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JOINT OPERATION

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Does the threat signal an end to the alliance?

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NEARBY



Telugu States vow mutual support for development

VIJAYAWADA

A.P. IT Minister Nara Lokesh and Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy emphasised that mutual cooperation is key to the progress of the Telugu States. » Page 4

APERC mulls steps to curb irregularities

VIJAYAWADA

In a move to keep the rising expenditure being incurred by DISCOMs under check and eliminate irregularities, APERC in-charge chairman P. Venkata Rama Reddy expressed the intent to bring in a regulation in three months. » Page 4

METROPLUS » PAGE 13

Tension rises in Manipur after Meitei man's killing

Rishikant Singh was shot dead in Churachandpur district while visiting his Kuki-Zo wife; protests staged in parts of Meitei-dominated Imphal Valley; Centre slammed for failing to control violence

Vijaita Singh
Rahul Karmakar
NEW DELHI/GUWAHATI

A 29-year-old man was shot dead by unidentified assailants in Churachandpur district of Manipur on Wednesday night, security officials said. The killing was recorded on camera.

Mayanglambam Rishikant Singh, a resident of Kakching, belonged to the Meitei community. He was visiting his Kuki-Zo wife in Churachandpur district.

Fresh tension gripped the State after the killing as sit-in protests were organised in parts of the Meitei-dominated Imphal Valley, while people in Kakching district blocked the Indo-Myanmar Sugnu Road to demand justice for the family of the deceased.



Hard loss: Grief-stricken relatives of the victim mourn at Kakching in Manipur on Thursday. PTI

Singh, who had been working in Nepal for the past two years, came to Churachandpur on December 19. He had been staying with his wife in Churachandpur since. "On Wednesday evening, unidentified people came to their house and took the couple away. While the wife was let off, the husband was taken a little further and shot dead. A video released by the assailants shows a terrified Singh, bent on his knees, pleading and crying for help," said a security official.

Assam Rifles came to know of the murder through their sources as there was no call made to the police. Around 9.30 p.m., a video of the killing, titled, "No peace no popular governments", was shared on WhatsApp from an IP address based in Guwahati, the official said.

A joint action committee formed in the valley in connection with Singh's death demanded that the case be handed over to the National Investigation Agency.

The Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI), the apex body of Imphal Valley-based organisations, condemned Singh's killing and said it showed the Centre's failure in controlling militants operating in the State.

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Karnataka Governor cuts short speech to legislature, walks out

Nagesh Prabhu
BENGALURU

In a fresh confrontation between the Lok Bhavan and the Congress-led government in Karnataka, Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot on Thursday refused to read the customary address prepared by the government and made a two-line address before walking out on the first day of the State legislature session.



Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah receives Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot ahead of the legislature session on Thursday. SUDHAKARA JAIN

The address to the joint session of the legislature ran into 122 paragraphs across 43 pages. However, the Governor had objected to certain paragraphs critical of the BJP-led Union government. Mr. Gehlot left without waiting for the national anthem to be played following which the State government accused him of insulting the anthem.

The abrupt exit led to chaos in the House, with Congress members raising slogans and attempting to gherao the Governor. Marshals intervened and escorted him out amid pandemonium.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah criticised the Governor's action, accusing him of violating constitutional conventions and acting at the behest of the Centre.

"It is the Governor's duty to address the first Assembly session of the year. The Cabinet approved the contents of the speech. Instead of reading the Cabinet-approved text, the Governor delivered a speech prepared by himself, which is unconstitutional," the Chief Minister said.

He alleged that the Governor was functioning as a "puppet of the Central government" and said the State government was examining the option of approaching the Supreme Court. The Governor's office has not issued any formal statement on the walkout so far.

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Is SIR about illegal immigration, asks SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday questioned whether the Election Commission (EC) had "clearly and eloquently" cited illegal, cross-border immigration as a reason for holding the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and verifying citizenship of registered voters.

The query from the Bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi came even as nearly 6.5 crore names were removed from draft electoral rolls published by the poll body in nine States and three Union Territories. Around 3.26 crore voters in Uttar Pradesh, one of the nine States, received notices asking them to attend hearings and show citizenship credentials.

Justice Bagchi said the poll body had listed only "frequent migration" as one of the reasons for holding the SIR. "Was the requirement of examination of citizenship in light of 2003 amendments to the Citizenship Act a trigger to hold the SIR in 2025? If so, that trigger does not have an eloquent expression in the SIR notification," Justice Bagchi observed.

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Three killed, 14 injured as bus collides with lorry

The Hindu Bureau
NANDYAL

Three people died, two of them charred to death, in an accident involving a private bus and a lorry in Nandyal district post Wednesday midnight.

Two crew members and 36 passengers on board the bus managed to rush out of the vehicle safely before the fire, caused by the collision, engulfed it. The lorry carrying e-vehicles was burnt completely.

According to police, the accident took place at Sirivella Metta on Allagadda-Nandyal national highway at around 1.05 a.m. on Thursday.

The private bus belonging to AR BVCR Travels bound to Hyderabad from Nellore started at 8.30 p.m. on Wednesday, with 36 passengers, two drivers and a helper on board.



Flames engulf a private travel bus after it collided with a lorry on the national highway at Sirivella Metta in Nandyal district post Wednesday midnight. U. SUBRAMANYAM

As the vehicle reached Sirivella Metta, the front tyre on its right side burst. The bus driver, Obulesu alias Bhaskar of Kadapa, lost control and the vehicle jumped the road divider and crashed into a lorry on the other side of the road. The lorry fell on the service road while the bus came to a halt on the highway.

Trapped in the cabin of their vehicles, lorry driver Naveen Kumar (25) from Kadapa and Obulesu died under the impact of collision. Assistant driver of the lorry, Abhishek (25), fell off the vehicle and died of injuries.

Flames erupted from the lorry initially and spread to the bus. The lorry was carrying e-vehicles from Hyderabad to Porumamilla in Kadapa district.

As the main door got locked, bus helper Surendra rushed to the rear side of the vehicle and broke the emergency window. Two youngsters from Sirivella and drivers of other passing vehicles rushed to the spot and ensured that all passengers and crew members jumped out of the bus.

At least 14 passengers suffered injuries and were shifted to Nandyal government hospital.

Superintendent of Police Suneel Sheoran, who supervised the rescue operations, said the tyre burst was the cause of the accident.

Acting on a complaint lodged by Vaibhav, a bus passenger of Atmakur in Nellore district, a case has been registered against the bus driver.

Minorities Welfare Minister N. MD Farooq visited the accident spot and directed the officials to ensure the best possible treatment for the injured.

The Minister asked the officials to conduct a thorough probe into the accident. Roads and Buildings Minister B.C. Janardhan Reddy condoled the deaths.

A.P. mulls ban on social media for children below 16 years

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

IT & HRD Minister Nara Lokesh has said that the State government is contemplating imposing a ban on access to social media for children below 16 years, like in Australia, to protect them from its harmful impact.

During an interaction with *Bloomberg* in Davos on Wednesday, Mr. Lokesh revealed the State government's intention to wean the children away from social media, noting that youngsters below a certain age should not be on such platforms as they do not fully understand the content they are exposed to and that a strong legal framework was required to curb the menace.

Welcoming the move, TDP national spokesperson G. Deepak Reddy said Mr. Lokesh has rightly highlighted the serious concern surrounding the impact of social media on the mental health and safety of children.

"Children below a certain age are not emotionally mature enough to comprehend the harmful content available online. That is why the Andhra Pradesh government is studying the global best practices and examining Australia's under-16 social media law," he said.

He further added that during the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) regime, social media was blatantly misused to launch brutal and derogatory attacks against women.

The initiative is aimed at shielding children from the toxic content and online negativity, Mr. Deepak Reddy added.

India absent as Trump rolls out his Board of Peace with 19 countries in attendance

Associated Press
Press Trust of India
DAVOS

U.S. President Donald Trump on Thursday inaugurated his Board of Peace to lead efforts at maintaining a ceasefire in Israel's war with Hamas, insisting that "everyone wants to be a part" of the body that could eventually rival the United Nations – despite many U.S. allies opting not to participate.



New accord: U.S. President Donald Trump holds the founding charter of the Board of Peace in Davos on Thursday. REUTERS

India was among the countries not present at the ceremony. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was among numerous global leaders invited by Mr. Trump to join the Board. India is yet to take a call on it, people familiar with the matter said when asked about the invite. Pakistan, Turkiye, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE are among the countries that have accepted Mr. Trump's invitation.

While Mr. Trump said 59 countries have signed onto the board, representatives of only 19 countries and the U.S. were present at the event at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

"You're the most powerful people in the world." Mr. Trump told the group, ranging from Azerbaijan to Paraguay to Hungary.

"This is not the United States, this is for the world," Mr. Trump said, adding, "I think we can spread it out to other things as we succeed in Gaza."

The event also saw Ali Shaath, former Palestinian Authority official from Gaza who is overseeing the Palestinian committee set to govern the territory under U.S. supervision, announcing that the Rafah border crossing, between Gaza and Egypt, will open in both directions next week.

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Officials issue alert as tiger strays into Eluru district from Telangana

The Hindu Bureau
ELURU

A tiger from Telangana has strayed into Eluru district, prompting the Forest Department of Andhra Pradesh to issue an advisory for the people and intensify night patrols and set up camera traps to track the movement of the animal.

The forest officials issued alerts for the residents of Pandirimamidigudem, Inumuru, Gadidaboru, Antarvedigudem, and nearby villages. Public announcements and traditional tom-tom beating are being used to warn the locals.

District Forest Officer Sandeep Reddy confirmed that the big cat, believed to have crossed into Eluru district from Telangana's Kavadigundla forest, after killing a calf there. The tiger entered the Nagavaram Mutha Reserve Forest in Eluru district via Pandirimamidigudem.



The tiger pug marks traced at Pandirimamidigudem village in Eluru district.

Based on pug mark analysis, forest officials have confirmed the tiger's presence within Pandirimamidigudem village limits, falling under Buttayigudem mandal and the Jangareddygudem forest range. The pug marks indicate the tiger may be retracing its route back towards Telangana.

A control room has been set up at the Eluru District Forest Office to track developments and coordinate rapid responses to any public alerts. Residents are being urged to avoid forest paths. The Forest Department has appealed to the public to immediately report any information related to the tiger's movement to the following officials: Sub-Divisional Forest Officer, Jangareddygudem (9505499141), Forest Range Officer, Jangareddygudem (94408 10223), Forest Section Officer, Mulagalampalli (95509 02333) and Control Room, Eluru (9908880327).

Pawan Kalyan inaugurates Kotappakonda-Kothapalem road

The Hindu Bureau
NARASARAOPET


Deputy Chief Minister K. Pawan Kalyan feeding a deer at Kotappakonda in Palnadu district on Thursday, after inauguration of a newly constructed Kotappakonda-Kothapalem road.

Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Panchayat Raj and Rural Development K. Pawan Kalyan on Thursday inaugurated the newly-constructed Kotappakonda-Kothapalem road.

The road, built at a cost of ₹3.9 crore from Panchayat Raj funds, and stretching nearly 8 km was thrown open to the public after the Deputy Chief Minister unveiled a plaque near the Shiva Stupa at the foothills of Kotappakonda.

Mr. Pawan Kalyan later walked along the road to inspect its quality. The project was taken up following a representation by local MLA Chadalavada Aravind Babu, seeking improved access for Kotappakonda Sri Trikoteswara Swamy temple devotees.

The Deputy Chief Minister had earlier assured the devotees that the road would be completed before Shivaratri. The new road is expected to ease travel for nearly 1.5 lakh devotees visiting Kotappakonda during Shivaratri and benefit farmers and students from nearby Kothapalem and Gonepudi areas.

Temple visit

Meanwhile, Mr. Pawan Kalyan visited the Kotappakonda Trikoteswara Swamy and participated in special religious rituals. The Deputy Chief Minister offered prayers to Lord Kotayyaswamy and took part in the special 'Padaabhishekam' conducted in the afternoon.

Temple priests performed Padaabhishekam to the deity in the form of 'Medha Dakshinamurthy', sprinkling holy water on the Deputy Chief Minister as part of the ritual. Mr. Pawan Kalyan offered silk garments and fruits to the deity.

After temple darshan, Mr. Pawan Kalyan reviewed the proposed Giripradakshina pathway layout, directing officials to expedite approvals and planning.

He later visited the Vanavihari Deer Park, fed spotted deer, and interacted with forest officials about wildlife conservation, bird species, vegetation, and park management facilities.

Command control centre at NTRUHS to monitor exams

Authorities can now monitor the UG and PG examinations at all 37 government and private medical colleges in the State from this facilty using CCTV footages, says Health Minister

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA


Health Minister Satya Kumar Yadav inaugurating the Integrated Command Control Centre at Dr. NTR University of Health Sciences in Vijayawada on Thursday. G.N. RAO

Minister for Health, Family Welfare and Medical Education Satya Kumar Yadav inaugurated the integrated command control centre at Dr. NTR University of Health Sciences (Dr. NTRUHS) on Thursday, as part of the measures to ensure transparency during the medical education examinations.

Addressing the media, the Minister said the authorities can now monitor the UG and PG examinations at all 37 government and private medical colleges in the State from this centre through the footage of CCTVs installed in examination halls. Each medical college has 25 cameras.

These cameras are connected to the command control centre, ending the need for the colleges to send CCTV hard disks to the university every time after exams.

All the data recorded from CCTVs will be stored on computers in the command control room for up to 70 days, and advanced technology has been used to ensure that the recordings are not damaged, the Minister said.

At present, monitoring has begun in five colleges. First, students writing MBBS and PG course examinations will be monitored. It will be extended to other courses, including dental, Ayurveda, homeopathy and nursing later, the Minister said.

In case the CCTVs develop glitches, the command control room is alerted. Measures have been taken to ensure that visuals are available even if the internet connection is weak during an exam.

Dr. NTRUHS Vice-Chancellor P. Chandrasekhar said that the centre has been set up at a cost of ₹30 lakh.

INBRIEF



Research conclave at Siddhartha Academy today

Siddhartha Academy of Higher Education (Deemed to be University), Vijayawada, is organising a two-day 'Research Conclave 2026' at V.R. Siddhartha School of Engineering from January 23. The event is jointly being organised by the Research and Development Cell and the Departments of ECE, CSE, IT, and MBA.

Text & Context and Health

Weekday features on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carries explainers, special articles and quizzes. In the latest issue (January 23, Friday), the following articles are available:

- The limits of household stability **newsth.live/householddebts**
- Thyroid testing should be driven by clinical suspicion, say doctors **newsth.live/thyroidtest**

You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access these articles. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access an article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text on camera to do the same.

'Murder' of YSRCP follower triggers political row

The Hindu Bureau
NARASARAOPET

The murder reported from Pinnelli village in Machavaram mandal of Palnadu district on January 10 has led to a political row, triggering sharp exchanges between the cadre of the ruling Telugu Desam Party (TDP)-led NDA and YSR Congress Party (YSRCP).

Manda Salman, 65, a YSRCP follower, was found murdered. Two persons – Motamarri Peturu and Motamarri Kantha Rao – allegedly associated with the ruling party, have been named accused in the case.

Machavaram police registered the case under Sections 103(1) and 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Section 302 read with 34 of the IPC.

Machavaram police SI Pavan Kumar K said that long-term disputes and personal rivalry led to the murder. The victim, who was admitted to a hospital in Guntur on January 10, died while undergoing on January 15.

Former Gurazala MLA Kasu Mahesh Reddy termed the incident a 'political murder', claiming political rivalry as the reason for the murder. However, police maintained that it was a clash between two individuals over apolitical issues and confirmed the arrest of the accused. The State SC Commission announced that it would visit the village to ascertain the facts related to the murder.

MLA Yarapatineni Srinivasa Rao said the murder followed instant provocation by the victim. He called for a probe into nearly 20 similar murders reported in the constituency during the YSRCP regime between 2019 and 2024.

The investigation is being handled by Machavaram SI Pavan Kumar under the supervision of Dachepalli Circle Inspector P. Bhaskar.



APSCHE Chairman K. Madhu Murthy during a meeting with his Telangana counterpart V. Balakista Reddy on Thursday.

'Need to strengthen collaboration between A.P. and Telangana'

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh State Council of Higher Education (APSCHE) Chairman K. Madhu Murthy on Thursday discussed key issues related to the ongoing initiatives in the higher education sector with his Telangana State Council of Higher Education (TGCHE) Chairman V. Balakista Reddy.

Prof. Murthy emphasised the need to strengthen collaboration between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The discussions revolved around enhancing academic excellence, promoting research and innovation, fostering institutional partnerships and improving student development initiatives in both States.

Prof. Murthy briefed the TGCHE chief on the various academic initiatives being undertaken in Andhra Pradesh. He highlighted programmes such as quantum technologies and extensive implementation of National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL), aimed at improving the quality of teaching-learning processes and expanding access to high-quality online courses for students and faculty.

Prof. Balakista Reddy underscored the need to equip students in both States with skills in emerging and advanced technologies.

Woman, paramour held for 'murdering' husband in Guntur

The Hindu Bureau
GUNTUR

A woman and her paramour were reportedly taken into custody on Thursday on the charge of murdering her husband at Chiluvuru village in Duggirala mandal of Guntur district in the intervening night of Janaury 18 and 19.

The deceased has been identified as Siva Nagaraju Lokam (46).

His father Gandhi, a former MPTC member, lodged the police complaint.

According to police, Lakshmi Madhuri, 35, allegedly served her husband biryani laced with three strips of sleeping pills, allegedly brought by her paramour Kondaveeti Gopi, 30.

Gopi, a native of Garlapadu village in Sattenapalli mandal of Palnadu district, works in Hyderabad.

As Nagaraju did not die after consuming the food, Madhuri and Gopi allegedly smothered him with a pillow, leading to his death. Police said ribs of Nagaraju were broken and bleeding was noticed.

Married for 20 years, the couple have two children aged 10 and 4.

Police said Nagaraju, an onion vendor, had suspected his wife of having an illicit relationship. Madhuri had reportedly lodged a harassment complaint two months ago.

Case registered

A case under Section 103(1) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) was registered on September 19. Sub-Inspector S. Venkat Ravi said the investigation is on.

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Timings
VIJAYAWADA

FRIDAY, JAN. 23	
RISE 06:39	SET 17:59
RISE 09:38	SET 22:01
SATURDAY, JAN. 24	
RISE 06:39	SET 18:00
RISE 10:15	SET 22:55
SUNDAY, JAN. 25	
RISE 06:39	SET 18:00
RISE 10:54	SET 23:52

Vijayawada Weather	max	min
Machilipatnam	31	20
Guntur Town	30	15
Vijayawada City	30	18

Vijayawada City Today
30°C The weather will be dry. Morning will be slight cool with mist and haze. Day will be slight warm. Night will be cool and hazy.

Vijayawada City Tomorrow
31°C Morning will be slight cool with mist and haze. Day will be slight warm. Night also will be slight cool. Dry weather to prevail.

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THE HINDU
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'Clear ₹25,384-crore dues of Discoms'

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

CPI(M) leaders led by Donepudi Kasinath submitted a memorandum to APERC In- Charge Chairman P. Venkata Rama Reddy during a public hearing on ARR filings of the DISCOMs for 2026-27 in Vijayawada on Thursday. They demanded that the government clear ₹25,384 crore dues of Discoms at the earliest to reduce their losses. The CPI (M) leaders requested the APERC to authorise the DISCOMs to take stern action against defaulters to recover ₹6,924 crore dues and wanted the 'secret pact' between the Discoms and Adani Energy Solutions on the installation of smart meters to be revealed.

Startup revolution key to growth in space technology: NRSC Director

The Hindu Bureau
GUNTUR



Delegates at the inaugural of the A.P. Space Tech Summit–2026 at Vignan's University at Vadlamudi in Guntur district on Thursday.

With a strong call for a startup-driven transformation of India's space sector, the Andhra Pradesh Space Tech Summit-2026 was inaugurated at Vignan's University, Vadlamudi in Guntur district on Thursday.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Prakash Chauhan, Director of the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), Hyderabad, said a 'revolution of startups' is essential to accelerate growth in space technology.

The summit, organised jointly by Vignan's University, the Andhra Pradesh SpaceTech Academy and Ananth Technologies, is being held under the theme 'Leveraging Space Technology for Viksit Bharat-2047'.

Dr. Chauhan noted that India's space startup ecosystem has grown rapidly, from just a handful three years ago to nearly 300 now, following policy reforms. He said earth observation, communication and navigation satellites would be critical for agriculture, disaster management, climate monitoring, transport and digital services.

He highlighted Andhra Pradesh's strategic advantage with Sriharikota and strong academia-industry linkages.

During the event, the 'South India Rocketry Challenge-2026' was launched and the AP SpaceTech Academy released its first publication, Space Tech Spectrum Journal.

Innovate Pharma conclave begins

The Hindu Bureau
GUNTUR

The Chebrolu Hanumaiah Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences (CHIPS) on Thursday inaugurated an international conference, Innovate Pharma 2026.

The two-day conference on 'Emerging Innovations in Pharmaceutical Sciences and Drug Discovery' was presided over by CHIPS president Dr. R. Srinivas. APSCHE Chairman K. Madhu Murthy attended as the chief guest, while Acharya Nagarjuna University In-charge Vice-Chancellor Prof. K. Gangadhara Rao was the guest of honour.

International experts from Malaysia's IMU University added global perspectives.

KARNATAKA ROAD DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)
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e-Mail: cekrdcl@gmail.com, Website: http://www.krdcl.in

No. KRDCL/IFB/2025-26/23 Date: 13.01.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

The **Karnataka Road Development Corporation Limited [KRDCL]** invites online tender as per KTPP 2000 Act and as per Standard Tender Document through KPP Portal **www.kpppkarnataka.gov.in** for the below work.
Name of Work: **Synchronization and implementation of Phase 02 of Adaptive Traffic signal control system (ATCS) along with emergency vehicle priority system in Bengaluru city with 5 Years maintenance under Bengaluru City Road Safety Authority and Traffic Management Project to Bengaluru City Traffic Police.** Amount put to Tender: **Rs.47,11,23,859.00.** Earnest Money Deposit (EMD): **Rs.48,00,000.00 (1.00 lakh through KPP Portal and 47 lakhs through Bank Guarantee OR 48 lakhs through KPP Portal).** Tender Period (including monsoon): **11 months for supply & installation with 5 years maintenance period. 1.** Interested Eligible Contractors may participate in the Tender process. The details are available in KPP portal from **23.01.2026 onwards. 2.** The Schedule of dates for various activities is as below: **(i)** Pre-bid meeting is on **12.02.2026 at 16.30 hours** in office of the Joint Commissioner of Police, Bengaluru City, No.5, Traffic Management Cell,2nd Floor, Infantry Road, Bengaluru-560001. **(ii)** Last Date for submission of Technical and Financial Bids is on **21.02.2026 up to 17.30 hours. (iii)** Time & Date of opening of Technical Bids is on **24.02.2026 at 11.00 hours** at KRDCL Head Office. "KRDCL reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids without assigning any reasons".
Note: Henceforth, any changes/modifications in the tender will be updated only on KPP Portal.

DIPR/CP/AAA/5173/2025-26

Sd/- CHIEF ENGINEER, KRDCL, BENGALURU

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A VJ-VJE

INBRIEF

Anitha stresses budgetary support to strengthen force

Home Minister V. Anitha chaired a high-level meeting on the annual budget proposals of the Home Department, at the Secretariat in Amaravati on Thursday. The meeting focused on strengthening law and order and modernising the police machinery to meet emerging security challenges. The Home Minister held detailed discussions on the budgetary allocations required for improving policing standards and operational efficiency. She directed the officials to initiate steps for the release of funds due from the Centre and emphasised the need for effective and transparent utilisation of resources.



Tirumala gears up for 'Ratha Saptami' on January 25

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) is all set to celebrate 'Ratha Saptami', one of the most significant festivals in its calendar, with grandeur on January 25, says TTD Chairman B.R. Naidu. Addressing the media in Tirumala on Thursday, Mr. Naidu, along with Executive Officer A.K. Singhal, Additional Executive Officer Ch. Venkaiah Chowdary and Trust Board members, outlined the arrangements made to manage the expected surge of pilgrims. The highlight of the festival would be the celestial procession of Lord Malayappa Swamy, riding seven vahanams from 5.30 a.m. to 9 p.m. along the four mada streets. The sacred 'Chakra Snanam' was scheduled between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m.

National-level meeting on livestock statistics begins

A two-day national-level annual meeting of the Technical Committee of Direction (TCD) on Livestock Statistics commenced in Amaravati on Thursday, bringing together representatives from all States and Union Territories to review and validate livestock product data and chart strategies for the sector's growth. The meeting was being attended by Director-General (Statistics) and TCD Chairman Kaal Singh, Special Chief Secretary (Health & Family Welfare) Takheer Ahmed, Andhra Pradesh Special Chief Secretary (Animal Husbandry) B. Rajasekhar, Adviser Jagat Hazarika, Director of Animal Husbandry T. Damodar Naidu.

Kisan drone service now accessible through app

Director of Agriculture Manazir Jeelani Samoon has said that Kisan drone services can now be availed from anywhere in the State through the 'Kisan Drones' mobile application, marking a major step in the digital transformation of agriculture. On Thursday, Dr. Samoon inspected the Digital Crop Survey (DCS) registration process under the new version of the e-Crop App during a field visit to a maize farm at Pedakakani in Guntur district. He personally reviewed the upgraded e-Crop web and mobile applications, and assessed the real-time tracking system implemented for the Rabi 2025-26 season.

ED grills Vijaya Sai Reddy in multi-crore liquor scam case

Officials of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) questioned former Rajya Sabha member V. Vijaya Sai Reddy for more than six hours in the alleged multi-crore liquor scam, in Hyderabad on Thursday. Investigating officers reportedly questioned Mr. Reddy about the alleged irregularities, shell companies, and other issues in the scam, and recorded his statement. The officers reportedly focused on money laundering allegations, and sought some documents from the former MP.

Chilli, palm oil fetching record prices this season: Minister

Agriculture Minister K. Atchannaidu has said farmers are benefiting from record prices for chilli and palm oil crops this season, crediting timely policy decisions taken by the coalition government. Addressing the media in Vijayawada on Thursday, he recalled that chilli farmers faced severe price crash last year, prompting the government to intervene through consultations with the Centre and announce a Market Intervention Price to stabilise rates. He said the situation significantly improved this year due to crop diversification by farmers and proactive government measures, resulting in steady and remunerative prices. During the current season, prices have risen to ₹15,000-₹19,500 per quintal.

APERC to streamline DISCOMS' purchases, curb corruption

Intends to bring in a regulation or comprehensive guidelines in three months to ensure exercise of greater control over procurements, says in-charge chairman Venkata Rama Reddy, and vows to crack down on unfair practices

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

In a significant move to keep the steep rise in the annual expenditure being incurred by the State power distribution companies (DISCOMs) under check and eliminate the scope for irregularities, Andhra Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission (APERC) in-charge chairman P. Venkata Rama Reddy expressed the intent to bring in a regulation or comprehensive guidelines in three months, that would exercise greater control over procurements by DISCOMs to rid these transactions of corruption.

He was speaking at a public hearing on the DISCOMs' Annual Revenue Requirement (ARR) filings for 2026-27 in Vijayawada on Thursday.

Responding to a complaint by the Centre for Liberty chairman and retired IPS officer A.B. Venkateswara Rao that the purchase of transformers by the SPDCL since 2022 was fraught with corruption and the costs thereof were sought to be imposed on the consumers in the form of true-up charges, Mr. Venkata Rama Reddy said he issued a detailed cost order in February 2025 on the basis of data secured from Karnataka, Telangana and Tamil Nadu and he did not act hastily even when asked to approve procurements at relatively high prices, saying that it required a detailed study.

"However, since the APERC was under the obligation to crack down on unfair practices, the issues brought to his notice would be examined," he asserted. Also, Mr. Venkata Rama Reddy stated that so far the APERC did not pay much attention to the procurement of materials (which account for a sizeable chunk of the costs paid by the DISCOMs) but it was high time the necessary inquiries were done as the said practices could not be allowed.

He further said the government never interfered with the functioning of APERC, while calling the government's decision to absorb the true-up charges amounting to ₹4,478 crore approved in December in order not to pass on the costs to consumers as gracious. Mr. Venkateswara Rao requested the APERC to disallow the costs claimed by the DISCOMs in their Annual Revenue Requirement filings for 2026-27, and maintained that the installation of Star-5 transformers in the farm sector should be completely avoided owing to their high cost. Basically, he raised strong objection to the procurement of more than 90% of the transformers from Shirdi Sai Electricals Limited and the remainder from Toshiba Transmission & Distribution. "By resorting to this unfair practice, competition from home-grown companies that would bring down costs was stifled even as the government scouted for investments abroad," he observed, appealing to the APERC to take appropriate action by invoking its full powers.

SCR seeks rationalisation of power tariff

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer of the Vijayawada Railway Division, Ch. Dinesh Reddy appealed to the APERC to direct the State power utilities to rationalise the tariffs charged by them, by considering the fact that the Railways was not a profit-driven entity and the Electricity Act, the National Tariff Policy and Ministry of Power's directives advocated cost-reflective tariffs and reduction of cross-subsidies, especially for deemed licensees (like the Railways).

Making submissions on behalf of the SCR at a public hearing conducted by the APERC on the ARR filings of the DISCOMs for 2026-27, here on Thursday, Mr. Dinesh Reddy noted that the SCR felt the need to buy power from generators / traders of its choice (open access) for a long time as a statutory right under Section 42 of the Electricity Act, 2003 because the average tariff charged by DISCOMs was the highest in five States but was unable to exercise the option due to pending court cases.



Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer Ch. Dinesh Reddy speaking at the APERC public hearing in Vijayawada on Thursday.

He stated that the average unit price of electricity in A.P. was ₹9.30 compared to ₹7.03 in Telangana, ₹6.74 in Chhattisgarh, ₹6.29 in Odisha and ₹5.79 in Kerala. Power was available at ₹6.53 in Maharashtra and ₹6.16 in Karnataka under open access. He suggested that the existing tariff under HT-IV(D) Railway Traction category in A.P. should be reviewed and rationalised to enable the Railways to reduce operational costs thereby easing the burden on public and supporting ongoing electrification and infrastructure upgrades.

Centre likely to review tax hike on tobacco

Sambasiva Rao M
GUNTUR

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has assured to review the recent hike in tobacco tax, according to Rajamahendravaram MP D. Purandeswari.

A delegation of Flue-Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco farmers from Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka, led by Ms. Purandeswari, on Thursday met Ms. Sitharaman in New Delhi seeking a review of the tobacco tax hike, citing its adverse impact on farmers and regulated FCV tobacco ecosystem.

The delegation, which also included Tobacco Board Chairman Yashwanth Kumar Ch., expressed concern that the sudden increase in tax could severely affect the livelihoods of lakhs of farming families and disrupt the auction-based regulated marketing system.

Ms. Purandeswari later told *The Hindu* that the newly introduced 18% tax on unmanufactured tobacco would burden the farmers. She observed that international FCV tobacco production increased, hence there would be normal demand at global markets for India's produce. That would impact local market as well. Stating that the new tax could lead to a decline in legal trade, revenue loss and a rise in illicit trade, the delegation stressed the need to protect domestic industry.



Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and Andhra Pradesh IT Minister N. Lokesh at the WEF in Davos on Thursday.

State emerging hub for tech, investment, innovation: Lokesh

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

HRD N. Lokesh highlighted the State's emerging role as a hub for advanced technologies, global investments, and innovation during the World Economic Forum engagements in Davos.

In meetings with Accenture CSO Manish Sharma, Mr. Lokesh proposed establishing a Global Delivery Centre in Visakhapatnam. He urged support in building a digital talent pipeline and strengthening startup ecosystems through the Ratan Tata Innovation Hub (RTIH). Mr. Sharma said Accenture had invested heavily in AI talent, with India as a key focus.

At a separate meeting with Cambridge University Vice-Chancellor Debbie Prentis, Mr. Lokesh discussed joint research and curriculum development, including climate awareness and advanced skills programmes for students, and collaborations with universities in Andhra and IIT-Tirupati on AI, data science, and engineering initiatives. Addressing the World Economic Forum Quantum Computing Summit, Mr. Lokesh announced that Andhra Pradesh would host South Asia's most powerful quantum computer by July 2026 in the State's Quantum Valley Innovation District, in partnership with IBM and TCS.

Stress on cooperative approach

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and A.P. IT Minister N. Lokesh on Thursday emphasised that cooperation is key to the progress of Telugu States. The two leaders met on the sidelines of the WEF in Davos to discuss education reforms, IT development, and skill-building initiatives. Mr. Lokesh presented details of A.P.'s ongoing education reforms and IT progress. Mr. Revanth Reddy briefed Mr. Lokesh on Telangana's development and welfare programmes. He invited Mr. Lokesh to visit fully modernised ITIs in Telangana to witness the transformation first hand.

Expedite projects in State, CM tells TATA Sons Chairman in Davos

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and TATA Sons Chairman N. Chandrasekharan met during the World Economic Forum (WEF) at Davos on Thursday and discussed the implementation of various projects, including the establishment of a TCS Development Centre in Visakhapatnam.

Mr. Naidu requested Mr. Chandrasekharan to partner with the State government in the construction of three sports cities, and to expedite the projects committed by the TATA Group. He also appealed to Mr. Chandrasekharan to explore the investment opportunities in the tourism sector in the State.

They deliberated on the progress of the TCS unit in Visakhapatnam, Amaravati Quantum Valley and the proposed solar power projects in Kurnool.

Mr. Chandrasekaran said officials from the Tata Trusts would be sent to discuss ways to take the initiatives under the Ratan Tata Innovation Hub (RTIH) forward.

Regarding the WEF, Mr. Naidu said it was an excellent platform to understand global industrial trends and the mindsets of entrepreneurs, and his visit significantly helped in positing 'Brand AP' on the global stage once again.



Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and TATA Sons Chairman N. Chandrasekharan during the WEF in Davos on Thursday.

Naidu urges the TATA Group to partner with the government in the construction of sports cities and explore investment opportunities in the tourism sector

'NDA falsely claiming credit for resurvey'

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has accused the NDA government of indulging in "credit chori" by claiming ownership of the land resurvey carried out during the YSRCP regime.

Addressing a press conference at Tadepalli on Thursday, Mr. Jagan said the land resurvey was a promise made in YSRCP election manifesto in 2019, and implemented in December 2020.

The YSRCP government spent nearly ₹6,000 crore and about 40,000 personnel were deployed to implement the 'Bhu Raksha and Bhu Hakku' schemes, resulting in the issuance of tamper-proof land titles using advanced technology. This was a historic reform that no previous government had attempted, he said, adding that Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu was shamelessly claiming credit for it, as the Centre had given ₹400 crore incentive as a token of appreciation for the land reforms.

When pointed out that Assembly Speaker Ch. Ayyanna Patrudu is suggesting "no work no pay" for legislators, Mr. Jagan said, "Unless Leader of Opposition status is accorded, there is no point in attending the House and they are not concerned about pay."

Later chairing the YSRCP Parliamentary Party meeting, he directed the MPs to raise issues of public importance and ensure that the concerns of people are effectively voiced at the national level.

'Jagan spreading lies on land reforms'

The Hindu Bureau
AMARAVATI

Revenue, Registration and Stamps Minister Anagani Satya Prasad has accused YSRCP president and former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy of spreading lies on land issues and re-survey.

Addressing the media at the Secretariat in Amaravati on Thursday, Mr. Satya Prasad alleged that Mr. Jagan was attempting "credit theft" over a process that had been initiated by the TDP government during its earlier term.

Reacting to Mr. Jagan's remarks earlier in the day, the Minister said the re-survey had been launched in 2018 by the TDP government at Takkellapadu village of Jaggayyapeta mandal with advanced technology and amendments to the Record of Rights Act notified through a gazette. Later, the YSRCP government had conducted the re-survey in a flawed manner, leading to 2.7 lakh complaints from the public.

He said the NDA government issued revised passbooks with State emblem and 15 security features.



Revenue Minister A. Satya Prasad addressing the media in Amaravati on Thursday.

INBRIEF



Twenty20 party joins BJP-led NDA ahead of Kerala polls

Twenty20, a corporate-backed outlier in Kerala's conventional coalition politics, joins the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) ahead of the Assembly elections. BJP State president Rajeev Chandrasekhar welcomed Twenty20 president Sabu M. Jacob into the alliance on Thursday. "We desperately needed allies and found none better than the NDA to avenge ourselves upon our enemies", Mr. Jacob said. He said only an expanding NDA could end "the LDF-UDF duopoly" in the State.

SIT summons BRS chief in phone tapping probe

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the phone-tapping case has summoned Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president K. T. Rama Rao for questioning, directing him to appear before investigators on Friday at the Jubilee Hills police station in Hyderabad. The notice stated that the investigation had indicated that Mr. Rama Rao was aware of certain facts and circumstances linked to the case and that his presence was required to assist the probe.

A.P.'s education model earns praise at national level

Andhra Pradesh's comprehensive and innovative education reforms for Children with Special Needs (CWSN) presented at the Inclusive Education Summit held in New Delhi has drawn wide-spread appreciation. Samagra Shiksha State Project Director B. Srinivasa Rao said A.P. is not limiting itself to providing basic infrastructure to such children and is working towards building an inclusive education ecosystem.

Karnataka Governor chose to skip portions faulting Centre

The full text of the government-prepared address included the 'injustices' faced by Karnataka within the federal framework in matters such as tax devolution, centrally sponsored schemes

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU


Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot addressing the joint session at Vidhana Soudha, in Bengaluru, on Thursday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Criticism of the Narendra Modi-led Union government over alleged economic and policy discrimination against Karnataka reportedly irked Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot, which led to him cutting short the address to the joint session of the Legislature on Thursday to just a few sentences.

Modes of 'suppression'

The remarks, included in the Governor's address, stated that Karnataka was facing a "suppressive situation" within the federal framework and that "injustice is being done to the State" in matters such as tax devolution, centrally sponsored schemes, central sector schemes, and special schemes.

However, the Governor's address to the Legislature was deemed to have been read.

Instead of reading out the full text of the government-prepared address – running to 43 pages – the Governor briefly addressed the legislators in Hindi and concluded with, "My government is committed to doubling the economic, social and physical development of the State. Jai Hind, Jai Karnataka."

The unread part of the Governor's speech said, "The Union government must seriously consider that economically suppressing Karnataka, which occupies a driving position in the national economy, will adversely affect the entire country."

It pointed out that during the period of the 15th Finance Commission, resources to the tune of ₹1.25 lakh crore were denied to the State, and this injustice has been brought to the notice of the 16th Finance Commission.

The Congress government also demanded the repeal of the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act and the restoration of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

"Worker-centric rights under the MGNREGA have been diluted, and labourers are being placed under contractors' control," the Governor's speech said, adding that it would lead to "large-scale corruption".

Governors' actions in T.N., Karnataka, Kerala show 'deliberate pattern': Stalin

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Governors of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka either altering or refusing to read out their customary address in the Assembly, prepared by the respective State governments, showed a pattern which was "clear and deliberate", Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said on Thursday.

Referring to the action of Karnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot on Thursday, Mr. Stalin posted: "First Tamil Nadu. Then Kerala. Now Karnataka. The pattern is clear and deliberate. Governors refusing to read the speech prepared by State governments and behaving like

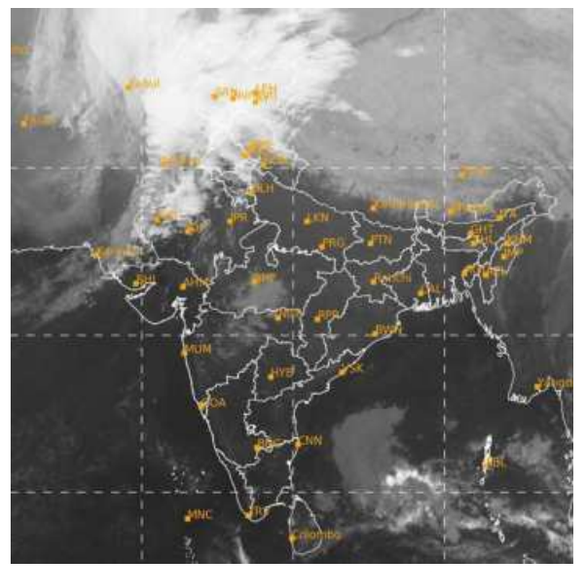

M.K. Stalin

party agents, undermining duly elected state governments."

Mr. Stalin contended that "the only solution now is to end the practice of commencing the first annual Assembly session with the Governor's address." The DMK will consult like-minded Opposition parties across India to abolish this obsolete and irrelevant practice, Mr. Stalin said.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday


TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.45 HRS)

Forecast for Friday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Uttarakhand. Thunderstorm with lightning & gusty winds likely at isolated places over Rajasthan, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. Dense fog likely at isolated places over Sikkim and West Bengal

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	27.9	12.0	Kozhikode	—	32.5	23.7
Ahmedabad	—	30.8	16.8	Kurnool	—	31.5	17.2
Aizawl	—	25.2	12.2	Lucknow	—	25.3	8.8
Allahabad	—	26.8	9.6	Madurai	—	32.0	18.7
Bengaluru	—	27.7	14.7	Mangaluru	—	32.9	20.6
Bhopal	—	27.5	11.2	Mumbai	—	30.5	18.4
Bhubaneswar	—	30.2	14.0	Mysuru	—	29.4	15.0
Chandigarh	—	26.3	4.8	New Delhi	—	27.1	6.3
Chennai	—	30.0	21.2	Patna	—	24.6	13.4
Coimbatore	—	30.6	18.0	Port Blair	—	30.6	25.7
Dehradun	—	26.4	7.2	Puducherry	—	30.0	19.2
Gangtok	—	16.1	7.7	Pune	—	30.4	17.8
Goa	—	33.2	19.9	Raipur	—	30.0	16.4
Guwahati	—	27.1	14.2	Ranchi	—	25.6	8.0
Hubballi	—	29.0	12.0	Shillong	—	17.6	6.4
Hyderabad	—	27.7	16.7	Shimla	—	22.4	6.2
Imphal	—	25.2	6.7	Srinagar	—	7.5	-3.4
Jaipur	—	25.1	12.6	Thiruvananthapuram	—	34.1	22.4
Kochi	—	30.4	23.4	Tiruchi	—	29.9	18.6
Kohima	—	17.0	6.4	Vijayawada	—	29.5	18.6
Kolkata	—	26.4	14.7	Visakhapatnam	—	29.8	19.9

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	113	116	.34	201	—	
Bengaluru	5	20	.39	135	151	
Chennai	7	14	.51	102	120	
Delhi	8	185	104	384	388	
Hyderabad	7	13	.52	80	104	
Kolkata	8	105	.62	227	161	
Lucknow	8	32	.60	211	214	
Mumbai	.45	.84	.50	142	140	
Pune	.16	71	.84	115	249	
Visakhapatnam	7	.93	.17	193	226	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Gurugram, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 366 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Madikeri, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 39

Air Quality Code: Poor, Moderate, Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

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No.03 & 04/CE/APRSCL/2025-26, dated: 21.01.2026

The APRSCL invites bids for the providing balance/leftover infrastructure works (1) at Nayanipalli(v), Vetapalem(M), Bapatla District with an ECV: **Rs.1,04,60,871/-** and (2) at Kothur(v) of Nellore with an ECV: **Rs.2,80,20,810/-** in the State of Andhra Pradesh from **23.01.2026 @02.00 P.M.** onwards upto **09.02.2026 @03.30 P.M.** For further details, log on to website **https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in** Contact DGM(T) : **8374446488**

DIPR 4762PP/CL, Dt: 22/01/2026 — Sd/- Chief Engineer, APRSCL, Vijayawada

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Advt. No. 03/2026 dt. 21.01.2026

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Administrative Officer

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I, **DANDA MURALI KRISHNA (Old Surname)** S/o. DANDA VENKATA SUBBAIAH, Resident of H.No. 7-838(A), RTC Colony, Mangamuru Road, Ongole, Prakasam District, Andhra Pradesh-523002, India., have changed my Surname as (New Surname) **DANDAY MURALI KRISHNA, S/o. DANDAY VENKATA SUBBAIAH.** Hereafter my Surname is known as **(New Surname) DANDAY MURALI KRISHNA, S/o. DANDAY VENKATA SUBBAIAH.**

PUBLIC NOTICE

LOSS OF DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public that my client Sri. PALAMARRI RADHA KRISHNA RAO (Aadhaar No: 2376 5827 9678), S/o P. Satya Narayana Rao, R/o H.No. 7-1-621/A/2, Flat No. 404, Srinivasa Nagar Colony (East), Satya Sai Apartments, Sanath Nagar, Ameerpet, Hyderabad, Telangana State, has lost the Original Link Document bearing No: 3502/1973 relating to Lawful Ownership of Property, situated in Land Survey No. 76, Plot No. 69, at Sri Viswanatha Nagar, Dinnedevarapadu Village, Kurnool Mandal, Kurnool District, Andhra Pradesh, registered in the office of the Sub-Registrar, Kurnool. The said original Link Document was lost while travelling from Hyderabad to Kurnool RTC Bus Stand in an APSRTC bus on 02-01-2026. Despite sincere and best efforts made to trace the document, the same could not be found. If any person finds the above-mentioned original document, they are requested to return it to the address mentioned above. Any misuse of the said document shall be punishable under law, and the finder shall have no right, title, or interest over the said property.

R. MURALI KRISHNA
Advocate,
Kurnool , A.P.

LEGAL NOTICE

HON'BLE JUDGE V COURT OF SMALL CAUSES BEFORE THE MOTOR ACCIDENTS CLAIMS TRIBUNAL AT CHENNAI
M.C.O.P No. 2415OF 2025

Vanathi ...Petitioner
VERSUS
1.Geddada Venkat Siva Ramakrishna
2. Royal Sundaram General Insurance Co Ltd
...Respondents

To,
Geddada Venkat Siva Ramakrishna
S/o. Narasimha Rao
10-378-2 Near Government College
Narayanapuram, Nadikudi,
Dachepalli, Palnadu, Andhra Pradesh - 522414

Please take notice that the above M.C.O.P filed by the Petitioner before the Honorable Judge V (5th), Court of Small Causes, at Chennai has been ordered notice to you on 06/01/2026. Therefore, you are required to appear before the said court on 09/02/2026 at 10:30 A.M either in person or through pleader failing which the above matter will be decided in your absence.

M/s. G. Babu Ganesh
COUNSEL FOR PETITIONER

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0877-2255553

DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL VISAKHAPATNAM
Ground & 1st Floor, 31-31-21, Sai Baba Street, Narayan Bhawan, Dabagardens, VISAKHAPATNAM - 530 020.

Case No. OA 522/2020

Summons under sub section (4) of section 19 of the Act, read with sub-rule (2A) of the Debt Recovery Tribunals (Procedure) Rule, 1993.

State Bank of India, SARB, Vijayawada, being represented by its Chief Manager ... Applicant
VS
Sri Lakshmi Venkateswara Agencies & 3 others.

To,
1. Sri Lakshmi Venkateswara Agencies, Prop: K. Madhu Naveen, D.No: 2-159,160, 161, Gudiwada Road, Appanaveedi Post, West Godavari, Andhra Pradesh-534247.
2. K. Madhu Naveen S/o Kaleswara Rao, D.No.28-1-105, Santi Nagar, 3rd road, Eluru, West Godavari-534007.
3. K. Vinod Kumar S/o Kaleswara Rao, D.No.28-1-105, Santi Nagar, 3rd Road, Eluru, West Godavari-534007.
4. K. Kaleswara Rao S/o Nanchariah, D.No.28-1-105, Santi Nagar, 3rd road, Eluru, West Godavari-534007. ... Defendants

SUMMONS TO DEFENDANTS BY PAPER PUBLICATION

WHEREAS, OA 522/2020 was listed before Hon'ble Presiding Officer/Registrar on 09.12.2025.

WHEREAS this Hon'ble Tribunal is pleased to issue summons/ notice on the said Application under section 19(4) of the Act, (OA) filed against you for recovery of debts of **Rs. 74,29,436.12 Ps.** (application along with copies of documents etc. annexed).

In accordance with sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, you, the defendants are directed as under:-

(i) To show cause within thirty days of the service of summons as to why relief prayed for should not be granted;

(ii) To disclosed particulars of properties or assets other than properties and assets specified by the applicant under serial number 3A of the original application;
You are restrained from dealing with or disposing of secured assets or such other assets and properties disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application, pending hearing and disposal of the application for attachment of properties;

(iii) You shall not transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise, except in the ordinary course of his business any of the assets over which security interest is created and / or other assets and properties specified or disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application without the prior approval of the Tribunal;

(iv) You shall be liable to account for the sale proceeds realized by sale of secured assets or other assets and properties in the ordinary course of business and deposit such sale proceeds in the account maintained with the bank financial institution holding security interest over such assets.

You are also directed to file the written statement with a copy thereof furnished to the applicant and to appear before **Presiding Officer/Registrar** on **06-03-2026 at 10:30 AM** failing the application shall be heard and declared in your absence.

Given under my hand and the seal of this Tribunal on this **29th day of December, 2025**.

Signature of the Office Authorised to issue Summons



A piece of board

India must eschew temptation to be a part of Trump's peace board

India, on Thursday, skipped the U.S. President Donald Trump-led "Board of Peace (BoP)" charter announcement held in Davos, although the government is said to be still discussing the invitation to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to join it. The BoP is part of the Trump administration's Phase 2 of the Gaza Peace Proposal, which is also meant to help resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict through talks on a two-state solution. This was cleared unanimously by the UN Security Council (Russia and China abstained) in November 2025 after an Israel-Hamas ceasefire. There are some reasons for India to seriously consider joining the BoP, as about 20 countries already have. India has been a principled supporter of the Palestinian cause, and a consistent provider of humanitarian assistance, and this could be an opportunity to help the brutalised Palestinian population. The decision by the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Israel and Türkiye, to join may put pressure on the Modi government. The rupture in U.S.-India ties and fragility of trade negotiations maybe another cause not to rebuff Mr. Trump's invitation now, as it may invoke his ire.

Neither pragmatism nor principle dictates taking such a decision in haste, however, and a country of India's standing cannot act based on the fear of missing out on a position of influence, or punishment by the U.S. Even though the UN has backed the U.S.'s original plans, the BoP's latest structure and mandate appear to have been unilaterally altered – it does not actually mention Gaza, according to leaked versions of the charter. Mr. Trump has appointed himself as chairman, with friends and family on the executive board, and the charter proposes to extend the BoP to other conflict-resolution ventures, suggesting that it would seek to supplant the UN. Second, while the board will appoint Palestinian technical experts, it does not include the Palestinian leadership, an affront to countries that have recognised Palestine. That Mr. Netanyahu, accused of genocide by UN agencies should be included, but not the Palestinian President, adds to that injustice. For India, Pakistan's decision to join the board is a red flag, particularly if Mr. Trump decides to include the Kashmir dispute to the BoP's peace plans. The BoP's 2-tier membership, offering "permanent" membership for a "fee" of one billion dollars is another red flag. It would also be difficult for India to cavil at its troops joining the International Stabilization Force, a non-UN initiative. Without clarity, members will only be rubber stamps to Mr. Trump's arbitrary and often illegitimate diktats on the future of Palestine. New Delhi must continue to consult partners on the best way forward, particularly the Palestinians, even as it keeps its own independent counsel. Above all, India must listen to its own conscience.

Welcome deescalation

Europe and rest of the world should still be wary of U.S. moves

In a move that brings a sense of relief to European nations and NATO members, U.S. President Donald Trump, in a speech at the World Economic Forum at Davos, appeared to back down from the possibility of the use of force to acquire Greenland, an autonomous Arctic territory administered by Denmark. Simultaneously, he hit out at world leaders, including from friendly countries such as Canada, France and Switzerland. His remarks came after weeks of rising tension over his earlier proposal to impose on eight European countries a 10% tariff on "any and all goods" beginning on February 1, which was then set to increase to 25% on June 1 until an agreement was reached for the U.S. to purchase or otherwise acquire Greenland. Given the broader context of the Trump administration using military force to kidnap Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro to the U.S. and it hinting publicly at similar interventions in the affairs of Colombia, Cuba, Iran and Mexico, European nations came close to retaliating with an anti-coercion instrument that is a counter-tariff facility targeting the business of major U.S. tech firms in the EU. After Mr. Trump's Davos comments, however, the focus has shifted to what he described as "the framework of a future deal with respect to Greenland and, in fact, the entire Arctic Region". Hinting that the time frame of such a deal would be "infinite", Mr. Trump also indicated that additional discussions on Greenland are ongoing, relating to the $175 billion Golden Dome missile defence plan, to position U.S. weapons in space.

Troubling though the strident rhetoric out of Washington was on the subject of taking over Greenland, the deeper institutional malaise that the conversations at Davos hinted at relate to the gradual breakdown of the rules-based international order. Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney poignantly alluded to this dysfunction in global trading and financial systems and trends in migration and climate change mitigation policies. He said that great powers were now using economic integration as weapons, tariffs as leverage, financial infrastructure as coercion, and supply chains as vulnerabilities to be exploited. He warned a vast swathe of "middle powers" of the world that contend with the complexities of this rivalry: "There is a strong tendency for countries to go along to get along... To accommodate. To avoid trouble. To hope that compliance will buy safety. It won't." Indeed, countries such as India, which have lingering concerns in bilateral ties with the U.S. despite overall positive trends in cooperation, would do well to consider whether his words on prioritising rule of law over the use of brute force as a modus operandi on the global stage ring true at home.

A dangerous march towards a Himalayan ecocide



Mallika Bhanot

is a member of Ganga Ahvaan, a citizen forum working for Himalaya-Ganga conservation, and Member of the Bhagirathi Eco-sensitive Zone Monitoring Committee



C.P. Rajendran

is an Adjunct Professor at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru, and author of the book, 'The Rumbling Earth: The Story of Indian Earthquakes'

In 2025, which saw nearly 331 days of near-continuous climate impacts, the human cost was staggering: over 4,000 deaths attributed to climate-induced disasters in 2025 alone, with Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand bearing the heaviest toll. Towns such as Dharali, Harsil, Uttarkashi, Chamoli, Kullu, Mandi and Kishtwar were ravaged by sudden cloudbursts, landslides, and avalanches that morphed into deadly flash floods, obliterating lives and livelihoods.

This onslaught of scorching heat, catastrophic floods and land subsidence appears to be the new normal. And yet, how does one explain the government's decision to endanger Dharali and Harsil – areas recently devastated by an avalanche-turned-flash-flood – by pushing forward a massive infrastructure project that would fell nearly 7,000 Devdar trees and countless native species?

Pushing infrastructure in a disaster zone

On November 12, the Uttarakhand Forest Department approved the felling of these trees, diverting 43 hectares of forest land for the Char Dham road-widening project, with 10 hectares meant for muck dumping. This decision again relies on the flawed DL-PS (double-lane with paved shoulder) standard that mandates a 12-metre paved surface in an area demonstrably prone to disasters.

The region, located north of the Main Central Thrust (MCT), is classified as a critical zone where major infrastructure is explicitly discouraged. There are also hanging glaciers and the area is fed by the Gangotri, one of the world's fastest receding glaciers, which sustains several unstable, moraine-laden glaciers in the valley. One of these glacier avalanches contributed to the disaster in Dharali.

This raises a pivotal and urgent question: what is the true value of these trees for this region?

The Devdar (Deodar) forests are crucial ecological assets in the delicate Himalayan landscape. Their extensive root systems stabilise slopes, prevent landslides and serve as natural barriers against avalanches and glacial debris flows, safeguarding downstream communities. These forests are also essential for the water quality of the Ganga. This is important as they are situated within the Bhagirathi Eco-Sensitive Zone, a nearly 4,000-square-kilometre buffer that was established in 2012 to protect the river's last pristine stretch.

The unique antimicrobial qualities of Devdar trees (from terpenoids, essential oils, and phenolic compounds found in the wood, bark and resin) fundamentally influence river ecology. As leaf litter and organic material enter mountain streams, they inhibit harmful bacteria while promoting the development of beneficial microbial communities, resulting in a naturally regulated, biologically active river system, especially in the upper reaches where industrial pollution remains limited.

These forests also maintain cooler microclimates, regulate water temperature in snowmelt-fed streams, and help sustain dissolved oxygen levels essential for aquatic life.

In the ecologically vulnerable Himalayas, disaster resilience must take precedence over disaster-prone projects and infrastructure

Deforestation would trigger warmer air and water, reduced oxygen, diminished bacteriophage activity, and an irreversible shift in the river's ecological character. This is why the Supreme Court, in its judgment, discouraged the felling of precious deodar trees in the area.

However, recent proposals by forest departments suggest "translocating" these ancient trees – an ecologically flawed notion. Uprooting centuries-old Devdars is tantamount to cutting them down. Their complex, site-specific ecological functions cannot be replicated elsewhere, and no suitable alternative terrain exists. Their preservation is not a matter of convenience but of environmental necessity.

A project built on falsehoods

The Char Dham Road Widening Project has been built on falsehoods. Its execution is a case study in how not to build in the Himalayas. This is evident in the bypassing of a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment, through project fragmentation, the adoption of an incorrect road-width standard contrary to its own mandate, the destabilising practice of vertical hill-cutting on fragile slopes, and the indiscriminate dumping of muck in vital water sources.

These are the consequences – along the nearly 700 kilometres of widened road, over 800 active landslide zones have emerged. Key border routes have been closed for extended periods, and the government's touted "all-weather road" is now derisively called an "all-*paidal* (all-pedal") road by locals.

To prevent such damage, the government needed only to regulate road width and prioritise stability over excessive widening, as warned by experts. Yet the Union Minister's recently proposed remedy, which is belated and inadequate – to retrofit slopes with Swiss fibreglass bolts and wire mesh – comes eight years after large-scale destabilisation.

The fundamental failure lies not in the absence of reinforcement, but in the original engineering decision to execute excessively steep hill cuts. Cutting slopes at angles that violate the natural "angle of repose" of Himalayan geology is a profound act of either ignorance or hubris. No amount of anchoring later can rectify this intrinsic flaw that was engineered into the landscape from the outset.

The Union Government's current developmental initiatives directly contradict a key policy framework: the National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE). Approved in 2014 under the National Action Plan on Climate Change, the NMSHE was established to protect the fragile Himalayan ecology. Its mandate includes monitoring glaciers and biodiversity, mitigating natural hazards and securing sustainable livelihoods for Himalayan communities. It was designed to build scientific capacity and guide policymakers toward genuinely sustainable development.

The government, therefore, owes the nation a clear explanation on why its actions violate its own flagship environmental policy. When *Devbhoomi* (the land of the gods) is turned against the *Devdaaru*, which are believed to be abodes of the deities, this is not development. It is a profound betrayal of traditional culture, ecology and scientific reason. Better sense must prevail, and those who enable these prejudiced, mindless, and disaster-prone projects must be held accountable.

The vulnerability of the Himalayan – one of the world's most climate-sensitive landscapes – is escalating. The current snowless winters and raging forest fires in this area resonate with the conclusion of a recent study, revealing that high-altitude areas have been warming 50% faster than the global average since 1950. This accelerated warming means extreme weather events such as the Dharali disaster will become increasingly frequent and severe.

If border security, connectivity and national interest are our true objectives, then disaster resilience must take precedence over disaster-prone infrastructure. This is not a matter of ideology; it is a scientific, ecological, and economic necessity.

The primary catalyst for disasters is unsafe land use: cutting into unstable slopes for wide highways, drilling massive tunnels without adequate geological surveys, and constructing large-scale hydropower projects. These activities have been repeatedly flagged by the National Green Tribunal and other bodies. Crucially, the clearance of deodar forests removes the natural anchors that bind fragile soils, directly accelerating erosion and amplifying the risk of landslides and floods.

While this development provides the fuse, climate change acts as a powerful "risk multiplier." It intensifies the threat by creating erratic rainfall patterns, supercharging weather events and accelerating glacial melt. This leads to a dangerous "water peak phase" of increased run-off and catastrophic flash floods, which, once the glaciers have fully retreated, inevitably gives way to a prolonged phase of water scarcity and drought.

These physical pressures are compounded by unsustainable human behaviours, including unregulated tourism, unchecked vehicular traffic in fragile zones, and the absence of carrying capacity assessments or functional solid waste management plans. These symptoms point to deeper, systemic governance failures: a persistent prioritisation of short-term, economic gains over long-term disaster resilience, and a chronic inability to plan and implement genuine, science-based sustainable development policies.

The subcontinent's foundation

This ground reality solidifies the axiom that "without the Himalayas, there is no India." The range is more than just a geographical entity; it is the very foundation of the subcontinent's existence. The Himalayas have shaped India into a fertile and habitable land, while also forging a syncretic cultural identity as enduring and majestic as the mountains themselves. The continuing sequence of disasters in the Himalayas is a non-negotiable lesson in earth system science and a loud reminder that India exists because of the Himalaya.

BRICS India summit needs a green and resilient agenda



Manjeev Singh Puri

is Distinguished Fellow, TERI, and former Lead Negotiator for India at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)



Shailly Kedia

is Senior Fellow, TERI, and Curator, World Sustainable Development Summit

The next BRICS Summit will be held in India this year. Having hosted the G-20 (2023), infrastructure and organisational processes are in place, but India must quickly hone in on the Summit's focus. This should obviously resonate with India and BRICS, but critically be an issue that is of vital importance for the Global South.

Given its vastly increased vulnerabilities to climate change, resilience is a top priority for the South, and also underscores India's and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's global leadership on an inclusive green agenda.

Need for a stabilising force

In the Trump polar world, collaborative multilateralism is under immense stress, with climate change being particularly singled out by the United States and being called a hoax along with a visible push for more fossil fuel use. The Donald Trump administration has said that it will withdraw the U.S. from 66 international organisations, which includes the India-helmed International Solar Alliance. In fact, the U.S. stayed away from the COP30 in Belém, Brazil, in November 2025 – something that possibly ensured a continuation of the COP process. With the Europeans, who for long positioned themselves as climate champions, facing domestic climate fatigue and external national security priorities, there is a certain space for a stabilising force for collaborative action on sustainability and resilience. BRICS can endeavour towards this.

The acronym, BRICS, however, raises the hackles of President Trump who thinks that it is anti-American and an attempt to dislodge the dollar. Given the vast gamut of India-U.S. ties, including the imperative of an acceptable trade deal, staying clear of massive tariffs relating to Russian oil imports and ensuring a certain presidential happiness in Washington DC will certainly need a certain adroitness on the part of India at the BRICS Summit. Such diplomatic capacity was on display during the G-20 Summit in Delhi that saw a successful balancing of global geopolitics with Indian interests, including protecting its strategic autonomy through multi-alignment and leadership of the Global South.

It is a critical imperative for the Global South and under an expanded BRICS

Climate change is a common concern

At the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the old grouping of BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India, China) has been useful and will continue to have its role but a larger grouping of major developing country players may add greater heft. This was seen in Belém to ensure that the handling of fossil fuels did not stymie development imperatives of developing countries. Climate impacts, while varying in form and intensity, are a common concern across BRICS, ranging from risks to infrastructure, health, livelihoods and ecosystems arising from permafrost thaw, pressures on the Amazon and the Himalayas, and growing vulnerabilities in coastal and riverine regions. It is in their own interest to collectively advance a stronger international agenda on adaptation, resilience, equity and sustainable development.

This role is further reinforced by several BRICS members having shouldered responsibility for steering the global climate process after the Paris Agreement came into force. Brazil, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have presided over climate conferences in the post-COVID-19 pandemic period, helping safeguard momentum on climate action. A BRICS act would also be useful on a unilateral side-stepping of UNFCCC principles such as the European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism. An opening of a broader climate debate, including trade, was initiated at Belém.

A major outcome of the July 2025 BRICS Summit in Rio de Janeiro was BRICS Leaders' Framework Declaration on Climate Finance, a matter where India has been strong in articulating the demands of the Global South.

With finance being the key enabler for climate action, there is a need to include the World Bank and International Monetary Fund chiefs in the BRICS Summit. It is not the time not to treat them as "theirs (G-7 or G-20's)" and not just confine BRICS to the New Development Bank. Any global push on climate finance without them is hardly possible, given the U.S.'s antipathy to climate change – a fact also reflected in how their corporates and private monies are reacting, including pulling back from Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG(requirements and even 'green' bonds and other funds.

BRICS is now about Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, and the UAE, together comprising half of the global population, around 40% of global GDP, and around 26% of global trade. Its voice and heft are considerable.

A chance for Indian to drive change

As the helmsman of BRICS this year, India is in a pivotal position to push for collaborative global action, at least as among much of the world that will join, on resilience and an inclusive green agenda. This will be in its interest as well as a critical imperative for the Global South.

Moreover, geopolitically for India, a BRICS push keeps Chinese ambitions on global leadership on a green agenda in check. India's green agenda focusing on resilience at the BRICS Summit 2026 would also resonate with Ethiopia, the host of COP32 in 2027.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The signal from Greenland

The recent discussions surrounding a prospective "Greenland deal" have raised important questions about sovereignty, international law, and responsible global diplomacy. While strategic cooperation in the Arctic is understandable, given emerging security and climate challenges, any discourse that appears to treat Greenland as a negotiable asset risks undermining the foundational principles of territorial integrity. The Greenland debate serves as a reminder that global leadership must be exercised through lawful diplomacy and mutual respect.

C.R. Rajesh,
Bengaluru

Spotlight on the Governor

Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi's 'walk out' from the State Assembly is yet another case of his acrimony toward the Tamil Nadu government.
Also, issuing a mere press release from the Lok Bhavan cannot be a proven document to justify his claims of his charges against the government, warranting his walk-out. Mr. Ravi's actions show a growing pattern under the current BJP-led government that uses the office of the Governor in the non-ruling BJP States as an instrument of interference.

R. Sivakumar,
Chennai

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address and the full name.

Does Trump's Greenland plan signal the end of NATO?



C. Raja Mohan

Journalist, academic, and foreign policy analyst



T.G. Suresh

Associate Professor, Centre of Political Studies, JNU

PARLEY

Days after the U.S.'s military strike on Venezuela and its capture of sitting President Nicolas Maduro, U.S. President Donald Trump intensified his push for Greenland, calling it an "absolute necessity" for U.S. national security. On January 17, he said he would impose a 10% tariff on eight European countries opposing the U.S.'s stance; he has since cancelled it. Mr. Trump's proposal reflects imperial undertones and tests the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)'s Article 5 pledge (an armed attack against one NATO member shall be considered an attack against them all). Does Mr. Trump's Greenland plan signal the end of NATO? C. Raja Mohan and T.G. Suresh discuss the question in a conversation moderated by **Smriti Sudesh**. Edited excerpts:

Mr. Trump wants to acquire Greenland, an autonomous territory of Denmark, which is a NATO member. How do we square this with NATO's foundational pledge?

C. Raja Mohan: I don't think Mr. Trump has time for niceties – that there is a 77-year-old alliance with a shared commitment. For him, this is the new unilateralism of the U.S. There is no real respect for international law. He is a president who is unconstrained at home and feels he can do whatever he likes abroad as well. And since the rest of the world depends on the U.S. for so much, barring China, no other major power has challenged his policies. There is some gap between his demand for Greenland and Denmark's rejection of the demand. In between these extremes, there are ways in which he could get his way and declare a victory, while also saving face for Denmark in some form.

Why does he want Greenland?

T.G. Suresh: Besides Mr. Trump's well-stated objective that Greenland is an absolute necessity for American security, other factors are often cited, including control over shipping routes and access to minerals in Greenland. The first is the Northern Sea Route, which connects the Atlantic and the Pacific via the Russian-Norwegian frontiers and runs along the Siberian coastline. The second is the Northwest Passage, a long-envisioned sea route running from the Atlantic through the Canadian Arctic Archipelago. If influencing shipping routes is the real concern, the question is, why does the U.S. need Greenland at all, since the Northwest Passage runs through Canadian waters and ultimately connects to the Chukchi Sea?

There is already a well-developed political and institutional arrangement governing the Arctic geography. It is therefore not clear why Mr. Trump is focusing specifically on Greenland.

The bedrock of NATO is the U.S.'s security guarantees. If the U.S. itself threatens to violate NATO's sovereignty, what message does it send to smaller NATO members which are suspicious of Russia's actions?



Sunset at Nuuk, Greenland. AFP

CRM: It sends a troubling message to most members of NATO. This is because they have long lived under the assumption that, whatever happens, the U.S. will remain their most reliable security partner. Despite all the problems over the last eight years, NATO has held together, largely because of the U.S.'s political commitment to European security.

However, over the last decade, especially during Mr. Trump's first term, this assumption has been questioned. He has openly challenged the relevance of NATO, arguing that the alliance is "ripping off" the U.S. and that European allies are a burden on American security. Still, during his first term, his administration was broader-based, and the traditional foreign policy establishment continued to shape policy.

This time, that constraint no longer exists. The rise of the MAGA (Make America Great Again) movement reflects a world view that sees alliances as largely useless and believes that the U.S. should look after itself. This camp also questions the long-held assumption that the U.S. must act as the gendarme of the global order, or that American leadership is essential for maintaining global security.

That also leads to the conclusion that the U.S.'s interests lie primarily in the western hemisphere, and that Washington must therefore focus on securing its own immediate strategic space. From Mr. Trump's perspective, gaining control over Greenland appears to be part of a broader effort to assert dominance over that hemisphere. But his position goes even further. He is not merely seeking influence or a security role; he wants sovereign control over Greenland. This is a wake-up call for Europeans.

At the same time, Mr. Trump has shown a willingness to negotiate directly with Russia on the Ukraine war, often without European leaders at the table. For him and his political base, the idea that NATO is a sacred obligation that the U.S. must bear no longer holds. The challenge for Europe, then, is on finding ways of coming to terms with this new reality.

> The U.S. is needed not only because of its military capabilities, but also because Europe has had the luxury of neglecting its own defence for decades. Also, without the U.S., the divisions in Europe will sharpen further.
> C. RAJA MOHAN

With the U.S., Russia, and China all increasing their footprint, how do you view the Arctic's rising prominence?

TGS: Across the world, major powers are competing to secure access to resources because prevailing development models have become increasingly energy-intensive. The Arctic has therefore emerged as a region of growing interest not only for Arctic states, but also non-Arctic ones. Activity is increasing around both shipping routes and energy and resource extraction. Ideally, global discussions on the Arctic should focus on melting ice and environmental consequences. Instead, we are seeing intense competition among major powers to influence or gain access to the region. This raises an important question: what has the U.S. actually done in this regard? Russia has invested in Arctic development for centuries, building extensive port infrastructure along the Arctic coastline and maintaining a large fleet of icebreakers, many of them nuclear-powered. But neither the White House nor major American firms, particularly energy companies, appear willing to make long-term fixed investments. This is why I do not foresee a major disruption of existing Arctic arrangements, which are largely led by Russia in partnership with Denmark, Canada, and other Arctic states.

Russia is watching Mr. Trump's Greenland ambitions closely. While a U.S. move that weakens NATO would suit Moscow, stronger American presence in the Arctic would mean long-term strategic competition. How do you assess this Russian dilemma?

CRM: Russian is a major power in many ways. It is arguably the most important power in the Arctic Sea. What happens to Russia's position will depend to a great extent on the nature of the relationship between Russia and the U.S. In fact, in the conversations on Ukraine peace between the U.S. and Russia, one of the key points under discussion has been collaboration in the Arctic. Mr. Trump has repeatedly said that he wants a decent relationship with Russia and that both countries can jointly exploit natural resources. Much therefore depends on whether Russia and the U.S. can reach a deal on Ukraine and move towards a different kind of relationship. If that happens, they could work together in the Arctic. But if they do not, and Mr. Trump gains control over Greenland, the contest between the two is likely to be quite vigorous.

From oil in Venezuela to rare earths in Greenland, is the U.S. turning to force and coercion as a tool for resource extraction?

TGS: Mr. Trump shows a preference for an economical approach to solving problems. Even when he talks about places like Venezuela, there is a visible aversion to putting boots on the ground or taking risks that come with major, disruptive interventions. Two things stand out clearly. First, his personal approach: he wants quick outcomes, what he calls a "deal", achieved in an economical time frame. Second, even if the U.S. were to attempt to control or establish sovereign ownership over Greenland, it would be extremely difficult. History shows that in regions stretching from the North Atlantic to the coldest parts of the Arctic, it is very hard to override the will of the people. Mr. Trump's economical, deal-oriented approach is likely to remain the final determining factor.

As Europe boosts defence spending amid the Ukraine war and its ongoing reliance on the U.S., Mr. Trump appears to be distancing America from NATO. How do you assess this?

CRM: This is like a situation where your protector becomes your tormentor. Mr. Trump's threat of leaving NATO and its potential consequences have made Europe nervous. Faced with what Europe sees as grave existential risks, it is willing to please and accommodate Mr. Trump. This also explains Europe's approach to the Greenland issue: most of its leaders would prefer to persuade Denmark to find a way that allows Mr. Trump to gain control over Greenland, while at the same time urging the U.S. to leave Denmark a fig leaf – something that avoids an outcome that appears overtly humiliating.

Can NATO survive Mr. Trump's second term?

CRM: No. That is precisely why European leaders want to keep the Americans in. The U.S. is needed not only because of its military capabilities, but also because Europe has had the luxury of neglecting its own defence for decades. Even if European governments now follow through on their promises to spend massively on defence, it will take time. Also, Europe's history shows that it is internally divided. Without the U.S., there is a real danger that these divisions will sharpen further.

To listen to the full interview
Scan the code or go to the link
www.thehindu.com

NOTEBOOK

The mystery of Court 10

Court 10 in the Supreme Court is a pause — an oasis of silence which has nothing to offer to the scribe, and easily overlooked

Krishnadas Rajagopal

Deep in the recesses of the Supreme Court is Court 10. Unlike its sibling courtrooms, which are overflowing beehives of disputes settled, won, lost, or adjourned, Court 10 is empty and closed. It has not witnessed objects being flung at the Bench or people nodding off to scholarly arguments from the Bar. If Court 10 could speak, it may have quoted Pierre-Albert Birot's 'The world pulse beats beyond my door'.

As court reporters, our first task of the day – or the previous night, if one is conscientious – is to check the causelist or the list of cases for the day. There are long rows of cases to watch and mark – some of them high-stakes. But they are all listed before the Benches of the other 16 courts; Court 10 is a white space on the computer screen. For a reporter struggling to make decisions about which cases to sit through and cover, Court 10 provides a much-needed break in the flow.

I have made some attempts to solve the closed-door mystery of Court 10, but only managed to draw hems and haws. A few looked at me blank-faced. Some gave me quizzical smiles. A few even turned combative: "Don't you have anything better to do today?" One of them dithered: "Never thought about it. Have to find out. Let you know". And off they all went, with not a moment to spare.

A kind soul invited me to come look inside Court 10. But I didn't make the appointment, having convinced myself that I was far too busy for trifles.

A 'highly-placed source', as they are often called in reporting terms, said a pillar stands awkwardly inside the court room, making it difficult to function there.

Google, my next best source, informed me that Kerala High Court had "renamed" one of its court rooms 12A. Then, Google did a Shashi Tharoor on me, informing me that the fear of number 13 is called 'triskaidekaphobia'.

Technology has changed our practice of court reporting. Hearings can be watched in isolation, in the comfort of personal spaces. Gone are the days when reporters would dash from one court room to another to catch the important bits of a hearing. I have outrun stalwarts in crowded court corridors, only to realise, once inside a courtroom, that the 'important case' was happening next door.

I would have probably cracked the Court 10 mystery in those days, pacing up and down before its closed doors. I might have played Sherlock, hunting for clues on my knees; or a Scout sneaking along the shuttered Radley home in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Even Mr. Satterthwaite's method in Agatha Christie's *The Man from the Sea* could have worked – opening the door, only to find a beautiful, sad woman dreamily gazing at the deep blue. But none of that is possible. For one, there are no windows in Court 10, shuttered or otherwise.

The Supreme Court generates news in rapid succession. Amid the frenzy, Court 10 is a pause – an oasis of silence which has nothing to offer to the scribe, and easily overlooked. There are other such spaces too. The right wing of the court has a broad balcony lined with neo-classical pillars overlooking a lawn. It is bordered with beds of flowers. Here, a lawyer can be seen munching a sandwich or a court staffer can be seen taking an afternoon stroll. Court reporters are now distanced from this balcony because of video conferencing.

Postscript: Yesterday's causelist showed that Justice Vipul M. Pancholi would preside in Court 10. "Great," I said to myself. "Just when I thought I had something. The Supreme Court has a way of doing this to you." Later in the day, I logged into the Court's display board and looked at Court 10. I was not surprised. It read: 'Not in session'.

krishnadas.rajagopal@thehindu.co.in

PICTURE OF THE WEEK

Taking the lead



Children who are part of road safety patrol take part in a Republic Day parade rehearsal at the Shivaji Park ground in Mumbai. EMMANUAL YOGINI

FROM THE ARCHIVES The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 23, 1976

Centre studying take-over of foreign drug firms

New Delhi, Jan. 22: Take-over of multinational companies producing pharmaceuticals as recommended by the Hathi Commission report is "under the consideration of the Government", the Minister of Chemical and Fertilizers, Mr. P.C. Sethi, told the Lok Sabha to-day. The question, he said, was a "complex" one. Mr. Sethi was replying to a discussion on the report raised by CPI members Ramavtar Shastri and Mr. Hiren Mukherjee.

A powerful plea for early implementation of the Hathi Commission report was made by several members.

Initiating the discussion on the report Mr. Ramavatar Shastri criticised the activities of multi-nationals in the industry and called for their takeover.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JANUARY 23, 1926

Yet another "cure"

In "The Daily Herald" received by this mail we read: Dr. Smallpage, a young Sydney practitioner, claims to have found an effective serum for the cure of consumption.

He has offered to hand over to the Australian people the formula for the preparation of the serum and to instruct medical men in its use for the treatment of poor people free of charge.

From Page One

Tension rises after Meitei man's killing

"The killing has taken place at a time when civil society groups and various sections of the public are making continuous efforts to restore peace and normal life in Manipur," COCOMI convenor Y.K. Dhiren said. "It is deplorable that the presence of more than 60,000 security personnel in Manipur to deal with the unrest has not helped stop the activities of armed militants," he said.

Earlier, Singh's body was recovered and sent for post-mortem. His wife has told the police that four men came in a black SUV looking for her husband. "All of them were masked. While two stayed in the car, the other two entered the house. One of them was carrying a weapon," the official said, adding the victim's wife was not able to recognise them yet.

She told the police that no one except the village chief knew about the arrival of her husband.

Karnataka Governor cuts short speech

Mr. Gehlot's walkout comes just two days after similar actions by Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi and Kerala Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar.

It is understood that Mr. Gehlot declined to read the full address as it contained 10 paragraphs critical of the Narendra Modi-led government, accusing the Centre of "injustice" to Karnataka in tax devolution and Centrally sponsored schemes.

The speech sought repeal of the Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission-Gramin Act and restoration of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act.

Targeting the BJP, Congress general secretary (Organisation) K.C. Venugopal said governors were "Super CMs" who act illegitimately after getting "blessings from the top". "PM Modi fancies himself as the Viceroy of India - who uses governors to remote control state governments from Delhi. Much to his disappointment, there is the Constitution of India under which elected State governments run as per the will of the people," Mr. Venugopal said in a post on X.

Is SIR about illegal immigration, asks SC

Senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, for the EC, earlier argued that the poll body was authorised to verify citizenship under Article 324 of the Constitution. Article 326 made citizenship mandatory for a person to vote. He referred to the amendments made in the Citizenship Act in 2003, which made conditions for citizenship more stringent, requiring both parents of electors to be Indian citizens. The concept of 'illegal immigrant' was introduced in the 2003 amendment. He agreed that the reason of "illegal migration" could have been expressed "more clearly, more happily".

Justice Bagchi said by 'migration' in the SIR notification, the poll body seemed to have been referring more to inter-State migration and not cross-border illegal movement.

Mr. Dwivedi responded that the term 'migration' would subsume both inter-State and trans-border movement. "We could have said 'inter-State migration', 'intra-State migration', 'cross-border migration' or use the one expression 'migration' to mean it all," he said.

The judge, however, said there was a clear distinction between migration and illegal immigration.

"Migration, when it is inter-State, is always lawful. The word 'migration' means 'lawful migration'. When you talk of inter-country migrations, it may amount to illegal immigration. In India, citizens are entitled to move to any part of the country. It is a fundamental freedom. The aspect of illegality comes only in the case of immigration. Your SIR order does not eloquently state that your SIR is also about illegal immigration... When it is migration simpliciter, we will interpret it as inter-State migration," Justice Bagchi observed.

The Bench asked "what was really in the mind" of the poll panel when it started the SIR exercise.

India absent as Trump rolls out Board of Peace

The U.S. President's attempt to create momentum for a project to map out a future of the war-torn Gaza Strip has been overshadowed this week, first by his threats to seize Greenland, then by a dramatic retreat from that push.

The countries that have accepted Mr. Trump's invitation to join the board are Argentina, Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Bulgaria, Egypt, Hungary, Indonesia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Morocco, Mongolia, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkiye, the United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam.

Mr. Trump has spoken about the board replacing some UN functions and perhaps even making that entire body obsolete one day. But he was more conciliatory in his remarks on the sidelines of the forum in the Swiss alps. "We'll do it in conjunction with the United Nations," Mr. Trump said, even as he denigrated the UN for doing what he said wasn't enough to calm some conflicts around the globe.

10 soldiers killed, 11 injured as Army vehicle falls into gorge

The bulletproof truck plunged into a 200-ft-deep gorge at Khanni top in Doda district of J&K; Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Minister express grief, wish speedy recovery to those injured

Press Trust of India
BHADERWAH/JAMMU



People carry the injured to a helicopter for treatment at Udhampur, after an Army vehicle met with an accident in the Khani Top area of Bhaderwah in Doda on Thursday. ANI VIDEO GRAB

An Army truck skidded off the road and plunged into a deep gorge in Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, killing 10 soldiers and injuring 11, officials said.

The accident took place at the 9,000-foot-high Khanni top along the Bhaderwah-Chamba inter-State road around noon when the driver of the bulletproof Army vehicle, Casspir, heading towards a high-altitude post lost control and the vehicle plunged into a 200-ft-deep gorge.

A joint rescue operation by the Army and the police was immediately launched and four of the soldiers were found dead on the spot. Others were rescued in an injured condition, the officials said.

The Army vehicle was badly mangled. Later, six more soldiers died from injuries.

One of the injured is under observation in Bhaderwah sub-district hospital while 10 soldiers were airlifted to Udhampur command hospital for specialised treatment.

"We have lost 10 soldiers with 11 others injured in the unfortunate accident involving an Army vehicle," Additional Deputy Commissioner, Bhaderwah, Sumit Kumar Bhutyal said.

Condolences

Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed grief over the accident. The Chief Minister conveyed heartfelt condolences to the families of the soldiers who lost their lives and wished a speedy recovery to those injured. Mr. Abdullah also lauded the swift rescue and evacuation efforts.

Mr. Sinha, in a post on X, said he was "deeply saddened at the loss of lives of 10 of our brave Indian Army soldiers in an unfortunate road accident in Doda. We will always remember the outstanding service and supreme sacrifice of our brave soldiers." He expressed his deepest condolences to the grieving families.

"In this moment of profound sorrow, the entire nation stands united with the bereaved families in solidarity and support. 10 injured soldiers have been airlifted to the hospital," the L-G said, adding he had directed the senior officials to ensure the best possible treatment.

"Praying for their speedy recovery," he further said.

Top Maoist leader among 15 members killed in Jharkhand

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

Central Committee Member Anal alias Toofan Da carried a bounty of ₹2.17 crore on his head

Anal, alias Patriam Manjhi, alias Toofan Da, senior leader and central committee member of the banned Communist Party of India (Maoist), was among the 15 Maoists killed during a special operation in the Saranda forest area of West Singhbhum district in Jharkhand on Thursday.

The operation named "Medhaburu" is being jointly conducted by security forces by deploying 209 COBRA, Jharkhand Jaguar, Central Reserve Police Force, and district police personnel in multiple encounters with the armed squad of Maoist leaders.

During a media interaction in Ranchi, Inspector-General (Operations) Michaelraj S. said around 6.30 a.m., the Maoists fired indiscriminately at the police and the security forces retaliated in self-defence.

Following the encounter, 15 bodies and a large quantity of weapons have been recovered.

"Preliminary investigations have identified 11 of the 15 deceased Maoists, including Anal who was not only carrying a reward of ₹1 crore in Jharkhand but ₹1.2 crore in Odisha and ₹15 lakh by the National Investigation Agency. There were a total of 149 cases lodged against him in Giridih district of Jharkhand," Mr. Michaelraj said.

He said that since 2022, Anal had been responsible for violent acts carried out by Maoists in the Saranda forest area of Kolhan.

Reacting to the operation, Union Home Minister Amit Shah wrote on X, "The ongoing joint operation by CRPF and Jharkhand Police has achieved a major success in the campaign to make the region free of Naxals through encounters, with the neutralization of the notorious wanted Maoist CCM 'Anal alias Patiram Manjhi' worth ₹1 crore." He further said, "We are committed to eradicate Naxalism, which has been synonymous with fear and terror for decades, before March 31, 2026."

SC records M.P. govt.'s assurance of peaceful worship at disputed site

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



Devotees make preparations for puja at the disputed Bhojshala complex on the eve of Basant Panchami in Dhar on Thursday. PTI

The Supreme Court on Thursday recorded an assurance given by Madhya Pradesh that arrangements would be made at the Bhojshala Saraswati temple-cum-Maulana Kamal Maula mosque in Dhar district for the harmonious conduct of worship by both Muslims, who come to perform *namaaz*, and Hindus, who want to offer prayers on the occasion of Basant Panchami on Friday.

"We appeal to all stakeholders, including the members of both communities, to observe mutual respect and tolerance and cooperate with the State and district Administration in maintaining law and order," a Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant observed.

The site has become a contentious focal point after the State High Court had issued interim directions for a scientific examination of the Bhojshala Saraswati Temple-cum-Maulana Kamal Maula mosque.

Appearing for Madhya Pradesh, Additional Solicitor General K.M. Nataraj suggested that exclusive and separate space would be made to the members of the Muslim community on January 23 to offer *namaaz* between 1 and 3 p.m. within the compound itself. Similarly, a separate space would be made available to the Hindu community to hold the traditional ceremonies on the occasion of Basant Panchami.

Senior advocate Salman Khurshid, appearing for the petitioner side, accepted Mr. Nataraj's proposal and agreed to provide to the Dhar District Magistrate the approximate number of persons belonging to Muslim community who would come for *namaaz* on January 23 between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.

Odisha police detain nine over attack on pastor in Dhenkanal

Satyasundar Barik
BHUBANESWAR

Delay in registering FIR and investigation reflects government's patronage of hate, says Congress

The Odisha police detained nine persons in connection with the alleged assault on a pastor in Dhenkanal district on Wednesday.

The attack, which occurred in the first week of January, was taken up for investigation after the victim's wife lodged a complaint with the Dhenkanal Superintendent of Police (SP), citing inaction at the local level. The pastor has been identified as Bipin Bihari Naik. "We have detained nine persons in connection with the attack on pastor. The probe is on," Abhinav Sonkar, Dhenkanal SP, said.

Mr. Sonkar, however, said the primary investigation revealed that the pastor was not made to consume cow dung or drain water, as reported by a section of the media. "We have also received doctors' report that no grievous injury has been caused to pastor," he said. The miscreants allegedly paraded the pastor after garlanding him with slippers in front of the public before handing him over to Parjang police. Local residents said that he was involved in religious conversion.

"The brutal attack on Pastor Bipin Bihari Naik in Odisha's Parjang, forcing him to eat cow dung and chant slogans is a shameful assault on our Constitution and freedom of religion. Delay in registering FIR and investigation reflects BJP government's silence and patronage of hate. Such attacks poison India's plural fabric," Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee president Bhatka Charan Das said.

Interfaith couple hacked to death in Moradabad

The Hindu Bureau
LUCKNOW

A 27-year-old Muslim man and his 22-year-old Hindu girlfriend were hacked to death, allegedly by the woman's brothers, in Moradabad district of Uttar Pradesh, the police said on Thursday.

The deceased, Arman and Kajal, residents of Umri Sabzipur village, were in a relationship. Kajal's brothers were opposed to the relationship and had asked her to end it. Three days ago, both of them went missing.

Arman's father filed a missing person complaint. When the probe began, the police found that Kajal was also missing. During questioning, Kajal's brothers confessed to killing the couple. The accused then led the police to the spot where the bodies had been buried, and revealed that they had tied up the couple's hands and legs before hacking them to death.

Court acquits Sajjan Kumar in Janakpuri violence case

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Citing absence of credible evidence against him, a Delhi court on Thursday acquitted former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar in a case related to violence in Janakpuri area during the 1984 anti-Sikh riots that broke in several parts of the country following the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Special Judge Dig Vinay Singh of Rouse Avenue Court acquitted Mr. Kumar stating that the prosecution has not met its burden of proof against the accused beyond a reasonable doubt, which is essential for conviction in a criminal trial.

Questionnaire for first phase of Census notified

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI



Census officials conducting pre-test exercise for the Population Census 2027 in Uttar Pradesh in November 2025. R. V. MOORTHY

The Registrar-General and Census Commissioner of India (RG&CCI) on Thursday notified 33 questions that residents will have to answer in the first phase of Census 2027, which will be conducted between April 1 and September 30.

While the notification published on January 7, 2020 for Census 2021, which was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and never took off, had 31 questions, the current notification has 33. The fresh notification splits the combined question on the type of floor, wall and roof of the Census house into three distinct questions regarding the "predominant material used in the floor, wall and roof" of the house.

According to the government, this will be the first digital Census, the first to count caste and also the first where respondents will be able to self-enumerate through a yet-to-be announced portal.

Population Enumeration (PE), the second phase of Census 2027 where caste will be enumerated, will be done in February 2027. Questions are yet to be notified for this phase.

The notification by RG&CCI Mritunjay Kumar Narayan in the official Gazette said, "....that all the Census Officers may, within the limits of the local areas for which they have been respectively appointed, ask all such questions from all persons on the items enumerated below for collecting information through the houselisting and housing census schedule in connection with the Census of India 2027."

The questions are: building number (municipal or local authority or Census number); Census house number; predominant material of floor of the Census house; predominant material of wall of the Census house; predominant material of roof of the Census house; use of Census house; condition of the Census house; household number; total number of persons normally residing in the household; name of the head of the household; sex of the head of the household; whether the head of the household belongs to Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe/Other; ownership status; number of dwelling rooms exclusively in possession of the household; number of married couple(s) living in the household; main source of drinking water; availability of drinking water source; main source of lighting; access to latrine; type of latrine; waste water outlet; availability of bathing facility; availability of kitchen and LPG/PNG connection; main fuel used for cooking; radio/transistor; television; access to Internet; laptop/computer; telephone/mobile phone/smartphone; bicycle/scooter/motorcycle/moped; car/jeep/van; main cereal consumed in the household; and mobile number (for Census-related communications only).

The pre-test or the preparatory exercise for the first phase of Census was held from November 10-30, 2025 in select areas across the country.

Don't speak publicly on party internal matters: Cong. to Punjab unit

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress high command on Thursday warned its Punjab leaders against making public statements about the party's internal matters, and resorting to factionalism.

Party general secretary in charge of organisation K.C. Venugopal said these directions had been issued after three-hour meetings of Punjab leaders with the party's top brass, including Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and senior leader Rahul Gandhi.

"The party has given clear directions to all leaders to refrain from making public statements," Mr. Venugopal said. "Every individual has their own views, but these should be discussed only with the party leadership or on party forums. Going to the media and spreading issues on social media – such activities will not be tolerated by the party."

The announcement comes barely days after the Scheduled Caste leader and former Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi made a public statement that the party's top posts in the State, including that of the Pradesh Congress Committee chief and the Leader of the Opposition in the Punjab Assembly, were being occupied by forward caste leaders.

Mr. Venugopal said that the party's top brass had ascertained the views of every leader on the party's performance in Punjab.

On leadership change

"There is no question of any leadership change in Punjab," Mr. Venugopal said, while replying to a question.

Responding to a question on reports that around 30 leaders from Punjab had sought an appointment with the party high command, the Congress leader said there was nothing wrong with leaders meeting the party leadership in their individual capacities.

However, "groupism would not be tolerated at any cost", he said.

U.P. voters on draft SIR list may get to skip hearings

Voters can upload their documents on EC's website and send a representative with authorisation letter, which can include local booth-level agents; sources say an order might be issued this week

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

Voters in Uttar Pradesh whose names have appeared on the draft list following the special intensive revision (SIR) in the State, but have been issued notices to attend hearings might now have the option of skipping them and instead send their representatives, which can also include local booth-level agents appointed by parties.

A directive to this effect might be issued as soon as this week, sources in the State's Chief Electoral Office told *The Hindu* on Thursday.

The voters would have the option of uploading their documents on the EC's website and then send their representative with an authorisation letter for the hearing at the electoral registration officer (ERO) or assistant electoral registration officer (AERO) offices as required. "This has been done for convenience of voters as many would find it difficult to be present for hearings at short notices," a source said.



Big relief: People searching for their names on the draft voter list after the SIR of electoral rolls in Uttar Pradesh. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

The representatives sent by the voters can include their family members as well as the BLAs of any political party active in that particular area, they said.

The decision might be a corollary to similar directives given by the Supreme Court for West Bengal earlier this week.

Around 3.26 crore voters, out of the 12.55 crore electors, whose names have appeared in the post-SIR draft electoral list in Uttar Pradesh could be sent notices asking them to attend hearings.

Out of these 3.26 crore, approximately 1.04 crore are those who could not be mapped to the 2003 voter lists when the last SIR had been conducted, while 2.22 crore are those names which have "logical discrepancies" in mapping.

Those who could not be mapped to the 2003 lists would be required to appear before the AERO or ERO as specified in the notices and submit documents from among the 12 mandated by the Election Commission to prove their age, citizenship and place of residence. Those who received notices regarding logical discrepancies will also be required to attend the hearings and provide the requisite documents to clear the doubts.

Some of the logical discrepancies which are flagged are less than 15 years of age gap between parents and children, one parent being mapped with more than six children, less than 40 years of age gap with grandparents and a mismatch in names.

India's structural reforms generating strong investor confidence, says Vaishnaw

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw with leaders in the fields of AI, robotics, and cybersecurity in Davos on Thursday. ANI

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Thursday said India's reform momentum is firmly on track, driven by deep structural reforms personally steered by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, which have transformed the Indian economy into a high-growth, resilient, and globally trusted destination.

Speaking on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting at Davos, Mr. Vaishnaw said landmark reforms undertaken in the past few years, including labour code reforms, simplification of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), transformations in the energy sector, and the opening up of nuclear energy to the private sector were generating strong investor confidence across sectors.

He said a continuous reform process was under way across all sectors of the economy, adding that investors were enthused by the policy environment in India. He cited several instances, including IKEA announcing plans to double its investment and Qualcomm significantly expanding its workforce in India.

Highlighting India's macroeconomic fundamentals, he said India was today the fastest-growing major economy in the world, with a consistent growth trajectory of 6-8% projected over the next five years.

The combination of moderate inflation and high growth reflected the economic transformation achieved under Mr. Modi's leadership over the past decade, he said.

Noting that global perception of India at Davos had been overwhelmingly positive, with the country being widely regarded as a trusted nation demonstrating consistent economic growth, he said deliberations across panels reflected a broad consensus that India's emergence as the world's third-largest economy was now a matter of timing rather than possibility.

Court acquits Kejriwal for skipping ED summons in Delhi excise policy case

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Thursday acquitted Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in cases related to skipping summons issued by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the excise policy case.

Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Paras Dalal of the Rouse Avenue Court acquitted Mr. Kejriwal. A detailed order is awaited.

The agency, probing money laundering cases related to an alleged excise policy scam, had approached the court in February 2024, stating that Mr. Kejriwal, one of the accused in the matter, was not complying with its repeated summons for interrogation. The summons issued by the agency were against the law and politically motivated, Mr. Kejriwal has said.



Arvind Kejriwal

AAP leader's reaction

The AAP leader welcomed the court's verdict. "Truth alone triumphs," he said in a post on social media platform X. Senior AAP leader Manish Sisodia said that no matter how hard one tries to suppress the truth, it ultimately comes out.

Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh said, "The BJP's misdeeds will meet their end, and justice will prevail. Once again, the conspiracy to falsely implicate Arvind Kejriwal by misusing the ED and the CBI has been exposed. The court's order is a stinging rebuke to the Modi government."

The case stems from a complaint lodged by the Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena, who alleged irregularities in the framing and implementation of Delhi's excise policy in 2022.

ED director visits Kolkata days after Mamata's intervention during search

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

The Director of the Enforcement Directorate, Rahul Navin, was in Kolkata on Thursday, days after West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's intervention during searches at the Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC) owner's house and offices.

According to officials, Mr. Navin will visit the regional office of the ED in Salt Lake and will interact with the staff to take note of the ongoing cases in eastern India. He will also reportedly look into safety and security concerns of their staff.

I-PAC searches

His visit comes against the backdrop of the ED searches at I-PAC co-founder Pratik Jain's house and I-PAC offices in Kolkata.

The ED was reportedly conducting searches in relation to a coal scam in Bengal. However, Ms. Banerjee claimed that the searches were "politically motivated to steal party data", adding that crucial data relating to the party's strategy documents and candidate lists were taken away by the ED. She was seen leaving the premises with a green file in her hand, which she did not carry while entering the area. On Wednesday, ED officials attached ₹57.78 crore worth immovable property belonging to Trinamool Congress MLA Jiban Krishna Saha in connection with the school recruitment scam. The total attachment in the scam cases stands at ₹698 crore.

Centre paving way for bonded labour by scrapping MGNREGA, says Kharge

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday accused the Union government of paving the way for "bonded labour" by scrapping the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). Addressing a national convention of MGNREGA workers here, he and Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi pledged to "fight to the finish" until the UPA-era scheme was restored in its original form.

The convention was organised by Rachnatmak Congress, a new party department meant to act as a bridge with civil society, headed by former MP Sandeep Dikshit, and supported by the NREGA Sangarsh Morcha, a coalition of NGOs and unions working with MGNREGA workers.

Drawing parallels with the 13-month farmers' agitation, both leaders urged workers to prepare for a long struggle. Mr. Kharge said that by withdrawing MGNREGA, the Centre had left workers at the mercy of the wealthy, forcing them to accept "whatever meagre amount" is offered for their work. "They are trying to bring back slavery," he said.



Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge at a convention of MGNREGA workers on Thursday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Economic exclusion

He warned that economic exclusion could be a step towards curtailing democratic rights. "Tomorrow a day will come when only those who have money, who are income tax payers, who own land, who have degrees and big industries, will be given the right to vote. Those who don't contribute to the country, who only live off guarantees and work, they will be kept that way, that's their agenda," he said.

Scrapping MGNREGA was an attack on the Constitution, Mr. Gandhi said, similar to the government's actions during demonetisation, the GST rollout, and the introduction of the "three black farm laws". Stressing the rights-based nature of MGNREGA, he said the law was rooted in "empowering the poor" and "respect".

It strengthened Panchayati Raj institutions, he said, because panchayats decided the type of work undertaken. He argued that the BJP government was now dismantling that right, just as it had earlier attempted with the farm laws. He predicted that the new law would also be withdrawn, "I know these people, they are cowards. When faced with united resistance, they simply cave in," he said, calling for unity among the poor to restore MGNREGA.

Criticising the centralised framework of the new Viksit Bharat–Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act, he said it handed the Union government control over fund allocation, enabling discrimination against Opposition-ruled States and favouring BJP-ruled ones.

Mr. Gandhi said the government wanted to take India back to pre-Independence days, when "one person would decide the destiny of the entire nation". Accusing the Centre of attempting to "undermine and dismantle democracy and the Constitution," he said: "They want to destroy the concept, idea and structure of modern India."

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Nagar Nigam Bharatpur invites Single-stage Two Part (envelope) Online unconditional open competitive bids through www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in from eligible bidders Nagar Nigam Bharatpur and "A" & "AA" Class in any Central/state/ Government/semi Government organization/Contractors for the work. The document can be seen and downloaded from the website **http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in** and **www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in**. Bids are to be submitted online in electronic format as per schedule given below:

Number of Work	04 Work
Cost of Work	1806.72 Lacs.
Bid Download start date and Time from Website http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in	From 21.01.2026, at 10.00 AM to 12.02.2026 upto 06.00 PM
Bid Upload end date and time on Website http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in	12.02.2026 Upto 06.00 PM
Pre-bid Meeting Date and Time	28.01.2026 at 11.00 AM Venue:- The Municipal Corporation Bharatpur
Submission of Document Physically/Tender Cost/RISL Fee UTR Slip	13.02.2026 upto 02.00 PM
Technical Bid Opening Date and Time	13.02.2026 at 3.00 PM
Financial Bid Opening Date and Time	Will be intimated later to technically responsive bidders.
UBN is: 1. DLB2526WLOB31401 3. DLB2526WSOB31403	2. DLB2526WSOB31402 4. DLB2526WSOB31404

Raj.Samwad/C/25/18089 Commissioner

Bureau of Investment Promotion
Udyog Bhawan, Tilak Marg, Jaipur
BIP/CGM (F&A)/ Date :- 12/01/2026
Notice Inviting Bid
Bids for procurement of Gift Hampers for Bureau of Investment Promotion, Jaipur (a Government of Rajasthan undertaking) are invited from interested bidders up to 1:00 PM of 06.02.2026. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portals: **(http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in)** and **(http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in)** of the state.
UBN No. : BIP2526GLOB00024
Raj.Samwad/C/25/18134 Commissioner (Inv. & NRIs)

TNPL TAMIL NADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED
Kagithapuram - 639 136, Karur Dist. Tamil Nadu.
Kagitha Nagar, Mondipatti - 621 306, Trichy Dist, Tamil Nadu.
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

Tender No.	Description of work	Due date
252613 007013	Multi-colour Laminated Wrapper Reels of various sizes (Base Paper 100 GSM with 15 Micron BOPP) for Unit - I.	04.02.2026
252613 007064	Copy Crown / New Spectrum / Perfecto Laminated Wrapper Reels of various sizes (100 GSM Base Paper with 15 Micron BOPP) for Unit - I.	06.02.2026
252613 007065	Hot Melt Gum - 214 for Copier Reel Packing for Unit - I.	04.02.2026
252613 007067	180 GSM Kraft Reels of various sizes for Unit - I & II.	04.02.2026
252613 007086	Procurement of Wet End Liquid OBA for PM#1, 2 & 3	06.02.2026
252633 000411	Imported Limestone for Cement Plant	06.02.2026
252633 000419	Procurement of White Clay	05.02.2026
252633 000424	Procurement of PP Bag for Power Bond Cement Packing (SIZE : 29.3" X 20.5")	06.02.2026
252633 000425	Procurement of PP Bag for Power Bond ++ Cement Packing (SIZE : 29.3" X 20.5")	06.02.2026
252623 004003	Procurement of Heavy Duty LDPE Shrink Film Roll, 70 Microns of various sizes (100 CM, 110 CM, 120 CM & 135 CM) for TNPL Unit - II.	09.02.2026
252623 003977	Procurement of CATIONIC ROSIN for Board Machine (CCK) of TNPL Unit - II.	06.02.2026

Corrigendum if any will be issued in TNPL Website and NIC Portal only. For further details, please visit websites : **www.tnpl.com / https://tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app**
DIPR/366/Tender/2026 *TNPL - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper*

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD
Office of the Chief Engineer (East)
6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560009
No: BWSSB/CE(E)/ACE(E)-II/DCE(M)-I/TA(E)/7167/2025-26 Dated: 21.01.2026
INVITATION FOR TENDER- CALL-3
(only through KPP Portal)
BWSSB invites Tender in Two Stage Tender System from eligible contractors for the work of diversion of 1800mm dia Cauvery Stage IV Phase II water supply pipeline at ORR Service road of Bellanduru Village for Construction of BBMP Road Culvert across ORR near RMZ Eco Space coming under Haraluru Service Station of AEE SE-3 Sub Division.
Amount Put to Tender: Rs.164.93 Lakhs, EMD: Rs.2,47,000/-
Last date and time for Receipt of tenders is on **29.01.2026** upto **16:00** hours. The bids will be opened on **30.01.2026** after **16:00** hours. The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** For further details contact the undersigned office during working hours.
Sd/-
Chief Engineer (East)
DIPR/CP/5165/CCL/2025-26

INBRIEF



167 drug samples flagged for quality lapses in December

In the monthly drug alert issued by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), the Central Drug Laboratories found 74 samples manufactured by various firms to be "not of standard quality (NSQ)", while State drug testing laboratories identified 93 samples that failed to meet prescribed quality standards. The list of NSQ and spurious drugs are being displayed on the CDSCO portal. The data has been released for December. "The failure is specific to drug products of the batch tested by the Government Laboratory, and it does not warrant any concerns on the other drug products available in the market," said a note released by the Ministry.

Man found dead after wife killed in 'accidental firing'

Yashrajsinh Gohil, nephew of senior Congress leader and Rajya Sabha member Shaktisinh Gohil, reportedly killed himself with his own revolver after his wife died when he appears to have accidentally fired the weapon at their residence in Ahmedabad, the police said on Thursday. The incident occurred shortly before midnight on Wednesday in their flat in NRI Tower, Bodakdev area. According to the police, preliminary investigation and a statement by Yashrajsinh's mother indicate that the firearm discharged accidentally while he was checking his revolver in the bedroom. A bullet went off by mistake and struck his wife, Rajeshwari, near her neck, the police said.

Officials 'coercing' us to surrender land: tribals

Great Nicobar Island project includes forest lands where Nicobarese lived before 2004 tsunami; 'it is our ancestral land, we will have nothing for the future generations,' says council member

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI

With some sections of the ₹92,000-crore Great Nicobar Island mega-infrastructure project "nearing approval", members of the Tribal Council in Little and Great Nicobar on Thursday alleged that they are being pressured by the district administration to "surrender our ancestral lands" to make way for the project.

Parts of the project in Galathea Bay, Pemmaya Bay, and Nanjappa Bay require the diversion of forest lands on which the indigenous Nicobarese people had been living before the 2004 tsunami.

In an online briefing to journalists, Tribal Council members said they had been called for a January 7 meeting with Nicobar district administration officials, where they were orally asked to sign a "surrender certificate", giving up their ancestral tribal lands. Hours after the briefing, they were summoned for another meeting where they were asked if they would give up their claims on a portion of their lands if they were allowed to relocate to a different section of the coast.



Tribal Council members say they were asked to sign a surrender certificate, giving up their ancestral lands. FILE PHOTO

Deputy Commissioner of Nicobar Amit Kale Marutirao, and Assistant Commissioner (Campbell Bay) Keshav Narendra Singh, have not responded to *The Hindu*'s requests for comment.

"At [the January 7] meeting, a few officials of the district were present along with a representative of the administration's Andaman Adim Janjati Vikas Samiti. We were shown various maps regarding the project and we were asked about our opinion on the development project. And then we were asked to sign the surrender certificate," Tribal Council chairman Barnabas Manju said, adding that the meeting, held at the Andaman Public Works Department guesthouse in Nicobar's Campbell Bay, lasted about 10 minutes. The Tribal Council members told the officials that they would have to discuss it amongst themselves.

At the press briefing, Titus Peter, 1st Captain of Pulobhabi village and a member of the Council, said, "We cannot sign a surrender document like this. It is our ancestral tribal land. We will have nothing for the future generations." Mr. Manju noted that it had been 21 years since they were displaced by the 2004 tsunami and are yet to hear from the administration about their requests to return to the location of their ancestral villages that had been destroyed by the tsunami.

Council members said they were not told any specifics about the "surrender certificate", though Mr. Manju noted that "the officials said they would help us draft it if needed." The Tribal Council is the apex representative body of the Nicobarese community, which is recognised as a Scheduled Tribe.

"It is not clear what parts of our ancestral land the officials are referring to. Our understanding is that they want the surrender certificate to mention areas that are covered under what used to be our villages before we were displaced by the tsunami," said Mr. Peter, pointing to the west coast on a map of Great Nicobar Island.

Prayagraj mela authorities serve fresh notice on seer

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The mela authorities accused the seer of disturbing the peace and provoking law-and-order issues

The clash over the alleged mistreatment of Swami Avimukteshwaranand Saraswati intensified on Thursday after the Prayagraj mela authorities served another notice on the religious leader accusing him of disturbing the peace and provoking law-and-order problems. They threatened to cancel the seer's land allotment and permanently bar him from participating in the religious fair.

The row between the mela authorities and the swami started on January 18, on the occasion of Mauni Amavasya, when he allegedly tried to reach Sangam for bathing, using his chariot without permission. The seer claimed that his followers had been mistreated.

The blame game escalated over the past week with political parties and religious leaders coming out in open support of Swami Avimukteshwaranand.

Possible stampede

In a notice issued on January 18, which the seer said he received on January 22, he was accused of breaking a barrier on a bridge over the river. The authorities also accused him of trying to forcibly enter a crowded area with a chariot, allegedly creating a stampede-like situation.

"…. you created a situation of conflict and possibility of a stampede which could have resulted in significant loss of life," the notice reads.

It added that his actions had disrupted the arrangements for the Magh Mela on Mauni Amavasya, and posed a serious threat to the safety of those attending the mela.

The seer has been asked to reply in 24 hours why the land and facilities provided to his organisation should not be revoked and why he should not be permanently barred from the mela.

In response, the Swami said that he had not broken any rule and was not using any chariot at the venue. He explained that it was the police that had opened the bridge for him and also alleged that the police and the administration are misusing their powers.

DRDO missile to feature at Republic Day parade

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) will highlight India's growing indigenous defence capabilities by showcasing several path-breaking technologies at the 77th Republic Day parade and "Bharat Parv 2026" at the Red Fort.

The key attractions of the programme include the Long Range Anti-Ship Hypersonic Missile (LR-AShM), and a dedicated DRDO tableau.

The DRDO will display the LR-AShM along with its launcher during the Republic Day parade at Kartavya Path.

The LR-AShM is a hypersonic glide missile capable of engaging both static and moving targets with high precision.

'Sindoor' formation by Air Force fighter jets to lead Republic Day flypast

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

The Indian Air Force (IAF) will showcase a formation of frontline fighter jets with the call sign "Sindoor" during the Republic Day flypast, symbolising India's aerial dominance during Operation Sindoor, the high-precision tri-services military campaign conducted against Pakistan last May.

The spearhead formation will comprise two Rafale jets, two MiG-29s, two Su-30 MKIs and one Jaguar aircraft – all of which actively participated in the operation. The flypast will carry the flag of Operation Sindoor, commemorating India's decisive military response following the Pahalgam terror attack.



The Indian Air Force's fighter jets fly past during the rehearsal for the Republic Day parade in New Delhi on Wednesday. PTI

A senior defence official said 29 aircraft, including fighter jets, four transport aircraft and nine helicopters, will participate in the flypast. For the first time, the flypast will be conducted in two segments - the first during the march-past and the second after the parade.

The flypast will showcase multiple formations such as Sindoor, Dhwaj, Prahar, Garud, Arjan, Varuna, and Vajrang. In a special tribute, four Mi-17 helicopters will shower flower petals over the marching contingents on Kartavya Path. A special formation during the flypast will be dedicated to Operation Sindoor, the official said.

Govt. calls for airlines to take IndiGo's vacated slots

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI/NEW DELHI

The government on Thursday asked airlines to submit their requests for operating domestic flights on the slots vacated by IndiGo, following the curtailment of the winter schedule in the wake of the December operational disruptions.

The Civil Aviation Ministry's communication said the committee on redistribution of the vacated IndiGo slots held its first meeting on January 13, wherein the process and principles for redistribution were discussed.

Following the deliberations, the panel had now asked airlines to submit their requests and preferences for the vacated slots, subject to various conditions, it added.

Press Club of India slams J&K Police over 'oral summons' to journalists

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Press Club of India (PCI) on Thursday criticised the Jammu and Kashmir Police for its decision to "orally summon several journalists, including Srinagar-based reporters of at least three national dailies, for questioning without providing them with specific reasons while doing so".

'Indicates harassment'

In a statement, the PCI said, "The reporters have been questioned over routine, fact-based reports based on publicly available information – a clear attempt to prevent them from fulfilling their duties as journalists."

"The fact that one of these reporters had to spend 15 hours over four days in Srinagar's Cyber Police Station and was told to sign a bond saying that he would not 'disturb the peace' indicates the harassment being unleashed on journalists in the region."

"Such arbitrary actions create an overall atmosphere of fear, where journalists cannot go about their daily jobs and exercise their constitutional right to work freely," it said.

> India's vibrant democracy stands on the shoulders of a free and fearless press; actions like this work to undermine that tradition
> PCI STATEMENT

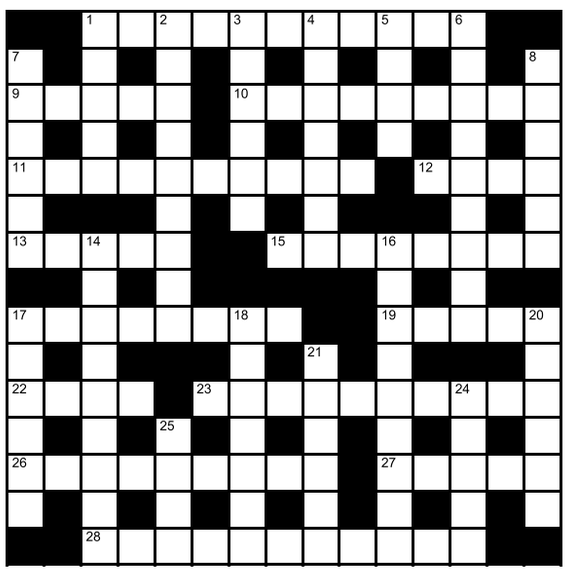
Demanding that the Jammu and Kashmir authorities allow journalists to discharge their duties without fear of intimidation and coercion and follow due process in their interactions with journalists, the Press Club of India said, "India's vibrant democracy stands on the shoulders of a free and fearless press; actions like this work to undermine that tradition."

THE HINDU CROSSWORD + 14698

(set by Incognito)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://thehindu.com/crosswords*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Unpaid? Super! (11)
9 Swears on affidavit typed hastily, for starters, and signs finally (5)
10 Prudent to go around country with Romeo and Lothario (9)
11 Misleading clue for "Sacred ornament worn by her after removing pouch" (3,7)
12 Wiki wrongly spelt bird (4)
13 Fine cotton thread from large island (5)
15 Excitedly petting around end of arm and seducing (8)
17 Talking without a bandage (8)
19 Boy leaves river submerging girl's animal (5)
22 Uncovered part of menu deleted (4)
23 No place to die inside the house (6-4)
26 Savage baron is in front of funny Arabian carrying redhead (9)
27 Prod guardsmen giving up arms and running (5)
28 Little dog with European mother's mother consumed fruit (11)

Down

1 Chose operation to explore deep initially (5)
2 Seattle preparation on ship is insipid (9)
3 Worst construction around eastern skyscrapers (6)
4 Named person... one jumping around pit (7)
5 Charged particles found in onion skin (4)
6 Going, consuming small sip, and indulging in idle talk (9)
7 Rolls Royce is parked in fuel enclosure (6)
8 Is making a mistake placing ornament behind queen (6)
14 Policeman's stake-out near road wrongly taped person... Not on! (5,4)
16 A label fixed in piano built in South American region (9)
17 European carrying university boy's flower (6)
18 Perhaps, transfixing top class fish behind end of barn (7)
20 The Desert Fox starting to march in capital with trainee (6)
21 Flower from Zulu hostelry is available in the beginning (6)
24 Historically popular song, perhaps, in soldier's heart (5)
25 Moderately hot conflict with maiden (4)

SUDOKU

9		1						
	2	6		1	9			
3			8	5				1
6					8			7
		3		4		6		
2			6					5
7				9	3			6
			2	7		3	5	
						7		4

No.SS6769 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to previous puzzle

L	P	A	C	I	C	K		
B	A	L	L	F	L	O	W	N
I	A	F	M	I	E	E		
B	R	O	N	C	O	I	N	T
C	R	C	I	R				
C	A	T	H	E	D	R	A	
P	E	L	T	N				
F	R	I	T	T	E	R	D	E
O	L	P	A	O				
I	N	D	I	G	O	R	I	V
N	N	E	A	E				
G	U	N	F	I	G	H	T	C
S	A	A	E	A	T	A		
B	A	R	N	T	E	X	A	N
F	T	E	T	T	D	Y		

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

1	8	5	7	6	4	9	2	3
9	3	2	5	1	8	4	6	7
7	4	6	9	3	2	8	1	5
5	7	8	4	2	9	1	3	6
4	9	3	6	5	1	2	7	8
2	6	1	3	8	7	5	9	4
3	2	7	1	4	5	6	8	9
6	1	4	8	9	3	7	5	2
8	5	9	2	7	6	3	4	1

FAITH

Basant Panchami

Basant Panchami has both cultural and spiritual import, said Prof. Kumool Abbi. It is the festival of Saraswati, Goddess of knowledge, music, arts and aesthetics. In the Shanti Parv of the epic Mahabharata, She is called the mother of Vedas. She removes ignorance, nescience and darkness, infusing warmth, brightness, clarity, luminescence, melody, harmony, purity and pure joy.

Basant Panchami is commemorated on the Magh Sud, that is the fifth day of the bright lunar fortnight (Sukla Paksha), of the month of Magha in the Indian lunar calendar.

In Punjab, Basant Panchami signals the process of the end of winter and the beginning of spring. For farmers, it signifies a preparation and readiness for the harvesting of crops. The yellow mustard flowers are in full bloom and with their brightness, they symbolise the positivity of the human spirit. The occasion is celebrated with sounds of the *dhol*, the pulsating bhangra, flying of colourful kites, the preparation of yellow rice, and wearing of yellow hued clothes.

In Punjab, the Dukh Nivaram Sahib Gurdwara at Patiala and the Chheharta Sahib Gurdwara at Amritsar are renowned for the sacred commemoration of Basant Panchami.

For the Sufis, the celebration of Basant Panchami is a practice initiated by Amir Khusro on the resting place of Nizamuddin Auliya of the Chisti Order. As stated in the Guru Granth Sahib, *Aaj hamara grah basant*, 'Today is springtime and I am imbibed with the deep crimson hue of the Lord's divine love.'

INBRIEF



EEPC urges lowering I-T for non-corporate MSMEs

The Engineering Export Promotion Council of India (EEPC) has demanded lowering income tax for non-corporate manufacturing MSMEs in the Union Budget and expediting payment of GST refunds. The council urged that I-T for all non-corporate manufacturing MSMEs be reduced to 25% from 33%, and 90% of GST refunds be released immediately. It also proposed allowing 100% depreciation on rooftop solar investments by manufacturing MSMEs instead of 20% now.

IIFL Finance Q3 net soars to ₹501 crore; scrip tanks 13%

IIFL Finance on Thursday said its December quarter net profit grew multifold to ₹501 crore compared with ₹82 crore in the year-ago period. IIFL Finance said the Income Tax Department has directed the company to get its accounts audited for a specified block period under Section 142(2A) of the Income Tax Act, 1961, and to appoint a "special auditor" for the purpose. Shares of IIFL Finance tanked 13.15% to close at ₹540.80 apiece on the BSE. PTI

Power transmission network scales past 5 lakh ckm: Govt.

India's national power transmission network has scaled past 5 lakh circuit kilometres (ckm) of transmission lines of 220 kilovolt (kV) and above, the Power Ministry informed on Thursday. According to the power ministry, the country's transmission network has grown by 71.6% since April 2014 with the addition of 2.09 lakh ckm of transmission lines alongside the addition of 876 GVA of transformation capacity during the mentioned period.

Flight cancellations cost IndiGo ₹577 crore

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

IndiGo's cancellation of about 5,000 flights in November and December cost the airline ₹577 crore, contributing to a 77.6% plunge in profit to ₹549 crore for the quarter ended December.

The airline recorded a profit of ₹2,448 crore in the year-ago period. The decline in profit was also driven by the implementation of new labour laws, which led to a charge of ₹969 crore, and by currency movements related to dollar-denominated future obligations amounting to ₹1,035 crore.

Chief Financial Officer Gaurav Negi said aircraft capacity additions would moderate to about 10%, down from 15-20%, as deliveries had been aligned with a reduced flight schedule following a 10% cut imposed by the DGCA, resulting in 200 fewer flights.

CEO Pieter Elbers did not answer questions from analysts on how the airline was reviewing its pilot recruitment plans and the exact number of pilots it was short of, though the DGCA found its over 5,000 flight cancellations in November and December were due to pilot duty rosters being stretched too thin after the new rest and duty norms came into effect from November 1.

It imposed a fine of ₹22 crore for non compliance with the new rules.

Over 9.5 lakh passengers were affected due to flight disruptions.

Net FDI negative for fourth month in a row in Nov. 2025

Net foreign portfolio investments have also been negative so far in the financial year 2025-26, with uncertainty over the India-U.S. trade deal and the weakening rupee affecting investor confidence

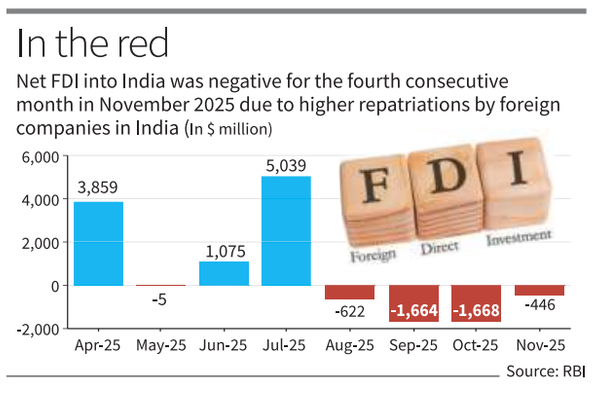
T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

India's net foreign direct investments (FDI) remained negative for the fourth consecutive month in November 2025, with outflows exceeding inflows by $446 million that month, an analysis of latest data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) shows.

The data, released as part of the RBI's monthly bulletin, shows that the main reason direct investment outflows exceeded inflows in November was because of relatively high repatriations and disinvestments by foreign companies operating in India.

Direct investments are typically made in assets and are viewed as growth-generating, as opposed to portfolio investments, which are generally done in equity and debt for expected returns.

The RBI noted that net foreign portfolio investments (FPI) have also been negative so far in the financial year 2025-26, with uncertainty over the India-U.S. trade deal and the weakening rupee affecting investor confidence.



Steady gross inflows

Gross direct inflows, which is the total amount of direct investment coming into the country, stood at $6.4 billion in November 2025, 22.5% higher than the amount received in November 2024. It was, however, marginally lower than the $6.5 billion received in October and the $7 billion in September.

"Gross inward FDI remained steady in November with Japan, Singapore, and the U.S. accounting for more than 75% of total FDI inflows," the RBI said in its report.

"The highest recipients (around 75%) of FDI inflows were the financial services sector, followed by manufacturing, and retail and wholesale trade," the report added.

Net FDI, however, which is the balance between outflows and inflows stood at -$446 million, meaning total outflows exceeded total inflows by that amount.

Within this, repatriation and disinvestment stood at a five-month high of $5.3 billion in November 2025, albeit 1.2% lower than it was in November 2024.

Outward FDI, which is the investments made by Indian companies abroad, stood at $1.5 billion in November 2025, less than half the $3.2 billion in October.

"Outward FDI moderated in November, with Singapore, Mauritius, the U.S. and the U.K. accounting for more than half of total outward FDI," the RBI noted.

"Sector-specific breakdown suggests that more than 70% of outward FDI was in manufacturing, financial, insurance, and business services."

The RBI report said that net foreign portfolio investments were negative for the 2025-26 financial year up to January 16, 2026.

SEC seeks to bypass India on summons to Adani

Reuters
NEW DELHI

The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission has asked a U.S. court for permission to personally email summons to Indian billionaire Gautam Adani and group executive Sagar Adani over alleged fraud and a $265 million bribery scheme, filings show.

India, the SEC said, has previously refused two requests to serve the summons.

In the most high-profile legal case in the U.S. involving an Indian conglomerate, the SEC has been trying to send summons to Adani group founder Gautam Adani and his nephew Sagar since last year.

Adani group has called the allegations "baseless" and said that it would seek "all possible legal recourse" to defend itself.

It did not immediately respond to *Reuters'* request for comment on the latest SEC filing, dated January 21.

In the response to the New York court, the U.S. markets regulator said it "does not expect service to be completed" through the current route and should be allowed to directly email the summons to the Adani group executives.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	THURSDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	82,307	0.49
US Dollar	91.58	0.07
Gold	1,57,200	-0.31
Brent oil	64.27	-1.21

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	2086.40	54.20
Adani Ports	1414.20	35.60
Apollo Hosp	6797.00	-29.50
Asian Paints	2703.80	42.70
Axis Bank	1294.80	9.90
Bajaj Auto	9370.00	191.00
Bajaj Finserv	1993.10	33.20
Bajaj Finance	942.85	6.60
Bharat Elec	417.30	14.65
Bharti Airtel	2002.20	6.10
Cipla	1370.40	0.80
Coal India	423.20	9.15
Dr Reddys Lab	1217.50	60.30
Hindustan Unilever	40.20	DE*
Eicher Motors	7049.00	-91.00
Eternal Ltd.	275.90	-7.60
Grasim Ind	2787.60	52.00
HCL Tech	1703.10	20.60
HDFC Bank	918.70	-1.65
HDFC Life	725.10	0.75
Hindalco	944.45	5.25
Hind Unilever	2390.60	22.60
ICICI Bank	1345.50	-3.50
IntGlobeAvi	4909.00	51.50
Infosys	1663.50	9.10
ITC	324.85	0.10
Jio Financial Services Ltd.	262.60	-0.65
JSW Steel	1184.40	9.80
Kotak Bank	426.00	4.40
L&T	3793.80	27.30
M&M	3573.70	20.40
Maruti Suzuki	15765.00	-5.00
Max Healthcare	998.80	-5.40
NestleIndia	1306.00	22.80
NTPC	342.45	3.75
ONGC	244.01	1.64
PowerGrid Corp	259.25	3.45
Reliance Ind	1402.50	-2.10
SBI Life	2022.00	-33.40
State Bank	1048.35	19.70
Shriram Finance Ltd.	1005.50	19.50
Sun Pharma	1634.20	21.30
TataConsumerProduct	1175.20	11.60
Tata Steel	189.10	4.69
TCS	3150.40	27.80
Tech Mahindra	1687.40	0.70
Titan	4018.60	-60.60
Tata Motors PV	347.30	8.05
Trent Ltd.	3803.80	39.40
UltraTech Cement	12364.00	133.00
Wipro	240.65	1.10

DE: Demerged Entity

TVS Emerald raises ₹425 cr.

Realty firm TVS Emerald has raised ₹425 crore in equity funding from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) to fund its new housing projects. TVS Emerald is part of the TVS Group. PTI

Adani Energy Solutions Q3 net profit falls 8% to ₹574 cr.

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Adani Energy Solutions Ltd. (AESL), for the third quarter ended December 31 reported a 8.2% year-on-year (YoY) fall in net profit to ₹574 crore.

"This was on account of a positive impact of deferred tax of ₹185 crore last year in Q3FY25 which has to be adjusted for a like-for-like comparison," the company said in a filing.

Adjusted profit after tax was up 30.4% to ₹574 crore, translating from double-digit EBITDA expansion, the company said. Cash profit was up 22.8% to ₹1,227 crore.

'Not easy to handle Venezuela oil, will assess in due course'

Saptaparno Ghosh
NEW DELHI

Venezuelan crude has high viscosity and acid number, but does provide some opportunities based on what is being offered, a senior Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL) official told investors in a conference call on Thursday.

"Venezuelan crude apart from being bottom-heavy, also has high viscosity and high acid number," director for refineries S. Bharathan said, adding: "We will have some opportunities. We will evaluate as and when we can get offers and [we will] take it accordingly."

He was responding to a query on seeing Venezuelan crude as an additional opportunity with the bottom-upgrade project in Vishakhapatnam in place.


Consolidated Q3 net profit grew 58% to ₹4,011 crore.

For clarity, higher viscosity is indicative of thick oil with resistance to flow while the acid number is used to determine the acidity and the chemical mix existing naturally in the oil.

An opportunity

CMD Vikas Kaushal added having crude from HPCL's Barmer refinery, which is in final stages of commissioning and potentially from Venezuela would provide "at least an opportunity to evaluate and see. It is not an easy crude to handle but the fact that we have an asset gives us that opportunity."

HPCL reported consolidated Q3 net profit grew by about 57.7% year-over-year basis to ₹4,011 crore on an improvement in gross refining margins. The scrip closed 0.29% lower at ₹427.70 apiece on the BSE and about 0.36% lower at ₹427.50 apiece on the NSE.

Indians' abroad spend slips to 2-year low as foreign-study outgo plunges

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

The amount of money sent or spent abroad by Indians fell to a two-year low of $1.94 billion in November 2025, pulled down in large part by a sharp dip in the amount spent on foreign studies, which slid to its lowest level since the COVID-19 pandemic-impacted month of April 2020.

Analysis of data on the outward remittances under the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Liberalised Remittances Scheme (LRS), shows the other driver of the fall in overall remittances in November 2025 was a dip in the amount spent on foreign travel.


Money spent on studies abroad fell 30% to $120.9 million.

Total outward remittances under the LRS stood at $1.94 billion in November 2025, down 0.5% from its level in November 2024. This is the lowest it has been since November 2023.

Within this, however, the amount spent on studies abroad fell to $120.9 million in November 2025 or 30% lower than in the same month of 2024. The amount spent on foreign travel slid to $1.1 billion in November 2025, down 1.1% from November 2024.

Geopolitical tensions

"Outward remittances have shown a clear divergence in trend this year," Pavan Kavad, MD, Prithvi Exchange, a BSE-listed and Fortune 500 foreign exchange dealer, told *The Hindu*. "Global uncertainty caused by geopolitical tensions and tighter policy conditions in key destination markets, has weighed on outward remittances, particularly those linked to education."

Cautious approach

"A visible slowdown in student enrollments and education-related spending across markets such as the U.S., the U.K., and Canada translated into softer remittance flows, as families adopt a more cautious approach amid rising costs, visa uncertainties, and delayed intake cycles," Mr. Kavad added. Looking at a longer time-period, the data shows outward remittances during April-November 2025 period stood at $19.1 billion, down 4.3% year-on-year.

RMZ, Maharashtra Govt. units to aid $30 billion investments

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

As part of association with CIDCO RMZ will develop data centre, commercial projects in Navi Mumbai

RMZ, a group owned by the Menda family and Asia's leading integrated alternative-assets platform, announced an investment partnership with Maharashtra Government entities Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) and City & Industrial Development Corporation of Maharashtra Ltd. (CIDCO) to facilitate investments of up to $30 billion in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) over the next 10 years in a phased manner with the potential to generate about three lakh direct and indirect jobs across the project lifecycle.

An agreement to this effect was signed at the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting 2026 in Davos.

Driving growth

The collaboration is aimed at driving economic growth through FDI in urban, regional, and infrastructure development.

As part of the partnership with MMRDA, RMZ will lead investment structuring and capital mobilisation, along with master planning, development, and long-term asset management, drawing on global best practices across real estate assets, infrastructure, logistics parks, and data centres.

To identify land

MMRDA will facilitate land identification and aggregation, provide policy level support and planning along with the approval process for the project.

As part of the association with CIDCO, RMZ will develop new data centre and commercial projects in Navi Mumbai. The project is likely to start in the financial year 2026-27 with CIDCO supporting RMZ in obtaining all the necessary permissions, land allotments, approval and clearances from relevant government departments.

Indian Bank Q3 net rises 7.3% to ₹3,061 cr.

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI

Indian Bank standalone profit after tax rose 7.3% year-on-year to ₹3,061.4 crore in Q3FY26.

Net interest income (NII) climbed 7.5% to ₹6,896 crore on an increase in Retail, Agriculture and MSME (RAM) loans in the quarter. The share of all the three put together increased to 66% in the quarter-ended December 2025 from about 64% a year earlier.

Cut in personal loans

The bank kept personal loan books lean and further reduced exposure by 9.8% to ₹6,706 crore.

The lender made a "conscious effort" to keep it low, Binod Kumar, CEO and MD told *The Hindu*. The decision assumes importance in the context of rising asset quality risks in the segment. Net interest margin slid 0.17% to 3.4% while gross non-performing Assets (NPA) as a share of total advances dipped 2.23% from 3.3% a year-earlier. Net NPAs reduced to 0.15% from 0.21%.


Binod Kumar

Exposure to U.S. market may reduce on tariffs: TASE Global

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Exposure to the U.S. market is likely to reduce on account of tariffs, said Sankararaman Vaidyanathan, chairman,TASE Global.

Addressing the media during the inauguration of TASE Global facility for aerostructure components at Sriperumbudur, near here, Mr. Vaidyanathan said: "There is an impact of tariffs. Definitely that hurts us a lot. We will migrate, that is why we are transferring, going towards Europe," he said.

We are supplying to AsiaPacific. Our exposure to the U.S. market last year was close to around 90%. This year it will be coming down to 40%."

Trusted Aerospace Engineering (TASE Global), a leading global precision manufacturing firm with operations across India, the U.S. and Europe, announced the inauguration of its new state-of-the-art manufacturing facility at Sriperumbudur.

The facility was opened by Eng. Masahiko Mori, president, DMG MORI, Japan. This facility, built with an investment of ₹150 crore, is dedicated to building aerostructure parts in addition to the existing manufacturing of aero engine and precision medical parts for export.

Global opportunity

This strategic expansion represents a significant milestone in the company's journey as it enters the surging global market for aerostructures, currently valued at about $70 billion annually. The firm said, this facility positions it to 'capture a $100 million revenue share over three years through higher aircraft output and defence programmes worldwide.'

Additional revenue

The facility would enable additional revenue of ₹300 crore annually in three years, the firm added.

Central to this growth is TASE Global partnership with DMG MORI, which has outfitted the unit with 30 advanced high-precision machines, renowned for blending German engineering precision with Japanese technology.



Daily grind: With multiple quick-commerce companies locked in an intense competition, fast delivery continues to be the ultimate deciding factor, even after the Union government asked the firms to drop the idea of 10-minute delivery. V. RAJU

The human cost behind every delivery

The Union government's directive to quick-commerce platforms to drop the concept of 10-minute deliveries owing to the excessive stress it puts delivery personnel under has been welcomed by gig workers, but they say it is just the tip of the iceberg. Low pay, inadequate incentives, poor safety measures and mistreatment at work all threaten their livelihoods, writes **Harish Gilai**

There was a timer counting down on the mind of M. Tejeswar as he negotiated the turns and traffic on BRTS Road at Kancharapalem in Visakhapatnam late at a night in 2025. The 25-year-old had been a food delivery worker for several months and knew that even a slight delay can get him a poor rating from the customer, which then affected his earnings. Moreover, he had received multiple orders that night and wanted to make most of the opportunity.

In his hurry, however, Tejeswar didn't notice the road divider up ahead and hit it head on. He was thrown off his two-wheeler in the violent impact and pain exploded in his leg. It was a major fracture, which forced him to stay off work for almost three months, without pay. But he considers himself lucky: In his profession, getting killed in an accident while hurrying to deliver an order is commonplace.

During breaks and in between orders, it is fatal accidents, broken bones and narrow escapes that figure in the discussion among delivery workers. The recent incident of a food delivery worker falling from a moving train in Anantapur while attempting to deliver an order had sparked national debate on the safety of gig workers.

As for Tejeswar, he is one of the 17,000 such workers in Visakhapatnam, delivering food, grocery, medicines and parcels at doorstep and providing services like bike taxi. It is not just youth who take up the job, many elderly individuals, too, turn to gig work for supplementary or primary source of income.

While landing a job in this field is relatively easy, staying on isn't. A lack of job security, inadequate incentives, low wages, physical strain and mistreatment at work among others force many to leave abruptly.

Obsession with quick delivery

With multiple quick-commerce companies locked in an intense competition, fast delivery has become the ultimate deciding factor. Though the Union government on January 13 urged quick-commerce and food delivery platforms to drop the concept of 10-minute deliveries, the idea continues to remain dominant. Workers say that companies continue to push for faster deliveries, and customers expect their orders to arrive as quickly as possible. This obsession with speed has proved costly for many delivery personnel.

"Even if the delay is marginal, people immediately contact the customer care, which in turn alerts us. Sometimes orders need to be delivered along Jagadamba Junction and NAD Junction [a traffic-heavy stretch], and we have to navigate the heavy traffic to make the delivery. However, customers still give us negative reviews, complaining that the food was delivered late," says Tejeswar, adding that although the 10-minute delivery concept has officially been dropped by his company, customers continue to expect the same speed. Delayed deliveries frequently result in negative feedback and one-star ratings, which affect his earnings and performance scores.

He recalls how a lot of his friends quit the job owing to the constant exposure to pollution and physical strain. "We inhale a lot of dust every day, and the continuous exposure to sun and pollution damages our skin. In almost every case, we make door delivery, even if the customer lives on the tenth floor. At the end of the day, we suffer severe headache and body pains," he says.

> Earlier, a rider used to get ₹600 to ₹800 as minimum wage for being present during working hours. Now, even if they log the stipulated time of 8-12 hours, there is no minimum wage guarantee.
>
> **B. JAGAN**
> All India Gig Workers Association Visakhapatnam district president

Low payment

Some delivery personnel say rising number of gig workers itself has become a major issue. As the number of delivery personnel increases, incentives decrease. This is because earnings are dependent on the number of orders completed and the distance covered.

"If we cover a distance of 7-8 km to deliver an order, we receive an incentive of around ₹60 to ₹70. However, deliveries within a radius of 1-2 km fetches only less than ₹20. In our company, if we manage to earn ₹500, an additional incentive of ₹120 is credited, but earning ₹500 a day in Visakhapatnam is extremely difficult because there are too many gig workers," says Srinivas, a delivery worker. He adds that expenses for fuel, food, water, other personal necessities as well as vehicle repairs come from their own pocket.

K. Shankar, a delivery personnel who had worked with two different companies previously, claims that irrespective of whether orders are received or not, gig workers are required to stay logged in for 12-16 hours a day.





Mistreatment at work

In March 2025, a food delivery worker in the city was allegedly assaulted and humiliated by a customer. The incident sparked outrage and led to largescale protests by gig workers, forcing the police to take legal action against the customer.

All India Gig Workers Association Visakhapatnam district president B. Jagan, however, says this was the only incident to have come to light. "There are a number of cases yet to come out. Three attacks took place at Dondaparthy alone," he alleges.

"In most cases, whenever an untoward incident or an accident occurs, the companies don't pay for the treatment or provide ex gratia. In 2025, a 42-year-old food delivery worker died in an accident, and about 12 others were injured," Jagan recalls. He says that there are about 17,000 active gig workers in the city alone, while there are about 40,000 registered members.

A booming field

Gig economy is booming across the country. Government think tank Niti Aayog, in its 2022 report titled 'India's booming gig and platform economy', says that gig workforce is expected to expand to 2.35 crore workers by 2029-30. For some, the work serves as a part-time income source while for others, it is their only full-time occupation.

Twenty-two-year-old ITI graduate B. Venkata Ramana is one of them. He has been working as a grocery delivery worker for the past six months, earning around ₹12,000-₹15,000 a month. On average, he delivers about 15-20 orders a day. "Though the pay is low, it helps," says Ramana, adding that he regularly attends employment melas by the government and explores other opportunities.

"My parents are labourers, and my sister is studying in Class VII, so I don't have the luxury of waiting for the perfect job. Until I find something better, I have to take up work like this," he says, pointing out that many youth in similar situation have turned to gig work for survival.

Fluctuating wages

Jagan says that no one knows how much a delivery worker earns per km. "Sometimes its ₹70 per 10 km, sometimes ₹80 and sometimes ₹100. There is no fixed amount," he says, adding that they have been pushing for minimum wage to gig workers.

> Even if the delay is marginal, people immediately contact customer care, which in turn alerts us. Sometimes orders need to be delivered along Jagadamba Junction and NAD Junction [a busy stretch], and we have to navigate the heavy traffic to make the delivery. However, customers still give us negative reviews, complaining that the food was delivered late.
>
> **TEJESWAR**
> A food delivery worker

"Earlier, a rider used to get ₹600 to ₹800 as minimum wage for being present during working hours. Now, even if they log the stipulated time of 8-12 hours, there is no minimum wage guarantee."

Jagan also mentioned how some companies discourage protest. "If a worker questions the company, their ID get blocked, which is only released after repeated requests. However, the number of orders begin to decline following this, he alleges. Once the ID is blocked, a worker can't login to work and receive orders.

He says the Visakhapatnam branch of the association has been staging protests for the past few years to secure minimum wage for gig workers, but to no avail.

It is high time, says Srinivas, that the government forms a body to protect their rights. "Steps should be taken for our welfare and safety. It must ensure proper compensation to the deceased or injured," he adds.



Loud silences

Sobhita Dhulipala and producer Suresh Babu discuss their film *Cheekatilo*

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The spy thriller *Goodachari* and *Major*, the biopic of Major Sandeep Unnikrishnan, saw Sobhita Dhulipala enact brief yet pivotal parts. While she had become a household name with web series and straddled both indie and mainstream film space across languages, an author-backed character in a Telugu film was still a distance away. Understandably, Sobhita speaks with enthusiasm about *Cheekatilo*, her Telugu film that will stream on Amazon Prime Video from January 23. The thriller features Sobhita as a true crime podcaster.

Directed by Sharan Kopishetty, the Prime Video original film is also the first original feature film in the digital space for leading Telugu film producer D Suresh Babu.

The forced silences

Cheekatilo follows the journey of the protagonist who studies criminology, becomes a journalist and later a podcaster. Sobhita explains how a childhood incident shapes her personality: "When something happens to Sandhya, she speaks about it within the safe space of her family. But it does not get the attention it requires. It silences her. I believe there are no silent people, only silenced ones. I had to understand what makes Sandhya persistent in her choices and how her actions help find a closure for herself and in the process, benefits others." It is this childhood incident and how the family pushes things under the carpet, says Suresh Babu, that makes the story compelling. "When a story is pitched to me, I analyse what makes it unique. This story has a female podcaster and an element of social commentary. I have been privy to how families hush up an issue; it could be a child's attention deficiency syndrome. In *Cheekatilo*, a young girl is molested and there is silence. I think it is important to convey that issues need to be discussed – to help the person find the strength to not be weighed down by it. The story also has an interesting whodunnit aspect."

> ***When a story is pitched to me, I analyse what makes it unique. This story has a female podcaster and an element of social commentary.***
>
> **SURESH BABU,** PRODUCER



Two of Suresh Productions' earlier films, *Krishna and His Leela* and *Narappa*, were made for theatrical release but opted for the digital route during the pandemic. Making a film primarily for digital consumption, however, has a different dynamic, says the producer: "Not having the box office pressure while working on a digital film might be a relief, but my fear was gauging if we were fine tuning it enough. For a digital film, the numbers come in slowly and in a different format – we would know how many people watched for how many minutes, and so on. The screenplay needs to be sharper to hold people's attention."

Sobhita, having worked in web series *Made in Heaven*, *Bard of Blood* and *Night Manager*, says she has learnt to gauge the response to her work in the digital space going by pop culture references that seep into social media or when she is pitched similar characters in series, films, or commercials.

Early on as a newcomer, she had stated that she likes to portray characters that are conflicted so that she can punch above her weight. "Young words," she reflects with a laugh, and adds, "Like how a rocket takes off into space by letting go of excess weight, I have let go of assumptions of how I need to mould my career. I am inspired by characters that have an agency. In this film, Sandhya confronts her fears, and stands up for what she thinks is right."

Since her debut in *Raman Raghav 2* to *Monkey Man*, Sobhita says her process of getting into the headspace of characters has been to understand their inner worlds. "Then, I try to emote from an understanding of how that character would express herself. It would be odd if all the characters I portray expressed anger, sadness or happiness the same way."

Sobhita intends to take up more work in Telugu cinema and says, "I look at *Cheekatilo* as a bridge to reconnect with the Telugu audience."

Scan QR code for video interview

Crime chronicles Sobhita Dhulipala. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Crime chronicles

Silent Screams: The Lost Girls of Telangana captures the emotional turmoil of the victims and their families

Sangeetha Devi Dundoo
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The case of the 26-year-old veterinary doctor who was sexually assaulted and murdered in November 2019 is still fresh in the minds of people in Hyderabad and Telangana. The incident triggered nationwide outrage and in the days that followed, an alleged encounter killing of the four accused also sparked debates.

For every such case that makes headlines, several others remain unnoticed. *Silent Screams: The Lost Girls of Telangana*, a 57-minute true crime documentary, presents three such cases.

Silent Screams begins with a voiceover by actor-musician Shruti Haasan. The documentary is the work of Hyderabad-based Mirage Media, which earlier produced *Occupied*, a war documentary that explored Palestinian art and cultural resistance, and *Qubool Hai?* a web series on child marriages in Hyderabad.

Produced by Pranav Pingle Reddy, *Silent Screams* is directed by Arvind Menon, who edited *Occupied* and *Qubool Hai?* In a mix of English, Telugu and Hindi, the film documents, through the lens of empathy, stories of atrocities against women in Asifabad, Warangal and Nalgonda districts of Telangana.



True stories A poster of the documentary. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"*Silent Screams* involved three years of research," says Pranav. After *Occupied*, he wanted to present stories closer to his roots, in Telangana.

The team chose stories that they felt would resonate with viewers from any part of the country. "Once the families were convinced that we were not out to sensationalise their cases, they were forthcoming to share their stories. The police were also open to answering tough questions," he adds.

One story involves nine murders after which a young woman is left to face the realities of life without her family. The film team traced her to Delhi, and was moved by her willingness to recount her story. "When people trust us, it is our responsibility to put forth their stories with conviction," says Pranav. A common thread across these cases was the misuse of the trust and goodwill the victims and families had placed in those around them.

Since Mirage Media also works on commercial projects for corporate entities, from time to time, the production house invested the earnings from those projects towards the documentary. "Whenever funds come in, we would work on post production. We were determined to complete the documentary even if it did not seem lucrative to digital platforms at first. In the long run when we make profits, we plan to share it with the families of the victims," Pranav explains.

(Silent Screams: The Lost Girls of Telangana streams on Sun Nxt)

Actor-producer Trupti Bhoir speaks about her latest film *Paro*, which is on the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' list of 201 feature films eligible to compete at the Oscars 2026



Hidden reality Trupti Bhoir in *Paro*. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Sold down the river

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Actor-producer and social activist Trupti Bhoir tears up as she recounts the experience of playing a paro (meaning a bride slave) in her Hindi film *Paro*. "But my tears don't matter in front of the horrors that the real victims go through," she says, recounting the long journey she has had with her NGO, Shelter Foundation, in shedding light on this 'cancer' at the heart of India.

Paro, directed by Gajendra Ahire, is an unflinching look into the lives of paros, an oppressed section of women who are sold or bartered like property by men, to become domestic slaves who have no rights. It is a custom prevalent in districts of Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. These women are expected to perform all duties a man must in a household, and in bed. They rear children, but have no claim over them, and can be sold whenever the master feels so. How is it different from sex work? "Sex workers at least have the right to earn for themselves or are recognised by society," explains Trupti.

Produced by Trupti and Sandesh Sharda,Gajendra's 100-minute film follows the story of Chaand (Trupti), who is sold from one man to another, like cattle. Trupti found the seed to make *Paro* in documentary films that international news media, *Al Jazeera* and *BBC*, had made about bride slavery in India. "I was shocked. I understood it was real, but I had to see it with my own eyes." Trupti then decided to venture into Mewat district in Haryana, where more than 60,000 paros live.

But entering Mewat is no cakewalk. Someone even told Trupti that if a person committed 100 murders, he would end up in Mewat. "Because nobody can find you. Even if the cops had to enter Mewat, they would go in groups of 20 or 30." Trupti sought the assistance of an NGO that wished to remain anonymous and visited 10 villages.

Through Shelter Foundation, Trupti and Sheetal Nikam have been collecting data on paros. "Data collection is important because numbers add pressure. We went to Mewat and spent 12 days collecting data from nearly 4,000 women." What was shocking to Trupti was how most of these women hailed from other states, like Assam, Orissa, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Gujarat. "Sometimes, a boyfriend would have duped and sold her off; sometimes, a poor father and mother would assume that they had married off their daughter well. Some would have been kidnapped," explains Trupti.

Armed with the data she collected on the ground, Trupti approached Vijaya Kishore Rahatkar, Chairperson, National Commission for Women. "She allowed us to be a part of a meeting. I took two paros, and they spoke for their sisters. This was in attendance of all representatives of each State's National Commission for Women. We are hopeful that our efforts will pay off."

Shot beautifully by Krishna Soren and with an exceptional aural scape from composer Satish Chakravarthy, *Paro* is now among the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' list of 201 feature films eligible to compete at the Oscars 2026. However, the film hasn't seen the light of day in India since the Central Board of Film Certification has yet to certify it.

The land we call home

AS *FREEDOM AT MIDNIGHT* spurs debate, director-producer Nikkhil Advani speaks on securing dignity in disagreement

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"Everybody is obsessed with entertainment. As creatives, we must also educate and provoke thought," says Nikkhil Advani, whose *Freedom At Midnight* Season 2 has opened to a tremendous response. "I'm surprised by the emotional outpouring. People told me they usually binge-watch, but with *Freedom At Midnight*, they paused to read the sources."

Reflecting on the source, Nikkhil recalls that many of his generation grew up loving Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre's *Freedom At Night*. "It helps us understand the days before Partition and its aftermath, whose effects and hostility continue today." Without taking sides, he wanted to put audiences "in negotiation rooms, in trains and communal riots, and beside Gandhi's fast," letting them judge leaders who lacked full answers. "Amidst chaos, they tried their best to maintain sanity."

Edited excerpts:

Question: *How did you balance historical facts and the dramatic flow of episodes?*

Answer: You need a top writing room that reads the material as deeply as you do. The aim was to capture the essence of the series, history that you may not know, history that you should know. Everything – drama, plot, character, and world-building – was rooted in the logline: the sacrifice of many and the ambition of one. We strictly cut anything that didn't serve this purpose. Also, we followed the book's tone, which shifts midway from a chamber piece to a thriller.

Q: *Were you conscious of the times we are living in?*

A: We are not here to provoke. I believe in Voltaire's idea: 'I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.' Dissension is democracy's cornerstone. My only requirement for performers and writers was that every character must retain dignity, even in dissent and disagreement.

Q: *The portrayal of the complex Nehru-Patel relationship has been appreciated. How did you approach this space?*



An Indian summer (Above) A still from *Freedom at Midnight Season 2*; (below) Nikkhil Advani. SONYLIV/YOUTUBE

A: The relationship between Nehru and Patel was built on mutual respect. In Season 1, when Gandhi gave the prime ministership to Nehru (despite significant support for Patel within Congress in 1946), we expected people to sit up and say, finally, someone showed what actually happened. Later, I spoke with someone close to Maniben (Patel), who said you guys got it wrong. It was not that Nehru didn't get any votes. Nehru received one vote, and that was Sardar Patel's. Gandhi came to Bombay in 1915, and till 1947, these three men spent almost every waking hour together. They knew each other's strengths and weaknesses. It is reflected in the scene after Gandhi's assassination when Nehru says to Patel, 'When your father passes away, you need the help of the big brother.'

Q: The series retains Jinnah's inaugural Karachi Assembly speech, where he envisions a Pakistan where Hindus can freely go to their temples...

A; Jinnah had a long journey from being a champion of Hindu-Muslim unity and opposing the use of religion in politics to taking on the persona of Quaid-e-Azam after he returned from self-imposed exile in London to lead the Muslim League. Otherwise, he was a South Bombay elitist lawyer and political strategist. Despite embracing this religious persona, he did not agree with everything that it represented. Five weeks before the inauguration, when (younger sister) Fatima tells him it is time to leave the Malabar Hill house, he asks, 'Do we need to pack everything?' She has to remind him that Quaid could not rule Pakistan from Bombay. He says, 'Who wants to stay here?'– but the hesitation in his expression betrayed his true feelings. As the book noted, he had fired a gun, but could not retract the bullet.

Freedom At Midnight Season 2 is streaming on SonyLIV.

SYLHET

Campaigning begins in Bangladesh for first post-Hasina national polls



AP

Bangladesh began official campaigning on Thursday for the hugely anticipated general elections next month, the first since the 2024 uprising ended the autocratic rule of Sheikh Hasina. Tarique Rahman, BNP chairman and son of former Premier Khaleda Zia, is widely seen as a leading contender for Prime Minister. AFP

BERLIN

Russia slams German spy charges, vows response for expelling official



AFP

Russia's embassy in Berlin on Thursday vowed retaliation after Germany expelled a diplomat accused of being an intelligence officer who worked as the handler of a woman arrested on spy charges. The embassy called the allegations "a ridiculous, hastily concocted provocation". AFP

BANGKOK

Fire at Cox's Bazar refugee camp displaces thousands of Rohingya



REUTERS

A massive fire destroyed hundreds of makeshift homes and displaced more than 2,000 people in a Rohingya refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, prompting calls on Thursday from relief agencies for more funding to build safer housing and help provide emergency aid. AP

SYDNEY

Gunman at large in Australia after leaving three dead, one wounded



REUTERS

Australian police said they were hunting for a gunman on the run after three people were killed and another was wounded on Thursday in the town of Lake Cargelligo in New South Wales. A report said one of the victims was the gunman's former partner, describing the incident as a suspected domestic violence attack. AFP

Trump withdraws tariffs after NATO 'agrees to Greenland framework'

President said the U.S. and NATO had 'formed the framework of a future deal with respect to Greenland and the entire Arctic Region'; European leaders have tried a mixture of flattery and tough talking to counter threats from the U.S. leader

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

U.S. President Donald Trump called off his threat of tariffs on eight European countries, including Denmark, announced last Saturday to compel them to transfer the semi-autonomous Danish territory of Greenland to the U.S.

Mr. Trump had said he would acquire the strategically located Arctic island "one way or another". The countries in question had each sent a small number of troops to Greenland earlier this month, following Mr. Trump's recent threats.



Iron fist: U.S. President Donald Trump at the World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland on Thursday. AFP

Mr. Trump announced that he was cancelling the tariffs on Wednesday evening, on his Truth Social media platform, after what he called a "very productive" meeting with Mark Rutte, the Secretary General of NATO in Davos.

Mr. Trump said the U.S. and NATO had "formed the framework of a future deal with respect to Greenland and, in fact, the entire Arctic Region" and that he would not be imposing the tariffs set to begin February 1 based on the understanding reached. The tariffs were set to kick off at a rate of 10%, increasing to 25% in June 2026.

"Additional discussions are being held concerning the Golden Dome as it pertains to Greenland," said Mr. Trump, referring to a multi-layered missile and air defence system he intends to build for the U.S.

Just prior to his discussions with Mr. Rutte, the U.S. President told a gathering in Davos that he was not going to use force to annex Greenland. Europe has been on edge over Mr. Trump's aggressive pursuit of the Arctic island Mr. Trump has suggested that Russia and China pose an imminent threat to Greenland, a claim denied by the Russians. European leaders, who in general do not share the same risk assessment on Russia and China's intentions in the Arctic, have tried a mixture of flattery and tough talking in response to Mr. Trump's threats. The European Parliament suspended the approval of a EU-U.S. trade agreement struck in 2025.

While the terms of the agreed framework appear to be under discussion, Mr. Trump said that Vice-President J.D. Vance, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, and special envoy Steve Witkoff would be among those responsible for the negotiations.

'Finger on the trigger': Iran Guards chief cautions U.S.

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

The commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guards on Thursday warned Washington that the force had its "finger on the trigger" in the wake of mass protests, as U.S. President Donald Trump said the Islamic republic still appeared interested in talks.

Guards commander General Mohammad Pakpour warned Israel and the United States "to avoid any miscalculations, by learning from historical experiences and what they learned in the 12-day imposed war, so that they do not face a more painful and regrettable fate".

Mr. Trump has repeatedly left open the option of new military action against Iran after Washington backed and joined Israel's 12-day war in June 2025.

Addressing the World Economic Forum in Davos, Mr. Trump said the U.S. struck Iranian uranium enrichment sites last year to prevent Tehran from making a nuclear weapon. Iran denies its nuclear programme is aimed at seeking the bomb.

"Can't let that happen," he said, adding: "And Iran does want to talk, and we'll talk."

Official toll

Meanwhile, Iranian authorities on Wednesday said 3,117 people were killed, providing their first official toll from the protests.

India, EU to ink new pact on defence and security, says Kallas

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

India and the European Union agreed on Wednesday to sign a new Security and Defence Partnership covering maritime security, cybersecurity and counterterrorism, the EU's highest ranking diplomat Kaja Kallas announced.

The partnership will be signed next week during the visit of European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President Antonio Costa to India, where they will be chief guests at Republic Day celebrations.

The leaders will co-chair the 16th India-EU Summit with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The preparations for the visit were going well, but were not without challenges, said Ms. Kallas, who will be accompanying the leaders to India. The visit is centred around the signing of a Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which is still being finalised.

India and the EU will adopt a new comprehensive strategic agenda next week, using a 2030 planning horizon, Ms. Kallas told European parliamentarians in Strasbourg. She noted that the EU is among India's largest trading partners and described India as "indispensable" to Europe's economic resilience.

The two sides worked on the joint statement and agenda mindful of the fact that the Summit "must deliver, taking into account the geopolitical landscape", Ms. Kallas said.

Ambitious partners

The two sides are also aiming to conclude a Security of Information Agreement, Ms. Kallas said, adding that in a dangerous world, India and the EU could benefit from working together.

"[The] EU and India are moving closer together at a time when the rules-based international order is under unprecedented pressure through wars, coercion, and economic fragmentation," she said.

Ms. Kallas told MEPs (Members of the European Parliament) that India and the EU must become more ambitious partners. "Two major democracies cannot afford to hesitate," she said.

During the visit to New Delhi, the two sides plan to conclude a Memorandum of Understanding on a comprehensive mobility framework, to facilitate the movement of students, seasonal workers, researchers and highly skilled professionals, and promoting research and innovation, Ms. Kallas said.

"In the Indo-Pacific and beyond, Europe and India can help anchor stability by defending open sea lanes, strengthening maritime domain awareness and resisting coercion in all of its forms," Ms. Kallas told parliamentarians.

Europe has to 'act now' to ensure security: Zelenskyy

Agencies
DAVOS

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Thursday blasted the EU's lack of "political will" in countering Russian leader Vladimir Putin, during a fiery address criticising some of Kyiv's top allies at the World Economic Forum.

He spoke after meeting U.S. President Donald Trump in Davos for talks on ending the war which both leaders described as positive.

But he urged European leaders to be more robust in defending democratic values in their region, as U.S. attention turns away. "Just last year, here in Davos, I ended my speech with the words: Europe needs to know how to defend itself. A year has passed. And nothing has changed. We are still in a situation where I must say the same words again," Mr. Zelenskyy said.

Ukrainian President says that documents for a deal to end the war 'nearly ready'

M. Zelenskyy said there would be two days of trilateral meetings involving the U.S., Ukraine and Russia due to begin in the United Arab Emirates on Friday. "Russians have to be ready for compromises because, you know, everybody has to be ready, not only Ukraine, and this is important for us," he said

He added that Europe needs to "act now". Russia's bigger army has managed to capture about 20% of Ukraine since hostilities began in 2014 and its invasion of 2022.

Mr. Zelenskyy said documents for a deal to end the war in Ukraine are "nearly, nearly ready." Some of the documents seek security guarantees, while others cover economic plans for the future of Ukraine.

France intercepts oil tanker from Russia

Associated Press
PARIS

France's Navy, working with intelligence provided by the United Kingdom, on Thursday intercepted an oil tanker in the Mediterranean Sea that travelled from Russia, in a mission targeting the sanctioned Russian shadow fleet, officials said.

French maritime authorities for the Mediterranean said the ship, *Grinch*, is suspected of operating with a false flag. The French Navy is escorting the ship to anchorage for more checks, the statement said. The tanker departed from the city of Murmansk in northwestern Russia, it said.

Oil revenue is a key part of Russia's economy, allowing President Vladimir Putin to pour money into the war effort against Ukraine.

Sinners makes Oscar history with record 16 nominations

Agence France-Presse
LOS ANGELES

Vampire period horror film *Sinners*, directed by Ryan Coogler, smashed the all-time Oscars record with 16 nominations, the Academy announced on Thursday. The tally included a best actor nomination for Michael B. Jordan.

One Battle After Another came in second with 13 nods including best picture, best actor for Leonardo DiCaprio and best director for Paul Thomas Anderson.

Guillermo del Toro's monster epic *Frankenstein*, Timothee Chalamet-led ping-pong drama *Marty Supreme* and Norwegian arthouse favourite *Sentimental Value* each bagged nine nominations. Period drama *Hamnet* secured eight nods including best actress for Jessie Buckley.



Film mosaic: Promo art for Oscar nominees for best picture. AP

Mr. DiCaprio, Mr. Chalamet and Mr. Jordan will battle for the best actor Oscar, along with Ethan Hawke for Broadway period drama *Blue Moon* and Wagner Moura from Brazilian political thriller *The Secret Agent*. For best actress, Ms. Buckley will compete with Emma Stone in conspiracy theorist drama *Bugonia*, Renate Reinsve in *Sentimental Value*, Kate Hudson in music biopic *Song Sung Blue*, and Rose Byrne in indie hit *If I Had Legs I'd Kick You*.

Persian-language Palme d'Or winner *It Was Just An Accident*, Spain's hippie odyssey *Sirat* and heartwrenching Palestinian docudrama *The Voice of Hind Rajab* will compete for best international film.

E-mail.ID-sectcrb_2006@yahoo.co.in ; Tel/Fax – 0671-2301751/2302751

Government of Odisha

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, CUTTACK (R&B) CIRCLE, CUTTACK

('e' – PROCUREMENT NOTICE)

Bid Identification No.CCE.Ctc.(R&B)15/2025-26

1. The Chief Construction Engineer, Cuttack (R&B) Circle, Cuttack on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites on Percentage rate basis bid in double cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for Road works as mentioned below.
2. No. of work : 10 Nos.
3. Nature of work : Road Works.
4. Class of contractor : 'B', 'A' & Special Class
5. Tender Paper Cost : Rs.10000/- (Online)
6. Available of bid document in the web site : From 02.02.2026 to 17.30 Hours of 16.02.2026
7. Date of opening of bid : Dt. 17.02.2026 at 11.00 Hours.
8. The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website https://tendersodisha.gov.in. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said web site.

B-1017: Chief Engineer (Civil), Cuttack (R&B) Circle

By E_Mail / e-Despatch : E Mail ID : serwcbaripada@gmail.com; Ph-No-06792-261343/261344, Gangraj, Baripada

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BARIPADA

Office Order No.110/ Dt.06.01.26//

2nd Corrigendum to National Competitive Bidding e_procurement Notice No.5497/Road work Dt.27.11.2025 (NCB No.-402)

Due to unavoidable circumstances the important dates of tendering process for road works are being changed as follows.

Sl No.	Item	Time Schedule as per Original NCB	Time Schedule as per Corrigendum Notice
1	Availability of Tender On-line for bidding	07.01.2026 at 11.00 AM to 22.01.2026 up to 5.00 PM	29.01.2026 at 11.00 AM to 13.02.2026 up to 5.00 PM
2	Date and Time of Seeking Tender Clarification if any	21.01.2026 up to 5.00 PM	12.02.2026 up to 05.00 PM
3	Date & Time of Opening of Technical Bid	23.01.2026 at 11.00 AM	16.02.2026 at 11.00 AM
4	Date & Time of opening of Financial Bid	Will be intimated later	Will be intimated later

Due to unavoidable circumstances the estimated cost of tendering process for Road Works are being changed as follows:- Sl No-(1) Read as Rs.912.29 Lakhs instead of Rs.879.75 Lakhs, Sl No-(2) Read as Rs.1646.96 Lakhs instead of Rs.1575.00 Lakhs, Sl No-(3) Read as Rs.614.32 Lakhs instead of Rs.615.00 Lakhs, Sl No-(4) Read as Rs.432.43 Lakhs instead of Rs.322.50 Lakhs, Sl No- (5) Read as Rs.1075.88 Lakhs instead of Rs.981.25 Lakhs, Sl No-(6) Read as Rs.451.16 Lakhs instead of Rs.416.67 Lakhs & Sl No-(7) Read as Rs.558.08 Lakhs instead of Rs.425.00 Lakhs. All other terms and conditions remain unchanged.

O-2119: Sd/- Er. A.K.Naik, Chief Construction Engineer, RW Circle, Baripada.

ODISHA MINING CORPORATION LIMITED
OMC House, Bhubaneswar-751001, Odisha
CIN: U13100OR1956SGC000313, www.omcltd.in

ODISHA MINING CORPORATION LTD. Mining Happiness

Short Notice
For sale of Cement Grade Limestone

The Odisha Mining Corporation Ltd intends to sell Cement grade Limestone produced at Ampavalli Limestone Mines, Ampavalli, Pattangi, Koraput district, Odisha through e-auction which will be conducted by MSTC Ltd. The e-auction shall be held from **11.00 A.M. to 2.00 P.M on dtd.30.01.2026.**

For details, please visit the website of MSTC i.e **www.mstcecommerce.com**.

CAD-3081 : CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (S&M)

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE : SUNDARGARH
Near Bana Durga Temple, Sankara, Sundargarh, Dist: Sundargarh-PIN-770020
Email: serw_sundargarh@yahoo.com
Via E-mail/ E-despatch

Office Order No.222// Date :.20.01.2026

1st Corrigendum

The date of availability of tender online/ date of seeking clarification/date of opening of tender for all the works invited under NIT Letter No.4409 dtd 02.01.2026 vide Bid Identification No: Online - **RWCCESNG-29 of 2025-26** are hereby modified as follows:

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender On-line for bidding	Availability of Tender On-line for bidding upto	Last Date & Time of Seeking Tender Clarification	Technical Bid Opening	Financial Bid Opening
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sundargarh	RWCCESNG-29 of 2025-26	22.01.2026 11:00 AM	10.02.2026 5:00 PM	09.02.2026 5:00 PM	11.02.2026 11:00 AM	Will be intimated separately

All other terms and Conditions are remained Unchanged.

O-2123: Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sundargarh.

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ଗ୍ରାମ୍ୟ ନିର୍ମାଣ ମଣ୍ଡଳ, ବ୍ରହ୍ମପୁର

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BERHAMPUR
(At/Po :- Ambapua, Near Income Tax Office, Berhampur-760011, Ganjam, Odisha)
(E-Mail:- serwbpr2004@yahoo.com; Tel No.:-0680-2404287)

No. e-tender // 349 // RWC// BAM// Dated 21.01.26 E-Mail/E-despatch

2nd Corrigendum to Bid Identification No. Online Tender / 48-2025-26/BPR

1) The partial modification of Road works under **MMSY-TRIP for the year 2025-26** vide above identification has been made as follows.

1.	Date of availability of tender	:	05.02.2026 to 20.02.2026 upto 5.30 PM instead of 22.01.2026 to 05.02.2026 up to 5.30 PM
2.	Last Date & Time of seeking tender clarification	:	18.02.2026 at 5.30 PM instead of 03.02.2026 at 5.30 PM
3.	Date of opening of Technical Bid	:	21.02.2026 at 11.00 AM instead of 06.02.2026 at 11.00 AM
4.	Date of opening of Financial Bid	:	Will be intimated later on.

All other contents will remain unchanged.

O-2126 : Chief Engineer, R.W.Circle, Berhampur

IN & OUT

Gujarat Giants names Jintimani as injury replacement for Titas



FILE PHOTO: EMMANUAL YOGINI

Gujarat Giants on Thursday drafted in pacer Jintimani Kalita, *right*, as a replacement for the injured Titas Sadhu for the remainder of the WPL. Titas had joined Giants from Delhi Capitals ahead of this WPL season, but did not play a single match. Jintimani has played 13 WPL games for Mumbai Indians. She joins Giants for ₹10 lakh.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Relieved I don't have to bowl to Abhishek in the nets: Arshdeep



K.R. DEEPAK

Arshdeep Singh is relieved he doesn't have to bowl too much to Abhishek Sharma, even during practice. "Abhishek always says, 'I do not want to bat against you guys'. It's good for us that he doesn't want to bat against us [Indian bowlers] too much, even in the nets. He doesn't face our bowlers often," Arshdeep quipped.

DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD

Phillips reckons Kiwis' extended stay in India has its pros and cons



K.R. DEEPAK

We've already been here (in India) for close to two weeks, and it would be one-and-a-half months by the time we are done with the World Cup. We have the opportunity to receive a lot more information than a lot of other teams, but we've been on the road for a lot longer than other teams — Kiwi all-rounder Glenn Phillips.

FIRST BLOOD

Sri Lanka gets the better of England in the opening ODI



AP

Sri Lanka scored a 19-run victory over England in the opening ODI at Colombo's R. Premadasa Stadium on Thursday. **The scores:** Sri Lanka 271/6 in 50 overs (Kusal Mendis 93, Janith Liyanage 46, Adil Rashid 3/44) bt England 252 in 49.2 overs (Ben Duckett 62, Joe Root 61, Pramod Madushan 3/39). **Toss:** Lanka; **PoM:** Dunith Wellalage.

Devine's all-round skills to the fore as Giants wallop Warriorz

The Kiwi legend scores an unbeaten 50 off 42 balls to lift the Gujarat side to 153 on a slow track and follows it up with a couple of scalps; Rajeshwari runs through the lower middle-order with a three-wicket haul as the UP side folds up for 108

WPL-4

Vivek Krishnan
VADODARA

On the back of an unbeaten half-century by Sophie Devine (50 n.o., 42b, 2x4, 3x6) and a precise display by its bowling unit, Gujarat Giants successfully defended a total of 153 for eight against UP Warriorz in the Women's Premier League on Thursday. On a sluggish strip at the Kotambi Stadium, Giants' 45-run win was utterly convincing. Left-arm spinner Rajeshwari Gayakwad, with figures of 4-0-16-3, enjoyed maximum success with the ball for the hosts.

Without Devine's knock, of course, Giants wouldn't have been in the contest in the second half of the game.

The 36-year-old New Zealander, who also took two wickets, made the most of a couple of reprieves after walking in at No. 5. She stayed through to the end, and capitalised by clearing the boundary twice in Shikha Pandey's 16-run final over.

Warriorz needed one of its top-six batters to show similar application. That wasn't to be as the visitors collapsed to 79 for six in 12.1 overs. Kiran Navgire and Meg Lanning fell inside the PowerPlay. In the eighth over, Phoebe Litchfield was also dismissed, her signature reverse-sweep – so often a productive option – off Ashleigh Gardner carrying to Renuka Singh at short third. With Harleen Deol hitting Renuka to Gardner at long-on just six balls later, the writing was on the wall.

Rajeshwari ran through Warriorz's lower middle-order.

Giants, too, had their struggles with the bat. In the PowerPlay, Danni Wyatt-Hodge and Anushka Sharma were undone by Kranti Gaud.

With boundaries hard to come by in the middle phase, Gardner tried to go after Deepti Sharma in the 10th over. Her attempt was in vain, playing all around a tossed-up delivery by the offie to fall for five off 12 deliveries.

For Giants to still mount a competitive total, the responsibility hinged on Devine. After three dot balls, the veteran slog-swept Deepti for a six over mid-wicket to get off the mark.

It was a clear indication of the type of track on offer that Devine, too, slowed down after that maximum. But it was a testament to her experience that she didn't succumb to the pressure.



Superb show: Devine proved to be the difference as Giants kept their playoffs hopes alive. FILE PHOTO

SCOREBOARD

GUJARAT GIANTS
Beth Mooney c Kiran b Ecclestone 38 *(34b, 5x4)*, Danni Wyatt-Hodge b Kranti 14 *(8b, 3x4)*, Anushka Sharma c Shweta b Kranti 14 *(8b, 3x4)*, Ashleigh Gardner b Deepti 5 *(12b)*, Sophie Devine (not out) 50 *(42b, 2x4, 3x6)*, Bharti Fulmali run out 5 *(5b)*, Kanika Ahuja c Kiran b Tryon 6 *(5b, 1x4)*, Kashvee Gautam b Ecclestone 11 *(6b, 1x6)*, Renuka Singh run out 1 *(1b)*, Happy Kumari (not out) 0 *(0b)*; Extras (lb-1, nb-1, w-7): 9; Total (for eight wkts. in 20 overs): 153.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-23 (Wyatt-Hodge, 2.6 overs), 2-43 (Anushka, 4.6), 3-65 (Gardner, 9.2), 4-93 (Mooney, 12.4), 5-105 (Bharti, 15.1), 6-115 (Kanika, 16.3), 7-131 (Kashvee, 18.2), 8-145 (Renuka, 19.4).

WARRIORZ BOWLING
Kranti 4-0-18-2, Shikha 4-0-53-0, Deepti 2-0-16-1, Ecclestone 4-0-22-2, Tryon 4-0-32-1, Asha 2-0-11-0.

UP WARRIORZ
Meg Lanning b Kashvee 14 *(10b, 2x4)*, Kiran Navgire st. Mooney b Renuka 0 *(1b)*, Phoebe Litchfield c Renuka b Gardner 32 *(27b, 5x4)*, Harleen Deol c Gardner b Renuka 3 *(12b)*, Chloe Tryon (not out) 30 *(22b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Deepti Sharma lbw b Rajeshwari 4 *(7b)*, Shweta Sehrawat st. Mooney b Rajeshwari 3 *(6b)*, Asha Sobhana c Gardner b Rajeshwari 7 *(11b, 1x4)*, Sophie Ecclestone c & b Devine 1 *(4b)*, Shikha Pandey run out 1 *(3b)*, Kranti Gaud b Devine 1 *(2b)*; Extras (lb-2, w-10): 12; Total (in 17.3 overs): 108.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-2 (Kiran, 0.2), 2-39 (Lanning, 4.5), 3-57 (Litchfield, 7.5), 4-59 (Harleen, 8.5), 5-67 (Deepti, 10.3), 6-79 (Shweta, 12.1), 7-93 (Asha, 14.4), 8-94 (Ecclestone, 15.2), 9-97 (Shikha, 16.1).

GIANTS BOWLING
Renuka 4-0-20-2, Kashvee 3-0-31-1, Devine 3.3-0-16-2, Gardner 3-0-23-1, Rajeshwari 4-0-16-3.

Toss: Warriorz; **PoM:** Rajeshwari.
Gujarat Giants won by 45 runs.

India will aim to fine-tune its arsenal in the second T20I

NZ IN INDIA

C. Shyam Sundar
RAIPUR

Team India began its final rehearsal for the upcoming T20 World Cup in style, thumping New Zealand on the back of a commanding batting display in Nagpur on Wednesday.

Abhishek Sharma's blitz at the top and Rinku Singh's fireworks at the end powered the Men in Blue to a mammoth score as the Kiwis were batted out of the contest.

The teams have now moved to the Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Stadium here for the second T20I on Friday with the home side looking to fine-tune its preparations further.

Abhishek and Rinku's excellence apart, skipper Suryakumar Yadav showed signs of regaining his form, which would have delighted the think-tank. The team will be hoping the smooth-stroking Sanju Samson, back at the top, can make it count and hit the straps leading into the T20 showpiece.

Southpaw Ishan Kishan, back in the national set-up after a hiatus, who missed out on an opportunity to score big, falling after scoring two boundaries, would be keen to get cracking.

All eyes will be on the ultra-aggressive Abhishek, who waded into the Kiwi attack, plundering eight sixes in his 35-ball 84. His form will be crucial to India's fortunes in this series and the World Cup to follow.

The importance of Hardik Pandya's presence in the side can't be overemphasised and he struck some lusty blows before Rinku took over in game one.

The irrepressible all-rounder then provided a breakthrough with the ball as the Indians made early inroads.

Despite Glenn Phillips' onslaught, the visiting side never appeared to be in the hunt and will look for an improved performance from the batters. The openers – Devon Conway and Tim Robinson – aren't ones to strike terror into the opposition bowlers, but will need to kick on quickly.

All that is easier said than done against an Indian attack comprising Jasprit Bumrah, Arshdeep Singh, Hardik and Varun Chakaravarthy, who can bamboozle the best batters.

The only concern for the Men in Blue would be the fitness of vice-captain Axar Patel, who injured himself while bowling in the first match and couldn't complete his full quota. Incidentally, he was the player-of-the match in a win in the first and only T20I to be played here, against Australia in 2023.

A lacklustre show by the bowlers let the Kiwis down in Nagpur and they will be eager to get back to their best.

The massive total put up by India in game one probably negated the dew factor.

Dew is expected during the second match and no score could be safe as South Africa showed in an ODI here in December 2025.



Positive sign: Suryakumar's flicker of a return to form bodes well for India in the build-up to the T20 World Cup. K.R. DEEPAK

The teams (from):

India: Suryakumar Yadav (Capt.), Axar Patel (Vice-capt.), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson (wk), Shreyas Iyer, Hardik Pandya, Shivam Dube, Rinku Singh, Jasprit Bumrah, Harshit Rana, Arshdeep Singh, Kuldeep Yadav, Varun Chakaravarthy, Ishan Kishan (wk) and Ravi Bishnoi.

New Zealand: Mitchell Santner (Capt.), Michael Bracewell, Mark Chapman, Devon Conway (wk), Jacob Duffy, Zak Foulkes, Matt Henry, Kyle Jamieson, Bevon Jacobs, Daryl Mitchell, James Neesham, Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Tim Robinson, Ish Sodhi and Kristian Clarke.

Match starts at 7 p.m.

We won't play in India, but hopeful of justice from ICC: Bangladesh

Press Trust of India
DHAKA

A defiant Bangladesh on Thursday refused to send its national cricket team for next month's T20 World Cup in India after the ICC rejected its demand for a change of venue, effectively paving the way for Scotland to take the country's place.

Bangladesh had been served an ultimatum by the world body on Wednesday to either agree to travel to India or risk being replaced as there was no credible threat to the safety of their players, officials or fans there.

The country was given time till Thursday to make its decision.

Scotland is next in line based on team rankings for the tournament starting on February 7.

However, taking a hardline position, Bangladesh's sports advisor Asif Nazrul, after a meeting with national team players, announced that the ICC's assessment was not acceptable to them.

"We cannot comment on this developing situation. If the circumstances change, we will issue an official media release on our website," Charles Paterson, head of communications of Cricket Scotland responded to a query from PTI.

"While our cricketers have worked hard to qualify for the World Cup, the security risk regarding playing in India remains unchanged. This concern is not based on abstract analysis...," Nazrul said in a press conference while declaring that the country won't play in India.

"We are not giving up hope yet; our team is ready. We expect the ICC to provide justice by considering our genuine security risks and allowing us to play in Sri Lanka," he added.

Bangladesh is scheduled to play four games in India (three in Kolkata and one in Mumbai).

Soorma's big win not enough

HIL - MEN

Y.B. Sarangi
BHUBANESWAR

JSW Soorma Hockey Club rode on Jeremy Hayward's fantastic four to thrash SG Pipers 6-1 in the final round-robin league match, but narrowly fell short of qualifying for the playoffs of the Hockey India League at the Kalinga Stadium here on Thursday.

Soorma, needing a win by seven clear goals to displace HIL GC from the fourth spot, were tied with Hyderabad Toofans and HIL GC on 11 points but finished fifth.

Encouraged by their coach Philippe Goldberg's call to score twice in each quarter, Soorma pumped in three goals inside 11 minutes. Long balls in the air and along the carpet, mixed with smart passing, helped Soorma breach Pipers' defence frequently. Hayward launched two low flicks to convert Soorma's first two short corners.

Gurjant Singh dispossessed Gareth Furlong near Pipers' circle and passed it on to Lucas Martinez to make it 3-0.

Pipers did well to reply with some attacks, but struggled with their finishing. Soorma scored their fourth as Hayward unleashed an angled flick to achieve his hat-trick early in the third period.

Pipers patiently held the ball and pulled one back through Tomas Domene's powerful short corner goal. Hayward's fourth off a penalty stroke restored Soorma's cushion but that was not enough for a spot in the next round as Pipers defended with determination to spoil Soorma's plans.



So close: Hayward's Soorma finished fifth. BISWARANJAN ROUT

The result: JSW Soorma Hockey Club 6 (Jeremy Hayward 2-pc, 7-pc, 34-pc, 45-ps, Lucas Martinez 11, Nicolas Keenan 47) bt SG Pipers 1 (Tomas Domene 43).

The table: 1. Vedanta Kalinga Lancers: Played 7, Wins 4, Wins (s.o.) 2, Loss 1, Loss (s.o.) 0, Goals For 16, Goals Against 8, Goal Difference 8, Points 16; **2. Ranchi Royals:** 7, 3, 1, 2, 1, 25, 18, 7, 12; **3. Hyderabad Toofans:** 7, 3, 0, 2, 2, 17, 11, 6, 11; **4. HIL GC:** 7, 3, 0, 2, 2, 21, 18, 3, 11; **5. JSW Soorma Hockey Club:** 7, 3, 1, 3, 0, 16, 14, 2, 11; **6. Accord Tamil Nadu Dragons:** 7, 1, 3, 2, 1, 19, 22, -3, 10; **7. Shrachi Bengal Tigers:** 7, 3, 0, 4, 0, 16, 24, -8, 9; **8. S.G. Pipers:** 7, 1, 0, 5, 1, 14, 29, -15, 4.

Friday's schedule: Eliminator: Toofans vs. HIL GC (5 p.m.); **Qualifier 1:** Lancers vs. Royals (7.30 p.m.).

Practice and prayers — Arshdeep's success mantra

Sankar Narayanan E.H.
NAGPUR

Braver batters and flatter decks have redefined the ceiling of T20 run-making. The series opener between India and New Zealand at the VCA Stadium, which witnessed a staggering 428-run aggregate, was just the latest example.

Pacer Arshdeep Singh's recipe for staying relevant during these games involves a bit of divine intervention and a whole lot of preparation.

"The first thing I do is take God's name: 'The wicket is looking flat... please save me,'" he quipped after India's 48-run win on Wednesday.

"All the planning is done in meetings and during practice. When you come on game-day, your target is to execute those plans."

The left-arm seamer, who bowled a creditable spell (4-0-31-1) amid the carnage, maintains that his rhythm is not hinged on whether he plays every game.

"There are a lot of benefits to being in and out of the side. Just like I'm in and out of the team, the ball is also swinging in and out really well," he joked.

That Hardik Pandya shared the new ball with the Punjab pacer, while holding back Jasprit Bumrah, was attributed to India's operational flexibility.

"The team's demands are considered while choosing the order of batters, bowlers, or even where a particular fielder should field.

"We must be prepared to adapt in these three aspects of the game. And that is our main motto," added Arshdeep.



Holding his own: Arshdeep returned impressive figures in the high-scoring opener at Nagpur. K.R. DEEPAK

INBRIEF





Rickelton, Stubbs replace de Zorzi, Ferreira in SA squad

Ryan Rickelton and Tristan Stubbs, on Wednesday, replaced the injured duo of Tony de Zorzi and Donovan Ferreira in the South Africa squad for next month's T20 World Cup. De Zorzi had suffered a right hamstring muscle tear during South Africa's tour of India late last year, while Ferreira was injured during the ongoing SA20 tournament. The last edition's runner-up is also sweating over the availability of David Miller for the ICC event.



Top players to battle it out in Mumbai Open tennis

A strong international field will figure in the fifth edition of the L&T Mumbai Open, part of the WTA 125K Series, will be held at the Maharashtra State Lawn Tennis Association (MSLTA) in Mumbai. The 86th-ranked Kiwi Lulu Sun heads the list while Latvia's Darja Semenistaja (98), France's Leolia Jeanjean (103), Australia's Kimberly Birrell (94), Chinese Taipei's Joanna Garland (117), The Netherlands' Arantxa Rus and last year's runner-up Mananchaya Sawangkaew of Thailand. The qualifying rounds will be held on January 30 and 31 while the main draw will begin on February 2.

Poonawalla to make a 'strong and competitive' bid for RCB

The ownership transfer process of Royal Challengers Bengaluru gained momentum on Thursday as Adar Poonawalla said he will be tabling a "strong and competitive" bid for the IPL franchise. "Over the next few months, we will be putting in a strong and competitive bid for RCB, one of the best teams in the IPL," tweeted Poonawalla, CEO of Pune-based vaccine-maker Serum Institute of India. He did not reveal the specifics – timeline or potential bid amount.

Mercedes unveils 2026 F1 car for new 2026 rules

Mercedes boss Toto Wolff said on Thursday that F-1 would undergo "significant change" in 2026 as the team unveiled its new car. Fresh chassis and engine regulations are being introduced this season in a major shake-up in the sport. The team released digital images of its new W17 car on Thursday, describing the 2026 season as "the biggest technical shake-up in the sport's history".

LIVE TELECAST

Ranji Trophy: JioHotstar, 8.45 a.m.
Men's U-19 World Cup: SS Select 2 & JioHotstar, 1 p.m.
Australian Open: Sony Sports Ten 2, 3, 5 & LIV, 1.30 p.m. & 5.30 a.m. (Saturday)
India vs New Zealand: 2nd T20I, Star Sports 2 & JioHotstar, 7 p.m.
HIL: Sony Sports Ten 1 & LIV, 7.30 p.m.
Bundesliga: Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 1 a.m. (Saturday)
Serie A: DAZN, 1.15 a.m. (Saturday)
LaLiga: FanCode, 1.30 a.m. (Saturday)

Vidarbha's Yash Rathod stands tall with an unbeaten century

Blends defence with measured authority; adds 93 with debutant Binkar after team is reduced to 45 for four; Pacer Raju returns a four-wicket haul

RANJI TROPHY

Sahil Mathur
ANANTAPUR

Almost as if the hangover of white-ball cricket hadn't worn off, Vidarbha lost its top order inside the first hour before Yash Rathod made his side recall a key skillset in the longer format – patience.

Rathod's 170-ball century blended defence with measured authority to pull Vidarbha back into the contest after pacer K.S. Raju had Andhra in control on the opening day of the Ranji Trophy Group 'A' fixture here at the Anantapur cricket ground on Thursday.

Away captain Harsh Dubey risked batting first despite the morning moisture, only to find Vidarbha, which ended the day at 267 for seven, reduced to 45 for four.



Showing the way: Rathod's patient knock took Vidarbha to 267 for seven on the first day.
FILE PHOTO: M. PERIASAMY

As the day wore on and conditions eased, Rathod demonstrated that the time in the middle was all the surface required.

Aman Mokhade began with a punch and followed it up with authoritative pulls.

However, Raju spoiled his party with a nip-backer after luring Mokhade into a drive.

Raju then sliced through the middle order. Danish Malewar edged to a sharp diving catch by Nitish Kumar Reddy at slip, while Atharva Taide fell for an expansive drive behind.

R. Samarth found the cover boundary before falling to the same shot, caught by K.S. Bharat off Raju.

Rebuilding

Batting at No. 5, Rathod guided debutant Rohit Binkar through a rebuilding phase. The pair resisted the urge to force the pace. Post lunch, that patience paid off as boundaries came more freely.

Binkar looked assured during his 37 as he stitched a 93-run stand with Rathod before edging down the leg side off K. Saiteja.

Nitish then returned to trap skipper Dubey in front, but Rathod found support in Darshan Nalkande to keep Vidarbha afloat with a 76-run stand.

Nalkande fell, chipping straight back to left-arm spinner Saurabh Kumar. Rathod's century, however, ended Vidarbha's day on a high after a poor start.

Scoreboard:

Vidarbha — 1st innings: Atharva Taide c K.S. Bharat b Raju 13, Aman Mokhade b Raju 21, Danish Malewar c Nitish b Raju 0, R. Samarth c K.S. Bharat b Raju 9, Yash Rathod (batting) 104, Rohit Binkar c K.S. Bharat b Saiteja 37, Harsh Dubey lbw b Nitish 9, Darshan Nalkande c & b Saurabh 36, Nachiket Bhute (batting) 25; Extras (b-4, lb-2, nb-1, w-6): 13; Total (for seven wkts. in 81 overs): 267.

Fall of wickets: 1-29, 2-33, 3-38, 4-45, 5-138, 6-156, 7-232.

Andhra bowling: Nitish 14-3-51-1, Sasikanth 14-2-50-0, Raju 16-5-51-4, Saiteja 12-2-34-1, Vijay 15-1-47-0, Saurabh 10-1-28-1.

RANJI SCORES — 6TH ROUND (DAY ONE)

Elite: Group A: At Bhubaneshwar: Tamil Nadu 281/7 in 83 overs (S.R. Athish 50, Pradosh Ranjan Paul 78, Andre Siddarth 56, Nidhish Rajagopal 54 batting) vs. Odisha. **Toss:** Odisha. **At Anantapur:** Vidarbha 267/7 in 81 overs (Yash Rathod 104 batting, Kalidindi Raju 4/51) vs. Andhra Pradesh. **Toss:** Vidarbha. **At Lucknow:** Jharkhand 279/1 in 86 overs (Shikar Mohan 78, Sharandeep Singh 128 batting, Arayaman Sen 64 batting) vs. Uttar Pradesh. **Toss:** Uttar Pradesh. **At Vadodara:** Nagaland 206 in 57 overs vs. Baroda 139/1 in 31 overs (Jyotsnil Singh 55, Shivalik Sharma 80 batting). **Toss:** Nagaland. **Group B: At Pune:** Goa 209 in 82.1 overs in (Snehal Kauthankar 73, Jalaj Saxena 6/79) vs. Maharashtra 19/0 in 5 overs. **Toss:** Goa. **At Thiruvananthapuram:** Kerala 139 in 56 overs (Sachin Baby 41, B. Aparajith 49, Nishunk Birla 4/40) vs. Chandigarh 142/1 in 34 overs (Arjun Azad 78 batting, Manan Vohra 51 batting). **Toss:** Kerala. **At Rajkot:** Saurashtra 172 in 47.1 overs (Jay Gohil 82, Harpreet Brar 6/38) & 24/3 in 6 overs vs. Punjab 139 in 40.1 overs (Prabhsimran Singh 44, Parth Bhut 5/33). **Toss:** Saurashtra. **At Bengaluru:** Madhya Pradesh 244/5 in 90 overs (Venkatesh Iyer 87) vs. Karnataka. **Toss:** Madhya Pradesh. **Group C: At Agartala:** Tripura 266 in 82.5 overs (Sridam Paul 75, Swapnil Singh 60 n.o., Mayank Mishra 4/59) vs. Uttarakhand 7/0 in 3 overs. **Toss:** Uttarakhand. At Fulung: Assam 187/6 in 86 overs vs. Haryana. **Toss:** Haryana. At Kalyani: Bengal 340/4 in 86 overs (Abhimanyu Eswaran 81, Sudip Chatterjee 140 batting) vs. Services. **Toss:** Services. **At Nadiad:** Gujarat 175 in 55.4 overs (Jaymeet Patel 57) vs. Railways 78/2 in 26 overs. **Toss:** Railways. **Group D: At Jaipur:** Himachal Pradesh 314/4 in 90 overs (Innesh Mahajan 40, Ankush Bains 72, Pukhraj Mann 118, Nikhil Gangta 66 batting) vs. Rajasthan. **Toss:** Himachal. **At Bengaluru:** Delhi 216 in 67.5 overs (Ayush Doseja 104 n.o.) vs. Chhattisgarh 52/0 in 17 overs. **Toss:** Delhi. **At Hyderabad:** Mumbai 332/4 in 87 overs (Siddhesh Lad 104, Sarfaraz Khan 142 batting) vs. Hyderabad. **Toss:** Hyderabad. **At Puducherry:** Pondicherry 233 in 86.4 overs (Ajay Rohera 94) vs. J&K 0/0 in 1 over. **Toss:** Pondicherry. **Plate: Final: At Patna**: Bihar 328/7 in 88 overs (Mangal Mahrour 43, Akash Raj 50, Sakibul Gani 108, Bipin Saurabh 75 batting) vs. Manipur. **Toss:** Manipur.

A dubious decision spells doom as Gill falls for duck

Amol Karhadkar
RAJKOT

The 'C' ground at the Niranjan Shah Stadium complex offered the unmistakable feel of a routine domestic fixture: an open-air venue, compact dressing rooms, temporary enclosures for selectors and invitees, and a spectator count that barely exceeded the number of personnel on the field.

It was in these modest surroundings that Shubman Gill, India's Test captain recently left out of the Men's T20 World Cup squad, was hoping to make the most of valuable game time and keep Punjab's faint Ranji Trophy quarterfinal hopes alive against Saurashtra. Instead, it turned out to be a day of misfortunes for the stylish right-hander. On a turning surface, Gill lost the toss. When the hosts were bowled out for 172, the handful of spectators – largely families of the Saurashtra players – sensed that conditions would make life uncomfortable for the visiting batters.

Gill had to wait as Punjab sent in the left-handed Nehal Wadhera at No. 3 to counter the left-arm spin trio. When Wadhera fell to Parth Bhut, Gill strode out.

As he walked in, Manan – the young son of Saurashtra batter Arpit Vasavada – shouted "first-ball wicket" in anticipation. That delivery was negotiated safely, but the next one from Bhut slid on marginally, stayed low, beat Gill's forward defensive prod and struck him on the pad. Saurashtra appealed in unison and umpire Vinod Seshan raised the finger.

Gill stood rooted for a moment, visibly surprised. It appeared the ball may have brushed the inside edge before hitting the pad, but with no broadcast coverage, the decision stood.

Gukesh beats Nguyen; Fedoseev shocks Arjun

CHESS

Press Trust of India
WIJK AAN ZEE

World champion D. Gukesh ended his spate of draws by defeating Thai Dai Van Nguyen of Czech Republic but overnight joint leader Arjun Erigaisi was shocked by Vladimir Fedoseev of Slovenia in the fifth round of Tata Steel Masters chess here.

Gukesh's timely victory ahead of the first rest day on Thursday put him on three points out of a possible five and went up to joint fourth spot behind three leaders.

While the game between Hans Niemann of the USA and Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan ended in draw, the two were joined on 3.5 points by Javokhir Sindarov. Erigaisi slipped to joint seventh on 2.5 points, a point ahead of two other Indians – Aravindh Chithambaram and R. Praggnanandhaa.

The results (round 5): R. Praggnanandhaa (1.5) drew with Anish Giri (1.5); Arjun Erigaisi (2.5) lost to Vladimir Fedoseev (3); Thai Dai Van Nguyen (1.5) lost to D. Gukesh (3); Jorden van Foreest (3) drew with Matthias Bluebaum (2.5); Hans Moke Niemann (3.5) drew with Nodirbek Abdusattorov (3.5); Vincent Keymer (2.5) bt Aravindh Chithambaram (1.5); Javokhir Sindarov (3.5) bt Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus (2).



Scoring at will: Kane heads in Bayern's opening goal against Union Saint-Gilloise. AP

Liverpool cruises; Bayern through to last-16 stage

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

Liverpool eased to a 3-0 win in Marseille in the Champions League on Wednesday as Harry Kane's double earned Bayern Munich a 2-0 victory against Union Saint-Gilloise that secured a place in the last 16 for the German giant.

Mohamed Salah made his first appearance for his club since returning from the Africa Cup of Nations, but he was not among the scorers.

Meanwhile, Bayern joined table-toppers Arsenal in guaranteeing a top-eight finish with a game to spare, and therefore a last-16 spot. Newcastle United was too strong for PSV at St James' Park, running out 3-0 winners.

Newcastle is in the top eight before completing the league phase away to reigning champion Paris Saint-Germain next week.

Chelsea is eighth after edging out Cypriot minnows Pafos 1-0 at Stamford Bridge thanks to a Moises Caicedo header in the 78th minute.

Barcelona is among the teams involved in the fight for direct last-16 access after it came from behind to defeat Slavia Prague 4-2.

Atletico Madrid drew 1-1 away to Galatasaray.

Atalanta's top-eight hopes were hit as it lost 3-2 at home to Athletic Bilbao, with the Basque side reviving its hopes of making the play-off round. Juventus continued its Champions League recovery with a third straight European win, beating Benfica 2-0.

The results: Galatasaray 1 (Llorente 20-og) drew with Atletico Madrid 1 (Simeone 4); Qarabag 3 (Duran 4, 80, Mustafazade 90+4) bt Eintracht Frankfurt 2 (Can Uzun 10, Chaibi 78-pen); Atalanta 2 (Scamacca 16, Krstovic 88) lost to Athletic Bilbao 3 (Guruzeta 58, Serrano 70, Navarro 74).

Bayern Munich 2 (Kane 52, 55-pen) bt Union Saint-Gilloise 0; Chelsea 1 (Caicedo 78) bt Pafos 0; Juventus 2 (Thuram 55, McKennie 64) bt Benfica 0.

Marseille 0 lost to Liverpool 3 (Szoboszlai 45+1, Rulli 72-og, Gakpo 90+3); Newcastle 3 (Wissa 8, Gordon 30, Barnes 65) bt PSV Eindhoven 0; Slavia Prague 2 (Kusej 10, Lewandowski 44-og) bt Barcelona 4 (Lopez 34, 42, Olmo 63, Lewandowski 71).

Harshita stars for Maharashtra Kesari

Sports Bureau
NOIDA

Harshita Mor overcame a massive point deficit to overthrow and pin Hannah Ojo Damola to the mat in closing stage of the 76kg bout, winning by fall and securing the tie and full points for Maharashtra Kesari against UP Dominators in Pro Wrestling League.

With both teams tied on four points, Maharashtra Kesari, which won the tie 5-4, moved to second on the table with 14 bout wins behind UP Dominators, which has won 20 bouts.

The results: Maharashtra Kesari bt UP Dominators 5-4 **Men: 57kg:** Atish Todkar (Maharashtra Kesari) bt Rahul Deswal (UP Dominators) 15-13; **65kg:** Tevanyan Vazgen (Maharashtra Kesari) bt Vishal Kaliraman (UP Dominators) 4-3; **74kg:** Yash (Maharashtra Kesari) bt Abhimanyu Mandwal (UP Dominators) 5-2; **86kg:** Mykhailov Vasyl (UP Dominators) bt Amit (Maharashtra Kesari) 15-3; **125kg:** Robert Baran (Maharashtra Kesari) bt Jaspooran Singh (UP Dominators) 10-2. **Women: 53kg:** Antim Panghal (UP Dominators) bt Yusneylis Guzman Lopez (Maharashtra Kesari) 5-0; **57kg:** Tapsya Gahlawat (UP Dominators) bt Manisha Bhanvala (Maharashtra Kesari) 12-9; **62kg:** Nisha Dahiya (UP Dominators) bt Bilyana Dudova Zhivkova (Maharashtra Kesari) 8-1; **76kg:** Harshita Mor (Maharashtra Kesari) bt Hannah Ojo Damola (UP Dominators) by Fall 11-13.

Sindhu and Lakshya make it to the quarterfinals of Indonesia Masters

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India
JAKARTA

Indian shuttlers P.V. Sindhu and Lakshya Sen entered the quarterfinals of Indonesia Masters badminton tournament after securing straight-game wins in their respective round-of-16 matches here on Thursday.

However, it was curtains for K. Srikanth, Anmol Kharb and the men's doubles pair of A. Hariharan and M.R. Arjun in the round of 16.

Lakshya, seeded seventh, prevailed 21-10, 21-11 over Hong Kong China's Jason Gunawan in a contest that lasted a little over half an hour.

Fifth seed Sindhu, a two-time Olympic-medallist, notched up a 21-19, 21-18 triumph over Line Hojmark Kjaerfeldt of Denmark in her pre-quarterfinal that took 43 minutes to wind up.

This was Sindhu's fifth win over the Dane in their six clashes so far.

It took just 32 minutes for fourth seed Chou Tien-Chen of Taiwan to get the better of Srikanth 21-11, 21-10.

Anmol let slip an advantage against Nozomi Okuhara of Japan by losing 21-16, 14-21, 11-21 in four minutes short of an hour.

The Malaysian pair of Man Wei Chong and Tee Kai Wun, seeded third, put it past Hariharan and Arjun 21-17, 9-21, 21-16 in 54 minutes.

The results (pre-quarterfinals): Men: Lakshya Sen bt Jason Gunawan (HK) 21-10, 21-11; Chou Tien-Chen (Tpe) bt K. Srikanth 21-11, 21-10.

Doubles: Man Wei Chong & Tee Kai Wun (Mas) bt A. Hariharan & M.R. Arjun 21-17, 9-21, 21-16.

Women: P.V. Sindhu bt Line Hojmark Kjaerfeldt (Den) 21-19, 21-18.

Nozomi Okuhara (Jpn) bt Anmol Kharb 16-21, 21-14, 21-11.

Djokovic and Wawrinka roll back the years to win in contrasting styles

The Serbian has it easy while registering his 399th victory in Grand Slam matches; the Swiss veteran prevails in a five-setter to become the first man over 40 to reach the third round of a Major since 1978; Sinner cruises but end of the road for Tsitsipas and Shapovalov; Keys to meet Pliskova

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Associated Press
MELBOURNE

Novak Djokovic and Stan Wawrinka made it a day for the ages at the Australian Open.

Djokovic improved to 399 wins in Grand Slam matches with a 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 victory over Francesco Maestrelli on Thursday, making the 38-year-old, 24-time Major winner just one shy of becoming the first player ever to 400.

He's aiming to win an unprecedented 25th Grand Slam title.

And if he does, he'll beat Ken Rosewall's record (aged 37 in 1972) as the oldest man in the Open era to win a Major singles championship.

The Rosewall name was prominent on Day 5 at Melbourne Park, where he was among the invited VIPs.

Wawrinka, at 40 years and 296 days, became the first man over 40 to reach the third round of a Major since Rosewall in 1978.

Day 5 in numbers

1 Vacherot becomes the first Monegasque man to reach the third round at a Slam

24 Swiatek becomes the first woman to reach the round-of-32 of the first 24 Grand Slams in a single decade

37 Djokovic remains unbeaten against qualifiers and lucky losers in Majors, a record

49 Wawrinka overtakes Federer (48) for most five-setters at Grand Slams

40y 296d Wawrinka is the oldest to win multiple matches at a Major (since 1987 when the 128-player draw was introduced at the Grand Slams)

7 USA is the first country with seven women (Gauff, Pegula, Keys, Jovic, Baptiste, Stearns and Anisimova) in the third round of the Australian Open. It had achieved a similar feat in 2015

8 Khachanov is the first man to reach the third round of the Melbourne Major for at least eight consecutive seasons after Federer (21 between 2000 and 2020)

17 Pegula has moved into the third round of a Major for the 17th time in her career. Only Swiatek (23) and Sabalenka (20) have more since the start of the 2020 season

19 Sinner is the second man (after del Potro - 12) to be undefeated against opponents at their home Slams (minimum 10 matches)



FRIDAY'S PICKS

WOMEN
1-Sabalenka vs Potapova
3-Gauff vs Baptiste
7-Paolini vs 29-Jovic
8-Andreeva vs Ruse
12-Svitolina vs 23-Shnaider

MEN
1-Alcaraz vs 32-Moutet
3-Zverev vs 26-Norrie
6-De Minaur vs 29-Tiafoe
10-Bublik vs Etcheverry
11-Medvedev vs Marozsan

COMPILED BY ANIRUDH VELAMURI

IMPORTANT RESULTS

Men: Second round: 5-Musetti (Ita) bt Sonego (Ita) 6-3, 6-3, 6-4; Machac (Cze) bt 31-Tsitsipas (Gre) 6-4, 3-6, 7-6(5), 7-6(5); Wawrinka (Sui) bt Gea (Fra) 4-6, 6-3, 3-6, 7-5, 7-6 (10-3); 9-Fritz (USA) bt Kopriva (Cze) 6-1, 6-4, 7-6(4); 16-Mensik (Cze) bt Jodar (Esp) 6-2, 6-4, 6-4; 4-Djokovic (Srb) bt Maestrelli (Ita) 6-3, 6-2, 6-2; 8-Shelton (USA) bt Sweeny (Aus) 6-3, 6-2, 6-2; 30-Vacherot (Mon) bt Hijikata (Aus) 6-1, 6-3, 4-6, 6-2; Cilic (Cro) bt 21-Shapovalov (Can) 6-4, 6-3, 6-2; 15-Khachanov (Rus) bt Basavareddy (USA) 6-1, 6-4, 6-3; 22-Darderi (Ita) bt Baez (Arg) 6-3, 1-6, 6-4, 6-3; 2-Sinner (Ita) bt Duckworth (Aus) 6-1, 6-4, 6-2; 12-Ruud (Nor) bt Munar (Esp) 6-3, 7-5, 6-4.

Doubles: First round: Sriram Balaji (Ind) & Oberleitner (Aut) bt Thomson (Aus) & Herbert (Fra) 7-6(4), 3-6, [10-8].

Women: Second round: 6-Pegula (USA) bt Kessler (USA) 6-0, 6-2; Selekhmeteva (Rus) bt 25-Badosa (Esp) 6-4, 6-4; 9-Keys (USA) bt Krueger (USA) 6-1, 7-5; 13-Noskova (Cze) bt Preston (Aus) 6-2, 4-6, 6-2; Wang (Chn) bt 24-Ostapenko (Lat) 4-6, 6-4, 6-4; 4-Anisimova (USA) bt Siniakova (Cze) 6-1, 6-4; 21-Mertens (Bel) bt Uchijima (Jpn) 6-3, 6-1; 16-Osaka (Jpn) bt Cirstea (Rom) 6-3, 4-6, 6-2; 31-Kalinskaya (Rus) bt Grabher (Aut) 6-3, 6-3; 2-Swiatek (Pol) bt Bouzkova (Cze) 6-2, 6-3; 5-Rybakina (Kaz) bt Gracheva (Fra) 7-5, 6-2; Bartunkova (Cze) bt 10-Bencic (Sui) 6-3, 0-6, 6-4;

Mixed doubles: First round: 6-Putz (Ger) & Zhang (Chn) bt Yuki (Ind) & Melichar-Martinez (USA) 6-4, 7-6(3)

Fallen seeds: Men: 21-Shapovalov, 31-Tsitsipas. **Women:** 10-Bencic, 24-Ostapenko, 25-Badosa.

Longest match

It took a four-and-a-half hour 4-6, 6-3, 3-6, 7-5, 7-6 (10-3) comeback victory over 21-year-old qualifier Arthur Gea in the longest match of the 2026 tournament so far.

Wawrinka, who is retiring at the end of the year, was one of three high-profile matches that finished around the same time, with Jannik Sinner continuing his bid for an Australian Open three-peat after beating James Duckworth 6-1, 6-4, 6-2 on Rod Laver Arena.

Eighth-seeded Ben Shelton, a semifinalist here last year, reached the third round with a 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 win over Australian qualifier Dane Sweeny.

Two men's seeds tumbled: Marin Cilic, the 2014 US Open winner, ousted No. 21 Denis Shapovalov and Tomas Machac upset 2023 runner-up Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-4, 3-6, 7-6(5), 7-6(5).

Defending champion Madison Keys was down a double break in the second set before rallying to beat Ashlyn Krueger 6-1, 7-5 and advancing to a third-round match against former No. 1 Karolina Pliskova.

In that tough quarter of the draw, No. 4 Amanda Anisimova fended off doubles champion Katerina Siniakova 6-1, 6-4 and sixth-seeded Jessica Pegula won 6-0, 6-2 over McCartney Kessler.

Bencic ousted

Pegula will next face Oksana Selekhmeteva, who upset 2025 semifinalist Paula Badosa 6-4, 6-4, No. 5 Elena Rybakina beat Varvara Gracheva and No. 10 Belinda Bencic was ousted by Nikola Bartunkova.

Iga Swiatek beat Marie Bouzkova 6-2, 6-3 and later said she's been trying to take lessons from Djokovic's attitude to sustained success and longevity.

Meanwhile in men's doubles, the Indo-Austrian pair of Sriram Balaji and Neil Oberleitner got the better of of Australian Jordan Thomson and Pierre-Hugues Herbert of France 7-6(4), 3-6, [10-8] to make the second round.

However, in mixed doubles, Yuki Bhambri and his American partner Nicole Melichar-Martinez crashed out in the first round, losing to the German-Chinese duo of Tim Putz and Zhang Shuai 6-3 1-6, [10-6].

Former India defender Ilyas Pasha passes away

FOOTBALL

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI



Ilyas Pasha. THE HINDU ARCHIVES

Former India and East Bengal defender Ilyas Pasha passed away on Thursday after a prolonged illness. He was 61. He is survived by wife, two daughters, and two sons.

The All India Football Federation (AIFF) condoled the death of Pasha, who was one of the best footballers to have come out of Karnataka.

Primarily operating as a right wing-back, he was renowned for his impeccable sense of timing, calm demeanour, and ability to read the game astutely.

At the international level, Pasha made his senior India debut on January 27, 1987, against Bulgaria in the Nehru Cup at Kozhikode.

He went on to earn eight international caps, featuring in two editions of the Nehru Cup (1987 and 1991), the 1991 SAF Games, and the 1992 Asian Cup qualifiers.

From 1987 onwards, he became a regular feature for Karnataka in the Santosh Trophy, representing the State at the tournaments held in Kolkata in 1987, Kollam in 1988, and Guwahati in 1989. He won two National titles with Bengal in 1993 and 1995.

On the back of his domestic exploits, Pasha was signed by Mohammedan Sporting, where he continued to enhance his reputation.

He later joined East Bengal and became an integral part of one of the club's most successful eras.

With the Red and Gold Brigade, he won the Calcutta Football League on five occasions (1991, 1993, 1995, 1996 and 1998), the IFA Shield five times (1990, 1991, 1994, 1995 and 1997), and the Durand Cup four times (1990, 1991, 1993 and 1995).

His trophy cabinet also included two Rovers Cups (1990, 1994), the Federation Cup (1996), the historic Wai Wai Cup in Kathmandu (1993), Airlines Trophy titles in 1990, 1992, 1995 and 1997, the Bordoloi Trophy (1992), ATPA Shield (1992), Kalinga Cup (1993), McDowell Trophy (1995, 1997), and the Super Cup in the 1996-97 season.

He was also a member of East Bengal's celebrated triple crown-winning side in 1990 and captained the team to its first international title at the Wai Wai Cup in 1993.

He got a special Lifetime Achievement Award from East Bengal in 2012.

BENGALURU WEST CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer, Rajajinagara Division, Malleshwaram Zone, 1st Floor, 19th Main Road, 2nd Block, Rajajinagar, Bangalore - 560 010.

No. EE/RNR/PR/297/2025-26 Date : 20.01.2026

CORRIGENDUM-1

Sub : Correction for Tender Notification Dates.
Ref : EE(RNR)/KPPP/02/2025-26/CALL-2, Dated : 02.01.2026
This is to notify that, the calender of events as per ref (1) is modified due to technical reasons, the revised calender of events is show below :
The Modified dates Read as : (1) Last Date & Time for receipt of tender upto **: 06.02.2026 at 17.00 hrs** (2) Date & Time for Opening of Technical Bid on **: 07.02.2026 at 17.30 hrs** (3) Date & Time for Opening of Financial Bid on **: 16.02.2026 at 17.00 hrs.**
All other terms and conditions of the notifications remains the same.
Sd/- Executive Engineer, Rajajinagar Division, Malleshwaram Zone, BWCC

GOVERNMENT OF RAJASTHAN
OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT CUM MUMBER SECRETARY, RAJASTHAN MEDICARE RELIEF SOCIETY, SAWAI MAN SINGH HOSPITAL, JAIPUR
[Sawai Man Singh Road, Tonk Road, Jaipur, Rajasthan 302001]
{Phone 0141-2518308, 0141 2565647, Email-ms.smshospital@gmail.com}
No.77 Store/SMS/MH/2025 Jaipur dated, the 08/01/26
Notice Inviting Bid
Bids for two years rate contract for procurement of Neurovascular Item for Neurosurgery Department are invited from interested bidders up to 29/01/2026 on 05-00 PM. Other particulars of bid may be visited on the procurement portal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.raj.nic.in) of the state.
UBN No. MCJ2526GLRC00137
DIPR/C/701/2026 **SUPERINTENDENT MEMBER SECRETARY**

RajCOMP Info Services Limited (RISL)
C-Block, 1st Floor, Yojana Bhawan, Tilak Marg, C-Scheme, Jaipur
RISL invites e-bids from the eligible bidders for the following:

NIB No./ Date/ Unique bid no.	Particulars	Estimated Cost	Start of sale / Last date
5946 Dated 20/01/2026 RIS2526SLOB00070	RFP for renewal of ATS, Subscription and Maintenance of existing IBM Engineered Machines at RSDC.	Rs. 13.25 Cr / Rs. 26.50 Lakh	20.01.2026 / 04.02.2026

Details can be seen on the websites **http://risl.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, http://doitc.rajasthan.gov.in.** Bids are to be submitted through **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in**
Raj.Samwad/C/25/18260 **Additional Director**

TAMILNADU INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED
No.19-A, Rukmini Lakshmipathi Road, Egmore, Chennai - 600 008, Phone-+91-044-28554479,28554480
E-mail: hr@tidco.com
Website: https://tidco.com/ https://careers.tidco.com

Recruitment Notification
Notification No.TIDCO/HR/Recruitment/2026-2 Dated: 23.01.2026
Applications are invited for the following post only through online mode from **23.01.2026 at 10.00 am to 07.02.2026 up to 5.00 pm** from the eligible candidates who wish to join the services in Tamilnadu Industrial Development Corporation Ltd (TIDCO).

S. No.	Name of the Post	No. of Vacancy	Compensation	Mode of Recruitment
1	Consultant - Startup Engagement Lead	One (1)	As per industries standard. (TDS and other statutory deductions, as applicable)	On Contract basis

For the detailed notification, qualification, experience, selection process, online application and other details, please visit our official website **https://tidco.com / https://careers.tidco.com**.
DIPR / 85 / Display / 2026
Managing Director
TIDCO

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU
TAMIL NADU URBAN HABITAT DEVELOPMENT BOARD
No. 5, Kamarajar Salai, Chennai - 600005, Tamil Nadu, India.
Invitation for Bids No: IRSHUPSP/NCB/08 and IRSHUPSP/NCB/09
ADB Loan No. and Project Title: 4106-IND: Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Housing for Urban Poor Sector Project in Tamil Nadu.
Contract No. and Title: Package-1/IRSHUPSP/MEL/08, Construction of **719 tenements (PS+5 floors)** with **development works** at **Melakottaiyur scheme** in **Vandalur Taluk**, **Chengalpattu District** .
Contract No. and Title: Package-2/IRSHUPSP/THI/09, Construction of 452 tenements (PS+9 floors) with **development works** at **Thirumudivakkam** in **T.S.No.367, Thirumudivakkam Village, Kundrathur Taluk, Kancheepuram District.**
The Superintending Engineer, Project Monitoring Unit, on behalf of Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board ("the Employer") invites bids from eligible bidders for the contract packages named above. Bids are invited under Open Competitive Bidding (OCB) - National procedure of ADB which is open to all bidders from eligible source countries of ADB.
1. Detailed Notice of Invitation for Bids (IFB) and the Bid document for above packages would be available at **www.tntenders.gov.in** starting from **23.01.2026.** Deadline for bid submission is **16:00 hours** on **19.02.2026.** All required information are provided in the bid document.
2. Online & Offline Pre-bid Meeting will be held at **14:00 hours** on **04.02.2026**. All the prospective bidders are advised to participate in the Pre-bid meeting.
3. Any addendum, clarification to the bidder's queries and corrigendum etc. will be published on the **www.tntenders.gov.in** website and will not be published in Newspapers.
4. Bidders may contact **Superintending Engineer, Project Monitoring Unit, TNUHDB** for any other information on bidding process.

Superintending Engineer (FAC), Project Monitoring Unit
DIPR/402/TENDER/2026

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KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
No.2, 2/1 and 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road, Gandhinagar
Bengaluru - 560 009. Phone No. 080-22265383, website: www.kiadb.in
IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-75/1720/2025-26 Date: 22.01.2026
SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER
(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)
Item Rate Tender under two cover bid system is invited for the work mentioned below as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors who have got adequate financial resources, state of the art technology, suitable construction equipments, technical man power & sufficient past experience for the the following work as per the schedule given below:
Name of the Work : Construction of Storm Water Drain from Ch.0.00m to 550.00m of Road No.35 at Sub Layout-4 of Hassan Growth Center Industrial Area, Hassan District. (2nd Call).
The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **07.02.2026** upto **4.00 pm.**
Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**
Sd/-
DIPR/CP/5176/NR/2025-26 **Chief Engineer-1, KIADB Bengaluru**

LIC HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED
Guntur Area Office: D.No: 6-21-21, Ground Floor, Gogula House, 9/2, Arundalpet, Guntur-522002. Ph: 0863-2254743
POSSESSION NOTICE
SARFA&ESI Act, 2002 (Appendix –IV) Under Rule 8(1) for Immovable property
Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the **LIC Housing Finance Limited, Guntur Area Office** under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notice calling upon the following borrower/s to repay the amounts as mentioned below with the names & with further interest / costs etc. within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
Name of the Borrower(s) : Mr. Naga Sankara Prasad Devagiri (Applicant/ Borrower), S/o. Devagiri Pamula, Flat No.407, Third Floor, Kamadhenu Apartment, Nr Dr No.Wb 3-385, D.No.77/2 of Maruproluvaripalem, Ward 24, West Block.3, Asodivaripalem Road, Bapatla Municipality, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh-522101. **(Loan No.710800005620)**; **Demand Notice Date : 14.10.2025, Outstanding Amount : Rs.10,99,485.29/- (Ten Lakh Ninety Nine Thousand Four Hundred Eighty Five Rupees And Twenty Nine Paisa Only), for closure of the loan together with the future interest from 15.10.2025. Date of Symbolic Possession: 19.01.2026.**
DESCRIPTION / SCHEDULE OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY:
Property Address : Schedule-A : All that piece and the parcel of the property bearing **sale deed No: 4089/2017, DATED 16/09/2017,** Guntur district, Narsaraopeta Registration, Bapatla Sub District Ilaka, 4th Bapatla Municipality Area, Ward No.24, West Block No.2, Near Door No.3-385, Maruproluvaripalem Grama D.No.77/2. The Immovable Residential Property named "KAMADHENU APARTMENT, with an extent 2243.44 sq. Yards or 1884.56 Sq.mtrs on which undivided share of land 45 Sq.yds or 37.80 Sq.mtrs of site. **Bounded as Follows: 1st Item: East:** Property of Kotra Siva Shankar Rao, **South:** Property of Suuda Masthan Rao and Uma Maheswara Rao, **West:** Property of Suuda Masthan Rao, **North:** Way to Asodivaripalem Road, **Again West:** Way to Asodivaripalem Road, **Again North:** Way to Asodivaripalem Road. **Schedule-B : "KAMADHENU APARTMENT" Flat No.407, Third Floor,** 1050 sft (Including Common Area, and one Car parking) **Bounded as follows: East:** Corridor, **South :** Staircase between this flat and flat No.406, **West:** Open to sky, **North:** Open to Sky between this flat and flat no.408.
The above borrowers, having failed to repay the amount, mentioned in the notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken the **SYMBOLIC POSSESSION** of the property described herein above in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the security Interest Enforcement rules, 2002 on the above mentioned dates.
The borrowers in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the LIC Housing Finance Limited for the amount mentioned above with further accrued interest & costs thereon till realization. The borrower/s attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the Secured Assets.
Date: 19.01.2026, Place: Guntur **Sd/- Authorised Officer, LIC Housing Finance Ltd.**



For the future: Paes has partnered with IGU, PGAI and TGF to build a pipeline of emerging golf talent in India. PTI

IGPL and Paes come together to take golf to schools

The Indian tennis legend says his eventual aim is to build 10 academies for different sports throughout the country in the next decade

Uthra Ganesan
NEW DELHI

With 18 Grand Slam titles behind him, Leander Paes is now hoping to produce more Olympic champions across sports, including golf.

The tennis legend has partnered with the Indian Golf Premier League (IGPL) in the Golf Growth Initiative, a programme to take golf to schools and interiors of the country and develop the next generation of Indian golfers, in association with the Indian Golf Union (IGU), the Professional Golfers' Association of India (PGAI) and The Golf Foundation (TGF).

His eventual aim, Paes said, was to build 10 academies for different sports throughout the country in the next 10 years.

"I have the Flying Man Academy, spread across 250 acres in Bhubaneswar. It has 100,000 kids divided into 40,000 tribal, 40,000 paid Indian kids and 20,000 international kids from 70 countries. We play 16 sports.

"Through these 16 sports, we empower the youth not just at the grassroots but also at the top of the pyramid. I want to develop Olympic champions. My focus in golf is to create academies, driving ranges, golf courses, design new-age training methods and take the game to Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities and villages," Paes said.

The programme will bring together some of the biggest names in Indian golf with the likes of Jeev Milkha Singh, Jyoti Randhawa, Shiv Kapur, Gaganjeet Bhullar, S.S.P. Chawrasia and Gaurav Ghei acting as mentors.

The six, interestingly, will also be part of the six franchises in the golf league that the IGPL plans to launch in March with auctions for the same likely to be in the middle of February.

The IGPL also announced a partnership with TGF to drive grassroots scouting and the establishment of world-class training facilities in Odisha, Gurugram, and Andhra Pradesh starting this year.

Indian Golf Union faults Indian Olympic Association for creating confusion, insists players won't suffer

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

Even as factional issues in Indian golf continue, Major General Bibhuti Bhusan has categorically placed the blame on the IOA for creating confusion in the sport.

"There is only one IGU which is recognised by the international federation, the Asian body and the Sports Ministry and registered with the Registrar of Societies. We have organised 50-odd tournaments pan India and sent teams to almost 15 tournaments in the last one year.

"We are giving funds, coming from the ministry to us, to the players. When we are recognised by everyone in the world, why is the IOA going elsewhere? It's solely the IOA that is creating confusion," Bhushan, the Director General and CEO of IGU declared on the sidelines of an event on Thursday.

The Indian Golf Union, headed by Brijinder Singh, is recognised by the sports ministry and the International Golf Federation but the Indian Olympic Association continues to consider the faction headed by Harish Kumar Shetty. Both held their elections on December 15, 2024 and the matter has been *sub judice* since then.

The matter gained importance with the final date for sending the long list of golf entries for the Asian Games being January 31. While both factions have sent their respective lists, Bhusan made it clear the players would not suffer.

"We have sent names of eight men and women each on the basis of the Official World Golf Rankings, which is the same for everyone, so the players won't suffer. But the IOA has not admitted to receiving our list," he insisted.

Post-surgery, Bhavani Devi hopes to win medal at the Asian Games this year

Uthra Ganesan
NEW DELHI

India's top fencer and Asian Games medal hopeful Bhavani Devi has undergone shoulder surgery in Italy to get fit in time for the quadrennial event later this year.

Currently at the Circolo Scherma Fides fencing club in Livorno, Bhavani, who last participated at the Istanbul Satellite Tournament in October 2025, winning silver in Sabre, went under the knife more than a month ago and is still on a rehab programme to ease into training.

"I had been managing persistent pain since 2024 and underwent surgery for right shoulder labrum micro-instability," Bhavani told *The Hindu* from Italy. "We initially attempted a conservative rehabilitation approach, but it wasn't providing the long-term stability needed for elite competition."



Bhavani went under the knife more than a month ago.

> We initially attempted a conservative rehabilitation approach, but it wasn't providing the long-term stability needed for elite competition

"I am following a structured rehab programme. I am respecting the healing process and am eager to hold my sabre again soon, gradually returning to peak physical condition. My goal remains unchanged – I am working toward a podium finish at the Asian Games with the Asian and World Championships later this year among my targets," the 32-year-old added.

The surgery, rehab and training to the tune of ₹16 lakh is being completely supported by the Sports Authority of India through the Target Asian Games Group scheme, expanding the existing scope of the programme from training, competition exposure and coaching support to overseas medical treatment and post-surgical rehabilitation.



The top-three: Tilottama, champion, flanked by silver-medallist Sonam, left, and bronze-winner Nupur. X@OFFICIALNRAI

Shooter Tilottama tops 10m air rifle trials

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Tilottama Sen secured the top spot in the T1 finals of women's 10m air rifle in the National shooting selection trials, here on Thursday. Shahu Tushar Mane of Railways won the men's event, while Vijayveer Sidhu claimed the top spot in 25m rapid fire pistol (T2).

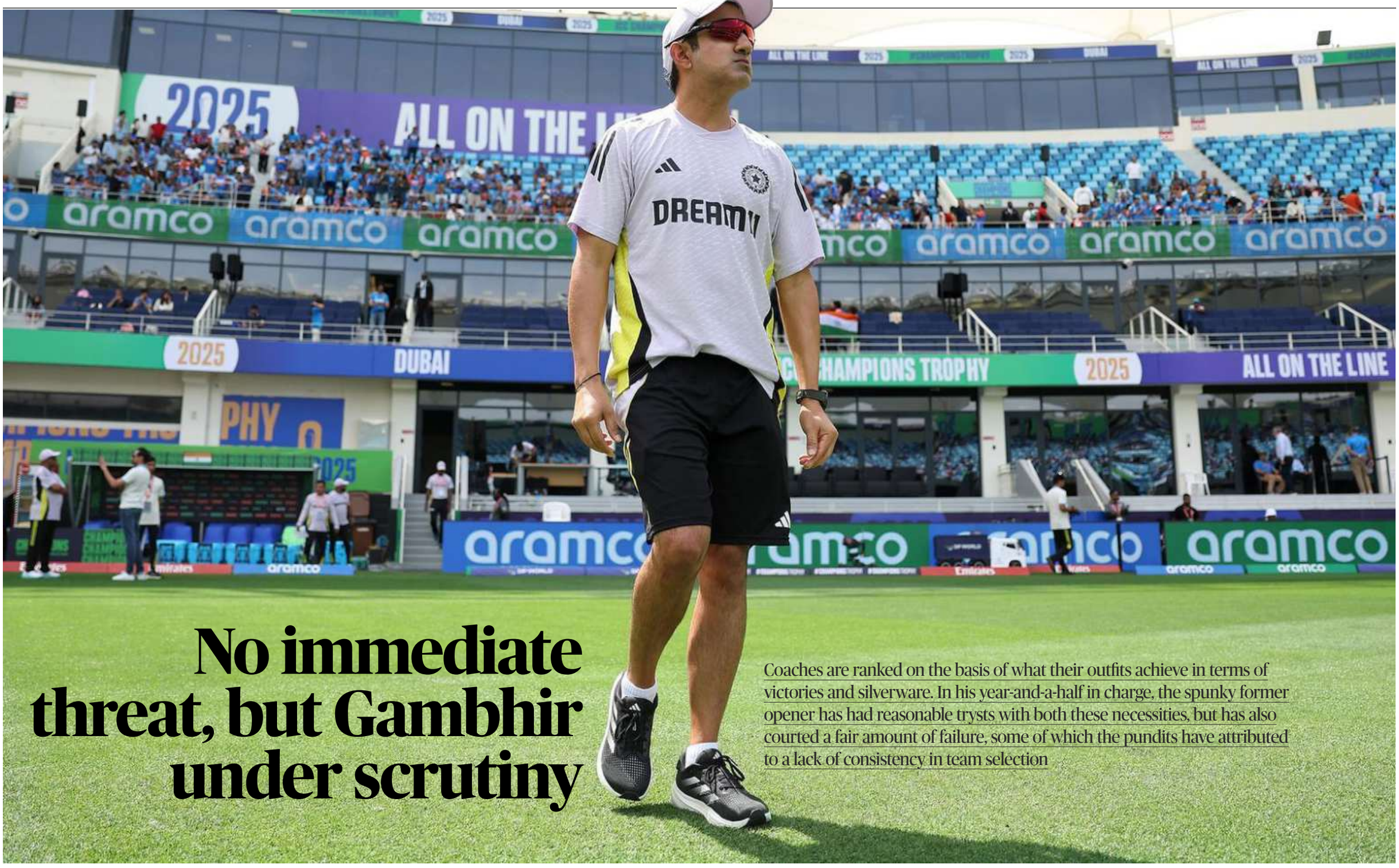
Tilottama entered the final as the eighth and last qualifier, having scraped through with 630.8, but rose steadily to finish on top with 253.4.

Sonam Uttam Maskar of Railways, who had qualified in fifth with 631.2, was second with 252.8. Madhya Pradesh's Nupur Kumrawat was third with 230.5(631.2).

In men's 10m air rifle, Mane, who had qualified fifth with 632.6, secured the top spot with 253.9, while Haryana's Arshdeep Singh took the second place with 251.1 and the third slot went to Maharashtra's Parth Rakesh Mane (230.5).

Olympian Vijayveer Sidhu shot 31 hits in the T2 final to secure the top spot in men's 25m rapid fire pistol. National champion Suraj Sharma was second after hitting 29 in the final.





No immediate threat, but Gambhir under scrutiny

Coaches are ranked on the basis of what their outfits achieve in terms of victories and silverware. In his year-and-a-half in charge, the spunky former opener has had reasonable trysts with both these necessities, but has also courted a fair amount of failure, some of which the pundits have attributed to a lack of consistency in team selection

GETTY IMAGES

R. Kaushik

What's it with left-arm pacers and wickets in the first/second over of a match? What is it indeed?

David Willey has 65 wickets in his first over in all T20s, followed by Shaheen Afridi (62), Mohammad Amir (55) and Trent Boult (50). The last-named also has the most first-over wickets (33) in the IPL. Mitchell Starc (26), the towering Australian, is second only to James Anderson (29) for the most wickets in their first over of a Test and heads the list when it comes to ODIs, also with 26 strikes. Guess what all these individuals serve up.

Now, throw Arshdeep Singh into the mix. The Indian left-arm swing exponent's dismissal of Devon Conway in the first T20I in Nagpur on Wednesday was a record 28th time he had taken a wicket for the county in the first two overs of an innings. Just a few days previously, he had dismissed Henry Nicholls in the first over of the final ODI in Indore. In a way, it was a comeback to 50-over internationals for the 26-year-old, who had taken five wickets in the three-match series against South Africa in November-December, only to sit out the first two ODIs against New Zealand.

Arshdeep is perhaps the most standout example of not getting enough game time in the last year-and-a-half, coinciding with Gautam Gambhir's ascension as India's head coach. India's highest wicket-taker in T20Is has featured in a little over 60% of the matches under the Suryakumar Yadav-Gambhir dispensation; he has also figured in just under 45% of all ODIs in the same era, which is hard to imagine given that he is far and away India's most competent and consistent white-ball pacer after Jasprit Bumrah.

It's no secret that Arshdeep is at his most dangerous when he is operating with the new ball, both to left-handers and right because he has the admirable ability to swing the ball away from the former and into the latter. He has age on his side, hasn't played a whole lot of first-class cricket (just 22 matches since his debut for Punjab six years ago) and hasn't had a long history of injuries, therefore he doesn't need 'preserving' and 'managing' like, say, a Bumrah or a Hardik Pandya. Arshdeep is at that stage of his cricketing journey where the more he plays, the better he will get. And yet, for no obvious discernible reason, he watched from the sidelines as New Zealand piled on the runs in the first two games - not enough to prevent India from scoring a four-wicket in Vadodara despite piling up 300 in match one, but muscular enough to make India's 284 in the next outing in Rajkot look positively miniscule.

India's most dangerous bowler in those two matches, and in the decider in Indore, was Mohammed Siraj, on the comeback trail after having been left out of the South Africa series. In 27 overs, he conceded only 124 runs, outstanding considering that New Zealand's scoring rate in the three fixtures were 6.00, 6.02 and 6.74 respectively. Maybe there was a case for resting Siraj for the South Africa ODIs because he had played in all four home Tests, against West Indies and the Proteas, and he showed that he is still the obvious lieutenant to Bumrah in the longer white-ball format.

Siraj's comrades in arms in the first two of those three faceoffs against New Zealand were Harshit Rana and Prasidh Krishna. In a lot of ways, they are very similar types of bowlers, bustling and of the hit-the-deck variety where Siraj is a more rounded prospect and Arshdeep offers so many different nuances apart from just swing with the new ball. For one thing, his angle, left-arm over. For another, his propensity to nail yorkers at the death and to mix up his pace superbly. Arshdeep has an ODI economy of 5.38 to go with 25 wickets in 15 games, so why would one play two almost identical bowlers in Rana (who can hit the ball a long way, as he showed during his maiden half-century in Indore) and Prasidh and pass up the opportunity to unleash a potential match-winner?

The Arshdeep situation is just one of many instances where India's team selection has been confusing, if not questionable. Even in the Virat Kohli-Ravi Shastri management age when India didn't repeat a Test XI for nearly 35 games, one could see a certain logic in the way the duo went about things, even if one didn't necessarily agree with the methodology. With Gambhir, alongside Shubman Gill in Tests and ODIs since June, and with Suryakumar in T20Is from July 2024 onwards, it's hard to see a great deal of method in what can be construed as madness. Cricket, more than any other sporting endeavour, is a game of numbers and it is sheerly on numbers and results that players, teams and coaching staff are judged. It can't be any other way. It's fanciful to want to entertain and play a thrilling brand of positive cricket - aka 'Bazball' - and expect to be absolved of blame when, in espousing the mantra of all-out aggression, defeat comes with the certainty and regularity of night following day. Or is it the other way round? Whether one likes it or not, cricketers and coaches will be estimated on the back of what outcomes they facilitate.

The defeat to New Zealand was India's home Test series loss in a dozen years, their first ever capitulation in their own backyard to the Kiwis

In football, for instance, creative midfielders and sturdy, uncompromising defenders attract nearly, but not quite, the same admiration and respect as the poachers, the born goalscorers who, through habit and experience, have mastered the knack of being in the right place at the right time. Many of these midfielders won't necessarily be the most prolific scorers, several of these defenders will primarily get on the scoresheet when they deliver from set-pieces, but they are still considered in the top echelons because such is the nature of the sport.

Cricketers don't enjoy the same luxury. For them, to put it bluntly, it is perform or perish. And performances come in tangible shapes - runs scored, fifties and hundreds stacked up, wickets taken, five-wicket hauls and 10-wicket bags and, in the 20-over landscape, economy rate. Likewise, coaches are ranked on the basis of what their outfits achieve in terms of victories and silverware. In his year and a half in charge, Gambhir has had reasonable trysts with both these necessities, but he has also courted a fair amount of failure, some of which the pundits have attributed to a lack of consistency when it comes to team selection.

Under Gambhir, India's Test series wins have come at home - against Bangladesh in his very first outing in September 2024 and against West Indies in October, both 2-0 sweeps. Ultimate success in limited-overs competitions are headlined by unbeaten runs in the desert sands of the Emirates in the 50-over Champions Trophy and the T20 Asia Cup, in March and September 2025 respectively. But around these sparkling triumphs are a litany of defeats too - 1-3 in a five-Test series in Australia (India's first series loss down under since 2014-15) but most damagingly, a 0-3 drubbing against New Zealand at home in October-November 2024 and a 0-2 pounding at the hands of South Africa last November.

The defeat to New Zealand was India's home series loss in a dozen years, their first ever capitulation in their own backyard to the Kiwis, and the first time they had lost all matches in a series of more than two Tests. South Africa's 2-0 sweep was their first series victory in India in a quarter of a century. India were once the unconquerables on their own patch, the aura of invincibility built over time through bossing of familiar conditions and the confidence and knowledge that their opponents had to play at better than their best repeatedly to best them. Now, India are hesitant and diffident and timid and fearful, especially on designer tracks laid out in the mistaken notion that India's batters continue to be masters against the turning ball when reality and the slew of defeats clearly suggests otherwise.

As if all these firsts weren't debilitating enough came a 1-2 loss to New Zealand in the ODI series that concluded on Sunday, also the first time the Kiwis had pulled the rug from their hosts' feat on Indian soil. Viewed in isolation, the result shouldn't be such a massive downer - contextually, the series had little meaning, and India rested Bumrah, Pandya and Axar Patel with an eye and a half on the defence of their T20 World Cup crown, which will begin in Mumbai on February 7 against United States. But India still had a gun batting line-up - former skippers Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, new captain Gill, his returning deputy Shreyas Iyer and K.L. Rahul, who stepped up to mastermind a 2-1 victory over South Africa late last year when Gill was out nursing a neck injury.

One would think this batting group would comfortably shade whatever total the Kiwis posted, but despite Kohli's sustained brilliance, that wasn't the case. India didn't help their cause by not necessarily putting out the most prudent XI, nor was Kuldeep Yadav, the middle-overs wicket-taker, going off the boil the best development. Working one's way around realistic possibilities of loss of form is where true mettle lies; India were sadly found wanting and while the players must and will cop the lion's share of the blame, the backroom staff under Gambhir can't hope to get away scot-free. If bouquets are accepted gratefully in success, brickbats in failures are inevitable and must be taken in the same spirit.

There is, it's almost certain, no immediate threat to Gambhir the head coach, but the spunky former opener will be well aware of the scrutiny he will be under, perhaps more than even the players themselves, at the home T20 World Cup. Should India fail to make an impression (read: at least reach the final), public memory isn't so short that it will be readily written off as a one-off. Gambhir needs his wards to rise to the challenge and the occasion, as much for his sake as their own. But he can also facilitate that process, alongside Sitanshu Kotak and Morne Morkel and Ryan ten Doeschate and T. Dileep, through clarity of thought and meticulousness in planning - characteristics that helped Rohit and Rahul Dravid forge a winning combination.

THE GIST

- While the players must, and will, cop with the lion's share of the blame for their failures, the backroom staff under Gambhir can't hope to get away scot-free
- If bouquets are accepted gratefully in success, brickbats in failures are inevitable and must be taken in the same spirit
- As India heads into the T20 World Cup, Gambhir, along with the others in the think-tank, need to have clarity of thought and meticulous planning

K.R. DEEPAK



Is Asia-Pacific on track towards elimination of Malaria by 2030?

World Malaria Report 2025, launched in December, provided a mixed bag; while fall in estimated cases in southeast Asia offer hope, rising cases of resistance to artemisinin-based frontline treatment and reduction in funding for malaria programmes raise concern

Ramya Kannan

The World Malaria Report 2025, launched in December, provided a bag of mixed news, five years ahead of the 2030 malaria elimination deadline. While the reduction in estimated cases in southeast Asia provided definite hope, of serious concern were rising cases of resistance to artemisinin-based frontline treatment for malaria, and falling funding for malaria programmes.

Notably, it is the Asia Pacific region that posted much of the good news. The significant reduction was driven by 10 of the region's 17 malaria-endemic countries, bringing estimated cases down from over 9.6 million in 2023 to approximately 8.9 million in 2024. The major reduction in estimated cases happened in Pakistan, and historic lows were reported in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam, the second year running. Among the successes being platformed against one of the most crucial emerging threats against malaria treatment also comes from this region, with the Greater Mekong Subregion's success in tackling antimalarial drug resistance finding mention in the report.

The Asia Pacific Leaders Malaria Alliance (APLMA) unites 22 governments that are committed to the goal of eliminating malaria by 2030. Sarthak Das, CEO, APLMA, says the "Asia Pacific region has made tremendous progress over the past two decades, but it is not entirely on track to meet the 2030 malaria elimination target."

He goes on to explain the current position: "Progress continues to stay uneven – while some countries have experienced a resurgence of cases, others reported substantial declines, and several have successfully attained malaria-free status. Sri Lanka, China, and most recently Timor-Leste have demonstrated that malaria elimination is achievable with sustained political commitment and consistent delivery."

However, Dr. Das points out that these successes coexist with a concerning plateauing of progress and, in particular, reversal in larger, more complex settings.

He explains that significant risks still persist, primarily due to two major challenges: securing sustainable long-term financing and ensuring last-mile execution in high-burden countries. "The challenges more often are in ensuring disciplined last-mile programme delivery, which is further compounded by the increasing financing shortfalls. The report shows that only about 42% of global malaria financing needs were met in 2024, and funding cuts in 2025 have widened this gap further."

But is the elimination goal within target at all? In fact, India has set itself the target of achieving zero indigenous cases of malaria by 2027, ahead of the 2030 target. Dr. Das says India's target is ambitious, but attainable. "India has made extraordinary progress since 2015, achieving steep reductions in cases and deaths, with many districts sustaining zero transmission for multiple years. India has also demonstrated proof-of-concept for elimination through indigenous projects," he said. However, recent data shows that progress has plateaued and cases have even rebounded in parts of the country, indicating that India is currently off the elimination trajectory required to meet the 2027 milestone, he points out.



Need for action: A health worker using a fogging machine in Assam as part of preventive measures against vector-borne diseases. RITU RAJ KONWAR

Dr. Das explains that to make the leap from control to elimination, three shifts are essential: "First, surveillance must become the central intervention. India needs real-time, case-based surveillance everywhere – including systematic reporting from the private sector, defence services, railways and urban health systems, so that every infection is detected, classified and responded to rapidly."

Secondly, he adds: "Today, five States and the northeast account for nearly 80% of the malaria burden. Success will depend on focused, project-mode execution in these remaining hotspots, while near-elimination States must invest in preventing resurgence."

Thirdly, the continuity of financing and operational discipline must be restored. India must treat malaria elimination as a time-bound national mission, with accountability, sharp targeting and sustained investment through the last mile.

Vaccines for malaria

While factors such as surveillance, vector control and effective case management, have been essential to the achievements of the past years, it was the vaccines that marked a significant breakthrough. Dr. Das says "Both RTS,S and the newer R21 vaccines represent important milestones. Large-scale pilot implementations in Africa have shown that RTS,S, when delivered through routine immunisation systems, can reduce severe malaria and contribute to measurable declines in child mortality. R21 has shown comparable or higher efficacy in controlled trials."

These vaccines have understandably been prioritised for rollout in Africa, where the burden of Plasmodium falciparum malaria and childhood mortality is highest. The countries in the Asia Pacific and the APLMA are actively evaluating how these vaccines could complement existing tools for targetted implementation.

The recent WHO report indicates that while artemisinin resistance has emerged as a serious threat to global malaria control, it has not yet been established in India. Artemisinin-based combination therapies remain the go-to first line of treatment as they are still highly effective.

India, which otherwise has a huge anti-microbial resistance burden on the other hand, "has taken a precautionary approach by institutionalising regular therapeutic efficacy studies, strengthening pharmacovigilance, and rapidly updating national treatment policies when early warning signals emerge." India's emphasis on universal parasitological diagnosis, strict adherence to combination therapy, and avoidance of oral artemisinin monotherapy has been central to preserving drug efficacy at scale, he adds.

Early detection through routine efficacy monitoring, strict regulation of antimalarial use, strong community-level case management – and critically – regional coordination to prevent cross-border spread are the need of the hour, Dr. Das insists. Resistance cannot be managed country by country; it requires collective action. Protecting artemisinin is not just a technical task – it is a strategic imperative for global malaria elimination, he adds.

Funding constraints

The greatest threat today to the success of the malaria elimination programme, however, is not even with artemisinin, it is dwindling financing. Dr. Das says: "At a time when malaria programs are entering the most difficult and expensive phase of elimination, overall international funding has declined. This shortfall is already forcing countries to scale back proven interventions, increasing the risk of resurgence and reversing hard-won gains."

In Asia Pacific, the impact is especially pronounced in high-burden areas that face persistent social and logistical challenges, including those prevalent among mobile and migrant populations and geographically remote communities. Such groups are particularly vulnerable because they often have limited access to health services and are difficult to reach with conventional malaria control measures.

Dr. Das suggests that a fundamental shift in how malaria elimination is financed and owned is required. Global funding will remain important, but it can no longer carry the full burden. National agencies must step up to fill the existing funding gaps, which the APLMA supports by strengthening budget advocacy efforts and building evidence-based investment cases.

Dr. Das adds: "This is not simply a cost, but an investment. Evidence consistently shows that every dollar invested in malaria elimination delivers multiple dollars in economic return through reduced healthcare costs, increased productivity, and stronger community resilience. Conversely, underinvestment at this stage is far more expensive: resurgence, emergency responses, and avoidable deaths carry a heavy and recurring price."

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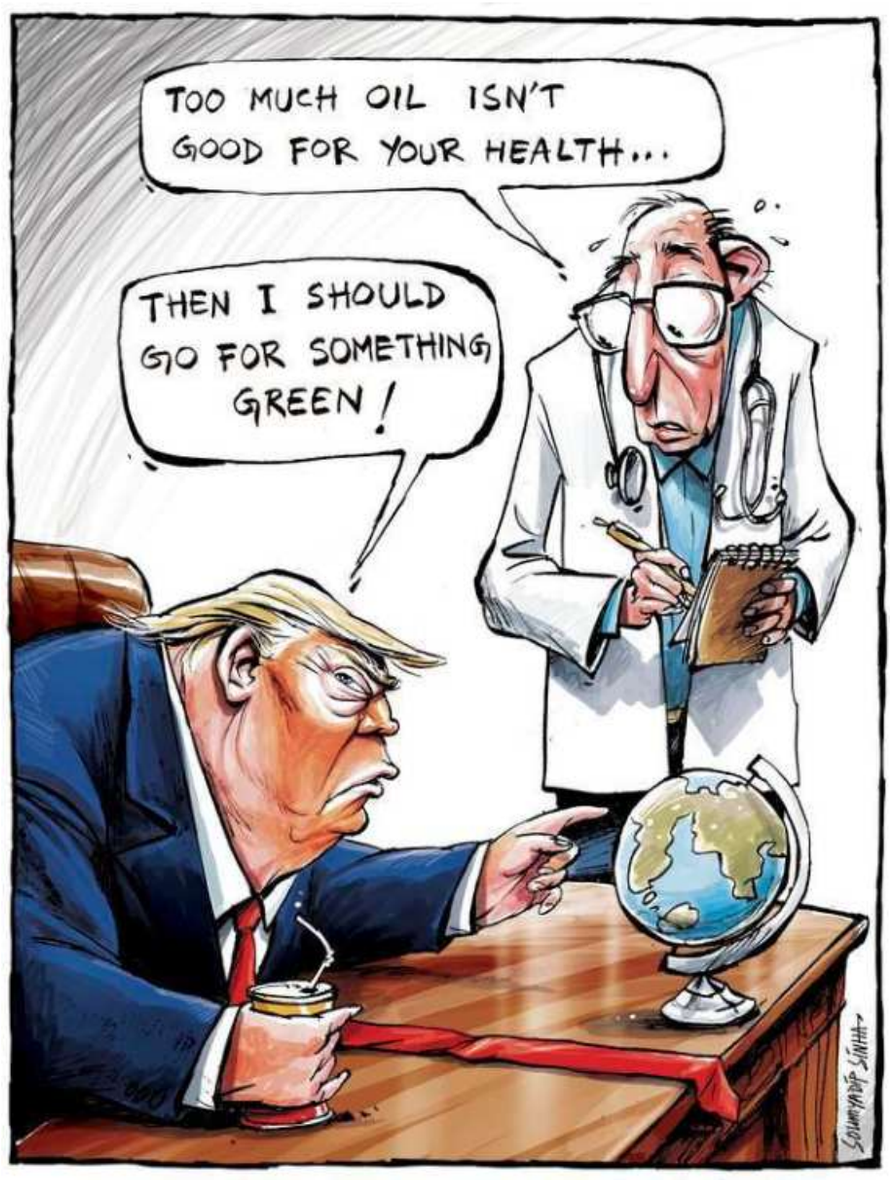
THE GIST

While the Asia Pacific region posted good news, experts say that significant risks persist, primarily due to two major challenges: securing sustainable long-term financing and ensuring last-mile execution in high-burden countries

India has set itself the target of achieving zero indigenous cases of malaria by 2027. India's target is ambitious, but attainable, say experts. They add that shifts are essential to make the leap from control to elimination

Experts say that a fundamental shift in how malaria elimination is financed is required. National agencies must step up to fill the existing funding gaps. Underinvestment at this stage is far more expensive, they say

HUMERUS



Thyroid testing should be driven by clinical suspicion, not isolated symptoms, say doctors

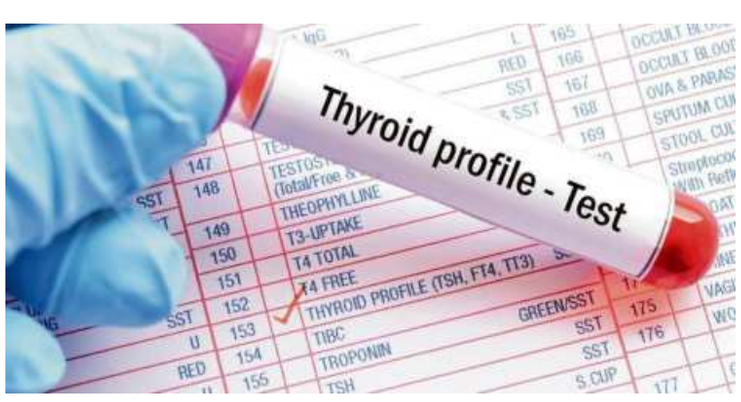
Athira Elssa Johnson

The thyroid is a small, butterfly-shaped gland located at the front of the neck, but its influence extends across nearly every system in the body. It produces two hormones – thyroxine (T4) and triiodothyronine (T3) that regulate metabolism and determine how fast or slow the body functions.

"These hormones influence the speed of our organs and directly affect heart rate, digestion, energy levels and body temperature," said Pearlsy Grace Rajan, senior consultant, internal medicine, Rela Hospital, Chennai. In this sense, she explained, the thyroid acts as a metabolic regulator, keeping the body's systems in balance.

When thyroid hormone levels fluctuate, the effects are felt across the body, influencing on metabolism, menstrual cycles and even mood. According to Usha Ayyagari, senior consultant, endocrinology and diabetes care, Apollo Speciality Hospitals, OMR, Chennai, thyroid hormones act on virtually every cell. They regulate energy use, growth, digestion and temperature, making their role fundamental to overall health.

Thyroid disorders broadly present as either an underactive gland (hypothyroidism) or an overactive one (hyperthyroidism), each associated with a distinct set of symptoms.



Risk alert: Casual testing based on advice from friends, social media or unverified sources is a growing concern among clinicians. GETTY IMAGES

Hypothyroidism may cause persistent fatigue, weight gain, feeling cold, constipation, dry skin, thinning hair, low mood, memory difficulties and a slowed heart rate. Hyperthyroidism can lead to weight loss despite a good appetite, palpitations, tremors, anxiety, excessive sweating, heat intolerance, sleep disturbance, loose stools and menstrual irregularities. Neck swelling or goitre may be seen in some cases.

The difficulty, doctors say, lies in the fact that many of these symptoms are common in modern life. Ravikiran Muthuswamy, endocrinologist, senior consultant, SIMS Hospital, Chennai, said the thyroid remains one of the most misunderstood organs in clinical practice. "Many people walk into the clinic already convinced they have a thyroid problem, even before any tests are done," he said.

When it comes to symptoms, "the overlap is huge," said Dr. Ravikiran. Stress, poor sleep, dietary issues and lack of physical activity can also produce identical complaints, leading people to suspect thyroid disease even when hormone levels are normal.

Dr. Pearlsy noted that this overlap is a key reason thyroid problems are frequently over diagnosed. Dr. Usha added that in women, peri-menopausal and post-menopausal symptoms further blur the picture, as they often resemble thyroid-related complaints.

Doctors stress that thyroid testing should be driven by clinical suspicion rather than by isolated symptoms or general health packages. "After evaluation, testing is useful when there is genuine suspicion, not curiosity," Dr. Usha said. She pointed out that marginal or borderline abnormalities are frequently detected during routine health check-ups and must be interpreted carefully by a healthcare professional.

Costs of excess

Casual testing based on advice from friends, social media or unverified sources is a growing concern among clinicians. "A slightly abnormal number does not automatically mean disease," Dr. Ravikiran said. Dr. Pearlsy warned that misinterpretation of reports can result in anxiety, repeated investigations and avoidable treatment.

At the same time, doctors caution that genuine cases of thyroid disease should not be ignored.

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Percentage plunge in IndiGo's quarter net profit

78 in per cent. India's largest airline, IndiGo, on Thursday reported a 78% decline in the December quarter net profit at ₹549.1 crore as flight disruptions and implementation of the new Labour Code took a toll on its earnings. It reported a net profit of ₹549.1 crore in October-December quarter, compared with ₹2,448.8 crore earnings in the year-ago period. REUTERS

Average congestion level in Bengaluru in 2025

74.4 in per cent. Bengaluru, has been ranked the second most congested city globally in 2025, with an average congestion level of 74.4%, according to TomTom's 2025 Traffic Index. It placed Mexico City at the top, followed by Bengaluru and Dublin. In Bengaluru, the average congestion level rose 1.7% points compared to the previous year. PTI

Percentage increase in India's coffee exports in 2025

22.5 in per cent. India's coffee exports rose in value terms by 22.5% to $2,058.06 million in the 2025 calendar year, but declined in volume by 4.47% to 3.84 lakh tonnes, Coffee Board data showed. In volume terms, the shipments declined from 4.02 lakh tonnes in 2024. India ranks seventh globally in coffee production and fifth in coffee exports. PTI

Missing persons reunited with family by Haryana police

17,000 Of the 17,000 missing persons, Haryana Police reunited 13,529 adults with their families over the last year. These included 4,130 men and 9,399 women who had been separated from their homes. Over the past year, Haryana Police traced and connected more than 17,000 missing persons with their families. PTI

People likely to experience severe hunger in Nigeria

35 million. The UN World Food Programme said on Tuesday that more than a million people in northeastern Nigeria could lose access to emergency food and nutrition aid within weeks unless funding is secured, as violence and hunger surge in the region. The food agency said in a statement it will sharply scale back assistance. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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The limits of household stability

India's growth story rests on aggregate comfort, but a closer look shows households saving less, borrowing more, and absorbing risks once shared more broadly; beneath stable growth and steady consumption, a growing fragility builds in household finances

ECONOMIC NOTES

Deepanshu Mohan

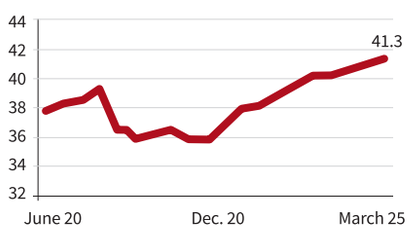
With only a couple of weeks left before the Finance Minister tables the next Union Budget, the aggregate markers of macroeconomic comfort in India's growth story may appear to be in place, where average economic growth remains strong in relative comparison to global standards, even amid the heightened uncertainty afflicting most other nations.

Yet this story of projected confidence rests on a partial reading of the aggregate data, which veils a deeper, more unsettling reality in India's economic fundamentals and their governing dynamics. A closer look at recent household finances data suggests that India's growth is increasingly being underwritten by households that are, on average, saving much less and borrowing more, while quietly absorbing economic risks that were once shared more broadly. This can, of course, increase household debt, especially among vulnerable and low-income groups, who haven't really gained in employment opportunities or higher incomes over the last few years.



Chart 1.45 A*: Household debt has risen steadily, reflecting greater reliance on borrowing

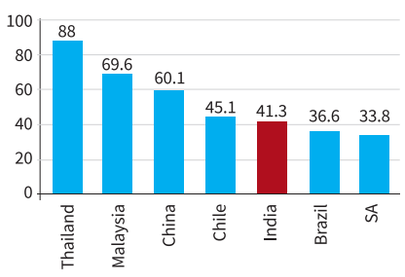
India's household debt
(Per cent of GDP)



*The RBI's Financial Stability Report's Chart 1.45 is frequently used to support the claim that India's household sector is financially stable.

Chart B: India's debt remains low versus peers, but this comparison masks domestic stress

Household debt of EMEs (March 2025)
(Per cent of GDP)



Household debt was 41.3% of GDP as of March 2025, far lower than levels observed in many emerging market peers

Chart 1.50 A
Savings have turned volatile as liabilities grow faster than assets

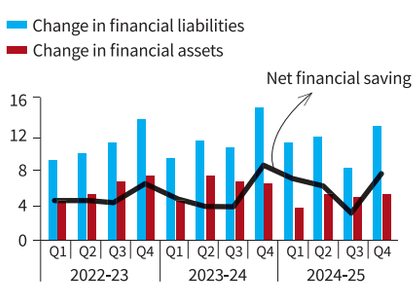
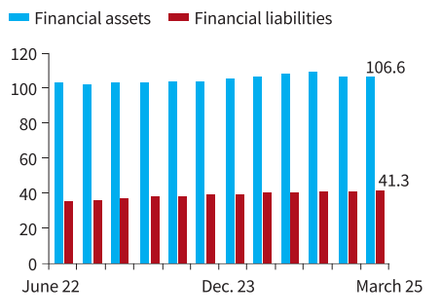


Chart C: Assets exceed liabilities, but household financial buffers are thinning



A misleading comfort

The Reserve Bank of India's Financial Stability Report (December 2025), read alongside its Annual Report 2024-25 and recent Budget documents, points to a shift that deserves attention precisely because it does not yet resemble a crisis, but exhibits enough to merit a red flag.

Chart 1.45 of the Financial Stability Report is frequently used to support the claim that India's household sector remains financially stable. Household debt stood at 41.3% of GDP as of March 2025, far lower than levels observed in many emerging market peers, including China, Malaysia, and Thailand. Additionally, the increase has been relatively gradual rather than abrupt, rising from roughly 36% of GDP in mid-2021 to slightly over 41% by early 2025. It proves that there is no household debt crisis in the traditional sense in India. Excessive leverage or an imminent threat to financial stability is not evident.

However, there are limits to this assurance. Debt-to-GDP ratios demonstrate the extent of household borrowing in relation to the economy, but they do not explain why households are taking on debt or whether they will be able to pay it off over time.

In the present situation, that distinction is important. According to the RBI's Annual Report 2024-25, real income growth has been uneven, especially outside formal employment and high-productivity sectors. In the meantime, overall consumption has held up well. Households must make other adjustments when consumption holds up despite weak or uneven income growth. Borrowing has become a more common way to make that adjustment.

Credit as a cushion

In this way, a change in the function of credit itself is reflected in the increase in household debt. Borrowing is being used more to close income and expense gaps than to finance the creation of assets. Even moderate debt levels can become a source of vulnerability when they substitute for income growth and savings rather than complement them. That question depends not on how much households owe today, but on how debt, income, and savings are evolving together, an issue that becomes central to assessing the economy ahead of the Budget.

Both sides of the balance sheet are simultaneously captured in Chart 1.50. Financial liabilities accounted for 41.3% of GDP in March 2025, while gross household financial assets stood at 106.6% of GDP. There is no indication that liabilities have surpassed assets, and households continue to be net holders of financial wealth. It is simple to conclude that household finances are sound based only on this.

Examining the flow data is the only way to see the stress. In recent quarters, net financial savings have drastically fluctuated and decreased. Net financial savings recovered to 7.6% of GDP in the last quarter of 2024-25, but this came after a compression to about 3-4% of GDP in the preceding quarter. The quicker accumulation of financial liabilities compared to financial assets is the direct cause of this volatility, according to the RBI.

There are obvious ramifications to this pattern. It indicates a more concerning change in domestic behaviour. Although households continue to save, a growing portion of that savings is being offset by new borrowing.

As a result, headline financial wealth can continue growing while the buffer that shields households from job shocks, income losses, and rising interest rates gradually deteriorates. A growing fragility lies beneath what appears stable in aggregate.

Why households are borrowing more

A more comprehensive fiscal and policy configuration that systematically transfers risk from the State to households is the cause of the increase in household borrowing. According to the RBI's State Finances: A Study of Budgets 2024-25, State governments have prioritised capital expenditure while limiting revenue expenditure.

Committed expenditures – interest payments, pensions, and salaries – now account for between 30 and 32% of State revenue receipts, leaving little space for income support or countercyclical transfers. States have actually become less responsive to household income stress while also becoming fiscally leaner.

At the Union level, the Budget at a Glance 2025-26 shows a continued emphasis on public investment, with capital expenditure budgeted at ₹11.2 lakh crore and effective capital expenditure at ₹15.5 lakh crore. This strategy is growth-enhancing, but it is not household-neutral. Infrastructure investment raises medium-term potential, yet does little to smooth short-term income volatility.

Union Budget 2026 will be framed understandably as a continuation of macroeconomic stability achieved through fiscal discipline and investment-led growth. However, stability that depends on households taking out loans to maintain demand is not self-sustaining and merits a closer look at options which can enable disposable income for households

The result is a quiet reallocation of risk. As governments consolidate and invest, households are asked implicitly to insure themselves.

A macro risk hiding in plain sight

This shift matters because it changes the very character of India's growth. Private consumption accounts for close to 60% of GDP, making household spending the economy's primary stabiliser. The danger lies in the interaction of three trends documented across the RBI's recent reports.

First, the Annual Report 2024-25 notes that real income growth has been uneven, especially outside formal employment and high-productivity sectors. Second, while borrower risk profiles have improved, unsecured retail credit has expanded rapidly, indicating that consumption is being sustained on thinner financial cushions. Third, as shown in Chart 1.50, net financial savings have become volatile and, at times, sharply compressed, as liability accumulation increasingly offsets asset formation.

A slowdown in income growth, a tightening of financial conditions, or a rise in unemployment would reduce discretionary spending and, more critically, compel households to retrench abruptly, because debt-financed consumption offers little room for adjustment.

Union Budget 2026 will be framed understandably as a continuation of macroeconomic stability achieved through fiscal discipline and investment-led growth. However, stability that depends on households taking out loans to maintain demand is not self-sustaining and merits a closer look at options which can enable disposable income for households.

It is not guaranteed even then that any marginal increase in income can help increase savings but may at least catalyse that over time in the longer term, while helping the citizenry take care of debt interest or borrowing repayments in the short to medium term. Restoring balance in the household budgeting calculus is the key fiscal policy-task prior to Budget 2026. Creating demand, more labour-intensive employment, and aligning fiscal outcomes towards these, while increasing average incomes, will eventually be affected by an economy where households gradually lose their ability to absorb shocks.

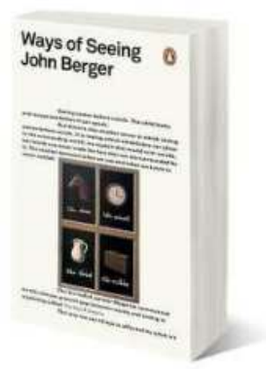
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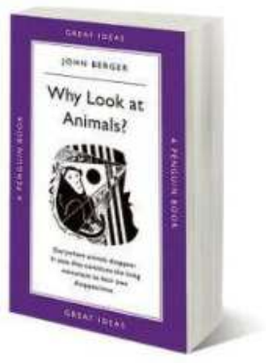
THE GIST

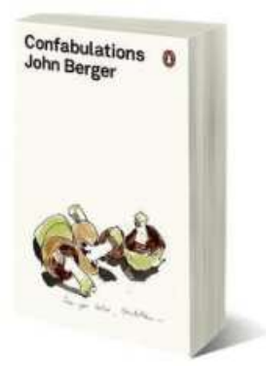
- India's growth rests on aggregate comfort, but a closer look shows households saving less, borrowing more, and quietly absorbing economic risks once shared more broadly.
- Household debt is not yet a crisis, but uneven income growth, rising liabilities, and volatile net financial savings point to a growing fragility beneath stable consumption.
- As fiscal policy prioritises investment and discipline, risk is being reallocated to households, making the balance between growth, demand, and household stability central before Budget 2026.

BIBLIOGRAPHY









Art critic and writer John Berger. AFP

John Berger never stopped experimenting with form and voice

In the centenary year of the great English art critic and writer, a look at a career spent insisting that changing our perspectives could change the world; Berger's influential books, including the acclaimed *Ways of Seeing*, are about history, people, and revealing the illusion of objectivity

Vasudevan Mukunth

There's a way to see yourself in the world, and write about it, without putting yourself at its centre. To write about history and place and people and in the course of that make yourself visible. It's an unselfish but also beautiful way. The English art critic and writer John Berger's famous book, *Ways of Seeing* – which he "made" with Sven Blomberg, Chris Fox, Michael Dibb, and Richard Hollis – taught me this. (I'm obviously not such a good writer.)

Ways of Seeing dissects consumer culture like a surgeon explaining each incision as she makes it. Here's the oil painting that taught us to desire objects. Here's the advertisement that inherited this language. There's a woman in this frame because she is to be looked at (thus exposing the male gaze). The product in the catalogue exists to complete you.

However, Berger doesn't pretend to stand outside the book's own frame, using "we" to implicate himself in the looking. When he writes "the way we see things is affected by what we know or what we believe", the gaze is turned inwards, to reveal the critic in his own viewfinder. *Ways of Seeing* reveals the visual machinery of persuasion by making Berger's own machinery visible. Each chapter strips away more layers of mystification, glamour, and, crucially, the myths of genius to reveal beneath it all the act of looking. It's Berger looking at paintings, looking at women looking at themselves being looked at.

Radical gesture

Consumer culture thrives on invisibility – the advertisement wants you to forget it was made, forget someone chose this angle, this light, this juxtaposition – and Berger reverses it. It's a radical gesture for admitting that critique has a body and a location, much as the thing being critiqued.

The influence of *Ways of Seeing* extended far beyond art history to reshape how critics in many disciplines understood their own practice. The book allowed generations of writers to abandon the pretence of omniscient detachment. His prose is itself accessible and as an author he's willing to question established hierarchies of taste, features that together democratised criticism by showing that rigorous analysis doesn't demand jargon or 'objectivity'.

This is why the book's discourse can be applied to almost any endeavour. (That the title also recalls Raymond Williams's statement about the mass media helps: "There are in fact no masses; there are only ways of seeing people as masses.") For instance, the book was my gateway to traditional notions of scientific objectivity in science writing. The feminist scholar Sandra Harding among others has argued that scientists should openly acknowledge how their values and perspectives shape research, rather than claim their stance is completely neutral. Donna Haraway's concept of 'situated knowledges' rejects what she called the "god trick" of seeing everything from nowhere, proposing instead that knowledge comes from specific, embodied positions.

Hidden frames

When we call something objective, we're really saying we believe we've managed rather than eliminated certain epistemic risks arising due to human imperfections. Observation changes what's observed and scientists pretending otherwise perform the same mystification Berger saw in art criticism: using authority to conceal. True objectivity, the kind that emerges regardless of who does the observing, exists only in vanishingly rare circumstances – when an observer's position, tools, assumptions, funding sources, career anxieties, and cultural moment genuinely don't matter.

How often does that happen in science? In medicine? In research on human behaviour, climate, ecosystems, and public health? The observer is always there yet the frames remain hidden, and to see them has been to become impertinent.

Berger applied this particular impertinence to the natural world in his 1980 essay 'Why Look at Animals?'. He argued that the way we view animals today, especially in zoos, is a monument to a relationship that capitalism has destroyed. Just as the art critic must acknowledge the gallery, the naturalist must acknowledge the cage. Berger observed that in the zoo the animal is rendered marginal: it's there to be seen yet it can't return the look. We drift from cage to cage like consumers in a department store, observing creatures that have been, in his words, "immunised to encounter". It illustrates how a claim to educational or scientific visibility can actually serve to make the subject invisible, reducing a living being to a token of its species.

Spiritual orphan

Berger also used 'impertinence' later in his life as the title and substance of an essay in his last book, *Confabulations* (2016). He wrote about being a spiritual orphan as he learnt that hierarchies were theatre and authority was costume. In fact, "I propose a conspiracy of orphans," he wrote. "We exchange winks. We reject hierarchies. All hierarchies. We take the shit of the world for granted and we exchange stories about how we nevertheless get by. We are impertinent." It's the idea that honesty is the only kind of objectivity that matters.

Confabulations was published in the final year of Berger's life and is proof that he never stopped experimenting with form and voice. The book meditates on the artist's responsibility to witness, with luminous and precise prose that moves effortlessly between the intimate and the universal. Reading it feels like spending time with a generous intelligence. And it's a fitting culmination to a career spent insisting that changing how we see could change the world.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

Senegal won this year's African Cup of Nations, beating hosts Morocco last Sunday. Here is a quiz on Africa's prestigious tournament

Vighnesh P. Venkitesh

QUESTION 1
How many countries participated in the first version of the tournament in 1957, and what is the current number of slots?

QUESTION 2
Which country was initially slated to host this year's tournament, but was stripped of its hosting rights due to concerns over readiness?

QUESTION 3
Name the most successful nation in the tournament, and the number of cups it has won.

QUESTION 4
What animal is the mascot of this year's tournament, and what is it called?

QUESTION 5
Name the three countries that have qualified for the coming World Cup but did not play in the AFCON?



Visual Question: Name this Moroccan player who won the golden boot at the tournament, but missed a penalty in the final? AFP

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz:
1. Who was Norma McCorvey? **Ans: Norma McCorvey, also known by the pseudonym Jane Roe, was the plaintiff in the landmark 1973 American legal case Roe v. Wade.**
2. Which U.S. state was the first one who ruled in Jane Roe's favour? **Ans: Texas**
3. In 1821, this U.S. state passed the first state statute legislating abortion in the United States. **Ans: Connecticut**
4. This was a landmark decision of the United States Supreme Court in which the Court upheld the right to have an abortion as established by the "essential holding" of Roe v. Wade (1973). **Ans: Planned Parenthood vs Casey**
5. In 2022, which decision ended the protection of abortion rights by the U.S. Constitution and allowed individual states to regulate any aspect of abortion not preempted by federal law? **Ans: Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization**

Visual: Identify this American lawyer who participated in two notable U.S. court cases of the 20th century. **Ans: Henry Wade**

Early Birds: K.N. Viswanathan | Sukdev Shet | Sunil Madhavan | Tito Shiladitya | Sadhan Panda



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

"You don't look happy. What's wrong?"

"Sujatha says that I am still tied to my mother's apron strings."

"What does she mean by that?"

"It means that he is controlled or influenced by her."

"In other words, this person does whatever his mother tells him to do?"

"Exactly! The mother dominates him completely. Here's an example."

"Seetha refused to marry Suresh because she felt he was still tied to his mother's apron strings."

"My cousin Gayathri claims that most Indian men are tied to their mother's apron strings."

"I know a man who is tied to his wife's apron strings."

"Meaning the man is controlled by his wife?"

"Right again!"

"My uncle spent the first twenty five years of his life tied to his mother's apron strings."

"He probably spent the next fifty-five years tied to his wife's apron strings."

"How did you know?"

"Just a guess!"

"Can I say, most Congressmen are tied to Sonia's apron strings?"

"Why don't you ask Sujatha?"

"I don't want to talk about her. By the way, is it wrong to say off the lights?"

"We in India tend to say, on the lights and off the lights, but a native speaker of English would say turn on/turn off the lights."

"I see, but...."

"....it is also possible to say switch on/switch off the lights."

"My mother switches off the lights at 10:30."

"My nephews always forget to turn off the fan."

"It's been ages since I turned the radio on."

"Will you be meeting Sujatha tomorrow?"

"Not if I can help it! But I will be seeing her father, though."

"He's coming to our school tomorrow. He's going to talk about how to become a pilot."

"He's been a pilot for a long time, hasn't he?"

"Yes, he has. He has flown different kinds of planes..."

"....aircraft."

"What?"

"He has flown different types of aircraft. You see, the plural of aircraft is aircraft."

"I see."

"Here's an example. There were ten aircraft waiting to take off."

"In the accident, both aircraft were damaged."

"Because of the heavy fog, the tower wasn't allowing any aircraft to land."

"Since the plural of aircraft is aircraft, I guess that's the reason why a ship which carries aircraft is called an aircraft carrier rather than aircrafts carrier."

"That's right!"

"I wonder if Sujatha's father has ever been on an aircraft carrier."

"I only hope he doesn't bore us like the speaker we had last week. The man spoke about nuclear physics and it was full of jargons. It was...."

"....it was full of jargon, not jargons."

"Is jargon an uncountable noun?"

"Yes, that's right! People who like to impress others use a lot of jargon."

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Word of the day

Anodyne:
unlikely to offend anyone or cause them to disagree

Synonyms: bland, neutral, harmless

Usage: *The minister issued an anodyne statement after the controversy.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/anodynepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ænədaɪn/

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