



Anahat wins maiden PSA Bronze-level title
Teenage sensation and seventh seed Anahat Singh defeated top seed and World No 10. Georgina Kennedy of England with scores of 12-10, 11-5, 11-7 in the Squash on Fire Open final, earning her first PSA Bronze-level title. **P10**

Bad governance leading to erosion of lakes and water bodies
Years back, every village and settlement had a lake—protected by a raised embankment, a katta. The lake was not merely a water body but a living institution. Its embankment was guarded by local deities—Katta Maisamma, Gandhi Katta Maisamma. **P6**

Markets rise over 1% as value buying spurs rebound on D-St
Stock markets rebounded on Monday with benchmark Sensex jumping by 943 points on value buying in blue-chip oil & gas, banking and auto shares after facing a massive drubbing on the Budget day. **P11**

Pan-India 'Nagabandham' teaser announced
Abhishek Nama's much-anticipated mythological action drama 'Nagabandham', starring Virat Karma, is generating strong buzz, with the first-look posters receiving an immense response. The makers have now locked the teaser release for February 15. **P12**

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WINDOWS

Hate Speech Bill brought to silence Oppn: BJP

SHIVAMOGGA: Alleging that the Congress-led government hurriedly passed the Karnataka Hate Speech and Hate Crimes (Prevention) Bill, 2025, during the Belagavi Winter Session without allowing proper discussion, BJP state president and MLA B.Y. Vijayendra said the Bill was brought with the sole intention of silencing the Opposition. Speaking to the media on Monday, Vijayendra responded to a question on the Governor not giving assent to the Bill. He said the legislation is harmful to democracy. "As a result of this law, our Hindu activist Vikas Puttur in Tarikere had not even begun his speech when police officials served him a notice and threatened to arrest him if he spoke," he alleged. He further claimed that Bajrang Dal activist Sharan Pumpwell has been prevented from crossing district limits in Dakshina Kannada. In Bengaluru, Puneeth Kerehalli was arrested even though he had allegedly identified illegal Bangladeshi immigrants and did the work that the police should have done, Vijayendra said. He alleged that earlier, those involved in illegal cattle transportation were booked under existing laws, vehicles were seized and offenders were jailed. "The Siddaramaiah government even attempted to bring a Bill to grant station bail to those arrested in such cases," he charged. Vijayendra said Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had earlier tried to divide society by raising the issue of a separate Veerashaiva-Lingayat identity. "Now, to cover up his failures, he is trying to pit the state against the Centre by claiming that the Union government has done injustice to Karnataka and to southern states. He is attempting to project himself as a leader of South India," he criticised. He said such a divisive mindset is not good for Siddaramaiah himself, for Karnataka, or for the development of the country. Referring to the Congress-led government's protest in Delhi under the slogan "Our tax, our right," Vijayendra questioned the Karnataka government's financial management. He said Siddaramaiah, as Finance Minister, has failed to mobilise funds for the government's guarantee schemes and has increased the excise department's revenue target to Rs 40,000 crore, which would lead to a rise in the number of liquor consumers.

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For the past 75 years, all budgets were life changing. They just didn't change mine

Row in LS as Rahul cites Gen Naravane's unpublished memoir

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

A row erupted in the Lok Sabha on Monday after Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi sought to quote from the unpublished "memoir" of former Army chief Gen M M Naravane (ret'd), but Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, along with other BJP members, strongly opposed it and accused the Congress leader of "misleading" the House. As Gandhi rose to speak on the Motion of Thanks to the president's address, he said he would first like to respond to the charges made by the previous speaker, BJP MP Tejasvi Surya, against the Congress

on nationalism and began quoting from what he stated was the "memoir" of Gen. Naravane talking about the India-China conflict of 2020. However, Singh strongly protested this and asked Gandhi to clarify whether the book had been published or not. The uproar went on for about 50 minutes with Speaker Om Birla repeatedly stating that no book or newspaper clipping can be quoted on a matter not related to the proceedings of the House, and Gandhi insisting that the document was authenticated and he could quote from it. Quoting former army chief General MM Naravane's book: "I am not being allowed to speak. I just

- General MM Naravane's book: "I am not being allowed to speak. I just have to speak 2-3 lines. It is a matter of national security. These are the words of the Army Chief (former), and it is a conversation that he has had with Rajnath Singh ji and PM Modi"
- The leader of the country is not supposed to run away from decisions and leave decisions to other people's shoulders. That is what the PM has done...I want to speak in the House. I don't know why they are scared. The point here is exactly what the PM said

have to speak 2-3 lines. It is a matter of national security. These are the words of the Army Chief (former), and it is a conversation that he has had with Rajnath Singh ji and PM Modi. All I am saying is that I want to say in the House what the Army Chief (former) has written and what orders did Rajnath Singh and PM

Modi give him..." "I want to speak in the House. I don't know why they are scared. The point here is exactly what the Prime Minister said and what Rajnath Singh Ji said. Whether the land was taken or not, that's a different question. We'll come to that. But before we come to that, the leader of the country is



supposed to give direction. The leader of the country is not supposed to run away from decisions and leave decisions to other people's shoulders. That is what the Prime Minister has done..." Government sources said Gandhi was speaking "concocted things" on China. They said there was ample material in the public domain on the decisions taken by India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, on China, and alleged that he "surrendered thousands

of acres of land just to further his own statesmanship." Gandhi said he never wanted to speak on the particular issue, but decided to do so after BJP's Surya questioned the patriotism of the Congress party. Singh maintained that the book had not been published. Gandhi then said he was quoting from a magazine article to put forth his views. Birla again disallowed it and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju called for

the Speaker's ruling to be adhered to. Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav supported Gandhi and urged the Speaker to allow the Congress leader to speak. With both the treasury and opposition MPs unrelenting, the Speaker adjourned the House till 3 pm. Several opposition leaders, including TMC's Mahua Moitra and Kalyan Banerjee, RJD's Manoj Jha, and SP chief Yadav, rallied behind Gandhi over the issue.

IBC Amendment Bill in 2nd half of Budget session: FM

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

FINANCE Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday said the government intends to introduce the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2025 in the second half of the Budget session beginning March 9 as the parliamentary committee has already submitted its report. The proposed amendments to insolvency law would help further enhancement in the timelines and effectiveness of proceedings as well as alignment of India's insolvency regime more closely with the global best practices. The parliamentary committee has submitted its report as far as proposed legislation with respect to Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) is concerned, she said during an interaction with the media a day after presenting Budget 2026-27 in the Lok Sabha. "I expect, subject to conditions, to table the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill in the second half of the Budget session starting March 9 incorporating suggestions of the committee," the Finance Minister, who also holds the Corporate Affairs

- STT hike to secure household savings from speculative bets: CEA Anantha Nageswaran
- 'Purpose is to ensure hard-earned savings are used to maximise wealth in households'



Ministry portfolio, said. This is going to be the seventh amendment to the IBC Act implemented in 2016. So far, it has undergone six legislative interventions since its enactment and the last amendment was in 2021. Chief Economic Advisor V. Anantha Nageswaran said on Monday that the increase in Securities Transaction Tax on derivatives trading announced in the Union Budget 2026-27 is aimed at securing household savings from highly speculative bets rather than generating revenue for the government. "The purpose (of STT

hike) is not revenue generation... the purpose is to ensure hard-earned savings are used to maximise wealth in households. The SEBI has pointed out how people lose money through F&O," the CEA told journalists. The Union Budget 2026-27, presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday, proposed raising STT on futures to 0.05 per cent from the present 0.02 per cent and on options premium and exercise of options to be raised to 0.15 per cent from the present rate of 0.1 per cent and 0.125 per cent, respectively.

Ex-ICC official blames BCCI for the turmoil

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

CRITICAL of the BCCI's handling of Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman's ouster from the IPL, former ICC Head of Communications Sami-ul-Hasan Burney on Monday said the Indian Board could have saved the T20 World Cup from the current turmoil by being more tactful. Rahman's release from a contract with the Kolkata



Sami-ul-Hasan Burney

Knight Riders triggered a chain of events that led to Bangladesh's exit from the event starting February 7 after refusing to play in India due to "security concerns".

In an apparent show of solidarity, Pakistan has now decided to forfeit the match against India on February 15 on government instructions. Burney, who also worked as Media Director of Pakistan Cricket Board after the end of his ICC tenure, said the BCCI could have avoided public statements announcing Rahman's ouster without actually specifying the reasons. "I mean, things could have been easily avoided if the cricket administrators or

people responsible for the game had been a little bit more careful and avoided public statements, like a Bangladesh player (Mustafizur) has to be removed from the franchise," Sami told PTL. "I mean they (the BCCI) didn't have to say it publicly. They could have easily privately told the franchise (KKR) to release the player and nobody would have known what happened and life would have moved on.

Govt announces Bengaluru GAFX 2026

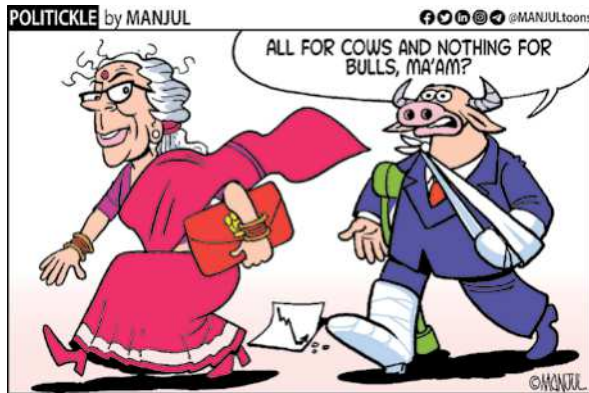
BENGALURU

THE government, in association with the Association of Bangalore Animation Industry (ABAI) and Startup Karnataka, on Monday announced the 7th edition of Bengaluru GAFX 2026, Asia's largest annual conference and exhibition for animation, visual effects, gaming, comics, XR, and immersive and interactive content. Scheduled to be held from February 27 to March 1 at Hotel Lalit Ashok in Bengaluru, the event will bring together creators, studios, technologists, investors, and industry leaders from across the global media and entertainment ecosystem. In his remarks at the

curtain raiser event, state Information Technology, Biotechnology and Science and Technology Minister Priyank Karge said: "For over a decade, Bengaluru GAFX has been a key catalyst for India's AVGC sector—bringing together talent, technology, policy and global opportunity on a single platform." "Evolution Reloaded" reflects Karnataka's belief that the next phase of AVGC growth will be driven by the convergence of deep technology and human creativity. GAFX embodies our ambition to position Karnataka as a global hub for creative technology and next-generation storytelling," he added.

DALAI LAMA WINS GRAMMY

LOS ANGELES: The Dalai Lama has won a Grammy for his spoken word album "Meditations: The Reflections of His Holiness the Dalai Lama" at a glittering and politically charged music gala, the first golden gramophone for the 90-year-old Tibetan spiritual leader. The 68th Grammy Awards, hosted by Trevor Noah and held at the Crypto.com Arena here on Sunday night, recognised winners in over 90 categories. While the Dalai Lama's followers in the Himachal Pradesh town of Dharamshala and elsewhere celebrated, Indian and Indian origin artists, including Anoushka Shankar, fusion band Shakti and Siddhant Bhatia, were nominated but didn't manage a win. Singer Rufus Wainwright accepted the award in the category for 'audio books, narration and storytelling' on behalf of the Dalai Lama.



Better to sell egg rice than be a cop, says constable on WhatsApp status

KOPPAL

THE Karnataka Police department has ordered a probe in connection with a WhatsApp status posted by a Constable saying that it is "better to sell egg rice than be a cop." The development was reported from Koppal district in Karnataka on Monday. According to police, the Constable, identified as Bramhanand, reportedly vented his anger over the functioning of the police department through WhatsApp status messages. The social media status was posted in response to a statement made by Direc-

PROBE ORDERED

tor General and Inspector General of Police (DG & IGP) M.A. Saleem regarding the recruitment of 8,300 police personnel. In his WhatsApp status, Constable Bramhanand wrote, "We have to be on duty 365 days a year, with not even a single day of leave. Selling egg rice is better than police duty." He is also said to have posted another status stating, "Think a hundred times before joining the police department, and if possible, it is better to join

some other department." These status messages went viral on social media and have triggered discussions within the police department. In view of the seriousness of the matter, Koppal District Superintendent of Police Ram L. Arasiddi has ordered an enquiry against Constable Bramhanand. Further investigation into the incident is underway, and police sources said that appropriate action will be taken based on the findings of the enquiry

report. It can be recalled that an enraged Constable shot dead a Sub-Inspector in their police station near Bengaluru when he was denied leave after working for over 30 hours in 2013. Police Constable Anand Kumar, 45, was arrested for fatally shooting police SI Vijay Kumar, 38, in the Rajanukunte police station. The incident had taken place after a heated argument on being denied leave and change of duty. It can also be recalled that a Sub-Inspector in

Bengaluru Rural district was previously suspended for abusing a senior officer in public after a heated argument over a vehicle permit. In the 2018 incident, Sub-Inspector M. Srinivas, attached to the Vishwanathapura police station, was suspended after a video of him abusing the jurisdictional inspector went viral on social media. The Bengaluru Rural Superintendent of Police at the time stated that the junior officer had violated the code of conduct and should have escalated the matter through proper channels. An enquiry was initiated following the suspension.

