


Ramayana Kalpavriksham returns with a grand celebration of dance, music and devotion

The fourth edition of 'Ramayana Kalpavriksham,' presented by Shankarananda Kalakshetra and Natyarambha, featured a galaxy of performances, talks.

P11 EDIT

THE Hans India



WOMENIA

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.

P6 BUSINESS

Mkt's 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.

P8 YOUNG HANS

Emerging roles in risk, finance, and technology: What students must learn today?

If you're a student or just starting your career, you may be wondering where the strongest long-term opportunities will be in the coming years.

P9

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WINDOWS

Trump announces trade deal deal with India, cuts tariffs

WASHINGTON: The United States and India have agreed to a trade deal, US President Donald Trump said on Monday after a phone call with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, announcing a cut in reciprocal tariffs and deeper economic cooperation. Trump said the US will reduce its reciprocal tariff on Indian goods to 18 per cent from 25 per cent, under the new agreement, in a bid to strengthen bilateral trade ties. In a post on his social media platform Truth Social, Trump described Modi as 'one of my greatest friends' and said the deal includes commitments by India to reduce its own tariffs and non-tariff barriers, and to buy more American goods, particularly in energy, technology and agriculture. The announcement also referenced India's potential shift away from Russian oil purchases, part of broader discussions that touched on geopolitical issues including the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The agreement marks a significant development in US-India economic relations amid ongoing negotiations over trade and tariff barriers that have dominated interactions between the two countries.

CM readies for war with Centre over 'zero funds'

Tells TG Cong MPs to raise Budget injustice issue in Parl

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD



Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy will meet some Union ministers in New Delhi after the municipal elections and appraise them of the status of the pending projects in the state and seek allocation of Central funds

THE state government is bracing to launch a fight against the Union government for not announcing any new projects to Telangana and not allocating funds that are required in the Union Budget 2026-2027 presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday.

Taking a serious note of Centre's 'deliberate' indifference towards the state, Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy instructed CMO officials and Chief Secretary K. Ramakrishna Rao to prepare a report on the Centre's allocations and seek early clearance of the pending projects.

Officials said that the Chief Minister will hold a high-level meeting to deliberate on the Union Budget,

its impact on the state's development and the financial condition.

"The state government was hopeful that the Centre would give approvals to pending projects like including Metro Rail phase-2, Musi rejuvenation project and funds for development works," officials said. They

pointed out that a special team was analysing the budget and subsequently taking stock of the findings vis-à-vis challenges facing the state due to Centre's delay in approving projects.

The Chief Minister was planning to hold a meeting with Congress MPs from Telangana and instruct

them to raise the issue of injustice meted to the state in the budget session of the parliament. A memorandum would also be submitted to the union ministers demanding fair allocation of funds.

Sources said that Revanth Reddy would meet some union ministers in New Delhi after the municipal elections and appraise them of the status of the pending projects that is putting a heavy burden on the state exchequer.

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikaramarka is preparing a report in consultation with the state finance department to seek more funds from the Centre and complete the pending projects this year. The budget preparation meetings would also take into consideration the poor allocations to the state.

ICC mulls suspending Pak as T20 WC 'India boycott' row deepens



NEW DELHI/ISLAMABAD

HOURS after the Pakistan government announced that the cricket team of the country will not play against India in the upcoming T20 World Cup, the ICC has warned to reconsider the stance,

making the board aware of the long-term implications they might face as a result of boycotting the high-profile fixture.

The ICC issued a warning that the boycott could lead to punitive sanctions, including its suspension.

Continued on Page 7

NEW YORK

Referring to certain leaders projecting themselves as freedom fighters, Revanth Reddy said it was inappropriate to compare them with Mahatma Gandhi. "When minor police notices are issued, they ask whether notices can be served on the 'Father of the Telan-

'Corrupt' KCR can't be father of Telangana: CM

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD



Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy addressing the Ravi Narayana Reddy National Award function in Hyderabad on Monday

gana state, Gandhiji sacrificed power and ultimately gave his life to the bullets of evil men. What sacrifices has this self-proclaimed father of the state made?" he asked.

Speaking after presenting Ravi Narayana Reddy

National Award to Justice B. Sudharshan Reddy here, the Chief Minister said there was no Telangana activist who did not face hardships during the Bharat Rashtra Samithi regime.

Continued on Page 7

Air India grounds flight after fuel switch moves from 'run' to 'cutoff'

HANS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI



spokesperson said.

"After receiving this initial information, we have grounded the said aircraft and are involving the OEM to get the pilot's concerns checked on a priority basis," the spokesperson said.

The flight AI 132 came from Heathrow to Bengaluru on Monday.

"We are aware that one of our pilots has reported a possible defect on the fuel control switch of a Boeing 787-8 aircraft," the Air India

Continued on Page 7

Continued on Page 7

MUSK, TRUMP, PRINCE ANDREW & BILL CLINTON Epstein files reveal hidden ties



Elon Musk, Howard Lutnick, and Richard Branson are among those now under scrutiny.

Continued on Page 7

kept close ties with Hollywood stars, politicians, and industry leaders, even after he had been convicted of sex crimes in 2008.

Continued on Page 7

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Revised IBC Bill in 2nd half of budget session: FM

NEW DELHI: The Union government is likely to bring in the revised Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) Amendment Bill when Parliament re-assembles for budget session after recess, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Monday, signalling progress on the long-pending overhaul of India's insolvency framework.

The select committee has submitted its report, and it is expected to be taken up in Parliament in the latter half of the current session after the House reconvenes following the recess, Sitharaman told the media during a post-budget briefing.

The remarks indicate that the government is preparing to move ahead with the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2025, after factoring in the recommendations of the parliamentary panel.

HMDA rakes in Rs 1,000 cr from high-rise permits

103 HIGH-RISE BUILDINGS GIVEN PERMISSION IN 2025; TELLAPUR, KOKAPET HOTSPOTS



THE high-rise buildings in the city are filling the coffers of the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) as it has raked in over Rs 1,000 crore in the last one year thanks to the permissions being given liberally to such constructions.

Of late, the HMDA has even given permission to buildings with 50 to 70 floors. During the year 2025 alone, 103 high-rise buildings were

given permission compared to 64 in the year 2024. According to official data, the areas such as Tellapur, Gandipet, Narsingi, Kokapet and others which were small

List of recent high-rise permits

Area	Height of skyscraper (meters)	No of Floors
Kokapet	206.75	59
Tellapur	158.4	50
Kollur	119.7	39
Kollur	134.35	37
Bachupally	108.06	35
Kokapet	105.3	23

villages until recently, have turned into hot destinations for high-rise buildings in the city. The top high-rise buildings for which permissions have been given, include a skyscraper with 70 floors in Osman Nagar near Tellapur and a high-rise with 63 floors in Kokapet with height going over 215 meters (the project is in preliminary

approval stage and likely to get completed by 2029). According to a senior official in the Municipal Administration & Urban Development (MA&UD), the permissions for such high-rise buildings are given based on the width of the road, traffic assessment and other infrastructure. A senior official said that if the road width is more than hundred feet, the permission for a high-rise building is given. The official said that based on this phenomenon, permission for high-rise was given in Abids area.

Continued on Page 7

IRREGULAR by MANJUL


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

Developers opting for high-rises due to unlimited FSI

Adverse impact on infra, power, water resources likely

K CHANDRASHEKAR HYDERABAD

THE high-rise buildings in the city are filling the coffers of the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) as it has raked in over Rs 1,000 crore in the last one year thanks to the permissions being given liberally

Ravi Narayan Reddy Award befitting for Justice Sudarshan Reddy: CM



HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION					
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER-II KHAIRATABAD ZONE, HYDERABAD					
'e' Procurement No.36/EE-II/Circle-38/Khairatabad Zone/GHMC/2025-26, Dt: 02-02-2026					
NIT No.	Name of the work	Estimate Amount/ECV	Start Date/Down Load	Name & Address of the Officer	
36/EE-II/ K2/GHMC/ 2025-26	Civil works (06 Nos)	Rs.84.85 Lakhs	For Works at S.I.No.01 to 06 04-02-2026 @ 12:00 P.M to 07-02-2026 upto 12:00 PM Only	Executive Engineer-II, K2, GHMC	
Further details can be seen at e-procurement @ https://www.tender.erecurement.gov.in e-mail address: eec38-youngu@gmail.com, Mobile No: 9331189501					
DIPR R.O. No. 14865-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2025-26 Date: 02-02-26					

SOUTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF T.G. LIMITED.					
OPERATION: SURYAPET CIRCLE					
OPEN TENDER NOTICE NO:O-04/2025-26					
Tenders are invited from eligible vendors for various Electrical and Civil works in Suryapet Circle. Schedule dates for Open-Tender Specification No: 01/25-26 to 07/25-26 of Tender Notice 0-04/2025-26 of SE/OP/Suryapet are: 1. Bid download starts from 03.02.2026 at 15:00 Hrs. 2. Last date and time for submission of Bid hard copies along with DD's and BG's: 10.02.2026 upto 15:00 Hrs. 3. Bid opening Date & Time: 10.02.2026 at 16:00 Hrs.					
Details are available at www.tgsouthernpower.com , Ph.No: 8712472748 Sd/- Superintending Engineer, Operation Circle, Suryapet					
DIPR R.O. No. 14861-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2025-26 Date: 02-02-26					

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION					
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER-II, KHAIRATABAD ZONE, HYDERABAD					
Sl. No.	NIT No.	No. of Works	Total amount (Rs. In Lakhs)	Start Date/Last Date for Receipts of Bids	Address of Officer Cell No.
1	36/EE-II/ K2/GHMC/TA/ 2025-26, Dated: 02/02/2026	Desilting-1	61.00	Bid Submission Start Date @ 03.00 P.M Bid Submission Closing Date @ 06/02/2026 @ 03.00 P.M	SE (K2), GHMC Phone No. 879052144
Total:		1 Work	61.00		Commissioner
Further details can be seen at e-procurement @ www.erecurement.gov.in					
Sd/- Superintending Engineer (K2)					
DIPR R.O. No.14890-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2025-26 Date: 02-02-26 Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation					

Government of Telangana HYDERABAD METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY & SEWERAGE BOARD					
O/o. Chief General Manager (Engg), Q.M Circle No. V, Sainikpuri, Sec'bad-94, Telangana					
e-TENDER NOTICE					
e-tender Notice No. & Date					
407/CGM(E)/OMC-V/2025-26, Date : 03.02.2026					
Name of Work : Laying of 900mm dia RCC Sewer trunkline from Old Hayathnagar Highway to Sai Baba temple, Mudhirkal Colony main road under Kamalanagar Section, Sub Division II, O and M District XI.					
Estimate Contract Value : Rs.151.73 Lakhs					
1. Tender Document will be available online from Date : 03.02.2026 from 5.00 PM onwards and the last date for receipt of tenders is Date : 17.02.2026 upto 5.00 PM. 2. Name & address of Chief General Manager (Engg), concerned - Chief General Manager (Engg), O&M Circle-V, HMWSB, Sainikpuri, Secunderabad -500094. 3. The Contractors/firms are requested to upload the information in the ZIP format preferably. 4. Further details can be seen on @ https://www.tender.telangana.gov.in					
Sd/- Chief General Manager (Engg), O&M Circle No. V, Sainikpuri, Sec'bad-94, Telangana.					

RAIL COACH FACTORY, KAPURTHALA					
On-line Tenders are invited by PCMM, RCF on behalf of President of India for following items:-					
Sr. No.	Tender No. and Due Date		Description		Quantity (Nos./Sets) EMD (Rs.)
1.	05261031/26.02.2026		Set of End Wall Assembly		28 Sets NIL
2.	05261067/05.03.2026		Under Frame complete for 3 Phase MEMU/TC Hybrid Coaches		39 Nos. 13,87,680/-
3.	05251952/26.02.2026		Set of Roof Complete & Side Wall Complete for LHB Parcels (PL No. 33557172)		38 Sets 726260/-
4.	05261051/02.03.2026		Set of Side Wall Complete & Roof Complete for 3 Phase MEMU/TC Hybrid Coaches (PL No. 30140626)		53 Sets 79650/-
5.	05261066/27.02.2026		Under Frame Complete for MEMU 3 Phase/DMC Hybrid Coaches		15 Nos. 6,09,590/-
6.	05261070/27.02.2026		Set of Roof Assy & Side Wall Complete for MEMU 3 Phase/DMC Hybrid Coaches (PL No. 30140651)		31 Sets 1569420/-
7.	02261031/23.02.2026		Harness of Underframe and Roof Arrangement for LHB Power Car Type Coaches		-- 2000000/-
8.	17251401A/23.02.2026		i) Set of Luggage Rack modules for LHB Non AC Chair Car Coaches ii) Luggage Rack Modules (without Lights) for LHB 2nd AC Chair Car Coaches		101 Sets 13,24,820/-
9.	02261033/02.03.2026		Harness of Under Frame and Roof arrangement for LHB FOG SLRD Non AC Coaches for Amit Bharat Rake		-- 436960/-
10.	05261080/02.03.2026		Cross Member (PL No. 33553658)		4751 1,84,890/- Nos.
11.	02251464A/02.03.2026		Harness of LHB EOG Non AC Chair Car (LWSCZ) Coaches		-- 757560/-
12.	16261007/23.02.2026		Blast Grade Garnet for Robotic Sand Blasting Plant		400 Metric Tonne 200000/-
13.	12261012/24.02.2026		Bodyside Window		1500 Nos 3,02,460/-
	Arrgt.		Emergency Openable Window		536 Nos

(1) For details and making On-line bids, visit Website <http://ireps.gov.in>. Drawings/specifications, wherever required can be downloaded from RCF Website <http://www.rcf.indianrailways.gov.in>. Class IIIB digital signature certificate required for on-line bidding, can be obtained from licensed certifying agencies listed at <http://www.cce.gov.in> (2) Tenders will close at 14.25 hrs. on due date and tender will be opened at 14.30 hrs. Tenders Sr. No. 1 to 13 will be open at RCF Kapurthala (Punjab) 3. For queries, contact IREPS Help desk at 011-24102855, 011-24105180 or RCF Help desk at 011-23378658.

Note: GST Number of RCF is 03AAAGM0289C1ZT. All the suppliers are advised to quote this in dispatch documents for the supplies made by them.

CORRIGENDUM

The following amendment is authorized against under noted tenders:- S.No. 1. Tender No. 17251632, for Design, Supply, Fitment and Commissioning of Furnishing Items in GS Coach with Guard Compartment for Kalka-Shimla Railways. Existing Due Date: 28.01.2026 To be read as due date : 10.02.2026 S.No. 2. Tender No. 17251698, for procurement of Set of Seats & Berths for L.H.B GS, SCN, AC3T & SLR HOG Coaches (HL3 Complainant) Due Date: 04.02.2026 To be read as Qty : Tender quantities revised, To be read as Estimated Value : Estimated values revised, S.No. 3. Tender No. 17261001 Due Date: 05.02.2026 (a) For Set of FRP Ceiling Sheet Assemblies for LHB Chair Car To be Revised Qty: 09.00 Set. (b) For Set of Ceiling Sheet Assemblies for LHB AC2T Coaches To be Revised Qty: 09.00 Set. (c) For Set of FRP Roof Panels for LHB SLR Hog Coaches (31-Seater) To be Revised Qty: 94.00 Set (d) For Set of FRP Ceiling Panels for LHB GS Coaches To be Revised Qty: 42.00 Set. (e) For Set of Ceiling Sheet for LHB First AC Coaches To be Revised Qty: 10.00 Set. (f) For Set of FRP Ceiling Sheet Assemblies for LHB AC Hot Buffet High Heating Capa City Coaches. To be Revised Qty: 36.00 Set. Revised EMD: Rs.18,72,100.00 Revised Estimated Value for tendered Items: Rs.9,36,02,250.00 S.No. 4. Tender No. 17261004, Existing Due Date: 02.02.2026 To be read as due date : 09.02.2026. S.No. 5. Tender No. 17261006, Existing Due Date : 02.02.2026, To be read as due date : 09.02.2026. PCMM Date: 02.02.2026 Date: 02.02.2026

CanFin Homes Limited	
SIDDIPET BRANCH	
D.No. : Flat No.101, 18-54, Sri Nilayam Near New Busstand, Telangana-502103	
Email: Siddipet@canfinhomes.com Ph: 7625103256	
Website: www.canfinhomes.com CIN :L8110KA1987PLC08699	
DEMAND NOTICE	

B-Forms for candidates approved by Cong screening panels: Mahesh

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD



THE TPCC Election Committee discussed municipal elections in a Zoom meeting held on Monday. The meeting was held under the leadership of TPCC chief B Mahesh Kumar Goud, in which leaders-Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, AICC in-charge general secretary Meenakshi Natarajan, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, Ministers, PEC, PAC members, Screening Committee members and DCC presidents--participated.

Later, the TPCC chief informed that the Zoom meeting decided to give B-forms

to the candidates recommended by the Screening Committees. The meeting took a unanimous resolution approving the candidates recommended by the Screening Committees.

On the other hand, the

TPCC started distribution of B-forms to the DCC presidents and in-charge Ministers on Monday.

In fact, the meeting also discussed the strategies to be adopted in the municipal elections.

Cong to take a call on dealing with 'double trouble' at today's meeting

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE Congress party is likely to take a decision in a meeting to be held at Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's old Camp Office on Tuesday on whether to ignore or initiate disciplinary action against rebel candidates, if any remain in the fray after the withdrawal of nomination papers on February 3, sources said.

The meeting will primarily focus on the issue of rebels contesting the elections after the final date for withdrawal, as the polls will be held on the party symbol.

On the other hand, the AICC in-charge general secretary Meenakshi Natarajan has asked the in-charge ministers to attend the meeting with complete details of offi-

cial candidates as well as rebel contestants, if any.

Party leaders said the rebel issue is a delicate one and needs to be handled cautiously, failing which the party could face double trouble.

"If the rebels are ignored, violations of party discipline may continue. If action is initiated, the rebels may work against the official candidates. Either way, damage is inevitable if rebels remain in the fray. Hence, the Chief Minister, on Monday, has instructed the in-charge ministers to ensure that rebels withdraw their nomination papers by hook or crook," a senior leader said.

It is learnt that the meeting will also discuss recent political developments and their impact on the upcoming municipal elections. Strategies to strengthen the party in parliamentary constituencies, implementation of development works, and welfare schemes are also expected to be reviewed.



Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy will chair this important meeting on Tuesday evening at his old Camp Office in Jubilee Hills. TPCC chief B. Mahesh Kumar Goud, AICC in-charge general secretary Meenakshi Natarajan, in-charge ministers, and other senior leaders will attend the meeting.

It is learnt that the meeting will also discuss recent political developments and their impact on the upcoming municipal elections. Strategies to strengthen the party in parliamentary constituencies, implementation of development works, and welfare schemes are also expected to be reviewed.

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

MAKING it clear that leaders should take responsibility for the victory of candidates if they want to recommend them for the ongoing municipal elections, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy said that the party should give B-forms only to winning candidates. The Chief Minister exuded confidence that the party is going to win the elections with a good majority as all surveys have come in favour of the Congress party.

While participating in a Zoom meeting on Monday, along with AICC in-charge general secretary Meenakshi

Natarajan, TPCC chief B Mahesh Kumar Goud, in-charge Ministers, Political Advisory Committee (PAC) members and DCC presidents, CM Revanth Reddy said that all leaders should work together diligently, taking the municipal elections as a challenge since the polls are being held on party symbols.

The Chief Minister suggested that leaders prepare a local manifesto and go to the people to explain the party's programmes and initiatives. He asked the DCC presidents to take responsibility for issuing B-forms to party candidates and ensuring coordination at the grassroots level.

The Chief Minister directed the in-charge Ministers to ensure that there would be no rebels in the elections and that all leaders work in unison. The CM said that the party would give nominated posts to leaders who did not get tickets in the municipal elections.

- The Chief Minister is confident of Congress winning with good majority
- Leaders told to work together, treat polls as a challenge
- Prepare local manifesto; engage with people on party initiatives
- In-charge Ministers to prevent rebels and ensure unity
- Nominated posts for leaders who don't get tickets

BJP launches LED campaign vehicles for municipal polls

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE BJP has introduced a new campaign strategy ahead of the upcoming municipal and municipal corporation elections by unveiling specially designed LED campaign vehicles. The initiative was formally launched at the party's state headquarters by BJP Telangana President N Ramchander Rao, in the presence of senior leaders and party workers, on Monday.

Speaking at the event, Rao said the LED campaign vehicles would play a crucial role in effectively communicating the party's vision and policies



to the people. He emphasised that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Central government has implemented several development and welfare programmes, and these vehicles will help highlight those achievements at the grassroots level.

"Through LED screens, citizens will be able to clearly understand the BJP's proposals for urban development and

the solutions we are offering to local problems," he stated.

Rao further underlined that the BJP's primary agenda in the municipal elections is to address public issues and ensure transparent governance. He noted that the vehicles will showcase details of Central schemes such as housing, sanitation and welfare programmes, alongside the BJP's roadmap for strengthening municipal infrastructure.

With this launch, the BJP has set the stage for a high-tech, people-centric campaign, aiming to strengthen its presence in Telangana's municipal polls campaign and position itself as a credible alternative for development-focused administration. Rao added.

BJP releases charge sheet against Cong rule in TG

- BJP President N Ramchander Rao and Maharashtra Minister Ashish Shelar unveil the document
- BJP accuses the Congress government of corruption, unfulfilled guarantees and administrative failures

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

AHEAD of the municipal and municipal corporation elections, the Telangana BJP intensified its attack on the Congress government by releasing a charge sheet accusing it of corruption, broken promises and administrative collapse.

Titled 'Fake Promises - Deceptive Assurances', the document was released by BJP Telangana unit president N Ramchander Rao along with Maharashtra Minister Ashish Shelar in the presence of senior leaders.

Addressing the media, Rao said the Congress came to power by announcing six guarantees and over 420



promises but failed to implement even basic commitments. He alleged that the state is facing a serious financial crisis, resulting in delays in payment of salaries to government employees and pensions to retired staff. Assurances such as DA arrears, PRC implementation, health cards and restoration of the old pension scheme remain unfulfilled, creating uncertainty among employees and pensioners.

Accusing the Congress of betraying farmers, Rao said welfare schemes such as Rythu Bandhu, farm loan waivers and farmer insurance have been neglected or discontinued. He claimed the Bhoo Bharati Act has triggered fresh land disputes, pushing farmers into distress and destroying their trust in the government.

Failures in education and healthcare were also highlighted. According to Rao, fee

reimbursement arrears have crossed several thousand crore rupees, while promises of new IITs, schools in slum areas and education security cards exist only on paper. In healthcare, unpaid Rajiv Arogyasri bills have forced hospitals to stop treatments, affecting poor patients. Promised super-specialty hospitals and maternity hospitals have not materialised.

Women's welfare was described as another major

failure. The BJP alleged that promises of Rs 2,500 monthly assistance, gold for brides, Anganwadi wage hikes and electric scooters remain unimplemented. Similarly, unemployed youth were promised Rs 4,000 monthly allowance and two lakh jobs within a year, but the BJP claimed no major fresh recruitment has taken place.

On urban governance, Rao alleged corruption worth Rs 2,500 crore in municipal bodies. He pointed to overflowing garbage, damaged roads and poor street lighting, alleging development is sustained mainly by Central government funds.

The charge sheet further accused the Congress of neglecting SC, ST and BC welfare, failing to resolve podu land issues and allowing encroachment of temple lands. Rao alleged law and order has deteriorated with rising thefts, drug abuse and communal tensions.

Concluding the press meet, Rao urged voters to reject Congress and BRS and support BJP, asserting it alone can ensure corruption-free governance in Telangana state.

Kavitha slams KTR's remarks, calls them dictatorial

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

TELANGANA Jagruthi President Kavitha has strongly criticised BRS working president Rama Rao, describing his recent political comments as dictatorial. Addressing a press conference, she argued that his appeal for citizens to vote for candidates based solely on the face of Chandrashekhar Rao, even if the candidate is unsuitable, reflects a monarchical mindset. She urged the public to vote based on individual character rather than caste or money in the upcoming municipal elections. Kavitha encouraged supporting good candidates regardless of their



party affiliations, noting that Telangana Jagruthi representatives are contesting on the Forward Bloc symbol. The leader also targeted Harish Rao, alleging that he is colluding with Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to stage political dramas. Regarding the phone tapping case, Kavitha demanded a fair investigation and supported the SIT summons issued to Chandrashekhar Rao. She maintained that anyone called for questioning must cooperate with the law, drawing from her own experience with national agen-

GHMC cancels trade licence of gutted furniture showroom

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

FOLLOWING the tragic fire that claimed five lives in Nampally, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation has cancelled the occupancy certificate and trade licence of a furniture showroom. The establishment is now permanently restricted from starting business anywhere within GHMC limits. Meanwhile, the Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Protection Agency (HYDRAA) has granted a one-month reprieve to commercial complexes failing to comply with fire safety regulations before initiating further seizures.

Authorities have strongly advised shopkeepers against storing large quantities of flammable materials such as textiles, plastics, paints, and chemicals. Officials emphasised that watchmen's families must not reside in cellars, and cooking facilities are strictly prohibited in basements. Earlier, the city witnessed the sealing of eight major establishments, including Neerus in Jubilee Hills, Standard Furniture in Nampally, and showrooms belonging to Royal Oak, Bantia, Anu, and Look-

Collectors told to finalise ex-officio voter lists

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE State Election Commission has directed District Collectors to compile details of ex-officio members, including MPs, MLAs, and MLCs, for the indirect election of chairpersons and mayors.

This data collection is scheduled from February 11



to 14. Officials must submit details of both previously registered voters and new members eligible for the February 16 ballot. State Election Commissioner Rani Kumudini discussed these preparations during a video conference with district authorities on Monday.

Meanwhile, the commission confirmed that following a thorough scrutiny of

over 28,000 original submissions, the total number of validly nominated candidates stands at 19,608.

These measures ensure transparency in the administrative process as the state moves toward the final stages of the municipal polling cycle, ensuring all eligible representatives can exercise their franchise properly.

TG BJP moves into action mode; to douse rebel fire ahead of polls

Rebel nominations attract suspension from the party for 15 years, says BJP chief

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

BJP State President N Ramachander Rao has delivered strong warning directing party cadres to rally behind officially nominated candidates in the upcoming municipal elections.

He said on Monday that only those candidates, who have been allotted the party's B-form, should contest. He urged all other BJP leaders, who filed nominations independently without withdrawing their nomination, will be suspended from the party for 15 years, with no chance of rejoining in the future," he declared.

Acknowledging the disappointment of those who did not receive tickets, Rao assured that the party values their contributions.

"Those who have worked tirelessly for the growth of the BJP will be duly honored, even if circumstances prevented them from receiving tickets this time," he said.

He highlighted that candidate selection was based on survey reports, social factors and party-specific considerations, ensuring that only those with strong winning prospects were chosen.

Rao expressed confidence that, just as in past panchayat elections, the BJP would continue its winning streak in municipal polls through the dedication of party workers and the trust of the people. He called on all leaders to withdraw nominations and work collectively in their divisions and wards to secure victory for the party's official candidates.

As TGSRTC bus travel turns dearer, passengers switch to other services

MM FAROOQUI
HYDERABAD

THE Telangana State Road Transport Corporation's (TGSRTC) inter-state services, especially on the Hyderabad-Bengaluru stretch, have been among the highest-earning routes for the Corporation, with a large number of passengers, particularly tech professionals, frequently travelling on these buses. However, due to the comparatively high fares charged by TGSRTC and the recent reduction in bus fares by the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation, many passengers travelling to Bengaluru have begun switching



to the neighbouring State's bus services.

On these routes the occupancy ratio would be 100 per cent and even more during the weekends. The Corporation used to charge additional to the existing fare during the weekend given the huge demand from the passengers, but the

burden of high fares forced the passengers to travel in other state bus services.

However, ever since the Corporation affected the price hike the occupancy ratio has drastically fallen in the TGSRTC AC bus services. According to sources, on an average every day only 10 to 15 passengers

were travelling in the A/c buses. "The passengers are coming and enquiring about the fares but not travelling in the buses," said a conductor who did not want to be quoted. The ticket price of AC buses in TGSRTC for Hyderabad - Bengaluru route is between Rs 1,200 and Rs 1,600 whereas the KSRTC charges around Rs 1,050 and Rs 1,250.

It had been observed that with passengers not preferring the TGSRTC services, the KSRTC are taking advantage of this and operating additional special buses. The KSRTC operates over a dozen of special buses to clear the rush of passengers in their buses. Vam-

shi, a regular commuter to Hyderabad - Bengaluru route, said, "KSRTC Avairat Club Class services charge Rs 1,050, and KSRTC Ambari Dream AC Rs 1,300. Whereas, the TGSRTC charges 1,600 and Super Luxury charges Rs 1,200. With this high price burden, I switched to another state bus service," he added. We passengers urged the Telangana Corporation to reduce the prices."

The union leader said that the state corporation had imposed various cess and additional cess for long-distance passengers.

"If the officials do not act in time, all the passengers would shift to other operators leading to further losses.

HMWSSB steps in to end Begum Bazar sewer overflows

HYDERABAD: In response to long pending sewerage problems in Begum Bazar and surrounding localities, Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) Managing Director Ashok Reddy conducted a field inspection of several critical points under O&M Division 4 on Monday and directed officials to take comprehensive measures for a permanent solution.

During the inspection, the MD reviewed the situation at Osman Gunj, where a decades old 400 mm RCC B 90 main sewer line deep manhole had collapsed, leading to the absence of an outlet and causing frequent sewerage overflow onto the main road. Officials informed him that construction of a new deep manhole is currently underway to address the immediate issue.

Ashok Reddy closely examined the ongoing reconstruction works and held discussions with engineering officials on long term corrective measures. He stressed the need to prepare integrated sewerage network proposals in coordination with GHMC officials to permanently resolve the recurring sewage overflow problem in the area.

The MD also observed that in areas such as Feelkhana, Osman Gunj and Begum Bazar, GHMC storm water drains exist and, in several locations, sewer lines have been improperly connected to these drains.

He noted that during the construction of new roads and nala coverings by GHMC on the Osman Gunj main road, certain pipelines and manholes were dam-



aged and diverted into the storm water drain.

As a result, silt accumulation during the monsoon season has led to backflow in sewer lines, causing sewage to frequently overflow onto roads in these localities. To address this, Ashok Reddy instructed officials to reconstruct the damaged manholes, identify and desilt buried manholes, and temporarily divert the overflowing sewage into the drain.

For a permanent solution, he proposed the construction of a new connectivity pipeline linking the affected sewer lines to the HMWSSB sewer line located beyond the Osman Gunj bridge. He further emphasized that strict measures must be taken to prevent sewerage from entering stormwater drains.

The MD directed officials to identify all such critical points where sewerage lines are connected to stormwater drains and prepare detailed plans to separate sewer and stormwater networks, ensuring efficient drainage and preventing future overflows. Senior officials including CGM Prabhu, GM, and other concerned officers accompanied the MD during the inspection.

GVL blasts Telangana govt, calls budget a game-changer

HYDERABAD: FORMER Rajya Sabha member and BJP leader Narasimha Rao on Monday described the Union Budget 2026-27 as a strong foundation for the economic goals of India in 2047. He praised the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi for transforming the nation from the world's eleventh largest economy under Congress to the fourth largest within a single decade, calling it a Modi economic miracle. Rao emphasized that the budget is pivotal for building an Atmanirbhar Bharat, with clear strategies to boost domestic production in electronics, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals.

The BJP leader particularly highlighted the Bio Pharma Shakti initiative, aimed at making India a global manufacturing hub, noting that the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research in Hyderabad is expected to benefit significantly.

He also welcomed the announcement of tax holidays for data centres until 2047, predicting a digital boom for the Telugu states. Rao pointed to three high-speed rail corridors centred in Hyderabad linking the city to Pune, Bengaluru, and Chennai as evidence of the Centre's commitment to the growth of Telangana.

PNB inaugurates Manikonda branch

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD



PUNJAB National Bank (PNB), one of India's leading public sector banks, inaugurated its Manikonda branch under the Hyderabad Circle on January 31, further expanding its footprint in the city. The branch was inaugurated by Vandana Pandey, General Manager and Zonal Head, Hyderabad, in the presence of Arvind Kalra, Circle Head, Hyderabad.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by local residents, customers and bank officials. Addressing the gathering, Vandana Pandey and Kalra highlighted PNB's strategic focus on expanding its branch network, strengthening customer outreach and delivering efficient, technology-enabled banking solutions in line with the bank's vision of inclusive growth.

The Manikonda branch becomes the 76th branch under the Hyderabad Circle, reaffirming PNB's commitment to strengthening its presence in key growth corridors and catering to the evolving financial needs of customers in the region.

Punjab National Bank continues to provide comprehensive banking and financial services while playing an active role in supporting sustainable economic development.

APOLLO-LEICESTER SUMMIT ON AI CAREERS



Dr Vinod Bhat (extreme Left), Vice Chancellor- The Apollo University, sharing his thoughts at the one-day education summit themed 'Apollo- Leicester Education Summit 2026' with the theme 'Global Careers in the Age of AI', hosted by the Apollo University and the University of Leicester, UK, in Hyderabad on Monday. (L-R) Karthik Anand Reddy, Managing Director, Apollo Knowledge; Sivaramakrishnan, CEO, Apollo Knowledge; Prof Henrietta O'Connor, Provost & Deputy Vice-Chancellor, University of Leicester & Martyn Edwards, Director of External Relations, University of Leicester, look on.

Rockwoods International School celebrates 8th Annual Day

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD



ROCKWOODS International School celebrated its 8th Annual Day, 'ANANTARA', in a vibrant and joyful atmosphere, reflecting the institution's commitment to holistic education. The event was graced by G Ravi, Secretary, Telangana Pollution Control Board, as the chief guest, and Dr Balaramu Naidu, Managing Director, Onus Robotics Hospitals, as the guest of honour.

The celebrations were attended by the school's Chairman Raman Naidu, CEO Subrahmanyam Rangineni, along with teachers, parents and students. Addressing the gathering, the chief guest delivered an inspiring and motivational speech, emphasizing the importance of education, discipline and environmental responsibility in shaping future generations.

Students showcased their talents with great enthusiasm through a series of colourful dances and cultural performances, enthalling the audience and making the evening lively and memorable.

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CBFC under fire over transparency and cultural portrayals



Cong govt brought perceptible change in 2 years: Ponguleti

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

STATE Revenue, Housing, and Information and Public Relations Minister Srinivas Reddy on Monday said the Telangana government has demonstrated the change the people desired and upheld public trust in just two years. Addressing the launch of the modernised I&PR Department website at the Secretariat, he said the state was in crisis when the government took office, particularly within the economic sector. Under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the administration is overcoming challenges step by step while

- Revenue Minister asserts Congress administration has upheld public trust by transforming the state from economic crisis to national welfare model while accelerating development through the ambitious Telangana Rising 2047 vision

accelerating development and welfare programmes. Highlighting reforms across agriculture, education, healthcare, housing, and employment, the Minister said Telangana

has become a role model for the country. He stressed that the Information Department plays a key role in communicating these achievements effectively and instructed officials to leverage technology for the quick dissemination of schemes. Two years is a short period, but the achievements are remarkable. The government has implemented several welfare schemes and is moving forward with the Telangana Rising 2047 vision, which combines global competitiveness with welfare for the poor. I&PR Commissioner Priyanka, Chief Minister's CPRO Malsur, and other senior officials participated in the programme.

VRC PHANIHARAN
HYDERABAD

THE controversy surrounding the certification of Sumathi Sathakam has once again exposed cracks in the functioning of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), raising serious concerns about transparency, accountability, and cultural sensitivity.

Early on, the storm first broke with the Telugu film Commitment, whose certification records published by CBFC Hyderabad appeared inconsistent and misleading. Initially, the film produced by Taduri Neelima and Baldev Singh was granted an 'A' certificate in January 2021, later modified to 'UA' in March 2021. However, subsequent disclosures revealed that the film title that was listed meant 'No Commitment' at all, but 'enjoy (No Commitments)', certified in 2014 under a different producer. This discrepancy has sparked doubts about whether film names, producers, or even

content were altered, and why such details were concealed until challenged.

Adding to the controversy, CBFC Hyderabad failed to publish the mandatory cut-list details of the 'Commitment'. M Kiran Kumar, a research scholar in film studies, pointed out that similar lapses occurred with CBFC Mumbai, which did not release the cut-list for Laal Singh Chaddha. "These lapses undermine CBFC's credibility as a statutory body entrusted with ensuring transparency in film certification," he said.

The issue goes beyond procedural lapses. While Sumathi Sathakam is the latest controversy, the Commitment film had reportedly used slokas from the Bhagavad Gita as background scores for scenes falling under 'A' certification. Raising concerns about the unchecked misuse of intangible cultural properties. When queried, Member of Parliament Dr K Laxman said that the government at the Centre

is committed to protecting cultural and intangible heritage. However, when brought to his notice about the legislative gap in the existing laws, CBFC, Hyderabad sources clarified that they are not legally mandated to check the legal norms to safeguard intangible properties. He said that he had to look into the legal gaps to take up the issue about the glaring gap in the regulatory framework, if any. Legal experts argue that inconsistent certification records, unexplained changes in film details, and withholding of mandatory public information demand urgent intervention.

Advocate Durga Prasad insists that the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting must step in to streamline CBFC's functioning and restore credibility. Beyond procedural irregularities,



- Does CBFC's Film Certification need more effective oversight?
- Violation of intangible properties turning into a routine
- Communities and identities are portrayed as inherently violent in nature

es, and even state identities, reinforcing harmful stereotypes." This is at a time when the Central government talks about and insists on the celebration of diversity of different states and communities under its EK Bharat and Shreshta Bharat, he added.

The ongoing controversies suggest that CBFC's role as a statutory body is being undermined by opacity, cultural insensitivity, and regulatory gaps. As skeletons continue to tumble out of the closet, the demand for effective oversight grows louder, with calls for reforms that ensure transparency, protect intangible heritage, and prevent the perpetuation of damaging stereotypes.

KTR LIKENS SUNDAY PROTESTS TO TG MOVEMENT AGITATIONS

BRS working president alleges vendetta politics, administrative collapse and warns against media trials

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

BRS working president KT Rama Rao said the protests taken out by party cadre on Sunday reminded people of the Telangana movement days as bike rallies and agitations in Hyderabad reflected deep anger over governance failures. Rama Rao stated that making former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao sit for hours in the name of inquiry amounted to an attack on democratic values and was done merely to satisfy the political vendetta of the government.

In an informal interaction with the media, Rama Rao criticised the Congress government, stating that since coming to power it has delivered nothing substantial and was indulging in diversion politics through false propaganda and motivated investigations.

He asserted that the Congress administration was



party cadre and supporters for protests held across Telangana, stating that demonstrations took place in over 12,000 Gram Panchayats. He noted that effigies of the government were burnt in more than 7,000 villages in a single day, claiming these were not merely political events but a spontaneous public response to dissatisfaction with official functioning.

He asserted that the Congress administration was

vested interests were being prioritised over public welfare.

Regarding the SIT questioning of K Chandrashekhar Rao, Rama Rao said the government was trying to derive political mileage rather than uncover the truth, reiterating that phone tapping allegations were baseless.

He demanded a white paper on large scale irregularities in Singareni coal mine tenders involving relatives of the Chief Minister and questioned why the government was reluctant to hand the matter to the CBI or a sitting judge.

He claimed both the NDA government at the Centre and the state government were shielding those responsible.

He also alleged that the Union Budget had dealt Telangana a raw deal and demanded transparency over investment pledges made at Davos, asking how many

projects from 2024 and 2025 had actually materialised.

Rama Rao expressed confidence in a strong performance during the upcoming municipal elections. He warned Commissioner Sajjanar against declaring verdicts outside of court, stating that officers cannot declare something illegal through tweets or selective leaks.

He insisted that if evidence exists, it must be produced before a court of law rather than used for media trials. On the remarks made by Kishan Reddy, Rama Rao stated that BRS leaders were not afraid of inquiries or press conferences and have always faced the media openly to present their side of the story. The working president concluded that the party would continue to stand by its leadership and fight against the undemocratic practices currently being employed by the ruling dispensation.



pends entirely on compliance with Section 5(2) of the Indian Telegraph Act, the Information Technology Act, and safeguards laid down by the Supreme Court in the PUCL case. Any deviation can be determined only through judicial scrutiny, not via official police communications.

By using the expression illegal phone tapping in an official message, the SIT Chief has displayed a preconceived notion about the investigation outcome. Rao said this conduct is unbecoming of a senior IPS officer and runs contrary to the standards of neutrality mandated under the All India Services Conduct Rules 1968. He warned that such premature conclusions in a politically sensitive

matter involving a former Chief Minister and the Leader of the Opposition create a reasonable apprehension of bias.

Harish Rao recalled that the Supreme Court has consistently held that investigations must not only be fair but must also appear to be fair. When the head of an SIT uses language that assumes guilt before trial, it weakens democratic institutions and erodes faith in the rule of law. Judgments must be delivered by courts, not through police messages, as democracy cannot survive if institutions abandon constitutional limits.

Rao also questioned why the SIT chief does not formally recognise K Chandrashekhar Rao as the Leader of the Opposition in his official capacity. He asserted that the current approach suggests a political motivation rather than a genuine search for the truth, further damaging the credibility of the entire investigative process during this critical period for the state.

GHMC okays ₹11,460 cr budget for infra push

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation has approved an Rs 11,460 crore budget for the 2026-2027 financial year, focusing on infrastructure development, sanitation, and the growth of merged municipalities.

Major projects including the construction of flyovers, road expansions, and healthcare facilities aim to enhance connectivity and public amenities. The budget covers the existing corporation area and 27 newly merged urban local bodies, with priority given to capital works. Specifically,

- GHMC Budget focuses on infrastructure
- GHMC clears major infra spend

Rs 9,200 crore is designated for current limits, while Rs 2,260 crore is set aside for the newly included municipalities.

The corporation noted that city expansion is placing increased demands on civic services. Therefore, the fiscal plan prioritises financial sustainability and fair resource distribution to ensure the expanded body operates effectively without straining primary revenue sources.

NFCL Junction flyover, the TV9 underpass, and the second phase of the Comprehensive Road Maintenance Programme.

Furthermore, approvals were granted for a 50-bed Community Health Centre at Yakutpura SRT Colony and a new circle office building at Hayathnagar. Other initiatives include a multi-purpose indoor sports complex at Banda Bavi and the development of a 120-feet road from Masjid Banda to the Botanical Garden. With these strategic approvals, Hyderabad is poised for a significant urban transformation. From superior traffic management to improved public health facilities, these initiatives represent a major advancement in making the city more efficient, sustainable, and interconnected for its millions of residents across the expanded administrative zones.



A dumping yard called Ibrahimbagh lake bund

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE bund of Ibrahimbagh lake has turned into a sprawling dumping ground, choked with construction debris and waste. Moreover, the lake is filled with water hyacinth, which has turned it into a breeding ground for mosquitoes.

According to residents, though the Greater Hy-



Shaik Arif, a resident, said, "There is no distinction between summer and winter. The mosquito menace is a never-ending nuisance in these areas. The situation remains unchanged every season. Even after numerous complaints to the authorities concerned, no action has been taken."

The lake is slowly transforming into a dumping yard due to waste and construction debris from surrounding areas. "The entire surface of the lake is covered with water hyacinth and has now turned into mosquito breeding spots. We request the officials concerned to clean and save Ibrahimbagh lake," said Suresh, another

resident.

Mohammed Sohail, another resident, demanded that the department concerned, which is meant to protect water bodies, must save the lake from further encroachments and preserve it by clearing construction debris, waste and water hyacinth, and by providing proper inlet and outlet channels to the lake.

PEOPLE'S VOICE

derabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) takes up mega sanitation drives across the GHMC limits, no proper sanitation works have been carried out in their area, which comes under Neknampur ward.

The residents also confirmed a severe mosquito menace, highlighting a surge in mosquito numbers across Manikonda, Neknampur and other surrounding areas.

Shaik Arif, a resident, said, "There is no distinction between summer and winter. The mosquito menace is a never-ending nuisance in these areas. The situation remains unchanged every season. Even after numerous complaints to the authorities concerned, no action has been taken."

Residents pointed out that water hyacinth is spreading rapidly and there is no proper maintenance or treatment, while dumping of construction debris continues unchecked.

Interesting insights emerge on human lifespan

IFE expectancy in India at the time of independence was approximately 30-32 years. This rather low figure was driven by widespread poverty, inadequate healthcare, malnutrition, and high infant/maternal mortality rates. Since 1947, life expectancy has more than doubled, rising to over 70 years in recent years. This is, by itself, considered to be a major milestone as it reflects an improved public health care in the country. With about 65 per cent of Indians currently under the age of 35 and the median age speculated to be around 29, lifespan is a constant subject of interest. With a senior citizen population of around 11 per cent of the

total, many a time the statement 'age is just a number' is bandied about in social circles. It thus becomes interesting to know how a human being's lifespan can be computed; some recent studies are helpful in this regard. Genetics may explain about half of a person's lifespan, a study has suggested, pointing to a far more significant role of genetics than indications from earlier research. The findings, published in the journal *Science*, show that once mortality due to external factors such as accidents or infections are accounted for, "heritability of human life span due to intrinsic mortality is above 50 per cent".

Researchers from Israel's Weizmann Institute of Science and Karolinska Institutet in Sweden pointed out that understanding the heritability of human life span is central to ageing research, yet measuring genes' influence on longevity remains a challenge. Earlier studies have estimated that life span may be 15-33 per cent heritable across varied populations, with a typical range of 20-25 per cent, they said. The researchers show that the estimates "are confounded by extrinsic mortality -- deaths caused by extrinsic factors such as accidents or infections". While genes linked to lifespan have been identified, external environments

like disease or living conditions can exert a powerful influence on how long one lives and often obscure or confound potential genetic effects, they said. "Extrinsic mortality systematically masked the genetic contribution to life span in traditional analyses," the authors wrote. The team added that historical data from twin studies -- often explored for understanding how genes interact with environment and contribute to noticeable traits -- lack sufficient cause of death information to correct for extrinsic mortality.

"We use mathematical modeling and analyses of twin cohorts raised together and apart to cor-

rect for this factor, revealing that heritability of human life span due to intrinsic mortality is above 50 per cent," they said. "Correcting for extrinsic mortality raises the estimate for the heritability of human life span in twin and sibling studies to (nearly) 55 per cent, more than twice previous estimates and in line with heritability of most human traits," the team added. All the same, for humans around the world, it would be far more important to add life to years than add years to life as another popular saying goes. With quality of life under constant strain owing to prevailing socio-economic conditions, lifespan, whether inherited or lived

LETTERS

Duty exemption on cancer drugs is a life-saving move

In a major initiative, the Union Budget 2026-27 has given customs duty exemption on cancer medication drugs and brought down life-saving medications at affordable rates, which is a widely appreciable initiative. One must remember that cancer patients are increasing by over a million every year in India. Another good augury is the government's proposal to establish over 200 cancer care centres across the nation. One fondly hopes that this will bring a huge relief to cancer-inflicted patients and their families from the middle- and low-income groups.

Saketh Sirasanagandla, Hyderabad

Middle class ignored, yet again

THE 2026-27 Union Budget ignores the middle class by retaining income-tax slabs and rates, while increasing securities transaction tax. The super rich are incentivised by write-offs of their loans and lower class is enjoying the benefit of freebies and free/subsidised housing. However, the middle class has to bear the brunt huge education costs, EMIs for essential consumer goods and rising house rents on the one side and loss of job security and rising unemployment or underemployment owing to technological progress and adverse changes in labour codes, on the other side.

P R Ravinder, Hyderabad

High-speed rail corridors must include Warangal

THE Union Budget 2026-27 has announced three high-speed rail corridors for Hyderabad connecting Pune, Bengaluru and Chennai, projecting them as "growth connectors." However, the complete omission of Warangal—the second-largest city of Telangana and a major educational, industrial and cultural hub—is deeply disappointing and economically short-sighted. Equally concerning is the proposal to divert nearly half of the rail traffic through the Bibinagar-Nadikudi section. Instead of upgrading Kazipet into a modern transit hub, the current plan risks turning it into a congestion bottleneck. Warangal has been repeatedly assured of a railway manufacturing unit and redevelopment under the Amrit Bharat Stations Scheme. I urge the Ministry of Railways and the Telangana Government to re-examine the corridor alignments and include Warangal-Kazipet in the high-speed rail framework, ensuring that Telangana's development is not confined to Hyderabad alone.

Vidyasagar Reddy Kethiri, Hanumakonda-506009

Oppn has chosen rhetoric over reason

THE Opposition's criticism of the Union Budget 2026-27 appears less an exercise in economic scrutiny and more of reflexive political ritual. Ignoring fiscal constraints, global uncertainty, and inflationary pressures, it has chosen rhetoric over reason. The budget's calibrated focus on capital expenditure, infrastructure push, fiscal consolidation, and targeted welfare reflects pragmatic governance, not indifference. To dismiss these measures as "anti-people" without credible alternatives only exposes an unwillingness to engage with hard economic realities.

S Lakshmi, Hyderabad

Unbecoming of Cong, DMK and TMC

THE Congress, TMC and DMK have indulged in irresponsible fault-finding over the Union Budget, branding it with a variety of pejorative labels rather than engaging with its substance. Such rhetoric is uncalled for at a time when the economy demands constructive debate and policy seriousness. Instead of offering credible alternatives or acknowledging fiscal constraints, the Opposition has chosen theatrics over analysis. Budgetary scrutiny is vital in a democracy, but reducing a complex financial exercise to slogan-driven criticism only weakens parliamentary discourse and does little to advance national economic interests.

Sakunthala K R, Hyderabad

Should the Centre fund development projects in states?

THE Union Budget sets out how the Centre will spend money on national priorities like national highways, railway corridors, power grids, defence, and large infrastructure projects. States, on the other hand, prepare their own budgets to meet local needs like irrigation canals, hospitals, schools, and village roads. Transfers from the Union Budget to states happen in several ways. First, tax devolution: a constitutionally mandated share of central taxes recommended by the Finance Commission. Second, grants-in-aid: funds given to states to cover revenue deficits, disaster relief or special needs. Third, centrally sponsored schemes: programmes like MGNREGA or PMAY, where both Centre and states share costs. Fourth, central sector schemes: fully funded by the Centre but implemented in states, such as PM-KISAN. Chief Ministers often criticize the Union Budget because it does not announce state-specific projects or increase their share of funds. They feel their states are ignored when allocations are shown only in aggregate. The Union Budget builds national infrastructure, while state budgets decide local development priorities.

Dr O Prasada Rao, Hyderabad

thehansreader@gmail.com



BENGALURU ONLINE

Govt changes timing of Urdu schools during Ramzan

BENGALURU: The Karnataka government has decided to change the school working hours for Urdu-medium primary, upper primary and high schools across the state during the month of Ramzan in the academic year 2025-26. State Home Minister G Parameshwara on Monday said calling the government's move as appeasement of minorities was not right. The decision applies to all government, aided and unaided Urdu-medium schools and follows a review of existing orders and a representation submitted by the Karnataka State Primary School Education Association (R), Bengaluru, a government circular said.

Read more at
<https://epaper.thehansindia.com>



PROF MADABHUSHI SRIDHAR ACHARYULU

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, Ganti Katta Maisamma, Pochamma—symbols of collective memory and ecological discipline. The deity stood there as a reminder and a silent message: do not breach the bank, do not pollute the water and do not encroach upon the commons. Cut to the present times. At most places, the lake is gone. The embankment is gone. But the deity remains.

Massive temples have replaced modest shrines. Expensive cars are driven in for rituals. Lemons are tied, pumpkins broken and garlands draped. There is a ticket for the vehicle and another for Ashtottara. Water is sprinkled to complete the ritual—often drawn not from the vanished lake, but from a purchased plastic “water bubble.”

Faith without water, development without life: Faith continues. Ecology does not. This is not a criticism of belief. Every society has its rituals. Even rockets sent into space are adorned with lemons, ginger,

and tamarind. Belief is not the problem. Selective belief is. We remember the deity but forget her purpose. We worship the guardian but destroy what she guarded.

Lakes turn drains; rivers become sewers:

Today though lakes exist, many of them have turned into drains. The Musi is no longer a river; it is an open sewer. Lake beds have been converted into schools, universities, hospitals, malls, and even government offices. Planning permissions were granted, layouts approved, foundations laid—often by the very State that is constitutionally bound to protect all natural resources.

We are now told not to drink water from our village lakes. We are told the wells are unsafe. That may be true—but it hides a deeper truth: the water did not become unfit by accident; it was made so by neglect, encroachment, and pollution. Real estate did not merely consume land. It consumed water, memory, and accountability.

From wells to water bubbles:

Every backyard once had a well. No one asked where the water came from—it was right there. Today, in apartments and gated colonies, no one asks about water sources. Buyers ask about parking, lifts, and amenities. Water is assumed. If there is a shortage, they say: ‘buy a water bubble.’

Plastic bottles have replaced public water systems. We buy packaged drinking water bottles oblivious of whether they are mineral water or ordinary tap water. We have even forgotten how to ask for pure water, because purity has been outsourced to a label.

This is not a consumer

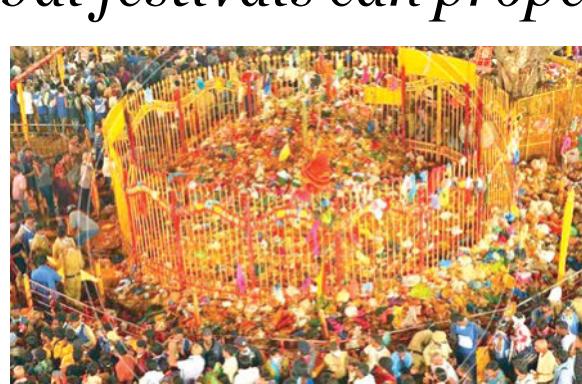


When lakes disappear, and bottled water becomes the norm, it is not culture that has failed—it is constitutional governance that must be blamed. When citizens are forced to rely on plastic bottles instead of public water infrastructure, the State has abdicated its duty. When faith is commercialised, and ecology is ignored, governance loses moral legitimacy.

choice. It is a governance failure. The Supreme Court, in several judgments, questions this failure of the Union and State governments. The apex court has held that the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution inherently includes the right to clean drinking water, sanitation, and a healthy environment. For instance, last year the Supreme Court while giving its ruling on M/s Landmark Ventures vs MPPCB & Ors, explained: “The right to life inherently includes the right to enjoy a pollution-free environment... and thereby has also recognised the right to clean drinking water as a fundamental right.” (2025 INSC 131)

The Court further emphasised that the State must regulate water supply, safeguard water bodies, and prevent health hazards to protect this right. While focused on sanitation in court premises, the Supreme Court in Rajeeb Kalita vs Union of India (2025) affirmed access to sanitation as part of Article 21, grounding it in earlier jurisprudence which linked environmental and public health rights to life and dignity. (2025 INSC 75)

In a case of A P Pollution Control Board vs M V Nayudu



There is a pressing need for the state governments of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh to transition from relying solely on “mega-events” to hosting regular, frequent tribal festivals. Such a shift could be the master key to unlocking rural entrepreneurship and revitalizing local economies in the tribal hinterlands.

up food stalls regularly, turning home kitchens into micro-enterprises. This not only monetizes traditional knowledge but also preserves culinary heritage.

Tourism as a force multiplier:

The jatara proves that people are willing to travel for an experience. However, the modern tourist—especially the younger demographic—seeks “experi-

Frequent conduct of tribal festivals can propel TG and AP economies

NOMULA SRINIVAS RAO

ing local economies in the tribal hinterlands.

Moving beyond the 'boom and bust' cycle:

Currently, the economic benefits of tribal festivals are concentrated in short, explosive bursts. During the Sammakka Saralamma Jatara, local traders, transporters, and artisans see a windfall. But once the deities return to the forest and the temporary shelters are dismantled, the economic silence returns.

By institutionalizing a calendar of frequent tribal festivals—perhaps monthly or quarterly circuits across districts like Adilabad, Bhadrak, Kothagudem, Visakhapatnam, and East Godavari—the two Telugu states can create a sustainable economic ecosystem. Regular events would mean a steady stream of income for local populations rather than a once-a-year lottery. It transforms the narrative from “pilgrimage management” to “cultural economic activity.”

Untapped potential of tribal entrepreneurship:

The primary beneficiary of frequent festivals would be the tribal entrepreneur. Our tribal belts are reservoirs of unique craftsmanship and organic produce that the urban market desperately craves but rarely accesses.

Handlooms and handicrafts:

In an era where “organic” and “farm-to-table” are the buzzwords, tribal cuisine is the gold standard. The bamboo chicken of Araku or the millet-based rotis of Telangana's tribes are delicacies that urban foodies travel miles to taste. Frequent festivals would allow local families to set

“trial travel.” They want to witness the rhythmic beats of the Gusadi dance, understand the rituals of the Dhimsa, and immerse themselves in nature.

By organizing frequent cultural festivals, the Tourism Departments of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh can cultivate “tribal circuits.” These festivals can act as anchors for eco-tourism. When thousands of tourists visit a district for a weekend festival, the ripple effect is felt across the hospitality sector. Homestays, local guides, transport operators, and small shops all thrive. It encourages infrastructure development in remote areas, not just for the sake of construction, but to service a growing service economy.

Empowering women and youth:

The most significant impact of a localised festival economy is on women and youth. In the tribal context, women are often the custodians of agricultural produce and handicrafts. The sale of forest produce—honey, medicinal herbs, tamarind, and the famous “bangaram” (jaggery)—is often managed by women.

Regular market-festivals give Self-Help Groups (SHGs) a consistent revenue channel. Instead of selling raw produce to middlemen at throwaway prices, they can package and brand their products for festival

visitors, capturing higher value. Similarly, tribal youth can be trained as cultural ambassadors, tour guides, and event managers, fostering a spirit of entrepreneurship that reduces migration to overcrowded cities.

The path ahead:

The government of Telangana state has already shown commendable dedication in organising the massive Sammakka Saralamma Jatara. The machinery is in place; the intent is visible. The next step is decentralisation and frequency.

We need not wait for the stars to align for a biennial Jatara to celebrate tribal culture. By creating a robust calendar of smaller, frequent festivals, we can turn every district into a cultural hub. This approach respects the sanctity of the massive annual pilgrimages while acknowledging that culture must be a living, breathing, and earning part of daily life.

Transitioning to frequent tribal festivals is not just about celebration; it is a strategic economic policy. It is about taking the spirit of the ‘bangaram’ offering—which symbolises wealth and purity—and ensuring that wealth flows back into the hands of the people, for whom the forest is their home.

(The writer is a former OSD to former Union Civil Aviation Minister)

Govt changes timing of Urdu schools during Ramzan

BENGALURU: The Karnataka government has decided to change the school working hours for Urdu-medium primary, upper primary and high schools across the state during the month of Ramzan in the academic year 2025-26. State Home Minister G Parameshwara on Monday said calling the government's move as appeasement of minorities was not right. The decision applies to all government, aided and unaided Urdu-medium schools and follows a review of existing orders and a representation submitted by the Karnataka State Primary School Education Association (R), Bengaluru, a government circular said.

Read more at
<https://epaper.thehansindia.com>

Guntur man bids Rs 2.08 cr for fancy vehicle number!

Ultra-rare VIP registration number 'DDC 0001' auctioned on Big Boy Toyz platform



HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

THE craze for fancy vehicle registration numbers in the Telugu states has once again come to light, with a resident of Guntur setting a new national record by purchasing India's most expensive number plate for whopping Rs 2.08 crore.

Kiran Kolpaka of Guntur won the online auction of the ultra-rare VIP registration number 'DDC 0001' (also known as 'DDC 001') for Rs 2.08 crore in January. This is the highest amount ever paid for a vehicle registration number in India. The auction was conducted

by the newly launched auction house platform of Big Boy Toyz (BBT) in its debut event.

The 'DDC 0001' number plate was previously owned by Big Boy Toyz founder Jatin Ahuja, which added to its exclusivity and market value. The plate is considered a rare and premium collectible among automobile and luxury asset enthusiasts.

The Rs 2.08-crore sale has surpassed all previous benchmarks for registration number auctions in the country. In 2025, the 'HR 88 B 8888' plate was auctioned for Rs 1.17 crore, but the deal was later cancelled due

to non-payment. The plate was eventually resold for Rs 26.7 lakh. In comparison, the successful sale of 'DDC 0001' has now become the highest confirmed transaction in this segment.

Experts said the record-breaking sale reflects the rising demand for premium registration numbers as status symbols and collectible assets. Such numbers are increasingly viewed as a mark of prestige among business owners and automobile enthusiasts.

The latest auction is expected to further boost interest in luxury number plates and organized auction platforms across India.

- India's strong democratic framework offers an unparalleled platform for talent to flourish
- Kondapalli Srinivas lauds The Hans India for hosting CEF South
- Says that anything created in Visakhapatnam can now reach the world

VASU POTNURI
VISAKHAPATNAM

CREATIVITY today is not just an idea but a powerful economic driver capable of positioning regions on the global map, MSME Minister Kondapalli Srinivas underlined. Delivering his address at the concluding session of the first edition of Creative Economy Forum (CEF) South organised by The Hans India in collaboration with the CEF along with HMTV as the media partner in Visakhapatnam, the minister stressed the immense economic power of creativity and that innovative thinking has the potential to build strong and sustainable economies. Underlining that



MSME Minister Kondapalli Srinivas along with Tamil Nadu BJP vice-president Khushbu Sundar, Creative Economy Forum South founder Supriya Suri, among others, at the first edition of the CEF South organised in Visakhapatnam



MSME Minister Kondapalli Srinivas speaking at the CEF South organised by The Hans India and CEF in Visakhapatnam

time governance.

Stressing the importance of ideas in entrepreneurship, the minister said that strong and original ideas naturally attract investment and sponsorship. With multiple funding mechanisms now available, he said, even innovators from remote areas have an opportunity to pitch their ideas. Appreciating The Hans India for organising the prestigious event in Visakhapatnam, the minister described the event as a true representation of South India's dynamic spirit, calling it highly inspiring and impactful.

Municipal polls: 615 nominations received in RR district

ESA BIN ABDUL REHMAN
RANGAREDDY

TELANGANA has registered five per cent growth in GST collections for January this year. The state collected Rs 4,261 crore compared to Rs 4,068 crore during the corresponding month last year. Commercial taxes officials noted that growth remained slow due to the ongoing implementation of rate rationalisation. However, they expect that the collection of pending dues as the financial year

concludes will help increase total revenue during February and March. Officials stated that while collections have increased slightly over the last four months, the overall growth rate remains low. This trend is expected to impact state revenues in the coming days, despite government hopes for a strong performance in the final quarter of the 2025-2026 financial year.

To address these concerns, a meeting will be organised with commercial taxes and GST officers soon.

Although 886 nominations have been received, of

the Jana Sena Party, four each from the All India Forward Bloc and three from the Communist Party of India.

The highest number of 224 nominations has been filed from Shadnagar municipality that spreads in 28 wards followed by Ibrahimpatnam (192), Chevella (133), Amanal (109), Moinabad (108), Shankarpally (100).

The district will witness municipal elections in six Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)-

Moinabad, Chevella, Ibrahimpatnam, Shadnagar, Amanal and Shankarpally, where a total number of 126 wards give mandate on polling day scheduled on February 11. All the ULBs have a total of 176,023 voters that include 87,478 men and 88,542 women electors.

Meanwhile, the government on Monday released the gazette notification revising the property tax in poll-bound areas un-

der Chevella municipality. The notification includes 12 gram panchayats—Chevella, Kandiwada, Palgutta, Mallareddyguda, Pamena, Damaragidda, Ramannaguda, Ibrahimpatnam, Urella, Devuni Yarravalli, Malkapur and Kesaram. As per the gazette, a rate of 0.25% tax was fixed for residential buildings and 0.40% on commercial establishments. The taxable slab shall come into effect from April 1, 2025.

Iran Prez orders resumption of nuclear talks with US

TEHRAN

IRANIAN President Masoud Pezeshkian on Monday ordered the start of nuclear talks with the United States, according to reports. "Iran and the United States will hold talks on the nuclear file," the reports said, without specifying the date.

The move signals a de-escalation after Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei issued a stern warning on Sunday to the US, stating that if the latter starts a war, it will turn into a regional war.

However, Trump had, even after Khamenei's strong remarks, reiterated his hope that the US and Iran could strike a deal. While responding to questions related to Iran's Supreme Leader's remarks, the US President said that he was hopeful both the

nations will make a deal. "Hopefully, we'll make a deal. If we don't make a deal, then we'll find out whether he was right," Trump said while talking to reporters.

Even though Iran and the United States have been at odds for quite some time, the recent escalation in tensions between the two nations was triggered by the anti-government protests in Iran during which, thousands of people reportedly died during crackdown on demonstrators, which prompted the US President to intervene and warn Iran against taking action against protesters.

The protests, which started on December 28, 2025, over the declining economic condition of the country soon turned into an agitation against the current Iranian regime. However, Iran

described the protests as "riots" stoked by the United States and Israel.

On Sunday, Iran's foreign minister Abbas Araghchi said that he believes the US President was "wise enough to make the correct decision", even though he was concerned about "miscalculations".

Araghi said that the Islamic nation does not have trust in the United States as a negotiating partner anymore while some nations in the middle east were trying to mediate and rebuild that trust.

"So I see the possibility of another talk if the US negotiation team follows what President Trump said: to come to a fair and equitable deal to ensure that there is no nuclear weapons," he told CNN in an interview.

Air India grounds flight after fuel switch moves from 'run' to 'cutoff'

Continued from P1

Following the incident, a Boeing spokesperson confirmed they are in touch with Air India and are "supporting their review of this matter."

Air India said it has informed the civil aviation regulator DGCA about the matter concerning the fuel switch. "At Air India, safety of our passengers and crew remains top priority," the spokesperson said.

After an Air India Dreamliner

crashed in Ahmedabad in June 2025, killing 260 people, the Tata-owned airline had checked the fuel control switches on all Boeing 787 aircraft in its fleet. The airline had reported it found no issues. In July 2025, a preliminary report from investigators who looked into the Ahmedabad Dreamliner crash showed that seconds after take-off, the plane's engine fuel control switches were switched off briefly, starving them of fuel.

Epstein files reveal hidden ties

Continued from P1

The documents show Musk exchanging a handful of emails with Epstein over the years about potential travel or social events. One email even mentions a part of Epstein's private island. Last year, Musk claimed he never visited Epstein's island and even posted on social media that the serial sex offender tried to get him to go to his infamous place, but he refused.

The files, though, suggest that in November 2012, Musk seemed curious about the island, sending Epstein an email asking, "What day/night will

be the wildest party on your island?" After the documents came out, Musk clarified on social media that he only had a few emails with Epstein and has repeatedly denied visiting his island, or flying on his private plane, nicknamed the "Lolita Express".

He also said that some of the emails could be misinterpreted and used by people trying to damage his reputation. "I was well aware that some email correspondence with him could be misinterpreted and used by detractors to smear my name," he added.

Massive showdown over ex-Army Chief's memoir

Continued from P1

"Naravane ji has written about the Prime Minister and Rajnath Singh ji clearly in his book, which has appeared in an article, and I am quoting from that article. They are scared because if it comes out, the reality of Narendra Modi ji and Rajnath Singh ji will be revealed. What happened to the 56-inch chest when China was before us and advancing?" Gandhi said. Congress and its leaders also shared on social media

Parl begins debate on President's Address

NEW DELHI: The Rajya Sabha has taken up discussion on the motion of thanks on the President Droupadi Murmu's address to the joint sitting of both the Houses of Parliament. A total of 16 hours has been allotted for the discussion. Moving the motion, Nominated Member C. Sadanandan Master said, President Murmu in her address has articulated a clear and confident vision of India's continued progress.

Seconding the motion, Dr Medha Vishram Kulkarni of BJP said, the President's address highlights India's continued progress.

HMDA rakes in Rs 1,000 cr from high-rise permits

Continued from P1

The unlimited floor space index (FSI) offered by the government is said to be the main reason for the developers opting for skyscrapers which invariably put immense pressure on infrastructure, power and natural resources like water.

The tallest building in the city and also in the southern part of India will be coming at Osman Nagar it will have 70 floors. Officials said that the project is coming up in an area of about seven acres and would have three towers with over 870 units. Similarly, another tallest building for which permission was

ICC mulls suspending Pakistan as T20 WC 'India boycott' row deepens

Continued from P1

"The ICC hopes that the PCB will consider the significant and long-term implications for cricket in its own country as this is likely to impact the global cricket ecosystem, which it is itself a member and beneficiary of," the global body said in a statement.

Pakistan on Sunday announced a boycott of its high-profile men's T20 World Cup group league match against India. "The Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan grants approval to the Pakistan Cricket Team to participate in the ICC World T20 2026, however, the Pakistan Cricket Team shall not take the field in the match scheduled on February 15 against India," the government posted on social media. "While the ICC respects the roles of governments in matters of national policy, this decision is not in the interest of the global game or the welfare of fans worldwide, including millions in Pakistan," the ICC further stated.

Affordable drugs, vaccines and diagnostics, supported by domestic biomanufacturing, would be a major social and economic support, especially for the middle class and vulnerable sections.

-Dr Jitendra Singh, Union MoS for Science and Technology



BIZ BRIEFS

Bridgestone's new partnership

Bridgestone India has announced a new collaboration with Parmish Verma, a Punjabi singer and actor as part of its strategy to deepen consumer engagement in key regional markets. Rajiv Sharma, Executive Director, Bridgestone India, said: "North India is a strategically important market for us. Parmish Verma's credibility and deep connection with audiences make him an ideal partner to represent Bridgestone. This collaboration enables us to engage meaningfully with young consumers."

HIET partners with Air India

Hindustan Institute of Engineering and Technology (HIET), part of the Hindustan Group of Institutions (HGI), announced a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Air India Limited at Wings India 2026 at Begumpet Airport, Hyderabad. Under the agreement, HIET will deliver structured training for Category B1.1 (Aeroplane Turbine) and Category B2 (Avionics) engineers selected by Air India. The programme is designed to support the airline's growing requirement for licensed aircraft maintenance engineers amid rapid fleet.

Classic Legends' new outlet

Classic Legends marks an important milestone in its journey of strengthening technical capability and service excellence with the inauguration of the Advanced National Training Centre at its Pithampur plant in Indore. Anupam Thareja, Co-Founder, Classic Legends, said: "As our brands continue to grow, strengthening our service capability ecosystem becomes extremely important. The Advanced National Training Centre is a strategic investment in people, skills and infrastructure, aimed at building future-ready technicians."

Montra Electric gets certification

Montra Electric (e-M&HCV business vertical), part of the Murugappa Group, has become the first heavy-duty electric truck manufacturer in the country to receive certification under the Government of India's PM E-DRIVE Scheme. HD Kumaraswamy, Union Minister, said: "The PM E-DRIVE scheme is a testament to the growing prowess of Indian innovation in the heavy-duty electric vehicle segment. Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, we are committed to decarbonizing our logistics."

Xiaomi opens 15 service centres

Xiaomi announced the strategic expansion of its Premium Service Centre network in India with the launch of premium service centres across 15 new cities. Sudhin Mathur, COO, Xiaomi India, said: "The strong response to our first 10 Premium Service Centres reaffirmed that customers are increasingly value faster, more dependable, and experience-led after-sales support. As part of Xiaomi's value-for-experience strategy for 2026, the expansion into 15 additional cities is a natural next step."

Mkts rise over 1% as value buying spurs rebound on D-St

BLUE-CHIP OIL & GAS, BANKING AND AUTO SHARES SPURRED REBOUNDS AFTER FACING A MASSIVE DRUBBING ON BUDGET DAY

Recovery Mode

- BSE-Sensex rallied 943.52pts or (+1.17%) to 81,666.46
- NSE-Nifty climbed 262.95pts or (+1.06%) to 25,088.40
- FIs offloaded Rs588.34 cr on Sunday



MUMBAI: 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.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rallied 943.52 points or 1.17 per cent, to settle at 81,666.46. During the day, it surged 1,009.31 points or 1.25 per cent to a high of 81,732.25. The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 262.95 points or 1.06

per cent to end at 25,088.40. During the day, it advanced 282.65 points or 1.13 per cent to 25,108.10.

Value buying after a sharp correction on Budget day and a steep decline in global crude oil prices helped key indices recover, experts said. From the Sensex firms, Power Grid jumped 7.61 per cent and Adani Ports climbed 4.76 per cent. Bharat Electronics, Reliance Industries, Mahindra & Mahindra, Larsen & Toubro, InterGlobe Aviation, ICICI Bank and UltraTech Cement

were among the other major gainers. Axis Bank, Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, Trent and Titan were the laggards.

Among indices, BSE Utilities jumped the most by 2.66 per cent, followed by power (2.54 per cent), services (2.38 per cent), energy (1.98 per cent), auto (1.98 per cent), oil & gas (1.92 per cent) and metal (1.90 per cent). IT, BSE Focused IT and healthcare were the laggards.

India's manufacturing sector activity witnessed a slight

recovery in January, amid faster increase in new orders, even as business confidence slipped to its lowest level in three-and-a-half years, a monthly survey said on Monday. The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), rose from a two-year low of 55 in December to 55.4 in January.

In the PMI parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday announced measures to boost manufacturing, offered long-term tax incentives for global data centres, and support for agriculture and tourism as she unveiled a Rs 53.5 lakh crore Union Budget for 2026-27, seen as a long-term blueprint for sustaining growth amid rising global risks. Shunning populist measures despite five key states, including West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, heading to polls, the Budget signalled continued fiscal consolidation and infrastructure spending.

INDIAWOOD event in B'luru from Feb 26

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

THE 26th edition of the biennial event INDIAWOOD 2026 will be held at the Bangalore International Exhibition Centre (BIEC) from February 26 to March 2. Organised by NürnbergMesse India, the show is set to attract woodworking and furniture manufacturing industry players.

The event is further supported by EUMABOIS, the European Federation of Woodworking Machinery Manufacturers.

Set to be the largest edition in its history, the show will host over 1,000 brands from more than 50 countries, welcome 90,000 industry professionals, and span 85,000 sqm of exhibition space, marking a 15 per cent growth over the previous edition.

The scale and diversity of participation reflect strong global confidence in India's manufacturing capabilities and align with the country's Viksit Bharat vision, where advanced manufacturing, exports and global integration are key growth drivers.

The recent flight of foreign capital followed the worst outflow of Rs 1.66 lakh crore (\$18.9 billion) recorded in 2025, triggered by volatile currency movements, global trade tensions and concerns over potential US tariffs and stretched market valuations.

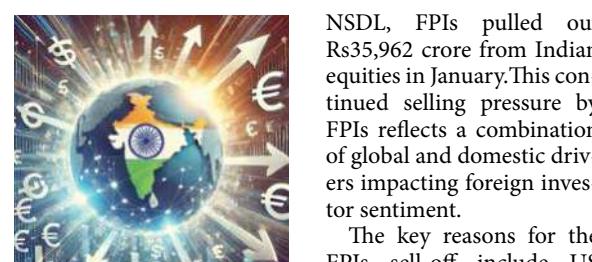
Going ahead, the sharp increase of STT in futures and options is likely to act as a marginal negative for FPI flows in the near term, particularly for high-frequency and derivative-focused global funds, said Aakash Shah, Technical Research Analyst at Choice Equity Broking.

"While the STT hike may help boost tax collections, it risks dampening trading

volumes and could slow tactical FPI participation. To meaningfully revive sustained FPI inflows, investors will be looking more closely at macro stability, the rupee movement, and consistency in tax policy rather than just growth optics," he added.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in her Budget speech for 2026-27, announced a proposal to raise the STT on futures to 0.05 per cent from the present 0.02 per cent and STT 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.

According to data from



NSDL, FPIs pulled out Rs35,962 crore from Indian equities in January. This continued selling pressure by FPIs reflects a combination of global and domestic drivers impacting foreign investor sentiment.

The key reasons for the FPIs sell-off include US tariff threats on Europe amid the Greenland dispute, which sparked global risk-off sentiment, along with a stronger US dollar, elevated bond yields, rupee weakness to Rs90-92 levels, and stretched valuations, Vaqarjaved Khan, Senior Fundamental Analyst, Angel One Ltd, said. Himanshu Srivastava, Principal, Manager Research, Morningstar Investment Research India, said, "Globally, persistent risk aversion, still elevated interest rates in developed markets, and a strengthening US dollar have encouraged capital to remain on the sidelines or rotate into other markets perceived to offer better risk-adjusted returns."

To discourage misuse of tax arbitrage, promoters will be subject to an additional buy-back tax, raising the effective tax rate to 22 per cent for corporate promoters and 30 per cent for non-corporate promoters, she stated. Sitharaman said, "Change in taxation of buyback was brought in to address the improper use of buyback route by promoters." Market experts believe that the higher tax burden on promoters may lead companies to reassess their capital allocation strategies between dividends and buybacks.

Roop Bhootra, Whole-time Director, Anand Rathi Share and Stock Brokers, said: "The proposed move is a positive

Business

Non-IT sectors lead white-collar hiring with 3% growth in Jan

BPO/ITES among the top 5 sectors to register a double-digit YoY growth, says report

Positive growth

- BPO/ITES sector posted a 21% growth in hiring
- Hospitality/travel sector registered a 15% rise
- Insurance sector also registered more than 7% growth
- However, banking and financial services saw a decline of 15%

NEW DELHI



Banking and financial services was one major non-IT sector to see a decline, slipping 15 per cent (on-year). Meanwhile, the IT sector remained flat for the month. Within this landscape, AI/ML roles sustained strong momentum with a more than 34 per cent rise.

Over the past three months, BPO/ITES has consistently ranked among the top 5 sectors for double-digit YoY growth.

In January 2026, hiring in the sector rose 21 per cent YoY, supported by broad-based demand across experience levels, including a strong 39 per cent increase in fresher hiring and a 9 per cent rise among professionals with 13-16 years of experience. Non-metro cities

FPIs offloaded ₹36,000-cr in Jan

Amid global uncertainties, going ahead the sharp increase of STT in futures and options is likely to act as a marginal negative for FPI flows in the near term



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Share buybacks to be taxed as capital gains for shareholders

NEW DELHI



for individual shareholders as tax liability reduces from 30 per cent (highest slab rate) to capital gains rates (short term 20 per cent and long-term 12.5 per cent) and negative capital gains for all categories of shareholders.

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In market parlance, buy-back tax is a kind of tax levied on companies that buyback their own shares from shareholders. Generally, governments impose this tax to restrain firms from distributing profits to shareholders through share buybacks rather than paying dividends.

Silver nosedives ₹52,000, gold plunges by ₹12,800

NEW DELHI

Silver prices extended its steep fall for the third straight day, tumbling Rs 52,000 to Rs 2,60 lakh per kg in the national capital on Monday, while gold fell to Rs 1.52 lakh per 10 grams amid weak global trends and a firm US dollar. According to the All India Saraf Association, the white metal nosedived Rs 52,000, or nearly 17 per cent, to Rs 2,60,000 per kilogram. On Saturday, the metal tanked 19 per cent, or Rs 72,500, to Rs 3.12 lakh per kilogram. In the last three sessions, silver prices have fallen Rs 14,500, or nearly 36 per cent from Rs 40,450 per kg -- its all-time high -- recorded on January 29. Gold price of 99.9 per cent purity also bore the brunt of the sell-off, crashing by Rs 12,800, or 7.73 per cent, to Rs 152,700 per 10 grams. It had settled at Rs 1,65,500 per 10 grams in the previous session.

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Union Budget redefines the individual tax experience

This Budget 2026-27 marks a quiet but powerful shift in India's personal taxation philosophy

K NARESH KUMAR

WITH the Budget now placed before Parliament, many who wait anxiously for this annual exercise will likely feel a sense of relief. Personally, I believe the Budget—at least from an individual's perspective—should ideally be a largely non-consequential event, intervening only when course correction or genuinely transformative change is required. Instead, it has gradually evolved into a highly hyped spectacle, one that often inflates expectations and, in turn, breeds disappointment. Over time, this anticipation has made the Budget less about steady governance and more about headline-driven outcomes.

Ironically, some of the most consequential fiscal decisions in recent years have been announced outside the Budget itself—whether it was the corporate tax reductions in 2019 or the personal income tax slab changes in 2024. This shift suggests a deliberate move by the government to decouple major policy actions from Budget Day theatrics, reserving the Budget for consolidation rather than surprise.

This Union Budget 2026-27 marks a quiet but powerful shift in India's personal taxation philosophy



In a rare display of empathy, the Budget fully exempts interest awarded by Motor Accident Claims Tribunals from tax. Compensation meant for rehabilitation will no longer be diluted by tax deductions through TDS (Tax Deducted at Source)—a small change with profound human impact.

lectured upfront and refunded months later. For families funding education abroad or managing medical emergencies, this is real, tangible relief. It results in lower cash

blockages, fewer refunds, and immediate liquidity relief especially for students, families and global Indians. Also, customs duty on imports for personal usage was proposed

fee. Also, the filing of returns for non-audit business cases & trusts is extended to 31st Aug, lowering stress, fewer penalties and better alignment with real-life realities.

Perhaps the most progressive move is the one-time foreign asset disclosure window. In an era of global careers and digital assets, inadvertent non-disclosure is common. A six-month amnesty window is proposed for small foreign income/asset declaration, targeted at students, tech employees, and first-time global earners. By offering immunity for small assets and a clean-up window without stigma, the government chooses trust over threat. The limit is set at small non-immovable assets less than 20 Lakh under Black Money Act. This is a humane correction mechanism instead of criminalization for genuine mistakes.

Compliance reforms go beyond rates. Automated lower-TDS certificates, centralized Form 15G/15H submission via depositories, and extended timelines for revising returns reflect an understanding of how people actually earn, invest, and make mistakes. The system now corrects errors rather than punishing them. ITR (Income Tax Return) revision deadlines are extended to 31st March with a nominal

Budget also nudges behaviour. Higher STT (Securities Transaction Tax) on derivatives reminds retail traders that leverage and speculation carry costs—both financial and systemic. The STT increased on futures by 0.05 per cent and options by 0.15 per cent. The message is subtle but firm: productive investing over churn, thus increasing barriers for frequent traders while long-term investors remain unaffected. Hope retail investors take note.

In sum, Budget 2026-27 does not merely tweak slabs or rates. It reimagines the relationship between the individual and the tax system—simpler, fairer, and more aligned with modern economic life. For the honest taxpayer, this is one of the most psychologically reassuring Budgets in recent memory.

(The author is a partner with "Wealocity Analytics", a SEBI registered Research Analyst firm and could be reached at info@wealocity-analytics.com)



Emerging roles in risk, finance, and technology: What students must learn today?

WILLIAM MAY

If you're a student or just starting your career, you may be wondering where the strongest long-term opportunities will be in the coming years. One area that's becoming increasingly relevant is risk management. Hiring trends show strong momentum, with risk-specific roles among the fastest-growing in India and ranked among the top 25 job roles in LinkedIn's 2026 job trends report. What's more, demand for risk professionals is rising not only in traditional financial services, but also across emerging and fast-evolving sectors such as artificial intelligence (AI), sustainability, technology, and consulting. This broad-based demand highlights how risk management has moved from being a niche function to a core business capability.

This growth reflects the way business itself is changing. Market volatility, evolving regulations, climate-related disruptions, and the rapid adoption of artificial intelligence are reshaping how organizations make decisions—both in daily operations and long-term strategic planning. As a result, risk considerations now influence lending decisions, investment strategies, technology adoption, and enterprise-wide planning. Risk management has also become central to how



companies protect their assets, ensure regulatory compliance, and identify opportunities for sustainable growth. Together, these shifts are opening new and diverse career pathways in India and globally, offering students and early professionals meaningful opportunities for long-term professional success.

Opportunities across finance, AI, and sustainability

Financial innovation, digital lending platforms, and advanced technologies continue to increase exposure to financial, operational, technological, and sustainability-related risks. This environment is creating steady demand for pro-

fessionals who can assess risk, interpret data, and support decision-making across different functions within an organization. For instance, credit risk teams play a critical role in evaluating the financial strength of borrowers and counterparties in faster, more data-driven lending environments. Their work helps institutions manage defaults while expanding access to credit.

Market risk professionals, meanwhile, focus on how changes in interest rates, equity markets, foreign exchange movements, and commodity prices impact trading activities and investment portfolios. Their analysis supports institutions in managing vol-

ability and protecting capital. Liquidity, operational, and model risk teams ensure that organizations can meet financial obligations during periods of stress and that internal models, systems, and processes function as intended. Together, these roles form the backbone of modern financial risk management.

The wider use of AI and digital infrastructure has introduced additional challenges that go beyond traditional financial risk. Issues such as model bias, data quality, system transparency, cybersecurity threats, and data privacy concerns are becoming increasingly important. These risks have driven demand for profes-



als who can oversee responsible technology use, strengthen governance frameworks, and ensure compliance with emerging regulations. At the same time, climate change and sustainability pressures are influencing asset values, credit decisions, insurance models, and long-term corporate strategy. As a result, organizations are seeking risk professionals who can connect climate and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) data with financial analysis to support resilience and long-term value creation.

Emerging risk specializations and skills in demand

Employers are increas-

ingly focusing on specialized risk roles across finance, AI and data analytics, cybersecurity risk management, ESG and sustainability risk, and regulatory compliance. These areas reflect the growing complexity of global financial systems, digital platforms, and regulatory expectations. Roles such as credit risk analyst, operational risk manager, cybersecurity risk specialist, ESG risk analyst, and compliance specialist continue to see strong and sustained demand across industries.

At the same time, organizations are looking for professionals who combine technical expertise with practical, real-world skills. This includes the

ability to work with data and quantitative models, familiarity with regulatory frameworks, digital and AI literacy, awareness of cybersecurity risks, and the capability to communicate risk clearly to diverse stakeholders. Strong communication skills are particularly important, as risk professionals often need to translate complex analysis into actionable insights for senior management and business teams. Together, these capabilities support informed decision-making in fast-moving financial markets and evolving business environments.

Preparing for risk careers in a changing job market

For students and early

professionals, entry-level risk-related careers can offer both stability and attractive base salary potential relative to other sectors, depending on skills, location, and the organization. Over time, as professionals gain experience and develop specialized expertise, they can progress into higher-earning risk specialist or leadership roles, where annual total compensation can be significantly higher.

To build a strong foundation, students can consider pursuing dedicated, globally recognized certification and certificate programmes in risk management across areas such as finance, sustainability, and AI. These programmes help develop essential analytical, technical, and governance-related skills that are increasingly valued by employers. They are relevant across banking, asset management, consulting, technology firms, and real-economy organizations focused on navigating financial markets, sustainability challenges, and the growing use of Generative AI. By investing early in these skills, students can position themselves strongly for the evolving world of work and long-term career growth in risk management.

(The author is Managing Director, Global Head of Certifications and Educational Programs)

Students showcase next-gen space & robotics innovations

MIT inaugurated the International Rover Challenge (IRC) 2026 and the International Space Drone Challenge (ISDC) 2026. The events are being organised in collaboration with the Space Robotics Society (SPROS) and have drawn participation from young innovators across India and overseas.

The inauguration marked the beginning of a global convergence of student-led teams showcasing technological innovation, scientific curiosity, and collaborative problem-solving in the fields of space robotics and aerial systems. This year's editions feature 33 national and international rover teams and 22 drone teams, underscoring the growing global footprint of the two competitions.

Lt. Gen. (Dr.) M. D. Venkatesh, VSM (Retd.), Vice Chancellor of MAHE, presided over the ceremony as Chief Guest. Welcoming participants, he highlighted that platforms such as IRC and ISDC reflect MAHE's



philosophy of experiential learning, where classroom knowledge is translated into real-world engineering solutions.

He noted that such competitions foster perseverance, confidence, and innovation, while also contributing to technological advancement, nation-building, and economic growth.

Cdr. (Dr.) Anil Rana, Director, MIT, emphasised the vibrant culture of innovation on campus and reiterated the institute's commitment to holistic education beyond academ-

ics. He highlighted MIT's strong ecosystem of student engagement through 26 major project teams and over 70 technical and cultural clubs, along with experiential initiatives that build resilience and adaptability among students.

The event also acknowledged Sagar Dhaka, MIT alumnus (EEE, Class of 2019) and Founder of SPROS, for his leadership and continued association with his alma mater in promoting global student innovation in robotics and aerospace technologies.

Celebrating healers, leaders, and changemakers



National Women Physicians Day 2026 is a moment to recognise and celebrate the extraordinary contributions of women doctors who serve at the healthcare systems worldwide. Observed on February 3, the birthday of Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell—the first woman to receive a medical degree in the United States—this day honours both the pioneers who broke barriers and the present-day physicians who continue to redefine medicine through skill, compassion, and leadership. Women physicians play a vital role across every specialty, from primary care and pediatrics to surgery, research, public health, and medical education. Beyond clinical excellence, they are often at the forefront of patient advocacy, community health initiatives, and innovation. Their work has been especially visible in recent years, as women doctors have led responses to public health crises, advanced medical research, and championed equitable access to care.

Despite these achievements, women physicians continue to face challenges, including gender bias, pay gaps, underrepresentation in leadership, and the pressure of balancing demanding careers with personal responsibilities. National Women Physicians Day is not only a celebration, but also a reminder of the need for continued progress toward equity, inclusion, and supportive work environments within healthcare.

Scientists develop single-unit device to capture, save solar energy

NEW DELHI

Indian scientists at the Department of Science and Technology (DST) have developed a solar-powered energy storage device that can both capture and store energy in a single unit, marking a major step towards clean, self-sustaining storage systems, an official statement said.

Unlike conventional solar systems that require separate units for energy harvesting and storage, the new technology can do both functions, reducing cost and energy losses during conversion, it said.

The statement from the Ministry of Science and Technology said the device known as photo-rechargeable supercapacitor was developed by researchers at the Centre for Nano and Soft Matter Sciences, Bengaluru under DST.

"These nanowires, only a few nanometres in diameter and several micrometres long, form a highly porous and conductive 3D network that efficiently absorbs sunlight and stores electrical charge. This unique architecture allowed the material to act simultaneously as a solar energy harvester and a supercapacitor elec-

trode," the statement detailed. When tested for real-world applications, the device delivered a stable output voltage of 1.2 volts, maintained 88 per cent of its capacitance retention even after 1,000 photo-charging cycles.

Further, it operated efficiently under varying sunlight conditions—from low indoor illumination to intense sunlight. This stability indicates that the nanowire structure can endure both mechanical and electrochemical stress over extended periods of use, the statement noted.

The self-charging power system can function anywhere even in remote regions without access to an electrical grid and can substantially reduce dependence on fossil fuels and conventional batteries.

Nasr School hosts farewell for ISC batch

HYDERABAD

Nasr School hosted a farewell ceremony for the outgoing students of Classes X and XII of the ISC Batch of 2025–2026, celebrating the completion of an important chapter in their academic journey. The evening was a graceful blend of tradition, talent, emotion, and togetherness, reflecting the core values of the institution.

The programme began with a vibrant welcome that set an upbeat tone for the celebrations. One of the most awaited highlights was the Ramp Walk, where students from both classes took to the stage with remarkable confidence and elegance. Showcasing individuality, charm, and poise, the participants impressed the audience as the event progressed through multiple rounds. The final

round featured a Question-and-Answer segment, testing the finalists' clarity of thought, articulation, and presence of mind.

The event was judged by distinguished guests from the creative field. Lucky Lakshmi Naidu—model, actress, journalist, and NCC achiever—and Madhuri Atluri, renowned designer and Mrs. Hyderabad 2019, brought valuable insights and inspira-

tion through their experience and achievements. As a gesture of appreciation and sustainability, the guests were welcomed with saplings.

The cultural segment added colour and energy to the evening, with captivating dance performances and melodious songs presented by students of Classes IX and XI. A soulful trumpet performance and an energetic flash mob further elevated

the atmosphere, followed by a lively DJ session that allowed students to celebrate and create lasting memories.

The declaration of titles, recognising students for their confidence, stage presence, and unique personalities.

Principal Mir Mohiuddin Mohammed announced the winners and addressed the gathering, extending his blessings and best wishes to the outgoing batch.



"If Pakistan does not have a valid reason to justify withdrawing from the big match (T20 WC) against India, or if they cannot show grounds for breaching the contract, then action will be taken by the ICC Board. However, it should be something that ensures no other team in the future also considers doing that,"

- Sunil Gavaskar

Squash on Fire Open in Washington Anahat wins maiden PSA Bronze-level title

WASHINGTON: 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.

This is the biggest title of young Anahat's career and her 15th overall on the PSA Tour, where the Indian world No. 31 has competed in 26 tournaments.

Kennedy had beaten Singh 3-0 in their only previous encounter at this season's Canadian Women's Open, and she made a strong start here, too, bringing up two game balls at 10-8 in the first.

But Anahat was then 3-2 down in game two, but from that moment on, barely took a step back, mixing her



game up well with attacking boasts, sharp kills and well-placed lobs.

A run of four straight points moved the teenager 6-3 in front, and she would only lose another two points in the game, moving within one game of glory.

A fast start to game three was always likely to be key to Kennedy's hopes of staging a comeback, but instead

it was Anahat who charged out of the blocks, moving 5-1 in front in less than two minutes.

5-1 soon became 10-6 and four match balls, and while the first came and went, Anahat would not have to wait long for her moment of glory, with a clinical forehand boast winner providing a fitting finale to a sensational week. "I'm extremely

happy. I knew I wanted to do well in these events, get my ranking up and also put on a performance, and I'm glad I was able to do that this time," Anahat said after her victory against the World No 10.

She has been in excellent form this season, reaching the semi-finals of the Silver-level Canadian Women's Open, finishing runner-up at the British Junior Open Under-19, helping India win the first-ever Squash World Cup, and claiming the Daly College Cup PSA title in Indore.

At the British Junior Open, she lost a tight four-game final to France's Lauren Baltayan (9-11, 11-7, 3-11, 9-11), marking her ninth BJO final across different age groups and underscoring her rising stature on the PSA Tour.

India qualify for Tent Pegging WC finals

NEW DELHI

INDIA on Monday qualified for the Tent Pegging World Cup Championships to be held in Jordan in November 2026 after a strong showing in the qualifying competition, where they won a total of six medals, including four team medals and two individual honours.

The Indian team comprised Dfr Sandeep Kumar, Dfr Dhanraj Sirsat, Dfr Bonge Ganesh Baliram and ASI Jitender Singh, all of whom contributed to the team medals across events.

Competing against traditional powerhouses such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Norway and Indonesia, the Indian contingent delivered a consistent performance across lance, sword and combined events to secure an overall bronze medal and confirm their place in the



World Cup finals in Jordan.

India opened their medal tally on January 29 with a team silver in the lance event, while Dfr Dhanraj Sirsat of the Rashtriya Rifles clinched an individual bronze in the same discipline.

The following day proved to be the highlight of the campaign as India struck gold in the team sword event. Sirsat added his second individual medal with a silver in the sword event, underlining his standout performance in the competition.

On January 31, the Indian team claimed bronze medals

in the combined Lemon & Pigs, Rings & Pigs and Relay events. The cumulative results earned India an overall team bronze, sealing qualification for the World Cup championships.

The team's coach-cum-manager Tarsem Singh Warraich, whose appointment caused a controversy as he is facing rape allegations, expressed satisfaction with the outcome, saying the sustained effort of the young riders has paid. "Each day we won a medal, our athletes were consistent. It's a team effort," said Warraich.

Tata Steel Masters Nodirbek wins title, Gukesh finishes joint 8th

WIJK AAN ZEE (THE NETHERLANDS): Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan clinched the Tata Steel Masters title with a black-piece victory against out-of-form Arjun Erigaisi while world chess champion D Gukesh emerged as the best Indian with a joint eighth finish as the tournament concluded here on Monday.

Gukesh drew with Vincent Keymer of Germany in the final round to end as the top performing Indian on 6.5 points. But, his fifty per cent score was below par and the Indian ace slipped below the 2750 rating mark.

R Praggnanandhaa also drew the last round with Jorden van Foreest of the Netherlands to end on 5.5 points and there are some lessons to be learnt for the Indian if the performance here is any indication ahead of the Candidates tournament.

Erigaisi had the biggest deficit in terms of rating as he lost a whopping 29 points to find himself out of top 10 in world rankings in a while.

In fact, Gukesh is the only Indian player ranked at number 10 on the live rating list and much to the surprise of the chess buffs, there is no Indian above 2750 ratings. Nodirbek scored a commendable nine points out of 13 games while his junior compatriot and World Cup winner Javokhir Sindarov made it an Uzbek domination by finishing second a half point behind.

Results Final round (Indians unless specified): R Praggnanandhaa (5.5) drew with Jorden van Foreest (Ned, 7.5); Arjun Erigaisi (4.5) lost to Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb, 9); Vladimir Fedoseev (Slo, 6.5) beat Aravindh Chithambaram (4.5); Thai Dai Van Nguyen (Cze 3) lost to Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb, 8.5); D Gukesh (6.5) drew with Vincent Keymer (Ger, 7.5); Matthias Bluebaum (Ger, 7) drew with Yagiz Kaan Erdogan (Tur, 7); Anish Giri (Ned, 6.5) drew with Hans Moke Niemann (Usa, 7.5).

India women brace for stiff test, men eye podium at Asia Team C'ships

QINGDAO (CHINA): A depleted Indian women's side will face an uphill task in defending its crown without talisman PV Sindhu, while the men will bank on a seasoned core to mount a strong podium challenge at the Badminton Asia Team Championships beginning here on Tuesday.

India had scripted history by clinching their maiden women's team gold in the last edition in Malaysia, but Sindhu's withdrawal due to a niggle has dealt a significant blow to their medal hopes.

The absence of the two-time Olympic medallist leaves the younger crop, led by Tanvi Sharma, with the responsibility of carrying the campaign.

The 17-year-old from Punjab was part of the champion team in 2024 although she didn't get to play any



games. In two years, Tanvi has emerged as the next big hope in women's singles with a silver medal at World Junior Championships in Guwahati, and a final finish at the US Open Super 300.

Unnati Hooda, 18, too, is coming into the tournament after a successful 2025 season where she achieved a career-high world ranking of No. 23 and defeated Sindhu at the China Open. The youngest Indian ever to win a BWF Super 100 title, Unnati ended 2025 with a title at the Odisha Masters.

T20 WC warm-up matches

Tilak, Mayank included in India 'A' squad

MUMBAI: Swashbuckling batter Tilak Varma was on Monday named in the India A squad for the T20 World Cup warm-up matches, while tearaway pacer Mayank Yadav returned after a long injury layoff.

Tilak, who has been cleared by the BCCI's Centre of Excellence (CoE) following a successful recovery from a groin injury, will feature in one of the two warm-up games before rejoining the senior national side. The left-handed batter will make a comeback to the national side after missing the recent T20 series against New Zealand, in which Shreyas Iyer was used as his replacement.

"Tilak Varma will feature in one warm-up match before joining the senior team," the BCCI said in a post on social media while announcing the squad. India A will take on the USA at the DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai on Monday before facing Namibia on Friday at the CoE in Bengaluru. Ayush Badoni will captain



the 15-member India A squad, which also includes Naman Dhir, Vipraj Nigam and Riyan Parag. Mayank, meanwhile, had been sidelined for over a year due to a stress fracture.

Defending champions India will begin their campaign against the USA on the opening day of the T20 World Cup on February 7.

India A squad: Ayush Badoni (c), Naman Dhir, Ashutosh Sharma, Priyansh Arya, N. Jagadeesan (wk), Tilak Varma, Riyan Parag, Manav Suthar, Ashok Sharma, Urvil Patel (wk), Gurjapneet Singh, Vipraj Nigam, Ravi Bishnoi, Khaleel Ahmed, Mayank Yadav. (PTI)

"Tilak Varma will feature in one warm-up match before joining the senior team," the BCCI said in a post on social media while announcing the squad. India A will take on the USA at the DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai on Monday before facing Namibia on Friday at the CoE in Bengaluru. Ayush Badoni will captain

(GSM) overcome G Pranitha (HVS) 3-2 (13-11, 9-11, 11-9, 9-11, 11-8). The men's singles final was equally competitive, with Swarnendu defeating Trishul Mehra (HDTT) 3-2 (11-6, 7-11, 11-8, 9-11, 11-8). Ali Mohammed (HDTT) secured third place by beating Vathsin B (GTTA) 3-1 (11-5, 11-4, 8-11, 11-9).

The three-day championship witnessed high-quality matches and strong participation, highlighting the growing standard of table tennis in Telangana.

'Pak's boycott of T20 WC against India pretty disgraceful'



NEW DELHI: Congress MP Shashi Tharoor criticised the politicisation of cricket, calling Pakistan's boycott of the T20 World Cup 2026 match against India "disgraceful" and urged all parties concerned to "contact each other on an emergency basis" regarding the imbroglio.

Shashi Tharoor said cricket is being politicised and called it disgraceful after Pakistan's decision to boycott the T20 WC match against India, while also noting that Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman should not have been denied his contract with Kolkata Knight Riders for the Indian Premier League (IPL) in the first place. He called Bangladesh's response to the Mustafizur situation an overreaction and noted that the whole T20 WC row is spiralling out of control.

"It is pretty disgraceful that sport has been politicised in this way on both sides, frankly. I don't think that Mustafizur (Bangladeshi cricketer Mustafizur Rahman) should have been denied his contract to play in Kolkata. It was most unfortunate. Intrusion of politics, I think the Bangladeshi reaction was an overreaction but it is also a reflection of the same and Pakistan is trying to show its solidarity with Bangladesh. This whole thing is spiralling out of control," Tharoor told reporters.

"I think we need to really need to come to an understanding that sports, especially a sport like Cricket which means so much to all the people, should be a means of bringing us together at least on the playing field, rather than allowing this to go on like this. I honestly think this is now a wake up call for all concerned to contact each other on an emergency basis, the ICC could be the platform for it - just say, let's call off this nonsense... You can't go on like this forever," Tharoor added.

Row over SC/ST Act

Bareilly ex-magistrate threatens Delhi stir

VARANASI: Former Bareilly city magistrate Alankar Agnihotri, suspended by the Uttar Pradesh government on charges of indiscipline, has said that he would stage a protest in Delhi from February 7 if the Centre does not withdraw the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

The 2019-batch Provincial Civil Services (PCS) officer, who made headlines after resigning as the Bareilly city magistrate, made the announcement after meeting Swami Avimuktешwaranand Saraswati on Sunday at the Srividya Math located at Kedarghat here.

Agnihotri said several organisations of the upper-caste community would participate in the stir if the central government fails to withdraw the SC/ST Act by February 6.

Responding to questions on his meeting with Swami Avimuktешwaranand, who was allegedly prevented by the administration from taking a holy dip at the Triveni Sangam during Magh Mela

"blackest law" in the country. Agnihotri termed it a "fortunate coincidence" and not part of any political strategy.

He said Swami Avimuktешwaranand -- the Shankaracharya of Jyotirmath in Uttarakhand -- had earlier invited him to Prayagraj, but he could not meet him due to lack of time.

"With his arrival in Kashi, I got the opportunity to meet him," he said. During his interaction with the media, Agnihotri said there was widespread resentment among people over the new University Grants Commission (UGC) rules.

"The core voter base is angry with the government," he said, describing the SC/ST Act, enacted in 1989, as the

"Taxiway W and N" the bureau said.

There were eight people onboard, including 2 crew members, in that aircraft. "The co-pilot suffered serious injury, whereas the PIC (Pilot In Command) and 6 passengers suffered minor injuries. The co-pilot could not be interviewed for a long time since he was in bad shape," the AAIB statement said.

Meanwhile, it is probing the VSR Ventures' Learjet 45 aircraft crash near the Baramati airstrip on January 28.

The investigation team is trying their best to finalise the report on top priority," the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) said in a statement.

On September 14, 2023, the Learjet 45 aircraft (VT-DLB) met with an accident at Mumbai airport. "The aircraft had earlier taken off from Visakhapatnam airport, and while landing at Mumbai airport, the aircraft continuously drifted to the right of the Runway 27 and crash landed at the shoulder of the intersection of

Mamata, 'SIR-affected' families meet CEC in Delhi

WB CM, TMC leaders confront Delhi cops, claim SIR-hit families from Bengal 'threatened'



NEW DELHI: West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee on Monday met Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar here along with 'SIR-affected' families and party leaders.

Last week, CEC Kumar had given time to Banerjee for a meeting on Monday. Banerjee, who reached the national capital on Sunday, was being accompanied by Trinamool MPs Abhishek Banerjee and Kalyan Banerjee, who is also an advocate.

Mamata Banerjee on Monday confronted police personnel deployed outside the Banga Bhawan in Delhi's Chanakyapuri and alleged harassment of the families affected by the SIR exercise in her state who have been brought to the national capital by the TMC.

Police said security arrangements in the area have been stepped up after the charges of indiscipline.

Addressing reporters, Banerjee said that the people from Bengal had

come to raise their issue with the Election Commission, but were being "threatened".

She questioned the heavy police deployment outside the Bhawan's premises.

However, Banerjee added that she doesn't blame the police, but "those who are on the top", referring to Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

The chief minister had reached the national capital on Sunday, a day before her meeting with Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on the SIR issue.

Around 50 families impacted by the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in West Bengal have been brought to the national capital and are staying at various properties of the state government, including the Banga Bhawan in Chanakyapuri.

Police said security arrangements in the area have been stepped up after the incidents involving juveniles.

A bench of Justices BV Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan observed that parents are not able to control their children.

"Substance abuse is another thing giving

China criticises Grammy Award for Dalai Lama

BEIJING: China on Monday deplored the Grammy Award given to the Dalai Lama, saying it "firmly opposes" the Tibetan spiritual leader using the recognition to carry out "anti-China activities".

The Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, won his first Grammy on Sunday in the category of best audio book, narration, and storytelling recording for his spoken-word album, *Meditations: The Reflections of His Holiness the Dalai Lama*, at the 68th annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles.

Asked for his reaction to the Dalai Lama winning the award, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Lin Jian reiterated China's allegation that the 90-year-old spiritual leader is carrying out separatist activity in the name of religion. The Dalai Lama is not purely a religious person, Lin told a media briefing here. "He is a political exile committed to anti-China separatist activity under the guise of religion," he said. Beijing firmly opposes relevant sides using the award as a tool to carry out anti-China activities, he said. The Dalai Lama, who has lived in exile in Dharamsala since he left Tibet in 1959, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989 for his consistent, nonviolent struggle to liberate Tibet.

Learjet plane crash probe in 'final stages', says AAIB



final stages. The investigation team is trying their best to finalise the report on top priority," the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) said in a statement.



Shivaranjani Harish



Sujata & Preetisha

ANNA RAO GANGAVALLI

The fourth edition of 'Ramayana Kalpavriksham,' presented by Shankarananda Kalakshetra and Natyarambha, featured a galaxy of performances, talks, and interactive sessions. CCRT, Madhapur, was the venue for the three-day event (January 30th–February 1st, 2026). Always attended by an overflowing audience, the yearly event, conceived and curated by

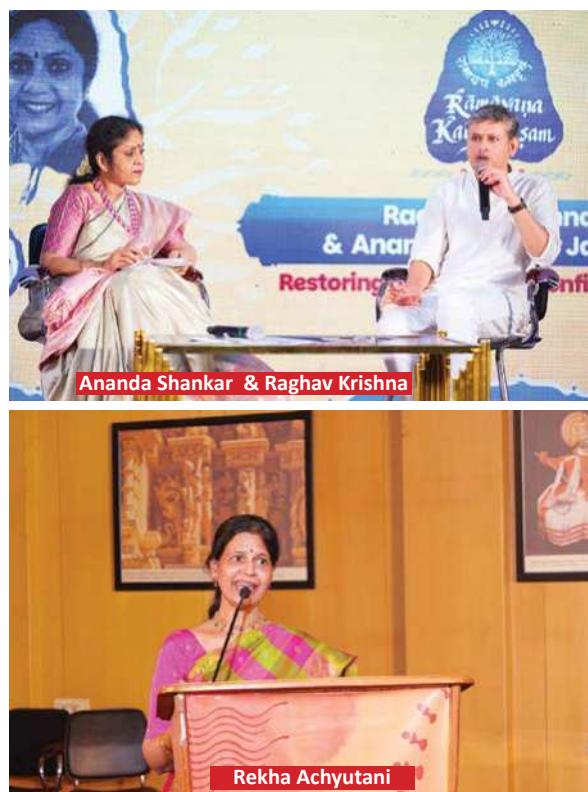
Padma Shri Dr. Ananda Shankar Jayant, has become an eagerly awaited star attraction in the cultural landscape of Hyderabad.

After the inauguration on the first day by Dr. Sandhya Purecha, Chairperson of the Sangeet Natak Akademi, the evening featured a poignant Odissi duet titled 'Seeta Haran,' presented by Dr. Sujata Mohapatra and her daughter Preetisha. Sujata wore a green costume with blue borders, while Preetisha

Womenia

Ramayana Kalpavriksham returns with a grand celebration of dance, music and devotion

The fourth edition of 'Ramayana Kalpavriksham,' presented by Shankarananda Kalakshetra and Natyarambha, celebrated India's epic heritage through a rich confluence of dance, music, and dialogue. Held at CCRT, Madhapur, the three-day festival offered audiences an immersive journey into the Ramayana through performances, talks, and interactive sessions. Conceived and curated by Padma Shri Dr. Ananda Shankar Jayant, the annual event continues to be a highlight of Hyderabad's cultural calendar



Rekha Achyutani



Carnatic Fusion

and literature, reflecting on the importance of awareness in shaping narratives. Rekha Achyutani spoke about Dharmic parenting, noting that while modern education may lead to success, true happiness lies in Indian traditional approaches that nurture grounded and timeless Bharatiya values. An engaging and interactive quiz session followed, reinforcing key Ramayana themes.

As evening approached, Srinivas Varakchedi, Vice-Chancellor of the Central Sanskrit University, delivered a scholarly address on the epic's ethical framework and its continued relevance today. The festival concluded exuberantly on a high note with a classical fusion concert led by music producer Mahesh Raghavan. Tradition was reimagined in Carnatic music tailored to contemporary tastes while staying rooted in heritage.

The final day of the festival opened with Chaganti Koteswara Rao's discourse on Hanumat Darshanam. Hanuman's strength, devotion, and importance were extolled using the metaphor of the connecting knot of flowers in a garland, symbolising him as the link between Rama and Sita during and after their separation.

Historian T. S. Krishnan delivered a talk drawing on his extensive research on South Indian temples, inscriptions, controlled by unseen strings. Entertainingly vibrant folk music by Bhungar Khan and the Manganiyar group Dharohar from Barmer, Rajasthan, with fast pacing and beats, energised the spectators at the day's conclusion.

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Charusmita Rao and Shivaranjani Harish presented 'Navaratri through the Ramayana,' interspersing Bharatanatyam with design and storytelling. The evening was exciting with the mesmerising puppet-style dance drama 'The Ramayana' by Rangars Little Ballet Theatre, Bhopal, where human puppets glided as though

swara alaap of Kambhoji was melodiously interpreted. Immersive Rama rasa was fully appreciated in the various other compositions in different ragas and languages, some requested by aficionados of the exceedingly popular singer.

Day two began at dawn with a deeply absorbing pravachanam on Sita Rama Kalyanam by the famous Chaganti Koteswara Rao. The divine marriage was described as the sacred union of Dharma and Shakti. He explained that Sita was central to the Avatar's unfolding to achieve the destruction of Ravana. A thought-provoking dialogue between Dr. Ananda Shankar and Raghava Krishna of BRHAT

explored the role of the arts in reclaiming India's civilisation in a contemporary context. Dharma, truth, and art are inseparable, and knowledge elevates consciousness. Dr. Mohan Raghavan examined the Ramayana experience with regard to technology, while critiquing colonial interpretations of Indic texts.

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Kalpana Iyer, the original 'Ramba Ho' girl, reveals she danced barefoot despite bleeding feet for the song

In an exclusive conversation, Bollywood veteran star Kalpana Iyer, the woman of the moment, opened up about the grit and physical toll behind her iconic dance performances.

The actress' is currently stirring headlines, as a recent video of her dancing to her legendary number "Ramba Ho" at the age of 70 took the internet by storm.

Talking to IANS, the actress recalled her early years in the industry as a dancer. Kalpana spoke candidly about dancing through pain, bruises, and bleeding feet, long before comfort and vanity became industry norms.

"I started dancing at 17, and I have never complained. I have shared green rooms, danced barefoot with scraped and bloodied soles, during Ramba Ho and have even done Raja Hindustani



barefoot with injury. I didn't have time to complain; I just worked and kept moving focusing on the opportunities that came my way and was so grateful for it. Dance has brought me so much joy in my life," she said, reflecting on an era where perseverance mattered more than privileges.

For Kalpana, in her own words, dance was never just a performance but a calling that demanded complete surrender, regardless of physical hardship.

Speaking about today's generation of performers, Kalpana was generous in her praise, stressing that comparisons between any eras of Bollywood is unfair.

"These days, girls have to put in a lot more effort. We did too, I don't deny that, but today you can see the detailing and the investment producers make. The more effort you put in, the more is invested in you. They look beautiful, their clothes are gorgeous, and some of them dance exquisitely. Times have changed and I respect that completely. I have immense love for all these girls and I truly wish them well," she shared.

Taking a trip down memory lane, Kalpana explained that it were her stark features and individuality that defined her success. She credited her slim frame, long legs, and expressive movement for

setting her apart in her time, while also acknowledging the role of camera work.

From songs like 'Jab Chhaaye Mera Jaadu' and 'Hari Om Hari' to many hit movies, she described her journey as fulfilling and unique. Now open to a second innings, Kalpana said she is willing to explore any role, as long as it respects her age and comfort, adding that she is even open to playing a naani or daadi.

The actress further also clarified a long-held myth about Ramba Ho shoot.

Kalpana revealed that the song was not shot in Goa, as widely believed. "We had shot at Nataraj Studio in Mumbai. Prema and I danced in a dance studio, right in front of Ramanand Sagar's office," she said, offering a behind-the-scenes detail.

Mona Singh on mistakes: They are lessons that help you grow as a human being

Actress Mona Singh strongly believes that mistakes are an essential part of life and should be treated as lessons rather than burdens to carry forward.

Sharing her thoughts, the actress said that when she makes a mistake, she prefers to reflect on it, learn from it, and move on, rather than feeling guilty or weighed down by it. According to her, that is the only way to truly move ahead in life.

Asked whether she ponders over the mistakes she makes or has learnt to accept them and move on, Mona, who is all set to be seen in the second season of the Netflix series 'Kohrra,' said: "That's the only way to go forward in life, I think — and not treat it as a mistake or feel guilty about it and carry that baggage. It's a lesson."

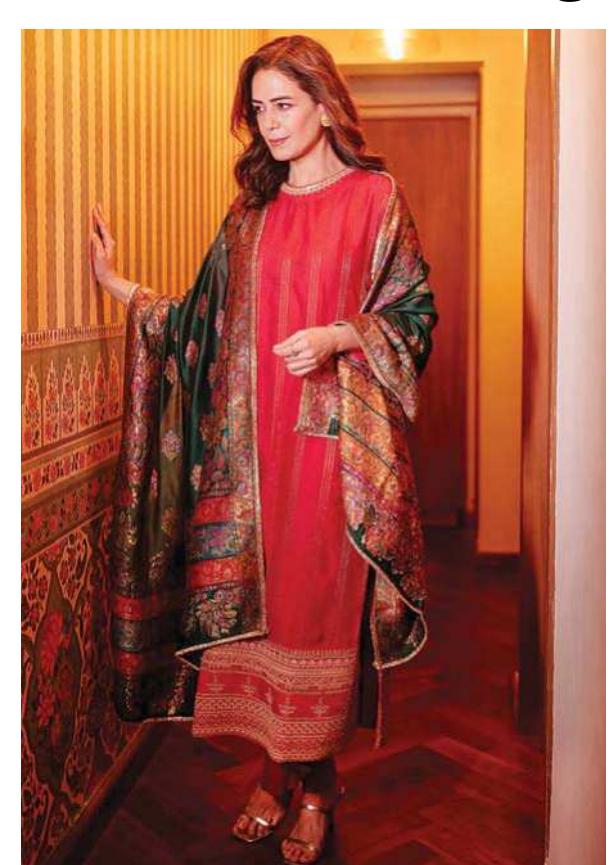
Mona added that life constantly teaches people valuable lessons, often through the people who enter their lives.

She said: "And I think that's what life does. It keeps teaching us those lessons. People come into our lives for a certain reason."

She shared that some relationships last, while others fade with time, but each one serves a purpose and leaves behind a learning experience.

"Some stay, some go. But they always teach you a lesson. And I think that's very, very human. And that's the way forward, if you don't want to stay bitter and want to grow and evolve as a human being," said the actress.

The new chapter of 'Kohrra' also stars Barun Sobti and Rannvijay Singh. The



second season will stream on Netflix starting February 11. In the new season, Barun reprises his role as the sharp-witted investigator Amarapal Garundi, who teams up with a new character played by Mona to solve a complex, dark murder mystery of a woman.

A Film Squad Production in association with Act Three, produced by Saurabh Malhotra, Sudip Sharma, Manuj Mittra, and Tina Tharwani, Season 2 also marks an important creative evolution for the series.

Talking about Mona, she is widely recognised for playing the eponymous heroine in the soap opera 'Jassi Jaissi Koi Nahin.' The actress is also known for her work in 'Kya Huua Tera Vaada,' 'Pyar Ka Ho Jaane Do,' and 'Kavach... Kaali Shaktiyan Se.' She made her film debut with a supporting role in Rajkumar Hirani's comedy-drama '3 Idiots' in 2009.

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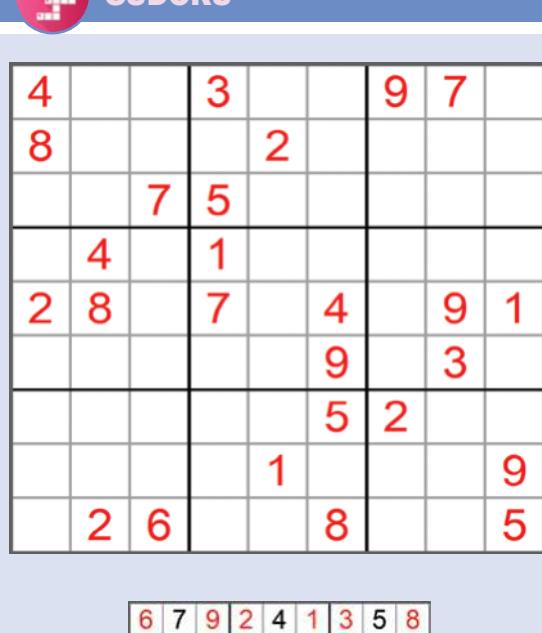
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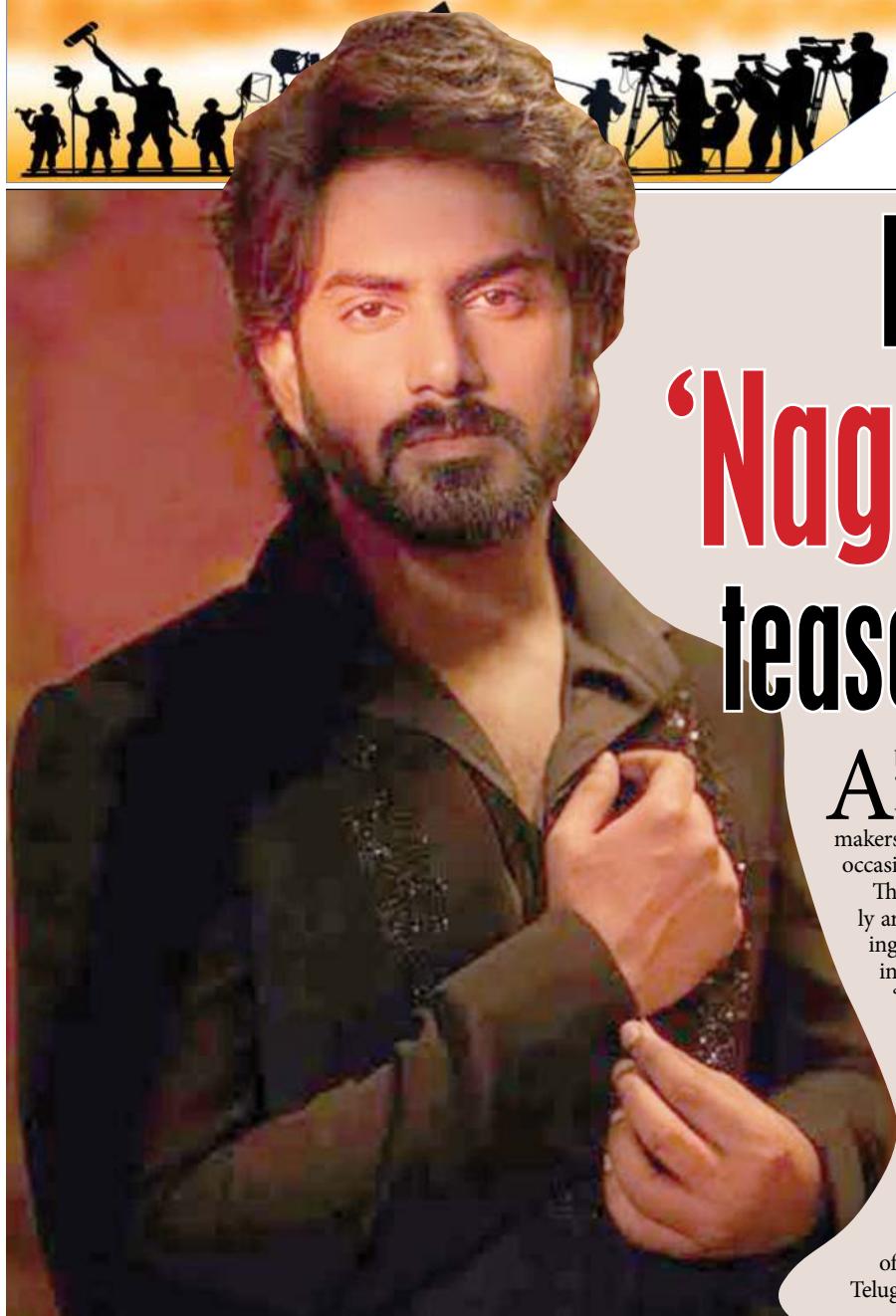
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Pan-India 'Nagabandham' teaser announced

Abhishek Nama's much-anticipated mythological action drama 'Nagabandham', starring Virat Karrna, is generating strong buzz, with the first-look posters receiving an immense response. The makers have now locked the teaser release for February 15, the auspicious occasion of Maha Shivaratri.

The striking teaser poster features a majestic cobra coiled protectively around a hidden treasure inside an ancient temple, perfectly hinting at the film's mystical suspense and divine intrigue. This glimpse into the core narrative promises a thrilling exploration of the sacred 'Nagabandham' tradition, set against the backdrop of India's historic Vishnu temples.

Nabha Natesh and Iswarya Menon play the leading ladies, alongside powerhouse performers Jagapathi Babu, Jayaprakash, Murali Sharma, and B.S. Avinash in pivotal roles.

The film boasts strong technical support, with Soundar Rajan S handling cinematography, RC Pranav in charge of editing, and Ashok Kumar overseeing production design, ensuring a grand visual spectacle. Produced by Kishore Annapureddy and Nishitha Nagireddy, 'Nagabandham' is nearing the final phase of production and is gearing up for a massive Pan-India release in Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam this summer.

'One by Four' emerges box-office winner



Tejas Gunjal Films and Rohit Gunjal Films have jointly produced the action crime drama 'One by Four (One/4)', starring Venkatesh Peddapalem, Aparna Mallick, and Heena Soni in the lead roles. The film is directed by Bahubali Palani K, who previously worked as an associate director on the blockbuster 'Baahubali'. It is jointly produced by Ranjana Rajesh Gunjal and Rohit Ramdas Gunjal.

Recently released, 'One by Four (One/4)' has emerged as a successful film, receiving appreciation from audiences across all sections and performing well in theatres. To celebrate the success, the team held a success meet at the Hyderabad Film Chamber, where they shared their experiences and gratitude.

Director Bahubali Palani K said, 'Audiences have made 'One by Four (One/4)' a blockbuster. Collections are strong in every theatre. Once again, viewers have proved that if the content is good, even a small film can achieve big success. Hero Venkatesh impressed everyone with his action sequences and performance. He has already done action films in Kannada, and I believe he

has a bright future in Telugu cinema as well. Our producers Ranjana and Rohit came from Mumbai with great passion for cinema and entered Tollywood with dedication. I hope they produce many more films. However, it is unfortunate that some actors who initially seek opportunities do not show up during promotions. They should at least support the film out of gratitude.'

Producer Ranjana Rajesh Gunjal said, 'Our film 'One by Four (One/4)', which blends a strong message with entertainment, is being well received by audiences. The success is purely due to its solid content. The character 'Pavitra' is receiving special appreciation, and hero Venkatesh's performance is widely praised. The film highlights the struggles a woman faces due to blackmail, making it a thought-provoking experience. We are deeply hurt that we did not receive promotional support from the heroines. Despite providing all facilities, they did not participate in promotions. Their absence caused losses to the film. We feel it is better to encourage and cast Telugu girls rather than depend on outsiders.'



Celebrities rally behind 'Barabar Premistha' release

The team of 'Barabar Premistha' held a grand pre-release event ahead of the film's theatrical launch, with several prominent guests extending their support and wishing success for the youthful entertainer. Starring Attitude Star Chandra Hass in the lead, the film is directed by Sampath Rudra and presented by Kakarla Satyanarayana. It is produced by Geda Chandu, Gayatri Chinny, and AVR under the banners of CC Creations and AVR Movie Wonders. Miss India finalist Meghna Mukherjee plays the female lead, while Arjun Mahi, known for 'Ishqama', appears as the antagonist. The film is all set for a grand release in theatres on February 6.

The pre-release event, held on Sunday (February 1), was attended by chief guests Jayanth C. Paranjee, JD Chakravarthy, and Aadi Saikumar, along with the film's cast

and crew. The evening was filled with appreciation for the team's efforts and confidence that the film would connect strongly with audiences.

Speaking at the event, Chandra Hass expressed gratitude for the support he has received. He said he has always admired filmmakers like Jayanth C. Paranjee and actors like Aadi Saikumar, whom he considers an inspiration. Thanking his father Prabhakar for constant encouragement, he added that the film has been made with complete sincerity. He promised that 'Barabar Premistha' would keep viewers engaged throughout with numerous twists and an engaging narrative. He also praised director Sampath Rudra for presenting him in a new and impactful way.

Aadi Saikumar extended his heartfelt wishes to Chandra Hass, recalling his association with Prabhakar during

'Next Nuvve'. He appreciated Chandra Hass' dedication and hard work and said he hopes 'Barabar Premistha' becomes a major breakthrough in the young actor's career. He urged audiences to watch the film in theatres and support the team.

Veteran director Jayanth C. Paranjee said the title 'Barabar Premistha' reflects confidence and attitude, perfectly matching Chandra Hass' personality. He praised the film's music, performances, and direction, expressing strong belief that it would emerge as a big hit.

JD Chakravarthy also conveyed his best wishes, applauding Prabhakar's inspiring journey and encouraging audiences not to miss the film. Director Sampath Rudra shared that the film has a Telangana backdrop and a gripping climax that will leave a lasting impression. He thanked the producers and music director RR Dhruvan for their contributions.

'Winter' begins with traditional pooja ceremony

The film 'Winter', jointly produced by Crescent Cinemas and TSR Makers, was launched grandly with a traditional pooja ceremony. 'Winter' features Ram, Aaditya Suraj Singh, Kusuma Chandhaka, Shashikala, and Srijita Ghosh in the lead roles. The film is being produced by Riyaz Ahmed

and T. Srinivas Rao. Suresh Lankalapalli, who received critical acclaim for 'Racharikam', is handling the story, screenplay, and direction for this project. With this film, Rizwan Ali will be introduced on screen as the antagonist. Notably, 'Winter' is based on real-life incidents that occurred in Kashmir. The pooja ceremony



'Mr. Work From Home' team creates buzz in Bheemili

The pre-release ceremony of 'Mr. Work From Home' was held at the Visakhapatnam Film Nagar Center in Bheemili Thimmapuram on Saturday. The film is being produced by Aravind and directed by Madhu, with Trigun playing the hero and Palayi Radha Krishna as the heroine.

Director Madhu said that the story of the film is centered on the use of new machinery in agriculture. The film focuses on the love and marriage of a young woman born into a rural farming family, while also delivering entertainment within a family setting.

Hero Trigun added that this film is very relevant for today's generation and carries a message for future generations. Producer Aravind stated that the film will be appreciated by audiences and praised director Madhu for crafting the story in a way that will resonate well with viewers. He also confirmed that the film is scheduled to release on February 13. The film team actively participated in the pre-release event, generating excitement among fans and the local community.



Naveen Chandra praises 'Honey' at trailer launch

Honey is a psychological horror film written and directed by Karuna Kumar, starring Naveen Chandra and Divya Pillai in the lead roles. Produced by Ravi Peetla and Praveen Kumar Reddy under the banner of OVA Entertainments and presented by Shekhar Studios, the film blends psychological depth, social relevance, and horror elements. 'Honey' is set to release in theatres on February 6. The promotional content released so far has received a wonderful response, and the makers recently launched the trailer.

Speaking at the trailer launch event, hero Naveen Chandra said, 'Hello everyone. I am very happy with the wonderful response to the trailer. I thoroughly enjoyed the filmmaking

process. This is a film that will grow through word of mouth. We have tried to make it within our budget while still delivering a different and unique experience to the audience in theatres.'

Director Karuna Kumar said, 'This time too, I have made a new attempt. I originally wrote this story, titled 'Darkness', for literature. Our producers later decided to adapt it into a film. We see such incidents happening in places like Madanapalle and Old Basti, often within the same house. In 'Honey', we explore the life of a person searching for and achieving something called 'Pilli Maya'. It is a story that unfolds within the mind, even when everything seems dark. The film was inspired by a real-life incident.'

Actor Raja Ravindra

shared, 'Hello everyone. When the director narrated the story, I liked it but wondered how it would be executed. The film has been shot even more wonderfully than I expected. He also gave me an extraordinary and memorable character. Technically, the film is outstanding.'

Heroine Divya Pillai added, 'Hello everyone. I always wanted to work with Karuna Kumar. I met him during the film 'Palasa', but it didn't work out then. I immediately agreed when he called me for this project.'

Heroine Divya Pillai added, 'Hello everyone. I was scared when the director narrated the story to me. It is very new and unique. I thank Karuna Kumar and Ravi for giving me this opportunity. I am very happy to work with Naveen again.'

Devotional drama 'Dakshina Kaali' releases worldwide

Dakshina Kaali is an upcoming devotional entertainer starring Subbu and Priyanka as the lead pair, while actress Archana will be seen in the role of the Goddess. The film is produced by Satyavani Meesala under the Srinidhi Creations banner, for which she has also provided the story. Directed by Thota Krishna, the movie is being made as a devotional drama with strong spiritual elements. The film is all set for a worldwide grand theatrical release on the 6th of this month in Telugu, Tamil, and Kannada. Recently, the songs launch event of 'Dakshina Kaali' was held at the Hyderabad Film Chamber. Renowned director V. Samudra and producers Tummalapalli Rama Satyanarayana and Prasanna Kumar attended the event as chief guests. Speaking on the occasion, director V. Samudra said that the songs and trailer of 'Dakshina Kaali' were very impressive and reminded him of the film 'Ammoru'. He expressed hope that actor Azad, who played the villain in the film, would gain recognition similar to Sonu Sood's performance in 'Arundhati'. He added that for producers who cannot afford Sonu Sood's remuneration, Azad would be a strong alternative.

Producer Tummalapalli Rama Satyanarayana stated that new films must continue to enter the industry and expressed confidence that 'Dakshina Kaali' would definitely be a success after watching its content. He wished for the film to achieve grand success like 'Ammoru'.

Producer Prasanna Kumar said that filmmaking is not just about words but requires immense effort and dedication. He appreciated the lady producer for making 'Dakshina Kaali' with great commitment and assured that their support would always remain with the film's team. Director Thota Krishna said that 'Dakshina Kaali' has been made to showcase the divine power and greatness of the Goddess. He revealed that apart from directing the film, he also played an important role in it. He assured that the movie would entertain audiences with all the elements they expect. Producer Satyavani Meesala shared that the Goddess guided them from the beginning of production until release. She said the shooting was completed smoothly without any hurdles due to the Goddess's blessings. She clarified that the film was not made for monetary gains but solely to portray the greatness and miracles of Goddess Dakshina Kaali. She also thanked seniors like V. Samudra, Prasanna Kumar, and Rama Satyanarayana for their encouragement and support.

