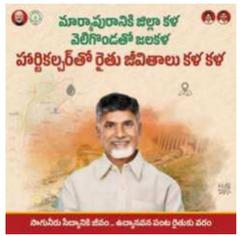
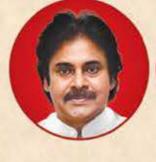


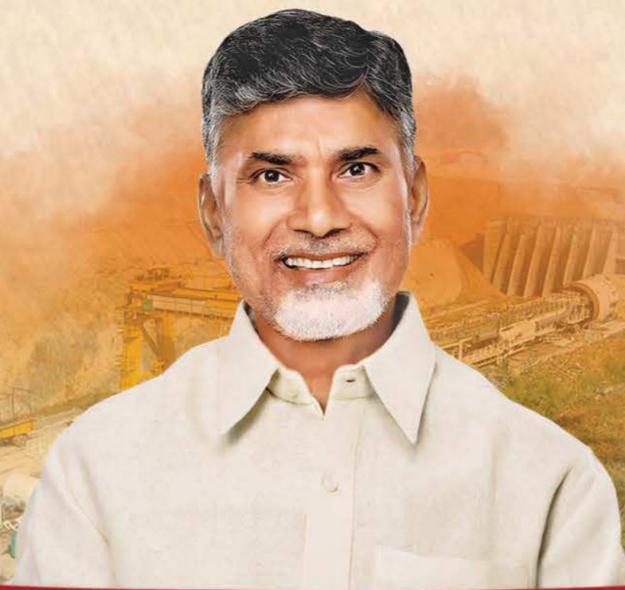
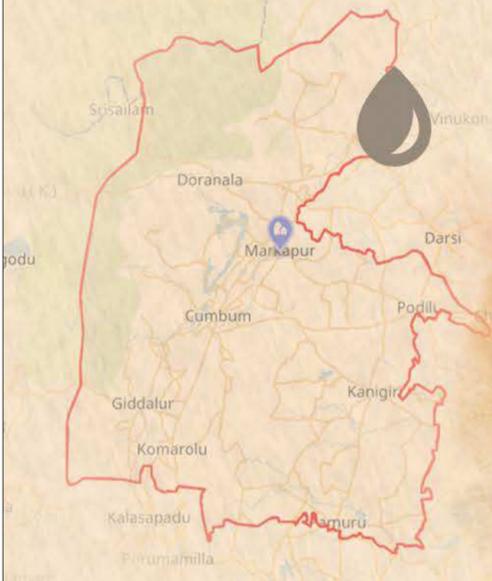
# THE Hans India



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## మార్కాపురానికి జిల్లా కళ - వెలిగొండతో జలకళ హార్టికల్చర్ తో రైతు జీవితాలు కళకళ



ఎన్నికల్లో మాటిచ్చినట్లు మార్కాపురం జిల్లా ఏర్పాటు చేసి... ప్రజల 5 దశాబ్దాల కలను నెరవేర్చాం.  
ఈ ఏడాదే వెలిగొండ మొదటి ఫేజ్ పూర్తి చేసి కరువు ప్రాంతంలో జలకళ తెస్తాం.  
హార్టికల్చర్ సాగుతో రైతుల జీవితాల్లో వెలుగులు నింపి జీవన ప్రమాణాలు పెంచుతాం.

ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ ముఖ్యమంత్రి

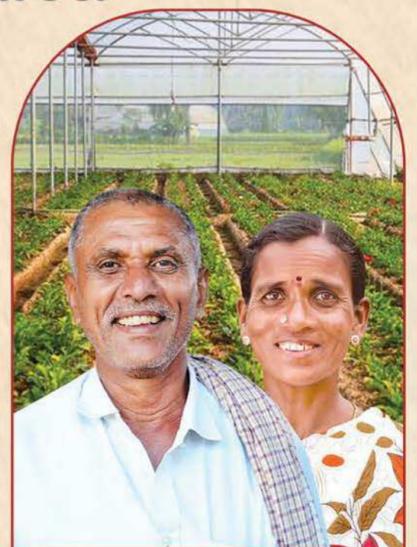
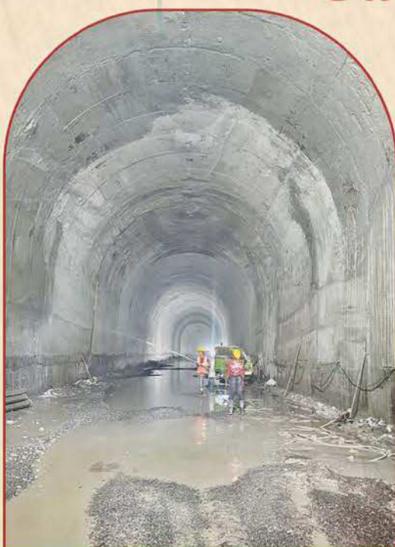
గౌ|| శ్రీ నారా చంద్రబాబు నాయుడు గారిచే

నేడు రూ.456 కోట్లతో చేపడుతున్న వెలిగొండ ప్రాజెక్టు ఫీడర్ కాలువ  
లైనింగ్ పనులకు శంకుస్థాపన కార్యక్రమం

స్థలం : గంటావానిపల్లె, పెద్దదోర్నాల మండలం | సమయం : ఉదయం 11 గంటలకు

భారీ బహిరంగ సభ

స్థలం : మార్కాపురంలోని శ్రీ సాయి బాలాజీ మోడల్ స్కూల్ ఎదురుగా  
తేదీ : 25-02-2026 | సమయం : మధ్యాహ్నం 2 గంటలకు



సాగునీరు సేద్యానికి జీవం... ఉద్యానవన పంట రైతుకు వరం

జారీచేసిన తార: సంచాలకశులు, సమాచార, శివ సంచారశాల శాఖ, ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ ప్రభుత్వం

# Ensure flawless conduct of SSC exams: Collector

Exams to be held from March 16 to April 1 from 9.30 am to 12.45 pm

31,334 students to appear at 179 centres across the district

Collector directs officials to transport question papers to strong rooms amid tight security

**Canara Bank** REGIONAL OFFICE : NELLORE  
RITVIK ENCLAVE, A.K. NAGAR,  
NELLORE-524004. PH: 94409 05330

**AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES**  
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Properties under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged to the Secured Creditor, the symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Buja Buja Nellore branch (13535) of Canara Bank will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 13.03.2026, for recovery of Rs. 26,30,396.42 (Rupees Twenty Six Lakhs Thirty Thousand Three Hundred Ninety Six and Paise Forty Two Only) due to the Buja Buja Nellore branch, Canara Bank from Mr. Masanam Suresh, S/o Venkata Subbaiah.

**DATE & TIME OF E-AUCTION: 13.03.2026 at 11.00 am to 01.00 pm**

EMD amount of 10% of the Reserve Price is to be deposited in E-Wallet of M/s PSB Alliance Private Limited (baanknet) portal directly or by generating the Challan therein to deposit the EMD through RTGS/NEFT in the account details as mentioned in the said challan on or before 12.03.2026 at 4.00 pm

**Details & full description of the immovable property with known encumbrances, if any:**  
All the part and parcel of Semi finished 1BHK flat in Residential apartment situated in Sy No 110/3, 110-2 & 108-1, Plot Nos. 3, 4 in K-Block, 13/P & 14/P in S-Block, flat no 408, Fourth floor "PRUDHI NIVAS" apartment, L.P No 113/2077/R/NLR, 126/2077/R/NLR, "SATYAM G NAGAR LAYOUT, Vavilpattu" area, Nellore Municipal Corporation, SPSR Nellore. Site Boundaries: North: Remaining site in plot no 13/P & 14/P in S Block, South: 33 feet layout Road, East: 33 feet layout Road, West: 33 feet layout Road. Flat No.408 Boundaries: North: Common corridor, South: Open to Sky, East: Lift some extent & Open to sky some extent, West: Staircase some extent & Open to some extent. Within the above boundaries total extent of site 21.33 sqyds of undivided share of land and Flat measuring with 646 Sqft.

**Reserve Price: Rs. 4,21,000/- EMD Amount: Rs. 42,100/-**

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link "E-Auction" provided in Canara Bank's website [www.canarabank.com](http://www.canarabank.com) or may contact Branch Manager, Buja Buja Nellore Branch(13535), Canara Bank, Phone No. 9491304361 during office hours on any working day. For E-Auction Process contact Service Provider: M/s PSB Alliance (baanknet), web portal: "https://baanknet.com", Helpdesk No. 8291220220, E-mail: support.baanknet@psballiance.com. Date: 23.02.2026, Place: Nellore Sd/- Authorized Officer, CANARA BANK

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
TIRUPATI

DISTRICT Collector Dr S Venkateswar has directed officials to take strong measures to ensure smooth and secure conduct of the SSC examinations scheduled from March 16 to April 1. He reviewed the arrangements at a meeting held at the Collectorate on Tuesday with officials from various departments.

The Collector said the examinations will be conducted from 9.30 am to 12.45 pm and must be held in a strict and peaceful manner without any lapses. A total of 31,334 students from the district have registered to appear for the Class 10 examinations. This includes 29,165 regular students, 1,178 students who failed last year, and 991 students from open schools. The examinations will be conducted at 179 centres across the district.

Dr Venkateswar instructed officials to ensure tight security



District Collector Dr S Venkateswar reviewing the arrangements for SSC public examinations at the Collectorate in Tirupati on Tuesday

while transporting question papers to strong rooms. A district-level review meeting should be conducted with police, postal department, and other concerned officials regarding the transportation of question papers.

He directed that strong police security be arranged at all examination centres. CCTV cameras should be installed at sensitive centres along with spe-

cial security measures. Section 144 should be implemented at all examination centres. Internet and xerox centres near the exam centres should remain closed during examination hours.

The Collector said that no electronic devices or mobile phones should be allowed inside the examination centres by candidates, invigilators, or any staff. Police officials were asked to conduct checks in advance.

He stressed that there should be no mass copying under any circumstances.

Officials were instructed to ensure that students reach examination centres on time. Basic facilities such as drinking water, toilets, lights, fans, electricity, first aid centres, and availability of medical officers must be provided at all centres. He also directed officials to ensure that APSRTC buses are made available for students attending the examinations.

DRO G Narasimhulu, DEO KVN Kumar, Education Department Assistant Commissioner B Sudha, Tirupati Municipal Additional Commissioner Sarada Devi, DPO Susila Devi, DM&HO Dr V Balakrishna Naik, Transport Officer K Murali Mohan and other district officers attended the meeting.

## PROPERTY DOCUMENT LOST

We, RAFI SIRAZ / RAFI RIYAZ S/o of A.M.Rafi. Below mentioned property schedule property document lost while we are travelling from Kuppam bus stand to my home through bike Chittoor Registration District, Kuppam Sub-Registration District, Kuppam Mandal, previously Dalavayi Kothapalle Grampanchayat, at present Kuppam Municipal area, No.129, Chinnu Kurabalapalli village accounts, S.No.144/1, Document No - 539/1999, Dated: 18/02/1999, G.N.R.Nagar, RCC molding and ACC sheeted house bearing D.No.27/6-1/7 with assessment No.1180012189.

If anyone found the above mentioned property document, Please contact us  
**A.SUDHARSANA BABU** - Advocate  
9849509162

**Union Bank of India**  
GANDHI ROAD, PRODDATUR BRANCH (04371), PH: 9324988353  
GANDHI ROAD, PRODDATUR, YSR KADAPA DIST - 516359

**E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE (For Sale of Movable / Immovable Properties)**  
Notice of 15 days for Sale of Immovable Secured assets Under Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. E-auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under The Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, read with the provision of Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the borrower(s) mentioned below that the below described immovable property mortgaged/Charged to the Secured Creditor, the Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Union Bank of India Secured Creditor will be sold on "As is Where is", "As is What is", and "Whatever there is" basis, by Public E-Auction on 13-03-2026 From 12.00 Noon to 5.00 PM for recovery of the dues mentioned below together with future interest and legal other expenses due to the bank/ Secured Creditor from respective borrowers.

**Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s):** 1) M/S SHREE RAMATHULASI TRACTOR AGENCY, Rep by its Prop: Mr. Guddeti Raja Ram, Plot No.25, MG Auto Nagar, Mydukur Road, Proddatur, YSR Kadapa Dist. 516360  
2) MR. GUDDETI RAJA RAM (Prop.), S/o G Rama Subba Reddy, D.No.2/253, 2nd ward, Eruvapalem Village, Rajupalem Mandal, YSR Kadapa Dist. 516359  
3) MR. GUDDETI RAMA TULASI REDDY, S/O G Raja Ram, D.No.2/253, 2nd ward, Eruvapalem Village, Rajupalem Mandal, Kadapa - 516359  
**Outstanding Amt:** Rs. 24,71,577.92 + interest yet to applied from 01-01-2026 as per contractual rate + penal interest + Legal exp

**DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTIES:** All the parts and parcel of Vacant land having an extent of Ac.3.08 cents located in survey no 182/1, Eruvapalem village, Rajupalem Mandal, Proddatur Taluk, YSR Kadapa Dist - 516359 in the name of guarantor Mr. Guddeti Rama Tulasi Reddy.  
**Boundaries:** East: Land of Guddeti Krishna Ram West: Land of Chemikala Konda Reddy & others, North: Public Road South: Land belongs to Chemikala Konda Reddy & others

**Reserve Price: Rs.51,00,000/- E.M.D: 5,10,000/- Bid Increment Amount : Rs.51,000/-**  
Encumbrances known to the bank: NIL

**Date & Time of E-Auction : 13-03-2026 from 12.00 NOON to 05.00 PM (with 10 mins unlimited auto extensions)**

For detailed terms and conditions of Auction Sale & Registration & login, Bidding Rules please visit the Website: <https://baanknet.com> and <https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in/auction-property/view-auction-property.aspx>  
Date : 20-02-2026, Place: Kadapa Sd/- Authorised Officer, Union Bank of India

## Tirupati celebrates 896<sup>th</sup> Formation Day with grandeur



HANS NEWS SERVICE  
TIRUPATI

THE sacred town Tirupati believed to originated in 1118 CE as per historical inscriptions, marked its 896th formation day here on Tuesday with magnificent celebrations. Once a small village known as Venkatanadhapuram or Govindapat-

nam in ancient times, Tirupati flourished under the rule of the Tiruvankadam Yadava kings, who developed it into a prosperous center. Over time, it has become a global hub of spirituality and culture.

The event, organized by the Rayalaseema Rangasthali Kalavedika, featured hundreds of artists in mytho-

logical costumes performing Govinda nama sankirthan, bhajans, kolatams, and special shows along the town's streets. The entire city buzzed with spiritual fervor and excitement.

Local residents and artists highlighted how Tirupati, continues to grow daily while gaining worldwide fame for its spiritual and cultural heritage. The programme concluded successfully amid devotion.

Rayalaseema Rangasthali Chairman Gundala Gopinath Reddy, Nagara Sankirtana Mandali members Vasudeva Reddy, Muninadha Reddy, Thondamanati Subrahmanyam Reddy, Bhaskarachari, Anna Reddy, Rajasekhar, Shambola Harinath, Mittapalli Brahmanandam, Siddavarapu Venkataradi, Munikrishna, Sravani, Jayamma, Arun, Kalyani, Padmavati, Parvathi, Madhu, Bhaskar, Munendra Reddy, Chandramouli were present.

## Conduct Census in a responsible manner: Collector

Attends the training programme

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
NELLORE

DISTRICT Collector Himanshu Shukla has directed the officials to conduct the Population Census 2027, in a most responsible and transparent manner as it is constitutional.

The Collector participated as a chief guest in the three-day training programme on Population Census-2027 scheduled from 24-2-2026 to 26-2-2026 being held at Narayana Engineering College in the city here on Tuesday.

Speaking on the occasion, the collector said that Population Census 2027 will be conducted in 2 phases. He



District Collector Shukla participating in Population Census 2027 training programme in Nellore on Tuesday

detailed that in the first phase, house listing will take place and later Census will take place.

While detailing Population Census, Shukla said that the Census conducted once in 10 years. However, now it is taking place after 2011. While saying that

Nellore is in 5th place related to developmental activities, the Collector urged the staff performing Population Census 2027 to strive to place Nellore in the first place. Joint Collector M Venkateswarlu, DRO Vijayakumar and others were present.

While detailing Population Census, Shukla said that the Census conducted once in 10 years. However, now it is taking place after 2011. While saying that

## BTech final year student dies by suicide in hostel room

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
TIRUPATI

A promising academic journey ended in tragedy on Monday night after a 21-year-old engineering student allegedly died by suicide in her hostel room near Rangampeta in Chandragiri mandal.

The deceased, Bhavana, was a final-year BTech student specialising in Data Science at Mohan Babu University. Known among peers as a meritorious student and class topper, she had recently secured a lucrative job offer reportedly worth Rs 17 lakh per annum from a leading technology firm during the campus placement drive.

According to the police, Bhavana was staying in a private hostel close to the univer-

sity. She is suspected to have hanged herself from a ceiling fan in her room during the late hours of Monday when she was alone.

Hostel authorities alerted the Chandragiri police after discovering the incident.

On receiving information, the police rushed to the hostel, shifted the body for post-mortem to Sri Venkateswara Government Medical College mortuary, and registered a case. Officials said an investigation is underway to ascertain the circumstances that led to the extreme step.

Family members were shocked upon learning about the incident. Her parents, Surendra and Janaki, hurried to Tirupati after being informed by the hostel management. They broke down on

seeing their daughter's body at the mortuary.

Students residing at the hostel stated that Bhavana appeared normal throughout the day and did not show any visible signs of distress. They expressed shock over the sudden turn of events, describing her as focused and academically driven.

Meanwhile, members of various student unions staged protests, demanding a thorough and transparent probe into the incident. Bhavana's grieving parents also sought a fair investigation to uncover the reasons behind their daughter's death.

Police officials maintained that all angles are being examined and further details will emerge after the completion of the inquiry.

**ANDHRA PRADESH INDUSTRIAL INFRASTRUCTURE CORPORATION LTD.**  
(An undertaking of A.P. Govt.)  
O/o, Chief Engineer (Central), APIC Towers, Plot No.1, IT Park, Mangalagiri, Guntur District, AP-522503

**Procurement Notice**  
Short Tender Notice Nos. 100 & 101/CE-C/APIC/2025-26, Dt. 20.02.2026  
Short Tender Notice No. 100:

Providing Integrated Audio-Visual and Digital Communication Ecosystem in the corporate office of the Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board (APEDB), Mangalagiri, Guntur District (2nd Call)

Short Tender Notice No.101: Supply, installation and interior works of Modular Furniture at Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board (APEDB) Office (5th Floor), Mayuri Tech Park, Mangalagiri, Guntur District under deposit contribution work. (2nd call). The details of tender notice and bid documents can be downloaded from [www.approcurement.gov.in](http://www.approcurement.gov.in)

Sd/- CHIEF ENGINEER-C, APIC LTD., Mangalagiri  
DIPR R.O. No. 4860 PP/CL/ADVT/1/1/2021-22, Dt: 24-02-26

**CHITTOOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, CHITTOOR**  
Roc.No.15/2025/CHUDA Date:24.02.2026

**APPENDIX DRAFT NOTIFICATION**

The following Draft Variation to the Master Plan which was sanctioned in G.O.Ms.No. 122, MA&UD, Dt.24-08-2022 is proposed to make in exercise of the powers conferred by Sub-section (1) of Section (15) of Andhra Pradesh Metropolitan Region and Urban Development Authorities Act, 2016.

Notice is hereby given that the draft will be taken into consideration after expiry of fifteen (15) days from the date of publication of the notification in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette and that any objections or suggestions which may be received from any person with respect thereto before expiry of said period will be considered by the Government of Andhra Pradesh. Objections or suggestions should be addressed to the Chittoor Urban Development Authority/Municipal Administration and Urban Development Department, Andhra Pradesh Secretariat, Velagapudi.

**DRAFT VARIATION**

The site in Sy. No. 3567/1 (LPM No.1299) of Jangalapalle Revenue Village, Yadamarri Mandal with an extent of net proposed area is Ac. 4.74 cents. The boundaries of which are given in the schedule below, which was earmarked as Protected use (Green) zone in the Master Plan of Chittoor Municipal Corporation and its vicinity areas sanctioned vide in G.O.Ms.No. 122, MA&UD, Dt.24.08.2022 is now proposed to be designated as Public & Semi-Public land use by variation of change of land use in the revised part proposed land use Map of M.M.P.No. 03/2025/CHUDA of Chittoor Urban Development Authority and is available in the office of the Chittoor Urban Development Authority, Chittoor.

**SCHEDULE OF BOUNDARIES**

North: Gutta (Sy. No. 3567), LPM No.1400, LPM No.1298) of Jangalapalle South: Existing 12M Wide Road East: Existing 12M Wide Road, West Gutta (Sy. No. 3387/1) LPM No.1365, LPM No.1367) of Jangalapalle.

Sd/-Vice Chairperson,  
Chittoor Urban Development Authority, CHITTOOR.

**SHRIRAM FINANCE LIMITED**  
REGISTERED OFFICE: Sri Towers, Plot No.14A, South Phase, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600032 website: [www.shriramfinance.me](http://www.shriramfinance.me).  
Branch Office: D.No. 4/620, 1st floor, Gandhi Road, Proddatur-516360, Kadapa (Dist).

**SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE**

We, M/s. Shriram Finance Limited (formerly known as "Shriram City Union Finance Limited" amalgamated with Shriram Transport Finance limited and converted as Shriram Transport Finance Limited as per the orders of NCLT Bench-II Chennai dated 09.11.2022) and thereafter obtained the approval to rename as Shriram Finance Ltd (Ministry of Corporate Finance letter dated 30.11.2022), is a company registered under the Companies Act, 2013 and also registered with RBI to do Non-Banking Finance business having its registered office at Sri Towers, Plot No.14A, South Phase, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600032 and branch office at PRODDATUR (hereinafter referred as Company/ Lender).

Where as, the undersigned being the authorised officer of Shriram City Union Finance Limited (SCUF) under the provisions of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (said Act) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 (said Rules) issued demand notices to the Borrowers details of which are mentioned in the table below to repay the amount mentioned in the said demand notices.

The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said Rules, on this 24 TH day of FEBRUARY 2026.

**Borrower Name and Address:**

- S.Karimulla, S/O S.Peeraseebah, ward No:10, Modemeedapalli, Kothapalli Panchayat, Proddatur, Kadapa(Dist).
- K.Sekhar, S/O Sathyanarayana, D.No:17/2223,Lingareddy Kottalu, Gopavaram Village, Proddatur, Kadapa(Dist).

**Amount due as per Demand Notice :-To pay Rs. 70,19,240/- (Rupees Seventy Lakhs Nineteen Thousand Two Hundred and Forty only) under reference of Loan A/c No :-PRDTRF04170001 Demand Notice Dated : 21.11.2025**

**SCHEDULE OF THE PROPERTY**

**ITEM NO:1:** YS R District, Proddatur Regn, Proddatur Sub-District, Proddatur (M), Kottapalli Panchayat Ward No:10, James peta Area, Modemeedipalli Village Accounts, Sy no:395/1, an Extent of Ac 0.035, Cents or 0.014 hectares out of Ac.0.09 cents of vacant site, bounded on: East : Item No.1 of "D" schedule belongs to shaik Mahaboob sahib; West : Site in Plot Nos 52 and 53 in santhi Nagar; North : Item No.3 of "C" schedule belongs to shaik khasim Peera; South : Site of Shaik Ghouse Mohiddin; Within this an extent of Ac.0.03 1/2 cents 0.014 Hectors or 169.4 sq.yards of vacant site along with all Easementary rights.

**ITEM NO:2:** YSR District, Proddatur Regn, Proddatur Sub-District, Proddatur (M), kotta palli Panchayat Ward No:10 James peta Area, Modemeedipalli Village Accounts, Sy.no:395/2 an extent of Ac 0.025 cents out of Ac.10 cents of Ac 0.40 cents vacant site, bounded on: East : Item No.2 of "D" schedule belongs to shaik mahaboob sahib; West : Site of Shaik Ghouse Mohiddin and item No.1 of D schedule belongs to shaik Mahaboob Basha; North : Site of Shaik Khasim peera and Amerun; South : Site of Shaik Ghouse Mohiddin; Within this an extent of Ac.0.02 1/2 cents 0.010 Hectors or 121 sq.yards of Vacant land along with all Easementary rights.

This notice is also hereby to caution the general public at large that the authorized officer of SFL is in the lawful Symbolic Possession of the immovable property mentioned herein above and the Borrowers or any person shall not after receipt of this notice transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise deal with/ alienate any of the above mentioned secured assets referred to in this notice, without prior written consent of SFL.

**Place :Kadapa / Zo Dated : 24.02.2026 Sd/- Authorised Officer Shriram Finance Limited**



# THE Hans India



**Aishwarya Sakhua on meeting herself without 'filters or performance'**  
Aishwarya was a Miss India finalist in 2006. From 2010 to 2012, she starred in the TV show 'Saas Bina Sasural'.

**The rise and fall of El Mencho**  
In Milenio Cartel, El Mencho started as a member of the assassin squad that protected the drug lord Armando Valencia Cornelio ("El Maradona"). On 12 August 2003, his boss was arrested by Mexican authorities.

**BDA unveils new graded slabs from 2.5% to 10%**  
The Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) has revised the penalty structure for owners of vacant sites who fail to commence construction within the stipulated time.

**Pawan Kalyan targets Jagan, questions silence on TTD Board**  
The Dy CM alleged that the SIT had concluded there was a conspiracy behind the supply of adulterated ghee. He claimed tender rules were relaxed to award contracts to favoured firms, said the then TTD governing body failed to discharge its responsibility.

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**WINDOWS**  
**RAMZAN TIMINGS**  
IFTAR (Wed) 6.27 PM  
SEHAR (Thu) 5.15 AM

## Well-organised 'syndicate' behind ghee scam: Naidu

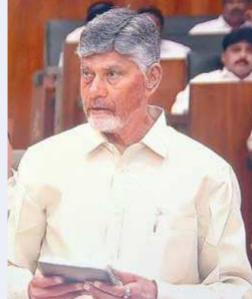
HANS NEWS SERVICE AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Tuesday launched a blistering attack in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly, alleging that a well-organised "syndicate" operated during the previous government's tenure to supply adulterated ghee to the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD).

Making a detailed PowerPoint presentation during a short discussion on the Tirumala laddu controversy, Naidu claimed that 59.71 lakh kgs of adulterated ghee was procured at a cost of Rs 234 crore. He alleged that the ghee was used to prepare nearly 20.01 crore Tirumala laddus offered as Srivari prasadam.

He accused those involved of manipulating tender rules, ignoring lab standards and submitting fake quality cer-

- ▶▶ Former PA to the then TTD chairman took Rs 4.5 cr bribe to facilitate contracts
- ▶▶ SIT seized chemicals and documents detailing alleged kickbacks
- ▶▶ Complaints surfaced in 2022; CFTRI report allegedly suppressed by previous board
- ▶▶ CM rejects attempts to link controversy with Heritage Dairy
- ▶▶ This is not just about ghee. It is about faith and sanctity of Tirumala, says CM



tificates. "Sacred Prasadam meant for devotees was compromised," he said. "This is not just corruption. It is an assault on faith," he added.

Naidu alleged that a former personal assistant to the then TTD chairman accepted a Rs 4.5 crore bribe to facilitate contracts. He claimed the Special Investigation Team (SIT) seized chemicals such as monoglycerides and acetic acid, along with documents

detailing alleged kickbacks.

According to the Chief Minister, complaints about ghee quality surfaced as early as 2022. He said a report by the Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI) that flagged adulteration was suppressed at the time. After his government assumed office, fresh samples were tested. A July 23, 2024, report from the National Dairy Development Board

controversy with Heritage Dairy, a company promoted by his family. "No government department has purchased ghee from Heritage," he asserted. He clarified that Indapur Dairy in Pune, which does co-manufacturing for multiple brands, has no connection with the alleged supply to TTD.

Expanding the attack, Naidu accused the previous regime of weakening temple governance, altering tender norms between 2020 and 2022, and failing to act on repeated complaints. He alleged that over 2,000 temples faced attacks between 2019 and 2024 and claimed that several incidents went uninvestigated.

He also defended Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan's remarks on protecting Hindu traditions and said places of worship must respect established customs.

Continued on Page 7

### PM Modi's 2nd visit to Israel set to upgrade strategic ties

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will undertake a two-day visit to Israel beginning Wednesday to shore up bilateral defence and trade cooperation amid the ongoing tensions in the Middle-east including deteriorating ties between the US and Iran. Modi's engagements will include his address to Israel's parliament, wide-ranging talks with his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu and a meeting with President Isaac Herzog. "This visit will reaffirm the deep and long-standing strategic partnership between the two countries and will present an opportunity to review the common challenges as well as realign efforts towards achieving their shared vision for a robust partnership between two resilient democracies," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said. It is learnt that boosting overall defence and security cooperation will be a major area of discussions during delegation level talks between the two prime ministers on Thursday.

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### Cabinet raises raw jute MSP to ₹5,925

NEW DELHI: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Narendra Modi, has approved a Rs 275 per quintal increase in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of raw jute for the 2026-27 marketing season, reinforcing income support for jute farmers. The MSP for raw jute (TD-3 grade) has been fixed at Rs 5,925 per quintal, ensuring a margin of 61.8 per cent over the all-India weighted average cost of production. The pricing decision remains aligned with the government's policy of fixing MSP at a minimum of 1.5 times the cost of production, as outlined in Budget 2018-19.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL  
Not a 'naked protester' ... A Dalal Street player

### 40% TARIFF DROP Indian exporters set to gain as US customs rolls out 10% global tariff

It's lower than Trump's threatened 15% levy

WASHINGTON/NEW DELHI

INDIA products clearing US customs from Tuesday onwards will be subject to 10% duties instead of 50% when the contracts were negotiated, opening doors for some kind of a relief even for cargoes on seas.

While immediate windfall will be for the importer who would have to pay 40% less tariffs, some of it may be passed on to Indian sellers. "Many exporters had an understanding with the buyers



while negotiating contracts at very thin margin or even loss that benefit from change in duties would be shared with them too," CEO and Director General of Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) Ajay Sahai said.

Continued on Page 7

### STOCK MARKET CRASH Investors lose ₹3L cr as Sensex plunges 1,069 points



MUMBAI: Frontline indices, the Sensex and the Nifty 50, suffered strong losses on Tuesday as investors booked profits across sectors, tracking weak global cues. The Sensex crashed 1,069 points, or 1.28%, to end at 82,225.92, while the NSE counterpart Nifty 50 fell 1.12% to close at 25,424.65. The mid-and small-cap indices also ended in the negative territory, but they still outperformed the benchmarks.

### AP Cabinet clears ₹2,387-cr chip project Nod for AP Sick and Stressed MSME Revival Policy (4.0) 2026-31



Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu holding a Cabinet meeting in the Secretariat on Tuesday

HANS NEWS SERVICE AMARAVATI

IN a sweeping set of decisions aimed at repositioning Andhra Pradesh as an investment-led growth hub, the state Cabinet chaired by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Tuesday approved a broad package of industrial, energy and governance reforms spanning semiconductor, renewable power, tourism infrastructure and MSME revival.

At its meeting held at the Secretariat, the Cabinet cleared proposals spanning semiconductor manufacturing, renewable energy, AI-driven data centres, tourism infrastructure and MSME revival, while ratifying decisions taken by the State Investment Promotion Board (SIPB).

A key decision was the approval of a Rs 2,387.81-crore

outsourced semiconductor assembly and test (OSAT) facility in Visakhapatnam district. The project, expected to generate around 1,000 direct jobs, was cleared under the AP Semiconductor & Display Fab Policy 4.0 (2024-29), marking the state's first semiconductor manufacturing initiative under India's semiconductor mission framework. The Cabinet also approved proposals related to a 1,000 MW AI-focused data centre project by the Adani Group in Visakhapatnam and Anakapalli districts.

Under the AP Integrated Clean Energy Policy 2024, multiple renewable energy projects received the green signal, including 160 MW wind projects in Anantapur district and wind-solar hybrid projects in Kurnool.

Continued on Page 7

### Kerala is now Keralam Union Cabinet okays renaming the state

NEW DELHI

THE Union Cabinet on Tuesday approved a proposal to alter the name of the state of Kerala to 'Keralam' and initiated the constitutional process required to amend the First Schedule of the Constitution for renaming the state.

The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Following the



approval, the President of India will now refer the proposed Kerala (Alteration of Name) Bill, 2026 to the Kerala Legislative Assembly to seek its views under Article 3 of the Constitution.

The change has its origins in a unanimous resolution passed by the Kerala Legislative Assembly on June 24, 2024, requesting the Union government to modify the State's name from 'Kerala' to 'Keralam', the matter being the name used in the State's native language, Malayalam.

Under Article 3 of the Constitution, parliament has the power to alter the name of an existing State by law. Continued on Page 7

### MAKING WATER FROM AIR

## A Nobel laureate makes Modi's vision a reality

NEW DELHI

IN October 2020, during a virtual interaction with Danish wind energy giant Vestas, Prime Minister Narendra Modi suggested that wind turbines could suck moisture from the air to generate clean drinking water.

Fast-forward to February 2026, and science has achieved that very goal through the work of a Nobel laureate.

As first reported by The Guardian, the Nobel laureate has unveiled an industrial machine that harvests

water from the driest air on Earth.

Professor Omar Yaghi, the 2025 Nobel Prize winner in Chemistry, has turned the tide with his company Atoco, a California-based deep-tech firm specialising in atmospheric water harvesting and carbon capture using atomic-scale precision.

Put simply, Yaghi has built a company that creates molecular traps to grab water and carbon directly from the sky with extreme accuracy. By using a breakthrough called reticular



Nobel laureate Prof Omar Yaghi, the pioneer of reticular chemistry, whose invention harvests clean water from the world's driest air

chemistry, the Nobel laureate is transforming what was once a subject of political mockery into a vital



line for a thirsty planet. The heart of this breakthrough lies in reticular chemistry, a discipline that involves

stitching together molecular building blocks into expansive, crystalline structures known as Metal Organic Frameworks (MOFs).

Think of these as the world's most advanced molecular sponges, but instead of cleaning a kitchen counter, they are designed to soak up invisible gases and moisture from the air.

Their internal architecture is so intricate that a single gram of the material, which is hardly the weight of a paperclip, possesses an internal surface area large enough to cover several

football fields.

These are nano-engineered materials, which means scientists have designed them at a scale 1,00,000 times smaller than the width of human hair. At this microscopic level, they can build custom-made chemical pockets that act like tiny rooms specifically sized to fit water molecules.

Unlike traditional atmospheric water generators (AWGs) that rely on energy-intensive cooling to reach the dew point, Yaghi's materials use adsorption.

Continued on Page 7

### Data of Andhra University students, staff on dark web

Over 46,000 records have allegedly been breached and leaked online



NARESH NANDAM VIJAYAWADA

IN a major cybersecurity concern, the personal data of 46,160 individuals associated with Andhra University has allegedly been compromised and leaked online. The breach reportedly came to light after a user on a dark web cybercrime forum claimed to have posted a database containing sensitive information belonging to students and staff of the university.

According to details shared on the forum, the leaked dataset includes a wide range of personal and academic information.

The exposed records allegedly contain full names, dates of birth, phone numbers, email addresses, enrollment

numbers, programme names, father's names, residential addresses, batch details, and academic validity periods. In addition, links to student photographs and digital signatures were also reportedly part of the data dump, raising serious concerns about identity theft and misuse.

Cybersecurity observers noted that the breach was publicly exposed online on Tuesday, although preliminary indications suggest that the actual compromise may have occurred last month. The delay between the suspected breach and its public disclosure has heightened concerns about the potential misuse of the data during the intervening period. Continued on Page 7



Screen shot of the post on a cybercrime forum

### SHIRTLESS PROTEST IYC chief arrested

NEW DELHI: Youth Congress president Uday Bhanu Chib was arrested on Tuesday after questioning in connection with T-shirt protest at the 'India AI Impact Summit', immediately inviting criticism from the Congress with Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi calling the police action "proof of dictatorial tendencies and cowardice". The Youth Congress leader, who the police claimed was the 'main conspirator and mastermind', was picked up for questioning on Monday af-



ternoon for the second time in connection with the protest at Bharat Mandapam on the last day of the AI summit. Police have already arrested seven Youth Congress activists, including three from Gwalior on Monday in the case.

Continued on Page 7



### Iran set to buy Chinese anti-ship cruise missiles

Iran is close to a deal with China to purchase antiship cruise missiles, according to six people with knowledge of the negotiations, just as the United States deploys a vast naval force near the Iranian coast ahead of possible strikes on the Islamic Republic.

## TIRUMALA GHEE ROW

# Pawan Kalyan targets Jagan, questions silence on TTD Board

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

DEPUTY Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan on Tuesday sharpened the attack on former chief minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy during a short discussion in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly on the alleged use of adulterated ghee in the preparation of Tirumala laddu prasadam.

Pawan questioned why Jagan was "shielding" members of the then Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) board.

"It would have been enough if he had said an investigation should be conducted and action taken," Pawan said. "If you are holding them back, then are you not involved?"

He accused the YSRCP of misleading the public by claiming there were no chemicals in the ghee used for Srivari laddu prasadam.

- Cites SIT, NDDB reports; says contracts were relaxed
- 'If you shield them, are you not involved' he asks former CM

"That is why they are now forced to give explanations," he said.

The Deputy CM alleged that the Special Investigation Team (SIT) had concluded there was a conspiracy behind the supply of adulterated ghee. He claimed tender rules were relaxed to award contracts to favoured firms and said the then TTD governing body failed to discharge its responsibility. "We are not accusing blindly. The lapse occurred during the tenure of the board appointed then," he said.

Referring to investigation findings, Pawan said the NDDB report indicated the presence of animal-



related substances in the ghee. He also cited the CBI-monitored SIT probe, stating that the report concluded the product supplied was not genuine ghee.

He alleged that laddus were prepared using the adulterated ghee and claimed that about one

lakh such laddus were sent to Ayodhya. "Only Srivari knows what was mixed in that ghee," he said, adding that anyone found guilty must face strict punishment. "If something like this had happened to any other religion, the entire country would have reacted strongly," he said.

# Council witnesses clash over crime and women's safety

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

A heated debate unfolded in the Legislative Council on Tuesday during a short discussion on law and order, with the treasury and opposition benches trading sharp charges over women's safety, crime statistics and the alleged spread of drugs.

Home minister V Anitha told the House that crimes against women have fallen by 4.4 percent since the formation of the NDA coalition government. She asserted that the government has adopted a zero-tolerance policy towards crimes against girl children.

According to her, overall crime in the state has declined by 6.6 per cent in the past 20 months due to measures initiated by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu. She said POCSO cases dropped by 8 per cent, murders of women fell by 45 percent and gang rape cases declined by 64 percent.

- Home minister Anitha claims overall crime fell 6.6% in 20 months, citing sharp drops in POCSO, murders of women, and gang rape cases
- Accuses the previous YSRCP gov't of law-and-order failure, highlighting lost Central funds and pledging one lakh CCTV cameras plus anti-drug drives
- Opposition MLC Kalyani counters with data showing harassment cases and rising NDPS cases, linking violent crimes to drugs and illicit liquor



Anitha blamed the previous YSRCP government for what she described as a breakdown of law and order. She alleged that industries and investments retreated during that period and claimed there was a time when families feared for the safety of women stepping out of their homes.

The minister also alleged that Rs 180 crore in central

funds was lost earlier due to the absence of a proper action plan. She said the present government plans to install one lakh CCTV cameras across the state to strengthen surveillance. Under a special anti-drug drive, 96,940 kg of marijuana has been seized so far, she added.

Anitha further stated that SC and ST atrocity cases have come down by

25 percent and accused the previous regime of politicising such cases. She also referred to the arrest of a village sarpanch belonging to YSRCP in a theft case at the residence of a TDP MLA.

However, YSRCP MLC Varudu Kalyani contested the government's claims. Citing official data, she said 16,288 women were reportedly subjected to harassment and alleged that crimes against women had increased in 10 districts, including Guntur, Nellore, Vizianagaram and Tirupati.

She linked violent crimes to ganja, drugs and illicit liquor, and pointed to a recent case in Madanapalle involving the rape and murder of a minor girl. Kalyani also claimed NDPS cases had risen sharply in districts such as Srikakulam and Nellore.

As the debate grew heated, the Chairman repeatedly urged members to maintain decorum and stick to the subject.

## ₹6,000-cr scam alleged in 'Housing for All' under YSRCP rule

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

REVENUE minister Anagani Satya Prasad on Tuesday alleged in the Assembly that massive irregularities amounting to nearly Rs 6,000 crore took place during the previous YSRCP government under the 'Housing for All' scheme.

Responding to a question raised by TDP MLA Maddipati Venkata Raju, the minister said that although the previous government claimed to have distributed 22 lakh house site pattas, nearly seven lakh beneficiaries did not even take conveyance deeds. He alleged that lands unfit for habitation — including low-lying areas, burial grounds, remote locations far from villages, and flood-prone lands — were acquired at two to three times the market price for distribution under the scheme.

Due to the non-habitable nature of these lands, nearly 2.5 lakh beneficiaries reportedly refused to accept house site pattas, he said. The minister further stated that upon inquiry by the present coalition government, 43,948



Revenue minister Anagani Satya Prasad speaking on housing in the Assembly on Tuesday

- Revenue minister Satya Prasad says nearly Rs 6,000 cr irregularities took place under the previous YSRCP regime with unfit lands being acquired at inflated prices and seven lakh beneficiaries did not take conveyance deeds

ineligible beneficiaries were identified in the distribution process. Additionally, another 1,11,037 beneficiaries are still under verification.

After assuming office, the coalition government decided to allot three cents of land in rural areas and two cents in urban areas under the housing scheme, he said, pointing out that the previous government had allotted only 1.5 cents or even one cent in some cases.

Satya Prasad revealed that

a total of 4,08,876 fresh applications have been received for house site pattas. Of these, 1,03,494 applications have been approved, 1,41,928 rejected, and 1,56,454 are currently under scrutiny.

He asserted that the present government is committed to ensuring transparency and providing genuinely eligible poor families with proper, habitable land for housing, unlike the alleged irregularities during the previous regime.

## SYNTHETIC MILK THREAT PROMPTS TIGHT CHECKS

PRADEEP VENNELAKANTI  
TIRUPATI

THE suspected link between adulterated milk and the recent deaths of four persons in Rajamahendravaram has triggered a wave of caution across AP's dairy-rich Rayalaseema region, with officials tightening checks in Tirupati and Chittoor districts.

Authorities say the tragedy has raised fresh concerns about synthetic milk entering regular supply chains, particularly through informal and cross-border routes. Tirupati and Chittoor, known for their strong dairy base after agriculture, witness heavy milk procurement for both domestic consumption and bulk supply to chilling centres and private dairies. The steady movement of milk across the Andhra Pradesh-Karnataka border has further heightened vigilance.

The alert follows recent enforcement action near Ballagiri in Karnataka, close to the Kuppam border, where officials reportedly uncovered a synthetic milk preparation unit. Three in-

- Inspections are underway in key dairy producing districts with large-scale milk movement in Tirupati and Chittoor districts



dividuals — two from Santhipuram mandal and one from Ramakuppam mandal in Chittoor district — were allegedly found producing artificial milk by blending expired milk powder with palm oil, urea and water. Investigators said the mixture was designed to imitate the thickness and fat content of genuine milk before being circulated in local markets.

Food safety officials explained that adulteration often involves adding substances such as urea, starch, detergents, maltodextrin and vegetable fats to enhance whiteness and density.

Preservatives and neutralisers may also be used to prolong shelf life. In extreme cases, officers said, a single litre of pure milk can be stretched into two litres of synthetic product, significantly boosting illegal profits. Authorities also flagged the

sumers to be alert to basic warning signs. Nearly 90 percent of locally produced milk in the region is cow milk, which typically carries a slight yellowish tinge, whereas buffalo milk appears whiter.

If milk sold as cow milk looks unusually white or excessively thick, adulteration should be suspected. Changes in taste, smell or fat consistency are also considered red flags. Simple household tests, such as adding iodine drops to check for maltodextrin or observing the texture of heated milk when rubbed between fingers, may provide preliminary indications of tampering.

Testing facilities are available at the College of Dairy Technology in Tirupati, where milk samples can be examined scientifically. Officials have advised dairies, bulk purchasers and consumers to utilise these services and promptly report suspicious supplies, stressing that public cooperation will be vital to safeguarding the integrity of the dairy sector in the wake of the Rajamahendravaram incident.

Officials have urged con-

## Pensions to be distributed on February 28

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

THE state government will distribute NTR Bharosa pensions on February 28, a day in advance, as March 1 falls on a Sunday, minister for MSMEs, SERP and NRI empowerment and relations Kondapalli Srinivas said in a statement on Tuesday.

The government will disburse Rs 2,725.79 crore to a total of 62,76,322 pensioners across various categories. The amount will be delivered at the doorsteps of beneficiaries by Swarna Gramam and Swarna Ward staff.

Of the total beneficiaries, 8,977 are newly sanctioned widow (spouse) pensioners, for whom Rs 3.59 crore has been released. The minister stated that pensions will be distributed on February 28, and any remaining payments will be completed on March 2, 2026, with Secretariat staff ensuring doorstep delivery.

He further said that since the coalition government assumed office, a total of Rs 57,808.68 crore has been spent on pensions, reflecting the State government's commitment to social security and welfare.

## Spl focus on disposal of accumulated scrap in TTD: Additional EO

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
TIRUMALA

THE TTD Additional Executive Officer Ch Venkaiah Chowdary instructed officials to lay special focus towards the disposal of scrap that has been accumulated for several years in various departments of TTD.

During the monthly coordination meeting with officials of different departments at the Sudharma Conference Hall in Sri Padmavathi Rest House, Tirumala, on Tuesday. Speaking on the occasion, the Additional EO directed the officials to identify the scrap available in all departments of TTD and submit a detailed report within 15 days. He also instructed that a schedule should be prepared in every department for scrap disposal once in six months. Necessary steps

should be taken to ensure that the scrap is disposed of regularly through auction.

He further stated that the feedback system is yielding excellent results and should be continued in the same spirit.

Based on the feedback collected from devotees, public transport, Annarasadam, and sanitation services in Tirumala have improved significantly.

In the same spirit, he suggested holding a special meeting on FMS, Kalyanakatta, and luggage centres, and preparing an action plan to provide better services to devotees.

He also instructed officials to install kiosk machines at the Aswini Hospital in Tirumala to facilitate devotees to make donations. Later, he reviewed the progress of various engineering works. CE Satyanarayana and other officials were present at the meeting.

## Fishermen flag boundary violations in Pulicat Lake waters

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
TIRUPATI

ALONG with fisherfolk and their community leaders from villages around Pulicat Lake, Tirupati MP Maddila Gurumoorthy on Tuesday met District Collector Dr S Venkateswar and submitted a representation, urging an early resolution to the long-pending inter-State water dispute concerning the lake.

During the meeting, the fishermen explained that as per public maps, the Pulicat Lake area near Pannangadu falls completely within Andhra Pradesh limits. They pointed out that although the area is about 3.34 km away from the inter-State boundary, fishermen from Tamil Nadu have allegedly altered boundaries



MP M Gurumoorthy along with fishermen and their leaders at the Collectorate in Tirupati on Tuesday

and continued fishing in these waters. They said this was causing serious difficulties to local fishermen and requested the district administration to intervene.

The District Collector informed the delegation that discussions had already been initiated with the Tiruvallur district Collector regarding the issue. He said the matter might take some time to resolve as

election-related activities are currently under way in Tamil Nadu, and assured the fishermen that there was no need to worry. He also said a meeting would be held with the Tiruvallur Collector through a Zoom call on the next Monday to further discuss the issue.

MP Gurumoorthy said he had raised the Pulicat Lake issue several times in Parliament earlier and assured that he would raise it again in the coming Parliamentary sessions. He also said the matter would be brought to the notice of Union Home Minister Amit Shah to seek a permanent solution. The MP appealed to fishermen from both States to maintain cordial relations and avoid any conflicts while efforts are under way to resolve the dispute.

## Illegal dairy unit sealed after fatal milk adulteration incident

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

THE adulterated milk tragedy in Rajamahendravaram has escalated, with police registering murder charges against trader Addala Ganeswara Rao after five deaths and 16 cases of severe kidney complications. Investigations linked the crisis in Chowdeswari Nagar and Swaroop Nagar to contaminated milk supplied by his Varalakshmi Dairy, which was sealed for operating without mandatory permissions.

DSP Devakumar said preliminary findings revealed adulteration with urea, detergent powder, and oil to thicken milk, compounded

by coolant oil leakage from a refrigerator. Officials believe financial distress and profit motives drove the practice.

Health authorities reported a surge in acute renal failure cases among residents consuming milk from the Korukonda dairy chain. A contaminated batch is suspected to have caused widespread toxicity. Three victims — Radhakrishnamurthy, N. Seshagiri Rao, and Tadi Ramani — died on Monday, raising the toll to five. Controversy surrounds the exclusion of B Kanakaratham, whose family insists her death was linked to the incident.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu ordered a comprehensive inquiry, directing district collec-

tor Kirthi Chakuri and SP Narasimha Kishore to probe thoroughly. Eluru range IGP Ashok Kumar confirmed severe charges, elevating the case from food safety violation to criminal act.

Health commissioner Veerapandian announced government coverage of treatment expenses and urged residents with symptoms to seek immediate care. Forensic analysis of seized samples is underway, while citizens demand stricter monitoring of dairy operations to safeguard public health.

Meanwhile, district collector Kirthi Chakuri along with MLA Adireddy Srinivas handed over cheques of Rs 10 lakh each to the bereaved families.

## District police crack daytime house burglary

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
TIRUPATI

IN a swift operation, Renigunta police arrested a burglar and recovered gold and silver jewelry worth Rs 14 lakh during a daytime house break-in in the district.

Acting on orders from District SP L Subba Rayudu and under the supervision of ASP Ravi Manoharachi, Renigunta SDPO Y Srinivas Rao formed a special team to

investigate daytime burglaries in the area. On Monday CI S Jayachandra led the team including SI K Dharma Reddy and staff to arrest the suspect near Venugopalapuram Cross at Renigunta Railway Station.

The accused, G Prabhakaran (32) Vangathur, Thiruvallur district, Tamil Nadu, was taken into custody.

Police seized about 97 grams of gold jewelry and 110 grams of silver jewelry from him, valued approximately Rs 14 lakh.

## Nellore police launch novel drive

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
NELLORE

THE Nellore police, known for proactive initiatives such as Naka Bandi, cordon and search operations, drone surveillance and counselling of rowdy-sheets to curb narcotics smuggling, thefts and chain snatching, has launched another innovative programme to prevent road accidents. The initiative, titled 'Face Wash and Go' (FW & G), was introduced a few months ago by Superintendent of Police Ajitha Ve-

jendra and is already yielding encouraging results. Under the programme, police personnel stop vehicles travelling on National and State Highways, especially during late-night and early-morning hours. Drivers are asked to park safely by the roadside, wash their faces with water provided by the police and take a short break before resuming their journey.

The initiative is being implemented at toll plazas, major junctions, railway stations and bus stands, with special teams deployed exclusively for this purpose.



District collector Kirthi Chakuri along with MLA A Srinivas distributes cheques to bereaved families in Rajamahendravaram on Tuesday

# 575 trees face felling for 'Reshme Bhavan' in Okalipuram; proposal before GBA

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
BENGALURU

THE Department of Sericulture has proposed felling 575 trees to construct a 'Reshme Bhavan' complex on 4.2 acres of land in Okalipuram, close to Majestic and near Lulu Mall Bengaluru. The proposal is currently under examination by the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA).

According to official documents, the project is planned on land located at Survey Nos. 12, 14 and 17

in Muddenahalli, Okalipuram, within the premises of the Joint Director's office. The site reportedly has 628 trees in total, of which 575 are proposed to be removed, leaving only 53 trees to be retained.

The Sericulture Department has described the project as a prestigious government initiative and has sought an early No Objection Certificate (NOC) for clearance. It has also informed that its existing office has been shifted to the



Mysore Sugar Company Reshme Bhavan has been entrusted to the Public Works Department (PWD). In October 2024, the State Cabinet approved approximately Rs 528 crore for the project. Subsequently, the PWD approached the GBA for necessary clearances.

While GBA has permitted land clearance in principle, the Karnataka High Court has laid down specific guidelines governing tree felling in Bengaluru.

Under Section 8(3) of the Karnataka Preservation of Trees Act, no tree within GBA limits can be cut without approval from the Dep-

uty Conservator of Forests (DCF), who has jurisdiction over trees in the area. As part of the process, an expert tree committee will inspect the site. Citizens have been invited to submit suggestions and objections within 10 days.

The trees listed in the proposal include Silver Oak, Neem, Tabebuia, Mahogany, Jackfruit, Gulmohar, Rain Tree and Ashoka. Environmentalists warn that if permission is granted, one of Okalipuram's last remaining

green pockets could soon disappear.

## Environmental Concerns Raised

Environmental activist express concern over the shrinking green cover in Bengaluru. "The city's green cover has reportedly declined drastically over the decades. There must be zero tolerance for tree felling. Globally accepted standards suggest that cities should aim for at least 30% green cover. We cannot afford to

lose even a single tree; instead, we must focus on restoration," they said.

They also questioned the need to locate Reshme Bhavan within central Bengaluru. "Why should Reshme Bhavan be in the heart of the city? Establishing it outside Bengaluru could help distribute development more evenly across the state," they argued. With public objections now invited, the final decision on the proposal rests on statutory approvals and environmental scrutiny.

## GOVT JOB VACANCY BACKLOG

# K'taka CM blames BJP as Dharwad protests intensify

BENGALURU

AS protests by government job aspirants intensified in Dharwad, with many taken into preventive custody, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday blamed the previous BJP regime for the large backlog of vacant posts.

According to protesters, who staged a massive demonstration in Dharwad earlier in the day, around 2.8 lakh posts remain vacant across various government departments in Karnataka, while fewer than 5,000 recruitments have been made in the last three years. In a press statement, Siddaramaiah said that when the Congress assumed office in 2023, over 2.64 lakh government posts were vacant.

He said the backlog was the result of "prolonged inaction under the previous BJP government, which failed to initiate timely recruitment or create a



structured roadmap to fill vacancies." "It is deeply unfortunate that BJP leaders are choosing to mislead innocent students even now to serve their narrow political interests," the CM said.

He alleged that, instead of encouraging aspirants to stay focused on their preparation and future, opposition leaders were "attempting to instigate unrest."

The chief minister said the current situation was largely due to recruitment irregularities and alleged

corruption during the BJP regime between 2019 and 2023, which eroded trust in the system and led to a significant backlog. "Our government is committed to restoring credibility, transparency, and stability in the recruitment process," he said.

Siddaramaiah added that several recruitment processes had to be temporarily stalled due to legal challenges related to internal reservation, which are under consideration in courts. He said

the government had chosen to act responsibly within the framework of law rather than rush decisions that could jeopardise the careers of thousands of candidates.

"Despite these structural and legal constraints, our government has moved with determination and integrity. In the last 2.5 years alone, more than 40,000 recruitments have been completed across departments," he said. Siddaramaiah said the government was conscious that many aspirants had waited

for years due to delays beyond their control. Recognising this hardship, he said the government had relaxed the upper age limit by more than five years for upcoming recruitments to ensure that deserving candidates are not excluded due to systemic delays.

"I want to assure that the process of filling the remaining vacancies is ongoing and will be further accelerated in a transparent, systematic, and time-bound manner," he said.

On the protests, the chief minister said he had taken serious note of the situation. "I understand the anxiety, frustration, and uncertainty that many government job aspirants are experiencing," he said.

He reiterated that the government is taking necessary administrative and policy measures to accelerate recruitment and strengthen institutions to prevent such backlogs in the future.

## Penalty for vacant sites

# BDA unveils new graded slabs from 2.5% to 10%



HANS NEWS SERVICE  
BENGALURU

THE Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) has revised the penalty structure for owners of vacant sites who fail to commence construction within the stipulated time. Under the new framework, a graded penalty slabs ranging from 2.5 per cent to 10 per cent will be imposed depending on the size of the plot.

According to a circular issued on February 11, the revised penalty will apply to all allottees who have not be-

gun construction within the timeframe specified in their lease-cum-sale agreement. The decision was taken at the Authority's meeting held on December 30. As per the revised structure, the 'vacant site penalty' will be calculated as a percentage of the prevailing guidance value of the property, based on the plot size.

Sites measuring up to 600 square feet will attract a penalty of 2.5 per cent. Plots between 601 and 1,200 square feet will face a 5 per cent penalty, while those between 1,201 and 2,400 square feet will be charged 7.5 per

cent. For sites larger than 2,401 square feet, the penalty will be 10 per cent. The new rates will come into effect retrospectively from September 23, 2024.

Site owners who are unwilling to pay the penalty may surrender their plots to the Authority. In such cases, 12.5 per cent of the amount paid will be deducted and the remaining balance will be refunded. However, the revised penalty structure will not apply to sites allotted in Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout and Arkavathi Layout, the BDA clarified.

## Consumer panel orders Samsung to repair phone at half cost



HANS NEWS SERVICE  
CHIKKAMAGALURU

IN a consumer rights ruling, the District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission has ordered Samsung India Electronics Private Limited to repair a defective premium smartphone by charging only half of the Rs 39,041 originally demanded for motherboard replacement.

The complainant, K S Rathan Kumar from Mudigere taluk, had purchased a Galaxy S24 Ultra handset which allegedly became non-functional during the warranty period. When he approached the service centre, he was informed that the motherboard had failed and that repairs would cost Rs 39,041.

Claiming that the refusal to repair the phone free of cost amounted to deficiency in service, he approached the Commission last August. The complaint named Samsung Smart Plaza in JP Nagar, Sara Mobiles and Electronics in Bengaluru, and Samsung India Electronics Pvt Ltd.

After hearings, the Commission directed the company to complete the repair by collecting only 50 per cent of the estimated amount from the complainant.

The order was delivered by Commission President N R Chennakeshava along with members E Prema and Dr Manjunath M Bamanakatti.

## Mangaluru Int'l Airport bags top global honour

ADJUDGED 'BEST AIRPORT AT ARRIVALS - GLOBALLY' FOR 2025

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
MANGALURU

IN a major boost to Karnataka's aviation profile, Mangaluru International Airport has been adjudged the 'Best Airport at Arrivals - Globally' for 2025 by Airports Council International World.

According to a press release here today from the airport, the prestigious Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Award is based entirely on passenger feedback gathered in real time under ACI's global survey programme, widely regarded as the aviation industry's most credible yardstick for service excellence.

The arrivals category measures the end-to-end inbound journey — from immigration



clearance and baggage delivery to terminal ambience, cleanliness, signage and overall passenger comfort.

This is the second year in a row that the airport has secured the global distinction, placing it among just six airports worldwide recognised in this category for 2025.

Managed by Adani Airport Holdings Limited, the airport has in recent years invested

in digital initiatives, process optimisation and service training to enhance passenger experience. Officials said the focus on operational efficiency and infrastructure modernisation has significantly improved arrival processes and turnaround times.

The award will be formally presented at ACI World's Airport Experience Summit in Istanbul in September 2026.

## 'Mahadevappa may have information on CM change'

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
BENGALURU

DEPUTY Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday said that Minister HC Mahadevappa may have some information regarding a possible change in the Chief Minister in the State, which could be the reason behind his remarks on the issue of a Dalit Chief Minister.

Responding to questions from the media near his official residence at Kumara Park and Suttur Mutt in Bengaluru, Shivakumar said he had seen Mahadevappa's statement but had no other information about any leadership change. "Mahadevappa is also part of our high command. He may have some information about a change in the Chief Minister. But I have no such information," he said.

When asked whether the party high command had summoned him or the Chief



Minister to Delhi, Shivakumar clarified that he had not received any call. "I have to go to Delhi in connection with my department's work. Funds to the tune of Rs 1 lakh crore are being discussed under the Urban Development Ministry, but it is being said that major cities may not be covered. I will discuss this with our Urban Development Minister and ask officials to prepare proposals for second- and third-tier cities," he said.

On being questioned about remaining silent over statements made by some Ministers despite being KPCC president, Shivakumar said it was the Chief Minister's responsibility to control Ministers and MLAs. "The Chief

Minister must control Ministers and legislators. As far as party matters are concerned, I am conveying information to Delhi," he said.

Asked about remarks made by senior leader Rajanna regarding G. Parameshwara, Shivakumar responded briefly, saying, "He is a senior leader."

On reports that the high command might call him for discussions, Shivakumar said he was currently in Kumarapura and had no further information.

Speaking about senior leader Satish Jarkiholi, Shivakumar said they shared similar views and discussed party matters every week. "He is a senior leader who has worked as a working president with me. We speak weekly. We are like-minded and are working on plans to bring the party back to power," he said.

Commenting on demands by newly elected MLAs seek-

ing at least five ministerial berths for first-time legislators, Shivakumar said he had read about the letter in newspapers but had not received it personally. "Everyone aspires to become a Minister. Even Narendra Modi did not become Chief Minister without being an MLA. There is nothing wrong in asking. I too became a Minister when I was first elected. A new generation must grow. How long can we continue holding on to positions? I have been a Minister for 36 years. New ideas and new faces must enter the Cabinet. The party will take a decision on this," he said.

He clarified that he had not claimed to be forming the Cabinet and that the Chief Minister had spoken about Cabinet expansion. "Whenever expansion is discussed, some write letters, some go to Delhi, and some express their aspirations. That is natural," he said.

## Great backyard bird count: St Aloysius' Mangaluru campus tallies 32 bird species

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
MANGALURU

ST Aloysius (Deemed to be University) in Mangaluru wrapped up its Campus Bird Count 2026 between February 13 and 16, joining the countrywide Great Backyard Bird Count coordinated by Bird Count India and eBird. The exercise, held on the university's 145-year-old, 37-acre campus in the city centre, recorded a total of 32 bird species.

Since earning Deemed to be University status two years ago, the institution has taken part in this citizen-science effort every year starting from 2019, steadily feeding observations into national databases.

This year's survey was led by assistant professors Kiran Vati K and Glavin Thomas Rodrigues from the zoology department, with enthusiastic involvement from faculty and students



who methodically surveyed varied habitats across the grounds.

Sightings included familiar city and woodland residents like Rock Pigeon, Greater Coucal, Asian Koel, and Asian Palm Swift. Raptors such as Black Kite and Brahminy Kite were seen gliding overhead or resting in trees. Water-associated birds—Little Cormorant and Eastern Cattle Egret—highlighted the campus's links to surrounding ecosystems.

Among arboreal species noted were White-throated Kingfisher, White-



cheeked Barbet, Malabar Flameback, and Rose-ringed Parakeet. Seasonal migrants Ashy Drongo and Green Warbler appeared during the count window.

Evidence of active breeding stood

out: nests belonging to Red-whiskered Bulbul were located, and the Indian Golden Oriole, a periodic breeder in peninsular India, was spotted making use of the campus's suitable cover.

Gardens and dense tree canopy supported insect-eaters and nectar seekers, including Common Tailorbird, Gray-breasted Prinia, Pale-billed Flowerpecker, Purple-rumped Sunbird, Purple Sunbird, and Loten's Sunbird. Additional highlights encompassed Chestnut-tailed Starling, Common Myna, Jungle Myna, Orange-headed Thrush, Oriental Magpie-Robin, and White-rumped Munia.

The university's unbroken participation since 2019 has built a robust record of long-term avian trends. The ongoing presence of resident birds, passage migrants, and nesting pairs demonstrates how carefully maintained urban green pockets can sustain diverse wildlife.

## K'taka HC bars coercive action against Ranveer

BENGALURU

IN a relief to Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh, the Karnataka High Court on Tuesday directed police not to take any coercive steps against him in a case related to allegedly mocking a local deity.

Hearing his petition seeking quashing of an FIR for allegedly mocking the deity of coastal Karnataka during an event in Goa, the bench of Justice M Nagaprasanna gave the direction to the Bengaluru police.

The bench also reprimanded the actor for his behaviour and said hurting religious sentiments will not be tolerated. It directed him to cooperate with the investigation.



During the Filmfare Awards event in Goa, Singh imitated actor-director Rishabh Shetty's role showing him under the 'Avesham' of Goddess Chavundi in 'Kantara Chapter-1'.

He even called Chavundi Goddess as a ghost. Alleging that this act of the actor has hurt his religious sentiments, a lawyer approached a city court to book a case against the actor. On the court's direction the city police registered an FIR against the 'Dhurandhar' lead.

## NMP 2.0 is a bold step; it can unlock resources for reinvestment

THE government has done well to set a target of Rs 16.7 lakh crore for National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) 2.0. The objective is to monetise assets of more than 2,000 projects in 12 sectors till 2029-30. The Prime Minister-headed NITI Aayog, after consultation with infrastructure ministries, has developed NMP 2.0, which Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched on Monday. A NITI Aayog paper said in 2021, "Asset monetisation, based on the philosophy of 'Creation through Monetisation', will tap institutional investment and long-term patient capital into stable mature assets, in turn generating financial resources for new infrastructure asset creation. This will enable economic growth, generating employment opportunities and better prospects for the

country's growth." At the launch, the Finance Minister complimented all ministries and departments and NITI Aayog for meeting nearly 90 per cent of the target of Rs 6 lakh crore, which was set for four years in the implementation of NMP 1.0. On the face of it, praise for falling short of the target seems awkward. However, if the polarised political situation and the perverted public discourse (which equates processes like privatisation and asset monetisation as cheaply selling off national treasure) are considered, we find that her comments are not off the mark.

Highlighting the significance of asset monetisation, she rightly pointed out that NMP enables recycling of productive public assets, thereby unlocking resources for reinvestment in new projects and

capital expenditure. She noted that this approach facilitates efficient mobilisation of funds for capex in public assets while minimising the budgetary outgo of the government. While the Centre has the courage to go ahead with the programme, it must ensure that it doesn't result in corruption and monopolies. Six points need to be considered regarding this. First, the government must ensure transparency in valuation. Public assets must be priced realistically and competitively. Independent advisors, transparent bidding processes, and robust disclosure norms are essential. All contracts should be made public, barring commercially sensitive details, so that citizens and oversight bodies can scrutinise them. The credibility of NMP 2.0 will rest on the perception that assets are neither under-

valued nor selectively awarded. Second, competitive bidding must be genuine, not cosmetic. If a handful of large conglomerates dominate most sectors, the risk of concentration increases. This can lead to a situation where the state replaces a public monopoly with a private one. Third, the contract design must balance investor incentives with public interest safeguards. Concession agreements should include performance benchmarks, service quality standards, and penalty clauses for non-compliance. For instance, toll road operators must adhere to maintenance and safety norms; power transmission operators must ensure reliability; airport operators must maintain passenger service standards. Regulatory oversight cannot be lax once assets are monetised. The objec-

tive is efficiency, not abdication. Fourth, revenue-sharing and user charges need careful calibration. While private operators must earn a fair return, excessive user fees can generate public resentment and fuel political backlash. Transparent tariff-setting mechanisms, ideally overseen by independent regulators, can mitigate such risks. Fifth, strong audit and accountability mechanisms are indispensable. Institutions such as the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) and parliamentary committees should periodically review monetisation outcomes. And, finally, the government must effectively explain the difference between monetisation and privatisation, emphasising that ownership remains public and that funds raised are earmarked for new infrastructure.

## LETTERS

### 'Keralam' was long overdue

REchristening of Kerala as Keralam following an unanimous resolution to that extent by the State Assembly and Centre's approval is a cause for great rejoicing. It is only a matter of time before it gets parliamentary approval. It is an emphatic reaffirmation of the State's distinct cultural and linguistic identity. In fact, it restores the original name found in Malayalam and its literature. Literally, Keralam means the 'land of coconuts'. Etymologically, Keralam could have been a derivative of 'Chera-alam', meaning 'land of the Cheras'. According to Dr Herman Gundert, "keram" is the Canarese (Kannada) form of "cheram" and Cheram. Keralam extended from Gokarna to Kanyakumari. The move is unlikely to pay electoral dividends to any political party as the demand for a change of name has been made by all parties. It is hoped that north Indians will now stop referring to the state as "Keral" and start calling it "Keralam".

G David Milton, Maruthancode (TN)

### MPs, MLAs must work for people's welfare

THE Sri Lankan government presently in financial dol-drum has found a way out, by way of regulating the salaries and perks of its MPs and MLAs. This is a welcome move whereas Indian MPs and MLAs continue to seek enhanced pensions reflecting the purpose for which the individuals have entered the 'political arena' - not to serve, but to be served, to ensure that their lives are safeguarded by way of unhindered pensions and perks. The lawmakers must understand the responsibilities for which they are elected. It is imperative to bring legislation in this direction. The 'will' of the people, must not merely end after casting of the vote, but go in for course correction, when the lawmakers err in their duty.

Sakunthala KR, Hyderabad

### India should emulate the Lankan example

THIS has reference to your editorial 'Sri Lankan Parliament shows the way for India'. It is time India implements the Sri Lankan model about salaries and perks of MPs and MLAs. In fact, this is an issue dominating the minds of the people of the country for a long time. The lawmakers unabashedly and unilaterally attempt to enhance their perks and salaries, forgetting the purpose for which they have been elected. The situation assumes significance when these elected members have no compunctions to stall the proceedings in the Parliament for no reason at all - except to score brownie points. The Sri Lankan model can infuse a sense of responsibility and purpose in the minds of Indian lawmakers, once it is implemented.

K V Raghuram, Wayanad

### TSSPDCL's chatbot is a timely move

THE Southern Power Distribution Company of Telangana Limited (TSSPDCL) has done well by launching its own WhatsApp chatbot, which is aimed at providing faster, more convenient, and accessible power-related services to consumers. Through this platform, users can easily register complaints, check billing details, and obtain power supply information on 8712441912. This initiative reflects a thoughtful adoption of modern technology to enhance customer service. The chatbot reduces the need to make countless calls or office visits. Such forward-thinking measures highlight TSSPDCL's commitment to efficiency, transparency, and the digital transformation of public utility services in the state. This development is not only a practical improvement for everyday users but also a significant step toward building a more user-friendly, technology-driven public service ecosystem.

Dr Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, Hyderabad-45

### Adulterated milk is the new killer

It is quite ironic that incidents of adulterated milk have become light even as there are unending debates over adulterated Tirumala laddu. It is reported that 106 families from Rajamahendravaram, who get milk from a private dairy located in Narasapuram, have developed 'anuria' (absence of urine). In an unfortunate development, four persons died and several others are undergoing treatment in various hospitals. It is a known fact that milk is wholesome food and so it is one of the staple items in the plate in various forms. Presently, private dairies are resorting to different ways to adulterate the milk to capitalise on the demand. At the same time, monitoring by agencies like FSSAI has been inactive and, as such, there is no quality check. The government must toughen its stand and ensure uncontaminated milk, which is ever in demand and by almost all households.

Pratapa Reddy Yaramala, Tiruvuru (AP)

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## BENGALURU ONLINE

### K'taka CM blames BJP as Dharwad protests intensify

BENGALURU: As protests by government job aspirants intensified in Dharwad, with many taken into preventive custody, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday blamed the previous BJP regime for the large backlog of vacant posts. According to protesters, who staged a massive demonstration in Dharwad earlier in the day, around 2.8 lakh posts remain vacant across various government departments in Karnataka, while fewer than 5,000 recruitments have been made in the last three years. In a press statement, Siddaramaiah said that when the Congress assumed office in 2023, over 2.64 lakh government posts were vacant. He said the backlog was the result of "prolonged inaction under the previous BJP government, which failed to initiate timely recruitment or create a structured roadmap to fill vacancies." "It is deeply unfortunate that BJP leaders are choosing to mislead innocent students even now to serve their narrow political interests," the CM said. He alleged that, instead of encouraging aspirants to stay focused on their preparation and future, opposition leaders were "attempting to instigate unrest". The chief minister said the current situation was largely due to recruitment irregularities and alleged corruption during the BJP regime between 2019 and 2023, which eroded trust in the system and led to a significant backlog.

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

## Rich brats cause fatal accidents but go scot-free

DR HYMA MOORTY

A rich 'brat' in Pune, son of a construction tycoon, killed two young IT professionals snatching away their promising careers. Another rich 'brat' was arrested from Virar, Mumbai, after mercilessly and consciously murdering a mother of two young children, while a third killed two promising young boys. In the recent Lamborghini hit and run case in Kanpur, the spoilt brat at the wheel brought the car driver to the driving seat. It was the presence of mind of the socially conscious by-passers that ensured that the rich guy responsible for the accident was booked. In Delhi's Dwaraka locality, a juvenile boy was speeding a Scorpio without a license, and his sister was filming a social-media 'reel' and the vehicle killed a 23-year-old and severely injured a cab driver. His mother, a single parent, was devastated.

Looking back, one finds that such reckless incidents are happening too often, especially with young drivers hungry for social media fame. All these 'killers' brazenly wear up their sleeve tattooed inscriptions like 'Mera baap amir hai'. These are offspring of stinking rich parents, who drive high-end cars and question the law by flaunting the clout of their

father. The list is long and endless. Justice hinges on courts where cases are overly delayed. The system is in cahoots to help relieve the accused of any punishment.

It is a harsh reminder of how money and power can call the shots, leaving the victims powerless. It's a serious issue and needs more awareness and stricter enforcement.

But public outcry and media pressure often push authorities to act, collective vigilance matters. It is not easy to cope with the sudden loss of a family member.

These recent cases of drunk driving involving youngsters and unlicensed juvenile drivers, often referred to as 'rich brats' by the media and society, have been alarming. It highlights the pressing issue of underage drinking and its fatal consequences. Drivers aged between 21 and 24 years, under the influence of alcohol, account for most fatal accidents.

This trend calls for strict enforcement of laws and public awareness campaigns on responsible drinking. It's a common concern that wealth and influence can lead to unequal treatment under the law, with ordinary citizens facing harsher consequences for similar of-

### PARENTS MUST BE HELD RESPONSIBLE



After all, money can 'fix' almost everything these days. Power always twists, and when money becomes absolute, it smothers conscience. Compassion, pity, help, fear and support get buried deep while ego, pride and wealth surface and dominate. No rules and regulations can resolve such problems.

fences. Cases like the Lamborghini one in Kanpur often spark public outcry and intense calls for justice highlighting the need for unbiased accountability in investigation.

Let us analyze the reasons why many of these rich 'brats' fall and flash their 'borrowed' riches. The most important reason is to have the privilege of growing up in affluent surroundings. This leads to reckless behaviour, including excessive drinking and reckless driving unmindful of the consequences.

The social circles they move around normalises excessive drinking and un-

heeding conduct, be it at home or on road, creating an environment where such actions are seen as acceptable or even as status symbols. They experience a high-stress environment despite external perceptions of luxury; the pressures and expectations placed on wealthy individuals can lead to stress and coping mechanisms that lead them to substance abuse. Lack of responsibility towards themselves, family and society and personal accountability add to the intoxication. Parents are to be held accountable and answerable to varying extents for accidents and killings caused by their juveniles

and addict children. If they fail to spend some time and educate their children about the damage of drinking and driving, they are morally and ethically responsible. They are supposed to supervise their children, especially when they are underage and not legally allowed to drink or drive. If they are aware of their child's brash and erratic behaviour but fail to take any timely action, they should be held liable for the consequences. Parents have a significant role in shaping their children's behaviour.

Most of the accidents in our country are caused by human error, carelessness and being casual at the wheel. It is necessary to be cautious and sincerely obey traffic rules, irrespective of who and what you are.

Meanwhile, some accidents are caused even if one is careful, especially at choked traffic interjections like Ameerpet junction in Hyderabad, where the bikers squeeze to cross and hit the waiting vehicle. While driving, distraction is the worst thing to happen and nowadays everyone is super pleased with their distracted driving, which has been on the rise for the last 15 years or so. The worst distractions include being under the influence of drugs or alcohol

## THE RISE AND FALL OF EL MENCHO

B V KUMAR

NEMESIO Oseguera Cervantes, known as "El Mencho", died on Sunday while being taken to the capital Mexico City, after being seriously injured in clashes between his supporters and the Mexican army. Four CJNG members were killed in the town of Tapalpa, the central-western Jalisco state. Three army personnel were also injured. The US had given Mexico tactical Intelligence that assisted the operation.

Over the past year, Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo, President of Mexico has come under intense pressure from US President Donald Trump, who threatened military intervention and higher import tariffs if Mexico fails to demonstrate concrete gains in curbing drug trafficking. However, Sheinbaum has rejected the notion of US strikes in Mexico, characterizing them as a violation of Mexico's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

According to its 2023 Annual Threat Assessment, the US intelligence community cited Mexico-based Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs) as the dominant producers and suppliers of various illicit drugs destined for the domestic U.S. market. Mexican TCOs, particularly the Sinaloa Cartel and the Jalisco Nueva Generacion (CJNG) remain the most predominant and sophisticated groups overseeing the transportation and distribution routes from Mexico to the United States.

Both groups have consolidated control over drug corridors from Mexico and are heavily involved in trafficking of fentanyl, methamphetamine, cocaine, heroin, and marijuana. Both have a history of establishing drug trafficking hubs, strong criminal partnerships, and using violence and corruption to gain control over the territory where they operate.

The Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels pose the greatest criminal drug threat the United States has ever faced. These ruthless, violent, criminal organizations have associates, facilitators, and brokers in all 50 states in the United States, as well as in more than 100 countries around the world. The Sinaloa Cartel, the Jalisco Cartel, and their affiliates



'EL MENCHO', THE LEADER OF ONE OF MEXICO'S MOST POWERFUL CARTELS, DEAD AFTER MILITARY OPERATION

control most of the fentanyl global supply chain, from manufacture to distribution.

The Jalisco Cartel maintains illicit drug distribution hubs in Los Angeles, Seattle, Charlotte, Chicago, and Atlanta. Internationally, the Jalisco Cartel has a presence and influence through associates, facilitators, and brokers on every continent, except Antarctica.

In Milenio Cartel, El Mencho started as a member of the assassin squad that protected the drug lord Armando Valencia Cornelio ("El Maradona"). On 12 August 2003, his boss was arrested by Mexican authorities. Around the same time, a rival criminal group known as Los Zetas, with the backing of the Gulf Cartel, carried out an armed offensive against the Milenio Cartel in Michoacán. The attack forced the Valencia family to exile in Jalisco.

El Mencho relocated to the state capital, Guadalajara, with his father-in-law José Luis González Valencia (alias "El Quini") and Román Caballero Valencia. In Jalisco, El Mencho and the Milenio Cartel formed an alliance with the Sinaloa Cartel subgroup headed by Ignacio "Nacho" Coronel, a high-ranking drug lord and ally of Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán. Under Coronel, El Mencho and his group managed the Sinaloa Cartel's drug operations, finances, and murder activities in the states of Colima and Jalisco.

The Milenio Cartel split into two. One

Part of El Mencho's success in the drug trade had to do with his ability to strategize market and consumer changes. Initially, the CJNG produced methamphetamine, but then he moved to heroin production when the consumer demand changed. In a series of highly coordinated tactics to prevent El Mencho's arrest, the CJNG blocked several highways and roads by setting at least 37 vehicles on fire. The purpose was to place them as blockades and give him ample time to escape

side was known as La Resistencia (The Resistance), the other was Los Mata Zetas (The Zeta Killers), headed by El Mencho. La Resistencia accused Los Mata Zetas of turning in Oscar Orlando to the authorities. A war ensued, and the two groups fought for the drug smuggling turf in Jalisco.

As leader of the CJNG, El Mencho consolidated his position and strengthened his organization through territorial expansion and established himself as one of Mexico's most-wanted criminals. His rise to fame was due to several factors, including the aggressive and sensationalist displays of public violence by CJNG. The direct attacks of the CJNG against Mexico's security forces earned El Mencho a reputation among authorities as "principal enemy" of the state and as a dangerous criminal. In addition, the fall of Mexico's former top crime bosses cleared the way for El Mencho to gain visibility and status.

He consolidated his operations in Jalisco and its adjacent states by fighting off incursions from criminal groups like Los Zetas and the Knights Templar Cartel. According

to government sources, he was responsible for overseeing the CJNG's entire drug trafficking operations in the states of Jalisco, Colima, and Guanajuato, where he created a bastion for methamphetamine production and trade.

Between 2014 and 2016, the only region in the country where the CJNG lost its territorial presence was in Mexico City. Internationally, the CJNG reportedly has ties with criminal groups in the U.S., the rest of Latin America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. On an international scale, CJNG is mainly focused on trafficking cocaine and methamphetamine.

The government estimated that El Mencho's group has about \$50 billion in total assets. Part of El Mencho's success in the drug trade had to do with his ability to strategize market and consumer changes. Initially, the CJNG produced methamphetamine, but then he moved to heroin production when the consumer demand changed.

In a series of highly coordinated tactics to prevent El Mencho's arrest, the CJNG blocked several highways and roads across the Guadalajara Metropolitan Area by setting at least 37 vehicles on fire. The purpose was to place them as blockades to impede the security forces from traveling across Jalisco's capital and giving El Mencho ample time to escape. The blockades were placed in strategic routes to prevent police reinforcements from coming in or leaving Guadalajara. After the attacks were over, the government confirmed that El Mencho was in the area and had evaded capture. The US government announced US\$ 10 million as reward to capture El Mencho, which was increased to US\$ 15 million.

Sheinbaum has pursued a direct approach to combating organized crime by increasing cooperation with the US security agencies. In a major operation launched by the Mexican Army the most wanted man and the leader of the feared Jalisco New Generation (CJNG) drug cartel have been killed during a security operation to arrest him, the Defence Ministry has said.

(The writer is a former DG of DRI and NCB)

### ECI holds first nat'l roundtable in 27 years

NEW DELHI: The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Tuesday convened a National Roundtable Conference with State Election Commissioners at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, marking the first such meeting in 27 years.

The previous conference of this kind was held in 1999. The day-long conference is being chaired by Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar in the presence of Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi.

State Election Commissioners (SECs) from all States and Union Territories are participating in the deliberations along with their legal and technical experts. Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) from all 36 States and Union Territories are also in attendance.

According to the ECI, the primary objective of the conference is to foster greater synergy between the Commission and State Election Commissions in managing electoral processes and logistics within their respective legal frameworks.

# Enthusiasm marks legislators' sports meet

HANS NEWS SERVICE VIJAYAWADA

THE Andhra Pradesh Legislators' Sports and Games 2026, titled 'Aatavidupu', commenced on a grand note on Tuesday at the Indira Gandhi Municipal Corporation (IGMC) Stadium in Vijayawada.

A total of 156 legislators, including MLAs and MLCs — among them several women representatives — are participating in athletics, indoor games and team sports. The competitions are designed to foster fitness, camaraderie and unity among elected members. Residents of Vijayawada turned up in good numbers to witness their representatives showcase sporting talent beyond the legislative arena.

The games will continue until February 26 at the IGMC Stadium and the Dandamudi Rajagopal Rao Municipal Corporation Indoor Stadium.



Assembly Speaker Ch Ayyanna Patrudu, Deputy Speaker K Raghurama Krishna Raju, Council Chairman Koyye Moshen Raju and others inaugurating the AP State Legislature Sports Meet-2026 at IGMC stadium in Vijayawada on Tuesday

The inaugural ceremony was attended by Assembly Speaker Chintakayala Ayyanna Patrudu, Legislative Council Chairman Koyye Moshen Raju, Deputy Speaker K Raghurama Krishna Raju, chief whips G V Anjaneyulu and Panchumarthi Anuradha, Saap chairman A Ravi Naidu, vice-chair-

man and managing director S Bharani, and Legislative Secretary Prasanna Kumar, among others.

Vijayawada East MLA Gadda Rammoan Rao and MLC Kavali Greshma carried the sports torch into the stadium. The dignitaries unveiled the 'Kreedha Jyoti' and declared the games

open, while senior legislator Gorantla Butchaiah Chowdary administered the sports pledge.

The opening tug-of-war contest set an energetic tone. Ayyanna Patrudu said the event helps legislators relieve stress, recalling it was first introduced by former Chief Minister NT Rama Rao.

# Atchanna flays YSRCP, vows veterinary revival

- Minister alleges YSRCP left animal husbandry in collapse, with hospitals lacking medicines, equipment, and staff
- Says 3,176 centres became ineffective; 485 new buildings built under coalition, but 826 institutions still in poor condition
- Govt plans phased Rs 302.5 cr programme (2026-29) to rebuild veterinary infrastructure for farmers and livestock-rearers

HANS NEWS SERVICE VIJAYAWADA

AGRICULTURE and animal husbandry minister K Atchannaidu on Tuesday launched a sharp attack on the previous YSRCP government, alleging that all departments were virtually "locked up" during its five-year rule, pushing the state into administrative disorder.

Replying to questions raised by MLAs in the Assembly regarding the lack of facilities and appointments in veterinary hospitals, the minister said the animal husbandry department was systematically weakened under the previous regime.

He stated that essential infrastructure for farmers and

livestock rearers was neglected, with veterinary hospitals reduced to mere namesake institutions. "There were no medicines, no modern equipment, buildings were in dilapidated condition, and staff shortages were rampant," he said.

Although 3,176 centres function under the animal husbandry department across the state, many became ineffective due to alleged negligence. Even buildings constructed through farmers' contributions were not maintained, he added.

The minister asserted that revival efforts began only after the coalition government assumed office. He revealed that 485 new buildings have been constructed so far with



Agriculture minister K Atchannaidu answering a question in the Assembly in Amaravati on Tuesday

assistance from RIDF-NABARD and ESVD funds. However, 826 institutions still remain in poor condition. Of these, 400 require new buildings at an estimated cost of ₹265.10 crore, while 426 need urgent repairs costing Rs 37.40 crore.

He said the government has prepared a phased plan under the RIDF-NABARD budget from 2026-27 to 2028-29 to strengthen veterinary infrastructure. The coalition government's goal, he emphasised, is to rebuild the department to genuinely serve farmers and livestock rearers.

# Kerala is now Keralam

Continued from front page

However, any such Bill can be introduced in parliament only after it is referred by the President to the concerned State legislature for its views. Once the Assembly's views are received, the Union government may proceed to obtain the President's recommendation and introduce the Bill in parliament.

The Cabinet approval marks the first formal step toward the proposed constitutional amendment.

In its 2024 resolution, the Kerala Assembly noted that the State was formed on linguistic lines on November 1, 1956, and that the name "Keralam" has long been used in Malayalam and during the independence movement to refer to a unified Malayalam-speaking region.

The Assembly unanimously urged the Central government to take steps to modify the First Schedule to the Con-

stitution to reflect the name "Keralam". Following the resolution, the Kerala government formally requested the Union government to initiate the constitutional process. The Ministry of Home Affairs examined the proposal after which the draft cabinet note was circulated to the Department of Legal Affairs and the Legislative Department of the Ministry of Law and Justice. Both departments concurred with the proposal.

# Indian exporters set to gain as US customs rolls out 10% global tariff

Continued from front page

The transit time for the US ports ranges from 45-60 days. So, at any given point of time one-eighth of annual exports to the US of \$10-12 billion are on seas so the benefit could be considerable if importers share the benefit of lower duties, he added.

Tariffs on India remained at 50% from last week of August 2025 to February 6 this year. Both sides issued a joint statement that removed 25% tariffs related to Russian oil purchases and agreed to bring down

reciprocal tariffs to 18% from 25%. Before the order of Indian reciprocal tariffs came, the US Supreme Court struck down all country-specific tariffs.

The US Customs and Border Protection notified 10% additional duties on imported articles from all countries for a period of 150 days under the Section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974 just hours before the news came into force at 12:01 am eastern standard time on Tuesday (February 24).

# IYC chief arrested

Continued from front page

Police also claimed that Chib's associates raised "anti-national slogans" and "tried to incite riot-like situations" at the venue. They also claimed Chib did not cooperate with the probe and did not disclose names of other co-accused and the source of printing T-shirts used in the protest.

Chib, who was not present at the venue during the protest last Friday, was produced before a court here, which sent him to four days police custody after rejecting his counsel's argument that he had cooperated with the probe and was not on the run. Police argued that the conspiracy went beyond printing the T-shirts with slogans against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

# Well-organised 'syndicate' behind ghee scam: Naidu

Continued from front page

Naidu also referred to past controversies, including allegations about a "pink diamond" and claims of religious propaganda on RTC bus tickets to Tirumala. He said these were part of attempts to defame both TTD and his government. "This is not just about adulterated ghee," he said. "It is about faith, governance, and the sanctity of Tirumala."

## AMID US STRIKE FEARS...

# Iran set to buy Chinese anti-ship cruise missiles

TEHRAN

IRAN is close to a deal with China to purchase anti-ship cruise missiles, according to six people with knowledge of the negotiations, just as the United States deploys a vast naval force near the Iranian coast ahead of possible strikes on the Islamic Republic.

The deal for the Chinese-made CM302 missiles is near completion, though no delivery date has been agreed, the people said. The super-sonic missiles have a range of about 290 kilometres and are

designed to evade shipborne defenses by flying low and fast. Their deployment would significantly enhance Iran's strike capabilities and pose a threat to US naval forces in the region, two weapons experts said.

Negotiations with China to buy the missile weapons systems, which began at least two years ago, accelerated sharply after the 12-day war between Israel and Iran in June, according to the six people with knowledge of the talks, including three officials who were briefed by the Iranian government as

well as three security officials. As talks entered their final stages last summer, senior Iranian military and government officials travelled to China, including Massoud Oraei, Iran's deputy defence minister, according to two of the security officials. Oraei's visit has not been previously reported.

"It's a complete game-changer if Iran has super-sonic capability to attack ships in the area," said Danny Citrinowicz, a former Israeli intelligence officer and now senior Iran researcher at Israel's Institute for National

Security Studies think tank. "These missiles are very difficult to intercept."

Reuters could not determine how many missiles were involved in the potential deal, how much Iran had agreed to pay, or whether China would go through with the agreement now given heightened tensions in the region. "Iran has military and security agreements with its allies and now is an appropriate time to make use of these agreements," an Iranian foreign ministry official told Reuters.

The Chinese delegation to

the United Nations directed Reuters to seek comment from the Foreign Ministry in Beijing. The foreign and defense ministries did not respond to requests for comment.

The White House did not directly address the negotiations between Iran and China over the missile system when asked by Reuters. US President Donald Trump has been clear that "either we will make a deal or we will have to do something very tough like last time," a White House official said, referring to the current standoff with Iran.

# Data of Andhra University students, staff on dark web

Continued from front page

The leaked information is believed to have originated from the Edusphere Platform, which is understood to be a technology partner providing digital services to Andhra University. Investigators and cybersecurity analysts pointed to the alleged vulnerability of the platform's website, edusphere.in, whose SSL certificate had reportedly expired some time ago. An expired SSL certificate can make a website more susceptible to cyberattacks, data interception, and

unauthorised access if not promptly renewed.

If confirmed, the breach could have serious implications for thousands of students, alumni, and staff members. Experts warn that exposed personal and academic data can be exploited for phishing scams, financial fraud, impersonation, and other forms of cybercrime.

As of now, there has been no detailed official statement confirming the extent of the breach or clarifying the immediate steps being taken to secure affected systems.

Cybersecurity professionals emphasise the need for a thorough forensic audit, immediate containment measures, password resets, and enhanced data protection protocols.

The incident underscores the growing vulnerability of educational institutions to cyber threats and highlights the urgent need for robust digital infrastructure, regular security audits, and strict compliance with data protection standards to safeguard sensitive academic records.

# A Nobel laureate makes Modi's vision a reality

Continued from front page

Most machines use the dew point, which is the exact temperature where air gets so cold that it can no longer hold moisture, forcing it to turn into liquid droplets, much like the fog we see on a cold window or a chilled soda can. This takes a massive amount of electricity.

Adsorption, however, is a much more natural and elegant process. Instead of forcing the air to get cold, the water molecules are simply glued to the surface of a material because they are chemically attracted to it.

This shift in approach is the secret to the efficiency of Yaghi's technology. By removing the need to refrigerate massive amounts of air, the system avoids the huge energy bills and heavy, noisy machinery that make old-

school water harvesters impractical.

Instead, these molecular sponges do the work for free, using their natural hunger to pull in water even when the air feels bone dry. It turns a forced, high-energy mechanical struggle into a quiet, natural chemical process.

The true struggle of previous atmospheric water generators has been their dependence on high humidity. Most fail when relative humidity drops below 45 per cent, leaving desert communities stranded. However, Atoco has designed its technology to be resilient, functioning efficiently even in environments with less than 20 per cent humidity. This means it can produce water in places where it almost never rains and where the air feels like a furnace.

# Cabinet clears ₹2,387-cr chip project

Continued from front page

Compressed biogas plants and battery energy storage systems were also approved, reinforcing the state's clean energy expansion plans. In the tourism sector, ultra-mega hospitality and convention centre projects were cleared in Amaravati, Visakhapatnam, Rajamahendravaram and Tirupati.

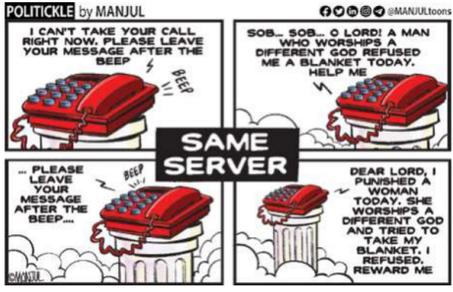
Incentives were extended to leading hospitality brands to strengthen tourism infrastructure and generate employment.

To support small enterprises, the Cabinet approved the AP Sick and Stressed MSME Revival Policy (4.0) 2026-31, aimed at reviving distressed units and promoting entrepreneurship under a "One Family, One Entrepreneur" model. Amendments to the AP Leather & Footwear Policy 2025-30 were also cleared.

On governance reforms, the government decided to reorganise Higher Education and Skill Development departments for better inte-

gration and establish a dedicated Science, Technology & Innovation Department. Administrative sanctions of Rs 424.34 crore and Rs 556 crore were approved for works related to the Assembly and High Court buildings in Amaravati.

Naidu emphasised faster project grounding and a shift from "Ease of Doing Business" to "Speed of Doing Business," urging officials to adopt AI-driven tools to improve transparency and execution.



## Hans India Classifieds

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
I, PASUVULA TABASSUM (Old Name), R/o. D.No. 97/262-2, Moolavanka, C.K. Dinne Mandala, Kadapa, Y.S.R. Kadapa Dist., A.P., 516003, have changed my name to SHAIK TABASSUM W/o. PASUVULA ABDUL (New Name). (TH\_44949)

I, PRAVEEN KUMAR MITHUN JAIN (Old Name), Resident of D.No.17-2-152, Flat No.11, D G Roy Apartment, Achari Street, Nellore, SPSR Nellore, Dt. AP. Here by declare that I have changed my name as PRAVEEN MITHUN JAIN S/o. SOHNMAL PRAVEEN KUMAR JAIN (New Name). (TH\_44949)

I, SHAIK MAHAMMAD ANEEF (OLD NAME), S/O SHAIK MAHABOOB ALI. R/O. 52/107-1, Kummaraavedi, Nabikota, Kadapa, 516003, A.P, INDIA. I Change My Name to SHAIK MOHAMMAD HANEEF. Henceforth, I will be known as SHAIK MOHAMMAD HANEEF. (TH\_44949)

I, SHAIK NAZIMUNNISA (OLD NAME), W/O SHAIK MOHAMMAD HANEEF. R/O. 52/107-1, Kummaraavedi, Nabikota, Kadapa, 516003, A.P, INDIA. I Change My Name to SHAIK NAJUMUNNISA. Henceforth, I will be known as SHAIK NAJUMUNNISA. (TH\_44949)

I, SHAIK MAHAMMAD ANEEF (OLD NAME), S/O SHAIK MAHABOOB ALI. R/O. 52/107-1, Kummaraavedi, Nabikota, Kadapa, 516003, A.P, INDIA. I Change My Name to SHAIK MOHAMMAD HANEEF. Henceforth, I will be known as SHAIK MOHAMMAD HANEEF. (TH\_44949)

I, SHAIK NAZIMUNNISA (OLD NAME), W/O SHAIK MOHAMMAD HANEEF. R/O. 52/107-1, Kummaraavedi, Nabikota, Kadapa, 516003, A.P, INDIA. I Change My Name to SHAIK NAJUMUNNISA. Henceforth, I will be known as SHAIK NAJUMUNNISA. (TH\_44949)

**CHANGE OF SURNAME**  
I, PICHPAT BASEERUN W/O, PICHPAT MAHABOOB BASHA (OLD NAME) R/O. D.NO. 1/83, CHAPADU POST & MID. YSR DIST. AP. Changed my Surname as PICHPATI BASEERUN W/O, PICHPAT MAHABOOB BASHA. (TH\_44949)

I, GANDLURI LEE LAVATHI W/O, GANDLURI VAMSHIEDAR REDDY (OLD NAME) R/O. D.NO. 3/920, BS COLONY, PRODDATUR POST & MDL, YSR DIST, AP. Changed my Surname as GANDLURI LEE LAVATHI W/O, GANDLURI VAMSHIEDAR REDDY. (TH\_44949)

**CHANGE OF SURNAME & DOB**  
I, Muchukota Chandra Kala W/o Muchukota Chandra Sekhar, Ex Army No:1269078W, HAV R/O D.No:403, 4th Floor, A-Block, Vijaya Durga Colony, Mallikarjuna Nagar, Kadapa, YSR Kadapa Dist., A.P., 516003. In My Husband records My Name mentioned as CHANDRA Kala instead of MUCHUKOTA CHANDRA KALA & DOB: 11.04.1958. (TH\_RJP)

**CHANGE OF SURNAME**  
I, Gandham Siva Sankar, Ex Army No:15156596Y, NK ACP HAV S/O G. Subbalah, R/o Akkasiddipalli (V), Sankavaram (P), Kala sapadu (M), YSR Kadapa Dist., A.P., 516217. In my Service records my Son's Name mentioned as Gandam Sai Babu instead of GANDHAM SAI BABU. (TH\_RJP)

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
I, SYDDAD JASMIN (Old Name), Resident of Opp. Government Hospital, Padarupalli, Nellore-524004, SPSR Nellore Dist., A.P. Here by declare that I have changed my name as SAYYAD JASMIN (New Name) D/o. SAYYAD BABU. For all Record Purposes. (TH\_MADAN)

**CHANGE OF NAMES**  
I, SHAIK BIKKU BAYIGARI BASHEERUNNISA W/O SHAIK BIKKU BAYIGARI KAREEMULLA, Resident of D.No.3/250, K.SUNKESULA ROAD, KHAIJIPET, KHAIJIPET MANDAL, YSR Kadapa District, A.P. My name was wrongly recorded in my INDIAN PASSPORT (I7199018) Mistakenly mention that is BIKUBAYIGARI BASHEERUNNISA, but correct name as per my Aadhar card that is SHAIK BIKKU BAYIGARI BASHEERUNNISA and also my father and my mother surname was mistakenly mention that is BIKUBAYIGARI MAHABOOB VALI and BIKUBAYIGARI RUKHYA BI but correct name's that is BANDI MAHABOOB VALI AND BANDI RUKHYA BI and also my husband name was mistakenly mention BIKUBAYIGARI KAREEMULLA but correct name that is SHAIK BIKKU BAYIGARI KAREEMULLA. (TH\_44949)

**CHANGE OF HUSBAND SURNAME**  
I, PUTTA DEEPIKA, W/O CHALLA VENKATA GOPI KRISHNA (old name) residing at South Amuluru (Vi), Thotapalli Gudur (M), Sri Potti Sriramulu Nellore District, Andhra Pradesh-524002, hereby declare that I have changed my husband surname as CHALLA VENKATA GOPI KRISHNA (new name). (TH\_MADAN)

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
I, Shaik Saib Peer (old Name) S/o Shaik Gudu Sahib, R/o 28-122, Alimabad Street, Rayachoty, Annamaya Dt. Ap. I Have Changed My Name To SHAIK SAHEB PEER, S/O SHAIK GUDU SAHIB, Hence forth, I Will Be Known As SHAIK SAHEB PEER. (TH\_44949)

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
I, DINNIPATI SREELATHA, W/O DINNIPATI VENKATASHESHA REDDY, R/at D.No. 27-56/A, Billurivaripalle, H/o Sompalle (V), Mulakalacheru (M), Annamaya Dist, AP, have changed my name to DINNIPATI SRI LATHA. Henceforth, I shall be known as DINNIPATI SRI LATHA for all purposes. (TH\_RJP)

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
I, B.Anuradha W/o B.V.Gopal Reddy, ESM No:746541 K, resident of D.No: 42/347-29-1, Simhapuri Colony Chinachowk, Kadapa, YSR Kadapa Dist, A.P. I have changed my Name from B.Anuradha to RAGHAVAREDDY ANURADHA. Vide affidavit dated: 23-02-2026. (TH\_RJP)

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# Ramadan cooking made effortless

Freeze everyday cooking essentials in ice cube trays to save time, reduce stress, and simplify Ramadan meal preparation

ASKARI JAFFER

The holy month of Ramadan is a time of reflection, prayer, and togetherness. However, for many families, it also brings the added responsibility of preparing elaborate suhoor and iftar meals daily. Balancing work, household chores, children, and fasting can quickly become exhausting, especially when hours are spent chopping, grinding, and sautéing in the kitchen. To make daily cooking more manageable, a simple yet highly effective kitchen hack is gaining popularity — using ice cube trays to store pre-prepared essentials. This practical approach helps cut down cooking time significantly and ensures that meals can be prepared quickly without compromising on flavour.



### Why Ice Cube Trays Work So Well

Ice cube trays are not just for freezing water. They are perfectly portioned, compact, and ideal for storing small quantities of frequently used

ingredients. By preparing and freezing basic cooking components in advance, you can avoid repetitive prep work every day.

The best part? These frozen cubes can be added directly

to hot pans without thawing, making the cooking process seamless and stress-free.

**Lemon Juice Cubes For Instant Freshness**  
Lemon juice is a staple



in many households during Ramadan, whether for refreshing drinks, salads, marinades, or curries. Instead of squeezing lemons every day, you can extract juice from 10 to 12 fresh lemons at once and pour it into ice cube trays.

Once frozen, these cubes can be stored in airtight containers in the freezer. Whenever needed, simply drop a cube into your lemonade, curry, or dressing. It saves time and ensures you always have fresh lemon flavour ready to use.

### Ginger-Garlic Paste Ready In Seconds

Ginger and garlic form the base of countless Indian and Middle Eastern dishes. Peeling, chopping, and grinding them daily can be time-consuming, particularly during fasting hours.

A convenient solution is to blend ginger and garlic into

a smooth paste with a small amount of olive oil. The oil helps preserve the paste and maintain its texture. Pour the mixture into an ice cube tray and freeze. These ready-to-use cubes can instantly enhance curries, gravies, stir-fries, and marinades.

### Flavour Boosters For Curries And Kebabs

To elevate everyday dishes, you can prepare a flavour-packed mixture using Thai chillies, mint, and cilantro. Blend them into a smooth paste and freeze in small portions. This vibrant mix works beautifully in curries, kebabs, chutneys, and even as a quick marinade base.

Having these flavour cubes prepared in advance eliminates the need to wash and grind herbs daily, making meal prep far more efficient.

### Tomato Base Without The Hassle

Tomatoes are another essential ingredient used in gravies and masalas. Instead of cooking them from scratch each day, you can prepare a thick tomato paste in advance by cooking fresh tomatoes over medium heat until they break down.

Once cooled, pour the paste into ice cube trays and freeze. These cubes can be added straight to hot oil while preparing curries or rice dishes, cutting down preparation time significantly.

### Golden Fried Onions For Instant Biryani

Sautéing onions until perfectly golden brown requires patience and constant attention. During Ramadan, when energy levels may dip, this task can feel especially demanding.

By frying a large batch of sliced onions in advance and freezing them in cubes, you can save valuable time. These cubes are ideal for biryani, gravies, and festive dishes often prepared during Ramadan gatherings.

### More Time For What Truly Matters

This simple freezer hack transforms daily cooking into a quicker, more organised process. Instead of spending long hours in the kitchen, you can focus on prayers, family time, and rest.

While this method is especially helpful during Ramadan, it can be adopted throughout the year for efficient meal planning. A few hours of preparation can save countless minutes every day — making cooking less stressful and far more enjoyable.

# Deepti Naval enjoys tour of Punjab fields, shares pictures



Veteran actress Deepti Naval is currently soaking in the rustic charm of Punjab and was seen spending some good time in the fields, while also attending a literary festival in Chandigarh.

Sharing glimpses from her visit, Deepti captioned one of her posts, "In the fields of Punjab." The actress in the pictures shared, seems to be enjoying a quiet and scenic getaway amid her professional commitments.

The actress recently was in Chandigarh to attend a literary festival, where she participated

in a book session. In the first picture shared on her social media, Deepti is seen standing in the fields, amidst blooming crops and is seen surrounded by rows of trees. Dressed in a long, earthy-toned coat paired with a scarf and sunglasses, the veteran actress looks stylish and chic.

In another post shared by Deepti features a photograph with singer Sunaini Guleri and wrote, "With singer Sunaini Guleri in Chandigarh during my book session."

Known for her meaningful cinema and

literary pursuits, Deepti Naval has been a part of the Bollywood industry for almost four decades.

The actress despite being a popular face in the industry, believes in living a grounded and simple life. A few months ago, Deepti had treated netizens with her selfie picture and revealed that she was riding in an auto rickshaw.

Sharing the simplicity of the ride, Deepti mentioned that she was headed to a plush luxury hotel in Mumbai for lunch. She wrote, "No car, no driver, sitting in an auto going to the Marriott for lunch!"

# Aishwarya Sakhuja on meeting herself without 'filters or performance'

Actress Aishwarya Sakhuja shared a profound reflection on self-growth, saying she is learning to meet herself without "filters or performance."

Taking to Instagram, the actress opened up about healing, restraint and quiet strength. She also spoke about the intimacy of embracing one's truth without rushing the process or shrinking her thoughts, adding that sometimes, simply being honest with oneself is enough.

"Becoming someone who doesn't rush her healing. Becoming someone who doesn't shrink her thoughts. Becoming someone who knows that strength doesn't always look like fire,

sometimes it looks like restraint," she wrote as the caption.

The 41-year-old actress spoke about the intimacy of meeting oneself without any filters or performance.

"There's a certain intimacy in meeting yourself like this. No filters. No performance. Just truth, staring back. And maybe that's enough," she added.

Aishwarya was a Miss India finalist in 2006. From 2010 to 2012, she starred in the TV show 'Saas Bina Sasural'. She was also seen in other fictional shows, including 'Main Naa Bhoolungi', 'Trideviyaan', and 'Rishta.com'.

The actress is primarily known for her role as Ahaana Khurana in 'Yeh

Hai Chahatein' and as air hostess Shilpa Shrivastava in 'Zyada Mat Udd'. She was also a contestant on reality shows 'Nach Baliye 7' and 'Fear Factor: Khatron Ke Khiladi 7'.

On the film front, she was last seen in 'Ujda Chaman' (2019), directed by Abhishek Pathak. The film stars Sunny Singh, Maanvi Gargro, Saurabh Shukla, Karishma Sharma and Aishwarya Sakhuja. It is an official remake of the 2017 Kannada dramedy 'Ondu Motteya Kathe'. The film revolves around a balding 30-year-old bachelor searching for a wife under a strict deadline.

On the personal front, Aishwarya married her longtime beau in December 2014.



### CROSSWORD

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**ACROSS**

- Medicinal amount (6)
- Vigour, energy (3)
- Against (4)
- "Return of the Jedi" creature (4)
- Uproar (6)
- Gujarat city (9)
- Coup d' - : change of Govt. (4)
- Greek letter (3)
- Mineral used as a gem (5)
- Firefighter Red (5)
- Bashful (3)
- First three alphabets (3)
- Final authority (3-2)
- Follower of major Indian religion (5)
- A can (3)
- Fret and fume (4)
- Bride and groom, you'll agree? (9)
- Swelling of big toe (6)
- Middy (4)
- Foretell, predict (4)
- Intestine (3)
- Be dazed; not fully conscious (6)

**DOWN**

- Tizzy (6)
- Compassion (8)
- Festive occasion (4)
- Spellbind (7)
- "V" in VCR (5)
- Big, as prefix (4)
- Wandering (7)
- Frequency unit (3)
- Playthings (4)
- Fathers (4)
- Bordering on? (8)
- Seasoned pork sausage (7)
- Pretentious talker (7)
- Hasten (3)
- Stylish (6)
- Surprise ending (5)
- Extended (4)
- One who prefers charges (4)

**Solution to February 24**

### SUDOKU

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**Solution to February 24**

## IN BRIEF

**Dakshina Kannada to hold 48-hr traffic survey from tomorrow**

MANGALURU: The Public Works Department (PWD), Government of Karnataka, will conduct a two-day traffic census on state highways and major district roads across Dakshina Kannada district from 6 am on February 26 to 6 am on February 28.

According to the Mangaluru Division of the PWD, 139 enumeration centres have been identified on key road stretches in the district for the exercise. The survey is part of the state-wide road traffic assessment for 2026 and aims to gather data for infrastructure planning and road development. Authorities have appealed to motorists and the public to cooperate with officials during the survey period.

**Seminar on writer Niranjana's birth centenary on Feb 27**

MANGALURU: A seminar marking the birth centenary of noted Kannada writer and journalist Niranjana will be held on February 27 at Mangalagangothri campus here. The programme is being organised jointly by the Sahitya Akademi and the S.V.P. Kannada Study Centre of Mangalore University. Vice-Chancellor P.L. Dharma will inaugurate the event. Scholars and postgraduate students from various colleges in coastal Karnataka and neighbouring Kerala are expected to participate.

**Women-centric music concert in Mangaluru**

MANGALURU: A unique women-themed music concert was held at Ambedkar Auditorium, Urwa, under the aegis of Sangeet Bharati Foundation, showcasing classical excellence by leading women artists. The programme was inaugurated with a ceremonial lamp lighting by music gurus Smt Basti Kavita Shenai, Smt Vibha Nayak and Smt Srilatha Prabhu. Foundation president Ustad Rafiq Khan, vice-president Narendra L Nayak, secretary Dr Usha Prabha N Nayak, trustee Ramesh KG, Treasurer Karunakara Balkoor and member Soumya Kamath were present. The first half featured a classical jugalbandi by Vibha Hegde and Shivani Mirajkar, accompanied by Medha Bhat (harmonium), Vijeta Hegde (tabla), Prateeksha Prabhu (tanpura) and Shaavari. The second half presented a violin trio recital by Sangeeta Shankar, Nandini Shankar and Ragini Shankar, with tabla support by Anuradha Pal. The event was sponsored by Union Bank of India, the Tourism Department, Canara Bank, Dr Dayananda Pai, Karnataka Bank and Mudra Printers.

**AESL, Indian Army sign MoU to offer scholarships to soldiers' families**

BELAGAVI

AAKASH Educational Services Limited (AESL) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Army to provide scholarships and academic support to serving personnel, veterans and their families across the country.

The agreement aims to extend educational welfare benefits to wards of serving and retired Army personnel, gallantry awardees, personnel with disabilities and families of soldiers who died while in service. Officials said the initiative seeks to ease financial barriers and expand access to qual-



ity test preparation services nationwide.

Under the MoU, Army wards enrolling in AESL's programmes at centres

across India will be eligible for a range of fee concessions. Families of personnel who died while in harness will only need to pay the

registration fee, with a 100 per cent waiver on all other fee components. Wards of personnel with more than 20 per cent disability and

**Aakash Educational Services Limited signs MoU with Indian Army, offering fee waivers, scholarships and mentoring support for serving personnel, veterans, gallantry awardees and families of soldiers who died in service**

gallantry awardees will receive a full tuition fee waiver. Children of serving and retired personnel will be eligible for a 20 per cent tuition fee concession, applicable after adjusting other scholarships.

The agreement was signed by a senior representative overseeing ceremonial and welfare functions on behalf of the Army and Dr Yash Pal, Chief Academic and Business Head (Delhi-NCR), AESL.

Chandra Sekhar Garisa Reddy, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of AESL, said the partnership reflects the institution's commitment to honouring the sacrifices of defence personnel by investing in the education of their children.

"Education is the strongest foundation for a brighter future. Through scholarships, mentoring and coun-

selling, we aim to empower the wards of Army personnel to realise their full potential," he said.

In addition to financial support, AESL will provide structured mentoring and career counselling through virtual and physical platforms during the tenure of the MoU.

The company had earlier entered into a similar understanding with the Central Reserve Police Force Family Welfare Association to offer academic assistance and scholarships to families of CRPF personnel, expanding its outreach to the armed and paramilitary forces community.

**Boseraju pushes for BRICS Quantum Summit****Seeks deeper tech ties with Brazil**

BENGALURU

KARNATAKA Minister for Minor Irrigation, Science and Technology N.S. Boseraju on Tuesday called for closer cooperation among BRICS nations in quantum technology and proposed convening a dedicated BRICS Quantum Summit to accelerate collaboration in emerging technologies.

Speaking after a high-level bilateral meeting at Vidhana Soudha with a Brazilian delegation led by Esther Dweck, Brazil's Minister of Management and Innovation in Public Services, Boseraju said structured global partnerships were essential to harness the transformative potential of quantum technologies.

He noted that other international blocs such as Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have begun organising dedicated quantum forums, and said BRICS countries should adopt a similar approach.

"As BRICS nations, we must collaborate to apply quantum technologies in agriculture, pharmaceutical research, water resource management, climate forecasting and flood

mitigation," Boseraju said. "A BRICS Quantum Summit could serve as a strategic platform to jointly address shared developmental challenges."

Highlighting Karnataka's progress, the minister said the state is home to India's first indigenously built commercial quantum computer and is positioning itself as a national hub for advanced technology research.

He pointed to the state government's announcement of a \$100 million Quantum Innovation Fund and plans to establish a dedicated Quantum City in Bengaluru. "Our goal is to build a \$20 billion quantum economy by 2035 and generate two lakh jobs in the sector," he said, adding that quantum applications are being explored in agriculture, flood management and healthcare delivery.

Beyond quantum computing, discussions between the two sides also covered Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), artificial intelligence and space technologies.

Boseraju highlighted the implementation of a Digital Water

**Karnataka Minister N.S. Boseraju calls for a BRICS Quantum Summit during talks with Brazilian delegation, outlines state's \$100 million quantum fund and plans for a \$20 billion quantum economy by 2035**

Stack under the Minor Irrigation Department, which integrates satellite surveillance and AI tools to monitor water bodies, prevent encroachments, assess water quality and track groundwater levels.

The Brazilian delegation included senior technology leaders such as Rodrigo Assumpção, President of Dataprev, and representatives of the Brazilian AI Observatory.

On Monday, Boseraju also held talks with a Bolivian delegation led by Omar Alfredo Peñalosa Escalera, Vice Minister for Science and Technology, to explore cooperation in AI and quantum computing for improving education, healthcare and public services. Senior state officials, including IT/BT Secretary N. Manjula, were present at the meetings.

**Upcoming Bellandur Metro station****BMRCL signs Rs 90-cr naming rights deal with Prestige Group**

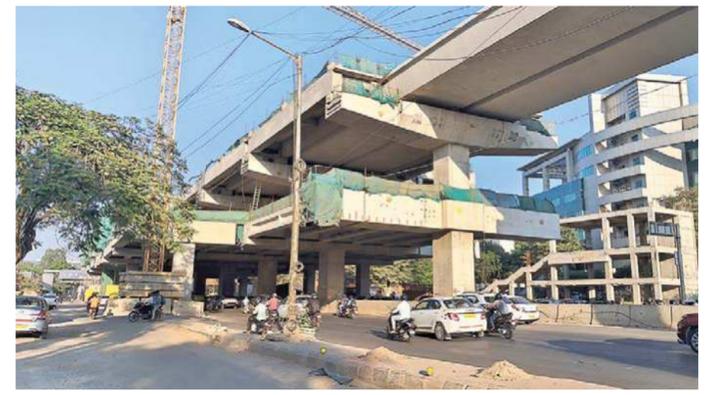
HANS NEWS SERVICE BENGALURU

BANGALORE Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has signed a Rs 90-crore agreement with Prestige Group for the naming rights and associated facilities of the upcoming Bellandur Metro station on the Outer Ring Road.

Under the agreement, the station will be officially named "Prestige Bellandur Metro Station" for a period of 30 years from the date of commencement of commercial operations, BMRCL said in a statement.

The total value of the agreement stands at Rs 90 crore. Of this, Rs 80 crore is allocated towards naming rights and other associated facilities within the station premises.

An additional Rs 10 crore will be paid for the construction of a dedicated skywalk connecting the Metro station to the Prestige campus.



BMRCL clarified that provisions have been included in the agreement to allow for design modifications to the skywalk at the project stage, if required.

**Advertising and Commercial Space**

As part of the deal, Prestige Group will receive 1,000 sq. ft. of advertising

rights inside the station premises, 3,000 sq. ft. of commercial space within the station campus.

However, BMRCL emphasized that the station will remain an asset under its ownership and control. Speaking on the occasion, Prestige Group Executive Director Jaggi Marwaha said, "We are committed

to supporting Bengaluru's rapidly growing transport network and contributing to the city's infrastructure development."

The agreement marks one of the significant naming rights deals undertaken by BMRCL as it seeks to boost non-fare revenue streams while expanding metro connectivity across the city.

**Cyber fraud aided via mule accounts****Engineering student among two arrested**

HANS NEWS SERVICE DAVANAGERE

IN a major breakthrough against mule account operators supporting cyber fraud, the city's Cyber Crime Police have arrested two individuals, including a 19-year-old engineering student. The duo allegedly opened fake bank accounts using forged documents and helped fraudsters siphon off large sums by acting as intermediaries.

The first arrest involved Parashurama from Kunkuv village in Honnali taluk. He had set up a firm named Talented Squad Solution in Bengaluru's Rajajinagar, posing as a job placement agency. Investigations revealed he opened six bogus accounts across nationalised and private banks.

These mule accounts were used to transfer crores of Rupees obtained through online



cheating. As many as 95 cases linked to these six accounts have been registered across the country. Parashurama is now in custody, with cyber police continuing detailed interrogation.

In a separate but related case, officers nabbed the 19-year-old engineering student who maintained mule accounts in two different banks. Scrutiny of his accounts exposed details of his involvement.

Fraudsters, using a Telegram ID named "Bhumika", first contacted the student

and lured him with promises of easy earnings through an "Earn While You Learn" scheme. They assigned him the task of receiving money into his account and immediately forwarding it to UPI IDs provided by them.

The young man carried out these transfers regularly and received a commission for each transaction. Driven by greed, he later opened additional bank accounts to handle more volume. Eight cases from various parts of the country have now been traced to these accounts.

**Boy killed in Shivamogga, 7 minors held**

SHIVAMOGGA

A 16-year-old boy was murdered outside a government school in Sulaebailu here, sparking tension in the area, police said on Tuesday. Following the incident, a large police force was deployed in the city.

The incident occurred after Sanketh (16), an SSLC student of the Government High School at Urugadooru, attended a special class ahead of examinations.

Superintendent of Police Nikhil B told reporters that Sanketh intervened in an argument involving a group of boys outside his school. They were discussing a cricket match.

"Some friends who were known to him - they had earlier studied in the same school - were involved. They are also minors. They hit him with their hands. Immediately after being struck, he collapsed. After he fell, by the time he was taken to the hospital, we came to know that he had died."

"... he was struck near the chest. Due to that blow, he collapsed on the spot," the SP said. All seven minors involved in the incident have been taken into custody in this connection, he said. On the possible motive, the SP said the exact cause is yet to be ascertained.

"We do not have complete information about that. Once we conduct a detailed inquiry, we will know. Some people are saying it may have been over a trivial matter. However, we cannot confirm that at this stage," he said.

**Narayana Health City crosses 10K orthopaedic surgeries, says senior specialists**

HANS NEWS SERVICE KALABURAGI

SENIOR orthopaedic specialists at Narayana Health City on Tuesday said the hospital has completed 10,000 orthopaedic surgeries over the past three years, marking a significant milestone in advanced joint, spine and reconstructive care in the region.

Addressing reporters, Dr Suman M Byregowda, Senior Consultant, Orthopaedics, said the achievement reflects the growing need for high-end musculoskeletal care in Kalaburagi and neighbouring districts.

"We are seeing increasingly complex revision cases, including failed joint re-

placements with severe bone loss. Our focus has been on combining surgical expertise with technologies such as customised 3D-printed implants to restore mobility at the earliest," Dr Byregowda said. He cited the example of a 70-year-old patient who had undergone total hip replacement decades ago but later developed implant loosening and metallosis, a rare reaction to metal debris that caused extensive bone damage.

The team performed a staged revision procedure, first removing the failed implant and diseased tissue, and later reconstructing the hip with a customised prosthesis. The patient was able to stand and walk with support soon

**Senior orthopaedic specialists at Narayana Health City say the hospital has completed 10,000 surgeries in three years, driven by robotic navigation and customised implants for complex spine, joint and oncology cases**

after surgery, he added. Dr Vinu Raj, Consultant-Spine, Department of Orthopaedics, said the integration of robotic-assisted navigation and real-time neuromonitoring has strengthened outcomes in complex spinal deformity surgeries.

"In severe congenital scoliosis and other deformities,



precision is critical. Robotic-assisted navigation allows pre-operative planning and highly accurate implant

placement during surgery, while neuromonitoring enhances patient safety," Dr Raj said. He referred to a recent

case of a 13-year-old girl with a spinal curvature exceeding 80 degrees who underwent robotic-assisted correction

surgery. She was mobilised on the second post-operative day and discharged with significantly improved alignment and balance.

The hospital has also handled complex orthopaedic oncology cases, including limb-salvage surgery for a 19-year-old diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma. Following chemotherapy, surgeons removed the affected bone and reconstructed the shoulder with a metallic prosthesis.

Both doctors said the milestone underscores the institution's emergence as a regional referral centre for advanced orthopaedic and spine care, enabling patients to access specialised treatment closer to home without travelling to metropolitan cities.

"Giving Sachin Tendulkar out leg before wicket, and it's a matter of knowing that it was a mistake, but until this day, every day, people talk about it. "Why did I give him out? Was he out and so on? But then in life, mistakes happen. I have accepted that it was a mistake, and life goes on,"

-Steve Bucknor, legendary umpire

# Bucknor regrets wrong LBW call against Tendulkar after 22 years

NEW DELHI

MORE than two decades after making what was then widely seen as a "dreadful" decision against Indian cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar, legendary umpire Steve Bucknor has finally expressed regrets and accepted that "it was a mistake."

2009, was one of the most respected umpires in world cricket for over two decades. However, he did a make a few contentious calls involving Tendulkar, the most shocking being an LBW dismissal during an India-Australia Test match at Brisbane's Gabba 22 years ago.

In an interview with the West Indies Cricket Umpires' Association, when Bucknor was asked about one of the



Association, when Bucknor was asked about one of the

most difficult decisions he had to live with as an umpire, he said, "Giving Sachin Tendulkar out leg before wicket, and it's a matter of knowing that it was a mistake, but until this day, every day, people talk about it. "Why did I give him out? Was he out and so on? But then in life, mistakes happen. I have accepted that it was a mistake, and life goes

on." In that match at Gabba in the 2003-04 series, Tendulkar was given out LBW by Bucknor following a loud appeal from Australian fast bowler Jason Gillespie and his teammates. Batting on 3, Tendulkar had attempted to leave the ball, which struck him high on the pads, but Bucknor was convinced by the Australian appeal. Television replays

later confirmed the ball was clearly going over the stumps. In the commentary box, the late Tony Greig had referred to it as "a dreadful" decision and he was not the only one who thought that way at the time. The match, the first of a four-match series and in which India skipper Sourav Ganguly struck a fluent 144, ended in a draw. That was

not the only instance when Bucknor gave Tendulkar out wrongly. In a match against Pakistan at Eden Gardens in 2005, the Jamaican adjudged Tendulkar caught behind off Abdul Razzaq despite a half-hearted appeal. Replays, however, showed a wide gap between the bat and the ball.

During an interactive session with fans in 2024, Tendulkar was asked about his relationship with Bucknor, and in lighter vein, he had said, "When I am batting, give him boxing gloves to wear (so he can't raise his finger)." Bucknor, 79, officiated in 128 Test matches between 1989 and 2009 and also holds the record for standing in five consecutive World Cup finals from 1992 to 2007.

## T20 WC Super 8s India pushed to brink after WI's win rock Group 1

NEW DELHI: India's Super 8 campaign at the T20 World Cup 2026 has hit turbulence early, leaving them with no room for missteps in the matches to come. A crushing 76-run loss to South Africa in Ahmedabad on Sunday has pushed them onto the back foot in Group 1, where they are competing alongside South Africa, the West Indies and Zimbabwe.



Sunday has pushed them onto the back foot in Group 1, where they are competing alongside South Africa, the West Indies and Zimbabwe.

The chase never gathered traction. Wickets fell at regular intervals, partnerships failed to materialise, and scoreboard pressure mounted quickly. Marco Jansen's four-wicket burst dismantled the middle order, sealing India's collapse for 111.

Beyond the loss of two points, the damage to their Net Run Rate, now a troubling -3.800, could prove decisive.

With two fixtures left in the Super 8 stage, India's equation is starkly simple: they must win both to stay alive.

Two wins: Victories over the West Indies and Zimbabwe would take India to four points. If South Africa also win their remaining games, both sides would progress. However, if South Africa drop one match, three teams could be locked on four points, pushing qualification down to Net Run Rate.

Should South Africa lose both, India and the West Indies would advance.

One win or fewer: Anything short of back-to-back wins will end India's campaign, regardless of other outcomes in the group. The margin for error has vanished. India's semi-final hopes now hinge not only on results but also on improving a Net Run Rate that has already taken a substantial hit.

T20 WC SUPER 8S TABLE					
TEAM	P	W	L	PT	NRR
<b>GROUP 1</b>					
WI	1	1	0	2	+5.350
RSA	1	1	0	2	+3.800
IND	1	0	1	0	-3.800
ZIM	1	0	1	0	-5.350
<b>GROUP B</b>					
ENG	1	1	0	2	+2.550
PAK	1	0	0	1	0.000
NZ	1	0	0	1	0.000
SL	1	0	1	0	-2.550

## Lanka eye turnaround in must-win clash vs NZ

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka will need to improve their batting against slower bowlers when they take on New Zealand in a must-win Super Eight game of the T20 World Cup here on Wednesday.



The home team batters failed to chase a below par 147 against England on a slow turner in Pallekele. The pitches in Sri Lanka have been tougher for batting compared to co-hosts India and the trend is likely to continue at the Premadasa where bigger boundaries make six-hitting difficult.

Some of the shot selection was questioned following the heavy loss in the Super Eight opener and Sri Lanka will need to learn from their mistakes.

"It's a T20 game, so obviously you come into a game, so you are looking to score as many runs as you can. So when the ball is not coming on to the bat, it's easier said than done," Sri Lanka's Indian batting coach Vikram Rathour reflected on the side's poor performance.

"Are there better options? Yes, definitely could have been taken. I thought on a wicket where the ball is stopping, so pushing is not a great idea. A couple of our wickets lost out on guys pushing for a single. I don't think that was a great option in these conditions," he added.

While batting has been led by Pathum Nissanka, left-arm spinner Dunith Wellalage has been impressive with the ball. To be fair, even the pacers have delivered thus far in the competition. New Zealand, who had to share a point with Pakistan following the wash-out at Premadasa, too have good spinners in their ranks including captain Mitchell Santner. With rain unlikely, both teams would be pushing for their first win of the Super Eight stage. New Zealand's opening duo of Finn Allen and Tim Seifert showed ominous form during the league stage and would be looking to extend that run. More runs are expected from the bat of Rachin Ravindra who got a much-needed fifty in his previous innings against Canada.

## Semis, final tickets to go live amid venue uncertainty

NEW DELHI: The tickets for the semi-finals and final of the T20 World Cup 2026 will go live at 7 pm IST on Tuesday, as announced by the International Cricket Council (ICC) in a release.

Cricket fans can book seats for the first semi-final on March 4, the second semi-final on March 5 and the highly anticipated final on March 8 through the official booking sites.

However, the venue for Semi-final 1 remains subject to a floating arrangement. The match will be held either at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo or at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata. While Semi-final 2 is confirmed to take place at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.

As per tournament guidelines, if the Pakistan cricket team qualify for the semi-finals, they will play semi-final 1 in Colombo on March 4. If Pakistan fail to qualify but the Sri Lanka team reach the super 4 and are not drawn against India, then the match will be played in Colombo.

## Australia outplay India in opening Women's ODI

BRISBANE: Australia produced a clinical all-round performance to defeat India by six wickets in the opening ODI at Allan Border Field on Tuesday, chasing down a modest target of 215 with authority to take a 1-0 lead in the three-game ODI series and also level the overall multifarmat series' tally to 4-4.

After bowling India out for 214, the hosts made light work of the chase, riding on half-centuries from captain Alyssa Healy and the ever-reliable Beth Mooney. India had promised more at different stages, but ultimately fell short on a surface that offered seam movement early and grip for the spinners as the innings progressed.

## TG PECET-2026 notification to be released today

HYDERABAD: The Telangana Physical Education Common Entrance Test-2026 (TG PECET-2026) notification for admissions into Bachelor of Physical Education (B.P.Ed) and Diploma in Physical Education (D.P.Ed) courses will be released on February 25, 2026. The entrance test is being conducted by Satavahana University under the aegis of the Telangana Council of Higher Education for the academic year 2026-27.

According to the schedule, online registration and submission of application forms will commence from March 2, 2026. The last date to submit applications without a late fee is May 5, 2026. The Physical Efficiency and Skill Tests, which form part of the entrance examination, will be conducted at Satavahana University, Karimnagar, from May 31 to June 3, 2026.

Candidates aspiring to pursue professional courses in physical education are advised to go through the detailed notification carefully and adhere to the timelines. Authorities have appealed to the media to give wide publicity to the TG PECET-2026 schedule to ensure maximum reach among eligible students across Telangana.

TG PECET-2026 is meant for admission into B.P.Ed and D.P.Ed courses offered by State Universities in Telangana and their affiliated colleges. Eligible candidates can apply online through the official website <https://pecet.tgche.ac.in>

# Kanpur, Prayagraj at risk of severe damage if quake strikes: IIT study

Buildings can tilt or sink, roads and railway tracks may crack, and underground utilities can rupture. Riverbank and low-lying areas are particularly vulnerable: Dr Nihar Ranjan Patra

KANPUR

A 17-year study by the Indian Institute of Technology-Kanpur (IIT-K) has warned that parts of Kanpur and Prayagraj could face severe damage if an earthquake of magnitude 6.5 or higher strikes the region. The research led by Dr Nihar Ranjan Patra, a

professor at IIT-K's civil engineering department, highlights the high liquefaction potential of the alluvial soil along the Ganga river belt -- a factor that can sharply amplify ground shaking and destabilise buildings.

The IIT-K research team analysed soil samples collected over nearly two decades

from Gujarat, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Samples were taken from 43 locations, with boreholes drilled up to 30 to 40 metres and 80 metres deep at two locations in Kanpur and Prayagraj in select areas - far deeper than the usual 10-30 metres used elsewhere. In several parts of Kanpur and Prayagraj,

the top 8-10 metres of soil is loose, sandy and water-saturated - conditions highly prone to liquefaction during strong tremors.

The findings are concerning as in some pockets, the effect could extend as deep as 30-40 metres. Liquefaction occurs when intense shaking causes waterlogged soil

to temporarily lose strength and behave like a liquid, Patra told PTL. Buildings can tilt or sink, roads and railway tracks may crack, and underground utilities can rupture. Riverbank and low-lying areas are particularly vulnerable, he added.

Localities identified for detailed soil analysis include

Bithoor, Mandhana, Panki, Barra, Chakeri, Ratanlal Nagar, Naramao and areas around IIT-K, among others. Parts of Varanasi were also found to have similar soil behaviour. According to India's seismic zoning map, sections of Kanpur and Prayagraj fall under Zones III and IV - denoting moderate to high risk.



## Copter carrying 7 crashes into sea, all rescued

SRI VIJAYA PURAM

A Pawan Hans helicopter carrying seven people, including two crew members, crashed into the sea just 300 metres away from its scheduled landing at Mayabunder helipad in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands on Tuesday, and all of them were rescued, officials said. The crash occurred around 9.30 am, after the chopper took off from Rangat in the North and Middle Andaman district, they said.



Did plane carrying 7 pax crash due to bad weather?

RANCHI: Authorities are looking into the main factors, including weather conditions, that could have led to the fatal crash of an air ambulance that killed seven people in Jharkhand on Monday evening, according to officials. Redbird Airways Pvt Ltd's Beechcraft C90 aircraft VT-AJV enroute from Ranchi to Delhi crashed soon after takeoff. There were five people and two crew members onboard. One of the officials said a conclusion on what could have led to the crash is yet to be reached and from initial inputs, and the weather conditions at the time of the crash would also be looked into.

ther to Mayabunder. "The helicopter landed at Rangat helipad around 9.05 am. It further took off from Rangat to Mayabunder at around 9.10 am. The helicopter ditched about 300 metres short of

Mayabunder helipad in the sea (shallow water) at around 9.30 am," Pawan Hans Ltd, a central public sector undertaking based in Noida, said on X. Five passengers and two crew members were on board, it said.

## Meat shops near schools promote violence: Bihar Dy CM

PATNA: Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha has vowed



to clamp down on shops selling meat, fish and poultry in the vicinity of religious and educational institutions, claiming that these offend "purity of sentiments" and promoted "violent tendencies" among children. The senior BJP leader, who holds the urban development portfolio in the Nitish Kumar government, made a statement to this effect a couple of days ago when his views were sought on a recent circular issued by the department. "We are making a new Bihar and this is being reflected in all the steps we take. I issued directions to strictly implement the rules in a recent departmental meeting, which have been framed to ensure proper hygiene and social harmony," he said. "We are not against people's right to have food of their choice. But, selling such items in the open, especially in the vicinity of religious institutions, adversely affects the purity of our sentiments. Similarly, these need to be kept away from educational institutions to prevent violent tendencies among children," Sinha said.

## U'KHAND EDN DIRECTOR ASSAULTED EMPLOYEES DEMAND BJP MLA'S ARREST

'Employees closed education department offices across the state, except for the Uttarakhand Board of School Education in Ramnagar'

DEHRADUN

EMPLOYEE organisations, insisting on the arrest of BJP MLA Umesh Sharma Kau in connection with the assault on Uttarakhand Director of Elementary Education Ajay Naudiyal, have issued an ultimatum to close all state offices from Wednesday if their demands are not met.

On Monday, Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami directed the chief secretary to develop a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the safety of employees. Meanwhile, police arrested four accused, including a

history-sheeter, involved in the vandalism and assault incident at the Directorate of Elementary Education on Saturday.

Members of a joint front formed to protest the assault on Naudiyal met CM Dhami on Monday and demanded that SOPs be established for their safety and police deployment in the offices. Following this, Dhami directed Chief Secretary Anand Bardhan to prepare the SOP and DGP Deepam Seth to ensure adequate security arrangements in government offices.

Meanwhile, as per the Morcha's previously announced programme, employees closed education department offices across the state, except for the Uttarakhand Board of School Education in Ramnagar. "Like today, education department officials and employees will continue their work boycott on Tuesday, and if no solution is found to our demand by Tuesday, all offices across the state will be closed from Wednesday," said Sanjay Bhaskar, front's media in-charge. Bhaskar alleged that the MLA had brought a history-sheeter with him to the director's office.



## Seer moves All HC seeking anticipatory bail in POCSO case

PRAYAGRAJ: Swami Avimukteshwaranand Saraswati on Tuesday moved the Allahabad



High Court seeking anticipatory bail after being booked for alleged sexual harassment of minor children and other offences. A notice has been sent to the office of the government advocate in this regard, before filing the application in court, sources said. The FIR was lodged at the Jhansi police station in Prayagraj against Saraswati and his disciple Mukundanand Brahmachari over allegations of sexual abuse of two persons, including a minor, over the past year.

According to the FIR, the complainants included Ashutosh Brahmachari Maharaj and two other persons, one of them a minor, who alleged sexual abuse by the accused at a gurukul and during religious congregations, including the recently concluded Magh Mela in Prayagraj. The action on Saturday followed an order passed by the special judge (POCSO Act), Prayagraj, directing that a case be registered on the application moved by Ashutosh Brahmachari and others.

ICRA has maintained a Stable outlook for the Indian aviation industry, supported by expectations of modest growth in domestic air passenger traffic and a gradually improving operating environment, despite near term challenges

-Kinjal Shah, Senior VP and Co Group Head, ICRA

## BIZ BRIEFS

## CSMVS' initiative

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS) unveiled 'Networks of the Past: A Study Gallery of India and the Ancient World' in Mumbai. Over 300 archaeological objects from more than 15 leading Indian and global museums will be showcased for three years until 2028. According to CSMVS: "These tell stories from the ancient cultures of India, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, Rome, Persia, and China, alongside treasures from undivided India."

## Nikon unveils new product

Nikon India Pvt. Ltd., has announced the release of the NIKKOR Z 70-200mm f/2.8 VR S II, a fast telephoto zoom lens compatible with full-frame/FX-format mirrorless cameras. The first NIKKOR lens to support the use of Arca-Swiss tripod heads, for smoother tripod mounting and dismounting. The tripod collar of this lens can be attached to Arca-Swiss screw-type quick-release clamps. However, please avoid using lever-type clamps, as they may not fix the lens firmly in place.

## Projects Today launches platform

Projects Today introduced AI-Driven business opportunity platform to strengthen India's project ecosystem. The new positioning brings project lifecycle context, tenders and L1/order updates, and stakeholder intelligence into one convenient workflow - helping organisations engage the right projects at the right time. The upgraded platform introduces an AI-enabled evolution focused on practical outcomes, including BOQ search, sub-project tracking, tender-to-order journey visibility, bidder and participation insights, opportunity estimation tools, credibility and analytics dashboards, and richer stakeholder relationship mapping.

## Harpic rolls out new product

Harpic, a home hygiene solutions provider has announced the launch of its latest product - New Harpic Bathroom Ultra Cleaner. The company also onboarded Bollywood Film-maker Rohit Shetty as brand ambassador. Rohit Shetty said, "I know what it's like when people associate you with a certain style, it means they trust you to deliver every single time. And that trust pushes you to do more, do better and to raise the bar."

## Policybazaar logs milestone

Since 2018, Policybazaar has facilitated over ₹2,069 crore in term insurance claims across 2,660 cases. This milestone strengthens consumer confidence in an underpenetrated market often hindered by claim concerns. By leveraging a digital-first model, the platform ensures speed and transparency, partnering with insurers to transform the stressful claims experience into a seamless, empathetic, and guided process for nominees during their most critical time of need.

## iQOO launches 15R; Co sees good demand in India

It has been six years for iQOO in India and the company has been launching flagship products

## Flagship Features

- Slimmest smartphone with a 7600 mAh battery
- Powered by the Snapdragon 8 Gen 5
- Has SuperComputing Chip Q2 with the 144 FPS gaming

HANS BUSINESS  
BENGALURU



Nipun Marya, CEO of iQOO



speed and efficiency. iQOO 15R is India's slimmest smartphone with a 7600 mAh battery. It also used the company's proprietary SuperComputing Chip Q2 with the 144 FPS gaming. It is also equipped with a Sony LYT-700V OIS camera, a 1.5K 144Hz AMOLED EyeCare Display, along with IP68 & IP69 dust and water resistance, the company said.

"The new launch is the second one in the iQOO 15 series. We already have the flagship product iQOO 15, which has received good response. Given the kind of features in the new phone and the pricing, we believe

that the new variant is also going to get a very good response," Nipun Marya, CEO of iQOO told the BizzBuzz on the sidelines of the launch event. "This is fastest smartphone in the market. It has a Snapdragon 8 Gen 5 processor. So, it is very fast and powerful. On the battery side, this is India's slimmest phone with 7600 mAh battery. It means, you can use your phone all day, do heavy tasks the whole day and there will be no issues with the phone at all. All of this, along with the camera, we believe that the price range of ₹40,000 to ₹45,000 for iQOO 15R is an amazing offer for our Indian users," Marya added.

## Markets in red as tariff fears rattle IT stocks

Infotech stocks plunge nearly 5% as renewed US tariff concerns dent risk appetite

MUMBAI

EQUITY benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty tumbled more than 1 per cent on Tuesday, dragged down by heavy losses in IT stocks amid concerns over artificial intelligence-led disruption and renewed trade-related uncertainties. Rising global crude prices amid escalating US-Iran tensions and sluggish global cues also hit investor sentiment, traders said. Snapping its two-session rally, the 30-share BSE Sensex plummeted 1,068.74 points, or 1.28 per cent, to settle at 82,225.92. During the day, the benchmark plunged 1,359.93 points, or 1.63 per cent, to hit an intraday low of 81,934.73. A total of 2,802 stocks declined, while 1,422 advanced and 143 remained unchanged on the BSE.

The 50-share NSE Nifty fell 288.35 points, or 1.12 per cent, to close at 25,424.65. In the intraday session, it



depreciated by 385.4 points, or 1.49 per cent, to hit a low of 25,327.60. As many as 32 of its components ended in the red while 18 settled in the green territory. "Investor sentiment weakened amid renewed concerns over global trade developments and rising geopolitical tensions, which kept crude oil prices elevated. Moreover, continued pressure on global technology stocks and fears of AI-led disruption further dragged domestic IT shares, amplifying the decline in the benchmark indices," Ajit

Mishra SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said. Tech Mahindra emerged as the biggest laggard, declining by 6.6 per cent, followed by HCL Technologies, Eternal, Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, Larsen & Toubro, Trent, Bharti Airtel, HDFC Bank, Bharat Electronics Ltd and ICICI Bank. On the other hand, NTPC, Hindustan Unilever, Tata Steel, PowerGrid, Titan, Reliance Industries, Axis Bank, and Sun Pharmaceuticals were among the gainers. "Domestic markets registered a sharp decline, led

by significant weakness in IT stocks amid renewed global concerns over AI-driven disruption and margin pressures for traditional service providers. Global trade and tariff worries resurfaced as well, with additional pressure arising from Trump's warnings on trade deals and reports of possible national-security tariffs. "Meanwhile, escalating US-Iran tensions, marked by embassy staff evacuations and Iran's warnings of wider regional escalation, intensifying risk aversion. Overall, markets remain highly sensitive to geopolitical risks and sector-specific pressures, driving investors toward defensive, domestically focused segments," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said. Broader indices also ended in the negative territory, with the BSE Smallcap Select Index falling 0.68 per cent, while the Mid-cap Select Index slipped 0.54 per cent.

## Cabinet enhances equity investment limit of Powergrid to ₹7,500 cr per subsidiary

The approval will enable the Maharatna to expand its investment in its core business and support the evacuation of renewable energy capacity

NEW DELHI: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Tuesday approved enhanced delegation to Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID), enhancing the permissible equity investment limit of the company from the current threshold of Rs 5,000 crore per subsidiary to Rs 7,500 crore per subsidiary -- while retaining the existing cap of 15 per cent of the company's net worth.

The approval came under the extant guidelines dated February 4, 2010, of the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) on the delegation of powers applicable to Maharatna CPSEs.

According to an official statement, the approval will enable POWERGRID, the largest and most experienced transmission service provider in the country, to expand its investment in its core business and support the evacuation of renewable energy capacity, helping achieve the target of 500 GW from non-fossil-based sources.

The statement further said that POWERGRID can now participate in the bids for capital-intensive transmission projects, such as Ultra High Voltage Alternating Current (UHVAC) and High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) transmission networks.

Additionally, it will broaden competition in the Tariff-Based Competitive Bidding (TBCB) for the selection of bidders for critical trans-



mission projects. "This ensures better price discovery, and ultimately leads to the availability of affordable and clean energy for consumers," the CCEA said.

The POWERGRID, the central transmission utility, recently announced its unaudited financial results for the third quarter of this fiscal. The public sector company reported robust growth in profitability.

Standalone profit after tax (PAT) stood at Rs 4,160.17 crore -- a 6.8 per cent increase from Rs 3,894.09 crore in Q3 FY25. Standalone revenue from operations was Rs 11,005.28 crore, up year-on-year from Rs 10,120.72 crore.

The Board of Directors approved several significant proposals, including a second interim dividend of Rs 3.25 per equity share (32.5 per cent on the face value of Rs 10) for FY 2025-26. The dividend will be paid on February 27, 2026.

## Clean Max's ₹3K-cr IPO subscribed 45% on day 2

NEW DELHI: The initial public offering (IPO) of Clean Max Enviro Energy Solutions, a commercial and industrial renewable energy provider, received 45 per cent subscription on the second day of share sale on Tuesday. The company's IPO got bids for more than 97 lakh (97,59,106) shares against over 218 lakh (2,18,23,329) shares on offer, according to the NSE data. The qualified institutional buyers' category was subscribed 1.21 times, while the quota for non-institutional investors was booked 41 per cent. Retail Individual Investors part fetched a 4 per cent subscription. Clean Max Enviro Energy Solutions raised Rs 921 crore from anchor investors on Friday. The public issue will close on February 25. The company has fixed a price band of Rs 1,000-1,053 per share, valuing it at Rs 12,325 crore at the upper end. The proposed issue comprises a fresh issue of shares worth up to Rs 1,200 crore and an offer-for-sale (OFS) of shares valued at Rs 1,900 crore by promoters and an investor shareholder.

## World shares trade mixed after heavy selling in AI scrips hit Wall Street

BANGKOK: World shares were mixed on Tuesday after US stocks slumped on heavy selling of shares in companies that could be losers in the artificial-intelligence boom. A report by Citirini Research, a New York-based financial services company, that outlined a future scenario in which AI's dominance caused the "human-centric consumer economy," to wither away with dire consequences for employment, was the latest hit to confidence for companies that might be displaced by fast expanding use of the technology. "Policy response has always lagged economic reality, but lack of a comprehensive plan is now threatening to accelerate a deflationary spiral," the report says. Still, Tuesday brought gains for computer-chip makers and other companies that profit from development of AI.

In early European trading, Germany's DAX edged 0.2 per cent lower to 24,952.11 and in Paris the CAC 40 was down less than 0.1 per cent at 8,491.94. Britain's FTSE 100 also lost less than 0.1 per cent, to 10,673.99. The



futures for the S&P 500 and Dow Jones Industrial Average were up less than 0.1 per cent.

In Asian trading, Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index surged 0.9 per cent to 57,321.09. Chip testing equipment maker Advantest rose 4.5 per cent, while machinery maker Disco Corp. added 2.1 per cent. Markets in mainland China advanced as they reopened following a weeklong holiday, but Hong Kong's Hang Seng fell as traders locked in profits from recent gains, slipping 1.8 per cent to 26,590.32. The Shanghai Composite index rose 0.9 per cent to 4,117.41. In South Korea, the Kospi picked up 2.1 per cent to 5,969.64, setting fresh records on gains for memory chipmaker Samsung Electronics, which jumped 3.6 per cent. SK Hynix, another chipmaker, closed 5.7 per cent higher.

## India's CV industry clocks robust sales in Jan

NEW DELHI: THE Indian commercial vehicle (CV) wholesale volumes reported a robust 27 per cent year-on-year (YoY) growth to 99,544 units in January, along with a sequential growth of 1.9 per cent over 97,682 units recorded in December 2025, a report showed on Tuesday.

The year-on-year growth was primarily driven by the reduction in Goods and Services Tax (GST) rate to 18 per cent from 28 per cent, effective September 22, 2025 and was further supported by increased freight activity in the goods segment, according to ICRA.

Retail volumes in the medium and heavy commercial vehicle segment (M&HCV) witnessed a healthy growth of 15.4 per cent on a YoY basis in January while recording a sequential growth of 22.1 per cent.

The retail volume growth in the M&HCV segment during the 10 months of FY26 stood at 6.3 per cent, indicating improving volume momentum following the implementation of GST rate cuts.

Moreover, according to the report, retail volumes in the light commercial vehicle



(LCV) segment grew by 14.9 per cent YoY in January.

The YoY growth in retail volumes of the LCV segment during 10 months of FY26 stood at 11.1 per cent.

Overall, the domestic CV wholesale volumes grew by 11.3 per cent (on-year) "during 10M FY2026, while retail volumes registered an 8.5 per cent growth during the same period", said the report.

The domestic CV industry is expected to register a moderate YoY growth of 7-9 per cent in wholesale volumes in FY26. Domestic CV wholesale volumes are further projected to register a moderate YoY growth of 4-6 per cent in FY2027.

The M&HCV (trucks) and LCV (trucks) segments are expected to witness YoY volume growth of 7-9 per cent and 9-11 per cent, respectively.

The buses segment is likely to see an 8-10 per cent YoY growth during the fiscal, said the report.

## Gold rises ₹400; silver stays flat

NEW DELHI: Gold prices rose by Rs 400 to Rs 1,63,200 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday amid persistent buying by stockists and a weaker rupee, according to the local marketmen. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 1,62,800 per 10 grams on Monday. However, silver prices remained unchanged at Rs 2,72,000 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes). Traders said increased offtake by local jewellers and stockists supported gold prices in the domestic market, even as international precious metal rates declined. In the international markets, spot gold was trading 1.35 per cent lower at USD 5,157.16 per ounce, while silver traded flat at USD 88.19 per ounce. Analysts said weakness in the rupee made gold costlier for holders of other currencies, offsetting the impact of a decline in global prices.



## Cos should be cautious on AI usage claims: Sebi whole-time member

MUMBAI

SEBI'S whole-time member Amarjeet Singh cautioned against 'artificial washing', or the use of exaggerated claims as a marketing tactic, warning that such instances can erode the public's trust in the markets.

"We have seen instances of market participants making overstated claims about using AI to deliver exceptional returns," Singh said, addressing an event jointly organised by IIMK and NSE here.

Asking companies to be mindful of how they communicate claims on usage of AI, Singh warned, "exaggerated claims, or selective disclosures, the so-called AI washing can mislead markets and erode trust". He acknowledged that AI is a powerful tool for education, research and accessibility, but advised for certain care to be taken as adoption of AI grows because of its ability to generate "convincing misinformation at scale".

"Can we confidently say that today's true and fair reports truly reflect economic reality?" he asked, adding that such questions are more relevant in the current times.



Amarjeet Singh says such claims can erode the public's trust in the markets

There are newer forms of a shift to "narrative-led communication including purpose-washing and green-washing", Singh said, pointing out that the aspirational language used in such efforts can sometimes run ahead of "verifiable action and measurable outcomes".

There is a historic capital shift from "financial to intellectual capital" as seen in the explosive growth in the stock prices of seven tech giants in the US, he said, underlining that the intangibles are driving market value.

Singh rued that our reporting systems have not

kept pace and underlined the need for reviewing the ways in which the reporting captures the intangible aspects of value creation, including advantages of algorithm usage, human capital prowess and societal impact. "Until we do, we are navigating the future with yesterday's map," Singh said.

No one should be systematically disadvantaged by opacity, manipulation, hidden conflict or engineered confusion, Singh said, adding that there is a possibility for information acting as a bridge between households and capital markets, and savings and productive investments if we get it right. "At stake is not just market efficiency, but public trust in finance as a force for good," he concluded.

## ADB commits \$108 mn to Aavas Financiers

NEW DELHI: Asian Development Bank on Tuesday said it has signed a senior secured debt financing package of up to \$108 million (about Rs 983 crore) with NBFC Aavas Financiers to expand access to affordable housing loans for lower-income households and business loans for MS-MEs in underserved states across India. The package includes concessional debt financing of \$8 million (in Indian rupee equivalent) through the Canadian Climate and Nature Fund for the Private Sector in Asia (CANPA), Asian Development Bank (ADB) said in a statement.

The financing will support housing loans for self-built and green-certified homes, promoting climate-resilient and energy-efficient housing solutions for lower-middle-income borrowers, it added. The transaction is also supported by up to \$1,50,000 in technical assistance to build institutional capacity and boost market awareness of green housing solutions, it said.



## Mahesh Babu heads to Georgia for next schedule of SS Rajamouli's 'Varanasi'

Superstar Mahesh Babu's next ambitious project Varanasi is shaping up as one of the biggest pan-world ventures in Indian cinema. Mounted on a monumental scale, the film is being directed by global blockbuster filmmaker S. S. Rajamouli, best known for Baahubali and RRR. Mahesh Babu was spotted leaving Hyderabad from Rajiv Gandhi International Airport earlier today, heading to Georgia for the next major shooting schedule. This is a work trip, as the actor is set to join the upcoming international schedule of the film. Reports suggest that Priyanka Chopra and Prithviraj Sukumaran are

also expected to join the Georgia leg of the shoot, making this schedule one of the most crucial phases of production. Music maestro M. M. Keeravani recently revealed that background score work will begin in September, after the entire shoot wraps up in June. The film also features Prakash Raj in key role. Produced by K. L. Narayana and S. S. Karthikeya, the massive pan-world action-adventure is being made on a grand budget and scale. Varanasi is officially slated for a worldwide theatrical release on April 7, 2027, and is already being positioned as one of the most ambitious Indian films ever made.

# What is your beef?

'Kerala Story' released in 2023 and claimed many things that were wrong with Kerala, including the theory of "Love Jihad." The state largely looked away. The film is back in the news as the makers release a trailer for Part 2; this time they have targeted beef curry. And now Kerala refuses to take the misrepresentation lying low, crying foul at what it sees as an attempt to fracture the secular fabric of society

RAJESHWARI KALYANAM

'Kerala Story 2' and the politics and propaganda around it, along with the hilarious reels mocking the beef scene in the trailer, take me back to my recent visit to Kochi. The port city—with its art, architecture, layered history, and melting pot of cultures—leaves an indelible mark. The sea, the fish, and most importantly the warmth of its people stay with you. Our quest for authentic Kerala parota with some help from an auto driver led us to a simple but bustling hotel in Mattancherry. The owner sat



at the counter while we shared a table with two students waiting for their meal. First came pathimukham—the special Kerala root boiled water served hot. We were spoilt for choice: the menu included appam, stew, kadala curry, square parota, even Indian Chinese. The clientele was a mixed bag—foreign tourists, local businessmen, executives, college students, families. People of all classes and creeds sat together, united by love for food. And guess what was the most ordered dish—Beef Roast. Beef is today in the news thanks to the recently released trailer of the film 'The Kerala Story 2'. In the trailer, a jihadi is shown force-feeding a girl beef curry. The scene appears conceptualized with little understanding of local culture or culinary habits, seemingly

to shock and provoke. Instead, it led to widespread indignation, with Malayalees across religions proclaiming their love for beef curry. The internet is filled with memes and reels mocking what many see as a scene created in poor taste and poorer research. The story of 'The Kerala Story' goes back to 2023 when Part 1 was released. It was widely accused of being propaganda, given its premise. The film tells the story of a Malayalee Hindu girl lured into conversion by her lover, married, and taken to a terrorist camp. It suggests that "Love Jihad" is widely prevalent in Kerala, quoting unverified numbers to substantiate the claim. In a technically weak film, several scenes present conspiracy theories and questionable information as fact. Kerala did not agree with

'The Kerala Story.' A state that produces some of the finest films considered it too trivial to take seriously. "No one will watch it here," was the general consensus—and they were not wrong. The film failed to make an impact in Kerala, though it provided WhatsApp fodder elsewhere. Now the team has released the trailer for Part 2. This time, among other things, they have targeted Kerala's most popular dish—beef curry. And that has clearly backfired. "In Kerala, everyone has 'Left' blood regardless of religion or politics," shared Father Augustine Vattoly, whom I met during the Kerala visit. He was referring to a shared social conscience that reflects in how people respond to issues. You see it in small but telling incidents—like the recent viral video of

an elderly woman stopping a scooter rider from using the sidewalk. A responsible citizen taking a stand. Augustine is a Catholic priest who supported Sister Ranit, who spoke against a Bishop and faced ostracism and legal battles. He convened "Save Our Sisters" (SOS) to stand by protesting nuns during the 2018 agitation. His experiences reflect Kerala's courage in expressing dissent. Sister Ranit and a few nuns now survive through tailoring and stitching cotton bags, sustained by community support. That solidarity, he says, is heartening. The 'Me Too' movement from late 2017 and 2018 was an eye-opener across India. But perhaps only in Kerala did it trigger deep introspection in the film industry, leading to the dissolution of AMMA (Association of Malayalam Movie Artists) after the Hema Committee report. The Women in Cinema Collective (WCC), formed after the abduction case involving actor Dileep, continues to grow stronger. Actor Rima Kallingal, an active WCC member, said at a National Women in Media conference in Thiruvananthapuram that directors and writers sometimes reach out to check if their scripts represent women appropriately. Even occasional instances like these signal a shift in perspective. The industry and society in the state remain male dominated. But when power is pitted against the powerless, a strong section speaks up for

the wronged. Popularly known as God's Own Country, Kerala is in many ways People's Own Country—fiercely protective of its collective identity. People are proud of their clean roads, greenery, heritage, culture, and cuisine—and yes, the beef roast and curry enjoyed with parota or puttu. Today, the response is not just about a beef scene. It reflects awareness of attempts to fracture a secular fabric where shared history takes precedence over divisive narratives. Onam, for instance, is celebrated by all communities. King Mahabali is welcomed with fervour, followed by the Onam sadhya—vegetarian in tradition, though some homes add non-vegetarian variations. A case has now been filed in a Kerala court against the release of the film. As we await judgment, one wonders if 'The Kerala Story 2' will succeed in polarizing Kerala. The film is being strategically released ahead of elections. It is worth recalling that on more than one occasion BJP candidates in Kerala have promised better quality beef in their manifestos. Hilarious but true. Looking back at municipal elections in Thiruvananthapuram, BJP did see some success. Whether beef had a role is debatable—but the irony is unmistakable. After all, if anything could sway a Kerala voter, it might just be the promise of good quality beef.

## 'Emi Raa Balaraju' from 'Vishnu Vinyasam' strikes a chord as breakup anthem

Actor Sree Vishnu, known for his effortless comic timing and relatable performances, is gearing up to entertain audiences with his upcoming film Vishnu Vinyasam, an out-and-out entertainer directed by debutant Yadunaath Maruthi Rao. Starring Nayana Sarika as the female lead, the film has already built strong buzz with its first two singles, especially the Valentine's Day release, which became a chartbuster. Adding to the momentum, the makers have now unveiled the third single, Emi Raa Balaraju, a quirky breakup number that blends heartbreak with humour. Designed as a tribute to love failures who choose laughter over pain, the song opens on a playful note with comedian Satya counting numbers, setting the tone for the protagonist's comic rant on love, heartbreak, and emotional chaos. The



narrative humorously reflects a man's frustration with romance, wrapped in satire and relatable sarcasm, making it instantly connect with younger audiences. Producer Sumanth Naidu also makes a fun appearance, adding extra humour to the track. Composer Radhan delivers a groovy, punchy composition, while Sarath Santos's vocals bring a smooth flow to the song. Lyricist Ramajogayya Sastry

cleverly transforms the hero's misery into mischievous fun through witty lines. Sree Vishnu's energetic lungi dance steps, choreographed by Bhanu Master, add mass appeal and crowd-pleasing moments. With music creating strong pre-release buzz, Vishnu Vinyasam is set to hit theatres on the 27th of this month, promising a laughter-filled entertainer with fresh flavour and youthful energy.

## 'D/O Prasad Rao Kanabadutaledhu' holds grand preview event

The Telugu web series D/O Prasad Rao Kanabadutaledhu is all set to premiere on ZEE5 from February 27, creating strong buzz ahead of its digital release. The series stars Rajeev Kanakala, Udaya Bhanu, Vasanthika, and Sriram Venkat in prominent roles. Produced by K.V. Sriram under the South India Screens banner and directed by Krishna Poluru, the series recently held a special media preview, followed by a grand launch event attended by the cast and crew. Rajeev Kanakala described his role as one of the most defining performances of his career, stating that the character demanded emotional depth, modulation, and transformation unlike anything he has done before. He credited director Krishna Poluru for presenting him in a refreshing and intense new space, adding that the narrative maintains gripping tension and emotional engagement till the very end. Director Krishna Poluru revealed that the story evolved over nearly two years, shaped carefully to balance emotional depth with thriller elements. He thanked ZEE5 for supporting the vision and trusting the project's long-form storytelling approach. Udaya Bhanu shared that she connected deeply with her role, especially the emotional layers, calling the character both strong and vulnerable. Producer K.V. Sriram expressed confidence that the series would resonate strongly with families and fathers, praising Rajeev's immersive performance and the consistent intensity across episodes. ZEE5 Telugu Senior Vice President Jayanth Raghavan said the series adds emotional depth to the platform's Telugu originals, while the team also highlighted the strong contribution of cinematography by Mahesh and dialogues by Shruti. Positioned as an emotionally intense thriller, D/O Prasad Rao Kanabadutaledhu promises a layered, suspense-driven narrative that blends family emotions with gripping storytelling.



## Mrunal Thakur grabs fashion lovers attention

Bollywood actress Mrunal Thakur's latest release Do Deewane Seher Me, produced by celebrated filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali and co-starring Siddhant Chaturvedi, has opened to a modest response at the box office. The film reportedly collected around Rs 1 crore on its opening day, followed by a slight growth on day two with earnings of approximately Rs 1.60 crore. Despite the marginal improvement, overall collections remain below industry expectations. Even as the film faces a slow theatrical run, Mrunal has remained upbeat and focused, choosing to stay positive about her journey rather than dwell on numbers. The actress continues to engage her fans through social media, where she recently shared a set of stunning new pictures that quickly caught attention online. In the latest photos, Mrunal is seen in a chic white one-shoulder top paired with grey wide-leg trousers, creating a modern yet elegant silhouette. The outfit's soft drapes added a graceful touch, while her styling—straight open hair, bold eye makeup, and nude lips—gave her a confident and contemporary look. Keeping her accessories minimal with a statement ring and a sleek bangle, the actress let her outfit take centre stage, earning praise from fans and fashion lovers alike. On the professional front, Mrunal has a promising lineup ahead. She will next be seen in the upcoming film Dacoit, which is scheduled for release on April 10. The film stars Adivi Sesh in the lead role and is already generating buzz among audiences. While Do Deewane Seher Me struggles at the box office, Mrunal Thakur's confidence, consistent screen presence, and upcoming projects continue to keep her firmly in the spotlight.



## 'Haiku' wraps first schedule, targets September release

Vision Cinema House has officially announced the successful completion of the first shooting schedule of its upcoming film Haiku, marking a confident start to the project's production journey. The opening schedule was wrapped up smoothly and on time, giving the team strong momentum as the film moves forward. The first phase of filming featured key sequences involving lead actors Aegan and Sridevi, along with impactful performances by Adrichi Arun and Kalaivani Baskar. According to the makers, the cast delivered emotionally layered performances that added depth and authenticity to the narrative right from the opening schedule.



Haiku is written and directed by Yuvaraj Chinnasamy, with additional screenplay contributions from Hariharan Ram. The creative collaboration has resulted in a script that blends sensitivity, realism, and strong cinematic storytelling, raising expectations within industry circles. The production team has also expressed satisfaction with the visuals

captured so far, particularly praising cinematographer Priyesh Guruswamy for establishing the film's emotional tone and visual mood. The footage from the first schedule is said to have exceeded expectations. Produced by Dr. D. Arulanandhu and Mathewo Arulanandhu under the Vision Cinema House banner, the film is progressing as planned. The next shooting schedule will begin shortly in Chennai, where major portions of the story will be filmed. With strong creative energy and steady production progress, Haiku is slated for a grand worldwide theatrical release in September 2026.