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### Brief Insights



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### Kaja Kallas Arrives in India on Her First Visit as EU Vice President

Kaja Kallas, the European Union's Vice-President and High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, arrived in the national capital on Saturday on her first official visit to India. Welcoming her visit, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said it comes at an opportune moment to further strengthen the India-EU Strategic Partnership. In a post on X, he said the visit builds on the momentum of regular high-level engagements between India and the European Union. Speaking earlier in the European Parliament, Kallas said Europe is ready to deliver on a powerful new agenda with India. She announced that the EU has agreed to move forward with the signing of a new Security and Defence Partnership, which will expand cooperation in areas such as maritime security, counterterrorism, and cyber defence. She said the agreement is expected to be signed during the upcoming EU-India Summit.

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### SIR Expansion to Remaining States Coming Soon: CEC Gyanesh Kumar

Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on Saturday said the special intensive revision of voters' lists in the remaining states will be rolled out soon as he described "pure" electoral rolls as the bedrock of democracy. On the eve of the Election Commission's foundation day -- also celebrated as National Voters' Day -- Kumar said the revision exercise is presently being conducted "smoothly" in 12 states and Union territories. The chief election commissioner said pure electoral rolls are the bedrock of democracy and added, "With this objective, the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls was initiated to ensure that every eligible elector's name is included in the electoral roll and that

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## 7 Feared Trapped as Fire Engulfs Furniture Store in Nampally

At least half a dozen persons were feared to be trapped inside a four-story building here after a major fire broke out Saturday afternoon

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

At least seven persons, including two children, were feared trapped after a massive fire broke out in the basements of a four-storey building housing Sai Vishwas Furniture Castle on Nampally Road on Saturday afternoon. Firefighters battled the blaze for nearly eight hours using skylifts and explosion-proof robots, but dense smoke continued to hamper rescue efforts late into the night. Hyderabad Police Commissioner V.C. Sajjanar said the fire erupted around 1 pm, prompting the immediate deployment of fire services, Disaster Response Force (DRF) teams and police. Officials said rescue operations were slowed by hazardous conditions in-



side the basements and debris clearance could take several more hours. Those trapped were identified as Mohammed Imtiyaz (27), a long-time employee; Syed Habeeb (28), an auto trolley driver; watchman Ya-

daiah; his children Akhil (11) and Praneet (7); and a woman, Beban Bee. Yadaiah's wife Lakshmi said the family had been living in the cellar and she was away at work when the fire broke out. Fire Services Director

General Vikram Singh Mann said the building had two cellars, with the first packed with furniture material. He reiterated that commercial use of cellars is prohibited in Hyderabad and said a short circuit was sus-

pected to have caused the blaze. Eyewitnesses reported smoke first emerging from the rear of the structure before flames engulfed both basement levels. Foam, adhesives, varnish drums and cardboard stored inside intensified the fire. Over 200 firefighters, supported by Bronto sky-lifts, fire tenders and water bowsers, were deployed. Robots equipped with cameras and gas sensors were later withdrawn due to zero visibility. Authorities said the building, constructed in 1960, was under illegal occupation despite High Court evicting orders. The Telangana State Human Rights Commission took suo motu cognisance, citing administrative negligence. Abids police registered a case and formed a special investigation team.

## Modi: Trade Deals To Create Jobs

**NEW DELHI**  
Wakeup telangana

Noting that India is among the youngest nations in the world, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said his government is entering into trade and mobility agreements with various countries to create new opportunities for youth both within India and abroad. Virtually handing over more than 61,000 appointment letters for government jobs at the 18th edition of the Rozgar Mela, the Prime Minister urged the new appointees to view their appointments as an invitation to join nation building and a pledge to work for creating a developed India. "India is signing trade and mobility agreements with several countries. These trade agreements are bringing new opportunities for the youth of the



nation," Modi said. Addressing the event held simultaneously at 45 locations across the country via video conferencing, Modi asked the youth to work with the motto "Nagrik Devo Bhava" (citizen is akin to God) while discharging their duties. He said India has embarked on a "reform express" aimed at making life and business easier. He asked the youth to recall their experiences at government offices in previous years and urged them to resolve to not let such hardships affect citizens during their tenure. The Prime Minister said, in recent times, the

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## Kharge: BJP Using Governors as Puppets

**HUBBALLI**  
Wakeup telangana

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday accused the BJP of using Governors in non-BJP-ruled States as "puppets" to obstruct the functioning of elected governments. He urged people to unite to protect freedom and the Constitution by setting aside caste and religious differences, and appealed to them to defeat the BJP in all forthcoming elections to remove it from power. Addressing the houses distribution programme here, Kharge alleged that Governors in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala were withholding assent



to Bills and obstructing governance. Kharge alleged that the BJP was using Governors as instruments to obstruct non-BJP governments. He claimed that directions were being issued to Governors directly from the Prime Minister's Office and the Union Home Ministry. "The governor is given instructions not to read the speech prepared by the government. This happened in Karnataka, and a similar situation was seen

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## Trump Threatens 100% Tariffs on Canada Over New China Trade Deal

**WASHINGTON**  
Wakeup telangana

President Donald Trump on Saturday threatened to impose a 100% tariff on goods imported from Canada if America's northern neighbor went ahead with its trade deal with China. Trump said in a social media post that if Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney "thinks he is going to make Canada a 'Drop Off Port' for China to send goods and products into the United States, he is sorely mistaken." While Trump has waged a trade war over the past year, Canada this month negotiated a deal to

lower tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles in return for lower import taxes on Canadian farm products. Trump initially had said that agreement was what Carney "should be doing and it's a good thing for him to sign a trade deal." Carney's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Trump's threat came amid an escalating war of words with Carney as the Republican president's push to acquire Greenland strained the NATO alliance. Trump

had commented while in Davos, Switzerland, this week that "Canada lives because of the United States." Carney shot back that his nation can be an example that the world does not have to bend toward autocratic tendencies. Trump later revoked his invitation to Carney to join the president's "Board of Peace" that he is forming to try to resolve global conflicts. Trump's push to acquire Greenland has come after he has repeatedly needed Canada over its sovereignty and suggested it also be absorbed the United States as a 51st state.

## US Hints At 25% Cut In Tariffs On India

**NEW DELHI**  
Wakeup telangana

US treasury secretary Scott Bessent has said there is a "path" to remove the 25 per cent tariffs imposed on India over its purchases of Russian oil, noting that such imports by Indian refineries have sharply declined. The remarks come amid strained bilateral ties after US President Donald Trump imposed a total of 50 per cent tariffs on India, including a 25 per cent levy linked to New Delhi's procurement of Russian crude. Speaking in an interview with Politico, Bessent on Friday described the sanc-



tions as a "success." "We put 25 per cent tariffs on India for buying Russian oil. And the Indian purchases by their refineries of Russian oil have collapsed. So that is a success," he said, adding that while the tariffs remain in place, there was scope for their removal. "I would imagine that there is a path to take them off," he said.

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## Bandi Slams SIT over 'Biased' Phone-Tapping Probe

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Union minister of state for home Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Saturday opposed the state government's decision to summon BRS leaders K.T. Rama Rao and T. Harish Rao as eyewitnesses rather than accused in the phone-tapping case. He questioned whether the Congress government was attempting to give a clean chit to Rama Rao and his father, former chief minister K. Chandrashekar Rao. In an informal chat with the media at the BJP state office, Sanjay asked why the leaders were sum-

moned under Section 160 of CrPc, which applies to persons acquainted with facts, instead of Section 41A, used for accused persons. "If BRS leaders are eyewitnesses and not accused or thieves, who are the actual culprits in the phone-tapping case," he asked. He alleged ministers were influencing the SIT inquiry and denying it independence. Urging the government to grant the SIT full freedom, Sanjay said the BRS family treated cases of public looting as petty matters. "They remain confident that no matter how much atrocity or corruption they commit, the Congress



government won't act against them," he added. Sanjay claimed SIT officials told him during his interrogation that his phone was tapped and his number added to a Maoist list. He demanded action against those responsible. He further asserted that phones of BRS MPs, MLAs, heroines and businessmen were tapped and added to Maoist lists, including Chandrashekar

Rao's daughter and son-in-law. "Yet they claim it was for national security," he said. Accusing the Congress government of portraying Rama Rao as a victim despite families suffering, Sanjay remarked: "People may have forgotten Nizam's atrocities, but they won't forgive KTR, who still shows no remorse." He demanded a white paper on mine allotments and alleged "Singareni loot" from 2014 to date, charging both BRS and Congress governments responsible for pushing the company into a debt trap. He urged repayment of the Rs 42,000 crore owed to Singareni.

## AIMIM Sahar Shaikh Councillor Apologises For 'Green Mumbra' Comment



**MUMBAI**  
Wakeup telangana

Newly elected AIMIM councillor Sahar Shaikh has apologised for her remark about making Mumbra "green" following sharp criticism of the comment made during her victory speech. Shaikh clarified that she was referring only to the colour of her party's flag and

said she had no intention of threatening any community. The controversy unfolded after Shaikh, in her victory speech, said she would make Mumbra green. Her comment drew immediate backlash, particularly from the BJP. Kirit Somaiya and Niranjan Davkhare lodged a police complaint accusing Ms Shaikh of threatening Hindu community in Mumbra. In a statement to the Mumbra police, the young corporator said, "It was not my intention to hurt anyone's feelings.

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ESTD 1960  
**ASTORIA HOTEL**  
Hyderabad Laziz Biryani  
ek baar khaage baar baar aage  
5-9-8 / C AG OFFICE ROAD, OPPOSITE TO RBI, HYDERABAD

## Coal Ministry Panel Probes SCCL Tender Cancellation

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

A two-member technical committee constituted by the Union coal ministry is intensifying its probe into alleged irregularities at Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL), with a key focus on the controversial cancellation of the Naini coal mine tender in Odisha. The committee was set up on the directions of Union minister for coal and mines G. Kishan Reddy. The panel comprises Chetan Shukla, Deputy Director General in the Ministry of Coal, and Marapalli Venkateswarlu, Director in the ministry's technical division. On



Saturday, the committee directed SCCL officials to submit all records connected to the development, operation and maintenance (MDO) tender for the Naini coal mine, which was issued on November 28 last year and later cancelled. Documents are being collected from SCCL's headquarters in Kothagu-

dem as well as its Hyderabad office. Amid the ongoing investigation, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar raised concerns over the possible misplacement or tampering of official records. Stressing the need for transparency, he urged authorities to immediately seize and secure

all relevant documents related to the tender process. "The possibility of records being tampered with or misplaced cannot be ruled out. All papers must be secured without delay," he said. In a parallel development, Union minister G. Kishan Reddy chaired a high-level review meeting with senior SCCL officials and representatives of the Coal Ministry in Kothagudem. In a social media post, Reddy said the discussions focused on assessing ongoing projects, increasing coal production, ensuring the future security of workers and improving operational efficiency through greater use of technology.

Sources said the technical committee is also examining the utilisation of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds by SCCL and whether mandatory approvals were bypassed during sanctioning. The panel plans to visit the Naini mine site as part of its inquiry. The probe is additionally comparing SCCL's procedures with those followed by Coal India Limited and Mahanadi Coalfields Limited, particularly amid allegations that CSR fund allocations were influenced by MLAs, ministers and other political leaders, raising concerns of favouritism.

## Seat-sharing row puts Congress, CPI on collision course in Kothagudem

**KOTHAGUDEM**  
Wakeup telangana

There is ambiguity over continuation of Congress-CPI alliance in the upcoming Kothagudem Municipal Corporation polls as both the parties want higher number of seats to contest in the elections. It may be noted that Congress-CPI had a pre-poll alliance during the 2023 Assembly polls and Kothagudem seat was allotted to CPI. The alliance has become shaky, with local leaders insisting on going alone in the elections, as the alliance could hamper their plans to contest. The Congress high command reportedly directed Kothagudem leadership to hold talks over sharing seats with CPI. It is said that the CPI wanted 30

corporator seats of the 60 seats in the corporation along with the mayor's seat. But Kothagudem Congress leaders do not want to give up the mayor seat and the same was conveyed to the CPI besides offering 20 seats instead of 30 sought by the CPI. Both the parties are yet to resolve the matter as there has been high demand for tickets in each ward. While the leaders of both the parties have been engaged in talks over seat sharing, applications are being received for all the 60 wards in the municipal corporation. There is fear among the leaders in both the parties that this exercise might turn adverse if the CPI and Congress agreed for seat sharing, aspiring candidates could become rebel candidates if denied tickets

It is being said Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy has also been against the alliance with CPI in Kothagudem as he feels that Congress could win the corporation by contesting alone. His followers highlight the point that Congress contested independently in the recent panchayat elections and secured good results. The CPI leaders, who do not want Congress to treat them as lesser partners, are hinting at the possibility of forming an alliance with the BRS if there is no positive response from the Congress. It has become a topic of discussion in political circles in the district. However, a senior Congress leader stated that the party high command wants the alliance to continue in Kothagudem and steps would be taken in that direction.

## Manjula Takes Charge as Bowenpally School Headmistress

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Manjula formally assumed charge as the new Headmistress of New Bowenpally Government High School for Boys on Saturday, marking an important moment for the local education community. She was promoted from her previous position as Senior Assistant at a primary school in Sangareddy, where she was widely appreciated



for her commitment to students and academic progress. The occasion turned into a warm community gathering, reflecting the close bond between the school and local residents.

Former Cantonment Board Vice-Chairman Jampana Pratap led the felicitation and honoured Manjula with a traditional shawl, extending best wishes for a successful tenure. Several com-

munity leaders, including Shakib Hussain, Shashiraj Yadav and Raju, were present and expressed confidence in her leadership. In her address, Manjula thanked everyone for their support and assured that she would focus on improving educational quality, school infrastructure and extracurricular activities, aiming for the overall development of students.

## Forest officials track tiger stray in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri after calf attacks

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The Forest Department teams continue to check the camera traps to track the movement of tiger that strayed into the Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district. The male tiger, aged around 10 years, attacked calves on Mon-

day in Ibrahimpur village in Turkapally of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district. It was not spotted since in and around the villages and forest officials suspect it might be staying in the forest or moved away to some other terrain. A day before, the tiger attacked cattle in the Ibrahimpur village, a local

farmer in the neighbouring village had noticed the pug mark in his field and alerted the forest officials. "We have collected the scat of the tiger and sent it to the CCMB. Also, our beat officers and staff are checking the camera trap to track the presence and movement of tiger," said an official

of the forest department. The forest officials, however, have asked the villagers to be vigilant and inform them if they notice pugmarks of the tiger in the fields or the tiger anywhere. The tiger is suspected to have crossed over into the district from Peddapalli and Siddipet, where it was spotted a fortnight ago.

## Minorities Welfare Dept move puts Abul Kalam Azad institute manuscripts at risk

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The decision of Minorities Welfare Department to take possession of the Abul Kalam Azad Oriental Research Institute located in Public Gardens, has drawn the ire of many from the minority community. The move has put manuscripts and books, many of which form rare collections and date back to several centuries that draw scholars from across the globe, at the risk of being damaged and lost. A team of Minority Welfare officials on Saturday turned up at the institute abutting the Masjid e Osmania, popularly known as the Bagh e Aam Masjid, and asked the committee to vacate the library. Abul Kalam Azad Oriental Research Institute was established in the year 1958 with an aim to conduct research in history, philosophy, culture and



languages; to guide scholars on research, train research scholars for post-graduate studies and arrange seminars, lectures, symposiums, and study circles. Prof Ashraf Rafi, chairman of the society that manages the institute, said several manuscripts dating back to centuries are in the institute library. "The government wants to take over the institute without arranging any alternative accommodation. Without any prior notice, we were asked to vacate the premises. Where will we carry all historic documents at a short notice?" he asked. The society had taken two halls that served as 'niyaz

khana' prior to 1959 on lease and started the institute. "The government seems to be unhappy with Maulana Abul Kalam's name and wants to close down the institute on pretext of mosque expansion," said Aziz Ahmed, a member of the society. A few years ago, one hall was taken over by TS Wakf Board and allocated to the mosque. "In the remaining portion, we are running the library and a small office. Scholars from across the globe, particularly Iran, Saudi Arabia and Europe, come to the library for research work," explained Aziz Ahmed. Among the manuscripts

are the Quran, Ramayana, Gita and others. A Quran in the Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi (1919-1980) was gifted to the library by the last Shah of Iran. There are books on Astronomy, Medicine and other subjects, some manuscripts date back to 13th century. "The manuscripts are rare and need to be properly preserved. They cannot be left unattended," said Dr Fatima Ahmed, a member. On Saturday, officials visited the library when the office-bearers were holding a meeting and informed them that they had to hand over the property to the government immediately. After consultation, the society members left the premises for fear of legal action and harassment. "It appears everything is decided, the Minority Welfare Department officials are in no mood to listen to anyone," complained a member of the society.

## BRS rejects Bhatti's claims, says cancellation of tenders itself admission

The Bharat Rashtira Samithi on Saturday countered the claims of Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on the Naini coal block tender controversy and pointed out that the cancellation of the tenders itself was an admission of a major scam. Former Minister T Harish Rao said Bhatti Vikramarka was beating around the bush and trying to cover up irregularities, without clarifying the actual reason for the cancellation of the tenders. "If no scam or irregularity took place, why were the tenders cancelled?" Harish Rao asked, while also questioning the Energy Minister's silence over the solar scams that he had exposed on Friday. "If the Deputy Chief Minister assures an impartial and transparent investigation into the scam involving Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and the role of his brother-in-law, I am prepared to write a letter to you seeking a detailed probe," Harish Rao said in a detailed post on X, soon after the Deputy Chief Minister held a press conference to dismiss allegations of irregularities in the Singareni tenders.

## Telangana Tops In Urban Development Funding: RBI Report

"Demographic Transition in India - Implications for State Finances": Reports

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Telangana has emerged as one of the four states recording the highest allocation towards urban development, reflecting the growing pressure on housing, transport and civic infrastructure arising from rapid population expansion in urban areas, according to a report released by the Reserve Bank (RBI) of India. The RBI's annual publication, 'State Finances: A Study of Budgets', which analyses state finances from 2023-24 (actuals) to 2025-26 (budget estimates), focused this year on the theme "Demographic Transition in India - Implications for State Finances" and highlighted how changing population structures are increasingly shaping fiscal priorities. The report noted that states were at varying stages of demographic transition, broadly classified as youthful, intermediate and ageing, based on the proportion of population aged 60 years and above. Telangana fell in the intermediate category, with 10.1 per cent of its population above 60 years in 2016, rising to 11.1 per cent in 2021, 12.5 per cent in 2026 and 14.5 per cent in 2031. It is projected to enter the 'ageing' category by 2036, when the elderly population is expected to touch 17.1 per cent. This shift is significant as ageing states face narrowing tax bases and rising fiscal pressure from pensions, healthcare and



social security, while youthful and intermediate States still have an opportunity to leverage a relatively larger working-age population. Telangana's development expenditure has shown a strong upward trend, increasing from ₹1,62,738 crore in 2023-24 to ₹2,03,029 crore in 2024-25 and further to ₹2,34,506 crore in 2025-26. The report places Telangana alongside Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat as states with the highest allocations towards urban development. It observed that youthful and intermediate States typically allocate around 16 per cent of their social sector spending to urbanisation, compared to only about 7 per cent in ageing states, consistent with their younger demographic profile and faster pace of urban growth. For intermediate states like Telangana, education continued to command the largest share of social sector expenditure, followed by pensions, urbanisation, health and social security, although the share of spending on urbanisation, health and social security has risen significantly over time. In contrast, non-development expenditure declined from ₹56,544 crore in 2023-24 to ₹45,894 crore in 2024-25 before rising modestly to ₹50,320 crore in 2025-

26. This pattern indicates a greater focus on capital formation and growth-oriented spending. The report also flagged concerns about the state's growing reliance on borrowings. Telangana's gross market borrowings rose from ₹40,150 crore in 2022-23 to ₹49,618 crore in 2023-24 and are projected to increase further to ₹56,209 crore in 2025-26. The maturity structure of state government securities (SGS) has been undergoing a gradual elongation, with a growing share of bonds having maturities beyond 10 and 15 years. Telangana is among the few states, along with Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Jammu and Kashmir, that have consciously issued SGS with maturities exceeding 20 years. In Telangana's case, securities with less than one-year maturity account for 4.6 per cent, those between one and five years for 13.3 per cent, five to ten years for 12.3 per cent, ten to twenty years for 41.6 per cent, and above twenty years for 28.2 per cent, reflecting a strategy of spreading repayment obligations over a longer horizon. The RBI has also highlighted concerns regarding debt sustainability. A substantial portion of Telangana's borrowings has been used for servicing past loans and interest payments, with 70 per cent of borrowings in 2023-24, 56 per cent in 2024-25 and 49 per cent in 2025-26 earmarked.

## BRS intensifies municipal poll drive, appoints senior leaders as incharges

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) has intensified its preparations for the ensuing municipal elections and appointed senior leaders as incharges for municipalities and municipal corporations where the elections are to be conducted. BRS working president

KT Rama Rao on Saturday appointed special coordinators for each municipality and corporation in the State. Releasing the list of municipal election coordinators appointed by the party, Rama Rao called upon the party cadre to work with the sole intention of garnering people's support and ensuring the party's victory in the municipal elections. Under the initiative of ap-

pointing incharges, a senior leader has been assigned the task of monitoring party affairs in each municipality. The primary responsibility of these leaders was to coordinate with the party cadre at the grassroots level and formulate election strategies as per the local conditions. They have been directed to stay put in the respective urban local bodies' right from

the beginning to the end of the elections. These coordinators would play a crucial role in the candidate selection for the municipal elections. They would be discussing with the local leadership, identifying the candidates with high winning prospects and submitting reports accordingly to the party high command. More importantly, they would also be monitoring the effective implementation of the

party's campaign programmes and coordinating with the booth-level agents, he said. A special system has been established to ensure that election trends and ground reports are regularly submitted to the party's head office at Telangana Bhavan and to the working president as well.

**Industry Captains Laud Telangana's Skilling Vision at Davos**

Telangana's skilling policy emerged as a major talking point at the World Economic Forum 2026 in Davos, drawing strong praise from global industry leaders who lauded the state's long-term, talent-centric vision. During their interactions with Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, industry captains appreciated the state's emphasis on building a future-ready workforce — rather than merely courting investments as it would position the state as a preferred destination for next-generation industries.

Tata Group chairman N. Chandrasekharan appreciated the state government's meticulous planning and its focus on nurturing talent, innovation and infrastructure as integrated pillars of growth. He also noted that the state's strong talent base would be a decisive advantage as India moves into advanced manufacturing, semiconductors, electric mobility and data-driven industries. The Chief Minister recalled Tata Technologies' successful partnership in upgrading 65 government ITIs into Advanced Technology Centres, calling it a model for industry-led skilling reforms. The delegation highlighted the creation of the Young India Skills University (YISU), conceived as a bridge between education and employment.

**KTR serves legal notices on Bandi Sanjay, Dharmapuri Arvind over defamatory remarks**

**BRS working president KT Rama Rao has served legal notices on Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar and BJP MP Dharmapuri Arvind, seeking an unconditional apology over alleged defamatory remarks and warning of civil and criminal action if they fail to comply**

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) working president KT Rama Rao on Saturday served legal notices to Union Minister of State for Home Bandi Sanjay Kumar and BJP MP Dharmapuri Arvind for making what he described as baseless and defamatory remarks against him and his family.

Rama Rao demanded that both the BJP leaders tender an unconditional apology within five days. Making such statements without any evidence was purely malicious and amounted to cheap politics, he said.

Failure to comply with the demand would compel him to initiate appropriate civil and criminal proceedings, his lawyers stated in the notices served on the two BJP MPs.

Rama Rao pointed out that despite a defamation case related to Bandi Sanjay's earlier remarks pending before a court, he had once again made baseless and objectionable statements, forcing him to



**KTR, Harish Brief KCR on Questioning by SIT**

A day after he was questioned by the Special Investigation Team probing allegations of illegal-tapping of phones during the BRS regime, BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao met with party president and former chief minister K. Chandrashekar Rao at his farmhouse in Erravalli village and briefed him about what transpired on Friday. It is learnt that during the meeting, the BRS leaders discussed in detail the questions from SIT, and were later joined by senior leader T. Harish Rao, who too was questioned by the SIT on Wednesday. Saturday's meeting assumed significance with indications emerging from official quarters that Chandrashekar Rao may be the next from the BRS and the former government likely to be summoned by the SIT for questioning.

issue fresh legal notices through his lawyers. In the notice sent to the Union Minister, Rama Rao's lawyers stated that during a press conference on January 23, Bandi San-

Jay had alleged that the BRS working president's family had amassed thousands of crores through phone tapping. He had also claimed that phones of celebrities were

tapped. The lawyers said these statements were completely false.

They took exception to Bandi Sanjay repeating similar allegations even when a defamation case against him was already pending before the City Civil Court.

Meanwhile, in the notice sent to Dharmapuri Arvind, the lawyers stated that his remarks alleging drug abuse and drug supply were objectionable.

Rama Rao, a former Minister who worked for the development of the State, particularly the expansion of the IT sector, was being targeted with reckless and baseless allegations without any evidence, which amounted to political vendetta, the lawyers said.

They demanded that both MPs immediately withdraw their statements and issue an unconditional public apology to Rama Rao. The notices warned that failure to respond within five days of receipt would invite strict action under civil and criminal laws.

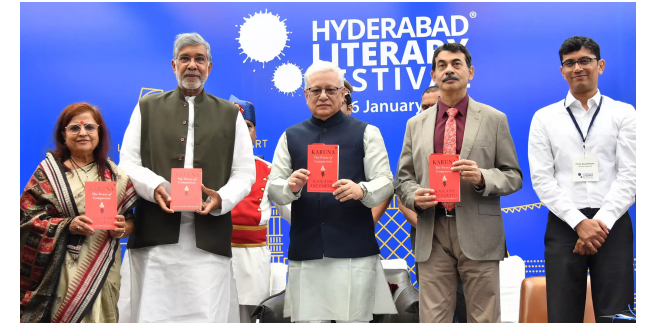
**KTR condemns attack attempt on Palla Rajeshwar Reddy**

BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Saturday strongly condemned attempts by Congress leaders to attack BRS MLA from Jangaon Palla Rajeshwar Reddy on Friday. Saying that a few Congress leaders, allegedly in an inebriated condition, behaved like street rowdies in the presence of Panchayat Raj Minister Seethakka during an official programme, Rama Rao said this reflected the deteriorating law and order situation in Telangana.

Taking to X, the BRS working president said that while Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy was indulging in revelry abroad, Congress leaders were running amok and creating havoc under the influence of alcohol.

"The situation in Telangana has now become so dire that even at foundation-stone laying ceremonies and inaugurations, drunk and drive tests need to be conducted," Rama Rao said. He said such incidents were the result of statements made by the Chief Minister that encouraged and fostered criminal behaviour. The Bharat Rashtira Samithi and Telangana society would not tolerate such a culture under any circumstances, he said. "The people have already taught a fitting lesson to the Congress in the recent Panchayat elections.

**Compassion Not Just an Emotion: Satyarthi Opens HLF 2026**



**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

"Compassion is not just an emotion, it is a disciplined and practical force. It can help solve major global problems like human trafficking, social inequality and environmental damages", said Nobel Peace Prize winner Kailash Satyarthi. He was speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the Hyderabad Literary Festival (HLF) 2026 here on Saturday. Governor Jishnu Dev Varma and Kailash Satyarthi formally opened the festival in the presence of writers, thinkers, artists and hundreds of visitors.

Satyarthi introduced the idea of "compassion quotient (CQ)", stating that unlike IQ or EQ, it does not rank people as superior or inferior. Rather, it helps understand the deeper values that shape human life. He also announced plans to introduce a scientific tool to measure the CQ, calling it essential in today's divided world. During the inaugural ses-

sion, Governor Varma inaugurated Kailash Satyarthi's latest book 'Karuna: The Power of Compassion'. Satyarthi said that the book reflected his five decades of work as a social activist, and shared that during this period, he helped rescue more than 1,38,000 children from child labour, trafficking and exploitation. HLF featured a wide range of activities, including panel discussions, workshops, nukkad natakas, live performances and exhibitions. Several sessions saw active participation from students, writers and members of the public. A highlight of the festival was a book signing session by Mir Muhammad Azmet Ali Khan, a descendant of the seventh Nizam of Hyderabad Mir Osman Ali Khan. At the exhibition of photographs of his father Mir Barkat Ali Khan Mukarram Jah, Azmet Jah signed copies of his recently released 'H.E.H. Mir Barkat Ali Khan Mukarram Jah Bahadur:

**Vasantha Panchami Grandly Celebrated at Pallavi International School**

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Pallavi International School, Nanajipur, celebrated Vasantha Panchami with grandeur, marking the occasion with cultural and educational significance. Gad-dam Shekhar Yadav, Sarpanch of Narkuda village and President of the Shamsabad Mandal Congress Party, attended as the chief guest and was warmly welcomed by the school management.

Addressing the gathering, Mr. Shekhar Yadav said education is a noble social service,



not a business. He stressed that education is the greatest wealth, essential for personal growth, social development, and nation-building. He urged students to pursue learning with discipline, values, humanity, and ethical responsibility. The event was attended

by several dignitaries, including Sarpanchs Mr. Koteshe Goud, Mr. Prabhakar Goud, and Mr. Ram Gopal, Vice-Sarpanchs, ward members, village leaders, teachers, and students. The enthusiastic participation made the celebrations a memorable success.

**Around 300 street dogs killed in Telangana's Pegadapalli**

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Around 300 stray dogs were allegedly killed by poisonous injections in Pegadapalli mandal on January 22, sparking outrage among animal rights activists. The incident came to light after Mudavath Preethi, cruelty prevention assistant of the Stray Animal Foundation of India, filed a complaint with the local police on January 23.

Acting on the complaint, Pegadapalli police registered an FIR and launched an investigation into the alleged cruelty. The complaint



names the village Sarpanch and Gram Panchayat Secretary as allegedly involved in the act. Authorities have stated that strict action will be taken against those found responsible, and the investigation aims to uncover the circumstances and accountability behind the mass poisoning of the stray dogs in the mandal.

**Sri Venkateswara Temple to Host 24th Brahmotsavam from Jan 30**

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The Sri Venkateswara Temple at New Boyinapally, New City Colony, Secunderabad Cantonment, is all set to host its 24th Annual Brahmotsavam from January 30 to February 4, 2026, amid growing spiritual fervour among devotees.

The official brochure for the six-day festival was unveiled at the temple premises by former Cantonment Board vice-chairman Jampana Pratap along with temple committee members. Speaking on the occasion, Pratap highlighted the Brahmotsavam as a major spiritual milestone and a cherished tradition for the local community.

The celebrations will include a series of Vedic rituals and grand processions, beginning with Raksha Bandhan, Ankurapana, Agni Pratishtha and Sri Vari Sesa Vahana Seva on the first day. A key



highlight will be the Sri Venkateswara Kalyanam, followed by Rathotsavam and Garuda Seva.

The festival will conclude with Chakra Snaman and Pushpa Yagam on February 4. Temple committee president Narayana said elaborate arrangements are being made to ensure smooth darshan, crowd management, water facilities and prasadam distribution for devotees.

**Dalit Leaders Seek Increased SC Reservation in GHMC Divisions**

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Leaders of the All India Ambedkar Yuvjan Sangh and the National Ambedkar Sena today submitted a formal representation to Sri Atluri Lakshman, Minister for Scheduled Caste, Tribal, and Minority Welfare, urging enhanced political representation for Scheduled Castes (SC) in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) divisions.

Currently, of 150 GHMC divisions, 23 are reserved for SCs. With the expansion to 300 divisions, the leaders requested that 48 divisions be reserved to reflect the



SC population share of 16%. They also proposed that specific constituencies, including Khairatabad Somajiguda, Erramanzil, Amberpet, Malakpet, Uppal, Nampally, Jubilee Hills, and Yakutpura, be designated as SC-reserved divisions. The leaders emphasized that the current allocation has politically marginalized SC

communities, preventing them from achieving fair representation and influence in local governance. They argued that underrepresenting SCs in municipal divisions undermines their constitutional and democratic rights. Minister Atluri Lakshman responded positively, assuring that he would discuss the matter

with the Chief Minister and GHMC Commissioner.

The delegation included Kadam Vinay Kumar, State President of the All India Ambedkar Yuvjan Sangh; M. Sreedhar, National President of the Ambedkar Sena; Rajesh, State President; Satiri Praveen Kumar, State Vice President; and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Statue leaders from Panjagutta. This representation highlights ongoing efforts by Dalit organizations to ensure proportional political representation for SCs in Greater Hyderabad, reinforcing their role in municipal governance and decision-making.

**Kamma Mahajana Sangham hits out at Dy CM Bhatti, YouTube channels**

**KHAMMAM**  
Wakeup telangana

The Kamma Mahajana Sangham, in an open letter, has found fault with the remarks being made by Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka and some YouTubers against Andhra Jyothi ABN group's MD Vemuri Radhakrishna.

The open letter, released in the backdrop of ongoing tussle over alleged irregularities in SCCL's coal tenders, has become viral on social media platforms. The sangham alleged that some 'pseudo-journalists and



blackmailers' were using YouTube channels to blackmail and ignite caste conflicts. Andhra Jyothi newspaper had published a report alleging that Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) had included a site visit clause in the Naini coal mine tender in

Odisha, preparing the ground to award the contract to favoured contractors.

The report, allegedly based on information provided by experienced mining companies who faced difficulties in obtaining the site visit certificate, was published in Andhra Jyothi on January 17. The following day, Bhatti Vikramarka held a press conference and announced the cancellation of the Naini tenders.

"When Radhakrishna exposed the flaws in the Mine Developer Operator (MDO) contract for the Naini coal mine tender,

Bhatti Vikramarka, with great integrity, cancelled the tender. But YouTube journalists were criticising Radhakrishna," the sangham complained. "If you commit corruption and then launch a counter-attack under the cover of caste, we will teach you a lesson. This is the final warning. If you utter nonsense against Radhakrishna in the name of caste, we will show you the pride of the Kamma caste in a democratic way. Hired intellectuals, fake YouTube journalists and Bhatti Vikramarka, must respond," it noted.

# US Urges Israel to Enter Next Phase of Gaza Ceasefire Talks

**CAIRO**  
Wakeup telangana

Top U.S. envoys met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Saturday, urging his government to move into the second phase of the ceasefire in Gaza. Netanyahu met with President Donald Trump's envoy Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law and Middle East adviser, according to the prime minister's office, which did not give details of the discussions. A White House official confirmed the meeting. The U.S. is anxious to keep the Trump-brokered deal moving, but Netanyahu faces pressure to wait until Hamas returns



the remains of the last hostage in Gaza. The biggest signal of the second phase would be the reopening of the Rafah border crossing between Gaza and Egypt. Ali Shaath, the head of a future technocratic government in Gaza that is expected to run day-to-day affairs, said Thursday

the border crossing will open in both directions this coming week. There was no confirmation from Israel, which said it would consider the matter this week. The crossing's Gaza side is currently under Israeli military control. The family of Ran Gvili, whose body is still in Gaza, urged more pres-

sure on Hamas. "President Trump himself stated this week in Davos that Hamas knows exactly where our son is being held," the family said Saturday. "Hamas is deceiving the international community and refusing to return our son, the last remaining hostage, in what constitutes a clear violation of the agreement it signed."

Hamas said Wednesday it has provided "all information" it has on Gvili's remains to ceasefire mediators, and accused Israel of obstructing search efforts in areas it controls in Gaza. The ceasefire took effect on Oct. 10. Egypt pushes for Rafah crossing to open Egypt's top diplomat pressed for an im-

mediate opening of the Rafah crossing with the director of Trump's new Board of Peace in Gaza, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry said Saturday, including the ability of Palestinians to enter and exit the territory.

Foreign Minister Bader Abdelatty spoke by phone with Bulgarian diplomat Nickolay Mladenov, the high representative for Gaza, the ministry said in a statement. They discussed the implementation of the ceasefire's second phase, including the deployment of an international monitoring force, the opening of the Rafah crossing in both directions and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the strip, the statement said.

## Young AIMIM Councillor Apologises For 'Green Mumbra' Comment

**MUMBAI**  
Wakeup telangana

Newly elected AIMIM councillor Sahar Shaikh has apologised for her remark about making Mumbra "green" following sharp criticism of the comment made during her victory speech. Shaikh clarified that she was referring only to the colour of her party's flag and said she had no intention of threatening any community. The controversy unfolded after Shaikh, in her victory speech, said she would make Mumbra green. Her comment drew immediate backlash, particularly from the BJP. Kirit Somaiya and Niranjan Davkhare lodged a police complaint accusing Ms Shaikh of threatening Hindu community in Mumbra. In a state-



ment to the Mumbra police, the young corporator said, "It was not my intention to hurt anyone's feelings. I apologize for this. My party's flag is green, but I will continue to work for India's tricolor for the rest of my life." Senior Police Inspector Anil Shinde confirmed that the corporator was summoned to the station twice to explain her stance. "She has apologised for the statement made by her and provided a written apology," Shinde stated. Kirit Somaiya said,

"Sahar is a 22-year-old young girl. She has apologised. We accept her apology. However, AIMIM leaders are making the new generation fundamentalists. AIMIM is the new Muslim League. This party is doing the work of inciting people. They made Malegaon green, they made Mankhurd green, they made Mumbra green and now they are trying to make Mumbai green," the BJP leader said. Defending Shaikh, AIMIM leader and former Lok Sabha MP Jaleel accused Maharashtra police of "selective action", adding that it acted under pressure from a small group of protesters. "The All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimien will spread the colour green across Maharashtra," he said.

## SIR Expansion to Remaining States Coming Soon: CEC Gyanesh Kumar

**NEW DELHI**  
Wakeup telangana

Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on Saturday said the special intensive revision of voters' lists in the remaining states will be rolled out soon as he described "pure" electoral rolls as the bedrock of democracy. On the eve of the Election Commission's foundation day -- also celebrated as National Voters' Day -- Kumar said the revision exercise is presently being conducted "smoothly" in 12 states and Union territories. The chief election commissioner said pure electoral rolls are the bedrock of democracy and added, "With this objective, the Special Intensive Revision



(SIR) of electoral rolls was initiated to ensure that every eligible elector's name is included in the electoral roll and that every ineligible name is removed." This exercise has been successfully completed in Bihar, and a 'special revision' of electoral rolls is separately underway in Assam, Kumar said. He said, "It (SIR) will soon be rolled out in the remaining states as well. "The most com-

pel-ling testament to the success of the SIR in Bihar was that not a single appeal was filed against the final electoral roll, establishing its sanctity and credibility," Kumar added. According to the chief election commissioner, polls conducted on "this strong foundation" proved historic, recording the highest voter turnout since 1951 at 67.13 per cent, with women electors

registering an unprecedented participation rate of 71.78 per cent. He also emphasised the role of all electors, especially the youth, and urged them to vote without fail and to become ambassadors of democracy. "I call upon our young electors to lead the fight against misinformation, disinformation, and false narratives. For this, it is essential that they remain fully informed about electoral processes and the various initiatives of the Election Commission," he said. The Election Commission was established on January 25, 1950, a day before India became a republic. For the past 16 years, the day has been celebrated as National Voters' Day

## For First Time, 41 Villages in Bastar's Maoist Core Zone to Celebrate Republic Day Without Fear

**RAIPUR**  
Wakeup telangana

For the first time in nearly three decades, the Maoist core zones of Bastar in Chhattisgarh will celebrate Republic Day without fear of Left Wing Extremism, marking a major milestone in the region's security and governance landscape, senior police officials said on Saturday. Large parts of the 40,000 sq km Bastar region—long considered the epicentre of Naxal violence—have been brought under effective control following sustained counter-insurgency operations over the past two years. Except for three to four small pockets in dense forest areas, the entire region is now free from Maoist dominance, enabling unhindered celebration of national festivals such as



Republic Day and Independence Day. "As many as 41 villages that were once part of Maoist core zones will join the rest of the country in celebrating the 76th Republic Day for the first time," Bastar Range Inspector General of Police P Sunderraj told this newspaper. Of these, 13 villages are located in Bijapur district, 18 in Narayanpur district, and 10 in Sukma district, all in south Bastar. Police officials said the turnaround has been driven by the establishment of new secu-

rity camps deep inside insurgency-affected areas. "The presence of security forces has restored confidence among villagers, improved governance, and encouraged public participation in national events," Sunderraj said. He added that the progress was also aided by active community support and the elimination of several senior Maoist leaders in recent operations, including Basavaraju, K Ramachandra Reddy and K Satyanarayan Reddy. A senior police officer expressed confidence that there would be no incidents of black flag hoisting or disruption by Maoists during Republic Day celebrations this year, similar to the previous year. "The Maoists no longer have the capacity to interfere with national events in Bastar.

Their influence has been reduced to a few isolated pockets," the officer said. According to police, the remaining pockets of Maoist presence are located in heavily forested terrain and are currently being used as hideouts by cadres fleeing from security forces. Steps are underway to establish additional security camps in these areas, which officials believe will completely eliminate Maoist influence in the coming weeks. The Centre has set a deadline of March 31 to end Naxalism across the country. With significant gains already achieved in Bastar, police officials remain optimistic that the region will soon be entirely free of Maoist control, allowing residents to fully participate in democratic and national traditions without fear.

## Kharge: BJP Using Governors as Puppets, Constitution at Risk

**HUBBALLI**  
Wakeup telangana

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday accused the BJP of using Governors in non-BJP-ruled States as "puppets" to obstruct the functioning of elected governments. He urged people to unite to protect freedom and the Constitution by setting aside caste and religious differences, and appealed to them to defeat the BJP in all forthcoming elections to remove it from power. Addressing the houses distribution programme here, Kharge alleged that Governors in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala were withholding assent to Bills and obstructing governance. Kharge alleged that the BJP was using Governors as instruments to obstruct non-BJP governments. He claimed that directions were being issued to Governors directly from the Prime Minister's Office and the



Union Home Ministry. "The governor is given instructions not to read the speech prepared by the government. This happened in Karnataka, and a similar situation was seen in Tamil Nadu and Kerala," he said. "When questioned, they say they are acting on instructions from above. Governors have been reduced to puppets," he remarked. He further alleged that progressive Bills were being withheld and returned, and warned that while governments may change, the country and its Constitution must remain su-

preme. Kharge claimed that laws meant to protect the poor were being diluted. "The Constitution speaks about the right to work under the Directive Principles. But they are taking it away," he said. Warning that welfare schemes were under threat, he added, "First, they weakened MGNREGA. Tomorrow, they will take Anna Bhagya, then housing, then free and compulsory education. One by one, the directive principles - Articles 38 to 50 are being targeted."

### JeM Terrorist.....

Bessent also criticised European countries for not imposing similar tariffs on India, accusing them of prioritising trade negotiations. "Our virtue-signalling European allies refused to do it because they wanted to sign this big trade deal with India," he said. He alleged that India significantly increased imports of discounted Russian oil after Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. "Before the Ukraine invasion, about 2 to 3 per cent of the oil processed in Indian refineries came from Russia. That share rose into the high teens — 17, 18, 19 per cent — leading to huge profits for refiners," he said. Bessent further accused Europe of indirectly financing Russia's war effort by purchasing refined petroleum products from Indian refineries using Russian crude. "In the ultimate act of irony and stupidity, guess who was buying the refined products from Indian refineries made from Russian oil? The Europeans," he said. When asked if he had called Europeans "stupid," Mr. Bessent clarified, "I said there was an act of stupidity." India and the European Union are expected to announce the conclusion of negotiations on a

Free Trade Agreement soon. New Delhi has rejected the US action, describing the tariffs as "unfair, unjustified and unreasonable," and has maintained that its energy procurement decisions are guided by national interest. According to the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air, India slipped to third place among buyers of Russian fossil fuels in December after Reliance Industries and state-owned refiners significantly cut crude oil imports from Russia.

### Modi: Trade Deals.....

The Prime Minister said, in recent times, the government has made unprecedented investments in modern infrastructure, leading to increased employment across construction-related sectors. He said that India's startup ecosystem was expanding rapidly, with nearly two lakh registered startups employing over 21 lakh youth. Modi said "Digital India" has expanded a new economy, with India emerging as a global hub in animation, digital media, and several other sectors. The Prime Minister said that next-generation reforms in GST have benefited youth entrepreneurs and MSMEs, while historic labour reforms

have strengthened social security for workers and employees, benefiting businesses as well. The PM stressed that the new labour codes have expanded and empowered the scope of social security. A PMO statement said the Rozgar Mela is a key initiative aimed at translating this vision into action in line with the prime minister's commitment to accord the highest priority to employment generation. Since its inception, more than 11 lakh recruitment letters have been issued through Rozgar Melas organised across the country, it said. The new appointees will be serving in the ministries of home affairs, health and family welfare, department of financial services, higher education, among others.

### Kaja Kallas Arrives....

India and the European Union will hold their 16th summit in New Delhi, during which a new comprehensive strategic agenda is expected to be adopted. Earlier, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the EU is close to finalising a Free Trade Agreement with India, describing it as what some have called "the mother of all deals." Addressing the World Economic

Forum in Davos, she underlined Europe's intention to expand trade and international cooperation. Von der Leyen said the proposed agreement could create a market of two billion people, accounting for nearly a quarter of global GDP. She added that while work remains, the EU and India are on the cusp of a historic trade agreement. The European Commission President said she will travel to India next weekend to advance discussions on the proposed trade deal and to strengthen economic relations and cooperation between Europe and India. European Council President Antonio Luis Santos da Costa and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen will pay a three-day state visit to India from January 25 to 27. They will be the Chief Guests at the 77th Republic Day celebrations. During the visit, the leaders will co-chair the 16th India-EU Summit on January 27. They are also scheduled to meet President Droupadi Murmu and hold restricted and delegation-level talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. An India-EU Business Forum is expected to be organised on the sidelines of the summit. India and the European.

FROM FRONT PAGE

## CRIME

### Dogs Killed En Masse in Yacharam

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The police booked a case on a complaint that about 100 stray dogs were allegedly killed through injections in Yacharam village of Rangareddy district. This is the latest in a series of incidents of mass killing of dogs, with animal welfare groups estimating nearly 1,000 dogs have been killed in multiple incidents, including the one at Yacharam. "Right now it does not appear to be 100 dogs (at Yacharam). Based on the information available, the number could be around 32 to 40, or at most 45. We need to confirm the figure," said Yacharam

sub-inspector Uyyala Madhu. The FIR, registered on January 20, is based on a complaint filed by Mudavath Preethi, a cruelty prevention assistant with the Stray Animal Foundation of India (SAFI). The FIR invokes Section 325 read with 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Section 11(1)(a)(i) of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. It names the village sarpanch, a ward member, the village secretary and others as accused. The complaint alleges that around 100 dogs were killed on January 19 by administering poisonous injections.

### Trader dies by suicide after incurring losses in online betting

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

A 39-year-old trader died, allegedly by suicide, after suffering losses of nearly Rs 70 lakh in online betting and fertilizer trading at Ranapur village in Sarangapur mandal on Friday. However, the incident came to light on Saturday. Police said Srikanth Jadav Prem Kumar took the extreme step by consuming pesticide after being distressed over heavy financial losses incurred through online betting and his fertilizer business. His body was found by shepherds in an

open area on the outskirts of Chincholi (B) village on Saturday morning. Prem Kumar is survived by his wife, two daughters and a son. According to the police, despite repeated warnings from his father, Prem Kumar continued to invest large sums in online betting applications after becoming addicted, eventually suffering losses of around Rs 70 lakh. He had been running a fertilizer shop in Nirmal, which he later shut down following the financial crisis, and was staying at Ranapur. A case has been registered and investigation is on.

## Traffic Zones Launch Road Safety Campaign

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

In an effort to curb road accidents and promote safer driving habits, the Khairatabad and Secunderabad traffic zones on Saturday organised Arrive Alive, a large-scale road safety awareness programme at Jalavihar. The event, which began at 8 am, was inaugurated by joint commissioner of police (Traffic) D. Joel Davis, with cine actor Nikhil Siddharth as special guest and DCP (Traffic-I) Avinash Kumar in atten-



dance. A massive bike rally involving nearly 300 riders was flagged off to spread awareness on responsible road behaviour. Additional DCP Ande Ramulu, ACPs S. Mohan Kumar and A. Srinivas, and other traffic officials were present. JCP Davis stressed the compulsory use of ISI-marked helmets for both riders and pillion

passengers. He expressed concern over the rising fatalities, noting that nearly 8,000 people lost their lives in road accidents last year, and urged motorists to adhere strictly to speed limits and traffic rules. Avinash Kumar cautioned parents against allowing minors to drive, underscoring the need for valid licences and proper training.

Actor Nikhil Siddharth said road safety was a shared responsibility and urged youngsters to lead by example by following traffic regulations. The campaign drew an enthusiastic response, with over 1,000 participants, including traffic police personnel, NCC cadets, members of the CRT Bike Riders Association, and members of the public. The event was organised under the supervision of ACP Shankar Raju (Traffic-3, Khairatabad Zone), according to a press release issued by Joel Davis.

## Cyberabad She Teams Rescue 337 Kids

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The Cyberabad She Teams police said they had booked 55 persons for indecent acts in public, during 176 decoy operations across the commissionerate between January 17 and 23. Petty cases were booked against 45 of them, while the remaining were counselled. The teams also received 18 complaints from women through various channels during the period. As part of Operation Smile-XII, the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) rescued 337 children - 329 boys and eight

girls - from different locations across Cyberabad. Officials said efforts were also made to address family disputes, with 30 cases of marital discord taken up at family counselling centres and CDEW Centres. The AHTU and SHE teams also conducted awareness programmes at multiple locations, sensitising about 4,260 participants on issues such as human and child trafficking, eve-teasing, cyber harassment, child marriage, child labour, stalking, begging, cyber fraud, and emergency helpline services.

## Gold Worth Rs 8.6 Lakh Stolen From Banker's House

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Unidentified persons allegedly stole 430 grams of gold ornaments worth approximately ₹8.60 lakh from the residence of a bank branch manager located in Jubilee Hills, triggering a police investigation. The theft came to light after the owner failed to locate the jewellery for several days, following which a formal complaint was lodged. According to police officials, the complainant, Mahita, a resident of Road No. 2 in

Jubilee Hills, stated that she had kept the gold ornaments in a pouch inside a wardrobe at her home on January 10. When she later attempted to retrieve the jewellery, it was found to be missing. After conducting a thorough search within the house and confirming that the ornaments were not misplaced, she approached the police on Friday to report the incident. A case has been registered, and preliminary investigations suggest that the theft may have been carried out by someone known to the family.

## Lost and found: HC to hear plea

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

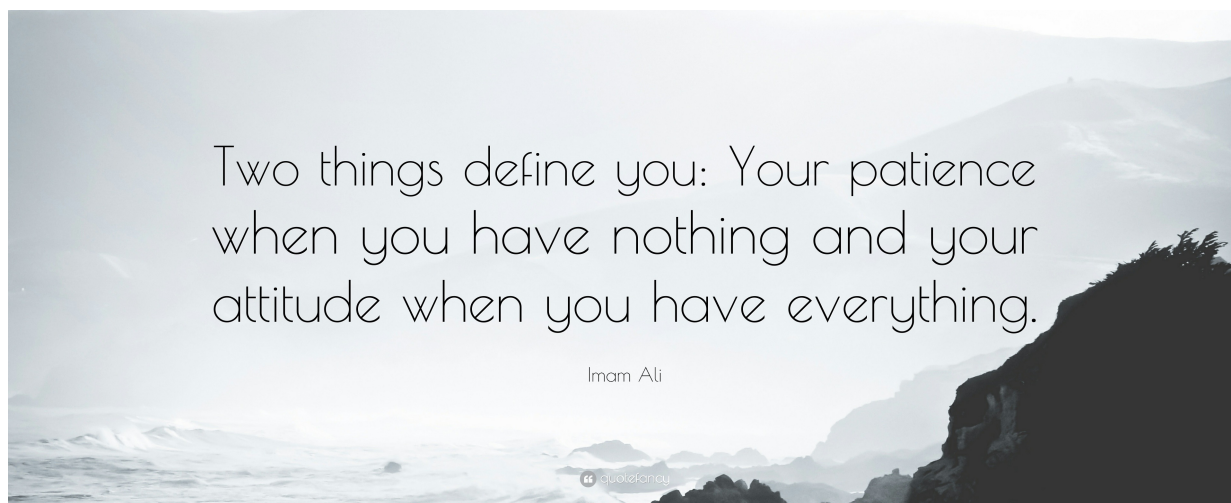
Justice Nagesh Bheemapaka of the Telangana High Court admitted a writ petition challenging the legality of the lost and found rules framed by the authorities at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA), Hyderabad. The judge was dealing with a writ plea filed by Fizan Husain, an advocate appearing party in person, seeking to declare the rules framed by the airport operations manager and others as illegal, arbitrary, and unconstitutional. The petitioner challenged the restrictions imposed on victims or owners of lost property. The rules prohibited the owner from entering the



lost and found room or personally viewing the relevant CCTV footage at the airport. According to the petitioner, such restrictions violated the principles of natural justice and created opacity in the handling of lost items. The petitioner sought a direction against the respondents to explain the manner in which lost ar-

ticles were disposed of, questioning whether such items were deposited in a government 'malkhana' or otherwise distributed among airport officials. The petitioner inter alia raised a grievance regarding a black check-in bag, alleged to have gone missing at RGIA. She argued that in the event the bag was not traced in the lost

and found room, a direction be issued against RGIA, Hyderabad, to pay ₹1.5 lakh towards the value of the lost articles, for alleged security lapses and breach of duty. Additionally, compensation of ₹5 lakh was claimed for mental and physical harassment, pain, and agony allegedly suffered by the petitioner since March 4, 2025, along with litigation costs. Further directions were sought to require the airport authorities to strengthen and upgrade security, vigilance, and surveillance mechanisms at the RGIA. After hearing the preliminary arguments, the judge directed the respondents to file their response in the matter.



Two things define you: Your patience when you have nothing and your attitude when you have everything.

Imam Ali

## EDITORIAL

### THE REASONS WHY INDIA NEEDS AN OPEN BUDGET

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The ritual of budget secrecy, shrouded in colonial-era mystery and enforced with a theatrical severity symbolised by the infamous "Budget Bunker", stands as an anachronism in a 21st-century democracy striving for transparency and participatory governance. This tradition, wherein the Union Budget is opened only on the appointed day in Parliament, is less a pillar of prudent economic management and more a relic of a bygone colonial mindset. The historical origins of this secrecy are deeply rooted in the exigencies of colonial control and, even further back, in the political machinations of 18th-century Britain. The concept finds its progenitor in Robert Walpole, Britain's first Prime Minister (also the Chancellor of Exchequer during his premiership). The very

term "budget" entered the fiscal lexicon through satire and suspicion. In 1733, opponents of Walpole derided his tax proposals as a magician's trick, publishing a pamphlet captioned "The Budget Opened" that framed the fiscal plan as a "grand mystery" revealed from a "bag of tricks". Walpole and since then each chancellor used the secrecy of their financial proposals to outmanoeuvre parliamentary opposition and minimise public backlash rather than protect speculative market interests. This practice was imported and intensified in British India, where the budget bunker of today's North Block is the direct descendant of a colonial fortress mentality, a physical manifestation of the state's insistence on monologue over dialogue. The classic justifications for this secrecy are frail in

the modern context. In an era of real-time data analytics, algorithmic trading, and global capital flows, the notion that a few weeks of clandestine preparation can effectively "surprise" the markets is naive. Instead, the sudden, big-bang release of complex fiscal and tax measures often induces volatility, as markets scramble to digest hundreds of pages of dense policy without the benefit of prior analyst scrutiny or phased debate. The real speculation it encourages is of the political variety: frantic media conjecture and lobbyist whispering campaigns that thrive in an information vacuum. Furthermore, the claim that secrecy prevents unfair advantage is hollow when one considers that sophisticated corporate entities invariably have greater resources to parse and react to the immediate budget announcement than the common citizen or small business.



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# Gold Outpaces Equities as Indian Markets Consolidate: PL Asset

**NEW DELHI**  
Wakeup telangana

Gold and silver have outperformed Indian equities amid persistent market consolidation, underscoring the importance of diversified asset allocation during periods of muted equity momentum, according to PL Asset Management's latest report, PMS Strategy Updates and Insights. The report notes that Indian equity markets are navigating a challenging phase marked by global uncertainty, cautious investor sentiment and weak market breadth. While domestic macro-economic fundamentals remain structurally strong, near-term equity returns have been driven by a narrow set of large-cap stocks, with broader par-



icipation remaining subdued.

PL Asset Management highlighted that market breadth has stayed weak over the past year, with only a limited number of stocks consistently trading above their long-term moving averages. This divergence points to under-

lying fragility despite headline index resilience and indicates that the market has yet to establish a durable, broad-based uptrend.

The consolidation trend was also reflected across equity style factors in 2025. Value and High Beta strategies delivered positive returns, while Momentum underperformed due to frequent trend reversals and fragmented leadership. Value stocks attracted investor interest on the back of attractive valuations and stable earnings visibility, while High Beta gains suggested calibrated risk-taking rather than a broad risk-on environment.

Overall, investor behaviour remained selective and risk-conscious. Against this backdrop,

precious metals emerged as effective portfolio stabilisers. Gold and silver benefited from sustained central bank demand, currency volatility and ongoing geopolitical uncertainty. Silver also drew support from its dual role as both a precious and industrial metal amid supply constraints. The report noted that Indian equities are currently trading near multi-cycle relative lows compared to gold and silver. Historically, such valuation gaps have favoured diversified portfolios, helping investors manage volatility without signalling a structural shift away from equities.

Market sentiment indicators suggest that the worst of pessimism may be over. Internal risk met-

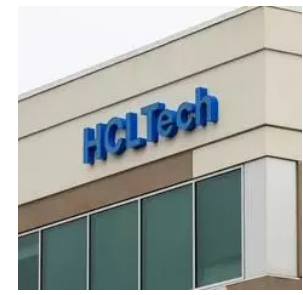
rics point to gradual improvement from recent cycle lows, supported by resilient domestic macro data and an improving earnings outlook. The high-low beta spread turning positive towards late 2025 signals early signs of returning risk appetite, though the recovery is expected to be gradual.

Commenting on the outlook, Siddharth Vora, Head - Quant Investment Strategies & Fund Manager at PL Asset Management, said markets are currently being driven more by asset allocation than broad equity rallies. He added that gold and silver have once again proven their relevance in helping investors manage risk during volatile phases.

# HCLTech to Acquire Singapore-Based Finergic

**NOIDA**  
Wakeup telangana

HCLTech, a leading global technology company, today announced that it has signed a definitive agreement to acquire Finergic Solutions Pte Ltd, a boutique wealth consulting firm headquartered in Singapore. The transaction is expected to close by April 30, 2026. Founded in 2019, Finergic focuses on core banking and wealth management transformation and has a strong, well-established global presence. The addition of Finergic's niche capabilities, combined with the scale of HCLTech, is expected to unlock stronger synergies and enhance service delivery across the financial



services and wealth management industry. HCLTech brings 25+ years of global experience in serving leading financial institutions. By integrating Finergic's specialized transformation strategy, consulting and wealth-architecture capabilities, HCLTech will accelerate the delivery of next-generation, platform-enabled wealth management solutions anchored by advanced AI-native workflows. These capabilities will complement

HCLTech's existing global experience supporting clients in Temenos products, including more than 40 global banks.

"With Finergic's focused domain expertise, HCLTech is strategically positioned to strengthen its digital services capabilities in wealth management," said Srinivasan Seshadri, Chief Growth Officer and Global Head - Financial Services, HCLTech. "This transformative transaction enables us to deliver advanced capabilities, foster innovation and unlock substantial synergies—empowering our clients to realize greater business outcomes across the financial services landscape."

# SDHI bags US\$ 227 mn shipbuilding contract from European firm

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Swan Defence and Heavy Industries (SDHI) on Friday said it has bagged a US\$ 227 million (around Rs 2,080 crore) contract from Europe-based Rederiet Stenersen AS.

The company has received the order to manufacture and supply six 18,000 DWT (deadweight tonnage) IMO Type II chemical tankers from its shipyard in Pipavav, Gujarat.

Swan Defence and Heavy Industries, in a statement, said the order valued at USD 227 million is one of India's largest single commercial shipbuilding orders and the first chemical tanker order placed with an Indian shipyard.

The contract bagged from European shipowner Rederiet Stenersen AS also includes an option for six additional vessels. The first vessel is scheduled for delivery within 33



months, with subsequent deliveries planned at regular intervals. Each tanker will have an overall length of approximately 150 metres and a beam of approximately 23 metres. The vessels will be designed by Marinform AS and StoGda Ship Design & Engineering and classed by DNV.

Commenting on the contract, Swan Defence and Heavy Industries Director Vivek Merchant said, "The order from Rederiet Stenersen AS underscores global confidence in our ability to deliver future-ready, high-quality vessels. This agreement is not only a significant achieve-

ment for SDHI but also a strong endorsement of India's growing commercial shipbuilding ecosystem." He said progressive maritime policies, including the Shipbuilding Financial Assistance (SFA) scheme, have enabled Indian private shipyards to compete successfully with leading global peers."

John Stenersen, Director, Ship Management, Rederiet Stenersen AS, said, "This is our first new-building contract placed with an Indian shipyard, following a comprehensive technical and commercial evaluation." The contract follows the signing of a Letter of Intent (LoI) between SDHI and Rederiet Stenersen AS earlier.

Swan Defence and Heavy Industries Limited (SDHI), formerly Reliance Naval and Engineering Limited, is a leading shipbuilding and heavy fabrication company in India.

# Students Develop AI-Run Tool For Airlines

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

A Hyderabad-based management student has developed an artificial intelligence tool aimed at tackling a recurring operational problem in airlines, fragmented onboarding that slows new employees and places added pressure on managers. The tool, called Onboardly, was built by Sneha Khowala along with help from Jash Lodhavia as part of the "AI in Business" course led by Dr Daniel Ringel, assistant professor of Market- ing for Data Science and AI at UNC Kenan-Flagler and Visiting Faculty at BITSOM.

Sneha said the idea emerged from her experience working in airline operations, where basic information needed for day-to-day functioning was often difficult for new hires to access quickly. "Airline onboarding is highly fragmented and time intensive. New



employees struggle to find the right information at the right time, while managers and human resources teams repeatedly answer the same operational and policy related questions. This affects productivity on both sides," she told. She said that even routine coordination could become inefficient. "I often had to make multiple phone calls just to figure out who was on shift or who to contact for last minute operational changes like cargo loading," she said. "When this is happening across teams

and locations, it leads to delays, confusion, and unnecessary operational friction." In just two weeks, the team consolidated Air India's scattered onboarding resources, including standard operating procedures, safety manuals, human resources policies, and internal documentation, into a single conversational system.

Onboardly functions as a digital onboarding guide that employees can use from their first day, allowing new hires to ask role specific questions such as where to find policies,

which procedures apply to their role, or whom to contact for specific issues. Instead of navigating large manuals or waiting for responses from supervisors, users receive structured answers intended to reduce confusion during the early stages of employment.

"The idea is to help new employees focus on understanding their role rather than spending time figuring out systems," Sneha said. "At the same time, it reduces the load on managers, who are otherwise pulled away from core responsibilities." She explained that the tool uses retrieval augmented generation, role-based access controls, and a simulated enterprise knowledge base, with features such as login-based access, chat history, workflow explanations, and automated safety alerts. According to the team, this has reduced repetitive queries to human resources teams and managers by 35 to 60 per cent,

accelerated new hire productivity by nearly three weeks, and improved operational readiness by standardising information access across teams.

When asked about the safety-sensitive nature of aviation, Sneha said compliance was a central design consideration. The current academic version of the tool uses fabricated airline data, but the system follows a retrieval-based architecture. "It only responds using information that has been explicitly provided to it. In a real-world setting, approved company manuals and policies would be the only data source," she said.

The tool also uses role-based access controls to limit what information a user can see. "If someone asks a sensitive or restricted question, the system does not provide an answer," Sneha said. "Instead, the query is flagged so that it can be addressed through proper channels."

# IndiGo posts sharp fall in December quarter profit

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

India's biggest airline, IndiGo, on Thursday reported a 78 per cent slump in net profit for the December quarter as flight disruptions and the implementation of new labour laws took a toll on its earnings.

The airline reported a net profit of Rs 549.1 crore in the October-December quarter, compared with earnings of Rs 2,448.8 crore in the year-ago period, according to a company statement.

The company said it took a hit of Rs 1,546.5 crore in the third quarter. This included Rs 577.2 crore due to massive flight disruptions witnessed in early December and another Rs 969.3 crore on account of the implementation of new labour laws.

IndiGo was slapped with a fine of Rs 22.2 crore for the flight disruptions, which it has accounted for under exceptional items. Currency movement related to dollar-based fu-



ture obligations aggregated Rs 1,035 crore in the December quarter. In the third quarter of the current financial year, InterGlobe Aviation, the parent of IndiGo, recorded a total income of Rs 24,540.6 crore, higher than Rs 22,992.8 crore posted in the year-ago period.

IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers said that in the December quarter, the company faced major operational disruptions that resulted in significant flight cancellations and delays from December 3 to 5. "Despite these operational disruptions, IndiGo delivered a topline of around 245 billion rupees in the December quarter, reflecting growth of around 7 per cent, with a reported profit of around 5 billion rupees and an underlying profit.

# Indian equities slide over 2.5 pc on FII outflows, tariff worries

**MUMBAI**  
Wakeup telangana

Indian equity benchmarks closed this week down over 2.5 per cent due to profit-booking, sustained foreign institutional investor (FII) outflows and renewed concerns over global trade disruptions stemming from the US tariff rhetoric.

All sectoral indices ended in the red this week, with Realty logging the worst performance, dipping 11.33 per cent. Consumer durables, telecom, and consumer discretionary sectors went down over 5 per cent.

Nifty dipped 2.51 per cent during the week and 0.95 per cent on the last trading day to 25,048. At close, the Sensex was down 769 points or 0.94 per cent at 81,537. It dipped 2.43 per cent during the week.

Broader indices posted



stronger losses during the week, with the Nifty Midcap100 down 4.58 per cent while Nifty Smallcap100 declined 5.81 per cent.

Bank Nifty ended the week with a firmly bearish technical tone after a decisive breakdown below the crucial 58,800 support.

Analysts said that the early-week sentiment found some support from earnings upgrades at select IT and banking stocks, but earnings disappointments that came later, with muted results from sectoral peers, weighed on market sentiments. Escalating geo-

political tensions — particularly around the U.S. administration's aggressive posturing on Greenland and tariff threats — unsettled global markets, culminating in a broad-based sell-off across domestic equities.

Further, rising global bond yields and uncertainty surrounding the US Supreme Court's review of Donald Trump-era tariffs further restrained risk-taking.

Since January 1 2026, both the Sensex and the Nifty have declined over 4 per cent. The global risk-off environment has prompted aggressive selling by foreign portfolio investors, who have off-loaded equities worth over Rs 36,500 crore during the month.

The Indian rupee has slipped to near 92 per US dollar, amplifying concerns around imported inflation.

# Hitachi Energy India receives Rs 26.07 crore tax demand for FY23

**MUMBAI**  
Wakeup telangana

Hitachi Energy India Limited said on Saturday that it has received a tax demand notice from the Income-tax Department for the assessment year 2022-23, asking the company to pay Rs 26.07 crore.

This amount includes Rs 16.40 crore as income tax and Rs 9.67 crore as interest, according to the company's exchange filing. The company said it received the order from the Assessment Unit on January 23, 2026, at around 3:39 pm.

According to Hitachi Energy India, the tax demand is linked to disallowances related to interest on delayed receivables and group management fees.

"The Company has received the order from the aforesaid authority for alleged disallowance of interest on delayed receivables and group

**HITACHI**  
Inspire the Next

management fee," it said in its regulatory filing. The company believes that the tax demand and the interest charged are arbitrary, unjustified, and not sustainable under the law.

"Based on assessment of facts and prevailing law, the company is of the view that the tax demand and interest levied is arbitrary, unjustified and unsustainable in law," Hitachi Energy India added.

Hitachi Energy India said it plans to challenge the order and will file an appeal before the Income-tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) within the allowed time period.

"The company will file necessary appeal with the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) in this regard within the

permissible timeline," it noted. Meanwhile, the company reported strong financial performance for the quarter ended September 30, 2025.

Its net profit jumped more than five times to Rs 264 crore, compared to Rs 52 crore in the same quarter last financial year.

Revenue for the quarter rose 18 per cent year-on-year (YoY) to Rs 1,832.5 crore. Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortisation (EBITDA) more than doubled to Rs 299.3 crore from Rs 108.8 crore a year ago.

The EBITDA margin also improved sharply to 16.3 per cent, compared to 7 per cent in the same period last financial year. On the stock market, shares of Hitachi Energy India Limited closed at Rs 16,504.10 on the BSE, falling Rs 357.40, or 2.12 per cent, for the day.

## Kisah Launches First Exclusive Store in Hyderabad at Sarath City Mall

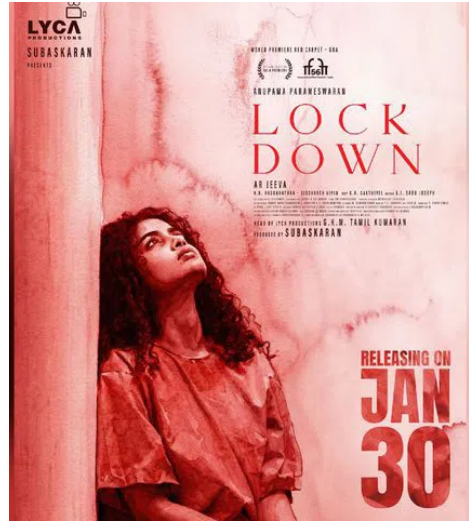
The makers of director A R Jeeva's gripping drama, 'Lockdown', featuring actress Anupama Parameswaran in the lead, announced on Friday that their film would now release on January 30 this year.

Taking to its X timeline, Lyca Productions, the firm producing the picture, wrote, "Every pause had a purpose. #Lockdown in cinemas Jan 30. #LockdownInCinemasJan30."

It may be recalled that the film's release had been postponed at least twice before. The release of the film, which was originally scheduled to happen on December 5 last year, was postponed the first time due to incessant rains that continued to lash Chennai and other parts of Tamil Nadu as a result of the deep depression caused by the remnants of cyclone Ditwah, which wreaked havoc in neighbouring Sri Lanka.

Lyca Productions, while announcing its decision to postpone the release of the film then, had said, "With the ongoing rains, the release of #Lockdown has been postponed. Your safety comes first. We'll meet you in theatres soon. #LockdownInCinemasSoon."

It also published a statement that read, "Due to the ongoing heavy rains and adverse weather conditions, the release of our film #Lockdown has been postponed. In light of the current challenges, we are delaying the release to prioritise the safety of our audience, theatre staff, and partners. Please stay safe and take necessary precautions."



We look forward to welcoming you to cinemas soon to experience 'Lockdown' on the big screen."

Once the rains receded, the makers, on December 8, announced a new release date and said the film would release on December 12. However, they again postponed the film's release, this time citing "unforeseen circumstances." The Censor Board has already cleared the film for release with a U/A certificate. 'Lockdown', a woman-centric film, has triggered huge expectations as it is based on a true story. A trailer released by the makers begins with Anupama Parameswaran (who plays the character of Anitha in the film) expressing fear of going home. It is evident she has a problem about which she cannot speak to her family. To add to her complica-

tions, we see unwanted advances being made by men to her. Under these circumstances, a 21-day nationwide lockdown is announced to check the spread of COVID, forcing Anitha to stay home. Anitha's behaviour causes her parents to worry. Her mom notices that she is constantly checking her phone and losing her temper. The trailer also goes on to show Anitha and her friend attempting to contact a doctor. However, he has been isolated because of contracting the virus.

The trailer also shows Anitha desperately calling all her friends to borrow cash. This makes her parents worried. They ask her why she is asking everyone for money. The trailer ends with Anitha apologising to her dad, saying that she won't do it again.

Produced by Subaskaran of Lyca Productions, the film will, apart from Anupama Parameswaran, also feature actors Charlie, Nirosha, Priya Venkat, Livingston, Indhumathi, Rajkumar, Shamji, Lollu Sabha Maran, Vinayak Raj, Vidhu, Abhirami, Ravathi, Sanjivie, Priya Ganesh and Asha among others. Music for the film has been scored by the gifted NR Raghunathan and Siddharth Vipin, while cinematography is by K A Sakthivel. The film has editing by V J Sabu Joseph and art direction by A Jayakumar. Choreography for the film is by Sherif and Sri Girish, while stunts have been choreographed by Om Sivaprakash. Costumes for the film have been designed by Meenakshi Shreedharan.

## Shah Rukh Khan's 'King' set to 'roar' in cinemas on THIS date

MUMBAI  
Wakeup telangana

Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan has officially announced the release date of his upcoming film King, with an announcement video that comes packed with a powerful punch.

Taking to his social media account, the actor unveiled striking visuals from the film while confirming that King will "roar" into cinemas on December 24, 2026.

The first visual in the announcement video features the bold title ROAR set against a dramatic backdrop. Another frame carries the impactful line, "This Christmas, fear wears the crown," that further hints at the film's larger-than-life scale, making it more intriguing.

In the video, Shah Rukh Khan is seen exuding dominance, with his rugged look in a torn white shirt and face splashed in blood.

Sharing the post, the actor wrote on his, "#KING is Ready to ROAR on 24.12.2026 in Cinemas. #ItsKingTime #KingDateAnnouncement".

On Shah Rukh Khan's 60th birthday in November, last year, the makers of "King" had unveiled the captivating title video from the forthcoming drama. The clip opened with a bird's-eye view of an



island facility. SRK's voice-over could be heard perfectly synced with the high-octane action sequences.

Going by the voice-over, SRK could be seen as a ruthless mercenary who has even lost count of how many people he has killed, and doesn't even know if they were good or bad. "100 desho'n mein badnaam, duniya ne diya sirf ek hi naam", 'KING', Shah Rukh was heard saying.

Sharing the initial glimpse of the drama on social media, makers, Red Chillies Entertainment, penned, "Sau deshon mein badnaam, Duniya ne diya sirf ek hi naam #KING #KingTitleReveal It's Showtime! In cinemas 2026. (sic)."

King also stars Deepika Padukone, Shah Rukh Khan's daughter Suhana Khan, Jai-deep Ahlawat.

## Sharwanand unveils teaser of crime comedy Baa Baaa Black Sheep

MUMBAI  
Wakeup telangana

Actor Sharwanand on Friday unveiled the teaser of Baa Baaa Black Sheep, a stylish crime comedy produced by Venu Donepudi under the Chitralayam Studios banner. The film is directed by Guni Manchikanti and was officially launched in October 2025, with filmmaker Tharun Bhascker having earlier released its motion poster.

Released on the occasion of Vasantha Panchami, the teaser offers a glimpse into a quirky narrative revolving around guns, gold and a city-wide chase involving six individuals. Sharing his thoughts after the launch, Sharwanand, who is riding high on the success of Nari Nari Naduma Murari, appreciated the teaser for its visual richness and wished the



team success.

Touted as a stylish crime comedy, Baa Baaa Black Sheep features an ensemble cast including Tinnu Anand, Upendra Limaye, George Marian, Akshay Lagusani, Vishnu Oi, Karthikeya and Vismaya Sri. The film's storyline centres on a flamboyant gangster, a group of misfit friends and eccentric criminals caught in a chaotic hunt triggered by the discovery of Mahatma Gandhi's 'missing watch'. What follows is a series of misunderstandings, greed-

driven pursuits and comic mishaps that unfold across the city.

Producer Venu Donepudi said the film blends a crime-driven plot with humour and situational irony. "The narrative focuses on secrets, hilarious twists, misunderstood crimes and evolving character dynamics. Witty dialogues and situational comedy are key elements of the film," he said. Notably, Baa Baaa Black Sheep is the first film to be shot entirely in Meghalaya.

## Sunny Deol's 'Border 2' earns Rs 32.10 crore on day one

MUMBAI  
Wakeup telangana

Sunny Deol's "Border 2" opened to a thunderous start at the domestic box office, collecting Rs 32.10 crore net on its first day, the makers said on Saturday.

The film, which was released in theatres across the country on Friday, is a sequel to Deol's 1997 blockbuster "Border", which was directed by J P Dutta.

"Border 2" is helmed by Anurag Singh and backed by T-Series and J P Films. It also stars Varun Dhawan, Diljit Dosanjh and Ahan Shetty.

In a press note, the makers said the film witnessed strong footfalls from early morning shows, emerging as one of the biggest openings in recent times.

"Border 2" made a colossal entry at the box office with a



massive Day 1, opening to impressive numbers and standing tall at Rs 32.10 CR NBCC (net box office collection), emerging as one of the biggest openings in recent times. "From early morn-

ing shows onwards, cinemas witnessed massive footfalls, as audiences turned up in huge numbers to mark a monumental Republic Day opening," read the note.

While the 1997 film was based on the events of the Battle of Longewala during the 1971 India-Pakistan war, "Border 2" is also set against the backdrop of the same conflict.

The movie reportedly didn't find a release in six Gulf nations — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — due to its alleged anti-Pakistan narrative.

It is the second Indian film in recent times to be denied clearance for theatrical release in the Gulf countries after director Aditya Dhar's spy action movie "Dhuranthar".

"Border 2" is produced by Bhushan Kumar, Krishan Kumar, Dutta and Nidhi Dutta. It also features Mona Singh, Sonam Bajwa, Anya Singh, and Medha Rana in pivotal roles.

## Abhijith Strikes Gold at Khelo India Winter Games

NEW DELHI  
Wakeup telangana

Kerala's Abhijith Amal Raj clinched the gold medal in the men's advanced figure skating category as figure skating made its debut at the Khelo India Winter Games (KIWG) 2026 in Ladakh, marking both a personal comeback and a milestone moment for the sport in India. The victory was significant beyond the podium. A former world champion in artistic roller skating, Abhijith's return to competitive ice figure skating after nearly a decade highlighted the arrival of a long-awaited national platform for the discipline. Abhijith is among India's most accomplished skating athletes. He won gold at the World Roller Skating Championship in 2019, followed by top honours at the Asian Roller Skating Championships in 2023 and 2025, and the World Skate Oceania and Pacific Cup in 2023. His success at



KIWG 2026 represents a rare crossover achievement between roller and ice skating at the national level.

Beyond rising to global prominence in roller skating, Abhijith had an impressive record in ice figure skating. He won gold at the Asian Open Figure Skating Trophy in Taiwan, the Dubai Golden Cup, and the Malaysian Open National Championship in 2014, along with national titles in 2013 and 2014. Another inter-

national gold followed in Malaysia in 2016, before he shifted focus to roller skating due to limited domestic infrastructure for ice sports.

Born and raised in Kerala, Abhijith began skating at the age of three. With ice skating facilities scarce in coastal India, his journey demanded extraordinary financial and personal sacrifice. His family sold property and moved into rented accommodation to support his training, including high-cost international coaching in Italy under Luca d'Alisera, an 11-time artistic roller skating world champion. Government support arrived later, but the foundation of his career was built through years of struggle.

Now 24, Abhijith is focused on giving back to the sport. Along with his skating partner Vacasya Lakshmi Narayanan, an Asian Roller Skating Championship gold medalist (2025), he co-founded

Adler Vision, a figure skating academy operating in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The academy has enrolled over 100 students in two years and regularly brings international coaches from Italy to train young skaters in India. "At the academy, we start with roller skating and, based on interest and performance, skaters can transition to ice skating or continue to excel in roller skating," Abhijith said. Several trainees have already competed at state and national levels, with plans to send select athletes to upcoming ice skating championships.

Abhijith, who was recruited by the Income Tax Department of Maharashtra under the sports quota in 2024, described Khelo India as a "prestigious championship" and said his participation in Ladakh was aimed at inspiring young skaters to believe in national opportunities.

## Hyderabad Hosts AIPC Symposium on Sustainable Cities

HYDERABAD  
Wakeup telangana  
Waheeduddin

The All India Professionals Congress (AIPC), through its Architects Domain - Telangana, organised a high-level conclave titled "Envisioning Sustainable Cities - Conversations on Urbanization & Sustainability" on January 24, 2026, at the Hyderabad Polo & Riding Club, Aziznagar. The event brought together leading architects, environmentalists, urban planners, academicians and civil society representatives to deliberate on sustainable urban development amid rapid urbanisation.

Renowned environmentalist Prof. K. Purushotham Reddy delivered the keynote address, highlighting the urgent need for environmentally



responsible city planning, conservation of natural resources and community-driven sustainability models. He stressed that future cities must balance economic growth with ecological sensitivity to ensure long-term livability. The symposium witnessed participation from several eminent experts, including Sujana Reddy

Kumbham, Telangana State Head, Architect Domain, AIPC; Prof. Anirban Ghosh of Mahindra University; noted environmentalist B.V. Subba Rao; and Dr. Kavita Reddy, AIPC State Head, Healthcare Domain. Representatives from civil society and industry, including Mrs. Sheetal of the Gandipet Welfare Association and

Mr. Srinivas from the Ramky Group, also shared perspectives on sustainable infrastructure and citizen engagement. Discussions focused on inclusive urban planning, climate-resilient infrastructure, policy interventions and the role of professionals in shaping greener, smarter cities for the future.

## Two held for drugging, robbing elderly woman in Hyderabad

The Abdullapurmet police on Friday, January 23, arrested two people for allegedly drugging and robbing a 71-year-old E Mangamma, a native of Kothagudem district.

At the time of the incident, the victim's family members were away. The accused, identified as G Harish, 25 and Venkatesh, 55, a farmer, both residents of Thippaigudem in Manchal mandal in Rangareddy district.

According to a complaint filed by the woman's family, Harish and Venkatesh arrived at Mangamma's residence and offered her a drink. After consuming the drink, the victim fell asleep. Harish and Venkatesh stole a gold chain that the victim was wearing.

## Cantonment land requirement revised for Hyderabad elevated corridors

A survey for the construction of two elevated corridors passing through cantonment areas has revealed that the projects require 2.68 acres more of Defence land than had been estimated earlier. This variation would mean the HMDA having to pay Rs 13 crore more to the Secunderabad Cantonment Board for the additional land.

SCB Chief Executive Officer Arvind Kumar Dwivedi, during the Board meeting on Friday, revealed that after a physical survey, a proposal citing the variation was sent to Southern Command, Pune, seeking an amendment to the working permissions.

SCB officials conducted a joint survey of lands falling under B-3, B-4, C and B-2 categories under cantonment management, specifying the variation.

The Defence Estates Office, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh circle, Secunderabad, then submitted a comprehensive proposal for grant of revised working permission to the HMDA for the construction of elevated corridors on State Highway-1 and National Highway-44 within cantonment limits.

Following approval by the DGDE for amendment of the revised working permission, the Cantonment Board passed a resolution accordingly. As per ground demarcation, a total of 1,21,424.1522 sq metres of land measuring 29.99 acres under the management of the Cantonment Board, Secunderabad, was affected.

Of this, 1,10,156.7392 sq metres, or 27.21 acres, which are classified, were to be transferred to HMDA on an 'Equivalent Value of Infrastructure' (EVI) basis, involving an amount of Rs 316.37 crore. The remaining B-3 and B-4 lands, measuring 11,267.413 sq metres or 2.78 acres, were to be transferred to HMDA.

## Stray dogs kill deer on Hyderabad University campus

Wildlife, which was displaced from its natural habitat after the State government cleared a part of the forest in Kanchari Gachibowli, on the University of Hyderabad (UoH) campus here, continued to fall prey to attacks.

On a single day, two deer were attacked and killed by stray dogs near the MH-K hostel on the university campus on Saturday.

In one incident, a pack of dogs chased a deer and attacked it, ripping apart its abdomen. In another case, a deer's carcass was found with dismembered legs behind the hostel, indicating the killing.

"Since it was a holiday, we were moving around the campus in the evening and found a deer's legs that were dismembered. Later, we heard the sound of dogs chasing a deer, which was whining. By the time we reached the spot, the dogs had killed the deer and started eating it," said a student and member of the Save HCU.

Wildlife activists and Save HCU members urged the university administration to take immediate responsibility and implement effective measures to protect displaced animals and prevent further such incidents.

This was not the first incident of dogs attacking deer on the university campus. In fact, such attacks surged after the government cleared some of the Kanchari Gachibowli forest abutting the university last year.

The Kanchari Gachibowli forest was home to over 700 flowering plants, 10 species of mammals, 15 species of reptiles and around 230 species of birds, besides rock formations that date back over a billion years. After deciding to auction these 400 acres of biodiversity-rich land, the State government felled trees in around 100 acres, leaving animals more vulnerable to attacks. About four to five deer that ventured out of their habitat were killed by stray dogs.

## Hyderabad Marks Hazrat Abbas (A.S.) Birth Anniversary with Fervour and Unity

Large gatherings, sandal and sehra processions, and special prayers held across Ashoor khana Hazrat Abbas(a.s) Golconda and Bargah-e-Hazrat Abbas



Bargah-e-Hazrat Abbas (Badi Bargah) at Devan Dawdi illuminated and decorated on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Hazrat Abbas (A.S.).

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The birth anniversary of Hazrat Abbas (A.S.) was celebrated with religious fervour and gaiety across the city on Friday, with devotees gathering in large numbers at ashoor-khanas to offer prayers and participate in religious programmes.

A particularly heavy turnout was witnessed at prominent centres such as Ashoor Khana Hazrat Abbas (A.S.), Golconda Fort and Bargah-e-Hazrat Abbas (Badi Bargah) at



Devan Dawdi, where devotees from different parts of Hyderabad assembled from early morning. The venues were beautifully decorated with lights, flowers and banners to mark the auspicious occasion.

Several religious organisations took out Sandal and Sehra processions on motorcycles from Yakutpura, Noorkhan Bazar and Qayam Nagar, which converged at Ashoor Khana Hazrat Abbas (A.S.), Golconda Fort. Some organi-

sations also organised foot processions that culminated at the Bargah-e-Hazrat Abbas (Badi Bargah) at Devan Dawdi. Special prayers and religious gatherings were held throughout the day. Devotees offered niyaz, cut cakes, showered flowers and exchanged greetings, reflecting the spirit of unity and devotion associated with the celebration. Religious scholars highlighted the life and sacrifice of Hazrat Abbas (A.S.), emphasising his values of courage, loyalty and compassion.

Hazrat Abbas (A.S.), the son of Hazrat Imam Ali (A.S.), was martyred in the Battle of Karbala in present-day Iraq. His birth anniversary falls on the 4th of Shaban, the eighth month of the Islamic Hijri calendar.

Hyderabad, home to a large Shia population, witnessed participation from both Shia and Sunni Muslims, underlining the city's tradition of communal harmony. Volunteers and organisers ensured smooth conduct of the programmes, with adequate arrangements made for crowd management. The celebrations concluded peacefully.

## Nampally automated parking complex to open on Jan 25

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) will operationalise India's first fully automated multi-level parking complex at Nampally on Sunday, January 25. The 15-floor facility includes three basements and seven upper floors, providing a total of 10 parking floors with capacity for 250 cars and 150-200 two-wheeler spaces.

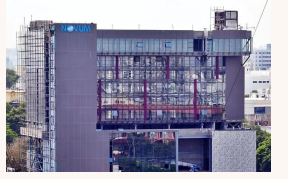
Equipped with robotic parking systems, AI-driven surveillance, solar power, and EV charging stations, the Rs 150 crore project is expected to address severe parking shortages near Nampally railway station and Exhibition Grounds.

HMRL has developed this project in Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode in partnership with Novum, a company owned by tech entrepreneur Harikishen Reddy and his wife Bhavana Reddy.

Constructed on 2,000 square yards of HMRL land under a 50-year concession, the facility will be made available from Sunday after receiving final approvals from various government departments.

In addition, five floors have been allocated for commercial activities to make this project commercially viable.

The complex also houses two well-equipped cinema the-



atres and a city-viewing gallery on the 11th floor. The automated puzzle parking system operates entirely via sensors with zero human intervention. It automatically categorises vehicles — SUVs, sedans, and small cars — and parks them on designated floors.

Unlike mechanical parking systems in Delhi and Mumbai, this system works without pallets, making parking smoother and more efficient.

The entry and exit terminals are spacious and smart, with flat turntables that cater to the needs of elderly individuals, women, and differently-abled users.

Vehicles can be left on the turntable at any angle, and the turntable rotates 360 degrees to position them correctly, NVS Reddy added.

The user experience is designed to be seamless and innovative.

Upon arrival, users receive an entry ticket with a QR code (smart card) that guides them to the terminal. Swiping the card at the terminal gate opens the gate.

The user then keeps the car on the turntable, applies the handbrake, turns off the engine, and exits.

## Hyderabad Firm Adopts Two Crocodiles

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

In a gesture towards wildlife conservation, Glukem Biocare Pvt. Limited, Hyderabad, has adopted two Mugger Crocodiles for a period of one year at Nehru Zoological Park on Saturday. Glukem Biocare director Rakesh Chinnala, along with US delegates Philip, Shyam and Sushantha Hazra, visited the zoo and presented a cheque of ₹1 lakh to J. Vasantha, curator, Nehru Zoological Park, towards



the adoption. Speaking on the occasion, Chinnala appreciated the maintenance and breeding programmes carried out in recent years. Earlier, he had adopted a Panther for a year. Nehru Zoological Park currently

houses four species of crocodiles — Mugger, long-snouted, siamese and saltwater. The curator appealed to citizens to contribute to the animal adoption scheme or support conservation through CSR activity.

## Oyster Sculpture Unveiled At Masab Tank

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

An oyster sculpture, symbolising the city's famed tag City of Pearls, was unveiled at Masab Tank on Saturday. The installation was designed and executed by Deccan Terrain Heritage for the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) as part of its heritage-in-urban-planning initiative. The project aims to adorn key junctions, parks and



public spaces with sculptures, art and artefacts that showcase Hyderabad's rich cultural fabric. "The sculpture is a tribute to the timeless pearl artistry and heritage of Hyderabad," said Mir Khan, chief architect, Deccan Terrain Heritage. Though landlocked, Hy-

derabad earned its sobriquet through an ancient pearl trade. Archaeological evidence suggests natural pearl collection along sea routes linking the Persian Gulf with India as early as 500 BCE.

The craft flourished under the Qutb Shahi Sultanate in the 16th century and continued to blossom during the Asaf Jahi dynasties, with nobles across the subcontinent patronising pearl jewellery.

## Ahead of Republic Day Railway Police Performs Mock Drills



**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The Secunderabad railway station saw a specialised drill focusing on the detection of explosives and narcotics involving a contingent of 67 sniffer dogs and their handlers. The three-hour operation, from 9.30 am, was a coordinated effort between the Railway Protection Force (RPF) Secunderabad, the bomb detection and disposal squad (BDDS), and the Telangana police intelligence security wing. It was supervised by inspector Mohd. Iqbal of Integrated Intelligence Training Academy (IITA)

and veterinary surgeon Dr A. Rakesh.

The canines specialised in explosive and narcotic detection were overseen by 100 handlers from the IITA. They were tasked with detecting concealed dummy explosives and narcotics. The squads successfully identified all "contraband" items. Senior officials, including RPF inspector B.S. Saraswath and BDDS sub-inspector Karuna Murthy, stated that the drill is part of a heightened security blanket thrown over major transit hubs in view of the upcoming Republic Day celebrations.

## Congress flags MGNREGA issues, starts three-day yatra in Hyderabad

Hyderabad DCC warns dilution of MGNREGA will hit poor, women and SC/ST families

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The Hyderabad District Congress Committee (DCC) on Saturday launched the MGNREGA Bachao Sangram Yatra, a three-day protest march opposing the alleged dilution of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) by the Union government.

The yatra began at Charminar and proceeded to Puranapul, while another leg was taken out from Singareni Colony in Yakutpura to Santosh Nagar X Roads. The march is part of the Indian National Congress's nationwide campaign to defend the constitutional Right to Work and oppose changes that the party says weaken the core spirit of



MGNREGA. Senior Congress leaders, including All India Congress Committee (AICC) Secretary Sachin Sawant and former Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president and former MP V. Hanumantha Rao, participated in the march, lending support to the local mobilisation.

Addressing party workers, Hanumantha Rao alleged that the Modi government was undermining the scheme. He said the legal Right to

Work, which once empowered rural families to demand employment, was being converted into a centrally controlled favour, which he described as unacceptable in a democracy.

Sachin Sawant raised concerns over wage insecurity, stating that rural families earlier depended on assured minimum wages and year-round employment. He alleged that arbitrary wage-setting and lack of work during critical periods were forcing labourers into insecure

and low-paid jobs.

Hyderabad DCC president Syed Khalid Saifullah warned that MGNREGA's decentralised structure was being dismantled. He alleged that powers were being taken away from gram panchayats and handed over to contractors, reducing workers to cheap labour without rights. He also criticised the move to make States bear 40 per cent of wage costs, calling it an attack on the poor, especially women and SC/ST families.

Congress leaders described MGNREGA as a lifeline for rural India and passed a resolution reaffirming support for the scheme. The yatra, coordinated by Congress Assembly in-charges from five constituencies, will conclude on January 26.

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