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**WEATHER**

MAX: 28.8°C  
MIN: 19.2°C  
RH: 42%  
RAINFALL: 0MM  
FORECAST: PARTLY CLOUDY SKY  
MAX/MIN temp. 29/19°C

**Brief Insights**

**Fadnavis Hails Ajit Pawar as 'Best CM'**

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday described late former deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar as the "best chief minister Maharashtra never had". Pawar, who was sworn in as deputy chief minister six times, had often spoken openly about his ambition to one day lead the State as chief minister. Both Houses of the Maharashtra Legislature paid tribute to Pawar on the opening day of the Budget session. Mr. Fadnavis also

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**Aviation Ministry May Cap Airfares During Festivals: Centre**

The Centre on Monday informed the Supreme Court that the Ministry of Civil Aviation is actively examining issues raised in a PIL seeking regulatory guidelines to curb unpredictable fluctuations in airfares and ancillary charges imposed by private airlines. A Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta termed the issue "serious" and granted four weeks to the Centre to conclude its deliberations. "This is a very serious concern. Otherwise, we don't entertain 32 petitions," the Bench observed. Additional Solicitor General Anil Kaushik, appearing for the Centre, sought at least three weeks to file a response, stating that the ministry was considering the

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**Trump Launches Fresh Attack on SC Tariff Ruling**

US President Donald Trump launched an extraordinary broadside of insults against the Supreme Court on Monday, claiming its "dumb" ruling limiting his trade tariffs had actually given him more powers. Trump said in a lengthy post on his Truth Social platform that Friday's court decision was "ridiculous, dumb, and very internationally divisive." "But he claimed, without clear explanation: 'I can use Licenses to do absolutely 'terrible' things to foreign countries, especially those countries that have been RIPPING US OFF for many decades.'"



**ASHA workers protest in Hyderabad for fixed pay: P8**

**Telangana Cabinet Clears 2 Schemes for Staff, Pensioners: P3**

**BJP is Conspiring to Eliminate the Congress, Says Bhatti: P2**



# India Unveils First Counter-terrorism Policy PRAHAAR At 22% Discount

The policy emphasises intelligence-led prevention and a "zero tolerance" approach aimed at denying terrorists, financiers and supporters access to funds, weapons and safe havens

**NEW DELHI**  
Wakeup telangana

The Centre on Monday unveiled the country's first national counter-terrorism policy, titled 'PRAHAAR', outlining a framework to address evolving terror threats through prevention, co-ordinated response, capacity building and adherence to the rule of law. Rolled out by the Union home ministry, the strategy is structured around seven pillars, including prevention of terror attacks to protect citizens and national interests, swift response, and integration of internal capacities through a whole-of-government approach.

The policy emphasises intelligence-led prevention and a "zero tolerance" approach aimed at denying terrorists, financiers and supporters access to funds, weapons and safe havens. It also underscores adherence to human rights and rule-of-law-based processes, miti-



gation of conditions enabling radicalisation, international cooperation, and recovery and resilience through a whole-of-society framework.

Highlighting technological challenges, the document notes that encryption, the dark web and crypto wallets enable anonymous operations by extremist groups. "Disrupting/Intercepting terrorist efforts to access and use CBRNED (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive, Digital) material remains a challenge for Counter Terrorism (CT) agencies. The threat of state and non-state actors misusing drones and robotics for lethal purposes remains

another area of concern, even as criminal hackers and nation states continue to target India through cyber-attacks," it said.

The policy also points to a nexus between illegal arms syndicates and terrorist groups and states that coordinated interventions are being undertaken by intelligence and law enforcement agencies in various states to counter such linkages and disrupt terror funding under existing legal frameworks. Without naming any country, the document states: "There has been a history of sporadic instability in the immediate neighbourhood of India, which has often given rise to ungoverned spaces. Be-

sides, a few countries in the region have sometimes used terrorism as an instrument of State policy. Notwithstanding this, India does not link terrorism to any specific religion, ethnicity, nationality or civilisation. India has always denounced terrorism and its use by any actor for achieving any stated or unstated ends unambiguously and unequivocally."

It adds that India has long been affected by cross-border sponsored terrorism and that global groups such as Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) have attempted to incite violence through sleeper cells. The document notes that terrorists operating from foreign soil have used technologies, including drones, to facilitate activities in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir, and that organised criminal networks are increasingly being used for logistics and recruitment.

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**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The Cabinet, at its meeting chaired by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Monday, approved the takeover of 69-km Hyderabad Metro Rail Phase-I from Larsen & Toubro (L&T) by March 31, end of the current financial year. This will pave the way for rapid expansion of the network under Phase-II as a joint venture between the state government and the Centre.

According to a Cabinet sub-committee that examined the takeover proposal, the government would need to pay nearly ₹15,000 crore, including outstanding liabilities, to L&T to acquire the Phase-I project. The asset valuation of Phase-I is estimated between ₹19,000 crore and ₹22,000 crore, indicating that the government would be acquiring the project at an approximate 22 per cent discounted value. According to the Cabinet, the expansion of Metro Rail Phase-II needed to be expedited to address growing traffic



congestion.

The Centre had indicated that the network must function under a single entity for undertaking Phase-II expansion through a joint venture model. L&T, which operates Phase-I, expressed its reluctance to take up the Phase-II, making the state government takeover of the existing network necessary. The state government has submitted proposals to the Centre for Metro Phase-II expansion. Under Phase-II A, lines covering 76.4 kilometres across five new corridors have been proposed, while Phase-II B envisages 86.1 kilometres across three additional corridors. The Cabinet expressed the confidence that the takeover decision would accelerate approval and

execution of these expansion plans. In another decision, the Cabinet approved inclusion of four villages — Chittiguda and Yavapur in Nawabpet mandal, and Tekulapalli and Enkatala in Mominpet mandal of Vikarabad district — into the jurisdiction of the HMDA as part of metropolitan expansion. The Cabinet also cleared implementation of the Comprehensive Road Maintenance Programme (CRMP) Phase-II within Greater Hyderabad limits under the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC).

The project will cover maintenance and development of an additional 300 kilometres of roads, over the 744 kilometres taken up under Phase-I, at an estimated cost of ₹3,145 crore funded through GHMC resources. Further, approval was granted for modernisation of the Manjeera Water Supply Scheme Phases I and II at a cost of ₹722 crore based on proposals submitted by the HMWS&SB.

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**97.37 Lakh Voters Deleted in Final Electoral Roll Released by TN CEO**

**CHENNAI**  
Wakeup telangana

The Election Commission on Monday released the final electoral roll for Tamil Nadu in which 97.37 lakh names of voters were deleted under various categories, leaving the number of electors in the southern state at 5.67 crore. Addressing a press conference, Chief Electoral Officer Archana Patnaik said that before the SIR exercise, the state's electorate stood at 6.41 crore. She said that 97.37 lakh names were deleted under various categories while 7.40 lakh people in the 18-19 age bracket

have been included in the electoral roll. Continuous updation will be taken up with immediate effect, she added. The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, with reference to January 1, 2026 as the qualifying date, was conducted in the state from October 27, 2025, and the final electoral roll was published today. As on October 27, 2025, there were 6,41,14,587 electors enrolled in the state. Following the enumeration, draft roll was published on December 19, 2025, and the number stood at 5,43,76,756.

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**Rahul Gandhi Meets 'Mohammad Deepak', Promises Gym Membership**

**NEW DELHI**  
Wakeup telangana

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday met Uttarakhand gym owner Deepak Kumar, who recently came into the spotlight after identifying himself as "Mohammad Deepak" during a confrontation over alleged harassment of a Muslim shopkeeper in Kotdwara. The meeting was held at 10, Janpath, the residence of Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi. Congress leader Vaibhav Walia,



Kumar, his friend Vijay Rawat and others were present. Kumar also briefly met Sonia Gandhi, and Rahul Gandhi spoke to Kumar's wife over the phone. In a Facebook post, Rahul Gandhi said,

"Every human being is equal. This is Indianness, this is 'mohabbat ki dukaan'. Meeting with brother Mohammad Deepak from Uttarakhand this same flame of unity and courage should burn in every Indian youth." Speaking to reporters, Kumar said Gandhi had invited him and appreciated his actions. "Rahul ji introduced me to Sonia ji and spoke with my wife over the phone. He told me that you have done a good job and that he will come to Kotdwara and take membership at my gym,"

**7 Killed In Jharkhand Air Ambulance Crash**

**RANCHI**  
Wakeup telangana

All seven persons on board a medical evacuation flight were killed after a Beechcraft C90 air ambulance operated by Redbird Airways Pvt Ltd crashed near Simaria in Jharkhand's Chatra district on Monday evening. According to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the aircraft (VT-AJV) was operating on the Ranchi-Delhi sector when it went



down in Kasaria Panchayat of Chatra district. The plane had taken off from Ranchi at 7:11 pm and lost communication

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# India Asks Its Nationals in Iran to Leave by Available Means

The Indian embassy in Iran issued a fresh advisory to the Indian nationals amid fresh protests in Tehran and increasing fears of US military strikes on the Gulf nation

**NEW DELHI**  
Wakeup telangana

India has advised its nationals in Iran to leave the country immediately in view of escalating tensions between the United States and Iran and the evolving security situation there. The Indian Embassy in Tehran on Monday issued an advisory asking all Indian nationals, including students, pilgrims, business persons and tourists, to depart Iran by all avail-

able means of transport, including commercial flights.

"In continuation of the advisory issued by the government of India on January 5 and in view of the evolving situation in Iran, Indian nationals who are currently in Iran (students, pilgrims, business persons and tourists) are advised to leave Iran by available means of transport, including commercial flights," the embassy said. It further stated that all Indian citizens and

Persons of Indian Origin should exercise due caution, avoid areas of protests or demonstrations and remain in contact with the embassy.

"All Indian nationals in Iran are requested to also have their travel and immigration documents, including passports and identity cards, readily available with them. They are requested to contact the Indian Embassy for any assistance in this regard," the advisory added. Last month, the govern-



ment had said it would take necessary steps to ensure the safety of over 9,000 Indians in Iran and was preparing contingency plans to facilitate the return of those wish-

ing to come back. A significant number of Indians in Iran are students, particularly those pursuing medical courses.

The embassy had earlier issued an advisory asking Indian nationals to leave Iran by available means of transport. The government had also advised against non-essential travel to the country. Iran has witnessed protests in recent months. Foreign secretary Vikram Misri had said India was closely monitoring the situation amid

"visible disturbances on the streets", adding that Indian students were safe and advising nationals not to venture out unnecessarily. Last month, Iranian foreign minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi spoke to external affairs minister S. Jaishankar to discuss the situation. Jaishankar had posted on X, "Received a call from Iranian foreign minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi. We discussed the evolving situation in and around Iran."

ESTD-1960

## ASTORIA HOTEL

Hyderabad Laziz Biryani

ek baar khaoge baar baar aaooge

5-9-8 / C AG OFFICE ROAD, OPPOSITE TO RBI, HYDERABAD

## BJP is Conspiring to Eliminate the Congress: Bhatti

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Monday alleged that the BJP was conspiring to politically eliminate the Congress and was raising the issue of changing the Constitution only to weaken the Grand Old Party. Addressing a District Congress Committee (DCC) orientation camp at Vikarabad, he said the Congress had not only played a pivotal role in securing India's independence but had also enacted several landmark and revolutionary legislations aimed at achieving economic, social and political equality. He accused certain political forces of attempting to keep society socially and economically divided for electoral gains. Stating that caste discrimination remained a



ground reality in the country, Bhatti said he had personally experienced caste bias in his life.

However, he emphasised that he never allowed discrimination to hinder his progress or commitment to public service. He urged party leaders to recognise social inequalities and work towards build-

ing an inclusive society based on justice and equal opportunity.

The Deputy Chief Minister asserted that only if Rahul Gandhi became Prime Minister would the country be able to effectively address its deep-rooted structural problems. He called upon DCC presidents from both Andhra Pradesh and Te-

langana to work relentlessly until Rahul Gandhi assumed the nation's top post. He stressed the importance of winning the maximum number of Lok Sabha seats in both States to strengthen the Congress at the national level. Referring to the case of Rohith Vemula, the research scholar who died by suicide following alleged caste discrimination, Bhatti said efforts were underway in Karnataka and Telangana to bring in legislation in his name to prevent caste-based discrimination in higher educational institutions.

He added that before the Assembly elections, Rahul Gandhi had promised equitable distribution of resources and wealth, and the Congress government in Telangana was implementing welfare and

development programmes in line with that commitment. Later, former APCC president N. Raghuvuera Reddy emphasised the need to further strengthen the party from the village to the district level. He said leadership that understands people's problems comprehensively would reinforce the organisation. Calling upon

DCC presidents to function not merely as organisers but as dedicated soldiers of the party, he urged them to lead public struggles and take Congress policies to the grassroots. Raghuvuera Reddy said it was their responsibility to inform people about the welfare and development programmes implemented by the Congress in the past and to build a strong, united cadre committed to the party's ideology.

## Intermediate Exams: Five Minutes Grace For Entry

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Students appearing for the Intermediate Public Examinations, commencing Wednesday, will be given a grace period of five minutes to enter centres. The examination begins at 9 am, with the last entry permitted at 9.05 am. Those arriving later will not be allowed inside. Telangana Board of Intermediate education secretary, S Krishna Aditya, on Monday urged students to reach centres — particularly in Hyderabad, Medchal and Malkajgiri — at least 30 minutes before the start. He advised using the QR code printed on hall tickets to locate centres promptly. A total of 9,95,075 students have registered, including 4,89,126 first-year and 5,07,949 second-year candidates. Exams will run from



February 25 to March 18. Hall tickets are available via college logins, the Board's website, or MeeSeva centres. Candidates must verify details such as name and subjects, rectifying discrepancies immediately through their college principal. Around 1,495 centres have been set up across the state, with 28,500 invigilators, 1,495 chief superintendents, 1,495 departmental officers, 75 flying squads and 200 sitting squads deployed.

Following the Sanskrit examination on Wednesday, evaluation of answer scripts will begin on February 26 at 20 spot camps across the

state. According to Krishna Aditya, all centres are equipped with basic amenities, including drinking water, wall clocks, functional toilets and dual desks. "No student will write examinations by sitting on the ground or floor," he said. He urged students to utilise the Tele-MANAS mental health facility, set up with the health department, to address stress, tension and anxiety.

The toll-free number is 14416. Students and parents may also contact the Board's control room on 040-24655027 or IVR number 9240205555. The command control room at the Board's office will monitor all 1,495 theory centres, with three to six cameras per centre covering the chief superintendent's room, entrances, gates and corridors.

## Thunderstorms hit Hyderabad, flights diverted

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

By early evening, traffic had slowed to a crawl as unseasonal thunderstorms lashed the city on Monday. Vehicles inched forward through sheets of rain, with water pooling near metro pillars and motorists waiting in long snarls. According to Telangana Development Planning Society (TSDPS) data between 8.30 am and 7 pm, Hayathnagar recorded 17.5 mm rainfall, Bahadurpura 14.5 mm, Attapur 13.5 mm, and parts of Rajendranagar around 12 mm.

The Hyderabad traffic police warned of waterlogging near Mehdiptnam at Pillar No. 264. Disaster Response Force teams and municipal staff were deployed to clear clogged drains. A minor collision between a car and a bus between NMDC and the PVNR flyover worsened congestion in Mehdiptnam. Air traffic was also disrupted. Four incoming flights were diverted from Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, Shamshabad. Flight Radar24 data showed an Akasa Air flight from Delhi diverted to Bengaluru, while three IndiGo flights from Jag-

dalpur, Delhi, and Goa were diverted to Vijayawada and Bengaluru. Airport authorities confirmed there were no cancellations. IndiGo issued a travel advisory asking passengers to check flight status updates. Thunderstorms were reported in Gachibowli, Rajendranagar, Bandlaguda Jagir, LB Nagar, Uppal, Malakpet, Charminar, Vanasthalipuram, and Kukatpally. Gusty winds of 30-40 kmph were recorded in parts of the state. Across Telangana, Mamda in Nirmal district recorded 42 mm, while

Doulthabad in Siddipet and Nannoor in Adilabad received 34.5 mm each. Hailstorms were reported in Dubbak, Siddipet district, and strong winds damaged signboards and disrupted power in Jayashankar Bhupalpally. The India Meteorological Department said the rain was linked to a low-pressure system over the Bay of Bengal and surface troughs across central and southern India. Light to moderate rain with thunderstorms is likely over the next 24 to 48 hours in several districts, including Hyderabad.

## Cabinet Nod to Upgrade TVVP to Directorate of Secondary Health Care

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The Cabinet has reportedly approved a proposal to convert the Telangana Vaidya Vidhana Parishad (TVVP) into the Directorate of Secondary Health Care (DSH), bringing secondary-level government hospitals directly under a full-fledged government department. The decision, said to have been cleared

on Monday, ends the autonomous status of TVVP and grants it directorate rank. The TVVP covers 184 hospitals, including community health centres, area hospitals and district hospitals, serving as a bridge between primary health centres and teaching hospitals. Officials said the autonomous structure had led to delays in budget releases, salary payments and employee benefits. Staff

have long demanded directorate status, pointing to issues such as delayed wages and lack of certain government health benefits. Andhra Pradesh had earlier converted its equivalent body into a secondary health care directorate after bifurcation. Health minister Damodar Rajanarsimha is learnt to have pushed for the change after a detailed study by the Admin-

istrative Staff College of India. The proposal was placed before Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and approved by the Cabinet. The move is expected to improve funding flow, administrative supervision and coordination within the health department, with officials stating it will strengthen services in district-level hospitals statewide.

## Cantonment Pays Solemn Tribute to Lasya Nanditha

Cantonment Leaders, Residents Pay Floral Tributes to Late MLA Lasya Nanditha on Second Death Anniversary



**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Floral tributes were paid to late MLA G. Lasya Nanditha on her second death anniversary at a solemn memorial held in Ward-1, New Bowenpally, on Monday. Former Secunderabad Cantonment Board Vice President Sri Jakkula Maheshwar Reddy (JMR), former board member Kumari P. Nalini Kiran, Sri K. Pandu Yadav, senior BRS leaders and local residents gathered to honour her memory. The leaders offered garlands to her portrait and observed a moment of silence, recalling her service to the Secunderabad Cantonment constituency. Speakers said her untimely demise created a

void in local leadership but her dedication to public welfare continues to inspire party cadres and residents alike. G. Lasya Nanditha, daughter of former MLA G. Sayanna, was remembered as a young and dynamic leader who maintained close contact with grassroots communities. Participants noted that she carried forward her father's legacy of service, particularly in New Bowenpally and surrounding areas of the Cantonment. Addressing the gathering, leaders highlighted her focus on civic issues, welfare initiatives and accessibility to the public. They said her commitment to addressing local concerns strengthened the bond between elected representa-

tives and residents. The memorial drew a significant turnout from Ward-1 residents, reflecting the enduring respect for her leadership and the continued support for the Sayanna family's contribution to public life. What began as a political remembrance evolved into a community tribute, with locals offering prayers and sharing personal memories of her interactions and assistance. The event concluded with party members reaffirming their resolve to continue working for the development of Secunderabad Cantonment, stating that carrying forward Lasya Nanditha's vision would be the true tribute to her life and service.

## Chaos at Gurukul Exam Centre Over Wrong Papers

Tension prevailed at the Gurukul entrance examination centre in Ryalampadu, Dharur mandal, Jogulamba Gadwal district, after the test failed to begin at the scheduled 11 am on Sunday after it emerged that students were given the wrong question paper. Angry parents and students staged a protest outside the school, alleging negligence. Dharur police stepped in brought the situation under control. Officials said 450 students had registered for the Common Entrance Test (CET) from the centre, of whom 405 appeared. Students were seated 10 minutes before the exam. When the question papers were distributed, staff realised that Class 5 papers had been given to students taking the test for entry into Class 6. An official from the Telangana Social Welfare Residential Educational Institution Society (TGSWREIS), which conducted the TG CET, said: "The issue happened during packaging at the printing press. This delayed the exam. However, the right paper was later sent and the exam was conducted." The exam, originally scheduled from 11 am to 1 pm, was eventually conducted between 3.40 pm and 5.45 pm. Parents expressed anger, stating they had travelled long distances and questioned the management's negligence.

## Karimnagar new mayor takes charge

**KARIMANGAR**  
Wakeup telangana

Kolagani Srinivas on Sunday assumed charge as the new Mayor of the Municipal Corporation of Karimnagar. The new mayor, along with family members, performed pujas in his chamber. After taking charge, he signed the first file to solve the drinking water problem and to take up various developmental works in newly merged villages with Rs 49 lakh. Thanking the people for electing the BJP in Kar-



imnagar, he thanked the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay, BJP state president Ramchander Rao, and party national and state leaders for choosing him as the Mayor. He assured that he would strive hard for the devel-

opment of all 66 divisions with the support of Union Minister Sanjay Kumar. Municipal Commissioner Praful Desai congratulated the new mayor by presenting a bouquet. Deputy Mayor Y Sunil Rao and others were present.

## Housing, Sanitation Top Prajavani Grievance List

The Prajavani programme held on Monday across the GHMC, Cyberabad and Malkajgiri municipal corporations received over 120 grievances, mostly related to sanitation, road restoration, and illegal constructions. The GHMC received 59 complaints, the CMC 43 and the MMC 25. At the Hyderabad collectorate, residents lodged 277 complaints. Of these, 189 were related to housing, with most petitioners seeking Indiramma houses. Another 82 complaints pertained to the revenue department, while six were from other departments.

## BC Simha Garjana Demands Political Power

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Vijayawada witnessed a massive mobilisation of Backward Classes (BC) leaders and cadres at the "Simha Garjana" public meeting organised under the leadership of BCY National President Bode Ramachandra Yadav, with a strong call for political power from village to Parliament. Delhi University Professor Suraj Mandal, grandson of B. P. Mandal, paid tributes to Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and other BC icons, urging unity to



make Bode Ramachandra Yadav the Chief Minister. He stressed that BCs must stop depending on others and instead consolidate their votes to capture power democratically.

Telangana State BC United Forum President Beri Ramachandra Yadav termed his participation a privilege and emphasised that education, employment, healthcare and poverty

eradication are possible only through political authority. He called for unity among BC, SC, ST and Minority communities to realise a "Bahujan Rajyam." Leaders from Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Odisha and Maharashtra attended, raising slogans of "Jai BC." Several BC association heads and youth leaders pledged support, asserting that with over 50% population strength, BCs can secure majority seats if united.

Telangana HC hears plea over alleged extortion bid to withdraw PIL

Justice J Sreenivas Rao of the Telangana High Court on Friday heard arguments in a criminal petition arising out of allegations that a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) was used to demand money for its withdrawal, with both sides making serious accusations against each other. The matter concerns a PIL filed by Gadila Raghuvendra Reddy, a resident of Kondapaka in Siddipet district, relating to the regularisation of plots in NBT Nagar, Banjara Hills. The PIL seeks quashing of GO Ms No. 56 issued by the State Government concerning regularisation of certain plots allegedly linked to K Venkateswara Rao, son of former MP and senior Congress leader Dr K Kesava Rao, and GHMC Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi. During the hearing, counsel appearing for K Venkateswara Rao submitted that Raghuvendra Reddy had allegedly threatened to withdraw the PIL if an amount...

# Telangana Cabinet Clears 2 Schemes for Staff, Pensioners

Under the EHS, beneficiaries will receive cashless medical treatment at government hospitals and 652 empanelled private hospitals.

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The Cabinet chaired by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Monday approved two major welfare initiatives for government employees and pensioners — a free comprehensive accident insurance policy and a cashless Employees Health Scheme (EHS). Information and public relations minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy said these were model schemes, unprecedented in the country, aimed at the welfare, security and social protection of government employees and pensioners. He said the accident insurance scheme did not require government employees and pensioners to pay any premium. Em-

ployees who die in an accident will be provided an insurance compensation of ₹1.2 crore. In addition, a term insurance benefit of ₹10 lakh will be extended in case of natural death up to the age of 60 years. The minister said the scheme, earlier introduced successfully for employees of Singareni and Transco, would be expanded to all government departments, corporations and public sector institutions. It would benefit 5.19 lakh regular government employees and 2.38 lakh pensioners — totalling 7.57. The police would be implemented through bankers in a manner that would not impose any financial burden either on employees or on the state govern-

ment. In another significant decision, the Cabinet approved the long-pending demand for a cashless Employees Health Scheme to ensure comprehensive healthcare security for government staff and pensioners. The scheme will cover 3.56 lakh regular employees, 2.88 lakh pensioners and their dependent family members, benefiting about 17.07 lakh people in total. Under the EHS, beneficiaries will receive cashless medical treatment at government hospitals and 652 empanelled private hospitals. It will cover for 1,998 medical procedures, and each employee will be issued a digital health employee card for accessing services. The scheme would be implemented through the Rajiv Aarogyasri Health

Care Trust an employees would need to contribute 1.5 per cent of their basic pay towards the scheme, with the government providing an equal matching contribution. Employees are expected to contribute ₹528 crore annually, matched by another ₹528 crore from the state government, taking the total annual outlay of the scheme to ₹1,056 crore. The Chief Minister reiterated that the government remained committed to prioritising employee welfare, health security and family protection. The Cabinet expressed satisfaction that the new schemes would provide confidence and financial security to government employees and pensioners while reinforcing the government's commitment to their well-

# Cabinet Approves Census Operations from May 11

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The first phase of Census-2027 operations across Telangana will be launched on May 11, with extensive administrative arrangements in place to conduct the nationwide exercise as per the schedule prescribed by the Centre. Around 89,000 personnel, including enumerators and nodal officers, will participate in the census operations in Telangana. The second phase of population enumeration is scheduled to be conducted in February 2027. The Cabinet at its meeting on Monday reviewed preparations being made for the Census and approved commencement of the first phase — the house listing operation — from May 11 to June 9. Officials informed the Cabinet that the enumeration process would fol-



जलसंधान से अन्न कल्याण

low the Centre's prescribed questionnaire consisting of 34 questions. In a key decision aimed at strengthening public healthcare services, the Cabinet approved restructuring of the Telangana Vaidya Vidhana Parishad (TVVP) by converting it into the Directorate of Secondary Health Care (DSH). The Cabinet cleared the proposal for introduction of a bill to grant the institution full-fledged government department status, replacing its existing autonomous structure. The move is expected to enhance funding priority, speed up procurement of medicines and surgical equipment, ensure timely payment of salaries to doctors and staff, and

improve delivery of medical services in government hospitals. The Cabinet also decided to undertake major reforms in the health and medical department to ensure efficient management of hospitals functioning under different administrative wings. A committee headed health minister Damodar Rajanarsimha will be constituted to study policy measures and recommend structural reforms. Government adviser Dr Nori Dattatreya and noted public health expert Dr K. Srinath Reddy will be members of the committee, whose suggestions will guide the reforms. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy suggested examining options to separate medical services from administrative services in hospitals to improve governance and operational efficiency.

# Paradox Museum Opens in Hyderabad

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Paradox Museum has officially opened its doors in Hyderabad, inviting visitors to step into a fascinating world of illusions, science, and interactive art. The much-awaited attraction was inaugurated by actress Nidhhi Agerwal along with Satish Yadav, Director India, Paradox Museum, and Nadia Roditi, Chief Operating Officer of Paradox Museum. Located on the ground floor of Pranaava One Hyderabad in Somajiguda, near Irrum Manzil Metro Station (Metro Pillar 1139), the museum promises a one-of-a-kind edutainment experience for families, students, and adventure seekers alike. Founded in 2022 by Milto Kambourides and Sakis Tanimanidis, the Paradox Museum first began in Oslo and has rapidly expanded across the globe. With a presence in major cities such as London, Paris, Miami, Berlin, Shanghai, Barcelona, Mumbai and more, the museum has already



captivated over 4 million visitors worldwide. Hyderabad now joins the list as the brand's newest international destination. The Hyderabad centre features more than 50 immersive and mind-bending exhibits designed to challenge perception and spark curiosity. Visitors can explore attractions like the Zero Gravity Room, Infinity Well, Paradox Tunnel, Paradox Sofa, Walking Kaleidoscope, Mirror Maze, and the famous Ames Room. Each installation blends science with creativity, offering illusions that appear to defy logic and gravity. Adding a local touch, the Hyderabad edition includes specially curated installations and the

unique "Melting Art" displays. The experience typically lasts between 60 to 90 minutes, providing endless opportunities for interactive fun, laughter, and eye-catching photographs. Designed for all age groups, the museum combines entertainment with education, encouraging visitors to question reality while learning about the science behind illusions. With over 1,200 exhibits across its global network and a footprint exceeding 15,000 square meters, Paradox Museum continues to redefine interactive entertainment. The Hyderabad launch marks another milestone in its journey, offering residents and tourists a thrilling escape into a world where nothing is quite as it seems.

# Hearings on Balka Suman's bail petition posted for today

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Hearings on the bail petition of Balka Suman, district president of the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), have been posted for today by a local court in Mancherla. The case relates to an alleged attack on the convoy of Labour Minister Dr G Vivek and G Vamshikrishna in Kyathhanpalli. The first-class additional court had earlier taken up Suman's bail plea, heard arguments from both sides, and adjourned the matter after



the police sought time to file a counter. Lawyers representing Suman contended that the allegations did not constitute serious offences warranting continued custody. Suman was arrested in connection

with a case registered at Ramakrishnapur police station for allegedly attacking the minister's convoy, forming an unlawful assembly, rioting, injuring a constable and obstructing a sub-inspec-

tor while police were on bandobast duty in Kyathhanpalli on February 17. He was remanded to 14 days of judicial custody on February 18 and is lodged in a jail at the Adilabad. The incident is set against political tensions in Kyathhanpalli municipality, where a special meeting for the selection of the governing council was postponed twice following an alleged ruckus by councillors of the Indian National Congress. BRS leaders alleged that Suman was being targeted for securing an absolute

majority of 14 wards in the 22-member municipal council. Meanwhile, Ramakrishnapur police have drawn criticism for allegedly conducting late-night checks at the residences of Suman and another accused, Dinesh, without permission. The police were also accused of threatening a computer operator, seizing mobile phones of former councillors Revalli Odolu and Srinivas, and detaining Dinesh, allegations that have added to the political controversy surrounding the case.

# TPCC Official Spokesperson Dr. Satyam Srirangam Extends Greetings to Cyberabad's First Municipal Commissioner

**KHAMMAM**  
Wakeup telangana

TPCC Official Spokesperson and PCC Member Dr. Satyam Srirangam today met IAS officer Ms. G. Srujana on the occasion of her assuming charge as the first Commissioner of the newly formed Cyberabad Municipal Corporation at the NAC Building, Madapur. He presented a bouquet and conveyed his warm congratulations. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Srirangam stated that a new



chapter has begun in Hyderabad's progressive journey. Under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the government has taken a historic decision to reorganize GHMC into three

independent corporations to ensure administrative efficiency and accelerated development. He urged the Commissioner to prioritize planned growth in Cyberabad, curb illegal constructions in Kukatpally constituency, improve road infrastructure, rejuvenate lakes, and develop public parks. Commissioner Ms. Srujana, IAS, responded positively and assured committed efforts toward comprehensive urban development.

# Karkana Nagaraju Meets P. J. Raju, Flags Labour Code Threat to Workers' Rights

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Karkana Nagaraju, Kukatpally Constituency INTUC president and HL INTUC Union general secretary, met INTUC National Secretary P. J. Raju at the union's national office in New Delhi to discuss pressing labour issues and strategies to strengthen the organisation. During the meeting, the leaders expressed serious concern over the recent Labour Codes passed by the Central Government in Parliament, which replace several long-standing labour laws. They warned that the new codes could endanger the very existence of trade unions and weaken workers' collective bargaining power. According to them, the



changes may dilute fundamental labour rights and tilt the balance in favour of corporate entities. Both leaders emphasized the urgent need to safeguard workers' interests and intensify efforts to reinforce union structures at all levels. They agreed to mobilize awareness among workers about the potential impact of the Labour Codes and to formulate a coordinated action plan to protect labour rights and uphold the principles of social justice.

# T'gana Accused of Ignoring Azad Scholarship Promise

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Telangana State Nomadic Muslim Tribes Association founder and State Working President M.D. Shabbir on Monday alleged that the State government and the Congress party are limiting their remembrance of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to symbolic gestures while failing to implement key promises made in his name. Addressing the media, Shabbir criticized the government for not launching the "Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Tohfa-e-Taleem" scheme, which was promised during the



previous elections. The scheme reportedly aimed to provide scholarships of up to ₹5 lakh to support minority students. Despite two birth anniversaries and two death anniversaries having passed since the promise was made, he said the scheme remains unimplemented. He alleged that leaders are con-

fining their tributes to garlanding photographs and posting messages on social media, instead of taking meaningful action. If the government were sincere in honoring Azad's legacy, it would have introduced the scholarship scheme on a significant occasion, he said, adding that mere commemorations amount to disrespecting a national leader of Azad's stature. Azad, born in 1888 as Mohiuddin Ahmed, was a prominent freedom fighter, scholar, and independent India's first Education Minister. He served as Congress president, played an active role in

the freedom struggle, and laid the foundation of India's modern education system. Institutions such as the IITs and the University Grants Commission were established during his tenure. His birth anniversary on November 11 is observed as National Education Day, and he was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna in 1992. Shabbir demanded the immediate implementation of the Tohfa-e-Taleem scheme, annual budget allocation of ₹1,000 crore for minority welfare, and promised reservations, urging the government to act with sincerity.

# CBIT CSE's HEADSTART 2026 Draws 360+ Innovators to Hyderabad

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The Department of Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) at Chaitanya Bharathi Institute of Technology (CBIT) successfully launched HEADSTART 2026, drawing over 360 participants from across India to Hyderabad for two days of innovation, competition, and collaboration. The event concluded on February 18 with a valedictory ceremony attended by Mr. Sravan Medapati, Director at DCX Academy, Capgemini, who distributed prizes and certificates to winners. He highlighted the growing synergy between industry and academia and encouraged students to continuously upgrade their skills to stay relevant in the rapidly evolving tech landscape. CBIT Principal



Dr. C V Narsimhulu commended the CSE faculty and student coordinators for successfully organizing the national-level fest. Earlier, on February 16, the department hosted its inaugural Ideathon 2026, which attracted more than 100 participants from various engineering colleges. Students presented innovative ideas in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and sustainable technology, demonstrating strong technical acumen and prob-

lem-solving capabilities. The fest also featured multiple technical competitions designed to enhance collaboration, creativity, and hands-on learning among participants from different parts of the country. The inaugural ceremony was led by Dr. C V Narsimhulu, Principal of CBIT, and Dr. S. China Ramu, Head of the CSE Department, along with faculty coordinators Dr. Isha Padhy and Dr. Anila M. The keynote address was delivered by Mr. Sriman Miryala, Director of Engineering at Qualcomm, who conducted an insightful session on the evolution of WiFi technologies. He traced advancements from early wireless standards to modern high-speed, low-latency systems and emphasized Qualcomm's pivotal role in shaping global wireless innovation.

# New York Orders Travel Ban, Schools Shut Down As Major Storm Hits US

**NEW DELHI**  
Wakeup telangana

New York ordered drivers off the road and shut down schools on Monday, while residents hunkered down for a massive snowstorm hitting the United States northeast. The National Weather Service (NWS) said in a post on X that "heavy snow is still falling" at 5:28 am local time (1028 GMT) on Monday adding that a total snowfall stands at 14.9 inches. According to the city's emergency services, between 9 and 11 inches of snow covered Manhattan and Brooklyn and "all non-essential vehicles are prohibited from operating on NYC Streets, Highways, and Bridges." Tens of millions of Americans from the US capital, Washington, to the northern state of Maine have prepared for up to two



feet (60 centimetres) of snow forecast in some areas. Snow and "freezing fog" with lows of 29F (-2C) were recorded in New York just before 6 am local time (1100 GMT), NWS said on its website. NWS has also predicted blizzard conditions would "quickly materialise" from Maryland up to southeastern New England, making travel "extremely treacherous." Early Monday morning, the storm had already

begun to hit New York, slashing visibility to the extent that the skyscrapers of Wall Street were barely visible from the adjacent borough of Brooklyn. Power outages are likely due to heavy snow and strong wind gusts, forecasters said. Just before 7:00 am local time (1200 GMT) on Monday, at least 119,347 customers were without power in the state of New Jersey, according to tracking website poweroutage.us.

Meanwhile, more than 5,000 flights have been cancelled, data from the tracker FlightAware showed early Monday. In New York, which has more than eight million residents, Mayor Zohran Mamdani said streets, highways and bridges would be shut until noon Monday. "New York City has not faced a storm of this scale in the last decade," he said, explaining the state of emergency. "We are asking New Yorkers to avoid all non-essential travel." The ban will not apply to essential workers or New Yorkers needing to travel due to emergencies. Brandon Smith, 33, who lives in Brooklyn, complained that some workplaces had remained open, even if roads were not. "It's gonna be difficult for most New Yorkers to get around because we still

have to go to work. It's unfortunate (roads) are suspended as jobs are not gonna stop calling us in," he said. Tourists, on the other hand, were delighted by the spectacle of their first experiences of snowfall. Macarena Gonzalez, who came from Chile, said that she knew it was going to snow but didn't realize to what extent. "I'm happy, it's a great experience," she told AFP on Sunday while exploring Times Square. The NWS warned heavy snow, high winds and low visibility were "expected to cause dangerous to impossible travel" conditions. New Jersey Governor Mikie Sherrill declared a state of emergency beginning midday Sunday, freeing up funds and allowing the swift deployment of resources to address the weather crisis.

# Canadian PM Carney Puts India At Heart Of Indo-Pacific Push To Reset Ties

**NEW DELHI**  
Wakeup telangana

Canada is signalling a decisive reset in ties with India as Prime Minister Mark Carney prepares for his first major overseas tour to India, placing New Delhi at the centre of a broader Indo-Pacific strategy aimed at diversifying trade, attracting investment, and strengthening long-term partnerships in a turbulent global economy. Announcing his upcoming visits to India, Australia and Japan from February 26 to March 7, Prime Minister Carney said Canada's new government is focused on "what we can control" in an increasingly divided and uncertain world. That focus, he stressed, means building economic strength at home while expanding and re-



balancing Canada's global relationships abroad. India will be the first and most prominent stop on the tour, underscoring Ottawa's intent to elevate relations with the world's fastest-growing major economy after a period of strain and missed opportunity. Carney will travel to Mumbai and New Delhi, where he is scheduled to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi to chart what officials describe as an ambitious new phase in Canada-India relations. The talks are expected to centre on expanding co-

operation across trade, energy, technology and artificial intelligence, talent mobility, culture and defence. Carney will also engage directly with Indian business leaders, pitching Canada as a stable, investment-friendly destination for capital in sectors ranging from clean energy and critical minerals to advanced manufacturing and digital technologies. India already ranks as Canada's seventh-largest trading partner, with two-way goods and services trade valued at \$30.8 billion in 2024. Both governments have set an even more ambitious goal: more than doubling bilateral trade to \$70 billion by 2030 through a proposed Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement. Negotiations were formally launched

# Maha Govt Vows To Protect Marathi Interests In Border Areas Of Karnataka

**MUMBAI**  
Wakeup telangana

Bringing the Maharashtra-Karnataka boundary issue once again at the centre of political discourse, the Maharashtra government on Tuesday sought to project a firm stance on the long-pending dispute. In his joint address to both the Houses of the state legislature, Maharashtra governor Acharya Devvrat on Monday asserted that the

state government remains committed to protecting the interests of Marathi-speaking communities in the border areas. "My government is committed to resolving the Maharashtra-Karnataka border dispute and has appointed eminent lawyers to represent Maharashtra in the Supreme Court," the Governor said in his joint address. The governor added that the government is implementing various educational,

health care, and other welfare schemes for Marathi-speaking people living in border areas. Maharashtra has been demanding that 814 villages along the borders including Belgaum, Karwar, Nipani, Bidar be included in the state - as a large population here speaks Marathi and share cultural ties with the state. The long-pending Maharashtra-Karnataka boundary dispute is before the Supreme Court. Mr. Acharya also

highlighted high investments from Davos, road infrastructure improvements, Samruddhi Express highway expansion to Vadhvan Port and East Vidarbha, job creation initiatives, the 'Lakshpati Didi' programme for rural women and preparations for the 2027 Kumbh Mela in Nashik. Referring to the World Economic Forum meeting in Davos, the Governor said Maharashtra expects investment proposals.

# Fadnavis Hails Ajit Pawar as 'Best CM'

**MUMBAI**  
Wakeup telangana

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday described late former deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar as the "best chief minister Maharashtra never had". Pawar, who was sworn in as deputy chief minister six times, had often spoken openly about his ambition to one day lead the State as chief minister. Both Houses of the Maharashtra Legislature paid tribute to Pawar on the opening day of the Budget



session. Mr. Fadnavis also announced a CBI probe into the plane crash incident involving Pawar. Mr. Fadnavis moved the condolence motion in the Legislative Assembly, while Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde moved the motion in the

Legislative Council. "Ajit Dada and I share the same birth date. He was exactly 11 years senior to me. He was my dada (elder brother) in the real sense," Mr. Fadnavis said while speaking on the motion. "He became deputy chief minister six times and was

a leader of immense capabilities. I truly believed destiny would one day give him the opportunity to become chief minister. Today, I would say he was the best chief minister that Maharashtra never had." In the Legislative Council, Mr. Shinde described Ajit Pawar as a strong pillar of support for the government. He credited the late leader for ensuring that the government's flagship 'CM Ladki Bahin' scheme was implemented without disturbing the State's financial balance.

# Aviation Ministry May Cap Airfares During Festivals: Centre

**NEW DELHI**  
Wakeup telangana

The Centre on Monday informed the Supreme Court that the Ministry of Civil Aviation is actively examining issues raised in a PIL seeking regulatory guidelines to curb unpredictable fluctuations in airfares and ancillary charges imposed by private airlines. A Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta termed the issue "serious" and granted four weeks to the Centre to conclude its deliberations. "This is a very serious concern. Otherwise, we don't entertain 32 petitions," the Bench observed. Additional Solicitor General Anil Kaushik, appearing for the Centre, sought at least three weeks to file a response, stating that the ministry was considering the issues flagged in the petition. Recording that the matter had been taken note of by the ministry, the court posted the case for further hearing on March 23. On January 19, the court had indicated that it would examine the



issue of "unpredictable fluctuations" in airfares and flagged steep increases during festivals, describing such hikes as "exploitation". It had directed the Centre and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to respond to the PIL seeking binding regulatory norms. Earlier, on November 17, the court had issued notices to the Centre, the DGCA and the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India on a plea filed by social activist S. Laxminarayanan seeking the establishment of an independent regulator to ensure transparency and passenger protection in the civil aviation sector. The petition alleged that private airlines reduced the free check-in baggage allowance for economy

class passengers from 25 kg to 15 kg without justification, converting part of the ticketed service into a revenue stream. It further claimed that limiting passengers to a single check-in bag without any rebate or benefit was arbitrary. The plea contended that no authority presently has the power to review or cap airfares or ancillary charges, allowing airlines to impose hidden fees and adopt dynamic pricing models. It alleged that arbitrary fare hikes, reduction of services and absence of effective grievance redressal infringe fundamental rights. The petitioner argued that unregulated pricing disproportionately affects economically weaker and last-minute travellers, particularly during festivals or emergencies. It also submitted that failure to regulate fare algorithms and service policies amounts to dereliction of constitutional duty and warrants judicial intervention. The matter will be heard next on March 23.

## State To Get.....

The Cabinet also sanctioned ₹282 crore for modernisation of Osmansagar drinking water pipelines to address nearly 30 per cent water loss caused by ageing pipelines and pump houses, aiming to improve water supply across the city. The Cabinet approved allocation of 153 acres of land in Kapra mandal to the defence ministry as equal-value land in exchange for 42 acres of defence land acquired for construction of elevated corridors in Hyderabad passing through Secunderabad Cantonment area towards Medchal (NH44) and Karimnagar (Rajiv Rahadari) It also cleared allocation of land at Kokapet in Gandipet mandal to the HMWS&SB for developing water supply infrastructure at Neopolis, while approving allotment of alternative land to the Sharada Peetham. Additionally, the Cabinet approved auctioning of shops constructed near double-bedroom housing units in CURE areas and decided to undertake a special drive for construction of Indiramma houses in both rural and urban areas, while exploring avenues to mobilise maximum central funds for the housing programme.

## 97.37 Lakh Voters.....

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, with reference to January 1, 2026 as the qualifying date, was conducted in the state from October 27, 2025, and the final electoral roll was published today. As on October 27, 2025, there were 6,41,14,587

electors enrolled in the state. Following the enumeration, draft roll was published on December 19, 2025, and the number stood at 5,43,76,756. "Subsequently, during the period for filing of claims and objections from December 19, 2025, to January 30, 2026, the names of 27.53 lakh eligible electors were added, and 4.23 lakh ineligible persons' names were deleted," she said. As per final roll, the male voters account for 2,77,38,925; female: 2,89,60,838; and Third Gender: 7,617. The number of electors in the age group of 18-19 years is 12.51 lakh, electors marked as Persons with Disability was 4.63 lakh and senior citizen electors (85+) are 3.99 lakh, Patnaik said. The Sholinganallur Assembly Constituency in Chengalpattu district has the highest number of electors with 5,36,991 electors, followed by Avadi in Thiruvallur district with 4,28,772 voters. The Harbour Assembly Constituency in Chennai district accounts for the lowest number of electors with 1,16,896 followed by Egmore (SC) in the state capital with 1,34,879 voters. The final electoral roll is available on CEO's website <https://elections.tn.gov.in>. Electors can check their names by visiting the site.

## 7 Killed In Jhar.....

The plane had taken off from Ranchi at 7:11 pm and lost communication and radar contact with Kolkata around 7:34 pm, approximately 100 nautical miles southeast of Varanasi. Chatra

## FROM FRONT PAGE

Deputy Commissioner Keerthishree G confirmed that all seven occupants, including two crew members, died in the crash. The wreckage was located in a forested area under Bariatu Pan-chayat in Simaria. Rescue teams from the district administration reached the spot and retrieved all bodies. The deceased have been identified as Captain Vivek Vikas Bhagat, Captain Savrajdeep Singh, Sanjay Kumar, Dr Vikas Kumar Gupta, Sachin Kumar Mishra, Archana Devi, and Dhuru Kumar. Ranchi airport director Vinod Kumar stated that the aircraft lost contact with air traffic control nearly 20 minutes after takeoff. Inclement weather is suspected to be a possible factor, though the exact cause will be determined after a detailed investigation. In an official statement, the DGCA said an Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AIB) team is being dispatched to probe the crash. The air ambulance had been arranged for Sanjay Kumar (41), a resident of Chandwa in Latehar district, who was undergoing treatment at Devkamal Hospital in Ranchi for 65 per cent burn injuries sustained earlier this month. Hospital CEO Anant Sinha said the patient's family opted to shift him to Delhi for advanced treatment. He left the hospital around 4:30 pm before boarding the flight. Reacting to the tragedy, former Jharkhand Chief Minister and BJP leader Champai Soren expressed deep sorrow and offered prayers for the deceased and their families. According to the DGCA website, Delhi-based Redbird

Airways operates six aircraft in its fleet, including the one involved in the crash. Further details are awaited as investigations begin. **India Unveils First.....** The document notes that terrorists operating from foreign soil have used technologies, including drones, to facilitate activities in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir, and that organised criminal networks are increasingly being used for logistics and recruitment. Social media and instant messaging platforms are cited as tools for propaganda, communication and funding. Under the prevention strategy, primacy is accorded to intelligence gathering and dissemination, with emphasis on disrupting overground worker modules and terror-financing networks. The Multi-Agency Centre and the Joint Task Force on Intelligence under the Intelligence Bureau are identified as nodal platforms for real-time sharing of counter-terror inputs. The response framework provides for coordinated action by central, state and district authorities, supported by standard operating procedures issued by the ministry. The policy states that Indian anti-terror laws give due importance to human rights and that multiple levels of legal redress are available to accused persons through the judicial system. It also addresses socio-economic factors, stating that poverty and unemployment among vulnerable communities are being addressed through government schemes to prevent exploitation.

CRIME

# Probe Agency ED Sets Target Of Filing 500 Chargesheets In FY26

**NEW DELHI**  
Wakeup telangana

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has set a target of filing 500 chargesheets in money-laundering cases in the current financial year and investigating officials have been directed to ensure that once a case is registered, the probe should be completed within one to two years, except in "complex" matters, the agency said on Sunday.

These measures were discussed and finalised during the federal probe agency's 34th Quarterly Conference of Zonal Officers (QCZO) held in Assam's capital, Guwahati, on December 19-21 last year. The meeting was chaired by ED Director Rahul Navin.

The agency has been holding this once-in-three

months conference outside Delhi since last year, with the last two editions held in Kevadia (Gujarat) and Srinagar (Jammu and Kashmir).

"The decision to hold the conference in northeastern region reflects the directorate's recognition of the strategic and operational importance of the region," the ED said in a statement.

It added that the meeting was significant as it was the last before the end of the current fiscal (March 31). Officials were told that the focus must be on "meaningful" achievement of targets, logical conclusion of investigations, timely filing of prosecution complaints and ensuring that attachments and penalties are legally sustainable and effectively realised.

"The target of filing 500 prosecution complaints in

the current financial year was reiterated and all field formations were urged to make concerted efforts to achieve the same while also preparing for an enhanced target in the next financial year.

"The need for this enhanced target is to proactively conclude long-pending investigations and to systematically reduce the life cycle of new investigations to a reasonable time frame of one to two years except in exceptionally-complex cases," the statement said.

The ED officials were also told that the powers given to them under the criminal sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) come with a corresponding responsibility and they should exercise those with caution, fairness and accountability.

"It was advised that officers must remain mindful of the impact of enforcement actions and ensure that summons and other statutory notices are issued judiciously, based on clear necessity and proper application of mind," the statement said.

The conference also discussed issues related to "priority areas" like intensifying efforts to track illicit assets abroad, identifying trade channels being misused for money laundering, misuse of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) and prioritisation of digital-arrest and cyber-fraud cases, instances of which are witnessing a "sharp" rise.

ED investigators were also asked to check the proliferation of illegal-betting and online-gaming platforms in the country, money laundering through share-market.

EDITORIAL

# SHOULD INDIA JOIN THE GAZA BOARD OF PEACE?

**NEW DELHI**  
Wakeup telangana

Of the two developments linked to Gaza, the first was the inaugural meeting of the proposed 'Board of Peace for Gaza', held on February 19. The second is Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled visit to Israel on February 25. These events, taken together, make this an appropriate moment to reflect on whether India should associate itself with the newly proposed Gaza peace architecture.

A brief backdrop is essential. The Gaza Strip is a narrow enclave roughly 41 kilometres long and 10 kilometres wide. On its eastern flank lies a heavily fortified perimeter separating it from Israel. On October 7, 2023, Hamas militants breached this barrier, killing approximately 1,200 Israelis and taking around 250 hostages. What followed was a prolonged and devastating conflict. After nearly 15 months of war, a ceasefire was declared on January 19, 2025. However, it lasted barely two months, collapsing on March 18, 2025. During that brief window, only three Israeli hostages and 90 Palestinian prisoners were exchanged — a modest outcome relative to the scale of the conflict.

**Ceasefire Framework**

It was only on October 9, 2025, that the United States brokered a broader ceasefire framework, inviting 60 world leaders to endorse a 'Board of Peace for Gaza'. At a subsequent global economic summit, 26 countries signed the Gaza Peace Accord, pledging \$5 billion in financial assistance and committing troops to an international stabilisation force. India has so far not taken a position.

The Gaza peace plan is structured in two phases. Phase One focuses on stabilisation and security; Phase Two envisages an economic and political settlement. Yet, of the 20 provisions in the plan, only three have been partially implemented: a fragile ceasefire frequently violated, limited exchanges of Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners, and the opening of the Rafah crossing solely for medical evacuations. The deeper issues remain unresolved.

The trust deficit between Israel and Hamas continues to impede progress. Israel insists that Hamas must surrender its weapons — a demand Hamas categorically rejects. Hamas, for its part, demands a role in governing Gaza, something Israel refuses to accept. Without movement on these core issues, the peace process risks remaining procedural rather than substantive.

**India's Options**

India must therefore carefully weigh its options before joining the Board of Peace. Signing the accord may offer the symbolic advantage of a "seat at the high table" in shaping post-conflict Gaza. But symbolism cannot substitute for strategic prudence.

One of the most significant concerns is structural. The Board of Peace is chaired by Donald Trump in his personal capacity, rather than by the incumbent US President ex officio. This raises serious questions about institutional continuity. What happens when a new US administration assumes office in January 2029? Would the Board's decisions bind a future American government? Would India be aligning itself with an initiative whose longevity depends on the political

fortunes of an individual? India can aid humanitarian relief and reconstruction without formally joining a Board whose structure, mandate, and longevity are uncertain.

India has consistently demonstrated strategic autonomy in recent years — whether in navigating the Russia-Ukraine conflict, balancing relations during tensions between Israel and Iran, or managing trade frictions with the United States. Associating with a body that could potentially take politically charged decisions may constrain India's diplomatic flexibility. There is also the broader concern that such extra-UN mechanisms could, over time, dilute or supplant the authority of established multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations. The implications of that shift could extend beyond Gaza to other international disputes, including those directly affecting India.

Another dimension relates to the nature of the initiative itself. President Trump has frequently framed the Palestinian question through an economic lens — prioritising reconstruction funding, investment packages, and development corridors. While economic revival is vital, the conflict is fundamentally political, rooted in competing national aspirations and questions of sovereignty. If India becomes a member of this Board, it may find itself navigating delicate diplomatic terrain. India's ties with Israel are deep and multifaceted, encompassing defence cooperation, counter-terrorism, cybersecurity, and high-technology transfers. India imports significant defence equipment from Israel, including night-vision devices and unmanned aerial vehicles.

## HC admits HUL writ, grants interim stay

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The Telangana High Court stayed further proceedings initiated by the labour Appellate Authority against Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) under the Telangana Shops and Establishments Act. Justice Renuka Yara was dealing with a writ petition filed by the company. According to the petitioner, the appellate authority proceeded to pass the impugned order in disregard of the statutory framework governing the appellate remedy and without appreciating the legal consequences arising from non-compliance with earlier directions within the mandatory period of 30

days.

Such non-compliance, according to the petitioner, rendered the second appeal infructuous. The company sought issuance of a writ of certiorari to quash the impugned order and a consequential direction to hear and dispose of the main appeal on merits.

A caveat entered appearance on behalf of the contesting respondent, contending that substantial dues amounting to about ₹60 lakh were pending against the petitioner. HUL contended that nearly ₹41 lakh had been paid and placed material on record evidencing such payments for the perusal of the court.

## PBEL Case: Court Orders Compensation For Boy's Parents

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The Hyderabad District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission directed Golden Star Facilities to pay ₹10 lakh as compensation to a bereaved family following the death of a six-year-old boy who was electrocuted at a gated community in Narsingi. The incident occurred in February 2019 at PBEL City, where the child, Monish, was playing in the lawn of the residential complex at around 6 pm. He touched a lamp post to retrieve a ball and collapsed. Inquiry revealed that he had come into contact with a live underground electrical wire and

died on the spot. The incident was captured on a CCTV camera.

Monish was the son of Diwakar, a software professional from Chennai, and was studying at a private school in Bandlaguda. The Narsingi police had then booked Incor, Golden Star, and the residents' welfare association.

Then-inspector G.V. Ramana Goud had told Deccan Chronicle in 2019 that the boy's body had been taken to Chennai, his family's native place, and that the case, though registered in Telangana, had involved co-ordination with Chennai police for the postmortem and inquest. No arrests were made at the time, he said.

## Hyderabad man held for using fake number plate

The Langar House Police Station has registered a criminal case and apprehended the accused, Arif Khan, for allegedly using a forged registration plate on his vehicle.

According to officials, the legitimate owner of a Honda Activa bearing registration number TS13EX3358 approached the traffic police after receiving illegal traffic challans against his vehicle.

During the investigation, authorities found that the accused had replaced his vehicle's original registration number with TS13EX3358 to mislead authorities.

## CBI Court Receives Second Hoax Bomb Threat

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

A CBI court here received a bomb threat by e-mail on Friday, which was later found to be a hoax, police said. According to court authorities, they received a similar hoax email bomb threat on February 18, and Friday's message was identical, including details of the sender. A thorough check was conducted in the court premises, and the threat was declared a hoax, police said, adding that an investigation is underway to trace the origin of the emails. The email received on February 18 claimed that RDX IEDs

were planted in the judge's chamber and court premises and would detonate when individuals carrying remote control devices approached the office.

In similar incidents in the past week, anonymous emails threatening to blow up the Karimnagar district court, in Telangana, and in the Rajamahendravaram and Anantapur courts in Andhra Pradesh have triggered panic and heightened security measures. This spate of threats is part of a wider pattern, with similar emails recently reported in courts across Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, and Karnataka.

## Man booked for illegal teak timber storage in Chintapalli

A man was booked for allegedly procuring and storing teak timber illegally in his house at Chintapalli village in Jannaram mandal on Friday. Timber worth over Rs.24,000 was seized from his possession.

Jannaram Forest Range Officer Sushma Rao, in a statement, said a case was registered against Muthyam Venkanna from the village for procuring and storing the teak timber at his house. Venkanna was found to have stored the timber logs during a surprise raid conducted by the Forest officials, following a tip-off. The timber was shifted to the office of Jannaram FRO for further inquiry and legal action.

## Khammam police arrests four involved in YouTuber Boggula Srinivas murder

**KHAMMAM**  
Wakeup telangana

Kusumanchi police have arrested four persons involved in the alleged murder of a YouTuber Boggula Srinivas, who was found dead in a car in Palair reservoir in the district on February 14.

Speaking to the media Khammam Rural ACP, Tirupathi Reddy informed that the financial disputes between the deceased Srinivas and his friend Mekala Venu Madhava Reddy of Kukatpally in Hyderabad led to the killing of the YouTuber.

He said that both the deceased and the main accused

Madhava Reddy committed a GST fraud worth Rs 90 lakh using the GST license, BOGGULA BBQ owned by the deceased person, with equal share in the earnings.

But Madhava Reddy paid only Rs 15 lakh to Srinivas promising to pay the remaining Rs 30 lakh later. In due course Srinivas's GST license was cancelled; notices were issued to Srinivas and Madhava Reddy from the GST department.

Then Srinivas was reported to have demanded that Madhava Reddy pay Rs 30 lakh due to him and to activate the GST license for which Rs 1 crore has to be paid as pen-

alty. It led to disputes among them; following which Madhava Reddy decided to eliminate Srinivas. The main accused allegedly plotted to kill Srinivas with the help of Pokala Koteswara Rao, Shaik Abdul Hafeez and Mohammed Azmathali Khan. An amount of Rs 5 lakh was paid as supari to kill Srinivas. As per the plan the deceased was taken in a car on February 13 night on the pretext of paying his dues in Vijayawada. During early hours on the next day he was killed at an isolated place in between Nakrekal and Jangaon with knives and iron rods. Later to make Srinivas'

death look natural, the body was thrown into Palair reservoir along with the car. A case under Sections 103 (punishment for murder), 61 (criminal conspiracy), 238 (tampering with evidence) read with 3(5) of BNS was registered at Kusumanchi police station. The accused confessed to their crime, the ACP said. It might be noted that Srinivas had become popular after publishing a book 'Pawan Kalyan Hatao-Politics Bachavo' in 2014 as the book created a sensation in the Telugu States. He received death threats at the time of the book release.



## FM Sitharaman to Banks: Focus on Core Banking, Stop Mis-Selling

**NEW DELHI**  
Wakeup telangana

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday cautioned banks against mis-selling financial products, stating that such practices now constitute an offence under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). She directed lenders to return to their core banking functions of mobilising deposits and extending loans, instead of prioritising the sale of insurance and other third-party products. Addressing reporters after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Central Board meeting in New Delhi, Sitharaman described mis-selling as her “pet peeve” and expressed concern that



banks are spending “more time selling insurance” than focusing on their primary responsibilities. She said banks must concentrate on mobilising Current Account Savings Account (CASA) deposits and strengthening their lending operations. “We have been discussing mis-selling with banks. Banks need to focus

on their core business,” she said, adding that many lenders appear to have drifted away from understanding their customers’ needs. Emphasising traditional banking principles, she advised institutions to “know your customer, reach out to them, lend and make your money from what you lend.” The Finance

Minister pointed out that borrowers are often compelled to purchase insurance products while availing loans, including home loans backed by collateral.

Questioning the logic behind such practices, she asked why a customer seeking a secured home loan should be required to take additional insurance coverage. According to her, such mis-selling places customers in a difficult position and undermines trust in the banking system. Sitharaman welcomed the RBI’s recent move to tighten regulations around marketing and sales practices.

Earlier this month, the central bank issued

draft guidelines titled Reserve Bank of India (Commercial Banks – Responsible Business Conduct) Amendment Directions, 2026, aimed at curbing unethical sales practices and strengthening consumer protection.

The proposed norms, set to come into effect from July 1, 2026, mandate that banks refund the full amount collected through mis-sold products and compensate customers for any resulting losses, in line with approved policies. The Finance Minister reiterated that restoring customer trust and reinforcing responsible banking practices must remain a priority for the sector.

## International Spice Conference Opens in Kochi Amid Regulatory Shifts

**NEW DELHI**  
Wakeup telangana

The four-day International Spice Conference (ISC 2026), organised by the All India Spices Exporters Forum (AISEF), began at Le Méridien Kochi, bringing together over 1,000 delegates from 30 countries. Held under the theme “Spice 360 – Getting Future Ready,” the ninth edition of the conference comes amid rising regulatory scrutiny, tariff shifts and climate-related production risks affecting the global spice trade. Inaugurating the event, Amitabh Kant, former G20 Sherpa and former CEO of NITI Aayog, called on the industry to move from bulk exports to high-value, branded and technology-driven products. He highlighted India’s position as the



world’s largest producer, consumer and exporter of spices, with exports exceeding 1.8 million tonnes worth over \$4 billion last year. Kant outlined key priorities, including value addition, adoption of artificial intelligence, climate-resilient farming, sustainability, traceability and farmer-centric policies. Martin Sonntag, CEO of Oterra, stressed the importance of collaboration, trust and responsible practices to strengthen consumer confidence as global standards on safety

and sustainability tighten. Emmanuel Nambusseril, Chairman of AISEF, said future readiness is essential as climate risks and science-driven regulations intensify. P. Hemalatha, Secretary of the Spices Board India, emphasised the need for harmonised testing protocols, stricter compliance systems and greater adoption of Good Agricultural Practices to ensure quality and market access. AISEF also presented industry honours, including the Lifetime Achievement Award to A.P. Murugan and the Institutional Award to the American Spice Trade Association. The conference exhibition, showcasing processing technologies, traceability solutions and quality systems, was inaugurated by N. Bhavani Sri, Secretary, National Turmeric Board.

## Staff Collusion Led to Haryana Govt Account Fraud, No Impact on Profitability: IDFC Bank

**NEW DELHI**  
Wakeup telangana

Private lender IDFC First Bank, which recently disclosed a ₹590 crore fraud linked to Haryana government accounts, on Monday called the incident an isolated one and said that it was the result of a collusion between its employees and external parties. In a specially convened call for investors and analysts earlier in the day, V Vaidyanathan, managing director and chief execu-

tive officer at IDFC First Bank, said, “This matter pertains to a particular branch in Chandigarh and is confined to a limited set of Haryana government-linked accounts. The main issue which we have observed here is that certain employees of this branch, most possibly in connivance with external parties, have fraudulently transferred these amounts to beneficiaries who had accounts outside of our bank.” “This is an isolated case.

In the last 5 years, 7 years, we put up over 1,000 branches, cumulatively maybe over 1,050 or 1,060. And, we have really not seen any incident of this nature that has happened here,” he added. The bank has pegged the discrepancy at around ₹590 crore, comprising ₹490 crore identified following reconciliation and an additional ₹100 crore that was “self-identified” through internal checks. The bank’s chief hinted that this amount of ₹590

crore is unlikely to increase. Recoveries and “employee dishonesty insurance” cover of ₹35 crore could reduce the impact on the bank, he said. Vaidyanathan informed that the bank has appointed KPMG to conduct an independent forensic audit, which is expected to conclude in 4–5 weeks. He said that the bank will make some provisions as a result of the fraud and in line with its policies to recognise any stress up-front.

## Muslim Rashtriya Manch Celebrates Indresh Kumar’s Birthday

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The birthday of senior leader Indresh Kumar was celebrated in Hyderabad by the Greater Hyderabad City unit of the Muslim Rashtriya Manch, where sweets were distributed and leaders gathered to mark the occasion. The event also highlighted the appointment of Zahid Mirza as the Greater Hyderabad City Convener of the organization. Expressing his gratitude, Zahid Mirza thanked Dr. Indresh Kumar for en-



trusting him with the responsibility and pledged to work dedicatedly for the organization’s objectives. Several prominent leaders were present at the celebration, including Sri Viragpochper, National Convener; Prof. Dr. Shahid Akhtar, National Convener; Mohd. Afzal, National Convener; Iliyas

Ahmad, National Convener; and M.A. Sattar, Regional Convener for Telangana and Andhra Pradesh and Member of the National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language under the Ministry of Education, Government of India. Zahid Mirza extended his thanks to all national and re-

gional conveners for their support and guidance. On the occasion of Dr. Indresh Kumar’s birthday, sweets were distributed among attendees as a mark of celebration. Friends and well-wishers congratulated Zahid Mirza on his new role as Greater Hyderabad City Convener and honored him with floral felicitations. The program concluded with reaffirmed commitment from the leadership to strengthen the organization’s activities in the Greater Hyderabad region.

## Striders Impex SME IPO From February 26

**MUMBAI**  
Wakeup telangana

Mumbai-based Striders Impex, engaged in the licensing, development, sourcing, and distribution of toys and kids’ consumer merchandise in India and the UAE, has announced a Rs 36.28 crore initial public offering in the price band of Rs 71 to Rs 72 per equity share of Rs 10 face value. The SME IPO, which will be



listed on the NSE Emerge platform, will open for public bidding on February 26 and close on March 2, 2026. The net proceeds from the IPO will be utilized for the incorporation and investment in a

newly proposed wholly owned subsidiary in mainland UAE, repayment of loans, working capital requirements, and general corporate purposes. The company has an international presence through its wholly owned subsidiary in the United Arab Emirates, supporting overseas distribution and trading activities. The company offers end-to-end solutions covering product design, devel-

opment, sourcing, manufacturing coordination, and distribution. It sources toys and kids’ consumer merchandise for children aged 18 months to 15 years from Indian and Chinese vendors. “The proposed IPO represents the next phase of our growth journey. The proceeds will enable us to deepen distribution, invest in brand building, strengthen working capital, and accelerate

international expansion through our UAE platform—driving scalable growth and creating sustainable long-term value,” said Kumarshri Rajkumar Bahety and Mustafa Esmail Kapasi, Managing Directors of Striders Impex. During FY25, Striders’ consolidated revenue stood at Rs 61.86 crore, with EBITDA of Rs 9.32 crore and profit after tax of Rs 8.40 crore.

## Influencer EV TraxelXP Penalised ₹50 Lakh in Defamation Case

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

In a significant boost to India’s startup ecosystem, the Court of the III Additional District and Sessions Judge, Sangareddy, on January 29, 2026, awarded ₹50 lakh in damages to PURE Energy Pvt. Ltd. in a defamation suit against social media influencer M. Prabhakar Aditya, known as “EV TraxelXP.” The judgment in O.S. No. 78 of 2024 (PUR Energy Private Limited vs. M. Prabhakar Aditya) also granted ₹73,383 towards legal costs. Presiding Judge G. Sunitha Ravindra Reddy ordered recovery of damages for loss of reputation and issued both permanent and mandatory injunctions. The defendant has been restrained from defaming or misusing the PURE EV

**Landmark Legal Victory: PURE EV vs. YouTube Defamation**

THE DISPUTE: MALICIOUS CONTENT & IP INFRINGEMENT

THE VERDICT: COURT DECREE & PENALTIES

- ₹50,00,000 Awarded in Damages** (The plaintiff must use a public apology to newspapers and social media)
- Financial Liabilities Imposed** (Damages for Defamation: ₹. 50,00,000)
- Mandatory Injunction For Public Apology** (The defendant must issue a public apology to newspapers and social media)
- Permanent Restraining Order** (A permanent injunction restrains the defendant from using the trademark or content of the plaintiff)
- ₹73,383 Awarded in Legal Costs** (Court Fee Paid: ₹. 16,384)

**Exorbitant Malice Behind Defamation** (Malicious videos were posted after the plaintiff refused legal demands for additional compensation)

**Irreparable Reputational Damage** (The court found the defendant caused significant loss of goodwill among customers and investors)

trademark and directed to remove all defamatory content from digital platforms. The court also mandated a public apology in national newspapers and across the influencer’s social media accounts. The court emphasized that the right to reputation is a fundamental right under the Constitution of India and observed that the defendant’s actions caused immense and irreparable harm. Notably, the defendant remained ex-parte, failing to contest the evidence submitted by the company, including screenshots, emails,

and videos. The dispute arose from a YouTube video titled “One Company Destroyed the EV Industry | Poor EV | Real Face,” where the influencer allegedly replaced “PURE EV” with “POOR EV” and used morphed images to mislead viewers. The court found the allegations baseless and malicious. The ruling sets a strong precedent, reinforcing that freedom of expression does not permit trademark infringement or deliberate misinformation targeting brands.

## Apple To Shift Some Mac Mini Production To US From Asia

**NEW DELHI**  
Wakeup telangana

Apple will move some production of its Mac Mini desktop computer to the U.S. from Asia, with a new manufacturing effort set to begin later this year at a Foxconn facility in north Houston, The Wall Street Journal reported on Monday. The plan marks the iPhone maker’s most recent U.S. investment, following its commitment announced last August

to invest \$600 billion in the U.S. over the next four years. In May, U.S. President Donald Trump had threatened Apple with a 25% tariff on products manufactured overseas, a sharp reversal from earlier policy when his administration had exempted smartphones, computers and other electronics from rounds of tariffs on Chinese imports. The production for Mac Mini will continue in Asia, its chief operating officer Sabih



Khan told WSJ, adding that the facility will meet local demand as the U.S. assembly line ramps up. It was not immediately clear whether Apple plans to scale down production in its Asia facilities. Apple did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment. The company

feels more confident projecting long-term demand for the Mac Mini, which is more popular than the Mac Pro, Khan added. It is also expanding the Houston facility to include a new training center for advanced manufacturing, according to the report. Apple has a mixed track record when it comes to following through on investment promises. In 2019, for instance, Cook toured a Texas factory with

Trump that was promoted as a new manufacturing site. However, the facility had been producing Apple computers since 2013 and Apple has since moved that production to Thailand. Apple continues to manufacture most of its products, including iPhones and iPads, in Asia, primarily in China, although it has shifted some production to Vietnam, Thailand and India in recent years.

## From Exquisite Dinner to Pool Volleyball: Rashmika-Vijay's Pre-Wedding Celebrations Begin

Actors Vijay Deverakonda and Rashmika Mandanna have officially confirmed their relationship, sharing intimate glimpses of their pre-wedding festivities ahead of their highly anticipated marriage on February 26, 2026. In a series of Instagram Stories, the actors shared moments that beautifully balance elegance with easy-going joy. The festivities, now officially titled "The Wedding of VIROSH," mark not just the union of two popular stars but also a tribute to the fans who coined the portmanteau years ago. On February 22, the couple confirmed their relationship and shared an emotional



joint note on Instagram, revealing that their wedding would carry the name lovingly given to them by their admirers. "Our dearest loves. Before we made any plans, before we chose anything for ourselves—you were already

there. With so much love, you gave us a name. You called us 'Virosh'. So today—with full hearts, we name our coming together in your honour," they wrote. The note concluded with gratitude-filled messages, thanking fans for their

unwavering affection and support. The pre-wedding celebrations in Udaipur reflect a blend of high-energy recreation and sophisticated luxury. Rashmika Mandanna offered followers a look at an exquisitely curated Japanese dining

experience. On the other hand, Vijay Deverakonda shared a more relaxed side of the festivities. The actor posted a snapshot of a spirited game of pool volleyball with friends, capturing the laid-back energy of the destination wedding. Reports indicate that Rashmika and Vijay had an intimate engagement ceremony in Hyderabad in October last year. Their upcoming wedding in Udaipur is now eagerly awaited by fans across the country. The duo shared screen space in the 2018 romantic comedy blockbuster 'Geetha Govindam' and the 2019 action drama 'Dear Comrade'.

## Manipuri Film 'Boong' Wins Best Children's Film at BAFTA 2026



**MUMBAI**  
Wakeup telangana

In a historic moment for Indian regional cinema, the Manipuri feature film Boong won the prestigious Best Children's and Family Film award at the BAFTA 2026 ceremony held at the Royal Festival Hall on Sunday. Backed

by Farhan Akhtar and Ritesh Sidhwani's Excel Entertainment, the film marks a significant global milestone for storytelling from North-East India. Directed by Lakshmi Priya Devi, the coming-of-age drama follows a young boy named Boong (Gugun Kipgen) who embarks on a journey from the hills of Manipur

to the border town of Moreh and into Myanmar to reunite his estranged father with his mother. The film, which features Bala Hijam and Angom Sanamatum in key roles, had its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2024 and saw a theatrical release in India in September 2025.

## Zeenat Aman Reaffirms That Mutual Respect, Not Marriage, Is Sacred

**MUMBAI**  
Wakeup telangana

Veteran actor Zeenat Aman has stirred considerable debate with her candid views on live-in relationships, drawing both criticism and support from different quarters. Responding to the backlash, the yesteryear screen icon stood firm, reiterating that her beliefs are neither new nor reactionary but rooted in a long-held conviction about the true essence of human relationships. According to her, the strength and success of any partnership lie not in legal contracts or religious ceremonies, but in the



presence of mutual love, respect, and equality. She emphasized that a healthy relationship is built on emotional connection and shared understanding, not on societal approval, official paperwork, or traditional validation. In her

view, formal marriage—while meaningful for many—should not be considered the sole benchmark of commitment or fulfillment.

She described it as "absurd" to assume that marriage is a mandatory ingredient for happiness or that it possesses the power to automatically repair a troubled relationship.

Simply formalizing a bond, she argued, does not address deeper incompatibilities or unresolved conflicts. Without mutual respect and genuine affection, even a legally sanctioned marriage can fail to provide emotional security or satisfaction. Reflecting on

changing social dynamics, Zeenat Aman observed that many young people today enter partnerships seeking companionship, emotional support, and shared experiences rather than material gain, social alliances, parental pressure, or the expectation of having children. Modern relationships, she suggested, are increasingly shaped by the desire for equality, personal freedom, and authentic connection. Couples often choose to be together because they genuinely value one another as individuals, not because tradition or circumstance compels them.

## Samantha Ruth Prabhu's 'Maa Inti Bangaaram' to release on May 15, 2026

**MUMBAI**  
Wakeup telangana

Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu is all set to grace the screen with another powerful role in her forthcoming drama "Maa Inti Bangaaram". Now adding to the hype, the makers have announced the release date for her Telugu drama.

The much-talked-about Tollywood flick will reach the audience on May 15 this year. Samantha updated the netizens about the release date of her next project with a social media post. The an-



nouncement poster showed Samantha peeping through the door, with a curious expression on her face.

"See you in theatres this summer, Bangaaram... #MaaIntiBangaaram Grand Release worldwide on 15th May, 2026 #Mi-

BonMay15th #MiB (sic)," she captioned the post.

In January, the makers unveiled the gripping first look poster from BV Nandini Reddy's directorial on social media.

The photo featured Samantha standing inside a bus in a simple brown saree. From the looks of it, she seems all geared up to pick a fight with intensity palpable in her eyes.

Dropping the poster on her IG, Samantha penned, "You just keep watching... #MaaIntiBangaaram will be connecting with y'all."

## Cantonment Merger Call Echoes at Cricket Finale

Cantonment Merger Movement Gains Momentum as Cricket Tournament Concludes in Bowenpally

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The demand for the merger of the Secunderabad Cantonment Board (SCB) with the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) gathered fresh momentum as 68 cricket teams and hundreds of youth participants rallied behind the cause during a three-day tournament in Bowenpally.

The "Cantonment Merger Movement Cricket Tournament," organised by Bowenpally Youth at the Bowenpally Cantonment Playground, concluded on Monday with a strong message: sports and civic activism can go hand in hand in the fight for administrative reform and regional development. Cantonment MLA Sri Ganesh, who attended the closing ceremony as Chief Guest, said the massive participation reflected growing public backing for replacing the existing cantonment administration with a civilian-led municipal system.



Addressing the gathering, the MLA said that while victory and defeat are part of sport, the unity and enthusiasm displayed by the youth must now strengthen the movement for the Cantonment's merger and long-term development. He described the turnout as a sign of "strength and legitimacy" for the ongoing campaign and urged residents to remain united until the transition is achieved. The tournament witnessed intense competition across three days,

culminating in a high-voltage final between Anil CC and Badam CC. Champions: Anil CC clinched a dominant victory to lift the trophy. Runners-up: Badam CC secured second place after a spirited performance. Sri Ganesh presented trophies and mementos to the winners and finalists, congratulating all participating teams for their discipline and sportsmanship. Organisers said the event was designed not just as a sporting competition but

as a symbolic assertion of the community's demand for integration with GHMC, arguing that a merger would accelerate infrastructure development, improve civic services, and bring the Cantonment area under a more accountable urban governance framework. With strong youth participation and visible political backing, the merger movement appears to be gaining renewed traction in the Secunderabad Cantonment region.

## West Indies Beat Zimbabwe by 107 Runs in Super 8 Clash

**MUMBAI**  
Wakeup telangana

A rampant West Indies pulverised Zimbabwe by 107 runs in a one-sided T20 World Cup Super Eights match after Shimron Hetmyer and Rovman Powell's brutal onslaught propelled them to the second highest total in the tournament's history here Monday. The West Indies meant business on a flat deck to clatter 19 sixes and 16 fours in all, amassing 254/6 on the back of Hetmyer's 34-ball 85 and Powell's 35-ball 59.

The Caribbean side narrowly missed Sri Lanka's record total of 260/6 set against Ireland in the inaugural edition of the competition in 2007. In their reply, a battered Zimbabwe crumbled in the face of an imposing target and the contest was sealed as early as in the third over, when Akeal Hosein (3/28) returned with a rare double-wicket maiden. The slide began when Zimbabwe's best batter in the tournament Brian Bennett (5) was cleaned up by Hosein, and



they had lost opener Tadiwanashe Marumani (14) to Matthew Forde, caught by Hetmyer.

Hetmyer had more catching to do when Ryan Burl (0) hit one straight to mid-wicket off Hosein, which left Zimbabwe reeling at 20/3 inside three overs. Gudakesh Motie (4/28) then struck twice in as many balls to leave Zimbabwe gasping in the 11th over, and the African side eventually rolled over for 147 in 17.4 overs. Brad Evans' career-best 43 off 21 balls (2 fours, 5 sixes) and his record 44-run stand for the 10th wicket

with Richard Ngarava reduced the margin of defeat.

The outcome also saw West Indies notching up their fifth straight win here at the Wankhede Stadium in T20 World Cup history, which began in their title-winning run in 2016. Hetmyer's first-innings exploits on a batting haven saw the West Indies No. 3 bettering his own record of fastest ever half-century for his side, off only 19 balls as opposed to the 22 deliveries he had consumed earlier in the tournament against Scotland.

Aided by a couple of lifelines, Hetmyer peeled off his second fifty of the tournament by pummeling seven sixes and as many fours. Like many of his peers, Zimbabwe's Tashinga Musekiwa was playing his first-ever game at the iconic venue but the 26-year-old would remember the game differently: for having dropped Hetmyer twice, on nine and 70. Brandon King (9), having hit a six off Richard Ngarava (2/47), struck it straight to Musekiwa at deep backward square in the third over. However, in the fourth, Musekiwa failed to control the ball which popped out of his hands at deep backward square, giving a lifeline to Hetmyer off Blessing Muzarabani (2/42) and that was where it all changed. Hetmyer had begun with a flick off mid-wicket for a four off the first ball and looked in good rhythm until he pulled one straight to deep backward square where Musekiwa had failed to hold on.

## Marriage scam targeting young women on the rise in Hyderabad

The Hyderabad City Police have sounded an alert over a sharp increase in marriage-related frauds, warning families and young women to remain vigilant as scammers exploit arranged marriage alliances to cheat and extort money. Several such cases have recently been reported to the Hyderabad She Teams, revealing a recurring and organised pattern used by the accused.

According to police officials, fraudsters typically approach families through traditional matchmaking channels, presenting themselves as genuine prospective grooms. Engagements are conducted formally and announced among relatives and the community, creating a sense of legitimacy and social pressure. Once the alliance is made public, the accused gradually build emotional closeness with the bride-to-be, repeatedly assuring her that the marriage is final. The VC Sajjanar, Hyderabad Police Commissioner, said the men often emotionally manipulate victims by claiming that since the wedding is already fixed, there is no harm in becoming physically intimate before marriage.

After gaining the woman's trust, they allegedly begin demanding large sums of money or additional dowry to proceed with the wedding. "If the demands are not met, the accused threaten to call off the marriage, placing immense mental pressure on the woman and her family," Sajjanar said. He added that because the engagement is already known in society, many families hesitate to approach the police due to fear of social stigma and embarrassment. Taking advantage of this silence, the accused reportedly escalate harassment and financial extortion.

## ASHA workers protest in Hyderabad for fixed pay

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA), who gathered at the Commission of Health and Family Welfare's office at Koti in Hyderabad, demanding a fixed honorarium of Rs 18,000 per month, were taken into custody and were not allowed to submit their representation to the Commissioner on Monday, February 23.

According to P Jaya Lakshmi, president of the Telangana ASHA Workers Union, which is affiliated to the Centre for Indian Trade Unions (CITU), said in a statement that from Monday morning itself, the police have been taking ASHA workers into custody from their homes across the state.



"Despite the restrictions imposed by the police, the ASHA workers managed to reach Hyderabad from all the districts. They reached Koti and took out a rally from Metro pillar no 1204 to the Commissionerate, but the police blocked the four roads near the Koti main signal," Jala Lakshmi told. "From 12 to 3 pm, ASHA

workers held a dharna, during which the police stationed there in significant numbers took most of them into custody and ferried them away from the scene," she said.

Videos from the scene also showed an ASHA worker falling unconscious, after which the police shifted her to a

hospital for treatment.

The demand for a fixed Rs 18,000 monthly honorarium has been the principal demand of the ASHA workers for several years. The Congress, in its 2023 election manifesto, had also promised to increase their honorarium and provide them with job security.

## Hyderabad becomes The Hartford's first home in India

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

Hyderabad on Monday marked another milestone in its rise as a global technology hub with the launch of the Global Technology Centre of The Hartford, the company's first-ever entry into India. The announcement was made by Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu.

The new facility, located in the Financial District of Hyderabad, spans about 1.6 lakh square feet and is designed to function in a start-up-like environment. It will focus on rapid prototyping, product development and seamless cross-time-zone collaboration with the company's global technology hubs in Hartford, Charlotte, Chicago and Columbus.

The centre will play a key role in The Hartford's enterprise-wide technology transformation, with strong emphasis on artificial intelligence, digital

innovation and engineering excellence. Over the next few years, the facility is expected to scale up to nearly 1,200 employees as it expands advanced digital, engineering and AI-led capabilities to support the organisation globally. Addressing the gathering, the Industries Minister said The Hartford's choice of Hyderabad follows a well-established trend. He recalled that when Microsoft expanded beyond the US, its first major overseas development centre was set up in the city. Similarly, when Google entered India, it established its largest campus outside Mountain View in Hyderabad. In recent years, global majors such as McDonald's, Vanguard, Dai-ichi Life and Marriott International have also chosen Hyderabad as their India entry point, setting up global capability centres that drive advanced digital engineering.

## Telangana HC directs state, GHMC to file counters in ward delimitation plea

The Telangana High Court on Monday, February 23, directed the Municipal Administration Department and the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) to file their counter-affidavits within three weeks in a petition challenging the non-implementation of ward reorganisation in the GHMC limits.

The court also instructed the petitioner to file a reply counter within a week thereafter. It warned that failure to submit the counters within the stipulated time would attract a penalty of Rs 5,000, payable to the State Legal Services Authority.

The petition was filed by Hyderabad resident Syed Saleem and another, questioning the authorities' failure to undertake ward reorganisation in accordance with G.O. Ms No. 570 issued in 1996.

A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice J Sreenivas Rao heard the matter. Counsel appearing for the State government and GHMC sought three weeks' time to file their counters.

Granting the request as a final opportunity, the bench adjourned the hearing for four weeks.

## Over 200 motorists booked in weekend drunk-and-drive crackdown

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The Hyderabad City Police have sounded an alert over a sharp increase in marriage-related frauds, warning families and young women to remain vigilant as scammers exploit arranged marriage alliances to cheat and extort money. Several such cases have recently been reported to the Hyderabad She Teams, revealing a recurring and organised pattern used by the accused. According to police officials, fraudsters typically ap-

proach families through traditional matchmaking channels, presenting themselves as genuine prospective grooms. Engagements are conducted formally and announced among relatives and the community, creating a sense of legitimacy and social pressure. Once the alliance is made public, the accused gradually build emotional closeness with the bride-to-be, repeatedly assuring her that the marriage is final. The VC Sajjanar, Hyderabad Police Commissioner, said the men often emotionally manipulate

victims by claiming that since the wedding is already fixed, there is no harm in becoming physically intimate before marriage. After gaining the woman's trust, they allegedly begin demanding large sums of money or additional dowry to proceed with the wedding. "If the demands are not met, the accused threaten to call off the marriage, placing immense mental pressure on the woman and her family," Sajjanar said. He added that because the engagement is already known in society, many families hesitate.

## BJP Mahila Protest



Activists of the Bharatiya Janata Party Mahila Morcha, led by state president Shilpa Reddy, staged a protest and burnt an effigy of Rahul Gandhi in Hyderabad on Monday, condemning the alleged ruckus by Indian Youth Congress workers during the India-AI Impact Summit. Police stopped the protesters near the BJP state office in Nampally.

## Special camps at Hyderabad schools for caste, income certificates

The Hyderabad district administration is going to organise special camps in government schools to issue caste and income certificates for students from Scheduled Castes (SC) communities.

It is aimed to help eligible students apply for Pre-Matric and Post-Matric scholarships. According to Hyderabad Collector Harichandana Dasari, the camps will simplify the application process and ensure that students receive the required documents without difficulty. The camps will be conducted in coordination with tahsildars, concerned officials, and MeeSeva Centres. These include government schools located in Moghulpura, Falaknuma, Chaderghat, Vijayanagar Colony, Ameerpet, Khairatabad, Musheerabad, Secunderabad, Himayatnagar, Nampally, Saidabad, and Marredpally.

## Hyderabad Police bust 127 crore pan-India cybercrime network

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

In a major nationwide crackdown, the Hyderabad police busted a large cyber fraud network operating across 16 states, with 104 people being arrested and recovering Rs 36 lakh cash and more than 200 mobile phones.

The crackdown was carried out under the leadership of V Aravind Babu, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Cybercrimes) across the 16 states.

The operation targeted networks that were involved in

investment scams, trading frauds and so-called "digital arrest" scams. Following an investigation, cybercrime officials identified 151 bank accounts used to channel and launder fraudulent funds. A total of 32 special teams conducted simultaneous operations over 10 days across multiple states to dismantle the network. Among those arrested were 86 mule account holders who allowed their bank accounts to be used for illegal transactions, 17 account suppliers who facilitated fund movement, and one banking official.

## BRS seeks action in infant death case linked to caste violence

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

The Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) on Monday demanded immediate legal action in connection with the death of a two-month-old infant, allegedly caused by an attack during a temple festival in Nagarkurnool district. Former minister V Srinivas Goud, along with BRS leaders, submitted a representation to B Sivadar Reddy, seeking strict action against those respon-



Srinivas Goud alleged that a family belonging to the BC (washerman) community was assaulted on February 18 at Kummera village during the Mallikarjuna Swamy Jatara. He claimed that the family was stopped from entering the temple, abused on caste lines and at-

tacked by alleged upper-caste members affiliated with the ruling Congress. When the victims approached the village sarpanch and others for help, they were allegedly assaulted again.

According to Goud, despite the family lodging a complaint at the Nagarkurnool police station, no action was taken. The infant, who reportedly suffered injuries during the incident, died on February 21. He demanded stringent punishment for all those involved and

urged police authorities to ensure such incidents are not repeated.

Meanwhile, the Telangana Commission for Backward Classes has sought a detailed report on the incident. Commission chairman S Niranjan asked the B Santosh and Endowments Commissioner S Harish to enquire into the matter and submit reports within three days, including details of arrangements made for conducting the jatara.

## Helmet Bank Lets Riders Borrow, Ride Safe

**HYDERABAD**  
Wakeup telangana

In a move prioritising road safety awareness over penalties, the Malkajgiri Police have launched an innovative Helmet Bank initiative across the Malkajgiri commissionerate. The programme allows two-wheeler riders caught without helmets to borrow one on the spot instead of being immediately fined.

Under the initiative, riders stopped during traffic checks are issued a helmet after providing basic identification details.

They are required to return the borrowed helmet within 24 hours after purchasing their own. Officials said the scheme aims to correct behaviour and encourage voluntary compliance with helmet rules.

The initiative was showcased by Traffic DCP

Rahul Reddy, who distributed new helmets to motorists found riding without protective gear. Police officials emphasised that the Helmet Bank is not meant to dilute enforcement but to promote a safety-first mindset among commuters, reduce repeat violations, and ultimately lower the risk of serious head injuries on city roads.



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