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ALIA BHATT'S NEW OBSESSION

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SHORT TAKES

BRS chief KCR likely to attend Assembly session today

Hyderabad, Dec.28 (NSS): BRS president and Leader of Opposition K Chandrashekar Rao is anticipated to be present on the opening day of the Assembly's winter session, which is scheduled to commence on Monday. According to BRS leaders, Chandrashekar Rao has formulated a comprehensive strategy to launch a sustained challenge against the Congress government, focusing particularly on issues related to irrigation, river water distribution, delayed projects, and unmet commitments. Party working president KT Rama Rao and senior leader T Harish Rao are likely to lead this effort, especially during conversations regarding irrigation matters.

Complete faith in judicial process: Unnao rape case convict Sengar's daughter

Unnao: Former BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar's daughter has said their family has full faith in the judicial process and asked his supporters "not to lose patience", after the CBI challenged the Delhi High Court order suspending his life sentence in the Unnao rape case. She asked people of Unnao to refrain from resorting to any kind of protest in a post on X in Hindi on Saturday, Aishwarya Sengar, daughter of Kuldeep Sengar, said, "I humbly request all the people of Unnao to please refrain from resorting to any kind of protest. You are our family, and in this difficult time, we must not lose patience. We have complete faith in the judicial process. Your restraint and blessings give us strength."

RSS chief calls upon Hindus to make India 'vishwa guru' for welfare of world

Hyderabad: RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat on Sunday called upon Hindus to work towards making the Hindu society and India a 'Vishwa Guru' for the welfare of the world. Addressing the valedictory function of Vishwa Sangh Shibir, a congregation of international Hindu organisations, he said Hindus and Swayamsevaks have to lead by example and demonstrate how human intellect can be directed towards global welfare. "... Technology will advance. Social media will grow. AI will come. Everything will come. But, technology's ill effects will not be there.

SC to hear Aravalli definition dispute, Unnao rape case today

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court is set for a busy Monday as it takes up two separate matters of national significance, one concerning environmental protection of the Aravalli hills and the other involving the suspension of a life sentence in the Unnao rape case. According to the cause list, both matters are likely to be heard by a three-judge vacation bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, along with Justices J K Maheshwari and Augustine George Masih. In the first matter, the top court has taken suo motu cognisance of a controversy surrounding the definition of the Aravalli hills and ranges that it had earlier approved. The case, titled "In Re: Definition of Aravalli Hills and Ranges and Ancillary



Issues", arises from concerns over the interpretation and implementation of directions aimed at protecting the Aravalli range, considered the world's oldest mountain system. On November 20, the court accepted a uniform scientific definition of the Aravalli hills and ranges and imposed a ban on the grant of fresh mining leases in identified areas across Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan and Gujarat until expert reports

are finalised. The definition was based on recommendations made by a committee constituted by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. As per the committee, an "Aravalli Hill" is any landform located in designated Aravalli districts that has an elevation of 100 metres or more above the local relief. The definition also includes the entire landform within the area enclosed by the lowest con-

CLOSER LOOK
 > Court takes suo motu cognisance on Aravalli definition row
 > Case titled "In Re: Definition of Aravalli Hills"
 > Aravalli hill defined as 100 metres above local relief
 > Aravallis described as barrier against Thar desert spread
 > Court also to hear Central Bureau of Investigation plea
 > CBI challenges Delhi High Court relief to Kuldeep Sengar
 > High court suspended Sengar's life sentence December 23
 > Sengar remains jailed in custodial death conviction

tour, along with supporting slopes and associated features, regardless of gradient. An "Aravalli Range", the panel said, would consist of two or more such hills located within 500 metres of each other, measured from the outermost boundary of their lowest contour lines. The area between such hills, along with associated landforms like hillocks and slopes, would also be treated as part of the range.

Telangana Assembly winter session to begin today



Hyderabad, Dec.28 (NSS): The Telangana State Legislature is gearing up for an intense political confrontation, with the winter session scheduled to begin at 10:30 AM on Monday. The first day will feature commemorations for former legislators who

have died since the previous session. Following the Question Hour, it is anticipated that the Deputy Speaker of the Assembly will be elected. The Business Advisory Committee (BAC) is expected to convene in the afternoon to finalize

the schedule for the remainder of the session. However, sources have indicated that the House will not meet for three days, from December 30 to January 1, and will reconvene on January 2.

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Revanth Reddy has pushed Palamuru back into a migration district: KTR

Nagar Kurnool, Dec 28: Bharat Rashtia Samithi (BRS) Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) on Tuesday launched a sharp attack on the Congress government and Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, accusing them of reversing the development achieved in Palamuru district and pushing it back into distress and large-scale migration. Addressing a meeting of newly elected Sarpanches in Nagar Kurnool, KTR said the

Congress government had failed to carry forward key irrigation and development projects, undoing years of progress made during the BRS regime. He alleged that despite being in power for two years, the Congress government had not completed even 10 per cent of the works initiated earlier. "Palamuru was made green and prosperous under KCR's leadership. Today, without even lifting a handful of soil, the Chief

Minister is indulging in irresponsible and abusive rhetoric. Congress has once again turned Palamuru into a migration district by stalling projects and drying up irrigation," KTR said. He stated that nearly 90 per cent of the Palamuru project works were completed during the KCR government. However, after coming to power, the Congress government cancelled approved tenders and crippled

Palamuru-Rangareddy Lift Irrigation Project. KTR also alleged that the Revanth Reddy government had compromised Telangana's rightful water allocations, severely impacting farmers. KTR announced that former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) is preparing for another phase of struggle to protect Palamuru-Rangareddy project, safeguard Telangana's water interests, and stand with farmers.

He said KCR would soon visit Palamuru and appealed to the people of the region to support the movement. Highlighting the agrarian crisis, KTR said the Congress government had replaced the "Rythu Bandhu" era with what he termed "Ra-Bandhu" (Vulture) rule. He alleged that farmers were being forced to plead for urea fertiliser, standing in long queues even during cold conditions.



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Call to transform villages into 'Digital Villages' - Minister Sridhar Babu

Hyderabad, Dec 28: State IT and Industries Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu on Sunday called upon newly elected sarpanches to transform villages into "Digital Villages" to ensure efficient and transparent delivery of civic services at the village level. Addressing a felicitation programme organised for newly elected sarpanches of the united Ranga Reddy district at Shamshabad, the Minister said strong villages form the foundation of India's democratic framework. Only when villages are empowered and well-governed can States and the nation progress on the path of development, he observed. Urging sarpanches to act as a responsible bridge between the government and the people, Mr. Sridhar Babu said they must work with commitment and integrity



so that, by the end of their tenure, villagers could proudly say their village had undergone a complete transformation. According to the Minister, the State government would extend full support to gram panchayats in adopting digital technologies and strengthening governance systems. Reiterating the government's commitment to Gram Swaraj, he said substantial funds would be allocated to village pan-

chayats in the coming days. Emphasising transparent delivery of welfare and development schemes, he said benefits must reach the last person in every village. He also asked sarpanches to accord priority to basic infrastructure such as cement roads, drainage systems and street lighting, while closely monitoring the functioning of schools, anganwadi centres and primary health centres.

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BJP chief holds meeting with party MLAs, MLCs ahead of legislative session

Hyderabad, Dec.28 (NSS): In view of the Telangana State Legislative Assembly sessions commencing on Monday, a crucial meeting was held on Sunday at the state party office under the chairmanship of the Bharatiya Janata Party Telangana State President N. Ramchander Rao, with the party MLAs and MLCs. The meeting was attended by BJP Legislative Party Leader Aaleti Maheshwar Reddy, MLAs Venkataramana Reddy and Rakesh Reddy, MLCs Anji Reddy, AVN Reddy and Malka Komuraiah, former advisor to the Union Ministry of Water Resources and advisor to the Maharashtra gov-

ernment Vedire Sriram and others. Similarly, the party's state president, N. Ramchander Rao, also contacted the MLAs who could not attend the meeting due to personal reasons via phone and explained the party's objectives. He ensured that every MLA was aware of the issues discussed in the meeting and guided them to participate in the legislative sessions in a coordinated manner. In this meeting, there was extensive discussion on the course of action to be followed by the party in the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council sessions focusing on strongly representing the public interest, questioning

the state government on public issues and obtaining clear answers. The members were guided to act in a coordinated manner in the assembly and to effectively and powerfully raise key issues concerning the public. Similarly, the party leadership expressed its resolve at this meeting to raise a strong voice in the assembly against the incompetent rule of the Congress government, to make the livelihood issues of the people of the state the central focus in the legislature, to expose the failures of the Congress government before the public and for the BJP to play a strong role in the assembly for the protection of public interests.

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Ram-rajya a benchmark for governance: CBN

AP CM CHANDRABABU NAIDU VISITS AYODHYA, OFFERS PRAYERS



Ayodhya, December 28: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu visited Ayodhya on Sunday and offered prayers at the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Temple. During his visit, he paid obeisance to Shri Ram Lalla, performed darshan and puja, and participated in the ongoing "Pratishtha Dwadashi Yagna" inside the temple premises, praying for peace and global well-being. CM Naidu further spent considerable time inside the temple complex, observing the grandeur and divinity of the newly constructed shrine. During the visit, the temple officials briefed him on the architectural scale, ongoing works, and the vision behind the project. Upon his arrival at the Maharshi Valmiki International Airport in Ayodhya, CM Naidu was given a warm welcome. Uttar Pradesh Agriculture Minister and Ayodhya dis-

trict in-charge minister Surya Pratap Shahi, along with senior administrative officials, received him. Speaking to the media after his visit, CM Naidu said the day was spiritually significant for him. He recalled his participation in the historic Pran Pratishtha ceremony in January 2024 and expressed happiness at returning again for Ram Lalla's darshan. "Ram-rajya is the benchmark for any government," the Andhra CM stated. "I sincerely appreciate all those who contributed to building this magnificent temple, from those who worked tirelessly on the ground to those who achieved consensus through dialogue and understanding. This is a great and historic temple, and it will emerge as a major spiritual hub for India." He emphasized that India today is progressing rapidly in technology and knowl-

edge. "When we combine this progress with our traditional spiritual values, it becomes the best path forward for humanity," he said. "The Ayodhya temple will play a crucial role in strengthening these values." CM Naidu also praised the Uttar Pradesh government for its development efforts. "UP is doing extremely well. UP and Bihar will play key role in goal of 'Vikasit Bharat 2047'. The Chief Minister of UP is doing an excellent job, and I congratulate him." Calling the temple "divine, historic, and transformative," CM Naidu said that in the next two years, the Ayodhya Ram Temple would become a benchmark for temples across the country. He concluded by thanking the Uttar Pradesh government for its hospitality and expressing hope that Ayodhya would continue to grow as a global center of faith, culture, and spiritual enrichment.

73rd All India Railway (Men's) Kabaddi Champions South Central Railway

Goalkpur, December 28, 2025: Under the aegis of the Northeast Railway Sports Association (NARSA), the 73rd All India Railway (Men's) Kabaddi Championship-2025 was held from December 24 to 28, 2025 at the Syed Modi Railway Stadium, Goalkpur. On the final day of the championship, December 28, 2025, in the final match, South Central Railway defeated Northeast Railway by 48-26 to win the championship, while Northeast Railway finished as the runner-up. Central Railway secured third place by defeating Integral Coach Factory (ICF) 39-29. In the final match, Nitesh Kumar, Nitin Singh, Narendra, Rohit, and Sumit of South Central Railway, and Captain Sunil Kumar, along with Praveesh, Rohit Gulia, Surendra Gill, Ashish Nagar, Himanshu, and Karmveer of Northeast Railway, displayed excellent performance. The Chief Guest, General Manager, Northeast Railway and Patron of



NARSA, Shri Uday Borwankar, honored and awarded the players of the winning, runner-up, and third-place teams. On this occasion, President of NARSA Shri Abhay Kumar Gupta, heads of departments, senior railway officers, a large number of players, and kabaddi enthusiasts from the Purvanchal region were present. Earlier, in the semifinal matches held on December 28, 2025, Northeast Railway defeated Central Railway in a closely contested match 37-24, while South Central Railway defeated Integral Coach Factory (ICF) 51-28, thereby securing their places in the final. Expressing gratitude to the Chief Guest, General Manager of Northeast Railway and Patron of NARSA Shri Uday Borwankar, along with heads of departments, senior railway officers, players from zonal railways and production units, coaches, referees, and officials who came from the Railway Sports Promotion Board, New Delhi, General Secretary of NARSA Shri Pankaj Kumar Singh said that a total of more than 350 players, coaches, referees, and officials from 17 teams participated in the championship.

Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu Pays Tribute to Portrait of NTR Fan



BY DR SUNEELKUMAR YANDRA,
Tirupati, December 28 : NTR Raju, an ardent fan of the late Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao and former board member of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD), recently passed away. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu, who had expressed his condolences on the day of NTR Raju's demise, visited his residence in Tirupati today. There, he paid floral tributes to NTR Raju's portrait.

Following this, the Chief Minister spent some time with NTR Raju's son, State Telugu Desam Party Media Coordinator Sridhar Varma, and other family members, offering his condolences and support. Chief Minister Naidu stated that losing a person like NTR Raju, who was a devoted admirer of the late NTR, is an irreparable loss to both the Nara and Nandamuri families. He described NTR Raju as being like a family member and expressed that his absence causes immense sorrow.

FOR THE FIRST TIME ON HINDI GENERAL ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION

By sanjay Dwivedi

Mumbai: In a historic moment for Indian television, Chairman of the Aditya Birla Group Kumar Mangalam Birla will make his first-ever appearance on Hindi General Entertainment Television on India's most iconic knowledge-based quiz show, Kaun Banega Crorepati, hosted by the legendary Amitabh Bachchan. The special episode marks a rare and significant crossover of leadership, intellect and popular culture on one of the country's most respected television platforms. Chairman of the Aditya Birla Group Kumar Mangalam Birla's presence adds gravitas to the current season's philosophy, 'Jahaan Akal Hai, Wahan Akad Hai', which celebrates the power of intelligence, clarity of thought and conviction in shaping success across social and economic strata. His participation reflects India's evolving



growth narrative—one driven by knowledge, enterprise and aspiration. During an insightful conversation on the show, Chairman of the Aditya Birla Group Kumar Mangalam Birla shared his optimistic perspective on India's economic journey, highlighting the nation's position as one of the fastest-growing economies globally. He spoke about the pace, scale and momentum of India's progress, underlining the unprecedented opportunities emerging across sectors

and communities. The episode also features lighter, more personal moments as Shri Kumar Mangalam Birla expressed his admiration for Amitabh Bachchan, calling him his favourite actor and sharing his excitement at finally sharing the stage with the cultural icon. In a candid exchange, he humorously admitted to feeling slightly nervous about answering questions correctly in front of the Shahenshah, adding warmth and relatability to the episode.

TELANGANA STUDY FORUM STATE BODY MEETING HELD AT HYDERABAD



Hyderabad: The Telangana Study Forum (TSF) State Body Meeting was successfully conducted today at the Lotus Lap Public Schools, Dilskhannagar Branch Campus, Hyderabad. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Sri Gona Reddy, TSF Chairman. Sri Rajendra Babu attended the programme as the Chief Guest, while several senior office-bearers and members of TSF participated in the deliberations. The meeting was presided over by Sri Srinivasa Chary, TSF State President. Dr. Lion

Komati Reddy Gopal Reddy, eminent educationist and environmentalist, TSF State Vice President, TRSMA State Advisor, and Chairman of Lotus Lap Public Schools, played a key role in guiding the discussions. Other prominent leaders present included Sri Laxmaiah, TSF Vice President, and Sri Rajaverdhan Reddy, TSF General Secretary. Ranga reddy Venue gopal, etc TSF state During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on various important issues such as education reforms, environmental protection, youth development, the Indian Constitution, and the current challenges faced by Telangana and the nation. The leaders emphasized the need for social awareness, constitutional values, and active youth participation in nation-building. On the occasion of New Year celebrations, TSF members exchanged greetings and collectively released the TSF New Year Calendar and informational folders, marking a positive beginning for the upcoming year.

BRS CHIEF KCR LIKE-LY TO ATTEND ASSEMBLY SESSION TODAY

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All BRS legislators have been tasked with coming well-prepared to discuss a range of topics, including the Palamuru-Rangareddy lift irrigation project, water allocation for rivers, delays in the Rythu Bharosa initiative, shortages of fertilizers, fee reimbursements, pensions, and the lack of implementation of 42 percent reservations for backward classes. On Sunday evening, K Chandrashekar Rao returned to his Nandinagar residence from his Erravalli farmhouse in preparation for the Assembly session. It is noteworthy that he has attended Assembly sessions only twice thus far: once for the Governor's address and another time during the budget speech. In contrast, the Chief Minister, various Ministers, MLAs, and even leaders from the Congress party are insisting that KCR attend the Assembly session. They have raised repeated questions about why KCR, who receives a salary funded by taxpayers, is not present to engage in discussions on public matters. Given this context, KCR's attendance at the Assembly has become a significant topic of debate. There are also questions about whether KCR will actively participate in discussions if he does attend, or if he will merely sign the attendance register and leave. Many are expressing these concerns. The

Congress government has already expressed its willingness to address issues of injustice related to Krishna river waters and irrigation projects during this Assembly session. Meanwhile, opposition leaders from the BRS have also called for discussions on these matters. As a result, there is a growing expectation that Monday's Assembly session will be quite eventful. Political analysts suggest that if KCR genuinely engages in this debate, it will likely lead to intense discussions and heated exchanges within the Assembly. They also say that if KCR simply comes to the Assembly, signs the register, and leaves, it would provide another weapon for the Congress party. It remains uncertain whether KCR will engage in the discussions or simply continue with his usual practice of signing the register and leaving. (NSS)

BRS CHIEF KCR LIKE-LY TO ATTEND ASSEMBLY SESSION TODAY

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Referring to the difficulties faced by sarpanches earlier due to pending bills, Mr. Sridhar Babu said the government was taking steps to clear outstanding dues in a phased manner and reaffirmed that all assurances made before the elections would be fulfilled. The Minister also announced that the government would organise phased, structured training programmes

for sarpanches to enhance their administrative and leadership capacities. The programme was attended by MLAs Mal Reddy Rangareddy, Kasireddy Narayana Reddy, Veerlapalli Shankar, Rammohan Reddy and Manohar Reddy. Ranga Reddy DCC president Challa Narasimha Reddy and Vikarabad DCC president Dhara Singh, along with other party leaders and newly elected sarpanches, were also present.

REVANTH REDDY HAS PUSHED PALAMURU BACK INTO A MIGRATION DISTRICT: KTR

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"Revanth Reddy has no concern for farmers. During KCR's tenure, there was never a shortage of urea, and farmers received fertilisers as per their needs," he said. KTR accused the Congress of coming to power with unrealistic promises and cheating the public after assuming office. He said the Chief Minister resorted to abusive language whenever questioned about the implementation of poll promises, even after completing two years in power. Stating that Revanth Reddy was obsessed with criticising KCR wherever he went, KTR remarked that the Chief Minister's frustration was evident. He challenged Revanth Reddy to publicly take an oath assuring uninterrupted supply of

urea to farmers and implementation of the promised ₹4,000 pension scheme. Reiterating that "wherever Congress is in power, there is no progress," KTR said Telangana was witnessing the same reality. He expressed confidence that the Congress government had only two more years left and that BRS would return to power thereafter. "Only a KCR-led government can restore development, prosperity, and dignity to villages," he said. KTR alleged that the Congress government was destroying a "golden Telangana" built during ten years of BRS governance. He said it was due to BRS policies that land values in Hyderabad had risen to as high as ₹150 crore per acre. He accused the Revanth Reddy government of eyeing nearly 9,300 acres of land in Hyderabad. He clarified that governments allot land to industries at concessional rates in the larger interest of development and employment, but criticised the Congress government for proposing policies that would allow arbitrary construction on industrial land by paying only a fraction of its value. KTR alleged that the so-called HILT policy was introduced to facilitate corruption on a massive scale. He also recalled that BRS had opposed attempts to grab tribal lands in Lagacharla and accused the BJP of remaining silent despite alleged large-scale corruption by the Congress government. KTR alleged a tacit understanding between the Congress and BJP in Telangana, stating that neither party was questioning the failures of the other. KTR was speaking at the felicitation programme for newly elected Sarpanches held at the BRS party office in Nagar Kurnool, where he congratulated the grassroots representa-

tives and called upon them to work unitedly for village development and the return of BRS governance in the state.

TELANGANA ASSEMBLY WINTER SESSION TO BEGIN TODAY

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Discussions about the waters of the Krishna and Godavari rivers are expected to take place. Meanwhile, a preparatory meeting was conducted in the committee hall of the Legislative Assembly building on Sunday in the context of the winter sessions. Legislative Council Chairman Gutha Sukhender Reddy, Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar, Deputy Chairman Banda Prakash Mudiraj, Legislative Council Chief Whip Patnam Mahender Reddy, and Legislative Council Secretary V. Narasimha Charyulu, and Legislative Assembly Secretary R. Tirupati and senior officials from various departments, including DGP Shivdhar Reddy, ADGP Vijayakumar, Hyderabad, Cyberabad, Rachakonda Commissioners VC Sajjanar, Avinash Mahanthi and Sudheer Babu, Intelligence IG- Karthikeya, Assembly Chief Marshal-Karnakar attended the meeting. Speaking on the occasion, Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar said that officials should take all measures to ensure the smooth conduct of the sessions.

KTR paid floral tributes to later CLP leader PJR



Hyderabad, Dec 28: Yesterday on Sunday PJR son former MLA Vishnu Vardhan Reddy invited ktr for his father 18th death anniversary held at Khairatabad (PJR cross road) Hyderabad .KTR along with BRS party MLAs , former ministers, senior leaders attended and paid floral tributes to former Clp leader PJR to his statue. Later talking to media, KTR said PJR was the leader of masses and poor people, he fought for their well beingness. He was the only leader from congress fought for people, when his party was in power . And also PJR was the leader who stood for separate telngana state instead he was suspended from the party.

Telangana Citizens Council Honours Visionaries with Ratan Tata Excellence Awards

HYDERABAD, Dec 28, 2025 — In a grand ceremony held today at the Press Club Auditorium, the Telangana Citizens Council (TCC) organized a prestigious Memorial Meeting and Felicitation Ceremony to mark the birth anniversary of the late Padma Vibhushan Ratan N. Tata. The event served as a powerful tribute to the legendary philanthropist's life, bringing together top judicial, academic, and social leaders to celebrate his philosophy of "Ethics over Profit." The Chief Guest, Prof. (Dr.) V. Balakista Reddy, Chairman of the Telangana State Council of Higher Education (TGCHE), lauded the Tata legacy, stating: "Ratan Tata did not just build industries; he built the intellectual and ethical infrastructure of India. His life teaches us that professional success is hollow without a deep commitment to social equity and national progress." The Special Guest, Hon'ble Justice Dr. Gurajala Radha Rani, President of the Telangana State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, emphasized the moral compass of the late industrialist: "Ratan Tata proved that integrity is the most valuable currency in business. He remains a guiding light for anyone seeking to balance corpo-



rate ambition with human empathy and justice." The Guests of Honour, Prof. Akber Ali Khan, former VC of Telangana University, highlighted the importance of character-building in education, noting that Tata's life remains the greatest case study for future leaders. The Guest for the day, Ln. Dr. Komatireddy Gopal Reddy, echoed these sentiments, urging the awardees to carry forward the torch of selfless service. The occasion was further graced by TCC office bearers including Dr. Mohd. Akther Ali, Sri T. A. Muralimohan, and Dr. Raviteja. Presiding over the event, Dr. Rajanarayan Mudiraj, State President of the Telangana Citizens Council, remarked: "Ratan Tata was the heartbeat of Indian humanity. Through these awards, we are not just honouring achievements, but affirming our commitment to the values of ethics, humility, and nation-building that he personified." Recognition of Excellence & Sevaratna Awards The ceremony reached its peak with the presentation of the Ratan Tata Excellence Awards. The first recipient of this prestigious honor was Prof. A. Patrick (Dept. of Commerce, Osmania University), followed by an illustrious group including Prof. R. Prasanth Kumar (School of Management Studies, University of Hyderabad), Dr. Mohammed Abdul Azeem (Professor & Head, Dept. of Management & Commerce, MANUU), Prof. Neela Gollapudi (Director, MBA Program, Kasturba Gandhi College for Women), Sri Prakash Goenka (Managing Director, Devashree ISPAT Private Limited), Sri Marri Prabhaker Mudhiraj (Convenor, All India Forum for Small & Medium Industries, TG State), Smt. G. Ratna (Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University), Dr. S. K. Amjad Ahmed (Medical & Health Dept), Sri K. Ravinder (TG Secretariat Outsourcing Employees Association), Smt. K. Aruna Prabha (Govt. Nizamia Tibbi College), Smt. C. Shanthi (Insurance Medical Services), and Dr. G.V.K. Acharyulu (Chief Editor, Nagarjuna Patrika). In an equally significant segment, the Ratan Tata Sevaratna Awards were conferred upon individuals for their selfless community service. The honored recipients included: Dr. B.K. Uma Rani (Rajyogini Incharge, Malakpet Branch), Sri Mattam Shashidhar (Eminent Social Activist, Shadnagar), Samba Lalitha (Principal, Sharda Vidyalaya Degree and PG College), Mrs. P. Arpitha (Jr. Assistant, ZPHS Chintagattu), Kadirimangalam Savithri (Founder & Chairman, Power NGO, Tirupathi), Mrs. Komali Krishna Reddy (State Level Coordinating Agency, New Hope Association), Mrs. Padma Kalavoori (PGHM, ZPHS Chintagattu), Mohammadi Fatima (Principal, Super Grammar High School), V. Jyothi (Teacher, Hanamkonda), Mekala Chandrashekhara Rao (BJP State Secretary, SC Morcha Telangana), and Porika Annapurna (GHMZPGS, Singaram, Inavole). In a joint statement of gratitude, the recipients expressed their heartfelt thanks to the Telangana Citizens Council for the recognition, noting that receiving an award associated with the name of Ratan Tata is a profound honor that reinforces their resolve to serve society with greater vigor and integrity.

Congress Celebrates Foundation Day in Sanathnagar with 141-Year Legacy on Display

Hyderabad, December 28, 2025: The Indian National Congress marked its 141st Foundation Day with a series of grand ceremonies across the Sanath Nagar Assembly Constituency, drawing party workers and supporters from Sanathnagar, Ameerpet, SR Nagar, Begumpet and surrounding areas. Led by Dr. Kota Neelima, PCC Vice President and Sanath Nagar Constituency in-Charge, the celebrations blended reverence for history with a reaffirmation of the party's development agenda. Dr. Neelima underscored December 28, 1885 as the anniversary of a movement that forged India's freedom struggle and shaped its early post-independence trajectory. She highlighted the Congress's evolving role—from uniting diverse voices during the freedom fight to steering nation-building in the decades after independence. Her address framed the occasion as both a retrospective and a roadmap for contemporary politics



in Telangana and beyond. The speech outlined key milestones attributed to Congress-led governance, including the establishment of emblematic institutions like IITs, NITs, and AIIMS, the nationalization of banks to broaden credit access, and efforts to electrify villages as part of a broader welfare agenda. Dr. Neelima connected these achievements to a broader narrative of inclusive growth, public investment, and social reform that the party continues to champion. In a tribute to welfare programs and governance, the in-charge highlighted measures such as the Right to Information Act, MGN-REGA, Rajiv Aarogyasri, and Telangana's formation as milestones of reform and regional empowerment. She also traced the party's enduring leadership lineage—from Mahatma Gandhi to Jawaharlal Nehru, Sonia Gandhi, and Rahul Gandhi—arguing that the Congress's 141-year strength rests on core principles and steadfast leadership, complemented by diligent party workers whose efforts are said to have helped reassert the party's relevance in Telangana. Concluding the proceedings, Dr. Neelima lauded the dedication of party workers as the backbone of the movement, insisting that grassroots organization and service remain central to political resilience. The celebrations were portrayed as a reminder of shared history and a pledge to advance inclusive growth, transparency, and social welfare, while signaling the Congress's intent to remain a mobilizing force in Telangana's evolving political landscape.

Beyond Traditional Education: Schools Adapting to the 21st Century

Hyderabad, Dec 28 : Eminent Educationist and Environmentalist, TRSMA National Advisor, Global Green Mentor Awardee-2025 (New York, USA), National Advisor, Environmental Protection and Development Council India's school education system is currently undergoing a transformative



phase. This change is founded on coordinated efforts to rethink educa-

tion for the 21st century. The focus has shifted from rote memorization to fostering critical thinking, creativity, and emotional intelligence. Technology, teacher capacity building, and the transformation of traditional teaching methods are driving forces behind this evolution, making learning more personalized and engaging for

every student. Aligned with the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), the National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (NCF-FS) 2022 and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023 have been implemented. These frameworks mar

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EDITORIAL

Manufactured
Traditions

In the landscape of modern Indian socio-politics, if there is such a word, December 25 has become a date of peculiar botanical urgency. Suddenly, the air is thick with the smell of incense and the aggressive rustle of holy basil. We are told, via high-resolution WhatsApp forwards and saffron-tinted infographics, that it is "Tulsi Pujan Diwas". To the uninitiated, it looks like a quaint revival of Vedic piety. To anyone with a history book and a functioning memory, however, it is a masterclass in the "invention of tradition" - a duplicitous branding exercise designed to turn a plant of peace into a picket line of cultural intolerance. Let us be clear: the Tulsi plant is, and has always been, a cornerstone of the Hindu household. For centuries, it has sat in the Vrindavan of the courtyard, a biological deity representing Lakshmi's grace and the medicinal wisdom of Ayurveda. We have Tulsi Vivah, an ancient, structurally complex festival tied to the lunar cycle of the Hindu calendar. But "Tulsi Pujan Diwas", fixed stubbornly to the Gregorian calendar date of December 25 (a most unVedic practice), is not an ancient ritual. It is a 2014 startup. It has the same historical depth as a seasonal discount sale.

Colonising The Calendar

The manufacture of this "Diwas" is a classic example of what historian Eric Hobsbawm called "Invented Tradition". These are practices that appear old but are actually quite new, designed to instil certain values through repetition and a false sense of continuity with a "glorious past". By pinning Tulsi worship to Christmas Day, the architects of this movement aren't trying to honour the plant or our culture; they are trying to colonise the calendar. The logic is transparently reactive. It stems from a profound cultural insecurity that views the celebration of Christmas - or even the mere acknowledgment of it - as a zero-sum game. If a neighbour puts up a star, one must counter with a shrub. If they sing a carol, we must chant a shloka, not out of devotion, but out of a desperate need to "reclaim" a space that was never actually lost. It is "spirituality" as a contact sport, kabaddi with chanting rather than panting. The duplicity lies in the justification. Proponents argue that they are protecting "Indian values" from the "onslaught of Westernisation". This creates a false binary: you are either a "Sattvic" Tulsi-worshipper or a "corrupted" consumer of cake and tinsel. By framing a modern creation as an ancient necessity, they provide a theological shield for contemporary xenophobia. It allows the practitioner to say, "I am not being intolerant of your holiday; I am simply being observant of my own (one-decade-old) tradition."

A Trojan Horse For Intolerance

This is how "manufactured tradition" serves as a Trojan Horse for intolerance. It rewrites history to suggest that Indian culture is a fragile thing that can only survive if it is constantly positioned against an imagined enemy. It replaces the expansive, pluralistic heart of Hinduism - which historically had no trouble assimilating various influences - with a brittle, reactionary mimicry. Furthermore, there is a profound irony in using the Tulsi plant for this purpose. In the Puranas, Tulsi is a symbol of bhakti (devotion), a quality that is internal, quiet, and deeply personal. To turn her into a tool for a "Cultural Cold War" is a form of spiritual malpractice. When worship is motivated by the desire to "cancel out" another person's joy, it ceases to be prayer and becomes a political weapon of intolerance. We see this pattern everywhere: the sudden "discovery" of ancient reasons to do modern, exclusionary things. Whether it is the rebranding of Valentine's Day as "Parents' Worship Day" (why not Kamadeva Diwas, I ask you?) or the fixating of festivals onto specific Western holidays, the goal is the same: to create a psychological ghetto where the "Other" is always an intruder.

Let Tulsi Be Sacred

By pretending that "Tulsi Pujan Diwas" has always existed in this specific, reactionary form, its promoters are gaslighting the public. They are erasing the genuine, organic history of Indian festivals, which are diverse, regional, and tied to the earth's own rhythms, and replacing them with a standardised, "Vedic-flavoured" version of modern "cultural nationalism".

HONOURING THE PUNJAB BOY,
SHARVAN SINGH, IS HONOURING THE
MANKIND, VELOUR AND PATRIOTISM

Jag Mohan Thaken

History repeats itself; but a few are fortunate to get the recognition. The spiritual world, especially the Sikh world, is proud of the act of kindness, humility and service to mankind exemplified by Bhai Kanhaiya Ji, who is widely known for his water seva during Sri Guru Gobind Singh Maharaj Ji's time in the battlefield. Once again in the History, a 10-year-old Sikh boy, Sharvan Singh, resident of a village hardly 2 kilometres from India-Pakistan border in Punjab's Ferozepur District, has earned national recognition for his act of compassion, exceptional courage and sense of patriotism by serving 'Milk-Lassi and Water' to the Military Persons deployed near his village during operation Sindoor. Akal Takht's former Jathedar, Giani Harpreet Singh in a tweet on 26th December, 2025, said, "Even on the battlefield, the spirit of selfless service and fearless courage, as exemplified by Bhai Kanhaiya Ji and Sikh history, has always continued to inspire our younger generations. During the war-like situation with Pakistan, 10-year-old Sharvan Singh from Firozpur, Punjab, displayed remarkable selfless service by providing tea, water, and ice to our soldiers. In recognition of this noble act, he has been honoured with the 'National Child Award' by the Honourable President of India, Mrs. Droupadi Murmu. I commend Sharvan Singh and, while appreciating his spirit of service, courage, and humanity, appeal to the people of Punjab to connect their children with the teachings of Sikh history—values of service, compassion, and bravery". While presenting the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar to Sharvan Singh and other children for their exceptional achievements in the fields of Bravery, Social Service, Environment, Sports, Art & Culture and Science & Technology at a ceremony held in New Delhi on December 26, 2025, on the occasion of 'Veer Baal Diwas', the President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu, said that about 320 years ago, Guru Gobind Singh Ji—the tenth Guru of the Sikh faith and



revered by all Indians—and his four sons made supreme sacrifices while fighting in support of truth and justice. She said that the bravery of the two youngest Sahibzadas, is honoured and respected both in India and abroad. She remembered with reverence the great child heroes who laid down their lives with pride for truth and justice. Terror of Mughal Rulers was on such a dreadful, scary, spooky and fearsome pitch that after the martyrdom of the younger Sahibzadas and Mata Ji, when no one dared to perform their last rites due to fear of the tyrannical government, Diwan Todar Mal Ji bought land by laying gold ashrafis and cremated the holy bodies of the Sahibzadas and Mata Ji. In this way, Diwan Todar Mal Ji became the hero of Saka Sirhind, due to this unique act, his name was recorded among the respected personalities of the Sikh Panth. Still the people bow to the good-hearted personality of Diwan Todar Mal Ji, who had immense devotion towards the Guru Ghar. It is pertinent to mention here that Sikhism is the religion which always keeps humanity as its serving motto. It had not only given the religious Gurus, who preached equality without any discrimination of caste and creed, service to humanity, compassion and a deep sense of

spirituality, but also gave the brave heroes, who martyred their lives for protection of religious freedom and the rights of the oppressed. History can never forget the unparalleled, supreme and extraordinary sacrifice of Guru Arjan Dev Ji, Guru Teg Bahadur Ji, Mata Gujri Ji and the younger Sahibzadas -- Baba Zorawar Singh Ji and Baba Fateh Singh Ji. The brave heroes like Sardar Bhagat Singh, Sardar Udham Singh and others, who fought against the tyranny of the English rulers for the sake of the country, are and will also remain the lighthouse for the present and coming generations. Bravery, humanity, kindness and fearless actions are the main elements in Sikhism. Presently also these elements can be noticed even in the children of the sect. The story of Ten-year-old Shraavan Singh, amidst the risks associated with war during Operation Sindoor, who regularly delivered water, milk, and lassi to the Indian soldiers stationed at the border near his home, reflects the 'Bravery, Humanity, Kindness and Fearless actions'. President Murmu said that the greatness of a country is certain when its children are filled with patriotism and high ideals. Ten-year-old Shraavan Singh, amidst the risks associated with war during Operation

Sindoor, regularly delivered water, milk, and lassi to the Indian soldiers stationed at the border near his home. Smt. Murmu was happy to note that the children have showcased their exceptional talent in various fields such as bravery, art and culture, environment, innovation, science and technology, social service, and sports. She said that it is because of talented children such as the seven-year-old Vaka Lakshmi Pragnika that India is considered a chess powerhouse on the world stage. Ajay Raj and Mohammed Sidan P, who saved the lives of others with their bravery and intelligence, deserve all the praise they receive. Nine-year-old daughter Vyoma Priya and eleven-year-old brave son Kamlesh Kumar lost their lives while saving the lives of others with their courage. Whereas, the differently-abled daughter Shivani Hosuru Uppara has achieved extraordinary accomplishments in the world of sports, overcoming economic and physical limitations. Vaibhav Suryavanshi has made a name for himself in the highly competitive and talent-filled world of cricket and has set many records. She expressed confidence that brave and talented children like them will continue to do good work and make India's future bright.

Congress Meltdown: In Digvijaya Singh's
'RSS' Post, A Reckoning For Rahul

"Multiple Chanakyas are advising the prince. The trouble is, there is only one prince. A problem that Machiavelli and Kautilya never faced. Plus, their respective Princes were able," says a senior Congress leader about the meltdown set off by Digvijaya Singh, 78, the former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. Singh, a master politician, recently threw a gauntlet at Rahul Gandhi through a social media post, in which he praised the organisational strength of the RSS and even tagged everyone from Rahul, Priyanka Gandhi, Mallikarjun Kharge and Jairam Ramesh to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Singh then attended the last Congress Working Committee meeting and made the same point in person. There, he was heard in utter silence, with his intervention espousing no comments from the audience. I spoke to a cross-section of Congress leaders before writing this column - both the rebels who want change in the party and the coterie to Rahul Gandhi who want status quo. The biggest takeaway is that Rahul cannot avoid a change if he continues to be unavailable and elusive. The last five days of the winter session, Rahul,



despite being the leader of opposition, chose to be in Germany to address the diaspora instead of taking up pressing issues such as the air pollution in Delhi, a state the Congress once ruled and where it has now been reduced to zero. The decentralisation and the lack of organisation that Singh underlined in his CWC address is unexceptionable. It is a point that any objective observer would agree with. A Warning For Venugopal? This also points to KC Venugopal, the General Secretary in charge of organisation, who has reduced the Congress party organisation to a hollow shell with state units almost out of business. Many say that is because Venugopal doesn't allow state leaders to make decisions while endlessly dithering on deci-

sions himself. In fact, the chorus for his ouster is only growing. Venugopal survives on Gandhi's patronage as his chief palace courtier. But he's no Ahmed Patel, who performed a similar role for Sonia Gandhi and was indispensable for the party. The question now is what lies in store for Venugopal. Will he get his dream job as the Congress face in the upcoming Kerala elections, or will he be kicked upstairs to some meaningless office? It may not be a stretch to say that Singh, in fact, was basically targeting Venugopal through his social media post, and by tagging Priyanka Gandhi Vadra publicly, he was seeking her intervention in the party's sorry state of affairs. Sources close to Singh say that speculation, especially from within the Congress,

that Singh is leaning towards the BJP-RSS is laughable. Sure he has been provocative, but his praise, they say, was nuanced and limited to the organisational discipline of the RSS. "They have created the largest political party in the world. The most formidable election winning machine and the biggest war chest. Only a blind person would not seek to emulate it in politics," said a source. This is a valid point. In contrast to such a robust organisation, Gandhi comes across as a leader who has romanticised electoral defeat with his constant pitch of "vote chori". Sources close to Singh also scoff at suggestions that the provocation for the tweet was the fact that he wants a new term in the Rajya Sabha. "Singh was a mass leader. He literally poisoned his own roots to come to Delhi and became Gandhi's counsellor. Yet, Gandhi, for reasons unknown, discarded him and fell for the comfort of his palace courtiers. Singh proved with his Narmada Yatra that he still has it in him to do mass politics, touching every district in Madhya Pradesh. He wants a say in the state and a bright future for his son Jaivardhan Singh. Is that a crime? It can only happen

when the Congress does well." Take Responsibility From the row between Siddaramaiah and DK Shivakumar in Karnataka, to the sidelining of leaders like Shashi Tharoor and Manish Tewari, to replacing the leadership in Rajasthan, Gandhi can no longer continue evading responsibility. Against this background, the public praise for Priyanka Gandhi Vadra can be seen as a cry for help from the party. Party leaders want Rahul to go back to bread and butter issues to take on the BJP. Instead, the issues he has taken up so far, such as "vote chori", "surrender Modi", have failed to get any traction. "The Trinamool Congress protested the removal of MGNREGA, the Congress' flagship scheme, much more than the Congress in Parliament. They held an all-night dharna. What did we do?" a Congress leader said. For now, all eyes are on the Rajya Sabha picks to see whether Rahul Gandhi has paid any heed to the discontent brewing within his party. If the usual palace guard makes the cut and there is no organisational overhaul, expect a mega meltdown. Evasion of responsibility isn't an option for the Congress top brass anymore.

TRUE FRIENDSHIP

When a sculptor strikes with care and art,
The stone reveals its tender heart.
From every blow, a form is born—
In pain, true beauty is adorned

So is friendship—firm yet kind,
A strength the world can rarely find.
It bears the weight like patient earth,
And lights the soul like morning's birth

It flows as pure as fresh-spilled milk,
With truth that gleams in fire's silk.
Unseen, it spreads like jasmine air,
It lifts us high with love to spare

It climbs like steps toward honest skies,
With no deceit, with no disguise.
Selfless as rain upon dry land,
It offers more than we demand

A sea of strength in storm and tide,
A mirror where our truths reside.
It is a mother's quiet grace,
A human soul in warm embrace

Can we forget such sacred thread?
This bond that lives when words have fled?



No crown nor coin can purest grace
take its place—
True friendship is the
- Dr Peruka Raju
7810033847.

Headlines

Komatireddy vows to expose KCR's 10 years of misrule in Assembly

Hyderabad, Dec.28 (NSS): Minister for Roads & Buildings and Cinematography Komatireddy Venkat Reddy said the Congress party's ideology, rooted in democracy and inclusive development, continues to guide the nation, and called upon party workers to take its values to the grass-roots. The Minister unfurled the Congress flag at Rajiv Gandhi Chowraha in Valigonda mandal headquarters on Sunday as part of the 140th Foundation Day celebrations of the Indian National Congress. Addressing party leaders and workers, the Minister said the Congress was a party built on sacrifice, freedom struggle and nation-building, recalling the contributions of leaders who led India to independence and laid a strong foundation for democratic governance. He said the party has always remained committed to public welfare and social justice. The Minister asserted that the Congress government in Telangana is continuing governance in line with the aspirations of the people, keeping welfare at the centre of its policies. He said the party would continue to work in the spirit of the ideals upheld by leaders such as Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, who made supreme sacrifices for the nation. Taking a swipe at the Opposition, the Minister said that regional parties lacking ideological strength tend to disintegrate over time, and remarked that there was no need to attach importance to statements made by BRS leaders. He criticised former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao for failing to address public issues and for not attending the Assembly despite drawing a salary as Leader of the Opposition. Komatireddy Venkat Reddy challenged the former KCR to explain the Kaleshwaram project accounts first before seeking accountability from the Congress government. "We are prepared to present our accounts transparently, but those who ruled earlier must answer the people," he said. The Minister also warned against any attempt to rename or dilute the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), stating that it was a constitutionally backed programme. He announced that the Congress would launch an agitation from January 5 if the name change proposal was pursued. The programme was attended by senior party leaders, local representatives, workers and supporters, who participated in the Foundation Day celebrations in large numbers. (NSS)

Himayathnagar & Jubilee Hills TTD temples gear up for Vaikuntha Dwara Darshan

Hyderabad, Dec.28 (NSS): The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) Himayathnagar, Jubileehills temple management, is making elaborate arrangements for the convenience of devotees visiting the temple on Tuesday on the auspicious occasion Vaikuntha Ekadasi. The temple management is facilitating Sarva darshan for the devotees since 1 am early on Tuesday. The darshan would continue till 10 pm with short breaks in the day for performing the daily rituals and sevas for Lord Venkateswara, said TTD Himayathnagar Local Advisory Committee (LAC) president N Shankar Goud at a press conference on Sunday at TTD Kalyana Mandapam in Himayathnagar. To avoid inconvenience to the devotees, VIPs and other guests would be provided darshan from 1 am to 6 am on Tuesday. This would ensure that Sarva Darshan devotees visiting the temple during the day were not subjected to any inconvenience, he said. "Even as the lord's darshan commences at 1 am on Tuesday early morning, all the sevas, including Ekantham, Thomala seva and sudhi and ekantham at 10 pm in the night, will be conducted as per the schedule," Shankar Goud said. The temple management said last year nearly 25,000 devotees had visited the temple for darshan on Vaikuntha Ekadasi. Considering the rush, all arrangements were being made to ensure hassle-free darshan for devotees. Sufficient drinking water facilities and annaprasadam arrangements have been strengthened to handle the expected heavy turnout were being made arranged, said TTD AEO Ramesh said. He appealed to the devotees to park their vehicles at traffic police identified locations and cooperate with the temple management. The meeting was attended by the temple's Chief Archaka and Ramesh, AEO, Hyderabad. TTD officials appealed to devotees to cooperate with authorities and follow traffic and security guidelines for a peaceful Vaikuntha Ekadashi darshan. (NSS)

GHMC launches month-long mega sanitation drive across 300 wards

Hyderabad, Dec.28 (NSS): In a bid to elevate urban hygiene standards and eliminate long-standing waste accumulations, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) is set to commence its most ambitious sanitation initiative yet Starting on Monday, December 29, a special drive will sweep across the city, targeting 300 wards daily until January 31, 2026. This comprehensive campaign, instructed by GHMC Commissioner R.V. Karnan, marks the first major sanitation effort following the recent Delimitation of wards, aiming to rid Hyderabad of legacy waste and foster community participation in cleanliness. The drive, outlined in a recent circular, focuses on a meticulously planned schedule of activities designed to address diverse urban waste challenges. Beginning with the cleaning of foot overbridges on Monday, the campaign will progress to flyovers, roadsides, dividers, central medians, and kerbs. Subsequent days will see targeted efforts on lakes and nalas, footpaths and parks, construction and demolition (C&D) waste removal, and waste near transformers and electric poles.

An overview of South Central Railway

Hyderabad, December 28: During the calendar year 2025, South Central Railway has registered consistent growth in all spheres. In this period the Zone has scaled new heights and crossed many mile stones in terms of infra development, introduction of new trains, stations development, enhancement of amenities to the passengers, staff welfare, loading, revenue generation and ensuring safety etc., Some of the major initiatives recorded during the calendar year 2025 are detailed in a chronological order below-

To decongest the three major terminals in Capital city region of Telangana (Hyderabad), and to provide a smooth and hassle-free journey to rail users, a new satellite terminal Charlapalli has been developed and inaugurated by Hon'ble Prime Minister in January, 2025. SCR has taken a special initiative for sharing the knowledge across the Doctors fraternity and the medical department of Zone has successfully conducted the First Annual Conference of Railway Association of Dermatologists in February 2025. The Zone is always in the forefront in providing amenities to its workforce and ensuring their well-being. In this direction, a 64 slices CT Scan machine has been installed at Lallaguda Central Hospital,

Secunderabad for the benefit of railway beneficiaries during March-2025 With a view to enhance the amenities and facilities at Railway stations and to improve the aesthetics of the station buildings, Indian Railways developing the stations as Amrit stations. As a part of it, three important railway stations viz., Begumpet, Karimnagar and Warangal in Telangana have been redeveloped as Amrit Stations and inaugurated by Hon'ble Prime Minister through remote video link in May 2025. Indian Railway in general and SCR in particular is ahead in taking up tourism friendly initiatives. As part of it, Kacheguda heritage sta-

tion gets Architectural Beautification with the cost of Rs 2.2 Crores, to highlight the Indo-Saracenic/ Indo Gothic architecture and its rich heritage with right illumination and the same was dedicated to the Nation by Hon'ble Union Minister Shri G. KishanReddy in June 2025. Further, in June -2025, In house Cardiac Cathlab has been provided at Lallaguda Central Hospital, Secunderabad for the benefit of railway beneficiaries. New Daily Train between Kacheguda and Bhagat Ki Kotihas been introduced and flagged off by Shri Ashwini Vaishnav, Hon'ble Union Minister of Railways in July, 2025. To avoid

enroute train detentions and to reduce the running time, a crucial Bypass line has been commissioned at Peddapalli junction in July, 2025. Vande Bharat Express train running between CSMT and Jalna has been extended up to Nanded and is flagged off by Shri Devendra Fadnavis, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Maharashtra in August, 2025. New Weekly Train has been introduced between Tirupati and Sainagar Shirdi and is flagged off by Shri V. Somanna, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Railways through remote video link in December, 2025. Vande Bharat Express

running between MGR Chennai Central to Vijayawada has been extended upto Narasapur and is flagged off by Shri Bhupatiraju Srinivasa Varma, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Heavy Industries and Steel in December, 2025. In addition to the above the following major infrastructure, capacity enhancement projects, Revenue generation and other important works taken up by the Zone During the year 2025 During the year 2025, SCR has achieved Freight loading of 136.2 Million tonnes (compared to 128.4 MTs during Jan - Nov 24).

Professor V. Balakista Reddy to Grace Ratan Tata 88th Birth Anniversary Celebrations as Chief Guest



Hyderabad: The 88th Birth Anniversary celebrations of Shri Ratan Naval Tata, renowned Indian industrialist and philanthropist, will be organised under the auspices of the Telangana Citizens Council (TCC) on December 28, 2025 (Sunday) at 10.00 a.m. at the Telangana State Union of Working Journalists (TUWJC) Press Club Auditorium, Basheerbagh, Hyderabad, the organisers announced. The programme will be graced by Professor V. Balakista Reddy, Prof. U. Umesh Kumar, Vice Chancellor, Satavahana University, Karimnagar, and Dr. Rajnarayan Mudiraj, President, Telangana Citizens Council (TCC). Other distinguished guests include Dr. Mohd. Akther Ali, Associate Professor, Department of Geography, Osmania University, and Dr. Lion Komatireddy Gopal Reddy, eminent educationist and environmentalist, National Advisor,



Environmental Protection & Development Council, TRSMA National Advisor, Chairman, and Global Green Mentor Awardee-2025 (New York, USA), who will participate as Guest of Honour. On the occasion, the Telangana Citizens Council will present the Ratan Tata Excellence Awards-2025 and Ratan Tata Seva Ratna Puraskar-2025 in recognition of outstanding service and excellence across various fields. Ratan Tata



Excellence Awards-2025 Awardees: • Prof. A. Patrick, Osmania University • Prof. Prashanth Kumar, University of Hyderabad • Dr. Mohammed Abdul Azeem, Professor of Management Studies • Prof. Neela Gollapudi, Kasturba Gandhi Women's College • Sri Prakash Goenka, Managing Director, DCSL Ispat • Sri Marri Prabhakar Mudiraj, Convener, All India Forum for MSME, Telangana Ratan Tata Seva Ratna Puraskar-2025 Awardees: • Dr. B. K. Umarani • Sri Mattam Sashidhar, Social Activist • Samba Lalitha, Principal • Smt. P. Arpitha, Teacher • Kadiraman Savitri, Founder, Power NGO • Smt. Komali Krishna Reddy, Social Worker • Smt. Padma Kalavuri, Women Empowerment Activist • Mohammadi Fathima, Principal • V. Jyothi, Teacher, Hanumakonda • Mekala Chandrasekhar Rao, State Secretary, BSP • Porika Annapurna, GHMC Employee and Social Worker The organisers stated that the programme aims to commemorate Shri Ratan Tata's legacy of ethical leadership, philanthropy, and nation-building, while encouraging excellence and service to society.

Northeast Frontier Railway Achieves Major Milestones in Modernization, Safety and Connectivity in 2025

Maligaon, 28 December, 2025 : Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has continued its robust momentum in advancing rail infrastructure and passenger services across the North Eastern region. During 2025, thirteen (13) pairs of trains under NFR are being upgraded from conventional ICF coaches to modern LHB rakes, offering enhanced safety, improved ride comfort and higher operational efficiency. Significant progress has been achieved in electrification over NFR, with 3,724.57 Route Kilometres (RKM) already electrified up to March 2025. During 2024-25, electrification works covering 1,141.38 Route Kilometres were completed, while 146.44 Route Kilometres have been electrified in 2025-26 up to 07 th October 2025. As a



result, the total electrified network over NFR has reached 3871 Route Kilometres. Division-wise electrification stands at 788.55 RKM in Katihar, 713.87 RKM in Alipurduar, 782.72 RKM in Rangiya, 1,104.63 RKM in Lumding and 481.21 RKM in Tinsukia Division, reflecting steady progress towards sustainable, energy-efficient and environmentally friendly rail operations in the North Eastern region. Safety

continues to be a foremost priority for NFR. The zone has strengthened Level Crossing (LC) gates through modern signalling and interlocked arrangements, with 624 interlocked LC gates now in place and 582 sliding boom installations improving road visibility and protection. Technology driven measures like the AI-based Intrusion Detection System (IDS) have been deployed across important elephant corridors to protect

wildlife and prevent train accidents, resulting in the successful protection of over 160 elephant lives in 2025 alone - reinforcing NFR's commitment to safety for both passengers and the environment. NFR's contributions to national development were recently highlighted during the inauguration and foundation-laying ceremony of development projects worth over Rs. 9,000 crore at Aizawl, Mizoram, where Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated the Bairabi-Sairang railway line to the nation. The Prime Minister emphasized the historic significance of connecting Aizawl to India's national railway network and its potential to transform lives through enhanced access to education, healthcare and employment.

CYBERABAD TRAFFIC POLICE APPREHEND 377 FOR DRUNK DRIVING

Hyderabad, Dec.28 (NSS): The Cyberabad Traffic Police (CTP) has conducted a special drunk driving enforcement drive over the weekend, resulting in the apprehension of 377 offenders. The total cases booked 300 two wheelers, 17 three wheelers, 58 four wheelers and Two heavy Vehicles. Based on their Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) levels, 317 offenders had BAC levels ranging from 35 mg/100 ml to 200 mg/100 ml, 39 offenders had BAC levels ranging from 201 mg/100 ml to 300 mg/100 ml, 21 offenders had BAC levels ranging from 301 mg/100 ml to 550 mg/100 ml. All the offenders will be produced before the court.

The Cyberabad police reiterates that driving under the influence of alcohol is a serious offence. If anyone is found to be driving in an inebriated condition and causes a fatal accident, such individuals will be booked under Section 105 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (Culpable homicide not amounting to murder). The maximum punishment under this section is 10 years of imprisonment along with a fine. Meanwhile, during the last week (December 22to 27) a total 55 drunk-driving cases were disposed in the courts, one offender receiving both fine and jail term, five fined with social service, and 49 fined. (NSS)

Mathura Vrindavan is ready to welcome sea of devotees this new year

Mathura, December 28 - Mathura Vrindavan is getting ready to welcome a sea of devotees for the new year season. Elaborate arrangements are made for lakhs of devotees expected to visit temples during the new year. Entry of Heavy vehicles will be restricted, and E-Rikshaw will be allowed to run only on their approved routes, SSP Shlok Kumar said. Maximum crowd is expected on New Year's Eve and the weekend following it, therefore, only a limited number of small vehicles will be allowed then, he added.

Parking arrangement for 7000 vehicles are made, hospitals are upgraded, and clock rooms are made to facilitate darshans. Extra police force are deployed with Magistrates and police officers on duty to take care of the extra crowd visiting on these days, Shlok Kumar added. Sri Bankey Bihari, the temple will be decorated with balloons and colourful cloths. Thakur ji is worshipped in his childhood stage at the temple; hence, special care is taken in temple rituals to ensure that "Lala" is not troubled.

Khichadi Prashad will be offered to Thakur Ji, Gyanendra Kishore Goswami, Sewayat Sri Bankey Bihari temple said. Supreme Court lawyer and Sewayat Sumit Goswami appealed to people to avoid visiting the temple during the New Year's time. He is pained with the fact that a large number of devotees are not serious devotees but rather came to make content for social media. Because of which, locals find it difficult to visit the temples. Echoing his concern, Dinesh Chandra Goswami, Sewayat

Sri Radha Raman Temple Vrindavan, also feels that the crowd unfortunately consist of a large number of influencers who visits only to make reels for social media. "The temple will be decorated for the New Year and will offer Khichadi Prasad to the deity", he added. Pawan Kaushik Sewayat Danghati temple Goverdhan expects even more number of devotees than previous years, to perform Parikrama (circumambulation) of thakur ji Maharaj during New Year time and to perform Panchamrit Abhishek in the

morning. He is worried about the fact that many devotees are now performing parikrama with shoes on and playing loud music on speakers. Dr Rakesh Gautam Sewayat Ancient Sri Garun Govind temple Vrindavan, believe that the New Year will be even more auspicious as it falls on Thursday, which is the day of deity. "Khichadi Prashad will be distributed to devotees, he added. Sri Kishna Janamsthan Mathura is also preparing to welcome a large number of devotees this year. Khichadi,

Gajak and rewadi are distributed to devotees as Prashad, Kapil Sharma, Secretary, Sri Krishna Janamsthan Seva Sansthan said. The ancient Kali temple Mathura is holding a S e h s t r a c h a n d i Pranchkundatmak yagna to bring peace and prosperity to everyone in the coming year, Raman Tandon, Media In-charge of Sri Kali ji temple, said. Businessman Pawan Chaturvedi points out that the existing infrastructure of the city is not fit for the huge rush the city is witnessing.

of the day quote

My message for European politicians who seem to have problems getting to grips with this fact is to repeat one more time that there is no need to be afraid of Russia attacking anyone. However, should anyone consider attacking Russia, they would face a devastating blow



SERGEI LAVROV | FOREIGN MINISTER, RUSSIA

Thailand does not see China merely as a mediator in our conflict with Cambodia but wants China to play a constructive role in ensuring a sustainable ceasefire by sending such signals to Cambodia as well



PRAK SOKHONN | FOREIGN MINISTER, CAMBODIA

Our country has suffered greatly from brutal regime changes, a cycle that repeats itself every ten years. I call on the people of the Central African Republic to choose the stability of institutions and a prosperous Central African Republic



FAUSTIN ARCHANGE TOUADERA | INCUMBENT PRESIDENT, CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

SHORT TAKES

B'desh polls: NCP sees internal rift

Dhaka: An internal rift overnight gripped the student-led National Citizen Party (NCP) over its proposed alliance with the Jamaat-e-Islami ahead of the Bangladesh election in February, with 30 of its leaders issuing a joint letter opposing the plan and two ranking members announcing their resignation. The NCP, a large offshoot of the Students Against Discrimination (SAD) that spearheaded last year's violent movement, dubbed the July Uprising, topping then prime minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League government, emerged as a political party with interim government chief Muhammad Yunus' blessings in February. The first signatory to the memorandum and the NCP's joint member-secretary, Mushfiq Us Saleheen, told reporters on Saturday night that they have sent the memo titled "Principled objections to a potential alliance in light of the accountability of the July Uprising and party values" to party convenor Nahid Islam.

China expels top military officials

Beijing: The Chinese parliament has expelled three high-ranking military officials in the latest crackdown against corruption. The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress Saturday expelled Wang Renhua, head of the Central Military Commission's (CMC) Political and Legal Affairs Committee; Zhang Hongbing, political commissar of the People's Armed Police (PAP), and Wang Peng, director of the CMC's training department.

Knife attack leaves 9 dead in Suriname

Paramaribo: A knife attack outside Suriname's capital of Paramaribo killed at least nine people, including five children, police said Sunday. Officials said the victims included four of the attacker's children and neighbours who came to their aid. A neighbour's child was also killed. Local media reported the victims were located at multiple homes. The attack took place in Richelieu in the Commewijne district about 25 kilometres (15 miles) east of Paramaribo. In a statement Sunday, Suriname's Police Corps said the male suspect attempted to attack police officers who arrived on the scene and he was injured during his arrest. He is now recovering in a hospital.

Indian man wins race discrimination claim in UK

Madhesh Ravichandran, from Tamil Nadu, said his Sri Lankan Tamil boss used references such as 'slave' and 'Indians are fraudsters' directed at him

Agency

London, Dec 28: An Indian man who accused his manager at a KFC franchise outlet in south-east London of wrongful dismissal and race discrimination has won nearly 67,000 pounds in compensation after a tribunal ruled in his favour. Madhesh Ravichandran, from Tamil Nadu, told an employment tribunal hearing that his Sri Lankan Tamil boss discriminated against him and used references such as "slave" and "Indians are fraudsters" directed at him. In details from the hearing published this week, tribunal judge Paul Abbott upheld Ravichandran's claim of wrongful dismissal and race discrimination against Nexus Foods Limited.

"The complaints of direct race discrimination are well-founded and succeed," reads the judgment. "We have found on the facts that the claimant was subjected to the less favourable treatments... his holiday request was refused because he was Indian and [restaurant manager] Kajan wished to prioritise requests from Sri Lankan Tamil colleagues, and he was referred to as a 'shih' and a 'slave' which is self-evidently less favourable treatment because of his race," it notes.

Ravichandran began work at the West Wickham outlet of KFC in January 2023 following his interview with Kajan,



whom he reported to directly. After facing months of problems, matters came to a head in July of that year when his boss attempted to make Ravichandran work excessive hours on a shift and handed in his notice. Judge Abbott said he accepted the evidence that his decision followed "Kajan's persistent efforts" to make him work "excessive hours". During follow up calls, Kajan was said to have become "racially abusive and threatening" towards Ravichandran. "This racial abuse from a manager had, we find, the purpose and the effect of violating the claimant's dignity," reads the judgment. The tribunal concluded that Ravichandran was "summarily dismissed" whilst serving out his notice and was denied his statutory right to one week's notice. "It was not asserted by the respondent that the claimant had done anything to entitle it to dismiss the claimant without notice. The claimant was, there-

fore, wrongfully dismissed and is entitled to be paid one week's pay in lieu of notice," it states. As part of the remedy from the findings of the tribunal hearing held in September, Ravichandran was granted a compensatory sum of 62,690 pounds, with additional payments in lieu of holiday pay and employment related particulars taking the total to around 66,800 pounds. The tribunal also directed Nexus Foods Limited to implement a "training programme for all employees concerning discrimination in the workplace, such programme to include training for managers on appropriate handling of grievances in this regard" within six months of the judgment.

Russia launches three Iranian sats into orbit

Agency

Tehran, Dec 28: Russia Sunday sent three Iranian communications satellites into orbit, the second such launch since July, Iranian state television reported. The report said that a Russian rocket sent the satellites to circle the Earth on a 500-kilometre (310-mile) orbit from the Vostochny launchpad in eastern Russia. The three satellites are dubbed Paya, Kowsar and Zafar-2. The report said that Paya, weighing 150 kilograms (330 pounds), is the heaviest satellite that Iran has ever deployed into orbit. Kowsar weighs 35 kilograms (77 pounds), but the report didn't specify how heavy Zafar-2 is. The satellites feature up to 3-metre resolution images, applicable in the management of water resources, agriculture and the environment. Their life span is up to five years. Russia occasionally sends Iran's satellites into orbit, highlighting the strong ties between the two countries. In July, a Russian rocket sent the Iranian communications satellite Nahid-2 into orbit. Russia, which signed a "strategic partnership" treaty with Iran in January, strongly condemned the Israeli and US strikes on Iran that came during a 12-day air war in June and killed nearly 1,100 Iranians, including military commanders and nuclear scientists. Retaliatory missile barrages by Iran killed 28 people in Israel. As a long-standing project, Iran from time to time launches satellite carriers to send its satellites into space. The United States has said that Iran's satellite launches defy a UN Security Council resolution and called on Tehran to undertake no activity involving ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons. UN sanctions related to Iran's ballistic missile program expired in 2023.

Bangladesh rejects India's claims on minority safety

India's MEA Friday had flagged "unremitting hostilities" against minorities, citing the recent killing of Hindu youth Dipu Chandra Das, who was lynched last week

Agency

Dhaka, Dec 28: Dhaka Sunday rejected concerns raised by India over the treatment of minorities in Bangladesh, calling it an "inaccurate, exaggerated, or motivated narrative" that does not reflect the facts. India's Ministry of External Affairs Friday said the "unremitting hostilities" against minorities in Bangladesh are a matter of "grave concern". It demanded punishment for the perpetrators involved in the lynching of a Hindu youth in the Mymensingh area last week. "The unremitting hostilities against the minorities in Bangladesh, including Hindus, Christians and Buddhists, at the hands of extremists is a matter of grave concern," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal had said. Responding to Jaiswal's remarks, Bangladesh foreign ministry's spokesperson SM Mahbul Alam said, "The Government of Bangladesh categorically rejects any inaccurate, exaggerated, or motivated narratives that misrepresent Bangladesh's longstanding tradition of communal harmony." Alam claimed that there were "systematic attempts to portray the isolated incidents of criminal acts as systemic persecution of the Hindus and maliciously used to propagate anti-Bangladesh sentiments" in



B'desh's Editors Council accuses section in interim govt of allowing violence

Bangladesh's newspaper Editors Council has accused a "section of the interim government" of allowing the recent spate of violence in the country after the death of Inqilab Mancha leader Sharif Osman Hadi. Hadi was shot in the head December 12 during an election campaign in Dhaka. He was airlifted to Singapore for advanced treatment but died of his injuries December 18. The same evening, a mob set on fire the offices of two mass circulation newspapers, Daily Star and Prothom Alo. Over half a century-old progressive cultural groups, Chayanat and Udichi Shilpi Goshthi, in the capital were also destroyed. They also lynched a Hindu factory worker in central Mymensingh. "We clearly know an announcement came to demolish the Prothom Alo, Daily Star and the Chhyanat one or two days before the attacks. The people of the country know, and the government as well knows who gave the announcement," Editors Council President Nurul Kabir said at an event of the Broadcast Journalists Centre (BJC) Saturday. Kabir, who is the editor of the New Age newspaper, said under the country's law, such announcements are a "criminal offence". "Yet the government did not arrest them to prevent the mayhem... that is why we said indeed a section of the government allowed the rampage to go on," Kabir said. He alleged an organised force carried out the attacks, and those who were arrested so far in connection with the incidents, "the political identity of theirs was revealed clearly".

different parts of India. "We observe a selective and unfair bias in certain quarters, where isolated incidents are amplified, misrepresented and propagated to incite common Indians against Bangladesh, its diplomatic missions and other establishments in India," Alam said. Alam said that the Indian spokesman's comments "do not reflect the facts". Referring to the killing of Amrit Mondal alias Samrat, by a mob in Rajbari town Wednesday night, Alam said Mondal was a listed criminal whose unfortunate death happened when he was committing extortion with his Muslim accomplice, who was later arrested. "To portray this criminal act in the lens of minority treatment is not factual but misleading," he added. Bangladesh calls upon different quarters in India to refrain from spreading misleading narratives that undermine the spirit of good-neighbourly relations and mutual trust, he said. On the other hand, Alam raised concern over alleged "incidents of brutal killings, mob violence, obstruction of elections, and disruption of religious events targeting Muslims, Christians, and other minority communities in India." "These incidents are viewed as hate crimes and targeted violence. We expect the concerned authorities in India to conduct impartial investigations into these incidents and bring the perpetrators to justice," he said.

Op Sindoor: Pak prez told to hide in bunker

Agency

Lahore, Dec 28: Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari has revealed that he was advised to "hide in a bunker" when India launched Operation Sindoor in May this year. Zardari made the revelation while speaking at an event in Larkana, Sindh province, to mark the 18th death anniversary of his wife and former prime minister Benazir Bhutto, who was assassinated in a gun and bomb attack in Rawalpindi December 27, 2007. "My MS (Military Secretary) came to me and said, 'Sir, the war has started. I had actually told him four days earlier that a war was going to happen. He said, 'Sir, let's go to a bunker (being a safe place)... I said, 'If martyrdom is to come, it will come here. Leaders don't die in bunkers. They die on the battlefield. They don't die sitting in bunkers,' he said Saturday. India launched Operation Sindoor May 7, targeting terror infrastructure in Pakistan and

Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in retaliation for the Pahalgam attack that killed 26 civilians. The strikes triggered four days of intense clashes between the two countries and ended with an understanding to stop the military actions May 10. "Pakistan desires peace but remains fully prepared to defend itself," Zardari said, while making claims about what he called Pakistan's "decisive stance" during the four-day conflict. President Zardari also praised Army chief Asim Munir for what he called a "befitting reply to India" in the armed conflict in May. The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) top leader claimed that the international community is now acknowledging Pakistan's stance and even US President Donald Trump had praised Munir. He also claimed that it was PPP that made Munir the Field Marshal. "We, the PPP, made Gen Munir Field Marshal," he said.



Ukrainians attend an Orthodox Christmas procession in downtown Lviv, Ukraine, Sunday

Chilly Gaza braces for more winter rain, progress on truce talks

Some families in the central town of Deir al-Balah said they had been living in tents for about two years, or for most of the war between Israel and Hamas that has devastated the territory

Agency

Deir Al-Balah (Gaza Strip), Dec 27: Barefoot children played on chilly sand as Gaza's thousands of displaced people prepared threadbare tents Saturday for another round of winter rain. Fathers braced fraying tents with old pieces of wood or inspected the ragged edges of holes torn in tarps. Inside the dim homes, daylight through

tiny holes shone like stars. Mothers battled the damp, slinging clothing over poles or cord to dry in the wind between the downpours that turn paths into puddles. One mother pulled a tiny child away from a mildewy patch of carpet. "We have been living in this tent for two years. Every time it rains and the tent collapses over our heads, we try to put up new pieces of wood," said Shaima Wadi, a mother of four children who was displaced from Jabaliya in the north. "With how expensive everything has become, and without any income, we can barely afford clothes for our children or mattresses for them to sleep on." Gaza's Health Ministry, part of the Hamas-run government, has said dozens of people, including a two-week-old infant, have died from hypothermia or after weather-related collapses of war-damaged homes.



Aid organizations have called for more shelters and other humanitarian aid to be allowed into the territory. Emergency workers have warned people not to stay in damaged buildings. But with so much of the territory reduced to rubble, there are few places to escape the rain. "I collect nylon, cardboard and plastic from the streets to keep them warm," said Ahmad Wadi, who burns the materials or uses them as a kind of blanket for loved ones. "They don't have proper covers. It is freezing, the humidity is high, and water seeps in from everywhere. I

don't know what to do." Ceasefire talks Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is expected to visit Washington in the coming days as negotiators and others discuss the second stage of the ceasefire that took effect on October 10. Though the agreement has mostly held, its progress has slowed. The remains of the final hostage taken during the Hamas-led attack October 7, 2023, that sparked the war are still in Gaza. Challenges in the next phase of the ceasefire include the deployment of an international stabilization force, a technocratic governing body for Gaza, the disarmament of Hamas and further Israeli troop withdrawals from the territory. Both Israel and Hamas have accused each other of truce violations. Gaza's Health Ministry said

that since the ceasefire went into effect, 414 Palestinians have been killed and 1,142 wounded. It said the bodies of 679 people were pulled from the rubble during the same period as the truce makes it safer to search for the remains of people killed earlier. The ministry Saturday said 29 bodies, including 25 that were recovered from under the rubble, had been brought to local hospitals over the past 48 hours. The overall Palestinian death toll from the Israel-Hamas war has risen to at least 71,266, the ministry said, and another 171,219 have been wounded. The ministry, which does not distinguish between militants and civilians in its count, is staffed by medical professionals and maintains detailed records viewed as generally reliable by the international community.

FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
You are in a mood to meditate or be alone. It may have arisen from some disappointment, says Ganesh, but you should honour it. It may even be a dynamic session of meditation involving painting, dancing, humming, or simply watching the world pass by.

TAURUS
Expect the confetti to pour and the music to blaze as you indulge in festivity and merry-making today, says Ganesh. Success might knock on your door this afternoon. Your thoughts will drip with optimism and your day might end with partying late into the night.

GEMINI
You will feel happy and content with your life today. However, you need to co-operate with others and help them with their troubles as well as maintain an attitude of friendliness. You need to guard against being selfish and looking after only your own interests, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Try focusing on achieving immediate goals today. Although, it is always beneficial to see the larger picture, there are days like today when working on short-term goals makes more sense. Later, you can cumulate these gains and complete the holistic picture. Once things are done to perfection, you will be filled with a sense of achievement. And, it deserved, says Ganesh. Celebrate in the evening.

LEO
Not every day is a Sunday, and today may not be one of those outright fabulous days, warns Ganesh. But there is high probability that you shall be very keen on your spiritual progress today. At the workplace, you may feel as if your hard work and accomplishments are not being given enough appreciation. But like Ganesh said, today is just such a day. In the evening, you might consider taking lessons to hone your skills and satisfy your love for music.

VIRGO
Your ability to keenly focus on things will reach its zenith today, says Ganesh. You will enjoy your work and complete your tasks proficiently and quickly. An unexpected turn of events may take place later today, but it will not give you too much cause for worry. Ganesh says physical intimacy will only enhance your love for your beloved.

LIBRA
Ganesh predicts a captivating day for you in terms of career. At work, you tend to do the tasks assigned to you with amazing clarity. Later in the day, whatever you say will charm a member of the opposite sex, which comes as a pleasant surprise to you. But beware, says Ganesh, as your outlook may cast a shadow on your thoughts in the evening.

SCORPIO
Work may pile up today unless you work extremely hard to meet your targets, says Ganesh. In business, you may be disappointed with the results you achieve and that may be the cause of anxiety and worry. Support may come in the form of love and affection from a dear one in the evening.

SAGITTARIUS
Come what may, you are all set to win the heart of your beloved today. Roses, romantic songs and gifts sum up the expressions of your love of him/her. However, work is always on your mind, even when you are shopping for your sweetheart. Have a lovely day!

CAPRICORN
It's your lucky day. You can look forward to an exciting time, both with your sweetheart and at work, says Ganesh. A few unexpected, but rather pleasant, events will keep you amused throughout, but there may be more surprises in store even as the day comes to an end.

AQUARIUS
Your family and friends are the pillars of strength for you. Today, they will make plans for leisure and recreation for you, and Ganesh advises you to go along with the flow. They want you to be happy and relaxed. You will realise how lucky you are to have them in your life.

PISCES
You will feel like King Midas himself today because everything you take up will fructify into something successful and rewarding, says Ganesh. You will be alight with incredible ideas and abuzz with stupendous energy. Feel free to skip the coffee!

Tridha on career choices



Mumbai: Actress Tridha Choudhury recently opened up about the careful choices she has made while navigating opportunities across industries. In an exclusive interview with this news agency, she explained that she was aware that doing nude scenes in a Hollywood project could have limited her future opportunities, especially in Bollywood and other industries. Tridha said she knew such a choice might have led to her being type-cast or blocked from many other projects. The actress shared that since she has already explored the international space, she believes there are other ways to

work globally without compromising her long-term career. Tridha further stated, "If I would have done one project in Hollywood, where I would have done nude scenes, it would have blocked a lot of my other projects. I knew that. So, I feel that if I have already tapped into the Hollywood space, I can still go ahead with a different approach. But for one project, I wouldn't risk the rest of my journey in Bollywood or somewhere else."

On the work front, Tridha made her film debut with Srijit Mukherji's *Mishawr Raw-hoshyo* and later gained recognition on television with the StarPlus series *Dahleez*. In 2020, Tridha appeared in notable roles in Amazon Prime Video's *Bandish Bandits* and MX Player's popular series *Aashram*.

Mumbai: Bollywood actress Madhuri Dixit recently shared her thoughts on the

Madhuri addresses falling theatre footfalls

changing dynamics of moviegoing, highlighting how rising cinema ticket prices are impacting theatre footfalls.

Speaking exclusively to this news agency, the *Dil To Pagal Hai* actress emphasised that while quality films continue to draw audiences, the increasing cost of tickets is making families more selective about which films to watch in theatres, especially with the convenience of OTT platforms at home.

Madhuri shared, "If the film is good, it will run and you have seen a few films running now in the theatres. So, it's not as if films are not running. I think if you go to see that even the cost of the tickets is very high. So, when one family goes there, they have to spend a lot of money. So, they really have to budget and think, which film to watch and which not to watch."

"Also, because of OTT, you know movies are at your fingertips. You're watching it at home whenever you want, when you get the time. Nowadays, even coming from work for people, by the time they get home, it is 8.30, 9.00. After that, going to watch a film has become a little difficult," she added.

Shweta celebrates progressive conversations

Mumbai: Actress Shweta Tripathi has shared what makes her proud about Indian stories on a global scale. The actress also said that she likes how conversations around equality and mental health have found a space in the mainstream. The actress spoke with this news agency as the year draws to a close. She said, "First, I think one thing that I'm very happy about is seeing global conversations around equality, mental health and inclusivity finally move into the mainstream. We are so aware of not just our everyday con-versations. We are so aware of what is happening with ourselves and our minds and body. So I think that was required and I really hope that increases and so does empathy. Second thing would be Indian stories finding a confident global voice. Be it our cinema, art, culture, it's being recognised beyond borders. She further mentioned, "Even with the rise of OTT which personally and professionally for me as an actor, as a producer and also as an audience has been very exciting because the people across the globe are raising the bar and that always encourages you and motivates where you to keep at it even on those days where you feel that we couldn't



Alia's new obsession

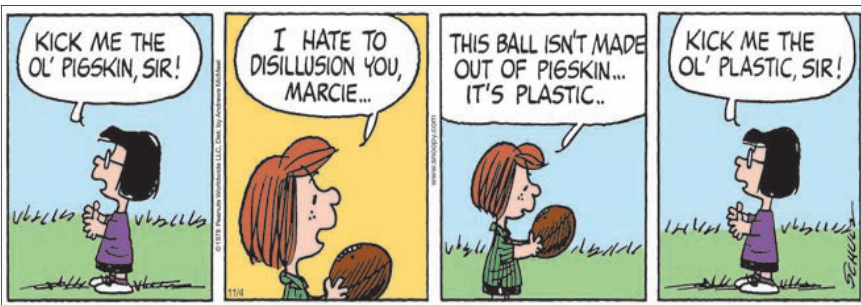
Mumbai: Actress Alia Bhatt took to social media to flaunt her new style obsession as she showcased her love for bows.

Taking to Instagram, the *Raazi* star, Sunday, shared several glamorous photos, in which she is seen with bows adorning her hair. The stylish shots showcase Alia in a variety of chic bow-inspired looks, highlighting her fashionable side. Alongside the images, Mahesh Bhatt's daughter wrote, "The phase of bows is going on." Alia's post seems to suggest that bows are her latest fashion statement. The series of images shows the actress striking different poses for the camera while flaunting her bow. In the final endearing picture, Alia plants a sweet kiss on her mother, Soni Razdan's, cheek, with her sister, Shaheen Bhatt, standing beside them.

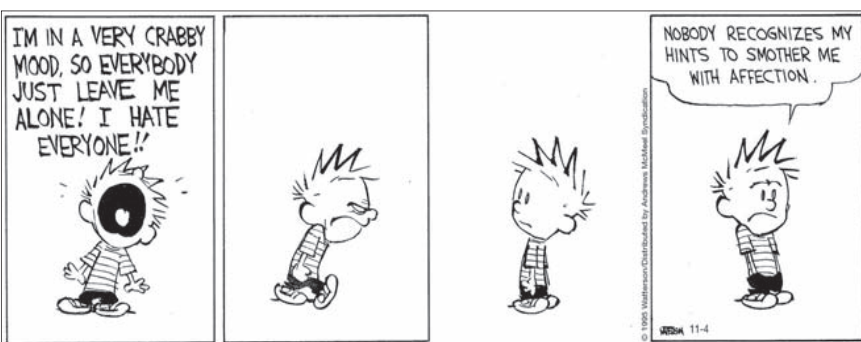
Meanwhile, Alia had recently offered a glimpse into her Christmas celebrations with her mother Soni, sister Shaheen, husband Ranbir Kapoor, and their daughter Raha. She shared a series of images from the festivities, which also included Neetu Kapoor and her sister-in-law Riddhima Kapoor Sahni. For the caption, she simply wrote: "Wrapped in love, Christmas 2025."

On the professional front, the 32-year-old actress was most recently seen in the film *Jigra*.

PEANUTS



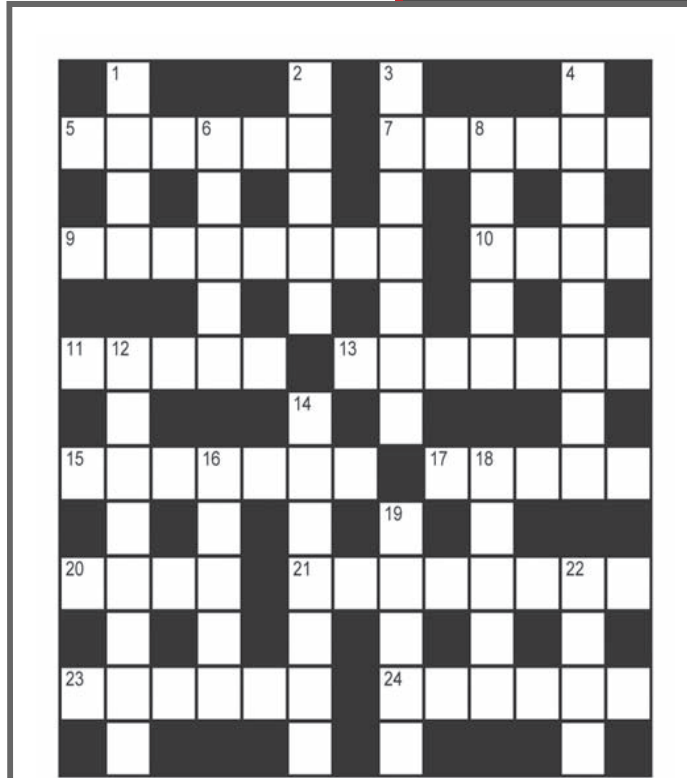
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



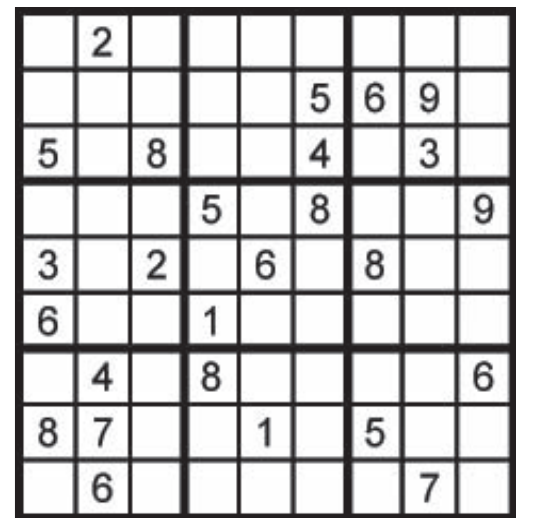
CROSSWORD



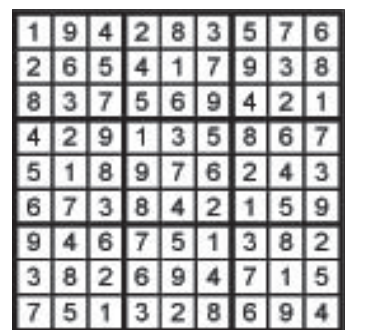
- Across**
- 5 Wine starters
 - 7 Gad about
 - 9 Omit (5,3)
 - 10 Sharp metal spike
 - 11 Small biting flies
 - 13 Llama relatives
 - 15 Acquires
 - 17 Cheapskate
 - 20 Greek salad cheese
 - 21 Stop signal (3,5)
 - 23 Praying insect
 - 24 News report
 - Down**
 - 1 Scottish hillside
 - 2 Fancy tie
 - 3 Yakety-yak
 - 4 Former squeeze (3,5)
 - 6 Come about
 - 8 Molten rock
 - 12 Duke, for one
 - 14 Entrance
 - 16 Separately
 - 18 Trojan War epic
 - 19 Fragrance
 - 22 Shacks

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

of the day
QUOTE

This week marks the transition into calendar year 2026 and is likely to witness heightened volatility due to the December F&O expiry. Key domestic data points to track include industrial production data for November and the final HSBC manufacturing PMI reading

AJIT MISHRA |
SVP, RESEARCH, RELIGARE BROKING

Based on current trends, India's exports are poised to deliver solid growth in 2026 as well. Notably, three free trade agreements -- UK, Oman, and New Zealand -- will enter into force next year, unlocking enhanced market access for both goods and services exports

RAJESH AGRAWAL | COMMERCE SECRETARY

India is expected to become the fourth-largest consumer durables market globally by FY27, with the industry projected to grow torupee 3 lakh crore by FY29 at a CAGR of around 11 per cent

SUNIL VACHANI | CHAIRMAN - CII NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER ELECTRONICS & DURABLES

SHORT TAKES

IndiGo's domestic market share slides

New Delhi: The country's largest airline IndiGo, which faced massive operational disruptions earlier this month, saw its domestic market share slide to 63.6 per cent in November, according to official data. Air India Group, comprising Air India and Air India Express, and SpiceJet had their respective market shares in November rise to 26.7 per cent and 3.7 per cent, respectively. In October, these figures were at 25.7 per cent and 2.6 per cent, respectively. Latest data from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) showed that Akasa Air also saw its domestic market share drop to 4.7 per cent in November from 5.2 per cent in October. With a share of 63.6 per cent in November, IndiGo remained the largest domestic carrier but the share declined from 65.6 per cent in October. In the wake of the operational disruptions, DGCA, earlier this month, directed IndiGo to reduce its winter schedule by 10 per cent. Last month, airlines received 1,196 passenger-related complaints, with 50.6 per cent pertaining to flight problem, followed by baggage (17.9 per cent) and refund (12.5 per cent). As per the data, the overall cancellation rate of scheduled domestic airlines stood at 1.33 per cent in November.

Mcap of 7 of top-10 companies declines

New Delhi: The combined market valuation of seven of the top-10 most valued firms declined by rupee 35,439.36 crore in a holiday-shortened last week, with State Bank of India taking the biggest hit, in line with a muted trend in equities. Last week, the BSE benchmark climbed 112.09 points or 0.13 per cent. From the top-10 pack, Reliance Industries, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), ICICI Bank, SBI, Bajaj Finance, Larsen & Toubro and Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) faced erosion from their valuation, while HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel and Infosys were the winners. The market valuation of State Bank of India tumbled rupee 12,692.1 crore torupee 8,92,046.88 crore. Reliance Industries' valuation dropped by rupee 8,254.81 crore torupee 21,09,712.48 crore. Bajaj Finance faced an erosion of rupee 5,102.43 crore to take its market valuation torupee 6,22,124.01 crore. Reliance Industries remained the most valued firm, followed by HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, TCS, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, and Infosys.

SILVER OUTSHINES BIG TECH

The white metal overtakes Apple, Alphabet in market value, expected to surpass NVIDIA

Agency

New Delhi, Dec 28: Silver has surged to become one of the most valuable assets in the world, overtaking tech giants Apple Inc and Alphabet in market capitalisation and moving closer to surpassing NVIDIA Corporation to claim the second spot after gold.

According to data from companiesmarketcap.com, silver's market capitalisation has risen to \$4.220 trillion. This places it just 8.1 per cent behind NVIDIA, which currently stands at \$4.592 trillion.

Gold continues to remain far ahead as the world's most valued asset, with a market capi-



SILVER'S MARKET CAPITALISATION HAS RISEN TO \$4.220 TRILLION
GOLD STILL WORLD'S MOST VALUED ASSET, WITH MCAP OF \$31.598 TRILLION

Silver is supported by strong industrial demand from new-age sectors, relatively cheap pricing compared to gold, and a sharp rally in the industrial metals after Trump's tariff announcement in April 2025

PRANAV MER | JM FINANCIAL SERVICES

talisation of \$31.598 trillion as of Friday (December 26).

The sharp rise in silver's

valuation comes amid a historic rally in prices. Spot silver on Comex crossed the \$75

per ounce mark Friday and extended gains to hit a fresh record high.

In India, silver futures on the Multi Commodity Exchange of India touched an all-time high of rupee 2,33,115 per kilogram during intraday trade. In contrast, NVIDIA's stock price was trading at \$188.61 in the afternoon session, down 0.32 per cent over the previous 24 hours.

Market experts believe silver could soon climb even higher in global rankings. Surendra Mehta, national secretary of the India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA), said that if the current momentum continues, silver is likely to overtake NVIDIA and become the second-most valuable asset in the world.

Mehta also pointed to unusual price distortions in global silver markets. He said the price difference between silver on Comex and the Shanghai exchange has widened to nearly \$7, far above the normal gap of less than \$1.

The scale of the rally is clearly visible in Indian markets. Silver prices on MCX have jumped more than 153 per cent over the past year, rising from rupee 91,600 December 26, 2024, torupee 2,31,879 on December 26, 2025.

Gold has also delivered strong returns but has lagged behind silver, gaining nearly 80 per cent during the same period as prices rose from rupee 77,460 torupee 1,39,233 per 10 grams of 24-carat gold.

Gold, silver may retain strength next week

NEW DELHI: Gold and silver are likely to hold their ground next week, as traders are awaiting meeting minutes of US Federal Reserve's FOMC, which will provide cues on the monetary policy outlook, analysts said. Though trading activity will remain subdued next week, with only a few key economic releases lined up, including November's pending home sales and meeting minutes from December's Federal Open Market Committee Tuesday, which will steer bullion prices. Gold

and silver prices are likely to maintain their upward momentum in 2026, driven by prospects of global rate cuts, safe-haven appeal and firm industrial demand, however, traders may turn cautious as the pace of gains may moderate after an exceptional 2025, they added. "On the technical front, after a staggering rally of 2025, we don't expect similar returns in 2026. But the current momentum may push up prices towards USD 5,000-5,200 and rupee 1,50,000-1,55,000 on the MCX in 2026,"

Pranav Mer, Vice President, EBG, Commodity & Currency Research, JM Financial Services Ltd, said. He added that underlying factors for the rally such as monetary policy easing, de-dollarisation, and global trade tensions will continue to dominate in 2026. "Bank of Japan's rate hikes, escalation in the global trade war as more countries may join in with import restrictions by levying tariffs and economic activity in the US and China will be closely tracked," Mer said.

BIS comes up with first Indian standard for electric tractors

Agency

New Delhi, Dec 28: The Bureau of Indian Standards has come up with the country's first testing standard for electric agricultural tractors, marking a push towards cleaner farm mechanisation.

The standard, IS 19262:2025 'Electric Agricultural Tractors - Test Code', was released by Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Pralhad Joshi December 24 at Bharat Mandapam on the occasion of National Consumer Day. Developed by BIS, it establishes uniform testing protocols to assess the safety, reliability and performance of electric tractors. The standard covers testing of power take-off (PTO), drawbar power, belt and pulley performance, vibration measurement, and inspection of components and assemblies.

It draws on existing standards for conventional diesel tractors and electric vehicles, adapted for agricultural use.

"The implementation of this standard through authorised testing institutes would facilitate wider adoption of electric agricultural tractors, promote innovation in clean technologies, and contribute to reduced emissions," an official statement said.

Mother's Public School celebrates Odisha's cultural legacy

BHUBANESWAR: Mother's Public School, Unit-1, hosted its annual school function on theme 'Sanskriti - The Echoes of Odisha', recently, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the state through vibrant performances by students of Classes IV to VII. The event sought to celebrate Odisha's traditions while promoting awareness of cultural preservation, community values, and sustainable development. Through dance, music and storytelling, students brought alive Odisha's festivals, folk traditions and spiritual ethos, highlighting the role of cultural literacy in quality education. The programme also underscored the importance of preserving temples, heritage sites and local festivals that strengthen community identity. The chief guest, Suvendu Kumar Sahu, Additional Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Department, Government of Odisha, appreciated the initiative, saying, "By integrating Odisha's cultural heritage with education, the school has aligned learning with the Sustainable Development Goals, instilling pride and a sense of rootedness among students." The event was graced by CEO of Mother's Group of Schools Supreet Rajpal, CFO Aditya Sabat, Principal-cum-Chairperson Poly Pattnaik, Director Sreejit Pattnaik, Managing Director Minati Sabat, and the school leadership. Cultural highlights included performances on Jagannath Stotram, Akshaya Tritiya and Chandan Yatra, Raja Parba and Lakshmi Puja, Kumar Purnima and Boita Bandana, and a powerful finale featuring Chhau, Nuakhai and Rath Yatra.



Private equity investments in real estate dip 29% in 2025

Agency

New Delhi, Dec 28: Private equity investments in real estate fell 29 per cent this year to \$3.46 billion due to lower inflow of funds in housing and warehousing projects, according to Knight Frank India.

Private equity (PE) investments stood at \$4.9 billion during the preceding year.

Inflow of PE funds hit record \$6.73 billion during the 2018 calendar year. Real estate

consultant Knight Frank India in an analysis released Sunday noted that investors remained cautious this year. Among different asset classes, the data showed that the PE fund inflow in office assets rose to \$2 billion during this calendar year from \$1.85 billion in 2024.

Office assets attracted 58 per cent of the total inflows in 2025.

Retail real estate also garnered \$374 million this year as against nil inflow during 2024. However, PE investments fell



sharply in housing and warehousing assets.

Housing segment attracted \$576 million this year as against \$1,177 million in 2024. The inflow of funds in warehousing parks plunged to \$510 million in 2025 from \$1,877 million in the preceding year.

Bitcoin drops 30% from record highs



Agency

Mumbai, Dec 28: Bitcoin has seen a sharp pullback in 2025, sliding nearly 30 per cent from its record high levels as weak trading activity, technical breakdowns and continued selling by long-term holders kept prices under pressure.

Despite the decline, improving regulation, growing institutional involvement and expanding blockchain adoption are keeping long-term optimism alive, with 2026 increasingly being seen as a potential turnaround year for the crypto market.

Bitcoin, the world's largest cryptocurrency, dropped to a low of around \$80,000 late last month before staging a rally and falling again this week. When bitcoin dropped to under \$81,000, that represented an approximately 36% fall from its all-time high of around \$126,000 hit earlier in October.

As of Friday, bitcoin was trading at over \$93,000, according to Coinmetrics, a roughly 26% decline from its record high.

Over the year, the crypto ecosystem recorded steady advancements. Decentralised finance platforms continued to expand, stablecoins gained wider acceptance for payments and settlements, and several countries moved ahead with pilot projects for central bank digital currencies.

Developer activity also remained strong, especially across the Asia-Pacific region and other global markets, with millions of developers building applications on blockchain networks.

These trends highlighted growing interest in blockchain technology despite price vola-

tility. The weakness in Bitcoin prices has been driven by a mix of technical and market factors. Prices slipped below the key 365-day moving average, which triggered further selling pressure.

Despite the price decline, several major developments shaped the crypto market in 2025. Early in the year, the United States announced the creation of a Strategic Bitcoin Reserve, a move that highlighted Bitcoin's growing importance at a national and strategic level.

This step was widely seen as a signal of increasing acceptance of digital assets within traditional financial systems.

Regulatory clarity also improved during the year. The passage of the GENIUS Act by mid-2025 provided a clear framework for US dollar-backed stablecoins.

This helped boost market confidence and is expected to support broader adoption of stablecoins by businesses and financial institutions.

Another key milestone came in December, when the US Commodity Futures Trading Commission allowed listed spot crypto products to trade on registered futures exchanges.

The decision marked an important shift toward stronger regulatory oversight, better transparency, and deeper institutional participation in the crypto market, especially across borders.

"With stronger regulation, rising institutional interest and sustained developer activity, market participants remain hopeful that these foundations will support long-term growth once investor confidence returns," experts stated.

India's water crunch brews risks for beverage giants

LAWS IN INDIA BAR THE MOVEMENT OF LIQUOR ACROSS STATE BORDERS WITHOUT A SPECIAL PERMIT, EFFECTIVELY FORCING COMPANIES TO SET UP PRODUCTION IN EVERY STATE THEY WANT TO SELL IN DESPITE THE WATER SCARCITY

Agency

Alwar, Dec 28: Foreign companies operating in India have long grappled with complex regulations and confusing tax laws. In the northwestern state of Rajasthan, some of the world's biggest beverage firms face the additional challenge of securing and managing dwindling water supplies while navigating strict government rules and grievances of some local people who only get the resource piped-in once a week.

Nearly two-thirds of Rajasthan is covered by the Thar Desert, and its groundwater extraction ranks among the highest in India, adding to the economic pressures for the state in balancing the needs of

tourism business, industry and its big agricultural sector.

Laws in India, the world's most populous nation, bar the movement of liquor across state borders without a special permit, effectively forcing companies to set up production in every state they want to sell in despite the water scarcity. So global giants like Diageo, Carlsberg and Heineken have to maintain factories in Rajasthan if they want to distribute their products in the state.

"(Water stress) is a growing issue in India," said Sonia Thimmiah, senior director of global sustainability at Heineken, the market leader, adding that a few years ago, water demand in some cities had come close to exceeding supply.



ageo said that they are increasing water efficiency in Rajasthan and other water-stressed regions, have worked to improve communities' access to water and aimed to replenish

ries use back to its source.

The challenges for the brewers in Rajasthan mirror a wider crisis across India, which holds 17% of the world's population but just 4% of its freshwater. As

the government classifies as "over-exploited" for groundwater, industries are further required to adopt the "latest water efficient technologies so as to reduce dependence on groundwater resources", a government order said in 2020, without specifying details.

"The water tables are declining and rains are variable," Diageo's Alwar head Sumit Wadia told Reuters.

"We have a vision to reduce water consumption by 40% and to ensure that whatever water is withdrawn from the ground, 100% replenishment is there. We are recycling 100% of the wastewater and installing advanced technologies which consume less water", like using air to rinse bottles instead

of water. The strain is evident in Rajasthan's industrial town of Alwar, about 150 km (100 miles) southwest of Delhi, where most of the beverage companies are centred. The wider Alwar district's groundwater extraction, driven mainly by irrigation, runs at nearly twice the rate its aquifers can recharge, government data shows.

Industry users consume just about 2% of Rajasthan's water, but under Indian law, all industrial and commercial entities seeking groundwater extraction have to install on-site rainwater harvesting and aquifer recharge systems.

of the day
quote

I have already spoken to Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, Pushkar Singh Dhami ji, regarding the tragic incident involving our student Angel Chakma, a resident of Nandanagar, who was brutally assaulted by a group of miscreants in Dehradun on December 9 and later he expired at Graphic Era Hospital

MANIK SAHA | TRIPURA CM



In Mat-tathur, when the CPI(M) attempted to install an independent councillor as panchayat president, Congress councillors supported another independent candidate

PINARAYI VIJAYAN | KERALA CM



People today accept that there has been a transformation in Uttar Pradesh. There is investment because there is security and the rule of law

YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CM



SHORT TAKES

Student ends life after getting caught in exam

Jaipur: A 19-year-old college student here allegedly jumped off from the 12th floor of an under-construction building after he was caught cheating in an exam, police said Sunday. The incident occurred Saturday in the Bagru area, they said. The student, Priyanshu Raj, a native of Patna in Bihar, was studying computer science (first year) at Manipal University and was staying in the college hostel, SHO Rajendra Kumar Godara said. The student was allegedly under stress after being caught cheating during an examination, following which his answer sheet and notes were seized, Godara said.

Country bomb found at councillor house

Kozhikode (Kerala): A country-made bomb was found at the porch of the house of an RJD councillor at Azhiyur near Vadakara here Sunday, police said. The incident occurred after the councillor allegedly voted in favour of the UDF in the election to the Vadakara block panchayat president's post, resulting in the LDF losing power. Police said the explosive was found near the veranda of the house belonging to RJD councillor Rajani Sunday morning.

HP: Pilot killed in paragliding mishap

Dharamshala: An experienced pilot was killed when a tandem paraglider reportedly developed a technical malfunction shortly after take-off, lost balance mid-air, and crashed near the road below the launch site in Kangra district, officials said Saturday. The incident occurred at the internationally renowned Bir Billing paragliding site.

Biker killed in explosion

Sehore (MP): A 20-year-old rider was killed when his motorcycle exploded in Madhya Pradesh's Sehore district Sunday, police said. The deceased, identified as Sukhram Barela, was engaged in blasting work at wells and other locations. He was allegedly carrying a large quantity of detonators with him for work when the explosion occurred in the morning, area Sub Divisional Officer of Police (SDOP), Roshan Jain, told reporters.

Prez undertakes submarine sortie onboard INS Vaghsheer

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 28: President Droupadi Murmu Sunday undertook a sortie onboard Indian Navy's indigenously-built frontline submarine INS Vaghsheer on the Western seaboard.

Murmu is the second President to undertake a submarine sortie. In February 2006, APJ Abdul Kalam experienced a submarine sortie onboard INS Sindhu Rakshak.

Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi accompanied

President Murmu, who is also the Supreme Commander of the armed forces, during the sortie in the Kalvari class submarine from the Karwar naval base in Karnataka, officials said.

The President, donning a naval uniform, waved at naval personnel before entering the submarine. She also interacted with the crew of INS Vaghsheer and lauded their dedication, while describing the indigenous submarine as a shining example of the Indian Navy's professional excellence and



«Droupadi Murmu is the second President to undertake a submarine sortie

«In February 2006, APJ Abdul Kalam experienced a submarine sortie onboard INS Sindhu Rakshak

combat preparedness. «President Droupadi Murmu undertook a dived sortie on the Western Seaboard onboard INS

Vaghsheer," the President's Secretariat said.

It said the President was briefed on the role of the sub-

marine arm in India's maritime strategy, and the operational capabilities as well as contributions in safeguarding national maritime interests.

Murmu, while interacting with the crew of INS Vaghsheer, commended their dedication, commitment and spirit of selfless service, it added.

«She said that this indigenous submarine is a shining example of the Indian Navy's professional excellence, combat preparedness and unwavering commitment to national secu-

urity," the secretariat said on social media.

INS Vaghsheer, the sixth and final submarine of the P75 Scorpene project, was commissioned into the Navy in January. It is one of the most silent and versatile diesel-electric submarines in the world, according to Navy officials.

It is designed to undertake a wide range of missions, including anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, intelligence gathering, area surveillance, and special operations.

Bihar: 8 wagons of goods train derail, rail traffic disrupted

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna/Kolkata, Dec 28: Eight wagons of a goods train have derailed in Bihar's Jamui district, causing disruption of railway services on the Howrah-Patna-Delhi route, officials said.

No casualties have been reported so far, they said.

An Eastern Railway official said that an inquiry has been ordered into the cause of the accident.

The accident took place between Lahabon and Simultala railway stations under the Asansol division of Eastern Railways around 11.25 pm Saturday. It resulted in the disruption of the movement of around two dozen trains overnight, causing inconvenience to passengers.

Accident relief trains have been sent from Asansol, Madhupur and Jhajha stations to the spot, he said. Clearing of the tracks and restoration work were being done on a war footing, he said.

Several express and other passenger trains have been cancelled or rescheduled and diverted owing to the blockage of tracks caused by the derailment of the goods train, the ER official said.

A number of express trains were being diverted via Dhanbad-Gaya and other routes. Among them are 12305 Howrah-New Delhi Rajdhani Express, 22347 Howrah-Patna Vande Bharat Express, 22500 Varanasi-Deoghar Vande Bharat Express, 22499 Deoghar-Varanasi Vande Bharat Express and 13332 Patna-Dhanbad Intercity Express, the official added.

SC to hear suo motu case on Aravalli hills today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 28: Amid a row over the definition of Aravalli hills approved by it, the Supreme Court has taken suo motu cognisance of the issue and is slated to hear the matter Monday.

As per the cause list, a three-judge bench vacation of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices JK Maheshwari and Augustine George Masih is likely to hear the matter. The case is titled as 'In Re: Definition of Aravalli Hills and Ranges and Ancillary Issues'. The top court November 20 had accepted a uniform definition of the Aravalli hills and ranges and

MUMBAI CIVIC POLLS

Cong, VBA seal alliance



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shiv Sena, BJP seat-sharing talks in final stages: Uday

Mumbai: Seat-sharing talks between the Shiv Sena and the BJP for the January 15 Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation elections are in the final stages, Maharashtra Minister Uday Samant has said. Speaking to reporters on Saturday, Samant said it is certain that the polls will be contested by the ruling parties as Mahayuti, and exuded confidence that the alliance will come to power in the BMC, Asia's largest civic body. «Seat-sharing talks are in the final stages. Instead of talking about who gets how many seats, we are contesting 227 seats as Mahayuti," he said. Taking a dig at the Shiv Sena (UBT) and Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS), Samant said some parties have allied to save their existence.

based on equality, fraternity, and social justice," he said.

Recalling that the two parties had earlier come together during the 1998 and 1999 elections, Sapkal said that after a gap of 25 years, a new chapter had begun.

«It took time for the process, but from today, a new phase in state politics has started," he added.

VBA leader Pundkar said the alliance had been formed to stop «the divisive politics of the BJP.

He said Sapkal had taken the initiative for the alliance and maintained a positive approach from the beginning.»

Ramesh questions environment minister

New Delhi: Amid a row over the redefinition of the Aravallis, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh Sunday posed four questions to Environment Minister Bhupendra Patel Yadav and claimed that the move will lead to fragmentation and undermining of the geographical and ecological integrity of the entire mountain range. In a letter to Yadav, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said there are understandably widespread concerns with the redefinition of the Aravalli hills that restrict them to landforms having an elevation of 100 metres or more.

banned grant of fresh mining leases inside its areas spanning Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan and Gujarat until experts' reports are out. The apex court had accepted the recommendations of a committee of MoEF&CC (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change) on the definition of Aravalli hills and ranges to

protect the world's oldest mountain system. The committee recommended that «Aravalli Hill» will be defined as any landform in designated Aravalli districts with an elevation of 100 metres or more above its local relief and an «Aravalli Range» will be a collection of two or more such hills within 500 metres of each other.



A man offers prayers at the banks of the Ganga river on a cold winter morning, in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh PHOTOS

Unnao rape victim, family protest at Jantar Mantar

Demanding stricter accountability from authorities, the victim, who was present during the protest, said that their family should be provided more security

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 28: The victim of the 2017 Unnao rape case, along with her family, and activists held a protest at Delhi's Jantar Mantar Sunday against the suspension of former BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar's life sentence by the Delhi High Court in the case.

Demanding stricter accountability from authorities, the victim, who was present during the protest, said that their family should be provided more security. «I'm requesting the chief minister to provide us security; these people are powerful. Please save your daughter," she said. «My husband was expelled from his job, we are unemployed, where will we go?" she said. The demonstrators raised slogans against what they described as undue leniency towards the convict, arguing that the action taken so far fell short of public expectations.

The mother of the victim said that they trust the Supreme Court and hope that justice will be delivered in this case.

«We were beaten up, our



Youth Cong slams BJP

Mumbai: Mumbai Youth Congress Sunday staged a protest against the relief granted to Unnao rape case convict and expelled BJP MLA Kuldeep Sengar. Protesters alleged the decision exposed the hypocrisy of the BJP's «Beti Bachhao, Beti Padhao» slogan. Led by Mumbai Youth Congress president Zeenat Shabreen, party workers travelled on a local train from Santacruz to Churchgate, interacting directly with commuters to raise awareness about the case and the alleged protection being extended to the convicted leader. The protesters criticised the BJP-led government for what they described as shielding those convicted of serious crimes against women and said such actions undermined women's safety and justice.

Protesters from All India Progressive Women's Association (AIPWA) and All India Students' Association (AISA) also joined the protests on Sunday and claimed that the case had brought to light the influence of political power in criminal matters. They warned that any dilution of responsibility would undermine faith in the justice system.

A police source said a woman was removed from the protest site as she was trying to enter the area with a placard in support of Sengar.

relatives were beaten up, fake cases were registered against our relatives; I request the government not to release him," she said. The Delhi High Court December 23 suspended the jail term of Sengar till the pendency of his appeal, saying he has already served seven years and five months in prison, and had granted him conditional bail. He will, however, remain in jail since he is also serving 10 years' imprisonment in the custodial death case of the victim's father and has not been granted bail in that case.

The Supreme Court is slated to hear Monday a plea by the CBI challenging the Delhi High Court order. According to the cause list, a three-judge vacation bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices JK Maheshwari and Augustine George Masih is likely to hear the matter.

Micro-hospitals new shield against rising NCDs: Experts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 28: As India's healthcare system buckles under a non-communicable diseases (NCDs) epidemic, experts advocated setting up of «micro-hospitals» which they claimed can curb India's deaths due to NCDs by replacing fragmented tertiary models with specialist-led coordinated care and reduced wait times.

WHO data reveals that NCDs account for an estimated 63 per cent of all deaths in India, they said. Hospital bed density lags at just 0.55 per 1,000 population -- far below the WHO's 3 per 1,000 benchmarks -- leading to



overcrowded facilities, long wait times, and variability in care quality. Experts said that despite India's world-class tech-

nology and infrastructure, the healthcare system is marred by a massive «middle-layer gap» (micro-hospitals) between pri-

mary clinics and overcrowded 500-bed hospitals, leading to fragmented care and a growing trust deficit between doctors and patients.

Addressing the HEAL One-Health Connect Series -- a health talk organised to nurture a culture of wellness and preventive care -- Dr Jagdish Prasad, former Director General Health Services (DGHS), Union health ministry said, «India has the doctors and

the technology, but what we truly lack is continuous, coordinated care.»

And large tertiary hospitals are often designed for acute crises, not the long-term, community-centred management that NCDs require, he explained.

«Micro-hospitals represent a necessary structural correction, bringing

consultations, diagnostics and follow-ups under one roof to restore the lost trust between patients and providers," he said. The micro-hospital model is emerging as a new blueprint designed to bridge the accessibility and quality gap, experts said. Unlike smaller nursing homes, micro-hospitals are purpose-built, specialist-led facilities that offer 360-degree care -- from advanced diagnostics to surgical interventions -- closer to residential communities. This prevents the «patient shuffling» that typically occurs when patients are forced to navigate multiple laboratories and clinics for a single diagnosis.

The micro-hospital model is emerging as a new blueprint designed to bridge the accessibility and quality gap, experts said

All-round India beat SL



Record partnership between Shafali and Smriti helps Women in Blue beat SL by 30 runs in 4th WT20I

Agency

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 28: An all-round India rode on Smriti Mandhana (80) and Shafali Verma's (79) record partnership followed by spinner Vaishnavi Sharma's impressive 2/24 to beat Sri Lanka by 30 runs in the fourth women's T20I and take a 4-0 lead in the five-match series here Sunday.

After Mandhana and Shafali set the platform for India's highest women's T20I total of 221/2 with the highest partnership of 162 for any wicket, Vaishnavi bowled an impressive 4-0-24-2 to help the home side record a commanding win.

Chasing a mammoth 222, Sri Lanka came out firing with Hasini Perera (33 off 20 balls, 7 fours) and skipper Chamari Athapaththu (52 off 37 balls, 3 fours and 3 sixes) providing the early fireworks.

But the target proved too much for the island team to manage, as they lost wickets in a flurry towards the end to finish at 191 for six in their 20 overs.

The left-handed Perera set

Mandhana also entered history books, becoming only the fourth batter after compatriot Mithali Raj, New Zealand's Suzie Bates and England's Charlotte Edwards to complete 10,000 international runs across formats

the tone with a flurry of fours at the start while Athapaththu once again displayed her rich array of strokes, but the asking run-rate on a flat pitch kept rising steeply for the Sri Lankan side.

In a high-scoring game where any error in line or length was punished severely by the batters from both the teams, the young Vaishnavi bowled a total of nine dot balls to exert pressure from one end while accounting for the dangerous Athapaththu and Harshitha Samarawickrama (20).

Arundhati Reddy (2/42) chipped in with a couple of vital strikes, dismissing Perera in the sixth over after a 59-run opening stand and later, got the rid of Kavisha Dilhari (13).

The fifth and final T20I will

be played here December 30. Earlier, Mandhana and Shafali went on a record-making spree, powering India to their highest Women's T20I total of 221 for two.

Having batted second in each of the three games so far in this five-match rubber, Mandhana and Shafali put on a batting masterclass to hammer Sri Lanka bowlers all around the Greenfield International Stadium after being asked to bat first.

Towards the end, Richa Ghosh smacked a 16-ball 40 not out and skipper Harmanpreet Kaur made 9-ball 16 not out, as India rattled up a massive total.

Indian openers Mandhana and Shafali shared a massive 162-run stand in 15.2 overs, which is now the best partnership for any wicket for the country in women's T20Is.

It was also the fourth occasion when Mandhana and Shafali stitched an alliance of 100 or more, as the pair bettered its own record of 143 against the West Indies at Gros Islet in 2019.

Brief Scores:

India: 221/2 in 20 overs (Shafali Verma 79, Smriti Mandhana 80; Malsha Shehani 1/32, Nimasha Meepage 1/40) beat **Sri Lanka:** 191 for 6 in 20 overs (Chamari Athapaththu 52; Vaishnavi Sharma 2/24) by 30 runs

Surya, Rithvik claim nat'l titles

Agency

Vijayawada, Dec 28: Surya Charishma Tamiri rode on strong local support to register a come-from-behind win over Tanvi Patri while Ritvik Sanjeevi S defeated Bharat Raghav to clinch the women's and men's singles titles respectively in the Senior National Badminton Championships in Vijayawada Sunday.

The 19-year-old Vijayawada-born Surya Charishma got the better of Tanvi 17-21, 21-12, 21-14 in the women's singles final, while Rithvik defeated Bharat 21-16, 22-20 in the men's singles summit clash.

The much-anticipated women's singles final between the local favourite and a player attempting to become the youngest senior national champion lived up to its billing as both players had their chances in the 58-minute encounter.

Tanvi took control of the



match at the midway stage of the opening game, and it looked like she had frustrated her opponent enough to induce unforced errors.

One such error happened at 6-5 in the second game as Surya Charishma swatted a service return in the net. But the service judge had called it a fault for height, and that gave the eventual champion a reprieve. She then went on to win seven consecutive points to take con-



trol of the second game.

In the decider, Surya Charishma engaged Tanvi in long rallies at the start, and the tiredness began to show on the youngster. Though Tanvi tried to keep pace with her opponent, she clearly ran out of steam as Surya Charishma wrapped up the match with six straight points from 15-14 on wards.

In the men's singles final, Rithvik relied on his superior defence and composure to over-

Tie-break denies Humpy hat-trick

The defending champion finishes with 8.5/11 points at joint 1st with 2 others. However, due to less tie breaker score she wasn't eligible for the final match and had to settle for bronze

Agency

Doha, Dec 28: Indian chess stalwart Koneru Humpy suffered a massive heartbreak in her bid for a third world rapid title, finishing with a bronze in the women's section of the FIDE World Rapid Championships after being cruelly done in by the tie-break rule, here Sunday.

Humpy, the winner of the world rapid title in 2019 and 2024, tied for the top spot with China's Zhu Jiner and Russian Grandmaster Aleksandra Goryachkina at 8.5 points, after the 11th and final round.

However, as per the international chess federation's (FIDE) tie-breaker rules to rank players with the same score -- namely Buchholz Cut 1, Buchholz and Average Rapid Rating



of the Opponents -- Humpy fell behind Zhu and Goryachkina to settle for the third spot after coming so close to clinching her third world rapid title.

Humpy had scores of 69, 74 and 2335 on the above-mentioned parameters, while Zhu (72.5, 77.5 and 2410) and Goryachkina (71.5, 77 and 2360) finished higher to contest for the top spot.

Goryachkina, the highest-rated Russian woman in chess history and the winner of the Women's Chess World Cup in 2023, defeated Zhu 1.5/0.5 in the tie-breaker to clinch her maiden world rapid title and 40,000

Euro prize purse.

It was her compatriot and former World Rapid bronze medalist, young B Savitha Shri who gave a spirited fight to Humpy in the 11th and final round to split a point.

Had Humpy secured a full point, she would have finished on nine points and made history by winning her third world rapid title, something no woman player has achieved so far.

Savitha (8 points) finished fourth while R Vaishali (8) came in fifth. The Women's World Cup winner Divya Deshmukh (7.5) was eighth and D Harika (7) was 19th.

Carlsen reigns supreme

The world No 1 Magnus Carlsen showcased his supremacy by clinching his sixth World Rapid title in the 'Open' category, adding to the titles he won in 2014, 2015, 2019, 2022 and 2023. He got 70,000 Euros for the win.

The Norwegian, who had not taken his seventh-round loss to Vladislav Artemiev lightly, won three consecutive games on the final day to take a one-point lead and then drew the 13th and last game against Dutch GM Anish Giri to finish on 10.5 points.

Russian GM Artemiev (9.5) was second, while Arjun Erigaisi earned a win against Russian GM Aleksandr Shimanov to jump to 9.5 points and secure a bronze ahead of American Hans Niemann (9.5) and Cuban-American Leiner Dominguez (9.5).

The world champion in classical chess, D Gukesh (8.5 points) finished 20th, while Nihal Sarin (8.5) was 19th. R Praggnanandhaa, also on 8.5, was 27th.

The World Blitz Championships will commence Monday with eight-time champion Carlsen favourite in the event.

Yuvraj bags record seven titles in 2025

The 28-year-old golfer added another feather to his cap with a one-stroke triumph in the Tata Open 2025

Agency

Jamshedpur, Dec 28: Yuvraj Sandhu, who had already secured the 2025 PGTI Order of Merit crown following his sixth victory of the season two weeks back, added another feather to his cap with a one-stroke triumph in the Tata Open 2025 to make it a record seven titles in the season.

The 28-year-old Yuvraj (67-64-68-65), the overnight joint leader, shot a final round score of six-under 65, highlighted by his match-winning birdie on the last hole to total 20-under 264 for the week at the INR 2



crore event, the PGTI's season finale, played at the Beldih and Golmuri Golf Courses in Jamshedpur Sunday.

Chandigarh-based Sandhu, who has now earned his card for the DP World Tour for 2026 by virtue of topping the PGTI Ranking, set a new record for most wins in a single season on the PGTI. Two weeks back in Delhi, Yuvraj had equalled the previous record of six wins in a season held by Manu Gandas since 2022.

Kyrgios beats Sabalenka in 'Battle of the Sexes' clash

Agency

Dubai, Dec 28: Nick Kyrgios beat Aryna Sabalenka 6-3, 6-3 Sunday in a "Battle of the Sexes" exhibition match billed as a modern take on Billie Jean King's famous victory over former Grand Slam winner Bobby Riggs more than 50 years ago, but one that has ignited controversy over its relevance and meaning.

Playing in front of a sold-out crowd at Dubai's Coca-Cola Arena, Kyrgios negotiated the slightly smaller "equaliser" court on women's world-number-one Sabalenka's side to secure victory after a tight and entertaining contest played under modified rules.

With a one-serve-per-point rule in effect, both players faltered on their deliveries in crucial moments before Kyrgios broke for a 4-3 lead and went on to take the opening set.



The maverick Australian was drenched in sweat and appeared out of breath in the second set after going 1-3 down, while his opponent danced to the music during a strategic timeout, but he persevered to make it 3-3 after Belarusian Sabalenka sent a shot long.

Kyrgios, who shortened the points with cheeky drop shots and used variations on his serve to good effect, pulled away to seal the win on serve before sharing a warm hug with Sabalenka at the net.

AFRICA CUP OF NATIONS

Osimhen steers Nigeria into top 16

Agency

Rabat (Morocco), Dec 28: Victor Osimhen scored a rare Africa Cup of Nations goal and Nigeria booked its place in the knockout stage with an ultimately nervy 3-2 win over Tunisia.

The Super Eagles almost squandered a three-goal lead as Montassar Talbi pulled a goal back in the 74th minute and Ali Abdi converted a penalty in the 87th. Osimhen missed two good chances with headers early on as the Nigeria made a good start, but he finally made one count before the break with a header to Ademola Lookman's cross.

Nigeria was cruising after the break when Lookman set up Wilfred Ndidi for the sec-



ond goal, then Osimhen set up Lookman in the 67th.

The Carthage Eagles somehow found a way back and threatened an unlikely comeback after Talbi scored the penalty and fans in the Complexe Sportif de Fès set off flares in delight.

Nigeria is assured of its place in the last 16 with a maximum six points in Group C, three ahead of Tunisia while Tanzania and Uganda have a point each.

Pace great Brett Lee inducted to Australian Cricket Hall of Fame

Agency

New Delhi, Dec 28: Former fast bowler Brett Lee has been inducted into the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame. The announcement was made Sunday, honouring his impressive international career characterised by exceptional pace, durability, and notable sportsmanship.

At 49, Lee is considered one of the quickest bowlers in history, alongside Shoaib Akhtar. He represented Australia from 1999 to 2012, playing 76 Tests, 221 ODIs, and 25 T20Is. Throughout his career across all formats, he took a total of 718 wickets. In Tests, he claimed 310 wickets, while in ODIs and T20Is, he took 221 and 38 wickets respectively.

The former pacer was a significant pioneer of the early

years of the T20 format, playing for several teams globally, including the Sydney Sixers in the Big Bash League. He was part of the Sixers team that secured the first Big Bash League title.

During his career in Australia, Lee contributed to three World Cup-winning teams in 1999, 2003, and 2007. He also participated in several Ashes series against England.

Lee is renowned for consistently crossing the 160 kmh mark on the speed gun. However, he was more than just producing quick deliveries; he had a talent for blending speed with impressive skill.

He was also named Australian Test Player of the Year in 2008 after receiving the prestigious Allan Border Medal. Lee became a well-known figure



in India as well, with a strong following due to his numerous appearances in the Indian Premier League (IPL) and his involvement in cultural activities such as music and film

collaborations.

Peter King, Chair of the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame, stated that Lee genuinely merits this honour, as he remains an exceptional ambassador for the sport.

"Brett Lee's induction into the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame is richly deserved. He was not only one of the fastest and most exciting bowlers the world has seen, but also an outstanding ambassador for Australian cricket. Brett's impact transcended statistics -- he inspired fans around the world with the way he played the game, the respect he showed opponents, and the pride he took in representing his country, King said in an official statement.

"Now a respected commentator, Lee continues to contribute to the game and its communities globally long after his final delivery. The Australian Cricket Hall of Fame celebrates players whose careers have left a lasting legacy on the sport, he added.

Jamalpur Ground Receives Upgrade as MLA Inaugurates Stage and Deep Boring Project

Rajmahal MLA Mohammad Tajuddin, also known as MT Raja, has gifted development projects to Jamalpur Ground for the benefit of local athletes and residents. Using MLA fund allocations, a stage and a deep boring system have been constructed at the ground.



OUR CORRESPONDENT Rajmahal: Rajmahal MLA Mohammad Tajuddin, also known as MT Raja, has gifted development projects to Jamalpur Ground for the benefit of local athletes and residents. Using MLA fund allocations, a stage and a deep boring system have

been constructed at the ground. On Sunday, the MLA formally inaugurated the project by cutting the ribbon and breaking a coconut. The total cost of the construction amounted to Rs 5.25 lakh. During the inauguration, the MLA stated that the newly constructed stage would facilitate the organization of events at the ground, while the deep boring system

would resolve drinking water issues for both players and spectators. Reiterating his commitment to rural development, he emphasized his dedication to the overall development of the region. Several local leaders and workers, including Ajay Das, Vikas Yadav, Subhash Chandra Das, and Bindeshwari Yadav, were present at the event.

Dr Jitendra Singh says, SHANTI Bill Will Go Down in History as One of Modi Government's Biggest Science Reforms

OUR CORRESPONDENT New Delhi: SHANTI Bill will go down in history as one of the Modi Government's biggest science reforms, said Union Minister Science & Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh in a media interview here today. The Minister observed that while parliamentary discourse on reforms has traditionally focused on public welfare schemes and governance measures, the long-term socio-economic character of the nation will increasingly be shaped by reforms in science and technology. The third term of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Modi 3.0, is distinctly characterised by bold, structural reforms, with a strong emphasis on science, innovation, and entrepreneurship, he added. SHANTI Bill represents a defining departure from convention by positioning science-driven reform at the centre of national transformation, said the Minister. Dr.

Jitendra Singh said, the Bill must be seen as one of the most significant science reforms of the Modi Government, noting that India has historically not framed scientific advancement within the reform narrative despite its decisive impact on future growth, industry, and global competitiveness. Placing the SHANTI Bill within the larger context of Modi 3.0, Dr Jitendra Singh said the third term of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is distinctly characterised by bold, structural reforms, with a strong emphasis on science, innovation, and entrepreneurship. He highlighted that while earlier reform phases were associated with landmark political and strategic decisions, Modi 3.0 will be remembered for breaking long-standing barriers in sectors that determine India's technological and economic future. The Minister said that the SHANTI Bill marks a historic reform in India's

nuclear sector, unlocking its potential for peaceful, clean, and sustainable energy while maintaining uncompromising standards of safety, sovereignty, and public interest. He emphasised that such a reform was inconceivable for over six decades and became possible only due to Prime Minister Modi's ability to dismantle legacy taboos and align India's policies with global best practices. Reiterating India's long-standing commitment to peaceful nuclear use, Dr Jitendra Singh recalled that from the time of Dr Homi Bhabha, India's nuclear programme was envisioned for development, healthcare, and energy security. The SHANTI Bill, he said, strengthens this foundational philosophy by enabling expansion for civilian purposes such as clean power generation, medical applications, and advanced research, while firmly excluding any deviation

from peaceful intent. Highlighting the demands of the emerging AI, quantum and data-driven economy, the Minister said nuclear energy is indispensable for providing reliable, round-the-clock power, unlike intermittent renewable sources. He noted that as India transitions away from fossil fuels and coal, nuclear energy will play a critical qualitative role in sustaining advanced technologies, digital infrastructure, and strategic sectors. Dr Jitendra Singh also informed that India's nuclear power capacity has doubled from about 4.4 GW in 2014 to nearly 8.7 GW today, with a clear roadmap to scale up substantially in the coming years. He said the government aims to reach around 100 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047, enabling nuclear energy to meet nearly 10 percent of India's electricity requirements and support the national Net Zero commitment.

K. A. Paul accuses BJP government and NCW of selective action; calls it abuse of institutions and a danger to democracy

OUR CORRESPONDENT New Delhi: Dr. K. A. Paul, founder of the Praja Shanti Party and the World's Most Popular evangelist, has criticised the BJP government and the National Commission for Women (NCW), alleging open double standards and political misuse of constitutional bodies. Referring to the NCW summoning actor Sivaji over remarks made in a public discussion, Dr Paul said the action was disproportionate

and politically driven. "Sivaji appeared before the Commission and apologised. There was no intent to insult anyone. Yet he was targeted because he questioned the BJP government and spoke positively about Nehru and the Gandhi family," he said. Dr. Paul contrasted this with what he described as complete inaction in cases involving politically influential figures. Pointing to actor and BJP Alliance TDP MLA Nandamuri Balakrishna, he



alleged that despite objectionable and much worst remarks about women being made on a national platform, no women's rights body intervened. "No summons,

no apology, no accountability. Instead, silence and rewarded this year with Padma Bhushan, This shows how selectively the law is applied," he said. He also referred to a former BJP MLA Senger from Uttar Pradesh who was convicted in a rape case following a CBI investigation, alleging that repeated bail orders, despite the victim stating her life was under threat- highlight how the system protects the powerful while victims are left

vulnerable. "Convicted offenders are repeatedly granted relief. Those who challenge the government are punished. This is not the rule of law," Dr. Paul said. Calling on citizens to recognise what he described as a "dangerous pattern," Dr Paul said the issue goes far beyond individual cases. "This is about the direction the country is taking. He said, if citizens remain silent today, they will face the consequences tomorrow.

Yuvraj Sandhu Sets New PGTI Record with Seventh Title of the Season at TATA Open 2025



OUR CORRESPONDENT Jamshedpur: Chandigarh-based Yuvraj Sandhu made history at the TATA Open 2025 by claiming his seventh victory of the season, following his earlier triumph that had already secured him the 2025 PGTI Order of Merit crown. The 28-year-old produced a final-round score of six-under 65, including a decisive birdie on the last hole, to finish at 20-under 264 across the week at the INR 2 crore season finale held at the Beldih and Golmuri Golf Courses in Jamshedpur. Sandhu's remarkable performance also earned him a spot on the DP World Tour 2026, and set a new record for the most wins in a single PGTI season, surpassing Manu Gandas' six victories in 2022. Throughout the season, Yuvraj achieved seven titles and seven additional top-10 finishes, including three runner-up results,

with season earnings reaching INR 1,91,67,100, breaking Veer Ahlawat's previous record of INR 1,56,35,724 in 2024. Shubham Jaglan, 21, who shared the overnight lead with Sandhu, carded a bogey-free five-under 66 in the final round to finish at 19-under 265, securing his second runner-up finish in only his third PGTI appearance. Khalin Joshi and Veer Ahlawat tied for third at 14-under 270, while Sri Lanka's N Thangaraja, a three-time winner this season, finished fifth in Jamshedpur and second in the PGTI Ranking with earnings of INR 1,18,21,821. The tournament format had players alternate between Beldih and Golmuri courses, with the front-nine of the leading groups played at Beldih and the back-nine at Beldih, with a combined par of 71. Sandhu started strong with early birdies, maintained his rhythm

despite two back-nine bogeys, and sealed the victory with a 15-foot birdie on the 18th. Jaglan, who had previously played Golmuri as a junior but not Beldih, kept pace throughout but was narrowly edged out by Sandhu's decisive final hole. Reflecting on his achievement, Sandhu said, "This has been my best season ever. Winning seven titles, including the TATA Open, has been special. I'm thrilled to head to the DP World Tour next year. These results reflect the hard work of my entire team." Jamshedpur's Kurush Heerjee finished tied 51st at 13-over 297. The TATA Open 2025 was sponsored by TATA Steel, a global steel leader with a historic legacy since 1907, and organized with support from PGTI partners including Rolex, Amul, IndusInd Bank, and Golf Plus Monthly.

Administration Provides Relief Amid Dense Fog and Severe Cold, Bonfires Arranged at Shaheed Chowk and Other Key Locations



OUR CORRESPONDENT Taljhari: In view of the increasing chill and dense fog in the district, the administration has initiated measures to provide relief to the general public. Under the directions of Taljhari Circle Officer (CO) and Block Development Officer (BDO) Ram Suman Prasad, arrangements have been made to light bonfires at Shaheed Chowk and other prominent locations across the block. CI Vibhas Kumar, while inspecting the bonfire arrangements, stated that, following the orders of the Deputy Commissioner

(DC), all major intersections and crowded areas in the block have been identified for this purpose. He added that travelers, passersby, and homeless people face severe hardships during this extreme cold, and the bonfires are providing them significant relief. The administration has clarified that these arrangements are not temporary; bonfires will continue to be maintained in the coming days as well. Additional supplies of firewood will be ensured in areas where the need for bonfires arises.

Prudent Study Center Students Undertake Educational Trip to Madro Fossil Park



OUR CORRESPONDENT Rajmahal: Students of Prudent Study Center in Kajigaon conducted an educational trip to the renowned Madro Fossil Park in Sahibganj district on Sunday. The visit aimed to familiarize students with the Earth's history and provide scientific knowledge about fossils. Under the guidance of teacher Praveen Kumar Singh, dozens of students explored the park. At the park, guide Laxman Murmu conducted a tour and

explained in detail the process of fossil formation and their geological significance. Students also visited the park museum and watched a special documentary on the origin of the Earth. During the trip, students were highly enthusiastic, taking notes from informational boards and gaining in-depth understanding about the Earth's formation, volcanic eruptions, reasons for fossilization, and techniques for determining the age of fossils. Appreciation

for Dr. Ranjit Kumar Singh. The educational trip began from the Model College Rajmahal campus. Students expressed gratitude to Principal Dr. Ranjit Kumar Singh, whose support and initiative made the trip successful. They also appreciated his efforts toward the conservation and protection of geological heritage. The students who took part included Anshu, Nitesh, Rishi, Suman, Surabhi, Anjana, Kunal, Hansraj, and Suman, along with several others.

Sanskar Coaching Institute Organizes Educational Field Trip; Locals and Parents Praise Initiative

OUR CORRESPONDENT Jamtara: Students of Sanskar Coaching Institute, located in Mohanabank village of Simaldubi Panchayat in Fatehpur block, participated in a field trip to Maa Malancha Pahar Nature Park on Sunday. This was the institute's first structured educational and social activity aimed at fostering students' overall development alongside academic learning. The initiative received enthusiastic appreciation from both villagers and parents. Director Gurudas Yadav stated that the institute's objective is not only to teach students in classrooms but also to empower them physically, mentally, and socially. He



highlighted that such activities help develop leadership skills, social understanding, and self-confidence, which are highly beneficial for the students' future. The event was attended by teachers Shamma Raja and Divya Bharti, along with several other faculty members,

villagers, and parents. They lauded the activity, noting that it not only enhances students' knowledge but also connects them with nature, fostering creativity and environmental awareness. The initiative reflects the institute's commitment to holistic education, going

beyond textbook learning to encourage balanced and positive growth in every aspect of students' lives. The institute plans to continue organizing similar field trips and social activities in the future to nurture creativity, health, and social responsibility among students.

Jamshedpur Tata Main Hospital Launches Online Payment System for In-Patients



OUR CORRESPONDENT Jamshedpur: Tata Main Hospital (TMH) has introduced an online payment facility allowing in-patients and their families to make hospital payments from anywhere. The system enables payments via smartphones or laptops by simply scanning a QR code, removing the need to visit cash counters multiple times. Hospital officials stated

that the initiative is aimed at enhancing patient convenience and simplifying the payment process for attendants and family members, particularly during long hospital stays. To ensure smooth implementation, QR code standees and clear Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for online in-patient payments will be set up across all hospital wards.

Congress Foundation Day Marks Service and Commitment in Madhupur; Tricolor Hoisted and Blankets Distributed to Needy



OUR CORRESPONDENT Madhupur: The 140th Foundation Day of the Indian National Congress was celebrated across Madhupur and the rest of Jharkhand with devotion, enthusiasm, and organizational unity. Under the leadership of Jharkhand Pradesh Congress Committee Secretary Shabana Khatun, Congress committees at the district, block, mandal, village panchayat, and ward levels

hoisted the party flag at their offices and residences of BLA members. Linking the celebration with service, Congress workers distributed blankets among the poor and needy in view of the harsh winter, demonstrating the party's commitment to social welfare and public service. Addressing the gathering, Secretary Shabana Khatun said that the Congress Foundation Day symbolizes organizational strength.

Annual Sports Festival Begins at Golden Valley Central School, Mayor Emphasizes True Spirit of Sports

OUR CORRESPONDENT Patna: "In competitions, the true victory lies in showcasing the best of one's sporting abilities. Sportsmanship strengthens harmony across various sections of society," said Mayor Sita Sahu while inaugurating the annual sports festival at Golden Valley Central School in Gardanibagh on Sunday. Addressing the students and teachers, she encouraged them to excel in sports and praised their efforts in nurturing talent and confidence. She also



highlighted that initiatives like Khelo India and Fit India Movement, introduced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, have inspired new enthusiasm among the youth. The inauguration ceremony

included balloon releases and the lighting of a ceremonial lamp, conducted jointly by Mayor Sita Sahu, Secretariat DSP Dr. Annu Kumari, Ward 13 Councillor Jeet Kumar, APSA Secretary Rakesh

Ranjan, Treasurer Mukesh Kumar. "In competitions, the true victory lies in showcasing the best of one's sporting abilities. Sportsmanship strengthens harmony across various sections of society," said Mayor Sita Sahu while inaugurating the annual sports festival at Golden Valley Central School in Gardanibagh on Sunday. Addressing the students and teachers, she encouraged them to excel in sports and praised their efforts in nurturing talent and confidence. She also

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Traditional Folk Performances Mark Karigari Haat 2025

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Patna: On the occasion of the International Year of Cooperatives, the Karigari Haat organized by Amrapali Sanstha at Gandhi Maidan resonated with the melodies of Bihar's folk songs on Sunday evening. During the cultural evening, Bihar's renowned folk singer Dr. Neetu Kumari Naveget captivated the audience by presenting traditional Bihari songs, keeping people engrossed in folk music for hours. The program was inaugurated by Archana Singh, organizer of Karigari Haat, Avadhesh Kumar, retired General Manager of NABARD, Section Officer Jackie, and others. Major participation in the event came from the National Jute Board, NCDC, WDC, New Delhi, Bihar Dairy, and the Fisheries and Animal Husbandry Research Institute, Bihar. The cultural program began with Ganesh Vandana, performed by Neetu Naveget. Karigari Haat-2025 witnessed a rich



presentation of Bihar's traditional folk songs. The event commenced with an invocation to Lord Ganesh — "Ghar Mein Padharo Gajanan Ji" — followed by numerous folk performances. Eminent folk singer of Bihar and Namami Gange Brand Ambassador, and "Paniya Ke Jahaj," among others. Rajesh Keshari presented "Odhni Ke Rang Piyar" along with a few film songs.

HEADLINES

City SP Conducts Annual Inspection of Sigodi Police Station



OUR CORRESPONDENT

Paliganj: On Sunday, City Superintendent of Police (SP) Bhanu Pratap Singh conducted the annual inspection of Sigodi Police Station. During the inspection, he reviewed the station's daily diary, lock-up, property records, wireless system, CCTNS system, investigation work, and pending case inquiries, closely examining the station's operational procedures and record-keeping. SP Bhanu Pratap Singh instructed the concerned officers and staff to conduct investigations using scientific methods, complete inquiries within prescribed timelines, maintain transparency, and ensure swift justice for the public. He emphasized that law-abiding citizens should not face any inconvenience and issued directives to strengthen crime prevention, law and order maintenance, night patrols, and vehicle checking operations. The inspection was attended by DSP 1 Rajeev Chandra Singh, Circle Police Inspector Chandrika Prasad, Station Officer Pramod Shah, along with several other officials.

Danapur OBC Rail Division Pays Tribute to Akhilesh Kumar Chanchal



OUR CORRESPONDENT

Danapur: A tribute ceremony for the late Branch Secretary Akhilesh Kumar Chanchal was held on Saturday at the Danapur OBC Rail Division Office, presided over by Division President Pradeep Kumar. During the ceremony, railway employees offered floral tributes to a portrait of the late Chanchal, honoring his memory. The event was attended by notable figures including Mohammad Zafar Ahsan, Zonal President of Mazdoor Congress; OBC Division Secretary Ravindra Kumar; and division officials Pramod Kumar, Sanjay Kumar, Upendra Kumar, Avinash Kumar, Upendra Kumar Rai, along with branch officials Vinod Kumar, Vimal Kumar, C.B. Singh, Sundar Kumar, Kaushalendra Kumar, Ashok Kumar, Umesh Prasad, and Satyendra Kumar Singh, among others, who paid their respects.

Godavari Company Hiwa Damages Bridge Over Khotaahi River; Locals Demand Action

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Chatra: The reckless operations of Godavari Company in the Keradari coal belt have sparked concern as incidents on Chatra's roads continue to rise. Coal from Keradari Chattibariatu Coal Mines is being transported via Godavari Company vehicles from Tandwa-Simaria-Chatra-Giddhaur to the Katkamandi railway siding. In the early hours, a coal-laden vehicle lost control while crossing a bridge over the Khotaahi River near Bay Morh in Giddhaur police station area, colliding with the divider on the bridge. The impact was so severe that the bridge divider broke, and the vehicle suffered partial damage. Fortunately, the vehicle did not overturn, saving the driver's life. The accident caused temporary chaos on the bridge, and locals informed the authorities and police after seeing the damaged divider and vehicle in the morning. Traffic on the bridge was disrupted for a while.

CONGRESS CELEBRATES 140TH FOUNDATION DAY WITH ENTHUSIASM IN AGLOI PANCHAYAT



OUR CORRESPONDENT

Barharwa: The 140th Foundation Day of the Congress Party was celebrated with great zeal and enthusiasm in Agloi Panchayat. On this occasion, party workers raised slogans such as "Congress Party Zindabad", "Rahul Gandhi Zindabad", "Alamgir Alam Zindabad", "Nisat Alam Zindabad", and "Tanveer Alam Zindabad". The event was attended by Agloi Panchayat President

Mahboob Alam, Hazrat Ali, Mokalsar Rahman, Arman Ali, Mojmam Haque, Mojibur Rahman, Ajmal Hussain, Md. Rabiul Islam, Masood Alam, Ziaur Rahman, Md. Salam, along with several other Congress workers. The celebration concluded with participants exchanging sweets and congratulating each other on the party's Foundation Day. The workers also reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening the Congress Party and continuing to fight for public

Civil Surgeon Conducts Surprise Inspection at Kotalpokhar PHC, Issues Cleanliness Ultimatum

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Barharwa: Aiming to improve the health infrastructure in Sahibganj district, the Civil Surgeon of Sahibganj conducted a surprise inspection at the Primary Health Center (PHC) in Kotalpokhar, Barharwa block today. The unannounced visit created a sense of urgency among hospital staff. During the inspection, the Civil Surgeon reviewed the attendance register and expressed strong dissatisfaction over the poor cleanliness standards in the hospital. Upon arrival, he first checked the presence of doctors and health workers as per the duty roster, emphasizing that any negligence in duty would not be tolerated. He then assessed the services provided to patients, checked the availability of medicines and stock registers, and observed the functioning of lab services. When the Civil Surgeon reached the first floor of the hospital, he was visibly angered by the unhygienic conditions. Finding cleanli-



ness standards highly unsatisfactory, he reprimanded the responsible staff and issued strict orders. The entire premises must be cleaned immediately, and a compliance report along with photographs must be submitted to the office once the task is completed. He also reviewed the ongoing works under the Chief Minister's Hospital Maintenance Scheme, inquiring about progress so far and instructing that remaining

work be completed within the stipulated timeline with proper quality standards. At the conclusion of the inspection, the Civil Surgeon delivered a stern message, stating that discipline, cleanliness, and quality patient care are the highest priorities in government hospitals. He warned that any negligence at any level in health services would result in strict action against the responsible personnel.

AN UNFORGETTABLE MILESTONE IN TTA HISTORY... GRAND CELEBRATIONS OF THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY



Hyderabad, December 28: The Telangana American Telugu Association (TTA), which has been organizing programs in the United States that reflect Telangana culture and traditions and, on the other hand, has been striving to bring the Telangana community onto a single platform, received widespread appreciation for celebrating its 10th anniversary on a grand and magnificent scale in Hyderabad, Telangana State. These decennial anniversary celebrations were held on December 25 at the Shilpakala Vedika in Madhapur, Hyderabad, with programs arranged to showcase Telangana culture. TTA Founder Paila Mallareddy, Advisory Council Chair Dr. Vijayal Reddy, Co-Chair Dr. Patlolla Mohan Reddy, members Bharat Madhadi and Srinu Anugu, former President Vamsi Reddy, President Naveen Reddy Mallipeddi, and Anniversary Celebrations Committee Chairman Dr. Narasimha Reddy Dantireddy, along with others, inaugurated the celebrations by lighting the ceremonial lamp.

Founded in 2015 in New Jersey, USA, based on the vision of eminent industrialist Dr. Paila Mallareddy, TTA has been rendering services from its inception to date to the Telangana community in America and to Telugu people in the state of Telangana. It has been organizing cultural arts, festivals, and celebrations in a grand manner. With thousands of members, it has earned recognition as the largest national Telangana organization in the United States. As part of the decennial celebrations, various art exhibitions, literary programs, and speeches by eminent personalities presented at Shilparamam captivated everyone. Art forms such as Bathukamma, Bonalu, Oggu Dolu, Dappu, Gussadi, Banjaru Kommu, Koya, and Pothuraju were performed, highlighting the identity of Telangana. Telangana Dhoom Dham and a musical feast were other major attractions. The Rasamayi Balakishan T Dhoom Dham program, led by Ramu Rathod, Madhu Priya, Relare Ganga, Kalyan Keys, and Antadugula Nagaraju,



enthralled the audience. Likewise, in the program titled "Salam to the Telangana Song" eminent singers such as Vimalakka, Gooda Anjanna, and Warangal Srinivas mesmerized the audience with their voices. The folk jugalbandi by artists Mohana Bhogaraju, Mounika Yadav, Shivanagulu, and Rela Ravi stood out as a special attraction. The Perini dance performance by Sandeep's troupe and the dance dramas Ekam and Ardhanareeshwaram presented by Dr. Priyanka Bharde's team spellbound the spectators. Renowned writers Gorati Venkanna, Kasarla Shyam, Mittapalli Surrender, and writer Smt. Ramadevi Nellutla participated and spoke about Telangana literature. As part of the opening of the celebrations, rich tributes were paid to eminent writers Ande Sri, Gaddar, and Vaddepalli Krishna. Cultural Committee Chair Dr. Vani Gaddam, advisor Rama Vanama, Anniversary Celebrations Committee Chairman Dr. Narasimha Reddy Dantireddy, and President Naveen Reddy Mallipeddi

expressed their gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of the celebrations. Narasimha Peruka provided audio and video visuals for the event. The celebrations were grandly organized through the dedicated efforts of Dr. Vani Gaddam and advisor Rama Vanama. As part of the decennial celebrations, the Awards Committee members Sangeetha Reddy and Shiva Reddy nominated the award recipients:

- Sri Chukka Ramaiah (Excellence in Education)
- Sri K. Rajendra Kumar (Retired IPS) for distinguished services to the nation
- Late Dr. Vaddepalli Krishna (Literary Excellence)
- Sri Pasumarthi Rangarao (Community Service)
- Smt. Keerthi Jalli, IAS (Public Service and Administration)
- Smt. Viha Reddy Unnalgadda (Sports)
- Sri P. Pramod Reddy (Cultural Field)
- Dr. Sunitha Krishnan (Special Recognition)
- Smt. Ramaleela Nanda (Humanitarian Service)



• Smt. Anita Chavali (Green Visionary) The awards were presented by Bhongir Member of Parliament Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, former Minister for Energy and Suryapet MLA Jagadishwar Reddy, Chamakura Malla Reddy, and Venkata Ramana Reddy. The decennial anniversary magazine (souvenir), reflecting ten years of TTA service and cultural activities, was designed by Srinivas Guduru, Sunil Gaddam, and Kavitha Reddy, and was grandly unveiled on this platform by the TTA team. For the celebrations, the venue was lavishly decorated in collaboration with Raghu Alugubelli and J Media. J Media served as the event partner. Although coordinating and conducting such a large-scale event in Hyderabad by NRIs from the United States was not an easy task, the entire team came together and made the celebrations a resounding success. Along with everyone's efforts, unity and dedication played a key role in the success of the event. The 10th anniversary core team worked for several months to ensure the pro-

gram's success. From day one, there were concerns regarding funds, support, cultural programs, and crowd management, but the team never lost confidence. By maintaining control over every department at every step, challenges were transformed into successes. In particular, Celebrations Committee Co-Chair Appireddy, Cultural Co-Chair Santosh Gantaram, and the hospitality team members Pallavi Ramidi, Jyothi Reddy, Sahodar, and Swathi Chennuri extended immense support. Jyothi Reddy played a crucial role in mobilizing the crowd. On the other hand, the Food and Hospitality division also played a key role in this success. Aroma Kitchen and Southern Spice provided lunch for 500 people and dinner for more than 3,400 attendees. Live counters, a wedding-style menu, excellent taste, and nearly 100 staff members continuously working on service and cleanliness delighted the guests. It was noteworthy that everyone praised the food for its taste. Dr. Paila Mallareddy and his spouse came forward as benefactors for the meals.