



HYDERABAD HEADLINES

RNI NO.APENG/2010/33328 VOL NO.16 ISSUE NO.: 300 HYDERABAD TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2026 PAGES: 12 RS. 1/-

WWW.HYDERABADHEADLINES.COM



2026'S MUST-SEE VANDE BHARAT ROUTES

Train travel in India has always been more than getting from Point A to B. With Vande Bharat Express, passengers can now enjoy some of the country's most spectacular landscapes along semi-high-speed routes.



7,000 Employees.. Amazon's New Bengaluru Landmark

MONEY MATTERS 09

Home Is Not a Place, It's Me: Shruti Haasan



BOX-OFFICE 12

FOCUS-POINT 10

SHORT TAKES



Hetmyer powers Windies past Zimbabwe
West Indies unleashed a brutal batting assault at Wankhede, thrashing Zimbabwe by 107 runs after piling up a record 254.6 powered by explosive fifties from Shimron Hetmyer and Rovman Powell.

STADIUM 11



Mexico Drug Don 'El Mencho' Killed
The Mexican military killed Nemesio Ruben Oseguera Cervantes, known as "El Mencho," the powerful leader of the Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG), during an operation in Tapalpa.

BEYOND BORDERS 08



India's AI Vision JUDGING RISKS & BENEFITS
Amid global AI optimism, India faces tough questions on funding, infrastructure, regulation and inclusion, as ambitions under the AI Mission must align with limited R&D spending and pressing social realities.

OPINION 06

New Era for State Employees

Rs. 1.2 crore insurance and Rs. 10 Lakh cashless Health schemes announced

HYDERABAD, FEB 24

In a significant move benefiting lakhs of government employees and boosting infrastructure development, the Telangana Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy at the Dr B.R. Ambedkar State Secretariat, took several key decisions focused on employee welfare, healthcare security, and major development projects.

Accident Insurance Scheme for Employees

In a first-of-its-kind initiative in the country, the Cabinet approved a comprehensive Accident Insurance Scheme for state government employees and pensioners without requiring them to pay any premium. The scheme will cover 5.19 lakh regular employees and 2.38 lakh pensioners — totaling 7.57 lakh beneficiaries. In case of accidental death, the family will receive ₹1.2 crore as insurance compensation. Additionally, employees up to the age of 60 will be eligible for ₹10 lakh term insurance in case of natural death.

Cashless Employee Health Scheme (EHS) Approved

The long-awaited Cashless Health Scheme (EHS) Approved

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >



Major Land Allocations for Development

- 223.09 acres in Koheda, Rangareddy district, for a Multi-Modal Logistics Park and Food Processing Park.
- 239 acres under TG Housing Board for a world-class fruit market.
- 70 acres in Mahabubabad for a JNTU engineering college.
- 36 acres in Ummappur, Siddipet district, for an engineering college under Satavahana University.
- Land allocation in 21 Assembly constituencies for new Young India Integrated Residential Schools.
- 5 acres in Bhadrachalam for a Greenfield Mini Stadium.
- 20 acres in Dhamsalapuram village, Khammam district, for construction of a Sri Venkateswara Swamy temple under TTD.
- 3.12 acres in Chigurumamidi, Karimnagar district, for construction of Panchamukha Anjaneya Swamy temple.
- Additionally, 153 acres in Kapra mandal will be transferred to the Defence Ministry in exchange for 42 acres required for elevated corridor construction in Hyd

10 Lakh Students Gear Up for Inter Exams from tomorrow



HYDERABAD, FEB.23

Intermediate Public Examinations in Telangana will commence from February 25 and continue till March 18. The examinations will be held daily from 9 am to 12 noon across the state. Inter Board Secretary Krishnaditya announced that a total of 9,97,075 students will appear for the exams. Of them, 4,89,126 are first-year students and 5,07,949 are second-year students. As many as 1,495 examination centres have been set up, which included 404 government colleges, 221 aided colleges, 863 private junior colleges and seven other schools and colleges. Students have been advised to reach their centres at least 30 minutes before the commencement of the exam.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

'Fake Voters' Ruining Sonar Bangla

'Jai Maa Kali', Modi targeted the TMC government



KOLKATA

In a public appeal to West Bengal voters weeks before the declaration of Assembly polls, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said he was "heartbroken by the deceit and anguish" faced by the cross-section of the state's citizens under the current Mamata Banerjee regime and vowed to correct it by building a 'Viksit Paschim Banga'. Modi said while a political change was "inevitable", a "judicious choice" by voters could align the state with the accelerated development seen in the rest of the country.

In an open letter written

in Bengali, which began with the slogan 'Jai Maa Kali', Modi targeted the TMC government on issues ranging from lack of governance and appeasement politics to fake voters, employment deficiency and women's safety. "Bengal used to be the nation's vanguard in both financial and industrial sectors in post-Independence India. It pains me to witness the brittle and sick state it has turned into. It is impossible to describe the irreversible damage which six decades of misgovernance and appeasement politics have caused," Modi said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

GROWTH X 2026: FTCCI SETS STAGE FOR MSME - TECH REVOLUTION



HYDERABAD, FEB.23

The Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FTCCI) will host the second edition of its flagship innovation summit, GrowthX 2026, on February 24 at JRC Convention Centre here in Jubilee Hills.

The summit will be inaugurated by G. Kishan Reddy, Union Minister for Coal and Mines, D. Sridhar Babu, Telangana Minister for IT and Industries, will attend as special guest, while Sanjay Kumar, Special Chief Secretary (IT), and renowned gastroenterologist D. Nageshwar Reddy will also address the gathering. Positioned as a national platform, GrowthX 2026

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

RAIN ALERT FOR TELANGANA FOR NEXT THREE DAYS



Hyderabad, Feb.23: The Meteorological Department has issued a three-day weather alert for Telangana, forecasting light to moderate rainfall in several districts. Officials said a trough has formed from South Interior Karnataka to Marathwada at an altitude of 0.9 km above mean sea level. Another trough extends from Gangetic West Bengal to the Andhra coast over Odisha at the same altitude. Meanwhile, the trough linked to the earlier low-pressure area over the Southwest Bay of Bengal has weakened. Light to moderate rains accompanied by thunder and lightning are likely at isolated places across the state on Monday and Tuesday, with similar conditions expected on Wednesday.

Five Dead in Suspected Kidney Illness Outbreak in RJY

RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM, FEB 23:

Panic continues in Rajamahendravaram after two more persons undergoing treatment for severe kidney-related complications died on Monday, taking the total death toll to five. The deceased were identified as N Seshagirirao (72) and Radha Krishnamurthy (74), both residents of Chowdeshwari Nagar near Lalacheruvu. Four other patients are reported to be in critical condition.

Earlier, Bhagashetty Kanakarathnam (76) and Tadi Krishnaveni (75) had succumbed while receiving treatment. Since February 15, at least 14 persons from the same locality have been admitted to hospitals with symptoms including vomiting, inability to pass urine, and abdominal swelling.



Most of the victims are above 60 years of age, though a five-month-old infant and a three-year-old child are also among the affected. Health officials suspect contaminated milk as a possible cause, as all the victims were reportedly supplied milk by the same vendor. Some residents stated that the milk and curd tasted bitter on Maha Shivaratri day. Police have detained a milk supplier from Korukonda mandal for questioning. Blood and urine samples of the patients have been sent for toxicology analysis, and reports are awaited.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

CEMENTING DREAMS WITH SUPERIOR STRENGTH.

Bharathi CEMENT
SUPERIOR QUALITY. GUARANTEED.
ULTRAFAST
FAST SETTING CEMENT

GERMAN TECHNOLOGY
ROBOTIC QUALITY CONTROL
TAMPER PROOF PACKING

3 TIMES BETTER



Designing the future: FDDI Hyd holds 5th convocation ceremony

HYDERABAD: The Footwear Design and Development Institute (FDDI) celebrated its 5th Convocation Ceremony at its Hyderabad campus, marking a significant milestone in its academic journey. Participating as a chief guest at the ceremony, Union Minister for Coal and Mines G. Kishan Reddy, in his address, underscored India's growing strength in manufacturing, innovation and skill development. Highlighting the pivotal role of the footwear and leather sector in employment generation, exports, and the growth of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), he encouraged graduates to embrace technology, sustainability, and design innovation to enhance India's global competitiveness. FDDI Managing Director, Vivek Sharma congratulated the graduating batch and reaffirmed the institute's commitment to nurturing globally competent professionals. He urged the students to uphold innovation, sustainability, ethical practices, and design thinking in their careers. Earlier, Executive Director of FDDI Hyderabad, Dr. Tej Lohit Reddy, delivered the welcome address, tracing the campus's progress since its establishment in 2018. He highlighted the development of a Centre of Excellence, advanced laboratories, and strong industry collaborations.

Tension at 'Chalo Hyd': ASHA workers clash with police

HYDERABAD: Tension prevailed in the city as thousands of ASHA workers staged a massive dharna at the Koti Commissioner's Office under the banner of 'Chalo Hyderabad', demanding immediate payment of pending January salaries, a fixed monthly pay of Rs.18,000, and allocation of sufficient funds in the upcoming Assembly budget to resolve their problems. Despite heavy restrictions and reported arrests across the state, large numbers of ASHA workers reached the protest venue. A scuffle broke out between the protesters and police, leading to several workers sustaining injuries. Protesters alleged that police personnel dragged women workers, resulting in torn clothes and some falling unconscious. The dharna continued from 12 noon to 3 pm. The Union leaders criticized the state government for not even being ready to listen to their problems and for allegedly suppressing their democratic right to protest and warned of intensified agitation if their demands are not addressed. The leaders criticized the government for not even being ready to listen to their problems. The leaders warned the government that if it does not resolve the problems faced by the ASHA workers soon, they would intensify the struggles in the future. Prominent participants included ASHA Union CITU State President P. Jayalakshmi, General Secretary R. Neela Devi and other union leaders. (NSS)

Centre urged to create exclusive OBC Ministry; National BC Dal demands comprehensive BC Bill



HYDERABAD

National BC Dal President Dundra Kumara Swamy demanded for immediate establishment of an exclusive Ministry for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) at the Centre and introduction of a comprehensive BC Bill in Parliament and State Legislatures to safeguard the constitutional, social, economic and political rights of Backward Class communities.

Addressing the National OBC Executive Committee meeting organised under the aegis of the National BC Dal here on Sunday, Swamy called for a nationwide movement aimed at transforming the future of OBC communities. He stressed that political empowerment could be achieved only through

"ideological clarity and sustained mobilisation." He accused successive Central governments of neglecting OBC concerns and demanded that the forthcoming national Census include mandatory caste enumeration with a clearly defined OBC column. He also called for enhanced budgetary allocations, an increase in the non-creamy layer income ceiling from ₹8 lakh to ₹15 lakh, reservation in promotions for OBC employees, and immediate implementation of the recommendations of the Justice Rohini Commission, which submitted its report on July 31, 2023.

The meeting began with members expressing grief over the tragic death of a minor in Kummari village of Nagarkurnool district, with participants offering condolences to the bereaved family and seeking justice.

Among those present were former Director General of Police and National Coordinator of the All India Bahujan Samaj Party, Purna Chandra Rao, along with BC association leaders from eight States, representatives of caste organisations, intellectuals, advocates, and leaders of student, youth and women's groups during the meeting, noted social activist D.V.V. Satyanarayana was appointed President of the organisation for Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. The appointment letter was handed over by Mr. Swamy amid felicitations from community leaders.

It was announced that a national delegation would tour Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh to strengthen unity among OBC communities.

Clean Musi, Don't Evict The Poor': Urban Development Forum Questions Riverfront Plans

HYDERABAD

The Urban Development Forum (UDF) has demanded transparency and people-centric planning in the proposed revival of the Musi River, cautioning the government against evictions in the name of development. The real revival of Musi means cleaning the river, protecting the environment, and protecting the rights of the people, the Forum noted.

The forum alleged that commercialization was being prioritised over actual river cleansing. It questioned the move to remove houses within 50 metres of the river under a proposed buffer zone, asking how structures built with prior government permissions could now be

termed illegal. UDF expressed concern over reported evictions before the Detailed Project Report (DPR) was discussed in the Assembly. It also sought disclosure of Maximum Flood Level (MFL) data and the full DPR related to the Musi revival scheme.

Referring to the "Sabarmati Riverfront Development Project" in Gujarat, the forum warned against adopting a model that led to large-scale displacement of the poor. Stressing that true revival means stopping sewage inflow and protecting both environment and residents' rights, the forum demanded permanent solutions to prevent sewage discharge into the Musi and extensive public consultations before proceeding with development works.

Hyderabad emerging as global value creation hub: Minister Sridhar Babu

HYDERABAD

The Telangana Government is working to position Hyderabad as a global value creation hub across sectors beyond information technology — including banking and financial services, life sciences, healthcare, aerospace, manufacturing, fintech, deep tech and retail — IT and Industries Minister D. Sridhar Babu said on Monday.

He was speaking after inaugurating The Hartford India Technology Center at Nanakramguda Financial District. Established by global insurance major The Hartford, the facility spans about 1.5 lakh sq. ft. and has the capacity to employ nearly 1,200 professionals.

Mr. Sridhar Babu said the government is focusing on developing industry-ready talent aligned with evolving business requirements and strengthening an innovation ecosystem that supports next-generation technologies.

Describing The Hartford's decision — a



company with a history of over two centuries — to expand in Hyderabad as a positive development, he said the centre would contribute to the city's growing role in the insurance sector driven by artificial intelligence, risk intelligence and digital engineering.

Noting that Hyderabad hosts over 400 Global Capability Centres (GCCs), the Minister said several multinational firms — including Marriott, McDonald's, UBS, DAZN, Vanguard, Eli Lilly, HCA Health-

care and Citizens Bank — have established major operations in the city. The State, he said, is implementing strategic initiatives to enable GCCs to evolve from back-end operations into Global Value Centres.

Mr. Sridhar Babu said ease-of-doing-business reforms, policy stability and advanced digital infrastructure continue to attract global companies to Telangana. According to him, the newly launched centre will work closely with The Hartford's technology hubs in Hartford, Chicago, Charlotte and Columbus in the United States, focusing on artificial intelligence, digital transformation and advanced technology development, and is expected to function as an engineering excellence hub.

Senior leaders from The Hartford, including President Morris Tooker, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer Claire Burns, CIO Shekhar Panjala, Hartford India Managing Director and Head Surya Tammiraju, and CTO Imran Malik, were present.

CONTINUATION FROM PAGE 1

'Fake Voters' Ruining Sonar Bangla

FROM PAGE 1

"While on the one hand the youth are forced to migrate to other states for lack of employment opportunities, on the other, women of West Bengal are fearful and alarmed due to a lack of security," he added.

Naming Bengal's political and cultural icons such as Swami Vivekananda, Rishi Aurobindo, Subhas Chandra Bose, Rabindranath Tagore and Shyama Prasad Mukherjee at multiple points in his letter, Modi regretted the "darkness of chaos that grips West Bengal" in current times.

"The West Bengal visualised by its iconic forefathers, such as Swami Vivekananda and Rishi Aurobindo, is now riddled with vote bank politics, violence and anarchy. The son of the soil of this state, Netaji Sub-

has Chandra Bose, whose call for freedom had once stirred the whole country, that holy land is now blemished with infiltration and torture of women. Fake voters currently dominate Rabindranath Tagore's 'Sonar Bangla'. "The whole country is worried about the darkness of chaos that West Bengal is sinking into," the PM wrote. Insisting that the time has come to break the shackles of "silent suffering", the PM said that change is now "inevitable" in Bengal.

"How long should we continue to suffer in silence? Change is now inevitable. The standard of living has remarkably improved in other states. Smiles have returned to the lips of the poor. Ayushman Bharat has provided health cover, new employment is guaranteed for the youth and women's safety is ensured. Bengal too should be part of this

growth and development," Modi said. Stating that he "waited eagerly for a chance to serve the people," the PM quoted Tagore's 'Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high' and promised to bring an end to "corruption and mal-governance".

"We will ensure women's safety, curtail migration for work and restore the state's former glory. Religiously persecuted refugee brothers and sisters who took shelter here would be granted citizenship through CAA and we will establish the rule of law by stopping infiltration," Modi said.

The letter coincided with the Bengal BJP's ongoing house-to-house 'Griha Sampark Abhiyan' during which party leaders will distribute the PM's communication to households during their grassroots outreach programme.

New Era for State Employees

FROM PAGE 1

Employee Health Scheme (EHS) also received Cabinet approval. The scheme will benefit 3.56 lakh regular employees, 2.88 lakh pensioners, and their dependent family members — covering a total of 17.07 lakh people.

Under the scheme, employees can avail cashless treatment in all government hospitals and 652 empanelled private hospitals. A total of 1,998 medical procedures will be covered.

The scheme will be implemented through the Rajiv Aarogya Health Care Trust, and digital health cards will be issued to beneficiaries. Employees will contribute 1.5% of their basic pay, with the government providing a matching contribution. The scheme will involve an annual expenditure of ₹1,056 crore, shared equally between employees and the state government.

Directorate of Secondary Health Care

The Cabinet decided to convert the Telangana Vaidya Vidhana Parishad (TVVP) into the Directorate of Secondary Health Care (DSH) to improve hospital administration and strengthen medical services for the public.

A special committee headed by Health Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha, with experts Dr Nori Dattatreya and Dr Srinath Reddy as members, will study reforms for better hospital management.

Hyderabad Metro to Be Taken Over

Based on the report of a ministerial sub-committee, the state government will take over Metro Phase-1 from L&T. The Metro Phase-2 expansion will be undertaken as a joint venture between the Centre and the State government.

Expansion of HMDA Limits

Four villages — Chittiguda, Yavapur, Tekulapalli, and Enkatala — in Vikarabad district have been brought under the HMDA limits.

Renewable Energy Push

As part of the Clean and Green Energy Policy, the Cabinet approved issuance of renewable energy distribution licenses for data centres consuming up to 300 MW of power. The Cabinet decisions were announced at a press conference by Ministers Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, Adhuri Laxman Kumar, and Vakiti Srihari.

10 Lakh Students Gear Up for Inter Exams from tomorrow

FROM PAGE 1

While candidates will be permitted entry up to five minutes late, officials cautioned that late arrival could cause inconvenience. A total of 28,500 invigilators have been deployed for smooth conduct of examinations. The exams will be conducted under strict surveillance with nearly 30,000 CCTV cameras installed across the centres. Officials said five centres that reported issues during practical examinations have been removed.

Authorities clarified that question papers will not be distributed before 12 noon under any circumstances. The Malpractice Committee will take immediate decisions if any irregularities are reported. All basic facilities have been arranged at the centres, officials added.

TELE-MANAS SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

To help the students cope with exam-related stress and anxiety, the Education Department has advised them to avail counselling services through Tele-MANAS by calling the toll-free number 14416. The mental health support service will be available 24x7. (NSS)

Four Dead in Suspected Kidney Illness Outbreak in RJY

FROM PAGE 1

East Godavari Collector Kirthi Chekuri announced a thorough probe has been ordered in this incident and culprits will not be spared. Two medical camps were organized at the victims area. Police already took into custody the milk vendor Ganesh and launched an investigation, SP D Naraisha Kishore said. Medical teams were pressed into service to probe into the contamination in medical and public health angles.

Gidugu Rudraraju Demands Thorough Probe into Milk Adulteration Deaths in Rajamahendravaram Rajamahendravaram: Congress Working Committee (CWC) member Gidugu Rudraraju has demanded a comprehensive and impartial inquiry into the alleged milk adulteration incident that reportedly led to the

deaths of four persons and left 10 others hospitalised in Rajamahendravaram. Rudraraju air-dashed to Rajamahendravaram from Hyderabad and visited the hospital where the victims are undergoing treatment. He consoled the affected families and described the incident as one of the greatest tragedies in the history of the city. Addressing the media, he alleged that the State government should focus on saving innocent lives instead of indulging in "dirty politics" over issues like the alleged adulteration of ghee in TTD. He accused the government of stooping to a low level by dragging religion into politics for vote-bank considerations. Rudraraju also criticised both the ruling TDP and the opposition YSRCP for failing to discuss the issue in the Assembly. He said people's issues must be debated seriously and demanded accountability from all parties concerned.

1085 e-buses to drive Hyderabad's green leap

HYDERABAD

Olectra Greentech Limited has secured a major boost to its electric mobility journey after receiving a Letter of Intent (LOI) from Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) through Evey Trans Pvt. Ltd. for the supply of 1,085 electric buses.

The order has been awarded under the PM E-DRIVE initiative spearheaded by Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL), aimed at accelerating electric public transport adoption across the Indian cities. The buses will be deployed in Hyderabad, strengthening the city's clean and sustainable transport network.

Headquartered in Hyderabad, Olectra has consistently maintained the No.1 market share in India's electric bus segment. With over 3,600 electric vehicles operating nationwide and an order book exceeding 10,000 vehicles, the company has clocked more than 500 million green kilometres, reinforcing its leadership in zero-emission mobility.

Speaking on the development, Olectra Managing Director Mahesh Babu described the order as a defining milestone in the company's electric mobility journey. He said the prestigious PM E-DRIVE order reinforces Olectra's commitment to the Make in India vision and to delivering



world-class, indigenously developed electric buses. Hyderabad, being the company's home city, represents innovation and progress, and Olectra looks forward to partnering with TGSRTC to provide efficient, comfortable, and sustainable public transportation aligned with India's clean energy and net-zero goals, he added.

The 12-metre low-floor buses - available in both AC and non-AC variants - are designed for Indian road conditions and high-frequency urban operations. Each bus will feature advanced front and rear air suspension systems for improved ride comfort and safety. Equipped with high-capacity lithium-ion battery packs, the buses will offer a range of over 250 kilometres per charge and support opportunity charging in about 45 minutes. Dedicated wheelchair spaces will also be included, underscoring Olectra's focus on inclusive mobility.



Youth participation key to achieving sustainable development goals: Konda

HYDERABAD

The closing ceremonies of the International Youth Biodiversity Conference-2026, organised with the aim of biodiversity conservation and youth empowerment in the state of Telangana, were held with great pomp. The three-day conference, organised under the auspices of the Telangana Biodiversity Board, was attended by youth, environmental scientists, researchers, policymakers, and representatives of voluntary organisations from across the country and abroad.

The Minister said the initiatives taken by the Telangana government in the field of biodiversity conservation are standing tall on the international stage. She called upon the youth to come forward towards preserving the natural wealth for future generations.

Noted author, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Center Co-Founder and CEO Srujan Pal Singh, as well as Telangana State Biodiversity Council Member Secretary Kalicharan participated in the programme. (NSS)

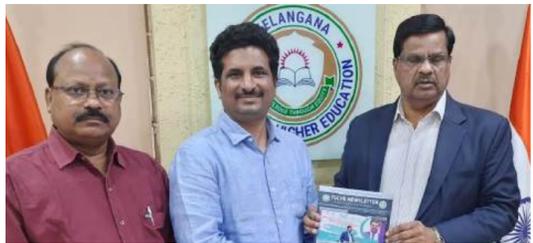
TGCHE Promotes Free Training and Certification for SC/ST Students

Faculty by IIT Madras Pravartak

HYDERABAD

Prof. V. Balakista Reddy, Chairman, TGCHE, has invited students and faculty members across the State to actively participate in the free online certification programmes launched by IIT Madras Pravartak, the Innovation Hub of Indian Institute of Technology Madras.

The prestigious initiative offers Free Training and Certification Programmes in Soft Skills and Entrepreneurship Development, exclusively for SC/ST students and teachers. The programmes aim to enhance employability, leadership capacity, entrepreneurial mindset, and overall career readiness among youth, while also strengthening the professional com-



petencies of teachers.

Programme Details

I. For Students (SC/ST - Diploma, UG, PG & Working Professionals)
Soft Skills Training and Certification - 30 Hours <https://fundaspring.com/products/free-soft-skills-certification-sc-st-students-professionals-iitm-pravartak-bodhbridge>

Entrepreneurship Development Certification Training - 20 Hours <https://fundaspring.com/products/entrepreneurship-development-sc-st-students-professionals-iitm-pravartak-bodhbridge>

Programme Highlights

- Start Date: 28th February
- Mode: Online

Eligibility: SC/ST Diploma, UG & PG Students, Working Professionals and Teachers

Certification: Issued by IIT Madras Pravartak

The Chairman stated that such capacity-building initiatives play a vital role in strengthening students' professional competencies beyond classroom learning. The Soft Skills programme focuses on resume preparation, communication skills, interview readiness, placement orientation, personality development, and structured career guidance frameworks.

The Entrepreneurship Development programme is designed to transform students from job seekers into job creators by equipping them with self-employment skills, innovation orientation, business planning knowledge, and practical exposure to emerging opportunities.

II. For Teachers (School to University Level - SC/ST)

Career Counsellor Certification Course - 20 Hours

<https://fundaspring.com/products/career-counsellor-certification-sc-st-teachers-iitm-pravartak-bodhbridge>

He further stated that the training will benefit working professionals and teachers by enhancing in-demand industry skills and offering structured personal and professional growth support, including psychometric assessments to identify individual strengths and career suitability.

The Chairman requested all Universities, Autonomous Colleges, Government and Private Degree Colleges in Telangana to widely circulate this information among eligible students and faculty members to ensure maximum participation.

CAG-ICSSR Colloquium Series: Telangana Chapter

HYDERABAD

The Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), Telangana Chapter, in collaboration with the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General (CAG) of India, is organizing the Telangana Chapter of the CAG-ICSSR Colloquium Series on "State of the Finances of Telangana" and "Health Sector of Telangana" on 25 February 2026 (Wednesday) from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM at the Centenary Seminar Hall, Prof. G. Ram Reddy Centre for Distance Education, Osmania University, Hyderabad.

This colloquium aims to provide a platform for dialogue between academia, audit institutions, and policymakers to strengthen public financial management systems, enhance fiscal transparency, and address governance challenges in the health sector.

The distinguished speakers include:

- Dr. Bibhu Prasad Nayak, Professor, School of Public Policy and Governance, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Hyderabad
- Dr. V. M. Sarma Jana, Former Professor, School of Economics, University of Hyderabad



• Prof. (Retd.) T. Tirupati Rao, Council Member, ICSSR, New Delhi; Former Vice-Chancellor, Osmania University, Hyderabad

• Smt. P. Madhavi, IA&AS, Principal Accountant General (Audit), Telangana

• Dr. Sanjay Rao Kamineni, IA&AS, Senior Deputy Accountant General (Audit Management Group) AMG II

The colloquium will deliberate on Telangana's fiscal health, revenue and expenditure trends, debt sustainability, and investment priorities, alongside a focused discussion on the performance of the health sector. The sessions will highlight how audit insights can be harnessed for evidence-based policy-making, mid-course corrections, and strengthening accountability in governance.

Interactive Q&A sessions will engage students, researchers, and practitioners, encouraging thought-provoking discussions on fiscal transparency and health sector reforms. The colloquium is expected to contribute to meaningful research and policy dialogues under the broader vision of Viksit Bharat@2047.

**JAWAHARLAL NEHRU TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY
HYDERABAD (JNTUH)**
KUKATPALLY, HYDERABAD - 500085, TELANGANA.

NOTIFICATION
TG PGCET-2026

Telangana Post Graduate Engineering Common Entrance Test
being conducted on behalf of TGCHE

Applications are invited for Post-Graduate Engineering Common Entrance Test (TG PGCET) for admission into M.E./M.Tech. / M.Pharm. / M. Arch. / Graduate level Pharm. D (P.B.), Full Time courses in various Universities, Affiliated Engineering, Pharmacy and Architecture Colleges in Telangana for the academic year 2026-2027.

Eligible candidates who wish to apply for TG PGCET-2026 may submit their applications through online mode only. Online Submission of application will commence from 27-02-2026. The related information regarding eligibility, syllabi, instructions, procedure for online application and detailed timetable will be available in the website <https://pgcet.tgche.ac.in>

Registration fee: Rs. 1100/- (Rs. 600/- in case of SC/ST/PWD candidates) per candidate per test. In case a candidate wants to appear for more than one test separate registration fee has to be paid accordingly.

Examination Dates: 28-05-2026 to 31-05-2026

Mode of Exam: The Exam will be conducted online only i.e. Computer Based Test (CBT)

The Registration fee should be paid through payment gateway (credit/debitcard/Net Banking/TG Online)

sd/- CONVENOR
TG PGCET-2026

Hyderabad. Date 23-02-2026

SRINIVAS GOUD SEEKS STRICT ACTION OVER BABY'S DEATH AT KUMMERA JATARA

HYDERABAD: Former minister Srinivas Goud on Monday lodged a complaint with Telangana DGP Shivadhar Reddy over the alleged killing of a two-month-old baby during the Kummera Jatara. Srinivas Goud personally visited the DGP's office in Hyderabad and demanded stringent action against those responsible for death of the infant belonging to the Rajaka community. He called for a thorough and impartial investigation to ensure justice for the victim's family and urged the authorities to take preventive measures to avoid such incidents in the future. He was accompanied by former BC Commission members Kishore Goud and Upender Chari, former Corporation Chairman Balaraju Yadav, and BRS leaders Swami Yadav, Raju and others.

SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
Follow us on [@SCRailwayIndia](https://www.scri.railways.gov.in) Details of the Tender Notices of S.C Railway can be seen on our website: www.scri.railways.gov.in

No. Y/C. e-Auction/HYB/2025-26
Date 20.02.2026

For and on behalf of the President of India, the Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Hyderabad Division, South Central Railway invites E-Auction through E-Auction leasing module of IREPS website www.ireps.gov.in for Awarding of Commercial contracts through Mobile Assets, Misc. Static Service, Parking, Pay & Use Toilets, RDN and Out of Home Category over Hyderabad Division. The E-Auction schedule is detailed hereunder.

S.No.: 01 Category: Parking Catalogue No.: HYB-Prkg-053 Particulars: Award of Parking lots at 02 locations viz., Dabirpura & Alwal (West side) Railway stations **Date of Auction:** 02.03.26 **Auction Start time:** 11:30 **Auction closing time:** 12:10

S.No.: 02 Category: ADVT-Int-202068-2-25-1 (Advertising Train Interior, Full Face) Catalogue No.: HYB-Mixed-058 Particulars: Interior of Train no.12789/12790 Kacheguda-Murdeswar-Kacheguda and 22715/22716 Kacheguda-Madurai-Kacheguda Express **Date of Auction:** 05.03.26 **Auction Start time:** 11:00 **Auction closing time:** 11:30

S.No.: 03 Category: ADVT-HYB-SFX-OH-124-25-1 (Advertising Out Home) Catalogue No.: HYB-Mixed-058 Particulars: Advertising Rights under out of Home category at Safilguda, Dayanand Nagar, Ramakistapuram Railway Station **Date of Auction:** 05.03.26 **Auction Start time:** 11:10 **Auction closing time:** 11:40

S.No.: 04 Category: ADVT-HYB-MBNR- Catalogue No.: HYB-Mixed-OSN-122-25-1 (Advertising -on station premises (Non digital) Particulars: Advertising Rights under RDN category at MBNR, DKC, WPR **Date of Auction:** 05.03.26 **Auction Start time:** 11:20 **Auction closing time:** 11:50

S.No.: 05 Category: MSS-HYB-DOR-BS-30-23-1 (Misc-Static-Services-Battery Swapping stations) Catalogue No.: HYB-Mixed-058 Particulars: Battery Swapping station in Dabirpura Railway Station **Date of Auction:** 05.03.26 **Auction Start time:** 11:30 **Auction closing time:** 12:00

S.No.: 06 Category: MSS-HYB-FM-BS-28-23-1 (Misc-Static-Services-Battery Swapping stations) Catalogue No.: HYB-Mixed-058 Particulars: Battery Swapping station in Falaknamuna Railway Station **Date of Auction:** 05.03.26 **Auction Start time:** 11:40 **Auction closing time:** 12:10

S.No.: 07 Category: MSS-HYB-HPG-BS-29-23-1 (Misc-Static-Services-Battery Swapping stations) Catalogue No.: HYB-Mixed-058 Particulars: Swapping station Battery in Huppuguda Railway Station **Date of Auction:** 05.03.26 **Auction Start time:** 11:50 **Auction closing time:** 12:20

S.No.: 08 Category: MSS-HYB-DYE-BS-95-25-1 (Misc-Static-Services-Battery Swapping stations) Catalogue No.: HYB-Mixed-058 Particulars: Battery Swapping station in Dayanandnagar Railway Station **Date of Auction:** 05.03.26 **Auction Start time:** 12:00 **Auction closing time:** 12:30

S.No.: 09 Category: MSS-HYB-UR-GZ-115-25-1 (Misc-Static-Services-Gaming Zone) Catalogue No.: HYB-Mixed-058 Particulars: Gaming Zone at Umdanagar Railway Station **Date of Auction:** 05.03.26 **Auction Start time:** 12:10 **Auction closing time:** 12:40

S.No.: 10 Category: MSS-HYB-MXT-PS-120-26-1 (Misc-Static-Services-Premium Stores) Catalogue No.: HYB-Mixed-058 Particulars: Premium Outlet at Malakpet Railway Station **Date of Auction:** 05.03.26 **Auction Start time:** 12:20 **Auction closing time:** 12:50

S.No.: 11 Category: Pay & Use Toilets Catalogue No.: HYB-PNU-008 Particulars: Operation and maintenance of Pay & Use Toilets at Nizamabad Railway station (MUE end) **Date of Auction:** 06.03.26 **Auction Start time:** 11:00 **Auction closing time:** 11:30

A2548 Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Hyderabad

SK Srivastava, GM/SCR Presents 'Employee of the Month' Safety Awards to Employees

HYDERABAD

Central Railway (SCR) reaffirmed its commitment to safety in train operations with a detailed review meeting held today at Rail Nilayam, Secunderabad. Shri Sanjay Kumar Srivastava, General Manager, South Central Railway, presented the "Employee of the Month" Safety Awards to fifteen employees in recognition of their dedication and alertness in preventing unsafe conditions. Shri Satya Prakash, Additional General Manager, SCR, participated in the meeting along with all Principal Heads of Departments. Divisional Railway Managers (DRMs) of Secunderabad, Hyderabad, Vijayawada, Guntakal, Guntur, and Nanded Divisions joined the review meeting through video conference. The awards were conferred upon critical frontline staff including Track Maintainers, Station Masters, Loco Pilots, Point's man, and Key-man. The division-wise distribution of awardees is as follows: Secunderabad Division - 03, Guntur Division - 01, Vijayawada Division - 05, Nanded Division - 03, and Guntakal Division - 03.

Congratulating the awardees, the General Manager lauded their devotion



and sincerity in discharging duties, emphasizing that such recognition would inspire and motivate other employees to remain vigilant and uphold safety standards in train operations.

During the meeting, Shri Srivastava instructed officials to strictly adhere to safety precautions at worksites and avoid shortcuts. He directed officers and supervisors to conduct regular safety drives focusing on staff alertness and adherence to prescribed procedures. Surprise

checks were also mandated to ensure compliance at worksites and construction sites.

The General Manager stressed that safety requirements must never be compromised. He highlighted the importance of sensitizing staff on all aspects of safety, strengthening fire safety arrangements, conducting inspections of points and crossings, and ensuring removal of construction materials near tracks after completion of works.

1,085 Olectra E-Buses to Power Hyderabad's Green Transit

HYDERABAD

Olectra Greentech Ltd. has secured a Letter of Intent (LOI) for the supply of 1,085 electric buses to be deployed in Hyderabad, providing a significant boost to the city's sustainable transport initiatives. The LOI was issued by the Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) through Evey Trans Pvt. Ltd. under the PM E-DRIVE programme led by Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL).

The procurement is part of broader efforts to accelerate the adoption of electric public transport across Indian cities. The new fleet is expected to enhance Hyderabad's public transport network by promoting cleaner and more energy-efficient mobility solutions.

Olectra Greentech, headquartered in Hyderabad and part of the MEIL Group, has maintained its leadership

position in India's electric bus market. The company has deployed more than 3,600 electric vehicles nationwide and currently holds an order book exceeding 10,000 vehicles.

Its fleet has collectively covered over 500 million green kilometres, reflecting the growing shift towards zero-emission transportation.

Mahesh Babu, Managing Director of Olectra Greentech Ltd., described the order as a major milestone for the company. He said the development reinforces Olectra's commitment to the Make in India vision and its focus on delivering advanced, reliable, and indigenously developed electric mobility solutions. He also expressed confidence in working closely with TGSRTC to provide efficient and comfortable public transportation for commuters.

For the Hyderabad deployment, Olectra will supply 12-metre low-floor elec-

tric buses in both air-conditioned (AC) and non-AC variants. The buses are designed to suit Indian road conditions and high-frequency urban operations. Each vehicle will feature advanced front and rear air suspension systems to improve passenger comfort and safety.

The buses will be powered by high-capacity lithium-ion battery packs, offering a driving range of over 250 kilometres per charge. Opportunity charging capability will enable recharging in approximately 45 minutes, ensuring operational efficiency. Dedicated wheelchair accommodation will also be incorporated to support accessibility and inclusive mobility.

Olectra Greentech Limited specialises in the design, manufacture, and deployment of electric buses and electric tippers, and continues to play a key role in India's transition towards clean and sustainable transportation.

RAJAPUSHPA
PROPERTIES PVT. LTD
Shaping Innovations

WHEREVER THERE IS A DREAM,
THERE IS RAJAPUSHPA

18
YEARS OF
XCELLENCE

48.67 +
MILLION SQ.FT.
PORTFOLIO

11.2
MILLION SQ.FT
COMPLETED PROJECTS

37.47
MILLION SQ.FT
UNDER CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

18000+
HAPPY RESIDENTS

20+
PROJECTS

ONGOING PROJECTS

RAJAPUSHPA
PROVINCIA
NARSINGI

RAJAPUSHPA
IMPERIA
TELLAPUR

RAJAPUSHPA
PRASANNA
KOKAPET

RAJAPUSHPA
Aurelia
TELLAPUR

RAJAPUSHPA
CASA LUXURA
NEOPOLIS

RAJAPUSHPA
INFINA
MANCHIREVULA

RAJAPUSHPA
skYra
NEOPOLIS

766 000 55 00 www.rajapushpa.in

SHORT TAKES

Konda Surekha invited to groundbreaking of ISKCON Cyberabad temple

HYDERABAD: Representatives from ISKCON have extended a formal invitation to Minister for Forest, Environment, and Endowments, Konda Surekha, to partake in the groundbreaking ceremony for the new ISKCON Cyberabad Temple and Maha Vantashala, which aims to provide sustenance to one hundred thousand individuals. This significant event is scheduled to take place on March 8 in Nalgandla. The organisers acknowledged the essential role the Minister has played in securing land for this temple dedicated to Lord Krishna, highlighting that her support facilitated the swift organisation of the groundbreaking ceremony.

Healing & Hope: Ayurvedic village revived at Chanchalguda prison

HYDERABAD: In a significant reformative step, the Ayurvedic Village at SICA, Chanchalguda was inaugurated by Dr. Soumya Mishra, Director General of Prisons and Correctional Services. Reopened after a six-year hiatus, the centre blends affordable public healthcare with inmate rehabilitation. Addressing a gathering, Soumya Mishra highlighted that the Ayurvedic Village is a model initiative combining affordable public healthcare with prisoner rehabilitation. The facility will provide authentic Ayurvedic treatments and therapies at nominal cost, making quality traditional healthcare accessible to the general public while strengthening the bond between prisons and society. She emphasized that the initiative has strong rehabilitative value.

Malkajiri traffic launches "Helmet Bank" to save lives

HYDERABAD: In a citizen-friendly road safety initiative, the Malkajiri Traffic Police has rolled out an innovative "Helmet Bank" programme under the guidance of Malkajiri police commissioner Avinash Mohanty, and leadership of DCP Traffic K Rahul Reddy. Under the initiative, the two-wheeler riders caught without helmets are offered a helmet free of cost on the spot after submitting basic details. Riders must return it within 24 hours after purchasing a new helmet. Launched at key junctions including Sangeet Chowrasta under Gopalapuram Traffic Police Station limits, the move aims to prevent head injuries, promote responsible riding behaviour, and build public trust through positive policing. This initiative complements the Telangana Police's "Arrive Alive" road safety campaign.

Hyderabad on course to become 'Healing Capital', says Sridhar Babu

HYDERABAD

Telangana IT and Industries Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu on Saturday said the State government is taking planned steps to transform Hyderabad — already a global pharma and life sciences hub — into a "Healing Capital" by integrating healthcare with data science and digital innovation.

Addressing the closing session of PHUSE APAC Connect 2026 at the Hyderabad International Convention Centre (HICC), the Minister said the future of healthcare would depend on the convergence of clinical science, artificial intelligence (AI) and real-world evidence.

He noted that clinical research is poised for transformative change, with technology set to play a decisive role. In this context, Telangana is building a forward-looking ecosystem to respond to future challenges and leverage emerging opportunities in healthcare.

Mr. Sridhar Babu listed key initiatives including AI City, Young India Skills University, expansion of Ge-



nome Valley, strengthening of data infrastructure, citizen health profiling, a dedicated medical tourism policy and the proposed Telangana Life Sciences School.

Emphasising the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration, he said meaningful progress in healthcare would require science,

data and human care to work together. He called for researchers, clinicians and technology experts to collaborate on a common platform to accelerate innovation in healthcare.

Reiterating the government's commitment to supporting innovation, the Minister invited global re-

searchers, institutions and industry partners to collaborate with Telangana in addressing future healthcare challenges.

PHUSE Board Chairman Stephen Bamford, Telangana Life Sciences Director Sarvesh Singh and IT Advisor Sai Krishna, among others, participated in the event.

South Central Railway to Launch First-of-Its-Kind

'Rail Parcel App'

Aimed at facilitating door to door service of parcel booking and delivery to the Rail users Hyderabad Division, SCR will be the first on Indian Railways to implement this Pilot Project

HYDERABAD

South Central Railway will organize a conclave on 'Rail Parcel Logistics' on 25th February, 2026 at Rail Nilay Auditorium, Secunderabad. Shri Sanjay Kumar Srivastava, General Manager, SCR will grace the occasion as Chief Guest and will launch the 'Rail Parcel App', a first of its kind initiative on Indian Railways aimed at providing seamless door to door parcel booking and delivery service for customers opting to transport parcels through trains. On



this occasion, South Central Railway will also sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Bangalore for undertaking study on Freight Logistics Market on SCR.

Hyderabad Division of SCR will be the first division on Indian Railways to implement this pilot project. The Rail Parcel App is a comprehensive digital platform which integrates

First Mile (pickup), Mid Mile (transportation by Railways), and Last Mile (delivery) services into a unified platform, making parcel movement simpler, faster, and more transparent for customers. The next gen Rail Parcel App will serve as a one-stop platform for booking, tracking, and managing parcel consignments. It is designed to bring together industry, individuals, businesses, and logistics partners under a single digital ecosystem that ensures end-to-end transport and convenience.

Features and benefits of App:

- Online booking and digital payments (online banking, debit/credit cards, UPI etc.)
- Real time parcel tracking
- Seamless end-to-end service — from doorstep pickup to doorstep delivery
- Automated push messages will be delivered to mobile number of customers at each stage of parcel handling

NO SNAKE BITE IN DARSHAN QUEUE, CLARIFIES TTD

TIRUMALA

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) has firmly refuted the reports alleging that a woman devotee was bitten by a snake in the darshan queue line at Tirumala Temple.

According to officials, a couple, Sarath Babu and Mounika, hailing from Warangal district of Telangana, arrived at Tirumala on Sunday night for the darshan of Sri Venkateswara Swamy. Upon reaching the R.B. Centre parking area near the SV Museum by taxi, Mounika stepped aside into a nearby dark area to apply turmeric to her feet. During this time, she felt a sudden touch on her leg and panicked. Her husband, Sarath Babu, inspected the area and noticed a small snake. Immediately, the security personnel were alerted. The Security promptly shifted the devotee to Aswini Hospital at Tirumala. After a thorough medical examination, doctors confirmed that there was no sign of snake bite.



Uttam commits to fast-track Gouravelli project

Funds, clearances, legal hurdles to be addressed on priority

HYDERABAD

Exuding confidence that the state would receive the environmental clearance soon for the Gauravelli Irrigation project and overcome all the legal hurdles being faced for the completion of works on it, the Minister for Irrigation and Civil Supplies N Uttam Kumar Reddy said today that the land acquisition process would be completed as part of a time bound programme. Joined by the Minister for Transport, Ponnamp Prabhakar, he had a high-level review at his Secretariat chambers on the issues coming in the way of the work progress.

Gouravelli project is one of the reservoirs constructed under the Indiramma Flood flow Canal (IFFC) project. He said the reservoir was initially proposed with a storage capacity of 1.41 TMC in Siddipet district. The original project was aimed to create an ayacut of 1.06 lakh acres. It was subsequently enhanced to a capacity of 8.23 TMC. He assured fair compensation and speedy payments to the farmers parting with land for the implementation of project. He asserted that the land acquisition process would put on fast track. The government is firm on completion of the land acquisition task by releasing required funds well before June 2. He directed Collectors of Karimnagar, Jangaon and Siddipet, who also participated in the review to pay focused attention to the land acquisition issues according to priority to the project.

Referring to the legal challenges, he directed the advocate general to be ready with the required strategies as the supreme court case involving the project will be coming up for hearing in two days. He expressed the hope that the state would be able to overcome all the legal hurdles in respect of the Gouravelli project. He said that the project has been pending with the works stalled for many years due to multiple reasons.

Stating that the state government remained committed to complete the project, he said funds would be released without further delay. Minister Prabhakar has been continuously pressuring Irrigation Department to complete it. The Minister Made it clear that there will be zero excuses so far as the completion of the land acquisition process is concerned. The June 2 deadline set by the Chief Minister, A Revanth Reddy for completing land acquisition across critical irrigation projects, including Devaluda and Gouravelli must be met at any cost.

In areas with growing urbanisation or where land values are skyrocketing, landowners are pressing for higher compensation. The Minister insisted that conscious and fair policy decisions on compensation rates must be taken at the award stage. He wanted the government advisor (Irrigation), Adityanath Das to take initiative in addressing all issues hampering the progress of works on the project.

Special Secretary, Prashant Jeevan Patil, Commissioner, (R&R), Shiv Kumar Naidu and ENC (General) Ramesh Babu were among those who took part.

TGCHE AT INDIA SKILL COMPETITION 2025-26

South Regional Meet to Position Telangana as a Skill Hub

HYDERABAD

Prof. V. Balakista Reddy, Chairman, Telangana Council of Higher Education (TGCH), graced the Opening Ceremony of the India Skill Competition 2025-26 South Regional Competition held on 21st February 2026. The competition was organised by the National Skill Development Corporation under the aegis of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India.

The competitions were conducted on 22-23 February 2026 at Pearl



Ground, and Prof. V. Balakista Reddy also attended on the subsequent day to witness the events, interact with participants, and appreciate their technical excellence and professional competencies.

Today, during the event, Prof. Reddy had a focused interaction with Mr. Arun Kumar Pillai, Chief Executive Officer of NSDC, to ex-

ploration on expanding sector-specific skill programmes in universities across Telangana. The discussions emphasised structured collaboration with Sector Skill Councils

(SSCs), strengthening internship and apprenticeship models, embedding industry-recognised skill certifications within degree programmes, and facilitating pathways for students to participate in national and international skill competitions.

On the sidelines of the competition, the Chairman held detailed discussions with CEOs of various Sector Skill Councils under NSDC, seeking their active support for the Rising Telangana 2047 Skilling Initiative. The meetings included leadership from the Healthcare Sector Skill Council, Water & Plumbing Skill Council, Electronics Sector Skill Council, Instrumentation & Automation Sector Skill Council,

Tourism & Hospitality Skill Council, Infrastructure Equipment Skill Council, Sports and Fitness Skill Council, Beauty & Wellness Skill Council, Skill Council for Persons with Disability, and Skill Council for Green Jobs, among others. He also met with the NSDC CSR and NSDC Academy Division Heads to explore collaborative initiatives between TGCH and NSDC Future Skills programmes.

Prof. Reddy also visited the Innovation Showcase and Exhibition at the India Skills Competition 2025-26 South Regional Competition along with the NSDC CEO, appreciating innovative projects and industry-aligned skill demonstrations presented by participants.

People asked about the illegal activities of the Reavath Reddy Government

- Questioned Geetha Murthy, former Mahila morcha state president

HYDERABAD

BJP National Council member and former State President of the Mahila Morcha, Geetha Murthy, lashed out, questioning whether attacks would be carried out if people asked about the illegal activities of the Revanth Reddy government.

She said that the games of former Congress minister Shabbir Ali, aimed at defaming the current BJP MLA K. Venkata Ramana Reddy—who has carried forward the legacy of service inherited from his father in Kamareddy district—will no longer continue.

She stated that the credit for defeating both a former Chief Minister and a sitting Chief Minister goes to Venkata Ramana Reddy. She mentioned that with the abundant blessings of the people of Kamareddy, he



contested against two major leaders there and emerged victorious.

Geetha Murthy said that even now, Venkata Ramana Reddy is implementing several public welfare programs in Kamareddy district, and unable to digest this, Shabbir Ali has started new dramas out of frustration. She expressed confidence that

the people will eventually know the truth and that Venkata Ramana Reddy stands on their side.

She also recalled that even today, Venkata Ramana Reddy has submitted an RTI application to the District Collector there, asking for a response within a week regarding the allegations made by Shabbir Ali.

'Caste brutality claims Infant's life in Nagar Kurnool'

HYDERABAD

Telangana Jagruthi president K. Kavitha launched a scathing attack on the Congress government, accusing it of betraying farmers, encouraging caste injustice, and completely failing the Nadigadda region.

Speaking at the Rythu Sangarshana Sabha in Gadwal on Monday, she said the death of a two-month-old infant in Nagar Kurnool, allegedly after being assaulted in the name of caste, is a blot on Telangana and a direct indictment of the government's failure to protect the weakest sections of society.

"This is not just an incident; it is a crime against humanity. Caste-based brutality has no place in Telangana, and this government's silence is shameful," she said, demanding immediate accountability and justice.

Kavitha announced that henceforth, every major Telangana Jagruthi programme would begin from Jogulamba Gadwal, asserting that the Nadigadda region has been ignored, cheated, and pushed to the



margins by both BRS and Congress governments. "This land has ethics, courage, and self-respect. Any movement that begins here will shake the corridors of power," she warned.

Strongly condemning the corporate exploitation of seed cotton farmers, Kavitha said that while Nadigadda's seed cotton feeds the entire country, farmers are being harassed daily and denied payments even after assurances given to the district administration. "Companies are looting farmers with the

full backing of the government," she alleged, demanding that all pending dues be cleared within one week, failing which Telangana Jagruthi would launch an uncompromising statewide agitation.

Attacking the Congress government's anti-farmer policies, Kavitha said midnight power supply has turned agriculture into a life-threatening struggle. "Farmers are forced to guard their fields at night, risking their lives to snakes and scorpions. This is not governance; this is cruelty," she said.

Kavitha also slammed the government for failing to supply even basic urea fertiliser and mocked the idea of app-based booking. "First give farmers smartphones, then talk about apps. Otherwise, stop this nonsense," she remarked.

Kavitha tore into the Congress government's loan-waiver claims, calling them a "big political fraud." She said promises were made to waive loans of 40 lakh farmers, but only 25 lakh were covered, leaving 15 lakh farmers betrayed. "Even small farmers with ₹50,000 and ₹1 lakh loans have been abandoned. This government lied openly and ran away from debate," she said, demanding a complete and unconditional loan waiver for every farmer.

Later, Kavitha met the District Collector of Gadwal district and submitted the memorandum. She warned that if the problems of seed cotton farmers are not resolved within one week, Telangana Jagruthi will take to the streets and launch road blockades across the district until the issues are fully addressed.



77 Illegal Bangladeshi Immigrants Identified

BHUBANESWAR, FEB 23

The Odisha government has identified 77 Bangladeshi nationals illegally staying in the state, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi informed the Odisha Assembly on Monday. Replying to a query raised by BJP MLA Padma Lochan Panda, Majhi said the identification was carried out as part of a state-wide drive in accordance with guidelines issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). He noted that, as per MHA letter No. 25022/28/2020-FI (Part-III) dated May 2, 2025, instructions were issued to Superintendents of Police across all districts to expedite the identification of illegal Bangladeshi immigrants. The Chief Minister said the Superintendents of Police have been acting in compliance with the MHA guidelines and conducting verification drives in their respective jurisdictions. According to Majhi, identity documents of 2,261 suspected individuals were examined during the state-wide verification exercise.

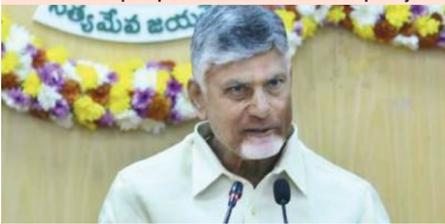
CM: Welfare Priority for Coalition Govt

AMARAVATI:

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu stated that the coalition government is committed to uplift poor and making efforts to achieve social equality. He said the government is moving forward to ensure social empowerment by reducing economic disparities and providing representation to weaker sections in proportion to their population.

Speaking in the Legislative Assembly on budget allocations to welfare departments, the Chief Minister said that despite financial constraints, the NDA government has made the "Super Six" a grand

Efforts on to uplift poor and achieve social equality:CM



success. He said allocations for SCs, STs, BCs and Minorities have been increased compared to the past.

The Chief Minister said focusing on future generations well being, strengthened Anganwadi centres and primary schools. Special emphasis is

being placed on residential schools to provide quality education. Efforts are being made to ensure better health along with proper nutrition.

The Chief Minister said the previous government reduced BC reservations from 34 percent to 24 percent. We have

constituted a one-man committee to restore reservations back to 34 percent. The government is making all efforts to increase and implement these reservations before local body elections. A Cabinet Sub-Committee has been formed to enact a BC Protection Act. Similarly, some BC groups are seeking inclusion in SC and ST categories. The related Bills have already been sent to the Centre.

The Chief Minister said that as a Chief Minister he introduced SC categorization during 1996-97. Subsequent governments failed to protect it. Now, we have once again implemented categorisation to ensure social justice within

SC communities. The earlier rulers also failed to protect GO No. 3 introduced for tribal welfare, and the Supreme Court struck it down. GO No. 3 must be implementable and acceptable to all. A decision will be taken soon. We are ensuring protection for minorities and providing honorariums to Mouzans and Imams. We are supporting girl children in all ways. Soon, we will introduce a Family Benefit Card by taking the family as a unit. Through Sanjeevani, financial relief will be provided to the poor, reducing their hardships. This government is committed for welfare of weaker section, the Chief Minister asserted.

CM Announces Rs10 Lakh Aid in Milk Deaths

AMARAVATI, FEB 23

The Andhra Pradesh government on Monday announced a compensation of Rs 10 lakh each to the families of four persons who died due to consumption of adulterated milk in Rajahmundry. Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu made the announcement in the Legislative Assembly. He also declared that the government will bear the medical expenses of those undergoing treatment in the hospitals. Terming the incident as painful, the Chief Minister expressed deep sympathy for the families of the deceased. He told the Assembly that the affected people were under-

going treatment in hospitals with symptoms like vomiting, stomach pain, and dialysis problems. Doctors found increased levels of urea and serum creatinine in the blood during clinical tests.

The Chief Minister stated that Varalakshmi Milk Dairy of Narasapuram village of Korukonda mandal supplies milk to 106 families in two areas of Rajahmundry daily. Officials have confirmed that the victims fell ill after drinking milk from this dairy. Four people died in the incident. Ten others are undergoing treatment, and two of them are on a ventilator. Three of the deceased were aged over 70 years, while the fourth one was 58 years old.

Jagan demands action over deaths due to milk adulteration

AMARAVATI, FEB 23

Former Chief Minister and YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) President Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy expressed deep shock and anguish over the tragic incident in Rajamahendravaram, where four persons have reportedly died after consuming adulterated milk, while several others are undergoing treatment in hospitals. He conveyed his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and prayed for the speedy recovery of those hospitalized. Y.S. Jagan stated that negligence in food safety enforcement has directly endangered public lives and demanded that the government take stringent action against those responsible for the adulteration. He emphasised that such incidents reflect serious lapses in monitoring and regulatory mechanisms, and



insisted that immediate corrective steps must be taken to ensure that similar tragedies do not recur. The YSRCP leader urged the Health Department to take swift control of the situation by ensuring the best possible medical care to all affected individuals, closely monitor their health condition, and, if necessary, deploy expert medical teams for comprehensive treatment. He called for urgent administrative intervention to strengthen food safety inspections and restore public confidence

in essential commodities like milk. Four deaths have been reported in two days due to alleged anuria (inability to pass urine), suspected to be linked to milk adulteration.

Two of those undergoing treatment in hospitals died since Sunday night. They were identified as S. Seshagiri Rao (72) and Radha Krishnamurthy (74). Two deaths were reported earlier. All the victims are from Laala Cheruvu and Chowdeswari Nagar areas of Rajahmundry (Rajamahendravaram) city in East Godavari district. At least 14 people were admitted to various hospitals with symptoms of anuria since February 15. They include four members of the same family. As the milk vendor for all the affected families is the same, health authorities suspected milk adulteration resulting in anuria.

Tirupati laddu row: YSRCP continues protest in Andhra Legislative Council

AMARAVATI, FEB 23

Opposition YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) continued to stall proceedings of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Council for the second week, demanding discussion on the supply of ghee to the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD) by Indapur Dairy and Milk Products Limited, which it claimed had links with Heritage Foods owned by the family of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. Like last week, the YSRCP members moved an adjournment motion on Monday seeking to suspend the listed business and take up the debate on the Indapur-Heritage issue. However, Council Chairman Koyye Moshenu Raju rejected the demand. The YSRCP members trooped into the well of the House and surrounded the podium, raising slogans in support of their demand. Amid protests by the YSRCP members,



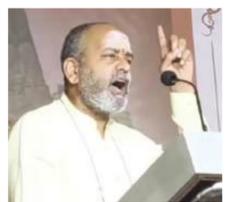
the Chairman took up question hour. As opposition members continued the protest, the Council was adjourned without transacting business. The Chairman announced that a meeting of the Business Advisory Committee (BAC) will decide on taking up debate on the issue. The YSRCP had been trying to raise the issue since last week. The opposition party claims that the Supreme Court-appointed SIT clarified the issue pertaining to the alleged adulteration of ghee supplied to the TTD. It is seek-

ing a discussion on the alleged irregularities in the procurement process, pricing and the alleged link between Heritage Foods and Indapur Dairy. Leader of Opposition Botsa Satyanarayana alleged that the ghee that was earlier procured at about Rs 320 per kg is now being supplied at around Rs 700 per kg through Indapur Dairy, which he said has links with Chandrababu Naidu's own company Heritage, resulting "in a doubling of price and looting of public money". Meanwhile, Minister for Human Resources De-

velopment Nara Lokesh said the facts relating to the adulteration of Tirupati laddu will be placed in the Assembly on Tuesday. Referring to the continuing boycott of the Assembly by YSRCP MLAs, he remarked that attending the Assembly is the responsibility of the MLAs. Lokesh, who is the son of Chief Minister Naidu, accused YSRCP of bringing God onto the roads. He said staging a protest in the Legislature with God's pictures is objectionable. Meanwhile, MLCs of the ruling coalition met Chairman Moshenu Raju and demanded action against the YSRCP MLCs who staged a protest in the Council last week with God's pictures. They said the MLCs who were holding pictures in their hands while wearing shoes should be suspended. The MLCs of TDP, Jana Sena and BJP also urged the Chairman to ensure that the Council transact its business without further wasting time.

Judge's Remark Sparks Row at Madras High Court

Madras High Court Justice GR Swaminathan called those who do not believe in spiritual gurus or the power of God 'rascals, fools and barbarians' at a public event.



An impeachment motion was recently moved against Justice GR Swaminathan following his order directing the lighting of a ceremonial lamp at Thiruparankundram. Madras High Court Justice GR Swaminathan has courted a fresh controversy as he asserted that those who do not believe in the concept of spiritual gurus as a part of God are "rascals, fools and barbarians". Addressing a public event by a spiritual organisation in Tamil Nadu, the judge said, "In Tamil Nadu, some people call themselves 'rationalists'. They call us rascals, fools and barbarians because we see the Guru as a form of God. I say that those who say so are rascals, fools and barbarians. Justice Swaminathan was recently at the

centre of a major row after he directed that a traditional lamp be lit at the Deepathoon (a stone pillar) near a historic dargah in Thiruparankundram, in addition to the usual temple locations. The state objected and sparked a massive row, and an impeachment motion was subsequently moved against him by over 100 MPs. The motion accused him of bias, lack of impartiality, and acting contrary to the secular functioning of the judiciary. At the event, the judge further said, "I have four more years left in service. I feel I should step up and act more courageously." Justice Swaminathan also spoke about the role of spiritual guidance during difficult times, asserting that

courage and support can come through the grace of a Guru.

Referring to his interactions with spiritual leaders, he said he had recently been in contact with a yogi near Tenkasi and discussed the concept of a spiritual "aura" that, according to him, could help devotees overcome personal weaknesses when they come into close proximity with spiritual masters. Justice Swaminathan has often made public remarks that critics argue blur the line between personal faith and judicial duty. He once said that "if we protect the Vedas, the Vedas will protect us," leading to criticism that he was prioritising religious texts over the Constitution. In another instance, he reportedly said that Sanatana Dharma would guide his remaining years of judicial service. He was also criticised for describing the Indian Constitution as a "copied" document largely derived from the Government of India Act, and suggesting it might lose its relevance if the country's "demographic profile" changed.

Siddaramaiah slams JDS, defends social justice, says Congress backs diverse leaders

KARNATAKA, FEB 23

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said a recent article he wrote to mark Social Justice Day had triggered wide political debate. Welcoming the discussion, he argued that systems must remain dynamic to serve people better and maintained that his commitment to equity has remained consistent over four decades in public life. Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday mounted a strong defence of his social justice plank, taking a dig at JDS's HD Kumaraswamy and asserting that the Indian National Congress alone has a tradition of nurturing leadership beyond family lines.

The Chief Minister said a recent article he wrote to mark Social Justice Day had triggered wide political debate. Welcoming the discussion, he argued that systems must remain dynamic to serve people better and maintained that his commitment to equity has remained consistent over



four decades in public life. He also expressed readiness for an open debate on caste and representation. Defending the piece, he said: "An article I wrote for a newspaper as part of Social Justice Day celebrations has sparked multifaceted debate in the state's political circles. If water remains stagnant, it turns into slush; if it flows, it becomes clearer."

"The social system is similar—if it does not remain rigid and instead becomes dynamic, it transforms in a people-centric manner. From this perspective, I welcome the discussion surrounding my article," he added. Responding to criticism that he was invoking caste considerations for political gain, Siddaramaiah dismissed the charge and turned the spotlight on the

Janata Dal (Secular), alleging that its top leadership has historically remained confined to one family. Without naming individuals beyond Kumaraswamy and his father, HD Deve Gowda, he questioned how many leaders from the Vokkaliga community had been groomed within that party. In contrast, he said the Congress has produced and promoted leaders from diverse social backgrounds, including Vokkaligas, Lingayats and backward classes, elevating them to the state's highest office. He noted that he himself, hailing from a backward community, was given the opportunity to serve as Chief Minister more than once.

The Chief Minister further asserted that if a Dalit leader were to occupy the top post in the state in the future, it would be through the Congress. He said such advancement would be based on merit and ideological commitment rather than lineage, and challenged rival parties to articulate a similar vision.

Kerala Signs Rs2,000 Cr Logistics MoUs at Vizhinjam Port

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, FEB 23

In a decisive move to consolidate public sector presence in strategic maritime infrastructure, the Kerala government on Monday signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) worth Rs 2,000 crore with three Central Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) to develop an integrated logistics ecosystem at the Adani Vizhinjam International Seaport. The agreements were formalised in the presence of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan at the Legislative Assembly complex, signalling a calibrated policy approach that seeks to retain core infrastructure under public oversight even as the port operates under a public-private partnership (PPP) model. The initiative is positioned as a structural intervention to transform Vizhinjam from a transshipment facility into a diversi-

fied logistics and maritime services hub. The partnership brings together state-owned Vizhinjam International Seaport Limited (VISL) and three Central entities -- Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Container Corporation of India (CONCOR), and Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC). The government's strategy is to embed critical services such as bunkering, rail-linked cargo movement and warehousing within the PSU framework, thereby preventing concentration risks in cargo handling and ensuring competitive pricing for trade stakeholders. Of the total planned investment, Rs 700 crore will be deployed by IOCL to establish large-scale bunkering facilities capable of servicing mother vessels calling at the port. The project is expected to position Vizhinjam as a key refuelling node along Indian Ocean trade routes, strengthening ancillary revenue streams.

Shivakumar: Mobile Ban Under Discussion

BENGALURU, FEB 23

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Monday said that the issue of banning mobile phones in schools is under discussion and that there is pressure from parents as well. "Many countries have implemented such measures. The issue is also being discussed at the international level," he said in response to questions from the media near his residence here.

Asked about restricting mobile phone usage by children in schools, he said: "It is not appropriate to publicly disclose how mobile phones are being misused. That is why discussions are being held on this issue."

On the issue of banning mobile phones, Home Minister G. Parameashwara stated there has been discussion on imposing a mobile ban in schools and colleges. Giving



ards Authority stating that Bengaluru's lake water is not fit for drinking, he said: "The government has never said that lake water in Bengaluru should be used for drinking or bathing. These lakes exist to recharge groundwater. Water from the Thippagondanahalli reservoir is treated by the BWSSB. Bengaluru's lake water is not meant for drinking or bathing." On the issue of protest by Congress against Viksit Bharat—Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act, he said the Central government has not issued any clarification or directive. "Even wages for previous work have not been released. The law has been rendered ineffective. Atrocities are being committed against labourers and the poor. We are organising a major protest against this. A 'NREGA Bachao Andolan' protest has been organised in Chikkaballapur," he said.

and the DMK government." "Our vote is our right. No one can buy us. Our vote is for the whistle symbol. We will not withdraw our word, and we will not be deceived again."

VELLORE (TAMIL NADU), FEB 23

Declaring that the upcoming Assembly election would be a "direct fight between Vijay and (M.K.) Stalin", Vijay on Monday intensified his attack on Chief Minister Stalin, asserting that the battle in Tamil Nadu was not about Delhi politics but about corruption and governance within the state.

Addressing party cadres and mid-level leaders at a closed-door meeting in Kollamangalam in Vellore district, the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) leader said: "To put it clearly, this election is a war between Vijay and Stalin. It is a war between the people of Tamil Nadu and corruption, between the people and bribery, between the people

2026 polls a direct fight between me and Stalin, asserts TVK leader Vijay

VELLORE (TAMIL NADU), FEB 23

and the DMK government." "Our vote is our right. No one can buy us. Our vote is for the whistle symbol. We will not withdraw our word, and we will not be deceived again."



Using a parable to drive home his message, Vijay compared Tamil Nadu's political landscape to a wild Jallikattu bull standing in the middle of a busy field, untamed and intimidating. He experienced handlers hesitated, a young boy approached calmly with fodder in his pocket and subdued the animal by understanding its hunger. "In that story, the bull represents the political situation of Tamil Nadu. The boy is not just me—it is all of us. When people are hungry for change, they need solutions, not fear," he said.

Vijay accused the ruling DMK of failing to deliver on

promises, including shifting electricity billing to a monthly cycle. "People were promised monthly bills. Has it happened? Paying once every two months is a burden. Can this be called modern corruption?" he asked. He also highlighted concerns about law and order, women's safety, inadequate bus services in hill villages, and the lack of medical facilities, forcing some women to

consider home deliveries. "In our government, the safety of girls and boys will come first. Government schools will match private standards. We will ensure clean toilets for girls, create a drug-free Tamil Nadu, and establish a welfare board for unorganised workers," he promised.

Criticising what he described as opportunistic alliances, Vijay said: "You cannot win with looted money or unstable coalitions. This is a whistle-stop election. Stay confident—victory is certain."

He further challenged political leaders to disclose their assets before and after entering politics, and questioned Stalin over past remarks that described him as a "friend".

"If I am your friend, why mention my name in controversies?" he asked. Asserting



EDITORIAL

INDIA BETS ON
PAX SILICA

India's entry into the Pax Silica alliance represents a strategic manoeuvre to secure its technological future by aligning with a U.S.-led coalition focused on the infrastructure for Artificial Intelligence (AI) and critical minerals. Its membership could boost domestic industrial goals by complementing initiatives such as India Semiconductor, IndiaAI, and National Critical Mineral Missions. By joining this ecosystem, India will aim to secure raw materials supply and advanced equipment, attract investment, and influence global tech and security standards. India does not currently possess significant capacity in processing critical minerals nor does it extract them in large quantities.

That said, for the rest of the world, including the Pax Silica group, the more important implication is in India's potential to shift the centre of gravity for global manufacturing and consumption. India's massive demand can be useful to financially justify new supply chains, especially ones not pegged to China; the country can also provide the engineering talent and assembly capacity required to diversify the global technology supply chain. India's participation could also add significant geopolitical weight to the bloc's efforts to establish democratic governance for critical technologies, rendering the coalition's standards more viable.

Of course, there is no such thing as a free lunch. The implications for India include potential economic retaliation from China, such as trade friction, slower market access, or pressure on upstream inputs such as minerals and active pharmaceutical ingredients. The Pax Silica partnership's focus on "trusted ecosystems" could also translate into rigid expectations regarding export controls and technology-transfer guardrails, which could clash with India's preference for not locking itself into alliances but, instead, pursuing what External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has called "issue-based alignments".

The government could open itself up to more criticism at home particularly if the U.S.-led bloc also begins to shape India's domestic AI rules in ways that look externally driven. Smaller Indian firms attempting to join global value chains could also face significant financial burdens and longer timelines due to stricter security audit requirements. In the end, the success of Pax Silica will depend on whether its partners go beyond talks to build a real-world supply chain where raw minerals are mined, refined, turned into chips, and used to power AI systems, all among the pact's members, creating a secure technology network that drives India's economic growth while protecting the alliance from disruptions.

3 Reasons India Shouldn't Sign A Deal With
A Court-Defeated Trump

The United States Supreme Court has removed the legal foundation on which Washington's sweeping reciprocal tariffs were constructed. In Learning Resources, Inc. v. Trump, Chief Justice John Roberts wrote that the President claimed the power to impose tariffs "on imports from any country, of any product, at any rate, for any amount of time". The Court held that such authority does not exist under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act. Congress alone retains the taxing power. Emergency tariffism, as practised over the past year, is unconstitutional.

Against this background, India should pause. It has rightly postponed its meeting on the proposed interim trade pact.

Figures That
Keep Changing

The interim trade framework finalised by India and the US in early February was negotiated under the shadow of a 50% tariff regime, including a 25% penalty linked to Russian oil purchases. The deal reduced India's exposure to 18% under a reciprocal tariff structure. Within days of the Court's ruling, that 18% fell to 10% under Section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974, a temporary surcharge capped at 150 days. The legal and economic baseline has shifted materially.

To sign a binding agreement while the tariff instrument set of the United States is in flux would be strategically imprudent. That interim framework included significant Indian concessions, with India agreeing to either completely eliminate or reduce tariffs on all US industrial goods and a wide range of agricultural products. The deal commits to addressing long-standing non-tariff barriers, including in medical devices and ICT (information and communication technology) goods, and to determine within six months whether

US or international standards are acceptable in identified sectors. It signals intent to purchase \$500 billion of US energy, aircraft, technology products, and other goods over five years, and also accepts monitoring and reimposition clauses linked to Russian oil imports.

In return, the United States applies an 18% reciprocal tariff rate and promises conditional removals under annexed procedures. That rate was already substantially above the pre-2025 average US tariff of roughly 2.5% on Indian goods. Trump had announced that temporarily, this would be 10% for all countries. Within a day, he said it would

but the mode of leverage has changed. Any agreement signed today prices in a tariff authority that no longer exists in the form previously exercised.

Second, durability risk. The interim agreement includes a clause allowing either party to modify commitments if tariffs change. If the US reconfigures its tariffs through statutory pathways after the 150-day window, India may find itself in serial renegotiations. Waiting until the US settles into a post-ruling tariff framework would allow India to negotiate against a clearer, steady state rather than a transitional regime.

Third, strategic conditional-

good for us because tariffs on India were better than those on its competitors. Now that the flat rate of 15% applies across the board, committing ourselves to something that might end up being higher than our competitors doesn't make any sense.

Further, if Section 122 expires without congressional extension, the tariff structure will change again. If Section 301 investigations are launched, sectoral tariffs could rise in politically sensitive areas. If Congress asserts itself more strongly post the Supreme Court ruling, the trade landscape could shift toward legislated constraints. Signing a deal now would convert provisional leverage into irreversible concessions.

Waiting does not mean walking away. It means sequencing. India can maintain the interim framework, continue negotiations toward the broader Bilateral Trade Agreement, and insist that final commitments be aligned with the post-litigation US tariff architecture. It can use the Supreme Court ruling to seek stronger rebalancing clauses, clearer trigger mechanisms and explicit insulation against temporary surcharge phases. It can ensure that agricultural protections, standards policy and industrial strategy are not reshaped by a tariff regime that may not survive its own legal cycle. The Supreme Court has restored constitutional boundaries in Washington, not predictability to US trade policy. That transition is underway. India should not lock itself into long-term obligations while the other side is still redefining the legal basis of its leverage.

(ADITYA SINHA WRITES ON
MACROECONOMICS AND
GEOPOLITICS AND IS A
FORMER OSD, ECONOMIC
ADVISORY COUNCIL TO THE
PRIME MINISTER.)

Disclaimer: These are the
personal opinions of the author



be 15% globally. The asymmetry has narrowed, but the structure remains unsettled.

There Are Three
Technical Reasons to
Wait

First, authority risk. The Supreme Court has made clear that sweeping tariff action requires clear congressional authorisation. The administration has pivoted to Section 122 for temporary surcharges and signalled reliance on Section 301 and Section 232 investigations for sector-specific action. These are slower, procedurally constrained and litigable. The United States still retains leverage,

ity. The framework links trade concessions to energy sourcing, defence cooperation and broader economic security alignment. Trade is not being negotiated in isolation. The US President has publicly framed tariffs as instruments of geopolitical leverage. Even if some of this rhetoric is political theatre, the structure of the agreement embeds monitoring and reimposition mechanisms. Signing under temporary tariff relief may lock India into durable external oversight in domains that extend beyond trade.

Testing The Waters

The counterargument is serious. The trade agreement was

Waiting does not mean walking away. It means sequencing. India can maintain the interim framework, continue negotiations toward the broader Bilateral Trade Agreement, and insist that final commitments be aligned with the post-litigation US tariff architecture.

Open Forum

India's AI Vision
JUDGING RISKS & BENEFITS

Much hype has been created about Artificial Intelligence (AI) before and after the recent summit as world leaders and leading technical experts shared their experience and expertise.

It offered an opportunity for India to delve deep into AI implementation and understand its risks and benefits. In his inaugural address, Prime Minister Modi presented India's Manav (human) vision for AI and, at the end, the Delhi Declaration, adopted by 86 countries and two organisations called "for collaborative, trusted, resilient and efficient" AI with benefits being shared by humanity.

The big question is whether AI will benefit humanity per se and whether India, with limited R&D spending, will have resources to implement AI infrastructure. Today, there's barely any AI deployment in key areas such as healthcare, surveillance and finance.

India's R&D spend stood at 0.7% of GDP in 2024 compared to 2.7% of China and 3.5% in the US. Not just these two countries, India spends much less among the emerging economies and possibly the lowest among the G-20 nations. The picture is even more disheartening in absolute GDP terms. Additionally, in the recent budget, the government cut this year's allocation to Rs 1000 crore Rs 2000 crore after AI Mission reportedly used only Rs 800 crore. Apart from the governments not-so-encouraging attitude, private investment also remains quite low compared with China, Japan, not to mention the US. According to reports, China's electronics giant Huawei alone spent nearly \$23 billion on R&D in 2023, more than India's combined public and private spending.

If intentions are not matched with technological and financial support, the nation cannot proceed much farther. AI is still in its infancy in the country though it has built LLM that supports 22 languages with states like

Andhra Pradesh having drawn multi-billion data centre commitments. However, it remains to be seen how much investment India can finally attract after initial estimates reveal that nearly \$70 billion has reportedly flowed into AI-related investments.

Barring IITs, science infrastructure and research facilities even in well-known universities needs much to be desired and additional funds must be provided by the Centre. The Union IT Minister recently asserted that industry-led AI labs, along with GPUs, will be introduced in 500 universities to build a large national talent pipeline. Obviously, this would help bridge the gap between students and actual industry needs. However, what remained unanswered is whether the industry would be ready to finance this and, if so, how much funding have they given to universities in the past.

India's agenda rests on three normative pillars, i.e. people, planet and progress but it appears quite misleading about what it means specially for a developing country like ours. While its claimed that AI would benefit the common man it has not been enumerated how agriculture, food security and healthcare would come to the rescue of the lower segments of society. Though India's domestic compute capacity remains modest, the stress on semiconductor supply chains is welcome news.

There is no problem in being over-ambitious. The reportedly \$200 billion expected in AI infrastructure over the next two years, even if it becomes a reality, in double the time would augur well for the country. Obviously, there is a need for technology upgradation with the right kind of R&D, but what is the contribution of the public and private sectors in financial terms?

There is a big consuming population in the country, but what percentage has the capacity to spend and live a dignified existence? Added to this, the hype of AI in research, specially in the small molecule drug discovery space, may be justified from one perspective

but here again the question rises what section of the population can purchase medicines as, in a recent programme, a well-known doctor stated that a significant portion of the populace go undiagnosed from diabetes.

Thus, the challenges cannot be overlooked as the spectre of human job displacement with the rise of AI can't be doubted. Even the founder of Sun Microsystems has stated that though AI reshapes global services and has opportunities for India, "those will be very, very disruptive to the Indian economy". As an example, he maintained that "IT services will go away by 2030" and there will be no such thing as BPO. The scope of AI's weaponisation as the technology is already being used to foment social division, hate, invade privacy or impersonate individuals in many societies. Apart from imparting skills to harness the technology, the question that comes up is the need to place legal, digital and public protective framework to back AI when it goes rogue.

An important question was raised by Yoshua Bengio of University of Montreal that keeping in view that only a handful of countries are leading the AI domain with frontier models, people of most other nations should be mindful of the effects of the risks that are being taken and that are going to affect societies. "We need to understand it socially because there's a social component psychologically in the case of AI because we're talking about systems that interact with people and language".

A key question that arises is the effect of AI on healthcare for the common man. It has not yet been outlined that those who remain undiagnosed for diabetes, cardio-vascular diseases and even cancer -- spreading very fast -- will benefit from this new technology. AI for the big pharma companies will not benefit the common man. Related to this is the other question-- which are the sectors where AI would help the common man? This needs clarity.

Former Greek finance minister Yanis Varoufakis, in his book 'Techno-

feudalism' sees this age as a return to feudalism. In his portrayal, AI companies are the new extractors, and ordinary citizens must pay their dues to be able to go about their lives. He underlined the fact that most of these companies are based in the US and China and many have deep links to the State apparatus.

Therefore, it's imperative for India and countries in the Global South to learn from the past and frame the issue right this time around. AI corporations, like the trading European companies of the yore, may be just service providers today but contain the seeds of a new kind of sovereign entity. Thus, the question arises is whether history will repeat itself in the AI age. However, national strategy needs to be evolved to incorporate the technology more widely in the country to drive human progress.

The India AI Mission must be expanded, support startups accelerated and multilingual applications improved for public service delivery, specially in healthcare and agriculture. There is a strong argument in favour of equipping more people with AI literacy, building the computing and energy infrastructure that powers advanced AI systems and integrating AI more fully into the real workforce. India is well positioned to develop AI literacy and the necessary infrastructure needed to broaden the benefits of technology though much depends on the resources it could marshal towards this end.



DHURJATI
MUKHERJEE



STOP



See this land, like a mother's grace
A soil so sweet, a warm embrace.
Richer than gold, more sacred than lore,
A place where love and life restore.

Humanity blooms in every field,
With crops of peace, our wounds are healed.
Secular dreams in furrows grow,
Where faiths may differ, yet rivers flow.

Look today and understand
This is our multi-blooded land:
A Hindu stands with honor high,
A Muslim lifts the nation's sky,
A Sikh who roars with lion's might,
A Christian guards with steadfast light.

One law, one soul no caste, no creed,
No room for hate, no space for greed.
Stop the stains of faith and bribe,
Cut the knots where politics thrive.

Step ahead, sow seeds of grace,
Let truth and love reclaim their place.
This land is great, not by its might,
But by ideals that burn so bright.

So raise the mirror, hold it high
This dream, this hope, will never die.
Who dares to claim it's not divine?
This nation's soul will stand through time.



...: Dr. Peruka Raju ...
7810032847

Rahul Gandhi Touted as Nation's Answer

● **BJP is Attempting to Erase the Congress Party that Brought Revolutionary Changes to the Country**
● **Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu at the Training Camp of District Congress Committee Presidents of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana**

VIKARABAD, FEB 23:

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu stated that only if Rahul Gandhi becomes the Prime Minister will the deep-rooted problems facing the country find solutions. He called upon District Congress Committee Presidents from both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana to work continuously until Rahul Gandhi is made Prime Minister and to strive to win the maximum number of MP seats in both states.

He was speaking on Monday at the District Congress Committee Presidents' Training Camp being held in Vikarabad. Bhatti Vikramarka delivered a speech on the topic, "Caste Issues and Reservations - How Congress Workers Should Fight to Eliminate Caste Discrimination."

He said that wherever untouchability or discrimination arises in the country, Rahul Gandhi personally reaches the spot. Referring to the incident at Hyderabad Central University, he noted that when Rohith Vemula died by suicide after allegedly facing caste discrimination, Rahul Gandhi directly visited the university, interacted with students, and helped shape the course of the movement. He added that Congress leaders did not allow party workers to enter the campus at that time, as Rahul Gandhi believed untouchability should be addressed as a social issue rather than politicized.

He further explained that efforts are underway in Karnataka and Telangana to



introduce legislation in the name of Rohith Vemula. Bhatti Vikramarka said Rahul Gandhi had promised equitable distribution of resources and wealth before elections, and after coming to power, the people's government has been implementing development and welfare programmes accordingly.

He stated that, for the first time since Independence, a caste census was completed within 50 days and presented in the Legislative Assembly, where it received unanimous approval. Bhatti Vikramarka alleged that the BJP is con-

spiring to eliminate the Congress Party, which not only secured India's independence but also enacted several revolutionary laws to achieve economic, social, and political equality. He said the BJP talks about a "Congress-free India" and changing the Constitution in an attempt to weaken the party that has historically fought to resolve social problems.

He remarked that certain political forces want society to remain socially and economically divided. Acknowledging that caste remains a reality in India, he shared that he

himself had experienced caste discrimination but continued to pursue his goals with determination, without allowing discrimination to hinder progress.

He said the All India Congress Committee is not merely a political party but has, for decades, worked to raise awareness against social evils such as untouchability, child marriage, and restrictions on widow remarriage. Alongside the freedom struggle, the Congress simultaneously carried forward social reform movements.

Recalling history, he mentioned that at an All India Congress Committee session held in Kakinada, T.K. Madhavan moved a resolution demanding the eradication of untouchability and temple entry for all communities. He also referred to movements such as the Vaikom Satyagraha in Kerala and the Chavdar (Mahad) Satyagraha in Maharashtra led by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, which were supported by Congress initiatives. He added that under Mahatma Gan-

dhi's leadership, large campaigns for Harijan upliftment were undertaken, promoting temple entry for Dalits and improving sanitation in Dalit localities, thereby creating nationwide awareness against untouchability.

After Independence, he said, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar enabled the abolition of untouchability through Article 17 of the Constitution. He noted that enactment of the SC/ST Atrocities Act and implementation of the SC/ST Sub-Plan were achieved under Congress governments.

He further stated that land reforms and bank nationalization carried out by Congress governments provided economic empowerment to socially and economically backward communities, strengthening their ability to resist social discrimination.

The meeting was attended by PCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud, Dr. Vamsi Chander Reddy, AICC leaders Viswanathan, Sawant, Sachin Rao, and others.



Unhappy with her marriage, man stops woman's scooty, shoots her on street over

A man in Punjab, upset over a woman's marriage, attacked her and her companion on a scooter, pushing her aside and shooting her in the head, before fleeing. The entire violent incident was captured on CCTV, showing the attacker checking the woman before escaping on his bike.

Unhappy with her marriage, a man in Punjab's Tarn Taran district confronted a woman in the streets and shot her in broad daylight before fleeing. The entire incident was captured on CCTV. In the video, a man wearing a red sweater can be seen riding a scooter. He stops the woman, who was riding pillion with another man, gets down, and begins slapping

and attacking the man on the scooter, causing him to fall. The woman tries to intervene, but the man pushes her and then shoots her in the head, with a loud bang audible. The man accompanying the woman got up and ran away. The shooter then returns to check on the woman lying on the ground before getting on his bike and leaving. The shooter, Karan, had been harassing Ruby even after her marriage, and on Saturday he fired multiple shots at her. The woman was referred to a private hospital in Amritsar in critical condition. The police are searching for the accused. The victim has been identified as Ruby Mehra, a resident of Garden Colony, Patti. Ruby had married a few months ago. The attacker, Karan, also belongs to the same city.

Protest against VC turns violent in JNU, police register FIR

NEW DELHI: (FEB 23)

Several students were injured in a late-night clash between two student groups at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, with the Left groups and the ABVP accusing each other of unleashing the violence, and authorities vowing to crack down on any unruly behaviour on campus. Tensions flared on the campus of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) after a protest against the vice-chancellor turned violent around 1.30 am on Monday. Following the incident, Delhi Police have registered an FIR after a complaint from the Chief Security Officer (CSO) of JNU regarding an incident involving JNUSU leaders and their associates on the intervening night, police officials said.

Uttarakhand: 2 Held, 6 Sought in Murder

DEHRADUN: (FEB 23)

Two persons have been arrested in connection with the murder of gangster Vikram Sharma, which took place a few days ago near Silver City Cinemas on Rajpur Road in Dehradun, officials said on Monday. The main accused and six other wanted individuals would be apprehended soon, Dehradun SSP Pramod Singh Doval and Uttarakhand STF SSP Ajay Singh said at a joint press conference here.



BLW creates new milestone Railways Cross 500 Loco Mark

VARANASI, FEB 23

Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) achieved another significant milestone by successfully turning out the 500th electric locomotive, WAP7, manufactured in FY 2025-26, driven by its excellent technical capabilities, commitment to quality, and continuous innovation. This milestone was achieved in the presence of BLW General Manager, Mr. Ashutosh Pant, and Additional Member (Traction), Railway Board, Mr. Somesh Kumar. With an environmentally friendly design and advanced safety features, passenger-carrying WAP7 locomotive No. 45002 departed for Howrah Loco Shed. 45002 was dispatched to the Howrah Loco Shed of Eastern Railway. On this occasion, Additional Member (Traction), Mr. Somesh Kumar, commended the dedication, commitment,

In the presence of General Manager, Mr. Ashutosh Pant and Additional Member (Traction), Railway Board, Mr. Somesh Kumar WAP7 locomotive No. 45002, equipped with environmentally friendly and advanced safety features, departs for Howrah Loco Shed

and excellent work culture of BLW's officers and employees, stating that BLW produced 500 locomotives in the current financial year due to their hard work and dedication. In his address, General Manager, Mr. Ashutosh Pant, expressed full confidence in the efficiency of the BLW team and stated that all production targets set by the Railway Board would be met on time and with quality. He commended the officers and employees for maintaining quality standards in locomotive manufacturing. Strong Steps Towards a Self-Reliant India - In line with the mantra "Make in India, Make for the World," BLW has achieved a remark-

able milestone by manufacturing 500 locomotives so far in the financial year 2025-26, a feat that the entire BLW family is proud of. It is worth noting that the production of 2,855 electric locomotives in just nine years, after starting production of two electric locomotives in 2017, is an excellent example of BLW's production capabilities. BLW is currently manufacturing WAP7 locomotives for passenger service and WAG9 locomotives for freight service. BLW has manufactured a total of 11,187 locomotives to date and has successfully exported 182 locomotives to 11 countries. The export of 10 state-of-the-art diesel-electric locomotives to Mozambique

Railways in the current financial year further strengthens BLW's global presence. High-capacity Locomotive with Advanced Technology - The newly launched WAP7 is a 6,000 horsepower high-speed electric locomotive designed to operate all types of passenger, mail, and express trains. Its maximum speed is 140 km/h and it is capable of pulling up to 24 coaches. It boasts modern features such as Co-Co wheel configuration, air-conditioned driver's cab, head-on generation system, regenerative braking system, hotel load facility, and computer-controlled braking system, making it energy-efficient, safe, and high-performance.

Present on the occasion were BLW's Principal Chief Electrical Engineer, Mr. S.K. Srivastava, Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer, Mr. Vivek Sheel, Principal Chief Material Manager, Mr. Alok Kumar Agarwal, Principal Financial Advisor, Mr. Muktesh Mittal, Principal Chief Engineer, Mr. Shailendra Kumar Singh, Principal Chief Safety Commissioner, Mr. Devraj Kumar Maurya, Principal Chief Personnel Officer, Mr. Lalji Chaudhary, Principal Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Devesh Kumar, Chief Vigilance Officer, Mr. Ankur Chandra, Chief Electrical Engineer-LoCo, Mr. Arvind Kumar Jain, Deputy General Manager, Mr. Sagar, Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer-LoCo, Mr. Sudip Rawat, members of the Employees' Council, SC-ST Association, and a large number of other senior officers and employees.

Manipur CM Yumnam Khemchand Singh Meets Union Finance and Defence Ministers

NEW DELHI, 23-FEB

Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh, accompanied by Deputy Chief Ministers Nemcha Kipgen and Losii Dikho, held a series of meetings with Union Ministers and BJP leadership in New Delhi on Monday. The delegation first met Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to discuss fiscal support and developmental priorities for Manipur.

Earlier in the day, Khemchand called on Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh at his office, accom-

panied by Dikho. This was the Chief Minister's first interaction with the Defence Minister since taking office on February 4. During the meeting, Singh assured full support from the Defence Ministry for the state's initiatives. Khemchand also requested the establishment of a Territorial Army (TA) battalion in Manipur. In the mean time Khemchand met BJP National President Nitin Nabin at the party's headquarters. Both deputy chief ministers were present, with Kipgen from Kangpokpi district making history as Manipur's

first woman Deputy Chief Minister. The discussions focused on strengthening the state BJP unit and accelerating the resettlement of internally displaced persons (IDPs), with Nabin assuring full party support. Khemchand was elected leader of the Manipur BJP Legislature Wing on February 3, becoming the first Chief Minister from the state to assume office after Nabin became party president. Earlier in the day, he also met BJP National General Secretary (Organisation) B. L. Santosh to discuss organisational matters.

The seizure was made at a checkpoint in Darjeeling district after officers acted on a tip-off about a suspicious vehicle entering West Bengal from Bihar on Sunday.

West Bengal Police seized over 3.3 kg of brown sugar worth several crores from a car bearing Border Security Force (BSF) stickers and arrested a former BSF personnel who allegedly used forged or misused credentials to evade checks.

The seizure was made at a checkpoint in Darjeeling district after officers from the Bidhannagar Investigation Centre acted on a tip-off about a suspicious vehicle entering West Bengal from Bihar on Sunday. According to police, the car drew attention because of prominent BSF markings and a modified number-plate assembly. A search revealed a concealed cavity behind



the plate, from which multiple packets of brown sugar were recovered. The driver, identified as Alok Kumar Ravikar of Katihar in Bihar, initially claimed he was a serving BSF inspector posted in Chhattisgarh and on medical leave, producing an identity card to back his assertion.

However, verification checks soon indicated he was a former BSF member with a criminal past.

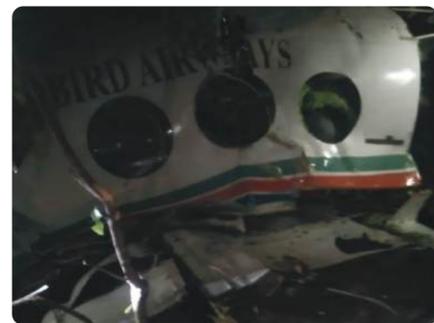
Investigators said Ravikar had previously been arrested in March 2023 in Bihar's Kishanganj district in an illegal liquor smuggling case, where he allegedly used BSF credentials

to bypass security barriers. Police are now examining whether his current identity documents are forged or belong to an earlier tenure before dismissal.

The consignment is suspected to have been routed from Bihar to Siliguri and officers are probing the wider trafficking network behind the shipment, including suppliers and intended receivers.

Ravikar was produced before the Siliguri sub-divisional court on Monday. Police sought custody for sustained interrogation to trace the supply chain and determine whether official insignia and vehicle markings were systematically used to facilitate drug transport across state and border checkpoints.

Officials said the case raises serious concerns over the misuse of security-force identity and insignia in organised narcotics trafficking along the eastern corridor.



Air ambulance with 7 onboard to Delhi from Ranchi crashes in Jharkhand's Chatra

An air ambulance with seven people onboard crashed near Simaria in Jharkhand's Chatra district on Monday evening while en route to Delhi from Ranchi, an airport official said. The DGCA in a statement said, On 23.02.2026 Redbird Airways Pvt Ltd Beechcraft C90 aircraft VT-AJV operating medical evacuation Air Ambulance flight on sector Ranchi-Delhi crashed in Kasaria Panchayat of Chatra district, in Jharkhand.

An air ambulance with seven people onboard crashed near Simaria in Jharkhand's Chatra district on Monday evening while en route to Delhi from Ranchi, an airport official said. There was no immediate confirmation of casualties. The crash occurred after the aircraft took off from Ranchi airport around 7.10 pm, he added. "An air ambulance from Ranchi with seven people onboard crashed near Simaria in Chatra district. The plane lost contact with air traffic control around 20 minutes after take-off," Ranchi airport director Vinod Kumar told PTI. Inclement weather could be a reason behind the crash, but the actual cause will be ascertained only after a probe, he added. The DGCA in a statement said, "On 23.02.2026 Redbird Airways Pvt Ltd Beechcraft C90 aircraft VT-AJV operating medical evacuation (Air Ambulance) flight on sector Ranchi-Delhi crashed in Kasaria Panchayat of Chatra district, in Jharkhand. There were seven people on board, including two crew members." "The aircraft was airborne from Ranchi at 19:11 IST. After establishing contact with Kolkata at 19:34 IST, aircraft lost communication and RADAR

contact with Kolkata at approximately 100 NM South-East of Varanasi," it added. The district administration's search and rescue team has reached the location, and an Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) team is being dispatched, the statement said. Chatra Deputy Commissioner Keerthishree G told PTI, "The aircraft went missing around 7.30 pm. It crashed at Bariatu Panchayat in Simaria." She said she could not confirm casualties as the crash site is deep inside a forest. "A team has been sent. We can confirm when the team reaches there," she added. Chatra SP Sumit Kumar Agarwal told PTI, "The crash site is deep in the forest. Police teams are yet to reach the spot, so we are not in a position to confirm the number of casualties." According to the DGCA website, Delhi-based non-scheduled operator Redbird has six aircraft in its fleet, including the one that crashed. Anant Sinha, CEO of Devkamal Hospital in Ranchi, told PTI that the air ambulance was arranged by one of their patients. "The patient, Sanjay Kumar (41), a resident of Chandwara in Latehar district, was brought to the hospital with 65 per cent burn injuries on February 16. He was being treated in the hospital," he said. He added the family members decided to take him to Delhi for better treatment. "They arranged an air ambulance on Monday. The patient left the hospital for Delhi around 4.30 pm," he said. Former Chief Minister and BJP leader Champai Soren in a post on X said he was deeply saddened by the news of the air ambulance crash at Simaria. "I pray for the safe recovery of all 7 individuals, including the crew members aboard the plane from Maranguru (the supreme tribal deity), and for strength to their families during this difficult time," he posted.

5 terrorists killed in operation in Pakistan's Balochistan

KARACHI: (FEB 23)

Five terrorists, including a suicide bomber, were killed during an intelligence-based operation by security forces in Pakistan's Balochistan province, the military's media wing said on Monday. In a statement, the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said the operation was carried out late Sunday night in Pishin district, where security forces raided a suspected hideout of militants belonging to a banned outfit. A security source said the slain militants were members of the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

Leicester Clashes Report Seeks Unity Body

By Aditi Khanna

LONDON: FEB 23

A new report into violent communal clashes on the streets of Leicester in 2022, blamed on widespread disinformation, on Monday called for the creation of a permanent community unity forum to improve relations in one of England's most diverse cities. 'Better Together: Understanding the 2022 Violence in Leicester', released by the Leicester Project Research Team and chaired by human rights expert Professor Juan Mendez, concluded that no single community was to blame for the unrest which flared up following an India-Pakistan cricket match in August 2022. It stressed that the communal clashes between communities of Indian heritage underscore the urgency of fresh, nationally resourced and locally accountable approaches to building strong, resilient and united communities.

Starting tomorrow, US to stop collecting Trump tariffs after Supreme Court ruling

In a statement, the US Customs and Border Protection said tariff collections under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) will cease at 12.01 am local US time (10.30 am IST) Tuesday, instructing importers that all related tariff codes will be deactivated in its cargo systems.



On February 20, the US Supreme Court stated that the IEEPA does not authorise unilateral tariff action and that the Trump administration cited no statute permitting such measures. The US will stop collecting a tranche of import tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump after the Supreme Court ruled the duties unlawful, forcing a sweeping rollback of a controversial trade tool that re-

shaped global supply chains and strained ties with major partners. In a statement, the US Customs and Border Protection said tariff collections under the 1977-era International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) will cease at 12.01 am local US time (10.30 am IST) Tuesday, instructing importers that all related tariff codes will be deactivated in its cargo systems. The halt comes more than

three days after the court's decision invalidated the emergency-based duties.

The agency gave no explanation for continuing to collect the tariffs in the interim and did not say whether importers would be refunded.

The suspension applies only to tariffs imposed under IEEPA and does not affect other Trump-era levies, including those under Section 232 national-security powers

and Section 301 unfair-trade statutes. "CBP will provide additional guidance to the trade community through CSMS messages as appropriate," the agency said. The move coincides with Trump's rollout of a new 15 per cent global tariff under a different legal authority to replace the struck-down duties, signalling a rapid pivot in US trade policy even as legal and financial fallout from the Supreme Court ruling continues. Economists estimate the Supreme Court ruling could put more than 175 billion USD in US tariff revenue at risk of refunds, as the now-invalidated IEEPA duties had been bringing in over 500 million USD a day, news agency Reuters reported. In a 6-3 ruling on February 20, the Supreme Court affirmed lower-court findings that Donald Trump exceeded his authority by invoking the IEEPA to impose

sweeping import tariffs, holding that the statute did not grant the powers he claimed.

Within hours, Trump announced a blanket tariff on US imports from all countries starting Tuesday — initially set at 10 per cent and then abruptly raised to 15 per cent, a shift that appeared to catch some officials off guard.

The new duties rely on Section 122 of US trade law, an untested provision permitting tariffs up to 15 per cent but requiring congressional approval if kept beyond 150 days. No president has previously used Section 122, and legal challenges are widely expected.

The court's decision voided multiple Trump-era tariffs on major Asian export economies, including China, South Korea, Japan and Taiwan — all central to global manufacturing and technology supply chains.

Australia backs removing ex-Prince Andrew from royal line of succession

Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor remains eighth in line to the British throne despite losing royal titles -- including the use of 'prince' -- in October 2025 over mounting scrutiny tied to his association with convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.



Australia's Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, has told his British counterpart Keir Starmer that his government would support plans to remove Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor from the royal line of succession. In a letter to the UK Prime Minister, Albanese wrote: "In light of recent events concerning Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor, I am writing to confirm that my Government would agree to any proposal to remove him from the line of royal succession." "I

agree with His Majesty that the law must now take its full course and there must be a full, fair and proper investigation. These are grave allegations and Australians take them seriously," he added. Andrew remains eighth in line to the British throne despite losing royal titles -- including the use of 'prince' -- in October 2025 over mounting scrutiny tied to his association with convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. The UK government is now weighing legislation that could formally remove him from the order of

succession, following his arrest on suspicion of misconduct in public office on Thursday. Andrew has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing.

'EXTRAORDINARY FALL FROM GRACE'

The Australian PM reiterated his position in a letter to UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer after publicly describing Andrew's arrest as an "extraordinary fall from grace" in an interview with Sky News Australia. "These are very serious allegations and they will be pursued quite clearly so

I'm not going to go into any of the legal matters," Albanese said. "But, it is extraordinary that someone who all of us have seen as part of the royal family has now been busted off into a legal process. No doubt it will not only focus on these documents but will also go to some of the other allegations that have been made as part of the whole Epstein saga."

ANDREW RELEASED UNDER INVESTIGATION AFTER ARREST

Thames Valley Police arrested Andrew on 19 February at his residence on the Sandringham estate on suspicion of misconduct in public office, an allegation tied to claims he shared confidential information with Jeffrey Epstein during official overseas visits more than a decade ago. Officers also searched properties connected to him in Norfolk and Windsor as part

of the enquiry. He was released after about 11 hours of police questioning but remains under investigation over allegations linked to his past role as a UK trade envoy. Authorities have not filed charges, and prosecutors have yet to decide whether the case meets the threshold for prosecution. He has consistently denied any criminal conduct.

CAN ANDREW BE REMOVED FROM LINE OF SUCCESSION?

To remove Andrew from the line of succession would require primary legislation passed by the UK Parliament, meaning approval by both the House of Commons and House of Lords before receiving royal assent from King Charles III. Since the monarch is also head of state in 14 other Commonwealth realms, any change affecting the succession would conventionally require the consent of those countries -- including Australia, Canada and New Zealand -- under the principles established by the 1931 Statute of Westminster and reaffirmed during the 2013 succession reforms.

Major military reshuffle in Bangladesh, defence advisor in India recalled

Bangladesh has launched a sweeping reshuffle of its top military leadership, reassigning key operational and intelligence posts just days after Tarique Rahman became Prime Minister after his Bangladesh Nationalist Party secured a landslide victory in the February 12 general elections. The changes also extend to Dhaka's military representation in New Delhi. Under orders issued by the Army headquarters on Sunday, Brigadier General Md Hafizur Rahman -- currently Bangladesh's defence advisor in India -- has been promoted to major general and directed to return to assume command of the 55th Infantry Division as General Officer Commanding, reports bdnews24. As per the orders, Lieutenant General Muhammad Mainur Rahman has been named Chief of General Staff (CGS), the army's principal operations post.



He previously headed the Army Training and Doctrine Command and succeeds Lieutenant General Mizanur Rahman Shamim, who has proceeded on retirement leave. In a parallel change at the top of military intelligence, Major General -- designate Kaiser Rashid Chowdhury will take over as director general of the Directorate

General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI). Currently, a brigadier general at Army Headquarters, he replaces Major General Mohammad Jahangir Alam, who has been deputed to the foreign ministry as ambassador. Lieutenant General Mir Mushfiqur Rahman has been appointed Principal Staff Officer (PSO) of the Armed Forces Division after serving as General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the 24th Infantry Division in Chittagong. Outgoing PSO Lieutenant General SM Kamrul Hasan has likewise been moved to the foreign ministry on ambassadorial assignment. The Army Headquarters orders also reshuffle key field commands: Major General JM Emdadul Islam becomes commandant of the East Bengal Regimental Centre, while Major General Ferdous Hasan Salim has been posted as GOC of the 24th Infantry Division.



Pakistan: Three security personnel killed, several injured following quadcopter attack

SLAMABAD, FEB 23

At least three Federal Constabulary (FC) men were killed when an ambulance carrying injured personnel came under attack in the Badrakhal area of Karak in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, local media reported citing regional police authorities.

The personnel were injured in a quadcopter attack on an FC post in the Dargah Shaheedan area this morning and were being transported to a hospital for treatment when the attack took place, the District Police Officer (DPO) told Pakistan's leading Geo News network. The report mentioned that at least five FC men were injured in the quadcopter attack, while two rescue personnel were also wounded in the ambulance attack. "Following the attack, police launched a search and clearance operation in the area to apprehend the assailants. Investigations into the incident are under way," Geo News reported. On Sunday, Afghanistan's Ministry of National Defence accused the Pakistani military regime of carrying out deadly airstrikes in various residential areas of the Nangarhar and Paktika provinces, resulting in the death of several civilians.

"Pakistan's military regime had once again conducted airstrikes in several civilian areas of Nangarhar and Paktika provinces -- including a religious school and several residential houses -- resulting in dozens of innocent civilians, among them women and children, being killed and injured," Pajhwok news reported quoting an official statement in which the Afghan defence ministry called the attacks a clear violation of Afghanistan's sovereignty and a crime. Islamabad has repeatedly bombed Afghan territories, claiming to aim at terror groups allegedly behind attacks in Pakistan. The result has been the Taliban retaliation, leading to intense firefights at the borders, and the subsequent closure for about four months. A strong public opinion is building up in Afghanistan against Islamabad's hegemonic tendencies. "Several experts say that the Pakistani military's attacks on Afghanistan and the targeting of civilians constitute a war crime," Kabul's Tolo News reported on Monday. "By targeting civilians in Nangarhar and Paktika, Pakistan's military regime has once again violated Afghanistan's national sovereignty," it asserted.

18 dead in Nepal after passenger bus plunges into river, rescue ops underway

Authorities confirmed that 18 people, including a woman and a man from New Zealand, lost their lives in the accident. A total of 26 injured passengers were rescued and sent to various hospitals for treatment. Some foreigners were also on the bus. A rescue operation is underway.



At least 18 people, including two tourists from New Zealand, were killed after a passenger bus travelling from Pokhara to Kathmandu plunged into the Trishuli River in Nepal in the early hours of the morning. Authorities confirmed that 18 people lost their lives in the accident, including 12 men and six women. A total of 26 injured passengers were rescued and sent to various hospitals for treatment. There were 44 passengers on the bus. The bus was travelling

along the Prithvi Highway when it veered off the road around 1 am near Bhaisepati area in Benighat Rorang Rural Municipality-5 of Dhadhing district. The vehicle fell nearly 300 metres down the slope and was found severely damaged near the riverbank. Foreign tourists were also among the passengers. One woman and a man from New Zealand were also among the dead. Rescue operations were carried out jointly by the Nepal Army, Armed Police Force,

and Nepal Police. Due to the difficult terrain, darkness, and lack of adequate relief materials, the rescue mission faced significant challenges. Survivors were brought nearly one kilometre downstream by boat before being carried up to the road and transported by ambulance to hospitals. Chief District Officer Suvendi said the injured were rescued using torchlight during the night. He acknowledged that there was a shortage of relief materials at the site.

Curfew imposed in Nepal's border town Birgunj to prevent religious strife

KATHMANDU, FEB 23

The local administration in Nepal's Parsa district on Monday imposed a curfew in parts of the border town of Birgunj, citing security concerns following tensions between Hindu and Muslim groups in the Shripur area of the city. Tensions between the two communities in Birgunj surfaced a few days after similar clashes erupted in Gaur, the district headquarters of another southern border district, Rautahat. These incidents have occurred just days ahead of the scheduled elections for the House of Representatives on March 5.

The District Administration Office (DAO), Parsa, said the curfew has been enforced within the boundaries of Birgunj Bypass in the east, Sirsiya River in the west, Gandak Chowk in the north, and Shankaracharya Gate in the



south. "The order has been effective from 9:45 am on Monday until further notice," the DAO said. During this period, all gatherings, processions, demonstrations, assemblies, meetings, and sit-ins within the designated areas have been prohibited.

Chief District Officer Bhola Dahal told IANS that the curfew was imposed to prevent an escalation of tension following the clash between two groups in the Shripur area. Local police said the pro-

hibitory order was issued following a dispute over road parking that threatened to turn into religious strife. "On Sunday evening, a four-wheeler driven by a Muslim man could not pass through a road due to motorcycles parked by some Hindu youths in Shripur. The local dispute threatened to escalate into a Hindu-Muslim confrontation due to insulting chants exchanged between the two sides," said Deputy Superintendent of Police Hari Bahadur Basnet,

Violence flares as El Mencho killed

WASHINGTON, FEB 23

Mexican security forces have killed Nemesio "El Mencho" Oseguera Cervantes, one of the country's most powerful drug kingpins, triggering violent reprisals across several states and prompting fresh advisories for US citizens. US Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau said he had been informed that Mexican forces had killed "El Mencho," describing him as "one of the bloodiest and most ruthless drug kingpins." "This is a great development for Mexico, the US, Latin America, and the world. The good guys are stronger than the bad guys," Landau wrote on X.



In a separate post, Landau said he was watching "the scenes of violence from Mexico with great sadness and concern." He added: "It's not surprising that the bad guys are responding with terror. But we must never lose our nerve!" The US State Department also circulated emergency contact numbers for American citizens. It shared 1-888-407-4747 for callers from the US and Canada, and +1 202-501-4444 for those calling from overseas, including Mexico. According to reporting in The

Wall Street Journal, Mexico's military killed Oseguera in an operation that marked one of the most significant blows yet to organised crime.

The newspaper said the killing escalated the government's war against cartels and sparked a violent gang response. The Washington Post reported that the cartel leader's death "set off a wave of violence in areas controlled



the raid, with suspected cartel members torching buses and businesses and clashing with security forces. The New York Post described Puerto Vallarta as being "under siege" after the army killed the cartel leader, as gunmen blocked highways and set vehicles ablaze. Oseguera was the head of the Jalisco New Generation Cartel, known as CJNG. US authorities had

previously offered a reward of up to \$15 million for information leading to his arrest. He had been indicted in the United States on drug trafficking charges and was long seen as a central figure in fentanyl and methamphetamine flows into the US. Mexico's operation comes amid sustained pressure from Washington to curb drug trafficking. In recent months, the US administration has pressed Mexico to intensify action against cartels, even as Mexican leaders have rejected direct US military intervention. The killing of "El Mencho" marks a major moment in Mexico's security campaign. But analysts have long warned that removing cartel leaders can trigger internal fragmentation and further violence as rival factions compete for control.

Did H-1B visa stress kill Telugu man in US?

An Indian man, Sasikanth Reddy Donthireddy died in the US after suffering a cardiac arrest. The fundraising campaign, launched to help repatriate his mortal remains to India, stated that he was stressed due to uncertainty surrounding his H-1B visa status.



A 30-year-old Indian national, Sasikanth Reddy Donthireddy, died of cardiac arrest in the United States, allegedly due to the stress of being unable to secure an H-1B visa. Donthireddy had been in the US for the past eight years and had been trying to obtain the work visa, according to a fundraising page on GoFundMe. The platform has now raised over \$50,000 to bring his mortal remains back to India. Donthireddy moved to the US in 2018 to pursue higher

work visa limited Donthireddy's ability to stabilise his professional and financial situation in the US. Donthireddy's parents, the appeal stated, had been waiting for nearly eight years "to welcome him back with pride and joy". Travel restrictions linked to visa limitations prevented him from visiting home during this period, the GoFundMe campaign added. Despite not being able to get the H-1B visa, the campaign noted that Donthireddy continued working long hours without giving up. On the morning of February 16, Donthireddy reportedly complained of chest pain. He was taken to hospital for medical treatment but later died due to cardiac arrest. No additional medical details have been made public. Following his death, Donthireddy's family and relatives initiated a fundraising campaign titled "After 8 Years Apart - Help His Family See Him One Last Time".

7,000 Employees, 1.1M Sq Ft Amazon's New Bengaluru Landmark

NEW DELHI, FEB 23

US tech giant Amazon on Monday announced the opening of its second largest office in Asia in Bengaluru.

The 12-storey campus spanning across 1.1 million square feet, will support over 7,000 employees across e-commerce, operations, payments, technology, and seller services in India, the company said in a statement.

"Amazon's continued investment in Bengaluru re-

fects India's growing role as a global technology and innovation hub. Large-scale campuses like Amazon's new campus create high-quality jobs, strengthen the local ecosystem, and support India's digital economy. We welcome investments that build long-term capability and create opportunity for our workforce," said MB Patil, Minister for Large & Medium Industries and Infrastructure Development, Karnataka after inaugurating the building.

The launch of this new campus is part of Amazon's continued investments in India after having invested over \$40 billion in the country, with additional commitments of \$35 billion worth of investments by 2030. The corporate building is situated 15 kilometres from Kempegowda International Airport, and has been designed to bring teams together at "scale and enable collaborative, flexibility, learning, and wellbeing," the company said.

"Over the years, the city has been home to some of our earliest technology and business teams, and today it remains a key hub for innovation and talent," said Samir Kumar, Country Manager Amazon India. The campus brings together adaptable workspaces and collaborative zones organised into self-sustaining neighbourhoods with meeting rooms, huddle spaces, break-out areas, and event spaces that can host more than 200 people, the firm said.

Employees have access to dedicated recreation facilities including basketball and pickleball courts, an amphitheatre, landscaped lawns, and outdoor community spaces. Cafeterias across two floors serve a range of global cuisines, the US-based firm said. The project incorporates strategies such as responsible material sourcing, reuse of office assets, and high-efficiency systems that are intended to reduce embodied and operational carbon, it added.



India Evaluating US Tariff Impact: FM

NEW DELHI, FEB 23

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday said it is too early to assess the impact of the recent tariff changes announced by the United States, adding that the commerce ministry is currently reviewing the situation.

FM Sitharaman remarks came after fresh trade tensions emerged following a decision by the US Supreme Court against sweeping import tariffs imposed earlier by the administration of Donald Trump.

Subsequently, President Trump announced a 10 per cent tariff on imports from all countries, including India, starting February 24 for a period of 150 days. A day later, he said the tariffs would be increased to 15 per cent.

When asked about the likely



impact of these tariff changes on the Indian economy, FM Sitharaman said it was "a bit too soon" to comment.

"The commerce ministry is examining the situation and that a delegation will decide on the timing of further trade negotiations. It's a bit too early for me to comment," FM Sitharaman told reporters.

Finance Minister Sitharaman said India remains committed to signing trade agreements with various countries to expand global market ac-

cess. "India has already signed trade pacts with countries such as Australia, New Zealand, the UAE, Qatar, Oman, as well as blocs like the EU and the UK," the Finance Minister stated.

"India wants to continue engaging with global markets and ensure its economy benefits from international trade," FM Sitharaman added.

Speaking after the customary post-Budget meeting with the Central Board of Directors

of the Reserve Bank of India, the finance minister also addressed concerns over rising gold prices.

FM Sitharaman explained that the recent spike in gold prices is largely due to increased buying by central banks across the world.

"Most countries today, particularly their central banks, are buying gold and silver and storing them," the Finance Minister said.

FM Sitharaman added that gold has always been a preferred investment for Indian households and that demand usually rises during the festive season.

The Finance Minister assured that the government and the RBI are closely monitoring the situation. However, FM Sitharaman said the price rise has not reached alarming levels so far.

'Badhna Hai Toh Yahan Judna Hai' Campaign Launched

NEW DELHI, FEB 23

Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Jayant Chaudhary has launched a nationwide campaign titled 'Badhna Hai Toh Yahan Judna Hai' to accelerate India's digital skilling movement through Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH). Addressing the launch event, Mr Chaudhary said that India's digital strength has been globally recognised through transformative initiatives such as India Stack, and now the Skill India Digital Hub.

He said that these platforms have expanded access to public services and skill development at an unprecedented scale. The



Minister also urged the citizens to connect with this campaign and take the next step in their growth journey. Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship informed that the campaign aims to expand access to SIDH, India's integrated digital platform for skilling, employment, and lifelong learning. It added that the campaign also brings on board legendary actor Amitabh Bachchan to further strengthen awareness and participation.

RBI watching development around 'IDFC' fraud: Malhotra

IDFC First Bank disclosed a ₹590-crore fraud committed by certain employees and others at a particular branch in Chandigarh in a specific set of Haryana State Government accounts

NEW DELHI, FEB 23

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is watching the development around the ₹590 crore fraud at IDFC First Bank and there is no systemic issue, Governor Sanjay Malhotra said on Monday (February 23, 2026). IDFC First Bank on Sunday (February 22, 2026) disclosed a ₹590-crore fraud committed by certain employees and others at a particular branch in Chandigarh in a specific set of Haryana State Government accounts. "We are watching the

development; there is no systemic issue," Mr. Malhotra told reporters at a press briefing after the customary post-budget address by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to the Central Board of Directors of the RBI. IDFC First Bank had said that the fraud is "confined to a specific group of government-linked accounts within the Haryana Government operated through the said branch in Chandigarh" and stressed that it does not extend to other customers of the Chandigarh branch.

Agents Seek Permanent Airfare Caps

Despite India being the world's fastest-growing aviation market, domestic airfares have become highly volatile and frequently unaffordable due to aggressive dynamic pricing

NEW DELHI, FEB 23

The IATA Agents Association of India (IAAI) has urged the Centre to continue with the present domestic airfare caps so as to promote tourism and strengthen regional air connectivity.

Despite India being the world's fastest-growing aviation market, domestic airfares have become highly volatile and frequently unaffordable due to aggressive dynamic pricing. Such sudden fare spikes directly harm tourism, disrupt family and business travel and weaken regional connectivity, IAAI said in a representation to the Union Ministers of Civil Aviation and Tourism.

Highlighting India's vast and underutilised domestic tourism potential, IAAI said that affordable and predictable airfares are critical to connect Tier-2, Tier-3 and remote destinations in line with the UDAN vision. The erratic fares—often exceeding comparable international



routes—undermine States investments in tourism infrastructure, erode passenger confidence and suppress demand.

The Ministry's temporary fare cap of ₹7,500 to ₹18,000 was timely and effective. The measure curbed exploitative surge pricing, protected passengers during emergencies and stabilised the domestic aviation market, the association said.

IAAI urged the government to continue the existing domestic airfare cap as a permanent and legally enforceable ceiling, with no seasonal, event-based or demand-driven

pricing permitted to breach the prescribed limit under any circumstances.

Biji Eapen, national president, and Aruna Shetty, general secretary, IAAI said over 5.3 lakh passengers are travelling daily across 164 airports and domestic traffic projected to reach 40 crore by 2029. Affordable, predictable, and transparent airfares are essential for inclusive aviation growth and domestic tourism. Such measures would protect passengers, strengthen regional connectivity, promote fair competition, and ensure the sustainable growth of Indian aviation.

Centre examining rising airfares at 'highest level', SC told

NEW DELHI, FEB 23

The Central government on Monday informed the Supreme Court that the issue of volatile airfares and add-on fees charged by private airlines during festive seasons and holidays is being examined at the highest level. A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehra was hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) challenging the "opaque, exploitative, and algorithm-driven" pricing practices in India's civil aviation sector, as well as the reduction in complimentary check-in baggage limits for passengers. Appearing for the Union government, Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Anil Kaushik submitted that consultations are underway at the highest levels of the government to address the concerns raised in the petition.

Airtel to Pump ₹20,000 Cr into Digital Lending

MUMBAI, FEB 23

Bharti Airtel on Monday announced plans to invest Rs 20,000 crore over the next few years to expand its digital lending business through its Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) subsidiary, Airtel Money Limited.

The telecom major said the fresh capital infusion will help strengthen its presence in India's fast-growing financial services sector and narrow the country's credit gap. Of the total Rs 20,000 crore investment, Airtel will contribute 70 per cent, while the remaining 30 per cent will be brought in by the promoter group through Bharti Enterprises Limited.

Gopal Vittal, Executive Vice Chairman of Bharti Airtel, said the success of the company's lending platform demonstrates its ability to combine technology, data and customer trust at scale.

"Our NBFC expansion strengthens this foundation and reflects our ambition to build a differentiated, future-ready digital lending business - one that stands for



trust, innovation, and financial inclusion," Vittal mentioned.

Airtel Money Limited recently received its NBFC licence from the Reserve Bank of India on February 13, 2026.

The company said the move marks a strategic expansion aimed at deepening financial inclusion and offering simple, secure and innovative digital financial services to customers across India.

Over the past two years, Airtel has built a digital lending platform that has already disbursed over Rs 9,000 crore in loans.

The company said its lending service provider (LSP) model has achieved strong

growth, supported by disciplined underwriting practices, portfolio management and real-time risk monitoring.

It added that its digital platform, backed by a data and analytics engine powered by more than 500 data scientists, has enabled it to scale up quickly while maintaining healthy loan performance metrics.

As part of the regulatory requirements, Airtel Money also clarified that while it has received a valid certificate of registration from the RBI under the RBI Act, the central bank does not guarantee the financial soundness of the company or the repayment of its liabilities.

1,500 Cr Port Projects Unveiled by Sonowal

NEW DELHI, FEB 23

Union Minister for Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated and laid the foundation for various port projects worth approximately 1500 Crore rupees at Tuticorin port, in Tamil Nadu today. This includes VOC Maritime heritage museum, laying of the foundation stone for 8 MW Wind farm and 5 MWh of Battery Energy storage System and the launching of corporate social responsibility projects at the Port. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that the ancient history of Tamil Culture commands a national aspiration. He said that this part of the Country carries an ancient maritime tradition with a nationalist perspective for centuries. He said that the Sengol in the new parliament shows that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had a profound respect for the deep-rooted Tamil tradition. He said that it also reflected in the timeless wisdom of the Tamilians.

The 10 Crore Shift: Gurugram Tops Mumbai

In a striking reshaping of India's luxury housing map, Gurugram has surged ahead of Mumbai to become the country's largest market by value for ultra-luxury homes priced at Rs 10 crore and above in 2025.

According to the latest High-End Luxury Housing Report by India Sotheby's International Realty and CRE Matrix, Gurugram clocked transactions worth Rs 24,120 crore in the Rs 10-crore-plus segment during calendar year 2025 — a record for any Indian city. Mumbai has sold ultra-luxury homes worth Rs 21,902 crore in the Rs 10 crore and above category in 2025.

Ultra-luxury sales hit record highs

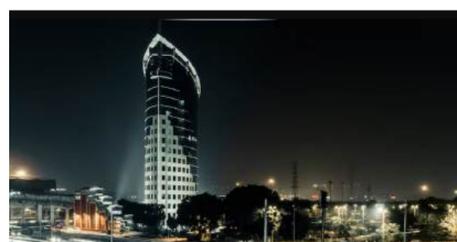
The report, which was released on February 23, shows that 1,494 homes priced above Rs 10 crore were sold in Gurugram in 2025, the highest ever recorded in a 12-month period for the city.

The surge marks a near-

tenfold jump in unit sales from just 155 homes in 2023, underscoring accelerating wealth creation and growing participation from high-net-worth and ultra-high-net-worth individuals, it said.

In value terms, the market expanded six-fold in two years — from Rs 4,004 crore in 2023 to over Rs 24,000 crore in 2025 — cementing Gurugram's position as India's most dynamic ultra-luxury residential hub. In 2024, the city had sold ultra-luxury homes worth Rs 13,383 crore.

Gurugram and Mumbai were followed by Noida and Greater Noida in terms of sale of ultra-luxury homes priced



Rs 10 crore and above. Noida and Greater Noida together sold Rs 9,358 crore worth homes in the ultra-luxury segment in CY 2025. Hyderabad and Bengaluru sold homes worth Rs 8,140 crore and Rs 2,319 crore respectively in ultra-luxury category in 2025.

Big-ticket homes drive market share

Ultra-luxury housing accounted for 24 percent of Gurugram's total residential market value in 2025, with an average ticket size of around Rs 16 crore per home, sign-

aling sustained appetite for large, premium residences.

Homes averaging about 5,000 sq. ft. dominated demand, particularly in the 4,000–6,000 sq. ft. category. Residences larger than 8,000 sq. ft. contributed nearly 22 percent of total transaction value, highlighting buyers' willingness to pay a premium for scale, privacy and exclusivity, the report showed.

New growth corridors overtake legacy addresses

A defining shift has been the rise of emerging luxury corridors. Micro-markets such as Dwarka Expressway, Golf Course Road and Golf Course

Extension Road together drove much of the expansion, supported by infrastructure upgrades, new supply and enhanced connectivity.

According to report, Dwarka Expressway posted a staggering 2,079 percent jump in transaction value, rising from Rs 383 crore in 2024 to Rs 8,347 crore in 2025. Golf Course Extension Road recorded a 379 percent increase in sales value, alongside sharp price appreciation, with weighted average prices climbing from Rs 24,855 per sq. ft. to Rs 37,899 per sq. ft.

Traditional prime pockets such as Golf Course Road saw steadier activity, constrained

by limited new inventory.

"What is particularly notable is that growth is no longer confined to legacy addresses. Emerging micro-markets are now driving a structural expansion of Gurugram's luxury housing market," said Tina Talwar, Area Director, India Sotheby's International Realty.

Wealth creation fuels demand

Market participants link the boom to broader capital formation and entrepreneurial wealth. In 2025 alone, 103 Indian companies raised a record \$19.54 billion through mainboard IPOs, creating a new cohort of founders and promoters entering the ultra-luxury housing segment.

"The nearly tenfold growth in the luxury segment over the

past two years reflects sustained buyer confidence and a maturing demand profile," said Abhishek Kiran Gupta, Co-founder and CEO, CRE Matrix.

He added that buyers are increasingly prioritising prime locations, construction quality and branded amenity-rich developments.

Bhupindra Singh, COO, Rise Infraventures Limited, said that the record sales values and volumes are primarily driven by emerging micro-markets, which are riding on infrastructure-led growth. As a result, affluent buyers are prioritising spacious living, connectivity and future value.

"This shift also suggests that luxury real estate is diversifying beyond legacy cities into new, dynamic urban ecosystems," he said.

MOST SCENIC VANDE BHARAT ROUTES TO EXPLORE IN 2026

Train travel in India has always been about more than just getting from Point A to Point B. It's about watching the country unfold outside your window, one landscape at a time. And with Vande Bharat Express transforming how Indians travel, these semi-high-speed trains have opened up some of the most spectacular routes in the country. As of February 2026, 164 Vande Bharat services operate across 82 routes, covering 274+ districts nationwide. While these trains are famous for their airline-style comfort, automatic doors, rotatable chairs, and bio-vacuum toilets, what often gets overlooked is the sheer beauty of the landscapes they traverse. From snow-capped Himalayan peaks to lush Western Ghats, from misty valleys to coastal stretches, several Vande Bharat routes offer journeys where the scenery rivals the destination. These aren't slow heritage trains like the Darjeeling Toy Train. Vande Bharat travels at semi-high speeds. Yet the routes are designed to showcase India's incredible geographical diversity. You're experiencing stunning views without sacrificing comfort or time. For travellers who appreciate that the journey itself can be the destination, these five Vande Bharat routes are absolute must-tries. Whether you're a window-seat devotee, a landscape photographer, or simply someone who finds train journeys meditative, here are the routes that prove Indian railways can be genuinely breathtaking.



1 KATRA TO SRINAGAR: HIMALAYAN DRAMA AT ITS FINEST

The Katra-Srinagar Vande Bharat route, which became operational in early 2026 as part of the expanded Kashmir railway project, is arguably India's most dramatically scenic train journey. This route crosses the iconic Chenab Bridge—the world's highest railway bridge at 359 metres above the river—offering views that quite literally take your breath away. Starting from Katra, the train climbs steadily into the Pir Panjal range. The route winds through 58 tunnels, including India's longest railway tunnel (the Pir Panjal Tunnel at over 11 km). As you emerge from these mountain passages, you're greeted with stunning vistas of snow-capped peaks, deep valleys carved by centuries of erosion, and terraced hillsides dotted with traditional Kashmiri homes. The crossing of Chenab Bridge is the highlight. At 359 metres high, it's taller than the Eiffel Tower. Looking down from your Vande Bharat window as the train glides over this engineering marvel, with the Chenab River flowing far below and mountains surrounding you on all sides, is genuinely unforgettable. As you approach Srinagar, the landscape softens. The harsh mountain terrain gives way to the famous Kashmir Valley—lush green meadows, apple orchards, and Dal Lake shimmering in the distance. The entire journey feels like travelling through a postcard where every frame deserves to be photographed. March to October when snow melts enough for clear views but mountain peaks remain white-capped. Avoid December to February when heavy snow can occasionally disrupt services. Book a window seat on the right side (facing direction of travel from Katra to Srinagar) for the best Chenab Bridge views.

2 MUMBAI CSMT TO MADGAON: KONKAN RAILWAY MAGIC

This route showcases the engineering marvel that is Konkan Railway. Passing through Panvel, Khed, Ratnagiri, and Kankavali before reaching Madgaon, the Vande Bharat glides through some of India's most lush and dramatic landscape. Within the first hour of leaving Mumbai, the urban sprawl gives way to the green wall of the Western Ghats. The train enters dense tropical forests where sunlight filters through thick canopy. You'll cross 84 bridges and pass through dozens of tunnels carved through mountainsides. The route hugs the coastline in several sections, offering glimpses of the Arabian Sea sparkling turquoise against rocky shores. During monsoon (June to September), this journey transforms into something magical. Waterfalls appear seemingly out of nowhere, cascading down cliff faces beside the tracks. The entire landscape turns impossibly green. Mist rolls through valleys. Every tunnel exit reveals a scene more beautiful than the last. The train often slows slightly during heavy rains, which actually enhances the experience—more time to soak in the views. The Vande Bharat's large windows are perfect for this route. Traditional trains have smaller windows with bars. Vande Bharat's massive, clean glass panels offer unobstructed views of forests, waterfalls, bridges, and sea stretches that define this spectacular route. Monsoon (June-September) for the most dramatic scenery, though travel takes slightly longer. October-February for clearer skies and sea views. Sit on the left side when travelling Mumbai to Goa for the best coastal and waterfall views.

3 DELHI TO DEHRADUN: GATEWAY TO THE HIMALAYAS

The Delhi-Dehradun Vande Bharat offers one of India's most satisfying journeys—watching the flat North Indian plains gradually give way to the foothills of the Himalayas. Often called the Gateway to the Himalayas, this route shows the dramatic geographical transition zone where the Indo-Gangetic Plain meets the mountain ranges. The first segment from Delhi through Meerut and Muzaffarnagar travels across agricultural heartland—wheat and sugarcane fields stretching to the horizon. Around Haridwar, everything changes. The landscape begins to rise. The Shivalik hills emerge on the horizon. As you approach Haridwar, forest stretches appear. The Ganges flows alongside the tracks in sections, sometimes visible, sometimes hidden by vegetation. After Haridwar, the climb becomes noticeable. The train winds through sal forests. Small waterfalls and streams appear during monsoon. The air feels different—cooler, cleaner. The final approach into Dehradun is spectacular. The Doon Valley, nestled between the Shivalik and Himalayan ranges, opens up with forested hills surrounding the valley floor. On clear days, you can see snow-capped peaks in the distance. The entire journey feels like watching India's geography textbook come alive. March to June and September to November for the clearest mountain views. Monsoon brings lush greenery but can obscure distant peaks. Morning trains offer better visibility of the Himalayan ranges. Afternoon journeys can have haze that obscures distant peaks.



FINAL THOUGHTS: With 164 Vande Bharat services now operational and more planned, Indian Railways has transformed intercity travel. These trains aren't just faster and more comfortable than traditional options—they've made scenic routes more accessible than ever before. No longer do you need to sacrifice comfort for beauty or spend days on slow heritage trains to see stunning landscapes. The five routes covered here prove that India's geographical diversity—from Himalayan peaks to Western Ghats, from coastal Kerala to Kashmir valleys—is best appreciated from a train window. And when that train offers plush seats, clean restrooms, good food, and large windows, the experience becomes genuinely special. So next time you're planning a trip, consider the journey itself. Choose the scenic route. Book that window seat. Keep your phone camera ready. Because sometimes the most memorable part of reaching your destination is actually getting there.

4 THIRUVANANTHAPURAM TO ERNAKULAM: COASTAL KERALA CHARM

This Vande Bharat route showcases Kerala's famous coastal beauty and lush greenery. While it might not have the dramatic mountain drama of northern routes, it offers something equally special—the serene, tropical beauty that makes Kerala "God's Own Country." The train glides through a landscape dominated by endless coconut palm groves swaying in the breeze. The route runs close to the coast in several sections, offering glimpses of the Arabian Sea. Between towns, you pass traditional Kerala villages with red-tiled roofs, backwater canals reflecting palm trees, and small temples with distinctive Kerala architecture. The countryside is incredibly green year-round. Paddy fields, banana plantations, rubber estates, and spice gardens create a patchwork of agricultural prosperity. Small fishing villages dot the coastline. The train passes through culturally significant towns like Kollam, Kayamkulam, and Alappuzha (Alleppey), each with its own character. What makes this route special isn't dramatic vistas but constant, gentle beauty. The landscape is soothing. The green is everywhere. The pace feels calm even at semi-high speed. It's Kerala distilled into a three-hour train ride. December to March offers the best weather. Monsoon (June-September) makes everything even greener but comes with heavy rains. This route is best enjoyed during daytime for full appreciation of Kerala's greenery and coastal views.



5 MUMBAI TO KOLHAPUR: WESTERN GHATS MAJESTY

The Mumbai-Kolhapur Vande Bharat route takes you deep into the Western Ghats through a landscape that changes dramatically with every passing hour. Winding through Satara, Belgaum, and Dharwad, this journey showcases the Ghats at their most majestic. The Journey: After leaving Mumbai's urban sprawl, the train begins its ascent into the Western Ghats. Unlike the coastal Konkan route, this path cuts inland through the heart of the mountain range. You pass through misty hill stations, traverse rolling green valleys, and wind through dozens of tunnels carved through solid rock. The landscape here is different from Konkan—less tropical rainforest, more open hills and grasslands. During monsoon, the entire plateau turns emerald green. Waterfalls appear on hillsides. During winter and early spring, morning mist fills the valleys, giving the journey an almost mystical quality. The route passes through Satara district, known for its strawberry farms and historical forts. The agricultural landscape changes with altitude—sugarcane and rice in the lowlands, grapes and strawberries in the cooler hills. Traditional Maharashtrian villages with their distinctive architecture dot the hillsides. Monsoon (June-September) for the most dramatic scenery and waterfalls. October-February for clearer skies and visibility. This is a full-day journey, so bring books, music, or work. The scenery is spectacular but comes in waves rather than being constant.



Hetmyer's majestic 85, Motie's 4-fer help Windies thrash Zimbabwe by 107 in Super 8s



DY Patil T20 Cup

Yuzvendra Chahal stars for Income Tax



NAVI MUMBAI: India's 2024 T20 World Cup winner Yuzvendra Chahal began the 20th edition of the DY Patil T20 Cup in fine style as he starred in Income Tax's seven wicket win over Reliance on the opening day at the DY Patil Stadium in Nerul, Navi Mumbai on Monday. Chahal's 4-11 helped Income Tax restrict Reliance to just 131 for nine in their 20 overs. The chase was fashioned by an unbeaten 31 by Venkatesh Iyer, who also picked up a wicket with his medium-pace.

In the other morning contest at the University Ground, Mumbai Customs beat CGST by 35 runs. Later in the afternoon, Karsh Kothari (4-31) and Arjun Tendulkar (3-34) starred with the ball for DY Patil Blue as they restricted Nirlon to 154 at the Stadium. Later with the bat, DY Patil Blue's much vaunted batting line-up led by teenage prodigy Vaibhav Sooryavanshi (2) and Sarfaraz Khan (0) failed to fire.

MUMBAI

Shimron Hetmyer produced a masterclass in power-hitting, raining seven sixes and an equal number of fours in a majestic 34-ball 85, as his blitzkrieg helped West Indies romp to a 107-run victory over a totally outclassed Zimbabwe in a Group 1 match in the Super 8s stage of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 in Mumbai on Monday.

Hetmyer unleashed fireworks at the Wankhede Stadium to help West Indies score a massive 254/6 in 20 overs -- the highest team score by any team in the T20 World Cup 2026 and the second-highest ever in the history of the T20 World Cup. Their victory margin of 107 runs turned out to be the biggest in this event.

Hetmyer turned the West Indies' effort into a one-knock innings, even though Rovman Powell's 35-ball 59 and his brilliant support in the third-wicket partnership of 122 runs ended up as the support act to a mesmerising performance by the 29-year-old from Guyana, who has moved up from the middle-order to No.2 in the batting order.

The target turned out to be a mountain too steep to climb for Zimbabwe, and their fight was as good as over when they slumped to 20/3 in the third over. Skipper Sikander Raza, despite going out of the ground to seek medical advice after being hit by a shot by Powell, struck a few shots during his 20-ball 27 while Dion Myer added 28 off 15 (3x4, 2x6).

Brad Evans blasted a few big shots in the death overs, hitting back-to-back sixes off Jason Holder and Shamar Joseph in scoring 43 off 21 balls (2x4, 5x6) as Zimbabwe were bowled out for 147 in 17.4 overs, slumping to a massive defeat. The scoreboard pressure was too steep to handle for Zimbabwe, the giant-killers in the league phase with wins over Australia and Sri Lanka.



Lanka.

Gudekesh Motie, bowling brilliantly, bagged his best figures of 4-28 while Akeal Hoseni, who started the Zimbabwe slide with 2-21 at the start, claimed 3-28 and Matthew Forde claimed 2-27 to complete the demolition job. The massive win boosted West Indies' NRR to 5-plus, making India's path to the semis even more difficult.

But the match belonged to Hetmyer as his stunning assault did a lot of good to West Indies' Net Run Rate ahead of the big battles against South Africa and India, as his big-hitting led to a massive

In scoring a majestic 34-ball 85, Hetmyer rewrote several records, hammering the fastest fifty by a West Indies batter in T20 WC, the joint-most sixes by a batter in

the event (17), helping Windies to the second-highest team total (254/6) in World Cup history in the 20-over game, and the biggest partnership for the third wicket for West Indies.

Asked to bat first, Hetmyer blasted the fastest fifty by a West Indies batter in the T20 World Cup, reaching the milestone in 19 balls, hitting four boundaries and five maximums in the process, improving on his own record for the fastest fifty by a West Indies batter in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup.

Hetmyer had earlier hammered a half-century in 22 balls against Scotland in the opening match of this World Cup at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata, breaking the previous record of fifty in 23 balls by Chris

Gayle at the Oval in 2009.

Powell was a bit sedate compared to his partner in reaching his half-century in 29 balls as they shared a massive 122-run partnership for the third wicket as West Indies powered to the biggest total at the Wankhede Stadium in this T20 World Cup.

Hetmyer came in to bat after the fall of Brandon King, to Richard Ngarava, who returned to the playing XI after recovering from an injury, in the third over, with the West Indies at 17/1. Hetmyer shared a 37-run partnership with skipper Shai Hope (14), who fell to a brilliant one-handed diving catch in the deep by Brian Bennett off Brad Evans.

The 29-year-old left-hander from Guyana started slowly and enjoyed two lives,

put down by the same fielder on either side of his fifty, and unleashed a mesmerising array of shots that left the Zimbabwe players shell-shocked.

Hetmyer, who used the cut, swirl pull, and inside-out lofted shots to good effect, started with a four off Richard Ngarava in the third over and another off Blessings Muzarabani in the next over. He got a life when Tashinga Musekiwa grassed a straightforward chance at long-leg on a swivel pull off Muzarabani.

Hetmyer was on 10 at that time and launched a blitzkrieg soon after, hitting Ngarava for back-to-back boundaries in the fifth over, blasting sixes off successive balls off Graeme Cremer in the seventh over, the first one a swipe across the line that landed in the deep mid-wicket stand and the next over the cow corner.

In the next over, he hammered Zimbabwe skipper Sikander Raza for three sixes in four legal deliveries as West Indies raced to 92/2 in the eighth over, reaching his half-century in 19 balls. He continued in the same vein after his half-century, blasting Sikander Raza to the biggest six of the night -- a 108-metre monster into cow corner -- in the 10th over and followed it up with a four off the next legal delivery. He scored 33 runs off Raza in nine balls. He was dropped once again when, at 72, Musekiwa was again the culprit. Powell joined the fun and unleashed a few big hits of his own, hitting four fours and three sixes as he reached his fifty off 29 balls. They reached the 100 of their partnership off 45 balls. Just when it looked like Hetmyer would reach his century, he was out, mistiming a swipe off Cramer and was caught by Bennett for 85 off 34 balls, hammering seven fours and an equal number of sixes during his brilliant knock. Powell too departed soon after, caught by Musekiwa off Muzaabani for 59 off 35 balls (4x4, 4x6).

England are just not going to look at Usman Tariq, says Dawson



KANDY (SRI LANKA)

England left-arm spinner Liam Dawson said the two-time champions will not be distracted by the hype surrounding Pakistan's mystery spinner Usman Tariq ahead of Tuesday's crunch T20 World Cup Super Eights clash, adding that the visitors are prepared for the full range of their opposition's spin arsenal.

England secured a 51-run victory over co-hosts Sri Lanka, and a win over Pakistan would guarantee them a top-two finish in their Super Eights group and a place in the semifinals. But concerns linger over England's top-order vulnerability to spin, with four of their top five falling to Sri Lankan spinners in Sunday's clash - a worrying sign ahead of a Pakistan side that boasts Tariq, Shadab Khan, Abrar Ahmed, Saim Ayub, Salman Agha and

Mohammad Nawaz.

Tariq has been the tournament's most talked-about spinner, especially due to the exaggerated pause he takes before releasing his off-breaks. England captain Harry Brook has even been spotted mimicking Tariq's unorthodox action in the nets. But Dawson, a seasoned campaigner in limited-overs cricket, said the focus must remain broader than one man. "It's not all about Tariq. They're a very good team with some dangerous players, and Tariq's obviously a very good bowler. But we're not going to just look at him. We'll look at the whole team and see how we can nullify them," Dawson told reporters on the eve of the clash.

Dawson, along with Will Jacks and Adil Rashid, shared seven wickets between themselves as Sri Lanka were bundled out for 95 in response to England's 146/9. He added that variety in England's spin bowling line-up has been key to their success so far.

"We're all very different types of spinners. Jacks gets a lot of overspin and a lot of bounce. Dilly (Rashid) has all his variations. Me - I sort of don't get the bounce that the other two get. It will be a different challenge on Tuesday night. We might get a better batting wicket. We'll have to see."

"Out of the three or four of us, I'm probably more the defensive spinner in this, and I know that's my role, and I'm just trying to be consistent for the captain. Adil can use all his tricks, and he comes on us to get the wickets and get us back in games or put us ahead in games."

"We're all very experienced. If you look at the amount of cricket that me and Adil have played, even Jacks as well, it's probably only with Beth that's probably got a little bit less experience. But there's a lot of trust in the guys that go out there and try to execute what you want to try and do," he added.

Chennaiyin FC fall to defeat away from home against Mohun Bagan

CHENNAI

Chennaiyin FC fell to an away-day defeat in their second Indian Super League 2026 match, going down 2-0 against Mohun Bagan Super Giant at the Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata. Head coach Clifford Miranda retained the same starting XI from the previous outing,

placing his trust in continuity as the Marina Machans looked to build early-season rhythm. Mohammad Nawaz started in goal behind a defensive pairing of Elsinho and Pritam Kotal, while Mohammed Ali Bemammer and Lalrinliana Hnamte provided the shield in midfield. Further forward, Alberto Noguera and Inigo Martin were tasked with supplying the creative spark and decisive edge in attack.

Chennaiyin began with discipline, absorbing early pressure through compact, organised defending. Nawaz was called into action in the 20th minute, getting down sharply to parry a driven effort from distance, before Noguera briefly threatened at the other end after a patient CFC build-up, though the move ultimately fizzled out. A setback followed just past the half-hour mark when Nawaz was forced off after an injury, with Samik Mitra stepping in and settling quickly, comfortably gathering a long-range attempt minutes later.

The Marina Machans nearly found a breakthrough in stoppage time of the first half when Bemammer's free-kick took a deflection and drifted wide, with Elsinho stretching but unable to turn it goalward. Moments later, however, Mohun Bagan broke swiftly and struck to take a 1-0 lead into the interval.

T20 WC: Raza refuses to blame change in venue for big defeat; looking forward to must-win game v India

MUMBAI

His side was hammered into submission by a rampaging West Indies side riding on a majestic 34-ball 85 by Shimron Hetmyer and a 35-ball 59 by Rovman Powell, Zimbabwe skipper Sikander Raza refused to blame the change in venue and change in conditions for his team's massive 107-run defeat in their first Super 8 stage match in Mumbai on Monday.

"I think if we think about change in venues, change in country, we will not learn anything, and for me it is very important to learn from this game. We don't want to look for excuses. If we want to go

through, we have to win in every country, every venue," said Raza after the match.

Hetmyer's blitzkrieg, in which he hammered seven fours and seven sixes, blasting a 19-ball fifty and his 122-run partnership with Powell for the third wicket, helped West Indies post 254/6 in 20 overs, the highest team total in this World Cup and the second-highest ever in the tournament's history. Zimbabwe's chase of the steep target did not catch fire as they lost three wickets in the power-play and were eventually bowled out for 147 in 17.4 overs, thanks mainly to a 21-ball 43 by Brad Evans (2x4, 5x6), and his 44-run partnership with Richard

Ngarava for the last wicket. Gudakesh Motie claimed a career-best 4-28 while Akeal Hoseni bagged 3-28 to hasten Zimbabwe's slide to defeat.

Though they faced a massive chase, Raza said they thought they had their chances, but the wicket spun a lot more than in the first innings and put paid to their hopes.

"We thought when we batted, it would stay true, but it started to turn. But it was a good learning game. There was a time that myself and Tony were saying that even if the RR gets to 18, we can get it. Motie's spell changed the game. But at this ground, you are never out of the game," said Raza.

83rd All India Railway Men's Hockey Championship concludes at RCF

Rail Coach Factory, qualify for the Knockout Stage

KAPURTHALA

The league phase of the 83rd All India Railway Men's Hockey Championship, organized at Rail Coach Factory (RCF), Kapurthala, concluded successfully today. A total of nine railway teams from across the country participated in the championship, and high-quality hockey was witnessed during the league matches. In this prestigious national-level hockey tournament, several Olympians and international-level players showcased their exceptional sporting talent.

The participating teams were divided into two groups. Group 'B' comprised Northern Railway, New Delhi; Central Railway, Mumbai; Integral Coach Factory, Chennai; and Eastern Railway, Kolkata. Group 'D' included Western Railway, Mumbai; South East Central Railway, Bilaspur; Banaras Lo-



comotive Works, Banaras; Southern Railway, Chennai; and the host team Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala.

During the six-day league phase, a total of 16 matches were played. From Group 'B', Northern Railway, New Delhi and Central Railway, Mumbai qualified for the knockout stage, while from Group 'D', Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala and Western Railway, Mumbai secured their places in the knockout round. The final match of the league phase was played today between RCF,

Kapurthala and Banaras Locomotive Works, Banaras, in which the RCF team registered a 7-0 victory.

The second part of the league phase of the championship was organized at Ranchi, where nine railway teams also participated. From there as well, the top four teams qualified for the knockout stage. The knockout phase of the championship will be held from 27 February 2026 to 02 March 2026 at Modern Coach Factory, Rae Bareilly, where a total of eight qualified teams will com-

pete for the championship title.

During the championship, Shri Ajay Nandan, General Manager, RCF, visited the venue to watch the match. He encouraged the players and congratulated the RCF Sports Association and participating teams for the successful conduct of the event. During the event, Shri K. S. Asla, President, RCF Sports Association, along with association officials, a large number of sports enthusiasts, and spectators were present.

The matches were played at RCF's modern astro-turf hockey stadium, where players were provided with excellent sports facilities. All teams displayed outstanding playing skills, team spirit, and sportsmanship, making the competition exciting and engaging. Officials and players from the Railway Board appreciated the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality provided by RCF Kapurthala. The smooth conduct of the matches reflects RCF's strong commitment to sports and its excellent organizational capability.

Medhansh Slams Back-to-Back Tons in U-10 Matches

HYDERABAD

Ten-year-old batting talent P. Medhansh Chary delivered a remarkable performance with consecutive centuries in Under-10 matches, showcasing impressive stroke play and consistency.

Training at Grow More Cricket Academy, Hastinapuram, LB Nagar, under coach Harish Kumar, Medhansh first scored a fluent 111 off 102 balls against AYR Cricket Academy. The knock, studded with 15 boundaries, came at a brisk strike rate of 108.82 during a 30-over contest held on February 14, 2026, at KGR Cricket Ground, Brahmanapally.

Continuing his rich form, Medhansh followed it up with an unbeaten 100 off 89 balls against KGR Cricket Academy on February



22, 2026. His innings featured 19 fours and a six, maintaining a healthy strike rate of 112.36 in the 25-over fixture at the same venue. Coaches and observers describe Medhansh as a technically sound and quick-learning batter, strong on both front-foot and back-foot play. Known for his disciplined practice and ability to translate training into match performances, he is also regarded as one of the best fielders in his team.



ALIA BHATT SHINES IN SILVER AT BAFTAS 2026

Alia Bhatt dazzled in a shimmering silver ensemble for her debut at the #BAFTAs, effortlessly channeling the timeless glamour of Hollywood legend Marilyn Monroe. The Bollywood starlet wore a custom-designed creation by Gucci, striking the perfect balance between vintage elegance and bold modernity on the red carpet.

Her look was elevated with a classic white stole, adding a hint of old-world sophistication to the sparkling silver outfit. Speaking to #BritishVogue ahead of the event, Alia revealed she "wanted to bring the glam," and she delivered impeccably, radiating poise and confidence with every step.

Renowned photographer Marco Bahler captured the moment beautifully, highlighting Alia's graceful presence and the intricate details of her ensemble. This BAFTA appearance marked a milestone for the actress, showcasing her ability to fuse Bollywood charisma with Hollywood elegance seamlessly.

Alia Bhatt's silver BAFTA look is a masterclass in marrying classic inspiration with contemporary fashion, creating a red carpet moment that will be remembered for its sophistication and star power.



TELANGANA DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER MALLU BHATTI VIKRAMARKA UNVEILS MOVIE ARTISTS ASSOCIATION DIARY

Hyderabad: The new diary of the Movie Artists Association (MAA) was unveiled by Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka. The diary was formally released by MAA President Vishnu Manchu through the Deputy CM.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister appreciated the initiatives undertaken by the MAA executive committee for the welfare of its members, including health awareness programs, regular health check-ups, and various welfare activities conducted for association members.

The event was held on Monday morning at Praja Bhavan. MAA Vice President Madala Ravi, Treasurer Shiva Balaji, and Executive Committee members Jayavani, Malakpet Shailaja, Shiva Narayana, Shashank, Haranath Babu, Manik, popular actor Sampurnesh Babu, M.R.C. Vadlapatla, and others participated in the program.

After unveiling the new MAA diary, the Deputy Chief Minister congratulated President Vishnu Manchu and the executive committee members for their efforts.

"HOME IS NOT A PLACE, IT'S ME: SHRUTI HAASAN"

Actress, singer, and musician Shruti Haasan, who has carved a niche across multiple film industries and languages, says she now sees the idea of home in a profoundly different light.

For Shruti, home is no longer a pin on the map—it's a feeling, an internal sanctuary she carries wherever she goes.

"Home is not geography at all for me," she says. "When I go back to Chennai, there's a sense of ease and infinite love. In Mumbai, it's a different kind of love.

In Hyderabad, because of work, it feels different again." Having navigated diverse cities and cultures through her career, Shruti has found warmth everywhere—but the deeper truth, she says, lies within.

"What I've realized is that you could probably throw me anywhere, and I'll find my comfort. That's my joy—discovering people, places, cultures, and making them mine.

Home is really where I am," she explains. She adds, "I could be in what's considered the most comfortable physical space, yet feel completely disoriented if I'm not at home with myself. That sense of self—being my own home—has given me safety and security in navigating life."

Shruti notes that home has never been a person, except perhaps her father, "who feels like the physical embodiment of home to me. Nothing's been more home than me for myself. It might sound self-centered, but it's worked well for me."

In a life that constantly moves across cities, languages, and cultures, Shruti Haasan's idea of home is quietly powerful—a reminder that true belonging comes not from an address, but from feeling at ease within oneself.



YASH STUNS FANS WITH CLEAN-SHAVEN LOOK AS TICKET IN TOXIC



Bengaluru: The anticipation surrounding "Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown-Ups" reached new heights with the release of a stunning new poster featuring actor Yash in a clean-shaven look as his second character, Ticket. Following the earlier teaser unveiling his bearded look as Raya, Yash's transformation into Ticket has sent ripples through social media, further intensifying the excitement for the film's March 19, 2026, release. One fan wrote, "I'll watch 1st day first show wit my team...where our anthamma is there, that's always heaven!" Another wrote, "World is Yash Boss territory"

The newly released poster depicts Yash as Ticket, drenched in blood, with a subtle yet striking appearance marked by a small goatee, light moustache, and a black earring.

Alongside this bold visual, the tagline "Your 'Ticket' to Hell" teases the darker, more sinister undertones of the movie. This dual-character reveal confirms that Yash will be portraying two distinct avatars in "Toxic," a narrative that promises to keep audiences on the edge of their seats. Directed by Geetu Mohandas, "Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown-Ups" has already garnered significant attention for its compelling teaser on social media.

The film is being simultaneously shot in Kannada and English, with dubbed versions scheduled for release in Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, and more. The film is backed by Venkat K. Narayana and Yash under KVN Productions and Monster Mind Creations.

AAYA SHER PROMO: NANI UNLEASHES PURE MAYHEM

The birthday celebrations for Nani begin early this year. Ahead of the big day on the 24th, the makers of The Paradise have dropped the promo of the first single Aaya Sher - and it's pure mayhem. Right from the first frame, the promo throws you headfirst into a gritty world loaded with dust, adrenaline, and explosive tension.

This is the introduction song for Nani, and Anirudh Ravichander powers it with roaring percussion, electrifying beats, and the chant Aaya Sher echoing like a war cry.

Nani's rugged transformation—the blazing red jacket, the fierce eyes, the intimidating 2-jedalu look—hits like a blast of mass energy.

He stands tall amid massive crowds, towering over the chaos like a true sher entering his kingdom. Every shot feels larger than life—sharp action, and visuals that scream intensity.

The last moment, where Nani roars Aaya Sher while surrounded by his men, is straight-up goosebump material.

Sudhan Master seems to have crafted a full-



on mass feast, and the promo itself hints at a choreo spectacle awaiting in the full song. Director Srikanth Odela is clearly handling this ambitious project with extreme precision, while producer Sudhakar Cherukuri and SLV Cinemas are mounting it uncompromisingly. The Paradise is releasing in 8 languages on August 21st, making it one of the biggest outings in Nani's career.

With this promo alone delivering solid goosebumps, Aaya Sher is all set to explode tomorrow.



I WANT TO PLAY SUPERHERO: SUNNY LEONE

Sunny Leone is embracing a new chapter with Kennedy, directed by Anurag Kashyap — a project she believes could mark a defining moment in her career. Known for constantly reinventing herself, Sunny says this film stands apart not because she set out to surprise audiences, but because of the opportunity itself. When Kashyap approached her, she understood the weight that came with it.

She credits the director for creating characters that allow actors to truly flourish, whether they are dark, complex or layered. Calling Kennedy a potential turning point, Sunny shares that she surrendered herself completely to the process — listening, learning and absorbing everything from rehearsals to dialogue coaching.

Playing Charlie, a character who uses her beauty and charm strategically, Sunny says the role required openness rather than stripping away vanity. For her, growth as an actor is a natural evolution. She insists this isn't about reinvention or a comeback, but about moving forward and embracing change.

With a love for psychological thrillers and long-form dramas, Sunny now looks ahead — even dreaming of playing a superhero someday.