



# Maharashtra mourns: Deputy CM Ajit Pawar cremated with full State honours

Baramati: In a sombre atmosphere filled with grief and chants of "Ekach Wada, Ajit Dada," Maharashtra bid a final farewell to its Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister, Ajit Pawar on Thursday.

The senior Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader was cremated with full state honours at the Vidya Pratishthan ground in Baramati on Thursday afternoon. The funeral followed a tragic aviation accident on Wednesday that claimed the life of the 66-year-old leader and four others.

The last rites were performed by Ajit Pawar's eldest son, Parth Pawar, who lit the funeral pyre at approximately 12:00 PM.

Thousands of supporters, party workers, and citizens gathered at the venue, their cries of "Ajit Dada Amar Rahe (Long live Ajit Dada)" echoing across the grounds.

Earlier in the day, his mortal



remains were kept at his residence in Katewadi, where a massive influx of people from across the state arrived to pay their respects.

Prominent leaders, including former Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and MNS chief Raj Thackeray, visited the family to

offer their condolences to Sharad Pawar, Sunetra Pawar, and the grieving family.

The funeral saw a rare gathering of political figures across the spectrum, reflecting Ajit Pawar's influence in state and national politics.

Key attendees included, Sharad

Pawar a veteran leader and Ajit Pawar's uncle, apart from Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari and Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant.

Leaders remembered him as a man of his word — a "straight-talking" administrator with an unmatched grip on governance. "Whenever there was a hurdle, Dada's one word was enough. We have lost our protective cover," remarked a supporter from the local community.

According to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the accident occurred on Wednesday morning. Ajit Pawar had departed from Mumbai at 8:10 AM for a series of campaign rallies in Baramati taluka, including stops at Nirawagaj, Pandare, and Supa. At approximately 8:45 AM, the

aircraft, instead of landing on the designated runway, crashed and was immediately engulfed in flames. There were no survivors. The deceased have been identified as: Ajit Pawar, Captain Sumit Kapoor, Pilot, Captain Shambhavi Pathak, Co-pilot, Vidip Jadhav, Personal Security Guard and Pinky Mali, Flight Attendant.

The news of his sudden demise sent shockwaves through the country. President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and leaders like Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi and Mamata Banerjee expressed deep sorrow over the loss of a leader who remained dedicated to the issues of farmers and the downtrodden.

As the flames rose at Vidya Pratishthan, the focus now shifts to the future of the NCP, leaving a massive vacuum in Maharashtra's political landscape.

## Medaram Jatara begins with fervour and gusto

Hanumakonda: Amid a huge crowd of devotees, the Sammakka-Saralamma Maha jatra began with great grandeur on Wednesday at Medaram. According to traditional rituals on the first day, it was formally inaugurated with the arrival of Goddess Saralamma from Kannepalli to the sacred platform (gadde). Between 11 am and noon, priests of Sammakka-Saralamma reached the platforms and purified them by plastering them with sacred soil. Following tribal traditions and clan customs, they drew ritual designs on the platforms and offered turmeric, vermilion, sarees, incense, lamps to the goddesses, performing special prayers.

Between 5 and 6 pm, Goddess Saralamma set out from Kannepalli under the divine protection (shadow) of Lord Hanuman and reached the platforms between 9 and 10 pm. Similarly, priests brought Govindarajulu from Kondai and Pagididda Rajulu from Poonugondla



to the platforms and installed them.

In the moonlight of Magha Shuddha Pournami, the Kalyana Mahotsavam will be conducted for Goddess Sammakka and Pagididda Rajulu in accordance with tribal traditions.

Medaram's chief priest Siddaboyina Arun Kumar said the devotees should receive the blessings of the Goddess, and that the government and the temple committee have completed all arrangements.

## Pawan Kalyan Adopts Giraffes at Visakhapatnam Zoo for a Year

Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister and Janasena leader Pawan Kalyan is currently in Visakhapatnam, where he visited the Indira Gandhi Zoological Park on Thursday.

During his visit, he demonstrated his commitment to animal welfare and made a special announcement. On his mother Anjana Devi's birthday, Pawan Kalyan expressed his love for her in a unique way, showcasing his passion for nature and animals. He announced that he will be adopting two giraffes at the zoo for a year, personally covering the annual maintenance costs. While visiting the zoo as Deputy Chief Minister, Pawan Kalyan inquired with officials about animal care practices. Following his adoption announcement, zoo staff and animal enthusiasts expressed their happiness. It is known that Pawan Kalyan has been involved in numerous environmentally friendly initiatives previously. His fans have flooded social media with praise for his noble gesture on his mother's birthday.



## Telangana CM Revanth Reddy visits Harvard Business school in US



Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's visit to the United States is ongoing. Following an invitation from students, he visited Harvard Business School and engaged in discussions with the students. He encouraged them to become partners in 'Telangana Rising' and to highlight the opportunities and strengths of Hyderabad and Telangana globally. Revanth Reddy urged the students to act as brand ambassadors and promote Hyderabad's image around the world.

## KCR serves notice in Phone Tapping Case

In a significant development in the illegal phone tapping investigation, SIT officials have issued notices to Bharat Rashtra Samithi chief and former Chief Minister KCR. The notices were delivered at his residence in Nandini Nagar during a visit by the officials.

KCR has been asked to appear for questioning on Friday at 3 PM. Given his age of 65, the SIT stated there is no requirement for him to visit the police station personally. Instead, he has been asked to provide a location within Hyderabad city limits where he can be available for questioning. Recently, former ministers involved in the case have been questioned.



## Telangana Launches TE-Poll App for Election Complaints

The Telangana State Election Commission (SEC) has introduced the TE-Poll mobile application to facilitate election-related complaints ahead of the upcoming municipal polls. Citizens can now submit their grievances via the app or through the official website, tsec.gov.in. Polling is scheduled for 11 February across seven municipal corporations and 116 municipalities, with vote counting set for 13 February.



## T. Ashok Kumar Takes Charge as New Inspector of Lallaguda Police Station

Secunderabad, metroudayam  
January 29 :

T. Ashok Kumar has taken charge as the new Inspector of Lallaguda Police Station on Thursday. The previous Inspector, Raghubabu, has been transferred to Andhra Pradesh, following which Ashok Kumar was appointed to the post. Prior to this assignment, T. Ashok Kumar was serving as Traffic Inspector at Malkajgiri Police Station. 2002 batch officer, Inspector Ashok Kumar stated on the occasion that maintaining law and order requires active public participation. He assured that he would work in coordination with his staff and the public to ensure peace and security in the Lallaguda area.



## Child marriage is a social crime.

Sarpanch Gosula Rajesh



### Kodada January 29 Metro Morning

Gosula Rajesh, sarpanch of Nadigudem mandal Chennakesavapuram said that the future of girls is darkened due to child marriage and it is a crime under law. On Thursday, a public awareness conference on prevention of child marriage was held in the village. Speaking on the occasion, the Sarpanch said that physical and mental problems arise due to marriages at a young age. He called upon all the villagers to unite and make the village child marriage free. Sub-Sarpanch Katikala Pullaiah, village elders and women participated in the program in large numbers....

## Leaders of Lorry Association inspected Ashok Leyland's new tipper.....



### Kodada January 29 Metro Morning

Leaders of Rashtra Lorry Association Ramineni Srinivasa Rao and Avula Rama Rao who visited the showroom on the invitation of Kodada Ashok Leyland, on this occasion company representatives explained the working method of Leyland 14 tire tipper with advanced technology. Later, the leaders of the association said that the Ashok Leyland company has provided reliable services to the truck owners in the transport sector for many years by providing advanced vehicles to suit all their needs and praised their services on this occasion. He said that the new tipper lorry will be very useful for the owners.

## Providing scholarships to talented students is commendable: Former Governor Bandaru Dattatreya.



### Hyderabad, January:29, MetroUdayam

Hyderabad : The Muthoot M. George Excellence Awards and Scholarships were presented in collaboration with the Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Former Governor Bandaru



Dattatreya, Telangana State Women's Commission Chairperson Nerella Sharada, Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry President Karthik Maheshwaram, Chairperson Bellam Madhavi, and other dignitaries attended the event as chief guests.

Scholarships were awarded to meritorious students. Former Governor Bandaru Dattatreya said that providing scholarships to students is commendable. He stated that giving scholarships to students fills families with joy, confidence, and hope for the future.

## Leaders of Lorry Association visited the family of Chintala Veeriah.

### Kodada January 29 Metro Morning

Many lorry association leaders said that the death of Chintala Veeriah is a great loss to the people of all walks of life along with the trade and commerce sectors. On Thursday, the former president of Canvassing Association, who died recently in Kodada town, went to the residence of Veeriah and visited his family members and expressed his deepest condolences. He said that it is very sad that Veeraya, who is a living example of goodness and humanity, is no longer with us. His death is a great loss to farmers, millers and Lorry Association. Later, they paid tributes to his portrait by garlanding it. Lorry association leaders Paidimari Venkatanarayana, Avula



Rama Rao, Ramineni Srinivasa Srinu and others participated in this program. Rao, Yalamandala Narasiah, Thota

## Malas should be given due priority in municipal elections.

### Kodada January 29 Metro Morning

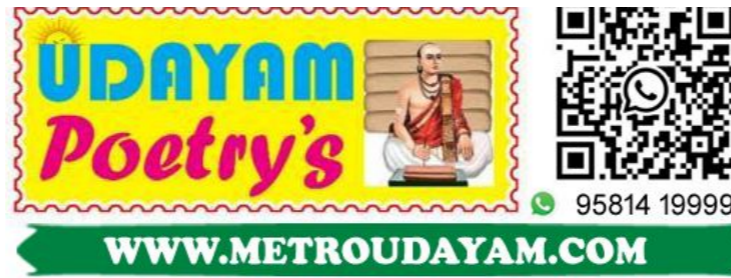
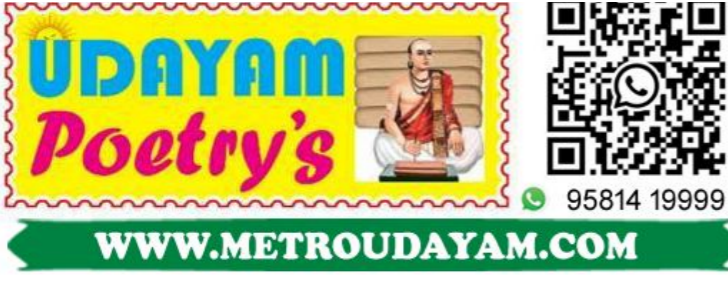
National president of Mala Mahanadu asked Uttam Padmavathi Reddy to give three councils and one co-option seat to Malas in the municipal elections. On Thursday, the MLA presented the petition along with State Secretary Pidtala Srinu at the camp office in Kodada town. They asked to be given a chance in the share due to them as per SC classification. On this occasion, the MLA responded positively and promised to provide an opportunity. State Secretary Pidathala Srinu, Lachimalla Rammohan Rao, Gadari Madhu, Praveen Kumar, Nagaraju, Kondalu, Esu, Rayappa, Shankar Rao, Ramesh, Krishna, Nageswara Rao and others participated in this program.



## A portrait presented to AP Governor Abdul Nazeer

Chikkadapally, January 29 (Metro udayam) : As part of the tea party program, a grand tea party was held at Lok Bhavan in Vijayawada under the auspices of Andhra Pradesh Governor S. Abdul Nazeer on the occasion of the 77th Republic Day. On this occasion, Murali Mohan Raju, a young writer and poet from Pinakini Youth Welfare Association of Sri Potti Sriramulu Nellore district, who conducts many inspiring literary, cultural, and service programs for the youth in both Telugu states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, participated in the Governor's tea party. He stated in a press release that he presented a portrait of the Governor to him during the event. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy Chief Minister Konidela Pawan Kalyan, ministers, and others participated in this program.





## MECHANICAL LIFE!

Everyday busy!  
No rest no leisure!  
Everyone rush!  
Almost all a mechanical life!

Particularly in cities!  
Getting up, brushing,  
tea coffee!  
Waking up children!  
Make them ready to school!

Mean time municipal water!  
Filling drums to store the water!  
Single bath room all rush there!  
Books, lunch box, school van comes!

Office time both for couple!  
Waiting for city bus!  
Running late, late to office!  
Time 5.00 pm. tired and reach home!

Late to bed, early raise!  
Alarm rings, routine starts!  
Life become boredom!  
No change, life became Mechanical!  
This is present trend of city life!



Composed by:  
B. Satyanarayana Rao,  
(Ba. Sa. Raa)  
Vijayawada

## Hanuma Naik Nomination as 7th Ward BRS Candidate...



### Kodada January 29 Metro Morning

The municipal election campaign has gained momentum. Hanuma Naik filed his nomination as BRS party candidate from Balaji Nagar 7th Ward in the town on Thursday. Earlier, a large number of activists and followers gathered from his residence and reached the municipal office as a rally. After that, he handed over his nomination papers to the Election Returning Officer. Speaking on this occasion, he expressed confidence that the development and welfare schemes undertaken by former Chief Minister KCR will win him. People of Balaji Nagar are requested to bless with their precious vote.



सभी इंसान घाटे में है। सिवाय उनके जो विश्वास लाए, अच्छे कर्म किए, और एक दूसरे को सच्चाई और सब्र (धैर्य, संयम) की नसीहत की... (शकील उवावा -६०१)

जिन्हें आदमी अपनी कम अवल के कारण बड़े लाभकारी, महान और शानदार ऐश्वर्ययुक्त समझता है और यह सोचकर भ्रमित हो जाता है कि उन्हें प्राप्त करने में ही उसके जीवन की सर्वोच्च सफलता है। दर असल यह दुनिया के सभी फायदे, दुनिया के सभी सुख - सुविधाएँ और यह दुनिया की ऐश्वर्यता सब कुछ वास्तव में परलोक के दृष्टि से देखा जाये तो तुच्छ और क्षणिक होते हैं। यह सभी कुछ ही वर्षों के अस्थायी जीवन तक मात्र सीमित है और कभी भी नष्ट हो सकते हैं।

लेकिन इसके विपरीत आखेरत (परलोक) का जीवन एक शानदार और शाश्वत जीवन है। इसके लाभ महान और स्थायी हैं और इस जीवन के नुकसान भी बड़े और हमेशा रहने वाले स्थायी हैं। बुद्धिमान व्यक्ति अगर ज्ञान से काम ले तो पारोगा के, उस परलोक जीवन के आगे इस दुनिया की सारी दौलत फीकी और तुच्छ हो जाती है। लेकिन इसका मतलब यह भी नहीं है के इस जीवन के सुख सुविधाओं का त्याग करने को धर्म ने कहा है। केवल इसी दुनिया के लाभ को दृष्टि में रखकर कर्म करने के बजाय परलोक का लाभ भी ध्यान में रखने को धर्म कहता है।

और जो व्यक्ति वहाँ ईश्वर की उपहारों से पुरस्कृत किया जायेगा वह जान लेगा के उसने अच्छे कर्मों के माध्यम से दुनिया में लाभान्वित काम किया है। और अपने बुरे कर्मों के कारण ईश्वर के द्वारा निर्धारित यातनाओं में जखड़ा हुआ व्यक्ती जान लेगा कि उसने दुनिया के लाभ के लिये कुकर्म करके बहुत ही बुरा सोदा कर चुका है। इंसान भले ही दुनिया में महान और शानदार समझे जाने वाले सभी उपलब्धियों को प्राप्त कर लिया हो लेकिन जब तक परलोक में काम आने वाले अच्छे कर्म नहीं करता है तो सक्तीन बहुत बड़े घाटे में रहेगा।

इस ज़िदगी में उन सभी लोगों का घाटा निश्चित रूप से होगा जिन लोगों ने अपनी ज़िदगी के मकसद को नहीं समझा। और खुदा की इबादत (ईश्वर की उपासना) नहीं किया। और नेक अमल (अच्छे कर्म) नहीं किया, मुसीबत में सब्र (संयम, धैर्य) नहीं किया।



इसी तरह अच्छे कर्म करने की, मुसीबत पर सब्र करने की दूसरों को नसीहत नहीं दिया। ऐसे सभी लोग आखिरत (परलोक) के बड़े घाटे से बच नहीं बच सकते। ईश्वर के और धर्म की दृष्टि में ऐसे सभी लोग अपनी ज़िदगी को व्यर्थ ही गँवा रहे हैं, जिनकी ज़िदगी का कोई मोल नहीं।

पवित्र कुरआन में स्पष्ट रूप से कहा गया है के, "नमाजे अन्न (समय) की कसम! बेशक, इंसान घाटे में है। सिवाय उनके जो ईमान लाए, अच्छे कर्म करते रहे, और आपस में (एक-दूसरे को) हक का हुक्म (सच्चाई की आज्ञा) और सब्र (धैर्य) की वसीयत (नसीहत) की।" (पवित्र कुरआन, अध्याय क्रमांक १०३, सूरेह अल अन्न, आयत क्रमांक ०१ से ०३)। उपरांत अध्याय में अल्वाह (सु.) समय की कसम खाकर समय के मूल्य को बताता है और क्षण क्षण का डोश, एक एक क्षण के महत्त्वता की ओर हमारा ध्यान आकर्षित करता है।

और इस उपरांत अध्याय में ईश्वर पर विश्वास, अच्छे कर्मों का आचरण, सच्चाई का हुक्म, और सब्र (संयम) की वसीयत की अहमियत को बताया गया है। सब्र की वसीयत करने का यह आदेश जीवन में सब्र की अहमियत को दर्शाता है। हम सभी जानते हैं के वसीयत भित्तिय के लिए एक योजना है जो यह सुनिश्चित करती है कि हमारे मृत्यु के बाद हमारी संपत्ति का प्रबंधन हमारे इच्छा के अनुसार हो। याने सब्र को हमारी सबसे बड़ी संपत्ति में स्थान दिया गया है।

दुनिया में में हम जुल्म (अत्याचार) और सब्र (संयम, सहनशीलता) दोनों को देखते हैं। खुदा (ईश्वर) अत्याचारियों के साथ नहीं बल्के संयमी लोगों के साथ होता है। वयों के सूरेह अल बकरा २/१९३ और सूरेह अल अनफ़ाल ८/४६ के मुताबिक "ईश्वर सब्र करने वालों के साथ होता है।" इसका मतलब यह कदापि ना लिया जाए के धर्म अत्याचार को सहन करने की शिक्षा देता है। बल्के धर्म हर तरह के जुल्म के खिलाफ लड़ने की आवाज़ देता है। अगर जुल्म सहना धार्मिकता होती तो करबला के मैदान में इमाम हुसैन अलैहिस्सलाम कभी जुल्म के विरोध में अपनी आहुति न देते।

-डॉ. मोहम्मदशकील ताजमोहम्मद जाफरी (शकील मंवर), मंवर, पुणे (महाराष्ट्र) भारत

## Budget Session: Prez Murmu highlights India's record growth in agriculture, health, infrastructure



New Delhi: President Droupadi Murmu, addressing a joint session of Parliament at the start of the Budget Session on Wednesday, lauded India's strides in agriculture, industry, healthcare, and social welfare, calling the nation's rapid progress "a topic for global discussion". Highlighting record foodgrain production of over 350 million tonnes in the past year, the President announced that India has now become the world's largest rice producer.

She further noted that the country has emerged as the second-largest fish-producing nation, reflecting the success of the blue economy, while continuing to lead globally in milk production -- a testament to the strength of the cooperative movement.

On the industrial front, President Murmu praised India's rise as the second-largest producer in mobile manufacturing, underscoring the government's efforts to build a system free from corruption and ensure that "every rupee is spent on India's development". Infrastructure development also featured prominently in her speech. She cited the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, initiated by former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, which added nearly 18,000 kilometres of new rural roads in the past year alone.

Turning to healthcare, the President commended the establishment of 1.8 lakh Ayushman Arogya Mandirs and highlighted initiatives benefiting senior citizens. Nearly one crore elderly citizens have been issued Vay Vandana cards, enabling around eight lakh of them to receive free hospital treatment.

She also pointed to the Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission, under which more than six crore citizens have been screened, and mission-mode campaigns that have helped control Japanese Encephalitis in rural Uttar Pradesh.

"It is a matter of pride that the World Health Organisation has declared India free of trachoma," she added.

President Murmu emphasised that the government's vision of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas is positively impacting lives across the country, particularly among Dalits, backward classes, and tribal communities.

She noted that social security coverage has expanded dramatically, with 95 crore Indians now benefiting from schemes, compared to 25 crore in 2014.

The President's address set the tone for the Budget Session, underscoring the government's achievements across agriculture, industry, healthcare, and social welfare, while projecting India's development story as one of global significance.

## Rajamouli's silent stroke: 'Varanasi' hints at April 7, 2027 release

SS Rajamouli is widely celebrated as one of Indian cinema's most influential filmmakers, but his sharp marketing instincts continue to set him apart. Once again, the ace director has grabbed attention with a clever and understated promotional move for his much-anticipated film Varanasi, starring Mahesh Babu.

After unveiling a powerful glimpse toward the end of last year, the Varanasi team had maintained radio silence, focus-

ing entirely on production. However, the calm was broken recently with an unexpected promotional twist that has quickly gone viral. A hoarding displaying the message "In Theatres April 7, 2027" was spotted in the holy city of Varanasi, instantly sparking curiosity and excitement among fans.

While there has been no official confirmation from the makers, images of the hoarding are spreading rapidly across social media platforms. Many believe



this is another example of Rajamouli's strategic brilliance—opting for a subtle, thematic promotion that aligns seamlessly with the film's title and setting, while quietly hinting at its release date.

Earlier, industry buzz suggested that Varanasi was eyeing a late-March release. However, speculation intensified after director Sandeep Reddy Vanga announced March

5 as the release date for Spirit, starring Prabhas. A potential clash raised concerns, but the newly surfaced date appears to have resolved that uncertainty.

If April 7, 2027, indeed turns out to be the final release date, it would provide a comfortable gap of nearly a month between Spirit and Varanasi, benefiting both big-ticket projects at the box office. Once again, Rajamouli proves that sometimes, silence can be the loudest promotion.

**K. Chandra shekar Rao Requests Postponement of SIT Inquiry**



Former Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao, also known as KCR, responded to SIT notices on Thursday by writing a letter to officials. In the letter, he stated he would not be able to attend the inquiry scheduled for the next day, citing the ongoing municipal elections. KCR explained, "I am busy with the nomination process for the municipal elections. Tomorrow is the last day for filing nominations. I have to issue B-forms to several candidates." He added that he would attend the inquiry on another day if summoned, saying, "I will definitely attend the inquiry if summoned on another day."

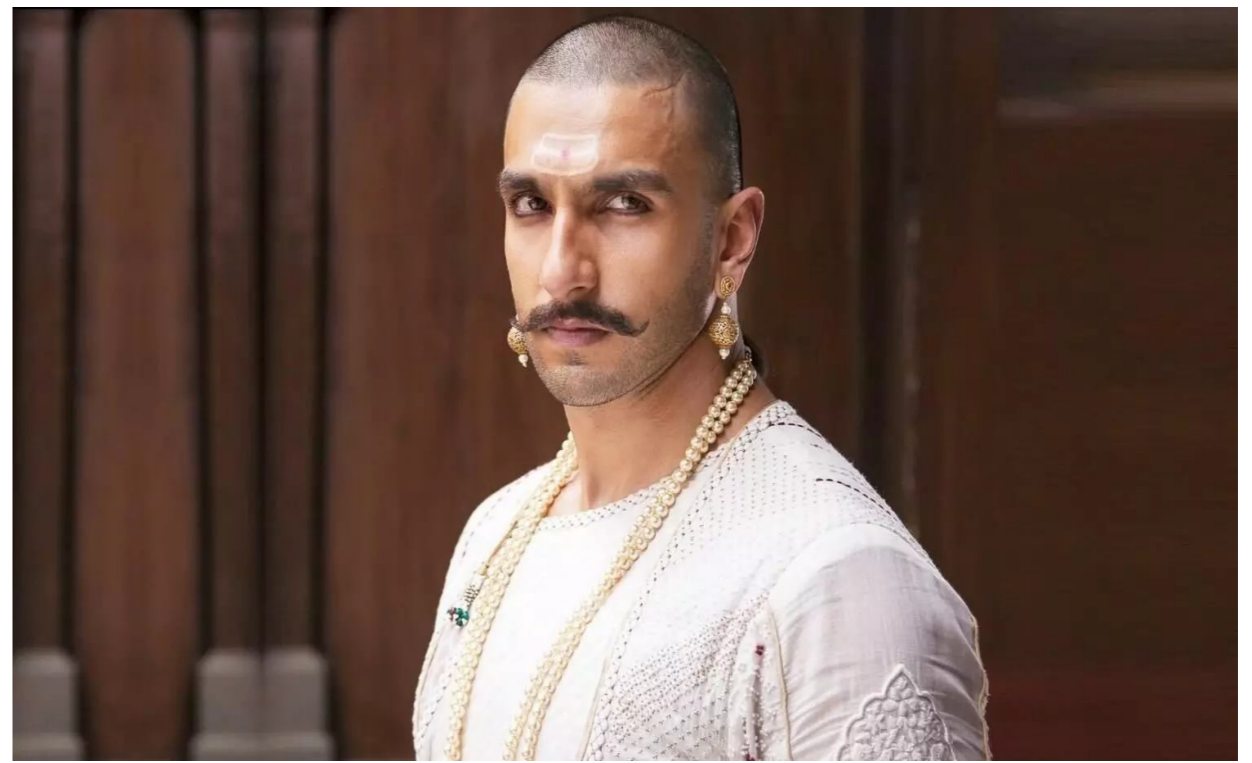
# Ranveer Singh booked by Karnataka Police for allegedly insulting Daiva traditions

Bengaluru: The Karnataka Police have registered a First Information Report (FIR) against Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh for allegedly insulting sacred Daiva traditions and hurting religious sentiments during an event held at the International Film Festival of India (IFFI), officials said on Thursday.

The FIR was filed by the High Grounds police station in Bengaluru following a complaint lodged by advocate Prashanth Methal. The actor has been booked under Sections 196 (threat to public order and social cohesion), 299 (deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings) and 302 (intentional acts aimed at wounding religious feelings through words, gestures or representations) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

According to the complaint, the alleged act was deliberate, intentional and malicious, with the intention of outraging the religious sentiments of Hindu devotees and promoting disharmony in society. The complainant claimed that the actor insulted the sacred 'Chavundi Daiva', thereby showing disrespect towards a deeply revered religious and cultural tradition and disturbing communal harmony.

It has been alleged that Ranveer Singh enacted an emotional Daiva scene inspired by Kantara: Chapter 1 during the closing ceremony of IFFI, despite an alleged request not to perform the ritualistic act on stage. The complainant stated that Chavundi Daiva is not a female ghost, as allegedly referred to by the actor, but a powerful guardian spirit symbolising justice, protection and divine feminine energy, holding immense religious significance in the coastal regions of Karnataka.



Referring to the deity as a ghost has been described in the complaint as blasphemous and a serious insult to Hindu religious beliefs and practices. The FIR notes that the complainant is a devotee of Chavundi Daiva, which is also his family deity, and that he has worshipped the goddess since childhood as part of the traditional Bhoota Kola rituals of coastal Karnataka.

The complaint further states that on November 28, 2025, during the closing ceremony of IFFI held in Goa, Ranveer Singh, while present on stage alongside the lead actor of Kantara: Chapter 1, allegedly performed actions that mocked and insulted the sacred Daiva tradition. It is also alleged that the actor imitated the

divine expressions of Panjurli and Guliga Daiva in a crude, comical and derogatory manner.

The complainant claimed that the actor, being a widely followed public figure, carried out the alleged act on an international platform with the knowledge that it could hurt the religious sentiments of devotees. The video of the performance reportedly went viral on social media, causing distress, anger and resentment among devotees, including the complainant.

The complainant stated that he became aware of the incident after viewing the video on Instagram, posted by an account named "Brief Chaat". Police officials confirmed that further investigation into the matter is currently underway.

## Gujarat CM offers prayers at Dwarkadhish temple, reviews lion conservation efforts in Gir

Dwarka/Sasan Gir: Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel on Thursday visited the Dwarkadhish Temple in Dwarka and travelled to Sasan Gir, where he reviewed wildlife conservation arrangements, undertook a jungle safari and flagged off vehicles for forest personnel. At the Dwarkadhish Temple, Patel offered prayers and performed rituals in accordance with traditional customs. Officials said the Chief Minister prayed for the happiness, peace and prosperity of the people of the state and greeted devotees present on the temple premises.

The district administration honoured him with a shawl and a replica of the Dwarkadhish Temple. Former minister and MLA Mulubhai Bera, District Collector Rajesh Tanna, Superintendent of Police Jayrajsinh Vala and other officials were present during the visit.

On Wednesday evening, Patel reached Sasan Gir and walked through the local market, interacting with residents, tourists and shopkeepers. He visited



stalls selling local products, including mango-based items from the Gir region and lion-themed handicrafts, and spoke with traders. Officials said he also interacted with students and women and spent time with local residents at a tea stall. Early on Thursday morning, the

Chief Minister undertook a jungle safari in Gir National Park. Forest officials said he sighted Asiatic lions and other wildlife in their natural habitat and visited the Keramba Thana area, where lions were observed in two different zones.

According to the most recent

population estimation, 891 Asiatic lions currently inhabit Gir and other lion-bearing regions of Saurashtra.

Following the safari, Patel flagged off 183 specially equipped vehicles at Sasan Gir for forest staff deployed across Gir, the extended Gir landscape

and other forest areas of the state. The vehicles are intended to strengthen wildlife protection, conservation, rescue and rehabilitation operations.

The Forest Department said the fleet comprises 174 field motorcycles, six Bolero Camper vehicles and three modified rescue vehicles, which will be used for patrolling, protection duties and rescue work in forest areas. Officials said the allocation aims to improve field mobility and operational efficiency, particularly in remote and sensitive wildlife zones.

During the tour, the Chief Minister also visited a Forest Department rescue centre. Forest officials briefed him on conservation measures being implemented under Project Lion, which provides a multi-layered framework for the protection and monitoring of Asiatic lions and their habitat.

They also informed him that 13 designated routes are currently operational for jungle safaris and wildlife viewing in the Gir Safari Park and adjoining areas.

## Harish Rao alleges corruption in excise licences



BRS/SLP Deputy Leader Harish Rao has alleged a fresh corruption scandal within the excise department, claiming that micro brewery licences are being distributed through political quotas. Speaking to the media during a chit-chat at Telangana Bhavan on Wednesday, Rao stated that out of 110 applications received for these licences, 25 have been earmarked specifically for political figures. He alleged that 21 licences were reserved under the quota of one prominent leader, while another four were allocated to a minister.

Rao highlighted the involvement of an individual closely associated with a senior leader, noting this person has direct access to the leader's residence and recently accompanied him to Tirupati. According to the allegations, unofficial agreements were brokered to collect Rs 1.80 crore per brewery licence. Of this sum, Rs 1.50 crore is purportedly destined for the main leader, while Rs 30 lakh is pocketed by the intermediary acting on his behalf. He further claimed that certain wine shop licences were issued to select individuals by bypassing the mandatory lucky draw process entirely.

The leader also drew attention to a mounting financial crisis in the liquor sector, asserting that supply companies are now owed nearly Rs 4,500 crore.

He noted that payments to liquor supplying companies have been stalled for 16 months, a situation he described as unprecedented in the history of the state. This negligence has reportedly led to a total halt in breezer supplies in many regions, with multinational liquor companies warning of a complete suspension of services due to non-payment. Rao attributed this crisis to internal disputes among ministers regarding commission sharing, which he warned would seriously impact state revenue.

Further allegations were made regarding a hologram tender dispute, which Rao claims resulted in an IAS officer being pushed into voluntary retirement due to conflicts between a senior leader and a minister.

He contrasted the government's support for beer manufacturers with its treatment of the agricultural sector. While farmers in Medak and Sangareddy districts face crop holidays across 70,000 acres due to water shortages under the Singur Dam and Ghanpur command areas, beer manufacturing units in Sangareddy continue to receive an uninterrupted water supply. Rao concluded by stating that several more scams, particularly those related to Singareni, are yet to be exposed to the public. The state government has opened the door to a fresh corruption scandal in the excise sector.

## Jagan slams coalition govt, announces statewide outreach

Tadepalli: YSRCP president Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy on Wednesday criticised the ruling coalition government, alleging corruption, administrative failure and neglect of public welfare. Addressing party workers from Bhimavaram at the party headquarters in Tadepalli, he claimed that people across the state were dissatisfied with the government's performance and felt let down by unfulfilled promises.

Jagan Mohan Reddy announced that he would undertake a mass contact programme covering all 150 Assembly constituencies to reconnect with the public and restore confidence among party workers. He said the proposed outreach would highlight what he described as the shortcomings of the present government and present an alternative vision.

Drawing a comparison between the previous YSRCP government and the current administration, he stated that his



government had implemented welfare schemes even during the Covid-19 pandemic and fulfilled its electoral commitments.

He said that during the YSRCP's five-year tenure, loans amounting to approximately Rs 3.32 lakh crore were raised, of which Rs 2.73 lakh crore was spent through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) schemes, with detailed records available. In contrast, he alleged that the coalition government had raised loans of about ₹3 lakh crore in less than two years without transparency or accountability,

while welfare programmes were curtailed. The YSRCP chief further alleged corruption in sectors such as liquor and sand, claiming that liquor was being sold above the maximum retail price and that revenue from sand sales had declined despite increased transactions. He also criticised the manner in which the recent Sankranti festival was conducted, alleging excessive commercialisation and irregularities. Raising concerns over law and order, Jagan Mohan Reddy referred to several incidents involv-

ing alleged misconduct by legislators, stating that such cases reflected a deterioration in governance.

He also accused the government of targeting political opponents by registering false cases.

On the welfare front, he alleged that students, farmers and patients were adversely affected due to the discontinuation or weakening of schemes related to education, healthcare and agriculture, including Aarogyasri and minimum support price mechanisms. Questioning the role of the government, he said failure to ensure basic services undermined public trust.

Jagan Mohan Reddy reiterated that his planned padayatra across all Assembly constituencies would focus on highlighting these issues and drawing a comparison between the two administrations.

## Madhu Yashki alleges BRS leaders set up US firms during statehood movement

Former MP and TPCC Campaign Committee Chairman Madhu Yashki Goud has alleged that while the people of Telangana were sacrificing their lives for statehood, prominent BRS leaders KTR, Harish Rao, and Kavitha were busy establishing companies in America.

Speaking to the media at Gandhi Bhavan on Wednesday, Goud claimed these firms were set up as early as 2010. He further slammed Kavitha, asserting she began amassing wealth during the statehood movement and continued to do so upon her return to active politics, even appointing personal assistants in every district at the time.

Goud stated that the Congress party currently holds a strong position, whereas the BRS and BJP have weakened. He accused certain police officers of acting as political activists under the previ-



ous BRS regime to illegally accumulate wealth. He quipped that the 'friendly policing' promoted by the BRS was, in reality, friendly only toward drug peddlers.

Goud also raised concerns about current police conduct, claiming some officers are more focused on land settlements than law and order. He criticised 'midnight arrests' as a ploy to grab head-

lines, much like the tactics used during the BRS administration.

While acknowledging that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is committed to following democratic and legal procedures, Goud warned that some officers are tarnishing the current government's image through improper investigative methods.

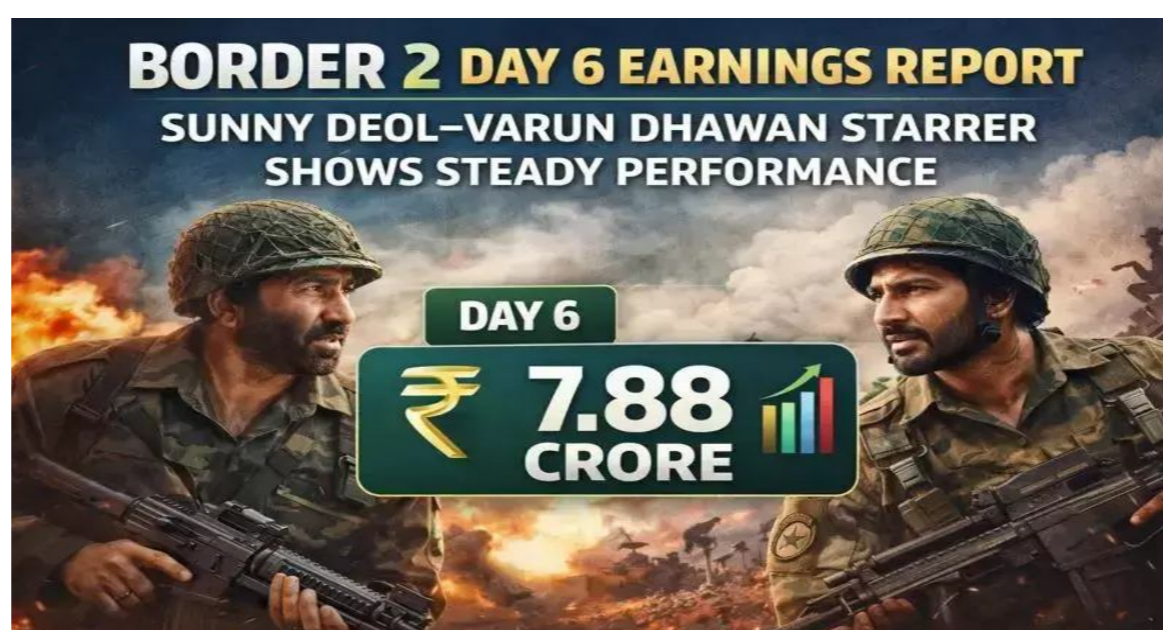
He reminded the bureaucracy that the leadership has changed and that CM Revanth Reddy is now in power. Goud strongly condemned any arrest made without following due procedure and urged all officials to perform their duties strictly in accordance with the Constitution.

## Border 2 Day 6 Earnings Report: Sunny Deol–Varun

### Dhawan Starrer Shows Steady Performance

We're talking about Border 2 which is a war drama grounded on the 1971 India vs Pakistan war. Directed by Anurag Singh, Border 2 features Sunny Deol in the part of Lt Col Fateh Singh Kaler and his first look and his discourses have left the followership in absolute admiration as it instills them with a feeling of nationalism and pride.

Interestingly, Varun Dhawan Border 2 also features a astral cast including Diljit Dosanjh, Sonam Bajwa, Varun Dhawan, Medha Rana, Ahan Shetty, Mona Singh etc. The movie stressed the valour if Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Indian Navy and served as a perfect homage to the martyred dogfaces. Released amid a massive buzz, Border 2 opened to decent reviews and witnessed a sonorous



response during the weekend especially on the 77th Republic Day festivity. still, it seems to be witnessing a dip in figures post the extended weekend

According to a report published in Sacnilk, Border 2 saw a dip of 33 in foot-falls during the morning shows and recorded a morning residency of 7.52 moment (day 6/ first Wednesday) Border 2 box office collection day 6 Morning Trend)

It's reported that Border 2 saw a shocking decline in figures especially during the morning shows. According to a report in Sacnilk, Border 2 was seen floundering to earn Rs 1cr during the morning shows and earned Rs 83 lakhs until 1230 pm on dya 6( first Wednesday). This took the overall collection of the movie to Rs 200.83 cr.

## Kanaka Durga devotees to get Tirumala-style laddu, meals



Vijayawada: In a major initiative to enhance the quality and taste of prasadam served to devotees, a team of officials from the Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam atop Indrakeeladri in Vijayawada visited the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) Sri Venkateswara Swamy temple on Wednesday. The purpose of the visit was to study Tirumala-style preparation and distribution methods for laddu prasadam and annaprasadam, with an aim to replicate the high standards at Indrakeeladri. The study committee visit was conducted under the guidance of temple executive officer V K Seena Naik, following directives from endowments minister Anam Ramanarayana Reddy and commissioner K Ramachandra Mohan. The initiative underscores the administration's commitment to enhancing devotees' experience and ensuring the highest quality in all aspects of prasadam service. During the visit, the team first met TTD additional executive officer (EO) Ch Venkaiah Chowdary and offered the Goddess Durga Devi prasadam. They then toured the main laddu preparation facility (Potu), closely observing the machinery, raw materials, and preparation techniques to ensure the highest quality. The officials also reviewed the annaprasadam distribution process, evaluating dining hall capacity, seating arrangements, crowd management, serving schedules, and the time devotees take to complete their meals. Engineering officials provided detailed information on the construction, machinery, and operational efficiency of the annaprasadam building. EO Seena Naik said measures would soon be implemented to provide devotees at Indrakeeladri with high-quality, tasty prasadam prepared using advanced Tirumala-style techniques. The delegation included executive engineers K V S R Koteswara Rao, B Rambabu and AEOs P Chandrashekhar and N Ramesh Babu.

## Supreme Court Reserves Verdict After Hearing States In Stray Dogs Case

The Supreme Court on Thursday reserved its order in the ongoing stray dogs case, a day after it completed hearings involving representations from all states. The bench concluded arguments after listening to a wide range of stakeholders, including animal welfare advocates, dog lovers, victims of dog-bite incidents, and legal representatives of both the Centre and state governments. After wrapping up the hearings, the court directed all parties to file their written submissions within one week before delivering its final verdict. During the proceedings, the Supreme Court voiced strong dissatisfaction over the failure of several states to effectively implement earlier directions related to the sterilisation of street dogs, establishment of dog pounds and removal of stray dogs from educational institutions and other sensitive premises. The bench, comprising Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and NV Anjaria, remarked that many states appeared to be making promises without concrete action, likening their responses to "building castles in the air" and indulging in "storytelling." The court also expressed shock at data presented from Assam, which reported around 1.66 lakh dog-bite cases in 2024 despite having only one dog shelter. Highlighting the seriousness of the issue, the bench noted that more than 20,900 dog-bite cases were reported in the state in January 2025 alone, calling the figures deeply alarming.

# TTD ghee adulteration case dominates Cabinet meet

Vijayawada: The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) adulterated ghee case figured prominently in the Andhra Pradesh Cabinet meeting on Wednesday, with Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu told ministers to wait until the Special Investigation Team (SIT) report is officially received by State government. According to sources, the issue was discussed at length during the Cabinet meeting, amid mounting political attacks from the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) over the SIT report. Ministers expressed strong displeasure over what they described as "misinformation and propaganda" being spread by the opposition on the SIT findings. They argued that the adulteration had taken place during the previous YSRCP government and accused party leaders of attempting to shift blame onto the present administration. Officials informed the Cabinet that the SIT, formed under the supervision of the CBI, has already filed a chargesheet in the case. In view of this, the Chief Minister told ministers to respond after the report is formally received and made public.

During the discussion, ministers referred to the alleged deposit of Rs 4.5 crore in a bank account linked to YV Subba Reddy's personal assistant. They said officials had pointed out that the dairies involved in supplying ghee did not



have sufficient milk collection or production capacity.

According to ministers, investigations revealed that some contracted dairies had mixed chemicals to manufacture ghee, instead of producing it through proper dairy processes. "This was not an accidental lapse. It was deliberate adulteration," one minister reportedly said during the meeting. Ministers also claimed that attempts are now being made to cover up past irregularities by targeting the current government. "A mistake was made. Adulteration happened. Now they are trying to escape responsibility through falsehood," sources quoted ministers as saying.

Chief Minister Naidu reportedly took a firm stand on the matter. He criticised YSRCP leaders for approaching the Supreme Court against the formation of the SIT in the past and now continuing their attacks even after a CBI-supervised investigation was completed. He is learnt to have remarked that the party's conduct reflected "criminal tendencies" and said its leaders were trying to distort facts to mislead the public. The Chief Minister stressed that any official response would come only after the SIT report is formally obtained by government. Naidu also asked his Cabinet colleagues to remain alert, warning that the issue could be used to trigger political instability.

## Drugs awareness cycle rally taken out

vijayawada: Stating that the eradication of drugs, ganja, and other intoxicating substances is a collective responsibility, Vijayawada East MLA Gadde Ramamohan called upon all sections of society to actively participate in eliminating the menace of substance abuse. He said that controlling drugs in society is not the responsibility of the police alone, but requires the active involvement of teachers, parents, neighbours, and the general public.

The MLA participated in the 'Drugs Pai Dandayatra' cycle rally, organised under the aegis of the Krishna Lanka police, near the Ramalingeswara Nagar Screw Bridge in the city on Wednesday. The programme was first launched near Mahita Public School, marking a strong beginning to the anti-drug campaign.

Addressing the gathering, Ramamohan expressed concern that over the past five years, ganja had reached school levels, adversely affecting even young children. Appreciating the police initiative, he said the 'Drugs Pai Dandayatra' programme is highly beneficial to society and urged people from all walks of life to participate in such awareness campaigns.



The MLA further stated that the Gadde Foundation had extended financial assistance of Rs 7 lakh for patrol vehicles and Rs 6 lakh for installation of CCTV cameras to strengthen law and order and enhance surveillance in the city. Referring to reports of ganja-laced chocolates being sold near schools, he said he had immediately brought the issue to the notice of the police. Meanwhile, he advised teachers, parents, and local residents to remain vigilant and inform the police if they notice anyone consuming or supplying drugs or ganja. He clarified that the police would not immediately arrest drug-

addicted individuals, but would instead provide counselling and rehabilitation support. He also lauded NTR District Police Commissioner SV Rajasekhar Babu for adopting modern technology and launching effective programmes to curb drug abuse. Additional DCP Muralikrishna, South ACP Praveen Kumar, Krishna Lanka Inspector SSV Nagaraju, VMC Corporator Mummaneni Prasad, along with coalition party leaders Singamsetti Ramesh, Ummadisetti Bahudur, Rayi Rangamma, Gogula Yesu, and Ammasetti Vasu, among others, participated in the rally.

# Hyderabad 10K reignites city's fitness spirit

The 19th edition of the Hyderabad 10K, India's first-ever 10K Run, was held with great enthusiasm at People's Plaza, celebrating fitness, inclusion and a pioneering legacy. Re-initiated this year by NEB Sports, the iconic event drew over 5,000 runners from Hyderabad and other places, who ran a scenic course looping around the historic Hussain Sagar Lake, turning the area into a vibrant hub of energy and purpose.

The run was ceremoniously flagged off by the founders of the Hyderabad 10K Foundation --Dr Ramesh Byrapaneni, Uma Chigurupati, Jagdish Nalluri, Anil Kumar and Dinaz --along with Padma Bhushan awardee and legendary badminton player Pullela Gopichand. Addressing participants, Gopichand recalled the early days of the Hyderabad



10K, noting that it was conceived at a time when organised running events were virtually unknown in India, with the aim of inspiring ordinary citizens to adopt

fitness as a way of life.

Adding a personal dimension to the event, Pullela Gopichand and Uma Chigurupati themselves took part in the 10K run and completed the course, earning finisher medals alongside thousands of runners and exemplifying the spirit of participation the event

and differently-abled runners participated alongside elite athletes, amateur runners, corporate teams and first-time participants, reinforcing the message that running is for everyone.

In the 10K women's category, KM Sujata clinched first place with a timing of 47:15, followed by Kanika Jain (55:56) and Johannah (1:00:15). In the men's category, Boddupalli Ramesh emerged winner with 35:38, ahead of Banoth Chandrashekar (38:00) and Vikram Prajapat (38:25).

Set against the scenic backdrop of Hussain Sagar and People's Plaza, the Hyderabad 10K once again reaffirmed its commitment to promoting active lifestyles while preserving the pioneering legacy of distance running in India.

stands for. A major highlight of this edition was its emphasis on inclusivity. Visually impaired

# Champions League: Madrid drop to play-offs, five English clubs move into round of 16

New Delhi: Real Madrid were defeated in Lisbon by Benfica to finish ninth and will have to face a play-off to reach the last 16 of the Champions League against Benfica or Bodo/Glimt.

Goalkeeper Anatoliy Trubin's sensational 98th-minute header earned Benfica a place in the knockout phase play-offs.

The Eagles looked set to miss out despite recovering from 1-0 down to open up a 3-1 lead thanks to two goals from Andreas Schjelderup either side of Vangelis Pavlidis' penalty.

Kylian Mbappe's second of the game – his 13th league phase goal setting a new record – pushed them out of the top 24 and there they remained until Jose Mourinho ordered Trubin forward and, against opponents suddenly down to nine men, the Ukrainian delivered the telling blow.

The league phase concluded in thrilling style with 18 simultaneous kick-offs, as Barcelona and Sporting CP secured top-eight positions alongside Bayern and five English teams.

Meanwhile, goalkeeper Anatoliy Trubin's last-gasp header sensationally earned Benfica a place in the knockout phase play-offs. Sporting secured a top-eight finish following Alisson Santos' dramatic winner in Bilbao.



The visitors twice pegged back their opponents at San Mames, where Ousmane Diomande and Francisco Trincao cancelled out efforts from Oihan Sancet and Gorka Guruzeta, respectively.

Then, in the fourth minute of stoppage time, Santos drilled a last-gasp winner beyond Unai Simon, who had kept out Luis Suarez's initial attempt.

Barcelona came from behind to secure a top-eight spot thanks to four second-half goals in 4-1 win over Copenhagen. Seventeen-year-old Viktor Dadason put Copenhagen ahead in the fourth minute, running onto a pass from Mohamed Elyounoussi to slot in. Barcelona pushed for an equaliser and broke through early in the second half, when a superb long ball from Dani Olmo found Lamine Yamal to set up Robert Lewandowski to level.

amal scored a goal of his own on the hour through a deflected strike that looped in, and Raphinha extended the hosts' advantage from the penalty spot before Marcus Rashford's late free-kick wrapped up the victory. Arsenal beat Kairat Almaty 3-2 to record their eighth victory to become the first team to finish the league phase with a 100% record.

The Gunners flew out of the blocks, Viktor Gyokeres charging through and curling in a low finish within three minutes. The visitors responded quickly, Jorginho stroking in a confident penalty four minutes later, but Arsenal had reasserted themselves by half-time – Kai Havertz cutting in from the right to curl in and Gabriel Martinelli finishing a fine team move.

The home side continued to dominate in the second-half but Kairat concluded their campaign on a positive note when Ricardinho headed in with the final touch of the match.

Liverpool secured a comfortable 6-0 win over Qarabag at Anfield to confirm their place in the round of 16. The hosts dominated from the outset and opened the scoring through Alexis Mac Allister's close-range header, doubling their advantage courtesy of Florian Wirtz's low drive into the bottom corner.

Mohamed Salah made it 3-0 with a sweetly-struck free-kick, before Hugo Ekitike's deft finish added a fourth seven minutes later. Mac Allister bundled in before Federico Chiesa completed the scoring in the final minute to secure Liverpool a top-eight finish for the second season running.

Tottenham sealed a place in the top eight by winning in Frankfurt 2-0 for the second consecutive season. Meanwhile, first-half masterclass from Jeremy Doku secured Man City a comfortable win to finish the league phase and earn a top-eight spot.

Elsewhere, Joao Pedro scored a fine double as Chelsea came from behind to progress directly to the last 16 and eliminate Napoli.

Last season's finalists Inter Milan soaked up pressure from Dortmund but struck with precision to win 2-0.

The Italian side grew into the game and broke the deadlock when Federico Dimarco curled a sublime free kick past Gregor Kobel.

Serhou Guirassy had a great chance for the hosts in the first-half but Andy Diouf was on hand to wrap it up in added time with a deflected second.

## GM Northern Railway Inspects Srinagar-Katra Section Amid Heavy Snowfall



Shri Ashok Kumar Verma, General Manager, Northern Railway, conducted an extensive inspection of the Srinagar to Katra rail section today. The inspection comes at a crucial time when the Kashmir Valley is witnessing challenging weather conditions due to ongoing heavy snowfall and sub-zero temperatures.

Inspection of Key Stations and Infrastructure During the visit, the General Manager inspected several key stations, including Srinagar, Pampore, Anantnag, and Quazigund. He meticulously reviewed the passenger amenities available at these stations to ensure that travelers are comfortable despite the harsh winter.

Shri Verma paid special attention in reviewing the ongoing maintenance and construction work on various tunnels and bridges. To ensure the highest safety standards, he personally inspected critical track elements, including points, switches, and turnouts, ensuring they remain operational during the freeze.

Focus on Ground Staff and Safety

A major highlight of the inspection was the General Manager's interaction with the ground staff and track maintainers. Acknowledging their dedication to working in freezing conditions, Shri Verma sought direct feedback regarding the challenges they face in maintaining the tracks during winter.

"The safety and well-being of our ground staff, who work tirelessly in sub-zero temperatures, is paramount," Shri Verma stated.

He instructed the accompanying officials to ensure that all necessary winter equipment and safety gear are provided to the ground staff immediately. He emphasized that the workforce must be fully equipped to handle track maintenance effectively given the current climatic conditions.

Concluding the inspection, the General Manager reviewed other ongoing infrastructure projects in the region. He advised all officers to adhere to strict deadlines, ensuring that the railway network remains robust and developmental works are not hindered by the weather.

## Govt flags growing digital addiction, mental health crisis in children, youth

New Delhi: Digital addiction is growing as a significant health problem among children and the youth and is also contributing to the mental health crisis in the country, said the government on Thursday in the Economic Survey 2025-26.

The Survey tabled in the Parliament by the Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Nirmala Sitharaman, noted that digital addiction is closely linked with the degrading mental health of the youth in the country.

"Digital addiction negatively affects academic performance and workplace productivity due to distractions, 'sleep debt', and reduced focus. It also erodes social capital," it said.

To address this problem, the CBSE has issued guidelines on safe internet use in schools and school buses. Other measures include the Ministry of Education's Pragyatah framework, which guides digital education planning with attention to screen time, and the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights guidelines on screen time limits and online safety.

Further, the Survey also



mentioned the high prevalence of social media addiction among those aged 15-24, which is strongly associated with anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and cyber-bullying stress.

Other issues plaguing Indian youth include compulsive scrolling, social comparison, and gaming disorders.

These are increasingly leading to sleep disruption, aggression, social withdrawal, and depression, with adolescent populations being especially vulnerable.

To address this issue, the government has taken multiple measures, the

Survey said.

This includes the Tele-MANAS (Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States), which has since its launch in October 2022, received over 32 lakh calls; the SHUT (Service for Healthy Use of Technology) Clinic at NIMHANS, Bengaluru, which provides specialised care for excessive and compulsive technology use, focusing on adolescents and young adults; and the Online Gaming (Regulation) Act, 2025, which represents a major step to address digital addiction and financial harm among youth.

As digital access cannot

be fully restricted, the Survey suggested the establishment of offline youth hubs, particularly in urban slums and rural areas, to provide alternatives to digital spaces; moderated online safe spaces hosted by schools or similar institutions.

"Schools play a critical role in shaping digital habits, and hence, they should introduce a Digital Wellness Curriculum covering screen time literacy, cyber safety, and mental health awareness," it said, while calling for a "holistic approach, including physical and mental health, is essential to ensure a resilient future".

## Medaram Sammakka-Saralamma Jathara Holiday Announced in Mulugu

The celebrations for the Medaram Sammakka-Saralamma Jathara, often called the 'Telangana Kumbh Mela', have commenced. Due to the anticipated influx of devotees and the event's local importance, the Mulugu district administration has announced a special holiday. The District Collector has issued orders declaring 30 January, a Friday, a public holiday across the district. This holiday applies to all government offices and educational institutions, both government and private. In return, 14 February, the second Saturday of the month—normally a holiday—will be a working day for schools, colleges, and offices, which will operate as usual.



## Suresh Raina praises incredible spirit of 'Vande Mataram CISF Coastal Cyclothon'



New Delhi: Former India cricketer Suresh Raina extended his best wishes for the Vande Mataram CISF Cyclothon 2026, calling it a stirring symbol of discipline, dedication and determination. The CISF Vande Mataram Coastal Cyclothon-2026, a flagship national public outreach and awareness initiative, was virtually flagged off from Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium, here on Wednesday. The event was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri Nityanand Rai, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

With the flag-off, the 25-day mega national movement formally commenced, as two CISF cycling teams simultaneously set out from Bakkhali (West Bengal) and Lakhpat (Gujarat). The teams will collectively traverse approximately 6,500 kilometres along India's eastern and western coastlines, covering nine coastal States and two Union Territories, before culminating at Kochi on 22 February 2026.

"I wish good luck to the whole CISF team. I hope the CISF marathon is going to be a lot of fun and full of enthusiasm. Please participate. All the best," Raina said in a video shared by CISF on its X handle, drawing a powerful connection between sporting excellence and national service, he applauded CISF personnel for their relentless efforts in spreading awareness about the critical importance of India's maritime security.

"Such inspiring words from an iconic sportsperson further strengthen CISF's resolve to drive impactful initiatives in the supreme interest of the nation," CISF posted on X.

During the journey, the Cyclothon will halt at 52 coastal villages, which will be adopted by CISF for sustained, year-long engagement. In coordination with key stakeholders such as ONGC, Port Authorities and other maritime agencies, local CISF units will undertake community welfare and infrastructure development activities, supported through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

With 47 CISF units located near India's coastline, the Force will ensure continued and long-term engagement with these adopted villages. Notably, 50 percent of the participating cyclists are women, reflecting a significant step towards gender inclusivity and women empowerment in national service initiatives.

The Cyclothon will witness the participation of notable personalities from sports, culture, film industry and public figures during major events at Mumbai, Goa, Mangaluru, Konark, Visakhapatnam and Chennai, before its culmination at Kochi.

## Hyderabad Police Deny Rise in Chain Snatching Incidents

Hyderabad City Police Commissioner Sajjanar has dismissed social media claims that chain snatching incidents have surged due to rising gold prices, alleging that interstate gangs have established bases in the city. He described these reports as entirely false. In a message posted on 'X' (formerly Twitter), he urged the public not to believe such rumours. Sajjanar stated, "Please do not forward unverified news and fear-mongering posts on social media. We will take strict legal action against those who spread false information to create panic. Hyderabad city is completely safe. Cooperate with us in maintaining law and order. If you have any doubts, call Dial 100."



# Seifert, Conway, Mitchell power New Zealand to 215/7 against India

Visakhapatnam: Tim Seifert, Devon Conway and Daryl Mitchell led the charge with the bat with blistering knocks to power New Zealand to 215/7 against India in the fourth T20I at the ACA-VDCA Stadium on Wednesday.

Seifert gave New Zealand a flying start in the powerplay by attacking India's pacers to set the tone for top-scoring with 62 off 36 balls, laced with seven fours and three sixes. Conway provided steady support with 44 off 23 deliveries, studded with four boundaries and three maximums as the pair raced towards a century stand before Kuldeep Yadav removed him and halted the momentum.

Though India clawed back in the middle overs, with Kuldeep and Arshdeep Singh picking two wickets each, Mitchell ensured New Zealand had a strong finish by hitting 39 not out off 18 balls, laced with two fours and three sixes, to push New Zealand past the 210-run mark. India, a batter short in this contest due to Ishan Kishan picking a niggler, will need another strong chase to maintain their unbeaten run in the series.

Inserted into batting first, Seifert set the tone from the very first over by hitting Arshdeep for three successive boundaries. By the fourth over, Seifert had already hammered Rana by hammering him for sixes over long-on and fours going over extra cover fence.

Conway, at the other end, took his time before opening up with a



boundary steered past third man in the fourth over. Even as Conway hammered Kuldeep and Ravi Bishnoi for two fours and as many sixes, Seifert brought up his fifty in just 25 balls – joint fastest for a New Zealand men's batter against India.

After the pair raised the first 100-plus opening stand for New Zealand against India in T20Is since 2017, Kuldeep struck when Conway mistimed loft to extra cover, while Jasprit Bumrah dismissed Rachin Ravindra caught and bowled via a slower ball. The bowling change worked well for India when Arshdeep accounted for Seifert, while Kuldeep had Glenn Phillips holing out to long-on as New Zealand slipped to 137/4. Mark Chapman and Mitchell Santner tried to rebuild but the for-

mer fell to Bishnoi, before the latter was run out by Hardik Pandya's direct hit. Zakary Foulkes provided some relief with a six and a four off Arshdeep but perished soon after to the pacer.

Mitchell then took charge in the death overs by smashing Bumrah for a six and two boundaries in the 19th over and continued his assault against Rana by carting him for a six and four to finish unbeaten on 39 off 18 balls, as New Zealand crossed the 200-run mark, while Rinku stood out for India with his four catches in the outfield.

Brief Scores: New Zealand 215/7 in 20 overs (Tim Seifert 62, Devon Conway 44; Arshdeep Singh 2-33, Kuldeep Yadav 2-39) against India

# Local wildcards Kubler-Polmans advance to men's doubles final

Melbourne: Hometown wildcards Jason Kubler and Marc Polmans continued their impressive Australian Open, punching their ticket into the men's doubles final with a three-set 6-2, 3-6, 6-3 semifinal win over Great Britain's Luke Johnson and Poland's Jan Zielinski on Thursday. Kubler will be bidding for his second Australian Open doubles crown after triumphing with Rinky Hijikata, also as wildcards, in 2023. Polmans, a semifinalist with Andrew Whittington at Melbourne Park in 2017, was the best player on the court on Thursday and will be contesting his first Grand Slam final.

Kubler showed no signs of being hampered by his bandaged left knee, which has undergone multiple operations, as he leapt skyward for a slam-dunk smash to conjure the first break of the match. Two games later, he unleashed back-to-back return winners on the ad side to clinch a break before holding for 5-1. Polmans clinically sealed the set when he held to love.

Kubler and Polmans



struggled to find a first serve in the second set, landing just 9 of 23 as the momentum swung. Polmans held serve in a challenging seventh game of the third before the hometown wildcards scrambled to break Johnson the next game. The Aussies sealed victory when Zielinski returned a Kubler serve long, Aus Open reports.

"That's the great thing

about doubles – it's the teamwork. Some days I won't be feeling it, like today, and then Marcy really stepped up. I'm sure there will be other times when maybe Marcy doesn't feel it as much and I've got to step up," Kubler said.

Awaiting the Australians will be Great Britain's former world No. 1 Neal Skupski and American Christian Harrison, the

experienced sixth seeds, ousted third-seeded Marcel Granollers and Horacio Zeballos in straight sets in the other semifinal.

Harrison and Skupski, who both competed at last year's ATP Finals with different partners, joined forces for the first time in Adelaide earlier this month, where they reached the semi-finals.