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PAKISTAN SAYS IT IS IN 'OPEN WAR' AGAINST NEIGHBOUR AFGHANISTAN

Pakistan bombed major cities in Afghanistan on Friday, and said the neighbours are in "open war" following months of tit-for-tat clashes | P9

PAK ARMY CLAIMS IT KILLED 274 TALIBAN MEN

Pakistan Army spokesperson Lt Gen Ahmad Sharif Chaudhry said his forces "killed 274 Taliban personnel, while 400 were injured". Twelve Pakistani soldiers were killed, while 27 others injured, he added. AFP journalists heard shellfire and gunfire in Torkham, with Afghan soldiers heading towards the frontier after overnight bombardment by Pakistan

MAST QALANDAR VS 'REACHING THEIR COLLAR'

- "Our patience has run out. Now it will be *Dama Dam Mast Qalandar*," Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said in a post on X
- However, Taliban govt spokesman Mujahid said the recent strikes were intended to send a clear message that "our hand can reach their collar." He claimed Taliban had seized 19 Pakistani military posts

55

PAKISTANI SOLDIERS KILLED IN LATEST ROUND OF ATTACKS, SAYS TALIBAN

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

Kejri, others let off in excise scam

Special judge Jitendra Singh raps CBI for procedural lapses, refuses to put accused on trial

UDAYAN KISHORE @ New Delhi

A Delhi court on Friday discharged former chief minister Arvind Kejriwal and 22 others, including deputy CM Manish Sisodia and ex-BRS leader K Kavitha in the alleged excise scam, finding it unworthy of trial as it junked the CBI chargesheet.

Hours later, the CBI moved the Delhi High Court challenging the trial court order.

Trial court special judge Jitendra Singh also pulled up the CBI for procedural lapses, violation of constitutional principles and relying on hearsay evidence. He also found the 'South Group' label for the excise policy accused particularly inappropriate, adding he will recommend a departmental inquiry against the investigating officer of the case.

Arvind Kejriwal gets emotional as he addresses the media on Friday | PTI

> **It's a historic verdict. The court has proved that Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia and AAP are *kattar imaandar* (staunchly honest). I challenge the PM to hold fresh polls in Delhi. If BJP wins over 10 seats, I will quit politics**
>
> — Arvind Kejriwal, AAP convener

> ***Satyamev Jayate* (truth alone triumphs). This (case) was a web of lies. Judiciary has cut right through it. Who will account for the time that I lost with my kids (due to her incarceration for five months)?**
>
> — K Kavitha, Telangana Jagruthi president

"Prosecution case, as presented in the chargesheet, rests largely on surmises, conjectures, and inferential leaps unsupported by cogent material," the judge said.

Singh said that the policy was the outcome of a structured governmental process involving multiple departments, expert committees and cabinet-level approvals, and the decisions, even if later withdrawn or criticised, "cannot by themselves give rise to criminal liability unless supported by clear evidence of quid pro quo, personal gain, or misuse of office".

Prosecution case does not disclose even the threshold of prima facie suspicion, far less the "grave suspicion" mandated by settled principles of criminal jurisprudence, the court said. Observing that the judicial task was not to secure a convenient outcome or to endorse a dominant narrative, but to uphold the rule of law, the judge refused to put the accused on trial.

The judge rejected the charge that Kejriwal as the then CM exercised overarching control over the conspiracy relating to the formulation and implementation of the excise policy, saying the only principal material relied upon to implicate him was the statement of approver, which was "without any independent corroboration".

GDP projected to grow 7.6% in FY26 under new series

PUSHPITA DEY @ New Delhi

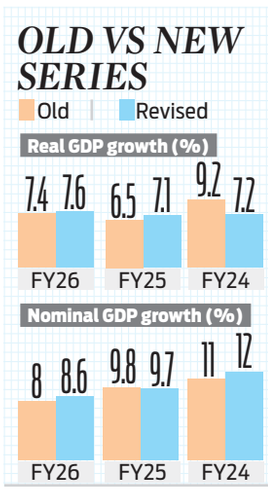
THE Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation on Friday released a new series of annual and quarterly National Accounts with 2022-23 as the base year, replacing the 2011-12 series, and raised India's real GDP growth estimate for FY26 to 7.6% from 7.4% projected earlier.

Quarterly data showed that real GDP growth in Q3 of 2025-26 eased to 7.8% from 8.4% in Q2. In the corresponding year-ago period, the economy recorded 8% growth.

Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran said that given the revised data, strong Q3 performance, and an improving outlook for capital flows and trade frameworks, FY27 real GDP growth projection was revised upward from 6.8-7.2% range to 7-7.4% with upward risk. The CEA added that with full-year growth estimated at 7.6% for FY26, the economy would need to expand by over 7.8% in Q4 to meet the projection.

The base year revision aims to better capture structural changes in the economy, incorporate new data sources, refine estimation methodologies, and enhance coverage and accuracy.

MoSPI Secretary Saurabh Garg highlighted the adoption of double deflation in the new series. "Earlier, single deflation methods were used in several sectors. Now, double deflation has been implemented in agriculture and manufacturing. This means more accurate measurement of real value added."



10L families set to get houses by year-end

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Vijayawada

SPEAKING on budgetary allocation for housing in the Assembly on Friday, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu laid out an ambitious growth vision for Andhra Pradesh. "The coalition government is working to make every poor family's dream of owning a home a reality. Already, over three lakh houses have been handed over to beneficiaries, and by the end of this year, more than 10 lakh families are expected to celebrate housewarming ceremonies," he said.

Naidu urged homeless families to apply for housing benefit, while warning that those indulged in irregularities during the previous regime would face strict legal action. He emphasised that the government's long-term goal is to ensure that by 2029, every poor family will have both a home and a free plot of land. Families without house sites will get two cents in urban areas and three cents in rural areas.

The government has set clear milestones on housing front. Three lakh housewarmings by Ugadi, 2.26 lakh by June, and 2.10 lakh by September. Both the Centre and the State government share the responsibility of providing housing for all, and corrective measures are being taken to address past mismanagement," he explained. P4

'Govt plans to clear ₹2,500 cr Aarogyasri dues under OTS'

S VISWANATH @ Vijayawada

THE State government is contemplating clearing the ₹2,500 crore dues of the YSR Aarogyasri Scheme (Now, NTR Vaidya Seva) left pending to network hospitals by the previous regime, under the One Time Settlement (OTS) scheme.

In an exclusive interview with *TNIE* to mark the launch of AP Dialogues, Minister for Health, Family Welfare and Medical Education Y Satya Kumar Yadav said the Health and the Finance departments are in consultation with the managements of network hospitals and banks to clear the pending dues under the OTS, exuding confidence that the issue will be resolved soon.

Though the NDA government is making prompt payment to network hospitals for treating patients under the NTR Vaidya Seva Scheme now, dues to the tune of ₹2,500 crore under the YSR Aarogyasri left by the previous regime, are still pending. The network hospitals had threatened to stall the NTR Vaidya Seva services if the YSR Aarogyasri dues were not cleared at the earliest. Hence, the government has come up with the OTS option to clear the dues, he said.

EXPRESS EXCLUSIVE

Health Minister Y Satya Kumar Yadav during AP Dialogues in Vijayawada on Friday | PRASANT MADUGULA

"In fact, the NDA government has cleared the bills to the maximum extent under the NTR Vaidya Seva. As we inherited ₹2,500 crore Aarogyasri dues, we are now focusing on clearing them," he said.

The coalition government has spent ₹7,500 crore on the implementation of NTR Vaidya Seva in less than two years, compared to ₹11,500 crore expended by the previous regime on the YSR Aarogyasri in five years. Quality medical treatment worth ₹350 crore is being extended to patients under the Vaidya Seva per month on an average," he said.

> **The coalition government has spent ₹7,500 cr on implementation of NTR Vaidya Seva in less than two years, compared to ₹11,500 crore expended by the previous regime on Aarogyasri in five years. Quality medical treatment worth ₹350 crore is being extended to patients under NTR Vaidya Seva per month**
>
> Satya Kumar, Minister

EXPRESS READ

SC Collegium proposes Lisa Gill as next Chief Justice of AP High Court

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Collegium has recommended transfer of Justice Lisa Gill, Judge, High Court of Punjab and Haryana, to High Court of Andhra Pradesh and for her appointment as the Chief Justice of that High Court with effect from the date the vacancy would arise | P4

T20 HIT-WAVE ICC MEN'S T20 WORLD CUP

Today's Match

7pm: Pakistan vs Sri Lanka (Pallekele)

'EXTRA-MARITAL AFFAIR'

Just before polls, Vijay's wife calls it quits

PRABHAKAR TAMILARASU @ Chennai

SANKGEETHA Vijay, wife of actor-politician and Tamizhaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) leader Vijay Chandrasekar, has filed a divorce petition before the Chengalpattu court alleging cruelty and adultery. The family court has summoned Vijay to appear before it on April 20.

Sankgeetha accused her husband of having an extra-marital relationship with an actress and that he has subjected her to "persistent mental cruelty, neglect and desertion".

If required, she said she would implead the actress as second respondent. She urged the court to hold in-camera proceedings to protect the privacy and dignity of the parties and their children.

On December 3 last, Sankgeetha filed the petition before the Principal District Judge Court, Chengalpattu, under provisions of the Special Marriage Act, 1954.

The petition was transferred to the family court on February 24. After the first hearing in the case on Thursday, the family court adjourned the matter to April 20 and directed Vijay to appear in person.

In her petition, Sankgeetha said the marriage was first registered in the UK on July 10, 1998, and later solemnised according to Hindu rites in Chennai on August 25, 1999. The petition stated that the marriage was initially cordial and that she devoted herself to family life and raising their children while supporting Vijay's professional commitments.

However, she alleged that in April 2021 she discovered that Vijay was involved in an adulterous relationship with an actress, which caused "deep emotional pain and mental suffering". Despite assurances that the relationship would end, she claimed their association continued. Sankgeetha also contended that attempts to resolve the dispute amicably through legal notices and personal discussions between 2021 and 2025 failed. She alleged that financial restrictions were imposed on her and that the marital relationship had irretrievably broken down.

Seeking dissolution of marriage, she has requested permanent alimony, residence at matrimonial home or an equivalent accommodation.

Vijay

Sankgeetha

'Withdrew emotionally, distanced himself'

In her petition, Sankgeetha alleged that Vijay "gradually withdrew emotionally, distanced himself from conjugal life and excluded her from his social and professional engagements"

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ALMANAC TODAY
• **Saturday :** 28/02/2026 • **Year:** Sri Viswavasu • **Aayanam:** Uttarayanam
• **Rutuvu:** Sisira • **Masam:** Phalguna • **Paksham:** Shukla • **Tithi:** Dvadashi 08.43 pm
• **Nakshatram:** Punarvasu 09.35 am • **Durmuhurtham:** 06.26 am - 07.13 am
• **Varjyam:** 05.14 pm - 06.46 pm • **Rahukaalam:** 09.00 am - 10.30 pm

WEATHER WATCH
MIN 21°C | MAX 37°C
FORECAST Mostly Sunny

Sunrise 06.29 am
Sunset 06.20 pm
Moonrise 03.32 pm
Moonset 04.44 am

Red Cross cancer hosp inks pact with Chennai institutes

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Nellore

THE Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) Cancer Hospital in Nellore, which has completed 25 years of service, has signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with leading cancer institutes in Chennai to strengthen its capacity for advanced and specialised care.

As part of the expansion, the hospital will introduce Neuro-Oncology and Hemato-Oncology departments, supported by expert professionals and modern treatment facilities. These additions are expected to enhance comprehensive cancer care for patients from Nellore and neighbouring districts.

Founded in 2001 by philanthropist Jakka Srinivasulu Reddy, the hospital began as a cancer detection centre before evolving into a full-fledged facility. It remains the only cancer hospital in Andhra Pradesh run by the Indian Red Cross Society, and the only Red Cross cancer hospital in India.

Located behind the Government Medical College in Nellore, the hospital is well connected, just 6 km from the railway station and 3.6 km from the RTC Bus Station. Its proximity to the Government General Hospital enables coordinated patient referrals.

The hospital currently operates wings in Medical, Gynaec, Radiation, and Surgical Oncology, with 105 approved beds. Nearly 90 per cent of patients receive treatment under the Dr NTR Vaidya Seva scheme, ensuring affordable access.

Beyond cancer care, the IRCS Nellore branch runs 14 humanitarian and healthcare projects, including a blood centre that conducts regular voluntary donation drives.

"Our focus has always been on delivering quality treatment at an affordable cost. The new services will further strengthen advanced cancer care at the hospital," said V Vijay Kumar Reddy, Chairman of IRCS Nellore.

Consumer panel fines Amazon for wrong delivery

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kurnool

THE Kurnool District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission has partly allowed a complaint filed by Bestha Mahesh of Pasupula village, holding Amazon Seller Services Pvt Ltd liable for deficiency in service and unfair trade practices.

Commission Chairman Karanam Kishore Kumar and Members N Narayana Reddy and S Nazima Kausar heard Consumer Complaint No. 170/2025.

Mahesh had ordered two 5-gram 24K gold bars on June 19, 2025 through Amazon's online platform, paying ₹58,108. Despite clearly specifying Kurnool as the delivery address, the consignment was delivered to Muzaffarpur/Kolkata in West Bengal.

Although the company later refunded the amount, the commission observed that delivering valuable goods such as gold to the wrong address amounted to negligence.

It ruled that Amazon could not evade responsibility by claiming it was only an intermediary.

The commission directed the company to pay ₹50,000 as compensation for mental agony, ₹10,000 towards litigation costs, and ₹2 lakh as punitive damages to the National Consumer Welfare Fund.

Chief Justice of India to visit Tirupati

Surya Kant to take part in Bhumi Puja ceremony for District Court Complex at Daminedu

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Tirupati

THE Chief Justice of India Surya Kant will visit Tirupati district on February 28 ahead of the Bhumi Puja ceremony for the new Tirupati District Court complex at Daminedu, scheduled for March 1.

Tirupati District Collector Dr S Venkateswar has directed officials to ensure comprehensive arrangements for the prestigious visit.

At a review meeting held on Friday, he instructed departments to coordinate on security, sanitation, vehicle parking, helipad facilities, and other essential amenities. Emergency medical teams will be on standby, while fire safety measures and uninterrupted power supply will also be ensured.

The Collector noted that senior judges are expected to attend the ceremony. Nodal officers will be appointed to oversee arrangements and prevent lapses.

He stressed the importance of coordination among police, fire, and other departments to ensure smooth conduct of the programme.

District Superintendent of Police Subbarayudu emphasised the need for stringent security measures during the Chief Justice's visit. He said nodal officers would be designated specifically to oversee security arrangements.

Following the review meeting, the Collector, SP, and other officials inspected the Daminedu site to assess preparations. They issued instructions to ensure the event is conducted successfully.

In view of the Chief Justice's tour, police carried out anti-sabotage checks across Tirupati and in Tirumala to prevent any untoward incidents.

The Bhumi Puja marks the beginning of construction for the new district court complex, a significant development for the region's judicial infrastructure. The visit of the Chief Justice and senior judges underscores the importance of the project.

District Collector S Venkateswar reviews arrangements for Chief Justice of India Surya Kant's visit, in Tirupati on Friday | EXPRESS

₹2.52 cr seized from car in Kadapa

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kadapa

YERRAGUNTLA police seized ₹2.52 crore in cash from two men during a vehicle check at Yerraguntla in Kadapa district on Friday evening.

Police intercepted a car travelling from Muddanoor to Yerraguntla as part of routine checks and found ₹2.52 crore in ₹500 denomination notes inside. The occupants failed to produce valid documents or bills to justify possession or transport of the money.

The two men, identified as residents of Gopavaram village in Proddutur mandal, told police they were employees of a gold trader from Proddutur. They claimed they had delivered ornaments to a person named Shankar Narayana in Guntakal and were returning with the cash.

Police registered a case, seized the money, and produced it before a court after the occupants failed to submit supporting transaction records.

Circle Inspector Viswanatha Reddy said further investigation is underway to trace the source of the cash.

Census data vital for all govt policies, says Collector

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Tirupati

ANNAMAYYA District Collector Nishanth Kumar has stressed that census data underpins government policy decisions and national development planning.

Speaking at a training programme on Census Phase I, House Listing and Housing Census, at Aditya Engineering College in Madanapalle, he said accurate and transparent data collection is essential for welfare schemes. He urged officials to record household details responsibly and strictly follow guidelines.

The Collector noted that census figures guide planning in education, healthcare, housing, employment, and infrastructure, while also influencing Finance Commission allocations, delimitation of constituencies, and resource management.

India has conducted a census every decade since 1872. The postponed 2021 exercise has resumed, with a new "Self Enumeration" facility allowing citizens to submit family details online or via mobile app.

Grahana Mela wall posters released at Sri Kurma Kshetra

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kurnool

ORGANISERS on Friday released wall posters and pamphlets for upcoming Grahana Mela at Nallagutta Sri Kurma Kshetra in Kurnool city.

Devotees will observe Ketugrasta Sampoorna Chandra Grahanam on March 3, with the eclipse occurring between 3:19 pm and 6:46 pm. Temple organiser AG Naresh said priests will perform rituals including Ksheerabhishekam, Jalabhishekam, mantra japam, meditation, and pujas to Swayambhu Sri Kurma Narayana Swamy. He noted that the temple will remain open for prayers throughout the eclipse, unlike many temples that close, and urged devotees to attend.

The poster release programme was held at Sri Lalita Peetham under the chairmanship of founder Sri Guru Meda Subrahmanyam Swamy. Doctors, social leaders, and spiritual figures attended and extended support for the successful conduct of the Grahana Mela.

Police install 822 CCTV cameras in Kurnool to enhance surveillance

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kurnool

KURNOOL district police have stepped up surveillance by installing 722 Matrix CCTV cameras and 100 AI-enabled cameras across the city, warning traffic violators and vehicle thieves of strict action.

District Superintendent of Police Vikrant Patil said in a press statement Friday that the cameras have been placed at major roads, junctions, and busy areas, with personnel monitoring the network round the clock from the Police Command Control Centre.

He explained that AI cameras will automatically detect violations and generate e-challans. Offences under watch include rash driving, overspeeding, minors driving, signal jumping, mobile use while driving, and improper parking.

Anantapur medicos selected for south zone chess meet

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Anantapur

TWO students of Government Medical College, Anantapur — B Deepak and K Lokesh Naik — have been selected to represent Dr NTR University of Health Sciences in the South India Inter-University Chess Tournament, scheduled from March 2 to 6 at Bharathidasan University, Tamil Nadu.

Deepak and Lokesh secured second and third positions respectively in the university-level selections. Principal Prof. M. Vijayashri congratulated them, praising their consistent performance and strategic play, and expressed confidence they would excel at the South Zone championship. Physical Director M Narasimha Naik highlighted growing student success in sports alongside academics. Faculty and staff extended best wishes.

SPMVV celebrates Science Day with 'Lab to Land' theme

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Tirupati

SRI Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam (SPMVV) celebrated National Science Day on Friday with a science exhibition organised by its School of Sciences. Vice-Chancellor Prof. V Uma inaugurated the event, urging that research move from 'lab to land' to benefit society. Students from multiple departments showcased experiments and models.

On the same day, SPMVV signed an MoU with the Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy to collaborate on integrative medicine research for chronic diseases.

EXPRESS READ

YVU fine arts students visit Pushpagiri temple

Kadapa: Fine Arts students of Yogi Vemana University visited the Pushpagiri temple complex as part of their curriculum. Fine Arts Department head Dr Kota Mrutyunjaya Rao said the exercise helped students study temple architecture and sculptural styles. Thirty-five students sketched and painted onsite, guided by faculty

Cordon and search op held in Kadapa colony

Kadapa: Police carried out a cordon and search operation in Sriram Nagar Colony and Disabled Colony under RIMS Police Station limits early Thursday. Supervised by DSP A Venkateshwarulu, the drive led to seizure of a motorbike without documents. Residents were briefed on cybercrime prevention and women's safety

Two YSRCP corporators join TDP in Kadapa

Kadapa: Two YSRCP corporators of the Kadapa Municipal Corporation joined TDP on Friday. Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu inducted Shiva Kotireddy and Ramalakshmana Reddy in the presence of party leaders, urging them to strengthen the TDP ahead of forthcoming municipal elections

PESIMSR holds 18th Graduation Ceremony

Tirupati: PES Institute of Medical Sciences & Research (PESIMSR), Kuppam, held its 18th Graduation Ceremony on Friday. Chief Guest Dr P Chandrasekhar addressed the gathering. Certificates were awarded to 167 MBBS and 95 postgraduate students, with Dr V Durga receiving the Gold Medal for Best Outgoing Student

Horoscopes By Holiday

HOLIDAY MATHIS

28th February : Cosmic Conjunction Many of us will be assessing the value of an item, deal, relationship or focus -- especially one that takes more than it gives. A conjunction of Mercury and Venus urges us to lean into subjectivity and personalize the transaction. The most pertinent question to pose is not "what's it worth?" but "what's it worth to me?"

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr. 20)
True: There are things you can't unsee. Truer: Nothing you see can be unseen. Each vision that goes into your beautiful brain is stored on some level, conscious or unconscious. So put yourself where the sights will fortify and inspire you.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 - May 20)
Pleasure with purpose is the theme. It's as though the universe knows you are meant for beauty, deserving of loyalty and the perfect candidate for enjoying the comforts bestowed upon you -- so savor the day.

GEMINI (May 21 - June 21)
In matters of fun, comedy and entertainment, playing it safe can be boring. Take some chances. Up the ante. It's ironic. Once you start creating more excitement, you'll see that it's not even a risky thing to do. It's something they welcome.

CANCER (June 22 - July 22)
You experience your feelings as information, not instructions, and you'll find them to be especially articulate today, telling you what is and is not working for you lately. Listen closely, then respond with care instead of reflex.

LEO (July 23 - Aug. 22)
You're not chasing the spotlight, but it finds and follows you anyway. Lead with playfulness and you'll get the attention that makes the game fun. Fortune favors bold joy over polished performance. Let laughter be your authority.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 - Sept. 22)
Some plans seem to come together by magic, but of course "magic" is often a trick a long time in the making and one which takes an even longer time to practice and perfect. You're doing the work and your "ta-da" moment is coming.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 - Oct. 23)
There's part of you working overtime to get it right. It's admirable. Useful! Until it starts crowding the moment with second-guessing. Bypass the trouble by staying with what you're doing instead of judging it. That's when productivity gets fun.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 21)
Relationships may be hard work, but they are also delicate work best done with precision instruments. A light touch is most effective. As you already know, it's best to work from the heart instead of building intellectual arguments and strategies.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21)
Home is a starting place. It's where the story begins. As Dorothy learned from her shoes, even when you're far from your origins, they are with you in every single step. Three clicks and you're back.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19)
The emphasis is on reciprocal and uplifting relationships where energy flows both ways. They'll leave you feeling happier. When your world includes variety and mutuality, your thoughts even out, your emotions regulate and life feels lighter.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18)
Your fears and doubts are seductive. But so are your dreams. Keep coming back to your fantasies and plans. The more you add to them, change, tweak and refine them, the more they will excite and empower you.

PISCES (Feb. 19 - Mar 20)
You've gathered the information you needed, and you're making right moves. Repeat this enough and it will become second nature. Remember, mistakes don't mean you owe yourself admonishment. This is all a learning process.

Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle

						3		
	7			2	8		4	1
9						8		7
		3		8			7	6
			5	3	6			
8	6			4		9		
7		9						3
4	8		3	7			2	
		1						

3	7	5	9	6	1	4	2	8
1	4	6	3	8	2	9	7	5
2	8	9	7	5	4	6	3	1
7	1	4	2	9	8	3	5	6
9	5	3	4	7	6	8	1	2
8	6	2	1	3	5	7	4	9
5	9	1	8	4	7	2	6	3
4	2	8	6	1	3	5	9	7
6	3	7	5	2	9	1	8	4

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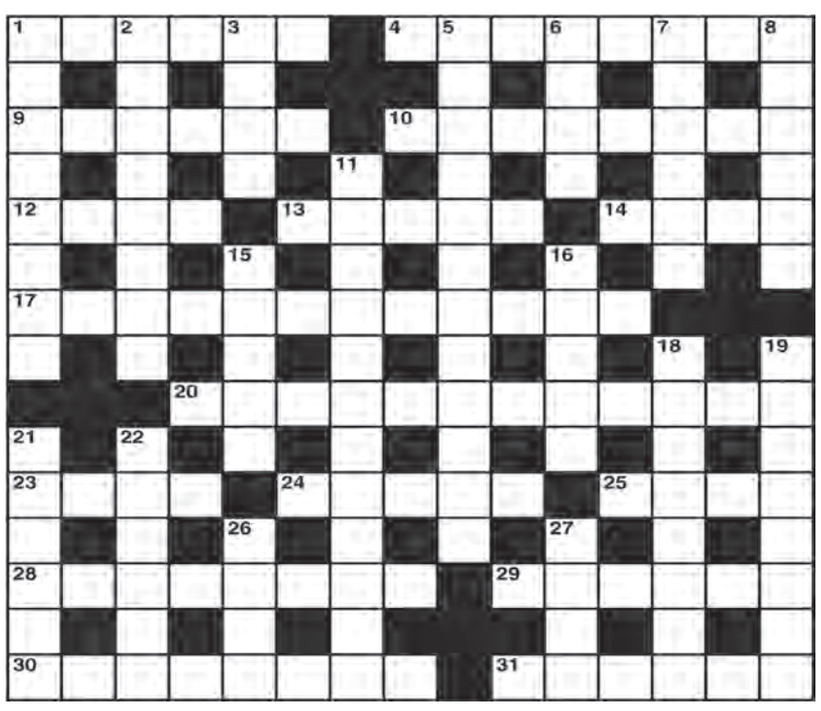
Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3X3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



CROSS WORD

ACROSS
1 A good man in the mine though too old now (4,2)
4 Be in a group but seem to behave independently (3,1,4)
9 Love duets freshly turned out (6)
10 Impressive meat and chip stew (8)
12 Every single fruit is less soft (4)
13 Ancient estate of Roman origin (5)
14 Charge is about right on the house (4)
17 Hardly bright ideas! (4,8)
20 Invitation to drink for the successful law student? (4,2,3,3)
23 Natural end of the range (4)
24 Don't sit where the dearest seats are (5)
25 Sustained hunger (4)
28 He superintends - a prophet? (8)
29 It provides tuneful songs for male drivers (6)
30 It defends against intrusion in place of a lock (8)
31 Mature folk left in a flurry of dust (6)

DOWN
1 There's a profit from this form of seed crop (8)
2 It helps if you require a frame-up (4,4)
3 Time to change article (4)
5 Such land is an accepted basis of discussion (6,6)
6 Yearn to feel discomfort (4)
7 A rigid back (6)
8 Automatic kettles must carry this label (6)
11 Educated postman? (3,2,7)
15 Grub stake organised (5)
16 Feeling irritable? (5)
18 Unusual sort of moral ban (8)
19 They broke the law and stowed away in ships (8)
21 Don't encourage delay (3,3)
22 The poet's always under the car of course (6)
26 He employs us with hesitation (4)
27 Sally is right to help (4)

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTIONS

Across: 1 Sprat, 4 Egotist, 8 Rib, 9 Testament, 10 Mangler, 11 Issue, 13 Shocks, 15 Static, 18 Sedan, 19 Portray, 21 Prospered, 23 Ida, 24 Andante, 25 Enemy.

Down: 1 Shrimps, 2 Robin Hood, 3 Total, 4 Ensure, 5 On a diet, 6 Ire, 7 Title, 12 Saturnine, 14 Kingpin, 16 Crybaby, 17 Sparse, 18 Sepia, 20 Ridge, 22 Old.

JUMBLE

UNSCRAMBLE THESE JUMBLES, ONE LETTER TO EACH SQUARE, TO FORM FOUR ORDINARY WORDS.

BY DAVID L. HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

RNFOT

SNTTU

REAVTN

CEDITE

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

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(Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumbles: DECAY HALVE SHADOW LIMBER
Answer: The offshore drilling platform required a big team. Together, they produced — "CREWED" OIL

ACCUSED KILLED Unidentified assailants killed 24-year-old murder accused Pechcheti Upendra Babu at Madugula mandal in Anakapalle on Thursday. Police said he faced five murder cases and was recently released on bail. Probe is on

3 devotees from K'taka die in Nandyal road mishap

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kurnool

THREE devotees from Karnataka died in a road accident on the NH near Jagadurthi in Dhone mandal of Nandyal on Friday. A Skoda car travelling from Bengaluru to the Srisailam Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple rammed into a crane moving ahead on NH, police said.

Shanta, 28, her son Siddharth, 4, and daughter Bhargavi, 6, died on the spot due to the impact. Shanta's husband, Pramod, sustained injuries.

Rescue personnel shifted Pramod to the government hospital in Dhone. Doctors later referred him to Kurnool GGH as his condition worsened. The family, residents of Bengaluru, was travelling to Srisailam for darshan. Probe is underway.

Space City Cluster on fast-track in Tirupati

We are developing Block 1 & 2 together to create integrated ecosystem rather than isolated pockets, says Collector

NETHAJI KUMARAMANGALAM @ Tirupati

TIRUPATI district has fast-tracked the proposed Space City Industrial Cluster at Routh Suramala near temple town Srikalahasti, positioning it as a flagship project in AP's industrial expansion.

The district administration has placed the project on top priority, following the vision of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, to transform the region into an industrial hub focused on the space and advanced manufacturing sectors.

The proposed cluster lies about 60 kilometres from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota, offering logistical advantages for space manufacturing, component supply and testing units. Officials expect the proximity to India's keyu launch centre to attract space-tech firms seeking seamless integration between manufacturing and launch operations.

The project will focus on spacecraft and rocket manufacturing, component assembly, electronics and advanced testing facilities. Officials have prioritised low-risk, high-value manufacturing such as precision components and electronics assembly over traditional heavy industries.

The district administration, through the Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (APIIC), has proposed integrated development of Block 1 and Block 2 to create a seamless industrial ecosystem. Authorities have expanded the activation area from an initial 600 acres to 4,800 acres in Phase A, with a long-term concept plan covering nearly 15,000 acres. Officials have planned plot sizes in parcels of 2, 3 and

5 acres to promote multi-storeyed industrial structures.

Authorities have proposed inviting the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) and allocating about five acres within the cluster to boost regulatory collaboration.

Tirupati District Collector S Venkateswar said, "We are developing Block 1 and Block 2 together to create an integrated space ecosystem rather than isolated industrial pockets. Once the master plans are finalised, we will conduct stakeholder consultations with industrialists, technocrats and space sector experts. The government, along with APIIC, will provide external linkages such as roads, water supply, power infrastructure and trunk utilities as per the master plan. The North Cluster will be reserved for future expansion as growth picks up."

The master plan incorporates expert feedback, including inputs from former ISRO Chairman S Somanath. He has advised that Block 1 and Block 2 be developed together to ensure an integrated ecosystem. He suggested a site visit to the Aerospace Division of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited to assess manufacturing scale and cargo movement requirements.

Phase A includes site assessment, base map preparation, demand estimation, technical assessment of external infrastructure needs and preparation of a detailed master plan for 4,800 acres. It will cover land-use zoning, circulation planning and marketing material development.

Phase B will focus on infrastructure master planning, preliminary design of roads and utilities, power sourcing and distribution plans, financial analysis, bid documentation and node-level concept planning for the larger 15,000-acre cluster. The cluster will include dedicated zones for rocket manufacturing, spacecraft manufacturing, technical and testing infrastructure, and logistics with heavy cargo corridors.

EXPRESS READ

JKSA convenor alleges harassment in Kurnool

Kurnool: Jammu & Kashmir Students Association (JKSA) National Convenor Nasir Khuehami has submitted a complaint to the AP Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister alleging harassment of Kashmiri students at Government College of Nursing, Kurnool. He said BSc Nursing students admitted under the PM's Special Scholarship Scheme face discrimination based on identity and religion

Youth killed in bike crash on Varadhi

Tirupati: A 23-year-old man, Adam Dwaraka of Tatayyagunta, died in a road accident on Garuda Varadhi in Tirupati on Friday. He was returning from a wedding in Tiruchanur when his bike reportedly lost control near Bliss Circle and hit a wall on the flyover. Dwaraka died on the spot. The pillion rider suffered minor injuries and fled. East Police Station SI Hemadri registered a case and probe is underway

Lokesh to launch Blue Jet proj today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Vijayawada

HRD Minister Nara Lokesh on Saturday will attend the ground breaking ceremony of Blue Jet Healthcare Ltd, one of India's leading manufacturers of contrast media intermediates used in medical imaging.

The ₹2,300-crore greenfield pharmaceutical manufacturing facility coming up at Rambilli Industrial Park in Anakapalle, will be a key scale-up of India's specialty pharma and CDMO capabilities.

Spread across over 102 acres near Visakhapatnam, the project will create new production capacities for contrast media intermediates, high-intensity sweeteners and multipurpose chemistry units. The facility will be developed in phases and is targeted to become operational in 2028-29.

Founded in 1968 as Jet Chemicals Private Limited, Blue Jet Healthcare has evolved into a science-led specialty pharmaceutical and healthcare ingredients company headquartered in Maharashtra.

At present, it operates as an integrated Contract Development and Manufacturing Organisation (CDMO), supplying advanced pharmaceutical intermediates, APIs, contrast media intermediates and high-intensity sweeteners to customers across India, Europe, the United States and other international markets. The company is recognised as one of India's leading players in contrast media intermediates and an early pioneer of saccharin manufacturing in India.

Over decades, it has built expertise in manufacturing scale-up and global regulatory-compliant production, positioning itself as a supplier to multinational pharmaceutical companies.

The Rambilli project entails an investment of approximately ₹2,300 crore and is expected to generate 1,750 direct jobs and 250 indirect jobs, strengthening the industrial profile of the Vizag economic region.

The facility will integrate an advanced Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) with marine discharge connectivity and incorporate Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) technologies. As per the company profile, it is designed to enable a 70% reduction in energy consumption while recovering 90-95% of wastewater - a critical factor as global pharma supply chains tighten ESG and compliance benchmarks.

The investment is expected to deepen India's domestic manufacturing base in high-value specialty intermediates at a time when global pharmaceutical companies are increasingly supply chains beyond single geographies.

Ayesha murder case comes to a close

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Vijayawada

THE 19-year-long quest for justice in the sensational murder of B-Pharmacy student Ayesha Meera came to a poignant and heart-wrenching close on Friday, as officials of the CBI handed over her mortal remains to her parents for cremation in Vijayawada court.

The development followed the court's acceptance of CBI's closure report in case. Acting on court's direction, the agency returned Ayesha's remains, which had exhumed in 2019 for a re-postmortem exam as part of re-investigation.

Family members said the final rites were conducted in Tenali in accordance with Muslim traditions, marking an end to years of legal battles.

Parents of Ayesha Meera carry her remains from the court in Vijayawada on Friday | PRASANT MADUGULA

The CBI informed the court that it had found no admissible evidence to prosecute any individual in the crime. The court observed that there was no material warranting probe. It recorded the parents' dissatisfaction with closure report and noted their submission that fiscal constraints prevented them from pursuing legal remedies.

Shamshad Begum said, "For 19 years, I have waited and fought for justice for my innocent daughter. Despite our battle, we have not got justice. I pray that those who killed my daughter should receive brutal punishment."

The family is planning to seek an appointment with CM Naidu to request further action. Meanwhile, mild tension prevailed as Women activists accompanied the family to express solidarity.

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH PUNE
(An Autonomous Institution of the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)
Dr. Homi Bhabha Road, Pune 411008 | Website: www.iiserpune.ac.in
IISER PUNE

Admission to Masters and Research Programme - August 2026

IISER Pune invites online applications for admission to the M.Sc., Integrated Ph.D., Ph.D., International Ph.D. and Industry funded Ph.D. programme for the August 2026 session.

Details of eligibility and application procedure are available at:

https://www.iiserpune.ac.in/education/admissions

Bharat Coking Coal Limited
(A Mini Ratna Company)
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)

NOTICE

All the tenders issued by Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on website of **BCCL "www.bcclweb.in"** Coal India Limited (CIL) e-procurement portal **"https://coalindiatenders.nic.in"** and Central Public Procurement portal **"https://eprocure.gov.in"** In addition, procurement is also done through GeM portal **"https://gem.gov.in".** This is applicable to all Open (Domestic/Global) Tenders issued through e-procurement portal of CIL.

This information is also available on BCCL website www.bcclweb.in

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
A.P. TOWNSHIP & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED
Block-2, besides CRDA New Building, Rayapudi, Amaravati

Name of the work: APTIDCO Circle - APTIDCO - Construction of Balance Physical Infrastructure such as Internal Roads, Storm Water rains, Water Supply, Sewerage Network, Septic Tank etc., in the approved layouts at Pamidi, Gooty, Hindupur, Puttaparthi, Kadiri, Anantapuramu and Rayadurgam in Anantapur District under Phase-II & III AHP-PMAY-HFA (U) with 2 years defect liability period under Lump sum Contract - Reg (% percentage tender). - **Publication of E-Tender Notice for the work relates to Kurnool Circle - Requested** - Reg.
ECV Amount :- Rs.62,47,56,700/- for Ananthapuramu District, Kurnool Division

E-Procurement Notice

Tender Notice No : NIT No: 10/Ananthapuramu Infra/DCTO/Kurnool/APTIDCO/2025-26, Dated : 24.02.2026

No. of Works	01
Bid Document Downloading Start Date	27.02.2026 @ 11:00 Hrs
Bid Document Downloading Close Date	17.03.2026 @ 14:00 Hrs
Last Date and Time for Receipt of Bids	17.03.2026 @ 17:00 Hrs
Financial Bid Opening Date	18.03.2026 @ 17:00 Hrs

Name & Address of the Concerned Officer : Officer Office of the Superintending Engineer, D.No.81/347-F-4-1, 1st Floor, ward No.81, Vidya Nagar Colony, MPFA Manzil Building, Plot No.30, V.V.S.Function Hall Road, near Gooty Road, Kurnool-518003.

The details can be seen in website http://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in thereof Contact No: 9701644955.

Sd/- Managing Director, APTIDCO, AMARAVATHI.
DIPR No.4874PP/CL/ADVT/1/1/2021-22, Dt.27/02/2026

SAINIK SCHOOL KALIKIRI,ANNAMAYYA DIST (AP)
(Under the aegis of Sainik Schools Society, Ministry of Defence)
Advt No. SSKAL/1010/RECT/2026-02, dated 27 Feb 2026
CANCELLATION OF ADVERTISEMENT TGT (SCIENCE) ON CONTRACTUAL BASIS

Reference is made to advertisement published on **08 Nov 2025** in Employment News,Andhra Jyothi and The New Indian Express for recruitment of TGT (Science) in Sainik School Kalikiri, on contractual basis. The advertisement has been cancelled due to administrative reasons. The registration fee paid by the candidates will be refunded within 45 days from date of this notice. **Separate mails would be sent to those who had applied in response to the initial advertisement.** Affected candidates to forward Bank a/c details (Account Holder Name, Account No, Bank Name, Branch & IFSC Code) to email ID contact@sskal.ac.in by **10 Mar 2026** for refund of Registration Fees.

Sd/- PRINCIPAL

Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited
(A wholly owned Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
(CIN: U04010KA2002SGC030438)

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPP portal only)

BESCOM invites tenders through kpp platform from eligible Bidders for "Preventive and Breakdown maintenance of all makes of RMUs of all combination of both DAS and Non DAS RMUs in BESCOM area for a period of one year **under Total Turnkey Basis"**

Sl.No.	Description	Enquiry/Indent No.
1	North Circle	**BESCOM/2025-26/EL/ WORK_INDENT1042**
2	Davangere Division	**BESCOM/2025-26/EL/ WORK_INDENT1043**

Bid Documents available: **03.03.2026.** Last date for Bid Submission: **02.04.2026, 17:00 Hrs.** Opening of Bid Document: **04.04.2026, 17:15 Hrs.**

The Tender documents can be obtained through KPP Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Aspiring bidders need to register on KPP Portal. Further, bidders can take assistance with KPPP helpdesk contact numbers (**+91-80-46010000, +91-080-68948777**) or email at **support@eprochelpdesk.com.** Furtherdetails can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

Sd/-Chief General Manager(Ele.), Procurement, Corporate Office, BESCOM, 2nd Floor, K.R.Circle, Bangalore-560 001.

For Electricity related complaints call: 1912
Download BESCOM Mithra Mobile APP

Government of India
Department of Space
ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC)
Mahendragiri P.O., Tirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu– 627 133, India

E-TENDER NOTICE Dated : 26-02-2026

On Behalf of the President of India, item-rate tenders are invited through **e-tendering** for the following works:

Sl. No.	Name of Works [Civil Works - Sl.no: 01 & 02: Electrical Work - Sl.no: 03]	Estimated Cost ₹ (in Lakhs)	Period of completion	EMD(₹)
1	NIT no:IPRC/CMG/TD/e-178/MI/CPH-78/2025-26			
	Water Proofing treatment over the roof of CFT facility, IPRC, Mahendragiri. (Civil work)	13.07	04 (Four months)	26,200
2	NIT no:IPRC/CMG/TD/e-179/MI/CPH-79/2025-26			
	Providing fencing around the Deflector pit, Assembly room and Cylinder yard at PTS Test Facility, IPRC, Mahendragiri. (Civil work)	20.76	03 (Three months)	41,600
3	NIT no:IPRC/CMG/TD/e-180/MI/ELE-55/2025-26			
	Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of APFC Panels at MRS, IPRC, Mahendragiri. (Electrical work)	22.52	06 (Six months)	45,100

Dates for Online Request : From 28-02-2026 [1000 hours] To: 16-03-2026 [2330 hours]

Due Time & Date of Submission : 19-03-2026 [1000 hours]

For further details visit: www.isro.gov.in/tenders (or) www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO.

For eligibility criteria and other details, interested tenderers may please refer to the detailed bilingual (Hindi-English) Notice Inviting Tenders (NIT) on the website https://www.isro.gov.in/Tenders.html and tender free view at https://www.tenderwizard.com/isro

Note : All future correspondence (Corrigenda) for the above work(s) shall be published only on the websites mentioned above.

GROUP HEAD, CMG, IPRC.

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INDIAN INSTITUTES OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH
(Autonomous Institutes of National Importance under the Ministry of Education, Government of India)

IISER BERHAMPUR | IISER BHOPAL | IISER KOLKATA | IISER MOHALI | IISER PUNE | IISER THIRUVANANTHAPURAM | IISER TIRUPATI

ADMISSION NOTICE 2026
5-YEAR BS-MS (DUAL DEGREE), 4-YEAR BS and B.TECH DEGREE PROGRAMS

EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES IN SCIENCE FOR INQUISITIVE YOUNG MINDS

Applications are invited from highly motivated students studying in the science stream for admission to 5-Year BS-MS (Dual degree), 4-Year B.Tech and 4-Year BS degree programs in Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs) at Berhampur, Bhopal, Kolkata, Mohali, Pune, Thiruvananthapuram and Tirupati for the academic year 2026-27.

For information, please visit https://www.iiseradmission.in/

PROGRAMS

- 5-Year BS-MS dual degree with Major in any one subject (Biology/Chemistry/Physics/Mathematics) - available in all IISERs
- 5-Year BS-MS dual degree with Major in Computational and Data Science/Earth & Environmental Science/Environmental Science/Geology -available in select IISERs
- 4-Year BS in Economics Sciences at IISER Bhopal
- 4-Year BS in Economic and Statistical Sciences at IISER Tirupati
- 4-Year B.Tech in Chemical Engineering at IISER Bhopal
- 4-Year B.Tech in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at IISER Bhopal
- 4-Year B.Tech in Data Science & Engineering at IISER Bhopal

ATTRACTIVE FEATURES

- Curricula distributed in breadth and depth with an opportunity to learn subjects from internationally reputed academicians
- Candidates choose their specializations only after exploring different subjects
- Exposure to the frontline research areas at the world-class laboratories/research groups
- Research internships and year-long research projects leading to MS thesis with opportunities for interdisciplinary research
- Fully residential campuses with well-equipped hostels and medical facilities
- Opportunities for sports, cultural, and other extracurricular activities for holistic development

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

- Applications must be submitted online only at **https://www.iiseradmission.in/**
- Applicants must carefully go through all instructions on the website, including information brochure and FAQ, before filling the application form.
- A non-refundable application fee of INR 2,000 for General, EWS, OBC and OBC-NCL categories, INR 1,000 for PwD, Kashmiri Migrants/Kashmiri Pandits/Non-Migrant Kashmiri Hindu Families and SC/ST categories and INR 12,000 for candidates applying under Foreign National category is applicable.

ELIGIBILITY

Candidates who have passed class XII/equivalent examination or minimum 3-year Diploma program in science stream (in 2024, 2025 or 2026) with minimum 60% marks (55% for SC/ST/PwD) are eligible to apply for IISER Aptitude Test (IAT) 2026.

For more details visit:
https://www.iiseradmission.in/#eligibility
All admissions will be only through IAT 2026

SCHOLARSHIP

Admitted students may be eligible for competitive INSPIRE scholarship as per the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India norms.

IMPORTANT DATES

Application Portal Opens on: **Thursday, March 5, 2026**
Last Date for Online Applications: **Monday, April 13, 2026**
IISER Aptitude Test: **Sunday, June 7, 2026 (9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon IST)**

All inquiries must be addressed to: **CHAIRPERSON, JOINT ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE 2026**
Email: askjac2026@iiserbpr.ac.in , Website: https://www.iiseradmission.in/#home
Phone: +91 7205457461 (2:00 to 5:00 PM IST, Working Days)

SCAN ME

POCSO ARREST Police in Kavali arrested a 57-year-old man in a POCSO case after he allegedly lured two minor girls with snacks and behaved inappropriately. A complaint was filed, and the accused was remanded to judicial custody

Collegium moots Justice Lisa Gill as next CJ of AP HC

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY
@ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court Collegium has resolved to recommend transfer of Justice Lisa Gill, judge at High Court of Punjab and Haryana, to the High Court of AP and for her appointment as the Chief Justice of that High Court with effect from the date the vacancy would arise.

The recommendation was made at a meeting of the collegium on Thursday.

"The collegium has taken a policy decision that in order to strengthen the efficiency and quality of administration of justice, a judge who is proposed to take over the high court as its chief justice may be transferred well in advance, preferably two months before the vacancy arises, so that such recommendee in the meantime becomes well conversant with the affairs of that high court and assumes charge of the office of chief justice, on the retirement of incumbent chief justice," the SC Collegium said in a statement.

In another development, the collegium also approved the proposals for appointment of nine advocates - Md Nadim Seraj, Ranjan Kumar Jha, Kumar Manish, Sanjeev Kumar, Girijish Kumar, Alok Kumar, Raj Kumar, Rana Vikram Singh, and Vikash Kumar - as judges of the High Court of Judicature at Patna.

The Collegium has recommended the appointment of Kerala HC judge Justice Sushrut Arvind Dharmadhikari as the next CJ of the Madras High Court. The decision was taken as the incumbent Madras High Court Chief Justice, Manindra Mohan Shrivastava, is due to retire on March 5.

CM Naidu to launch free HPV vax drive today

Programme to cover 3.45 lakh 14-year-old girls across AP through 1,645 health centres to prevent cervical cancer

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Vijayawada

IN a major public health initiative aimed at curbing cervical cancer, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu will inaugurate the free HPV (Human Papillomavirus) vaccination programme for 14-year-old girls across Andhra Pradesh.

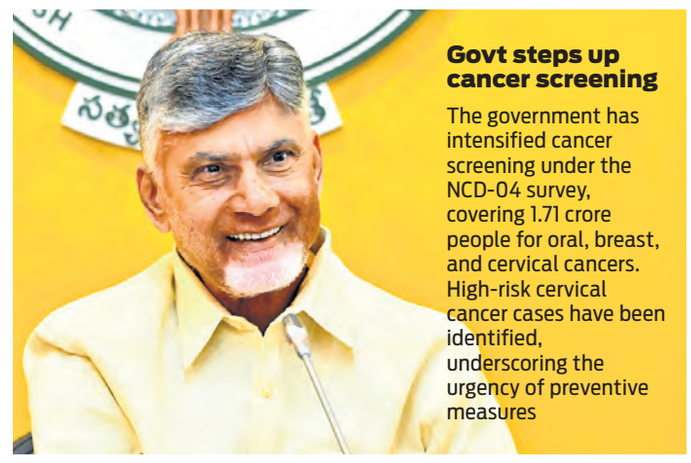
The State government plans to vaccinate approximately 3.45 lakh girls, beginning Saturday, with the launch event scheduled at Cheepurupalli in Vizianagaram district. The programme coincides with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's nationwide rollout from Ajmer, Rajasthan.

Health Minister Satyakumar Yadav announced that the vaccines will be distributed through 1,645 primary and urban health centres equipped with cold storage facilities. In the first phase, the state has already received 1,90,800 doses, with a total expenditure of ₹14.11 crore earmarked for the campaign.

The vaccination programme will continue for three months, with certificates issued to all recipients. Coordination between the Education Department, Women and Child Welfare Department, and other agencies will ensure smooth implementation.

According to official data, Andhra Pradesh has 3,45,377 girls aged 14 years. Kurnool district has the highest number at 23,957, while Polavaram records the lowest at 2,777. Vaccinations will be administered on dates fixed by the Union government, and additional doses will be supplied as needed. Parents' consent will be obtained before administering the vaccine.

The initiative comes against the backdrop of alarming cancer statistics. Between 2021 and 2025, the State recorded 75,000 new cancer cases, with an average of 30,000 deaths annually. Of the 38,055 women who died due to breast, cervical, and ovarian cancers during this period, 53% succumbed to breast cancer, while 31% died from cervical cancer.



Govt steps up cancer screening

The government has intensified cancer screening under the NCD-04 survey, covering 1.71 crore people for oral, breast, and cervical cancers. High-risk cervical cancer cases have been identified, underscoring the urgency of preventive measures

Minister Yadav stressed that HPV vaccination would provide long-term protection against cervical cancer, which is the second most common cancer among women in India.

The HPV vaccine, administered in a 0.5 ml dose, protects against four major virus strains (types 6, 11, 16, and 18) that cause cervical cancer.

Officials assured that the vaccine is safe, with only minor side effects such as mild fever or pain at the injection site, which subside within two days. Recipients will be observed for 30 minutes post-vaccination before being allowed to leave.

The state has established 1,645 cold chain points to store and distribute the vaccine, with the highest number in Srikakulam (85), followed by Kadapa (77). Medical staff have already been trained, and the entire program will be monitored through the U-WIN digital platform for real-time data tracking.

A State-level control room will oversee the campaign, and citizens can report issues via the 104 helpline, available round the clock.

The government has also intensified cancer screening under the NCD-04 survey, covering 1.71 crore people for oral, breast, and cervical cancers. High-risk cervical cancer cases have already been identified, underscoring the urgency of preventive measures.

Yadav noted that his first official signature as Health Minister was on the cancer survey file, reflecting the government's commitment to tackling women's health challenges.

This initiative marks a significant step in Andhra Pradesh's fight against cervical cancer, combining vaccination, screening, and awareness to safeguard women's health. The government hopes that widespread HPV immunisation will drastically reduce future cancer cases and mortality rates.

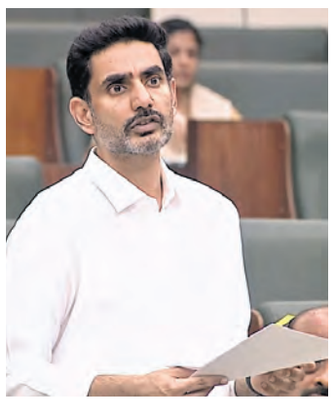
VIGILANCE TO PROBE IRREGULARITIES COMMITTED BY AU EX-VC: LOKESH

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Vijayawada

ALLEGING that Andhra University in Visakhapatnam had turned into an office of the YSRCP during the previous regime, Minister for HRD and IT Nara Lokesh informed the AP Legislative Assembly that a vigilance inquiry is under way to unearth the irregularities allegedly committed by former AU Vice-Chancellor Prasada Reddy.

He said the report would be submitted within the next 45 days and that stringent action would be taken based on the findings of the inquiry.

Replying to questions raised by Visakhapatnam City MLAs Velagapudi Ramakrishna Babu, Gana Babu and Vamsi Krishna Srinivas during Question Hour in the Assembly on Friday, Lokesh said that over the past five years YSRCP activists were indiscriminately appointed to various posts in government universities across Andhra Pradesh.



He stated that a special manpower audit is currently being conducted. The audit will be completed within the next 30 days, and strict action will be taken against ineligible appointees.

He added that requests have been made for the regularisation of contract and MTS staff. After the manpower audit is completed, the government will consult the Finance Department and take appropriate action.

Alleging that education standards in the State had declined during the previous YSRCP regime, he said Andhra University was ranked 29th in the NIRF rankings in 2019 but slipped to 76th by 2023. After the coalition government came to power, it improved to 41st rank.

The goal now is to place the university among the top 10 institutions.

Lokesh also assured the MLAs that the centenary celebrations of AU would be conducted in a grand manner.

YSRCP MLCs demand debate on laddu row

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Vijayawada

YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) MLCs has strongly criticised the ruling TDP-led coalition government for allegedly evading a full-fledged debate on the Tirumala laddu controversy.

Addressing media at the Assembly Media Point, they asked why the government was reluctant to discuss the issue if no irregularities occurred in the procurement of ghee used for laddu preparation.

The MLCs alleged that corruption took place through Indapur Dairy and claimed that Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) funds were diverted to Heritage Foods, a company linked to Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu's family.

They accused the government of violating Assembly conventions by offering only a short statement instead of permitting a proper debate, despite agreeing to one in the Business Advisory Committee.

For four consecutive days, YSRCP members have demanded a discussion, but they say ruling party legislators created chaos in the House to block it.

They cited the CBI-SIT charge sheet as evidence of wrongdoing and accused the Chief Minister of misleading devotees by raising fears of adulterated ghee. Several MLCs, including Vanka Ravinder Nath, Kumbha Ravibabu, and Ramasubba Reddy, alleged that Naidu politicised the issue for personal gain and must apologise to devotees.

Other members, including Kavuru Srinivas and Parvata Reddy Chandrasekhar Reddy, said TTD's national prestige was at stake.

₹13,722 cr being spent on free power for ryots: Min

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Vijayawada

ENERGY Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar informed the Legislative Assembly that the State government is spending ₹13,722 crore to provide free electricity to farmers across the State.

He stated that 1.10 lakh agricultural electricity connections have been sanctioned so far to support the farming community.

Responding to a question raised by MLA Maddipati Venkata Raju regarding the distribution of electricity transformers and accidents occurring due to power lines in palm oil plantations, the Minister said that 177 transformers have already been distributed in Gopalapuram constituency.

He noted that the distribution process experienced minor delays due to the ongoing agricultural season, but assured that the remaining transformers will be supplied shortly.

The Minister emphasised that the use of covered Fiber Reinforced Plastic (FRP) poles during palm oil harvesting can significantly reduce electrical accidents. He stated that the coalition government is committed to the expansion of palm oil cultivation and is taking special measures for the welfare and development of palm oil farmers.

Highlighting safety concerns, the Minister observed that most accidents occur when iron poles are used during harvesting operations without proper precautions.

Govt aims to transform Rayalaseema into horticulture hub with 30k cr: CM

Continued from page 1

Turning to agriculture, the Chief Minister outlined reforms based on five guiding principles. They include Agritech, Water Security, Demand-driven Crops, Food Processing, Marketing, and Government Support. He highlighted that Andhra Pradesh contributes nearly 10% to India's Gross Domestic Product through agriculture.

To support farmers, the government has allocated ₹13,722 crore for free electricity in 2025-26, covering 22.5 lakh pump sets.

Naidu pointed out that transparency in paddy procurement has ensured ₹10,816 crore in direct payments to farmers, while clearing ₹1,670 crore dues left pending by the previous regime. He also announced plans to introduce mechanisation and AI-driven services to modernise farming practices.

Naidu revealed that Andhra Pradesh has attracted ₹14,230 crore investments in the food processing sector. Natural farming is being expanded to 50 lakh acres, with 15 lakh farmers already practising it across 8,168 villages, he highlighted.

The government aims to transform Rayalaseema into a horticulture hub through a ₹30,000 crore cluster plan, which, combined with private investments, will reach ₹1 lakh crore. Andhra Pradesh also plans to establish the world's largest cocoa city in Eluru and strengthen aquaculture by providing electricity at ₹1.50 per unit.

The Chief Minister highlighted significant progress in water conservation, noting that groundwater levels in Annamayya district have risen by 6.67 m due to efficient measures. Statewide, average groundwater levels increased by 7.31 m, saving ₹95 crore in electricity charges. Expansion of horticulture crops across 20,000 hectares has contributed to ₹1,634 cr growth in the G SDP.

Naidu assured that tenant farmers and irrigation societies will be fully supported, stressing that farmer welfare is the foundation of AP's development.

EXPRESS READ

Botcha says he is fine after ill health rumours

Vijayawada: Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, Botcha Satyanarayana, in a message, reassured supporters that there was no cause for concern regarding his health. He stated that he was in good condition and had only visited the hospital for a routine medical check-up. The clarification was aimed at dispelling rumours

Jagan mourns chief priest of Chilkur temple

Vijayawada: Former chief minister and YSRCP president, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, expressed deep sorrow over the demise of Soundararajan (90), chief priest of the renowned Chilkur Balaji temple in Telangana. Jagan noted that Soundararajan, who served the deity for several decades, earned immense respect as a distinguished spiritual leader

Ensure Nandi Natakotsavams mirror rich cultural heritage of AP: Kandula

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Vijayawada

EMPHASISING the need to strengthen the creative economy as a driver of growth, Tourism, Culture and Cinematography Minister Kandula Durgesh on Friday directed officials to ensure that the prestigious Nandi Natakotsavams reflect the rich cultural identity of the State.

Reviewing the functioning of the Film Development Corporation (FDC) at the Velagapudi Secretariat, the Minister said that in line with the vision of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, departments concerned must work in coordination to promote the creative economy and generate employment.

Durgesh instructed officials to expedite preparations for conducting the Nandi Awards, Nandi Natakotsavams, TV and Theatre Awards, and Kandukuri Awards. He said the jury, venues and dates would be finalised after consultations with the Chief Minister.

The Minister announced that the government is set to introduce a new film policy aimed at attracting more film shootings to Andhra Pradesh. He suggested that films shot in the state should prominently feature the names of local tourist destinations on screen to boost tourism promotion.

Assuring full support to investors, he encouraged the establishment of film studios, dubbing theatres and re-recording facilities. To provide greater opportunities for local artistes, he directed the creation of a comprehensive data bank. He also disclosed that discussions were held with Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat regarding the establishment of a branch of the National School of Drama in Rajamahendravaram, with the Centre responding positively.

Officials including FDC MD Viswanathan, G M Srinivas Naik and others attended.

Sai Prasad to take charge as new Chief Secy today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Vijayawada

SPECIAL Chief Secretary (Water Resources) G Sai Prasad will assume office as the Chief Secretary of Andhra Pradesh at the State Secretariat on Saturday.

The State government on November 29, 2025 issued orders extending the term of the incumbent CS K Vijayanand and for another three months till February 28, 2026 and appointing Sai Prasad as his successor.

Accordingly, Sai Prasad will take charge as the new CS of the State at 11.33 am on Saturday.

Sai Prasad, a 1991 batch IAS officer of AP cadre, first worked as the Assistant Collector of Warangal district in the combined AP State from June, 1992 to May, 1993. He served in different positions including the CCLA and is currently in the position of Special CS (Water Resources Department) and also Ex Officio Special CS to the Chief Minister.

CBI resumes fresh round of inquiry into Viveka case on SC directions

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kadapa

THE investigation into the murder of former minister YS Vivekananda Reddy continues even after eight years, with the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) resuming a fresh round of inquiry following directions from the Supreme Court of India.

Vivekananda Reddy was murdered on March 15, 2019. Since then, the case has been investigated by both the Special Investigation Team (SIT) and the Central Bureau of Investigation, but a conclusive outcome has remained elusive despite changes in governments over the years.

Dissatisfied with the progress of the probe, Vivekananda Reddy's daughter approached the Supreme Court seeking a fresh investigation, alleging lapses in the earlier inquiry. Acting on the court's orders, the CBI issued notices to four individuals.

On February 21, the CBI questioned Arjun Reddy, a close relative of former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, in Hyderabad. As the remaining pesrsons expressed their inability to travel to Hyderabad, CBI officials conducted questioning on Friday at the Pulivendula Town Police station.

Mahendra Yadav was questioned for nearly two hours, while Kiran Yadav was also examined. Bharat Yadav, however, did not appear for the inquiry.

HC to monitor SIT probe into Group-1 Main row

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Vijayawada

THE Andhra Pradesh High court on Friday clarified that it would personally monitor the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe into the alleged irregularities in the evaluation of the Group-1 Main examination papers.

A division bench comprising Justice Battu Devanand and Justice Haranath Sharma observed that it expects the SIT, constituted by the State government following the court's directions, to conduct a sincere and transparent investigation. The bench made it clear that it would continue to oversee the probe until the SIT completes its inquiry and submits a report before the court.

Noting that considerable time had already been devoted to hearing the batch of appeals filed in connection with the alleged irregularities in the Group-1 evaluation process, the court said it would continue hearing the part-heard appeals until they reach a logical conclusion.

CHANGE OF SURNAME

I, **PELLETI DHANALAKSHMI** (Old Name with Surname), W/o **VITALAKSHUDU NAIDU VALLERU**, residing at D.No.8-53,Keenatam palle,Yadamari Mandal,Chittoor District, AP,517422 hereby declare that I have changed my surname from **PELLETI** to **VALLERU**.Hence hereafter my name with surname is **DHANALAKSHMI VALLERU** (New Name)

CHANGE OF SURNAME

I, Kokkinti Shahanaz (Old Name) W/o Khader Basha Kokkinti, R/o D.No:1-222, Maseedu Veedhi, Damalacheruvu (V), Pakala (M), Tirupati Dist., A.P.-517152. I changed my Surname to **DEVALAPALLI SHAHANAZ (New Name).**Henceforth I will be known as **DEVALAPALLI SHAHANAZ.**

CHANGE OF NAME

I,Peddiraju Sredevi (Old Name) W/o Peddiraju Kumar Raju, R/o D.No:357, Chinnampalli, Obulavaripalli, Gobburuvaripalle, Kadapa A.P, India - 516108, I changed my Name to **PEDDIRAJU SREEDEVI (New Name).** Hence forth I will be known as **PEDDIRAJU SREEDEVI.**

CHANGE OF NAME

We, MUTALA RAMJAN VALI and MUTALA RAZIYA BEE, R/O, D.No: 9/28-10-1, Variga Road, Masapet, Rayachoty, Annamayya (Dist), A.P. We are the parents **MUTALA AHMAD (New Name),** Previously our son called as MUTALA AHMED (Old Name), we have changed our Son's Name as **MUTALA AHMAD (New Name).**

CHANGE OF DATE OF BIRTH

I, **UMMADI NAGAMANI,** D.O.B: **30.06.1995**, wife of No. 2502249A, Rank: HAV CLK, Name: **UMMADI HARINATH REDDY**, R/o D.No. 3/94, Bayanapalle, Chennur Tahsil, YSR Kadapa District, Andhra Pradesh – 516162, hereby declare that my Date of Birth has been wrongly recorded in my husband's Part-II Order No. 0/0139/0001/2014.My correct Date of Birth is **07.05.1996** as per my Aadhaar Card. Henceforth, my Date of Birth shall be read as **07.05.1996** for all purposes.

CHANGE OF NAME & D.O.B.

I, **U. RAJESWARAMMA,** D.O.B: **02.05.1965,** Mother of No. 2502249A, Rank: HAV CLK, Name: **UMMADI HARINATH REDDY,** R/o D.No. 3/94, Bayanapalle, Chennur Tahsil, YSR Kadapa District, Andhra Pradesh – 516162, hereby declare that my name and Date of Birth have been wrongly recorded in my son's Part-II Order No. 3/0567/0004/2009.My correct name is **UMMADI RAJESWARAMMA** and my correct Date of Birth is **01.01.1956** as per my Aadhaar Card.Henceforth, I shall be known as **UMMADI RAJESWARAMMA,** D.O.B: **01.01.1956,** for all purposes.

The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd

(A Govt. of Kerala Undertaking) Sankaramangalam, Kollam-691 583
Phone: 0476-2651215 to 2651217, e-mail: md@kmml.com, URL: www.kmml.com

TENDER NOTICE

For more details please visit E-Tendering Portal, https://etenders.kerala.gov.in or www.kmml.com

Sl No.	Tender ID	Items
1	2026_KMML_834236_1	Providing Rear Dump Truck (Tipper)
2	2026_KMML_840579_1	Loading of Iron oxide to KEIL vehicle
3	2026_KMML_839944_1	Rubber lining work of Clarifier (K 401) in IBP
4	2026_KMML_840765_1	Supply of N301 acid scrubber (Rubber Lined)

Chavara 28.02.2026 Sd/- Managing Director for The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd

MDA/HSG.95 KODAIKANAL TALUK CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING SOCIETY LIMITED

P.T. ROAD, KODAIKANAL, DINDIGUL DISTRICT - 624 101

SHOP SITE AND COMMON USE LAND SALE

Application are invited through e-tender for the sale of SHOP SITE AND COMMON USE LAND owned by MDA/HSG.95 Kodaikanal Taluk Co-operative Housing Society Limited, for more details visit website: **https://tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app**

SECRETARY/ADMINISTRATOR

KERALA STATE COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT (KSCSTE),

Sasthrabhavan, Pattom, Thiruvananthapuram - 695004,
Phone : 0471-2548316, website: www.kscste.kerala.gov.in

NOTIFICATION

The KSCSTE is seeking qualified candidates for the post of Director, KSCSTE-JNTBGRI

For details log on to www.kscste.kerala.gov.in.

Last date for the receipt of application is 21.03.2026 , 5.00 p.m

D3/214/2026 MEMBER SECRETARY

SHRIRAM FINANCE LIMITED

Registered Office: Sri Towers.Plot No.14A, South Phase, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai- 600 032. Website:www.Shriramfinance.in
Branch Office::D.No.13-87,First Floor, AVC Complex, Madanapalli Road, Palamaneer, Chittoor Dist-517408

POSSESSION NOTICE

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorised Officer ofM/S. SHRIRAM CITY UNION FINANCE LTD. (since amalgamated with M/s SHRIRAM FINANCE LIMITED), under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of Powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated **27.09.2025**

To

1.D.R.Sridhar Naidu, S/o.Rama Murthy,D.no-25-55,Ayyakanna Street, Palamaner, Chittoor Dist-517408(Customer)

2.D.Hemalatha, W/o.D R Sridhar Naidu,D.no-25-55,Ayyakanna Street, Palamaner,Chittoor Dist-517408 (Guarantor)

3.SChandrika, W/o.Varadarajulu,D.no-28-12,Gantavooru, Palamaner, Chittoor Dt-517408 (Guarantor)

4.U.A.Srikrishna Chaithanya, S/o.Arunagiri,D no-19-59,Sarai Angadi street, Palamaner, Chittoor Dist-517408(Guarantor)

calling upon them to repay the amount of **Rs.3099140/-(Thirty Lakh Ninty Nine Thousand One Hundred Forty Rupees Only) as on 27.09.2025** with further interest from 28.09.2025.on Enterprise Finance Loan Agreement **PLMNRTF2403250001 dated 25.03.2024** [sanctioned by M/s Shriram City Union Finance Limited since amalgamated with M/s Shriram Finance Limited]. within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

It may be noted that pursuant to the Scheme of Amalgamation approved by the Hon'ble NCLT, Chennai on 09.11.2022 in C.P. No: 69-76 of 2022, M/s. Shriram City Union Finance Limited was merged with M/s. Shriram Transport Finance Company Limited. Subsequently, the name of M/s Shriram Transport Finance Company Limited stands changed to M/s Shriram Finance Limited with effect from 30.11.2022 as per "Certificate of Incorporation pursuant to change of Name" as certified by Registrar of Companies under Government of India, Ministry of Corporate Affairs. Hence, the present notice is issued by M/s. Shriram Finance Limited, the Secured Creditor in existence as on date.

The Borrower and Guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantors/Mortgagor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules on this the **21.02.2026**

The guarantors/mortgagor and borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned NOT to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the M/s Shriram Finance Ltd., for an amount of **Rs.30,99,140/-(Thirty Lakh Ninty Nine Thousand One Hundred Forty Rupees Only) as on 27.09.2025** with further interest **from 28.09.2025** on Enterprise Finance Loan Account.

The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of sub section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

SCHEDULE OF THE PROPERTIES

Chittoor Dist., Palamaneru Sub District, ChittoorZillaparishath, Palamaneru Mandalam, Palamaneru Municipality and Village Accounts, Palamaneru town, ward No.28, Gantaooru residential area, S.No.637/3 an extent of 120.61 sq.yds.

1st Item Bounded by: East :Road leading to Gantavuru, West :Second item property, North:Site of G.Hari, South:5 feet wide lane and site of G.Sulochanamma. With in the boundaries site measuring East to West 50 feet or 15.240 meters, North to South 11 feet or 3.352 meters. Total admeasuring 550 sq.feet or 61.11 sq.yds.

2nd ItemBounded by East :1st item and site of G.Hari, West :House of GovindaRajulu bearing door No.28-69, North:House of S.Chandra bearing door No.28-67 , South:5 feet wide lane and site of G.Sulochanamma With in the boundaries site measuring East to West 21 feet or 6.400 meters North to South 25 ½ feet or 7.772 meters Total admeasuring 535.5 sq.feet or 59.5 sq.yds. **Total above 1 and 2 items an extent of 120.61 sq.yds.**

Place : Palamaner **Sd/- Authorised Officer**
Dated : 21.02.2026 **Shriram Finance Limited**

OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF (CIVIL), ODISHA NIRMAN SOUDHA, UNIT-V, BHUBANESWAR

E-mail ID: cebuildings_orissa@yahoo.co.in, cebuildings@rediffmail.com, Tel. -(0674)- 2391523

INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB)

File No-B-II-Rev.-03/2019 (Pt.) Lr. No.- 5400 / Bhubaneswar 16th Feb., 2026
Invitation for Bids
34001/89/2526 Bid Identification No. C.E. (B) - 51 / 2025-26

1.	The Chief Engineer, Buildings-II (I/c), Odisha on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites bids from reputed Indian firms/ Contractor registered with the State Government and bidders of equivalent Grade / Class registered with Central Government / MES / Railways for the infrastructure works detailed in the table below on turnkey basis (i.e. Architectural planning with detailed design, vetting & execution).		
2.	Nature of work	:	Construction of Collectorate Building (S+5) at Chatrapur in the district of Ganjam on Turnkey Basis.
3.	No. of work	:	01 No.
4.	Bid Cost.	:	10,000/-
5.	Class of Contractor	:	Super Class
6.	Availability of Bid Documents in the website	:	From dt.05.03.2026 to 05.30 PM of dt.26.03.2026
7.	Pre –bid meeting	:	Dt.13.03.2026 at 11.30 AM
8.	Last date of online submission of bid	:	Dt.26.03.2026 up to 5:30 PM
9.	Last dt. of Submission of hardcopy (Cover-III).	:	Dt.02.04.02026 up to 5:30 PM
10.	Date of Opening of Bid	:	Dt.04.04.2026 at 11:30 AM.
11.	The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: https://tendersodisha.gov.in. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website only.		

Sd/- Chief Engineer, Buildings-II (I/c), Odisha, Bhubaneswar
OIPR- 34001/34117/1/25-26/0028

punjab national bank

...the name you can BANK upon! (A Government Of India Undertaking)

ASSET RECOVERY MONITORING BRANCH : VISAKHAPATNAM D.No.9-13-45/2/9/1, 5th floor, MVR Vinayagar Trade Centre, VIP Road, Visakhapatnam- 530003 Mob: 98312 00669, 96409 33383

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule Rule 8(6) r/w 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules,2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/physical/ symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of the Bank/ Secured Creditor, will be sold on **"As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is"** on the date as mentioned in the table herein below, for recovery of its dues due to the Bank/ Secured Creditor from the respective borrower (s) and guarantor (s). The reserve price and the earnest money deposit will be as mentioned in the table below against the respective properties.

DATE AND TIME OF E-AUCTION: 17-03-2026 BETWEEN 11.00 AM TO 04.00 PM

Last date for payment of EMD: on or before 17-03-2026 up to 3.00 PM
Bid Increase Amount : Rs.25,000/-

1) Name of the Borrower / Total Dues: M/s Sri Ekalvya Traders, Prop: D.Naveen Kumar, (A/C No. 4198008700000658 & 419800IB00001114)

Door No. 11-145/4, Vijaya Shankar Colony, Yogimallavaram, Tirupati

D.Naveen Kumar, S/o Vijay Kumar, Door No. 11-145/4, Vijaya Shankar Colony, Yogimallavaram, Tirupati. & **also at** : **D.Naveen Kumar, S/o Vijay Kumar,** 6-2-153A, Sai Ram Street, Tirupati-517501.

GUARANTORS : 1. D.Praveen Kumar, Dr.No.1-48/1, SVP Colony, Thanapalli Road, Tiruchanoor, Tirupati-517503. & **also at : D.Praveen Kumar,** 6-2-153A, Sai Ram Street, Tirupati-517501. **2. G.Sateesh Kumar, S/o G.N.Gopal,** 78, Pillayar Koil Street, Sekkanur Pettai, Usoor, Vellore, Tamilnadu-532105. & **also at : G.Sateesh Kumar,** D.No.7-1-10, R.N.Mada Street, Tirupati-517501.

Name of the Branch : TIRUPATI (419800) **Demand Notice 13(2) dated: 03-04-2021**

Outstanding Amount as on: 31-03-2021 is Rs.95,97,632.03 Ps. plus further interest, costs and other charges from **01.04.2021** Less amount paid, if any, after the date of demand notice.

Possession Date : 28-06-2021 **Nature of Possession: Symbolic**

Description of the Immovable Properties Mortgaged/ Owner's Name (mortgagers of property(ies)) : 1. Property in the name of Sri G Satish Kumar vide Sale Deed Doc.No.1166/1995 Dt.06.03.1995 Property in the name of Sri G Satish Kumar of residential open land admeasuring 120 square yards or 1080 square feet in survey No 102/2 situated at 19th ward opposite Door No19-42-58-393 STV Nagar, Govindarajapuram, Tirupathi, Chittoor district **bounded by: East:** House of G S Chowdary, **West:** Property of P Dilshar begum, **North:** property of M Venkataiah naidu, **South:** 19 feet wide road (Presently Road blocked by constructing a compound wall)

2. Property in the name of Sri D Praveen Kumar vide Gift settlement Deed Doc.No.1310/2006 Dt.10.03.2006 : All that part and parcel of residential open land admeasuring 77.33 square yards or 696 square feet in survey No102/2 situated at 19th ward opposite Door No19-42-58-393 STV Nagar Govindarajapuram, Tirupathi, Chittoor district **bounded by: East:** House of G S Chowdary, **West:** Property of P Dilshar begum, **North:** property of M Venkataiah Naidu, **South:** Site sold earlier to G Sateesh Kumar.

Reserve Price: Rs.83,50,000/- Earnest Money Deposit: Rs.8,35,000/-

Details of the encumbrances known to the secured creditors : Nil Encumbrances

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF E-AUCTION SALE: 1) The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further conditions. **2)** The properties are being sold on **"As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is"** Basis. **3)** The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorised Officer, but the Authorised Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation. **4)** The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the Website **https:// baanknet.com** on **17-03-2026** between **11.00 AM to 04.00 PM. 5)** For detailed term and conditions of the sale, please refer **https://baanknet.com & www.pnbindia.in**

Date : 25.02.2026 Place: Visakhapatnam — STATUTORY SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE Rule 8(6) r/w 9(1) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002 — **Authorised Officer Punjab National Bank**

SHRIRAM FINANCE LIMITED

Registered Office: Sri Towers.Plot No.14A, South Phase, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai- 600 032. Website:www.Shriramfinance.in
Branch Office::D.No.13-87,First Floor, AVC Complex, Madanapalli Road, Palamaneer, Chittoor Dist-517408

POSSESSION NOTICE

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorised Officer ofM/S. SHRIRAM CITY UNION FINANCE LTD. (since amalgamated with M/s SHRIRAM FINANCE LIMITED), under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of Powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated **28.08.2025**

To: 1) D.R Sridevi, W/o.Arunagiri,D.no-19-59,Saarai Angadistreet, Palamaner, Chittoor Dist-517408 Now Residing at D.no-25-55,Ayyakanna Street, Palamaner,Chittoor Dt-517408 (Customer)

2.D.Rammurthy, S/o.Munirathnam Naidu,D.no-25-55, Kaka thopu, Palamaner, Chittoor Dist-517408 (Guarantor)

3.D.Hemalatha, W/o.D.R.Sridhar Naidu,D.no-25-55,Ayyakanna Street, Palamaner,Chittoor Dist-517408 (Guarantor)

calling upon them to repay the amount of **Rs.46,42,067/-(Forty six Lakh Forty Two Thousand Sixty even Rupees Only) as on 28.08.2025** with further interest from **29.08.2025.** on Enterprise Finance Loan Agreement **PLMNRTF2407230001 dated 26.07.2024**[sanctioned by M/s Shriram City Union Finance Limited since amalgamated with M/s Shriram Finance Limited]. within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

It may be noted that pursuant to the Scheme of Amalgamation approved by the Hon'ble NCLT, Chennai on 09.11.2022 in C.P. No: 69-76 of 2022, M/s. Shriram City Union Finance Limited was merged with M/s. Shriram Transport Finance Company Limited. Subsequently, the name of M/s Shriram Transport Finance Company Limited stands changed to M/s Shriram Finance Limited with effect from 30.11.2022 as per "Certificate of Incorporation pursuant to change of Name" as certified by Registrar of Companies under Government of India, Ministry of Corporate Affairs. Hence, the present notice is issued by M/s. Shriram Finance Limited, the Secured Creditor in existence as on date.

The Borrower and Guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantors/Mortgagor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules on this the **21.02.2026**

The guarantors/mortgagor and borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned NOT to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the M/s Shriram Finance Ltd., for an amount of **Rs.46,42,067/-(Forty sixLakh Forty Two Thousand Sixty even Rupees Only) as on 28.08.2025** with further interest from **29.08.2025** on Enterprise Finance Loan Account.

The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of sub section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

SCHEDULE OF THE PROPERTIES

Chittoor District, Palamaner Sub-District, PalamanerMandal, palamaner Muncipality, Palamaner Village Accounts, Survey Number 166-1 an extent of AC.1.82 cents piki Ac1.67 cents after Sub-Division and as per ROR Survey Number 166-1A1A2 an extent of Ac.1.17 cents piki an extent of Ac.0.25 cents or 0.1012 hectors of land bounded on:-

East :Land belongs to Varadarajulu, West:Land retained by Donar, i.eD.Hemalatha, North:Land belongs to lalithamma.D, South:Land belongs to T.Padmanabham. Within these boundaries admeasuring an extent of Ac.0.25 cents or 0.1012 hectors of land along with ¼ th share in Borewell, Current Service, including easementary rights therein.

Place : Palamaner **Sd/- Authorised Officer**
Dated : 21.02.2026 **Shriram Finance Limited**

IDFC FIRST Bank Limited

(erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)
CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792
Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8th Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai - 600031. TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 | FAX: +91 44 4564 4022.

APPENDIX IV [Rule 8(1)] POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable property)

Whereas the undersigned being the authorized officer of IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the said Act read with [rule 3] of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notices calling upon the Borrower/ Co-borrowers and Guarantors to repay the amount mentioned in the demand notice appended below within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice together with further interest and other charges from the date of demand notice till payment/realization.

The Borrower/ Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/ Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors and public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of the Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this notice.

LOAN ACCOUNT NUMBER	BORROWER/S/ CO-BORROWER/S & GUARANTORS NAME	DESCRIPTION OF THE MORTGAGED PROPERTIES	DEMAND NOTICE DATE	DEMAND NOTICE OUTSTANDING AMOUNT (RS.)	DATE AND TYPE OF POSSESSION TAKEN
:47804526	1.BUTTI THIRUPALU, 2.BUTTI NAGESWARAMMA	ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF PROPERTY SITUATED AT SRI POTTI SRIRAMULU NELLORE REGISTRATION DISTRICT, VINJAMURU SUB REGISTRATION AREA, KALIGIRI MANDAL, GUDLADONA GRAM PANCHAYAT, EAST GUDLADONA VILLAGE, SURVEY NO. 732/1 AN EXTENT OF 12 ANKANAMS OR 96 SQ. YARDS OF SITE IS **BOUNDED BY: EAST: CEMENT ROAD, SOUTH: HOUSE OF BUTTI CHINNAIAH, WEST: HOUSE OF BUTTI RAMAIAH, NORTH: WAY SOME EXTENT AND HOUSE OF BUTTI BALARAMAIAH TO SOME EXTENT WITHIN THE ABOVE SAID BOUNDARIES AN EXTENT OF 12 ANKANAMS OR 96 SQ. YARDS OF SITE IN WHICH 7 ANKANAMS OR 504 SQ. FEET OF R.C.C. SLAB BUILDING, BEARING ASSESSMENT NO. 140 INCLUDING DOOR FRAMES, DOORS,WINDOWS WITH ALL FIXTURES AFFIXED THERETO WITH ALL EASEMENTARY RIGHTS.**	30.10.2025	Rs. 4,30,721.70/-	Possession 25-02-2026
92999154	1.DEVARAPALLI MALAKONDAIAH, 2.CHEVURI SIREESHA	ALL THE PIECE AND PARCEL OF PROPERTY SITUATED IN SPSR NELLORE DISTRICT, NELLORE REGISTRATION DISTRICT, KAVALI SUB-REGISTRAR OFFICE, BOGOLE MANDAL, BOGOLE GRAM PANCHAYAT AREA, WITHIN NELLORE URBAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY LIMITS, BOGOLE VILLAGE, ANDHRA PRADESH-524142, SURVEY NO. 136-2, BEARING AN ASSESSMENT NO. 1398 OF HOUSE & SITE, IS **BOUNDED BY:- EAST: ROAD, WEST: HOUSE OF DEVARAPALLI MADHAVA RAO, NORTH: HOUSE OF GADDE VENKATESWARLU, SOUTH: HOUSE OF DEVARAPALLI KONDALARAO WITHIN THESE BOUNDARIES AN EXTENT OF 27 ANKANAMS OR 216 SQ. YARDS OF SITE, INIT R.C.C. SLAB HOUSE, AN EXTENT OF 288 SQ. FTS. ALONG WITH ALL FITTINGS & FIXTURES, IS INCLUDING WITH ALL EASEMENT RIGHTS.**	30.10.2025	Rs. 2,70,691.97/-	Possession 25-02-2026
100965666	1. SAIK NAYAB RASOOL 2. SHAIK DIL SHAD	ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF PROPERTY SITUATED IN PRAKASAM REGISTRATION DISTRICT, SINGARAYAKONDA SUB-REGISTRAR OFFICE, SRI POTTI SREERAMULU NELLORE DISTRICT, LINGASAMUDRAM REVENUE MANDAL, MUTHYALAPADU GRAM MAZARA, PEDDAPAVANI GRAM PANCHAYATI, MUTHYALAPADU VILLAGE, ANDHRA PRADESH-523115 SURVEY NO. 409-1, DOOR NO. 44-12, ASSESSMENT NO. 473, AN EXTENT OF 120 SQ. YARDS OF SITE, INIT AN EXTENT OF 399 SQ. FTS. OF RCC SLAB HOUSE AND **BOUNDED BY: EAST: HOUSE OF SHAIK AHMED, THIS SIDE MEASUREMENT-36 FT., WEST: HOUSE OF ALLABASKSHU, THIS SIDE MEASUREMENT-36 FT., NORTH: HOUSE OF SHAIK NAYAB, THIS SIDE MEASUREMENT-30 FT., SOUTH: ROAD, THIS SIDE MEASUREMENT-30 FT. WITHIN THESE BOUNDARIES AN EXTENT OF 120 SQ. YARDS OR 100.8 SQ.MTS OF SITE, INIT AN EXTENT OF 399 SQ.FTS OF RCC SLAB HOUSE, ALONG WITH ALL FITTINGS & FIXTURES, INCLUDING WITH ALL EASEMENT RIGHTS THEREIN.**	22.11.2025	Rs. 4,94,227.09/-	Possession 25-02-2026

The Borrower/ Co-borrowers/ Guarantors in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) for an amount mentioned in the demand notice together with further interest and other charges from the date of demand notice till payment/realization.

Date: 25-02-2026
Place: ANDHRA PRADESH

Authorised Officer
IDFC FIRST Bank Limited
(erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)

Muthoot Finance — GOLD AUCTION NOTICE

GSTN - 37AABCT0343B1ZX

Registered Office: Muthoot Finance Limited, NH Bypass, Palarivattom, Kochi-682 028, Kerala, India. CIN: L65910KL1997PLC011300, Ph:+91 484 4804000, 2396884, 2394712. mails@muthootgroup.com, www.muthootfinance.com

Notice is hereby given for the information of all concerned that Gold Ornaments pledged with under mentioned branches of the company, which were overdue for redemption and which have not been redeemed so far in spite of repeated notices, will be auctioned at the concerned Taluk Auction centers as per the details given below. In any case if the auction could not be conducted on the below said date, the Auctioneer is having the right to postpone the auction to following 2nd auction dates or on subsequent dates at given centers without any further notice. Any change in auction date will be published at the place of auction.

1st auction date : 12.03.2026,03:00PM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,4th road, TB.RAOD, KALIKIRI (KALIKIRI Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 12.03.2026,03:00PM , Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd, Regional Office, D.No:7-30, Padmavathipuram, Beside Telephone Exchange Office, Tiruchanoor Road, Tirupati-517501, Chittoor (Dist)-Ap, Ph:0877-2240014 (CHITTOR District). KALIKIRI - (AP)(3755) MAL- 13202,

1st auction date : 20.03.2026,02:00PM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,Bhaghya Nagar Colony, RTC Bus Stand Road, Opp.Maharshi Vidyalayam, Kadapa (KADAPA Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 20.03.2026,02:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd,No.4/487, Nagaraju Peta, Kotireddy Street, Old Bus Stand, Kadapa - Kotireddy Street, Cuddapah, -516001 (CUDDAPAH District). KADAPA - KOTIREDDY STREET(3568) SRS- 92,

1st auction date : 24.03.2026,10:00AM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,Building no 2/87/7Srinivasapuram, thiruchanur main road thirupathi. (THIRUPATHI URBAN Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 24.03.2026,10:00AM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd, Regional Office, D.No:7-30, Padmavathipuram, Beside Telephone Exchange Office, Tiruchanoor Road, Tirupati-517501, Chittoor (Dist)-Ap, Ph:0877-2240014 (CHITTOR District). THIRUPATHI -AIR BYEPASS ROAD(2070) MAL- 4811, 4813, 4819, 4820, 4821, 4822, 4823, 4824, THIRUPATHI1(0717) MAL- 6294, 6340, TIRUPATHI - BAIRAGIPATTEDA(4387) MAL- 7552, MSL- 15661, SRS- 206, TIRUPATHI - KORLAGUNTA(3192) MSL- 16171, TIRUPATI -PADMAVATHIPURAM(1646) SRS- 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, TWS- 3,

1st auction date : 13.03.2026,05:00PM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,Building No.2/575, Sivalayam Street, Rajampet. (RAJAMPETA Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 13.03.2026,05:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd,No.4/487, Nagaraju Peta, Kotireddy Street, Old Bus Stand, Kadapa - Kotireddy Street, Cuddapah, -516001 (CUDDAPAH District). T. SUNDUPALLI - (AP)(3532) MAL- 13611,

1st auction date : 23.03.2026,04:00PM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,Building No.7/330, Shivalayam street, Proddutur. (PRODUTTUR Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 23.03.2026,04:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd,No.4/487, Nagaraju Peta, Kotireddy Street, Old Bus Stand, Kadapa - Kotireddy Street, Cuddapah, -516001 (CUDDAPAH District). PRODDUTUR - GANDHI ROAD(4307) MAL- 8311, 8422, 8455, 8605, SBS- 25, 26, SRS- 137, 162,

1st auction date : 23.03.2026,05:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd,D. No. 13/338-1-O-S, First Floor, Opp: Tvs Showroom (VEMPALLI Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 23.03.2026,05:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd,No.4/487, Nagaraju Peta, Kotireddy Street, Old Bus Stand, Kadapa - Kotireddy Street, Cuddapah, -516001 (CUDDAPAH District). VEMPALLI - (AP)(5007) MAL- 1286, 1403, 1434, SRS- 55,

1st auction date : 16.03.2026,05:00PM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,D.No.113/3A, RTC Bus stand road, Punganur. (PUNGANUR Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 16.03.2026,05:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd, Regional Office, D.No:7-30, Padmavathipuram, Beside Telephone Exchange Office, Tiruchanoor Road, Tirupati-517501, Chittoor (Dist)-Ap, Ph:0877-2240014 (CHITTOR District). PUNGANUR (AP)(1768) MAL- 17267,

1st auction date : 26.03.2026,12:00PM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,D.NO.2-236, SOUTH POST OFFICE STREET, RENIGUNTA. (RENIGUNTA Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 26.03.2026,12:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd, Regional Office, D.No:7-30, Padmavathipuram, Beside Telephone Exchange Office, Tiruchanoor Road, Tirupati-517501, Chittoor (Dist)-Ap, Ph:0877-2240014 (CHITTOR District). TIRUPATI - KARKAMBADI ROAD(4695) MAL- 1942,

1st auction date : 23.03.2026,02:00PM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,D.NO.4-9-56, OPP.ANDHRA BANK, KADAPARAOD, PULIVENDULA- 516390 (PULIVENDULA Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 23.03.2026,02:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd,No.4/487, Nagaraju Peta, Kotireddy Street, Old Bus Stand, Kadapa - Kotireddy Street, Cuddapah, -516001 (CUDDAPAH District). PULIVENDULA - PARNAPALLI ROAD(5055) MAL- 723, 735, MSL- 790,

1st auction date : 16.03.2026,04:00PM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,D.NO.5-33, MURALIKRISHNA, PRIYA COMPLEX, OPP.RTC BUS STAND, PAKALA, (PAKALA Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 16.03.2026,04:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd, Regional Office, D.No:7-30, Padmavathipuram, Beside Telephone Exchange Office, Tiruchanoor Road, Tirupati-517501, Chittoor (Dist)-Ap, Ph:0877-2240014 (CHITTOR District). PAKALA-(AP)(2647) MSL-13588,

1st auction date : 17.03.2026,02:00PM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,D.No.8-796, High school road, Near Sri Lakshmi Vishnu Bhavan Road (CHITTOOR Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 17.03.2026,02:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd, Regional Office, D.No:7-30, Padmavathipuram, Beside Telephone Exchange Office, Tiruchanoor Road, Tirupati-517501, Chittoor (Dist)-Ap, Ph:0877-2240014 (CHITTOR District). CHITTOOR - KONGAREDDY PALLI(3462) SRS- 146, CHITTOOR(0543) MAL- 12889, GANGADHARA NELLORE-(AP)(2373) MAL- 7545, 7547,

1st auction date : 13.03.2026,10:00AM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,D.NO.9-140, Opp:Police station, Upstairs of Bajajservicecentre, M.G.Road, KODUR. (KODUR Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 13.03.2026,10:00AM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd,No.4/487, Nagaraju Peta, Kotireddy Street, Old Bus Stand, Kadapa - Kotireddy Street, Cuddapah, -516001 (CUDDAPAH District). RAILWAY KODUR (AP)(1832) MAL- 8035, MHL- 62, SRS- 323

1st auction date : 17.03.2026,05:00PM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,D.NO: 4-42, BAZAAR STREET, KARVETINAGARAM (GANGADHAR NELLORE Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 17.03.2026,05:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd, Regional Office, D.No:7-30, Padmavathipuram, Beside Telephone Exchange Office, Tiruchanoor Road, Tirupati-517501, Chittoor (Dist)-Ap, Ph:0877-2240014 (CHITTOR District). KARVEETINAGARAM - (AP)(3740) SRS-82, 83, ZIP-3,

1st auction date : 14.03.2026,10:00AM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd,Door No. 14/97, Kadiri- Rayachoti Main Road (GALIVEEDU Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 14.03.2026,10:00AM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd,No.4/487, Nagaraju Peta, Kotireddy Street, Old Bus Stand, Kadapa - Kotireddy Street, Cuddapah, -516001 (CUDDAPAH District). GALIVEEDU - (AP)(4846) MAL- 2937, 2965, 2970,

1st auction date : 14.03.2026,03:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd,Door No: 11-318-2, Rangasamudram Road (THAMBALAPALLI Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 14.03.2026,03:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd, Regional Office, D.No:7-30, Padmavathipuram, Beside Telephone Exchange Office, Tiruchanoor Road, Tirupati-517501, Chittoor (Dist)-Ap, Ph:0877-2240014 (CHITTOR District). B.KOTHAKOTA - RANGASAMUDRAM ROAD(5075) MAL- 1612,

1st auction date : 18.03.2026,12:00PM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,Near RTC Bus Stand, Lakshmi Complex, plamaner (PALAMANER Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 18.03.2026,12:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd, Regional Office, D.No:7-30, Padmavathipuram, Beside Telephone Exchange Office, Tiruchanoor Road, Tirupati-517501, Chittoor (Dist)-Ap, Ph:0877-2240014 (CHITTOR District). PALAMANER(1116) SRS- 353, ZIP- 67,

1st auction date : 20.03.2026,10:00AM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,NELLORE MAIN ROAD, UPSTAIRS ANDHRA BANK, BADVEL (BADVEL Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 20.03.2026,10:00AM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd,No.4/487, Nagaraju Peta, Kotireddy Street, Old Bus Stand, Kadapa - Kotireddy Street, Cuddapah, -516001 (CUDDAPAH District). BADVEL-(AP)(2911) MAL- 10669, ZIP- 10,

1st auction date : 20.03.2026,12:00PM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,NO.1/136, MUDDANUR ROAD, JAMMALAMADUGU , KADAPA DIST (JAMMALAMADUGU Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 20.03.2026,12:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd,No.4/487, Nagaraju Peta, Kotireddy Street, Old Bus Stand, Kadapa - Kotireddy Street, Cuddapah, -516001 (CUDDAPAH District). MUDHANUR(AP)(1835) ZIP- 28,

1st auction date : 18.03.2026,10:00AM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,No.67-B, Palace Road, Kuppam (KUPPAM Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 18.03.2026,10:00AM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd, Regional Office, D.No:7-30, Padmavathipuram, Beside Telephone Exchange Office, Tiruchanoor Road, Tirupati-517501, Chittoor (Dist)-Ap, Ph:0877-2240014 (CHITTOR District). KUPPAM - NEW BYPASS ROAD(5041) MAL- 1046, MSL- 2385,

1st auction date : 16.03.2026,02:00PM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,NO: 9-195,KOTHA PETA STREET,VAYALPADU (VAYALPADU Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 16.03.2026,02:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd, Regional Office, D.No:7-30, Padmavathipuram, Beside Telephone Exchange Office, Tiruchanoor Road, Tirupati-517501, Chittoor (Dist)-Ap, Ph:0877-2240014 (CHITTOR District). VAYALPADU-(AP)(3981) MAL- 11298,

1st auction date : 14.03.2026,12:00PM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,NO:49/119, K.R.K .Towers, Trunk road, Opp:Government Jr.College, RAYACHOTI (RAYACHOTY Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 14.03.2026,12:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd,No.4/487, Nagaraju Peta, Kotireddy Street, Old Bus Stand, Kadapa - Kotireddy Street, Cuddapah, -516001 (CUDDAPAH District). RAYACHOTI-(AP)(2320) MAL- 22522, SRS- 351,

1st auction date : 23.03.2026,10:00AM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,OPP:A.P.S.R.T.C. BUSTAND,MAIN ROAD, PORUMAMILLA,KADAPA(DIST (PORMAMILLA Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 23.03.2026,10:00AM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd,No.4/487, Nagaraju Peta, Kotireddy Street, Old Bus Stand, Kadapa - Kotireddy Street, Cuddapah, -516001 (CUDDAPAH District). PORUMAMILLA - (AP)(3188) MAL- 8587, ZIP- 29,

1st auction date : 20.03.2026,04:00PM, Auction Centre : MUTHOOT FINANCE LTD,VEMPALLI ROAD, OPP: RTC BUS STAND (KAMALAPURAM Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 20.03.2026,04:00PM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd,No.4/487, Nagaraju Peta, Kotireddy Street, Old Bus Stand, Kadapa - Kotireddy Street, Cuddapah, -516001 (CUDDAPAH District). YERRAGUNTLA-(AP)(4070) SRS- 238, 239, 240,

1st auction date : 16.03.2026,10:00AM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd. 15-16-1, 1st Floor, CTM Road, Ward No-15, Near RTC Bus Stand,Madanapalle (Taluk), Annamayya District, Andhra Pradesh State, Pin - 517330. (MADANAPALLE Taluk). | 2nd auction date : 16.03.2026,10:00AM, Auction Centre : Muthoot Finance Ltd, Regional Office, D.No:7-30, Padmavathipuram, Beside Telephone Exchange Office, Tiruchanoor Road, Tirupati-517501, Chittoor (Dist)-Ap, Ph:0877-2240014 (CHITTOR District). MADANAPALLI - MARPURI STREET(3756) MSL- 26978, MADANAPALLI(1065) SRS- 327,

Note: Customers can release the gold ornaments before the auction date (06.03.2026).
Note: Bidders are requested to produce Identity Card / Pan Card No./ GST Certificate.
(Incase Registered Dealers) Successful bidders should transfer the full auction amount by RTGS

Place : THIRUPATHI
Date : 28.02.2026

For Muthoot Finance,
M/s. SSR & Co., Law Associates, 1-19-72/1/2,
Rukminipuri Colony, Behind Spencers, ECIL Post, Hyderabad - 62

Every object strives for its proper place. A book seeks to be near its truest admirer — Vikram Seth

INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Ramnath Goenka

SHARP GDP REVISIONS SHOW NEED TO FOCUS ON BETTER DATASETS

THE statistical overhaul India is undergoing will convey more over time than it's doing in the moment. But for now, what appears certain is that growth is strong and broad-based, with consumption and investment on the expenditure side and manufacturing and services on the supply side turning in decent performances. For 2025-26, real GDP growth is pegged at 7.8 percent, up from 7.4 percent estimated in the old series. Sequentially, third-quarter growth printed lower at 7.8 percent as against 8.2 percent seen in the second quarter; but it's higher than the 7.4 percent registered during the same period in the previous year. Soon after the new dataset's release, Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran revised his 2026-27 real growth estimate upwards to 7-7.4 percent. Pegging nominal growth at 10-11 percent, the CEA concluded that the economy would comfortably cross the $4-trillion mark by next March.

The biggest setback is in the nominal GDP. For 2025-26, it is now estimated at ₹345 lakh crore in absolute terms, down from about ₹357 lakh crore under the old series. It means, in dollar terms, the size of the Indian economy stands at $3.8 trillion, reduced from $3.9 trillion, making the wait to emerge as the fourth largest economy a bit longer. That said, what's undeniable is that India has seen consecutive years of 7 percent growth with key components like manufacturing making a strong comeback. Agriculture and mining, however, need to punch higher than the 2025-26 projections, while services growth remains range-bound. Private investments are finally coming around and consumption seems steady with strong rural demand.

Among the various revisions, what stood out was the significant downward revision in 2023-24 numbers. Real GDP growth rates were revised down from 9.2 percent in the old series to 7.2 percent. All three components—agriculture, industry and services—saw sharp downward revisions. It's true that this was due to methodological improvements. But it raises the pertinent question if policy interventions such as personal income tax cuts and GST rate rationalisation came a beat behind the actual music. Sound public policy rests on timely, credible and granular data. It's now evident that we have been reading things wrong. For evidence-based decisions amid rapid changes, we need a harmony of datasets across ministries and states, besides continuous efforts at improving their quality and transparency.

DIET NO MORAL TEST, DON'T POLICE PLATES

BIHAR'S Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha sparked a row when, while banning the open sale of meat near religious places and schools, he said such visibility hurt the "purity of our sentiments" and could foster "violent tendencies" among children. He insisted the government was not against anyone's right to eat what they chose; yet the order casts ordinary dietary practice as a moral and social threat.

The political backdrop made the statement more charged. In Bihar, food habits of leaders such as Lalu Prasad, Tejashwi Yadav and Rahul Gandhi have in recent times been amplified into campaign controversies. The BJP has accused them of eating meat during 'auspicious' days to allege disrespect to Hindu sentiments. With Holi coming up and elections due in several states including West Bengal next door, the timing of Sinha's remarks has led the opposition to question his intentions.

If this is about sending a majoritarian cultural signal, it is on a weak ground because, within Hinduism, Shakta traditions and numerous sub-groups have included meat in their diets for long. Data also exposes the rhetoric. The National Family Health Survey 2019-21 showed that just 16.6 percent of Indian men and 29.4 percent of women aged 15-49 had never consumed meat. Yet, 'non-vegetarian' is a social label used with an arguably pejorative slant in many contexts.

The episode fits a wider pattern. Across India, food culture has been increasingly politicised—from school mid-day meals to food served in hostels or on trains. What's lost in this noise is the individual's right to choose. Vegetarianism works well for those who practise it. But a shift from animal-based food can worsen poverty and malnutrition among communities used to it as an affordable source of protein. When these foods are left out of government schemes, it sends the message that their habits are inferior or avoidable.

The Constitution protects personal freedom, including the right to choose what one eats. Governments should ensure hygiene and follow the law without turning food into a tool of moral policing. Social harmony cannot grow by limiting diversity—but only by accepting others' choices. A confident society does not feel threatened by its constituents' food choices.

QUICK TAKE

A GLOBAL FORCE FOR GOOD

THE Trump administration has a new enemy: Cuban doctors. Since 1963, the communist nation has sent out over 400,000 healthcare professionals to serve in more than 160 countries. Today, it brings in more than $8 billion for the island nation's beleaguered economy. Guatemala gave in to American pressure last week and closed its three-decade-old programme hosting Cuban doctors, whereas Italy's Calabria province resisted it, as did several Caribbean nations last year. The need for having an international medical force is felt more acutely today than ever before. India, which is still remembered in China for sending Dwarkanath Kotnis and four other doctors to treat soldiers in 1938, should take the lead in such a global initiative. It's a cause that should not face ideological frontiers.

Studies show that many of the medicines that help cut flab may trigger side effects like gastrointestinal trouble, heightened anxiety and skeletal muscle loss. They must be used with extreme care

WHILE WE TRY TO DISPOSE OF THE ADIPOSE

K SRINATH REDDY

Chancellor of the PHFI University of Public Health Sciences and Chair of the Centre for Universal Health Assurance at the Indian School of Public Policy

MANDAR PARDIKAR

AS overweight and obesity levels rise in populations the world over, they pose much more than cosmetic and mobility challenges to people. Body fat, especially visceral fat which is stored within the abdomen, is a factory that churns out an army of pro- and anti-inflammatory chemicals.

As visceral fat deposits rise, they release a flood of tissue-damaging pro-inflammatory chemicals, while reducing the production of anti-inflammatory chemicals like adiponectin. This chronic assault on body tissues increases the risk of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancer and dementia.

Development and clinical deployment of several anti-obesity drugs has recently provided powerful interventions to reduce body weight and confer protection against the cardio-metabolic hazards associated with obesity. After years of limited success in providing effective medical treatments for obesity (beyond invasive surgical treatments), these drugs demonstrated dramatic results. A booming global market has emerged over the past few years, with clamour for these 'miracle drugs' going beyond clinical use to cosmetic transformation.

This was made possible by pathbreaking advances in biomedical research which helped to identify many hormones that are produced naturally by the body to regulate appetite, gastric motility and blood glucose levels, with brain signalling acting as a powerful communication tool to coordinate physiologic functions across a complex web of neuro-endocrine and metabolic pathways.

Among these, recently-discovered glucagon-like peptide (GLP-1) and glucose-dependent insulinotropic polypeptide (GIP) have emerged as key players besides well recognised hormones like insulin and glucagon. GLP-1 is a natural hormone produced mainly by the L-cells of the ileum (lower part of the small intestine). GIP, also known as gastric inhibitory polypeptide, is produced by the K-cells of the jejunum (upper part of the small intestine).

This surge in knowledge about the intricately designed and harmoniously coordinated human physiology enabled the development of drugs that may act as agonists (binding to a specific cell, producing a biological response mimicking a naturally occurring substance) of these hormones, to serve diverse clinical needs. At the forefront of this are the GLP-1 and GIP agonists (like semaglutide, liraglutide and tirzepatide). Apart from influencing insulin release and glucose homeostasis, these agents also have favourable effects on lipid metabolism and inflammation. GIP has also been recently shown to have a major influence on bone remodelling.

Euphoria about these miracle drugs has started dissipating in the last two years. While clinical trials are very good for demonstrating efficacy in sampled populations studied for a limited time period, adverse drug effects emerge more clearly over a longer time period when a large number of persons have started using the drug.

This has happened with the anti-obesity drugs. Initial reports reported gastrointestinal side effects (ranging from abdominal bloating due to delayed gastric emptying to disrupted intestinal muscle movement). While some initial reports of increased suicidal ideation have not been corroborated, anxiety and depression have been reported.

More serious adverse effects have emerged with increased global use. Sarcopenia, or loss of skeletal muscle, is a serious problem which can lead to falls. Apart from a direct action of the drugs on skeletal muscle, decreased appetite leads to low protein intake affecting muscle mass. Decrease in physical activity may also contribute. High-protein diets and protein supplements have been advocated to prevent or treat sarcopenia among users of GLP-1 agonists.

Over 22 percent of individuals using GLP-1 receptor agonists develop at least one nutrient deficiency within 12 months, driven by severe appetite suppression and delayed gastric emptying. Common deficiencies include vitamins D, B12, folate, thiamine, iron and calcium.

More disconcerting information has emerged from studies of persons who have discontinued the medication after using it for a prescribed period and losing weight. Studies showed that over 40-50 percent of lost weight was regained within 28-52 weeks of stopping. Some returned to their starting weight within 1.5 to 2 years. If that was disappointing, more disconcerting was the fact that benefits related to blood pressure, diabetes and blood lipid control dissipated fast after the drugs were stopped.

Researchers at Oxford University reviewed 37 studies with over 9,000 patients to compare the blockbuster weight-loss jabs with conventional dieting or other pills. The study found that individuals stopping GLP-1 weight-loss drugs regain weight about four times faster than those stopping traditional diet and exercise programmes. Patients typically regained most lost weight within two years, averaging 0.4-0.8 kg per month, with positive health indicators fading away in a year.

Reasons for this reversal could be many. When these drugs are given in larger than naturally produced hormones, without harmonising with the dietary fluctuations that occur over the usual course of a day, production of the natural hormone may be suppressed and may not readjust later. Exuberance over achieved weight loss may lead to dietary indiscretion in the belief that the 'meds will take care of it'. Loss of skeletal muscle may lead to physical inactivity.

For young- and middle-aged persons who wish to use GLP-1 agonists to 'look good', there is a caution they must heed. While erectile dysfunction may improve alongside vascular function in elderly persons with diabetes, there is a 22 percent higher probability of developing that unwanted side effect among other males too. Among women users, the risk of inability to experience an orgasm is doubled. Ophthalmic complications of a serious nature have also been reported in a small proportion of users.

While dramatic weight loss and impressive metabolic gains have been demonstrated with these drugs, undesirable side effects and rebounds after discontinuation raise questions on their introduction into routine clinical practice. Amid those dilemmas, we must remember that GLP-1 agonists and GIP are natural hormones which nature has perfected for our bodies to produce and use.

Fruits like apples and guavas, nuts and seeds have been shown to increase their production and diets. Ultra-processed foods derange that capacity with adverse health effects. Perhaps it is best to promote healthy, wholesome traditional diets for the population, while reserving these drugs for clinical use in persons with extreme obesity or severe cardio-metabolic impairments of health.

(Views are personal)

(ksrinath.reddy@phfi.org)

BOOKENDED BY MELAS AND FESTS

PRATIK KANJILAL

Senior Fellow, Henry J Leir Institute of Migration and Human Security, Fletcher School, Tufts University

SPEAKEASY

WILLIAM Dalrymple recently sputtered like a lit fuse on X at an "irritating and ignorant article" in *The Guardian* that had asked why India has over 100 literary festivals but low book sales and no culture of reading. Is it because entertainments like Bollywood are included in festivals? Why did Dalrymple feel irritated when the argument about poor sales and low readership has been around for decades?

The article by Amrit Dhillon only added the contrast between the smallness of the publishing industry in India and the boom in literature festivals, led by the Jaipur Literature Festival that Dalrymple co-founded. She offered supporting quotes from authors, booksellers and publishers. All of them affirm that the book trade moves slowly, but Indians like a nice jamboree. This rather harmless allegation burst like an inflamed boil.

Blame the name. The literature (or literary) festival is a British creature of post-war provenance—the oldest is at Cheltenham, an annual feature from 1949, and the best-known is at Hay-on-Wye, established in 1988, which exported the concept and the name overseas. In India, JLF adopted the format in 2006, grew exponentially and encouraged entrepreneurs with literary leanings—and organisations which understand that literariness works like angel dust—to get in on the game. Writing became performative.

In the beginning, there were book fairs, not literary festivals. In mediaeval Europe, trade fairs at commercial centres like Leipzig attracted booksellers and printers, who then launched book fairs. The Frankfurt fair, the biggest business-to-business book expo, is purely a trade fair for the sale of international rights. It lets in retail buyers only as an afterthought. Interaction of readers with writers and publishers, a hallmark of literary festivals, is limited to the weekend.

In India, book fairs preceded literary festivals. The New Delhi World Book Fair opened in 1972 in conjunction with the Asia 72 trade show. Both were held at the Pragati Maidan exhibition complex, a classic design by architect Raj Rewal that the present government has demolished in a random act of vandalism to make room for Bharat Mandapam.

India's biggest book event is the International Kolkata Book Fair, started in 1976, which draws over 20 lakh visitors. It's a very serious fair—rare titles like *Revelations of Divine Love* by the 13th-century anchoress Julian of Norwich can be found there (I know, I bought a copy). The fair also features literary entertainments like readings and discussions by prominent writers and publishers, and Kolkata's significant set circulate freely. So do phalanxes of pamphleteers selling crank treatises proposing a geocentric universe or divination by observing crows (*Kak Charitra*). It's a mixed bag, like a country mela, which is where it gets its Bengali name from—Boi Mela.

AFP

> Before jamborees like the Jaipur Literature Festival were established, there were large book fairs like the one in Kolkata offering eclectic fares. When we complain about the country's low readership and relatively small publishing industry, we are mostly talking about English language publishing

A mela suggests not a trade fair for bookish audiences and writerly stars, but rural harvest festivals. There's the Poush Mela in nearby Santiniketan, for instance, where highbrow and lowbrow mingle in a strangely uplifting cloud of food, music, poetry, handicrafts, activism and pot. In India, the traditions of the deadly-serious book fair and the entertaining festival have merged. People who don't like this say it devalues books. The rest say that it brings more people into the fold of readers. These are opinions, not facts.

The older allegations which started this thread—books don't sell in India and there's hardly a culture of reading—must be inconclusive because, invariably, the discussion is about publishing in English, which is a fraction of the Indian publishing landscape. The whole vista is very varied, from risk-averse publishers who print textbooks to offset speculative losses in literary publishing, specialists like Amitav Ghosh's publisher Ravi Dayal and Vikram Seth's publisher P Lal, and idealists running small presses, usually into the ground.

Besides, in Indian publishing, for every fact there's an alternative. The industry formalised only recently and it is still normal for writers to submit a manuscript without a contract and to hand over rights during a casual phone call, with no written record. Frames of reference also matter. In response to the article in *The Guardian*, which stated that Indian print runs are low and that 10,000 copies make a bestseller (a fact in English publishing), HarperCollins India CEO Anantha Padmanabhan pointed out that the Malayalam novel *Ram C/O Anandhi* by Akhil P Dharmarajan and *Too Good to be True* by Prajakta Koli sold 3 lakh and 2 lakh copies in a year (an alternative fact). The context: both are young social media phenomenons and Koli works in OTT cinema. Of course they'd have the numbers. Amish pioneered that strategy when he embraced digital media promotion.

Beyond English, on which the spotlight is fixed, Indian publishing is a vast landscape. If you consider sellers of used books—who often participate in trade fairs—you'll find the numbers climbing fast. And if you look into the darker corners of this world where the pirates are silently at work, you'll find hoards that go uncounted. That's why, when no one's looking, many writers ask the bootleggers at traffic lights how their novels are doing. The pirate estimate can be more revealing than formal sales figures. A market with such varied cultures of reading, and so many languages, styles and niches, can't be treated as a single, orderly entity bound by universal rules.

(Views are personal)

(Tweets @pratik_k)

MAILBAG

WRITE TO: letters@newindianexpress.com

Structural reform

Ref: *Joseph panel report* (Feb 27). The panel's observations have merit in a narrow sense. Both the Congress and the BJP have, when in power, used governors to destabilise opposition-ruled states. The tool changed hands, but the practice did not. That is precisely why structural reform matters.

S M S Aazmem, Port Blair

Orthographic identity

Ref: *Keralam: Extra m won't alter state of being* (Feb 27). Renaming Kerala to Keralam carries cultural legitimacy but it's an administrative folly. The practical costs far outweigh symbolic gain. Identity is lived, not legislated; governance improvements matter more than orthographic nationalism.

K Chidanand Kumar, Bengaluru

Approval awaited

Ref: *Road to redemption* (Feb 27). In 1975, I was a fourth-year MBBS student and this was avidly discussed in our prescribed reading. The research work on the mentioned points are already done from 2018. While natural Wolbachia presence is confirmed in Northeast Indian mosquitoes, large-scale field releases of developed strains are still awaiting final government approval.

Dr A S Shanmugam, Tirunelveli

Normalised discrimination

Ref: *When the whole does not count all the parts* (Feb 27). The Delhi incident is shameful but not surprising. Racial discrimination against Northeasterners has been quietly normalised for too long. The author is right that integration cannot be forced through assimilation; it requires genuine cultural inclusion. A good starting point would be mandatory sensitisation in schools and residential communities.

Abbharna Barathi, Chennai

Outside curriculum

Ref: *SC orders ban* (Feb 27). Till now as common citizens, we have opined that courts are beyond suspicion. Any contrary material is anathema for both the judiciary and the common public. But why rain down so harshly? Is there anything more than that meets the eye?

Jaikishan N, Kengeri

Bowler's choice

Ref: *Right option* (Feb 27). Instead of using his best bowlers to wrap up Zimbabwe's innings up quickly, the Indian captain let the game drift. Asking Dube, who had already conceded 26 runs in his previous over, to bowl the last over could have proven costlier.

R Sriramprasad, email

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POSTS OF THE DAY

Abhishek Singhvi @DrAMSinghvi
Entire India stands in unwavering solidarity with Afghan brethren. Sovereignty is not a bargaining chip, and terror cannot be state policy.

Saket Gokhale @SaketGokhale
Yet again, BJP's shameless tactic of using CBI & ED as their political tools stands exposed. The Modi-Shah Govt will soon fall apart just like these fake cases.

Piyush Goyal @PiyushGoyal
The AI Summit was a moment of pride for the entire nation of India, but unfortunately, the country's oldest party attempted to tarnish this national celebration.

Indian and UK representatives at 6th edition of Home Affairs Dialogue | EXPRESS

Home Affairs Dialogue: India raises security of diplomats, K-links in UK

MUKESH RANJAN @ New Delhi

INDIA and the United Kingdom, during the 6th edition of Home Affairs Dialogue on Friday highlighted pro-Khalistani extremism and the activities of anti-India groups operating in Britain as key areas for closer co-operation and coordination.

During talks, India raised concerns over recent security breaches affecting Indian dignitaries and diplomatic premises in the UK, underlining the need for stronger measures and enhanced cooperation. Both sides acknowledged the importance of safeguarding diplomatic missions and maintaining public order, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said in a statement.

As Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan has been traveling to Bihar along with Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the Indian delegation at the meet was led by Secretary (Border Management) Rajendra Kumar, while the team from UK's Home Office was led by Second Permanent Secretary Simon Ridley, it said.

The dialogue provided a platform for reviewing ongoing collaboration and identifying new avenues for joint action on security-related challenges, the MHA noted in the statement.

"The two nations identified several other priority areas for proactive engagement. These included tackling drug trafficking networks, addressing migration-related issues, strengthening criminal justice partnerships, deepening law enforcement cooperation, and enhancing collaboration in cyber security," the MHA statement read, while adding that both sides agreed that emerging threats in the digital domain require sustained information-sharing.

SC says an undertaking by Centre does not curtail Parliament's powers ● 'Judges won't be influenced by anything'

'ABSOLUTE PREROGATIVE TO ENACT LAW'

ALSO IN TOP COURT

SC: Submit report on farmers' agitation

The Supreme Court on Friday asked the high-powered committee constituted earlier, to amicably resolve the grievances of the farmers who held an agitation at the Shambhu border between Punjab and Haryana in 2024, to submit its report-cum-recommendations. The bench said that the report-cum-recommendations should not be divulged public domain until further orders of the court.

Doctor gets bail in Pune Porsche crash case

The Supreme Court on Friday granted bail to a doctor arrested for allegedly tampering with the blood samples of a 17-year-old boy, accused of crashing a Porsche car into a motorcycle in Pune and killing two persons. The incident dates back to May 19, 2024, when the car allegedly driven by an allegedly drunk 17-year-old fatally knocked down two IT professionals in Pune. A bench of Justices B V Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan granted the relief.

SC agrees to hear plea against SHANTI Act

The Supreme Court on Friday agreed to hear a plea challenging several provisions of the SHANTI Act, 2025, saying the main dispute raised is between an actual, visible and tangible national interest versus an unfortunate hypothetical loss. A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi termed the matter as "extremely sensitive issue" requiring detailed hearing.

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Friday said Parliament retains the "absolute prerogative" to enact a law and it is not bound by the undertaking which may have been given by the Centre.

The observations came from a bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi which was hearing a batch of petitions challenging the constitutional validity of Section 152 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). Section 152 deals with the acts endangering sovereignty, unity and integrity of India.

A lawyer appearing for the petitioners said Section 152 reintroduces Section 124A (sedition) of the erstwhile Indian Penal Code. In May 2022, a three-judge bench of the apex court had put on hold the colonial-era penal law on sedition till an appropriate government forum re-examines it and directed the Centre and states to not register any fresh FIR invoking the offence.

The lawyer said that in 2022, the Centre had given an undertaking before the top court that they would review the sedition law. The counsel said the government cannot reintroduce the provision in BNS after giving an undertaking before the court.

"An undertaking by the executive does not curtail Parliament's legislative powers. The Union of India may have given an undertaking before the court but Parliament is not bound by it," the bench said, adding, "Parliament has the absolute prerogative to enact a law."

During the hearing, the petitioners also questioned Section 173 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), saying it violates the apex court's Lalita Kumari judgement which mandates registration of an FIR if the information discloses commission of a cognisable offence.

The bench, however, said the Lalita Kumari judgment has been abused, leading to proliferation of frivolous FIRS. "Sometimes judgments are given sitting on ivory towers. Have you seen what kind of litigation it has generated? Once cognisable offence is disclosed, FIR has to be registered. How much that judgment has been abused in this country?" the bench asked.

The bench also said many times courts are abused.

'We know our officers': SC says no to objection on EC training module in Bengal

> **We know our judicial officers, and they are not to be influenced by anything. There has to be an end to it**
>
> Supreme Court

BENGAL GOVT CONCERN

It dismissed the WB govt's concerns and affirmed that the judicial officers would be independent and follow the court's guidelines.

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Friday refused to entertain the West Bengal government's objections over the training module issued by the Election Commission (EC) for judicial officers deployed to verify voter claims as part of the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the state.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi said judicial officers would not be "influenced by anything" and the apex court orders in the matter were clear.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for West Bengal, said, "Something strange has happened. While your lordships passed the order that all modalities will be settled by the chief justice (of Calcutta HC) and the committee, what they have done is, behind the back, they have issued directions to judicial officers and issued a training module saying this is what they should accept and this is what they should not accept," Sibal said. He argued that the ECI issued a "clandestine" training module to judicial officers.

The Chief Justice said judicial officers would take a call. "We can't hear like this. There has to be an end to it," he said.

A glimpse of Op Sindoor at Indo-Pak border

JAVARIA RANA @ New Delhi

THE Indian Air Force on Friday recreated key elements of Operation Sindoor at Pokhran during Vayu Shakti on Friday, laying out how it carried out strikes and countered aerial threats during last year's hostilities with Pakistan.

President Droupadi Murmu, as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces flew a sortie in the indigenous Prachand before witnessing the FPD (Force Protection Detachment). The sortie was undertaken as a two-aircraft LCH formation, with Chief of the Air staff Air Chief Marshal AP Singh flying the second helicopter.

With a deafening supersonic boom, a Rafale under the call sign "Brahmastra" opened the FPD, signalling its key role in the IAF's future force structure after the government's nod earlier this month for 114 additional aircraft.

The sequence began with ISR (intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance) inputs from RPAS (remotely piloted aircraft system), which identified and tracked targets in real time, with simulated terror camps and radar installations adding operational realism.

This was followed by simulated suppression and destruction of enemy air defences, overseen by the IAF's Integrated Air Command and Control System (IACCS) and executed using loitering munitions.

The integrated air defence grid was demonstrated through coordinated firings by Akash surface-to-air missiles, the Spyder system and upgraded L-70 guns, mirroring the layered approach adopted during the conflict. The IAF had played a central role on May 7, striking two of the nine designated targets and then countering Pakistan's aerial incursions using a mix of legacy Soviet-origin systems and modern indigenous and imported platforms, including Akash, MR-SAM, Pechora and Osa-AK. During the hostilities, the S-400 system carried out the longest-range ground-to-air kill in military history, taking down a SAAB 2000 Erieye. The force inflicted damage on at least 11 Pakistani air bases, after which Islamabad desperately reached out for a ceasefire despite initially declining a call from Indian DGMO Lt Gen Rajiv Ghai on May 7.

The indigenous Tejas MK-1 LCA was missing from the FPD after the entire fleet was grounded following a runway incident earlier this month. Rafale, Su-30MKI, Jaguar, Hawk and Mirage 2000 formed the fighter package, with Rafale and Su-30MKI demonstrating air-to-air engagements.

A C-295 transport aircraft carried out a night assault landing, while a C-130J Super Hercules landed on a short strip, inserted Garud commandos into a simulated combat zone and took off within minutes, as attack helicopters secured the area.

President Droupadi Murmu with Chief of the Air staff Air Chief Marshal AP Singh | PTI

Rafale opens recreation of strikes at Pokhran

With a deafening supersonic boom, a Rafale under the call sign "Brahmastra" opened the FPD, signalling its key role in the IAF's future force structure after the government's nod earlier this month for 114 additional aircraft. Army elements were also part of the display.

NCERT orders immediate recall of Class 8 textbook after SC verdict

S LALITHA @ New Delhi

A day after the Supreme Court imposed a blanket ban on the new Class 8 social science book, the National Council for Educational Research and Technology (NCERT) on Friday asked individuals and organisations that have copies of it to return it to its head office in Delhi. The education body said that it sold only 38 copies of the book on Monday, the only day it was sold from its Delhi office.

Its advisory said, "The NCERT requests any individual or organisation in possession of the NCERT textbook 'Exploring Society: India and Beyond', Social Science Grade 8 Part 2, or any material related to it, to return it to the Head, Department of Education in Social Sciences or the Publication Division, NCERT, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi, at the earliest."

The advisory further said, "We also request that any content related to the chapter 'Role of Judiciary in our Society', if posted on any of the social media or digital platforms, be deleted at the earliest."

A senior official told this newspaper that 2.5 lakh copies of the book had been printed. "Only 38 of them were sold at our head office on the day of release on Monday. We stopped the sale the following day. The buyers have been tracked down and only 10 copies are yet to be taken back by the Publications Division of the NCERT," he said, adding that following the ban, the buyers must return their copies, as it is illegal to possess it now.

The education body quoted the Thursday order of the court in its advisory: "A complete blanket ban is hereby imposed on any further publication reprinting or digital dissemination of the book titled 'Exploring Society, India and Beyond'. ... Any attempt to circumvent this order through electronic media or alternative titles, containing the same contents, shall be treated as a direct interference, willful breach and defiance of the directions issued herein above."

The controversy part of the chapter spoke of alleged corruption in the judiciary and provided supporting data from a five-year period since 2017. The NCERT later apologised for what it called an inadvertent mistake, while the Ministry of Education assured a probe and punishment for the guilty.

Return Journey

2.5 Lakh
No. of copies printed of the Class VIII book, but most of them were not put on sale

38 copies sold from NCERT Delhi office on Monday before being withdrawn

28 copies have been returned to NCERT office

Canadian PM arrives in Mumbai for 4-day India visit to reset bilateral ties

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

CANADIAN Prime Minister Mark Carney arrived in Mumbai on Friday, commencing a four-day visit to India that is seen as a pivotal effort to reset bilateral ties and expand economic engagement between the two countries.

He will pay homage to the victims of 26/11 Mumbai terrorist attack. His visit begins with meetings scheduled with leading business figures in Mumbai, India's financial capital, before he travels to New Delhi on March 1.

Carney will hold talks with PM Narendra Modi on March 2. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will call on the Canadian PM who will also address the India–Canada CEO Forum in the national capital prior to returning to Canada.

"The visit marks a significant step in further strengthening India–Canada ties," a spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs said, underscoring that the partnership is rooted in shared democratic values, and expanding cooperation across sectors.

The trip comes at a sensitive juncture for Ottawa. With relations between Canada and the United States under strain, Carney has pledged to diversify trade partnerships and identify new markets for Canadian exports. India, with a population of 1.4 billion and one of the world's fastest-growing major economies, is seen as a potentially crucial destination for Canada's petroleum, natural gas and other resources.

Bilateral ties have been strained in recent years following allegations by former PM Justin Trudeau that the Indian government was linked to the killing of a Canadian citizen associated with Sikh separatist activism. India has strongly denied the accusations.

No visit to Punjab

Carney is not scheduled to visit Punjab, a region that has historically been central to Indian migration to Canada. Observers say the focus this time is squarely on recalibrating diplomatic channels and rebuilding economic confidence.

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney and partner Diana Fox Carney arrive in Mumbai on Friday | PTI

When Modi speaks, the world listens, says BJP

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi addressed 19 foreign parliaments between 2014 and 2026, which is a record for an executive head of India. Hailing the milestone, the BJP claimed on Friday that Modi addressed more foreign parliaments than any previous Indian prime minister, and notably more than all Congress prime ministers combined.

"When PM Modi speaks, the world listens. He had addressed 19 foreign parliaments–right from addressing the joint session of the US Congress to the Knesset of Israel," the BJP posted on 'X'. It called the achievement "a reflection of India's growing global stature, diplomatic credibility, leadership and moral authority".

According to available information, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh addressed seven foreign parliaments, Indira Gandhi addressed four and Jawaharlal Nehru addressed three. Former Prime Ministers Rajiv Gandhi and Atal Bihari Vajpayee addressed two foreign parliaments each.

In 2014, shortly after assuming office, Modi addressed the parliaments of Australia, Fiji, Nepal and Bhutan. The following year, he addressed the National Assembly of Mauritius in March and Sri Lanka's Parliament. In the same year, he delivered a widely noted address in the Parliament of Mongolia and later spoke at the UK Parliament in November.

In December 2015, Modi addressed the Parliament of Afghanistan. In June 2016 came the mother of all addresses when he spoke at the joint session of the US Congress. In 2018, he addressed the Parliament of Uganda, and in 2019, the Parliament of the Maldives. In 2023, Modi once again addressed a joint session of the US Congress.

In the second address to the US Congress, he had said, "Democracy is the idea that welcomes debate and discourse. Democracy is the culture that gives wings to thought and expression. India is blessed to have such values from times immemorial. In the evolution of the democratic spirit, India is the Mother of Democracy."

According to the BJP, in 2024, he addressed the Parliament of Guyana. In July 2025, he addressed the Parliament of Ghana, followed in the same month by addresses to the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago and the Parliament of Namibia. Later that year, he also addressed the Parliament of Ethiopia. Most recently, he addressed the Knesset in Israel and was honoured with the Israeli Parliament's highest award. Addressing the Knesset, PM Modi raised the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack and condoled the death of Israeli citizens.

As of February 2026, Modi has undertaken 99 international visits to 79 countries.

19 Parliaments ONE PM

PM Modi has become the first Prime Minister of India to have addressed 19 foreign parliaments. Shortly after assuming office in 2014, PM addressed the parliaments of four countries. His latest address was at the Knesset in Israel.

- **Aug 2014**: Parliament of Nepal
- **Nov 2014**: Parliament of Fiji
- **Nov 2014**: Parliament of Australia
- **Mar 2015**: Parliament of Sri Lanka
- **Mar 2015**: National Assembly of Mauritius
- **May 2015**: Parliament of Mongolia
- **Nov 2015**: UK Parliament
- **Dec 2015**: Parliament of Afghanistan
- **June 2016**: Joint Session of US Congress
- **July 2018**: Parliament of Uganda
- **June 2019**: Parliament of Maldives
- **June 2023**: Joint Session of US Congress
- **Nov 2024**: Parliament of Guyana
- **July 2025**: Parliament of Namibia
- **July 2025**: Parliament of Trinidad & Tobago
- **July 2025**: Parliament of Ghana
- **Dec 2025**: Parliament of Ethiopia
- **Feb 2026**: Knesset of Israel

LOCAL BODY BILL

The Maharashtra legislature on Friday passed a bill allowing a person elected as chief of municipal councils, nagar panchayats and industrial townships to also be a councillor.

6 DEAD AS SLEEPER BUS HITS TRAILER IN RAJ'S BALOTRA

INDIA	Max	Min		Max	Min
Ahmedabad	32	20	Mumbai	27	22
Bhopal	31	18	Panaji	30	22
Jaipur	31	18	Patna	31	18
Amritsar	28	13	Lucknow	32	17
Chennai	31	23	Port Blair	28	26
Kolkata	32	21	Imphal	24	11
Srinagar	13	02	Chandigarh	28	14

Ruling party to launch outreach programme in the state from today

BJP-AGP alliance deal for Assam poll likely by Mar 10

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR @ Guwahati

WITH Assembly elections in Assam expected in April, the BJP is inching closer to finalising its alliance with regional parties Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) and Bodoland People's Front (BPF).

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday said the BJP is keen on 100% seat-sharing with the AGP. "But if there disputes in some seats, then they will see a friendly contest. Wherever possible, we will have a seat-sharing deal. Where it is not possible, we will have a friendly contest," Sarma said, adding that the BJP-AGP alliance is likely to be finalised by March 10. He said the BJP's alliance with the BPF was more or less finalised on Thursday.

The BPF, which rules the autonomous Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), is a powerhouse in the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) which has 15 Assembly seats.

Sarma did not speak about the United People's Party Liberal (UPPL). The BJP had ruled the BTC in alliance with the UPPL from 2020-2025 until both were ousted from power. The BPF had swept the BTC polls, bagging 28 of the 40 seats.

After the poll debacle, the BJP renewed its alliance with the BPF. A BPF legislator was also inducted into the ministry. The BPF and the UPPL are bitter foes, and it is to be seen if the BJP forges an alliance with the Pramod Boro-led UPPL.

Meanwhile, the BJP will launch a "Jan Ashirwad Yatra" from Saturday. The Chief Minister said the BJP's target would be to cover 40 to 50 Assembly constituencies under the yatra, which will begin from Gupteshwar temple under Dhekiajuli constituency.

"Through this yatra, developmental and welfare initiatives of Central and state governments will be taken to the people, while seeking their blessings for elections," the BJP said in a statement.

Last month, the Congress had taken out an outreach campaign, "Raijor Podulit Raijor Congress" (People's Congress at People's Doorsteps).

'Tie-up with Bodoland People's Front finalised'

CM Himanta Biswa Sarma said the BJP's alliance with the Bodoland People's Front (BPF) was more or less finalised on Thursday. The BPF, which rules the autonomous Bodoland Territorial Council, is a powerhouse in the Bodoland Territorial Region which has 15 Assembly seats. Sarma did not speak about the United People's Party Liberal.

Bihar BJP MLAs seek strict law to stop conversion

RAMASHANKAR @ Patna

THE demand for a stricter anti-conversion law was raised on the concluding day of Bihar legislative assembly on Friday. The issue was raised by several members of the NDA during the calling attention motion.

Eighteen MLAs including Maithili Thakur, Mithilesh Tiwari, Janak Singh, Sanjay Kumar Singh, and Baidyanath Prasad called for laws similar to those in other states like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Gujarat.

Speaker Prem Kumar assured the House that government would review anti-conversion laws of states that ban forced religious conversion and inter-faith marriage and "if required, would implement it in Bihar as well". He said that government is concerned over the issue raised by members in the House. "Adequate steps will be taken to deal with the situation," he said.

The legislators contended that several states have provisions for severe punishment, including imprisonment upto 20 years in such cases.

BJP MLA from Buxar Mithilesh Tiwari said that in Buxar district, over 1,000 Dalit families had converted. Tiwari said that the state should adopt a law similar to Uttar Pradesh.

Shah meets Bihar officials on border, special probe committee announced

RAMASHANKAR @ Patna

HOURS after Union Home Minister Amit Shah held a high-level meeting on issues related to Indo-Nepal border with senior state administrative officers in Purnea, Bihar deputy chief minister Vijay Kumar Sinha announced setting up a special probe committee to look into allegations of encroachment of land by 'outsiders' in Kishanganj district.

Sinha, who is also the revenue and land reforms department minister, said that a special committee would be formed to investigate reports of encroachment of land by 'outsiders' in Kishanganj district, a part of Seemanchal region. Sinha made the announcement on the concluding day of Budget session of Bihar legislative Assembly on Friday.

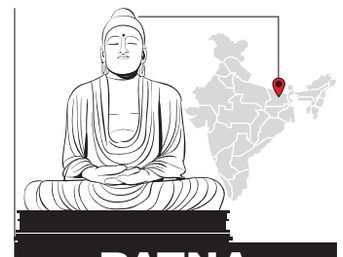
JD(U) MLA from Thakurganj Neeraj Agrawal raised the issue of illegal infiltration and encroachment of land belong to local residents by 'outsiders'. He said that land allotted to the landless from Dalits, ST and Muslims under government's 'Bhoodan' scheme in Dighalbank block of Kishanganj district had been encroached upon by 'outsiders.'

The MLA claimed that some people from West Bengal's Malda and Murshidabad districts have 'purchased' land of the poor. Kishanganj's Thakurganj area is strategically sensitive from security point of view. He claimed that 90 per cent of such land has been encroached upon. Ownership of 'Boodan' land can not be transferred, according to rule, he added.

Besides Nepal, Seemanchal shares borders with West Bengal and is seen as a gateway to the strategically important Silliguri Corridor, often referred to as the 'Chicken Neck'.

New strategy formulated

Earlier in the day, Shah chaired a meeting on issues related to the India-Nepal border with senior administrative and police officers in Bihar's Purnea as a new strategy was made to control suspicious activities, infiltration, and smuggling in the bordering areas.



PATNA DIARY

RAMASHANKAR
Our correspondent in Bihar
ramashankar@newindianexpress.com

Focus on infiltrations in Seemanchal region

Union Home Minister Amit Shah's three-day visit to Bihar has triggered a new controversy. His visit is generally linked with assembly election to be held in West Bengal. Though his visit is mainly focussed on state's border security arrangements, some political observers link it to possibility of creating a new state by carving out parts of Bengal and Bihar. RJD MLA Ranvijay Sahu has claimed that parts of Bihar's Seemanchal region and Bengal will be carved out for creating a new state. Senior BJP leader and former union minister Syed Shahnawaz Hussain, however, quashed all these speculations.

MLC's startling 'liquor' claim in Assembly

RJD MLC Sunil Kumar Singh had claimed that he could arrange delivery of liquor directly inside state legislative council premises on the last day of the Budget session, but he failed to keep his word. Singh had also put a condition that the courier bringing alcohol bottle to legislative council should not be arrested, but government did not oblige him. Singh alleged that the decade-old prohibition law in Bihar has completely failed. Bihar deputy CM Vijay Kumar Sinha asserted that government is fully committed to enforcing liquor ban and that any, regardless of their status, found violating it would be punished.

Minister promises sports village in Bhagalpur

Sports lovers have reasons to cheer up. Bihar sports minister Shreyasi Singh has said that 'Khel Gaon' will be constructed in Goradih in Bihar. The 'Khel Gaon' will prove to be a historic gift for the athletes of the Anga region – Banka, Bhagalpur, Jamui, and Munger districts. The State Council of Ministers recently met and formally approved the transfer of approximately 15.01 acres of government land to the Sports Department free of cost. With this decision, process of constructing state's first sports village has begun, and instructions have been issued to department concerned to complete the necessary formalities.

INFECTION

Meghalaya alert after death of 2 Agniveer trainees

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR @ Guwahati

AFTER two Agniveer trainees died of suspected meningococcal bacterial infection in Shillong, the Meghalaya government has issued a health advisory, urging people to wear a mask and avoid crowded areas. The two were among 30 trainees at the Assam Regimental Centre in Shillong. The others have been quarantined and kept under observation.

The government in an advisory said the State Surveillance Unit (SSU) had been notified of suspected cases of meningococcal infection. The District Surveillance Unit (DSU), East Khasi Hills, in coordination with the SSU, has initiated an active epidemiological investigation. Case investigation, contact tracing, laboratory review, and surveillance strengthening measures are underway.

"The SSU reassures the public that the situation is being closely monitored and under control. No new suspected cases have been detected in any other area. All necessary measures, including identification and monitoring of close contacts and implementation of appropriate preventive interventions, are being carried out as per standard outbreak response," the advisory read.

Under debt over 'Aviator' addiction, man poisons himself, wife, daughter

ANURAAG SINGH @ Bhopal

Addiction to online betting game Aviator and losses caused by it allegedly prompted a trader to poison himself and his teenage daughter and wife in Shahdol district of Madhya Pradesh. While the middle-aged trader, identified as Shankar Lal Gupta, and his 16-year-old daughter Swati died within 24 hours of consuming poison, his wife Rajkumari is battling for life at the Shahdol Medical College Hospital.

Shankar Lal apparently took the extreme step after sending his 15-year-old son Aniket to a friend's shop on Wednesday evening.

According to Shankar Lal's nephew Krishna, "My uncle was a well-to-do businessman, who ran a mobile phone and accessories business, but plunged into mounting debts after addiction to Aviator." He added that Shankar Lal recently lost a large sum and had been disturbed since then.

Krishan said that on Wednesday, he brought a two-litre bottle of cold drink and consumed it with his daughter and wife. "The daughter died first and when we returned home from her cremation, my uncle also died. My aunty is in critical condition," he said, adding that Shankar Lal borrowed heavily and was under intense pressure to repay the loans.

Police investigations have revealed large transactions in the three bank accounts operated by Shankar Lal in the last two years. "The transaction details revealed that he had withdrawn over Rs4 lakh in cash in two years. The sums ranging between Rs1,000 to Rs5,000 were withdrawn frequently. Ongoing probe suggests that he had taken a bank loan, whose details are being assessed by the police," Shahdol district police superintendent Ramji Shrivastava told this newspaper on Friday. The police are banking on Rajkumari's condition to stabilise for further

19-yr-old's 'encounter' death snowballs into Punjab row

HARPREET BAJWA @ Chandigarh

THE death of 19-year-old Ranjit Singh in an alleged encounter by the Punjab Police in connection with the killings of two police personnel in Gurdaspur has snowballed into a major controversy, with the chorus for an independent probe growing louder.

Gurdaspur Congress MP Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa has written a letter to Home Minister Amit Shah, demanding an inquiry by the NIA or CBI as the family has refused to accept Ranjit's body seeking action against police. Human rights and religious organisations have also demanded a probe.

In his letter, Randhawa said, "A 19-year old youth was killed in an 'encounter'. His mother has asserted that he had been picked up from their home. Immediate transfer of probe to a central agency, such as the NIA or CBI, is needed, so that truth is pursued in a manner that restores public confidence."

The family members said they would take the body only after the state government registered murder charges against the police officers involved in the alleged encounter. Harvinder Singh Malhi, uncle of Ranjit, said the family had sought the intervention of the Supreme Court and the Punjab and Haryana High Court.

REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE

'Will only take body only after police taken to task'

The family members said they would take the body only after the state government registered murder charges against the police officers involved in the alleged encounter. Harvinder Singh Malhi, uncle of Ranjit, said the family had sought the intervention of the Supreme Court and the Punjab and Haryana High Court.

Ranjit's mother Sukhwinder Kaur alleged that police took her son on the pretext of questioning him in the killing of ASI Gurnam Singh and Home Guard jawan Ashok Kumar at the Adhian check post. "Police thrashed him badly and he died in their so-called interrogation. The post-mortem should be conducted by an independent panel of doctors," she said, demanding a CBI investigation.

Punjab Human Rights Organisation (PHRO) demanded that the government conduct an investigation by a judicial commission. Khalra Mission Organisation and Manukhi Adhikar Insaaf Sangarsh Committee requested the Chief Justice of the Punjab and Haryana High Court to take suo motu notice of the killing.

Leader of the Opposition Partap Singh Bajwa urged the Punjab and Haryana High Court Chief Justice to take suo motu cognisance of Ranjit's killing and order independent and impartial probe.

"When a family expresses mistrust in the state machinery, it reflects the gravity of the situation. I fully support their demand for an independent and credible post-mortem," he said, demanding that the probe be handed over either to a HC judge or to CBI.

Guns to governance for 120 surrendered Naxals

EJAZ KAISER @ Raipur

IN a shift from insurgency to courting parliamentary democracy, 120 former Maoists, who have been rehabilitated after their surrender, visited the Chhattisgarh Assembly on Friday. The group, including high-ranking former Naxal cadres who once saw the State as an adversary, witnessed legislative proceedings firsthand, marking what officials described as an "unforgettable day" in Chhattisgarh's history.

The ex-Maoist group was personally received by Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai and Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma. Greeting the group with the traditional 'Jai Johar', Sai emphasised that his government's priority is ensuring a life of dignity and security for those who choose the path of the Constitution.

"It is a matter of great pride that our brothers and sisters, having left the path of violence, are today standing as witnesses to the democratic process. Enabling rehabilitated individuals to earn a respectful livelihood remains a top priority of the government. We have framed our rehabilitation policy accordingly," the CM said.

Sharma lauded the ex-Maoists for abandoning the path of the 'gun' and returning to the mainstream. "The path of the Constitution is the path of development, peace, and prosperity. The state government has been continuously working to ensure dignified lives, employment, and skill development opportunities for rehabilitated youth," he said.

Deputy CM expressed confidence that they would become agents of positive change in society and inspire others to return to the mainstream. "The people of Bastar had long desired change and under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and the leadership of Chief Minister Sai, that vision is now being realised," he said.

The group, consisting of 66 men and 54 women, filled the assembly galleries, drawing an emotional response from the Assembly Speaker. Congratulating the youths for their courage in embracing the mainstream, the Speaker described the occasion as rare and historic, congratulating former Maoists for rejoining the democratic mainstream and accepting the Constitution.

The 120-member group represented a cross-section of the Maoist hierarchy — one central committee member, five Dandakaranya special zonal committee members, seven divisional committee members, 33 area committee members and 84 party members. Deputy CM Sharma hosted a dinner for the ex-Maoist group at his official residence in Naya Raipur.

Former Maoists with CM Vishnu Deo Sai at Chhattisgarh Assembly on Friday | EXPRESS

Tally of surrenders high as deadline to end LWE nears

Ahead of the March 31, 2026, deadline to eliminate CPI (Maoist), Chhattisgarh witnesses a profound transition as 2,704 Maoist cadres have surrendered over the past two years. With only weeks remaining for the target date, security forces have maintained high pressure while keeping the door to rehabilitation wide open. CM Sai said the massive surrenders are not just the figures, but a testament to the trust, security, and stability that is now returning to Maoist-affected areas.

Gujarat wetland authority formed, but not a single meeting held in two years

DILIP SINGH KSHATRIYA @ Ahmedabad

THE Gujarat government has stated in the Assembly that the Gujarat State Wetland Authority has not held a single meeting in the last two years, even as the 24-member body exists as the nodal body to manage the state's wetlands since 2017.

The government made the admission in the House in response to a question asked by Congress MLA Anant Patel.

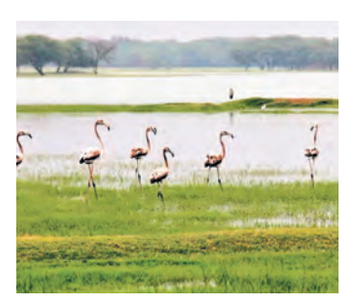
Gujarat has the highest wetland area in the country. The 2011 study by the Space Applications Centre, Ahmedabad, estimated about 1,50,174 sq km of wetlands in the country, which was about 6.9 per cent of India's total geographical area. This study found Gujarat to have about 34,350 sq km of wetlands, which was 17.6 per cent of the state's geographical area and 22.9 per cent of the national wetlands. The state's coastal wetlands form about 35.8 per cent of the total wetland area in the country.

The important wetlands in the state include Great Rann of Kachchh and Wildlife Sanctuary, Wild Ass Sanctuary in Little Rann, Nalsarovar Lake and Bird Sanctuary and Porbandar Bird Sanctuary among others.

The structural design of the authority includes the Minister for Forests as its chairman, chief secretary as vice chairperson and 21 senior officials as members. Despite the high-profile nature of its leadership, its inability to hold regular meetings shows little governance of the wetlands in the state, even as it has a robust definition of wetlands as hydrologically sensitive zones.

The state government acknowledges wetlands as dynamic ecological systems, which support specialised vegetation and aquatic biodiversity, yet the very authority meant to safeguard them has not convened any meetings to assess threats, encroachments or conservation priorities.

The definition under the Ramsar Convention treats wetlands as a broad continuum, which expands the governance responsibility far beyond isolated water bodies.



Global benchmarks and governance responsibility

The definition under the Ramsar Convention treats wetlands as a broad continuum from marshes and lakes to mangroves, and lagoons, which expands the governance responsibilty.

GLOBAL WEATHER

LR: Light Rain • HR: Heavy Rain • LS: Light Snow • TDS: Thundershower • LC: Light Cloud • SNY: Sunny

Beijing	21	1	SNY	Los Angeles	20	12	SNY
Colombo	28	24	SNY	Melbourne	26	15	LC
Dhaka	31	19	SNY	Moscow	4	2	SNY
Dubai	26	21	SNY	New York	7	2	SNY
Houston	31	19	TDS	Singapore	28	25	TDS
Istanbul	33	21	SNY	Toronto	1	-5	SNY
London	13	9	SNY	Washington	3	-2	SNY

Pak bombs Kabul; Declare 'open war'

Largest bombardment of Afghanistan capital and first strikes on southern base of Taliban since 2021

ISLAMABAD

PAKISTAN on Friday said it was in an "open war" with Afghanistan after its forces killed more than 270 Taliban fighters and injured over 400 others in airstrikes in response to what Islamabad described as the cross-border attack by the Afghan Taliban.

Afghanistan's Taliban government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said that Afghan forces killed 55 Pakistani soldiers and targeted what he described as "important military objectives" inside Pakistan.

Taliban security personnel stand guard near the Torkham border crossing | AFP

The Afghan Taliban attacked several check posts along the border late Thursday, apparently to avenge the air strikes carried out by Pakistan in Afghanistan's border areas on Sunday. Pakistan responded by hitting targets in Kabul, Kandahar and Paktia under 'Operation Ghazab lil Haq' early Friday. The 2,611-km-long border between Pakistan and Afghanistan is known as the Durand Line, which Kabul has not formally recognised.

"Our patience has run out. Now there is an open war between us... Now it will be 'Dama Dam Mast Qalandar'. Pakistan's army did not come from across the seas. We are your neighbours; we know your ins and outs," Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said.

Pakistan Army spokesperson Lt Gen Ahmad Sharif Chaudhry said that the Taliban came armed with quad-copters and small and big weapons, but the response by Pakistan was so effective that they were repulsed completely at all 53 places and "we gave effective response to target all 53 places".

A Taliban government spokesman Mujahid said that the recent strikes were intended to send a clear message that "our hand can reach their collar," adding that any "malicious act" by the Pakistan would be answered "in Islamabad." *PTI*

Tamil Nadu Power Generation Corporation Ltd
Notice Inviting Tenders (E-Tendering Process)

Specification No.	Tender Inviting Authority	Name of the Work
305	SE / MM-I / NCTPS-I	TANGEDCO NCTPS I 3 x 210 MW Installation of Semi Dry Flue Gas desulphurization system

For details of works / Procurement / Due date of submission / Opening, viewing and downloading of e-tenders, please visit websites: **www.tangedco.gov.in, www.tntenders.gov.in, www.tenders.tn.gov.in**

DIPR/1462/Tender/2026

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd. 4/10, Mythree Tower, Bommanhalli Hosur Main Road Bangalore- 560068

The Authorised ICICI Bank Officer under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notices to the borrower(s) mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice.

Having failed to repay the amount, the Notice is issued to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken symbolic possession of the property described below, by exercising powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property. Any dealings with the property will be subject to charges of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower(s)/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs)	Name of Branch
1.	Sri Saibaba Distributors, Saleem Shaik, Imambi Shaik, Vaddepalli Venkateswarlu & Sardar Shaik / Represented By Partners Saleem Shaik, Imambi Shaik, Vaddepalli Venkateswarlu Door No 11-71, Main Road Pedakurapadu Mangalagiri Guntur- 522503/ 362605000550.	Guntur Dist, Mangalagiri Sub-dist, Presently Mandam Sub-Dist., Which is to An Extent of 56.6 Sq.yds of Site and A Rcc Daba House Therein Bearing Door No.4-87 As Item No.1 and Another 2 Sq.yds of Site As Item No.2, in Total An Extent of 58.6 Sq.yds of Site is Situated In D. No. 344/3 of Mandadam (V) & (P) is Being Bounded By: Item No.1 (56.6 Sq Yds of Site And A Rcc Daba House Therein) East : Joint Passage : 39 Links South : B Schedule Property And Site of G. Madhusudhana Rao : 39 Links West : Site of Aluri Venkaiah : 30 Links North : Property of D- Schedule : 39 Links Within These Boundaries to An Extent of 56.6 Sq.yds of Site And A Rcc Daba House Therein With All Appurtenances. Item No.2 (2 Sq.yds of Site) East : Property of C-schedule : 4½ Links South : R & B Road : 6½ Links West : Item No.2 of B-Schedule Property : 6½ Links North : Item No.1 of A-Schedule Property : 6½ Links Within These Boundaries to An Extent of 2 Sq.yds of Site./ Date of Symbolic Possession 24th February 2026.	October 30, 2025 Rs. 15,08,818.75/-	Guntur & Kurnool

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/guarantors(s) is/are hereby issued a 30 day Notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold after 30 days from the date of publishing this Notice, as per the provisions under Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date: February 28, 2026
Place: Guntur & Kurnool

Sincerely Authorised Officer
For ICICI Bank Ltd.

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
EDUCATION & WELFARE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, VIJAYAWADA

e-procurement Tender Notice

NIT Nos: 109 and 112/MD/APEWIDC/VJA/2025-26, Dated: 27.02.2026
Downloading commencement on 04.03.2026 and closing date may be viewed in e-procurement.gov.in

Tenders are invited for Civil works and Furniture (1) Construction of 1st Floor and 2nd Floor over Academic Block-C at SK University at Ananthapuramu (2) Construction of Compound wall at JNTU-GV in Vizianagaram (3) Construction of New Dormitory, Over Head Tank (Syntex) and Dining Cum Kitchen in APSWREIS at Velugonda from eligible civil contractors and (4) Rate Contract to Supply Furniture to Educational Institution & Hostels located in 26 Districts of Andhra Pradesh (2 Years Rate Contract) from eligible original equipment manufactures (OEM)/original equipment manufacturing firm/compines.

Further details may be viewed at **http://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in** Contact No. 08645 295758

Note: 1.Changes / amendment if any will only be communicated through above e-procurement platform.

Sd/- Managing Director, APEWIDC, Vijayawada

TAMILNAD MERCANTILE BANK LTD.
Kurnool Branch, D.No: 67/86,Old Post Office Road, Old Bus Stand, Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh -518 001 Phone: 08518-246797, 9177701973
Email.id.:kurnool@tmbank.in, CIN: L65110TN1921PLC001908

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

Auction Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provison to Rule 8(6) and 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the **Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s)** that the below described immovable property mortgaged/ charged to the Secured Creditor, the **physical possession** of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Limited, Kurnool Branch**, (Secured Creditor), will be sold on **"As is where is", "As is what is"**, and **"Whatever there is"** on **18-03-2026** for recovery of **Rs. 19,88,062.34/- (Rupees Nineteen Lakhs Eighty Eight Thousand Sixty Two and Thirty Four Paise Only) (Rs. 17,99,637.12 towards the Over Draft Account and Rs. 24,708.14 towards the GECL (Term Loan) and incidental charges) as on 11-02-2026 due** to **Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Limited, Kurnool Branch Secured Creditor from Borrower/Mortgagor/Guarantors: 1) M/s.Sri Ranganathaswamy Traders, Prop.Mr.Boya Sai Krishna, S/o Mr. Boya Nageswara Rao 2) Mr.Boya Sai Krishna, S/o.Mr. Boya Nageswara Rao and 3) Mr. B Nageswara Rao, S/o. Boya Chinna Ramudu.**

The Reserve Price will be Rs. 16,50,000/- (Rupees Sixteen Lakhs Fifty Thousand Only) and earnest money deposit will be Rs.1,65,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Sixty Five Thousand Only).

Place of Auction	Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Limited, Kurnool Branch, Door. No.67/86, Old post office road, Old bus stand, Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh – 518001, Mob No. 9177701973, Email :- Kurnool@tmbank.in
Date and time of auction	18-03-2026 and 03:00 PM
Upset Price	Rs. 16,50,000/- (Rupees Sixteen Lakhs Fifty Thousand Only)

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

All the Piece and Parcel of the Land to the extent of 210 sq. Yards in Sy No.642 in Ward No.14, Veldurthy Village, and Mandal, Kurnool District building constructed there at bearing D.No.14-10-5 Standing in the name of **Mr. Boya Sai Krishna S/o.Boya Nageswara Rao. Boundaries of the Property: East:** Site of B Ramudu and others (Site of Executants), **South:** Site of Boya Hanumanna, **West:** Rasta, **North:** Rasta. **Note 1) The sale notice is also uploaded/published on website (www.tmb.bank.in). For terms and conditions of the auction, visit our website www.tmb.bank.in / Kurnool Branch.**

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in secured creditors website (www.tmb.bank.in).

Date : 26-02-2026 Sd/- Authorized Officer,
Place : Kurnool Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Ltd., Kurnool Branch.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd. 4/10, Mythree Tower, Bommanhalli Hosur Main Road Bangalore- 560068

The Authorised ICICI Bank Officer under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notices to the borrower(s) mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice.

Having failed to repay the amount, the Notice is issued to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken symbolic possession of the property described below, by exercising powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property. Any dealings with the property will be subject to charges of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower(s)/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs)	Name of Branch
1.	M R Metals, R Azgar & Sharmila A / Represented By Proprietor R Azgar No 14-651, Mgr Street Chittoor- 517001 / '116605006449.	Property- 1 Schedule: Chittoor District Chittoor Sub Dist. Chittoor Mandal Corporation Area Chittoor Municipal 72 Chittoor Village Lands Sy. No 342, Chittoor Town Kannaiah Naidu Ganganapalle & Colony An Extent of 154 Sq. Yards Paiki Bearing D.No. 28-684/3 Bounded on: East. By The Road West By The House of M. Balaji Bearing D.No.28-721/1 North: By The Newly Constructed House of P.V. Venkataramana South: By The Road Within The Above Boundaries Admeasuring East-west on Northern Side:33 Ft. OT 10.23 Mtrs., Southern Side 38 Ft. or 11.78 Mtrs., North-South:39 Ft. or 12.09 Mtrs., Total: 1385 Sq.ft. or 154 Sq. Yards Vacant Site With RCC Roofed G+2 Structure Building of 575 Sq.ft. With Doors, Doorframes, Windows, Windowframes, Electricity Fittings, Water Tap Connection, Assessment No. 1008001258, Water Tap Assessment No. 1008004325, Hsc Nos. 51 12504004793, 5112504002974, 5112504005777./ Date of Symbolic Possession 24th February 2026.	October 16, 2025 Rs. 58,26,954.44/-	Chittoor

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/guarantors(s) is/are hereby issued a 30 day Notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold after 30 days from the date of publishing this Notice, as per the provisions under Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date: February 28, 2026
Place: Chittoor

Sincerely Authorised Officer
For ICICI Bank Ltd.

MAHAGENCO Maharashtra State Power Generation Co. Ltd.

MAHARASHTRA STATE POWER GENERATION COMPANY LIMITED
Renewable Energy-Project & Planning,
HDIL Tower, A Wing, 4th Floor, Bandra (East), Mumbai – 400 051.
(Tel: : 91-22-26582424/2999/2965 Ext:331/381/332/360) Fax No: 91-22-26476518
email: cespgd@mahagenco.in, dycespgd@mahagenco.in,

Notice Inviting Tender (NIT)
RfX NO: 3000064888

Maharashtra State Power Generation Company Ltd. (MSPGCL) invites online bids for "EPC Package with Land including Design, Engineering, Manufacturing, Supply, Erection, Inspection, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 300 MWAC Phase-II Grid Connected Ground Mounted Solar PV projects along with associated power evacuation system up to STU substation including Ten (10) years Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of the same with minimum project of 25 MWAC at single location anywhere in Maharashtra, India."

Single tender with Rfx No 3000064888 is being published for cumulative capacity of 300 MWAC on MAHAGENCO's e-procurement portal https://eprocurement.mahagenco.in.

Tender schedule:

1.	Start date of download of tender document	27/02/2026 at 17.00 Hrs. IST
2.	Pre-bid conference	13/03/2026 at 11.00 Hrs. IST
3.	Last date for Submission of Online Bid	21/04/2026 at 12.00 Hrs. IST

MAHAGENCO reserves the right to cancel / withdraw this Invitation for Bids without assigning any reason for such decision.

For more details of Notice for Invitation of Tender (NIT), please visit to MAHAGENCO's e-procurement portal https://eprocurement.mahagenco.in as well as MAHAGENCO's official website https://www.mahagenco.in

Sd/ -
Chief Engineer (RE-P&P)
Mahagenco, HO Mumbai.

YOU CAN'T WAIT FOR INSPIRATION. YOU HAVE TO GO AFTER IT WITH A CLUB ❯ JACK LONDON
QuoteExpress

AXIS BANK LIMITED Retail Lending and Payment Group (South Zonal Office/Branch): Axis Bank Ltd, Agri Area Office, D.No.5/25/92(3/7) , Brodipet, Near Sai Baba Temple, Guntur - 522002

Axis Bank Ltd., 3rd Floor, Gigaplex, NPC – 1, TTC Industrial Area, Mugalsan Road, Airoli, Navi Mumbai – 400 708.
Registered Office: "Trishul", 3rd Floor Opp. Samartheshwar Temple Law Garden, Ellisbridge Ahmedabad – 380006

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE ASSETS UNDER THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT 2002 READ WITH PROVISO TO RULE 8 (6) & 9(1) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULE, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property is mortgaged/charged to the secured creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Secured Creditor will be sold on **"As is where is" , "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on 17.03.2026** for recovery of **Rs.60,23,278/- (Rupees Sixty Lakh Twenty Three Thousand Two Hundred and Seventy Eight Only) being the amount due as on 30.09.2022** (this amount includes interest applied till 30.09.2022) with future interest and costs due to the secured creditor . **M/S. SWASTICK AGRO SEEDS REP BY ITS PROPERITER Mr. ADONI YOUSUF SAHEB & ADONI ADAM SAHEB in Loan No: 2310.** Please refer the appended auction schedule for necessary details: -

KNOWN ENCUMBRANCES (IF ANY)	NIL
RESERVE PRICE (IN RS.)	**Rs.1,26,53,500/-** (Rupees One Crore Twenty-Six Lakhs Fifty Three Thousand and Five Hundred Only)
EARNEST MONEY DEPOSIT (IN RS.)	**Rs.12,65,350/-** (Rupees Twelve Lakhs Sixty Five Thousand Three Hundred Fifty Only) through DD/PO in favor of 'Axis Bank Ltd.' payable at Andhra Pradesh
BID INCREMENTAL AMOUNT	**Rs. 25,000/- (Rupees Twenty-Five Thousand only)**
LAST DATE, TIME AND VENUE FOR SUBMISSION OF BIDS / TENDER WITH EMD	Till **16.03.2026 latest by 05:00 P.M.** at Axis Bank Ltd, Agri Area Office, D.No.5/25/92(3/7), Brodipet, Near Sai Baba Temple, Guntur - 522002. Addressed to Mr. P Maddilety Reddy
DATE, TIME, AND VENUE FOR PUBLIC E-AUCTION	On **17.03.2026, between 11.00 A. M and 12.00 Noon.** with unlimited extensions of 5 minutes each at web portal **https://www.bankeauctions.com** e-auction tender documents containing e-auction bid form, declaration etc., are available in the website of the Service Provider as mentioned above.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

Item No.1:- All that Residential property situated at Uravakonda village and Gram panchayat, Uravakonda Mandal, Anantapur District, Uravakonda Sub Registration, Vide Sy.No.497-H1, bearing D.No.1-2-37(old), 1-2-41 (New) in an extent of 102.6 Sq. Yds. ,and constructions there in with Total Built Up area is 1762.43 Sft is **bounded on EAST:** Rasta **WEST:** Rasta **NORTH:** House of Maniyar. Yousuf Saheb **SOUTH:** House of Khalandar

Item No.2:- All that Industrial property situated at Bhudagavi Village Lands, Near Uravakonda Check Post, Anantapur District, Uravakonda Sub Registration. Vide Sy.Nos.372, 374, in an extent of 2 Acres, and constructions there in with 3951.07 Sq. FT is bounded on **EAST:** Canal **WEST:** Bellary to Anantapur Road **NORTH:** Property A & B Schedule **SOUTH:** Canal

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale are made available on the link provided in the secured creditor's website i.e. **https://www.axisbank.com/auction-retail** and the Bank's approved service provider M/S C1 India Private Limited at their web portal **https://www.bankeauctions.com**.

The auction will be conducted online through the Bank's approved service provider M/s.C1 India Private Limited at their web portal **https://www.bankeauctions.com**.

For any other assistance, the intending bidders may contact Mr. P Maddilety Reddy Mobile No:9491923422 & Mr. Karthick 9080589635 Authorized officer of the Bank during office hours from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

This Notice should be considered as 15 Days' Notice to the Borrowers under Rule 8(6) & 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rule, 2002.

Date: 28.02.2026 **Sd/- Authorised Officer**
Place: ANANTAPUR **Axis Bank Ltd.**

Indian Bank
CUDDAPAH BRANCH, 20/918, Co-operative Colony, Near Nehru Park, Kadapa, Kadapa District

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES
"APPENDIX- IV-A" [See provison to rule 8 (6)]

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) andGuarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the **Possession** of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **Indian Bank, Cuddapah Branch,** Secured Creditor, will be sold on **"As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is"** on **25-03-2026** for recovery of amount listed below due to the **Indian Bank, Cuddapah Branch,** Secured Creditor

Borrowers: 1) Mr.Pitter Badruddin S/o Mr. Pitter Mahaboob Peera, 2) Mrs. Shaik Thahera Begum Kogatam W/o Mr. Pitter Badruddin,

Both Residing at: Address-1: 14533 Diamond Park Ln, Conroe, Texas - 77384, United States of America, **Address-2:** 10503, Flaxen Manor CT, Spring, TX, 77379, United States of America, **Address-3:** 8/188-1, Almaspet, Kadapa - 516001, **Address-4:** D.No. 2-17-1, GM Talkies, Banaganapalle, Nadyal District-518124.

Amount due as on 26-02-2026 is of Rs. 7,65,26,354.00/- with further interest, costs, other charges and exp thereon from 27-02-2026

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTIES: Property-1: EM of vacant site at Sy No.189/2, Ward No.2 of Banaganapalle Town, Nandyal District belonging to Mr.Pitter Badruddin S/o Pitter Mahaboob Peera. **Site Area: Ac 0-17 Cents or 826.75 Sq. yards. Boundaries: As per LSR and Document: East:** Site purchased by the applicant from P Mahaboob Peera, **West:** Masum Basha Darga Road, **North:** Sarkar Road, **South:** G.M Cinema Hall Compound wall.

Boundaries: As per EVR: East: Site of applicant, **West:** Road Masoom Basha Darga, **North:** Road, **South:** G.M Talkies Compound wall.

Reserve Price:Rs.1,50,00,000/- EMD Amt:Rs.15,00,000/- Bid Incremental Amt: Rs.1,00,000/- Property ID No:IDIB7492034562A

Property-2: EM of site and GM Picture Palace construction having D.No.2/17 in Sy.No.189/1 of Banaganapalle Village limits, Banganapalle Mandal, Nadyal District belonging to Mr. Pitter Badruddin S/o Pitter Mahaboob Peera.

Site Area: 2914.88 Sq.Yards Boundaries: As per LSR and Document: East: House, Site of Damala Venkata Subbaiah and others, **West:** Rooms of Applicant and others, **North:** Site of Fathima Bee & Others, **South:** R & B Nandyal Road.

Site Area: 2420.00 Sq.yards Boundaries: As per EVR: East: Site of D Venkata Subbaiah, P Brahmaiah, V Ramakrishnaiah & Site of applicant., **West:** Site of Applicant, **North:** House of Applicant, **South:** Rastha & Site of Applicant.

Property-3: EM of vacant site in ward no.2, Sy.No.189/1 of Banaganapalle village & Mandal, Nandyal District belonging to Mr.Badruddin Pitter S/o Pitter Mahaboob Peera. **Site Area: 305.55 Sq. yards (40 Sq.yards + 110.00 Sq.yards + 155.55 Sq. yards) Boundaries: Item No.1 (40 Sq.yards): East:** Site of Sy. No.189/2, **West:** 22' Rastha, **North:** GM Talkies, **South:** R&B Road. **Item No.2 (110 Sq.yards): East:** 22' Rastha, **West:** 22' Rastha, **North:** GM Talkies, **South:** R&B Road. **Item No.3 (155.55 Sq.yards): East:** 22' Rastha, **West:** Site of Fathima Bee, **North:** GM Talkies, **South:** R & B Road.

Reserve Price: Rs.7,05,00,000/- EMD Amt: Rs.70,50,000/- Bid Incremental Amt: Rs.1,00,000/- Property ID No.: IDIB7492034562

Prior Encumbrance on Above Mentioned Properties: Nil

DATE & TIME OF E-AUCTION : 25-03-2026 & 11:00 AM to 04:00 PM

Bidders are advised to visit the website (**https://baanknet.com**) of our e auction service provider PSB Alliance Pvt. Ltd to participate in online bid. For Technical Assistance Please call PSB Alliance Pvt. Ltd **Helpdesk No.8291220220,** email ID:- support.BAANKNET@psballiance.com and other help line numbers available in service providers help desk.

For Registration status with PSB Alliance Pvt. Ltd. and"EMD status, please contact support.BAANKNET@psballiance.com. For property details and photograph of the property and auction terms and conditions please visit: **https://baanknet.com** and for clarifications related to this portal, please"contact Helpdesk No.8291220220 Bidders are advised to use Property ID Number mentioned above while searching"for the property in the website with **https://baanknet.com**

Contact: 1) Authorised Officer, Mr.Manish Kumar-94906 90276, 2) Branch Manager, Mr.Ayush Kumkar-94906 90257

Date: 27.02.2026, Place: Kadapa **Sd/- Authorised Officer, Indian Bank, Cuddapah Branch**

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT CORPORATION (CHENNAI) LIMITED
PALLAVAN HOUSE, ANNA SALAI, CHENNAI - 600 002.

TENDER NOTICE

On behalf of MTC, e-tenders are invited for the **"Procurement, Supply, Operation and Maintenance of 300 AC 7metre Low Floor Electric Buses and Development of Allied Electric and Civil Infrastructure on Gross Cost Contracting (GCC) Model".**

TENDER SCHEDULE					
Tender document download date start from	Tender document submission start date & time	Tender document submission end date & time	Tender will be opened on (Date & Time)	EMD amount in Rs.	Pre-bid meeting date and time
28.02.2026	16.03.2026 12.00 Hrs	07.04.2026 upto 16.00 Hrs	07.04.2026 at 16.30 Hrs	1,50,00,000/-	09.03.2026 at 15.00 Hrs

The tender documents are available in the tender websites : **https://tntenders.gov.in, https://mtcbus.tn.gov.in, https://tnidb.tn.gov.in.** Bidders are requested to upload their tender documents through the Government e-procurement portal **https://tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app** only. Any modification (if any) in tender terms and tender invitation period will be uploaded in the websites and the tenderers are requested to go through the above website periodically.

MTC (Chennai) Ltd reserves the right to Accept / Reject any tender without assigning any reason thereof.

DIPR/ 1466 /TENDER/2026 **MANAGING DIRECTOR**

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Log to www.newindianexpress.com
THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS
Google Play App Store

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd Street No. 1, Begumpet, Hyderabad,-500016

PUBLIC NOTICE - TENDER CUM E-AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET
[See proviso to rule 8(6)]
Notice for sale of immovable assets

E-Auction Sale Notice for the sale of immovable asset(s) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

This notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/ charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Limited will be sold on 'As is where is', 'As is what is' and 'Whatever there is' as per the brief particulars given hereunder;

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price / Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of E-Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
1.	Mr. Siluguri Vara Prasad Raju (Borrower) Mrs. Bejjupalli Sowjanya (Co-Borrower) Account No. LBVPM00005355598/ LBVPM00005411795	All That Site Measuring 35 Sq.yds., or 29.26 Sq.mtrs, Being Undivided And Unspecified Share Out of The Total An Extent of 622 Sq.yds Together With Residential Flat No.302 In Second Floor With A Built Up Area of 950 Sft (including Common Areas and Balconies) With Electricity Service Connection No.116583m025 010000 and Car Parking 80 Sft In Stilt Floor of "Racon Towers", Being Plot Nos.169 & 170 of Layout Approved By Vuda Vide Its Rc No.221/80-f-5, L.P.No.4/80 And Regularised Vide Its Lrs Rc Nos.9284/08/I-5 & 9285/08/I-5, Covered By Survey No.2/1 of Madhurawada Village, Situated At Phase-3, Padma Housing Colony, Within The Limits of The Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation Area, and Madhurawada Joint Registration Sub District and Total Property Bounded By: East: Plot No.171 South: 30 Feet Wide Road West: 30 Feet Wide Road, North: Plot No.168, Measurements: East Wing: 80 Feet or 24.38 Mtrs. South Wing:70 Feet or 21.33 Mtrs. West Wing: 80 Feet or 24.38 Mtrs. North Wing:70 Feet or 21.33 Mtrs Boundaries of Residential Flat No.302 In Second Floor East :open Space South: open Space West: flat No.301 North: Common Corridor	Rs. 27,47, 447.72/- (as on February 23, 2026)	Rs. 23,00, 000/- / Rs. 2,50, 000/-	March 10, 2026 from 11:00 AM to 12:00 Noon	March 24, 2026 from 10:30 AM to 11:30 AM

The online auction will be conducted on the https://assets.matexauctions.com of our auction agency Matex Technologies Private Limited. The Mortgagors/ Noticees are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest by March 23, 2026 before 05:00 PM else the secured asset(s) will be sold as per schedule.

The prospective bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at ICICI Bank Ltd 40-1-127,128 and 129 RIBG, 4th floor, Murali Chambers, M. G. Road, Vijayawada- 520010 on or before March 23, 2026 before 05:00 PM Thereafter, they have to submit their offer through the website mentioned above on or before March 23, 2026 before 05:00 PM along with the scanned image of the Bank acknowledged DD towards proof of payment of EMD. In case the prospective bidder(s) is/ are unable to submit his/ her/ their offer through the website, then the signed copy of tender documents may be submitted at ICICI Bank Ltd 40-1-127,128 and 129 RIBG, 4th floor, Murali Chambers, M. G. Road, Vijayawada- 520010 on or before March 23, 2026 before 05:00 PM Earnest Money Deposit DD/ PO should be from a Nationalised/ Scheduled Bank in favour of "ICICI Bank Limited" payable at Vijayawada

For any further clarifications in terms of inspection, Terms and Conditions of the E-Auction or submission of tenders, contact ICICI Bank Employee Phone No. 8008999536 / 9326713629.

Please note that the marketing agencies 1. Matex Technologies Private Limited and 2. Cardekho has also been engaged for facilitating the sale of this property.

The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons.

For detailed Terms and Conditions of the sale, please visit www.icicibank.com/n4p4s

Date : February 28, 2026
Place: Nellore

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

बैंक ऑफ़ बड़ौदा
Bank of Baroda

BANK OF BARODA
Nellore Branch, 1 st Floor, 16-4-426, NR Estate, Indira Bhavan Road, Nellore – 524 001, AndhraPradesh Phone: + 91 – 861 -2327269, 2302727, 2327005

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 6(2) & 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **Bank of Baroda, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis for recovery of below mentioned accounts. The details of Borrower(s)** / Guarantor (s) / Secured Asset/s/Dues/Reserve Price/e-Auction date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below.

Name & address of Borrower/Guarantor/s	Description of the Immovable Property (Mortgaged by Mr Katakuta Venkateswarlu S/o Katakuta Ramanaiah)	Total Dues
1.M/s. BIOTRIX FORMULATIONS,(Borrower) Rep. by its proprietor Mrs. Katakuta Prasuna, R/o D-Block,26-6-1001, AutoNagar,Mourya Nagar,Behind Govt. Hospital, Nellore–524 002, Andhra Pradesh. **2. Mrs. Katakuta Prasuna (Legal Hair)** R/o D.No.304, Sri Lakshmi Srinivasa Residency, Near Ratnam High School, A C Nagar,Nellore–524 004, Andhra Pradesh. **2. Mr Katakuta Charith (Legal Heir)** S/o. Late Mr.Katakuta Venkateswarlu, R/o.27-3-570, Flat No. 304, Sri Lakshmi Srinivasa Residency, Opp. Ratnam School, A C Nagar, Nellore –524 002, SPSR Nellore ,District, Andhra Pradesh.	**Schedule A :**Sri Potti Sreeramulu Nellore District Registration –Stonehousepeta Sub-Registration-Nellore Municipal Corporation-Nellore Bit-2 area-Land in Survey Nos.551 & 554 by converting into house plots – Nellore City, A.C. Nagar area, Kodandaramapuram, Municipal Ward No.27-2, near Door .No.1063-Plot bearing No.17 consisting an extent of 29 ankanams and 57 Sq. .ft., and plot bearing No.16 consisting an extent of 31 ankanams and 59 Sq.ft., in total 61 ankanams and 34 Sq.ft., or 411.187 Sq.mts., of vacant site **East :** Layout Road,**West:** House and site of Tupill Ranga Reddy,**North:** House and site of Tirumala Raju Saraswathi to some extent and house and site in Plot bearing No.18 to some extent ,**South:** Channel An extent of 61 ankanams 34 Sq. ft or 411.187 Sq.mts of vacant site in Plot bearing Nos.16 & 17 out of which Undivided 1/18th share to an extent of 3.41 ankanams or 27.32 Sq. yards or 245.89 Sq.ft or 22.84 Sq.mts of vacant site within the above referred boundaries with all its easement rights. **Schedule B :**All the piece or parcel of property consisting of Flat No.304 in Third Floor measuring inclusive of all common areas an extent of 784 Sq ft or 72.835 Sq.mts. of utility in "S.S.S HOMES residential complex being constructed in above referred A-Schedule property with Assessment /I.D. No.1031074802 bearing Door No.27/3/570(304) bounded by: **East:** This building site **West:** Common corridor to some extent and staircase to some extent,**North:** Joint wall between this Flat and Flat No.303 ,**South:** This building site	**Rs.48,30,802.73 (Rupees Forty-Eight Lakhs Thirty Thousand Eight Hundred Two and Paise Seventy Three Only) as on23.09.2024 + Unapplied interest from 24.09.2024 + other charges if any, till realization**

Reserve Price- .Rs.19,04,000/- EMD – Rs.1,90,400/- .Bid Increase Amount : Rs.20,000/-

Possession Status: constructive	Property Inspection Date & time: 12-03-2026 to 16-03-2026 Time:10:00 AM to 05:00 PM (with prior appointment only)

E-Auction Date and time 17-03-2026 Time : From 2.00 PM to 6.00 PM

For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer/visit to the website link https://www.bankofbaroda.in/e-auction.htm and online auction portal https://Baanknet.com. Also, prospective bidders may contact the Authorised officer on Tel No. 0863-2220244 ; Mobile 8977513922

Date:25.02-2026, Place: Nellore **Sd/- Authorised Officer , Bank of Baroda**

Market Watch

	MARKET			GOLD		SILVER		FOREX	
961.42 ▼	Sensex	81,287.19	₹110 ▼	24 carat (10 gm)	₹161,720	1 kg	₹285,000	▲ Dollar	90.95
317.90 ▼	Nifty	25,178.65	₹100 ▼	22 carat (10 gm)	₹148,250	10 gm	₹2,850	▼ Euro	107.36

India, EU release trade pact text

Text contains provisions on customs & trade facilitation, rules of origin, IPR and digital trade

PUSHPITA DEY @ New Delhi

THE European Union and India on Friday released the full text of the long-negotiated India–EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA), detailing provisions on customs and trade facilitation, rules of origin, intellectual property rights, services and digital trade, as well as trade and sustainable development.

The 20-chapter agreement addresses several long-standing sticking points in the negotiations, including sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures and clarifications around the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM).

An annexure on model mediation procedures has been included in the pact, the conclusion of which was announced on January 27. The agreement is expected to be formally signed later this year and is likely to come into force next year. The EU has indicated that detailed tariff schedules will be released at a later stage.

Data protection, digital trade

The text provides clarity on data protection, explicitly affirming that each side retains the sovereign right to determine its own level of protection for personal data and privacy.

"Each Party may adopt and maintain the safeguards it deems appropriate to ensure the protection of personal data and privacy, including through the adoption and application of rules for the cross-border transfer of personal data," the agreement states.

FTA rules out customs duties on e-transmissions

The agreement rules out customs duties on electronic transmissions and restricts mandatory disclosure of source code to specific regulatory requirements. While the digital trade chapter supports the free flow of data across borders for commercial purposes, it preserves each country's authority to frame and enforce rules on privacy and security.

While the digital trade chapter supports the free flow of data across borders for commercial purposes, it preserves each country's authority to frame and enforce rules on privacy and security.

The agreement also rules out customs duties on electronic transmissions and restricts mandatory disclosure of source code to specific regulatory requirements.

Remedies, transparency

The FTA mandates greater transparency in anti-dumping and countervailing duty investigations. Both sides are required to notify the other before initiating a probe and to allow consultations—at least seven days after the invitation—prior to launching a countervailing investigation.

Interested parties must be given an opportunity to present their views. Before issuing a final decision, authorities are required to disclose essential facts in writing and provide detailed reasons in any preliminary findings.

CBAM, climate measures

On carbon border measures, the pact states both sides shall apply no less favourable conditions to the other party's goods than those granted to like goods from third countries with respect to any flexibilities in implementing CBAM. Regarding the EU's CBAM, which has been a contentious issue in the talks, the bloc has committed to endeavour to support India's greenhouse gas emission reduction efforts, including through mobilisation of financial resources, tools, instruments and related investments. While no special exemption has been granted to India, the EU has pledged assistance for India's long-term industrial transformation to align with CBAM requirements.

Non-tariff measures

In services, the agreement expands market access in sectors such as information technology, banking and financial services, telecommunications and professional services. It also eases norms for the temporary movement of qualified professionals. The text addresses non-tariff barriers, particularly SPS measures, stating that such regulations must protect human, animal or plant life or health while facilitating trade.

India to become $4 tn economy by next fiscal: CEA

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

INDIA will have to wait for longer to achieve the $4 trillion target. Earlier, the government had estimated that the target will be achieved by the end of the current financial year.

However, the latest GDP estimates show the nominal GDP of the country has declined from the ₹357 lakh crore in the old series to ₹345.5 lakh crore in the new series. At an average exchange rate of ₹87, India's GDP in dollar terms would fall short of $4 trillion.

"Based on current projections, India is expected to cross the $4 trillion mark comfortably in 2026-27, though relative global rankings will depend on external factors," chief economic advisor V Anantha Nageswaran told media here on Friday.

However, he said that India is firmly on course to become one of the world's largest economies. "The exact timing of becoming the third or fourth largest will depend not only on domestic growth but also on exchange rate movements and the performance of other economies," he said.

As per IMF estimates, the Indian economy was supposed to cross the $4 trillion-mark in FY26 and reach around $4.96 trillion in FY28. By FY29, India was projected to hit $5.46 trillion, and surpass $6 trillion by 2030. India was also supposed to become the 4th-largest economy in the current financial year surpassing Japan. But with the new series and revised nominal GDP numbers, India is now unlikely to achieve this target as well.

As per data released by MoSPI on Friday, Nominal GDP or GDP at current prices is estimated to attain a level of ₹345.47 lakh crore in the year 2025-26, against ₹318.07 lakh crore in 2024-25, showing a growth rate of 8.6%.

India is expected to cross the $4 trillion mark comfortably in 2026-27, though relative global rankings will depend on external factors

V Anantha Nageswaran, CEA, Govt of India

PUBLIC FINANCE

Fiscal deficit at 63% of full year target by Jan-end

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

FISCAL deficit of the central government by the end of January stood at ₹9.8 lakh crore, or 63% of the annual Budget target for 2025-26 as against 74.5% in the year-ago period, government data released on Friday showed.

The Centre estimates the fiscal deficit (the gap between expenditure and revenue) during 2025-26 at 4.4% of GDP or ₹15.58 lakh crore. The Centre received ₹27.08 lakh crore (79.5% of corresponding RE 2025-26 of total receipts) up to January 2026, as per the monthly accounts released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA). It comprised ₹20.94 lakh crore of tax revenue (net to Centre), ₹5.57 lakh crore of non-tax revenue and ₹57,129 crore of non-debt capital receipts.

The CGA data showed ₹11.39 lakh crore has been transferred to state governments as devolution of share of taxes by Government of India, which is ₹65,588 crore higher than the previous year.

Further, total expenditure incurred by Government of India is ₹36.9 lakh crore (74.3% of corresponding Revised Estimate 2025-26), out of which ₹28.47 lakh crore was on revenue account and ₹8.42 lakh crore on capital account.

Mkts fall up to 2.5% this week on global cues

ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

WITH global cues turning negative and FII selling picking up pace, India's equity market has come under a severe bearish grip with the benchmark indices – BSE Sensex and NSE Nifty50 – sliding up to 2.45% this week. On Friday, the Sensex tanked 961.42 points or 1.17% to settle at 81,287.19 while the Nifty tumbled 317.90 points or 1.25% to end at 25,178.65.

Vinod Nair, head of research, Geojit Investments said the lack of progress in US-Iran nuclear talks has intensified concerns of further escalation of Middle East tensions, while persistent AI-related uncertainty is also supporting safe-haven flows.

Domestically, a risk-off tone prevails as the earnings season winds down and global macro factors take precedence. Although IT stocks are witnessing selective low-level buying after recent corrections, the broader trend remains subdued. With FIIs staying cautious and volatility likely to resurface, markets may continue to trade within a narrow range, added Nair.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹3,466 crore on Thursday. On Friday, the selling escalated and FII net sales stood at ₹7,356 crore. Pravesh Gour, senior technical analyst at Swastika Investmart, said the decline is driven by global risk aversion, subdued institutional participation, and profit booking following the recent recovery.

"Elevated US bond yields, uncertainty around the global interest rate trajectory, and mixed economic data from major economies have kept sentiment fragile. Persistent geopolitical tensions between the US and Iran, along with volatility in crude oil prices, are further weighing on confidence as traders trim positions ahead of key domestic and global triggers," said Gour.

Going forward, he added that investors should closely track global bond yields, crude oil trends, and currency movements, particularly the rupee against the dollar. The market is also expected to react on the Q3 GDP numbers that came after trading hours on Friday. The Q3FY27 GDP growth estimate stood at 7.8%.

Sujan Hajra, chief economist & Executive Director, Anand Rathi Group, said the better-than-expected numbers have clear market implications.

Realty, auto, FMCG stocks fall; IT pack shows resilience

Realty, auto and FMCG stocks fell most on Friday, while IT pack showed some resilience and managed to end on a flat note. The broader markets saw profit booking, with both midcap and smallcap indices declining by around 1% each, reflecting cautious sentiment

Industry body questions legal validity of telecom dept's SIM-binding mandate

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

AS the deadline for the SIM-binding mandate approaches, an industry body has questioned the legal validity of the government's directive.

The Broadband India Forum (BIF), which represents major tech firms like Meta and Google, cited a senior counsel's opinion that termed the direction as "ultra vires the parent legislation" and "unconstitutional". In a letter dated February 23 to Department of Telecommunications (DoT) secretary Amit Agrawal, BIF highlighted the legal opinion, which concluded that the Telecommunications (Telecom Cyber Security) Amendment Rules, 2025, and recent directives regarding 'SIM-binding' exceed the authority granted under the parent Telecommunications Act, 2023.

The matter pertains to a direction issued by the central government in November to ensure that app-based communication services such as WhatsApp, Signal, and Telegram are continuously linked to a user's active SIM card.

BIF, in its letter to the DoT, said the legal opinion provided by a senior counsel concluded that the amendment rules and the consequential directions are "ultra vires the parent legislation and are unconstitutional."

Union telecom minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, earlier this week during a briefing, said the decision on SIM-binding rules will not change."There are some issues that are national security issues, and on national security issues, there can be no compromise," he asserted.

It stated that, as per legal opinion, by introducing and regulating Telecommunication Identifier User Entities (TIUEs), which are non-authorised entities, the Amendment Rules alter the class of persons subject to telecom regulation and extend the statutory scope of the Act via delegated legislation.

NEXT-GEN JOBS

Skilled talent shortages rise to 82% in India

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ Chennai

ARTIFICIAL intelligence skills become the most sought-after skillset by enterprises in India in the fast-evolving world. Nearly 82% of Indian employers are finding it difficult to get skilled talents in 2026, as per US-based ManPower Group's Global Talent Shortage Survey.

India's talent shortage at 82% is significantly higher than the global average (72%), it stated. For the first time, AI knowledge has surpassed all other areas of expertise to become the most difficult skill for employers to find, overtaking traditional engineering and IT capabilities. The staffing solutions company surveyed 3,051 employers in India. AI literacy and AI model development emerged among the hardest skills to find.

At 94%, automotive industry has the highest scarcity of talent in India followed by sectors like finance & insurance (85%), tech & IT services (84%), logistics (81%), manufacturing (79%), hospitality (76%). Sandeep Gulati, MD, India and Middle-East, ManpowerGroup, said, "India's talent shortage at 82%, much above global average of 72%, signals a structural transformation in labour market rather than a cyclical one. The surge in demand for AI skills — AI literacy and model development — reflects AI is not replacing jobs but reshaping how work gets done."

Have enough coal to meet summer demand: CIL

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

COAL India Limited (CIL), India's largest coal miner, on Friday said it has sufficient coal supplies to meet the anticipated rise in power demand during the summer season.

As per the company, coal stocks at domestic coal-based power plants stood at nearly 55 million tonnes (MT) as of February 25 — the highest ever for this period. In addition, there is a transit stock of 5.5 MT of coal at goods sheds, washeries, and ports combined. Coal India's producing subsidiaries were holding sizeable pithead coal stocks of around 115 MT as of February 26, 2026, which are expected to increase further by the close of the fiscal year.

Moreover, CIL said its three-layer buffer across the supply chain — coal inventory at CIL's pitheads, coal stocks at thermal power plants, and ready-to-extract in-situ coal in its mines — assures comfortable coal availability as the summer season begins.

The cumulative quantity of Coal India's pithead stock, plant stock at domestic coal-based thermal power stations and exposed coal in-situ provides strong operational assurance —Senior official, Coal India Limited

The total readily available coal across these sources is approximately 175.5 MT. This level of domestic coal sufficiency in the system can meet any spurt in power demand as well as demand from other sectors, dispelling concerns about coal shortages. The in-situ coal exposure at mines contributing to 90% of CIL's total annual output was 60.2 MT at the end of the first fortnight of February 2026.

This means large quantities of coal have already been uncovered through overburden removal and are ready for extraction and supply at short notice. Higher domestic coal availability could help reduce imports. Meanwhile, international coal prices have shown an upward trend as of February 2026.

"The cumulative quantity of CIL's pithead stock, plant stock at domestic coal-based thermal power stations and exposed coal in-situ provides strong operational assurance", said a senior official of CIL.

Opens 200th Studio outlet

The company has opened the 200th NEXA Studio outlet at Kharkhoda in Haryana. Maruti Suzuki India's NEXA channel accounts for 40% of its overall sales, with the rest coming from its mass market chain ARENA

Maruti to open 700 NEXA Studio outlets by 2030-31 to attract non-urban buyers

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

MARUTI Suzuki India (MSIL) plans to open up to 700 outlets of its small format premium retail chain NEXA Studio by 2030-31 as it looks to attract car buyers in non-urban centers. The company has opened the 200th NEXA Studio outlet at Kharkhoda in Haryana.

"By 2030-31, we are aiming something between 600 to 700 NEXA Studio outlets across the country…At present NEXA Studio accounts for around 8- 10% of sales from the overall NEXA channel. By 2030-31 we are expecting that it should be at least 25 to 30%," said Maruti Suzuki India senior executive officer, marketing & sales, Partho Banerjee.

Maruti's NEXA channel accounts for 40% of its overall sales, with the rest coming from its mass market chain ARENA. NEXA sales network presently has over 740 outlets across more than 530 cities.

Banerjee said despite being small in size, the NEXA Studio outlets offer the same premium experience as a full format NEXA outlet in big cities and metros, including EV charging facilities as the company seeks to trickle down electrification to smaller cities and towns. The company has recently rolled out its first electric vehicle, e VITARA SUV in the domestic market.

ASIANOMICS

JAPAN

CORE INFLATION SLOWS BELOW BOJ'S 2% TARGET

Annual core inflation in Tokyo slowed in February, running below the Bank of Japan's 2% target for the first time in 16 months, data showed on Friday. This development will heighten friction between the central bank and the government on the future path of rate hikes. The data is in line with the BOJ's projection that consumer inflation will temporarily slow due to the impact of fuel subsidies and the base effect of last year's spike, before reaccelerating on steady wage gains. The Tokyo core consumer price index, which excludes volatile costs of fresh food, rose 1.8% in the year to February after a 2.0% gain in January, data showed, falling below the 2% target for the first time since October 2024. It compared with a median market forecast for a 1.7% gain. The slowdown reflected the effect of fuel subsidies and the abolition of gasoline tax surcharges, while a wave of food price hikes has also run its course.

PHILIPPINES

BANK ASSETS REACH HISTORIC HIGH OF PHP 29.86 TN

Philippines bank assets concluded 2025, reaching a record PHP 29.86 trillion, representing an 8.87% increase from the previous year. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) data indicates that this growth was largely fuelled by an expanding loan book and increased investments. Universal and commercial banks maintained the majority of these assets at PHP 27.88 trillion. Digital banks experienced the highest growth rate, surging by 40.54% to PHP 165.35 billion, whilst rural and cooperative banks saw a 9.17% decline. The sector's net loan portfolio climbed by 11.89% to PHP 16.61 trillion, and net financial investments grew by 10.51% to PHP 8.59 trillion. Total liabilities also rose by 8.86% to PHP 26.19 trillion, primarily driven by a 7.4% increase in total deposits. This robust asset growth aligns with the central bank's monetary easing cycle.

SOUTH KOREA

CENTRAL BANK HOLDS RATES

South Korea's central bank maintained status quo on interest rates on Thursday and signalled policy would stay unchanged for the next six months as a chip boom in exports and steady inflation allow policymakers more time to assess financial stability risks. The Bank of Korea's (BOK) seven-member monetary policy board voted to keep its benchmark interest rate unchanged at 2.50. The BOK raised this year's growth forecast to 2.0% from 1.8% previously. It introduced the Federal Reserve's dot plot style chart on Thursday that shows where the policy rate would be in the next six months. Of the 21 dots, 16 were at 2.50%, meaning a predominant view for no change in the rate until at least August this year. South Korea's policy-sensitive three-year treasury bond futures rose 0.21 points to 105.49. The BOK recently signalled a pause in its easing cycle that began in October 2024, as it navigates currency market volatility.

WI stand between India and semifinal

Holders' biggest challenge will be to keep opponent batters in check

FIROZ MIRZA @ Kolkata

EVEN in their defeat against South Africa in the Super Eights clash at Ahmedabad a few days ago, two-time champions West Indies bettered their record of most sixes by any team in an edition of the T20 World Cup. With 11 sixes in the match, their overall tally reached 66 - four more than the previous record set by the Caribbean side in the last edition.

West Indian batters preferring the aerial route is nothing new. It started 10 years ago when former captain Daren Sammy, now head coach of the team, put emphasis on the team's strategy of dealing in boundaries - the move that worked wonders as they went on to win their second title.

Despite playing 53 dot balls, Shai Hope and Co ended up scoring 176/8 in 20 overs in their latest outing, which once again underlines their gung-ho approach no matter what the situation is - even it meant six of their top seven batters ended up holing out to fielders.

And Sunday is expected to be no different at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata with their contest against India turning out to be a virtual quarterfinal. It was South Africa pacers - Lungi Ngidi (3/30) and Kagiso Rabada (2/22) - who broke the backbone of Windies batters, who anyway were in pursuit of boundaries irrespective of the situation. Onus will be on India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah and Arshdeep Singh, who have claimed seven and eight wickets respectively from five matches so far with Hardik Pandya expected to complement them.

Arshdeep spoke on West Indies' approach after India's 72-run win over Zimbabwe and said they will assess things on the day of the match. "It's not like they have only one gear. Today, if you look, they played really nicely in the middle as well. They took the game deep and then made around 180 runs. So I guess they can also adapt according to the situation," he observed while talking to reporters in the mixed zone. "Looking forward to the game, we'll see how the wicket plays and what the conditions are like. The focus right now is on recovery, and we'll assess things on game day."

Even as the left-arm pacer opined their next opponents have adopted a completely different approach after losing early wickets, West Indies performance so far suggests something entirely different. In the six matches they have played in the tournament, the boundary percentage in their total has always been above 60 except for the Group C match against Italy where it was 57. Remarkably, it was highest against the Proteas as they scored 126 runs in boundaries which included 15 fours and 11 sixes - around 72 per cent.

South Africa have given a template and if India bowlers manage to follow it and contain high-flying West Indies batters at Eden Gardens where boundaries are short, the Men in Blue can keep their dream of winning a second consecutive title alive.

Their previous record at the venue will only add to their confidence. Out of eight T20Is they played here, they have lost only once - the first match staged in October 2011. More importantly, West Indies have never beaten India in a T20I in Kolkata. They have lost all the four matches. India won twice while chasing the target and emerged winners in the remaining two while defending the total.

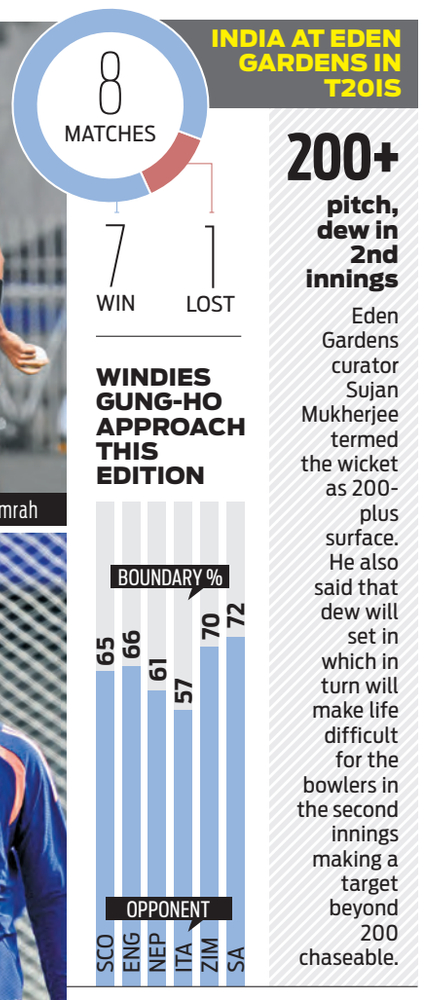
One thing that can help the Hope-led side will be their familiarity with the venue of late. They have played two matches here in the tournament so far beating Scotland and Italy by 35 and 42 runs respectively. India last played here in January when Varun Chakravarthy claimed 3/23 in his four overs to bowl out England for 132. Abhishek Sharma scored a 34-ball 79 to help India chase the target in 12.5 overs with seven wickets in hand.

Full story: newindianexpress.com

Arshdeep Singh & Jasprit Bumrah

Varun Chakravarthy

PICS: ASHWIN PRASATH



Shimron Hetmyer

Security beefed up at Eden Gardens

FIROZ MIRZA @ Kolkata

WITH West Bengal already politically charged up as Assembly elections are round the corner and India playing their first match in Kolkata at the ongoing T20 World Cup, a beefed up security is expected to be in place on Sunday.

It could be even twice or thrice the previous arrangement made for the Group stage matches. Besides, the final electoral list following the special intensive revision (SIR) in West Bengal will also be published on Saturday which in turn could add to the worries of the cops. "The deployment of forces will be twice or even thrice of the arrangement made for the past matches," a senior cop said. He said the additional security would be in place as India will be playing at the venue, which is already sold out. "We haven't received any request for special arrangement from the Cricket Association of Bengal in the wake of publication of the final electoral list on Saturday. Anyway, the strength of security personnel will be decided on Saturday. We are ready to counter any situation," added the cop.

Notably, the final electoral list with 60 lakh-plus names with 'adjudication marks' will also bear the names of deleted electors, with 'deleted' against their names. After publication of the final list, supplementary lists will also come out in phases.

The venue has witnessed unsavoury incidents in the past. Sachin Tendulkar's unfortunate run out in the first match of the Asian Test Championship in February 1999 is one of them. Infuriated with the mode of dismissal, the spectators pelted bottles and other objects at Shoaib Akhtar, who collided with Tendulkar leading to his run out, as he returned to his fielding position in the deep. Tendulkar's appeal might have pacified the crowd but all hell broke loose within 30 minutes of the play on the last day, prompting the police to forcibly vacate the ground filled with thousands of people.

Before it, the ODI World Cup semifinal between India and Sri Lanka had to be abandoned as the crowd turned violent with the co-hosts on the verge of losing the contest.

Fans at the Eden Gardens, Kolkata during the ongoing T20 World Cup | PTI

The pain of losing a loved one on tour

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN & FIROZ MIRZA @ Kolkata/Chennai

ON Thursday, thousands flocked to the MA Chidambaram Stadium to see if the Indian team would win a must-win match. They were joined in spirit by millions, who were tuning in or streaming. Unknown to them, Rinku Singh, one of the 15 men tasked with winning the T20 World Cup, was battling something extremely personal.

The thought of not seeing his father alive for one final time. He had already said his goodbyes a few days earlier. On the bench, Rinku knew Friday was round the corner. But he didn't know it on Thursday. He would have longed for a medical miracle. Another quiet moment between a son and a father. To share another laugh. To listen to that one piece of music again. To reminisce. Late on Thursday, Rinku's father, who had been suffering from liver cancer, passed away. He left from Chennai for Aligarh for the final rites before rejoining his team in Kolkata on Friday. Sonu, one of Rinku's siblings, confirmed to this daily that his brother has left Aligarh to join the team. "He came here for the father's last rites. He has left to join the team in Kolkata."

It once again shines a light on how cricketers process personal tragedies on tour. How their grief can often be played out in the public eye. The importance of family cannot be overstated. It's generally everything and the only thing, especially when compared to a sport. The first thing Mohammed Siraj did after coming back from Australia in early 2021 was go to his father's final resting place. In a world filled with Covid rules and compulsory quarantine, the pacer opted to stay back and complete his maiden Test series in Australia. But he carried that burden throughout that series, grieving quietly in hotel rooms across Australia. After he came back, he dedicated all those wickets he picked to his father who had fuelled his cricketing dreams. "It was the most difficult time for me to be there at his burial place," the pacer had said. During the 1999 World Cup, Sachin Tendulkar missed the India - Zimbabwe game because of the death of his father in India. Sachin, who was very close to his father, was urged to rejoin the team by his family.

Athletes are said to be different because they generally have to pay through pain — the pain of a broken bone, a failing ankle, a dodgy knee or a fractured finger. But that can often be incomparable to the mental anguish of losing a loved one.

Full story: newindianexpress.com

Will Jacks and Rehan Ahmed celebrate after beating New Zealand | AP

Will, Rehan seal Mumbai semis for England

ENS @ Chennai

FOR so long on Friday night, the match on Saturday night was going to be contested for pride. Not anymore. With Will Jacks and Rehan Ahmed taking England over the line in a thriller, Pakistan are alive. The smart money is still on the Kiwis advancing to the semifinal stage of the tournament but Pakistan now know that a big win over Sri Lanka will take them through on NRR.

On NRR, the Black Caps are way superior at +1.39. Pakistan, who copped a defeat at the hands of England, are on -0.46. If Pakistan are to overturn that deficit, they need to either win by over 65 runs or chase down any target in under 13 overs or so. These figures are an approximation and it will become clear once the first innings in Saturday's match in complete. England will wait to see who they play in Mumbai. **BRIEF SCORES:** New Zealand 159/7 in 20 ovs (Phillips 39, Seifert 35; Jacks 2/23) **lost to** England: 161/6 in 19.3 ovs (Jacks 32 n.o; Rachin 3/19).

Happy Hardik key for India

ASHOK VENUGOPAL @ Chennai

IN a must-win Super 8s game against Zimbabwe at the MA Chidambaram Stadium on Thursday, India all-rounder Hardik Pandya was key to help his team win by 72 runs. Pandya came up with a gem of a innings, an unbeaten 50, to set a good total for India.

"Pretty happy. Yes, it sounds like a 23-ball 50, but I think I had to reassess in the situation as well. Just in the game, I realized I can time the ball and hit sixes as well," Pandya said.

Full story: newindianexpress.com

PAKISTAN SEEK SEMIS BERTH

As New Zealand went down to England, Pakistan have an outside chance to make it to the semifinals. They will face Sri Lanka in a must-win game where net run rate will be crucial. A look...

Eyes on Salman

One of the underwhelming aspects of Pakistan's campaign so far is Salman Agha's captaincy. Agha have not contributed much individually, but more than that his on-field calls has been disappointing. Against SL, he cannot take any chances as Agha and head coach Mike Hesson will have to bring their A game.

What they need?

While toss will be crucial for Pakistan, should they bat first, the 2009 winners will have to win by a margin of 65 runs approximately. If they were to chase, they have to get past the total in 13 overs or less approximately. The Agha-led side have their task cut out for them in what is their last chance to make it to the semifinals.

SL vs PAK @ KANDY | 7 PM • LIVE ON STAR SPORTS & JIOHOTSTAR

EXPRESS READ

Dhamne's dream run comes to an end in Pune

PUNE: Manas Dhamne's sensational run at the Maha Open ATP Challenger 75 Men's Tennis Championship came to an end here as he went down (3-6, 7-6 (8), 6-4) to Duje Ajdukovic in the men's singles quarterfinals.

Railways crowned nat'l kabbadi champions

VADODARA: Indian Railways secured the 72nd Senior Men's National Kabaddi Championship Trophy on Friday after beating Maharashtra 49–31 in the final. Railways prevailed over 29 teams divided into 8 pools in last 4 days.

Holder Aravindh wins, Yakubboev holds Gukesh

PRAGUE: D Gukesh played out a draw with Nodirbek Yakubboev of Uzbekistan, while holder Aravindh Chithambaram beat Hans Moke Niemann of the United States in the Prague International Chess Festival here.

Oz women beat India by 5 wickets, seal ODI leg

HOBART: Georgia Voll shone with a scintillating hundred (101) as Australia defeated India by five wickets to seal the three-match Women's ODI series here on Friday. Batting first India posted 251/9 but that was not enough.

CL: Real drawn to face City

AFP @ Paris

REAL Madrid and Manchester City will face off in a Champions League knockout tie for the fifth season running after being drawn Friday to play each other in the last 16.

The Spanish giants will host City in the first leg at the Santiago Bernabeu next month before travelling to England for the return the following week. The clubs have already played each other this season, with City winning 2-1 in Madrid in December during the league phase.

ROUND OF 16 FIXTURES (FIRST LEG ON MARCH 10-11): Real Madrid v Manchester City, Bodo/Glimt v Sporting, Paris Saint-Germain v Chelsea, Newcastle United v Barcelona, Galatasaray v Liverpool, Atletico Madrid v Tottenham Hotspur, Atalanta v Bayern Munich, Bayer Leverkusen v Arsenal.

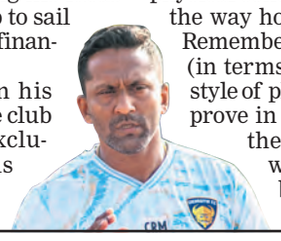
ISL

Playing football Clifford's way

CHANDRA PRABHU @ Chennai

ON the surface, former India midfielder Clifford Miranda comes across as a quiet and an unassuming person. But deep inside he seems to be emotional. This was evident in the past few months when ISL was delayed due to deadlock over the agreement to organise the league. In his coaching career so far, his current position in Chennaiyin FC might be the toughest, in terms of inculcating his ideas and getting the club to sail safely after a tough financial period.

He opened up on his time working in the club and more in an exclusive chat with this daily. *Excerpts:*



• On the season so far

To start with, I am very pleased with the attitude of the players. What also gets me excited is the fact that they want to learn. They want to prosper in a way in a way where they can help themselves and the club, which is very encouraging. So, in terms of results, yes, it hasn't gone our way. But it's also true that we are not at our optimum best in terms of the physical condition, as well as in the way how we are playing. Remember, it's a new team, (in terms of the set-up and style of play). We need to improve in certain aspects of the game, especially when we have the ball.

• On his coaching philosophy

There are two factors. The first is I like to play possession-based football. But not for the sake of it. For me, it's called a progressive possession. Ultimately, the most important thing is to reach the opponent's goal. Sometimes if we can reach with one pass, we'll go with one pass. If we require 20 passes, we'll make 20. So, the most important thing is to know when to go.

It's important that how I want my team to play comes from the methodology and training. A lot of training sessions are based on helping the players make decisions.

Full story: newindianexpress.com

Ranji Trophy: Jammu & Kashmir on verge of creating history in Hubballi

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @ Chennai

AND, now, Jammu and Kashmir are united even when they are divided. United thanks to their love of cricket. United thanks to their undying love for feel-good stories. United thanks to their team on the verge of doing something unprecedented in the region's cricketing history. And everybody wants a piece of action. On Friday evening, Omar Abdullah, the region chief minister's, decided he would fly in to watch history unfold on the final day at Hubballi.

That history will surely arrive sometime after 2.00 PM in the city. There is one of more day's worth of cricket left in the final of the Ranji Trophy but it's purely academic in nature. Heavily-fancied Karnataka, eight-time champions with a plethora of India stars, past and present, trail by 477 runs. And they still need to pick up six wickets to start their fourth innings. This isn't champagne on ice. This is J & K's name already inked on the trophy, them becoming the 18th Indian state or region to win Indian cricket's greatest domestic honour. The 92-year-old competition has always had a penchant for surprise but this would surely be one of its greatest yet.

And like they have done so often this season, the man who broke through Karnataka's resistance on Friday was Auqib Nabi. The 29-year-old, who will surely be capped by India in the one-off Test against Afghanistan this Summer provided the seamer is fit, found Mayank Agarwal's pad in the innings 91st over. Agarwal, whose 160 had kept them in the game till that point, was given not out but Nabi reviewed the decision. The referral returned three reds. Two overs later, Nabi picked up his fifth of the innings, his 7th of a remarkable season. Karnataka's innings folded soon after for 293 to concede a lead of 291. J&K opted to bat again to completely guard against a Karnataka counter-attack with the bat. They suffered a minor hiccup but recovered to reach 184/4.

BRIEF SCORES: J&K 584 & 186/4 in 57 ovs (Iqbal batting 94) vs Karnataka 1st innings 293 all out in 93.3 ovs (Agarwal 160; Auqib Nabi 5/54). **Full story: newindianexpress.com**

Jammu & Kashmir players celebrate after dismissing Karnataka for 293 | D HEMANTH

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— Vishnu Deo Sai, Chief Minister, Chhattisgarh