

# Indian-Origin man among 4 killed in South Africa temple collapse

While two people, a construction worker and a devotee, were confirmed dead on Friday, the death toll rose to four on Saturday after rescue teams recovered more bodies.



While two people, a construction worker and a devotee, were confirmed dead on Friday, the death toll rose to four on Saturday after rescue teams recovered more bodies. The New Ahobilam Temple of Protection, situated on a steep hill in Redcliffe in north of eThe-

kwini (formerly Durban), was being expanded when a section of the building gave way on Friday while workers were on site. The exact number of workers and temple officials believed to be trapped beneath tonnes of rubble is unknown. While two people, a construction

worker and a devotee, were confirmed dead on Friday, the death toll rose to four on Saturday after rescue teams recovered more bodies. Of the four deceased, one has been identified as Vickey Jairaj Panday, an executive member of the temple trust and manager of the construction project, local media reported, quoting officials. Panday had been deeply involved in the development of the temple since its inception nearly two years ago, the reports said. Sanvir Maharaj, director of Food for Love, a charity affiliated to the temple, also confirmed that Panday was among those who had died. Rescue workers, who spent two days trying to recover

a fifth body that had been located, had to suspend operations on Saturday afternoon due to inclement weather, Reaction Unit South Africa spokesperson Prem Balram told local media. “At this stage, it cannot be confirmed whether additional individuals remain trapped beneath the rubble,” he said. The temple was designed to resemble a cave, using rocks brought from India and excavated on site, and the family building the structure had claimed that it would house one of the world’s largest deities of Lord Nrsimhadeva. The eThekwin Municipality, in a statement, said no building plans had been approved for the project, suggesting the construction was illegal.

Initial rescue efforts had been guided by cellphone calls from one of the trapped persons, but communications ceased late Friday evening, officials said. KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Minister for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Thulasizwe Buthelezi visited the site on Saturday and pledged that rescue operations would continue for as long as necessary, even as experts noted that there was little hope of finding more survivors. Buthelezi expressed gratitude to the combined government and private teams involved in the search and rescue operation, including a special dog unit from the Western Cape.

# Violence reported in several parts of Kerala after civic poll results

Police said another violent incident was reported at Marad, where stones were allegedly pelted at a UDF victory procession, leaving several people injured.

Safir News  
Kozhikode: Dec, 14



Violence erupted at various places across Kerala, particularly in the northern districts, following the announcement of local body election results on December 13, police said on Sunday. In Eramalam in Kozhikode district, tension prevailed throughout the Saturday night after the Indira Gandhi Bhavan, a Congress office, was allegedly attacked by CPI(M) workers. According to an FIR registered at Edachery police station, around 200 people marched towards the Congress office carrying weapons and vandalised the building, causing damage estimated at around Rs five lakh. A statue of the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was also damaged in the attack, police said. Soon

after, UDF activists gathered at the spot, further aggravating the situation. However, with the deployment of additional police personnel, the situation was brought under control, an officer said. Police said another violent incident was reported at Marad, where stones were allegedly pelted at a UDF victory procession, leaving several people injured. In Sultan Bhatery in Wayanad district, police registered a case after a car carrying a UDF activist and his family

members was allegedly attacked by around 40 CPI(M) workers, an official said. Sultan Bhatery police also booked UDF activists in a separate incident for allegedly attacking a CPI(M) worker who objected to the bursting of crackers near his house, the officer added. In Panoor in Kannur district, houses of several Muslim League activists were allegedly attacked by CPI(M) workers, and vehicles parked at the houses were also damaged.

# ‘Vote chori’ an attack on very idea of India: Siddaramaiah

The chief minister was speaking at the Congress’ mega rally at Ramlila Maidan in Delhi, against the vote chori.

Safir News  
New Delhi: Dec, 14

Targeting the ruling BJP at the Centre for the alleged ‘vote chori’ (vote theft), Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday said, fascism does not begin with guns on the streets, it begins with the quiet theft of institutions, the slow manipulation of systems, and finally, the theft of elections. Terming vote chori as an attack on the very idea of India, he said, the Special Investigation Team (SIT) filing a charge sheet naming a former BJP MLA, his son, and others in Aland constituency in Karnataka, for alleged attempt to delete nearly 6,000 voters’ names, makes a significant legal step.



The chief minister was speaking at the Congress’ mega rally at Ramlila Maidan in Delhi, against the vote chori. “History teaches us that fascism does not begin with guns on the streets, it begins with the quiet theft of institutions,

the slow manipulation of systems, and finally, the theft of elections,” Siddaramaiah said. Authoritarian regimes around the world use one core tactic, which is rigging the democratic process while pretending to protect it. This is ex-

actly what the BJP is doing today, he alleged. “They capture institutions. They intimidate election machinery. They distort voter lists. They suppress turnout in Opposition areas. They violate the level playing field through money and power,” he said, adding that “this is not just malpractice. This is vote chori which is an attack on the very idea of India.” Stating that a government born out of “stolen votes” is not a democratic government, the CM said, it is a government that fears the people, manipulates the mandate, and survives only through deceit. “This is precisely how democracies decline into electoral autocracies. Today BJP’s vote chori is the biggest threat to the republic since independence,” he said.

# Messi to meet CJI and Army chief along with PM Modi in Delhi



Safir News  
New Delhi: Dec, 14

Argentine football icon Lionel Messi will meet the Chief Justice of India and the Army chief at a member of Parliament’s house after his visit to Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s official residence during his Delhi leg of the India tour here Monday. The final day of the GOAT India Tour will also see Messi exchanging greetings with two members of the Indian cricket team at the Ferozshah Kotla Stadium.

It is understood that the member of parliament is Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Praful Patel, who had served as president of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) for three terms. Messi will arrive in the national capital at 10.45am, and after a 50-minute ‘Meet and Greet’ session at a city hotel, he will head to the PM’s residence where he will spend 20 minutes interacting with Modi.

His next stop will be the residence of an MP, where he is also set to meet the Argentina Ambassador to India Mariano Agustín Caucino, besides CJI Justice Surya Kant and Army chief general Upendra Dwivedi. The chief of Enforcement Direc-

torate, Rahul Navin, is also likely to part of the select gathering at the MP’s house, which will also comprise fee top government officials. After his meeting with the VVIPs, Messi’s convoy will leave for the Ferozshah Kotla Stadium where a few programmes are lined up.

At 3.30pm, Messi is scheduled to enter the stadium via the walkway that leads to the pitch, where the cars will be ready to then leave from there directly to the airport once the GOAT concerts ends.

Following a grand welcome with music, Messi will head to the small soccer field where some Indian celebrities will be engaged in a match. Messi will greet the players, take group photo with teams.

A football clinic with 22 children will be held from 3.55pm to 4.15pm. Messi will then head to the centre of the field, and two Indian cricketers will give him a gift, and the Argentine footballer will hand over two pre-signed jersey to both.

Messi will arrive in the national capital at 10.45am, and after a 50-minute ‘Meet and Greet’ session at a city hotel, he will head to the PM’s residence where he will spend 20 minutes interacting with Modi.

# BENGAL GOVERNOR DENIED ENTRY TO SALT LAKE STADIUM AMID MESSI CHAOS



Kolkata: West Bengal Governor C V Ananda Bose was “denied” entry into the Salt Lake Stadium, after chaos and crowd trouble at the venue marred an event featuring football legend Lionel Messi. Bose described the denial of entry on Saturday evening as an affront to the constitutional position of the governor, and sought a reply from the authorities.

“I never write a report without seeing the spot... My report is half-ready. I want to see for myself what happened in Ground Zero,” he told reporters outside the stadium. “Is this the way West Bengal treats its governor? The governor is not a rubber stamp,” Bose said, terming the episode a “ghastly irrelevance of a constitutional authority”.

Bose said he would revisit the stadium on Sunday and examine the issue in depth.

“It is not a personal affront... this is an affront to the constitutional position of the governor. If truth can be hidden from the governor, maybe this is only the tip of the iceberg. I will certainly explore it to the hilt and establish the truth,” he asserted. The governor said the police had already begun an investigation and that his report would reflect “the point of view of the people who are affected”. Chaos unfolded at the Salt Lake Stadium on Saturday, after spectators resorted to vandalism on failing to catch a glimpse of Messi, alleging gross mismanagement by the organisers and obstruction of view by VIPs.

Police arrested the event’s main organiser, Satadru Datta, while Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced the constitution of a high-level inquiry committee to probe the incident. Bose had earlier dubbed the incident at the Salt Lake Stadium a “dark day for the sports-loving people of Kolkata”.

# We focus on development, says NCP as Ajit Pawar skips visit to RSS founder’s memorial

Even as Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar skipped the visit to RSS founder K B Hedgewar’s memorial in Nagpur on Sunday his party NCP stressed that it joined the Mahayuti alliance for the state’s development..

Safir News  
New Delhi: Dec, 14

Even as Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar skipped the visit to RSS founder K B Hedgewar’s memorial in Nagpur on Sunday, his party NCP stressed that it joined the Mahayuti alliance for the state’s development. The National Congress Party’s ideology is based on the “progressive thoughts of (social reformers) Shahu, Phule and Ambedkar,” NCP spokesperson Anand Paranjpe said, noting that it was



not the first time that Pawar skipped the visit to Hedgewar’s memorial. While Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, Deputy CM Eknath Shinde and ruling BJP, Shiv Sena legislators

visited Hedgewar’s memorial and paid tributes to him on Sunday morning, Pawar and other NCP leaders skipped the event. The winter session of the Maharashtra legislature is currently underway in Nagpur. Ministers and MLAs belonging to the BJP visit the memorial of Hedgewar and the second Sangchalak, M S Golwalkar, at the Smruti Mandir in Reshimbagh every year during the winter session of the state legislature. Last year, MLAs Raju Karemore and Rajkumar Badole were the only representatives of the Ajit Pawar-led NCP,

which has 41 legislators in the assembly, at the Smruti Mandir. NCP spokesperson Paranjpe said it is not the first time that Ajit Pawar skipped a visit to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) founder’s memorial. “We stick to our principles and our focus is development of the state,” he asserted. Sachin Sawant, spokesperson of the Opposition Congress, claimed the NCP has been hearing the “ideology” of RSS in cabinet meetings and unless Pawar’s party agrees with it, they wouldn’t be in power.

# Public won’t tolerate’, BJP on derogatory slogans against PM Modi at Cong protest

BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra launched a scathing attack on Congress’ ‘vote chori’ protest, where derogatory slogans were directed at Prime Minister Narendra Modi,

Safir News  
New Delhi: Dec, 14

BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra launched a scathing attack on Congress’ ‘vote chori’ protest, where derogatory slogans were directed at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, stating that the public “will not tolerate” such disrespect towards their “beloved leader”.

Congress workers and leaders gathered for a protest rally at Delhi’s Ramlila Maidan on Sunday against alleged ‘vote chori’, accusing the Centre and the Election Commission of India (ECI) of colluding to manipulate elections. The demonstration, however, also triggered controversy as several participants were heard raising objectionable slogans against Prime



Minister Narendra Modi.

As slogans echoed across the venue, some workers were heard chanting, ‘Modi teri kabra khudegi, aaj nahi to kal khudegi’ (Modi, your grave will be dug, if not today, then tomorrow),

along with ‘Vote chor, gaddi chhod’, targeting the Prime Minister.

Throughout the protest rally, party workers continued to raise similar objectionable slogans while holding placards and banners.

Safir News  
New Delhi Dec, 14

Alleging that “vote chori” was in the BJP’s DNA, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday said his party stood with ‘satya’ (truth) and vowed to remove the “Narendra Modi-RSS government” from power. Addressing the party’s ‘Vote Chor Gaddi Chhod’ rally at the Ramlila Maidan here, he launched a scathing attack on the Election Commission and mentioned the names of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, and Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi to allege that they were working for the BJP. “We will stand



with ‘satya’ (truth) and will remove the Narendra Modi-RSS government from power. They have ‘satta’ (power), and they indulge in ‘vote chori,’” the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha said. Claiming that truth is in the DNA of

those following the Congress ideology, he alleged that there is untruth and “vote chori” in the DNA of the BJP-RSS. “You should not fear, in the end we will remove Narendra Modi, Amit Shah and the RSS government from power by

following the path of truth,” he said. Asserting that it may take time, but truth will ultimately win, the former Congress chief said, “We’ll work with truth and non-violence to defeat Modi and (Amit) Shah. Rahul Gandhi was accompanied by Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge and Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi at the Ramlila ground, where party workers in large numbers gathered to protest against “vote chori”. The party has collected around six crore signatures against alleged vote theft from every corner of the country, and will be presenting the same to the President of India. Later, in a post on X, Rahul Gandhi said,