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## PM hands over appointment letters to 61,000 youths at Rozgar Mela, says it's an invitation to nation-building

Agency, New Delhi



Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday handed over appointment letters to more than 61,000 youths selected in various government departments and organizations through video conferencing at the 18th Rozgar Mela (Employment Fair). On this occasion, the Prime Minister said that the new year has brought a new chapter of happiness in the lives of the youth. He said that this appointment letter is not just a document of employment but a 'letter of resolve' for building a developed India. Prime Minister Modi said that today more than 61,000 youths of the country are starting a new chapter in their lives. He said that joining government service is an opportunity to serve the nation and fulfill responsibilities towards the Constitution. The Prime Minister said that this is the time for the youth to connect with the Constitution and

understand their duties. In his address, the Prime Minister highlighted the national significance of the month of January, saying that the country is currently in the atmosphere of Republic Day celebrations. January 23rd was celebrated as Parakram Diwas on the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, January 25th is National Voters' Day and January 26th is Republic Day. He said that it was during this period that 'Jana Gana Mana' was adopted as the national anthem and 'Vande Mataram' as the national song, which further enhances the importance of this day. Modi said that the Rozgar Mela has been

established as an institution in the past years. Through this, lakhs of youths have received appointments in various departments of the central government. He said that connecting the youth with skills and providing them with employment and self-employment opportunities has been a priority of the government, and it was with this objective that the Rozgar Mela was started in mission mode. The Prime Minister said that India is one of the youngest countries in the world today. The government's continuous effort is to create new opportunities for Indian youth both domestically and internationally. He said that

the Government of India is entering into trade and mobility agreements with several countries, which are increasing employment and professional opportunities for Indian youth globally. The Prime Minister said that in the past years, India has made unprecedented investments in modern infrastructure. Developments in sectors such as roads, railways, airports, ports, and logistics have created massive employment opportunities in construction and every related sector. He said that India is the only major economy that has doubled its GDP in a decade, and today more than a hundred countries are investing in India through

foreign direct investment.

Prime Minister extends greetings on Uttar Pradesh Foundation Day

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday extended his greetings to the people of Uttar Pradesh on the occasion of the state's Foundation Day. He said that Uttar Pradesh's contribution to the richness of Indian culture and heritage has been invaluable, and the state has played a crucial role in the country's progress. In a message shared on the social media platform X, Prime Minister Modi said that with the double-engine government and the active participation of the development-oriented people of the state, Uttar Pradesh has transformed from a "BIMARU" state to an "exemplary" state in the last nine years.

## Jharkhand Government and Naveen Jindal Group Hold Meeting on Industrial and Developmental Cooperation

Ranchi: Representatives of the Naveen Jindal Group met with Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren in London and held detailed discussions on investment, industrial development, and long-term cooperation in the state. This meeting was held as a follow-up to the discussions between the Chief Minister and industrialist Naveen Jindal in Ranchi on January 2, 2026. According to a press release issued by the Chief Minister's Secretariat on Saturday, the meeting discussed important topics such as steel, clean energy, skill training, higher education, and sustainable development. Both sides expressed their commitment to working together to promote environmentally friendly and sustainable industrial development in Jharkhand. The Naveen Jindal Group expressed interest in potential investments in the steel industry, clean energy projects, and power infrastructure in Jharkhand. The meeting also emphasized prioritizing environmental protection and social responsibility along with industrial investment. This initiative was described as being in line with the Government of India's national goal of promoting a low-carbon economy and green energy. Emphasis on Higher Education and Skill Training Appreciating the 'Marang Gomke Scholarship Scheme', the Naveen Jindal Group discussed possibilities of collaboration in the field of

**Strong partnership proposed in steel, clean energy, skills development, and higher education**



higher education and skill training. This included considering scholarship support for students from Jharkhand, vocational training programs, and capacity building schemes for the youth. Furthermore, an agreement was reached to enhance the capacity of educational and training institutions through skill development and training programs to ensure better employment opportunities for young people. Both sides stated that skilled human resources are the cornerstone of Jharkhand's long-term and inclusive development. This proposed collaboration is considered a significant step towards creating new employment opportunities, expanding green energy, and accelerating sustainable industrial development in Jharkhand.

## Brief News

### Amidst bitter cold, Russia launches major attack on two Ukrainian cities



Kyiv: Russia launched major aerial attacks on Ukraine's capital Kyiv and its second-largest city Kharkiv early Saturday morning. According to officials, at least 13 people were injured in these attacks carried out with drones and missiles. Two people are in serious condition, while 11 were injured in Kharkiv. According to media reports, the mayor of Kyiv said that loud explosions were heard in several parts of Kyiv. He said that the attacks occurred in two different districts of the city, located on both banks of the Dnieper River. He added that the injured have been hospitalized and their condition remains serious. According to the Ukrainian Air Force, Russia used both drones and missiles in this attack. More than 100 drones were used in the attack on Kyiv. The head of the Kyiv military administration said that drone attacks were recorded in at least three districts, causing fires in two locations.

### Bangladesh Elections: US Tilt Towards Jamaat-e-Islami Raises India's Concerns



Dhaka: A major shift is unfolding in South Asian geopolitics just ahead of the general elections in Bangladesh scheduled for February 12, 2026. This change in US foreign policy has brought not only Bangladeshi politics but also India's security interests into the spotlight. The US is now signaling direct dialogue and engagement with Jamaat-e-Islami, Bangladesh's most prominent and controversial Islamist party. According to a recently surfaced report, a senior US diplomat stationed in Dhaka admitted in a private meeting with local journalists that Bangladesh has now tilted towards Islamic ideology. The diplomat suggested to the journalists that they give members of Jamaat's student wing, Islami Chhatra Shibir, a platform in mainstream media programs. The US believes that Jamaat has now become a political force that cannot be ignored. While the US embassy has described this as routine dialogue, the diplomats' approach clearly indicates that Washington now considers Jamaat a legitimate political stakeholder.

### Home Minister Amit Shah and other leaders pay tribute on the birth anniversary of Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur

Agency, New Delhi

On the birth anniversary of Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur, a pioneer of social justice, former Chief Minister of Bihar and recipient of the 'Bharat Ratna', Home Minister Amit Shah and various political leaders paid tribute to him and remembered his contributions. Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah described Karpoori Thakur as an exemplary ideal of social justice, saying that he laid a strong foundation for social equality by implementing reservations for the underprivileged, backward

### BJP should assure me that they will make me the Chief Minister, then I am ready for an alliance



Kolkata: Humayun Kabir, the TMC MLA who was expelled from the party and gained national attention after laying the foundation stone for the Babri Masjid in West Bengal, has set a condition for an alliance with the BJP. Kabir says that if he is assured that he will be made the Chief Minister, he is ready for an alliance. It should be noted that after being suspended from the TMC at the end of last year, Kabir formed a new party. He named this party the Janata Unnayan Party (JUP). According to media reports, MLA Humayun Kabir has said that he is ready to form an alliance with the BJP if he is made the Chief Ministerial candidate. He has also called for an alliance with the Congress, CPI-M, and ISF.

### Even after so many years, do we still have to prove that we are citizens of this country

Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said that 3 to 4 people are committing suicide every day due to concerns over the National Register of Citizens (NRC). More than 110 people have lost their lives so far, and 40-45 people are fighting for their lives in hospitals. After so many years, do we still have to prove that we are citizens of this country? Mamata Banerjee made these remarks at an event commemorating Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's birth anniversary. According to media reports, CM Mamata

said that the names of more than 58 lakh voters have been removed from the draft voter list released in December. She said that there are a total of 7.6 crore voters in the state, of which the citizenship of 1.66 crore voters has been questioned. They have been sent notices for hearings to re-verify their documents. CM Mamata said that different spellings of the same surname are common in Bengal. Giving her own example, she said that her surname is written as both Banerjee and Bandyopadhyay, but those conducting the NRC don't even understand this.

### Winter Storm Fern's Catastrophic Threat: The Shadow of White Death Looms Over 230 Million People in the US

Agency, Washington



The United States is currently facing a severe natural disaster that has heightened concerns among meteorologists. A warning has been issued for an extremely powerful blizzard, named Winter Storm Fern, which is threatening the lives of over 230 million people. Experts claim that this storm could break records from the past several decades. This is not just ordinary snowfall, but a deadly combination of snow, freezing rain, and Arctic cold that has the potential to bring the entire country to a standstill. The severity of this storm can be gauged from the fact that its

intensity and the speed of the icy winds will be at their peak. This storm, which is expected to last from Friday to Monday, will leave behind a blanket of snow more than a foot deep and deadly frost. In light of this impending danger, more than 1,400 flights scheduled for Saturday have already been canceled, leaving busy airports like Dallas and Fort Worth deserted. Additionally, there is a strong possibility of power lines breaking due to heavy snowfall and freezing rain, potentially plunging thousands of homes into darkness amidst the biting cold. The most dangerous aspect of this disaster is the accompanying polar vortex cold air.

### India's Electoral Model a Hit, Now Several Countries Worldwide Will Conduct Special Intensive Revision

Agency, New Delhi



India's electoral innovations have made a global impact in making democratic processes more transparent and accurate. The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter lists will no longer be limited to India, as most democratic countries' Election Management Bodies (EMBs) have also emphasized adopting this method for purifying their voter lists. This significant consensus was reached at the conclusion of the three-day international

conference on 'Democracy and Election Management' (IICDEM-2026) held at Bharat Mandapam. Election management bodies from 42 countries and heads of missions from 27 countries participated in the conference. All representatives unanimously expressed their commitment to making voter lists error-free in their respective countries and providing every voter with a photo identity card. On the final day of the conference, the 'Delhi Declaration 2026' was shared. India's Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar provided details of the declaration's

### Eight arrested from UP, Gujarat, and Odisha in case of defrauding people of Rs 15 crore through digital arrest

Agency, New Delhi

**Cyber gang that defrauded people of crores of rupees in the name of KYC updates busted, 4 arrested from Jharkhand and Bengal**

New Delhi: The cyber police of the South-West district have busted a large inter-state cyber fraud gang that was cheating bank customers on the pretext of KYC updates. Police have arrested four accused from Jharkhand (Jamta-Dhanbad region) and West Bengal in this connection. The accused posed as bank officials to trap people. Mobile phones, SIM cards, and digital evidence related to the fraud have been recovered from the accused.

Mahavir Sharma alias Neel (27), Pradyumna Tiwari, Ankit Mishra, Bhupendra Kumar Mishra, and Adesh Kumar Singh (36). He said that the 77-year-old victim received a phone call on December 24, 2025, informing her that a SIM card issued in her name was involved in a money laundering case.

### Shankaracharya Avimuktanand and the government should resolve the dispute together, don't let Sanatan Dharma become a laughing stock: Dhirendra Krishna Shastri



Kota: The educational city of Kota has transformed into a city of devotion these days. On the very first day of the Shri Ram Katha by storyteller Acharya Dhirendra Krishna Shastri in Ramganjmandi, a surge of faith was witnessed. On the first day of this Gau Mata Mahotsav organized by Education Minister Madan Dilawar, Dhirendra Shastri not only gave religious discourses but also offered advice on the ongoing dispute between Shankaracharya Avimuktanand Saraswati, who is adamant about bathing with a palanquin in Prayagraj, and the Yogi government.

### Operation Sindoos was a strong stand, I won't apologize for it: Shashi Tharoor

Kozhikode: Congress MP Shashi Tharoor said that he has not opposed the Congress party's stand in Parliament at any stage. He said that the only issue on which there was public disagreement on principle was Operation Sindoos. He said that he had taken a very strong stand on this matter, and he would not apologize for it. After the Pulwama incident, he himself wrote a column. In it, he said that this cannot go unpunished, there must be a response. Tharoor said this while answering questions from the audience at the Kerala Literature Festival in Kozhikode on Saturday. According to media reports, he has no regrets about his strong stance on the Operation Sindoos issue.

# Joint inspection of the full dress rehearsal and parade practice for the grand Republic Day celebrations was conducted

Correspondent.DN

**Goddha:** At the local Gandhi Maidan, District Magistrate-cum-Deputy Commissioner Miss Anjali Yadav, IAS, and Superintendent of Police Mr. Mukesh Kumar, IPS, jointly inspected the final full dress rehearsal and parade practice for the successful organization of the Republic Day celebrations. During the program, the Deputy Commissioner instructed the police personnel and various schools to finalize their preparations, ensure 100% adherence to social distancing during the parade, complete the final cleaning of the grounds, and finish the stage decoration and painting work. The Deputy Commissioner appealed

to the district residents to celebrate Republic Day peacefully, imbued with a spirit of patriotism, and to take a pledge for the unity, integrity, and prosperity of India. She also stated that the use of plastic flags is prohibited during Republic Day. Superintendent of Police, Godda, Mr. Mukesh Kumar, IPS, stated that all police officers and personnel should participate in the Republic Day celebrations with complete discipline and that any remaining shortcomings should be addressed as soon as possible. Police officers and personnel were instructed to participate in the Republic Day ceremony in clean uniforms. The program included contingents of IRB personnel, male and female



police personnel, Home Guard personnel, and school children, whose performance was inspected in sequence. After the inspection, the Deputy Commissioner and the Superintendent of Police held a meeting with the concerned officials to discuss in detail the parade salute, march-past, flag hoisting procedure, stage

arrangements, arrival and departure of guests, outline of cultural programs, sound system, electricity, sanitation, drinking water, first aid, fire safety, and traffic and security arrangements. They instructed the concerned departments and assigned officers to ensure a coordinated, timely, and error-free

event. From a security perspective, instructions were given regarding crowd management, the chief guest's address, entry and exit arrangements, barricading, passes and seating arrangements for media personnel, tableau screening and evaluation committee, honoring freedom fighters, marking seating areas for

media personnel near the flag hoisting site, CCTV surveillance, and deployment of adequate police force at sensitive points. The contingents participating in the parade were instructed to practice with discipline, uniformity, and according to the prescribed standards. The Deputy Commissioner said that Republic Day is a festival of national pride, and therefore, the ceremony should be organized in a dignified, well-organized, and secure manner. Negligence at any level will not be tolerated. The Superintendent of Police instructed strict adherence to security standards and strengthening of the rapid response system to deal with emergencies. It is to be noted that rehearsals for the Republic Day parade were being conducted since January 18, 2026, and the final rehearsal was held today. The chief guest, Minister of Rural Development, Rural Works and Panchayati Raj Department, Ms. Deepika Pandey Singh, will hoist the flag at 9:05 AM. \*Present on the occasion were Additional Collector, Godda, Sub-Divisional Police Officer, Godda, Mr. Baidyanath Oraon, Sub-Divisional Police Officer, Mr. Ashok Priyadarshi, District Land Acquisition Officer, Mr. Ritesh Jaiswal, District Supply Officer cum District Treasury Deputy Collector, Mr. Avinash Purnendu, District Public Relations Officer, Mr. Arvind Agarwal, Social Security Officer, Mr. Abhay Kumar Jha, District Transport Officer, Ms. Kanchan Kumari Bhudolia, District Education Officer, Ms. Mishra Tudu, District Education Superintendent, Mr. Deepak Kumar, Sergeant Major, City Police Station In-charge Mr. Dinesh Mahli, along with other police personnel and school children.\*

## Deputy Commissioner and Superintendent of Police inspected the Republic Day parade rehearsal

Celebrate Republic Day with confidence, enthusiasm and the energy of patriotism: Deputy Commissioner

Correspondent.DN

**Deoghar:** The final rehearsal of the parade to be held on the occasion of Republic Day was conducted at the local K.K.N. Stadium in the presence of Deputy Commissioner-cum-District Magistrate Mr. Naman Priyesh Lakra and Superintendent of Police Mr. Saurabh. Besides, contingents of the District Police Force, JAP-5 personnel, male and female police personnel, Home Guard cadets, NCC, and school children participated in the rehearsal. During this time, the participants were led by the Sergeant Major as per the rules. Furthermore, as part of the Republic Day preparations, the parade



rehearsal had been going on since January 20, 2026, and this was the final rehearsal. On this occasion, Deputy Commissioner-cum-District Magistrate Mr. Naman Priyesh encouraged everyone, saying that they should contribute their 100% to make the program grand with confidence, enthusiasm and the energy

of patriotism on their faces. Superintendent of Police Mr. Saurabh also gave necessary and appropriate instructions to the concerned police officers regarding the parade. Final rehearsal of Republic Day parade completed.... While interacting with media representatives, Deputy Commissioner Mr. Naman

Priyesh Lakra, IAS, urged the district residents to participate in the main ceremony and said that we all should celebrate this national festival peacefully and safely, filled with patriotism, and cooperate with the district administration in maintaining law and order. He also informed that this year a contingent of girls from government schools will also participate in the parade. The Deputy Commissioner further informed that the flag hoisting will be done by the Chief Guest, Minister of Water Resources and Minority Welfare Department, Mr. Hafizul Hassan, at 9:05 AM. He also informed that this

The main program will be organized at the local K.K.N. Stadium on Republic Day as per the prescribed schedule. In addition, a cultural program filled with patriotic fervor will be organized from 6 PM onwards. During this time, in addition to the above-mentioned individuals, Sub-Divisional Officer Mr. Ravi Kumar, Sub-Divisional Police Officer, District Nazir Deputy Collector, District Public Relations Officer, Traffic DSP, Sergeant Major, Assistant Public Relations Officer, and officers and personnel from the concerned departments and police force were also present.

## Paddle Boating Launched at Khutabandh Pond, Shibu Soren Indoor Stadium Inaugurated in Dumka



Correspondent.DN

soon for the stadium's operation, allowing the general public to join. In addition, international-standard equipment for other indoor games such as carrom, chess, and table tennis is available. The process of starting yoga classes in the stadium complex is also underway. Highlighting the objective of launching paddle boating at Khutabandh pond, and the newly constructed Shibu Soren Indoor Stadium was inaugurated by the MLA of Dumka, Mr. Basant Soren. On this occasion, the MLA said that Dumka is a sub-capital and continuous efforts are being made to develop it accordingly. Several development projects have already been implemented. In the future, Dumka district will be covered with various public welfare and development-oriented schemes to ensure overall development. He informed that the Shibu Soren Indoor Stadium has been constructed for all types of indoor sports, primarily offering badminton facilities. A membership drive will be launched

## Rehearsal held for the 77th Republic Day Parade

Correspondent.DN



## The Deputy Commissioner inspected the arrangements for the Palash Livelihood Festival Saras Fair, which will be held in the district from January 25th to January 31st

Correspondent.DN

**Deoghar:** Deputy Commissioner-cum-District Magistrate Mr. Naman Priyesh Lakra, IAS, inspected the arrangements being made for the Palash Livelihood Festival Saras Fair, which will be held at Deoghar College premises from January 25th to 31st. He also gave necessary and appropriate instructions to the concerned officials regarding the inauguration and preparations for the fair tomorrow. During the inspection, Deputy Commissioner Mr. Naman Priyesh Lakra, IAS, instructed the concerned officials to complete the tasks on time to ensure the smooth functioning



of the Palash Livelihood Festival Saras Fair and the program scheduled for tomorrow. He further gave necessary instructions to the concerned officials regarding the facilities to be provided for the visitors attending the fair. Besides the above, Deputy Development Commissioner Mr. Piyush Sinha, Deputy Municipal Commissioner Mr. Sagari Baral, Nazir Deputy Collector Mr. Shailesh Priyadarshi, District Public Relations Officer Mr. Rahul Kumar Bharti, DPM JSLPS, JSLPS state-level team, Assistant Public Relations Officer, DMFT team, and other concerned officers and executive engineers were also present.



by the administration. During the program, the Sub-Divisional Officer interacted with the people of the panchayat, listened to their problems, and gave necessary instructions to the concerned officers. He directed the panchayat representatives and the

local administration to coordinate and ensure that the blanket distribution work is carried out in a transparent and effective manner. The local villagers expressed their gratitude to the district administration and the Sub-Divisional Officer, saying that receiving blankets in this biting cold has provided them with great relief. On this occasion, Block Development Officer Monika Baskey, panchayat representatives, local public representatives, and a large number of villagers were present.

## A blanket distribution program was organized by the Sub-Divisional Officer, Godda, in Bara Paktari Panchayat under Sundarpahari block of Godda district

Correspondent.DN

**Godda:** Considering the increasing cold wave and harsh winter conditions, a blanket distribution program was organized by the Sub-Divisional Officer, Godda, Mr. Baidyanath Oraon, for needy and

helpless villagers in Bara Paktari Panchayat under Sundarpahari block of Godda district. On this occasion, Sub-Divisional Officer Mr. Oraon himself distributed blankets to the beneficiaries and said that the objective of the state government and the district

**Brief News****BJP District President Inaugurates Nagpuri Orchestra Program**

**Khunti:** A colorful Nagpuri orchestra program organized by the Yuva Shanti Club in Balankel, Rania block, was inaugurated on Saturday by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) District President Anand Kumar by cutting the ribbon. The program witnessed enthusiastic participation from the people of the area. The entire atmosphere was filled with joy due to the cultural performances and Nagpuri songs and music. On this occasion, Nikhil Kandulna participated in the program as a special guest and appreciated the event. The district president said that such cultural programs provide a platform for local talents and also promote mutual brotherhood and cultural awareness in society. The people present at the program thoroughly enjoyed the performances of the artists. Rania Mandal BJP President Sushila Devi, Mandal Vice President Doman Singh, Panchayat President Pradeep Nag, Committee Secretary Kuldeep Nag, former Mandal President Shiv Avtar Singh, Damu Bhai, Dhaneshwar Nag, Balram Kashi, and many other BJP workers and local villagers were present at the program.

**Nationwide Strike on February 12 to Protect Workers' Rights**

**East Singhbhum:** Vishnu De, convenor of the joint platform of central trade unions and independent federations of Kolhan division, said that a nationwide one-day general strike will be held on February 12, 2026, against the anti-labor and anti-farmer policies of the central government. He said that this strike is the beginning of a decisive struggle to protect the workers' rights achieved through sacrifices and against pro-corporate policies. Speaking at a press conference held in Jamshedpur on Saturday, Vishnu De said that the central government has implemented four labor codes without consulting the trade unions, the objective of which is to weaken the right to strike, render unions ineffective, and convert permanent jobs into contract and temporary arrangements. He alleged that through the new labor force policy-2025, an attempt is being made to eliminate the concept of collective bargaining and tripartite dialogue. The joint platform says that the rampant privatization of railways, coal, steel, defense, banks, insurance, energy, and other public sectors has posed a threat to the country's self-reliant economy. Furthermore, instead of filling the more than 65 lakh vacant government positions, outsourcing and contract labor are being promoted. Essential commodities, education, and healthcare are becoming unaffordable for the common people, while farmers have yet to receive a legal guarantee of Minimum Support Price (MSP). The major demands of the trade unions include the repeal of the four labor codes, statutory MSP for all agricultural products, regularization of contract and temporary workers, halting the privatization of public sector undertakings, revival of the Heavy Engineering Corporation (HEC), guaranteed education, healthcare, and housing for all, and the withdrawal of new laws detrimental to the interests of workers and farmers. Vishnu Dey appealed to the workers, farmers, youth, students, and people's organizations of Jharkhand to make the strike a success.

**Jharkhand agitators honored in Chaibasa on Republic Day**

**West Singhbhum:** On the occasion of Republic Day in West Singhbhum district, a program was organized by the Deputy Commissioner's office on Saturday at the Mangil Rungta Plus Two School in Chaibasa. The chief guest was Deepak Biruwa, Transport Minister of the Jharkhand Government. Sandeep Anurag Topno, Sub-Divisional Officer, Sadar Chaibasa, was present as the special guest. Sadar Block Development Officer Amitabh Bhagat, Sadar Circle Officer Upendra Kumar, and all the Block Development Officers and Circle Officers of the sub-division were also present. Addressing the program, Transport Minister Deepak Biruwa said that 25 years have passed since the establishment of Jharkhand and the 26th year is underway, but the Jharkhand agitators have not yet received the respect they deserve. He said this is a matter of sadness for him. He added that since becoming an MLA, he has been raising this demand with the government and the government will soon take cognizance of it. He assured that the demands of the agitators would be considered and they would be given due respect. Meanwhile, Sub-Divisional Officer, Sadar Chaibasa, Sandeep Anurag Topno, stated that in this sub-divisional program, the Jharkhand founding movement participants were being honored with certificates and shawls. He stated that it was because of the Jharkhand movement that a separate state was established and employment opportunities within the state were available. Had Jharkhand not been formed, it's possible that these opportunities would not have been available. During the program, the Jharkhand agitators were honored and their contributions were remembered.

**Preparations complete for the state-level Republic Day celebrations; full dress rehearsal held at Morabadi Ground**

Agency. Ranchi

A full dress rehearsal was held on Saturday at Ranchi's Morabadi Ground in preparation for the state-level Republic Day celebrations to be held on January 26th. The rehearsal was successfully conducted under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Manjunath Bhajantri and Senior Superintendent of Police Rakesh Ranjan. During the full dress rehearsal, all the programs of the Republic Day ceremony were replicated in real-time to avoid any shortcomings or technical errors on the day of the main event. The Deputy Commissioner and Senior Superintendent of Police inspected the parade,



took the salute during the march past, and gave necessary instructions to all the contingents participating in the parade to maintain discipline and coordination. After the rehearsal, a joint briefing was held for all the officers deployed for the ceremony, which was attended by district-level and police officers. During this briefing, the Additional District Magistrate, Ranchi, provided detailed information about the joint

order issued regarding the Republic Day celebrations to all the deployed officers. Addressing the joint briefing, Deputy Commissioner Manjunath Bhajantri instructed all the officers to reach their respective deployment locations on time and faithfully discharge their assigned responsibilities. He said that better coordination among all departments is essential for the successful conduct of the ceremony.



Instructions were also given to ensure the timely display of tableaux, strengthen medical arrangements, and ensure other necessary arrangements. Senior Superintendent of Police Rakesh Ranjan gave special instructions regarding security arrangements, stating that thorough frisking must be carried out before entry to the venue and all security standards must be strictly followed to prevent any untoward incident.

Deputy Development Commissioner Saurabh Kumar Bhuvaniya gave necessary instructions to the concerned officers regarding the smooth, disciplined, and timely display of the tableaux to be presented on the occasion of Republic Day. The state-level Republic Day parade, to be held at Morabadi Ground, will feature contingents from the Indian Army, CISF, CRPF, ITBP, Jharkhand Jaguar, JAP-1, JAP-2, DAP

(men and women), SSB, Chhattisgarh Police, JAP-10 (Women's Battalion), Home Guard, and NCC (girls and boys). The bands of the Indian Army, JAP-1, Home Guard, and JAP-10 (Women's Battalion) will also perform at the ceremony. The Republic Day parade will be commanded by Captain Mohit Kumar Suman of the Indian Army, Ranchi, while the second-in-command will be Mr. Sushant Kumar, Senior Constable-1, Ranchi. The administration has clarified that all necessary preparations have been completed to ensure the state-level Republic Day ceremony is conducted in a grand, disciplined, and secure manner.

**Jharkhand's Weather Continues to Fluctuate, Minimum Temperature in Kanke at Five Degrees**

Agency. Ranchi

The weather continues to fluctuate across the state. The minimum temperature in Kanke, Ranchi, is still 5.7 degrees Celsius, while the maximum temperature in Daltonganj has reached 31.2 degrees. This is causing people in Daltonganj to experience intense heat during the day. However, it gets cold there in the evening. Due to this, the minimum temperature recorded there on Saturday was eight degrees. The Meteorological Department said on Saturday that a low-pressure area has formed over northern Punjab and surrounding areas due to a western disturbance. Also, due to snowfall in the northern states, cold winds



have started blowing again in the plains and central parts of the country. As a result, a slight drop in temperature is being recorded. In the last 24 hours, the highest temperature in the state was recorded at 31.2 degrees in Daltonganj and the lowest at 5.7 degrees in Kanke, Ranchi.

On Saturday, the weather remained clear throughout the day in Ranchi and surrounding areas, with moderate winds. This caused people to feel a chill during the day.

**Strict Security Arrangements in Ranchi for Republic Day, 1500 Additional Personnel Deployed**

Agency. Ranchi

Elaborate security arrangements have been made in the capital city of Ranchi in view of Republic Day. 1500 additional personnel have been deployed in sensitive and identified areas of the city. All station house officers have been instructed to conduct intensive search operations in lodges, hostels, bus stands, railway stations, and markets in their respective areas to prevent any untoward incidents. The police administration has instructed all PCR and patrolling vehicles to remain constantly mobile. Five Quick Response Teams (QRTs), comprising approximately 200 personnel, have been kept in reserve to deal with any emergency situation. In addition, four tear gas teams will also be on high alert. Ranchi Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Rakesh Ranjan said on Saturday that a multi-layered security system has been implemented



in the city for Republic Day. Special security arrangements have been made at the main venue in Morabadi and the surrounding areas. Drop gates have been installed at more than 40 locations, where personnel have been deployed. No vehicle will be allowed to proceed beyond the drop gates. The SSP said that a total of 700 personnel have been deployed in the Morabadi area. Along with this, four Indian Police Service (IPS) officers, six Deputy Superintendents of Police (DSPs), and 17 police inspectors will monitor the security arrangements. Traffic System Changes - Extensive changes have also been made to the

traffic system of the capital on the occasion of Republic Day. Traffic Police Superintendent Rakesh Singh said that the entry of heavy vehicles into the city will be completely closed from 6 am to 10 pm on January 26. He said that heavy vehicles coming to Ranchi from Kanke will be restricted to Borya, vehicles coming from Chaibasa via Khunti will be restricted to Birsa Chowk, and vehicles coming from Gumla-Simdega will be restricted to Kathal Mod and ITI. Similarly, heavy vehicles coming from Jamshedpur will be restricted to Durga Soren Chowk and Sadabahar Chowk. Similarly, large vehicles coming from Patratu to Ranchi will only be allowed to go up to Law University, and vehicles coming from Tilta Chowk Ring Road towards Piska Mod will only be allowed up to Pandara Bazaar. The movement of private vehicles will also be restricted in the Morabadi area. Only vehicles with valid passes will be allowed to enter and exit the event venue.

**Daylight Burglary After Breaking into House, Two Accused Arrested**

Agency. East Singhbhum

A daylight burglary was reported on Saturday morning at Khan Building, opposite Vishwanath Temple on Mango Gurudwara Road. Around 7:30 AM, masked criminals, disguised as laborers, entered the building and broke into a locked house. At the time of the incident, the homeowner, Akhileshwar Dubey, a medical representative, was away in his village preparing for his son's wedding. The criminals first broke the lock on the main door and entered the house. When they couldn't break the lock on an inner room, they broke down the door itself. They then looted jewelry and cash from the cupboards and boxes before easily making their escape. The extent of the loss will only be assessed after Akhileshwar Dubey returns. The building owner, Umakant Singh, said that since the movement of laborers is common in the morning, no one suspected anything. People thought that repair work was going



on at Dubey's house. A short while later, a neighbor noticed the broken door and informed others, which led to the discovery of the burglary. Upon receiving information about the incident, former BJP leader Vikas Singh reached the spot and informed the local police station. With the help of local youths and the police who arrived at the scene, two of the accused were apprehended. The police have taken them into custody for questioning and have launched a search for other members of the gang. Vikas Singh, who was present at the scene, said that drug use has increased rapidly in the area, leading to a continuous rise in crime.

**Republic Day preparations complete, Deputy Commissioner and SSP inspect parade**

Agency. East Singhbhum

Preparations for Republic Day are complete in East Singhbhum district. On Saturday, Deputy Commissioner Karan Satyarthi and Senior Superintendent of Police Piyush Pandey jointly inspected the full dress rehearsal of the contingents participating in the parade, which will be held at Gopal Maidan as part of the district-level main ceremony. During the inspection, the Deputy Commissioner and the Senior Superintendent of Police thoroughly observed the disciplinary status, coordination, march past, and overall arrangements of the parade. The parade included one platoon of JAP-6, two platoons of the District Police Force,



one platoon of the District Home Guard, two platoons of the NCC (men's and women's units), and two platoons of the Scouts and Guides. All the contingents participated in the final rehearsal with full discipline and enthusiasm. The senior officers of the district also reviewed other preparations being made at the main ceremony venue and gave necessary instructions to the concerned officers to complete all arrangements on time. They instructed that special vigilance be maintained regarding security, traffic, seating arrangements, presentation of tableaux, and the smooth conduct of the program. The district administration informed that the flag hoisting ceremony will be held at Gopal Maidan at 9:05 AM on January 26, 2026.

**Youth Arrested with Brown Sugar**

Agency. East Singhbhum

Late Friday night, Mango police, in a major operation against the illegal drug trade, raided the Daigutu Forest Line area and arrested a youth with brown sugar. Police recovered 15 packets of brown sugar and Rs. 250 in cash from the spot, while another accused managed to escape by taking advantage of the darkness and the forest. According to the police, based on a tip-off, a team from Mango police station raided the Daigutu Forest Line on Friday night. Two youths were present there in suspicious circumstances. Seeing the police, both started running, but the police surrounded them and apprehended one youth on the spot, while the other accused managed to escape. The arrested accused, Asif Akhtar, was sent to judicial custody on Saturday. The arrested youth has been



identified as Asif Akhtar alias Shibu Bachha, a resident of Azad Basti in the Mango police station area. The absconding accused has been identified as Rohit Singh, a resident of Daigutu. The police seized the brown sugar and cash recovered from the spot. In this regard, a case has been registered against both the accused under the NDPS Act based on the statement of SI Amit Kumar, posted at Mango police station. The arrested accused, Asif Akhtar, was sent to judicial custody on Saturday.

**Savarna Mahasangh protests at Deputy Commissioner's office against UGC's new equality regulations, submits memorandum**

Agency. East Singhbhum

On Saturday, the Savarna Mahasangh Foundation of India staged a strong protest at the district level against the regulations issued by the University Grants Commission in January 2026 to promote equality in higher education institutions. The protest was held at the Deputy Commissioner's office complex in Jamshedpur. During the protest, Savarna Mahasangh workers raised slogans such as "Equal rights are our right," "Withdraw the anti-constitutional regulations," and "Equal justice for all classes." The protest was peaceful, but the workers showed strong resentment towards the notification. Following this,



a delegation of the Savarna Mahasangh submitted a memorandum in the name of establishing equality in higher education institutions, focuses only on the rights of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, and disabled students, while completely ignoring the constitutional rights and protection of students from the general category. He said that this is against the basic spirit of Articles 14, 15, and 21 of the Indian Constitution. Dhanurdhar Tripathi also alleged that this regulation

does not include any punitive provisions for false or malicious complaints, which has created a wide possibility of its misuse. This is creating an atmosphere of fear, discontent, and inequality in university campuses in several states of the country. District officials of the Mahasangh stated that India's estimated population is approximately 140 crore, of which about one-third belongs to the general category. Despite this, such notifications are violating the fundamental rights of crores of students from the general category. They also said that the contribution of the general category to the country's development, administration, education, industry,

# Indian national, 3 relatives shot dead in family dispute in US; children hid in closet

**New Delhi, Agency:** A domestic shooting in the US state of Georgia on early Friday morning left four dead, including an Indian national, after an alleged family dispute escalated into violence at a residence in Lawrenceville, authorities said.

Three children who were inside the home at the time survived after hiding in a closet, one of whom managed to call emergency services.

According to the Gwinnett Daily Post, Gwinnett County police responded to a "shots fired" call around 2.30 am (local time) at a house in the 1000 block of Brook Ivy Court. Officers found four adults inside the home suffering from gunshot wounds.

All four were pronounced dead at the scene.

Investigators said three



young children - aged seven, 10 and 12 - were inside the house when the shooting began. To protect themselves, the children hid together in a closet. Police said the 12-year-old managed to call 911, providing crucial details that helped officers reach the location within minutes.

The children were not

injured and were later taken into the care of a family member. Because officers arrived quickly and found the suspect's vehicle still in the driveway, K-9 units were deployed to search the area. A police dog tracked the suspect to a nearby wooded area, where he was arrested without incident.

**Suspect and victims**

**identified:** Police identified the suspect as Vijay Kumar, 51, of Atlanta. He has been charged with four counts each of aggravated assault, felony murder and malice murder, along with one count of first-degree cruelty to children and two counts of third-degree cruelty to children.

The victims were identified as Kumar's wife, Meenu Dogra, 43, of Atlanta, and three relatives - Gourav Kumar, 33, Nidhi Chander, 37, and Harish Chander, 38 - all residents of Lawrenceville.

Investigators said an argument began between Kumar and Dogra at their home in Atlanta, after which they travelled with their 12-year-old child to the Brook Ivy Court residence, where the other three victims lived with two children.

300 more killed, Telangana dog toll 900 in a month

**HYDERABAD, Agency:** About 300 dog carcasses were found dumped in a pit in Jagtial district in the latest case of alleged mass killing of strays in Telangana, taking the total number of dogs found dead in the state this month to nearly 900. The latest alleged killings in Pega pally, 200km from Hyderabad, occurred Thursday, allegedly on orders from the village sarpanch, animal rights activists claimed.

Based on a complaint by Preethi Mudavath from Stray Animal Foundation of India, police registered an FIR against the village sarpanch and gram panchayat secretary, among others, under sections 325 read with 3(5) of BNS, and Section 11(1)(a) of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 (dealing with killing and poisoning by multiple persons).

Preethi told media villagers informed her the lethal injections were administered by two women.

Cases of mass killings of strays have been reported from Kamareddy, Hanumakonda and Ranga Reddy districts in the last few weeks. In most cases, FIRs were registered against newly elected sarpanches and other representatives who allegedly ordered the killings to fulfil their poll promises.



## Trucks carrying loose loads to be hard topped; govt to notify rule soon

**NEW DELHI, Agency:** In a move to address the menace of loose items, such as soil, construction materials and municipal waste, often falling from both uncovered or tarpaulin-covered trucks, the govt will soon make it mandatory for these vehicles to have "mechanised covering" - automated or machine-assisted methods for covering.

This will be part of the updated Truck Body Code. Road transport minister Nitin Gadkari has said the code will be notified soon. Officials said the changes to the code have been adopted by a committee under the road transport ministry that has representatives from the industry as well. media

has learnt that the truck-manufacturing industry has sought two years to implement the code while the govt is keen to roll it out in the next one year.

There have been several Supreme Court orders directing proper covering of trucks carrying loose and protruding loads, but there has been little compliance due to poor enforcement.

## Snow & winds bring chaos to J&K

**Roads blocked, flights paused, power hit, schools shut**

**SRINAGAR/JAMMU, Agency:** Snowfall and savage winds up to 155kmph pulverised J&K on Friday, blocking highways, causing flight cancellations, shutting down schools, disrupting power, leaving homes roofless and forcing the suspension of Vaishno Devi pilgrimage.

In the Valley, IMD reported snowfall of 55cm in Shopian, 45cm in Gulgarg, 20cm in Kupwara, 17cm in Pahalgam, 16cm in Banihal, and 15cm in Sonamarg as the weather system fed by western disturbance

bances began its moderate rains onslaught late Thursday night.

In Jammu, Trikuta Hills, home to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi's cave shrine, received the first snowfall of the season alongside Doda, Kishtwar, Ramban, and Poonch. "Light to

ceded by light to heavy rainfall on Jan 24 and 25.

Vehicular movement was stopped in both directions on the all-important Jammu-Srinagar National Highway due to fresh snowfall around Navyug Tunnel. Several other roads were blocked.

At Srinagar airport, no flights moved on Friday. IndiGo said both take-offs and landings had been suspended due to snowfall. "We are closely monitoring the weather and will get you on your way as soon as conditions allow,"

## Wanted in multiple cases, man arrested after police encounter in Delhi

**New Delhi, Agency:** A man wanted in multiple criminal cases was arrested after a brief exchange of fire with police in southeast Delhi, an official said on Saturday.

Police laid a trap near MB Road after receiving inputs about Satish Bhati's (22) movement. When Bhati was spotted on the intervening night of Friday and Saturday and signalled to stop, he allegedly tried to escape and opened fire at the police party, a senior police officer said. "The team overpowered him after a brief exchange of fire. He was safely apprehended and disarmed on the spot," the officer said. No police personnel were injured in the incident, he added. During the search, police recovered one country-made pistol, six mobile phones sus-

pected to be snatched or robbed, and a motorcycle believed to have been used in the commission of crimes, officials said.

Preliminary investigation revealed that Bhati is a habitual offender with prior involvement in multiple criminal cases, including snatching and robbery, in different parts of the city. A case under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Arms Act has been registered, and further investigation is in progress, police added.



## Acid attacks: Centre approves policy for Rs 10,000 monthly aid to survivors in Chandigarh



of beneficiaries and continuation of pension as deemed appropriate.

Benefit will be transferred through DBT mode only and suitable safeguards, including with respect to residency, will be incorporated for selection of beneficiaries so that the scheme is not misused. Besides, the budget need will be met from already available resources with Chandigarh Administration. The Centre's response came during a hearing of a contempt petition filed by advocate HC Arora. Arora had alleged that in a PIL filed by him, the UT administration had undertaken to pay monthly financial assistance to acid attack victims at the rate it is paid by Punjab and Haryana, but it did not keep its promise while Punjab was paying monthly a pension of Rs 10,000 since 2016.

to following conditions.

Instead of new scheme, it may be made a separate component of already running schemes i.e., Union Territory of Chandigarh Victims Assistance Scheme 2012 or Pension to the Persons with Disabilities as deemed appropriate. Suitable economic criteria will also be incorporated for selection

(assault on enemies). "Training of birds like kites or any animal involves neuroscience. Once you understand the science behind these animals and the training part, then these are highly trainable," Captain Harshita said.

She said the Indian Army has been using indigenously-bred dogs for quite some time and they are trained basically for two purposes - detection (explosives, mine detection, tracking, search and avalanche rescue) and protection

which is a "documented kill", will also be showcased at the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) tableau during the parade for the first time.

The tableau will showcase India's victory in Operation Sindoora last year and the jointness of the three services displayed during the decisive action. One side will feature lethal military weapons that proved crucial during the operation. The other side will depict the destruction of the infrastructure on the side of Pakistan.

## Bactrian camels to Zanskar ponies: 'Animal soldiers' to join 6k military personnel at R-Day parade

**S400 to be displayed, EU contingent to participate**



**New Delhi, Agency:** From Bactrian camels to Zanskar ponies, a rare contingent of "animal soldiers" will for the first time be seen marching down Kartavya Path joining the 6,050 military personnel during the 90-minute Republic Day parade on Monday.

They will be under the command of Captain Harshita Yadav, daughter of a retired IAF officer, and from the first batch of Indian Army's Remount & Veterinary Corps.

Speaking to media, she said, "This contingent is very uniquely curated. There are two Bactrian camels from Ladakh, four Zanskar ponies, four raptors (specially-trained

birds of prey), 10 military dogs, mostly indigenously-bred. They are all Army soldiers and have different operational roles."

Perfectly adapted to extreme cold, thin air and

## Editorial

### The 'Mother of All Deals'

This time, January 27th, the day after Republic Day, could prove historic. A Free Trade Agreement (FTA) could be signed between India and the European Union. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has clearly hinted at this, calling it the "mother of all deals." This statement is natural. India, with a population of over 1.47 billion, is the world's fourth-largest economy. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank estimate that India's economy will be the fastest-growing in 2026-27, with a growth rate of around 6.5 percent. Gita Gopinath, former Deputy Managing Director of the IMF, estimates that India could become the third-largest economy by 2028. A trade agreement with such a country would provide European countries with a broad and diverse market. India's FTA with the European Union, a union of 27 countries with a GDP of \$22.5 trillion, a population of approximately 460 million, and an average per capita income of approximately \$49,000, will undoubtedly send a startling message to the entire world. This agreement will be extremely important for a population of over 1.93 billion. New trade avenues will open up, demand for products will increase, production will grow, and as a result, new jobs will be created. It is noteworthy that several rounds of trade negotiations between the two countries continued for 19 years. It was then named the Broad-Based Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA), but despite several rounds of negotiations between 2007 and 2013, a trade agreement could not be reached. The European Union disagreed on issues such as market access, taxes, intellectual rights and property, labor laws and regulations, and environmental standards.

Europe's concerns about its carbon footprint persist even today. However, India has made sincere efforts to reduce carbon emissions to near-zero through alternative measures, such as forest expansion and clean energy. Clearly, the EU has understood India's seriousness regarding the environment and pollution. However, this agreement was delayed and stalled for years. Finally, in 2022, with renewed political will, negotiations began to conclude a comprehensive FTA. In the 2024-25 fiscal year, India's exports to the EU amounted to \$75.85 billion, while imports amounted to \$60.68 billion. Nevertheless, India's exports to Europe are significantly lower than those to China. The EU could now become India's largest trading partner. Currently, textiles, readymade garments, leather goods, marine products, etc.

Prof. Satpal

In a vast and diverse country like India, voting rights are not merely a constitutional right but a symbol of social justice, equality, and popular sovereignty. World history bears witness to the fact that voting rights have never been readily granted by those in power. The concept of democracy developed in ancient Athens, but even there, voting rights were limited to free male citizens.

Women, slaves, and foreign nationals were denied this right. Medieval Europe was dominated by monarchies, where public political participation was unimaginable. The struggle for suffrage began with the development of modern democracy. In Britain, the working class and women gained the right to vote after a long struggle. In the United States, despite constitutionally enshrined voting rights, Black citizens were practically barred from voting until the 1960s. This history underscores the fact that suffrage is not a gift, but an achievement of mass struggles. The history of suffrage in India has also been steeped in struggle and deprivation. During colonial rule, the right to vote was extremely limited. Under the Acts of 1909, 1919, and 1935, suffrage was linked to property, taxes, and education. This right was virtually unattainable for women, Dalits, tribals, and the poor. While political consciousness grew during the freedom movement, the decisive role of the general public was still limited. In such a situation, the decision by the framers of the Constitution of independent India to grant universal adult suffrage was a historic and revolutionary step. The Indian Constitution, which came into effect on January 26, 1950, granted the right to vote to every citizen who had attained the age of 21, without any discrimination. This was later reduced to 18 years under the Constitution's 61st Amendment Act, 1988. This decision, establishing universal adult franchise in 1950, was more progressive than many developed democratic countries of the time. India's first general election, held in 1951-52, was called the largest

**A single vote is not a single vote; it combines with millions of opinions to create the power for change. This needs to be embraced... Democracy is considered one of the best systems of government in the world.**

**While it embraces diversity, it also allows for criticism. Because the democratic system is based on public participation, freedom, equality, and representation, the vote is the most powerful weapon in democracy. It is this power through which the public directs power, legitimizes governments, and holds governance accountable.**

democratic experiment in world history. In a country with approximately 170 million voters and a very low literacy rate, implementing democracy was a major challenge. The Election

formed, but a large segment of voters remain distant from the polling booth. Arguments like "all leaders are the same," "what difference will my one vote make," or "politics is dirty" are often heard.

awareness campaigns and street plays are periodically organized to promote the use of the right to vote.

Additionally, the decision to celebrate January 25, 2011, as



Commission arranged election symbols for illiterate voters, ballot boxes were delivered to villages, and the public participated enthusiastically in this months-long process. The voter turnout was approximately 45.7 percent, which was remarkable considering the circumstances at the time. This election was not merely a choice of power, but a test of public faith in democracy. In the decades that followed, Indian democracy experienced many ups and downs. By the 21st century, the situation had improved somewhat. Voter turnout in the 2014 general elections reached 66.4 percent and 67.4 percent in 2019, the highest ever. In the 2024 elections, the voter turnout was 66.10 percent. It is a harsh truth that today, the very right to vote, for which the world and India have struggled for centuries, is becoming a victim of neglect and indifference. Elections come, governments are

This thinking contradicts the fundamental principles of democracy. In a democracy, it's not the abundance of options that is important, but the selection of the best option. Not voting isn't a sign of disillusionment with the system, but rather a weakening of it. When a citizen doesn't vote, they exclude themselves from the decision-making process. They surrender their right to choose their representatives and indirectly accept bad leadership. In a democracy, it's easy to complain about corruption, bad governance, and incompetent leadership, but it's also essential to introspect whether we've played our part. If a citizen stays home on voting day and later questions government policies, their moral standing is weakened. This statement may seem harsh, but it holds a profound truth: a person who doesn't vote loses their moral right to speak out against corrupt leaders in a democracy. However,

National Voters' Day was made in light of the declining youth turnout. Despite this, it's ironic that while social media is abuzz with political debate, government criticism, and ideological conflict, this same segment lags behind in reaching the polling booth. Democracy isn't strengthened solely by online discourse, but by access to the ballot box. There are special expectations from the youth. India is a young country, with a large population about to vote for the first time. If this segment remains indifferent, the future of democracy will be weakened. Young people must understand that voting isn't just a means to elect the current government, but a tool to shape the future. A single vote isn't a single vote; it combines with millions of opinions to create the power for change. This understanding needs to be internalized, only then will democracy truly flourish.

## Traffic jams are a brake on the country's progress

**Yogendra Yogi**

The country is grappling with a lack of basic infrastructure. The situation is dire everywhere. The country's political parties are not serious about providing these facilities. This is why the country suffers billions of rupees in losses every year due to the lack of these facilities. Political parties and governments blame each other for the lack of such facilities and shirk their responsibility. According to the TomTom Traffic Index 2025, Bengaluru is the second most congested city in the world. Only Mexico City has slower traffic speeds than Bengaluru. Pune, Maharashtra, is in fifth place. The report claims that people lose 168 hours a year due to Bengaluru's traffic congestion, equivalent to 7 days and 40 minutes. According to a survey by the Boston Consulting Group (BAG), the peak hours are 7 to 9 in the morning and 6 to 8 in the evening, during which commuting takes one and a half times longer than the average. Kolkata was the worst in this survey, with Bengaluru coming in sec-

ond. Despite having the highest number of vehicles, Delhi's situation remained better due to better roads. According to reports, the number of people using private vehicles in Delhi was the highest at 45 percent, while in Bengaluru this figure was 38 percent. Mumbai won the race in terms of use of public vehicles, followed by Kolkata. Bengaluru stood at the bottom in this matter where traffic jams have become common. India's four major cities - Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Kolkata - suffer a loss of Rs 1.47 lakh crore every year due to traffic jams. A recent study revealed that Bengaluru suffers a huge economic loss of approximately Rs 20000 crore every year due to traffic jams.

Thousands of people visit this city, billed as India's Silicon Valley, every year. Over the past 15 years, the city's population has grown rapidly. It now boasts nearly 15 million residents and over 10 million vehicles on its roads. The rapid growth of this population can be gauged from the fact that former Chief Minister

**Cities are plagued by traffic congestion, which wastes 10% of fuel consumption. Where vehicles are stranded, they create a pollution zone, containing measurable gases like carbon monoxide and sulfur oxide. Traffic congestion has a direct impact on pollution, as emissions from stopped vehicles can be 3 to 7 times higher than from smoothly moving traffic. Large amounts of nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, and carbon dioxide are emitted, affecting local air quality and posing a threat to the health of local residents...**

Basavaraj Bommai stated in a statement that by 2027, the number of vehicles in the city will exceed its population. Economic losses related to traffic congestion in Delhi are projected to reach US\$14.7 billion by 2030. Fuel wastage due to traffic congestion alone could lead to millions of dollars in losses every day, exacerbating the city's already severe air quality problems. The report found that employees spent significant time stuck in traffic, leading to significant productivity losses. The study estimates that the IT sector alone has lost approximately 7,000 crore due to traffic congestion. Furthermore, traffic congestion adversely impacts small and medium-sized enterprises.

These businesses struggle to meet delivery schedules, resulting in delayed shipments and dissatisfied customers. This, in turn, has a sharp impact on the city's economy, leading to losses of approximately 3,500 crore. Motor vehicle use in India has seen a significant increase since 2000, with the number of new vehicles doubling every 5-6 years. Although this growth was temporarily halted by the pandemic, motor vehicle use has recovered rapidly, with an average of 58,000 new vehicles registered daily in 2023-24, of which 52,000 were private vehicles. In Delhi, an average of 6.4 lakh vehicles were registered during the same period, with an average of 1,750 new vehicles registered daily. One of the rea-

sons for increasing traffic congestion is the excessive number of cars. Traffic stagnation consumes approximately 3% of India's gross domestic product (GDP). Cities are plagued by traffic congestion, which wastes 10 percent of fuel consumption. Where vehicles are stranded, they create a pollution zone, containing measurable gases such as carbon monoxide and sulfur oxide. Traffic congestion has a direct impact on pollution, as emissions from stopped vehicles can be 3 to 7 times higher than from smoothly moving traffic. Large amounts of nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, and carbon dioxide are emitted, affecting local air quality and posing a threat to the health of local resi-

dents. According to the 2011 census, India's urban population was 31.16%, which, according to the World Bank's 2022 projections, is projected to reach 35% by 2020. This pace of urbanization will accelerate in the coming years, leading to an increase in the number of vehicles in metropolitan areas. Delhi will have approximately 12-13 million registered vehicles by 2023. Environmental pollution is also a serious consequence of traffic congestion.

Thirteen of the world's 20 most polluted cities are in India. Traffic congestion leads to a significant increase in vehicle carbon emissions, which deteriorates air quality and increases health problems. Several effective strategies can be adopted to address this problem. First, strengthening public transportation systems is essential. More cities should promote metro networks, electric buses, and cycle tracks. High-occupancy vehicle lanes can be implemented in India, giving priority to vehicles with more than one passenger and encouraging carpooling.

# Markets tanks nearly 1% amid widespread sell-off; Sensex slips below 82,000

**New Delhi, Agency:** Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty resumed their downward journey to end nearly 1 per cent lower on Friday, dragged by widespread sell-off and the rupee depreciating to hit a record low against the US dollar.

Besides, investors rushing to safe-haven assets from riskier assets and unabated foreign capital outflows in the absence of domestic triggers added to the gloom, traders said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex tumbled 769.67 points, or 0.94 per cent, to close at 81,537.70. During the day, the index slumped 835.55 points, or 1.01 per cent, to hit an intraday low of 81,471.82.

The 50-share NSE Nifty dived 241.25 points, or 0.95 per cent, to settle at

25,048.65. In the intraday session, it plunged 264.6 points, or 1.04 per cent, to hit a low of 25,025.30.

Among the 30 Sensex constituents, Adani Ports, Eternal, IndiGo, Axis Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Power Grid, Bharat Electronics Ltd, State Bank of India, Maruti Suzuki India, Bajaj Finance, NTPC, Trent, Larsen & Toubro and Reliance Industries were the laggards.

On the other hand, Tech Mahindra, Hindustan Unilever, Infosys, Asian Paints, Tata Consultancy Services, Titan and UltraTech Cement were among the gainers.

The BSE smallcap gauge slumped 2.19 per cent, while the midcap index fell 1.56 per cent.



Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 2,549.80 crore on Thursday, while Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought stocks worth Rs 4,222.98 crore, according to exchange data.

"Indian equity markets went on a sell-off mode

despite an optimistic global market and supportive domestic PMI data. Sentiment weighed down on uptick crude oil prices, a sharp depreciation of the rupee to record lows, FIIs selling and earnings delivery falling marginally short of expectations amid premium India valuations," said Vinod

Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Ltd.

Realty and PSU bank stocks underperformed on execution-related delays and profit booking, while Adani Group stocks came under pressure amid reports of potential summons by the US regulator, Nair added.

In Asian markets, Japan's Nikkei 225 index, Shanghai's SSE Composite index, South Korea's Kospi index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index closed higher.

European markets were trading lower in mid-session deals. US equities ended higher on Thursday.

"Looking ahead, market sentiment is likely to remain cautious as investors position themselves for the upcoming Union Budget and the US Fed's interest rate decision,

where expectations are muted," he said.

Gold and silver prices rallied on Friday to hit fresh lifetime highs in the futures trade, tracking record gains in international markets amid a weakening US dollar and rising expectations of interest rate cuts by the Federal Reserve.

The rupee hit an all-time low of 92 on Friday and recovered marginally to settle at 91.88 (provisional) against the US dollar.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, rose 1.03 per cent to USD 64.72 per barrel.

On Thursday, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 397.74 points to close at 82,307.37, while the broader NSE Nifty rose 132.40 points to settle at 25,289.90.

## Bank unions to go on nationwide strike on January 27 to press for 5-day work week

Bank employee unions have decided to go on a nationwide strike on January 27 to press for a long-pending demand for a five-day work week.

If the strike proceeds, it will disrupt public sector banking operations for three consecutive days, with January 25 and 26 being holidays.

Most of the public sector banks have already informed their customers about the disruption in banking services if the strike materialises.

In response to the strike notice served by the UFBU, the Chief Labour Commissioner held a conciliation meeting on Wednesday and Thursday, the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU), an umbrella



organisation of nine unions of officers and employees, said in a statement.

"Besides representatives of IBA and various Banks, representatives of DFS, the Ministry of Finance, were present. From UFBU, all our 9 unions were present. Despite detailed discussions, finally there was no positive outcome out of the

conciliation proceedings," it said. Hence, it has been decided to go ahead with the strike on January 27, it added.

Currently, bank employees get the second and fourth Saturdays off each month, apart from Sundays.

The decision to declare all Saturdays as holidays was agreed between the Indian Banks' Association

and UFBU during the wage revision settlement in March 2024.

"It is unfortunate that the government is not responding to our genuine demand. There would be no loss of man-hours as we have agreed to work an extra 40 minutes daily from Monday to Friday," UFBU had said earlier this month.

The UFBU noted that RBI, LIC, GIC, stock exchanges and government offices already follow a five-day work week, arguing there was no justification for banks to lag behind.

UFBU is an umbrella organisation of nine major bank unions in India, representing employees and officers across public sector banks and some old generation private banks.

## BoC (Burger or Chai) Sets Sights on 1,000 Franchise Outlets by 2030, Aiming to Shape India's Desi-First QSR Growth Story

**Mumbai, Agency:** As India's quick service restaurant (QSR) industry continues its rapid expansion, BoC (Burger or Chai) is emerging as a fast-growing, homegrown contender in the fast food franchising space. Founded in 2022 in Mumbai-Nagpur simultaneously, one of the country's most competitive foodservice markets, the brand has announced an ambitious plan to scale to 1,000 franchise outlets by 2030, reinforcing its vision to build a nationally recognized, desi-led fast food chain.

India's organised QSR sector has seen strong momentum over the past decade, driven by urbanisation, rising disposable incomes, a young consumer base and growing acceptance of franchise-led business models. Against this backdrop, BoC has positioned itself as a brand that



blends operational discipline, scalable systems and culturally rooted offerings - an approach its founders believe is essential to stand out in an increasingly crowded marketplace. Launched by husband-wife duo, two young entrepreneurs, BoC was created after identifying a gap in India's food franchise ecosystem. While many fast food brands focus heavily on marketing or rapid outlet additions, the founders saw an opportunity to build a QSR brand that prioritises execution, profitability and long-term sustainability.

## SATCON 2026 wraps up in Delhi with 250+ delegates from 7 countries'

**New Delhi, Agency:** World's First Vegetarian Certification Conclave, SATCON 2026, successfully concluded on January 19, 2026, at Le Méridien, New Delhi, marking a significant milestone in India's food and certification ecosystem. Organised by Sattvik Certifications, the one-day conclave brought together over 250 participants from FMCG companies, luxury hospitality brands, educational institutions, certification bodies, and government policy circles.

Delegates from seven countries - Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, UAE, Qatar, and South Korea, participated in the conclave, reflecting growing global interest in verified vegetarian and vegan food systems. The discussions were anchored around three core themes: Consciousness, Connect, and Collaboration, with a strong focus on strengthening vegetarian certification standards, consumer trust, and ethical food practices.

The conclave featured in-depth panel discussions on building awareness around Sattvik standards, expanding vegetarian offerings in luxury hospitality, mindful culinary practices, ethical leadership, and the need for consistent global food benchmarks. Interactive networking sessions enabled industry leaders and policymakers to exchange practical insights, form collaborations, and identify actionable steps to enhance food safety, compliance, and transparency.

The event was graced by eminent dignitaries as Chief Guests, including Shri Santosh Gangwar, Governor of Jharkhand and former Union Minister; Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge); Shri B. L. Verma, Member of Parliament and former Minister; Ms. Bansuri Swaraj, Member of Parliament, New Delhi; and Shri Vagish Pathak, Member of the Legislative Council & Chairman of Sattvik Certifications.

## SC seeks status reports from CBI, ED on PIL alleging banking fraud by Anil Dhirubhai Ambani Group

**New Delhi, Agency:** The Supreme Court on Friday issued fresh notices to industrialist Anil Ambani and Anil Dhirubhai Ambani Group (ADAG) on a PIL seeking a court-monitored probe into alleged large-scale banking and corporate fraud involving the group and its associate entities.

A bench led by CJI Surya Kant directed CBI and ED to file status reports in sealed covers in 10 days on the progress of their respective probe into the alleged fraud.

On November 18, 2025, the top court had issued notices to the Centre, CBI, ED, Anil Ambani, and ADAG on a PIL filed by former Union Power Secretary EAS Sarma. Noting that Ambani and ADAG had not responded yet, the apex court said this would be their final opportunity to respond to the petition.

Directing the Bombay High Court Registrar General to ensure proper service of notice on Ambani and



ADAG and to file a compliance report, the top court posted the matter for further hearing after 10 days.

Petitioner Sarma alleged that ADAG entities were involved in fraudulent diversion of public funds, fabrication of financial statements, and systemic collusion with institutional actors.

On behalf of the petitioner, advocate Prashant Bhushan said the alleged fraud was "probably the largest corporate fraud in India's history". He claimed that it had been

underway since 2007-08, though an FIR by CBI was registered only in 2025.

Bhushan criticised the probe agencies for failing to probe the alleged involvement of bank officials, asserting, "We want a status report from ED and CBI on what they are investigating. Clearly, they are not probing the collusion by the banks."

He requested the court to direct both agencies to file detailed reports on their investigation into the roles of banks and their officials in facilitating the alleged financial misconduct. The bench asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta - appearing for CBI and ED - to ensure submission of status reports in a sealed cover within ten days. The bench also fixed the next hearing for the matter after that period.

The petitioner highlighted alleged financial irregularities across multiple ADAG entities, accusing them of large-scale diversion of public funds with regulatory failure.

## IIFL Finance Reports Strong Q3 FY26 PAT of Rs. 501 Crore, up 20% Quarter-on-Quarter

**New Delhi, Agency:** IIFL Finance Q3FY26 Results update Strong rebound continues with PAT at Rs. 501 Cr, up 20% q-o-q.

Significant improvement in asset quality from 2.14% to 1.60%, with exit from high-risk segments, focusing on gold and mortgages.

Interim dividend of Rs. 4 per share (200%) declared and approved by the Board.

For the quarter ended Dec 31, 2025, IIFL Finance reported a consolidated profit after tax of Rs. 501 Cr (pre non-controlling interest) up 20% q-o-q. The company's consolidated AUM rose 9% q-o-q to ?98,336 Cr, reflecting steady growth driven by strong growth momentum in gold loans business.

Key Highlights

- Gold Loans: Fully normalized post-embargo (Sep 2024); now making up for the highest share in the AUM mix
- Asset Quality: Stage 2/3 trending down; PCR 92%
- Portfolio Re-set: Exited digital unsecured MSME, micro-LAP from HFC & high-risk MFI geographies
- Financial Strength: ROA 2.1% | ROE 11.3% | CRAR (Consolidated, Computed) 27.7% | Liquidity ? 9,433 Cr | PAT ? 1,193 Cr (9M)
- Growth Focus: Collateral-backed retail lending - Gold, MSME Secured & Home Finance
- Operating Model: AI-led risk and governance systems; phygital reach of Rs 4,800 branches
- S&P Ratings affirmed the rating at 'B+' and revised the outlook on



IIFL Finance's Long term Issuer Default Rating from Stable to Positive

Interim dividend of ?4 per share (200%) declared and approved by the Board

Mr. Nirmal Jain, Founder & Managing Director, IIFL Finance,

said:

"The third quarter reflects a consolidation of IIFL Finance's transformation, marking a clear shift from stabilisation to sustainable operating momentum. Disciplined portfolio re-setting continues to deliver results, with robust loan growth led by gold loans, improved asset quality, and strong capital and liquidity buffers. These gains are also reflected in higher confidence from international rating agencies, as evidenced by recent rating outlook upgrades. With risks well contained and returns improving, the foundation for scalable, high-quality growth is firmly in place. Going forward, our AI-led operating framework, phygital distribution network,

and strong risk and compliance discipline will remain central to delivering consistent performance and long-term value creation"

Business Segment Performance

- Home Loans: AUM grew 5% YoY to ?31,893 Cr but de-grew 0.4% QoQ; business is steady and on track to deliver as per plan
- Gold Loans: AUM surged 189% YoY and 26% QoQ to ?43,432 Cr, demonstrating a strong momentum supported by healthy tonnage growth and stable asset quality
- MSME Loans: AUM grew 17% YoY and 4% QoQ to ?10,081 Cr, owing to strategic re-calibration towards low risk secured lending and pullback from unsecured lending.

## Team India eyes unassailable lead in third T20I

▪ **Sanju Samson's test and Ishan Kishan's challenge**

Agency, Guwahati



Buoyed by comfortable wins in the first two matches, India will enter the third T20I here on Sunday with the aim of securing an unassailable lead in the five-match series. While India will be aiming to seal the series in this match, Sanju Samson's performance is the most talked about, as Ishan Kishan's explosive comeback in the previous match has reignited debate over the team combination. Kishan's brilliant innings has again raised the question of who the team management will trust to open the innings alongside Abhishek Sharma. With only two weeks left for the start of the T20 World Cup, and India still have three more matches against New Zealand before that, the Indian team's structure appears largely settled. The team has displayed balanced performances in both batting and bowling departments so far, but uncertainty remains over

some positions, with Sanju Samson's place being considered the most crucial. In the last match, Ishan Kishan strengthened his claim with a quickfire 76 off just 32 balls, further increasing the pressure on Samson. Samson was given the opportunity to open alongside Abhishek Sharma after Shubman Gill was dropped due to his lack of impact in the T20 format, but the Kerala wicketkeeper-batsman has not fully capitalized on the opportunities he has received so far. Despite returning to his preferred batting order, his performance has clearly lacked consistency. His weakness against fast bowlers has once again been exposed. In the recent series against England, he was repeatedly dismissed by fast bowlers, and against New Zealand, he managed only 10 and six runs in the first two matches. Former

Indian batsman WV Raman also commented on the manner of his dismissals, saying that unless Samson adapts his shot selection and bat speed to the pace of the ball, it will be difficult to expect consistent performances from him. A welcome relief for India is that captain Suryakumar Yadav appears to be back to his old rhythm. He scored a half-century in T20 Internationals after a long time, scoring 82 runs off 37 balls in the last match. Abhishek Sharma, although dismissed on the first ball of the previous match, will be aiming for a big innings in this match. India had a poor start in the previous match, being reduced to six runs for two wickets. However, Kishan's aggressive batting completely changed the course of the match, and India achieved the target with 28 balls to spare. The team management will also be monitoring Axar Patel's finger injury and hope he gets adequate match practice before the World Cup. Fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah was rested in the last match and is likely to return in this match, as the fast bowlers

are being rotated due to the short intervals. This match will be a matter of pride for the New Zealand team.

The Mitchell Santner-led team may change its strategy after this crushing defeat and consider sending Daryl Mitchell up the order. However, its fielding, often considered strong,

has been disappointing in this series, with many easy catches dropped. If New Zealand is to make a comeback, it will need to improve immediately.

**The squads are as follows:**

**India:** Suryakumar Yadav (captain), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson (wicketkeeper), Ishan Kishan, Shreyas Iyer, Hardik Pandya, Shivam Dubey, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Varun Chakravarthy, Rinku Singh, Arshdeep Singh, Ravi Bishnoi, Harsh Rana.

**New Zealand:** Mitchell Santner (captain), Devon Conway, Bevan Jacobs, Daryl Mitchell, Glenn Phillips, Tim Robinson, Jimmy Neesham, Ish Sodhi, Jack Foakes, Mark Chapman, Michael Bracewell, Rachin Ravindra, Kyle Jamieson, Matt Henry, and Jacob Duffy.

## BBL 15: Melbourne Renegades sign explosive opener Josh Brown to a new two-year contract

Agency, Melbourne



Melbourne Renegades' explosive opening batsman Josh Brown has secured his future with the club for the next two years. Brown will now play for the Renegades until at least the end of Big Bash League 17 (BBL 17). Josh Brown, who joined the Melbourne Renegades in BBL 14, had a stellar performance during BBL 15, especially in both Melbourne Derby matches where he proved to be the team's star. He had previously made a strong start to his Big Bash career with the Brisbane Heat in BBL 12 and moved to Melbourne at the end of 2024. After the agreement, Josh Brown said in a statement released

Stars in the first Melbourne Derby. Melbourne Renegades General Manager Rosen Garten said, "Josh gives us tremendous power at the start of the innings. When he's in form, there are very few players who can accelerate the innings as quickly as he can." This new contract for Josh Brown comes at a time when BBL 15 is in its final stages and several clubs have announced contract extensions for players. The Melbourne Stars have signed new deals with Sam Harper (two years), Hilton Cartwright (two years), and Peter Siddle (one year), while Sydney Thunder captain David Warner has re-signed with the club for BBL 16.

## Naomi Osaka withdraws from Australian Open 2026 before third-round match

Agency, New Delhi



Japanese tennis star and two-time Australian Open champion Naomi Osaka has withdrawn from the Australian Open 2026 due to injury. Osaka made the decision just hours before her third-round match, which she announced on social media. Osaka wrote on her Instagram story, "I had to make this difficult decision to address a physical issue that arose after my last match. I was incredibly excited to continue playing and this tournament meant so much to me. It's heartbreaking to have to stop here, but I shouldn't take any risks with my body to get back on the court." She added, "Thank you for all the love and support... I'm so grateful for all of you." Osaka had defeated

Sorana Cirstea of Romania in the second round. This match was also notable for the frosty handshake between the two players. In the third round, Osaka was scheduled to face Madison Inglis of Australia. However, after Osaka's withdrawal, Inglis advanced directly to the pre-quarterfinals (Round of 16). With this, she became the first Australian player to reach the last 16 of the Australian Open since Ashleigh Barty in 2022. Madison Inglis will now face six-time Grand Slam winner Iga Swiatek for a place in the quarterfinals.

## Australia Tour: Indian Women's Test Team Announced, Harmanpreet Kaur to Captain; Kamalini Ruled Out, Uma Chetry Included

Agency, New Delhi



The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Saturday announced the Indian women's Test team for the tour of Australia. The tour, which begins next month, will see the Indian team play three ODIs, three T20 Internationals, and a one-off Test match against Australia. Harmanpreet Kaur will captain the team during the tour, which runs from February 15 to March 9, 2026, while Smriti Mandhana has been named vice-captain. According to the BCCI, wicketkeeper G. Kamalini has been ruled out of the entire tour due to injury. Uma Chetry has been included in India's T20 and ODI

squads as her replacement. Additionally, Pratika Rawal, who was part of the World Cup-winning campaign and has recovered from injury, has also been included in the Test team. India Women's Test Team: Harmanpreet Kaur (Captain), Smriti Mandhana (Vice-Captain), Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Amanjot Kaur, Richa Ghosh (Wicketkeeper), Uma Chetry (Wicketkeeper), Pratika Rawal, Harleen Deol, Deepi Sharma, Renuka

## National Selection Trials: Suruchi and Jaipal deliver strong performances in 10m Air Pistol Trial 1 Final

Agency, New Delhi



In the 10m Air Pistol Trial 1 Final under the National Selection Trials 1 & 2 (Group A) currently underway at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range, World Champion Suruchi and Jaipal Malviya of Madhya Pradesh delivered outstanding performances on Saturday, securing the top spots in the women's and men's categories respectively. After finishing second in the qualification round with a score of 580-20x, World Champion Suruchi further elevated her performance in the final, scoring 242.4 and securing first place in the 10m Air Pistol Women's Trial 1 Final. Sanyam of Chandigarh, who topped the qualification round with 581-16x, also performed consistently well, but had to settle for second place, 2.6 points behind the winner. Meenu Pathak of Delhi secured third place with a score of 218.4. She had finished fourth in the qualification round with 577-18x.

Tejaswini, who qualified in eighth place with 575-14x, finished fourth in the final with a score of 197.5. Olympian Rahi Sarnobat secured fifth place in the final with 177.1 after scoring 579-18x in the qualification round. Divya T.S. of Karnataka finished sixth with 156.5 after 576-23x, while Priya Muralidhar finished seventh with a score of 133.3 after 576-16x. Olympian Esha Singh, who qualified in seventh place with 575-19x, could not start in the final. Earlier in the day, Jaipal Malviya of Madhya Pradesh delivered a confident performance to secure first place

in the 10m Air Pistol Men's Trial 1 Final. Malviya, who finished seventh in qualification with 582-23x, showed remarkable improvement in the final, scoring 245.6 and edging out Gaurav of Uttar Pradesh by 2.4 points. Gaurav, who was second in qualification with 584-24x, won the silver medal. Pramod of Haryana, after finishing sixth in qualification with 582-25x, secured third place in the final with a score of 221.4. Junior national champion Jonathan Gavin Anthony, who topped the qualification round with 587-21x, finished seventh in the final with a score of 137.8. Yogesh Kumar of Rajasthan secured fourth place with a score of 202.5, while Ujjwal Malik of the Navy finished fifth with 180.3. Kedarling Balakrishna Uchgaonve of the Army secured sixth place with 157.7. World champion Samrat Rana, who finished fourth in qualification with 583-17x, could not participate in the final.

## ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup: Match Officials Announced for Super Six Stage in Namibia

Agency, Dubai



The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced the Emirates ICC International Panel of Umpires and Referees for the Super Six stage matches of the ICC Under-19 Men's Cricket World Cup 2026 to be played in Namibia. January 25: Australia vs South Africa - Faisal Afridi and Nitin Bathi will officiate as on-field umpires in this crucial match at the Namibia Cricket Ground. Corey Black has been appointed as the TV umpire, while Forster Mutizwa will be the fourth umpire. Prakash Bhatt will be the match

referee. Faisal Afridi has previously umpired in the South Africa vs Afghanistan match in the group stage, while Nitin Bathi officiated in the Proteas' victory against Tanzania. January 25: West Indies vs Ireland - In the match to be played at the High Performance Oval on the same day, Shaun Haig and Iknou Chabi will be the on-field umpires. Graham Lloyd will be the TV umpire and Virender Sharma the fourth umpire. Niyamur Rahul will be the match referee. This will be Shaun Haig's third on-field match involving the West Indies. He previously umpired in the West Indies-Afghanistan and West Indies-South Africa matches

in the group stage. January 26: Afghanistan vs Sri Lanka - Corey Black and Forster Mutizwa will be the on-field umpires in this match at the Namibia Cricket Ground. Shaun Haig will be the TV umpire and Iknou Chabi the fourth umpire. Niyamur Rahul will be the match referee. January 24: 13th-16th Place Play-off (Japan vs Tanzania) - Corey Black and Forster Mutizwa will also be the on-field umpires in this match to be played at the High Performance Oval, Windhoek. Graham Lloyd will be the TV umpire, Dighton Butler the fourth umpire, and Prakash Bhatt the match referee.

## Suryakumar Yadav breaks Yuvraj Singh's record

» **Most instances of scoring 20+ runs in a single over in T20s.**

Agency, New Delhi



Foulkes' ninth over. In that over, Suryakumar scored 24 runs, including fours on the first four balls, a six on the fifth, two runs on the last ball, and a wide. This over completely shifted the momentum of the match in India's favor. With this innings, Suryakumar Yadav also broke the record of former legendary all-rounder Yuvraj Singh. Suryakumar has now moved to second place in the list of Indian players who have scored 20 or more runs in an over in T20 International cricket. He has achieved this feat five times in his career, while Yuvraj Singh had done it four times. Rohit Sharma tops this list, having scored more than 20 runs in an over six times.

## Pro Wrestling League: Haryana Thunders confident of a comeback

Agency, Noida



Despite a narrow 4-5 defeat against Maharashtra Kesari in the Pro Wrestling League (PWL) 2026 at the Noida Indoor Stadium, the owners of Haryana Thunders have expressed confidence that the team will make a strong comeback in the remaining matches of the tournament. The franchise management praised the wrestlers' fighting spirit, saying that the team fought till the last bout and the final moment, but the results were not in their favor. After the match, Haryana Thunders owner Prerna Banika praised the team's efforts, saying, "Our players fought till the last minute. We have very strong players; it was just a bad day for us. We have told the players that they gave their best, and sometimes close defeats are necessary for the team to stay grounded and increase their hunger for victory." Continuing the discussion, team owner Isha Gupta said, "The result does not reflect the team's hard work and commitment. Our players fought hard till the end, but it was one of those days when things didn't go our way. The players

were naturally a little disappointed because we are usually used to winning our matches, especially our female wrestlers. However, this match will make the team stronger, and we have asked the players to take it as an exception." Another team owner, Shreya Paraspuria, also commented on Haryana Thunders' fighting spirit and never-give-up attitude, saying, "The team fought till the last minute and never gave up. Winning and losing are part of the game. We are fully confident that Haryana Thunders will make a strong comeback." With two wins in three matches, Haryana Thunders is currently in third place in the points table.

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Agency, New Delhi



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## Indian team announced for Rising Stars Women's Asia Cup 2026, Radha Yadav to captain

Agency, New Delhi



Sharma. Although Diya Yadav and Mamta M have been included in the team, their availability will be subject to clearance from the BCCI Centre of Excellence. Rising Stars Women's Asia Cup 2026: India A Schedule • February 13 (2:00 PM): India A vs UAE • February 15 (2:00 PM): India A vs Pakistan A • February 17 (9:30 AM): India A vs Nepal • February 20 (9:30 AM): Semi-final 1 (Top team of Group A vs Second team of Group B) • February 20 (2:00 PM): Semi-final 2 (Top team of Group B vs Second team of Group A) • February 22: Final (Time to be decided)



**At 70, Anupam Kher finds a new friend, shares a video and makes a promise**

Veteran Bollywood actor Anupam Kher has been trending on social media since morning after he jokingly accused his son Sikandar of slapping him. Now, apart from the joke, the actor has found a new friend at the age of 70, who is around 10 years old. The actor shared a sweet video with his new friend Rehan.

Anupam Kher often shares every experience of his life on social media, whether good or bad. This time, he posted a video of his new friend Rehan, in which he is seen giving him a chocolate treat. In fact, Rehan is a child from a poor family who survives by begging. As soon as the actor noticed Rehan, he could not stop himself from talking to him after seeing the sparkle in his eyes. He also promised to get the child admitted to a local school.

Anupam Kher is seen asking Rehan about his favorite food and his interest in studies at school. While sharing the video, the actor wrote, "My new friend Rehan. Rehan is a street child who loves chocolate coffee very much."

1,000 artists in The Rise of Ashoka, film completed in 138 days: Satish Ninasam



Renowned Kannada cinema actor Satish Ninasam is very excited about his upcoming film The Rise of Ashoka. The film is based on a story from the 1970s, set around the time when a young man living near the Karnataka-Tamil Nadu border challenged old social rules and traditions. During a press meet, Satish Ninasam revealed that at least 1,000 artists are part of the film and that it took a total of 138 days to complete the shoot.

The film holds special significance in many ways due to its massive cast, large sets, and detailed planning.



**From Mardaani to Thappad: After 2014, the definition of a heroine changed, Bollywood made women's voices its strength**

On Thursday, it has been 11 years since India committed to changing social attitudes toward daughters and making them economically and socially self-reliant. The Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao campaign, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January

22, 2015, along with the Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, has written a new chapter of empowerment for girls across the country. After the BJP government came to power, not only were several schemes introduced to empower women, but Bollywood also played an inspiring role in society through women-centric stories. Many films released after 2014 sent the message that women can not only stand up for their rights but can also bring about social change through their decisions.

Mardaani: Rani Mukerji's Mardaani franchise has been a favorite among audiences, and the third part of the franchise is set to release soon. In this series, Rani plays the character of Shivani Shivaji Roy. In the 2014 film Mardaani, Shivani is a fearless police officer who fights against crimes and atrocities against women. Directed by Gopi Puthran, this crime thriller takes on male-dominated mindsets.



# New look for a new role: Richa Chadha's hairstyle surprises fans

Actress Richa Chadha, known in Bollywood and the OTT world for her bold style, strong performances, and diverse roles, is once again in the spotlight. Recently, Richa was seen with a short and stylish haircut, which has caught the attention of her fans. It is believed that this new look is not for a fashion trend, but part of her preparation for an upcoming major project. Richa is known for fully committing herself to her characters, and changes in her appearance often hint at a special role.

A source close to Richa told IANS that her new short hair-

cut is for a new OTT project, the shooting of which will begin in the first week of February. It is a big web series in which Richa will be seen in the female lead role. Not much information about the project has been revealed yet, but it is certain that her character will be very strong and important. She is also expected to make an official announcement about this new project soon. Sources said that she is extremely serious about her work, and whenever she changes her look, there is always a creative reason behind it. For her, acting means completely adopting the character's

mindset, life, and style. That is why she never hesitates to transform herself according to the demands of the role.

Richa Chadha began her career with the film Oye Lucky! Lucky Oye!, in which she played a small but memorable role. She gained wider recognition with the 2012 film Gangs of Wasseypur. After that, there was no looking back. In films like Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela, Masaan, Fukrey, and Section 375, she presented herself in new avatars each time. Apart from films, her work in the web series Inside Edge was also widely appreciated.

## Genelia Deshmukh set to begin a new chapter with Gunmaster G9

**The story is based on action and espionage**

Genelia shared a glimpse of this new journey on her Instagram story. In the post, a side profile of her face can be seen. On this picture, she wrote, "New beginning." In this post, Genelia also shared the name of the film. The film with which Genelia is making this new beginning is titled Gunmaster G9.

The bubbly star of Hindi cinema, Genelia Deshmukh, is once again starting a new chapter in her acting career. After doing select films, Genelia has now begun shooting for her next film. She has tagged this project as a "new beginning." This film is considered important not only for her career but has also become a matter of excitement for audiences.

Genelia shared a glimpse of this new journey on her Instagram story. The post shows a side profile of her face, with the words "New beginning" written on it. In the same post, she also revealed the name of the film – Gunmaster G9. This is an action and spy-based film, in which actor Emraan Hashmi will be seen in the lead role alongside her.

The film is being directed by Aditya Datt. Actor Aparshakti Khurana will also be seen in an important role in this film. Gunmaster G9 is said to be inspired by the popular 1979 spy film Surakshaa. At that time, the character of Gunmaster G9 was played by actor Mithun Chakraborty and was very well received by audiences. Now, the same character is being presented in a new era, with a new perspective and a new style.



## From "Kitne Aadmi The" to "Jo Darr Gaya...", the story behind Ramesh Sippy and Sholay's immortal dialogues

In the history of Bollywood, there are some films that not only entertain but also permanently settle in people's memories through their stories, characters, and dialogues. One such film is Sholay, and director Ramesh Sippy played a key role behind its success. Ramesh Sippy made many superhit films in his career, but Sholay took his popularity to another level.

Some of the film's famous dialogues like "Jo darr gaya, samjho mar gaya" (The one who got scared is as good as dead), "Ab tera kya hoga, Kalia?" (Now what will happen to you, Kalia?) and "Yeh haath mujhe de



de, Thakur" (Give me your hand, Thakur) are still on the lips of audiences of all ages. These dialogues are not just lines, but have become an integral part of the memories of Hindi cinema. Ramesh Sippy was born on January 23, 1947, in Karachi,

Pakistan. His father, Gopaldas Parmanand Sippy, popularly known as GP Sippy, was a well-known Bollywood producer. After Partition, the Sippy family settled in Mumbai. Growing up in a film-oriented environment, Ramesh acted as a child artist at the age of

just six in the film Shahenshah. However, instead of continuing as an actor, he chose to follow in his father's footsteps and entered the world of film direction.

Ramesh Sippy began his directorial career with the 1971 film Andaz, which starred Shammi Kapoor and Hema Malini and was well received by audiences. He followed this with Seeta Aur Geeta in 1972, in which Hema Malini played a double role. This film was also a success and established Ramesh Sippy as a skilled director.

His biggest film, Sholay, released in 1975, changed the direction of Bollywood itself.

## War, injury, and change: Border 2 impacts Varun Dhawan's personal life

For Bollywood actor Varun Dhawan, his upcoming film Border 2 is not just another movie, but a very special experience for his career and life. On Thursday, Varun shared several pictures from the film set on Instagram and said that this film taught him to go beyond his limits. He said that the experience transformed him physically, mentally, and emotionally.

In his post, Varun wrote, "This film has been like a war for me, which helped me become a better human being and a better artist."

The film taught me to push beyond boundaries. During the shoot, I suffered injuries and also faced many changes in my personal life. Despite this, I put all my energy and hard work into the film."

In his Instagram post, Varun also said that he is extremely excited to present this film to the audience. He added that he is also sharing his favorite background music from the film and that he wants people to watch the movie.

The producers of Border 2 are Gulshan Kumar and T-Series. The film is directed by Anurag Singh, while Bhushan Kumar, Krishan Kumar, J.P. Dutta, and Nidhi Dutta are also involved in the production.

