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## India-Germany strengthen strategic partnership against terrorism: Modi

**A historic turning point in India-Germany relations: PM Modi-Chancellor Scholz talks strengthen the global partnership model.**

Agency. Gandhinagar

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday that India and Germany agree that terrorism is a serious threat to all of humanity. Both countries will continue to fight against it together with full determination. Prime Minister Modi said this during a joint press conference with German Chancellor Friedrich Merz in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The Prime Minister said that it is a happy coincidence that Swami Vivekananda had built a bridge of philosophy, knowledge and faith between India and Germany. Today, Chancellor Friedrich Merz's visit is giving new energy, new confidence and new expansion to that very bridge. He said that this is not only Merz's first visit to India but also to Asia as Chancellor, which reflects

A new expansion in strategic partnerships, trade, technology, defense, and people-to-people relations.



the importance given to relations with India. The Prime Minister said that Chancellor Merz's visit is taking place at a time when both countries completed 25 years of their strategic partnership last year and are celebrating 75 years of diplomatic relations this year. These achievements are a symbol of the shared ambitions, mutual trust and continuously strengthening cooperation between the two countries. Modi said that close cooperation between economies like India and

Germany is important for all of humanity. Bilateral trade has now crossed the \$50 billion mark. More than two thousand German companies are operating in India, which reflects their confidence in India's potential. He said that the partnership between the two countries in the fields of technology cooperation, renewable energy, defense and security is constantly strengthening. A roadmap will be worked out for co-development and co-production in defense industries. The comprehensive roadmap created in the field of higher education will provide a new direction, and German universities have been invited to open their campuses in India. The Prime Minister thanked Chancellor Merz for announcing visa-free transit for Indian citizens. Prime Minister Modi said that

### Prime Minister Modi and German Chancellor Scholz meet with CEOs of various companies at the CEO Forum

Ahmedabad:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the India-Germany CEO Forum in Ahmedabad on Monday with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz. Top industrialists and business leaders from both countries participated in the forum and discussed ways to further strengthen trade, investment, and technological cooperation.

Prime Minister Modi and Chancellor Scholz reiterated their commitment to taking the India-Germany economic partnership to new heights. Prime Minister Modi and Chancellor Scholz also visited the Sabarmati Ashram, from where Mahatma Gandhi launched the historic Dandi March. The two leaders paid floral tributes to Bapu and paid homage to his ideals. Chancellor Scholz also experienced Gandhiji's legacy by spinning the charkha (spinning wheel).

several global and regional issues, including Ukraine and Gaza, were discussed. India supports the peaceful resolution of all disputes.

Both countries are working together on climate action, energy, urban development, green hydrogen, and secure supply chains.



## German Chancellor impressed by Gandhi's ideals

Agency. Ahmedabad

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz visited the historic Gandhi Ashram on the banks of the Sabarmati River in Ahmedabad on Monday. On this occasion, both dignitaries paid heartfelt tributes to Mahatma Gandhi by laying wreaths at his statue. The Prime Minister and the German Chancellor also visited Hriday Kunj, Gandhi's residence in the ashram, and observed the process of spinning the charkha (spinning wheel). During their visit to the Gandhi Ashram, both leaders expressed deep respect for Gandhi's simple life, his message of self-reliance, and the values of truth and non-violence. German Chancellor Friedrich Merz was deeply impressed by his visit to the Gandhi Ashram. In his message in



**Kite Festival at Sabarmati: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz fly Hanuman kite**

Ahmedabad: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday welcomed German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, who is on a two-day visit to India, at the Sabarmati Ashram. The two leaders paid tribute to the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, and honored his life and ideals. Following this, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz arrived at the Sabarmati Riverfront, where they participated in the International Kite Festival 2026. On this occasion, both leaders enjoyed the festival by flying kites in the traditional style. During the festival, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chancellor Merz flew a kite depicting Lord Hanuman and bearing the words "Operation Sindoor

the visitors' book, he wrote unwavering faith in every individual continue to inspire us today.

## Brief News

**Prime Minister to inaugurate the 28th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth on January 15**



New Delhi: The Indian Parliament is hosting the 28th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth (CSPC) in New Delhi from January 14-16. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the conference on January 15 at 10:30 AM in the historic Central Hall of the Parliament House complex, Constitution House, in New Delhi. The Prime Minister had also inaugurated the 9th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' (P20) Summit. The P20 inter-parliamentary conference was hosted by the Indian Parliament in October 2023. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla is the Chairman of this conference. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla informed in a press conference on Monday that India is hosting the 28th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth after 16 years. On January 14, a meeting of the Executive Council of 15 countries will be held.

**President, Vice President, and other leaders pay tribute to Swami Vivekananda on his birth anniversary, extend greetings to the youth**

New Delhi: On the occasion of Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary and National Youth Day, President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan, Home Minister Amit Shah, Nitin Gadkari, Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi, and Yogi Adityanath, along with several other prominent leaders, paid tribute to Swami Vivekananda and extended their best wishes to the youth. They also remembered his thoughts and contributions. Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan paid his respects at his residence. President Droupadi Murmu wrote on social media platform X that Swami Vivekananda was an eternal visionary and a spiritual icon. He emphasized inner strength and service to humanity as the foundation of a meaningful life. Swami Vivekananda, who spread India's timeless wisdom to the world, awakened national pride among Indians and inspired the youth towards nation-building. His teachings will continue to inspire humanity forever.

## ISRO Mission Suffers Major Setback: Rocket Fails to Place Satellite in Orbit

Agency. Sriharikota



V. Narayanan stated that the first three stages of the rocket performed perfectly normally. However, an unknown technical anomaly occurred thereafter, causing the flight to deviate from its planned trajectory and preventing the successful completion of the mission. He clarified that scientists are currently conducting a thorough analysis of the data received and a detailed report on the exact causes of the failure will be shared soon.

### Death Toll Reaches 22: The number of deaths in Bhagirathpura continues to rise

Indore: The number of deaths caused by contaminated water supplied by the Indore Municipal Corporation in Bhagirathpura continues to rise. After 21 deaths due to the contaminated water supplied by the municipal corporation, the 22nd death occurred yesterday when Kamlabai, 59 years old, a resident of Nayapura Jeevan Ki Fail, Bhagirathpura, died at MY Hospital. The day before, Sunita Verma, wife of Satish, 49 years old, a resident of Farshi Wali Gali in Bhagirathpura, also died after consuming the water supplied by the Indore Municipal Corporation. Sunita was admitted to MYH on January 7th. With her death, the number of deaths due to contaminated water in Bhagirathpura reached 21, and now, after Kamlabai's death, the number has risen to 22.

## Man-Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile Accurately Hits Target in Flight Test

Agency. New Delhi



The third-generation fire-and-forget man-portable anti-tank guided missile (MPATGM), with its superior offensive capabilities, has once again proven its effectiveness in a flight test. During the test, the performance of the missile and warhead was found to be as per the standards. The target of the test was a dummy tank, which the missile successfully destroyed. This test has paved the way for the Army to acquire the third-generation indigenous man-portable anti-tank guided missile. The Defence Research and

Development Laboratory (DRDL) in Hyderabad, a DRDO laboratory, successfully conducted the flight test against a moving target at the KK Range in Ahmednagar, Maharashtra. The indigenous developed MPATGM incorporates state-of-the-art indigenous technologies such as an Imaging Infrared (IIR) homing seeker, an all-electric control actuation system, a fire control system, a tandem warhead, a propulsion system, and a high-performance sighting system. These have been developed by DRDO's collaborating laboratories: Research Centre Imaarat, Hyderabad; Terminal Ballistics Research Laboratory, Chandigarh; High Energy Materials Research Laboratory, Pune; and Instruments Research and Development Establishment, Dehradun. According to DRDO, the thermal target system was developed by the Defence Laboratory, Jodhpur, to simulate a target tank. The IIR seeker is capable of combat operations during both day and night.



### Iranian Foreign Minister's visit to India canceled due to escalating protests and threat of attack in Iran

Agency. New Delhi

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi's visit to India has been canceled. The visit was scheduled for January 15-16. The decision was made due to escalating protests in Iran and the threat of external intervention. Such a situation could trigger a major conflict in the region. Iran has warned that if the US attacks

Iran, it will retaliate against Israel and US military bases. This statement comes at a time when US President Trump has said that he is considering several options to support the ongoing protests in Iran. According to media reports, India is monitoring the situation. If the situation deteriorates and a conflict breaks out, plans have also been prepared to evacuate Indian citizens.

## India is building world-class highways with speed, quality, and technology: Gadkari

Agency. New Delhi



Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, said on Monday that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India is rapidly moving towards global leadership in world-class highway projects and large-scale project implementation. Nitin Gadkari addressed an event online today in Puttaparthi, Andhra Pradesh, celebrating four Guinness World Records achieved on the NH-544G Bengaluru-

but its purpose should be character building, intellectual empowerment, and self-reliance. Only through education and proper training can the youth of India realize Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a 'Developed India-2047'. Referring to India's ancient knowledge tradition, the Vice President recalled ancient centers of learning like Nalanda and Takshashila. He said that texts like the Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Kautilya's Arthashastra, and Thirukkural considered education central to social and moral life.

## Massive fire breaks out in Himachal market, two dead including a child, 8 missing

Solan:

A massive fire broke out in the lower market of Arki in Solan district of Himachal Pradesh due to several cylinder blasts. So far, two people, including a child, have died, while 8 people are reported missing. Four of the missing are children. A seven-year-old child was rescued alive from the fire, but he died in the hospital. Relief and rescue operations are underway. According to the information, the fire broke out in the lower main market of Arki last night. The fire quickly spread and several shops were engulfed in flames one after another. Several cylinders also exploded amidst the fire, causing panic in the market. People immediately informed the administration and the fire department.

## I will kick people from UP and Bihar out of Mumbai: Raj Thackeray

Mumbai: Maharashtra Navnirman Sena chief Raj Thackeray has once again threatened people from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Thackeray said that people from UP and Bihar should understand that Hindi is not their language. I don't hate the language, but if you try to impose it, I will kick you out. He said, "They are coming to Maharashtra from all sides and taking your share. If the land and language are gone, you will be finished." According to media reports, Raj said, "This is the last election for the Marathi people. If you miss this opportunity today, you will be finished. Unite for Marathi and Maharashtra." He said, "Mumbai was achieved after the sacrifices of many people. What answer will we give to those people?"

# DC and SP Grandly Inaugurate Three-Day Sohrai Festival

Correspondent.DN

The district administration of Pakur organized a grand three-day Sohrai festival at the Agricultural Produce Market Committee premises in Pakur. The festival was inaugurated jointly by Deputy Commissioner Mr. Manish Kumar, IAS, and Superintendent of Police Miss Nidhi Dwivedi, IPS, along with Additional Collector Mr. James Surin, Sub-Divisional Officer Mr. Simon Marandi, and MP representative Mr. Shyam Yadav, by lighting a lamp. On this occasion, the DC, SP, and other officers present danced to the beat of the drum, encouraging the folk culture. The Sohrai festival began with worship performed according to traditional rituals. Sohrai Festival: A vibrant celebration of our nature, tradition, and Santal culture: Deputy Commissioner Addressing the festival, Deputy Commissioner Mr. Manish Kumar, IAS, extended his heartfelt greetings and best



wishes to the people of the district on the occasion of the Sohrai festival. He said that the Sohrai festival is a vibrant symbol of respect for livestock, gratitude towards nature, and the Santal civilization. This festival symbolizes that human life, agriculture, animals, and nature are deeply interconnected. The Deputy Commissioner expressed gratitude to the Chief Minister on behalf of the district administration for granting a two-day holiday on the occasion of the Sohrai

festival, thereby honoring tribal culture and traditions. He informed that, like last year, this year too, the festival is being organized with full responsibility under the leadership of the Sub-Divisional Officer and with the cooperation of the Superintendent of Police, local artists, the Sohrai committee, and cultural groups. The Deputy Commissioner said that this festival offers a rich glimpse of Santal culture, traditional folk dances, folk music, rare musical instruments, traditional

food, attire, and handicrafts. He informed that the Welfare Department has connected several villages to this event, enabling people to understand their traditions and express gratitude towards nature. He further informed that the festival began in the villages, where livestock were worshipped, expressing respect for nature and animals. This three-day festival will provide a platform for local artists and also promote cultural exchange through artists from other districts. The

Deputy Commissioner appealed to the people of Pakur district to participate in this festival with their families and take pride in their culture, heritage, and traditions. Sohrai Festival: An opportunity to connect with culture, nature, and roots: Superintendent of Police \*Superintendent of Police Ms. Nidhi Dwivedi, IPS, said that this three-day festival organized by the district administration and the Sohrai Committee is highly commendable. She said that it is a matter of pride that

- DC and SP dance to the beat of the drum, give message of water and forest conservation and cleanliness at the Sarhul festival
- Worship performed with traditional rituals

the Sohrai festival is being celebrated with great enthusiasm and fervor for the second consecutive year. Expressing gratitude to the government, she said that the declaration of a holiday has ensured widespread public participation, and people are actively participating in this festival organized by the district administration. The Superintendent of Police said that the colorful traditional costumes, folk dances, and rare musical instruments presented by artists from every corner of the district at the festival venue are vividly showcasing our rich folk culture. She said that the Sohrai festival is not only an opportunity to connect with nature and one's roots but also a means to preserve and pass on the cultural heritage to the next generation. This festival conveys the message of enjoying with family, introspection, and being mindful of the future. On this occasion, Additional Collector Mr. James Surin, Sub-Divisional Officer Mr. Simon Marandi, MP's representative Mr. Shyam Yadav, and other officials also shared their views on the importance of the Sohrai festival.

## Blood Donation Camp Organized in Dumka under Road Safety Month 2026



**Dumka:** Various public awareness activities are being continuously organized in the district under Road Safety Month 2026. In this series, a blood donation camp was organized today at the Blood Bank in Dumka, in which a large number of people participated. On this occasion, the District Transport Officer, Mr. Mrityunjay Kumar, Dumka, himself donated blood, sending a strong message to the youth and drivers. He urged young people and drivers not to waste their precious blood in accidents due to reckless driving, but to drive safely on the roads and earn merit by donating blood. He also explained that blood donation helps meet the blood requirements of victims of road accidents. Awareness programs are being continuously conducted in Dumka district under Road Safety Month. In this connection, a blood donation camp was also organized by the Primary Health Center, Jarmundi, where blood was collected and people were made aware of road safety. Members of the Road Safety Committee, Blood Bank staff, and several social workers were present at the event.



**Bhagalpur:** District Magistrate Dr. Naval Kishore Chaudhary (IAS) extended a warm welcome to the newly appointed Senior Superintendent of Police, Mr. Pramod Kumar Yadav (IAS), and City Superintendent of Police, Mr. Shailendra Kumar Singh (IPS). He also offered his best wishes to the outgoing Senior Superintendent of Police, Mr. Hriday Kant (IPS), and the outgoing City Superintendent of Police, Mr. Shubhank Mishra (IPS).

## Relief for leprosy patients in Banka: Blankets and self-care kits distributed among 50 Grade-2 patients

Correspondent.DN

**Banka:** The Additional Chief Medical Officer-cum-District Leprosy Control Program Officer (Leprosy)-cum-Civil Surgeon distributed blankets and self-care kits to 50 Grade-2 leprosy patients in the district. 25 blankets were provided by the district's Red Cross Society, and the remaining blankets were procured through public contributions by the leprosy program's field worker, Mr. Sanjeev Kumar, with the help of Dr. Manoj Kumar (Dentist, Sadar Hospital), GNM Supriya Kumari, Govind Medical Hall



Banka, and other contributors. Dr. Jitendra Kumar Singh, Civil Surgeon, District Program Manager Mr. Brajesh Kumar Singh, Non-Communicable Diseases Officer Dr. Vijay Kumar, and Civil Surgeon's office clerk Mr. Rajesh Kumar, along with leprosy program's non-medical assistants Rajesh

## In Godda, the 82nd birth anniversary of Dishom Guru Shibu Soren was celebrated with reverence and service, and JMM workers offered floral tributes

Correspondent.DN

**Godda:** Under the leadership of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha District President Prof. Prem Nandan Kumar, on the auspicious occasion of the 82nd birth anniversary of the state's founder, the founder of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, former Chief Minister, the greatest leader of tribals across the country, and the messiah of the poor, Dalits and the underprivileged, late Dishom Guru Shibu Soren, the chief guest, MLA from Littipara assembly constituency and party's central spokesperson Mr. Hemal Murmu, along

with all the party officials and workers, offered floral tributes one by one. Following this, the chief guest Mr. Hemal Murmu and District President Prof. Prem Nandan Kumar shed light on Guruji's life and his contributions in detail. Mr. Murmu said that he had the opportunity to work with Guruji for a long time. He is no longer with us, but his thoughts will always remain immortal. District President Prof. Prem Nandan Kumar, expressing his views, said that they will never forget the lessons Guruji taught them about fighting

against injustice and oppression, and they will continue to fight against injustice and oppression. He emphasized the need to take Guruji's philosophy to every household. All the workers also took an oath to spread his ideas to every home. After this program, a large number of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha workers reached the Sadar Hospital, old age home, and orphanage and distributed blankets and fruits to all the patients, children in the orphanage, and the elderly in the old age home. The atmosphere during the program was filled with emotion as slogans like "Shibu Soren Amar Rahe" (Long live Shibu Soren), "As long as the sun and moon exist, Guruji's name will remain," and "Jharkhand Mukti Morcha

Zindabad" (Long live Jharkhand Mukti Morcha) resonated throughout. The program was attended by a large number of workers, including Vikas Murmu, Basudev Soren, Simon Malto, Mary Soren, Shrawan Mandal, Poonam Devi, Mrityunjay Singh, Yusuf Ansari, Azimuddin, Gudha Mandal, Prashant Kumar, Shivam Dubey, Santosh Mahto, Vilas Mandal, Som Marandi, Balmukund Mahto, Md. Argaman, Lalita Jha, Shahnaz Begum, Madan Mandal, Ramchandra Marandi, Vij Mahato, Swikrit Hansda, Rajkumar Das, and Satyanarayan Mandal.

## The admission process has begun at the OBC Girls Residential +2 School in Banka; online applications will be accepted from January 10th

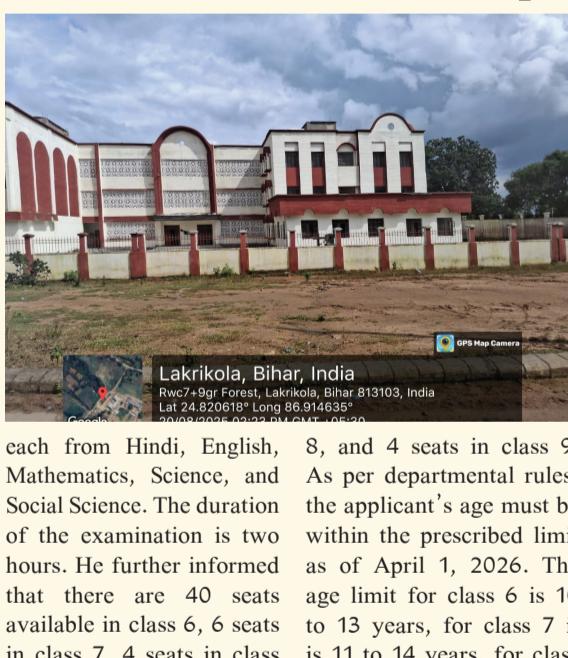
Correspondent.DN

**Banka:** The online application process for admission to the Other Backward Classes Girls' Residential +2 High School, Banka, run by the Backward Classes and Extremely Backward Classes Welfare Department, for the academic session 2026-27 will begin on January 10, 2026. The District Welfare Officer informed that interested candidates can apply online through the departmental website from January 10, 2026 to February 9, 2026. Online admit cards will be available from February 15, 2026 to

February 22, 2026. The entrance examination will be held on March 1, 2026 (Sunday), while the results will be published on March 13, 2026. Admission of selected students will take place from March 16, 2026 to March 23, 2026, and classes will commence from April 1, 2026. The District Welfare Officer stated that admission to classes 6 to 9 in the residential schools run by the department will be based on a written objective test. This test will be of 100 marks, with a total of 100 questions, each question carrying 1 mark. The question paper will include questions worth 20 marks

8, and 4 seats in class 9. As per departmental rules, the applicant's age must be within the prescribed limit as of April 1, 2026. The age limit for class 6 is 10 to 13 years, for class 7 it is 11 to 14 years, for class

8 it is 12 to 15 years, and for class 9 it is 13 to 16 years. Applications from candidates outside the age limit will not be accepted. At the time of online application, candidates will be required to upload their caste certificate, domicile certificate, income certificate (annual income less than three lakh rupees), Aadhaar card, passport-size photograph, and a certificate of date of birth and class issued on the letterhead of their current school principal. It is worth noting that the Other Backward Classes Girls' Residential +2 High School in Banka district is a model school where students are provided with state-of-the-art smart classrooms, science laboratories, a well-stocked library, and a playground. In addition, students are provided with free food, clothing, and accommodation, enabling them to receive quality education without any financial worries. Online applications can only be submitted through the departmental website <https://bcebonline.bihar.gov.in>. Applications in the prescribed format can also be submitted in handwritten or typed form at the District Welfare Office, Banka.



## A fake Facebook account has been created in the name of Jamtara DC Ravi Anand; people are urged to be vigilant against cyber fraud

Correspondent.DN

**Jamtara:** Cybercriminals have created a fake Facebook account in the name of District Magistrate-cum-Deputy Commissioner of Jamtara, Mr. Ravi Anand, IAS; the fake Facebook ID has been created under the name "Mr. Ravi Anand IAS DC"; the Deputy Commissioner has appealed to the district residents to be vigilant. The matter of cybercriminals creating a fake Facebook account of the District Magistrate-cum-Deputy Commissioner of Jamtara, Mr. Ravi Anand, IAS, has come to light. A fake Facebook



Shri Ravi Anand DC IAS  
10 friends · 1 mutual  
@sunilkumarraunrr  
Official Account of Deputy Commissioner  
District Magistrate, Jamtara (Jharkhand)

Sent you a friend request

Respond Message

This person made a new type of profile that doesn't have to use the name they go by in everyday life. These profiles have visible

account has been created by cybercriminals under the name "Mr. Ravi Anand DC IAS", and upon becoming aware of this, the Deputy Commissioner-cum-District Magistrate of Jamtara, Mr. Ravi Anand, IAS, has appealed to all the residents of the district, stating that the said account is fake. Therefore, they should immediately reject any friend requests or message requests from this account and not fall for any kind of deception. If any money is demanded through this fake account, ignore it and immediately report it to the cyber police station. The Deputy Commissioner has also given necessary instructions to the Superintendent of Police's office to take appropriate action in this matter. It is noteworthy that in this digital age, cybercriminals are adopting various tactics to swindle people out of their hard-earned money in an instant. Cybercriminals create fake Facebook IDs, WhatsApp accounts, etc., in the name of others and try to cheat people in a very cunning way. Unfortunately, innocent people often fall into the trap of these fraudsters. \*The links to the official social media accounts of the Deputy Commissioner of Jamtara are as follows:\*

**Brief News****Heavy Vehicles Banned in Jamshedpur Urban Area for Two Days During Makar Sankranti and Tusu Festival**

East Singhbhum: To ensure the peaceful and orderly conduct of Makar Sankranti and Tusu festivals, the East Singhbhum district administration has decided to ban the entry of heavy



vehicles into the urban area on January 14 and 15. A joint order has been issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Senior Superintendent of Police, and Traffic DSP to prevent any inconvenience to devotees and the general public during the festivals and to maintain smooth traffic flow. According to the order, the operation of all heavy vehicles, except buses, will be completely prohibited in the urban area of Jamshedpur from 4 AM to 11 PM on January 14 and 15. On the occasion of the festivals, Makar Sankranti baths, Tusu processions, cultural programs, and fairs are organized in various parts of the city, attracting a large number of people. This decision has been taken considering the potential for congestion and traffic jams. The administration has clarified that vehicles related to essential services may be exempted if necessary, based on relevant permits. The traffic police have also been instructed to deploy additional forces at major intersections and crowded areas. The district administration has appealed to citizens, drivers, and organizers to follow the issued instructions and cooperate with the administration by using alternative routes so that the festivals can be celebrated safely and in an organized manner.

**BJYM Celebrates Vivekananda Jayanti, Youth Pledge to Serve the Nation**

**Khunti:** On the occasion of Swami Vivekananda Jayanti and National Youth Day, the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM), Govindpur Mandal, organized a function at the Panchayat Secretariat, Jariagarh, on Monday. In this program, organized under the leadership of Mandal President Vinay Gupta, workers and villagers pledged to follow the path shown by Swami Vivekananda.

**Tribute and Floral Offering:**

The program began with offering flowers to the portrait of Swami Vivekananda and paying respectful homage to him. During this time, the atmosphere resonated with slogans of "Swami Vivekananda Zindabad" (Long live Swami Vivekananda).

**Youth Power is the Foundation of the Nation: Vinay Gupta -**

On the occasion, BJYM President Vinay Gupta said that Swami Vivekananda's thoughts are still relevant today. The mantra of self-confidence and character building that he gave to the youth is most important in making India a world leader. He said that if the youth power unites and makes de-addiction, education, and service their goal, then nothing can stop the pace of nation-building. The youth should prioritize national interest above all else. Ram Laxman Singh, Bindeshwar Singh, Nandkumar Singh, Rama Sahu, Manoj Singh, Ramchandra Sahu, General Secretary Madhusudan Sahu, Minister Jagannath Sahu, and others were present on this occasion.

**Hindi Sahitya Bharati offers floral tribute on Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary**

**Ranchi:** On the occasion of Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary, Hindi Sahitya Bharati, Jharkhand, offered a heartfelt tribute by laying flowers at the statue of Swami Vivekananda at Mecon Chowk in Ranchi on Monday. On this occasion, those present also resolved to follow the ideals he preached. Addressing the program, Ajay Rai, President of Hindi Sahitya Bharati, Jharkhand, said that Swami Vivekananda was a great symbol of India's spiritual consciousness. Through his powerful thoughts and the message of Karma Yoga, he not only made the country aware of its self-respect but also established a unique identity of Indian culture and Vedanta philosophy throughout the world. Ajay Rai said that Swami Vivekananda's message of "Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached" is still a guiding principle for the youth today. His entire life inspires self-confidence, character building, social harmony, and service to humanity. He said that a strong, cultured, and harmonious society is possible only by adopting Swami Vivekananda's ideals in life. The program concluded with a resolution to internalize his thoughts. On this occasion, office bearers of the organization, literateurs, and several dignitaries were present.

**Former police station driver arrested for stealing valuables from MGM Hospital premises**

**East Singhbhum:** Panic erupted at the MGM Hospital premises late Sunday night when a former driver of the Ulidih police station was caught red-handed by Home Guard personnel while stealing valuable copper wires connected to AC units and oxygen pipelines. The vigilance and prompt action of the alert guards prevented a major theft from occurring at the hospital premises. According to eyewitnesses, the accused was taking advantage of the darkness of night to remove copper and mercury wires connected to the AC and oxygen lines installed in the hospital premises. During this time, his suspicious activities caught the attention of the Home Guard personnel on duty. The guards immediately apprehended the youth on the spot and began questioning him. Preliminary investigation revealed that the arrested youth had previously worked as a private driver in the Ulidih police station area. Upon receiving information about the incident, the MGM police arrived at the scene and took the accused into custody. During the search, the stolen copper wire was recovered from him. The police are conducting a thorough interrogation of the accused and are trying to ascertain whether he has been involved in similar theft incidents before. They are also investigating whether an organized theft gang is behind him. The police are taking further legal action in the matter.

**One Thousand Young People Participate in ABVP Ranchi Metropolitan's YuvaThon on National Youth Day**

Agency, Ranchi



On Monday, the enthusiasm of youth power was evident at the YuvaThon (marathon) organized by the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) Ranchi Metropolitan on the occasion of Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary (National Youth Day). More than 1000 young people actively participated in this marathon, painting the streets of Ranchi with the colors of patriotism. The chief guest of the program, cricketer Saurabh Tiwary, encouraged the winners and participants, saying that it is a matter of pride to see such a large number of young people running together for fitness and for the country. Sports and

marathons inspire us not to give up and to reach our goals. Congratulations to those who won today, and those who participated are no less than winners because they chose the field over laziness. By following Swami Vivekananda's ideals, you will all make India's future bright. On this occasion, Dr. Santosh Kumar Mahto, President of Akhil Bharatiya

Vidyarthi Parishad, Ranchi Metropolitan, said that the presence of more than 1000 young people today has proved that Swami Vivekananda's ideas are still relevant. ABVP aims not only to empower the youth physically but also to dedicate them mentally to the nation. Special guest ABVP State Secretary Prakash Tuti praised the enthusiasm of

the youth and said that Swami Vivekananda used to say that 'strength is life and weakness is death'. Today, the youth of Ranchi have demonstrated their indomitable strength by running even in this biting cold. This race was not just a competition, but a journey of resolve. ABVP is always ready for the personality development of the youth and nation-building, and today's massive turnout further strengthens our resolve. On the occasion, Monu Shukla, State Youth Convenor of Krida Bharati, said that the program, which was designed with the objective of promoting a healthy lifestyle and nationalism, was successfully completed with the large participation of the youth.

**Wildlife Trafficking Busted, Three Accused Arrested with 35 Parrots**

Agency, East Singhbhum



In a major crackdown against wildlife trafficking, the Forest Department in Jamshedpur has arrested three traffickers. The operation was carried out on Sunday evening near the Sakchi roundabout, resulting in the recovery of 35 parrots packed in a box. This success of the Forest Department was achieved based on a tip-off received from the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau. In a press conference held on Monday, DFO Saba Alam Ansari stated that the department had received information that illegal trading of wildlife and related items was taking place in the area. Upon confirming the information, the Forest Department team

immediately took action and arrested Abhay Gupta near the Sakchi roundabout. During the search, 35 parrots were recovered from a carton in his possession. Based on Abhay Gupta's information, the Forest Department arrested Mohammad Guddu and Sameer Ansari from their residences. Large parakeets, deer antlers, and other protected wildlife and their remains were recovered from them. Arrangements are being

made to ensure the safety of all the recovered wildlife. The Forest Department has registered a case against the three accused under the Wildlife Protection Act and initiated legal proceedings. DFO Saba Alam Ansari clearly stated that wildlife trafficking is a serious and illegal crime that will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Similar strict operations will continue against those involved in such activities in the future.

**Ranchi District Office Bearers' Meeting Held Under Chairmanship of Hemant Soren**

For Publication

Today, January 12, 2026, as per the pre-scheduled program, a meeting of all levels of office bearers from Ranchi district was held in the auditorium of the residence of the party's Honorable Central President, Shri Hemant Soren, located on Kanke Road. Organizational matters were discussed and the work of the organization was reviewed in the meeting. The meeting was presided over by the party's Central President, Shri Hemant Soren, and conducted by Central General Secretary and Spokesperson, Shri Vinod Kumar Pandey. Along with the Honorable Central President, Shri Hemant Soren, those prominently present at the meeting included Central General Secretary and Spokesperson Shri Abhishek Prasad "Pintu", Central Members Shri Pawan Jedia, Shri Ashwini Sharma, Shri Antu Tirkey, Shri Samanur Mansoori, Shri Hemal Mehta, Ranchi District Convenor Shri Mustaq Alam, along with Smt. Nayantara Oraon, Smt. Sandhya Gudiya, Smt. Sushma Vardeva, Smt. Ankita Verma, members of the Ranchi District Convening Committee, members of the Ranchi Metropolitan Convening Committee, presidents and secretaries of all block committees under Ranchi district, and presidents and secretaries of all ward committees under Ranchi Metropolitan area.

**Amrit Bharat Express Trains Driving West Bengal's Next Rail Revolution**

Indian Railways' growth story has often been told through iconic landmarks, high-speed ambitions and marquee inaugurations. Yet, the true measure of a national transport system lies in how consistently it serves the everyday traveller. The Amrit Bharat Express trains are an affordable and reliable Rail connectivity, linking far-off regions often separated by geography and opportunity. Conceived as a special offering of the Amrit Kaal, the Amrit Bharat Express brings seamless, non-AC long-distance travel to the common passenger at fares of less than 500 per thousand kilometres. For millions who depend on Indian Railways for work, education and livelihood, it offers modern facilities without the burden of high

fares. Amrit Bharat Express trains emphasize comfort and seamless Rail connectivity for its passengers. Their design reflects a new approach to Rail travel, one that prioritizes passenger convenience, energy efficiency and environmental responsibility. As an indigenous train, Amrit Bharat Express also strengthens the spirit of Atmanirbhar Bharat, showcasing home-grown engineering aligned with India's operational needs. Speaking at the launch of the service, the Prime Minister described the Amrit Bharat Express as the country's latest modern train, following the Vande Bharat Express and Namo Bharat Rapid Rail. Together, the three represent a broader transformation underway in Indian Railways, one that is now translating into tangible benefits for everyday passengers across regions. On the 17th and 18th January, the Nation will see a leap in this journey of modernization with the launch of Amrit Bharat Sleeper trains. With an aerodynamic design and the capability to run at speeds of up to 180 kmph, these world-class trains will reduce travel time for long-distance journeys. Till now, 30 Amrit Bharat Express train services have been operating in the country since the service was first launched in December 2023. On 17th January 2026, Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will flag off a series of Amrit Bharat Express trains from West Bengal to different parts of the country. Tentative names of Amrit Bharat Express, which links North Bengal with central Tamil

Nadu's educational and manufacturing centres. By offering a direct and affordable option on a corridor traditionally dependent on fragmented connections, the service simplifies long-distance travel for thousands who routinely travel between eastern India and the south. Similarly, the Alipurduar - Bengaluru Amrit Bharat Express will strengthen links between the Doars region in West Bengal and the southern industrial ecosystem in Karnataka. Alipurduar's strategic location near international borders and forested terrain has often translated into isolation. A direct Amrit Bharat Express to Bengaluru will serve as an economic and social link for the people of the region. Completing this eastern arc is the Alipurduar

**Swadeshi Manch offers floral tributes on Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary**

Agency, West Singhbhum



On Monday, under the aegis of Swadeshi Jagran Manch, floral tributes were offered to the statue of Swami Vivekananda at the Bengali Seva Samiti, Rabindra Bhavan complex in West Singhbhum district on the occasion of his birth anniversary. All the members present on the occasion offered flowers at the feet of Swami Vivekananda one by one and paid their respects. After offering the Belur Math in Kolkata, he developed it into a major center. Even at a young age, he guided and shaped society with his foresight. From childhood, he was endowed with exceptional talent, which is why he remains an ideal for the youth today, and there is a need to imbibe his thoughts.

**New HIMS System Inaugurated at CCL Headquarters Dispensary by Director (Human Resources) Mr. Harsh Nath Mishra**

The Hospital Information Management System (HIMS) was inaugurated at the Darbhanga House Dispensary, Central Coalfields Limited (CCL), Ranchi, by the Director (Human Resources), CCL, Mr. Harsh Nath Mishra. On this occasion, he emphasized CCL's commitment to further strengthening healthcare services. Director (Human Resources) Mr. Harsh Nath Mishra stated that this new facility launched at the CCL dispensary is a significant and farsighted step towards the digitalization of healthcare services. With

Rajiv Jaiswal said that this initiative is a meaningful effort towards providing accessible, safe, and quality medical facilities to the employees. Dispensary staff members Mr. Amod Prasad, Mrs. Sarika Prasad, Mrs. Kanchan Snehlata Kujur, Mr. Champal Oraon, Mr. Ravi Pradhan, Mrs. Sangeeta Devi, Mr. Pankaj Kumar, and other officers and employees were also present. At the conclusion of the program, all the attendees expressed their happiness and described this new facility as an important and commendable step towards expanding healthcare services.

During the event, Dr.

Sanjay Kumar Thakur, and General Manager (Systems) Mrs. Biwa Oraon were present and made significant contributions to the program.

In view of the increasing cold, Ranchi district administration is making arrangements for bonfires

Agency, Ranchi

stands, railway stations, market areas in the city, as well as places in rural areas where daily wage laborers, migrant workers, pedestrians, destitute and homeless people stay or frequent in large numbers at night. Arrangements for bonfires have been ensured at all these locations. The Deputy Commissioner has instructed the concerned officials to remain constantly active in their respective areas and regularly monitor the bonfire arrangements. They have also been instructed to ensure that the bonfire arrangements continue uninterrupted and that the needy people benefit from them.

In view of the continuously increasing cold in Ranchi district, the district administration has taken necessary steps, giving top priority to the safety and convenience of the general public. As per the instructions of Deputy Commissioner-cum-District Magistrate Manjunath Bhajantri, extensive arrangements for bonfires are being made regularly at various prominent locations in the urban and rural areas of the district to provide relief to people affected by the cold. The district administration has identified major intersections, bus

- Mumbai (Panvel) Amrit Bharat Express, which reflects east-west integration. Mumbai remains India's most established commercial centre, while Panvel is emerging as a major transit and logistics hub. For business passengers from North Bengal and adjoining regions, a direct, comfortable train to Panvel, Mumbai, will reduce travel uncertainty at affordable fares. From a technical perspective, the Amrit Bharat Express places strong emphasis on safety and passenger comfort. Semi-automatic couplers reduce noise and jolts during coupling operations, while deformation tubes help absorb impact in the event of accidents. Push-pull technology enhances operational efficiency and performance.

# IIT Madras develops ramjet-assisted artillery shells, boosts gun range by 50 per cent

**New Delhi, Agency:** IIT Madras has achieved a breakthrough in defence technology by developing ramjet-assisted artillery shells that can extend the range of existing gun systems by nearly 50 per cent without compromising lethality. This innovation integrates a ramjet engine into standard 155 mm artillery ammunition, replacing the conventional base-bleed unit, and enables sustained propulsion after the shell exits the gun barrel.

The technology has shown substantial range

improvements across multiple platforms, including Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS), extended range from 40 km to 70 km; Vajra K-9 gun, extended range from 36 km to 62 km; Dhanush artillery guns, extended range from 30 km to 55 km, said IIT Madras.

The project, launched in 2020 in collaboration with the Indian Army, has undergone extensive gun and field trials, successfully validating clean gun exit, stable flight, and reliable ramjet ignition.



This innovation aligns with the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, demonstrating how upgrading existing systems can deliver cost-effective, survivable, and future-ready firepower for modern battlefields.

The project was led by Prof PA Ramakrishna of IIT Madras, along with Lt Gen P R Shankar (retd), Prof HSN Murthy, Prof G Rajesh, Prof M Ramakrishna, Prof Murugaiyan, Lt Gen Hari Mohan Iyer (retd), Prof Lazar C and Dr Yogesh Kumar Velari.

## I-PAC raids: ED makes big charge against Mamata in SC accuses CM of obstructing probe, destroying evidence

**New Delhi, Agency:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday moved the Supreme Court seeking directions for the registration of an FIR against West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee, the DGP and the Kolkata police commissioner for "obstructing probe, tampering with and destroying evidence in a multi-state money laundering case against I-PAC".

Asserting the requirement for an FIR, the anti-money laundering agency said "protectors of law became party to a serious cognizable offence" as they "intimidated and threatened ED officers and snatched files and electronic evidence containing incriminating material."



The central probe agency also said it had approached the Calcutta high court for the CBI probe into the incident but "the clout enjoyed by the CM and her supporters was used to create a ruckus in the courtroom forcing the judge to adjourn hearing".

The ED on Saturday moved the apex court

alleging interference and obstruction by the Mamata Banerjee-led West Bengal government during search operations at the Kolkata headquarters of political consultancy firm Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC) and the residence of its director Pratik Jain.

Later, the state government filed a caveat seeking

to be heard before any adverse order is passed.

The Bengal government's caveat was filed after the ED carried out searches on Thursday at I-PAC's office and Jain's residence as part of a money laundering probe linked to an alleged multi-crore rupee coal pilferage scam. A caveat allows a party to ensure that no order is issued without giving it an opportunity to present its case.

The ED has alleged that chief minister Mamata Banerjee entered the raid locations and took away what it described as "key" evidence, including physical documents and electronic devices. Banerjee has rejected the allegations and accused the central agency of overreach.

## J&K: Suspected Pakistan drones spotted along LoC, IB near Samba, Rajouri and Poonch districts; search operations launched

**New Delhi, Agency:** Security forces detected movement of suspected drones in multiple forward areas along the International Border and the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba, Rajouri and Poonch districts on Sunday evening, officials said.

All the flying objects were seen coming from the Pakistan side and returned after hovering over Indian territory for a few minutes, they added. Following the sightings, security forces launched ground search operations in the affected areas.

In the Nowshera sector along the LoC in Rajouri district, Army troops opened fire using medium and light machine guns after observing drone movement over Gania-Kalsian village around 6.35 pm, officials said.

Another drone was spotted over Khabbar village in the Teryath area of Rajouri district at around the same time. The flying object, with a



blinking light, was seen coming from the direction of Dharmasal village in Kalakot and moving towards Bharakh, they said. In

Samba district, a drone-like object with a blinking light was seen hovering for several minutes over Chak Babral village in the Ramgarh sector around 7.15 pm, officials said. A similar object was also noticed moving from the direction of Tain towards Topa in the Mankote sector along the LoC in Poonch district at around 6.25 pm, they added.

## India offers 'limitless possibilities' for investors, says Modi

**New Delhi, Agency:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said India is emerging as a beacon of stability and opportunity amid global uncertainty, attracting growing trust from investors across the world.

Addressing the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference for the Kutch and Saurashtra region, the Prime Minister said India's political stability, policy consistency and an expanding neo-middle class with rising purchasing power make the country a land of "limitless possibilities".

He said that the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Summit conveys a clear message to investors, adding that for investment in regions such as Saurashtra and Kutch, "this is the time, the right time". Stating that global institutions are increasingly bullish on India, Modi said the International Monetary Fund has described India as the engine

of global growth, while S&P has upgraded India's sovereign rating after eighteen years.

He added that Fitch Ratings

has also praised India's macroeconomic stability and fiscal credibility. Recalling the early days of the Vibrant Gujarat initiative, the Prime Minister said the original objective was to showcase Gujarat's potential, attract investment and create opportunities that would benefit both India and global stakeholders.

in Thiruvananthapuram. He said the FIR in the case was "designed to protect the real culprits" and questioned how justice could be ensured "when ministers are involved".

The alleged gold heist linked to Sabarimala in Pathanamthitta district has triggered political accusations, with BJP claiming a cover-up and seeking a probe independent of Kerala police. Left Democratic Front (LDF) govt denies wrongdoing. According to the state-appointed SIT, gold

was allegedly stripped, diverted and converted in 2015 through a planned operation involving temple officials, intermediaries and private jewellers.

Setting the tone for BJP's campaign ahead of the 2026 Kerala assembly elections, Shah predicted a breakthrough.

"The lotus will bloom in the state as BJP will assume office in 2026," he said. "Our aim is to develop Kerala, to protect the state from anti-nationals, and safeguard the cen-

turies-old devotion of the people."

He accused both LDF and Congress-led opposition United Democratic Front (UDF) of "match-fixing" that led to stagnation. "Communist parties are wiped out from the entire world and Congress has been wiped out in India."

The path to development of Kerala is with NDA under the leadership of Modi-ji," Shah said, linking Kerala's future to PM Narendra Modi's goal of a developed India by 2047.

## After COVID, survivors faced a second battle — stigma at home, work and hospitals

**New Delhi, Agency:** For many Indians who recovered from COVID-19 during the first wave, the pandemic did not end with a negative test report. A nationwide study has found that fear and stigma followed survivors long after recovery, leading to social exclusion, job loss and psychological distress, while also discouraging people from seeking testing or disclosing illness. The multicentric study, conducted by researchers from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and collaborating institutes and published in Discover Public Health on December 31, 2025, shows how fear of contagion quickly turned into moral judgement. People who tested positive were often seen not just as a health risk, but as responsible for bringing the disease into neighbourhoods. In many cases, this stigma extended to entire families, informally labelled as "corona house-

holds" even after recovery. Dr Rajesh Sagar, Professor of Psychiatry, AIIMS, said stigma was a major issue in the early phase of the pandemic and directly affected testing and disclosure. "I was part of the DGHS committee that framed national guidelines, and stigma was specifically addressed in them. Public labelling of houses and colonies intensified fear and led many people to hide symptoms or avoid testing," he said.



The qualitative study covered 18 districts across seven states — Assam, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. Researchers interviewed 223 people between September 2020 and January 2021, including 87 COVID-19 survivors and 136 community members, during India's first wave.

Recovered patients reported being avoided by neighbours, excluded from weddings and community events, or withdrawing from social life to escape judgement. Several said the rejection continued for months despite medical clearance. Containment measures often worsened stigma.

Houses marked with stickers, barricaded lanes and repeated official visits turned a private illness into a public identity, legitimising gossip and prolonging social rejection beyond the isolation period.

## Shah wants 'neutral' Sabarimala probe

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, Agency:** Union home minister Amit Shah demanded Sunday Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan's resignation and warned of statewide BJP protests unless a "neutral probe" is ordered into an alleged gold heist linked to Sabarimala hill shrine.

"It is time for CM Pinarayi Vijayan to go, as LDF could not safeguard Sabarimala and also could not bring development to the state," Shah said, addressing party workers at a felicitation function for BJP winners in local body

in sacred structures was allegedly stripped, diverted and converted in 2015 through a planned operation involving temple officials, intermediaries and private jewellers.

The path to development of Kerala is with NDA under the leadership of Modi-ji," Shah said, linking Kerala's future to PM Narendra Modi's goal of a developed India by 2047.

## Teen kills 34-year-old Bengaluru techie for refusing sexual advances

**Bengaluru, Agency:** Bengaluru police on Sunday said they have arrested an 18-year-old man on murder charges in connection with the death of a 34-year-old woman software engineer, who was initially suspected to have died in a fire accident, at her apartment in the eastern part of the city.

The man is a native of Kodagu district. He allegedly murdered her for refusing sexual advances.

The victim, who hailed from Dakshina Kannada, worked for a prominent tech company here. It was initially suspected that she died due to suffocation from smoke, after a fire broke at her two-bedroom flat, allegedly due to a short circuit, late

on January 3 night. The incident had happened at Subramanya Layout in the Ramamurthy Nagar police station limits. Her flatmate had gone to her hometown when the incident happened. Police, who investigated the case based on a complaint by a victim's friend, who expressed suspicion about the death, have arrested the suspect.

According to police, the suspect, who lived with his mother next door, allegedly entered the victim's flat through a siding window at around 9 pm on January 3 and asked her to cooperate sexually, to which she resisted.

## Is money deposited in banks safe?

### Gyanu Nigam

Loan waivers have been announced periodically across the country. When the question arises about farmer loan waivers and debt restructuring for certain sectors, whether bank loans have been waived, this naturally raises concerns among the public. Will the money deposited in banks, especially in savings accounts and fixed deposits (FDs), remain safe? Banks take deposits from

the general public. They accept this money in the form of fixed deposits, savings accounts and current accounts. On the basis of this deposit, banks give various types of loans. They give home loans, personal loans, gold loans and loans to industries. Banks pay low interest on deposits and charge higher interest on loans. Banks operate with the income from this difference in interest. They return interest and principal to the

depositors on time. Public sector banks are nationalized banks. The general public trusts them. In the past few years, the government and banks have written off approximately 16 lakh crore rupees in corporate loans. Banks have also invested heavily in the stock market, providing the largest number of loans to the industrial sector. This has raised concerns among people about whether their money deposited in banks

will be safe if the stock market declines.

When loans are waived for a specific category, it's often not a "complete waiver." In most cases, the government reimburses the banks from the public treasury. This amount, which the government provides to banks, doesn't directly impact bank deposits. Depositors' money remains safe. Therefore, there's usually no direct threat to the deposits of ordinary depositors.

If a bank is grappling with large amounts of bad loans (NPAs), and the government or the Reserve Bank does not intervene in time, the risk can increase. Banks also operate under the Companies Act and are subject to bankruptcy laws. To mitigate this risk, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) maintains strict oversight of banks. Furthermore, under the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC), every

depositor is insured for up to ₹5 lakh per bank.

Questions arise from time to time regarding the investments of insurance companies and banks. It's true that banks and insurance companies invest deposits in the stock market and other investment avenues. These investments are subject to strict regulations and risk management. Bank deposits are not invested directly in the stock market.

## Editorial

### Fearing de-dollarisation: On the U.S., oil and the petrodollar

President Donald Trump's urgency to push the Russia Sanctions Bill through Congress, granting him the power to impose tariffs of up to 500% on nations buying oil from Moscow, is officially framed as a punitive measure to weaken Russia's war economy. Yet, this legislative push comes just after the capture of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro on January 3. Throughout his press briefings thereafter, Mr. Trump emphasised Venezuela's vast oil reserves as America's underlying strategic interest. This twin focus on Russian sanctions and Venezuelan oil assets suggests that both measures are less about geopolitical 'penalisation' and more about protecting the petrodollar's dominance at a time when its hegemony is eroding. For decades, oil has been priced and largely settled in U.S. dollars. That system underpinned the dollar's centrality in global finance for much of the late 20th century. But since the sanctions on Russia following its 2014 annexation of Crimea, and, more vigorously, after the Ukraine invasion in 2022, major consumers such as China and India have deepened trading arrangements that circumvent the dollar. India, for instance, imported substantial volumes of Russian crude since 2022, accounting for more than 20% of Russia's war-period crude exports. China's purchases were even larger, reflecting its strategy to secure energy at a discount and experiment with non-dollar settlement mechanisms.

### The rise of youth power through Vedanta and the timeless philosophy of Swami Vivekananda

**The birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, the great man who brought India's cultural and spiritual consciousness to global prominence, January 12th, is not just a date in the country's history but an energetic celebration. What we celebrate as National Youth Day is actually a day to express gratitude to this great man who introduced a sleeping India to its inherent strengths. The Vedanta philosophy expounded by Vivekananda was not a dry knowledge confined to the Himalayan caves; rather, it was a practical Vedanta that had the power to revolutionize farms, factories, and the inner psyche of young people.**

**Dilip Kumar Pathak**

When he began his address at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago with "My American brothers and sisters," it was not just words but the realization of Advaita Vedanta, which considers the entire universe as one family. The fundamental foundation of his philosophy was that every soul is divine and that human weakness is merely an illusion. He declared fearlessness the essence of religion and made it clear that thoughts that weaken us physically, intellectually, and spiritually should be discarded as poison. Among the ideals Swami Vivekananda set for the youth, the most important were character building and self-confidence. He often said that a person who does not believe in himself cannot believe in God. He inspired young people to become men with muscles of iron and nerves of steel, rather than merely carrying the burden of bookish knowledge. Vivekananda believed that India's resurgence is possible only when the youth



renounce their comforts and devote themselves to serving the poor, the deprived and oppressed sections of society. According to him, education is what makes a person stand on his own feet and instills a sense of responsibility towards society. He gave the youth the great mantra of goal-focus, which calls for making one idea one's life and living by it. His words: "Arise, awake, and stop not until the goal is achieved" are as vibrant today in modern India in 2026 as they were a century ago. Vivekananda's spirituality was not a path of escapism, but a message of effort. He considered the body a temple of the soul and emphasized the importance of yoga and

and resolve to serve the nation even in the most difficult circumstances. Swamiji believed that in the future, India's glory will be determined not by its weapons, but by the moral courage and spiritual knowledge of its youth.

In today's digital and competitive age, where young people are often falling prey to loneliness and depression, Vivekananda's teachings serve as a beacon. They teach us that conquering our inner strengths is essential before conquering the outside world. His philosophy is a unique blend of socialism and spirituality, inspiring young people to become global citizens while remaining deeply connected to their cultural roots. Swamiji liberated religion from the narrowness of rituals and elevated it to the heights of humanism. For him, patriotism was not merely a sentiment, but a deep compassion for the people and a concrete action for their upliftment. He wanted India's youth to be a beautiful blend of the modernity of science and the depth of Vedanta.

## Trump's tariffs challenge global trade pacts

### Sanat Jain

US President Donald Trump's tariff policy has shaken the foundations of the global trade system. Under the slogan "America First," Trump has turned import tariffs into a tool of US policy global bullying, encompassing China, Russia, European countries, and all developing nations. This policy has put at stake not only bilateral trade but also the relevance of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The fundamental principle of the global trade treaty was to facilitate trade between all countries under international rules. The Trump administration has openly challenged the rules of the global trade treaty by imposing unilateral tariffs on steel, aluminum, electronics, and other products. These tariffs, imposed by President Trump citing national security, represent a new manifestation of US protectionism and bullying. The most worrying aspect is that the US has crippled the WTO's dispute settlement system. By blocking

the appointment of judges to the Appellate Body, it has sent a message to the entire world: if decisions are not favorable to the US, the institution itself should be rendered ineffective. Not all countries in the world are protesting this US bullying. Donald Trump's stance is pushing the world away from the rules-based system of global trade treaties and toward a power-based system. Trump's tariffs have severely disrupted global supply and exchange systems. Inflation and unemployment have risen in countries around the world, including the US. An atmosphere of economic and strategic uncertainty has developed across the world. This situation has become even more challenging for developing countries, as they are neither in a position to impose retaliatory tariffs nor are they able to secure justice under the rules of the global trade treaty. The hope of obtaining swift justice under the rules of the global trade treaty has also been completely lost. The Global Trade Treaty, which once



linked countries around the world, has reached a crossroads, where the bullying of US President Donald Trump is becoming evident. America's authoritarianism has posed a serious challenge to the multilateral system. Due to the failure to adhere to the institutions and rules of the Global Trade Treaty, countries around the world are

attempting to rejoin the authoritarian system, posing a significant threat to global peace. On the other hand, Trump's policy of nationalistic protectionism has made it clear that if the most powerful countries break the rules, institutions become mere paper. The United Nations Security Council and other global institutions are facing a

similar situation. Will the Global Trade Treaty remain hostage to the political desires of a few countries? Or will the Global Trade Treaty's rules be reformed to make it globally effective again? This responsibility does not lie solely with the US. The future of the Global Trade Treaty depends on the collective understanding and responsibility of

countries around the world. If the global trade treaty is broken, it will not only impact developing countries but will also rapidly increase the risk of economic recession for countries around the world. Since the global trade treaty came into effect, governments across the world are heavily in debt. Ordinary citizens are also burdened with debt. The credit system that was established through the global trade treaty to promote economic growth, employment, and social development has now left no one untouched. Weakening the global trade treaty is weakening the global economy, and all countries will have to pay the price for this. More than 70 countries are currently witnessing protests against recession, unemployment, and inflation. Those currently in power are facing challenges. The general public is suffering from inflation and unemployment. Consequently, after the global economic recession, disputes among countries will increase rapidly. This situation could even lead to World War III. Such assumptions are beginning to emerge.

# Techno Paints announces Sachin Tendulkar as its Brand Ambassador

**Hyderabad, Agency:** Master Blaster Sachin Tendulkar has been appointed as the brand ambassador of paints manufacturer Techno Paints and Chemicals. He will continue as the company's brand ambassador for three years. The company, which has established a stable position in the domestic paints sector for 25 years and is operating successfully in eight states, is looking to expand across the country with the addition of Sachin.

Techno Paints and Chemicals' Chairman Akuri Srinivas Reddy said, "We are honoured to collaborate with one of the world's most iconic cricketers and Bharat Ratna, Sachin Tendulkar. We are looking forward to achieving bigger and greater things this year with expansion and IPO,"

and no one could have been a better ambassador or growth partner for us."

Earlier in 2023, the company announced the appointment of film actor Mahesh Babu as its brand ambassador. He was the company's brand ambassador for a period of two years.

IPO to be launched this financial year

Techno Paints and Chemicals' Chairman Akuri Srinivas Reddy told the media on Saturday that the company will file DRHP in 2026-27. He said that the process will be completed in 2026-27 only. He revealed that Rs.500 crores will be raised through the IPO.

Targeting revenue of Rs.2,000 cr

The company earned a revenue of Rs 210 crore in 2024-25. It is expecting Rs 450 crore in the current financial year.



Srinivas Reddy revealed that they are targeting to reach the Rs 2,000 crore level by 2029-30. The Indian paint industry is worth Rs 90,000 crore and is growing at a rate of 5-9 per

cent annually. The per capita consumption of paints worldwide is 15 litres per year. In India, it is only 4.5 litres. Srinivas Reddy said that there is immense potential in this

sector domestically.

## Plans to expand into new markets

Techno Paints manufactures decorative, industrial and speciality paints. It has made its mark in the special texture finishes and construction chemicals segments. It is offering over 3,000 shades of decorative paints. The company has its own research and development centre in Hyderabad. And a state-of-the-art manufacturing plant at Pashamylaram near Hyderabad. It is currently operating in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Delhi, Odisha, and Chandigarh. It is determined to expand to Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, West Bengal, and Uttar Pradesh by the end of this year. It has decided to

enter the Middle East in 2026-27.

## About Techno Paints

Hyderabad-based Techno Paints has already completed more than 1,250 projects so far. It has painted buildings in the residential, commercial, industrial and hospitality sectors, covering an area of 180 crore square feet. Currently, 175 painting projects are ongoing in various states. Painting work has also started for 26,065 schools in Telangana. More than 5,000 expert painters are employed by the company. Srinivas Reddy revealed that they have become a top brand in the market due to their international standards and timely project completion. The company began its journey in 2001 with 10 people. Today, it continues to thrive with over 450 employees.

## Smartan Launches Revolutionary AI Injury Prevention Platform at CES 2026

**Las Vegas, Agency:** Smartan launched its AI-powered injury prevention and rehabilitation platform at CES 2026, introducing breakthrough computer vision technology that has already helped achieve a 42% reduction in sports injuries across pilot deployments in India. 19-Year-Old Indian Entrepreneur Debuts Celebrity-Backed Sports Technology at World's Largest Tech Show.

Developed by 19-year-old Co-Founder and CTO Sanjay Thiagarajan, an undergraduate at Case Western Reserve University, and Co-Founder and CEO Arunesh Raja, a Purdue University graduate, the platform transforms everyday cameras and smartphones into powerful tools for real-time biomechanical analysis, removing reliance on costly lab setups



without compromising on clinical-grade precision. The launch marks a significant milestone for the Indian startup backed by cricket legend Ravi Shastri.

Addressing a \$33 Billion Problem With 8.6 million sports injuries occurring annually worldwide and costing \$33 billion in healthcare expenses, Smartan's platform tackles a critical global challenge. Studies show 80% of these injuries are preventable with proper

technique and early intervention, which is exactly what Smartan's AI delivers in real-time.

"We've democratized biomechanical analysis that previously required expensive laboratory equipment," said Arunesh Raja. "Our platform works with any camera, analyzes movement in real-time with sub-100ms latency, and provides instant feedback to prevent injuries before they occur."

Proven Results and

## Market Traction

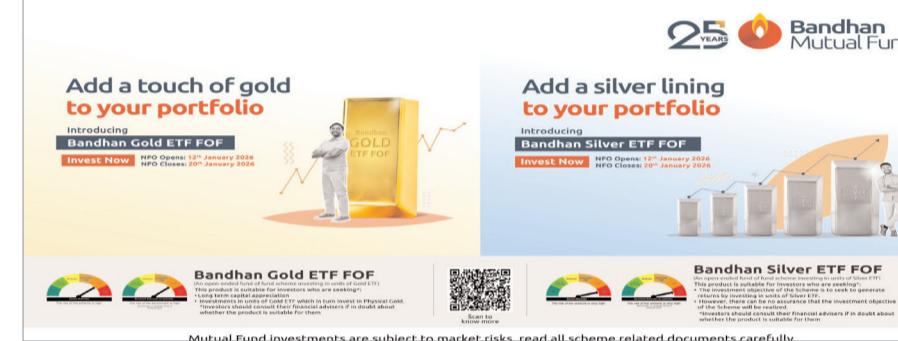
The platform is getting deployed across sports academies in India, demonstrating measurable impact:

- 42% reduction in form-related injuries
- Real-time feedback during training sessions
- Objective rehabilitation progress tracking for doctors and physiotherapists

The company has raised seed funding from 4G Capital Ventures as well as cricket icon Ravi Shastri.

CES 2026 Launch and US Expansion At CES 2026--attracting 130,000+ attendees and generating \$300 billion in annual business deals--Smartan is unveiling enhanced rehabilitation features while announcing plans for US market entry, targeting sports academies, corporate wellness programs, and medical facilities.

## Bandhan Mutual Fund Offers Two ETF Fund of Funds for Simple and Efficient Access to Precious Metals



**Ranchi:** Bandhan Mutual Fund has announced the launch of the Bandhan Gold ETF FoF and Bandhan Silver ETF FoF, two open-ended schemes designed to provide investors with an easy, transparent, and cost-efficient way to participate in gold and silver. The New Fund Offers (NFOs) open on Monday, 12 January 2026, and close on Tuesday, 20 January 2026. Investments in the Bandhan Gold ETF FoF and Bandhan Silver ETF FoF can be made through licensed mutual

fund distributors, investment advisors, online platforms, or directly at <https://bandhanmutual.com/campaign/nfo/>. Vishal Kapoor, CEO, Bandhan AMC, commenting on the launch, said, "Gold and silver can play a meaningful role in portfolio diversification, but the way investors access these assets matters. Physical metal often brings uncertainties around purity, making charges, storage, and resale, while ETFs require demat accounts that many investors still do not use."

## Online shopping in future will be AI-driven, says Sundar Pichai as Google partners with global retailers

Google CEO Sundar Pichai announced the launch of the Universal Commerce Protocol (UCP), saying that artificial intelligence (AI) agents will play a major role in the way people shop in the near future.

In a social media post, Pichai said, "AI agents will be a big part of how we shop in the not-so-distant future. To help lay the groundwork, we partnered with Shopify, Etsy, Wayfair, Target and Walmart to create the Universal Commerce Protocol, a new open standard for agents and systems to talk to each other across every step of the shopping journey. And coming soon, UCP will power native checkout so you can buy directly on AI Mode and the Gemini app." He said AI agents will become an important part of the shopping journey, helping users discover products, compare options and complete purchases more efficiently.

To support this shift, Google has partnered with major global commerce and retail platforms, including Shopify, Etsy, Wayfair, Target and Walmart to create UCP. The Universal Commerce Protocol is a new open standard designed to allow AI agents and different digital systems to communicate smoothly across every stage of the shopping process.

Google said the protocol will help remove barriers between platforms and enable a more connected experience for users, merchants and AI-powered tools. Pichai said that UCP will soon power native checkout, allowing users to buy products directly within AI-driven experiences such as AI Mode and the Gemini app. This would reduce the need for users to move across multiple websites or apps, making the buying process simpler and faster.

## Anant National University Students Earn IPR for Project Developed in Foundation Year

### New Delhi, Agency:

Reflects Anant's practice-led pedagogy that enables students to translate ideas into real-world solutions from day one Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India (NewsVoir) Foundation Year students of Anant National University's Class of 2028 have achieved an early academic milestone by securing design registration (Intellectual Property Rights) for their project Woodwork Zoo. The project emerged from a classroom module and reflects Anant's emphasis on hands-on, inquiry-led design education from the very first year.

Dr Sanjeev Vidyarthi, Provost, Anant National



University, said, "At Anant, we believe that innovation should begin from the very first year of a student's academic journey. We actively encourage students to conceive, develop and own their ideas, and we support them through every stage, from making and prototyping to

intellectual property registration. By introducing IPR awareness and formal protection early on, we empower students to view their projects not just as academic exercises, but as valuable, real-world innovations with the potential to create impact."

Aarambh

Incubation Centre plays a key role in fostering entrepreneurship and innovation at Anant by supporting young innovators through mentorship, prototyping assistance and access to government and non-government agencies.

This initiative exemplifies Anant's commitment to experiential learning, innovation and early professional exposure. By integrating strong foundation pedagogy with incubation and IPR support, Anant enables students to translate classroom learning into meaningful, design-led innovations, laying the groundwork for a future-ready, industry-aware design education.

## Startups urge govt for stronger incentives, easier credit and tax relief ahead of Union Budget 2026

**New Delhi, Agency:** As the Union Budget 2026 is set to be presented on Sunday, February 1, startups across sectors have called on the government to announce stronger incentives, easier access to credit and simplified compliance norms to support early-stage ventures and ensure long-term growth.

"Extending subsidies and providing targeted support to startups based on actual vehicle sales can significantly strengthen manufacturing capabilities, especially for smaller and emerging companies. Such measures would enable startups to scale production, invest in technology and build long-term operational capacity".

He further added, "Although central government schemes such as CGTMS, MUDRA and PMEGP are intended to improve access to credit, their effective-

ness remains limited due to continued collateral requirements imposed by banks and NBFCs. Despite government-backed guarantees, only a small number of proposals are approved, restricting the flow of institutional finance to startups".

He called for clearer and more uniform guidelines to ensure lending institutions fully recognise and implement government-backed guarantee mechanisms.

Startups working in social and impact-driven sectors are also expecting focused support.

Abhinav Rao Kuchipudi, Founder and CEO of ParentVerse, said early-stage startups are looking for enhanced incentives, simplified compliance structures and better access to funding and grants.

He said, "We look forward to enhanced incentives for early-stage startups, simplified compliance structures, and better access to funding and grants for impact-driven ventures. Tax benefits for startups investing in family-focused innovation, women-led enterprises, and tech-enabled education would further accelerate growth".

Kuchipudi also urged the govern-

ment to place greater emphasis on early childhood development, mental health and digital-first parenting solutions in the upcoming budget.

He said increased allocations to child well-being, parental education, and mental health awareness would help build a resilient future generation.

From the employment and HR space, Devashish Sharma, Co-founder and CEO of Taggd, said the Union Budget 2026 offers an opportunity to strengthen labour reforms, workforce readiness and employer confidence. He said, "The Union Budget 2026 presents a lucrative opportunity to strengthen the trifecta of labour reforms, workforce readiness, and employer confidence. The implemented labour reforms have started to simplify compliance and improve worker protection.

However, the substantial impact will depend on whether organisations feel secure enough to hire and invest in skilling and reskilling. The upcoming budget can build on this progress by increasing employer-led training and supporting technology adoption without disrupting the workforce". Meanwhile, Avinash Deshmukh, COO of the health and wellness startup iThrive, said complex compliance and fragmented access to funding are major hurdles for startups.

He stated, "What is really holding startups back today is not their intent or innovation-it is survival within a complex compliance and funding environment. Access to credit remains fragmented and difficult, especially for those in early-stage businesses doing meaningful work."



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# Chandigarh girl Nandini Sharma claims maiden hat-trick in Women's Premier League



**New Delhi, Agency:** Chandigarh girl Nandini Sharma claimed a maiden hat-trick on way to a five-wicket haul as Delhi Capitals bowled out Gujarat Giants for 209 in their Women's Premier League match.

Sent in to bat, Gujarat

Rana, hammering two fours and four successive sixes in an over that yielded 32 runs and pow-

Giants opener Devine, who retired from international cricket last year, smashed seven fours and eight sixes in her blistering 42-ball knock, adding 94 runs for the opening wicket with Beth Mooney (19). Devine set the tone early, striking three fours off Chinelle Henry before taking Nandini Sharma apart with two fours and a six in the fourth over. She was particularly severe on Sneh

Giants to 80 without loss in the powerplay. The New Zealander brought up her half-century in just 25 balls before Shree Charani broke the opening stand with a sharp caught-and-bowled effort in the ninth over to remove Mooney. Devine briefly regained control, hitting Charani for three sixes, but fell in the 11th over bowled by Nandini. Skipper Ashleigh Gardner kept Gujarat Giants on course with a brisk 49 off 26 balls, smashing four boundaries and three sixes to take the side past the 200-mark.

Nandini capped a memorable outing by picking up four wickets in the final over, including three off the last three balls, to complete her maiden hat-trick.

# Shanaka's 9-ball 34, Hasaranga's 3-fer help Sri Lanka clinch series-levelling win against Pakistan



**Dambulla, Agency:** Sri Lanka defeated Pakistan by 14 runs in the rain-affected 3rd T20I to level the three-match series 1-1 on Sunday at the Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium.

Sri Lankan batters, especially captain Dasun Shanaka, Janith

Liyanage and Kamil Mishara, were the chief architects of Sri Lanka's win, while Wanindu Hasaranga's three-wicket haul helped the hosts restrict Pakistan's chase.

Pakistan won the toss and opted to bowl first in a match that was reduced to 12 overs per side due to rain.

# Irfan Pathan dissects Virat Kohli's consistency after legendary batter's match-winning 93 against New Zealand



**New Delhi, Agency:** Former Indian cricketer Irfan Pathan dissected the reason behind Virat Kohli's consistency in ODIs after the legendary Indian batter's match-winning 93-run knock against New Zealand at Vadodara on Sunday in the first ODI of the three-match series against New Zealand.

Pathan noted Kohli's head position and his body strength, saying they help the batter on the crease.

Kohli scored 93 off 91 balls, helping India clinch the match by four wickets while chasing New Zealand's 301-run target at the BCA Stadium in Kotambi, Vadodara.

Notably, this marked Kohli's seventh consecutive fifty-plus score in the 50-over cricket since the third match of the ODI series in Australia in October 2025. Of the seven fifty-plus scores, Kohli has three centuries (two in ODIs and one in the Vijay Hazare Trophy). His last seven scores read: 93, 77, 131, 65\*, 102, 135, and 74\*.

Speaking on his YouTube channel, Irfan Pathan offered high praise to Kohli, calling

him "Virat consistent Kohli". Pathan lauded the 37-year-old batter's strong technique, fitness and fearless approach--especially his ability to step out of the crease and adapt his innings effectively.

Pathan also noted that while Kohli hit several boundaries in the early stages of his innings against New Zealand, he changed his approach thereafter.

Pathan also called for there to be more five-match ODI series and even triangular ODI series so that the cricket world can see more of Kohli, since he is exclusively an ODI player now.

"The way Virat Kohli is batting, we can call him 'Virat consistent Kohli'. In the last seven innings, he has scored three centuries and four half-centuries. He missed out on a hundred by a whisker in the first ODI and has now amassed 28000 runs in international cricket. He is now only the second after Sachin Tendulkar. Kohli deserves praise for the way he approaches his innings, especially for stepping out regularly at 37. When a batter steps out regularly, many things can go wrong. But Kohli's head position is strong, and it shows his technique is strong. Your core needs to be strong, so do your calves and glutes. Only then, a batter step out and hit those big shots. He had struck six boundaries in his first 20 balls and changed his approach afterwards," Pathan said on his YouTube channel.

"He played aggressively at the start, but scored only one boundary in the next 50 deliveries when he was set. It is amazing to see his approach and how he keeps getting better. I feel there should be either a five-match series or a triangular series so we can see Kohli score more international runs. Not only was I expecting him to score a ton, but also finish the game. He often does that, but couldn't today," Pathan said further.

With the fifty, Virat Kohli also surpassed Kumar Sangakkara's tally of 28,016 runs to become the second-highest run-getter across all formats in international cricket, only behind Sachin Tendulkar. Now in 557 matches, Kohli has 28,068 runs to his name at an average of 52.66, with 84 centuries in 146 centuries.



# WPL: Gujarat Giants pull off thrilling victory over Delhi Capitals by 4 runs

**Navi Mumbai, Agency:** Gujarat Giants (GG) pulled off a thrilling victory over Delhi Capitals in the ongoing Women's Premier League (WPL) in Navi Mumbai on Sunday. Seven runs were required in the last over, and Sophie Devine just gave 2 runs and scalped two wickets to seal a win for GG by four runs. The game seemed to be lost when 41 came off the 18th and 19th over, but Devine turned it around to script a famous win.



Chasing a target of 210, Lizelle Lee and Shafali Verma opened the innings for Delhi Capitals. DC started well, racing to 40 in five overs; however, Verma was dismissed in the next over by Rajeshwari Gayakwad for 14. Laura Wolvaardt and Lee took the innings forward, adding 90 runs for the second wicket before Kashvee Gautam removed Lee for an outstanding 86 runs of just 54 balls, including 12 fours and three sixes.

## WTT Feeder Series 2026

### Manush Shah, Ryu Hanna win men's and women's singles titles

**Vadodara, Agency:** Top seed and local favourite Manush Shah and the Korea Republic's Ryu Hanna registered contrasting victories to clinch the men's and women's singles titles respectively in the WTT Feeder Series 2026, presented by Sports Authority of Gujarat, at the SAMA Indoor Sports Complex here on Sunday.



# Afghanistan's Mohammad Nabi shares 53-run stand with son Hassan Eisakhil in BPL clash

**Sylhet, Agency:** The father-son duo of 41-year-old Afghanistan veteran cricketer Mohammad Nabi and 19-year-old Hassan Eisakhil notched up a fifty-run partnership, marking a rare moment in cricket.

Batting together during the Dhaka Capitals vs Noakhali Express match, Nabi and Eisakhil joined hands to compile a 53-run stand in just 30 balls at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium in Sylhet in the ongoing Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) 2025-26 season.

Eisakhil scored 92 runs for Noakhali Express, which proved to be a match-winning

knock for his team as they reached 184/7 in the first innings, a target the opposition could not even come close to chasing. Notably, the BPL match was Eisakhil's first in the league. On the other hand, Eisakhil's father, Nabi, scored 17 runs.

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Coming to the 22nd match of the BPL 2025-26, Noakhali Express secured a convincing 41-run victory over Dhaka Capitals at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium. Choosing to bat first, Noakhali Express posted a formidable total of 184/7 in their 20 overs, anchored by Hassan Eisakhil's 92 off 60 balls and a rapid 48 off 25 balls from Soumya Sarkar.

## HAPPY LOHRI

## Lohri – The Festival of Fire, Faith and the Farmer's Hope



**New Delhi:** Lohri is one of North India's most vibrant and meaningful festivals, celebrated with immense joy, music, and warmth every year on January 13. Rooted deeply in Punjab's agrarian culture, Lohri

marks the end of winter and the arrival of longer days, symbolising renewal, prosperity, and gratitude. More than just a seasonal celebration, Lohri reflects the emotional bond between nature and human

life, especially the farming community that depends on the rhythms of the earth.

Traditionally, Lohri is celebrated on the eve of Makar Sankranti, when the sun begins its northward journey. This astronomical transition is believed to bring positivity and growth. For farmers, Lohri holds special importance as it coincides with the harvesting season of rabi crops.

Standing beside the crackling bonfire, people offer prayers to Agni, the fire god, thanking nature for abundance and seeking blessings for a prosperous year ahead.

The bonfire is the heart of Lohri celebrations. Families and neighbours

gather around it after sunset, tossing offerings like sesame seeds, jaggery, peanuts, popcorn, and rewari into the flames. These offerings represent gratitude and hope, symbolising the surrender of negativity and the welcoming of warmth, light, and positivity. The act of circling the bonfire while chanting traditional folk songs strengthens community bonds and preserves centuries-old traditions.

Music and dance add colour and rhythm to Lohri festivities. The energetic beats of the dhol set the mood as men perform the lively Bhangra, while women grace the celebration with the elegant Giddha. Folk songs narrating tales of love, courage, and harvest resonate in the cold winter air. These cultural expressions keep Punjab's rich heritage alive and connect younger generations with their roots.

Lohri is especially significant for newly married couples and families welcoming a newborn child. For them, the festival symbolises new beginnings and blessings for happiness and fertility. Grand celebrations are organised, and gifts are exchanged among relatives, reinforcing family ties and social harmony.

In modern times, Lohri has transcended regional boundaries. It is celebrated across India and among Indian communities worldwide, adapting to urban lifestyles while retaining its essence. Apartments and housing societies organise community bonfires, cultural programs, and potluck dinners, making Lohri a festival of togetherness even in bustling cities.

Despite changing times, the spirit of Lohri remains unchanged. It reminds people to stay connected to nature, respect agricultural traditions, and value collective joy over individual celebration. In an era dominated by technology and fast-paced living, Lohri offers a moment to pause, gather around warmth, and celebrate life's simple blessings.

Ultimately, Lohri is not just a festival—it is a celebration of hope, resilience, and gratitude. As flames rise against the winter sky, they carry prayers, dreams, and faith, lighting the way toward a brighter, more prosperous future.

## The Cultural and Historical Significance of Lohri in Indian Tradition



**New Delhi:** Lohri is more than a harvest festival; it is a cultural symbol that reflects centuries of history, folklore, and community life in northern India. Primarily associated with Punjab and Haryana, Lohri has deep roots in agrarian traditions and ancient beliefs related to nature, seasons, and celestial movements. Over time, it has evolved into a celebration that unites people across regions, generations, and cultures.

Historically, Lohri is linked to the winter solstice, marking the gradual increase in daylight after the longest night of the year. This shift was seen as a victory of light over darkness, warmth over cold, and hope over hardship. Ancient communities depended heavily on solar cycles for agriculture, making this transition a moment of joy and relief.

## Lohri in Modern India – Tradition in a Changing World

**New Delhi:** As India rapidly modernises, traditional festivals like Lohri continue to evolve, adapting to contemporary lifestyles while preserving their core values. Once celebrated primarily in rural Punjab, Lohri has now found a place in urban apartments, corporate offices, and international communities, reflecting its universal appeal.

In cities, space constraints have transformed Lohri celebrations.

Large bonfires are replaced by symbolic fire rituals, eco-friendly lamps, or community events organised in open grounds. Despite these changes, the essence of Lohri—togetherness, gratitude, and joy—remains intact.

Modern Lohri celebrations often blend tradition with innovation. Cultural

programs, fashion shows

featuring ethnic wear, and fusion music performances add a contemporary touch. Social media platforms amplify the festival's reach, allowing people to share greetings, photographs, and memories across borders.

The festival has also



embraced environmental awareness. With growing concerns about pollution, many communities promote green Lohri celebrations by avoiding harmful materials and encouraging



## Lohri and the Farmer – Celebrating Nature's Bounty and Hard Work

**New Delhi:** For generations, Lohri has been inseparably linked to India's farming community. The festival is a tribute to the resilience, patience, and dedication of farmers who work tirelessly to feed the nation. Celebrated during the peak of winter, Lohri marks the nearing harvest of rabi crops, particularly wheat, making it a moment of relief and optimism for agricultural households.

Agriculture in Punjab and neighbouring regions depends heavily on seasonal cycles. Harsh winters often test the endurance of both crops and farmers. Lohri arrives as a promise of better days ahead, when the sun grows stronger and the fields begin to flourish. The festival symbolises hope—hope that the harvest will be bountiful and the year prosperous.

The ritual of lighting the bonfire holds agricultural significance. Fire represents energy, warmth, and protection. Farmers offer the first produce of the season to the flames, expressing gratitude for nature's generosity. This act reflects a deep understanding of ecological balance and the belief that humans are caretakers of the land rather than its masters.

Lohri celebrations in villages are marked by simplicity and authenticity. Community gatherings replace grand decorations,

and joy is expressed through music, dance, and shared meals. Elderly farmers recount stories of past harvests, passing wisdom to younger generations. These conversations strengthen rural bonds and preserve agricultural knowledge.

In recent years, the role of farmers has gained renewed attention due to discussions around sustainability, climate change, and food security. Lohri serves as a reminder of the vital contribution farmers make to society. It encourages respect for agricultural labour and awareness of the challenges faced by rural communities.

Urban celebrations of Lohri may differ in scale, but the festival's message remains the same. By celebrating Lohri, city dwellers reconnect with the origins of their food and the people who cultivate it.

Schools and institutions increasingly use the festival as an opportunity to educate children about farming, seasons, and environmental responsibility.

Ultimately, Lohri is a celebration of harmony between humans and nature. It honours the farmer's toil, the land's fertility, and the sun's life-giving force. In doing so, it reminds society that prosperity is rooted in respect for nature and gratitude for those who nurture it.

