



# I am a BJP worker, Nitin Naveen is my boss: Modi

Agency. New Delhi

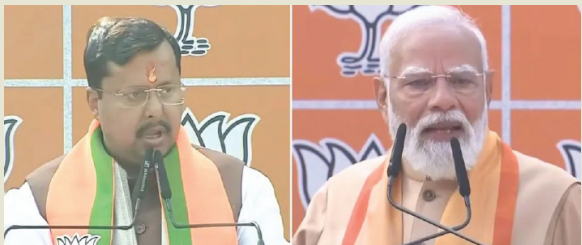
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday congratulated Nitin Naveen, the new national president of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and described himself as a party worker, saying that when it comes to party matters, Nitin Naveen is his boss. Nitin Naveen assumed charge as the party president at a ceremony held at the BJP headquarters in Delhi. Prime Minister Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, outgoing president JP Nadda, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, and other senior party leaders and workers were present on the occasion. Addressing the party workers, the Prime Minister said, "I am a worker of the Bharatiya Janata Party, this is my greatest pride. When it comes to the party, Nitin Naveen ji is my boss." He said that in the BJP, positions change but ideals do not, leadership changes but the direction remains the same. The BJP is a family where relationships



are more important than membership. The Prime Minister said that Nitin Naveen's responsibility is not limited to the BJP alone, but also includes maintaining coordination among all the partners of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). He expressed confidence that Nitin Naveen, with his youthful energy and experience, will carry forward the party's legacy. Referring to the organizational elections, the Prime Minister said that the election was conducted under a 100% democratic process, in accordance with the spirit of the party's constitution. This is a symbol of the BJP's democratic faith, organizational discipline, and

## In the BJP, a political position is not a privilege, but a responsibility: Nitin Naveen

New Delhi: In his first address, newly elected Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) National President Nitin Naveen expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying that only those who connect with the emotions of the people can become truly great. He said, "I have seen Prime Minister Modi working for the service of the nation as a dedicated worker. I have learned from him that a person who can connect with the emotions of the people is the one who becomes a great leader. In the BJP, a political position is not a privilege, but a responsibility." Recalling a conversation with Modi at an event, Nitin Naveen said, "I remember when I first participated in an event with you in Anand,



Gujarat. At that time, during the Sadbhavana Mission program, I saw you listening attentively to every person. After the program ended, when you spoke to us in your chamber, you explained with great emotion why so many people had come from Gujarat. That day I understood that a person becomes great only when he connects with the emotions of the people." He said that if the BJP has become the world's largest political party today, it is because of our inspiring leadership.

that Nitin Naveen represents the generation that has witnessed the era from radio

## India and UAE Agreement Target to reach \$200 billion in trade by 2032

Agency. New Delhi

The strategic and economic relations between India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) reached a new milestone on Monday. In a high-level meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and UAE President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, an ambitious target was set to double bilateral trade between the two countries to \$200 billion by 2032. This trade has already touched the \$100 billion mark in the financial year 2024-25, reflecting the success of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) signed in 2022. The joint statement issued after the meeting emphasized connecting Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to the global market. It called for the early implementation



of initiatives such as 'Bharat Mart', 'Virtual Trade Corridor', and 'India-Africa Bridge' to facilitate the easy access of Indian products to the Middle East, Africa, and Eurasia. Discussions also took place on the UAE's potential participation in the Dholera Special Investment Region in Gujarat. This project will develop major strategic infrastructure such as an international airport, smart city, railway connectivity, and energy infrastructure. Prime Minister Modi invited UAE sovereign wealth funds to invest in the second infrastructure fund proposed for 2026.

## Brief News

### PM Modi wants to centralize power and see the poor starve: Rahul Gandhi



Rae Bareli: Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, is on a two-day visit to his parliamentary constituency of Rae Bareli, where he participated in a MNREGA meeting organized by the party and strongly criticized the central BJP government. He accused the government of weakening the original spirit of MNREGA. Rahul Gandhi interacted with villagers and workers while presiding over the MNREGA Bachao Chaupal (Save MNREGA meeting) in the Unchahar area of Rohania block. Rahul said that the MNREGA concept was created with two main objectives. First, under the government's policy, local governments like Gram Panchayats should be given some responsibility and financial responsibility. The second objective was to create a minimum wage for the poor people of India, especially young people, so that they could benefit, but Narendra Modi does not want this.

### ABVP to launch campaigns on singing Vande Mataram and reducing screen time

Panaji/New Delhi: The Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) will conduct campaigns such as hostel surveys and campus-wide Vande Mataram programs in the coming months to raise awareness among youth and connect them with national unity. In addition, it will implement its 'Screen Time to Activity Time' campaign on a large scale to help young people overcome digital addiction. A 'Hostel Survey Campaign' will be conducted across the country from February 15 to March 15. To commemorate the 150th anniversary of Vande Mataram, 'Campus-to-Campus Vande Mataram' programs will be organized in educational institutions across the country from March 23 to August 15, through which patriotism, national unity, and cultural awareness will be instilled in the youth. Furthermore, the 'Screen Time to Activity Time' campaign, launched on National Youth Day, will be implemented on a large scale throughout the year through numerous programs to help young people overcome digital addiction and engage in sports, social participation, creative and physical activities.

## Congress has poisoned the minds of Muslims for years: Rijiju

Agency. New Delhi

At an event on Tuesday, Union Minister and BJP leader Kiren Rijiju spoke on various topics, from Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi to Muslims. Union Minister Rijiju said that as the Minister for Minority Affairs, he has done a lot of work for Muslims. No minister before him had done this kind of work. He made Hajj and Umrah easier. Regarding Rahul Gandhi, he jokingly said that he had invited him to his home. Union Minister Rijiju said that the



BJP party's constitution is very strict. The process of appointing the BJP's national president follows the rules. The nomination form has to be checked very carefully before Prime Minister Narendra Modi signs it. Union Minister Rijiju said that the internal mechanism was worked on to make Nitin Naveen the party president. Many people want to become the party president, but the responsibility is given only to a select few who meet the criteria. It is noteworthy that the party wanted young leadership, which is why Nitin Naveen's name was put forward.

### Sabarimala Theft Case: ED Raids 21 Locations in 3 States, Intensifies Money Laundering Probe

Thiruvananthapuram: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday expanded its investigation into the gold theft case linked to the Sabarimala temple, launching a major operation simultaneously across Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka. A total of 21 locations in the three states were raided as part of the probe into alleged money laundering. This action comes at a time when a Special Investigation Team (SIT) constituted under the supervision of the Kerala High Court is already conducting a criminal investigation into the case. The SIT has so far arrested 13 people in this high-profile case, who are currently in judicial custody. The primary objective of the ED's latest raids is to uncover clues related to the transaction of proceeds of crime and the concealment of assets.

### India's James Bond, the undercover agent who lived in Pakistan disguised as a Muslim

New Delhi: India's 20, 1945, in Pauri Garhwal, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval's father was an officer in the army. Ajit Doval, an IPS officer of the 1969 Kerala cadre, joined the Intelligence Bureau in 1972. During this time, he served for six years at the Indian Embassy in Lahore, Pakistan. To gather information while in Pakistan, Doval roamed the streets of Lahore disguised as a Muslim.



## From 'America First' to 'America Alone': A Year of Trump's Presidency

Agency. Washington

US President Donald Trump has completed one year in office. This year has been quite turbulent for the United States and the entire world. After coming to power on January 20, 2025, Trump rapidly and strictly implemented his "America First" policy. While this brought some immediate benefits to his supporters, it weakened America's global influence and accelerated the emergence of a multipolar world order, with several powerful nations rising to prominence. Domestically, the Trump administration issued more



than 225 executive orders in its first year. Immigration remained his top priority. Nearly 600,000 people were deported from the US in one year. National Guard troops were deployed in several cities in the name of border security. While supporters called these measures tough and necessary,

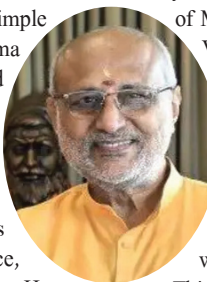
the government faced strong criticism for family separations, wrongful arrests, and allegations of human rights violations. Large protests erupted in Los Angeles, Minneapolis, and other cities. On the economic front, tax cuts, high tariffs, and reduced government spending boosted industries in some sectors, but also led to increased inflation. This directly impacted the middle class and the poor. Layoffs in government departments and constant policy changes weakened the administrative system. In foreign policy, Trump adopted a unilateral approach.

## Libraries are powerful agents of social change: Vice President

Agency. New Delhi

Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan said on Tuesday that libraries are not merely repositories of books, but powerful agents that guide society and bring about social change. He expressed these views while addressing a program of the Harijan Sevak Sangh at the historic Gandhi Ashram in Kingsway Camp, New Delhi. The Vice President visited the Gandhi Ashram today, where he inaugurated the expansion of the Mahadev Desai Library. On this occasion, he also visited the Kasturba Museum located in the ashram complex,

where Mahatma Gandhi and Kasturba Gandhi stayed when they visited Delhi in the 1930s and 1940s. The Vice President said that seeing the simple lives of Mahatma Gandhi and Kasturba Gandhi at the ashram evokes a deep emotional feeling, which inspires sacrifice, service, and determination. He said that the expansion of the Mahadev Desai Library is not merely an expansion of a physical structure, but a reaffirmation of the idea that knowledge is the strongest force for advancing society.



Libraries awaken ideas and play a crucial role in bringing about positive change in society. Referring to the life of Mahatma Gandhi, the Vice President said that after witnessing the poverty of Indian farmers, Gandhiji resolved to abandon Western attire and wear only a dhoti. This transformation symbolized his lifelong dedication to connecting with the common people and working for their upliftment. Referring to the Swadeshi movement, he said that Gandhiji opposed the

policy of sending India's raw materials abroad and then selling them back as finished goods, and promoted Swadeshi (indigenous) products. The Vice President said that the Harijan Sevak Sangh, established by Mahatma Gandhi, has made a significant contribution to eradicating social evils like untouchability through education, awareness, and service. A person's identity is determined not by their birth, but by their character. Referring to the life of former President K.R. Narayanan, the Vice President said that the Harijan Sevak Sangh played a significant role in shaping his education and life journey.

## Jharkhand and Tata Steel Sign Historic Agreement for 11,000 Crore Investment

Agency. Ranchi

Under the leadership of Chief Minister Hemant Soren, the Jharkhand government and Tata Steel Limited signed a significant Letter of Intent (LoI) at the World Economic Forum (Davos). This agreement outlines an investment of over 11,000 crore in new-age green steel technologies, paving the way for a sustainable, carbon-neutral industrial future and create large-scale direct and indirect employment opportunities. According to a press release issued by the Chief Minister's Secretariat on Tuesday, this partnership will implement cutting-edge technologies from the Netherlands and Germany in Jharkhand, enabling the state to become a global leader in green manufacturing. Tata Steel's Managing Director and CEO, T. V. Narendran, was present with his delegation on this occasion. The press release stated that in a historic and far-reaching step in the global industrial landscape, this agreement between the Jharkhand government, under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Hemant Soren, and Tata Steel Limited outlines an investment of



over 11,000 crore in new-age green steel technologies. This will propel the state towards a sustainable, carbon-neutral industrial future and create large-scale direct and indirect employment opportunities. Under this partnership, state-of-the-art innovation-based technologies from the Netherlands and Germany will be implemented in Jharkhand, enabling the state to play a leading role in the global shift towards green manufacturing while maintaining harmony with nature. **Pioneering Next-Generation Ironmaking Technologies-** The Jharkhand government stated that the cornerstone of this investment is revolutionary ironmaking technologies such as HIsarna and EzyMelt, with a proposed investment of 7,000 crore. The unique feature of the HIsarna technology is that it allows the use of indigenous coal and low-grade iron ore, reducing dependence on expensive imports and

making steel production more cost-effective. Combined with carbon capture and storage, this technology has the potential to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by up to 80 percent. Following a successful pilot project in the Netherlands, Tata Steel plans to establish a commercial plant with a capacity of approximately 1 million tonnes per year in Jamshedpur by 2030. Meanwhile, the EzyMelt (Electrically Assisted Syngas Melter) technology will further strengthen the sustainability of the traditional blast furnace process. This is the world's first solution of its kind, which uses syngas to reduce coke consumption and can reduce carbon emissions by approximately 50 percent. **A New Dimension for Industrial Infrastructure-** In addition to ironmaking innovations, this investment package also includes a state-of-the-art combi mill worth 1,500 crore and a tinplate expansion worth 2,600 crore.



# Deputy Commissioner-cum-District Magistrate of Jamtara, Mr. Ravi Anand, IAS, held a public grievance redressal session in his office chamber to listen to people’s problems

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**Jamtara:** Deputy Commissioner-cum-District Magistrate of Jamtara, Mr. Ravi Anand, IAS, organized a public grievance redressal session in his office chamber to listen to the problems of the general public. More than 35 people presented their problems to the Deputy Commissioner during the public grievance redressal session. In the public grievance redressal session, more than 35 complainants presented their grievances to the Deputy Commissioner. These included land-related issues, problems with neighbors preventing construction, housing problems, non-receipt of pension amounts, land encroachment cases, complaints of excessive electricity bills, failure of the Circle Officer to evict encroachers from government land despite orders from the DC/ SDO court, and matters related to the selection of Anganwadi workers and helpers. The Deputy Commissioner listened attentively to various types of problems and forwarded the

applications to the concerned offices for further action as per rules. The Deputy Commissioner directed that several cases be expedited and the Deputy Commissioner’s office be informed of the outcome. An elderly woman who came with her grandson for pension received an on-the-spot solution. During the public grievance redressal session, an elderly woman came with her grandson. The woman told the Deputy Commissioner that she was 62 years old but was not receiving her pension. The Deputy Commissioner immediately instructed the concerned official to enroll her in the pension scheme. During the investigation, it was found that the elderly woman’s pension had been approved since December 12, 2024, and the amount was being credited to her bank account every month, although the woman had not checked her bank account for a long time. When the Deputy Commissioner informed the elderly woman that Rs. 12,000 had been deposited into her bank account, the elderly woman and her grandson expressed their happiness

▪ Approximately 35 people presented their problems to the Deputy Commissioner during the public grievance redressal session; several problems were resolved on the spot.  
▪ The Deputy Commissioner instructed the concerned officer to submit an investigation report within 24 hours regarding a matter related to the selection of Anganwadi workers and helpers.

and thanked the Deputy Commissioner. To protect against the cold, the Deputy Commissioner gave a blanket to an elderly man at the public grievance redressal camp; he also received an assurance that action would be taken on his complaint. Meanwhile, an



elderly man from Narayanpur narrated his plight to the Deputy Commissioner, stating that his name had been removed from the housing scheme list, that he was being harassed, and that he had not received a blanket from the block office despite the severe cold. The Deputy Commissioner took his problem very seriously and instructed the concerned officials. He also immediately provided the elderly man with a blanket, which made the man very happy, and he left for his home. After hearing the complaints at the public grievance redressal camp, the Deputy Commissioner directed that a report on the matter related to Anganwadi workers and helpers be submitted within 24 hours. At the

public grievance redressal camp, three applications were received related to the selection of Anganwadi workers and helpers, and these applicants had previously appealed to the Deputy Commissioner at similar camps. The Deputy Commissioner expressed strong displeasure at the lack of action on their applications over such a long period. He instructed the District Social Welfare Officer to take the matter seriously and obtain an investigation report from the concerned CDPO/ Circle Office within 24 hours and submit the file. He stated that if the report was not received within the stipulated time, departmental action would be initiated against those responsible. Woman appeals to Deputy Commissioner at public grievance redressal meeting... “I bought the land 15 years ago, I pay taxes regularly, but my neighbor is preventing me from building a house...”; Deputy Commissioner assures action. At the public grievance redressal meeting, the Deputy Commissioner listened attentively to all matters, including land

disputes, land-related problems, and encroachments, and directed that action be taken. In this connection, a woman informed the Deputy Commissioner that her neighbor was preventing her from building a house, even though she had owned the land for 15 years and was paying taxes regularly. The Deputy Commissioner directed the Circle Officer to conduct an on-site investigation and submit a report. The Deputy Commissioner also listened to all other applications received and gave necessary instructions to the concerned officials for their prompt resolution. “District residents should feel free to present their problems to us at the public grievance redressal meeting,” says Deputy Commissioner. The Deputy Commissioner appealed to the district residents, stating that a public grievance redressal meeting is being held every Tuesday. He urged them to come on Tuesdays and present their problems without hesitation, assuring them that the district administration would resolve the issues according to the rules.

# A delegation from Godda College visited the residence of Podaiyahat MLA Pradeep Yadav

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**godda:** Present were Principal Dr. Vivekanand Singh, Dr. Basukinath Jha, Dr. Mahtab Ahmed, Dr. Meera Singh, Dr. Balbhadra Prasad Singh, Dr. Pankaj Kumar, Dr. Ranjan Kumar, Mukund Kumar Sah, etc. It is worth noting that B.Ed and M.Ed courses were started in Godda College and throughout Jharkhand. It was only through the efforts of the then Education Minister Pradeep Yadav that B.Ed studies could be started in Jharkhand. Since then, B.Ed studies have been



continuously running at Godda College, and thousands of local students have studied B.Ed here and have secured B.Ed-based jobs across India. In 2025, the NCTE, which grants recognition to B.Ed programs,

suspended B.Ed studies at Godda College from Delhi due to some deficiencies in standards. These deficiencies included a shortage of teachers and professors. However, now, 100% of the

required professors are in place, thanks to the efforts of MLA Mr. Pradeep Yadav. Mr. Pradeep Yadav and the current government have removed all the obstacles in the B.Ed program. Due to the restoration of recognition by the NCTE from Delhi, there is widespread joy among the local people, students, and teachers in Godda district. Under the leadership of Godda College Principal Dr. Vivekanand Singh, the delegation met with MLA and former minister Mr. Pradeep Yadav, thanked him, and presented him with a shawl.

# Deputy Development Commissioner Holds Review Meeting on Republic Day Preparations

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**Dumka:** Deputy Development Commissioner Mr. Aniket Sachan reviewed the preparations for the successful and grand celebration of Republic Day 2026 at the Police Line ground with officials from all concerned departments.

The meeting included a detailed review of the preparations being made at the venue. The Deputy Development Commissioner instructed that all preparations related to the Republic Day celebrations be completed on time and to a high standard. He directed that proper arrangements be made for painting, barricading, the drinking water, toilets, and other necessary basic facilities



at the event venue. He also instructed that special attention be paid to the cleanliness of the city to ensure a clean and orderly environment during the celebrations. He directed that attractive decorations, necessary signage, and directional signs be arranged at the venue, keeping in mind the convenience of the general public. All departments were also instructed to complete

the construction of the Republic Day tableaux within the stipulated time frame to avoid any inconvenience on the day of the event. The Deputy Development Commissioner and District Transport Officer Mr. Mrityunjay Kumar appealed to all departments to work in coordination with each other to make the Republic Day celebrations dignified and successful.

# Violence during public hearing of private coal company, assault inside the tent, lakhs worth of damage

**Former Chief Minister Mr. Babulal Marandi raises questions on law and order**

Senior Journalist Kaushal Kumar



**Barkagaon (Jharkhand):** A group of villagers attacked another group during a public hearing organized by the Jharkhand State Pollution Control Board for a private coal company at the local football ground on Tuesday. The attack caused chaos and the atmosphere turned violent due to the people protesting against the public hearing. According to eyewitnesses, a large number of miscreants, armed with traditional and sharp weapons like spears, arrows, and sickles, arrived at

the public hearing site in tractors and directly entered the tent. Most of them were wearing masks, mufflers, and helmets to cover their faces. In a pre-planned manner, they brutally assaulted the farmers and villagers present there. Even women were not spared and were beaten, leading to screams and cries at the scene. Their clear objective was to disrupt



the public hearing process. During the violence, there was widespread vandalism in the tent, hundreds of chairs were damaged, and the arrangements for the event were completely destroyed. Meanwhile, Leader of the Opposition Mr. Babulal Marandi condemned the incident on the X platform and questioned the government’s functioning. Local former MLA Ms. Amba Prasad also reached the spot and spoke to the villagers.

# District Level Scholarship Sanction and Monitoring Committee Meeting Concluded

Senior Journalist Kaushal Kumar

A meeting of the District Level Scholarship Sanction and Monitoring Committee was held in the office chamber at the Collectorate, under the chairmanship of District Magistrate-cum-Deputy Commissioner Ms. Anjali Yadav, IAS, with the objective of ensuring effective implementation, timely sanction, and transparent distribution of various scholarship schemes operating in the district. During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner conducted a detailed review of the current status of scholarship schemes for students belonging to pre-matric, post-matric, minority, Scheduled Caste,



Scheduled Tribe, Backward Class, and other eligible categories. She instructed the concerned departments to approve the applications of all eligible students on time and transfer the scholarship amount to their bank accounts promptly, so that no student’s education is hampered due to financial reasons. The Deputy Commissioner laid special emphasis on ensuring transparency and accuracy

in the scholarship application verification process. She said that incomplete or erroneous applications should be promptly brought to the notice of the students through the concerned schools/colleges for correction. She also directed that pending applications be processed quickly and all procedures be completed within the stipulated time frame. During the meeting, an amount of Rs. 4.18 crore was

sanctioned for 22,379 children belonging to SC, ST, and OBC categories from classes one to eight, which will be sent to their bank accounts through PFMS. It was also directed in the meeting that awareness campaigns should be conducted at the school, college, and panchayat levels for the widespread dissemination of information about scholarship schemes, so that more and more eligible students can benefit from the schemes. In addition, emphasis was placed on regular monitoring of data entry, verification, and payment status on the online portal. District Welfare Officer Mr. Sudhir Prasad Singh, along with other staff members of the District Welfare Department, were present in the meeting.

# Godda Sub-Division Level Training-cum-Workshop on Safe and Empowered Women – Empowered Jharkhand, Child Marriage-Free Jharkhand was organized

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**Godda:** A Godda Sub-Division Level Training-cum-Workshop was organized at the local Nagar Bhawan, Godda, to effectively implement the state government’s ambitious resolutions of “Safe and Empowered Women – Empowered Jharkhand” and “Child Marriage-Free Jharkhand.” The program began with the lighting of a lamp by the District Magistrate cum Deputy Commissioner, Godda, Miss Anjali Yadav, IAS Sub-Divisional Officer, Godda, Mr. Baidyanath Oraon, District Transport

Officer, Miss Kanchan Kumari Bhudolia, District Social Welfare Officer, Miss Purnima Kumari, and other dignitaries. Addressing the program, the Deputy Commissioner stated that social evils are the biggest obstacle to society’s progress and that collective efforts against them are essential. Describing child marriage as a serious social crime, he stressed the need for coordinated cooperation between the administration, relevant departments, public representatives, and all sections of society to eradicate it. He urged concerned officials and staff to regularly organize

awareness programs in their respective areas, establish communication at the school, panchayat, and community levels, and ensure timely delivery of benefits to those truly in need. He stated that negligence at any level will not be tolerated in these matters. During the program, detailed information was provided on the provisions, eligibility, benefits, grievance redressal process, and various state government schemes under the Social Evils Prevention Scheme. The awareness, monitoring, reporting mechanisms, and prompt action processes under the “Child Marriage Free Jharkhand” campaign



were also highlighted. The program also explained how to ensure legal action by promptly intervening through the relevant departments upon receiving information about child marriage. Nasreen provided detailed information on women empowerment, child protection, and the

eradication of social evils. Speakers at the program emphasized that child marriage is not only a crime, but also poses a serious obstacle to the physical, mental, and educational development of girls. Active participation from every section of society

is essential to prevent it. During the training session, detailed information was provided on various state and central government schemes, including the Child Marriage Prohibition Act, legal provisions related to women’s safety, the Chief Minister’s Kanyadaan Scheme, the Savitribai Phule Kishori Samridhhi Yojana, sponsorship schemes, the Women’s Helpline (181) and the Child Helpline (1098). Special emphasis was placed on prompt action in case of suspected child marriage, strengthening the information system, and interdepartmental coordination. During the

workshop, instructions were given to conduct awareness campaigns in schools, Anganwadi centers, Panchayat representatives, and the community to educate people about the ill effects and legal consequences of child marriage. The need to prioritize education, health, and skill development to empower women and girls was emphasized. During the program, people were made aware of road safety through street plays. Also, everyone collectively resolved that they would play an active role in their respective fields and continuously strive for the creation of a child marriage-free, safe and

strong Jharkhand. During the program, the peer leader of the adolescent group operating under the Child Marriage Free Jharkhand Abhiyan program enthralled the officials and the audience by staging a street play to prevent child marriage. The play showed how child marriage causes adolescent girls to miss their studies and their dreams remain unfulfilled. Officials from various departments, supervisors, Anganwadi workers/ assistants, representatives of voluntary organizations and employees from other related departments were present in the program.



Brief News

Martyrs' Day to be celebrated on February 2nd in Tapkara, preparations reviewed

**Khunti:** A review meeting of the top committee of the Koel Karo Jan Sangathan was held on Tuesday at Japud Baghicha in Rania block to discuss the preparations for Martyrs' Day, which is celebrated every year on February 2nd. The meeting was presided over by the organization's vice-president, John Jursen Gudiya. Reviewing the decisions taken in the previous meeting, the committees responsible for the upkeep of all tourist and picnic spots in the submerged area were requested to cooperate in making the Martyrs' Day program a success. The organization clarified that there will be a complete ban on the sale of alcohol and other intoxicating substances in the Tapkara area on Martyrs' Day. It was announced that all tourist spots in the submerged area, including Perwaghagh, Pandupuding, and Chanchala Ghagh, will remain closed on February 2nd. Traditional leaders from the submerged area and surrounding villages were appealed to ensure maximum participation of villagers in the Martyrs' Day program so that the martyrs can be respectfully paid tribute. Special emphasis was placed on program preparation, discipline, and social participation in the meeting.

Minister Shilpi meets Alka Lamba, discusses women's issues

**Ranchi:** Jharkhand Agriculture Minister Shilpi Neha Tirkey met with All India Mahila Congress National President Alka Lamba during her visit to Delhi on Tuesday. They held detailed discussions on pressing issues related to women and MNREGA in the state. In a press release, the minister described the meeting as a significant step towards strengthening the fight for women's rights, dignity, and security. She said that during the conversation with Lamba, an agreement was reached to intensify the struggle against the exploitation of women, which will infuse new energy among women activists. Besides this, discussions were also held regarding organizing a national-level program in Jharkhand on the occasion of the upcoming Women's Day. Emphasis was placed on the need for a comprehensive campaign to connect the struggles of women in the rural areas of Jharkhand, their daily struggles, and socio-economic challenges with the mainstream of a changing India. During the discussion, the crucial role of women in the MNREGA struggle being waged by the Congress at the national level was highlighted. The minister said that the number of women workers among those receiving employment under MNREGA is significant, but the central government is conspiring to deprive women of the employment they receive in their villages and homes by making changes to MNREGA. An agreement was reached to launch an organized movement against such efforts.

Congress demands action over alleged insult to Shankaracharya on Mauni Amavasya



**Ranchi:** The alleged incident of insult to Shankaracharya Maharaj on Mauni Amavasya has sparked outrage among Sanatanis across the country. Condemning the incident, former president of the East Singhbhum District Congress Committee, Anand Bihari Dubey, termed it a well-planned conspiracy against Sanatan culture and the Hindu saint tradition. He said that this incident is not only an insult to a saint but also an act that hurts the sentiments of the entire Hindu society. Anand Bihari Dubey said that the festival of Mauni Amavasya symbolizes restraint, silence, penance, and spiritual peace. The kind of misbehavior meted out to a Jagadguru like Shankaracharya, who had come for a dip in the Triveni on such a sacred occasion, reflects the height of anti-social and irreligious mentality. Calling it completely unacceptable, he said that such incidents are part of a conspiracy to spread anarchy in society and break religious harmony. He stated unequivocally that the Indian National Congress would not ignore this incident at any cost. If the administration fails to take swift and stringent action against the culprits, Congress workers will be forced to take to the streets and protest democratically. Those who are protecting the culprits should also not be spared. On Tuesday, Anand Bihari Dubey sent a memorandum to the President and the Union Home Minister through the Deputy Commissioner. The memorandum demands the formation of a high-level inquiry committee for an impartial investigation into the incident, an inquiry into the alleged indecent and insensitive behavior of some police officials, the strictest possible legal action against the guilty individuals, and ensuring complete security for Shankaracharya.

District-Level One-Day Training-cum-Workshop on Civil Registration System (CRS) for Births and Deaths Organized

**Khunti:** As per the instructions of the Deputy Commissioner-cum-District Registrar (Births and Deaths), Khunti, Mrs. R. Ronita, a district-level one-day training-cum-workshop on the Civil Registration System (CRS) for births and deaths was organized today at the DRDA auditorium. This training-cum-workshop was organized with the objective of making the civil registration process in Khunti district more robust, transparent, and time-bound. The program was inaugurated jointly by the Additional Collector, Khunti, Mr. Parmeshwar Munda, by lighting the ceremonial lamp. On this



occasion, the Additional Collector, Khunti, in his address, said that timely and accurate registration of births and deaths is extremely important. It not only protects the fundamental rights of citizens but also helps in obtaining Aadhaar cards, educational certificates, enrollment in the voter list, property transfer, and availing benefits of various government schemes. He clarified that any kind of negligence or delay in the registration process will not be tolerated, and all concerned officers must ensure that the registration is completed within the stipulated time frame (within 21 days of the

event). Highlighting the objectives of the training, it was stated that this program was organized to enhance the capacity of registrars working in all blocks and Nagar Panchayat areas of the district. During the training, detailed discussions were held on the use of the online portal (dc.crsorgi.gov.in), document verification, error correction, and the latest guidelines related to providing better services to the general public. The officers were urged to effectively utilize the knowledge gained from the training to improve their efficiency and provide prompt and transparent services to the citizens, freeing them from the clutches of middlemen. The training program was attended by the Additional Collector, Khunti; District Statistical Officer-cum-Additional District Registrar (Births and Deaths), Khunti; Executive Magistrate, Khunti; Deputy Superintendent, Sadar Hospital, Khunti; all Medical Officers In-Charge; All Block Statistical Supervisors; all Panchayat Secretaries, Computer Operators, and other concerned officials were present in large numbers. All Registrars (Birth and Death) were instructed to direct the Panchayat Secretaries-cum-Registrars

working in their respective areas to be regularly present at the Panchayat Secretariat and carry out birth and death registration work. Furthermore, the Block Statistical Supervisors and Block Panchayat Raj Officers were asked to ensure that the registration units of at least two Panchayats are inspected every month and the report is submitted to the District Statistical Office, Khunti. The District Statistical Officer, Khunti, extended his best wishes to all the participants and stated that Khunti district will set an example of excellence in citizen services and achieve 100% target in birth and death registration.

Awareness Program on Girls' Health Held in Ranchi on National Girl Child Day

**Agency. Ranchi**

On the occasion of National Girl Child Day, a special program was organized by the Marwari Yuva Manch, Ranchi Samarpana branch, at R.B. Springdale School, Kishorganj, on Tuesday. During this program, organized with the support of Asha Sarraf, sanitary pads were distributed among the girl students. This information was given by the organization's media in-charge, Sarita Bathwal. She said that this event was organized as part of the service fortnight (January 12 to January 26) held to commemorate the founding day of the organization, under which various programs related to social welfare are

being organized. The main objective of the program was to promote the health, hygiene, and empowerment of girls. Sarita Bathwal said that the Manch aims to continuously work on issues related to health, education, and women's empowerment in society. In this context, the girl students in the school premises were made aware of the importance of menstrual hygiene, necessary precautions, and correct information. The girls were given the message to adopt hygiene, become self-reliant, and be conscious of their health. The organizers said that various programs related to public welfare will be organized in the future as well.

Violence erupts during private coal company's public hearing; mob storms venue, causing extensive damage worth lakhs

Former Chief Minister Babulal Marandi questions law and order situation

**Barkagaon (Jharkhand):** A group of villagers attacked another group during a public hearing organized by the Jharkhand State Pollution Control Board for a private coal company at the local football ground on Tuesday. The attack triggered chaos and violence. The atmosphere turned violent due to the presence of people protesting against the public hearing. According to eyewitnesses, a large number of rioters, armed with traditional and sharp weapons like spears, arrows, and sickles, arrived at the public hearing venue in tractors and stormed directly into the tent. Most of them were wearing masks, mufflers, and helmets to conceal their identities.



In a pre-planned manner, they brutally attacked the farmers and villagers present there. Even women were not spared and were also beaten, leading to screams and panic at the scene. Their clear objective was to disrupt the public hearing process. During the violence, the tent was extensively vandalized, hundreds of

chairs were damaged, and the arrangements for the event were completely destroyed. Meanwhile, Leader of the Opposition Babulal Marandi condemned the incident on the X platform and questioned the government's functioning. Local former MLA Amba Prasad also reached the spot and spoke to the villagers.

National Seminar on Teacher Education under NEP-2020 to be held at CUJ on January 21-22

**Agency. Ranchi**

A two-day national seminar will be organized by the Central University of Jharkhand (CUJ) in Ranchi on January 21 and 22. The theme of the seminar is "Reimagining Teachers and Teacher Education from the Perspective of the National Education Policy-2020: From Indian Knowledge Traditions to Global Educational Discourse." This information was given by the university through a press release issued on Tuesday. According to the release, the seminar will be formally inaugurated on January 21 under the leadership of the Vice-Chancellor of Central University of Jharkhand, Prof. Kshitibhushan Das. This national seminar is being supported by the Indian Council of



Social Science Research (ICSSR), Ministry of Education, Government of India, the Indian Council of World Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, and the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Ministry of Culture, Government of India. Prof. S.C. Panda, former Principal, Regional Institute of Education, Bhubaneswar (NCERT) and former Consultant, National Council for Teacher

Education (NCTE), New Delhi, will be the chief guest at the inaugural session. The organizers said that the seminar has received a widespread and encouraging response from across the country. More than 150 research papers have been received so far, while the participation of more than 200 delegates is expected. The main objective of the seminar is to provide a common platform to academicians, teacher educators, researchers,

policymakers, and educational activists from across the country to have a serious and meaningful discussion on the proposed reforms, innovations, and practical challenges in teacher education under the National Education Policy-2020.

Secretary Ajay Singh holds meeting to ensure success of MDA campaign, issues instructions

Agency. Ranchi

The Jharkhand government has started preparations for the MDA-2026 campaign in mission mode to eradicate filariasis. In this regard, a crucial meeting of the State Task Force was held on Tuesday at Nepal House, chaired by Additional Chief Secretary of the Health Department, Ajay Singh. In the meeting, Additional Chief Secretary Ajay Kumar Singh gave important instructions regarding the successful implementation of the Mass Drug Administration (MDA) program, which is scheduled to begin on February 10. He also discussed in detail the campaign strategy, potential



challenges, and the roles of various departments. In addition, he discussed the prevention of vector-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue, chikungunya, kala-azar, and Japanese encephalitis. The meeting was informed that filariasis is a serious parasitic disease spread by mosquitoes. Ajay Singh said that so far, 57,436

lymphedema patients have been registered in Jharkhand. The state government has given top priority to the eradication of filariasis and has decided to implement it in mission mode. He informed that under MDA-2026, the target is to administer anti-filarial drugs to approximately 1.75 crore people in 14,496 villages across 87 blocks

of 14 districts of the state, starting from February 10. For this, a system of real-time monitoring has been established through mission squads, volunteers, and control rooms at the panchayat level. The Additional Chief Secretary instructed that along with drug distribution, drug consumption must be ensured. It should be transformed into a mass movement. The meeting was attended by Campaign Director Shashi Prakash Jha, Deputy Director Dr. Lal Majhi, representatives from various departments, and representatives from the World Health Organization (WHO) and Piramal Swasthya.

Tribal Students' Union delegation meets Governor, apprises him of students' problems

Agency. Ranchi

A delegation of the Tribal Students' Union, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee University (DSPMU), Ranchi, led by its president Vivek Tirkey, paid a courtesy call on Governor Santosh Gangwar on Tuesday and apprised him of various problems faced by students in the state, including those at the university. Vivek Tirkey stated that tribal, Scheduled Caste, and Backward Class students in Jharkhand are facing serious financial, administrative, and academic problems during their higher education. He raised the issue of delays in the e-Kalyan scholarship scheme, saying that many students are being forced to drop out of their studies due to the non-payment of scholarships on time. The delegation demanded the immediate appointment of



permanent Vice-Chancellors in the state universities, stating that the functioning of universities under acting Vice-Chancellors for years is affecting academic quality and administrative efficiency. They also demanded the speedy completion of the process of renaming DSPMU as Veer Shaheed Budhu Bhagat University. The delegation also emphasized the need for conducting student union elections soon and making the higher education system transparent, accountable, and time-bound. Governor Santosh Gangwar listened attentively to all the demands

of the delegation and assured them of necessary action. Other student representatives, including Vice-President Deepa Kachhap, Prakash Bhagat, and Sulekha Kumari, were present in the delegation.

Affidavit

I, AN Shubhra Shukla, aged approximately 43 years, wife of Shri Nirantan Shukla, resident of Village and Post-Singra Khurd, Police Station Sadar Medininagar, District-Palamu, State-Jharkhand, Pin Code 822102, do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare on oath as follows:  
1. That my true name is AN Shubhra Shukla.  
2. That in my Aadhaar card number 2053 1223 1674, my name has been mistakenly recorded as AN Shubhra, whereas my correct name, AN Shubhra Shukla, has not been recorded.  
3. That in my PAN card number JRCPS3833R, my name is correctly recorded as AN Shubhra Shukla, which is true and correct.  
4. That I am executing this affidavit for the purpose of correcting my name in my Aadhaar card number 2053 1223 1674, from the mistakenly recorded name AN Shubhra to my correct name AN Shubhra Shukla.  
R.N.831/94 Date:30/10/2025

Public Notice

I, Ramesh Kumar Agrawal Son of Late Purnamal Agrawal Resident of Patel Nagar, Bhurkunda, P.S. Bhurkunda Bazar, District Ramgarh, Presently Residing at Flat No. 203, Panchwati Apartment, Basant Vihar, Kanke Road, Ranchi went to Market along with Original Copy of Sale Deed No. 1477/1255 dated 17.03.2017 & 2293/2138 Dated 27.05.1999 on 10.02.2024 There my file containg above some pages of deeds lost somewhere in the market. If any body fin, please contact me .  
My phone No. is 9431394203 (Ramesh Kumar Agrawal)



# Alcohol, sugary drinks stay cheap in India as WHO flags weak taxes in South-East Asia

**New Delhi,Agency:** Despite strong evidence linking alcohol and sugar-sweetened beverages to cancers, liver disease, obesity, diabetes, heart disease and road injuries, both products are becoming more affordable in India, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has warned, calling weak tax design across South-East Asia a major public-health failure. Across two recent global reports, the WHO ranks South-East Asia — including India — among the weakest regions on health-oriented taxation. While taxes exist, they have failed to curb consumption because they are not linked to alcohol strength or sugar content, nor adjusted for inflation or rising incomes. As a result, prices fall in real terms even as health harms rise.

On alcohol, the Global Report on Alcohol and Health and Treatment of Substance Use Disorders notes that only about one-quarter of countries worldwide automatically adjust excise taxes for inflation. South-East Asia performs especially poorly on alcohol-content-based taxation, which WHO considers the most effective deterrent. Instead, flat or category-based taxes allow high-strength alcohol and binge drinking to remain affordable. Doctors say the consequences are already visible. Dr Sharad Malhotra, Senior



Consultant & Director, Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Aakash Healthcare, said hospitals are seeing younger patients with advanced liver disease, alcohol-related cancers, heart problems and mental health disorders linked to heavy drinking. Rising incomes, celebrity promotion and peer pressure, he warned, are fuelling binge drinking among youth. “When alcohol keeps getting cheaper, we are effectively subsidising future disease and premature deaths,” he said.

WHO identifies alcohol as a leading risk factor for premature death and disability, contributing to liver cirrhosis, cancers, cardiovascular disease, injuries and violence. The burden is shifting rapidly to low- and middle-income countries like India, where consumption is rising faster than policy responses. A similar pattern is seen with sugary

drinks. The WHO Global Report on the Use of Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Taxes 2025 found that the median total tax on a 330-ml sugary carbonated drink in South-East Asia is about 22.7%, but most of this comes from GST or VAT — broad consumption taxes that do little to reduce intake. The excise component remains weak.

Excise taxes on sugary drinks exist in six of eight South-East Asia countries, including India, but levels are too low to significantly reduce consumption. Rising incomes have again outpaced price increases, making sugary drinks progressively cheaper.

Dr Anoop Misra of Fortis C-DOC said sugary drinks are driving obesity, type-2 diabetes and heart disease, increasingly in adolescents and young adults, warning that many packaged fruit juices contain as much sugar as soft drinks. WHO says weak tax design blunts impact, as fruit juices, sweetened milk drinks and ready-to-drink teas and coffees are often lightly taxed, allowing consumers to switch products rather than cut intake. Only 25% of countries tax sugary drinks based on sugar content. Consumer policy expert Prof Bejon Kumar Misra of Healthy You Foundation said India’s GST-heavy approach weakens the health signal. “

**As Poland courts Pakistan, India advises zero tolerance for terror**

**New Delhi,Agency:** Amid Poland's efforts to step up ties with Pakistan, external affairs minister S Jaishankar told his visiting Polish counterpart Radoslaw Sikorski that Poland should display zero-tolerance for terrorism instead of fuelling the terrorist infrastructure in India's neighbourhood. Warsaw has been looking to expand its trade, defence and energy ties with Pakistan and Sikorski visited Islamabad in Oct last year to further scale up bilateral cooperation. Jaishankar told him he was no stranger to this part of the world and was also familiar with the longstanding challenge of cross-border terrorism. "Poland should display zero-tolerance for terrorism and not help fuel the terrorist infrastructure in our neighbourhood," he said. The meeting also saw India's discord with Europe on the Russia-Ukraine war spill out in the open as Jaishankar stressed that selective targeting of India on the Ukraine issue is unfair and unjustified.

# 'Contempt of court': SC irked by Maneka Gandhi's criticism of its order in stray dog case

**New Delhi, Agency:** The Supreme Court on Tuesday expressed displeasure over former Union minister Maneka Gandhi's remarks criticising apex court orders in the stray dog issue, stating that she has committed contempt of court.

A Bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and N V Anjaria said the former minister has made "all kinds of comments" against everyone without even thinking.

Questioning senior advocate Raju Ramachandran who appeared for Gandhi, the bench said, "You said the

court should be circum-spect in its remark but have you asked your client what kind of remarks she has made? Have you heard her podcast? She has made all kinds of remarks against everybody without even thinking. Have you seen her body language?"

The Bench said it was not initiating contempt proceedings against the former Union minister because of the court's magnanimity.

Justice Mehta asked Ramachandran what budgetary allocation has Maneka Gandhi, as a former Union minister, helped in getting to eradi-



cate the stray dog problem. Ramachandran replied that he has appeared even on behalf of terrorist Ajmal Kasab and budgetary allocation is a policy matter.

"Ajmal Kasab did not commit contempt of court but your client has," Justice Nath remarked.

The Bench said its remark on making dog feeders accountable was not made sarcastically but on a serious note, although during a dialogue while hearing the matter.

The hearing in the case is still underway.

On January 13, the top court had said it will ask states to pay a "heavy compensation" for dog bite incidents and hold dog feeders accountable for such cases.

The court also flagged concerns over the non-implementation of norms on stray animals for the last five years.

# Boost for defence exports as Rajnath flags off 1st batch of Pinaka guided rockets for Armenia

**New Delhi,Agency:** In a big boost for India's arms exports, defence minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday flagged off from a facility in Nagpur the first batch of guided Pinaka rocket system bound for Armenia.

The export of the multi-barrel rocket launcher, renowned for its accuracy and extended range, signalled India's emergence as a reliable supplier of cutting-edge defence technology. The Pinaka launchers, which are highly capable weapon systems with variants that can strike targets at up to 75 km -- the latest trial version can even touch a range of 120km -- have been increasingly promoted by India as part of its growing arms exports. Rajnath said the export of Pinaka missiles developed at Solar Defence & Aerospace facility have begun, demonstrating the capabilities of the defence industry. "India is no longer just an importer but is rapidly moving towards becoming an



exporter," he said. The minister said that due to increasing participation of the private sector, India's defence exports, which were at less than Rs 1,000 crore 10 years ago, have now reached a record Rs 24,000 crore. Domestic defence production, which stood at just Rs 46,425 crore in 2014, has grown to a record Rs 1.51 lakh crore now, he added.

The Indian Army has already inducted Pinaka Mk-I Enhanced variant (EPRS) after successfully completing trials in April 2022.

# Hope against Chikungunya: ICMR steps in as cases rise across India

**New Delhi,Agency:** With Chikungunya continuing to leave thousands of Indians with prolonged and debilitating joint pain, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has moved to fast-track a potential antiviral treatment, inviting Indian companies to help develop and manufacture an experimental RNA-based therapy.

The initiative comes amid a sustained disease burden. World Health Organisation surveillance data show India recorded over 30,000 suspected Chikungunya cases and nearly 1,800 laboratory-confirmed cases between January and March 2025, with Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu among the worst-affected states.

Against this backdrop, scientists at ICMR's National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, have developed an experimental RNA-interference-based therapy that

directly targets the Chikungunya virus. In pre-clinical studies, the treatment completely suppressed viral replication in laboratory cell lines and mouse models by silencing two essential viral genes — E2 and nsP1.

The findings have prompted ICMR to offer the technology for transfer to industry.

Explaining its significance, Dr Ekta Gupta, Professor of Clinical Virology at ILBS, New Delhi, said, “RNA interference blocks viral protein formation by targeting messenger RNA. In Chikungunya, NIV’s RNAi approach targeting E2 and nsP1 has shown complete viral suppression in vivo with a single dose.

While laboratory results are encouraging, clinical trials are needed. This is important because there is currently no vaccine or antiviral for a disease that causes significant morbidity in parts of the country.”

# High drama in Tamil Nadu assembly: Governor R N Ravi walks out; alleges 'national anthem insulted'

**New Delhi,Agency:** Tamil Nadu governor RN Ravi walked out of the state assembly on Tuesday before delivering his inaugural address, expressing disappointment over what he said was a lack of respect for the national anthem.

He also claimed that his microphone was switched off during the proceedings. “I am disappointed. National Anthem was not given due respect,” the governor said. He added that “it is unfortunate that his speech was interrupted.”

Inside the House, the situation led to a sharp exchange, with assembly Speaker M Appavu urging the governor to follow established rules and customs of the assembly.

Later, Raj Bhavan issued a press release explaining the reasons behind the governor’s walkout. “The governor’s mic was repeatedly switched off, and he was not allowed to speak,” the



statement said. It also claimed that issues such as “atrocities against Dalits and sexual violence against Dalit women are sharply increasing,” but were “totally bypassed in the speech.”

The release further alleged that the “National Anthem is yet again insulted, and the Fundamental Constitutional Duty is disregarded.”

Meanwhile, AIADMK general secretary and leader of opposition in

assembly Edappadi Palaniswamy raised slogans with party leaders at the entrance of assembly after they walked out from the House over law and order issues in Tamil Nadu.

This was not the first such incident. A similar episode took place last year when governor Ravi walked out of the Assembly in what he described as “deep anguish,” alleging that the “constitution of Bharat” and the National Anthem were insulted.

With Assembly elections drawing closer, the session is being viewed as politically crucial. Opposition parties, including the AIADMK and the BJP, are expected to level several allegations against the ruling party and the state government.

Chief minister M K Stalin and his Cabinet colleagues are preparing to counter the attacks, setting the stage for a tense and politically charged assembly session.

# Punjab government approves modernisation of bus terminals in five districts

**Chandigarh,Agency:** The Punjab government has approved the modernisation of bus terminals in Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Sangrur, Patiala and Bathinda through a structured Public Private Partnership (PPP) model to strengthen public transport infrastructure.

Transport Minister Laljit Singh Bhullar said on Saturday the decision was taken under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann with the objective of improving passenger facilities, safety, accessibility and overall efficiency at major transport hubs.

He said the bus terminals serve as key connectivity points for both rural and urban populations and play an important role in inter-state



travel to neighbouring states of Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana, Delhi and Rajasthan.

According to the minister, Ludhiana and Jalandhar bus termi-

nals handle between 75,000 and one lakh passengers daily, while Patiala and Bathinda witness footfall of around 50,000 passengers every day. Bhullar said the projects will be implemented under Design-Build-

Finance-Operate-Transfer or Build-Operate-Transfer models to ensure quality services while maintaining fiscal prudence.

The modernisation will focus on improving waiting areas, sanitation facilities, lighting, signage, organised boarding systems and parking arrangements, along with better crowd management during peak hours. He said provisions for barrier-free access will be included to ensure ease of movement for senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

**List WB voters with 'logical discrepancy': SC to poll panel**

**New Delhi,Agency:** As almost 1.4 crore West Bengal voters face “logical discrepancy” notices requiring submission of documentary proof for the special intensive revision (SIR), Supreme Court ordered the Election Commission on Monday to display the list of such people in panchayat and block offices and gave them 10 more days to furnish documents to establish their credentials for inclusion in the state electoral rolls. Given the size of work and incidence of violence against EC officials conducting the drive in West Bengal, a bench of CJI Surya Kant and Justices Dipankar Datta and Joymalya Bagchi asked the state to provide manpower as required by EC and directed the DGP to ensure maintenance of law and order for smooth conduct of the exercise.



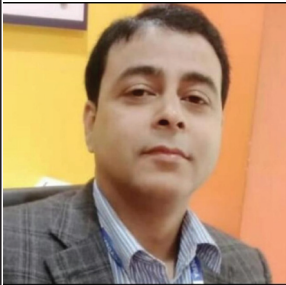
EDITORIAL

Address structural flaws  
in higher education

Despite having one of the world's largest higher education networks, including over 1,300 universities, the academic and research standards in India are woefully short of international standards. They fare poorly in the global rankings, puncturing the oft-repeated narrative of being a 'Vishwaguru'. A recent nationwide survey has revealed several structural flaws in the higher education sector, particularly concerning the faculty. Nearly one in three faculty members reported receiving no formal training on how to teach before entering the classroom, and among those who did, almost 70% found that training ineffective, the Jetri Faculty Worklife Report 2025 has pointed out. There are over 1.6 million faculty members teaching over 40 million students spread across higher education institutions in the country. One of the key findings of the study, based on responses from 547 faculty members across public and private institutions, was that nearly a quarter of faculty end up spending most of their time on administrative tasks that are primarily critical to institutions rather than students. This imbalance suggests that institutional priorities may crowd out time for student-focused interactions. In contrast, globally ranked institutions prioritise faculty-student interactions and project-based learning more than anything else. Faculty members who spend more time on student-centred work tend to remain longer at their institutions, suggesting that meaningful teaching may help retain the faculty. When faculty feel unable to do the work they value most, disengagement follows. Similarly, lecture-based teaching remains the dominant mode in India, even as nearly two-thirds of faculty report persistent struggles with student engagement.

Many faculty members juggle teaching, research and administrative duties without enough support to manage competing demands, leaving them overwhelmed, feeling caught between priorities and struggling to maintain balance. As they are increasingly pulled away from student-focused tasks, the critical bonds that drive both student and faculty engagement risk fraying — affecting the heart of the academic experience. The surveyed faculty members admitted to feeling ill-equipped to address students' mental-health issues, diverse learning needs, and the responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools. Another big challenge pertains to student motivation. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents cited lack of student engagement as a huge challenge. It was observed that student commitments did not come from a place of genuine passion, as they seemed to care more about collecting activities they could put on their resume or on social media. Teaching methods also play a major role in driving student engagement. The survey has shown that lecture-based abstract teaching remains the overwhelming default for faculty.

JEE Main January 2026: The First Big Test  
of the Year for Engineering Aspirants



Prashant Jha

As the calendar turns to January 2026, lakhs of young aspirants across the country will step into examination centres with a single dream — a strong start in the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Main. Conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA), the January session of JEE Main is not just an entrance test; it is the opening chapter of a long academic journey towards the IITs, NITs, IIITs and other centrally funded technical institutions. For many students, this session is an opportunity to assess their preparation under real examination conditions, while for others it is the decisive attempt to secure a high percentile early in the year.

**Exam Schedule:**  
**January 2026 Session :** The JEE Main January 2026 session is scheduled to be held in the second half of January, spread over multiple

days to accommodate the large number of candidates. As in previous years, the examination will be conducted in two shifts each day — a morning shift and an afternoon shift — in Computer Based Test (CBT) mode. Paper 1 (for B.E./B.Tech) will be held on most days, while Paper 2A (B.Arch) and Paper 2B (B.Planning) will be conducted on selected dates. Each candidate will be allotted a specific date, shift and centre, details of which will be mentioned on the admit card issued by NTA a few days before the examination. The multi-day format ensures smooth conduct, but it also means that candidates should not compare difficulty levels across shifts. Normalisation of scores, a well-established process, takes care of any variation. What matters most is individual performance on the allotted day.

**What to Carry on the Exam Day :** One of the most common causes of anxiety on exam day is confusion about permitted and prohibited items. Clarity on this front helps candidates stay composed. First and foremost, the JEE Main Admit Card is mandatory. Candidates must carry a printed copy, preferably

in colour, as it contains essential details such as roll number, exam centre address, reporting time and important instructions. Along with the admit card, a valid photo identity proof is required. Acceptable IDs include Aadhaar card, school ID, passport, PAN card or voter ID. Candidates must also carry a passport-size photograph, preferably the same as uploaded in the application form. Some centres may require it for attendance verification. In terms of stationery, a transparent ballpoint pen is usually allowed. Rough work sheets will be provided at the examination centre and must be returned after the exam. Equally important is knowing what not to carry. Mobile phones, smart watches, calculators, digital watches, earphones, wallets, bags and any kind of electronic gadget are strictly prohibited. Even metallic accessories and jewellery are discouraged. Candidates are advised to wear simple clothing without large buttons or metallic elements to avoid delays during security checks.

**Reporting Time and Centre Discipline :** Reaching the examination centre well before the reporting time mentioned on the admit

card is crucial. Entry gates typically close 30 minutes before the exam begins, and latecomers are not allowed under any circumstances. Once inside, candidates must follow instructions given by invigilators and security staff. Biometric verification and frisking are standard procedures. Though time-consuming, these are essential for maintaining the integrity of the examination. Silence, discipline and patience are the unwritten rules inside the centre. Any form of unfair means or misconduct can lead to immediate disqualification, and in serious cases, debarment from future examinations.

**Exam Day Preparation: The Mental Game :** By January, preparation is largely complete. The exam day is not about learning new concepts, but about managing the mind. The night before the exam should be reserved for light revision and adequate rest. Revising short notes, formulas and key concepts is more effective than attempting full-length mock papers at the last moment. A good night's sleep does more for performance than any extra hour of study. On the morning of the exam, candidates should

have a light, familiar meal. Experimenting with food is best avoided. Hydration is important, but excess intake should be avoided to prevent discomfort during the test.

**Strategy Inside the Examination Hall :** Once the exam begins, the first few minutes should be spent calmly reading instructions on the screen. Rushing into questions without understanding the paper structure often leads to avoidable mistakes. Experts consistently advise starting with the subject one feels most confident about. This builds momentum and reduces anxiety. The JEE Main paper is designed to test not just knowledge, but also time management and decision-making. Candidates should be mindful of negative marking. Attempting every question is neither necessary nor wise. Intelligent selection — answering questions that are clearly understood and leaving ambiguous ones — often results in a better score. Time allocation across Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics should be roughly balanced, but flexibility is key. If one section proves unexpectedly difficult, it is better to move on rather than get stuck.

**After the Exam: Perspective Matters :** Once the paper is over, candidates should resist the temptation to overanalyse the exam or compare answers with peers. Each shift is different, and unofficial answer keys often create unnecessary stress. The January session is only one step. For those who perform well, it provides confidence and breathing space. For others, it offers valuable insight into areas that need improvement before the April session.

**A Calm Start to a Long Journey :** The JEE Main January 2026 session marks the first national academic milestone of the year. It is demanding, competitive and intense — but it is also fair, structured and predictable for those who approach it with clarity. In the end, success in JEE Main is not defined by panic or last-minute heroics, but by steady preparation, a calm mind and disciplined execution on the exam day. As thousands of students take their seats across centres in January, the real test will not just be on the computer screen, but in their ability to remain composed under pressure — a lesson that extends far beyond the examination hall.

Surge of returning refugees deepens  
shelter crisis in Afghanistan



With a rising number of Afghan refugees returning home, access to shelter has emerged as a major challenge, as many returnees struggle to secure housing and basic necessities, Tolo News reported. Officials of the Islamic Emirate said measures are being taken to address the issue, with land distribution continuing in several provinces. Hamdullah Fitrat, deputy spokesperson of the Islamic Emirate, said more than 3,000 plots of land have been provided so far to forcibly repatriated returnees. "So far, 3,046 plots of land have been distributed in various provinces among returnees who were forcibly expelled. The distribution process is ongoing. Also, under the directive of the esteemed

Amir al-Mu'minin, emergency aid for returnees has accelerated, including food, non-food items, and cash assistance," Fitrat said. In a related development, the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing said the Joint Permanent Committee for the Resettlement of Migrants has distributed land to over 2,800 families in Kunar, Laghman, Maidan Wardak, Kandahar, Kunduz, Paktia, and Bamyan, Tolo News reported. The ministry also said that land distribution for another 5,000 families has begun in Nangarhar, according to Tolo News. Kamal Afghan, the ministry's spokesperson, said the land distribution programme is being expanded province by province. "The Ministry of Urban Development and

Housing has launched land distribution step-by-step in all provinces, and the program will, God willing, expand to ensure the fair distribution of plots to all returnees," Afghan said. Meanwhile, returnees arriving from Pakistan said they continue to face serious difficulties due to a lack of shelter and essential facilities, and urged faster allotment of land and the provision of basic services, Tolo News reported. "Now I'm going to Baghlan, but I have nothing there. We sold everything we had just to pay rent. We ask the Islamic Emirate to help us with land and food distribution," said Yar Mohammad, a returnee. Another returnee, Sher Mohammad, called for urgent support amid harsh weather conditions. "Our request to the government is to give us blankets and cash aid because it's cold here and we're struggling," he said. According to statistics cited in the report, nearly seven million Afghans have returned from various countries since the return of the Islamic Emirate to power, underlining the need for sustained planning to resettle and support returnees.

Taxes won't push Delhi towards  
green transport

Delhi's latest electric vehicle proposal makes one thing clear: when policymakers run out of ideas to make cleaner technology attractive, they reach for taxes. The Delhi government is considering extending its green cess to petrol and CNG vehicles, on top of higher diesel levies, explicitly to make conventional cars more expensive and electric vehicles seem relatively cheaper. That is not climate leadership. It is fiscal coercion dressed up as environmental policy.



The premise is simple: make conventional vehicles more expensive and consumers will switch. But that assumes EV adoption is being delayed by attitude, not access. For many buyers, petrol and CNG vehicles remain the rational choice because they are cheaper upfront, easier to refuel, and more reliable for daily use, advantages that taxes do nothing to erase.

Delhi already offers some of India's most generous EV incentives: zero road tax, waived registration fees, and purchase subsidies of Rs 5,000 per kilowatt-hour. Yet electric vehicles still account for only about 12-14 per cent of new registrations. If subsidies alone have not delivered mass adoption, a 1-2 per cent cess on conventional vehicles is unlikely to do so either. For middle-income households buying two-wheelers or small cars, this tax is not a behavioural nudge, it is a price shock. For commercial drivers, delivery fleets, and small businesses, this shift functions less as an incentive and more as a penalty. EVs remain an impractical option for many operators: charging infrastructure is limited to few urban corridors, electricity supply is unreliable in large parts of the country, and resale markets for electric vehicles are still immature. Raising the cost of petrol vehicles does nothing to address these structural gaps, it simply increases operating costs for those who have no viable alternative. Global experience points in a different direction. In countries where EV adoption has accelerated, such as Sweden, Norway, and Finland, the transition followed a sequence: build strong charging networks, ensure availability of vehicles across price segments, foster competition among manufacturers, and only then phase in penalties on high emission vehicles.

POEMS

Ballad of Birmingham

"Mother dear, may I go downtown  
Instead of out to play,  
And march the streets of Birmingham  
In a Freedom March today?"

"No, baby, no, you may not go,  
For the dogs are fierce and wild,  
And clubs and hoses, guns and jails  
Aren't good for a little child."

"But, mother, I won't be alone.  
Other children will go with me,  
And march the streets of Birmingham  
To make our country free."

"No, baby, no, you may not go,  
For I fear those guns will fire.  
But you may go to church instead  
And sing in the children's choir."

She has combed and brushed her night-dark hair,  
And bathed rose petal sweet,  
And drawn white gloves on her small brown hands,  
And white shoes on her feet.

The mother smiled to know her child  
Was in the sacred place,  
But that smile was the last smile  
To come upon her face.  
For when she heard the explosion,  
Her eyes grew wet and wild.  
She raced through the streets of Birmingham  
Calling for her child.

By Dudley Randall

Investing in women's employment key to resilient, inclusive economy: WEF's Ebru Ozdemir

Investing in women's employment is the most efficient way of achieving a resilient, inclusive and future-proof economy, according to Ebru Ozdemir, Chairperson of the Board, Limak Holding, and Chair of World Economic Forum Engineering and Construction Industry Group.

In an article ahead of the annual Davos summit, Ebru Ozdemir noted that reskilling and upskilling programmes must be gender-focused to truly keep pace with the evolving digital economy. Her article also suggested that integrating more women into STEM professions is

essential for finding the human capital needed to solve planetary-scale issues.

"We cannot achieve a sustainable economy without gender parity in STEM. Putting women at the forefront of engineering and technology is the most crucial investment for growth and resilience," she writes.

In her article titled 'From digital divide to investment dividend: Why women are the key to a future-proof workforce,' she argues that the world must reframe the investment in women and girls not as a social expense, but as the highest-return capital expenditure for the resilient, inclusive



and future-proof economy the world desperately needs. "The foundational truth remains: Investing

in women is investing in humanity's most underutilized economic engine," she writes. Investing in the

skills of female engineers is not just a matter of social justice; it is the most direct way to secure the specialized

human capital necessary to solve the trillion-dollar, planet-sized problems discussed in Davos every year, she continued. "It's how we ensure that our infrastructure investment is not just built, but built sustainably and inclusively." "Let us ensure that 50 per cent of that future workforce - the women who are ready to lead - are given the tools to shape it," she writes. "The dividend is a world that is not just sustainable, but truly equitable, resilient and ready for whatever the next revolution brings. Let's make that investment now. "The World Economic Forum (WEF)

will convene its 56th Annual Meeting in Davos from January 19 to January 23, 2026, bringing together nearly 3,000 leaders from more than 130 countries at a moment of heightened geopolitical tension, economic uncertainty and rapid technological transformation. Held under the theme "A Spirit of Dialogue," Davos 2026 seeks to provide an impartial platform for global leaders from government, business and civil society to reconnect, rebuild trust and explore collaborative solutions to challenges that increasingly transcend borders.

This year's programme is shaped by ongoing geopolitical realignments, slowing global growth, trade frictions and accelerating technological change. Across sessions on geopolitics, growth and global governance, participants will explore how cooperation can be renewed amid contested norms, strained alliances and eroding trust. The Annual Meeting is expected to see record levels of government participation, with around 400 top political leaders, including nearly 65 heads of state and government and six leaders from the G7, taking part.



# Atomesus AI Surpasses 100,000 Active Users Within a Week

## Signals New Era for Indigenous Indian Artificial Intelligence

**New Delhi,Agency:** In a major milestone for India’s fast-growing technology ecosystem, Atomesus AI has crossed 100,000 active users within just one week of its public launch, with an impressive 12,000 users already on paid plans. The rapid adoption highlights strong market confidence in the platform and positions Atomesus AI as one of the most promising artificial intelligence startups to emerge from India in recent years. Explosive Growth After Launch The first week of Atomesus AI’s availability has exceeded internal expectations, both in terms of user engagement and conversion to paid subscriptions. Industry observers note that such traction—especially paid adoption at this scale in the initial launch win-

dow—is rare in the competitive AI landscape. Users across India have been actively using Atomesus AI for productivity, analysis, content creation, and decision-support tasks, with retention rates indicating strong day-to-day engagement. The company attributes this growth to its focus on performance, simplicity, and India-centric use cases. Daily Updates and Rapid Innovation Atomesus AI has confirmed that new updates are being rolled out continuously, with improvements and new features arriving almost every day. The development team is operating on an accelerated innovation cycle, responding directly to user feedback and real-world usage patterns.



This rapid release strategy reflects the company’s broader vision: to build a world-class AI system that evolves in real time alongside its users, rather than relying on infrequent, large updates. Building a Fully Independent Indian AI Model One of the most significant announcements from Atomesus AI is its ongoing work on developing its own proprietary AI models. The company has stated that it is progressing steadily toward

becoming a 100% independent Indian AI model, designed, trained, and optimised in-house. This move aligns with India’s growing emphasis on technological self-reliance and data sovereignty. By building its own models, Atomesus AI aims to reduce external dependencies and create AI systems that better understand Indian languages, contexts, businesses, and cultural nuances. Recognition by the Government of India Adding to its credibility, Atomesus AI has been officially recognised as an AI startup by the Government of India. This recognition places the company among a select group of technology startups contributing to the nation’s innovation and digital transformation

goals. Such acknowledgement not only validates the company’s technological direction but also strengthens its position in the domestic and global AI ecosystem. Platform Availability and Upcoming iOS Launch Currently, Atomesus AI is available on web platforms and Android devices, making it accessible to a broad user base across the country. The company has also confirmed that its iOS application is in advanced stages of development and will be launched very soon, expanding its reach to Apple users worldwide. This multi-platform strategy is expected to further accelerate growth and adoption, especially among professionals, students, and enterprises seeking AI-powered tools on the go.

## DRIVE YOUR MATCH: BMW India Unveils its new Ad Campaign

**Gurugram,Agency:** BMW India announced the launch of its latest campaign, ‘DRIVE YOUR MATCH’, a strategic evolution of its communication approach that elevates the idea of choice into one of discovery, recognition, and self-expression. The new campaign focuses on how customers connect with the brand, positioning every BMW not as a mass-market option, but as a precise match to an individual’s personality, aspirations, and lifestyle.

Mr. Vitesh Barar, Director, Marketing, BMW India, said, “BMW has always stood for progressive luxury, driving pleasure and individuality. With DRIVE YOUR MATCH, we elevate the conversation from owning a car to recognising a reflection of who



you are. This campaign celebrates the deep, personal connection our customers share with the brand, while showcasing the versatility of our portfolio in a way that remains distinctly premium. In India, where aspirations are deeply personal and evolving, ‘DRIVE YOUR MATCH’ reinforces BMW as the perfect partner in every individual journey.” Building on the brand

route ‘For Every You, there’s a BMW’, the new advertisement campaign sharpens the narrative by moving from literal accessibility to meaningful alignment. DRIVE YOUR MATCH reframes versatility as premium precision, where finding the right BMW is not about selection, but recognition. At the heart of the campaign is a powerful insight: customers don’t choose a BMW, they

recognise the one that reflects who they are. Through the lens of match-making, BMW becomes a natural extension of identity, where every interaction with the brand is a joyful moment waiting to be discovered. The campaign leads with exclusivity and self-actualisation, while seamlessly showcasing the breadth of BMW’s products, services, and experiences.

The campaign serves as a unifying communication platform that brings together BMW’s complete portfolio in India, with a confident, call-to-action driven tone. It reinforces the brand’s premium aspiration while celebrating individuality, ensuring consistency across touchpoints and campaigns through mid-2026.

## Maharashtra govt signs multi-billion dollar MoUs at WEF 2026



**Davos,Agency:** Maharashtra secured investment commitments across multiple sectors, including infrastructure and steel, on the opening day of the World Economic Forum 2026 in Davos. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis presided over the exchange of several Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) between the Government of Maharashtra and various global entities to promote industrial and urban development. According to the Maharashtra Chief Minister's Office on X, the state government

signed agreements in sectors including logistics, steel, and urban infrastructure. One of the commitments came from the SBG Group, which signed an MoU with the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) for a USD 20 billion investment in the logistics sector. This project aimed to generate 4,50,000 jobs in the Mumbai and MMR region. Additionally, Alta Capital and Panchshil Realty committed 25 billion dollars, with a projected employment generation of 2,50,000.

## Samsung Gives New Direction to AI-Driven Smart Ecosystem with ‘Your Companion to AI Living’ Vision

**Ranchi:** Samsung has strengthened its AI-powered connected ecosystem under the ‘Your Companion to AI Living’ vision by bringing together smart TVs, displays, home appliances, gaming monitors, and digital care solutions. The company’s CEO and Head of the Device Experience Division, TM Roh, said that deep integration of AI across mobile, display, home appliances, and services is delivering not just technology, but more personalized and meaningful experiences in everyday life. According to SW Yong, Head of the Visual Display Business, Vision AI Companion along with advanced displays such as Micro RGB, OLED, and Neo QLED is making the TV viewing experience more immersive and user-centric. Cheolgi Kim, Head of the Digital Appliances Division, said that AI-enabled



refrigerators, laundry, and cleaning solutions are reducing the burden of daily household tasks while connecting millions of users through Smart Things. In the digital health space, Praveen Raja said that connected devices and wearables are shifting care from reactive to proactive, while security platforms such as Knox and Knox Matrix ensure robust protection of user data across the entire AI ecosystem.

## Randeep Hooda Begins His Entrepreneurial Journey as an Investor in TeinPro

**New Delhi ,Agency:** Everyday nutrition is evolving rapidly in India. As people are becoming more & more conscious of what they eat, there is a growing demand for food that supports health goals without giving up taste, tradition, and enjoyment. Responding to this shift, TeinPro has entered the health food market with the launch of its first protein bar. Conceptualised by Chinmay Barik, Raghav Gupta, Kshitij Shokeen, and created with acclaimed Bollywood actor Randeep Hooda as one of its core investors, TeinPro is redefining the meaning of protein supplements in India. It's not just about lifting heavier or running longer anymore. It's about supporting the full spectrum of Indian modern lives with everyday wellness in mind. Protein's role in muscle repair and growth is well established, but its relevance extends far beyond the gym floor. Adequate high-quality protein intake ensures sustained energy, high metabolism, and better immunity,



making it the foundation of both performance and everyday wellbeing. Yet, most of the Indian diets are traditionally rich in carbohydrates and full of flavour. They often fall short on the daily protein intake quotient, especially for vegetarians. TeinPro's protein bar has been developed to complement this reality. It adds quality protein into the diet, without disrupting food choices or taste preferences for everyone, be it people who train, people who move, or people who simply want to feel more resilient in their routine. TeinPro's protein bar has been developed with a deep understanding of the human anatomy and its function to support the body's already ongoing work flawlessly. Its

no-added-sugar, no-preservatives formula is rich in magnesium, zinc, and anti-oxidants, with ashwagandha extracts that ensure calm focus along with sustained energy. Unlike the conventional protein bars that lean heavily towards hardcore fitness or casual snacking, TeinPro is a functional bridge between the two. It is a smart, everyday choice whether between meals, after workouts, or during long workdays, and even a healthy dessert option. Speaking about the protein bar and their brand vision, TeinPro's leadership said, "We saw a gap between performance nutrition and everyday nutrition, and that's how TeinPro was born. Our goal was to create a bar that acknowledges our regular lifestyle and food habits. TeinPro is crafted with equal focus on taste as on nutrition. The Protein as well as energy bars offers natural sweetness that satisfies even the post-meal sweet cravings, all while providing nutrition.

## Manthan 2026 concludes successfully, advancing dialogue on India's Clinical Research and Life Sciences R&D Ecosystem'

**New Delhi,Agency:** Manthan 2026, a Research & Development Leadership Symposium, concluded successfully at Novotel, Mumbai. The insightful day-long symposium brought together eminent voices, leaders, and experts from across India's life sciences and clinical research ecosystem to deliberate on the future of research, innovation, and collaboration in the country. Powered by DiagnoSearch Life Sciences and instituted by The VASUs Foundation, Manthan is envisioned as a strategic platform to encourage leadership, collaboration, and evidence-based discussions within the life sciences and healthcare research ecosystem. The symposium focuses on advancing original research thinking and strength-

ening knowledge exchange across science, technology, engineering, and medicine (STEM). The symposium featured eminent speakers, part of the esteemed steering committee, including Mr. Saumil Mody, President - Commercial & Ops, Gennova; Dr. Seema Pai, Senior Director - India & SEA Cluster, Pfizer; Dr. Manisha Ginde, Representative, The VASUs Foundation; Ms. Suneela Thatte, Head - R&D, Merck KGaA; Dr. Santosh Jha, Founding Medical Director, MAA24; Dr. Vinod Mattoo, Executive Director, DiagnoSearch; Dr. Pawan Singh, Head of Clinical Sciences, Kashiv Biosciences; Dr. Chirag Trivedi, Global Head - CSU, Sanofi; Dr. Sanish Davis, R&D Director, J&J Innovative Medicines,



India; and Mr. Anirban Roy Chowdhury, Associate Vice President, Sun Pharma. Aligned to the theme "India in the Changing Landscape of Life-Sciences Research & Development," Manthan 2026 served as a powerful forum paving the way for India's next phase of life sciences R&D. The symposium assembled pharmaceutical leaders, R&D professionals, clinical researchers, policymakers, and regulatory experts to share unique insights, challenge conventional thinking, and drive meaningful dialogue around the rapidly

evolving landscape of drug discovery, research, and pharmaceutical innovation—while collectively shaping a shared future vision for India's position as a global hub for high-quality research and development. The one-day insightful symposium featured four focused thematic sessions: - The Future of Life Sciences R&D in India: The Innovation Leap! - Next-Gen Therapeutics: Unlocking the Future with mRNA, Cell, and Gene Therapy? - Building the Roadmap for Research on Tropical Diseases including Neglected Tropical Diseases - Enabling Innovation: Building India's Life Sciences R&D Ecosystem of Talent, Infrastructure,

and Collaboration Through a series of thought-provoking panel discussions, keynote addresses, and real-world insights, Manthan 2026 highlighted the importance of strong cross-sector collaboration, patient-centric research models, research excellence, skill development, and globally aligned regulatory and governance frameworks to translate scientific progress into real-world impact. Speaking on the successful conclusion of the symposium, Dr. Manisha Ginde, Co-Founder, President & Managing Director, DiagnoSearch Life Sciences and Representative, The VASUs Foundation said, "Manthan reflects a collective commitment to advancing India's clinical research and life sciences R&D capabilities.



# Indian team will take on New Zealand in the first T20 with the intention of winning

Agency, Nagpur

Under the captaincy of Suryakumar Yadav, the Indian team will take the field on Wednesday in the first match of the five-match T20 series against New Zealand, aiming for a winning start. The Indian team’s goal is to win this series and gain momentum for the T20 series to be held next month. The Indian team has performed well in T20s recently, but Suryakumar has not been scoring runs. Therefore, Suryakumar’s aim will be to score as many runs as possible in this series to regain his form for the T20 World Cup. Suryakumar took over the captaincy of the T20 team in 2024, and since then, the Indian



team has won most of its matches. In the last two years, the Indian T20 team has only faced defeat in a few matches. Therefore, they will be strong contenders for victory in this match against the Kiwi team. However, the Indian team will miss the batting of Tilak Varma. Tilak will not be playing in this match due to surgery. Shreyas Iyer has been included in his place.

On the other hand, the New Zealand team is also quite strong. Their morale is high after winning the previous ODI series, which will benefit them, although their path will not be easy. The Indian team has won 18 out of their last 25 matches. The team has aggressive batsmen like Abhishek Sharma and a spinner like Varun Chakravarthi. Meanwhile, New Zealand has won

only 13 out of the 21 T20 International matches played since the 2024 T20 World Cup. They have aggressive opening batsman Devon Conway. The team has a spinner like captain Mitchell Santner and a fast bowler like Jacob Duffy. The presence of in-form Daryl Mitchell and Glenn Phillips has strengthened the team considerably. Fast bowler and all-rounder Christian Clarke will be in the team for this match because Michael Bracewell and Adam Milne are both unfit. The Indian team has all-rounder Hardik Pandya. Spinner Varun will be a key weapon for the Indian team. Varun’s four overs between the seventh and 15th overs often change the course of the match. The two teams

are as follows:

India: Suryakumar Yadav (captain), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson (wicketkeeper), Ishan Kishan, Shreyas Iyer, Hardik Pandya, Shivam Dube, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Varun Chakravarthi, Rinku Singh, Arshdeep Singh, Ravi Bishnoi, Harshit Rana. New Zealand: Mitchell Santner (captain), Devon Conway, Bevan Jacobs, Daryl Mitchell, Glenn Phillips, Tim Robinson, Jimmy Neesham, Ish Sodhi, Jack Foulkes, Mark Chapman, Michael Bracewell, Rachin Ravindra, Kyle Jamieson, Matt Henry, Jacob Duffy, Kristian Clarke. Time: The match will start at 7 PM.

# Australian Open: Venus Williams and Ekaterina Alexandrova knocked out in women’s doubles first round

Agency, Melbourne

American legend Venus Williams and Russia’s Ekaterina Alexandrova have been eliminated in the first round of the women’s doubles at the Australian Open 2026. The American-Russian pair was defeated by France’s Elsa Jacquemot and Colombia’s Emiliana Arango 6-3 (3), 6-4. This loss ends Venus’s campaign at Melbourne Park. Earlier, the two-time Australian Open finalist Venus was knocked out in the first round of the women’s singles after losing to Olga Danilovi. This was Venus’s first appearance at Melbourne Park since 2021 and her first tournament outside the US since 2023. The seven-time Grand Slam winner, who received a wildcard into the tournament, became the oldest woman to play in the main draw of the Australian Open. The previous record was held by Japan’s Kimiko Date, who lost in the first round in 2015 at the age of 44. Venus has reached the Australian Open final twice, the semi-finals in 2001, and the quarter-finals six times.



Her tournament record stands at 54-21. In addition, she has won the women’s doubles title four times in Melbourne—in 2001, 2003, 2009, and 2010 with her sister Serena Williams, and also won the mixed doubles title in 1998 with Justin Gimelstob. After a 16-month break, Venus returned to tennis in July 2025 and played three tournaments. She defeated compatriot Peyton Stearns 6-3, 6-4 in the first round of the Mubadala Citi DC Open but then lost to Magdalena Frch. In August, Venus lost in the first round of the Cincinnati Open to Spain’s Jessica Bouzas-Maneiro

# Women’s Asia Cup Rising Stars 2026: India-Pakistan clash on February 15

Agency, New Delhi

The Asian Cricket Council (ACC) has released the schedule for the Women’s Asia Cup Rising Stars 2026. The tournament will begin on February 7 in Bangkok, Thailand. India and Pakistan will face each other on the cricket field on February 15. A total of eight teams will participate in the tournament, including India A, Pakistan A, Bangladesh A, Sri Lanka A, UAE, Nepal, Malaysia, and hosts Thailand. These teams have been divided into two groups of four teams each. The top two teams from each group will qualify for the semi-finals. The tournament will be played in the T20 format. India A has been placed in Group A, where they will face Pakistan A, UAE, and Nepal. Group B includes Bangladesh A, Sri Lanka A, Malaysia, and hosts Thailand. India A’s first match in the tournament will be against the UAE on February 13. This will be followed by the



highly anticipated match against Pakistan A on February 15. The team’s final group stage match is scheduled against Nepal on February 17. The Indian team has not yet announced its squad for the tournament. India A’s Schedule – Women’s Asia Cup Rising Stars 2026

▪ India vs UAE – February 13 ▪ India vs Pakistan – February 15 ▪ India vs Nepal – February 17 This tournament will prove to be a significant opportunity for young Indian women cricketers to showcase their talent and gain international experience.

# Manchester City signs Crystal Palace defender Marc Guéhi

Agency, New Delhi

Manchester City has officially announced the signing of Crystal Palace’s star defender Marc Guéhi amidst their defensive woes. The club announced on social media on Monday that Guéhi has signed a contract until June 2031. The 25-year-old England defender, Marc Guéhi, came close to joining Liverpool on the September 2025 transfer deadline day, but the deal fell through at the last minute. Now, Guéhi will be seen in a Man City jersey. Guéhi captained Crystal Palace in the FA Cup final in May, leading them to a title victory against Manchester City. He has played 26 international matches for England so far. Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola had recently expressed



concern about the lack of players in defense. This had become a major challenge for City, who are currently in second place in the Premier League, seven points behind Arsenal. Before Guéhi’s signing, Guardiola had said, “Without John (Stones), without Ruben (Dias), and without Josko (Gvardiol), we are in a difficult situation, and this is not just a matter of one match but a long-term problem.

# Bangladesh maintains its stance on not playing in India at the T20 World Cup

Agency, Dhaka

Bangladesh government’s sports advisor Asif Nazrul clarified on Tuesday that Bangladesh will not change its stance on playing in India in the ICC T20 World Cup. He also dismissed reports that Scotland would replace Bangladesh if the latter withdrew from the tournament. Asif Nazrul said that Bangladesh has refused to play in India citing security concerns and has requested the ICC to hold its matches in co-host Sri Lanka. He said the government’s position on the issue is clear and unwavering. Talks were held between Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) and ICC officials in Dhaka last weekend, but no solution could be reached. The stalemate deepened when the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) instructed the IPL franchise Kolkata Knight Riders to release Mustafizur Rahman from their team amidst the current political tensions. According to sources, the ICC has set a deadline of January 21 to resolve the matter. If Scotland were to replace Bangladesh, they would need at least 15 days to prepare, as Scotland



is the highest-ranked team that failed to qualify for the World Cup. Bangladesh had also proposed changing its group, but Ireland refused to agree to this. Asif Nazrul told reporters, “I am not aware of any plan to replace us with Scotland in the ICC T20 World Cup. If the ICC tries to impose unfair conditions on us under pressure from the Indian cricket board, we will not accept them.” He further added, “There have been instances in the past where Pakistan refused to travel to India and the ICC changed the venue of the tournament. We have also demanded a change of venue on logical grounds and cannot be forced to play in India under any kind of unreasonable pressure.”

## Brief

**Buxar’s daughter, Panchratna Kumari, wins gold medal at South Asia Wrestling Championship**



**Buxar:** Panchratna Kumari, a daughter of the district and a woman constable of the Bihar Police, has achieved a historic feat in the international sports arena, bringing glory to the country, Bihar, and the district. In the South Asia Combat Wrestling Championship 2026 held in Lumbini, Nepal, she won the gold medal in the 75 kg weight category with a spectacular performance. Women wrestlers from eight South Asian countries participated in this competition. During the tough and exciting matches, Panchratna Kumari showcased her excellent technique, physical prowess, discipline, and courage, defeating all her opponents. She secured the gold medal with a decisive victory in the final match. At the closing ceremony, Nepal’s Minister of Sports, Santosh Pandey, presented her with the gold medal and wished her a bright future. On this achievement, former District Councilor Dr. Manoj Kumar Yadav said that Panchratna Kumari has proved that daughters from rural areas can also hoist the country’s flag at the international level.

# India and England to play five-match Mixed Disability T20 series from January 29

Agency, New Delhi

A historic five-match Mixed Disability T20 International (T20I) series between India and England will be played from January 29 to February 6. The first three matches of the series will be held at the Shaheed Vijay Singh Pathik Sports Complex in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, while the last two matches will be played in Jaipur, the capital of Rajasthan. This series will see players with physical disabilities, hearing impairments, and intellectual disabilities competing together, which is a unique feature of mixed disability cricket. The Indian team’s preparations are in full swing, and a national training camp has already started in Jaipur



from January 19. The team will leave for Greater Noida on January 25. The England men’s mixed disability team is expected to arrive in India on January 23. On this occasion, Ravi Kant Chauhan, General Secretary of the Differently Aabled Cricket Council of India (DCCI), said in a statement that hosting England in India shows that mixed disability cricket is gaining recognition at the global level. We are confident that this tour will inspire many emerging players across the country. The ICC (International Cricket Council) is also supporting

this initiative. The Indian team’s camp is underway, and the players are excited to face the strong English team. Ian Martin, Head of Disability Cricket at the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), said that this series is a significant step towards strengthening mixed disability cricket in the international disability cricket calendar. England and India are playing a leading role in this format, and other countries will soon join in. Spectators will see that the quality of cricket is of a very high standard, and we are providing these talented players with a proper platform to showcase their talent. I expect a very competitive series, and I thank the DCCI for the invitation to come to India and for their efforts in making this series a reality.

# Indian Racing Festival to make its street race debut in Goa, competition to be held on February 14-15

Agency, New Delhi

The much-awaited Goa debut of the Indian Racing Festival is set to take place on February 14 and 15. This high-profile Formula Street Race weekend, under Round 4 of the championship, will be held in Goa. The historic event was announced by Goa Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant. The event is expected to give Goa a new identity as a leading motorsport destination in the country. After the thrilling Round 3 held at the Kari Motor Speedway in Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu), the championship caravan is now moving westwards. Amidst the title battle, racing will take place for the first time on an FIA-grade street circuit in Goa. This specially designed 2.064-kilometer-long circuit has 12 turns, which will present a technical challenge for the drivers and teams,



while also providing a spectacular visual experience for the spectators. Goa will witness top-class racing of this level for the first time. Welcoming the Indian Racing Festival to Goa, Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant said, “After a long wait, the Indian Racing Festival is coming to Goa on February 14 and 15. Hosting a motorsport event of this level demonstrates that Goa is fully capable of hosting world-class sports and entertainment events. He said that Formula racing will boost tourism, provide opportunities for

local businesses and service providers, and open new avenues for youth in engineering, technology, event management, and motorsport-related careers. I commend Racing Promotions Private Limited (RPPL) for working with the state administration to make this international-level event possible in Goa.” The Indian Racing Festival is distinguished by its inclusive structure, bringing together Indian and international drivers to compete. Each team comprises four drivers—an experienced international driver, an emerging international driver, an Indian driver, and a female driver. This promises a spectacular display of diversity and collaboration on the streets of Goa. Street racing is a core element of the Indian Racing Festival’s vision. Following successful street races in Hyderabad and Chennai, Racing Promotions Private Limited

(RPPL) is once again pushing boundaries, combining world-class circuits, cutting-edge engineering, and immersive experiences for spectators. Akhilesh Reddy, Chairman and Managing Director of RPPL, said, “Street circuits are the next phase of Indian motorsport. They bring racing closer to the fans and elevate engagement with the sport to a new level. The Goa round is a crucial milestone in this journey, as we bring high-quality racing to a new state.” The presence of celebrity team owners is another highlight of the festival. These include John Abraham (Goa Aces JA Racing), Arjun Kapoor (Speed Demons Delhi), Sourav Ganguly (Kolkata Royal Tigers), Naga Chaitanya (Hyderabad Black Birds), Kichecha Sudeep (Kichecha’s Kings Bengaluru), and Dr. Shweta Sundeep Anand (Chennai Turbo Riders).

# WPL 2026: G Kamalini Ruled Out for the Entire Season, Mumbai Indians Sign Vaishnavi Sharma

Agency, New Delhi

Mumbai Indians (MI) have suffered a major setback in the Tata Women’s Premier League (WPL) 2026. The team’s wicketkeeper-batter, G Kamalini, has been ruled out of the remainder of the tournament due to injury. Mumbai Indians have signed Vaishnavi Sharma as her replacement. G Kamalini had played 5 matches for Mumbai Indians in the current season of the Tata WPL 2026, but due to injury, she will not be able to participate further in the season. Mumbai Indians have included left-arm spinner Vaishnavi Sharma in their squad for Rs 30



lakh as a replacement for Kamalini. Vaishnavi was part of the Indian team that won the ICC Under-19 Women’s T20 World Cup in 2025. Vaishnavi Sharma has played 5 T20 Internationals for India so far, taking 5 wickets. The inclusion of the young spinner is expected to strengthen Mumbai Indians’ bowling attack.





### Karan Johar Immersed in the 2016 Trend, Refreshes Memories from Ae Dil Hai Mushkil to Koffee With Karan

The 2016 trend is currently gaining strong momentum on social media. Many users are revisiting their old memories and sharing glimpses from that year. Celebrities, too, are actively following this trend. On Monday, renowned filmmaker Karan Johar joined in and shared a special post.

On his official Instagram account, Karan Johar posted several glimpses from 2016, including moments from award shows of that year, scenes from his popular talk show Koffee With Karan, and highlights from the “In Conversation With...” session at the Toronto Film Festival. Sharing the post, the director wrote, “Revisiting these memories from 2016 made me feel emotional. My film Ae Dil Hai Mushkil was released in 2016.



### OTT Explosion: Hit Romance, Thriller, and Space Drama Films and Series Releasing This Week

Mumbai. In the digital age, people can enjoy films and web series from the comfort of their homes. This week is set to be special for entertainment lovers. While some big films are releasing in theatres, OTT platforms are also bringing a lot of exciting content for viewers. Platforms like Netflix, Jio Hotstar, Prime Video, and ZEE5 are set to release several new and popular projects this week, offering a mix of romance, drama, thriller, and space drama.

Gustakh Ishq –

The film Gustakh Ishq was released in theatres on November 28 last year and is now ready to enter the OTT world. Starring Fatima Sana Shaikh and Vijay Varma, the film presents a touching story. It is directed by Vibhu Puri and also features Naseeruddin Shah and Sharib Hashmi in important roles. Gustakh Ishq will start streaming on Jio Hotstar from January 23, 2026.

## Sonam Kapoor Set to Become a Mother for the Second Time, Actress Flaunts Royal Style in Latest Photoshoot

Bollywood’s popular actress Sonam Kapoor is going to become a mother for the second time. She had shared this happy news some time ago. On Monday, the actress posted stunning pictures on Instagram, proudly flaunting her baby bump.

In the shared photos, Sonam is seen wearing a black outfit. She opted for a crop top paired with a long skirt and layered it

with a coat. To enhance the look further, she carried a black bag. Sharing the post, Sonam wrote, “Mama’s day out, ready for the event.”

Sonam’s look on Instagram appears quite captivating. Even during pregnancy, she has not let go of fashion and is confidently showcasing her beauty. It is worth mentioning that Sonam had officially announced her

pregnancy some time ago.

Sonam Kapoor and Anand Ahuja announced their relationship in 2016 after dating for a long time. The couple got married in 2018 and welcomed their son Vayu in 2022. Now, three years later, the couple is set to become parents once again. With another member joining the family, happiness has doubled at their home.

## 10 Years of Marriage and the Journey Continues: Asin Shares Glimpses of Her Anniversary Celebration



Away from the glitz and glamour of the film world, actress Asin Thottumkal is once again in the spotlight. On Tuesday, she shared glimpses of the celebration of her 10th wedding anniversary, which she marked in a very special and romantic manner. Although Asin, who made a strong mark from South cinema to Bollywood with her powerful acting, is no longer seen in films, fans

still eagerly wait for her appearances. On this special occasion, Asin shared her happiness with everyone through social media.

On the occasion of her 10th wedding anniversary, Asin posted several pictures and videos on her Instagram Stories. Her husband, businessman Rahul Sharma, was also seen in them. In one video, Rahul Sharma can be seen singing the famous song “All of Me” by renowned singer John Legend for Asin, during which Asin’s laughter is clearly visible. Asin first shared a picture of a beautiful sand art that she created herself. It read “A + R = AR,” and she captioned it, “10 years of marriage and the journey continues.” After that, she posted a few videos showcasing the stunning décor of their anniversary celebration.

### Anupam Kher Shares Memories from 2016, Gets Emotional Remembering Satish Kaushik

Renowned and veteran Bollywood actor Anupam Kher is always in the news for his personality and work. On social media, he often shares old memories and special moments with his fans. These days, reminiscing about the past and sharing old photos has become a trend, and Anupam Kher is no exception. On Tuesday, he posted some memorable pictures from 2016. In these photos, several big names from Bollywood and Hollywood were seen alongside him.

In the pictures, Anupam Kher is seen posing with many Bollywood stars. Prominent actors like Salman Khan, Akshay Kumar, Ranveer Singh, Varun Dhawan, and Arjun Kapoor were seen with him. Apart from this, he also shared some memorable moments with famous Hollywood actors Robert De Niro and Gerard Butler.

In this post, Anupam Kher was also seen with his family members. His mother Dulari and actor brother Raju Kher appeared with him in the pictures. However, among all these photos, one picture caught the attention of fans the most, in which Anupam Kher was seen with his friend Satish Kaushik. Actor and their close associate Anil Kapoor was also present in this picture.



### “Ishqan De Lekhe Is a Dream for Me, One I Have Lived Every Day”: Isha Malviya

Actress Isha Malviya is now set to begin a new and important chapter in her career. After a long period of hard work and preparation in acting, she is stepping onto the big screen and will be making her debut with her first Punjabi film Ishqan De Lekhe. For her, this film is not just a debut but a dream that she has lived every single day.

Isha said, “This film means more to me than words can express. Standing in front of the camera has been an emotional experience for me. This film is very close to my heart, and I hope the audience will feel the same love and honesty that we felt while making it. This film is much more than a debut; it is a dream that I have lived every day!”

In the film, renowned Punjabi cinema actor Gurnam Bhullar plays the lead

role. The film is directed by Manvir Brar, while the story has been written by Jassi Lohka. Ishqan De Lekhe is a romantic love story and is scheduled to release in cinemas on March 6. Talking about Isha’s journey, she began modeling at the age of 13 and also participated in several beauty pageants.



### Siddhant Chaturvedi and Mrunal Thakur’s Do Deewane Shehar Mein to Release on February 20

Mrunal Thakur and Siddhant Chaturvedi will soon be seen together in the romantic drama film Do Deewane Shehar Mein. On Monday, the makers announced the film’s release date along with its teaser. The film will be released during the Valentine’s season, making it a special treat for fans.

Actor Siddhant Chaturvedi shared the teaser on Instagram and wrote, “Not every love is perfect, but it is enough. An imperfect love story of this city. The teaser is out, and this Valentine’s, love will fall in love again.”

The 1 minute and 8 second teaser does not reveal much about the story. Instead, it focuses on the famous song Do Deewane Shehar Mein from the 1977 classic film Gharonda. In the teaser, Mrunal and Siddhant’s characters are seen dancing joyfully to the song. The song was sung by Runa Laila and Bhupinder Singh, written by Gulzar, and composed by Jaidev.

At the beginning of the teaser, the couple is shown in a romantic mood, sharing loving moments with each other. However, towards the end, pain and tragedy are hinted at, suggesting that the film may include emotional twists, breakups, or challenges to add depth to the story.