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'PM should now accept freebies good for country': Kejriwal

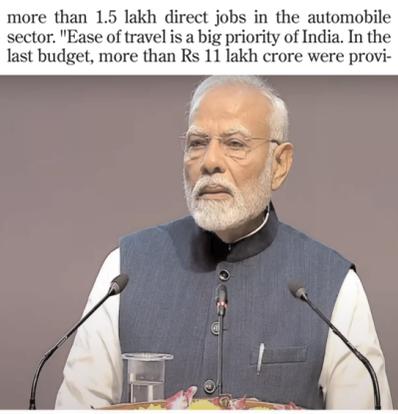


New Delhi, Jan. 17: The BJP has 'copied' the AAP and announced several 'revis' in its Delhi poll manifesto but Prime Minister Narendra Modi won't approve of the 'freebies' promised by his party...

Sanjay Kumar president announced that they too will provide free handouts to the people of Delhi. Kejriwal said, launching a scathing attack on the opposition party. 'I want to tell them that they should acknowledge that Prime Minister Modi was wrong when he said the things that he did about us. They should also accept free handouts are not wrong - they are a gift from God and good for the country.'

India outstanding destination for investment in mobility sector: PM Modi

Simmi Kaur Babbar New Delhi, Jan. 17: India stands as an outstanding destination for every investor looking to shape their future in the mobility sector, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday, and assured all government support to investors. Addressing the gathering after inaugurating the Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025 at Bharat Mandapam here, the Prime Minister said India is focusing on the development of green technology, EVs, hydrogen fuel and biofuels. Emphasising that the strength of the 'Make in India' initiative fuels the growth prospects of the country's auto industry, he said sale of EVs is set to increase eight times by the end of the decade. Modi said the government is working on a mobility system which can support economy and ecology, and create a system which can reduce the country's bill on the import of fossil fuels. He said 'Make in India' initiative has played a huge role in the development of auto industry. The initiative has got a push from the PLI (production linked incentive) scheme which has helped in the sales of more than Rs 2.25 lakh crore in the sector. This scheme has created



more than 1.5 lakh direct jobs in the automobile sector. 'Ease of travel is a big priority of India. In the last budget, more than Rs 11 lakh crore were provided for the development of infrastructure,' the prime minister said, and added the network of multi-lanes and highways were expanded. Noting that India's automotive industry is both fantastic and future-ready, he said India's auto industry witnessed a 12 per cent annual growth last year and

exports too rose significantly. Encouraging corporates to invest in the sector, Modi said the rising middle class, rapid urbanisation, high quality infrastructure development, and affordable vehicles are going to push automobile sector. The endeavour, he said, is to develop a complete ecosystem for mobility, the PM said. He also said it is the right time to invest in multi-lanes and highways were expanded. Noting that India's automotive industry is both fantastic and future-ready, he said India's auto industry witnessed a 12 per cent annual growth last year and exports too rose significantly. Encouraging corporates battery storage system in India. The five-day expo which is being held across three venues - Bharat Mandapam and Yashobhoomi in the national capital and India Expo Center and Mart, Greater Noida - is expected to witness over 100 new launches across automobiles, component products and technologies. The Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025, scheduled from January 17-22, will bring the entire value chain of the mobility ecosystem - from automobile manufacturers to components, electronics parts, tyre and energy storage makers, and automotive software firms and material recyclers - under a single umbrella.

BJP releases Delhi manifesto; promises Rs 2500 for women, pension for elderly

New Delhi, Jan. 17: BJP president JP Nadda on Friday released the first part of the party's manifesto for the Delhi assembly polls, announcing Rs 2,500 monthly aid for women, LPG cylinders at Rs 500 and Rs 2,500 pension for senior citizens. He also assured all existing public welfare schemes in Delhi will continue if the BJP is voted to power. Addressing a press conference while releasing the first part of the 'Sankalp Patra', Nadda said the party's manifesto is the foundation for a developed Delhi. Hitting out at the Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party, he said all corruption charges in the existing public welfare schemes will be investigated. He promised that a BJP-led Delhi government will approve implementation of the 'Ayushman Bharat' in the city in its first Cabinet meeting, and also give additional health cover of Rs 5 lakh. 'The BJP will give LPG cylinders at Rs 500 to women from poor sections. One free cylinder will be given each on Holi and Diwali,' he said. The BJP president also promised Rs 2,500 pension for senior citizens between the age of 60-70 and Rs 3,000 for those older than 70. Delhi will vote on February 5 and the results will be announced on February 8.

Abetment of suicide charges shouldn't be mechanically applied: Supreme Court

Navdeep Singh Sahni New Delhi, Jan 17: The Supreme Court on Friday said the offence of abetment of suicide under the Indian Penal Code should not be invoked mechanically against individuals only to soothe feelings of the distraught family members of the person who has died. On Friday, the Supreme Court ruled that the Indian Penal Code's crime of aiding suicide should not be applied automatically to people in order to ease the grief of the deceased's bereaved family. On Friday, the Supreme Court ruled that the Indian Penal Code's crime of aiding suicide should not be applied automatically to people in order to ease the grief of the deceased's bereaved family. A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and K V Viswanathan said the investigating agencies should be sensitised so that persons were not subjected to the abuse of the process of a totally



untenable prosecution. 'Section 306 IPC appears to be casually and too readily resorted to by the police. While the persons accused of the proposed scheme "The conduct of the proposed and the deceased," the court went on, "their interactions and conversations preceding the unfortunate death of the deceased should be approached from a practical point of view and not divorced from day-to-day realities of life. Hyperboles employed in exchanges should not, without anything more, be glorified as an instigation to commit suicide." The top court said the trial courts also should exercise "great caution and circumspection" and should not adopt a "play-it-safe syndrome" by mechanically framing charges, even if the investigating agencies in a given case showed utter disregard for the ingredients of Section 306. The judgment came on a plea filed one Mahendra Awase challenging an order of the Madhya Pradesh High Court, which declined his prayer to discharge him from the offences punishable under Section 306 of the IPC.

Centre is covering up country's declining job market: Kharge

ST Correspondent New Delhi, Jan 17: The central government is covering up the reality of the declining job market in the country, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said on Friday while referring to a recent LinkedIn report. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said that the central government is "deceiving the nation" by counting just one hour of work per week as legitimate employment (ANI) Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said that the central government is "deceiving the nation" by counting just one hour of work per week as legitimate employment "At least 82% of youth are seeking jobs this year, and 55% reported that finding a job became more difficult in 2024, while 37% have given up hope of finding a new job by 2025," he shared on X, without giving any further details of the survey. Kharge accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his government of "misleading" the youth regarding the current employment situation in India through various policy changes. He also cited a separate survey indicating that "69% of Indian HR professionals find it increasingly challenging to locate qualified candidates for available positions." Accusing the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) further of "misrepresenting" data, Kharge said, "They are extrapolating from outdated surveys to mislead millions of young people about employment opportunities, all without conducting a proper census." "The Modi government has misled the youth with falsehoods such as paper leaks orchestrated by the mafia, chaotic job fairs for limited positions, job losses due to harmful policies like demonetisation and faulty GST implementation, undermining reservation rights, leaving government job vacancies unfilled for years, and promising two crore jobs annually," he added. Meanwhile, union labour and employment minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Wednesday proposed a policy change to redefine employment, suggesting that women working in households and self-employed individuals should also be considered employed.



Another Maya nephew on political horizon, Ishan attends BSP meet

Tejinder Kaur Babbar Lucknow, Jan 17: Facing the daunting task of reviving the BSP's fortunes in UP politics, Mayawati is relying on family members by allotting them key posts in the party. Fighting to regain lost ground in UP, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati opened the doors for her younger nephew, Ishan Anand, and launched an attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) during a review meeting held at the party state unit office on Thursday. A law graduate from Westminster University in London, Ishan attended the meeting along with his elder brother Akash Anand (BSP national coordinator), party general secretary SC Mishra and BSP state president Vishwanath Pal. Son of the BSP chief's younger brother Anand Kumar (vice president of the party), Ishan made his first public appearance at a press conference held by Mayawati on her 69th birthday on



Wednesday. Mayawati is known for giving a message to the party cadre through workers' review meetings and conferences. The seating arrangement of the leaders in the meetings is also an indication of the position of a leader in the

organisation. On Wednesday, Ishan shared the dais with the BSP chief, and in the Thursday meeting, his seat was on the right side of the dais along with the national coordinator, national general secretary and state president. "Soon, he will be given a post in the party organisation and assigned work," said a BSP leader who attended the meeting. Facing the daunting task of reviving the BSP's fortunes in UP politics, Mayawati is relying on family members by allotting them key posts in the party. The rebellion of top party leaders and efforts by the NDA and INDIA bloc to make inroads into the BSP's Dalit support base have added to her anxiety. The rise of Azad Samaj Party (ASP) chief Chandra Shekhar Azad has emerged as another challenge for the BSP to maintain hold over the core Jatav votes. In the recently held by-polls to the nine assembly seats in UP, ASP candidates polled more votes than the BSP candidates in Meerapur and Kunark assembly seats in west UP, once the stronghold of BSP. After the BSP formed the government in UP in 2007, Mayawati announced

that her successor would not come from her family, but would rather be from the Jatav community. There was speculation in the party that she would make a senior party leader her heir. However, the changing political scenario forced her to make amends - and promote a dynasty in politics. To counter Chandra Shekhar Azad, she announced to promotion of young leaders in the organisation. Akash is 30 years old and Ishan is 26. The duo will be the young faces of the party, the BSP leader said. Addressing a press conference on Wednesday, Mayawati announced that Akash will lead the party campaign in the Delhi assembly election. Akash had led the party campaign in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh assembly elections. He also launched the party campaign in Haryana last year but was not seen in action during the Maharashtra and Jharkhand assembly polls. In the Thursday review meeting, Mayawati also indicated that the BSP will sharpen its attack on the BJP.

Saif doing 'very well', likely to be discharged from hospital in 2-3 days

Naresh Malhotra Mumbai, Jan. 17: Bollywood star Saif Ali Khan, undergoing treatment at a Mumbai hospital after suffering injuries in a knife attack at home, is doing "very well" and expected to be discharged in two to three days, doctors said on Friday. The 54-year-old actor, who received multiple stab injuries, including in his neck, underwent an emergency surgery at the Lilavati Hospital where he was taken after the brutal attack in his apartment in upscale Bandra by an intruder on early Thursday. "We are observing his progress and he is doing excellently well according to our expectations. As per his progress, we have advised him bed rest and if he is comfortable, then in two to three days we will discharge him," said Dr Nitin Dange, neurosurgeon at Lilavati Hospital. He said a team of doctors checked on him and made him walk. The actor is fit to be moved out of the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and "we are shifting him to a special room," informed the neurosurgeon, who led the team of doctors who operated on Khan on Thursday. "Khan had three injuries, two on the hand and one on the right side of the neck.



object was lodged inside, which has gone very deep, touching the dura and the spinal cord, but it has not damaged the spinal cord," Dr Dange said. Doctors have removed the sharp object and done repairing of the spinal injury, he explained. "He is very lucky. We repaired the leaking spinal fluid and the dura which was there. We had to do a repair, which was successful," Dr Dange added. "Today when we made him walk, he was completely okay to

walk. He is on a regular diet and that's why we have taken a decision to shift him from the ICU to a normal special room. He has been advised bed rest in view of the deeper injury to the spine. Today we will be restricting visitors as we want Khan to rest," he maintained. The entire family - Khan, his wife and fellow star Kareena Kapoor, and their two sons, four-year-old Jeh and eight-year-old Taimur - were home in the 12th floor apartment in 'Satguru Sharan' building along with their five house helps at the time of the attack. In a statement to the police, Jeh's nanny Elyyama Philip, who first encountered the armed attacker, said he asked for Rs 1 crore. The intruder did not force his entry or break into the actor's flat but possibly sneaked in at some point during the night with the intention of robbery, police officials said. Philip told the police she was sleeping on the floor in Jeh's room and woke up around 2 am when she heard a sound and saw a man move towards the sleeping child. Panicked, she rushed to pick him up and was pushed away by the man, armed with a wooden stick and a long Hexa blade. Khan, who was awarded a Padma Shri in 2010, was taken to the hospital in Bandra an autorickshaw.

Delhi HC rejects plea against rule to reserve symbols for recognised pol parties

New Delhi, Jan 17: The Delhi high court on Friday rejected a petition that challenged the Election Symbols (Reservation & Allotment) Order 1968 on the ground that it discriminates between registered and unregistered political parties. The order provides for reservation and allotment of election symbols to political parties in parliamentary and assembly polls. The Janata Party, which petitioned the high court against the 1968 order, had argued that the ECI order was discriminatory and arbitrary since it reserved symbols for recognised political parties but not for unrecognised parties. A bench of acting chief justice Vibhu Bakhru and justice Tushar Rao Gedela, however, dismissed the plea, observing that the issue had already been decided by the Supreme Court in Subramanian Swamy v Union of India (2008). In this case, the apex court dealt with Janata Party's petition challenging clause 10 A of the Order that only permitted a party to retain its symbol for six years after losing its status as a recognised political party and held that in its September 2008 verdict that symbols cannot be considered as a party's exclusive property. "We find merit in the contention (of the Election Commission of

India) that the issue is no longer res integra & has been concluded by authoritative decision of the SC in Subramanian Swamy v Election Commission of India. In view of the above, the petitioner's challenge to the constitutionality of the order is also rejected," the high court said in its order. The Janata Party, having a symbol of plough on a farmer's shoulder (Chakra Haldar), had come to power at the Centre in 1977, with Morarji Desai as the Prime Minister of India. It was earlier recognised as a national party, however, it was declared as an unrecognised political party in 2000 by the Election Commission of India (ECI), after it failed to secure a minimum percentage of votes in the 1996 general elections. The party argued that the 1998 Order was discriminatory and arbitrary as it reserved symbols of recognised political parties but didn't let unrecognised parties use their old symbols. This classification, the party's plea said, was unreasonable and unnatural. It claimed that symbols were intrinsic property of a political party and the same could not be snatched from a party due to its performance in polls and failure to secure 6% of the valid votes in the elections.

NEWS BOX

Miscreants chop tail of temple bull, injure legs

MYSURU. While the horror of miscreants slashing udders of cows and stabbing them in Bengaluru is still fresh in the minds of people, some assailants have cut a temple bull's tail in Nanjangud and attacked it with lethal weapons, causing grievous injuries. The incident occurred in Haladakeri, near Srikanteshwara temple. On hearing the distressed cries of the bull, locals alerted veterinary doctors who rushed to the spot and found that miscreants had chopped its tail and injured its legs. They said the bull is out of danger and may recover in course of time. Mysuru SP Vishnuvardhan visited the spot and directed DySP Raghu to register a suo motu case and investigate it. He said they had formed two teams to nab the miscreants who had committed the inhuman acts. Residents of Hallada Kere and Youth Brigade activists raised slogans against the temple authorities and government for failing to open a goshala on the temple premises.

A few others recalled that they had managed to round up butchers who had attempted to take the bull in a vehicle. Others accused temple officials of being hand-in-glove with butchers and cattle thieves. Former Member of Legislative Assembly B Harshvardhan visited the spot and demanded stringent action against the miscreants. He said the sentiments of Hindus are being hurt after the Congress came to power.

He also urged the temple staff to keep details of temple bulls, and recalled that he had stopped the illegal transport of temple bulls to slaughterhouses in Kerala. The previous government had identified two acres of land and released funds to open a goshala in Nanjangud, but it had not taken off. He felt such incidents would hurt the faith of devotees.

Andhra Pradesh plans free bus travel for women from Ugadi; decision to be taken at Cabinet meeting

VIJAYAWADA. The State government is making efforts to implement the free bus travel for women scheme from Ugadi. The APSRTC is also gearing up to launch the scheme. A decision on the free bus travel scheme is likely to be taken at the Cabinet meeting to be held on Friday (January 17). The Group of Ministers on the free bus travel scheme has reportedly submitted its report to Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu.

The report is said to have underlined the need for hiring more buses to implement the scheme from Ugadi. Free bus travel for women is one of the election promises made by the TDP-led NDA as part of 'Super Six'. However, the NDA could not implement the scheme soon after coming to power due to various reasons such as availability of required number of buses and also formulation of a robust mechanism for its success. The government set up the Group of Ministers to study the free bus travel for women scheme in other States before launching it in Andhra Pradesh. It is headed by Transport Minister M Ramprasad Reddy. Women and Child Welfare Minister Gummadi Sandhya Rani and Home Minister Vangalapati Anitha are its members, while Kantilal Dande, Principal Secretary (Roads and Buildings Department) is the convener. The Group of Ministers visited Karnataka, Telangana and Delhi, where the free bus travel for women scheme is being implemented, to study it. The Group of Ministers is said to have come up with several recommendations, which include increasing the bus fleet, invitation of tenders to hire buses, renewal of existing ones, recruitment of staff, particularly conductors, based on the demand.

Land acquisition hurdles to delay coastal highway in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR. Even as bidding is underway for the first phase construction works of coastal highway in Odisha, the ambitious project faces fresh challenges as land acquisition hurdles threaten to delay its progress. As per the revised alignment, the four-lane access controlled greenfield coastal highway will pass through Khurda, Puri, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Bhadrak and Balasore in Odisha and East Medinipur in West Bengal.

With a length of about 163.2 km, the highway stretches from Rameswar on NH-16 in Khurda to Ratanpur in Kendrapara in the phase-1 and it passes through 134 villages in the four districts of Khurda, Puri, Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapara.

According to the preliminary survey, 768.82 hectare of land will be acquired for the highway with a 45-metre right of way (RoW) to be built on design, build, operate and transfer (hybrid annuity) model. The required land include 113.6 ha of government land, 15.28 ha of forest land and 639.97 ha of private land.

Sources said particulars of more than 250 ha land in 53 villages of Puri, Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapara districts have not been provided to NHAI yet and the delay has stalled further progress.

"Gop tehsil has not provided land particulars of 21 out of 24 villages while Erasama tehsil has failed to submit the land particulars of all 15 villages to be affected by the project. Similarly, land details of nine villages in Mahakalapada tehsil, four in Kujang and two each in Kakatpur, Brahmagiri and Pattamundai are awaited," sources said.

Dindigul farmers pick Kerala rice over better yields, higher profits

DINDIGUL. The increasing demand for rice from Kerala, coupled with good returns, has pushed farmers to opt for paddy cultivation in Dindigul district. Paddy was cultivated on over 13,000 hectares in 2023-2024, a stark increase from the 1,522 hectares in 2016-17.

K Magudeeswaran, a paddy farmer said, "There are many varieties of paddy in Palani and other areas such as Ayakudi, Pappampadi, Akkaraipatti and Narikalpatti. Some of the popular varieties are Jyothi Matta, Sindu Kaveri and Akashya. Jyothi Matta variety, which offers a yield of 1-1.5 tonnes per 60 cents of land, is bought by traders and mill owners and is sold in Kerala.

Since the crop period is just 120-130 days, many farmers opt for this variety." Speaking to TNIE, Tamil Nadu Uzhavar Pathukappu Iyakkam state secretary R Kalidas said, "The rise in demand for rice from Kerala has pushed the farmers from Palani taluk to take up paddy farming. A paddy farmer gets 15 bags of paddy (100 kg) from 60 cents of farmland. The farmer could sell 15 bags for Rs 4,700-5,000. Besides, other paddy varieties such as Matta Kaveri and Sindhu

Kaveri also offer good returns. For example, a quintal of these varieties was priced around Rs 2,000-2,350 some years ago. Now, traders are offering more than Rs 4,500." With several hundred tonnes of paddy being supplied to Kerala, farmers in Tamil Nadu are



a happy lot.

Elaborating further, K Chandran, a trader, said, "I sent over 80 loads (each load of 2.5 tonnes) of rice to Kerala last year. There is huge demand for rice varieties such as Jyothi Matta and Una Matta. These varieties are similar to Rajabhogam rice sold in Tamil Nadu. Besides, the crop period is also around 135

days. Buyers from Kerala show more interest in Jyothi Matta and Una Matta, and they buy these varieties at Rs 25-35 per kg. These rice varieties are not procured by the state government. When the traders from Kerala show more interest and also offer a good price as compared to the procurement rate from the state government, farmers are tempted. Besides, the state government offers just Rs 24 per kg for paddy in Tamil Nadu. Farmers have to take their produce to the procurement centre and the logistics cost adds to the burden."

Farmers must pay Rs 2 per kg for daily wagers in the state. Besides, when it rains, there is an added risk of the paddy getting wet. As a result, the farmers prefer to sow the paddy varieties preferred by buyers from Kerala, he added. An official from the agriculture department said, "Jyothi Matta and Una Matta are much sought after varieties of paddy. When the traders come in large numbers and offer good prices, the farmers naturally feel comfortable. Farmers have the freedom to choose what crops they plant when they get a good price. When there is a demand for paddy from other districts and other states, they will go for it. This phenomenon is not limited to Kerala alone."

Vishudhi Sena works tirelessly to maintain cleanliness at Sabarimala after Makaravilakku

PATHANAMTHITTA. At Sabarimala, a dedicated force known as the 'Vishudhi Sena' plays a crucial role in maintaining the cleanliness of the hill shrine, working tirelessly day and night. Just as other forces stationed at the shrine, the members of Vishudhi Sena are akin to warriors on duty, ensuring that the shrine and its surrounding areas, including Pamba, Nilackal, Pandalam, and Kulanada, are kept spotless. Their work is especially vital after the Makaravilakku festival. Currently, the team is clearing over 50 loads of garbage each day. With 300 members assigned to 18 sectors at Sannidhanam, the cleaning is conducted in two shifts - from 6 am to 6 pm and 6 pm to 6 am.

Formed in 1995, Vishudhi Sena is part of the



Sabarimala Sanitation Society. The group is equipped with necessary cleaning tools, including gloves, jackets, shoes, and identity cards. The Sabarimala ADM, who oversees the pilgrimage, supervises the team's activities under the guidance of Duty

Magistrate G V Pramod. Kottayyan, the leader of Vishudhi Sena, hailing from Tamil Nadu, explained that the garbage collected in five tractors is transported to the Pandithavalam incinerator for proper disposal. "The waste is wrapped in cloth and loaded into tractors for transportation," he said. The cleaning team also ensures that garbage from the forest areas, where devotees camped during the Makarajyothi day, is removed before completing their tasks and returning on the morning of January 20.

In recognition of their hard work, the Travancore Devaswom Board has recently introduced a special accident insurance scheme for the cleaning staff, underscoring the importance of their contribution to the smooth operation of the pilgrimage.

Centre approves Rs 10,300 crore aid for Visakhapatnam Steel Plant amidst salary woes

VISAKHAPATNAM. In what could bring a temporary relief to Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP), the Centre is expected to announce an aid package of Rs 10,300 crore for it. TDP State president and Gajuwaka MLA Palla Srinivasa Rao shared the development on X (formerly Twitter) on Thursday, stating that the Centre had approved the release of aid to VSP under a revival package. "It is a matter of joy that the Union Cabinet has approved the release of Rs 10,300 crore under the Revival Package, with the special initiative of Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu. Heartfelt gratitude to Prime Minister Modi and CM Chandrababu Naidu for once again giving life to the slogan 'Visakha Ukku Andhrula Hakku,'" he stated. Sources indicate that Union Steel Minister HD Kumaraswamy may announce the details in the coming days, outlining how the aid will be utilised. However, despite the announcement, VSP employees remain concerned due to the ongoing delay in salary payment. Employees of Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited - Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (RINL-VSP) have faced irregular payment of salaries since September 2024. On Sankranti, VSP employees staged a shirtless protest at the main gate demanding release of pending salaries.

"We have been hearing reports about the Centre announcing an aid of Rs 10,000 - Rs 11,000 crore for VSP. Some suggest it will be in bonds, others say it will be given as debt, but there is no clarity. While the State government under the TDP has pushed for more funds, simply sanctioning money is not enough to revive the plant.

Absence of ramps, handrails... Kids with special needs get short shrift in Karnataka govt schools

BENGALURU. Even as the last census highlighted that Karnataka has more than 3.30 lakh specially abled children aged 5-19, government data revealed that only 86,674 children with special needs—50,543 boys and 36,131 girls—are enrolled in government schools across the state.

Experts said while the number of children with special needs must have increased, government efforts to include them in schools and prevent dropouts are nowhere to be seen and even when efforts are made, they are not uniform and fair towards all districts.

Between 2017-18 and 2022-23, the education department did not use Rs 137.95 crore (12%) of its funds, intended for the distribution of motorised vehicles. On the other hand, CSR funds for special education schools were heavily concentrated only in Bengaluru, with Rs 207.65 crore granted to just seven institutions between 2017 and 2022, sources from the department told.

While the Supreme Court has advocated for the inclusion of children with special needs and for training teachers to teach them, several parents said many children with a disability are still being denied admission to mainstream schools. Experts and parents of children with disabilities lamented that the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) are just confined to paper.

Development Educationist Prof Niranjana Reddy questioned why the government was not implementing strict plans to extend support beyond Bengaluru. "The government starts in Bengaluru to show the progress, but does not even complete it here, let alone reach other districts. What is even the purpose of holding assembly sessions in Belagavi, meant to address the gaps in other districts, when the government continues to neglect them?" he argued.

Even most schools lack the resources to



properly support these children. Before children can even check for resources, the infrastructure itself denies them access, he added. Multiple surveys and reports, including the CAG report, suggested that over 20,000 schools in Karnataka lack ramps, 28,843 are without handrails and more than 52,000 are without toilets for children with special needs.

Botched home birth kills 31-year-old woman, female infant in Ranipet

RANIPET. A 31-year-old pregnant woman and her fourth child — a female infant — died on Thursday morning after an attempted home delivery at her mother's residence in Arcot, Ranipet district. According to sources, the woman had previously delivered her third child in a such manner at her home in Salem. The deceased has been identified as T Jothi, police said. Jothi's husband, S Tamilselvan (31), is a carpenter from Salem. The couple, married for nine years, already has three children — two daughters and a son, they added.

During her pregnancy, Jothi had moved to her mother Valli's house on Thirunavukarasu Street in Arcot, while her husband remained in Salem. According to police, Jothi went into labour early Thursday morning and experienced severe pain and significant blood loss. Faced with an emergency, Jothi and her mother attempted a home delivery. Sources said that complications arose while Valli attempted to cut the umbilical cord. The infant died immediately, and Jothi lost consciousness. Her brother rushed her to the Arcot Government Hospital, but doctors declared her dead on arrival, they added.

"When she arrived at the hospital around 8 am, she was already dead. The umbilical cord was injured, and it appeared to be a full-term pregnancy," said a doctor from the hospital. Following the incident, police registered an FIR. Bodies of the woman and infant have been sent to the Vellore Government Medical College and Hospital for autopsy.

Ranipet health officials confirmed that the infant had weighed 2.8kg and the pregnancy had not been registered under the Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) programme in Salem. Further investigation into the matter is currently under way, as police are yet to ascertain the exact cause of death. In light of the incident, health authorities in Ranipet have reiterated that the public should not attempt home deliveries and must seek immediate medical attention during emergencies.

'Samadhi' opened, preliminary probe finds no foul play

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. After days of uncertainty, the controversial 'samadhi' chamber of Gopan Swami at Aralamoodu near Neyyattinkara was opened on Thursday morning. The inquest that followed revealed no visible injuries or wounds on the body of Gopan Swami, whose 'discreet' burial by family members on January 9 had kicked up a row.

The postmortem examination was conducted at the Thiruvananthapuram Medical College Hospital. According to the police, the preliminary investigation has not detected any foul play. However, the exact cause of death will be known only after the detailed postmortem report, which will include chemical analysis of internal organ samples, comes out, the police said. The analysis of samples may take up to a week. The tomb of Gopan Swami, located at his house, was opened under the supervision of the sub-collector. The body was found seated inside the concrete chamber, with ash, flowers, and aromatic substances filled chest high. His mouth was found agape, filled with bhasma (sacred ash) and

perfume. Police said initial observations indicate the body might have been placed in the tomb after Gopan Swami's death.

Final rites will be conducted today: Family

Meanwhile, doctors are examining



whether ash entered Gopan's lungs, as this could have potentially led to a heart attack. According to doctors, there are charred marks on his head, but due to the decomposed state of the body, it is difficult to determine this accurately.

Sanandan, son of Gopan Swami, claimed that he declined a police request to be present at the site when the tomb was

opened. However, he later reached the medical college hospital during the postmortem. Initially, Gopan Swami's family had refused to accept the body, citing that the exhumation was done in violation of rituals. After intervention by VHP leaders and discussions with officials, the family agreed to receive it.

The body is kept at the mortuary of a private hospital. The family has announced that the final rites will be conducted on Friday at their house as per rituals. The process of exhuming the body was conducted peacefully, with tight police security arranged due to concerns of potential conflict. A large police force led by two DySPs was deployed at the site early in the morning. The district administration coordinated the procedures, and access to the tomb was restricted. The area was covered with tarpaulin before officials, including forensic experts, inspected the site and removed the tombstone. The police took action after the High Court rejected a plea by Gopan Swami's wife and two sons to stay the order to inspect the tomb.

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1.2k trees to be relocated for 2 road projects in Greater Noida

Noida. Twelve hundred trees near two key projects are set to be transplanted in green areas. The Greater Noida Authority plans to engage expert companies for transplanting trees obstructing its developmental projects.

To facilitate this, the authority is set to empanel agencies with expertise in tree transplantation. These companies will initially be tasked with relocating over 1,200 trees from two key road projects. The projects include the construction of an underpass at Gaur Chowk and a connecting road at the LG Roundabout, where 800 and 400 trees, respectively, need to be transplanted. The authority intends to ensure that mature trees are preserved and relocated to nearby green belts to maintain ecological balance. The horticulture department has identified locations such as parks in Sectors 2 and 3 for replanting these trees. Species like peepal, pealkhan, ficus, champa and bottle palm will be included in the relocation effort.

The transplantation process will involve scientific site assessments, safe excavation, transportation and replanting. Post-transplantation care will also be provided. Environmentalist and water expert Pranab J Patar told that



the survival of transplanted trees depends on several external factors, including soil type, weather conditions and the care provided during the initial days after transplantation.

He likened the process to organ transplants, noting that, at times, "trees or soil may reject the transplantation, making it a complex and delicate

procedure". The authority has estimated a cost of approximately Rs 10,000 per tree, which includes the use of heavy machinery for relocating large trees.

To qualify for empanelment, agencies must have successfully transplanted more than 500 trees of at least three different species, with at least 50% of

those trees having a girth exceeding 150 cm and an age of over 10 years. Additionally, agencies must have a minimum of three years of experience in transplanting native trees in semi-arid regions. The empanelment will initially be valid for one year, and the selected agencies will also be required to prepare detailed reports on each transplantation project. The initiative aims to address the environmental concerns associated with urban development by saving mature trees and enhancing the region's green cover.

While the forest department has permitted the transplantation of 800 trees out of 1,000 trees to be removed from near Gaur Chowk, the authority is focused on relocating all trees to minimise ecological impact. At LG Roundabout, the transplantation of 400 trees will pave the way for the construction of the connecting road to Noida.

As per norms, while the authority is required to plant 10 new trees for every tree that is cut during construction, officials have emphasised that their primary objective is to avoid tree loss altogether by relocating them to suitable locations.

Unified industrial policy, e-bus plan get board approval

Noida. A joint board meeting of the Noida and Greater Noida authorities was convened by chief secretary Manoj Kumar Singh, who also serves as chairperson of both organisations. Key agendas discussed at the meeting included the revised industrial allotment policy and the proposed e-bus service. The revised policy, approved at the meeting, will be introduced soon, officials said. On Dec 26, Singh directed the Noida, Greater Noida, and Yamuna Expressway Authorities to standardise their policies and present them before their respective boards for final approval. Under the revised policy, industrial plots up to 8,000 sqm will be allocated through e-auction, prioritising genuine entrepreneurs over investors. For plots exceeding 8,000 sqm, allotments will be made based on interviews and objective criteria. A Noida

Authority official said that the new allotment policy, including its terms and conditions, will be published soon. Subsequently, the two authorities will launch their respective plot allotment schemes. Additionally, a consensus was reached on implementing a unified policy governing allotment, cancellation, lease execution, and possession of plots. After necessary amendments, this policy will be implemented to standardise services and address provisions beyond those mentioned in lease documents. The Noida Authority board also reviewed the status of industrial and institutional plots as of Dec 31, 2024, or plots with overdue payments that are delaying the issuance of occupancy or completion certificates. Noida Authority decided to refer such cases to govt,

offering plot owners a final opportunity to clear their dues. To resolve long-standing issues involving properties transferred through multiple general power of attorneys (GPAs), the Authority will prepare a streamlined mechanism for transferring and registering residential plots and flats. The board has also granted in-principle approval for the operation of 300 air-conditioned electric buses in

Noida. The 300 buses will operate on 13 routes, connecting the Noida sectors with Greater Noida and Delhi, among other areas.

NAME CHANGE
I, VEENA W/O RAM AYODHYA R/O H.No. 676/1-2, First Floor, Village Devi, Khanpur, South Delhi, Delhi-110062, have changed the name of my minor son AAYUSH aged 14 years and he shall hereafter be known as AAYUSH AYODHYA, for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as MOHD MOHSIN alias MOHD MOHSIN ANSARI S/O NASEEM AHMAD R/O A-85, GALI NO-3, RANI GARDEN, GEETA COLONY, EAST DELHI, DELHI-110031 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MOHD MOHSIN ANSARI

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as PRAKASH son of Shri BHORI LAL residing at House No.950, Block-H, Gali No.16, Sangam Vihar, New Delhi-110062, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as KALLU

PUBLIC NOTICE
I, hitherto known as BHADAJURIA KAUSHLENDRA KAMLENDRAFRATAPINSINGH alias KAUSHLENDRA K BHADAJURIA alias BHADAJURIA KAUSHLENDRA S/O KAMLENDRA present address A-301, Rastrapati Bhawan Cabinet Affairs Apartments VTC, Dwarka Sector-10, PO: Dwarka District: South West Delhi State: Delhi-110075. Perma any objection(s) 96, Amarnath Park Society, N Maheshwari Nagar, Odhav, Ahmedabad, Gujarat - 382415, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as BHADAJURIA KAUSHLENDRA.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Information is given to general public at large that our client Mr. Sanjeev Kumar is the owner of Freehold Residential Property No. C-85 & C-86-A area measuring 50+100 out of total area measuring 150 sq. yds. arising out of Kharsa No. 10/11, 15/1, 15/2, 16/1, 2, 3, 25, 11, 12, 19, 20, 21 & 22 Situated in the Village of Matiala, Delhi State Delhi, Colony known as Mansa Ram Park, in Block-C Uttam Nagar, New Delhi, by virtue of Sale Deed (Self) dated 09.01.2025 which is duly registered in the office of Sub-Registrar - II-B Jankapuri, vide Document No. 2025/25/11/884, in Book No. 1, Volume No. 13606, on Pages No. 111-128, on dated 09.01.2025. In the chain documents below mentioned document not available i.e. Death Certificate & SMC of Late R.A. Virender Kumar Our client is declaring that any other Person does not have any right over the said property, which is to be financed by Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Ltd. Branch: Dwarka, Delhi. If any person(s) have any objection(s) or claim(s) with respect to the right, title or interest in the Said Property then contact us within 07 days from the date of Publication of this notice and or the same to the undersigned if found by anyone. Thereafter no claim shall be entertained.

NAME CHANGE
I, SEEMA DEVI Wife of No-16021792F Rank-L/HAV Name-KARMPAL residing at NANGAL-BAWLA, RANOTH, ALWAR, RAJASTHAN-301404, have changed my name from SEEMA DEVI to SEEMA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 17/01/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE
I, Kishor Badhabhai Vegada S/O Vegada Badhabhai Nagabhai, R/O P52, Second Floor, Silver Crest Villa, Sector-48, Sohna Road, Gurgaon Haryana-122001 Have Changed my name to Kishor Vegada for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, NO-6498038W Rank-NK Name-KHARGA DHIMAL residing at VILL-TURTURI KHANDA, PO-HATIPOTHA, PS-SAMUKTALA, TEHSIL & DIST-ALIPURDUJAR, WEST BENGAL-736201 have changed my wife's name from PINKI DHIMAL to PINKI BHOWMICK for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 17/01/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, NO-6498038W Rank-NK Name-KHARGA DHIMAL residing at VILL-TURTURI KHANDA, PO-HATIPOTHA, PS-SAMUKTALA, TEHSIL & DIST-ALIPURDUJAR, WEST BENGAL-736201 have changed my mother's name from BISHNUMAYA DHIMAL to BISHNUMAYA CHHETRI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 17/01/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi

NAME CHANGE
I, NO-6498038W Rank-NK Name-KHARGA DHIMAL residing at VILL-TURTURI KHANDA, PO-HATIPOTHA, PS-SAMUKTALA, TEHSIL & DIST-ALIPURDUJAR, WEST BENGAL-736201 have changed my father's name from DIL BAHADUR DHIMAL to DILBAHADUR CHHETRI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 17/01/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SAVANT PRIYANKA RAMRAO Wife of No-1362884A Rank-NK Name-PATIL KADAM ABHIJEET KRISHNAT Residing at VILL-DANEWADI, PO-WADIRATNAGRI, TEH-PANHALA, DIST-KOLHAPUR, MAHARASHTRA-416229 have changed my name from SAVANT PRIYANKA RAMRAO to PATIL KADAM PRIYANKA ABHIJEET for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 17/01/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, NEERAJ KUMAR S/O ASHOK KUMAR residence of H NO-444/23 F BLOCK MOLARBAND EXTN LAST 60 FEET ROAD BADARPUR DELHI-110044, have changed my name to NEERAJ SINGH for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE
I, NO-16021792F Rank-L/HAV Name-KARMPAL residing at NANGAL-BAWLA, RANOTH, ALWAR, RAJASTHAN-301404, have changed my mother's name from BIRMA DEVI to BRAHMA DEVI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 17/01/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SEEMA DEVI Wife of No-16021792F Rank-L/HAV Name-KARMPAL residing at NANGAL-BAWLA, RANOTH, ALWAR, RAJASTHAN-301404, have changed my name from SEEMA DEVI to SEEMA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 17/01/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, PALAK D/O ASHOK KUMAR PANDEY R/O House No-382, Sector-05, Near CGHS Hospital, Gurgaon, Haryana-122001 Have Changed My Name To PALAK PANDEY For All future Purpose.

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is for general information that I, Rahul Singh S/O Veer Pal Singh R/O Quarter No 13 Type 3, Govt Press Colony, Maya Puri, South West Delhi, Delhi-110064 declare that name of my mother has been wrongly written as Pramod Kumari Singh in my 10th Class Educational Documents. The actual name of my mother is Pramod Kumari.

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is for general information that I, Sana D/o Nasim Ahmad R/O H.No-1037, Street No-33, Jafraabad, Bhajan Pura, North East, Delhi-110053 declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as Naseem Ahmed in my 10th, 12th and Diploma Educational Documents. The actual name of my father is Nasim Ahmad.

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is for general information that I, Mohd Zubair S/O Nasim Ahmed R/O H.No.1037, Street No.33, Jafraabad, Seelampur, Bhajan Pura, North East, Delhi-110053 declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as Naseem Ahmed in my 10th and 12th Class Educational Documents. The actual name of my father is Nasim Ahmed.

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as Rahul Singh S/O Gangra Sagar Singh R/O 230/1C Railway Colony, Mandawali Shakar Pur, Baramand Shakarpur Gandhi Nagar, East Delhi, Delhi-110092 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Antrim Singh.

NAME CHANGE
I, Komal Rani W/O Satish kumar chaudhary R/O E-1-123, 2nd floor, Rohini sector -16 new delhi-110085 have changed my name from Komal Rani to Komal Chaudhary for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE
hitherto known as Nikita D/o Ramesh Kalsan R/O AG-177D, Vikas puri, West Delhi, Delhi-110018 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Nikita Kalsan.

NAME CHANGE
I, No. 15439701M, Rank-NK Name-GOPAL SINGH R/O 331, THOK PACHHAYA, SIHORA, SIHORA, MATHURA, UTTAR PRADESH-281305, have changed my father's name from KAILASHI SINGH to KAILASHI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 17/01/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, NO-16021792F Rank-L/HAV Name-KARMPAL residing at NANGAL-BAWLA, RANOTH, ALWAR, RAJASTHAN-301404, have changed my mother's name from BIRMA DEVI to BRAHMA DEVI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 17/01/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I hitherto know as Savliya alias Sawalia Ram S/O Sh Inder Singh R/O Near Ram Talawalia Mandir Sikandarpur Palwal Haryana-121102, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Sanwalia Ram Dager.

NAME CHANGE
I, JYOTI KAILAS MOREY Wife of No-14651223N Rank-HAV Name-MOREY KAILAS DAMODHAR R/O VILL-DIVDHANA, PO-PETHI, TEH-CHIKHILI, DIST-BULDANA, MAHARASHTRA-443201 have changed my name from JYOTI KAILAS MOREY to MOREY JYOTI KAILAS for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 17/01/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is for general information that I, RAJ-PAL Singh S/O S/O: Balwant Singh, R/O 489, Nirmla colony Ashok Vihar Phase 4, Ashok Vihar, North West Delhi, Delhi-110052, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written Raj Pal Singh in my driving Licence no DL01 19840177801. The actual name of mine is RAJPAL Singh Pawar, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE
I, NO-16023174P Rank-NK Name-RAJESH KUMAR residing at VILL-LHAURRA, PO-KIRATPUR NIMANA, TEH-KOL, DIST-ALIGARH, UTTAR PRADESH-202140, have changed my father's name from KALICHARAN to KALICHARAN SINGH for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 17/01/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SUNITA MAHARANA spouse of No.JC-353891N Rank-SUBEDAR Name- PURNA CHANDRA MAHARANA R/O BHANDARISAIHI, PAR-ALAKHEMUNDI, PARLAKHEMUNDI, GAJAPATI, ODISHA-761200, I have changed my name from SUNITA MAHARANA to SUNITA MOHARANA for all future purposes. Vide affidavit dated 14.01.2025 before Sub Divisional Magistrate Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, NO-GS-192112M Rank-ELECT Name- VIJAY KUMAR GUPTA R/O VILLAGE-POST-GAURA, GAURA, SARAN, BIHAR-841443 have changed my minor son name from AYUSH KUMAR to AAYUSH KUMAR for all future purposes. Vide affidavit dated 17.01.2025 before Sub Divisional Magistrate Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, MOHAMMED NASEEM SON OF ABDUL MUJINI RESIDENT OF K-1723, GALI NO.9, ROAD, NO.19, SANGAM VIHAR, NEW DELHI-110080 have changed my name from MD NASEEM to MOHAMMED NASEEM for all purposes in future.

NAME CHANGE
I, NO-1362884A Rank-NK Name-PATIL KADAM ABHIJEET KRISHNAT Residing at VILL-DANEWADI, PO-WADIRATNAGRI, TEH-PANHALA, DIST-KOLHAPUR, MAHARASHTRA-416229, have change my minor son's name from AADITYA ABHIJEET KADAM to PATIL KADAM AADITYA ABHIJEET for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 17/01/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Funds diverted to Colombo, ED attaches Rs 224cr property of realty firm

Gurgaon. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has attached assets valued at Rs 224 crore in a money laundering case involving luxury hotel projects in Colombo and land in Gurgaon. The investigation centres around cases under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, against Krishi Realtech Pvt Ltd, its promoter Amit Katyal, and associates who allegedly defrauded investors. Krishi Realtech came under the ED's scanner following FIRs filed by Gurgaon police and economic offences wing in New Delhi, accusing the company of diverting funds collected from buyers for other projects.

According to investigators, Krishi collected Rs 503 crore from buyers for residential plots that were not delivered even after 13 years. Preliminary probe, officers said, revealed that Katyal diverted these funds to The One Transworks Square (Pvt) Ltd in Sri Lanka — formerly known as Krishi Transworks Colombo (Pvt) Ltd — for a luxury real estate project.

The ED also discovered that Katyal used complex financial layering to disguise the fraudulent funds as legitimate income. The Rs 224-crore property attached by the ED included four acres and shares in buildings constructed in Colombo worth Rs 205 crore. Additionally, Rs 19 crore was traced to NCR Business Park Pvt Ltd — now Good Earth Business Park Pvt Ltd — for acquiring 2.8 acres in Gurgaon Sector 66. The latest action by the ED follows previous attachments by the investigating agency worth Rs 173 crore in Aug and Oct 2024, bringing the total attached assets in this case to Rs 397 crore.

MCG's Sohna Chowk multilevel parking to open in a month in Gurgaon

Gurgaon. The multilevel parking facility at Sohna Chowk is set to open in a month. MCG commissioner Ashok Kumar Garg on Thursday conducted an inspection of the nearly completed multilevel parking facility at Sohna Chowk. MCG officials said the facility will be operational within a month. Garg said, "The multilevel parking being constructed by the MCG at Sohna Chowk is almost complete."

"This state-of-the-art parking structure spans three basements and five floors, accommodating 56 shops, parking for 230 cars and over 100 two-wheelers," he said. "It features three elevators, centralised air conditioning and stack parking in the basement. I have instructed the officers that it be made ready for public use as soon as possible," the MCG commissioner said. During his visit, Garg also inspected the proposed locations for multilevel car parking facilities at Kaman Sarai and Sadar Bazar post office.

He instructed officials to clear all encroachments from the Kaman Sarai site. TOI reported on Thursday that the Haryana gov't finance department will allocate Rs 43.66 crore to the MCG for purchasing the land from PWD (BR) for the Sadar Bazar post office parking facility. The state govt will provide these funds from the outstanding stamp duty arrears of Rs 495.95 crore that it needs to pay to the MCG.

In 2019, MCG had announced plans for three multilevel parking structures in Sadar Bazar's bustling marketplace. These facilities, aiming at reducing traffic congestion, were planned near the post office, at Kaman Sarai and at Sohna Chowk. The initial designs specified 10-storey structures for all three locations, including three underground levels.

All registries on land set aside for logistics park to be banned

Noida. After widespread encroachments were reported in the Tappal-Bajna area of Aligarh, a region identified by the Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) to develop a logistics park and industrial projects, the Authority has requested the Aligarh administration to halt land registries and ban all unauthorised residential and other constructions within the notified area. As the registrations are being done under residential category, it could be difficult for the Authority to evict the plot owners, which could jeopardise the multi-modal logistics park scheme, officials said.

Yamuna Authority's OSD Shailendra Singh told TOI the Aligarh administration was recently urged to impose a ban on residential plot registrations within the notified area. Proposed under the Authority's Master Plan 2031 (Phase II), the state-of-the-art logistics park will come up on 364 acres inside the Tappal-Bajna Urban Centre project — an industrial and residential township spread over 27,438 acres (11,104 hectares) near the Noida International Airport — and cater to the growing cargo needs of NCR and neighbouring areas.

The Rs 1,040-crore logistics park is to be developed in three phases. Phase I will cover 205 acres, including 154 acres dedicated to core logistics operations. YEIDA is to acquire 1,900 hectares of land in Aligarh's Tappal village for the logistics park and other projects under its master plan.

Last year, the Authority issued a notification to acquire 736 hectares in Tappal, and the process of conducting a social impact assessment (SIA) is currently underway.

Despite notices being issued to colonisers, land is being sold to buyers from Delhi-NCR with a promise of owning a home near the airport. Residential plots are being offered at prices ranging from Rs 15,000 to Rs 25,000 per square metre, depending on the location, while commercial plots along the Yamuna Expressway command higher rates.

NAME CHANGE
It is for general information that I, Mamta D/O Devender, R/O House No-D-465, Near Bahin Wali Choupal, Thok Katheria, Durgapur (78) Palwal, Haryana-121102, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Mamta Sansanwal.

NAME CHANGE
I, No-16023174P Rank-NK Name-RAJESH KUMAR residing at VILL-LHAURRA, PO-KIRATPUR NIMANA, TEH-KOL, DIST-ALIGARH, UTTAR PRADESH-202140, have change my mother's name from VIMLESH DEVI to VIMLA DEVI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 17/01/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I hitherto known as Komal alias Anita W/O Sukhvir, R/O N 86/52, JHUGZI RLY LINE LAWRENCE ROAD, IND AREA, Onkar Nagar, North West Delhi, Delhi-110035, Have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Anita.

NAME CHANGE
I, INDRA JEET SINGH S/O RAM SINGH GAUTAM R/O CRYSTAL APARTMENT, 302, SECTOR-48, FARIDABAD, HARYANA-121001 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO INDERJEET SINGH GAUTAM FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSE

NAME CHANGE
I, Chhaju Ram Sharma S/O Rati Ram R/O 5, Gali-A/5, Palam Vihar Road, Ashok Vihar Phase-3, Gurgaon Haryana-122001 Have Changed my name to Chhaju Ram for all future purposes.

INDIAN RAILWAYS "PUBLIC NOTIFICATION"
Notice is hereby given to all users of Railway lines and premises situated on the Complete section of the under noted section of the Northern Railway that the 25000 Volt, 50 Hz, AC overhead traction wires will be energized on or after the date specified against the section. On and from the same date the overhead traction line shall be treated as live at all time and no unauthorized person shall approach or work in the proximity of the said overhead line.

Section	Date
Sub: "Energisation of 25 KV, Single phase AC 5 HZ newly electrified Line no. 5 (Common loop line) and RGM/TM siding in Deoband Yard including modification in existing lines, modification in existing Deoband SSP in connection with new line of DBD-RK section, associated turnouts & x-overs from location no. TTM/1 (Ch: 145/897.00) to location no. 147/36 (Ch: 147/726.50) and electrification of new line along with associated turnouts & x-overs from location no. 147/36 (Ch: 147/726.50) to location no. 01/10 (Ch: 647.80) to Deoband-Roorkee section of Delhi Division".	20.01.2025

INDIAN RAILWAY INTRODUCTION OF AC 25 KV TRACTION "WARNING TO ROAD USERS"

It is notified for information of the Public that in connection with introduction of 2.2 KV AC electric traction over "Energisation of 25 KV, Single phase AC 5 HZ newly electrified Line no. 5 (Common loop line) and RGM/TM siding in Deoband Yard including modification in existing lines, modification in existing Deoband SSP in connection with new line of DBD-RK section, associated turnouts & x-overs from location no. TTM/1 (Ch: 145/897.00) to location no. 147/36 (Ch: 147/726.50) and electrification of new line along with associated turnouts & x-overs from location no. 147/36 (Ch: 147/726.50) to location no. 01/10 (Ch: 647.80) to Deoband-Roorkee section of Delhi Division". Height gauges have been erected at all the level crossings with clear maximum height 4.78 m and contact wire shall be at a height of minimum 5.5 m above road level with a view to prevent loads of excessive height from coming into contact or dangerous proximity to live traction wire.

Public are hereby notified to observe the height specified above for the purpose of loading vehicles and to see that the loads carried in road vehicles do not infringe the height gauges under any circumstances. The dangers of a load of excessive height are as follows:-

- Danger to the height gauge and consequent obstruction to the road as well as the railway line.
- Danger to the materials or equipment carried or the vehicle itself.
- Danger of fire and risk of life due to contact with or dangerous proximity to the conductors.

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/Const. N.Rly. 4th Floor, DRM Office, New Delhi 110025

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

KIND ATTENTION RAIL PASSENGERS!

IMPORTANT NOTICE

It is notified for the information of rail passengers that Northern Railway has revised the timings of the following Vande Bharat Express trains on below mentioned stations as under:-

Train No. & Name	Existing Timings		Revised Timings		Revised Timings With Effect from (JCO)
	Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.	
22439 New Delhi - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Vande Bharat Express	14:05	----	14:15	----	20.01.2025
22477 New Delhi - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Vande Bharat Express	23:15	----	23:20	----	20.01.2025
22478 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - New Delhi Vande Bharat Express	----	05:50	----	05:45	21.03.2025

Passengers are advised to please check the detailed Time-Table of above trains through RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website: <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTEAS App.

RailMadad Helpline No. 139

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NEWS BOX

Joe Biden: Will Donald Trump's Return Be His Legacy?

Washington. Joe Biden wanted to go down in history as the man who saved America from Donald Trump. Instead he may be remembered for handing Trump a second term in the White House. In years to come Biden, 82, may be judged more kindly. The Democrat steered a divided country out of the Covid-19 pandemic and the chaos of Trump's first four years, before pushing through an impressive raft of legislation. But Biden's single term will now be bookended by his rival's presidencies. And it will be defined by a single fateful decision -- to defy mounting concerns about his age and run for reelection in 2024. For many the defining image of the 46th US president will be a haunted-looking Biden lost for words in the disastrous debate against Trump that eventually forced him out of the race.

His replacement as Democratic candidate, his Vice President Kamala Harris, was left with an almost impossible task to prevent Trump's return.

If Biden insisted until the end that he could have beaten his Republican nemesis, he still admitted that it may take a while to restore his reputation. "It will take time to feel the full impact of all we have done together, but the seeds are planted," he said in his farewell address.

Historic Challenges

Biden's inauguration in January 2021 was a remarkable comeback for an often underestimated politician who spent a lifetime battling both political odds and personal tragedy. But he was an unlikely savior. Biden was America's oldest elected president at the time -- until Trump's election in 2024 -- and arguably more famous for his gaffes and for being Barack Obama's vice president.

And he faced historic challenges. The country was reeling from the January 6, 2021 Capitol assault by Trump supporters protesting his election defeat, while the US economy was shattered by Covid.

Journalist Takes Off Protective Gear As He Reports On Gaza Ceasefire

World. Palestinian journalist Anas Al-Sharif celebrated the news of the Gaza ceasefire deal by taking off his helmet and press vest -- the armours of a journalist during a war report. In a viral video, the Al Jazeera journalist is seen taking off the protective gear that became a part of his body over the last few months as part of his reportage. Standing amid the Palestinians celebrating the ceasefire deal, Anas Al-Sharif says, "Now, I can finally take off this helmet that has exhausted me throughout this period. And also, this vest, which became a part of my body over this long time, always accompanying me." "Now, we announce here, from this place in the middle of Gaza City, this ceasefire announcement for the people and residents of the Gaza Strip who have been subjected to a war of genocide, endured bombings and forcible displacement from this place here where I stand," he reported. A man lifts the journalist on his shoulders from behind, as he announces the ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas, marking a potential end to a 15-month-long war.

According to the reports, Al-Sharif has been reporting from Gaza since the start of the war on October 7, 2023, despite several threats to him and his family from Israel. Reportedly, in December 2023, Al-Sharif's family house was bombed, killing his 90-year-old father. Owing to his poor health, Al-Sharif's father couldn't accompany the rest of the family, who were evacuated to UNRWA school.

A day after announcing the ceasefire agreement and freeing himself from the safety gear, Al-Sharif again resorted to protecting himself. In a video shared on Instagram, he wrote, "I'm back to putting on my armor and journal helmet I had left before you, while people were celebrating the news of the ceasefire on Gaza. Unfortunately, in these hours the pace of Israeli targets and massacres is increasing in various areas of the Gaza Strip." Israel and Hamas reached a landmark ceasefire deal on Wednesday night. The deal will take effect from Sunday, when the first Israeli captives are expected to be released and guns will fall silent.

The ceasefire deal is divided into three phases including a complete ceasefire, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza, release of hostages, a permanent end to the war and a reconstruction plan for Gaza. The joy of a ceasefire agreement was short-lived as residents on Thursday woke up to new Israeli air strikes and more deaths.

Thailand's Prime Minister Targeted By AI Phone Scam Mimicking World Leaders

World. Phone scams are one of the widespread problems around the world, with many cases of call centers in different countries deceiving people. These scammers often impersonate government officials or tech support representatives to manipulate victims into transferring money.

Typically, these calls target ordinary people, but Thailand's Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra recently revealed that she fell victim to an AI-driven phone scam. The scammer demanded money from her by using a cloned voice of a well-known world leader and claiming that her country was the only ASEAN nation yet to contribute. The prime minister recognised the fake voice but was shocked by the scam's sophistication, pointing out how the threat of AI-enabled fraud is growing.

According to CNN, Paetongtarn Shinawatra did not reveal who the computer was mimicking but said she received a message in a voice identical to a well-known leader.

"The voice was very clear, and I recognised it immediately. They first sent a voice clip, saying something like, 'How are you? I want to work together,' and so on," Paetongtarn told CNN.

She said she later missed a call from the same number, then received a voice message that cut to the chase: "They sent another voice message asking for a donation, saying, 'You are the only country in (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) that hasn't donated yet,' emphasising it. I was taken aback for a moment and realised something was off."

Indian-origin Nazi sympathiser gets 8 years in jail for White House truck attack

Washington. Indian national Sai Varshith Kandula, 20, on Thursday was sentenced to eight years for an attempted attack on the White House with a rented truck on May 22, 2023. The attack aimed to overthrow the democratically elected American government in order to replace it with a dictatorship fuelled by Nazi ideology, the Department of Justice said. Kandula had pleaded guilty on May 13, 2024 to a charge of willful injury or depredation of US property. Born in Chandanagar, India, he was a lawful permanent resident of the US with a green card. In addition to the prison term, District Court Judge Dabney L. Friedrich ordered Kandula to serve three years of supervised release. The Indian national flew on a commercial flight from St Louis, Missouri, to Washington D.C. on the afternoon of May 22, 2023, connecting through another airport on a one-way airline ticket, according to court documents, and arrived at Dulles International Airport about 5:20 pm,

wherein he rented a truck at 6:30 pm. e stopped for food and gas, and then drove to Washington, D.C., where he crashed into the barriers protecting the White House and the President's Park at 9:35 pm at the intersection of H Street, Northwest and 16th Street, Northwest. Kandula drove onto the sidewalk, sending pedestrians running from the scene. After striking the barriers, the truck backed up in reverse, then lurched forward, striking the metal barriers a second time. The second impact disabled the truck which began smoking from the engine compartment and leaking fluids.

Kandula next exited the vehicle and went to the back of the truck. From a backpack he removed a flag, a three-by-five foot red-and-white banner with a Nazi Swastika in the centre, and brandished it. US Park Police and the US Secret Service officers arrested Kandula at the scene and took him into custody, the Department of Justice



said. According to the plea agreement, at the time Kandula crashed the truck into the White House perimeter, he was attempting to gain access to the White House to seize political power.

"Kandula's intent was to replace the democratically elected government with a dictatorship fueled by ideology of Nazi Germany and for himself to be put in charge of the United States. Kandula admitted to investigators that he would have arranged for the killing of the US President and

others if necessary to achieve his objective. His actions were calculated to influence or affect the conduct of government by intimidation or coercion," it said. According to Department of Justice, his actions caused USD 4,322 in damage to the National Park Service. This amount included costs for repairing the metal bollard barriers to their original condition and ensuring structural soundness, oil and chemical removal, spill cleanup, and disposal of fluids from the crashed U-Haul.

Kandula planned the attack for several weeks. Prior to renting the truck and crashing it on the White House grounds, he made several attempts to gain access to vehicles or armed security guards. For example, on April 22, 2023, Kandula requested 25 armed guards and an armoured convoy from a security company located in Virginia, federal prosecutors said.

Biden's plainspeak on poll loss: Spent too much time on policy, not on politics

World. Joe Biden, in his final interview as the outgoing US President, asserted that he failed to sell his administration's achievements in a way that could have helped him secure enough public approval to win a second straight term in the White House. In an interview with MSNBC, Biden touched on a wide range of topics, from his successor Donald Trump to the ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas. The 82-year-old, who dropped out of the US presidential race to make way for Kamala Harris, underlined that the Democrats could have better communicated to voters on their popular programs and infrastructure projects. "If a legislation was responsible for a new bridge, let people know that this was something the Democrats did, that it was done by the party... Ironically, I almost spent too



much time on the policy and not enough time on the politics," Biden lamented.

He also highlighted that Trump's sign on stimulus payments for Covid relief also helped sway the narrative that the economy was stronger under the Republican during his first term. Even though the stimulus checks were issued under Biden's presidency, they had Trump's name on them due to his insistence on his last year in office. "It helped him (Trump) a lot, and it

undermined our ability to convince people that we were the ones that were getting this to them," Biden said.

The 2021 legislation, called the American Rescue Plan, injected \$1.9 trillion into the economy ravaged by the pandemic. Before signing off, the US President warned of tech industry "oligarchs" with tremendous influence in US politics. "If the decision is made that the multimillionaires, the super, super wealthy, the wealthiest people in the world, begin to control all the apparatuses, from the media to the economy, then who do I get to fight back for me?" Biden said. The remarks are being seen as a swipe at Trump's appointment of tech titans Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy to run a 'Department of Government Efficiency' (DOGE).

US Braces For Freezing Weather Fueled By Polar Vortex

Washington. Americans were bracing Thursday for frigid temperatures that forecasters said could produce life-threatening conditions, with Donald Trump's inauguration expected to be the coldest in 40 years. The bitter weather -- tied to an Arctic "polar vortex" blast -- is expected to bring nighttime lows as cold as minus 23 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 31 degrees Celsius) over the weekend for some of the northernmost parts of the United States.

President-elect Trump, who takes office Monday, will see his swearing-in ceremony in Washington hit by freezing temperatures and winds of up to 30 miles per hour. "It's going to be pretty gusty," said Marc Chenard, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service (NWS).

He told AFP that a "few inches" of snow is forecast on Sunday in the US capital, which is still blanketed in ice from a winter storm earlier this month. Trump's inauguration -- set to draw more than 200,000 visitors to Washington -- will go ahead under chilly conditions of

no more than 21 degrees Fahrenheit (minus six degrees Celsius), according to the NWS. If the forecast is correct, US media reported it will be the coldest inauguration since Ronald Reagan's in 1985, when the temperature was seven degrees Fahrenheit.



Chenard said central and eastern parts of the United States would face the most below average temperatures in the coming days, cooled by winds pushed south by a weakening of the polar vortex.

The polar vortex is an air mass above the North Pole, located high in the stratosphere. Humans dwell in the troposphere, and the stratosphere is just

above it. Chenard added that temperatures "could certainly be life-threatening" for some people who find themselves outdoors during the cold snap due to the risk of hypothermia. While the link between global warming and heat waves is very direct, the behavior of winter storms is governed by complex atmospheric dynamics that are more difficult to study. In December 2022, a fierce winter storm left at least 61 people dead in the United States, with some victims found outside and others in their homes or cars. The latest temperature drop comes two weeks after parts of the country were blanketed by a large swath of snow and ice, contributing to at least five deaths and disrupting travel for millions. Extreme weather has also struck the western United States, with Los Angeles ravaged by wildfires this month that left two dozen people dead and large areas of the city in ruins. Conditions have since eased and firefighters have begun making progress to contain the blazes.

China's population shrinks for 3rd straight year, posing threat to economy

Shanghai. China's population fell last year for the third straight year, its government said Friday, pointing to further demographic challenges for the world's second most populous nation, which is now facing both an ageing population and an emerging shortage of working age people. China's population stood at 1.408 billion at the end of 2024, a decline of 1.39 million from the previous year. The figures announced by the government in Beijing follow trends worldwide, but especially in East Asia, where Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong and other nations have seen their birth rates plummet. China three years ago joined Japan and most of Eastern Europe among other nations whose population is falling.



The reasons are in many cases similar: Rising costs of living are causing young people to put off or rule out marriage and child birth while pursuing higher education and careers. While people are living longer, that's not enough to keep up with rate of

new births. Countries such as China that allow very little immigration are especially at risk. China has long been among the world's most populous nations, enduring invasions, floods and other natural disasters to sustain a population that thrived on rice in the south and wheat in the north. Following the end of World War II and the Communist Party's rise to power in 1949, large families re-emerged and the population doubled in just three decades,

even after tens of millions died in the Great Leap Forward that sought to revolutionize agriculture and industry and the Cultural Revolution that followed a few years later.

After the end of the Cultural Revolution and leader Mao Zedong's death, Communist bureaucrats began to worry the country's population was outstripping its ability to feed itself and began implementing a draconian "one child policy." Though it was never law, women had to apply for permission to have a child and violators could face forced late-term abortions and birth control procedures, massive fines and the prospect of their child being deprived an identification number, effectively making them non-citizens. Rural China, where the preference for male offspring was especially strong and two children were still ostensibly allowed, became the focus of government efforts, with women forced to present evidence they were menstruating and buildings emblazoned with slogans

such as "have fewer children, have better children." The government sought to stamp out selective abortion of female children, but with abortions legal and readily available, those operating illicit sonogram machines enjoyed a thriving business.

That has been the biggest factor in China's lopsided sex ratio, with as many as millions more boys born for every 100 girls, raising the possibility of social instability among China's army of bachelors. Friday's report gave the sex imbalance as 104.34 men to every 100 women, though independent groups give the imbalance as considerably higher, one disturbing for the government was the drastically falling birthrate, with China's total population dropping for the first time in decades in 2023 and China being narrowly overtaken by India as the world's most populous nation in the same year. A rapidly aging population, declining workforce, lack of consumer markets and migration abroad are putting the system under severe pressure.

Los Angeles Fire Evacuees Told No Return For At Least A Week

Los Angeles, United States. Tens of thousands of people ordered to flee their homes as wildfires tore through Los Angeles were told Thursday they would not be allowed back for at least a week, with fears over electrocution, landslides and exposure to toxic materials. Frustration is mounting among evacuees, who are angry over rules that prevent them from returning -- even to homes that survived the deadly blazes. "There was a group chat where everyone was complaining, getting mad, saying, 'why do they keep on locking us out of our homes?'" Ronnen Miz told local broadcaster KTLA. But with 40,000 acres (16,000 hectares) burned in two ferocious fires, the situation is just too dangerous, officials said. Electricity, gas and sewage lines are wrecked, there is toxic waste everywhere, and there is a growing threat of hazardous mudslides or landslips, officials said at a news conference.

"It's going to be a while," said Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert Luna. "I'm going to say at minimum, at least another week, and that's an estimate, but I believe it's going to be longer than that." According to the latest coroner's tally, at least 27 people have died in wind-driven fires that ripped through the upmarket enclave of Pacific Palisades and the more mixed community of Altadena.

Luna said search teams were continuing to comb the rubble looking for victims, with the number of dead expected to rise. Authorities were also holding people back from some areas "because we believe there may be deceased victims" he said.

Destabilized hillsides

Teams from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) began inspections Thursday as they work to remove pesticides, fuel and lithium batteries from the wreckage before any debris clean-up can take place.

Los Angeles County Director of Public Works Mark Pestrella said apparently unaffected structures could be hit by landslides, and any substantial rain could be dangerous. "In the event that we have major rain, we do expect that all of the street areas and all the communities will be impacted by debris flows that could be hazardous to human health." Hillsides have been destabilized by the fires, and by the huge volumes of water that firefighters used in a bid to tame them.

Photographs from the Pacific Palisades area showed one home -- undamaged by the fire -- that appeared to have broken in two after the flames were extinguished when part of a hillside collapsed.

Pam Shriver

US tennis great Pam Shriver revealed on Thursday a cache of major trophies from her illustrious career were stolen after she evacuated from the fire. Shriver, 62, packed five US Open trophies, five French Open plates, five Wimbledon trophies and one Australian Open trophy into her car as she fled her Brentwood home and headed to a hotel on Friday. Some time later, she found the car -- and its irreplaceable contents -- had been stolen. "It's really sad on so many levels that when people are at their lowest and in their most difficult times, people are doing things like this," Shriver told ESPN.

NEWS BOX

Amicus curiae suggests regulatory authority for entertainment industry

KOCHI. The amicus curiae appointed by the Kerala High Court has filed a report suggesting to constitute Kerala Entertainment Industry Regulatory Authority (KEIRA), an overarching body to regulate and develop the entertainment industry. KEIRA should exercise comprehensive oversight and regulatory functions over the industry, including bodies like the Chalachitra Academy and Kerala State Film Development Corporation (KSFDC) and cinema collectives. The report stated that centralising these functions will help streamline the regulatory process while allowing for greater coordination between various stakeholders, thereby ensuring transparency, accountability, and growth within the sector. The authority ought to have a large membership, to ensure the representation of all stakeholders. The ex-officio members could be the secretary of the department of cultural affairs, Kerala, the Director of KSFDC, and a representative from the Kerala State Women's Commission. A gender-justice activist with experience in gender rights and sexual harassment cases should also be included in the authority.

KEIRA should have the authority to ensure compliance with industrial standards, codes of conduct, and applicable laws, as may be compiled in the Compliance Blueprint.

CET 2025 to be held on April 16, 17

BENGALURU. The Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) announced the dates for the Common Entrance Test (CET) and four other major professional entrance exams on Thursday. CET for professional courses including engineering and veterinary sciences, will be held on April 16 and 17, with applications open from January 23 to February 21. The Kannada Language Test for Horanadu and Gadinadu Kannadiga candidates is scheduled for April 18. For the first time, the dates for all professional entrance exams have been announced simultaneously, providing greater clarity and coordination across departments. Moreover, unlike previous years, candidates are no longer required to upload documents online, simplifying the application process. The CET scores will also be used for admissions to courses such as Yoga and Naturopathy, B-Pharma, Pharm-D, Agricultural Science, and B.Sc (Nursing). This year, a single form will be used for all courses, including medical, dental, Ayush, architecture, BPT, BPO, and allied health sciences. Candidates must register online and pay the application fee. They can log in using their own mobile number, with a one-time password (OTP) sent for authentication. Each mobile number can only be used for one registration. Caste, income certificates, and 371(J) RD numbers entered by candidates will automatically fetch reservation details. Moreover, the academic records will be fetched through the Student Achievement Tracking System (SATS).

Guntur GGH treats over 9.5 lakh patients in 2024, expands facilities

GUNTUR. Guntur Government General Hospital (GGH) has seen an overwhelming influx of patients, providing exceptional services and comfort. From January to October 2024, over 9.54 lakh patients sought medical care at the hospital, which serves not only local residents but also those from neighbouring states like Telangana, Odisha, and Bihar.

The hospital handled 6,66,232 outpatient visits, with over 3,000 patients visiting daily. To accommodate the increasing patient numbers, especially for outpatient services, six additional OP counters were added. The hospital also reported 52,288 admissions in the first 10 months of 2024. In the emergency ward, 182,415 patients accessed outpatient services, while 24,255 sought inpatient care.

Guntur GGH doctors performed a total of 23,478 surgeries in 2024, including 11,436 minor and 12,042 major surgeries. Additionally, 21,900 normal deliveries and 2,959 caesarean sections were recorded. The hospital's 1,700-strong workforce includes 350 doctors, nurses, paramedics, lab technicians, and other essential staff.

Development projects are underway, including the construction of the Mother and Child Health block and a service block. The hospital is also expanding its cancer care services at the NATCO Cancer Care Center, offering free treatment with 150 beds, ICU facilities, outpatient wards, and specialised oncology services. The hospital has invested Rs 50 crore to enhance its cancer treatment facilities, which include the Varian Vitalbeam Linear Accelerator and other modern equipment.

KIND ATTENTION RAIL PASSENGERS! KUMBH MELA SPECIAL TRAINS

For the Convenience of Rail passengers during KUMBH MELA-2025, Railways are operating several Special Trains in addition to regular trains. The date wise list of Special Trains are given below:-

SPECIAL TRAINS RUNNING ON 18.01.2025 (SATURDAY)					
Spl. Train No.	Station From	Dept. Time	Station To	Arr. Time	Stoppages
02417	Subedarganj	21:35	Delhi Jn.	08:55	Fatehpur, Govindpuri, Etawah, Tundla & Aligarh stations
02418	Delhi Jn.	09:30	Subedarganj	19:40	
04111	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	06:00	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	18:50	Prayagraj Rambag, Jhusi, Handia Khas, Gyanpur Road, Madhosingh, Banaras, Bhadohi, Janghai Jn., Mariahu, Zafarabad Jn., Shahganj Jn., Akbarpur, Goshainganj, Ayodhya, Ayodhya Cantt., Sultanpur, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh Jn., Mau Aikka, Phaphamau Jn. & Prayag Stations.
04112	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	06:30	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	21:00	
04113	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	17:30	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	07:45	Prayagraj Rambag, Jhusi, Handia Khas, Gyanpur Road, Madhosingh, Banaras, Bhadohi, Janghai Jn., Mariahu, Zafarabad Jn., Shahganj Jn., Akbarpur, Goshainganj, Ayodhya, Ayodhya Cantt., Sultanpur, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh Jn., Mau Aikka, Phaphamau Jn. & Prayag Stations.
04114	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	17:45	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	08:00	
04210	Prayagraj Sangam	11:15	Jaunpur	14:00	
04209	Jaunpur	14:15	Prayagraj Sangam	17:15	Prayag, Phaphamau, Phulpur, Janghai & Mariahu Stations.
03409	Malda Town	20:45	Prayagraj Rambag	17:15	New Farakka Jn., Barharwa Jn., Sahibganj Jn., Kahalgaoon, Bhagalpur, Sultanganj, Jamalpur Jn., Abhaipur, Kiul Jn., Mokameh, Barh, Bakhtiyarpur, Rajendra Nagar, Patna Jn., Danapur, Ara, Buxar, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Varanasi & Banaras Stations
09404	Janghai	08:30	Ahmedabad Jn.	18:00	Prayagraj, Fatehpur, Govindpuri, Etawah, Tundla, Agra Fort, Bayana, Gangapur City, Sawai Madhopur, Kota, Ramganj Mandi, Bhawani Mandi, Nagda, Ratlam, Dahod, Godhra, Chhayapuri & Anand Stations
06019	Mangaluru	04:15	Varanasi Jn.	14:50	Kasaragod, Nileshwar, Payyanur, Kannur, Thalassery, Vadakara, Kozhikode, Feroke, Tirur, Shoranur Jn., Ottappalam, Palakkad Jn., Coimbatore Jn., Tiruppur, Erode Jn., Salem Jn., Jolarpettai Jn., Katpadi Jn., Arakkonam Jn., Perambur, Gudur Jn., Nellore, Ongole, Chirala, Tenali Jn., Vijayawada Jn., Khammam, Warangal, Ramagundam, Sirpur Kagaznagar, Balharshah Jn., Chandrapur, Nagpur Jn., Itarsi Jn., Pipariya, Narsinghpur, Jabalpur Jn., Katni Jn., Maihar, Satna Jn., Manikpur Jn., Prayagraj Chheoki Jn., Mirzapur & Chunar Jn. stations.
04251	Prayag Jn.	20:30	Ayodhya Cantt.	23:55	
04252	Ayodhya Cantt.	15:45	Prayag Jn.	19:55	Phaphamau Jn., Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh Jn. & Sultanpur stations
04253	Phaphamau Jn.	11:15	Ayodhya Cantt.	14:45	
04254	Ayodhya Cantt.	06:15	Phaphamau Jn.	10:15	Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh Jn. & Sultanpur stations
04255	Prayag Jn. (Ring Rail)	05:35	Prayag Jn. (Ring Rail)	21:30	Phaphamau Jn., Mau Aikka, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh Jn., Chhibila Jn., Khundaur, Sultanpur, Kuddebar, Khajurhat, Bharatkund, Ayodhya Cantt., Salarpur, Sohawal, Devrakot, Baragaon, Rudauli, Raujagaon, Patranga, Daryabad, Saidkhanpur, Safdarganj, Rasauli, Barabanki Jn., Safedabad, Malhaur, Lucknow Jn., Utretia, Mohanlalaganj, Kankaha, Nigohan, Shrirajnagar, Bachhravan, Kuninganj, Harchandpur, Gangaganj, Rae Bareilly Jn., Rupamau, Fursatganj, Jais, Bani, Gauriganj, Talakhjuri, Amethi, Misrauli, Maa Chandika Devi Dham Antu, Jagesharganj, Chhibila Jn., Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh Jn., Shanidev Dham Bishnathganj, Mau Aikka, Sevait and Phaphamau Jn. & stations
06071	Chennai Central	14:20	Gomtinagar	14:15	Gudur Jn., Nellore, Ongole, Chirala, Tenali Jn., New Guntur, Vijayawada Jn., Khammam, Warangal, Sirpur Kagaznagar, Balharshah, Gondia Jn., Balaghat Jn., Mainpur, Jabalpur, Katni Jn., Maihar, Satna Jn., Manikpur Jn., Prayagraj Chhivki Jn., Mirzapur, Chunar Jn., Varanasi Jn. And Ayodhya Dham Jn. stations.
07107	Tirupati	20:55	Banaras	15:45	Gudur Jn., Nellore, Ongole, Chirala, Tenali Jn., Vijayawada Jn., Eluru, Tadepalligudem, Nidadavolu Jn., Rajamundry, Samalkot Jn., Annavaram, Elamanchilli, Anakapalle, Duvvada, Pendurti, Kottavalasa, Vizianagram Jn., Bobbili, Parvatipuram, Rayagada, Muniguda, Kesinga, Tittlagarh, Balangir, Bargarh Road, Sambalpur Jn., Jharsuguda Jn., Rourkela, Hatia, Ranchi, Muri Jn., Barka Kana, Tori, Latehar, Barwadih Jn., Daltonganj, Garwa Road Jn., Japla, Son Nagar, Dehri On Sone, Sasaram, Bhabua Road, Chandauli Majhwar, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Kashi & Varanasi Stations
01034	Mau Jn.	23:50	Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj(T)	14:30	Azamgarh, Shahganj Jn., Varanasi, Chunar, Mirzapur, Prayagraj Chheoki, Manikpur Jn., Satna, Maihar, Katni, Jabalpur, Narsinghpur, Pipariya, Itarsi Jn., Banapura, Harda, Khirkiya, Chhanera, Talvadya, Khandwa Jn., Bhusaval Jn., Jalgaon Jn., Manmad Jn., Nasik Road, Igatpuri, Kalyan Jn., Thane & Dadar Stations
04202	Prayagraj Sangam	12:20	Alamnagar	17:00	Prayag Jn., Kunda Harnamganj, Unchahar Jn., Rae Bareilly, Bachhravan & Utariatyia Jn. Stations
04201	Alamnagar	19:15	Prayagraj Sangam	23:25	
04206	Prayagraj Sangam	13:30	Ayodhya Cantt.	17:00	
04205	Ayodhya Cantt.	08:45	Prayagraj Sangam	12:15	Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh Jn. & Sultanpur stations
07707	Moula Ali	23:55	Azamgarh	17:15	Charlapalli, Jangaon, Kazipet Jn., Peddapalli, Manchiryal, Bellampalli, Sirpur Kagaz Nagar, Balharshah, Chandrapur, Nagpur, Itarsi, Pipariya, Narsinghpur, Jabalpur, Katni, Maihar, Satna, Manikpur, Prayagraj Chheoki, Banaras & Shahganj station.
06002	Gomtinagar	03:45	Chennai Central	23:55	Ayodhya Dham Jn., Varanasi Jn., Chunar Jn., Mirzapur, Prayagraj Chheoki Jn., Manikpur Jn., Satna Jn., Maihar, Katni Jn., Jabalpur, Nainpur, Balaghat Jn., Gondia Jn., Balharshah, Sirpur Kagaznagar, Warangal, Khammam, Vijayawada Jn., New Guntur, Tenali Jn., Chirala, Ongole, Nellore & Gudur Jn. Stations
04527	Phaphamau Jn.	22:30	Amb Andaura	17:50	Rae Bareilly Jn., Lucknow, Shahjahanpur, Bareilly Jn., Moradabad, Najibabad, Roorkee, Saharanpur, Yamunanagar Jagadhri, Ambala Cantt., Chandigarh, Morinda, Roop Nagar, Anandpur Sahib, Nangal Dam & Una Himachal Stations
04316	Dehradun	08:10	Phaphamau Jn.	23:50	Haridwar, Najibabad, Moradabad, Bareilly Jn., Lucknow & Rae Bareilly Jn. stations
04066	Delhi Jn.	23:25	Phaphamau Jn.	14:15	Ghaziabad, Hapur, Garhmuktesar, Gajraula, Amroha, Moradabad, Rampur, Bareilly Jn., Shahjahanpur, Hardoi, Lucknow & Raebareilly Jn. stations.
SPECIAL TRAINS RUNNING ON 19.01.2025 (SUNDAY)					
02418	Delhi Jn.	09:30	Subedarganj	19:40	Fatehpur, Govindpuri, Etawah, Tundla & Aligarh stations
04111	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	06:00	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	18:50	Prayagraj Rambag, Jhusi, Handia Khas, Gyanpur Road, Madhosingh, Banaras, Bhadohi, Janghai Jn., Mariahu, Zafarabad Jn., Shahganj Jn., Akbarpur, Goshainganj, Ayodhya, Ayodhya Cantt., Sultanpur, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh Jn., Mau Aikka, Phaphamau Jn. & Prayag Stations.
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04210	Prayagraj Sangam	11:15	Jaunpur	14:00	
04209	Jaunpur	14:15	Prayagraj Sangam	17:15	Prayag, Phaphamau, Phulpur, Janghai & Mariahu Stations.
09032	Ghazipur City	00:30	Udhna Jn.	12:45	Aundhihar Jn., Jaunpur, Varanasi, Chunar, Mirzapur, Prayagraj, Fatehpur, Govindpuri, Orai, Veerangana Laxmibai Jhansi, Lalitpur, Bina, Ganj Basoda, Vidisha, Sant Hirdaram Nagar, Shujalpur, Ujjain, Nagda, Ratlam, Dahod, Godhra, Vishwamitri & Bharuch Station
04251	Prayag Jn.	20:30	Ayodhya Cantt.	23:55	
04252	Ayodhya Cantt.	15:45	Prayag Jn.	19:55	Phaphamau Jn., Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh Jn. & Sultanpur stations
04253	Phaphamau Jn.	11:15	Ayodhya Cantt.	14:45	
04254	Ayodhya Cantt.	06:15	Phaphamau Jn.	10:15	Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh Jn. & Sultanpur stations
04255	Prayag Jn. (Ring Rail)	05:35	Prayag Jn. (Ring Rail)	21:30	Phaphamau Jn., Mau Aikka, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh Jn., Chhibila Jn., Khundaur, Sultanpur, Kuddebar, Khajurhat, Bharatkund, Ayodhya Cantt., Salarpur, Sohawal, Devrakot, Baragaon, Rudauli, Raujagaon, Patranga, Daryabad, Saidkhanpur, Safdarganj, Rasauli, Barabanki Jn., Safedabad, Malhaur, Lucknow Jn., Utretia, Mohanlalaganj, Kankaha, Nigohan, Shrirajnagar, Bachhravan, Kuninganj, Harchandpur, Gangaganj, Rae Bareilly Jn., Rupamau, Fursatganj, Jais, Bani, Gauriganj, Talakhjuri, Amethi, Misrauli, Maa Chandika Devi Dham Antu, Jagesharganj, Chhibila Jn., Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh Jn., Shanidev Dham Bishnathganj, Mau Aikka, Sevait and Phaphamau Jn. & stations
08562	Visakhapatnam Jn.	22:20	Gorakhpur	20:25	Vizianagaram Jn., Srikakulam Road, Palasa, Brahmapur, Chhatrapur, Balugaon, Khordha Road, Bhubaneswar, Naraj Marthapur, Dhenkanal, Angul, Boinda, Redharwol, Sambalpur City, Jharsuguda Road, Raigarh, Champa Jn., Bilaspur, Pendra Road, Anuppur, Shahdol., Umaria, Katni, Maihar, Satna, Manikpur, Prayagraj Chheoki Jn., Mirzapur, Chunar, Varanasi, Jaunpur Jn., Mau Jn. And Deoria Sadar Station.
04202	Prayagraj Sangam	12:20	Alamnagar	17:00	Prayag Jn., Kunda Harnamganj, Unchahar Jn., Rae Bareilly, Bachhravan & Utariatyia Jn. Stations
04201	Alamnagar	19:15	Prayagraj Sangam	23:25	
04206	Prayagraj Sangam	13:30	Ayodhya Cantt.	17:00	
04205	Ayodhya Cantt.	08:45	Prayagraj Sangam	12:15	Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh Jn. & Sultanpur stations
04526	Bathinda Jn.	04:30	Phaphamau Jn.	23:55	Rampura Phul, Barnala, Dhuri, Patiala, Rajpura, Ambala Cantonment, Yamunanagar Jagadhri, Saharanpur, Roorkee, Laksar, Najibabad, Moradabad, Bareilly Jn., Shahjahanpur, Hardoi, Lucknow & Rae Bareilly Jn. station
04315	Phaphamau Jn.	06:30	Dehradun	21:30	Rae Bareilly Jn., Lucknow, Bareilly Jn., Moradabad, Najibabad & Haridwar Stations
04065	Phaphamau Jn.	23:30	Delhi Jn.	13:40	Raebareilly Jn., Lucknow, Hardoi, Shahjahanpur, Bareilly Jn., Rampur, Moradabad, Amroha, Gajraula, Garhmuktesar, Hapur & Ghaziabad Stations
04662	Amritsar	20:10	Phaphamau Jn.	19:00	Beas, Jalandhar City, Dhandari Kalan, Sirhind, Rajpura, Ambala Cantt., Yamunanagar Jagadhri, Saharanpur, Deoband, Muzaffarnagar, Meerut City, Hapur, Garhmukteswar, Gajraula, Amroha, Moradabad, Rampur, Bareilly Jn., Shahjahanpur, Lucknow and Raebareilly Jn. stations
03410	Prayagraj Rambag	19:15	Malda Town	14:30	Banaras, Varanasi, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Jamalpur Jn., Sultanganj, Bhagalpur, Kahalgaoon, Sahibganj Jn., Barharwa Jn. & New Farakka Jn. Stations

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Science, secrecy and preventing the next pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic killed an estimated 7.1 million people worldwide, causing global life expectancy to decline by 1.6 years between 2019 and 2021. It disrupted economies, destroyed livelihoods and strained social cohesion in many countries. Yet, no one has been held accountable for it. Will US President-elect Donald Trump change that? Five years after the emergence of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes Covid-19), we still do not know where the pathogen first arose. Did it emerge naturally in the wet markets of Wuhan, China, or did it escape from the nearby Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), where studies on bat coronaviruses were underway?

We do know that China's government allowed what might have been a local outbreak to morph into a global health crisis. After the first Covid-19 cases were reported in Wuhan, Chinese President Xi Jinping's regime censored reports about the disease and hid evidence of human-to-human transmission for weeks. Meanwhile, travel to and from Wuhan was allowed to continue unhindered. Unlike the Muslim Gulag in Xinjiang province or the naval-base construction in the South China Sea, however, the Chinese authorities could not conceal the "novel coronavirus" for long, nor could the rest of the world ignore it once the secret was out. So many people contracted Covid-19 so quickly that many hospitals were soon overwhelmed, leaving many victims to be treated in tents. China's government then shifted from concealment to damage control. State media reframed the crisis in Wuhan as a story of successful recovery, while touting unrealistically low mortality rates. Meanwhile, Xi thwarted international efforts to initiate an independent forensic inquiry into Covid-19's genesis, which, he claimed, would amount to "origin-tracing terrorism." The only "investigation" he allowed was a 2021 joint study with the World Health Organisation that China controlled and steered.

While Trump, who was President for the first few months of the pandemic, often highlighted the link between China and Covid-19, his successor Joe Biden effectively let China off the hook. Less than a week after his inauguration, Biden produced a presidential memorandum urging federal agencies to avoid mentioning the virus' geographic origins.

Biden's goal was to stem a rise in bullying, harassment and hate crimes against Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders. The toxicity of America's partisan politics meant that pushing back against racism — which Trump and his cohort often stoked — also meant shutting down any discussion of China's role in causing the crisis.

Social-media platforms, mainstream media and some prominent US scientists (who hid their conflicts of interest) also aided the suppression of debate about Covid-19. The partisan divide over whether to investigate China's responsibility for Covid-19 persists to this day. Just last month, Democrats challenged a 520-page report — produced by the Republican-controlled US House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus pandemic — which concluded, after a two-year investigation, that the virus likely escaped from the WIV, faulting the report's methodology. So, while some US government agencies — including the Department of Energy and the FBI — have given credence to the lab-leak theory, there remains no consensus in Washington. Failure to get to the bottom of where Covid-19 originated may not only allow China to evade responsibility; it will also weaken the world's ability to prevent another global pandemic. But there is reason to hope that the incoming Trump administration will revive the search for an answer. Beyond Trump's own willingness to point the finger at China, some of his Cabinet picks — notably, Robert F Kennedy, Jr, as Secretary of Health and Human Services and Jay Bhattacharya as Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) — have challenged prevailing narratives about Covid-19 (albeit sometimes in dangerous ways).

With the largest museum, Raisina Hill to be a cultural beacon

India's most ambitious museum project will both be a challenge and a historic moment to showcase 'the timeless and eternal India.'

SOON, the burra sahibs of the British Raj, once ensconced in the North and South Blocks atop the magnificent Raisina Hill, will squirm in their graves as their crown-crested chairs will be replaced by iconic Indian antiquities, like the Dancing Harappan Girl and the Chola Nataraja, among myriad others.

The upcoming National Museum (replacing the existing one) of India, to be called Yuga Yugeen Bharat (meaning 'the timeless and eternal India') Museum (YYM), is set to come up at the North and South Blocks as part of the Central Vista Redevelopment Project in New Delhi. The museum, making adaptive reuse of the existing structures, spreading over 1,54,000 sq m and having 950 rooms, will be the largest museum in the world. "It will be bigger than the British Museum in London and the Grand Louvre in Paris, which covers around 70,000 square metres," says a government note. This magnum opus would make India sit on the high table of culture in the world. However, the humongous task of setting up of such an ambitious and gigantic museum is at once exciting and challenging. It's not a simple task of commissioning a new building designed to a programme. It's a project to retrofit two separate blocks that have been built in hybrid neoclassical styles and for use as offices by our colonial masters. Converting them into a world class state-of-the-art national museum is a daunting task.

The challenges are at multiple levels, both functional and aesthetic. They entail massive architectural modifications and refurbishing of interior spaces to function as museum galleries. They will call for the best Indologists, museum exhibitors, art scholars, interior designers and numerous other related art experts to curate the content, to tell the narrative in an engaging, imaginative and interactive mode.

What is a museum? It comes from the Greek word mouseion. It was used for ancient temples dedicated to the Muses, the patron goddesses of arts and sciences. The concept of the museum as a place for the public developed slowly. "Enlightenment ideals and values — critical scrutiny of all assumptions, open debate, scientific research, progress and

tolerance — have marked the museum since its foundation," says Susan A Sternau, an art historian.

There are numerous examples across the world of existing spaces being converted into museums. The two most iconic museums — the Louvre and Musee d'Orsay of Paris — were originally a palace and a railway station, respectively. While the Louvre is famous for its star exhibit of Mona Lisa painting by Leonardo da Vinci, the Orsay is redolent with its biggest collection of Claude Monets, Camille Pissarros and other world famous Impressionist

will now be a temple of art, culture, democracy and diversity. Anyone passing by Vijay Chowk will view the YYM looming large, like a latter day Acropolis, as an embodiment of antique, beautiful and civilisational jewels of India. It will be the biggest gesture of decolonisation and dismantling of the erstwhile ensemble of brute Imperial power by the soft power of a nation aspiring to be Vishvaguru to a world torn asunder by wars, conflicts and confrontations. It will also equip the high-security, 'no-entry' zone of the North and South Blocks with a

magnificent plaza between the two, which will be accessible to the public, enabling an upfront view of the magnificent Indo-Saracenic hybrid architecture of Edwin Landseer Lutyens and Herbert Baker. The present cold space of state power will become a people's plaza — alive with art, colour and vibrancy that museum precincts the world over generate. The imposing challenge of the project will be the retrofitting of the nearly 100-year-old buildings, ensuring structural safety for the country's jewels of antiquity and civilisational wealth for another 100 years. All building services will need to be upgraded to the state-of-the-art levels, without tampering with or damaging the heritage interiors. Many clusters of smaller office rooms and

warrens of service areas will have to be merged to create larger gallery spaces to showcase the priceless exhibits.

The YYM agenda is ambitious. Union Minister of Culture and Minister of Tourism Gajendra Singh Shekhawat states that it will "transcend the traditional museum experience and embody the spirit of inclusivity. It will be a museum of the people, centring community narratives — a testament to India's legacy as the mother of democracy." In this context, the ministry recently organised an inter-ministerial stakeholder consultation and capacity-building workshop. India and France have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the development of the project as France is renowned for its expertise in such projects — exemplified by the Louvre, the Grand Palais, and the Hotel de la Marine.



artists. The Tate Modern at London, standing along River Thames, was created by converting an old derelict power station into an imaginative museum by architects Herzog and de Meuron. Before the 20th century, the preferred style for museums was neoclassical or Renaissance, celebrating grandeur and ceremonial language to convey its role as a temple of art. Museum design is a specialised field and some architects of the 20th century have created masterpieces of modern architecture. Museums, like the Guggenheim in New York designed by iconic architect Frank Lloyd Wright and the one at Bilbao by Frank Gehry, are works of sculptural art by themselves. For the YYM project, let's examine the advantages first. The location is near perfect. For, what can be a symbolically more powerful message than that India holds its cultural and civilisational richness at the highest level, above the axis of state power, at Kartavya Path? The seat of Imperial hubris

India's dope shame

Zero tolerance must be the norm at all levels

Doping continues to cast a long shadow on sports in India. The country has earned the dubious distinction of being second among nations with the most number of athletes currently ineligible to participate in international events. Adille Sumariwalla, outgoing president of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI), believes there is a silver lining to this dark cloud — more cheats are getting caught because greater testing is being done. However, the risk of being named, shamed and penalised is not outweighing the temptation to enhance one's performance fraudulently. The level of deterrence remains low, even as unscrupulous elements keep trying out new ways to game the system. It's not enough for the national federation to have zero tolerance for doping. Strictness and transparency must percolate down to the district level, where the menace widely persists. If



Sumariwalla is to be believed, district coaches are themselves supplying banned substances to up-and-coming players for short-term gains. It is commendable that the Haryana Sports Department,

roused to action by

The Tribune's damning report on drug use during a boxing championship in Hisar, has warned that federations or associations would be suspended if doping occurs at any event organised by them. The message is loud and clear: sports bodies must face the music if they fail to weed out the black sheep.

Unfortunately, once sportspersons get used to taking drugs and getting away with it, they rarely try to mend their ways. Hard work and self-belief — two of the most potent tools to excel in sports — are sacrificed at the altar of unfair means. The state of affairs can improve if the evil is nipped in the bud; the earlier the clean-up happens, the better. A country aspiring to host the Olympics can't afford to suffer the fate of Russia, which has become a global outcast in the sporting arena mainly due to rampant doping. a

Turbulence awaits India in Trump zone

There is uncertainty over whether his MAGA push will help Make India Great Again

DURING the US presidential election campaign, the commentariat in India was generally of the opinion that a second Trump presidency would be beneficial for India. Much hope was invested in the so-called personal chemistry and bonhomie between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Donald Trump. As events have unfolded over the past few weeks, it would appear that New Delhi now awaits Trump a bit nervously. Much has been made of Trump's early invitation to Chinese President Xi Jinping to attend his inauguration. It took some diplomatic effort on External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's part to ensure that at least he received an invitation. More worrying, however, are Trump's remarks about trade, tariffs and immigration. Along with the rest of the world, India is getting prepared for a period of turbulence in the bilateral relationship as well as in global geopolitics. Evan Feigenbaum, vice-president of Washington DC-based think tank Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and a former member of the George W Bush administration, warns that Asian governments and markets should be prepared for Trump-induced turbulence. "Geopolitically, Asian governments, firms and especially markets should prepare to face a whirlwind of strategic turbulence," says Feigenbaum. Jaishankar's last air dash to Washington helped get the outgoing national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, to New Delhi. That visit sought to inject new energy into a sagging affair. During his proposed visit to Washington DC this weekend, the foreign minister will seek to inject even more energy into the relationship. Such activism draws attention to the concern with anticipated turbulence. In recent weeks, many within the ruling establishment

in India have complained about the anti-India stratagems of the so-called American "deep state", including influential individuals like George Soros. This kind of talk emanating from within the Sangh Parivar betrays nervousness in New Delhi despite the confidence exuded by diplomats and officials. At least one reason for this would be the uncertainty about the answer to a simple question — will MAGA help MIGA? Trump's promise for his second presidency is primarily to Make America Great Again (MAGA). Modi's promise to India has been MIGA — Make India Great Again. In the past, especially in the early years of the US-India strategic partnership during the tenures of President George W Bush and Prime Ministers Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh, the template was that it would be in US interest to help India's rise. It is his view, especially on the part of President Bush and his advisers that facilitated the US-India civil nuclear agreement. This view had to contend with doubts within the American establishment as to where India stood on matters of interest to the US. Doubts regarding the latter were renewed after India played footsie with Vladimir Putin following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In the United States, three schools of thought contend with each other on the US-India relationship. These can be classified as ideological, realist and transactional. The ideological school, never a decisive voice, has always placed great emphasis on the fact that India is a democracy and that its rise as a plural democracy is in the interests of the US. The West fought Soviet communism during the Cold War and now responds to Chinese authoritarianism. In both battles, the empowerment of a democratic India was viewed as a

global public good. The realist view situates US-India relations within a global balance of power perspective that sees a stronger India as a helpful balancer against an aggressive and assertive China, at least within Asia. The fact is that US-India ties have improved over the past two decades against the backdrop of China's rise. Hence, both the ideological



and the realist views have contributed to an improvement in US-India relations, with the American establishment viewing India's rise as being in its own interest and a positive development in itself. Making India Great Again suited US interests as long as India was viewed as an emerging counterforce to China. By contrast, the purely transactional view that Trump opted for during his first tenure has insistently asked the question, 'what's in it for me?' Entering his second term Trump now asks that question with renewed vigour and force and

the question is asked of the world as a whole, India included. The rise of transactionalism over realism means India has to show what it can do to MAGA for the US to do something to MIGA. Even though such transactionalism is associated with the first Trump presidency, it found new takers within the Biden administration after India went along with Russia in the wake of the Ukraine war. A growing number of officials within the Biden administration also became transactional and kept ticking off points as to what India was doing for or against US interests. Expect more of that going forward. Faced with such transactionalism, it would seem, India has hedged its bets by stabilising relations with both Russia and China. Some analysts have expressed the hope that Trump may improve relations with Russia and that would in turn enable India to retain that relationship while continuing to deal with China. Whatever the facts, the point is that it will take time before some stability returns to the US-India relationship. Indeed, this would be true even for US relations with key allies and neighbours. Everyone is waiting and watching to see how much of Trumpism is bluff and bluster and how much he means business.

Even as India hopes to stabilise and improve its relationship with the US, it has to be prepared for the anticipated turbulence. After all, Trump's basic and fundamental policy objective will remain America First. The US is determined to retain its dominant global position, secure control over the trans-Atlantic alliance and ensure that allies spend more on their defence so that it can focus its resources on making its own economy more globally competitive and dominant.

Compact space solutions for Your Interiors



While, we all complain of builders wasting spaces and the very fact that most houses in Mumbai are anything but spaced-out, not many people experiment with compact interior solutions.

Big-size couches, antique dining tables that take up a lot of space and unnecessary shelves and cupboards that leave our homes with little place to walk, is how most houses look. Here's a look at some compact housing solutions that can be easily adapted without making major changes along with being pocket-friendly.

The foldables

One of the best ways to save space is to have a lot of foldable furniture in the house. Hydraulics is the solution; and it is the best option for those who face the challenge to accommodate more in less. From hydraulic beds with internal storage that can be folded to fit into a wardrobe, to foldable tables can be brought down whenever needed, you have several choices. In fact, these foldable furniture pieces, if properly made, can look extremely stylish. Although, it is mostly wrought iron that is used to design hydraulic furniture, considering it's safe, wood, too, can be used to make lighter stuff like tables, etc.

Drawers et al

We all have a fetish for collectibles, however, it becomes slightly difficult to give every piece its right visibility, due to lack of space. This is when drawers come



to the rescue. You can make drawers anywhere in the house, be it your TV cabinet to the gaps in your couch. In fact, a very smart way to store a large number of things is to make a floor drawer. Just give a slight elevation to a certain section of your house, either for the sitting area or the dining space, and the elevation can be converted into a spacious drawer. Solid wood seaters with storage can also be used to store stuff like cushion covers and coasters while chests can be used as coffee tables.

Adjustable kitchen

Service windows are a great way to save space because not only do they serve as a quick option to transfer food from the kitchen to the dining area, but also serve as a potential dining table when needed. Attach a foldable table to your service window and it can well serve as a dining table. Bring in a few chairs and you are set. Two long-stem bar chairs can also be accommodated inside a cabinet that fits right under your kitchen service window to make it a live bar counter when required. Also, make sure you have several layers of shelves and drawers in your kitchen, so the you utilise the horizontal as well as vertical space properly.

Bring it in

Remove flower beds and accommodate them in the room, this will help proper utilisation of space, as walls use a considerable amount of space. You can either have a single chair hammock in the extension, that overlooks the surroundings or single cane baithaks that use less space. Moreover, you can also use it to store things that are less important like bills, envelops, etc. by setting up vertical wall-mounted hydraulic drawers that take very less space and can be easily hidden behind side curtains.

Wardrobe wall-function

We all like stylish wardrobes, however, a wardrobe is something that occupies a lot of space. A wall cavity is a smart solution

to accommodate a huge wardrobe. It would hardly take two to three inches of floor space for the doors (preferably sliders) and would allow enough usage of space. You can make a similar set-up for your washing machine and dishwasher, especially if you are not blessed with extra drying space. A wall cavity either in your kitchen or the corridor next your bathroom can accommodate them easily, without restricting movement.

Inside out

This is the most interesting piece of compact furniture. A set of round or square coffee table and four well fitted seaters inside it will help you make the right utilisation of space. You can either sit down and use it as low dining or coffee table or just pull out the seaters (with storage of course) when you have more heads.

Tip: Make sure you have large French windows in every room. They make the house look spacious and beautiful since they usually overlook the surroundings outside. Also, use colours like ivory white or beige, as they attract sunlight to make you home look visibly bigger.



7 things to help organise Your living area

If you have been thinking to renovate your home and get rid of the clutter for the longest time, then this is the right time to start.

However, if do not want to spend a lot and still want your house to look organised, then here's a tip. Just get rid of these seven simple things and you can change the look of your living room instantly.

1. Bills, envelopes and invites

Most living rooms have a stack of unimportant papers lying everywhere. From various utility bills to credit card statements, and from envelopes to wedding invites, we always tend to dump all this on our coffee table or our TV cabinet in the living room. Get rid of empty envelopes and bills older than three years, and organise the rest in drawers, so that they're hidden.

2. Extra cushions

Cushions lend a sense of style to the living room; vibrant coloured and abstract design cushions help the living area come to life. However, too much of anything is a bad idea. Do not overcrowd

your living rooms with cushions, limit them to your couch or a baithak. Don't overdo it by keeping them on chairs, window seats, recliners or by simply increasing their number.

3. Big-size music system and CDs

That big four-CD-changer home theatre system with four massive speakers covering a complete wall of your living room, might have emotional value, but it definitely adds to the clutter. Simply replace it with a sleek sound bar that would be hardly noticed but has effective sound quality, and you will notice that the room looks less cluttered.

4. Candles

You definitely had a romantic evening in mind when you picked up those scented candles. However, they are now lying unattended in various corners coated with loads of dust. Get rid of those candles and buy lights that are easy to clean and can be

used for a longer duration. Make sure they are all hanging lights so that the floor remains de-cluttered.

5. Bean bags

A lot of people buy bean bags to create a relaxed sitting arrangement, however, they are rendered redundant after a while as they trigger back problems. They then just lie there in clumps, occupying a lot of space and we end up dumping things on bean bags which adds to the clutter. Make way for a smart pair of antique wooden or recliners that will occupy less space and will prove useful as well.

6. Artificial plants

This is one of the most useless things in anybody's living room, as they do not add any charm to the room whatsoever. In fact, Feng Shui and vastu experts warn about keeping artificial plants in homes as they have some kind of negative energy. Get rid of them as they attract a lot of dust and occupy unwanted space. Invest in real plants instead.

7. Miniature artifacts



Not many people can maintain art-house like interiors, as it needs a lot of cleaning. Miniature artifacts and handicrafts enhance the look of your living room and make it look arty. These objects makes your house look

dingy and unkempt if they are not dusted and maintained from time to time. If de-cluttering your house means having a clear space, then miniature artifacts need to be got rid off. In fact, a less-cluttered house looks bigger and better.

Dense Fog Continues To Blanket Delhi, Over 100 Flights, 27 Trains Delayed

►A thick blanket of fog continued to blanket Delhi on Friday, reducing visibility and delaying more than 100 flights and over 20 train operations.

New Delhi. A thick blanket of fog continued to blanket Delhi on Friday, reducing visibility and delaying more than 100 flights and over 20 train operations. Officials said that at least 130 flights are running late this morning as the visibility across the national capital dropped between zero to 200 meters. The Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL), in an update, said the flights that are not CAT III compliant may get impacted. It also advised passengers to contact the airline concerned for updated flight information.

"While landing and take-offs continue at Delhi Airport, flights that are not CAT III compliant may get affected. Passengers are requested to contact the airline concerned for updated flight information. Any inconvenience caused is deeply regretted," it said in a post on X. IndiGo also issued an advisory saying, "Due to foggy conditions in Delhi, low visibility may lead to changes in flight schedules. We request

you to stay updated on your flight status before heading to the airport." At least 27 trains heading towards Delhi were delayed, officials said. According to the System of Air Quality and



Weather Forecasting and Research, the air quality index (AQI) stood at 294 this morning in the 'poor' category. An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200

'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'.

Visuals show the national capital covered in fog. GRAP 4 revoked Delhi's AQI touched the 'severe plus' category last year post-Diwali, forcing the authorities to impose the fourth and last stage of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP).

Since then, the capital has been witnessing the imposition and revoking of the Stage 3 and 4 of GRAP.

On Thursday, the government re-imposed Stage 4 of GRAP after a thick smog enveloped the national capital, reducing visibility to zero. However, it was revoked a day later after light rain improved air quality in the region. According to the GRAP sub-committee, they revoked the GRAP 4 rules considering its disruptive nature that impacts a large number of stakeholders and the public at large. But the GRAP 3 will remain in effect.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted a mostly clear sky for Friday with dense fog in the morning.

Farmers To Resume Delhi March From Shambhu Border On January 21

New Delhi. A group of 101 farmers will make a fourth attempt to reach Delhi by crossing the Shambhu border (Punjab-Haryana) on January 21, aiming to press for their demands, which include a legal guarantee for Minimum Support Price (MSP) on crops. The group, known as "Marjeevadas" (those willing to sacrifice their lives), has previously attempted to march to Delhi three times but faced resistance from authorities.

The farmers' earlier efforts to march to Delhi on December 6, 8, and 14 last year were thwarted by the Haryana Police and paramilitary forces. These forces used tactics such as tear gas, water cannons, and pepper sprays to disperse the protesters. As a result, nearly 50 farmers were injured during these confrontations. Despite the challenges, the farmers have remained steadfast in their demands.

This new "Delhi Chalo" march, which is set for January 21, has been announced jointly by the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM) and the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM), both non-political farmer organizations. KMM convener Sarwan Singh Pandher stated that the group does not believe the Union government is willing to engage in meaningful discussions. "It is now up to the government to either fulfil our demands or kill us," he said, reaffirming the urgency of their cause. Pandher also clarified that despite earlier promises by BJP leaders allowing farmers to march on foot to Delhi (as opposed to using tractors), the farmers were still obstructed by the Haryana Police and central authorities. He has called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi to permit peaceful protests, allowing the farmers to continue their fight for a legal guarantee on MSP.

Leadership and Support

The upcoming march will be led by farmer leaders Manjit Singh Rai and Balwant Singh Behramke, both prominent figures in the movement. Their commitment to the cause remains unwavering, as they join the group of 101 "Marjeevadas" ready to risk their lives for their demands. The decision to proceed with the January 21 march follows closely after another significant protest action. A group of 111 farmers initiated a fast-unto-death near Khanauri, located on the Haryana side of the border, to show solidarity with farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal.

Delhi HC reserves order on plea for tabling of CAG reports

NEW DELHI. The Delhi High Court on Thursday reserved its verdict on a petition moved by the BJP demanding a special session of the Assembly to table several Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) reports. The plea, filed by Leader of Opposition Vijender Gupta and six BJP MLAs – Mohan Singh Bisht, Om Prakash Sharma, Ajay Kumar Mahawar, Abhay Verma, Anil Kumar Bajpai, and Jitendra Mahajan – seeks directives for the timely tabling of the CAG reports. Justice Sachin Datta, presiding over the case heard the arguments made by Senior Advocate Mahesh Jethmalani



for the petitioners, alongside representatives of the Delhi government and the Assembly Speaker.

In earlier proceedings, the court criticised the Delhi government for delaying the presentation of the CAG reports, labeling the inaction as "unfortunate."

The bench questioned whether a mandamus could compel the Speaker to summon a special session, especially with impending elections. The plea sought direction to the Delhi government and Chief Minister to expedite the submission of the 14 CAG reports on finance, pollution, administration, and liquor to the Assembly Speaker. They also called for a special assembly session to table these reports.

In an earlier plea, BJP MLAs sought presentation of these reports to L-G Saxena.

Delhi's Bawana residents threaten election boycott over waste-to-energy plant

NEW DELHI. The proposed waste-to-energy (WTE) plant in Bawana has ignited protests among local residents who have raised environmental and health concerns. With Assembly elections round the corner, many have warned of a poll boycott if the project goes forward. The plant is designated to come up on a 15-acre site near a hazardous waste Treatment, Storage, and Disposal Facility in DSIDC Sector 5.

Residents from over 15 nearby villages claim the project will worsen pollution, destroy trees, and pose severe health risks, including respiratory ailments and neurological disorders. "Our area is already grappling with pollution from the factories and other WTE plants. This project will only make things worse," said local resident Akshay Mehta. Locals are particularly alarmed about toxic emissions, such as dioxins, furans, and heavy metals, and alleged mismanagement of ash and waste from the plant. "The Okhla WTE plant has left behind hazardous ash and polluted the environment. We can't let the same happen here," said Manoj Tiwari, a farmer from Narela.

Environmentalists have criticised the over-reliance on incineration, pointing to systemic failures in Delhi's waste management practices. Residents are also concerned about the potential destruction of mature trees at the site. "These trees are vital for the local ecosystem. Cutting them down for another polluting project is unacceptable," said Kavita Singh, a local activist. A public hearing by the Delhi Pollution Control Committee on December 27 saw thousands of residents gather to oppose the project. Many feared the site would turn into another dumping ground. "Promises of pollution control efforts have been made before, but they've failed every time," said Ramesh Jain, a community leader. Project officials have assured residents that the plant would feature advanced pollution controls, create jobs, and benefit local businesses. With elections nearing, the proposed plant remains a contentious issue. Residents insist their demands must be addressed or they will boycott the February 5 polls.

Republic Day: In a first, armed forces to showcase combined tri-services tableau

NEW DELHI. For the first time in the history of India's Republic Day celebrations, there will be no separate tableaux for the Army, Navy, and Air Force. In a significant shift, the focus this year will be on a combined tri-services tableau, emphasising the theme of jointness and synergy among the Armed Forces. This landmark decision is part of broader efforts by the Ministry of Defence and the Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS) to promote better coordination and understanding among the three services. The tri-services tableau, curated by HQ IDS, aims to symbolise the unity and integration of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, reflecting their collective strength and shared vision for national

security. The move aligns with recent initiatives to foster jointness within the armed forces, including the decision to assign Aides-

cooperation, laying the groundwork for a more unified defence structure in India.

The combined tableau is expected to highlight key elements of the three services, showcasing their modernisation, achievements, and collaborative capabilities. By presenting a unified front, the Armed Forces aim to demonstrate their commitment to working together as a cohesive force to safeguard the nation's interests. This decision is a testament to the Armed Forces' evolving approach to operational synergy, which is crucial for addressing modern security challenges. The combined tableau at the Republic Day Parade is not just a change in presentation but a strong message of unity and jointness at the core of India's defence strategy.



de-Camp (ADCs) from alternate services to the respective Chiefs of Staff of the three services. These steps mark a shift towards seamless integration and inter-service

cooperation, laying the groundwork for a more unified defence structure in India.

The combined tableau at the Republic Day Parade is not just a change in presentation but a strong message of unity and jointness at the core of India's defence strategy.

Supreme Court pauses order directing rollout of Ayushman Bharat scheme in Delhi

New Delhi. The Supreme Court on Friday paused a Delhi High Court order that directed the Delhi government to sign an agreement with the Centre for the implementation of the Ayushman Bharat scheme in the national capital. The top court's order came while hearing a plea filed by the Delhi government against the direction of the Delhi High Court, that directed the AAP government to sign an MoU with the Centre for the rollout of the Ayushman Bharat scheme.

While appearing before the Supreme Court, Delhi government's lawyer, Abhishek Manu Singhvi, said that the High Court re-defined the power-sharing between the Centre and Delhi government. "They can't force me. How can the High Court force me on policy matters to sign MoU

with the central government?" Singhvi said while appearing before the top court. The Delhi government has opposed the implementation of the



Centre's Ayushman Bharat scheme in the national capital, saying that it would "amount to downgrading the healthcare initiatives already in place".

Under the government's flagship Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY), seniors above the age of 70 are entitled to cashless health coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh per family per year. It covers hospitalisation expenses for a wide range of conditions, including major surgeries, chronic illness treatments, and specialised healthcare services that tend to become more essential as one ages. Once enrolled, beneficiaries can access treatments without paying out-of-pocket at empanelled hospitals.

The scheme covers more than 1,500 procedures, including knee and hip replacements, cardiac surgery, and cancer treatments. Covers secondary and tertiary care, helping older adults manage both minor and critical conditions.

Maha Kumbh 2025: Spiritual Guru Jaya Kishori Takes Dip In Prayagraj, Shares "Happiness" Mantra

Speaking to spiritual orator and motivational speaker Jaya Kishori urged youth to attend Maha Kumbh for a positive and enriching experience.

New Delhi. Spiritual orator and motivational speaker Jaya Kishori has appealed to the youth to experience the Maha Kumbh at Sangam to "achieve peace, happiness and bliss". In an exclusive interview with NDTV on the sidelines of Maha Kumbh 2025 in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj, Ms Kishori shared her "surreal" experience of taking a dip

in the Sangam for the first time. She believes she is "blessed" to do "Amrit Snan". Before the Snan (bath), Ms Kishori experienced a mix of nervousness and excitement but tension vanished as soon as she took the dip, she said, and added, "You feel calmness from within. You feel a different kind of energy within you, a positive one, and I think this is what every youth is struggling towards."

Ms Kishori said that today's youth want permanent happiness. "What we call in our shastras, anand; not maza or masti, anand. If you want that, please attend these kinds of things... You will find something very different, but a very positive and enriching experience."

Maha Kumbh, the world's largest gathering of humanity, began on January 13 and will culminate on February 26. Held once every 12 years, people attend Maha Kumbh to take a dip

in the sacred waters, believed to wash away sins and purify the soul. This year, Maha Kumbh is expected to host around 45 crore people over the 45 days



celebration.

In October last year, Ms Kishori received huge backlash for carrying a custom Dior "Book Tote" worth over Rs. 2 lakh. Known for her teachings on non-materialism and spiritual growth, Ms Kishori spoke about blending

materialism with spirituality and gave an example of Arjuna. "In Bhagavad Gita, not once Arjuna said that you have to leave everything or you have to leave the kingdom. He was taught to fight and live up to his dharma (religion). And, his dharma was to fight. If you are a student, your dharma is to study. Not that you don't have to earn money through that. Everybody is working towards money," she said. Ms Kishori further explained that one has two options after student life - grihastha (householder) and vairagya (detachment). "If you are opting for grihastha, you should have a materialistic life. Buying something is not a problem. It is when things buy you. With money, you can take your country forward. But keep spirituality with you." In March 2024, the spiritual orator received the 'Best Creator Award for Social Change' from Prime Minister Narendra Modi. She was praised for blending modernism with spirituality.

Thunderstorms and rain likely to continue in Delhi till Sunday, predicts IMD

NEW DELHI. A spell of overnight rain witnessed in Delhi, Noida, Ghaziabad and other places in the National Capital Region on Thursday intensified the cold weather conditions, further bringing down the temperature. Delhi is likely to experience light rain and thunderstorms till Sunday, according to a forecast by the India Meteorological Department (IMD). The city's minimum temperature on Thursday hovered around 12.05°C and maximum temperature at 21.41°C. The minimum and maximum temperatures are expected to settle around 8 and 19 degrees Celsius, respectively, on Friday.

Delhi's primary weather station at Safdarjung recorded 3.7 mm of rainfall. Among other weather stations, Palam recorded 8.6 mm rainfall, Pusa 7.5 mm, and Mayur Vihar 4 mm. The IMD has issued yellow alert across Delhi, predicting light rain, smog and shallow fog in the morning hours until Sunday. Cloudy conditions are also likely to persist on Friday.

The Centre's panel on air quality revoked curbs under stage 4 of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) amid dip in pollution levels following rain. Stage 4 curbs include a ban on all construction activities, entry of non-essential polluting trucks, and mandatory shifting of school classes. The curbs were imposed on Wednesday as calm winds, low temperatures and foggy conditions allowed accumulation of pollutants in the region, with the AQI clocking 396 on Wednesday evening.

Paint Your house Green this winter



Love plants, but not sure if you can maintain them with ease? Ashok kumar mundetiya tells you how to add an extra edge to your balcony garden and interiors this season...

The glory of gardening: hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature. To nurture a garden is to feed not just on the body, but the soul. With space being a rarity these days, it is difficult to dream of a garden space — more so, if you are staying in a small apartment. But fear not! For terrace garden — big or small — is a wonderful way to add colour to your otherwise dull life. You can just sit there, listen to music, read books or simply pull up a couch to lie down and soak in the natural beauty. Low space in metros and big cities has also compelled plant lovers to grow vegetables on their balconies. It is not only a great stress-buster, but the benefits of consuming home-grown vegetables also compensate for the time spent on pruning it. But wait... Before you start painting your house green, a few things should be taken into account, because no matter how much you care, your plants aren't going to thrive if you are ignorant of their specific needs. CT provides the basic guidelines to beginners...

Know your plants

Before adding a plant to your potted collection, it is advisable to ask an expert at a nursery about the conditions the plant needs. "It's usually much easier to grow plants that do well in your region, temperature and soil. For instance, don't

try to grow a flower like a rose — which requires six hours in the sun — on a porch that gets sunlight only for an hour in the morning. While it's important to maintain a steady temperature for indoor plants, a terrace garden needs adequate sunlight. Again, if you notice your plant becoming thin and reaching out toward the light, it needs to be closer to sunshine," informs AB Karmakar, executive/ administrator for The Globe Nursery on Lindsay Street.

Maintenance of indoor plants

- Most indoor plants do best in partial shade, which works out well since indoor areas don't usually get direct sunlight. Keep this in mind before you decide to put a potted plant in a place where it will get hours of direct sunlight; you may end up exposing it for too long.
- One must select the right size of the pots. For indoor plants, go for pots either 4 inches or 6 inches in size. Allow enough space for the roots to grow. Make sure the pots are light and strong, so as to hold the plant for a long time.
- Place plastic saucers under the pots to avoid soil and water spillage.
- Ficus Elastica, Areca Palm, a variety of philodendron or dracaena are best suited for indoors. These plants can do without sunlight for 7-10 days with minimum requirement of water.

Water the plants carefully

"Water the plants as and when required. Many first-time gardeners or potted plant owners water plants more than necessary, believing that the more water the plant gets, the better they grow. While it holds true for certain plants, it can kill others," suggests Dr SL Rahman, consultant at Agri-Horticultural Society of India.

Kitchen garden in pots

- If you thought a kitchen garden only works in bigger houses, you are highly mistaken. Get creative. Don't throw away buckets, containers etc. Use them along with hanging baskets for smaller plants. You can even

- Do not use soil from the garden. It can be filled with weed seeds, insects, and fungal diseases. It is better and easier to buy readymade potting soil (a mixture comprising clay, bone dust, vermicompost, neem cake and mustard cake) from the local nursery. You can also go for coco peat, which are made from coconut husks and is a medium for growing plants.
- Get various seedlings from the nursery. Remove the plants from its nursery container. Never pull a plant out by its stem. If it is stuck, tap the sides of the pot to loosen it. Gently tease the ends of the roots free before planting it in the bigger pot.
- For the proper growth of vegetables in your balcony, the pot size should be between 8-10 inches.
- Make one or more drain holes in the pot. Place small chips right over them so that they don't clog and excess water can pass through.
- Do not pile soil on top of the plant; make sure the stem is completely above the surface. Leave about an inch between the soil surface and the rim of the pot.
- All vegetable plants need constant moisture. Some plants need water on a daily basis.

Veggies for beginners

Coriander: How many times did you get sad looking at half-dried coriander leaves (dhania) in the market? Coriander is something that is used in everyday cuisine to spice it up. And that makes it a must-grow for every kitchen garden. The seed is technically a fruit containing two seeds in it. When split, it increases the germination rate since it scarifies the seed. Take a tray with potting mix filled up to half inch from the top. Then make rows by drawing a line with your index finger or a stick. Simply sow the split coriander seeds in each row. Once done, water them and wait! It starts germinating between 5-7 days.

Potatoes: Plant potatoes during late February and March. When the green shoots begin to appear above the soil, cover them with more compost. You only need remember to water them. After 10 to 20

weeks, dig around in the soil to collect your home-grown potatoes!

Peas: It's a trouble-free crop that enjoys cooler weather. Sow them in the pots between March and June. Erect some sticks or posts for support. You'll be amazed at how good fresh peas taste and the more that you pick them, the more they produce!

Tomato: With a little water and a lot of sun, tomato plants are quick to grow. Roots of a tomato plant grow deeper into the soil. So, choose a bush variety like 'Cherry Cascade' that can be planted in hanging baskets and window boxes. Just cut a tomato into four pieces and bury it about 1/2 an inch into the soil. Wait for 3-4 weeks for the seeds to start sprouting.

Cucumber: These grow best when the soil is warm. Cucumber plants tend to sprawl all over. Provide your plants with ample space to stretch their roots. Again, since these are climbers, you must get a proper support. Go for smaller varieties if there's less space.

Green chilli: These are good companion plants for tomatoes and coriander. Just take two or three dried red chillies. Slit them open and sprinkle the seeds in a pot filled with soil and a little manure, available in the nurseries. Ensure the seeds don't go too deep. Cover it with little soil and water it. It takes about a week or so for the seeds to sprout. If the pot is not large enough, you can replant the sprouts into a bigger pot. You may need to tie up the chili plant to a pole to let it grow and avoid bending.

Winter blossom

- According to Nirupom Sen, secretary-cum-CEO, Agri-Horticultural Society of India, if you have a garden without flowers, you have got to do something about it. So, before deciding where to plant your flowers, you should know when the best time to grow flowers is. "During winter, the best flowers to grow in Indian climate are Petunia, Cockscomb, Antirrhinum, Cineraria, Zinnia, Calendula, Chrysanthemum, Marigold and Dahlia," he says.

- Flower plants need up to 5 inches deep soil. So take an earthen pot of 6-8 inches in height. Dig a hole in the potted soil. Bury the seed

about 2 inches deep. Flowers do not need to be smothered with the soil. Do not bury them too deep. After 6 weeks, you will see the seeds sprout into saplings. - The after-care is very essential. Sprinkle water as and when required.

Terrace talk

- As the main element of a terrace garden comprises watering of plants and keeping the soil wet, it is important that the best quality proofing material is

- selected.
- One has to bear in mind that the area selected to build a terrace garden should have a slight slope, so that it can drain water easily and has the capacity to bear the load.
- It is always advisable to pick plants which don't grow big in size.
- You can install a separate tank to store water or have a mechanical watering arrangement. But most often, people love to water their garden themselves and see the plants grow.
- Preparing the potting mixture & sowing seeds
- These days, one can easily get exotic and hybrid seeds of capsicum, chilly, cabbage, broccoli, coriander, tomatoes, brinjal, basil and parsley. The potting mixture should have 20% of leaf mould, 40% sand and 40% soil. You can add mustard cake and cow dung cake as fertilizers. After the seeds are sown, one should cover the soil with a layer of fine sand. Sand makes the soil porous and helps the roots grow. Keeping insects away
- Use neem-based organic pesticides. Or you can take 100 gram of chillies, 4-5 cloves of garlic and a few bulbs of turmeric, paste it and mix it in 1 litre of water. Pour the liquid in a container and simmer it till it is reduced to half. Refrigerate it and use it whenever necessary. All you need to do is take out about 20 ml or the concentrated paste, mix it in a litre of water and sprinkle it on the plants. However, if insects or diseases do strike your plants, go for the safest botanical or microbial pesticides!
- For the proper growth of vegetables/ flowers, the pot size should be between 8-10 inches. Make one or more drain holes in the pot
- Place small chips right over them so that they don't clog and excess water can pass through
- Do not pile soil on top of the plant
- Get various seedlings from the nursery
- Carefully remove the plants from its nursery container. Make sure the stem is completely above the surface
- Leave about an inch between the soil surface and the rim of the pot

Petrol demand set to increase 6.6 per cent in FY26

NEW DELHI. Domestic demand for petroleum products is projected to hit a record 252.9 million tonnes in FY26, a 4.65% increase from the 241.8 million tonnes expected for FY25, as per the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC). The growth in demand is primarily driven by key transport fuels—petrol and diesel. Petrol consumption is expected to rise 6.64% to 42.6 million tonnes (MT), up from 39.98 MT in FY25. Diesel demand is forecasted to grow by 2.77%, reaching 94.12 MT as against 91.57 MT in the current fiscal. This will mark the third consecutive year of record-high petroleum product consumption in India. As demand rises, domestic oil refining capacity is set for expansion. In 2025, India will witness significant growth in refining capacity, including the launch of its first greenfield integrated refinery complex in nearly a decade. By 2028, India's refining capacity is projected to reach 309.5 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA), up from the current 256.8 MMTPA. India is a key exporter of petrol, diesel and other petroleum products and the government's drive to establish the country as a petrochemical manufacturing hub is further spurring the expansion of refining capacity. LPG consumption is also on the rise, with demand expected to grow by 4.69% in FY26, reaching 33 million tonnes, up from 31.52 million tonnes in FY25. This growth is fueled by the success of the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, which provides subsidized LPG connections to low-income households. As of December 23, 2024, over 103.34 million LPG connections have been distributed under this program, launched in 2016.

Infosys profit up 11 per cent to Rs 6.8k crore; revenue guidance increased

BENGALURU. IT services company Infosys on Thursday posted a 11.4% growth in net profit at Rs 6,806 crore for the third quarter ending December 2024, beating Street estimates, compared to Rs 6,106 crore in the same quarter last year. The company's revenue from operations in the third quarter stood at Rs 41,764 crore, a 7.6% increase compared to Rs 38,821 crore in the year-ago period. The company's operating margin stood at 21.3%, an increase of 0.8% y-o-y. For FY25, the company has raised its revenue guidance from 3.75%-4.5% to 4.5%-5.0%, based on its strong performance in this quarter. The company has retained its margin guidance at 20%-22%. During the company's post-earnings press conference, Salil Parekh, CEO and MD, Infosys said, "Financial services in the US continues to grow strongly. We have seen a revival in European financial services during Q3. We are seeing an improvement in the retail and consumer product industry in the US with discretionary pressures easing." He added that the automotive sector in Europe continues to remain slow. In Gen AI, the company has built 4 small language models for banking, IT operations, cyber security, and broadly for enterprises. "In Gen AI we are also developing over 100 new agents for deployment within our clients," said the CEO. "We are having several discussions with clients where they would like to use the small language models that we have built," he added.

8th Pay Commission: How much salary

NEW DELHI. For government employees, a salary hike often feels like a festive bonus, arriving just in time to ease financial pressures. The announcement of the 8th Pay Commission is no different. With rising inflation making it harder to manage monthly expenses, the news of the 8th Pay Commission brought hopes of a pay hike for central government employees. The Union Cabinet approved the establishment of the 8th Pay Commission on Thursday. Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw confirmed the decision and said that the commission would be formed soon to revise the pay structure for central government employees and pensioners.

One of the most pressing questions is the expected hike in salaries and how the hike will be calculated. According to experts, the fitment factor, which plays a key role in determining pay increases, may be set between 2.5 and 2.8 times the current basic pay. This means that government employees earning a basic pay of Rs 18,000 could see their salaries increase to Rs 45,000, providing a much-needed boost. Krishnendu Chatterjee, Vice President and Business Head at TeamLease, shared insights on the expected changes with India Today Digital.

"Considering the inflation factor, there are indications that fitment factor for salary hike may stay between 2.5-2.8 times of their current salaries, which will give a significant boost to employee salaries between 40k - 45k at the current base of 18k" said Chatterjee.

HOW TO CALCULATE SALARY HIKE?

To estimate the revised salary, employees can multiply their current basic pay by the fitment factor. "Multiply the Basic Pay by 2.5 - 2.8 times," said Chatterjee.

For example, if an employee's basic pay is Rs 25,000 and the fitment factor is 2.7, the revised salary would be Rs 67,500. This formula helps employees gauge the potential increase in their pay under the 8th Pay Commission. The final salary hike will depend on various factors, including inflation adjustments and prevailing market rates. Inflation plays a significant role as the commission aims to ensure that the revised pay structure addresses the rising cost of living. The 8th Pay Commission will likely build upon the changes introduced by the 7th Pay Commission, which came into effect in January 2016. The 8th Pay Commission is expected to complete its recommendations by the end of 2025.

Maruti Suzuki unveils its first BEV e Vitara at Bharat Mobility Global Expo

NEW DELHI. Maruti Suzuki India Limited unveiled its first BEV (Battery Electric Vehicle) SUV – the e VITARA on January 17 along with the comprehensive 'e for me' Electric Eco-Solutions at the Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025. Built on the ground-up HEARTECT-e platform, the e vitara offers superior performance and excellent range, with uncompromised comfort and safety, the carmaker said. The electric SUV will be introduced in Maruti's NEXA channel. Toshihiro Suzuki, Representative Director and President, of Suzuki Motor Corporation, said, "We aim to make BEVs attractive to customers through a three-pronged strategy. The first is to develop a BEV-dedicated platform for optimum performance. The second is to evolve the right product for the target markets, based on customer requirements. The third is to leverage our global economies of scale and concentrate manufacturing at a single



location for the world."

"For this purpose, we have chosen India as the global manufacturing base due to its quality products, and scale merit," added Suzuki. Hisashi Takeuchi, Managing Director & CEO, of Maruti Suzuki India Limited, said that the e vitara is an SUV built on the all-new platform, called HEARTECT-e, exclusively designed for electric vehicles. He added that the EV comes with highly efficient battery pack options to deliver more than 500 km for

61kWh on a single charge. "We have equipped the e vitara with several premium and advanced features such as Level 2 ADAS, Integrated Digital Display, and Next-Gen Suzuki Connect," said the MD.

Elaborating on the steps to increase EV adoption, he said, "Our goal is to create Electric Eco-Solutions for the customers. We call it 'e for me'. We will offer smart home chargers along with installation support, leverage our vast network to provide fast charging support in the top 100 cities in the first phase, and then expand further." "The idea is that, within these cities, every 5 to 10 km a customer finds a charging point by Maruti Suzuki. We are also preparing 1,500 EV-enabled service workshops covering over 1,000 cities with specially trained manpower and special equipment to address all EV-related support, including charging. Additionally, we will provide roadside assistance all over India," he added.

The e vitara will be showcased through a phased rollout across NEXA dealerships nationwide. It will be exported to more than 100 countries, including key markets like Japan and Europe from India. The EV is fitted to an R18 (18") aerodynamic alloy wheel, the next generation NEXTré 3-Point Matrix LED DRLs with LED projector headlamps, fixed-glass sunroof and soft-touch dual-tone materials with multi-colour ambient lighting.

An Integrated Digital Display of 25.65cm (10.1") and a 26.04cm, (10.25") multi-information display present an array of information and controls. The e VITARA also features ventilated front seats and best-in-its-segment 10-way power-adjustable driver seat. It also offers rear seating system with a versatile 40:20:40 split configuration with easy boot access, Rear Seat Armrest with cup holder, along with reclining and sliding functionality that enables flexible boot space to match your journeys.

Asian shares slip as China says economy hit five per cent growth target in 2024

BANGKOK. Shares were mostly lower in Asia on Friday after China reported that its economy grew at a 5% annual pace last year, hitting the government's target but slowing from the year before.

U.S. futures edged higher and oil prices also climbed. Strong exports and policies aimed at spurring more consumer spending and investment helped drive a boom in manufacturing, which jumped nearly 6% from a year earlier, the Chinese government reported. Share benchmarks in China showed scant reaction, given that the 5% annual growth exactly matched the government's target for "about 5%" growth in 2024. In quarterly terms, the economy grew 5.4% in October-December.

Economists are forecasting a further slowing of growth this year and

beyond, and President-elect Donald Trump's threats to raise U.S. tariffs on Chinese goods have added to Beijing's



challenges as it faces a raft of moves by Washington to limit access to advanced technology, such as computer chips used in artificial intelligence.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng index slipped

0.1% to 19,509.68 and the Shanghai Composite index also fell 0.1%, to 3,231.30.

In Tokyo, the Nikkei 225 index lost 1% to 38,193.05, while the Kospi in Seoul shed 0.3% to 2,521.46.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 edged 0.1% lower to 8,316.70. Taiwan's TaieX fell 0.1%, even though computer chip maker Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Corporation (TSMC) reported Thursday that its profit in the last quarter jumped 57%. The world's biggest semiconductor manufacturer — which has found itself in the middle of a trade and technology rift between the U.S. and China — said it results were propelled by the artificial intelligence boom. Its stock that trades in the United States rose 3.9% on Thursday. Early Friday, its Taiwan-traded shares were up 3.9%.

Apple sidelines AI news summaries due to errors

NEW DELHI. Apple pushed out a software update on Thursday which disabled news headlines and summaries generated using artificial intelligence that were lambasted for getting facts wrong. The move by the tech titan comes as it enhances its latest lineup of devices with "Apple Intelligence" in a market keen for assurance that the iPhone maker is a contender in the AI race.

Apple's decision to temporarily disable the recently launched AI feature comes after the BBC and other news organizations complained that users were getting mistake-riddled or outright wrong headlines or news summary alerts. Apple deployed the update to developers working with a beta version of its software, sidelining the AI feature for news headlines.

The tech giant plans to restore the feature when it is working properly and eventually roll it out to all users.

Apple in June of last year unveiled new iPhones built with generative AI as it seeks to boost sales and show it is keeping up in the technological arms race. The company has a lot riding on the new iPhone 16 and hopes that customers are attracted to buy the latest models by its new AI powers.

"We are thrilled to introduce the first iPhones designed from the ground up for Apple Intelligence and its breakthrough capabilities," Apple chief executive Tim Cook said at an event at the iPhone-maker's Silicon Valley headquarters.

"Apple Intelligence" is a new suite of software features for all devices that was announced at the company's annual developers conference, where it also announced a partnership with ChatGPT-maker OpenAI. In the short-term, the new powers include AI-infused image editing, translation, and small, creative touches in messaging, but not more ambitious breakthroughs promised by other AI players, such as OpenAI or Google.

The features are similar to tools recently released by Meta, Microsoft and Google, which can produce well-crafted content simply by querying in everyday language.

Google last year released AI-infused Pixel 9 smartphones, its challenge to the iPhone.

Pixel phones account for a tiny sliver of the global smartphone market dominated by Samsung and Apple, but Google argued its new line is a chance to answer what -- after all the hype -- AI can actually do for customers. Samsung has also showcased AI across its line, and is expected to unveil a new flagship Galaxy smartphone at an event next week in Silicon Valley.

Bad credit? Here's how you can still secure emergency funds

New Delhi. Life's unpredictability often leads to financial emergencies at the most inconvenient times. If you have a low credit score, getting a loan can feel challenging. But don't worry—there are ways to get emergency loans even with bad credit. Here's a simple guide to help you through the process.

UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGE OF BAD CREDIT

A credit score below 650 is typically considered poor, stemming from missed payments, high credit usage, or loan defaults. While such scores restrict borrowing options and result in higher interest rates, several lenders cater to individuals with bad credit. By focusing on factors like income stability, collateral, or even a guarantor's backing, these lenders make emergency loans accessible.

STEPS TO SECURE AN EMERGENCY LOAN

Identify the right lender: Compare options and choose a lender offering competitive terms despite your low credit score. Prepare required documents: Ensure you have ID proof



(Aadhaar/PAN), income evidence, and address verification ready for quick processing. Submit your application: Complete the application process online or offline, based on convenience. Evaluate offers carefully: High interest rates and hidden charges

can make borrowing expensive, so scrutinise terms before accepting. Plan for repayment: Timely EMI payments can prevent further credit score deterioration and even help improve it.

TIPS FOR BOOSTING YOUR LOAN APPROVAL CHANCES

To improve your chances of getting a loan approved with a bad credit score, start by applying for a smaller loan amount, as this makes you less risky in the eyes of lenders.

Providing collateral can further increase your approval chances, as it offers the lender security. Alternatively, applying with a guarantor who has a good credit score can make a significant difference. Demonstrating a stable income is also crucial, as it reassures lenders of your ability to repay the loan on time. Lastly, clearing any outstanding debts can enhance your financial profile and increase your credibility as a borrower.

SEBI bars Pacheli Industrial Finance, six entities for alleged financial misconduct

NEW DELHI. Markets regulator Sebi has barred Pacheli Industrial Finance, a non-banking financial company, and six other entities from the securities market till further orders for alleged financial irregularities and stock manipulation. Apart from Pacheli Industrial Finance Ltd (PIFL), Abhijit Trading Company Ltd, Calyx Securities Pvt Ltd, Hibiscus Holdings, Avail Financial Services, Edoptica Retail India and Sulphur Securities, are the six entities which were also restrained from the markets. In an interim order passed on Thursday, Sebi revealed that PIFL secured loans amounting to Rs 1,000 crore from six entities classified as non-promoters. These loans were converted into equity through a preferential allotment, resulting in the issuance of over 51 crore shares to the lenders.

The regulator noted that an investigation into bank account records, however, uncovered that the loan transactions were a sham. Funds were round-tripped between PIFL and the lenders, with the company issuing shares without receiving any legitimate consideration. "We have witnessed Pacheli Industrial Finance which was consistently

reporting negligible revenues suddenly taking on a Rs 1,000 crore loan without making any disclosures on how the funds will be utilised or the loan serviced, Sebi's Whole-Time Member Ashwani Bhatia said in the order. The loan, which appears to have been availed from connected entities, was converted into equity. "The examination of the bank statements of the company and connected entities prima facie revealed that the funds that were advanced as loan was round-tripped and the company ended up issuing shares without receiving any consideration," Bhatia added. Following the preferential allotment, the six entities collectively hold 99.28 per cent of PIFL's holding, leaving only a minuscule free float of 0.72 per cent.

Through this modus operandi, the company's market capitalisation skyrocketed from Rs 40 crore to over Rs 4,000 crore within eight months, bypassing natural market dynamics, the order said. With such a small float, natural market dynamics were effectively bypassed becoming a case of the tail wagging the dog, Bhatia observed.

Sebi pointed out the preferential allotment was part of a well-orchestrated scheme to expand Pacheli Industrial Finance's share capital and allocate shares to connected entities without genuine consideration, disadvantaging existing public investors. Further, the regulator flagged the situation



as a potential "pump-and-dump" operation, wherein inflated stock prices attract retail investors before the major shareholders offload their holdings after the lock-in period expires.

Accordingly, Pacheli Industrial Finance and the six other entities were debarred from accessing as well as dealing in the securities markets till further orders and they have been given 21 days to respond to Sebi's findings. Further, the regulator said that a detailed investigation will be undertaken by Sebi into the issues identified in this order including trades executed in the scrip during the price rise period. Meanwhile, the regulator has also frozen the shareholding of the six preferential allottees and barred PIFL from accessing the capital markets. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) observed that the urgency of the measures, comes from the lock-in period for the preferential shares expiring in March 2025, raising concerns over potential harm to retail investors. The order came after Sebi initiated a detailed investigation into trades executed during the price surge period. The scrutiny began after internal alerts were triggered by the inconsistent share price movement of PIFL relative to its financials. Between December 2, 2024, and January 16, 2025, the company's share price soared by 372 per cent, jumping from Rs 21.02 to Rs 78.2.

NEWS BOX

Paula Badosa snaps at boyfriend Stefanos Tsitsipas for asking her to calm down

Melbourne. Spaniard Paula Badosa lost her cool at boyfriend Stefanos Tsitsipas on Friday, January 17. Playing her third round match against Marta Kostyuk in the Australian Open, Badosa was put under immense pressure. Windy conditions, and some good tennis from Kostyuk put Badosa in trouble despite winning the opening set of the match 6-4. Badosa lost control in the windy conditions and gave away a 0-4 lead in the second set of the match. A frustrated Badosa tried to explain to her team that the wind was not letting her play her natural game and the balls were hitting the frame of the racquet.

As Badosa tried to explain her issues to the team, her boyfriend Stefanos Tsitsipas - sitting in the crowd asked her to calm down. Badosa lost her cool at the Greek star and



gestured to him that he should come and play if he believed that he could tackle the conditions. The hilarious exchange was caught on the camera which got the commentators in splits. The panel joked that Tsitsipas had made a rookie mistake there.

After losing the second set 4-6, Badosa made a strong comeback in the game. She did not waste any time and finished the match with a clinical 6-3 win in the third set. It took Badosa 2 hours and 32 minutes to beat the 17th seed Ukrainian player. Badosa's next game is on 19 January. She will play the winner of Olga Danilovic vs Jessica Pegula.

While Badosa qualified for the fourth round of the tournament, her boyfriend's fate was not the same. Eleventh seed Stefanos Tsitsipas suffered a shock first-round exit at the Australian Open on Monday, January 13. The 2023 finalist was defeated by 20-year-old American Alex Michelsen, 5-7, 6-3, 2-6, 4-6, in a match lasting 2 hours and 43 minutes at John Cain Arena in Melbourne.

The Australian Open has traditionally been a successful tournament for Tsitsipas, with the Greek star having reached the semi-finals three times before making the final in 2023. Explaining his shock defeat - the first big upset of Australian Open 2025 - Tsitsipas attributed it to a lack of match practice in the new season.

Australian Open: Rohan Bopanna-Shuai Zhang secure safe passage into Round 2

New Delhi. Rohan Bopanna and his mixed doubles partner Shuai Zhang secured a safe passage into the second round of the Australian Open 2025 with a straight sets win over Kristina Mladenovic and Ivan Dodig on Friday, January 17. Bopanna and Zheng won the match 6-4, 6-4 in what was a determined performance by the Indian and Chinese duo on Friday. Bopanna, who had suffered an early exit from the men's doubles competition, was looking for redemption and a repeat of the 2023 run in Melbourne where he had reached the final with Sania Mirza. The Indian and his Chinese partner would get out of the blocks quickly in the first set and secured a 3-0 lead. Dodig and Mladenovic were able to stop the streak by breaking when Zhang was serving. They would mount a mini comeback off their own serve to make things 3-2 and keep themselves alive in the contest. Both teams would take games off their own



serves before Bopanna stepped up to serve out the final one and secure the set for his team. The second set started with both teams breaking each other twice before Dodig and Mladenovic were able to secure a lead off their own serve. The turning point in the contest came in game 7 when Bopanna and Zhang were able to convert a crucial break point and edge ahead. They would make it a 2-point lead with their own serve to make it 5-3. Despite Dodig and Mladenovic getting one more point with their own serve, Bopanna and Zheng proved to be too good for them on the day and served out to secure the win in one hour and 12 minutes to progress to the next round.

While Dodig and Mladenovic dominated most of the stats, converting just 3 out of 17 break points came back to haunt them in the end. Bopanna and Zhang would convert 5 out of the 9 break points available to them to clinch the win.

Dressing room has crashed: Harbhajan compares current Indian team to Chappell era

New Delhi. Former India spinner Harbhajan feels that there are big divisions in the Indian dressing room. Speaking on his YouTube channel, Harbhajan Singh said that the news that has come out of the Indian team over the last 6-8 months indicated that the dressing room had crashed. Multiple news outlets, including India Today quote sources about what had been going on behind the scene during India's torrid tour of Australia. Reports had claimed that the Indian team was divided into camps with a senior player projecting himself as the Mr. Fixit in the team, who could captain on an interim basis in case Rohit Sharma was going to get sacked. The reports gained flight after Rohit Sharma was 'rested' from the Indian team in the final Test match at Sydney. The Indian captain held an unprecedented press conference on Day 2 of the match, stating that he had dropped himself.

Things did not stop there. After the Indian team returned from the tour of Australia, reports suggested that the BCCI would take strict steps to discipline the Indian team.

Reacting to the reports, Harbhajan said that there was an incredible amount of drama

taking place behind the scenes. The former spinner slammed the players and the Indian team management, asking them how could so many reports emerge over the last two months. Harbhajan suggested that every house fights, but they should be kept inside



the home. "Solve it between yourselves. Why is there so much drama. Every house has fights but that should not come out. In the last 6-8 months, we have heard so many things. If Ajit Agarkar today says that the leaks were not from Sarfaraz but from the coach, what will happen then? There is no point in blame game," Harbhajan said on his YouTube channel. The spinner likened the current

Indian dressing room to the one during Greg Chappell's era and said that he had seen this infighting before.

"Gautam Gambhir is new. He has to get to know the players. The players have to know him. Without chemistry it will not work. I have seen this before. In the 2006-08 era when Greg Chappell was the coach, I saw the entire dressing room crash down. The reason was that players started to play blame game. How did the media get to know so many things?" Harbhajan said.

The Greg Chappell era was a big blot in Indian cricket history, where multiple leaks affected the Indian team. One of Chappell's letters to the BCCI criticising Sourav Ganguly was leaked to the media, resulting in massive controversy. In that era, India's performance plummeted as well, with the team getting knocked out of the 2007 ODI World Cup at the group-stage. "Leaks are coming out of the dressing room, from the BCCI meeting. Why? Why are so many things coming out?" Harbhajan questioned.

The BCCI took notice of the issues and came down hard on the Indian team. Sources told India Today that the BCCI had prepared a 10-point document to get the players back in

line. **The Full Text of Policy Document for Team India (Senior Men)**

Objective: To establish guidelines that promote discipline, unity, and a positive team environment while ensuring professional standards and operational efficiency during tours and series.

1. Participation in Domestic Matches
Participation in domestic matches is mandatory for players to remain eligible for selection in the national team and for central contracts, as per BCCI guidelines. This policy ensures that players stay connected to the domestic cricket ecosystem, fostering talent development, maintaining match fitness, and strengthening the overall domestic structure.

Additionally, it inspires emerging players by providing them opportunities to compete alongside top cricketers, ensuring continuity in talent progression. Any exceptions to this mandate will be considered only under extraordinary circumstances and will require formal notification and approval from the Chairman of the Selection Committee, ensuring fairness and transparency in the process.

Manchester United boss Ruben Amorim to be 'cautious' with hero Amad Diallo praise

New Delhi. Manchester United boss Ruben Amorim has claimed that he will be cautious with his praise for hat-trick hero Amad Diallo as the Ivory Coast star bailed his side out yet again during their Premier League clash with Southampton on Thursday, January 16. United were trailing 0-1 heading into the final 10 minutes after a shoddy performance at Old Trafford. A man known for his clutch goals during his United career, Amad would turn the game on its head with a 12-minute hat-trick as the Red Devils ended a 4-game winless run. Speaking after the match, as quoted by Reuters, Amorim said that he would need to be careful with praise of Amad. The United boss said he would tell the winger to rest well and be ready for Sunday as they face Brighton at home.

"The important thing is to win and he helped us and then he is doing a very good season," Amorim said of Diallo. "But you have to be careful with the young kids. Congratulations to him, enjoy tonight and he needs to appreciate these moments."

"I will tell him tomorrow he has to rest, eat good



food because Sunday we need him again. He did a great job, a good moment for a young kid to score a hat-trick for a club like this."

Amorim takes blame for lacklustre show
Before Amad's blitz, United struggled to make an impact and didn't look like the same side that beat Arsenal in the third round of the FA Cup. Amorim took some blame for the performance and also admitted that the recent battles against Liverpool and Arsenal took a toll on them.

"I have big expectations for all, trying to be really demanding and I also understand when they try it and cannot do it," he added. "The pressure of playing at home is harder than playing away. The demands of controlling all the game against this opponent is harder."

"I need to improve the training and recovery of the players. We are tired, not just the body but the mind. It is a different game, we have to press more. If we don't manage the ball for so long, we suffer." The win helped United to move to 12th in the Premier League standings.

UFC star Jiri Prochazka wins hearts with special gesture for fan battling cancer

New Delhi. UFC light heavyweight Jiri Prochazka won hearts with his heartfelt gesture for a fan, who is battling cancer. Jiri, a former UFC light heavyweight champion, debuted a new look ahead of UFC 311, having shaved his head for the fan. Usually, the Czech Republic fighter is known to sport a special war braid for his fights, which adds to his intimidating look and persona. Jiri took the step to shave his head to show solidarity with Ashley McGarity, a young woman battling cervical cancer who lost her hair during chemotherapy. Before shaving her head completely, McGarity had styled her hair to mimic Prochazka's iconic war braid, a signature look he'd worn during some of his most memorable fights. In a touching gesture, Jiri reciprocated by shaving his own head and



making a donation to support cancer research, standing by McGarity. The former light heavyweight champion would also reveal that he will be flying in McGarity to be at cageside for his fight at UFC 311. Jiri would claim that it was his way of showing that Martial arts has something to give back to the society. "This hair was inspired by

Ashley," Prochazka said, as quoted by MMA Fighting. "That girl, she's fighting with cancer. She will come tomorrow." "This is my showing solidarity. Because it's about sending the good energy. Yesterday, I reached 1 million followers on Instagram so I will give for each other 1 million [Czech Koruna] by my foundation to oncologist patients. Martial arts has something to give back, it's all about good energy." UFC would share the video of Jiri shaving his hair and President Dana White decided to match his donation of 1 million Czech Koruna, roughly 50,000 US Dollars.

Jiri will be facing Jamahal Hill during the UFC 311 event and will be a crucial one for both men. Both Jiri and Hill are coming off losses to current champion Alex Pereira and will be hoping that win would put them back in title contention.

Tennis great reveals her Grand Slam trophies were stolen after LA fires

New Delhi. Tennis great Pam Shriver has revealed that her grand slam trophies were stolen after the Los Angeles Fires wreaked havoc in the city. Shriver reported her car missing early Thursday after it was stolen outside a hotel in Marina del Rey. The vehicle contained a collection of her prized tennis trophies, including five US Open trophies, five French Open plates, five Wimbledon trophies, and one Australian Open trophy.

Shriver, 62, explained that she had moved the trophies from her Brentwood home the previous Friday after returning from a vacation in Hawaii. The tennis great, who was a doubles specialist during her playing career, revealed that she was taking things out to pack them in the car when she saw that the vehicle was missing. "I was just starting to

take things out to pack them in the car, and I was like, 'Where's the car?'" ESPN tennis analyst Shriver was quoted as saying by the network.



Initially, she had planned to fly directly to Melbourne from Hawaii to cover the Australian Open. However, her plans changed after last week's devastating wildfires, which claimed at least 24 lives and

destroyed thousands of buildings. Although Shriver's home was spared from the blaze, it remains without heating and power. As a result, she has been staying at a hotel while awaiting the restoration of utilities.

Really sad on so many levels
Shriver would reveal that it was really sad to see people commit such crimes during a crisis. "It's really sad on so many levels that when people are at their lowest and in their most difficult times, people are doing things like this," Shriver said of the theft.

LA fires latest
At least 25 people have been killed, and some 30 others remain unaccounted for as massive wildfires have ravaged parts of Los Angeles in the past one week. In its latest update, the US National Weather Service warned that hurricane-force winds had the potential of fuelling the wildfires that have destroyed more than 12,000 structures and forced nearly 100,000 people to evacuate from their homes.

Rohit Sharma, Hardik Pandya practice together before Champions Trophy

Mumbai. India ODI captain Rohit Sharma is back in practice after his disaster tour of Australia in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. After practising with the Mumbai Ranji team, Sharma was seen in training alongside Hardik Pandya in the Mumbai Indians' nets. Rohit and Hardik were training ahead of India's white-ball series against England. While Hardik Pandya will fly out for India's 3-day long training camp in Kolkata on Saturday, January 18, Rohit Sharma will remain in Mumbai. India have not announced their squad for the ODI series vs England and the Champions Trophy and Rohit is expected to remain busy in that. The video footage of the practice was posted on social media by one of the

fans on X. Rohit could be seen batting against the white-ball, while Pandya was bowling in the nets. Rohit Sharma is expected to resume his duties as the ODI captain in the England series. As per reports, the Champions Trophy could be a crucial point in Rohit Sharma's career. Rohit has been training hard to get back to the required fitness levels. The India captain was seen running in Mumbai and doing his drills alongside the Mumbai Ranji team. Meanwhile, the Indian cricket team is holding a 3-day camp before their T20I series against England. Sources have told India Today in that the team will assemble in Kolkata on January 18 and practice for 3 days before playing their series

opener at the Eden Gardens Stadium. The Indian team, led by Suryakumar Yadav will hope to continue their good work in the format. Under the leadership of Yadav, India have won series against Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and South Africa already, with some of the matches shattering multiple records. Sanju Samson's promotion at the opener's spot has been a key finding for the team management, helping them to add to their strength in the position. The new generation of Indian players are present in the 5-match series, starting from Abhishek Sharma to Nitish Kumar Reddy. India are expected to make life difficult for England in home conditions.



Shraddha Kapoor

Twins With Her Rumoured Boyfriend Rahul Mody, Shares A Cute Photo

Shraddha Kapoor has been grabbing headlines after her recent photo with rumoured boyfriend Rahul Mody. Though the couple has never confirmed their relationship, their photos often spark buzz. In the recent one, both are seen twinning in matching outfits. The photo has gone viral on social media. Taking to her Instagram stories, Shraddha Kapoor shared a photo in which she and Rahul are wearing the same outfit. She has not captioned it but dropped it with heart emoji. While Shraddha hasn't publicly addressed the rumours, she hinted at a significant relationship in her interview with Cosmopolitan. She shared, "I really love spending time with my partner, doing things like watching a movie, going for dinner, or traveling. I like spending time together or even not doing things together."

The dating buzz around Shraddha and Rahul began earlier in 2024 after they were spotted together at several events. Shraddha even attended a friend's wedding with



Rahul, further fueling speculation. Rahul Mody, a screenwriter and assistant director, worked on Tu Jhoothi Main Makkaar, a film starring Shraddha alongside Ranbir Kapoor.

On the professional front, Shraddha recently appeared in the blockbuster Stree 2, the sequel to her 2018 horror-comedy hit with Rajkumar Rao. While fans eagerly await news of her next project, Shraddha seems to be enjoying some well-deserved personal time. Amid this, recently filmmaker Nikhil Dwivedi shared a script of Nagin. Looks like the film is all set to go on floors. Speaking with India Today, he revealed Shraddha's role as a shape-shifting snake. Nikhil shared that she was his first and only choice for the part, stating, "She was excited. She was the first one to come on board. I approached her first with the idea, and she was sold. She can't wait to start the shoot, now that the script is ready." In 2020, Shraddha Kapoor took to X and wrote, "It's an absolute delight for me to play a Naagin on screen. I have grown up watching, admiring, and idolising Sridevi ma'am's Nagina and Nigahen and have always wanted to play a similar role rooted in Indian traditional folklore."



Big Boss 18: Shilpa Shirodkar Defends Mahesh Babu, Namrata Shirodkar Amid Fan Criticism, Says 'I Don't Care...'



Shilpa Shirodkar's journey on Big Boss 18 came to an emotional close as she was evicted just days before the grand finale, narrowly missing the chance to compete for the coveted trophy. Following her exit, Shilpa addressed the chatter around her family's lack of public support on social media, particularly from her brother-in-law Mahesh Babu and sister Namrata Shirodkar. Fans and trolls alike criticized the duo for not promoting or visibly supporting her during her stint on the show. In an interview with Galatta, Shilpa candidly spoke about the situation and responded to the trolling directed at her family. When asked about the absence of social media shoutouts from Mahesh Babu and Namrata, she made her stance clear, saying, "Oh my God! Come on! You're not gonna judge a relationship based on a post. It's ridiculous! And truly honestly, yeh seekha hai maine Big Boss ke ghar mein (And honestly, this is what I have learned inside the Big Boss house): I don't care what people say. I know what my family means to me. I know how much I mean to them. And I know that's all that matters."

Shilpa went on to emphasize that public perceptions or judgments would never impact the close bond she shares with her family. She reassured fans that her relationships remain strong, regardless of what others might think. Reflecting on her time in the Big Boss house, Shilpa also revealed that she deeply regretted a significant argument she had with her sister Namrata before entering the show. Speaking to filmmaker Anurag Kashyap during her time on the show, she admitted missing her family deeply during her stay.

Shilpa's eviction marks the end of a rollercoaster journey in Big Boss 18, a season that saw her forging strong connections with fellow contestants like Vivian Dsena, Karan Veer Mehra, and Chum Darang. Now, only six contestants remain in the competition: Karan Veer Mehra, Vivian Dsena, Chum Darang, Eisha Singh, Avinash Mishra, and Rajat Dalal.

Akshay Kumar Returns From Bhooth Bangla Shoot In Jaipur, Greets Paps At Mumbai Airport



Akshay Kumar was spotted at Mumbai airport as he returned from Jaipur after completing the latest shooting schedule for his upcoming film Bhooth Bangla. The actor greeted the paparazzi with a warm smile and a quick wave. The video has gone viral on social media. In the video, shared by Viral Bhayani, we can see Akshay Kumar dressed in a black outfit and looking handsome. Fans dropped heart emojis. Recently, Akshay Kumar welcomed actress Tabu on the sets of the upcoming movie 'Bhooth Bangla'. The makers of the film took to their Instagram, and shared a picture of Akshay extending a warm welcome to the actress and the two embraced each other. The two icons of Bollywood have consistently won hearts with their performances, and their reunion after more than 20 decades is naturally anticipated. Akshay and Tabu previously shared screen space in the cult-classic 'Hera Pheri'. The excitement around 'Bhooth Bangla' has been at its peak ever since its announcement. While the film is one of the most awaited horror comedies, it promises several elements to look forward to. Among these, its ensemble cast is the most crucial aspect that makes this film even more special. Moreover, the film will also reunite the iconic team director Priyadarshan, Akshay Kumar, and Tabu, who last worked together on 'Hera Pheri'.

This has undoubtedly heightened the anticipation for the film, which is coming with such a stellar cast and intriguing premise. The film is directed by Priyadarshan, and produced by Shobha Kapoor and Ekta R Kapoor under the banner of Balaji Telefilms and Akshay Kumar's production house, Cape of Good Films. The film is co-produced by Faara Sheikh and Vedant Baali.

The story is written by Akash A Kaushik and screenplay by Rohan Shankar, Abilash Nair and Priyadarshan. The dialogues are by Rohan Shankar. The current schedule of the film is underway in Jaipur. 'Bhooth Bangla' is slated for its theatrical release on April 2, 2026.

Kareena Kapoor

Breaks Silence On Saif Ali Khan's Stabbing Attack: 'Respect Our Boundaries And Give Us Space'



In a shocking turn of events early Thursday morning, Saif Ali Khan was attacked during an alleged burglary attempt at his Mumbai residence. The incident occurred at around 2:30 am at Saif's 12th-floor apartment in the Satguru Sharan building, Bandra. Reports reveal that Saif sustained six injuries, including two deep wounds, two intermediate ones, and two minor injuries. One of the more serious injuries, near his spine, required immediate attention from a neurosurgeon. Following the attack, Kareena Kapoor Khan addressed the media frenzy by releasing a heartfelt statement on social media. In her Instagram post, she wrote, "It has been an incredibly challenging day for our family, and we are still trying to process the events that have unfolded. As we navigate this difficult time, I respectfully and humbly request that the media and paparazzi refrain from the relentless speculation and coverage."

She continued, "While we appreciate the concern and support, the constant scrutiny and attention are not only overwhelming but also pose a significant risk to our safety. I kindly request that you respect our boundaries and give us the space we need to heal and cope as a family." Concluding her message, she added, "I would like to thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation

during this sensitive time - Kareena Kapoor Khan."

Meanwhile, Saif's team issued an official update regarding his health. Their statement read, "Saif Ali Khan has come out of surgery and is out of danger. He is currently in recovery, and the doctors are closely monitoring his progress. All family members are safe, and the police are investigating the incident. We would like to thank Dr. Niraj Uttamani, Dr. Nitin Dange, Dr. Leena Jain, and the team at Lilavati Hospital. Thank you to all his fans and well-wishers for their prayers and thoughts during this time."

Saif's children, Ibrahim Ali Khan and Sara Ali Khan, were seen arriving at Lilavati Hospital on Thursday morning to check on their father's recovery. Director Siddharth Anand also visited the actor, while visuals of Shah Rukh Khan heading to the hospital to visit his Kal Ho Naa Ho co-star circulated on social media, further highlighting the industry's concern. The attempted robbery at Saif and Kareena's residence has left the film fraternity in shock. According to Dr. Niraj Uttamani, Chief Operating Officer of Lilavati Hospital, Saif was brought in at 3:30 am with six stab wounds, two of which were severe. The injury near his spine was particularly concerning and required urgent surgical intervention. Earlier in the day, Kareena Kapoor Khan's team issued an additional statement, confirming the incident. It read, "There was an attempted burglary at Saif Ali Khan and Kareena Kapoor Khan's residence last night. Saif sustained an injury to his arm and is currently in the hospital, undergoing a procedure. The rest of the family is safe. We request the media and fans to be patient and avoid speculation, as the police are conducting their investigations. Thank you for your concern."