

Smart corruption: Congress accuses BJP of using AI images to win water award

Khandwa district's national water conservation award sparked controversy after Congress alleged the use of AI-generated images, but authorities denied any link between the images and the award decision.

—

New Delhi (Agency)

The Congress has accused the BJP-led Madhya Pradesh government of corruption, alleging that the Khandwa district administration used Artificial Intelligence (AI)-generated images to secure a national water conservation award. At the sixth National Water Awards ceremony held in November, Khandwa district secured first place nationwide for outstanding work in water conservation under the Centre's 'Jal Sanchay, Jan Bhagidari' (JSJB) campaign. It received a Rs 2 crore award, reports PTI news agency.

In a post on X, Madhya Pradesh Congress president Jitu Patwari took a swipe at the BJP, alleging that

instead of teaching children the responsible use of AI, the party is using the technology to facilitate corruption.

"In Khandwa, officials of the BJP government turned two-foot-deep pits into wells using AI, and uploaded AI-generated images of various development works across the area on the portal. Based on these images, they even took an award from the Honourable President, he alleged." Patwari said in his post in Hindi. "When the ground reality came to light, fields and empty grounds were found there. Clearly, this was not water conservation, but a game of technology-created images. Under the BJP rule, corruption has also become smart,"



he added.

The district administration, however, dismissed Patwari's allegations.

In a brief statement, District Panchayat Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Nagarjun B Gowda said

"verified images after thorough scrutiny of 1,29,046 works" were uploaded on the JSJB portal.

The images were then verified by the Union Jal Shakti Ministry and officials also conducted random field inspections. He said photographs related to water conservation are uploaded on another portal named 'Catch the Rain' only for educational and motivational purposes.

"The district administration has found that 21 images generated through AI were uploaded on the Catch the Rain portal. This was possibly done with malicious intent. The district administration is taking action against those who uploaded these images," the CEO added.

BJP has dismantled MGNREGA & snatched employment guarantee of Dalits and poor: CM Mann

The Sikh Times

CHANDIGARH, 30th December: During the special session of the Punjab Vidhan Sabha, Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann said the newly rechristened 'Viksit Bharat - Guarantee Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission Gramin (VB-G RAM G)' is aimed at snatching food, jobs and dignity from Dalits, women and the poorest families. He asserted that by rushing the new law through Parliament within just 14 hours, the

BJP's anti-Punjab mindset, rewards favoured industrialists at the cost of the common people of the country, and raises a fundamental question about how India can aspire to be 'Vishav Guru' or 'Viksit Bharat' while depriving the weakest sections of their basic right to food and livelihood, while also calling out the Akali Dal's studied silence as deliberate and opportunistic. Winding up the debate during special session convened to discuss the issue, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said that the

additional financial burden on the states. "Earlier MGNREGA, which was carefully conceived by former PM Dr. Manmohan Singh, was introduced after years of deliberations. However, now VB-G RAM G has been passed by the Parliament only within a few hours," he noted. The Chief Minister said that unfortunately the Union government has changed the basic character of the scheme as the MGNREGA was demand driven scheme whereas VB-G RAM G is a norm based scheme, which is not in the interest of people. "During the last financial year, under the MGNREGA scheme implemented in Punjab, the participation of women has been registered at 60% and that for Scheduled castes, it has been 70%, meaning thereby majority of the beneficiaries under the MGNREGA scheme have been belonging to the most marginalised sections of the Society," he pointed out. As such, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said that with the implementation of the provisions of the new Act, the economic condition of such marginalised sections will worsen with the lack of employment opportunities. So, the Chief Minister said that the provisions of the new Act are aimed at weakening both the SCs and women socially and economically, resulting in widen-

ing of inequality causing further avoidable distress. "The Union government's act is totally aimed at snatching food from the common man who have been immensely benefited from the MGNREGA scheme. Earlier the weaker sections got assured employment through the scheme but now this purpose will be defeated," he added. The Chief Minister said that instead of giving guarantee of MSP to the farmers on crops, the Union government has now snatched the guarantee given to the labourers for the work by their predecessors, which will cause a lot of distress. "This act is the game plan of the Union government just to corner the benefit to his blue eyed industrialists for whom even the trips of the Prime Minister in the foreign countries are also planned. It is ironic that the people sitting in cozy offices at the National capital will plan for development works in the villages of the state," he added. CM

Bhagwant Singh Mann said that in reality BJP is suffering from anti-Punjab syndrome due to which they take the decisions against the interests of the state with every passing day. Citing the decisions of the Union government on Chandigarh, Panjab University, BBMB and others, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said that every move of the Union government is aimed at looting the interests of the people.

Contd.....page-3



Union government has hollowed out the very soul of the rights-based Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) scheme. Demanding its immediate rollback, the Chief Minister said the move exposes the

centre has killed the basic spirit of the MGNREGA scheme by changing its name to 'VB-G RAM (G)', which takes away the right to guaranteed wages / employment from poor workers, women, and lakhs of job card holding families and imposes an

PIL in SC seeking action against racial violence targeting northeastern citizens

The Sikh Times

New Delhi: A PIL was filed in the Supreme Court seeking judicial intervention to address the "continuing constitutional failure" to prevent and respond to racial discrimination and violence against citizens from northeastern states and other frontier regions. The PIL was filed on December 28 in the backdrop of the brutal killing of Anjel Chakma, a 24-year-old MBA student from Tripura, who succumbed on

December 27 to grievous injuries sustained in a racially motivated attack in Selaqui area of Dehradun. Anjel from Unakoti district's Machmara went to Dehradun after completing his graduation in Holy Cross School, Agartala, to pursue MBA, where he was stabbed to death in the presence of his younger brother Michael. The family members of Chakma

want capital punishment or at least life imprisonment for all the accused involved in the incident. Anoop Prakash Awasthi, a Delhi-based lawyer, has made the Centre and all the states and Union territories as parties to the PIL. "That the present writ petition is being filed seeking issuance of writ under Article 32 of the Constitution seeking issuance of writ in the nature of mandamus, order, direction or any other appropriate writ for the violation of

fundamental rights as under article 14, 19 (1) a & (g) and 21, and thus seeking judicial intervention to address the issue of racial discrimination and violence against Indian citizens from the northeastern states and other frontier regions of India," the plea said. "We are Indians. What certificate should we show to prove that?"

words that tragically became the last recorded assertion of Anjel Chakma about his constitutional belonging before the confrontation escalated into brutal violence, it said while recounting the offence leading to his death. The attackers allegedly assaulted and stabbed both brothers and Chakma sustained severe injuries to his neck and spine, remained unconscious throughout his treatment, and died after more than fourteen days in intensive medical care, it said, adding his death triggered widespread anguish, protests, and demands for justice across the country. "Issue an

appropriate writ (ad interim till a legislation is made) in the nature of formulating comprehensive guidelines, recognising 'racial slur' as a separate category of hate crimes and determining punishment for the same," the plea said. It sought a direction to the Centre and the states to create a "nodal agency or a permanent body or commission or directorate" at the central level as well as at the level of each state where such racial crimes can be reported and redressed. "Direct the respondents at central level as well as at the level of each state to make and create a dedicated special police unit in each district/metropolitan area to address the racial crimes," it said. The plea sought a direction to the Centre and the states to organise "workshops and debates at educational

institutes on the issue of prevailing racial discrimination and ways to redress the same". The petition said that despite the unmistakable hate-based and racial motivation behind the crime, India's criminal justice system lacks any mechanism to recognise or record racial bias at the initial stage of investigation. As a result, such offences are treated as ordinary crimes, "erasing motive, diluting constitutional gravity, and perpetuating a pattern of impunity", it said.

Hallmark

Your assurance of Purity



HUID-based hallmarking for silver jewellery & articles as per Indian Standard IS 2112:2025 in effect from 1 September 2025



*Silver hallmarking is voluntary.
Customers are encouraged to verify purity at the point of purchase.

Follow us for more information
@indianstandards



Verify HUID on
BIS CARE APP

CBC0810315/00172526

News box

Dense fog blankets Gurgaon, visibility drops, 130 flights cancelled at IGI**Gurgaon.(Agency)**

The city woke up to a blanket of dense fog on Monday morning, with buildings fading into a white haze and traffic inching along with headlights on. The fog eased only after around 12.30pm.

IMD issued a dense fog alert for the city on Dec 30, warning that visibility may drop sharply during late-night and early-morning hours. A district-wise advisory issued on Monday said several parts of Haryana, including south Haryana, are likely to witness dense to very dense fog over the next 2 days. Fog intensity is expected to reduce from Dec 31 and Jan 1, though isolated pockets may still see dense fog.

On Monday, Gurgaon recorded a minimum temperature of 9.6°C, which was 2.2°C higher than the previous day. The maximum temperature settled at 16.6°C, about 3.6°C lower than Sunday. IMD linked the prevailing conditions to an approaching western disturbance over the western Himalayan region between Dec 30 and Jan 1. Light to moderate rainfall is likely over parts of Haryana, including Gurgaon and Chandigarh, on Dec 31 and Jan 1 before tapering off. Minimum temperatures are expected to rise by around 2°C to 3°C over the next 3 days and then fall again by a similar margin. Day temperatures are also likely to dip over the next 3 days to 4 days. The met department cautioned that dense fog may disrupt traffic movement and affect flight and train operations due to poor visibility. Meanwhile, Delhi was engulfed in a thick blanket of fog with visibility down to 50 metres on Monday. Calm winds and gloomy weather also kept the air quality in the severe zone. Dense fog continued for seven hours, the second longest spell of the season after Dec 19, when it lasted for eight and a half hours. The minimum temperature was 8.3 degrees Celsius, two notches above normal. The maximum temperature was 20.3 degrees Celsius. At least 130 flights were cancelled and eight diverted, and over 550 were delayed at Delhi's IGI Airport. Road transport on highways and expressways was also affected as a large part of the Indo-Gangetic plain witnessed very low visibility from late at night to early morning hours.

Drunk taxi driver goes on rampage in Gurgaon Sector 4, injures 5**Gurgaon.(Agency)**

A taxi driver who was allegedly drunk rammed into multiple vehicles and injured five people in Sector 4 on Sunday evening. Police identified the accused as Raju (28), a resident of Laxman Vihar in Gurgaon. He was apprehended from the spot, and the taxi was seized.

The incident occurred around 7 pm when a white taxi entered the Sector 4 stretch at high speed and began hitting vehicles one after another. Eyewitnesses said, "The driver appeared to have lost control of the vehicle." The car was coming so fast that people did not get time to move aside. "The taxi first hit several two-wheelers before crashing into autorickshaws and cars ahead, leaving multiple vehicles damaged and debris scattered across the road. Witnesses said the driver appeared heavily intoxicated. Five passersby were injured in the incident, including a woman who sustained serious injuries, while others suffered minor wounds. Locals rushed to help the injured and shifted them to a nearby private hospital. Traffic movement was disrupted for some time before police reached the spot, cleared the damaged vehicles and restored normal flow. Police said a case has been registered at Sector 9A police station against the driver for reckless driving and endangering lives, and further investigation is underway.

Gurgaon highrises advised to install smog guns to cut dust pollution**Gurgaon.(Agency)**

With the city's air quality staying in the very poor bracket for the second straight day, Haryana State Pollution Control Board (HSPCB) advised hundreds of residential and commercial projects to install smog guns or water-sprinkling systems to control dust during the winter months. The city's AQI stood at 315 on Friday, slightly better than 353 a day earlier, but still in the very poor range. The HSPCB advisory was sent to more than 180 group housing societies, condominiums, plotted colonies and commercial complexes across the city, including major projects in DLF City, Golf Course Road, Golf Course Extension Road, Sohna Road, New Gurgaon, Cyber City and Manesar.

High-rise societies and large establishments were advised to install at least 1 smog gun or water-sprinkling system for up to 4 towers, and add a unit for every further set of 4 towers. "The systems should be installed at an adequate height with directional nozzles so that internal roads, common areas, parking lots and peripheral stretches are uniformly covered without causing waterlogging or inconvenience to residents," said an HSPCB official. Treated water from sewage treatment plants should be used as far as possible to avoid wastage of potable water, the advisory said, adding that the systems should be run during early mornings and evenings, or whenever AQI slipped into the poor, very poor, severe or severe-plus range. "Operation may be intensified on days with low wind speed, temperature inversion or high dust concentration," it said. RWAs and management committees were also told to ensure regular maintenance, cleaning of nozzles and adherence to electrical safety norms so that the systems did not cause water seepage, structural damage or safety hazards. The advisory also called for regular sweeping of internal roads, prohibition of open burning of waste and leaves, proper covering of construction material stored inside premises, and regulation of diesel generator movement and emissions. "Each society must nominate a responsible member or officer to monitor the system and maintain a logbook with the date, time and duration of operation, which will need to be produced to authorities when sought," the official said. Residents were urged to cooperate with the measures "in the interest of public health and environmental protection."

Risk at 4.30am: How UP Roadways drivers are steering through fog**Noida.(Agency)**

Driving an early morning bus from Noida to Agra at this time of the year is partly guesswork for Manish Kumar. "We usually leave the depot at 5 am and reach Agra by 9 am. There is thick fog on the way and navigating becomes extremely difficult," he said. The city is wrapped in thick blanket of smog, particularly during early morning and late night and visibility drops sharply across the region. On Monday, it remained between 50m and 200m. Bus drivers risk their lives and move through the dense fog to take the early morning passengers to their destinations. The Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation's (UPSRRTC) Noida depot runs 188 buses connecting Noida with neighbouring districts such as Ghaziabad, Bulandshahr, Meerut, Agra and Aligarh besides operating on long-distance routes to Lucknow and Dehradun. With a crew of nearly 500 drivers and conductors, they ferry nearly

35,000 commuters daily.

Nearly 150 buses ply between the Greater Noida depot to neighbouring areas like Meerut, Agra, Bulandshahr, Mathura, Aligarh, Lucknow, Hathras, Hapur, Bareilly, Badaun, Shamli, Dadri and Jhansi. Despite the hazardous conditions, drivers say not turning up for work is not an option. They are paid about Rs 2 per kilometre and skipping trips would directly impact their earnings. "We are contractual employees. If we drive less, we get paid less," said a driver. A bus conductor at the Noida depot, Aditya, recalled witnessing the massive pile-up near Mathura about two weeks ago. "Thirteen people were killed and many were injured in that accident. Visibility is very poor but we have to do our duty," he said. The assistant regional manager of UPSRTC Noida, Rohtash Singh, said the depot ensured that all buses are equipped with fog lights, wipers and indicators. He added that drivers and conductors have

been sensitised to maintain speed limits and follow traffic rules. "Night services from Noida to Lucknow have been temporarily suspended due to fog-related



risks," he said. The situation is aggravated by inadequate lighting on the expressway, say bus drivers and operators. The general secretary of Delhi Inter-State Bus Operators Sangh, Shyam Lal Gola, said hundreds of luxury buses ply between Delhi and Uttar Pradesh and other states face similar issues. "We found that lighting systems on the

Yamuna Expressway and other e-ways are not good and ineffective during fog and inclement weather. This needs urgent improvement," he said. At times, when a vehicle breaks down on the expressway, the towing vehicle arrives several hours late, he added. Ghaziabad has a fleet of 1,084 UPSRTC buses running from its eight depots, including Kaushambi, Loni, Sahibabad, etc. to different districts of the state. The depot has nearly 4,000 drivers and conductors and handles nearly one lakh commuters daily.

The regional manager of UPSRTC Ghaziabad, Kesri Nandan, said all drivers and conductors have been advised to ensure the speed limit remains below 50 kmph during winter. "They have been advised not to park on the roadside. Reflective tapes have also been pasted on the buses for better visibility," he said.

Woman dies by suicide in Gurgaon, kin allege dowry harassment**Gurgaon.(Agency)**

A 23-year-old woman was found dead at her matrimonial home in Naharpur Enclave in the city on Saturday. Police arrested her husband on Sunday on charges of dowry harassment.

Police said they received information through an emergency response vehicle (ERV) that a woman had died inside a locked room at a house in Naharpur Rupa village. When the police team arrived, the door was broken open in the presence of local residents and private witnesses.

The woman was found dead inside the room, and her three-month-old infant was found crying on the bed. A forensic team, along with personnel from the Naharpur Rupa police post, reached the spot to collect fingerprints and other evidence. The body was sent to the mortuary for a postmortem examination and was handed over to the victim's parents after the autopsy. Bulbul was a resident of Padam Colony in Faridabad. She had married Jagdeep (30), a resident of Naharpur Rupa, in 2024. Jagdeep works at a utensils shop. Bulbul's brother Rajkumar alleged in his complaint that soon after the marriage she was repeatedly harassed by her husband and in-laws over dowry demands. He said Bulbul returned to her parents' home in August 2024 due to the alleged cruelty and stayed there for several months. She was later sent back to her matrimonial home after relatives gave assurances. After the birth of her child, the harassment allegedly resumed. Rajkumar further said Bulbul called him on Dec 25 and claimed her life was in danger. On December 27, the family was informed that she had died. He alleged foul play and claimed Bulbul had been killed.

He also said a neighbour of the accused alerted him that something had happened to his sister. When he contacted her father-in-law, he informed him of her death and asked him to take her body.



investigation.

In the second case, Mannu Kumar, a resident of Bijwasan in Delhi, was cheated at an Axis Bank ATM in Sector 14 on Dec 9. Kumar went to withdraw cash using the ATM card of his employer, Sullavi Kumari, who was waiting outside. Kumar told police that a man inside the kiosk offered help, saying the machine was not working properly. During repeated attempts to withdraw cash, the suspect watched the PIN, swapped the

card, and distracted Kumar. Soon after he left, Rs 15,000 were withdrawn from the account. The complaint was filed and a case under sections 305 and 318(4) was registered at Sector 14 police station.

In the third incident, the attempt failed due to the victim's alertness. Rohtash, a resident of Bhiwani district who lives in Sector 51, went to withdraw cash from an SBI ATM in Sector 12 on Saturday. A man inside the kiosk spoke to him, watched him enter his PIN, and tried to replace the ATM card. Realising something was wrong, Rohtash raised an alarm, after which people nearby chased and caught the accused. The man was identified as Sonu, a resident of Kanoh village in Hisar district. Police said he was beaten by the public before being handed over. A case was registered under sections 305 and 318(4) at Sector 14 police station.

Police said investigations are underway in all three cases. CCTV footage, transaction details, and possible links between the accused and other suspects are being examined to determine whether the incidents are connected.

Gurgaon breathes very poor air for 2nd day in a row**Gurgaon.(Agency)**

The city's air quality remained in the 'very poor' category for the second consecutive day on Monday, with the AQI at 318, according to the pollution data. The AQI was 353 on Sunday, while Saturday's index was 353. All four monitoring stations were active in the city. Vikas Sadan reported the worst air at 360, followed by Gwalpahari (309) and Sector 51 (307) — all in the 'very poor' band. Teri Gram recorded an AQI of 285, in the 'poor' category. The city's AQI trend over the past 3 days shows the winter smog spell did not ease despite day-to-day fluctuation. At the station level, PM2.5 remained the main pollutant. Vikas Sadan recorded the highest PM2.5 at 354 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, followed by Gwalpahari (312

$\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$), Sector 51 (267 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$), and Teri Gram (234 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$). For PM10, Teri Gram led with 330 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, followed by Sector 51 (321 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) and Gwalpahari (243 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$). Vikas Sadan does not monitor PM10. For comparison, CPCB's permissible limits are 60 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ for PM2.5 and 100 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ for PM10 (24-hour average). Officials of HSPCB said local emissions combined with weak dispersion were keeping pollutants trapped. "Pollutants are getting trapped in the atmosphere and that's why the AQI is deteriorating. Wind speed has dipped to around 3 kmph," a regional officer of HSPCB said. According to CPCB guidelines, an AQI between 301 and 400 is classified as 'very poor', a level at which most people may experience

breathing discomfort with prolonged exposure.

The Decision Support System (DSS) forecast continued 'very poor' air over Delhi-NCR till Dec 31, with the index likely to slip into the 'severe' range on Jan 1, 2026. The system notes that the ventilation index is expected to stay below 6,000 m/s with low wind speeds, conditions considered unfavourable for the dispersion of pollutants. In the national capital, meanwhile, the air quality index was severe at 4pm. On a scale of 0 to 500, it was 401 against 390 — very poor — a day earlier. Doctors advise residents to avoid strenuous outdoor activity, use masks when outside for long durations.

Church site vandalised in Gurgaon, 2 days after mahapanchayat**Noida.(Agency)**

Two days after a mahapanchayat was held opposing the construction of a church, a registered religious charitable society alleged that miscreants vandalised its construction site in Teekli village of Sector 56 on Sunday night, damaging CCTV cameras and electrical fittings and snatching surveillance equipment from caretakers. Members of Delhi Bible Fellowship alleged that around 10pm, a group of men arrived at the site and banged repeatedly on the main gate with iron rods and pipes. "At least 4 persons jumped past the main gate, entered the construction premises and started damaging CCTV cameras fixed on a pole. They broke all electrical light fittings, causing a short circuit that led to a fire in the cables," the society's complaint said. It further alleged that the intruders threatened two caretakers at the site and took away the DVR of the CCTV



unit and a Wi-Fi router from their makeshift hut. "They entered the hut of the caretakers and threatened them with dire consequences if construction continued. The attackers had covered their faces with cloth. They broke the DVR unit linked to CCTV cameras and the Wi-Fi router installed in the room of the caretakers. They took away both with them to ensure their identities were not revealed," the complaint said.

When a TOI team visited the construction site on Monday, it

found electrical fittings broken and a CCTV camera lying on the ground. The team also questioned the Badshahpur ACP, who had visited the site along with his team, about the attack. The officer, however, declined to comment. This was not the society's first complaint. On Dec 24, it alleged that a few villagers came to the construction site and threatened workers present there against continuing work. A Mahapanchayat, the society alleged, was organised in the

village two days later, where strong objections were raised against the construction of the church.

"Hate speeches were delivered at the panchayat on Dec 26," the complaint said. Police said they were verifying the details and trying to identify those involved in the attack on Sunday.

"Our team inspected the site and collected evidence, along with photographs of the vandalised property. We also recorded the statements of the caretakers. Further investigation is underway," an official said. Another police official said talks were held between both parties on Monday evening. "We called both parties to mediate and sort the issue out through talks.

However, we are yet to register an FIR. We have, meanwhile, assured the church society that they can continue with the construction work. Police personnel will be stationed on the premises to provide protection."

According to the society, the church is coming up on 2 acres that were registered in its name on Nov 14, 2019.

THE SIKH TIMES

Edited, Printed, Published
Owned by Simmi Babbar
N-31, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar
Delhi-110009

Printed at Qaumi Patrika Printing
Press, A4/A144, Tronica City
(Loni), Ghaziabad (Uttar Pradesh)

Corporate Office:
5, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,
Press Area, ITO, New Delhi

Editor-in-Chief
Gurcharan Singh Babbar
Mob: 9654077232, 9971359517

Website : www.thesikhtimes.in

Email: sikhstimesindia@gmail.com

NEWS BOX

US Announces \$8.6 Billion Boeing Contract For F-15 Jets For Israel

WORLD. (Agency)

Boeing was given an \$8.6 billion contract for the F-15 Israel Program, the Pentagon said on Monday, after US President Donald Trump met Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Florida. "This contract provides for the design, integration, instrumentation, test, production, and delivery of 25 new F-15IA aircraft for the Israeli Air Force with an option for an additional 25 F-15IA aircraft," the Pentagon said. The Pentagon said the contract involved foreign military sales to Israel. The US has long been by far the largest arms supplier to its closest Middle East ally. Pro-Palestinian and anti-war protesters around the US had demanded an end to Washington's military support for Israel due to its devastating assault on Gaza but those demands have not been met in the administrations of President Donald Trump and former President Joe Biden. Contract work will be performed in St. Louis, and was expected to be complete by December 31, 2035, the Pentagon said in a statement.

Bolsonaro Could Return To Jail Cell This Week After Surgery

WORLD. (Agency)

Brazil's far-right former president Jair Bolsonaro could be back behind bars as soon as New Year's day after undergoing surgery for a groin hernia, doctors said Monday. Barring complications, Bolsonaro should be discharged on January 1, surgeon Claudio Birolini told reporters at the private DF Star clinic in Brasilia. Bolsonaro would then be returned to the cell where he is serving a 27-year prison sentence for leading a failed coup plot. Bolsonaro, 70, had surgery on Christmas Day, followed two days later by a procedure to treat recurring hiccups. In office from 2019 to 2022, he has for years been dealing with complications from an abdominal stab wound he suffered during a 2018 campaign rally, requiring several major surgeries. In September, Brazil's Supreme Court found Bolsonaro guilty of conspiring to stay in power after losing 2022 elections to leftist Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. Bolsonaro had been under house arrest until shortly before the start of his jail term, but was detained and sent to prison after he took a soldering iron to his ankle monitoring bracelet in what the court saw as an escape attempt.

"Politically Motivated": Imran Khan, Bushra Bibi Challenge 17-Year Jail Term



Islamabad. (Agency)

founder and former prime minister Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi on Monday filed separate appeals before the Islamabad High Court (IHC), challenging their conviction in the Toshakhana 2 case, Dawn reported. The appeals follow a December 20 verdict by a special court that sentenced both Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi to 17 years' imprisonment in connection with the alleged purchase of a Bulgarian jewellery set. The jewellery was gifted to Imran Khan by the Saudi crown prince during an official visit in May 2021 and was allegedly acquired at a substantially reduced price. During the proceedings, the prosecution maintained that the PTI founder retained the jewellery set, valued at around PKR 80 million, after paying only PKR 2.9 million. In their petitions, the defence challenged the basis of the conviction.

According to copies of the appeals available with Dawn, the couple's lawyers argued that the sentencing was politically motivated, stating, "The overarching objective of the present prosecution appears to be the continued incarceration of the appellant, thereby preventing his participation in national politics and curtailing his political role and influence."

The appeals also raised procedural concerns, noting that the National Accountability Bureau initially initiated the case before being transferred to the Federal Investigation Agency. Questioning the manner in which the investigation was conducted, the appeals stated, "The learned trial court overlooked the methodology adopted by the Federal Investigation Agency in conducting the investigation. In the absence of settled law, precedent, or clear guidance on the subject, heightened care and caution were required in interpreting and applying the governing legal framework." Instead, both the investigating agency and the Trial Court proceeded in a cursory manner. This is evident from the absence of any FIR (first information report) on the record. Expanding on these concerns, the defence highlighted that the FIA submitted a challan "within two days of the initiation of the investigation", arguing that such a limited timeframe did not allow for a fair and transparent probe, Dawn reported.

The appeals further contended that the Toshakhana 2 conviction amounted to the fourth prosecution linked to Toshakhana-related matters and therefore constituted double jeopardy. This was described as "reflecting a repetitive and overlapping invocation of criminal process in respect of the same subject matter".

Despite political differences, Yunus said, her long political journey, dedicated to national welfare, people-oriented leadership, and firm resolve, consistently showed the way forward.

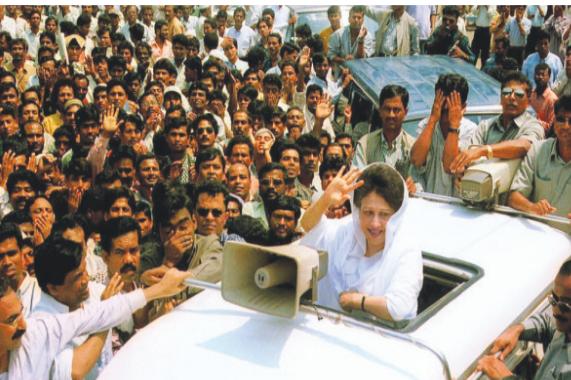
DHAKA. (Agency)

Bangladesh's interim government Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus on Tuesday described former prime minister Khaleda Zia as a "great guardian" whose role in the country's democratic journey would be remembered forever, as he expressed profound sorrow at her death. In a condolence message posted on his X handle, Yunus said he was "deeply

saddened and grief-stricken" by the passing of Zia, noting that the nation had lost not just a political leader but a towering stateswoman who represented an important chapter in Bangladesh's history.

With the passing of Zia, "the nation has lost a great guardian", he said. Zia, the longtime chief of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and a three-time prime minister, died at around 6 am local time after a prolonged illness at Evercare Hospital in Dhaka. She was 80. Yunus said Zia's role in establishing democracy, nurturing a multi-party political culture and safeguarding the rights of the people will be remembered forever. "Through her uncompromising leadership, the nation was repeatedly freed from undemocratic conditions and inspired to regain liberty. The nation will remember her contributions to the country and its people with respect," he said. Despite political differences, Yunus said, her long political journey, dedicated

to national welfare, people-oriented leadership, and firm resolve, consistently showed the way forward. "With her death, Bangladesh has lost an experienced and proven stateswoman," he said.



Recalling her political life, Yunus said Zia was Bangladesh's first woman prime minister and "led the struggle to restore democracy against autocracy." Her "strong leadership played a decisive role in

bringing down the nine-year-long autocratic rule of HM Ershad", Yunus said. He said after becoming prime minister in 1991, Zia laid a strong foundation for the economy through liberalisation.

During what he described as Sheikh Hasina's "fascist rule", Yunus said, Zia emerged as a "unique symbol of struggle and resistance", inspiring the nation through her steadfast stance. The Chief Adviser alleged that due to her political success, Zia became a victim of "extreme political vengeance", and was sentenced to 17 years in prison in what he called "false and fabricated cases", and endured long periods of incarceration.

Yunus expressed deep condolences to Zia's bereaved family and to the leaders and activists of BNP. Calling her death an irreparable loss for the nation, he urged people to remain calm and patient and requested citizens to pray for the departed leader.

Trump once again claims credit for ending India-Pakistan conflict during Netanyahu meeting

PARAMARIBO. (Agency)

US President Donald Trump has once again claimed that his administration played an important role in ending the military confrontation between India and Pakistan, repeating the assertion during a bilateral meeting with visiting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at Mar-a-Lago on Monday. As he opened discussions with Netanyahu and senior members of his delegation, Trump said he had "settled eight wars" during the first year of his second term in the White House, though he complained that he had received little recognition for these efforts. Among the conflicts he cited were hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which he claimed to have resolved by threatening both countries with steep trade penalties. Trump said he warned the two sides that trade would be cut off and tariffs raised sharply if fighting continued, prompting what he described as a swift resolution.

He then went on to repeat his claim regarding South Asia, stating that he had stopped the fighting between

India and Pakistan. "Settled eight wars, but we don't know the countries. Azerbaijan... It's good when you can say it," Trump said.



He added that Russian President Vladimir Putin had once expressed surprise at how quickly the conflict was resolved, claiming, "I literally settled it in one day." Trump further asserted that trade pressure had been central to his strategy. "They do trade. I said, 'We're going to cut you off from trade. No more trade,' to both of them... Then I put 200 per cent tariffs... the next day they called. Thirty-five years of fighting, and they stopped," he said.

Referring specifically to South Asia,

Trump added, "India. How about India and Pakistan... So I did eight of them." Since May 10, when Trump announced on social media that India and Pakistan had agreed to a "full and immediate" ceasefire following what he described as a "long night" of talks mediated by Washington, the US president has repeated the claim more than 70 times in public remarks, meetings with foreign leaders, and overseas visits. However, India has consistently rejected claims of third-party mediation, maintaining that the decision to halt hostilities was reached bilaterally.

The escalation began after India launched Operation Sindo on May 7, targeting terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in retaliation for the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam, which killed 26 civilians. This was followed by four days of intense cross-border drone and missile exchanges between the two nuclear-armed neighbours. On May 10, India and Pakistan announced an understanding to end the conflict, bringing the brief but severe military standoff to a close.

Saudi Arabia bombs Yemen over shipment of weapons for separatists that arrived from UAE

DHAKA. (Agency)

Saudi Arabia bombed the port city of Mukalla in Yemen on Tuesday over what it described as a shipment of weapons for a separatist force there that arrived from the United Arab Emirates. The attack signals a new escalation in tensions between the kingdom and the Southern Transitional Council, which is backed by the Emirates. It also further strains ties between Riyadh and Abu Dhabi, which had been backing competing sides in Yemen's decadal war against the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels. A military statement carried by the state-run Saudi Press Agency announced the strikes, which it said came after ships arrived there from Fujairah, a port city on the UAE's eastern coast. "Given the danger and escalation posed by these weapons,

which threaten security and stability, the Coalition Air Forces conducted a limited military operation this morning targeting weapons and combat vehicles unloaded from the two ships at the port of al-Mukalla," it said. Mukalla is in Yemen's Hadramaut governorate, which the Council had seized in recent days. The port city is some 480 kilometers (300 miles) northeast of Aden, which has been the seat of power for anti-Houthi forces in Yemen after the rebels seized the capital, Sanaa, back in 2014.

The strike in Mukalla comes after Saudi Arabia targeted the Council in airstrikes Friday that analysts described as a warning for the separatists to halt their advance and leave the governorates of Hadramaut and Mahra. The Council had pushed out forces there affiliated with the

Saudi-backed National Shield Forces, another group in the coalition fighting the Houthis.

Those aligned with the Council have increasingly flown the flag of South Yemen, which was a separate country from 1967-1990. Demonstrators have been rallying for days to support political forces calling for South Yemen to secede again from Yemen. The actions by the separatists have put pressure on the relationship between Saudi Arabia and the UAE, which maintain close relations and are members of the OPEC oil cartel, but also have competed for influence and international business in recent years. There has also been an escalation of violence in Sudan, another nation on the Red Sea, where the kingdom and the Emirates support opposing forces in that country's ongoing war.

Australian police find no evidence of 'broader terrorist cell' in Bondi Beach shooting

Australian Federal Police Commissioner said that the accused are alleged to have acted alone. She said there is no evidence indicating the alleged offenders were part of a broader terrorist cell or were directed by others to carry out an attack.

UPALM BEACH. (Agency)

An investigation that extended to the Philippines of two men accused of shooting dead 15 people at a Sydney Jewish festival has found no evidence that they were part of a "broader terrorist cell," police said on Tuesday. Sydney residents Sajid Akram, 50, and his 24-year-old son Naveed Akram, 50, spent most of November in Davao City in

the southern Philippines. Australian Federal Police Commissioner Krissy Barrett said they returned on a flight from Manila on Nov. 29. Two weeks later, they are accused of killing 15 and wounding another 40 in a mass shooting that targeted a Hannukah festival at Bondi Beach. Philippine National Police determined the pair rarely left their hotel during the visit, Barrett said. "There is no evidence to suggest they received training or underwent logistical preparation for their alleged attack," Barrett told reporters. "These individuals are alleged to have acted alone. There is no evidence to suggest these alleged offenders were part of a broader terrorist cell, or were directed by others to carry out an attack. However, I want to be clear, I am not suggesting that they were there for tourism," Barrett added. Barrett did not detail a motive for the visit, which began on Nov. 1. Police allege the pair were inspired by the Islamic State group. The southern Philippines once drew small numbers of foreign militants aligned with the Islamic State group or al-Qaida to train in a secessionist conflict involving

minority Muslims in the largely Catholic nation. Barrett said she was limited in what she could disclose about the investigation in the Philippines because she did not want



to prejudice Naveed Akram's trial. He has yet to enter pleas to dozens of charges including 15 counts of murder and one of committing a terrorist act. Police shot him in the abdomen during a gunfight at Bondi on Dec. 14 and he spent a week in a hospital before he was transferred to a prison. Police shot his father dead at Bondi. Authorities are promising the largest police presence ever at New Year's Eve festivities at

Sydney Harbor on Wednesday. More than 2,500 officers will be on duty. Many will be openly carrying automatic rifles, a sight rarely seen on Sydney streets.

The first police responders to the Bondi massacre were armed with Glock pistols that lacked the lethal range of the Akrams' rifles and shotguns. Two police officers were among the wounded. New South Wales Premier Chris Minns said the state was not moving toward a more militarized police force in response to the attack.

"Given we've just had the worst terrorism event in Australia's history inside the last month, it would be self-evidently the case that things need to change and the security needs to change," Minns said. "I understand that there'll be some people that oppose this or regard it as the militarization of the police. My sense is far more families would fully support that kind of police operation because they will feel far safer in that environment," Minns added. More than 1 million revelers crowd the waterfront each year to see a world-famous fireworks display centered on the Sydney Harbor Bridge.

NEWS BOX

Army jawan missing since Uttarkashi flash floods: Admin to issue communication to family

ANGUL. (Agency)

Authorities in Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand have decided to issue a communication to the family of Sachin Ponia, a 24-year-old Agniveer from Uttar Pradesh's Hathras who went missing during the flash floods in the neighbouring state in August 2025, inviting their concerns and objections to the administration's decision to declare the Army jawan dead.

Ponia, who was attached with the 14th Battalion of the Rajputana Rifles, was deployed in Uttarkashi when flash floods struck the area on August 5. The decision follows a report published in The Indian Express, in which Ponia's family claimed that he was declared dead without any conclusive evidence. The Hathras district administration had invited objections from the general public regarding the Agniveer's death upon getting a communication from their Uttarkashi counterparts.

Following a letter from the Matwadi Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) in Uttarkashi declaring Ponia "dead on a final (provisional) basis under the presumption of death," the Hathras district administration had issued a proclamation order inviting objections from the general public.

The order stated that if any person has objections to declaring Ponia dead, they may submit their objections within 30 days at the SDM's office. Speaking to The Indian Express, Matwadi SDM Shalini Negi said the Uttarkashi police filed a closure (final) report after investigating the matter, stating that Ponia and the other missing personnel could not be traced despite extensive efforts.

What caused the BEST bus accident that killed 4 in Mumbai? Here's what the driver says

Mumbai. (Agency)

Santosh Sawant, 50, the driver of the BEST bus that ran over pedestrians in Bhandup on Monday night, killing four people and injuring eight others, told the Mumbai police that the accident took place due to a mistake on the part of the previous driver who had handled the vehicle.

Sawant said the other driver had placed the hand brake in drive mode instead of neutral mode. After their shift changed, when Sawant pulled the hand brake to start the bus, the vehicle, which was already on drive mode, surged forward and ran over the crowd in front, he claimed. Twelve people were knocked down in the impact and rushed to MT Agarwal Hospital in Mulund and Rajawadi Hospital in Ghatkopar. A lampost was also damaged.

Following the accident, three women and one man were pronounced dead at the hospitals, while eight others, including seven men, are currently under treatment. Videos that went viral later showed people pushing the bus to one side to rescue those who were trapped under it.

The Bhandup police arrested Sawant on Monday night after registering a First Information Report (FIR) in the matter. He is a permanent bus driver under the Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport Undertaking (BEST), and not a contractual employee, an officer said. Sawant will be produced before a court on Tuesday where the police will seek his custody. Prima facie, he did not appear to be driving under the influence of any intoxicant, an officer stated.

A police officer said that they will be calling the previous driver to record his statement in connection with the incident. They have also sent the bus for an inspection to determine if there was some technical fault.

'Lawlessness' and demolitions: Bombay HC's reality check for Mumbai Metropolitan Region civic bodies over illegal constructions

Mumbai. (Agency)

Over the past three years, the Bombay High Court has issued a series of directives against rampant illegal and unchecked constructions in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), holding civic bodies and their top officials, including commissioners serving as administrators, accountable for the mushrooming of thousands of such structures and seeking immediate action.

The high court passed orders mandating demolitions, suspending responsible officers, recovering costs from errants, and ensuring strict implementation of the guidelines.

While elections for 29 municipal corporations in Maharashtra will be held on January 15, 2026, several civic bodies completed their terms in 2022, leading to prolonged administrative rule of 3 to 4 years in several cities in MMR and the rest of the state.

'Something fundamentally goes wrong' In June this year, the HC observed that a large number of uncontrolled illegal structures would not have come up in the municipal areas of MMR if civic bodies had strictly implemented a 2009 Government Resolution (GR) that laid down detailed guidelines for dealing with such structures.

'Do I need to choose my friends based on religion?': Woman after vigilantes disrupt her birthday at Bareilly cafe

Lucknow. (Agency)

Three days after vigilantes stormed into a cafe in Bareilly and disrupted her birthday celebration, while raising allegations of love jihad, the 22-year-old woman said the incident has shattered her reputation and left her afraid of stepping out of her house.

The woman, a final-year nursing student, said 12 people were present at the party and they were her classmates. "I had invited 40 of my classmates but only 12 could attend... among them, two were Muslims. I feel deeply ashamed that my friends were harassed and assaulted...," she said.

"Do I now need to choose my friends based on their religion?" she asked. She also said the incident has left her distressed. "I have confined myself to the house and not stepped out... because of fear."

On Saturday, nearly two dozen vigilantes barged into the cafe and allegedly assaulted the birthday group and staff. The incident was purportedly triggered by the presence of two youths from the Muslim community at the party. Police had detained the two youths, Shaan and Waqib, along with the cafe owner, Shailendra Gangwar, invoking provisions of breach of peace. They were released later on bail on personal bonds, officials had said.

Police have so far arrested five people in connection with the incident. The key accused, Rishabh Thakur and Deepak Pathak, were not among them, officials said. While it was alleged that Rishabh and Deepak have links with the Bajrang Dal, the organisation's Bareilly

country and even beyond. I cannot understand who gave these assailants the authority to judge people and decide who I should be friends with," she added. Staying at her aunt's house in Bareilly, she recounted what transpired. Around 12.30 pm on December 27, her friends

assembled at the cafe. About an hour later, as she was cutting her birthday cake, the group of assailants allegedly barged in, raising slogans.

"They started assaulting my classmates, Waqib and Shaan... some of them began misbehaving with others, including me, while questioning us about our religion," she claimed. "My friends pleaded with them to let us leave. Although they were pushed out of the hall, the attackers continued to beat Waqib and Shaan, who suffered serious injuries," she added, alleging that the assailants misbehaved

with her and attempted to snatch her mobile phone. She said her parents and relatives never objected to her having Muslim friends and are fully aware of her social circle. "I regularly post photos with my friends on social media... I organised the birthday celebration only after asking my parents. They know who my friends are. If they have no objection, then who are these people to try to 'guide' me?"

coordinator Aryan Chaudhary denied the claim. Hailing from neighbouring Badaun district, the woman has been living at the hostel of the nursing institute for the past four years. Her father is a farmer, and she is the eldest of two siblings. After the ruckus, she said she has not returned to her institute and has left the hostel. "I am going through depression because it has ruined my image not just locally, but across the

coordinator Aryan Chaudhary denied the claim. Hailing from neighbouring Badaun district, the woman has been living at the hostel of the nursing institute for the past four years. Her father is a farmer, and she is the eldest of two siblings. After the ruckus, she said she has not returned to her institute and has left the hostel. "I am going through depression because it has ruined my image not just locally, but across the

Prodded by high command, Karnataka Congress tries to put lid on Kogilu issue

BENGALURU. (Agency)

The Congress government in the state is treading cautiously after the eviction of 250 families, mostly Muslim, living illegally on government land at Kogilu in Bengaluru invited a nudge from the party high command. The party top brass is wary of the fallout the move will have on its prospects in the Kerala Assembly elections where it is fighting its INDIA bloc partner -- LDF, led by CPM.

Days after Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan of the CPM commented that Uttar Pradesh's "Bulldozer Raj" has arrived in Karnataka, AICC General Secretary (Organisation) KC Venugopal intervened and suggested to the state leaders that the drive could have been undertaken with greater caution. Now, the Siddaramaiah government is making efforts to put the lid on the issue by rehabilitating the evicted.

It is said that Venugopal is eyeing the Kerala chief minister's post if the Congress-led LDF wrests power in the Assembly polls, expected to in April/May, 2026. Incidentally, Siddaramaiah is landing in

Thiruvananthapuram late on Tuesday evening to take part in the 93rd Sivagiri pilgrimage meeting at Sivagiri Mutt, Varkala, on Wednesday, where he is likely to meet Venugopal. Both Siddaramaiah and DCM DK

the power to advise the state government. Their moves also assume significance as the high command is yet to decide on leadership change in Karnataka.

Housing Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan and Social Welfare Minister Dr HC Mahadevappa, from the Siddaramaiah camp, attacked Vijayan for interfering in the state issue. Zameer, a Muslim strongman, advised Vijayan to build houses for the "victims" if he is so concerned. Earlier, a delegation including CPIM leaders -- Kerala MP AA Rahim and former minister KT Jaleel -- visited Kogilu and came down heavily on the Congress government, likening its act to UP's "bulldozer raj". It is highly likely that CPM, which documented the agony of the "victims", plans to play it against Congress during campaigning for the Kerala Assembly polls. However,

Congress got its other ally, Indian Union Muslim League (IUML), on its side as its leader PK Kunhalikutty, who visited the area on Sunday, said the demolition drive should not be equated with that of Uttar Pradesh.

71 sheep die near Rashtra Prerna Sthal: NGO alleges they ate rotten food; CM Yogi orders probe

Lucknow. (Agency)

At least 71 sheep died and several others were taken critically ill near the Rashtra Prerna Sthal in Lucknow, which was inaugurated on December 25, after consuming some poisonous substance. While an NGO alleged that the animals suffered food poisoning after consuming rotten food dumped in an open area near the Rashtra Prerna Sthal, the district administration said the cause of deaths will be ascertained only after post-mortem reports are received. Taking cognisance of the incident, CM Yogi Adityanath ordered an inquiry into the matter and announced financial assistance of Rs 10,000 per sheep.

The incident came to light after police alerted the Animal Husbandry Department, following which a team visited the site to start treatment of animals and assess the situation. Post-mortem examination of the dead sheep has been conducted and the reports are awaited, the officials said.

Lucknow Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Manoj Kumar Singh said the administration is awaiting the post-mortem reports, after which the next

course of action will be decided. The exact cause of the incident is yet to be ascertained, he added.

The sheep belong to some residents of Fatehpur district who came to Lucknow recently and were staying with their herd in the open space in Ghela area which is close to the Rashtra Prerna Sthal.

Lucknow Chief Veterinary Officer Suresh Kumar said after receiving information from police, he

sent a team of three veterinary doctors to the spot to provide treatment to the affected sheep. "There are nearly 300 sheep at the site. Around 70 sheep have recovered after treatment. The treatment of the remaining animals is going on. Post-mortem has been

conducted on the dead sheep and viscera samples have been preserved and will be sent to a laboratory for further examination," Kumar said.

The doctors informed him that the sheep had likely consumed a poisonous substance a day earlier, following which their stomachs swelled, leading to breathing difficulties, the Chief Veterinary Officer said. The dead sheep will be buried after completing the procedure.



UP shivers amid severe cold wave: More fog, rain on forecast this week

Lucknow. (Agency)

Several parts of Uttar Pradesh continued to reel under intense cold on Monday. While intense fog is forecast for Tuesday, rain is expected on New Year owing to a western disturbance. Owing to severe cold wave conditions across Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has ordered the closure of all schools up to Class 12 till January 1. This applies across all boards -- ICSE, CBSE, and UP Board.

As per data from the India Meteorological Department, the Lucknow (Airport) Observatory Sunday recorded a maximum temperature of 18.0°C -- 3.1°C below normal -- while the minimum was 10.4°C, 3°C above normal. On Monday, the maximum was 17°C and the minimum was 10°C. On Tuesday, the Met department has forecast that the fog cover is likely to be intense in East, West and Central UP regions.

According to the Meteorological Department, the state can expect slight relief from the first day of the new year when cold conditions along with foggy nights are likely to

decrease. However, it said some places in West UP may see light rain on January 1 due to a western disturbance. Meanwhile, UP's Terai region will continue to face thick fog cover as well as zero visibility during night hours until the western disturbance subsides, confirmed the weather department in Lucknow.

Senior Meteorological Department scientist, Atul Kumar Singh, told The



Indian Express, "Cold day conditions will continue for next two days due to the western disturbance. While the minimum temperature in districts across UP have remained normal over the past several days -- which is between 7°C and 12°C -- the maximum temperature has been below normal."

Abide by law or begin 2026 in lock-up: Surat Police issue stern warning ahead of New Year's eve

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

From the sky, the ground as well as the eyes and ears of the personnel on duty, the Gujarat Police are keeping a close watch on revellers to enforce strict law and order in major cities of the state in the run-up to New Year's eve. On Monday, even as the Vadodara city police undertook an Area Dominance March, the Surat City Police issued a stern warning to stay within "the line of law" or "begin your new year in the lock-up."

In view of New Year's Eve celebrations, Surat City Commissioner of Police Anupam Singh Gahalaut on Monday elaborated on the preparations made by the police to ensure maintenance of law and order on December 31. Gahalaut sounded a clear warning against breaking the law, including consumption of drugs -- which would attract an FIR. He said, "People will say goodbye to 2025 on December 31 and welcome 2026. We have received 13 applications from event organisers in the city. The Surat police are with you, so far as you follow the law. So

long as you do not indulge in acts that cause trouble to women and other co-revellers. Do not overspeed... if you try to tease women or indulge in stunts, cut cakes with swords or such acts, we will come after you..."

Pointing out that although the Surat Police have begun efforts for rehabilitation of individual drug users, the New Year's Eve will be an exception as anyone caught with traces of intoxicant in their body samples, will face an FIR.

"On December 31, if anyone is found having consumed drugs, we will lodge cases against them. On other days we help in rehabilitation but on December 31, we will strictly check for narcotics consumption.

As part of the preparations, 5,000 police personnel have been deployed and 45 checkpoints have been set up... any intoxicant consumed will result in strict police action. We have 380 alcohol

detectors, of which 180 are baton-based, to allow testing from a distance. As many as 200 breath analysers are handed out to SOG, DCB and other local police. We also have

anti-narcotics kits," Gahalaut said. He added that the city police would install additional cameras at "blind spots" to monitor movement in the city on New Year's eve. "We have 900 body-worn cameras... In

some spots where there are no CCTVs, we are putting up solar-based and wireless cameras for live monitoring through the control room... We request people to celebrate by respecting the rule of law. If you break the sanctity of the law in place, it is certain that you will begin 2026 in a police lock-up. Enjoy and coordinate with the police, Gahalaut said."

In Vadodara, the city police undertook an area domination exercise and Commissioner of Police Narasimha Komar appealed to the citizens to follow the law. Komar said, "The police have worked with complete dedication for the prevention, detection, investigation and law and order maintenance all year through... Now, as we reach the end of the year, an action plan has been prepared by the city police for the safe celebrations of the New Year's eve. For this, a crackdown on bootlegging, identification of persons indulging in peddling drugs..."

INSV Kaundinya begins journey to Oman: All you need to know about the ancient-style sailing vessel

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

On Monday afternoon, a pilot craft slowly backed off the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) jetty in the Porbandar district of Gujarat, towing the Indian Naval Sailing Vessel (INSV) Kaundinya out to sea, to the tune of "Jai Ho" from Slumdog Millionaire played by the Naval band.

The two-masted sailboat with a specially trained crew will make its maiden voyage to Muscat, in the Sultanate of Oman, retracing the historic maritime routes that connected India with the wider Indian Ocean world for millennia. At the launch ceremony, the Guest of Honour, Issa Saleh Abdullah Alshabani, the Omani Ambassador to India, spoke of historical and cultural ties between the two nations and peoples. He was joined by Vice Admiral Krishna Swaminathan, the Flag Officer Commanding (FOC-IN) of the Western Naval Command, as well as Rear Admiral Srinu Guru, Flag Officer Commanding of the Gujarat Naval Area, among other senior naval officers.

Here is all you need to know about INSV Kaundinya

Inspiration and collaborators

INSV Kaundinya is a stitched sail ship, based on a 5th-century CE ship depicted in the paintings of Ajanta Caves. The project was initiated in July 2023 through a tripartite agreement signed by the Ministry of Culture, the Indian Navy, and Hodi Innovations, with funding from the Ministry of Culture.

The ship, which embodies India's historic role as a maritime nation, is named after the legendary mariner Kaundinya, who is believed to have sailed from India to Southeast Asia in ancient times. Its sails display motifs of the Gandaberunda and the Sun, the bow bears a sculpted Simha Yali, and a symbolic Harappan-style stone anchor adorns its deck, each element evoking the rich maritime traditions of ancient India.

country and even beyond. I cannot understand who gave these assailants the authority to judge people and decide who I should be friends with," she added. Staying at her aunt's house in Bareilly, she recounted what transpired. Around 12.30 pm on December 27, her friends

assembled at the cafe. About an hour later, as she was cutting her birthday cake, the group of assailants allegedly barged in, raising slogans.

"They started assaulting my classmates, Waqib and Shaan... some of them began misbehaving with others, including me, while questioning us about our religion," she claimed. "My friends pleaded with them to let us leave. Although they were pushed out of the hall, the attackers continued to beat Waqib and Shaan, who suffered serious injuries," she added, alleging that the assailants misbehaved

with her and attempted to snatch her mobile phone. She said her parents and relatives never objected to her having Muslim friends and are fully aware of her social circle. "I regularly post photos with my friends on social media... I organised the birthday celebration only after asking my parents. They know who my friends are. If they have no objection, then who are these people to try to 'guide' me?"

Early release from jails an incentive, not privilege

On directions from the Supreme Court, the Punjab & Haryana High Court has initiated suo motu proceedings to monitor and supervise implementation of the early release guidelines for the convicts, popularly known as Pre-mature Release (PMR) Policies. PMR is an important correctional toolkit, whereby, good conduct prisoners are freed from jail before they serve full term of the sentence awarded to them by the trial court. Early release of convicts does not amount to overturning of judgment of conviction, it is a prerogative of the government authorities to mitigate punishment in appropriate cases. PMR would depend on many factors including public interest, gravity and nature of the offence, signs of reformation exhibited by the convict and impact of the release on the victims and society in general.

Early release of good conduct prisoners serves two important purposes, one for the prison administration and another for the convicts. Possibility of release before time singularly motivates prison inmates to exhibit good conduct and lead a disciplined life. Freedom before full



term of sentence also protects the convicts from ill-effects of long incarceration and, *inter alia*, facilitates their re-integration with the mainstream society. Overall good conduct and probability of becoming a useful citizen are the two main considerations for making an inmate eligible for PMR. The two powers of the authorities to remit and commute sentence vary in nature and scope and are mutually exclusive; they are exercised by the competent authorities independent of each other. The apex court in *Prem Raj v. Delhi Administration* (2003) has clarified that 'remission' entails reducing the quantum in the same category of sentence, without changing its type, whereas, 'commutation' implies changing the type of sentence to a lower category of punishment; the two terms are not interchangeable. In a welfare state, executive governments are expected to solve problems and address miseries of the people. Therefore, the appropriate governments are conferred powers to suspend or remit sentence on case- to- case basis, with or without conditions. This power is to be exercised after obtaining and considering opinion of the convicting court. The release of convicts under this provision is a purely humanitarian exercise to mitigate their personal hardships in larger public interest. Since this power is to be exercised on the request of convicts, no policy framework is necessary; procedural guidelines though can always be issued to maintain uniformity. Undoubtedly, premature release of convicts is neither a privilege nor a right of every prisoner; it is an incentive which is granted by the executives based on some prescribed eligibility criteria. Over the years, several conceptual and procedural flaws have crept in the laws as well as in implementation of the PMR policies, which need immediate correction.

Redefining America's sense of self

The fall in Trump's approval ratings through 2025 reflected America's glissading sense of self. It coincided with his team's back-and-forth on releasing the Epstein files. A battle of real and proclaimed statures played out. Portraits of his team, including Chief of Staff Susie Wiles, resized them in the public eye

America's love affair with monumentalism is hardly a secret: with buildings, warships, automobiles, aircraft—and, most importantly, self-image. So, when this core of self-esteem begins to crack and eventually crumble, we can be sure that something is afoot that will redefine America's sense of self. For better or for worse—which might actually go hand in hand.

Never before has the US introspected more than after Donald Trump took office this January. The most monumental president in the 80 postwar years, according to Gallup, he began with approval ratings of 47 percent (21-27 January) but is now down to 36 percent (1-15 December), where it has been stuck since November 3. This steadily declining graph is a reliable mirror to America's glissading sense of self under the Trump presidency. Trump has been promising big and delivering small. The Epstein files fiasco is a case in point. One of Trump's presidential election planks was the unconditional release of the entire, unredacted Epstein files. In January, Trump reiterated his promise. In February, his attorney general Pam Bondi told an interviewer that an Epstein "client list" was on her desk. The department of justice (DoJ) ostentatiously sent "declassified" dossiers to far-right influencers—but it was material already in the public domain.

On February 21, Trump's ratings fell to 45 percent. A month later, they were down to 43 percent. On April 25, Virginia Giuffre, one of the early Epstein accusers, died by suicide—and between then and May 18, his ratings plateaued. Giuffre's death forced his ratings further down to 40 percent on June 19, two weeks before the DoJ denied that Epstein maintained a "client list" at all, and that it wouldn't release any more files. On July 21, Trump's ratings plummeted to 37 percent. On October 1, Trump hit a relative high of 40 percent, until Giuffre's posthumous memoir, published on October 19, clubbed the ratings down to 37 percent. They slid further to 36 percent on November 3, where they remained until last declared on December 1. Meanwhile, the Trump dispensation doubled down on halting the skid, first by releasing emails sent between Epstein and others, then by the Congress passing and Trump signing into law the Epstein Files Transparency Act, and then by the DoJ releasing the records—only to begin massively redacting them from its website within hours of release, especially for documentation to do with Trump.

In the interstices of this stormy diminution of ratings and the public outcry against the harm done by presidential duplicity to juvenile-focused familyism—one of the foundations of American society—other self-critiques



began doing the rounds. Trump has always trumpeted his height as 6'3". When photographs surfaced of him walking beside Prince William, who is confirmed as 6'3", in September, Trump appeared six inches shorter. The war of tallness—or grō?ekrieg, a war of grandeur—broke hearts across social media platforms, with MAGA warriors sharing the quicksand of doubt with left liberals. Potus guaranteed being larger-than-life in two crucial forms—an ethical promise and his own persona—and fell short in both senses.

There was more to come. On December 16, *Vanity Fair* published 'Eye of the Hurricane', a wrap of the year in two parts featuring interviews of Susie Wiles, the Trump White House's chief of staff, at length and in depth. But the most extraordinary revelations came not from the text, but from the posed photographs by Christopher Anderson. They seem *prima facie* passable portraits of people in power, posing with their best face forward. But the snarky commentary was in the inconsequential dimensions that Anderson reduced these movers-and-shakers to in their architectural environments. Anderson posed Vance next to a light switch, installed at a particular height by regulation—and this juxtaposition

immediately reduced Vance from his self-proclaimed 6'2" to at most 5'10". Karoline Leavitt, the White House press secretary whom Trump has occasionally been raffish about, was photographed in close-up, highlighting her spotted lips pierced by filler injections. Right or left, the horror at the careless feet of clay in the mythified high echelons of the White House left the *hoi polloi* distressed and 'schadenfreuded' in equal measure.

Meanwhile, Trump is mirroring the citizenry—both shrunken and bullfrogged, but still figure-skating on personal and social bewilderment as if none of this resizing was psychologically revealing or long-term. On December 13, following a trip to Japan, Trump spoke positively about "really cute" kei cars, asking, "How would that do in this country?" It sent the bellwether US automobile industry, predicated on design and factory largeness, into a lather. On December 22, he went big, announcing the commissioning of a new series of ginormous 'Trump class' battleships. Things are changing in America, but, as a March 2020 report by the University of Georgia pointed out, "Americans who do change tend to report a lower sense of well-being." I wonder if this is going to end well.

End the silence: Call out goons acting in the name of religion

The Tribune Editorial: Ruffians masquerading as religious activists destroying Christmas decorations and threatening worshippers deserve the attention reserved for the worst of the law-breakers.

Do gestures and images matter? Yes they do. Do words count? They absolutely do. The Prime Minister attending Christmas morning prayers at a church in Delhi sent out a reassuring message of communal harmony and goodwill. The pictures lent a sense of quiet calm. What has been missing from the highest quarters is an outright condemnation of the attacks on minorities. Goons masquerading as religious activists destroying Christmas decorations and threatening worshippers deserve the attention reserved for the worst of the law-breakers. Instead, there is troubling silence over the brazen acts of vandalism, disruption and lawlessness in the name of religion. It's deeply worrying. What's worse is that such condemnable incidents took place on a day when the nation celebrated the birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee. December 25 saw the inauguration of the Rashtriya Prerna Sthal, the national memorial complex, in



Lucknow, with 65-foot-high bronze statues of Vajpayee, Syama Prasad Mookerjee and Deendayal Upadhyaya. The Prime Minister said it symbolises a vision that has guided India towards self-respect, unity and service. In the

national capital, the BJP opened an exhibition on Vajpayee's life and contributions at its headquarters. The Delhi government rolled out subsidised Atal Canteens. The late former Prime Minister may or may not have approved of such adulatory forms of remembrance, but what he certainly would have taken umbrage to is the normalisation of hate-spewing, provocative and irrational behaviour that demonstrates and amplifies majoritarianism.

Vajpayee set high standards in public life, assuring that preserving the inclusive character of India overrode ideological positions. A small group of lumpen elements cannot be allowed to dictate terms and destroy all that India stands for. Not speaking out and strongly rejecting such unruly and perverse conduct is a disservice.

Will G-Ram-G serve the poor better than MGNREGA

Any rural employment scheme must follow the new norms, otherwise no funds will be sanctioned by the Centre.



Farmers dying by suicide, migration from rural to urban areas, jobless growth in the 1990s and stagnation and decline in agricultural productivity were the distress signals which led to enactment of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in 2005. The Rajasthan chapter of People's Union for Civil Liberties, India's largest human

rights organisation, filed a Public Interest litigation on similar issues in mid-2001. The petition put forward that the right to life, a fundamental right under the Indian Constitution, has been recognised inclusive of the right to live with dignity, including the right to food. MGNREGA is based on the experiences of many previously designed and implemented rural

development employment-oriented schemes and wage employment programmes in the past five years plans. The draft of the legislation was largely based on the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Act, 1977, undoubtedly, one of the most progressive and purposeful legislations to guarantee work and wages to the rural work force, in particular, the poor farmers and landless

labourers. Poverty is a state of deprivation. In absolute terms, it reflects the inability of an individual to satisfy certain basic minimum needs for a sustained, healthy and reasonably productive living. This inability has a social, cultural, political and a physiological dimension. This scheme helped in achieving three SDG goals—poverty eradication, environment protection and woman empowerment.

The government always has machinery; it only needs the will and vision to identify the problem and act accordingly. Does the repealing of MGNREGA to VB-G-RAM-G and joining it wrongly with the Livelihood Mission, give us a better tool to serve the deprived lot? G-RAM-G is not a better scheme as it further imposes cuts on taking up work during 60 days of harvesting period. Are the persons employed in MGNREG scheme land owners? Section 4(5) of VB-G RAM G makes the scheme fund allocation-based, making it dependent on Delhi. Section 4(6) states that any rural employment scheme designed, must follow the norms laid by G-RAM-G, otherwise no funds will be sanctioned by the Centre. Section 5(1) bars universal applicability of the G-RAM-G scheme in the country. The area of operation shall be notified by the Central government. Section 22(2) authors fiscal strangulation of states by introducing 60:40 funding ratio.

VB G-RAM-G kills the spirit and structure of a beautiful piece of legislation commended worldwide. It is an example of strong centralisation of the process masqueraded in the shape of a Bill like all propaganda and fake narratives of the government. Does it imply labour control disguised as labour employment? All India rural female Labour Force Participation Rate increased from 24.6% in 2017-18 to 47.6% in year 2023-24, thanks to MGNREGA scheme. MGNREGA's death has killed the hope to survive in difficult days.

Shimla Jal Prabandhan Nigam resolves over 2,300 consumer complaints promptly

Shimla. (Agency)

Shimla Jal Prabandhan Nigam (SJPNL) continues to take proactive steps with a strong focus on consumer convenience.

According to the corporation, more than 2,300 complaints and queries have been received so far, all of which have been successfully resolved through service centres and the 24x7 customer care helpline.

Consumers can register complaints related to water supply issues, such as billing, new connections, collection, network maintenance, metering, mobile and email alerts, meter reading, and operation & maintenance by calling the 24x7 customer care number 87671-98000.

An SJPNL spokesperson stated that the corporation's primary objective is to provide uninterrupted, transparent, and reliable water supply services to the residents of Shimla. Dedicated customer service centres and helpline teams are working with full commitment to ensure the timely resolution of every complaint.

The spokesperson further appealed to citizens to directly contact the 24x7 helpline for any water-related complaints, information, or suggestions, assuring that all grievances will be addressed on a priority basis.

Class 9 student found critically injured in Lucknow's PGI area; mother alleges attempt to murder

Lucknow. (Agency)

A class 9 student was found critically injured on the roadside in the PGI area of Lucknow on Christmas Day, triggering allegations of attempted murder by her family. Police on Tuesday launched an investigation into the incident.

According to the victim's mother, Neetu Singh, a resident of Rajnighand, Ashiana, her daughter, Mansi, studies in a private school. On December 25, Mansi received a call from a classmate, Nikhil, who asked permission to take her out, claiming he would be accompanied by his sisters. When the request was initially declined, another friend, Sheeba Srivastava, called and said that she, Aiba Khan, and Mansi would be going out together. After this assurance, Mansi was allowed to leave.

The group told the family they were going to Phoenix Palace Mall in Alambagh, but later took Mansi to Lulu Mall instead. There, they reportedly met a boy named Rushil. Sheeba and Mansi went with him, while Nikhil and Aiba Khan travelled in another vehicle. The group then headed towards the Vishwanath Academy School area.

When Mansi did not return on time, her mother repeatedly called her. After several unanswered calls, Mansi answered and said they were at Lulu Mall and would return soon. About 10 minutes later, Sheeba called to inform the family that an accident had occurred and that Mansi and Rushil were in serious condition.

The family rushed to the hospital, where they were informed that the injured had been brought in by an unidentified person. Neetu Singh alleged that if it were a road accident, the police should have been informed immediately.

She further claimed that inquiries at the alleged accident site revealed no witnesses or information about any accident, and even the police said they had no prior record of such an incident.

J&K extends VPN ban to Kulgam after Kupwara and Shopian

Srinagar. (Agency)

After Kupwara and Shopian, authorities in Jammu and Kashmir's Kulgam district have ordered a suspension of Virtual Private Network (VPN) services for two months, citing security concerns.

According to Kulgam Police, the Deputy Commissioner has imposed the ban with immediate effect in the interest of maintaining

public order and ensuring security. The order notes that the potential misuse of VPN services could hinder lawful monitoring and pose risks to

public safety. Police have urged residents to strictly comply with the directive and cooperate with the district administration. Authorities warned that any violation of the order will invite strict legal action under relevant laws. The police appealed to the public for cooperation in maintaining peace and security in the district. The authorities in Jammu and Kashmir have stepped up action against the use of VPN services and already banned in north Kashmir's Kupwara and south Kashmir's Shopian districts in the union Territory. Several districts in Jammu region have already imposed the ban on VPN services.

Seat-sharing done, nominations due: BJP-Sena finalise BMC battle lines

The BJP and Shiv Sena on Monday night announced a seat-sharing agreement for the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation elections, with the BJP contesting 137 seats and the Sena 90.

Chandigarh. (Agency)

After days of deliberations the BJP and the Shiv Sena announced a seat sharing agreement late on Monday night with the BJP set to contest 137 seats and the Shiv Sena 90 seats.

The announcement was made after a late night meeting between BJP's Mumbai City president Amit Satam and Sena's Rahul Shewale.

"We have completed our seat sharing talks for the 227 seats. It has been decided that BJP will contest on 137 seats while Sena will contest on 90 seats. Both parties will allocate some seats from their respective quotas to their allied parties. The candidates of both parties will file their nomination papers on Tuesday and hold a joint campaigning. We will seek the votes together and install the Maha Yuti's mayor in Mumbai," Satam said.

The announcement drew curtains on the prolonged discussion between the two parties on who gets how many seats for the BMC elections.

Meanwhile as the deadline for filing nominations for the January 15 Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) elections ends Tuesday, political parties on Monday rushed to finalise candidates, issue AB forms and iron out alliance-related issues. An AB form denotes that a certain candidate has been approved by a political party. On Monday, the Indian National Congress released its first list of 87 candidates for the civic polls, a day after formally announcing an alliance with Vanchit Bahujan

Aghadi (VBA) led by Prakash Ambedkar.

The Congress has largely focused on the western suburbs, including areas such as Dahisar, Kandivli, Magathane, Charkop, Malad, Versova and Andheri West, and has finalised candidates primarily from constituencies represented by its sitting MLAs such as Aslam Sheikh, Amin Patel and Jyoti Gaikwad.

So far Congress, Ajit Pawar-led NCP, NCP (SP),

candidates.

Sena (UBT)'s distribution of AB forms began Sunday and continued late into Monday at Matoshree, where party president Uddhav Thackeray personally handed over authorisation letters to candidates, directing them to file nominations immediately.

Among those who received AB forms were Roshni Gaikwad (Ward 3), Ankit Prabhu (Ward

54), Zeeshan Changez Multani (Ward 62), Prasad Ayre (Ward 65), Ramakant Rahate (Ward 208) and Supradeep Tafarphekar (Ward 150). Notably, AB forms were not issued in Worli, represented in the Assembly by Sena (UBT) MLA Aaditya Thackeray. "We have not given AB forms in Worli yet. Forms for Worli, Sewri and Dadar will be issued soon. Local rivalries exist, especially given our past contests with the MNS, but these should not be overplayed," a Sena (UBT) functionary said.

Former mayor Kishori Pednekar, too, had not received an AB form till late Monday evening.

The uncertainty led to the resignation of Worli shakha pramukh Suryakant Koli after Hemangi Worlikar was reportedly finalised from Ward 193. Former corporator Vishakha Raut, who received a ticket from Ward 191, said in a post on X that the AB form handed to her by Uddhav Thackeray had strengthened her resolve for victory.



Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA) and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) have released lists of candidates for BMC polls, while the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), MNS and the Shiv Sena (UBT) are yet to officially release their list of candidates.

However, Shiv Sena (UBT) is learnt to have issued AB forms to 102 candidates till Monday evening, the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) to 24 aspirants, and the BJP to 100

NFR Achieves Major ROB-RUB Infrastructure Milestones in 2025 Strengthening Safety and Connectivity Across the Zone

The Sikh Times

Maligaon, 30th December, 2025: As part of Indian Railways' ongoing drive to eliminate manned level crossing gates, Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) achieved notable infrastructure milestones in 2025, enhancing safety, mobility and rail road connectivity across the zone. The continuous and priority-based construction of Road Over Bridges (ROBs) and Road Under Bridges (RUBs) has improved operational safety, ensured uninterrupted train movement, reduced road congestion and waiting time and lowered the risk of rail road accidents. These works are prioritised based on traffic volume, safety impact, public benefit and technical feasibility, contributing to smoother passenger and freight movement across the region. During 2025, Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) achieved notable infrastructure progress with the completion of 16 Road Over Bridges (ROBs) and 22 Road Under Bridges (RUBs) across states under its jurisdiction. Alongside these achievements, several RUB projects are currently in progress, and new works are being taken up as required to address growing traffic and safety needs. These ROBs were executed at strategic locations across five divisions of NFR, covering key centres such

as Panbazar, Chaparmukh, Kampur, Katihar



during the year was the completion of the

and Mancotta, among others. The completion of these ROBs and RUBs has improved rail road integration, strengthened connectivity and ensured safer and smoother movement for both trains and road users across the NFR network. A landmark achievement

ROB at Panbazar, Guwahati. Built at a cost of Rs.47 crore, the 290metre long ROB features a wide carriageway with 1.5metre footpaths on both sides and modern engineering elements such as a 60metre Bow String Girder with composite girders. The struc-

ture provides adequate vertical and horizontal clearances, facilitating efficient train operations while significantly easing traffic congestion along the busy Panbazar-Paltan Bazar corridor. Similarly, major infrastructure milestone is the ROB connecting Raha (NH-27) with Chaparmukh Railway Junction and further towards West Karbi Anglong. Constructed at a cost of Rs. 84.6 crore with a total length of 1,179 metres, this ROB has emerged as a critical regional link, improving connectivity, enabling smoother movement of people and goods and eliminating delays that were earlier caused by level crossings. In addition, 22 Road Under Bridges (RUBs) were successfully completed in 2025. These RUBs have enhanced rail road safety, ensured uninterrupted train operations, reduced traffic bottlenecks and enabled faster, smoother travel for commuters and freight alike. Through these sustained efforts, Northeast Frontier Railway remains committed to the elimination of manned level crossings and the development of safe, efficient and future ready rail infrastructure. The achievements of 2025 underscore NFR's continued focus on passenger safety, operational excellence and inclusive infrastructure growth, contributing significantly to the socio-economic development of the region.

Strict Action Against Pollution Violators, No Laxity in Industrial Areas: DM

The Sikh Times

Manoj Pal

Muzaffarnagar: Taking a tough stand on rising pollution in industrial areas, District Magistrate Umesh Mishra has issued a clear warning that industries violating environmental norms will face strict action. On Tuesday, during the District Industry Bandhu meeting held at the Federation Hall of the Federation of Muzaffarnagar Commerce and Industry, the District Magistrate said that industrial development cannot come at the cost of public health and the envi-

ronment. Listening seriously to the issues raised by industrialists, the District Magistrate directed all concerned depart-



ments to ensure timely and lawful resolution of complaints. He emphasized that cleanliness and environmental protection in industrial areas are equally important. Any industry found spreading filth or pollution in and around its premises will be penalized. The District Magistrate categorically stated that if any industrial unit is found emitting smoke, discharging polluted water, or engaging in any activity against prescribed environmental standards, no leniency will be

shown. Calling pollution a serious threat to public health, he instructed officials to conduct regular inspections and take firm action wherever violations are found. He also directed the Executive Officer of the Municipal Council to take strict action against roadside encroachments and ensure proper management of industrial areas. The District Magistrate further instructed that 80 percent of the tax revenue generated from industrial areas must be spent on their development, cleanliness, and environmental improvement. Industrialists were urged to cooperate with the municipal body for beautification of the Meerut Road industrial area. Instructions were also given to the electricity department to immediately rectify sagging electric wires and remove unused electric and telephone poles. The District Magistrate made it clear that prior NOC would be mandatory before digging any road and the concerned department must restore the road after completing the work. During the meeting, officials informed that tenders for Arlant Road and Rainbow Road in the industrial area have been finalized and construction work will begin shortly. A training session on the operation of the "Udyami Mitra App" was also organized by the Industries Department. The meeting was conducted by Assistant Commissioner Industries Ashish Kumar. The Chief Development Officer, Joint Magistrate, officials from various departments, and office bearers of all industrial organizations were present.

COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

Tender Notice No: EL/29/61_2025/K/1289; Dated: 24-12-2025.

E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work:

Tender No.: 61_2025. Name of Work:

At Kathiar Division :-

Comprehensive Annual Preventive and

Breakdown Maintenance Contract of REBC

(Regulated Cum Emergency Battery

Charger) of Sydler makes provided in LHB

type AC & TL Coaches of Kathiar division

for three (03) years. Tender Value:

₹ 1,75,269/-; Earnest Money:

₹ 1,75,269/-; Date & time of closing of tender:

at 15:00 hrs. and opening at 15:30 hrs. on

15-01-2026. Complete information

alongwith tender document of above

e-tender will be available in the website

www.ireps.gov.in

SR. DEE (G&Chg.), Kathiar

NORTH EAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

Serving Customers With A Smile

Lord Ranganath gives Darshan from Vaikuntha Dwar: Millions of devotees receive darshan

Vrindavan. (Agency)

The Vaikuntha Dwar(gate) was opened at the largest South Indian style Ranganatha temple in North India on the occasion of Vaikuntha Ekadashi here on Tuesday early morning. The Lord, seated at the Vaikuntha Gate, which opens only once a year, gave darshan to his devotees. It is believed that devotees who pass through the Vaikuntha Dwar attain Vaikuntha Loka (the abode of Lord Vishnu).

The Vaikuntha festival began late at night with the Mangala Aarti of Lord Ranganatha. Afterward, in the early morning hours, Lord Ranganatha, along with Goddess Goda, arrived at the Vaikuntha Dwar in a palanquin amidst the melodious sounds of traditional musical instruments. The palanquin of Lord Ranganatha remained at the Dwar for about half an hour.

Upon the arrival of Lord Ranganatha's procession at the Vaikuntha Dwar, the serving priests, under the leadership of the temple's head priest, Shri Govardhan Rangacharya, recited prayers. After about half an hour of prayers and rituals, the Kumbh Aarti was performed for Lord Ranganatha, Shatkopa Swami, Nathamuni Swami, and the Alwar saints.

BRIDGE WORK

E-Tender Notice No. LMG/Engg/84

of 2025 Date: 26-12-2025. E-Tenders

are invited by the undersigned for the following works:

Brief Description of Item: Rebuilding of Monsoon

damages of Bridges of Bridge no.140,1

41,145,148,149,150,158,159,161,168,

169,170,171,173,175,176,177,178,

179,180,181,187,188,189,190,195,

207 and 208 Total = 28 nos and

its protection works such channel,

Sausage crates protection, flooring,

cement and Epoxy Grouting and other

ancillary works from 6/0/09 to 9/0/09 under the jurisdiction of SSE/W

HGS in connection with Maintenance

of BG track. Tender Value:

₹ 6,10,25,527.02/-; Earnest Money:

₹ 4,55,100/-; Date & Time of closing of tender: 15.00 hrs. on 22-01-2026

& opened at 15.00 hrs. on 23-01-2026

The complete information of above e-tender will be available upto

15.00 hrs. on 22-01-2026 in website

www.ireps.gov.in

SR. DEE (G & Chg.), Kathiar

Air India Express pilot arrested over alleged flyer assault, released on bail

An off-duty Air India Express pilot has been arrested for allegedly assaulting a passenger at IGI Airport. The investigation is ongoing with police examining CCTV footage and witness statements.

New Delhi.(Agency)
An off-duty Air India Express pilot, Captain Virendra Sejwal, has been arrested in connection with an alleged assault on a passenger at Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport and released on bail, officials confirmed. The sections under which he was booked are bailable, and his release came shortly after formal arrest procedures were completed.

INVESTIGATION UNDERWAY

Delhi Police said the probe is ongoing, with CCTV footage from multiple cameras around Terminal 1 being scrutinised to piece together the events. Statements from the complainant, Ankit Dewan, and other witnesses have been recorded, and relevant

material evidence is being examined. "After registering the case, CCTV footages were collected and statements recorded. The accused was also called for questioning, and



his arrest was effected a few days back," said the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Airport.

PILOT COOPERATES WITH

AUTHORITIES
Captain Sejwal appeared before the investigating officer and is cooperating with the enquiry. Police said his responses are being evaluated against the available evidence. "If the explanations are not satisfactory, further legal action may follow," a source added.

A senior officer emphasised that the investigation is proceeding strictly on merit and evidence. "Whatever can be shared without affecting the outcome of the probe will be made public," the official said.

BACKGROUND OF THE INCIDENT

The incident allegedly took place on December 19 near the security checkpoint of Terminal 1. Dewan claims he confronted airline staff for jumping the queue, after which Sejwal, then a passenger on a different airline, allegedly verbally abused and physically assaulted

him. Dewan also stated that the altercation traumatised his seven-year-old daughter, who witnessed the episode.

Medical reports reportedly confirmed a displaced fracture of Dewan's left nasal bone. The FIR has been filed under sections 115 (voluntarily causing hurt), 126 (wrongful restraint), and 351 (criminal intimidation) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

AIRLINE RESPONDS

Air India Express said it is aware of the incident and that Sejwal has been removed from official duties pending an internal enquiry.

The airline clarified that the pilot was travelling on another carrier at the time of the incident. The Delhi Police continue to record statements from all relevant individuals as the investigation proceeds, with authorities maintaining that the case is being handled meticulously to ensure a fair outcome.

"A Banana Republic?": AAP's Saurabh Bharadwaj Jabs BJP In Delhi Officers Row



New Delhi.(Agency)

The suspension of two Delhi government officers – the Sub-Registrar of Kapashera and the Tehsildar of Mehrauli – led to a spat Tuesday morning between the BJP and AAP. Aam Aadmi Party leader Saurabh Bharadwaj questioned Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on the issue, asking if her administration actually had the authority to suspend the officers.

Bharadwaj pointed out sarcastically that when the AAP was in power, the Lieutenant Governor – the centre's representative in the national capital – claimed that right and acted on recommendations by the National Capital Civil Service Authority, or NCCSA. "... but the elected Delhi government never had the power to suspend any officer. During AAP rule, it was a committee called NCCSA that sent recommendations to the Lieutenant Governor... and then it was up to him to decide. Is it a banana republic?"

He was reacting to a note from the Chief Minister's Office confirming the suspension. In her statement, Gupta said her government would not tolerate corruption at any level. "If an officer is found negligent or involved in corruption, he or she has no right to remain in service..."

Control over bureaucrats in the city has been a point of contention between the Bharatiya Janata Party-ruled federal government and its arch rival, which controlled the Delhi government for 11 years till it lost the 2025 election. This led to vitriolic arguments between the two sides.

This round was triggered by the suspension of two officials after repeated complaints. Bharadwaj drove home his point in more X posts, including one with a screenshot of a news report from July 2016 with the headline – '(Arvind) Kejriwal can't suspend any Delhi government official: MHA'. "Is the opposition in Delhi meant to school BJP ministers... Here is what your Ministry of Home Affairs said about powers of elected Government of Delhi to suspend officers."

Tribunal orders removal of BrahMos CEO over lapses after top scientist complains

The Central Administrative Tribunal directed the Defence Ministry and DRDO to restart the selection process for Brahmos CEO and reconsider senior scientist Sivasubramaniam Nambi Naidu's claim.

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) has ordered the removal of Jaiteerth R Joshi as Director General and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of BrahMos Aerospace and directed the Defence Ministry to reconsider the claim of senior scientist Sivasubramaniam Nambi Naidu for the top post. Naidu had challenged Joshi's appointment, alleging procedural lapses. In its order passed on Monday, the Hyderabad bench of the tribunal asked the Ministry of Defence and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) to revisit Naidu's claim within four weeks. Until a final decision is taken, the CAT directed that an in-charge arrangement be put in place, explicitly barring the current Director General from holding the charge. The tribunal examined the



powers of the Secretary, Defence Research and Development and Chairman, DRDO, observing that while the authority is empowered to approve one of the names recommended by the Selection

Committee for the Director General's post, it cannot disregard the complete service records of other scientists empanelled for the position. Joshi's appointment as DG and CEO of BrahMos Aerospace was challenged by Naidu, a senior DRDO scientist, who alleged unjust supersession and procedural irregularities. Naidu contended that he was seven years senior to Joshi and held the higher rank of Distinguished Scientist, while Joshi was a Scientist 'H' at the time of his appointment.

In its verdict, the CAT directed the Defence Ministry and DRDO to remove Joshi from the post, restart the selection process, reconsider the claims of Naidu and other senior scientists, and appoint an interim in-charge for BrahMos Aerospace within four weeks, barring Joshi from holding that role.

AAP playing politics on serious issue like pollution: Mayor

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has condemned the statements made by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) regarding the directions of the Supreme Court related to toll plazas. The civic agency stated, "During the period when the AAP was in power, no concrete or effective action was taken against pollution, and now, after being out of power, the party is playing politics on this serious issue, which is extremely reprehensible."

Delhi Mayor Raja Iqbal Singh clarified: "The Supreme Court in its order had stated that the MCD is directed to consider, on a priority basis, as to why the nine toll plazas in question be not temporarily suspended till the air quality conditions improve in the NCR territory. The top court did not issue any direct

order to close the toll plazas. At the same time, the MCD has duly submitted an affidavit before the Supreme Court, providing details of all the steps being taken in this regard."

Singh added that the civic agency is already working towards barrier-free toll collection through a Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) system. "The process of issuing tenders for this is underway, in which Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) and RFID technology will be used. With the implementation of this modern technology, there will be no queues of vehicles at toll plazas, which will reduce both traffic congestion and pollution."

"The AAP's sole agenda now is to spread confusion and indulge in political rhetoric. If the party were genuinely concerned about the citizens of Delhi and

their health, it would have taken concrete and result-oriented action while in power, instead of now attempting to evade its responsibilities through misleading statements," the mayor said. Talking about the initiatives by the corporation against pollution, the mayor said, "The improvement in air quality is a long-term and collective effort, in which the central government, the Delhi government, and the MCD are working together."

No direct order to close toll plazas'
Clarifying its stance against AAP's allegations, Delhi Mayor Raja Iqbal Singh said: "The SC in its order had stated that the MCD is directed to consider, on a priority basis, as to why the nine toll plazas in question be not temporarily suspended till the air quality conditions improve in the NCR."

'Right to privacy' not absolute, must yield to legitimate state interests: Delhi HC

The judge made the observation while dismissing a plea by businessman Moin Akhtar Qureshi challenging a trial court order directing him to give voice samples to the CBI for comparison with intercepted calls from 2013-14.

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Delhi High Court has held that the 'Right to Privacy', a fundamental right granted under the Constitution, is not absolute and must yield to legitimate State interests. Justice Neena Bansal Krishna made the observation while holding that ordering a person to provide voice samples for comparison with intercepted phone calls does not violate their fundamental rights against self-incrimination granted under the Constitution. The judge made the observation while dismissing a plea filed by controversial businessman Moin Akhtar Qureshi challenging a trial court order that had directed him to provide voice samples to the CBI for comparison with intercepted telephone conversations recorded in 2013-14. Qureshi had claimed that the order violated his right to privacy.

"The direction to provide a voice sample does not violate Article 20(3) of the Constitution as it does not constitute testimonial compulsion... While the Right

Privacy is a fundamental right, it is not absolute and must yield to legitimate State interests, such as the prevention and investigation of crime," the judge said.

According to the petition, the case related to surveillance conducted by the Income Tax Department between October 2013 and March 2014, followed by searches at Qureshi's premises in February 2014.

Based on intercepted calls and BlackBerry Messenger communications, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) lodged a complaint, leading to the CBI registering an FIR in 2017 under provisions of the Indian Penal Code and the Prevention of Corruption Act. In his plea, Qureshi argued that the intercepted calls were "stale," and inadmissible due to non-compliance with SC guidelines on telephone interception and the absence of mandatory certification under the Evidence Act.

Court restrains Dr Reddy's sunscreen
The Delhi HC restrained Dr Reddy's Laboratories from manufacturing sunscreen products bearing the word "SUN" on labels,

from impersonating Akasa Air and misusing its trademarks to run recruitment scams. Granting interim relief to SNV Aviation, the court barred use of Akasa-related marks, domains and emails. It held that demanding "process fees" from job seekers amounts to deception and passing off.

Influencer gets bail in '6 cr movie role fraud case'

The Delhi High Court has granted bail to social media influencer Sandeepa Virk in a money laundering case linked to allegedly duping a woman of nearly 6 crore by promising a film role. Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma noted the case was filed a decade after the transactions and that nearly 2.7 crore was already returned. Virk, arrested in August 2025, was granted bail on a 2 lakh personal bond with two sureties. Proceedings in the predicate offence are pending as the main accused remains absconding.

Acasa Air wins relief against scammers

The Delhi High Court restrained entities

holding that its use appears trademark-like. Granting interim relief to Sun Pharma, the court ordered status quo, noting that "SUN" was given placement despite sunscreen being separately described on the product.

Acasa Air wins relief against scammers

The Delhi High Court restrained entities

holding that its use appears trademark-like. Granting interim relief to Sun Pharma, the court ordered status quo, noting that "SUN" was given placement despite sunscreen being separately described on the product.

Acasa Air wins relief against scammers

The Delhi High Court restrained entities

holding that its use appears trademark-like. Granting interim relief to Sun Pharma, the court ordered status quo, noting that "SUN" was given placement despite sunscreen being separately described on the product.

Acasa Air wins relief against scammers

The Delhi High Court restrained entities

holding that its use appears trademark-like. Granting interim relief to Sun Pharma, the court ordered status quo, noting that "SUN" was given placement despite sunscreen being separately described on the product.

Acasa Air wins relief against scammers

The Delhi High Court restrained entities

NEWS BOX

Robert Lewandowski exposes Barcelona's tactics to dodge bonus payments to Bayern

NEW DELHI. (Agency) Robert Lewandowski has revealed a remarkable behind-the-scenes episode from last season's La Liga campaign, admitting that FC Barcelona asked him to avoid scoring late in the title-winning run-in to prevent triggering a bonus payment to Bayern Munich. The revelation offers a candid look into the financial pressures the club was navigating, even while lifting the league trophy. Speaking to Polish journalist Bogdan Rymanowski, Lewandowski confirmed the unusual request and explained that it stemmed from Barcelona's economic situation rather than sporting priorities. With the title already secured, financial calculations came into sharper focus during the final weeks of the season. "There are things I don't want to talk about. I respect Barcelona and the people who work there a lot," Lewandowski said. "I was aware of the club's situation. There were many other



situations that needed to be resolved for the good of the club." "In short, it was a bonus, and it is known that at that time Barcelona looked to save every euro," he added. "It was no small thing. I had no problem with it, but it stuck in my head and I wondered whether to score a goal or not." Lewandowski had finished the league campaign on 23 goals, and a clause in his transfer agreement meant that two more goals would have triggered an additional 2.5 million euros payment to Bayern Munich. Given Barcelona's ongoing financial strain at the time, the club was keen to avoid any extra outgoing costs, even those linked directly to performance incentives. While the situation raised eyebrows when reports first emerged, Lewandowski's confirmation adds weight to how carefully Barcelona were managing their finances during that period. For a striker whose career has been defined by goals, the idea of holding back marked an unusual mental challenge, even if it did not alter his professional approach. The comments also arrive amid growing speculation surrounding Lewandowski's future at Camp Nou. With his current contract set to expire at the end of the season, interest has reportedly emerged from the Saudi Pro League and Major League Soccer.

SA20: Coach Sourav Ganguly under early pressure as Pretoria Capitals lose 2 in 2

NEW DELHI. (Agency) Head coach Sourav Ganguly is under pressure early in his maiden stint as head coach of Pretoria Capitals in the SA20, the premier T20 competition in South Africa. The former India captain will need to get things moving forward quickly as the Capitals have lost two in two and find themselves rooted to fifth spot in the six-team points table. After a season-opening defeat to Jo'Burg Super Kings, Pretoria were handed a comprehensive 48-run hammering by SunRisers Eastern Cape at St George's Park in Gqeberha on Monday, December 29. Ganguly was roped in as head coach amid high expectations, having previously worked in managerial roles with Delhi Capitals, and has former Proteas all-rounder Shaun Pollock alongside him as assistant coach. Led by the experienced Keshav Maharaj, Pretoria will be eager to turn things around swiftly and ensure they do not miss out on a playoff berth for the third



successive season. On Monday evening, however, Pretoria were thoroughly outplayed in all departments as SunRisers produced a dominant display in front of a packed, orange-clad crowd at South Africa's oldest Test venue. Asked to bat first, SunRisers rode on a batting masterclass from Quinton de Kock, who thrilled the home supporters with a fluent 77 off 47 balls, striking five fours and six sixes. De Kock set the tone early, mixing crisp lofted drives with powerful pulls, and found solid support in Matthew Breetzke, who scored a brisk 52 off 33 deliveries. The duo added a rapid 116 runs for the second wicket after the early dismissal of Jonny Bairstow, completely tilting the momentum in the hosts' favour.

Gukesh blunders under pressure, loses blitz game to 12-year-old prodigy

World champion Gukesh

Dommaraju suffered a shock blitz defeat in Doha. A late blunder under time pressure allowed 12-year-old prodigy Sergey Sklokin to claim one of the biggest upsets of the World Blitz Championship.

Liverpool. (Agency)

The unpredictability of blitz chess caught up with world champion Gukesh Dommaraju at the FIDE World Blitz Championship 2025 in Doha, where the Indian star suffered a surprise defeat to 12-year-old FIDE Master Sergey Sklokin. The loss, which came in the third round, was shaped by a late error under extreme time pressure and marked a low point in Gukesh's 2025 season. On paper, the matchup appeared heavily tilted in Gukesh's favour. The reigning world champion entered the game with a blitz rating of 2628, standing 228 Elo points clear of Sklokin,



who is rated around 2400. The difference in titles was just as stark. Gukesh is a super grandmaster with a classical rating above 2750, while Sklokin holds the FIDE Master title, two levels below grandmaster. Despite

the gap, the contest remained finely balanced deep into the endgame. The defining moment arrived on move 70, when the clock became the decisive factor. Playing with the black pieces, Gukesh had only eight seconds

Hardik Pandya to make Test comeback Robin Uthappa picks all-rounder as ideal no. 7

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

Former India cricketer Robin Uthappa believes Hardik Pandya could still have a meaningful role to play in Test cricket, suggesting the all-rounder would be an ideal No. 7 option for India if he chooses to return to the red-ball format. Uthappa feels Pandya's current fitness levels and skill set make a Test comeback far from unrealistic, especially in the context of how India have been using their pace-bowling all-rounders. Expanding on his point, Uthappa noted that India's recent Test combinations show flexibility rather than fixed roles, with players like Nitish Kumar Reddy, Harshit Rana and Washington Sundar being used on and off depending on conditions and team balance. Speaking on his YouTube channel, Uthappa argued that Pandya would comfortably fit into this evolving structure if he is willing to take on a controlled workload. "If Hardik Pandya returns to the No. 7 spot in Tests, it would be wonderful," Uthappa said. "The way he's playing, anything can happen. It's cricket. Never say never. If Hardik decides



to play Test cricket, will BCCI ask him not to play? If he says he wants to play and wants to win the World Test Championship, I don't think they would say no." Uthappa also addressed concerns around Pandya's bowling workload in the longest format,

pointing out that modern all-rounders are no longer expected to bowl marathon spells. Are all-rounders bowling 20 overs? Nitish Kumar is not bowling that much. He's bowling around 12 overs. If Hardik bowls 12 to 15 overs per innings, I think he can do it with the way he's fit now, the way he's bowling and batting. It's his own decision," he added. Pandya last played Test and First-Class cricket in 2018, stepping away from red-ball cricket after struggling with a recurring back injury. Since then, he has focused entirely on white-ball formats, a move that has helped him establish himself as one of India's most important limited-overs players despite intermittent fitness concerns. India have continued to explore all-round options in Tests, rotating between Reddy, Shardul Thakur, Washington Sundar and even Harsh Rana in specific conditions. Pandya's own Test record, though limited, remains solid, with 532 runs from 11 matches at an average of 31.29 and 17 wickets at 31.05.



Ronaldo and Djokovic share the stage, respect and lessons to defy age

Dubai. (Agency)

Portuguese football icon Cristiano Ronaldo and Serbian tennis great Novak Djokovic have spent the better part of two decades redefining excellence in their respective sports. On Sunday, December 28, in Dubai, the two icons briefly shared the same stage, and the moment offered a reminder of how closely their careers have mirrored each other, despite unfolding in different arenas.

At the 16th edition of the Globe Soccer Awards, Djokovic was honoured with the Globe Sports Award, with Ronaldo presenting the trophy himself. The Al-Nassr forward was also among the winners on the night, picking up the Best Player in the Middle East award, but it was his words for the Serbian tennis great that became the highlight of the ceremony. Speaking while handing over the award, Ronaldo drew a clear parallel between their journeys, stressing the value of longevity at the elite level. "For me, he is



"So I think he deserves [the award] because he is a great example for this generation, all generations, the generation [that] is going to come. So he deserves this," he added. The comparison is not without substance. At 40, Ronaldo remains an active force in top-

level football and continues to chase the unprecedented landmark of 1,000 career goals, currently standing on 956. While he has indicated that the 2026 FIFA World Cup will be his final international tournament, he has extended his club future by signing on with Al-Nassr until 2027. Djokovic, two years younger, continues to defy the physical demands of modern tennis. Ranked world No. 4, the 24-time Grand Slam champion holds the all-time record for weeks spent at the top of the ATP rankings, with 428. He has also made it clear that retirement is not imminent, describing the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics as a long-term motivation rather than an end point. For Djokovic, receiving the honour from Ronaldo carried special meaning, with the Serbian calling it a dream moment. As Djokovic sets his sights on a historic 25th Grand Slam at the Australian Open and Ronaldo presses on towards football's most exclusive scoring club, their stories continue to run in parallel

and perform well for the team. This is not the end of the road for him," Harbhajan told PTI. "He is a great player with beautiful technique. I believe he will make a brilliant comeback, and we should not forget that he is still the Test captain." The former off-spinner also pointed to the explanations offered by the team leadership, suggesting that the decision was driven by tactical considerations rather than form alone. "I was listening to Ajit Agarkar and Captain Suryakumar. They were saying that Gill was excluded because of the combination. They must have taken the call depending on the conditions and the combination," Harbhajan added. Gill's omission from the T20 setup comes at a time when Indian selectors have leaned towards aggressive, flexible batting options at the top, with all-rounders and power-hitters favoured to suit modern T20 demands. His more measured approach, once viewed as an asset, has increasingly come under scrutiny in the shortest format.

GILL BACK TO THE GRIND

Despite the disappointment, Gill has wasted little time sulking.

India's Test report card for 2025: Spark abroad, scars at home, chaos within

The doyens retired after a forgettable tour of Australia. A young leader then took charge and showed promise in England. However, a crushing home defeat against South Africa cast a long shadow over the Indian Test team's 2025 report card.

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

2025 proved to be a mixed year for Indian cricket, marked by both highs and lows. While the Men in Blue tasted success in the white-ball formats—being crowned Champions Trophy and Asia Cup winners, the famed home fortress once again witnessed a painful collapse in Test cricket.

The year began amid controversy, with Indian captain Rohit Sharma opting out of the fifth Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Australia following a poor run of form, a decision that sparked serious questions about his leadership. Although Rohit later insisted that he was not going anywhere and that the Sydney omission was a one-off, Indian Test cricket underwent a dramatic transformation in the months that followed. One by one, three of the team's strongest pillars, their greatest match-winner in the longest format, R Ashwin, the king who bled white for Test cricket, Virat Kohli, and the leader who held the side together, Rohit, departed within a short span, leaving gaping holes in the red-ball setup.

AN NEW ERA

The young captain responded admirably to the responsibility, silencing those who doubted his calibre away from home with a splendid century in the very first Test. However, he received a reality check on his captaincy debut as England chased down a daunting

target of 371 to take an early lead in the series. Having been outplayed in the opener, Gill took it upon himself to deliver a



counterpunch, producing marathon knocks in both innings of the second Test and amassing a staggering 430 runs in the match—the second-highest tally in a single Test after Graham Gooch's 456. India eventually sealed a commanding 336-run victory, with Gill claiming the Player of the Match award

in his first win as Test captain. Momentum, however, proved difficult to sustain. After the emphatic win, India suffered another heartbreak, losing the Lord's Test by a narrow margin of 22 runs. The young side, though, showed admirable resilience in the fourth Test, batting an extraordinary 143 overs in the final innings to secure a hard-fought draw. Then came the series finale at The Oval, where Mohammed Siraj bowled his heart out and exorcised the ghosts of Lord's with a thrilling six-run victory, allowing India to begin their new era in Test cricket with a hard-earned 2-2 drawn series. The next assignment came at home against the West Indies, and as expected, the hosts crushed the visitors by an innings and 140 runs in the series opener. While another rout appeared inevitable in the second Test, a spirited fightback by the West Indies—a after being asked to follow on—enabled them to avoid an innings defeat.

All Australian tariff lines will be zero-duty for Indian exports from January 1: Piyush Goyal

New Delhi.(Agency)

All Indian exports will have 100% duty-free access to the Australian market from January 2026 under the Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) between the two countries, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Monday. The trade deal, initiated three years ago, has led to an 8% rise in Indian exports to Australia during the 2024-25 financial year. "From 1 January 2026, 100% of Australian tariff lines will be zero-duty for Indian exports, unlocking fresh opportunities for labour-intensive sectors," the Minister said in a social media post. He added that the agreement has delivered tangible results. Over the past three years, the pact has driven sustained export growth, deeper market access and stronger supply-chain resilience, benefiting Indian exporters, MSMEs, farmers and workers alike. The free trade agreement was signed in April 2022. India's trade deficit with Australia has since narrowed by more than 42%, falling to \$6.9 billion in 2024-25 from \$12.06 billion in FY2022-23, the year the pact was signed.

Growth in India's exports to Australia has been led by manufacturing sectors such as chemicals, textiles, pharmaceuticals, plastics and petroleum products, alongside a strong performance by gems and jewellery. Exports of gems and jewellery rose 16% during April-November 2025. Agricultural exports also expanded sharply, driven by fruits and vegetables, marine products, spices and a notable increase in coffee shipments. The Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) on Organic Products was signed, marking a major milestone by enabling seamless trade and lowering compliance costs for exporters," the Minister said.

AI propels layoffs in tech sector; companies focus on reskilling

New Delhi.(Agency)

As artificial intelligence (AI) adoption accelerates, India's information technology (IT) and start-up sectors are undergoing a period of upheaval marked by job cuts and growing uncertainty over the future role of programmers and coders.

Recently, IT industry veteran and Infosys co-founder N R Narayana Murthy said modern technologies would eliminate routine roles in the sector. Echoing this view, the Economic Survey 2024-25 noted that emerging technologies pose both threats and opportunities for labour markets worldwide.

With companies increasingly focusing on machine learning (ML), the sector is expected to see the elimination of mundane roles such as data entry and basic coding. Automating routine tasks helps firms reduce recurring manpower costs by replacing them with one-time capital investments in technology.

India's largest IT services provider, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), undertook a major resizing exercise this year, announcing plans to lay off 2% of its workforce, or about 12,000 employees. However, employees and IT unions alleged that nearly 38,000 staff were terminated in the second quarter. TCS said in a statement that it has so far laid off around 6,500 employees. In April, reports suggested that Infosys laid off nearly 800 freshers—onboarded in October 2024—from its Mysuru campus for failing internal assessments, though the company denied the claims. In October, quick-commerce platform Zepto reportedly laid off 300 employees, with nearly 1,000 jobs lost since the start of the year. Ola's AI arm, Krutim, has also laid off close to 200 employees in 2025, including about 50 from its linguistics team, as part of a strategic realignment.

According to staffing firm Xpheno, nearly 7,700 senior professionals in the IT industry exited their jobs between mid-2024 and mid-2025 due to AI adoption, automation, economic pressures, and overhiring during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PPF rates to come up for revision tmrw: Know how it can be used as a pension fund

Kolkata.(Agency)

The Centre can revise the interest rates on PPF (Public Provident Fund) at the beginning of every quarter, if it wants. Accordingly, the interest rates for PPF, as indeed of other small savings schemes at the Post Office, will come up for revision on Dec 31. If there is no change in the PPF rate, the existing annual rate of 7.1% will apply for the January-March 2026 quarter. PPF is one of the instruments of long-term asset creation and tax exemption, which were launched in the era of controlled economy. Introduced in 1968, this scheme has survived the transition to a market economy and continues to be popular with millions of investors, who want to put a part of their funds in a guaranteed-return instrument. The most interesting thing to know about in circumstances, it could be used to generate cash regularly almost like a pension fund. PPF accumulation rule

Significantly, there are a couple of rules that enable PPF to be used as a pension fund. But the point is the withdrawals take place from the accumulated funds in PPF and the more the amount, the higher the possibility of withdrawal. Therefore let's do a back-of-the-envelope arithmetic to watch how it can happen. The first rule that enables the creation of a significant amount is the extension of PPF beyond the initial 15 years. It allows one to continue investment period in PPF by blocks of 5 years after the expiry of initial 15 years. In other words, one can invest for 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40 years or beyond. The corollary: if one makes a substantial investment every year and the corpus keeps accumulating at 7.1% for such a long term, one ends up creating a sizeable corpus. For the sake of keeping our calculation simple, suppose an individual has Rs 1 crore in his/her PPF account.

The revised allowances will come into effect from January 1 and apply across multiple categories, including domestic layover, night operations, deadhead travel and a newly introduced tail-swap allowance.

New Delhi.(Agency)

IndiGo has raised allowances for its pilots by up to Rs 2,000, weeks after the airline cancelled several flights due to pilot rostering issues, sources told news agency. The revised allowances will come into effect from January 1 and apply across multiple categories, including domestic layover, night operations, deadhead travel and a newly introduced tail-swap allowance. The move follows severe disruptions earlier this month, when the country's largest airline cancelled more than 1,600 flights in a

single day. The disruptions were widely attributed to inadequate planning around the rollout of revised Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) norms, which restrict the number of night landings a pilot can operate. The new rules require airlines to deploy more pilots for night operations, adding pressure to crew availability. Against this backdrop, IndiGo has revised upward several allowances paid to pilots. The increases range from as little as Rs 25 to as much as Rs 2,000, depending on the category, sources said.

REVISED ALLOWANCE STRUCTURE

Under the revised structure, a captain will now receive Rs 3,000 as domestic layover allowance for a 10.01 to 24-hour layover, up from Rs 2,000 earlier. For first officers, the allowance for the same duration has been increased to Rs 1,500 from Rs 1,000.

For every additional hour beyond the 24-hour mark, captains will be paid Rs 150

instead of Rs 100, while first officers will receive Rs 75, up from Rs 50. Night operation allowances have also been raised. Captains will now earn Rs 2,000



instead of Rs 1,500. Meal allowances during transit for captains have been doubled to Rs 1,000 from Rs 500.

In addition, IndiGo has introduced a tail-swap allowance, which was not available earlier. Tail-swap refers to a situation where a scheduled aircraft is replaced with another aircraft, often at short notice.

Sources, however, pointed out that the latest hikes restore only about 25 per cent of the allowances that were cut following the implementation of the second phase of the FDTL norms in November.

Following the operational disruptions earlier this month, aviation safety regulator DGCA directed IndiGo to reduce its winter schedule by 10 per cent.

As of early December, IndiGo employed 5,085 pilots. Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol informed the Rajya Sabha in a written reply on December 8.

Only 1 day left for PAN-Aadhaar linking deadline: Are you legally exempt

New Delhi.(Agency)

With just one day left before the December 31 deadline, taxpayers are running out of time to link their Permanent Account Number (PAN) with Aadhaar. The Income Tax Department has made it clear that this linking is compulsory for most individuals, and missing the deadline can lead to serious financial and tax-related troubles.

The government has been urging taxpayers to complete this process well in advance, but many are still unaware of the consequences or unsure whether the rule applies to them.

WHY PAN-AADHAAR LINKING MATTERS

PAN-Aadhaar linking is now a mandatory requirement under Indian tax laws. According to a notification issued by the Income Tax Department on April 3, 2025, individuals whose PAN was issued using an Aadhaar number before October 1, 2024, must complete the linking process by December 31, 2025.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU MISS THE DEADLINE

If the PAN is not linked with Aadhaar by the deadline, the PAN may become inoperative from January 1, 2026. Failing to link PAN with Aadhaar on time can create multiple problems. An inoperative PAN means you may not be able to file your income tax return or receive any pending tax refund. Banks and financial institutions may also refuse transactions, like opening bank accounts, and carrying out high-value transactions that require a valid PAN. Moreover, those who attempt to link PAN and Aadhaar after the deadline will also have to pay a penalty of Rs 1,000 before the process can be completed.

WHO IS LEGALLY EXEMPT FROM PAN-AADHAAR LINKING

While the rule applies to most people, the law does provide exemptions for certain categories. The Aadhaar-PAN linking requirement does not apply to individuals residing in Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, or Meghalaya. It is also not mandatory for non-residents under the Income-tax Act, 1961. Senior citizens aged 80 years or more at any time during the previous year are also exempt.

Protests erupt in Iran as currency hits record low, central bank chief quits

Iran's largest protests in three years erupted after the rial plunged to a record low, driving up prices, forcing the central bank chief's resignation and intensifying anger over inflation and economic mismanagement.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Iran was jolted by one of its biggest protests in three years on Monday after the rial, the country's currency, collapsed to a record low against the US dollar, triggering fresh anger over soaring prices and forcing the resignation of the country's central bank chief. State television reported that Mohammad Reza Farzin, head of Iran's Central Bank, had stepped down as demonstrators poured into parts of Tehran and other major cities. Traders and shopkeepers rallied along Saadi Street in downtown Tehran and in the Shush area near the capital's main Grand Bazaar—a powerful symbol of political change since merchants there helped fuel the 1979

Islamic Revolution, the news agency Associated Press reported. The IRNA news agency confirmed the protests, while witnesses said similar rallies broke out in Isfahan, Shiraz and Mashhad. In some areas of Tehran, police fired tear gas to disperse crowds. Monday's demonstrations were the largest since 2022, when nationwide protests erupted after the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in police custody. Amini had been detained by Iran's morality police for allegedly violating hijab rules, sparking months of unrest. Witnesses told the Associated Press that many traders shut their shops in protest and urged others to do the same. The semi-official ILNA news agency reported that business activity slowed sharply, even though some shops remained open. A day earlier, protests had been limited to two mobile markets in downtown Tehran, where demonstrators chanted anti-government slogans.



The unrest follows a dramatic plunge in the rial, which fell to 1.42 million to the dollar on Sunday before recovering slightly to around 1.38 million on Monday. When Farzin took office in 2022, the currency was trading at roughly 430,000 to the dollar. The rapid depreciation has intensified inflationary pressures, driving up the cost of food and daily essentials and squeezing household budgets. According to Iran's state statistics centre, inflation stood at 42.2 per cent in December, up from a year earlier and higher than in

November. Food prices rose 72 per cent year-on-year, while health and medical items jumped 50 per cent, figures many critics say point toward looming hyperinflation.

Iran's economic woes are closely tied to sanctions. The rial traded at about 32,000 to the dollar when the 2015 nuclear deal eased international restrictions in exchange for limits on Iran's nuclear program. The agreement collapsed after Donald Trump withdrew the United States from the deal in 2018, unleashing renewed economic pressure. Uncertainty has also grown after June's 12-day war involving Iran and Israel, with fears of a broader conflict that could draw in the United States weighing on markets. In September, the United Nations reimposed nuclear-related sanctions on Iran through the so-called snapback mechanism, freezing assets abroad, halting arms transactions and imposing penalties linked to Iran's ballistic missile program.

Akanksha Chamola's

Holiday Diaries Feature A Chic Lunch Date And Pink Glam



The holiday season is all about fun dates, delectable food and picture-perfect shots of actress Akanksha Chamola. The actress shared a series of pictures from a recent lunch at a famous restaurant in Mumbai. She shared pictures of the interiors that represented a rustic yet artistic look as well as the exotic dishes she tried. Above all, her fans were mesmerised by the adorable look in pink. In the pictures, Akanksha was seen in a pink off-the-shoulder top with a matching skirt. To add to the glam, she carried a croquet sling bag and wore a pair of bulky white sneakers. Complimenting her look, a fan wrote, "So so sooooooo pretty Akku," while another called her, "Beautyqueen."

Akanksha Chamola's Christmas Celebration

Earlier, Akanksha Chamola celebrated Christmas with her husband, Gaurav Khanna. The Bigg Boss 19 winner turned to Instagram to share photos from their romantic Christmas holiday. In the images, the couple is seen smiling together in identical black clothes. While one snapshot shows Gaurav wrapping his arm

around Akanksha, another shows the actor planting a kiss on his ladylove's cheeks. The two were also spotted posing in front of a massive gold-lit Christmas tree. In the caption of his post, Gaurav wrote, "Merry Christmas. Some people are worth Melting for.... You, @akankshagkhanna and me at Christmas." Akanksha Chamola is a well-known actress from the entertainment industry. She rose to prominence as Parineeta in the program Swaragini and is best recognised for her roles in the shows Swaragini, Bhoot, and Kaise Mujhe Tum Mil Gaye.

Akanksha and Gaurav met at an audition. Gaurav fell for Akanksha at first sight,

and he started the first conversation by pretending to be a newcomer to the industry and asking for the route to break the ice. The pair soon fell in love, and in 2016, Akanksha and Gaurav married in Gaurav's birthplace of Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh.



Madhuri Dixit

Honours Late Actor Dharmendra, Praises His Humility: 'A Thorough Gentleman'

Bollywood icon Madhuri Dixit recently opened up about her experience working with legendary actor Dharmendra. In an exclusive interview with IANS, she recalled starting out as a junior alongside him and was full of praise for his humility. Dixit described how he never let his success get to his head. The 'Dil To Pagal Hai' actress fondly remembered Dharmendra's kind nature, his encouragement toward others, and his love for poetry. The actress called Dharmendra not only a remarkable actor but also a true gentleman.

Remembering the legendary actor, Madhuri Dixit shared, "I have done one film with him and we were like juniors, literally like we were like little babies and he was a thorough gentleman very sweet, well-spoken, very down-to-earth, never took his success seriously."

"You would always see him praising others. He would always encourage, you know, everyone and he loved poetry. He loved to write poetry. So, he used to recite some of his poems that he has written he used to recite them to us and What a handsome man. I always thought he was one of the most handsome men in the industry and it's a big loss to the industry," added the 'Devdas' actress.

Dharmendra passed away on November 24 at the age of 89. He had been experiencing age-related

health issues over the past few months and was admitted to Breach Candy Hospital in Mumbai. After being discharged, he continued his treatment at home. The 'Sholay' actor breathed his last 12 days after being discharged from the hospital.

Following his tragic demise, Madhuri Dixit took to social media to pay tribute to the late superstar.



She wrote, "An icon who defined grace, strength, and humility. Dharamji, your loss leaves a void that can never be filled. Your legacy goes beyond the screen; it lives in the love and admiration of millions. Your remarkable body of work, your humility, and your ever-endearing spirit have left an indelible mark on this industry. Thank you for inspiring, entertaining, and touching hearts across decades. Forever remembered, forever cherished."

Bhagyashree's 'Suhana Safar' In A 'Chukchuk Gaadi' Is Winning Hearts



Train journeys are fun, but while most of us love hopping on a train, celebrities usually skip this mode of travel. That's why Bhagyashree's recent trip caught everyone's attention! The actress hopped on a train and shared a delightful video of her journey on Instagram. True to form, she looked radiant and couldn't stop smiling from ear to ear, spreading her cheerful vibes all the way through the ride.

Bhagyashree's Train Journey

Bhagyashree took to Instagram to share a video of herself traveling by train. Adding to the charm of her train journey, she set the reel to the popular yesteryear song, Zindagi Ek Safar Hai Suhana, perfectly complementing the nostalgic vibe. In the clip, she can be seen running along the platform to catch the train, looking effortlessly stylish in a black striped shirt and trousers. Once on board, the actress strolls into the compartment with a bright smile and enjoys the sunlit view from her window seat. Her caption on the video read, "Chukchuk gaadi!! A train journey after a long time." She went on to appreciate the Indian Railways for connecting so many cities, calling it an 'extensive' and 'intricate' network.

Internet Can't Keep Calm As Bhagyashree Travels By Train

Bhagyashree's video has crossed over two lakh likes and received more than 2,200 comments, with fans flooding the post with love and admiration for the actress. One user remarked humorously, "Ja Simran ja, jeele apni zindagi." To this, the Maine Pyaar Kiya actress replied, "Hahaha...bilkul wahi kar rahi hu." Another one wrote, "She is still so cute...can't get over Main Pyaar Kiya because of her cuteness." Someone commented, "Happy journey, ma'am. Enjoy your day and love you." A fan called the actress 'forever young' and said, "Followed her since I was eight. Now, over 40, but she stays young at heart. I really appreciate all of her acting roles. She's adorable. Stay young and sweet."

Khushi Kapoor Wishes Sister Anshula Kapoor On Her 35th Birthday, Calls Her 'Best Human'



Khushi took to the Stories section of her official Instagram handle and dropped a photo of herself lovingly hugging Anshula.

A actress Khushi Kapoor wished a happy birthday to the 'best human', sister Anshula Kapoor. Khushi took to the Stories section of her official Instagram handle and dropped a photo of herself lovingly hugging Anshula in what seemed to be a party. She also seems to be giving her big sister a kiss, going by her adorable expressions in the snap. "Happy birthday to the best human @anshulakapoor," Khushi's birthday wish for Anshula read. For those who do not know, actor Arjun Kapoor and Anshula are Boney Kapoor's kids from his first wife, Mona Shourie, whereas Janhvi and Khushi Kapoor are his daughters from his second marriage to the late actress Sridevi.

Both Khushi and Janhvi were seen on top of their bridesmaid duties during Anshula's recently held Ghor Dhana ceremony.

Previously, Anshula dropped a clip on her IG of Janhvi tying a Paranda to her hair, while Khushi assisted her in the process. Thanking Khushi and Janhvi for being her 'soft place to land' on her special day, Anshula shared an emotional note on social media saying, "Didn't know how much I needed their quiet kind of love until I had it. The kind that doesn't need words – just a hug at the right time, a hand that reaches to hold mine, a look that says 'we've got you'. The kind that shows up softly, but stays loud in my heart... (sic)"

"My sounding boards, my built-in cheerleaders, my unspoken comfort. Thank you for being my soft place to land, always. ILY my @janhvikapoor @khushikapoor (white heart emoji)," she added.

Anshula is set to tie the knot with Rohan Thakkar soon. The two matched on a dating app back in 2022 and ended up talking the entire night. After three years of being in a relationship, Rohan popped the big question in New York.



How to boost your Productivity

The recipe for success is a complicated one. It takes a lot of talent, a little bit of luck and a relentless work ethic but even those three ingredients won't guarantee success. It takes one more thing, and it's something that is often overlooked. The one thing you can't accomplish goals without is clarity. While there are several types of clarity -mental, physical, emotional, spiritual -mental

clarity is the most vital when it comes to achieving an objective. The good news is that there are plenty of ways to obtain mental clarity. Practising the methods below will jumpstart your productivity, declutter your life and allow you to make progress towards any goal that you set.

Mental Clarity

What is mental clarity? When I asked

superathlete and best-selling author of Finding Ultra, Rich Roll, he described mental clarity like this: "Mental clarity is when you are deeply acquainted with your highest self. When you truly understand who you are, what is important and the trajectory ahead. Mental clarity is when your life and vocation become an extension of your best, most authentic self."

Overconfidence leads to bad decision-making

Being confident is one thing and being overconfident quite another. Researchers have found that those who think intelligence is fixed and unchangeable tend to be more overconfident.

"Such people tend to maintain their overconfidence by concentrating on the easy parts of tasks while spending as little time as possible on the hard parts of tasks," said Joyce Ehrlinger from Washington State University in the US. "A little bit of overconfidence can be helpful, but larger amounts of overconfidence can lead people to make bad decisions and to miss out on opportunities to learn," Ehrlinger added in the paper to be published in March in the Journal of Experimental Social Psychology.

But people who hold a growth mindset -- meaning they think intelligence is a changeable quality -- spend more time on the challenging parts of tasks,



Consequently, their levels of confidence are more in line with their abilities.

The researchers note that overconfidence is a documented problem for drivers, motorcyclists, bungee jumpers, doctors and lawyers.

According to the first of three studies, the researchers found that students who hold a fixed mindset about intelligence were more overconfident about their performance on a multiple-choice test

than those with a growth mindset. The second study found that students with fixed mindsets devoted less attention to difficult problems and, consequently, displayed more overconfidence than those with growth mindsets.

Further evidence for this conclusion came from a third study, which showed that forcing fixed theorists to really look at the difficult as well as the easy parts of an intellectual task shook their confidence, inspiring more accurate impressions of their performance.

"We know that students' beliefs about intelligence are very consequential in the classroom and that interventions teach students a growth mindset lead to improvements in their grades," Ehrlinger said.

"We also know that being overconfident keeps people from learning. You have to understand and acknowledge what you don't yet know in order to truly learn," Ehrlinger explained.

People over-claim their contributions in larger teams

Size of a team can lead people to inflate their own contributions while diminishing their team members' work, and bigger the teams, the more individual members of a team "over-claim" their contributions, says a study.

The findings, to be published in the Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied, do not suggest that people intend to take more credit than due.

Instead, people inadvertently fail to account for everyone's contributions because they are naturally egocentric, and it is harder to consider everyone's contributions when groups are larger, the researchers said.

"People were surprised about the extent that over-claiming occurs. They think their reporting is accurate," said study co-author Juliana Schroeder, assistant professor of management at University of California Berkeley's Haas School of Business.

In a series of experiments, the study participants - 699 MBA students enrolled in a negotiations course - answered six questions to measure how much work they claimed.

For example, they were asked, "Of the total work that your study

group did last semester, what percent of the work do you feel like you personally contributed?" based on categories such as preparing case write-ups; providing insights; proposing teamwork suggestions; raising key questions; and providing answers to other group member's questions.

The study offered no reward for over-claiming one's contribution.

The math did not add up. The percentages consistently added up to more than 100 percent, indicating over-claiming. Teams with eight or more members claimed credit totaling more than 140 percent!

The researchers also conducted experiments with academic authors, museum visitors, and a large-scale national sample - producing similar results supporting over-claiming.

To reduce over-claiming, "when you have large groups, you might want to consider breaking down the group into smaller teams," Schroeder suggested. "It is also important to make the workflow very clear. If assignments are clearly divided, it is easier for people to remember who is doing what," Schroeder noted.



deviate from one thing to another. Straightforward and to the point answers are only what they love to hear.

Ask questions

Don't be blank at the end of the interview, ask questions, be it on your profile, about the company, pay working hours etc. No questions give an impression of disinterest in the company and the job. But make sure your questions are appropriate.



groups, you might want to consider breaking down the group into smaller teams," Schroeder suggested.

"It is also important to make the workflow very clear. If assignments are clearly divided, it is easier for people to remember who is doing what," Schroeder noted.