

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

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MORNING EDITION PRAYAGRAJ Wednesday, 28 January, 2026 UNIQUE GIFT OF KRIYAYOGA ASHRAM AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO GIVE IMPETUS TO WORLD BUILDING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

Bangladesh minorities' body expresses concern over safety ahead of puja

DHAKA: Amid a number of incidents of attacks, the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council has said there is growing concern and anxiety among devotees regarding the Sharidya Durga Puja celebrations that begin on Sunday. The organisation said that though devotees are being assured by the highest levels of the govt, including the chief adviser, army chief and home affairs adviser, about the smooth conduct of the Sharidya Durga Puja festivities, the overall situation on the eve of the festival has only fed their apprehensions and anxiety. A statement of the central committee, signed by Manindra Kumar Nath, acting general secretary of the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council, on Friday highlighted attacks on at least nine puja mandap and temples and vandalism of idols from Sept 2 to Sept 23. Muhammad Yunus, who is now in New York, on Saturday conveyed his greetings to the Hindu community of Bangladesh. Emphasising Bangladesh's tradition of communal harmony, he said, "This country belongs to all of us. It is a safe abode for all people." He noted that the destruction of evil forces and the triumph of truth.

Wankhede sues Aryan Khan's show for defamation

NEW DELHI: IRS officer and former Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) zonal director Sameer Wankhede has filed a defamation suit in Delhi high court against the makers of the Netflix drama series 'The Ba***ds of Bollywood'. The suit filed on Thursday seeks an injunction and Rs 2 crore in damages for misleading and negative portrayal of anti-drug enforcement agencies and maligning his reputation. The series, directed by Aryan Khan, son of actor Shah Rukh Khan, was released on Sept 18. Wankhede is known for arresting Aryan Khan in a drug case in 2021.

India and the European Union reach a trade deal

Indian and European Union leaders announced the agreement

New Delhi

After 18 years of lengthy negotiations between India and the European Union (EU), a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was finalized on Tuesday. Indian and European Union leaders announced the agreement during the 16th India-EU Summit on Tuesday. The agreement is expected to be implemented in 2027. Following this deal, the tax on European cars such as BMW and Mercedes in India will be reduced from 110% to 10%. Additionally, taxes on liquor and wine imported from Europe to India may also be reduced. Currently, European liquor attracts a 150% tariff, which will be lowered to 20-30%.



India is the world's fourth-largest economy, while the EU is the second largest. Together, they account for approximately 25% of the global economy and about one-third of total world trade. Modi said: FTA with 27 countries on the 27th. Regarding the India-European Free Trade Agreement, PM Modi said that on

January 27, India signed this FTA with 27 European countries. This will boost investment, create new innovation partnerships, and strengthen global supply chains. This is not just a trade agreement, but a roadmap for shared. The Prime Minister stated that under this agreement, India and the European Union will

jointly advance the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor. He said that at a time of global upheaval in the international order, reforms in international institutions have become very important. Following this, PM Modi addressed the India-EU Business Forum. He said that today, trade, technology, and rare minerals are being used as weapons to exert pressure, therefore India and the EU should work together to reduce their dependence. Costa said: My Goan connection is a matter of pride for me. European Council President Antonio Costa described himself as an Indian diaspora member.

IPS officer 'suicide' case: Wife names Haryana DGP in complaint



CHANDIGARH: IAS officer Amneet P. Kumar, wife of senior Haryana IPS officer Y. Puran Kumar who allegedly shot himself dead on Tuesday, lodged a complaint with Chandigarh police on Wednesday night seeking an FIR against Haryana DGP Shatruej Singh Kapur and Rohtak SP Narendra Bijarnia, and demanded their arrest. Amneet sought an FIR under BNS Section 108 (abetment to suicide) and provisions of the SC & ST

(Prevention of Atrocities) Act. "This is not a case of ordinary suicide but the direct result of systematic persecution of an honest officer from a Scheduled Caste community by powerful superiors," the IAS officer claimed in a complaint lodged at 8.55 pm on Wednesday. "Justice must not only be done but must be seen to be done - even for families like ours, shattered by the cruelty of the powerful," her complaint said. Mystery note

Jamaat-ul-Mominaat': JeM forms first women's wing; Masood sister Sadiya to head

NEW DELHI: Pakistan-based terror group Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) has announced the formation of its first-ever women's wing, named 'Jamaat-ul-Mominaat', according to media reports. The announcement was made through a letter issued under the name of JeM chief and UN-designated terrorist



Maulana Masood Azhar.

According to the letter, recruitment for the new unit began on October 8 at Markaz Usman-o-Ali in Bahawalpur, Pakistan. The women's brigade will reportedly be led by Sadiya Azhar, the sister of Masood Azhar. Her husband, Yusuf Azhar was killed during Operation Sindoor on May 7.,

TRUE THOUGHT ABOUT OUTWARD RITUALBYADI

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj : "Outward ritual cannot destroy ignorance, because they are not mutually contradictory," wrote Shankara in his famous Century of verses. "Realized knowledge alone destroys ignorance Knowledge cannot spring up by any other means than inquiry. 'Who am I? How was this Universe born? Who is its maker? What is its material cause?' This is the



kind of inquiry referred to." The intellect has no answers for these questions; hence the rishis evolved

yoga as the technique of spiritual inquiry.-

Autobiography of Yogi

Very shocked ': CJI Gavai breaks silence on shoe attack

NEW DELHI: Chief Justice of India Justice BR Gavai on Thursday said that he was "shocked" after an advocate hurled a shoe at him in Supreme Court. In his first reaction, the Chief Justice described the incident as a "forgotten chapter" and said, "My learned brother and I were very shocked with what hap-



pened on Monday; for us it is a forgotten chapter." According to a report by the remarks came during a discus-

sion that also involved advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, who recalled a similar incident from a decade ago.

Disapproval

Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, who was also part of the bench, expressed his strong disapproval

"I also wrote an article on this.. something similar happened 10 years ago in the neighbouring

court. The two judges there had taken a different view on what procedure should be followed while invoking contempt powers," he said. Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, who was also part of the bench, expressed his strong disapproval of the attack, saying, "I have my own views on this. He is the Chief Justice of India.

China to India: 'Promise' that rare earth magnets supplied will not be re-exported

Restrictions

China has tightened its rare earth export controls, expanding restrictions



India, China is reportedly seeking guarantees that the heavy rare earth magnets supplied by it will not be re-exported to the US and will be used only to meet local needs. China produces over 90% of the world's processed rare Earths

and rare Earth magnets. These 17 rare Earth elements are said to be key component in products ranging from EVs to aircraft engines and military radars. According to a report in Economic Times, China wants to ensure that the heavy rare earth magnets supplied to India do not reach the US. The report quotes a person aware of the matter. The Indian government is said to have so far not agreed .

Cancer cases in India up by 26%,

N E W DELHI: The incidence of cancer in India has gone up by 26%, from 84.8 per 1 lakh population in 1990 to 107.2 in 2023, according to a new study. Published in The Lancet, it shows

deaths due to cancer increased by 21% during this period, despite advances in treatment. In comparison,

son, both incidence and mortality have declined significantly in US and China over the 33-year period. The reason behind this is strong tobacco control, universal vaccination and organised screen-

Republic Day celebrated at Kriya Yoga Ashram, Swami Shri Yogi Satyam Ji Maharaj hoisted the tricolor flag



Akhand Bharat Sandesh Prayagraj

The Republic Day celebrations were held on Monday in a peaceful and spiritual atmosphere at the Kriya Yoga Ashram in Jhansi. On this

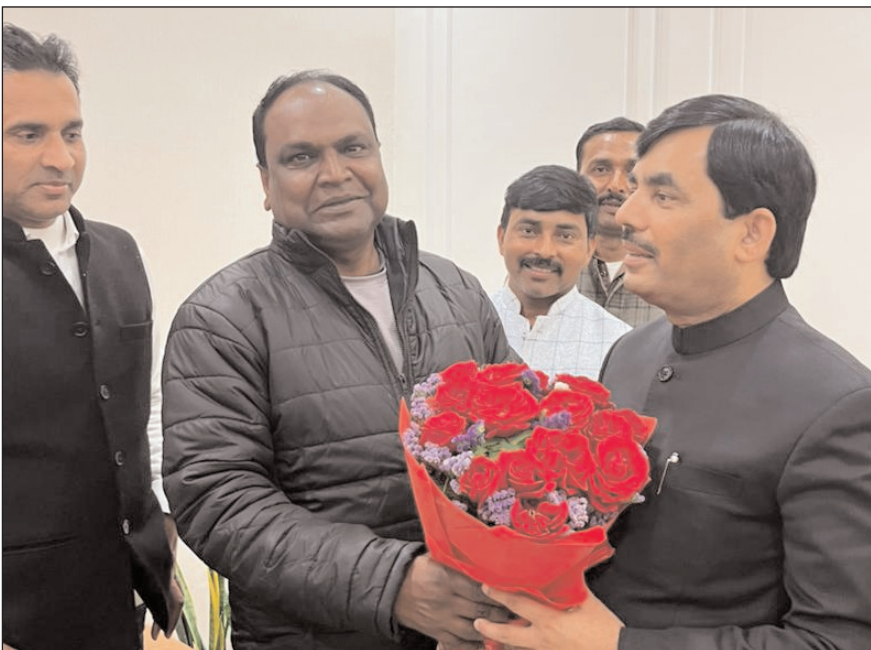
occasion, the head of the ashram, Swami Shri Yogi Satyam Ji Maharaj, hoisted the national flag. On the auspicious occasion of Republic Day, Kriya Yoga practice and meditation were organized in the ashram premises, in which devotees from India



and abroad participated. Through Kriya Yoga and meditation, the devotees prayed for the prosperity and integrity of the nation and for world peace. During the program, a wonderful blend of patriotism, discipline, and spiritual practice was wit-

nessed. The head of the ashram, Swami Shri Yogi Satyam Ji Maharaj, said that a positive role can be played in nation-building through Kriya Yoga and meditation. The ceremony concluded in a harmonious atmosphere.

Shahnawaz Hussain receives a grand welcome at Prayagraj Airport



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Prayagraj. Former Union Minister Shahnawaz Hussain was given a grand welcome at the airport on Tuesday by the Minority Front of Prayagraj city. A large number of front officials and workers were pres-

ent at the welcome ceremony. Under the leadership of Minority Front City President Nawab Khan, the workers warmly welcomed the former Union Minister. On this occasion, all the city officials including City Vice President Mohammad Sharif,

City Secretary Mohammad Imtiaz Ansari, Syed Usman, and Mohammad Abdullah Ansari (District President of Pradhan Sangh) were present. The workers welcomed him with garlands of flowers, expressing their respect and support for him.

DU will discuss the Viksit Bharat curriculum and Gita-based courses

Delhi: According to officials, the standing committee of Delhi University (DU) will meet to evaluate suggestions for a number of value addition courses (VAC), including four that are centered on the Bhagavad Gita and one called An Introduction to Viksit Bharat. The committee's emphasis on incorporating modern applications of Indian philosophy and development topics into the curriculum is highlighted in the agenda, which was made public on Wednesday.

With themes like "Gita for Holistic Life," "Gita and Leadership Excellence,"

"Gita for Sustainable Universe," and "Gita for Navigating Life Challenges," four of the six VACs that are being considered are centered around the Bhagavad Gita. Based on Karmayoga, Jnanayoga, and Bhaktiyoga, the Gita for Holistic Life syllabus suggests teachings on self-management, resolving problems in modern life, and methods of action, knowledge, and devotion. The course will also include practical components. The other courses will cover similar thematic applications of Gita's teachings to leadership, sustainability, and life's prob-

lems. Gita may undoubtedly be able to offer us some direction, but it seems ridiculous to introduce so many VACs on Gita. In addition to practical elements like field trips to communities, self-help groups, and farmers' organizations, the proposed chapters will address the role of technology, infrastructure, agriculture, and sustainability, he said. A VAC titled "The Science of Happiness" is also on the schedule. The Centre for Hindu Studies has also suggested starting a PhD program in Hindu Studies, which is anticipated to begin.

Pradhan defends UGC 2025 draft, calls Cong claims 'false'

Delhi: The University Grants Commission (UGC)'s proposed rules on faculty recruitment and promotions in higher education planted seeds of a new political conflict between Tamil Nadu and Kerala and the Centre. Compared to the June 30, 2010 gazette notification, the vice

appointment process appears unchanged. The states' argument that the new legislation will provide chancellors (governors) more VC selection discretion has caused controversy. Kerala called the draft regulations "an overreach by the central govt, rendering states

powerless in the higher education sector," but M K Stalin declared preparations to dispute the governor's VC appointment powers. UGC draft regulations a "direct attack on federalism and state rights" since they offer state governors substantial authority.

The GST Council voted to exempt gene therapy used to cure cancer from taxes

Delhi: The GST Council voted to exempt gene therapy used to cure cancer from taxes, and postponed a proposal for lower rates while lowering the tariff on fortified rice kernels used in PDS to 5%. The council determined that 18% GST would be applied to the margin of suppliers for all used cars, including electric vehicles. Even though there won't be any tax transactions involving private citizens, businesses or used car sellers would be subject to the fee. According to Sitharaman, states desired a greater fee, but the Center had suggested a 5% tax on EVs. The GST Council issued a number of clarifications, one of which was that ready-to-eat



The council determined that 18% GST would be applied to the margin of suppliers for all used cars, including electric vehicles

popcorn would be subject to a 12% tax, similar to the namkeen tax, if it were pre-packaged with salt and spices.

Caramelized sugar will be subject to an 18% tax. In a similar vein, the council stated that as voucher transactions were

neither a delivery of commodities nor services, they would not be subject to taxes. It also made it clear that small enterprises that pay rent to unregistered landlords and are covered by the reverse charge system will not be required.

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Starbucks workers expand strike across several US cities

Starbucks workers have extended their ongoing strike to four more cities, including New York, according to the union that represents more than 10,000 coffee shop workers. The strike stemmed from failed negotiations between Starbucks and union representatives, with disputes over wages, staffing levels, and work schedules remaining unresolved. According to news agency Reuters, the five-day strike, which began on , initially impacted Starbucks

locations in Los Angeles, Chicago, and Seattle. As of Saturday, the industrial action has expanded to include New Jersey, New York, Philadelphia, and St. Louis. While the union did not specify the location of the walkout in New Jersey, it confirmed that the strike continues to disrupt operations in the newly added cities.

The union's strike spans in 10 cities, including Columbus, Denver and Pittsburgh, during the festive period, potentially affect-

ing the company's Christmas revenue. The workers' Union had earlier indicated that the industrial action could extend to "hundreds of stores". Eve. Discussions between Starbucks and the union began in April. The company recently reported conducting over eight negotiation sessions, resulting in 30 agreements. The coffee chain manages more than 11,000 outlets across the United States, with approximately 200,000 staff members.

UGC bans 3 private universities from PhD admissions for 5 years

Due to academic misconduct and UGC PhD regulations, OPJS University (Churu), Sunrise University (Alwar), and Singhania University (Jhunjhunu) have been forbidden from accepting PhD students for five years (2025-26 to 2029-30). Admissions at three Rajasthan universities were suspended immediately. Following admission exam protocols, Research Advisory Committee (RAC) creation, and thesis evaluation criteria, the UGC found their practices inadequate. Another 30 are being examined. The UGC said, "After analysing/ examining/ evaluating the information/ data submitted by the universities, the Standing Committee has found that three universities did not



follow the provisions of the UGC PhD regulations and also the academic norms for the award of PhD degrees... the responses received from these universities were not found satisfactory." UGC chair M Jagadesh Kumar stressed PhD program integrity and said additional Indian universities are being reviewed. To maintain Indian higher education's reputation, violations may result in similar punishments. PhD programs should be held to the

highest standards by universities. Institutions that violate UGC's PhD regulations will be punished. We are also inspecting PhD programs at other universities. Those that breach PhD regulations will also be punished.

Incorrect institutions must be barred from admitting PhD candidates. We must protect Indian higher education's integrity and worldwide standing "UGC chair M Jagadesh Kumar stated.

Admission is based on points from various categories

" Nursery admissions began. The Directorate of Education (DoE) announced in November that the second list would be revealed on February 3"

Delhi: The first list for 2025-26 nursery admission at Delhi's private unaided schools. Initially, major school lists had 100 to 200 pupils. Nursery admissions began November 28, 2024. The Directorate of Education (DoE) announced in November that the second



list would be revealed on February 3. All admissions will be completed by March 14.

Parents now have four to five days to accept admission, verify, and pay costs. Schools vary, but ours

gives parents four days to pay fees. We will then work on the second list, depending on the vacancy. Tania Joshi, principal of The Indian School in Sadiq Nagar, south Delhi, said their list of 114 kids was released Friday.

Jyoti Arora, principal of Mount Abu Public School in Rohini, northwest Delhi, claimed that based on prior trends, 20-25% of first-list candidates will not take admissions. 100 students are on the first list. We will see some rejections since parents apply to numerous institutions and occasionally wish to wait for their first choice, Arora said.

According to DoE, admission is based on points from various categories. Most schools consider distance between the student's home and school, if the candidate has siblings in the same school, and whether anyone in the

IIT Kharagpur teachers petition governors. Restore HoD positions

Delhi: The IIT Kharagpur Teachers' Association (IITTA) urged the institute's board of governors to expunge show-cause notices issued to 86 faculty members, restore their administrative positions, and protect the association's office bearers from arbitrary or retaliatory actions amid the faculty-administration dispute. In September, the IIT Kharagpur teachers' associa-



tion accused director Virendra Kumar Tewari of "nepotism" and "arbitrary faculty recruitment" in a letter to the Union Ministry of

Education, sparking a confrontation. They wanted an academically qualified, inclusive governance-experienced successor. When the administration sent show-cause notices to IITTA office bearers and disciplined them for not answering within seven days, tensions rose. Show cause notices were sent to 86 academic members who signed a petition supporting the IITTA, wors-

ening the situation. The IITTA said several of the 86 academic department heads were replaced. The administration also said people who answered or apologized would not be punished. After an unusual general body meeting the IITTA approached the board of governors. They worry the administration may act fast and deny office bearers a fair hearing.

PPGCL Bara Power Plant Celebrates 77th Republic Day with Pride, Unity and Commitment to Nation-Building



Prayagraj

PPGCL Bara Power Plant celebrated the 77th Republic Day with great pride, dignity and patriotic fervor, commemorating the historic adoption of the Constitution of India and reaffirming its commitment to the core constitutional values of Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. The ceremony was graced by Ashok Panda, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), PPGCL, along with senior officials including

Chief O&M, Chief O&M (Services), Head HR & Administration, Head FGD Project and Head Security. The dignitaries jointly unfurled the National Flag, symbolizing national unity, constitutional integrity and collective responsibility. On the occasion, Security and Fire & Safety personnel were felicitated for their exemplary dedication and outstanding service. Their critical role in ensuring plant safety and uninterrupted opera-



tions in a demanding 24x7 working envi-

ronment was specially acknowledged.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Ashok Panda emphasized the vital role of the power and energy sector in nation-building. He stated that reliable electricity forms the backbone of economic growth, social development and national security. Appreciating the commitment of engineers, business partners and support teams, he remarked that their tireless efforts truly reflect the spirit of service and responsibility

that the Republic stands for. The celebrations concluded with a collective pledge by all officers and employees to uphold the highest standards of safety, quality, regulatory compliance and meaningful contribution towards nation-building. The Republic Day celebration at PPGCL Bara Power Plant stood as a strong symbol of patriotism, professionalism and unwavering commitment to powering the nation's progress.

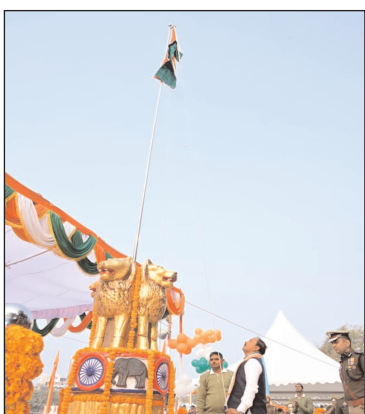
Republic Day Celebrated with Great Enthusiasm at Meja Energy Corporation, Outstanding Employees Honored



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Meja. The 77th Republic Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm at Meja Energy Corporation on Friday. The ceremony began with the hoisting of the national flag by the corporation's Chief Executive Officer, G. Srinivas Rao. On this occasion, CISF, DGR security forces, and children from St. Joseph's School saluted the tricolor. In his address, the Chief Executive Officer said that strengthening educational facilities is among the priorities of Meja Energy Corporation. He mentioned the achievements of the corporation and appreciated the contributions of the employees. Children from Our Little Kingdom, Bal Bhavan, Bal Srijan, and St. Joseph's School presented patriotic cultural programs at the ceremony. The CISF security demonstration was a major attraction. During the program, employees who performed outstanding work throughout the year were honored with Meritorious Awards. CISF personnel were also felicitated. On the occasion of Republic Day, the corporation, under its CSR scheme, inaugurated a 5-kilowatt off-grid solar power system at Primary School Kohdar (I). G. Srinivas Rao said that this initiative will ensure uninterrupted power supply in schools and promote education and clean energy in rural areas. Senior officers of the corporation, employees, their families, school administration, and villagers were present at the event.

Deputy Chief Minister Hoists National Flag at Police Lines on the Occasion of the 77th Republic Day



Prayagraj. Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya hoisted the national flag and took the salute at the parade at the Police Lines on Monday on the occasion of the 77th Republic Day. On this occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister also administered the oath of the Preamble of the Indian Constitution to the people present there. The Deputy Chief



Minister honored a total of 11 officers/employees posted in Prayagraj with the highest commendation medal. Those honored included Traffic Sub-Inspector Indrapal, Head Constable Subhash Chandra Yadav, Head Constable Prabhakant Rai, Head Constable Ajay Kumar Singh, Head Constable Abhay Kumar, Head Constable Umesh Singh Yadav,

Head Constable Kamlesh Kumar Maurya, Head Constable Amit Kumar Pandey, Head Constable Dinesh Kumar Singh Yadav, Head Constable Dev Chandra Bharti, and Head Operator Rajesh Singh. The Deputy Chief Minister also honored Mr. Alok Yadav, Mr. Lal Saheb, and Mr. Pankaj, who recently displayed exemplary courage in rescuing two

Air Force pilots and retrieving a helicopter from a pond after a trainee helicopter crashed. On this occasion, patriotic cultural programs were presented by students from various schools, including Girls High School and College Civil Lines, Pyari Nandan Umran Singh Memorial Inter College Colonelganj, Shakun Vidya Niketan Naini, St. Joseph's College Civil Lines, Aryan Dance Academy Akhand Hind Fauj Prayagraj, and children from the police families of Police Lines Prayagraj (gymnastics performance and cultural program). On this occasion, Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya, in his address, paid homage to all the great personalities who contributed to achieving independence for the country and establishing a republic. He said that today India has become the world's fourth-largest economy.

Tricolor Flag Hoisted at Commissioner's Office on Republic Day



Prayagraj. On the occasion of Republic Day, Divisional Commissioner Soumya Agarwal hoisted the national flag at the Commissioner's office on Monday. After the national anthem, she administered the oath of the Preamble of the Constitution to the officers and employees. Wishing everyone a Happy Republic Day, the Divisional Commissioner said that the Constitution has granted equal rights to every citizen. She urged the officers and employees to rise

above religion, caste, and regionalism and discharge their duties with complete dedication and honesty so that the country and the state reach new heights of develop-

ment. All the officers and employees of the Commissioner's office, including the Additional Commissioners, were present at the program.

Grand Celebration of Patriotism at NCC Group Headquarters Prayagraj on the 77th Republic Day

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Prayagraj. On the auspicious occasion of the 77th Republic Day, a grand ceremony imbued with discipline, valor, and national spirit was organized at the NCC Group Headquarters Prayagraj. On this glorious occasion, NCC Group Commander Prayagraj, Brigadier Upendra Singh Kandil, hoisted the national flag. He saluted the national flag with a Guard of Honor. As the strains of the national anthem resonated, the entire premises echoed with thunderous cheers, and the atmosphere was filled with patriotism. After the flag hoisting, Brigadier Kandil inspected the Guard of Honor and addressed the cadets, inspiring them to always be ready for national service and to imbibe discipline, dedication, and selfless service in their



lives. On this historic occasion of Republic Day, officers and cadets who received commendations for their outstanding contributions to the Army and NCC were honored. Congratulations were extended to Colonel Ritu Srivastava Rawat, Commanding Officer of 15 UP Battalion NCC Prayagraj, for receiving the Chief of Army Staff Commendation, Lieutenant Colonel Farah Deebea, Administrative Officer of 6 UP Girls Battalion, for receiving the Iron Lady award, and GCI Varsha Kesarwani of 15 UP Battalion NCC Prayagraj for receiving

the ADG NCC Medal. In addition, Brigadier Kandil congratulated Cadet Pratyusha Yadav of Allahabad University and Senior Under Officer Akash Singh (RRPG College, Amethi) of 18 UP NCC, who were awarded the DG NCC Commendation, stating that this achievement is a result of their hard work, discipline, and dedication to the values of the NCC. Thereafter, Brigadier Kandil reviewed the preparations for the upcoming NCC written examination and motivated the cadets to perform exceptionally well.

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Prayagraj. District Magistrate Manish Kumar Verma hoisted the national flag at the Collectorate premises on the auspicious occasion of Republic Day and, after the national anthem, administered the oath of the Preamble of the Indian Constitution to the officers and employees present. On this occasion, he extended Republic Day greetings to everyone. The District Magistrate garlanded and paid homage to the statue of Mahatma Gandhi located in the Collectorate premises. He also garlanded the statue of Bharat Mata and lit a lamp in the Sangam Auditorium. On this occasion, the District Magistrate honored the families of freedom fighters by presenting them with flowers and shawls. In his address, the District Magistrate



said that January 26th is our national festival, and on this occasion, I extend my best wishes and greetings to everyone on this national festival of January 26th. He said that on this day we remember all those who made significant contributions in securing freedom for our country. Today, we pay homage to the freedom fighters as well as those great personalities who drafted our Constitution. He said that today we should pledge to build our country in accor-

dance with the vision they had for India. He said that we must have knowledge of our history and should never forget our roots. The Constitution is the soul of our country. After gaining independence, the drafting of the Constitution was the biggest challenge for us. Our country's Constitution is the world's largest written constitution, from which many countries of the world draw inspiration today. Our Constituent Assembly drafted such a

strong constitution that even after decades, despite the diversity of caste, religion, language, and such a large population and area, we continue to set an example of brotherhood and unity in diversity to the whole world. India is the world's largest democracy, and it continues to function so strongly because the framers of our Constitution drafted it very thoughtfully. He said that India is a country full of diversity. The Constitution has given us equal rights.

Today we are among the world's four largest economies. The continuous progress our country has made and our journey towards becoming a world leader is primarily built upon the strong foundation of our Constitution. On the auspicious occasion of Republic Day, the District Magistrate requested everyone to contribute to the advancement of the

country and its development into a developed nation. He said that we should not wait for others to join us in doing good work. We should honestly strive towards our goals. We should set an example for society by doing good deeds. To continuously propel the country towards progress, we should do our best with complete dedication and honesty, and not let the sacrifices of the freedom fighters go in vain. Present on this occasion were Additional District Magistrate (Administration) Pooja Mishra, Additional District Magistrate (City) Satyam Mishra, Additional District Magistrate (Namami Gange), Additional District Magistrate (Finance and Revenue) Vinita Singh, Additional District Magistrate (Supply), and all officers and employees of the Collectorate, including Vinod Kumar Singh.

Editorial

Why The Taliban Foreign Minister Is Really Visiting India

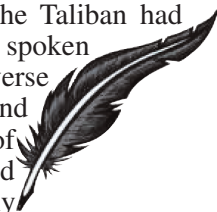
The Acting Foreign Minister of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, Amir Khan Muttaqi, will be traveling to New Delhi between October 9-16, after having received a waiver from the UNSC sanctions committee. His previous bid to secure the waiver back in September was not successful. During his visit, he is expected to meet the External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and will arrive in New Delhi after having participated in the Moscow Format Dialogue in Russia. The impending visit has raised - and might answer - important questions about how India's relationship with the Taliban-led regime has evolved in the past four years. While there is an acknowledgement of the inevitability of engaging with the Taliban because of strategic and security considerations, concerns about what form this engagement would take and whether India can secure its interests for real, persist.

India's Reaction In 2021

When the Taliban usurped power in August 2021 and anointed themselves at the helm in Afghanistan, India's response to the developments was simultaneously knee-jerk and gradual. As the fighting intensified, India did not take much time to shut down its consulates and close its embassy. It was also quick in revoking visas and arranging the evacuation of Indian citizens from the country. But there was still a degree of dilly-dallying on how it intended to engage with the regime. A few weeks after the group's return, the Indian ambassador in Qatar met the head of the political office of the Taliban in Doha in order to seek assurances about protecting India's security and interests in the country. Subsequently, after a visit by the then Joint Secretary of the Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran division in the Ministry of External Affairs to Kabul in June 2022, New Delhi operationalised a technical mission in the country to facilitate and monitor the delivery of aid. This ad hoc, reluctant engagement has now metastasised into a tacit acceptance of the inevitability of grappling with the reality of the Taliban.

The Dubai Meeting

At the beginning of this year, the Indian Foreign Secretary met Muttaqi in Dubai - the first high-level engagement between the two sides. The meeting saw a discussion over a broad spectrum of issues between the two countries - from humanitarian and development assistance to the importance of the Chabahar port for the purposes of trade and delivery of aid. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the Taliban defined India as a key 'economic and regional player' in their statement. After the terrorist attack in Pahalgam in April, a delegation led by India's Joint Secretary in the PAI division also met Muttaqi. This was followed by a telephonic conversation between the Indian External Affairs Minister and Muttaqi, where India expressed gratitude for the Taliban's condemnation of the attacks in Pahalgam. The January meeting between Misri and Muttaqi came in the backdrop of Pakistan's air-strikes in Afghanistan the previous month and New Delhi's condemnation of the same, while the April meeting and the consequent call happened in the context of the Pahalgam terror attack and India's retaliatory strikes on Pakistan under Operation Sindoor. The Taliban had condemned the attack and spoken against how it had an adverse impact on regional peace and stability. The deterioration of ties between Pakistan and Afghanistan has consequently given India more space to engage with the Taliban.



Analysis - Bihar 2025: The Poll That Could Turn On 6,300 Votes



The latest Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of Bihar's electoral roll has concluded with a significant reduction of 51 lakh voters, amounting to a 6% drop from the rolls as of May 2025. In comparison, the previous SIR conducted between 2002 and 2003 led to a sharper 14% reduction in eligible voters. However, that exercise was spread over a longer period and occurred between two elections, not immediately before one. As a result, the revelation that more than one in ten voters were either ineligible or non-existent did not spark the kind of debate we're witnessing today. A detailed analysis of the electoral impact of both revisions offers a trove of insights into why this current exercise could significantly shape the upcoming election outcome.

Historical Benchmarks and Electoral Shifts

Working on an analysis that benchmarks all elections since the 2000 Bihar Assembly election tracks the reduction in voter numbers, turnout trends, and electoral outcomes. The first election after the 2002-03 revision was held in February 2005. The voter count had dropped

from approximately 6 crore to 5.26 crore. The result was a hung assembly, with the UPA led by Lalu Prasad Yadav struggling to retain power. By October 2005, the voter count further declined to 5.13 crore under the vigilant oversight of Election Commissioner KJ Rao. This election delivered a clear majority to the NDA, which won 143 of the 243 seats.

Interestingly, as long as the absolute number of voters remained below the pre-SIR benchmark of 2000, the NDA maintained its dominance. The 2010 election was a landslide for the NDA. While many contextual factors influenced these outcomes, the correlation with voter count benchmarks is hard to ignore. However, as voter numbers began inching

back toward the 2000 levels, the NDA's grip weakened. In 2015, they lost. In 2020, they scraped through with a razor-thin margin - just 0.03% of the vote. While factors like the LJP's role and Nitish Kumar's shifting alliances were critical, one unmistakable pattern emerged: lower voter counts tend to favour BJP-led alliances. This seems to be an implicit understanding shared by both the BJP and its rivals.

Why This SIR Matters More

If the current SIR reduced voters by 6%, that is less than the 14% reduction of the previous one, why does it feel more consequential?

A microscopic look at the 2020 results reveals the answer. The NDA won the state by a margin of just

11,150 votes, narrower than the margin in many individual assembly seats. Had just 12 seats swung the other way, Bihar would have had a different Chief Minister.

In fact, only 6,292 voters across those 12 seats needed to vote differently to change the outcome. That's what makes this SIR so pivotal. Even a few hundred ineligible or non-existent voters could tip the balance in multiple constituencies. The average margin across the state was 16,832 votes, or roughly 10%. Yet the distribution of support for both the ruling party and the opposition was so evenly spread that small shifts could have led to dramatically different results.

The Jan Suraj Factor and Caste Dynamics

Adding to the complexity is the emergence of Prashant Kishor's Jan Suraj Party, which is expected to cut across caste lines and appeal to a broad voter base.

This new entrant could disrupt traditional voting patterns and further fragment the vote. A parallel can be drawn with Maharashtra's 2024 Lok Sabha election, where the NDA and the Congress-led

alliance were separated by just 0.5% in vote share. Despite the narrow margin, the NDA suffered a decisive defeat. However, the NDA's women-centric welfare schemes, especially the Ladli Bahin initiative, helped them break caste barriers and reach deeper into the electorate than ever before. This experience has likely informed the NDA's strategy in Bihar, where they hope to replicate that success and appeal beyond traditional caste lines, much like Jan Suraj aims to do.

A New Political Landscape

A serious attempt to triangulate Bihar's politics, long after the CPI(ML) and Left Front ceased to be major players. The rise of younger leaders in RJD and Jan Suraj, while the BJP banks on a coalition of EBC (Extremely Backward Class) leaders. rgest pre-election outreach to women voters in Bihar's history. It's a heady mix-new players, shifting alliances, and a finely balanced electorate. Many years ago, a state tourism department used the tagline "Full of Surprises." Today, that phrase perfectly captures the mood of Bihar's 2025 election.

Happy to see Indian girls coming up in golf,' says India's first ever female golfer

Among the longest hitters, at 25 years of age, this girl has been wowing golfing fans across the world. Her straight hits cover much ground, leaving onlookers agape. For world no. 41, Aditi Ashok, who has had a spectacular run in the 2023 LET, opens with a much-cherished win on European soil, winning the Ladies Open 2023 season-ending tournament at the Andalucia Costa Del Sol Open (Spain). It's total surrender to the game: she won her fourth Ladies European Tour title at the Kenya Ladies Open, came third in Morocco, and was runner-up in Saudi Arabia (2023). Scratch the calm demeanour, and there is a girl with a plan who wants to hit straighter and longer. Golf consumes her. She recently

reconnected with her childhood coach, Gaurav Diwan, and is "working on my swing speed and distance". From those early years, she turned pro in 2016 and was also rookie of the year, and Ashok is the first Indian female golfer to enter the top 50 world ranking. On a journey that began at age five, she accompanied her father, Ashok Gudlamani, onto the Karnataka Golf Course in Bangalore. One swing and another, and soon she was hooked. Over the years, her resolve, passion, and stoic stance have seen her climb deftly along the ranks of ladies' golf. Putting, she believes, is her strength, and often birdie-ing to perfection, the ramrod straight serious girl with her lips pursed in concentration has beaten

men, trumped tournaments, and is eyeing 2024 as the greens promise victories ahoy. "Finishing in the top 5 in Spain has been heartening after the work I have put in. It has been completely different when compared to where I was in 2022. Then, I was ranked 99 at the LPG. So, the first win (in Kenya) got the ball rolling," smiles Aditi. A miss at the 2020 Olympics (she came fourth), a silver at the Asian Games 2023, she dug deep after an off-kilter season. Having crossed the finish line with wins, she feels failure teaches, victories not so much. "In August, I took a month or two off to prepare for the Asian Games. Even though it had no ranking points and had nothing to do with my LPGA.

Ladakh Needs A Healing Hand, Not Divisive Politics - An IAF Officer's Plea

A most unwanted event occurred on the crown of India's map last month. This opinion piece is a cry to all, who mean well by India, to bury the hatchet that has brought turmoil to the most peace-loving but hardy group of people, and to one of the most serene real estate that India possesses - Leh, where one cannot move a step without being greeted by absolute strangers with their lyrical greeting - 'Juley'. One day in August 1978, I, a young Flying Officer, took 'lift' in an An-12 from Chandigarh to Leh for a month-long Chetak helicopter detachment. That began an association with that remote frontier through many flying detachments for the next four years, then in the mid-'90s for two-and-a-half years as a Commanding Officer, followed by many short visits in the next two decades. Leh grew on me, as it has on almost all Indian Army and Air Force personnel who has had the privilege of being stationed in the Ladakh sector. Can I apportion my feelings on many, if not most of the thousands of uniformed men and women who have been stationed there? I think I can, judging from the out-



pouring of bewilderment, grief and angst in social media by veterans after the violent happenings on September 24, when a protest turned violent and four Ladakhis were killed in police firing. The Ladakhis are simple folks who go about working in the limited summer months to stock up on money, food and livestock for the bitterly cold winters when temperatures drop to minus 30 degrees and below. The harsh and punishing environment has made them rugged and tough to endure hardships that are difficult for others to even imagine. They are literally the backbone of the security forces, too, up in those dizzy environs. Pick up the photo of May 24, 1948, when Air Cmde 'Baba' Mehar Singh landed his Dakota on the makeshift kutcha runway and opened up Leh for the Army to move in and throw back Pakistani raiders; what one would see are village folks who had

constructed the runway, crowding around the Dakota aircraft. Or, pictures of the making of airfields at Chushul, Fukche and Thoise, which show the locals toiling on their haunches to level the ground with hands, shovels and hand-pulled rollers. In the '70s and '80s, we would swoop low in our helicopter upon spotting an Army patrol moving on foot along the Shyok river valley to reach Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO) and Track Junction posts on the China border; on waving to the Ladakhis who manned these mule convoys - sometimes Yaks, too - they would cheerfully respond. It took us 90 minutes of flying to reach DBO from Leh - they, however, endured around two weeks of march. And the wars. There is not one conflict in independent India that has not seen the Ladakhis give their life for the nation. Take Colonel Chewang Rinchen (twice awarded Maha Vir Chakra.

Nitish Kumar Is Still The 'X' Factor In Bihar - And NDA Knows It

With poll dates announced in Bihar, election fever has gripped the state once again. As the political landscape heats up, one question dominates conversations across teashops and television debates alike: is Nitish Kumar still the X-factor that determines electoral outcomes in Bihar? The answer, it appears, is far more complex than a simple yes or no.

A Kingmaker's Legacy

Nitish Kumar's political career presents an impressive track record that few can match. Whichever party he has allied

with has tasted victory in Bihar - the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in 2005 and 2019, the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) in 2015, and the BJP again in 2020. This remarkable streak has earned him the reputation of being Bihar's ultimate kingmaker, who has donned the hat of King for almost 20 years - a leader whose support can swing the entire electoral arithmetic in favour of his chosen partner. His political strength rests on a carefully cultivated vote bloc comprising Kurmi-Koeri communities (7%), Hindu

Backward Classes (EBCs, at 26%) Mahadalits, and Womenfolk. These constituencies have remained largely loyal to him through various political upheavals, drawn by his relatively clean image and development-focused governance. **Development Agenda** Nitish Kumar's governance model has been distinctly welfare-oriented, particularly focusing on women's empowerment and marginalised communities. His flagship schemes like Jeevika Didi, cycle distribution for school

girls, and the controversial prohibition policy have become defining features of his political legacy. He introduced 20% reservation for EBCs in local bodies and pushed women's representation in panchayats to 50% - moves that significantly expanded political participation among previously under-represented groups. In what is termed his last innings, Nitish has opened the budget purse wide, launching a slew of schemes targeting women, youth, senior citizens, farmers, and laborers.

Grand Coronation of Lord Shri Ram: Devotional Evening Mesmerizes Devotees

Barabanki

Under the auspices of Shri Ramlila Seva Samiti, a grand coronation ceremony of Lord Shri Ram and a devotional music evening (Bhajan Sandhya) were held late Sunday night at the historic Ghantaghar. Thousands of devotees from the city and nearby areas gathered to witness the divine spectacle, as chants of "Jai Shri Ram" echoed through the entire town. (Coronation amid Vedic chants and shower of flowers) The coronation of Lord Shri Ram returning from Ayodhya was performed by Acharya Pramod Pathak amid sacred Vedic hymns. As the ceremony took place, devotees showered flowers, bowed their heads, and sought blessings. Pandit Pramod Pathak recited soulful verses from the

Ramcharitmanas, filling the atmosphere with deep devotion and spiritual fervor. (Bhajan Sandhya enchanted the audience) Renowned T-Series devotional singer Ramkumar Lakhha captivated the audience with his melodious bhajans such as "Meri Jhopdi Ke Bhagya Aaj Khul Gaye" and "Ram Janaki Baitha Hain Mere Seene Mein." The audience danced and swayed with devotion, completely immersed in the divine rhythm. Committee members too participated with great enthusiasm, adding life and energy to the event. (A festive atmosphere with vibrant lights) The entire Ghantaghar area was beautifully decorated with colorful lights and shimmering decorations. The golden idol of Lord Shri Ram, seated on the throne, mesmerized everyone present.

Devotees and volunteers were visibly moved, immersed in the spiritual ambiance throughout the evening. Committee General Secretary Shivkumar Verma informed that this grand coronation marked the conclusion of this year's Ramlila celebrations. The event was successfully organized with the cooperation of Anant Sarraf, Rajendra Soni, Pamesh Rastogi, Purushottam Tandon, Bhupesh Soni and Shobhit Gupta. Among those present were Committee President Anil Agrawal, management members Ramlakhan, Santosh Singh, Vinod Gaba, Rajesh Gupta, Krishna, Raju Patel, Sudhir Jain, Ankit Gupta (Golu) the youth executive team and several other distinguished members.

Barabanki

On the eve of Maharishi Valmiki Jayanti, the Chambal Museum family demanded due respect to the revolutionary warrior of the Chambal region, 'Jungli Mangali Valmiki'. In this regard, a call has been made to build a glorious memorial for the revolutionary warrior, 'Jungli Mangali', and to further intensify the ongoing public awareness campaign to honor the heroic tales of the Chambal Valley, to revive and preserve the memories of revolutionary heroes, and to include the legacy of revolutionary heroic tales in textbooks. Speakers at a meeting of the Chambal Museum family in Panchnad, Chambal region, stated that under the Chambal Saga campaign, two immortal symbols of the Chambal region's bravery in the 1857 Chambal War of Independence, real brothers Jangli and Mangali Valmiki, added a chapter to history that not only makes us proud but also inspires us today.



Raja Niranjana Singh Chauhan, the leader of the Chakarnagar State, declared independence on May 31, 1857, liberating the Panchnad Valley from British rule. It was from here that war plans were made and campaigns challenging British rule were launched. Whether the British approached from Jalaun, Tatarpur, or the Agra-Hanumanpura route, Jangali-Mangali Valmiki, the commander of Jangali-Mangali warriors, gave them a decisive response on every front. Jangali-Mangali Valmiki, the capable commander of Jangali-Mangali Chauhan, set an example of courage in the Battle of Shergarh on November 1, 1857, the Battle for the Capture of Etawah on December 3,

and the battles of Bhognipur-Kanpur-Dehat, Kalpi, and Charkhari from January to April 1858. The infallible marksman, Jangli-Mangali Valmiki, killed 22 British soldiers in the Battle of Chakarnagar on September 6, 1858, and in the Battle of Sahason on September 11, before attaining martyrdom himself. These two brothers are known in history as pioneers of Dalit bravery. Addressing the gathering, Dr. Shah Alam Rana, Director General of the Chambal Museum, said that today, 167 years have passed since their sacrifice. Even after 78 years of independent India, what fear still haunts those in power? Many governments, but these two revolutionary brothers have been forgotten.

Why are 5.3cr cases pending in Indian courts? Missing lawyers & witnesses, long stays...

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court, while adjudicating a matter related to inexplicable delays in disposal of cases in trial courts last week, observed that a speedy trial, as part of the right to life, is an unimpeachable right. But what happens when counsels are not available in over 62 lakh cases, accused are absconding in more than 35 lakh cases, witnesses are missing in nearly 27 lakh cases, and over 23 lakh cases are stayed by different courts?

As of Sept 25, 5.34 crore cases are pending across all courts in the country, including 4.7 crore pending trials in district and subordinate judiciary, 63.8 lakh in high courts, and 88,251 before the SC. While reasons for delay are not available for cases pending before the Supreme Court and high courts, the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) has cited 15 reasons behind delays in 1.78 crore cases before lower courts, out of the 4.7 crore pending with them. Of the cases with available reasons, 81% are criminal and 19% civil. For roughly three crore cases, no reasons have been provided. The main reasons cited are "counsels not available" in over 62 lakh cases; absconding accused in over 35 lakh cases; missing witnesses in nearly 27 lakh cases; stay by various courts in over 23 lakh cases; "awaiting documents" in over 14 lakh cases; and "parties not interested" in almost 8 lakh cases. The other reasons cited by the NJDG include frequent appeals, unavailable records, miscellaneous applications blocking trials, parties seeking additional witnesses, and legal representatives of deceased parties not being on court records.

Curiosity and Dedication Reflected in Every Exhibit: DM Students Presented Innovative Science Models

Barabanki

The district-level science exhibition held on Monday at PM Shri Government Inter College Barabanki showcased students' creativity and scientific talent. Organized under Samagra Shiksha (Secondary), Barabanki the exhibition was inaugurated by District Magistrate Shashank Tripathi by lighting the ceremonial lamp. While observing the science models the DM said, "Each project reflects hard work, innovation and a genuine curiosity to explore something new. Such efforts not only enhance interest in science but also nurture creative



thinking. Recalling his own student days, he added that participating in science exhibitions is one of the best ways to learn, as observing others' models broadens knowledge and perspective.

Among the main attractions were models like Modified Crutch, Rain Detective System, Floating House, Blind Stick and Robotic Fire Fighter, which drew significant

attention from visitors. The event began with a salute from the Scout-Guide Color Party in honor of the Chief Guest. Prominent attendees included District Inspector of Schools O.P. Tripathi, Principal Radheshyam, Vice Principal Arvind Prakash Tripathi and several teachers. The evaluation committee comprised Dr. Santosh Kumar, Zaheer Ahmad, Anand Kumar Yadav and Shikha Sahu who judged the models. The program concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Finance and Accounts Officer Santosh Kumar Maurya, expressing gratitude to all guests and participants.

ATS Gets 8-Day Custody of 5 Suspects Linked to 'Mujahideen Army' Plot

Lucknow

The Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) of Uttar Pradesh has secured eight days of police custody for five individuals accused of forming a group called the "Mujahideen Army" with the alleged aim of toppling India's democratic system and establishing Sharia-based governance. The accused—Akmal Raza (Sultanpur), Safeel Salmani alias Ali

Rajvi (Sonbhadra), Mohammad Tauseef (Kanpur), Qasim Ali (Rampur) and Mohammad Raza (Fatehpur, currently residing in Kerala) — were arrested in late September following an ATS investigation into an alleged terror conspiracy. According to ATS officials, the group had planned violent jihad, arms procurement and the formation of an armed outfit to challenge the

democratic order. The case was registered under Sections 148 and 152 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) at the ATS Police Station Lucknow. Following interrogation and evidence collection, the ATS produced the accused before the NIA/ATS Special Court in Lucknow, which granted police custody from October 7 for eight days for further investigation.

UP CEO Reviews Audit & Poll Expense Reports of Registered Political Parties

Lucknow

The Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Uttar Pradesh, Navdeep Rinwa conducted a detailed hearing on Monday with representatives of political parties registered in the state who failed to submit their annual audit reports and election expenditure statements within the stipulated time frame. A total of 127 registered political parties with addresses in Uttar Pradesh were issued show-cause notices by the Election Commission for not furnishing their annual audit and poll expense reports for the past three financial years, despite participating in Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections since 2019. (16 Parties Appeared Before CEO) Out of 30 parties summoned for



Monday's hearing, representatives of 16 parties appeared before the CEO and submitted their pending reports for the years 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24. The CEO scrutinized the donation reports, audited accounts, and expenditure details, while also verifying each party's registration number, current address, email and contact information. (Reminder on Statutory Deadlines) Rinwa emphasized that all political parties must submit their

donation report by September 30 and audited accounts by October 31 each year. Similarly, Lok Sabha candidates must file their expense details within 90 days and Assembly candidates within 75 days of the election's conclusion. Parties are also required to report all donations exceeding 20,000. The CEO instructed all political parties to update their email IDs, mobile numbers and addresses to ensure they receive timely communications from the Election Commission.

Barabanki

On the sixth day of Gandhi Jayanti Week an essay writing and rangoli competition was organized at Gandhi Bhavan on Friday, where students displayed remarkable creativity and thoughtful expression. Chief Guest Dr. P.L. Punia former Member of Parliament, said that India's true progress is possible only by following the path shown by Mahatma Gandhi. He appreciated the Gandhi Trust's efforts to connect children with the ideals of Gandhi and Lohia, calling it a commendable initiative. The program began with the garlanding of Mahatma Gandhi's portrait by Dr. Punia, former



minister Arvind Kumar Singh Gop, social worker Sudha Rani Verma and Municipal Chairperson Sheela Singh Verma. On this occasion the Trust's founding president Rajnath Sharma honored Dr. P.L. Punia with the Lifetime Achievement Award, Sudha Verma with the Aruna Asaf Ali Nari Shakti Award and

Sheela Verma with the Mahatma Gandhi Janseva Award for their contributions to society. Sudha Verma said that the enthusiasm witnessed in Barabanki during Gandhi Jayanti celebrations is truly inspiring. She added that such week-long events help spread awareness of Gandhian philosophy in society.

Connecting Children with Gandhi's Ideals Is the Need of the Hour: Punia

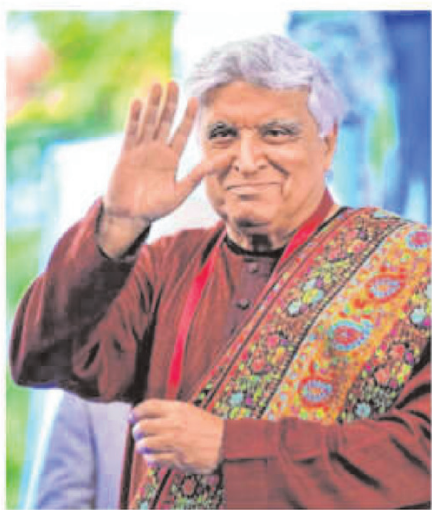
Challan defaulters to face service block on DL & RC

NEW DELHI: Those who violate traffic and other motor vehicle (MV) rules will soon be required to either accept and pay challans or contest them with supporting evidence within 45 days, says a draft notification proposing amendments to the MV Rules



related to the issuance and payment of challans. As per the proposed changes notified by the road transport ministry, regional transport offices (RTOs) won't process any applications related to the licence or vehicle registration of such offenders until

the dues are cleared. Such vehicles and driving licence holders will also be flagged as "not to be transacted" on Vahan and Sarathi portal. Sources said these changes have been proposed to nudge violators to clear their dues.



61 years in Mumbai

Javed Akhtar remembers coming to Mumbai with 27 *paisa*, shares his journey of struggle and hard work

Veteran lyricist and screenwriter Javed Akhtar first arrived in Mumbai on October 4, 1964, at the age of 19, with just 27 *naya paisa* in his pocket. On Saturday, reflecting on his 61 years in the city, he penned an emotional note expressing gratitude for how kind life has been to him.

Taking to his X (formerly Twitter) and wrote, "On 4th October 1964 a 19-year-old boy had disembarked at Bombay central station with 27 *naya paisa* in his pocket. Went through homelessness, starvation, unemployment but when I look at the grand total I feel life has been too kind to me."

Born in 1945 in Gwalior, he added, "For that I can not but help but thank Mumbai, Maharashtra, my country and all those who looked at work kindly. Thank you, thank you so much."

Talking about his journey, Javed told Hindustan Times in 2006 that he slept wherever he could, sometimes on a verandah, sometimes in a corridor, and sometimes under a tree, alongside several other homeless, jobless people like him. "At last, in November 1969, I got some work which in film parlance is called a break," he added.

'Kindness matters more than grades'

Samantha Ruth Prabhu talks about student stress, importance of kindness over grades and her upcoming Telugu film

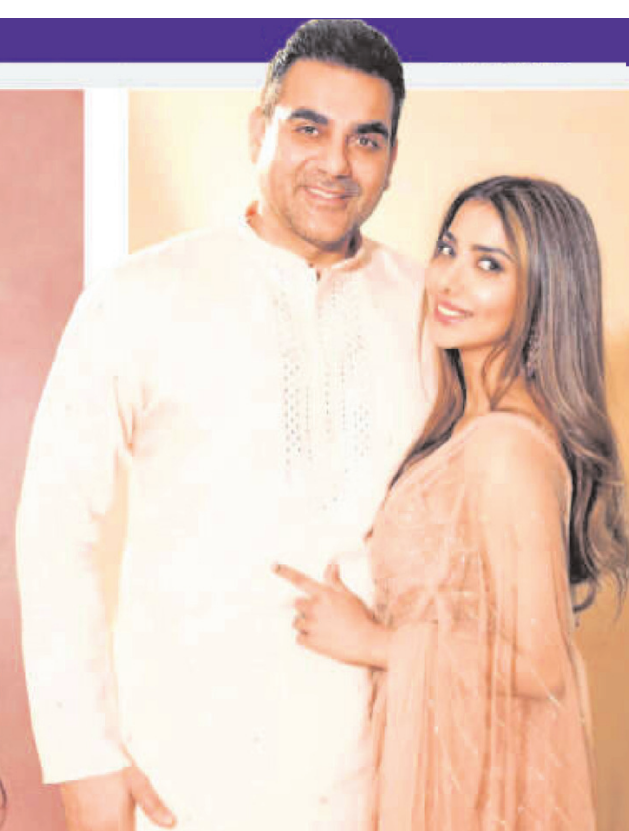
Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu shared some advice to students dealing with pressure and also talked about what she learnt when she was in school. The actress on Sunday treated her fans with a question and answer session, where a social media user asked Samnatha how to focus on health. The user asked: "How to focus on health? Being a student it's really hard to find time!! Can u plz give suggestions? (sic)."

Answering the question, Samantha said in a video: "Honestly, it has been a long time since I was a student but I have been hearing a lot about how difficult it is right now for students. The stress is..."

The actress said that she doesn't recall it "being so bad". "But I empathise with you and I really want you to understand that good grades are not everything. I think what I learnt most from being a student and the most important part of being a student was the friendships that I made, respect I had for people around me, and the kindness that I learned from my friends."

Talking about the lessons she learnt in school, Samantha said: "I learnt empathy, kindness, I learnt how to be a better human and I think these are the qualities honestly that worked out for me." "I don't remember any of the things that I studied in school but these are the qualities that stayed with me and that are really important in life." The actress then shared a news article about the student suicides in India in 2023 with Maharashtra reporting the highest cases as per NCRB reports.

Samantha dropped a heart break emoji on the article. The actress was also asked about her next Telugu project. To which, Samantha said that she finally has an answer to the question as she is starting to shoot this month for a film.



Arbaaz & Sshura become parents

Arbaaz Khan, Sshura Khan welcome baby girl two years after marriage; Salman Khan returns from Panvel farmhouse to celebrate with family

Bollywood actor-filmmaker Arbaaz Khan and his wife, makeup artist Sshura Khan, have been blessed with a baby girl. The couple got married in an intimate ceremony in December 2023, years after Arbaaz's divorce with actress Malaika Arora.

Sshura was hospitalised on October 4 in Mumbai. Several videos have surfaced on social media in which Arbaaz, his brother Sohail Khan, and his and Malaika's son Arhaan Khan, are seen entering the hospital.

According to a report in AajTak, Arbaaz's brother, superstar Salman Khan is returning to his Bandra residence from Panvel farmhouse to celebrate with his family members. While Arbaaz has not officially shared the good news with his fans on social media, several media reports have confirmed that he has become a father again. In June 2025, Arbaaz had opened up on Sshura's pregnancy, and stated that it was an "exciting phase" of their lives.



OG ramp queen

Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut made a grand return to the fashion runway, turning showstopper for designer label Raabta by Rahul's latest bridal jewellery collection, Salatan. The designer duo unveiled the regal collection on Friday, sharing glimpses of Kangana's walk on their official Instagram page. After a hiatus of several years, Kangana graced the ramp once again, exuding her signature confidence and poise. She wore an elegant ivory *saree* adorned with intricate embroidery, paired with a heavily embellished blouse. To complement the outfit, she chose emerald and gold statement jewellery from Raabta by Rahul's new line. Her look was completed



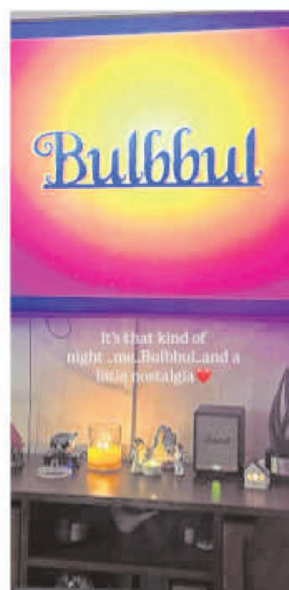
Designer Rahul Luthra and Kangana Ranaut

with a neatly styled floral bun, traditional accessories, and subtle glam makeup, perfectly embodying the essence of royal grace.

Triptii's *Bulbbul* nostalgia

Bollywood actress Triptii Dimri, who enchanted the audiences with her hauntingly beautiful performance in the series *Bulbbul*, took a stroll down memory lane as she rewatched the 2020 period horror-mystery.

Taking to her Instagram stories, Triptii shared a picture of her television screen with *Bulbbul* playing on it. "It's that kind of night... Me, *Bulbbul* and a little nostalgia," Triptii wrote as the caption. She then shared a picture of the moon and wrote: "The after effects of watching *Bulbbul*." *Bulbbul* also stars Avinash Tiwary, Paoli Dam, Rahul Bose, and Parambrata Chattopadhyay. Set against the backdrop of the 1880s Bengal presidency, the film revolves around a child bride and her



journey from innocence to strength. The story followed a child bride who grows into an enigmatic woman ruling over

her household, hiding her painful past, as supernatural murders of men plague her village.

Triptii had her first lead role in the romantic drama *Laila Majnu* in 2018 but gained critical recognition for her performances in Anvita Dutt's films *Bulbbul* and *Qala*. She gained popularity with a supporting role in the top-grossing action films *Animal*, *Bad Newz* and *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3*. Last month, Triptii brought home her new fur baby, Lychee. She took to her official Instagram account and posted a couple of photos posing with her fur buddy in the car.

Bollywood actress Triptii Dimri relives magic of *Bulbbul* with a sprinkle of nostalgia

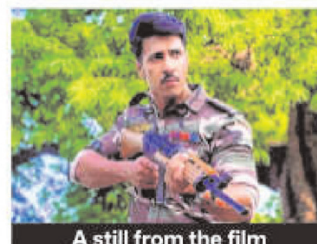


From playing Dhritrashtra in *Mahabharat* to leading a cybercrime thriller, Thakur Anoop Singh shares his story of grit, growth, and discipline



In an exclusive interview with actor Thakur Anoop Singh opened up about his upcoming film *Control*, a cybercrime thriller based on true events surrounding digital frauds. Best known for his roles in *Romeo 33*, *Dharmarakshak Mahaveer Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj*, *Mahabharat* (as Dhritrashtra), and popular South films including *Yajmana*, *Rogue*, and *Naa Peru Surya*, Naa *Ilalu India*, Singh is now stepping into the lead role of Abhimanyu in *Control*. Directed by Safdar Abbas, the film is set to release on October 10. In this candid conversation, Singh discussed his first reaction to the script, his preparations, the discipline that drives him, and his vision for the future. Excerpts:

Q. The film *Control* is based on true events surrounding digital frauds and cybercrime. What was your first reaction when you heard about



A still from the film

the script?

A. My first reaction was the relatability factor that the script carries. I've personally seen friends experience similar scams, and that made it feel very real to me. I thought, if this could happen to people I know, imagine how many others must have gone through it. The script felt both informative and impactful. I found the story challenging because it allowed me to portray a victim's perspective and show what happens to a victim's family when they're scammed. That's what made it such an interesting subject for me.

Q. The film deals with such a relevant issue. Did you research or meet any real-life victims of cyber fraud?

A. As I mentioned earlier, I already knew people who had gone through

such scams, so I observed them closely. I studied how hackers create fake OTPs or links, and how they manipulate victims into panicking and making mistakes. My friend's mother, who's in her 60s, was once scammed. I often say that our parents belong to the last innocent generation, and this incident really hit home. I saw firsthand how they struggled to recover the money—which they never could—and how the scammer, despite their pleading, stayed cold and unapologetic. It showed me the mindset of such criminals. I tried to bring that anger and helplessness into my performance as Abhimanyu in *Control*.

Movie

Q. How was your experience working with Safdar Abbas, the director of the film?

A. It was a great experience. Safdar Abbas has previously worked as an associate director with Abbas-Mustan, so he came with a lot of experience. *Control* was his first film as an independent director, and it was only my second film as a protagonist. We bonded well even before the shoot—we did a lot of workshops together. His clarity and experience reflected on set, and overall, it was a very positive and collaborative experience.

Q. Many people first noticed you in *Mahabharat*. Do you feel that role shaped your career in a significant way?

A. Absolutely. Playing Dhritrashtra in *Mahabharat* gave me tremendous confidence and experience. It wasn't directly responsible for my move into films, but it definitely motivated me to take that step. Working on such a massive production helped me understand the craft better and prepared me for larger roles. That experience gave me the self-belief to approach filmmakers and tell them I was ready for films. So yes, it played an important role in shaping my journey.

Q. What advice would you give to young people who want to maintain discipline in their career and health?

A. Discipline has brought me where I am today. It's all about managing your time, diet, and routine. You can't live carelessly thinking you can fix things later. The body adapts quickly to whatever lifestyle you choose, so you must stay consistent. My advice to youngsters is if you have a vision, stay disciplined in every aspect of life. That's the only way to achieve your goals and sustain success.

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Draft bill to strengthen statistical institute unveiled

NEW DELHI: The central govt has released a draft bill which aims to strengthen the Indian Statistical Institute by putting in place a revamped governance structure, making the board a leaner and more empowered body for policy, administrative and financial matters.

As the institute approaches its centenary in 2031, the vision is to make it not only one of the best in country but one of the foremost institutes in the world. An official statement said the proposed draft bill is founded upon guiding principles of 'Excellence: promoting academic rigour, global competitiveness, and innovation'. The draft bill also aims to establish clear institutional structures, streamline decision-making, uphold integrity in leadership and administration, and



grant the institute greater decision-making powers in its day-to-day functioning and planning. The draft bill also aims to ensure transparency, oversight, and responsiveness to stakeholders, according to the statement released by statistics ministry. "The proposed reforms are aimed at unlocking the institute's full potential in 21st century. By aligning it with legal and governance framework of other institutions of national importance, govt intends to strengthen its capacity to deliver world-class education,."

Hindu University establishes public policy institute

Delhi: Hindu College at Delhi University has set itself apart from other Indian universities by creating a public policy lab. Officials have stated that the goal is to include real-world policymaking into both undergraduate and graduate programs. With the goal of democratizing and decentralizing the process of knowledge generation, the lab is designed to serve as a hub for policy simulations, applied research, and field-based insights. This will bring

'Swachh Shehar Jodi' launched to help 200 cities manage solid waste

NEW DELHI: In an initiative aimed at helping around 200 cities effectively manage and process their municipal solid waste, govt on Saturday launched 'Swachh Shehar Jodi' (SSJ) programme. The initiative officially pairs mentor cities with mentee cities, allowing the latter to directly learn from and replicate best practices of well-performing cities. Rolling out the first such structured mentorship and collaborative action programme, involving 72



mentor cities and 200 mentee cities, housing and urban affairs minister Manohar Lal Khattar said the aim is to ensure that "every city benefits from the collective knowledge pool of Swachh Bharat Mission". The

minister said, "Swachh Shehar Jodi is not just a ceremonial partnership. It is one of the largest structured, time-bound and outcome-driven mentorship arrangements in urban waste management sector."

Assess UV technology in sewage treatment, NGT directs IIT Delhi

Delhi : National Green Tribunal (NGT) asked IIT Delhi to examine the effectiveness of UV technology in sewage treatment and directed the DPCC to take punitive action against 14 STPs, which, as per a report, failed to meet the standards.

A tribunal

bench, headed by NGT chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava, in an order took notice of a report by Delhi Jal Board (DJB).

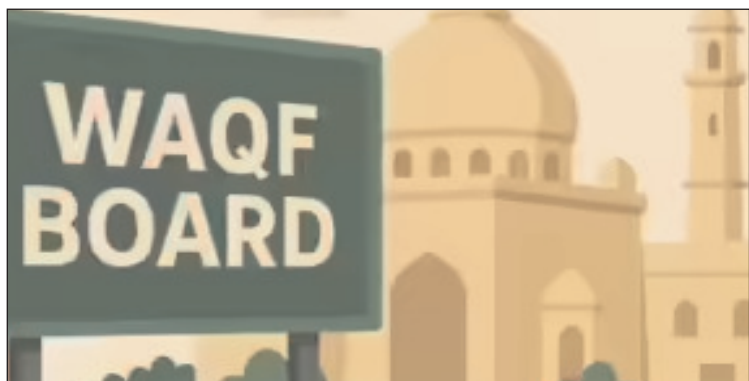
The report stated that of 37 STPs in the city, seven were yet to be installed with a disinfection system, four had not installed any sys-

tem, while among others, 15 had deployed UV and 11 had chlorination-based disinfection systems to treat bacteria in sewage before discharging the treated water into drains. For those yet to be installed, the process was initiated or tenders awarded.

VHP to govt over AIMPLB's stir against waqf law

NEW DELHI: Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) urged on Saturday Centre and state govts to stay alert against possible violence during nationwide protests announced by All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) and other Muslim bodies against Waqf Amendment Act.

VHP said it was "strange" that while challenging the law in court, the organisations were simultaneously launching street agitations instead of waiting for Supreme Court's verdict. VHP president Alok Kumar cited recent incidents of violence during Milad-un-Nabi processions to caution that fresh mobilisations could "disrupt law and order, invite



conflicts and promote violence." He called upon society, particularly Hindus, to remain "vigilant and prepared" in coordination with local authorities.

According to Kumar, AIMPLB's four-page "road map" for the second phase of its 'Save Waqf Campaign' calls for a nationwide bandh on Oct 3, when Muslims

have been asked to shut shops and offices between 8am and 2pm, barring medical establishments. The plan also includes marches towards Rashtrapati Bhavan in Delhi, Raj Bhavans in state capitals, and mass courting of arrests. "This is being promoted as Bharat Bandh on social media," Kumar said. VHP also appealed to SC.

Companies in the electronics industry are the most welcoming to LGBTQIA+ apprentices.

Delhi : A whopping 71% of businesses in the electronics sector have shown a great desire to hire LGBTQIA+ apprentices, making it one of the most welcoming sectors for this demographic. Overall, 64 percent of Indian companies are welcoming of LGBTQIA+ apprentices, so this is just one more example of a larger trend. The January-March TeamLease Degree Apprenticeship Outlook Report emphasizes this change. The majority of electronics and telecom firms (71%) are eager to hire LGBTQIA+ apprentices.

Supreme Court asks Centre, NCERT on transgender-inclusive

Delhi :The Supreme Court notified NCERT, the Union government, and six states to respond to a plea to integrate transgender inclusive sex education in school curricula. Chief Justice of India (CJI) Bhushan R Gavai and Justice K Vinod Chandran sent notices to the Centre, NCERT, and Maharashtra, Punjab, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu on the case brought by 16-year-old Delhi student Kaavya Mukherjee Saha.

Class 12 student from Vasant Valley School in Delhi filed the case, com-



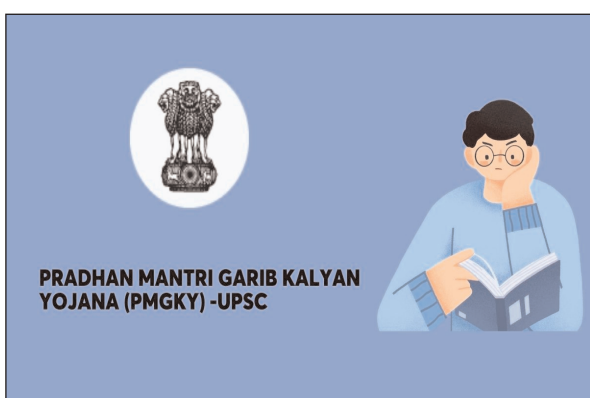
plaining about the lack of transgender-inclusive Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in NCERT and SCERT textbooks. The student wants binding gender sensitisation and transgender-inclusive CSE rules in all schools nationwide. Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, representing Saha,

told the bench that NCERT had recently admitted in a Right to Information (RTI) reply that it had "no information" on integrating CSE into school education, despite a 2024 Supreme Court order. Saha's petition claimed that NCERT and most state councils of educational research and training (SCERTs) have failed to include structured or examinable content on gender identity, gender diversity, and sex and gender despite Sections 2(d) and 13 of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.

Pradhan Mantri Kalyan Yojana relies on NCERT

Delhi : Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan voiced his faith in NCERT's ability to push educational reforms and bring about a paradigm change in teaching and learning, despite the fact that the council has been criticized for its textbook updates. In his support of NCERT's initiatives to implement the reforms proposed in NE, Pradhan compared it to a "Gyan Kumbh" that has had a profound impact on the lives of many Indians. At its 65th Foundation Day, Pradhan emphasized that NCERT needs to take the lead in transforming India's education system by adopting a reform-oriented and tech-driven role. It has come a long way since its start, especially in terms of education's role in nation-building.

He emphasized that



the organization needed to "don a new avatar" that was reform-oriented, tech-driven, and focused on best practices in order to embrace its role as a change leader. With unwavering conviction, Pradhan declared that NCERT will "bring a paradigm shift in teaching and learning and play a key role in actualising the goal of Samridhh Bharat." "Confident that NCERT will continue shaping critical and creative thinking in the 'Amrit Peedhi'," stated the professor.

DU teachers raise issues of unoccupied reserved seats

Delhi: Teachers from Delhi University brought up issues with professor recruitment in front of a Parliamentary Committee, claiming that the SC/ST populations were marginalized on a systematic level. Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. They paid a visit to DU and had in-depth interviews with eighty people, including faculty, stu-

IIT Madras, IISc B'luru, IIT Bombay top 3 in NIRF 2025

Delhi : The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras has topped the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2025 for the seventh consecutive year, and also emerged the top engineering college in India for the 10th year since the rankings were introduced in 2016. Like last year, the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru is ranked second in the overall ranking, and IIT Bombay third. The first non-engineering institution in the Top 10 of the overall ranking is the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi at eighth (seventh last year); the IITs at Delhi, Kanpur, Kharagpur, and



Roorkee (which swapped places with AIIMS) hold the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh places. Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi) and Banaras Hindu University (Varanasi) have moved up to the ninth and tenth spots, respectively. Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan and minister of state for education Sukanta Majumdar

announced the overall rankings and rankings across 17 categories for higher education institutions (HEIs).

The categories include engineering, management, medicine, university, law, research, and agriculture. There is also a category just for colleges. A total of 14,163 higher education institutions participated in the 10th edition of NIRF Rankings.

BCCI to hold AGM on Sept 28 to elect president, secretary, other office bearers

Delhi : The Board of Control for Cricket in India will conduct elections for the post of all its office-bearers - president, vice-president, secretary, joint secretary and treasurer, in Mumbai on September 28. In a notice, seen by to all the state associations, BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia stated, "Notice is hereby given that the 94th Annual General Meeting (hereinafter referred to as "AGM") of the Board of Control for Cricket in India ("BCCI"), which will be held at 11.30 AM on September 28, 2025, at BCCI headquarters at Mumbai, to transact the business as per the agenda provided below." "The minutes of the 93rd Annual General Meeting held on September 29, 2024, the minutes of the Special General Meeting held on January 1, 2025, and the minutes of the Special General Meeting held 2025, are attached herewith. Rest of the agenda papers will follow shortly. You are kindly requested to attend the meeting," Saikia concluded.

NMC asks medical colleges to deploy PG students in flood-affected areas

Delhi : The National Medical Commission (NMC) has asked all medical colleges across the country to deploy post-graduate medical students in flood-affected areas.

The deployment would be a part of the district residency programme, according to its recent directive. The directive states: "In view of recent floods/disaster-like situations in northern states/UTs, there is an urgent requirement for healthcare professionals as part of the ongoing relief measures.

R Ashwin's Message To Rohit, Virat Kohli: "Show That You Are Serious"

There is also no confirmation of their availability for the next Cricket World Cup that is set to take place two years from now.

Discussions

Informal discussions on the road to the 2027 World Cup got underway

Two veteran India players -- Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma -- are at the fog end of their international careers. Both the stars have already retired from T20Is and Tests and remain active only in ODIs at the highest level. Despite them making the cut in the India squad for the upcoming Australia series, uncertainty looms over the duo's future. There is also no confirmation of their availability for the next Cricket World Cup that



is set to take place two years from now. Former India all-rounder Ravichandran Ashwin has shared a piece of advice for both of them. The team is set to play only a few ODI matches in the lead up to the Cricket World Cup 2027, so Ashwin has advised the Rohit-

Virat duo to play India A matches as well as domestic tournaments to keep up with the training for the big event. He added that the two players need to show the selectors they are serious about playing the quadrennial tournament. "The India A series is currently

going on. You know that there are not many ODI matches before the 2027 Cricket World Cup. So Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma should be told to play the series. They should be told, 'If you don't play this series, then you don't fit in the plan. If you are not a part of this series,

you need to go and play Vijay Hazare Trophy because that is another thing we can look at the form you are in'," said Ashwin on 'Ash Ki Baat'. "I have heard it in the past that players don't like to play at times because maybe they are not motivated enough to play India A series. It could happen. Since you want to play 2027 Cricket World Cup, show that you are serious about it. Go and play Ranji Trophy cricket and other tournaments; the selectors will also know, he is serious about playing," he added. Apart from match practice and form, age is another factor that poses a huge challenge to the two players. Rohit is already 38 years old.

Boxing Great's Son Arturo Gatti Jr. Dies in Circumstances Hauntingly Similar to His Father's

The boxing world was stunned by the news of the death of Arturo Gatti Jr., the 17-year-old son of the late boxing legend, Arturo "Thunder" Gatti. The young boxer was found dead earlier this week in an apartment in Mexico, where he resided with his mother, Amanda Rodrigues. More than the death, the circumstances sur-

rounding the event have sent a fresh wave of shock through the global boxing community. The death of Arturo Jr. surprisingly has uncanny similarities to the mysterious death of his father 16 years ago. Arturo Gatti Jr. was found hanging on Monday, October 7, 2025, according to sources close to the family. The news was

first shared publicly by Chuck Zito, an American actor and former bodyguard of Arturo Gatti Sr., who shared the update on the tragedy on social media. Zito's post claimed that Gatti Jr. was found hanging in the apartment. Incidentally, it was "the same way they found his father dead in an apartment in Brazil.

Not His Fault': Rana Gets Complete Backing Amid Gambhir-Linked Criticism



India pacer Harshit Rana has come under the scanner for being selected for the upcoming white-ball tour to Australia, starting October 19. The player was part of India's Asia Cup 2025 winning squad, but had a below-par performance in the two matches he got to play. Rana returned figures of 1 for 25 in three overs vs Oman and leaked 54 runs for one wicket in four overs against Sri Lanka in the continental tournament. He has thus far played 2 Tests, 5 ODIs and 3 T20Is, picking 4, 10 and 5 wickets, respectively. The player is being criticized heavily for the fact that he made it to the India squad for Australia tour despite a series of poor performances. Former India opener Kris Srikkanth even termed Harshit Rana as the "only one permanent member" in the team. Many feel that's Harshit's

Potential

Player was part of India's Asia Cup winning squad, but had a below-par performance

KKR connection with the current India head coach Gautam Gambhir that sees him get picked for all formats in the Indian team. Amid the chatter, former India batter Aakash Chopra has come out in support of him, saying that Harshit has potential. "People are trolling this kid a lot. It's not his fault that he gets picked in all squads. Anyone who plays for India gets picked by the selectors. Captain and coach also give inputs but don't have the voting rights. If after that someone keeps getting picked, then it's not that person's fault. You are pointing your guns in the wrong direction," said Chopra on his YouTube channel.

Reporters Surround Naqvi Over Asia Cup Trophy Act



Asian Cricket Council (ACC) chief Mohsin Naqvi remained tight-lipped after he was queried regarding the whereabouts of the Asia Cup 2025 trophy. A huge controversy came to light last month after India beat Pakistan in the Asia Cup final in Dubai. After the match, the Suryakumar Yadav-led side refused to receive the trophy from Naqvi, who is also the Interior Minister of Pakistan. The Indian cricket team was not formally presented with the trophy as Naqvi left the stadium with the silverware and the winner's medals. Sources told last week that the Asia Cup trophy is now with the Emirates Cricket Board (ECB). It isn't yet confirmed how and when the trophy will be handed over to India. Earlier this week, Naqvi faced questions about the Asia Cup trophy controversy during

Pakistan spinner Abrar Ahmed's wedding reception in Karachi. In a video shared by TOK Sports, Naqvi evaded the questions from the media, before being eventually escorted to his car by Pakistan pacer Shaheen Afridi. Naqvi has been accused of violating the Code of Responsibilities and Ceremonial Protocols as he refused to hand over the Asia Cup trophy to the winning Indian team. This move violated established ceremonial protocols and his fundamental duties as the ACC Chief to honour the winners, leading to embarrassment. The BCCI has made it clear that they intend to escalate the issue to the ICC, with the matter set to be raised at the upcoming ICC meeting in November. As per sources, the BCCI is also pushing for his impeachment.

India's Smriti 12 Runs Away From Breaking All-Time Women's ODI Record

Overtaking

Smriti is just 12 runs away from overtaking Australian legend Belinda Clark



Indian opener Smriti Mandhana is just 12 runs away from overtaking Australian legend Belinda Clark for most runs in a calendar year in women's ODIs as her side takes to the field for the ICC Women's World Cup match against South Africa on Thursday. India, undefeated so far in both contests against Sri Lanka and arch-rivals Pakistan, will take on a charged-up South Africa. The Proteas unit bounced back strongly with a commanding win over

New Zealand after a 10-wicket loss to two-time champions England, during which they were skittled out for just 69 runs. With scores of 8 and 23 against SL and PAK, respectively, Mandhana has been a slow starter this tournament, with the law of averages perhaps catching up with her. Nonetheless, in 16 innings, she has scored a stunning 959 runs at an average of 59.93 with a

strike rate of over 113, including four centuries and three fifties. Her best score is 135. Back in 1997, Belinda had not only cracked the first-ever one-day international cricket double ton, but also smashed 970 runs in 16 matches and 14 innings, with a mind-boggling combination of 80.83 average and 98.11 strike rate. She scored three centuries and four fifties, with a best score of 229*.

R Ashwin's Unfiltered Verdict On Harshit Selection, Says "Very Questionable"

Former India international Ravichandran Ashwin didn't mince a single word as he shared his opinion on the selection of pacer Harshit Rana for India's ODI series against Australia. Harshit has somehow managed to break into the Indian team in all three formats despite the fact that his appearances in the playing XI have been very limited. Seeing Harshit get the



selectors' nod for the Australia tour, fans were left scratching their heads. Many even suggested that it's Harshit's KKR connection with

head coach Gautam Gambhir that has made him an all-format player. Ashwin, in a video on his YouTube channel, admitted that he isn't

Opinion

He isn't clear about the logic behind Rana's selection to the Indian team

clear about the logic behind Rana's selection to the Indian team. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) selection committee chairman Ajit Agarkar

didn't share the thought process behind Harshit's selection. Ashwin, however, feels he might have been selected as he can be handy with the bat. "Why they are selecting him, I am not sure. I would love to be in the selection meeting to know the reason behind his inclusion. From my side, the reason I see is that in Australia we need that fast bowler who can bat. Someone trusts that

he can bat, which is why they are selecting him as a potential No. 8. But I am not sure about his batting ability. Two years back he bowled a brilliant pacy delivery in the IPL final that flew off the edge (Nitish Kumar Reddy's dismissal). He has played for a while now for that one delivery," Ashwin said in a video on his YouTube channel.

This is the decision of the BCCI, selectors, and coaches. Shubman captained India in England

Shami Breaks Silence On Australia ODIs Snub, Ends Gill vs Rohit Sharma Captaincy Debate



Mohammed Shami has been missing from international cricket for a long time now. The fast bowler last played in the 2025 Champions Trophy and since then has been

out of the Indian cricket team due to fitness issues. Though he played in the IPL and is regularly playing domestic cricket for Bengal, the BCCI selectors have chosen to over-

look him. He was not considered for the ODI and T20I teams for India's Tour of Australia, which starts on October 19. Shami has now broken his silence on the issue. "There have been many rumors and memes. People want to know my opinion on the non-selection for the Australia series. I will just say that getting selected is not in my hands; it's the job of the selection committee,

coach, and captain. If they feel I should be there, they will select me, or if they feel some more time is needed, it's in their hands. I am ready and practicing," Shami said on his YouTube channel. "My fitness is also good. I will try to do better because when you are away from the ground, you need to remain motivated. I played in the Duleep Trophy. I felt very comfortable, my rhythm was good, and I

bowled around 35 overs. There are no issues with my fitness." He also touched on the subject of Rohit Sharma being replaced as ODI captain, with Shubman Gill being the new skipper. "Bahut hi zyada memes ban rahe hai sawal ko leke (There have been a lot of memes on this question). I feel there should not be any objection. This is the decision of the BCCI, selectors, and coaches.

Saudi Arabia Win See-Saw FIFA World Cup Qualifier With Indonesia

Six-time World Cup participants Saudi Arabia had to come from behind to open their play-offs for the 2026 finals with a 3-2 victory over Indonesia, while 2022 hosts Qatar were held to a stalemate by Oman. The Saudis, favourites to qualify from Group B given they enjoy home advantage, got off to the worst possible start at King Abdullah Sports City in Jeddah when Hassan Al Tambakti appeared to block with his arm Jay Idzes' close-range header in the penalty area. After a lengthy VAR check, Indonesia were

awarded a penalty and midfielder Kevin Diks kept his cool from the spot to put his side 1-0 up in the 11th minute. Indonesia, managed now by former Netherlands and Barcelona striker Patrick Kluijver, are attempting to qualify for their first World Cup since gaining independence from the Dutch in 1945. However, the lead lasted only six minutes. Making his competitive international debut, Saleh Abu Shamati curled a sublime left-footed effort from the edge of the Indonesia area past goalkeeper.