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UNIQUE GIFT OF KRIYAYOGA ASHRAM AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO GIVE IMPETUS TO WORLD BUILDING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

SIR deadline extended by seven days in 12 states

New Delhi

The Election Commission has extended the SIR deadline by seven days in 12 states. The process of special intensive revision of the voter list will now continue until December 11th. According to the notice issued by the Commission announc-



ing the extension, the draft voter list will be published on December

16th. The final voter list will be published on February 14th. The

Election Commission has stated that the deadline for filling out the enumeration form has been extended until December 11th. Voters will be able to file objections until January 15th. The Commission has also stated that the process of allocating polling booths will be completed by

December 11th. According to the schedule released on November 30th, the Commission has stated that control tables will be prepared between December 12th and 15th. During this period, the draft voter rolls will also be prepared in all 12 states and union territories. Voters will be able to submit their

objections between December 16 and January 15. Voter list scrutiny will take place on February 10, followed by the final voter list. The Election Commission has stated that Electoral Registration Officers in all states will hear voter objections between December 16 and February 7.

Mann Ki Baat: PM says, adopt Vocal for Local in New Year's shopping



New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the 128th edition of Mann Ki Baat. During the address, PM Modi addressed several important issues, including the hoisting of the Ram Mandir flag and the discussion of endurance sports. The Prime Minister said that the month of November brought many inspirations, including the celebration of Constitution Day, the Vande Bharat program, and the hoisting of the Dharma flag at the Ram Mandir. PM also mentioned the inauguration of the Panchjanya Memorial at Jyotisar in Kurukshetra. PM men-

tioned the honey produced from the wild basil (Sulai) flowers in the hilly areas of Jammu and Kashmir. PM Modi said that this honey is white in color and is called Ramban Sulai honey. The Prime Minister also noted that this honey has also received a GI tag. He said, "Today, India is setting new records in honey production. Today, honey production in India has exceeded 1.5 lakh metric tons." This has provided employment opportunities to thousands of people. It is also increasing the sweetness of honey in all corners of the country. And this sweetness is also increasing the income of farmers.

All-party meeting held before Parliament session

New Delhi

The winter session of Parliament begins on Monday. There are already signs of a ruckus between the central government and the opposition over several issues during this winter session. JP Nadda, Kiren Rijiju, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, Gaurav Gogoi, and other leaders attended the all-party meeting chaired by Union Defense Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday before the winter session. Congress makes serious allegations, prepares to corner the government in Parliament. Following the all-party meeting, Congress Lok Sabha MP Gaurav Gogoi said, "It seems the government, the BJP, and the Prime Minister want to destroy India's democracy and parliamentary traditions." He said,



"This is probably the shortest winter session; it seems the government wants to derail Parliament." Regarding the party's strategy in Parliament, he said, "In the all-party meeting, Congress demanded discussions on national security, air pollution, protecting democracy, and the security of voter lists." CPI(M) MP Reminds Government of Responsibilities After the all-party meeting, CPI(M) leader John Brittas said, "The blast near the Red Fort in Delhi has exposed the government. Our party wants a detailed dis-

cussion in Parliament on security issues." He added that if Parliament is disrupted or stalled, the government will be solely responsible for it. "No one said we won't let Parliament function," said Kiren Rijiju. After the all-party meeting, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said, "No one said Parliament won't function or won't allow it to function. Some leaders said they might create a ruckus in the House over the SIR. I am saying positively that we are ready to listen to the opposition. Parliament belongs to

I hope there will be no disruption: Kiren Rijiju

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said, "There will be debate in Parliament and I hope there will be no disruptions. If we work with a calm mind, it will be beneficial for the country and the Parliament session will run smoothly." In the winter session, the central government will push forward its reform agenda with a bill to open up the civilian nuclear sector to private companies.

everyone, to the country. There is a method for discussing every issue in Parliament. There are rules and traditions." Kiren Rijiju said, "In the winter session, we hope everyone will work with a calm mind and avoid heated debates.



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at the grand Aathman Bhandara and idol consecration ceremony held in Jhajjar, Haryana on Sunday.

The Bengal government did not pay the increased honorarium of BLOs, the commission raised objections

New Delhi

The Election Commission recently issued an order to increase the honorarium of BLOs. However, despite the Election Commission's order, the TMC government in

Bengal did not pay the increased honorarium to BLOs and other Election Commission officials. The Election Commission has now raised objections to this. The Election Commission issued a notification to increase

the honorarium. The Election Commission issued a notification in August, stating, "Accurate voter lists are the foundation of democracy. The electoral roll preparation machinery, which includes Electoral

Registration Officers, Assistant Electoral Registration Officers, BLO Supervisors, and BLOs, plays a crucial role in preparing the electoral rolls." The Election Commission has decided to increase the annual honorarium.

Electronic toy laboratory starts in Noida



New Delhi

Eighteen young engineers, participating in a special training program run by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, have developed several prototypes of indigenous electronic toys. They also developed control and automation-based technical solutions tailored to industry

needs, opening up new opportunities in this sector. This training program, run by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, aims to strengthen the indigenous electronic toy industry. The program also marked the inauguration of the Electronic Toy Laboratory at C-DAC, Noida. Under this program,

Foreigners will attack again through conversion, we have to be alert: CM Yogi

Jhajjar

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister and Gorakhpethadhiswar Mahant Yogi Adityanath presented two points to the saints and sages, cautioning society. He warned that when the golden age arrives, it inspires awareness and vigilance. When India's golden age arrived, foreign attacks had already begun. We must remain vigilant again. Even today, attacks will occur



through religious conversion and drug abuse, and foreigners will be behind them. No anti-Sanatan activities should be tolerated. Protecting Sanatan Dharma is essential for the protection of India, global humanity, and

the entire inanimate world. Sanatan Dharma will remain safe only if we remain united. We must not divide; if we divide, we will be destroyed. This is what has happened whenever we have divided. We must not divide in the

name of caste, appeasement, region, or language. Rather, just as the flag of Dharma is flying high at the Ram Janmabhoomi in Ayodhya, the flag of Sanatan Dharma should be seen flying in every Sanatani's home, unitedly. Chief Minister and Gorakhpethadhipati Yogi Adityanath attended the idol consecration ceremony and a grand feast of eight maans at the Baba Palnath Ashram in Kablana village on Sunday.

People displaced due to ethnic violence in Manipur protest near Raj Bhavan

Imphal

Hundreds of people displaced from their homes due to ethnic violence in Manipur staged a massive protest near the Raj Bhavan in Imphal on Sunday. The protesters' main demand was to be allowed to return to their homes as soon as possible. Where did the protesters come from? The protesters were from Churachandpur, Kangpokpi, Imphal West, and Imphal East districts. All of them have been living in relief camps since ethnic violence broke out in Manipur in May 2023. The protesters chanted slogans.

38.51 percent voter turnout in Delhi MCD by-election

New Delhi

Only 38.51 percent voter turnout was recorded on Sunday in the by-elections for 12 MCD wards. Despite political parties' allegations and counter-allegations, local issues, and the candidates' active participation, voter apathy disappointed the candidates. The final outcome among the 51 candidates contesting the by-elections for these 12 wards will be



determined only after the counting of votes on Wednesday, December 3rd. Voter turnout in these wards was approximately 10.5 percent lower than in the 2022 general elections. According to the Delhi

State Election Commission, many polling stations were bustling with activity as soon as voting began in the morning, and voting continued until evening, but the voting pace remained slow.

Delhi car blast: Two clerics arrested

Rampur

A connection to the Delhi bombings has emerged from Rampur, Uttar Pradesh. The two clerics from Haldwani and Nainital Mosques arrested by the NIA team on Friday night are both residents of Rampur. The NIA team has been camping in Rampur district for three days to search for the terrorists. However, Superintendent of Police Vidyasagar Mishra declined to provide any



information. NIA Eye on Three Locations According to police sources, NIA and National Security teams have been in Rampur district for three days after finding a crucial link in the call details

obtained from the mobile phone of Dr. Umar Nabi, the suicide bomber involved in the Delhi bombings. The team is monitoring suspected locations in the Tanda, Dadhiyal, and Shahabad areas. No

Arrests Made in Rampur On Friday night, the NIA team arrested Mohammed Asim Qasmi, a cleric from Bilal Mosque in Banbhulpura, Haldwani. Meanwhile, they are also interrogating Maulana Naem of the Nainital Mosque. Both are residents of Dadhiyal and Rampur. However, the NIA has not yet made any arrests in Rampur. Maulvi Asim's family teaches at a madrasa. Maulvi Mohammad Asim, a resident of Dadhiyal.

Briefs

JAIPUR

Couple set ablaze, two detained

In Badolay village, Mokhampura, near Jaipur, a couple was allegedly set ablaze by pouring petrol on them. Both have been admitted to SMS Hospital of Jaipur in critical condition. Preliminary investigation suggested a long-running feud between the families of the victims led to the incident. Two people named by the victim in a statement to the police have been detained. The police said that the victim, Kailash Gurjar (40), is married, while the woman, Soni Gurjar (32) is a widow. The incident occurred on Friday late at night when Soni reportedly went to meet Kailash at a makeshift shed in a field when people informed of this meeting allegedly set the couple on fire. The villagers, responding to their cries for help, reached the spot and doused the flames. —Manish Godha

TIKAMGARH (MP)

3 siblings killed over land dispute

Three brothers, all farmers, were killed and four others, including two women and a 10-year-old girl, were seriously injured on Sunday in a mob attack over a land dispute in Tikamgarh district in Madhya Pradesh, a police official said. The incident took place in Ramanagar, about 50 km from the district headquarters. Brothers Chaturbhuj (35), Parmalal (37) and Balram (44), residents of Simra Khurd village in Bamhorikala police station area, died after being attacked by 8-10 persons with sticks and sharp weapons.

MEERUT

Animal meat found outside gurdwara

Tension gripped the Thapar Nagar area on Sunday after the discovery of animal flesh outside a gurdwara. A large number of locals gathered at the spot and expressed their outrage. Police rushed to the spot to prevent any flare ups. A crime branch team was called in to join the investigation.

BLAME GAME | Majority of Grand Old Party's candidates feel it would have fared better in polls had there been no alliance

RJD & Congress trade barbs after Bihar rout

PATNA

Sparks have started flying between RJD and Congress, two major constituents of the Mahagathbandhan, after the opposition alliance's humiliating defeat in the recently-concluded Bihar assembly election.

In the Bihar poll, NDA clinched a massive victory by winning 202 seats as Mahagathbandhan's seat tally reduced to just 35.

Congress leaders, who attended a meeting in New Delhi to review the party's performance in the polls, said that a section of leaders wanted the party to contest the election alone instead of having an alliance with the RJD.

"Majority of the Congress candidates have held the view that the party would have done better had there not



Bomb squad inspects the Bihar Assembly complex ahead of Winter session, in Patna on Sunday

been an alliance with RJD. It is up to the party high command to decide what should be the future strategy," remarked senior party leader Shakeel Ahmed Khan after the meeting.

Many Congress leaders viewed that the ruling NDA's 'jungle raj' narrative, impacted the performance of the

alliance partners in the polls as well. Congress leaders also contended that the upper caste voters also left the party and started supporting BJP due to its alliance with RJD.

State RJD president Mangani Lal Mandal countered it by saying, "If Congress wants to go it alone in the elections, it is free to do

MLAs to take oath today

The 5-day session of the state legislature will start from Monday with the newly elected MLAs taking oath on the first day, amid heavy security arrangements around and in the assembly building. During the five day first session of the 18th assembly from Dec 1 to Dec 5th, the election of speaker of the assembly will take place on Tuesday.

so. It will get to know its worth."

"Whatever votes Congress has got, it is due to RJD. It is a spent force in the state. We have been accommodating their unreasonable demands in election after election. Still, if Congress wants to contest elections alone, it should do it by all means," he added.

BENGALURU

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Sunday once again dismissed reports of internal differences with CM Siddaramaiah, asserting that he never took any MLAs to Delhi amid speculation over leadership changes that had erupted earlier.

On Saturday, the two leaders had a breakfast meeting after which they put up a united front, denying any difference between them.

"We never had differences of opinion. I never took a single MLA whenever I went to Delhi. I could have taken at least 10 to 12 MLAs. That does not serve any purpose," Shivakumar told reporters here.

He said that he being the Karnataka Pradesh Congress president is like a "father figure" to all the party members.

"I have to take everyone along. All 140 MLAs are dear to me. I never differentiate with anyone. I have no differences of opinion with anyone," the Deputy CM said.



Karnataka Minister DK Shivakumar at the award presentation ceremony of the Karnataka Half-Language Culture and Literature Academy 2024, in Bengaluru

Recalling his efforts during HD Kumaraswamy's tenure as chief minister for a year from May 2018, he said, "I tried my best to save the coalition government of Congress and JD(S). This is something which I and God know."

He added that Kumaraswamy and his father former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda also know it.

Responding to Kumaraswamy's charge that Shivakumar had sought the support of pontiffs in the midst of power tussle, he

said, "I never asked for it. I love all the castes. Many seers had spoken in my favour. Did I ask them to speak on my behalf? No. It is their love and trust in me. Should I call that wrong?"

"Let him (Kumaraswamy) say whatever he wants, but I will not get hurt. I never backstab. I fight from the front," Shivakumar said.

On the BJP's criticism over the leadership row, he remarked, "The BJP can say anything for survival. Should we take them seriously?"

Youth's dedication driving force of 'Viksit Bharat': PM

NEW DELHI

The dedication of India's youth is the greatest strength of 'Viksit Bharat', Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday citing recent achievements across diverse sectors ranging from space manufacturing to farming.

In his monthly 'Mann ki Baat' radio address, the prime minister listed the 150th anniversary of 'Vande Mataram', the Constitution Day celebration at the Central Hall, and the hoisting of

'MANN KI BAAT'

'Dharmadhwa' atop the Ram Mandir at Ayodhya among the inspirational developments in November.

He also highlighted the inauguration of the world's largest LEAP engine MRO facility in Hyderabad and the induction of INS 'Mahe' into the Indian Navy.

"Just last week, Skyroot's Infinity Campus gave a new boost to India's space ecosystem. This is a reflection of India's new thinking, innova-



Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma listens to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Mann ki Baat' at Sangar camp office, in Jaipur on Sunday

Modi: Learn Tamil during Kashi-Tamil Sangamam

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday urged citizens to participate in the Kashi-Tamil Sangamam at Varanasi and avail an opportunity to learn Tamil. In his monthly 'Mann ki Baat' address, Modi said the fourth edition of the Kashi-Tamil Sangamam will commence on Dec 2 at the Namoh Ghat in Varanasi. "This year's Kashi-Tamil Sangamam has a very interesting theme: Learn Tamil - Tamil Karkalam," Modi said, describing the event as the confluence of the world's oldest language and one of the world's oldest cities.

tion, and youth power," PM Modi said in the 128th episode of his 'Mann ki Baat' address.

PM Modi referred to a video on social media of a unique drone competition organised by ISRO. "In this video, the youth of our country,

especially our Gen-Z, were trying to fly drones in conditions similar to Mars," he said, adding that the youth were trying to fly drones solely with the help of cameras and in-built software in the absence of GPS support on Mars.

SRO on SIR inspection trip in Bengal

KOLKATA

Special Roll Observer (SRO) Subrata Gupta on Sunday had visited few places at South 24 Parganas to see the ongoing work of SIR.

Gupta visited Falta in South 24 Parganas district to review the SIR work. "I have come here to oversee whether all the

directives of Election Commission of India (ECI) are being followed during SIR exercise. I have received a few complaints, so came to check them," said Gupta.

After the SRO left, the BLOS mentioned that the SRO didn't have any problem with them as their work was done adhering to all the directives by the poll body. Notably, Gupta was

appointed as SRO on November 28 by ECI. He is a retired IAS officer of West Bengal cadre.

Meanwhile, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) state president and Rajya Sabha MP Samik Bhattacharya had once again urged Chief Electoral Officer Gyanesh Kumar to visit West Bengal to oversee SIR work in the state.

"Most of the problems are taking place in Bengal amid all the states where SIR exercise is on. Gyanesh Kumar should come himself instead of sending representatives," said Bhattacharya.

Leader of Opposition Suwendu Adhikari stated that the poll body should visit most of the places of South 24 Parganas.

Now, Ladakh LG's residence is 'Lok Niwas'

Leh: Ladakh's Raj Niwas, the official residence and office of Lieutenant Governor Kavinder Gupta, has been renamed 'Lok Niwas'.

Gupta emphasised that the renaming of LG's residence strengthens direct engagement with citizens.

Termining it a landmark initiative towards inclusive and accessible governance, an official spokesperson said the step follows the Union Home Ministry's November 25 directions that all Raj Bhavans be renamed Lok Bhavan and Raj Niwas be renamed Lok Niwas across the country.

Renaming of Raj Bhavan: Stalin for mindset change

CHENNAI

With the Union Minister of Home Affairs directing to change the names of Raj Bhavan and Raj Niwas across the country into Lok Bhavan and Lok Niwas respectively, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister questioned the utility of the exercise.

"What is required is a change in mindset and not in the name," Stalin, also president of the DMK, posted on social media on Sunday.

The name change was examined and recommended by a Committee headed by Tamil Nadu Government R N

Ravi.

Stalin pointed out that the Legislative Assembly is the House of People's Representatives. Therefore, changing the name of the Raj Bhavan by those who did not have any respect for the Assembly, was only an eye-wash, he argued.

He questioned if this was merely to throw dust in the eyes of people's democracy. Arguing that what was necessary in the present day was to respect governments elected by the people and ensure the sovereignty of the House, Stalin said, "If there is no change in thinking (mindset), name change is unnecessary."

UP minister's son falls prey to cyber fraud

GORAKHPUR:

Uttar Pradesh cabinet minister Dr Sanjay Nishad's son Dr Amit Kumar Nishad has become a victim of cyber fraud after scammers allegedly misused his mobile number to open a fake bank account and activate a UPI ID linked to it. For months, money sent to Dr Amit was redirected to the fraudulent account.

The incident came to light when one of his acquaintances transferred Rs 50,000 to his number last week. Dr Amit did not receive any transaction alert on his phone. He immediately checked his bank details and discovered that the funds had been diverted to an account operated by a man identified as Samreen Ali.

Police said the accused had opened the bogus account at the Mandawali branch of Bank of Baroda in Delhi. Shahpur police registered a case based on Dr Amit's complaint and have launched an investigation with assistance from the cyber cell.

Dr Amit's mobile number is linked to several important contacts and financial transactions. Although payments had stopped reflecting in his account for months, he initially did not pay attention to it. "We have registered an FIR against Samreen Ali. The probe has been assigned to Inspector Avadhesh Tiwari. Cyber cell support is being taken," said Shahpur SHO Neeraj Rai.

37 Naxals surrender in Chhattisgarh; 27 of them carried ₹65 lakh bounty

DANTEWADA (CHHATTISGARH)

Thirty-seven Naxalites, 27 of them collectively carrying a reward of Rs 65 lakh, surrendered in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada district on Sunday, police said.

The cadres, including 12 women, turned themselves in before senior police and CRPF officials here as part of the "Poona Margem" (from rehabilitation to social reintegration) initiative, Dantewada Superintendent of Police Gaurav Rai said.

The initiative, launched by Bastar range police, has been emerging as a transformative drive for establishing lasting peace, dignity and compre-



Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) pose for a group picture after completing a year-long strategic advance into the Abujmahad region, successfully sealing the last major interstate corridor used by Naxal insurgents, in Narayanpur on Sunday.

hensive progress in Bastar region, he said.

The key cadres among

those who surrendered include Kumali alias Anita Mandavi, Geeta alias Lakshmi

Madkam, Ranjan alias Soma Mandavi and Bhima alias Jahaj Kalmu. All of them carried a reward of Rs 8 lakh each, the official said.

Under the government's rehabilitation policy, the cadres who have surrendered will be provided instant assistance of Rs 50,000 each along with other facilities, like training for skill development, agricultural land, etc, he said.

Inspired by the surrender and rehabilitation policies of the Centre and the state government, more than 508 Maoists, 165 of them carrying a reward, have quit violence and joined the social mainstream in Dantewada district over the past 20 months, the official said.

'Unsafe' remark: Muslim outfit slams Madani

Jabalpur (MP):

RSS-linked Muslim Rashtriya Manch (MRM) on Sunday rejected Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind (JUH) president Maulana Mahmood Madani's claim that minority community feels unsafe in India, saying "separatist-minded clerics" like him hindered the progress of Muslims.

The MRM's national convenor, SK Muddin, said Muslims enjoy full Constitutional rights and security in the country. Madani had on Saturday alleged that efforts were being made to establish the supremacy of one group via actions like bulldozer action, mob lynching, weakening of the Muslim Waqf and Islamic reforms.

Vigil up after Delhi blast link surfaces in Kanpur

KANPUR

Authorities have intensified surveillance in the city after a possible connection emerged between two doctors, Shaheen and Parvez Ansari, and the recent blast in Delhi.

Police and central agencies have conducted checks across sensitive and highly sensitive areas. During the operation, 25 more suspects were identified, many of whom speak Bengali and Urdu.

Officials are investigating whether these individuals could be Rohingya. Initial findings indicate that their roots are in villages bordering Balrampur. Special police personnel and local intelligence teams have been deployed to verify details.

Hornbill Festival opens with 6 country partners

KOHIMA

Nagaland is fully prepared to host the 10-day Hornbill Festival, in which six country partners will participate, Tourism minister Temjen Inna Along said on Sunday.

Briefing media on preparations for the 26th edition of the Hornbill festival at a press conference here, the minister said the celebration will open on

December 1, coinciding with Nagaland Statehood Day.

Celebrated since 2000, the Hornbill festival is an annual tourism promotional event of the state government and has grown into Nagaland's largest cultural event, envisioned to promote the traditions of all Naga tribes while boosting tourism.

It is the coming together of all the tribes of the state under one roof in Kisama, some 12



km south of the state capital on the NH-29, Kohima-Imphal road.

Over the years, it has evolved into an international

platform, attracting visitors from across India and abroad and expanding to multiple venues across the state.

This year, six country partners - France, Ireland, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Malta, and Austria - and one state partner, Arunachal Pradesh, will participate, besides the 18 major tribes of the state showcasing their richly colourful culture and tradition.

The festival will be officially hosted by Governor of Nagaland, alongside delegations from the partner countries and the Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, he said.

Along said the 2025 edition will place greater emphasis on culture, tradition, and collaboration with country partners to amplify Nagaland's global visibility.

Multiple festival extensions will be held across the state,

including Mon (Dec 8-10), Dimapur (Hornbill Carnival from Dec 6), Wokha (Doyang Festival), Zünheboto, and other locations, he said.

The minister acknowledged delays in preparatory works due to persistent rains and road damage, but said all line departments, including Tourism, Power, PHED, Police, and district administrations, have worked round-the-clock to ensure readiness.



Gangster Act action against JP Dubey, a close associate of Atiq Ahmed

Case filed against three members

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj. Police are continuously taking action to curb crime in the city. In this regard, the Airport Police Station has filed a case under the Gangster Act against Jaiprakash Dubey alias JP Dubey, a close associate of the mafia Atiq Ahmed, and three active members of his gang. According to the police, this gang has long been involved in serious crimes such as extortion, land grabbing, assault, attempted murder, and harassment of Scheduled Caste individuals. Station in-charge Vinay Kumar Singh stated that JP Dubey, originally a resident of Songra village in the Pwara police station area of Jaunpur district, is currently



living in Shaha alias Pipalgaon in the Airport police station area. Police investigation has revealed that JP Dubey is the gang leader of an organized criminal gang. The two other accused, Vikas Pasi, a resident of Pipalgaon, and Bhaiyalal, a resident of Rajpurpur Gayasuddinpur (Dhoomanganj), are also active members of the gang. According to the police, this gang has been involved in

crimes such as illegally occupying farmers' and government land and plotting it, extorting money from people, and assaulting and abusing people who resist. In several cases, gang members have been accused of attempted murder. Police have also received complaints of intimidation and physical abuse of Scheduled Caste individuals.

In September, JP Dubey and Vikas Pasi were also con-

firmed to be involved in the fatal attack on Sonu Kumar, the former block chief of Chail, over a land dispute in Pipalgaon. Police arrested both accused and sent them to jail after the incident. The station in-charge stated that due to the gang's continued serious crimes, the police have taken action against them under the Gangster Act to curb their criminal activities. The police will now investigate the gang's assets and illegally acquired property. They are also investigating other possible associates and networks of the gang. Police say that strict action against the criminals will strengthen law and order in the area and increase the sense of security among the people.

7,448 centers announced online for UP Board Exam 2026, objections open until December 4

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj

The Uttar Pradesh Board of Secondary Education (UP Board) has released a list of 7,448 examination centers online for the 2026 High School and Intermediate Examinations. These include 910 government schools, 3,484 aided schools, and 3,054 unaided schools. This number is lower than last year. In 2025, 7,657 centers were designated online, and in 2024, 7,864. However, the number of centers increases each year after objections are resolved. For example, in 2025, 7,657 centers were designated online, but after objections, this number increased to 8,140. Similarly, in 2024, the number of centers increased from 7,864 to 8,265. Board Secretary Bhagwati Singh stated that the list of examination centers (including student allocation), prepared based on school information certified by the Tehsil-level committee, has been uploaded to the website. Any school, candidate, par-



ent, principal, or manager can submit objections online using the prescribed format until December 4th. For the first time, the Board has issued a separate format for objections. No representations will be accepted after December 4th. The District School Inspector will examine the objections received, resolve them within the stipulated timeframe, and forward the list approved by the District Center Determination Committee to the Board website by December 11th. This list will be uploaded by December 17th. Secondary objections to this list will be received until December 22nd. The Board's Center

Determination Committee will then resolve the objections and release the final list by December 30th. This year, 258 examination centers have been proposed in Prayagraj district. Meanwhile, the UP Board has also released the schedule for the 2025 high school and intermediate examinations. The examinations will run from February 18, 2025, to March 12, 2025. The first shift is scheduled from 8:30 am to 11:45 am, and the second shift from 2:00 pm to 5:15 pm. The examinations will be conducted over a total of 15 working days. The high school examination will begin with Hindi

and conclude with Agriculture, while the intermediate examination will begin with General Hindi and conclude with Computer. The board has also released the dates for practical examinations. On February 19, practical examinations for Computer and Sewing subjects in high school will be held, along with examinations for Intermediate vocational subjects. On February 20, the intermediate English and Sanskrit examinations will be held. The board says that this time, sufficient gaps have been provided between subjects so that students can prepare better. According to the Board of Secondary Education, Prayagraj, a total of 52,30,297 students have registered for the UP Board exams this year. These include 27,50,945 in high school and 24,79,352 in intermediate. The board has instructed all districts to ensure necessary facilities at examination centers and to conduct the examinations in a completely transparent and cheating-free manner.

Dr. Santosh Dubey successfully treated uterine cancer using the Palash Kshar method

Cancer treatment is possible in Ayurveda

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj Dr. Santosh Dubey has successfully treated cancer using the Palash Kshar method in Ayurveda. At a press conference held at the Hindustani Academy, he stated that Premadevi's uterine cancer was treated using the global



Palash method in August, and the surgery was successful. The MRI report after the surgery showed no signs of cancer. This result is encouraging for the

Ayurvedic treatment method. Dr. Dubey stated that if the high-potency Palash method is used correctly, positive and effective results can be

achieved in various types of cancer. Dr. Avnish Pandey explained that Acharya Sushruta, known as the founder of surgery in Ayurveda, described alkali therapy thousands of years ago. Alkali is considered excellent for piercing, cutting, and writing. Palash (Palaash), also known as Butea monosperma, possesses anticancer, antioxidant, and free radical scavenging properties. It has been used since ancient times to treat tumors and wounds.

Evidence-based research is needed today. Senior physician Dr. Bharat Nayak stated that treatment of cancer is possible with Ayurveda, provided patients consult an Ayurvedic physician in a timely manner. Decreased immunity in cancer patients reduces their ability to fight disease. Positive results have been seen in cancer patients with immunity-boosting medications. Dr. Arvind Mishra, Dr. O.P. Mishra, and Dr. Mohan were present.

DM Appeals to Political Parties to Support SIR Program

Bahraich

In accordance with the directives of the Election Commission of India, a meeting with political parties was held at the Collectorate Auditorium by District Magistrate (DM) Akshay Tripathi to seek their cooperation for the special intensive revision program based on the eligibility date of 1 January 2026. The program aims to complete all procedural activities as per the Commission schedule by 4 December 2025. During the meeting, the DM



requested political parties to activate their Booth Level Agents (BLA) to assist Booth Level Officers (BLO) in the collection of forms. He emphasized that each BLA should submit at least 50 forms at every booth and support BLO in the collection process. The DM also

checked with party officials regarding the submission of forms by themselves and their family members and appealed to ensure that the general public is made aware to submit their forms before 4 December. He stressed the importance of reducing unmapped .

Tehsil-Level Sports and Cultural Program for Divyang Children

The event saw enthusiastic participation from 70 divyang and regular children from the Sarojini Nagar area

Lucknow

Under the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan and inclusive education initiative, a tehsil-level sports and cultural program for CWSN (Children With Special Needs) was successfully organized on Friday at Pre-Middle School Banthra, Sarojini Nagar. The event saw enthusiastic participation from 70 divyang and regular children from the Sarojini Nagar area. The program began with a morning procession (Prabhat Pheri), in which special educators and parents accompanied the divyang children. Following this, Block Education Officer R.P. Yadav inaugurated the event by offering flowers and lighting the lamp at the statue of Saraswati. He formally opened the



competitions by giving his blessings to the children. Throughout the day, children participated in various sports and cultural activities with great enthusiasm. Competitions included 50-meter and 100-meter races, rangoli, frog race, musical chairs, mehndi, calligraphy and math race, among others. Winners were awarded first, second, third and consolation prizes for their performances. At the conclusion of the program, BEO R.P.

Yadav presented certificates and prizes to all participating children, bringing smiles to their faces. The success of the event was credited to the dedicated efforts of school teachers Uday Pratap Singh, Suchita Tripathi, Kaushal Kishore Srivastava, Suresh Kumar Kannaujia, as well as special educators Anil, Ashok Kumar Singh, Yogesh Kumar Yadav, Gyan Singh, Manoj Singh, Shraddha, Shekhar Patel

Children who placed first in the sports competition held at Springer Public School received medals and certificates

Today's children will be the future of tomorrow - Chief Guest - Major General Dharamraj Rai, Good education reflects a good society - Director Sanjay Shukla

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Tharwai

Along with education, children are also becoming leaders in sports and developing their talents and skills. Today, children are also making careers in sports and bringing glory to the country. In this vein, a three-day sports competition was held at Springer Public School, located near Gomti River No. 40 in Tharwai, Prayagraj Ganganagar Zone, a renowned school in the field of education. Children participated enthusiastically in events



such as the Number Game, Color Ball Game, Balloon Game, Relay Race, 100-meter and 200-meter races, Badminton, and High Jump. Children participated enthusiastically,

winning medals and trophies. Prize distribution and a cultural program were held as part of the annual sports competition at Springer Public School on Sunday. The chief guest of

the event was Major General Dharamraj Rai, who inaugurated the event by lighting a lamp and presenting him with a bouquet of flowers. The little children captivated everyone with their melodious dance performances, drawing cheers from all present. The chief guest honored all the children who placed in the sports competition by presenting them with medals. The winning teams in badminton and other sports received trophies. In his address, Chief Guest Major General Dharamraj Rai highlighted the importance of edu-

cation and emphasized that those who strive never fail, and that good knowledge is essential for success. The children's participation and placements in the games today are a matter of great pride, as today's children will be the future of tomorrow. Director Sanjay Shukla explained that the children's hard work and true dedication led to their success and expressed his gratitude to everyone present. The entire school staff and parents of the children were also present. The program was conducted very well by Neha Mathur.

Editorial

Telangana Martyrs' Memorial: World's largest stainless steel structure

Hyderabad now has the world's largest seamless stainless-steel memorial—the Telangana Martyrs Memorial, or Amara Jyoti. Dominating the landscape for miles and close to the State Secretariat, the elliptical-shaped structure has a giant, yellow flame in carbon steel atop it. The memorial has been built as a tribute to those brave people who gave up their lives over the past five decades, or so, for the statehood of Telangana. This international distinction didn't come easy. Amara Jyoti has been four years in the making. Prior to this, the conceptualisation and ironing out of the logistics took two years; hence, it necessitated altogether six years. The construction began in 2019, and it was inaugurated in June, 2023. It also took a huge amount of manpower. Over 5,000 construction labourers (approx), around 100 engineers, and 500 technicians contributed to making this memorial a reality. About 4,500 stainless-steel plates, weighing over a hundred tonnes, were used for the structure, along with other materials. Finally, it cost nearly Rs 180 crore. However, it was an investment eminently worth the cost and effort for the state government and the workforce, considering that it holds so much symbolic value. The steady stream of visitors that are pouring in is also appreciating this monument. The crowds are getting bigger considering it is located in the central part of the city and beside the famous Hussain Sagar Lake. The memorial is spread over a total area of 3.29 acres of land. There is a large, well-landscaped garden, and the memorial structure with its highly polished, reflective exterior stands within this green space. The built-up area of the memorial, including the garden, is about 2.88 lakh sq feet (26,800 sq metres). The artist-sculptor who developed the concept, designed the memorial, and also supervised the project from start to finish, K Venkata Ramana Reddy, explains that he already had exposure to many famous monuments, including memorials around the world in 80 countries, but, for the purpose of this project, visited many countries to study the kind of war memorials they had. "I submitted five designs, of which the one you see was approved by the Telangana state government," he reveals. The stainless-steel material (316 L) was procured from Sweden. The 4,500 sheets were assembled into approximately 450 large plates in Dubai and shipped to Hyderabad in containers. Here, onsite, these stainless-steel plates were assembled, i.e., welded together with flawless precision and laser technology, to create a smooth, seamless exterior with a mirror-like finish. Of course, the interior walls and slabs used concrete. Globetrotters may find the Amara Jyoti somewhat reminiscent of the famous Chicago Bean or Cloud Gate and the Bubble at Karamay in China. However, Ramana Reddy is quick to rebut the comparisons, though he does appreciate the Chicago Bean. As he points out, "The Chicago Bean or Cloud Gate is a public art project and not a memorial. Moreover, it is smaller in length, breadth, and width." The Bubble is widely considered a copy of the Chicago Bean design. Making Amara Jyoti was a very tough task and required painstaking attention to detail, explains Ramana Reddy, reeling off more statistics. The base of the lamp, or diya, has an elliptical shape with a major axis length of 54 metres and a minor axis length of 37 meters. From the terrace, the diya rises to a height of 26 metres and is 45 metres from ground level.



How two villages along India-China border is Sardar Patel's dream fulfilled

Though historically intimately linked, two separate events took place recently, nearly 1,000 miles away from each other. The central sector of the Indo-Tibet boundary in Uttarakhand, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan directed Army formations to work for the rehabilitation of the border villages of Nelang and Jadung, near the Line of Actual Control in Chamoli district. During the 1962 Indo-China war, both villages were abandoned, and their residents were relocated to safer nearby areas.

Far away in the east, at the Tawang War Memorial in Arunachal Pradesh, the Indian Army, along with the Tawang administration and the local Monpa population, commemorated the 74th anniversary of the arrival of Maj Bob Khathing in the area. In 1951, the Manipuri Naga officer took over the administration of the border town of Tawang, south of the McMahon Line; a communication of the Defense PRO in Guwahati thus explained, "After the valiant Major undertook a treacherous march from the plains of Assam to Tawang, negotiating Sela and Bomdila passes during peak winters, leading a contingent of 200 Assam Rifles troops and 600 porters for a difficult maiden mission, thus materialised the formal



establishment of Indian civil administration at Tawang."

The above two events are linked as the takeover of both places' administration is the result of a decision of the Himmasinghji Border Defence Committee created by the Army Headquarters on November 12, 1950.

Let us remember the facts

On October 7, 1950, the communist troops advanced in eastern Tibet, and after smashing the ill-trained and ill-equipped Tibetan army, Chamdo, the capital of Kham Province, fell to the invaders. On November 7, Sardar Patel, the deputy prime minister, despite his poor health, sent a long letter to the prime minister about the implications of the Chinese invasion of Tibet for India's northern border. Five days later, the dying Sardar (who passed away on December 15) constituted

this committee to examine the possibility of Chinese communist troops occupying the areas south of the McMahon Line or elsewhere on the Indo-Tibet border and "to consider the feasibility or advancing outposts of the Assam Rifles in order to forestall such ingress".

esides Maj Gen Himmatsinghji, deputy minister of defense (chairman), it included Lt Gen Kulwant Singh, K Zakaria, head of the Ministry of External Affairs' historical division, SN Haksar, joint secretary also from MEA, Group Captain MS Chaturvedi from the Indian Air Force, and Waryam Singh, deputy director of the Intelligence Bureau. After discussing at great length the advisability of pushing forward a post to Tawang, it was decided to go ahead. It was also decided to send troops

to Nelang (then written Nilang) and Jadung (then Jadhung), two tiny villages south of the Tsangchok-la, the pass marking the watershed in the area, in the Chamoli district.

The Role of Jairamdas Daulatram

One man was central in the setting up of Maj Khathing's expedition to Tawang; it was Jairamdas Daulatram, the governor of Assam. It is sad that his role has been more or less forgotten today. On December 10, 1950, he managed to get the concurrence of the Ministry of External Affairs headed by Nehru; a Joint Secretary concurred with the Committee, "We cannot agree to a unilateral occupation of Tawang by the communists." The ball then started rolling, and preparations for the expedition began. Maj Khathing received detailed instructions from Nari Rustomji, the advisor to the governor, on behalf of Daulatram himself.

Eight Tasks

Precise tasks were given to the young and bold officer.

The first task was to occupy Tawang. Khathing was asked to explain to the local population and Tibetan officials that he was "doing no more than is being done by the administration in other parts of Indian territory;" in 1914, Tibet had agreed to the McMahon Line, north of

Tawang being the boundary. The major was ordered to "treat any Tibetan or other officials you may meet with courtesy, but nevertheless let them understand that jurisdiction in the area vests in you and not in them." He was directed to submit detailed reports about the Tibetan 'influence' in the area and the nature of taxes collected. He was further told to abolish all existing taxes and substitute them with lighter taxes to be paid to the Political Officer, representing the Indian government: "There will be no forced labour and everything needed will be duly paid for." An important task was to communicate to the local people that "none of their religious practices. The sixth point was that in case Khathing met with armed opposition, he was to cable Shillong (the governor's office) immediately, "indicating the strength and position of opposing forces." Fortunately, due to Khathing's intelligence and diplomatic skills, this would not be necessary, and

74 years later, he was still considered by the Monpas as their liberator. Khathing was also asked to keep daily wireless telegraphic contact with Daulatram after crossing the Se-La pass. It is what Khathing did, and his dispatches and cables still make fascinating reading.

Why Somalia asked Turkey to defend its territorial waters

Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud. Reuters File In Somalia, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has made a strategic play. The Somali government has approved a maritime security pact with Turkey. Ankara has been authorized to build up, train, and equip the Somali navy. Not just that—they will also defend Somalia's territorial waters. Turkish warships could be patrolling Somalia's coast, and they could be active in the Indian Ocean for the duration of ten years. There are many reasons why Somalia selected Turkey. Somalia has been dealing with a terror insurgency for almost two decades. Recently, there has been a rise in piracy along the Somali coast.

Also, there is chaos in the Red Sea with the Yemen-based Houthis disrupting global trade. All these are important reasons, but Somalia's primary target is different. Ethiopia is Somalia's neighbour and nemesis. The maritime deal is aimed at countering Ethiopia and stopping it from executing its port plan. Ethiopia is landlocked. But the Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, wants it. He believes that a port is essential for Ethiopia's growth. So on January 1 of this year, Ethiopia struck a deal with Somaliland to allow it to use its coast to build a navy. Ilem, though: Somaliland is not officially an independent nation. It is considered a breakaway part of Somalia. In the entire international community, no country

has recognised Somaliland. It tried to separate from Somalia in 1991. Since then, it has been de-facto independent. Of course, Somalia was outraged by their port deal, too, because it won't end there. Reports say that Ethiopia could officially recognise Somaliland's independence, and Mogadishu will never allow this. It wants Ethiopia to rescind the offer, and that's where Turkey comes in. The new maritime deal could help Somalia. The deal could "convince" Ethiopia to back down. After all, would Abiy Ahmed dare to take on the Turkish navy? As Turkey is a NATO member, an attack on one member is an attack on all of NATO. So Ethiopian aggression is almost out of the question.

UPI in UAE: The changing face of cross-border payments

The recent development concerning the UPI affects international banking and finance systems at their most fundamental level.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his recent visit to the UAE announced the extension of the service of the UPI payment system in UAE which is a significant development not only between India and the UAE, but in the West Asian region as a whole. India's relations with the West Asian region could not realise the true potential immediately after independence, owing mainly to the countries of the region being bound by their obligatory Muslim solidarity with Pakistan. This, however, has changed dramatically over the past two decades, especially after the 9/11 incident and the global war on terror. India's West Asia policy is rooted in four important pillars that include the people, energy security, trade and security. It was in 2005 that the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh formulated the 'Look West' policy and then in 2014, PM Modi announced the need for 'Link West' along with the 'Look East' Policy. Within the region, it is UAE which has slowly emerged as India's key partner and a trusted ally. UAE, by its location and its stature in the region, forms a key pillar of India's West Asia policy. UAE is an



integral part of all important regional forums including the GCC, Arab League etc. It is also part of the I2U2 or the West Asia Quad comprising India, Israel, the US and the UAE. India's bilateral relations with the UAE rest on three important pillars including trade and investments, energy and the Indian community in UAE. The landmark agreement CEPA (Comprehensive Economic Partnership) signed on February 18, 2022, laid the foundation for an exponential increase in trade and economic partnership and is an example of a special relationship between the two nations. The recent development concerning the UPI affects international banking and finance systems at their most fundamental level. This involves two elements: cross-border financial transactions and associated payments, as well as the cross-border establishment of premises. There are many international agreements signed to

make the international banking system more effective. The International Banking law was also developed to stop large amounts of bank fraud. Banking law involves a wide number of private agreements among the private parties. In recent years, there has been an explosion in both types of activity and, with it, the need for international agreements as to how the business of international banking and finance should be conducted. These agreements which are signed among the sovereign countries are enforced using domestic legislation. There are three purposes. First, they may serve to facilitate the conduct of cross-border business. In this category, one finds agreements on technical standards, standardised contracts (master agreements), codes of conduct, harmonised accounting and disclosure standards, arrangements for cross-border payment, netting and custodial services.

Russia-Ukraine war enters third year: Bloody stalemate, no signs of breakthrough

In the book 'The Fathomless Caves', Kate Forsyth, the author, describes war as, "An unpredictable beast. Once unleashed, it runs like a rabid dog, ravaging friends and foes alike. It can drag on for years, a slow attrition of nerve and fortitude, or be over in one brilliant flash, an extravagant configuration of flame and blood and sweat." The Russian-Ukraine War fits well into the above description. When President Putin launched 'special military operations' to 'demilitarise and denazify' Ukraine on



February 24, 2022, it was universally given that the war would be over in a few days, with Russia inflicting a crushing defeat on Ukraine. Ironically, two years

later, the conflict rages on, degenerating into a state of stalemate with little change in the ground situation. Although a classic limited war, its politico-economic impact

has been felt far and wide, with serious geo-strategic ramifications. Militarily, it has gone on to redefine the very nature of warfare. The Russian offensive commenced as a typical military campaign, preceded by missiles and airstrikes, followed by a large-scale ground invasion along multiple fronts. The northern thrust was launched from Belarus towards Kyiv, the southern one was from Crimea, and the south-eastern push was from Luhansk-Donetsk towards Kharkiv.

Briefs

LUCKNOW

Maj Gen Syed Taqi Abbas Rizvi laid to rest

Maj Gen Syed Taqi Abbas Rizvi, VSM (MG ASC), was laid to rest with full military honours at Imambara Ghufuran Maab following his untimely demise on November 29, 2025.



LALITPUR

165 Disabled Children Identified for Aids

A disability assessment camp at Adarsh School identified 165 children with physical, mental, visual, and hearing impairments for assistive devices. Organized with ALIMCO Kanpur, the camp aimed to aid students in council schools. The devices will be distributed on December 28. Officials stated these aids are crucial for the children's educational rehabilitation and the goal is to benefit as many as possible.

RAEBARELI

Teachers Threaten Dharna Over Pay

The Junior Teachers Association will begin an indefinite dharna on December 9. They demand the implementation of a 'selection pay scale' for 450 teachers and the release of Mid-Day Meal conversion costs. The union claims principals are paying for meals from their own pockets. Files for the pay scale are reportedly pending final approval at the District Basic Education Officer's office.

BALLIA

Waste Disposal Center Illegally Occupied

A waste disposal center in Ratsi village, built a year ago, remains unused and is now illegally occupied. Locals report it is filled with construction materials, controlled by the Water Corporation, instead of village waste. Vehicles provided for waste collection stand idle. Villagers allege the village head and secretary are complicit, preventing the center from serving its purpose.

JAUNPUR

University Celebrates Nagaland's Cultural Heritage

Veer Bahadur Singh Purvanchal University is celebrating Nagaland's establishment day. A pre-event saw students creating rangoli art depicting Naga culture. The main event on December 1 will feature a documentary, competitions, and cultural programs. Organizers aim to connect the new generation with Nagaland's social and cultural identity, with a selfie point adding to the attractions.

VARANASI

Afghan National Held Without Documents

A 62-year-old Afghan national, Pir Badshah, was detained during a routine check. He was found on a Maharashtra-registered bike without a passport or visa. A mobile phone and a green card were recovered. A joint team of IB, LIU, and police is investigating his travel motives and contacts.

EXTENSION | UP extends SIR form submission deadline by one week

SIR deadline extended after BLOs report intense pressure

LUCKNOW

The Election Commission's ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral roll in Uttar Pradesh has been extended by one week following reports of mounting pressure on Booth Level Officers (BLOs). Officials confirmed that the last date for filling the SIR forms has now been shifted to 11 December, allowing additional time to complete field verification work.

Due to the extension, the timeline for subsequent stages has also been revised. The draft electoral roll, earlier scheduled for publication on 9 December, will now be released on 16 December. Similarly, the final electoral roll, originally planned for 7 February, will be issued on 14 February. Authorities indicated that this adjustment was necessary after several dis-



tricts reported increased workload on BLOs, with some officers complaining of long working hours and stress.

Concerns over BLO workload intensified after multiple districts registered complaints regarding the pace and volume of the verification process. Some regions even reported fatalities among staff members during the ongoing

New deadline set as 11 December, draft roll now on 16 December and final roll on 14 February.

SIR exercise, prompting the Election Commission to reconsider the deadlines. Officials stated that the extension aims to ensure accuracy in the voter

list without compromising the well-being of field personnel.

A tragic incident from Moradabad has drawn significant attention. A 46-year-old BLO, Sarvesh Singh, was found dead in his home in an apparent suicide. Police officials recovered a note from the scene, and family members informed authorities that he had been appointed as a BLO

on 7 October while serving as an assistant teacher at a composite school in Jahidpur Seekampur under Bhagatpur Tanda block. In a letter addressed to education department officials, he reportedly stated that he was under severe stress due to SIR targets not being met. His body was discovered hanging inside the house on Sunday morning. The Rural SP, Kunwar Akash Singh, said that the case is currently under investigation.

The SIR campaign, aimed at improving the accuracy of the voter list through detailed verification, requires BLOs to conduct house-to-house checks, verify resident details, and update entries. With the extension in place, officials expect the workload to spread more evenly, allowing BLOs to complete their tasks without the pressure reported earlier.

Workload or fear: BLO takes own life

MORADABAD

A Booth Level Officer (BLO) in Moradabad, identified as 46-year-old Sarvesh Singh, was found hanging inside his home on Sunday morning. According to police, he had recorded a tearful video hours before the incident, in which he spoke of extreme exhaustion and an inability to meet SIR-related targets. A suicide note recovered from the scene mentioned that he had four young daughters and had been struggling with sleeplessness and anxiety due to work responsibilities. Colleagues described him as a dedicated but overburdened official, increasingly distressed by relentless pressure and unending administrative demands.

The incident is part of a troubling pattern reported across Uttar Pradesh. Since the start of the SIR (Special Summary Revision) exercise, seven BLOs in the state have lost their lives—three by suicide and others due to cardiac and neurological emergencies. Teachers and staff assigned BLO duties have repeatedly flagged high workloads, long

**Rising deaths of BLOs highlight severe workload stress**

hours, and inadequate training as major concerns. Unions have demanded compensation and job support for affected families, citing growing mental pressure on field workers. They argue that the immense stress of meeting voter list revision deadlines, often with insufficient resources, has created a crisis.

District authorities, however, maintain that targets are being met and that support staff are deployed to assist BLOs. While investigations continue into the Moradabad case, the rising number of fatalities has renewed calls for improved training, reduced workload, and better monitoring of stress among frontline personnel.

UP clears OPS for 154 teachers after document recheck

LUCKNOW

The UP government has approved the inclusion of 154 college teachers and retired personnel under the Old Pension Scheme (OPS), replacing the New Pension Scheme (NPS). The decision applies to lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors and select retired staff working in higher education institutions across the state. According to the order issued by the Special Secretary, Higher Education, Girijesh Tyagi, directors of higher education have been instructed to carry out a detailed re-verification of all service records. The implementation of OPS will take place only after confirming document authenticity and compliance with financial

**Order excludes ad-hoc, contractual, work-charge and dependent-quota employees.**

guidelines. Officials stated that the scrutiny process is mandatory to ensure accuracy in pension eligibility.

The order clearly states that the benefit will not apply to ad-hoc employees, contractual

workers, work-charge staff, daily wage earners, seasonal workers or those appointed through dependent-quota provisions. These categories remain outside the scope of the approval. The Higher Education Department noted that the administrative decision follows multiple requests from teachers seeking restoration of the earlier pension system. The department emphasized that OPS will be granted only to those who fulfil all prescribed conditions after the verification stage. The state-level directive comes as part of an internal review of pension cases linked to higher education services.

The department will now begin cross-checking the records of all 154 eligible individuals, and OPS will be activated for each case once formal verification is completed.

Yoga Bhawan celebrates 65 years of service



LUCKNOW

Yoga Bhawan marked its 65th anniversary (1960-2025) with a special felicitation ceremony on November 29, 2025, recognizing its enduring dedication to yoga, therapeutic yoga, and meditation in Lucknow. The institution, whose newly constructed premises were inaugurated by former UP Governor Vishnu Kant Shastri in 2002, has been vital in improving the physical, mental, and spiritual health of the community for over six decades.

Cough Syrup Cartel kingpin nabbed at Kolkata Airport

LUCKNOW

Sonbhadra: In a major breakthrough against drug trafficking and the illegal trade of restricted cough syrup, the police have arrested the alleged mastermind, Bhola Prasad Jaiswal, from Kolkata International Airport. Sonbhadra Superintendent of Police Abhishek Verma stated that the accused, a resident of Adampur in Varanasi, was detained while preparing to flee the country.

Following his arrest, police submitted a request for transit remand before a Kolkata court. Once approved, the accused will be brought to Sonbhadra for further investigation. The case dates back to 18 October 2025, when two containers carrying 1,19,675

**Accused linked to over ₹25 crore fake transactions and large-scale illegal cough syrup distribution**

bottles of prohibited cough syrup were seized during a checking drive in Sonbhadra. Based on information provided by arrested suspects Brij Mohan and Shivhari, police later recovered large quantities of cough syrup and 20 lakh cash from four trucks in Ghaziabad during a joint oper-

ation. Investigations revealed that Jaiswal conducted large-scale illegal distribution using fake billing through M/s Shaili Traders, Ranchi. The Sonbhadra SIT uncovered nearly 25 crore worth of fraudulent transactions across Bhadohi, Chandauli, Varanasi, and Sonbhadra, with many firms found to be non-existent. Bank accounts linked to the operation were subsequently frozen.

A separate complaint filed on 29 October 2025 by Drug Inspector Rajesh Maurya alleged that a fake firm had illegally supplied over 7,53,000 bottles of Phensedyl cough syrup between April 2024 and April 2025. The accused was also wanted by police in Chandauli, Jaunpur, and Ghazipur.

Private firms take charge of DL process

LUCKNOW

The process of obtaining a Driving License (DL) in Uttar Pradesh is set to change from December 1, with the state's Transport Department handing over the operational responsibilities to three private agencies. The companies—Silver Touch, Focam Net, and Rozmarta—have completed the necessary hardware installation and will commence work on Monday, with an initial phase of system testing planned.

This transition follows the department's decision to distribute the work previously managed solely by Smart Chip, which employed 300 staff. The shift in contractors last week caused a three-to-four-day suspension of DL approvals, leading to inconvenience for appli-

**Private Firms Silver Touch, Focam Net, and Rozmarta to take over operations after hardware installation**

cants. Officials now expect the process to stabilize and streamline under the new arrangement.

As part of the operational reshuffle, staff who had been working in their respective districts for nearly a decade have been transferred. Employees from surrounding districts are being posted to the Lucknow RTO.

Dhananjay video with cough syrup smuggler ignites political fire

LUCKNOW

Controversial strongman and former MP Dhananjay Singh has found himself at the center of a fresh political storm after a video and photographs of him with Amit Tata, an accused arrested in a codeine cough syrup smuggling case, surfaced publicly. The emergence of this footage has intensified political discourse in the state, with Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav taking a jibe, questioning when the "bulldozer" would act.

Responding to the controversy, Dhananjay Singh alleged that he is a victim of a conspiracy. He stated that he would write letters to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Prime Minister Narendra Modi,

**SP chief questions inaction, demands 'bulldozer action'**

demanding a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) inquiry into the matter. Singh is frequently in the news for his large convoy, his assertive public persona, and luxury vehicles, including cars with the number 9777. He had recently garnered attention for the simultaneous purchase of a Land Cruiser and a Wellfire vehicle.

Lucknow Premier League teams announced

LUCKNOW



The Cricket Association Lucknow (CAL) today announced the six teams for the inaugural Lucknow Premier League (LPL), set to begin in February-March 2026. The teams are Lucknow Nawabs, Lucknow Lions, Lucknow Strikers, Lucknow Aces, Lucknow Panthers, and Lucknow Challengers. CAL chief Dr. Navneet Sehgal stated that the league, owned by corporate groups, aims to provide a bigger platform for local cricketers to showcase their talent and facilitate their growth in the sport.

Maurya sets new grassroots targets

LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government reaffirmed its commitment to village and poor-centric welfare during a review meeting chaired by Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya in Varanasi on Saturday. The meeting assessed ongoing schemes under the Rural Development Department and stressed accelerating efforts to transform the 'Developed India' vision into reality.

Maurya stated that development efforts were progressing strongly across the state, with eligible beneficiaries receiving support through various schemes. He highlighted the government's expanded focus on women's empowerment, self-reliance, and economic participation.

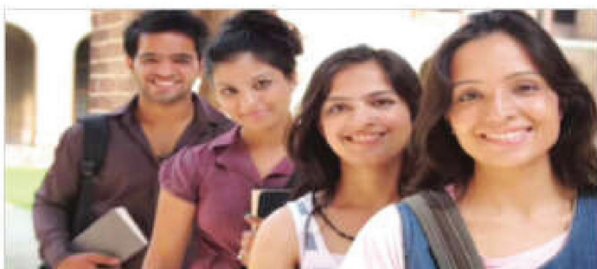
**Deputy CM emphasises push towards 'Developed India' vision**

Under the NRLM scheme, officials were instructed to form more self-help groups and connect additional women, targeting the creation of one crore "Lakhpati Didis." Groups yet to receive the revolving fund will be prioritised. The Deputy CM also directed that all THR plants in the district be equipped with solar systems.

300 firms lined for mega recruitment drive

VARANASI

The UP government is preparing to organise the Employment MahaKumbh 2025, a large-scale job fair aimed at expanding employment opportunities for young candidates across the state. The event will be held on 9 and 10 December 2026 at Government ITI, Karaundi, Varanasi, and will feature participation from 300 national and multinational companies. Officials estimate that the fair will offer over 20,000 job opportunities, with maximum



annual salaries reaching 3.6 lakh. According to Deep Singh, Employment Fair Coordinator at the Regional Employment Office, candidates can participate free of cost. Registration has been enabled through the Rojgar Sangam portal, and an

on-the-spot registration facility will also be provided. For ease of access, the district administration has circulated a QR code that candidates can scan to directly register for the mega event.

Companies from diverse

Employment mega fair in Varanasi to offer 20,000 jobs

sectors—such as IT, construction, health, education, banking, tourism, services, and security—will be present. Major organisations expected to attend include L&T, IFFCO, Axis Bank, Vardhman Textiles, Swiggy, Blinkit, Quesr Corp, MRF Chennai, SIS India, Sriram Pistons & Rings, SBI, PNB, Bank of Baroda, Taj Hotels, Tata Motors, Mahindra, TVS, Utkarsh Small Finance

Bank, Orbel Electronics, RK Solar, UPSRTC (for contractual driver recruitment), Dixon International (Noida), along with companies from automobiles, FMCG, textiles, footwear, security solutions, real estate, sales and marketing, IT software, and education.

A wide range of applicants can participate, including those with High School, Intermediate, Graduate, Postgraduate, ITI, Diploma, MBA, BBA, Hotel Management, BTech, LLB, D-Pharma, B-Pharma, M-Pharma, and various professional qualifications.

'Gram Chaupal' initiative resolves over 5.85 lakh problems

LUCKNOW

Under the leadership of Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya, the Uttar Pradesh government's 'Gram Chaupal' (Village Problem - Village Solution) initiative is successfully resolving rural issues at the village level itself. This program, reflecting the motto "Double Engine Government - At the Doorstep of the Public," organizes a Chaupal every Friday in two Gram



Panchayats of each development block across the state. The initiative aims to bring government services and problem-solving mechanisms closer to the rural population.

Briefs

LONDON

Indian student stabbed to death in UK

A 30-year-old man, identified locally as an Indian student, was stabbed during a street attack in central England and later died of the serious injuries in hospital. West Mercia Police on Friday issued an appeal for information from any witnesses to the attack in Worcester earlier in the week. Reports from India have named him as Vijay Kumar Sheoran of Haryana's Charkhi Dadri district. "On Tuesday morning around 4:15 am a 30-year-old man was found by officers on Barbourne Road in Worcester with serious injuries," West Mercia Police said in a statement. "He was taken to hospital but sadly died later that day. Five men were arrested on suspicion of murder and are now on bail as the investigation continues," the statement added.

KARACHI

7 explosions in Balochistan in 24 hours

At least seven explosions have occurred in Pakistan's restive Balochistan province in the last 24 hours without any casualties being reported while two security guards of a construction company were injured. Suspected insurgents carried out the attacks in Balochistan capital Quetta and Dera Murad Jamali. On Saturday, insurgents hurled hand grenades at a police checkpoint in Quetta, following which an IED explosive was detonated near an Anti-Terrorism Department vehicle. Three other explosions were carried out later in the evening. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Asif Khan said that the blast was carried out near Lohr Karez, on the outskirts of Quetta, blowing up the main line connecting Quetta with other parts of the country.

BISHKEK

Kyrgyzstan holds snap election

Polls opened in the Central Asian republic of Kyrgyzstan on Sunday in a snap parliamentary election amid the arrests of opposition figures and the closure of independent media outlets. It is expected to cement the grip of President Sadyr Zhaparov, who has sought to suppress dissent in what was once Central Asia's most democratic country. The vote is being held a year earlier than scheduled, a move that officials have justified by arguing that the parliamentary elections would otherwise fall too close to the 2027 presidential elections. There have also been sweeping changes to Kyrgyzstan's electoral system, with 30 constituencies electing three lawmakers each.

NEUVES-MAISONS

5 dead in house fire in France

Five people have died in a blaze that ravaged a home in a small town in eastern France, local authorities said on Sunday. The Nancy prosecutor's office has opened an investigation after 70 firefighters and about 40 vehicles were deployed overnight to tackle the fire in the town of Neuves-Maisons, the Meurthe-et-Moselle Prefecture told The Associated Press. A sixth person was treated for smoke inhalation, but their life is not in danger.

SHOWDOWN | As US prez says airspace 'closed in its entirety', Maduro alleges 'colonial threat' and attack on sovereignty

Trump ignites fireworks over Venezuela airspace

WEST PALM BEACH

President Donald Trump on Saturday said that the airspace "above and surrounding" Venezuela should be considered as "closed in its entirety," an assertion that raised more questions about the US pressure on Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro. His government accused Trump of making a "colonial threat" and seeking to undermine the South American country's sovereignty.

The White House did not respond to questions about what Trump posted on his Truth Social platform, and it was unclear whether he was announcing a new policy or simply reinforcing the messaging around his campaign against Maduro, which has involved multiple strikes in the Caribbean Sea and eastern Pacific Ocean on small boats accused of ferrying drugs as well as a buildup of naval forces in the region. More than 80 people have been killed in such strikes since early September.



The Republican president addressed his call for an aerial blockade to "Airlines, Pilots, Drug Dealers, and Human Traffickers," rather than to Maduro.

Venezuela's government said it "forcefully rejects" Trump's claim about closing the airspace and that it was a "colonial threat" intended to undermine the country's "territorial integrity, aeronautical security and full sovereignty." The Foreign Ministry said "such declarations constitute a hostile, unilateral and arbitrary act."

The statement also said that US immigration authorities had unilaterally suspended biweekly deportation flights of Venezuelan migrants.

Following negotiations between the two governments, more than 13,000 Venezuelans have been deported to Venezuela this year on dozens of chartered flights, the latest of which arrived late Friday in Caracas, the capital, according to flight-tracking data.

International airlines last week began to cancel flights to Venezuela after the Federal Aviation Administration told pilots to be cautious flying around the country because of heightened military activity.

The FAA's jurisdiction is generally limited to the United States and its territories. The agency does routinely warn pilots about the dangers of flying over areas

with ongoing conflicts or military activity around the globe, as it did earlier this month with Venezuela. The FAA works with other countries and the International Civil Aviation Organisation on international issues. The FAA and ICAO did not immediately respond to requests for comment on Saturday.

Trump's administration has sought to ratchet up pressure on Maduro. The US government does not view Maduro as the legitimate leader of the oil-rich but increasingly impoverished South American nation, and he faces charges of narcoterrorism in the US.

US forces have conducted bomber flights near Venezuela, and the USS Gerald R. Ford, America's most advanced aircraft carrier, was sent to the area. The Ford rounds off the largest buildup of US firepower in the region in generations. With its arrival, the "Operation Southern Spear" mission includes nearly a dozen Navy ships and about 12,000 sailors and Marines.

India helps Sri Lanka in rescue endeavours

Death toll due to raging Cyclone Ditwah crosses 330

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka continued relief and rescue efforts on Sunday with India's assistance in the aftermath of catastrophic floods, landslides and devastation caused by Cyclone Ditwah that killed over 330 people.

According to the latest figures released by Sri Lanka's Disaster Management Centre (DMC) at 4 pm on Sunday, 212 people have been killed, with 218 missing since Thursday.

A whopping 9,98,918 people from 2,73,606 families were affected by the extreme weather, DMC said.

Meanwhile, India's National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) personnel, along with the Indian Air Force (IAF), continue to assist Sri Lankan authorities to save precious lives on a war footing.

"@NDRFHQ personnel, in close coordination with local authorities, continue to undertake relief operations in Sri Lanka," External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar posted on social media.

India sent two urban search and rescue teams comprising 80 NDRF personnel to the



India's NDRF personnel undertake relief operations as part of Operation Sagar Bandhu in Sri Lanka

-PTI

Island nation under Operation Sagar Bandhu, reaffirming the spirit of 'Neighbourhood First.'

In a daring operation, IAF helicopters undertook a hybrid rescue mission to extricate stranded passengers, including Indians, from a restricted zone.

"A Garud commando was winched down to guide the group through a cross-country route to a pre-briefed helipad at Kotmale, from where 24 passengers - including Indians, foreign nationals and Sri Lankans - were evacuated to Colombo," the Indian Air Force posted on social media on Sunday.

In a parallel effort, three critical casualties were airlifted to Colombo for immediate medical attention, it said.

The IAF team also airlifted "five teams of Sri Lankan Army personnel (40 troops)" from Diyathalawa Army Camp to the landslide-affected Kotmale region to support relief operations.

Two Chetak helicopters on board the aircraft carrier INS Vikrant also joined the rescue efforts.

In an extraordinary display of courage and grit, a family of four stranded on a rooftop was rescued by a Chetak team on Saturday.

Netanyahu asks Israel prez for pardon amid corruption trial

TEL AVIV

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday asked the country's president to grant him a pardon from corruption charges - seeking to end a long-running trial that has bitterly divided the nation.

Netanyahu, who has been at war against the country's legal system over the charges, said the request would help unify the country at a time of momentous changes in the region. But it immediately triggered denunciations from his opponents, who said it



would weaken Israel's democratic institutions and send a dangerous message that he is above the rule of law.

In a statement on Sunday, the prime minister's office said that Netanyahu had submitted a request for a pardon to the legal department of the

Office of the President. The president's office called it an "extraordinary request," carrying with it "significant implications."

Netanyahu is the only sitting prime minister in Israeli history to stand trial, after being charged with fraud, breach of trust and accepting bribes in three separate cases, accusing him of exchanging favours with wealthy political supporters. He has not yet been convicted of anything.

Netanyahu rejects the allegations and has condemned the case as a witch hunt orchestrated by the media, police and judiciary.

Rubio, Witkoff hold talks with Ukraine's negotiators as US pushes to end conflict

WEST PALM BEACH

Top Trump administration officials are meeting Ukrainian negotiators in Florida this weekend, pushing to broker an end to Russia's war in Ukraine and setting the stage for key talks planned this week in Moscow with Russian leader Vladimir Putin.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Special Envoy Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, the son-in-law of US President Donald Trump, were expected to sit down with a Ukrainian delegation to further hash out the details of a proposed peace framework - talks that come at a sensitive moment for Ukraine as it continues to push back against Russian forces that invaded the country in 2022.

On Friday, just before the Florida sit-down, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announced the resignation of his powerful chief of staff, Andrii Yermak, who up

until that point had been the country's lead negotiator in talks with the US.

The announcement came after Yermak's home was searched by anti-corruption investigators. Zelenskyy's government has been roiled by fallout from a scandal over USD 100 million embezzled from the energy sector through kickbacks paid by contractors, causing newfound domestic pressures for Zelenskyy.

It was only a week ago that Rubio had met with Yermak in Geneva, with each side saying the talks had been positive in putting together a revised peace plan.

Now, the Ukrainian delegation includes Andrii Hnatov, the head of Ukraine's armed forces; Andrii Sybiha, Ukraine's foreign minister; and Rustem Umerov, head of Ukraine's security council, Zelenskyy has said.

Diplomats have been focused on revisions to Trump's proposed 28-point plan developed in negotiations

Beleaguered Zelenskyy to meet Macron today

Paris: France is ready to host Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Monday as talks for the Russia-Ukraine peace deal accelerate. France 24 reported that Zelenskyy will visit French President Emmanuel Macron in Paris, Macron's office (Elysee) said, as the Ukrainian leader finds himself in the most difficult political and military situation since the war. A presidential official on Saturday said that Macron and Zelenskyy will discuss "the conditions for a just and lasting peace", France 24 reported. Earlier, one of Ukraine's most influential political operators and a close aide of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy resigned, hours after anti-corruption agencies raided his home - a major crisis as Kyiv faces new pressure from the US to accept a peace deal to end the war with Russia, CNN reported.

—Agencies

between Washington and Moscow. That plan was criticised as being too weighted toward Russian demands. It had initially been envisioned that Ukraine would cede the entire eastern region of the Donbas to Russia - a sticking point for Kyiv.

The plan - which Trump has since downplayed as a "con-

cept" or a "map" to be "fine-tuned" - would also impose limits on the size of Ukraine's military, block the country from joining NATO, and require Ukraine to hold elections in 100 days. Negotiators have indicated the framework has changed, but it's not clear how its provisions have been altered.

Hong Kong blaze toll hits 146; Beijing warns against protests

HONG KONG

More than a thousand people turned out on Sunday to pay tribute to the victims of Hong Kong's deadliest fire in more than 75 years, as Beijing warned it would use a national security law to crack down on any "anti-China" protest in the wake of the blaze.

The cause of the blaze at a high-rise apartment complex, remains under investigation, amid public anger over missed fire risk warnings and evidence of unsafe construction practices.

Police said on Sunday evening the confirmed death toll had risen to 146 after they completed a sweep of five of the burnt out towers. Some bodies had been found in stairwells and on rooftops where residents had tried to flee. More than 40 people are still considered to be missing in the fire, police said.

Mourners queued for more than a kilometre along the banks of a canal near the burnt-out Wang Fuk Court housing complex to lay white flowers for those who died. Some attached notes addressed to the victims.

Police on Saturday detained

Miles Kwan, 24, who was part of a group that launched a petition demanding an independent probe into possible corruption and a review of construction oversight, two people familiar with the matter said. Reuters could not establish whether he had been arrested.

The online petition promoted by the group drew over 10,000 signatures by Saturday afternoon before it was closed. A second petition with similar demands was launched soon after by a Tai Po resident living overseas. That had more than 2,700 signatures as of Sunday.

Four killed in shooting at banquet hall in California town

STOCKTON

Four people were killed and 10 wounded in a shooting during a family gathering at a banquet hall in Stockton, sheriff's officials said Saturday.

The victims included both children and adults, said Heather Brent, a spokesperson for the San Joaquin County sheriff's office. Early indications "suggest this may have been a targeted incident," Brent said during a news conference at the scene.

Local officials said the suspected shooter has not been caught and pleaded with the public for help. Detectives were still working to identify a possible motive.

"If you have any information as to this individual, reach out immediately. If you are this individual, turn yourself in immediately," San Joaquin County District Attorney Ron Freitas said during a news conference.

The shooting occurred just before 6 pm inside the banquet hall, which shares a parking lot with other businesses. Stockton is a city of 320,000 about 64 kilometres south of Sacramento. "Families should be together instead of at the hospital, standing next to their loved one, praying that they survive," Mayor Christina Fugazzi said.

offgrid

Record 3.7m take civil service exam in China

BEIJING

Over 3.7 million Chinese appeared on Sunday for the first national civil service examination after an increase in the eligibility age cap beyond 35 years, highlighting a surge in demand for government jobs amid the country's growing unemployment pressures.

The exam selects candidates for the positions in the country's central government and its branches.

Over 3.7 million Chinese appeared for the examination, which meant that roughly 98 applicants are competing for one available post on average, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

Approximately 70 per cent of these vacancies are reserved for fresh college graduates, according to authorities.

China has lifted the eligibility age limit for this exam to 38 in general, which is hailed as a welcome move to

break the 35-year ceiling normally seen in the job-seeking market.

For new graduates from master's and doctoral programmes, the age cap has been further relaxed to 43, authorities said.

This is also the first exam after China recently announced the K-Visa for foreign STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) professionals, following US President Donald Trump's announcement of a USD one-

lakh fee to get a new H-1B visa.

Dubbed as China's H-1B, the new visa faced a backlash in the Chinese social media, with netizens questioning its timing, considering the prevailing high unemployment rate in the country.

The unemployment rate in China is stated to be around 19 per cent, and the pressure on local jobs is already high, with 12 million graduates entering the job market



Bollywood's black dress magic

Disha, Giorgia, Jacqueline, Malaika and Harnaaz show how to wear the little black dress in five different ways

The little black dress, or LBD, is a classic fashion staple that every woman should own. It can be worn for a casual lunch or a glamorous night out. Bollywood

stars have shown how to style the LBD in different ways, making it look new and exciting. From playful designs to edgy minimalism, old Hollywood glamour, and modern romance, these five stars prove that the black dress never goes out of style. Here are five looks to inspire your wardrobe.

Malaika Arora's edgy minimalism

Malaika wears a sleek black slip dress with satin-like fabric. The simple design exudes effortless style. Barefoot and relaxed, she shows that an LBD can be casual yet chic. Her look proves that minimalism and comfort can make a black dress look modern and stylish without overdoing it.

Jacqueline Fernandez's old Hollywood glamour

Jacqueline wears an off-shoulder black dress with a deep V-neck and asymmetrical hemline. Structured shoulders and sheer tights add classic Hollywood elegance. Slicked-back hair and a bold red lip complete the look. She shows how a black dress can bring timeless glamour and sophistication to any occasion.

Giorgia Andriani's dramatic elegance

Giorgia stuns in a black mini dress with ruched detailing and an asymmetrical hem. The ruffles and textured fabric add movement and drama. Styled simply, the dress itself becomes the statement. Her look shows that a bold design can make an LBD stand out without any extra accessories.

Harnaaz Sandhu's modern romance

Harnaaz wears a ribbed black dress with a crystal-embellished neckline. Long sleeves and a fit-and-flare shape make it stylish and comfortable. The jeweled detail adds sparkle for evening wear. Her look shows that an LBD can be romantic and modern, proving this wardrobe staple works for any event, day or night.

Disha Patani's playful sophistication

Disha wears a strapless black velvet LBD with red heart details. The fitted silhouette is balanced by the playful design. Minimal jewelry and a sleek half-up hairstyle keep the dress as the main focus. Her look shows how a single unique feature can make a simple black dress stand out.

'I'm number 1 female host...'

Sophie Choudry shuts down troll asking how she survived Bollywood 'Bina kaam ke'

Bollywood actress-singer Sophie Choudry recently responded to a troll who questioned her survival in Bollywood, asking how she has sustained her career without doing movies, web shows, or even songs. The trolling began after she shared a photo with Jennifer Lopez from Netra Mantena and Vamsi Gadiraju's royal wedding in Udaipur, where Sophie hosted the event while JLo performed at the reception.

In response, Sophie said, "Through the live show market. I've been one of the busiest live performers for 17 years at corporate and wedding shows, and I am the number 1 female host for live events. Just because you don't see me on screen doesn't mean I haven't made my place elsewhere."

She added that in India, unless a female actress is among the top 10, they don't make much

money—a fact she realised early on and is thankful to God for recognising.

Another troll called Sophie a wannabe and suggested she might have begged JLo to click a photo with her. Sophie replied, "Such a sad mentality you have. I feel sorry for you. I have never begged for anything in my life. I requested, and she kindly obliged because I was the host of the show. It's not every day you get to meet your idol and tell them how much you admire them. But clearly you wouldn't know what that is. Too much negativity."

Sophie has appeared in films like *Shaadi No. 1*, *Pyaar Ke Side Effects*, and *Kidnap*. Early in her career, she also worked as a backup singer for renowned playback singers such as Shweta Shetty and Alisha Chinai, before establishing herself as a pop singer.



Veteran Kannada actor Umesh dies

Veteran Kannada actor 'Mysore' Srikantayya Umesh died on Sunday after prolonged illness, family sources said. He was 80. The actor has been suffering from cancer for quite some time and was recently admitted to a hospital where he breathed his last. His career in the film industry spanned over five decades where he acted in over 350 films. Born on April 24, 1945 in Mysuru, Umesh started his career at the age of four when he played a role in Lanchavatara fame Master K Hirannaiah's theatre group. Later, he joined Gubbi Veeranna's theatre troupe. Umesh got a major break in the film industry in 1960 when he played the lead role in the movie *Makkala Rajya*.

Salman Khan remembers Dharmendra

Salman Khan remembered Dharmendra, saying his death shocked the nation, fans and the entire Bollywood film industry



Bollywood superstar Salman Khan paid his tribute to late Bollywood legend Dharmendra and said his death has been a "massive shock" for the entire nation. The *Sholay* actor breathed his last on Monday, aged 89. His acting career spanned over six decades.

Salman spoke of the late actor during the episode of his reality show *Bigg Boss 19*. "Yeh hafta waise hi jo guzra hai, manatein maang kar, prarthnayein karke, aansuon ke saath guzra

hai. Desh ko ek bahut hi bada jhatka laga hai, fans ko ek bahut hi bada jhatka laga hai. Industry ko ek bahut hi bada sadma pahuncha hai. (This past week has passed with prayers, supplications and tears. The entire nation has suffered a massive shock, the fans have been deeply shaken, and the industry has received a huge blow)," he said.

"I guess aap samajh rahe hain main kinki baat kar raha hoon. Anyway, God bless his soul. I wish I wasn't doing this week's *Weekend Ka Vaar*, but life goes on (I guess you understand who I'm talking about. Anyway, God bless his soul. I wish I wasn't doing this week's *Weekend Ka Vaar*, but life goes on)," he added.

Salman was also present at the prayer meet, which was held on Thursday. The Deol family organised the prayer meet, titled 'Celebration of Life', on the serene lawns of Hotel Taj Lands End in suburban Bandra. Besides Salman, it was attended by several celebrities, including Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, Madhuri Dixit, Vidya Balan, Shabana Azmi, Jackie Shroff, Sidharth Malhotra, Suniel Shetty, Ameesha Patel, Fardeen Khan, Nimrat Kaur, Sonu Sood, Anu Malik, Subhash Ghai, Abbas-Mastan, Anil Sharma, Karan Johar and Rekha.

Strong roles ahead

Tejaswini Kolhapure will be seen in two new films, playing both a light comedy role and a serious character

Tejaswini Kolhapure continues to build her career with strong and meaningful roles at a time when many actresses are limited to ornamental parts. She earned early recognition with Anurag Kashyap's *Ugly*, which was screened at Cannes and brought her a Best Supporting Actress nomination at the Screen Awards. She later gained wider attention for her role as 'Rambha Maa' in Hansal Mehta's Netflix series *Scoop*.

Tejaswini Kolhapure is now preparing for two new projects. The first is a light, family-friendly comedy featuring Kapil Sharma and Neetu Kapoor.

The second is *What the Ittefaq*, in which she plays 'Mukta', a middle-class woman dealing with an unhappy marriage, emotional conflicts, and personal mistakes.

As audience preferences shift toward realistic storytelling and strong performances, actors like Shefali Shah, Konkona Sen Sharma, Pankaj Tripathi, and Vijay Varma

are gaining prominence. Tejaswini Kolhapure stands among them, choosing roles that focus on substance rather than glamour. Her performances continue to add depth and weight to every story she becomes a part of, showing her steady growth and proving she is committed to meaningful cinema that connects with audiences today.



Briefs

MADURAI

Spain, Dutch continue winning run



World No. 4 Spain placed themselves on course for a quarterfinal spot, beating Belgium 2-0 to register their second consecutive win in a Pool D match of the FIH Junior Men's Hockey World Cup here on Sunday. Spain scored through Juan Prado's (20th minute) field strike and a penalty corner conversion by Bruno Avila in the 32nd minute to emerge winners. Spain had earlier thrashed Egypt 8-0 in their tournament opener here on Friday. With this win, Spain top Pool D with six points from two wins ahead of world No. 7 Belgium, who have three points from two matches. Spain will next play Namibia here on Tuesday, while Belgium will be up against Egypt the same day. In another match of Pool D, Namibia beat Egypt 4-2. Liam Bruys (23rd), James de Jager (26th), Josh van der Merwe (32nd) scored.

JAIPUR

Harman flags off Pink City Half Marathon



World Cup winning Indian women's team captain **Harmanpreet Kaur** flagged off the 10th edition of the Pink City Half Marathon here as part of the 'Run For Zero Hunger' cause. The marathon featured three categories: the 21 km Half Marathon for professional athletes, 10 km Cool Run for intermediate athletes, and 5 km Dream Run for beginners and families. Close to 15,000 runners participated in support of #RunForZeroHunger movement, raising 1 lakh Poshan Packs for children at Nand Ghars. "It's inspiring to see thousands run not only for fitness, but for a purpose that touches the lives of children at Nand Ghars across India.

IPOH (MALAYSIA)

Belgium edge out India, lift Azlan Shah Cup



In an entertaining final, Belgium beat India 1-0 in a closely-fought encounter to lift the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup here on Sunday. India were forced to settle for a silver, thanks to **Thibaut**

Record-breaking Abhishek flattens Bengal in SMAT

Sharma smashes joint third-fastest T20 half-century in men's cricket

HYDERABAD

The record-breaking **Abhishek Sharma** bludgeoned the Mohammed Shami-led Bengal attack into submission with a brutal 52-ball 148, which comprised a staggering 16 sixes, to power Punjab to a 112-run win in a Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy Group C match here Sunday. Playing in the manner that best defines his batting, Abhishek raced to a 12-ball half-century, which is the joint-third-fastest fifty and joint-second-fastest by an Indian in men's T20 cricket.

Thanks to his explosive knock against an incisive attack spearheaded by seasoned campaigner Shami and the nippy Akash Deep, Punjab amassed an imposing 310 for five batting first.

Bengal were stopped at 198 for nine in their allotted 20 overs despite a 66-ball 130-run knock by skipper Abhimanyu Easwaran, who also hit eight sixes and 13 fours.

In terms of sixes struck in a T20 innings by an Indian, Abhishek is now placed second in the list behind Punit Bisht (17), who got it in a domestic game against Mizoram.

Opening the batting with Prabhsimran Singh (70 off 35 balls), Abhishek launched into a brutal onslaught on the likes of Shami, Akash Deep, Wriddick Chatterjee and Shahbaz Ahmed.

The Bengal bowlers were scurrying for cover as Abhishek found the sixes and fours at will at the same Uppal stadium, where he blazed away to a 55-ball 141 for Sunrisers Hyderabad against Punjab Kings in the last Indian Premier League.

The swashbuckling opener scored his runs at more than 15 runs an over against both Shami (1/61 in 4 overs) and Akash Deep (2/55 in 4 overs) as well as Saksham Choudhary (1/35 in 2 overs) and Chatterjee (0/67 in 4 overs). Abhishek smashed five fours and as many sixes to get to his fifty.



12
Balls taken by
Abhishek Sharma
for the fifty

FIRST ODI | Virat Kohli's 52nd ODI hundred powered the hosts in 17-run victory

India win despite SA fight

RANCHI

Virat Kohli's long-awaited 52nd ODI hundred gave India the luxury to ward off a spirited South African chase as the hosts won the first ODI by 17 runs, here on Sunday.

Chasing a huge 350 for victory, the Proteas seemed resigned to defeat at one stage when they were 11/3 but some middle order fightback from Matthew Breetzke (72) and Marco Jansen (70) helped them run India close as they were bowled out for 332 in 49.2 overs.

Earlier, at a stage of his career where every ODI innings carries scrutiny, star batter Virat Kohli delivered a statement hundred - his 52nd in the format, to propel India to a formidable 349 for 8.

Kohli reasserted his relevance and authority in the only international format he plays with a fluent 135-run knock that formed the spine of India's innings. His commanding knock came off 120 balls with seven sixes and 11 fours. His 136-run stand with Rohit Sharma (57 off 51) for the second wicket, set up India's big total on a largely flat JSCA Stadium track.

With Kohli no longer part

of T20Is, and only six ODIs scheduled for India in the next eight months or so, every outing in the format now comes with significance.

The 36-year-old responded with trademark authority, reminding the selectors and team management that he remains India's most bankable batter in the format.

Rohit too had a great platform to assert himself after being dropped at 1 but he could make only 57 before being trapped by Jansen.

Still, their 136-run partnership -- during a much-anticipated Roko show -- would give confidence not to the two

THE ROKO SHOW

Rohit survived a sitter on one, spilled by Tony de Zorzi at mid-wicket, and used the reprieve to settle before opening up with a string of boundaries against Jansen and Corbin Bosch. He hit Marco Jansen for two boundaries in a space of five balls and Bosch was also taken to task: his incoming deliveries were flicked with ease and the short ones were pulled with authority.

Kohli, meanwhile, was in vintage touch -- a six over mid-off off Burger showing the full bat face signalled his

intent as well as touch. It was followed by a silken cover drive. With South Africa's pacers erring in both line and length, the pair motored along, forcing stand-in captain Aiden Markram to introduce off-spinner Pranelan Subrayen, but the runs kept flowing.

135
Kohli's
stupendous
innings

staple but also the team management that they still belong to big stage and can serve India a bit more. It was a flat deck but the Proteas bowlers were also guilty of not bowling a probing line and length. Kohli walked in early after Yashasvi Jaiswal's 18 ended via a faint edge off Nandre Burger, and the Ranchi crowd immediately anticipated a reunion worth waiting for.

KOHLI HOLDS FIRM

Rotating strike smartly and putting away the loose balls, he ensured India did not drift. Soon after he completed his hundred, a manic fan breached security, knelt before his 'King', touched his feet before being whisked by security officers. What was remarkable was Kohli's ability to change the gears even when the ball had gone soft. Now only one ball of the two can be used after 34 overs, making the stroke-making challenging.



Scoreboard

India: Y Jaiswal c De Kock b Burger 18, R Sharma lbw Jansen 57, V Kohli c Rickelton b Burger 135, R Gaikwad c Brevis b Baartman 8, W Sundar c Bosch b Baartman 13, KL Rahul c De Kock b Jansen 60, R Jadeja c Markram b Bosch 32, H Rana (not out) 3, A Singh b Bosch 0, K Yadav (not out) 0.

Extras (B-5, LB-4, W-14) 23. **Total** (For 8 wkts, 50 overs) 349. **Fall of wickets:** 1-25, 2-161, 3-183, 4-200, 5-276, 6-341, 7-347, 8-347. **Bowling:** M Jansen 10-0-76-2, N Burger 10-0-65-2, C Bosch 10-0-56-2, O Baartman 10-0-60-2, P Subrayen 10-0-73-0.

South Africa: A Markram c Rahul b Arshdeep 7, R Rickelton b H Rana 0, Q de Kock c Rahul b H Rana 0, M Breetzke c Kohli b Kuldeep 72, T de Zorzi lbw Kuldeep 39, D Brevis c Gaikwad b H Rana 37, M Jansen c Jadeja b Kuldeep 70, C Bosch c Sharma b P Krishna 67, P Subrayen c Rahul b Kuldeep 17, N Burger c Rahul b Arshdeep 17, O Baartman (not out) 0. **Extras** (LB-3, W-3) 6. **Total** (all-out, 49.2 overs) 332. **Fall of wickets:** 1-7, 2-7, 3-11, 4-77, 5-130, 6-227, 7-228, 8-270, 9-312. **Bowling:** A Singh 10-1-64-2, H Rana 10-0-65-3, W Sundar 3-0-18-0, P Krishna 7.2-1-48-1, K Yadav 10-0-68-4, R Jadeja 9-0-66-0.

India's Virat Kohli plays a shot during the first ODI.

PTI

Liverpool legends relive the 'Miracle of Istanbul' more than 20 years later

David James and Robbie Fowler spoke exclusively to **FPJ** on the famous night in 2005

MUMBAI

It's been over 20 years since the 'Miracle of Istanbul' but ask Liverpool legends **David James (extreme right)** and Robbie Fowler about their recollections of the famous night of the Champions League final in the Turkish city and they would talk about it as if it happened just yesterday.

Miraculous. That's the one word Liverpool's legendary goalkeeper David James uses to describe the iconic Reds' victory against AC Milan in the UEFA Champions League final of 2005.

The duo spoke exclusively to **The Free Press Journal** in an interaction to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the now-famous Champions League summit clash that captured the imagination of the footballing world.

"I think just to give some context, I was in Malawi doing some charity work with England. Flew out to Chicago to meet up with the England



squad for the end of season, a couple of friendlies. Got to the hotel, absolutely shattered. The guys sat in the function room watching the game. 3-0 at half time, maybe now's a good time to go to bed. This one looks like it's over but we stayed up, watched the match. Incredible, absolutely incredible," James added.

Fowler, who was at the match, had his own story to tell.

"I think my memory was when I was at the game, at the stadium. I was fearful at half-time, thinking it could be 6-7 goals. But in true Liverpool

fashion, we managed to do the extraordinary and come back and win the game. I was looking up to witness it first hand, an incredibly incredible night," he added.

Talking about the fortunes of the current Liverpool team and their fortunes, James and Fowler felt for them to get anywhere close to clinching the Premier League would require a similar miracle.

"I think Liverpool had a tough time, but we've had tough times in the past, but we've always got through to them. You look at the 'Miracle of Istanbul', everything was

against us, but we managed to fashion up a performance out of nowhere, and I think that's what the team need now. You've got the leaders, the likes of Mo Salah, Vic Perisic, Van Dijk, Alisson, the goalkeeper, who are all incredible players, and I'm confident in saying that we'll be back soon," James stated.

Fowler chipped in with his thoughts.

"I think, in the current squad, you look at the likes of Mohammad Salah, Robert, and I mention those two in particular because everyone doubts them. I've heard

obviously this season, qualifying for the World Cup with Scotland is something that no one would have expected them to do. Mo with his numbers last season, and every time people start asking the big questions, these guys turn around and bring performances like that," the Liverpool great added.

With the 2026 FIFA World Cup not too far away, James and Fowler felt it would be difficult to pick a clear winner or favourite due to multiple external factors.

"You've got to think Brazil will be thereabouts. I mean, France should be strong, Spain will be strong. I think the way England sailed through their group without conceding a goal, England will be one of the favourites too," Fowler felt.

James admitted that the World Cup being held in three different countries makes things a bit more challenging for all teams. "Now, I know we've said that before in major tournaments with England, but they could ask a few questions this year."

Russell announces IPL retirement

All-rounder joins Knight Riders support staff as power coach

KOLKATA

Swashbuckling all-rounder **Andre Russell** on Sunday announced his retirement from the Indian Premier League ahead of the mini auction scheduled for December 16, and will join three-time winners Kolkata Knight Riders' coaching staff.

The 37-year-old Russell, who has been an integral part of the KKR side since IPL 2014, will join their coaching staff as a "power coach" ahead of the 2026 edition for which an auction will be held in Abu Dhabi. "Hanging up my IPL boots, but not the swagger. What a ride it's been in the IPL - 12 seasons of memories, and a whole lot of love from the @KKRiders family," Russell wrote on X.

"I'll still be smashing sixes and taking wickets in every other league around the world. And the best part? I'm not leaving home. you'll see me in a new role, in KKR's Support Staff, as the POWER COACH of 2026. New chapter.



Same energy. Forever a Knight," he added.

By joining the support staff, Russell has followed the footsteps of another venerable T20 cricketer from the Caribbean, Kieron Pollard, who serves as the batting coach of Mumbai Indians, even though he represents the franchise in other leagues.

"I've made a decision to retire from the IPL. I will still be active playing in various leagues around the world and for all the other KKR franchises. I had some amazing times and great memories (in the IPL), hitting sixes, winning games, getting MVPs..." he said in a statement issued to the media.

badminton

Treesa-Gayatri win Syed Modi Intl title

LUCKNOW

The Indian pair of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand retained the women's doubles crown but Kidambi Srikanth's hopes of snapping an eight-year title drought went up in smoke as he suffered a heartbreaking loss in the final of the Syed Modi International Super 300 here Sunday.

Former winner Srikanth, a 2021 world championships silver medallist, went down

16-21 21-8 20-22 to world No. 59 Jason Gunawan of Hong Kong in a 67-minute thriller.

The 32-year-old had last won a title in 2017 at the French Open and had come close earlier this year, finishing runner-up at the Malaysia Masters Super 500.

Defending champions Treesa and Gayatri, however, produced an attacking masterclass to rally from a game down and outwit the world No. 35 pair of Japan's Kaho Osawa and Mai Tanabe 17-21 21-13 21-15 in a pulsating

one hour and 16-minute final. They were playing only their second event since Gayatri's return from a five-month shoulder injury layoff.

Srikanth vs Gunawan

Gunawan started strongly to go 4-1 ahead and went into the break with a three-point lead. Errors crept into the Indian's game soon after as his lifts floated long, helping Gunawan move to 14-10.

Srikanth answered with crisp smashes but Gunawan stayed sharp, surging to 17-11

with a straight down-the-line winner. Srikanth saved three of the seven game points before Gunawan sealed the opener with a powerful smash.

Switching sides brought a renewed Srikanth, who injected pace into his attack and unleashed razor-sharp smashes and brilliant retrieves to race to 6-1. A body smash from Gunawan broke his run, but Srikanth maintained pressure on the backhand side to lead 11-4, and eventually, grabbed 13

game points. He converted on the second to roar back into the contest.

The decider saw Srikanth move to 5-1, but Gunawan clawed back with a jaw-dropping retrieval that left Srikanth on the floor, narrowing the gap to 4-5 and was soon leading 6-5.

India's Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand Pullela compete against Japan's Kaho Osawa and Mai Tanabe. PTI



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