

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

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MORNING EDITION PRAYAGRAJ

Sunday 23 November, 2025

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

CM Yogi offered prayers to Maa Ganga and paid his respects at the feet of Bade Hanuman

Prayagraj

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath visited Prayagraj on Saturday and participated in several religious events. He attended a ceremony at the residence of MLA Harsh Vardhan Vajpayee, where he consecrated the idol of Sankat Mochan Hanuman. Following this, he visited the Sangam Nose, performed Triveni Pujan, and offered aarti to Maa Ganga. The Chief Minister also

visited the Bade Hanuman Temple, bowed before the deity, and later reviewed the preparations for the upcoming Magh Mela. Throughout the visit, he warmly acknowledged and received greetings from the public. The Chief Minister first arrived at the home of BJP MLA Harsh Vardhan Vajpayee in Rambagh, where he participated in the religious ceremony and consecrated the statue of Shri Vijayaprad Hanuman. He also performed puja and



aarti during the event. MLA Vajpayee presented a memento to the Chief Minister as a gesture of respect. After this, CM Yogi proceeded toward the

Sangam. Boarding a boat from the VIP Ghat, he traveled to the Sangam Nose while feeding birds along the way in the Yamuna River. Upon arrival, he

offered prayers and aarti at the sacred Triveni Sangam, followed by aarti to Maa Ganga.

He bowed his head in reverence and prayed for the successful organization of the Magh Mela. Returning by boat, he then made his way to the Hanuman Corridor, where he also greeted devotees gathered there.

The Chief Minister inspected the ongoing development work of the Hanuman Corridor and later offered

prayers at the Bade Hanuman Temple. Sitting before the deity feet, he performed rituals, including puja and aarti.

Cabinet Minister Swatantra Dev Singh, Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi', MP Praveen Patel, MLC Mahendra Singh, Surendra Chaudhary, MLA Siddharth Nath Singh, Deepak Patel, Pooja Pal, Piyush Nishad, Guru Prasad Maurya, Rajmani Kol and other dignitaries were present during the religious programs.

SIR: No pressure on BLOs: EC



Kolkata

A woman working as a booth level officer (BLO) in Nadia district, West Bengal, was found dead at her home on Saturday morning. Police said her family members believe she committed suicide due to stress related to her SIR work. Family alleges suicide due to pressure from SIR work. The BLO, identified as Rinku Tarafdar, was found hanging from the ceiling of her room in Krishnanagar, Bangalji area of Chhapra.

A police officer said, "The family says she was under immense pressure due to her SIR work. We found a note in her room. The body has been sent for a postmortem. The

necessary investigation is underway." CM Mamata Banerjee demands suspension of SIR. Meanwhile, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has appealed to Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar to stop the ongoing SIR in Bengal. On Thursday, he wrote in a letter to the Chief Election Commissioner that "continued unplanned and forceful actions could endanger more lives and jeopardize the integrity of this work." Earlier on Wednesday, the body of a booth-level officer was found hanging in Jalpaiguri district, with his family also claiming that the excessive workload of the SIR was responsible for his death.

Modi presented proposals at the G-20 on inclusive development

Johannesburg

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, speaking at the first session of the G-20 Summit on Saturday, stressed the need to rethink the parameters of global development, saying the world must adopt a model that simultaneously considers individuals, society, and nature. The Prime Minister proposed the formation of a "G20 Global Healthcare Response Team" to address global health security. He expressed deep concern over the growing global drug trafficking, especially the spread of highly dangerous substances like fentanyl. Addressing the first session of the G-20 Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, Prime Minister Modi stated that under South Africa's presidency, effective work has been done on issues



such as skilled migration, tourism, food security, artificial intelligence, the digital economy, innovation, and women's empowerment. He stated that many historic steps initiated at the G-20 Summit in New Delhi have been furthered this time. He congratulated South African President Cyril Ramaphosa for the successful organization of the conference. Modi said that the development paradigms adopted so far have left large populations isolated from resources and led to the overexploitation of nature, with Africa

bearing the greatest impact. He stated that India's civilizational approach, based on holistic humanism, can show the world the path to balanced development. The Prime Minister proposed the creation of a global repository of traditional knowledge within the G20 and stated that India's Indian knowledge system could serve as the foundation of this global platform. This would enable the knowledge of traditional and nature-balanced lifestyles from around the world to reach future generations.

Calling Africa's development a global interest, the Prime Minister introduced the G20 Africa Skills Enhancement Initiative. Under this initiative, the goal is to train 1 million certified trainers over the next 10 years, working on a "trainer-trainer" model. These trainers will subsequently impart skills to millions of youth. To address global health emergencies and natural disasters, the Prime Minister suggested the creation of a G-20 Global Healthcare Response Team, comprised of trained doctors from member countries, capable of being deployed immediately in times of crisis. Modi described drug trafficking, especially deadly drugs like fentanyl, as a serious threat to global security and called for an initiative within the G-20 to combat the drug-terror.



India, Australia and Canada have launched the ACITI partnership, working together on emerging technologies, clean energy and secure supply chains.

CM orders stringent measures against illegal immigrants

Lucknow

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has issued clear instructions to all District Magistrates to take swift and stringent action against illegal immigrants. Emphasizing that law and order, national security and social harmony



remain top priorities, he stated that any illegal activity will not be tolerated. District administra-

tions have been directed to identify illegal immigrants residing in their areas and take action in

accordance with the law. CM has also instructed the establishment of temporary detention centers in each district to house identified infiltrators. Foreign nationals found living illegally will be accommodated in these centers until the completion of the verification process.

Congress suppressed Sardar Patel's contribution: Nadda

New Delhi

Recalling the role of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel during an event in New Delhi on Saturday, BJP President JP Nadda alleged that for four decades after independence, the Congress party did not give Patel's contributions the place in history that they truly deserved. He said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the leader who has given Sardar Patel the rightful respect. At the event, Nadda also flagged off the 150 Unity March, marking Patel's birth anniversary. Nadda said that at the time of India's independence, the country

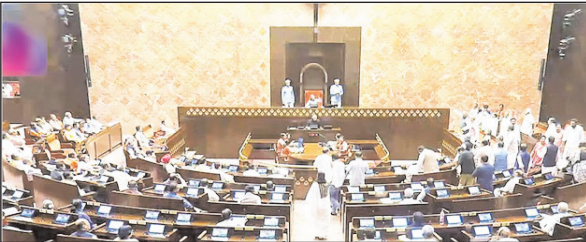


was divided into 562 princely states, and the British wanted India to remain weak and divided. However, Sardar Patel unified all these princely states within two years, establishing India as a strong nation. He said that despite his immense contribution, Congress governments, for political reasons, did not give Patel the respect he deserved.

Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Panel: Seven members assigned responsibilities

New Delhi

Rajya Sabha Chairman C.P. Radhakrishnan has constituted a new panel of Deputy Chairmen, effective November 21, 2025. This panel includes seven members. These members will be able to preside over the House in the Chairman's absence, if needed. The new members include Dr. Dinesh Sharma, Bhubaneswar Kalita, S. Phangnon Konyak, Rajani Patil, Dr.



Sasmit Patra, Dr. Thambidurai, and Tiruchi Siva. It should be noted that the new seven-member panel of Deputy Chairmen in the Rajya Sabha includes representatives from various parties. Four members of this panel are from the BJP, one from the

Congress, one from the Akali Dal, and one from the Akali Dal. Dr. Dinesh Sharma of the BJP from Uttar Pradesh, Bhubaneswar Kalita of the BJP from Assam, S. Phangnon Konyak of the BJP from Nagaland, The names include Phangnon Konyak,

Congress's Rajni Patil from Maharashtra, BJP's Dr. Sasmit Patra from Odisha, AIADMK's Dr. M. Thambidurai from Tamil Nadu, and DMK's Tiruchi Siva from Tamil Nadu. What is the significance of this panel? In addition to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, additional members are often required to run the Rajya Sabha. These panel members help ensure the smooth functioning of the House.

Amrit Pharmacy will be established in every medical college and district hospital

New Delhi Union Health and Family Welfare Minister J.P. Nadda on Saturday announced the extensive expansion of the AMRUT network across the country, stating that the goal now is to provide AMRUT pharmacies in every medical college and every district hospital in the country, ensuring access to affordable medicines for every citizen. Nadda was addressing the gathering after inaugurating the 10th foundation day celebrations of AMRUT (Affordable Medicines and Reliable Implants for

President described Satya Sai Baba as an inspiration to follow the path of service

Puttaparthi (Andhra Pradesh)

President Draupadi Murmu, during her visit to Andhra Pradesh today, attended the Sathya Sai Baba Birth Centenary celebrations. Speaking at the event held in Puttaparthi, Sri Sathya Sai district, the President said, "Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasized the belief that 'service to humanity is service to God.' He linked spirituality with selfless service and personal transformation. Sai Baba inspired



millions to follow the path of service." Baba's devotees serving the underprivileged in many countries. Murmu said Sathya Sai Baba urged his followers to combine spirituality with public welfare. She said it was a matter

of satisfaction that his devotees in so many countries were serving the underprivileged. She said that the message of selfless love through selfless service continues to inspire the Sri Sathya Sai organization to serve and volunteer.

Magh Mela will be held with grandeur and divinity: Chief Minister Yogi

Prayagraj

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath held a review meeting on the preparations for the Magh Mela on Saturday and then briefed reporters. The Chief Minister stated that the fair is progressing at a war footing. He stated that the entire event will be celebrated with grandeur and grandeur, with the participation of pilgrims and devotees. He explained that the



Magh Mela dates are approaching 15 days in advance. Paush Purnima will be on January 3rd, Makar Sankranti on January 15th, Mauni Amavasya on January 18th, Basant

Panchami on January 23rd, Magh Purnima on February 1st, and Mahashivratri (six major bathing ceremonies) on February 15th. A large number of pilgrims will be present

from January 3rd to February 1st. Approximately 20 to 25 lakh pilgrims stay at the fair for a month, performing meditation and penance to Mother Ganga. Additionally, a large number of devotees come to bathe on the main bathing festivals. It is estimated that during the approximate one and a half months, 12 to 15 crore pilgrims will bathe at the Sangam in Prayagraj.

Briefs

LALITPUR

UP Rural Sports League Held in Mahrauni

The 'Uttar Pradesh Gramin Khel League' was organized at CB Gupta Inter College, Mahrauni. Inaugurated by State Minister Manohar Lal Panth, the event featured various athletic competitions for boys and girls across sub-junior, junior, and senior categories. Winners were announced in events like 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, and 1500m races, along with kabaddi, volleyball, and badminton. The event concluded with a prize distribution ceremony.

BALLIA

Grand Kalash Yatra for Shri Vishnu Mahayagya

A grand Kalash Yatra was taken out from Mahadeva Kuti in Bheempura on the occasion of the Shri Vishnu Mahayagya. Led by TN Mishra and Shri Anupand Ji Maharaj, the procession saw 1001 maidens carrying kalashes, filling the area with religious fervor. The yatra proceeded to the Saryu river to collect holy water and then moved towards the yagya site, accompanied by chants and music, attracting a massive crowd of devotees.

JAUNPUR

Massive Walkathon on Sardar Patel Jayanti

An eight-kilometer 'Run for Unity' walkathon was led by BJP MLA Ramesh Chandra Mishra in Maharajganj to mark Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's birth anniversary. The event saw large participation from school children, government employees, and BJP workers. Rajya Sabha MP Darshana Singh was the chief guest and emphasized the message of unity and brotherhood. The walkathon concluded at the block premises, where the MLA thanked all participants for the historic event.

VARANASI

Agriculture Director Inspects Seed, Fertilizer Stores

The Joint Agriculture Director of Varanasi Mandal, Shailendra Kumar, conducted a surprise inspection of cooperative societies and government seed stores in Jansa and Korauta. He issued a show-cause notice to one secretary for not displaying a rate board and for an outdated distribution register. Officials were directed to ensure subsidized seeds and fertilizers are sold at fixed rates with proper transparency, warning of strict action against overcharging or illegal sale of unapproved seeds.

LUCKNOW

Police Arrest Accused with ₹5,000 Reward

Wazirganj police, in a joint operation with the Crime Branch, arrested Karn Sonkar, a wanted criminal with a reward of ₹5,000 on his head. The accused was apprehended near Polytechnic Chauraha and was wanted in several serious criminal cases. He had been evading arrest for the past year, and a warrant had been issued against him. The arrest is considered a significant success for the police.

MONEY SWINDLE | Widow pension scam and loan fraud rock two districts

Fake certificates, false loans: Deception Exposed

BAREILLY / SHAMLI

Two separate cases of financial irregularities involving government benefits and microfinance loans have surfaced in Bareilly and Shamli districts of Uttar Pradesh. In Bareilly's Aonla region, the district administration has confirmed that several married women received widow pensions despite their husbands being alive. According to the official inquiry report submitted by the Sub-Divisional Magistrate, multiple instalments of the pension amount—totalling 1.23 crore—were transferred into the accounts of 56 married women and two ineligible elderly beneficiaries.

The matter first came to light on 4 November, when police identified the discrepancies and arrested four middlemen allegedly involved in fabricating death certi-



icates of the women's husbands. Following this, the District Magistrate instructed the Aonla SDM to provide a pending detailed report. After receiving the findings last week, the District Magistrate forwarded the report to the Senior Superintendent of Police and recommended the formation of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) for an in-depth probe. Authorities noted that the middlemen responsible for generating

Administrations flag pension fraud in Bareilly and loan-related deception in Shamli

fake documents have been identified, and further action will be taken based on SIT findings.

In a separate case, women in Shamli district have reported fraud in microfi-



nance-linked group loans. According to complaints, the operator of a women's self-help group allegedly used identity documents of several members to acquire multiple loans from microfinance institutions, including Bandhan Bank and other finance companies. After securing lakhs of rupees in unauthorised loans, the operator reportedly disappeared, leaving the women liable for repayments.

Victims claim that loan

recovery agents are now visiting their homes, demanding instalments and threatening to seize household belongings. One complainant stated that although she had repaid her earlier loan two years ago and declined any new loan offer, she recently discovered a running loan under her name with a monthly instalment of ₹2,800. Another victim alleged verbal abuse and intimidation by agents. As of now, about 15 women have come forward, accusing the group operator of withdrawing multiple loans using their documents.

The complainants have approached police, requesting an official investigation into the alleged fraud and collusion between the group operator and loan agents. Police officials have stated that inquiries are underway and appropriate action will follow based on evidence gathered.

Pilibhit BLOs get reward boost for their role in SIR

PILIBHIT

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the voter list is underway across Uttar Pradesh, with Pilibhit district introducing unique incentives to encourage improved performance by Booth Level Officers (BLOs). According to an official circular, BLOs who complete the highest number of digitisation tasks during the SIR drive will receive rewards including a jungle safari at Pilibhit Tiger Reserve, family lunch at Chuka Beach, movie tickets, and appreciation certificates.

The SIR campaign began in Pilibhit on 4 November. As part of the exercise, 1,522 BLOs and 52 district-level officers have been deployed. BLOs are conducting door-to-door visits, distributing verification forms, collecting details, and uploading all information digitally. The district administration has prepared a performance-based incentive model to ensure timely completion of digitisation targets.

Officials stated that the first-

**Best performers will receive jungle safari passes, family lunch, and movie tickets**

ranked BLO from each assembly segment based on the maximum digitisation completed will be eligible for the rewards after the conclusion of the SIR process. The initiative is aimed at improving accuracy in voter list revisions while ensuring accountability in field operations.

The administration has also warned of action against BLOs showing negligence during the campaign. Parallel awareness efforts are being carried out to prevent fraud and misinformation related to SIR formalities.

Historic market under threat: Akhilesh Yadav

LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Friday accused the government of taking decisions that have created a severe livelihood crisis for thousands of traders in Banaras' historic Dalmandi market. Speaking at a press conference at the party office in Lucknow, he said the administration's move was driven by political motives rather than heritage protection.

Yadav stated that Dalmandi has long been an important commercial center and holds significant historical value. According to him, local traders have been facing continuous pressure for several years due to widening-related decisions, which he claimed are now

**Dalmandi traders urge government to withdraw the decision, SP vows full support in their ongoing struggle**

threatening both heritage structures and business establishments.

He alleged that officials were intimidating traders in the name of road expansion, citing similar situations in Meerut and Akbarnagar where markets were

reportedly disrupted, affecting livelihoods. Yadav also questioned the status of the earlier "Kyoto model" promise for Banaras, asserting that the city's current condition contradicts that vision.

Traders present during the press conference appealed to the government to withdraw the widening plan, arguing that shifting them to areas such as Lhta or other localities would not be viable due to lack of customer access.

Yadav further said the Dalmandi polling booth has historically shown poor results for the BJP, claiming traders were being "punished" for political reasons. He added that the SP will stand firmly with the traders and that the market, which supports thousands of families, should not be demolished.

Five day majalis held in Chhota Imambara

LUCKNOW



A five-day series of mourning assemblies, 'Azā-e-Fātimiyā,' commenced at the Hussainabad Chhota Imambara in Lucknow to commemorate the martyrdom of Hazrat Zahra (S.A.). The inaugural Majlis was addressed by Maulana Ghulam Mehdi Gulrez, who spoke on Islam's role in elevating the status of women from the era of ignorance, citing Hazrat Zahra as the ultimate source of this honor.

Solar Tech gives Gandhi's charkha a modern makeover

LUCKNOW

A solar-powered spinning wheel drew significant attention at the Khadi Festival that began on Friday at the Central Sanskrit University campus in Lucknow. The upgraded machine, demonstrated during the inauguration, showcased how solar technology is now being used for weaving and thread-making, replacing manual spinning once associated with Gandhi's charkha.

More than 160 entrepreneurs and units from across Uttar Pradesh have set up stalls displaying khadi products, handicrafts, and items produced using both traditional and modern techniques. The festival also features Banarasi sarees, woolen garments, Uttarakhand caps, and

**Women artisans report increased employment and reduced production costs due to new machinery**

other indigenous textile products. Artisans from Amethi

reported that the solar-powered setup has provided employment to at least 27 women involved in thread-making. Another artisan from Lucknow stated that support from the Khadi Board has helped expand her handicraft work since 2023, enabling her team of 15 workers to save up to ₹10 lakh annually.

AI maps intestinal disorders in seconds

LUCKNOW

A researcher at Lucknow University has developed an advanced artificial intelligence technique capable of detecting stomach and intestinal diseases at an early stage. The system analyses endoscopy images using a deep semantic-segmentation model that marks affected regions with high precision.

According to researchers involved in the project, the technology can identify even the smallest abnormalities, including polyps, ulcerative colitis indicators, and micro-level tissue changes that are often difficult to detect through visual examination alone. By highlighting these patterns during endoscopic evaluation, the tool supports doctors with a clearer

**The method identifies polyps, colitis patterns, and micro-level abnormalities that often go unnoticed**

understanding of disease progression.

Medical professionals state that early detection significantly improves treatment responses and reduces overall diagnostic delays. Faster assessment also helps patients receive timely intervention, potentially lowering treatment costs and avoiding prolonged medical procedures.

Deputy CM calls for technology-led, transparent food processing growth

LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government has strengthened its push in the food processing sector, directing officials to focus on targets, training and technology for faster establishment of new units. The Deputy Chief Minister instructed departments to accelerate implementation and ensure district-level motivation camps for entrepreneurs.

Under the PMFME scheme, each district will set up a minimum of 1,000 units. Special focus will be placed on Rohilkhand, Bundelkhand and Braj regions, with strict emphasis on transparency and visible on-ground progress. All positive efforts are to be uploaded on social media platforms. The state also directed immediate completion of solar power con-

**State pushes for 1,000 units per district under PMFME and expansion of training trades**

nections for all THR plant units.

UP reported 428 units established under the Food Processing Policy, 192 units receiving subsidies, and 58 units equipped with solar power. Officials noted that the state hosts nearly 75,000 food

processing units, including 3.5 lakh in the unorganised MSME segment.

The government also reviewed training programmes, calling for more trades, wider coverage and increased participation of women. Progress on food parks, incubation centres, village-level awareness and PPP-based operations was also assessed. Directions were issued to ensure timely district-wise reporting and completion of ongoing schemes.

intiative

Digital health gains speed with AI's help

LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh is expanding AI-driven healthcare systems to enhance efficiency, accessibility and digital integration across both urban and rural regions. Under ongoing state-level programmes, the government is increasing the use of artificial intelligence in diagnostics, telemedicine and data management to make medical services more affordable and widely available.

Digital health initiatives such as telemedicine and e-Sanjeevani have significantly

reduced out-of-pocket expenditure for patients. Through AI-enabled virtual consultations, citizens in remote districts are able to connect with medical specialists without travelling long distances. Since its launch, the e-Sanjeevani platform has recorded millions of teleconsultations. According to the National Health Authority's 2025 report, over 70 percent of beneficiaries are from rural areas, where early diagnosis and basic treatment advice are often difficult to access.

Skill development is also being prioritised. Under the

**Government accelerates digital tools, remote care and training**

National Rural Health Mission, more than 4,000 health workers were trained in 2024-25 in AI applications, digital

health workflows, data analytics and cybersecurity. State health data indicates that trained workers have implemented AI-based screening tools in rural health centres, raising diagnostic accuracy by nearly 30 percent. The programme is also creating new job opportunities, particularly for young professionals entering digital-health start-up ecosystems.

Uttar Pradesh is among the leading states in generating Ayushman Bharat Health Account IDs, with more than 12.45 crore IDs created. These digital records support real-

time data access, AI-based risk assessment and personalised health recommendations. The integrated platform ensures secure storage while enabling quicker advice for patients through digital case histories. Innovation and investment in health technology have increased as well. At the 2023 Global Investors Summit, more than 50 health-tech start-ups secured investment proposals exceeding 500 crore. These include AI-based screening models, mobile applications for disease monitoring, and tools for pregnancy tracking.

BSIP hosts outreach for international science festival

LUCKNOW

The Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences (BSIP) in Lucknow successfully organized a Science Outreach Program today as a curtain-raiser for the 11th edition of the India International Science Festival (IISF) 2025, which will be held in Chandigarh from December 6 to 9. The festival's theme, "Vigyan Se Samruddhi: for Aatmanirbhar Bharat," promotes science-led growth for a self-reliant nation.

The event, guided by Director Prof. Mahesh G. Thakkar, emphasized the need for science to transcend laboratories and reach



the common populace. Prof. Thakkar urged young students to align their scientific efforts with the national vision of "Viksit Bharat Mission 2047."

Dr. G. K. Goswami, Director of the Uttar Pradesh Institute of Forensic Science and Chief Guest, delivered an address highlighting the expanding and vision-oriented role of forensic science in legal practice.

After spending crores, the road to Bamhrauli village has turned into hell

From the village head to the Vikas Bhawan officials, everyone is limited to collecting commissions

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Tedhimod Kaushambi. In the village panchayat of Bamhrauli in the Sirathu tehsil area, over the past five years, the village panchayat officials have spent crores of rupees in government funds on various development projects, withdrawing the money from the treasury. However, the truth is that the entire village has been reduced to a living hell. The village roads are unfit for travel. Drains are collapsing after construction, and dirty drain water is flowing onto the roads. The village is completely lacking in sanitation. A sanitation worker is receiving his salary from home, and the panchayat officials are assisting him in receiving his salary by registering fake attendance. Villagers are repeatedly complaining to officials about the numerous problems prevalent in the village. Demands are being made for an investigation into the funds spent on development projects undertaken over the past five years. However, due to the involvement of the Block Development Officer and the ADO Panchayat, the development projects carried out in the village are not being investigated impartially. Consequently, action cannot be taken against the village panchayat officials who embezzled crores of rupees



from the government budget, and the general public is suffering the consequences. The condition of the village roads is so dire. It is a far cry from driving on that road, even walking a single step is difficult. The entire road is filled with mud and water. Even the paths through the ravines look better than this. Villagers have repeatedly demanded that the road be repaired, but it remains unrepaired. It is reported that on the south side of Bamhrauli village, in front of Raju Paswan's door, there are large potholes on the road.

Forget about driving on this road, even walking on it is a difficult task for the public. Vehicles that pass through it get stuck in the mud. The question arises as to how the villagers will travel on this road. Even the

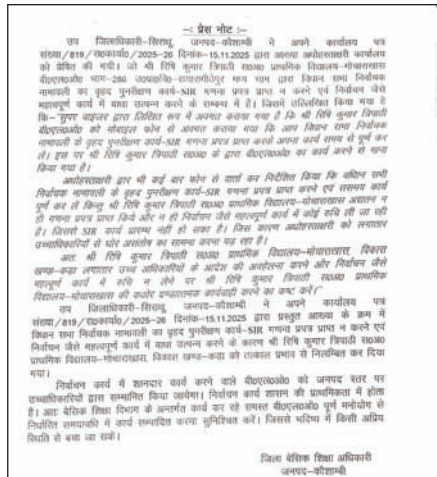
MP, MLA, have not made any effort to solve the village's problems. Graduate teachers, MLAs, Legislative Council members, and Rajya Sabha members represent the area, but they too have turned their backs on solving the problems, leading to widespread anger among the public. Senior officials of the district are boasting of development in the district, they are trumpeting about achieving excellent development in the district, and the officials are boasting of being the best in the entire state, whereas the reality is that Bamhrauli. The common people are upset with the plight of the village. Development is visible only on paper and on computers. From the Pradhan to the officials of Vikas Bhawan, everyone is limited to collecting commission only, due to which the image of Yogi government is also getting tarnished and the claim of corruption free government is proving to be hollow. When the team of **Akhand Bharat Sandesh** newspaper Kaushambi reached the village, they were stunned to see the poor system. After parking the bike outside the village, they had to walk along the road-side to see the condition of the village. An attempt was made to talk to the village Pradhan and the Panchayat Secretary in this regard, but the talk could not happen.

Shockingly, the BSA suspended a teacher by issuing a letter without his signature

Teachers who were negligent in their SIR work were suspended

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Kaushambi. The teacher who was negligent in the work of SIR related to the election has been suspended. The extent of injustice has reached when the Basic Education Officer has neither signed the letter of order for suspension of the teacher nor has the date been mentioned in that letter as to on which date the teacher has been suspended. This letter of BSA has been sent to the concerned newspaper office by the Information Officer, due to which big questions have been raised on the functioning of the Education Department. After all, how the letter has been issued without signature and date is a matter of big investigation in itself. The District Basic Education Officer, District-Kaushambi has informed that the report was sent to the office of the undersigned by the Sub-District Magistrate-Sirathu, District-Kaushambi through his office number /819/R.A.Karya0/2025-26 dated-15.11.2025. Which is regarding Rishi Kumar Tripathi, Assistant Director, Primary School-Mocharakhas BLO, Part-286, Upper Primary School-Sayara Geethepur Central Part, not receiving the SIR counting form for the massive revision work of the Assembly electoral roll and creating obstacles in an important work like the election. In



which it has been mentioned that the supervisor has informed in writing that Rishi Kumar Tripathi, BLO, was informed through mobile phone that you should complete your work on time by receiving the SIR counting form for the massive revision work of the Assembly electoral roll. On this, Rishi Kumar Tripathi, R.A., has been refused to do the work of BLO. The undersigned also spoke several times over the phone and directed that all the officers should obtain the SIR counting forms for the massive revision work of the electoral rolls and complete the work on time, but Rishi Kumar Tripathi, Assistant Primary School, Gocharakhas, has neither received the updated counting forms nor is he taking any interest in such an important work like the election.

Due to which the SIR work could not be started. Due to which the undersigned is continuously facing severe dissatisfaction from the higher officials. SDM said that for continuously disobeying the orders of higher officials and not taking interest in important work like election, please take strict punitive action against Shri Rishi Kumar Tripathi, Assistant Teacher, Primary School-Bhocharakhas. In continuation of the report submitted by the Sub-District Magistrate Sirathu, District-Kaushambi in his office no./819/R.A./2025-26 dated 15.11.2025, Rishi Kumar Tripathi, Assistant Teacher, Primary School-Mocharakhas, Development Block-Kada was suspended with immediate effect for not receiving the SIR counting form for the massive revision work of the Legislative Assembly electoral roll and creating obstruction in important work like election.

The BLO who did excellent work in the election work was awarded a district level award. They will be honored by higher officials. Election work is a priority for the government. Therefore, all BLOs working under the Basic Education Department should ensure that they complete their work with full dedication and within the stipulated time period. This will avoid any unpleasant situations in the future.

Persons with Disabilities Have Divine Creative Potential: Justice Kshitij Shailendra

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj. The closing session of the three-day Divine Arts and Skills Exhibition, jointly organized by the Department for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities and the Uttar Pradesh Deaf and Dumb School, Prayagraj, was attended by the Honorable Justice Kshitij Shailendra as the Chief Guest, and the Honorable Justice Vipin Chandra Dixit, Honorable High Court,



Allahabad, as the Special Guest. The Honorable Justice visited the stalls of government departments and organizations working in the field of disability at the Divine Arts and Skills Exhibition. The Honorable Justice also visited the skills training stall run by the Uttar Pradesh Deaf and

Dumb School for the benefit of the disabled. In his address at the event, the Honorable Justice stated that persons with disabilities possess divine creative potential. Hearing aids, MR kits, and tiffin boxes were distributed to 50 disabled children. Various cultural programs were

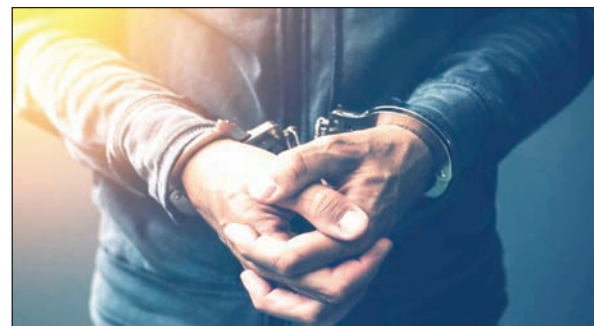
organized during the closing session of the three-day exhibition. In this three-day exhibition, voluntary and departmental organizations like Bachpan Day Care Center, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh Deaf and Dumb School, Prayagraj, Bhavini Welfare Society, Mata Kalavati College, Udaan Special School, Train Trust, Jan Chetna Sansthan, Saksham etc. participated. In this closing session, Abhay Kumar Srivastava, Deputy Director, Department of Empowerment of

Persons with Disabilities, Prayagraj Division, Prayagraj, Ashok Kumar Gautam, District Disability Empowerment Officer, Prayagraj, Dr. K.N. Mishra, Principal, Uttar Pradesh Deaf and Dumb School, Prayagraj, Vikas Pandey, District Coordinator, Integrated Education, Prayagraj and Sandesh Mishra, Curriculum Coordinator were present. This program was conducted by spokesperson Dr. Prabhakar Tripathi.

Pipri Police Arrested Wanted Accused of Raping a Girl Under the Pretend of Marriage

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Kaushambi On November 15th, a young man named Ramzan lured a young woman from the Pipri police station area, promising to marry her. The girl arrived at the young man's home in Jhansi and went with him. However, the marriage did not end, and instead, he began having physical relations with her. The girl's family reported the matter to the police sta-



tion. The police began efforts to locate the girl and the young man. The family alleges that the young man also raped her. A case was registered at Pipri police station under relevant sections. In connection with the above

case, on November 22, 2025, the Pipri police team arrested the wanted accused, Rajman Nishad, son of Nepali Nishad, resident of Umarwal, Pipri police station. After legal proceedings, the accused was sent to court.

Serious Assault on Senior Doctor Inside Nazareth Hospital, Prayagraj

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj : A serious incident of violence occurred today at Nazareth Hospital, Prayagraj, where a doctor on duty was physically assaulted inside his consultation chamber. At around 12:30 PM, Deepak Shukla resident of Chandpur Salori, accompanied by Shivam Agrahari, Vivek Agrahari, Himanshu Singh and 4-5 other men, forcibly entered Chamber No. 2, where Dr. R. P. Shukla was attending to patients. Without any provocation, Deepak Shukla manhandled the doctor, beat him, and attempted to strangle him. During the assault, a lady patient



and the nurse on duty who tried to intervene, were also attacked. Recognizing the severity of the attack, Security staff immediately reached the spot, rescued the doctor, and prevented further harm. The injured doctor, patient and nurse were shifted to the emergency department for urgent med-

ical care. Nazareth Hospital strongly condemns this brutal attack on medical personnel who were carrying out their duty to serve patients. The administration has reiterated that violence against healthcare workers is a punishable offence, and such incidents will not be tolerated.

Various police stations organized awareness programs under Mission Shakti Abhiyan Phase 5.0

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Kaushambi On Saturday, as part of Mission Shakti Abhiyan Phase 5.0, various police stations in the district created awareness among women and girls by providing detailed information on women's empowerment, cybercrime, new laws (BNS, Good Touch/Bad Touch), and helpline numbers. Also, the Anti Romeo Squad roamed around the area and warned and instructed the miscreants. In the major action/awareness program by the police stations, Sub Inspector Poonam Kabir and Constable Chanchal Singh of Charwa police station roamed around in Hardai, Madai, Kaju area and checked the miscreants and gave detailed information about cyber crime and women helpline numbers to the girls. Constable Bandana Yadav and Constable Shweta Mishra of West Sharira police station roamed around the banks and intersections and



gave information about good touch-bad touch and cyber security and gave information about helpline numbers related to Mission Shakti. Similarly, Sub-Inspector Sunil Kumar Yadav of Police Station Sarai Akil and women police personnel made the girls in the town of Sarai Akil and Budhpuri aware about cyber crime, Mission Shakti Centre, counselling and crimes related to women. The Anti-Romeo Squad of the Women Police Station went to Primary School Gaura and informed them about the new laws Zero FIR, E-FIR, BNS and BNSS and by roaming around, warned the miscre-

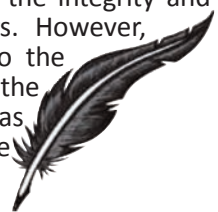
ants. Sub-Inspector Vijay Kumar and lady constable of Mahewaghat police station went to village Naubasta and made women/girls aware about cyber crime and women helpline numbers. Sub-Inspector Rajesh Kumar and team of Mopur Painsa police station went to village Mopur and gave information about women empowerment and cyber crime. Sub-Inspector Kanchan Devi and PRD team of Karari police station went to village Myohar Bazar and Pindra Bazar and gave information about helpline numbers related to cyber security and Mission Shakti. Sub-

Inspector Sunita Goyal and team of Sandipan Ghat police station went to village Malk Mohiddinpur and organized an awareness program on women safety and cyber crime. Sub-Inspector Nidhi Verma and team of Kadadham police station informed the girls about Mission Shakti, cyber crime and helpline numbers in Primary School Ismailpur. Police Station Kaushambi's Sub Inspector Awadhesh Shukla and the women constable team pasted pamphlets at the Community Health Center Bara, informing women/girls about the new law and cyber security. Police Station Kokhraj's Sub Inspector Vindhya Vasini and PRD team went to village Kokhraj and informed them about Mission Shakti and cyber crime helpline numbers. By giving information about important helpline numbers, women and girls have been motivated for public awareness.

Editorial

Civil servants are running India's regulatory bodies. It dilutes institutional independence

Looking back at India's reform story of more than three decades, it is worthwhile to recall that economic liberalisation of the 1990s had a few implicit assumptions of how an economy should function and grow on a sustainable basis. One of those assumptions followed from the government decision to allow the private sector to operate in areas that were hitherto monopolised by state-owned enterprises. Under such liberalisation, it was assumed that while the government would continue to frame policies for areas opened up to the private sector, the regulation or enforcement of those policies would be undertaken by independent regulators through rules framed by them. A classic example of this thinking was India's telecommunications sector that was opened up to the private sector in the early 1990s. This was followed by the setting up of the Telecommunication Regulatory Authority of India or Trai a few years later. Subsequently, the business of basic telephone services, run in large parts of the country by a government department, was hived off to a newly created state-owned enterprise. Something similar, in varying degrees, happened in other areas such as the insurance, airports, and power sectors. In addition, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) was set up to regulate and adjudicate upon issues of market dominance and practices that undermined competition in various sectors. The principle was clear: Let the government frame the policy (and not run a business), while independent regulatory bodies could enforce the policy by framing necessary rules. Another implicit assumption behind such a separation of responsibilities between the government and the regulators was about who should steer those regulatory bodies. To impart autonomy and independence to these institutions and insulate them from government interference, the pool of talent for hiring key personnel was widened. Experts and private-sector professionals in related fields, along with even retired members of the judiciary (though under some pressure as was seen when the legislation for setting up the CCI was framed), were among those the government believed could be hired to head these regulatory institutions. Thus, the first chairperson of the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission was an economist. Trai was set up under the chairmanship of a retired judge and its next chairperson was a former banker. Even the first capital market regulator was a banker in the late 1980s, and the first chairperson of the insurance sector regulator was a former chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes. The first full-fledged chairperson of the CCI was a retired Indian Administrative Services (IAS) officer. So, there was a mix of regulatory heads chosen from a pool of experts from both the government and the private sector. In spite of a few civil servants heading these institutions, the idea that continued to be pursued was to insulate regulation from the stranglehold or influence of the political executive. The third significant aspect of regulation in the early days of economic reforms was the framing of rules for appointing heads of regulatory bodies in a way that effectively ruled out conflicts of interest. Thus, a regulator would usually not be considered for another job in the government system after the completion of his or her term. The idea was that the regulator should be able to act freely and fairly without any expectation of future assignments from the government or the private sector. Indeed, one of the regulators under the law was, until recently, barred from accepting any government job after having served in that regulatory post. These were guardrails to preserve the integrity and independence of regulators. However, the situation with regard to the last two assumptions behind the regulatory framework has changed significantly in the last few decades.



Trump should withdraw USCIRF's authorisation. It's interfering in India's domestic governance

In a strongly worded statement, Government of India has condemned and refuted the findings of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom report as "biased and politically motivated, and continuation of persistent attempts to misrepresent isolated incidents and cast aspersions on India's vibrant multicultural society which reflects USCIRF's deliberate agenda rather than a genuine concern for religious freedom". Though this is not the first time such reports have painted India as a coun-

try highly intolerant of its religious minorities, the March 2025 report is the first time a recommendation has been made for India to be designated as "country of particular concern". It alleges that minorities in India are facing 'deteriorating treatment'. Fifteen other countries, including Afghanistan, Russia, China, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia, have been found to be treating their respective minorities badly. Three aspects of this report should be of concern to New Delhi, and it should be brought to

the attention of those the report is supposedly submitted to. The first is the report's mention of the assassination of separatist Sikh elements in Canada posing as members of the Sikh religious community and the alleged attempt on the life of another Khalistani separatist. "The Indian government also continued to expand its repressive tactics to target religious minorities abroad, specifically members of the Sikh community and their advocates... International reporting and intelligence from the Canadian govern-

ment corroborated allegations linking an official in India's Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) and six diplomats to the 2023 assassination attempt of an American Sikh activist in New York," the report has said. It's important to note that these radical elements do not represent the Sikh community. While the Government of India has categorically rejected the allegation, the Canadian government and the prosecuting authorities in the then Biden dispensation initiated legal actions against Indian officials.

Can A 'Technocrat' Fix All That's Wrong With BJP In Kerala?



On June 9, 2024, as the Modi 3.0 government was set to swear in, Rajeev Chandrasekhar came up with a cryptic tweet: "Today, curtains down on my 18-year stint of public service, of which three years I had the privilege of serving with PM Narendra Modiji's Team Modi 2.0. I certainly didn't wish to end my 18 years of public service as a candidate who lost an election, but that's how it has turned out". The tweet was deleted after a day, and the amended version conveniently laid the blame for the confusion on an "intern". It was an emotional response, a mark of Chandrasekhar's utter disappointment with not finding a place in Modi 3.0. It also signified how the 'technocrat' was not a run-of-the-mill politician who believed in rehearsed or curated responses. Less than a year since then, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) high command has now sprung a surprise by naming Chandrasekhar as its new Kerala state president. By no means was Rajeev Chandrasekhar the frontrunner. Incumbent K. Surendran, who overstayed his term by two years, was tipped to get another year's extension, until the assembly elections in the state in 2026. There were other contenders too, such as firebrand Sobha Surendran and veteran MT Ramesh. Even conventional wisdom suggested that social engineering compulsions would go against Chandrasekhar, a Nair hailing from Thrissur. With the two Malayalis in Modi's third ministry being a Nair and a Syrian Christian—Suresh Gopi and George Kurian—an

Ezhava/Hindu OBC candidate would've been the more practical option. But the high command had enough reasons to pick Chandrasekhar. The BJP in Kerala is a divided house with multiple factions, and none of the frontrunners would have been able to function smoothly on account of internal dissension. Even K. Surendran's five-year term was marred by friction with the PK Krishnadas-led faction, as well as his running feud with Sobha Surendran. The BJP leadership reckons that Rajeev Chandrasekhar can carry all the factions together. He is not a natural politician, but the central leadership deems that this very characteristic will become Chandrasekhar's USP. It is very much a repetition of the 'K. Annamalai' experiment in Tamil Nadu.

True, Chandrasekhar's acceptability cuts across factions. But there are various other considerations at play. For all the gains it made elsewhere, the BJP has hardly had any electoral impact in Kerala, despite a steady rise in vote share. Even after faring reasonably well in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, cornering nearly 20% votes and Suresh Gopi's win from Thrissur, it did badly in the Palakkad by-election last November. That loss probably

put paid to Surendran's hopes to stay on until the assembly polls, as he had turned the issue into a battle of prestige. The central leadership also cannot quite understand why the BJP does so poorly in a state where the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has the second-largest network of shakhas (branches) in the country. For a long, the RSS in Kerala had been deeply involved in the functioning of the state BJP, though the party's ideological mentor has taken a backseat in recent times. This was meant to afford more autonomy to the state party president, but it ultimately culminated in RSS organising secretary K. Subash's resignation, with the Sangh not naming a replacement in his stead for an extended period.

Now, Rajeev Chandrasekhar's appointment is likely to be followed by the RSS naming an organising secretary to assist the new president in his functioning. The last time the high command named an out-of-the-box candidate as state president was in the run-up to the 2016 assembly polls, when veteran Sangh leader Kummanam Rajasekharan, whose hardliner image and association with the Nilakkal protests of 1982

had proved to be a baggage for the party in the past. The central leadership also believes that Chandrasekhar can cater to sections of Kerala's aspirational middle class that are yearning for change and are unhappy with both the ruling Left government and the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF).

Since Chandrasekhar doesn't fit the mould of a regular politician, he may be able to connect better with this class and some increasingly 'apolitical' sections of voters that support, say, a Shashi Tharoor. In many ways in fact, it was the spirited contest that he put in against Tharoor in the Lok Sabha election in Thiruvananthapuram, despite being a late entrant, that may have propelled Chandrasekhar to the coveted position today. Giving a tough fight to Tharoor, a lot of people were left wondering whether Chandrasekhar could have emerged victorious had he been pencilled in sooner. "Ini Karyam Nadakkum" ('Now things will move') was Chandrasekhar's campaign slogan. This may well be called Chandrasekhar's second coming in Kerala politics. Contrary to what many may believe, the contest

in Thiruvananthapuram wasn't his initiation in state politics, even if he was based in Bengaluru until then. Much before that, he had been a key mediator for getting the Bharat Dharma Jana Sena (BDJS), affiliated to the Ezhava community outfit Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDP), to join the National Democratic Alliance

(NDA) in 2016. That is when Chandrasekhar was named the NDA's vice-chairman for Kerala, despite being a Rajya Sabha MP from Karnataka. Now, he may be expected to act as a bridge to the Christian clergy and cater to their grievances. The Christian community in Kerala has traditionally stood with the Congress, although cracks have begun to appear in recent times. Chandrasekhar may be expected to utilise issues such as the controversy surrounding the Munambam suburb of Ernakulam, where some 600 LChristian and Hindu families are protesting against the Wakf Board's claim over the area. Notably, Chandrasekhar was a key figure in getting veteran leader PC George to merge his splinter party with the BJP. Shone George, the latter's son, is also expected to emerge as an important leader during Chandrasekhar's term. It would also be remiss not to mention Chandrasekhar's ownership of Asianet News, which has consistently topped BARC (Broadcast Audience Research Council) ratings for Malayalam news channels. He is the majority shareholder of the news channel through the holding company Jupiter Capital. While some BJP leaders think that with the channel maintaining an independent editorial line Chandrasekhar's business interests may backfire on him, that could be a thin reading of the situation. This view got amplified recently when he had to tweet an apology on account of the channel's alleged slighting of the Maha Kumbh on a news show.

Why's Turkey erupting for Ekrem Imamoglu? He's the biggest threat to Erdogan yet

In Turkey, the vox populi is rising once again, reminiscent of the Gezi uprising that occurred 12 years ago. After a week of continuous protests in multiple cities—against the arrest of Istanbul mayor Ekrem Imamoglu—authorities have put a ban on gatherings and detained close to 2,000 individuals. The unlawful and unconstitutional arrest of Imamoglu is the culmination of over two decades of political erosion under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's increasingly autocratic governance. It has systematically undermined democratic institutions, silenced dissent, and played up the Islamist agenda internationally, particularly on the matter of Kashmir. Now, in the streets of Turkey's major cities, thousands of people, mostly students and youth, are pushing back against Erdogan, and their defiance is growing louder by the day. At the heart of this unrest lies the struggle for Turkey's political future—and the figure leading this charge—Ekrem. Imamoglu, a calm and charismatic mayor, was arrested

under politically motivated charges of corruption and embezzlement—accusations that many see as a pretext for silencing a rising political star. His arrest was an absurd spectacle. Taken from his walk-in closet while calmly adjusting his tie, Imamoglu was detained merely hours before he was set to be nominated as the presidential candidate by Turkey's Opposition in the 2028 elections. For a leader with immense support across Turkey, this act of political repression has galvanised protests not just in Istanbul but across the nation. But why has one figure—mayor of Istanbul since 2019—become the focal point of such a significant crisis. Obscurity in 2019, defeating the candidate supported by Justice and Development Party (AKP) by 13,000 votes—when no one thought he could. Before Imamoglu, conservatives from the AKP had ruled Istanbul for 25 years. Erdogan himself owes the foundations of his political career to his mayorship of Istanbul in the 1990s.

BJP has a new Muslim strategy up its sleeve. Saugat-e-Modi isn't just about Bihar election

This Ramadan, a quiet gesture from the Narendra Modi government has stirred conversation Eid kits for 32 lakh underprivileged Muslims, described as a goodwill initiative timed with the holy month. The offering appears festive, including familiar Eid ingredients such as dry fruits, semolina, vermicelli and sugar. The kits also include kurta-pyjamas for men and suit fabrics for women, all neatly packaged to reach Muslim households before Eid. At first glance, it appears to be a thoughtful cultural outreach by the Bharatiya Janata Party, an attempt to bring warmth and festivity into homes that might otherwise go without. But as with most things in Indian politics, the surface is rarely the whole story. The move hasn't gone unnoticed by political observers. Why this sudden and massive outreach to Muslims—by a party that has so far built much of its narrative on distancing itself from appeasement politics? This is the same BJP whose leaders have routinely criticised political opponents for attending Iftar parties, framing such gestures as opportunistic pandering. And yet, here we are, with the ruling party preparing curated Eid hampers not just for a symbolic few but for over 30 lakh Muslim households. For many, the question is not whether the gesture is kind—but why now, and why like this? The BJP's 'Saugat-e-Modi' kits have not only surprised political commentators but also drawn scathing remarks from the Opposition. For some, it's a clear contradiction of the BJP's usual stance on such gestures. But for political analysts watching the timing closely, the move seems less like a change of heart and more like a strategic calculation—with Bihar in mind. The upcoming Bihar assembly election has raised concerns within the BJP that rising Opposition

momentum could impact not just the party, but also its key allies—Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal (United), Chirag Paswan's Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), and Jitan Ram Manjhi's Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular). In that light, the Eid outreach feels less like an act of cultural generosity and more like a political buffer—an attempt to soften the blow in a state where coalition math can shift quickly. That analysis may hold some truth—but it also seems to overlook the broader outreach pattern the BJP has been steadily building, particularly toward poor Muslims, Pasmanda communities, and Muslim women. Over the past few years, the party has made targeted efforts to create an opening within sections of the Muslim electorate long seen as distant. In the 2023 urban local body elections in Uttar Pradesh, the BJP went as far as fielding Pasmanda Muslim candidates—a move once considered politically unthinkable. Of the 395 Muslim candidates it fielded, 54 went on to win. These numbers may seem modest when seen in the larger national context, but they speak to a subtle shift in the party's approach.

One that goes beyond gift boxes and hints at reimagining of BJP's political strategy—at least on the surface. BJP's effort to engage with Pasmanda and poor Muslims isn't new. In UP, Danish Ansari, a Pasmanda Muslim, was appointed as Minister of State for Minority Welfare, Muslim Waqf, and Haj in Yogi Adityanath's second cabinet—which was seen by many as a symbolic but politically significant move. The party and its spokespersons often claim that it was the BJP that made APJ Abdul Kalam the President of India, citing it as proof of its inclusive credentials. Added to this are a number of welfare schemes that directly or indirectly

Journalist honored with Vigilant Sentinel Award, Pandit Dinesh Dutt Jha memorial ceremony was grandly organised



Varanasi

Journalist were honored with the Sajag Prahari Award at the Dinesh Dutt Jha memorial ceremony in Varanasi. National Journalist Association as a special guest National President Rakesh Kumar Gupta was present. Dinesh Dutt Jha was the father of modern Hindi journalism, the pioneer of Indian journalism. Dinesh Dutt Jha presented the news in a simple, clear and logical manner: He was the sun of Indian journalism. Dinesh Dutt was a strong advocate of linguistic purity in newspapers, a fearless and

self-respecting journalist. Varanasi: Maithil Samaj Uttar Pradesh and National Journalist Association Dinesh Dutt Jha Memorial and Honor Ceremony was organized at Paradkar Bhavan under the joint auspices of Editor-in-Chief Pt. Kashi Journalist Association Founder President and Senior Journalist Dr. Atri Bhardwaj. The function started with garlanding and lighting of lamp by the chief guest, senior journalist Saurabh Chakraborty and guests on the portrait of Pt. Dinesh Dutt Jha. After this, State President of Maithil Samaj Uttar

Pradesh Nirsan Kumar Jha Advocate honored the Chief Guest Senior Journalist Saurabh Chakraborty with Editor-in-Chief Pt. In Dinesh Dutt Jha Journalism Gaurav Samman, turban, dupatta and garland symbolizing Mithila culture and Pandit picture were given. Dinesh Dutt Jha In the ceremony, Editor-in-Chief Pt. Dinesh Dutt Jha Sajag Prahari Award was given to the journalists who have made significant contribution in the field of journalism, in which Varanasi Press Club President Chandan Rupani, PTI Naveen Pandey, INEXT Vikas Singh.

Dibiyapur

A total of 353 residents received medical care during the Arogya Health Mela-2 organized by the Health Department on Thursday. The event took place at Binpurapur in Dibiyapur, where 211 people registered at the health camp held in Birhooni village. The health fair was attended by Chief Community Health Centre Superintendent Dr. Ashok Rai, along with medical specialists Dr. Mrityunjay, Dr. Meenakshi, Dr. Vishal Dubey, Dr. Mahendra Kumar Singh, Dr. Ali Ahmad, Vijay Singh, Priyanka, Neha Dohre, Radha Yadav and Abhishek Yadav. They examined patients and provided treatment for seasonal illnesses including cold, cough and fever. The Arogya Mela (Phase-2) at Binpurapur Panchayat Bhawan was formally inaugurated by Chief Medical Officer (CMO)



Dr. Surendra Kumar Singh. Over 100 patients underwent checkups and received medical assistance from the team of doctors. During the event, the CMO conducted traditional maternal and child health ceremonies- performing Godh Bharai (baby shower) for seven-month pregnant Sneha and Annaprashan (rice-feeding ritual) for six-month-old Abhyansh and Harsh Pratap. Superintendent Dr. Vijay Anand, Dr. Rashmi Yadav and Jyotendra Mishra were also present on the occasion.

Youth Found Hanging Near Kali Mata Temple in Auraiya

Auraiya

Panic spread in the Awasi Vikas Colony area on Friday morning after the body of a young man was found hanging from a tree near the Kali Mata Temple under the Sadar Kotwali police station limits. Local residents who spotted the body immediately informed the police, following which a team reached the spot and took the body into custody for investigation. The deceased was identified as Deepak, a resident of Gauraiya Talab under Sadar Kotwali area. According to preliminary information, Deepak reportedly left his home late Thursday night and allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself from a tree using a rope near the temple. Around 7 AM, morning walkers noticed the body hanging and alerted others, leading to a crowd gathering at the scene. Police later informed the family about the incident. Authorities have sent the body for postmortem and initiated a detailed investigation. Police are trying to ascertain the circumstances and the reasons behind the suspected suicide.

Three revenue-related cases were presented at the resolution day: no on-the-spot resolution

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Tharwai

A resolution day was held on Saturday under the chairmanship of Tharwai Police Station in-charge Santosh Kumar Pandey, where a total of three cases were presented, three of which were related to the revenue department. None of the cases could be resolved on the spot. A joint team of revenue and police was formed and sent for resolution. Inspector Santosh Kumar Pandey directed the formed teams to take necessary action and resolve the complaints as quickly as possible. Additional Inspector Paras Nath, SSI Deepak Kumar, Village Head Mahendra Giri, Revenue Department accountant Arvind Kumar Yadav, Yatendra Tiwari, and Neeraj Patel were present on the spot.

Kumar Satyam Ghazals Mesmerize Mahadeva Mahotsav. From “Chaap Tilak” to “Chupke-Chupke”- the audience swayed to every enchanting ghazal

Barabanki

The soulful evening of the Mahadeva Mahotsav turned unforgettable on Saturday when renowned ghazal singer Kumar Satyam captivated the audience with his refined voice and heartfelt renditions. His performances immersed listeners in a blend of Sufi essence and nostalgic melodies, creating an atmosphere filled with musical devotion. The program began with the ceremonial lamp-lighting by Additional District Judge Krishna Chandra Singh, after which the entire venue resonated with the purity of music. (A Sufi Beginning...and the Court of Music Came Alive) Kumar Satyam opened the mehfil with the graceful lines “Jo khandani hain, woh mizaaj apna namr rakhte hain.” Soon after, when he presented the soulful “Hum tere shehar mein aaye hain musafir ki tarah” and the Sufi classic “Chaap Tilak Sab Chheeni Mose Naina Lagaaye Ke,” the audience



erupted into thunderous applause. It was clear from that very moment that the evening was going to be truly special. (As the Melodies Rose, the Magic Deepened) With each piece, the charm of the mehfil grew stronger. During “Hum tere shehar mein aaye hain musafir ki tarah,” the audience repeated “wah-wah” echoed through the pavilion. His famed ghazal “Abhi ye daulat nayi-nayi hai” brought a wave of applause



across the venue. When he rendered the evergreen, emotion-laden “Chupke-Chupke Raat Din Aansu Bahana Yaad Hai,” a deep silence fell-broken only by the sweetness of the tune. Many elderly listeners were visibly carried away by memories as they gently swayed to the melody. He further elevated the evening with timeless classics like “Hothon Se Chhoo Lo Tum,” “Meri Manzil Hai Kahin,” and “Zindagi Kitni Khoobsurat Hai.” (When Ghazals Wove a Web of

Emotions) In the finale, Satyam performed “Zindagi Aur Kuchh Bhi Nahi, Teri Meri Kahani Hai,” filling the entire atmosphere with musical warmth. The evening reached its peak when he sang “Tumko Dekha Toh Yeh Khayal Aaya” and the audience swayed joyfully, unable to resist the charm. The harmonies, the rhythms, and the timeless lyrics together created an ambience so captivating that every listener found themselves lost in it. (Distinguished Presence at the Event) The event was graced by poet Priyanshu Gajendra, SDM Gunjita Agrawal, Tehsildar Vipul Singh, Naib Tehsildar Vijay Prakash Tiwari, BDO Jitendra Kumar, along with many other dignitaries, all of whom praised the exceptional musical evening. The melodious night not only enhanced the prestige of the Mahadeva Mahotsav but also left an unforgettable and tune-ful imprint on the hearts of everyone present.

Traffic Awareness Campaign under “Traffic Month” Essay & Speech Competition Organized, 283 Vehicles Challenged

Etah

As part of the ongoing “Traffic Month” awareness drive, an essay and speech competition on road safety was organized on Friday at Jan Kalyan Public School, Anandpuri, Etah. Three students each from both categories were honored for their outstanding performances. During the campaign, a large-scale traffic enforcement drive was conducted across the district, resulting in challans issued to 283 vehicles and collection of a total penalty amounting to 3,54,000. The programme was held under the guidance of



Senior Superintendent of Police Etah, Shyam Narayan Singh, supervision of Additional Superintendent of Police, Shwetabh Pandey and leadership of Traffic Circle Officer, Rajesh Singh. In the presence of the Traffic Circle Officer, the traffic police team educated students on the importance of road safety

rules and administered a pledge to support safe travel practices. Strict action was taken against various traffic rule violations, including drunk driving, triple riding, riding without helmets, black films, unauthorized hooters and sirens, pressure horns, underage driving, vehicles without number plates, no-parking violations and speeding. In addition, the traffic police team distributed safety pamphlets, installed reflectors on vehicles and urged the public to use helmets and seat belts mandatorily to ensure safe and responsible commuting.

MSME Credit Outreach Programme organised at Central Bank of India, Varanasi Sanction letters worth 7400 lakh distributed

Varanasi

Central Bank of India, Varanasi Region, successfully organized an MSME Credit Outreach Program today. Led by the Regional Head, Ranvijay Singh, the program was enthusiastically attended by MSME customers, entrepreneurs and staff members from various branches in the region. Loans worth 7400 lakh were sanctioned to eligible MSME borrowers during the event and acceptance letters were distributed to several customers. This initiative reflects the Bank continued commitment to foster the growth of micro, small and medium enterprises and strengthen their vital role in India economic progress. Addressing the gathering, Ranvijay Singh highlighted Central Bank of India commitment to empowering small businesses by providing timely and accessible



credit. He also underscored the Bank active role in the effective implementation of various government-led schemes to promote entrepreneurship, create employment and strengthen economic self-reliance in the region. The program included detailed discussions on various loan schemes, including MSME finance, retail loans and business development products. Customers were also informed about the importance of having a current and savings account and the benefits of maintaining a strong, long-term banking rela-

tionship. Participants appreciated the program for the opportunity to interact directly with senior bank officials and learn about suitable financial solutions for expanding their businesses. The program concluded with a vote of thanks, reiterating their commitment to further strengthen the MSME ecosystem in the Varanasi region. Central Bank of India is committed to organizing such outreach programmes in future as well, so that entrepreneurs and emerging businesses continue to get access to credit facilities and financial guidance.

Mera Yuva Bharat’ Organizes Third Sardar 150 Unity March in Auraiya

Auraiya

Under the banner of Mera Yuva Bharat Auraiya, Uttar Pradesh a grand Third Sardar 150 Unity March (Padyatra) was organized on Friday, spreading the message of national unity and youth empowerment.

The march started from Shri Chhote Singh Sumitra Kumari Inter College, Sarvodaya Nagar, Banthra, Bidhuna. Former MP and State General Secretary Subrat Pathak attended as the chief guest and formally flagged off the Unity March. He was joined by Yatra In-charge Sarvesh Katheria, BJP District President Kamal Dohre,



District Panchayat President Anand Singh, District In-charge Manoj Rajput (OBC Morcha), Regional President Prakash Pal, State General Secretary Anup Gupta and Anwar Warsi, who were present as special guests. A large number of youths and respected citizens participated in the march, including national volunteer Adarsh Kumar, Sunil Kumar, Surendra

Kashyap (Nehru Yuva Mandal Bela) and Cheena, collectively promoting unity and patriotism. The padyatra concluded at Shishu Mandir, Tehsil Road, Bidhuna, where the event came to an end with the national anthem. For security arrangements, Bela charge Ganga Das Gautam accompanied the march along with police personnel to ensure smooth conduct.

Tragic Road Accident: 80-Year-Old Man Dies After Being Hit by Speeding Motorcycle Near Bidhuna

Bidhuna

An 80-year-old elderly man lost his life in a tragic road accident near Bidhuna on Friday after he was struck by a speeding motorcycle. The victim was on his way to attend a religious ceremony at his daughter house when the mishap occurred. Police have taken the motorcycle rider into custody. The deceased has been identified as Siyaram Shakya, son of Roolpal, a resident of Devaraav. According to police, Siyaram Shakya had left home alone to participate in a religious flag ceremony (Jhande Ka Karyakram) at his daughter Anita in-law home in Sanwaliya. As he reached near Bidhuna, a high-speed motorcycle rammed into him, causing severe injuries. The collision was so intense that Siyaram sustained deep wounds on his head and other parts of his body. On receiving information, Bidhuna police rushed to the spot and immediately transported the critically injured man to the Community Health Centre (CHC) Bidhuna in a rickshaw. However, doctors declared him dead upon examination. Siyaram Shakya is survived by his family including three sons and two daughters. One son had passed away earlier, while the surviving sons have been identified as Narveer Singh and Rampratap. Both daughters are married—one named Guddi, residing in Bikupur and the other Anita, where he was headed for the ceremony at the time of the accident. Police officials confirmed that the motorcycle rider has been detained and further legal proceedings are underway. The news of the fatal accident has plunged the entire family into deep mourning.

Kamal Haasan champions independent cinema

Actor highlights indie cinema's freedom, urging greater theatre space amid dominance of commercial films

Independent cinema is as free as India, said veteran actor Kamal Haasan on Friday, stressing that he has been raising the issue of non-commercial films not finding space in theatres for four decades now. The veteran actor walked the red carpet of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) ahead of the screening of his film *Amaran*, which he produced through his banner Raaj Kamal Films International.

Haasan, the star of movies such as *Apoorva Raagangal*, *Nayakan*, *Thevar Magan*, *Sadma*, *Pushpak Vimanam* and *Chachi 420*, believes independent cinema shouldn't be forced into the same mould as mainstream cinema. "Independent cinema is very independent, as free as India..."

don't bring it into a confining space of a very commercialised cinema," the 71-year-old told PTL.

Asked about indie films not getting space to be showcased in theatres, Haasan said, "Yes, that's been my complaint for about 40 years." At the red carpet, Haasan was accompanied by *Amaran* lead stars Sivakarthikeyan and Sai Pallavi. The film, based on Major Mukund Vardharajan who was martyred during a counter terror operation in Kashmir in 2014, serves as the opening film of the 56th IFFI.

Pic: Narayan Pissurienkar



India set to rise as the Studio of the World, say Murugan and Jaju

The diplomats came together during IFFI for an Ambassadors' Roundtable on Friday at the Taj Cidade de Goa Heritage Hotel in Dona Paula, to explore new pathways to advance bilateral audio-visual cooperation, with a focus on co-production opportunities, creative-economy growth, and deeper cultural exchange.

Conceived as a space for dialogue between India and partner nations, the roundtable centred on emerging possibilities in filmmaking, technology partnerships, and regulatory harmonisation that can strengthen global creative ecosystems. The discussion focused on unlocking economic value through co-production treaties, fostering cultural and technological exchange, easing regulatory challenges for filmmakers abroad, and building a more interconnected creative landscape.

Shruti Rajkumar, consultant, NFDC, presented India's evolving anti-piracy framework detailing technological interventions and policy-level mechanisms designed to curb digital leakage and protect content owners.

Ambassadors of Cuba and Nepal, senior diplomats representing Israel, Guyana, Australia, Ireland, Morocco, Togo, and Côte d'Ivoire, participated in the roundtable and shared insights into the film industries in their respective nations.

Welcoming the diplomats, Sanjay Jaju, secretary,

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting highlighted India's rapidly expanding media environment and its growing appeal as a production hub. He emphasised the country's multilingual talent pool and its emergence as a studio of the world, where global stories can be imagined, produced, and shared.

Underlining India's strengths, ranging from diverse filming locations to advanced animation and VFX studios, Jaju stressed that partnering with India provides access to an expansive global diaspora, enabling stories to travel seamlessly across cultures and markets. In his special address, Dr L

Murugan, Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, who chaired the roundtable, positioned co-production as the most powerful avenue for strengthening audio-visual cooperation. He highlighted the role of bilateral agreements in enabling joint development ventures, simpler permissions, smoother mobility of talent and resources, and increased creative freedom for filmmakers. He also spoke about India's strengthened measures against piracy, facilitated through inter-ministerial collaboration with MeITY, MHA, and the Ministry of Law, ensuring a safer ecosystem for global productions.



125 rising stars in the making at Creative Minds of Tomorrow

Talents In Turbo Mode! India's Next-Gen

Creators hit the floor as the fifth edition of Creative Minds of Tomorrow (CMOT) 2025 kicked off on Friday day in Goa, turning the scenic

coastal city into a playground for India's most talented and budding young filmmakers. 125 rising stars are stepping into the spotlight for a high-octane 48-hour filmmaking challenge, where ideas sprint from script to

screen in a whirlwind of creativity, collaboration, and cinematic magic. This isn't just a festival event—it's where tomorrow's directors, actors, and storytellers start making their own blockbuster stories.



Sukhwinder shares childhood memories on KBC

Sukhwinder shares a nostalgic childhood memory, recalling a charming 'trophy-toffee' mix-up that delights Big B and viewers

In an exciting upcoming episode of *Kaun Banega Crorepati*, celebrated singer Sukhwinder Singh takes the hotseat, offering viewers a glimpse into the journey that shaped him into one of India's most iconic voices.

During the episode, Sukhwinder, renowned for his chartbusters and evergreen songs, engages in a candid conversation with host Amitabh Bachchan, reflecting on his musical journey and the experiences that defined his career.

Looking back at his childhood, the singer recalls a

charming memory from one of his earliest stage performances. He shared how a group of judges and chief guests appreciated his singing and decided to award him a trophy. Sukhwinder recounted, "They said, 'Let's give the trophy to the kid.' Hearing that, I started dancing," he laughed, before revealing the innocent misunderstanding behind the moment. "As a child, I misheard 'trophy' as 'toffee'."

The light-hearted anecdote left the audience smiling, highlighting that Sukhwinder's musical journey has been shaped not only by discipline and dedication but also by moments of pure innocence and joy.

Fans of *Mirzapur* got a treat when Ali Fazal shared a candid behind-the-scenes photo from the sets of *Mirzapur: The Movie*. The image, which quickly went viral, featured the original cast — Ali Fazal (Guddu), Pankaj Tripathi (Kaleen Bhaiya), Divyendu (Munna), Abhishek Banerjee (Compounder), Shaji Choudhary (Magbool) — alongside the film's newest addition, Jitendra Kumar (Bablu). Ali accompanied the post with his signature playful tone, referencing Farhan Akhtar's *120 Bahadur* while teasing the upcoming *Mirzapur* film: "From the M team - 7 idhar, 120 udhar... Coming Soon In Theatres." A source said, "It was special to have the original cast together for an important sequence. Ali wanted fans to glimpse that moment. The team is working diligently, and the film will build meaningfully on the world *Mirzapur* has created." With the reunion of the core cast and new additions, anticipation for *Mirzapur: The Movie* continues to grow.

Mirzapur cast BTS



It's a wrap

Dia Mirza and Rahul Bhat wrap first collaboration under Kanwal Sethi's direction, promising a soulful, mature romance set in Nainital



The yet-untitled romantic drama featuring Dia Mirza and Rahul Bhat has officially wrapped, marking the first collaboration between the two acclaimed actors. Directed by Indo-German filmmaker Kanwal Sethi, the film promises a soulful, mature exploration of love, longing, and human emotions, bringing together two understated performers in a compelling narrative.

Set against the serene landscapes of Nainital, the

story acts as a spiritual sequel to Sethi's beloved *Once Again*, capturing the quiet beauty and complexity of adult romance. Known for his sensitive and intimate storytelling, Sethi blends emotional depth with lyrical realism, creating one of the most heartfelt love stories in recent Indian cinema.

Produced by Kovid Gupta, Sanjay Gulati, and Amit Saxena under Kovid Gupta Films, Crawling Angel Films, and Splendid Films, the project has already generated buzz online, with the producer tweeting, "A WRAP of epic proportion."

FILMY SHOTS

Madhuri Dixit stuns in Mrs Deshpande teaser

Bollywood's *Dhak Dhak* girl, actor Madhuri Dixit, is all set to deliver one of her most unpredictable performances in the upcoming thriller-drama series *Mrs Deshpande*. On Friday, the makers unveiled the much-awaited teaser of the show along with its premiere date, promising a story built on suspense and tension. In the teaser, Madhuri portrays the titular character in a never-before-seen avatar. The 30-second-long teaser offers a disturbing yet gripping glimpse into the world of *Mrs Deshpande* (Madhuri Dixit), who is shown quietly cutting vegetables and humming a song. However, things take a mysterious turn when *Mrs Deshpande* brings out a menacing smile after hearing a radio bulletin about a serial killer on the loose.



Siddhant and Mrunal bring an imperfectly perfect love story



Sanjay Leela Bhansali is ready to present an "imperfectly perfect" love story on Valentine's Day 2026. Featuring Siddhant Chaturvedi and Mrunal Thakur in lead roles, the film titled *Do Deewane Seher Mein* looks forward to celebrating the season of love with a story that will feel like a "warm hug, simple, soulful, and refreshingly pure," the makers said, as per a press release. On Friday, the makers dropped the first promo of *Do Deewane Seher Mein*, offering audiences a unique, creative animation paired with beautiful music and soft visuals of a city. "*Do Deewane Seher Mein* is a love story that feels timeless yet new, also touted to be one of the cutest and most heartfelt love stories of the coming year, bringing back the kind of romance we haven't seen in cinemas for a very long time," the maker said.

IDF uncovers massive Hamas tunnel where Israeli soldier's body was kept

Gaza tunnel 7-km long with 80 rooms

ISRAEL

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) have revealed a sprawling Hamas tunnel complex in the Gaza Strip where the body of Lieutenant Hadar Goldin was secretly kept for years. Goldin was killed during a 2014 ambush in Gaza, and

Israel recovered his remains earlier this month.

According to the IDF, the newly exposed tunnel extends seven kilometres, reaches a depth of 25 metres, and contains around 80 rooms—making it one of the most extensive underground networks discovered in the region.

Video footage shared by the IDF on Thursday shows the tunnel running beneath the densely populated Rafah neighbourhood, passing under a UNRWA

compound, clinics, mosques, and kindergartens.

The network reportedly hosted senior Hamas commanders, served as a base for planning attacks, and stored weapons.

The elite Yahalom engineering unit and Shayetet 13 naval commandos led the operation that exposed the complex.

During the raid, Israeli forces also arrested Hamas operative Marwan Al-Hams, accused of involvement in determining



Screen grab from the video shared by IDF of the massive 7-kilometre-long tunnel has 80 rooms.

Goldin's death and aware of the location where his body was held.

The operation was part of months-long covert efforts to locate and retrieve Goldin's remains. Meanwhile, the Gaza conflict continues to escalate. Israeli airstrikes on Thursday killed five people and injured 18 in Khan Younis. Strikes on homes in Bani Suhaila and Abassan resulted in the death of a baby girl and several civilians.

The violence comes as both Israel and Hamas accuse each other of violating a fragile, nearly six-week-old truce. Since the war began in October 2023, more than 69,000 Palestinians and 1,200 Israelis have been killed.

The war in Gaza began after Hamas-led militants killed 1,200 people, most of them civilians, and took 251 people hostage in an attack on southern Israel on October 7, 2023.

Israel boosts air defences with \$8.7bn along with Iron Dome expansion

TEL AVIV

Israel signed a multi-billion-dollar contract with defense contractor Rafael Advanced Defense Systems to expand serial production of the Iron Dome missile defense system, the Defense Ministry announced on Thursday.

The funding comes from an USD 8.7 billion U.S. aid package approved by Congress in April 2024, with USD 5.2 billion specifically earmarked to strengthen Israel's air defense systems.

The Iron Dome system, developed in Israel and manufactured in collaboration with the U.S. government, provides defense against short- and medium-range rocket and missile threats, as well as UAV threats. Throughout the recent war, the system has exhibited outstanding performance with remarkable interception rates, delivering crucial protection to Israel's home front against missile, rocket, UAV, and cruise missile attacks. Featuring cutting-edge technologies, Iron Dome ranks among the world's most sophisticated air defense systems. Rafael is the system's lead contractor.

"The Iron Dome system has become one of the world's finest air defense systems in history. Over the years, and particularly during recent military operations, Iron Dome has protected our nation's skies and successfully intercepted thousands of threats from Gaza, Lebanon, and other theaters serving as a protective shield for Israeli citizens," Defense Minister Israel Katz said.

G20 | President Cyril Ramaphosa insists that the G20 declaration will proceed with or without the United States

'Will not be bullied, G20 declaration will proceed'

JOHANNESBURG

Insisting that South Africa will not be "bullied by anyone", the country's President Cyril Ramaphosa on Thursday took aim at the United States, insisting that the G20 declaration will proceed, with or without the United States.

"The talks are going extremely well. I am confident we are moving towards the declaration, and they are now just dotting the I's and crossing the T's," the South African media quoted Ramaphosa as saying while replying to a question on whether a declaration would be issued following the G20 Leaders' Summit in Johannesburg this weekend. Ramaphosa was speaking on the sidelines of the closing ceremony of the G20 Social Summit in Boksburg on Thursday.



US President Donald Trump has announced that no American government officials will attend this year's Group of 20 (G20) summit in South Africa, accusing the host nation of mistreating its minority white farmers.

"It is a total disgrace that the G20 will be held in South Africa," Trump wrote on his social media platform earlier this month, claiming that the South African gov-

ernment has allowed "abuses" against Afrikaners, including violence, killings, and land seizures.

"Afrikaners (People who are descended from Dutch settlers, and also French and German immigrants) are being killed and slaughtered, and their land and farms are being illegally confiscated.

No US Government Official will attend as long as these Human Rights abuses continue. I look forward to hosting the 2026 G20 in Miami, Florida!," he added.

Trump had previously said he would not personally attend the summit, which brings together leaders from the world's largest and emerging economies.

The decision represents a rare diplomatic boycott of a major global forum by the United States. It also underscores the Trump administration's increasingly

confrontational stance towards South Africa.

The South African government has repeatedly rejected US accusations of discrimination, saying that white South Africans continue to have higher living standards than the Black majority population, decades after the end of apartheid.

Ramaphosa has previously told Trump that reports of widespread persecution of white farmers were "completely false."

South Africa currently holds the rotating presidency of the G20, with the United States set to assume the role next year.

Despite Washington's absence, the summit is going ahead as planned, with world leaders focusing on global economic growth, energy transition, and development cooperation.

Yoon indicted in Marine death probe

SEOUL

South Korea's former President Yoon Suk-yeol has been indicted by a special counsel for allegedly exerting improper influence over the military investigation into the 2023 death of Marine Cpl. Chae Su-geun. Eleven former senior defence and security officials, including ex-spy chief Cho Tae-yong and former Defence Minister Lee Jong-sup, were also indicted.

The special counsel alleges Yoon pressured officials to overturn initial findings that pointed to negligence by Marine commanders, reportedly reacting with anger when briefed on the report. Although indicted without detention, Yoon is already under arrest over separate martial law-related charges and will now face trial for abuse of power and document tampering.

The Marine had died during a search mission amid heavy rains, prompting nationwide scrutiny of military accountability. Yoon denies all allegations.

Ex-CIA officer slams Imran Khan's PTI for apology demand

WASHINGTON DC

The former intelligence officer John Kiriakou claimed that his lawyer had advised him to "keep a low profile" and to be aware of his surroundings. However, he mailed them back and wrote, "In regards to your demand for an apology, I wipe my a** with your demands for an apology."

A controversy has erupted after former CIA officer and whistleblower John Kiriakou revealed that former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's party, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), tried to coerce him into apologising for comments he made on the conflict between New Delhi and Islamabad. In an intentionally crude reply, Kiriakou wrote that he would use their letter demanding an apology as toilet paper.

Kiriakou made an assessment of the conflict while speaking to ANI in October. He warned that "Pakistanis will lose" and that nothing

good will come out of a war between the two countries.

"Nothing, literally nothing good will come of an actual war between India and Pakistan because the Pakistanis will lose. And I'm not talking about nuclear weapons. I'm talking just about a conventional war," he said.

His analysis did not sit right with the people of Pakistan as a result of which he received online abuse and death threats.

"I said, in a conventional conflict, India would beat Pakistan because it has five times the people. The death threats.. I've lost count of how many death threats I received", he recalled in a YouTube podcast with Julian Dorey uploaded on November 18.

PTI's letter condemned his remarks "in the strongest possible terms" and demanded "an immediate apology" to "his excellency, the former prime minister [Imran Khan], to the members of the party [PTI], and to the people of Pakistan."

Russia claims full capture of Kupyansk

MOSCOW

Russian forces have taken full control of the strategic northeastern Ukrainian city of Kupyansk, Chief of the General Staff Valery Gerasimov announced on Thursday during a briefing with President Vladimir Putin at a military command post. The seizure of the city, located near the Oskol River, marks a major milestone for Russian operations in the region, offering a significant logistical advantage and enabling further advances westward.

Gerasimov reported that Russian troops had "liberated" the city of Kupyansk and were destroying Ukrainian positions along the river's left bank. He added that conditions had been created for Ukrainian troops to surrender, claiming many soldiers were willing to lay down their arms but were being threatened by their own commanders. Ac-

cording to him, Kiev has issued no instructions regarding surrender, leaving troops "under threat of being shot or destroyed by drones" if they attempt it. Putin praised Russian forces, stating that roughly 15 Ukrainian battalions were encircled in and around Kupyansk.

Gerasimov also reported progress on other fronts: the East grouping captured 13 settlements across Dnepropetrovsk and Zaporozhye regions, while the North grouping now controls most of Volchansk in Kharkov Region. In the Donetsk People's Republic, the South grouping continues clearing parts of Konstantinovka.

Ukraine, however, has rejected Moscow's claims as exaggerated. The Ukrainian General Staff insisted that "Kupyansk is under the control of Ukraine's defense forces," denying reports of encirclement or major losses in VolA(Pokrovsk).

15 killed in gas explosion

ISLAMABAD

At least 15 people were killed and several others injured after a gas explosion at a factory near Malikpur area in Pakistan's Faisalabad on Friday, the local media reported. In a statement issued earlier, rescue authorities said that a building and nearby structures collapsed after the boiler of the factory exploded early Friday morning.

Trump official criticises Mamdani visit

WASHINGTON DC

New York City Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani's visit to Washington "speaks volumes" that a "communist" is coming to the White House and that US President Donald Trump is willing to meet and talk with anyone, Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt has said.

Mamdani will meet Trump in the White House Friday, the first meeting between the two

and also since his victory in the New York City Mayoral election on November 4.

"It speaks volumes that tomorrow we have a Communist coming to the White House, because that's who the Democrat Party elected as the Mayor of the largest city in the country," Leavitt said Thursday at the press briefing in the White House.

She said it is very telling and also "speaks to the fact that President Trump is willing to

meet with anyone and talk to anyone, and to try to do what's right on behalf of the American people, whether they live in Blue States or Red States or Blue Cities, in a city that's becoming much more left than I think this President ever anticipated in his many years of living in New York." Leavitt did not give details of what Trump's first meeting with Mamdani could entail and also said she didn't want to speak for the President.

"I think you'll all hear from him (Trump) directly," she said.

Ahead of the meeting, Mamdani told reporters in New York that while he has many disagreements with Trump, he will work with the American leader on any agenda that benefits New Yorkers.

Mamdani said his team had reached out to the White House to set up this meeting.

Utqiagvik enters 64-day polar nights

ALASKA

Alaska the northernmost city in the United States — has entered its annual Polar Night, bidding farewell to the sun for the next 64 days. The phenomenon, driven by the Earth's 23.5-degree axial tilt, will keep the sun below the horizon until January 22, 2026.

Located 500 miles north-

west of Fairbanks, Utqiagvik, home to about 4,400 residents, will not experience complete darkness. Instead, the town will see brief periods of civil twilight each day — a dim blue glow that appears before dawn. Still, temperatures are expected to plunge due to the absence of daylight and heat.

The extended darkness contributes to the development of the polar vortex



— a mass of cold, dense air over the North Pole that can

influence winter weather patterns across the North-

ern Hemisphere. Occasionally, this frigid air pushes southward, impacting states across the Lower 48.

Formerly known as Barrow, Utqiagvik sits at 71.17°N latitude, well within the Arctic Circle, where such extreme seasonal patterns are normal. The region has a deep cultural history, with archaeological sites dating back to 500 CE.

Toll in Bangladesh earthquake rises to six

DHAKA

At least six people were killed and several injured as a massive earthquake of magnitude 5.7 jolted Dhaka and parts of the country on Friday, damaging buildings, causing fires at several places and sending panic among residents.

Three people were killed in Dhaka, while the fourth died in the suburban river port town of Narayanganj, officials said, as local media reported injuries to at least 50 people across the country.

The other two deaths were reported from Narsingdi, where the epicentre was located some 10 kilometres beneath the surface.

The epicentre of the quake that struck at 10:38



am (local time) was at Narsigndi on the northeastern outskirts of Dhaka at a depth of 10 kilometres, Bangladesh's meteorology department said. The place is around 13 kilometres east of the seismic centre in Dhaka's Agargaon area.

Dhaka's deputy police commissioner Mallik Ahsan Uddin Sami said,

quoting the fire service, that at least three people were killed after a railing, bamboo scaffolding and debris of a five-storey building fell on them at Old Dhaka's Armanitola area.

A bystander was critically wounded at the scene in the crowded neighbourhood, he said.

Major fire at COP30 venue injures 21

BELEM

A fire at the main venue of the UN COP30 Climate Summit in Belem, Brazil, injured at least 21 people and triggered a chaotic evacuation on Thursday afternoon. The blaze erupted around 2 p.m. in the 'Blue Zone', which houses negotiation halls, country pavilions, media centres, and offices of top dignitaries. Thousands rushed toward exits as smoke quickly filled parts of the complex.

The Brazilian Health Ministry said 19 of the injured suffered from smoke inhalation, while two experienced anxiety attacks. No burn injuries were reported, and 12 people were discharged after receiving

medical attention. Others remain under observation in Belem health facilities.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who was at the venue, was swiftly evacuated by UN security. India's Environment Minister Bhopender Yadav and his delegation also exited safely, officials confirmed.

Authorities shut down the venue for more than six hours to conduct a full safety inspection. It reopened at 8:40 p.m., although the damaged country pavilion area remained closed. The UNFCCC later informed participants that the site had been declared fully safe after Brazilian officials restored working conditions and renewed the operating permit.



UK makes citizenship tougher

LONDON

The UK has unveiled sweeping immigration reforms that could require some legal migrants to wait up to 20 years before applying for permanent settlement. Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood said the new rules aim to reward those who "contribute and play by the rules," while easing pressure on public services.

Under the proposal, the standard qualifying period for settlement will double to 10 years, with longer waits for low-paid workers and those who rely on benefits. Health and social care workers could face a 15-year wait, while migrants dependent on state support may wait 20 years. Illegal migrants and visa overstayers may be required to wait up to 30 years.

In contrast, NHS doctors, nurses, high earners, and entrepreneurs could gain settlement in as little as 3–5 years. Only British citizens—not permanent residents—would be eligible for benefits and social housing.

Briefs

NEW DELHI

Deepti, Renuka at WPL Auction



As many as 277 players from across the world, including India's World Cup star **Deepti Sharma**, will vie for 73 slots during the upcoming Women's Premier League auction, scheduled here for November 27. Announcing the list of players who have entered the auction pool, a WPL media advisory said a total of 19 players had registered in the highest base-price bracket of Rs 50 lakh, 11 players in the Rs 40 lakh bracket, and 88 players in the Rs 30 lakh bracket. "The auction list includes 194 Indian players, comprising 52 capped and 142 uncapped players, who will go under the hammer for 50 slots, while 66 overseas capped players and 17 overseas uncapped players will look to fill the 23 available slots," said the release.

NEW DELHI

India has multiple options: Jonty



Former South Africa cricketer **Jonty Rhodes** feels India will definitely miss Shubman Gill in the second Test against the Proteas but said the hosts have enough bench strength to fill the regular captain's void. Gill was on Friday released from the Test squad ahead of the second match against South Africa starting Saturday in Guwahati after he could not fully recover from a neck spasm sustained while batting in the first innings of the opening Test in Kolkata. "Sometimes India's strength is also a slight disadvantage. They have so many great cricket players. So, who to bring in, who to leave out is such a difficult call."

MUMBAI

IES Orion, Padmakar Dhamdere win



The Secondary Section Championship title of IES Gymnastics Tournament was bagged by IES Orion, while Padmakar Dhamdere English

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PREVIEW | Rishabh Pant will lead the home side with the series on the line

Team India face buoyant SA

MUMBAI

Team India would look to avoid an embarrassing and historic series defeat to South Africa when they lock horns in the second and final Test at the Barsapara Stadium in Guwahati on Saturday.

If India's batters were found wanting against some sustained South African spin bowling led by Simon Harmer and Keshav Maharaj, the challenge has been compounded even further this time around with the absence of regular skipper Shubman Gill.

Gill has been ruled out of the Test due to a neck injury sustained during the first Test in Kolkata. India vice-captain Rishabh Pant will be leading the team and will have a massive challenge of dealing with a South African team which has been buoyed by their first Test win in 15 years.

The visiting captain Temba Bavuma has been on an absolute roll as South Africa skipper winning 10 out of 11 Tests played so far and can register his 11th victory as captain in Guwahati.

For India and its head coach Gautam Gambhir, the Test will not just be about avoiding a series defeat but a potential turning point in terms of how they strategize and go about their approach of playing the game.

The decision to play on turning tracks adopted by Gambhir has come in for scathing criticism from all quarters with Indian batters found wanting in executing their skills.

If the pitch at the Eden Gardens turned out to be a damp squib with spinners from South Africa claiming 13 wickets between them and batters from both sides struggling and Bavuma being the only batsman scoring a fifty,



India's head coach Gautam Gambhir gives batting tips to Yashasvi Jaiswal during a practice session.

Guwahati will be an unknown entity. Going into a Test match with not knowing what to expect from the pitch is presently a scarier prospect for India and Gambhir given the recent turn of events.

India would hope their batters get their act together be it at the top of the order with the likes of KL Rahul and Yashasvi Jaiswal not firing in the Kolkata Test.

Washington Sundar's introduction as No 3 was being seen in some quarters as the ushering in of a new era by Gambhir. The play did not

work from a match winning perspective but Washington certainly has the potential and the goods to change the course of the match with his bat as much as he does with the ball.

With the left-handed batter's promotion up the order, India can play four spinners in tandem with Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel and Kuldeep Yadav all in the mix. Jasprit Bumrah gave India a rollicking start in the first Test with his ruthless fifer but then things went south for the home team.

Squads:

India (probable): 1 Yashasvi Jaiswal, 2 KL Rahul, 3 B Sai Sudharsan, 4 Dhruv Jurel, 5 Rishabh Pant (capt, wk), 6 Nitish Kumar Reddy, 7 Ravindra Jadeja, 8 Washington Sundar, 9 Kuldeep Yadav, 10 Jasprit Bumrah, 11 Mohammed Siraj
South Africa (probable): 1 Aiden Markram, 2 Ryan Rickelton, 3 Wiaan Mulder/ Dewald Brevis/ Senuran Muthusamy, 4 Tony de Zorzi, 5 Temba Bavuma (capt), 6 Tristan Stubbs, 7 Kyle Verreynne (wk), 8 Corbin Bosch, 9 Marco Jansen, 10 Simon Harmer, 11 Keshav Maharaj

Rabada ruled out of second Test

Barsapara track better than Eden Gardens, says SA skipper Bavuma

GUWAHATI

South Africa pace spearhead Kagiso Rabada was on Friday ruled out of the second Test against India as he has not recovered from the rib injury he suffered during a training session ahead of the series-opener.

"Kagiso has been ruled out of the second Test," said Proteas skipper Temba Bavuma while giving an update on the pacer, who also missed the first Test in Kolkata, which the visitors won by 30 runs.

Bavuma hinted that Lungi Ngidi, who has joined the team as a reinforcement, could feature in the Guwahati game, starting Saturday.

"Is there a temptation to play him? Yeah, definitely. That's why he's here. He can do what he can do with the new ball. If there is a bit of assistance with the new ball, especially with the early morning spots, he definitely comes into play." "We'd like to make that decision early on in the morning, but with any player that comes into the squad, comes in with the backing of everyone."

Bavuma added that the Guwahati track looked like a typical sub-continental wicket, which aids batting in the first couple of days and then becomes conducive for the slow bowlers.

"This wicket looks a lot fresher and will be more consistent in terms of variability compared to Kolkata. We will have another look in the morning and decide on Kagiso's replacement," the skipper opined.

"This is a typical sub-continental wicket with the first two days good for batting



This wicket looks a lot fresher and will be more consistent in terms of variability compared to Kolkata. We will have another look in the morning and decide on Kagiso's replacement

Kagiso Rabada,
South Africa pace spearhead

before spinners come into play."

Guwahati is hosting a Test match for the first time and the pitch at the Barsapara Stadium is an uncharted territory for both teams.

Having won a Test match on a difficult track in Kolkata, Bavuma can feel a spring in the stride of his teammates, who are on cusp of a series-win in India after 25 years.

The last time Proteas won a series in India, Sachin Tendulkar captained India for the last time and late Hansie Cronje also played his final series as leader of Proteas Men. "The mood is buoyant amongst the boys. We're excited to try and replicate our performances as we did in the first Test."

Same India squads likely for NZ series, T20 World Cup

ICC tourney rules mandate teams to submit final 15-member squad

GUWAHATI

The national selection committee led by Ajit Agarkar, in all likelihood, will select identical squads for the five-match T20I series against New Zealand and the marquee ICC T20 World Cup, a BCCI source said on Friday.

While the schedule of the global event is yet to be announced, the tentative start date for the 20-team tournament is February 7.

The ICC tournament rules mandate teams to submit their final 15-member squad, a month prior to the commencement of the tournament. The selection committee will announce their picks with an option to make changes till a specified cut-off date. The same rule was in place too for the 2024 edition held in the Americas which India won under Rohit Sharma's captaincy.

The New Zealand T20I

With only 10 T20Is left before the T20 World Cup, you won't see many changes happening in the squad proper unless someone is ruled out due to any specific injury

Source

series starts from January 21 and will be the last series before the T20 World Cup.

"With only 10 T20Is left before the T20 World Cup, you won't see many changes happening in the squad proper unless someone is ruled out due to any specific injury," a source privy to development told PTI on condition of anonymity.

"One of the biggest reasons being continuity and the 15 chosen for the series."

Govt will intervene to ensure ISL is held: Centre

NEW DELHI

The Centre on Friday told the Supreme Court that it will intervene to ensure that the country's top-tier football competition -- the Indian Super League (ISL) -- is held and players are not put to any disadvantage.

The All India Football Federation (AIFF), on November 7, said it has not received any bid for the commercial rights of the ISL, marking another setback for Indian football as the submission deadline closed.

In a report to the apex court after an unsuccessful tender process to monetise the ISL, the court-appointed committee led by Justice L Nageswara Rao (retired) has recommended striking a balance between preserving the AIFF's authority and keeping in mind prospective bidders' commercial interests.

The committee submitted a report to the top court after the invitation for bids on the tender floated for the ISL's commercial rights found no takers, which left the sport's national federation in a fix.

Stokes shines for England

Skipper's fifer overshadows Starc's 7/58 as visitors gain advantage

PERTH

In a chaotic opening day of the Ashes, **Ben Stokes (centre)** won the toss and watched his team skittled for 172 before taking a five-wicket haul to give England a first-innings advantage Friday in the first cricket test.

Day 1 lived up to the pre-series hype, with pace bowlers dominating on a sunny day in front of more than 51,000 spectators at Perth Stadium. Mitchell Starc took a career-best 7-58 as Australia bundled England out by the second session. Jofra Archer took a wicket in the first over of Australia's reply to show the five-man England pace arsenal wasn't to be outdone. The home team was 123-9 at stumps, still 49 runs behind.

In terms of wickets - 19 tumbled in 72 overs - the test is almost half over with four days remaining.

England lost wickets at regular intervals but batted with intent, scoring at 5.23 runs per over.

The disjointed Australian batting lineup went in defensively and lost wickets at even more regular intervals, with-out the flow of runs.



SCOREBOARD

England first innings: Z Crawley c Khawaja b Starc 0, B Duckett lbw Starc 21, O Pope lbw Green 46, J Root c Labuschagne b Starc 0, H Brook c Carey b Doggett 52, B Stokes b Starc 6, J Smith c Green b Starc 33, G Atkinson c Smith b Starc 1, B Carse c Labuschagne b Doggett 6, J Archer (not out) 0, M Wood c Carey b Starc 0. **Extras:** (LB-5, NB-2) 7. **Total:** (all out, 32.5 overs) 172. **Fall of wickets:** 1-0, 2-33, 3-39, 4-94, 5-115, 6-160, 7-161, 8-168, 9-172. **Bowling:** M Starc 12.5-4-58-7, S Boland 10-0-62-0, B Doggett 7-1-27-2, N Lyon 2-0-10-0, C Green 1-0-10-1
Australia first Innings: J Weatherald lbw Archer 0, M Labuschagne b Archer 9, S Smith c Brook b Carse 17, U Khawaja c Smith b Carse 2, T Head c Carse b Stokes 21, C Green c Smith b Stokes 24, A Carey c Carse b Stokes 26, M Starc c Carse b Stokes 12, N Lyon (not out) 3, S Boland c Brook b Stokes 0, B Doggett (not out) 0. **Extras:** (LB-7, NB-3) 9. **Total:** (For 9 wks, 39 overs) 123. **Fall of wickets:** 1-0, 2-28, 3-30, 4-31, 5-76, 6-83, 7-118, 8-121, 9-121. **Bowling:** J Archer 9-4-11-2, G Atkinson 9-4-19-0, M Wood 5-0-18-0, B Carse 10-1-45-2, B Stokes 6-1-23-5

Batters from both teams were hit in the grill by sharply rising short-pitch deliveries, with Cameron Green struck by a 147 kph (91 mph) Mark Wood bouncer that knocked him off balance and almost

had him tripping on his stumps in the 24th over of Australia's innings.

England's attack was bowling with the kind of menace that the Australian pacemen usually dish out to visiting

hosting rights

IOA Prez Usha confident of India's 2030 CWG bid

NEW DELHI

Indian Olympic Association president **P T Usha** is confident about securing the hosting rights of the 2030 Centenary Commonwealth Games during the Commonwealth Sport General Assembly in Glasgow on November 26.

"Tomorrow we are leaving for Glasgow. I am confident that people's hope will be fulfilled. I am positive. Just wait for 2-3 days," Usha said

here on Friday.

Last month, the Executive Board of Commonwealth Sport recommended Ahmedabad as the host city for the centenary edition of the Games, pending final approval at the Glasgow meeting.

Both Ahmedabad and Abuja (Nigeria) were part of the final shortlist under the organisation's "Games Reset" principles, aimed at fostering innovation and long-term sustainability.

The 2030 Games will mark

100 years since the inaugural CWG was held in Hamilton, Canada.

The Commonwealth Sport Executive Board has also agreed to work with Nigeria to strengthen its future hosting prospects, including a potential bid for the 2034 Games.

Usha was on Friday honoured with the FIICI Lifetime Achievement Award for her extraordinary contribution to Indian sport, inspiring generations of athletes during FICCI TURF 2025 - 15th

Global Sports Summit here.

"I am so happy to get the Lifetime Achievement award. These small, small things motivate us. I was not expecting to get the Lifetime Achievement award," the legendary athlete said.

"Indian sport rises when we rise together. Talent exists in every corner of the country, but opportunity must reach every child. Our focus must remain on the athlete: clear pathways, strong systems, fair selections and support rooted in

science, nutrition and mental strength. India is full of young dreamers, and it is our responsibility to ensure their dreams matter."

The event was also attended by Sports Secretary, Government of India Hari Ranjan Rao.

"India's sporting progress depends on one principle: an athlete-focused, coach-led ecosystem supported by every stakeholder, collaboration between the Centre, states, industry and federations is essential," Rao said.

