

# AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

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

## Bihar: Now Nitish government's focus is on appointments

Patna

With the start of a new term in Bihar, Nitish Kumar's government is focusing on filling vacant positions in departments. All departments have been instructed to identify vacancies and positions and initiate the recruitment process as soon as possible. Following the government's order,



the Building Construction Department has

requested details from all building zones regarding vacancies for

lower division clerks and Class III employees, such as those appointed through the Staff Selection Commission. In the directive sent to several building zones, including Chapra, Purnia, Saharsa, Patna, and Darbhanga, the department has stated that the building zones and subordinate divisions should clear the roster

for vacancies for lower division clerks and Class III employees based on reservations and obtain the approval of the divisional commissioner. Subsequently, the department should provide the department with a requisition for appointments to the relevant positions. Along with this letter, the department also cited a

previous letter that provided similar instructions. Despite the department's instructions, many zones did not provide the required information to the government. The department has said in the letter that those zones which did not provide the required information to the government in the light of the previous order

## India-Indonesia agreed to strengthen partnership



New Delhi

Defense Minister Rajnath Singh held talks with his Indonesian counterpart in New Delhi on Thursday and agreed to further strengthen defense ties. Co-chairing the third India-Indonesia Defense Ministers' Dialogue, the two countries reiterated the importance of international law and a prosperous Indo-Pacific. India announced the gift of horses and a ceremonial carriage from the Indian Army's Remount Veterinary Corps to Indonesia. After meeting Indonesian Defense Minister General

(Retd.) Sjafrri Jamssoeddin in New Delhi, Rajnath Singh said, "Our defense cooperation has grown exponentially in recent years due to our commitment to maintaining regional security. During today's talks, we had a frank discussion on further strengthening our defense cooperation and comprehensive strategic partnership." He said that the talks reaffirmed the long-standing strategic partnership and deepening bilateral defense cooperation. Both ministers recalled the visit of Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto to India as the chief guest at the 2025 Republic

## Our youth power is scaling new heights: PM Modi

New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Skyroot Infinity Campus via video conferencing on Thursday. Skyroot Infinity Campus is a space startup campus. In his address, PM Modi said that the country's space sector is witnessing an unprecedented opportunity. The private sector is making significant strides in India's space ecosystem. The Skyroot Infinity Campus reflects India's new thinking, innovation, and youth power. It is also a result of the government's reforms in the space sector. PM Modi Praises India's Youth PowerThe Prime Minister said, "The innovation, risk-taking, and entrepreneurship of our youth are reaching new heights. India's private sector space talent is making its mark



across the world. Today, India's space sector is becoming an attractive destination for global investment." The Prime Minister said that more than 300 space startups are showing new hope. The Prime Minister recalled the early days of the Indian space program, when rockets were transported on bicycles, and now India has emerged as one of the most reliable launch vehicles. PM Modi said, "This journey may have begun with limited resources, but its progress has proven that determination can achieve dreams. In

changing times, the space sector is growing rapidly, encompassing areas such as communications, weather forecasting, urban development planning, and national security. "Benefits of Historic ReformsPM Modi said, "We have made historic reforms in the space sector, opening it to the private sector, creating a new space policy, connecting startups and industry with innovation, and launching In-Space." He further said that there are plans to open the nuclear sector to the private sector. Skyroot is India's leading private space

company, founded by Pawan Chandna and Bharat Dhaka, both IIT alumni and former ISRO scientists. New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday inaugurated the Infinity Campus of Indian space startup SkyRoute via video conferencing. He said that India's space sector has undergone major transformation in the last 6 to 7 years and has now become an open, collaborative, and innovation-driven economy. The Prime Minister said that his government's opening up of the space sector to the private sector has provided opportunities for the country's youth, especially Gen Z youth, to benefit fully. India has capabilities in the space sector that only a few countries possess. We have skilled engineers, a high-quality manufacturing economy.



Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla paid tribute to the first Speaker of the Lok Sabha, G.V. Mavalankar

## 9 lakh girls defeat Anemia as Kanpur sets record

Kanpur

Kanpur has set a historic milestone under Mission Shakti 5.0 through its remarkable success in the Anemia-Free Campaign. On Wednesday more than 904,000 women, adolescent girls and students across 4500 centres in

the district took iron folic acid (red tablets) simultaneously, spreading a powerful message of health awareness and empowerment. This collective achievement has become a matter of pride not just for Kanpur but for the entire state of Uttar Pradesh. Taking the campaign a step fur-

ther, the district administration has announced plans to honor the staff of centers where the highest number of women and girls received iron tablets. During the felicitation ceremony scheduled for Monday, departmental teams that turned this initiative into a mass

movement will also be recognized. District Magistrate Jitendra Pratap Singh said that Shakti 5.0 has evolved beyond women's safety to become a movement for women's health and confidence. He emphasized that this initiative marks a historic success for Kanpur.

## Pak drone attack on Uri hydro plant was unsuccessful



Chandigarh

Police have arrested Kanwaljit Singh, alias Lovejit Singh, accused of firing at a Congress leader's shop in Gurdaspur, after an encounter. Batala SSP Mehtab Singh stated that the accused was associated with Babbar Khalsa International. A pistol and

the motorcycle used in the crime were recovered from him. He explained that on November 21, two unidentified youths on a motorcycle opened fire at Gautam Guddu Seth's mobile shop in Batala city, Gurdaspur. Police received information that Kanwaljit was traveling on a bike towards Shahpur village in Dera Baba Nanak.

## "Supreme" crackdown on air pollution in Delhi, What is the solution?

New Delhi

The suffocating air in Delhi-NCR is making life difficult for people. In light of the air pollution issue, the Supreme Court has stated that it will hear the matter on a regular basis. The Supreme Court clarified that merely hearing the matter formally around Diwali is not appropriate. The Supreme Court agreed to hear the matter related to the increasing air pollution in Delhi-NCR. The matter was



mentioned by an amicus (lawyer appointed by the court). Due to the urgency of the situation in Delhi-NCR, an early hearing was requested. Commenting on the matter, the CJI asked, "What magic wand can

the judiciary use to tell us? What order can we pass today to clean the air?"

The CJI further stated that he would hear the matter. The problem has been identified. "Many causes of pollution in Delhi" The CJI stated

that there are many reasons behind the pollution in Delhi-NCR; it is not caused by a single factor. Only domain experts can explain the various reasons for this, and if there are multiple reasons, those experts can also provide solutions. He said that he hoped the government would do something in this direction. The CJI said, "We will review this matter regularly. List it on Monday." (With inputs from news agency PTI).

## Congress is working to create a narrative against the country from foreign soil

New Delhi

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) launched a scathing attack on the Congress party and its social media team on Thursday. The BJP stated that the Congress party is working from foreign soil to create a narrative against the country and insult the nation. BJP national spokesperson and MP Dr. Sambit Patra stated in a press conference at the party headquarters

that since 2014, the Congress party, especially Rahul Gandhi and his team, social media team, advisory committee team, and prominent Left leaders, have been leaving no stone unturned to insult Prime Minister Narendra Modi and India. To this end, Rahul Gandhi is enlisting the help of foreign forces and, by operating his accounts from abroad, is attempting to shape the narrative in India.

## India's tradition is a saga of dedication of great men: Yogi

Ghaziabad

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that India's tradition is a saga of sacrifice and dedication by saints, sages, and great men. For ages, this epic has been an inspiration for humanity. Humanity has listened to and been inspired by this epic to shape its future. Even today, sacred worship practices within India continue to foster this tradition with devotion. Three days ago, the completion ceremony of the grand yagya (fire



sacrifice) to mark the completion of the construction of the magnificent temple of Lord Shri Ram in Ayodhya was accompanied by the hoisting of the grand saffron flag by PM Modi.

The entire world and the country witnessed and experienced this eternal splendor of India. CM Yogi visited Tarun Sagar Tirtha in Muradnagar on Thursday. He inaugurated the cave temple, built

in 100 days as part of the Panch Kalyanak Maha Mahotsav. CM Yogi Adityanath remembered Lord Parshvanath and Saint Tarun Sagar Maharaj. The CM also released the books "Meri Beti" and "Antarmana Divya Mangal Path." UP is fortunate that many Jain Tirthankaras were born here. The Chief Minister said that Uttar Pradesh is fortunate that the first Jain Tirthankara, Lord Rishabh Dev, and four other Jain Tirthankaras were born in Ayodhya. The world

## An 8th-grade student took her own life after her parents refused to give her a mobile phone

Nagpur

In Nagpur, Maharashtra, when her parents refused to give their daughter a mobile phone, the teenager, driven by stubbornness, committed suicide. The 8th-grade student hanged herself. Upon receiving the information, police arrived at the scene and sent the body to the hospital for a postmortem. The incident occurred near the Hanuman Temple in the Chankapur area of Nagpur. The 13-year-old 8th-grade student hanged herself because her parents refused to buy her a new smartphone.

New Delhi

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta launched the "Aapki Kaandi, Aapki Adhikar" mega campaign on Thursday. She said that this decision brings new hope to millions of families. Speaking at an event held at the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, the Chief Minister stated that "Aapki Kaandi, Aapki Adhikar" is a campaign aimed at helping citizens recover unclaimed financial assets. This cam-



paign has brought true relief and dignity to middle-class and poor families. This is a major step towards ensuring that the hard-earned money that had been lying unclaimed for years, now reaches its rightful owners. She said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi

and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman understood the concerns of ordinary families, recognized their difficulties, and paved the way to ensure that this unclaimed financial asset reaches the people in a fast, transparent, and secure manner. It is Prime Minister Modi's vision that crores of rupees of public money lying in various bank accounts should be claimed. This initiative is in the public interest.



## Briefs

LUCKNOW

**BJP MP fined for illegal mining**

Kaiserganj BJP MP Karan Bhushan Singh has been hit with a penalty of over ₹4.88 crore for illegal sand mining after the Allahabad High Court's Lucknow bench dismissed his plea against the recovery order. An inspection in January 2019 found that his firm, M/s Nandini Infrastructure Vishnoharpur Tarabganj, had excavated 1.72 lakh cubic metres of sand beyond the approved lease area in Gonda's Durgaganj village. The District Magistrate had imposed a ₹10 lakh fine and ordered royalty and mineral value recovery. The court said Singh may seek revision before the state authority, but the recovery will continue meanwhile.

-Biswajeet Banerjee

AMARAVATI

**Heavy rains due to Cyclone Ditwah**

Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority on Thursday said that a depression over the Southwest Bay of Bengal and adjoining Sri Lanka coast has intensified into a cyclone which is likely to bring heavy rains and strong winds to South Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema districts. According to the APSDMA, the weather system is moving north-northwest and is expected to strengthen further in the next 12 hours. "Cyclone Ditwah has formed and is intensifying. Coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh are likely to experience heavy rainfall and strong winds," said APSDMA in a release.

NEW DELHI

**TMC MP questions EC on SIR AI app**

Trinamool Congress (TMC) Rajya Sabha MP Saket Gokhale on Thursday questioned the "mysterious" AI application that the Election Commission has said it will use for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise in West Bengal. In a post on X, the TMC MP said no details about the app and its functionality are available. "The EC's mysterious 'AI app'... Now, the Election Commission says they will use an 'AI app' during the SIR exercise in Bengal. As is typical, there are zero details of who made this app and its functionality," Gokhale said. As per officials of the EC, the poll panel is set to introduce AI-based verification systems during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls in West Bengal to prevent the inclusion of fake or deceased voters.

**TOUGH STAND | Searches conducted in 10 states after FIR alleges that bribes were paid to govt officials in lieu of disclosing confidential information; cops recover multiple electronic devices during a raid at the Jamia Islamia Institute****Med colleges under ED scanner**

NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate on Thursday conducted searches at 15 locations across 10 states in a money laundering investigation linked to alleged bribery in granting academic sanctions to certain medical colleges to run courses.

Searches were conducted in Andhra Pradesh,

**Information enabled colleges to manipulate the parameters and obtain approval for running courses**

Telangana, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Delhi in connection with the June 30 FIR registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation.

The FIR alleged that bribes were paid to government officials, including the National Medical Commission (NMC), in lieu of disclosing confidential information about the inspection of medical colleges to the key managerial persons related to medical colleges and middlemen.

The information enabled college authorities to manipulate the parameters and obtain approval for running academic courses at the medical colleges. The premises being searched include seven premises of medical colleges located in multiple states, and certain private persons named as accused in the FIR, the ED officials told the media.

**J&K institute raided for suspected unlawful links**

**Handwara:** Acting on credible intelligence inputs, Handwara Police carried out a raid at the Jamia Islamia Institute in Waripora, Handwara, on Thursday as part of an investigation into suspected unlawful activities and alleged links to banned organisations.

According to officials, a team of police personnel searched the premises and recovered multiple electronic devices during the operation. The seized equipment has been sent for detailed forensic analysis to determine its usage and to verify any suspected connections,

including possible affiliations with Jamaat-e-Islami (JIE), which remains a proscribed organisation.

Police stated that the operation was conducted strictly in accordance with legal procedures and emphasised that the investigation is still underway. "Handwara Police is committed to taking firm action against individuals or entities found involved in unlawful or anti-national activities," an official said, assuring the public that transparency and accountability are guiding principles of the ongoing probe.

**NIA custody of Bilal Wani extended**

A Delhi court on Thursday extended the National Investigating Agency (NIA) custody of Jasir Bilal Wani alias Danish, a key accused in the Red Fort blast case, for a

November 18, was set to end on Thursday.

Wani, a resident of Qazigund in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir, was arrested by the NIA in Srinagar on November 17 for allegedly offering technical assistance for terror activities, including modifying drones and attempting to develop rockets in the lead-up to the November 10 blast.

**ED conducts raids along India-Myanmar border**

**New Delhi/Aizawl:** The Enforcement Directorate on Thursday conducted maiden searches along the India-Myanmar border in Mizoram apart from some places in Assam and Gujarat in a drugs trafficking linked money laundering case, officials said. The federal probe agency also seized Rs 35 lakh cash apart from some digital devices. Locations across Aizawl and Champhai in Mizoram, Sribhumi (Karimganj) in Assam and Ahmedabad in Gujarat are being searched under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), they said. The probe stems from a Mizoram Police FIR into the seizure of 4.72 kgs of heroin worth Rs 1.41 crore from six people. These are the first searches conducted by the agency along the India-Myanmar border (Champhai), the ED officials said.

**Assam assembly passes bill to ban polygamy**

Himanta promises UCC if he becomes CM again

GUWAHATI

The Assam assembly on Thursday passed a bill to ban polygamy, making it an offence, which may lead to a maximum of 10 years of imprisonment, barring some exceptions.

It kept people belonging to the Scheduled Tribe (ST) category and areas under the Sixth Schedule out of the purview of the legislation.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) will be implemented in Assam if he becomes the CM again after the assembly polls next year.

During the passage of the Assam Prohibition of Polygamy Bill, 2025, the chief minister, who also holds the portfolio of the home and political departments, said the law is "irrespective of religion and not against Islam as being perceived by a section".

"The Hindus are not free from polygamy. That's also our responsibility. This bill will cover people from Hindu, Muslim, Christian and all



**Members of Assam Pradesh Congress Committee protest over the alleged corruption involving state BJP President Dilip Saikia, CM Himanta Biswa Sarma, his wife Riniki Bhuyana Sarma, and cabinet ministers Ashok Singhal and Jayanta Malla Baruah, in Guwahati**

other societies," he added.

Despite the CM's request to all opposition members to withdraw their respective amendments to send a message from the House that the bill is passed unanimously to empower women, AIUDF and CPI(M) went ahead with their modification suggestions, which were defeated by voice vote.

CPI(M) MLA Manoranjan Talukdar demanded that the bill be sent to the Select Committee of the Assembly for a detailed dis-

cussion on the clauses.

On the issue of UCC, Sarma said it will be implemented in Assam if he becomes the CM again after the assembly polls next year.

Assembly elections in Assam are likely to take place in March-April in 2026.

The Assam cabinet has also approved a report of the Group of Ministers (GoM) regarding the proposal for grant of Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to six major communities of the state.

**RSS leader's murder accused killed in encounter**

CHANDIGARH

The main accused in the November 15 murder of RSS leader Baldev Raj Arora's son, Naveen Arora, was shot dead in a police encounter in Fazilka district early Thursday. Police said the accused, Badal, was taken to Mamu Johiya village for recovery of the murder weapon when two of his accomplices, already hiding there, opened fire on the police team.

In the crossfire, Badal and Constable Balour Singh were injured. Both were taken to the Fazilka civil hospital, where Badal died.

The constable is undergoing treatment. The two accomplices managed to escape but left behind a .30 bore and a .32 bore pistol. Naveen, 32, was shot in the head on November 15 while returning home on his motorcycle. He was rushed to the hospital but did not survive. Police suspect the involvement of a foreign handler and believe the killing was targeted to spread fear in the state.

**Expelled by AIADMK, ex-MLA Sengottaiyan joins Vijay's party**

CHENNAI

Actor Vijay's newly formed Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) received a major boost on Thursday with the entry of nine-time MLA and former AIADMK veteran KA Sengottaiyan. He has been appointed chief coordinator of TVK's high-level administrative committee, a move expected to bring clarity to the party's structure, which many critics have described as functioning more like a fans' association than an organised political party.

Sengottaiyan began his political career over 50 years ago, joining the AIADMK soon after MG Ramachandran launched the party in 1972. A fierce loyalist of Jayalalithaa, he earned a reputation as her most efficient election campaign and tour manager. His name surfaced prominently during the 1989 pandemonium in the Tamil Nadu Assembly, when then Chief Minister M Karunanidhi accused him of assault, leading his trademark dark glasses to break during the chaos. It was in the same turmoil that Jayalalithaa alleged a

**Aarudhra gold ponzi case: ED searches 21 locations in Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata**

MUMBAI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday carried out search operations at 21 locations, including multiple premises in Mumbai, as part of its probe into alleged money laundering by Aarudhra Gold Trading Pvt Ltd (AGTPL), officials said on Thursday.

In parallel, the ED's Chennai zonal office conducted searches across Chennai, Kancheepuram and Kolkata under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

During the multi-city operation, the agency seized Rs 22 lakh in cash and property documents valued over Rs 1.5 crore, and recovered incriminating documents, digital records linked to investments, property assets and suspected fund layering.

The ED operation follows an FIR registered by the Economic Offences Wing

(EOW), Chennai, under provisions of the IPC, the Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Act, 2019, and the RBI Act. According to the FIR, Aarudhra Gold Trading Pvt Ltd (AGTPL) allegedly collected massive public deposits by promising unusually high monthly returns of 10-30%, along with incentives such as monthly payouts, gold coins, and referral commissions of 2% on deposits up to Rs 5 lakh.

The EOW, Chennai, has already filed a chargesheet against 40 individuals and entities, including AGTPL's group companies, directors, senior employees, and field agents. Police records indicate that 1,04,433 depositors have been affected, with claims have been submitted for about Rs.2,438 crore as of June 2023. The default amount has been quantified at Rs.1,404 crore. The main accused V. Rajasekhar continues to remain absconding along with his wife.

**WinZO's founder duo held on money laundering charges**

NEW DELHI/BENGALURU

The Enforcement Directorate has arrested online money gaming platform WinZO founders - Saumya Singh Rathore and Paavan Nanda - on money laundering charges, officials said Thursday.

They were arrested in Bengaluru on Wednesday following their questioning at the zonal office of the federal probe agency, they said.

The two were produced

before a local court in Bengaluru the same night, and were sent to one-day custody by the court. They are expected to be produced again before the court for a detailed order, as per officials.

On Monday, the ED, in a statement, alleged that funds to the tune of Rs 43 crore of gamers were "held" by the company and that these monies should ideally have been refunded to players after India banned real-money gaming.



**Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) leader Vijay with former MLA KA Sengottaiyan, as the latter joins the party, at the Panaiyur headquarters office**

DMK minister had pulled her saree.

Over the decades, Sengottaiyan became a familiar face in the Jayalalithaa Cabinet, though his political influence remained largely centred around his Gobichettipalayam constituency, where he won eight elections. Recently, he was expelled from the AIADMK for rebelling against party leader Edappadi K Palaniswami and demanding the return of ousted leaders. On Wednesday, he resigned as MLA, clearing the path for

his switch to TVK.

Vijay welcomed him, seeing that Sengottaiyan's long political experience would strengthen the party. Addressing reporters, Sengottaiyan, who kept a photo of Jayalalithaa in his shirt pocket, said the people would bring Vijay to power through a "revolution," drawing parallels with AAP's rise in Delhi and Punjab. He added that he chose TVK because he felt the ruling DMK and the AIADMK had become indistinguishable in Tamil Nadu's political landscape.

**New definition of Aravalli ranges may spell disaster, says Congress**

NEW DELHI

The Congress has cautioned that the revised definition of the Aravalli Hills, which extend from Delhi to Gujarat, via Haryana and Rajasthan, can have "grave environmental and public health consequences" and has therefore called for an immediate review of the changes in the Supreme Court.

Flagging the issue, Congress general secretary, while citing a newspaper report, said on Thursday that over the years, the Aravalli Hills have been "devastated by mining, construction, and other activities in violation of all regulations and laws" and that "now it

appears that this sensitive and sprawling ecosystem will be subject to another severe blow."

Stating that as per the news report, the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change has recommended to the Supreme Court a new definition of Aravalli Hills, Ramesh wrote in a post on "X" that: "This definition is meant to restrict mining but in reality will mean that 90 per cent of the Aravalli Hills will not be counted as Aravalli any more. Evidently, the Supreme Court has accepted this revised definition. This is bizarre and will have very grave environmental and public health consequences. It calls for an immediate review.

The road to hell is indeed paved with good intentions."

The report had stated that the Forest Survey of India had red-flagged the issue while stating how important these hills were as they act as barriers to sand and dust flowing east. The apex court had on Nov 20 accepted the Ministry's definition of the Aravalli Hills which laid down that "any landform that is at an elevation of 100 m or more above the local relief will be considered as part of Aravalli Hills along with its slopes and adjacent land". However, the report stated that the ministry had not revealed that this would mean that over 90 per cent of the range will not be counted as such.

**Firing at AAP leader's house**

CHANDIGARH

Two unidentified motorcycle-borne men opened fire at the house of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Daljit Singh Raju near Darvesh Pind in Phagwara, Kapurthala district, early Thursday. Police said around 23 rounds were fired at about 1.30 am, damaging window and door panes, though no one was injured.

Raju is the Phagwara coordinator for AAP's anti-drug campaign and is known to be close to Hoshiarpur AAP MP Raj Kumar Chabbewal. CCTV footage shows the two armed men parking their motorcycle at a distance, walking up to the house and firing multiple shots before fleeing.

**Congress trying to create anti-India narratives: BJP**

NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party on Thursday accused the Congress of trying to "create anarchy" by using several "X" social media accounts being operated from abroad, including from Bangladesh and Pakistan, for trying to promote anti-India narratives.

Raising the issue of alleged misuse of social media platforms, BJP MP Sambit Patra while addressing a press conference at the party headquarters charged that the Congress, its leader Rahul Gandhi and some prominent Left-leaning people have since the formation of the

first Narendra Modi-led government in 2014 not spared any opportunity to speak against India from abroad.

Citing new location-tracking features on "X", Patra alleged that the Congress was relying on social-media accounts to influence domestic political narratives from outside India. With the "X" owned by Elon Musk recently launching a new feature that discloses information about an account's user location, frequency of username changes and the date the account was created, the BJP was able to gain an insight into the accounts it spoke about.

Patra said the handles being operated by various

Congress leaders and supporters were being operated from countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, the United States, Ireland and Thailand, Pakistan. He alleged that "fake" accounts which were part of a "Left-Congress ecosystem" were being used to push anti-India narratives like "Vote Chor" to demean various political leaders and institutions.

Among the prominent Congress leaders whose accounts were being operated from abroad, he said, were the party's media and publicity department chairman Pawan Khera. Patra said the location indicator showed that Khera's account was "based in the United States".

HAPUR

A dramatic scene unfolded at Brighat in Garhmukteshwar on Thursday when two youths arrived in a car with what they claimed was a body for cremation. They prepared the wooden pyre and were about to begin the last rites when a person present at the cremation ground noticed something suspicious. Some locals removed the shroud and were shocked to find a plastic dummy instead of a human body. Investigators suspect that it could be a plot to falsely show a living person as dead to claim insurance money, help a criminal evade law by faking death, or destroy evidence of a planned crime.



## The work of SIR is important; it should be completed within the stipulated timeframe on priority: District Magistrate

Inspected Arya Kanya PG College and other booths as part of the revision campaign

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

**Prayagraj.** District Magistrate Manish Kumar Verma, in order to expedite the collection and digitization of forms as part of the special intensive revision campaign of the voter list, conducted an on-site inspection of the distribution, collection, and digitization of SIR forms being carried out by the respective BLOs at the Arya Kanya PG College and other booths on Thursday. He reviewed the progress of the work and issued necessary instructions to all concerned officials. He inspected booths where the progress of form collection and digitization was poor and where BLOs were showing negligence or indifference towards the work. He inquired about the reasons for the slow progress of SIR at such booths and provided necessary guidance to the concerned BLOs and other officials to accelerate form collection and digitization. During the inspection, he asked the people present in the area to fill out their forms and provide them to the BLOs. He also provided necessary guidance to the other staff members deployed to assist the BLOs to ensure progress in the work. He urged everyone involved in the SIR process to fulfill their responsibilities. Strict action will be taken



against anyone found negligent. The District Magistrate stated that the SIR work is crucial and must be completed on a priority basis within the stipulated timeframe. During the inspection, the District Magistrate also urged all voters to provide their forms to the BLOs as soon as possible. He urged those present to understand their responsibilities and promptly complete the forms and provide them to the BLOs so that they can be processed on time. He stated that voters who, despite repeated visits from the concerned BLO, have not yet completed and submitted their forms, or who are not providing the required cooperation in completing the forms, will not be included in the list to be published on the 9th. Therefore, everyone should complete and submit their forms as soon as possible. He added that people can also fill out their forms online, so if anyone

wishes to do so online, they should submit them as soon as possible. The District Magistrate stated that digitizing the forms is currently a top priority. He inquired from BLOs and other concerned officials about the number of forms distributed and collected, and the number of digitized forms, in relation to the number of voters present. He directed all officials to work together to accelerate the process of digitizing the forms. He directed BLOs to increase door-to-door outreach campaigns and expedite the process of collecting and digitizing the forms from voters. He spoke with the people present at the booth, learned about their problems, and also informed them about the form-filling process and necessary instructions. Municipal Commissioner/Assistant District Election Officer Seelam Sai Teja and other concerned officials were present on the occasion.

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Prayagraj

To ensure that pilgrims attending the Magh Mela 2026 have to travel as little as possible on foot to reach the fair area, a meeting was held jointly by Divisional Commissioner, Mrs. Saumya Agarwal, and Police Commissioner Joginder Singh, with all relevant officials from the police, transport, fair, and district administrations in the I-Triple C auditorium at the Mela Authority office. Discussing the route plan for buses operated by the Transport Department during the fair period, the Divisional Commissioner issued innovative instructions to provide point-to-point mobility for pilgrims during the Magh Mela 2026. Under this initiative, two-wheelers will be provided to transport pilgrims from various pickup points in the district to the nearest parking lot in the fair area. The Mela administration will engage companies like Ola, Uber, and Rapido



through tenders and require them to prepare fare charts based on kilometers. All contracted drivers will be required to operate two-wheelers only on designated routes and adhere to the established fare regulations. To ensure strict compliance, companies will be required to provide the administration with the number and details of their contracted drivers.

A committee of police, transport, and railway officials will be formed to prepare route charts for two-wheelers. This facility

will be available only on non-peak days between January 1, 2026, and February 15, 2026. Regarding shuttle buses, the Transport Department stated that additional arrangements have been made for 75 EV and 200 diesel buses for the fair period. The plan is to operate only EV buses on non-peak days or all buses on peak days. The officials also clarified that the number of buses will be increased depending on the crowds. He also informed about the various route plans made to con-

nect various places of the city to the nearest parking of the fair area, on which the Divisional Commissioner directed that buses should not be brought to GT Jawahar and other sensitive places where there is a high possibility of traffic jam. District Magistrate Manish Verma, Additional Commissioner of Police Dr. Ajaypal, Fair Officer Rishiraj, Municipal Commissioner Salem Sai Teja and other concerned departmental officers were also present in the meeting.

## Saini Police Station conducted a special operation and arrested 12 warrant accused

Saini Police Station conducted a special operation and arrested 12 warrant accused

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

**Kaushambi.** Under the direction of Kaushambi Superintendent of Police Rajesh Kumar, as part of the campaign against crime and criminals in the district, the Saini Police Station team conducted a special operation on Thursday to arrest warrant accused, 12 accused, related to a total of nine cases, were arrested from various locations. After

legal proceedings, the accused were sent to the court. Among the arrested accused, 03 warrant accused related to case no. 1042/2023 1. Bhim Singh son of Radheshyam Yadav 2. Prahlad Singh son of Matadin Yadav 3. Bachan Singh son of Radheshyam residents of Qazipur Pathrawan police station Saini or warrant accused Lakshmi Devi wife of Mithai Lal resident of Nagar Panchayat Azhuva police station

Saini related to complaint no. 2397/16 or warrant Ritu Kesharwani daughter of Ram Lal resident of Bhola Chauraha Azhuva police station Saini related to FIR no. 230/24 section 323/504/354/304/34 IPC or 02 warrant accused related to FIR no. 660/08 1. Babu Lal son of late Sundar Lal 2. Kunna wife of Babu Lal residents of village Nidura police station Saini or FIR no. 412/23 section Warrant

accused Golu son of Ghure Lal Saroj resident of Mauhari Bagh Majra Govindpur Goriyo police station Saini related to 457/380/411/328 IPC related to police station Kokhraj and warrant accused Mahesh Pasi son of late Kedar Nath Pasi resident of Mahubari police station Saini related to case no. 3518/2013 and warrant accused Jai Chand son of Bhulla Pasi resident of Sirathu police station Saini related to case no.

45/2009 and warrant accused Sajan son of Ramhit resident of Maheshpur Ganpa police station Saini related to NCR no. 110/2005 and 02 warrant accused 1. Bachraj Pasi son of late Gajodhar alias Ram Saware resident of ward no. 06 Azhua police station Saini related to FIR no. 827/2015 have been arrested by police team of police station Saini and presented in the court.

Kaushambi

A married woman was shot and killed at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday in the Unau village council of the Kaushambi Manjhanpur police station area. After the shooting, the young man arrived at the Manjhanpur police station with a pistol and confessed to the murder. Police have taken the young man into custody and, upon arriving at the scene, seized the body of the deceased woman and



sent it for a post-mortem examination. The deceased woman, Deepika Tiwari, 24, daughter of Ram Mohan Pandey, a resident of Unau, was married three years

ago. A few days ago, she had returned to her maternal home in Unau, where she was shot and killed. The shooter is said to be her relative.

## Pickup driver falls into canal after hitting bike, injuring three



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

**Kaushambi.** After hitting a bike near Sambhui village in the Saini police station area, the pickup lost control and broke a culvert, eventually overturning into the canal. Three people were injured in the accident. People from the vicinity rushed to the scene and informed the police. Police arrived at the scene and rushed the injured to the hospital for

treatment. According to information, Ravi, son of Dayashankar, is a pickup driver from Kaju village in the Charwa police station area. On Thursday evening, he was carrying electricity department supplies in his pickup and was heading towards Kada Dham. Near the canal at Sambhui turn in the Kada area, a biker, Betu Singh, son of Uttam Singh, resident of Ganpa, Saini police station, suddenly came in front of him.

After hitting the bike, the pickup lost control, broke a culvert, and overturned into the canal. In the accident, bike rider Betu Singh and pickup driver Ravi along with Manish Kumar, resident of Ram Nagar town Chayal, were also injured. After receiving information about the accident, the police reached the spot, called an ambulance and admitted all three injured to Sirathu CHC. Their condition is said to be critical.

## Inspector stripped of his post, lawyers protest, causing traffic jam for 6 hours

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

**Prayagraj.** The Dhumanganj police station in-charge was placed under suspension late Thursday evening. Bar Council candidate Pradeep Deoghar Tripathi, along with his fellow lawyers, launched a protest against him and blocked the Prayagraj-Kanpur highway. Following talks between the police officer and the protesting lawyers and assurances of immediate action and an investigation, the protest was ended and traffic was restored. Advocate Piyush Singh, a resident of Pritam Nagar, Dhumanganj police station in the city, received a message from his bank on Wednesday evening stating that approximately ₹16 lakh had been transferred to another account. Advocate Piyush Singh stated that the bank manager had transferred



a large sum of money from his account without informing him. When he went to the bank to inquire, he was treated rudely. He complained to the Dhumanganj police station. He alleged that the station in-charge, Inspector Rajesh Upadhyay, did not answer his phone despite several attempts. Upon arriving at the police station, he and his fellow lawyer, Pradeep Deodhar Tiwari, were mistreated and threatened with shooting by pointing a service revolver at them.

Angry lawyers then came out of the police station premises to express their displeasure against the police and blocked the Kanpur Prayagraj Highway. Advocate Pradeep Tiwari, a candidate for the Bar Council elections, alleged that the inspector misbehaved with him when he went to the police station to seek information. He stated that he had arrived at the police station regarding a case involving his fellow lawyer, Piyush Singh Patel. He first tried to speak to the inspector

on the phone, but when he was not answered, he contacted another number. Upon arriving at the police station, the inspector asked him to leave and, in anger, brandished a pistol and threatened to shoot him. The court intervened and brought the situation under control. Pradeep Deodhar Tiwari alleged that the inspector was abusing the lawyers, calling them "brokers" and appeared mentally unstable. He stated that no public servant providing legal services has the right to use such language and threats. He demanded the immediate suspension of the inspector and the registration of an FIR for threatening him. In response to the lawyers' protest, DCP Manish Shandilya arrived at Dhumanganj police station. Police officers continued to try to pacify the angry lawyers from 3 p.m. onward, but the lawyers remained

adamant on their demand for an FIR to be filed for pushing Inspector Rajesh Upadhyay from the station's chair and threatening them with a pistol. To control the ongoing protests and slogans against the police, police officers deployed police from four police stations. To end the protest, DCP Manish Shandilya, an ADCP, a trainee IPS officer, and ACs from two circles were deployed at the protest site for security. At around 7 p.m., following the lawyers' protest, police officers finally placed Inspector Dhumanganj on the line of duty at the request of the protesting lawyers. DCP Manish Shandilya stated that, as per the lawyers' demand, the investigation of the entire matter has been handed over to the ADCP. Further action will be taken based on the facts that emerge after the investigation.



## Editorial

### India's online gaming ban shows today's thriving sector could be tomorrow's casualty

It took a mere six minutes in the Lok Sabha and a few minutes more in the Rajya Sabha to wipe out an established industry. In a matter of 48 hours, the passing of the Bill on Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill 2025 has adversely impacted 2,00,000 direct employees, Rs 23,613 crore in investments, over Rs 4,500 crore in advertisements and Rs 20,000 crores in direct and indirect taxes. The Bill, now an Act, was introduced in Parliament without undergoing the due process of a draft for public opinion, stakeholder consultations, or, at the very least, a warning. Policy corridor whispers imply that even allies were not aware of such a move. A decade-old, established sector constitutionally guaranteed under Article 19 has been asked to wrap up operations and told it will be held liable for criminal actions, including those of its employees, if it doesn't comply. While the Act aims to safeguard public health and address the concern of offshore illegal platforms, any ban, especially in the digital space, has consistently proven to have amplified the issue multiple times. The immediate fallout would include economic disruptions, shifts in user behaviour, and social harms. The opaque strategy adopted by the government in this case highlights the grave direction that policy-making is taking in India. The uncertainty goes far beyond the online real money gaming sector and will set a precedent for future policies in each sector. This swift and unconsulted legislative strike is not just a regulatory misstep but a stark warning of the growing unpredictability in India's policy landscape, one that could unravel investor confidence, domestic business trust, and exacerbate systemic issues like brain drain of talent and businesses. The immediate economic toll is staggering and underscores the bill's shortsightedness. Beyond the 2,00,000 direct jobs at risk, it affects ancillary industries like fintech, advertising, and content creation. Annual GST revenues of Rs 20,000-25,000 crore and TDS of Rs 1,080 crore (FY24) will evaporate, creating fiscal gaps at a time when India's fiscal deficit stands at Rs 15.77 lakh crore, amounting to 4.8 per cent of GDP. But the real cautionary tale lies in the investor disarray this creates. A reported foreign direct investment (FDI) of \$2.7 billion and startup funding of \$2.8 billion in real money gaming are now stranded. This unpredictability echoes broader patterns in India's policy environment, where sudden changes deter long-term commitments. For instance, the 2019 e-commerce FDI rules, which restricted inventory models for e-commerce platforms, led to a reported slowdown in US-India tech investments, with firms citing regulatory whiplash as a key barrier. Similarly, retrospective tax demands in the past (e.g., the Vodafone case) have been linked to a dip in FDI inflows, with studies showing that economic policy uncertainty reduces FDI by up to 30 per cent in emerging markets like India. The 2025 Kearney FDI Confidence Index highlights regulatory complexity and ease of doing business as concerns for investors in India, potentially showing off billions in inflows amid global uncertainties like US tariffs. Businesses, particularly in the digital economy, thrive on stability. This bill's passage without stakeholder input, bypassing the Pre-Legislative Consultation Policy, sends a chilling message: Today's thriving sector could be tomorrow's casualty. As the industry voices alarm, with petitions likely heading to courts, the precedent risks cascading effects on adjacent digital fields where India aims for global leadership but faces investor hesitation due to such volatility. In the larger scheme, this policy unpredictability is accelerating India's brain drain, particularly in tech and digital innovation, where skilled professionals seek more stable environments abroad. Data from 2025 reveals a stark reality: Over 1,05,000 global tech layoffs this year alone, with 20 per cent occurring in India, have pushed thousands of engineers and developers to migrate.



## Why hasn't India won the Nobel Prize for literature after Independence? Quality of education

**Speaking** in a distinguished institution, a political leader expressed concern that after Rabindranath Tagore in 1913, no Indian has received the Nobel Prize in Literature. His question—"Is the writing of our country not at the level anymore? Or has it been ignored by international institutions?"—was thought-provoking. But the tone was aloof. However, when you think about it, the answer is obvious. During the British Raj, India produced a number of great poets, artists, scientists, scholars, and thinkers. Many of

them have an international reputation. The solitary Nobel Prize in literature was also received during the British period. Under the British, our talents flourished. The educational institutions of the British rulers encouraged talents without discrimination on any ground. Did our desi leaders, post-British rule, continue that noble tradition? It is well-recognised that the educational institutions of British India declined rapidly after Independence. Instead of nurturing talent, new policies, knowingly or unknowingly,

worked toward their suppression or migration to the West. Isn't it curious that during the British Raj, hardly any Indian writer, scientist, artist, or scholar decided to settle abroad? Whereas in Independent India, talent of all kinds began settling in Europe and America, leaving India for good. To come to the issue, the leader who pointed out our lack of Nobels seems unaware that there are two essential prerequisites to help grow quality writers. One, to connect children & youth with great literature, taking care that they also get time

and encouragement to savour it. Second, to maintain a whole system of good institutions and platforms for learning, teaching, writing, publishing, and interacting. To ensure all this, staying away from narrowness or compromise must be a rule. But desi leaders, preachy and voluble, did the opposite! The British made arrangements in every field of knowledge and science to promote talent—modern public institutions, great libraries, newspapers, magazines, entire new learning disciplines like history, civics, etc.

# India-US relationship has survived darker times. Intelligence ties bind us together

**Edward** Heath, Great Britain's Prime Minister, felt the words wash over him, hot like a dragon's breath: "The United States had received nothing from India except a kick in the teeth, in exchange for \$4 billion last year," President Richard Nixon raged. The Indians, Nixon went on, thought "the white nations had no choice but to come in and bail India out." Alarmed, British Foreign Secretary Alec Douglas-Home stepped in. "The Indians were admittedly intolerably high-minded," he accepted. "But there was an important common interest in preserving Indian independence from Soviet and Chinese domination." The invective against Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her nation, provoked by her refusal to back down on Bangladesh, continued in the privacy of Nixon's office, though: "A slippery, treacherous people," "bastards," "old witch," "b\*tch". Even as the political leadership in both countries raged against each other, the relationship between the Central Intelligence Agency and the Research and Analysis Wing remained robust, historian Paul McGarr writes. In 1973, the head of Prime Minister Indira's secretariat, Prithvi Nath Dhar, and the chief of R&AW, Rameshwar Nath Kao, lobbied for CIA chief William Colby to visit New Delhi. As President Donald Trump appears to be leading the India-United States relationship into an abyss from which there is no return—adding restrictions to the outsourcing of jobs on the back of crippling tariffs—the period



between 1971 and 1973 shows the two countries have been locked in airless places before. The intelligence services of both countries, though, found ways to bypass potholes and cul-de-sacs, ensuring strategic conversation continued. Little understood, India-US intelligence ties flourished in the shadow of the Cold War, as New Delhi resolutely proclaimed its commitment to non-alignment. Late in the summer of 1949, India was struggling to contain its first post-Independence insurgency, an uprising by communists in the Telangana region. The Indian Army, sent to Hyderabad to battle the Nizam's armies, found itself at war with peasant insurgents in Telangana. Thousands died in the brutal conflict, Jonathan Kennedy and Sunil Purushotham have recorded, as the Army herded Adivasis into concentration camps in near-starvation conditions. Less than forty-seven years old and with little experience in global politics, an unassuming police officer was tasked with helping India find the right tools to deal with the crisis. TG Sanjeevi, earlier a Superintendent of Police in Madras, and now Director of the Intelligence Bureau, was

ordered to make a three-week visit to Washington. For decades before Independence, the Intelligence Bureau had been relentlessly focused on the threat of communist terrorism. Telangana was its first challenge after Independence—and, it seemed, its first potential failure. To Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, it seemed that the threat was transnational and a danger to the survival of the Indian republic. The colonial legacy meant India had a substantial relationship with the United Kingdom's intelligence services. The Security Service, popularly known as MI5, was a critical source of assistance in the first years after Independence. India became debilitatingly reliant on this relationship, Avinash Paliwal has recorded. "This is satisfactory," an MI5 memo on general dependence smugly noted—but India understood the need to widen its partnerships. George Kennan, then director of policy planning at the State Department, agreed with Prime Minister Nehru's assessment. To address the challenge, Kennan recorded, Sanjeevi would have to "look beyond India's borders and

seek to influence policy in regard to dangers from without." This meant that, despite Nehru's socialism, America would help him push back against the Communist threat. The visit did not begin well, though. Sanjeevi was affronted by the imperious behaviour of the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, J Edgar Hoover, and vowed never to allow contact between the Intelligence Bureau and the FBI. The damage was contained, however, during his subsequent meetings with the Central Intelligence Agency. Sanjeevi came away with positive impressions of his meetings with Colonel Richard Stilwell, Kermit "Kim" Roosevelt, and the director of central intelligence, Roscoe Hillenkoetter. Even though the two countries clashed over questions of ideology and global politics, the alignment of their interests wasn't particularly opaque. India's government provided arms and training to Tibet's ramshackle military after 1949, and even considered deploying troops in support of its independence. The problem was that the Indian Army just didn't have the resources. In 1954, India formalised this reality, ceding many of its colonial-era rights, like stationing troops in Lhasa, historian Karunakar Gupta has written. The Intelligence Bureau, though, looked the other way, as the CIA supplied weapons and equipment to Khampa insurgents from 1958 on, historian Claude Arpi has written. India also ignored CIA flights in support of Tibetan insurgents, which

crossed over its territory en route from Dhaka. Langley supported the founding of the Special Frontier Force, intended to carry the PLA along the China-India Line of Actual Control. The CIA also oversaw the insertion of nuclear-powered surveillance equipment to gather intelligence on China's nuclear-weapons programme. Even as this intelligence cooperation continued, Prime Minister Nehru publicly complained that the United States was interfering in Indian politics, "buying up newspapers and spreading a network of publicity organisations." Later, Prime Minister Indira assailed foreign powers plotting to "run down India." CIA agents, American intelligence officer Russell Jack Smith wrote sharply, "were to be found according to Madame Gandhi, beneath every charpoy and behind every neem tree." Even as Prime Minister Indira frequently railed against CIA intervention to bring about regime change—and public outrage erupted when the journal Ramparts disclosed CIA funding for Indian anti-Communist political parties in 1967—the relationship carried on in the darkness, as it were. As Sanjeevi told CIA interlocutors in 1950, "he frequently had to take independent action without the knowledge of his government". The intelligence relationship survived even in the face of contradictory United States objectives. For example, CIA personnel told India they had detected signals linking the jihadist warlord Sirajuddin Haqqani.

### China will be more central to India now. Though an anti-US unity is premature

As I write this column from Boston, the biggest American newspapers have the Tianjin meeting of Prime Minister Modi, President Putin, and President Xi—all three smiling and shaking hands—as a leading news item. The sub-theme is also that President Trump's policies are driving them closer, perhaps opening the door to an anti-US unity in international geopolitics. The talk of an anti-American unity is perhaps premature. At least two of the three nations, China and India, have significant ties with the US, which can be ruptured only at a very great cost. Despite the talk of a decline, the US is still the world's largest economy. At the end of 2024, according to the World Bank, America's GDP was \$29.18 trillion, which amounted to 26.2 per cent of the world economy (\$111.33 trillion). A market of that size cannot easily be shunned. Indeed, most countries and corporations would covet access to it. But there is no doubt that Trump's radi-

cal break from America's post-Cold War foreign policy, especially his use of tariffs as an economic and political tool, is creating new geopolitical and economic scenarios. Countries must take into account these changes as they make adjustments in their foreign policies. Of course, Trump is known to be mercurial and abrupt changes in his policies cannot be wholly ruled out. However, three things are likely to remain constant: use of trade tariffs, opposition to immigration, and smaller American investments in international security. The changes in these realms, if any, are likely to be of degree. Fundamental changes can take place only if the results of these policies are catastrophic for his MAGA base, especially via inflation or if the judiciary intervenes more firmly than it has done so far. How should India, severely jolted by Trump's tariffs, imagine its way forward? Let me suggest that China will become even more central to India's foreign policy.

### Vijay is winning the nickname war in Tamil Nadu. He's attacking Brand Stalin with 'uncle' taunt

In the world of marketing, a new entrant's toughest task is to break the perception built around the old guard. Established brands don't crumble because of direct attacks. They erode when their aura is punctured, when their carefully constructed image is made to look smaller, or even laughable. Politics is not different. Though for decades, MK Stalin was no more than a 'possible' political heir to former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu M Karunanidhi, things changed in 2019. Stalin was turned into a brand, crafted meticulously as the only answer, as an able administrator, and a calm and composed CM post the 2021 elections. He was presented as the inevitable figure, the steady numero uno of contemporary Tamil Nadu Politics, a man positioned above ridicule. Even his critics rarely succeed in dismantling his image. Actor turned politician Vijay was out to destroy that brand when he called him, "My dear Stalin uncle." With such an open taunt at his second public rally, Vijay wasn't merely addressing the Chief Minister; he was reframing him. What at first sounds like cinema dialogue is,

in LinkedIn lingo, classic disruption. A single word that wedges into the aura of authority, triggering what one might call the 'uncle-ification of a statesman'. Stalin was recast as just another politician, a figure who is now the subject of memes. This is not an insult for insult's sake, but rather is a strategy through vocabulary. Political authority in Tamil Nadu has always been theatrical. MGR's heroism, Jayalalithaa's imperiousness, Karunanidhi's oratory skills, Stalin's calm—these are curated performances. Brands with narratives. "Uncle" in this context is not reverential. It's casual, familiar, and even patronising. The strength of Stalin's brand lies in the distance it creates, and Vijay's jab collapses that distance instantly. It is lethal in politics. It forces a new narrative onto the mainstream discourse, away from discussions on policy and performance, and instead drags it into a battle of personalities. Marketing teaches us that the most viral campaigns are not the longest ones, but the most repeatable ones. The same applies to political communication in the social media age. Uncle' is not just a word but a weapon in what Tamil politics

increasingly resembles—nickname warfare. A meme-ready shorthand handed over to the trolls, clipped into reels, recycled into jokes, hash-tagged into tweets. DMK's own and meticulously built digital army, usually skilled at dictating the narrative, is now forced to rebut it. And rebuttal, sadly, is half the battle lost. As one would have expected, social media is abuzz with the keyword 'Uncle'. Not one but a thousand iterations of the same comment are afloat across the state's digital space — "What uncle. it is very wrong uncle." Every attempt at creating a 'third and alternate force' in Tamil Nadu—be it Kamal Haasan, Seeman, Vijayakanth, Vaiko, or GK Moopanar before them—has struggled because they failed to dent the DMK-AIADMK binary. Voters saw them as the 'Third' person outside of the duel, not mainstream players. Vijay is trying a different path. Not with a policy vision, not with organisational might, nor with uniquely positioned ideological sermons, but with classic brand disruption. By making Stalin react, or at least by forcing his sympathisers to, Vijay dug a pit in the binary.



## Briefs

LALITPUR

**Minister inspects medical college**

State Minister and District In-charge Minister Danish Azad Ansari conducted a surprise inspection of the Government Medical College in Lalitpur. He reviewed various OPDs, wards, registration counters, and the medicine store, seeking direct feedback from patients. The minister directed officials to ensure no illegal transactions occur with patients and to expedite the appointment of neuro and cardiac surgeons. He emphasized that all necessary medicines should be available within the hospital.

BALLIA

**Three Accused in Murder Case Arrested**

Haldi police have arrested three men—Piyush Kumar Singh, Aneesh Kumar Singh, and Ankur Singh—wanted for the murder of a tent businessman, Ajit Kumar Singh. The victim was killed following an argument over changing chair and sofa covers at a wedding on November 22. The accused had dumped the body and the victim's motorcycle into the Ganga river. The arrests were made based on a tip-off, and the accused have been presented before the court.

BALLIA

**1971 War Hero Captain Ali Hamza Passes Away**

Captain Ali Hamza, a brave Indian Army officer who played a significant role in the 1971 India-Pakistan war, passed away in a Lucknow military hospital at the age of 78. His body, draped in the national flag, was kept at his residence in Ubbhav for the public to pay their last respects. A founder of a local ex-servicemen's organization, he is survived by his wife and five daughters. The news of his demise has cast a pall of gloom over the Belthara Road area.

JAUNPUR

**University to Celebrate Nagaland Day**

Veer Bahadur Singh Purvanchal University will celebrate Nagaland Day on December 1, following directives from the Raj Bhawan. A preparatory meeting was held under the chairmanship of Registrar Keshav Lal. The event will feature cultural and educational activities, including debates, rangoli, exhibitions, quizzes, and cultural performances, aiming to familiarize students with Nagaland's social, historical, and cultural heritage and promote national integration.

KANPUR

**Police Warns Women's Commission Member**

Kanpur Police have issued an official notice to State Women's Commission member Anita Gupta, warning her to "stay within her limits." This comes after she inspected Barra police station. The police stated that commission members do not have the legal authority for direct station inspections, as it disrupts daily policing, public services, and emergency duties. The notice explicitly asked her to refrain from such inspections in the future.

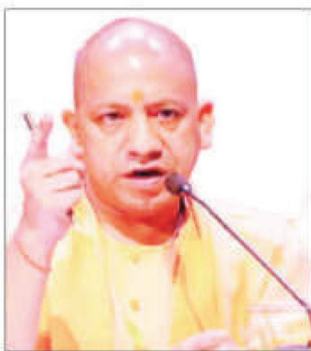
**DIRECTION | UIDAI guidelines cited departments asked to rely only on original primary documents.****New Rule: Aadhaar cannot support age verification in official records**

LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government has issued a major directive clarifying that the Aadhaar card will no longer be accepted as a valid document for verifying a person's date of birth. The decision was communicated through an official order from the Planning Department to all Principal Secretaries and Additional Chief Secretaries across state departments.

The order follows a communication issued by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) on 31 October, which stated that the date of birth recorded on Aadhaar is often "approximate" and therefore cannot be treated as an authentic proof document. UIDAI instructed all institutions to avoid using Aadhaar for age verification in sensitive or official processes.

According to the directive



signed by Special Secretary Amit Singh, several state departments were still treating Aadhaar as a birth-date proof despite UIDAI's earlier clarification. The new instructions make it mandatory that Aadhaar must not be used for appointments, promotions, corrections in service records or any procedure involving identity-based verification of age. Instead, departments have been asked to rely strictly on approved original documents

**State departments instructed to stop accepting Aadhaar for birth-date verification.**

such as school certificates, birth certificates, high-school mark sheets or certificates issued by municipal bodies or health departments. These documents retain their exist-

ing official status for verifying date of birth.

In a separate initiative, the government has moved to expand Aadhaar-related services in rural areas. Aadhaar centres are being set up inside gram panchayat secretariats to reduce the need for residents to travel to towns. In Mainpuri district, a plan has been prepared to open 50 Aadhaar centres across nine blocks.

These centres will provide services including new

Aadhaar enrolment, updates to address, name, mobile number or photograph, and correction of errors in existing Aadhaar records. Gram panchayat facilities already offer documents such as residence, caste, income and birth certificates, and Aadhaar services will now be added to this list.

District Panchayati Raj Officer Dr. Awadhesh Singh confirmed that required information regarding the new Aadhaar centres has been sent to the Directorate of Panchayati Raj. Future action will follow instructions received from the state.

With the new rule in effect, Aadhaar will no longer be accepted as proof of date of birth for government jobs, pensions, scholarships, bank accounts or licensing procedures. Citizens will now be required to produce birth certificates or other valid documents.

**State aims to boost SIR drive with revised pay for 1.6 lakh BLOs**

LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government is preparing to increase the honorarium for Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and Supervisors involved in the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral roll. A proposal to this effect, sent by the Chief Electoral Officer to the state government, is awaiting final approval. If cleared, the monthly honorarium for BLOs will be doubled from Rs 500 to Rs 1,000, and for Supervisors, it will be raised to Rs 1,500 per month.

This move comes as the SIR process, involving the distribution, collection, and digitization of forms for over 15.44 crore voters, gains pace across the state's 1.62 lakh booths. In the last 24 hours alone, more than 1.14 crore forms were digitized, with each BLO digitizing an average of 70 forms. Additionally, a one-time payment of Rs 2,000 for BLOs and a first-time honorarium for Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and Assistant EROs

**Over 6.4 crore SIR forms digitized, seven districts cross 50% digitization milestone**

(AEROs) are also under consideration.

Chief Electoral Officer Navdeep Rinwa reported that 6.40 crore forms have been digitized so far, with districts like Auraiya, Chitrakoot, Ambedkar Nagar, Barabanki, Pilibhit, Saharanpur, and Moradabad having completed over 50% of the digitization work. The final, purified voter list is expected to exclude names of deceased, relocated, and duplicate voters.

**₹989 crore tax evasion racket uncovered**

MORADABAD

A major GST evasion racket worth ₹989.13 crore has been uncovered in Uttar Pradesh after the State Tax Department completed a detailed investigation into 535 firms linked to accused Ikhlaj, a resident of Meerut. The probe revealed that 335 out of these firms were fake and collectively showed a nationwide turnover of ₹5,478 crore. Officials have described this as one of the biggest GST fraud cases detected in the country.

The investigation began after two trucks carrying iron were seized in Moradabad on 24 and 25 October. Both trucks were linked to 144 fraudulent firms registered using only two mobile numbers.

**State Tax Department completes probe into 535 firms linked to racket**

Subsequent FIRs led to the formation of an SIT, which later arrested mastermind Ikhlaj and his aide Ittehat Alam. During searches, SIT recovered Ikhlaj's diary con-

taining the names and mobile numbers of 535 firms. The State Tax Department, led by Additional Commissioner Ashok Kumar Singh, conducted a four-day verification. Of the total, 200 firms showed no transactions, while the remaining 335 were connected to fake operations under "AK Enterprises", spanning multiple states.

The probe found strong links to bogus firms in Delhi and Gujarat. So far, two FIRs have been lodged in Moradabad and one in Lucknow. Nine businessmen and two firms have been named as accused, while six members of the network are still absconding. Officials said the SIT and tax authorities are coordinating to dismantle the nationwide fraud network.

**Fazilnagar becomes Pava Nagari****UP State Bureau**  
KUSHINAGAR

The Uttar Pradesh government has officially renamed Fazilnagar as "Pava Nagari," announced by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. The decision recognizes the town's significance as the Mahaparinirvana site of Lord Mahavir, the 24th Tirthankar of Jainism. Although Lord Mahavir was born in Vaishali, Bihar, he attained Mahaparinirvana at Fazilnagar. Ancient texts refer to the site as "Pavagadh." Over time, the historical name gradually lost prominence, prompting the state government to restore its traditional identity.

**₹100 crore drug supply trail exposed, Lucknow man arrested**

LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh STF has arrested a key member of a narcotic cough syrup syndicate accused of distributing codeine-mixed Fensydyl syrup worth nearly 100 crore across several states. The accused, identified as Amit Kumar Singh alias Amit Tata, was apprehended near Gwari Chauraha in Gomti Nagar, Lucknow.

STF officials stated that Amit was attempting to reactivate the network while staying in Lucknow. Two mobile phones, a Fortuner vehicle, an Aadhaar card, ₹4,500 in cash and several digital documents were seized from him. He is being interrogated at the STF headquarters.

According to investigators,

**STF nabs key associate of syndicate supplying codeine syrup across multiple states.**

Amit is closely associated with the syndicate's alleged kingpin, Shubham Jaiswal, who is currently believed to be operating from Dubai. Amit reportedly came into contact with him through an acquaintance, Vikas Singh of Azamgarh, and

joined the illegal trade for high profits. The STF found that Amit opened a firm named "Devkripa Medical Agency" in Dhanbad in January 2024. Though the firm was registered in his name, its operations were managed by the kingpin and associates. A second firm, "Shri Medical," was later used in Varanasi. Amit admitted to investing around ₹5 lakh and receiving returns of up to ₹22 lakh, with additional amounts paid in cash and deposited into his wife's bank account.

Amit already faces a case in Lucknow's Sushant Golf City police station, while his father has been named in a separate FIR in Varanasi. Investigations revealed that the syndicate purchased large quantities of codeine syrup using forged documents.

**Wedding guests killed as Safari falls into 20 foot ditch**

JAUNPUR

A Safari car carrying wedding guests from Varanasi to Dharmapur, Jaunpur, skidded off the highway and plunged into a 20-foot-deep ditch near Multiganj Bazaar, resulting in the instant death of three passengers. Three others sustained serious injuries.

The car, traveling to the wedding late on Wednesday night, went out of control on a turn. Upon hearing the crash, bystanders rushed to the scene and had to break the car windows to rescue the trapped occupants as the doors were locked. Police transported all six individuals to the Multiganj Community Health Centre.

**Bomb rumour halts Kisan Express for an hour**

AYODHYA

A false bomb alert in Ayodhya caused the Firozabad-Dhanbad Kisan Express (13308) to remain halted at Patranga railway station for nearly an hour, creating panic among passengers. The rumour prompted immediate deployment of local police teams, including officers from the rural police and Rudauli circle, who began a detailed inspection of the train and surrounding areas. A youth suspected of spreading the fake alert was taken into custody.

A similar rumour also affected the Firozpur-Dhanbad Ganga Sutlej Express (13508), leading to a joint search operation by the Bomb Disposal Squad and Railway Protection Force. Every coach of the train was checked thoroughly. Due to these security

**Mentally unstable youth detained for spreading fake information, GRP begins legal action**

procedures, the Vande Bharat Express was held at Dariyabad station between 1:35 PM and 3:00 PM. Investigation later revealed that the bomb rumour originated from a mentally unstable youth from Jharkhand. GRP Barabanki detained the individual, identified as Anant Raj from Hazaribagh, who was traveling from Roorkee to Koderma.

**HC expresses concern over war widow's 54 year struggle for land**

PRAYAGRAJ

The Allahabad High Court has expressed deep concern over the plight of a soldier's widow who has been struggling for 54 years to receive her entitled land grant following her husband's martyrdom in the 1971 Indo-Pak War.

The petitioner claims she was due five bighas of land but was only allotted 2.5 bighas, initiating her decades-long struggle since 1974. Justices Atul Sreedharan and Anish Kumar Gupta observed that if the widow's claims are accurate, "it is a shocking testament to the state of affairs for the entire society."

**SP deploys teams over SIR irregularities**

LUCKNOW

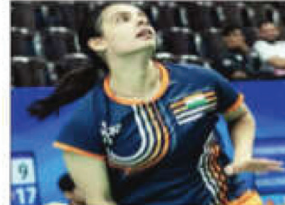
The Samajwadi Party (SP) has appointed officials in every district of Uttar Pradesh to monitor the ongoing SIR process. Residents across the state are currently filling and submitting SIR forms. The party claims that irregularities are occurring during verification, including allegations that certain names are being removed intentionally.

According to information issued by the SP, the newly designated district officials have been instructed to closely review activities within their assigned assembly segments. They are expected to examine Booth Level Officer (BLO) lists and assess booth-wise progress in form distribution, submission and uploading.

The party's letter directs each representative to conduct

**Party alleges irregularities in SIR process, including selective removal of names.**

immediate visits to their respective areas. They must verify how many forms have been issued, how many have been collected and how many have been uploaded into the system. After completing the assessment, the officials are required to submit detailed reports to the party headquarters.

**Tanvi Sharma shocks former world No. 1 Okuhara**

LUCKNOW

At the Syed Modi India International in Lucknow, 16-year-old Indian shuttler Tanvi Sharma delivered the tournament's biggest upset by defeating former World No. 1 and champion, Nozomi Okuhara (Japan), in a three-game thriller (13-21, 21-16, 21-19) to reach the quarterfinals. In men's singles, K. Srikanth advanced easily, but third seed H.S. Prannoy was stunned by young compatriot Manraj Singh.

**warning Winter smog worsens UP air quality**

LUCKNOW

Several districts in Uttar Pradesh are experiencing hazardous air quality conditions as winter intensifies, with pollution levels rising sharply across the NCR-connected belt. Hapur, Noida, Greater Noida, Ghaziabad and Meerut remain the worst affected, with daily AQI values frequently surpassing 300 and, in some locations, reaching as high as 500. According to the Central Pollution Control Board, Hapur has recorded an AQI of over 485,



placing it in the 'severe' category. Experts note that such levels pose a health risk even to otherwise healthy individuals.

In Lucknow, the average AQI was recorded at 179, but several areas reported significantly higher readings. Tal Katora Industrial Centre

**Health experts warn of respiratory risks as several UP cities report AQI between 300 and 500**

posted an AQI of 319, the Kukrail Picnic Spot reached 343, and other locations such as Ambedkar University, Lalbagh and Gomti Nagar reported values ranging from 185 to 285. Doctors at King George's Medical University warned that pollution is directly affecting lung function, increasing the risk of

asthma, bronchitis, heart complications and long-term illnesses such as lung cancer.

Environmental experts highlight vehicle emissions, industrial activities, construction dust, and stubble burning as major contributors. Uttar Pradesh has over two million older vehicles, and authorities say that high traffic density continues to worsen particulate levels. Scientists from IITR note that stubble burning generates large amounts of PM2.5 and PM10, significantly reducing visibility and elevating pollution indices across northern India.

LUCKNOW

The 22-member Uttar Pradesh football team for the 2025-26 All-India Civil Services Men's Football Championship has been officially announced. The tournament will be held from December 8 to 15, 2025, at the Campal Football Ground in Goa. Three players from the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly Secretariat have secured places in the squad, marking a notable achievement for the institution.

The selected players are Shrikant Kanaujia, Sanjay



Kumar and Praveen Mishra. All three earned their positions after demonstrating strong skill, discipline and fitness during the selection trials. Their inclusion highlights the growing sports participation within the Assembly Secretariat. Before departure, the players paid a courtesy visit to the Speaker of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly.



## Awareness rally to promote National Lok Adalat flagged off from District Court, Ghazipur



**Akhand Bharat Sandesh**

**Ghazipur.** To promote the upcoming National Lok Adalat on December 13, 2025, an awareness rally was flagged off by the District Court, Ghazipur, from Gate No. 1 of the District Court by the Honorable District Judge. Present on the

occasion were Honorable District Judge Dharmendra Kumar Pandey, Additional District Sessions Judge/Secretary, District Legal Services Authority, Ghazipur, Vijay Kumar, and all judicial officers, advocates, paralegal volunteers, police personnel, court staff, and

others. The rally raised awareness about the National Lok Adalat, calling for justice for all and for the poor.

The slogan of the Lok Adalat is "No worries, no one lost." The District Legal Services Authority's objective is to provide simple, accessible, and free justice to the general public.

## Private sector capex may fall 25% to Rs 4.88 lakh cr in FY26: Govt survey

**Delhi:** A government survey research estimates private business capital spending will drop 25% to Rs 4.88 lakh crore in 2025-26 from Rs 6.56 lakh crore in FY25. The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation's Forward-Looking Survey on Private Sector CAPEX Investment Intentions between November 2024 and January 2025 found that private corporate capex was Rs 3.94 lakh crore in 2021-22, Rs 5.72 lakh crore in 2022-23, and Rs 4.22 lakh crore in 2023-24. To establish a fixed panel, 2,172 firms provided complete infor-



mation for all five years of the reference period. The government said the aggregated (unweighted) capex data from this panel of firms is credible for five-year capital expenditure trends. Over four years from 2021-22 to 2024-25, aggregate capex (unweighted) increased 66.3%. Of the

3,064 responding companies, 2,172 planned 2025-26 capex. The data suggests respondents are cautious when revealing capital spending plans. The research advised caution when interpreting 2025-26 Capex data due to the conservative stance and fear of responding firms.

## Possible goal of India-US trade deal: equal access to technology

**Delhi:** According to insiders, as part of the intended bilateral trade agreement (BTA), India is expected to request that the United States relax export controls and provide it with access to vital technologies on par with important American

allies such as Japan, Australia, and the United Kingdom. Furthermore, they mentioned that India might be interested in pursuing these kind of concessions in the following industries: semiconductors, biotechnology, artificial intelli-

gence (AI), pharmaceuticals, quantum computing, and telecom equipment. Textiles, gems and jewelry, leather goods, clothing, plastics, chemicals, shrimp, oil seeds, chemicals, grapes, and bananas are among the labor-intensive sectors.

## The divine Panchkundiya Gayatri Mahayagna concluded at Mata Mahakali Dham, a wonderful celebration of devotion, emotion, and service

**Akhand Bharat Sandesh**

**Ghazipur.** The entire premises of the sacred Mata Mahakali Dham, located in Yusufpur under the jurisdiction of the district's Kotwali Muhammadabad police station, were filled with divine faith and divinity on Thursday, as the one-day Panchkundiya Gayatri Mahayagna was held with immense devotion and enthusiasm. From early morning, a boundless crowd of devotees thronged the Mother's court, as if a sea of devotion had overflowed. As the sacred sound of "Om Bhur Bhuvah Swaha..." resonated at the Yagya site, the



atmosphere was filled with spiritual energy. Acharya Ravindra Shastri, conducting each stage of the Yagya with Vedic chanting and complete rituals, imparted the message to devotees to move forward on the path of righteousness, morality, and well-being. With each offering, devotees offered their wishes for the hap-

piness and prosperity of their families, society, and nation at the Mother's feet. After the yajna was completed, a well-organized feast was organized, where devotees humbly accepted the prasada of the Mother Goddess. The temple priest, Satya Prakash, alias Mukesh, personally distributed the prasada, greeted the devotees,

and expressed his gratitude. On this auspicious occasion, renowned social worker Meera Rai, continuing her long-standing tradition of service, distributed blankets to the needy. Her spirit of service warmed the hearts of the devotees present, and she received immense appreciation. Overall, this divine Panchkundiya Gayatri Mahayagna, held in the Mata Mahakali temple complex, was a great success, inspired by devotion, harmony, service, and spiritual joy. The atmosphere, resonating with chants of the Mother Goddess, provided a palpable experience of transcendental peace and purity.

## Promoters of Prudential, HCL to form health insurer

**Delhi:** Prudential and HCL Group promoters announced a separate health insurance joint venture. Prudential Group Holdings, Prudential's UK affiliate, would own 70% of the joint venture, while HCL Group promoter Vama Sundari Investments will own 30%. HCL founder Shiv Nadar gave his daughter Roshni Nadar Malhotra large shares in Vama Sundari Investments, giving her power. Prudential had its first branch in Kolkata in



1923, making India a critical market, according to CEO Anil Wadhvani. "Today, we have a significant presence with life insurance and asset management businesses providing a comprehensive offering of insurance and wealth products," Wadhvani. ICICI Bank has partnered with Prudential, a FTSE 100

company, for over two decades in life insurance and asset management. The Prudential cooperation intends to provide quality health insurance in India, according to Vama executive director Shikhar Malhotra. "Through this collaboration, we aim to advance our common mission to enhance access to quality health insurance and drive greater penetration across the country," stated. If approved by regulators, Amar Joshi will lead the joint venture.

## The government raises sugarcane FRP by 4.41% to Rs 355 per quintal for 2025-26

**Delhi:** The government raised the fair and remunerative price (FRP) of sugarcane by 4.41 percent to Rs 355 per quintal for the 2025-26 season in October.

An official statement said the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi made this decision in the interest of sugarcane farmers. Sugarcane FRP is Rs 340 per quintal for 2024-25. Sugar mills must pay sugarcane growers FRP, the minimum price set by the Indian government. I&B Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told the media after the meeting that the FRP of Rs 355 per quintal for a 10.25%



basic recovery rate was approved. "The FRP for sugar season 2025-26 is 4.41 per cent higher than current sugar season 2024-25," says the report. Farmers will receive Rs 3.46 per quintal for each 0.1% sugar recovery increment above 10.25%. FRP decreases by Rs 3.46 per quintal for every 0.1% recovery rate decline. The government also agreed

not to deduct sugar mills with recovery below 9.5%. These farmers will receive Rs 329.05 per cent for sugarcane in 2025-26. The statement states that sugarcane production costs Rs 173 per quintal in 2025-26. The 2025-26 FRP of Rs 355 per quintal at 10.25% recovery is 105.25% higher than manufacturing cost.

## For 2025-26, I-T Department notifies ITR forms 1, 4

**Delhi:** Individuals and companies with income up to Rs 50 lakh must file ITR forms 1 and 4 for assessment year (AY) 2025-26 with the income tax department. Anyone with long-term capital gains up to Rs 1.25 lakh in a fiscal year can submit ITR-1. Previously, they had to file ITR-



2. With the notification, individuals, HUFs, corporations with income up to Rs 50 lakh, and

those with business and professional incomes in 2024-25 (April-March) can file I-T returns. ITR Form 1 (Sahaj) and ITR Form 4 (Sugam) are easier forms for many small and medium taxpayers. Sahaj can be filed by a resident with an annual income of up to Rs 50 lakh from

salary, one residential property, other sources (interest), and agricultural income up to Rs 5,000. Individuals, Hindu Undivided Families (HUFs), and firms (other than LLPs) with yearly income up to Rs 50 lakh and business and profession revenue can file sugam.

## The annual celebration concluded with the death anniversary of former Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh, a prominent advocate for social justice

**Akhand Bharat Sandesh**

**Prayagraj** On Thursday, the annual celebration and death anniversary of Raja Manda, the former Prime Minister of the country, the father of political and social revolution, and the founder of Gopal Vidyalyaya, a prominent advocate for social justice, were held on the school campus. Jaiveer Singh, Independent Charge Minister of Tourism and Culture of the Uttar Pradesh Government, was the

chief guest at the death anniversary and annual celebration. Honoring the students who performed exceptionally well at the school, he said, "Today's children are tomorrow's future. And my best wishes to the students who performed exceptionally well. In the future, I expect all of you to use your talents for the nation, so that India can become a developed country by 2047, while preserving cultural values." Further, while throwing light on the biography of Raja Manda, he said that the messiah of social justice,

the father of political social revolution, the founder of the school, Raja Manda kept fighting for the respect of all backward, Dalit, minority people throughout his life even though he did not get the benefit of it. As a special guest, regional MLA Koran Rajmani Kol said that the double engine government is doing many works for the improvement of education. Due to which today all the students are getting education easily in the schools. Along with various programs in the death

anniversary and annual celebration program, a blanket distribution program was also organized for poor women by the chief guest with the help of school manager Ajay Singh. The program was attended by prominent Bharatiya Janata Party District President Rajesh Shukla, Municipal Council President Om Prakash Kesari, Pushpraj Singh Patel, Rajeshwari Tiwari, Ajit Pratap Singh, Arun Pratap Singh alias Pappu, Govind Singh, Block Chief Mukesh Kol, District Panchayat Member Arun Kumar

Chaturvedi, Pramod Pyaasi, Santara Devi, Rajiv Pratap Singh, Gopal Vidyalyaya Inter College Vice President Rudra Narayan Bajpai, Raghavendra Pratap Singh, Principal Mohammad Sabir Ali, Vice Principal Kamlesh Tiwari, and all the teachers and staff. The program was efficiently conducted by school teacher Santlal Maurya, and the program was presided over by Municipal Council President Om Prakash Kesari. Minister Holds Press Conference After attending the program.



## Shilpa's moment of devotion

Shilpa Shetty brings home Sai Baba's sacred *Kafni* and *Paduka*, expressing deep gratitude and devotion as her family welcomes the blessed relics

**B**ollywood actress Shilpa Shetty is filled with gratitude as she brings home Sai Baba's sacred *Kafni* and *Paduka*, marking a deeply spiritual moment for her family. The *Hungama 2* actress expressed heartfelt thanks as she welcomed the revered symbols into her home, calling it a blessing and a moment of divine grace.

Taking to her Instagram handle, Shilpa posted a video where she, along with her husband, Raj Kundra, and other family members, could be seen worshipping Sai Baba's sacred belongings. She also added Lata Mangeshkar's chorus *Shirdi Majhe Pandharpur* as a background score

for the music.

Alongside the post, Shilpa wrote in the caption, "Filled with gratitude and love as I bring home your sacred *Kafni* and *Paduka*, Sai. May your divine presence fill my home and heart, guiding me with *Shraddha* and *Saburi*. Om Sai Ram #gratitude #love #blessings #miracles."

For the unversed, the *Kafni* is the long, robe-like attire worn by Shirdi Sai Baba, while the *Paduka* represents his sacred sandals or footprints. Devotees regard these items as deeply blessed, and many welcome them into their homes as a gesture of profound respect and devotion to Baba.

## Dhanush revisits Raanjhanaa memories

Dhanush reveals why his character Kundan from *Raanjhanaa* continues to resonate with fans, holding a lasting impact even after over a decade

**D**hanush opened up about his iconic character Kundan from *Raanjhanaa*, explaining why the role continues to hold a special place in his life. In his recent post on Instagram, the actor revealed why his character Kundan refuses to let go of him even after more than a decade.

Sharing his photos, Dhanush wrote, "A walk through the memory lane Where it all started. Kundan. A character that refuses to let go of me, even after more than a decade. The Name Kundan still echoes in the narrow lanes of banaras as people call out to me and I still turn

and smile."

"Now walking through the same lanes, sitting in front of the same house, sipping chai from the same tea shop, and walking by the shores of the holy Ganges, with the man who gave me Kundan, feels like a full circle. Now it's time for Shankar. *Tere Ishk Mein*. FROM TOM. *Har Har Mahadev*."

In some of the clicks, the actor is seen posing alongside filmmaker Aanand L. Rai. Interestingly, *Tere Ishq Mein* brings together Aanand L. Rai, Dhanush, and A.R. Rahman once again, following their collaborations on *Raanjhanaa* and *Atrangi Re*. Also starring Kriti Sanon in the lead role, the movie is the spiritual sequel of the superhit film *Raanjhanaa*.

## Aamir Khan to join Tata Mumbai Marathon 2026

**A**amir Khan and his family will run as part of the Home Run Squad to support the Paani Foundation and Agatsu Foundation at the Tata Mumbai Marathon 2026 in January. Khan, ex-wife Kiran Rao, son Azad Rao Khan, and daughter Ira Khan will join the Dream Run (5.9 K), Junaid Khan will take on the Open 10 K, and the actor's son-in-law Nupur Shikhare will run the 42 K full marathon, as per a press release.

Founded by Aamir Khan and Kiran Rao, Paani Foundation has transformed drought-hit

villages in Maharashtra through training, science, and teamwork. Agatsu Foundation, created by Ira Khan, makes mental health accessible, affordable, and humane. The foundation provides a free community centre and low-cost therapy clinic in Bandra and hosts programmes on mental health awareness.

"We are running the Tata Mumbai Marathon," Azad said as the family gathered around to announce the news on Ira's Instagram page. "As one big chaotic family," Ira said. A running Aamir joined them later and said he had already started training for it.

## Elli AvrRam manifests music video wish

**A**ctress Elli AvrRam has revealed why her collaboration with Moroccan singing sensation Saad Lamjarred in *Homa Dol* was something she had long manifested and hoped would come true. When asked what she recalls when she thinks about *Homa Dol* as the song has completed a year, she said it immediately brings back memories of the incredible energy on set.

Elli AvrRam told IANS, "For me it was like two dreams come true in one song ever since I discovered Saad Lamjarred, the super famous Arabic Moroccan singer when he released his Arabic song that became a superhit. Ever since then I've been manifesting that one day I want to do a music video with this artist." "So, when the team of the music video reached out to me and said they want to cast me for the song *Homa Dol* opposite Saad Lamjarred, it made me realise how one should always dare to dream and it can really come through."

Elli added, "The second thing is that I've always dreamt of doing a period drama sporting those beautiful ancient looks, like a complete princess from back in time and I actually got to do it. I actually felt like a princess while shooting for it."

Speaking about the scale of the project, and the fact that *Homa Dol* was a big-budget song with a strong storyline, she shared that the ex-

perience was truly memorable. "I'm filled with so many beautiful memories. Since it was a big budget song, everything related to it was quality, be it the gorgeous costumes and sets. It was a beautiful experience. I always look forward to doing great music because I feel shooting for a music video is like almost doing a film but in a short span of time. So, you have to act and perform as well. So, it's great fun to do more magical music videos," mentioned Elli AvrRam.

Actress shares how she manifested her dream collaboration with Moroccan singer Saad Lamjarred for an upcoming music video project



Pic: Instagram\_@elliavrRam



Dhanush reveals why his character Kundan from *Raanjhanaa* continues to resonate with fans, holding a lasting impact even after over a decade

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## 'Greatest surprise of my life'

Taylor Swift talks about her relationship with NFL star Travis Kelce

**T**aylor Swift has spoken candidly about her relationship with NFL star Travis Kelce in a new teaser for *The End of an Era*, a six-part documentary series premiering on Disney+ on December 12, reported People.

In the clip, shared widely by fans on social media, the 35-year-old singer reflects on how her now-fiance unexpectedly entered her life. Calling Kelce the "greatest surprise of my life," Swift describes their first connection with a hint of humour. "The most meaningful relationship I've ever had... started with a man saying he was but-thurt that I didn't want to meet him," she said, referring to Kelce's com-



ments on the August episode of the New Heights podcast, where he recounted trying to meet Swift during her Eras Tour stop, according to People.

The teaser further shows Swift comparing their professions, noting that while both are performers, Kelce's world involves "considerably more violence" than hers. The visuals accompanying the voice-over feature the couple sharing affectionate moments backstage, rehearsing choreography for Kelce's cameo during the tour, and spending time together during various tour preparations.



Pic: X



Pics: Instagram\_@samyuktha\_shan

## Love sealed in a joyous celebration

Actress Samyuktha Shanmughanathan gets married to Aniruda Srikkanth

**A** few days ago, there were reports that Tamil actress Samyuktha Shanmughanathan and former cricketer Aniruda Srikkanth are engaged. However, there was no confirmation about it. But on Thursday, the two

tied the knot and shared their wedding pictures on social media. They also shared a beautiful post of their wedding, in which we can see them sharing some romantic moments with each other, and light-hearted moments with their friends and family.



## Briefs

LUCKNOW

## Tanvi stuns former world champion



World Junior Championships silver medalist **Tanvi Sharma** and Manraj Singh created a flutter at the Syed Modi International, stunning the former world champion Nozomi Okuhara of Japan and HS Prannoy respectively to enter the quarterfinals on Thursday. The 16-year-old Tanvi, who had reached the US Open Super 300 final earlier this year, notched a morale-boosting 13-21 21-16 21-19 win over second seed Okuhara in a 59-minute thriller. Manraj, 19, then delivered a sensational performance to oust Prannoy, the 2023 World Championships bronze medalist, 21-15 21-18 in just 43 minutes, sending shockwaves through the men's singles draw. Top seed Unnati Hooda too booked her place in the last-eight with 21-15 21-10 win over Tasnim Mir.

CHENGDU (CHINA)

## Nagal bows out in Aus Open qualifier



India's top singles player **Sumit Nagal** bowed out of the Australian Open Asia-Pacific wild card play-off tournament after losing to Yunchaokete Bu of China in straight sets in the quarterfinals here on Thursday. Nagal, seeded sixth in the tournament, lost 2-6 2-6 to the top-seeded Chinese opponent. The Chengdu event, which runs from November 24-29 at the Sichuan International Tennis Centre, offers the men's and women's singles winners wild card entry into the main draw of the 2026 Australian Open. The Indian's path had been clouded earlier by visa uncertainty. His initial application to enter China was rejected, prompting Nagal to publicly appeal to Chinese officials.

IPOH (MALAYSIA)

## Selvam scores winning goal for India vs NZ



Selvam Karthi produced the winning goal in the last quarter as India defeated New Zealand 3-2 in the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup, here on Thursday. India, who had eked out a thrilling

## Pant sorry for Test debacle against SA

Stand in Test skipper promises team will regroup and refocus

NEW DELHI

India's Test vice-captain Rishabh Pant has apologised for the team's shambolic performance in the 0-2 series loss to South Africa, asserting that the team will "regroup, refocus and reset" to come back stronger.

India were handed a 0-2 drubbing in the series that ended with the second Test in Guwahati on Tuesday. Pant led the home side in this match as regular skipper Shubman Gill was nursing a neck injury.

The team lost the game by a mammoth 408 runs, further denting the aura of invincibility around its home record and making its path to World Test Championship final more difficult.

"There is no shying away from the fact that we didn't play good enough cricket over the last two weeks. As a team and as individuals, we always want to perform at the highest level and bring smiles to billions of Indians," Pant, who is personally drawing flak for his reckless shot selection during the series, said in a post on 'X'.

"Sorry we couldn't live up to expectations this time, but sport teaches you to learn, adapt and grow - both as a team and as individuals...We know what this team is capable of and we will work hard, regroup, refocus and reset to come back stronger and better as a team & individuals," he added.

Pant insisted that representing India is the greatest honour of the players' lives.



Sorry we couldn't live up to expectations this time, but sport teaches you to learn, adapt and grow

**Rishabh Pant**  
Indian wicketkeeper

The defeat at the hands of a well-prepared South Africa came within a year of the embarrassing 0-3 whitewash inflicted by a lesser fancied New Zealand side.

Both the touring sides capitalised on Indian batters lack of application against quality spinners.

Head coach Gautam Gambhir has faced the maximum scrutiny for the recent failures. India is not due to play any more Test cricket until next year.

## Jemimah to miss remaining WBBL season, to support Mandhana

BRISBANE

India's Women's World Cup-winning hero Jemimah Rodrigues will miss the remaining WBBL season in Australia after she decided to stay back in India to support her national team-mate Smriti Mandhana whose wedding got postponed.

Jemimah had returned a few days back to attend Mandhana's wedding and was scheduled to fly back to complete her Women's Big Bash League (WBBL) assignment for Brisbane Heat.

But Mandhana's father took ill on the eve of the wedding and the ceremony got postponed. Jemimah then decided to be by Mandhana's side to support her.

"The Brisbane Heat have agreed to a request to release Jemimah Rodrigues from the remainder of the Women's Big Bash League," said Brisbane Heat in a statement.

"Rodrigues returned home to India after the Heat's match against the Hobart Hurricanes 10 days ago as part of a pre-arranged commitment where she was to be involved in Indian teammate Smriti Mandhana's wedding last weekend.

"However, the celebrations were subsequently postponed due to a health issue with Mandhana's father," the statement added.

The club said they had agreed to Jemimah's request for release. "Rodrigues will stay in India to support her teammate, and the Heat has agreed to her not returning for the final four games of the WBBL season."

Jemimah had played a pivotal role in India lifting their maiden Women's World Cup.

## WPL 2026 AUCTION| Sharma returns to UP Warriorz for ₹3.20 cr; Charani, Kerr, Henry, Lanning and Wolvaardt land big deals

NEW DELHI

Star India all-rounder Deepti Sharma emerged as the costliest buy of the 2026 WPL mega auction while other ODI World Cup standouts, Shree Charani and Laura Wolvaardt, also walked away with hefty pay cheques here on Thursday.

The seasoned Deepti expectedly fetched the big bucks with UP Warriorz using the Right to Match (RTM) card to retain the India all-rounder for a whopping ₹3.20 crore. She is now the second-highest-paid Indian player in WPL history, just Star India all-rounder Deepti Sharma emerged as the costliest buy of the 2026 WPL mega auction while other ODI World Cup standouts, Shree Charani and Laura Wolvaardt, also walked away with hefty pay cheques here on Thursday.

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"We definitely expected price to be in the range of what we saw. It's the premium what you pay for high quality spin bowling all-rounders and there was no doubt that we wanted Deepti back," UP Warriorz Director of Cricket Operations Kshemal Waingankar said.

Mumbai Indians made one of the day's biggest moves by buying New Zealand all-rounder Amelia Kerr for ₹3 crore. The 25-year-old was part MI's title winning runs in 2023 and 2025.

UP Warriorz surprisingly shelled out ₹2.40 crore for the veteran India all-rounder Shikha Pandey, who last played for the national side in 2023.



UP Warriorz used the Right to Match card to secure services of Indian all-rounder Deepti Sharma for ₹3.20cr in the WPL 2026 mega auction in New Delhi on Thursday. x

## WPL 2026 Auction Most Expensive buys

Team	Player	Base price	Winning bid
UP Warriorz	Deepti Sharma	₹50 Lac	₹3.2 Cr
Mumbai Indians	Amelia Kerr	₹50 Lac	₹3 Cr
Gujarat Giants	Sophie Devine	₹50 Lac	₹2 Cr
UP Warriorz	Meg Lanning	₹50 Lac	₹1.9 Cr
Delhi Capitals	Chinelle Henry	₹30 Lac	₹1.3 Cr
Delhi Capitals	Shree Charani	₹30 Lac	₹1.3 Cr
UP Warriorz	Phoebe Litchfield	₹50 Lac	₹1.2 Cr
Delhi Capitals	Laura Wolvaardt	₹30 Lac	₹1.1 Cr

Left-arm spinner Charani, a key performer in India's triumphant World Cup run, was snapped up by Delhi Capitals for ₹1.30 crore, almost five times her base price of ₹30 lakh, after an intense bidding battle with the Warriorz. Delhi Capitals continued

their aggressive approach, outbidding Royal Challengers Bengaluru to land South Africa captain Wolvaardt for Rs 1.10 crore and West Indian batter Chinelle Henry (Rs 1.30 crore) while also adding India all-rounder Sneha Rana for Rs 50 lakh.

"In Laura we've got a tremendous player who can fill in those shoes. She will add a lot of leadership into the dressing room, but we are very clear that we want to go with an Indian captain," DC co-owner Parth Jindal said.

The Warriorz, armed with the auction's largest purse of ₹14.5 crore, were among the busiest franchises. Along with Deepti, they exercised RTM cards to bring back young pace sensation Kranti Gaud (₹50 lakh) and England's premier spinner Sophie Ecclestone (₹85 lakh).

Gujarat Giants bagged the Sophie Devine for ₹2 crore, while UP Warriorz landed Meg Lanning ₹1.90 crore.

## SA Loss: Selectors could turn to senior domestic stars

The no. 3 conundrum: Gaikwad, Patidar lead the chase

NEW DELHI

Specialists could be back in vogue in Indian Test cricket after the series whitewash against South Africa as the Ajit Agarakar-led selection panel recalibrates its approach towards crucial positions like the number three slot in the batting line-up. The spot, which was sealed by the likes of Rahul Dravid and Cheteshwar Pujara for a better part of the last three decades, is now up for grabs.

Karun Nair couldn't clinch it in England despite being given four Tests and B Sai Sudharsan, with an average 27 across 11 innings, has shown that he is still very much a work in progress.

There are a lot of technical issues in his game, especially on the spin-friendly sub-continental tracks, and he needs time in domestic cricket and time with pathways team (India A) to get ready for Tests.

Test cricket isn't a place to correct elementary mistakes when stakes are very high and India have been learning this



Ruturaj Gaikwad who made it to ODI team recently is one of the strong contenders for selection in Test team. PTI

again and again in the most painful way possible.

There is a strong possibility that the selection committee will now seriously consider some of the seasoned domestic names to lend some solidity to the line-up going forward.

While doors are mostly shut on Sarfaraz Khan and Abhimanyu Easwaran, three battle-hardened domestic veterans Ruturaj Gaikwad, Rajat Patidar and Rinku Singh could keep the team management interested going forward.

Among the new crop of red-ball players Smaran Ravichandran (first-class average 78) and Yash Rathod (960 runs last Ranji season) have prolific numbers as middle-order batters.

"People might blame Ajit and his committee for not selecting Abhimanyu and Sarfaraz but then do the head coach (Gautam Gambhir) and new captain (Shubman Gill) have faith in their abilities? If not what will Ajit alone do?" asked a former selector.

But possibly time has come to once again go back to the drawing board and bank on specialists rather than placing faith in non-existent all-rounders. Nitesh Reddy's batting average in 10 Tests is 26, largely due to that hundred in Australia, and he has bowled only 86 overs in 15 innings, which is not even six overs on an average.

## Ashwin, Gavaskar support Gambhir amid mounting criticism after series loss

Former stalwarts feel coach's job is to prepare team, rest is upto players

PTI

NEW DELHI

Former off-spinner R Ashwin has defended under-fire India head coach Gautam Gambhir after the 0-2 home Test series loss to South Africa, saying it is not right to call for his sacking at a time when not enough responsibility has been shouldered by the players.

India were outplayed in the series that concluded in Guwahati on Tuesday, going down by a record 408 runs in the second and final Test. A majority of the criticism has been directed towards Gambhir's planning and push for all-rounders in the squad that has affected its balance.

But Ashwin said the former opener, who has a contract till 2027, does not deserve to be removed.

Why are we doing this? It's a sport. Managing a team cannot be that easy. And yes, he is hurting too. We must understand that. It might feel nice to get someone sacked, but that's not how it should be," Ashwin said in his Youtube show 'Ash ki Baat'.

"I've never been that kind of person. It's not about support-



- Mika

ting anyone, Gautam is not my relative. I could also point out 10 mistakes. Yes, mistakes happen, but anybody can make them. It's just that when they cost you, they become very expensive," he added.

Ashwin, who is retired from international cricket as well as the IPL, said he understands the need to pin responsibility given India's formidable home record in the past but it is unfair to only target the coach and not ask questions of the players.

"We want to ask for responsibility. It's easy, because in Indian cricket, you know it

and I know it -- there's a lot to gain and a lot of money involved," he said.

"So many people are ready to take the job, and there will always be people putting their hat in the ring. But the fact is, a coach cannot pick up the bat and go out to play.

"What can a coach do? I'm asking you a simple question. Put yourself in the coach's position. You may say a player needs continuity and that there has been a lot of rotation, fine, agreed. But the skill to play and perform is the player's responsibility," he added.

Ashwin urged the players to also take responsibility.

"I haven't seen enough responsibility taken by enough players to say the coach is the problem...I didn't see enough from the players' side to blame decision-making alone. Sure, decision-making can always be better, no doubt," he said.

## Players have to deliver, says Gavaskar

Former India captain Sunil Gavaskar also came out in defence of the embattled Gambhir, saying the head coach can only prepare the team and it is the players who have to deliver on the field.

"He's a coach. The coach can prepare a team. The coach can tell, you know, a guy with his experience. But it's out there in the middle that the players have to deliver," Gavaskar told 'India Today'.

"Now, to those who are asking, you know, for him to be held accountable, my question, counter-question is: what did you do when India won the Champions Trophy under him? What did you do when India won the Asia Cup under him?"

## ISSF, BWF bank on India to ensure return to the event

PTI

NEW DELHI

The world governing bodies of shooting and badminton are delighted that India has bagged the hosting rights of the 2030 Commonwealth Games as they feel it brightens their chances of returning to the event after being dropped from the 2026 edition.

International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) and Badminton World Federation (BWF) welcomed

the Commonwealth Sport general assembly's unanimous decision to award the Games to the Indian city of Ahmedabad on Wednesday.

The 2030 Games will feature 15 to 17 disciplines, a significantly higher number compared to the scaled down 10-event Glasgow 2026 edition. Glasgow dropped, among others, shooting and badminton to cut down the cost of the Games.

"The International Shooting Sport Federation is pleased to see Ahmedabad,

India, approved as the hosts of the 2030 Commonwealth Games at Commonwealth Sport's General Assembly today, providing a strong case for our sport's return to the programme," the ISSF stated.

"With India hosting the 2030 Commonwealth Games, Commonwealth Sport has an exceptional opportunity to tap into one of the world's most engaged badminton markets," said BWF.

The eight confirmed sports that will feature at the

2030 Games are athletics and Para athletics, swimming and Para swimming, table tennis and Para table tennis, bowls and Para bowls, weightlifting and Para powerlifting, artistic gymnastics, netball and boxing.

The sports under consideration for inclusion are archery, badminton, 3x3 basketball and 3x3 Wheelchair basketball, beach volleyball, T20 cricket, cycling, diving, hockey, judo, rhythmic gymnastics, rugby sevens, shooting, squash, triathlon and

Para triathlon and wrestling. The final programme will be out next year.

## Cricket in Vadodara?

Ahmedabad's neighbouring city of Vadodara could be in contention to co-host cricket matches during the 2030 Commonwealth Games, Indian Olympic Association (IOA) CEO Raghuram Iyer told PTI on Thursday but also insisted that the organisers would be aiming to conduct a "compact" event overall.



Union Sports and Youth Affairs Minister Mansukh Mandaviya speaks to the media in New Delhi. PTI