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IN BRIEF



50 students get relief as J&K to allot MBBS seats

JAMMU
In a relief for 50 MBBS students of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Institute of Medical Excellence, the J&K exam board has set January 24 as the date for counselling to accommodate them in seven government-run medical colleges. » Page 4

Punjab health scheme offers free treatment

CHANDIGARH
The Aam Aadmi Party government in Punjab on Thursday launched 'Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojna', extending free treatment of up to ₹10 lakh to every family in the State. » Page 3



HIGH-ALTITUDE ACCIDENT
Truck falls into gorge in J&K killing 10 soldiers

NEWS » PAGE 14



EXCISE POLICY CASE
Kejriwal acquitted for skipping ED summons

NEWS » PAGE 15

India absent as Trump rolls out his Board of Peace with 19 countries in attendance



New accord: U.S. President Donald Trump holding the founding charter of the Board of Peace in Davos on Thursday. REUTERS

Associated Press

Press Trust of India

DAVOS

U.S. President Donald Trump on Thursday inaugurated his Board of Peace to lead efforts at maintaining a ceasefire in Israel's war with Hamas, insisting that "everyone wants to be a part" of the body that could eventually rival the United Nations – despite many U.S. allies opting not to participate.

India was among the countries not present at the ceremony. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was among numerous global leaders invited by Mr. Trump to join the Board. India is yet to take a call on it, people familiar with the matter said when asked

about the invite. Pakistan, Turkiye, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE are among the countries that have accepted Mr. Trump's invitation. While Mr. Trump said 59 countries have signed onto the board, representatives of only 19 countries

and the U.S. were present at the event at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

"You're the most powerful people in the world," Mr. Trump told the group, ranging from Azerbaijan to Paraguay to Hungary.

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EDITORIAL

» PAGE 10

GREENLAND FRAMEWORK

» PAGE 18

C M Y K

Karnataka Governor cuts short speech to legislature, walks out

Nagesh Prabhu
BENGALURU

In a fresh confrontation between the Lok Bhawan and the Congress-led government in Karnataka, Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot on Thursday refused to read the customary address prepared by the government and made a two-line address before walking out on the first day of the State legislature session.

A joint action committee formed in the valley in connection with Singh's death demanded that the case be handed over to the National Investigation Agency.

The Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI), the apex body of Imphal Valley-based organisations, condemned Singh's killing and said it showed the Centre's failure in controlling militants operating in the State.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 14



Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah receiving Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot ahead of the legislature session on Thursday. SUDHAKAR JAIN

shals intervened and escorted him out amid pandemonium.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah criticised the Governor's action, accusing him of violating constitutional conventions and acting at the behest of the Centre.

"It is the Governor's duty to address the first Assembly session of the year. The Cabinet approved the contents of the speech. Instead of reading the Cabinet-approved text, the Governor delivered a speech

prepared by himself, which is unconstitutional," the Chief Minister said.

He alleged that the Governor was functioning as a "puppet of the Central government" and said the State government was examining the option of approaching the Supreme Court. The Governor's office has not issued any formal statement on the walkout so far.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 14

A NEW ORDER RISES IN TAMIL NADU

NDA IS HERE



We Welcome HONORABLE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA SHRI. NARENDRA MODI JI TO TAMIL NADU

VINOJ PANNEERSELVAM STATE SECRETARY - BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY TN



M N D N D

Two more builders arrested in Noida techie death case

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Two more builders were arrested on Thursday in connection with the death of a 27-year-old software engineer whose car plunged into a water-filled pit at Sector 150 in Greater Noida.



Builders Ravi Bansal and Sachin Karanwal after being arrested on Thursday.

The Noida police arrested Ravi Bansal and Sachin Karanwal following a complaint filed by Rajkumar Mehta, father of the deceased techie Yuvraj Mehta, on January 18.

Earlier, Abhay Kumar, director of real estate firm MZ Wiztown Planners, had been taken into custody in the case. A three-member Special Investigation Team constituted on the directions of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath visited the site and re-created the sequence of events leading to the incident, police officials said.

Meanwhile, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) sought responses from the Noida Authority and other agencies, highlighting alleged failures in stormwa-

ter management that may have contributed to the drowning on the intervening night of January 16 and 17. In its order, the tribunal noted that a stormwater management plan prepared by the Uttar Pradesh Irrigation Department in 2015 had proposed the construction of a head regulator to divert excess water into the Hindon river.

The Noida Authority released ₹1.05 lakh in 2016 for survey and design work, but the proposed infrastructure was never executed. The tribunal observed that critical decisions were discussed but not implemented.

The case pertains to an FIR lodged at Janakpuri police station in connec-

Court acquits Sajjan Kumar in 1984 anti-Sikh riots case

Prosecution failed to prove guilt beyond reasonable doubt, says court; case relates to an FIR over killing of two men in Janakpuri on November 1, 1984; victims' kin call the acquittal an 'injustice'

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

Citing the "absence of credible evidence" against him, a Delhi court on Thursday acquitted former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar in a case related to violence in the Janakpuri area during the 1984 anti-Sikh riots.

Special Judge Dig Vinay Singh of the Rouse Avenue Courts said the prosecution had failed to establish Kumar's guilt beyond reasonable doubt, which is essential for a conviction in a criminal trial. "Resultantly, because of lack of credible evidence as to the presence of the accused in the crime in question, or his being part of the unlawful assembly, or his involvement in any manner, either through instigation, conspiracy or abetment of any other nature, he is acquitted of the charges," the court observed.

The case pertains to an FIR lodged at Janakpuri police station in connec-



Families of 1984 riot victims protesting in New Delhi on Thursday after the court acquitted Sajjan Kumar. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

tion with the killing of two men, Sohan Singh and his son-in-law Avtar Singh, on November 1, 1984. Kumar's name was added later following a probe by a Special Investigation Team (SIT), constituted on the recommendations of a committee headed by Justice G.P. Mathur, which revisited cases linked to the 1984 violence. In its chargesheet filed in 2022, the SIT accused Kumar of offences including murder, rioting, promoting enmity be-

tween groups, dacoity, mischief and hurting religious sentiments.

No release from jail

Despite the acquittal, Kumar will remain lodged in Tihar Jail as he is serving life sentences in other cases related to the 1984 riots. In 2018, the Delhi High Court awarded him life imprisonment for the killing of five Sikhs in Palam Colony, a verdict currently under challenge in the Supreme Court. In February

2024, he was sentenced to life imprisonment in another case relating to the murder of Jaswant Singh and his son Tarundeep Singh in Saraswati Vihar.

Rejecting the prosecution's argument that Kumar's past convictions should weigh against him, the court held that guilt in one case cannot automatically establish guilt in another. "A man may be convicted of 100 crimes, but to be held guilty of the 101st crime, proof beyond a reasonable doubt in that crime is required," it said.

Families' reaction

Terming the acquittal an "injustice", relatives of riot victims expressed anguish. Nirmal Kaur, whose father was allegedly burnt alive during the riots, said she had spent four decades seeking justice but to no avail. Wazir Singh, kin of another victim, alleged that Kumar escaped punishment in several murder cases due to his "power and influence".

Secondary particulate matter main cause of pollution: CAQM report

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

A synthesis of studies on the causes of air pollution in Delhi sought by the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) in Delhi-NCR finds that the major source of winter pollution is secondary particulate matter (27%), followed by transport (23%), biomass burning (20%), which includes municipal solid waste and crop residue, dust (15%) and industrial emissions (9%).

"The primary focus has been to bring a uniform and unanimous opinion on air pollution sources to help bridge the gap between existing data and actionable policies," the CAQM said in the report made public on Wednesday.

The existing studies were compiled by the experts after the Supreme Court, on January 6, ordered the CAQM to prepare a report and bring on record the "major causes of worsening air quality index (AQI)" in the region. Source-apportionment



A layer of smog seen at New Delhi's ITO area. FILE PHOTO

studies point to the activities that release chemicals such as nitrous oxides, sulphur dioxide, and volatile organic compounds (VOC) that constitute primary particulate matter.

Role of ammonia

Secondary particulate matter – the largest source of air pollution – forms when these primary particulate matter interact in the atmosphere. This interaction is largely due to the presence of ammonia. Independent studies have shown that nearly 80% of the ammonia over India comes from fertilizers as well as excreta from livestock.

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TENDER Notice No. EL-50-DNR-Open-45-2025-26, Danapur
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Note: Detailed information may be seen in the tender documents.
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Online e-tenders in two bid systems (Technical and Financial) are invited through the e-procurement portal <http://eprocure.gov.in/cpp> by the Director, LGBRIMH, Tezpur from eligible Manufacturers / Firms / Companies / Authorized Agents / Distributors / Dealers for Rate Contract for Supply of Laboratory Reagents (Kits) & Chemicals for existing Automated Immunoassay analyzer. The last date of bid submission is 29.01.2026. For more details log on to <http://eprocure.gov.in/cpp> or www.lgbrimh.gov.in.

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Director
LGBRIMH
CBC17179/12/0007/2526

THE HINDU
The National Newspaper

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(राजस्थान सोसायटी परिस्टेशन एट, 1958 के अन्तर्गत पंजीकृत)

सार्वजनिक सूचना

निम्न विकेन्द्रिक शिक्षकों को राजमेस के आदेश क्रमांक 2087 दिनांक 25.07.2025 के द्वारा अधिकार देवारों की प्रतीका (APO) में किया गया। इसके पश्चात भी संविधित विकेन्द्रिक शिक्षकों द्वारा नियंत्रण संसाधनों में कार्यग्रण नहीं किया गया। इस संबंध में उन्हें दो असर प्रदान करते हुए क्रमशः दो बार कारण बताओ नोटिस जारी किए गए, किन्तु उनके द्वारा न तो कार्यग्रण किया गया और न ही कोई संतोषजनक प्रत्युत्तर किया गया।

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3	Dr. Dilip Kumar	Assistant Professor	General Medicine	Bhilwara
4	Dr. Suresh Kumawat	Assistant Professor	General Surgery	Bhilwara
5	Dr. Ashok Kumar	Assistant Professor	General Surgery	Sikar
6	Dr. Vijay Ola	Assistant Professor	Urology	Sikar
7	Dr. Mangi Lal	Assistant Professor	General Surgery	Pali
8	Dr. Mohd Arif	Assistant Professor	Orthopaedics	Pali
9	Dr. Laxminarayan Nagal	Assistant Professor	Paediatrics	Pali
10	Dr. Nishant Aswani	Assistant Professor	Neurology	Pali
11	Dr. Haridev Singh	Assistant Professor	General Medicine	Pali
12	Dr. Jogendra Singh Rajpurohit	Assistant Professor	Anaesthesia	Sirohi
13	Dr. Ramawat Sanwaria	Assistant Professor	E.N.T.	Sirohi
14	Dr. Vivek Parihar	Assistant Professor	Paediatrics	Sirohi
15	Dr. Mamta Sabal	Assistant Professor	Obs. & Gynaec.	Sirohi
16	Dr. Abhimanyu Singh	Assistant Professor	Cardiology	Barmer
17	Dr. Kapil Kumar Raheja	Associate Professor	Paediatrics	Barmer
18	Dr. Anand Kumar Kularia	Associate Professor	Ophthalmology	Barmer
19	Dr. Alkesh Kumar Meena	Senior Demonstrator	Anatomy	Barmer
20	Dr. Parul Mishra	Assistant Professor	Obs. & Gynaec.	Dausa
21	Dr. Payal Yadav	Assistant Professor	Anaesthesia	Dausa
22	Dr. Bijendar Kumar Meena	Associate Professor	Radiodiagnosis	Dausa
23	Dr. Preeti Singh	Assistant Professor	Ophthalmology	Dausa
24	Dr. Deepal Meena	Assistant Professor	General Medicine	Baran
25	Dr. Sunita Dhaka	Assistant Professor	Obs. & Gynaec.	Churu
26	Dr. Richa Kachhawa	Assistant Professor	Anaesthesia	Nagaur
27	Dr. Harsita Damor	Assistant Professor	Skin	Dungarpur
28	Dr. Somya Dulara	Assistant Professor	General Surgery	Dungarpur
29	Dr. Rohit Kumar Sharma	Assistant Professor	General Medicine	Bharatpur
30	Dr. Ramkesh	Assistant Professor	General Medicine	Bharatpur
31	Dr. Khushboo Jain	Assistant Professor	E.N.T.	Bundi
32	Dr. Hiteshi Yadav	Assistant Professor	Anaesthesia	Bundi
33	Dr. Arvind Mohan Verma	Assistant Professor	General Surgery	Bundi
34	Dr. Lokendra Singh Chauhan	Assistant Professor	Orthopaedics	Dholpur

अतः उपर्युक्त तालिका में अंकित सभी 34 विकेन्द्रिक शिक्षकों को अंतिम अवधि प्रदान किया जाता है कि वे इस सार्वजनिक सूचना के प्रकाशित होने की विधि से 7 दिवान की अवधि में राजमेस सुनिश्चित करें। ये सभी जाने की स्थिति में यह माना जाएगा कि विकेन्द्रिक शिक्षक सेवा में बैठे रहने के इच्छुक नहीं हैं, एवं उनके विलुप्त राजस्थान मेडिकल एज्यूकेशन सोसायटी (एम्सीई) विसिलिनरी रूल्स, 2018 के अन्तर्गत विना किसी अतिरिक्त सूचना के उनकी सेवाएँ समाप्त किए जाने की कार्यवाही अमल में लाई जायगी। जिसके दिए वे राजस्थानी होंगे।

निदेशक, राजस्थान

Timings
DELHI

FRIDAY, JAN. 23
RISE 07:13 SET 17:53
RISE 09:53 SET 22:18
SATURDAY, JAN. 24
RISE 07:13 SET 17:54
RISE 10:23 SET 23:19
SUNDAY, JAN. 25
RISE 07:13 SET 17:55
RISE 10:55 SET 00:00

Delhi Weather max min
Delhi City 27 06
Safdarjung 27 06
Palam 25 08

Delhi Palam Today
19°C Significant fall in day temperature. Few spells of light to moderate rain and thundershower with gusty winds and hailstorm to occur.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
23°C The weather will be mostly dry. Day will be pleasant. Night will be cold with mist and fog. Dry weather to prevail.

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TEXTILES
OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONER FOR HANDLOOMS
Sant Kabir Handloom Award and National Handloom Award for the year, 2025

Applications duly filled in the prescribed format are invited from the residents of India for the following categories of handloom awards for the year 2025 for their outstanding contribution in the field of Handloom sector. The details are given below:

Sl. No.	Name of Awards	Category	Sub- Category	No. of Awards
01	Sant Kabir Handloom Award (SKHA)	Weaving	Woolen Exclusively for women weavers (Sant Kabir Handloom Award- Kamala Devi Chattopadhyay)	03
			Languishing Weaves	01
			Tribal Weaves	01
			Total (A)	06
02	National Handloom Award (NHA)	Weaving	Weaving	08
			Exclusively for women weavers (Sant Kabir Handloom Award- Kamala Devi Chattopadhyay)	

'Forensic report of Atishi's video not shared with Delhi Assembly'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Punjab police have replied to the Delhi Assembly Secretariat on registering an FIR on the "doctored" video of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Atishi posted by Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and Delhi Minister Kapil Mishra, but did not provide the forensic report and other relevant documents related to the matter, a source said on Thursday.

"The Delhi Assembly Secretariat will take cognizance of the matter in due course," the source said. There was no official statement from the Assembly.

AAP and the BJP have been in conflict over a video of Ms. Atishi in the Delhi Assembly. While the BJP accuses her of "defaming" Guru Tegh Bahadur, Ms. Atishi rejects the allegation, claiming that the footage posted by Mr. Mishra was "doctored". Speaker Vijender Gupta had sought a response from the Punjab police over the FIR it registered.

Punjab rolls out health scheme with free cashless treatment up to ₹10 lakh

Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojna' biggest since Independence, says CM Mann; cover to be provided to all 65 lakh families in the State; over 2,500 medical procedures eligible under the scheme in hospitals

The Hindu Bureau

CHANDIGARH

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Punjab on Thursday launched 'Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojna' (MMSY), extending free treatment of up to ₹10 lakh to every family in the State. Any resident of Punjab, with an Aadhaar card and a voter card, will be eligible to avail the benefits of this scheme.



For the first time, no income limit has been fixed for any health scheme in the State, said Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann. FILE PHOTO

Mann handed over the scheme-related cards to some of the eligible beneficiaries.

"People can go to any hospital, whether government or private. The government has already started fixing everything," said Mr. Kejriwal, explaining about the insurance scheme.

Mr. Mann said the scheme was the "biggest since Independence" and

has been launched for the welfare of every section of society. "Health cards will be issued to all 65 lakh families, covering nearly three crore citizens of Punjab," he said, adding that for the first time, no income limit has been fixed for any health scheme in the State.

He added diagnostic services have also been included in the scheme. "Any citizen can now get

free treatment at any government or private hospital in Punjab or Chandigarh," he said.

Addressing a gathering here, Mr. Kejriwal criticised the previous governments. "In the past 75 years, several governments came, but they did not take care of people despite making tall claims," he said.

On works undertaken in the healthcare sector in the State, Mr. Kejriwal said around 1,000 Mohalla Clinics have been set up in the past four years, and 500 more such clinics will come up. "We will also set up 2,500 'pind clinics' in each village," he said.

Party leaders Manish Sisodia, Satyendar Jain, State Ministers Arman Arora and Harpal Singh Cheema were also present.

(With inputs from PTI)

Delhi CM lays foundation stone for rejuvenation of Munak Canal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Thursday laid the foundation stone for the rejuvenation of the Munak Canal and the construction of grand Chhath ghats.

Terming the initiative as a "gift" for devotees from

Purvanchal (people from eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and parts of Jharkhand), the CM assured that the ghats would be revived by the next Chhath Puja.

Devotees will be able to offer prayers to the Sun god in a safe, clean, and developed environment, replacing the unhygienic

conditions that existed earlier, she said, adding that the area will emerge as a major centre for religious and cultural activities.

The CM instructed the officials of all departments that the projects exceeding ₹5 crore must be updated within one week on the 'CM-Pragati' portal.

RAMAN RESEARCH INSTITUTE Sadasivanagar, Bengaluru – 560080

Advt. No. 03/2026 dt. 21.01.2026

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- NOIDA, Nirula's Sec-2, Near Metro Station, Sec-15, Noida, UP
- LAJPAT NAGAR, 49, Main Ring Road, Adj. Haldi Ram, Near Moolchand Crossing

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IN BRIEF



Amit Shah to address U.P. Day event in Lucknow tomorrow

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will address Uttar Pradesh Day celebrations in Lucknow as the chief guest on January 24, an official statement issued on Thursday stated. At the programme to be held at Rashtra Prema Sthal, Mr. Shah will launch the 'One District One Cuisine' scheme. Under this scheme, the distinctive traditional cuisine of each district of Uttar Pradesh will be identified and linked with quality improvement, branding, and market access, so that local flavours gain recognition not only at the regional level but also nationally and on the global stage. Mr. Shah will also confer the Uttar Pradesh Gaurav Samman 2025-26, it added. PTI

Twenty20 joins BJP-led NDA ahead of Kerala Assembly poll

Twenty20, a corporate-backed outlier in Kerala's conventional coalition politics, has joined the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) ahead of the Assembly poll. BJP State president Rajeev Chandrasekhar welcomed Twenty20 president Sabu M. Jacob into the alliance on Thursday. "We desperately needed allies and found none better than the NDA to avenge ourselves upon our enemies," Mr. Jacob said. He said only an expanding NDA could end "the LDF-UDF duopoly" in the State. He alleged that Kerala had become "a graveyard for investors".

PM to address poll rallies in Kerala, Tamil Nadu today

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI Prime Minister Narendra Modi will kick-start the BJP's election campaign in Kerala and Tamil Nadu on Friday by addressing public meetings in the two poll-bound States.

Mr. Modi will be in Thiruvananthapuram for an official event to launch and lay foundation stones for development projects and flag off new trains.

"After the government programme, the Prime Minister will address party rallies in Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala and Chengalpattu in Tamil Nadu," a source said.

Elaborate security arrangements are in place in Madurantakam, 87 km from Chennai, in Chengalpattu district in view of Mr. Modi's visit. Elections are due in Kerala and Tamil Nadu in April this year.

Amid defection rumours, Cong. summons its Bihar MLAs to Delhi to pick House chief

Amarnath Tewary

PATNA



Ahead of the newly elected 18th Bihar Assembly's Budget Session on February 2, the State Congress unit is yet to choose its leader of the House.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR A HEALTHIER UTTAR PRADESH

A New Era of Inclusive Development • Compassion • Innovation • Trust

Artificial Intelligence is emerging as a powerful instrument to transform governance from a reactive approach to a proactive one.

- Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister, U.P.



A VISION TURNED INTO ACTION: Uttar Pradesh is entering a transformative era where Artificial Intelligence (AI) is redefining governance, healthcare and public service delivery. Guided by the vision of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the state is leveraging technology to move from a reactive system to a proactive, people-centric model of development. With the launch of the UP AI Mission and the inauguration of the AI in Transforming Healthcare Conference in Lucknow, the government has laid the foundation for making Uttar Pradesh a national leader in AI-driven healthcare services. From real-time disease tracking to digital health access in remote villages, AI is becoming a powerful instrument for transparency, precision, and inclusion.

AI Ecosystem in Uttar Pradesh



₹2,000 Crore AI Mission: A New Healthcare Revolution for Uttar Pradesh

The Chief Minister announced that projects worth approximately ₹2,000 crore will be implemented in phases over the next three years under the UP AI Mission, placing Uttar Pradesh at the forefront of AI-enabled healthcare delivery in India.

These initiatives aim to enhance:

- Real-time disease surveillance
- Early epidemic detection
- Vector-borne disease tracking
- Accurate health data analysis for policymaking
- Digital access to healthcare services in remote regions
- ✓ Medical Device Park
- ✓ Pharma Park
- ✓ MedTech Center (Lucknow)
- ✓ AI Center (Gauam Buddha Nagar)
- ✓ IIT Kanpur CoE
- ✓ Lucknow AI City

"By enabling real-time data collection and feedback on epidemics and vector-borne diseases, AI can support informed decision-making, stronger policies, and better outcomes."

- Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister, U.P.

Building the AI Workforce of Tomorrow

- 65 Data & AI Labs Planned Across Uttar Pradesh
- Operational: Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Pilibhit
- Approved: 49 New Locations
- Upcoming: 13 Additional Centers



These labs provide hands-on AI training, real-time datasets and industry-ready skill development for students and young innovators.

"AI must remain human-driven, not the other way around. Maintaining this balance will be critical for the future."

- Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister, U.P.

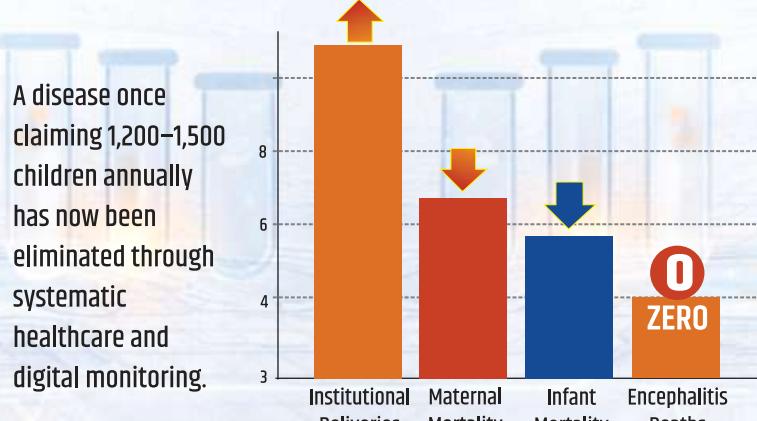
From Policy to People Delivering Impact at the Last Mile

The Chief Minister emphasized that AI enables real-time data collection, early disease detection, and accurate health feedback systems, empowering the government to design stronger policies and achieve better health outcomes.

AI is being applied to:

- Epidemic Monitoring & Vector-Borne Disease Tracking
- Maternal & Infant Health Support
- Tuberculosis Identification & Treatment Monitoring
- Telemedicine & Virtual ICUs
- Healthcare Access in Remote Areas

Public Health Transformation Through Technology



Healthcare Infrastructure: Growth Powered by Digital Transformation

The Chief Minister highlighted that districts once lacking ICUs, oxygen plants, dialysis units, blood banks, and digital diagnostics are now equipped with modern healthcare facilities. Virtual ICUs and telemedicine services, introduced during the pandemic, continue to serve remote and rural populations, ensuring expert medical support without geographic barriers.

MEDICAL COLLEGES IN UP



- ✓ 1.06 Crore DBT Beneficiaries
- ✓ 80,000 e-POS Shops
- ✓ 30 Lakh Fake Ration Cards Removed

AI and digital healthcare systems are strengthening medical education and expanding access to trained healthcare professionals across the state.

AI on the Ground



How AI is Improving Lives in Uttar Pradesh



Citizen → AI Systems → Health Workers → Hospitals → Better Outcomes

From Vision to Reality — Uttar Pradesh Leads India's AI-Powered Healthcare Revolution



Policing



Agriculture



Education



Governance



A Global Platform for India's Economic Strength

The Davos engagement, according to the Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav, is not merely symbolic but instrumental in translating India's economic momentum into tangible outcomes on the ground. He described WEF as an "important platform for strengthening India's economy", where global investors, policymakers and industry leaders converge to shape future growth narratives.

For Madhya Pradesh, participation at Davos has become a strategic extension of its investment outreach. The state,

traditionally known for its agricultural base and mineral resources, is now positioning itself as a diversified investment destination encompassing renewable energy, pharmaceuticals, textiles, Agri-processing, digital economy and tourism.

"The core purpose of our engagement at Davos is two-fold," Dr. Yadav explained. "First, to create meaningful employment opportunities for our youth, and second, to take Indian products—particularly those from Madhya Pradesh—to global markets."

2026: A Year Dedicated to Farmers' Prosperity

In a significant policy announcement, the state government has dedicated the year 2026 to the prosperity of farmers. Agriculture remains central to Madhya Pradesh's economy, and the government sees vast potential in allied sectors such as food processing, fisheries, horticulture and dairy.

With its diverse agro-climatic zones, the state aims to emerge as a national leader in agri-based industries. "Madhya Pradesh will certainly become a leading state in food processing, fisheries, horticulture and dairy production," Dr. Yadav said, linking agricultural growth directly to rural employment and income generation.

Multiples Dialogues with Switzerland

Key diplomatic engagements at Davos involved discussions with Samuel Gagger, a member of the Swiss National Council. The talks focused on clean energy, advanced manufacturing and inclusive development.

Dr. Yadav highlighted that Madhya Pradesh has the largest tribal population in India and that tribal welfare, sustainable livelihoods and inclusive growth are among the state government's top priorities. Initiatives such as millet promotion, economic and rural tourism were discussed as tools to enhance tribal incomes, nutrition, and self-reliance.

Discussions extended to skill development through technical training programmes, joint innovation with Swiss universities in green technologies, and cultural exchange initiatives to promote Madhya Pradesh as a heritage and eco-tourism destination for Swiss travellers.

A Broader Davos Footprint: Investment, Innovation and Branding

Overall, Dr. Mohan Yadav's Davos visit emerged as a comprehensive exercise in global outreach. The Chief Minister presented Madhya Pradesh as an emerging hub for green energy, tourism,

industry, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, digital economy, sports, yoga and cultural dialogue.

Green Energy and Inclusive Development

At high-level roundtable meetings, he presented the state's green energy vision, reaffirming its commitment to integrating renewable energy into the mainstream of inclusive and sustainable development. Progress and future plans in solar power, energy storage and clean energy projects were shared, with Madhya Pradesh's model—aligned with the Prime Minister's green energy vision—receiving appreciation from Prahlad Joshi.

Investment Promotion

Through the "Invest in India: Madhya Pradesh" roundtable, the Chief Minister engaged directly with global investors, highlighting the state's ease of doing business, availability of land, water and energy, and strong logistics network. Investment opportunities across automobiles, renewable energy, pharma, textiles, IT-ITES, agriculture and food processing were showcased, with special support announced for employment-intensive industries.

FROM DAVOS TO DEVELOPMENT: India's March Towards a \$3-Trillion Milestone and Madhya Pradesh's Global Push for Investment, Innovation and Inclusive Growth

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As India positions itself firmly on the path to becoming the world's third-largest economy, global platforms are increasingly turning into strategic arenas where national ambition meets state-level execution. At the World Economic Forum (WEF) 2026 in Davos, this

convergence was sharply visible through the engagements led by Dr. Mohan Yadav, Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, who articulated a vision that linked India's macroeconomic ascent under the prime minister of India Mr. Narendra Modi with the state's own trajectory of

investment-led, inclusive growth. Speaking on the sidelines of the global summit, the Chief Minister underlined that India, having already emerged as the world's fourth-largest economy, is steadily advancing towards the third position. "This is a defining phase for

the country. Every Indian state today has unprecedented opportunities to accelerate growth, attract global capital, and integrate local strengths with international markets," he said, calling upon states to actively participate in platforms such as the World Economic Forum.

Madhya Pradesh, DP World Sign MoU to Boost Logistics and Investment

In a significant move to strengthen logistics infrastructure and attract global investment, the Government of Madhya Pradesh on Wednesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with DP World, a leading global logistics and supply chain company based in the United Arab Emirates.

The MoU was signed in the presence of Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav at Davos.

Ahmed bin Sulayem was also present.

The agreement focuses on investment cooperation and industrial development, with an emphasis on strengthening logistics infrastructure and trade ecosystems in the state. DP World has expressed interest in exploring investment opportunities in Madhya Pradesh, a move seen as key to integrating the state with national and global supply

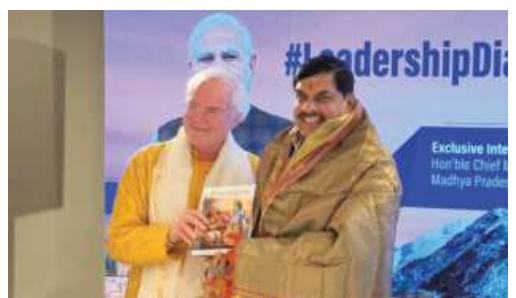


Additional Chief Secretary Neeraj Mandloi signed on behalf of the state government, while Anil Mohata, CEO and Chief Finance & Business Development Officer, signed for DP World. DP World Group Chairman Sultan

chain networks. Officials said the MoU marks an important step towards positioning Madhya Pradesh as a logistics and trade hub, leveraging investor-friendly policies, improving infrastructure, and global partnerships.

Investment Climate: Technology, Jobs and Industry at the Core

At multiple interactions with industry leaders and delegations, the Chief Minister emphasised that Madhya Pradesh offers a conducive ecosystem for investment,



supported by policy stability, improving infrastructure and a growing skilled workforce. He stressed the need for industries to adopt advanced technologies and align with global standards, particularly in sectors that generate large-scale employment.

Organic agriculture, he noted, represents a high-potential sector with strong linkages across food processing, textiles and allied industries. From cotton cultivation to textile manufacturing, Madhya Pradesh is seeking to strengthen value chains that combine traditional strengths with modern processing and branding.

"Employment-generating activities must be prioritised," he said, adding that organic farming, food processing, cotton-based industries and textiles together offer a wide canvas for sustainable growth.

From Summit to Site GIS Investments Taking Shape



The state's confidence at Davos is backed by concrete outcomes at home. Dr. Yadav highlighted that the Global Investors Summit held in Bhopal in 2025 has begun delivering results. Nearly 30 per cent of the investment proposals received during the summit have already been implemented on the ground.

A major milestone came on December 25, when Amit Shah inaugurated and laid foundation stones for development projects worth over Rs. 2 lakh crore at the Abhyuday Madhya Pradesh Growth Summit in Gwalior. Cumulatively, industrial development works valued at approximately ₹8.5 lakh crore are either underway or in execution.

"This reflects the growth trajectory of Madhya Pradesh," the Chief Minister said, noting that sustained follow-up and policy facilitation are key to converting investment intent into real economic activity.

From Yoga to Pharma, Tourism to Technology MADHYA PRADESH'S MULTI-SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PUSH AT DAVOS

D6151/25

Yoga & Cultural Diplomacy

Talks with United Consciousness Global on global promotion of yoga; proposal for an international yoga event and permanent yoga centre in Ujjain.

Pharma Investment

Discussions with Sandoz on pharma manufacturing, generics, APIs, anti-infectives, and skilled workforce development.

Tourism Outreach

Strong pitch linking heritage, wildlife, spiritual and cultural tourism with global investment under "Heart of Incredible India."

From Dialogue to Delivery: Focus on converting global engagements into jobs, infrastructure, investment and inclusive growth on the ground.

International Cooperation

Bilateral talks with Maldives leadership on tourism, medical tourism, education, wildlife conservation and cultural exchange.

Digital Economy & Clean Energy

Engagements with ReNew Power on data centres, digital infrastructure and clean energy-led growth.

Sports & Youth Development

Meetings with Manchester United representatives on sports development, sports tourism and building a sports hub.

Scan the code to follow Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav's official social media handles



SPOTLIGHT



Killed for a cow

On January 14, a man was beaten to death in Odisha's Balasore district on suspicion of his involvement in what is now being called cattle trafficking by the police. **Satyasundar Barik** visits the family to piece together the events of that day, and examine how cattle trading is emerging as a flashpoint, deepening mistrust between majority and minority communities

Clasping her two-month-old daughter close to her chest, Manori Bibi sits silently inside her mud house. Her face is expressionless even as her baby's first social smile flickers across her face. Under a thatched roof riddled with holes, torn apart not by a storm, but by poverty, Manori's life appears more difficult than it already was in Astia village of northern Odisha's Balasore district.

Her husband, Seikh Mukander Mohammed, a 35-year-old mason, whose meagre daily wages kept the household afloat, died on January 14. His life was allegedly taken after he was lynched by *gau rakshaks* (cow protectionists), who operate openly in vigilante groups predominantly across Bharatiya Janata Party-ruled States.

Odisha has recorded an average of about 20 cow-related episodes of obstruction and violence in a month since mid-2025, as per the Odisha Police's Crime Branch. Typically, groups that operate in the name of preventing alleged cattle smuggling obstruct vehicles carrying cattle. They call the police thereafter. After Mukander's death, the police in Keonjhar, the home district of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, launched multi-district raids to dismantle organised cow smuggling.

Rizwan, a resident of the village and a photographer with an Odia daily, says Mukander's family now faces a double battle: "They will grapple with both social stigma and deepening financial distress."

In the early hours

Mukander was born and raised in Astia village, 12 kilometres from Balasore town and about 15 km from Chandipur's Integrated Test Range, India's premier missile testing centre. Astia's lanes tell a different story from many rural settlements: Hindu and Muslim households sit side by side, often within 50 metres of each other. With no agricultural land to inherit, Mukander turned to daily-wage labour. Over time, he picked up masonry skills, earning about ₹100 more a day than an unskilled labourer. The improvement did little to ease the family's precarity.

"On average, my brother got work for barely 18 days a month at ₹500 a day. For the remaining days, he did odd jobs to survive," says his younger brother, Seikh Jitender Mohammed. Their father is bedridden. January 14, 2026, was Makar Sankranti, a major Hindu harvest festival. It would mean almost a complete halt to construction work in the area. With no wages for the day, Mukander needed alternative work.

His mother, Manwari Bibi, recalls that he received a phone call in the early hours of the day. "He was asked to accompany a fish-laden pick-up van to its destination, and was promised ₹1,000. He accepted gladly," she says. Mukander left home between 2.30 a.m. and 3 a.m. Manori says the family had borrowed money from two self-help groups, and the debt had climbed to ₹90,000. "Work comes rarely. When it does, you cannot refuse," she says.

A few hours later, the family received frantic phone calls from villagers saying Mukander had met with an accident, she says. By the time they reached Jaydev Kasaba, where the pick-up van

We not only hand over those involved in cow trading to the police, but also follow the cases to their logical conclusion... The winds of change have started blowing. More people are coming forward to fund efforts to save cows in Odisha

JITENDRA SWAIN
Secretary, Maa Bharati Go Seva Kendra, Balasore

had skidded off the road, Mukander had already been shifted to the hospital by the police. He died later that afternoon.

Initially, the police treated the case as cattle smuggling having gone wrong. "An injured cow was found near the vehicle, so we invoked provisions of the Odisha Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act, 1960; the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960; and relevant Sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023," says Debajyoti Dash, Additional Superintendent of Police, Balasore.

As the day progressed, videos began doing the rounds of a person, allegedly Mukander, being mercilessly beaten by a group of men. While the authenticity of the footage is being verified by the police, the visuals showed the person being forced to chant slogans such as "Jai Shri Ram" and "Go mata, mo maa" (The cow is my mother).

Mukander's brother Jitender filed a complaint, following which the police registered a new case under Section 103(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, dealing with mob lynching. "We have arrested six persons in connection with the incident. The investigation is ongoing, and no one will be spared," says Balasore Superintendent of Police Pratyush Diwaker. A resident living near Jaydev Kasaba, the site of the incident, about 10 km from Mukander's home, says there were nearly 10 men who intercepted the van in the early hours of the morning.

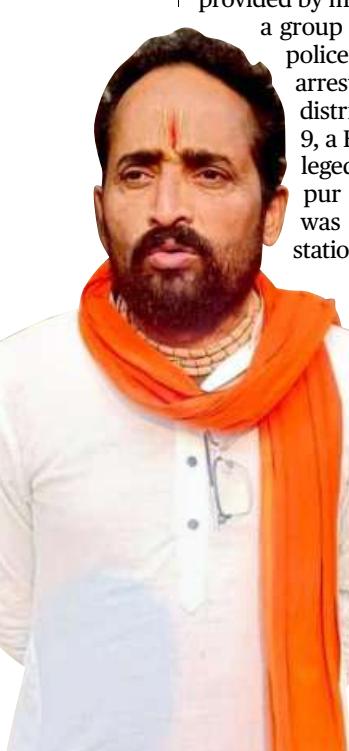
On the streets

Odisha Police's Crime Branch records show a recurring pattern: cattle-laden vans being waylaid and frisked by vigilante groups. In November 2025 alone, at least 20 cattle transport vehicles were tracked down by the groups across different parts of the State. In several instances, the groups were linked to Hindu organisations, say the police.

On November 5, 2025, acting on information provided by members of the Hindu Ekta Manch, a group for a Hindu *rashtra* (nation), the police say they seized four bullocks and arrested a man from Barbil in Keonjhar district. Four days later, on November 9, a Bajrang Dal member filmed the alleged slaughter of a cow in Jagatsinghpur district, following which a case was registered at Balikuda police station.

On November 14, Bajrang Dal members intercepted another cattle van in Bhadrak, rescuing eight animals, say the police. On November 18, *gau rakshaks* alerted Khordha police about a truck allegedly carrying 12 buffaloes. Yet again, on November 21, Bajrang Dal members intercepted a cattle vehicle in the Sukinda area of Jajpur district, leading to the seizure of 12 cattle.

September 2025 saw cattle transport vehicles being intercepted on 26 occasions across



According to Swain, around 30 *gau rakshaks* and a much larger number of *gau sevaks* (servants) are active in the district. "We not only hand over those involved in cow trading to the police, but we also follow the cases to their logical conclusion. We ensure the police do not dilute cases at any stage of the investigation, and we even fight cases in court so that culprits do not go unpunished," he says. Swain claims public support is growing. "The winds of change have started blowing. More people are coming forward to fund efforts to save cows in Odisha," he says.

Operating extra-constitutionally

Human rights activists express serious concern over the violence that often precedes police action in cases of alleged cattle trading. "We have a more than 60-year-old law in the form of the Orissa Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act, 1960. Where does it mention the role of cow vigilantes? Who has given them the power to assault people, even if they are on the wrong side of the law?" says Biswapiya Kanungo, a human rights lawyer.



Standing guard: Security personnel deployed at the entrance of Astia village in Balasore district, where a lynching incident took place. BISWARANJAN ROUT

Odisha. In at least 8 of these cases, including 6 involving Bajrang Dal members, and one each involving the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and *gau rakshaks*, the groups reached the spot before they alerted the police.

Police records show that 30 cases related to cattle transportation were registered in August 2025. On August 4, a BJP zilla parishad member tipped off authorities about the assembly of 21 cows in the Simapali area of Nuapada district. According to police documents, at least 15 people associated with Sangh Parivar organisations, including the VHP, Bajrang Dal, and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, had first confronted a person linked to the cattle before the police stepped in and formally registered a case.

However, while police reports routinely acknowledge the role of these groups in intercepting cattle vehicles, they rarely document whether violence preceded their arrival on the scene. Some of those caught were Hindus.

In 2021, as many as 80 incidents of Hindu-Muslim tension were recorded, 35 of them triggered by issues related to cows, including alleged trafficking and slaughter. The number of communal incidents stood at 58 in 2022, and rose sharply to 85 in 2023 with cow-related issues emerging as the flashpoint in 30 and 60 cases respectively. By July 2024, up to 65 Hindu-Muslim incidents had already been reported, of which 49 were centred on cow-related disputes.

As Mukander's death triggered outrage, *gau rakshaks* denied any role in the violence that led to his killing. "We have grown into an organised group of volunteers who only inform the police about cow transportation and slaughter. We have never been involved in violence," says Jitendra Swain, secretary of Maa Bharati Go Seva Kendra in Balasore, which claims to shelter nearly 3,000 stray cattle.

According to Swain, around 30 *gau rakshaks* and a much larger number of *gau sevaks* (servants) are active in the district. "We not only hand over those involved in cow trading to the police, but we also follow the cases to their logical conclusion. We ensure the police do not dilute cases at any stage of the investigation, and we even fight cases in court so that culprits do not go unpunished," he says. Swain claims public support is growing. "The winds of change have started blowing. More people are coming forward to fund efforts to save cows in Odisha," he says.

Amplifying the police action, Animal Husbandry Minister Gokula Nanda Mallik told PTI that the government was acting firmly against cattle smuggling. "Properties worth more than ₹50 crore belonging to cattle traders have been confiscated. The Chief Minister has instructed officials to keep a close watch on cattle smuggling," he said.

On the alleged involvement of *gau rakshaks* in violence, Mallik said the cow protection was linked to "religious sentiment and *asmita*" (pride), adding that while social activists often assist the police, "they should not take the law into their own hands". Addressing the Fisheries and Livestock Conclave, Chief Minister Majhi warned cattle smugglers, saying strict action would be taken against them. Revenue and Disaster Minister Suresh Pujari announced that cow shelters would be constructed across the State. For this, the government would provide the land.

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Teverybody is obsessed with entertainment. As creatives, we must also educate and provoke thought," says Nikkhil Advani, whose *Freedom At Midnight* Season 2 has opened to a tremendous response. "I'm surprised by the emotional outpouring. People told me they usually binge-watch, but with *Freedom At Midnight*, they paused to read the sources."

Reflecting on the source, Nikkhil recalls that many of his generation grew up loving Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre's *Freedom At Night*. "It helps us understand the days before Partition and its aftermath, whose effects and hostility continue today." Without taking sides, he wanted to put audiences "in negotiation rooms, in trains and communal riots, and beside Gandhi's fast," letting them judge leaders who lacked full answers. "Amidst chaos, they tried their best to maintain sanity."

Edited excerpts:

The land we call home

As *Freedom At Midnight* spurs debate, director-producer Nikkhil Advani speaks on securing dignity in disagreement, and finding a love story at 50

Question: How did you balance historical facts and the dramatic flow of episodes?

Answer: You need a top writing room that reads the material as deeply as you do. The aim was to capture the essence of the series, history that you may not know,

history that you should know. Everything – drama, plot, character, and world-building – was rooted in the logline: the sacrifice of many and the ambition of one. We strictly cut anything that didn't serve this purpose. Also, we followed the book's tone, which shifts midway



men spent almost every waking hour together. They knew each other's strengths and weaknesses. It is reflected in the scene after Gandhi's assassination when Nehru says to Patel, 'When your father passes away, you need the help of the big brother.'

Q: Were you conscious of the times we are living in?

A: We are not here to provoke. I believe in Voltaire's idea: 'I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.' Dissension is democracy's cornerstone. My only requirement for performers and writers was that every character must retain dignity, even in dissent and disagreement.

Q: The portrayal of the complex Nehru-Patel relationship has been appreciated. How did you approach this space where neither is completely ideal nor totally pragmatic?

A: The relationship between Nehru and Patel was built on deep mutual respect. In Season 1, when Gandhi gave the prime ministership to Nehru (despite significant support for Patel within Congress in 1946), we expected people to sit up and say, finally, someone showed what actually happened. Later, I spoke with someone close to Maniben (Patel), who said you guys got it wrong. It was not that Nehru didn't get any votes. Nehru received one vote, and that was Sardar Patel's. Gandhi came to Bombay in 1915, and till 1947, these three

Jinnah had a long journey from being a champion of Hindu-Muslim unity and opposing the use of religion in politics to taking on the persona of Quaid-e-Azam after he returned from self-imposed exile in London to lead the Muslim League. Otherwise, he was a South Bombay elitist lawyer and political strategist. Despite embracing this religious persona, he did not agree with everything that it represented. Five weeks before the inauguration, when (younger sister) Fatima tells him it is time to leave the Malabar Hill house, he asks, 'Do we need to pack everything?' She has to remind him that Quaid could not rule Pakistan from Bombay. Egoist that he was, he says, 'Who wants to stay here?' – but the hesitation in his expression betrayed his true feelings. As the book noted, he had fired a gun, but could not retract the bullet.

Q: What kind of creative choices did you make while showcasing violence during the Partition?

A: I couldn't ignore death trains, exodus violence, or Lahore's devastation. The book covers violence against women extensively, making it essential to show that.

Q: These days, you seem wedded to the long form. When will you return to theatres?

A: I am a bit wary of the theatrical space. I might be ready to make a love story again. I am 50 and want to see what love looks like in the 50s. Are there any second chances in love?

Freedom At Midnight Season 2 is currently streaming on SonyLIV.

STEP OUT



Living legacy

Ahead of the birth anniversary of Amrita Sher-Gil, attention turns to the artist whose work continues to frame conversations around modernism in India. She left behind questions of identity, freedom, and belonging that still resonate across generations. Art historian-writer Yashodhara Dalmia leads a discussion on her life and lasting influence on Indian art history. *January 27, 6.30pm at DAG, Windsor Place, Janpath.*



Enduring modernism

A century after his birth, the work of Satish Gujral is revisited through an exhibition. Moving across painting, sculpture, and works on paper, it traces the forces that shaped his practice, from the rupture of the Partition to encounters beyond India, including Mexico, alongside personal archival material.

Satish Gujral 100: A Centenary Exhibition is on at NGMA, Jaipur House, until March 30.



Blooms of tradition

Over 40 rare pre-Partition textiles at an exhibition trace how phulkari functioned within women's lives, and their everyday worlds

Geetika Sachdev

Long before museums, archives or written histories documented women's lives in Punjab, their stories were patiently stitched into cloth. Phulkari, literally 'flower work', emerged not as an ornament but as inheritance: a language of colour, repetition and labour through which women marked birth, marriage, belief, everyday life and loss. Made within homes, often over years, these embroideries were never meant for display. They were folded into trunks, wrapped around bodies, exchanged at thresholds of life, and carried across generations – and, eventually, across borders.

At LATITUDE 28 Sut te Saah: Stories Woven in Phulkari brings this intimate world into view without stripping it of its emotional density. Presented by

founder-director, LATITUDE 28, Bhavna Kakar and curated by Shreya Sharma, the exhibition brings together over 40 rare pre-Partition phulkaris and baghs from Punjab.

Drawn from the family collections of Brigadier Surinder and Shyama Kakar, and designer Amit Hansraj, the exhibition marks one of the first major presentations of phulkaris and baghs at a private gallery in India. "This exhibition allows us to shift the lens from craft as peripheral to craft as central, positioning phulkari as a complex form of knowledge produced by women," says Bhavna. "These pieces, including those passed down from my great-great grandmother to my mother, are embedded in lived histories of kinship, migration and resilience."

The exhibition unfolds across three interlinked sections:

Sankraman (transition), Vishvaas ate Katha (belief and narrative) and Rihaih (dwelling and everyday life).

In Sankraman, phulkari emerges as a carrier of blessing, protection and continuity. Chope phulkaris, traditionally embroidered by maternal grandmothers and gifted to brides, hold the tenderness of beginnings. Vari-da-Bagh glows with auspicious motifs that bind communities. Dense, luminous baghs unfold like fields of colour, reflecting collective labour. Thirma, with its restrained white ground, carries associations of purity, and the quieter passages of life.

Vishvaas ate Katha brings

Many of the works were created before 1947 but lived with after – carried across borders, homes and identities

Needle lore Sut te Saah: Stories Woven in Phulkari. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT.

together faith, folklore and oral memory. Sainchi phulkari, rich with figurative scenes, capture village life. The final section, Rihaih, turns inward. Here, phulkari appears not as spectacle but as presence – folded into trunks, brought out at particular moments, shaping women's worlds across generations.

Many of the works were created before 1947 but lived with after – carried across borders, homes and identities. "The Partition is not treated as a distant backdrop," Shreya notes. "It reshaped the lives carried within these textiles. The exhibition attends to how rupture settles into everyday life."

That sense of continuity is embodied in the voice of Bhavna's paternal grandmother, Ram Kumari, some of whose phulkaris were later inherited by her daughter-in-law, Shyama. "These phulkaris were not made by one pair of hands alone," Ram Kumari recalls. "My sisters, bhabhis and I worked on them under my mother's watchful eye – she was the most talented among us. Each woman had her own skill, the cloth passing from hand to hand with no tracing, only exact calculation."

She also remembers the material routes that fed this domestic practice: pat silk arriving from Peshawar with the Pathans, valued "as highly as its weight in silver".

Collectors Rahul Sharma and Shreya, speak of encountering phulkari first as lived inheritance rather than collectible artefact. "We were drawn to them through an exhibition in Philadelphia," they say.

Alongside the textiles, boliyan and oral fragments are woven through the space, recreating the social and emotional worlds in which phulkari was made and used.

Until January 26, 11am to 7pm at LATITUDE 28, B-74, Ground Floor, Block B, Defence Colony.

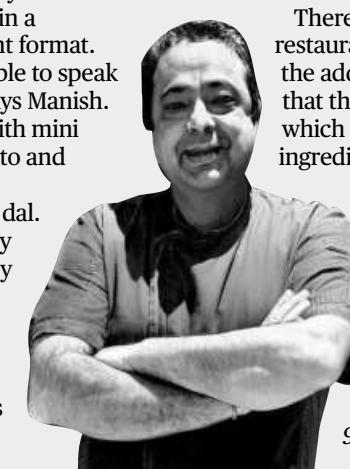
walnut chutney and Kashmiri chilli jam. The barbecue river sole – easily one of the highlights of the meal – is coated with tamarind chilli miso, the chef's nod to Nikkei cuisine, and served with a tangy mooli-adrak lachha. Compared to that, the curry leaf chicken fails to impress, although pickled drumsticks do add the much-needed tang and texture.

The mains arrive with a flourish. The slightly tangy tamarind chicken kadhi is balanced with pink ginger and an imli leaf paratha. We dunk soft butter buns in the chunky tomato crab ghotala before diving into charan paturi kofta in a pleasingly pungent cauliflower kasundi curvy served with puffed hing kachoris.

Dessert includes Jaipur saffron pheni with chocolate drizzle. But it is the baked rasmalai with fried chironji and nolen gur makhana where we linger. The drinks follow a similar trajectory with elevated familiar flavours.

There is no dearth of good Indian restaurants in the capital, but with the addition of Nisaba, it appears that they now have a destination which delivers on good quality ingredients in a refined space.

At First Floor, Humayun's Tomb World Heritage Site Museum, Sunder Nursery, Nizamuddin, open from 12pm to 12am. A meal for two costs ₹5,000. For reservations call 9810906091.



Dinner at the tomb

Chef Manish Mehrotra opens Nisaba, signalling a more grounded approach to contemporary Indian cuisine



Back in the game Food at Nisaba; Chef Manish Mehrotra. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Deepali Dhingra

When Chef Manish Mehrotra parted ways with Indian Accent, the progressive Indian restaurant, the question was, what will he do next? He took a year off.

Nisaba is proof that a well-timed pause is sometimes the best creative decision. At Delhi's Humayun's Tomb Museum complex, Nisaba, with its clean lines and warm sunlight streaming in through large windows, fits right in.

"Nisaba is the goddess of grain in Mesopotamia. I wanted a name which was easy to pronounce, was international but also had a nice Indian ring to it," says the chef.

He, along with founding partners Amit Khanna and Binny Bansal, wanted to set up a culinary space that draws inspiration from everyday dishes found across India, presented in a contemporary restaurant format.

"I want the food to be able to speak to the India of today," says Manish.

We begin our meal with mini samosas filled with potato and generously dunked in a comforting Moradabadi dal. It is served with the aptly titled everything chutney – sweet, tangy and spicy. The popular nadru churma from Kashmir, typically served with dahi, makes a debut with burrata,



A piece of board

India must eschew temptation to be a part of Trump's peace board

India, on Thursday, skipped the U.S. President Donald Trump-led "Board of Peace (BoP)" charter announcement held in Davos, although the government is said to be still discussing the invitation to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to join it. The BoP is part of the Trump administration's Phase 2 of the Gaza Peace Proposal, which is also meant to help resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict through talks on a two-state solution. This was cleared unanimously by the UN Security Council (Russia and China abstained) in November 2025 after an Israel-Hamas ceasefire. There are some reasons for India to seriously consider joining the BoP, as about 20 countries already have. India has been a principled supporter of the Palestinian cause, and a consistent provider of humanitarian assistance, and this could be an opportunity to help the brutalised Palestinian population. The decision by the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Israel and Türkiye, to join may put pressure on the Modi government. The rupture in U.S.-India ties and fragility of trade negotiations maybe another cause not to rebuff Mr. Trump's invitation now, as it may invoke his ire.

Neither pragmatism nor principle dictates taking such a decision in haste, however, and a country of India's standing cannot act based on the fear of missing out on a position of influence, or punishment by the U.S. Even though the UN has backed the U.S.'s original plans, the BoP's latest structure and mandate appear to have been unilaterally altered – it does not actually mention Gaza, according to leaked versions of the charter. Mr. Trump has appointed himself as chairman, with friends and family on the executive board, and the charter proposes to extend the BoP to other conflict-resolution ventures, suggesting that it would seek to supplant the UN. Second, while the board will appoint Palestinian technical experts, it does not include the Palestinian leadership, an affront to countries that have recognised Palestine. That Mr. Netanyahu, accused of genocide by UN agencies should be included, but not the Palestinian President, adds to that injustice. For India, Pakistan's decision to join the board is a red flag, particularly if Mr. Trump decides to include the Kashmir dispute to the BoP's peace plans. The BoP's 2-tier membership, offering "permanent" membership for a "fee" of one billion dollars is another red flag. It would also be difficult for India to cavil at its troops joining the International Stabilization Force, a non-UN initiative. Without clarity, members will only be rubber stamps to Mr. Trump's arbitrary and often illegitimate diktats on the future of Palestine. New Delhi must continue to consult partners on the best way forward, particularly the Palestinians, even as it keeps its own independent counsel. Above all, India must listen to its own conscience.

Welcome deescalation

Europe and rest of the world should still be wary of U.S. moves

In a move that brings a sense of relief to European nations and NATO members, U.S. President Donald Trump, in a speech at the World Economic Forum at Davos, appeared to back down from the possibility of the use of force to acquire Greenland, an autonomous Arctic territory administered by Denmark. Simultaneously, he hit out at world leaders, including from friendly countries such as Canada, France and Switzerland. His remarks came after weeks of rising tension over his earlier proposal to impose on eight European countries a 10% tariff on "any and all goods" beginning on February 1, which was then set to increase to 25% on June 1 until an agreement was reached for the U.S. to purchase or otherwise acquire Greenland. Given the broader context of the Trump administration using military force to kidnap Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro to the U.S. and it hinting publicly at similar interventions in the affairs of Colombia, Cuba, Iran and Mexico, European nations came close to retaliating with an anti-coercion instrument that is a counter-tariff facility targeting the business of major U.S. tech firms in the EU. After Mr. Trump's Davos comments, however, the focus has shifted to what he described as "the framework of a future deal with respect to Greenland and, in fact, the entire Arctic Region". Hinting that the time frame of such a deal would be "infinite", Mr. Trump also indicated that additional discussions on Greenland are ongoing, relating to the \$175 billion Golden Dome missile defence plan, to position U.S. weapons in space.

Troubling though the strident rhetoric out of Washington was on the subject of taking over Greenland, the deeper institutional malaise that the conversations at Davos hinted at relate to the gradual breakdown of the rules-based international order. Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney poignantly alluded to this dysfunction in global trading and financial systems and trends in migration and climate change mitigation policies. He said that great powers were now using economic integration as weapons, tariffs as leverage, financial infrastructure as coercion, and supply chains as vulnerabilities to be exploited. He warned a vast swathe of "middle powers" of the world that contend with the complexities of this rivalry: "There is a strong tendency for countries to go along to get along... To accommodate. To avoid trouble. To hope that compliance will buy safety. It won't." Indeed, countries such as India, which have lingering concerns in bilateral ties with the U.S. despite overall positive trends in cooperation, would do well to consider whether his words on prioritising rule of law over the use of brute force as a modus operandi on the global stage ring true at home.

A dangerous march towards a Himalayan ecocide

In 2025, which saw nearly 331 days of near-continuous climate impacts, the human cost was staggering: over 4,000 deaths attributed to climate-induced disasters in 2025 alone, with Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand bearing the heaviest toll. Towns such as Dharali, Harsil, Uttarkashi, Chamoli, Kullu, Mandi and Kishtwar were ravaged by sudden cloudbursts, landslides, and avalanches that morphed into deadly flash floods, obliterating lives and livelihoods.

This onslaught of scorching heat, catastrophic floods and land subsidence appears to be the new normal. And yet, how does one explain the government's decision to endanger Dharali and Harsil – areas recently devastated by an avalanche-turned-flash-flood – by pushing forward a massive infrastructure project that would fell nearly 7,000 Devdar trees and countless native species?

Pushing infrastructure in a disaster zone

On November 12, the Uttarakhand Forest Department approved the felling of these trees, diverting 43 hectares of forest land for the Char Dham road-widening project, with 10 hectares meant for muck dumping. This decision again relies on the flawed DL-PS (double-lane with paved shoulder) standard that mandates a 12-metre paved surface in an area demonstrably prone to disasters.

The region, located north of the Main Central Thrust (MCT), is classified as a critical zone where major infrastructure is explicitly discouraged. There are also hanging glaciers and the area is fed by the Gangotri, one of the world's fastest receding glaciers, which sustains several unstable, moraine-laden glaciers in the valley. One of these glacier avalanches contributed to the disaster in Dharali.

This raises a pivotal and urgent question: what is the true value of these trees for this region?

The Devdar (Deodar) forests are crucial ecological assets in the delicate Himalayan landscape. Their extensive root systems stabilise slopes, prevent landslides and serve as natural barriers against avalanches and glacial debris flows, safeguarding downstream communities. These forests are also essential for the water quality of the Ganga. This is important as they are situated within the Bhagirathi Eco-Sensitive Zone, a nearly 4,000-square-kilometre buffer that was established in 2012 to protect the river's last pristine stretch.

The unique antimicrobial qualities of Devdar trees (from terpenoids, essential oils, and phenolic compounds found in the wood, bark and resin) fundamentally influence river ecology. As leaf litter and organic material enter mountain streams, they inhibit harmful bacteria while promoting the development of beneficial microbial communities, resulting in a naturally regulated, biologically active river system, especially in the upper reaches where industrial pollution remains limited.

These forests also maintain cooler microclimates, regulate water temperature in snowmelt-fed streams, and help sustain dissolved oxygen levels essential for aquatic life.



Mallika Bhanot

is a member of Ganga Ahvaan, a citizen forum working for Himalaya-Ganga conservation, and Member of the Bhagirathi Eco-sensitive Zone Monitoring Committee



C.P. Rajendran

is an Adjunct Professor at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru, and author of the book, 'The Rumbling Earth: The Story of Indian Earthquakes'

Deforestation would trigger warmer air and water, reduced oxygen, diminished bacteriophage activity, and an irreversible shift in the river's ecological character. This is why the Supreme Court, in its judgment, discouraged the felling of precious deodar trees in the area.

However, recent proposals by forest departments suggest "translocating" these ancient trees – an ecologically flawed notion. Uprooting centuries-old Devdars is tantamount to cutting them down. Their complex, site-specific ecological functions cannot be replicated elsewhere, and no suitable alternative terrain exists. Their preservation is not a matter of convenience but of environmental necessity.

A project built on falsehoods

The Char Dham Road Widening Project has been built on falsehoods. Its execution is a case study in how not to build in the Himalayas. This is evident in the bypassing of a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment, through project fragmentation, the adoption of an incorrect road-width standard contrary to its own mandate, the destabilising practice of vertical hill-cutting on fragile slopes, and the indiscriminate dumping of muck in vital water sources.

These are the consequences – along the nearly 700 kilometres of widened road, over 800 active landslide zones have emerged. Key border routes have been closed for extended periods, and the government's touted "all-weather road" is now derisively called an "all-paidal (all-pedal)" road by locals.

To prevent such damage, the government needed only to regulate road width and prioritise stability over excessive widening, as warned by experts. Yet the Union Minister's recently proposed remedy, which is belated and inadequate – to retrofit slopes with Swiss fibreglass bolts and wire mesh – comes eight years after large-scale destabilisation.

The fundamental failure lies not in the absence of reinforcement, but in the original engineering decision to execute excessively steep hill cuts. Cutting slopes at angles that violate the natural "angle of repose" of Himalayan geology is a profound act of either ignorance or hubris. No amount of anchoring later can rectify this intrinsic flaw that was engineered into the landscape from the outset.

The Union Government's current developmental initiatives directly contradict a key policy framework: the National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE). Approved in 2014 under the National Action Plan on Climate Change, the NMSHE was established to protect the fragile Himalayan ecology. Its mandate includes monitoring glaciers and biodiversity, mitigating natural hazards and securing sustainable livelihoods for Himalayan communities. It was designed to build scientific capacity and guide policymakers toward genuinely sustainable development.

The government, therefore, owes the nation a clear explanation on why its actions violate its own flagship environmental policy. When *Devbhoomi* (the land of the gods) is turned against

the *Devdaaru*, which are believed to be abodes of the deities, this is not development. It is a profound betrayal of traditional culture, ecology and scientific reason. Better sense must prevail, and those who enable these prejudiced, mindless, and disaster-prone projects must be held accountable.

The vulnerability of the Himalayan – one of the world's most climate-sensitive landscapes – is escalating. The current snowless winters and raging forest fires in this area resonate with the conclusion of a recent study, revealing that high-altitude areas have been warming 50% faster than the global average since 1950. This accelerated warming means extreme weather events such as the Dharali disaster will become increasingly frequent and severe.

If border security, connectivity and national interest are our true objectives, then disaster resilience must take precedence over disaster-prone infrastructure. This is not a matter of ideology; it is a scientific, ecological, and economic necessity.

The primary catalyst for disasters is unsafe land use: cutting into unstable slopes for wide highways, drilling massive tunnels without adequate geological surveys, and constructing large-scale hydropower projects. These activities have been repeatedly flagged by the National Green Tribunal and other bodies. Crucially, the clearance of deodar forests removes the natural anchors that bind fragile soils, directly accelerating erosion and amplifying the risk of landslides and floods.

While this development provides the fuse, climate change acts as a powerful "risk multiplier." It intensifies the threat by creating erratic rainfall patterns, supercharging weather events and accelerating glacial melt. This leads to a dangerous "water peak phase" of increased run-off and catastrophic flash floods, which, once the glaciers have fully retreated, inevitably gives way to a prolonged phase of water scarcity and drought.

These physical pressures are compounded by unsustainable human behaviours, including unregulated tourism, unchecked vehicular traffic in fragile zones, and the absence of carrying capacity assessments or functional solid waste management plans. These symptoms point to deeper, systemic governance failures: a persistent prioritisation of short-term, economic gains over long-term disaster resilience, and a chronic inability to plan and implement genuine, science-based sustainable development policies.

The subcontinent's foundation

This ground reality solidifies the axiom that "without the Himalayas, there is no India." The range is more than just a geographical entity; it is the very foundation of the subcontinent's existence. The Himalayas have shaped India into a fertile and habitable land, while also forging a syncretic cultural identity as enduring and majestic as the mountains themselves. The continuing sequence of disasters in the Himalayas is a non-negotiable lesson in earth system science and a loud reminder that India exists because of the Himalaya.

BRICS India summit needs a green and resilient agenda

The next BRICS Summit will be held in India this year. Having hosted the G-20 (2023), infrastructure and organisational processes are in place, but India must quickly hone in on the Summit's focus. This should obviously resonate with India and BRICS, but critically be an issue that is of vital importance for the Global South.

Given its vastly increased vulnerabilities to climate change, resilience is a top priority for the South, and also underscores India's and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's global leadership on an inclusive green agenda.

Need for a stabilising force

In the Trump polar world, collaborative multilateralism is under immense stress, with climate change being particularly singled out by the United States and being called a hoax along with a visible push for more fossil fuel use. The Donald Trump administration has said that it will withdraw the U.S. from 66 international organisations, which includes the India-helmed International Solar Alliance. In fact, the U.S. stayed away from the COP30 in Belém, Brazil, in November 2025 – something that possibly ensured a continuation of the COP process. With the Europeans, who for long positioned themselves as climate champions, facing domestic climate fatigue and external national security priorities, there is a certain space for a stabilising force for collaborative action on sustainability and resilience. BRICS can endeavour towards this.

The acronym, BRICS, however, raises the hackles of President Trump who thinks that it is anti-American and an attempt to dislodge the dollar. Given the vast gamut of India-U.S. ties, including the imperative of an acceptable trade deal, staying clear of massive tariffs relating to



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cooperation in the Arctic is understandable, given emerging security and climate challenges, any discourse that appears to treat Greenland as a negotiable asset risks undermining the foundational principles of territorial integrity. The Greenland debate serves as a reminder that global leadership must be exercised through lawful diplomacy and mutual respect.

Russian oil imports and ensuring a certain presidential happiness in Washington DC will certainly need a certain adroitness on the part of India at the BRICS Summit. Such diplomatic capacity was on display during the G-20 Summit in Delhi that saw a successful balancing of global geopolitics with Indian interests, including protecting its strategic autonomy through multi-alignment and leadership of the Global South.

Climate change is a common concern

At the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the old grouping of BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India, China) has been useful and will continue to have its role but a larger grouping of major developing country players may add greater heft. This was seen in Belém to ensure that the handling of fossil fuels did not stymie development imperatives of developing countries. Climate impacts, while varying in form and intensity, are a common concern across BRICS, ranging from risks to infrastructure, health, livelihoods and ecosystems arising from permafrost thaw, pressures on the Amazon and the Himalayas, and growing vulnerabilities in coastal and riverine regions. It is in their own interest to collectively advance a stronger international agenda on adaptation, resilience, equity and sustainable development.

This role is further reinforced by several BRICS members having shouldered responsibility for steering the global climate process after the Paris Agreement came into force. Brazil, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have presided over climate conferences in the post-COVID-19 pandemic period, helping safeguard momentum on climate action. A BRICS act would also be useful on a unilateral side-stepping of UNFCCC principles such as the European Union's Carbon

Border Adjustment Mechanism. An opening of a broader climate debate, including trade, was initiated at Belém.

A major outcome of the July 2025 BRICS Summit in Rio de Janeiro was BRICS Leaders' Framework Declaration on Climate Finance, a matter where India has been strong in articulating the demands of the Global South.

With finance being the key enabler for climate action, there is a need to include the World Bank and International Monetary Fund chiefs in the BRICS Summit. It is not the time not to treat them as "theirs (G-7 or G-20's)" and not just confine BRICS to the New Development Bank. Any global push on climate finance without them is hardly possible, given the U.S.'s antipathy to climate change – a fact also reflected in how their corporates and private monies are reacting, including pulling back from Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) requirements and even 'green' bonds and other funds.

BRICS is now about Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, and the UAE, together comprising half of the global population, around 40% of global GDP, and around 26% of global trade. Its voice and heft are considerable.

A chance for Indian to drive change
As the helmsman of BRICS this year, India is in a pivotal position to push for collaborative global action, at least as among much of the world that will join, on resilience and an inclusive green agenda. This will be in its interest as well as a critical imperative for the Global South.

Moreover, geopolitically for India, a BRICS push keeps Chinese ambitions on global leadership on a green agenda in check. India's green agenda focusing on resilience at the BRICS Summit 2026 would also resonate with Ethiopia, the host of COP22 in 2027.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The signal from Greenland

The recent discussions surrounding a prospective "Greenland deal" have raised important questions about sovereignty, international law, and responsible global diplomacy. While strategic

cooperation in the Arctic is understandable, given emerging security and climate challenges, any discourse that appears to treat Greenland as a negotiable asset risks undermining the foundational principles of

territorial integrity. The Greenland debate serves as a reminder that global leadership must be exercised through lawful diplomacy and mutual respect.

C.R. Rajesh,
Bengaluru

Spotlight on the Governor
Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi's 'walk out' from the State Assembly is yet another case of his acrimony toward the Tamil Nadu government. Also, issuing a mere press release from the Lok

Bhavan cannot be a proven document to justify his claims of his charges against the government, warranting his walk-out. Mr. Ravi's actions show a growing pattern under the current BJP-led government that uses the office of the

Governor in the non-ruling BJP States as an instrument of interference.

R. Sivakumar,
Chennai

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address and the full name.

Does Trump's Greenland plan signal the end of NATO?

**PARLEY****C. Raja Mohan**
Journalist,
academic,
and
foreign policy
analyst**T.G. Suresh**
Associate
Professor,
Centre of
Political
Studies, JNU

Days after the U.S.'s military strike on Venezuela and its capture of sitting President Nicolas Maduro, U.S. President Donald Trump intensified his push for Greenland, calling it an "absolute necessity" for U.S. national security. On January 17, he said he would impose a 10% tariff on eight European countries opposing the U.S.'s stance; he has since cancelled it. Mr. Trump's proposal reflects imperial undertones and tests the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)'s Article 5 pledge (an armed attack against one NATO member shall be considered an attack against them all). Does Mr. Trump's Greenland plan signal the end of NATO? C. Raja Mohan and T.G. Suresh discuss the question in a conversation moderated by Smriti Sudesh. Edited excerpts:

Mr. Trump wants to acquire Greenland, an autonomous territory of Denmark, which is a NATO member. How do we square this with NATO's foundational pledge?

C. Raja Mohan: I don't think Mr. Trump has time for niceties – that there is a 77-year-old alliance with a shared commitment. For him, this is the new unilateralism of the U.S. There is no real respect for international law. He is a president who is unconstrained at home and feels he can do whatever he likes abroad as well. And since the rest of the world depends on the U.S. for so much, barring China, no other major power has challenged his policies. There is some gap between his demand for Greenland and Denmark's rejection of the demand. In between these extremes, there are ways in which he could get his way and declare a victory, while also saving face for Denmark in some form.

Why does he want Greenland?

T.G. Suresh: Besides Mr. Trump's well-stated objective that Greenland is an absolute necessity for American security, other factors are often cited, including control over shipping routes and access to minerals in Greenland. The first is the Northern Sea Route, which connects the Atlantic and the Pacific via the Russian-Norwegian frontiers and runs along the Siberian coastline. The second is the Northwest Passage, a long-envisioned sea route running from the Atlantic through the Canadian Arctic Archipelago. If influencing shipping routes is the real concern, the question is, why does the U.S. need Greenland at all, since the Northwest Passage runs through Canadian waters and ultimately connects to the Chukchi Sea?

There is already a well-developed political and institutional arrangement governing the Arctic geography. It is therefore not clear why Mr. Trump is focusing specifically on Greenland.

The bedrock of NATO is the U.S.'s security



Sunset at Nuuk, Greenland. AFP

guarantees. If the U.S. itself threatens to violate NATO's sovereignty, what message does it send to smaller NATO members which are suspicious of Russia's actions?

CRM: It sends a troubling message to most members of NATO. This is because they have long lived under the assumption that, whatever happens, the U.S. will remain their most reliable security partner. Despite all the problems over the last eight years, NATO has held together, largely because of the U.S.'s political commitment to European security.

However, over the last decade, especially during Mr. Trump's first term, this assumption has been questioned. He has openly challenged the relevance of NATO, arguing that the alliance is "ripping off" the U.S. and that European allies are a burden on American security. Still, during his first term, his administration was broader-based, and the traditional foreign policy establishment continued to shape policy.

This time, that constraint no longer exists. The rise of the MAGA (Make America Great Again) movement reflects a world view that sees alliances as largely useless and believes that the U.S. should look after itself. This camp also questions the long-held assumption that the U.S. must act as the gendarme of the global order, or that American leadership is essential for maintaining global security.

That also leads to the conclusion that the U.S.'s interests lie primarily in the western hemisphere, and that Washington must therefore focus on securing its own immediate strategic space. From Mr. Trump's perspective, gaining control over Greenland appears to be part of a broader effort to assert dominance over that hemisphere. But his position goes even further. He is not merely seeking influence or a security role; he wants sovereign control over Greenland. This is a wake-up call for Europeans.

At the same time, Mr. Trump has shown a willingness to negotiate directly with Russia on the Ukraine war, often without European leaders at the table. For him and his political base, the idea that NATO is a sacred obligation that the U.S. must bear no longer holds. The



The U.S. is needed not only because of its military capabilities, but also because Europe has had the luxury of neglecting its own defence for decades. Also, without the U.S., the divisions in Europe will sharpen further.

C. RAJA MOHAN

challenge for Europe, then, is on finding ways of coming to terms with this new reality.

With the U.S., Russia, and China all increasing their footprint, how do you view the Arctic's rising prominence?

TGS: Across the world, major powers are competing to secure access to resources because prevailing development models have become increasingly energy-intensive. The Arctic has therefore emerged as a region of growing interest not only for Arctic states, but also non-Arctic ones. Activity is increasing around both shipping routes and energy and resource extraction. Ideally, global discussions on the Arctic should focus on melting ice and environmental consequences. Instead, we are seeing intense competition among major powers to influence or gain access to the region. This raises an important question: what has the U.S. actually done in this regard? Russia has invested in Arctic development for centuries, building extensive port infrastructure along the Arctic coastline and maintaining a large fleet of icebreakers, many of them nuclear-powered. But neither the White House nor major American firms, particularly energy companies, appear willing to make long-term fixed investments. This is why I do not foresee a major disruption of existing Arctic arrangements, which are largely led by Russia in partnership with Denmark, Canada, and other Arctic states.

Russia is watching Mr. Trump's Greenland ambitions closely. While a U.S. move that weakens NATO would suit Moscow, stronger American presence in the Arctic would mean long-term strategic competition. How do you assess this Russian dilemma?

CRM: Russia is a major power in many ways. It is arguably the most important power in the Arctic Sea. What happens to Russia's position will depend to a great extent on the nature of the relationship between Russia and the U.S. In fact, in the conversations on Ukraine peace between the U.S. and Russia, one of the key points under discussion has been collaboration in the Arctic. Mr. Trump has repeatedly said that he wants a decent relationship with Russia and that both countries can jointly exploit natural resources. Much therefore depends on whether Russia and the U.S. can reach a deal on Ukraine and move towards a different kind of

relationship. If that happens, they could work together in the Arctic. But if they do not, and Mr. Trump gains control over Greenland, the contest between the two is likely to be quite vigorous.

From oil in Venezuela to rare earths in Greenland, is the U.S. turning to force and coercion as a tool for resource extraction?

TGS: Mr. Trump shows a preference for an economical approach to solving problems. Even when he talks about places like Venezuela, there is a visible aversion to putting boots on the ground or taking risks that come with major, disruptive interventions. Two things stand out clearly. First, his personal approach: he wants quick outcomes, what he calls a "deal", achieved in an economical time frame. Second, even if the U.S. were to attempt to control or establish sovereign ownership over Greenland, it would be extremely difficult. History shows that in regions stretching from the North Atlantic to the coldest parts of the Arctic, it is very hard to override the will of the people. Mr. Trump's economical, deal-oriented approach is likely to remain the final determining factor.

As Europe boosts defence spending amid the Ukraine war and its ongoing reliance on the U.S., Mr. Trump appears to be distancing America from NATO. How do you assess this?

CRM: This is like a situation where your protector becomes your tormentor. Mr. Trump's threat of leaving NATO and its potential consequences have made Europe nervous. Faced with what Europe sees as grave existential risks, it is willing to please and accommodate Mr. Trump. This also explains Europe's approach to the Greenland issue: most of its leaders would prefer to persuade Denmark to find a way that allows Mr. Trump to gain control over Greenland, while at the same time urging the U.S. to leave Denmark a fig leaf – something that avoids an outcome that appears overtly humiliating.

Can NATO survive Mr. Trump's second term?

CRM: No. That is precisely why European leaders want to keep the Americans in. The U.S. is needed not only because of its military capabilities, but also because Europe has had the luxury of neglecting its own defence for decades. Even if European governments now follow through on their promises to spend massively on defence, it will take time. Also, Europe's history shows that it is internally divided. Without the U.S., there is a real danger that these divisions will sharpen further.



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NOTEBOOK

The mystery of Court 10

Court 10 in the Supreme Court is a pause – an oasis of silence which has nothing to offer to the scribe, and easily overlooked

Krishnadas Rajagopal

Deep in the recesses of the Supreme Court is Court 10. Unlike its sibling courtrooms, which are overflowing beehives of disputes settled, won, lost, or adjourned, Court 10 is empty and closed. It has not witnessed objects being flung at the Bench or people nodding off to scholarly arguments from the Bar. If Court 10 could speak, it may have quoted Pierre-Albert Birot's 'The world pulse beats beyond my door'.

As court reporters, our first task of the day – or the previous night, if one is conscientious – is to check the causelist or the list of cases for the day. There are long rows of cases to watch and mark – some of them high-stakes. But they are all listed before the Benches of the other 16 courts; Court 10 is a white space on the computer screen. For a reporter struggling to make decisions about which cases to sit through and cover, Court 10 provides a much-needed break in the flow.

I have made some attempts to solve the closed-door mystery of Court 10, but only managed to draw hems and haws. A few looked at me blank-faced. Some gave me quizzical smiles. A few even turned combative: "Don't you have anything better to do today?" One of them dithered: "Never thought about it. Have to find out. Let you know." And off they all went, with not a moment to spare.

A kind soul invited me to come look inside Court 10. But I didn't make the appointment, having convinced myself that I was far too busy for trifles.

A 'highly-placed source', as they are often called in reporting terms, said a pillar stands awkwardly inside the court room, making it difficult to function there.

Google, my next best source, informed me that Kerala High Court had "renamed" one of its court rooms 12A. Then, Google did a Shashi Tharoor on me, informing me that the fear of number 13 is called 'triskaidekaphobia'.

krisnadas.rajagopal@thehindu.co.in

PICTURE OF THE WEEK**Taking the lead**

Children who are part of road safety patrol take part in a Republic Day parade rehearsal at the Shivaji Park ground in Mumbai. EMMANUEL YOGINI

FROM THE ARCHIVES**The Hindu.****FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 23, 1976****Centre studying take-over of foreign drug firms**

New Delhi, Jan. 22: Take-over of multinational companies producing pharmaceuticals as recommended by the Hathi Commission report is "under the consideration of the Government", the Minister of Chemical and

Fertilizers, Mr. P.C. Sethi, told the Lok Sabha to-day. The question, he said, was a "complex" one. Mr. Sethi was replying to a discussion on the report raised by CPI members Ramavtar Shastri and Mr. Hiren Mukherjee.

A powerful plea for early implementation of the Hathi Commission report was made by several members.

Initiating the discussion on the report Mr. Ramavtar Shastri criticised the activities of multi-nationals in the industry and called for their takeover.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JANUARY 23, 1926**Yet another "cure"**

In "The Daily Herald" received by this mail we read: Dr. Smallpage, a young Sydney practitioner, claims to have found an effective serum for the cure of consumption.

He has offered to hand over to the Australian people the formula for the preparation of the serum and to instruct medical men in its use for the treatment of poor people free of charge.

Text & Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Percentage plunge in IndiGo's quarter net profit

78 in per cent. India's largest airline, IndiGo, on Thursday reported a 78% decline in the December quarter net profit at ₹549.1 crore as flight disruptions and implementation of the new Labour Code took a toll on its earnings. It reported a net profit of ₹549.1 crore in October-December quarter, compared with ₹2,448.8 crore earnings in the year-ago period. REUTERS

Average congestion level in Bengaluru in 2025

74.4 in per cent. Bengaluru has been ranked the second most congested city globally in 2025, with an average congestion level of 74.4%, according to TomTom's 2025 Traffic Index. It placed Mexico City at the top, followed by Bengaluru and Dublin. In Bengaluru, the average congestion level rose 1.7% points compared to the previous year. PTI

Percentage increase in India's coffee exports in 2025

22.5 in per cent. India's coffee exports rose in value terms by 22.5% to \$2,058.06 million in the 2025 calendar year, but declined in volume by 4.47% to 3.84 lakh tonnes, Coffee Board data showed. In volume terms, the shipments declined from 4.02 lakh tonnes in 2024. India ranks seventh globally in coffee production and fifth in coffee exports. PTI

Missing persons reunited with family by Haryana police

17,000 Of the 17,000 missing persons, Haryana Police reunited 13,529 adults with their families over the last year. These included 4,130 men and 9,399 women who had been separated from their homes. Over the past year, Haryana Police traced and connected more than 17,000 missing persons with their families. PTI

People likely to experience severe hunger in Nigeria

35 million. The UN World Food Programme said on Tuesday that more than a million people in northeastern Nigeria could lose access to emergency food and nutrition aid within weeks unless funding is secured, as violence and hunger surge in the region. The food agency said in a statement it will sharply scale back assistance. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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The limits of household stability

India's growth story rests on aggregate comfort, but a closer look shows households saving less, borrowing more, and absorbing risks once shared more broadly; beneath stable growth and steady consumption, a growing fragility builds in household finances

ECONOMIC NOTES

Deepanshu Mohan

With only a couple of weeks left before the Finance Minister tables the next Union Budget, the aggregate markers of macroeconomic comfort in India's growth story may appear to be in place, where average economic growth remains strong in relative comparison to global standards, even amid the heightened uncertainty afflicting most other nations.

Yet this story of projected confidence rests on a partial reading of the aggregate data, which veils a deeper, more unsettling reality in India's economic fundamentals and their governing dynamics. A closer look at recent household finances data suggests that India's growth is increasingly being underwritten by households that are, on average, saving much less and borrowing more, while quietly absorbing economic risks that were once shared more broadly. This can, of course, increase household debt, especially among vulnerable and low-income groups, who haven't really gained in employment opportunities or higher incomes over the last few years.

A misleading comfort

The Reserve Bank of India's Financial Stability Report (December 2025), read alongside its Annual Report 2024-25 and recent Budget documents, points to a shift that deserves attention precisely because it does not yet resemble a crisis, but exhibits enough to merit a red flag.

Chart 1.45 of the Financial Stability Report is frequently used to support the claim that India's household sector remains financially stable. Household debt stood at 41.3% of GDP as of March 2025, far lower than levels observed in many emerging market peers, including China, Malaysia, and Thailand. Additionally, the increase has been relatively gradual rather than abrupt, rising from roughly 36% of GDP in mid-2021 to slightly over 41% by early 2025. It proves that there is no household debt crisis in the traditional sense in India. Excessive leverage or an imminent threat to financial stability is not evident.

However, there are limits to this assurance. Debt-to-GDP ratios demonstrate the extent of household borrowing in relation to the economy, but they do not explain why households are taking on debt or whether they will be able to pay it off over time.

In the present situation, that distinction is important. According to the RBI's Annual Report 2024-25, real income growth has been uneven, especially outside formal employment and high-productivity sectors. In the meantime, overall consumption has held up well. Households must make other adjustments when consumption holds up despite weak or uneven income growth. Borrowing has become a more common way to make that adjustment.

Credit as a cushion

In this way, a change in the function of credit itself is reflected in the increase in household debt. Borrowing is being used more to close income and expense gaps than to finance the creation of assets. Even moderate debt levels can become a source of vulnerability when they substitute for income growth and

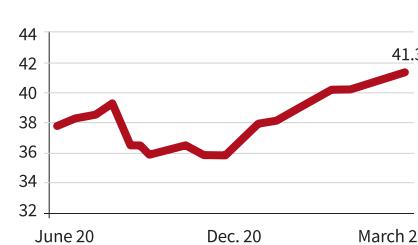
Low debt, rising strain

India's household debt remains modest by emerging-market standards, but the RBI's latest financial stability data reveal a more fragile undercurrent: households are saving less, borrowing more, and increasingly absorbing risks once shared by the State



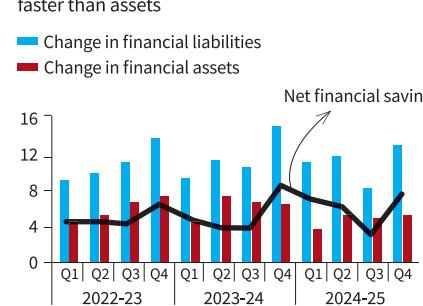
Chart 1.45 A*: Household debt has risen steadily, reflecting greater reliance on borrowing

India's household debt (Per cent of GDP)



*The RBI's Financial Stability Report's Chart 1.45 is frequently used to support the claim that India's household sector is financially stable.

Chart 1.50 A Savings have turned volatile as liabilities grow faster than assets



savings rather than complement them. That question depends not on how much households owe today, but on how debt, income, and savings are evolving together, an issue that becomes central to assessing the economy ahead of the Budget.

Both sides of the balance sheet are simultaneously captured in Chart 1.50. Financial liabilities accounted for 41.3% of GDP in March 2025, while gross household financial assets stood at 106.6% of GDP. There is no indication that liabilities have surpassed assets, and households continue to be net holders of financial wealth. It is simple to conclude that household finances are sound based only on this.

Examining the flow data is the only way to see the stress. In recent quarters, net financial savings have drastically fluctuated and decreased. Net financial savings recovered to 7.6% of GDP in the last quarter of 2024-25, but this came after a compression to about 3-4% of GDP in the preceding quarter. The quicker accumulation of financial liabilities compared to financial assets is the direct cause of this volatility, according to the RBI.

There are obvious ramifications to this pattern. It indicates a more concerning change in domestic behaviour. Although households continue to save, a growing portion of

Chart B: India's debt remains low versus peers, but this comparison masks domestic stress

Household debt of EMEs (March 2025) (Per cent of GDP)

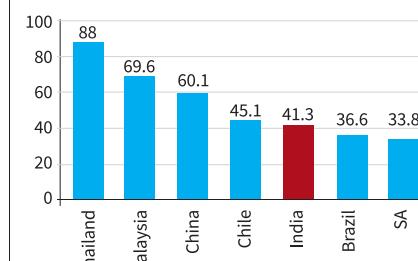
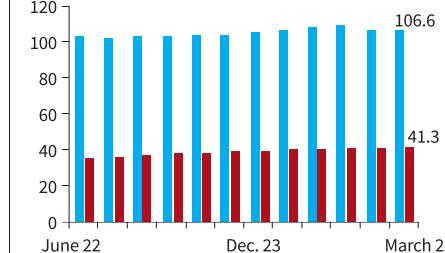


Chart C: Assets exceed liabilities, but household financial buffers are thinning

Financial assets ■ Financial liabilities



that savings is being offset by new borrowing.

As a result, headline financial wealth can continue growing while the buffer that shields households from job shocks, income losses, and rising interest rates gradually deteriorates. A growing fragility lies beneath what appears stable in aggregate.

Why households are borrowing more
A more comprehensive fiscal and policy configuration that systematically transfers risk from the State to households is the cause of the increase in household borrowing. According to the RBI's State Finances: A Study of Budgets 2024-25, State governments have prioritised capital expenditure while limiting revenue expenditure.

Committed expenditures – interest payments, pensions, and salaries – now account for between 30 and 32% of State revenue receipts, leaving little space for income support or countercyclical transfers. States have actually become less responsive to household income stress while also becoming fiscally leaner.

At the Union level, the Budget at a Glance 2025-26 shows a continued emphasis on public investment, with capital expenditure budgeted at ₹11.2 lakh crore and effective capital expenditure at ₹15.5 lakh crore. This

Union Budget 2026 will be framed understandably as a continuation of macroeconomic stability achieved through fiscal discipline and investment-led growth. However, stability that depends on households taking out loans to maintain demand is not self-sustaining and merits a closer look at options which can enable disposable income for households

strategy is growth-enhancing, but it is not household-neutral. Infrastructure investment raises medium-term potential, yet does little to smooth short-term income volatility.

The result is a quiet reallocation of risk. As governments consolidate and invest, households are asked implicitly to insure themselves.

A macro risk hiding in plain sight
This shift matters because it changes the very character of India's growth. Private consumption accounts for close to 60% of GDP, making household spending the economy's primary stabiliser. The danger lies in the interaction of three trends documented across the RBI's recent reports.

First, the Annual Report 2024-25 notes that real income growth has been uneven, especially outside formal employment and high-productivity sectors. Second, while borrower risk profiles have improved, unsecured retail credit has expanded rapidly, indicating that consumption is being sustained on thinner financial cushions. Third, as shown in Chart 1.50, net financial savings have become volatile and, at times, sharply compressed, as liability accumulation increasingly offsets asset formation.

A slowdown in income growth, a tightening of financial conditions, or a rise in unemployment would reduce discretionary spending and, more critically, compel households to retrench abruptly, because debt-financed consumption offers little room for adjustment.

Union Budget 2026 will be framed understandably as a continuation of macroeconomic stability achieved through fiscal discipline and investment-led growth. However, stability that depends on households taking out loans to maintain demand is not self-sustaining and merits a closer look at options which can enable disposable income for households.

It is not guaranteed even then that any marginal increase in income can help increase savings but may at least catalyse that over time in the longer term, while helping the citizenry take care of debt interest or borrowing repayments in the short to medium term. Restoring balance in the household budgeting calculus is the key fiscal policy-task prior to Budget 2026. Creating demand, more labour-intensive employment, and aligning fiscal outcomes towards these, while increasing average incomes, will eventually be affected by an economy where households gradually lose their ability to absorb shocks.

Deepanshu Mohan is professor and dean, O.P. Jindal Global University and Director, Centre for New Economics Studies (CNES). He is a visiting professor at LSE and a visiting fellow at University of Oxford. Geetaali Malhotra contributed to this column.

THE GIST

India's growth rests on aggregate comfort, but a closer look shows households saving less, borrowing more, and quietly absorbing economic risks once shared more broadly.

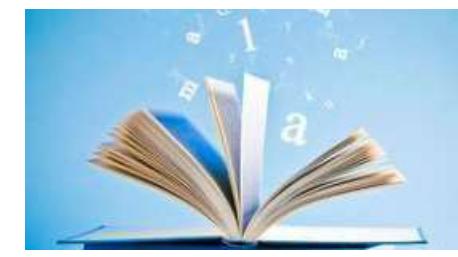
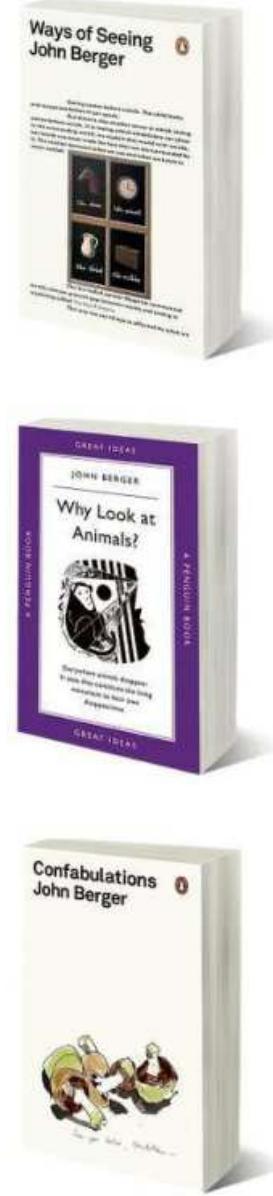
Household debt is not yet a crisis, but uneven income growth, rising liabilities, and volatile net financial savings point to a growing fragility beneath stable consumption.

As fiscal policy prioritises investment and discipline, risk is being reallocated to households, making the balance between growth, demand, and household stability central before Budget 2026.

BIBLIOGRAPHY



Art critic and writer John Berger. AFP



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

"You don't look happy. What's wrong?"

"Sujatha says that I am still tied to my mother's apron strings."

"What does she mean by that?"

"It means that he is controlled or influenced by her."

"In other words, this person does whatever his mother tells him to do?"

"Exactly! The mother dominates him completely. Here's an example."

"Seetha refused to marry Suresh because she felt he was still tied to his mother's apron strings."

"My cousin Gayathri claims that most Indian men are tied to their mother's apron strings."

"I know a man who is tied to his wife's apron strings."

"Measuring the man is controlled by his wife?"

"Right again!"

"My uncle spent the first twenty five years of his life tied to his mother's apron strings."

"He probably spent the next fifty-five years tied to his wife's apron strings."

"How did you know?"

"Just a guess!"

"Can I say, most Congressmen are tied to Sonia's apron strings?"

"Why don't you ask Sujatha?"

"I don't want to talk about her. By the way, is it wrong to say off the lights?"

"We in India tend to say, on the lights and off the lights, but a native speaker of English would say turn on/turn off the lights."

"I see, but...."

"....it is also possible to say switch on/switch off the lights."

"My mother switches off the lights at 10:30."

"My nephews always forget to turn off the fan."

"It's been ages since I turned the radio on."

"Will you be meeting Sujatha tomorrow?"

"Not if I can help it! But I will be seeing her father, though."

"He's coming to our school tomorrow. He's going to talk about how to become a pilot."

"He's been a pilot for a long time, hasn't he?"

"Yes, he has. He has flown different kinds of planes..."

"....aircraft."

"What?"

"He has flown different types of aircraft. You see, the plural of aircraft is aircraft."

"I see."

"Here's an example. There were ten aircraft waiting to take off."

"In the accident, both aircraft were damaged."

"Because of the heavy fog, the tower wasn't allowing any aircraft to land."

"Since the plural of aircraft is aircraft, I guess that's the reason why a ship which carries aircraft is called an aircraft carrier rather than aircrafts carrier."

"That's right!"

"I wonder if Sujatha's father has ever been on an aircraft carrier."

"I only hope he doesn't bore us like the speaker we had last week. The man spoke about nuclear physics and it was full of jargons. It was..."

"....it was full of jargon, not jargons."

"Is jargon an uncountable noun?"

"Yes, that's right! People who like to impress others use a lot of jargon."

Published in The Hindu on May 25, 1999

John Berger never stopped experimenting with form and voice

In the centenary year of the great English art critic and writer, a look at a career spent insisting that changing our perspectives could change the world; Berger's influential books, including the acclaimed *Ways of Seeing*, are about history, people, and revealing the illusion of objectivity

Vasudevan Mukunth

There's a way to see yourself in the world, and write about it, without putting yourself at its centre. To write about history and place and people and in the course of that make yourself visible. It's an unselfish but also beautiful way. The English art critic and writer John Berger's famous book, *Ways of Seeing* – which he "made" with Sven Blomberg, Chris Fox, Michael Dibb, and Richard Hollis – taught me this. (I'm obviously not such a good writer.)

Ways of Seeing dissects consumer culture like a surgeon explaining each incision as she makes it. Here's the oil painting that taught us to desire objects. Here's the advertisement that inherited this language. There's a woman in this frame because she is to be looked at (thus exposing the male gaze). The product in the catalogue exists to complete you.

However, Berger doesn't pretend to stand outside the book's own frame, using "we" to implicate himself in the looking. When he writes "the way we see things is affected by what we know or what we believe", the gaze is turned inwards, to reveal the critic in his own viewfinder. *Ways of Seeing* reveals the visual machinery of persuasion by making Berger's own machinery visible. Each chapter strips away more layers of mystification, glamour, and, crucially, the myths of genius to reveal beneath it all the act of looking. It's Berger looking at paintings, looking at women looking at

themselves being looked at.

Radical gesture

Consumer culture thrives on invisibility – the advertisement wants you to forget it was made, forget someone chose this angle, this light, this juxtaposition – and Berger reverses it. It's a radical gesture for admitting that critique has a body and a location, much as the thing being critiqued.

The influence of *Ways of Seeing* extended far beyond art history to reshape how critics in many disciplines understood their own practice. The book allowed generations of writers to abandon the pretence of omniscient detachment. His prose is itself accessible and as an author he's willing to question established hierarchies of taste, features that together democratised criticism by showing that rigorous analysis doesn't demand jargon or 'objectivity'.

This is why the book's discourse can be applied to almost any endeavour. (That the title also recalls Raymond Williams's statement about the mass media helps: "There are in fact no masses; there are only ways of seeing people as masses.") For instance, the book was my gateway to traditional notions of scientific objectivity in science writing. The feminist scholar Sandra Harding among others has argued that scientists should openly acknowledge how their values and perspectives shape research, rather than claim their stance is completely neutral. Donna Haraway's concept of 'situated knowledges' rejects

what she called the "god trick" of seeing everything from nowhere, proposing instead that knowledge comes from specific, embodied positions.

Hidden frames

When we call something objective, we're really saying we believe we've managed rather than eliminated certain epistemic risks arising due to human imperfections. Observation changes what's observed and scientists pretending otherwise perform the same mystification Berger saw in art criticism: using authority to conceal. True objectivity, the kind that emerges regardless of who does the observing, exists only in vanishingly rare circumstances – when an observer's position, tools, assumptions, funding sources, career anxieties, and cultural moment genuinely don't matter.

How often does that happen in science? In medicine? In research on human behaviour, climate, ecosystems, and public health? The observer is always there yet the frames remain hidden, and to see them has been to become impertinent.

Berger applied this particular impertinence to the natural world in his 1980 essay 'Why Look at Animals?'. He argued that the way we view animals today, especially in zoos, is a monument to a relationship that capitalism has destroyed. Just as the art critic must acknowledge the gallery, the naturalist must acknowledge the cage. Berger observed that in the zoo the animal is

rendered marginal: it's there to be seen yet it can't return the look. We drift from cage to cage like consumers in a department store, observing creatures that have been, in his words, "immunised to encounter". It illustrates how a claim to educational or scientific visibility can actually serve to make the subject invisible, reducing a living being to a token of its species.

Spiritual orphan

Berger also used 'impertinence' later in his life as the title and substance of an essay in his last book, *Confabulations* (2016). He wrote about being a spiritual orphan as he learnt that hierarchies were theatre and authority was costume. In fact, "I propose a conspiracy of orphans," he wrote. "We exchange winks. We reject hierarchies. All hierarchies. We take the shit of the world for granted and we exchange stories about how we nevertheless get by. We are impertinent." It's the idea that honesty is the only kind of objectivity that matters.

Confabulations was published in the final year of Berger's life and is proof that he never stopped experimenting with form and voice. The book meditates on the artist's responsibility to witness, with luminous and precise prose that moves effortlessly between the intimate and the universal. Reading it feels like spending time with a generous intelligence. And it's a fitting culmination to a career spent insisting that changing how we see could change the world.

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

THE DAILY QUIZ

Senegal won this year's African Cup of Nations, beating hosts Morocco last Sunday. Here is a quiz on Africa's prestigious tournament

Vighnesh P. Venkitesh

QUESTION 1

How many countries participated in the first version of the tournament in 1957, and what is the current number of slots?

QUESTION 2

Which country was initially slated to host this year's tournament, but was stripped of its hosting rights due to concerns over readiness?

QUESTION 3

Name the most successful nation in the tournament, and the number of cups it has won.

QUESTION 4

What animal is the mascot of this year's tournament, and what is it called?

QUESTION 5

Name the three countries that have qualified for the coming World Cup but did not play in the AFCON?



Visual Question: Name this Moroccan player who won the golden boot at the tournament, but missed a penalty in the final? AFP

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz:
1. Who was Norma McCorvey? Ans: Norma McCorvey, also known by the pseudonym Jane Roe, was the plaintiff in the landmark 1973 American legal case *Roe v. Wade*.

2. Which U.S. state was the first one who ruled in Jane Roe's favour? Ans: Texas

3. In 1821, this U.S. state passed the first state statute legislating abortion in the United States. Ans: Connecticut

4. This was a landmark decision of the United States Supreme Court in which the Court upheld the right to have an abortion as established by the "essential holding" of *Roe v. Wade* (1973). Ans: Planned Parenthood vs Casey

5. In 2022, which decision ended the protection of abortion rights by the U.S. Constitution and allowed individual states to regulate any aspect of abortion not preempted by federal law? Ans: Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization

Visual: Identify this American lawyer who participated in two notable U.S. court cases of the 20th century. Ans: Henry Wade

Early Birds: K.N. Viswanathan | Sukdev Shet | Sunil Madhavan | Tito Shiladitya | Sadhan Panda

Word of the day

Anodyne:

unlikely to offend anyone or cause them to disagree

Synonyms:

bland, neutral, harmless

Usage:

The minister issued an anodyne statement after the controversy.

Pronunciation:

newsth.live/anodynepro

International Phonetic Alphabet:

/ænədænən/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to letters@thehindu.co.in with the subject 'Text & Context'

From Page One**Tension rises after Meitei man's killing**

"The killing has taken place at a time when civil society groups and various sections of the public are making continuous efforts to restore peace and normal life in Manipur," COCOMI convenor Y.K. Dhiren said. "It is deplorable that the presence of more than 60,000 security personnel in Manipur to deal with the unrest has not helped stop the activities of armed militants," he said.

Earlier, Singh's body was recovered and sent for post-mortem. His wife has told the police that four men came in a black SUV looking for her husband. "All of them were masked. While two stayed in the car, the other two entered the house. One of them was carrying a weapon," the official said, adding the victim's wife was not able to recognise them yet.

She told the police that no one except the village chief knew about the arrival of her husband.

Karnataka Governor cuts short speech

Mr. Gehlot's walkout comes just two days after similar actions by Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi and Kerala Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar.

It is understood that Mr. Gehlot declined to read the full address as it contained 10 paragraphs critical of the Narendra Modi-led government, accusing the Centre of "injustice" to Karnataka in tax devolution and Centrally sponsored schemes.

The speech sought repeal of the Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeeyika Mission-Gramin Act and restoration of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act.

Targeting the BJP, Congress general secretary (Organisation) K.C. Venugopal said governors were "Super CMs" who act illegitimately after getting "blessings from the top". "PM Modi fancies himself as the Viceroy of India - who uses governors to remote control state governments from Delhi. Much to his disappointment, there is the Constitution of India under which elected State governments run as per the will of the people," Mr. Venugopal said in a post on X.

Is SIR about illegal immigration, asks SC

Senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, for the EC, earlier argued that the poll body was authorised to verify citizenship under Article 324 of the Constitution. Article 326 made citizenship mandatory for a person to vote. He referred to the amendments made in the Citizenship Act in 2003, which made conditions for citizenship more stringent, requiring both parents of electors to be Indian citizens. The concept of 'illegal immigrant' was introduced in the 2003 amendment. He agreed that the reason of "illegal migration" could have been expressed "more clearly, more happily".

Justice Bagchi said by 'migration' in the SIR notification, the poll body seemed to have been referring more to inter-State migration and not cross-border illegal movement.

Mr. Dwivedi responded that the term 'migration' would subsume both inter-State and trans-border movement. "We could have said 'inter-State migration', 'intra-State migration', 'cross-border migration' or use the one expression 'migration' to mean it all," he said.

The judge, however, said there was a clear distinction between migration and illegal immigration.

"Migration, when it is inter-State, is always lawful. The word 'migration' means 'lawful migration'. When you talk of inter-country migrations, it may amount to illegal immigration. In India, citizens are entitled to move to any part of the country. It is a fundamental freedom. The aspect of illegality comes only in the case of immigration. Your SIR order does not eloquently state that your SIR is also about illegal immigration... When it is migration simpliciter, we will interpret it as inter-State migration," Justice Bagchi observed.

The Bench asked "what was really in the mind" of the poll panel when it started the SIR exercise.

India absent as Trump rolls out Board of Peace

The U.S. President's attempt to create momentum for a project to map out a future of the war-torn Gaza Strip has been overshadowed this week, first by his threats to seize Greenland, then by a dramatic retreat from that push.

The countries that have accepted Mr. Trump's invitation to join the board are Argentina, Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Bulgaria, Egypt, Hungary, Indonesia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Morocco, Mongolia, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkiye, the United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam.

Mr. Trump has spoken about the board replacing some UN functions and perhaps even making that entire body obsolete one day. But he was more conciliatory in his remarks on the sidelines of the forum in the Swiss alps. "We'll do it in conjunction with the United Nations," Mr. Trump said, even as he denigrated the UN for doing what he said wasn't enough to calm some conflicts around the globe.

10 soldiers killed, 11 injured as Army vehicle falls into gorge

The bulletproof truck plunged into a 200-ft-deep gorge at Khanni top in Doda district of J&K; Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Minister express grief, wish speedy recovery to those injured

Press Trust of India
BHADERWAH/JAMMU

A n Army truck skidded off the road and plunged into a deep gorge in Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, killing 10 soldiers and injuring 11, officials said.

The accident took place at the 9,000-foot-high Khanni top along the Bhaderwah-Chamba inter-State road around noon when the driver of the bulletproof Army vehicle, Casspir, heading towards a high-altitude post lost control and the vehicle plunged into a 200-ft-deep gorge.

A joint rescue operation by the Army and the police was immediately launched and four of the soldiers were found dead on the spot. Others were rescued in an injured condition, the officials said.

The Army vehicle was badly mangled. Later, six more soldiers died from injuries.

One of the injured is under observation in Bhaderwah sub-district hospital



People carry the injured to a helicopter for treatment at Udhampur, after an Army vehicle met with an accident in the Khanni Top area of Bhaderwah in Doda on Thursday. ANI VIDEO GRAB

while 10 soldiers were airlifted to Udhampur command hospital for specialised treatment.

"We have lost 10 soldiers with 11 others injured in the unfortunate accident involving an Army vehicle," Additional Deputy Commissioner, Bhaderwah, Sumit Kumar Bhutyal said.

Condolences
Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed grief over the

accident. The Chief Minister conveyed heartfelt condolences to the families of the soldiers who lost their lives and wished a speedy recovery to those injured. Mr. Abdullah also lauded the swift rescue and evacuation efforts.

Mr. Sinha, in a post on X, said he was "deeply saddened at the loss of lives of 10 of our brave Indian Army soldiers in an unfortunate road accident in Doda. We will always remember the outstanding service and supreme sacrifice of our brave soldiers." He expressed his deepest condolences to the grieving families.

"In this moment of profound sorrow, the entire nation stands united with the bereaved families in solidarity and support. 10 injured soldiers have been airlifted to the hospital," the L-G said, adding he had directed the senior officials to ensure the best possible treatment.

"Praying for their speedy recovery," he further said.

Top Maoist leader among 15 members killed in Jharkhand

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

Anal, alias Patriam Manjhi, alias Toofan Da, senior leader and central committee member of the banned Communist Party of India (Maoist), was among the 15 Maoists killed during a special operation in the Saranda forest area of West Singhbhum district in Jharkhand on Thursday.

The operation named "Medhaburu" is being jointly conducted by security forces by deploying 209 COBRA, Jharkhand Jaguar, Central Reserve Police Force, and district police personnel in multiple encounters with the armed squad of Maoist leaders.

During a media interaction in Ranchi, Inspector-General (Operations) Michaelraj S. said around 6.30 a.m., the Maoists fired indiscriminately at the police and the security forces retaliated in self-defence.

Following the encounter, 15 bodies and a large quantity of weapons have been recovered.

"Preliminary investigations have identified 11 of the 15 deceased Maoists, including Anal who was not only carrying a reward

of ₹1 crore in Jharkhand but ₹1.2 crore in Odisha and ₹15 lakh by the National Investigation Agency. There were a total of 149 cases lodged against him in Giridih district of Jharkhand on Thursday."

He said that since 2022, Anal had been responsible for violent acts carried out by Maoists in the Saranda forest area of Kolhan.

Reacting to the operation, Union Home Minister Amit Shah wrote on X, "The ongoing joint operation by CRPF and Jharkhand Police has achieved a major success in the campaign to make the region free of Naxals through encounters with the neutralization of the notorious wanted Maoist CCM 'Anal alias Patiram Manjhi' worth ₹1 crore."

"We are committed to eradicate Naxalism, which has been synonymous with fear and terror for decades, before March 31, 2026."

SC records M.P. govt.'s assurance of peaceful worship at disputed site

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



Devotees make preparations for puja at the disputed Bhojshala complex on the eve of Basant Panchami in Dhar on Thursday. PTI

The Supreme Court on Thursday recorded an assurance given by Madhya Pradesh that arrangements would be made at the Bhojshala Saraswati temple-cum-Maulana Kamal Maula mosque in Dhar district for the harmonious conduct of worship by both Muslims, who come to perform *namaz*, and Hindus, who want to offer prayers on the occasion of Basant Panchami on Friday.

"We appeal to all stakeholders, including the members of both communities, to observe mutual respect and tolerance and cooperate with the State and district Administration in maintaining law and order," a Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant observed.

The site has become a contentious focal point after the State High Court had issued interim directions for a scientific examination of the Bhojshala Saraswati Temple-cum-Maulana Kamal Maula mosque.

Appearing for Madhya Pradesh, Additional Solicitor General K.M. Nataraj suggested that exclusive and separate space would be made to the members of the Muslim community on January 23 to offer *namaz* between 1 and 3 p.m. within the compound itself. Similarly, a separate space

would be made available to the Hindu community to hold the traditional ceremonies on the occasion of Basant Panchami.

Senior advocate Salman Khurshid, appearing for the petitioner side, accepted Mr. Nataraj's proposal and agreed to provide to the Dhar District Magistrate the approximate number of persons belonging to Muslim community who would come for *namaz* on January 23 between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.

The attack, which occurred in the first week of January, was taken up for investigation after the victim's wife lodged a complaint with the Dhenkanal Superintendent of Police (SP), citing inaction at the local level. The pastor has been identified as Bipin Bihari Naik. "We have detained nine persons in connection with the attack on pastor. The probe is on," Abhinav Sonkar, Dhenkanal SP, said.

Mr. Sonkar, however, said the primary investigation revealed that the pastor was not made to consume cow dung or drain water, as reported by a section of the media.

"We have also received doctors' report that no grievous in-

Odisha police detain nine over attack on pastor in Dhenkanal

Satyasundar Barik
BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha police detained nine persons in connection with the alleged assault on a pastor in Dhenkanal district on Wednesday.

The attack, which occurred in the first week of January, was taken up for investigation after the victim's wife lodged a complaint with the Dhenkanal Superintendent of Police (SP), citing inaction at the local level. The pastor has been identified as Bipin Bihari Naik. "We have detained nine persons in connection with the attack on pastor. The probe is on," Abhinav Sonkar, Dhenkanal SP, said.

Mr. Sonkar, however, said the primary investigation revealed that the pastor was not made to consume cow dung or drain water, as reported by a section of the media. "We have also received doctors' report that no grievous in-

jury has been caused to pastor," he said. The miscreants allegedly paraded the pastor after garlanding him with slippers in front of the public before handing him over to Parjani police. Local residents said that he was involved in religious conversion.

"The brutal attack on Pastor Bipin Bihari Naik in Odisha's Parjani, forcing him to eat cow dung and chant slogans is a shameful assault on our Constitution and freedom of religion. Delay in registering FIR and investigation reflects BJP government's silence and patronage of hate," says Congress

The deceased, Arman and Kajal, residents of Umri Sabzipur village, were in a relationship. Kajal's brothers were opposed to the relationship and had asked her to end it. Three days ago, both of them went missing.

Arman's father filed a missing person complaint. When the probe began, the police found that Kajal was also missing. During questioning, Kajal's brothers confessed to killing the couple. The accused then led the police to the spot where the bodies had been buried, and revealed that they had tied up the couple's hands and legs before hacking them to death.

FIR against TMC MLA for violence at BDO office

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

The Election Commission (EC) has ordered for an FIR to be filed against Trinamool Congress (TMC) MLA Monirul Islam for vandalising the office of the Block Development Officer (BDO) in Farakka earlier this month.

The EC directed the District Magistrate to file the FIR by Thursday evening against Mr. Islam, the MLA of Farakka, for leading a mob to vandalise the BDO office on January 14 and threatening to "drag out EC officials and beat them". There were no reports of an FIR being registered against the MLA till Thursday evening.

Questionnaire for first phase of Census notified

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Registrar-General and Census Commissioner of India (RG&CCI) on Thursday notified 33 questions that residents will have to answer in the first phase of Census 2027, which will be conducted between April 1 and September 30.

While the notification published on January 7, 2020 for Census 2021, which was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and never took off, had 31 questions, the current notification has 33. The fresh notification splits the combined question on the type of floor, wall and roof of the Census house into three distinct questions regarding the "predominant material used in the floor, wall and roof" of the house.

According to the govern-



Census officials conducting pre-test exercise for the Population Census 2027 in Uttar Pradesh in November 2025. R.V. MOORTHY

ment, this will be the first digital Census, the first to count caste and also the first where respondents will be able to self-enumerate through a yet-to-be announced portal.

Population Enumeration (PE), the second phase of Census 2027 where caste will be enumerated, will be done in February

items enumerated below for collecting information through the houselisting and housing census schedule in connection with the Census of India 2027.

The questions are: building number (municipal or local authority or Census number); Census house number; predominant material of floor of the Census house; predominant material of wall of the Census house; predominant material of roof of the Census house; use of Census house; condition of the Census house; household number; total number of persons normally residing in the household; name of the head of the household; sex of the head of the household; whether the head of the household belongs to Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe/Other; ownership status; number of dwelling rooms

exclusively in possession of the household; number of married couple(s) living in the household; main source of drinking water; availability of drinking water source; main source of lighting; access to latrine; type of latrine; waste water outlet; availability of bathing facility; availability of kitchen and LPG/PNG connection; main fuel used for cooking; radio/transistor; television; access to Internet; laptop/computer; telephone/mobile phone; smartphone; bicycle/scooter/motorcycle/moped; car/jeep/van; main cereal consumed in the household; and mobile number (for Census-related communications only).

The pre-test or the preparatory exercise for the first phase of Census was held from November 10-30, 2025 in select areas across the country.

Don't speak publicly on party internal matters: Cong. to Punjab unit

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress high command on Thursday warned its Punjab leaders against making public statements about the party's internal matters, and resorting to factionalism.

Party general secretary in charge of organisation K.C. Venugopal said these directions had been issued after three-hour meetings of Punjab leaders with the party's top brass, including Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and senior leader Rahul Gandhi.

"The party has given clear directions to all leaders to refrain from making public statements," Mr. Venugopal said. "Every individual has their own views, but these should be discussed only with the party leadership or on party forums. Going to the media and spreading issues on social media – such activities will not be tolerated by the party."

The announcement comes barely days after the Scheduled Caste leader and former Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi made a public statement that the party's top posts in the State, including that of the Pradesh Congress Committee chief and the Leader of the Opposition in the Punjab Assembly, were being occupied by forward caste leaders.

Mr. Venugopal said that the party's top brass had ascertained the views of every leader on the party's performance in Punjab.

On leadership change
"There is no question of any leadership change in Punjab," Mr. Venugopal said, while replying to a question.

Responding to a question on reports that around 30 leaders from Punjab had sought an appointment with the party high command, the Congress leader said there was nothing wrong with leaders meeting the party leadership in their individual capacities.

However, "groupism would not be tolerated at any cost", he said.

U.P. voters on draft SIR list may get to skip hearings

Voters can upload their documents on EC's website and send a representative with authorisation letter, which can include local booth-level agents; sources say an order might be issued this week

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

Voters in Uttar Pradesh whose names have appeared on the draft list following the special intensive revision (SIR) in the State, but have been issued notices to attend hearings might now have the option of skipping them and instead send their representatives, which can also include local booth-level agents appointed by parties.

A directive to this effect might be issued as soon as this week, sources in the State's Chief Electoral Office told *The Hindu* on Thursday.

The voters would have the option of uploading their documents on the EC's website and then send their representative with an authorisation letter for the hearing at the electoral registration officer (ERO) or assistant electoral registration officer (AERO) offic-



Big relief: People searching for their names on the draft voter list after the SIR of electoral rolls in Uttar Pradesh. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

es as required. "This has been done for convenience of voters as many would find it difficult to be present for hearings at short notices," a source said.

The representatives sent by the voters can include their family members as well as the BLAs of any political party active in that particular area, they said.

The decision might be a corollary to similar direc-

tives given by the Supreme Court for West Bengal earlier this week.

Around 3.26 crore voters, out of the 12.55 crore electors, whose names have appeared in the post-SIR draft electoral list in Uttar Pradesh could be sent notices asking them to attend hearings.

Out of these 3.26 crore, approximately 1.04 crore are those who could not be mapped to the 2003 voter lists when the last SIR had been conducted, while 2.22 crore are those names which have "logical discrepancies" in mapping.

Those who could not be mapped to the 2003 lists would be required to appear before the AERO or ERO as specified in the notices and submit documents from among the 12 mandated by the Election Commission to prove their age, citizenship and place of residence. Those who received notices regarding logical discrepancies will also be required to attend the hearings and provide the requisite documents to clear the doubts.

Some of the logical discrepancies which are flagged are less than 15 years of age gap between parents and children, one parent being mapped with more than six children, less than 40 years of age gap with grandparents and a mismatch in names.

India's structural reforms generating strong investor confidence, says Vaishnaw

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Thursday said India's reform momentum is firmly on track, driven by deep structural reforms personally steered by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, which have transformed the Indian economy into a high-growth, resilient, and globally trusted destination.

Speaking on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting at Davos, Mr. Vaishnaw said landmark reforms undertaken in the past few years, including labour code reforms, simplification of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), transformations in the energy sector, and the opening up of nuclear energy to the private sector were generating strong investor confidence across sectors.

He said a continuous reform process was underway across all sectors of the economy, adding that investors were enthused by the policy environment in India. He cited several instances, including IKEA announcing plans to double its investment and Qualcomm significantly expanding its workforce in India.



Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw with leaders in the fields of AI, robotics, and cybersecurity in Davos on Thursday. ANI

high growth reflected the economic transformation achieved under Mr. Modi's leadership over the past decade, he said.

Noting that global perception of India at Davos had been overwhelmingly positive, with the country being widely regarded as a trusted nation demonstrating consistent economic growth, he said deliberations across panels reflected a broad consensus that India's emergence as the world's third-largest economy was now a matter of timing rather than possibility.

Court acquits Kejriwal for skipping ED summons in Delhi excise policy case

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Thursday acquitted Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in cases related to skipping summons issued by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the excise policy case.

Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Paras Dalal of the Rouse Avenue Court acquitted Mr. Kejriwal. A detailed order is awaited.

The agency, probing money laundering cases related to an alleged excise policy scam, had approached the court in February 2024, stating that Mr. Kejriwal, one of the accused in the matter, was



not complying with its repeated summons for interrogation. The summons issued by the agency were against the law and politically motivated, Mr. Kejriwal has said.

AAP leader's reaction

The AAP leader welcomed the court's verdict. "Truth alone triumphs," he said in

a post on social media platform X. Senior AAP leader Manish Sisodia said that no matter how hard one tries to suppress the truth, it ultimately comes out.

Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh said, "The BJP's misdeeds will meet their end, and justice will prevail. Once again, the conspiracy to falsely implicate Arvind Kejriwal by misusing the ED and the CBI has been exposed. The court's order is a stinging rebuke to the Modi government."

The case stems from a complaint lodged by the Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena, who alleged irregularities in the framing and implementation of Delhi's excise policy in 2022.

ED director visits Kolkata days after Mamata's intervention during search

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

The Director of the Enforcement Directorate, Rahul Navin, was in Kolkata on Thursday, days after West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's intervention during searches at the Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC) owner's house and offices.

According to officials,

Mr. Navin will visit the regional office of the ED in Salt Lake and will interact with the staff to take note of the ongoing cases in eastern India. He will also reportedly look into safety and security concerns of their staff.

I-PAC searches

His visit comes against the backdrop of the ED searches at I-PAC co-founder Pra-

tik Jain's house and I-PAC offices in Kolkata.

The ED was reportedly conducting searches in relation to a coal scam in Bengal. However, Ms. Banerjee claimed that the searches were "politically motivated to steal party data", adding that crucial data relating to the party's strategy documents and candidate lists were taken away by the ED. She was

seen leaving the premises with a green file in her hand, which she did not carry while entering the area. On Wednesday, ED officials attached ₹57.78 crore worth immovable property belonging to Trinamool Congress MLA Jibon Krishna Saha in connection with the school recruitment scam. The total attachment in the scam cases stands at ₹698 crore.

Centre paving way for bonded labour by scrapping MGNREGA, says Kharge

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday accused the Union government of paving the way for "bonded labour" by scrapping the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). Addressing a national convention of MGNREGA workers here, he and Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi pledged to "fight to the finish" until the UPA-era scheme was restored in its original form.

The convention was organised by Rachnaikam Congress, a new party department meant to act as a bridge with civil society, headed by former MP Sandeep Dikshit, and supported by the NREGA Sangharsh Morcha, a coalition of NGOs and unions working with MGNREGA workers.

Drawing parallels with the 13-month farmers' agitation, both leaders urged workers to prepare for a long struggle. Mr. Kharge said that by withdrawing MGNREGA, the Centre had left workers at the mercy of



Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge at a convention of MGNREGA workers on Thursday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

the wealthy, forcing them to accept "whatever meagre amount" is offered for their work. "They are trying to bring back slavery," he said.

Scrapping MGNREGA was an attack on the Constitution, Mr. Gandhi said, similar to the government's actions during demonetisation, the GST rollout, and the introduction of the "three black farm laws". Stressing the rights-based nature of MGNREGA, he said the law was rooted in "empowering the poor" and "respect".

It strengthened Panchayati Raj institutions, he said, because panchayats decided the type of work

undertaken. He argued that the BJP government was now dismantling that right, just as it had earlier attempted with the farm laws. He predicted that the new law would also be withdrawn, "I know these people, they are cowards. When faced with united resistance, they simply cave in," he said, calling for unity among the poor to restore MGNREGA.

Criticising the centralised framework of the new Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeeyika Mission (Gramin) Act, he said it handed the Union government control over fund allocation, enabling discrimination against Opposition-ruled States and favouring BJP-ruled ones.

Mr. Gandhi said the government wanted to take India back to pre-Independence days, when "one person would decide the destiny of the entire nation". Accusing the Centre of attempting to "undermine and dismantle democracy and the Constitution," he said: "They want to destroy the concept, idea and structure of modern India."

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NOTICE INVITING TENDER		
Tender No.	Work Description	Due date
252623 004030	Expansion of the Nursery and Primary School building (Phase III) at TNPL Unit - II.	04.02.2026

Corrigendum if any will be issued in TNPL Website and NIC Portal.

Detailed Terms & conditions, tender fee, EMD etc., are available in the tender document which can be downloaded from websites : www.tnpl.com/

<https://tntridges.gov.in/nicapp/epro>

DIPR/395/Tender/2026 TNPL - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper

Government of Kerala	
Published Tenders from 19-01-2026 to 21-01-2026	
Irrigation Department	
Tender ID: 2026 Irrig_829023 1 * Superintending Engineer * DESILATION OF MALANKARA DAM ON TURN-KEY METHOD AT IDUKKI * Closing Date: 03-Feb-2026 * PAC: Rs648395560	
Visit https://etenders.kerala.gov.in for more details.	
Ro.No:19-21/Jan/2026/PRD/(N)11	

Bureau of Investment Promotion		
BIP/CGM (F&A)/	Date :- 12/01/2026	Commissioner (Inv. & NRIs)
Notice Inviting Bid		
Bids for procurement of Gift Hampers for Bureau of Investment Promotion, Jaipur (a Government of Rajasthan undertaking) are invited from interested bidders up to 1:00 PM of 06.02.2026. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portals: (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in) and (http://sppr.rajasthan.gov.in) of the state.		

UBN No. : BIP2526GLOB00024
Raj.Samwad/C/25/18134

Commissioner (Inv. & NRIs)

Notice Inviting Tenders

Tender No. Description of work Due date

252613
007013 Multi-colour Laminated Wrapper Reels of various sizes (Base Paper 100 GSM with 15 Micron BOPP) for Unit - I.

252613
007064 Copy Crown / New Spectrum / Perfecto Laminated Wrapper Reels of various sizes (100 GSM Base Paper with 15 Micron BOPP) for Unit - I.

252613
007065 Hot Melt Gum - 214 for Copier Reel Packing

252613
007086 180 GSM Kraft Reels of various sizes for Unit - I & II.

252613
000411 Procurement of Wet End Liquid OBA for PM#1, 2 & 3

252633
000419 Imported Limestone for Cement Plant

252633
000419 Procurement of White Clay

252633
000424 Procurement of PP Bag

IN BRIEF



167 drug samples flagged for quality lapses in December

In the monthly drug alert issued by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), the Central Drug Laboratories found 74 samples manufactured by various firms to be "not of standard quality (NSQ)", while State drug testing laboratories identified 93 samples that failed to meet prescribed quality standards. The list of NSQ and spurious drugs are being displayed on the CDSCO portal. The data has been released for December. "The failure is specific to drug products of the batch tested by the Government Laboratory, and it does not warrant any concerns on the other drug products available in the market," said a note released by the Ministry.

Man found dead after wife killed in 'accidental firing'

Yashraj Singh Gohil, nephew of senior Congress leader and Rajya Sabha member Shaktisinh Gohil, reportedly killed himself with his own revolver after his wife died when he appears to have accidentally fired the weapon at their residence in Ahmedabad, the police said on Thursday. The incident occurred shortly before midnight on Wednesday in their flat in NRI Tower, Bodakdev area. According to the police, preliminary investigation and a statement by Yashraj Singh's mother indicate that the firearm discharged accidentally while he was checking his revolver in the bedroom. A bullet went off by mistake and struck his wife, Rajeshwari, near her neck, the police said.

DRDO missile to feature at Republic Day parade

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) will highlight India's growing indigenous defence capabilities by showcasing several path-breaking technologies at the 77th Republic Day parade and "Bharat Parv 2026" at the Red Fort.

The key attractions of the programme include the Long Range Anti-Ship Hypersonic Missile (LR-ASHM), and a dedicated DRDO tableau.

The DRDO will display the LR-ASHM along with its launcher during the Republic Day parade at Kartavya Path.

The LR-ASHM is a hypersonic glide missile capable of engaging both static and moving targets with high precision.

'Sindoor' formation by Air Force fighter jets to lead Republic Day flypast

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

The Indian Air Force (IAF) will showcase a formation of frontline fighter jets with the call sign "Sindoor" during the Republic Day flypast, symbolising India's aerial dominance during Operation Sindoor, the high-precision tri-services military campaign conducted against Pakistan last May.

The spearhead formation will comprise two Rafale jets, two MiG-29s, two Su-30 MKIs and one Jaguar aircraft – all of which actively participated in the operation. The flypast will carry the flag of Operation Sindoor, commemorating India's decisive military response following the Pathankot terror attack.



The Indian Air Force's fighter jets fly past during the rehearsal for the Republic Day parade in New Delhi on Wednesday. PTI

A senior defence official said 29 aircraft, including fighter jets, four transport aircraft and nine helicopters, will participate in the flypast. For the first time, the flypast will be conducted in two segments – the first during the march-past and the second after the parade.

The flypast will show-

case multiple formations such as Sindoor, Dhvaj, Prahar, Garud, Arjan, Varuna, and Vajrang. In a special tribute, four Mi-17 helicopters will shower flower petals over the marching contingents on Kartavya Path. A special formation during the flypast will be dedicated to Operation Sindoor, the official said.

Govt. calls for airlines to take IndiGo's vacated slots

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI/NEW DELHI

The government on Thursday asked airlines to submit their requests for operating domestic flights on the slots vacated by IndiGo, following the curtailment of the winter schedule in the wake of the December operational disruptions.

The Civil Aviation Ministry's communication said the committee on redistribution of the vacated IndiGo slots held its first meeting on January 13, wherein the process and principles for redistribution were discussed.

Following the deliberations, the panel had now asked airlines to submit their requests and preferences for the vacated slots, subject to various conditions, it added.

"The fact that one of these reporters had to spend 15 hours over four days in Srinagar's Cyber Police Station and was told to sign a bond saying that he would not 'disturb the peace' indicates the harassment being unleashed on journalists in the region."

"Such arbitrary actions create an overall atmosphere of fear, where journalists cannot go about their daily jobs and exercise their constitutional right to work freely," it said. Demanding that the Jammu and Kashmir authorities allow journalists to discharge their duties without fear of intimidation and coercion and follow due process in their interactions with journalists, the Press Club of India said, "India's vibrant democracy stands on the shoulders of a free and fearless press; actions like this work to undermine that tradition."

Press Club of India slams J&K Police over 'oral summons' to journalists

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



India's vibrant democracy stands on the shoulders of a free and fearless press; actions like this work to undermine that tradition

PCI STATEMENT

these reporters had to spend 15 hours over four days in Srinagar's Cyber Police Station and was told to sign a bond saying that he would not 'disturb the peace' indicates the harassment being unleashed on journalists in the region."

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FAITH

Basant Panchami

Basant Panchami has both cultural and spiritual import, said Prof. Kumool Abbi. It is the festival of Saraswati, Goddess of knowledge, music, arts and aesthetics. In the Shanti Parv of the epic Mahabharata, She is called the mother of Vedas. She removes ignorance, nescience and darkness, infusing warmth, brightness, clarity, luminescence, melody, harmony, purity and pure joy.

Basant Panchami is commemorated on the Magh Sud, that is the fifth day of the bright lunar fortnight (Sukla Paksha), of the month of Magha in the Indian lunar calendar.

In Punjab, Basant Panchami signals the process of the end of winter and the beginning of spring. For farmers, it signifies a preparation and readiness for the harvesting of crops. The yellow mustard flowers are in full bloom and with their brightness, they symbolise the positivity of the human spirit. The occasion is celebrated with sounds of the dhol, the pulsating bhangra, flying of colourful kites, the preparation of yellow rice, and wearing of yellow hued clothes.

In Punjab, the Dukh Nivaran Sahib Gurdwara at Patiala and the Chheharta Sahib Gurdwara at Amritsar are renowned for the sacred commemoration of Basant Panchami.

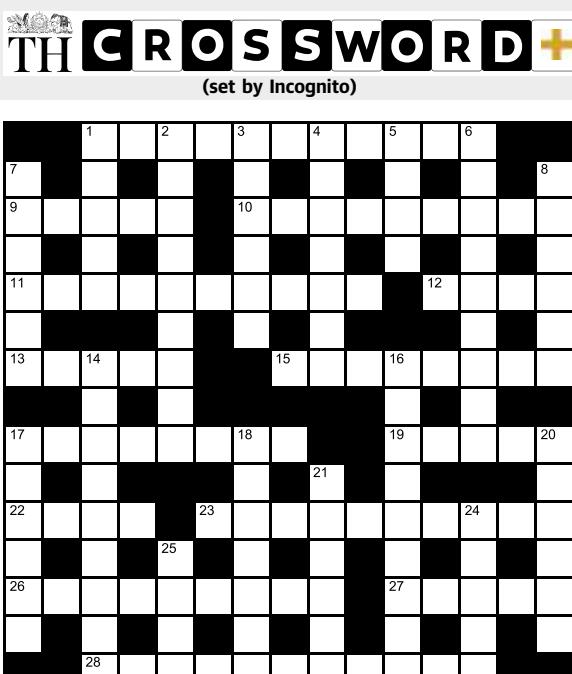
For the Sufis, the celebration of Basant Panchami is a practice initiated by Amir Khusro on the resting place of Nizamuddin Auliya of the Chisti Order. As stated in the Guru Granth Sahib, *Aaj hamara grah basant*, 'Today is springtime and I am imbued with the deep crimson hue of the Lord's divine love.'

CROSSWORD

14698

(set by Incognito)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at <https://thehindu.com/crosswords>



Across

- Unpaid? Super! (11)
- Swears on affidavit typed hastily, for starters, and signs finally (5)
- Prudent to go around country with Romeo and Lothario (9)
- Misleading clue for "Sacred ornament worn by her after removing pouch" (3,7)

SUDOKU

9	1							
2	6	1	9					
3		8	5				1	
6				8			7	
3		4		6				
2		6					5	
7		9	3				6	
2		7		3	5			
						7	4	

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to previous puzzle

L	P	A	C	I	C	K		
B	A	L	F	L	O	N		
R	O	N	C	I	N	T	E	
C	A	H	E	R	E	R	D	
T	H	E	D	R	E	R	D	
F	R	I	T	E	R	E	D	
I	N	T	E	R	E	D	D	
D	E	R	E	R	E	D	D	
G	E	R	E	R	E	D	D	

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

1	8	5	7	6	4	9	2	3
9	3	2	5	1	8	4	6	7
7	4	6	9	3	2	8	1	5
5	7	8	4	2	9	1	3	6
4	9	3	6	5	1	2	7	8
2	6	1	3	8	7	5	9	4
7	2	1	4	5	6	8	9	3
6	1	4	8	9	3	7	5	2
8	5	9	2	7	6	3	4	1

IN BRIEF



EEPC urges lowering I-T for non-corporate MSMEs

The Engineering Export Promotion Council of India (EEPC) has demanded lowering income tax for non-corporate manufacturing MSMEs in the Union Budget and expediting payment of GST refunds. The council urged that I-T for all non-corporate manufacturing MSMEs be reduced to 25% from 33%, and 90% of GST refunds be released immediately. It also proposed allowing 100% depreciation on rooftop solar investments by manufacturing MSMEs instead of 20% now.

IIFL Finance Q3 net soars to ₹501 crore; scrip tanks 13%

IIFL Finance on Thursday said its December quarter net profit grew multifold to ₹501 crore compared with ₹82 crore in the year-ago period. IIFL Finance said the Income Tax Department has directed the company to get its accounts audited for a specified block period under Section 142(2A) of the Income Tax Act, 1961, and to appoint a "special auditor" for the purpose. Shares of IIFL Finance tanked 13.15% to close at ₹540.80 apiece on the BSE. PTI

Power transmission network scales past 5 lakh ckm: Govt.

India's national power transmission network has scaled past 5 lakh circuit kilometres (ckm) of transmission lines of 220 kilovolt (kV) and above, the Power Ministry informed on Thursday. According to the power ministry, the country's transmission network has grown by 71.6% since April 2014 with the addition of 2.09 lakh ckm of transmission lines alongside the addition of 876 GVA of transformation capacity during the mentioned period.

Adani Energy Solutions Q3 net profit falls 8% to ₹574 cr.

The Hindu Bureau

MUMBAI Adani Energy Solutions Ltd. (AESL), for the third quarter ended December 31 reported a 8.2% year-on-year (YoY) fall in net profit to ₹574 crore.

"This was on account of a positive impact of deferred tax of ₹185 crore last year in Q3FY25 which has to be adjusted for a like-for-like comparison," the company said in a filing.

Adjusted profit after tax was up 30.4% to ₹574 crore, translating from double-digit EBITDA expansion, the company said. Cash profit was up 22.8% to ₹1,227 crore.

'Not easy to handle Venezuela oil, will assess in due course'

Saptaparno Ghosh

NEW DELHI



Consolidated Q3 net profit grew 58% to ₹4,011 crore.

Venezuelan crude has high viscosity and acid number, but does provide some opportunities based on what is being offered, a senior Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL) official told investors in a conference call on Thursday.

"Venezuelan crude apart from being bottom-heavy, also has high viscosity and high acid number," director for refineries S. Bharathan said, adding:

"We will have some opportunities. We will evaluate as and when we can get offers and [we will] take it accordingly."

He was responding to a query on seeing Venezuela-

Flight cancellations cost IndiGo ₹577 crore

Jagruti Chandra

NEW DELHI

IndiGo's cancellation of about 5,000 flights in November and December cost the airline ₹577 crore, contributing to a 77.6% plunge in profit to ₹549 crore for the quarter ended December.

The airline recorded a profit of ₹2,448 crore in the year-ago period. The decline in profit was also driven by the implementation of new labour laws, which led to a charge of ₹969 crore, and by currency movements related to dollar-denominated future obligations amounting to ₹1,035 crore.

Chief Financial Officer Gaurav Negi said aircraft capacity additions would moderate to about 10%, down from 15-20%, as deliveries had been aligned with a reduced flight schedule following a 10% cut imposed by the DGCA, resulting in 200 fewer flights.

CEO Pieter Elbers did not answer questions from analysts on how the airline was reviewing its pilot recruitment plans and the exact number of pilots it was short of, though the DGCA found its over 5,000 flight cancellations in November and December were due to pilot duty rosters being stretched too thin after the new rest and duty norms came into effect from November 1.

It imposed a fine of ₹22 crore for non-compliance with the new rules.

Over 9.5 lakh passengers were affected due to flight disruptions.

Net FDI negative for fourth month in a row in Nov. 2025

Net foreign portfolio investments have also been negative so far in the financial year 2025-26, with uncertainty over the India-U.S. trade deal and the weakening rupee affecting investor confidence

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan

NEW DELHI

India's net foreign direct investments (FDI) remained negative for the fourth consecutive month in November 2025, with outflows exceeding inflows by \$446 million that month, an analysis of latest data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) shows.

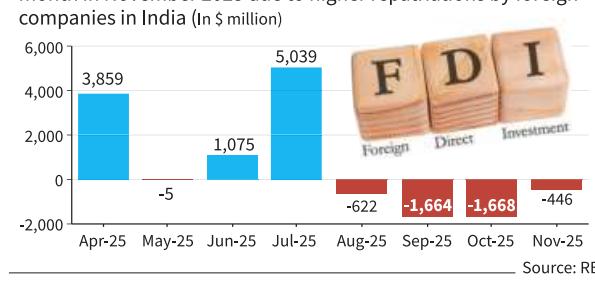
The data, released as part of the RBI's monthly bulletin, shows that the main reason direct investment outflows exceeded inflows in November was because of relatively high repatriations and disinvestments by foreign companies operating in India.

Direct investments are typically made in assets and are viewed as growth-generating, as opposed to portfolio investments, which are generally done in equity and debt for expected returns.

The RBI noted that net foreign portfolio invest-

In the red

Net FDI into India was negative for the fourth consecutive month in November 2025 due to higher repatriations by foreign companies in India (in \$ million)



Source: RBI

ments (FPI) have also been negative so far in the financial year 2025-26, with uncertainty over the India-U.S. trade deal and the weakening rupee affecting investor confidence.

ceived in October and the \$7 billion in September.

"Gross inward FDI remained steady in November with Japan, Singapore, and the U.S. accounting for more than half of total outward FDI," the RBI noted.

"Sector-specific breakdown suggests that more than 70% of outward FDI was in manufacturing, financial, insurance, and business services."

The RBI report said that net foreign portfolio investments were negative for the 2025-26 financial year up to January 16, 2026.

stood at -\$446 million, meaning total outflows exceeded total inflows by that amount.

Within this, repatriation and disinvestment stood at a five-month high of \$5.3 billion in November 2025, albeit 1.2% lower than it was in November 2024.

Outward FDI, which is the investments made by Indian companies abroad, stood at \$1.5 billion in November 2025, less than half the \$3.2 billion in October.

"Outward FDI moderated in November, with Singapore, Mauritius, the U.S. and the U.K. accounting for more than half of total outward FDI," the RBI noted.

"Sector-specific breakdown suggests that more than 70% of outward FDI was in manufacturing, financial, insurance, and business services."

The RBI report said that net foreign portfolio investments were negative for the 2025-26 financial year up to January 16, 2026.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	THURSDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	82,307	0.49
US Dollar	91.58	0.07
Gold	1,57,200	-0.31
Brent oil	64.27	-1.21

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter.	2086.40	54.20
Adani Ports	1414.20	35.60
Apollo Hosp.	6797.00	-29.50
Asian Paints	2703.80	42.70
Axis Bank	1294.80	9.90
Bajaj Auto	9370.00	191.00
Bajaj FinServ	1993.10	33.20
Bajaj Finance	942.85	6.60
Bharat Elec.	417.30	14.65
Bharti Airtel	2002.20	6.10
Cipla	1370.40	0.80
Coal India	423.20	9.15
Dr Reddys Lab.	1217.50	60.30
Hindustan Unilever	40.20	DE*
Eicher Motors	7049.00	-91.00
Etemal Ltd.	275.60	-7.60
Grasim Ind.	2787.60	52.00
HCL Tech	1703.10	20.60
HFDC Bank	918.70	-1.65
HFDC Life	725.10	0.75
Hindalco	944.45	5.25
Hindunilaveli	2390.60	22.60
ICICI Bank	1345.50	-3.50
IntGlobeAvi.	4909.00	51.50
Infosys	1663.50	9.10
ITC	324.85	0.10
Jio Financial Servic- es Ltd.	262.60	-0.65
JSW Steel	1184.40	9.80
Kotak Bank	426.00	4.40
L&T	3793.80	27.30
M&M	3573.70	20.40
Maruti Suzuki	15765.00	-5.00
Max Healthcare	998.80	-5.40
NestleIndia	1306.00	22.80
NTPC	342.45	3.75
ONGC	244.01	1.64
PowerGrid Corp	259.25	3.45
Reliance Ind.	1402.50	-2.10
SBI Life	2022.00	-33.40
State Bank	1048.35	19.70
Shriram Finance	1005.50	19.50
Sun Pharma	1634.20	21.30
TataConsumerPro- duct	1175.20	11.60
Tata Steel	189.10	4.69
TCS	3150.40	27.80
Tech Mahindra	1687.40	0.70
Titan	4018.60	-60.60
Tata Motors PV	347.30	8.05
Trent Ltd.	3803.80	39.40
UltraTech Cement	12364.00	13.30
Wipro	240.65	1.10

DE: Demerged Entity

TVS Emerald raises ₹425 cr.

Realty firm TVS Emerald has raised ₹425 crore in equity funding from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) to fund its new housing projects. TVS Emerald is part of the TVS Group. PTI

SEC seeks to bypass India on summons to Adani

Reuters

NEW DELHI

and a \$265 million bribery scheme, filings show.

India, the SEC said, has previously refused two requests to serve the summons.

In the most high-profile legal case in the U.S. involving an Indian conglomerate, the SEC has been trying to send summons to Adani group founder Gautam Adani and his nephew Sagar since last year.

Adani group has called the allegations "baseless" and said that it would seek "all possible legal recourse" to defend itself.

It did not immediately respond to Reuters' request for comment on the latest

SEC filing, dated January 21.

In the response to the New York court, the U.S. markets regulator said it "does not expect service to be completed" through the current route and should be allowed to directly email the summons to the Adani group executives.

Indians' abroad spend slips to 2-year low as foreign-study outgo plunges

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan

NEW DELHI

The amount of money sent or spent abroad by Indians fell to a two-year low of \$1.94 billion in November 2025 or 30% lower than in the same month of 2024. The amount spent on foreign studies, which slid to its lowest level since the COVID-19 pandemic-impacted month of April 2020.

Analysis of data on the outward remittances under the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Liberalised Remittances Scheme (LRS), shows the other driver of the fall in overall remittances in November 2025 was a dip in the amount spent on foreign travel.



Money spent on studies abroad fell 30% to \$120.9 million.

Total outward remittances under the LRS stood at \$1.94 billion in November 2025, down 0.5% from its level in November 2024. This is the lowest it has been since November

2023.

Within this, however, the amount spent on studies abroad fell to \$120.9 million in November 2025 or 30% lower than in the same month of 2024. The amount spent on foreign travel slid to \$1.1 billion in November 2025, down 1.1% from November 2024.

Geopolitical tensions

SYLHET

Campaigning begins in Bangladesh for first post-Hasina national polls



Bangladesh began official campaigning on Thursday for the hugely anticipated general elections next month, the first since the 2024 uprising ended the autocratic rule of Sheikh Hasina. Tariq Rahman, BNP chairman and son of former Premier Khaleda Zia, is widely seen as a leading contender for Prime Minister. AFP

BERLIN

Russia slams German spy charges, vows response for expelling official



Russia's embassy in Berlin on Thursday vowed retaliation after Germany expelled a diplomat accused of being an intelligence officer who worked as the handler of a woman arrested on spy charges. The embassy called the allegations "a ridiculous, hastily concocted provocation". AFP

BANGKOK

Fire at Cox's Bazar refugee camp displaces thousands of Rohingya



A massive fire destroyed hundreds of makeshift homes and displaced more than 2,000 people in a Rohingya refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, prompting calls on Thursday from relief agencies for more funding to build safer housing and help provide emergency aid. AP

SYDNEY

Gunman at large in Australia after leaving three dead, one wounded



Australian police said they were hunting for a gunman on the run after three people were killed and another was wounded on Thursday in the town of Lake Cargelligo in New South Wales. A report said one of the victims was the gunman's former partner, describing the incident as a suspected domestic violence attack. AFP

Trump withdraws tariffs after NATO 'agrees to Greenland framework'

President said the U.S. and NATO had 'formed the framework of a future deal with respect to Greenland and the entire Arctic Region'; European leaders have tried a mixture of flattery and tough talking to counter threats from the U.S. leader

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

U.S. President Donald Trump called off his threat of tariffs on eight European countries, including Denmark, announced last Saturday to compel them to transfer the semi-autonomous Danish territory of Greenland to the U.S.

Mr. Trump had said he would acquire the strategically located Arctic island "one way or another". The countries in question had each sent a small number of troops to Greenland earlier this month, following Mr. Trump's recent threats.

Mr. Trump announced



Iron fist: U.S. President Donald Trump at the World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland on Thursday. AFP

that he was cancelling the tariffs on Wednesday evening, on his Truth Social media platform, after what he called a "very productive" meeting with Mark Rutte, the Secretary General of NATO in Davos.

Mr. Trump said the U.S. and NATO had "formed the framework of a future deal with respect to Greenland and, in fact, the entire Arctic Region" and that he would not be imposing the tariffs set to begin Febru-

ary 1 based on the understanding reached. The tariffs were set to kick off at a rate of 10%, increasing to 25% in June 2026.

"Additional discussions are being held concerning the Golden Dome as it pertains to Greenland," said Mr. Trump, referring to a multi-layered missile and air defence system he intends to build for the U.S.

Just prior to his discussions with Mr. Rutte, the U.S. President told a gathering in Davos that he was not going to use force to annex Greenland. Europe has been on edge over Mr. Trump's aggressive pursuit of the Arctic island. Mr. Trump has suggested that Russia and China pose an

imminent threat to Greenland, a claim denied by the Russians. European leaders, who in general do not share the same risk assessment on Russia and China's intentions in the Arctic, have tried a mixture of flattery and tough talking in response to Mr. Trump's threats. The European Parliament suspended the approval of a EU-U.S. trade agreement struck in 2025.

While the terms of the agreed framework appear to be under discussion, Mr. Trump said that Vice-President J.D. Vance, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, and special envoy Steve Witkop would be among those responsible for the negotiations.

'Finger on the trigger': Iran Guards chief cautions U.S.

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

The commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guards on Thursday warned Washington that the force had its "finger on the trigger" in the wake of mass protests, as U.S. President Donald Trump said the Islamic republic still appeared interested in talks.

Guards commander General Mohammad Pakpour warned Israel and the United States "to avoid any miscalculations, by learning from historical experiences and what they learned in the 12-day imposed war, so that they do not face a more painful and regrettable fate".

Mr. Trump has repeatedly left open the option of new military action against Iran after Washington backed and joined Israel's 12-day war in June 2025.

Addressing the World Economic Forum in Davos, Mr. Trump said the U.S. struck Iranian uranium enrichment sites last year to prevent Tehran from making a nuclear weapon. Iran denies its nuclear programme is aimed at seeking the bomb.

"Can't let that happen," he said, adding: "And Iran does want to talk, and we'll talk."

Official toll

Meanwhile, Iranian authorities on Wednesday said 3,117 people were killed, providing their first official toll from the protests.

India, EU to ink new pact on defence and security, says Kallas

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

agenda mindful of the fact that the Summit "must deliver, taking into account the geopolitical landscape", Ms. Kallas said.

Ambitious partners

The two sides are also aiming to conclude a Security of Information Agreement, Ms. Kallas said, adding that in a dangerous world, India and the EU could benefit from working together.

"[The] EU and India are moving closer together at a time when the rules-based international order is under unprecedented pressure through wars, coercion, and economic fragmentation," she said.

Ms. Kallas told MEPs (Members of the European Parliament) that India and the EU must become more ambitious partners. "Two major democracies cannot afford to hesitate," she said.

During the visit to New Delhi, the two sides plan to conclude a Memorandum of Understanding on a comprehensive mobility framework, to facilitate the movement of students, seasonal workers, researchers and highly skilled professionals, and promoting research and innovation, Ms. Kallas said.

"In the Indo-Pacific and beyond, Europe and India can help anchor stability by defending open sea lanes, strengthening maritime domain awareness and resisting coercion in all of its forms," Ms. Kallas told parliamentarians.

Europe has to 'act now' to ensure security: Zelenskyy

Agencies
DAVOS

Ukrainian President says that documents for a deal to end the war 'nearly ready'

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Thursday blasted the EU's lack of "political will" in countering Russian leader Vladimir Putin, during a fiery address criticising some of Kyiv's top allies at the World Economic Forum.

He spoke after meeting U.S. President Donald Trump in Davos for talks on ending the war which both leaders described as positive.

But he urged European leaders to be more robust in defending democratic values in their region, as

Arab Emirates on Friday. "Russians have to be ready for compromises because, you know, everybody has to be ready, not only Ukraine, and this is important for us," he said

He added that Europe needs to "act now". Russia's bigger army has managed to capture about 20% of Ukraine since hostilities began in 2014 and its invasion of 2022.

Mr. Zelenskyy said documents for a deal to end the war in Ukraine are "nearly, nearly ready." Some of the documents seek security guarantees, while others cover economic plans for the future of Ukraine.

French maritime authorities for the Mediterra-

France intercepts oil tanker from Russia

Associated Press
PARIS

France's Navy, working with intelligence provided by the United Kingdom, on Thursday intercepted an oil tanker in the Mediterranean Sea that travelled from Russia, in a mission targeting the sanctioned Russian shadow fleet, officials said.

Oil revenue is a key part of Russia's economy, allowing President Vladimir Putin to pour money into the war effort against Ukraine.

nean said the ship, *Grinch*, is suspected of operating with a false flag. The French Navy is escorting the ship to anchorage for more checks, the statement said. The tanker departed from the city of Murmansk in northwestern Russia, it said.

"Can't let that happen," he said, adding: "And Iran does want to talk, and we'll talk."

Official toll

Meanwhile, Iranian authorities on Wednesday said 3,117 people were killed, providing their first official toll from the protests.

Sinners makes Oscar history with record 16 nominations

Agence France-Presse

LOS ANGELES

Vampire period horror film *Sinners*, directed by Ryan Coogler, smashed the all-time Oscars record with 16 nominations, the Academy announced on Thursday. The tally included a best actor nomination for Michael B. Jordan.

One Battle After Another came in second with 13 nods including best picture, best actor for Leonardo DiCaprio and best director for Paul Thomas Anderson.

Guillermo del Toro's monster epic *Frankenstein*, Timothee Chalamet-led ping-pong drama *Martyr Supreme* and Norwegian arthouse favourite *Sentimental Value* each bagged nine nominations. Period drama *Hannet* secured



Film mosaic: Promo art for Oscar nominees for best picture. AP

eight nods including best actress for Jessie Buckley.

Mr. DiCaprio, Mr. Chalamet and Mr. Jordan will battle for the best actor Oscar, along with Ethan Hawke for Broadway period drama *Blue Moon* and Wagner Moura from Brazilian political thriller *The Secret Agent*.

For best actress, Ms. Buckley will compete with Emma Stone in conspiracy theorist dra-

ma *Bugonia*, Renate Reinsve in *Sentimental Value*, Kate Hudson in music biopic *Song Sung Blue*, and Rose Byrne in indie hit *If I Had Legs I'd Kick You*.

Persian-language Palme d'Or winner *It Was Just An Accident*, Spain's hippie odyssey *Sirat* and heart-wrenching Palestinian docudrama *The Voice of Hind Rajab* will compete for best international film.

By E-Mail / e-Despatch : E Mail ID : servcaripada@gmail.com; Ph-No-06792-261343/261344, Gangraj, Baripada

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BARIPADA

Office Order No.110/ Dt.06.01.26/

2nd Corrigendum to National Competitive Bidding e-procurement Notice No.5497/Road work Dt.27.11.2025 (NCB No.-402)

Due to unavoidable circumstances the important dates of tendering process for road works are being changed as follows:

Sl. No.	Item	Time Schedule as per Original NCB	Time Schedule as per Corrigendum Notice
1	Availability of Tender On-line for bidding	07.01.2026 at 11.00 AM to 23.01.2026 up to 11.00 PM	29.01.2026 at 11.00 AM to 13.02.2026 up to 5.00 PM
2	Date and Time of Seeking Tender Clarification if any	21.01.2026 up to 5.00 PM	12.02.2026 up to 05.00 PM
3	Date & Time of Opening of Technical Bid	23.01.2026 at 11.00 AM	16.02.2026 at 11.00 AM
4	Date & Time of opening of Financial Bid	Will be intimated later	Will be intimated later

Due to unavoidable circumstances the estimated cost of tendering process for Road Works are being changed as follows:-
SI No-(1) Read as Rs.912.29 Lakhs instead of Rs.879.75 Lakhs, SI No-(2) Read as Rs.164.96 Lakhs instead of Rs.157.50 Lakhs, SI No-(3) Read as Rs.614.32 Lakhs instead of Rs.615.00 Lakhs, SI No-(4) Read as Rs.981.25 Lakhs instead of Rs.451.16 Lakhs instead of Rs.416.67 Lakhs & SI No-(7) Read as Rs.558.08 Lakhs instead of Rs.425.00 Lakhs.
All other terms and conditions remain unchanged.

O-2119: Sd/- Ar. K.Naik, Chief Construction Engineer, RW Circle, Baripada.

ODISHA MINING CORPORATION LIMITED

OMC House, Bhubaneswar-751001, Odisha

CIN: U13100OR1956SGC000313, www.omcltd.in



ODISHA MINING

CORPORATION LTD.

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Short Notice For sale of Cement Grade Limestone

The Odisha Mining Corporation Ltd intends to sell Cement grade Limestone produced at Ampavalli Limestone Mines, Ampavalli, Pattangi, Koraput district, Odisha through e-auction which will be conducted by MSTC Ltd. The e-auction shall be held from 11.00 A.M. to 2.00 P.M. on dt.30.01.2026.

For details, please visit the website of MSTC i.e www.mstcecommerce.com.

CAD-3081:

CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (S&M)

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE: SUNDARGARH

Office Order No.22/ Date :20.01.2026

1st Corrigendum

The date of availability of tender online/date of seeking clarification/date of opening of tender for all the works invited under NIT Letter No.4409 dt.02.01.2026 vide Bid Identification No: Online - RWCCECSNG-29 of 2025-26 are hereby modified as follows:

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender On-line for bidding	Availability of Tender On-line for bidding upto	Last Date & Time of Seeking Tender Clarification	Technical Bid Opening	Financial Bid Opening
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sundargarh	RWCCECSNG-29 of 2025-26	22.01.2026 11:00 AM	10.02.2026 5:00 PM	09.02.2026 5:00 PM	11.02.2026 11:00 AM	Will be int

IN & OUT

Gujarat Giants names Jintimani as injury replacement for Titus



FILE PHOTO: EMMANUEL YOGINI

Gujarat Giants on Thursday drafted in pacer Jintimani Kalita, right, as a replacement for the injured Titus Sadhu for the remainder of the WPL. Titus had joined Giants from Delhi Capitals ahead of this WPL season, but did not play a single match. Jintimani has played 13 WPL games for Mumbai Indians. She joins Giants for ₹10 lakh.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Relieved I don't have to bowl to Abhishek in the nets: Arshdeep



Arshdeep Singh is relieved he doesn't have to bowl too much to Abhishek Sharma, even during practice. "Abhishek always says, 'I do not want to bat against you guys. It's good for us that he doesn't want to bat against us [Indian bowlers] too much, even in the nets. He doesn't face our bowlers often,' Arshdeep quipped."

DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD

Phillips reckons Kiwis' extended stay in India has its pros and cons



We've already been here (in India) for close to two weeks, and it would be one-and-a-half months by the time we are done with the World Cup. We have the opportunity to receive a lot more information than a lot of other teams, but we've been on the road for a lot longer than other teams — Kiwi all-rounder Glenn Phillips.

FIRST BLOOD

Sri Lanka gets the better of England in the opening ODI



Sri Lanka scored a 19-run victory over England in the opening ODI at Colombo's R. Premadasa Stadium on Thursday. **The scores:** Sri Lanka 271/6 in 50 overs (Kusal Mendis 93, Janith Liyanage 46, Adil Rashid 3/44) bt England 252 in 49.2 overs (Ben Duckett 62, Joe Root 61, Pramod Madushan 3/39). **Toss:** Lanka; **PO:** Dunith Wellalage.

Devine's all-round skills to the fore as Giants wallop Warriorz

The Kiwi legend scores an unbeaten 50 off 42 balls to lift the Gujarat side to 153 on a slow track and follows it up with a couple of scalps; Rajeshwari runs through the lower middle-order with a three-wicket haul as the UP side folds up for 108

WPL-4

Vivek Krishnan

VADODARA

On the back of an unbeaten half-century by Sophie Devine (50 n.o., 42b, 2x4, 3x6) and a precise display by its bowling unit, Gujarat Giants successfully defended a total of 153 for eight against UP Warriorz in the Women's Premier League on Thursday. On a sluggish strip at the Kotambi Stadium, Giants' 45-run win was utterly convincing. Left-arm spinner Rajeshwari Gayakwad, with figures of 4-0-16-3, enjoyed maximum success with the ball for the hosts.

Without Devine's knock, of course, Giants wouldn't have been in the contest in the second half of the game.

The 36-year-old New Zealander, who also took two wickets, made the most of a couple of reprieves after walking in at No. 5. She stayed through to the end, and capitalised by clearing the boundary twice in Shikha Pandey's 16-run final over.

Warriorz needed one of its top-six batters to show similar application. That wasn't to be as the visitors collapsed to 79 for six in 12.1 overs. Kiran Navgire

and Meg Lanning fell inside the PowerPlay. In the eighth over, Phoebe Litchfield was also dismissed, her signature reverse-sweep — so often a productive option — off Ashleigh Gardner carrying to Renuka Singh at short third. With Harleen Deol hitting Renuka to Gardner at long-on just six balls later, the writing was on the wall.

Rajeshwari ran through Warriorz's lower middle-order.

Giants, too, had their struggles with the bat. In the PowerPlay, Danni Wyatt-Hodge and Anushka Sharma were undone by Kranti Gaud.

With boundaries hard to come by in the middle phase, Gardner tried to go after Deepti Sharma in the 10th over. Her attempt was in vain, playing all around a tossed-up delivery by the offie to fall for five off 12 deliveries.

For Giants to still mount a competitive total, the responsibility hinged on Devine. After three dot balls, the veteran slog-swept Deepti for a six over mid-wicket to get off the mark.

It was a clear indication of the type of track on offer that Devine, too, slowed down after that maximum. But it was a testament to her experience that she didn't succumb to the pressure.



Superb show: Devine proved to be the difference as Giants kept their playoffs hopes alive. FILE PHOTO

SCOREBOARD

GUJARAT GIANTS

Beth Mooney c Kiran b Ecclestone 38 (34b, 5x4), Danni Wyatt-Hodge b Kranti 14 (8b, 3x4), Anushka Sharma c Shweta b Kranti 14 (8b, 3x4), Ashleigh Gardner b Deepthi 5 (12b), Sophie Devine (not out) 50 (42b, 2x4, 3x6), Bharti Fulmalji run out 5 (5b), Kanika Ahuja c Kiran b Tryon 6 (5b, 1x4), Kashvee Gautam b Ecclestone 11 (6b, 1x6), Renuka Singh run out 1 (1b), Happy Kumari (not out) 0 (0b); Extras (lb-1, nb-1, w-7); Total (for eight wkt.s, in 20 overs): 153.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-23 (Wyatt-Hodge, 2.6 overs), 2-43 (Anushka, 4.6), 3-65 (Gardner, 9.2), 4-93 (Mooney,

WARRIORZ BOWLING

Kranti 4-0-18-2, Shikha 4-0-53-0, Deepthi 2-0-16-1, Ecclestone 4-0-22-2, Tryon 4-0-32-1, Asha 2-0-11-0.

UP WARRIORZ

Meg Lanning b Kashvee 14 (10b, 2x4), Kiran Navgire st. Mooney b Renuka 0 (1b), Phoebe Litchfield c Renuka b Gardner 32 (27b, 5x4), Harleen Deol c Gardner b Renuka 3 (12b), Chloe Tryon (not out) 30 (22b, 3x4, 1x6), Deepti Sharma lbw b Rajeshwari 4 (7b), Shweta Sehwat st. Mooney b Sehwat st. Mooney b Rajeshwari 3 (6b), Asha Sobhana c Gardner b Rajeshwari 7 (11b,

FALL OF WICKETS

1-2 (Kiran, 0.2), 2-39 (Lanning, 4.5), 3-57 (Litchfield, 7.5), 4-59 (Harleen, 8.5), 5-67 (Deepthi, 10.3), 6-79 (Shweta, 12.1), 7-93 (Asha, 14.4), 8-94 (Ecclestone, 15.2), 9-97 (Shikha, 16.1).

GIANTS BOWLING

Renuka 4-0-20-2, Kashvee 3-0-31-1, Devine 3.3-0-16-2, Gardner 3-0-23-1, Rajeshwari 4-0-16-3.

Toss: Warriorz; **PO:** Rajeshwari. Gujarat Giants won by 45 runs.

We won't play in India, but hopeful of justice from ICC: Bangladesh

Press Trust of India

DHAKA

A defiant Bangladesh on Thursday refused to send its national cricket team for next month's T20 World Cup in India after the ICC rejected its demand for a change of venue, effectively paving the way for Scotland to take the country's place.

Bangladesh had been served an ultimatum by the world body on Wednesday to either agree to travel to India or risk being replaced as there was no credible threat to the safety of their players, officials or fans there.

The country was given time till Thursday to make its decision.

Scotland is next in line based on team rankings for the tournament starting on February 7.

However, taking a hard-line position, Bangladesh's sports advisor Asif Nazrul, after a meeting with national team players, announced that the ICC's as-

sessment was not acceptable to them.

"We cannot comment on this developing situation. If the circumstances change, we will issue an official media release on our website," Charles Paterson, head of communications of Cricket Scotland responded to a query from PTI.

"While our cricketers have worked hard to qualify for the World Cup, the security risk regarding playing in India remains unchanged. This concern is not based on abstract analysis..." Nazrul said in a press conference while declaring that the country won't play in India.

"We are not giving up hope yet; our team is ready. We expect the ICC to provide justice by considering our genuine security risks and allowing us to play in Sri Lanka," he added.

Bangladesh is scheduled to play four games in India (three in Kolkata and one in Mumbai).

Soorma's big win not enough

HIL - MEN

Y.B. Sarangi

BHUBANESWAR

JSW Soorma Hockey Club rode on Jeremy Hayward's fantastic four to thrash SG Pipers 6-1 in the final round-robin league match, but narrowly fell short of qualifying for the playoffs of the Hockey India League at the Kalinga Stadium here on Thursday.

Soorma, needing a win by seven clear goals to displace HIL GC from the fourth spot, were tied with Hyderabad Toofans and HIL GC on 11 points but finished fifth.

Encouraged by their coach Philippe Goldberg's call to score twice in each quarter, Soorma pumped in three goals inside 11 minutes. Long balls in the air and along the carpet, mixed with smart passing, helped Soorma breach Pipers' defence frequently. Hayward launched two low flicks to convert Soorma's first two short corners.

Gurjant Singh disposed Gareth Furlong near Pipers' circle and



So close: Hayward's Soorma finished fifth. BISWARANJAN ROUT

passed it on to Lucas Martinez to make it 3-0.

Pipers did well to reply with some attacks, but struggled with their finishing. Soorma scored their fourth as Hayward unleashed an angled flick to achieve his hat-trick early in the third period.

Pipers patiently held the ball and pulled one back through Tomas Domene's powerful short corner goal. Hayward's fourth off a penalty stroke restored Soorma's cushion but that was not enough for a spot in the next round as Pipers defended with determination to spoil Soorma's plans.

The result: JSW Soorma Hockey Club 6 (Jeremy Hayward 2-pc, 7-pc, 34-pc, 45-ps, Lucas Martinez 11, Nicolas Keenan 47) bt SG Pipers 1 (Tomas Domene 43).

The table: 1. Vedanta Kalinga

Lancers: Played 7, Wins 4, Wins (s.o.) 2, Loss 1, Loss (s.o.) 0, Goals

For 16, Goals Against 8, Goal Difference 8, Points 16; 2. Ranchi Royals: 7, 3, 1, 2, 1, 25, 18, 7, 12;

3. Hyderabad Toofans: 7, 3, 0, 2, 17, 11, 6, 11; 4. HIL GC: 7, 3, 0, 2, 21, 18, 3, 11; 5. JSW Soorma

Hockey Club: 7, 3, 1, 3, 0, 16, 14, 2, 11; 6. Accord Tamil Nadu

Dragons: 7, 1, 3, 2, 1, 19, 22, -3;

7. Shriram Bengal Tigers: 7, 3, 0, 4, 16, 24, -8, 9; 8. S.G.

Pipers: 7, 1, 0, 5, 1, 14, 29, -15. 4.

Friday's schedule: Eliminator: Toofans vs. HIL GC (5 p.m.); Qualifier 1: Lancers vs. Royals (7.30 p.m.).

Practice and prayers — Arshdeep's success mantra

Sankar Narayanan E.H.

NAGPUR

Braver batters and flatter decks have redefined the ceiling of T20 run-making. The series opener between India and New Zealand at the VCA Stadium, which witnessed a staggering 428-run aggregate, was just the latest example.

Pacer Arshdeep Singh's recipe for staying relevant during these games involves a bit of divine intervention and a whole lot of preparation.

"The first thing I do is take God's name: 'The wicket is looking flat... please save me,'" he quipped after India's 48-run win on Wednesday.

"All the planning is done in meetings and during practice. When you come on game-day, your target is to execute those plans."

The left-arm seamer, who bowled a creditable



Holding his own: Arshdeep returned impressive figures in the high-scoring opener at Nagpur. K.R. DEEPAK

spell (4-0-31-1) amid the carnage, maintains that his rhythm is not hinged on whether he plays every

"There are a lot of benefits to being in and out of the side. Just like I'm in and out of the team, the ball is also swinging in and out really well," he joked.

"We must be prepared to adapt in these three aspects of the game. And that is our main motto," added Arshdeep.

holding back Jasprit Bumrah, was attributed to India's operational flexibility.

"The team's demands are considered while choosing the order of batters, bowlers, or even where a particular fielder should field."

"We must be prepared to adapt in these three aspects of the game. And that is our main motto," added Arshdeep.

IN BRIEF



Rickelton, Stubbs replace de Zorzi, Ferreira in SA squad

Ryan Rickelton and Tristan Stubbs, on Thursday, replaced the injured duo of Tony de Zorzi and Donovan Ferreira in the South Africa squad for next month's T20 World Cup. De Zorzi had suffered a right hamstring muscle tear during South Africa's tour of India late last year, while Ferreira was injured during the ongoing SA20 tournament. The last edition's runner-up is also sweating over the availability of David Miller for the ICC event.



Top players to battle it out in Mumbai Open tennis

A strong international field will figure in the fifth edition of the L&T Mumbai Open, part of the WTA 125K Series, will be held at the Maharashtra State Lawn Tennis Association (MSLTA) in Mumbai. The 86th-ranked Kiwi Lulu Sun heads the list while Latvia's Darja Semenistaja (98), France's Leolia Jeanjean (103), Australia's Kimberly Birrell (94), Chinese Taipei's Joanna Garland (117), The Netherlands' Arantxa Rus and last year's runner-up Mananchaya Sawangkaw of Thailand. The qualifying rounds will be held on January 30 and 31 while the main draw will begin on February 2.

Poonawalla to make a 'strong and competitive' bid for RCB

The ownership transfer process of Royal Challengers Bengaluru gained momentum on Thursday as Adar Poonawalla said he will be tabling a "strong and competitive" bid for the IPL franchise. "Over the next few months, we will be putting in a strong and competitive bid for RCB, one of the best teams in the IPL," tweeted Poonawalla, CEO of Pune-based vaccine-maker Serum Institute of India. He did not reveal the specifics – timeline or potential bid amount.

Mercedes unveils 2026 F1 car for new 2026 rules

Mercedes boss Toto Wolff said on Thursday that F1 would undergo "significant change" in 2026 as the team unveiled its new car. Fresh chassis and engine regulations are being introduced this season in a major shake-up in the sport. The team released digital images of its new W17 car on Thursday, describing the 2026 season as "the biggest technical shake-up in the sport's history".

LIVE TELECAST

Ranji Trophy: JioHotstar, 8.45 a.m.
Men's U-19 World Cup: SS Select 2 & JioHotstar, 1 p.m.
Australian Open: Sony Sports Ten 2, 3, 5 & LIV, 1.30 p.m. & 5.30 a.m. (Saturday)
India vs New Zealand: 2nd T20I, Star Sports 2 & JioHotstar, 7 p.m.
HIL: Sony Sports Ten 1 & LIV, 7.30 p.m.
Bundesliga: Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 1 a.m. (Saturday)
Serie A: DAZN, 1.15 a.m. (Saturday)
LaLiga: FanCode, 1.30 a.m. (Saturday)

Sindhu and Lakshya make it to the quarterfinals of Indonesia Masters

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India

JAKARTA

Indian shuttlers P.V. Sindhu and Lakshya Sen entered the quarterfinals of Indonesia Masters badminton tournament after securing straight-game wins in their respective round-of-16 matches here on Thursday. However, it was curtains for K. Srikanth, Anmol

Kharb and the men's doubles pair of A. Hariharan and M.R. Arjun in the round of 16.

Lakshya, seeded seventh, prevailed 21-10, 21-11 over Hong Kong China's Jason Gunawan in a contest that lasted a little over half an hour.

Fifth seed Sindhu, a two-time Olympic-medalist, notched up a 21-19, 21-18 triumph over Line Hojmark Kjaerfeldt of Denmark in her pre-quarterfinal that took

43 minutes to wind up. This was Sindhu's fifth win over the Dane in their six clashes so far.

It took just 32 minutes for fourth seed Chou Tien-Chen of Taiwan to get the better of Srikanth 21-11, 21-10.

Anmol let slip an advantage against Nozomi Okuhara of Japan by losing 21-16, 21-12, 21-21 in four minutes short of an hour.

The Malaysian pair of Man Wei Chong and Tee Kai Wun, seeded third, put

it past Hariharan and Arjun 21-17, 9-21, 21-16 in 54 minutes.

The results (pre-quarterfinals): Men: Lakshya Sen bt Jason Gunawan (HK) 21-10, 21-11; Chou Tien-Chen (Tpe) bt K. Srikanth 21-11, 21-10.

Doubles: Man Wei Chong & Tee Kai Wun (Mas) bt A. Hariharan & M.R. Arjun 21-17, 9-21, 21-16.

Women: P.V. Sindhu bt Line Hojmark Kjaerfeldt (Den) 21-19, 21-18.

Nozomi Okuhara (Jpn) bt Anmol Kharb 16-21, 21-14, 21-11.

Early finish likely for Saurashtra-Punjab match as 23 wickets fall on day one

Left-arm spinners call the shots with Harpreet and Bhut host doing the maximum damage; only 11 of the day's 94.2 overs were bowled by the pacers



Bowlers day out: Saurashtra's Bhut and Punjab's Harpreet made excellent use of the conditions. VIJAY SONEJI

RANJI TROPHY

Amol Karhadkar
RAJKOT

Left-arm spin ruled the roost as a whopping 23 wickets fell on the opening day of Saurashtra's crucial Ranji Trophy Group B tie against Punjab at the Niranjan Shah Stadium C ground here on Thursday.

While Harpreet Brar (6/38 & 2/6) and Parth Bhut (5/33) emerged as the stars of Punjab and Saurashtra's bowling attacks, the game remained in balance with the former managing to negate the 33-run first innings deficit with three quick strikes in the last 25 minutes of Saurashtra's second essay.

When offie Jass Inder got one to spin through Jay Gohil's gates and hit the woodwork, Saurashtra was placed at 24 for three, with

an overall lead of 57 runs and nightwatcher Dharmendra Jadeja at the crease.

With Saurashtra in need of outright wins in the last two games to keep its qualification hopes alive, it wasn't a surprise to see a turning track on offer. While the pitch wasn't as demonic as the scoreboard hints at, a combination of accurate bowling and lack of application by a majority of the batters resulted in a stark possibility of a two-day finish on the cards.

So lopsided was the contest in favour of spinners that the three pacers combined from both teams bowled only 11 of the 93.2 overs that were played on the day.

Jaydev Unadkat, the Saurashtra captain, won a crucial toss, and Gohil's star act with the willow – the lone fifty of the day – helped Saurashtra cross

the 150-run mark.

Similarly, after Saurashtra folded up soon after lunch, Punjab opener Prabhjot Singh dominated veteran Ravindra Jadeja – who shared the new ball with Unadkat. Only after Dharmendra and Bhut – the other two left-arm spinners were employed – did Saurashtra begin controlling the game.

The scores: Saurashtra – 1st innings: Harvirk Desai c Harnoor b Harpreet 13, Chirag Jani c Anmolpreet b Sanvir 8, Jay Gohil c Dutta b Harpreet 82, Arpit Vasavada c Harpreet b Dutta 2, Ravindra Jadeja c Harpreet b Jass 7, Prerak Mankad lbw b Harpreet 32, Sammar Gajjar c Prabhjot Singh b Jass 0, Hetwijk Kotak b Harpreet 12, Parth Bhut b Harpreet 0, Dharmendra Jadeja lbw b Harpreet 5, Jaydev Unadkat (not out) 7; Extras (lb-4): 4; Total (in 40.1 overs): 139.

Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-50, 3-73, 4-73, 5-136, 6-119, 7-120, 8-120, 9-135.

Saurashtra bowling: Unadkat 4-1-22-1, Ravindra 12.1-2-48-2, Dharmendra 12-2-36-2, Bhut 12-2-33-5.

Saurashtra – 2nd innings: Harvirk Desai c Anmolpreet b Harpreet 6, Chirag Jani c Harnoor b Harpreet 5, Dharmendra Jadeja (batting) 5, Jay Gohil b Jass 8; Total (for three wkts. in 6 overs): 24.

Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-15, 3-24.

Punjab bowling: Harpreet 3-2-6-2, Dutta 2-0-9-0, Jass 1-0-9-1.

3-17-0, Sanvir 4-2-10-1, Harpreet 18.1-6-38-6, Dutta 11-2-32-1, Jass 11-1-71-2.

Punjab – 1st innings: Harnoor Singh c Harvik b Unadkat 0, Prabhjot Singh lbw b Dharmendra 44, Uday Saharan c Kotak b Dharmendra 23, Nehal Wadhera c Vasavada b Bhut 6, Shubham Gill lbw b Bhut 0, Anmolpreet Singh c & b Bhut 35, Prerit Dutta lbw b Bhut 11, Sanvir Singh b Jadeja 1, Krish Bhagat b Bhut 3, Harpreet Brar lbw b Ravindra 12, Jass Inder (not out) 4; Total (in 40.1 overs): 139.

Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-50, 3-73, 4-73, 5-136, 6-119, 7-120, 8-120, 9-135.

Saurashtra bowling: Unadkat 4-1-22-1, Ravindra 12.1-2-48-2, Dharmendra 12-2-36-2, Bhut 12-2-33-5.

Saurashtra – 2nd innings: Harvirk Desai c Anmolpreet b Harpreet 6, Chirag Jani c Harnoor b Harpreet 5, Dharmendra Jadeja (batting) 5, Jay Gohil b Jass 8; Total (for three wkts. in 6 overs): 24.

Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-15, 3-24.

Punjab bowling: Harpreet 3-2-6-2, Dutta 2-0-9-0, Jass 1-0-9-1.

A dubious decision spells doom as Gill falls for duck

Amol Karhadkar
RAJKOT

The 'C' ground at the Niranjan Shah Stadium complex offered the unmistakable feel of a routine domestic fixture: an open-air venue, compact dressing rooms, temporary enclosures for selectors and invitees, and a spectator count that barely exceeded the number of personnel on the field.

It was in these modest surroundings that Shubman Gill, India's Test captain recently left out of the Men's T20 World Cup squad, was hoping to make the most of valuable game

time and keep Punjab's faint Ranji Trophy quarter-final hopes alive against Saurashtra. Instead, it turned out to be a day of misfortunes for the stylish right-hander. On a turning surface, Gill lost the toss. When the hosts were bowled out for 172, the handful of spectators – largely families of the Saurashtra players – sensed that conditions would make life uncomfortable for the visiting batters.

Gill stood rooted for a moment, visibly surprised. It appeared the ball may have brushed the inside edge before hitting the pad, but with no broadcast coverage, the decision stood.

As he walked in, Manan – the young son of Saurashtra batter Arpit Vasavada – shouted "first-ball wicket" in anticipation. That delivery was negotiated safely, but the next one from Bhut slid on marginally, stayed low, beat Gill's forward defensive prod and struck him on the pad. Saurashtra appealed in unison and umpire Vinod Seshan raised the finger.

Gill stood rooted for a moment, visibly surprised. It appeared the ball may have brushed the inside edge before hitting the pad, but with no broadcast coverage, the decision stood.

Harshita stars for Maharashtra Kesari

Sports Bureau

NOIDA

Harshita Mor overcame a massive point deficit to overthrow and pin Hannah Ojo Damola to the mat in closing stage of the 76kg bout, winning by fall and securing the tie and full points for Maharashtra Kesari against UP Dominators in Pro Wrestling League.

With both teams tied on four points, Maharashtra Kesari, which won the tie 5-4, moved to second on the table with 14 bout wins behind UP Dominators, which has won 20 bouts.

The results: Maharashtra Kesari bt UP Dominators 5-4

Men: 57kg: Atish Todkar (Maharashtra Kesari) bt Rahul Deswal (UP Dominators) 15-13;

65kg: Tevanyaz Vazgen (Maharashtra Kesari) bt Vishal Kaliraman (UP Dominators) 4-3;

74kg: Yash (Maharashtra Kesari) bt Abhimanyu Mandwal (UP Dominators) 5-2; 86kg: Mykhailo Vasyl (UP Dominators) bt Amit (Maharashtra Kesari) 15-3; **125kg:** Robert Baran (Maharashtra Kesari) bt Jaspooran Singh (UP Dominators) 10-2.

Women: 53kg: Antim Panghal (UP Dominators) bt Yusneyl Kesuman Lopez (Maharashtra Kesari) 12-9; **62kg:** Nisha Dahiya (UP Dominators) bt Bilyana Dudova Zhivkova (Maharashtra Kesari) 8-1; **76kg:** Harshita Mor (Maharashtra Kesari) bt Hannah Ojo Damola (UP Dominators) by Fall 11-13.

Liverpool cruises; Bayern through to the last-16 stage



Scoring at will: Kane heads in Bayern's opening goal. AP

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

Liverpool eased to a 3-0 win in Marseille in the Champions League on Wednesday as Harry Kane's double earned Bayern Munich a 2-0 victory against Union Saint-Gilloise that secured a place in the last 16 for the German giant.

Mohamed Salah made his first appearance for his club since returning from the Africa Cup of Nations, but he was not among the scorers.

Meanwhile, Bayern joined table-toppers Arsenal in guaranteeing a top-eight finish with a game to

spare, and therefore a last-16 spot. Kane headed in to open the scoring early and converted a penalty on 55 minutes.

Chelsea is eighth after edging out Cypriot minnows Pafos 1-0 at Stamford Bridge thanks to a Moises Caicedo header in the 78th minute.

Barcelona is among the teams involved in the fight for direct last-16 access after it defeated Slavia Prague 4-2.

Atletico Madrid drew 1-1 away to Galatasaray in Istanbul, with Giuliano Simeone putting the visitors ahead early on only for a Marcos Llorente own goal to restore parity. Juventus continued its Champions League recovery with a third straight Eu-

Sindhu and Lakshya make it to the quarterfinals of Indonesia Masters

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India

JAKARTA

Indian shuttlers P.V. Sindhu and Lakshya Sen entered the quarterfinals of Indonesia Masters badminton tournament after securing straight-game wins in their respective round-of-16 matches here on Thursday. However, it was curtains for K. Srikanth, Anmol

Kharb and the men's doubles pair of A. Hariharan and M.R. Arjun in the round of 16.

Lakshya, seeded seventh, prevailed 21-10, 21-11 over Hong Kong China's Jason Gunawan in a contest that lasted a little over half an hour.

Fifth seed Sindhu, a two-time Olympic-medalist, notched up a 21-19, 21-18 triumph over Line Hojmark Kjaerfeldt of Denmark in her pre-quarterfinal that took

43 minutes to wind up. This was Sindhu's fifth win over the Dane in their six clashes so far.

It took just 32 minutes for fourth seed Chou Tien-Chen of Taiwan to get the better of Srikanth 21-11, 21-10.

Anmol let slip an advantage against Nozomi Okuhara of Japan by losing 21-16, 21-12, 21-21 in four minutes short of an hour.

The

Djokovic and Wawrinka roll back the years to win in contrasting styles

The Serbian has it easy while registering his 399th victory in Grand Slam matches; the Swiss veteran prevails in a five-setter to become the first man over 40 to reach the third round of a Major since 1978; Sinner cruises but end of the road for Tsitsipas and Shapovalov; Keys to meet Pliskova

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Associated Press

MELBOURNE

Novak Djokovic and Stan Wawrinka made it a day for the ages at the Australian Open.

Djokovic improved to 399 wins in Grand Slam matches with a 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 victory over Francesco Masetelli on Thursday, making the 38-year-old, 24-time Major winner just one shy of becoming the first player ever to 400.

He's aiming to win an unprecedented 25th Grand Slam title.

And if he does, he'll beat Ken Rosewall's record (aged 37 in 1972) as the oldest man in the Open era to win a Major singles championship.

The Rosewall name was prominent on Day 5 at Melbourne Park, where he was among the invited VIPs.

Wawrinka, at 40 years and 296 days, became the first man over 40 to reach the third round of a Major since Rosewall in 1978.

Longest match
It took a four-and-a-half hour 4-6, 6-3, 3-6, 7-5, 7-6 (10-3) comeback victory over 21-year-old qualifier Arthur Géa in the longest match of the 2026 tournament so far.

Wawrinka, who is retir-

Day 5 in numbers

1 Vacherot becomes the first Monegasque man to reach the third round at a Slam

7 USA is the first country with seven women (Gauff, Pegula, Keys, Jovic, Baptiste, Stearns and Anisimova) in the third round of the Australian Open. It had achieved a similar feat in 2015

17 Pegula has moved into the third round of a Major for the 17th time in her career. Only Swiatek (23) and Sabalenka (20) have more since the start of the 2020 season

19 Sinner is the second man (after del Potro -12) to be undefeated against opponents at their home Slams (minimum 10 matches)

COMPILATION BY ANIRUDH VELAMURI

24

Swiatek becomes the first woman to reach the round-of-32 of the first 24 Grand Slams in a single decade

37

Djokovic remains unbeaten against qualifiers and lucky losers in Majors, a record

49

Wawrinka overtakes Federer (48) for most five-setters at Grand Slams

40y 296d

Wawrinka is the oldest to win multiple matches at a Major (since 1987 when the 128-player draw was introduced at the Grand Slams)

FRIDAY'S PICKS

WOMEN

- 1-Sabalenka vs Potapova
- 3-Gauff vs Baptiste
- 7-Paolini vs 29-Jovic
- 8-Andreeva vs Ruse
- 12-Svitolina vs 23-Shnaider

MEN

- 1-Alcaraz vs 32-Moutet
- 3-Zverev vs 26-Norrie
- 6-De Minaur vs 29-Tiafoe
- 10-Bublik vs Etcheverry
- 11-Medvedev vs Marozsan



IMPORTANT RESULTS

Men: Second round:

- 5-Musetti (Ita) bt Sonego (Ita) 6-3, 6-3, 6-4;
- 6-Machac (Cze) bt 31-Tsitsipas (Gre) 6-4, 3-6, 7-6(5); Wawrinka (Sui) bt Géa (Fra) 4-6, 6-3, 3-6, 7-5, 7-6 (10-3); 9-Fritz (USA) bt Kopřiva (Cze) 6-1, 6-4, 7-6(4); 16-Mensik (Cze) bt Jodar (Esp) 6-2, 6-4, 6-4;
- 4-Djokovic (Srb) bt Maestrelli (Ita) 6-3, 6-2, 6-2; 8-Shelton (USA) bt Sweeny (Aus) 6-3, 6-2, 6-3; 10-Vacherot (Mon) bt Hijikata (Aus) 6-1, 6-3, 4-6, 6-2; 12-Cilic (Cro) bt 21-Shapovalov (Can) 6-4, 6-3, 6-2; 15-Khachanov (Rus) bt Basavareddy (USA) 6-1, 6-4, 6-3; 22-Darderi (Ita) bt Baez (Arg) 6-3, 1-6, 6-4, 6-3; 23-Sinner (Ita) bt Duckworth (Aus) 6-1, 6-4, 6-2; 12-Ruud (Nor) bt Munar (Esp) 6-3, 7-5, 6-4.

Doubles: First round:

- 6-Putz (Ger) & Zhang (Chn) bt Yuki (Ind) & Melichar-Martinez (USA) 6-4, 7-6(3)

Fallen seeds: Men:

- 21-Shapovalov, 31-Tsitsipas.

Women: Second round:

- 7-Swiatek (Pol) bt Cirstea (Rom) 6-3, 4-6, 6-2; 31-Kalinskaya (Rus) bt Grabher (Aut) 6-3, 6-3; 2-Swiatek (Pol) bt Bouzkova (Cze) 6-2, 6-3; 5-Rybáková (Kaz) bt Gracheva (Fra) 7-5, 6-2; Bartunkova (Cze) bt 10-Bencic (Sui) 6-3, 0-6, 6-4;

Mixed doubles: First round:

- 6-Putz (Ger) & Zhang (Chn) bt Yuki (Ind) & Melichar-Martinez (USA) 6-4, 7-6(3)

Fallen seeds: Women:

- 21-Shapovalov, 31-Tsitsipas.

Women: Second round:

the draw, No. 4 Amanda Anisimova fended off doubles champion Katerina Siniakova 6-1, 6-4 and sixth-seeded Jessica Pegula won 6-0, 6-2 over McCartney Kessler.

Bencic ousted

Pegula will next face Oksana Selekhmeteva, who upset 2025 semifinalist Paula Badosa 6-4, 6-4, No. 5 Eleanna Rybakina beat Varvara Gracheva and No. 10 Belinda Bencic was ousted by Nikolina Bartunkova.

Iga Swiatek beat Marie Bouzkova 6-2, 6-3 and later said she's been trying to

6-Pegula (USA) bt Kessler (USA) 6-0, 6-2; Selekhmeteva (Rus) bt 25-Badosa (Esp) 6-4, 6-4; 9-Keys (USA) bt Krueger (USA) 6-1, 7-5; 13-Noskova (Cze) bt Preston (Aus) 6-2, 4-6, 6-2; Wang (Chn) bt 24-Ostapenko (Lat) 4-6, 6-4, 6-4; 4-Anisimova (USA) bt Siniakova (Cze) 6-1, 6-4; 21-Mertens (Bel) bt Uchijima (Jpn) 6-3, 6-1; 16-Osaka (Jpn) bt Cirstea (Rom) 6-3, 4-6, 6-2; 31-Kalinskaya (Rus) bt Grabher (Aut) 6-3, 6-3; 2-Swiatek (Pol) bt Bouzkova (Cze) 6-2, 6-3; 5-Rybáková (Kaz) bt Gracheva (Fra) 7-5, 6-2; Bartunkova (Cze) bt 10-Bencic (Sui) 6-3, 0-6, 6-4;

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take lessons from Djokovic's attitude to sustained success and longevity.

Meanwhile in men's doubles, the Indo-Austrian pair of Sriram Balaji and Neil Oberleitner got the better of of Australian Jordan Thomson and Pierre-Hugues Herbert of France 7-6(4), 3-6, [10-8] to make the second round.

However, in mixed doubles, Yuki Bhambri and his American partner Nicole Melichar-Martinez crashed out in the first round, losing to the German-Chinese duo of Tim Putz and Zhang Shuai 6-3 1-6, [10-6].

Former India defender Ilyas Pasha passes away

FOOTBALL

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI



Former India and East Bengal defender Ilyas Pasha passed away on Thursday after a prolonged illness. He was 61. He is survived by wife, two daughters, and two sons.

The All India Football Federation (AIFF) condoled the death of Pasha, who was one of the best footballers to have come out of Karnataka.

Primarily operating as a right wing-back, he was renowned for his impeccable sense of timing, calm demeanour, and ability to read the game astutely.

At the international level, Pasha made his senior India debut on January 27, 1987, against Bulgaria in the IFA Shield five times (1990, 1991, 1994, 1995 and 1997), and the Durand Cup four times (1990, 1991, 1993 and 1995).

His trophy cabinet also included two Rovers Cups (1990, 1994), the Federation Cup (1996), the historic Wai Wai Cup in Kathmandu (1993), Airlines Trophy titles in 1990, 1992, 1995 and 1997, the Bordoloi Trophy (1992), ATPA Shield (1992), Kalinga Cup (1993), McDowell Trophy (1995, 1997), and the Super Cup in the 1996-97 season.

He was also a member of East Bengal's celebrated triple crown-winning side in 1990 and captained the team to its first international title at the Wai Wai Cup in 1993.

He got a special Lifetime Achievement Award from East Bengal in 2012.

RAJIV GANDHI THERMAL POWER PLANT, KHEDAR, HISAR (A UNIT OF HARYANA POWER GENERATION CORPORATION LIMITED)

Expression of Interest

Memo no. 33/XEN/CMD-II (Pond Ash)/RGTPP/F-22

Dated:- 21.01.2026

RGTPP, HPGCL, Khed, Hisar invites Expression of Interest for lifting of pond ash from pond ash user agencies i.e. Cement companies, block manufacturers, traders etc. Pond ash is available for lifting on 'as is where it is' basis and **free of any cost**, from Ash Dykes of RGTPP, Khed, Hisar and shall be allocated on '**first come first serve**' basis. Interested parties are requested to submit their response in Performa attached as **Annexure-I**. Total quantity to be allocated is 4,00,000MT in 80 lots of 5,000 MT each.

All the charges related to excavation, loading and transportation are to be borne by the interested parties. Duration for the pond ash allocated under this expression of interest shall be one month from the date of issuance of LOI/allotment letter. The duration of contract can be extended or short closed anytime at discretion of RGTPP, HPGCL.

During the course of lifting, all norms/rules/regulations related to environmental protection set by MoEF&CC, CPCB, HSPCB other regulatory bodies, as amended from time to time, shall be followed in true spirit and will be applicable. Further, a contract agreement will be signed on NJSP between RGTPP, HPGCL and pond ash lifters to ensure faithful execution of terms and conditions of EOI (Available on HPGCL's official website <https://hpcl.org.in>).

For any further queries related to lifting of pond ash, interested firms may contact the undersigned during the office hours. EOI details are as under:

Sr.no.	EOI scope	EOI submission start date and time	EOI submission end date and time	Official Web site	Contact details
1	Lifting of pond ash from Ash Dyke of, RGTPP, Khed, Hisar	22.01.2026, 10:00 hrs	28.01.2026, 17:00 hrs	https://hpcl.org.in	Er. Tinku Goyal, XEN/ CMD-II, 822820043

Note: This EOI can be cancelled at sole discretion of HPGCL

XEN/CMD-II, RGTPP, for Chief Engineer, RGTPP, HPGCL, Khed, Hisar.

1187/11/31/2026/42328/C/199/7

E-TENDER NOTICE

OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT CUM MEMBER SECRETARY, RAJASTHAN MEDICARE RELIEF SOCIETY, SAWAI MAN SINGH HOSPITAL, JAIPUR

[Sawai Man Singh Road, Tonk Road, Jaipur, Rajasthan 302001]

(Phone 0141-2518308, 0141 2565647, Email-ms.smshospital@gmail.com)

No.77 Store/SMS/MH/2025

GOVERNMENT OF RAJASTHAN

NOTICE INVITING BID

Jaipur dated, the 08/01/26

Bids for two years rate contract for procurement of Neurovascular Item for Neurosurgery Department are invited from interested bidders up to 29/01/2026 on 05-00 PM. Other particulars of bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> or <http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in>) of the state.

UBN No. MCJ2526GLRC00137

DIPR/C/701/2026

SUPERINTENDENT MEMBER SECRETARY



For the future: Paes has partnered with IGU, PGAI and TGF to build a pipeline of emerging golf talent in India. PTI

IGPL and Paes come together to take golf to schools

The Indian tennis legend says his eventual aim is to build 10 academies for different sports throughout the country in the next decade

Uthra Ganeshan
NEW DELHI

With 18 Grand Slam titles behind him, Leander Paes is now hoping to produce more Olympic champions across sports, including golf.

The tennis legend has partnered with the Indian Golf Premier League (IGPL) in the Golf Growth Initiative, a programme to take golf to schools and interiors of the country and develop the next generation of Indian golfers, in association with the Indian Golf Union (IGU), the Professional Golfers' Association of India (PGAI) and The Golf Foundation (TGF).

His eventual aim, Paes

said, was to build 10 academies for different sports throughout the country in the next 10 years.

"I have the Flying Man Academy, spread across 250 acres in Bhubaneswar. It has 100,000 kids divided into 40,000 tribal, 40,000 paid Indian kids and 20,000 international kids from 70 countries. We play 16 sports."

"Through these 16 sports, we empower the youth not just at the grassroots but also at the top of the pyramid. I want to develop Olympic champions. My focus in golf is to create academies, driving ranges, golf courses, design new-age training methods and take the game to Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities and villages," Paes said.

The programme will bring together some of the biggest names in Indian golf with the likes of Jeet Milkha Singh, Jyoti Randhawa, Shiv Kapur, Gaganjeet Bhullar, S.S.P. Chawrasia and Gaurav Ghei acting as mentors.

The six, interestingly, will also be part of the six franchises in the golf league that the IGPL plans to launch in March with auctions for the same likely to be in the middle of February.

The IGPL also announced a partnership with TGF to drive grassroots scouting and the establishment of world-class training facilities in Odisha, Gurugram, and Andhra Pradesh starting this year.

Indian Golf Union faults Indian Olympic Association for creating confusion, insists players won't suffer

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

Even as factional issues in Indian golf continue, Major General Bibhuti Bhushan has categorically placed the blame on the IOA for creating confusion in the sport.

"There is only one IGU which is recognised by the international federation,

the Asian body and the Sports Ministry and registered with the Registrar of Societies. We have organised 50-odd tournaments pan India and sent teams to almost 15 tournaments in the last one year.

"We are giving funds, coming from the ministry to us, to the players. When we are recognised by everyone in the world, why is

the IOA going elsewhere? It's solely the IOA that is creating confusion," Bhushan, the Director General and CEO of IGU declared on the sidelines of an event on Thursday.

The Indian Golf Union, headed by Brijinder Singh, is recognised by the sports ministry and the International Golf Federation but the Indian Olympic Asso-

ciation continues to consider the faction headed by Harish Kumar Shetty. Both held their elections on December 15, 2024 and the matter has been *sub judice* since then.

The matter gained importance with the final date for sending the long list of golf entries for the Asian Games being January 31. While both factions

have sent their respective lists, Bhushan made it clear the players would not suffer.

"We have sent names of eight men and women each on the basis of the Official World Golf Rankings, which is the same for everyone, so the players won't suffer. But the IOA has not admitted to receiving our list," he insisted.

Post-surgery, Bhavani Devi hopes to win medal at the Asian Games this year

Uthra Ganeshan
NEW DELHI

India's top fencer and Asian Games medal hopeful Bhavani Devi has undergone shoulder surgery in Italy to get fit in time for the quadrennial event later this year.

Currently at the Circolo Scherma Fides fencing club in Livorno, Bhavani, who last participated at the Istanbul Satellite Tournament in October 2025, winning silver in Sabre, went under the knife more than a month ago and is still on a rehab programme to ease into training.

"I had been managing persistent pain since 2024 and underwent surgery for right shoulder labrum micro-instability," Bhavani told *The Hindu* from Italy. "We initially attempted a conservative rehabilitation approach, but it wasn't providing the long-term

Bhavani went under the knife more than a month ago.

stability needed for elite competition."

"I am following a structured rehab programme. I am respecting the healing process and am eager to hold my sabre again soon, gradually returning to peak physical condition. My goal remains unchanged - I am working toward a podium finish at the

Asian Games with the Asian and World Championships later this year among my targets," the 32-year-old added.

The surgery, rehab and training to the tune of ₹16 lakh is being completely supported by the Sports Authority of India through the Target Asian Games Group scheme, expanding the existing scope of the programme from training, competition exposure and coaching support to overseas medical treatment and post-surgical rehabilitation.

Tilottama Sen secured the top spot in the T1 finals of women's 10m air rifle in the National shooting selection trials, here on Thursday. Shahrukh Mane of Railways won the men's event, while Vijayveer Sidhu claimed the top spot in 25m rapid fire pistol (T2).

Tilottama entered the final as the eighth and last qualifier, having scraped through with 630.8, but rose steadily to finish on top with 253.4. Sonam Uttam Maskar of Railways, who had quali-



The top-three: Tilottama, champion, flanked by silver-medallist Sonam, left, and bronze-winner Nupur. X@OFFICIALNRAI

Shooter Tilottama tops 10m air rifle trials

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

fied in fifth with 631.2, was second with 252.8. Madhya Pradesh's Nupur Kumrawat was third with 230.5 (631.2).

In men's 10m air rifle, Mane, who had qualified fifth with 632.6, secured the top spot with 253.9, while Haryana's Arshdeep Singh took the second place with 251.1 and the third slot went to Maharashtra's Parth Rakesh Mane (230.5).

Olympian Vijayveer Sidhu shot 31 hits in the T2 final to secure the top spot in men's 25m rapid fire pistol. National champion Suraj Sharma was second after hitting 29 in the final.

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No immediate threat, but Gambhir under scrutiny

R. Kaushik

What's it with left-arm pacers and wickets in the first/second over of a match? What is indeed? David Willey has 65 wickets in his first over in all T2Os, followed by Shaheen Afridi (62), Mohammad Amir (55) and Trent Boult (50). The last-named also has the most first-over wickets (33) in the IPL. Mitchell Starc (26), the towering Australian, is second only to James Anderson (29) for the most wickets in their first over of a Test and heads the list when it comes to ODIs, also with 26 strikes. Guess what all these individuals serve up.

Now, throw Arshdeep Singh into the mix. The Indian left-arm swing exponent's dismissal of Devon Conway in the first T20I in Nagpur on Wednesday was a record 28th time he had taken a wicket for the county in the first two overs of an innings. Just a few days previously, he had dismissed Henry Nicholls in the first over of the final ODI in Indore. In a way, it was a comeback to 50-over internationals for the 26-year-old, who had taken five wickets in the three-match series against South Africa in November-December, only to sit out the first two ODIs against New Zealand.

Arshdeep is perhaps the most standout example of not getting enough game time in the last year-and-a-half, coinciding with Gautam Gambhir's ascension as India's head coach. India's highest wicket-taker in T20Is has featured in a little over 60% of the matches under the Suryakumar Yadav-Gambhir dispensation; he has also figured in just under 45% of all ODIs in the same era, which is hard to imagine given that he is far and away India's most competent and consistent white-ball pacer after Jasprit Bumrah.

It's no secret that Arshdeep is at his most dangerous when he is operating with the new ball, both to left-handers and right because he has the admirable ability to swing the ball away from the former and into the latter. He has age on his side, hasn't played a whole lot of first-class cricket (just 22 matches since his debut for Punjab six years ago) and hasn't had a long history of injuries, therefore he doesn't need 'preserving' and 'managing' like, say, a Bumrah or a Hardik Pandya. Arshdeep is at that stage of his cricketing journey where the more he plays, the better he will get. And yet, for no obvious discernible reason, he watched from the sidelines as New Zealand piled on the runs in the first two games - not enough to prevent India from scoring a four-wicket in Vadodara despite piling up 300 in match one, but muscular enough to make India's 284 in the next outing in Rajkot look positively minuscule.

India's most dangerous bowler in those two matches, and in the decider in Indore, was Mohammed Siraj, on the comeback trail after having been left out of the South Africa series. In 27 overs, he conceded only 124 runs, outstanding considering that New Zealand's scoring rate in the three fixtures were 6.00, 6.02 and 6.74 respectively. Maybe there was a case for resting Siraj for the South Africa ODIs because he had played in all four home

Tests, against West Indies and the Proteas, and he showed that he is still the obvious lieutenant to Bumrah in the longer white-ball format.

Siraj's comrades in arms in the first two of those three faceoffs against New Zealand were Harsit Rana and Prasidh Krishna. In a lot of ways, they are very similar types of bowlers, bustling and of the hit-the-deck variety where Siraj is a more rounded prospect and Arshdeep offers so many different nuances apart from just swing with the new ball. For one thing, his angle, left-arm over. For another, his propensity to nail yorkers at the death and to mix up his pace superbly. Arshdeep has an ODI economy of 5.38 to go with 25 wickets in 15 games, so why would one play two almost identical bowlers in Rana (who can hit the ball a long way, as he showed during his maiden half-century in Indore) and Prasidh and pass up the opportunity to unleash a potential match-winner?

The Arshdeep situation is just one of many instances where India's team selection has been confusing, if not questionable. Even in the Virat Kohli-Ravi Shastri management age when India didn't repeat a Test XI for nearly 35 games, one could see a certain logic in the way the duo went about things, even if one didn't necessarily agree with the methodology. With Gambhir, alongside Shubman Gill in Tests and ODIs since June, and with Suryakumar in T20Is from July 2024 onwards, it's hard to see a great deal of method in what can be construed as madness. Cricket, more than any other sporting endeavour, is a game of numbers and it is sheerly on numbers and results that players, teams and coaching staff are judged. It can't be any other way. It's fanciful to want to entertain and play a thrilling brand of positive cricket - aka 'Bazball' - and expect to be absolved of blame when, in espousing the mantra of all-out aggression, defeat comes with the certainty and regularity of night following day. Or is it the other way round? Whether one likes it or not, cricketers and coaches will be estimated on the back of what outcomes they facilitate.

The defeat to New Zealand was India's home Test series loss in a dozen years, their first ever capitulation in their own backyard to the Kiwis

In football, for instance, creative midfielders and sturdy, uncompromising defenders attract nearly, but not quite, the same admiration and respect as the poachers, the born goalscorers who, through habit and experience, have mastered the knack of being in the right place at the right time. Many of these midfielders won't necessarily be the most prolific scorers, several of these defenders will primarily get on the scoresheet when they deliver from set-pieces, but they are still considered in the top echelons because such is the nature of the sport. Cricketers don't enjoy the same luxury. For them, to put it bluntly, it is perform or perish. And performances come in tangible shapes - runs scored, fifties and hundreds stacked up, wickets taken, five-wicket hauls and 10-wicket bags and, in the 20-over landscape, economy rate. Likewise, coaches are ranked on the basis of what their outfits achieve in terms of victories and silverware. In his year and a half in charge, Gambhir has had reasonable trysts with both these necessities, but he has also courted a fair amount of failure, some of which the pundits have attributed to a lack of consistency when it comes to team selection.

Under Gambhir, India's Test series wins have come at home - against Bangladesh in his very first outing in September 2024 and against West Indies in October, both 2-0 sweeps. Ultimate success in limited-overs competitions are headlined by unbeaten runs in the desert sands of the Emirates in the 50-over Champions Trophy and the T20 Asia Cup, in March and September 2025 respectively. But around these sparkling triumphs are a litany of defeats too - 1-3 in a five-Test series in Australia (India's first series loss down under since 2014-15) but most damagingly, a 0-3 drubbing against New

Zealand at home in October-November 2024 and a 0-2 pounding at the hands of South Africa last November.

The defeat to New Zealand was India's home series loss in a dozen years, their first ever capitulation in their own backyard to the Kiwis, and the first time they had lost all matches in a series of more than two Tests. South Africa's 2-0 sweep was their first series victory in India in a quarter of a century. India were once the unconquerables on their own patch, the aura of invincibility built over time through bossing of familiar conditions and the confidence and knowledge that their opponents had to play at better than their best repeatedly to best them. Now, India are hesitant and diffident and timid and fearful, especially on designer tracks laid out in the mistaken notion that India's batters continue to be masters against the turning ball when reality and the slew of defeats clearly suggests otherwise.

As if all these firsts weren't debilitating enough came a 1-2 loss to New Zealand in the ODI series that concluded on Sunday, also the first time the Kiwis had pulled the rug from their hosts' feet on Indian soil. Viewed in isolation, the result shouldn't be such a massive downer - contextually, the series had little meaning, and India rested Bumrah, Pandya and Axar Patel with an eye and a half on the defence of their T20 World Cup crown, which will begin in Mumbai on February 7 against United States. But India still had a gun batting line-up - former skippers Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, new captain Gill, his returning deputy Shreyas Iyer and K.L. Rahul, who stepped up to mastermind a 2-1 victory over South Africa late last year when Gill was out nursing a neck injury.

One would think this batting group would comfortably shade whatever total the Kiwis posted, but despite Kohli's sustained brilliance, that wasn't the case. India didn't help their cause by not necessarily putting out the most prudent XI, nor was Kuldeep Yadav, the middle-overs wicket-taker, going off the boil the best development. Working one's way around realistic possibilities of loss of form is where true mettle lies; India were sadly found wanting and while the players must and will cop the lion's share of the blame, the backroom staff under Gambhir can't hope to get away scot-free. If bouquets are accepted gratefully in success, brickbats in failures are inevitable and must be taken in the same spirit.

There is, it's almost certain, no immediate threat to Gambhir the head coach, but the spunky former opener will be well aware of the scrutiny he will be under, perhaps more than even the players themselves, at the home T20 World Cup. Should India fail to make an impression (read: at least reach the final), public memory isn't so short that it will be readily written off as a one-off. Gambhir needs his words to rise to the challenge and the occasion, as much for his sake as their own. But he can also facilitate that process, alongside Sitanshu Kotak and Morne Morkel and Ryan ten Doeschate and T. Dileep, through clarity of thought and meticulousness in planning - characteristics that helped Rohit and Rahul Dravid forge a winning combination.



THE GIST

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As India heads into the T20 World Cup, Gambhir, along with the others in the think-tank, need to have clarity of thought and meticulous planning

HEALTH

Is Asia-Pacific on track towards elimination of Malaria by 2030?

World Malaria Report 2025, launched in December, provided a mixed bag, while fall in estimated cases in southeast Asia offer hope, rising cases of resistance to artemisinin-based frontline treatment and reduction in funding for malaria programmes raise concern

Ramya Kannan

The World Malaria Report 2025, launched in December, provided a bag of mixed news, five years ahead of the 2030 malaria elimination deadline. While the reduction in estimated cases in southeast Asia provided definite hope, of serious concern were rising cases of resistance to artemisinin-based frontline treatment for malaria, and falling funding for malaria programmes.

Notably, it is the Asia Pacific region that posted much of the good news. The significant reduction was driven by 10 of the region's 17 malaria-endemic countries, bringing estimated cases down from over 9.6 million in 2023 to approximately 8.9 million in 2024. The major reduction in estimated cases happened in Pakistan, and historic lows were reported in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam, the second year running. Among the successes being platformed against one of the most crucial emerging threats against malaria treatment also comes from this region, with the Greater Mekong Subregion's success in tackling antimalarial drug resistance finding mention in the report.

The Asia Pacific Leaders Malaria Alliance (APLMA) unites 22 governments that are committed to the goal of eliminating malaria by 2030. Sarthak Das, CEO, APLMA, says the "Asia Pacific region has made tremendous progress over the past two decades, but it is not entirely on track to meet the 2030 malaria elimination target."

He goes on to explain the current position: "Progress continues to stay uneven – while some countries have experienced a resurgence of cases, others reported substantial declines, and several have successfully attained malaria-free status. Sri Lanka, China, and most recently Timor-Leste have demonstrated that malaria elimination is achievable with sustained political commitment and consistent delivery."

However, Dr. Das points out that these successes coexist with a concerning plateauing of progress and, in particular, reversal in larger, more complex settings.

He explains that significant risks still persist, primarily due to two major challenges: securing sustainable long-term financing and ensuring last-mile execution in high-burden countries. "The challenges more often are in ensuring disciplined last-mile programme delivery, which is further compounded by the increasing financing shortfalls. The report shows that only about 42% of global malaria financing needs were met in 2024, and funding cuts in 2025 have widened this gap further."

But is the elimination goal within target at all? In fact, India has set itself the target



Need for action: A health worker using a fogging machine in Assam as part of preventive measures against vector-borne diseases. RITU RAJ KONWAR

of achieving zero indigenous cases of malaria by 2027, ahead of the 2030 target. Dr. Das says India's target is ambitious, but attainable. "India has made extraordinary progress since 2015, achieving steep reductions in cases and deaths, with many districts sustaining zero transmission for multiple years. India has also demonstrated proof-of-concept for elimination through indigenous projects," he said. However, recent data shows that progress has plateaued and cases have even rebounded in parts of the country, indicating that India is currently off the elimination trajectory required to meet the 2027 milestone, he points out.

Dr. Das explains that to make the leap from control to elimination, three shifts are essential: "First, surveillance must become the central intervention. India needs real-time, case-based surveillance everywhere – including systematic reporting from the private sector, defence services, railways and urban health systems, so that every infection is detected, classified and responded to rapidly."

Secondly, he adds: "Today, five States and the northeast account for nearly 80% of the malaria burden. Success will depend on focused, project-mode execution in these remaining hotspots, while near-elimination States must invest in preventing resurgence."

Thirdly, the continuity of financing and operational discipline must be restored. India must treat malaria elimination as a time-bound national mission, with

accountability, sharp targeting and sustained investment through the last mile.

Vaccines for malaria

While factors such as surveillance, vector control and effective case management, have been essential to the achievements of the past years, it was the vaccines that marked a significant breakthrough. Dr. Das says "Both RTS,S and the newer R21 vaccines represent important milestones. Large-scale pilot implementations in Africa have shown that RTS,S, when delivered through routine immunisation systems, can reduce severe malaria and contribute to measurable declines in child mortality. R21 has shown comparable or higher efficacy in controlled trials."

These vaccines have understandably been prioritised for rollout in Africa, where the burden of Plasmodium falciparum malaria and childhood mortality is highest. The countries in the Asia Pacific and the APLMA are actively evaluating how these vaccines could complement existing tools for targeted implementation.

The recent WHO report indicates that while artemisinin resistance has emerged as a serious threat to global malaria control, it has not yet been established in India. Artemisinin-based combination therapies remain the go-to first line of treatment as they are still highly effective.

India, which otherwise has a huge anti-microbial resistance burden on the other hand, "has taken a precautionary approach by institutionalising regular

therapeutic efficacy studies, strengthening pharmacovigilance, and rapidly updating national treatment policies when early warning signals emerge." India's emphasis on universal parasitological diagnosis, strict adherence to combination therapy, and avoidance of oral artemisinin monotherapy has been central to preserving drug efficacy at scale, he adds.

Early detection through routine efficacy monitoring, strict regulation of antimalarial use, strong community-level case management – and critically – regional coordination to prevent cross-border spread are the need of the hour, Dr. Das insists. Resistance cannot be managed country by country; it requires collective action. Protecting artemisinin is not just a technical task – it is a strategic imperative for global malaria elimination, he adds.

Funding constraints

The greatest threat today to the success of the malaria elimination programme, however, is not even with artemisinin, it is dwindling financing. Dr. Das says: "At a time when malaria programs are entering the most difficult and expensive phase of elimination, overall international funding has declined. This shortfall is already forcing countries to scale back proven interventions, increasing the risk of resurgence and reversing hard-won gains."

In Asia Pacific, the impact is especially pronounced in high-burden areas that face persistent social and logistical challenges, including those prevalent among mobile and migrant populations and geographically remote communities. Such groups are particularly vulnerable because they often have limited access to health services and are difficult to reach with conventional malaria control measures.

Dr. Das suggests that a fundamental shift in how malaria elimination is financed and owned is required. Global funding will remain important, but it can no longer carry the full burden. National agencies must step up to fill the existing funding gaps, which the APLMA supports by strengthening budget advocacy efforts and building evidence-based investment cases.

Dr. Das adds: "This is not simply a cost, but an investment. Evidence consistently shows that every dollar invested in malaria elimination delivers multiple dollars in economic return through reduced healthcare costs, increased productivity, and stronger community resilience. Conversely, underinvestment at this stage is far more expensive: resurgence, emergency responses, and avoidable deaths carry a heavy and recurring price."

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THE GIST

While the Asia Pacific region posted good news, experts say that significant risks persist, primarily due to two major challenges: securing sustainable long-term financing and ensuring last-mile execution in high-burden countries

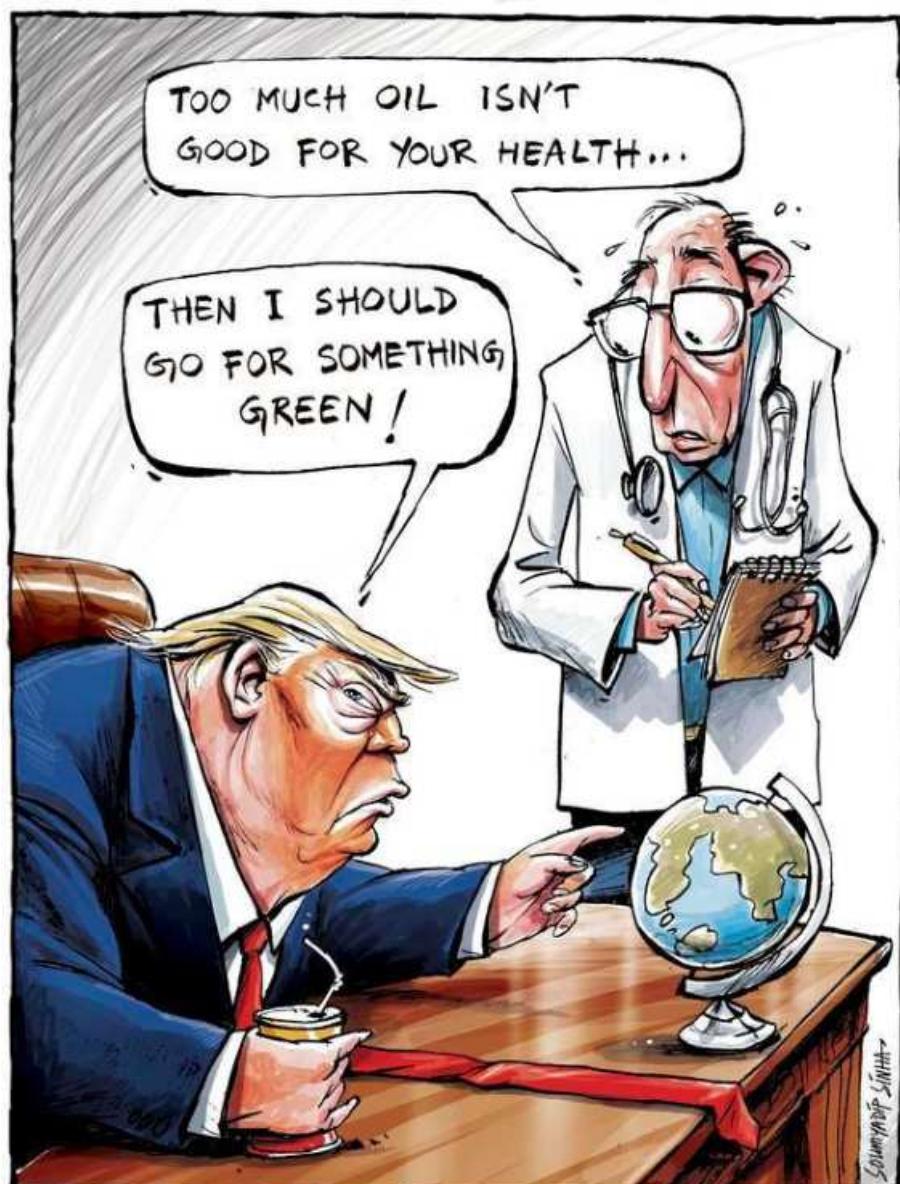
India has set itself the target of achieving zero indigenous cases of malaria by 2027. India's target is ambitious, but attainable, say experts. They add that shifts are essential to make the leap from control to elimination

Experts say that a fundamental shift in how malaria elimination is financed is required. National agencies must step up to fill the existing funding gaps. Underinvestment at this stage is far more expensive, they say

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HUMERUS



Thyroid testing should be driven by clinical suspicion, not isolated symptoms, say doctors

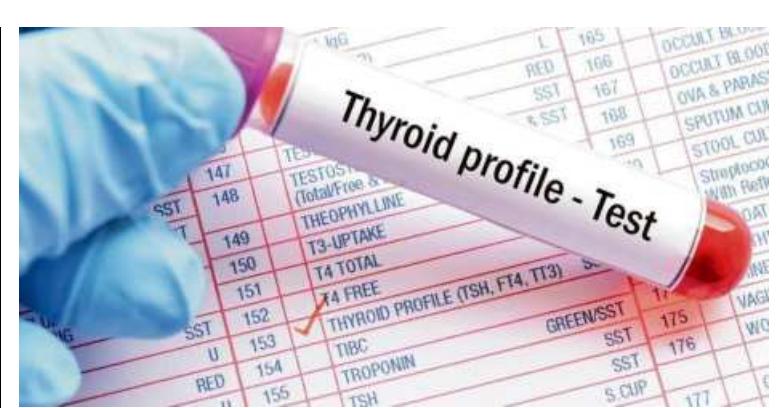
Athira Elissa Johnson

The thyroid is a small, butterfly-shaped gland located at the front of the neck, but its influence extends across nearly every system in the body. It produces two hormones – thyroxine (T4) and triiodothyronine (T3) that regulate metabolism and determine how fast or slow the body functions.

"These hormones influence the speed of our organs and directly affect heart rate, digestion, energy levels and body temperature," said Pearlsy Grace Rajan, senior consultant, internal medicine, Rela Hospital, Chennai. In this sense, she explained, the thyroid acts as a metabolic regulator, keeping the body's systems in balance.

When thyroid hormone levels fluctuate, the effects are felt across the body, influencing on metabolism, menstrual cycles and even mood. According to Usha Ayyagari, senior consultant, endocrinology and diabetes care, Apollo Speciality Hospitals, OMR, Chennai, thyroid hormones act on virtually every cell. They regulate energy use, growth, digestion and temperature, making their role fundamental to overall health.

Thyroid disorders broadly present as either an underactive



Risk alert: Casual testing based on advice from friends, social media or unverified sources is a growing concern among clinicians. GETTY IMAGES

gland (hypothyroidism) or an overactive one (hyperthyroidism), each associated with a distinct set of symptoms.

Hypothyroidism may cause persistent fatigue, weight gain, feeling cold, constipation, dry skin, thinning hair, low mood, memory difficulties and a slowed heart rate. Hyperthyroidism can lead to weight loss despite a good appetite, palpitations, tremors, anxiety, excessive sweating, heat intolerance, sleep disturbance, loose stools and menstrual irregularities. Neck swelling or goitre may be seen in some cases.

The difficulty, doctors say, lies in the fact that many of these symptoms are common in modern

life. Ravikiran Muthuswamy, endocrinologist, senior consultant, SIMS Hospital, Chennai, said the thyroid remains one of the most misunderstood organs in clinical practice. "Many people walk into the clinic already convinced they have a thyroid problem, even before any tests are done," he said.

When it comes to symptoms, "the overlap is huge," said Dr. Ravikiran. Stress, poor sleep, dietary issues and lack of physical activity can also produce identical complaints, leading people to suspect thyroid disease even when hormone levels are normal.

Dr. Pearlsy noted that this overlap is a key reason thyroid problems are frequently over

diagnosed. Dr. Usha added that in women, peri-menopausal and post-menopausal symptoms further blur the picture, as they often resemble thyroid-related complaints.

Doctors stress that thyroid testing should be driven by clinical suspicion rather than by isolated symptoms or general health packages. "After evaluation, testing is useful when there is genuine suspicion, not curiosity," Dr. Usha said. She pointed out that marginal or borderline abnormalities are frequently detected during routine health check-ups and must be interpreted carefully by a healthcare professional.

Costs of excess
Casual testing based on advice from friends, social media or unverified sources is a growing concern among clinicians. "A slightly abnormal number does not automatically mean disease," Dr. Ravikiran said. Dr. Pearlsy warned that misinterpretation of reports can result in anxiety, repeated investigations and avoidable treatment.

At the same time, doctors caution that genuine cases of thyroid disease should not be ignored.

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