JHARKHAND'S OWN ENGLISH DAILY

# THE AVENUE MAIL

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# Fire breaks out at Mahakumbh Mela due to cylinder blast, 18 tents burnt down

## Chief Minister Yogi reaches accident site to review the situation

**Prayagraj, Jan 19 (IANS) :** A major fire broke out due to a cylinder blast at the Mahakumbh Mela site in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj on Sunday. There were no immediate reports of any casualty, though at least 18 tents were burnt down in Sector 19.

According to officials, fifteen fire tenders were at the site and the blaze was brought under control.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has reached the Kumbh Mela site to review the situation. He spoke to officials and the firefighting teams.

"Very sad! The fire incident at Mahakumbh has shocked everyone. The administration is ensuring immediate relief and rescue operations. We pray Maa Ganga for everyone's safety," the Maha Kumbh 2025 official X handle posted.



It later put out another post saying the fire had been brought under control.Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Mahakumbh Mela Vaibhav Krishan said that the fire broke out at the tents of Gita Press.

"The fire broke out in the tents of Gita Press. There are no reports of any casualties. A survey is being conducted to ascertain the extent of damage caused by the fire. The fire has been brought under control. It is a matter of nose piercing. Only tents and some things have been burnt," he said.

District Magistrate of Prayagraj (DIG) Ravindra Kumar, too, claimed that the situation has been brought under control.

"The fire has been extinguished. There is no information of any casualties and the situation is under control," he said.

Video clips shared widely on social media showed a thick black column of smoke billowing out from the affected area.

### PM speaks to CM Yogi Adityanath

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday spoke to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to take stock of the situation after a fire gutted several tents in Sector 19 of the Mahakumbh venue in Prayagraj. No one was injured in the incident.

PM Modi and Chief Minister Adityanath also discussed fire-control arrangements at the venue to prevent a repeat of such an incident.The Uttar Pradesh CM has sent senior officials to the site to assess the situation.

## Saif Ali Khan stabbing case: Bangladeshi accused sent to 5-day custody



**Mumbai, Jan 19 (IANS)** The accused arrested for allegedly attacking actor Saif Ali Khan at his residence has been sent to five-day police custody by Bandra Holiday Court on Sunday. Ahead of this, police have confirmed that the person arrested for allegedly attacking actor Saif Ali Khan is an illegal immigrant from Bangladesh.

The accused, identified as Mohd Shariful Islam Shehzad, entered the residence of the renowned actor with the intent to commit theft.

As per the police statement, various investigation teams were formed to investigate the crime, and a case has been registered under sections 311, 312, 331(4), 331(6), and 331(7) of the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS).

Further, according to the police, the accused was about to flee to his native village when he was detained at Hiranandani Estate in Thane. It was revealed that the accused is a native of the Jhalokati district in Bangladesh.

# Transporter shot dead in broad daylight in Mango

Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** In a shocking daylight murder, transporter Santosh Singh was shot dead in the Mango Gurudwara Basti area. The incident occurred when Singh was standing near Manan Gali outside his residence and unknown assailants approached him. As they opened fire, Singh attempted to flee, running towards a nearby house. However, the criminals were relentless and chased him inside the house, where they shot him multiple times, hitting him in the chest. He collapsed on the spot and died instantly.



Following the brutal attack, the criminals fled the scene, leaving no trace behind. Police rushed to the spot and have sent the body for post-mortem. Investigations are underway, with authorities examining nearby CCTV footage to identify the assailants.

Santosh Singh, a known transporter, was also reportedly associated with the Congress party. His elder brother, Jitendra Singh, had previously contested the Jamshedpur West elections as an independent candidate. The murder has sent shockwaves through the area and police are under pressure to resolve the case swiftly.

"This is a cold-blooded act and we are determined to bring the criminals to justice," said a police officer involved in the investigation.

## J'khand's four districts to get rail connectivity for first time since independence

**Ranchi, January 19:** In a major expansion, the Ministry of Railways is set to connect four districts of Jharkhand by rail for the first time since independence. These districts will come under the Ranchi division, as per the statement by the ministry.

According to reports, the preliminary survey report for the project has been submitted by Jharkhand Rail Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (JRIDCL) to the Railway Board for a detailed project report (DPR).

The districts that are to be connected by rail are Gumla, Khunti, Simdega, and Chatra. While Gumla, Khunti and Simdega will be connected to the existing Ranchi-Lohardaga rail line, Chatra will be connected to a railroad along the Ranchi-Hazaribagh rail route.

According to the details in the report, a 55 km rail line will be laid from Lohardaga to Gumla, 20 km from Hatia to Khunti, 43 km from Gumla to Simdega, and 42 km from Hazaribagh to Chatra.

The project was spearheaded under the Union Cabinet decision in August 2024 in which three railway projects worth nearly Rs 6,500 crore were passed. These projects included setting up of two new lines and one multi-tracking project covering seven districts in four States--Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal.

India's railway network is an integral part of the country's transport system. With over 8,000 stations across the country, it offers a wide range of connectivity for the travellers. Npw, the network is expanding even more as four districts in Jharkhand-Gumla, Khunti, Simdega, and Chatra-are all set to get railway connectivity for the first time since India's independence. This long-awaited move marks a significant milestone.

These districts in Jharkhand have lacked the convenience of railway connectivity for decades. The locals here relied heavily on road transportation to travel to major towns and cities. Naturally, the addition of these rail links for these districts under the Ranchi division of Railways will certainly transform the region's connectivity, economy, and overall development.

# Israel receives 3 hostages handed over by Hamas under Gaza ceasefire



**Gaza, Jan 19 (IANS) :** Hamas released three Israeli hostages on Sunday to the Red Cross, who then handed them over to Israel, as a ceasefire came into effect, halting over 15 months of conflict in Gaza.

Pictures from the scene showed three female hostages - Romi Gonen, Doron Steinbrecher, and Emily Damari - exiting a vehicle surrounded by armed Hamas fighters. The hostages were then transferred into vehicles belonging to the International Committee of the Red Cross.

According to an Israeli official, the Red Cross confirmed that the women were in good health. The exchange is part of a broader ceasefire agreement that will see the release of hostages and prisoners on both sides.

The implementation of the ceasefire faced delays earlier in the day, reflecting the fragile nature of the agreement. Under the terms of the truce, three Israeli hostages are expected to be freed daily, starting Sunday after 4 pm local time. In total, 33 Israeli hostages held in Gaza are set to be released during the initial phase of the ceasefire, which is expected to last six weeks.

Simultaneously, buses in the Israeli-occupied West Bank were prepared to transport Palestinian prisoners scheduled for release from Israeli detention. Hamas announced that the first group of Palestinian detainees to be freed includes 69 women and 21 teenage boys.

## Three passengers killed, 12 injured after bus overturns in Hazaribag



**Hazaribag, January 19:**: Three passengers were killed and around 12 others injured when a private bus overturned in Jharkhand's Hazaribag district on Sunday evening, a police officer said. The accident occurred near Narki More on Bishnugarh-Gomia Road, around 45km from district headquarters Hazaribag, when the bus was negotiating a sharp turn.

Police recovered the bodies from the overturned bus and took the injured to hospitals in Gomia and Bishnugarh.

The bus was going to Phusro in Bokaro district from Hazaribag, the police officer said.

The bodies were sent to Sheikh Bhikhari Medical College and Hospital in Hazaribag for post-mortem examination.



India women celebrate after winning the inaugural Kho Kho World Cup in New Delhi

## Kumbh celebrates festival of unity in diversity: PM Modi

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday praised people's participation in the Maha Kumbh, being organised in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, as a celebration of India's "unity in diversity."

Addressing the 118th episode of his monthly radio programme, Mann Ki Baat, PM Modi referred to the Maha Kumbh as the "Ekta Ka Maha Kumbh" (Maha Kumbh of Unity).

"Maha Kumbh has started in Prayagraj. The scenes are extraordinary --memorable crowds and an incredible confluence of equality and harmony. This time, the festival has been enriched with divine planetary alignments. The Kumbh celebrates the festival of unity in diversity," he said.

Highlighting the inclusivity of the event, PM Modi stated, "People from across the world gather at the sands of Sangam. This age-old tradition knows no discrimination or casteism. People from southern, eastern, and western India come together.

## FIR against Rahul Gandhi for 'fighting against Indian state' remark

**Guwahati, Jan 19 (IANS)** An FIR has been registered against Congress MP and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi for his 'fighting against Indian state' remark.

The First Information Report (FIR) has been registered against Rahul Gandhi at the Pan Bazar Police Station in Guwahati. This FIR is under sections 152 and 197(1)d of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, which pertain to actions that endanger the sovereignty, unity, and integrity of India.The complaint was filed by Monjit Chetia, who accused the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha of overstepping the boundaries of permissible free speech.

According to Chetia, the Congress leader's remarks allegedly pose a significant threat to public order and national security.

Chetia said in his statement: "By declaring that his fight is against the 'Indian state' itself, the accused has consciously incited subversive activities and rebellion among the populace. This is an attempt to delegitimise the authority of the state and to portray it as a hostile force, thereby creating a dangerous narrative that could provoke unrest and separatist sentiments."

# PM Modi highlights Netaji's connection to Gomoh in 'Mann Ki Baat'

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** Jharkhand's Gomoh holds a special place in India's freedom struggle, as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose touched the soil here the last time before embarking on his mission to secure India's Independence. This historical connection was brought to light by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the 118th episode of 'Mann Ki Baat' on Sunday.

Recalling the dramatic events of 'The Great Escape', PM Modi said, "It was January in Kolkata during the peak of World War II. India's anger against British rule was rising. Police patrolled every corner of the city, with special attention to a house in the heart of Kolkata. Amid this tension, a man in a brown coat, pants, and a black hat stepped out of the house under the cover of darkness. Dodging several checkpoints, he reached Gomoh station in Jharkhand. From there, he boarded a train, eventually making his way to Europe via Afghanistan, despite the British Empire's watchful eyes."

PM Modi added, "This thrilling story might sound like a movie scene, but it reflects the extraordinary courage of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Today, we




celebrate January 23, his birth anniversary, as 'Parakram Diwas', commemorating his bravery and indomitable spirit."

The events of January 18, 1941, mark one of the boldest episodes in India's freedom movement. Under house arrest at his residence on Elgin Road, Kolkata, by the British authorities, Netaji orchestrated a meticulously planned escape. Disguised as a Pathan, he left his home with the assistance of his nephew, Dr Shishir Bose, travelling in a Wanderer car (registration number BLA 7169). By 8 p.m., he reached the home of his lawyer friend, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, in Gomoh's Loco Bazar.

With Sheikh Abdullah's help, a Pathan outfit was hastily prepared by Amin Tailor of Gomoh. Amin himself escorted Netaji to Gomoh station at 1 a.m. in the dead of night, where he boarded the Howrah-Peshawar Mail (later came to be known as the Kalka Mail). This train, renamed Netaji Express in 2021, carried him to Delhi. From there, he continued his journey via the Frontier Mail to Peshawar, eventually leaving India and evading the British authorities. To honour Netaji's legacy, Gomoh station was renamed Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Junction in 2009. A life-sized bronze statue of him now stands between platforms 1 and 2, accompanied by a plaque narrating the tale of his daring escape.

Shishir Bose vividly described the emotional moment in his book, "At Gomoh station, a sleepy porter carried Netaji's luggage as he climbed the overbridge and disappeared into the darkness. Moments later, the Kalka Mail arrived, and I stood outside the station, listening to the sound of its wheels which carried him further into history."

# Saryu pushes for public committees to boost development in Mango, JNAC areas

## Jharkhand Finance Minister should present strong state budget: Roy

Mail News Service



**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** In a press conference at his Bistupur residence, Jamshedpur West MLA Saryu Roy made a significant announcement regarding the formation of Public Facilities Committees for the Mango Municipal Corporation and JNAC areas.

These committees, as per Roy, will be open to anyone interested in addressing local issues like water, electricity, roads, drains and garbage. He emphasized that members need not belong to any political party, as long as they have a deep understanding of their area's problems and are committed to finding solutions.

"I want to involve the community directly in resolving local issues, irrespective of their political affiliations.

These committees will play a crucial role in improving our city's basic infrastructure," said Roy.

He also voiced his concerns about the state of the Mango Municipal Corporation, stating that the corporation has no office and questioned the logistical challenges surrounding its upcoming elections.

Roy noted that despite a court order mandating the elections within four months, the corporation lacks a proper administrative setup. He expressed urgency, stating, "Where will the winners sit if the elections are held without basic infrastructure?"

Furthermore, Saryu Roy appealed to Jharkhand's Finance Minister to avoid falling into the trap of populist budgeting and urged the government to allocate resources effectively. He said, "The state government must ensure that the allocated budget is spent efficiently. Right now, we see the situation where budgets are being surrendered in December and reallocated to other departments. This will not help improve the economy."

Roy also criticized the weak administrative structure in Jharkhand, explaining that despite receiving central funds, the state struggles with spending them. "The administration must take responsibility for the unused funds. Ministers and secretaries need to be held accountable for their departments' inefficiencies," he stated.

Addressing concerns over Jharkhand's economic situation, he pointed to the failure of the state government to auction and license iron ore mines, which was part of their responsibility. Roy stressed that these issues need immediate attention to boost the state's economy. "The state government should not engage in unnecessary conflicts with the Centre. It should coordinate with the central government to move the state forward," he advised.

Additionally, Roy questioned the government's claim of owing Rs 1.36 lakh crore from the Centre. He urged the government to clarify the details of this debt and explain the real financial situation to the public. "Simply asking for the money won't work. Transparency is key," he added.

Finally, Roy called for Jharkhand to transition from a consumer state to a producer state, which would lead to more sustainable growth and avoid losses in GST. He emphasized, "We need to create internal resources, not depend solely on external funding. Only then can we expect real progress in our state." (w/nkm)

# Tata displaced raiyats demand justice for land rights



Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** A crucial meeting of the Singhbhum Janjati Moolvasi Raiyat Kalyan Parishad regarding the rights of Tata displaced people took place at Turiabeda in MGM, chaired by Gopal Murmu. The focus of the discussion was primarily on Malikana rights and the Tata lease agreement. The displaced raiyats raised strong objections against the current process of Malikana rights and lease renewal, demanding that their original land rights be recognized first.

Despite previous appeals to the President for justice regarding the return of their land and compensation for land acquired forcefully, the displaced raiyats claimed they had not received any justice. "We demand the rightful return of land and a proper displacement certificate before any talks of Malikana rights or lease renewal," said Gopal Murmu.

Key figures present at the meeting included Prahlad Gope, Kanhay Singh (village head), Sunil Hembram, Ganesh Gope and others. They expressed their determination to continue fighting for their rights. The displaced community emphasized that soon, they would be sending another delegation to the district administration and the Chief Minister to press for justice. The group reiterated their commitment to securing their rightful land ownership before any further discussions on Malikana rights and lease renewal. (w/nkm)

# District CWC supports two girls with financial aid for higher education

Mail News Service

**Seraikela, Jan 19:** The District Child Welfare Committee (CWC) has provided financial assistance to two girls from Bhandarisaai village in Seraikela block to support their higher education. Both girls had been struggling financially after the death of their fathers, which had hindered their ability to continue their education.

Rohit Mahato, President of the District CWC, personally handed over the financial support to Lovely Purti, daughter of late Parasu Purti and Veerangani Das, daughter of late Pradeep Das. "Education is a fundamental right and we are committed to supporting students who face financial difficulties in continuing their studies," Mahato said. This initiative aims to provide an opportunity for these young girls to pursue their educational dreams despite the challenges they face at home. (w/nkm)

# Maa Ganga Mela concludes

**Seraikela, Jan 19:** The seven-day Maa Ganga Pujan Utsav cum Mela concluded on Sunday in Bada Kankra with a grand ceremony.

The event, which is celebrated every year on the second day of Akhan Yatra, culminated with Tadka Dahan (the burning of the demon Tadka) and the immersion of idols.

District Council Chairman Sonaram Bodra graced the closing ceremony as the chief guest. While performing the Tadka Dahan in a traditional manner, Bodra addressed the gathered crowd, encouraging them to follow the path of truth. "The incarnation of God is always born to destroy evil and this teaches us the importance of living a truthful life for the betterment of our society," he said. The Maa Ganga Pujan Utsav is closely related to agriculture, with the belief that it brings good rainfall to aid agricultural activities throughout the year.

The fair is organized annually to ensure a successful harvest season. (w/nkm)

# Sleeper buses from Jamshedpur to Prayagraj for Maha Kumbh

Mail News Service




**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** Four sleeper buses are now operational from Jamshedpur to Prayagraj, offering convenient travel options for devotees heading to Maha Kumbh.

These buses depart daily around 6 pm from the Jai Prakash Narayan Bus Terminal in Bhuiyandih, Jamshedpur and reach Prayagraj at approximately 8 am, covering the 13-14 hour journey.

The route passes through Ranchi, Sasaram, Kudra, Mohania, Chandauli, Mughalsarai Bypass and Varanasi. Sleeper buses operated by Singh Travels, Rajdhani Travels, Arzoo Travels and Nataraj Travels are currently in service.

Tickets can be booked online through the RedBus portal or at the terminal through authorized booking agents.

The fare is Rs 1,750 for a lower sleeper, Rs 1,650 for an upper sleeper and Rs 1,450 for a regular seat.

Deepak Kumar Singh, owner of Singh Coach, noted the growing demand. "The number of passengers traveling to Prayagraj for Maha Kumbh holy dip is increasing steadily. If no barricades are in place by the administration, the bus drops passengers at Baika Bagh Labor Chowk in Prayagraj. The return journey also begins from the same point at 4:30 pm," he said.

The return buses arrive in Jamshedpur by 6 am the next day, ensuring a convenient schedule for travelers. With reliable service and increasing passenger interest, these buses are making it easier for devotees to participate in the Maha Kumbh festivities.

**Saryu flags off bus for Kumbh Mela trip:** Jamshedpur West MLA Saryu Roy inaugurated a bus service for Kumbh Mela organized by the Rani Adventure and Welfare Trust. The bus, carrying 60 passengers, left from Jamshedpur for its destination. The flag-off event saw the presence of Trust President Somnath Banerjee, M Chandrashekhar Rao, Anand Singh, K Vineet, Renu Banerjee, Lakshmi Gond, Sanjay Tiwari, Rambabu Tiwari and Rama Devi, among other dignitaries. This initiative is aimed at providing an organized travel option for devotees and tourists visiting Kumbhnagari. (w/nkm)

# Inspects new MGM hospital

**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** ITDA Project Director Dipankar Chaudhuri conducted an inspection of the new hospital in Dimna on Saturday, addressing preparations for the relocation of MGM Hospital.

Accompanying him were college Principal Dr Diwakar Hansda, Superintendent Dr Shikha Rani and Deputy Superintendent Dr Jujhar Manjhi. During the visit, Chaudhuri reviewed the hospital's overall progress and gathered reports from key departments. Heads of Departments highlighted critical issues, including a shortage of water and essential resources. Principal Dr Hansda also updated Chaudhuri on the status of tenders for various pieces of equipment required for the hospital's operation. Emphasizing the urgency of the matter, Chaudhuri instructed the hospital administration to expedite the procurement process. "Place the order for purchasing the equipment as soon as possible and start the hospital without further delay," he stated. (w/nkm)

# Bhojpuri Idol Season 2's second audition a huge success



**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** The second audition of Bhojpuri Idol Season 2, organized by Bhojpuri Sanskriti Manch, was conducted successfully in response to the overwhelming demand from the community. Chief Patron Bharat Singh stated that the event was a direct result of the immense popularity of the first audition, with numerous talents participating, not just from the local area but from far-flung regions as well.

The audition aimed to provide a platform for aspiring Bhojpuri artists to showcase their skills and take Bhojpuri music to greater heights. "The response has been extraordinary and we are thrilled to provide such a platform for the talents of our region," said Bharat Singh.

The participants presented their skills across various Bhojpuri music genres, impressing the jury with their passion and dedication. Sunil Sahay evaluated their performances, while Bhojpuri Sanskriti Manch convener and lyricist Tomar Satyendra Singh also provided their expertise during the audition process. The selection of candidates for the next stage will be announced soon, as confirmed by the Manch. (w/nkm)

# Karni Sena celebrates Maharana Pratap's death anniversary



**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** The Kshatriya Karni Sena in Jamshedpur commemorated the death anniversary of India's legendary warrior Maharana Pratap by celebrating Shaurya Diwas at the Maharana Pratap Chowk, Marine Drive. On this occasion, Karni Sena officials, along with several supporters, gathered to honour Maharana Pratap's unwavering commitment to the unity and integrity of the nation. District President Mohit Singh paid tribute to Maharana Pratap, describing him as a symbol of national pride and valour. "Maharana Pratap fought valiantly till his last breath to protect the sovereignty of the country. His life is an inspiration to us all," said Singh. The event was attended by key figures such as State President Binay Singh, Youth State Vice President Ranjan Singh and others, who expressed their respect for the warrior's legacy. The ceremony encouraged people to draw inspiration from Maharana Pratap's sacrifices and carry forward the values of courage, sacrifice and patriotism. (w/nkm)

# Yuva AJSU office bearers resign amid internal strife

Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** In a dramatic move, several key office bearers of Yuva AJSU, including state convenor Gautam Singh, Ranchi district co-incharge Neeraj Verma and several others, resigned from their positions citing internal party issues. In a press release, Neeraj Verma revealed that despite his decade-long commitment to the party's principles, internal factionalism and the mistreatment of dedicated workers had forced him to take this decision.

Verma criticized the party's leadership for promoting division within its ranks, with some individuals creating animosities between insiders and outsiders. "The party, once a beacon of youth-led struggle, is now riddled with infighting and conspiracies that degrade the hardworking members," Verma said.

Other officials echoed similar sentiments, emphasizing that their resignation was not a personal grievance but a stand for self-respect and the party's foundational values. The former members assured their continued dedication to the development of Jharkhand and the public's welfare, even as they severed ties with the party. (w/nkm)

# KSMS presents enchanting stage adaptation of 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'



Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** Kerala Samajam Model School (KSMS) presented a spectacular stage adaptation of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, a timeless tale filled with imagination, kindness, and perseverance.

The production was brought to life by the dedication of 175 students who made up the talented cast and crew.

With a vibrant backdrop, meticulously designed costumes and props, and mesmerizing sound and lighting effects, the play transported the audience into the magical world of Willy Wonka. Over the course of three months, the students and faculty worked tirelessly to ensure the success of this grand production, showcasing exceptional teamwork, creativity, and commitment.

The performances were attended by Principals from various schools, parents, teachers, and distinguished literature and theatre enthusiasts on January 19. KSMS hosted the production for its students on January 17th and for students from other schools on January 18th. In total, over 1,800 audience members witnessed the show, captivated by the dazzling performances.

The directorsof the play Reema Sengupta, SrividyaPrem, and M.K Parvathireceived immense praise for their remarkable direction and attention to detail. (W-mb)

# MTMC hosts workshop on forensic training for police

Mail News Service



**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** Department of Forensic Medicine & Toxicology at Manipal Tata Medical College (MTMC) hosted training workshop titled "Comprehensive Training Workshop on Medicolegal Autopsy and Firearm Injuries for police officers."

One-day program brought together expertise and innovation to enhance the skills of law enforcement officers in critical areas of forensic investigation.

The workshop provided specialized training for 30 police officers, equipping them with practical knowledge in medicolegal autopsy, interpretation of firearm injuries, investigation of asphyxia cases, and crime scene analysis. Recognizing the importance of hands-on learning, the department created four artificial crime scenes within the state-of-the-art Skills Lab.

These simulations offered participants an immersive experience, replicating real-life scenarios to hone their investigative acumen. Rishabh Trivedi, IPS officer of the 2022 batch, actively participated in the workshop, underscoring its significance in bridging the gap between forensic science and law enforcement. Kumar Shivashish, SP-City, Jamshedpur who participated as the chief guest in the valedictory function highlighted the critical role of such training in enhancing investigative precision and ensuring justice delivery.

Three forensic experts, under the guidance of their Dean-DrPradeep Kumar G, from MTMC served as faculty during the event namely Dr. Vijay Kautilya, Dr. JyotishGuria and Dr. DaideepyaBhargava.

Their collective expertise and tailored approach ensured that each officer gained valuable insights into both theoretical and practical aspects of forensic science. The training also delved into firearm injuries, a critical aspect of modern forensic investigation, enabling officers to accurately interpret ballistic evidence and reconstruct crime scenarios. Participants praised the workshop for its interactive methodology and real-world applications. (W-mb)

# Bhupendra and Rakesh acquitted in defamation case filed by Saryu

**Chaibasa, Jan 19:** In a defamation case filed by MLA Saryu Roy in 2022, the special MP-MLA court in Chaibasa acquitted Bhupendra Singh, President of the Surya Mandir Committee and Rakesh Singh, former District General Secretary of BJP Jamshedpur Mahanagar, giving them the benefit of doubt. The case stemmed from allegations that the two had posted defamatory content on Facebook accusing Roy of corruption related to the construction of his villa. During the trial, Bhupendra and Rakesh Singh maintained that their Facebook accounts had been hacked and they were not responsible for the defamatory posts. They also provided a police report about the hack. "We have always respected Saryu Roy and the posts were not written by us," Bhupendra Singh remarked after the court's ruling.

The court's decision to acquit the accused was based on the lack of conclusive evidence and the defence presented by their lawyer, Keshav Prasad, who argued that the posts were a result of hacking. Both men expressed relief after the verdict, maintaining their innocence throughout the trial. (w/nkm)

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# Double pre-boards before board exams: Special classes for low-scoring students

Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** Ahead of the upcoming Matriculation and Intermediate board examinations scheduled from February 11 to March 3, 2025, the East Singhbhum District Education Department has announced two rounds of pre-board exams at the district level. The initiative aims to improve student performance and ensure better results, with special focus on academically weaker students.



"The pre-board exams will serve as a performance map for the students, allowing us to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Based on the results, students will be categorized into four grades: A, B, C, and D," said District Education Officer (DEO) Manoj Kumar. "Those in grades C and D will receive extra attention, including extended classes after school hours," he added.

In light of unsatisfactory results from a recent pre-board examination, the School Education and Literacy Department has issued guidelines to all District Education Officers, urging enhanced preparation strategies. Teachers have been instructed to focus on high-weightage chapters and provide targeted practice to students.

"Our goal is not just to help students pass but to empower them to score better marks," the DEO emphasized. Extra classes will be conducted beyond regular school hours, and students will be provided with potential questions for thorough practice.

This year, a total of 25,380 students will appear for the Matriculation examination, while 22,256 students will take the Intermediate examination. To accommodate these students, 45 Matriculation and 23 Intermediate centres have been designated in Dhalbhum subdivision, along with 26 Matriculation and 12 Intermediate centres in Ghatsila.

The directive from the department underscores the critical need to improve results across the board. "The responsibility lies with us to ensure that no student is left behind. These extra measures are steps in that direction," a senior official from the education department remarked.

Parents and students have welcomed the move. "It's reassuring to see the department taking such proactive measures. These extra classes and targeted preparations will definitely help the students," said a parent of a Matriculation student.

As the countdown to the board exams begins, the district's education machinery is leaving no stone unturned to ensure students are well-prepared to excel, making these pre-board exams a critical part of their success strategy. (w/nkm)

# Jharkhand ATS to interrogate terrorist Shahbaz and associates in Delhi

Mail News Service



**Ranchi, Jan 19:** The Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) of Jharkhand Police is set to travel to Delhi to interrogate Shahbaz and his associates, who are implicated in terrorist activities. These suspects, all currently in judicial custody following their arrest by Delhi Police's Special Cell, are believed to have links with Al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS). The ATS team will question the terrorists to gather information about the presence and operations of AQIS sleeper cells in Jharkhand.

Since August 2024, Jharkhand, particularly the Chanho police station area in Ranchi, has been under scrutiny for its connections to AQIS. The Delhi Police Special Cell had raided a terrorist training camp in Rajasthan, arresting six individuals on the spot. Following the operation, both the Delhi Police and Jharkhand Police have been conducting raids and investigations to track down AQIS associates.

According to the Jharkhand ATS, several individuals associated with AQIS have already been arrested, including Dr. Ishtiaq from Bariatu, Faizan Ahmed from Hazaribagh, Mohammad Modabbir from Chanho, Rizwan and Mufti Rahmatullah Majahiri from Chanho, Matithar Rahman from Pipratoli, Iltaf from Lohardaga, and Anamul Ansari from Pakoriyo, among others. The Delhi Police Special Cell has also interrogated these suspects during their remand.

A senior official from the Jharkhand ATS noted, "We are working closely with Delhi Police to gain crucial insights from their investigations. Our focus is on identifying AQIS sleeper cells in Jharkhand and neutralizing their activities."

The ATS continues its operations against gangsters and terrorists in Jharkhand, including investigations into properties linked to criminal activities. The team is also compiling a database on sleeper cells involved in terrorism in the state, with plans for significant future action based on this intelligence. (w/nkm)

# Commercial activities in basements face crackdown, 15 buildings marked for action



Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** The Jamshedpur Notified Area Committee (JNAC) has identified 15 buildings in Jamshedpur that are using their basements for commercial activities instead of designated parking spaces. Notices will be issued to the owners, and failure to comply will result in sealing the premises.

Under the supervision of ADM Aniket Sachan, two teams have been formed to inspect buildings in Jamshedpur East and West assembly constituencies. The teams, comprising city managers, engineers, and assistant city investors, began inspections following strict directives from the Jharkhand High Court to act against illegal constructions.

JNAC Deputy Municipal Commissioner Krishna Kumar stated, "Instructions have been given to mark the buildings and list them. On the first day, 15 buildings were marked, and notices will be issued to them."

The process involves identifying violations, issuing notices, and sealing the properties if the owners fail to respond within the stipulated time. "We are intensifying action against illegal constructions, and commercial activities in basements meant for parking will not be tolerated," Kumar added. (w/nkm)

# Residential schools to boost education for Jharkhand's endangered tribes

Mail News Service

**Ranchi, Jan 19:** In a transformative move, the Jharkhand Education Project Council has announced the development of residential facilities in 10 schools across the state to promote education among endangered tribal communities. Under the first phase of this ambitious initiative, one school each from 10 districts has been selected, with hostel construction already underway.

This initiative is part of the Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyay Maha Abhiyan (PM-Janman), which aims to ensure accessible education for children in remote tribal areas. The targeted tribal communities include the Asur, Birhor, Ho, Birjia, Korwa, and Mal Pahadia, all of which face significant educational and infrastructural challenges.

The project, with an allocated budget of Rs 3.5 crore, is set to provide not only education but also safe housing, clean drinking water, sanitation, and proper nutrition to students.



The hostels are expected to be completed by September-October 2025, making them operational for the 2026-27 academic session. These facilities will cater to children from remote rural areas who struggle with transportation and lack access to basic amenities.

"We are committed to creating a conducive environment where children from vulnerable tribes can thrive academically and personally," said a senior official from the Education Department. Each school will ensure students have access to proper food, water, and accommodations alongside their studies.

The schools selected in the first phase include Ram Narayan Sponsored High School in Hunterganj (Chatra), Plus Two High School in Gudu, Saryu (Latehar), Plus Two KN High School in Ichak (Hazaribagh), Government High School in Murkunda (Gumla), Basic Middle School in Amrapada (Pakur), Plus Two SS High School in Kisko (Lohardaga), Plus Two High School in Bhandaria (Garhwa), PVTG Plus Two High School in Lakhoria (Deoghar), High School in Karinda Ramgarh (Dumka), and MS School in Sijua (Giridih).

The initiative also aims to improve road and telecom infrastructure and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for these communities. By integrating education with holistic development, the program seeks to uplift these tribes and bridge educational disparities. (w/nkm)

# Jharkhand Bar Council election to be announced soon

Mail News Service

**Ranchi, Jan 19:** The process for the election of the Jharkhand Bar Council has officially commenced, with the election date expected to be announced within the next 15 days. A committee has been formed to prepare the voter list for the election. During the executive meeting of the Jharkhand Bar Council, it was decided that the chairman would be authorized to announce the election date after the completion of the voter list.

The term of the current Bar Council ended on July 28, 2023. Initially, the Bar Council of India granted a six-month extension, followed by another one-year extension. However, the Bar Council of India has clarified that no further extensions will be provided, and the verification of lawyers must be completed within this period. Only those lawyers who have completed the verification process will be eligible to vote in the election.

The voter list will be sent to the respective bar associations across all districts for further processing, ensuring that the election process proceeds smoothly and as per the guidelines. (w/nkm)

# 42 MW solar power illuminates 128 Jharkhand villages



Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** Jharkhand in a significant stride towards renewable energy, has been electrifying remote villages through off-grid solar power plants, where conventional electricity supply was deemed impossible due to challenging geographical conditions. Over the past four years, 128 villages have embraced solar energy, illuminating 10,016 households and providing electricity to schools, chaupals, and rural streets.

The Jharkhand Renewable Energy Development Agency (JREDA), working on the data provided by Jharkhand Bijli Vitran Nigam, spearheaded the initiative. Each off-grid solar plant was designed with a capacity of 500 kilowatts, tailored to meet the requirements of every household in the targeted villages. The electricity produced is distributed via dedicated networks, ensuring uninterrupted supply.

Villages in districts such as Latehar, Ranchi, Simdega, Sahibganj, Chatra, Dumka, and Garhwa now benefit from a total capacity of 42 MW generated by these plants. Additionally, three LED lights have been installed in each household, while village roads and lanes have been lit with streetlights. Schools and community spaces like chaupals have also been electrified.

The initiative comes at an average cost of Rs 1 crore per village, with a total expenditure of Rs 130 crore provided as grants by the state government. A village-level committee has been formed in each area to oversee the functioning and maintenance of the solar plants. In case of faults, the agency notifies JREDA for prompt repairs.

"This program has transformed lives in remote areas by ensuring sustainable and reliable electricity," said a JREDA official. With these efforts, the state continues to lead in leveraging solar energy for rural development. (w/nkm)

# Month-long daily power cuts in Kolhan for maintenance: Prep for summer begins

Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** Residents across Kolhan, including Jamshedpur, Mango, Ghatshila, Adityapur, Saraikela, Chakradharpur, and Chaibasa, will face scheduled power cuts of 3-4 hours daily starting next week. The electricity divisions have announced the outages as part of an extensive maintenance drive aimed at ensuring uninterrupted power supply during the peak summer months.

The maintenance initiative, which will span an entire month, involves replacing worn-out wires and outdated equipment across all seven electricity divisions. A survey of feeders has already commenced, and officials have promised to release daily power cut schedules to minimize inconvenience for consumers.

"The work is critical to prevent disruptions during the high-demand summer season. Scheduled outages will ensure efficient and timely maintenance," said Anand Kaushik, Electrical Executive Engineer, Jamshedpur Electricity Division.

To address concerns over unscheduled disruptions, all executive engineers have been directed to stick to the scheduled timings. "Except for emergencies, there will be no unnecessary outages beyond the allocated maintenance hours. Consumers will be informed in advance," Kaushik assured.



The electricity department has emphasized that the current demand for power in Kolhan is relatively low, making this the ideal time for maintenance work.

Mango Division leads maintenance efforts

In Mango, surveys of overloaded areas have been completed, and maintenance work is already underway in two sections. "We've identified problem areas and have begun upgrades to avoid overload issues during summer," said Sanjeev Kumar, Electrical Executive Engineer, Mango Electricity Division.

Maintenance activities in Mango are being conducted under the supervision of Electricity SDOs and Junior Engineers. Power supply is being shut down during the day for the work. "This proactive approach is necessary to avoid summer outages that could disrupt daily life," Kumar added.

All sub-divisions have started surveying feeders and equipment to identify maintenance priorities. The initiative includes plans to address infrastructure weaknesses, ensuring a robust power supply when demand peaks in the coming months.

Residents have expressed mixed reactions to the announcement. While some have welcomed the department's preventive measures, others have raised concerns about the inconvenience of daily outages. "It's better to endure short-term disruptions now than face major power cuts in the summer," said Ravi Prasad, a resident of Adityapur.

With summer just weeks away, Kolhan's electricity divisions are racing against time to complete the necessary upgrades and deliver on their promise of uninterrupted power supply. (w/nkm)

# JEE Main-2025: Over 13.95 Lakh applicants, new exam changes leave students nervous

Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** The National Testing Agency (NTA) has released the exam dates and cities for the first session of JEE Main-2025, with over 13.95 lakh students nationwide applying for the exam. This marks a significant increase of over one lakh applicants compared to last year. In Jharkhand alone, more than 22,000 students have registered. The exams will be held in six cities, including Jamshedpur, Ranchi, Dhanbad, Hazaribagh, Bokaro, and Ramgarh.

The city intimation details, which include students' names, parents' names, birthdates, and exam locations, will help candidates prepare for the exam. Admit cards will be issued three days prior to the exam. Students must bring their admit card and a valid photo ID to the exam center. The JEE Main will be conducted in two shifts on January 22, 23, 24, 28, and 29 for Paper 1 (BE-BTech), and on January 30 for Paper 2 (BArch). Paper 1 will be held in two shifts: from 9 am to 12 noon and from 3 pm to 6:30 pm.

One of the most significant changes this year is the revised exam pattern. According to the new guidelines, Section-B in both Paper 1 and Paper 2 will no longer have optional questions. Students will now be required to answer all five questions in this section, which was not mandatory in previous years. Additionally, negative marking has been introduced for Section-B, with one mark being deducted for each incorrect answer. These changes have left students scrambling to adjust their strategies. "The removal of optional questions in Section-B is a big challenge. Earlier, we had the option to skip questions we weren't sure about. Now, I'll have to attempt all questions, which increases the risk of losing marks," said Arvind Kumar, a JEE aspirant from Jamshedpur. He also expressed concern about the negative marking, stating, "We will have to be extra cautious to avoid making mistakes, as one wrong answer can cost us significantly."

JEE expert P. Pandey advised, "Students will need to change their strategy entirely for this year's exam. In Section-B, they must focus on time management and accuracy. Since negative marking is in place, a careful approach is essential."

With just weeks to go until the first session, students are feeling the pressure of these new changes, which could impact their overall scores. However, they remain determined to adapt and tackle the challenge head-on. (w/nkm)

# JEE Main 2025: New tie-breaking rules and exam guidelines

Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** The National Testing Agency (NTA) has introduced several changes to the JEE Main 2025 exam, including revised tie-breaking criteria and updates to the examination pattern. Previously, merit was determined based on age in the case of tied scores. Now, the percentage scores in Maths, Physics and Chemistry will be used to break ties.

For the first time, numerical questions will carry negative marking, with one mark deducted for every incorrect answer. JEE Main Paper 1 is scheduled for January 22, 23, 24 and 28, while Paper 2 will take place on January 30.

To ensure security and transparency, candidates will undergo a three-level verification process. "Entry will be granted only after scanning the QR code on the admit card and identity card," stated an NTA official. Centralized monitoring through AI-enabled CCTV cameras will also be implemented. Notably, thumbprint verification will no longer be conducted.

Dress code and reporting guidelines

The NTA has laid out strict dress and reporting rules for the exam. Candidates must arrive at the exam center at least 30 minutes before the scheduled time. Latecomers will not be allowed entry.

Prohibited attire includes shoes, full-sleeve shirts, tight clothing and garments with large buttons. Acceptable clothing includes jeans, salwar suits, kurtas, long skirts, trousers and T-shirts. While jewellery is generally prohibited, exceptions for religious items like kirpans, mangal-sutras and toe rings are allowed, provided candidates arrive early for thorough checks.

The morning session will run from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, with gates closing at 8:30 AM. The afternoon session, from 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM, will have gates closing at 2:30 PM. Prohibitory orders will be enforced at all exam centres to maintain order.

NEET UG 2025 updates

The NEET UG 2025 exam is scheduled for May 4 and will be conducted in offline mode using OMR sheets. Despite recommendations from a seven-member committee led by former ISRO chairman K. Radhakrishnan to conduct NEET UG online in multiple sessions, the NTA has confirmed its offline format. This decision follows irregularities reported in the 2024 NEET UG exam and subsequent Supreme Court-directed investigations. (w/nkm)

# Kisan Mazdoor Ekta Diwas celebrated in East Singhbhum

Mail News Service




**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** CITU and Kisan Sabha members in East Singhbhum, alongside others across the country, observed "Kisan Mazdoor Ekta Diwas" on 19th January, marking the 43rd anniversary of the first joint program of workers and farmers post-independence. A street meeting was held at Birsa Chowk Sakchi, with hundreds of participants from both organizations coming together to commemorate the historic event.

The event was presided over by veteran leader Com. KK Tripathi, who highlighted the significance of the day. "On 19 January 1982, for the first time in the history of independent India, farmers and workers joined hands for a one-day nationwide general strike, demanding improvements in their lives and livelihoods. It was a day of massive mobilizations, road blockades and demonstrations, which were met with brutal police repression, resulting in the loss of 10 lives," said Com. Tripathi.

He also criticized the Modi government's policies, stating that despite 43 years, the basic direction of the government's policies remained unchanged. He pointed out the government's continued push for pro-corporate and neo-liberal policies, such as the implementation of four labour codes and the controversial National Agricultural Marketing Policy (NAMP). "Farmers and workers are once again forced to fight against these policies," he added.

CITU Jharkhand General Secretary, Com. B. Deb, shared the demands of trade unions and farmers' organizations for the upcoming budget. These include making essential commodities GST-free, a ban on futures trading and hoarding, implementation of a universal public distribution system, higher taxes on corporates and the super-rich and provisions for employment generation and social security for workers.

The meeting concluded with a protest against the anti-labour stance of corporate heads from Infosys and L&T, symbolized by the burning of their photographs. Comrades J Majumdar, KD Pratap, KP Singh, Sanjay Kumar, PR Gupta and T Mukherjee also addressed the gathering, reaffirming their commitment to these demands. The meeting ended with a call for a joint protest on 5th February if these demands are not addressed in the budget. (w/nkm)

## SER announces Kumbh Mela special trains schedule

Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** South Eastern Railway has announced the operation of special trains for passengers traveling to the Kumbh Mela.

The special trains will run on two key routes to accommodate the increased demand for rail services. The Tatanagar-Tundla-Tatanagar Special (Train No. 08057/08058) will depart from Tatanagar at 20:55 hrs on 19th January 2025, reaching Tundla at 19:20 hrs the next day, 20th January 2025. In the return direction, the Tundla-Tatanagar Special (Train No. 08058) will leave Tundla at 03:00 hrs on 21st January 2025, arriving back at Tatanagar at 23:55 hrs on the same day.

The train will have stoppages at Chandil, Purulia and Bhojudih within the South Eastern Railway jurisdiction. In addition, the Ranchi-Tundla-Ranchi Special (Train No. 08067/08068) will depart from Ranchi at 10:30 hrs on 19th January 2025, arriving at Tundla at 06:30 hrs on 20th January 2025. The return train, Tundla-Ranchi Special (Train No. 08068), will leave Tundla at 16:20 hrs on 20th January 2025 and is expected to reach Ranchi at 15:50 hrs on 21st January 2025. This special train will stop at Muri and Bokaro Steel City within the South Eastern Railway jurisdiction. (w/nkm)

## SSP inspects Azadnagar police station

**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kishore Kaushal conducted a surprise inspection at the Azadnagar police station on Friday, where he thoroughly reviewed the station's premises and examined its records. Kaushal's visit aimed to evaluate the performance of the station's officers and ensure that pending cases and warrants are executed promptly.

The SSP issued a stern directive to the police officers to expedite investigations and ensure that criminals are apprehended without delay. "We must take swift action on all pending cases and warrants to ensure that justice is delivered," Kaushal emphasized during the inspection.

Kaushal also instructed the officers to initiate intensive patrolling in the area as part of measures to control crime. "Patrolling should be strengthened and every effort must be made to create a safer environment for the public," he added. The SSP's guidance emphasized the importance of communication between the police force and the community to ensure effective crime control.

## DAV Public School students spread joy at old age home

Mail News Service



**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** DAV Public School, NIT Campus, organized a special visit to an old age home, aiming to foster empathy and connect generations.

Twenty members of the school's Student Council, accompanied by four teachers, participated in the program, creating an unforgettable experience for all involved. The visit was coordinated by teachers Rekha Prasad, Sudha Singh, Rupashree Prasad and Rajlaxmi Bhatt Mishra, who warmly welcomed the students and guided them through the program. As a gesture of care and support, the school presented the elderly residents with food, beverages and other essential items. The students displayed profound respect by touching the feet of the elderly, seeking their blessings. During the interaction, the elderly shared insightful stories and life experiences with the students, leaving a lasting impact on the young minds.

To lighten the emotional atmosphere and spread cheer, the students performed a blend of traditional and contemporary entertainment.

They recited couplets from the Ramcharit Manas and sang melodious film songs, filling the home with joy and nostalgia.

Principal O.P. Mishra, also the Co-Director of Jharkhand Zone 'A,' expressed his appreciation for the initiative. "This visit is not just an act of service; it is an opportunity for students to learn the value of compassion and the importance of respecting our elders. It's heartening to see the connection formed today," he remarked. (w/nkm)

## Traditional Mage festival concludes in Namadih village

Mail News Service



**Seraikela, Jan 19:** The three-day Mage festival, held annually in Namadih village, concluded with fervor and devotion on Saturday. Organized by the Sari Sari Desauli Kandepat Kandeburu Organizing Committee, the event was led by committee president Vishnu Banra.

The festival began with the inauguration of Aakan Jatra and Mage Puja by Diuri priest Gulbadan Suren and Dakua Sundar Suren. On Friday, villagers gathered in Jahera to conduct rituals honoring their ancestors, including the Ishta Dev Singbonga. The festival continued with Mage dance and music programs throughout the night, culminating in various sports competitions on Saturday. The games included races like the one-leg race, egg race and slingshot target, among others. Winners were awarded by organizing committee members, including President Vishnu Banra, Secretary Rajaram Hembram, Vice President June Banra, Treasurer Soma Hembram and other guests and committee members. (w/nkm)

## ADLS Sunshine School celebrates graduation nite for class of 2024-25

Mail News Service




**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** ADLS Sunshine School celebrated the Graduation Nite for its outgoing batch of 2024-25, marking a momentous occasion for students, staff and parents.

The event, held on the school premises, was a blend of nostalgia and excitement as students bid farewell to their school years and prepared for their future endeavours.

The ceremony commenced with the National Anthem, followed by a warm welcome address by Principal Manju Singh. She congratulated the graduates for their academic achievements and encouraged them to pursue their dreams with dedication and hard work.

"Work hard, strive for perfection and face challenges with passion and perseverance," she advised the students.

The event featured vibrant cultural performances, including a motivational song by the Sunshine Choir, a Bollywood mash-up and a Qawwali, adding a celebratory atmosphere to the evening. Graduates were awarded Year Books, mementos and character certificates in recognition of their contributions.

The prestigious Principal's Award was presented to Ayesha Alam for her exemplary performance in both academics and co-curricular activities. The event concluded with a heartfelt Valedictory Speech by Ayesha Alam, the School Senate President, who expressed gratitude and shared her experiences. The program ended with the school anthem, leaving everyone with cherished memories and best wishes for the future. (w/nkm)

## INCAB Kerala Public School hosts heartfelt farewell for Class 10 students

Mail News Service



**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** INCAB Kerala Public School hosted a heartwarming farewell ceremony for its outgoing Class 10 students on Saturday.

The event was graced by distinguished guests including Assistant Director Shanta Vaidyanathan, Academic Director Lakshmi R, J.P. Dubey, Adarsh Gupta and Khushbu Prajapati from TRF, along with the school's Principal D. Sonali. The ceremony also saw the presence of proud parents of Class 10 students. The program began with the lighting of the lamp, followed by a series of vibrant performances by the students of Class 10 and Class 9. The highlight of the event was the heartfelt sharing of memories by the Class 10 students, who reflected on their ten-year journey at the school. Class 10 student Anjali Kandir was crowned as Miss KPS and Rajiv Sona was named KPS. Ten students were also honoured with KPS awards for their exceptional talents. The awards were presented by the Assistant Director and Academic Director and each Class 10 student was given a memento to commemorate the occasion. In their speeches, the special guests wished the students success in their future endeavours, encouraging them to be good citizens and face life's challenges with confidence. Principal D. Sonali also extended her heartfelt wishes to the students and motivated them to continue progressing in life. Class teacher Neetu Sinha emphasized the importance of being responsible citizens, while the stage was skilfully conducted by Class 9's Sunidhi Kumari Singh and gratitude was expressed by Zaira Falak. The event concluded with the national anthem, marking the end of a memorable day for the Class 10 students of INCAB Kerala Public School. (w/nkm)

## Two youth arrested for kidnapping and extortion



**Ramgarh, Jan 19:** The Ramgarh police have arrested two youths on charges of kidnapping and extortion. The suspects, armed with a pistol, allegedly kidnapped Dhananjay Kumar Singh and held him captive in a rented house.

The incident appears to be linked to a financial dispute, as money was reportedly transferred from the victim's account under threat. Dhananjay Kumar Singh, the freed victim, recounted his ordeal.

"I was kept locked in a house and forced to transfer money at gunpoint," he said. The police have recovered a loaded pistol, an injection of drugs and a black Scorpio vehicle (registration number JH 01FW4543) used in the crime.

One of the arrested suspects, Amit Kumar, confessed during interrogation, "We rented the house at Bazar Tand just this morning. We are residents of Patna, Bihar." The police are continuing their investigation into the case and have confirmed the recovery of the firearm and other items linked to the crime.

Further details about the motive and accomplices, if any, are being probed. (w/nkm)

## Mirgichingda women's fair : A celebration of tradition and community spirit

Mail News Service

**Seraikela, Jan 19:** The traditional Women's Fair in Mirgichingda, Seraikela, took place on the first Saturday after Akhan Yatra, drawing women and girls from various parts of Seraikela and nearby rural areas.

The fair, a cultural highlight of the region, celebrates the worship of Baba Garbheshwar Mahadev, located amidst the rocks of the Kharkai River.

The women and girls participated in rituals, offering fruits as prasad, while praying for personal well-being and family prosperity.

In line with tradition, the women gathered at the Mirgichingda site, where they prayed for the fulfilment of personal desires. Young girls prayed for a suitable groom, while women prayed for the peace and prosperity of their families.

Once their prayers were offered, the participants enjoyed a community feast, a ritualistic chura-dahi picnic, symbolizing a day of freedom from household chores. The fair became a joyous occasion for the women, bringing a sense of togetherness, relaxation and celebration of the traditions that connect the community.

The fair continues to be an eagerly awaited event, fostering both spiritual and cultural bonding among the women of Seraikela and surrounding areas. (w/nkm)

## Rajendra Vidyalaya's winter carnival: A day of magic and merriment

Mail News Service




**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** The premises of Rajendra Vidyalaya, Sakchi, were transformed into a magical wonderland as the school hosted its much-anticipated 3rd Edition of the Winter Carnival. The vibrant event, brimming with excitement and joy, marked the beginning of the year 2025 with a grand celebration on January 18.

The Carnival was inaugurated by distinguished guests, including the General Secretary of the Bihar Association, CPN Singh, Joint Secretary and School Secretary Amresh Sinha and the Principal of Rajendra Vidyalaya, Anita Tiwari. Their presence added prestige to the event, setting the tone for an unforgettable day.

True to its festive spirit, the school premises came alive with a variety of stalls catering to all age groups. Game stalls like Balancing the Cup, Memory Challenge, Fun with Music, Fix the Face, Dartboard and Try Your Luck drew enthusiastic participants. Meanwhile, food stalls served an array of delectable treats, delighting visitors with diverse culinary experiences.

The school grounds resonated with electrifying music from the lively music corner, drawing a vibrant crowd to sway and dance to the rhythmic tunes. The atmosphere was charged with energy as parents, teachers and students participated in games and activities with unparalleled zeal and enthusiasm.

"This carnival isn't just an event; it's an experience that brings our community together," remarked Principal Anita Tiwari. "It's heartening to see everyone, from the youngest children to their grandparents, enjoying themselves and creating cherished memories."

The event was meticulously organized, showcasing the creativity and teamwork of the school management and students. Visitors praised the carnival for its lively ambiance and the wide range of activities that kept everyone engaged throughout the day.

As the day drew to a close, the carnival culminated in a grand celebration marked by gaiety and exuberance. Guests departed with hearts full of joy and minds brimming with cherished memories of a magical day spent with loved ones. (w/nkm)

# Grand Prana Pratishtha Mahotsav concludes at Bistupur Satyanarayan Marwari Temple

Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** The grand five-day Prana Pratishtha Mahotsav of Shri Shyam Baba at Shri Satyanarayan Marwari Temple, Bistupur, concluded on Sunday with immense devotion and enthusiasm. Organized by Shri Shyam Seva Samiti, the event witnessed the active participation of thousands of devotees, who came to seek blessings and immerse themselves in the divine atmosphere.





The Prana Pratishtha rituals were meticulously conducted by five priests—Pandit Sanjay Sharma, Kamal Sharma, Manish Sharma, Bajranglal Sharma—under the guidance of Prithvi Singh Chauhan, Minister of Shri Shyam Mandir Committee, Khatu. Chauhan, who traveled from Khatu Dham, Rajasthan, ensured the sanctity of the rituals. The primary hosts, Rekha and Mukesh Aggiwal, performed all religious ceremonies with unwavering devotion. Adding to the spiritual fervour, a garland of peacock feathers was offered to Shri Shyam Baba by the city's religious institution, Shri Kalka Mata Parivar.

Prominent storyteller Himanshu Ji Maharaj from Mathura also graced the occasion and participated in the rituals. The festivities on Sunday began with the deity's Shringar, followed by Pran Pratishtha and Aarti Darshan Puja at 11:37 AM. Later in the afternoon, the temple doors were ceremoniously opened at 3:31 PM amid the resonating chants of Vedic mantras. The atmosphere was further electrified as the temple premises echoed with devotees chanting "Jai Shri Shyam," "Sheesh Ke Daani," and "Hare Ka Sahara."

Throughout the day, a continuous flow of devotees thronged the temple, taking darshan and blessings of Shri Shyam Baba and other deities. The awe-inspiring decoration of the temple, especially the grand adornment of Shri Shyam Baba and the divine court of other deities, captivated the devotees. Many devotees expressed their overwhelming joy and spiritual fulfilment as they marvelled at the beautifully decorated temple.

As part of the celebrations, Bundi Prasad was distributed among the devotees. Over 2,100 individuals relished the Prasad in the evening alone. The event culminated with a grand kirtan that began with Shri Ganesh Vandana. Renowned artists Anubhav Agarwal (Jamshedpur), Saurabh Sharma (Kolkata) and Chaitanya Dadhich (Jaipur) enthralled the audience with soul-stirring bhajans. Their performances created an atmosphere of divine bliss and thousands of devotees were seen dancing with devotion and joy. The success of the five-day Mahotsav was attributed to the dedicated efforts of several individuals and organizations. Key contributors included Mukesh Agiwal, Suresh Agiwal, Ashok Naredi, Mahavir Agarwal, Pankaj Agarwal, Prabhash Moonka, Praveen Agarwal, Pradeep Gupta, Panjal Saraogi, Deepak Nagelia, Kaushal Nagelia and all the members of Shri Shyam Seva Samiti and Shri Satyanarayan Marwari Mandir Committee.

The event concluded on a spiritually uplifting note, leaving devotees with cherished memories and a renewed sense of devotion. (w/nkm)

# Seraikela police destroy 10.5 acres of illegal opium crop



**Seraikela, Jan 19:** In an ongoing crackdown on illegal opium cultivation, the Seraikela-Kharsawan district police have destroyed opium crops spanning 10.5 acres across various police stations.

This action is part of a larger effort that has already resulted in the destruction of opium cultivation on approximately 214.16 acres of land in the district.

On Sunday, opium crops were eradicated in the Chauka, Ichagarh and Kharsawan police station areas. Under the leadership of Sub-Divisional Police Officer Chandil, about 3.5 acres of illegal opium cultivation was destroyed in Ranka and Turu villages. In Ichagarh, police destroyed 2 acres of opium crops in Birdih village.

In a show of local cooperation, residents of Chetanpura Tola in Raijama village voluntarily gathered in a gram sabha and helped destroy opium plants from about 5 acres of forest land. The continuous awareness campaigns run by the police have played a pivotal role in encouraging local participation. (w/nkm)

## New convenor group formed for Saraikela-Kharsawan, Godda and Simdega Districts

Mail News Service

**Seraikela, Jan 19:** In a significant political development, a new convenor group has been formed for the Saraikela-Kharsawan, Godda and Simdega districts, as per the instructions of the JMM Central President.

The group is designed to strengthen the party's grassroots presence and enhance its political influence across these districts. Dr. Shubhendu Mahato, former District President of Saraikela-Kharsawan, has been appointed as the convenor chief of the group. "The formation of this group is a strategic move to consolidate our party's efforts and reach out to more people," said Dr. Mahato. Alongside him, several prominent party members have been included in the group, such as Ganesh Choudhary, Charu Chand Kisku, Sudhir Mahato and others.

The new convenor group aims to foster unity and growth within the party by engaging actively with the communities of these districts. "We are committed to addressing the issues of our people and strengthening the party's presence at the grassroots level," Dr. Mahato added. The formation of this group has been seen as a step towards empowering local leadership and ensuring a more cohesive and organized political structure within the region. Party members are hopeful that this initiative will boost the JMM's influence in these districts ahead of future elections. (w/nkm)

# Vincent Moon mesmerized by rare pictures at Guru Kedar Nath Sahu's residence

**Seraikela, Jan 19:** Renowned French filmmaker and documentary maker Vincent Moon, along with his associate Miss Julie, visited the residence of Padma Shri late Guru Kedar Nath Sahu on Sunday. The purpose of their visit was to shoot a documentary on the celebrated Seraikela Chhau art. They were warmly welcomed by Guru Malay Kumar Sahu, the director of Shri Kedar Art Center Seraikela.

During the visit, Vincent Moon explored rare photographs and documents related to Guru Kedar Nath Sahu's legacy, which are showcased in the gallery at the Shri Kedar Art Centre. "The Seraikela Chhau dance is a complete art form in itself. Guru Kedar Nath Sahu's lifetime dedication to this art is an exemplary demonstration of love and devotion," said Moon. He praised the ongoing efforts of



Guru Malay Kumar Sahu to preserve and promote the art form, calling them "highly commendable."

Moon also expressed his appreciation for local media coverage during his stay. He took a copy of The Avenue Mail, the region's only English-language newspaper, after expressing his desire to stay informed about local news. Upon reading the newspaper, Moon expressed satisfaction with the coverage, adding, "It is essential for visitors like me to stay updated with local developments." (w/nkm)

# Tailik Sahu Mahasabha distributes blankets

Mail News Service



**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** The 425th death anniversary of the revered Mahadanveer Bhamashah was observed as Pride Day by the All India Tailik Sahu Mahasabha at Sakchi (MGM) Bhamashah roundabout, led by District President Rakesh Sahu. The event was marked by the garlanding of Bhamashah's portrait and offering tributes in his honor.

During the ceremony, Rakesh Sahu highlighted the importance of Bhamashah's selfless contribution to Maharana Pratap during the war, recalling how he opened his entire treasure to aid his friend. "Bhamashah's act of generosity remains an inspiration for us all," Sahu said. The event also included the distribution of blankets to 51 underprivileged individuals. The Mahasabha announced plans to install a statue of Bhamashah at the roundabout in the near future. Along with Rakesh Sahu, other notable figures present included District Treasurer Suresh Kumar, Senior Vice President Ranjit Kumar Sao and General Secretary Pappu Sahu, among others. Their collective efforts were recognized in ensuring the success of the event. (w/nkm)

# Legal awareness program for girl students

Mail News Service




**Seraikela, Jan 19:** In an effort to empower girls through legal awareness, the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) conducted a legal awareness camp at Kasturba Gandhi Girls Residential School in Gamharia on Sunday. This program was part of a 90-day initiative aimed at educating girl students about their rights and responsibilities.

DLSA Secretary Tausif Meraj, who was present at the event, emphasized the importance of educating young girls about their legal rights to ensure their safety and empowerment. "This program helps girls understand their rights, including protection against domestic violence, sexual harassment and online safety," he stated. The camp covered various topics such as women's rights, children's rights, laws against domestic violence and cybersecurity.

The school's warden, Rashim Pradhan and all the teachers were also present during the event, ensuring that the students received crucial information on how to protect themselves in society. (w/nkm)

# Kanu Vikas Sangh hosts annual get-together and picnic



Mail News Service

**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** The annual get-together and picnic of Kanu Vikas Sangh took place on Sunday, January 19 at the Tribal Culture Centre in Sonari, with around 400 participants from 95 families.

The event featured a wide range of sports and cultural programs, making for an exciting day of celebration and community bonding. Nandji Prasad, the chief guest for the occasion, graced the gathering and honoured meritorious students for their exceptional achievements. He spoke to the attendees, saying, "This annual event not only strengthens our bonds but also motivates the younger generation to strive for excellence in their endeavours." Key dignitaries of the society, including Mahesh Ram, Sunil Prasad, Burma Prasad, Sandeep Kumar, Shailendra Prasad, Vikrant Kumar and Mahesh Prasad, played an instrumental role in organizing the event and ensuring its success. Their collective efforts ensured the event ran smoothly and provided a space for attendees to reconnect and celebrate shared values.

The event concluded with a heartfelt vote of thanks from the organizing committee, emphasizing the importance of unity within the community. (w/nkm)

# 70 specially-abled children visit Tata Zoo



Mail News Service

**Seraikela, Jan 19:** The district administration organized an exposure visit to the Zoological Park in Jamshedpur for 70 specially-abled children from various blocks.

The children, accompanied by their resource teachers and physiotherapists, were given a guided tour of the park, where they learned about the diverse wildlife, including animals, birds and aquatic life.

District Education Superintendent Kailash Mishra and Inclusive District Incharge Manoj Kumar were present at the park, actively engaging with the children and providing them with valuable insights into the animals and their habitats.

Mishra expressed his support for the initiative, emphasizing the importance of such programs in boosting the morale of children with special needs.

"This exposure visit aims to encourage children by providing them with new experiences and knowledge," he said.

During the event, Mishra also celebrated the New Year with the children by cutting a cake, sharing words of inspiration and positivity. "Specially-abled children are not a curse but a boon to society," he remarked, stressing that these children too have immense potential and should be empowered to reach their fullest capabilities.

Assistant Program Officer John Muthu also spoke at the event, underscoring the significance of these exposure visits in fostering holistic development for children with special needs. (w/nkm)

# SDP blood donors honoured with Manav Jeevan Daai Seva Samman



**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** An award ceremony was held in Jamshedpur to honour the city's blood donors, with 31 century donors and 10 half-century donors recognized for their extraordinary contributions.

The event was organized by Dr. Vinay Kumar Singh and Shri Shri Gayatri Parivar Golpahari. The honourees were presented with clothes, bouquets and symbols of appreciation. Among the century donors, notable figures included MV Prasad (121 donations), Kumares Hazra (119) and Satpal Singh (118), while half-century donors like Kumares Hazra (79 donations) and Dheeraj Kumar (69) were also acknowledged.

"These blood donors are true heroes and their selfless contributions save lives," said Dr. Vinay Kumar Singh, highlighting the vital role of regular blood donations in sustaining healthcare systems. (w/nkm)

# Vidya Bharati Chinmaya Vidyalaya triumphs in inter-school basketball tournament

Mail News Service



**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** Vidya Bharati Chinmaya Vidyalaya Telco emerged victorious in both the boys' and girls' categories of the Inter-School Basketball Tournament organized by the Jharkhand State Basketball Association (R) and co-hosted by the East Singhbhum Basketball Association. The two-day event concluded on Sunday at Telco Chinmaya School with thrilling matches.

In the girls' category, Vidya Bharati Chinmaya Vidyalaya defeated RMS Khutadih to secure the championship, while RMS Khuntadih finished as runners-up. In the boys' category, Vidya Bharati Chinmaya Vidyalaya overcame Govind Vidyalaya Tamolia in a closely contested final, with Govind Vidyalaya Tamolia taking the runner-up spot.

The closing ceremony was graced by Sports Officer Seraikela Amit Kumar Singh, Sports Officer East Singhbhum Avnish Tripathi and social worker Arvind Dubey, along with association members.

Congratulating the winners, Amit Kumar Singh remarked, "The determination and teamwork displayed by the students are commendable. Sports not only build physical fitness but also instil discipline and teamwork." (w/nkm)

# Rotary's RYLA 'Pankh' program inspires youth leadership

Mail News Service




**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** The three-day RYLA 'Pankh' Youth Leadership Program, organized by the Rotary Club of Jamshedpur West, concluded on Sunday at Kerala Public School, Kadma.

The program aimed to empower youth by nurturing their leadership potential and talents. Among the sessions held, Col Arora led the first, titled 'Widening Horizons,' where students were introduced to the Horizon Europe program, a European initiative that promotes research and innovation in less-developed EU regions.

In the following session, 'Leading from Inside Out,' Pragya Singh emphasized the power of self-leadership, stating, "Self-leadership inspires a mindset of possibility and resilience, enabling individuals to embrace challenges and achieve meaningful goals."

Another notable session was 'Options are Abundant,' led by former Indian cricketer Saurabh Tiwari, who encouraged the students to keep persevering, saying, "Continuous effort is the key to success; never stop trying, as giving up distances us from our goals." The program concluded with a speech by Sharat Chandran, who expressed, "It's a privilege to lead the youth. Being young is a matter of pride and I wish our country's youth achieve the highest success."

In the cultural competition held on the second day, Team Brahmaputra emerged as the winner, followed by Team Indus and Team Kaveri. The students from the Mass Communication Department of Karim City College, who had come to cover the event, were honoured with mementos and certificates for their efforts.

The Rotary Club, with active participation from members such as President Rtn Amit Mukherjee and Secretary Deepti Singh, expressed its gratitude, stating, "RYLA 'Pankh' 2025 reflects our commitment to shaping the leaders of tomorrow." (w/nkm)

# Biden's Visa reforms

In a major policy shift, US President Joe Biden has introduced crucial changes to immigration rules, especially those governing H1B and H2 visas, just days before Donald Trump assumed office. These reforms, now in effect, mark a significant step forward for skilled professionals globally, with Indian IT workers standing to gain immensely.

The H1B visa program, long cherished by Indian professionals and companies, has been a cornerstone of global talent mobility. It provides a platform for highly skilled workers to contribute to the US economy without requiring permanent settlement. This latest reform makes the H1B visa even more accessible, simplifying processes and removing degree-related barriers that once constrained the eligibility of deserving candidates.

This relaxation is a game-changer, particularly for Indian IT professionals, who dominate the H1B landscape. In 2023, over 70 percent of H1B visas were granted to Indian workers, highlighting their significant role in the American workforce. By easing degree-related requirements, the new rules emphasize skills and employment status rather than rigid academic qualifications. This will enable companies to hire top talent based on merit and expertise, fostering innovation and excellence.

One of the most noteworthy changes is the proposal to allow H1B visa holders to renew their visas without returning to their home country. This eliminates the logistical and financial burden of international travel, ensuring continuity in employment and reducing stress for workers and their families. For Indian professionals, this is a particularly welcome relief, as it allows them to focus on their careers without being tied down by cumbersome procedures.

The reforms also aim to curb the misuse of the H1B program by introducing stricter regulations. These measures include enhanced powers of inspection to ensure compliance and prevent fraudulent applications. Employers will now face greater scrutiny, with applications subject to rejection or cancellation if found lacking in verified information. This not only safeguards the integrity of the program but also promotes fairness, ensuring that genuine candidates have a better shot at securing opportunities.

Additionally, the new rules address the issue of equitable distribution by limiting instances where organizations can apply for multiple jobs simultaneously. By closing loopholes, the reforms level the playing field for applicants, creating a system that values transparency and accountability. These measures will encourage ethical hiring practices, benefitting both employers and employees in the long run.

Beyond the immediate benefits for Indian workers, these changes hold the potential to deepen US-India relations. The H1B visa program has long been a symbol of collaboration between the two countries, fostering mutual growth and understanding. By making the process more inclusive and efficient, the Biden administration is sending a clear message: the US values its partnership with India and recognizes the critical role Indian professionals play in driving its economy.

For Indian IT companies, which heavily rely on H1B visas to deploy talent abroad, these reforms signal a more stable and predictable environment. The move will encourage businesses to invest further in the US market, creating jobs and contributing to economic growth. At the same time, it underscores the importance of a skills-driven workforce, empowering individuals to achieve their professional aspirations.

These reforms are not merely administrative changes; they reflect a broader vision of inclusivity and opportunity. By prioritizing skills over rigid requirements and cracking down on misuse, the Biden administration is redefining the H1B program as a beacon of fairness and meritocracy. Indian professionals, with their unmatched expertise and work ethic, are poised to thrive under this new system.

In conclusion, the revised H1B visa rules represent a win-win situation. They address longstanding challenges, streamline processes and enhance opportunities for skilled professionals, especially those from India. These changes reinforce the US as a global hub for talent and innovation while strengthening its ties with India. For Indian professionals, this is not just a policy reform—it is a gateway to a brighter, more secure future in a competitive world.

From the Editorial Desk

# How IITian Jaishankar left US job and turned




The Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, has drawn lakhs of devotees from across the world to the sacred Triveni Sangam. Among these seekers are individuals like Acharya Jaishankar, whose journey from a successful material life to spirituality reflects the transformative power of Indian culture.

Acharya Jaishankar, an IIT-BHU graduate, was thriving in the United States with a lucrative job and all material comforts. Yet, he felt an emptiness that led him to explore spirituality.

His turning point came after meeting his guru, Swami Dayanand Saraswati of the Arsha Vidya sect, whose ashram is in Rishikesh. This encounter introduced him to Vedanta, the Indian philosophy that emphasises self-realisation and eternal happiness.

Speaking to IANS, Acharya elaborated on his spiritual journey and said, "Despite all material achievements, I found that people, whether in India or the US, were unhappy. True happiness is not found in the material world but in self-knowledge and realisation, as taught in Vedanta."

He stressed that the concept of salvation and eternal happiness is unique to Indian culture, achievable through self-awareness and not dependent on the afterlife.

"Only happiness mixed with sorrow can be obtained. After that, that thing will go away. That is why sorrow will remain because you cannot stop what you have got from going away. In time, union and separation will keep happening. In such a situation, one has to think about what is eternal in life. Only that which is beyond space and time can be eternal. The scriptures show our true nature. This is the subject of Vedanta. The scriptures tell you that you are infinite, you are the true form of knowledge. After getting this knowledge, you can get happiness," he stated.

"Our scriptures teach that we are infinite and the true form of knowledge. This understanding leads to eternal happiness," he said.

Highlighting the importance of living according to Dharma, Acharya said, "Dharma is the first Purusharth (goal) described in our scriptures. Without Dharma, there is no Moksha (liberation). Whatever you do should align with Dharma."

Acharya Jaishankar also commented on Abhey Singh, an IITian-turned-saint accused of drug use before joining spirituality. He urged people to focus on an individual's current path rather than their past.

"Like rivers that become pure despite their origins, the present actions of a saint should matter more than their history. The stories of sages like Valmiki remind us of the transformative power of Dharma."

Acharya lauded the government for the arrangements at Maha Kumbh, emphasising that the event offers an unparalleled opportunity for spiritual growth.

He urged attendees to approach the Kumbh as a chance for self-purification rather than as a mere tourism experience.

Acharya Jaishankar encouraged people to embrace the principles of Dharma and Vedanta in their daily lives for a meaningful existence.

"True happiness lies in realising our infinite nature, as revealed by our scriptures," he concluded.

The Maha Kumbh continues to inspire individuals worldwide, bridging material achievements with spiritual awakening and underscoring the profound wisdom of Indian culture.

# India's GDP growth set to further improve in 2nd half this year, market volatility to subside




India's GDP growth is set to further improve in the second half this year due to macroeconomic stability, supported by significant foreign exchange reserves and a regulated twin deficit, according to a Motilal Oswal Private Wealth (MOPW) report released on Wednesday.

The report expects India to continue to be among the highest growing major economies despite the recent slowdown in growth.

Indian markets are expected to remain volatile in the first half of 2025 due to several global and domestic events, including the new Donald Trump administration's policies in the US, China's measures to counter trade tariffs and its possible implications for emerging market (EM) currencies, and the upcoming Union budget.

These events are anticipated to create uncertainty in the near term. However, as these events unfold and greater clarity emerges, market volatility is expected to subside in the latter half of the year, the report stressed.

"The post-covid period has been extremely rewarding to equity investors driven by earnings growth, improving macros and domestic inflows into equities," said Ashish Shanker, MD and CEO of MOPW.

The year 2024 has been no different with broader markets doing extremely well. The mid cap and small cap segment have outperformed the large caps. Gold has also done well as an asset class.

"The year 2025 will bring its share of uncertainty as the new US president gets sworn in. After years of good performance, the US markets also look tired. This calls for moderation in expectations and a sharp focus on risk management through asset allocation," said Shanker.

MOPW recommends closely monitoring the upcoming earnings season and GDP growth trajectory.

"We expect this trend to reverse and expect large caps to do better this year given the valuation comfort. In the longer term, earning growth and stock returns should converge," it suggested.

Despite potential short-term volatility, the medium-term outlook for Indian equities remains positive. This optimism is driven by several factors, including India's stable macroeconomic environment, likely increase in government spending in the medium term and improving liquidity conditions and monetary stimulus by the RBI.

# The 'sanction' effect on Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia



In fresh trouble to the ruling Aam Aadmi Party ahead of the Delhi Assembly polls, the Union Home Ministry has granted sanction to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to prosecute party convenor and former Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal as well as senior party leader and former Deputy CM Manish Sisodia in a money laundering case tied to the alleged liquor policy scam.

Lt Governor V.K. Saxena last month gave the nod to the anti-money laundering agency to prosecute Kejriwal under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in the 2021-22 liquor scam case.

The policy was later scrapped by the AAP government led by Kejriwal.

Both Kejriwal and Sisodia had filed distinct petitions before the Delhi HC challenging the trial court's decision to take cognisance of the ED prosecution complaints filed against them in the alleged liquor policy scam. The AAP leaders had also sought a stay on trial proceedings on the ground that the court below had taken cognisance of the alleged offences under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) without any prior sanction having been obtained by the ED for prosecution.

The pleas contended that the trial court should have not taken cognisance of the ED's prosecution complaint without sanction since Kejriwal as well as Sisodia held a public office at the time of the commission of the alleged money laundering offence.

Why is sanction necessary?

Under the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), no person who is/was a public servant can be prosecuted for an offence allegedly committed during the discharge of his official duties without first obtaining sanction from the appropriate government authority. The sanction provision prevents frivolous or politically motivated prosecutions against public servants and ensures that they are not prosecuted for actions performed in the course of their official duties unless there is a valid and justifiable cause.

What happened before the Delhi HC?

The Delhi High Court had asked the ED to respond to the distinct petitions filed by the AAP leaders but did not pass any interim order staying the trial proceedings as it had passed on a petition filed by senior Congress leader and former Union Minister P. Chidambaram against trial court proceedings in connection with the Aircel-Maxis money laundering case. In order to maintain judicial propriety, the trial court, reportedly, had paused framing of charges against Kejriwal after he moved the Delhi High Court challenging its order taking cognisance of the ED's prosecution complaint in the absence of prior sanction.

In a recent hearing held on December 20, the proceedings before the Delhi High Court were deferred after an adjournment was sought on the ED's behalf due to the non-availability of Additional Solicitor General S.V. Raju. This met opposition from Kejriwal's lawyer, who said that the agency should not seek adjournment. The AAP supremo's counsel added that an early date for the next listing should be given in view of the forthcoming Delhi Assembly elections.

Ultimately, Justice Manoj Kumar Ohri-led Bench decided to take up the matter for hearing on January 30, along with Sisodia's plea. With the grant of sanction, the pending petitions would likely turn infructuous and the AAP leaders may choose to institute fresh proceedings against the grant of sanction.

What did ED argue so far? Before the Delhi High Court, the Enforcement Directorate (ED), in the course of oral arguments, had argued that since the alleged offence of money laundering did not fall within the purview of "discharge of their official duties", Kejriwal as well as Sisodia, could be prosecuted without the requirement of sanction under Section 197 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC).

Recently, the Supreme Court, in the ED vs. Bibhu Prasad Acharya case, examined the question of grant of prior sanction for taking cognisance of the prosecution complaint filed by the ED under the PMLA. A 2-judge Bench of the apex court upheld a decision of the Andhra Pradesh High Court quashing the orders passed by the Special PMLA Court taking cognisance on the complaints filed against the accused, who at the relevant time, held the post of the Vice Chairman and Managing Director of Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation Ltd. and Principal Secretary of I&CAD Department of the Andhra Pradesh government.

The Supreme Court rejected the ED's contention that the provisions of Section 71 of the PMLA will have an overriding effect over the provisions of the other statutes, including the CrPC. "Considering the object of Section 197(1) of the CrPC, its applicability cannot be excluded unless there is any provision in the PMLA which is inconsistent with Section 197(1). No such provision has been pointed out to us. Therefore, we hold that the provisions of Section 197(1) of CrPC are applicable to a complaint under Section 44(1)(b) of the PMLA," it held.

Bail to Arvind Kejriwal

(A) Corruption case: In September 2024, the Supreme Court directed Kejriwal to be released on bail in connection with the corruption case linked to the alleged liquor policy scam. While turning down his distinct plea challenging arrest by the CBI, Justice Surya Kant, heading a two-judge Bench, ordered Kejriwal's release on bail but restrained him from making any "public comments on merits of the case" pending trial before the Rouse Avenue Court.

"The terms and conditions imposed by the coordinate Bench in the ED matter shall apply in this case also. The appellant (Kejriwal) shall remain present before the trial court on each and every date of the hearing unless granted an exemption. He shall fully cooperate with the trial court for expeditious completion of trial proceedings," the bench added.

(B) Money Laundering case: In a judgment passed on July 12 last year, another bench headed by Justice Sanjiv Khanna (now CJI) opined that Kejriwal may be released on interim bail in the money laundering case, given the fact that the right to life and liberty is sacrosanct, and he has suffered incarceration of over 90 days.

The 2-judge Bench referred to a larger bench Kejriwal's plea challenging his arrest and subsequent remand by the ED in the alleged liquor policy scam for an authoritative pronouncement on the questions of law involved.

In the same judgment, the Justice Khanna-headed Bench had asked Kejriwal to take a call on stepping down from the CM post.

"We are conscious that Arvind Kejriwal is an elected leader and the Chief Minister of Delhi, a post holding importance and influence. We have also referred to the allegations. While we do not give any direction, since we are doubtful whether the court can direct an elected leader to step down or not function as the Chief Minister or as a Minister, we leave it to Arvind Kejriwal to take a call," it said.

(C) Interim bail in money laundering case: In view of the 2024 general polls, a bench headed by Justice Khanna (now CJI) had ordered then CM Kejriwal to be released on 21-day interim bail in the money laundering case and had asked him to surrender on June 2.

Imposing a slew of conditions, the bench asked Kejriwal to not visit his office or secretariat, while out on interim bail. It clarified that the grant of interim relief should not be treated as an expression of opinion on the merits of the case or the appeal pending before the apex court. As per the SC order, Kejriwal was prevented from signing official files unless it was required and necessary for obtaining clearance/approval from the Lt Governor.

Bail to Manish Sisodia

In August 2024, the Supreme Court granted bail to Sisodia, saying that he could not be kept behind bars for an unlimited period of time in the hope of a speedy completion of trial in the alleged excise policy case.

A bench presided over by Justice B.R. Gavai had said: "In the present case, in ED as well as CBI matter, 493 witnesses have been named and the case involves thousands of pages of documents and over lakh pages of digitised documents."

"It is thus clear that there is not even a remotest possibility of the trial being concluded in the near future. In our view, keeping the appellant behind bars for an unlimited period of time in the hope of speedy completion of the trial would deprive him of the Fundamental Right of Liberty given under Article 21 of the Constitution."

The Bench, also comprising Justice K.V. Viswanathan, held that on account of a long period of incarceration running for around 17 months and the trial not having commenced, Sisodia had been deprived of his right to a speedy trial.

Rejecting the contention that Sisodia, if granted bail, may tamper with the evidence, the Supreme Court had said that the prosecution case majorly stems from documentary evidence, which has already been seized by the CBI and the ED. It refused to accept Central agencies' submission that Sisodia should not be allowed to visit the Delhi Chief Minister's Office or Delhi Secretariat.

"The appellant (Sisodia) shall surrender his passport with the Special Court. The appellant shall report to the Investigating Officer every Monday and Thursday between 10-11 a.m. and the appellant shall not make any attempt either to influence the witnesses or to tamper with the evidence," it said.

In an earlier judgment delivered on October 30 last year, the top court had denied bail to the former Deputy Chief Minister but said that if the trial proceeds slowly in the next three months, he may apply for bail afresh.

Recently, the top court allowed a plea filed by Sisodia seeking relaxation of the bail condition requiring him to report to the Investigating Officer semi-weekly. "We do not find the said condition is necessary and the same is therefore deleted. However, it is directed that the applicant (Sisodia) shall regularly attend the trial court," it ordered.

What is the case against Kejriwal and AAP?

As per the Central agencies, Kejriwal, along with other AAP leaders, had accepted bribes from the "South Group", a cartel allegedly controlling liquor sales and benefiting from the Delhi government's 2021-22 excise policy. Kejriwal and his ministers allegedly swindled over Rs 2,026 crore as the liquor excise policy lacked transparency and thrived on illegal decision-making to benefit some favoured licensees, said a Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) report whose excerpts came into public domain recently.

Reportedly, the government auditor's report said the exchequer lost around Rs 890 crore as the AAP government did not re-tender the surrendered retail liquor licences. The CAG report raised serious questions on the AAP government's policy-making and implementation, citing several instances of irregularities like lack of transparency in pricing, violation in issue and renewal of licences, non-penalisation of violators, non-seeking of approval from LG, Cabinet or the Assembly.

The government lost an additional Rs 941 crore due to the exemptions that had to be given to the zonal licensees, the report said.

The Group of Ministers, headed by Sisodia, allegedly did not act on the recommendation of the expert panel and even allowed disqualified entities to bid for licences. While out on bail, the former CM Kejriwal has denied the allegations, accusing the BJP of weaponising central agencies to target political opponents.

# World Bank expects India's fiscal deficit to shrink further amid rising tax revenues

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** India's fiscal deficit is expected to shrink further, on the back of growing tax revenues, according to a World Bank report.

The report noted that this trend is anticipated to contribute to fiscal consolidation policies of the government.

"In India, fiscal deficits are expected to continue shrinking, largely on account of growing tax revenues," the report said

While fiscal deficits across South Asia are predicted to remain tight, India stands out with its improving fiscal position. In contrast, fiscal deficits in other South Asian nations are projected to remain stable due to fiscal adjustments being offset by higher interest payments in Pakistan and infrastructure investments in Bangladesh.



The report noted that inflation in the region is forecast to moderate during the projection period, supported by stabilising exchange rates. Inflation is expected to remain within or below target ranges in countries like India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

India is also projected to retain its position as the fastest-growing economy among the world's largest economies, with a GDP growth forecast of 6.7 per cent for FY2025-26 and FY2026-27.

The report highlighted sustained growth in India's services sector and a strengthening of manufacturing activity, driven by government initiatives to enhance logistics infrastructure and simplify tax regulations.

Private consumption growth is expected to rise due to an improving labour market, increased credit availability, and easing inflation, while government consumption growth may remain restrained. Investment growth in India is anticipated to stay robust, underpinned by rising private investments, strong corporate balance sheets, and better financing conditions. These factors are expected to enhance the country's economic resilience in the coming years.

The Indian government aims to bring down the fiscal deficit to 4.9 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in the current financial year from 5.6 per cent in 2023-24.

India's net direct tax collections, comprising corporate tax and personal income tax, shot up by a robust 15.4 per cent to Rs 12.1 lakh crore, from April 1 to November 10 during the current financial year, according to the latest figures released by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT).

Similarly, there has been a robust growth in GST collections on the back of rising economic activity.

The buoyancy in tax collections places more funds in the government's coffers to undertake investments in large infrastructure projects to spur economic growth and take up welfare schemes for the poor.

## India's first flying taxi prototype unveiled at auto expo

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** In a bid to realise the dream of air taxis and transform urban mobility in India, the country's first flying taxi prototype, called 'Shunya', has been unveiled at the 'Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025' here.

Precision manufacturing firm Sona SPEED signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Bengaluru-based Sarla Aviation towards this goal.

Sarla Aviation is developing India's most sophisticated electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft.

Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel, HD Kumaraswamy, visited the Sarla Aviation booth, and showed keen interest in the flying taxi prototype, considered a historic step toward sustainable and futuristic mobility in the country.

Sona SPEED motors have been part of several space missions of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The agreement positions Sona SPEED as a key partner in revolutionising urban air mobility in the country.

"This partnership is a significant step in Sona SPEED's evolution as a hub for aerospace innovation. Together, we aim to shape a cleaner, faster, and more efficient future for urban transportation," said Chocko Valliappa, CEO of Sona SPEED.

Under the MoU, Sona SPEED will utilise its state-of-the-art facilities in Karnataka to design and manufacture critical components, like the motors and landing gear among others for Sarla Aviation's eVTOL aircraft.

# CII pegs India's growth rate at 7 per cent for 2025-26 amid rising private investments

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** An increase in private investments and employment is expected to keep India's overall growth around a stable 6.4-6.7 per cent during the current financial year and is likely to drive up the growth to 7.0 per cent in FY26, according to a survey released by apex business chamber CII on Sunday.

India has emerged as a bright spot amid geopolitical fault lines that have disrupted global supply chains and posed serious challenges to global growth, the survey said.

Confederation of Indian Industry

pointed out.

The pan-India CII survey, which was conducted over the past 30 days, suggested that 75 per cent of the respondents believe that the current economic environment is conducive to private investments.

"Given that 70 per cent of the firms surveyed said that they would invest in FY'26, an uptick in private investments might be on the cards over the next few quarters," said Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General, CII.

Along with economic growth, employment generation has also been at the centre stage in recent policy discussions. India's vision of a "Viksit Bharat" by 2047 is hinged upon performing well on the imperative of "creation of good quality jobs".

Encouragingly, the early results from the survey show that about 97 per cent of the sample firms are likely to increase employment in both 2024-25 and 2025-26. In fact, 79 per cent of the respondents' firms said they added more people over the past three years.

Responding to the question on the extent of employment generation expected in FY'25 and FY'26, about 97 per cent of the firms indicated that employment is expected to increase with 42 per cent to 46 per cent of the firms indicating a 10 to 20 per cent increase in employment over and above the existing workforce and about 31 per cent to 36 per cent of them have indicated an expected increase in employment of up to 10 per cent.

## 2025 to be marked by key innovations, localised features for India: OnePlus

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** The year 2025 for global technology brand OnePlus in India will be marked by key innovations, localised features tailored specifically for the domestic market, and exceptional end-to-end customer support, the company said on Sunday.

The country is a key market for OnePlus and to further this, "we recently announced Project Starlight that marks one of the biggest investments made by OnePlus in India," a company spokesperson told IANS.

"As part of this project, we plan to invest Rs 2,000 Crore each year till 2027 focused towards addressing three key pillars, making our devices sturdier, ensuring remarkable customer service and developing India-specific features for our products," said the OnePlus spokesperson.

In Q3 2024, India's smartphone market achieved its highest-ever value, driven by the ongoing trend of premiumisation and domestic manufacturing. 5G smartphones captured their highest-ever share of 81 per cent in the overall shipments, according to Counterpoint Research.

According to the company, the overall plan for the India market in 2025 is comprehensive and ambitious.

"With the successful launch of the OnePlus 13 series, we have laid a solid foundation for the year ahead. We will continue to introduce cutting-edge technology across all our product categories, with innovation at the core of our strategy," said the company spokesperson.

Under 'Project Starlight', OnePlus introduced a comprehensive greenline worry-free solution for OnePlus Community.

# India emerges as global hub for startups and innovation: Minister

**Mumbai, Jan 19 (IANS)** India has emerged as a global hub for startups and innovation under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh, has said.

After inaugurating India's first-of-its-kind CSIR Mega 'Innovation Complex' in Mumbai and dedicated it to startups and industry stakeholders, the minister said "We are proud to be the third-largest start-up ecosystem in the world, with over 100 unicorns that stand as testaments to India's entrepreneurial spirit".

"This remarkable growth is a reflection of the transformative initiatives and policies introduced by our government to empower the youth and drive economic self-reliance," the minister noted.

The new 'Innovation Complex' is a huge state-of-the-art set up spread over nine floors, equipped with 24 "ready-to-move" incubation labs in addition to furnished office and networking spaces for innovative startups, MSMEs, industry, and CSIR labs.

The facility will provide high-end scientific infrastructure, expertise and regulatory support to stakeholders including CSIR labs, startups, MSMEs and industry, for the SOP-driven studies necessary for regulatory submissions and compliance.

"This inauguration is just the beginning. We are excited about the future potential and the immense contributions this Innovation Complex will make to India's growth story," said the minister.

# Motilal Oswal denies accusations circulating on social media, calls them 'baseless'

**Mumbai, Jan 19 (IANS)** Asset manager Motilal Oswal Asset Management Company (MOAMC) on Sunday denied accusations circulating on social media against the company and its officials, saying these "baseless accusations are a deliberate attempt by individuals with vested interests to malign the good reputation that our firm and leadership have built over decades".

Responding to rumours on social media that claimed MOAMC money managers may have been bribed to stock up on Kalyan Jewellers, the financial services major categorically denied "the baseless, malicious, and defamatory allegations".




"Such baseless attacks on our integrity are completely unacceptable to us. Motilal Oswal Financial Services (MOFSL) has a legacy of nearly four decades of working with ethical practices and transparency," said the asset manager.

In a statement, the company further stated that the "integrity of our teams is of highest standards and we assure investors that we never have, and we never will tolerate any slip up on this count".

"The allegations made against the firm and its officials about rumours related to resignation, unethical practice or search are totally false and a blatant attempt to mislead the public and damage the trust we have earned over decades of exemplary service," MOAMC said.

The asset manager urged people not to believe these baseless and unethical attempts to spread misinformation.

## Will continue to contribute towards PM Modi's 'Viksit Bharat' mission: JCB India CEO

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** We remain bullish on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for 'Viksit Bharat@2047', especially on creating a robust infrastructure, and will continue to contribute towards nation building as we have done in the last 45 years, Deepak Shetty, CEO and Managing Director, JCB India, said on Sunday.

Speaking to IANS at the 'Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025' in the national capital, Shetty said they have seen government increasing investments on infrastructure development across the spectrum in the last 10 years - be it roads, highways, railways, housing, Har Ghar Nal Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and so on -- and "we believe the focus on infrastructure from the government will continue relentlessly".

"In the last 45 years, JCB supplied machines and expertise that helped built brilliant infrastructure across the country. Now, we are aligned with the government's 'Viksit Bharat by 2047' goal," he noted.

He said that JCB is very bullish about the domestic market, adding that they have seen a growth of more than 12 per cent year-on-year.

Shetty said the company always focuses on innovation, aiming to meet the changing expectations of the Indians customers.

# EPFO simplifies process for funds transfer, correcting personal details

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has introduced major changes to simplify key processes for its 7.6 crore subscribers by cutting down circuitous approvals that led to delays and inconvenience.

Labour and Employment Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said the EPF members, who have linked their Universal Account Number with their Aadhaar number, can file their transfer claims online using the one-time password generated using their Aadhaar. For this too, the intervention of the employer is not needed now.

Members will now be able to self-correct personal details, including name, address and bank details, by logging in to the EPFO website. "Such changes by Aadhaar-verified account holders will no longer require the approval of the employer," the minister said.

This revision will immediately benefit around 3.9 lakh members whose requests are pending at various stages. If any member who can self-approve has already filed his request which is pending with the employer, the member can delete the already filed request and self-approve as per the simplified process. The majority of the cases could directly be self-approved by the members themselves or in some selected cases by the employer.

Out of the total eight lakh requests received at EPFO for correction through employers in FY 2024-25, almost 45 per cent of the change requests can be self-approved by the member without the employer's verification or approval at EPFO. On average, this will eliminate a delay of nearly 28 days taken by the employer to approve Joint Declarations. The request for change of EPF Account holders not having a full e-KYC shall get approved at the employer level in approximately another 50 per cent of the cases without the requirement for any approval at EPFO, the Minister said.

At present, around 27 per cent of the grievances filed by the members relate to member profile/KYC issues and with the introduction of the revised JD functionality, it is expected that there shall be a drastic reduction in the number of grievances being filed by the members, the Minister explained.

To rectify common errors in recording name, marital status and service details during the registration process or later, an employee had to make a request online with supporting documents.

# ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel to start rolling out automotive steel at Hazira plant this year

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India, a joint venture between ArcelorMittal and Japan's Nippon Steel Corp, is set to commission two state-of-the-art production lines this year dedicated to manufacturing advanced automotive steel products, according to a company statement issued on Sunday.

Once operational, the production of the two units will substitute imports of high-end steel required by the entire automotive sector, promoting the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, the statement said.

All the products will match the quality standards of parent companies ArcelorMittal and Nippon Steel (AM/NS India). Some of the offerings currently available globally will also be manufactured for the first time in India, the statement added.

The new lines, comprising a Continuous Galvanising Line (CGL) and a Continuous Galvanising and Annealing Line (CGAL) are expected to be fully operational in 2025. These two facilities, embedding the technical know-how of the parent companies, will be part of the upcoming Cold Rolling Mill 2 (CRM2) complex at its flagship plant in Hazira, Gujarat.



The two units will enable the production of ArcelorMittal as well as Nippon Steel's licensed products, with strength levels up to 1180 MPa, in both coated and uncoated steel. This initiative builds on the previous success of AM/NS India with the introduction of Optigal and Magnelis last year, according to the company statement.

The expansion aims to meet the growing demand for high-quality, value-added automotive steel in India, which currently stands at 7.8 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) for flat steel and is projected to grow by 6-7 per cent annually.

Dilip Oommen, Chief Executive Officer of ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India), said: "The dedicated two units mark a significant step toward our goal of providing high-quality, premium steel solutions tailored to the evolving needs of the automotive sector. With our wide range of products and services, we are well-positioned and preferred choice among automotive manufacturers."

"Once operational, these additions will not only enable us to indigenously produce new offerings that are widely recognised globally but also help grow our portfolio as well as our market share. This expansion plays a key role in our strategy to strengthen the country's steel ecosystem and boost global competitiveness," he added.

Meanwhile, AM/NS India is showcasing its differentiated automotive offerings along with ArcelorMittal's Multi-Part Integration?(MPI) solutions at the ongoing Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025 in New Delhi.

# Ticketless passenger clings to cable of German high-speed train for 30 km, survives

**Munich, Jan 19 (IANS) :**A ticketless passenger on a German high-speed train ended up clinging to the train's exterior after it departed the station before he was ready to board, according to police.

The 40-year-old man, who had boarded the ICE train in Munich without a valid ticket, stepped off at the Ingolstadt station for a cigarette break. However, the BBC reported that he took too long and found himself locked out when the train doors closed, leaving him at risk of being left behind.

In a desperate move, he climbed onto a bracket between two carriages and held onto cables as the train sped towards Nuremberg at speeds of up to 282 km/h (175 mph). Federal police eventually stopped the train about 30 km away.

Witnesses quickly alerted authorities, who contacted the train driver, prompting an unscheduled stop at Kinding in Upper Bavaria. The intercity express was on a six-hour journey to the northern city of Lubeck.



The man, a Hungarian national, told police he had left his luggage on the train during his cigarette break and did not want to be separated from it.

Remarkably, a police spokesman confirmed he was unharmed after his risky stunt. "A state police officer who happened to be on board located the 40-year-old Hungarian 'passenger' and escorted him back onto the train," the spokesman said, adding that he was later handed over to federal police at Nuremberg central station.

The man is expected to face charges for "an act disruptive to operations," categorized as an administrative offence.

Federal police have since issued a public warning, urging people not to endanger their lives on Germany's trains.

# Indian scientists develop wearable devices that can detect stress

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** Scientists from Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bengaluru, an autonomous institute of Department of Science and Technology have developed a novel wearable device that can detect stress.

The team developed the Neuromorphic device -- electronic systems that mimic the functions of neurons and synapse -- using silver wire network on a stretchable material.

The device can sense strain, mimics pain perception and adapts its electrical response accordingly.

"These pain-like responses in the device paves the way for future smart wearable systems that can help doctors detect stress," said the researchers.

The team noted that small gaps appear within the silver network, when the material gets stretched.

This temporarily breaks the electrical pathway.

To reconnect, an electric pulse is given, which fills the gaps, and essentially "remembers" the event.



"Each time it is stretched and reconnected, the device gradually adjusts its response, much like how our bodies adapt to repeated pain over time. This dynamic process enables the device to mimic memory and adaptation, bringing humans closer to materials that respond intelligently to their environment," the team said in the paper, published in the journal Materials Horizons, Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC).

The device also combines sensing and adaptive response in a single, flexible unit. It offers a streamlined, efficient way for technology to adapt to its environment naturally, without complex setups or external sensors.

The research can "lead to more advanced health monitoring systems that "feel" stress like the human body and adapt in real-time, giving feedback to doctors or users," said the researchers.

Too much stress is known to cause physical and mental health problems.

Stress is known to be a precursor to many health problems, such as high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, obesity and diabetes.

Learning how to cope with stress can help feel less overwhelmed and also boost mental and physical well-being.

The team noted that technology used can also improve robotic systems. These may not only help machines become safer, but also more intuitive to work with humans.

# From mastering the board to mastering the drip! Did Gukesh just level up with a makeover?



**Bengaluru, Jan 19 (IANS)** A snippet of chess prodigy Gukesh Dommaraju sporting an edgy, on-trend look has taken the internet by storm.

The leaked images show Gukesh donning oversized jackets, trendy accessories, and a statement pair of glasses.

Fans are loving this refreshing take on his persona, with one netizen saying, "Bhai apna celebrity se kam nahi!"

The buzz around this snippet has only added to Gukesh's growing appeal, blending his sharp intellect with a flair for contemporary style. Whether it's a nod to GenZ culture or simply a playful experiment, his look has struck a chord with fans and fashion enthusiasts alike.

For now, it's safe to say Gukesh has made a winning move, both in chess and in style. The anticipation is real - what made this star go for this makeover?

Indian Grandmaster Gukesh, who scripted history by becoming the youngest-ever World Champion, beat Ding Liren of China in the 14-game match in Singapore. The 18-year-old from Chennai capitalised on a blunder by Ding in the winner-takes-all 14th game to dethrone the reigning champion, winning the match 7.5 to 6.5 and become the second Indian after Viswanathan Anand to become the World Champion in classical chess.

Gukesh broke the four-decade-old record of chess legend Garry Kasparov, who won the title in 1985 at the age of 22 years, 6 months, and 27 days. He is the second Indian to win the World Chess Championship title, claiming the title in just over a decade after five-time winner Anand had lost the title to Magnus Carlsen of Norway in Chennai in 2013. Carlsen abdicated the crown in 2023, paving the way for Ding to beat Ian Nepomniachtchi.

# India projected to see 5-times surge in green investments at Rs 31 lakh crore till 2030

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** India is projected to see a five-fold growth in green investments to Rs 31 lakh crore between 2025 and 2030, a Crisil report showed on Wednesday.

Of the Rs 31 lakh crore investments, Rs 19 lakh crore is seen going into renewable energy and storage, Rs 4.1 lakh crore into transport and automotive sectors and Rs 3.3 lakh crore into oil and gas, according to the report presented at the Crisil's 'India Infrastructure Conclave 2025' in the national capital.

This is a crucial part of an estimated $10 trillion investments needed through 2070 to achieve the country's net-zero goals as per the Updated First Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement.

Among India's key NDC commitments are a 45 per cent reduction in the carbon intensity of its gross domestic product (GDP) by 2030 from 2005 levels, and an increase in the share of cumulative installed power capacity from non-fossil-fuel-based energy resources to 50 per cent.

"As the fastest-growing large economy over the medium term, India has a window of opportunity to balance its developmental and environmental aspirations and priorities," said Amish Mehta, Managing Director and CEO, Crisil.



Based on the plans announced by the government and corporates, and progress on the ground, "we estimate Rs 31 lakh crore of green investments through 2030," he added.

India's total renewable energy installed capacity recorded a robust double-digit growth of 15.84 per cent to touch 209.44 GW, as of December 2024, from 180.80 GW in December 2023.

The total capacity added during 2024 amounted to 28.64 GW, representing a significant year-on-year increase of 119.46 per cent compared to the 13.05 GW added in 2023, according to the latest government data.

According to the report, for established technologies with relatively lower risk profile, such as solar power, wind power and two-wheeler EVs, there is adequate debt finance available through banks, sector-focused development finance institutions and bond markets.

# US woman describes her kids' Indian diet, internet applauds

**New York, Jan 19 (IANS) :** From comforting dal chawal to flavourful kadhai paneer, indian cuisine has a lot to offer. Kristen Fischer, an American content creator who moved to India three years ago, is also a fan of Indian food. Recently, she shared a video on Instagram highlighting some of the Indian dishes that her kids love to eat. She titled the clip, "Everything I fed my kids today living in India." Kristen started her day by making breakfast, which consisted of plain parathas and dahi. With pictures of her children contentedly enjoying the meal, she said, "It's the breakfast my children love." Later in the day, Kristen gave them refreshing coconut water.

For lunch, Kristen prepared a traditional comfort meal - rajma chawal. She smiled proudly as she mentioned that her kids ate every bite of the healthy dish. Kristen chose roasted makhana as a snack-time treat. Later in the evening, Kristen served homemade pav bhaji, a popular street food staple in Mumbai. Kristen shared how her children especially loved the pav (the bread), calling it a "hit for dinner tonight."




In the caption, Kristen wrote, "My kids have grown accustomed to the Indian diet. Now it is all they eat and recognize. This is everything I fed my kids in a single day. I love the variety, flavours, and health benefits of Indian foods. I love knowing my kids are eating vegetarian dishes that are good and good for them. What do you feed your little ones? What should I make for them next?" People shared their reactions in the comments section.

One user wrote, "Impressive! Mrs Fischer. Compared to processed food boxes, this is outstanding."

Another added, " You are giving them wholesome meals, especially the makhana."

Someone else commented, "Healthy food. Healthy life."

"Your choices for your kids eating are very good. Makhanas are very good and healthy food," read a comment.

A person said, "Wow, what a great menu."

"Amazing, wholesome foods," read a comment.

Someone praised Kristen's parenting skills and wrote, "You are such a great mother."

"Kudos to you for trying to be as close as possible to perfection while preparing Indian delicacies," said an Instagrammer.

# Study links childhood abuse to arthritis or psoriasis in adulthood

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** People whose childhoods featured abuse, neglect, or domestic abuse are more likely to be at risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis or psoriasis in later life, according to a study on Wednesday.

Researchers from the University of Birmingham used a Dexter software platform with a database of over 16 million Electronic Health Records.

The software checked the records over 26 years for medical codes of immune-mediated inflammatory disorders (IMIDs) and found childhood maltreatment was associated with increased incidence rates for rheumatoid arthritis and psoriasis.

The findings, published in the journal Communications Physics, showed that the increase in risk was significant for both diseases. The diseases were also found to be more pronounced in women than in men.

"As far as we're aware, this is the first matched cohort longitudinal study



to investigate the relationship between childhood maltreatment and immune-mediated inflammatory disorders (IMIDs) in later life," said Dr Liam Snook from the University of Birmingham.

From 16 million records, the software identified 256,130 records coded for exposure before 18 years of age to abuse (physical, sexual, or emotional), neglect, or domestic abuse, either by the GP, or codes relating to social services involvement.

The control group consisted of 712,478 records which were matched on age, sex, indices of deprivation, and GP surgery.

The team checked the records from these two cohorts for diagnostic codes for immune-mediated inflammatory disorders such as rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis, coeliac disease, multiple sclerosis, inflammatory bowel disease, and systemic lupus erythematosus from 1995 to 2021.

The findings showed the childhood maltreatment cohort had a significantly increased risk for: rheumatoid arthritis: 11.19/100,000 patient years vs 7.77/100,000 patient-years; and psoriasis: 152.79/100,000 patient years vs 128.74/100,000 patient-years.

Rheumatoid arthritis is a chronic autoimmune disease that causes inflammation in the joints. It's characterised by pain, swelling, stiffness, and tenderness in the joints.

Psoriasis is a chronic skin condition that causes red, scaly patches on the skin. It's an autoimmune disease that occurs when the immune system overreacts, causing skin cells to multiply too quickly.

# E-Rickshaw Union meeting held to address drivers' issues

**Mail News Service**



**Chaibasa, Jan 19:** On Sunday, January 19, a meeting of the E-Rickshaw Union was held at Podahat Stadium under the chairmanship of Sakhil Ahmed Khan and coordinated by Mangal Sardar. The meeting saw the participation of all E-Rickshaw drivers from Chakradharpur, focusing on key issues and strategies for the future.

The meeting addressed several pressing concerns, including the challenges faced by E-Rickshaw drivers and the need to fix appropriate fare rates. A unanimous agreement was reached to follow all traffic rules, regulations and the policies of Chakradharpur Municipality. Municipal taxes were also discussed, emphasizing the importance of compliance while seeking clarity on taxation issues.

In a bid to enhance communication, it was decided to create a WhatsApp group for drivers to report and resolve problems promptly. The establishment of public charging points for E-Rickshaws was proposed to address the increasing demand for reliable charging infrastructure.

Additionally, the members stressed the need for the Municipality to set up designated E-Rickshaw stands at strategic locations for the convenience of the general public. A demand was also made to facilitate the issuance of driving licenses for E-Rickshaw drivers locally in Chakradharpur.

The gathering concluded with a resolution to organize regular meetings to strengthen the union further. The association extended its gratitude to the subdivision administration for ensuring a peaceful and successful meeting. (w/nkm)

# Rauniyar Vaishya Sangh promotes social unity at family reunion

**Mail News Service**



**Chaibasa, Jan 19:** The Rauniyar Vaishya Sangh organized a family reunion and picnic at Lupungutu Waterfall on Sunday. Jharkhand Revenue and Transport Minister Deepak Birua graced the occasion as the chief guest, along with social worker Ghanshyam Darbara and Sadar Police Station In-charge Tarun Kumar.

Minister Birua praised the Sangh's contributions to society. "The association's commendable work strengthens social bonds. I assure my full support to their initiatives," he said. Patron Advocate Rajaram Gupta raised concerns over the lack of land for building a dharamshala, to which the minister promised to look into a solution.

The program featured musical chair, quiz and debate competitions for women and children. Lalita Gupta secured first place in the musical chair event, while Prince Gupta won the General Knowledge competition. The event concluded with a message of unity and cooperation from the guests. (w/nkm)

# Asanpath Madhya Vidyalaya celebrates annual sports day with enthusiasm

**Mail News Service**



**Chaibasa, Jan 19:** The Annual Sports Day of Asanpath Madhya Vidyalaya, under Majhgaon block, was celebrated with great fervour on Sunday. Students from classes 1 to 8 showcased their talents in various competitions, including races, sack races, frog races and shot put.

Chief Guest Niral Purti, MLA of Majhgaon, praised the school's efforts in promoting sports along with academics. "Sports are essential for intellectual and physical development. They foster discipline, cooperation and community spirit," he remarked.

Special guests included former Labour Commissioner Gyan Singh Doraiburu and other notable figures. The chief guest announced the construction of two additional classrooms and paver blocks for the school campus under the MLA fund.

The event was inaugurated with a lamp-lighting ceremony and winners were awarded medals and certificates amid cheers from parents and teachers. (w/nkm)

# Kharagpur Division celebrates 69th Railway Week

**Mail News Service**



**Kharagpur, Jan 19:** The Kharagpur Division of Indian Railways marked the 69th Railway Week—Rail Seva Puraskar, 2024, with a grand celebration on January 17, 2025. The event was presided over by K.R. Chaudhary, Divisional Railway Manager (DRM), as the Chief Guest. Meera Chaudhary, President of SERWWO/KGP, attended as the Guest of Honour, accompanied by ADRM-I Debjit Das, ADRM-II Maneesha Goel and other senior officers and staff.

During the ceremony, 83 railway officers and staff were honoured for their exceptional services and dedication throughout 2023-24. Additionally, 21 Efficiency Shields were awarded to various departments and units. Among the highlights, Sardiha Station received the Best Maintained Station Shield, Mecheda Station was awarded the Commercial Efficiency Shield and Combined Crew Lobby/Andul along with Combined Running Room/KGP earned the Best Running Efficiency Shield. Numerous other departments and units were also recognized for their contributions.

Addressing the gathering, DRM K.R. Chaudhary praised the division's achievements in the freight and passenger sectors despite numerous challenges. He emphasized the importance of safety in train operations and urged employees to remain focused during the critical last quarter of the financial year to meet the targets set by the Railway Board. "We must work with dedication and ensure the satisfaction of passengers and rail users," he remarked. He also expressed gratitude for the cooperation extended by various trade unions and associations.

The event concluded with colourful cultural performances by the division's staff and members of the Divisional Cultural Team, adding vibrancy to the celebration. (w/nkm)

# Respecting workers and fostering open communication is essential: Saryu

## Thousands attend worker conference and picnic organized by Roy



**Mail News Service**

**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** Thousands of workers from Janata Dal (United) and Bharatiya Janata Party gathered at the Adityapur Auto Cluster for a worker conference cum picnic organized by Jamshedpur West MLA Saryu Roy. The event, which saw a large turnout, provided a platform for workers to interact with their leaders in an open and relaxed environment.

MLA Saryu Roy personally met with nearly every worker in attendance, asking about their well-being and fostering a sense of connection. "It's important to engage with workers directly and listen to their concerns. Their respect is vital for the growth of any party," Roy shared with the attendees. The workers, in turn, were visibly happy to meet their leader, with many expressing gratitude for the opportunity to discuss their issues.

Jamshedpur MP Bidyut Baran Mahto also attended the event, accompanied by his supporters. He congratulated Saryu Roy for organizing the conference and took time to engage with the workers, taking pictures and sharing conversations.

Ashutosh Rai, the event organizer, emphasized that workers are the true capital of any political party. "It is essential to respect and value our workers. MLA Saryu Roy has always been available for them, considering them his pride," said Ashutosh Rai.

Saryu Roy explained the importance of maintaining an open dialogue with workers, especially after the recent election results. "I strongly felt that in order to move forward, we must talk to workers in an open environment and give them the respect they deserve. This is why I decided to organize this conference," he remarked.

The event featured a lively music and song session, with performances from Devendra Pandey and Chanchala Singh of Sonu Singh Dularua's team. Their bhajans and Bhojpuri songs won the hearts of the attendees, while delicious food was served to all, making the picnic both enjoyable and memorable for everyone present. (w/nkm)

# Martial arts winter camp builds willpower and self-confidence

**Mail News Service**




**Chaibasa, Jan 19:** The "Martial Arts Winter Camp" organized by the Singhbhum Martial Arts Academy's Tambo Branch continued into its second day on Sunday.

The camp, which began on January 18 and will run until February 2, witnessed enthusiastic participation from children.

On Sunday, the trainees ran a kilometre to Gaushala Park, where they practiced street fighting techniques under expert supervision. "The purpose of the camp is to test the children's willpower, instil self-confidence and spread awareness about self-defence," said Sensei Vivek Khalko, the event coordinator.

Children at the camp will receive training in Karate, Taekwondo, Boxing and Mixed Martial Arts from different masters over the two-week period. Open to children above the age of four, the camp aims to equip participants with skills to handle real-life challenges effectively. (w/nkm)

# Free eye check-up camp under Drishti Seva Maha Abhiyan in Chhaliyama

**Mail News Service**

**Seraikela, Jan 19:** A free eye check-up camp was successfully organized on Sunday in Chhaliyama village, located in the Rajnagar block, under the Drishti Seva Maha Abhiyan initiative. The camp was a collaboration between Yuvak Milan Samiti Chhaliyama, Anand Marg Universal Relief Team Global and Purnima Netralaya.

Around 110 people participated in the camp and approximately 40 individuals were diagnosed with cataracts and tear duct issues. These patients will undergo free cataract surgeries on January 28 at Purnima Netralaya. The surgeries will be performed with the help of the Ayushman and National Blindness Prevention and Control Program (DBCS). Additionally, patients will receive free lens implants, along with prescribed medicines and glasses post-operation. (w/nkm)

# Kanu Jagran Manch organises annual family picnic

**Mail News Service**



**Gamharia, Jan 19:** The annual family gathering and picnic organized by Kanu Jagran Manch Jamshedpur took place on Sunday, 19th January, at Devnagari in Gamharia. The event was graced by Ganesh Kanu from Patna as the chief guest. Alongside him, Ram Bahadur Sah, President of Garhwa Kanu Vikas Sangh and Secretary Pramod Kumar Ji were present as special guests, offering valuable insights into the upliftment of society.

A highlight of the event was the honouring of Ravindra Kumar, retired Deputy General Manager of UCIL Jaduguda, for his special contributions to the community, with a commemorative memento.

The event featured a lively discussion on the educational, intellectual and moral development of society. Children and women enjoyed a variety of sports and other competitions organized for their entertainment. Additionally, banners promoting various social initiatives, including fruit distribution in old-age homes, food services at Gandhi Ashram and a blood donation camp at Jamshedpur Blood Bank, were displayed at the event.

The chief guest and selected committee members distributed awards to the winners of the competitions. The event concluded with a cultural program, attended by the forum's patron Sant Saav and several prominent members, including Ram Lal, Krishna Kumar Gupta and others, who played an instrumental role in making the event a success. (w/nkm)

# Rohit Jerai triumphs as fastest runner at district athletics meet

**Mail News Service**

**Chaibasa, Jan 19:** The two-day district level athletics competition began with an enthusiastic inauguration by Sadar Sub-Divisional Police Officer Bahaman Tuti, along with other notable guests including West Singhbhum District Athletics Association President Nitin Prakash, Secretary Ajay Kumar Nayak and District Chess Association Secretary Basant Khandelwal. The first day witnessed fierce competition across various categories.

Rohit Jerai emerged as the fastest runner in the men's 100m race, securing first place, while Shiv Shankar Nayak and Narsingh Kandaiburu took second and third positions, respectively.

In the 800m men's race, Turi Kandeyang claimed first place, followed by Gulal Mahato of Bangar Samaj in second place. In the 800m women's category, Dilki Pariya finished first, with Savitri in second place. Other notable performances included Sarita High Buru winning the 100m under-20 girls' category and Anish Surin taking first place in the 100m under-20 boys' race.

The competition also featured events like shot put and 400m races, with winners across different age groups receiving medals and certificates from the guests. The athletes were praised for their spirited performances and the event ended with an expression of gratitude from the organizers and officials for the smooth conduct of the event, including cooperation from volunteers like Kashmir Kandeyang, Vijay Singh and many others. (w/nkm)

# Loyola School's Adhiraj clinches Jharkhand Secondary Level FIDE Rating Chess tournament

**Mail News Service**




**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** In a dazzling display of skill and strategic brilliance, Adhiraj Mitra, a Class 7 student of Loyola School, emerged as the undisputed champion of the Jharkhand Secondary Level FIDE Rating Chess Tournament 2025. The young prodigy triumphed over 258 participants from 70 schools across the state, remaining unbeaten and finishing with a flawless score of 8/8.

Adhiraj, already a well-known name in the chess circuit, was the highest-rated player in the tournament, and his performance was nothing short of extraordinary. Not only did he defend his position as the top seed, but he also gained 20 Elo points, further strengthening his dominance in the sport.

The tournament was held over two intense days at the JRD Tata Sports Complex, where students from schools across Jharkhand showcased their chess prowess. Adhiraj's impeccable performance stood out as he navigated through challenging games against seasoned competitors with precision and composure beyond.

Adhiraj's journey to the top has been marked by consistent hard work and dedication. Starting his chess training at the age of six, he quickly rose through the ranks, participating in state and national-level tournaments. His coach, Grandmaster Arjun Ghosh, expressed immense pride in his student's performance. "Adhiraj's ability to analyze the board and anticipate his opponent's moves is remarkable for his age. This victory is a testament to his immense potential," said Ghosh.

Adhiraj's parents also credited his success to the school's support and his disciplined approach to balancing academics and chess. "Loyola School has always encouraged Adhiraj's passion for chess, providing him with the right platform to excel. We are incredibly proud of his achievement," they shared.

The tournament witnessed fierce competition, with participants showcasing a range of strategies and techniques. Adhiraj's journey to victory included critical matches against players from Ranchi, Dhanbad, and Bokaro, some of whom were state-level champions.

The event concluded with a grand prize distribution ceremony, where Adhiraj was awarded the championship trophy along with a cash prize and a certificate of excellence. The organizers, Jharkhand Chess Association, praised Adhiraj's achievement, calling him "a bright hope for Indian chess."

When asked about his inspiration, Adhiraj mentioned his admiration for Indian chess legend Viswanathan Anand. "I look up to Anand Sir for his humility and brilliance. I hope to follow in his footsteps and bring glory to India," he said with a shy smile.

## Health

### Excess maternal weight in 1st trimester linked to foetal fat accumulation: Study



**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** Foetuses of women who gain excess weight in the first trimester of pregnancy are likely to have excess fat distribution in their body, according to a study.

The study, led by researchers at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), showed that foetuses in the womb may have more fat in their upper arm and the abdomen.

The findings, appearing in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, may be key to developing early intervention strategies to prevent adult obesity associated with heavier birth weight.

Excessive weight gain early in life is a known risk factor for adult obesity and related conditions, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes. For the study, the researchers analysed data from an earlier study of more than 2,600 singleton pregnancies.

This included information on maternal weight before and during pregnancy and three-dimensional (3D) ultrasound scans (up to five) throughout pregnancy.

The results showed that pregnant people with excessive weight gain -- defined as more than 2 kilograms (about 4.4 pounds) in the first trimester -- had foetuses with larger abdominal circumferences.

Compared to women with adequate weight gain in their pregnancy, these babies in the womb also had more abdominal area and larger foetal arm fat thickness.

Further, the team reported that foetuses from the excessive weight gain group continued to have greater arm thickness and abdominal measurements through the end of pregnancy, even when weight gain was not considered excessive during the second and third trimesters.

In contrast, most previous studies have not examined foetal 3D measures during pregnancy and have only linked total weight gain across pregnancy, not just in the first trimester, with birth weight.

"The findings suggest that the timing of weight gain, instead of total weight gain, could be important for developing efforts to prevent excess foetal size and reduce the risk of heart disease and other conditions later in life," the researchers said.

# Saif Ali Khan Case: Shatrughan Sinha shares pic from Saif's hospital room?



**Mumbai, Jan 19 (IANS)** Veteran actor and politician Shatrughan Sinha has shared an AI generated image of Bollywood actor Saif Ali Khan and his wife Kareena Kapoor Khan. The picture shows a wounded Saif on a hospital bed with an IV in his hand as Kareena sits beside him.

On Sunday, Shatrughan Sinha took to his X, formerly Twitter, and shared the AI generated image as Saif undergoes recovery at the Lilavati Hospital in Mumbai. The veteran actor also penned a long note in his tweet, and thanked the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Devendra Fadnavis, and deputy CMs Ajit Pawar and Eknath Shinde despite being from the opposition.

He wrote, "Very sad & unfortunate the tragic attack on our near, dear & loved #SaifAliKhan which injured him severely. Thank God he is healing well to recover. Profound regards to my all time favorite 'show man' filmmaker #RajKapoor's granddaughter #KareenaKapoorKhan & the family. One humble appeal please stop the 'blame game', police are doing their job well. We certainly appreciate our CM & HM, Maharashtra @Dev_Fadnavis for his concern & remedial measures. Let's not complicate the matter further".

"The matter will be solved soon, sooner the better. Thanks to Deputy CMs @AjitPawarSpeaks & our friend @mieknathshinde for their kind words, extreme care & efforts. After all Saif is one of the most brilliant star/actor & also both a Padmashri & National Award winner. Law will take its own course as things are moving in the right direction. Get well soon" (sic)", he added.

Saif was reportedly attacked with a 2.5 inch knife by an assailant who barged into his Bandra house through his youngest son, Jeh's room.

As per media reports, doctors removed the 2.5 inches of knife from his wound. The actor, who underwent a surgery, has now been shifted to the ICU and is said to be out of danger.

The actor was stabbed multiple times in an attempt to fight off a burglar during the wee hours of Thursday. The actor sustained six stab wounds, two of which are said to be serious as they are closer to his spine. The incident took place at 2:15 am when the burglar allegedly barged into their Bandra home, and attacked their house help and then Saif when he intervened.

# Alankrita Sahai is 'Immensely grateful' for 'Band Of Maharajas' making in to the Oscars



**Mumbai, Jan 19 (IANS)** Alankrita Sahai, the lead actress of "Band Of Maharajas" recently spilled her excitement about her movie making it to the reminder list of Oscars 2025.

The movie "Band Of Maharajas" has made the cut for the 'Best Picture Reminder List' for the 97th Academy Awards. Talking about the latest milestone, Alankrita Sahai was quoted saying, "Immensely grateful to the academy, the audience and everyone for their love and support towards our film. This is once again a testimony of the fact that good quality work always shines sooner or later. When we heard the news last year that our film is in the race for Oscars from India, we were immensely happy. And now, the 'reminder list' is one step ahead for the big occasion. My gratitude to everyone for showing love to my work and our film and here's hoping and praying that we can continue to make the country proud."

# Shradha Mishra lifts the winner's trophy of 'Sa Re Ga Ma Pa!'



**Mumbai, Jan 19 (IANS)** After leaving the audience and mentors impressed with some terrific performances, Shradha Mishra finally lifted the trophy of Sa Re Ga Ma Pa ~.

While Subhasree Debnath became the first runner-up, Ujwal Motiram Gajbhar was the second runners-up. Adding star power to the evening, Udit Narayan and Kavita Krishnamurti were seen gracing the stage with some melodious performances. Joining them during the finale was the former cricketing icon Harbhajan Singh, who unveiled the ILT20 trophy.

Winner of Sa Re Ga Ma Pa, Shradha Mishra shared her excitement with the following words, "This is a dream come true for me. My journey on Sa Re Ga Ma Pa has been a transformative learning experience, thanks to the constant support and guidance of my mentors. Recording my first OG single, 'Dhokebazi,' composed by Sachin-Jigar, was a milestone moment, and I am overwhelmed by the love it received.

# Release of Ashwath Marimuthu's 'Dragon' postponed to February 21



**Chennai, Jan 19 (IANS)** The makers of director Ashwath Marimuthu's romantic comedy 'Dragon', featuring actor Pradeep Ranganathan in the lead, on Saturday announced that they were pushing the release of their film from February 14 to February 21.

Director Ashwath took to X to make the announcement. He wrote, "With all love and respect towards Ajith sir, his fans and team #vidamuyarchi, we are gracefully pushing our film by a week to Feb 21st. We'll use this extra one week to better our product and promote the film well ! Leaving the rest to audience @pradeeponelife @archanakalpathi @aishkalpathi @Ags_production."

The 'Dragon' team's decision comes a day after makers of actor Dhanush's 'Nilavukku Enmel Ennadi Kobam' announced that they were pushing their film's release from February 7 to February 21.

Director Ashwath Marimuthu's romantic comedy 'Dragon', featuring actor Pradeep Ranganathan in the lead, was originally scheduled for February 7. It was later pushed to February 14 for Valentine's Day. However, now, in the wake of director Magizh Thirumeni's 'Vidaa Muyarchi', featuring actor Ajith in the lead, releasing on February 6, other production houses are shifting their films to other dates.

Apart from Pradeep Ranganathan, Dragon will also feature directors K S Ravi Kumar, Gautham Vasudev Menon, Mysskin, and actors VJ Siddhu, Harshath Khan, Anupama Parameshwaran, Kayadu Lohar, Mariam George, Indhumathy Manigandan and producer Thenappan among others.

Produced by Kalpathi S Aghoram, Kalpathi S Ganesh and Kalpathi S Suresh, the film will have music by Leon James and cinematography by Niketh Bommi.

Editing for the film will be by Pradeep E Ragav and stunts are by Vicky and Dilip Subbarayan. The story for the film has been penned jointly by Ashwath Marimuthu and Pradeep Ranganathan while the dialogues and screenplay are by Ashwath Marimuthu.

# Newbies Aaman Devgan and Rasha Thadani wish to work with THESE Bollywood stars




**Mumbai, Jan 19 (IANS)** Aaman Devgan and Rasha Thadani's debut project "Azaad" reached the cinema halls on 17th January 2025. During an exclusive interaction with IANS, the newcomers were asked during a rapid-fire round "One actor you would love to work with but are too intimidated to approach".

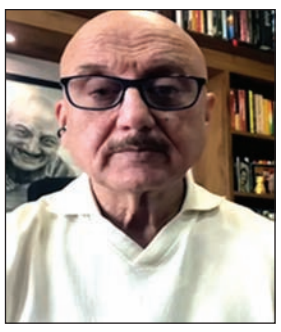
Replying to this, Rasha Thadani cutely mentioned "Deepika Padukone", whereas Aaman Devgan said, "Ranbir Kapoor".

Previously, during the same interview, they were asked, "It appears that you both are fluent in Hindi, was it a conscious effort to study or did it come naturally?" In response, Rasha Thadani was quoted saying, "My mother talks at home in Hindi only."

On the other hand, Aaman Devgan revealed, "I think the industry that we are trying to work in, its main language is Hindi. So if we don't know the language, it is not a good thing. I am glad. We were unaware that we know Hindi so well."

Recently, Kajol took to her Instagram handle and shared her best wishes for her nephew Aaman Devgan and Rashan Thadani for their debut project. The 'Do Patti' actress dropped a video of herself posing in a golden-hued outfit, along with yellow-tinted glasses. She captioned the post "Was at the premiere of #Azaad last night, the only thing missing? A horse by my side. Congratulations @aamandevgan @rashathadani on the release of your debut film, may this be the first of many #aboutlastnight #moviepremiere #ootn."

## Anupam Kher recites heartfelt poem on Kashmiri Hindus Exodus Day



**Mumbai, Jan 19 (IANS)** Veteran actor Anupam Kher, who essays the role of Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Narayan in the recently released movie 'Emergency', recited a poem for Kashmiri Pandits on Kashmir Hindus Exodus Day.

On Sunday, the senior actor took to his IX, formerly Twitter, and shared a video of himself reciting the poem.

He said in the video, "Home of Kashmiri Pandits, just 4-5 km away from the beautiful Dal lake. Surrounded by the fragrance of saffron, hidden behind the Pashmina shops near the markets In the narrow streets of the old city. On the old banks of the river Jhelum, entangled in the threads of memories and, houses like half-burnt pyres which are neither sold on postcards nor seen in films. But this is also Kashmir's broken glass of windows ringing from the rooftops". He further mentioned, "Wet memories of the water captured on the courtyard The scorching weather passes through the sun as if the silence of the night has been sniffed out by death, never pass by the palaces of Kashmiri Pandits because even the palaces will be haunted by a story like a child trapped in an orphanage which is neither accepted nor is justice given. The crime is not accepted, and the justice isn't given to the home of Kashmiri Pandits". The actor also penned a long note in his tweet as he wrote, "19th January, 1990. #KashmirHindus Exodus Day! It has been 35 Years since more than 500000 Hindus were brutally thrown out of their homes.

# Eighty thousand Kannappa comic books printed so far, says Vishnu Manchu



**Chennai, Jan 19 (IANS)** The makers of the pan-Indian film 'Kannappa', featuring Vishnu Manchu in the lead, are leaving no stone unturned to take their film based on the story of the warrior devotee of Lord Shiva to the next generation.

During an interaction with the media in Chennai, journalists were presented with two volumes of a comic. When Vishnu Manchu was asked about the comic books and if whether the story in them was what was being made into the film, he replied, "You have two volumes. We have also got a third volume which will be ready in a fortnight.

"For this generation, by which I mean kids who are less than 16 years old, I have to prepare them for a story of this kind. Initially, when we launched this book, I put out a message on Instagram asking those who wanted a copy of the comics to DM me. This was six to seven months ago. We only printed 5,000 copies and for even that, there were people who were apprehensive, saying, "Who will read them."

"However, until today, we have printed 80,000 books so far. The interest is quite high and we want that interest to translate to the film," Vishnu said.

Pointing out that comic books only have the base of the story, Vishnu said, "The true story is much, much different from what you see. Kannappa is a story that can be told in a single page. It is about how an atheist changed to being a devotee. When Lord Shiva wanted to see how big a devotee Kannappa was and put him to the test, he himself was surprised that he had such a big devotee in Kannappa so much so that he said that before puja is offered to him in his temple, it will have to be offered to Kannappa first.

"But who was Kannappa and what did he do before this interaction with Shiva. There are several versions and this film is my version of who Kannappa is. What was his journey and his relationship with his dad. I took the liberty of writing it. This is based on true facts but in my version of what it could have been," the actor replied.

The film, which is being directed by Mukesh Kumar Singh, features some of the top stars of the Indian film industry including Vishnu Manchu, Mohan Babu, Mohanlal, Prabhas, Preity Mukundhan, Akshay Kumar, Sarathkumar and Kajal Aggarwal. Cinematography is by US cinematographer Sheldon Chau and Indian cinematographer Siddharth.

# After women, Indian men's team also clinches inaugural KhoKho World Cup title



**New Delhi, Jan 19:** The Indian men's team followed suit to the women's side in the inaugural edition of the KhoKho World Cup as it clinched the title on the back of a thumping win over Nepal on Sunday, January 19. In an all India vs Nepal final in both men's and women's categories, the Indian teams reigned supreme over their opponents to bag both titles.

The men's team defeated Nepal for another time in the KhoKho World Cup after having beaten them in the tournament opener a few days ago. They bossed all four turns and kept Nepal at bay.

The Men in Blue took a lead of 26-0 while attacking on turn 1. They didn't let the opponents cede much ground while defending. Nepal could muster only 18 points in attack to remain 26-18 behind after the first two halves.

The Indian men then displayed an even better performance in the attack in the third turn. They collected 28 points to leave Nepal with much to do in the final turn as the hosts led 56-18 after the third end. The visitors couldn't do much in the fourth turn and amassed only eight points when they needed 37 for a win as India romped home 54-36 to seal the men's World Cup. The men's side remained unbeaten in the tournament, just like the women's side. They defeated Nepal in their tournament opener 42-37, before getting the better of Brazil in their second match 64-34. India defeated Peru 70-38 and ended the group stage with a win over Bhutan 71-34. India had defeated South Africa in the semifinal with a scoreline of 60-18.

Earlier the women's team also defeated Nepal 78-40. The Women in Blue took an early lead of 34-0 at the end of turn 1, as they attacked first. Nepal closed in the gap when they attacked, bringing it to 35-24 at the end of turn 2. The visitors were hanging by a thread, but the Women in Blue possibly took it away in turn 3, when they earned 38 more points.

Nepal had no answers to the giant 49-point lead. In the last turn when they were attacking, Nepal women found it extremely hard to catch the Indian defenders and could only amass 16 points. The hosts won the tournament with a scoreline of 78-40.

# Women's HIL: Soorma Hockey Club gear up for back-to-back clashes



**Ranchi, Jan 19 (IANS)** Soorma Hockey Club return to the MarangGomkeJaipal Singh MundaAstro Turf Hockey Stadium to play their fourth match of the Women's Hockey India League against Delhi SG Pipers on Monday. After that, Soorma will gear up again to take on Odisha Warriors on January 21.

In the last match against Delhi SG Pipers, in Rourkela, Soorma Hockey Club went down 2-0 courtesy of goals from SangitaKumari and Deepika, marking their first loss in the league so far. Head coach Jude Menezes and his team are now eager to set the record straight in the return fixture against the Pipers.

"We knew they would come out to play as they had lost both their matches till then however, we didn't play to our potential. In the first two games, we were happy with our performance, in the last match we didn't start the first half well but we did well in the last two quarters. But at the end of the day, we have to score goals to win matches and that's going to be the focus for the next match," Jude explained.

# India Open 2025: Olympic champions Viktor Axelsen, An Se Young clinch singles titles



**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** Paris Olympic champions Viktor Axelsen of Denmark and South Korea's An Se Young registered thumping victories to clinch the men's and women's singles titles, respectively in the India Open 2025 at the KD Jadhav Indoor Hall here on Sunday.

Axelsen, playing in his sixth India Open final in 10 years, defeated Hong Kong's Lee CheukYiu 21-16, 21-8 to clinch his third India Open men's singles crown while An Se Young had little trouble in packing off Thailand's PornpaweeChochuwong 21-12, 21-9 in the women's singles final.

In the paired events, the unseeded Japanese combination of Arisa Igarashi and Ayaka Sakuramoto capped off their giant-killing run with a clinical 21-15, 21-13 victory over South Korea's Kim Hye Jang and Kong Hee Young in the women's doubles summit clash. This is only the third tournament together for the Japanese combination with Igarashi, formerly known as ArisaHigashino, making a successful shift to women's doubles from mixed doubles.

However, Chinese second seeds Jiang Zhen Bang and Wei YaXin ended the run of the unseeded French combination of Thom Gicquel and DelphineDelrue with a 21-18, 21-17 win in the mixed doubles final.

Malaysian men's doubles combination of GohSzeFei and NurIzzuddin found a way past South Korea's Kim Won Ho and SeoSeung Jae 21-15, 13-21, 21-16 to clinch the title in the only match that went to the decider.

While An Se Young has been dominating the women's singles circuit, the men's singles final was expected to be a close affair as Axelsen had lost to Lee in the opening round of the Malaysian Open last week and had struggled to close out his quarterfinal and semi-final matches.

Aus Open: Djokovic beats Lehecka to set QF showdown with Alcaraz.

# Rohit Sharma promises to bring Champions Trophy 2025 to Wankhede Stadium



**Mumbai, Jan 19 (IANS)** Having brought two ICC trophies to the Wankhede Stadium -- the 2007 T20 World Cup as a member of the team and the 2024 T20 World Cup as skipper, India captain Rohit Sharma on Sunday promised that his team will do it's best to bring the upcoming 2025 Champions Trophy to the iconic venue for another round of celebration.

As the 2025 Champions Trophy was brought onto the stage and displayed to the people, Rohit said among the most cherished moments of his life was bringing the 2024 T20 World Cup to Wankhede after an open-top bus ride around Marine Drive.

"I am sure when we reach Dubai the wishes of 140 crore people will be with us. We will try to win it and bring the (ICC Champions Trophy) back here at the Wankhede," said Rohit.

The 37-year-old made the promise at the function organised by the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) to celebrate the completion of 50 years of the Wankhede Stadium here on Sunday.

The Champions Trophy, which is on a Trophy Tour around all participating countries, was brought into the Wankhede to mark the occasion. Rohit was present on the stage in the middle of the Wankhede Stadium along with Sunil Gavaskar, Dilip Vengsarkar, Ravi Shastri, Sachin Tendulkar, Diana Edulji and Ajinkya Rahane as players from Mumbai who have gone on to captain India in various forms of cricket.

India will start their Champions Trophy campaign against Bangladesh in Dubai on February 20, followed by matches against arch-rivals Pakistan and New Zealand on February 23 and March 2, respectively. India named their 15-member squad for the eight-team marquee tournament on Saturday.

# U19WC: India women begin title defense with 9-wicket win over West Indies



**Kuala Lumpur, Jan 19 (IANS)** Parunika Sisodia, Joshitha VJ and Aayushi Shukla picked seven wickets between themselves as India began their U19 World Cup title defence in fiery style with a commanding nine-wicket win over the West Indies at the Bayuemas Oval on Sunday. After winning the toss and electing to bowl first, India were in control from the word go to take control of the proceedings. Pacer Joshitha, named Player of the Match, dented West Indies early by taking 2-5 in two overs, before Parunika (3-7) and Aayushi (2-6) shone to bowl them out for just 44 in 13.2 overs.

India were also helped by the fact that the West Indies' shoddy running between the wickets gave them three scalps. In reply, India managed to chase down the total in only 4.2 overs with nine wickets in hand, as vice-captain Sanika Chalke and wicketkeeper G Kamalini remained unbeaten on 18 and 16 respectively.

**Brief Scores:** West Indies 44 in 13.2 overs (Kenika Cassar 15, Asabi Callendar 12; ParunikaSisodia 3-7, Joshitha VJ 2-5) lost to India 47/1 in 4.2 overs (Sanika Chalke 18 not out, G Kamalini 16 not out; Jahzara Claxton 1-18) by nine wickets.

# Seraikela Kharsawan Boxing Association holds AGM, announces new office bearers

**Mail News Service**



**Gamharia, Jan 19:** The annual meeting of the Seraikela Kharsawan Boxing Association was held today under the chairmanship of Vasco Besra at Sidhu Kanu Chowk, Mirud, in the Gamharia block.

The event was attended by a distinguished group of guests, including Singhbhum MP Joba Manjhi, Inside Jharkhand News Director Ankur Singh, international boxing coach Ernest Lakra and international boxer Aruna Mishra, among others.The meeting's highlight was the announcement of the new office bearers for the association. Joba Manjhi, the chief guest, declared the appointments: Vasco Besra as President, Amit Singh Dev and Apel Samad as Vice Presidents, Himanshu Kumar Singh as General Secretary, Balram Patsani as Joint Secretary, P Vasudev Rao as Treasurer and Ajit Kumar Singh, Santosh Mahato and Anirudh Mahato as Executive Members.

In her address, Manjhi expressed her happiness over the growth of the association and called upon the youth of the area to take up boxing, aiming to produce international-level athletes who could bring recognition to Jharkhand in the field of sports.Special guest Ankur Singh shared plans for a state-level boxing competition to be organized in collaboration with the association soon. Aruna Mishra, while congratulating the association, encouraged more children from the district to get involved in boxing and pursue it seriously.The event was conducted by Ajit Singh and the vote of thanks was given by Himanshu Kumar Singh. Many other dignitaries, including Bhunda Besra, Durga Besra, former national boxer Sukhlal Soye and many local sports enthusiasts, also attended the event, marking a significant moment for the boxing community in the region. (w/nkm)

# Euro Kidz International holds sixth annual sports day



**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** Euro Kidz International School organised 6th annual sports day on Saturday, showcasing a variety of talents from students. The event featured a beautiful drill and march past presented by the kindergarteners. Students participated in various races, including those for parents, adding an element of enthusiasm and engagement. Dr. Santanu Dutta, the chief guest and Dr. Riya Dutta, the guest of honour, attended the event, making it a memorable occasion. The event was marked by a spirit of unity, sportsmanship, and joy, creating an overall wonderful and memorable celebration for students, parents and teachers alike.

# Sports festival in memory of Tafazzul Karim from Jan 21

**Mail News Service**



**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** A ten-day sports festival will be organized in memory of educationist late Tafazzul Karim in Jamshedpur. The festival, set to begin on January 21, will be held at Mango under the joint aegis of the social organization Aman Welfare Mission and APJ Kalam School, informed organizing committee chairman, Dr. Afroz Shakeel.

Addressing press meet on Sunday, Dr. Shakeel said that the sports festival will feature various events, including cricket, football, karate, inter-school spelling competitions, inter-school essay competitions, quiz competitions, drawing competitions, speech competitions and chess competitions.

The winners of these competitions will be honoured with trophies and certificates. Dr. Afroz Shakeel mentioned that approximately 1,000 school children are expected to participate in the ten-day sports festival.

It is noteworthy that January 21 marks the death anniversary of Tafazzul Karim, making this festival a meaningful tribute to his legacy.

Also present were Md. Tahir Hussain, Shakeel Ahmed and others.

# Aathmachila cum Tusu Mela in Sandeburu concludes with sports competition

**Mail News Service**



**Seraikela, Jan 19:** The Aathmachila cum Tusu fair in Sandeburu, Kharsawan, concluded with great enthusiasm on the occasion of Makar Sankranti. The fair, a lively tradition, attracted people from numerous nearby villages who arrived to celebrate with songs and dances. The fair was filled with vibrant stalls selling local items and offering delicious food, creating a festive atmosphere for children and adults alike.

In addition to the celebrations, the fair organizing committee hosted a sports competition, which included various fun events for both children and adults. The winners were awarded by the fair's organizing committee.

Dinesh Kumar Mahato, the chairman of the committee, emphasized the significance of such fairs in fostering community spirit. "Fairs like these strengthen our bonds and spread brotherhood in our community. This tradition must be preserved for future generations," he said.

The winners of various competitions included Amar Hembram, who secured first place in the children's race and Sushila Sundi, who topped the needle-thread race. The dance competition saw Arvind Samad win first place, while Khushi Mahato emerged victorious in the pot-breaking race. (w/nkm)

# Yoga and fun games for senior citizens in Jamshedpur




**Mail News Service**

**Jamshedpur, January 19 :** Tata Steel sports department successfully conducted two events for senior citizens under Senior Citizen Fun and Fitness league 2024-25 on January 17-18.

Yoga event was conducted at National Metallurgical Laboratory (NML) auditorium on January 17. Around 100 persons attended the event.

On January 18, fun activity and games were organised at Archery ground at JRD Tata Sports Complex which was attended by total 30 persons.

Both the events were well coordinated by Dinesh Rakshit and Neelam Kumari with support from other employees of sports department.

# East Singhbhum wins J'khand State Taekwondo Competition

**Mail News Service**



**Jamshedpur, Jan 19:** The 24th Jharkhand State Taekwondo Competition, organized by East Singhbhum under the aegis of Jharkhand Taekwondo Association, concluded today at Rajasthan Bhawan Mango. The event, held on January 18 and 19, 2025, saw East Singhbhum emerge as the winner in the Kyorugi category, while Ranchi secured the runner-up position.

In the Poomsae category, West Singhbhum claimed the top spot. The closing ceremony was graced by Amarpreet Singh Kale (State Spokesperson, BJP) and Neeraj Singh, State President of the Business Cell, as chief guests. They awarded medals and trophies to the winning and runner-up teams, motivating the players with their encouragement.

Attendees included South Point School Director Shiv Prakash Sharma, Jharkhand Taekwondo Association Vice President Gopal Kumar, East Singhbhum Taekwondo Association President Manohar Singh, and several other officials and coaches.

The event was officiated by Chief and Referee Rohit Singh, along with a dedicated team including Amar Bauri, Mahendra, Subhash, Soham, Shweta and others. This competition marks a significant achievement for East Singhbhum and highlights the growing prominence of Taekwondo in Jharkhand.



Newly-initiated 'Naga Sadhus' of 'Panchayati Akhara Shri Niranjani' during the Mahakumbh, at Sangam in Prayagraj.

# Kejriwal promises houses on instalments to Dalit sanitation workers

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** Eyeing the vote bank of Dalit government employees, AAP National Convenor Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday proposed building low-cost houses for sanitation workers and wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking subsidised land for the purpose.

Addressing media persons, Kejriwal said the Delhi government will build affordable houses for sanitation workers on land given by the Centre and the occupants will repay the cost of these houses to the government in easy instalments to own a flat at the time of retirement.

"I have proposed that the scheme can begin with sanitation workers of New Delhi Municipal



Corporation (NDMC) and Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and can be extended to other government employees," he said.

Highlighting the latest welfare scheme proposed by him, Kejriwal said many lower-level employees had told him about the challenges they face after retirement.

"They live in government accommodation while on the job but vacate these houses after retirement. They are unable to purchase their own homes or afford expensive rental accommodation in Delhi, leaving them and their families in a vulnerable situation," Kejriwal said, adding that he had personally seen some sanitation workers being forced to live in slums after retirement.

In a letter addressed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, shared with the media, Kejriwal said: "Since land-related matters in Delhi come under the Central government, you are requested to provide land to Safai Karamcharis at concessional rates. Delhi Government will build houses for them on these lands and the workers will repay the cost of these houses to the government in easy instalments."

## Parvesh says Kejriwal using Punjab funds in campaign, seeks ECI probe

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** BJP candidate from New Delhi Assembly constituency Parvesh Verma on Sunday sought an Election Commission of India (ECI) probe into the alleged use of Rs 50 crore sent from Punjab for funding the election campaign of his rival and AAP Convenor Arvind Kejriwal.

Addressing a press conference, Verma claimed that Kejriwal is going to lose the February 5 election by 20,000 votes and the fear of this humiliating defeat is forcing him to resort to illegal means and spread falsehoods about threat to his life.

"Arvind Kejriwal is conducting his election campaign with a convoy of 50 cars and 400 Punjab Police personnel, despite previously taking oaths to refuse security and vehicles," said Parvesh Verma.

The BJP leader said that a sum of Rs 50 crore had allegedly been sent by the AAP government in Punjab solely for Kejriwal's campaign in the New Delhi constituency and demanded an investigation by the ECI.

Verma said that whenever Kejriwal visits the New Delhi constituency for campaigning, the people question him about employment, electricity, and other pressing issues and he has no answers.

## Hindenburg founder Anderson named in investigations for securities fraud, faulty disclosures: Reports

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** Substantial evidence has begun to emerge against the controversial short-seller Hindenburg Research and its founder Nathan Anderson in a court battle in Ontario, Canada, exposing Hindenburg's secret ties, and potential securities fraud and faulty disclosures made by the firm and the founder, according to media reports.

"There are multiple counts of securities fraud for both Nate Anderson and Anson Funds, and we have only reviewed 5 per cent of the material as of the time of writing," said a report by Market Frauds, a Canadian online investigative news outlet.

"It is almost certain that when the entire exchange between Hindenburg and Anson reaches the SEC, Nate Anderson will be



charged with securities fraud in 2025," the report states.

Hindenburg's decision to abruptly close down operations has taken many by surprise, particularly due to its timing -- just three days before Donald Trump's inauguration.In November 2024, Bloomberg's Crack Research team published an extensive report, the first in a series exposing the covert forces behind various short-sellers and research firms, including Hindenburg. The report, titled "Short-Sellers' Secret Talks and Alliances Emerge in Court Battle", centred on firms, including Hindenburg Research and Anson Funds, a Canada-based fund operated by Moez Kassam, of Indian origin. Denying any relationship with Anson, Hindenburg told Bloomberg that it receives "hundreds of leads each year from diverse sources. We rigorously vet each lead and have always maintained full editorial independence over our work," it said.

## Railway milestone: 18-coach trial run on Katra-Budgam track in J&K

**Jammu, Jan 19 (IANS)** The trial run on the Katra-Budgam railway track of Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) was completed on Sunday as the 18-coach trial train started at 8 a.m. from Katra railway station towards Kashmir

"The trial 18-coach train has reached Budgam now and this completes the final trial run on the USBRL", officials of the railway monitoring the trial run said here.

The ambitious USBRL was completed for Rs 41,000 crore. The track covers 326 Km out of which 111 Km section is in tunnels with the T-49 tunnel being 12.77 Km long, which is the longest railway tunnel in the country.



Indian Railways has made the world's highest railway bridge over the Chenab River in the Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir. The iconic Chenab Bridge is 1,315m long having an arch span of 467m and a height of 359m above the river bed. The Chenab Rail Bridge is a steel and concrete arch bridge carrying a single-track railway line, located between Bakkal and Kauri in the Reasi district of Jammu Division.

The bridge spans the Chenab River at a height of 359 m (1,178 ft) above the river, making it the world's highest rail bridge and the world's highest arch. It is built between the Sangaldan Railway Station and the Reasi Railway Station.

## JDN protests search at Palamu Medical College girls hostel, raises concerns

**Dhanbad, Jan 19:** The state body of the IMA Junior Doctors Network (JDN) is in turmoil following a late-night search at the girls' hostel of Mednirai Medical College Hospital (MMCH) in Palamu by the district administration. The JDN leadership has condemned the action, calling it an overstep, as the search was conducted without prior permission from the college authorities.The incident occurred on Saturday evening around 8:30 pm when a team led by SDM Sulochna Meena arrived unannounced at the girls' hostel. The search included rooms, washrooms and the entire hostel campus. Since no college authority was present with the search team, female MBBS students strongly protested the intrusion.

According to sources, MMCH Principal Dr. Paras Nath Mahto and senior faculty member Dr. Atul Prakash were en route to attend a CME program when the SDM requested the phone number of the hostel warden but did not seek formal permission for the search. It was only after the situation escalated that Dr. Mahto arrived at the hostel around 10 pm to handle the issue. Under medical college guidelines, the district administration cannot enter the campus without prior consent from the college authorities. After the search, the administration failed to provide any information about the objectionable items allegedly found in the hostel. "Such searches have never been conducted in any girls' hostel of a medical college in the state. If it was done following the rules, we would support it; otherwise, we will protest strongly," stated JDN President Dr. Vikash Kumar. Dr. Kumar, who is also the joint secretary of IMA Ranchi, confirmed that medical bodies across the state would join the protest.Dr. Raghvendra Kumar, JDN General Secretary, emphasized that students from all six medical colleges in the state would unite against what they described as the "dictatorship" of the Palamu administration. Meanwhile, Dr. Sushil Kumar, JDN Chairman, revealed that the association is attempting to meet with the health minister to discuss the incident. Senior faculty members at MMCH also expressed their disapproval of the search, stating that the administration should have sought permission from the principal if they had credible information regarding objectionable items in the hostel. Despite several attempts, neither Dr. Mahto nor SDM Dr. Meena were available for comment. (w/nkm)

## 'Mann Ki Baat': This Republic Day is very special, says PM Modi

**New Delhi, Jan 19 (IANS)** In his first 'Mann ki Baat' episode of 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday wished all countrymen a happy Republic Day in advance and said it was special this time.

The Prime Minister started his address by paying homage to the great leaders of the nation and their contributions towards the country.

He said, "You must have noticed one thing, Mann Ki Baat takes place on the last Sunday of the month...But this time, we are meeting a week earlier, on the third Sunday of the month, instead of the fourth month, because next Sunday is Republic Day. I wish all countrymen a happy republic day in advance."

"This Republic Day is very special. This is the 75th anniversary of the Republic of India. This year marks 75 years of the implementation of the Constitution of India. I bow to all those great in the



118th episode of his radio broadcast. Playing a part of Dr B.R. Ambedkar's address in the radio address, PM Modi said, "When the Constituent Assembly started its work then Babasaheb Ambedkar said a very important thing regarding cooperation...In the address, Dr Ambedkar stressed that the Constituent Assembly must work together, be united and jointly work together for the welfare of all."

The Prime Minister also played audio of Dr Rajendra Prasad, who was the head of the Constituent Assembly, in which he emphasised India's history and culture represent the nation's sense of living together with peace, and stressed that the country will continue to keep doing so.

"Dr Rajendra Prasad ji spoke about the country's commitment towards human values," PM Modi said.

Playing an audio of Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee, PM Modi said, "He had raised the issue of equal opportunities."

"We Indians should take inspiration from these ideas and work towards building India that makes our Consitution makers proud," he said.

He mentioned that a day before the Republic Day is National Voters' Day, which is observed because the Election Commission of India was established on this day.

"Our Constitution makers have given the Election Commission great importance in the Constitution for people's participation in democracy. In 1951-52, when the elections took place for the first time in the country, people were sceptical, about whether the country's democracy will survive. But our country proved all the apprehensions wrong. After all, India is the mother of democracy," PM Modi said.

## Assam STF nabs one more member of terrorist group 'Ansarullah Bangla Team'

**Guwahati, Jan 19 (IANS)** The Special Task Force (STF) of Assam Police has arrested another dreaded cadre of the Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT), a Bangladesh-based terror group affiliated with Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), officials said on Sunday.

An Assam Police spokesperson said that the STF, in another successful operation against fundamentalists and Global Terrorist Organisations (GTO) arrested the most wanted Jihadi/Islamic extremist Jaheer Ali from Dhubri, an Assam district,. shares border with Bangladesh and West Bengal.With the latest arrest of Ali, the STF so far arrested 13 associates of the ABT."These 13 cadres, including a Bangladeshi national, were active in clandestine activities under the direction of Md Farhan Israk, a close associate of Jasimuddin Rahmani, the chief of ABT."They sent one Bangladeshi national, Md Sad Radi alias Shab Sheikh a resident of Rajshahi, Bangladesh, to India to spread their nefarious ideology amongst like minded Indian National across India," the spokesperson said.He said that under the direction of STF Chief Partha Sarathi Mahanta, 'Operation Praghat' was conducted.The accused were arrested and recovery of arms, ammunition, explosives and other materials and various incriminating documents, mobile phones was made from their possession.On December 30 last year, ABT cadre and the absconding prime accused, Gazi Rahman (35) was arrested with the assistance of Kokrajhar Police.On December 27 last year, ABT associate Shahinur Islam (36) was arrested from Bandhabpara in Dhubri District while on December 24, the STF arrested Abdul Zaher Sheikh and Sabbir Mirdha from Namapara in Kokrajhar district and a huge cache of arms and ammunition and other war-like items were recovered from the hideout of one of the arrested accused persons.

## Dr. Thakur M.K. Singh re-elected JSHSA GS, new team takes charge

**Dhanbad, Jan 19:** In the recently held elections for the Jharkhand State Health Services Association (JSHSA), Dr. Thakur Mritunjay Kumar Singh was re-elected as the General Secretary for a second consecutive term, securing 899 votes. His opponent, Dr. Krishna Murari Singh, received 267 votes. Dr. Sharad Kumar from Deoghar won the race for State Convener with the highest votes (822), defeating Dr. Sidheswar Baskey (213) and Dr. Santosh Kumar (122). The election also saw Dr. Jagannath Hembrom of Chaibasa becoming the new Vice-President for the Kolhan Division, winning 138 votes against Dr. Shahid Anwar of Jamshedpur, who received 50 votes.Speaking about the new team, Dr. Bimlesh Singh, the newly elected President, said, “Our focus will be on addressing the concerns of medical officers and ensuring the effective implementation of state government health programs.” Several positions, including the President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer and Joint Secretaries, were elected unopposed and voting was held only for the posts of General Secretary, State Convener and Vice-President of Kolhan Division. The election process was smooth and peaceful, with no protests reported.

## Seven deaths in West Champaran: No link to spurious liquor, says SDM

**Patna, Jan 19:** Seven villagers from Mathia village in Bihar’s West Champaran district have died over the past five days, sparking concern among locals. Narkatiaganj's Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM), Surya Prakash Gupta, clarified on Sunday that the deaths were not linked to the consumption of spurious liquor, ruling out that possibility.Gupta explained that one death occurred due to an accident, while two others succumbed to pre-existing ailments. "Cold diarrhea has been cited as the reason for the death of three individuals, while one passed away from breathing problems," Gupta stated. These deaths took place between January 14 and January 19. However, he noted that the family members had already conducted the cremation before the deaths were reported.A medical team, along with civil and police officials, is currently stationed in the village. "We have alerted local representatives to monitor the situation and inform us immediately if anyone else falls ill," added Gupta. This incident follows the tragic deaths of 16 individuals in 2021 from alleged spurious liquor consumption in the neighboring Lauriya and Ramnagar blocks.Meanwhile, suspicion over the cause of death has arisen, particularly from the family of one of the deceased. Dilip Gupta, the elder brother of Pradeep Gupta, who passed away, described his brother as a habitual drinker. "On January 16, after drinking, he began retching and his condition worsened. He was taken to the Bettiah hospital but collapsed on the way," Gupta reported, further fueling suspicions about the cause of his death.

## Saif Ali Khan attack case: How Mumbai Police tracked down Bangladeshi attacker

**Mumbai, Jan 19 (IANS)** Bangladeshi national, Shariful Islam Shehzad had illegally entered India and was living under the false name Bijoy Das, the Mumbai Police said on Sunday after arresting him for allegedly breaking into actor Saif Ali Khan's residence and attacking him during a burglary attempt.

The Mumbai Police arrested Shehzad on Sunday from Maharashtra's Thane.

Police had formed 30 teams to track down the accused.

CCTV footage of the building in Bandra where Saif Ali Khan, his wife Kareena Kapoor Khan and their sons live. The police, investigating the case, noticed the suspect leaving the building after the attack. Police then scanned several hours of footage from across the city to locate the suspect.

The suspect's footage was captured by a CCTV camera in DN Nagar in Andheri. They saw the suspect getting off the bike and tracked down the two-wheeler using its number.

While the CCTVs were being scanned thoroughly, the police had local intelligence inputs and zeroed in on a rented accommodation at Koliwada in Worl.

The investigating team found that the accused lived with three others,



sources in the police said.

A police team went to this accommodation and questioned the people living there. They managed to get the suspect's name and related information. Police also got his phone number and tracked his phone location, the sources added.

Sources said the accused was hiding in a thicket on a deserted road in Thane. Police first surrounded him from all sides and then took him into custody.

Police have said they did not find any Indian document from Shehzad but found evidence that established he is a Bangladeshi national who crossed over illegally.

During questioning, he claimed that he did not know that he was breaking into Saif Ali Khan's home, a source said.

Sources said the accused told police that he used the rear staircase and air-conditioning ducts to go inside the building. He also said it was the first time he had entered the building.Police have said they may recreate the scene with the accused.

Earlier in the day, Dikshit Gedam, DCP, Crime Branch Mumbai, addressed a press conference and said, "There is primary evidence to anticipate that the accused is a Bangladeshi. He does not have valid Indian documents. Some seizures indicate that he is a Bangladeshi national."

He said that on January 16, at 2 a.m., actor Saif Ali Khan was attacked at his residence. "FIR was registered and one accused has been arrested. His name is Mohammad Shariful Islam Shehzad, he is 30 years old. He entered the house with the intention of robbery. He will be produced in the court and custody will be demanded," said the DCP.