



4
KERALA CM CALLS MAHA MIN'S 'MINI-PAK' REMARK DEPLORABLE



11
ISRAEL RAIDS LAST FUNCTIONING NORTHERN GAZA HOSPITAL



16
A LOOK AT INDIA'S TOP SPORTING MOMENTS IN 2024

MANIPUR CM SAYS SORRY FOR ETHNIC STRIFE, HOPEFUL OF PEACE

“We now have to forget past mistakes and have to start a new life: I hope with the New Year, normalcy and peace will be restored in state”

TDG NETWORK
IMPHAL

“Apologising” for the ongoing crisis in the state in which around 200 people have died and many left their homes, Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Tuesday asked people to “forget the past” and start a new life for peaceful and prosperous Manipur.

The violence in Manipur between the Meitei and the Kuki communities erupted after a rally by the All Tribal Students Union of Manipur (ATSUM) on May 3, 2023, following the Manipur High Court order directing the state to consider the inclusion of the Meitei community in the Scheduled Tribes list.

Reflecting on the crisis, the Manipur CM said, “This entire year has been very unfortunate. I feel regret and I want to say sorry to the



N Biren Singh

people of the state for what is happening till today, since last May 3.”

“Many people lost their loved ones. Many people left their homes. I really feel regret. I would like to apologise,” he added.

Singh further appealed to the various communities in the state to “forget past mis-

takes and start a new life”. “Now, I hope after seeing the last 3-4 months’ progress towards peace, I hope that with the New Year 2025, normalcy and peace will be restored in the state. I want to appeal to all the communities of the state that whatever happened has happened. We now have to forget past

“This entire year has been very unfortunate. I feel regret and I want to say sorry to the people of the state for what is happening till today, since last May 3.”

mistakes and have to start a new life. A peaceful Manipur, a prosperous Manipur, we should all live together,” he said.

Manipur Chief Minister further said that till date about 200 people have died and around 12,247 FIRs have been registered in the state. Addressing a press con-

ference, Singh noted that 625 accused were arrested and around 5600 arms and weapons were also recovered.

He further stated that the central government has provided funds to construct new houses for the displaced persons.

“Till now, altogether roughly 200 people have died, and around 12,247 FIRs were registered, and 625 accused were arrested, and around 5,600 arms and weapons were included, and around 35,000 ammunitions were recovered. Good progress is there in tackling the issues. The central government has provided enough security personnel and enough funds to help the displaced families and enough funds to construct new houses for the displaced persons,” the Manipur CM stated.

Farmers seek Centre's invite for talks on demands

- Dallewal's hunger strike crosses 35 days
- SC defers hearing on hospital shift to January 2
- Punjab govt says negotiations under way

NEERAJ MOHAN
CHANDIGARH

The Punjab government on Tuesday informed the Supreme Court that the protesting farmers have written to the Union government, stating that fasting farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal would accept medical assistance only if the Centre invites them for talks to discuss their long-standing demands.

Dallewal (70) has been on an indefinite hunger strike since November 26 for 13 demands of the farmers including a legal guarantee of Minimum Support Price (MSP) for crops and a loan waiver.



Jagjit Singh Dallewal (File photo)

Despite his deteriorating health, he has refused medical intervention, fearing forceful removal from the protest site by authorities. The Supreme Court on Tuesday deferred its hear-

ing to January 2 regarding Punjab's compliance with an earlier order to shift Dallewal to a hospital.

The apex court had instructed the Punjab government to P3

Expelled from college over unpaid fees, Dalit girl in Haryana ends life

TDG NETWORK
CHANDIGARH

A Dalit student from Sharda College in Singhani village, Bhiwani district in Haryana reportedly died by suicide due to pressure over unpaid fees and alleged harassment. As per the initial reports by the police, a case of abetment to suicide has been registered against four individuals, including the college principal. The incident took place on December 24.

The family accused the police of initially being reluctant to file the case. They stated that the delay in recording the father's statement was due to his poor mental condition.

Jagdish, the student's fa-

The family accused the police of initially being reluctant to file the case. They stated that the delay in recording the father's statement was due to his poor mental condition.

ther, said his daughter was enrolled at Sharda College. Financial difficulties prevented him from paying her pending fees of Rs 35,000 for the 2024-25 academic year. As a result, the col-

lege administration barred her from appearing in her fifth-semester exams on December 6 and subsequently expelled her.

The victim's father also alleged that the college administration coerced his daughter into unethical activities, unable to bear this harassment, she took her own life. Police have registered a case against Hanuman Singh, his son, an unidentified daughter, and the principal under relevant sections of the law. However, the college administration has denied all accusations as baseless. Jitender Singh, in-charge of Bhiwani police station, confirmed that a case of abetment to suicide has been filed and the investigation is underway.

PM to launch five new trains connecting Delhi to Kashmir in New Year

AJAY JANDYAL
SRINAGAR

In a significant step towards enhancing connectivity, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to inaugurate five new train services linking Delhi to the Kashmir Valley in January, providing a major boost to travel comfort and convenience. The new trains, designed with modern amenities including advanced heating systems, aim to offer a comfortable journey for passengers, especially during the harsh winter months. The introduction of heating systems in the coaches is a first for Indian Railways, specifically catering to the needs of travelers in colder regions prone to extreme cold and snowfall.

Reports confirm that Prime Minister Modi will virtually inaugurate the



Jammu Railway Division from New Delhi on January 6, marking a new chapter in the region's railway network.

Railway officials have assured that the new services will feature state-of-the-art technology to ensure smooth operations, even in challenging weather conditions. The trains are expected to significantly improve travel experiences and connectivity, particularly for those traveling to and from the Valley.

India fourth nation to achieve space-docking

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Following the successful launch of the SpaDeX mission, Union Minister of State Jitendra Singh stated that India has become the fourth country to join the select league of nations to achieve space docking through its own indigenously developed “Bharatiya Docking System.”

Taking to X, Singh said, “India has become the fourth country to join the select league of nations to achieve space docking, through its own indigenously developed ‘Bharatiya Docking System.’”

“Privileged to be associated with the Department of Space at a time when Team #ISRO mesmerizes the world with global wonders, P3



People hold balloons displaying ‘2025’ as they welcome the upcoming year on the last day of the year 2024, in Prayagraj on Tuesday. ANI

Yunus pays tribute to Manmohan Singh

AGENCIES
DHAKA

Bangladesh Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus on Tuesday paid a rich tribute to former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who died last week.

Bhagat Singh Gallery in Lahore's Poonch House opened

TARUNI GANDHI
CHANDIGARH

The Punjab government in Pakistan has inaugurated the Bhagat Singh Gallery in the historic Poonch House, Lahore, where the iconic freedom fighter's trial took place 93 years ago. The gallery, which opened to tourists on Monday, was inaugurated by Punjab Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman.

The gallery features an extensive collection of historical artifacts, including photographs, letters,

Professor Yunus visited the Indian High Commission in Dhaka and placed a floral wreath at the portrait of late PM Manmohan Singh.

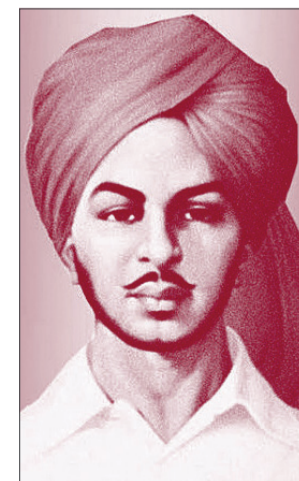
He also wrote a condolence message in the condolence book opened at the High Commission.

India is observing a seven-day

mourning for the late Prime Minister of the country.

Indian High Commissioner Pranay Kumar Verma received the Chief Adviser at the High Commission at Baridhara at 11:30 am.

Professor Yunus spoke briefly with the High P3



including his execution certificate, letters, photo-

graphs, and newspaper clippings. The new gallery expands on these exhibits, offering visitors a deeper insight into Singh's life and his fight against British colonial rule.

Bhagat Singh, along with his associates Sukhdev and Rajguru, was tried and convicted for the assassination of British police officer John P. Saunders. He was executed on March 23, 1931, at the age of 23, in Lahore's district jail. Documents in the gallery reveal details of his petitions, including

requests for court orders, interviews with his father, and access to newspapers and books during his imprisonment.

One notable document, signed by the jail superintendent, certifies Singh's execution, confirming that all procedures were followed, and no errors occurred. The revolutionary's applications notably ended with the phrase “Yours etc. etc.” instead of conventional closings, reflecting his defiance against oppression.

P3

Small savings rates kept unchanged for January-March

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The central government has kept the interest rates unchanged on various small savings schemes for the January-March quarter of Financial year 2024-25, according to an official notification from the Ministry of Finance. “The rates of interest on various Small Savings Scheme for the second quarter of FY 2024-25 starting from 1st January 2025 and ending on 31st March 2025 shall remain unchanged from those notified for the first quarter (1st October 2024 to 31st December 2024) of FY 25,” said the Finance Ministry.

DETAILS P7



The Daily Guardian Review wishes all our readers a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

ANTI-MARGINALISED MENTALITY: CONG CHIEF KHARGE ATTACKS BJP

Hits out at alleged caste atrocities against Dalits, Adivasis

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge on Monday hit out at Union Home Minister Amit Shah and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) over the alleged caste atrocities committed against Dalits and Adivasis in the states including Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh where they are in power.

"In Parliament, Home Minister Amit Shah insults Babasaheb Ambedkar and the same anti-marginalised mentality is being repeated in BJP-ruled states," Kharge posted on X.

Calling BJP's rule "anti-constitutional," the Congress President said that atrocities are committed against Dalits, Adivasis, Backward (Classes), and minority communities under the Modi rule.

"It is well known that

SLAMS SHAH, BJP-RULED STATES

- "In Parliament, Home Minister Amit Shah insults Babasaheb Ambedkar and the same anti-marginalised mentality is being repeated in BJP-ruled states," Kharge posted on X.
- "It is well known that atrocities are being committed against Dalits, Adivasis, backward and minority communities under the anti-constitutional rule of the Modi government," the Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Rajya Sabha said.
- "A crime is committed against Dalit-Adivasi women and children every hour, and according to the NCRB, these figures have doubled since 2014," he added.



"Congress will continue to fight the anti-constitutional thinking of the BJP-RSS," Kharge added. (ANI)

atrocities are being committed against Dalits, Adivasis, backward and minority communities under the anti-constitutional rule of the Modi government. Those who are poor and deprived are suffering the brunt of Manuwaad," Kharge, who is the Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Rajya Sabha, said.

"A crime is committed against Dalit-Adivasi

women and children every hour, and according to the NCRB, these figures have doubled since 2014," he added.

The Congress President cited several incidents of caste atrocities which have been reported recently, including the death of a Dalit youth in police custody in Madhya Pradesh's Dewas. He also said that an Adivasi woman in Odisha's Bala-

sores was tied to a tree and beaten up.

"In Madhya Pradesh's Dewas, a Dalit youth is killed in police custody. An Adivasi woman in Odisha's Balasore was tied to a tree and beaten up. A Dalit girl student from Haryana's Bhiwani was forced to commit suicide after being unable to pay her BA exam fees. In Maharashtra's Palghar, an Adivasi woman who

was pregnant died after she had to travel 100 km in search of an ICU. Three Dalit families are forced to migrate because of caste-based attacks on them and the police remain silent in Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar," Kharge said.

"In Parliament, Home Minister Amit Shah insults Babasaheb Ambedkar and the same anti-marginalised mentality is being repeated in BJP-ruled states," Kharge posted on X.

was pregnant died after she had to travel 100 km in search of an ICU. Three Dalit families are forced to migrate because of caste-based attacks on them and the police remain silent in Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar," Kharge said.

He further asserted that Congress will not allow the constitutional rights of 140 crore Indians to be "violated."

Uniform Civil Code BJP's manifesto, pending with law panel: Law Min Meghwal

TSG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Expressing the government's intent to work towards bringing Uniform Civil Code, Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal on Tuesday said that UCC figured in the BJP manifesto for 2024 Lok Sabha polls and the party makes such a mention when it feels that the proposal can be implemented.

Meghwal said that UCC was being implemented in Goa and Uttarakhand has enacted a law for its implementation.

"The UCC was a part of BJP's manifesto, no doubt about it. We take up things in the manifesto when we think it is possible. States also worked on it. It was already implemented in Goa and Uttarakhand passed the act. The matter is pending with the Law Commission of India, other states are also interested," he said.

The terms of reference of the 23rd Law Commission, which was constituted earlier this year, included the Uniform Civil Code.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said earlier this month in Parliament that the government was exerting its force to have a "secular civil code". He made the remarks in Lok Sabha during his speech in a debate marking 75 years of India's constitution.

"There is a burning issue I wish to discuss, and that is the Uniform Civil Code! This topic was not overlooked by the Constituent Assembly either. The Constituent Assembly engaged in lengthy and in-depth discussions about the Uniform Civil Code. After rigorous debates, they decided that it would be better for which ever government is elected

in the future to take a decision on this matter and implement the Uniform Civil Code in the country. This was a directive from the Constituent Assembly, and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar himself had said so. However, those who neither understand the Constitution nor the country, and have read nothing beyond their hunger for power, are unaware of what Babasaheb had actually said. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had strongly advocated for the abolition of personal laws that were based on religious grounds," PM Modi had said.

"During the debates of that era, K.M. Munshi, a prominent member of the Constituent Assembly, emphasized that the Uniform Civil Code was essential for the unity and modernity of the nation. The Supreme Court, too, on multiple occasions, has stated the necessity of implementing a Uniform Civil Code in the country at the earliest and has even directed governments to work towards it.

Glad Amit Shah has declared Wayanad tragedy as 'disaster of severe nature': Priyanka

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi welcomed Union Home Minister Amit Shah's decision to classify the Wayanad tragedy as a "Disaster of Severe Nature," underlining that this step would aid rehabilitation efforts and called for the swift allocation of necessary funds.

In her post on X, the Wayanad MP described the Centre's decision as "a step in the right direction."

She said, "I am glad @AmitShah ji has finally taken the decision to declare the Wayanad tragedy as a 'Disaster of Severe Nature.' This will greatly help those



in need of rehabilitation and is definitely a step in the right direction. We will all be grateful if adequate funds for the same can also be allocated at the earliest."

Earlier, the Centre informed the state of Kerala that the Meppadi landslide

disaster in Wayanad district has been considered by the Inter-Ministerial Central Team as a disaster of "severe nature" for all practical purposes.

In a communication, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs stated, "Keeping in view the intensity and magnitude of the Meppadi landslide disaster in Wayanad district, it has been considered by the Inter-Ministerial Central Team (IMCT) as a disaster of severe nature for all practical purposes."

The communication was shared by the Congress unit of Kerala on its official social media account on December 30.

"Following a request sub-

mitted by the delegation led by Wayanad MP Smt. @priyankagandhi, the Centre has classified the Mundakkai-Chooralmala landslide in Wayanad as a disaster of 'severe nature,'" Kerala Congress wrote on X.

On December 5, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and MPs from Kerala met Union Home Minister Amit Shah, urging the Centre to provide immediate relief to the landslide-affected people of Wayanad.

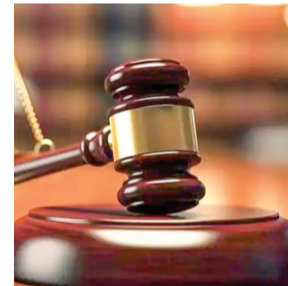
"We have given representation to the PM and Home Minister. The devastation in the area (in Wayanad) is complete. The people who are affected have lost absolutely everything.

CBI court sends 5 accused to 3 years in prison in Telgi Bogus Stamp Scam

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Special Judge for CBI Cases on December 30 sentenced 5 accused persons namely Falguni Ben Babubhai Patel; Kishore Kumar Purshottambhai Patel; Prashant Nangappa Patil; Amzad Ali and Shaikh Zakir Hussain to 3 years' imprisonment with a total fine of Rs 2.5 lakh in Telgi Bogus Stamp Scam, the CBI said in a press release on Tuesday.

These individuals were found guilty under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), for offences of criminal conspiracy, forgery of stamps, cheating, forgery and making or possess-



ing forged documents, etc.

The case was registered by CBI on transfer of investigation of the case of CID Crime, Gandhi Nagar Zone, Gujarat. It was alleged that the accused persons (license & unlicense vendors) knowingly utilized/ sold forged stamp papers, Court fee stamps, Share transfer stamps, etc. of various denominations in

the Ahmedabad and Surat area of Gujarat.

The scam, which was uncovered in 2001, involved the circulation of counterfeit stamps, a significant offence that had wide-reaching consequences for both the economy and the integrity of the public administration. The fraudulent activities were discovered during a raid on stamp vendors in Surat and Ahmadabad, where authorities seized a large number of bogus stamps. The operation was traced to two offices operating under the names "Sadguru Services" and "Sahay Services."

In this case, the CBI had charge-sheeted a total of 16 accused. Out of these, two ac-

cusped persons passed away during the course of the trial, while nine others were convicted earlier. The Court vide Judgment dt.

August 20, 2008, sentenced 5 accused namely, Shabbir Ahmed Sheikh, Shivaji, Khalid Ahmed, Vijay Solanki and Jacob Chako to undergo imprisonment for a term of five years and a fine of Rs 25000 each.

Later, vide Judgment dated March 19, 2009 the Court had sentenced 3 accused namely, Sadiq Ibrahim Hudli & AKL Telgi to imprisonment of 7 years and fine of Rs 35000 each and accused Sidharth @ Sidhu to undergo imprisonment for 5 years and a fine of Rs 30000.

Former CBI inspector Rahul Raj stripped of Medal for Excellence

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The central government has cancelled the Union Home Minister's Medal for Excellence in Investigation-2023 awarded to Rahul Raj, a former inspector of the Central Bureau of Investigation, following his arrest in an alleged bribery case in exchange for manipulating inspection reports for nursing colleges in Madhya Pradesh.

The decision to forfeit the prestigious medal comes after Raj was accused of accepting a bribe in exchange for manipulating inspection reports for nursing colleges in Madhya Pradesh. The Union Home Minister's Medal for Excellence in Investigation was awarded to Raj in 2023. This prestigious



recognition was conferred upon Raj and 14 other CBI officers for their exceptional contributions to investigative work.

However, in May 2024, Raj was arrested by the CBI's Internal Vigilance Unit for allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs 10 lakh from Anil Bhaskaran, the chairman of Malay College of Nursing in Madhya Pradesh's Indore. The bribe was reportedly solicited in exchange for pro-

viding favourable inspection reports to nursing colleges affiliated with the Nursing Council of Madhya Pradesh.

Following the arrest, the CBI terminated Inspector Raj's services on May 21, 2024, and initiated a comprehensive investigation into the matter. The agency's swift action underscored its commitment to maintaining integrity within its ranks.

In light of these developments, the Union Home Minister's Medal for Excellence in Investigation, which had been awarded to Raj in 2023, was subsequently cancelled.

"The medal was forfeited under Rule 9 of the rules governing the award, reflecting the serious nature of the misconduct," a Home Ministry notification mentions.

Defence forces' chiefs to have ADCs from sister services from January

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Moving towards deeper integration, the three services chiefs will have their Aide De Camps (personal staff officers) from sister services.

Defence officials said the three services chiefs till now have their ADCs from their own service but from January 1 onwards, they will have ADCs from their sister services.

"All the three service chiefs have voluntarily accepted their personal staff officers in the form of Aide-de-Camp (ADC) coming from different services," the officials said.

The Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan already

has his ADC from the Indian Air Force.

The move comes at a time when the Indian Defence forces are moving towards theatreisation to be prepared for fighting wars of the future. The officials said that India is transforming through a consensus-based approach moving toward theatre commands.

This change will be adopted by all three service chiefs from January 1, signaling the major changes coming in 2025, the officials said.

The defence officials said that to some, it may appear a small step but it is one of the biggest signals for transforming Defence Forces to empower India.

NIA achieves 100 per cent conviction rate in 2024

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Tuesday announced a record-breaking achievement for 2024, boasting a 100 per cent conviction rate with the conviction of 68 accused in 25 cases, a feat that underscores the agency's commitment to delivering justice and strengthening national security.

Officials attributed this success to rigorous investigations and meticulous legal strategies. The achievement marks a significant milestone for the NIA, further solidifying its reputation as one of the country's most effective investigative agencies.

As per the agency, a total of 210 accused were arrested across key categories of crimes in 80 cases registered by the NIA in 2024. Of these cases, Left Wing Extremism (LWE) and North East insurgency topped the list at 28 and 18 cases respectively.

Seven Jammu and Kashmir Jihadi cases were followed by six explosive substances and five human trafficking cases.

NIA further registered four other Jihadi cases, four Khalistan and two ISIS Jihadi cases, and one case each in gangsters, cyber terrorism, Fake Indian Currency Notes and others categories.

Besides convictions of 68 accused in 25 cases, NIA said its impressive perfor-

mance for 2024 was marked by charge sheeting of 408 accused.

A total of 137 properties worth Rs 19.57 crore were attached during the year as part of the agency's sustained efforts to dismantle the various terrorist, gangster and other criminal networks.

Left Wing Extremism (LWE) remained under NIA's scanner throughout the year, leading to a maximum of 69 arrests of the total 210 arrests reported in 2024.

Twenty-eight cases of LWE were registered, and 12 chargesheets filed against 64 accused in this category. North-east insurgency was also high on NIA's radar with 15 arrests.

Maha Kumbh Mela has taken shape, will be grand spectacle: UP CM

TDG NETWORK
PRAYAGRAJ

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday highlighted the immense cultural and spiritual significance of the upcoming Maha Kumbh Mela 2025, noting that the event has taken its shape and is expected to be an even grander spectacle than previous editions.

"The Maha Kumbh Mela

has taken its own shape. The program is progressing on a war footing and people are enthusiastic. This auspicious moment of Maha Kumbh is coming after 144 years and the country and the world want to be a witness to this great gathering," said Chief Minister Yogi.

The Maha Kumbh Mela will be held in Prayagraj (Allahabad), Uttar Pradesh from January 13 to February



26, 2025.

CM Yogi said, "This time, in view of the Maha Kumbh,

30 pontoon bridges are being built. Out of which 28 have been completed. 2 will be ready within the next 3-4 days. A temporary ghat of 12 km is being prepared here. More than 7000 organizations have come so far. The Mela Authority has arranged for more than one and a half lakh tents here and this program is progressing on a war footing and people are enthusiastic."

"The country and the world are eager to come to Prayagraj Kumbh. Everyone wants to see this biggest spiritual and religious gathering of Uttar Pradesh and the country with their own eyes. The Maha Kumbh Mela has taken its own shape. The program is progressing on a war footing and people are enthusiastic. This auspicious moment of Maha Kumbh is coming after 144 years and

the country and the world want to be a witness to this great gathering," said CM Yogi. Earlier in the day Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath offered prayers at Prayagraj's Lete Hanuman Mandir.

The preparations for the Mahakumbh Mela 2025 have been ramped up as the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath visited Prayagraj on Tuesday for

the fifth time in December to review the preparations for the upcoming event.

During his visit, the Chief Minister also inaugurated the Bio-CNG plant built in the Naini area of the city. The Chief Minister also inspected the key locations such as the Sangam Erawat Ghat, Sangam Noj Ghat, and the newly constructed steel bridge parallel to the Ganga Setu.

In view of the upcoming

Mahakumbh event, CM Yogi held a review meeting at the Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC) Auditorium in the Prayagraj Mela Authority to review the preparations for the event.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister, during his visit to Prayagraj would inspect the steel bridge built parallel to the Ganga Setu while doing a ground inspection of various routes.

THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON BANGLADESH POLITICAL CRISIS

67% of people believe that Bangladesh preparing to amend the constitution and implement Sharia law

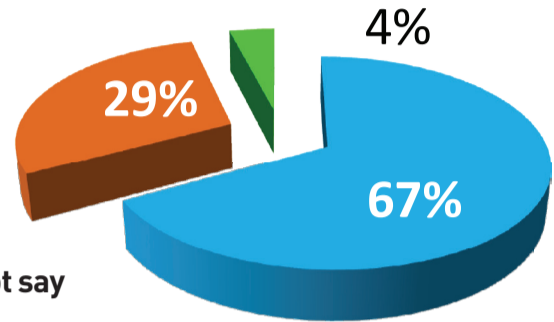
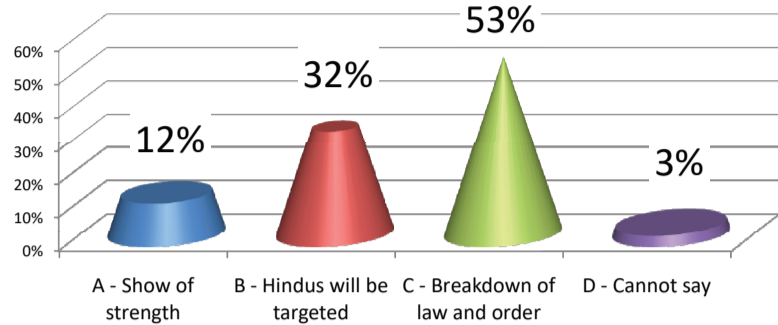
The collapse of Sheikh Hasina's government in Bangladesh has triggered political uncertainty domestically, regionally, and globally. An interim

government, advised by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, is pursuing reforms, but challenges like lawlessness, economic instability, and anti-

Hindu sentiment persist. Internationally, India, the U.S., and China vie for influence amid evolving geopolitical dynamics.

Q1. ▶

Opposition parties and Jamaat-e-Islami are organizing a big rally in Dhaka today. What do you think is the reason?



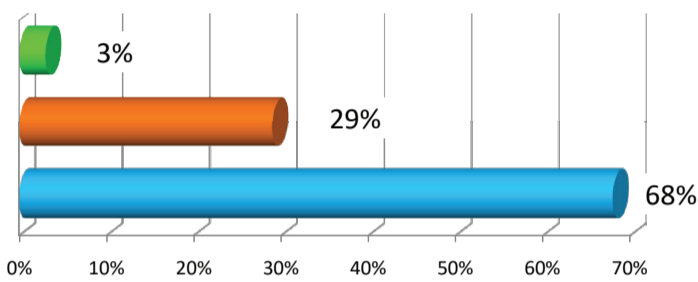
Q2. ◀

Is Bangladesh preparing to amend the constitution and implement Sharia law?

Q3. ▶

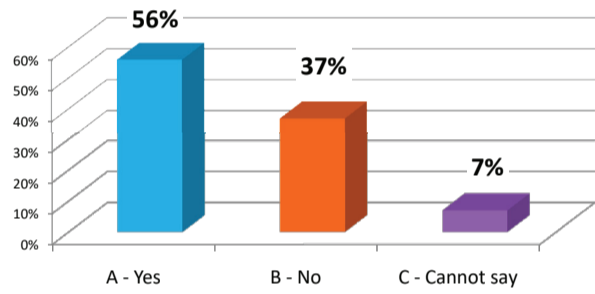
Can the removal of the President and Army Chief prevent Bangladesh from becoming fully Islamist?

A - Yes B - No C - Cannot say



Q4. ◀

Will Jamaat-e-Islami and opposition parties rename Bangladesh and change its flag?



Migratory birds seen at Chatlam Wetland on a cold winter morning, in Pulwama on Tuesday. ANI

Prez Murmu extends New Year greetings

AGENCIES NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday extended her greetings to the people on the eve of the new year 2025.

In her message, the President said, "On the joyous occasion of the new year, I extend my heartiest greetings and best wishes to all Indians, living in India and abroad.

The coming of the new year

marks the beginning of new hopes, dreams, and aspirations in our lives.

"Let us welcome the New Year with joy and enthusiasm and take our society and nation further on the path of unity and excellence," she said.

Meanwhile, as the national capital gears up to welcome the New Year 2025, Delhi Police has outlined comprehensive security arrangements to ensure safe celebrations.

Famous spots such as Hauz Khas, Connaught Place, and Lajpat Nagar are expected to see large crowds for the festivities.

Speaking to ANI, DCP South West Surendra Chaudhary said, "We have briefed restaurant owners and staff about the protocols. In collaboration with the traffic police, we have deployed a facial recognition system (FRS) van to identify any people with

criminal backgrounds who may visit the area.

"We have installed 60 cameras for monitoring, and our SHO and senior officials will be present. Through loudspeakers, we will also address the gathering if necessary," Choudhary added.

Police have set up 27 checkpoints with personnel equipped with breath analyzers to check for drunk driving and promote road safety.

Farmers seek Centre's invite

CONTINUED FROM P1

government on December 20 to ensure Dalal's treatment, even allowing the state to seek logistical support from the Centre if necessary.

A vacation bench comprising Justices Surya Kant and Sudhanshu Dhulia recorded the Punjab government's submissions, with Advocate General Gurinder Singh requesting a three-day extension to comply with the court's order. The bench emphasized that while it would not interfere with negotiations between the state and farmers, its priority remained the enforcement of its directives. On December 29, a team of Punjab government officials visited the protest site to persuade Dalal to accept medical help. The officials reportedly assured

him of continued efforts to address the farmers' demands and prevent forceful action.

Meanwhile, talks are ongoing between Punjab government representatives and the protesting farmers. Gurinder Singh informed the court that efforts were being made to shift Dalal to a makeshift hospital on the Punjab side of the Khanauri border.

In a letter to the Union government, the protesting farmers proposed talks to address their demands and urged the Centre to extend an invitation. They stressed that Dalal would accept medical intervention only after such an invitation.

The Punjab government is facing pressure to resolve the crisis, with its efforts closely monitored by the Supreme Court. In previous hearings, the

court acknowledged the complexities of the situation, directing the state to prioritize the leader's health while balancing the sensitivities of the protest.

As the hearing is adjourned to January 2, all eyes are on the outcome of negotiations and the Supreme Court's next steps. Meanwhile, the doctors issued a medical bulletin stating that late Monday night Dalal's blood pressure dropped to a worrying level of 76/44. Farmer leaders said that Dalal wishes to meet the farmers at the Khanauri Border on January 4, as he believes that given his current health condition, any unforeseen incident could happen at any moment. They said that Dalal wants to deliver an important message to all farmers at Kisan Mahapanchayat on January 4.

India achieves space-docking

CONTINUED FROM P1

one after the other," the Minister added.

Hailing Prime Minister Narendra Modi for laying the road to "Viksit Bharat," Singh said, "A humble tribute to PM @narendramodis mantra of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' heading towards 'Viksit Bharat,' which will pave the way for a journey beyond the skies for 'Gaganyaan' and 'Bharatiya Antariksha Station.'"

Meanwhile, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is preparing for the launch of the NVS-02 satellite in January 2025, aboard the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV), said ISRO Chairman S. Somanath. Speaking about the upcoming mission, Somanath added that this mission is just one of many planned for the upcoming year.

"In 2025, we have many missions. To start with, we have the mission of GSLV launching the NVS-02 in the month of January," Somanath said.

Earlier, on May 29, 2023, the GSLV-F12 rocket successfully launched the NVS-01 satellite, weighing 2,232 kg, into Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO). According to an ISRO statement, the NVS-01 satellite featured an indigenous atomic clock and was designed to enhance the capabilities of NavIC, including L1 band signals for broader service coverage.

The NVS-02 mission is likely to continue this progress, further strengthening the NavIC system with advanced features.

The announcement was made by Somanath after the successful launch of PSLV-C60, which carried the SpaDeX and other payloads. Following the launch, Somanath highlighted the importance of docking for the Chandrayaan-4 mission, confirming that the final docking is expected to occur around January 7, 2025.

"Chandrayaan-4 has multiple modules, five in total, which will be launched at different times and integrated into two

separate modules. These modules need to reach orbit and then dock both in Earth orbit and Moon orbit. Docking is essential for Chandrayaan-4. This mission aims to go to the Moon, land there, return to Earth, and complete the journey successfully," Somanath explained.

He further added, "This is one of the proving grounds for Chandrayaan-4. Docking will begin tomorrow, and many processes will take place, but the final docking will likely happen by January 7."

Somanath also celebrated ISRO's 99th launch, saying, "For us, this is the 99th launch of any launch vehicle from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre. It's a very significant milestone. We're preparing for the 100th launch at the start of next year. In this 99th launch, PSLV-C60 successfully placed two SpaDeX satellites, weighing 220 kilograms, into a circular orbit of 475 kilometers."

He further explained that SpaDeX would undergo various operations starting tomorrow, working towards its docking condition, with the final docking expected by January 7, 2025. "This is not the first SpaDeX; there will be more varieties, including demonstrations of bigger and more complex versions of docking systems in the coming days," he added.

The SpaDeX mission, ISRO's year-end project, is historic as it aims to achieve the rare feat of docking or merging two satellites in space. The project is a cost-effective technology demonstration mission for in-space docking using two small spacecraft launched by PSLV.

The primary objective of the SpaDeX mission is to develop and demonstrate the technology required for the rendezvous, docking, and undocking of two small spacecraft (SDX01, the Chaser, and SDX02, the Target) in low-Earth circular orbit. Docking technology is crucial for long-term missions like Chandrayaan-4, the planned Indian space station, and the eventual manned Gaganyaan mission.

'Why is PM refusing to visit Manipur': Congress after Biren Singh apology

TDG NETWORK NEW DELHI

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Tuesday hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi after Manipur Chief Minister Biren Singh apologised for the ongoing 'crisis' in the state, which erupted since May 2023.

The Congress leader questioned why the PM has not spoken on the Manipur issue yet.

"It has taken 19 months for the CM to say what he has said today, and it is not enough. The real issue is not what the CM says or does not say.

The real issue is why, for 19 months, the PM has not spoken; he has travelled all over the country, but he has not found time to go to Manipur. The issue is not

what this puppet CM says or does not say; the issue is why the PM is refusing to visit the state of Manipur and refusing to reach out to different communities of Manipur," the Congress leader said.

He further termed it as a failure of Prime Minister Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, calling their refusal to go to Manipur an insult to the people.

"It is the failure of the PM and the man to whom he has outsourced Manipur, the Union Home Minister. The PM's continued refusal to go to Manipur is an insult to the people of Manipur," he added.

"The Prime Minister should go and say the same thing that the CM said today. The people of Manipur are asking

why the PM is neglecting us," Ramesh said.

Earlier today, apologising for the ongoing crisis in the state in which around 200 people have died and many left their homes, Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Tuesday asked people to "forget the past" and start a new life for peaceful and prosperous Manipur.

Reflecting on the crisis, the Manipur CM said, "This entire year has been very unfortunate. I feel regret, and I want to say sorry to the people of the state for what is happening till today, since last May 3.

"Many people lost their loved ones. Many people left their homes. I really feel regret. I would like to apologise," he added.

Bhagat Singh Gallery in Lahore's Poonch House opened

CONTINUED FROM P1

The gallery also sheds light on the British police's efforts to dismantle Singh's team of 24-25 members, linking them to the Hindustan Socialist Republican Army and the Naujawan Bharat Sabha.

Imtiaz Rasheed Qureshi, chairman of the Bhagat Singh Memorial Foundation, welcomed the opening of the gallery and urged the Punjab government to rename Shadman Chowk, the site of Singh's execution, in his honor. "We will keep pushing for this recognition," Qureshi

Yunus pays tribute to Manmohan Singh



CONTINUED FROM P1

Commissioner and shared his memories with his long-time friend Manmohan Singh.

"How simple he was! how wise he was!" he said, recalling his friendship with the late Indian Premier. He also said that Singh played a big role in turning India into a global economic giant.

Earlier on Friday, in his messages, the Chief Adviser described Dr Singh as a person of great humility, a visionary leader, and a statesman who was known for his unwavering commitment to ensuring the welfare of the people of India. The Chief Adviser said that the late Prime Minister would be remembered for his contributions to India's economic transformation.

He stated that Dr Singh's leadership not only shaped the future of India but also contributed to strengthening the bond of friendship and mutually beneficial cooperation between Bangladesh and India.

Referring to Dr Manmohan Singh's role in promoting regional cooperation, the Chief Adviser also highlighted the late

leader's vision and firm commitment to regional peace, prosperity, and role in advancing South Asian cooperation. He urged the South Asian countries to work together to build on the rich legacy of his ideas and work as a tribute to Dr Manmohan Singh.

The Chief Adviser recalled his many cherished memories with Dr Singh. In his condolence messages, Muhammad Yunus mentioned the warm congratulatory message the late Indian Prime Minister sent on the occasion of Dr Yunus' winning the Nobel Peace Prize in October 2006.

He also recalled his meetings with Dr Singh in January 2007 in New Delhi and later in December 2009 as Yunus was invited to deliver the 2nd Prof. Hiren Mukerjee Annual Parliamentary Lecture, which was attended by members of both houses, including the Speaker of the Rajya Sabha.

The Chief Adviser extended, on behalf of the government and people of Bangladesh, his heartfelt condolences to the family of Dr. Manmohan Singh, the Government, and the people of India.

GOVT EXTENDING ALL HELP: MEA ON DEATH PENALTY TO KERALA NURSE

Nimisha Priya, in jail since 2017 in Yemen, sentenced to death for murder of a Yemeni national

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Tuesday confirmed its awareness of the death sentence handed to Nimisha Priya, an Indian nurse in Yemen, and assured that the government is providing all possible assistance.

In response to media queries regarding the case of Nimisha Priya, MEA official spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said, "We are aware of the sentencing of Ms. Nimisha Priya in Yemen. We understand that the family of Ms. Priya is exploring relevant options. The government is extending all possible help in the matter."

Nimisha Priya, who is sentenced to death in Yemen, is a trained nurse

EXPLORING OPTIONS: MEA

- As per her appeal, when she went to India for a month's holiday in 2015, Mahdi, with whom she had joined hands in 2015 to set up her clinic in Yemen's capital city Sana. She sought Mahdi's support because, under Yemen's law, only nationals are allowed to set up clinics and business firms.
- In July 2017, Nimisha took the help of a warden of a jail located near her clinic. The warden suggested that she should try to sedate him, and then convince him to give her passport. However, sedation did not affect Mahdi, who was a substance abuser.



and has worked in private hospitals in Yemen for a few years. She has been sentenced to death for the murder of a Yemeni national, Talal Abdo Mahdi. She is a trained nurse and has worked in private hospitals in Yemen for a few years. Nimisha moved to Yemen in 2008 to support her daily-wage labourer

parents. Her husband and minor daughter returned to India in 2014 because of financial reasons and in that same year, Yemen was gripped by civil war, and they could not go back as the country stopped issuing new visas. Later in 2015, Nimisha joined hands with a Mahdi to set up her clinic in Ye-

men's capital city Sana. She sought Mahdi's support because, under Yemen's law, only nationals are allowed to set up clinics and business firms. In 2015, Mahdi accompanied Nimisha Priya to Kerala when she came for a month-long holiday. During the visit, he stole a wedding photograph of Nimisha, which he later

manipulated to claim that he was married to her.

A plea moved by mother of Nimisha Priya had stated, "After a while, Nimisha's clinic began, Mahdi manipulated the ownership documents of the clinic. He also began to take money out of her monthly earnings after telling everyone that Nimisha was his wife Nimisha had alleged that Mahdi had been harassing her and her family for years. Mahdi also seized her passport. This was done to ensure that she would not leave Yemen. He tortured her under the influence of drugs. He threatened her at gunpoint several times. He took all the money from the clinic and her ornaments."

The plea further alleged

that unable to cope with the torture, Nimisha complained to the police in Sana but instead of taking action against Mahdi, the police arrested her and put her in jail for six days. It was further alleged that on her return from jail, the severity of the torture increased manifold.

In July 2017, Nimisha took the help of a warden of a jail located near her clinic. The warden suggested that she should try to sedate him, and then convince him to give her passport. However, sedation did not affect Mahdi, who was a substance abuser. She tried sedating him again, using a stronger sedative in order to retrieve her passport but he died within a few minutes due to a drug overdose.

'Central, state governments will have to take initiative'

TDG NETWORK
KOCHI

Following the death sentence handed to Indian nurse Nimisha Priya in Yemen, Kerala LoP and Congress leader VD Satheesan urged both the central and state governments to take immediate steps to save her. He further asserted that they are putting pressure on the state and central government to take initiative to save her. Satheesan said, "The central government as well as the state government will have to take initiative to postpone this death sentence and save her. We are putting pressure

on the state government and the central government to take initiative." Meanwhile, Babu John of Save Nimisha Priya forum emphasised the importance of negotiations with the family of the deceased and said, "There is no time for us... Government has to involve immediately with the Yemen government to stop the execution... We are asking the government of India to intervene and start the negotiation process immediately." He added, "Kerala government has nothing to do with it because it is totally in relation with the Yemeni government and the Indian government."

Kerala CM calls Maha Min's 'mini-Pak' remark deplorable, provocative

TDG NETWORK
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Monday condemned the recent remarks made by Maharashtra BJP Minister Nitesh Rane, who referred to Kerala as "Mini Pakistan." Vijayan called the remark "deeply provocative and deplorable," adding that it highlighted the approach of the "Sangh Parivar" towards the state.

Vijayan accused the Sangh Parivar of attempting to marginalise and isolate regions where they face challenges in gaining influence, using hate campaigns and divisive narratives as a tool. "The statement by Maharashtra BJP Minister Nitesh Rane, labelling Kerala as



"A minister who makes such hate-filled remarks is unfit to hold office"

"Mini Pakistan," is deeply provocative and deplorable. It reflects the fundamental approach of the Sangh Parivar towards Kerala.

The Sangh Parivar believes they can marginalise and isolate regions where they struggle to establish influence through hate campaigns and divisive narratives.

Rane's statement is a direct example of this strategy," the statement read. The Kerala CM further took a jibe at the central government for not addressing the minister's remarks, labelling them a violation of constitutional values and the minister's oath of office. He further noted that such a minister who makes such comments was not unfit to hold a ministerial office.

"A minister who makes such hate-filled remarks is unfit to hold office."

It is astonishing that the leadership of the ruling party at the centre has chosen not to react to this blatant violation of constitutional values and the minister's oath of office," he added. Earlier on Monday, in a controversial remark, Maharashtra Minister Nitesh

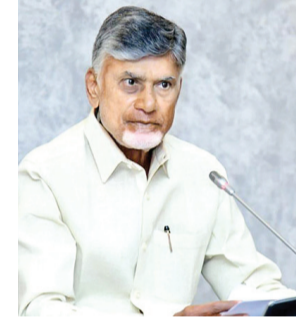
Rane compared Kerala to "Mini-Pakistan" and stated that the Congress leaders Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Rahul Gandhi were elected as members of Parliament for precisely this reason. "Kerala is mini Pakistan; that is why Rahul Gandhi and his sister are elected from there. All terrorists vote for them. This is the truth; you can ask. They have become MPs after taking terrorists with them," Rane said while addressing a rally in Purandar Taluka of Pune district. Notably, following the row that erupted after his remark from opposition leaders, Rane clarified that Kerala was very much part of India, saying he was merely comparing the situation in Kerala and Pakistan.

CM Naidu unveils Swarna Andhra Vision 2047

TDG NETWORK
AMARAVATI

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu announced the release of the Swarna Andhra Vision-2047 document, highlighting water security as one of the state's 10 key development priorities.

He also underlined that ensuring water security is crucial to the long-term growth of Andhra Pradesh. According to a statement, CM Naidu praised former Chief Minister Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao (NTR) as the only leader who supplied five TMC of water to Tamil Nadu through the Telugu Ganga Project. He noted that Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh contributed water to Tamil Nadu under an agreement signed in the presence of former Prime



Minister Indira Gandhi. He further stated that 90 per cent of irrigation projects, including the Somasila project, were initiated and completed during the Telugu Desam Party's (TDP) tenure.

Addressing the Polavaram Project, CM Naidu recalled that after the state bifurcation in 2014, the Congress Party declared Polavaram a national project. He urged the Prime Minister to merge the seven mandals likely to be affected by the project into Andhra Pradesh,

The CM highlighted water security as one of key development initiatives and crucial to the long-term growth of Andhra Pradesh.

the statement added. The statement further stated that Naidu had firmly mentioned that he did not take the oath as Chief Minister until this issue was resolved.

An ordinance was subsequently passed, signed by the President of India, and approved in the parliamentary sessions.

Naidu, as per the statement, also lauded NTR as a visionary leader who initiated irrigation projects to ensure water availability for future generations.

He noted that while Uttarandhra districts receive good rainfall, they continue to face water shortages due to inadequate irrigation infrastructure. Similarly, Rayalaseema, Prakasam, and Nellore districts frequently experience droughts, leading to uncertainty in agricultural incomes. The Krishna River, he said, suffers from unreliable inflows due to excessive water usage by upstream states and full utilization of allocations by basin states.

In contrast, the Godavari River has consistent inflows, making it a potential source for addressing water scarcity in Andhra Pradesh. CM Naidu revealed that, on average, 2,989 TMC of floodwater flows into the sea annually from the Godavari River, based on data from the past 50 years.

ISRO set to launch NVS-02 satellite in Jan 2025: ISRO chief

TDG NETWORK
SRIMATHIKOTA

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is preparing for the launch of the NVS-02 satellite in January 2025, aboard the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV), said ISRO Chairman S Somanath.

The ISRO chief on Monday further added that this mission is just one of many planned for the upcoming year. The GSLV launch will mark ISRO's 100th mission.

Speaking about the up-



coming mission, Somanath said, "In 2025 we have many missions, to start with, we have the mission of GSLV launching the NVS-02 in the month of January..."

On May 29, 2023, the GSLV-F12 rocket successfully launched the NVS-01 satellite, weighing 2,232

kg, into Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO).

According to an ISRO statement, the NVS-01 satellite featured an indigenous atomic clock and was designed to enhance the capabilities of NavIC, including L1 band signals for broader service coverage.

The NVS-02 mission is likely to continue this progress, further strength-

ening the NavIC system with advanced features.

The announcement was made by Somanath after the successful launch of PSLV-C60, which carried the SpaDeX and other payloads.

Following the launch, Somanath highlighted the importance of docking for the Chandrayaan-4 mission, confirming that the final docking is expected to occur around January 7, next year.

He said, "Chandrayaan-4 has multiple modules, five in total, which will be launched at different times

and integrated into two separate modules. These modules need to reach orbit and then dock both in Earth orbit and Moon orbit. Docking is essential for Chandrayaan-4. This mission aims to go to the Moon, land there, return to Earth, and complete the journey successfully."

He further added, "This is one of the proving grounds for Chandrayaan-4."

Docking will begin tomorrow, and many processes will take place, but the final docking will likely happen by January 7."

Navi Mumbai police cracks down on illegal immigrants involved in narcotics trade

TDG NETWORK
NAVI MUMBAI

To address concerns about the illegal narcotics trade, the Navi Mumbai Police conducted a crackdown on foreign nationals residing illegally in the city, many of whom are involved in drug-related offenses. Commissioner of Police, Navi Mumbai, Milind Bharambe, expressed concerns about illegal immigrants, particularly Africans, who enter the country on student, medical, or business visas but eventually en-

gage in the narcotics trade. "Those who are illegal immigrants, especially Africans, are indulging in the trade of narcotics. They come on student visas, medical visas, and business visas, but over time, they begin engaging in the narcotics trade. Several have been arrested and are in jail. Navi Mumbai Police has taken action against Africans involved in the narcotics trade in the last two years," he said. Furthermore, he stated that the Navi Mumbai police are actively preparing to

maintain a peaceful atmosphere during the upcoming festivities. The police are taking comprehensive measures to prevent any unexpected incidents and ensure that all celebrations proceed smoothly and safely for the community. Milind Bharambe, Commissioner of Police, Navi Mumbai, assured that police personnel would be deployed to ensure the safety of every citizen and urged people to remain responsible during celebrations and adhere to laws and regulations.

'Our Dalit leader': DKS backs Priyank Kharge amid BJP's demand for resignation

TDG NETWORK
BENGALURU

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has rejected BJP's demand for the resignation of state minister Priyank Kharge and said party leaders "know his integrity". "We know the integrity of Priyank Kharge, the investigation is going on. No question of anyone resigning. Priyank Kharge is our Dalit leader.

It is not possible (to hand over the case to CBI). We know how CBI works. Our police and officials are capable of doing the investigation," Shivakumar said. He was responding to a query about Karnataka BJP chief BY Vijayendra's remarks that that Bidar contractor's alleged suicide case should be handed over to CBI and Pri-



yanka Kharge should resign. Priyank Kharge is son of Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge. "Many leaders and others take pictures with us, does it mean we have a relation with them? Our government is clean, they (BJP) don't have anything, that's why they're speaking in this way," Shivakumar said. "BJP government gave only my case to CBI...Priyank Kharge is our government's vocal minister, he's a Dalit leader who is emerging and he's doing best in IT and BT, that's why they're trying all this, it's not the case for CBI.

40 years after Bhopal gas tragedy, 'toxic waste' at Union Carbide to be disposed after HC order

TDG NETWORK
BHOPAL

After a long wait of four decades, the 'toxic waste' materials at Union Carbide factory located in Madhya Pradesh's capital Bhopal would be disposed of following the order of the MP High Court, an official said.

The process of packing the waste materials at the factory in the state capital began with full protection on Tuesday. The whole procedure was being done under the supervision of the officials of the Pollution Control Board. A tragic incident, touted as the world's worst industrial disaster, "Bhopal gas tragedy" had claimed the lives of several thousand people after deadly gas leaked from the Union



Meanwhile, an activist who works with survivors of the Union Carbide disaster, Rachna Dhingra alleged that the 337 MT waste was just one percent of the entire waste material and the waste (underground) which infected groundwater of around 40 settlements of Bhopal was still lying in the factory.

Carbide India Limited pesticide plant on the intervening night of December 2 and 3, 1984. 40 years after the tragic

incident, a total of 337 metric tons of waste materials at the factory will be transported to Pithampur in Dhar dis-

tributed for its safe disposal. On the disposal of waste materials, Director of Bhopal Gas Relief and Rehabilitation Directorate, Swatantra Pratap Singh said, "Today, a procedure to dispose of the toxic waste of 337 metric tons lying on the premises of Union Carbide factory is underway in accordance with the order of principal bench of MP High Court Jabalpur dated December 3. It was instructed in the order that the 337 metric tonnes of waste should be disposed of in Pithampur within 4 weeks, where 10 tonnes of waste sample was already disposed of in 2015 on a trial basis." The reports of waste disposed there have been favourable and there has not been any adverse impact of it to the environment.

SP Maha unit is BJP's 'B' team: UBT Sena after SP decides to contest BMC polls

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Shiv Sena UBT leader Anand Dubey on Tuesday launched an attack on the Samajwadi Party (SP) after its Maharashtra unit decided to contest the upcoming Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) election and termed the state SP leaders as the 'B' team of the BJP.

Dubey said that his party's seniors will meet SP Chief Akhilesh Yadav and convey the 'bad policies' of SP in Maharashtra. He further stated that SP has no identity without Maha Vikas Aghadi in the state. "It has been exposed that the Maharashtra Samajwadi Party is the 'B' team of the BJP, especially Abu

Azmi and Rais Sheikh. When our leaders meet Akhilesh ji in Delhi, we will certainly tell them about the bad policies of the Samajwadi Party in Maharashtra.

We had included the Samajwadi Party in the Maha Vikas Aghadi with love, but we didn't know that they could stab us in the back... In Maharashtra, the Samajwadi Party has no identity without Maha Vikas Aghadi," Shiv Sena UBT leader said. Earlier SP Maharashtra leader and MLA from Mankhurd Shivaji Nagar Abu Azmi said, "The SP will contest the BMC polls as an individual party. We will contest at least 150 seats. There is no coordination in the MVA anymore."

AAP LAUNCHES REGISTRATION FOR PUJARI, GRANTHI SAMMAN YOJANA

Kejriwal visited Shri Marghat Wale Baba Mandir at Kashmere Gate along with his wife to start the registration

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday launched the registration for Pujari Granthi Samman Yojana. He visited the Shri Marghat Wale Baba Mandir at Kashmere Gate along with his wife Sunita Kejriwal to start the registration for the scheme.

Delhi Chief Minister Atishi got the granthis of a gurudwara in the Karol Bagh area registered for the AAP government's recently announced monthly honorarium on Tuesday. During her visit, Atishi offered prayers at Sant Sujan Singh Maharaj Gurudwara in central Delhi.

Arvind Kejriwal on Monday announced that his party would launch a 'Pujari Granthi Samman Yojana' if it gets re-elected in Delhi, promising a monthly allowance of Rs 18,000 for Hindu temple priests and granthis of gurdwaras.

This comes after the former Chief Minister of Delhi on Monday announced 'Pujari, Granthi Samman Yojana' under which he stated that the priests of temples and the 'granthis' of the Gurud-



AAP National Convener Arvind Kejriwal launches the Pujari Granthi Samman Scheme during his visit to Marghat Wale Hanuman Baba temple. (Below) CM Atishi registers Granthi Sahibans under the Priest-Granthi Samman Scheme, at Gurudwara Shri Sant Sujan Singh Maharaj, Karol Bagh, in New Delhi. ANI

REGISTRATION BEGINS

- Kejriwal and Atishi initiated registration at religious sites in Delhi.
- The scheme honors priests' contributions and aims to support their families.
- BJP accused Kejriwal of "populist tactics" and reacting to pressure from their movements.
- The initiative comes ahead of Delhi polls, sparking debate over its intent.



wara will receive an honorarium of about Rs 18,000 per month. He further stated that this scheme would be implemented once the AAP from the government wins in the upcoming polls in the

national capital. "Today I am making an important announcement regarding a scheme. The name of the scheme is Pujari Granthi Samman Yojana. Under this, there is a provi-

FIGHT FOR CAPITAL DELHI ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS 2025

sion to give an honorarium to the priests of temples and the 'granthis' of the Gurudwara. They will be given an honorarium of about Rs 18,000 per month. This is happening for the first time in the country. The priest is a class that has carried forward

the rituals from generation to generation. They never paid attention to their family and we never paid attention to them," said Kejriwal. "We know how pujaris serve us. Be it the birthday of our kid or the death of a loved one, they have always con-

nected us with God. But they never gave attention to their own families, and neither did we pay enough attention to them. This is happening for the first time in the country. We have done many works in the national capital which happened for the very first time. We improved schools and hospitals and made bus travel for women. I just hope that the BJP and the Congress governments will learn from this and will implement such schemes in the state run by them," he added.

Reacting to this, Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva attacked the AAP government after they announced 'Pujari Granthi Samman Yojana' and said that Arvind Kejriwal is now a defeated and desperate leader who is making "populist announcements to stay in power."

Addressing a press conference in the national capital, the Delhi BJP chief said that the AAP knows they are going to lose Delhi elections that's why they are remembering 'Lord Ram.'

"Arvind Kejriwal is now a defeated and desperate leader who is making daily populist announcements to stay in power."

BJP's Bansuri challenges Kejriwal to implement schemes

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI



BJP MP Bansuri Swaraj called the 'Pujari Granthi Samman Yojna' announced by AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal an "appeasement" move ahead of the upcoming Assembly polls. In a press conference, the New Delhi MP challenged Kejriwal to implement the schemes announced by him, including the 'Mahila Samman Yojna', saying there is no Model Code of Conduct in place.

last 10 years. Now, at the time of elections, he is promising them honorarium in a "deceitful" manner, she charged. Swaraj asserted that Kejriwal's interest in priests and granthis is purely election-

Swaraj asserted that Kejriwal's interest in priests and granthis is purely election-driven.

Kejriwal on Monday announced a monthly honorarium of Rs 18,000 for all the Hindu temple priests and granthis of Gurudwaras after AAP returns to power in February.

Bansuri said that the AAP government was not able to pay Rs 18,000 to Imams of mosques for months due to lack of funds and yet Kejriwal was trying to appease the priests and granthis just before the elections.

She questioned why no honorarium was paid to the priests and granthis in the

driven. "For years, Kejriwal has shown little regard for religion or religious places, yet now, as elections approach, he appears to focus on priests and granthis. It raises questions about why pastors and priests from other communities have been overlooked, she said.

She also highlighted a shift in priorities, saying, "While schools were promised, the focus seemed to shift elsewhere. Now, with elections nearing, temples suddenly take centre stage. This appears to reflect a calculated strategy."

BJP accuses Kejriwal of using children for his 'cheap, dirty' politics

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI



Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Gaurav Bhatia on Tuesday launched a scathing attack against the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) over a video showcasing children supporting AAP for the upcoming Delhi assembly elections posted on the social media platform X and called it a violation of the Juvenile Justice Act 2015 and the guidelines of the Election Commission of India. He said that AAP has used children for dirty politics.

"If anyone has learnt to use the children of Delhi for dirty politics, then it is Arvind Kejriwal and Chief Minister Atishi Marlena. Arvind Kejriwal and Atishi Marlena have pushed our innocent children into politics by uploading their videos. This is a violation of the Juvenile Justice Act 2015

and secondly, the guidelines of the Election Commission of India state that there should be no statements of children, there should be no presence of them, and there should be no such activities... This 'X' post should be removed immediately but Arvind Kejriwal has still not removed this post..." said the BJP leader.

Notably, a video was posted by Chief Minister Atishi on X on December 29. The video showed children saying "Abki Baar Kejriwal," which was later reposted by former Delhi Chief Minister and AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal.

'Delhi polls should be fought on dirty tap water, Yamuna pollution'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Lashing out at Aam Aadmi Party National Convener Arvind Kejriwal over 'Pujari Granthi Samman Yojana,' Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Vijay Goel on Tuesday said that the announcements by Kejriwal are electoral announcements. He further said that the upcoming Delhi assembly elections must be based on issues like dirty tap water, Yamuna pollution, etc. "The announcements by Arvind Kejriwal are electoral announcements... The elections should be based on dirty tap water, Yamuna pollution, Delhi pollution, corruption... Arvind Kejriwal did not take any steps in the past 10 years and is now making new announcements each day... The one who doesn't work for 10



years only wants to win elections by announcement of freebies," said BJP leader Vijay Goel. Earlier in the day, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Gaurav Bhatia called Kejriwal "anti-Hindu" and "anti-development."

"Anti-Hindu Kejriwal is now making new promises ahead of the upcoming Delhi assembly elections. Why is it happening? It is because Kejriwal knows that the false promises he has made have not been fulfilled and his career is going to get over that he is coming up with more fake promises."

Delhi poll body complains against 7 for voter ID fraud

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi's poll body has filed a police complaint against seven people for allegedly forging identification documents to obtain voter ID card ahead of the assembly elections in February. The office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) on Tuesday said it has requested to lodge FIRs against two individuals in Bindapur locality in the southwest district and four others in Dwarka.

Another an FIR has been registered against one person in the Narela zone, according to the poll body.

"Certain applicants have submitted online applications for voter registration using fraudulent means, including uploading tampered documents as part of their applications for new



The electoral body emphasised the need for prompt action to investigate these cases and prevent further fraudulent activities.

voter registration."

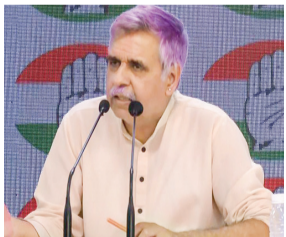
It further alleges that the applicants attempted to deceive authorities by providing falsified documents, particularly tampered Aadhaar cards, as proof of resi-

dence. "This constitutes a serious offense as the applicants intentionally provided false information and documents to manipulate the electoral roll. Such ac-

Cong targets Kejriwal, calls him 'pathological liar'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Sandeep Dikshit on Tuesday lashed out at Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) supremo Arvind Kejriwal, calling him a "pathological liar". Dikshit, who is the Congress' candidate from New Delhi constituency for the upcoming assembly polls, also said he is going to file a criminal and civil defamation case against Chief Minister



Atishi and AAP MP Sanjay Singh for alleging that he had received money from the BJP. "A few days ago, the CM said that we are taking money from the BJP. After this

Cong' Sandeep Dikshit vows to file defamation case against AAP's Atishi, Sanjay Singh

press conference, I will file a criminal and civil defamation case against (CM) Atishi and Sanjay Singh. I will ask for Rs 10 crore and out of that money, I will donate Rs five crore to Yamuna cleaning and the remaining half will be donated to clean the pol-

luted air in Delhi," he said. They used to say that they have increased sewage treatment by 1.5 times in Delhi. When the Congress lost the elections, the sewage treatment capacity was at 604 MGD and it remains the same today.

Congress slams Kejriwal's promises as 'political jumla'

TIKAM SHARMA
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Congress has claimed that the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has lost its ground presence and that the people of Delhi are unlikely to vote for them in the upcoming Delhi Assembly elections, expected to take place in February-March 2025. Although the Election Commission of India is yet to announce the official dates, Congress leader Devender Yadav criticized Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal for making daily announcements of new schemes without fulfilling promises made over the past decade. Yadav highlighted that despite disclaimers from the Delhi Government, Kejriwal has been making promises like Rs 2,100 for women, free healthcare for the elderly, and Rs 18,000 for temple priests and gurudwara granthis under the "Pujari Granthi Samman Scheme," in a bid to mislead the public.

BJP lashes out at AAP with 'Bhrashtaachaar' posters

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI



The Delhi unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party came out heavily against the incumbent Aam Aadmi Party government in Delhi by putting up posters outside the BJP Delhi office targeting the 10-year rule of AAP.

In their posters, the BJP called the AAP National Convener Arvind Kejriwal and other senior leaders Manish Sisodia and Satyendra Jain as "Bhrashtaachaar Ke Tees Maar Khaan" (Master of Corruption).

The BJP in their poster accused Kejriwal of making huge amounts of money through the alleged liquor scam, by allegedly increasing the margin of liquor contractors from 5 per cent to 125 per cent.

The BJP also slammed Manish Sisodia, stating that he being the Education Minister, went to jail in the 'liquor scam' while the education

BJP accused Jain of 'corruption' in an alleged money laundering case and making money through "Hawala" channels.

minister. BJP also accused him of implementing the liquor policy by holding secret meetings with industrialists. BJP accused Jain of 'corruption' in an alleged money laundering case and making money through "Hawala" channels.

The BJP further slammed the 'Delhi Model' of Aam Aadmi Party, accusing the ministers of corruption, and

stated that AAP has more ministers in jail compared to any other state government in the country.

They also accused AAP of being the 'Tanker Mafia,' stating that the water supply in Delhi is the most expensive in India. The BJP also mentioned the landfill in Ghazipur, claiming that it has become the country's biggest landfill.

'Why is he hurt?': RJD MP Jha mocks LG's letter to CM Atishi

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) MP Manoj Kumar Jha on Tuesday took a dig at Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena, saying that he should maintain the dignity of his constitutional position. He questioned the Delhi LG's "hurt" over the Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) internal matter.

When Atishi became the Chief Minister, she said that she would serve till the next



elections, the senior RJD leader said, adding that there are many Chief Ministers of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) who said that they were doing formalities and the actual person was

someone else. "Sometimes even I don't understand whether he (Delhi LG Saxena) knows he is on a constitutional post. You are the Lieutenant Governor. You should maintain the dignity (of the post). Main ginnaun kitne CM BJP ke jinhone kahan ki main sirf khadav dho raha hun, asal to vo hain (Should I start counting how many Chief Ministers of the BJP said that they were just doing formality, the actual person was someone else).

This is their (AAP) party's internal matter. When Atishi became the Chief Minister, she said that she would serve in the next elections. Everything depends on the election results. Why is the LG getting hurt?" Jha told ANI.

His reaction comes after the Delhi LG wrote a letter to Chief Minister Atishi earlier and expressed his disapproval of AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal referring to her as a "temporary Chief Minister."

DELHI'S DECEMBER POWER DEMAND EXCEEDS 5,000 MW

As per officials, the peak power demand in the capital this winter is expected to cross 6,300 MW.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The plummeting temperature in Delhi has raised power demand to newer heights with December clocking a peak of 5,213 MW, the highest ever for the month, discom officials on Monday said. For the first time in Delhi's history, the peak power demand in December has crossed the 5,000 MW-mark.

As per the State Load Dispatch Centre (SLDC), power demand stood at 5,213 MW at 10:50 am on Tuesday, after touching 5,046 MW on Monday. Delhi's peak power demand in December was 4,884 MW in 2023, and 4,964 MW in 2022, discom officials said. The winter months in Delhi are expected to follow

WINTER DEMAND SURGE

- Winter power demand is expected to surpass 6,300 MW.
- 53% of BSES peak demand will be met through green energy.
- AI tools are being used for accurate winter power demand forecasting.
- Last winter's peak demand reached 5,816 MW, with higher projections for this season.



the record-breaking summer trend in peak power demand, which touched an unprecedented peak of 8,656 MW this year. As per officials, the peak power demand in the capital this winter is expected to cross 6,300 MW.

A BSES spokesperson said that green energy will meet up to 53 per cent of the over 3,900 MW peak power demand in areas under BSES Rajdhani Power Limited (BRPL) and BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL). Advanced Artificial Intelli-

gence and Machine Learning tools are also being used for accurate forecasting to tackle the growing winter power demand, he said. BRPL and BYPL successfully met this season's peak winter power demand of 2,194 MW and 1,038 MW

Last winter, the peak hit 5,816 MW on January 22, marking the highest level recorded in the national capital in winter months.

in their respective areas so far, the spokesperson said. Last winter, the peak hit 5,816 MW on January 22, marking the highest level recorded in the national capital in winter months. The peak power demand in areas within BRPL and BYPL are projected to exceed 2,600 MW and 1,240 MW, respectively, officials said.

Engineer, two others held for illegal arms supply

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Three people, including a B.Tech graduate, were arrested for their alleged involvement in supply of arms and ammunition in Delhi, police said on Tuesday. The accused have been identified as Rajesh Choube (46) from Madhya Pradesh, Aviral Sharma (35) from Uttar Pradesh and Jitender Singh (42) from Rajasthan, they said.

"On November 28, a tip off regarding a key member of arms supply syndicate, Rajesh was received that he was coming near Sector-18, Metro Station, Rohini to deliver huge consignment of illegal fire arms," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Amit Kaushik said.

A trap was laid and Rajesh was arrested. Five semi-automatic pistols with 200 live cartridges were recovered from him, Kaushik said. During interrogation, Rajesh

The accused have been identified as Rajesh Choube (46) from Madhya Pradesh, Aviral Sharma (35) from Uttar Pradesh and Jitender Singh (42) from Rajasthan, they said.

disclosed that he had procured illegal arms from local supplier of MP and illegal ammunitions from one Aviral Sharma of Agra in UP. Rajesh was supposed to further supply these arms and ammunition in the areas of Delhi and UP.

"On November 30, on the instance of Rajesh, Aviral was arrested from Agra, UP and 50 live cartridges were recovered from him. During interrogation, Aviral disclosed that he also supplied the ammunition to Jitender in Rajasthan," another officer said. Subsequently, on December 2, Jitender was arrested from Rajasthan's Dholpur and 25 live cartridges were recovered from him, he said. Rajesh is involved in the ille-

gal supply of firearms since 2013.

In 2013, he met Mohsin, who lured him in the crime introduced him with the local supplier of arms of MP, the police said.

He procured illegal pistols from local supplier and live cartridges from Aviral Sharma and further supplied the same to various persons of Delhi, MP and UP. He was previously found involved in three criminal cases including an Arms Act case, they said. Aviral is a B.Tech graduate and was working in a multinational company in Noida. He procured ammunition from various local suppliers of MP and further supplied the same to various persons including Rajesh and Jitender.

Delhi logs 209 'good to moderate' air days in 2024

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi experienced a significant improvement in air quality in 2024, with a record 209 days falling under the "Good to Moderate" air quality category, according to data released by the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) on Tuesday.

This marks the highest number of such days since 2018, barring the COVID-19 lockdown year of 2020 when industrial and commercial activities were largely halted.

Despite challenging meteorological conditions in some months, 2024 matched the average AQI of 209 seen in 2021 and 2022, ranking as



People sit around the bonfire to keep themselves warm on a cold winter morning, near Jama Masjid, in the old quarters of Delhi

one of the cleanest years for the capital. "2024 witnessed the best ever "Good to Moderate" and the least ever "Poor to Severe" AQI days (barring COVID affected 2020)," CAQM, in a press statement, noted. "Continual, concerted and persistent efforts of all

stakeholders round the year have further helped to improve the general air quality in Delhi," CAQM said, highlighting the record achievement.

While the overall air quality saw improvement, January 2024 witnessed its worst-ever AQI at 355 due to still wind conditions.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), on Tuesday, as of 8:30 am, Delhi recorded an average temperature of 10.2 degrees Celsius, with Pusa recording the minimum temperature today at 9.1 degrees Celsius, while Najafgarh recorded 9.6 degrees Celsius. The Met Department has forecast that the minimum temperature in Delhi may range between 9 to 11 degrees

Celsius with the maximum temperature between 15 to 18 degrees Celsius. It further stated that there could be the possibility of "shallow fog" engulfing the city on Tuesday, affecting visibility on the roads.

Meanwhile, the air quality index recorded in the national capital at 8 am today was 245, categorised as 'poor,' according to the data of the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good,' 51 and 100 'satisfactory,' 101 and 200 'moderate,' 201 and 300 'poor,' 301 and 400 'very poor,' and 401 and 500 'severe.'

Shallow fog envelops city, minimum temperature drops

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Amid inclement weather conditions, a layer of shallow fog enveloped several parts of the national capital, Delhi, on Tuesday.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), on Tuesday, as of 8:30 am, Delhi recorded an average temperature of 10.2 degrees Celsius, with Pusa recording the minimum temperature today at 9.1 degrees Celsius, while Najafgarh recorded 9.6 degrees Celsius. The Met Department has forecast that the minimum temperature in Delhi may range between 9 to 11 degrees

Constable killed for rebuking drunk drivers: Chargesheet filed

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

An on-duty constable was killed in September allegedly for rebuking two people for drinking on the road in outer Delhi, according to a 400-page chargesheet filed by the Delhi Police.

According to the chargesheet, Sandeep Malik (30) was performing his night duty in civil clothes on September 29 when he spotted Dharmender (39) and Rajnish (25) drinking in a car in the Nangloi area.

An official, citing the chargesheet, said when Malik rebuked the accused, an argument broke out between them. They rammed their vehicle into Malik's bike, dragging it for 10 meters.

Following this, Sandeep suffered critical head injuries and was rushed to a hospital by the other policemen. Doctors declared him dead on arrival, officials said. The incident was captured on the CCTV camera, around 2.15 am.

A 400-page chargesheet was filed at Tis Hazari court on December 27. The police in



its chargesheet have made two people - Dharmender and Rajnish the main accused while two others - Jitender alias Jeetu and Manoj Shareman -- were named for harbouring Dharmender. A senior officer said that the police have made a watertight chargesheet to ensure justice for the constable and his family. Delhi Police had registered an FIR under sections 221 (obstructing public servant in discharge of his public functions, 132 (Assault or criminal force to deter public servant from discharge of his duty), 103 (murder), 249 (harbouring offender) and 3(5) (acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita at Nangloi police station.

Police detains 12 Bangladeshis living without identifications

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi Police has detained 12 Bangladeshi nationals who were living in different areas of south Delhi without any identification, an official said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) South East Ravi Kumar Singh said that these people were caught from areas including Nizamuddin, Kalindi Kunj, Shaheen Bagh, and Sarita Vihar. They have been sent to detention camp, he added. "So far, we have caught 12 Bangladeshis, from different areas like Nizamuddin, Kalindi Kunj, Shaheen Bagh, and Sarita Vihar. We have detained them and they have been sent to the

detention camp. All the Bangladeshis that we have met were without identities and some people had been living for a long time. We are investigating further. We have a Bangladeshi cell, a specialised unit, which works on this. We have verified close to 1,200 people and will do so in the future as well as information will come," Singh told ANI.

Meanwhile, in another case, Delhi Police arrested six people while taking action against complaints over fake identification cards, an official said. The Electoral registration

officer had submitted two complaints against eight people in connection with this matter.

DCP (South East) Singh said that upon receiving complaints they filed two FIRs against those involved. The cyber cafe owner along with five others including two middlemen were arrested. "We received two

complaints from the Electoral registration officer, Okhla which was against a total of eight people.

been living here in Delhi illegally since 2005; meanwhile, the son, during interrogation, admitted to entering

Bangladeshi mother-son duo residing in Delhi deported

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Monday deported a Bangladeshi mother-son duo, with the mother living in the national capital illegally since 2005. During a verification drive carried out by the staff of South Campus Police Station, the police identified the two detainees as Naim Khan

(22) and his mother, Nazma Khan, while conducting searches and gathering intelligence to locate undocumented immigrants.

According to the police, the mother had been living here in Delhi illegally since 2005; meanwhile, the son, during interrogation, admitted to entering



India via the West Bengal border in 2020 and stated that he had been residing in Katwaria Sarai with his mother.

The verification drive started following a tip-off that the police received on December 29 about an illegal Bangladeshi national at Shastri Market near Pippal Chowk in Delhi.

Following the detention, the duo was deported to Bangla-

desh through the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO).

Meanwhile, the police are continuing efforts to identify more illegal migrants in the area.

This action is part of the South West District Police's ongoing efforts to address concerns over the unauthorised stay of migrants, including those from Bangladesh, in the city.

Notably, to address the rising concerns over the unauthorised stay of migrants, including Bangladeshi nationals, in the capital, the Delhi Police has intensified efforts to identify, detain, and repatriate individuals residing without valid Indian documents.

DCP South Delhi Ankit Chauhan said that as part of the drive by South District Delhi Police, seven illegal migrants from Bangladesh were detected, which included 5 women and 2 men. They were carrying Bangladeshi IDs with them. Some are working at the construction sites while some are planning to enrol themselves in beauty parlours. After further verification, they were deported through the Foreigners Regional Regis-

tration Office (FRRO).

As part of the drive, the Delhi Police have carried out a series of targeted operations and joint inspections across the South West District. Special teams comprising officers from local police stations and special units have been deployed to conduct thorough searches and gather intelligence to locate undocumented immigrants. During the verification drive, door-to-door verifications were conducted, and almost 400 families were checked, and their documents were collected. Verification forms (Parcha-12) were sent to their respective addresses in West Bengal for verification. A special team was also constituted and sent to West Bengal for manual verification of suspects, said the police.

Sehrawat unveils 'chargesheet' against Delhi government's failures

TIKAM SHARMA
NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP General Secretary and West Delhi MP Kamaljeet Sehrawat released a chargesheet against the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government today, highlighting its failures and unfulfilled promises over the past decade. The chargesheet was unveiled at the West Delhi District Office in the presence of key leaders, including West District President Chandrapal Bakshi, Najafgarh District President Ramesh Shokhanda, Zone Chair-

man Amit Khadkadi, West District Media Incharge Amarjit Singh Amar, and Najafgarh District Media Incharge Pankaj Singh.

Sehrawat criticized the Delhi government for neglecting its commitments across 10 assembly constituencies in the West Delhi Lok Sabha area. She pointed out that while 156,800 ration cards were to be issued in this region, only 68,000 were created by 2015, leaving thousands without access to central government ration schemes. She also noted that pensions for over 300,000 elderly citizens



have not been provided since 2015.

The BJP leader accused the Kejriwal government of failing to deliver on promises such as introducing 11,000 buses, building 500 schools, and establishing

20 universities. Instead, the city's transportation system is being supported by 940 e-buses provided by the central government. She also claimed that the metro expansion in Delhi has been unnecessarily stalled under

AAP's governance.

Sehrawat questioned the government's claims of installing 1.5 million CCTV cameras across Delhi, alleging a lack of transparency on the actual numbers. She highlighted the plight of contract workers, including guest teachers, municipal staff, and civil defense personnel, who are yet to be regularized. Farmers in rural areas of Delhi, she said, have been overlooked and denied official recognition under the AAP government.

Addressing issues related to electricity tariffs, she credit-

ed the Lieutenant Governor with curbing exploitation under PPAC charges, which eased the financial burden on citizens. Sehrawat criticized the Kejriwal government for the deteriorating state of the Yamuna River, calling it a drain within Delhi's borders. She also cited the poor state of health infrastructure, particularly in mohalla clinics within her constituency, which she described as being overrun by garbage and stray animals.

She further criticized the condition of hospitals like Rawatula Rao and Indira Gandhi, stating that they

are unfit to treat serious patients, who are often forced to seek care at DDU Hospital. In education, she pointed out shortcomings such as only 700 out of 1,068 schools offering science education, the lack of principals in many schools, and the absence of the promised sports university.

On waste management, Sehrawat condemned the delay in clearing "garbage mountains," stating that Delhi has become increasingly polluted. She also criticized the Delhi Jal Board for failing to manage sewage and water supplies, with

areas like Balbir Nagar and Dwarka experiencing sewage entering homes. She alleged that INR 80 crore was misused under the guise of cleanliness, particularly in the Najafgarh zone.

Lastly, Sehrawat urged the Delhi government to sign the MoU for implementing the Ayushman Bharat scheme by January 5, accusing Kejriwal of depriving Delhi residents of free healthcare under the initiative. She dismissed schemes like "Sanjeevani" as false claims meant to divert attention from the government's failures.

GOVT KEEPS SMALL SAVINGS RATES STEADY FOR JAN-MAR 2025

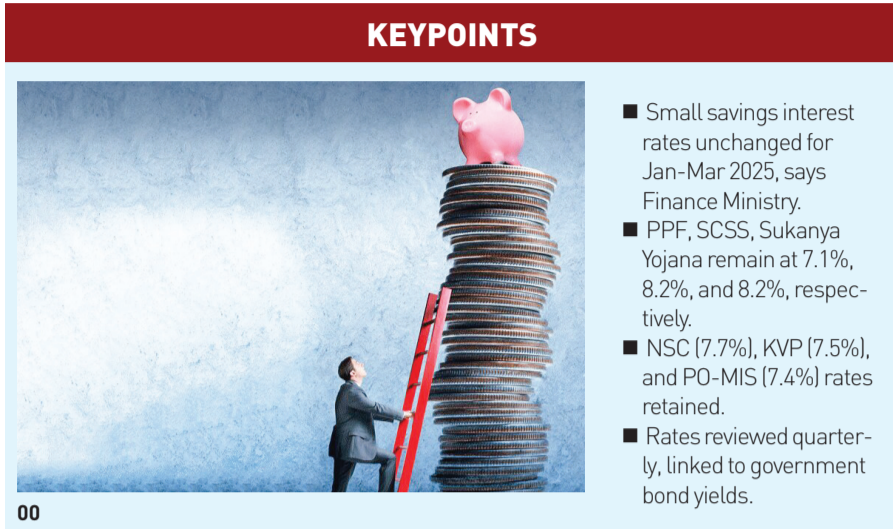
The government has retained small savings scheme interest rates for January-March 2025, ensuring consistent returns for investors.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The central government has kept the interest rates unchanged on various small savings schemes for the January-March quarter of Financial year 2024-25, according to an official notification from the Ministry of Finance.

"The rates of interest on various Small Savings Scheme for the second quarter of FY 2024-25 starting from 1st January 2025 and ending on 31st March 2025 shall remain unchanged from those notified for the first quarter (1st October 2024 to 31st December 2024) of FY 2024-25," said the Finance Ministry in the notification.

The interest rates on small savings schemes are typically reviewed every quarter by the



KEYPOINTS

- Small savings interest rates unchanged for Jan-Mar 2025, says Finance Ministry.
- PPF, SCSS, Sukanya Yojana remain at 7.1%, 8.2%, and 8.2%, respectively.
- NSC (7.7%), KVP (7.5%), and PO-MIS (7.4%) rates retained.
- Rates reviewed quarterly, linked to government bond yields.

00

government.

For the Public Provident Fund (PPF), one of the most popular small savings schemes, the interest rate will continue to be 7.1 per cent. This scheme is widely favored due to its tax ben-

efits and long-term savings potential.

The Senior Citizen Savings Scheme (SCSS) will also maintain its interest rate at 8.2 per cent. This scheme is specifically designed to provide financial security

to senior citizens, offering higher returns compared to other savings options.

Deposits made under the Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, which is aimed at encouraging savings for the education and marriage expenses of

girl children, will continue to earn an interest rate of 8.2 per cent. This scheme is an integral part of the government's 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' initiative.

The National Savings Certificate (NSC), which is a fixed-income investment plan, will keep its interest rate at 7.7 per cent. This scheme is considered a secure investment with moderate returns.

The Post Office Monthly Income Scheme (PO-MIS), which provides regular monthly income to investors, will offer an interest rate of 7.4 per cent.

The Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP), a government-backed savings scheme designed to double the investment over a specific period, will continue to provide an interest rate of 7.5 per cent.

Mumbai achieves 13 year high, recording over 1.41 lakh property sale registrations in 2024

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Mumbai city, under the jurisdiction of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), is projected to record 12,518 property registrations in December 2024, generating Rs 1,154 crores in revenue for the state exchequer, according to the report by Knight Frank.

The report added that compared to the same period last year, property registrations noted a modest rise of 2 per cent, while stamp duty collections increased by a robust 24 per cent year-on-year (YoY), driven by a notable rise in high-value transactions.

The total number of property sales registration for the year 2024 will reach 1,41,302 while revenue generated from property registrations for the year is estimated to stand at Rs 12,161

Transactions in this segment totalled 2,879 properties, showcasing a growing inclination toward premium real estate.

Core. Both these represent a new 13-year high.

On a sequential basis (month-on-month), property registrations in December 2024 increased by 23 per cent YoY while stamp duty collection from property registrations increased by 25 per cent in the same period. Residential properties accounted for 80 per cent of total registrations in December.

Shishir Baijal, Chairman & Managing Director, Knight Frank India, said "The steady rise in registrations and revenue highlights robust demand, especially for premium and spacious homes. The data also indicates Mumbai's real estate market as a key

driver of economic activity and an attractive long-term investment."

As per the report there is a steady rise in registration in higher value properties in the city. In December 2024, properties priced at Rs 2 crore and above accounted for 23 per cent of registrations, up from 18 per cent in December 2023.

Transactions in this segment totalled 2,879 properties, showcasing a growing inclination toward premium real estate. Conversely, registrations for properties valued under Rs 50 lakh declined significantly, dropping from 30 per cent to 25 per cent share, indicative of a shift in buyer preferences towards higher-value segments.

Stock market closes near flatline in year-end; Nifty ends above 23,650

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

The Indian benchmark equity indices, BSE Sensex and NSE Nifty 50, witnessed a recovery from intra-day lows but ended the last trading session of 2024 near flatline on Tuesday.

The losses in the market were led by declines in IT and select banking stocks.

The BSE Sensex dropped to a low of 77,561, reflecting global market weaknesses, but rebounded to a high of 78,248 before closing at 78,139, down 0.14 per cent or 109 points.

The National Stock Exchange (NSE) Nifty 50

followed a similar trend, recovering from a low of 23,460 and surging to about 23,690, but ultimately settled at 23,644.80 virtually unchanged.

On NSE, Bharat Electronics Limited, ONGC, Kotak Bank, Trent and Coal India were the gainers, while the Adani Enterprises, Adani Enterprises, Tech Mahindra, TCS, Infosys, and SBI life remained the top losers.

During the trading session on NSE, the IT stocks drag the most, while Health Care and PSU stocks lend the support.

"As we are entering 2025, we can expect possible

profit booking in high-performing stocks and indexes for which investors should be prepared. Macro factors like inflation, a weakening rupee, and high unemployment are expected to challenge market stability, with more youth turning to the stock market as a source of income," stated VLA Amala, Co-Founder of Stock Market Today.

"FDI plays an important role in India's market. However, in 2024 FIIs turned into net sellers with almost Rs. 25,000 crore outflows and counterbalanced DIIs net buying of more than Rs. 5.5 lakh crores.

This brand is bringing the men back with monochrome classics

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Recently featured in GQ India, BWG is a luxury menswear brand that has captivated the fashion world with its uncompromising dedication to a monochromatic palette.

Specializing in Black, White, and Grey, BWG offers a curated collection of Pullovers, Shirts, T-Shirts, and Polos, each crafted with an unwavering commitment to exceptional quality and minimalist aesthetics.

Unveiling a New Standard of Luxury:

BWG's focus extends beyond color, emphasizing the finest materials available.



Knitwear: Crafted from 100% Australian Merino Wool, certified by the Woolmark Association, ensuring unparalleled softness, warmth, and durability.

T-Shirts & Polos: Utilizing 100% US Supima Cotton, renowned for its exceptional strength, softness, and luster, and certified by the Supima

Association. A Philosophy of Minimalism:

The brand name, BWG, succinctly encapsulates its philosophy: "Men in Monochrome." This reflects a modern approach to menswear, emphasizing confidence, individuality, and a refined sense of style.

Demat accounts surged but penetration still low at 12% compared to 62% in US

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

India's stock market landscape is witnessing rapid growth in demat accounts, but the penetration remains significantly lower compared to global standards, according to a report by Motilal Oswal.

The report highlights that demat account penetration in India stands at just 12 per cent, far behind the 62 per cent penetration in the United States.

It said "The demat account



penetration in India is at 12 per cent vs. 62 per cent for the US. Discount brokers, through their digital offerings, are changing the paradigm, enabling rising awareness and adoption of

equity in lower-tier towns and cities".

The number of demat accounts in India has reached approximately 179 million recently, nearly doubling from 90 million in FY22.

This surge has been driven largely by discount brokers leveraging digital platforms to increase awareness and adoption of equity investments, particularly in smaller towns and cities.

The growth in trading volumes has been exponential as per report with the average daily turnover (ADTO) across all segments—Equity Futures & Options (F&O), Cash, and Commodities—growing multifold over the past five years. Among these, the Options segment has been the primary

growth driver.

However, regulatory measures introduced by SEBI to curb the options segment are expected to temporarily impact volumes before setting the stage for long-term growth.

In response to the new regulatory environment, the report mentioned that the discount brokers may need to adjust their pricing models to maintain profitability. Simultaneously, exchanges will need to focus on product innovation to counter any decline in trad-

ing volumes.

The report also noted that the widening of the primary market, with more listings and increased free float, will likely drive turnover velocity higher. This trend is expected to support volume growth for both exchanges and brokers.

Additionally, brokers are focusing on expanding their product offerings, such as loans, fixed income, mutual funds, and insurance, to enhance customer lifetime value and mitigate market cyclicality.

Indian startups hit a funding dip in 2024, but unicorns still shine bright

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Indian startup ecosystem experienced a rollercoaster ride in 2024, characterised by a slight yet concerning decline in funding activity and a shift in investor sentiment, alongside a silver lining with several startups achieving unicorn status.

Despite facing global economic challenges, India's startups showcased remarkable resilience, adeptly navigating changing market conditions, while continuing to attract investments.

According to data from Tracxn, Indian startups raised a total of USD 30.4 billion in funding throughout 2024, a 6.5 per cent decline from the USD 32.5 billion secured in 2023.

Despite this dip, the Indian startup ecosystem

STARTUP CORNER



interest in the sector.

The overall funding trend reflects a cautious-yet-optimistic approach from investors, as they navigate a more selective funding environment, while still recognising the potential of high-growth startups in India.

A slight shift towards early-stage investments was evident during the year, with seed and Series A rounds gaining traction, as investors sought to back innovative ideas with long-term potential.

"Businesses that could demonstrate robust underlying unit economics found greater favour this year," Dushyant Singh, Managing Partner at Playbook Partners, noted.

Gig economy, retail, and enterprise applications stood out as top-performing sectors, according to

Tracxn.

Quick commerce emerged as a high-growth sector, with 40 active companies, including unicorns Zepto, Blinkit, and Swiggy Instamart, and promising newcomers Dunzo, Swish, and Farmako.

In July, the government announced the abolishment of the angel tax on investments in startups to provide a more conducive environment for growth.

"By eliminating this tax, the government has provided a much-needed boost to investors and entrepreneurs, enabling greater liquidity and more flexible funding options for startups. However, fewer funding rounds, high operational costs, and infrastructure challenges remain ongoing factors that need attention," said Jeenendra Bhandari, Chairman, JITO

Incubation and Innovation Foundation (JIIF).

There was an encouraging rise in women entrepreneurs and founders from Tier 2 and 3 towns.

Ninad Karpe from IOOX VC said the entrepreneurial culture has transcended its traditional boundaries.

"The entrepreneurial culture has transcended its traditional boundaries, seeping into colleges, schools, and even Tier 2 and 3 towns. Founders from these regions are bringing fresh perspectives, solving hyperlocal problems, and creating opportunities that were previously untapped.

"There's a noticeable rise in women entrepreneurs, signalling a positive shift in inclusivity and diversity within the startup ecosystem," he said.

According to official

data, India has more than 73,000 startups with at least one woman director that have been recognised under the Startup India Initiative.

Despite the positive trends, challenges persist. Global economic uncertainties have a direct impact on investor sentiment and funding availability. "While the number of deals has seen a quarterly increase of 10-20 per cent... deal values have declined significantly. This reflects a cautious investment climate, with most funding rounds being either follow-ons by existing investors or bridge rounds aimed at extending the runway rather than driving growth. The focus has shifted from valuation-driven funding to sustainability and profitability," FAAD Capital CEO Aditya Arora said.

'Decline in migrant workforce raising concerns on ruralisation'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The decline in migrant population to the workforce is raising concerns on ruralisation as against urbanisation says a report by Systematix Institutional Equities.

The report says the decline in rural-urban migration has contributed to rising ruralisation, with an increasing share of the population and workforce remaining in rural areas.

This shift has led to higher food demand, narrowing urban supplies, and persistent food inflation. The dependence on agriculture for employment has also grown, with 46.1 per cent of the workforce engaged in the sector in 2023-24, up from 42.5 per cent in 2017-18.

This trend underscores a rise in disguised unemployment and stagnation in rural wages, particularly among women, whose real wages declined by 2.3 per cent annually over the last five years.

The report challenges claims that improved rural infrastructure, such as electrification and housing under schemes like the PM Awas Yojana-Gramin, has reduced migration.

Historical data indicates that while rural electrification and housing construction have progressed, their pace has slowed significantly in recent years.

The cumulative addition of rural houses between FY14 and FY24 was 25 million, falling short of the potential 46.3 million if earlier growth trends had persisted



DIGITAL DIGNITY IN INDIA: A CALL FOR ETHICAL AND INCLUSIVE ONLINE

OPINION

DR. DEEVANSHU SHRIVASTAVA



The rise of the internet and digital technologies has revolutionized countless

aspects of human life, from communication and commerce to education and entertainment. In India, this digital revolution has been particularly transformative, connecting millions of citizens and fostering unprecedented economic growth. However, this rapid digitization has also brought with it a host of challenges, including the erosion of digital dignity.

Digital dignity refers to the fundamental right of every individual to par-

ticipate in the digital world with respect, safety, and agency. It encompasses a range of issues, including online privacy, data protection, freedom of expression, and access to information. In India, these rights are often threatened by various factors, including cyberbullying, online harassment, the spread of misinformation, and the digital divide. One of the most pressing concerns is the prevalence of online harassment and cyberbullying, particularly against women, minorities, and marginalized communities. The anonymity and reach of the internet can embolden individuals to engage in abusive behavior, often with impunity. This not only violates the dignity of the targeted individuals but also creates a

climate of fear and intimidation that can stifle free speech and participation in online spaces. Misinformation and disinformation also pose a significant threat to digital dignity. The rapid spread of false or misleading information can manipulate public opinion, incite violence, and undermine democratic processes. In India, this has been exacerbated by the proliferation of social media platforms and messaging apps, which can amplify misinformation and make it difficult to distinguish fact from fiction. The digital divide is another major challenge, with millions of Indians still lacking access to the internet and digital technologies. This exclusion can exacerbate existing inequalities and marginalize

vulnerable communities. Without access to essential online services, such as education, healthcare, and financial services, these individuals are denied the opportunities and benefits that digital inclusion can provide.

Addressing these challenges requires a multi-pronged approach that involves government intervention, industry collaboration, and public awareness. The government must enact and enforce strong laws to protect online privacy, combat cybercrime, and promote digital literacy. Industry players must also take responsibility for creating safe and inclusive online platforms, while promoting ethical data practices and combating the spread of misinformation. Public

awareness campaigns are also crucial to educate individuals about their digital rights and responsibilities. By promoting responsible online behavior and fostering a culture of respect and empathy, we can create a more inclusive and equitable digital landscape.

In conclusion, digital dignity is not merely a luxury but a fundamental human right. In India, the rapid growth of the digital world necessitates a concerted effort to ensure that this right is protected and upheld for all citizens. By addressing the challenges of online harassment, misinformation, and the digital divide, we can create a digital India that is truly inclusive, equitable, and empowering. *The author is Associate Dean, School of Law, GD Goenkha University, Gurugram.*

PERSPECTIVE

POLITICAL CALENDAR FOR 2025

First of all, a very happy new year. Politically speaking, 2025 is going to begin on a highly charged note with the Delhi elections. Although Delhi is not a full state and sends only 7 MPs to the Lok Sabha, it is the capital and in terms of optics it sends a powerful message as to who controls the city. Which is why we have seen the never ending turf war between the BJP via the Lt Governor's office and the ruling Aam Admi Party. For the sitting chief minister this is also a crucial election, as apart from Punjab (which is fast spiralling out of control), Delhi is the only win that he has to boast about. And Delhi is really where the Aam Admi Party's journey began. For the BJP, this is a win that has always eluded Prime Minister Modi for it has never won Delhi after Modi took office. In other words, apart from Mamata Banerjee, the Delhi CM remains one who has successfully warded off the Modi juggernaut. On a personal note, he would like to win Delhi for the BJP. In fact, going into the new year with less than two months left for the polls the BJP is still to announce a CM candidate. Which means this could well end up being a high stakes battle between Brand Modi and Kejriwal. As for the Congress, it is still to put its house in order and so far the only role it will play will be that of a spoiler - will it eat into the BJP's vote or the AAP's.

The other election due in 2025 is that of Bihar. There the alliances are already in place, with the BJP aligning with the JD(U) and the Congress with Laloo Yadav's party. It would be interesting to see if Tejashwi Yadav can mount a comprehensive challenge to the NDA. As far as the NDA is concerned, then the dynamics between JD(U) and the BJP would be interesting. Will this be Nitish Kumar's last election for his popularity is on a decline?

Apart from the elections, there is also the budget that will be the first challenge of the year. The economy still remains Modi's biggest challenge. Will he continue to make the middle class pay for his welfareism or will he finally offer some cheer to the salaried professional, the trader and the entrepreneur?

Apart from the elections, there is also the budget that will be the first challenge of the year. The economy still remains Modi's biggest challenge. Will he continue to make the middle class pay for his welfareism or will he finally offer some cheer to the salaried professional, the trader and the entrepreneur?

A marker of Modi's hold over the BJP would be the election/selection of the new BJP chief as JP Nadda's term ends in January (end). Will he be able to appoint a person of his choice, or will the RSS hold sway. If you recall in the last few state elections, specially Haryana and Maharashtra it was the RSS that did the bulk of campaigning. It is also the RSS that has taken credit for the wins, leading to speculation that it had begun to assert itself within the BJP.

As for Rahul Gandhi, the year 2024 had ended on a mixed note as the Congress could not maintain the Lok Sabha momentum in the assembly polls that followed. He still remains the Congress party's tallest leader but there are others within the INDIA bloc that have begun to question his credibility to lead. As the only pan India party within the opposition the Congress still holds the dominant position. But while it may take the lead in parliament, it will not be able to assert itself in the regional polls. Kejriwal has refused to ally with the Congress in Delhi and Tejashwi Yadav is also not willing to cede too many seats to the Congress in Bihar.

Given that the INDIA bloc was formed for the Lok Sabha, it may survive these regional contradictions. But if it has to give a comprehensive challenge to the BJP in the next elections, now is the time to get its act together and come up with a common minimum program as well as a convener. No use leaving these issues for the last minute.

This in a nutshell is a brief To-Do list for 2025. **PRIYA SAHGAL**

The 'Hypocrisy' of being an 'Empath' — To be or not to be a 'Human'

OPINION

NIDHI SHARMA

"All I ever wanted was to reach out and touch another human being not just with my hands but with my heart."

Who is an empath? A person who feels the emotions, struggles and silent battles of people around him or her. But this article is not about "how to become an empath" or "how should we inculcate empathy in people" etc. This article rather is about the antonym of "empath" which is "hypocrite", more so the human practice of donning the attire of "hypocrisy" everyday but seeking the blanket immunity of being an "empath." Being an empath in the present times has become quite a romanticised term owing to the social media reels, posts that brag about the importance of empathy when in fact the humans are miles away from even understanding the word "empathy". Any person who is not an empath is clearly and undoubtedly inconsistent with his or her emotions which will eventually result in the lack of building healthy and meaningful relationships.

I often recall one of my favourite movies, Tamasha

, while talking about how important it is to be "empathetic." The protagonist of the movie Ved (portrayed by Ranbir Kapoor) has struggled since childhood trying to make everyone around him happy. His parents, then his boss, and eventually his partner Tara (portrayed by Deepika Padukone). He just wants to fit into the boxes that people around him want him to fit in. A time comes when he realises that no one could understand what he had gone through and at a party when a friend asks him "how have you been Ved?" He lashes out and starts giving an account of his life which clearly came out as offensive and traumatising to his friend and the people around. Ved leaves but not before asking "jab janana nahi hota toh puchte qun hain" and the friend is quick to respond "ye toh sab puchte hain naa." This is where the entire problem lies. People do not know what being empathetic is.. but since "kindness" is cool these days they just want to assure you that I am here for you .. I am here to listen to

you..I cannot help you but can only sit with you while you cry.. when in fact it's all a big farce. There is a difference between being sympathetic and being empathetic. You feel sorry for someone is what sympathy looks like, but comprehending the pain of the person in front of you, even a stranger is what empathy is. Take for example a student who is scared to give his or her presentation in front of a class of 60 students, a teacher understanding what that student might be feeling or what fear he or she might be enduring that leads to trembling of hands and sweat beads on the forehead is what empathy looks like, on the other hand the teacher meeting her colleagues and telling them "that child has depression so couldn't perform well.. poor soul" is what sympathy is all about. And as much as my heart pains to write this..... But the world today lacks "empathy" and "empaths" not just in the outside world but even amongst family and friends.

Recently I witnessed the lack of sympathy let alone empathy in people attending a funeral of an eminent person. Since the dawn of our lives and I am irrevocably sure that till the dusk of our lives arrives, we have been and will always

be conditioned with the thought process that "ye aise mat karo" "ye aisa hona chahiye" "aise kareng toh log kya kahenge" "chaar logon ne dekh liya toh kya bolenge." For all the people, especially the youngsters who hold their breaths and stop their hearts from doing what they want to, let me break the news that "chaar log" in this funeral were discussing their skin care routines.. Some were indulged in gossip while many were happily greeting each other. For a moment I had to reckon whether I was at a funeral or at a party.

Human beings and their inconsistencies. These words aptly describe the hypocrisy of being an empath and a human being including myself. Words like "take care", "I will call you soon", "I am here for you" mean nothing for the simple reason that it is difficult to think about others before thinking about yourself. Imagine having a heartbreak not out of lack of love or reciprocation of love but due to the lack of empathy. I would label that to be the worst kind of grief or wretchedness a person has to go through. We open our hearts and let out our emotions, be it beams of success or tears of pain in front of people who we think will understand what we are feeling in that moment. We

trust each other as humans and play this gamble that if I can be an empath the other person in front of me would also be the same. How naive of us? This is where the fairytale is disrupted by an explosive truth and makes us realise how wrong we were throughout. People may paint a rosy picture for us making us believe in goodness or how they are different or not like the rest of the world.. but when you find yourself empty handed on the most aching days of your life it becomes staggering to even believe in the word "goodness." You probably don't even want to hear about it. Most of us have gone through this at some point of our lives.

But even on the days that we feel anything like this we should remind ourselves what great beauty lies in being empathetic and kind. The entire world might be cruel to us or try to bring us down, but we must never forget that a single act of kindness or empathy might save the day and at times life for a person. The phrase "acche logon k sath sabse zada bura hota hai" is true in today's time since a person who feels the emotions too deeply is already running in negative on the barometers of pragmatism. They are constantly reminded by the malevolent experiences that they must build their

boundaries, must think about themselves first and let people suffer for it's not your job to fix them. But a person who chooses to be empathetic everyday has done so because for him or her the world is not just a place to move mechanically or robotically. They have chosen to accept the many "hypocrisies" of being a human and still move forward with kindness and empathy in their hearts. And maybe they will lose again but not without spreading the happiness which at the end of day we all are craving for. As it has been beautifully portrayed in these words by Henri Nouwen-

"When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives means the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a warm and tender hand. The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, not healing and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is a friend who cares."

The author is Assistant Professor of Law at University Institute of Legal Studies (UILS), Panjab University, Chandigarh.

Four ways to make the New Year's positivity LAST

OPINION

CHAITANYA CHARAN DAS

Wish you a very happy New Year!

Normally, at such times, we make resolutions, and that's very important. At the same time, today, I'd like to propose a more holistic approach by which the positivity of the New Year can last.

Consider a four-quadrant diagram:

The y-axis represents happiness (positive) and unhappiness (negative).

The x-axis represents newness (positive) and oldness (negative).

Using the acronym LAST:

L: Let go of what is old and unhappy.
A: Appreciate what is old and happy.
S: Seek what will be new

and happy.

T: Tolerate what may be new and unhappy.

Let's explore these quadrants one by one.

1. Let go of what is old and unhappy

In the past year, some bad things may have happened—perhaps a relationship went south, or a situation became irreparable. We need to let go. We don't have to let those memories replay endlessly. If there's something to learn, we can learn it, but after that, let go. The Bhagavad-Gita (18.35) emphasizes avoiding self-defeating thought patterns such as lamenting

or resenting.

2. Appreciate what is old and happy

Reflect on the good in the past year. Maybe we

discovered a new ability or learned a new skill. We can be grateful for the opportunities we received and appreciate how we

rose to those occasions. The Bhagavad-Gita (16.1) highlights that satisfaction is not just an emotion—it's a decision. By consciously focusing on what is right in our life, we can appreciate it and build on it.

3. Seek what will be new and happy

This is where resolutions come in. Let us determine how to better tap into the opportunities that the New Year brings. If we're hoping for something positive to work out, we need to solidify our determination. The Bhagavad-Gita (6.25) states that intelligence sustained by conviction enables us to

persist in our endeavors.

Let us write down our resolutions and, by studying the Gita's wisdom, appreciate how Krishna wants us to have a far brighter future.

4. Tolerate what may be new and unhappy

As with every year, unexpected, undesirable, or unfortunate events may occur. The key is to tolerate them. The Bhagavad-Gita (2.14) reminds us that everything that comes will pass. Let's not get over-agitated or hyperventilate about setbacks. With a higher vision—that we are parts of Krishna and He has a plan

for us—we can focus more on His plan than on our immediate pleasures or displeasures. This perspective can help us not just tolerate but transcend negativity.

By filling our consciousness with something stimulating and fulfilling, we can leave no room for negativity.

Let's make our New Year positivity LAST by:

Letting go of what is old and unhappy.
Appreciating what is old and happy.
Seeking what will be new and happy.
Tolerating what may be new and unhappy.

2024

As the nation moves forward, the milestones of 2024 will serve as a testament to its resilience, vision, and commitment to a brighter, more prosperous future.

INDIA'S ACHIEVEMENTS

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

India's achievements in 2024 reflect its growing global stature and transformative progress across various sectors. The nation's economic growth, technological advancements, and infrastructural developments have reinforced its position as a major player on the world stage.

This report highlights key milestones in areas such as GDP growth, space exploration, renewable energy, and education. With strategic diplomatic engagements and cultural resurgence, India is advancing toward its goal of becoming a global leader.



XPoSat



Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. File Photo



Mumbai Trans Harbour Link

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

GDP and Macroeconomic Stability:

India is currently the fifth-largest economy in the world, with a GDP of \$3.94 trillion at current prices. It is also currently the third-largest economy in the world in terms of GDP based on purchasing power parity (PPP) with a GDP size of 16.02 trillion USD.

Foreign Exchange Reserves

The nation's foreign exchange reserves reached a historic high of \$642 billion, a testament to prudent fiscal management and robust trade policies. India has achieved the significant feat of joining the ranks of the world's largest foreign exchange reserves, securing the 4th position globally after China, Japan, and Switzerland.

Startup Ecosystem



With 148,931 DPIIT-recognized startups, India retained its position as the third-largest startup ecosystem worldwide. Over 1.55 million jobs were directly generated by startups, bolstered by initiatives like 'Make in India' and 'Startup India'.

Industrial and Agricultural Growth

Key sectors like manufacturing and services witnessed substantial expansion. Agriculture achieved record production levels, supported by government subsidies



The G7 Summit was held at the luxury resort of Borgo Egnazia in Italy's Apulia region. (Narendra Modi/X)

and advancements in agri-tech.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Mumbai Trans Harbour Link

India's longest sea bridge, inaugurated in January 2024, significantly reduced travel time between Mumbai and Navi Mumbai.

Expansion of Vande Bharat

Trains

As on December, 2024, a total of 136 Vande Bharat train services are running across the Indian Railways network. During the Calendar year-2024, Indian Railways introduced 62 Vande Bharat services.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND SPACE ACHIEVEMENTS

XPoSat and Aditya-L1: XPoSat, India's first dedicated

meteorological forecasting capabilities.

Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV) Technology: Progress in reusable launch systems was demonstrated through the RLV-LEX tests, contributing to cost-effective space exploration.

Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV): The SSLV-D3 mission successfully placed satellites into orbit, reinforcing India's ability to cater to small-satellite demand.

India's performance across key global economic indexes for 2024

Global Index 2024	India's Global Rank	Data	Source
Largest Global Economy	5	GDP: \$3.94 billion thousand	IMF
Global (Military) Power Ranking	4	Power Score: 0.1023; Military Spending: \$74.0 billion	Global Firepower Military Strength
Largest Gold Reserves	8	Gold Reserves (in tonnes): 840.76	World Gold Council
Global Wealth Report: Countries with growing millionaire population	11	Growth percentage: 22%	UBS
Sustainable Trade Index	23	Sustainability Score: 24	IMD and Hinrich Foundation
Global Competitiveness Index	39	Competitiveness Score: 57.17	IMD
Global Innovation Index	39	-	WIPO
World Talent Ranking	58	Talent Score: 40.47	IMD
Largest Stock Exchange (as per market cap)	5	Market Cap: \$5,055,163.02	WFE

work to promote creativity and inclusivity. **National Education Policy (NEP) Implementation:** The NEP's goals were fur-

The nation's continued growth, innovation, and strategic engagements position it as a key global player, ready to lead in the years ahead. With solid foundations in place, India is well on its way to achieving sustained development and enhancing its influence on the global stage.



ed polarimetry observatory, was launched successfully. The Aditya-L1 solar mission achieved a significant milestone by reaching its designated halo orbit.

INSAT-3DS: ISRO launched the INSAT-3DS weather satellite to enhance

Analog Space Mission: India conducted its first Analog Space Mission, advancing preparations for human spaceflight.

CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

Inauguration of Ram Mandir:

The Ram Mandir in Ayodhya was inaugurated on January 22, symbolizing a historic and spiritual milestone for the nation.

UNESCO's Report on Arts Education:

A landmark report highlighted India's emphasis on integrating culture and arts into the educational frame-

ther realized, with significant progress in vocational training and digital learning platforms.

DIPLOMATIC AND STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENTS

Global Leadership: Prime Minister Modi's participation in the G7 Summit in Italy underscored India's growing influence on global matters, including climate change and digital governance.

Official visits to Russia, Poland, and other nations strengthened bilateral and multilateral partnerships.

Regional and Strategic Partnerships:



in regional forums like SAARC and BIMSTEC was enhanced, with renewed focus on economic integration and counter-terrorism.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

Renewable Energy Initiatives:

In 2024, India achieved significant milestones in renewable energy, adding 14.9 GW capacity (April-November) and reaching a total of 205.5 GW. Solar dominated with 94.2 GW, driven by expanded domestic manufac-

turing supported by the PLI scheme.

Water Conservation Efforts:

The Jal Shakti Abhiyan yielded substantial results, improving water accessibility and irrigation efficiency in rural areas.

India's achievements in 2024 underscore its remarkable progress across economic, technological, cultural, and diplomatic fronts. The nation's continued growth, innovation, and strategic engagements position it as a key global player, ready to lead in the years ahead. With solid foundations in place, India is well on its way to achieving sustained development and enhancing its influence on the global stage. As the nation moves forward, the milestones of 2024 will serve as a testament to its resilience, vision, and commitment to a brighter, more prosperous future.



Vande Bharat train

This report highlights key milestones in areas such as GDP growth, space exploration, renewable energy, and education. With strategic diplomatic engagements and cultural resurgence, India is advancing toward its goal of becoming a global leader.

TRIPURA HIGH COURT: PREVENTION OF ANIMAL CRUELTY ACT NEEDS TO BE SCRUPULOUSLY IMPLEMENTED

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Tripura High Court in the case Ms. Paramita Sen v. The State of Tripura & Ors observed and has remarked that the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, Rules framed thereunder and the guidelines issued from time to time by the statutory authorities do need to be observed scrupulously at all levels by the concerned State authorities.

The Division bench comprising of Chief Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh and Justice Biswajit Palit was hearing the present matter.

The bench in the case directed the State authorities to ensure that such guidelines be once again circulat-

ed to the officers in the field so that cases of non-compliance of the provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 (Act of 1960) and Rules framed thereunder by the officers at the ground level are not repeated again.

In the present matter, the court was hearing the Public Interest Litigation, PIL filed by an Advocate and an animal right activist working in the field of animal welfare activities as a member of the NGO, 'Society for Welfare of Animal and Nature, SWAN.'

The petitioner in the case drew the attention of the High Court to an incidence which occurred on July 25, 2024 at about 03:00 pm at Kamrangabari, Kailashahar, Unakoti District in respect



of a vehicle which was intercepted transporting cattle which includes cows, calves and bulls illegally in an inhumane manner in violation of the Act of 1960, Transport of Animals Rules, 1978, Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Care and Maintenance of Case Property Animals) Rules, 2017 and

the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.

The petitioner alleged before the court that despite information by a local activist, and a written complaint in the Kailashahar Police Station under the provisions of the Act of 1960, the cattle and the vehicle seized were released by the police

The petitioner submitted before the court that the direction may be issued to the respondent-authorities to ensure that in future strict compliance of the provisions of the Act of 1960 and the Rules framed thereunder be carried out in matters of seizure and release of such seized animals.

without following the prescribed procedure under the Act of 1960.

Further, the petitioner also contended before the court that the complainant was being influenced to withdraw the complaint.

On the other hand, the Government Advocate sub-

mitted that the adequate action has been taken against the concerned inspector, after issuance of show-cause notice by imposing a 'final warning' for such negligent act with a direction not to repeat such act in near future by the Superintendent of Police, Unakoti

District, vide office order dated November 22, 2024.

It was also submitted before the court that the Government Advocate that respondent authorities are obliged to follow the procedure prescribed under the Act, 1960 and the Rules framed thereunder and respondent-authorities have assured that all such precautions would be taken in future to ensure that the letter of the law in this regard is duly complied with.

The petitioner submitted before the court that the direction may be issued to the respondent-authorities to ensure that in future strict compliance of the provisions of the Act of 1960 and the Rules framed thereunder be carried out

in matters of seizure and release of such seized animals.

The court while considering the facts and circumstances of the case stated that, 'This court is of the view that the Act of 1960, the Rules framed thereunder and the guidelines issued from time to time by the statutory authorities do need to be observed scrupulously at all levels by the concerned authorities and the concerned respondents would also ensure that such guidelines be once again circulated to the officers in the field so that cases of non-compliance of the provisions of the Act of 1960 and Rules framed thereunder by the officers at the ground level are not repeated again.'

Punjab and Haryana High Court acquits man in rape case: Untorn clothes of alleged victim denotes consent

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Punjab and Haryana High Court in the case XXXX v. XXXX acquitted a man in rape case wherein the court observed that the discrepancy in the prosecutrix's testimony and that the alleged sexual intercourse was consensual as the clothes of the prosecutrix were not torn at the crime site.

The bench comprising of Justice Sureshwar Thakur and Justice Kirti Singh was hearing the present matter.

The bench in the case stated that, 'The existence of untorn clothes of the prosecutrix, at the crime site, also is magnificatory that, as such, the prosecutrix was a consensual partner to hers allegedly becoming subjected to sexual intercourse(s) at



the instance of the accused Arjun Singh, especially if she was a non-consensual partner to the sexual assault, thus, her clothes would have been torn, rather than her clothes being found in an untorn condition at the crime site.

In the present matter, the court was hearing an appeal filed against the man who is being convicted under section 376 (2) (g) of Indian Penal Code, IPC and has sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for life. Another accused was also convicted under section

The bench noted in her previous statement she had stated she was wearing jeans and top and later she stated she was wearing suit.

376s (2) (g).

The court acquitted him wherein noting that the victim had turned hostile.

Further, the bench in the case noted that the prosecutrix deposed that she made hue and cry but 'went unnoticed on account of the accused bolting the doors of the room from inside, thus obviously becomes falsified.'

The court also observed that the prosecutrix did not disclose about the event to anyone while coming back to her home from the place of incident 'thus naturally

bespeaks about hers being a consensual partner to the sexual assault, if any, as became perpetrated upon her person by the accused.'

The bench noted in her previous statement she had stated she was wearing jeans and top and later she stated she was wearing suit.

The bench while considering the facts and circumstances of the case stated that the improvement or embellishment, as made by the prosecutrix during hers recording her testimony before the learned trial Judge concerned, thus from

her previously recorded statement in writing before the police officer concerned, but leads to an inference that her rendered testimony in Court, thus become unamenable for assigning of any credence thereto. In sequitur, the benefit thereof is to be assigned to the accused.

Accordingly, the court set aside the conviction.

The counsel, Dr. Anmol Rattan Sidhu, Sr. Advocate with Mr. Gursher Singh Dhillon, Advocate appeared for the appellant (in both cases).

The counsel, Mr. Gursher Singh Dhillon (Legal Aid Counsel) appeared for the appellant (in CRA-D-371-DB-2013)

The counsel, Mr. Maninder Singh, Sr. DAG, Punjab.

Allahabad High Court: 'Free-willed' wife meeting civil society members sans forming a illegal relation is not cruelty against husband

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Allahabad High Court in the case Mahendra Prasad vs. Smt. Bindu Devi observed that a 'free-willed' wife's acts of travelling alone or interacting with members of civil society without engaging in any illegal or immoral relationships cannot be considered an act of cruelty against her husband.

The bench comprising of Justice Saumitra Dayal Singh and Justice Donadi Ramesh was hearing the present matter.

The bench in the case stated that a conduct of wife of only seeking to keep alive a legal fiction of her marriage, without any reason to keep alive that relationship, and refusing to cohabit with her husband may amount to cruelty against the husband.

The court in the case observed and has allowed the appeal of husband to challenge a family court's judgment and order wherein the court dismissed the divorce suit he had instituted.

However, the husband had pressed for a divorce decree on two grounds: mental cruelty and desertion by the wife.

It being the case of the appellant-husband that the parties got married in February 1990, and in Decem-



ber 1995, a male child was born to the parties.

The parties resided intermittently for a total of only 8 months and they last cohabited together in December 2001 (as per the wife).

The court observed that both the parties admitted that 23 years have passed since they last cohabited, and now they live separately.

It has been alleged by the husband before the court that his wife was in an adulterous relationship with another man, and she, being a free-willed person, would go out of her own to the market and other places and did not observe 'Parda'.

It has also been submitted by him before the court that his wife used to pass on verbal insults to him due to his poor economic status.

Further, he claimed that such acts and other acts constituted cruelty against him. The High Court in its order noted that the act of the wife,

being free-willed or a person who would travel on her own or meet up with other members of the civil society without forming any illegal or immoral relationship, may not be described as an act of cruelty committed.

The court noted that it was being disputed that the parties' marriage was arranged and the husband's family status was known to the wife, and still, the marriage was solemnised.

The court also observed that the normal relations have also existed between the parties and the act of insults that were allegedly caused by the respondent have neither been described with details of time or place of occurrence, nor such acts have been proven before the learned Court below. To that extent, this court find no error in the order of the learned Court below in not acting on the plea of insults caused by the respondent.

Calcutta High Court: Employer cannot deduct excess amount from retiral benefits paid to employee on erroneous fixation of pay scale

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Calcutta High Court in the case observed and has held that the employer cannot deduct or adjust the excess amount paid to the employee on erroneous fixation of pay scale from the retiral benefits.

The Division bench comprising of Justice Harish Tandon and Justice Prasennjit Biswas was hearing the present matter.

BACKGROUND OF THE FACTS

On March 26, 1996, the respondent employee was

being appointed as a lecturer in Ramkrishna Mission Shilpapatna, Belgharia, Kolkata. From December 21, 2013, he attained superannuation.

The employee was allowed Career Advancement Scheme, CAS benefit from March 26, 2001 and the second CAS from March 26, 2006.

It has been observed by the appellant authorities that at the time of joining the post, the employee did not have the M. Tech. degree which was obtained on March 25, 1996. In view of the order dated October 24, 2007, the

employee was entitled to a first CAS only after successfully completing 6 years of service and accordingly, the second CAS should have been awarded after lapse of further period provided.

The appellant noticed the erroneous fixation of scale of pay by the extending benefit under the CAS. The authorities asked for the refund of the excess amount paid to the employee after he retired from the service.

Aggrieved with the same, the employee filed the writ petition.

The single judge ruled in favour of the employee by

holding that the authorities cannot recover excess amount paid to the employee.

Aggrieved with the same, the authorities filed an appeal against the order of the single judge.

It was contended by the appellant before the court that the service book was not forwarded to the authority before the superannuation of employee and as soon as the discrepancy was detected, it was immediately notified.

Further, the court contended that the lecturer must have possessed the

M.Tech. degree as on January 01, 1996 to avail the benefits of the Career Advancement Scheme but it was absent as the employee obtained the M.Tech degree on March 25, 1996 and therefore, was not entitled to the benefits of CAS.

On the other hand, it was contended before the court that the employee that while awarding the second CAS, a meeting was held on January 25, 2008 in presence of an Additional Director of the Department and 'no objection' was raised therein while extending the second CAS benefit.

Punjab and Haryana High Court: Holding multiple inquiries on same allegations amount to violation of Article 21 of Constitution

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Punjab and Haryana High Court in the case Ajay Kumar Versus State Of Punjab observed and has granted anticipatory bail in fraud and Prevention of Corruption Act case to a Junior Engineer posted in Municipal Council Khanna, accused for committing embezzlement of Rs. 3.17 lakhs.

The bench headed by Justice Sandeep Moudgil in the case stated that, 'The multiple inquiries on same set of allegations would amount to violation of Article 21 of the Constitution of India added with the fact that the petitioner has

On the other hand, the counsel appearing for the State opposed the petition filed wherein it is submitted that there being serious allegations against the petitioner, therefore his custodial interrogation is required.

bona fide intentions and is willing to join the investigation and cooperate for furtherance of the same so that the final report can be submitted by the Investigating Agency within the stipulated period.'

It was alleged before the court that the petitioner Ajay Kumar along with

others was involved in committing embezzlement for an amount of Rs. 3.17 lakhs by floating tender of Rs. 4.20 lakhs.

The Senior counsel appearing on behalf of the petitioner argued before the court that multiple inquiry on the same set of allegations levelled by

the complainant are not permissible in the light of notification dated April 01, 2008 issued by the Director General of Police, Punjab.

Reliance was also placed on Jaswinder Singh vs. state of Punjab and Ors in order to underscore that, 'multiple inquiries not only cause injustice to the petitioner-complainant but also become a source of abuse, harassment and cause delay in conclusion of criminal investigation and trial.'

On the other hand, the counsel appearing for the State opposed the petition filed wherein it is submitted that there being serious allegations against the

petitioner, therefore his custodial interrogation is required.

The court in the case stated that there being no reason to deny the petitioner the concession of anticipatory bail to the petitioner.

It being pertinent to note that the High Court had earlier pulled up the Punjab Police officers for initiating multiple enquiries against a man without registering any FIR, prima facie in contempt of the Supreme Court's directions in the Lalita Kumari case.

The counsel, Mr. Bipan Ghai, Sr. Advocate with Mr. Nikhil Ghai, Advocate and Mr. Nikhil Thamman, Advocate appeared for the petitioner.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Allahabad High Court in the case observed that a relationship between brother-in-law and sister-in-law (jija and sali) is immoral.

The court stated that if a woman is a major, the said relationship does not attract the offence of rape.

The bench headed by Justice Sameer Jain in the case observed and has granted bail to an accused i.e., Jija who was booked under section 366, section 376, section 506 of the Indian Penal Code, IPC on the allegation that he enticed away his sister-in-law i.e., the wife's sister or saali under the false promise to perform marriage with her.

The counsel appearing for him argued before the single judge that his client had been falsely accused in the present matter.

It has also been submitted by him before the court

that an illicit relationship had developed between the sister-in-law i.e., the alleged victim and brother-in-law i.e., applicant, and when this fact came to the knowledge of the informant, he lodged the FIR of the present case.

Further, it was submitted before the court that the alleged victim is a major who had earlier denied the allegations in her Section 161 of Code of Criminal Procedure, CrPc statement.

Later, she changed the statement under Section 164 of Code of Criminal Procedure, CrPC and supported the prosecution's case.

On the other hand, the AGA though opposed to the prayer for bail, could not dispute the fact that the alleged victim is a major and from the record, it could not be reflected that she was not the consenting party. The court in the case took into account the

allegations made against the accused, the arguments advanced by both parties and the fact that the alleged victim initially denied the allegations against the applicant but later on supported the prosecution's case, wherein it is stated that she had developed a relationship with the applicant and married him. The court also emphasized that though their relationship was immoral, the relationship would not attract the offence of rape as the alleged victim is a major.

The court in the case considered the counsel appearing for the applicant had admitted that an illicit relationship was developed between the applicant and the victim.

The court noted that the accused applicant was arrested in July 2024 and has no criminal history.

Accordingly, the court allowed his petition and granted him bail.

TOP OF THE DAY

KIM EXTENDS NEW YEAR GREETINGS TO 'COMRADE' PUTIN

Pyongyang: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un extended New Year greetings to Russian President Vladimir Putin, expressing hopes for strengthened ties between Pyongyang and Moscow and wishing Russia success in its conflict with Ukraine, Al Jazeera reported, citing state news agency KCNA. Kim also praised their cooperation in 2024 and expressed a desire to "design and push ahead with new projects."

The Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported on Tuesday that in a letter to mark the New Year, Kim extended his greetings to his "dearest friend and comrade"

NEW EUROPEAN IMPORT STANDARDS EFFECTIVE FROM JANUARY: ISRAEL

TEL AVIV: Israel's Ministry of Economy and Industry published the results of a survey conducted among hundreds of importers, in preparation for the entry into force of the import reform "What's good for Europe is good for Israel" starting January 1, 2025. The survey shows that most importers expect to take advantage of the reform tracks as early as the first quarter of this year.

The "What's good for Europe is good for Israel" reform is the adoption of European regulatory standards for the importation of various products. Israel's standards and regulations are much higher and more complicated than those in Europe.

TAIWAN DETECTS 5 CHINESE AIRCRAFT, 6 NAVAL VESSELS NEAR ITS SHORES

Taipei: Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense (MND) reported detecting five Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) aircraft and six People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) vessels operating near Taiwan.

According to the MND, three of the five PLA aircraft crossed the median line and entered Taiwan's northern and southwestern Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ).

PAK DEF MIN RAISES DOUBTS OVER PTI'S 'SINCERITY' IN HOLDING TALKS WITH GOVT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Monday raised doubts about the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's 'sincerity' in upcoming talks with the federal government, questioning the party's "abrupt shift" in approach. The Express Tribune reported.

He further said, "I am repeatedly asking what happened to the person [PTI founder Imran Khan] who did not want to shake hands with us [and is now desperately seeking dialogue with the government]." The statement came after Pakistan's National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq formally held an in-camera meeting between committees representing the government and Imran Khan-founded party.

ISRAEL RAIDS LAST FUNCTIONING NORTHERN GAZA HOSPITAL

Israeli forces damage building, evacuate patients, arrest director

AGENCIES
TEL AVIV

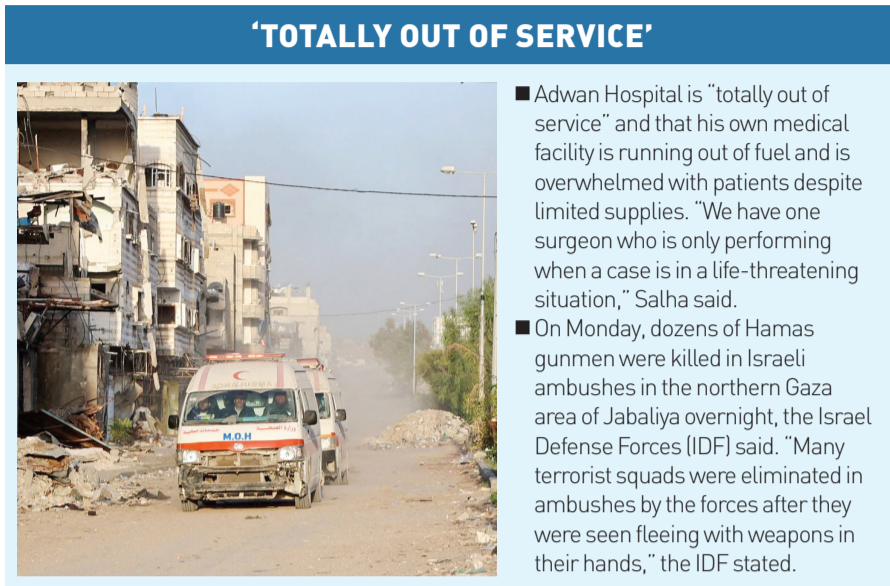
Israeli forces raided the last functioning hospital in Northern Gaza, damaging the building and evacuating its patients and doctors, CNN reported.

Israeli forces also arrested the hospital's director, Husam Abu Safiya, accusing him of being a suspected " Hamas terrorist operative," according to the CNN report.

On Friday, The raid on Kamal Adwan Hospital in northern Gaza has put approximately 75,000 Palestinians still remaining in the northern part of the enclave at risk, the United Nations stated.

According to the report, the raid has left the hospital "empty" of patients, some of whom are critically ill, as confirmed by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Speaking to CNN, Mohammed Salha, the director of Al Awda Hospital



'TOTALLY OUT OF SERVICE'

Adwan Hospital is "totally out of service" and that his own medical facility is running out of fuel and is overwhelmed with patients despite limited supplies. "We have one surgeon who is only performing when a case is in a life-threatening situation," Salha said.

On Monday, dozens of Hamas gunmen were killed in Israeli ambushes in the northern Gaza area of Jabaliya overnight, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said. "Many terrorist squads were eliminated in ambushes by the forces after they were seen fleeing with weapons in their hands," the IDF stated.

in northern Gaza, said that the Adwan Hospital is "totally out of service" and that his own medical facility is running out of fuel and is overwhelmed with patients despite limited supplies. "We have one surgeon who is only performing when a case is in a life-threatening situation," Salha said. He added, "The health system in the north has com-

pletely deteriorated. We are working to save what is left."

On Monday, dozens of Hamas gunmen were killed in Israeli ambushes in the northern Gaza area of Jabaliya overnight, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said. "Many terrorist squads were eliminated in ambushes by the forces after they were seen fleeing with weapons in their

hands," the IDF stated. According to the IDF, the Hamas squads were neutralized through gunfire and tank shelling.

At least 1,200 people were killed, and 252 Israelis and foreigners were taken hostage in Hamas's attacks on Israeli communities near the Gaza border on October 7. Of the 97 remaining hostages, more than 30 have been declared dead.

Former Japanese PM Suga signs condolence book in memory of Manmohan Singh

AGENCIES
TOKYO

Former Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga visited the Indian Embassy in Tokyo and signed the condolence book opened in memory of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who passed away on December 26 in Delhi.

Sharing details regarding his visit, Indian Embassy in Tokyo stated, "H.E. Mr. Yoshihide SUGA, Former Prime Minister of Japan and Vice President of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), visited Embassy of India, Tokyo, and signed the Condolence Book opened in memory of Dr. Manmohan



Singh, former Prime Minister of India."

Manmohan Singh passed away at the age of 92 due to age-related medical issues in Delhi on December 26. He was cremated with full state honours at Nigambodh Ghat in Delhi's Kashmir Gate in the presence

of his family, friends, colleagues, and government dignitaries on December 28.

President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh paid their last re-

spects to the former PM by placing a wreath near his mortal remains.

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge along with Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi were also present for the cremation ceremony after they paid tribute to the former Prime Minister.

Singh's political career spanned several decades, with notable positions including Finance Minister from 1991 to 1996, during which he spearheaded economic reforms that transformed India's economy. He served as the Prime Minister of India from 2004 to 2014, succeeding Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Former Maldives Prez junks report claiming Indian involvement in 'plot' against Muizzu

AGENCIES
MALE

The chief of the Maldivian Democratic Party and the country's largest opposition party, Mohamed Nasheed, dismissed a Washington Post report alleging that the opposition sought USD 6 million from India to aid in a plot to impeach Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu.

The former Maldives president stated he was unaware of any "serious plot" against President Muizzu and added that India would never support such a move. "I read with interest to-



back such a move, as they always support Maldives' democracy. India has never dictated terms to us, either," Mohamed Nasheed wrote.

The Washington Post report, based on an internal document titled "Democratic Renewal Initiative," stated that Maldivian opposition politicians proposed bribing 40 members of parliament, including those from Muizzu's own party, to vote to impeach him.

"In an internal document titled 'Democratic Renewal Initiative' and obtained by The Washington Post, Maldivian oppo-

sition politicians proposed bribing 40 members of parliament, including those from Muizzu's own party, to vote to impeach him. The document also proposed paying 10 senior army and police officers and three powerful criminal gangs to ensure Muizzu's removal. To pay off the various parties, the conspirators sought 87 million Maldivian rufiyaa, or USD 6 million, and according to two Maldivian officials, it would be sought from India," the Washington Post report alleged.

Pakistan People's Party to oppose Tax Amendment Bill in Pakistan

AGENCIES
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan People's Party Member of National Assembly Mirza Ikhtiar Baig on Monday (local time) said that his party would oppose the proposed Tax Amendment Bill, which aims to freeze the bank accounts of non-filers.

Baig revealed that the proposed bill restricts non-filers from transferring immovable property and threatens to confiscate their business properties under new provisions, ARY News reported.

Baig called the proposed laws "excessively harsh" and stated that his party would

oppose them. According to ARY News, Baig suggested that this bill should be discussed in the Finance and Revenue Committees of the National Assembly.

Baig also pointed out that the category of "non-filers" was created by the government itself, and further, in a jibe, he questioned, "Would people soon need permission just to breathe?" Further, according to ARY News, last week, after Pakistan's Senate body approved the tax amendment bill, the FBR announced that it had issued notices to around 169,000 influential individuals to bring them into the tax net.

China stuns with barrage of next-gen military aircraft

AGENCIES
HONG KONG

Following hard on the heels of the J-35A fifth-generation fighter's debut at the Zhuhai Airshow from November 12-17, 2024, China unwrapped three brand new aircraft types on Boxing Day. Astonishingly, two appear to be sixth-generation fighters, making China the first country in the world to successfully fly such advanced designs.

The impact of China's achievements should not be diminished, for the sudden appearance of two distinct sixth-generation fighters is dramatic and breathtaking.



The West is planning such fighters - like the USA's Next Generation Air Dominance (NGAD) project over which the authorities are humming and hawing - but they are on drawing boards at best. China, on the other hand, has already built prototypes and successfully flown them.

Court issues warrant to detain impeached President Yoon

AGENCIES
SEOUL

A Seoul court on Tuesday approved a warrant to detain former South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, who was impeached over his failed attempt to impose martial law, according to a report by Yonhap News Agency.

Notably, this marks the first instance of a sitting president in the country facing arrest.

The report stated citing sources, that the Seoul Western District Court granted the Corruption Investigation Office for High-ranking Officials (CIO) permission to issue the warrant.

Yoon was impeached by the National Assembly over his attempt to impose martial law in the country on December 3.

The court also authorized a warrant to search Yoon's presidential residence in Yongsan, Seoul, as part of the ongoing investigation. The CIO sought the detention warrant after Yoon failed to comply with three separate summonses for questioning regarding the brief martial law enact-



The report stated citing sources, that the Seoul Western District Court granted the Corruption Investigation Office for High-ranking Officials (CIO) permission to issue the warrant.

CIO officials are expected to execute the warrant soon. Once detained, the agency will have 48 hours to decide whether to request an arrest warrant for extended detention or release him. Detention warrants are typically valid for seven days.

While issuing the warrants, the court rejected Yoon's claims that the CIO lacks jurisdiction over insurrection cases and that the warrant request was therefore illegal. The court also dismissed Yoon's claims that he couldn't attend questioning sessions because arrangements for his personal safety and security detail, as the president, had not been made, Yonhap reported.

Following the warrant's

issuance, the Presidential Security Service stated that it would handle the matter in accordance with legal procedures. Although Yoon enjoys immunity from criminal prosecution as president, South Korean law excludes charges of insurrection or treason from this privilege.

Earlier on December 14, Yoon was impeached by the National Assembly over his attempt to impose martial law in the country. The members of the unicameral National Assembly had voted 204 to 85 to impeach South Korea's President.

Taliban orders all NGOs to stop employing women or face closure

AGENCIES
KABUL

Taliban has announced it will close all national and foreign nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) employing women in Afghanistan. In a letter shared on X, Taliban-led Ministry of Economy warned that failure to comply with the order would result in NGOs losing their licence to function in Afghanistan, Al Jazeera reported.

The Taliban announced the latest decision two years after they asked NGOs to suspend the employment of Afghan women, allegedly as they did not follow Taliban's interpretation of the Islamic dress code for women.

The Taliban-led Economy Ministry said that it was responsible for the registration, coordination, leadership and supervision of all activities conducted by national and foreign organ-



isations. The Taliban has once again ordered the women to stop working in institutions not controlled by Taliban, according to the letter. It said, "In case of lack of cooperation, all activities of that institution will be cancelled and the activity licence of that institution, granted by the ministry, will also be cancelled."

Restrictions have been imposed on Afghan women since the Taliban seized power in August 2021, prompting the United Nations to denounce the

"gender apartheid" the authorities have established, according to Al Jazeera report.

Taliban has banned girls from studying beyond sixth class, restricted employment and blocked access to parks and other public places. While announcing the decision, Taliban had said that the ban was a "temporary suspension" that would be resolved after creating a safe environment for girls to attend school. However, no change in decision has been announced yet.

Pak's PTI to present demands in govt meet tomorrow, seeks solution to issues

AGENCIES
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) negotiating team has decided to present two initial demands in its upcoming meeting with a government team, set to be held later this week, Dawn reported.

Pakistan's National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq will chair an in-camera meet-

ing between the negotiating teams of federal government and PTI on January 2, Dawn reported citing a notification issued by the National Assembly Secretariat on Monday. This will be the second meeting between PTI and the government.

The notification said that Sadiq "will chair a 2nd meeting (in-camera) on negotiations between Treasury and

Opposition on Thursday, the 2nd January, 2025 at 11:30am" at the Parliament House. According to sources, PTI had decided to pursue two initial demands in the talks scheduled for January 2, which includes release of under trial political prisoners and the establishment of a judicial commission to conduct investigation into the events of May 9, 2023 and November 26,

a brand new airborne early warning (AEW) aircraft based on the Y-20 transport from Xian Aircraft Corporation (XAC). Thus, three of China's largest aircraft producers enjoyed their moment under the sun.

It is unlikely all three secretive aircraft had maiden flights that very day, so widespread circulation of videos and still images on Boxing Day constitutes a carefully orchestrated campaign by the Chinese government. Netizens face severe penalties for publishing images of top-secret military technology, and ANI recently spoke to one Chinese aircraft aficionado

who was imprisoned for six months for photographing and posting aircraft images.

Significantly, 26 December is Mao Zedong's birth date. Also, the aircraft trio's revelation came shortly after the Pentagon released its annual report on the status of China's military on 18 December. Beijing reacted angrily, saying the document "misinterpreted

China's defense policies, speculated about China's military capacity development, flagrantly interfered in China's domestic affairs, desperately slandered the Chinese military and exaggerated the so-called military threat posed by China."

HAPPY NEW YEAR



The 9pm fireworks are seen during New Year's Eve celebrations in Sydney, Australia. Agencies

Germany accuses Elon Musk of election meddling over AfD endorsement

AGENCIES
BERLIN

The German government has accused Tesla CEO and entrepreneur Elon Musk of interfering in the country's upcoming election after he endorsed the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD), according to a report by Euro News.

Officials, including government spokesperson Christiane Hoffmann, Social Democratic Party (SPD) co-leader Lars Klingbeil, and Friedrich Merz, leader of Germany's largest opposition party Christian Democratic Union (CDU) condemned Musk's com-



ments on Germany.

"It is indeed the case that Elon Musk is trying to influence the federal election through his statements," Hoffmann said.

She added that although Musk was "free to express his opinion" it was worth noting Musk was recommending voting for a party

that is "being monitored by the Office for the Protection of the Constitution on suspicion of being right-wing extremist and that has already been recognized as being right-wing extremist in parts." SPD co-leader Lars Klingbeil also criticised Musk, comparing him to Russian President Vladimir Putin and accusing him of election interference.

Klingbeil alleged that Musk's public endorsement of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) ahead of the country's snap elections is a deliberate attempt to weaken Germany's democracy and called for stricter regulation of major inter-

net platforms like Musk's X. In an interview with Funke Mediengruppe on Monday, Klingbeil likened Musk to Putin, saying that "both want to influence our elections and are deliberately supporting the AfD, the enemies of democracy. They want Germany to be weakened and plunge into chaos."

"We need to be much more proactive and effectively limit the power of the large internet platforms like Musk's short message service, X. Here, a tech billionaire is trying to use his influence to influence the course of world politics," Euro News reported.

Trump backs Musk's statement on contributions of immigrants to US

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON

US President-elect Donald Trump has expressed his support to entrepreneur and aide Elon Musk, over his recent statements on the contributions of immigrants to the United States.

Musk had emphasised the value of hard-working individuals from all races, creeds, and nationalities who have contributed to the nation, urging Americans to preserve the country's identity as a land of freedom and opportunity.

Musk in a post stated, "Anyone of any race, creed or nationality - who came to America and worked like hell to contribute to this country will forever have my respect. America is the



land of freedom and opportunity. Fight with every fiber of your being to keep it that way!"

Showing his support for Musk, the President-elect reposted the Tesla CEO's post on his social media platform Truth Social.

Two days earlier, Trump had expressed his support for the H-1B visa programme and acknowledged

frequently using it for his own properties, calling it a "great programme," according to a report by the New York Post.

Calling it a "great programme," the President-elect said he has "always" been in its favour.

"I've always liked the visas, I have always been in favour of the visas. That's why we have them," Trump said in a telephonic interview with the New York Post.

He added, "I have many H-1B visas on my properties. I've been a believer in H-1B. I have used it many times. It's a great programme."

Notably, during Trump's first term, the administration imposed restrictions on H-1B visas, citing concerns over "abuse" and "economic strain."

Berlin police arrests man after knife attack injures 2

AGENCIES
BERLIN

Two people were wounded in a knife attack in western Berlin, police in Germany's capital said Tuesday.

The New Year's Eve stabbing took place in the western district of Charlottenburg, a police spokeswoman said.

Emergency services were alerted shortly before 12 p.m. local time (11:00 UTC/GMT), police said.

The Berliner Morgenpost newspaper reported that the attack began inside a supermarket on the corner of Quedlinburger Strasse and Sömmerringstrasse. Police said the knifeman then moved outside to the sidewalk close to a nearby hotel.

The suspect, a Syrian national who lives in Sweden, is said to have stabbed his victims with a knife he stole from the supermarket, police said in a statement.

The Berliner Zeitung (BZ) reported that several passers-by pounced on the attacker and overpowered him until the police arrived. The paper described how the suspect had apparently "stabbed wildly."

Two people were hospitalized and the suspect was later arrested.

Police later said one of the victims remains in hospital, the other was released after outpatient treatment.

"Initial findings indicate that the suspect may have signs of mental illness and that there is no indication for a terrorist motivation," police spokeswoman Jane Berndt told The Associated Press.

RUSSIAN MISSILE, DRONE ATTACK ON UKRAINE HITS MULTIPLE TARGETS

AGENCIES
KYIV

Russia launched an aerial attack on Ukraine on Tuesday, striking the capital and other regions with multiple missiles and drones.

Ukraine's air force reported a ballistic missile threat at 3:00 a.m. (0100 GMT), with at least two explosions heard in Kyiv minutes later. Another missile alert was issued at 8:00 a.m. followed by at least one explosion in the city. Missile debris fell in the Darnytskyi district of the capital with no reports of casualties or damage, the local administration said.

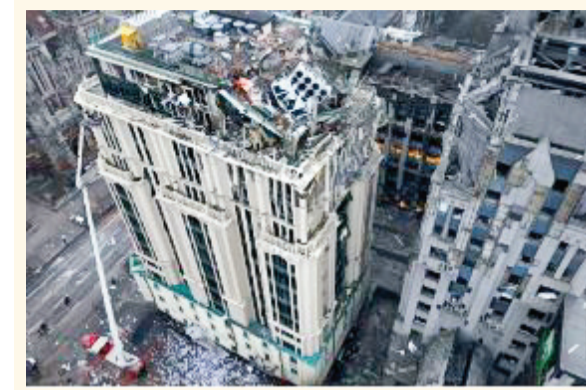
Authorities in the north-eastern Stryi region reported strikes near the city of Shostka, where the mayor, Mykola Noha, said 12 residential buildings had been damaged as well as two educational facilities. He said some "social infrastructure objects" were destroyed, without providing detail.

The air force also reported missiles and drones targeting several other regions of Ukraine.

In Moscow, the Russian Defense Ministry said that its forces successfully struck a Ukrainian air base and a gunpowder factory.

Around half of Ukraine's energy infrastructure has been destroyed during the war, and rolling electricity blackouts are common and widespread.

Kyiv's Western allies have provided air defense systems to help Ukraine protect critical infrastructure, but Russia has sought to overwhelm its air defenses with combined strikes involving



RUSSIA STRIKES UKRAINE

- Missiles and drones hit Kyiv and other regions.
- Debris fell, no casualties reported.
- Residential, educational sites hit in Shostka.
- War leaves Ukraine with blackouts and damaged infrastructure.
- Ukraine's air defenses challenged by combined Russian strikes

large numbers of missiles and drones.

Russian attacks come as uncertainty looms over the course of the nearly three-year conflict. U.S. President-elect Donald Trump, who takes office next month, has vowed to end the war and has thrown into doubt whether vital U.S. military support for Kyiv will continue.

On Monday, President Joe Biden announced that the United States will send an additional \$2.5 billion in weapons to Ukraine as his administration works quickly to spend all the money it has available to help Kyiv fight off Russia before Trump takes office.

Ukraine has struck back at Russia with a steady barrage of missile and drone attacks throughout the year.

Early Tuesday, Russia's Defense Ministry said that air defenses shot down 68 Ukrainian drones over several regions early Tuesday and sank eight uncrewed boats in the Black Sea.

Head of the Smolensk region in western Russia, Vasily Anokhin, said drone

RUSSIA ADVANCED NEARLY 4,000 SQ KM IN 2024

MOSCOW: Russian forces advanced by 3,985 square kilometres (1,539 square miles) in Ukraine in 2024, seven times more than in 2023, according to an AFP analysis of data from the Study of War (ISW).

Much of the Russian gains came in the autumn, as they took 610 square kilometres in October and 725 square kilometres in November. Those two months saw the Russians conquer the most territory since March 2022, in the

early weeks of the conflict. The Russian advance slowed in December, coming to 465 square kilometres in the first 30 days of the month.

However it is already nearly four times bigger than in the same month of the previous year and two and a half times more than in December 2022.

Nearly three quarters of the territory taken by the Russians in Ukraine in 2024 was in the eastern region of Donetsk, which includes Pokrovsk, an Ukrainian logistical hub.

fragments fell on the territory of an oil depot, sparking a blaze.

In Russia-occupied Crimea, the Moscow-appointed head of the city of Sevastopol, Mikhail Razvozhayev, said that Russian defenses downed four aerial drones attacking the city and sank two uncrewed boats near the shore. Meanwhile, Ukraine's Military Intelligence Directorate,

known under its acronym GUR, claimed that one of its naval drones on Tuesday shot down a Russian helicopter with a missile, marking the first time when an aerial target was destroyed by an uncrewed vessel.

It said a Magura V5 naval drone downed a Russian Mi-8 helicopter with an R-73 missile near Cape Tarkhan-kut, the westernmost point of the Crimean peninsula.

Trinidad and Tobago declares emergency after weekend killings

AGENCIES
PORT OF SPAIN

Trinidad and Tobago has declared a state of emergency following killing incidents during the weekend added to what was already an exceptionally deadly year for the Caribbean nation, CNN reported.

In the emergency orders announced by the office of the Prime Minister Keith Rowley on Monday, the police personnel will be able to conduct search among people and premises without warrants and detain suspects for up to 48 hours, in an effort to reduce what the leader termed an "unacceptable high level of violent crime." However, no curfew has been placed by the authorities.



The decision came after several people were killed in the gun violence during the weekend, taking the murder toll in Trinidad and Tobago in 2024 to 623 - the highest level in police records dating back to 2013, according to CNN report.

According to the US Government Accountability Office (GAO), Trinidad and Tobago which has a population

of 1.5 million has one of the highest murder rates in the Caribbean, along with Jamaica and Haiti, while violent deaths in the region are nearly three times the global average. Police has warned they expect the amount of gang-related violent crime involving powerful assault weapons to rise.

While addressing a briefing on Monday, Acting

Attorney General Stuart Young said that there had been 61 homicides so far in the month of December, according to CNN report. These included a shooting incident on Saturday, which involved a high caliber automatic weapon outside a police station that claimed the life of one person and an incident less than 24 hours later in which five people were killed and one injured in the Port of Spain area.

While speaking at the same briefing, Trinidad and Tobago's Minister of National Security Fitzgerald Hinds said two people were killed on Friday - one in a gang-related incident, another in a "domestic situation" - and 15 others killed in gun-related incidents since last Monday.

Germany, France, Poland condemn Georgia violence, back pro-democracy movement

AGENCIES
BERLIN

The foreign ministers of Germany, France and Poland on Tuesday expressed concern about "the political crisis" in Georgia, two days after former soccer player Mikheil Kavelashvili was formally inaugurated as president of the South Caucasus nation, cementing the ruling party's grip in what the opposition calls a blow to the country's European Union aspirations and a victory for former imperial ruler Russia.

"We strongly condemn last week's violence against peaceful protesters, media and opposition leaders and recall Georgian authorities' responsibility to respect human rights and protect fundamental freedoms, including the freedom to as-



sembly and media freedom," the three ministers wrote in a joint statement.

In reaction to the Russia-friendly course of the ruling Georgian Dream party, the three countries said they would "implement the EU decision on ending visa-free travel for Georgian diplomatic and service passport holders and consider additional measures on EU and national level."

They also stressed that "the political course of repression and democratic backsliding

by the Georgian Dream has in reaction led to a downgrading of our relationship at European and national level and a reduction of our assistance to and cooperation with Georgia's authorities."

They also stressed that "the political course of repression and democratic backsliding by the Georgian Dream has in reaction led to a downgrading of our relationship at European and national level and a reduction of our assistance to and cooperation with Georgia's authorities."

World greets 2025 after sweltering year of Olympics, turmoil, and Trump

AGENCIES
PARIS

The world ushered in 2025 on Tuesday, with huge crowds waving goodbye to the old year that brought Olympic glory, a dramatic Donald Trump return and turmoil in the Middle East and Ukraine.

It is all but certain that 2024 will go down as the hottest year on record, with climate-fuelled disasters wreaking havoc from the plains of Europe to the Kathmandu Valley.

Sydney -- the self-proclaimed "New Year's capital of the world" -- sprayed nine tonnes of fireworks from its famed Opera House and Harbour Bridge at midnight local time (1300 GMT).

"Just to see all the beautiful colours and enjoy being in

Vladimir Putin prevailed in a Russian ballot widely dismissed as a sham, while a student uprising toppled Bangladesh's reigning prime minister.

this situation with so many people in wonderful Australia," said 71-year-old retired nurse Ruth Rowse ahead of the display.

As champagne corks popped and New Year's Eve parties kicked into gear along picturesque Sydney Harbour, many revellers were relieved to see the past 12 months in the rearview mirror.

"It would be nice for the world if it all sort of fixed itself, sorted itself out," insurance worker Stuart Edwards, 32, told AFP before

the fireworks.

Taylor Swift brought the curtain down on her Eras tour this year, pygmy hippo Moo Deng went viral and teenage football prodigy Lamine Yamal helped Spain conquer the Euros.

The Paris Olympics united the world for a brief few weeks in July and August.

Athletes swam in the Seine, raced in the shadows of the Eiffel Tower and rode horses across the manicured lawns outside the Palace of Versailles.

It was a global year of elections, with countless millions going to the polls across more than 60 countries.

Vladimir Putin prevailed in a Russian ballot widely dismissed as a sham, while a student uprising toppled Bangladesh's reigning prime minister.

However, no vote was as closely watched as the November 5 contest that will soon see Trump back in the White House.

From Mexico to the Middle East, his looming return as commander-in-chief is already making waves.

The president-elect has threatened to pile economic pain on China and boasted of his ability to halt the Ukraine war within "24 hours".

JASON MOMOA SET TO PLAY LOBO IN 'SUPERGIRL: WOMAN OF TOMORROW'



AGENCIES
WASHINGTON

Jason Momoa, known for his iconic portrayal of 'Aquaman' in the DC Extended Universe (DCEU), is staying within the DC fold, but this time in a brand-new role. The actor has been confirmed to play Lobo, the infamous alien bounty hunter, in the highly anticipated 'Supergirl: Woman of Tomorrow', which is slated for release on June 26, 2026, as confirmed by the DC Studios co-CEO James Gunn.

Taking to his Instagram handle, James shared the exciting news with the fans.

He shared an animated picture of Jason as Lobo and on his Instagram stories, he wrote, "Welcome to the #DCU Jason Momoa. @prideofgypsies #Lobo #Supergirl."

This casting marks a significant milestone in Momoa's ongoing relationship with DC, as the actor transitions from his role as 'Aquaman' to the larger-than-life character of Lobo. The move comes after years of Momoa publicly expressing his desire to take on the role. In a recent Instagram post, he shared a quote from a press tour for 'Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom', where he expressed hope that DC would eventually reach out to him for the part.

"They called," he cap-

tioned the post, confirming his new role in the DC Universe.

Lobo, who made his comic book debut in Omega Men No. 3 in 1983, is a blue-skinned, cigar-chomping antihero known for his superhuman strength, regenerative healing, and brutal nature. Over the years, various filmmakers have attempted to bring the character to the big screen, including Guy Ritchie and Brad Peyton, with Dwayne Johnson once considered for the role in Peyton's iteration. However, these plans never materialised.

In the meantime, Lobo made his television debut through actor Emmett J. Scanlan in the series 'Krypton'.

Momoa's casting as Lobo is a key development in the new era of DC films under the leadership of James Gunn and Peter Safran, the co-chairs of DC Studios. Since taking over, Gunn and Safran have emphasised the importance of continuity while also giving new life to the brand by introducing fresh faces and narratives. Despite the shift in direction, they left room for fan favourites from the previous regime to return, albeit in different roles. Momoa's transition from 'Aquaman' to 'Lobo' is one of the major examples of this new approach.

SABRINA CARPENTER REFLECTS ON HER COFFEE ANTHEM 'ESPRESSO' AND UPCOMING PROJECTS



AGENCIES
WASHINGTON

Sabrina Carpenter's infectious hit 'Espresso' took the music world by surprise when it dropped earlier this year, and the Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter admits she had no idea how much it would resonate with audiences. Despite the track, which became a viral sensation, Carpenter was unsure if the song, which references the beloved coffee beverage, would connect with fans.

"I really didn't know if it would connect," Carpenter told The Hollywood Reporter in an interview, adding, "But the sentiment and the sound of the song and the confidence that it kind of just carries along with it was something that I really

believed in. So, I had literally no idea that anyone would like it, but I liked it, and that was kind of all that mattered to me in that moment, and something I try to remember over and over again."

The song's success led to a collaboration with Dunkin', resulting in the creation of 'Sabrina's Brown Sugar Shakin' Espresso', a coffee drink inspired by the track.

Growing up on the East Coast, Carpenter shared, "I'm a born and bred East Coaster, and Dunkin' was my childhood. When they approached me about a collab, I realised my window for a coffee partnership was closing, and I hadn't done it yet. So, it just felt like the perfect fit."

PICTURE PERFECT

Malaika Arora snapped in a silver, sequined gown. (Instagram)



ANGELINA JOLIE, BRAD PITT SETTLE DIVORCE AFTER EIGHT YEARS OF LEGAL BATTLE

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON

After more than eight years of their legal fight, Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie have finally settled their highly publicised divorce. As per People magazine, Jolie's lawyers confirmed on Monday, December 30, 2024, that both parties have agreed to terms, marking a significant chapter in the protracted legal saga that began when Jolie filed for divorce in September 2016. Jolie and Pitt had been married for two years and together for 12 before their relationship came to an end. Jolie filed for divorce on September 19, 2016, citing "irreconcilable differences," shortly after an incident involving a private plane flight that she claimed escalated into an abusive altercation between Pitt and



their six children. Authorities investigated the matter, but Pitt was not charged, and Jolie later chose not to press charges.

In a statement to People magazine, Jolie's attorney, James Simon, reflected on the journey, stating, "More than eight years ago, Angelina filed for di-

orce from Mr Pitt. She and the children left all of the properties they had shared with Mr Pitt, and since that time she has focused on finding peace and healing for their family. This is just one part of a long ongoing process that started eight years ago. Frankly, Angelina is ex-

hausted, but she is relieved this one part is over."

A source close to Jolie told People magazine that the actress has remained focused on moving forward, saying, "She doesn't speak ill of Pitt publicly or privately. She's been trying hard to be light after a dark time."

'Star Wars' actor Angus MacInnes passes away at 77

AGENCIES
LOS ANGELES

Canadian actor Angus MacInnes, best known for his roles in 'Star Wars: A New Hope' and 'Rogue One', has passed away at the age of 77. As per Variety, MacInnes breathed his last on December 23. He died peacefully and surrounded by family, according to a statement by the MacInnes Family shared on social media.

"To all Angus' fans around the world, with breaking hearts, we write this: Angus MacInnes, beloved husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, friend and actor died on 23rd of December 2024. He left us peacefully, surrounded by his family and love," read the statement posted to Facebook.



"Angus' career spanned decades, with unforgettable roles in films such as 'Star Wars: A New Hope' (as Gold Leader, Jon 'Dutch' Vander), 'Wit-

ness,' 'Judge Dredd,' 'Captain Phillips,' and many others. His work touched countless lives, and he took great pride in being part of these stories that continue

to resonate with audiences worldwide," the statement further read.

The family described Angus as "a kind, thoughtful, and generous soul who brought warmth and humor into the lives of everyone who knew him."

"He will be deeply missed by his family, friends and fellow actors but also by his fans around the world - his family thank you all," they added.

MacInnes starred as Jon "Dutch" Vander, better known as Gold Leader, in the first "Star Wars" film, and would go on to reprise the role in the "New Hope" prequel "Rogue One." Other credits include "Eyes Wide Shut," "The Black Dahlia," "Formula 51" and "Rhythm & Blues."

'You've been a mixed bag!': Lara Dutta shares precious moments from 2024

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Actor Lara Dutta has posted some precious moments from the year gone by. On Monday, the 'Andaaz' actor took to Instagram and dropped pictures of her special moments from the year 2024. Along with the post, she wrote a long note and called it a 'mixed bag'.

"2024..... you've been a mixed bag! But so much to be grateful for. To begin with... My parents celebrating 56 years together.....building a home and a new chapter in an adopted country that I'm slowly coming to enjoy and appreciate..... WORK!!!! That keeps me sane and hungry and motivated..... Family, without whom nothing else would matter..... friends,



who make my world go round..... travels and events,

that add spice and new adventures to life..... and fi-

nally, HOME.....the people you hold the closest and tightest..... With the medical roller coaster and hospital carousel, we've been on this year, I'm most grateful to have my parents with me at the close of the year," the note concluded. From her parents' anniversary celebration to spending time with her friends and enjoying her work, she shared it all.

Netizens showered love and blessings on the post by dropping heart emojis in the comment section.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Lara was recently seen in 'Ranneeti: Balakot & Beyond' which was released on April 25 on JioCinema. 'Ranneeti: Balakot & Beyond' captivated audiences with its gripping narrative and stellar performances.

BRAIN PICKING



I believe in destiny, God's hand and hard work.



- KATRINA KAIF
(Indian Actress)

RASHMIKA MANDANNA CELEBRATES EIGHT YEARS IN FILM INDUSTRY, THANKS FANS FOR SUPPORT



TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

'Pushpa 2: The Rule' star Rashmika Mandanna on Tuesday celebrated completing eight years in the film industry and thanked fans for their constant love and support. Taking to her Instagram stories, the 28-year-old actor shared a message of gratitude for her fans.

"8 years in the film industry and the only way I could do what I have done so far is only because of your love and support. Thank you," she wrote in the caption. Born and raised in Kodagu district of Karnataka, Mandanna made her acting debut in 2016 with the Kannada movie Kirik Party, opposite Rakshit Shetty,

and then starred in Telugu hits like Geetha Govindam, Dear Comrade, Bheeshma and Sita Ramam.

Mandanna found nationwide success with 2021 hit 'Pushpa: The Rise', co-starring Allu Arjun. She made her Bollywood debut with 'Goodbye' and then starred in the smash hit film 'Animal' with Ranbir Kapoor.

The actor most recently starred in Pushpa 2: The Rule, which has become a runaway hit at the global box office, earning over Rs 1,700 crore since its release on December 5. Her upcoming movies include 'Sikandar' with Salman Khan, 'Chhaava' with Vicky Kaushal and Maddock's horror comedy universe title 'Thama', headlined by Ayushmann Khurrana.

YASH URGES FANS TO CELEBRATE SAFELY, AVOID GRAND GESTURES ON HIS BIRTHDAY



TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Actor Yash, famed for his role in the KGF series, took to Instagram on Monday to urge fans to avoid grand gestures and gatherings for his birthday on January 8. The 38-year-old actor expressed his gratitude for the immense love he has received over the years

enial. But there have been some unfortunate incidents too. It's time for us to change our language of love, especially when it comes to celebrating my birthday."

He stressed that love should not be expressed through extravagant displays, but rather by staying safe, setting positive examples, achieving personal goals, and spread-

Actor Yash, famed for his role in the KGF series, took to Instagram on Monday to urge fans to avoid grand gestures and gatherings for his birthday on January 8.

but emphasised the importance of a safer, more thoughtful way of celebrating.

In his post, Yash wrote, "The love you all have showered on me has been nothing short of phenom-

ing joy. Earlier this year, three of Yash's fans tragically lost their lives while erecting a large cutout of the actor. Following this, Yash had also urged his fans to celebrate responsibly.

DIABETES-FRIENDLY SNACKING

HARNESS THE POWER OF AMERICAN PECAN PAIRINGS

TDG NETWORK

Managing diabetes involves making thoughtful food choices that help maintain healthy blood glucose (blood sugar) levels. One effective way to support blood sugar control throughout the day is through balanced snacking. While carbohydrates naturally elevate blood glucose levels, pairing them with nutrient-dense foods like pecans can help mitigate these effects.

American Pecans are an excellent choice for those managing diabetes due to their unique nutritional profile. With just 4 grams of carbohydrate per serving, pecans are lower in carbs compared to other tree nuts, making them a great option for mindful snacking. A serving of american pecans (19 halves) not only provides only 4 grams of carbohydrate but also delivers 3 grams of fiber and 3 grams of plant-based protein. The combination of fiber and protein helps support feelings of fullness, making pecans an ideal snack for those looking to control hunger and avoid overeating.

In addition to fiber and protein, pecans are heart-healthy and provide a range of important vitamins and minerals, including magnesium and vitamin E. These nutrients contribute to overall wellness, supporting not only blood sugar control but also digestive health. American Pecans are also a rich source of monounsaturated fats, which are known to support heart health and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, a concern for many individuals managing diabetes.

Being mindful of portion sizes is



essential when creating balanced snacks. It's recommended to enjoy up to three snacks per day, based on hunger cues. A good rule of thumb is to pair one serving of pecans with 1 to 2 servings of a carbohydrate-rich food, such as fresh fruit, whole grains, or low-fat dairy. This combination helps create a well-rounded snack that provides long-lasting energy without causing sharp spikes in blood sugar levels. For example, pairing 19 pecan halves with a small apple or a serving of cooked oatmeal makes for a satisfying and nutritious snack.

Snacking mindfully can also contribute to better blood glucose management. Pre-measuring your pecans can help avoid overeating,

and eating slowly while savoring each bite allows you to enjoy the natural sweetness and buttery texture of the nuts. Reducing distractions such as watching TV or working while snacking can prevent mindless eating, which often leads to consuming more than necessary. Listening to your body's hunger cues and stopping when satisfied are important practices to ensure that snacking remains beneficial to your health goals.

If you're looking for snack inspiration, there are countless delicious ways to incorporate pecans into your daily routine. For a quick and easy option, try mixing pecans with dried apricots for a homemade trail mix, or sprinkle pecan pieces over your favorite yogurt

and fresh berries for a satisfying parfait. For something more indulgent, try making a batch of cinnamon pecan popcorn by tossing pecans with plain popcorn, a sprinkle of cinnamon, and a pinch of salt for a delightful treat. Pecan energy bites made with pecans, dates, oats, and a pinch of salt are another great option for a nutritious snack that's packed with energy.

By incorporating pecans into your snacks, you can enjoy a nutrient-dense, diabetes-friendly food that supports blood glucose control and provides lasting satisfaction. With their heart-healthy benefits, delicious taste, and versatility, pecans make a perfect addition to any diabetes management plan.

A New Year Calls For New Italian Delights: Cicchetti Italiano!

SANJANA CHAWLA

Situated in the alleys of Delhi's favourite Khan Market, Chef Parth Gupta's Cicchetti Italiano is a gem of a restaurant that serves up authentic, sustainable Italian cuisine with a focus on organic and locally sourced ingredients. As a food and health enthusiast, I was excited to discover this newly opened gem and experience the culinary magic that Chef Parth and his team have to offer!

The moment I entered, I was transported straight to the Tuscan countryside with the place's old-school Italian vibe and lemon frames. The rustic-chic decor, complete with reclaimed wood accents, posters, and greenery, set the tone for a truly immersive dining experience.

I began my late lunch with an assortment of bruschettas, each one more delicious than the last. The Confit Garlic Bruschetta was a standout, with its rich taste of caramelized onion and garlic pesto on crispy bread. The Tapenade Olive Bruschetta was another favorite, with its savory tapenade and Kalamata olives. I also tried the Pesto Pistachio Bruschetta, which wooed me with its vibrant pesto sauce and crunchy pistachios! I ended my bruschetta cravings with Porcini E Parma, a cheesy delight!



For my Italian mains, I opted for the Ziti Al Vodka, which was cooked to perfection and tossed in a spicy vodka sauce. I also tried the Burrata Classico Pizza, which was topped with fresh in-house burrata cheese, tomato sauce, and fresh basil. The neopolitan crust was thin, made of all things healthy, and well-cooked, and the flavors were perfectly balanced.

To finish off my meal, I indulged in Chef Parth's unique classic Pecan & Berry Tres Leches. It was a decadent and creamy dessert topped with pecan nuts and soaked in milk. I also tried the Blossom

Drink, Exotica Drink, and ABC Detox, all of which were refreshing and delicious—specially Blossom with its sweet citric base and loaded with blue berries!

What impressed me most about Cicchetti Italiano was its commitment to sustainability. The restaurant uses organic and locally sourced ingredients, bakes their own breads and cheese, makes drinks and desserts without preservatives, and strives to reduce waste in its kitchen and dining areas.

This Italian newbie is a must-visit for anyone who loves Italian food, sustainability, and exceptional service. Will I return? Yes!

A VISIONARY DIET: USING NUTRACEUTICALS AND FUNCTIONAL FOODS TO COMBAT EYE DISORDERS



ANISH DESAI

Eye health is intrinsically linked to oxidative stress, a process driven by reactive oxygen species (ROS) that can damage vital ocular structures, leading to conditions like dry eye disease (DED), cataracts, and age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Antioxidant nutraceuticals present a promising avenue for managing these conditions through dietary interventions and functional foods.

Antioxidants neutralize harmful ROS, preventing cellular damage in the eye. Nutritional sources of antioxidants are indispensable, as many vital compounds cannot be synthesized by the body. Key players in ocular health include:

- Vitamin C:** Found abundantly in citrus fruits, vitamin C is a potent scavenger of ROS and plays a pivotal role in regenerating other antioxidants like vitamin E.
- Vitamin E:** Present in nuts

and seeds, it protects cellular membranes from oxidative damage.

Beta-carotene: A precursor of vitamin A, beta-carotene (in carrots and sweet potatoes) supports vision by protecting the retina and cornea.

Lutein and Zeaxanthin: Often included in supplements, these carotenoids accumulate in the retina and shield it from oxidative damage.

Anthocyanins: Found in bilberries and blackcurrants, these antioxidants improve microcirculation in the retina and alleviate DED symptoms.

Curcumin: Extracted from turmeric, curcumin exhibits anti-inflammatory properties and mitigates oxidative stress in the cornea and lens.

Resveratrol: A compound in red wine and grapes, resveratrol combats oxidative damage and vascular issues linked to AMD and diabetic retinopathy.

Functional foods are fortified or naturally rich in nutrients that benefit specific health areas. For eye health, some of the functional foods are particularly beneficial:

Leafy Greens: Kale, spinach, and collards are high in lutein and zeaxanthin, carotenoids that protect the

macula from blue light and oxidative damage.

Fish: Fatty fish like salmon and mackerel are excellent sources of omega-3 fatty acids, which support retinal health and reduce the risk of AMD.

Berries and Grapes: Rich in anthocyanins, these fruits enhance night vision and protect retinal cells.

Nuts and Seeds: Almonds, sunflower seeds, and walnuts provide vitamin E and zinc, essential for maintaining visual function.

Nutraceuticals and functional foods offer a natural approach to preserving vision and combating oxidative stress. By adopting a diet enriched with these eye-friendly nutrients, you can protect your vision and enhance overall ocular health. However, while these dietary strategies are beneficial, they should not replace regular eye check-ups. Consulting an eye doctor is essential to monitor your vision, detect early signs of eye diseases, and ensure a comprehensive approach to eye health. A proactive dietary strategy combined with professional eye care is not just an investment in your eyes but also a commitment to a healthier future

Winter of Joy: New Year's Eve Celebrations

TDG NETWORK

Ring in 2025 with a Winter of Joy like no other! Le Meridien New Delhi brings an unforgettable New Year's Eve, filled with dazzling performances, incredible dining, and non-stop entertainment. An extraordinary evening of elegance, excitement, and a big party vibe, at Le Meridien New Delhi there is a perfect celebration waiting for everyone.

LE MERIDIEN NEW DELHI: A WINTER OF JOY

XO & Mi @ Le Belvedere (20th Floor)

Date & Time: December 31, 2024, 7:00 PM onwards

Features: Stunning city views, live performance by Jude Corneille (Soft Rock, Bollywood, Classic English hits), gala dinner with unlimited drinks.

BIG PARTY AT THE ATRIUM

Date & Time: December 31, 2024, 7:00 PM - Midnight

Highlights: Largest dance floor, electrifying performances by Alisha Arora & Bolly Beats Crew, premium seating with direct access to the dance floor.

FESTIVE NEW YEAR'S BRUNCH

The One

Date & Time: January 1, 2025
12:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Arts Room Brunch

Date & Time: January 1, 2025
12:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Features: Cheese trolley, live carving station, hot specials, desserts like Crepe Suzette and Bischoff Tres Leches.

DOUBLETREE BY HILTON, BAANI SQUARE

Date & Time: January 1, 2025
12:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Venue: Glasshouse, Baani Square

Features: Live chaat counters with gourmet twists. Global cuisine, including dim sums and grilled specialties. Entertainment with a live band, saxophonist,



and DJ. Family-friendly ambiance.

ROSEATE HOTELS & RESORTS

Venue: DEL at Roseate House, Aerocity
Date & Time: January 1, 2025
12:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Highlights: Signature dishes like Butter Garlic Prawns, West Devonshire Roast Lamb, and Mutton Nihari. Global buffet with carving stations and freshly baked breads.



Decadent desserts including Khubani Ka Meetha and Gajar Halwa. Ambiance: Sophisticated interiors with serene alfresco seating.

FINE DINING OPTIONS

The One: Lavish buffet with cold cuts, live Indian street food stations, and desserts. Price: Rs 14,000 per person.

eau de Monsoon: Fusion of Indian flavors in a fine dining setting. Price: Rs 12,000 per person.

Nero: Modern European-inspired cuisine. Price: Rs 11,000 per person.

STAYCATION PACKAGES

Room Options: Executive Room (Rs 14,000), Superior Room (Rs 15,500), Club Room (Rs 19,000), Executive Suite (Rs 28,000).

Inclusions: Grand gala access, live entertainment, New Year's Day breakfast. Celebrate the New Year with style, indulgence, and unforgettable experiences at these top-notch venues!

SETTING SMART GOALS for the New Year

TDG NETWORK

As the New Year begins, many of us feel inspired to set goals that will lead to personal and professional growth. However, without a clear plan, these resolutions often fade away. That's where SMART goals come in—a framework that ensures your aspirations are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

SPECIFIC

Start by defining your goal with precision. Vague objectives like "get fit" or "save money" are hard to achieve. Instead, be clear: "I will exercise three times a week" or "I will save 10,000 each month." Specificity eliminates ambiguity and provides a clear direction.

MEASURABLE

A goal must be quantifiable to track progress. For example, if your goal is to improve your health, decide how you'll measure success—such as losing 5kg in three months or running 5 km in under 30 minutes. Having measurable criteria keeps you motivated as you see tangible results.



ACHIEVABLE

While it's great to dream big, your goals should be realistic given your current circumstances. Setting unattainable objectives can lead to frustration. If you're new to fitness, aiming to run a marathon in a month might not be feasible. Instead, start with smaller milestones, like running 2 km comfortably, and build from there.

RELEVANT

Your goals should align with your broader life ambitions and values. Ask yourself: "Why is this

goal important to me?" If financial security is a priority, focus on goals like building an emergency fund or reducing debt. Relevant goals resonate with your personal or professional aspirations, ensuring sustained commitment.

TIME-BOUND

Every goal needs a deadline to create a sense of urgency. Without a



time-frame, it's easy to procrastinate. Break your goal into smaller, time-bound steps. For instance, if you want to read 12 books in a year, aim to finish one book by the end of each month.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

A SMART goal combines all these elements. Instead of saying, "I want to get fit," a SMART version would be: "I will lose 5 kg in three months by exercising three times a week and following a balanced diet."

By setting SMART goals, you create a clear roadmap for success, ensuring your New Year's resolutions are not just wishes but actionable plans. Start the year with purpose, and watch your aspirations turn into achievements!

MINDFUL LIVING 2025: NEW YEAR HABITS TO BALANCE WORK, FAMILY, AND SELF-CARE

SAURABH TYAGI

Moving into the new year, 2025, is a perfect opportunity to redefine some of the objectives that focus on multi-dimensional growth. Indeed, maintaining an equilibrium between work, family, and personal time is not easy. However, the situation can be changed by introducing mindful practices into everyday life. Here are eight strategies to make life easier for you this upcoming year.



1. START YOUR DAY WITH POSITIVE INTENTION

Every morning consider spending some time just for you. It will help your body and mind be prepared for what is ahead. This can be achieved through meditation, stretching, or writing it down in a journal. Mentally navigating the world after a grounded start is easier.

2. SET BOUNDARIES AT WORK

Every working individual understands one truth: employers demand more than is physically reasonable. Communicate your work times and any other responsibilities that you have. Saying 'no' right away might not help so be smarter about what tasks you choose to accept.

3. PLAN FAMILY TIME

In the busy rush of everyday

life, family time can easily slip through the cracks. Make it a point to plan quality time with loved ones. Whether it's a weekly movie night, a family outing, or just a dinner together, ensure you nurture these connections.

4. INCORPORATE BREAKS INTO YOUR DAY

Take 5-10 minutes every hour to break up the monotony of desk work. Give your brain some time to shut down and relax. Once you return to your work, you will be able to concentrate better. You might take a few steps, get out of your office, or practice deep breathing.

5. ADAPTING TO CIRCUMSTANCES

Life is full of surprises and when the time comes you have to adjust or reschedule your plans. It makes sense to say that stress inhibits flexibility. So understanding that

sometimes things don't work out and it's OK is important. So being able to cope with change easily is essential in order not only to improve quality of life but also to improve peace of mind.

6. PRIORITIZE SLEEP

It is crucial to get enough sleep in order to stay in good health. Make it a point to eliminate screens prior to sleep. Limit yourself to some quiet time if required so you can sleep peacefully and afterward be ready for the next day.

7. PRACTICE GRATITUDE

Once thankfulness is part of your life, there is little room for stress. Have a simple exercise where you can consider the things that you are thankful for. It might be your health, family, or maybe even a little success or progress you made today, these are all things that can help you

create and sustain a positive environment.

8. MAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF

Self-care is necessary for a harmonious existence. Mark out some "me time" in your diary for activities that interest you, for example, a nice book a yoga class, or just a calm period of silence. By scheduling this self-practice, simplifies looking after the others.

These mindful habits, when integrated into the daily routine, would aid one in maintaining a balanced life. Remember that the emphasis should be on progress, not perfection. Focus on progress rather than striving for the unattainable ideal. A single step each day yields large results more gradually and fosters a better environment of peace for you and your surroundings. *The author is the Co-Founder & CEO of PropChk.*

MADHU KOTIYA

Aries (March 21 - April 19)

This year, Aries, the universe is urging you to take a page from your lower self to discover and reflect on what you want in love. It's a moment for reevaluating your emotional goals. April and November will be prime months, granting opportunities for making contacts that not just buzz but expand the ensparner into new realms of growth. Your feelings do matter, so give them consideration, however, do not dismiss your values.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20)

The year 2025 brings a tranquil breather from your recent maelstrom, creating your ideal environment to build calm, strong connections. This could be a big year for commitment milestones, such as moving in together or getting engaged,

especially with Venus sprinkling romantic stardust on it in March and September.

Gemini (May 21 - June 20)

Gemini, your year glitters with social activities. Barriers to love will have been broken down slightly by early misunderstandings that both of you will have had, but the summer months are positively begging you to meet somebody you can touch on intellectual points of view or who can match a more animated personality like yours.

Cancer (June 21 - July 22)

This year marks a deeper level of emotional involvement for you, Cancer. Image a lot of early obstacles will pave the way for the work to resolve long-standing issues and deepen connections. The summer months seem especially ripe for new beginnings.

Leo (July 23 - August 22)

LOVE READING 2025

2025 buzzes for you, Leo.

Your native magnetism will feel irresistible, sparking interest in both fresh and longstanding unions. Its love truly shines through the key periods in February and July: perfect for creating heartwarming memories.

Virgo (August 23 - September 22)

This year, Virgo, is about improving communication, strengthening your bonds through clarity and comprehension. February and August stand out as optimal for cementing those personal bonds or meeting the person who appreciates your attention to detail.

Libra (September 23 - October 22)

This year deepens your journey into your own self-discovery and the dynamics of relationships for you, Libra. Teach your important lessons about setting boundaries early on. Starting April, expect a more flowy dynamic, so you can attract the partnerships you actually do want.

Scorpio (Oct. 23 - Nov. 21)

Prepare for a year filled with passion and transformation, Scorpio. Second half of the year looks good for nurturing significant relationships, so grab the opportunities when you can to

deepen and reignite those relational fires.

Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21) You feel your wild heart bringing you romantic adventures this year, Sagittarius. At best for embarking on new connections or renewing old ones through lively activities. Watch your mouth in those retrogrades, but enjoy the romance otherwise.

Capricorn (Dec 22-Jan 19)

This year is all about strengthening and deepening bonds, Capricorn. Whether you are looking for a serious commitment or simply desire a person of ambition in your life, the planet of security in 2025 will solidify those dreams.

Aquarius (January 20 - February 18)

The plan for your love life in 2023, Aquarius? Expect the unexpected. Tracking unpredictable shifts may guide you to a partnership that re-

flects your uncommon essence and values.

Pisces (February 19 - March 20)

Relationship-maniac Pisces will have their interconnectivity center lit up in 2025 for the purpose of fostering deeply resonant, spiritual unions. You should rely on your intuition to lead you to people who are in line with what you care about, emotionally and soulfully, too, as you must frequently prioritize the bonding with yourself before engaging with other individuals.

Dr. Madhu Kotiya is a renowned Spiritual, Energy and Psychic Counsellor and Healer, Wiccan High Priestess, Tarot Mentor, Numerologist, Vastu Expert and Crystal Therapist. She is also the founder of India's First Wicca and Tarot School viz., Wicca India School and Mshezaim Institute of Tarot and Divination



'From resolution to reality - How Veganuary has become a popular movement in India'

TDG NETWORK

As the year winds down, it is natural to reflect on the resolutions that were made in January. While there would be some of us who could hold on to their resolutions and some others who could not. However, there is no reason to feel lost. Making a new year's resolution itself is a combination of awareness about oneself and a conscious decision to do better. Even setting a goal is a step in the right direction; this is more than most people manage.

Being vegan once seen as a fringe lifestyle choice, appears to be occupying an increasingly bigger place not only in the West but also in India.

Reports indicate that vegan diets create 75% fewer greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming, as well as much less water pollution and wildlife damage. Fruits and vegetables, legumes, and grains require less energy, land, and water to produce than animal-derived diets.

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO VEGAN NUTRITION

<p>PROTEIN REPAIRS CELLS AND BUILDS STRENGTH Get it from... tofu, seitan, tempeh, beans & pulses</p>	<p>KEEPS YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM HEALTHY Get it from... a B12 supplement, Marmite & nutritional yeast</p> <p>VITAMIN B12</p>	<p>OMEGA 3 A CRUCIAL POLYUNSATURATED FAT Get it from... a microalgae supplement, as well as flax seeds, chia seeds & walnuts</p>
<p>OMEGA 6 A CRUCIAL POLYUNSATURATED FAT Get it from... sunflower oil, nuts & seeds</p>	<p>BUILDS STRONG BONES AND TEETH Get it from... fortified dairy alternatives, calcium-set tofu, kale & broccoli</p> <p>CALCIUM</p>	<p>IRON CREATES IMPORTANT PROTEINS FOR STRENGTH AND HEALTH Get it from... dark leafy veg, dark chocolate & sweet potato</p>
<p>IODINE BUILDS HORMONES AND KEEPS CELLS HEALTHY Get it from... an iodine supplement, seaweed, cereals & grains</p>	<p>MAINTAINS BONES & MUSCLES Get it from... a vegan vitamin D supplement, sunshine, UV-grown mushrooms and fortified dairy alternatives</p> <p>VITAMIN D</p>	<p>TOP TIP Veganuary recommends that everyone following a vegan diet long-term regularly supplements vitamin B12, vitamin D, iodine and omega 3 (vitamin D not essential in summer if you spend time outdoors in sunlight).</p>

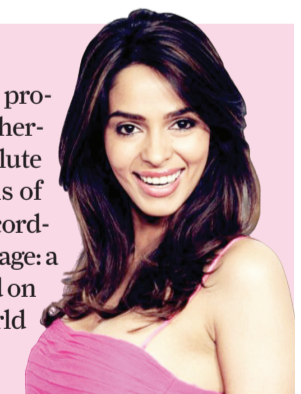
While diet seems to be the biggest concern for those wanting to make the switch fact is that veganism is not

just about diet, it is a lifestyle that refrains people from any form of animal exploitation

Veganuary- the global behaviour change organisation encouraging people to try vegan in January and

CELEBRITY SUPPORT

Veganuary's Indian Ambassadors include film stars, professional athletes, and mountaineers, with Mallika Sherawat being the most recent addition. "They are absolute gems, and they have literally helped show millions of people how enriching plant-based eating can be" according to Prashanth. They send a loud and obvious message: a plant-based diet is a huge advantage for looking good on screen, channeling inner creativity, and fueling world record feats.



Being vegan once seen as a fringe lifestyle choice, appears to be occupying an increasingly bigger place not only in the West but also in India.

beyond- understands the importance of building a supportive community. Prashanth Vishwanath, who heads the organisation in India says "We know it takes a whole ecosystem to form positive habits. That's why we work with brands, restaurants and retailers to make plant-based products more accessible. Our 11 celebrity ambassadors from India show how they're on top of their game while

eating vegan. And anyone trying vegan with us receives more than 10 free resources including daily support emails. The idea is to make the transition to eating more plant-based as fun and rewarding as possible."

BUILDING THE 'TRY VEGAN' ECOSYSTEM

Collaborating with brands In January 2024, 140 Indian firms participated in

the Veganuary movement, launching new goods, special deals, and menu items. More than 40 new goods were launched in India, ranging from vegan eggs to curry meal sets. Nature's Basket, Amazon Fresh, Hilton Hotels, Big Basket, and Hard Rock Cafe were among the firms who participated, and the campaign anticipates that many more will join this year.

FREE RESOURCES

Annual Veganuary campaigns that encourage people to try vegan for a month as the new year rolls in come with an impressive list of free goodies to make the transition enjoyable and

hassle free. Participants gain access to a digital celebrity cookbook, with vegan recipes from Indian and global celebrities, a complete vegan starter kit, with comprehensive answers to any and all questions about adopting a plant based diet and a lot more.

In India, embracing veganism is especially practical, thanks to the wide range of naturally vegan foods that are culturally familiar, easy to prepare taking out the need for expensive or exotic ingredients. It just needs a little bit of planning to ensure it meets all necessary nutrients. The list of vegan food varieties is expanding every day, offering plenty of options to not only nourish your body but also delight your taste buds.

So, whether it's for your health, the planet, or compassion for animals, embracing a plant-based lifestyle is more accessible than ever. With the right support and an abundance of options, making the choice to eat better could be the most rewarding resolution you take on this year.

A LOOK AT INDIA'S TOP SPORTING MOMENTS IN 2024

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

The year gone by saw India achieving some new milestones in sports with the government's schemes such as Khelo India contributing to nurturing talent at the grassroots and Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) providing world-class support to elite athletes.

Sports has evolved from being a mere pastime to a respected career option, inspiring millions of young Indians to pursue their athletic dreams.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has consistently engaged with athletes at various events, including the Olympics and national games. Even his speeches frequently highlight the successes of Indian athletes on international platforms, instilling a sense of pride among citizens.

After the Paris Olympics, he praised both medalists and those who narrowly missed out on podium finishes, emphasizing that every athlete's journey contributes to India's sporting legacy.

Ahead of the Paris Paralympics 2024, PM Modi wished the Indian contingent success, stating that their courage and determination inspire the entire nation. After the event, all the players were invited to PM's residence where the PM welcomed them and lauded their efforts at the Games. Paralympian Yogesh Kathuniya called PM 'Param Mitra' highlighting the encouragement each player receives from him.

During a meeting with Neeraj Chopra, the gold medalist javelin thrower, PM Modi made a heartfelt gesture by connecting with his mother. He shared a light-hearted moment about how he was eagerly waiting for her to prepare her famous ladoos after Neeraj's victory at the Tokyo Olympics. This personal touch not only showcased Modi's warmth but also highlighted the importance of family support in an athlete's journey.

PM Modi felt emotional when he received a special gift from chess star Vantika Agarwal. She gifted him a treasured photo from the 'Swami Vivekananda Mahila Chess Mahotsav' in 2012, where PM Modi, then Chief Minister of Gujarat, was awarding her, a press release from the Sports Ministry and Sports Authority of India



Neeraj Chopra finishes second in the Diamond League Final (ANI)



Paris Paralympics 2024: Yogesh Kathuniya wins Silver Medal.



India's Vantika Agrawal stands on the podium with her individual gold medal at the Chess Olympiad in Budapest. File photo (X)

(SAI) said.

"There are countless moments that highlight PM Modi's connection with athletes, inspiring them, making them feel valued, and motivating them to win for the nation. He consistently interacts with them before, during, and after tournaments, cheering them on throughout, regardless of whether they win or lose. He is truly a pillar of strength for them," the release said.

In a significant move towards realising PM Modi's vision of hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games in India in 2036,

the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) officially expressed the nation's interest. In November, the IOA submitted a Letter of Intent to the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) Future Host Commission, marking India's formal bid for this prestigious global event.

The 'Khelo India' scheme aims to foster a mass movement for promoting sports excellence across the country. With an annual budget of USD 119 million, the scheme covers grassroots talent identification and development, and provides scholarships to more than



India lift T20 World Cup 2024. (X).File photo

2,700 children each year.

In fact, a total of 124 athletes who were part of the Indian Contingent which participated in the Asian Games held in Hangzhou were Khelo India athletes, and they contributed by winning 42 medals out of 106 medals.

Khelo India Women's League was renamed as Asmita Women's League. About, four seasons of ASMITA have been held since 2021 which has seen a total participation of 83,615 women in 20 sports from across 35 States and UTs.

Under the Khelo India Scheme, a total of 2,781 athletes (KIAs) have been identified and are provided with comprehensive support, including specialized coaching, equipment, medical care, and a monthly allowance. The Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) supports athletes in their preparation for the Olympics and other international competitions.

Notably, out of the 117 athletes representing India at the Paris Olympics, 28 were Khelo India athletes. Similarly, India's Paralympic team, featuring 18 Khelo India athletes, has already secured 29 medals, the highest ever at the ongoing Paris Paralympics 2024.

R Vaishali shines in World Blitz Championship qualifier

AGENCY
NEW DELHI

Indian Grandmaster R Vaishali has made headlines by winning the women's qualifier at the World Blitz Championship, securing her place in the quarterfinals. Following the impressive gold medal performance of compatriot Koneru Humpy, who took home a prize of USD 60,000, Vaishali showcased her talent by scoring 9.5 points in the women's section, finishing with a remarkable 9.5/11 record that included three draws.

Russian player Kateryna Lagno was the closest competitor to Vaishali, finishing with 8.5 points. The remaining six qualifiers all ended with 8 points. Despite meeting the points criteria, Humpy was eliminated due to a poor tiebreaker, ultimately finishing in ninth place.

In the open section of the tournament, ten players, including world number one Magnus Carlsen, tied for first place. Carlsen man-



aged to draw six of his 13 games, finishing among the co-leaders by the end of the qualifiers. Russian Ian Nepomniachtchi emerged as the qualifier winner with 9.5 points, benefiting from the best tiebreak, while Fabiano Caruana of the United States secured second place, ahead of Carlsen, who placed third.

Notably, none of the Indian players made it to the top eight, despite some strong early performances. Erigaisi Arjun started strong with five consecutive victories but ultimately finished with a disappointing seven points. R Pragganandhaa

- INDIAN STANDINGS:**
- R Pragganandhaa: 8.5 points (23rd)
 - Raunak Sadhwani: 8 points (46th)
 - Arjun Erigaisi: 7 points (64th)
 - Aravindh Chithambaram: 7 points (68th)
 - V Pranav: 7 points (67th)
- Women's Standings:**
- R Vaishali: 9.5 points (1st)
 - K Humpy: 8 points (9th)
 - Divya Deshmukh: 7 points (18th)
 - Vantika Agarwal: 7 points (19th)
 - D Harika: 7 points (22nd)



was the highest-placed Indian with 8.5 points, but a last-round loss to Russian Daniil Dubov cost him a chance to advance to the quarterfinals.

In the upcoming quarterfinals, Vaishali will face Chinese Grandmaster Zhu Jiner. Her back-to-back victories against GMs Nana Dzagnidze of Georgia and Valentina Gunina of Russia in rounds 7 and 8 were crucial in helping her to the event.

- QUALIFIERS: OPEN SECTION:**
1. Ian Nepomniachtchi
 2. Volodar Murzin (Both FIDE)
 3. Fabiano Caruana
 4. Hans Niemann Moke
 5. Wesley So (all USA)
 6. Magnus Carlsen (Norway)
 7. Jan-Krzysztof Duda (Poland)
 8. Alireza Firouzja (France)
- Women's Section:**
1. R Vaishali (India)
 2. Lei Tingjie
 3. Wenjun Ju
 4. Zhu Jiner (all China)
 5. Kateryna Lagno
 6. Valentina Gunina (Both FIDE)
 7. Carissa Yip (USA)
 8. Bibisara Assaubayeva (Kazakhstan)

Mahesh Bhupathi and Sumit Nagal discuss Indian tennis

SUNIL YASH KALRA
UAE

Indian tennis legend Mahesh Bhupathi and rising star Sumit Nagal recently shared their thoughts on the state of Indian tennis and its future during an engaging discussion on the Cricket Predicta show, hosted by Sunil Yash Kalra in the UAE. Reflecting on the current scenario, Bhupathi expressed concern over the lack of Indian players in the top 100 singles rankings, stating, "The results speak for themselves. We don't see anyone in the top 100 singles, men or women, except Sumit Nagal. So, I guess we'll have to wait and watch."

Bhupathi also emphasized the growing support for Indian tennis and praised Nagal's progress. "We're picking the cream of the crop because we are owned by a group of Indians. We wanted to support Sumit and allow him to play at the highest level. He's come out with flying colors, so it's working well," he said.



Addressing the vacuum left by iconic players like Leander Paes, Sania Mirza, and himself, Bhupathi expressed optimism, adding, "If more Indian players rise to the top, we'll be eager to include them." Sumit Nagal, currently the sole Indian player near the top 100, shared his determination to elevate Indian tennis further. "There's a long way to go. I want to be in a position where I can make a big difference in tennis in India. I'm working hard and hope everything goes well in the next few years to push higher rankings," Nagal said.

Nagal also highlighted the importance of sponsorships in his journey, appreciating the support from

partners like the Bank of Baroda. "It's a fun partnership when a company endorses a sport that's not at the top in India right now," he remarked.

Looking ahead, Nagal expressed enthusiasm about representing India in the Davis Cup.

"If everything aligns with my schedule, why not?" he said confidently. The 113th edition of the Davis Cup is set to take place from 31 January to 25 November 2025, and Nagal's potential participation has raised hopes for Indian tennis fans.

The discussion offered a candid look at the challenges and opportunities in Indian tennis, with both Bhupathi and Nagal expressing hope for a brighter future.