



# Aryan Age

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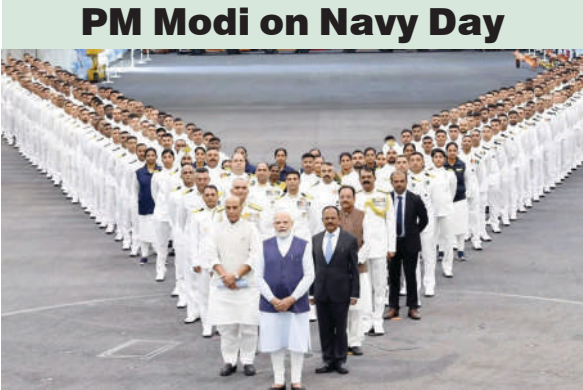


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## Our Navy upholds maritime security'



**New Delhi :** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday extended his greetings to the Indian Navy on Navy Day on Thursday, praising their exceptional courage and determination in safeguarding the country's maritime interests.

In a post on X, PM Modi highlighted the Navy's critical focus on self-reliance and modernisation, noting how these efforts have enhanced India's overall security apparatus.

"Our Navy is synonymous with exceptional courage and

determination. They safeguard our shores and uphold our maritime interests," the Prime Minister stated. He recalled his "memorable experience" of spending Diwali with Naval personnel on board INS Vikrant, India's first indigenous aircraft carrier.

Commending the Navy's crucial role in strengthening maritime security, the Prime Minister expressed confidence in their future. Navy Day is celebrated to commemorate the Navy's decisive role in the 1971 Indo-Pak war.

## Indo-Russia: Delhi gets Russian education hub; Mumbai and Chennai branches planned

**New Delhi:** In a major step to deepen educational and cultural cooperation between India and Russia, the Russian Educational Agency has inaugurated its first branch in New Delhi.

The initiative, a joint project between the Synergy Corporation and Innopraktika. India, aims to provide Indian students with streamlined access to quality higher education in Russia while fostering cultural, scientific, and social ties between the two nations. The launch comes when Russian President Vladimir Putin is on a State visit to India reflecting the strengthening of relations between both the countries.

The agency already collaborates with leading Russian universities and plans to expand its presence in India, with new branches set to open in Mumbai and Chennai in 2026.

Over 10,000 Indian students are expected to pursue Russian higher education next year. The Agency's branch in New Delhi will serve as a support center for applicants: agency specialists will help select study programs

and universities, guide students through all admission procedures, and assist with visa applications and other necessary documentation. This will significantly simplify the process for Indian students interested in Russian education and ready to build their futures based on international academic experience.

"Many Indian graduates of Russian universities have become true ambassadors of friendship between our nations and cultures," said Vadim Lobov, President of the Synergy Corporation. "Russian universities inherit the prestigious Soviet higher education system, and the Educational Agency will continue this tradition by helping the next generation of Indian students receive world-class education in Russia."

Beyond academics, the agency will also promote Russian culture and language through interactive programs like "Bridge of Friendship: Russia and India," recently launched in Delhi schools.

Currently, the agency cooperates with leading Russian universities and plans to expand

schoolchildren insight into the country where they wish to study.



in India. In 2026, branches will open in Mumbai (Maharashtra) and Chennai (Tamil Nadu). The agency also aims to send over 10,000 Indian students to study at Russian universities in 2026.

A key focus of the agency's work will be promoting Russian culture and language. Thematic classes will give Indian

The first interactive lessons, "Bridge of Friendship: Russia and India," were held in Delhi schools on the day the agency branch launched, with over 1,000 high school students participating.

More lessons will be held across India in the near future. "It's important for us not just

to provide information about Russian universities—students can find that online. Our task is to help them prepare for admission. We select preparatory courses, assist with paperwork, and ease cultural adaptation," emphasized Natalia Popova, First Deputy General Director of Innopraktika.

The growing interest in Russian culture and language reflects strengthening humanitarian cooperation between India and Russia.

The New Delhi branch will serve as a support hub for Indian youth seeking international education and will contribute to closer cultural, scientific, and economic interaction between the two nations.

Russian education has traditionally enjoyed high prestige in India, particularly in medicine, IT, and engineering. Graduates of Russian universities significantly contribute to India's economy and scientific-technological development, often becoming ambassadors of Russian-Indian friendship.

## Priyanka Gandhi slams Modi govt as Rupee falls past 90 against Dollar

**New Delhi:** Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, All India Congress Committee general secretary and Wayanad MP, on Thursday criticized the government as the Indian rupee slipped past the 90-per-dollar mark, hitting a record low.

Speaking to the media, she questioned the government's silence now, contrasting it with its criticism when the currency weakened during the Manmohan Singh government.

"What did they use to say when the dollar's value

was high against the rupee during the Manmohan



Singh government? What is their response today? Ask them. Why are you asking me?" Priyanka said while speaking to media.

Her comments reflect growing public and political



concern over the currency's record low, which analysts attribute to capital outflows, rising crude prices, and delays in a major trade deal

with the US.

Meanwhile, the government, through the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and its economic team, has downplayed the fall. Chief Economic Adviser V. Anantha Nageswaran recently stated that the rupee's depreciation is unlikely to significantly impact inflation or exports at present.

The decline comes amid weak trade and portfolio flows, coupled with growing uncertainty over the India-US trade deal.

## Congress Tewari seeks debate on Delhi-NCR air pollution emergency

**New Delhi:** Congress MP Manish Tewari on Thursday submitted an adjournment motion in the Lok Sabha seeking immediate suspension of Question Hour, Zero, and all scheduled business to discuss what he described as a "catastrophic air pollution crisis" engulfing Delhi-NCR and the Indo-Gangetic Plain.

In his letter to the Secretary General of the Lok Sabha, Tewari warned that toxic air had turned the region into "lethal gas chambers", triggering a

national public health emergency of an unprecedented scale.

He noted that residents of Delhi-NCR stand to lose up to seven years of life expectancy. He added that doctors from Sir Ganga Ram Hospital and the Lung Care Foundation have reported a sharp rise in lung cancer cases among non-smokers.

"Children are suffering irreversible damage to their lungs and brains, the elderly are struggling to breathe, and people of all ages face soaring risks of

asthma, pneumonia, heart attacks, and strokes,"



Tewari said, stressing that millions of Indians are being robbed of years of their lives.

The Congress MP said

that Indian cities now dominate global lists of the world's most polluted, with pollution levels rising by over 70 percent in recent years. He argued that the crisis was no longer a seasonal phenomenon but a "continuing calamity" that demands urgent, coordinated intervention by both Central and State governments.

Urging the House to act without delay, Tewari called for all other business to be set aside to address what he termed a "life-and-death emergency".

## BJP promises corruption-free civic body, better roads and infra in Mumbai

**Mumbai :** Ahead of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) elections, the Bharatiya

engaging with citizens even after the elections.

Satam said that Mumbai residents expressed clear



Janata Party (BJP) Mumbai on Thursday promised corruption-free civic body, better roads and infra in Mumbai.

According to Mumbai BJP President and MLA Ameet Satam, a citizen survey was conducted in city and over 2.65 lakh people took part in the campaign, which began on September 16, 2025. Of these, 1.45 lakh people said they were willing to volunteer to help build the "future Mumbai".

Satam thanked the public for their strong response and said the BJP would continue

satisfaction with the progress of several big infrastructure projects carried out by the MahaYuti government. These include the Metro network, the Coastal Road, the Atal Setu, and the government's housing initiatives.

He said citizens repeatedly pointed out that these projects are bringing visible positive changes to the city, an official statement said.

The feedback shows that citizens want a corruption-free administration, honesty, and more direct

communication from corporators.

Around 53 per cent of respondents said that they were unhappy with the quality of BMC services, it said.

People also expect quicker improvements especially in the areas of roads, sanitation, and monsoon preparedness.

The suggestions from Mumbai citizens included cleanliness competitions and awards at the local level, designated hawkker zones, separate hospital wards for women and senior citizens, setting up an innovation hub in Mumbai, implementing a Mumbai environmental plan, AR (Augmented Reality) booths to showcase the forts of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Maharashtra's cultural heritage, a fully online, single-window system for all citizen services, the statement said.

The BJP considers this public engagement the true success of the campaign and promised that citizen feedback would continue to shape policy decisions in the future," Satam said.

## Mumbai-Goa Highway to be completed by April 2026: Gadkari



**Mumbai:** Union Minister for Road Transport Nitin Gadkari informed the Lok Sabha on Thursday that the long-pending Mumbai-Goa Highway project will be completed by April 2026. The work on the project started in 2009.

He was responding to a question raised by Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Arvind Sawant, who highlighted the prolonged delay and public frustration regarding the project. Sawant pointed out that the highway work has been ongoing for nearly 10 years, with expenses surpassing even major national projects, yet the road remains incomplete. He urged the minister to take personal interest in ensuring timely completion.

Replying to this, Gadkari said that the highway work initially began in 2009, even before he became a minister in 2014. The earlier government had handed over the project to the Public Works Department, and the work faced several challenges such as land acquisition issues and frequent contractor changes, many of whom faced action due to non-performance.

Gadkari confirmed that 89 percent of the Mumbai-Goa Highway work is completed. He assured that the remaining portion will be finished by April 2026, putting an end to the inconvenience faced by citizens. He also acknowledged the significant delays in the project.

## Second tiger death at Byculla Zoo weeks after Shakti's passing

**Mumbai :** Weeks after the death of Byculla Zoo's 9-year-old Royal Bengal tiger named Shakti on November 17, it has come to light that yet another tiger had died at Byculla Zoo in Mumbai --its 3-year-old male Royal Bengal tiger named Rudra -- on 29 October 2025, officials said.

According to information from the Byculla Zoo authorities, Rudra was born with Trypanosoma and was extremely weak at birth. Over the past three years, various treatments were administered to Rudra, who

succumbed to his illness on October 29, before the death of Shakti. Rudra was the cub born to Shakti and Karishma.

On February 2020, the pair of Royal Bengal tigers — Shakti (male) and Karishma (female) — were brought to the Veermata Jijabai Bhosale Botanical Garden and Zoo in Byculla from the Siddhartha Garden and Zoo in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar.

In a statement issued on November 26, the BMC confirmed that Shakti died from respiratory failure due to pneumonia, refuting reports circulating on social

media that Shakti died because of a bone stuck in his respiratory tract during a meal. However, the announcement did not mention the earlier death of another tiger at the zoo.

When asked, an official from the zoo said, "We are awaiting the report on the cause of death. It is being confirmed by the Mumbai Veterinary College (Parel), and hence no statement was made at the same time as the statement about Shakti's death."

The zoo at present has two tigers, Karishma and her cub Jay.



## Election code casts a shadow over Nagpur Winter Session

**Nagpur :** The Maharashtra legislature's winter session, scheduled to open in Nagpur, is set to unfold under the constraints of an extended model code of conduct for municipal councils and Nagar Panchayat elections raising concerns about the government's ability to announce any major initiatives for Vidarbha.

Held every year in Nagpur under the provisions of the Nagpur Pact, the session has already been

shortened. Originally planned from December 8 to 19, it will now end on December 14 following a decision in the Business Advisory Committee (BAC). The uncertainty follows an order by the Nagpur bench of the Bombay High Court, which directed that counting for all municipal council and Nagar Panchayat elections be conducted on December 21. As a result, the State Election Commission's

code of conduct, initially expected to expire on December 4, will now remain in effect until December 21, according to collectorate officials.

Although the Commission had earlier rescheduled polls in some constituencies to December 20 due to administrative issues, the court's directive aligning the counting dates for all bodies effectively prolongs the restrictions by nearly three weeks.

Officials confirmed that the code will remain fully in force until the counting concludes.

The timing has raised eyebrows. The Nagpur winter session is traditionally the platform where persistent Vidarbha concerns such as irrigation shortfalls, agrarian distress, industrial stagnation, human-wildlife conflict and unemployment receive sustained attention.

This year's session carries added urgency as unseasonal rains have devastated crops across the region. Farmers, including orange, rice, soybean, and cotton cultivators, are waiting for compensation, insurance payments, and possibly even a loan waiver, despite the government already announcing a Rs 32,000-crore relief package.

However, the extended code may prevent the government from

unveiling fresh measures, leading to speculation that Vidarbha could lose a valuable opportunity for redress. Opposition leaders have slammed the BJP-led Mahayuti government for curtailing the session.

Congress Legislature Party leader Vijay Wadettiwar remarked, "A seven-day session is merely an attempt to avoid responsibility. The government is using the code of conduct as a

shield because it does not want to address public grievances.

He further accused the administration of lacking the courage to face the ground realities. With the code set to continue until December 21, public expectations for meaningful decisions especially for farmers hit hard by crop destruction have dampened, intensifying uncertainty over the session's eventual impact.



# Nitish promises faster growth in Bihar, outlines five-year development roadmap

**Patna** : Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Thursday assured the Assembly that the NDA government will accelerate development across all sectors over the next five years, with a special focus on strengthening the economic condition of every household, boosting industrial growth agriculture and tourism.

The CM was participating in a special debate on motion of thanks to the speech of Bihar Governor Arif Mohammad Khan during a joint session of the state legislature. Kumar said the people of Bihar have given the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) a massive mandate, and the government is committed to delivering faster progress with full cooperation of the Centre.

He said that Bihar is moving forward continuously and in the next five years, the development work will expand significantly.

Highlighting the government's employment initiatives, Kumar said that 50 lakh youths have already been provided jobs or employment opportunities. The government now aims to provide employment to 1 crore youths over the next five years which would further be extended, he reiterated.

Outlining his contributions during his 20-year tenure, the Chief Minister said when the first NDA government was formed on November 24, 2005, the rule of law was established and



now there is no atmosphere of fear in Bihar, instead, there is peace, brotherhood and harmony.

Highlighting his major achievements, Kumar said his government has given priority to improving education and health infrastructure. A large number of new schools have been opened, massive teacher recruitment drives have raised the number of government teachers to 5.2 lakh, he added, saying that special schemes were launched to encourage girls' education.

He said health services have been upgraded with free medicines and treatment in hospitals and the number of medical colleges has doubled from 6 to 12, with more under construction. Besides, the bed capacity at PMCH and IGIMS is

being expanded.

Kumar said that in 2016 the government achieved its target of ensuring that people from remote regions could reach Patna in six hours. Today, improved connectivity through roads, bridges, bypasses and elevated corridors has reduced travel time from the farthest district to around five hours.

He said to further strengthen road connectivity, five new expressways would be construed, roads connecting block headquarters would be widened and bridges and bypasses would be expanded.

Kumar said the Agriculture Road Map, implemented since 2008, has significantly increased production of grains, fruits, vegetables, milk, eggs, meat and fish. Fish production has risen

more than 2.5 times, making Bihar self-reliant in fish supply and raising farmers' income. Work under the fourth Agriculture Road Map is now underway.

Outlining the achievements of his ambitious 'Seven Resolves' mission, Kumar said that it transformed the rural Bihar. Under the government's Seven Resolves Part I and II, households across Bihar have received electricity, tap water, toilets and pucca roads connecting habitations.

Kumar said electricity reached every household since 2018. Most domestic consumers now receive electricity free of cost. Solar panels will be provided to interested households, he added. Speaking about women's empowerment programmes, he said that

50% reservation were given to them in Panchayati Raj institutions (2006) and urban local bodies (2007). His government made a provision of 35% reservation for women in police and all government jobs.

He said that formation of Jeevika self-help groups now having 1.4 crore members proved to be a major booster in transforming the lives of women folk. Under the Mukhyamantri Mahila Rozgar Yojana, 1.56 crore women have received Rs 10,000 each, he said, adding that women with successful enterprises will be given assistance up to Rs 2 lakh.

Kumar said that his government has also focused on the welfare of all communities. Madrasas have been granted government recognition, and their teachers receive salaries at par with other government teachers.

He said the government increased the Social Security pension from Rs 400 to Rs 1,100.

Expressing his gratitude towards the Prime Minister for extending is strong support to Bihar, the Chief Minister said the Central government is providing full cooperation for Bihar's development. The Centre was extending financial assistance for roads, industries, health, tourism, flood control, establishment of a Makhana Board, new airports and for Western Kosi Canal project.

He added that Bihar recently hosted the Khelo India Youth Games, which is a matter of pride for the state.

## Land acquisition for development of two non-major ports underway in Odisha

**Bhubaneswar** : Odisha's Commerce and Transport Minister Bibhuti Bhusan Jena informed the Assembly on Thursday that the land acquisition process for developing two non-major ports in the state is currently in progress.

Responding to a written question from BJD MLA Arun Kumar Sahoo, the Minister said that the proposed ports—Subarnarekha in Balasore district and Astaranga in Puri district—are being developed under the jurisdiction of the state government.

He clarified that the government has already signed concession agree-

ments with Subarnarekha Private Limited and Nabaryug Engineering Company Limited for the development of the two non-major ports.

According to Jena, these agreements mark key milestones in the state's long-term port development strategy aimed at boosting maritime infrastructure and enhancing coastal economic activities.

He added that the development of the Subarnarekha and Astaranga ports is expected to improve regional connectivity and foster industrial growth in the surrounding districts.

The Minister also in-

formed the House that a concession agreement has been signed for establishing a captive jetty for JSW Utkal Steel Limited's proposed Integrated Steel Plant at Jhatdhari Muhan in Jagatsinghpur district.

This captive jetty, he said, would facilitate efficient transportation of raw materials and finished products, supporting the logistical needs of the upcoming steel plant.

Jena noted that Odisha currently has only one major port—Paradip—which functions under the administrative control of the Union Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.

## SIR move foiled Amit Shah's President's rule ploy: CM Mamata

**Baharampur** : Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress Chief Mamata Banerjee today said they have allowed the EC's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls to frustrate Amit Shah's ploy to grab power by imposing President's rule in West Bengal.

"If we had not allowed SIR in West Bengal, then there could have been a situation for the Centre to impose the President rule, and this ploy was of Amit Shah," Banerjee said. She was addressing a rally at the Baharampur Stadium in Murshidabad, a minority-dominated border district of the state with Bangladesh.

"It was a ploy of Amit Shah, but they have been

frustrated, and no one will be allowed to grab the property and rights of the people."

"Shah wants to capture Bengal at any cost. But the BJP must remember, by doing SIR in Bengal, you have dug your own grave. Bengal and Bihar are not the same. Bengal cannot be won as you did in Bihar. You cannot win Bengal by cleverness and trickery," she said.

"You can not beat us or kill us; we will protect our rights and win finally," the Chief Minister said.

She said in February, West Bengal election dates will be announced, so they did SIR on purpose three months before, she alleged.

She also asked people not to fear SIR.

## Over 50,000 Bangladeshis and Rohingyas illegally staying in Lucknow: BJP

**Lucknow** : A day after Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath directed the setting up of detention centres for foreign infiltrators detected during verification drives, the BJP on Thursday claimed that over 50,000 Bangladeshis and Rohingyas are staying illegally in Lucknow. During a 2019 survey, the UP government had acknowledged the presence of around one million foreign infiltrators in the state, particularly in Noida, Ghaziabad, and Lucknow. The BJP, however, claimed that its workers in Lucknow have identified approximately 50,000 illegal residents. To monitor the situation, ward-level teams have been formed across the city to check tenants and slum dwellers. Party's Lucknow city President Anand Dwivedi said that no ineligible person will be allowed to be added to the voter list. Dwivedi issued strict instructions to party workers regarding the identification and monitoring of illegal immigrants in the city during the Special Revision of Voter Lists (SIR). He said, "Under no circumstances should the names of any illegal immigrants, including Bangladeshis and Rohingyas, be added to the voter list. Identify them and inform the administration." "Special teams have been formed in each ward, conducting continuous surveys in slums and



tenant settlements. The teams are identifying people who have immigrated from other states or countries and are living without documents and notifying the administration," he said. He said special teams have been formed in each ward, conducting continuous surveys in slums and tenant settlements. The teams are identifying people who have immigrated from other states or countries and are living without documents and notifying the administration. These teams are reporting their findings to the administration for appropriate action. The BJP has also warned locals that sheltering illegal residents or assisting them in obtaining documents is a punishable offence. Party workers are reporting such cases to the administration so that legal action can be taken. Workers are ensuring thorough verification of all identification documents, including Aadhaar cards, voter ID cards, and ration cards.

## Police registers FIR against hotel in south Kashmir for violating immigration Rules

**Srinagar** : Police in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district on Thursday registered an FIR against a local hotel in Pahalgam for alleged violations of the Immigration and Foreigners Act.

The FIR was registered after authorities found the establishment had failed to properly record and report the details of foreign guests staying at the tourist resort.

Police said that during routine inspections of hotels and guest accommodations in the Rafting Point area, a team from Police Station Pahalgam conducted checks to



verify compliance with legal and security regulations.

"During the inspection, it was found that Hotel Golden Heritage, Rafting Point, Yenner, had accommodated two foreign nationals of

Thailand. The hotel management deliberately concealed their stay and failed to submit the mandatory Form C online, which is required for reporting and registration of foreign nationals," police

## EoW chargesheets businessman, ex-officials in Srinagar land fraud case

**Srinagar** : The Economic Offences Wing (EoW) of the Crime Branch Kashmir filed a chargesheet in a land-fraud case allegedly involving a businessman and two retired officers of revenue department, officials said on Thursday. The chargesheet was produced in 2022 FIR which was registered under Sections 420, 467, 468, 471, 120-B Ranbir Penal Code read with Section 5(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

The EoW said the chargesheet was filed in Court of Special Judge Anti-Corruption, Srinagar against Habibullah Bhat, a businessman from Omarhail Buchpora; Mohammad Rajab Reshi, retired Naib Tehsildar from Brein Nishat; and Syed Khurshid Ahmad, then Patwari, from Watalbagh Lar, Gan-



derbal.

The case originated from a written complaint alleging that a fraudulent mutation of land measuring 10 marlas, at Zoonimar Eidgah, Srinagar, had been executed in favour of the accused bene-

ficiary on the pretext of a sale deed.

Accordingly a probe was ordered and during Investigation, it was revealed that no such sale deed had ever been registered by the concerned Sub-Registrar, EoW said.

## Siddaramaiah-Venugopal meeting fuels speculation; Karnataka Congress denies factionalism

**Bengaluru** : The Karnataka Congress saw renewed attention on Thursday after Chief Minister Siddaramaiah was seen attending an event with Congress national leader K.C. Venugopal, triggering speculation about shifting equations within the state unit.

Addressing the swirling rumors, Deputy Chief Minister G. Parameshwara quickly dismissed any talk of factionalism, saying, "No, first of all, let me clarify, there's no camp. There's no camp system in our party and cabinet. You know, few ministers meet only if you say that's a camp, that's not correct."

Congress leader Priyank Kharge further asserted that the party remains united, stating, "There is no signal. The signal is very clear. The DCM and CM have told the high command, who will take a decision. The high command has said we will intervene when necessary. The signal is loud and clear; the problem is you don't want to see it."

Political observers, however, note that the high-profile meeting between Siddaramaiah and Venugopal, a key national leader, comes at a crucial time when the party is gearing up



for strategic decisions on leadership.

Analysts say such interactions, though officially non-factional, often carry heavy political messaging, signaling close coordination between the state and national leadership.

Sources within the party reiterated that all major decisions regarding leadership and portfolios will remain with the Congress high command, emphasizing that Karnataka leaders are committed to working in tandem with New Delhi. The latest episode ensures that political watchers will remain on alert, closely dissecting every public appearance and interaction for clues about the Congress's next moves in Karnataka.

## West Bengal SIR: EC flags 30 booths for major voter data mismatches; orders statewide progeny mapping

**Kolkata** : The Election Commission has primarily identified 30 booths across 30 assembly constituencies where widespread discrepancies in parental information have been detected in the 2025 electoral rolls, prompting an urgent order for progeny mapping at all polling booths.

The anomalies involve voters absent from the 2002 rolls but linked to parents whose names do not match the 2025 entries. The scale of errors potentially affecting up to 30 lakh voters has pushed the poll panel to deploy booth-level officers (BLOs) for immediate verification, with reports due within seven days. The irregularities came to light after the IT team at Nirvachan Sadan analysed enumeration forms uploaded for Bengal's 7.66 crore voters.

The team alerted State Chief Electoral Officer Manoj Agarwal, whose office conducted sample checks and confirmed that mismatches were not isolated but widespread. This triggered instructions for booth-wise progeny mapping across the state to ensure error-free rolls ahead of the Assembly elections.

According to EC sources, all 30 detected booths fall in 30 separate Assembly constituencies, with the highest concentration of anomalies reported from South 24-Parganas. In Sandeshkhali part 168, for instance, 1,267 of the 1,447 electors have linked themselves to parents from the 2002 rolls despite contradictory parental names in the 2025 entries. Joynagar's part 6 shows a

similar trend, with 1,199 of 1,278 voters falling into this category, while in Kultali's part 85, mismatches have been detected in 1,002 of 1,154 entries.

Comparable patterns



have emerged in other districts as well. At a booth in Hingalganj in North 24-Parganas, 705 of 779 voters have reflected inconsistent parental data, and in Hemtabad in North Dinajpur, 977 of 1,119 voters show the same kind of contradiction. Additional irregularities of this nature have also been reported in Dhuhpuri, Dabgram-Phulbari, Dinhat, Murarai, Habibpur and several other constituencies.

"Some mistakes may be unintentional, many appear deliberate attempts by voters to avoid scrutiny during the special intensive revision (SIR) by falsely linking themselves to voters from the 2002 rolls," an election commission official said. From a layman's parlance, progeny mapping is a verification process requiring voters listed in the 2025 rolls to establish legitimate parental links with voters from the 2002 rolls.

Under EC instructions, BLOs must visit each affected household to check why individuals have linked themselves to parents whose recorded names do not match existing data.

## UP hosts high-level ESDM roundtable to boost Electronics Manufacturing

**Lucknow** : Uttar Pradesh strengthened its push towards becoming a premier destination for (ESDM) as senior policymakers and top industry leaders convened for a high-level roundtable in Lucknow on Wednesday. In his keynote address, Infrastructure & Industrial Development Commissioner, Deepak Kumar highlighted the state's progress towards the USD 1 trillion economy goal and reaffirmed its commitment to investor facilitation. He announced that Nivesh Mitra 3.0 will be launched soon, strengthening single-window clearances and enabling faster industrial deployment & Ease of Doing Business in state. He also noted the availability of land bank, 27 Integrated Manufacturing and Logistics Clusters-ready pockets for rapid industrial deployment robust power supply, data centre ecosystem and emerging IT Parks that collectively support advanced manufacturing. Reinforcing the state's long-term development roadmap, Advisor to the Chief Minister, Awanish K Awasthi shared the USD 6 trillion vision for Uttar Pradesh by 2047 and stressed the importance of accelerating growth across electronics, IT, manufacturing, tourism, and emerging technologies.

He drew attention to major infrastructure projects such as the upcoming Noida International Airport in Jewar expanded expressway network, and the multimodal

logistics hub in Dadri, which will significantly enhance industrial competitiveness. Another Advisor to the Chief Minister, K.V. Raju, addressed the delegates and reaffirmed the State Government's commitment to providing seamless support to investors. He assured industry leaders that Uttar Pradesh stands fully prepared to extend all necessary assistance to enterprises looking to establish or expand their operations in the state. He underscored that the Government of Uttar Pradesh remains proactive, responsive, and investor-friendly, ensuring that every proposal receives timely facilitation and enabling a smooth, confidence-driven investment experience. Speaking on the broader industrial landscape, Principal Secretary, Planning & Nodal Officer, Economic Growth Mission, Alok Kumar underlined the state's favourable investment climate, marked by progressive policies, improved law and order, and high-quality technical talent. He stated that Uttar Pradesh now offers one of the country's strongest foundations for design-led and innovation-driven manufacturing. Earlier welcoming the delegates, Principal Secretary, Department of IT & Electronics, Anurag Yadav highlighted Uttar Pradesh's accelerated rise in the electronics sector, noting the state's creditable performance in mobile manufacturing.



# Two New Metro Corridors Set to Boost Mumbai Commuting

**Mumbai :** Commuting between North and South Mumbai has recently become quicker and more economical with the launch of the final segment of the Mumbai Metro 3, also known as the Aqua Line. In a significant move to further alleviate daily travel stress and congested traffic, two crucial new sections of the Mumbai Metro network are expected to become operational before the end of December, according to details shared by the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) and reported by media outlets.

The two sections slated to open for public use by December 31 are a segment of Metro Line 9 and a portion of Metro Line 2B. Specifically, the Metro Line 9 segment will run between Dahisar East and Kashi-



gaon, while a section of Metro Line 2B will connect Diamond Garden in Chembur East to Mandale in Mankhurd. This news follows the earlier announcement made by Maharashtra Transport Minister Prapat Sarnaik on November 20, who also indicated that the section of Metro Line 7 running between Dahisar and Kashmir is expected to be commissioned by the year's end.

Metro Line 9 is de-

signed as an extension of the existing Line 7, stretching from Andheri to CSIA (Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport) and from Dahisar to Mira Bhayandar. The 13.581 km long corridor will feature 10 stations, including Dahisar, Pandhurang Wadi, Miragaon, Kashigaon, Sai Baba Nagar, Meditya Nagar, Shahid Bhagat Singh Garden, and Subhash Chandra Bose Stadium. Additionally, the extension

towards CSIA will include an elevated Airport Colony station and an underground station at CSIA, significantly improving connectivity for air travelers.

Meanwhile, Metro Line 2B, which runs from D N Nagar to Mandale, is a 23.643 km elevated corridor intended to drastically improve connectivity between the Eastern and Western suburbs of Mumbai. Although the initial opening will only cover the Diamond Garden to Mandale stretch, the complete corridor will eventually feature 20 stations, linking Andheri West to Mankhurd. Key stations along the entire route will include ESIC Nagar, Nanavati Hospital, National College, Bandra Metro, Kurla (E), EEH, Chembur, Diamond Garden, BSNL Metro, and Mandale Metro.

# TMC Faces Heat for Ignoring Pollution Rules During Demolitions

**Thane :** The air pollution crisis in Thane is reaching critical levels, directly impacting public health with a sharp increase in respiratory ailments like cough, cold, and asthma, resulting in a surge of patient visits to local clinics. While the Thane Municipal Corporation's (TMC) Pollution Control Department is rigorously enforcing strict anti-pollution measures—such as mandating green curtains, water sprinkling, and fines—against private developers, a serious concern has emerged: the municipal administration itself is reportedly failing to comply with these very rules during its own development and demolition activities. This inconsistency calls into question the civic body's overall commitment to environmental protection.



The TMC has been meticulous in its regulatory role, issuing notices to 73 non-compliant developers and collecting fines between January and November, insisting on adherence to guidelines like covering construction materials and cleaning vehicles. However, the civic body's own actions starkly contrast this stringent stance. During extensive demolition drives against unauthorized constructions in the Diva and Shil

areas, the TMC allegedly neglected essential control measures such as installing green curtains on buildings being torn down and using water for dust suppression.

The resulting large plumes of dust spread widely, causing considerable trouble and health risks to surrounding residents. This failure to practice what it preaches fun-

damentally contradicts the TMC's efforts to discipline private builders.

The situation is now set for external scrutiny, as sources indicate the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB) is preparing to launch its own inspection of the TMC's demolition and development sites.

The MPCB is the state's environmental regulatory body, and if its inspection finds evidence that the Municipal Corporation has violated pollution control rules, it is expected to issue a formal notice to the TMC. This action would hold the civic body accountable for its environmental breaches, placing it under the same regulatory pressure it imposes on private entities.

# MHADA Majiwada Project Finally Gets Green Light

**Thane :** The technical hurdles that had stalled the proposed old-age home and working women's dormitory project by MHADA's Konkan Board at Majiwada in Thane have finally been overcome, paving the way for the foundation-laying ceremony scheduled for January 2026.

The Konkan Board initially planned two separate seven-storey buildings—one for senior citizens and the other for working women—as part of an initiative to address housing needs for specific demographic groups. However, the Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC) withheld its essential approval for both projects due to complex technical issues, which created a significant delay in the crucial housing plans.

The core of the problem stemmed from the fact that the land designated for the old-age home and wom-

en's hostel, located in the Vivekanand Nagar layout, was included in the city's extensive cluster redevelopment project.

The TMC was hesitant to grant permission because this inclusion meant the land might not ultimately be available for the hostel and home projects. This required a focused effort from the Konkan Board to resolve the technical and administrative deadlock, which it has now successfully managed to do by convincing authorities to separate the plots from the cluster scheme.

In alignment with the state's housing policy, which prioritizes solving accommodation problems for senior citizens, women, and students, these facilities are deemed vital for the Thane region. The need is becoming even more urgent as the number of women and students migrating to the Mumbai Metropolitan Region

(MMR) for education and employment is projected to dramatically increase due to the development of the Growth Hub. Both buildings, planned to be seven-stories high, will offer all necessary facilities and are expected to cost a combined ₹11 crore.

Against this backdrop, the Konkan Mandal successfully pushed for the land to be excluded from the cluster redevelopment project. Dr. Vishal Rathod, Chief Officer of Konkan Mandal, confirmed that the corporation has now asked for a new proposal for the projects, which will be submitted quickly to secure final approval. He also reaffirmed the plan to hold the groundbreaking ceremony in January 2026, marking a definite start to the construction of the old-age home on approximately 1,300 sq. meters and the women's hostel on 1,500 sq. meters.

# Malad Air Quality Display Board Shows '2' PM 2.5, Residents Doubt Accuracy

**Mumbai :** A video shot near an active construction site in Malad West, close to Orlem Church, has triggered a significant public outcry after the on-site air quality display board showed an implausibly low PM 2.5 reading of just “2”. The reading, which is globally indicative of pristine, clean air—better than conditions in Switzerland, as the resident recording the clip sarcastically noted—immediately sparked widespread doubts about the reliability of Mumbai's real-time pollution monitoring systems. This skepticism is intensified by the visibly dusty environment, which directly contradicts the displayed number and undermines the public's confidence in the data meant to inform them about a critical public health issue.

The resident, whose clip was posted by infobazzarnet, expressed clear disbelief while standing amid heavy, dust-generating construction activity. He explicitly stated that a site officer informed him the display was managed and maintained by the BMC (Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation), effectively pointing the finger of accountability at the civic body. This revelation is crucial as it suggests a breakdown in the city's mandatory pollution monitoring infrastructure, rather than mere non-compliance by a private contractor. It confirms that the issue is not just about pollution control, but about the integrity of the data being reported to the public.

The viral circulation of the video has amplified existing concerns over the general trustworthiness of pollution monitors across Mumbai. Social media users and environmental activists were quick to dismiss the reading as a clear falsehood, arguing that such ultra-low levels are scientifically impossible in a construction-dense area like Malad, which frequently registers “Poor” or “Unhealthy” AQI levels. The incident raises serious questions about whether the pollution sensors at the site are properly calibrated, regularly maintained, or even functional, especially given that the BMC itself recently acknowledged that 117 out of 400 linked sensor-based monitors at construction sites were found to be inactive.

In response to this and other incidents of deteriorating air quality, environmental activists have strongly urged the BMC to provide a transparent and immediate clarification regarding the inspection and maintenance protocols for these public display boards. They argue that inaccurate or misleading readings, particularly those near construction areas where pollution is most acute, do more than just confuse the public—they actively hinder genuine efforts to track, mitigate, and hold polluters accountable for the city's air quality crisis. The demand now is for stringent action to ensure all mandated monitoring systems are operational and reporting truthful data.

# Impersonation Used to Illegally Secure CIDCO Plot

**Navi Mumbai :** Panvel City Police have initiated legal action against 12 members of the Bahira family in a serious case of land fraud, following allegations that they used the identity of a deceased relative to fraudulently obtain a valuable CIDCO plot. The family stands accused of portraying the late Vishnu Govind Bahira as alive and using forged documents to secure a plot measuring 1,100 sq. meters at Sector 35 in Kamothe under the CIDCO 12.5% scheme. The elaborate scheme was only exposed after a third-party complaint led CIDCO officials to review the allotment documents, confirming the fraudulent nature of the

claim.

The fraudulent operation involved creating a fake identity card in the deceased man's name but featuring the photograph of an unrelated person, Sakharam Dharma Dhawale. This individual then posed as ‘Vishnu Bahira’ at multiple government offices. According to a complaint filed by CIDCO Assistant Development Officer Sandeep Sathe, this impersonator illegally signed crucial legal papers, including the lease agreement and the tripartite agreement, at the Sub-Registrar Office. This deliberate act of impersonation and forgery enabled the family to unlawfully claim possession of Plot No. 102 and subse-

quently construct a building on the acquired land.

Police officials explained that the fraudulent submissions were allegedly carried out systematically across various offices, including the Panvel Tehsil, CIDCO, and the Sub-Registrar Office, dating back to February 2006. The plot allotment was ultimately granted based on documents that were later discovered to be entirely fabricated. The family is believed to have resorted to this high-risk impersonation to avoid the lengthy process of obtaining a legal heir certificate after Vishnu Bahira's death, which would have delayed the plot allotment by about a year.

The family members—Sunil Govind Bahira, Chandrakant Govind Bahira, Eknath Shankar Bahira, Sharda Bhalchandra Bahira, Kathod Govind Bahira, Hiranman Govind Bahira, Dharmubai Govind Bahira, Maruti Govind Bahira, Dharma Shankar Bahira, Laxman Bhagwan Bahira, Shweta Sunil Bahira, along with the impersonator Sakharam Dharma Dhawale—have all been booked by the police. They face charges under various sections of the BNS, including Sections 318(4), 336(3), 338, 340(2), and 3(5). The Panvel City Police are actively continuing their investigation into the systematic plot fraud.

# Bhiwandi Factory Fire

**Bhiwandi :** A massive fire completely destroyed a ground-plus-two brush-manufacturing factory in the Jaymata Di Compound, Kalher, Bhiwandi, late at night. The blaze rapidly grew in intensity, fueled by the large quantity of highly combustible raw materials and chemicals used in the factory. The sheer scale of the inferno quickly overwhelmed the local fire unit, necessitating a multi-agency response with fire tenders brought in from Bhiwandi, Kalyan, and Thane. After several strenuous

hours, over two dozen firefighters successfully brought the flames under control, preventing the spread to adjacent units.

Despite the catastrophic destruction of all machinery and stock, officials confirmed that no casualties or injuries were reported. While the total property loss is extensive, the combined firefighting effort focused on ensuring no lives were lost. The exact cause of the fire remains under investigation, but preliminary concerns point toward a possible electrical short circuit.

# Purulia Chhau Porbo Returns to Mumbai Stage

**Mumbai :** Mumbai is set to host a spectacular cultural festival with the return of Chhau Porbo-2, a high-energy showcase of the traditional Indian martial art-based dance form, Purulia Chhau.

Originating from the tribal regions of Eastern India, this vibrant performance will take place on Sunday, December 7, 2025, at 7:00 pm at the prestigious Ravindra Natya Mandir. The event, presented by VIBGYOR—a group dedicated to preserving India's folk traditions—promises a compelling fusion of heritage, dramatic storytelling, and athleticism.

The evening will feature two acts centered on Hindu mythology: the raw power of the epic abduction sequence, “Sita Haran,” followed by a break for the official launch of the VIBGYOR Calendar 2026, and concluding with the poignant and philosophical finale, “Krishna's Deha Tyag.”

Indrani Mukherjee, the driving force behind VIBGYOR, emphasized the significance of presenting the “purest form” of Chhau, performed by masters who embody the art. Chhau, which UNESCO recognizes



as a living legacy, is unique for its dynamic combination of high-energy movements, elaborate masks, and powerful dramatic expressions.

The entire performance will be enriched by live music, featuring traditional drums, cymbals, and wind instruments, aimed at bringing the “soul of Purulia right here to the city” for Mumbai's discerning audience. This festival not only showcases cultural heritage but also merges this vibrant art with the spirit of Mumbai life through its associated calendar launch.

# Visually Impaired Vendor Allegedly Assaulted by RPF Near Bhayandar Station

**Bhayandar :** A distressing incident has been reported near the Bhayandar railway station involving the alleged assault of a visually impaired woman by personnel from the RPF. The shocking event occurred in the evening as the divyang woman was earning a living by selling small items near the railway overbridge. According to reports from workers of the MNS and Marathi Ekikaran Samiti, the RPF personnel initially instructed the woman to vacate the spot but then allegedly escalated the situation into an assault, claiming the officers slapped the woman and subjected her to further harassment by throwing water on her. This aggressive action against a vulnerable vendor has sparked immediate and widespread community backlash, leading to demands for urgent accountability.

Upon learning of the alleged

assault, workers from the MNS and Marathi Ekikaran Samiti immediately rushed to the woman's aid and strongly demanded strict disciplinary action against the police officers involved. MNS City President Sandeep Rane vehemently condemned the incident, issuing a public warning of a major political agitation if the railway administration fails to take prompt disciplinary measures against the guilty personnel within a 48-hour deadline. The alleged assault has created a climate of anger and indignation throughout the area, fueling a growing demand for a comprehensive and impartial investigation. The community expects the railway administration and senior officials to intervene swiftly and ensure the perpetrators face the strictest possible consequences for their actions against a visually impaired person.



Editorial

Cute Names and Bitter Reality

‘Sevatirth’ and ‘Lok Bhavan’ are sweet to listen to, grand in meaning and people-oriented in message. Looking at these new names given by the Central Government to the Prime Minister’s Office and Raj Bhavans across the country, one feels that a new chapter of Indian democracy has begun. But the question is, does the reality change when the name changes? Because the endless stories of Governor-Government conflicts have shown that even if the walls of Raj Bhavan are adorned with beautiful names, cute names are no panacea for the power politics inside it. The BJP government at the Centre, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has taken two important and symbolic decisions, which are trying to give a new direction to the administrative and political language of the country. The first decision is that the Prime Minister himself has changed the name of his office from PM Office to ‘Sevatirth’, which underlines the message that ‘Government means service’. The second and more important decision is that it has been decided to change the name of all Raj Bhavans in the country to ‘Lok Bhavan’, and all the Governors have been informed to implement it. Accordingly, some governors immediately renamed the Raj Bhavan as ‘Lok Bhavan’. Although the Raj Bhavan has been renamed as Lok Bhavan, it is not possible for the general public to easily enter the Raj Bhavan. Just because the name has been changed, there will be little change in the functioning immediately! Even after giving a cute name, will it really become a people’s house (Lok Bhavan)? The basic question is whether it will really become a people’s house (Lok Bhavan). For the past several years, the governors appointed by the government of the party in power at the center have done many things, such as putting any government in trouble or blocking the state’s files if there is any government opposing the government at the center. This is not a recent phenomenon, but has been going on since almost 1960. Many governors had taken the oath to overthrow the government in the state. The governor is the envoy of the President in the state, but his position is higher than the Chief Minister, because he has a direct relationship with the President. Whenever there are good or bad incidents in the state or the government becomes unstable, the governor submits his report to the center and on that basis the central government takes a decision considering the overall political situation in the state. If the government in a state is very unstable, the imposition of President’s rule can be done on the recommendation of the Governor. Or the Governor can dismiss the existing government and swear in another government in its place. The state legislature is convened in the state, the Governor delivers an address in the first session every year, the budget is presented to the Governor after it is presented, and all the laws, amendment laws and many ordinances passed in the session do not actually become law unless they are signed by the Governor. If the law passed in the Legislative Assembly is very problematic and has potentially serious consequences, the Governor does not approve the law and it is sent to the Union Home Ministry. The role of the Governor is very important in many such important matters. Taking advantage of this situation, many Governors appointed by the party in power at the Center have been trying to trouble the government as much as possible by taking many decisions such as how to bring the government of another party into trouble if it is in power in the state. This is why it does not always seem like there will be harmony between the Raj Bhavan and the state government. For some reason or the other, there is a conflict between the Governor and the Chief Minister. Not only this, but even if the government is of the same party at the Center and in the state, there is often a conflict between the Chief Minister and the Governor. The Governor often does not agree with the government’s policy and then he conveys his opinion against the government to the Center, from there the conflict between the Governor and the Chief Minister begins. When the same party government is in power at the Centre and in the state and the Governor takes such decisions, then the representatives of the local government raise the issue of what is the need for the Governor? Conflicts between the Governor and the state government are more visible in Tamil Nadu. This is also the case in Kerala to some extent. In West Bengal, conflicts between the Governor and the Chief Minister are seen almost every day. Then these people go to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court gave a historic verdict to the Governor, saying, “We cannot insist on the President to take a decision within a specific time frame.” Therefore, the powers of the Governor have once again remained intact. The bungalow where the Governor lives and has his office is called ‘Raj Bhavan’ and there are such Raj Bhavans in all the states of the country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi renamed the Raj Bhavans as ‘Lok Bhavans’. There is no doubt that his concept behind this is very good. However, it is necessary to pay attention to whether the Raj Bhavans will really become ‘Lok Bhavans’. Because these Raj Bhavans are not open to the general public even today. Then after renaming it ‘Lok Bhavan’, will the Governor hold Janata Darbar for the people every day or even two-three times a week? Will he provide justice to the people? Many questions like this will arise. Earlier, the road in front of the Prime Minister’s residence has been renamed ‘Lok Kalyan Marg’ and the road famous as the historic Rajpath in Delhi has been renamed ‘Kartavya Path’. That is why this issue cannot be resolved by just changing the name, in reality the Governor is also the envoy of the people, until the Governor works in such a way, whether or not the Raj Bhavan is renamed ‘Lok Bhavan’, has no impact on the people. In reality, there needs to be a big change in the overall working method of the Governor. The name change has been improved, but until the working method of the Governor is improved, the Governor will not become a public servant in the Lok Bhavan. Therefore, I do not think that the issue will be resolved by changing the name alone. For this, the post of Governor is also a savior for the people, such work should also be done by the Governor. Therefore, the real meaning of ‘Lok Bhavan’, as intended by the Prime Minister, must be implemented in practice. It is not just about using words to enhance their beauty, but it is important that the concept behind it is reflected in the actions and proceedings of the Governor. Although ‘Raj Bhavan’ has become ‘Lok Bhavan’ today, the real change will happen only when these magnificent buildings are truly open to the public.

Air Quality Situation in Delhi-NCR

Chairing a high-level review meeting on Air Pollution in Delhi NCR today, Union Minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Shri Bhupendra Yadav, asked all concerned State/UT authorities to expedite the on-ground implementation of all decisions taken in previous five meetings, to improve Air Quality in Delhi-NCR. Cabinet Minister for Environment, Forest and Wildlife, Government of NCT of Delhi, Sardar Manjinder Singh Sirsa was present during the meeting.

Reviewing each action-point minutely, Shri Yadav emphasized the need for high-quality implementation of action plans in Delhi-NCR across all identified categories. The areas included accelerated Road Development and Repair, Dust Control by ensuring end-to-end pavements, Construction and Demolition Waste Management, Industry compliance to Emission Standards, Smart Traffic Management, boosting Public Transport, legacy Solid Waste Management, and Greening of open spaces. The Minister requested each stakeholder to prepare detailed Annual Action Plans for the coming year, to control pollution generation at source. He further stressed time-bound execution of the plans, by way of achieving monthly and weekly targets. The year-long roadmaps would ensure proactive planning toward improving air quality in the NCR, he noted. Shri Yadav also directed that on-ground review

meetings would soon be held to ensure that the action plans are being implemented in the right earnest. The meetings, coordinated by the CAQM, would include discussions with Agriculture Departments of Governments of Punjab and Haryana on stubble burning; with Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Development on new initiatives for planned urban development; with local bodies of NCR cities on tackling local contributors of pollution.

During the meeting, issues were taken up one-by-one and the progress was reviewed. On the issue of Industry’s compliance to emission standards in Delhi-NCR, a decision was taken that delinquent units would be handled to encourage them to voluntarily initiate accelerated installation of Online Continuous Emission Monitoring Systems (OCEMS) and Air Pollution Control Devices (APCD). Strict actions would be taken against units failing to comply by 31.12.2025, even leading to closure directions. Further, it was informed that escalations in the market prices of such devices are being closely monitored, so as to not discourage industrial units and delay device installations. Around 2,254 industrial units having high potential for causing pollution like metal, textiles, food/ food processing and other red-category industries have been mandated to install calibrated and verified OCEMS, along with APCDs by 31.12.2025. An SOP for OCEMS installation



tion has been issued, and directions have been given to NCR SPCBs/PCCs for ensuring early installation, it was informed by CPCB.

The Minister reviewed Road Development works, including pothole repairs, and instructed NCR States to strictly adopt time-bound SOPs for completing pending works. App-based monitoring was emphasized to enable real-time citizen feedback and correspond-

ing corrective action by authorities. Shri Yadav emphasized on ensuring quality road construction, adhering to CAQM design framework including end-to-end pavements and proper drainage. Intensive on-ground monitoring of the ongoing works in Delhi need to be conducted, he desired. The Minister further requested the Municipal authorities to expedite deployment of Mechanical

Road Sweeper Machine (MRSMs) at the ground level.

On Traffic Congestion, it was emphasized that 62 identified hotspots in Delhi require urgent action through smart traffic management solutions by Delhi Police, and that short-term measures may be immediately deployed to resolve the traffic issues at the earliest. Further, actions like removal of encroachments and illegal parking, along with special police deployment during peak traffic hours, issuing tenders for Foot-over Bridges, etc. were asked to be fast-tracked. Similar action plans are encouraged for other NCR cities, with the Minister stressing the need for visible, on-ground improvements. The review meeting highlighted the ongoing transition of the Public Transport fleet to electric vehicles, with around 3,400 buses currently in operation and expected to increase to over 5,000 by March next

year. End-to-end connectivity based on passenger load in high population density areas of Delhi-NCR was emphasized. The Minister also called for targeted action against below BS-IV commercial vehicles. It was informed that BS-III and below have been stopped from entering Delhi w.e.f. 01.11.2025. The Minister instructed officials to identify potential Greening Sites across NCR and ensure public participation in mapping and execution. Plantation on degraded forest land, greening of open spaces, and removal of encroachments from urban parks, water bodies, and wetlands was emphasized. Education Departments of NCR States were asked to revive eco-clubs and green-warrior groups, to enhance youth-led greening efforts and promote community conservation. Micro-plans are to be prepared with relevant departments and implemented this winter, continuing for the next five years, ensuring participation of local elected representatives, Shri Yadav desired. The Minister reviewed progress made over the last five meetings, which included a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. The meeting witnessed participation from key stakeholders including senior officers of the Ministry, CAQM, CPCB, Governments of NCT of Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Municipal Commissioners of NCR Cities and other concerned agencies.

PMML Enables Remote Access to Rare Archival Collection for Researchers

The (PMML)—a premier national institution dedicated to preserving and showcasing the legacy of all Prime Ministers of India since Independence—has taken a major step forward in expanding access to its vast archival resources. PMML houses one of the world’s largest collections of rare archival materials, comprising over 25 million documents belonging to more than 1,300 individuals and organisations. These records are regularly consulted by bonafide researchers and scholars studying Modern and Contemporary Indian History. In a landmark initiative, PMML is un-

dertaking a comprehensive digitization project of its rare archival collection, which includes personal papers, correspondence, speeches, diaries, and newspaper articles. This transformative effort ensures long-term preservation of fragile documents while enabling restricted remote access for genuine research scholars. A substantial portion of the frequently accessed material has already been digitized, uploaded, and made available through the newly developed system. A dedicated IT Platform has been created to facilitate remote access to these Digital Archives. Reg-



istered scholars may now submit online requests to view specific archival documents without needing

to visit the PMML premises. Once approved, the requested materials will be securely made available on

the scholar’s desktop for viewing only. The launch of PMML’s Digital Archives marks a significant milestone in leveraging technology to safeguard invaluable historical resources and enhance accessibility for researchers, scholars, and knowledge seekers across the world. Shri Ashwani Lohani, Director, PMML, stated that this initiative reflects the institution’s unwavering commitment to promoting high-quality research and strengthening the study of Modern and Contemporary India by enhancing ease of access to archival materials.

“Rail, Road, Air and Waterways Turn ‘Ashtalakshmi’ Region into a New Engine of India’s Growth”

The Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has emerged as “the grand architect of a new and resurgent Northeast,” transforming a region once neglected for decades into a major driver of India’s growth, connectivity and national pride.

Speaking on the development outcomes achieved over the last decade, Sonowal said the Northeast has transitioned “from the margins of policymaking to the mainstream of national priorities,” reflecting the prime minister’s commitment to infrastructure expansion, economic reform, cultural revival and long-term peace-building.

“The Northeast suffered seven decades of under-representation and underinvestment,” Sarbananda Sonowal said. “Under Modi ji, the region is recognized as the Ashtalakshmi of India — not just a border region but a new engine of national growth. From railway capital connectivity and airports to highways, power, digital networks and inland waterways, the transformation has been historic.”

The Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said connectivity has been the cornerstone of the prime minister’s roadmap. All major gauge conversion work in the region has been completed, with Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Manipur and Mizoram connected to the broad gauge network and goods and passenger trains reaching the region’s interiors for the first time. The Bogibeel rail-cum-road bridge — completed in 2018 — and the commissioning of the Bhaierabi-Sairang link in June 2025 have expanded access across Assam and Mizoram.



Four capital connectivity rail projects — Nagaland, Manipur, Sikkim and Meghalaya — are underway, while the India-Bangladesh Agartala-Akhaura rail link was inaugurated jointly by the prime ministers of both nations in November 2023.

On roads, more than 11,000 km of upgraded national and strategic highways have been taken up in the last decade. Major corridors include the Shillong–Nongstoin-Tura section, the Nechipu–Hoj NH–13 project, and the capital connectivity highways to Kohima, Itanagar and Gangtok, several of which are nearing completion in 2025.

Air connectivity has undergone what Sarbananda Sonowal described as “a revolution.” From nine airports in 2014, the Northeast now has 19 operational airports. Greenfield airports at Pakyong and

Hollongi, along with the upgraded Tezu, Rupsi and Agartala terminals, were operationalized under the UDAN scheme. A network of heliports and water aerodromes has been added to extend links to remote districts.

“Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji, the Northeast has witnessed a historic reversal of decades of neglect.

From rail connectivity reaching state capitals to world-class highways, airports and waterways, the region has emerged as a new engine driving India’s growth. The completion of landmark projects like Bogibeel, the expansion of AIIMS Guwahati, and the rapid pace of road and airport infrastructure demonstrate the scale of transformation underway,” said Sarbananda Sonowal

Sonowal said the Prime Minister

ter Modi’s vision has attracted historic investment to the Northeast. The bio-refinery at Numaligarh, India’s first bamboo-based ethanol plant, has created new income streams for farmers. The Numaligarh Refinery Expansion, costing ₹22,594 crore, has tripled its capacity, positioning the region as a strategic energy hub. The semiconductor assembly and test facility at Jagiroad — a ₹27,000 crore investment — will produce 15 billion chips annually and generate 27,000 jobs, placing the Northeast on the global technology map. Agriculture and organics are central to the region’s development. The Northeast now leads India’s organic value chain, supported by farmer-producer organisations, bamboo industry deregulation and dedicated missions.

The Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said stability in the

Northeast has improved due to peace accords with Bodo, Karbi, Bru and other groups, while AFSPA has been reduced by 75 percent since 2014. “A cultural renaissance is underway,” Sarbananda Sonowal said, noting national recognition for icons such as Bharat Ratna Dr Bhupen Hazarika, the commemoration of Lachit Barphukon, and the inscription of Assam’s Maidams on the UNESCO World Heritage Li.” The Modi decade has unlocked unprecedented economic potential for the Northeast — from the bamboo-based bio-refinery at Numaligarh to the first semiconductor plant at Jagiroad. These are not isolated projects; they reflect a renewed national confidence in our region. Alongside peace accords, cultural revival, and global recognition of icons like Lachit Barphukon and Bhupen Hazarika, we are witnessing a renaissance of identity, pride, opportunity and investment in our land,” said Sarbananda Sonowal

Sonowal said the Prime Minister Modi’s more than 70 visits to the region and consistent ministerial review reflect “governance that shows up where people live.”

Under the Act East Policy, Sonowal said, the Northeast is becoming a logistics and cultural gateway to Southeast Asia, through integrated check posts, border infrastructure and multimodal connectivity linking waterways, highways and rail.

“The story of the Northeast today is the story of a resurgent India,” Sonowal said. “This transformation carries the signature of Prime Minister Modi — a leader who placed faith, focus and future in the hands of the Northeast’s people.”



## Mobile cancer screening van reaches over 5,000 in Thane district

**Thane :** A mobile cancer screening initiative in Thane district has drawn an overwhelming public response, reaching more than 5,000 citizens during a month-long health campaign.

The programme, conducted from November 3 to 29, was designed to strengthen community-level cancer awareness and enable early detection across rural and semi-urban pockets.

The campaign was carried out under the guidance of Thane District Magistrate Dr. Shrikrishna Panchal and Chief Executive Officer Manoj Ranade.

Officials said the initiative reflects a growing emphasis on preventive healthcare and decentralised medical services.

According to district authorities, the objective was twofold: to identify early signs of cancer among vulnerable populations and to ensure timely medical intervention for those showing



symptoms.

Health experts reiterated that early detection plays a crucial role in significantly improving a patient’s chances of successful treatment.

As part of the outreach, a specially equipped diagnostic van travelled across the district, offering free cancer screening to residents.

The mobile unit followed a predetermined schedule, ensuring systematic coverage of multiple villages and localities. The campaign spanned five tehsils—Kalyan, Bhiwandi, Ambarnath, Murbad and

Shahpur—targeting communities that often have limited access to specialised medical services. Screenings were focused on three high-prevalence cancers: oral, breast and cervical.

District Surgeon Dr. Kailash Pawar and District Health Officer Dr. Gangadhar Parge said that the response surpassed expectations, with people turning up in large numbers at each stop. They noted that awareness drives conducted alongside the screenings also played a key role in encouraging participation.

# BMC issues Alert for high tide at night

**Mumbai :** The Brihan-mumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Thursday issued an alert cautioning citizens to avoid the city’s coastline tonight, as Mumbai braces for a high tide expected to reach 4.96 metres at 11.52 pm.

The civic body has advised residents, particularly those in low-lying and coastal areas, to exercise utmost caution. The BMC has issued alerts for the period between December 4 and 7, during which high tides above four metres are anticipated.

Officials emphasised that citizens should remain vigilant, avoid venturing into the sea, and follow safety advisories from life-



guards and local authorities.

The BMC has urged visitors to Chaitya Bhoomi in Dadar and nearby Shivaji

Park to maintain a safe distance from the seashore on Dec 6, the death anniversary of Dr B.R. Ambedkar.

Thousands of Ambedkar followers visit the site each year and pay homage to the architect of the Indi-

an Constitution, whose last rites were performed there in 1956.

To prevent mishaps, disaster management teams and local police have been placed on alert to ensure crowd management and a quick response in case of an emergency.

Despite the high tide warning, Mumbai’s weather remains stable. The city will experience clear skies and dry conditions over the next few days. Temperatures will hover between 33–34°C during the day and 19–20°C at night, with minimal humidity.

No rainfall or weather warnings have been issued by the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

## ED seizes cash, documents during raid in Jamia Islamia Ishatul Uloom

**Mumbai :** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has seized Rs 9 lakh in cash, incriminating documents and multiple digital devices during raids at 12 locations across Nandurbar, Mumbai and other places as part of an ongoing probe into the Jamia Islamia Ishatul Uloom (JIU), an educational trust, the agency said Wednesday.

The searches and raids were carried out under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

According to the agency, preliminary findings show that the trust received about Rs 406 crore in foreign donations between 2014-15

and 2023-24 from donors based in Kuwait, Botswana, the UK, Mauritius, Switzerland, Seychelles, Panama and other jurisdictions.

Officials said the trust allegedly dealt with large amounts in cash and diverted donor funds for purposes not permitted under statutory norms. Officials said that the Seized evidence collected during the ongoing probe into JIU trust indicates alleged misuse of “national research incentives for organisational self-funding”, adding that the trust also received donations from multiple other trusts and NGOs in violation of regulations.



The ED action forms part of a broader investigation by the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) and the Nandurbar Police into alleged systematic FCRA violations, including diversion of foreign funds

originating from countries such as the UAE and Saudi Arabia for non-permitted activities by the trust. The ED action stems from an FIR registered by the Maharashtra Police and a chargesheet filed in April this year by the

Akkalkuwa Police Station.

The police investigation had alleged that several foreign nationals were involved in suspicious financial activities linked to the trust. The investigation also revealed that the associated As-Salam Unani Hospital and Medical College allegedly submitted fake or inflated patient data to obtain government grants and official recognition.

Besides more than 12,000 madrasa students, many of them from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Jharkhand, were admitted in recent years, reflecting an unusual surge in out-of-state enrolments.

## Massive delays and cancellations hit IndiGo at Mumbai Airport

**Mumbai :** Severe disruption was reported at Mumbai’s Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport, as IndiGo faced widespread delays and cancellations triggered by an acute shortage of cabin and cockpit crew. Similar issues were recorded across major airports nationwide. At Mumbai airport alone, about 32 flights—16 departures and 16 arrivals—were cancelled. Across the country, more than 130 IndiGo services were affected. Sources said the carrier cancelled over 70 flights, including several operating from Bengaluru and Mumbai. Separately, 38 IndiGo flights were cancelled from Delhi airport due to technical issues and operational requirements. In an official statement, the airline acknowledged that its operations had been “significantly disrupted across the network for the past two days.” IndiGo apologised to passengers and said it had implemented calibrated adjustments to its schedules to stabilise operations. While it did not specify the total number of cancellations, the

airline confirmed that these measures would continue for at least 48 hours to help restore punctuality. IndiGo attributed the disruptions to multiple factors. A spokesperson cited “unforeseen operational challenges,” including minor technology glitches, winter-related schedule changes, adverse weather, increased aviation-system congestion and the implementation of updated crew rostering rules under (FDTL). These combined issues, the airline said, created a compounding operational burden that was difficult to foresee. IndiGo stated that passengers affected by cancellations were being offered refunds or alternate travel arrangements. The turbulence came a day after a separate technical glitch disrupted check-in systems for several airlines, including Air India. On Tuesday evening, multiple airports experienced check-in delays of at least 45 minutes due to a third-party system failure. Air India confirmed the issue in a post on X at 9:49 p.m., stating that the problem had been resolved.

## Nana Patole tells Fadnavis: Impeach Maha Chief Election Commissioner or else Congress will

**Mumbai :** Senior Congress MLA Nana Patole today asked the Fadnavis government to initiate an impeachment motion against Maharashtra’s Chief Election Commissioner, or else the Congress itself would do so on the very first day of the forthcoming winter session of the state assembly.

“The law is the same for everyone, whether it is for a Supreme Court judge or an Election Commissioner. They cannot go against the Constitution. We have proposed to the Maharashtra government that they should initiate an impeachment motion against the Chief Election Commissioner of the state under Article 243. If the state government does not bring a motion, we will bring an impeachment motion against the State Election Commissioner on the very first day of the forthcoming winter session,” Congress MLA Nana Patole told media persons here.

Patole raised questions about the conduct of local civic body elections by the Maharashtra Election Commissioner.

“The state government may think that our role is political, but should we call it if the criminal is released af-



ter committing the crime? In fact, the role of the Election Commission itself is political. If the state government does not bring impeachment, it will be revealed that the Election Commission and the state government are in cahoots with each other,” the Congress leader said.

“In Gadchiroli, the Election Commission itself asked a tehsildar to change the battery of the EVM. So will EVMs be safe for 18 days? We have serious doubts,” he said.

Patole also demanded that the forthcoming winter session of the Maharashtra assembly must be held for a month.

“Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis himself comes from Vidarbha. When he

was in the opposition, he used to demand that the winter session should last for two months. Now, our demand is that the winter session should last for one month and not two months. Last time, the winter session lasted only for a few days,” Patole added.

Meanwhile, in a related development, senior Congress leader and former Maharashtra Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan today alleged that the Fadnavis government is responsible for the delay in vote counting and release of poll results of the local body elections.

“Due to the court order, local body election results have been delayed till December 21. Due to this, ballot boxes will be in godowns

for the next 16 days. This period is enough for the government to tamper with them,” he remarked.

“The order by the Nagpur bench of the Bombay High Court has exposed how incompetently the Election Commission is working. By postponing the counting of votes for so long, the public’s trust in the entire election process is being eroded. When this case began in court, government lawyers were expected to present their case effectively. If the government had made a proper argument, election results would not have been postponed from December 3 to December 21. But the government failed to do so and now the Election Commission is being blamed,” Chavan said.

“For the last 10 years, the BJP deliberately ignored local body elections. This is a plot to end democracy, and dictatorship has begun. If the people do not wake up, it will simply continue like this. The government and the Election Commission are getting away by blaming each other. Was the government sleeping when the case was being heard in the court?” Chavan told media persons in Satara.

## Nitesh Rane’s remarks spark political, environmental debate

**Mumbai :** Ahead of the upcoming Nashik Kumbh Mela, around 1,800 trees are likely to be cut at Tapovan to construct a Sadhu Gram, a move that has sparked intense political and environmental debate.

The proposal to clear such a large number of trees has drawn immediate criticism from opposition parties, environmental groups, and activists who say the plan will cause irreversible ecological damage.

For many local residents and environmental advocates, Tapovan represents a vital green cover in Nashik, making the felling proposal even more contentious.

As the issue continued to gain traction, the political temperature rose further on Thursday when Minister Nitesh Rane made a provocative statement.

Rane questioned what he called “selective activism,” accusing environmentalists of remaining silent during Bakri Eid despite voicing strong concerns over trees.

“Those who worry about trees — why are they quiet on Bakri Eid? Why don’t they hug goats the way they hug trees?” he said, triggering widespread reactions.

According to Rane, activists display “double standards,” arguing that those who oppose tree cutting never protest animal slaughter during Eid.

“Where does the principle of sarva dharma samabhav disappear then? If trees should live, why not goats?” he



remarked, intensifying the debate.

He went on to claim that Eid sees “large-scale slaughter” and that “blood flows,” yet environmentalists raise no objections or suggest alternatives.

Rane also questioned why no one calls for a “virtual Bakri Eid,” the way symbolic or low-impact celebrations are proposed for environmentally sensitive occasions.

His comments quickly sparked a heated political and social argument, with several activists.

And groups condemning the comparison as misleading and an attempt to communalise an environmental concern.

In the midst of the controversy, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis stepped in to clarify the government’s

position on the proposed tree felling.

Fadnavis emphasised that providing infrastructure and facilities for the lakhs of saints.

And devotees expected at the Kumbh Mela is essential, but so is safeguarding the environment.

He said the government aims to strike a balance between development and ecological responsibility, ensuring that necessary arrangements do not come at unsustainable environmental cost.

The Chief Minister added that some trees will be transplanted, and new saplings will be planted as part of compensatory measures, noting that Tapovan is not an old natural forest but an area where most trees were planted under the Five Lakh Tree Plantation Scheme.

## Former Maharashtra Minister Bharat Rajabhau Bondre passes away at 83

**Buldhana :** Former state minister and senior political leader Bharat Rajabhau Bondre, widely known across Buldhana district as the “water-man”, passed away on Tuesday due to age-related ailments.

He was 83.

Bondre, a prominent figure in the political landscape of Chikhli constituency for several decades, served multiple terms as a legislator. He first entered the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly in 1972 on an Indian National Congress ticket, and subsequently won elections in 1980, 1985 (Congress-I) and 1990, establishing his long-standing influence in the region.

A close associate of Sharad Pawar throughout his career, Bondre held several important portfolios in the state cabinet, including Education, Industry and Irrigation (Water Resources).

His tenure in the Irrigation department saw the initiation and expansion of numerous small and medium-scale projects in Buldhana district.

Major projects such as the Khadakpurna and Jigav irrigation schemes were developed under his leadership, contributing to his reputation as an advocate for water-resource development.

Even after stepping back from



active politics in recent years, Bondre continued to maintain close en-

gagement with irrigation authorities. He regularly followed up on ongoing projects and remained a respected figure among officials in the Water Resources Department.

His death has prompted widespread condolences from supporters and residents of Buldhana district. Many have described him as a development-oriented leader known for his integrity and commitment to public welfare.

Bondre’s passing marks the end of an era in regional water-resource advocacy, leaving numerous irrigation projects and local communities mourning the loss of a leader who shaped their progress for decades.

## Maharaja Yashwantrao Holkar Jayanti celebrated in Pune

**Pune :** A grand programme was held in Pune on Wednesday to mark the 250th birth anniversary of Maharaja Yashwantrao Holkar, the valiant warrior of the Maratha Empire, a pioneer of the freedom struggle, who compelled the British to kneel.

Santosh Shinde, the State spokesperson of Sambhaji Brigade today, said that Maharaja Yashwantrao Holkar blew the trumpet of war against British injustice and fought directly for Swarajya.

In the Battle of Hadapsar, he crushed the Brit-

ish and forced them to flee. His valor was so formidable that even the Peshwas stepped back, he said.

Today is a day to remember this great warrior who shook the British and carved his name in history, he added.

While addressing the gathering Shinde said We once fought the British of that era; today we must fight the modern British — meaning injustice, inequality, and mental slavery. Awakening society with the thoughts.

And ideals of Yashwantrao Holkar is the need of

the hour, he added.

In those days, battles were fought with swords against the British — today, we must fight the modern British with ideas, intellect, and unity.

We must all come together against injustice, corruption, casteism, division, and mental slavery, he said in a release.

During the program at Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Holkar Garden, a floral garland was offered to the image of Maharaja Yashwantrao Holkar by PMC Assistant Commissioner Surekha Bhanghe.



## Akshay Kumar cheers on niece Simar Bhatia as she steps into Bollywood with Ikkis: “Safar mushkil hai...”

**Mumbai** :Akshay Kumar has extended a warm welcome to his niece Simar Bhatia as she prepares to make her Bollywood debut with the upcoming film Ikkis.

Simar, the daughter of Akshay’s sister Alka Bhatia, is all set to share the screen with Agastya Nanda in what is being positioned as one of the most anticipated releases of the year.

The makers recently unveiled the film’s first romantic track, Sitaare, sung by the much-loved Arijit Singh, giving audiences an early glimpse of the fresh pairing.

Along with the song, Simar’s first-look poster was also released, showcasing her in a poised and confident avatar that has already attracted attention online.

Taking to social media, Akshay Kumar penned an emotional note for his niece, expressing both pride and affection as she enters the world of cinema.

He reflected on their journey together, writing about holding her as a baby and now witnessing her transformation into an actor ready to face the camera.

Calling her evolution

and allowing the universe to align with their intentions, a philosophy he hopes Simar will embrace.

Towards the end of his message, Akshay’s tone turned even more affectionate as he told Simar he was immensely proud of her.

He reminded her that while the world was about to discover Simar Bhatia, she had always been a star in his eyes.

“Go shine! Jai Mahadev,” he concluded, sending his blessings and encouragement as she steps into her new journey.

In Ikkis, Simar plays the female lead opposite Agastya Nanda, marking a major launch for her in a film that carries both emotional depth and historical significance.

The movie is a war drama based on the life of Second Lieutenant Arun Khetarpal, the young Param Vir Chakra awardee remembered for his extraordinary bravery during the 1971 war.

Directed by acclaimed filmmaker Sriram Raghavan, Ikkis is set for a theatrical release on December 25, adding to the festive slate of year-end films.

## Yami Gautam calls out Bollywood’s growing ‘paid hype’ culture; Hrithik Roshan backs her bold statement

**Mumbai** : Actor Yami Gautam on Thursday urged members of the film industry to unite against what she described as the rising trend of “paid hype” ahead of a film’s release.

Sharing her concerns on X, Yami said the practice — which she claimed includes both manufactured praise and coordinated negativity — has grown into a worrying pattern that could harm the long-term health of the film ecosystem.

She wrote that she had wanted to speak about the matter for a long time but felt compelled to finally address it because the trend has now become widespread.

According to Yami, certain entities demand payment in the name of “marketing” to generate positive buzz, and if not paid, allegedly threaten to create negative narratives even before a film hits theatres.

Calling the system exploitative, she wrote that this arrangement felt like “a kind of extortion,” one that could distort how audiences perceive films and artists.

She added that because such services are easily ac-



cessible to anyone, they can be misused either to artificially hype a project or to target another film or actor with negativity.

Yami warned that normalizing such behaviour could have severe consequences for the entire industry, noting that it would ultimately undermine genuine talent and honest filmmaking.

She cautioned that if the truth behind many such orchestrated “successes” of recent years were revealed, it “would not be a pretty picture for many,” suggesting that the practice has already caused irreversible damage.

The actor also contrasted the situation with the southern film industries, praising their stronger sense of unity

said, works with honesty and passion.

She noted that her husband and his team had poured immense effort into their upcoming project, and she hoped India would be proud of the final film.

At the same time, she said she was motivated by her concern for the larger industry, wishing to see Indian cinema achieve its fullest creative potential without being clouded by artificial noise.

Concluding her post, Yami urged the fraternity to preserve the joy and purity of filmmaking, saying the audience should be free to form opinions without manipulation.

Supporting her view, Hrithik Roshan responded to her post and said that paid hype damages journalism itself by suppressing authentic opinions.

Hrithik added that both artists and journalists lose their freedom when such practices take over, noting that without truthful expression and constructive criticism, “what job satisfaction can they — or any of us — hope for?”

## Shabana Azmi, Kabir Bedi to star in true-story legal drama ‘USA v Raj’

**Mumbai** : Acclaimed Indian actor Shabana Azmi has officially joined the cast of USA v Raj, a biographical legal drama that brings to screen the turbulent and emotional journey of Dr. Raj Bothra. The update was first reported by Variety.

The film centres on Dr. Bothra’s real-life ordeal, which saw him face 54 federal charges in the United States at the age of 79. His case drew widespread attention due to the sheer scale of the accusations and the prolonged duration of the proceedings.Dr. Bothra spent over 1,300 days in incarceration, repeatedly denied bail despite his age and deteriorating health. His eventual acquittal came in June 2022 when a unanimous jury cleared him of all charges.

According to Variety, Shabana Azmi will step into the role of Pammi Bothra, the steadfast matriarch who held her family together during the relentless legal battle. Her character is described as a powerful emotional force within the narrative.Veteran actor Kabir Bedi has been cast as Dr. Raj Bothra, bringing gravitas to the central character. His portrayal is expected to capture the vulnerabilities and resilience of a man fighting to reclaim his dignity.Actor Emily Shah joins the cast as Sonia Bothra, the couple’s daughter. Sonia is depicted as a pivotal support system for her father, standing by him throughout the exhausting trial and public scrutiny.

## Tara Sutaria gets candid about privacy and her personal life: “I share what I’m comfortable with”

**Mumbai** : In a candid conversation with Hindustan Times, actor Tara Sutaria opened up about the challenges and realities of living life in the public eye. Ever since her debut in Student of the Year 2, Tara has been a constant subject of media attention, but she maintains one unwavering conviction — her personal space is sacred.

Reflecting on her journey so far, Tara admitted that navigating the limelight hasn’t always been easy. However, she has developed the ability to rise above public scrutiny and focus on what truly matters. “I navigate the scrutiny and attention that comes with fame with grace and perspective. I’ve learned not to take everything personally and to focus on the love, not the noise,” she said.

For Tara, fame comes with both glamour and pressure, but she has learned where to draw the line. When paparazzi flashes and public speculation become overwhelming, the actor turns inward and leans on the people she trusts the most.

“I just step back, disconnect, and return to my core — my family and close friends keep me grounded and sane,” she shared, emphasising the importance of having a strong support

system while working in a highly visible industry.

Despite frequent conversations and media chatter surrounding her relationship with Veer Pahariya, Tara chooses silence over constant clarification. She stressed that she prefers to keep certain aspects of her life away from public discourse.

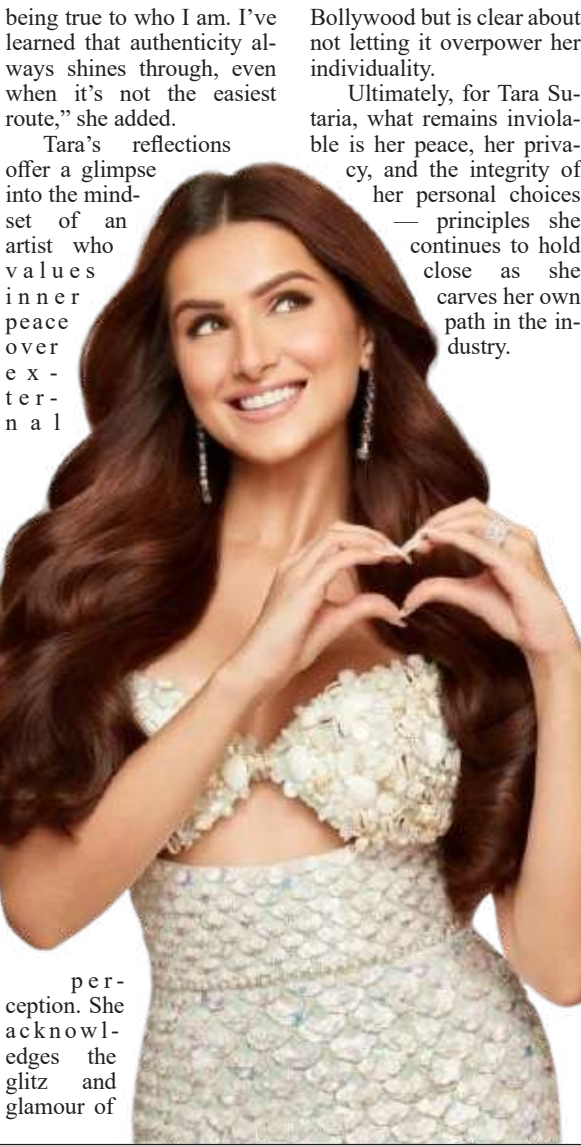
“I’m very protective of my personal life. I share what I’m comfortable with, and I keep the rest sacred,” she explained, reiterating that personal boundaries are non-negotiable for her.

Shifting to her professional journey, Tara expressed a measured and grounded perspective. She says that she is in no rush to chase rapid career milestones or jump into back-to-back projects.

“I want my choices to reflect quality and honesty. I don’t want to rush. I want to grow with every project I take on,” she said, highlighting her desire for thoughtful and meaningful work.

The actor also spoke about the pressures that often accompany life in Bollywood, from maintaining appearances to fitting into industry expectations. For Tara, the key lies in staying authentic.

“I handle them all by



## Angelina Jolie leads mafia-style thriller ‘Sunny,’ production underway

**Mumbai** : Academy Award winner Angelina Jolie has officially begun production on Sunny, a dark and gripping thriller directed by Eva Sørhaug (Tokyo Vice, Yellowjackets), according to Deadline. The film is being produced under the banners of Gramercy Park Media, A Higher Standard, and Nickel City Pictures.

Described as a modern take in the tradition of classic mafia dramas, Sunny centres on a fierce female gangster who must protect her sons — and herself — from an abusive drug kingpin. When a devastating incident pushes her past breaking point, she is left with only hours to orchestrate their escape and ensure their survival.

The screenplay is penned by William Day Frank, based on a story he developed alongside Sørhaug. The project brings together an impressive roster of producers, including Gramercy Park Media’s Nathan Klingher, Jolie herself, Nickel City Pictures’ Mark Fasano, and A Higher Standard’s Jeffrey Greenstein, in association with Choice Films.Sørhaug also serves as an executive producer on the film. A Higher Standard is handling worldwide sales, with WME Independent co-representing domestic rights.Sharing insight into the scale and intensity of the project, Nickel City’s Mark Fasano praised Jolie’s performance, calling her “a tour-de-force.” He added, “People are going to be

shocked by what she brings with this riveting character. This violent world that Eva and Angelina have crafted is grounded in survival and family, led by a mother doing anything and everything within her power to protect her two boys.”

Echoing the sentiment, producer Nathan Klingher highlighted Jolie’s deep creative investment in the role. “Angelina has made this role uniquely her own. Strong, character-driven thrillers like this are rare, and the attention to detail that she and Eva have brought to the film is impressive to watch,” he said.Sunny marks another intense performance-driven project for Jolie, who recently earned Golden Globe and Critics Choice Award nominations for portraying opera icon Maria Callas in Pablo Larraín’s Maria.

Jolie’s upcoming slate remains equally diverse, including Alice Winocour’s Couture, Marc Forster’s comedy Anxious People, and The Initiative, a spy thriller that reunites her with Mr. & Mrs. Smith director Doug Liman. She is represented by WME and Johnson, Shapiro, Slawett & Kole.Director Eva Sørhaug, known for her bold storytelling, first drew global attention with her psychological thriller 90 Minutes, which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival. She has since expanded her footprint in international television with projects such as AMC’s Talamasca.

## Scorsese joins forces with Billions’ creators for Las Vegas Casino

**Mumbai** : Marking the 30th anniversary of his landmark film “Casino”, Martin Scorsese is set to return to the glittering yet perilous world of Las Vegas gambling, joining forces with “Billions” co-creator Brian Koppelman and David Levien on a newly greenlit drama series.

The pair will serve as showrunners and writers on the eight-part production, crafting a contemporary tale of power, peril and manipulation within the city’s fiercely competitive casino industry, reports DEADLINE.The eight-episode drama is set in the high-stakes, sharp-elbowed present-day Las Vegas casino business, which is a modernised but still dangerous version of the legendary city. At the centre of it stands Robert “Bobby Red” Redman, president of the hottest hotel casino in town, who has to make some long odds moves to try and secure his position and take more ground.

Koppelman and Levi-



en executive produce with their producing partner Paul Schiff (Rushmore) alongside Scorsese and his Sikelia Productions, Julie Yorn and Rick Yorn for Expanded Media, and former Billions writer-producer Beth Schacter, with Kerry Orent (The Better Sister) serving as co-executive producer. Its genesis can be traced to an initial concept developed by Julie and Rick Yorn with

Scorsese, following earlier discussions about potential long-form storytelling ventures. Early drafts were a period narrative, but the trajectory shifted dramatically when Koppelman and Levien proposed a contemporary reimagining of the casino world, a pitch that swiftly catalysed the series’ commissioning.While sharing a setting with Scorsese’s 1995 movie Casino, the Net-

flix series is not related in any way to the film, which is set in 1973 and stars Robert De Niro, Sharon Stone and Joe Pesci. Scorsese also explored casinos/gambling in another period piece, his HBO Boardwalk Empire. Meanwhile, Koppelman and Levien have previously tackled the arena in contemporary setting with two movies they wrote, Ocean’s Thirteen and Rounders.

## Rashmika Mandanna calls out AI-Driven morphed content targeting women: “Choose responsibility over recklessness”

**Mumbai** : The rising misuse of Artificial Intelligence to morph and generate fake and explicit images of film personalities has sparked growing concern across the Indian entertainment industry. What began as scattered instances has now escalated into a disturbing pattern, forcing celebrities and digital-rights activists to demand urgent action.

Several actors have spoken out against this alarming trend in recent months, and now Rashmika Mandanna has joined the chorus with a strong and unequivocal message. On Wednesday, the actress took to her X account to express her outrage and urge society to confront the growing menace of AI-generated fake content.

Calling for greater accountability and responsibility in the handling of such technology, Rashmika stressed that the ethical use of AI is no longer optional but necessary. She described the situation as a “moral decline” that must be addressed before it causes deeper damage to individuals and society at large.

The actress highlighted how the Internet has increasingly become a space where manipulated visuals can be passed off as real with alarming ease. This blurring of truth, she warned, undermines trust and exposes individuals—particularly women—to severe emotional and reputational harm.

Referring specifically to the misuse of AI tools to create vulgar, offensive and harmful content targeting women, Rashmika shared a powerful line: “When truth can be manufactured, discernment becomes our greatest defense.”

She further elaborat-

ed that while AI itself is a powerful tool for progress, its distortion for creating obscenity reveals “a deep moral decline in certain people.” She reminded her followers



that the digital world is no longer a reliable reflection of reality. Instead, it has become “a canvas where anything can be fabricated.”

Urging users to adopt a sense of responsibility, Rashmika encouraged people to choose integrity over recklessness when using technology. “Let us rise above misuse and use AI to build a more dignified and progressive society,” she wrote.The actress also stressed the need for strong punitive measures

against offenders. “If people cannot act like humans, then strict & unforgiving punishment must be served to them,” she asserted, calling for tighter laws and enforcement against those who weaponize technology.

Mandanna’s statement comes amid a surge in deepfake controversies, with several female celebrities becoming victims of AI-generated abusive content. Industry insiders say the growing sophistication of these tools has made detecting fake material increasingly difficult, intensifying the need for legal safeguards and public awareness.

Her message adds to the mounting demand within Bollywood and the digital community for clearer legislation and technology-driven solutions to curb such digital crimes. Many argue that proactive measures, combined with ethical vigilance, are the only way to contain the misuse of AI.On the work front, Rashmika Mandanna is gearing up for the release of Cocktail 2, the sequel to the 2012 hit film Cocktail.



# Shami, Abishek, Easwaran star for Bengal in Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy

**Hyderabad** : Bengal produced a commanding all-round performance to out-play Services by seven wickets and register their fourth win of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy Elite campaign on Thursday.

With this victory, Bengal strengthened their position in Elite Group C, taking their tally to 16 points after five matches—a strong indicator of their consistent form this season.

The match, held at the Gymkhana Ground, saw Bengal dominate with both ball and bat, leaving little room for Services to stage a fightback.

Pacer Md Shami was the standout performer, delivering a fiery spell that rattled the Services batting lineup and set the tone for Bengal's comfortable win.

Shami picked up four wickets for just 13 runs, showcasing exceptional



control and variation, and was deservedly named the Player of the Match.

His opening burst, supported by disciplined bowling from the rest of the attack, ensured that Services struggled to accelerate despite occasional resistance.

Akash Deep complemented Shami brilliantly, claiming three wickets for 27

runs and maintaining consistent pressure throughout his spell. Writtick Chatterjee also made valuable contributions with figures of 2 for 32, while Pradipta Pramanik chipped in with one wicket for 38, helping Bengal restrict the opposition effectively.

Put into bat, Services were bowled out for 165 in

18.2 overs, a total that looked below par considering the batting-friendly conditions on offer. In reply, Bengal's chase was built on a stunning second-wicket partnership between Abhimanyu Easwaran and Abishek Porel. The duo stitched together a superb 93-run stand, ensuring that Bengal remained well ahead of the required

run rate right from the early overs.

Easwaran anchored the innings with a fluent 58 off 37 deliveries, displaying excellent shot selection and composure under pressure.

At the other end, Abishek Porel played a scintillating knock of 56 from just 29 balls, taking on the bowlers with confidence and maintaining Bengal's momentum.

After their dismissals, Yuvraj Keshwani (36 not out off 19) provided the finishing touches with an energetic cameo that kept the chase firmly on track. Akash Deep, already impressive with the ball, added a flourish with the bat as well, remaining unbeaten on 14 off just five deliveries. Bengal eventually crossed the target with ease, finishing at 167 for 3 in 15.1 overs to seal a dominant win and continue their strong run in the tournament.

# Second round concludes in National Women's Chess Championship at Durgapur

**Durgapur** : The second round of the prestigious 51st National Women's Chess Championship, 2025 concluded on Thursday at the Sidhu Kanhu Stadium here, where the country's top women chess players are battling it out for national glory.

A total of 139 players from across 27 states and 3 affiliated units of the All India Chess Federation (AICF) are participating in this premier national event.

The tournament features an impressive field of 26 titled players including 7 Women Grandmasters (WGMs), underlining the elite standard of competition.

After the completion of two rounds, a tightly contested race has emerged, with 26 players jointly leading the standings with a perfect score of 2 points.



The top seed, Arpita Mukherjee of West Bengal, has also made a steady start to the championship.

The tournament was inaugurated on Wednesday by state panchayat minister Pradip Majumder in presence of Grandmaster and Arjuna Awardee Dibyendu Barua.

Along with several other distinguished dignitaries and officials.

The championship will be played over 11 rounds, and carries a substantial total prize fund of Rs.30 lakhs, making it one of the most significant women's chess events in the country. With several intense rounds ahead.

The championship promises thrilling contests as India's finest women players compete for the national crown.

# Flamengo claims eighth Brazilian Serie A crown

**Rio De Janeiro** : Samuel Lino scored first-half winner as Flamengo clinched its eighth Brazilian Serie A title with 1-0 home victory over Ceara.

Lino broke the deadlock in the 37th minute at Maracana Stadium when he ran onto Jorge Carrascal's through ball and fired low past goalkeeper Bruno Ferreira on Wednesday.

The visitors controlled only quarter of possession and had just one shot on target as Flamengo moved five points clear of second-placed Palmeiras to secure the title with one matchday to spare.

"It was tough to find scoring opportunities tonight because they gave us very little space," Lino told reporters after the match.

"I won title here with Flamengo in the Rio under-20 championship and today I'm part of this team that has won the league at the Maracana. I have feeling of gratitude," the former Atletico Madrid and Valencia winger added.

The result came just four days after Flamengo secured the Copa Libertadores title - South America's premier club trophy - by beating Brazilian rivals Palmeiras in the final.

Flamengo has now won eight major trophies in the past seven years, including three Copa Libertadores crowns, three Brazilian Serie A titles and two Copa do Brasil triumphs.



The Rio de Janeiro club previously won Brazil's Serie A in 1980, 1982, 1983, 1992, 2009, 2019, 2020 and 2025.

Elsewhere in Brazil's top flight on Wednesday, Neymar scored three second-half goals as Santos eased relegation fears with [Ceara] 3-0 away win over Juventude.

The former Barcelona and Paris Saint-Germain star put his side ahead when his first-time effort flew into the top-left corner after taking deflection.

He doubled the lead just after the hour by combining with Igor Vinicius before firing into the far corner from

[Ceara] tight angle.

Neymar then converted from the penalty spot after Lautaro Diaz was pulled down by Marcos Paulo on the edge of the six-yard box.

Santos now has 44 points and is two points clear of the relegation zone ahead of the final match of the season against Cruzeiro at home on Sunday.

In other Brazilian top-flight fixtures on Wednesday, Palmeiras won 3-0 at Atletico Mineiro, Bahia prevailed 2-0 at home to Sport, Sao Paulo cruised to 3-0 home win over Internacional and Fortaleza overcame Corinthians 2-1 at home.

# Root's ton anchors England as Starc rips through top order

**Brisbane** : Joe Root's magnificent unbeaten 135, his maiden Test century on Australian soil, powered England to a fighting 325 for 9 at stumps on Day 1 of the second Ashes Test at The Gabba on Thursday.

It was a dramatic day that ebbed and flowed relentlessly, defined by Root's class, Mitchell Starc's six-wicket burst and a late-hour counterattack from Jofra Archer that lifted England past the 300-run mark.

England had earlier won the toss and elected to bat, hoping for early stability, but those plans were quickly dismantled by Starc's new-ball brilliance.

Starc struck in his opening over, trapping Ben Duckett, and then removed Ollie Pope soon after, leaving England shaken at a precarious 5 for 2 within the first three overs.

The Gabba crowd sensed the possibility of an early collapse, but Zak Crawley and Joe Root dug in with admirable resolve to halt Australia's charge.

The pair rebuilt the in-



nings through a composed 117-run partnership, mixing caution with controlled aggression to frustrate the Australian bowlers.

Crawley, in particular, looked in sublime touch, driving confidently and pulling with authority on his way to a fluent 76 before Michael Neser ended his stay with an under-edge to the keeper.

Root, meanwhile, batted with a characteristic blend of patience and flair, raising his fifty with a pull off Brendan Doggett and navigating through a couple of close review scares. As the day progressed, Root began to assert control, unfurling his trademark late cuts, straight drives and delicate clips that repeat-

edly pierced the infield.

He moved into the 90s with back-to-back boundaries off Doggett and brought up his first century in Australia with a flick to deep mid-wicket off Scott Boland, drawing a standing ovation from teammates and thunderous applause from the Barmy Army.

However, England struggled to build partnerships around him. Harry Brook's promising 31 was cut short when he edged Starc to Steve Smith at slip, ending another promising stand. Ben Stokes was the next to depart, run out after backing up too far for a non-existent single as Josh Inglis produced a sharp direct hit

that shattered England's momentum once again.

Jamie Smith's stumps were rattled by Boland shortly after, and Will Jacks edged an angling delivery from Starc to Smith, leaving the lower order exposed.

Starc returned for a fiery third spell and made immediate impact, removing Gus Atkinson and Brydon Carse in successive overs, with wicketkeeper Alex Carey completing two superb diving catches behind the stumps. With six wickets for 71 runs, Starc reinforced his reputation as a master of the pink ball, troubling England throughout the day with pace, swing and bounce.

Just as Australia neared the close with dominance, Jofra Archer launched a stunning counterattack, smashing three sixes and two fours in a 26-ball 32 that shifted the momentum once more. Root joined the late scoring spree, even unfurling a cheeky reverse scoop for six over third man, and combined with Archer to push England past 300 before stumps.

# Bengal Super League set to commence from Dec 14

**Kolkata** : The Bengal Super League (BSL) is poised to usher in a new chapter in Bengal's footballing landscape as it officially kicks off on December 14, bringing with it a renewed spirit of competition and community engagement.

Spearheaded by Shrachi Sports, the league aims to elevate grassroots and semi-professional football by offering

a high-calibre platform for emerging athletes across the state.

With a vision to strengthen Bengal's sporting ecosystem, the Bengal Super League promises high-intensity matches, rising talent and an electrifying atmosphere that celebrates Bengal's deep-rooted passion for the beautiful game.

"The Bengal Super League is not just a tournament;

it is a movement. Our aim is to spotlight Bengal's extraordinary footballing talent and create a world-class platform where local heroes can rise, inspire and redefine the future of the sport in our state. BSL is all about passion, competitiveness and the unifying force of football and we are proud to bring this vision to life", said Rahul Todi, Managing Director, Shrachi Sports.

The inaugural season will officially begin on December 14 at the District Sports Association Stadium, Malda from 4 pm, featuring a fresh and promising lineup of newly formed teams built for the league's first edition. Among the participating sides are Sundarban Bengal Auto FC, North 24 Parganas FC, Howrah-Hooghly Warriors, FC Medinipur, Burdwan Blasters, Kopa Tigers

Birbhum, JHR Royal City FC Malda [Murshidabad and Northbengal United FC. Though these teams are making their competitive debut, they bring together a compelling mix of experienced players from platforms such as the Indian Super League, I-League, Calcutta Football League and Subroto Cup, alongside talented youngsters scouted from across Bengal.

# Olympic flame for 2026 Winter Games handed over to Italy in Athens

**Athens** : Greece on Thursday held the Olympic flame handover ceremony for the 2026 Milan-Cortina Olympic Winter Games at the historic Panathenaic Stadium here. The flame was carried into the stadium by world wrestling champion Georgios Kougioumtzidis, who then passed it to Italy's Olympic champion Jasmine Paolini and cyclist Filippo Ganna, symbolizing the long-standing ties between Greece, the birthplace of the Olympic Games, and Italy, host nation of the upcoming Winter Olympics. World water polo champion Eleni Xenaki then received the

flame and, together with her teammates from Greece's national team, lit the ceremonial cauldron inside the marble stadium, known as Kallimarmaro. In his remarks, Isidoros Kouvelos, president of the Hellenic Olympic Committee, highlighted the symbolic value of the ceremony and Greece's continuing role as guardian of Olympic traditions. Giovanni Malago, president of the organizing committee for the 2026 Winter Olympics, thanked Greece for safeguarding the Olympic spirit and noted that preparations in Italy were moving forward.

# Netherlands dominate again as Chile keep their hopes alive on a thrilling Day 3 in Santiago

**Santiago (Chile)** : Day 3 of the FIH Hockey Women's Junior World Cup City of Santiago 2025 was defined by the supremacy of the Netherlands, who once again delivered an outstanding performance with an 8-0 win over Japan to underline their status as leading title contenders, with 18 goals scored and none conceded so far.

The United States also maintained their strong form with a solid 4-0 victory against Korea, while Germany collected a second consecutive win by defeating India 3-1.

The day's biggest emotion came in the closing match, as hosts Chile ignited celebrations in the stands with a dramatic 1-0 victory over Malaysia that keeps them alive in Pool A ahead of a decisive clash with Japan on Friday.

New Zealand and Uruguay produced the most entertaining draw of the day, a

3-3 result that leaves the battle in their pool wide open, while the programme had opened with Ireland's 4-1 win over Namibia, in which the European side controlled proceedings from the start.

Ireland vs Namibia (Full-Time Score: 4-1)

Ireland took the initiative from the start on the synthetic surface of the Centro Deportivo de Hockey Césped at the National Stadium, generating six circle entries in the first quarter and opening the scoring in the 1st minute through Hollai Quinn.

Namibia tried to hold a compact block, but Ireland extended their lead in the second quarter: Quinn struck again in the 16th minute and Milla Fulton added the 3-0 in the 18th minute, during

a phase in which the Europeans put together two penalty corner sequences that kept the game inside the Namibian 23 metres.

After half-time, Ireland maintained controlled build-up and reached 4-0 beyond the midway point of the third quarter, when Maia McCourt finished off another phase of high circulation. Namibia produced their best attacking spell in the final stages, earning two consecutive penalty corners and pulling one back in the 58th minute through Anthea Coetzee.

In the closing minutes, Ireland managed their advantage with a compact structure inside their own 23 and limited Namibia's circle entries through to the final whistle.

Team captain Amy Handcock said, "We're happy with our overall performance, we would have liked to not compete towards the end, but overall, we're really happy."

India vs Germany (Full-Time Score: 1-3)

Germany seized the initiative from the start, producing six circle entries in the

first quarter and opening the scoring in the 4th minute with a penalty stroke converted by Lena Frerichs.

India responded with two consecutive penalty corner attempts, but were unable to generate effective shots. In the second quarter, Germany extended their territorial dominance with twelve circle entries and another stroke opportunity in the 29th minute, which on this occasion was not converted.

India tried to counter through long transitions, but struggled to sustain possession in the attacking third.

After the break, Germany kept their high press and forced India to drop deep inside their own 23 by winning four consecutive penalty corners in the early stages of the third quarter.

In the final phase, Germany widened the gap with a field goal from Annika Schönhoff and, a few minutes later, Martina Reisenegger made it 3-0 after another set-piece sequence.

India reduced the deficit three minutes from time, when Hina Bano scored following their third penalty corner sequence in what was their most productive attacking spell of the match.

Germany managed the closing minutes with a compact structure and controlled outlets, securing top spot in the pool with back-to-back victories.

Player of the Match Johanna Hachenberg said, "I think our performance was good, but we can do it better because sometimes we had a rollercoaster game. We need to keep our level through the whole match, but we're happy to win today."

New Zealand vs Uruguay (Full-Time Score: 3-3)

New Zealand started the match with five circle entries in the first quarter, but it was Uruguay who opened the scoring in the 9th minute, as Valentina Luis finished off

their first penalty corner sequence.

The Oceania side levelled at 1-1 in the 14th minute through Greer Findlay from a set play. The pattern continued in the second quarter: Uruguay regained the lead in the 17th minute with a deflection by Sofia Trigo after two consecutive PCs and stretched the score to 3-1 in the 26th minute, when Melina Haidukowski converted again from a penalty corner.

New Zealand reduced the deficit to 3-2 in the 20th minute thanks to a drag-flick from Niamh McKenzie, leaving a 3-2 half-time score after a phase marked by heavy activity from set pieces.

On the restart, both teams registered just one circle entry each in the third quarter, with Uruguay protecting their lead through a mid-block and good control of transitions, while New Zealand looked for access



from the flanks to regain presence in the final third.

In the last quarter, New Zealand increased their territorial pressure, generated four consecutive circle entries and finally equalised 3-3 in the 58th minute when Georgie Shoter scored from a penalty corner.

Uruguay closed the game by protecting their own 23 in the final seconds to secure the point and second place in Pool F.

Uruguay's Player of the Match, Silvina Bonaudi, said, "It was a very tough match, we were ahead for most of the game and the end was very tight. The draw leaves us with a good overall

balance and now we are waiting for the United States result to see where we finish in the pool."

Korea vs United States (Full-Time Score: 0-4)

The United States imposed themselves from the very beginning, recording ten circle entries in the first quarter and applying constant pressure on the Korean defence.

The opening goal arrived in the 10th minute, when Mary Adams converted from a penalty corner to make it 1-0.

In the second quarter, Andrea Bradley's team kept their territorial control, added six more circle entries.



BSE Sensex		Nifty 50		Nifty 500		Nifty Next 50		Nifty 100		Nifty Bank		Nifty Midcap 100	
Close	Percent change	Close	Percent change	Close	Percent change	Close	Percent change	Close	Percent change	Close	Percent change	Close	Percent change
85,265.32	0.19%	26,017.10	0.12%	23,724.25	0.034%	68,560.80	0.23%	26,557.00	0.19%	59,288.70	-0.10%	60,299.80	-0.03%
Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open	Previous close	Open
85,106.81	84,987.56	25,986.00	25,981.85	23,716.30	23,718.10	68,400.85	68,445.60	26,506.10	26,505.40	59,348.25	59,287.10	60,208.85	60,368.45
High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
85,487.21	85,487.21	26,098.25	25,938.95	23,820.45	23,680.25	68,807.00	68,345.40	26,627.45	26,471.40	59,548.70	59,062.15	60,618.95	60,208.85

## Top Gainers

Company	Current	% Gain
TCS	3,227.40	1.49
SBI Life Insura	2,001.90	1.48
Tech Mahindra	1,560.40	1.21
HUL	2,460.90	0.53
Infosys	1,596.00	1.10

## Top Losers

Company	Current	%Loss
Interglobe Avi	5,464.50	-2.34
Hindalco	810.90	-0.66
Eternal	296.20	-0.52
Maruti Suzuki	15,981.00	-0.63
HDFC Bank	999.10	-0.14

## Commodities

Commodity	Price	Change (%)
Gold Dec 05	127,287.00	-545.00 -0.43
Silver Dec 05	174,676.00	-3,617.00 -2.03
Crudeoil Dec 18	5,339.00	-17.00 -0.32
Naturalgas Dec 26	450.40	0.40 0.09

# Stock markets bounce back after 4 days of decline; Sensex climbs 158 points

**Mumbai** : Snapping a four-day losing streak, benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty recovered on Thursday, supported by renewed buying interest in technology and IT counters.

The rebound lifted market sentiment after several sessions of weakness, driven largely by global uncertainties and continuous foreign fund outflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rose 158.51 points, or 0.19 per cent, to close at 85,265.32, marking a modest but encouraging recovery for investors.

During intraday trade, the index had climbed as much as 380.4 points, or 0.44 per cent, touching a high of 85,487.21 before paring some gains toward the close.

The broader NSE Nifty also moved higher, adding 47.75 points, or 0.18 per cent, to end at 26,033.75, reflecting improved buying across select large-cap stocks.

This rebound came after the Sensex had slipped around 613



points, or 0.72 per cent, and the Nifty had dropped nearly 230 points, or 0.8 per cent, over the previous four consecutive sessions.

Market analysts attributed Thursday's upmove primarily to strength in IT stocks, which outperformed amid improved global cues and bargain hunting

by investors.

Among the major Sensex gainers were Tata Consultancy Services, Tech Mahindra, Infosys and HCL Tech, all of which logged noticeable gains as market participants rotated back into defensives and export-oriented plays.

Bharti Airtel, Sun Pharma,

Bharat Electronics and Trent also featured among the top performers, offering additional support to the benchmark indices.

On the flip side, Maruti Suzuki, Eternal, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Titan ended as the notable laggards, capping the overall market gains.

## ONGC, Petronet LNG Ld execute 15-years ethane unloading, storage and handling services binding agreement

**Bhubaneswar** : Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) Limited and Petronet LNG Limited (PLL) have entered into a 15-Years Ethane Unloading, Storage and Handling (USH) Services Binding Term Sheet (commencing between October – December 2028 and ending on the 15th anniversary of the commencement date).

PLL is developing ethane unloading, storage and handling (USH) facilities with an ethane storage tank capacity of approx. 1,70,000 Cubic Meters at Dahej, Gujarat.

PLL is also constructing a unique third jetty at Dahej which will be capable of handling Ethane and Propane in addition to LNG.

As per the term sheet, ONGC shall reserve capacity of approximately 600 KTPA at PLL's Ethane storage and handling facilities at Dahej, Gujarat. PLL shall receive, store and handle Ethane

sourced and imported by ONGC/its subsidiary or affiliate(s) at Dahej, Gujarat and re-deliver Ethane to ONGC at the Delivery Point.

The term sheet shall form the basis for definitive agreements between the parties. As per the commitments under the binding term sheet, PLL is expected to earn a gross revenue of about ₹5,000 crore over the total contract duration of 15 years.

The transaction under the said term sheet shall commence from FY 2028-2029. It represents a significant milestone in PLL's strategic vision to develop and offer ethane import infrastructure to third parties, thereby expanding its business portfolio beyond LNG and strengthening its position in India's petrochemical and energy value chain.

PLL's under-construction unique third jetty will facilitate unloading, storage and handling ethane, propane and LNG at Dahej.

## Electricity demand declines 0.3 per cent in Nov, marking second consecutive month of degrowth: CRISIL

**New Delhi** : Electricity demand declined 0.3 percent year-on-year in November, marking the second consecutive month of degrowth, says a report released by credit rating agency, CRISIL on Thursday.

Lower temperatures cooled power demand by an estimated 0.3 percent to 123 billion units (BUs) in November compared with 124 BUs a year ago.

This comes after a nearly 6 percent on-month degrowth in October, the report notes.

Among others, Madhya Pradesh logged an 11 percent decline in demand due to severe cold wave conditions, while Rajasthan saw demand dip by 7 percent due to cold weather, the report says.

Degrowth in electricity consumption refers to the planned reduction of energy use and resource depletion to balance the economy with the environment, improve

well-being and reduce inequality.

CRISIL said that 50 percent of India's power demand arises from industrial and commercial consumers,



and manufacturing expanded at a slower pace in November.

The Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index was at 56.6 in the current month compared to 59.2 in

October.

As per the report, in the real-time market (RTM), the average market clearing price (MCP) declined 9 per cent year-on-year to Rs 3.13

pared to Rs 2.7 per unit of the same period last year" it said.

These prices enabled distribution companies and commercial and industrial consumers to meet demand at a competitive price and replace costlier power by procuring through the exchange.

The report noted that Renewable energy-based generation is estimated to have increased 17 percent year-on-year, rising for the eighth time this fiscal, with rising capacity additions.

On the other hand, Hydro power demand has also grown every month this fiscal, with 27.6 per cent year-on-year growth in November. Conversely, coal-based power generation declined for a second time this quarter.

It is estimated to have declined 3.5 percent year-on-year in November after suffering a shrinkage of 14 percent year-on-year in October.

## Vizhinjam roars into global league: India's deepest port sets record-breaking 1st year

**Thiruvananthapuram** : Vizhinjam International Seaport, developed and operated by Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd. (APSEZ) in partnership with the Government of Kerala, has completed its first year of commercial operations with an extraordinary performance that has redefined India's maritime capabilities and earned global acclaim.

In a single year, the port has surged ahead with record-breaking growth, unmatched operational efficiency, and milestone vessel calls that position it firmly among the world's emerging deep-water transshipment hubs.

Celebrated nationwide as the "Wonder Port of India," Vizhinjam's debut year stands out for its exceptional speed and scale. It became the fastest Indian port to cross the one-million-TEU mark, achieving this milestone in record time and surpassing its annual capacity within just ten months.

By its first anniversary, the port had handled 615 vessels and 1.32 million TEUs, demonstrating a level of operational consistency rarely seen in a new maritime facility.

Vizhinjam's ability to attract the world's largest carriers has been a defin-



ing feature of its remarkable year. Between December 2024 and December 2025, the port welcomed 41 ultra-large container vessels (ULCVs) measuring more than 399 metres—more than any other port in India.

In total, 154 vessels above 300 metres called at the port, further underscoring its readiness to serve as a global hub for the biggest liners. Among its most significant achievements was the arrival

of MSC Verona, with a 17.1-metre draft—the deepest-draft vessel ever handled in South Asia.

The port also hosted MSC Irina, the world's largest container ship, marking another historic milestone. Vizhinjam recorded its highest-ever single-vessel TEU handling when MSC Paloma carried 10,576 TEUs, and set a national benchmark with a Gross Crane Rate of 28.52 in October 2025.

## India's manufacturing industry needs to remain competitive: Piyush Goyal

**New Delhi** : Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal on Wednesday underscored the evolving pillars shaping India's manufacturing competitiveness, stressing that innovation, quality, design, sustainability and efficiency must remain central to the sector's growth trajectory. He said these elements were no longer optional but fundamental to ensuring that Indian manufacturers can compete effectively in an increasingly integrated global marketplace where standards and expectations continue to rise. Goyal noted that the manufacturing landscape worldwide is undergoing rapid transformation, and India must adapt swiftly to stay relevant and resilient in the face of emerging challenges. He highlighted that global disruptions in recent years—ranging from geopolitical tensions to supply chain bottlenecks—have exposed vulnerabilities within traditional production models. The Minister cautioned industry stakeholders against excessive dependence on specific geographies for critical inputs, stating that such concentration increases risks during unforeseen disruptions. He emphasised that India must identify sectors where strengthening domestic capacity is crucial, enabling greater autonomy and



enhanced control over supply chains. According to Goyal, building such capacities will not only mitigate risks but also serve as a catalyst for long-term industrial expansion, especially as India positions itself as a reliable global manufacturing hub. The Minister added that strong collaboration between industry players is essential for scaling manufacturing output, as collective knowledge, shared expertise and coordinated efforts can significantly amplify impact. He also pointed out that a vibrant manufacturing sector naturally bolsters the services ecosystem, reinforcing the broader economic growth cycle. Goyal said that as India expands its footprint in international markets, it must also remain committed to fostering healthy competition within the domestic economy to boost efficiency and innovation. He cited examples from states such as Uttar Pradesh and Odisha, which have achieved notable progress in recent years, leading to the creation of local opportunities and a visible reduction in migration pressures.

## Pantomath stands among top Merchant Bankers, strengthens leadership with robust IPO pipeline

**Mumbai** : Pantomath Group has achieved a significant industry milestone by emerging as one of the largest merchant bankers in India, backed by a strong performance on initial public offerings in 2025.

The league table ranking reflects Pantomath's ac-

celerating growth, diversified sectoral presence, and a consistent record of delivering successful capital-market transactions.

In 2025, Pantomath led and co-led 11 IPOs across exchanges, spanning sectors such as engineering, logistics, commercial ser-

vices, food processing, and industrial manufacturing. These offerings together represented more than Rs 4,100 crore in aggregate issue size, underscoring the firm's expanding role as a preferred partner for mid-sized and emerging enterprises accessing public

markets.

Of the 11 transactions executed during the period, six were Sole-Lead mandates, demonstrating strong client confidence in Pantomath's advisory capabilities, distribution network, and end-to-end execution strength.

The remaining transactions were successfully co-managed reinforcing Pantomath's collaborative presence in the broader investment-banking ecosystem.

Some notable IPOs during the period include Vidya Wires Ltd., Glottis Ltd.,

Dev Accelerator Ltd., Vikran Engineering Ltd., and Regaal Resources Ltd. Issue sizes ranged from Rs 130 crore to over Rs 850 crore, showcasing Pantomath's ability to manage diverse mandates across various industry verticals and scale requirements.

## Cohesity boosts global cybersecurity from Bengaluru

**Bengaluru** : Cohesity, a global leader in AI-powered data security, on Thursday inaugurated its new regional office in Bengaluru, reinforcing the city's role as a global hub for innovation, talent, and advanced cybersecurity solutions. The move highlights India's growing importance in shaping Cohesity's global strategy and accelerating AI-driven data security initiatives.

The announcement coincides with the one-year milestone of Cohesity's integration with Veritas' data protection business and recent expansions at its Pune facility, underlining the country's key role in the company's global operations.

"The Bengaluru office is a milestone for Cohesity, reflecting our belief in India as

a global engine of innovation, resilience, and growth," said Sanjay Poonen, CEO and President. He added, "Our teams here are building the future of data security, protecting critical data—from hospital patients to financial systems—not just in India, but worldwide."

The new facility more than doubles the capacity of the company's previous Bengaluru offices, featuring hybrid workspaces, wellness rooms, collaborative zones, and sustainable design. It has achieved LEED Gold certification, underscoring Cohesity's commitment to employee well-being and responsible growth.

India hosts a rapidly expanding customer base for Cohesity, including four of the top five banks, three of the four largest telecom com-

panies, and global organisations such as Infosys, BMW, Delta Air Lines, Salesforce, FedEx, Toyota, and NEC.

Recent research shows 76% of organisations globally experienced at least one significant cyberattack last year, driving demand for AI-powered security solutions. Cohesity's Data Cloud platform helps enterprises protect and analyse their data across locations, reduce cyber risks, and accelerate recovery from attacks.

"Bengaluru and our India teams will be critical in accelerating innovation for our AI-driven offerings," Poonen said. India now plays a central role in Cohesity's product development, customer engagement, and competitive advantage, with Bengaluru at the heart of this transformation.

## Spurt in equity flows from Russia to India

**Chennai** : Apart from Russian oil and defence equipment, there is an increased equity flow from Russia to India, states a study by Rubix Data Sciences Pvt. Ltd.

According to the study, one of the notable developments in the Indo-Russian relationship is the sudden spurt in Russian capital inflows into Indian equities. "Equity inflows from Russia tripled in FY25 to USD 18.45 million from USD 5.16 million in FY24," the study notes. It should be noted that Russian President Vladimir Putin will be on a two-day official visit to India from December 4-5.

The study also finds that India's crude oil and petroleum products imports from Russia are likely to remain at an elevated level in November 2025 despite the US' repeated warnings against oil imports from Russia.

The report assumes greater significance in the backdrop of India's strenuous efforts to sign a bilateral trade treaty with the US.

According to the report, the two economies, India and Russia, are intertwined, and it is difficult for them to scale down the trade relations in the near-to-medium term.

Total goods traded between India and

Russia recorded a robust 70 percent CAGR from FY21 to FY25. Notably, India's trade deficit also widened by almost 20 times during this period. In FY21, India sourced barely 2 percent of its crude oil imports from Russia. But in FY25, it increased to 35 percent, making the former Soviet state India's largest crude oil supplier with a trade value of more than USD 50 billion in FY25. "More importantly, India's crude oil imports from Russia are projected to reach their highest level in November this year, but may start declining from December onwards, driven primarily by pre-deadline stocking by Indian refiners, discounted pricing, and shifting global energy flows," the study states. Russia's overall exports are mainly led by three energy products: crude oil, petroleum products, and natural gas. The share of these products in the total exports has increased to 52 percent in 2024 from 30 percent in 2021. Overall, Asia now accounts for nearly 95 percent of Russia's crude oil exports. China is the top buyer, and India comes second.

The study also points out that despite mounting international pressure, India con-