



◆ CHANDIGARH ◆ PUNJAB ◆ HARYANA ◆ HIMACHAL PRADESH ◆ DELHI ◆ JAMMU & KASHMIR ◆ UTTARAKHAND

## NEWS BRIEFS

Renowned Punjabi playwright Jatinder Brar passes away, leaves behind legacy of cultural excellence

AMRITSAR: Eminent playwright Jatinder Brar, who gave Punjabi theatre a permanent address in Amritsar with Punjab Natasha, passed away due to age-related illness. Brar, 81, was a celebrated name in Punjabi theatre circles, known not just for his plays but also for nurturing and mentoring theatre talent from the heart of Majha. Brar's death has sent shockwaves throughout the theatre, literary, and social circles. The demise of playwright Jatinder Brar marks the end of an era in Punjabi theatre as well as Amritsar's cultural space. During his lifetime, he was honoured with several accolades, including the Shiromani Natak award, Punjab Gaurav, and countless other literary awards. His theatrical journey is a living testimony to the saying, "Hum akele hi chale the janib-e-manzil magar log milte gaye aur caravan banta gaya." His notable plays include "Lohe Di Bhatti", "Faasile", "Kudedan Ki Jaai", "Kadessan", and "Paydan".

CM Bhagwant Singh Mann also paid obeisance at the holy shrine of Kalgi Dhar Patshah Ji, met the shrine management and witnessed a strong turnout of devotees and local residents, underscoring the deep connect between the Panth, its historic institutions and the people who continue to draw inspiration from them.

Addressing the gathering, Punjab CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Nanded Sahib is a sacred place not only for Sikhs but for entire humanity, as the Tenth Sikh Guru Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji spent a considerable part of his life on this holy land."

The Punjab CM asserted that the Punjab Government would impress upon the Maharashtra Government to accord holy city status to Nanded Sahib as a befitting tribute to Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. The Chief Minister added, "The 350th Shaheedi Diwas (Martyrdom Day) of the Ninth Guru, Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Ji, who laid down his life for religious freedom and human rights, has been commemorated by the state government with deep devotion and reverence."

Recalling an important decision taken last year, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "In November, on the Shaheedi Diwas of Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Ji, the Punjab Government designated three Takht Sahibs as holy cities." He said the official notification granting holy city status to the walled city area of Amritsar, Talwandi Sabo and Sri Anandpur Sahib had already been issued, fulfilling a long-pending demand of the sangat across the world. "On similar lines, an announcement for Nanded Sahib should also be made by the Maharashtra Government, for which the Punjab Government will make all possible efforts," he said.

The Chief Minister also announced a complete facelift of the Punjab Bhawan in Nanded Sahib. "The Punjab Bhawan constructed by the Punjab government will be

upgraded with ultra-modern facilities to facilitate devotees," Bhagwant Singh Mann said, adding that the supply of Verka milk products in Nanded would also be further streamlined for the benefit of pilgrims. He asserted, "No stone will be left unturned to ensure every possible facility for the devotees visiting this sacred place."

Highlighting the contribution of Punjabis to the nation, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Punjabis have played a stellar role in the freedom struggle, in making the country self-reliant in food production, and in safeguarding the unity,

integrity and sovereignty of India."

He said Punjabis are always at the forefront when it comes to defending the borders and are ever ready to make sacrifices. "It is a matter of immense pride that in times of any mishap, Punjabis often reach the spot even before organisations like the Red Cross to serve the needy," he said.

The Chief Minister said, "The Punjab government is duty bound to perpetuate the glorious legacy of the great Guru Sahibans among the younger generations. We are following the footsteps of the

great Guru Sahibans, who taught humanity to stand against tyranny and injustice while ensuring the welfare of all."

He added that as part of this commitment, the Punjab Government recently commemorated the 350th Shaheedi Diwas of Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Ji at Sri Anandpur Sahib. "Our sole aim is to keep the younger generations connected with the life, philosophy and supreme sacrifices of the Guru Sahibans for mankind," he said.

Meanwhile, at Takht Sri Hazur Sahib, the Chief Minister prayed for the progress and development of the state and the prosperity of its people. He said, "Takht Sri Hazur Sahib is one of the five highest seats of religious authority in Sikhism, providing spiritual, temporal and moral strength to the community." He listed the other four Takhts as Sri Akal Takht Sahib in Amritsar, Takht Sri Keshgarh Sahib in Sri Anandpur Sahib, Takht Sri Damdama Sahib in Talwandi Sabo and Takht Sri Patna Sahib in Bihar.

Paying tributes to Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Dashmesh Pita Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji made unparalleled contributions to uphold the traditions of secularism, safeguard human rights and ensure religious freedom, even sacrificing his entire family for these ideals." He said the Guru Sahib spent a significant part of his life on the sacred land of Nanded Sahib.

The Chief Minister said he felt blessed to have the opportunity to pay reverence at the holy shrine. "I seek the blessings of the Almighty to give me the strength to serve the people of Punjab with humility and dedication," Bhagwant Singh Mann said. After offering prayers at the Gurdwara Sahib, he reiterated the firm commitment of his government to serve people of all castes, colours, creeds and religions and to work towards building a harmonious society.



## Punjab CM Mann bows in reverence at Nanded Sahib says his govt will raise demand for granting holy city status to Nanded with Maharashtra Govt

BUREAU

NANDED: Bowing in reverence at Takht Sachkhand Sri Hazur Sahib in Nanded, Maharashtra, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Saturday said his government would raise the demand for granting holy city status to Nanded Sahib with the Maharashtra Government, underscoring that the sacred town holds immense spiritual significance for Sikhs and humanity at large. Recalling that the Punjab Government has already declared Sri Amritsar Sahib, Sri Anandpur Sahib and Talwandi Sabo as holy cities, the Punjab CM asserted that his government remains fully committed to the Guru Sahib.

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## Heavy snow brings life to a standstill in Himachal

DHARAMSHALA, JAN 24



Life has been put on a standstill in Himachal Pradesh following a heavy spell of snow in the state during the last 24 hours. Hundreds of roads remained closed for vehicular movement and electricity supply was disrupted at thousands of places statewide.

As per the state Meteorological Department, Kothi near Manali received the highest snowfall at 105 cm during the past 24 hours, followed by Gondla in Lahaul and Spiti with 85 cm. Keylong received 75 cm, Khadra in Shimla district 68.6 cm, Kufri 66 cm, Manali 45.8 cm, Shillaroo 45 cm, Kukumseri 41.4 cm, Jot 32 cm, Hansa 30 cm, Sangla 27.5 cm, Shimla 27 cm, Bharmour 26 cm, Kalpa 16.4 cm and Sarahan 11.5 cm.

Several places in the state also witnessed heavy rain during the period. Dharampur in Mandi district received 91.4 mm of rainfall, followed by Solan (68.6 mm), Kanghat (67 mm), Una (54.2 mm), Palampur and Nagrota Suryani (53.2 mm each) and Nahan (51.9 mm).

Shimla, the state capital, recorded a minimum temperature of minus 0.5°C, while Dharamsala recorded 5.2°C. Manali recorded minus 0.4°C, Kangra 1.7°C, Mandi 4.3°C, Solan 1.8°C, Bilaspur 4.5°C, Hamirpur 3°C, Kalpa minus 3.8°C, Sundernagar 3.7°C, Bhuntar 2.5°C, Nahan

6.2°C, Paonta Sahib 8°C, Kufri minus 2.5°C, Narkanda minus 4.2°C, Reckong Peo 0.1°C and Tabo minus 6.5°C. Kukumseri was the coldest place in the state, recording a minimum temperature of 7.2°C.

While weather conditions are expected to remain dry in most parts of the state, heavy snow is likely to continue in the higher reaches today. Meanwhile, government transport services were hit in Kangra district, with 58 bus routes suspended, after fresh snowfall in McLeodganj and surrounding villages of Naddi, Dharamkot and Bhagsunag on Friday night led to a sharp dip in temperatures.

At the ICC Board meeting, Bangladesh were taken to the cleaners with an overwhelming 14-2 verdict in favour of the "Tigers" travelling to India for their games.

ICC gave BCB a 24-hour deadline to change its stance but with Asif Nazrul being adamant, the cricket crazy nation's hopes of playing the T20 World

Cup went up in smoke.

It has been learnt that top ICC officials including chairman Jay Shah were in Dubai on Friday and late evening an e-mail was sent to BCB chairman Aminul Islam Bulbul informing him about global body's decision.

"An e-mail was sent last evening to BCB chairman intimating him that his board didn't get back to ICC officially af-

TER the 24-hour deadline that was given to them to decide if they wanted to come to India," an ICC source said on condition of anonymity.

"BCB did a press conference in Dhaka before officially intimating the global body which is a violation of protocol. They have been categorically told that they are being replaced. Scotland is the new team in the World Cup."

ICC also intimated all the participating member nations separately about Bangladesh being dropped from the tournament.

Bangladesh Sports Ministry advisor Asif Nazrul had advised against national team travelling to India, citing security issues despite being given repeated assurances by ICC.

Scotland will thus play their four group league games against West Indies (February 7), Italy (February 9) and England (February 14) in Kolkata followed by a game against Nepal in Mumbai on February 17.

BCB, in a desperate measure, had also approached Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) of ICC, unaware about the terms of reference of the sub-committee which is not allowed to hear an appeal against a decision made by its own Board of Directors.

AGENCY  
NEW DELHI, JAN 24

While Cricket Scotland has maintained that they haven't received any official confirmation but it seems that it is only a matter of time that they will be intimated. Photo: X

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has pushed Bangladesh out of the upcoming T20 World Cup, bringing in Scotland after BCB refused to let its team travel to India citing security concerns in the wake of Mustafizur Rahman's ouster from IPL.

Scotland's entry ended the month-long suspense after Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) repeatedly insisted that their matches be shifted to Sri Lanka and even suggested their group being swapped with Ireland.

The Irish Cricket board however categorically dismissed the suggestion.

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## 18th Edition of Rozgar Mela organized at ITBP 50th Battalion, Panchkula

109 appointment letters distributed at Rozgar Mela Organized by ITBP 50th Battalion in Panchkula

SHIV KUMAR SHARMA  
PANCHKULA, JANUARY 24



As per the directions of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, the 18th edition of the Rozgar Mela was organized at the 50th Battalion of Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force (ITBP), Sector-26, Panchkula (Haryana). The programme was graced by Hon'ble Shri Manohar Lal, Union Minister for Power and Housing & Urban Affairs, Government of India, as the Chief Guest. Shri Pawan Kumar Negi, Deputy Inspector General, Regional Headquarters (Shimla) was also present on the occasion.

During the programme, appointment letters were distributed to 109 selected candidates for recruitment in ITBP, CISF, BSF, SBI, GAIL and other Central Government organizations. Hon'ble Minister congratulated all the selected candidates and wished them a bright and successful future.

Addressing the gathering, Hon'ble Shri Manohar Lal congratulated all the youth and said that Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji is concerned

about the youth in every possible way. The Prime Minister's vision focuses on the education of the youth, their skilling, providing them appointment letters, and creating opportunities for self-employment.

He said that today's youth is our future. The youth who are getting jobs today will be the witnesses to a 'Viksit Bharat'.

in 2047. The responsibility being placed on the shoulders of the youth today will ensure that the country moves forward, becomes self-reliant, and achieves the goal of a developed India."

On the occasion, Shri Shailesh Singh Narkoti, Commandant, 50th Battalion, ITBP and Nodal Officer of the programme, stated that the Rozgar Mela initiative launched under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji aims to provide large-scale employment opportunities to the youth and is a significant step towards building an Atmanirbhar and Viksit Bharat. He informed that under the 18th edition of the Rozgar Mela, more than 61,000 appointment letters have been issued across the country, including the appointment letters distributed during today's programme.

Family members of the selected candidates, senior officers of ITBP, and personnel were also present during the event.

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## NEWS BRIEF

16th National  
Voters' Day to be  
observed in  
Panipat today

ASHOK CHUGH  
PANIPAT: In accordance with the directions of the Election Commission of India, the 16th National Voters' Day will be observed across the district on Sunday, January 25, on the theme "My India, My Vote". District Election Officer and Deputy Commissioner Virender Kumar Dahiya said that the district-level programme will be held at 11 am in the auditorium of the District Secretariat. He said National Voters' Day aims to strengthen democracy, promote voter awareness, and celebrate the participation of every citizen in the electoral process. During the programme, voters as well as officers and employees of various departments will be administered a pledge to uphold democratic traditions, maintain the dignity of free, fair, and peaceful elections, and exercise their right to vote in all elections without being influenced by religion, class, caste, community, language, or any form of inducement.

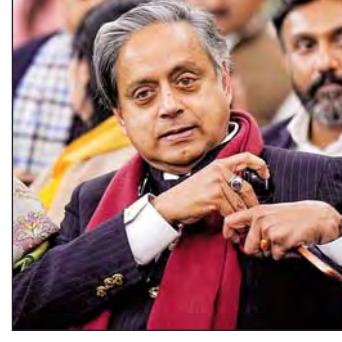
## AGENCY

KOZHIKODE, JAN 24

Congress leader Shashi Tharoor on Saturday rejected any claim of going against the party line on any issue, saying that he has "at no stage violated any of the Congress' positions in Parliament."

He said that there has been only one instance of "public disagreement on principle," which occurred after the Pahalgam terror attack and the response with Operation Sindoor, for which he remains unapologetic.

"After the terror attack, which killed 26 people, the Congress leader had said that the act "cannot go unpunished, there has to be a kinetic response. I have at no stage violated any of the Congress' positions in Parliament; the only issue on which there has been public disagreement on principle is about Operation Sindoor, where I did take a very strong stand, and I remain unapologetic about that," Tharoor said. Tharoor's comments



to public disagreements with other party leaders, Tharoor added, "After Pahalgam happened, I myself, as an observer and commentator, I had written a column in the Indian Express, which I think I gave the title 'After Pahalgam', they gave it a title 'Hit Hard, Hit Smart'. I said in that article - this cannot go unpunished; there has to be a kinetic response."

Following the Kochi event, it was reported that Tharoor had skipped an All India Congress Committee (AICC) meet due to his prior engagement at the Kerala Literature Fest.

However, Tharoor reportedly did attend the Prime Minister's event in Thiruvananthapuram, where PM Modi inaugurated multiple Bharat trains.

The (AICC) meeting was attended by multiple party leaders, including party president Mallikarjun Kharge, party General Secretary (Organisation) KC Venugopal, Rahul Gandhi, Jairam Ramesh, Deepa Dasmunshi, Meira

Kurukshetra to witness celebration of Dalit upliftment and social harmony at state-level Sant Ravidas Jayanti on January 31

## HANS RAJ YADAV

KURUKSHETRA: The sacred land of Kurukshetra is set to once again become a symbol of Dalit upliftment and social harmony with the organisation of a state-level celebration marking the 649th birth anniversary of Sant Shiromani Guru Ravidas. The ceremony will be held with devotion on January 31 at Umri, where



Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini and Union Power Minister Manohar Lal are

scheduled to participate. Preparations for the state-level event are in full swing. Addressing the media, Sudeesh Kataria, Chief Media Advisor to Union Power Minister Manohar Lal, shared details of the programme and said there is widespread enthusiasm among the Dalit community regarding the Sant Ravidas Jayanti celebrations.

## Bharatiya Kisan Sangh delegation discusses farmers' issues with Chief Minister ahead of Budget

NIRMAL SAINI  
RADAUR, JAN 24

A delegation of the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh met Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini at his Sant Kabir Kutir residence in Chandigarh and held detailed discussions on key issues concerning farmers in the run-up to Budget 2026. The meeting focused on the current condition of farmers, challenges faced by the agriculture sector and future requirements. The Chief Minister listened attentively to the delegation and assured them of positive action on the issues raised and demands submitted.

The delegation included Regional Organisation Minister Surendra Singh, State President Satish Kumar and State General Secretary Rambir Singh Chauhan. Rambir Singh Chauhan said that the memorandum submitted to the Chief Minister called for concrete policy measures to strengthen rural infrastructure, increase farmers' income and make agriculture a profitable occupation. The delegation urged the government to



make special budgetary provisions for milk production and livestock development, and to establish a government milk agency in every village. It also demanded incentives for organic farming in the Morni block of Panchkula district, construction of cold storage facilities in every district, and special budgetary allocation for flood control and prevention of soil erosion in Yamunanagar. Other suggestions included identifying waterlogging-affected districts and implementing solutions, providing a 50 per cent subsidy on agricultural machinery related to sugarcane cultivation, implementing crop insurance through a government agency, and promoting indigenous cow rearing.

## 'Never violated Congress' position; Will remain unapologetic on Operation Sindoor stance': Shashi Tharoor

KARUR, JAN 24

Congress leader Shashi Tharoor on Saturday rejected any claim of going against the party line on any issue, saying that he has "at no stage violated any of the Congress' positions in Parliament."

He said that there has been only one instance of "public disagreement on principle," which occurred after the Pahalgam terror attack and the response with Operation Sindoor, for which he remains unapologetic.

"After the terror attack, which killed 26 people, the Congress leader had said that the act "cannot go unpunished, there has to be a kinetic response. I have at no stage violated any of the Congress' positions in Parliament; the only issue on which there has been public disagreement on principle is about Operation Sindoor, where I did take a very strong stand, and I remain unapologetic about that," Tharoor said. Tharoor's comments

come on the backdrop of speculation over him being "upset" for being ignored by party leaders, particularly by Rahul Gandhi, at a party event in Kochi on January 19. Tharoor had attended the 'mahapanchayat' party event, where Rahul Gandhi was present too. However, as Gandhi entered the stage, along with KC Venugopal, multiple party leaders were greeted directly; however, a direct greeting to Tharoor was not given. While detailing his stance, which had led

Kumar and others in Delhi. Congress leaders have refuted any claim of anger between the leadership and Tharoor, saying that he had informed them about his commitments earlier.

"He spoke to the leaders about that, and I guess the leaders have given him permission to be there. This is not about him skipping the meeting. It is an important literary festival in Kerala that he attends every year. This is about our pathway ahead," said party leader Shafi Parambil.

It is also very important for the party and for us, so he is releasing that (his book), that is why he sent us a message. Party is his priority, he was just in an event with Rahul," said Deepa Dasmunshi, AICC General Secretary.

When asked if Tharoor is 'angry' with the leadership, she added, "No, no, nothing like that. Tharoor is very happy with the Congress party and the central leadership; there is no difference of opinion on this."

## Republic Day celebrated with patriotic fervour at Saraswati Model School



## Two-day PM SVANidhi camp at International Saraswati Model School

YAGYA DUTT SHASTRI  
PEHOWA, JAN 24

At the International Saraswati Festival, staff associated with the National Urban Livelihoods Mission were honoured by the Haryana Saraswati Heritage Development Board for the successful organisation of a two-day special camp under the PM SVANidhi scheme. The felicitation ceremony was held during a programme attended by Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini. Deputy Chairman of the Haryana Saraswati Heritage Development Board, Dhooman Singh Kirmach, honoured TFI Anurag Sharma and TCO Suman Prajapati from the National Urban Livelihoods Mission for their exemplary work and contribution. He said the government is continuously working to make street



vendors and small traders self-reliant through the PM SVANidhi scheme, and connecting eligible beneficiaries to the scheme through a two-day camp on a major platform like the International Saraswati Festival was a commendable effort. Praising the dedication of the National Urban Livelihoods Mission staff, Kirmach said it is committed officers and employees who ensure that government schemes are successfully implemented on the ground. The honoured officials expressed gratitude to the

Chief Minister and the Haryana government and reaffirmed their commitment to continue working with full dedication in the public interest. TCO Suman Prajapati also shared information about the National Urban Livelihoods Mission, stating that it is a Government of India scheme aimed at linking the urban poor with employment, self-employment and self-reliance. Under the mission, street vendors, self-help groups and urban poor families are provided training, loans, subsidies and employment opportunities.

## Grand final rehearsal held at Ladwa Anaj Mandi ahead of 77th Republic Day celebrations

KARAMBIR  
LADWA, JAN 24

With the aim of making the 77th Republic Day celebrations historic and grand, a subdivision-level final rehearsal was organised on Saturday at Ladwa Anaj Mandi. The rehearsal witnessed a vibrant display of patriotism as schoolchildren presented colourful cultural performances, while disciplined parades were carried out by police personnel, NCC cadets, Scouts and Guides.

The programme began with the hoisting of the national flag and salute by Ladwa SDM Anubhav Mehta. Addressing those present, the SDM informed that on Monday, January 26, the 77th Republic Day will be celebrated with great enthusiasm under the theme



"Vande Mataram" beneath the large shed at Ladwa Anaj Mandi. He added that Panipat Mayor Komal Saini will attend the event as the chief guest and perform the flag hoisting. During the final rehearsal, students from 10 schools presented patriotic cultural items, while students from a college also captivated the audience with their impressive performance. In addition, band displays by police contingents, NCC units, Scouts, and school

students drew loud applause from those present. SDM Anubhav Mehta said that participating students had been working tirelessly over the past several days to ensure the success of the national celebration. He explained that the purpose of the final rehearsal was to identify and rectify any shortcomings in advance so that the Republic Day ceremony on January 26 could be conducted in a dignified and flawless manner.

## Author Anil Kumar Bharti urges PM Modi to order DNA test on Netaji's remains in Japan



TAPINDER SINGH  
PATIALA: International author and educationist Anil Kumar Bharti has written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi demanding that he should fulfil his promise by conducting a DNA test on the remains of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, preserved in the Renkoji Temple in Tokyo, Japan, and thereby unveil the mysteries surrounding Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's life and death, thus fulfilling his duty as the Prime Minister of India towards the people of India. International author and educationist Anil Kumar Bharti is a social worker, a conscious citizen, and a retired teacher. Through this letter, he has drawn Prime Minister Modi's attention to a national issue that is connected to the sentiments of millions of Indians and our national pride. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's life and death have remained a mystery since 1945. Some official documents have accepted the plane crash of August 18, 1945, but the Mukherjee Commission report and the doubts prevalent among the Indian public have continued to raise questions about this alleged truth. At present, when India is leading the world in the field of science and technology, resolving this unresolved mystery is no longer impossible. Therefore, educationist Anil Bharti has logically demanded that, as a scientific solution, a DNA test of the remains preserved in the Renkoji Temple in Tokyo be conducted using modern 'mitochondrial DNA' technology. This is a highly advanced and scientific technique through which the truth can be ascertained by matching the DNA of family members even from remains that are hundreds of years old. This test will reveal the complete truth.

## Blessing ceremony organised for Class XII students at Navyug Senior Secondary School, Mohan Nagar



HANS RAJ YADAV  
KURUKSHETRA: A blessing ceremony for Class XII students was organised at Navyug Senior Secondary School on Friday. On the occasion, a havan was performed on the school premises and blessings were offered to all students appearing in the upcoming board examinations. School Director B. D. Gaba extended his best wishes to the students and prayed for their bright future. Addressing the students, he said they should understand the true value of life and work with discipline, keeping national development as their goal. He encouraged students to continue their studies, pursue higher education, and dedicate themselves to the service of the nation. He also motivated them to prepare for examinations with patience, dedication, and hard work, while guiding them for the board exams. School Principal Devender Arora offered special suggestions to students for moving ahead confidently in their future. Headmistress Preeti Mishra wished the students a successful future and urged them to uphold the values of honesty and truth learnt at school, and to always keep the school's flag flying high.

## Grand chariot procession of Lord Venkatesh taken out after abhishek on Basant Panchami

MAHENDER GOYAL

HISAR: On the occasion of Basant Panchami, a grand chariot procession of Lord Venkatesh was taken out with great devotion at Shri Tirupati Balaji Dham, spreading an atmosphere of spirituality across the shrine. In accordance with traditional rituals, the abhishek of Lord Venkatesh was performed, following which chants of "Jai Shriman Narayan", "Jai Govinda" and "Jai Bhagwan Venkatesh" echoed through the premises. After the rituals, Lord Venkatesh, along with Goddess Lakshmi and Goddess Bhudevi, was seated in a palanquin placed on a decorated chariot. Amid Vedic chants and prayers, the ceremonial procession commenced, with devotees pulling the chariot with ropes as an expression of their faith and devotion. The procession circumambulated the entire temple complex in a traditional manner. Following the completion of the yatra, prasad was distributed among the devotees. Devotees who participated in the procession also paid obeisance at various temples within the Tirupati Dham complex, including those dedicated to Lord Venkatesh, Goddess Padmavati, Goddess Godavari, Garuda, Lakshmi Narasimha, Sudarshan, Ramanuja Swami, Shathakopa Swami, Varavara Muni and Hanuman. Located near Landhi Toll Plaza on Agroha Road, the Tirupati Dham houses several prominent attractions such as the 42-foot-high golden Garuda Stambh, Balipitham and the Tirupati Yagyashala. The Srinivasa Gauthala, Yagyashala, sacred Purushkarani and the 71-foot-high gopuram also remained major centres of devotion for the visiting pilgrims.



## 'Run for Swadeshi' organised at Government Girls Senior Secondary School, Pratap Nagar

RAHUL KOHLI

YAMUNANAGAR: Under the guidance of District Education Officer and District Chief Commissioner, Yamunanagar, Mrs Prem Lata Bakshi, a "Run for Swadeshi" programme was organised at Government Girls Senior Secondary School, Pratap Nagar, under the banner of Bharat Scouts and Guides. The event was held in line with the call given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to adopt indigenous language, indigenous thought, indigenous attire and indigenous products. The programme began with a motivational address by the school principal, Mr Tejpal Walia. In his address, he said that in accordance with the Prime Minister's appeal, every citizen must awaken the spirit of "self", that is, swadeshi, within themselves. He emphasised that unless people refrain from using foreign products and consciously adopt swadeshi goods, it will not be possible to make the country, villages and society self-reliant and economically strong. Following the address, all students of the school were administered a pledge to use indigenous products. After the oath-taking ceremony, a public awareness rally and run were organised as part of the "Run for Swadeshi" initiative, in which guide students participated with great enthusiasm.



## Shab-e-Barat to be observed on night of Feb 3, special night of prayers and devotion: Maulana Rashid Wafa Nadvi



MAINPAL KASHYAP  
INDRI: Principal of Darul Uloom Shah Ullah, Maulana Mohammad Rashid Wafa Nadvi, has announced that the holy festival of Shab-e-Barat will be observed on the night of February 3, after the day concludes. Speaking on the occasion, he elaborated on the significance and spiritual importance of Shab-e-Barat. In his message, Maulana Rashid Wafa Nadvi said that the night of Shab-e-Barat is filled with Allah's mercy and blessings, and prayers offered on this sacred night are accepted. He said it is believed that on this night Allah descends to the seventh heaven and an announcement continues throughout the night, inviting believers to seek forgiveness, pray for themselves, their parents, their children, and their needs, assuring that their prayers will be granted. Appealing to the Muslim community, he urged them to offer special prayers for the welfare of all humanity, peace, and brotherhood on this sacred night. He said every Muslim should engage in maximum recitation of the Holy Quran, seek forgiveness for sins, and resolve to perform righteous deeds. The principal further said that on the night of Shab-e-Barat, the destinies of people across the world are decided, and anyone who prays sincerely to Allah never returns empty-handed. He added that helping the poor, feeding orphans, and assisting the needy on this blessed night is among the highest forms of worship, which, he said, is the true message of Shab-e-Barat.

## Tributes paid to late Rajinder Prasad, father of Haryana Assembly Secretary Rajiv Prasad

SHIV KUMAR SHARMA  
KARNAL, JAN 24

Leaders from across the political spectrum, representatives of social and religious organisations, senior administrators and members of the judiciary paid rich tributes to the late Rajinder Prasad, father of Haryana Assembly Secretary Rajiv Prasad (HCS), at a condolence meeting held in Karnal on Saturday. The gathering expressed solidarity with the bereaved family and offered prayers for the departed soul. Haryana Assembly Speaker Harvinder Kalyan and Cabinet Minister Krishan Kumar Bedi were among those who paid homage. MLAs Jagmohan Anand, Yogendra Rana, Geeta Bhukkal and Shadi Lal Batra, Mayor Renu Bala Gupta, Sonipat Deputy Commissioner Sushil Sarwan, former minister Shashi Pal Mehta and several former legislators also attended the condolence meeting. Rajinder Prasad, a former Additional District and Sessions Judge, passed away on January 10, 2026, at the age of 76. Speakers noted that his demise has caused an irreparable loss not only to the family but also to society at large. While acknowledging



the inevitability of life and death, they remembered him as a person who discharged all his responsibilities with dignity and left behind a close-knit and accomplished family. The bereaved family includes his wife Geeta Prasad; son Rajiv Prasad (HCS), currently Secretary, Haryana Assembly, and daughter-in-law Ritu Singh, former Assistant Advocate General, Punjab; daughter Dr Vijayalakshmi and son-in-law Purushottam Kumar, Additional District and Sessions Judge, Faridabad; son Amit Prasad, Labour Enforcement Officer, Kurukshetra, and daughter-in-law Monika Prasad; and younger son Ritesh Prasad, Legal Manager at JSW.

## Anil Vij to hoist national flag and take salute at district-level Republic Day in Yamunanagar

RAHUL KOHLI  
YAMUNANAGAR, JAN 26

All preparations have been completed by the district administration to celebrate the 77th Republic Day with enthusiasm and grandeur in Yamunanagar. A full-dress rehearsal of the programmes to be presented at the district-level function was held at the New Grain Market on Saturday, which was reviewed by Deputy Commissioner Preeti, who hoisted the flag and took the salute during the rehearsal. The Deputy Commissioner informed that on the auspicious occasion of Republic Day, January 26, at 10 am, Haryana's Energy, Transport and Labour Minister Anil Vij will hoist the national flag at the Tejli Sports

Complex. He will also inspect the parade and take the salute during the march past. Prior to the main, the minister will visit the Shaheedi Memorial located at the Police Lines, Jagadhri, to pay homage to martyrs. She said that all contingents put up commendable performances during the full-dress rehearsal. The parade will be led by DSP Pooja. The male police contingent will be led by PSI Ajay Kumar, the women police contingent by PSI Ruchi, the Home Guards contingent by SI Abhishek, the NCC boys' contingent by Senior Under Officer Vineet Kumar, and the NCC girls' contingent by Senior Under Officer Bhoomi. The Bharat Scouts contingent will be led by God Bless Public School leader Kumar Gagan, while the Bharat Scouts and Guides girls' contingent will be led by Guide Leader Kumari Shivani.

## NEWS BRIEFS

**Havan organised at Narsingh Das Public School for success in board examinations**



KAMAL SHARMA

**TARAORI:** A formal havan—yajna was organised on the school campus of Narsingh Das Public School to pray for the success of students appearing in the upcoming board examinations. Acharya Munna Shastri conducted the ritual with Vedic chants and recitation of hymns, offering prayers to the Almighty for the bright future and academic success of the students. Garvit and Yashdeep Singh performed the role of chief yajman during the ceremony.

Addressing the students, school chairperson Madhu Gupta said that the path of truth, discipline and relentless hard work is the key to remarkable success and holistic development in student life. She encouraged students to remain focused and sincere in their efforts. School director Dharmendra Khera blessed the students and motivated them to prepare for the board examinations with dedication, perseverance and a positive mindset. During the havan, students and teachers collectively offered oblations with deep reverence.

## Krishan Pal Gurjar distributes appointment letters to selected youth during Prime Minister's Rozgar Mela in Sonipat

SHIV KUMAR SHARMA

**SONIPAT :** In line with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's resolve to provide government jobs to the youth of the country, the 18th edition of the Prime Minister Rozgar Mela was organised at the national level today, January 24, 2026 (Saturday). On this occasion, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, by pressing a remote button, distributed appointment letters to 61,656 selected candidates, including over 8,000 women, at 45 locations across the country for appointments in various government departments.

As part of this nationwide initiative, a programme was also organised at the Group Centre, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Kharkhoda (Khewra), Sonipat. On this occasion, Union Minister of State for Cooperation, Shri Krishan Pal Gurjar distributed appointment letters to 103 selected candidates appointed in various Central Government departments, particularly in the



Central Armed Police Forces.

The live telecast of the programme was organised at the CRPF Group Centre, Kharkhoda. The Union Minister of State for Cooperation, Shri Krishan Pal Gurjar, attended the event as the Chief Guest and personally handed over the appointment letters to the selected youth.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Krishan Pal Gurjar said that Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has always laid emphasis on employment generation, innovation, use of technology and placing citizens at the cen-

tre of development. He stated that the appointment letter distribution programme in Sonipat is a concrete step towards achieving the goal of Viksit Bharat.

The Minister further informed that the newly appointed candidates are also being provided training through the 'Karmayogi Prarambh' online module on the iGOT Karmayogi portal, which offers more than 1,588 e-learning courses. This training will enable the youth to effectively discharge their responsibilities and contribute meaningfully to the building of a developed India. He added that transparent, technology-based and fast recruitment processes are strengthening the participation of Young India in government services. Shri Gurjar congratulated all the newly appointed candidates and urged them to serve the nation with honesty, dedication and efficiency.

## RAKESH BHAYANA:

**PANIPAT:** Preparations for the district-level Republic Day celebration have reached their final stage. On Saturday, Deputy Commissioner Dr. Virender Kumar Dahiya hoisted the national flag during the final rehearsal of the Republic Day Ceremony at Shivaji Stadium and inspected the arrangements, issuing necessary directions to the concerned officials. Earlier, he paid floral tributes to the martyrs at the Shaheed Smarak located in the District Secretariat.

After the inspection, Dr. Dahiya informed that the district-level Republic Day celebration will be held in a grand manner on January 26 at 10:00 a.m. at Shivaji Stadium. Development and Panchayat Minister Krishan Lal Panwar will be the Chief Guest and will hoist the national flag. He emphasized that, as every year, the celebration should leave a historic and unforgettable impression, and urged all officers, teachers, and students to work with dedication and commitment to ensure its success.

During the Republic Day ceremony, marching contingents of the Haryana Police (men and women), Home Guards, NCC Girls, NSS, Scouts and Guides, Red Cross, and Hindustan Scouts will participate in an impressive march-past. Various developmental tableaux presented by different departments will also add to the grandeur of the event. IPS Harshit Goyal will serve as the Parade Commander.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned officials to ensure thorough cleanliness of the entire city and the stadium premises prior to the event, along with proper decoration and installation of flags. He also instructed that a ceremonial gateway (toran dhar) be erected at Ramlal Chowk, the turning point towards the stadium. Adequate arrangements for traffic management, law and order, and especially the safety of girl students will be ensured by the police.



Dr. Dahiya stated that as India is the world's largest democracy, Republic Day is a matter of pride as well as responsibility for all citizens. Therefore, all officials associated with the event should take personal interest and perform their duties with full sincerity and dedication.

On this occasion, SP Bhupender Singh, Additional Commissioner of Municipal Corporation Vivek Chaudhary, SDM Panipat Mandeep Kumar, DSP Headquarters Satish Vats, District Education Officer Rakesh Bura, along with several senior district officials, were present.

## Messiah of the Poor, People's Leader Karpoori Thakur - Krishan Sain



SHIV KUMAR SHARMA

**NISSING / KARNAK -** The birth anniversary of India's people's leader Karpoori Thakur was celebrated in Gangoh, Uttar Pradesh. Krishan Sain, Nissing In-charge, Yamanagar BJP, and State Executive Member, Haryana, attended the program as the chief guest. Jasbir Chauhan, Municipal Councilor of Nissing, also attended. The committee gave a warm welcome to the chief guests upon their arrival. BJP leader Krishan Sain started the program by lighting the lamp. Everyone remembered People's Leader Karpoori Thakur. Krishan Sain shed light on the life of People's Leader Karpoori Thakur and gave the people of the community complete information about the difficult journey of his life. He also emphasized that the Sain community should unite and move forward. Committee President Master Shyamal, Organizer Jail Singh Bharti, Convenor Master Surendra Sain, Secretary Master Sanjay Sain, General Secretary Master Jagdish Sain, Sundarpal Sain, Pradeep Sain, Vipin Sain, Sonu, Ankit Sompal, Raj Pradhan, Dhamma Bassi, Pawan Sain, and all the members of the community were present at the program.

## Voting is not only a right but also a duty: Dr Chauhan



SHIV KUMAR SHARMA

**ASANDH / KARNAK:** Describing the Indian Constitution as one of the most progressive in the world, Director of the Haryana Rural Development Institute, Virender Singh Chauhan, said that the framers of the

Constitution granted equal voting rights to every adult citizen without discrimination of caste, colour, religion or gender, reflecting their far-sighted vision.

He was addressing students at a programme organised at Geeta Vidya Mandir School, Rahra.

The programme was organised to mark National Voters' Day and witnessed enthusiastic participation from students and villagers. School principal Mahender Singh and sarpanch representative Master Surender Singh Rana welcomed Dr Chauhan by presenting a bouquet and expressed gratitude for his visit.

Dr Chauhan said that even the United States, often referred to as the world's oldest democracy, failed to grant voting rights to all citizens in its early years, with African Americans and women having to wait decades to gain the franchise. In contrast, he said, India ensured universal adult suffrage from the very inception of the Republic. Highlighting the role of youth, Dr Chauhan said young people are the greatest strength of the country's democracy. If the youth become aware of their voting rights and participate actively, they can significantly strengthen both the direction and condition of the nation. He urged students to spread awareness about voting within their families and society, and to contribute to nation-building by becoming responsible citizens.

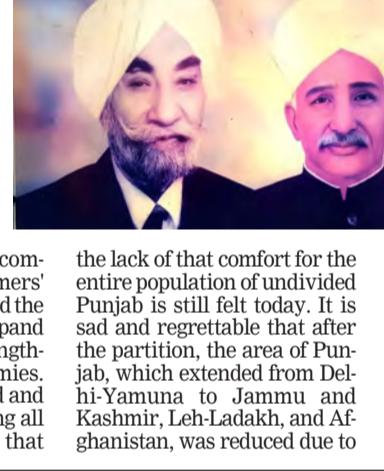
## Haryana, Himachal, and Punjab should be reunited : Simranjit Singh Mann

SHIV KUMAR SHARMA

KARNAK, JAN 24

Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar) President S. Simranjit Singh Mann said that Sir Chhotu Ram and my elder, Lieutenant Colonel S. Joginder Singh Mann, both served together in the Lahore Assembly of undivided Punjab. Colonel Joginder Singh Mann won the election in 1937, and Chaudhary Sahib, while serving as the Agriculture Minister, took significant initiatives in favor of farmers and the common people. At that

time, the entire population of Punjab lived in a very comfortable environment because the people were happy and satisfied with the government's responsibilities. However, after the partition of the country,



the lack of that comfort for the entire population of undivided Punjab is still felt today. It is sad and regrettable that after the partition, the area of Punjab, which extended from Delhi-Yamuna to Jammu and Kashmir, Leh-Ladakh, and Afghanistan, was reduced due to

the division of our region into Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, which the rulers did to fulfill their political and selfish motives. This has caused great difficulties not only for Punjab but also for the people of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. It is our heartfelt desire that Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh should unite to form a larger state so that we can support each other as before and overcome all our economic, social, and religious difficulties. He said that while remembering the open-mindedness and humanitarian initiatives of Chaudhary Sir Chhotu Ram, he expressed regret over the actions of the leaders who divided Punjab into Haryana and Himachal Pradesh after the partition of the country and expressed his desire to reunite them.

## Self-Reliant and developed India should be every youth's resolve: Anurag Thakur

RAKESH BHAYANA

PANIPAT, JAN 24

During his Haryana visit, former Union Minister and Member of Parliament from Hamirpur, Anurag Thakur, received a warm welcome from BJP workers on his arrival in Panipat. At the Panipat Urban MLA's office and the railway station, MLA Pramod Kumar Vij, BJP workers, and office-bearers of the Yuva Morcha extended a cordial welcome to MP Thakur.

Under the leadership of BJP District President Dushyant Bhatt, MLA Pramod Vij's son Rahul Vij, Yuva Morcha State Secretary Virender Saini, and Yuva Morcha District President Amit Pandit, Yuva Morcha workers welcomed Anurag Thakur at the Panipat Railway Station by garlanding him with flowers and raising slogans of

'Bharat Mata Ki Jai'. Subsequently, Cabinet Minister Krishan Lal Panwar, MLA Pramod Kumar Vij, and Panipat Mayor Komal Saini, along with workers from the Panipat Urban Assembly constituency, felicitated MP Thakur and listened to his views.

While addressing the party workers, MP Anurag Thakur

is consistently setting new benchmarks of development and is establishing a distinct identity for itself in Haryana. Traditional Hukka Presented as a Mark of Respect

On the occasion, a hukka, symbolising Haryana's rich cultural heritage, was presented to MP Anurag Thakur by MLA Pramod Kumar Vij and Yuva Morcha workers. The MP expressed his gratitude to all the workers for this heartfelt gesture.

The event was attended by District General Secretary Sunil Kansal, Mahila Morcha District President Neha Sharma, former District General Secretary Krishan Chhokkar, District Secretary Sonia Gaba, senior BJP leader Sunil Soni, Yuva Morcha State Vice President Sanjeev Sanu, Sunil Kapoor, Municipal Corporation councillors, Mandal presidents, and a large number of respected BJP workers.



ur said that a self-reliant and developed India should be the sole objective of every citizen. He stated that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India's youth is continuously bringing global recognition to the nation.

Praising the development works carried out by Panipat Urban MLA Pramod Vij, Thakur said that Panipat city

## Amway India launches Nutrilite Biotin C Plus

**HISAR -** Amway India, one of the leading companies supporting health and wellbeing, has launched Nutrilite Biotin C Plus (with Zinc & Beta Carotene)—a scientifically formulated nutraceutical that contains ingredients to support healthy hair, skin and nails from within. Positioned as a beyond-biotin formulation, the product goes beyond single-ingredient supplements by delivering 100% of the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) of three essential nutrients, Biotin, Vitamin C and Zinc, along with Beta Carotene, reinforcing Amway's focus on science-backed nutrition and plant-forward wellness. Developed with Nutrilite's 90+ years of nutrition expertise, the product brings together essential nutrients aligned with recommended dietary allowances (RDA), reinforcing Amway's focus on everyday nutrition. Speaking on the launch, Rajneesh Chopra, Managing Director, Amway India, said that Consumers today increasingly recognize that overall wellbeing and external appearance are deeply interconnected. At Amway, our focus has always been on enabling people to lead more fulfilling lives through science-backed, nature-inspired nutrition. The launch of Nutrilite Biotin C Plus (with Zinc & Beta Carotene) strengthens our 'beauty from within' nutrition portfolio by offering a comprehensive nutrient, beyond-biotin formulation that supports everyday wellness needs. It also reflects our commitment to accelerating an innovative product pipeline that empowers individuals to take charge of their wellbeing from within.



## Life of late Rajinder Prasad an inspiration of justice and service: Assembly Speaker Harvinder Kalyan

SHIV KUMAR SHARMA

**KARNAK:** Haryana Assembly Speaker Harvinder Kalyan said that the life of the late Rajinder Prasad was imbued with the values of justice, discipline and human sensitivity, making him not only an outstanding judge but also a personality whose conduct continues to inspire society.

Paying tributes to the late Rajinder Prasad at a condolence meeting held at the Karneshwar Temple in Karnal, the Speaker said that during his judicial service, his judgments reflected a balanced blend of law, morality and humanity. He added that Rajinder Prasad's contribution as the first judge from the Valmiki community in Haryana stood as a symbol of social harmony and equal opportunity.

Harvinder Kalyan said that even after retirement, the late Rajinder Prasad continued to serve society through various platforms, demonstrating that true service goes beyond the boundaries of official position. Expressing condolences to the bereaved family, he said that the values adopted by Haryana Assembly Secretary Rajiv Prasad in public service are a direct reflection of the upbringing and values imparted by his father.

**Excellent results in BA fourth semester at Indira Gandhi Women's College**



**SANJAY SHARMA**  
**KAITHAL:** The BA fourth semester (NEP) examination results of Indira Gandhi PG Women's College have been declared and have been described as highly commendable, with students delivering an outstanding performance and bringing laurels to the institution.

Sharing details, the college principal said that as per the recently declared university results of the BA fourth year, as many as 129 students secured an SGPA of 9 at the university level. Among them, nine students achieved an impressive 9.80 SGPA to secure the first position in the college. Two students secured the second position with 9.70 SGPA, while 18 students stood third with 9.60 SGPA. In addition, 129 students scored 9 SGPA and 130 students secured 8 SGPA, reflecting the institution's strong academic standards and consistent quality of education.

The nine top-performing students who secured 9.80 SGPA include Sonia, Roma, Vandana, Muskan, Khushi, Tamanna, Kashish, Kiran and Savina.

## Policybazaar for business introduced enroute

**CHANDIGARH:** Policybazaar for Business (PBF), the corporate arm of one of India's largest insurance marketplace, has introduced Enroute, a platform designed to simplify marine and transit insurance operations. The issuance of certifications and declarations, a process that was traditionally time-consuming, can now be completed in just a few clicks. The platform empowers businesses to efficiently handle their domestic and international trade requirements.

Policybazaar for Business offers comprehensive marine insurance solutions covering inland transit, import and export shipments, annual marine policies, single transit covers, and tailored solutions for diverse industries such as manufacturing, retail, logistics, and e-commerce. These offerings are critical for businesses as marine and transit insurance protects goods against risks like damage, theft, loss, or accidents during transportation-risks that can significantly impact cash flows and business continuity if left uninsured.

To avoid claim denials, companies and businesses must submit monthly declarations for domestic policies. They are also required to provide transit-specific insurance certificates for import and export shipments under annual marine and transit insurance policies. The manual execution of these formalities would often be cumbersome for the customer. PBF simplifies this process with an easy-to-use platform that reduces administrative workload, enhances accuracy and ensures smoother compliance. "Marine and transit insurance customers often faced operational hurdles due to fragmented platforms and complicated modes of declaration. The new platform is designed to benefit the customers by streamlining the entire process.

## ASF Insignia secures Rs. 1,250 crore capital commitment from Alpha Alternatives

**CHANDIGARH:** ASF Insignia, a large integrated commercial IT office campus strategically located in Vatsal Valley, Gurgaon, having good connectivity with South Delhi, Faridabad and the Gurgaon CBD, has secured a commitment of equity and quasi-equity investment of approximately Rs. 1,250 crore from Mumbai-headquartered Alpha Alternatives. The transaction reflects continued institutional interest in high-quality office real estate assets in the National Capital Region. The investment will be infused in tranches - the first tranche of approximately 7450 crore from which is already received. The capital will be deployed to improve the capital structure of ASF entities through debt reduction, support targeted infrastructure & amenity upgrades, building refinements, and enhance occupier experience across the campus, with the objective of revitalising leasing momentum and repositioning the asset as a long term prime commercial office project. Commenting on the development, Mr. Anil Saraf, ASF Insignia, said that the investment from Alpha Alternatives reinforces the long-term fundamentals of ASF Insignia and our strategy of building an institutionally driven office ecosystem. The focus is on balance sheet strength, asset quality and creating a campus that continues to meet the evolving needs of large enterprises and global capability centres, on cost optimal basis.



CHANDIGARH

SUNDAY, JANUARY 25, 2026

## EDITORIAL

## 'Mother of all deals' to redraw global economic map

The participation of European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in the Republic Day celebrations as the Chief Guest carries significance that goes beyond diplomatic optics. It sends a crucial message of realignment of the global economic map at a time when the world is grappling with unpredictable and whimsical tariff policies of the United States. During her recent address at the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, she described the imminent trade agreement with India as the "mother of all deals", indicating the potential of its impact on global geopolitics. The renewed momentum to finalise the historic Free Trade Agreement was evident during German Chancellor Friedrich Merz's visit to India earlier this month, which underscored Europe's growing recognition of India not merely as a market, but as a long-term partner in global growth, technology, and resilience. The signing of the FTA will be just the starting line for businesses on both sides. The real impact of the India-EU FTA will be shaped by how effectively it is implemented, how ambitiously industry engages with it, and how decisively both governments support collaboration beyond tariff reductions and legal frameworks. The deal presents a win-win situation for both. For Europe, struggling with energy shocks, slowing growth, and an uneasy dependence on China, India offers scale, stability, and a democratic counterweight in the Indo-Pacific. For India, it opens privileged access to one of the world's largest consumer markets, accelerates technology transfers, and strengthens its ambition to become a global manufacturing and services hub. Europe brings deep expertise in advanced engineering, clean technologies, precision manufacturing, and trusted regulatory systems. India brings scale, cost competitiveness, a large and skilled workforce, and one of the world's fastest-growing domestic markets. The FTA has the potential to align these strengths far more systematically than has been possible so far. Across India, European companies are increasingly moving beyond sales and assembly operations to establish manufacturing, design, and engineering hubs. When European technology and Indian capability are integrated effectively, the outcome is globally competitive. Today, nearly 6,000 European companies operate in India, supporting millions of jobs across sectors such as clean energy, mobility, digital infrastructure, aerospace, advanced materials, and manufacturing. These are sectors where India and Europe share long-term priorities. At present, India-EU trade and investment are concentrated in a limited number of Indian States and a handful of EU member countries. This leaves large parts of both economies underrepresented. Many European SMEs, particularly from Central and Eastern Europe, are actively seeking reliable global partners. At the same time, several Indian States are positioning themselves as manufacturing and services hubs with global ambitions. An effective FTA can help widen these corridors, connecting new Indian States with new European regions and integrating them into shared value chains.



Giridhar Aramane

India's recent progress in infrastructure development is often described through numbers—kilometres of highways built, airports operationalised, or capital expenditure expanded. These indicators are important and impressive, but they only partially explain the transformation underway. Equally consequential has been a change in how large public projects are governed, coordinated and executed. Over the past decade, this shift has altered outcomes across sectors, particularly for projects long constrained by administrative fragmentation and delayed decisionmaking.

When the present government assumed office in 2014, the infrastructure sector was marked by significant stress. Projects worth nearly Rs 8.8 lakh crore—about eight per cent of GDP—were stalled.

Infrastructure-linked non-performing assets had crossed 11 per cent, and delays in land acquisition, environmental

and forest clearances, and inter-agency coordination had become systemic. The policy challenge was therefore not limited to expanding investment; it required correcting institutional weaknesses that impeded execution.

It was in this context that PRAGATI (Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation) was introduced in March 2015. Conceived as a structured, whole-of-government review mechanism chaired by the Prime Minister, PRAGATI sought to address persistent bottlenecks through regular monitoring and coordinated resolution. Its purpose was straightforward: to ensure that large public projects did not remain stalled due to avoidable administrative delays.

The Prime Minister's role in chairing these reviews lent authority and urgency to the process. More importantly, it signalled that execution and timelines mattered, and that unresolved coordination issues would not be allowed to drift indefinitely. At the same time, PRAGATI was designed to function through existing institutional channels, strengthening accountability across ministries, states, and district administrations rather than bypassing them.

The crucial distinction that set PRAGATI apart from other governance mechanisms was the singleminded focus of the Prime Minister, his grasp of sectoral detail, and the unwavering regularity of reviews. Three-hour sessions held every month, personally chaired by the Prime Minister, sent shockwaves through the administrative system. When the highest executive authority, armed with meticulous preparation, directly confronts inaction and blame-shifting, lethargy and red tape

have no place to hide. These meetings combined firm rebukes, pointed exposure of inconsistencies, and data-driven challenges to recalcitrant officials, with appeals reminding them of their duty to the nation. The outcome has been a remarkable surge in infrastructure delivery over the past decade, a momentum that continues.

Supported by a digital project monitoring platform, PRAGATI enabled systematic tracking of issues and time-bound follow-up. Responsibilities were clearly assigned—from secretaries of central ministries and state chief secretaries to district collectors and field-level officers—reducing ambiguity in ownership, particularly where issues cut across jurisdictions.

The impact of this change is best understood not only through aggregated data, but also through individual project trajectories. One such example is the Bhadrachalam-Kovur railway line. The

foundation stone was laid in 1999, when I was the District Magistrate there. For nearly eighteen years thereafter, the project saw little progress, with no meaningful allocation or sanction, despite its regional importance. Only after PRAGATI reviews began flagging such long-pending projects did momentum return. In 2022, a major portion of the line was finally inaugurated—an outcome reflecting not a change in technical feasibility, but in institutional attention and follow-through.

A similar shift was visible in the early months of PRAGATI itself. In 2015, while visiting the offices of MMRDA and CIDCO to study town planning schemes in the Mumbai metropolitan region, I was perplexed by the unusual urgency in the corridors. Officials were fielding tense

enquiries ahead of a PRAGATI meeting scheduled for that afternoon. At issue was a clearance from the Ministry of Environment for the Navi Mumbai International Airport—pending for several years without resolution. Shortly before the meeting, the approval arrived by fax. The clearance itself was not the achievement; what had changed was the expectation that long-pending decisions would now be scrutinized and explained.

Over the past decade, PRAGATI has reviewed and facilitated progress on infrastructure projects worth over 85 lakh crore across transport, power and social sectors, resolving more than 3,000 issues across 382 projects. These figures reflect not only scale, but a move towards more predictable and coordinated execution.

The transport sector, particularly national highways, illustrates this clearly. Through PRAGATI, 325 projects of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, valued at approximately 4.5 lakh crore, were taken up for focused intervention. Issues related to land acquisition, forest and wildlife clearances, and utility shifting were resolved with a success rate exceeding 95 per cent. The average time to address such constraints fell from over a year to less than three months.

These governance improvements translated into tangible outcomes. Projects such as the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway, Urban Extension Road-II in Delhi, and the Ambala-Kotputli High-Speed Corridor progressed steadily after prolonged delays. Over this period, the pace of highway construction rose from about 12 km per day in 2014 to around 35 km per day, reflecting both higher capacity and improved coordination.

PRAGATI also operated alongside a broader set of reforms strengthening the infrastructure lifecycle. Integrated planning under the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan reduced siloed decision-making. Digital platforms for land acquisition and environmental clearances shortened approval timelines, while reforms in contracting, dispute resolution and project-readiness norms improved risk allocation and private-sector confidence.

It also heralded a new phase in cooperative federalism. Setting aside political differences, several state governments used this forum to accelerate infrastructure development, translating the principle of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas into administrative practice.

Taken together, these measures have supported a sustained increase in public capital expenditure and a more consistent delivery pipeline, with outcomes visible across highways, railways, airports and urban transport systems. The broader lesson is clear: infrastructure delivery depends as much on governance design as on financial commitment.

As India moves towards Vision 2047, the scale of planned infrastructure expansion will place increasing demands on institutional capacity. Sustaining progress will require embedding these governance practices more deeply across sectors and states. In this sense, PRAGATI is best understood not as a one-time intervention, but as part of a continuing effort to align ambition with execution in India's infrastructure programme.

(The author is Former Secretary of MoRTH.)

## Prince Harry, UK PM Starmer condemn Trump's remarks on NATO troops to Afghanistan



UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Prince Harry condemned the remarks by US President Donald Trump about sending troops to the Afghan frontlines, CNN reported.

Their reactions came after Trump, in an interview with Fox News, spoke about the US involvement in NATO and said that Washington received little in return when compared to its contributions. "Will they be there if we ever needed them?" Trump asked, "I'm not sure of that."

With regards to NATO members sending troops to Afghanistan, CNN reported that Trump said, "We've never needed them. We have never really asked anything of them. You know, they'll say they sent some

troops to Afghanistan, or this or that. And they did - they stayed a little back, a little off the front lines," he said.

In a video message on X, the UK PM paid tributes to the 457 armed forces personnel who lost their lives in Afghanistan and recalled their courage, bravery and sacrifice and several of those injured with life-changing injuries.

"I consider President Trump's remarks to be insulting and frankly appalling," he said.

A key principle of the NATO alliance is Article 5, under which all members agree to come to the defence of any member state if it is attacked. Article 5 has been invoked once, by the United States after the

September 11, 2001, terror attacks. CNN reported that around 3,500 allied troops died in the conflict, of whom 2,456 were Americans and 457 were British.

The Duke of Sussex, who served in the British Army with two tours of Afghanistan, issued a strong statement via his spokesperson on January 23 in response to Trump, People reported.

As per People, Harry said, "In 2001, NATO invoked Article 5 for the first-and-only-time in history. It meant that every allied nation was obliged to stand with the United States in Afghanistan, in pursuit of our shared security. Allies answered that call. I served there. I made lifelong friends there."

## Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu engages global leaders at WEF 2026 in Davos

Minister of Civil Aviation, Ram Mohan Naidu, held a series of high-level engagements, strategic meetings and multilateral interactions at the World Economic Forum (WEF) 2026 in Davos, reaffirming India's growing leadership in aviation, infrastructure, sustainability, innovation and global economic cooperation.

According to a press release, at WEF 2026, the Minister participated in the session on "Scaling up Autonomous Mobility", where he outlined India's structured approach of "Enable, Deploy and Scale." Highlighting progressive policy frameworks such as the Drone Rules 2021, real-world applications, including medical deliveries in remote regions, and India's preparedness for eVTOLs and autonomous aviation, he underscored how regulation, digital infrastructure, and manufacturing strength are being leveraged to address congestion, access, and logistics challenges at scale.



The Minister held a strategic discussion with Francisco Gomes Neto, CEO of Embraer, at the Congress Centre in Davos, focusing on strengthening Embraer's presence in the Indian aviation ecosystem through strategic partnerships with Indian industry stakeholders.

On the sidelines of the Forum, Ram Mohan Naidu conducted a series of productive bilateral meetings with Pragati Group, Skildai, and IndianOil

Corporation Ltd, exploring opportunities for collaboration across aviation, infrastructure and energy sectors, as per the release. He noted that the WEF platform provides a vital opportunity to engage with global stakeholders and strengthen partnerships to unlock new growth avenues for India amid global economic uncertainty. In a significant diplomatic engagement, the Minister held discussions with Apostolos Tzitzikostas, EU Transport Commissioner, focusing on sustainability, innovation and EU-India cooperation in the transport ecosystem, including coordination between EASA and DGCA to further enhance aviation safety standards. As per the release, Ram Mohan Naidu was honoured to be welcomed at the Maharashtra Pavilion by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, acknowledging Maharashtra's governance reforms, investor-friendly policies and future-ready development vision that position the state as a key driver of India's growth. At the Country Strategy Dialogue session, the Minister spoke as a panelist alongside Ashwini Vaishnaw and Pralhad Joshi, highlighting India's emergence as a global innovation and investment destination under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He noted that with Indian airlines set to induct nearly 100 aircraft annually over the next 15 years and a vision of 350+ airports by 2047, India is rapidly emerging as a global hub for aircraft component manufacturing.

## POEMS

## The Before Picture

It's complicated, my relationship status with progress. I often prefer

the "before" picture. The future is where I'm going only because

I have no choice, because time moves in one direction, dragging

a bit of itself behind like meat.

An unseen hand keeps

tugging it—time's rabbit leg, time's hunk of red venison—

just out of reach. Did I just describe the future as bait? Am I strung

along? I know, when I arrive there, it won't be there. Won't be that.

I'll be now, the way it is right now. And again. Refresh,

refresh, refresh. The before pile up behind me. It's now again.

By Maggie Smith

## "Reflects India's commitment to justice, national sovereignty": Iran thanks New Delhi for opposing "unjust" UNHRC resolution

Iran's ambassador to India, Mohammad Fathali, appreciated India's stand on the United Nations Human Rights Council's (UNHRC) 39th special session to address the deteriorating human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

India voted against the resolution at the UNHRC calling for increased scrutiny of the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, aligning itself with a group of countries that opposed what they described as a selective and politically driven initiative. The resolution sought to address what was termed a deteriorating human rights situation in Iran. India's vote placed it among a minority of states rejecting the measure, while several others abstained.

The resolution was adopted at the session by 25 votes in

favour, seven against and 14 abstentions.

Reacting to India's vote, in a statement on X, Iranian Ambassador to India Mohammad Fathali welcomed New Delhi's stance, saying, "I extend my sincere gratitude to the Government of India for its principled and firm support of I.R. of Iran at the UNHRC, including opposing an unjust and politically motivated resolution. This stance reflects India's commitment to justice, multilateralism, and national sovereignty."

Earlier, noting that the history of the relationship and collaboration between Iran and India dates back hundreds of years before the emergence of Islam, Abdul Majid Hakeem Ilahi, the Representative of Iran's Supreme Leader, said that India philosophical texts were studied in Iran.

He said India's



achievements in mathematics, astronomy, and medicine were studied in Iran and people of Iran have always learned about the relationship between the two ancient civilisations.

"The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran always insists on good relations and collaboration between Iran and India. I hope that in Chabahar they will work nicely... The history of the relationship and collaboration between Iran and India goes to 3,000 years ago, before the emergence of Islam. Even at that time, we were using philosophical books of India," he said.

"Even at the university, we studied philosophical books of India, and in mathematics, astronomy, and medicine, we were also using your civilisation, your knowledge, and we always learned through our schools the

relationship between Iran and India," he added.

Meanwhile, Iranian state television has released the first official death toll from the recent anti-government protests that engulfed the country, reporting that 3,117 people were killed during the crackdown, as reported by Al Jazeera. In a statement carried by Press TV on Wednesday, Iran's Martyrs Foundation said that 2,427 of those killed in the demonstrations were civilians and security forces.

The US-based Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA) has said 4,519 were killed during the wave of demonstrations, including 4,251 protesters, 197 security personnel, 35 people aged under 18 and 38 bystanders who it says were neither protesters nor security personnel.

CHANDIGARH

SUNDAY, JANUARY 25, 2026

## NEWS BRIEF

Children of Bal Ashram Sujanpur to visit Jaipur during February holidays: Gandharva Rathore

ANIL KUMAR HAMIRPUR: Deputy Commissioner Gandharva Rathore has said that as part of the state government's efforts to ensure a dignified life for destitute children, along with providing all essential facilities, arrangements are also being made for their recreation and educational exposure. In this continuation, children of the Bal Ashram in Sujanpur will be taken on a tour of Jaipur during the February holidays. The Deputy Commissioner said that the tour for 13 children of the Bal Ashram along with staff members is being sponsored under the Corporate Social Responsibility scheme through the Venus Foundation. Coordination regarding the tour is being carried out with Venus Foundation official Ekta Thakur. According to the proposed programme, the children will depart for Chandigarh by road on February 8 and from there travel to Jaipur by the Vande Bharat Express. They will stay at a hotel in Jaipur. On February 9, 10 and 11, the children will visit several historical, religious and tourist sites

AGENCY SHIMLA, JAN 24

While tourists are rejoicing over fresh snowfall in Himachal Pradesh, local residents, farmers, and orchardists are pinning long-term hopes on a good tourism season and a productive agricultural year.

However, heavy snowfall has also caused widespread disruption, with transportation severely affected across several districts.

Due to snowfall in the upper reaches of Shimla, Kullu, Lahaul-Spiti, Chamba, and Kinnaur districts, more than 600 roads have been blocked, creating difficulties for both locals and visitors. Efforts are underway to restore connectivity.

Speaking to an news agency, Himachal Pradesh PWD Minister Vikramaditya Singh said that the snowfall came after a long dry spell and has brought relief to farmers and orchardists. "After a very long dry spell, this snowfall has occurred in our state, which has brought happiness among farmers and orchardists. However, snowfall also leads to road blockages. I am in



constant touch with departmental officials, JCBs and Poclain machines are continuously engaged in clearing roads in hilly areas," he said.

The minister added that higher reaches have received 2.5 to 3 feet of snow, while high-altitude areas have recorded up to 4 feet, making road clearance time-consuming.

"As per the latest information, around 600 small and big roads have been affected, including link roads and major district roads. We are making all efforts to open them at the earliest," Singh told ANI.

Appealing to tourists, Vikramaditya Singh urged patience and cooperation. "I request all tourists visiting Himachal Pradesh to maintain the beauty of the state and not panic if there are temporary difficulties. The administration, police, PWD, and all concerned departments are working round the clock to ensure people reach safe places," he said.

He further informed that snow-clearing machines have been deployed extensively, including within Shimla Municipal Corporation

## Villagers benefited from health check-up camp in Ghalluwal

AVINASH CHAUHAN

AMB: The MP Mobile Health Service Team organized a health check-up and awareness camp in village Ghalluwal. At the camp, 63 people were screened, while 38 patients underwent necessary medical tests. During the camp, patients were provided medical advice



Ruchi, Manish Thakur, and Nihal Singh provided services. Pradhan Sona Devi, Deputy Pradhan Anil Jaswal, Anganwadi worker Rinku Devi, Asha worker Saroj Devi and local people were also present in the camp and helped in making the camp successful.

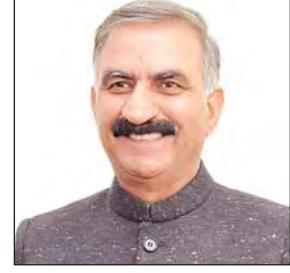
## CM extends warm greetings on 56th Statehood Day: Reaffirms vision for prosperous Himachal

DINESH AGARWAL SHIMLA, JAN 24

Chief Minister Thakur Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu has extended his heartiest congratulations to the people of Himachal Pradesh on the historic occasion of the state's 56th Statehood Day. In his message, the Chief Minister underscored the significance of this milestone, noting that the day serves as a reminder of the state's remarkable journey and the collective resilience of its people.

Reflecting on the state's architectural and political heritage, the Chief Minister paid rich tributes to the visionary leaders who championed the cause of formation of Himachal Pradesh. He specifically honored the "Architect of Himachal," Dr. Y.S. Parmar, along with other prominent personalities whose dedication and foresight paved the way for the state's socio-economic development and unique identity.

The Chief Minister also



expressed deep gratitude for the unforgettable contribution of the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi. He recalled the historic day of 25th January 1971, when, amidst a heavy blanket of snow at Shimla's iconic Ridge Ground, she officially announced the grant of full statehood to Himachal Pradesh. This moment, he noted, remains etched in the state's history as the dawn of a new era of self-governance and progress. Looking toward the future, Chief Minister Sukhu emphasized that the state government is working with a mission-driven approach to transform Himachal Pradesh's economic landscape.

## Snowfall boosts tourism hopes but disrupts life in Himachal, over 600 roads blocked



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### Youth Congress holds key meeting in Hamirpur to strengthen 'MGNREGA Bachao Sangram'



Sangram'

ANIL KUMAR

HAMIRPUR: A significant meeting of the Himachal Pradesh Youth Congress was held in the Hamirpur Assembly constituency on Saturday under the chairmanship of Rajat Rana. The meeting focused on a detailed discussion on public interest issues, including the 'MGNREGA Bachao Sangram'. The meetings were organised as part of the 'Chalo Panchayat Ki Ora - MGNREGA Bachao Sangram' campaign, aimed at strengthening the organisation at the panchayat level, raising a strong voice against attempts to weaken the welfare-oriented MGNREGA scheme, and deliberating on upcoming protest programmes and strategies. Youth members were urged to visit villages, create public awareness, unite to protect the rights of labourers, and strengthen the movement from panchayats to the streets. Speakers emphasised that a strong panchayat ensures the security of workers and contributes to building a stronger India. Several senior leaders of the Youth Congress were present on the occasion, including Himachal Pradesh Youth Congress vice president Abdul, district Hamirpur

### Voters' Day celebrated with enthusiasm at Govt Sr Sec School, Chamboh



Chamboh

ANIL KUMAR

CHAMBOH: Voters' Day was celebrated with enthusiasm at the Government Senior Secondary School, Chamboh recently, with a series of awareness-oriented activities involving teachers and students. The programme began with an address by Manoj Verma, Lecturer in Physics, who spoke on the importance of voting in a democracy. Following his address, he administered the Voter Awareness Pledge to teachers and students, urging them to actively participate in the electoral process. On the occasion, students Sanjana Thakur and Diya Sharma recited poems highlighting the significance of voting. Students also displayed posters and charts focusing on Voters' Day and the importance of electoral participation. The exhibition of posters and charts emerged as the main attraction of the programme. The event concluded with an address by Sweep Nodal Officer Devender Thakur, who congratulated

### Himachal Pradesh sets historic education push, over Rs 10,000 cr allocated as Rohit Thakur lays foundation stone of Rs 1cr examination hall in Bilaspur

AJAY KUMAR UPADHYAY BILASPUR, JAN 24

Himachal Pradesh has taken a decisive and visionary leap towards transforming its education system, with the State Government earmarking more than Rs 10,000 crore for the education sector in the upcoming financial year. This bold commitment, amounting to nearly 17 percent of the total state budget, underlines the government's resolve to build a future-ready, inclusive, and employment-oriented education ecosystem. Education Minister Rohit Thakur on Saturday laid the foundation stone of a modern examination hall to be constructed at a cost of Rs 1 crore at Government Senior Secondary School, Panjgai, in Bilaspur sub-division. On the occasion, he also presided over



the school's prize distribution ceremony, felicitating meritorious students and encouraging them to strive for excellence. Addressing the gathering, the Minister highlighted that massive investment in education infrastructure, teacher recruitment, and academic reforms is yielding visible results. He said Himachal Pradesh continues to strengthen its educational foundations, supported by

competencies from an early age. Pre-primary education is also being expanded across thousands of schools, supported by the appointment of ECCE tutors and child-centric learning material. The Minister informed that around 8,000 teachers have been appointed, with more recruitments underway to ensure optimal student-teacher ratios. Smart classrooms, digital libraries, virtual learning, teacher training, international exposure programs, and inclusive education initiatives have further elevated academic standards. Significantly, Himachal Pradesh has recorded notable improvement in national education rankings, reflecting the success of sustained reforms and the government's unwavering commitment to quality education.

### CM's historic decisions creating new opportunities for talented sportspersons: Sunil Sharma Bittu

RAJNEESH SHARMA

HAMIRPUR, JAN 24

Chief Minister's Political Advisor Sunil Sharma Bittu on Saturday said that Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu has taken several major decisions to motivate, encourage, and train talented sportspersons of the state, while also providing them with the best possible opportunities to showcase their abilities.

Addressing talented athletes during an award ceremony organised by the Hamirpur District School Sports Association at the Town Hall here, Sunil Sharma Bittu said that soon after assuming office, the Chief Minister doubled the diet money for school sportspersons. He said this

step was aimed at strengthening the nutritional support system for young athletes.

He further said that for school sportspersons participating in national-level competitions, the Chief Minister has provided the facility of AC class railway travel and, in special circumstances, air travel. He described these decisions as

unprecedented, noting that no previous government had taken such significant steps for budding athletes.

Highlighting infrastructure development, Sunil Sharma Bittu said a world-class indoor stadium is nearing completion at Nadaun at a cost of around Rs 125 crore, calling it a major gift from the Chief Minister to the sportspersons of the state.

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**KHADOOR SAHIB (SARBJOT SINGH SANDHA):** The Republic Day was celebrated with great respect, devotion, and National spirit at Guru Amar Dass Adarsh Institute, Goindwal Sahib. A special assembly was organized, where teachers and students expressed their respect and dedication to the country. The students presented patriotic performances, including choreography, songs, and dances, which captivated the audience. The students showcased the country's unity, integrity, and sacrifices through their performances. The Managing Director Dr. Jatinderpal Singh Randhawa and the Principal of the school, Mrs. Manisha Sood congratulated everyone on Republic Day, praising the students and teachers for their hard work, saying such events strengthen patriotism.



## Dr. V.K. Paul, Member NITI Aayog graces IMTECH's 42nd Foundation Day

GAURAV GOEL  
CHANDIGARH, JAN 24



CSIR-Institute of Microbial Technology (IMTECH), Chandigarh today celebrated its 42nd Foundation Day by organizing several events including the much-anticipated Foundation Day Lecture delivered by Dr. Vinod K Paul, Member, NITI Aayog. Dr. Paul who is leading the health, nutrition and education verticals at NITI Aayog, delivered this year's foundation day lecture on "Future Pandemic Preparedness: What we must do now".

Dr. Paul mentioned that entire efforts of the Government of India for mitigating challenges posed by COVID-19 pandemic was driven by science and evidence with Government, Nation and Society being stakeholders of the action plan. He appreciated IMTECH's efforts during the pandemic for undertaking

the cornerstones of future pandemic strategy". He laid down a road map for IMTECH scientists exhorting them to pursue research on priority pathogens that have the potential to cause future pandemics.

Developing counter measures upto Phase II clinical trial, working in partnership with the industry, creating efficient supply chains and demonstrate capabilities and speed should be the key for India for any pandemic mitigation strategy.

Dr. Sanjeev Khosla, Director, CSIR-IMTECH while welcoming the guests and faculty to IMTECH's 42nd foundation day apprised the audience with the institute's achievements in the last one year. Speaking at the occasion he said "Innovating with Microbes and Impacting lives has been the guiding force for the scientists and researchers of IMTECH family over the last 4 decades.

## Guru Kripa Sewa Sansthan to hold 28th free piles & eye check-up and operation camp on February 8



AJAY MALHOTRA  
FATEHGHAR SAHIB, JAN 24

A comprehensive meeting of the Guru Kripa Sewa Sansthan (GKSS) was convened today at Sirhind, during which the President of the Sansthan announced the organization of the 28th Free Piles & Eye Check-up and Operation Camp. The camp, being held in collaboration with Vishav Jagriti Mission, Sirhind, will take place on Sunday, February 8, 2026, from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM at Guru Kripa Sewa Sansthan, Cinema Road, Opposite Rakesh Mitter Factory, Sirhind, District Fatehgarh Sahib.

According to the members, this annual camp aims to provide free, accessible, and quality healthcare to the economically weaker and needy sections of society. Over the years, thousands of

patients have availed the benefit of free consultation, check-ups, and surgeries, making the initiative a major social support system for the region.

During the meeting, it was highlighted that Guru Kripa Sewa Sansthan has always been at the forefront of social welfare activities, including free medical camps, eye donation drives, and blanket distribution.

The Sansthan also operates laboratory services at highly nominal charges, ensuring that essential diagnostic tests remain within reach of the general public. Adding to its healthcare initiatives, GKSS

## On 37th RSM, safety awareness and eye camp held



**BHAWANIGARH (SUMER GARG):** In connection with the 37th road safety month (RSM), a road safety awareness and eye check-up Camp was organised at the truck union, Bhawanigarh, by the RTO office, Sangrur; Traffic Police, Sangrur; and the CMO office, Sangrur.

Mr. Karnbir Singh Chheena, RTO Sangrur; Mr. Karnbir Singh, ADTO Sangrur; Mr. Hardev Singh, ASI (traffic education cell); ASI Randhir Singh (Traffic In-charge, Bhawanigarh); and head constable Ranjit Singh (traffic Police, Bhawanigarh) participated in the camp.

The eye check-up camp was conducted by Kulveer Singh, ophthalmic officer, health department. During the camp, participants were made aware of various aspects of road safety, traffic signs, first aid, and essential documents. In addition, truck drivers were also given a lecture on safe and responsible driving practices.

## Using Punjab VS photos and videos as weapons to issue copyright strikes and Shut Down Independent Media channels is illegal: Pargat Singh

**JALANDHAR (PARAMJIT SINGH):** Former Education Minister and MLA Pargat Singh has raised a serious and sensitive issue by writing a letter to the Election Commission. He has demanded clarification and directives on this matter from the Election Commission. He has also written a letter to Vidhan Sabha Speaker Kultar Singh Sandhu. In these letters, he has accused the Aam Aadmi Party of illegally issuing copyright strikes from its official page on social media channels, leading to their suspension or deletion. He has demanded an investigation into this dictatorial decision by the government and action against those found guilty. Mr. Singh stated that the ruling Aam Aadmi Party in Punjab is using photos and videos from the Punjab Vidhan Sabha along with images related to the Chief Minister's official duties, from its official social media platforms to initiate copyright strikes. As a result, some independent media platforms and journalists' social media accounts, which have been raising legitimate questions about government policies or misuse of government resources, have been suspended or shut down.

NEWS BRIEF

Aaditya Dachalwal takes over as DC Rupnagar



**BAHADURJEET SINGH RUPNAGAR:** 2016 batch IAS officer Aaditya Dachalwal assumed his office as the Deputy Commissioner of Rupnagar today. Talking to the media after assuming office, Aaditya Dachalwal said that solving the problems of the people of Rupnagar district on priority basis, providing transparent administration, taking the benefits of government schemes to the common people and taking the district to heights in every field by implementing development works will be his main priority. He said that the focus will be on making the benefits of government services reach the homes of residents of the district in a simple way. Along with this, health, education, drinking water, sanitation and infrastructure will be further strengthened.

**Republic Day celebrated with pomp at green field convent school Dangarh**



**BALWINDER AZAD BARNALA:** Republic Day was celebrated with pomp at Green Field Convent (Senior Secondary) School Dangarh. On this occasion, Principal Dr. Manpreet Kaur, Vice Principal Jasvir Kaur, Incharge Ajinderpal Tiwana and all the staff saluted the tricolor flag and a parade was also held by the children. On this occasion, Madam Mala Garg enlightened the children about Republic Day. She said that Republic Day is celebrated across the country every year on 26th January. She also said that our Constitution came into effect on 26th January 1950. On this day, our country became a secular and democratic country. On this occasion, a cultural program was presented by the children.

**CM Health Insurance Scheme to become historic milestone in Punjab's healthcare sector: Saurabh Behal**



**VERMA GURDASPUR:** Newly appointed Chairman of the Improvement Trust and senior Aam Aadmi Party leader Saurabh Behal stated that the Chief Minister Health Insurance Scheme will prove to be a historic and transformative milestone in Punjab's healthcare sector. He said that Punjab has become the first state in the country to implement a scheme providing free medical treatment up to Rs 10 lakh. Saurabh Behal informed that on January 22, the Punjab government took a historic step by launching the Chief Minister Health Insurance Scheme.

Under this ambitious scheme, every family in the state will be entitled to free and cashless medical treatment up to Rs 10 lakh. Saurabh Behal added that the scheme was formally launched from Mohali by Aam Aadmi Party's National Convener Mr. Arvind Kejriwal and Punjab Chief Minister Mr. Bhagwant Singh Mann.

**AICTE-ATAL sponsored FDP organised at Bharat Group of Colleges**



**SARDULGARH (KULWINDER KARWAL):** The Department of Mechanical Engineering, Bharat Group of Colleges, Sardulgarh, successfully organised a six-day online Faculty Development Programme (FDP) on the theme "Performance Characteristics of Internal Combustion Engines Using Alternative Fuels." The programme was held from January 19 to January 24 under the sponsorship of AICTE-ATAL.

Only 13 colleges and universities across Punjab were selected to conduct this prestigious FDP, including renowned institutions such as NIT Jalandhar, Thapar Institute of Engineering and Technology, Patiala, Lovely Professional University, and Chandigarh University.

Bharat Group of Colleges was among the selected institutions, marking a significant achievement for the campus. College CEO Mr. Rajesh Garg and Admission Director Mr. Mohit Kumar Jain expressed pride over the institution being chosen for this opportunity, stating that it reflects the academic credibility and commitment of the college towards quality education and research.

**DSP Garhshankar clears encroachments on Mahilpur-Jaijon road, issues 35 traffic challans**



**HOSHIARPUR (DALJEET AJNOHA):** DSP Garhshankar Daljeet Singh Khakh led a team to remove illegal encroachments by shopkeepers on Mahilpur-Jaijon Road in Mahilpur town, Hoshiarpur district. The operation cleared goods placed outside shops on public land, while issuing challans to about 35 vehicles parked in no-parking zones. Shopkeepers received strict warnings of future legal action. The drive addressed recurring accidents caused by these encroachments, including a recent incident where a young girl's legs were injured in a crash. DSP Khakh emphasized that shopkeepers must keep goods within their premises or face stringent enforcement. He added that police are deploying staff for traffic control in Mahilpur and nearby areas like Kot Fatihi and Garhshankar, with solutions promised soon. Local leaders praised the action.

**Crackdown on crime: 30 FIRs filed, 38 held in Sangrur**



**DHURI (RAJESHWAR PINTU):** Under the Punjab Government's 'War Against Drugs' initiative, the Sangrur police have executed a massive week-long crackdown, resulting in the registration of 30 FIRs and the arrest of 38 suspects. The operations, conducted from January 17 to January 23, targeted drug trafficking, illicit liquor trade, and illegal gambling across the district.

Detailed performance, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Sarbjit Singh Chahal said 30 smugglers were arrested in 22 separate cases. The police recovered a significant quantity of contraband, including 99 gm of heroin, 205 gm of opium, 15 kg of poppy husk, 150 gm of sulphur, and 505 intoxicating tablets. Simultaneously, a drive against illicit liquor led to eight arrests. The police seized a large stock of domestic and branded alcohol, alongside 170 litres of lahan (raw liquor). In a stern move to strike at the financial roots of the drug trade, the administration used bulldozers to demolish illegal properties built with drug money. Two such structures belonging to smugglers in Harijan village were razed on January 22.

**Using Punjab VS photos and videos as weapons to issue copyright strikes and Shut Down Independent Media channels is illegal: Pargat Singh**



**JALANDHAR (PARAMJIT SINGH):** Former Education Minister and MLA Pargat Singh has raised a serious and sensitive issue by writing a letter to the Election Commission. He has demanded clarification and directives on this matter from the Election Commission. He has also written a letter to Vidhan Sabha Speaker Kultar Singh Sandhu. In these letters, he has accused the Aam Aadmi Party of illegally issuing copyright strikes from its official page on social media channels, leading to their suspension or deletion.

He has demanded an investigation into this dictatorial decision by the government and action against those found guilty. Mr. Singh stated that the ruling Aam Aadmi Party in Punjab is using photos and videos from the Punjab Vidhan Sabha along with images related to the Chief Minister's official duties, from its official social media platforms to initiate copyright strikes. As a result, some independent media platforms and journalists' social media accounts, which have been raising legitimate questions about government policies or misuse of government resources, have been suspended or shut down.

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## NEWS BRIEF

BJP Nayagaon Mandal's newly elected president, Bhupinder Singh Bhupi, who is serving his third term

J.K. BATTIA  
CHANDIGARH: The newly elected president of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Nayagaon Mandal, Bhupinder Singh Bhupi, who is serving his third term, has formally announced his new executive committee, following the guidelines of the Honorable District President of Mohali, Sanjeev Vashisth. The formation of this new executive committee reflects the BJP's commitment to strengthening its organisational structure and serving the people of the area. President Bhupinder Singh Bhupi has appointed dedicated workers to important positions in the executive committee, including Suresh Yadav, who is serving his fourth term as General Secretary, and Sanjay Gupta, who is serving his second term.

Police of Longowal police station took out flag march



RAVI GARG

LONGOWAL: The new police station chief Sardar Baljit Singh, who has been transferred from Patiala, has taken over his duties. As soon as he took over the duties, he took out a flag march with his police party in the market, town and nearby villages in the context of 26 January. Talking to the media, he said that our main purpose of taking out the flag march is that no untoward incident of any kind should happen on the coming 26 January, so we are taking full vigilance. Talking to the media about drugs, he said that I am giving a strict warning to those involved in drug dealing through you that either they should leave my area or stop doing drug dealing, otherwise strictest action will be taken against them. Any kind of hooliganism is not tolerated. On this occasion, Sardar Baljit Singh was present with his entire police team.

Fancy dress competition organised at Euro kids and dream Berry Convent School



AMRISH ANAND  
DORAH: A fancy dress competition was organised at the local Euro Kids and Dream Berry Convent School under the able leadership of Director Rajat Sharma. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from young students, who impressed the audience with colourful fancy dress presentations along with vibrant group and solo dance performances.

The children not only showcased their artistic talents but also conveyed inspiring messages through their performances, earning appreciation from parents and staff alike. The lively event reflected the creativity, confidence, and enthusiasm of the young participants. On the occasion, Director Rajat Sharma and Principal Surinder Kaur stated that as children's talents are nurtured and encouraged, they show greater interest not only in academics but also in co-curricular activities. They added that the school continuously strives to promote creativity and develop new interests among students.

CM Health card removes treatment worries of Punjabis: Tholi



GURMAIL SINGH SANGATPURA  
LEHRAGAGA: The Aam Aadmi Party government led by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has given a big gift of 'Chief Minister Health Card' (Chief Minister Health Insurance Scheme) to Punjabis by providing world-class health facilities. With this, people will no longer worry about their treatment. This idea was expressed by AAP party coordinator and social worker Ajay Kumar Tholi from Ward No. 3. Today, Tholi went door to door to make people aware about the Chief Minister Health Card and while giving detailed information about the facilities available under this scheme, he said that the Mann government has proven to be the most successful government in Punjab during its tenure.

SHASHI PAL JAIN  
MOHALI, JAN 24



Punjab Minister for Defence Services Welfare, Welfare of Freedom Fighters and Horticulture Departments, Sh. Mohinder Bhagat will unfurl the National Flag on January 26 at Shaheed Major Harminder Pal Singh Government College, Phase-6, Mohali during the District-Level Republic Day celebrations, informed Deputy Commissioner Komal Mittal here today.

The Deputy Commissioner, along with SSP Harmandeep Singh Hans, inspected the parade, march past, tableaux and

cultural performances during the final rehearsal held today at the venue. Expressing satisfaction over the preparations, DC Komal Mittal said that the performances of all participants during the final rehearsal were impressive. She appreciated the

**"Integrity, choice & life": Dr. Sukhmani Kaur's captivating Solo Art exhibition opens at Punjab Kala Bhawan**



FATEH GURU SAHIB (AJAY MALHOTRA): A mesmerizing solo art exhibition titled "Integrity, Choice & Life" by acclaimed conceptual abstract artist Dr. Sukhmani Kaur opened at Punjab Kala Bhawan, Sector 16, Chandigarh, on January 24. The exhibition will remain open to visitors till January 28, daily from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm, offering art enthusiasts an enriching visual experience.

The show was formally inaugurated at 12:30 pm on January 24 in the esteemed presence of S. Swaranjit Singh Savi, Honourable Chairman of the Punjab Art Council, Mr. Gurdeep Dhiman, President of Punjab Lalit Kala Akademi, and Mr. Bheem Malhotra, President of Chandigarh Lalit Kala Akademi, who joined as Guests of Honour.

Dr. Sukhmani Kaur, a Finance Ph.D. and Assistant Professor, is a self-taught artist whose creative journey stems from deep personal introspection. Her works draw inspiration from geodes and natural crystal formations, mirroring the concealed layers of human psychology, emotional resilience, and the many choices that define one's journey. Through her vibrant palette and abstract compositions, she attempts to translate profound themes—integrity, identity, emotional balance, and personal transformation—into compelling visual forms.

**PPCB and Police checked shops of Kites & Chinese dor**

SANGRUR (SUMER GARG): The Govt of Punjab, department of science, technology & environment has issued directions on 05.07.2023 regarding the complete ban on the manufacture, sale, storage, purchase, supply, import and use of kite flying thread made of nylon, plastic or any other synthetic material including the popularly known as Chinese dor alias manjha and any other synthetic kite flying thread, which is coated with synthetic substance and is non-biodegradable as well as any other kite flying thread that is sharp or made sharp such as being laced with glass, metal or any other sharp material, in the State of Punjab.

Any person, who contravenes the provisions of above directions issued under the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986 or the Rules made therein, shall be liable for penalty not less than Rupee 10 thousand, but it may extend up to 15 lakh rupees.

The concerned department has numerous appeals have been made to the public of the State through public notices not to use banned Chinese dor, nylon, synthetic thread for kite flying and help the Govt. In a noble cause. Punjab pollution control board (PPCB) has even announced a cash prize of maximum up to Rs. 25,000 to anyone, who informs about the above at toll free number 1800-180-2810.

**Kapila family pays tribute to late Dev Raj Kapila through path of Sri Sukhmani Sahib**



DORAH (AMRISH ANAND): The Kapila family organized a Path of Sri Sukhmani Sahib in the sacred memory of their late father, Dev Raj Kapila, on the occasion of his death anniversary, seeking peace, prosperity, and well-being for the family and humanity at large. The religious ceremony was held with full devotion and Sikh traditions at a petrol pump located on G.T. Road. N Bhai Sahib ji from Gurdwara Singh Sabha, Doraha, recited the Path and delivered a spiritually enriching discourse, inspiring the devotees to connect with the Guru and follow the path of truth, service, and meditation. A large number of devotees from the surrounding areas attended the programme and offered prayers for the departed soul. Following the religious congregation, Guru Ka Langar was served, reflecting the spirit of equality and selfless service. On the occasion, Gora Lal Kapila and Vinod Kapila expressed their heartfelt gratitude to all the devotees for their presence and support, stating that the programme provided spiritual strength to the family and was successfully completed with the blessings and cooperation of the Sangat.



**MCM renews institutional membership with CII**



CHANDIGARH: Reaffirming its commitment to strengthening academia-industry linkages, Mehr Chand Mahajan DAV College for Women has renewed its institutional membership with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), North Region.

The renewed collaboration envisions to open up diverse opportunities for students, including industry-oriented training, internships, and mentorship from seasoned industry experts. Through this association, students will gain valuable exposure to contemporary industry practices, enhancing their employability and professional readiness.

The partnership will also provide a supportive ecosystem for emerging student start-ups by facilitating guidance, networking, and access to industry insights. By aligning academic learning with industry expectations, the collaboration aims to nurture innovation, entrepreneurship, and skill development among students.

Officiating Principal Ms. Neena Sharma asserted that the renewed association with CII is a significant step towards bridging the gap between academics and industry.

## Admission Mela at Sahibzada Ajit Singh School on 28th

HOSHIARPUR (DALJEET AJNOHA): Sahibzada Ajit Singh Public School, Ladhwala Mahilpur, run under the management of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, is organising an admission mela to offer special facilities for new students. Students enrolling for the next session will receive special discounts on fees.

According to Principal Rajvinder Kaur, no fees will be charged from admitted students until March.

The school provides high-quality worldly education alongside Gurubani-based instruction to instill moral values, shape them into good human beings, and contribute to building a better society. This helps children steer clear of the growing darkness of addictions and live up to their parents' aspirations.

## Full dress rehearsal of Republic Day function, Deputy Commissioner hoists the tricolor

JS SODHI  
JALANDHAR, JAN 24

The full dress rehearsal of the district level function to be held on January 26 on the occasion of Republic Day was held today at the local Guru Gobind Singh Stadium, in which Deputy Commissioner Dr. Himanshu Agarwal hoisted the national flag. The Deputy Commissioner then inspected the parade. On this occasion, Police Commissioner Dhanpreet Kaur was also present. Later, Dr. Agarwal took salute from the march past led by Parade Commander Ashok Meena IPS. The parade included ITBP, Punjab Police (men and women), Punjab Home



Guards, NCC (Boys and Girls), Lyallpur Khalsa School (Boys), Government Girls Senior Secondary School Nehru Garden, DSSD Senior Secondary School, Lyallpur Khalsa School (Girls) and the band of CRPF were included. After this, tableaux depicting the public welfare schemes of the Punjab Government were displayed. After this, various cultural performances were presented by students of various schools and colleges with a sense of patriotism. Earlier, a mass PT show was presented by students of various schools. The Deputy Commissioner said that on January 26, during the district level function, Punjab's Mining and Geology, Water Resources and Land and Water Conservation Minister Barinder Kumar Goyal will attend as the chief guest and will hoist the national flag.

## PSPCL engineers brave storm to restore power across Punjab

LK BANSAL  
MOHALI, JAN 24

Heavy rainfall accompanied by strong gusty winds on 23 January disrupted normal life across Punjab, causing extensive damage to the state's electricity infrastructure. Falling trees damaged power poles and transmission lines at several locations, leading to snapped conductors and widespread power outages. Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL) bore the brunt of this natural calamity. Rising to the challenge, PSPCL engineers and employees displayed exemplary courage, dedication, and a strong spirit of public service. Battling relentless rain, darkness, and hazardous conditions, field staff worked round the clock—often risking their own safety—to restore electricity supply at the earliest. Chief Engineer (South Zone—Operations) Er. Rattan Mittal stated that



11,636 power-related complaints were received across South Zone cities. Of these, power supply has already been restored in 11,552 cases.

Work is underway on the remaining 84 complaints, all of which are expected to be resolved by 8:00 pm, including locations where poles and key infrastructure suffered severe damage.

Across Punjab, a total of 53,432 complaints were registered following the storm. By midnight, 32,508 complaints had been successfully resolved. To address the remaining cases,

PSPCL engineers and non-technical staff continue to work tirelessly in the field. Power supply has been restored in almost all areas, barring a few pockets with extensive damage, which are also expected to be fully restored by this evening.

This collective effort stands as a strong testament to the unwavering commitment, selfless service, and professionalism of PSPCL employees, who remain ever-dedicated to ensuring reliable power supply and serving the people of Punjab in every circumstance.

## Lehra Police conducted flag march in view of Republic Day

GURMAIL SINGH SANGATPURA  
LEHRAGAGA, JAN 24

Keeping in mind the Republic Day on the upcoming January 26, Lehra Police today conducted a flag march under the leadership of DSP Ranbir Singh. The main purpose of this march was to remove fear and anxiety from the minds of the people of the area and motivate them to celebrate Republic Day without fear.

Speaking on the occasion, DSP Ranbir Singh said that a flag march has been conducted in Lehra city and some surrounding villages.

This should create a sense of security among the public and make them believe that the police is with them.



PATHANKOT (SHARANJEET): Halqa Incharge Vibhuti Sharma visited various wards of Pathankot and made people aware about the Chief Minister's Health Insurance Scheme and also cut stamps on the spot to make health insurance cards. Speaking on the occasion, Halqa Incharge Vibhuti Sharma said that the Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann was the first to launch the Chief Minister Health Insurance Scheme in Punjab and I am very grateful to Arvind Kejriwal, the national convener of the Aam Aadmi Party, for providing such a great relief to the people.

The Chief Minister's Health Insurance Scheme, under which every family is provided with the facility of free treatment worth Rs. 10 lakh, has done a great job. He said that on that occasion, tokens have also been given to make cards to provide the benefits of the health insurance scheme to the people. Through this token, the beneficiary can go to his nearest CSC center and make a Chief Minister's Health Insurance Scheme card.

He said that with the launch of the health insurance scheme in Punjab, Punjab has become the first state in India where no one will have to lose their life due to lack of money.

## 77th Republic Day: Full-Dress Rehearsal held at police lines ground DC hoists Tricolour

DALJEET AJNOHA  
HOSHIARPUR, JAN 24

A full-dress rehearsal for the district-level celebrations of the 77th Republic Day, observed across the country, was held today at the local Police Lines Ground. Deputy Commissioner Dr. Himanshu Agarwal, the chief guest, hoisted the national flag. Following the flag-hoisting, the Deputy Commissioner inspected the various contingents in the parade.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (Rural Development) Nikas Kumar and Parade Commander Dheerendra Verma accompanied her.

She took the salute from contingents including PRTC Jahan Khelan, PRTC Jahan Khelan Women's Wing, District Police, District Police Women's Wing, Punjab Home Guards, Paisco (ex-servicemen),



national flag. Tableaux showcasing Punjab government welfare schemes, achievements and initiatives in various fields will also feature in the event, she added.

The Chief Minister will honour freedom fighters, their family members, brave women, and individuals for exemplary work in different sectors. Needy persons will be distributed motor tricycles and sewing machines.

She directed officers of concerned departments to celebrate Republic Day with full enthusiasm and discharge their duties diligently.

# Shah Rukh Khan announces release date of 'King' with a 'roar'



## IIT Madras' SWAYAM Plus launches 'AI for All' courses in Hindi

**CHANDIGARH :** Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras)-led digital learning platform SWAYAM Plus has launched its flagship 'AI for All' initiative in Hindi, reinforcing its commitment to inclusive and accessible AI education.

The six free online courses will enable learners from across the country to acquire essential AI skills in their preferred language. The courses do not require any prior knowledge of AI or coding. Basic digital literacy and an interest in learning are sufficient, making the programme suitable for first-time learners as well as educators and faculty members.

All courses are curated by experts from the IIT Madras ecosystem, drawing on deep academic and industry experience, and emphasise hands-on activities, real datasets and case study-based learning with a strong focus on employability.

The last date to register using the following link for all six courses is 26th January 2026 - <https://swayam-plus.swayam2.ac.in/ai-for-all-courses>. For clarifications or to request a callback, learners may write to [pmu-sp@swayam2.ac.in](mailto:pmu-sp@swayam2.ac.in).

The SWAYAM Plus is an initiative of IIT Madras under the Ministry of Education, Government of India, created to deliver high-quality, employment-oriented online learning at scale.

Welcoming students and learners from all over India to benefit from this program, Prof. R. Sarathi, Dean (Planning), IIT Madras, said, "With the launch of the Hindi versions, all six 'AI for All' courses are now accessible to a wider and more diverse learner base, including students and professionals from arts, science, commerce and allied disciplines."

**B**ollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan has officially announced the release date of his upcoming film King, with an announcement video that comes packed with a powerful punch.

Taking to his social media account, the actor unveiled striking visuals from the film while confirming that King will "roar" into cinemas on December 24, 2026.

The first visual in the announcement video features the bold title ROAR set against a dramatic backdrop. Another frame carries the impactful line, "This Christmas, fear wears the crown," that further hints at the film's larger

than-life scale, making it more intriguing.

In the video, Shah Rukh Khan is seen exuding dominance, with his rugged look in a torn white shirt and face splashed in blood.

Sharing the post, the actor wrote on his, "#KING is Ready to ROAR on 24.12.2026 in Cinemas. #ItsKingTime #KingDateAnnouncement".

On Shah Rukh Khan's 60th birthday in November, last year, the makers of "King" had unveiled the captivating title video from the forthcoming drama.

The clip opened with a bird's-eye view of an island facility. SRK's voice-over could be heard perfectly synced with the high-octane action

sequences.

Going by the voice-over, SRK could be seen as a ruthless mercenary who has even lost count of how many people he has killed, and doesn't even know if they were good or bad.

"100 desho'n mein badnaam, duniya ne diya sirf ek hi naam", KING, Shah Rukh was heard saying. Sharing the initial glimpse of the drama on social media, makers, Red Chillies Entertainment, penned, "Sau deshon mein badnaam, Duniya ne diya sirf ek hi naam #KING #KingTitleReveal It's Showtime! In cinemas 2026, (sic)." King also stars Deepika Padukone, Shah Rukh Khan's daughter Suhana Khan, Jaideep Ahlawat.

## Upasana Singh breaks silence on rift rumours with Kapil Sharma

**MUMBAI:** Bollywood actress Upasana Singh, best known for her popular characters on The Kapil Sharma Show, in an exclusive conversation with IANS, has opened up about her absence from the comedy show. She has also clarified that there was never any fallout between her and comedian Kapil Sharma, putting all rumours to rest. In a candid interview with IANS, Upasana said that Kapil continues to be like a younger brother to her, dismissing rumours of any bad blood between them. "For me, Kapil is still like my younger brother. We talk to each other and share a good bond. If he needs me ever on the show and if I like the character, I would surely go," she said.

Recalling her journey on the show, the actress said that she and the team stayed at the top of TRP charts for nearly two-and-a-half years. "People enjoyed my character a lot. I became Jag Bua and later Pinky Bua, and both were loved by the audience," she added.

Talking about returning to Kapil's show, Upasana stated that she was open to returning to the show, but only if she was given a significant role. She further explained that when Kapil shifted channels and offered her a part again, she did return briefly. However, things did not work out creatively. "Kapil was extremely busy with his film commitments at that time and did not have the time to work on the detailing of my character. Because of that, it didn't fully satisfy me as an actor," she said.



## SAEL commissions 1 GWp Solar Project at World's Largest RE Park, Group's total operational capacity crosses 2 GWp

**CHANDIGARH :** SAEL Industries Ltd. (SAEL), a vertically integrated renewable energy (RE) company, commissioned a 1 GWp (800 MW) solar power plant at the world's largest Renewable Energy Park in Khavda, Gujarat, through its subsidiaries SAEL Solar P4 Private Limited and SAEL Solar P5 Private Limited (400MW, 500MWp each).

The projects are backed by 25-year long-term Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) with Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Limited (GUVNL), ensuring revenue stability. The projects deploy over 15 lakhs TOPCon bifacial modules. Over 60% of the modules were assembled at SAEL's solar manufacturing facilities located in Punjab and Rajasthan, in-line with the 'Make in India' initiative.

Mr. Laxit Awla, CEO & Executive Director, SAEL Industries Ltd. said, "Khav-



da Renewable Energy Park is a vision of Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji in his efforts to position India as a global RE powerhouse. Turning Gujarat's terrain into a clean energy zone at scale will not only unlock development of large RE capacity but will also reduce reliance on conventional sources of power, generating green jobs and meeting India's non-fossil fuel target by 2030. With the commission-

ing of our 1 GWp solar power plant in Gujarat, we are excited to be part of this journey. We are committed to supporting India's solar ambition by deploying our technologies and continuing to add value in the clean energy ecosystem".

Spanning almost 3,600 acres near India's western frontier, these projects demonstrate SAEL's project execution and engineering capacities in a challenging terrain with saline soil and seasonal flooding, where parts of the site remain under nearly a meter of water during peak rainy season.

The commissioning of SAEL Solar P4 Private Limited and SAEL Solar P5 Private Limited further strengthens SAEL's expansion across India's renewable energy value chain. In November 2025, YEIDA (Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority) allotted 200 acres. The secured book share increased to 48% as of Dec'25.

PAR for the bank stood below 4%, Slippages moderated to ₹221 crore in Q3FY26 with GNPA at 2.39% and NNPA at 0.58% as of Dec'25. Credit costs for the quarter, stood at ₹195 crore and expect a further moderation over the current operating quarter. PCR improved to 76% as of Dec'25. Provisioning requirements have begun to taper with Microfinance Bucket X Collection Efficiency trends touching 99.7% as of Dec'25.

Our Net Interest Margins for Q3 FY26 improved to 8.23%, up 33 bps QoQ supported by lower CoF, favorable product mix, lower interest reversals and CRR relaxation. We reported highest ever NII for the quarter of ₹1,000 Crore. This translated into a robust profitability, with profit after tax strengthening to ₹186 Crore for Q3 FY26, representing a healthy YoY growth of 70.8%. Adjusted for one time Gratuity expense towards new Labor Codes effective Nov'25, our PAT would have been around ₹200 Crore. For Q3FY26 RoA of 1.5% and RoE of 11.5%, underscore the steady improvement in our return metrics.

With healthy capital adequacy at 21.6%, robust liquidity buffers, and a disciplined approach to growth, the Bank remains well positioned to deliver sustainable and profitable growth in the coming quarters.

## LG Electronics India Limited leads the industry: Among the First to Launch 2026 BEE Star Rated Air Conditioners in India

**CHANDIGARH :** Ahead of the peak summer season, LG Electronics, India Limited (LGEL), Most Trusted Brand (in Electronics segment)\* has announced its emergence as among the first brands to introduce its comprehensive range of Air Conditioners fully compliant with the new 2026 Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) Star Rating norms. LGEL proactive rollout ensures that Indian consumers have immediate access to the most advanced, energy-efficient cooling technology available today.

The updated BEE norms represent a significant leap in energy benchmarks, raising the bar for the entire industry to align India with global energy performance standards.

LGEL has upgraded its portfolio well in advance, reinforcing its commitment to sustainability and responsible product development. Sanjay Chithra, Co-Chief Sales & Marketing Officer, LG Electronics India Limited

Commented on the launch: "As India moves towards stricter energy efficiency norms, LG Electronics India Limited remains committed to supporting this transition through early compliance and future-ready product innovation. With our portfolio already aligned to the new BEE standards, LGEL enters the new season well-prepared to offer reliable, energy-efficient air conditioning solutions that help our consumers save money while enjoying superior cooling."

To ensure a smooth transition for consumers, LGEL is launching a comprehensive awareness campaign across print, digital, and retail channels to explain the benefits of the new star ratings. Furthermore, LGEL manufacturing and supply chain operations have fully aligned with the new guidelines. While the new 2026-compliant models are the focus, air conditioners manufactured under the previous standards will remain available until existing stocks are liquidated, offering consumers flexibility in their purchasing decisions.

## Stitching Awareness Into Lives: Sanjeevani Launches 'The Pink Tag Project'



**CHANDIGARH:** The third edition of Sanjeevani: United Against Cancer – a transformative initiative by Federal Bank Hormis Memorial Foundation, News18 Network, and knowledge partner Tata Trusts, launches The Pink Tag Project, a pioneering behavioral change campaign that meets women in their most personal, intimate moments to remind them that self-care is not a luxury – it is survival. In India, every four minutes, a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer. Every eight minutes, a woman loses her life to the disease. In small towns and villages where awareness remains low and stigma run high, conversations around breast health are almost non-existent. Women rarely find time for themselves - caught between household chores, earning livelihoods, and caring for families. Until a crisis forces their hand, their personal health remains invisible, postponed, forgotten. The Pink Tag Project is born from a single insight: the most intimate moment in a woman's day - when she gets dressed - can become the most powerful reminder to check her own health. The solution is elegantly simple. A small, pink-colored tag with clear instructions for self-breast examination is stitched inside every blouse, kurta, or inner-wear - right next to the wash-care tag. Placed exactly where women are alone, focused entirely on themselves, the Pink Tag becomes an unavoidable, intimate reminder. Not a campaign that demands their time or attention, nor a seminar they need to attend. Just a whisper, stitched into the fabric of their daily lives. The Pink Tag Project is documented in a powerful short film that captures the journey from insight to action. Voiced by acclaimed actor Sheeba Chaddha, the film opens with the harsh reality - every four minutes, a woman in India is diagnosed with breast cancer, yet the silence in small towns is deafening. It shows women doing what they do every day: drawing water, sweeping courtyards, preparing meals, getting dressed. Talking about the initiative, M V S Murthy, Chief Marketing Officer of Federal Bank said, "At Federal Bank Hormis Memorial Foundation, we believe that real change doesn't come from heightened campaigns. It comes from interventions that whisper, consistently, intimately, and with empathy. The Pink Tag Project is a testament to the power of behavioral design. By partnering with local tailors and volunteers, we've turned a simple garment into a life-saving tool."

## Ujjivan Small Finance Bank Ltd announces its Financial Results

**CHANDIGARH :** Ujjivan Small Finance Bank Ltd. today announced its financial performance for the quarter ended December, 2025. Mr. Sanjeev Nautiyal, MD & CEO, Ujjivan Small Finance Bank said "India's macroeconomic environment continues to remain conducive, with strong GDP growth at 8.2% for Q2 FY26 translating into supportive environment for credit growth and improved asset quality.

For Ujjivan SFB deposits grew 7.7% QoQ and 22.4% YoY to ₹42,223 Crore, with Credit-Deposit ratio at 88% as of Dec'25. With a clear focus on acquiring quality New to Bank customers and dedicated channels to engage better with Existing to Bank customers CASA% stayed above 27% for 2 consecutive quarters. Cost of funds continued to trend lower due to the deposit rate cuts already taken in H1 FY26 and better overall liquidity planning. CoF for the quarter was 7.08% down 49 bps YoY.

Gross Loan Book for the quarter grew 7.1% QoQ and 21.6% YoY to ₹37,057 Crore, driven by highest-ever quarterly disbursements, at ₹8,293 Crore. This was due to all round performance across unsecured and secured products. Secured portfolios such as Housing, MSME, Gold, Vehicle and Agri loans, scaled up in line with our long-term diversification strategy. The secured book share increased to 48% as of Dec'25. PAR for the bank stood below 4%, Slippages moderated to ₹221 crore in Q3FY26 with GNPA at 2.39% and NNPA at 0.58% as of Dec'25. Credit costs for the quarter, stood at ₹195 crore and expect a further moderation over the current operating quarter. PCR improved to 76% as of Dec'25. Provisioning requirements have begun to taper with Microfinance Bucket X Collection Efficiency trends touching 99.7% as of Dec'25.

Our Net Interest Margins for Q3 FY26 improved to 8.23%, up 33 bps QoQ supported by lower CoF, favorable product mix, lower interest reversals and CRR relaxation. We reported highest ever NII for the quarter of ₹1,000 Crore. This translated into a robust profitability, with profit after tax strengthening to ₹186 Crore for Q3 FY26, representing a healthy YoY growth of 70.8%. Adjusted for one time Gratuity expense towards new Labor Codes effective Nov'25, our PAT would have been around ₹200 Crore. For Q3FY26 RoA of 1.5% and RoE of 11.5%, underscore the steady improvement in our return metrics.

With healthy capital adequacy at 21.6%, robust liquidity buffers, and a disciplined approach to growth, the Bank remains well positioned to deliver sustainable and profitable growth in the coming quarters.

## How high blood pressure affects heart valves over time

**ROHTAK:** Hypertension is one of the most significant factors behind several heart diseases, including valve disease. What people often treat as a simple condition can act as a silent trigger and gradually damage the heart and blood vessels over time. High blood pressure happens when the force of blood against the arterial walls remains high, which strains the arteries and increases the risk of heart attack, stroke, and valve disorders.

Dr. Jatin Yadav, HOD & Consultant -Cardiothoracic Vascular Surgery, Manipal Hospital, Gurugram, said, "Uncontrolled high blood pressure silently affects the structure of the heart and its valves. When detected early, hypertension can be managed effectively with certain lifestyle changes, preventing long-term valve damage. However, many patients remain unaware until symptoms become severe. Early detection, regular monitoring, and timely treatment can significantly slow valve deterioration. In conditions where high blood pressure has already affected the heart valves, minimally invasive therapies like heart valve repair, replacement, and balloon Valvuloplasty can be the best option.

How Valves Get Damaged Over Time?



1. Valve leakage: When the valve does not close fully, it results in a leak. This causes blood to flow backwards in the heart, and less blood can be pumped in your body.

2. Valve Narrowing (Stenosis): The heart valve flaps thicken, resulting in valve narrowing, and blood flow becomes restricted, making the heart work harder to pump.

3. Increased Wear and Tear: Constant pressure overload leads to valve degeneration and weakens the structure with the passage of time.

4. Calcium Buildup: Persistent hypertension leads to calcium deposits on the valve, resulting in the rigidity and narrowing of the valves, further obstructing blood flow.

Dr. Jatin Yadav, HOD & Consultant -Cardiothoracic Vascular Surgery, Manipal Hospital, Gurugram, regularly visits Rohtak to offer consultations to patients suffering from heart conditions. He will be available for OPD consultation on 2nd and 4th Thursdays of every month from 11:30AM - 1PM at Nobel Health City Hospital, Rohtak.



Comes with mood changes, anxiety or emotional distress  
Common Health Conditions Linked to Postpartum Fatigue  
Anemia: Blood loss during childbirth can lead to low hemoglobin levels, causing weakness, palpitations, and shortness of breath.  
Thyroid Disorders: Postpartum thyroiditis may cause extreme fatigue, weight fluctuations, and mood disturbances.

Nutritional Deficiencies: Low levels of iron, vitamin B12, or vitamin D can delay recovery.  
Infections: Undiagnosed infections after delivery can result in persistent exhaustion and fever.

Postpartum Depression or Anxiety: Emotional distress often presents as constant fatigue, sleep disturbances, and difficulty bonding with the baby.

Timely medical evaluation helps identify the cause of persistent fatigue. Doctors may recommend some blood tests, screening for postpartum depression and treatment options such as nutritional supplements, medications, hormonal therapy, or mental health support. New mothers should consult their gynaecologist if fatigue feels overwhelming, does not improve, or is accompanied by additional symptoms. Prioritising maternal health is essential, as a healthy mother is central to a healthy postpartum journey.

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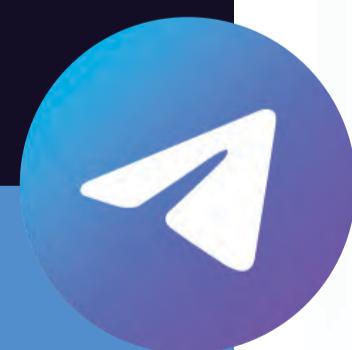
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