



The Researchers'

NEWS BOX

Ukraine hasn't held elections since Russia's full-scale invasion. Here's why

KYIV. (Agency)

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has rejected suggestions that he is using the war as an excuse to cling to power, saying he is ready to hold elections if the US and other allies will help ensure the security of the poll and if the country's electoral law can be altered. Zelenskyy's five-year term was scheduled to end in May 2024, but elections were legally put off due to Russia's full-scale invasion. That has become a source of tension with US President Donald Trump, who has criticized the delay as he pushes Zelenskyy to accept his proposals for ending the war.

Zelenskyy responded to that criticism on Tuesday, saying he was ready for elections. "Moreover, I am now asking — and I am stating this openly — for the United States, possibly together with our European colleagues, to help me ensure security for holding elections," he told reporters on WhatsApp.

"And then, within the next 60–90 days, Ukraine will be ready to hold them." Until now, Zelenskyy has declined to hold an election until a ceasefire is declared, in line with Ukrainian law that prevents a poll from being held when martial law is in effect. Ukrainians largely support that decision.

Here is a look at why Ukraine has not been able to hold elections so far:

A wartime election would be illegal

Ukraine has been under martial law since February 2022, when Russia launched its full-scale invasion. The country's constitution provides for martial law in wartime, and a separate law bars the holding of elections while it remains in force. Beyond being illegal, any nationwide vote would pose serious security risks as Russia bombs Ukrainian cities with missiles and drones. With roughly one-fifth of the country under Russian occupation and millions of Ukrainians displaced abroad, organizing a nationwide ballot is also widely seen as logistically impossible. It would also be difficult to find a way for Ukrainian soldiers on the front line to cast their votes.

Although Zelenskyy's term formally expired in May 2024, Ukraine's constitution allows him to legitimately remain in office until a newly elected president is sworn in.

Aid flow into Gaza falls short of ceasefire terms, leaving two million Palestinians in distress

JERUSALEM. (Agency)

Aid deliveries into Gaza are falling far short of the amount called for under the US-brokered ceasefire, according to an Associated Press analysis of the Israeli military's figures as humanitarian groups say the shortfall is severely impacting the strip's 2 million people. Under the October ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas, Israel agreed to allow 600 trucks of aid into Gaza a day. However, Israel's own figures suggest that an average of only 459 trucks a day have entered the Gaza Strip between Oct. 12, when the flow of the aid restarted, and Sunday, according to an AP analysis. COGAT, the Israeli military body in charge of coordinating aid entry, provided the figures. Aid flow does not meet ceasefire benchmark COGAT said that roughly 18,000 trucks of food aid had entered Gaza from when the ceasefire took effect until Sunday, amounting to 70% of all aid that had entered the territory since the truce. This means that COGAT estimates that including the rest of the aid — items that are not food, such as tents and medicines — a total of just over 25,700 trucks have entered Gaza. That is well under the 33,600 trucks that should have gone in by Sunday, under the terms of the ceasefire. In response to the AP analysis, COGAT insisted Wednesday the number of trucks entering Gaza each day was above the 600 mark but refused to elaborate why the figures don't match or provide raw data on truck entry. COGAT used to give daily figures of trucks entering Gaza during the war but stopped doing so when the ceasefire began. Rights groups say that is because it controls the crossings and has sole access to track how much aid and commercial goods are entering Gaza.

US Congress set to target China with new restrictions in massive defense bill

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

The Trump administration may have softened its language on China to maintain a fragile truce in their trade war, but Congress is charging ahead with more restrictions in a defense authorization bill that would deny Beijing investments in highly sensitive sectors and reduce US reliance on Chinese biotechnology companies.

Included in the 3,000-page bill approved Wednesday by the House is a provision to scrutinize American investments in China that could help develop technologies to boost Chinese military power. The bill, which next heads to the Senate, also would prohibit government money to be used for equipment and services from blacklisted Chinese biotechnology companies. In addition, the National Defense Authorization Act would boost US support for the self-governing island of Taiwan that Beijing claims as its own and says it will take by force if necessary.

"Taken together, these measures reflect a serious, strategic approach to countering the Chinese Communist Party," said Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi, the top Democrat on the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party. He said the approach "stands in stark contrast to the White House's recent actions." Congress moves for harsher line toward China

Australia demands social media giants report progress on account bans for children under 16

The tech companies' responses to eSafety Commissioner Julie Inman Grant's first demand for data will likely indicate their commitment to ridding their platforms of young children.

MELBOURNE. (Agency)

Australian authorities on Thursday demanded some of the world's biggest social media platforms report how many accounts they have deactivated since a ban on accounts for children younger than 16 became law. Facebook, Instagram, Kick, Reddit, Snapchat, Threads, TikTok, X, YouTube and Twitch all said they would abide by Australia's world-first law that took effect on Wednesday, Communications Minister Anika Wells said. But the tech companies' responses to eSafety Commissioner Julie

Inman Grant's first demand for data will likely indicate their commitment to ridding their platforms of young children. "Today the eSafety Commissioner will write to all 10 platforms who are considered age-restricted social media platforms and she will ask them ... what were your numbers of under 16 accounts on Dec. 9; what are your numbers today on Dec. 11?" Wells said.

The commissioner would reveal the platforms' responses within two weeks. The platforms would be required to provide monthly updates for six months.

The companies face fines of up to 49.5 million Australian dollars (\$32.9 million) from Wednesday if they fail to take reasonable steps to remove the accounts of Australian children younger than 16.

Wells said the European Commission, France, Denmark, Greece, Romania, Indonesia, Malaysia and New Zealand were considering following Australia's lead in restricting children's access to social media.

"There's been a huge amount of global interest and we welcome it, and we welcome all of the allies who are joining Australia to take action in this space to draw a line to say



enough's enough," Wells said.

Sydney-based rights group Digital Freedom Project plans to challenge the law on constitutional grounds in the Australian High Court early next year.

Inman Grant said some platforms had consulted lawyers and might be waiting to

receive their first so-called compulsory information notice Thursday or their first fine for noncompliance before mounting a legal challenge. Inman Grant said her staff were ready for the possibility that platforms would deliberately fail to exclude young children through age verification and age estimation technologies.

"That could be a strategy that they have in and of themselves: we'll say we're complying but then we'll do a crappy job using these technologies and we'll let people get through and have people claim it's a failure," Inman Grant told Australian Broadcasting Corp. Inman Grant said her research had found that 84% of children in Australia aged 8-12 had accessed a social media account.

Of those with social media access, 90% did so with the help of parents. Inman Grant said the main reason parents helped was because "they didn't want their children to be excluded."

"What this legislation does ... is it takes away that fear of exclusion," Inman Grant said.

Big boost for Pak's F-16 jets as US approves \$686 million tech upgrade: Report

KATHMANDU. (Agency)

The Trump administration has informed Congress of a USD 686 million proposal to upgrade Pakistan's F-16 fighter jets, triggering a 30-day review period and expected scrutiny from lawmakers, with India keeping a close watch, Pakistani media reported on Wednesday. The package, approved by the US Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), included advanced avionics, Link-16 tactical data links, cryptographic equipment, training, and full logistical support. According to the report quoting a DSCA letter dated December 8, the sale covered USD 37 million in Major Defense Equipment (MDE) and USD 649 million in additional hardware, software, and support services. Key recipients of the notification included House Speaker Mike Johnson, Senate

Foreign Relations Committee Chairman James Risch, and House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Brian Mast. The administration emphasised that the deal is intended to modernise Pakistan's Block-52 and



Mid-Life Upgrade F-16 fleet while ensuring compatibility with US and partner forces. The MDE list featured 92 Link-16 systems, a secure, jam-resistant digital network used by US and allied militaries for real-time

battlefield coordination, and six Mk-82 inert 500-pound bombs, designed for integration and release testing. Non-MDE items included avionics updates, mission-planning systems, IFF (Identification Friend or Foe) equipment, cryptographic appliques, test equipment, spare parts, simulators, publications, and contractor engineering and logistics support. Lockheed Martin of Fort Worth, Texas, has been named the principal contractor. According to the notification, the US does not plan to send additional personnel to Pakistan for the upgrades, nor does it expect any impact on American defence readiness. The administration stressed that the sale "will not alter the basic military balance in the region," a line aimed at addressing longstanding Indian concerns.

Former Bolivian President Arce arrested in corruption investigation a month after leaving office

LA PAZ. (Agency)

Bolivian law enforcement officials on Wednesday arrested former President Luis Arce as part of a corruption investigation, opening an uncertain chapter in the country's politics a month after the inauguration of conservative President Rodrigo Paz ended 20 years of socialist rule.

A senior official in Paz's government, Marco Antonio Oviedo, told reporters that Arce had been arrested on charges of breach of duty and financial misconduct related to the alleged embezzlement of public funds during his stint as economy minister in the government of charismatic former leader Evo Morales (2006-2019). A special police force dedicated to fighting corruption confirmed to The Associated Press that Arce was in custody at the unit's headquarters in Bolivia's capital of La Paz.

Officials described Arce's arrest as proof of the new government's commitment to fighting graft at the highest levels in fulfillment of its flagship campaign promise. "It is the

decision of this government to fight corruption, and we will arrest all those responsible for this massive embezzlement," Oviedo said. But underlining the country's polarization, Arce's allies said his arrest was unjustified and smacked of political persecution. Accusations of theft from a fund for rural peasants

Authorities accused Arce and other officials of diverting an estimated \$700 million from a state-run fund dedicated to supporting the Indigenous people and peasant farmers who formed the backbone of Morales' Movement Toward Socialism party. As Bolivia's first Indigenous president, Morales transformed the country's power structure and gave Indigenous people more sway than ever.

Serving on the board of directors of the Indigenous Peasant Development Fund from 2006 to 2017, Arce was in charge of allocating funds to social development projects in rural areas. During that time, officials allege, Arce siphoned off some of that money for

personal expenses.

"Arce was identified as the main person responsible for this vast economic damage," said Oviedo. Bolivia's attorney general, Roger Mariaca, told local media that Arce had invoked his right to remain silent during police questioning. He said Arce would remain in police custody overnight before being brought before a judge to determine whether he will remain detained pending trial.

The charges against Arce carry a maximum sentence of 4-6 years in prison. An ex-president allegedly grabbed from the street Arce's key ally and former government minister, Maria Nela Prada, insisted on the ex-president's innocence and denounced the corruption scandal as a case of political persecution. Although the prosecution said it issued an arrest warrant, she said Arce was not notified of the case before he was bundled into a minivan with tinted windows in an upscale La Paz neighborhood on Wednesday and brought in for interrogation.

European nations agree to consider weakening protections for migrants dating to World War II

BRUSSELS. (Agency)

As sympathy for immigrants erodes around the world, European nations agreed Wednesday to consider changes that rights advocates say would weaken migrant protections that have underpinned European law since World War II. The consensus coalesced as mainstream political parties across Europe have adopted tougher migration policies as a way to blunt the momentum of far-right politicians exploiting discontent over immigration, even though illegal border crossings are actually falling.

Members of the 46 countries that make up the Council of Europe acknowledged "challenges" posed by migration while reaffirming their respect for the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights, the council's secretary general, Alain Berset, told journalists after discussions in Strasbourg, France.

Berset described the 75-year-old convention as a "living instrument." While nations reaffirmed their commitment to the rights and freedoms of the convention, they also recognized countries' responsibility to "safeguard national vital interests such as security." The convention and the court, which handles complaints against the council, have been increasingly criticized by some member states, including Italy, Denmark and the United Kingdom. They argue that they are too limited in how far they can go to tackle illegal migration and deport migrants who commit crimes. Ministers of the 46 countries will now begin debating a political declaration on migration to be adopted in May and a new recommendation to deter human smuggling, Berset added.

The council, which is not an European Union institution, was set up in the wake of World War II to promote peace and democracy.

Growing consensus for a new interpretation

Discussions over the need to reform or reinterpret the convention as it relates to migrants began last year after nine nations signed a letter attempting to curtail the power of the court, the council's independent legal arm. The group of nations argued that the court's interpretation of rights and obligations prevented them from expelling migrants who commit crimes and keeping their countries safe. Berset defended the court's independence at the time, but support for a tougher stance has only grown. While Berset sought to downplay the division, 27 nations signed a separate statement on Wednesday calling for a less restrictive interpretation of the law, echoing the arguments made last year. "A right balance has to be found between the migrants' individual rights and interests and the weighty public interests of defending freedom and security in our societies," it read.

'It makes me want to cry': Emotional evacuees recount moments they fled Thailand-Cambodia fighting

SURIN. (Agency)

Annat Meephew had just enough time to pack up his clothes and flee his home in Thailand a couple of kilometers from the border with Cambodia, the second time in four months hundreds of thousands of people like him have had to escape fighting between the Southeast Asian neighbours. "Sometimes when I think about it, I tear up. Why are Thais and Cambodians, who are like siblings, fighting?" the 73-year-old said. "Speaking about it makes me want to cry." The latest round of clashes along the disputed border erupted on Monday, derailing a ceasefire pushed by US President Donald Trump that ended the previous clashes in July, which killed dozens in both countries. Officials in Thailand said Wednesday that about 400,000 people have been evacuated, while Cambodia reported more than 127,000 displaced. Unlike during the first round of fighting in July, many Thai evacuees in northeastern Surin province said they left before hearing the sound of fire following early evacuation warnings

from local leaders, triggered by a brief skirmish at the Cambodian border on Sunday.

"I could only bring my clothes," Annat said. "I even forgot to lock my doors when I left." Many took shelter in university halls, sitting or lying on thin mats or in tents erected within their allotted space. Music played to help relieve stress. Health officials checked on evacuees, while volunteers organized activities to entertain children. Thidarar Homhual also received a warning on Sunday to leave her home about 15 kilometers from the border. She teared up as she spoke about the pets she had to leave behind. Her stay in a gymnasium with more than 500 others has been far from comfortable, but she said meals are provided, and support from officials and volunteers helped her cope. "Maybe because this isn't the first time we've lived through something like this, I believe many of us can adapt. Although no one wants to adjust to living like this, I'll just go with the flow. Otherwise, it would be too stressful," she

said. Cambodians take shelter in open fields across the border in Cambodia, life for evacuees has taken on a rugged rhythm. Many said they left in a hurry after hearing



shots on Monday, seeking refuge mostly in an open field. They erected tents or improvised shelters stitched together with tarps, anchored to the backs of trucks to shield themselves from the wind. People huddled for conversation, meals or sleep. Smoke drifted from small coal stoves where families cooked simple dishes, while others went fishing in a nearby pond

to supplement their food. Loueng Soth arrived at a roadside area in the Cambodian town of Srei Snam with her seven family members. She said conditions have been

difficult, and she was praying for the fighting to end as soon as possible.

"I don't want to stay here and sleep on the ground as I do now," she said. "I want the war to end so I can return to my home." With cool-season temperatures dropping, the chilling winds have made life in the same field even harder for Thai Chea, who on Monday fled his home just a few hundred meters (feet) from the battleground. At the shelter where he is staying, people donned sweaters and gathered around cooking stoves in the early morning to keep warm. But there is still no sign of when evacuees can return home, as leaders on neither side appear willing to back down. "I want the war to end as soon as possible, so that I can go back to my home to do my farming work and take care of my dogs and chickens. They are at home with no one looking after them."

Modi–Trump Hold ‘Warm’ Phone Call Amid Strain Over Tariffs, Trade Deal Hopes

New Delhi: Amid swirling speculation of a possible breakthrough in the long-stalled India–US trade deal, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump held a phone conversation on Thursday, reviewing the state of bilateral ties and discussing ways to deepen cooperation across key strategic sectors. According to an official statement, both leaders took stock of progress in the partnership and explored new avenues for collaboration in trade, critical technologies, energy, defence and security. They also expressed satisfaction over the strengthening of bilateral cooperation and stressed the need to maintain momentum in efforts to boost commerce. The statement underscored their commitment to ad-

vance shared interests under the India–US COMPACT framework — a modern initiative designed to accelerate defence, economic and technology partnerships. Modi later described the interaction on X as “warm and engaging”, noting that the two leaders also exchanged views on regional and global developments. Notably, he made no mention of trade, even as economic ties face renewed friction. Bilateral tensions have escalated in recent months following Washington’s decision to impose a fresh 25% tariff on India’s imports of Russian oil — over and above existing duties — effective August 27. New Delhi has termed the move discriminatory, pointing out that China remains the largest buyer of Russian



US Lawmakers Warn Trump’s Policies Are Damaging Long-Term Strategic Trust

crude and the European Union continues significant LNG imports from Moscow. Thursday’s call came close on

the heels of Russian President Vladimir Putin’s high-profile visit to India, which drew global attention for its

major defence and energy agreements — and the visibly warm personal chemistry between Modi and Pu-

tin, including their widely discussed car ride from the airport to the PM’s residence. Back in Washington, Trump’s India policy has faced mounting criticism, with lawmakers accusing him of alienating a key strategic partner. During a recent congressional address, a Democratic representative even brandished the image of Modi and Putin sharing a car, arguing that Trump’s actions were pushing India closer to Moscow. “President Trump’s policies towards India can only be described as cutting off our nose to spite our face,” Congresswoman Sydney Kam-lager-Dove warned, cautioning that the administration’s approach was causing “real and lasting damage” to strategic trust.

BSL Commissions New 100-TPD Lime Crusher Unit to Boost Production Efficiency



Bokaro: In a push to strengthen its raw-material processing capabilities, Bokaro Steel Plant (BSL) has commissioned a new 100-tonne-per-day lime crusher unit at its Raw Material Management (RMP) department. The facility, located at the lime discharge complex, was inaugurated by Executive Director (Works) Priya Ranjan, in the presence of Executive Director (Operations) Anoop Kumar Dutt and senior officers of BSL and FSNL. Top RMP officials — including CGM (Refractory) Nagarajan Srikanth, GM (RMP) Mukesh Kumar, DGM (RMP) Anurag Dey, and DGM (RMP) Sameer Mahapatra — were also present during the launch ceremony. Speaking at the event, ED (Works) Ranjan said the new unit would significantly enhance the efficiency and agility of BSL’s steel-making processes, calling the installation “a major step forward” in strengthening the plant’s production capabilities. He lauded the coordinated efforts of BSL staff and FSNL teams who executed the project. The lime crusher unit is expected to be a key asset for boosting flux production for the sinter plant. The introduction of calcium-rich lime will increase sinter bonding strength, reduce return sinter, and sharply improve sinter plant productivity. This, in turn, will supply higher-quality sinter to the blast furnaces, directly supporting smoother and more efficient hot-metal production. Additionally, the unit is designed to prevent “less off-take” scenarios in the RMP’s rotary kiln, improving kiln productivity and extending the life of its refractory lining. With this launch, BSL has added an important link to its raw-material chain — one expected to improve consistency, cut wastage, and elevate production performance across the board.

IIT(ISM)–BIS Hold Seminar on Mining Equipment Standards

Dhanbad: IIT (ISM) Dhanbad, in partnership with the Mechanical Engineering Department of the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), hosted a national seminar on “Standardization in Mining Equipment and Earth-Moving Machinery.” The event brought together BIS officials, policymakers, industry experts, and academicians to discuss emerging needs and evolving standards in the mining sector. Speaking on the occasion, Sanjay Pant, Deputy Director General (Standardization), BIS, underlined the urgent need to upgrade and globally align India’s standards, strengthen conformity assessment systems, and support innovation and regulatory preparedness in mining and earth-moving machinery.

Dhanbad Gas Leak: Situation Still Critical as CMPDI Launches Drone Mapping of Danger Zone

by Jai Sinha

Dhanbad: With the Kenduadih gas leak showing no signs of easing even after nine days, experts from the Central Mine Planning and Design Institute (CMPDI) have begun an extensive drone-based survey to map the affected zone and identify the source of the underground emissions. A CMPDI team led by Geology Manager Bhuvnesh Kumar Gupta arrived from Ranchi on Thursday and immediately started aerial measurements using a high-resolution drone camera. The team is tracking temperature variations, population spread, and housing patterns across the leak zone — key indicators that help determine the intensity and movement of the trapped gas. Gupta said that since winter temperatures typically



range between 20°C and 22°C, any hotspot detected above normal would strongly suggest an active gas pocket. “These readings will be taken repeatedly for accuracy, and a detailed report will be ready in 15 to 20 days,” he said. Despite continuous monitoring, officials admit the situation remains alarming. Toxic gas levels in several pockets are still far above safe limits, raising concerns for both residents and the administration. Multi-agency teams, including ex-

perts from DGMS, CIMFR, CMPDI, and other scientific bodies, are using all available methods to identify the root cause of the leak. Meanwhile, the investigation and mapping work is moving at a rapid pace, even as the prolonged emission continues to test the preparedness of local authorities. With gas levels remaining high and the source still unclear, officials say the incident remains a serious and evolving crisis for Dhanbad’s Kenduadih region.

EC Extends Voter Roll Revision in Six Regions; No Relief for Poll-Bound Bengal

New Delhi: The Election Commission on Thursday extended the timeline for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in five states and one Union Territory, even as West Bengal — gearing up for high-stakes Assembly polls next year — was notably denied any extension. The revised schedule covers Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Extended Deadlines Across States

Under the new timeline, enumeration will now continue until December 14 in Tamil Nadu and Gujarat, and until December 18 in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Uttar Pradesh has received the longest extension, with the process running until December 26.

Draft electoral rolls will be released in phases:

- Dec 19: Tamil Nadu, Gujarat
- Dec 23: Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh,



Andaman & Nicobar Islands

• **Dec 31:** Uttar Pradesh In contrast, the enumeration period for Goa, Gujarat, Lakshadweep, Rajasthan and West Bengal ended today as originally scheduled, with no additional time granted. The EC confirmed that draft rolls for these areas will be published on December 16.

Bengal Becomes Political Flashpoint

With elections in West Bengal expected early next year, the Commission’s decision

not to extend deadlines has sparked political chatter. After the heated exchanges surrounding the Bihar SIR process, the next major confrontation between the BJP-led NDA and the Opposition is widely expected to unfold in Bengal — a state where electoral stakes remain exceptionally high. The EC had earlier allowed Kerala additional time, extending enumeration there until December 18 and setting December 23 for draft roll publication.

Over 50 Crore Forms Digitised; Lakhs Await Processing

According to EC data released earlier this week, 50.8 crore enumeration forms have already been digitised, while around 23.22 lakh remain pending. Since Phase II of the SIR began on November 4, a total of 50.96 crore forms have been distributed nationwide. The latest extensions have further intensified the political climate, setting the stage for a fierce battle over voter roll accuracy ahead of next year’s crucial elections.

IndiGo Announces Rs 10,000 Compensation, Begins Refunds After Major Flight Disruptions

New Delhi: IndiGo has announced a ₹10,000 compensation for passengers affected by the airline’s widespread operational disruptions on December 3, 4 and 5, offering the amount in the form of travel vouchers valid for any IndiGo journey over the next 12 months.

In addition to government-mandated compensation, the airline will provide an extra ₹5,000 to ₹10,000, depending on a flight’s block time, to travellers whose flights were cancelled within 24 hours of departure.



The carrier said it has also begun issuing refunds for all cancelled flights, noting that many customers should already see the amount reflected in their bank accounts, with the remaining refunds to be processed

shortly. Refunds for tickets booked through online travel platforms have also been initiated and are expected to appear soon. IndiGo, in its statement, said it is “expecting to operate over 1,950 flights on Thursday.”

Under the ongoing Winter Schedule, the airline typically operates over 2,200 flights daily across its domestic and international network. However, the government has reduced IndiGo’s Winter Schedule by 10% to help the carrier stabilise operations after cancellations surged to 1,600 flights on December 5. The airline said the combined steps aim to restore operational normalcy and rebuild passenger confidence after the unprecedented disruptions.

Bangladesh Election Date Declared: Polls, Referendum Scheduled for Feb 12



News Desk: Bangladesh will head to the polls on February 12 for its first national election since the ouster of Sheikh Hasina, Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin announced on Thursday. A national referendum on the contentious ‘July charter’ — a set of proposed reforms to restructure state affairs after Hasina’s fall — will be held the same day.

Nasir Uddin said campaigning will begin on January 22 and end at 7:30 am on February 10, setting the stage for a tightly packed political battle across 300 parliamentary seats.

With the once-dominant Awami League banned under an anti-terror law — a move critics call political vengeance — the opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) led by Khaleda Zia is widely seen as the frontrunner.

The announcement comes months after Bangladesh was rocked by weeks of violent protests in August 2024, forcing Hasina to flee the country. Since then, the nation has been governed by an unelected interim administration headed by Muhammad Yunus, backed by the military and protest groups.

Detailing the election timetable, the Chief Election Commissioner said nomination papers must be filed by December 29. Scrutiny will take place from December 30 to January 4. Appeals against returning officers’ decisions must be submitted on January 11 and will be resolved between January 12 and 18.

The deadline for withdrawing nominations is January 20, while the final candidate list and election symbols will be released on January 21. Voting across the country will take place on February 12.

Tata Steel Acquires 50% Stake in Thriveni Pellets in ₹636-Crore Deal



Mumbai: In a strategic move to bolster its raw-material security, Tata Steel has announced the acquisition of a 50.01% stake in Thriveni Pellets Pvt. Ltd. (TPPL). The deal, valued at up to ₹636 crore, positions Tata Steel as the majority owner of the company.

TPPL owns 100% of Brahmani River Pellets Ltd. (BRPL), which operates a 4 MTPA pellet plant in Jajpur, Odisha, along with a 212-km slurry pipeline — a critical asset for transporting iron ore slurry efficiently to steel-making facilities. The acquisition is expected to give Tata Steel a stronger grip over essential inputs and reduce logistical bottlenecks as it expands capacity across India.

Industry analysts say the move is aligned with Tata Steel’s long-term strategy of securing upstream raw-material assets to improve cost efficiencies and ensure supply stability. The remaining 49.99% stake in TPPL continues to be held by Lloyds Metals & Energy.

The transaction, approved by Tata Steel’s board, is subject to standard regulatory clearances. Market sentiment remained upbeat after the announcement, with investors viewing the acquisition as a step forward in strengthening the company’s domestic operations.

With this deal, Tata Steel further consolidates its position in the steel value chain, signalling a robust push towards reinforcing its production ecosystem amid rising demand and competitive pressures.

Government Deactivates Over 3 Crore Suspicious Railway Ticketing IDs

New Delhi: In a major crackdown on misuse of the railway ticketing system, the Centre has deactivated more than three crore suspicious user IDs linked to online ticket reservations since January this year. Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw shared the information in a written reply in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday.

Vaishnaw said the Indian Railways’ reservation platform remains a robust, highly secure IT system strengthened with advanced cybersecurity safeguards. He added that multiple measures have been rolled out to improve system performance and enhance the availability of both regular and Tatkal tickets.

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Presented "Concrete Facts": PM Modi Praises Amit Shah's Parliament Speech

In a social media post, PM Modi said that Amit Shah presented “concrete facts” while addressing concerns raised by Opposition over electoral system.

New Delhi .(Agency)
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday praised Home Minister Amit Shah for his "outstanding" speech in Parliament, where the Home Minister countered Opposition allegations on the electoral process and also responded to Congress MP Rahul Gandhi's charge of "vote theft".
In a post on X, PM Modi said that HM Shah had presented "concrete facts" while addressing concerns raised by the Opposition over the electoral system, adding that the

Home Minister had highlighted the robustness of India's democratic processes and "exposed the lies" being circulated in recent days. "An outstanding speech by Home Minister Shri Amit Shah Ji. With concrete facts, he has highlighted diverse aspects of our electoral process, the strength of our democracy and also exposed the lies of the Opposition," PM Modi wrote on X.
HM Shah's speech came amid a heated debate over the integrity of elections, during which the Home Minister dismissed allegations of

manipulation as "baseless" and accused the Opposition of attempting to undermine public confidence in democratic institutions. He detailed procedural safeguards, historical precedents and legal frameworks to assert that India's electoral architecture remains secure and transparent.
The exchange marked one of the sharper confrontations of the ongoing session, with the Treasury benches rallying behind

HM Shah's detailed rebuttal and others were legitimate and needed further examination. Union Home Minister Amit Shah, participating in a discussion on election reforms in Lok Sabha on Wednesday, rebutted every point raised by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in his “vote theft” allegations, and cited instances of electoral manipulation by the Opposition itself.
He delivered his statement amidst repeated interruptions from the Opposition benches, where he



Ruling Maharashtra Alliance To Fight Civic Polls Together: State Minister

A crucial meeting in this regard was attended by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, and other senior leaders.

New Delhi.(Agency)
Maharashtra Revenue Minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule has said that the ruling Mahayuti alliance in the state will fight the forthcoming Zilla Parishad and Municipal Corporation elections as a united front. A crucial high-level meeting in this regard was attended by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Maharashtra Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) chief Ravindra Chavan, and senior leaders.
"All district-level leaders have been directed to complete the Mahayuti structure at the grassroots level at the earliest. Minor issues may arise on 5-10 per cent seats locally, but wherever required, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde will personally intervene and take the final decision," Bawankule, who is also the BJP's state-in-charge for local body polls, told reporters.
"Ajit Pawar Is Inseparable Part Of Alliance"
For the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation

(BMC) elections, the alliance has adopted a "4 + 4" formula. A coordination committee comprising four senior office-bearers each from BJP and Shiv Sena (Shinde group), along with



representatives of other Mahayuti partners, will finalise seat-sharing after detailed technical analysis. Differences, if any, will be resolved by the top leadership.
Bawankule further clarified that the crucial decision regarding the post of Mayor of Mumbai

will be taken jointly by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar.
Bawankule dismissed any speculation, asserting that Deputy Chief Minister Pawar and his Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) form an integral part of the Mahayuti. "Recently local body elections saw some electoral differences among workers at a few places, but those have been completely resolved. There has never been any ill will, only normal electoral differences of opinion, which are now a thing of the past," the Maharashtra revenue minister added.
Addressing the issue of Vidarbha's development, Bawankule said that ever since the Devendra Fadnavis-led government came to power in 2014, the region has witnessed unprecedented progress. He slammed the Congress for decades of neglect that led to its decline in the region. Bawankule also reiterated that, given Vidarbha's largest forest cover in the state, the headquarters of the Forest Department will remain in Nagpur and will not be shifted.

Court rejects ex-Minister, family's discharge plea in Rs 31-crore land scam

A special court in Mumbai has rejected the discharge application filed by former Maharashtra Revenue Minister Eknath Khadse and his family in the Bhosari land scam, paving the way for charges to be framed against them and a trial to begin.



New Delhi. (Agency)
A special court in Mumbai rejected the discharge application of former Maharashtra Revenue Minister Eknath Khadse, his wife Mandakini Khadse, and their son-in-law Girish Chaudhari in the Bhosari land scam case, saying the accused in the matter had attempted to "strategically" use the "power and post" of the Nationalist Congress Party leader. The court's decision would now lead to framing of charges against all three of them and a start of trial.
"Whether the Sub-Registrar is to be added as an accused or not, will have to be decided by the court during trial, which depends upon the evidence which will be forthcoming. At this stage, it is sufficient to note that the material on record makes out a case for framing of charges," Special Judge Satyanarayan Navander said during the hearing. According to the case details, the alleged scam involved the purchase of a piece of land from the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) in the Bhosari industrial area near Pune. It is alleged that Khadse used his official position to facilitate the acquisition of this government land by his wife and son-in-law at a price significantly below market value. The Khadse family reportedly bought the land for Rs 3.75 crore when the actual price was Rs 31.01 crore, the Enforcement Directorate has alleged.

Behind Handicrafts Award For Manipur Woman With Disability, A Life Of True Grit

In a light blue saree, Indira Devi smiled for the cameras from her wheelchair. She held the award - 'Divyang Artisan - Hand Embroidery' - in her lap

New Delhi.(Agency)
A paralysis of the limb due to a tumour led to 80 per cent disability for Yengkhom (O) Indira Devi, a resident of Manipur's Kakching district. With movement restricted, she began working on small hand embroidery like knitting on handkerchiefs, pillow and bed covers as a hobby, her family says.
In 2014, Indira Devi - who had been living with locomotor disability - suffered rib and leg injuries in a car-bus collision of such severity that one of the drivers died on the spot, her family says.
Burdened by the second tragedy, Indira Devi, who could not walk, decided to put all her concentration on her hand embroidery work. She has not looked

back, her family says. She was one of the artisans from all corners of India who received the National Handicrafts Awards for 2023



and 2024 from President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday. In a light blue saree, Indira Devi smiled for the cameras from her wheelchair. She

held the award - 'Divyang Artisan - Hand Embroidery' - in her lap. While two others from Manipur - Laishram Memicha and A Bimola Devi - also received the handicrafts awards, the circumstances that Indira Devi went through with true grit drew huge support.
"My mother is very happy. It means a lot to her. She has gone to Delhi for the award," Indira Devi's daughter, Anu, told on phone from the state capital Imphal.
Before the national recognition came, Indira Devi received several state awards for her handicrafts work that involved creating intricate embroideries on cloth, the most recognisable being an embroidered painting of the game of sagol kangjei, or polo.

IPL matches won't leave Bengaluru, says Dy CM Shivakumar

BELAGAVI.(Agency)
Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Wednesday said a decision on allowing IPL matches at Chinnaswamy stadium would be taken after discussing it in the cabinet meeting at Belagavi on Thursday. After meeting the newly elected KSCA President Venkatesh Prasad in Belagavi, Shivakumar said, "We have no intention of stopping cricket matches at Chinnaswamy stadium, but we have to think of crowd control measures. We will also have to incorporate Michael D'Cunha

committee suggestions in a phased manner. Venkatesh Prasad has also agreed to it. Our government is committed to organising cricket matches without denting the reputation of the state." "The newly elected President of KSCA and his team met us today, seeking the government's cooperation. We will not allow any of the matches, including the IPL events, to be shifted out of Bengaluru. We will have to work together on this," he said.
Tourneys soon, says Prasad
International cricket matches, including

the IPL, will soon resume at Bengaluru's Chinnaswamy Stadium. Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) President Venkatesh Prasad said that cricket fans will receive this good news soon. He visited the KSCA ground in Raj Nagar here on Wednesday, inspected the building, and later spoke to officials. He said that he has visited Belagavi and submitted a request to the CM and Deputy CM DK Shivakumar regarding the issue. Both leaders have assured that the matter will be discussed in Thursday's Assembly session.

Lamp-lighting row can be resolved in Tamil Nadu with Hindus' strength: RSS Chief

New Delhi .(Agency)
Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat said the ongoing Thiruparankundram issue in Tamil Nadu can be resolved within the state, asserting that the “strength and awakening of Hindus” in Tamil Nadu would be sufficient to achieve a favourable outcome. Speaking at the 100 Years of Sangh Journey – New Horizons event in Tiruchirappalli on Wednesday, Bhagwat was responding to an audience question on whether the RSS should escalate the Thiruparankundram issue to the national level. The matter is currently sub-judice.
“The Thiruparankundram issue, if it needs escalation, it will be done. That matter is now sub-judice. Let it resolve,” he said, adding that Hindu organisations in Tamil Nadu were already working on the matter. “If at all it is needed, they will let us know. Then we will think about it.” Emphasising that the situation could be settled locally, Bhagwat said, “At present, I think the issue can be resolved here only on the basis of Hindus’ strength in Tamil Nadu. We will not need to

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat said the Thiruparankundram issue can be resolved within Tamil Nadu through Hindu strength. He noted escalation is unnecessary unless local organisations seek it. The matter is currently before the Supreme Court.

escalate it.” He added that one thing was “pakka (for sure)”, that the issue would be resolved in



favour of Hindus. The Thiruparankundram dispute concerns the lighting of the traditional Karthigai Deepam lamp at ‘Deepathoon’, a stone lamp pillar on the Thiruparankundram hillock near a dargah in Madurai.

Will Mumbai Mayor Be From Sena? Eknath Shinde's "Mahayuti" Reply

Asked whether Shiv Sena would retain the BMC mayor position, Eknath Shinde avoided staking any claim. "The mayor of Mumbai will be from the Mahayuti," was all he said - twice.

Mumbai .(Agency)
Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde is cautious when pressed about the upcoming Mumbai mayoral election -- a race that has historically been central to the Shiv Sena's political identity. The undivided Shiv Sena had controlled the Mumbai mayor's post for 25 years. But on Wednesday, at the "Unstoppable Maharashtra" conclave organised by NDTV Marathi Manch, asked whether the Sena would retain the position, Shinde avoided staking any claim. "The mayor of Mumbai will be from the Mahayuti," was all he said - twice.
Sources said the BJP has signalled willingness to let Shinde's Sena hold the mayoral posts in Mira-Bhayandar and Thane, but Mumbai is non-negotiable. The political reunion of the Thackeray cousins has already injected fresh energy into the upcoming Brihanmumbai Corporation polls, especially in view of their strong personal pull in Mumbai and the Konkan region. The primary battle is expected to be between the BJP's Hindutva plank and the Thackerays' "Marathi first" narrative.
In that landscape, Shinde is increasingly seen as playing a supporting role to the BJP rather than asserting the Sena's traditional dominance in the city. "All parties have the right to form alliances. Our agenda is clear - development and welfare schemes," said Shinde, when asked about the reunion of the Thackerays. He then underscored his ideological lineage. "We are following Balasaheb Thackeray's ideology," he said, while taking a swipe at the Thackerays for "not showing interest" during the rural local polls.

IndiGo crisis | When saying sorry is less than adequate

The week gone by has been one of rage. The months of November and December 2025 will be remembered by IndiGo Airlines and most certainly by those who used it for travel as months of trauma. And drama. IndiGo cancelled as many as 2,000-plus flights (the number climbing by the hour even as you read this) with a decision that left hundreds of thousands of passengers in the lurch. It began with delays announced in installments of 30 minutes, in true-blue heritage airline style, and then most ended with cancellations. These many cancelled flights meant cancelled plans and loss of time, energy, carefully-laid plans and money, as far as passengers were concerned. Some missed weddings, some missed funerals, and some missed very important meetings. In short, large-scale cancellations by India's largest airline meant putting thousands of lives and plans in disarray. As these many people grappled with their personal losses, the airline went contrite. It took full-page advertisements in newspapers to say sorry. These apology ads, coming in the wake of a genre of faux apology ads taken by many a brand across the world, sadly did not mean much to those affected.

India went angry. There were a set of people who went ballistic on the airline and its management systems. Television channels and newspapers were filled with rage. Social media went a step further with memes of every kind that decimated a brand built assiduously, one well-managed flight at a time, over the past 19 years. The now-common device of rage-bait was used and social media algorithms went berserk upping the ante of this movement. Hashtags of every kind went viral, including one that said #MakeThemPay. All of India got involved in this debate of the airline traveller who lost his travel. Everyone with a smartphone pitched into the debate.

In many ways, this crisis exposed the soft-underbelly of brand IndiGo. The brand seems to carry a lot of negative weight for sure, with a whole host of loyal passengers willing to do a quick flip on it. Many berated the airline for being one without empathy for its users. Many criticised the cost-cutting measures seen in its bony seats. Even more pitched in to recall every disgruntlement they have ever had on their travels. Nothing was forgotten. This critique had its own levels on the passion scale of involvement. It was from a reasonably low level of a whine to a rabid call for action. In the bargain, everyone forgot the many flights flown by the airline to date, the conveniences availed with connections to remote locations not catered to by any other airline, and the rather uneventful run of the airline to date, especially with a large crisis. The airline has always been nifty and clever in its branding. Its call sign is 6E (and that's meant to be sexy). Its play with words is always a pleasure to devour. It even took out an ad campaign 10 years ago that said, 'Sleep with your wife'. It was all about same-day return flights from metros. Taking the same genre of talk ahead, I remember seeing one that said, 'We do it 28 times a day'. It meant the frequency of their Delhi-Mumbai flights, of course. Brand IndiGo meant being ahead of the race, being savvy, being safe, being reliable, and most importantly, being on time. The airline invented for itself a time standard of its own even, the IndiGo Standard Time. Remember? Therefore, when all hell breaks loose, consumers question. An airline that claims for itself a platinum status for delivery will always be under acute customer scrutiny. IndiGo got its unfair and fair share of flak over the week. Even as I write this, there is rumour of stiff and punitive action against the airline by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, and, indeed, the government itself. Airlines in India have become the lifeline of the nation at the upper end of the pyramid of decision-making. An airline that owns 63 percent of this share cannot afford to fault. When it does, it disrupts. It disrupts lives, imagery, and most importantly the basic craving of wanting to lead a predictable life, at least when it comes to travel.

Russia key to India’s quest for self-reliance

Delhi needs to reorient partnership with Moscow to make the most of co-production in the defence sector

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin's two-day visit to New Delhi was his first trip to India since the onset of the Ukraine conflict in 2022. Hosted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the summit emphasised the enduring strategic partnership between the two nations, nurtured during decades of Cold War-era cooperation. The visit elicited considerable global interest since the US and the European Union have sought to 'isolate' the Russian President over his war against Ukraine. The International Criminal Court has issued arrest warrants for Putin with regard to war crimes in Ukraine. Hence, the Indian decision to receive him with customary summit pageantry and related protocols had its own strategic significance. Modi welcomed the Russian leader at the airport with his trademark embrace, underscoring the rapport between the leaders. The visit took place amid escalating US pressure on India to curb Russian oil imports and defence purchases; both sides reaffirmed that their ties were to external pressure".

Moscow has been a traditional supplier of military equipment and major platforms (tanks, ships, aircraft) to India since the mid-1960s, but contrary to pre-visit expectations and speculation, no major defence deals were announced during Putin's visit.

The reference in the joint statement was relatively bland and noted that military and military-technical cooperation had traditionally been a pillar of the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between India and Russia. It added: "Responding to India's quest for self-reliance, the partnership is reorienting presently to joint research and development, co-development and co-production of advanced defence technology and systems." The emphasis was on joint manufacturing in India of spare parts, components, aggregates and other products for maintenance of Russian-origin arms and defence equipment under the Make in India programme through transfer of technology; setting up of joint ventures for meeting the needs of the Indian armed forces; and preparing for subsequent exports to mutually friendly third countries. The Modi-Putin summit signalled a potentially strategic pivot in India-Russia defence relations, moving beyond the traditional buyer-seller dynamic towards deeper collaboration. This aligns with India's Atmanirbharta (self-reliance) initiative in defence manufacturing, aiming to further reduce import



(Hindustan Aeronautics Limited), the primary activity was assembling the parts and there was little or no attempt to reverse-engineer or embark on an indigenous design. This inability/reluctance to enter the design domain is in stark contrast to the Chinese example. The most successful reverse-engineering accomplishment by China of Soviet-era military equipment is the development of the Shenyang J-11 fighter jet family from the Sukhoi Su-27 'Flanker'. The PLA Air Force initially acquired Su-27SK fighters from Russia in the 1990s under a licensed production agreement, assembling them as the J-11A using Russian-supplied kits. However, by the mid-2000s, China succeeded in reverse-engineering the aircraft — disassembling, analysing and replicating key components — to produce the fully indigenous J-11B variant without further Russian involvement. This involved copying the airframe, avionics, radar systems and propulsion, then integrating Chinese

upgrades like the WS-10 turbofan engine (reverse-engineered from the Russian AL-31F), active electronically scanned array (AESA) radar and domestically produced weapons systems. The Su-27 itself originated in the Soviet Union (designed in the 1970s, entering service in 1985), making the J-11 a direct adaptation of Soviet technology. This design breakthrough allowed China to reduce its import dependency, acquire self-sufficiency and then export this fighter, with Pakistan being a major buyer.

India acquired its first Sukhoi, the Su-30, in 1997, but the prevailing national ecosystem remained inhibited and import dependency continued, with France emerging as an alternative supplier for fighter aircraft (Rafale). Putin's visit witnessed a revival of interest in the fifth-generation Su-57 fighter jets, with India seeking source code access and stealth enhancements. Whether this potential acquisition will complement the indigenous Tejas remains a moot point at this stage.

There is no denying the fact that Moscow (both during the Soviet era and afterwards) has provided invaluable technological assistance to India in certain niche areas that are strategically critical — both missiles and underwater nuclear propulsion (INS Arihant) are a case in point. The joint-venture BrahMos missile is a success story, and the current visit has listed a lighter variant of this missile as a potential area for cooperation. Design knowhow of major military equipment is akin to the crown jewels of a nation and this kind of knowledge cannot be bought off the shelf. It is illustrative that even the USSR/Russia, with whom India has had a very robust military supplier relationship, has not parted with design knowhow. Putin's visit will be consequential if India is able to prioritise Atmanirbharta in an earnest and resolute manner and reorient the partnership with Moscow to realise the full potential of joint R&D, co-development and co-production of select advanced defence technologies. But this will be an arduous journey and many cobwebs would have to be cleared within the Indian ecosystem. Even for Moscow, there are red lines regarding how deep the military cooperation with Delhi can be. How Russia will allay Beijing's anxiety. Likewise, Delhi has to remain cognisant of Washington's strictures pertaining to the engagement with Russia.

Verdict shouldn't turn clock back in Bollywood

The survivor’s courage and Dileep’s arrest were turning points for the Malayalam film industry in more ways than one

The abduction and rape of a leading actress in the Malayalam film industry—and the subsequent arrest of superstar Dileep—had shaken Bollywood like never before. The survivor's unprecedented decision to pursue the case to its logical end created a stir across Kerala. The investigation into the 2017 incident took a dramatic turn when the police concluded that the attack was not a random act of violence, but part of a larger conspiracy meant to intimidate her. This line of inquiry eventually led to Dileep. After almost nine years and several twists in the trial, the Ernakulam Principal Sessions Court has now acquitted the actor-producer, the seventh accused, while finding the other six accused guilty. Shortly after his acquittal, Dileep claimed that a "conspiracy" had sought to pin the blame on him. The government, however, has decided to appeal the verdict in the high court and has assured the survivor of support until she gets justice.

The survivor's courage and Dileep's arrest were turning points for the Malayalam film industry in more ways than



one. The sexually suggestive jokes passed off as slapstick comedy—a trademark of many Dileep films—began to recede. The industry ushered in a new wave of cinema that was more inclusive and appealed to a pan-Indian audience. The formation of the Women in Cinema

Collective (WCC), which coincided with the case, helped shift long-skewed gender relations in the industry. The Hema Committee, set up to look into allegations of sexual harassment and violence, was another constructive outcome. That the survivor continued her cinematic journey instead of withdrawing from public view was an act of courage that inspired others facing similar ordeals.

While the WCC has vowed continued support to the survivor, the manner in which other industry bodies—including the Association of Malayalam Movie Artists and the Malayalam Cine Technicians Association—have responded to the verdict is worrying. Their swift decision to welcome the actor back into their fold is troubling, especially when the survivor is one of their own and an appeal is imminent. It is the responsibility of every progressive film lover to ensure that this verdict does not reverse the shift in power dynamics and film grammar that the case had helped bring about.

Foreign campuses trigger Indian concerns

By inviting Western universities to set up Indian campuses, are we outsourcing our aspiration to be a global academic hub? The premiums such brands demand will deepen the economic divide in higher education. True internationalisation should be about equal partnerships involving intellectual reciprocity

The decision to allow foreign universities in India is not just a policy shift, but indicates a profound change in the politics and economics of higher education. During his visit earlier this year, UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer led a delegation of 14 university vice-chancellors, all of whom were exploring opportunities under the new University Grants Commission rules. The 2023 regulations allow the world's top 500 universities to set up campuses in India. No doubt, it shows India's openness to global partnerships. But behind the rhetoric lies a mix of economic, political, and ideological interests on both sides. The National Education Policy 2020 aims to make the country a global education hub. However, instead of building up its own universities to reach that standard, the government has invited established Western players to fill the gap. And that raises a pertinent question: is India building a self-reliant education system, or merely outsourcing its academic aspirations? From Britain's perspective, the rationale is primarily financial. Once flush with endowments and stable funding, many UK universities are struggling now. Inflation, capped tuition fees, and shrinking government grants have left them running deficits. Making things worse, tighter visa rules have curbed international student inflows, which once contributed £37.4 billion annually to the UK economy. Faced with this challenge, expanding into India appears to be a smart business decision. With millions of English-speaking students and a booming middle class, India is a lucrative education market. It's no surprise, therefore, that Starmer's government is keen to tap into it. However, the worrying concern is that education looks less like a cultural exchange and more like a commercial export.

British university degrees in India are marketed as aspirational, prestigious, and globally recognised. The pitch sounds compelling: 'a UK degree without leaving home'. But the reality is more complex. The costs will almost certainly be higher than those of Indian public universities, and the degrees may not carry the same global acceptance as those obtained by studying in the UK. Graduates of these Indian campuses, although technically earning UK-accredited degrees, may not enjoy the same post-study work rights as their counterparts who study in the UK. Of course, these campuses promise access to international faculty, modern infrastructure, and globally aligned curricula. However, that promise will probably be limited to a small, affluent demographic. Much like India's top private universities, the new foreign campuses may offer quality education, but at prohibitive costs. In a country where public universities still educate the overwhelming majority, this trend risks widening the already deep divide between those who can afford premium education and those who cannot.

This concern becomes clearer when we examine the condition of India's public universities. Many have faced budget cuts and growing administrative control over the past decade. At the same time, the government has actively courted private and foreign players. And now, through this new initiative, the government has conveyed that education is shifting from a public good to



a private commodity. Treating education as a tradeable service undermines it as a public right. Sadly, and quite ironically, India's own attempts at international collaboration haven't fared particularly well. The South Asian University, established in Delhi as a joint initiative of SAARC nations, was meant to be a symbol of regional cooperation. However, political interference, discrimination, and curbs on dissent have tarnished that vision. If India struggles to ensure academic freedom in a regional university it hosts, can it realistically guarantee autonomy for branches of powerful Western institutions? Besides, there's the question of competition.

Indian public universities, already burdened by limited funds, and bureaucratic hurdles, will now face competition from foreign institutions with global brand power and deeper pockets. Even partnerships between the two may become lopsided, with Indian universities relegated to a feeder or satellite status. Over time, this could trigger a quiet brain drain within the country itself, drawing the best faculty, diverting philanthropic funding, and further weakening the public education ecosystem. Although proponents argue that foreign campuses will raise standards and provide global exposure to Indian education, let us remember that real internationalisation isn't about franchised campuses or imported syllabi. It requires equal partnerships: shared research, genuine student exchange, and intellectual reciprocity. A British university in Gurugram may carry London's prestige, but can it recreate the same academic environment, diversity, or freedom? Will it build communities of learning, or simply expand its market footprint? So, the debate isn't a clash between globalisation and nationalism; it's about the terms of engagement. If India wants to be a true global education hub, it must prioritise equity, autonomy, and accountability. Foreign institutions can add value, but only if they strengthen rather than overshadow Indian universities. Otherwise, India risks turning higher education into a marketplace of imported dreams—glittering on the surface, hollow beneath.



हिन्दू धर्म में बहुत महत्व रखता है खरमास

खरमास हिन्दू धर्म और ज्योतिष में बहुत महत्व रखता है, क्योंकि किसी भी शुभ कार्य की शुरुआत करने से पहले शुभ समय या मुहूर्त जरूर देखा जाता है। साथ ही सूर्य के चाल भी देखते हैं, क्योंकि सूर्य जब धनु और मीन राशि में आते हैं तब खरमास लग जाता है। अतः शुभ कार्यों को करने की मनाही है। खरमास से संबंधित 20 खास नियम, जिनका पालन करना है आवश्यक

- खरमास 16 दिसंबर 2022 से 14 जनवरी 2022 तक जारी रहेगा। अतः इस समय में सगाई, शादी, वधु प्रवेश, गृह प्रवेश, घर निर्माण, नया व्यापार का आरंभ तथा किसी भी तरह का कोई भी मांगलिक कार्य ना करें।
- खरमास में पूरे महीने में सूर्योदय से पहले उठकर स्नानादि करके प्रतिदिन चढ़ते सूरज को अर्घ्य अर्पित करें, यह सेहत, समृद्धि के लिए लाभदायी रहेगा और ऐसा करने से शुभ फल भी मिलेगा।
- इस महीने भगवान श्री कृष्ण के प्रसन्न करने के लिए गौशाला जाकर गौमाता को गुड़, हरा चना खिलाएं और उनका पूजन करें।
- यदि गौशाला जाना प्रतिदिन संभव ना हो तो घर में गाय की मूर्ति या तस्वीर लगाकर उसका पूजन करें।
- खरमास के महीने में आप जितने असाहाय और गरीबों की मदद करेंगे उतना लाभ मिलेगा, क्योंकि खरमास ही एक ऐसा महीना है जिसमें दान और पुण्य करने का सबसे अधिक फल मिलता है।
- प्रतिदिन ब्रह्म मुहूर्त में उठकर स्नानादि से निवृत्त होकर श्री विष्णु का केसर मिले दूध से अभिषेक करें और कम से कम 11 बार विष्णु मंत्र- ‘ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय नमः’ का तुलसी की माला से जाप करें।
- खरमास को मलमास भी कहा जाता है। इस माह आने वाली सभी एकादशियों का व्रत-उपवास करके भगवान श्री विष्णु का पूजन करें और उन्हें तुलसी के पत्तों के साथ खीर का भोग लगाएं।
- हिन्दू धर्म में इस महीने को शुभ नहीं माना जाता है। अतः हिन्दू धर्म के विशिष्ट व्यक्तिगत संस्कार भी निषेध हैं, जैसे नामकरण, यज्ञोपवीत, शुभ विवाह और कोई भी धार्मिक संस्कार नहीं करें।
- जिनकी कुंडली में सूर्य कमजोर स्थिति में हो उन्हें सूर्यदेव का पूजन, अर्घ्य, उपासना आदि इस माह अवश्य करना चाहिए।
- इस माहपर्यंत श्री विष्णु का पूजन करके तीर्थस्थान पर जाकर स्नान-दान करने का भी विशेष महत्व है।
- इस महीने नई वस्तुएं, नया घर, प्लॉट, घर अथवा कार या इलेक्ट्रॉनिक सामान की खरीदारी नहीं करनी चाहिए।
- नौकरी अथवा कार्यक्षेत्र में उन्नति के लिए खरमास की नवमी तिथि को छोटी कन्याओं को भोजन करावाएं, यह पुण्य फलदायी कार्य होगा।
- इस माह में बुरे अथवा कुविचारों को त्यागें, बुरी आदतें और नशे की लत हो तो छोड़ दें, दुराचार आदि का भी त्याग करके धार्मिक कार्यों में मन लगाएं।
- इस महीने में प्रतिदिन सूर्यदेव की उपासना करके आदित्य हरदय स्तोत्र का पाठ करें।
- इस माह सायंकाल के समय सूर्यदेव की आराधना करने से जहां जीवनपर्यंत भौतिक सुखों की प्राप्ति होती है, वहीं अन्न, जल आदि किसी भी वस्तु की जीवन में कमी नहीं रहती।
- यश-कीर्ति की चाह रखने वालों को, उत्तम स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा, संतान और करियर में सफलता के लिए प्रतिदिन प्रातःकाल में उग रहे लाल सूर्यदेव को अर्घ्य दें।
- इस महीने अपने इष्टदेव की पूजा-अर्चना और सेवा करने तथा दान-पुण्य देने से पुण्य का संचय होता है।
- खरमास में पीपल वृक्ष का पूजन करना शुभ फलदायी माना जाता है, क्योंकि पीपल में भगवान श्री विष्णु का वास माना जाता है।



ज्ञान का अद्भुत भंडार है श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता

- श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता एक दिव्य ग्रंथ है। गीता मरना सिखाती है, जीवन को तो धन्य बनाती ही है। यह हमें पलायन से पुरुषार्थ की ओर अग्रसर होने की प्रेरणा देती है।
- श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता हिन्दुओं के पवित्रतम ग्रंथों में से एक है।
- गीता जयंती मार्गशीर्ष शुक्ल एकादशी को मनाई जाती है।
- गीता केवल धर्म ग्रंथ ही नहीं यह एक अनुपम जीवन ग्रंथ है। जीवन उत्थान के लिए इसका स्वाध्याय हर व्यक्ति को करना चाहिए।
- श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता की पृष्ठभूमि महाभारत का युद्ध है।
- श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता के 18 अध्याय हैं

गीता कहती है कि जीवन रोने के लिए नहीं, भाग जाने के लिए नहीं है, हंसने और खेलने के लिए है। यह हमें संकटों से, हिम्मत से लड़ने की प्रेरणा देती है। गीता मानव मात्र को जीवन में प्रतिष्ठा आने वाले छोटे-बड़े संघर्षों के सामने हिम्मत से खड़े रहने की शक्ति देती है। श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता ज्ञान का अद्भुत भंडार है। हम हर काम में तुरंत नतीजा चाहते हैं लेकिन भगवान ने कहा है कि धैर्य के बिना अज्ञान, दुख, मोह, क्रोध, काम और लोभ से निवृत्ति नहीं मिलेगी। आइए जाने खास बातें.

- और महाभारत का युद्ध भी 18 दिन ही चला था।
- अर्जुन को भगवान श्रीकृष्ण ने गीता का उपदेश दिया था।
- गीता में कर्तव्य को ही धर्म कहा है। भगवान कहते हैं कि अपने कर्तव्य को पूरा करने में कभी भी लाभ-हानि का विचार नहीं करना चाहिए।
- गीता के 700 श्लोकों में हर उस समस्या का समाधान है, जो हर इंसान के सामने कभी न कभी आती हैं।
- गीता एकमात्र ऐसा ग्रंथ है, जिसकी जयंती मनाई जाती है।
- भगवान ने अर्जुन को निमित्त बनाकर, गीता के ज्ञान द्वारा विश्व के मानव को पुरुषार्थ करने की प्रेरणा दी है।



खरमास में करें सूर्य देव की उपासना

क्यों खरमास में मंगल कार्यों (शादी-विवाह, मुंडन, जनेऊ संस्कार, नूतन गृह प्रवेश इत्यादि) को करना उत्तम नहीं बताया गया है। गुरु का ध्यान सूर्य देव पर रहता है। खरमास में धार्मिक अनुष्ठान किए जाते हैं, किंतु मंगल शहनाई नहीं बजती। खरमास 15 जनवरी की रात तक रहेगा। काशी पंचांग के अनुसार सूर्य जब गुरु की राशि धनु या मीन में विराजमान रहते हैं, तो उस घड़ी को खरमास माना जाता है और

में जनेऊ संस्कार, मुंडन संस्कार, नव गृह प्रवेश, विवाह आदि नहीं करना चाहिए। इसे शुभ नहीं माना गया है, वहीं विवाह आदि शुभ संस्कारों में गुरु एवं शुक्र की उपस्थिति आवश्यक बताई गई है। ये सुख और समृद्धि के कारक माने गए हैं। खरमास में धार्मिक अनुष्ठान किए जाते हैं, किंतु मंगल शहनाई नहीं बजती। इस माह में सभी राशि वालों को सूर्य देव की उपासना अवश्य करनी चाहिए।

गुरु का ध्यान सूर्य देव पर

इसका एक धार्मिक पक्ष यह भी माना जाता है कि सूर्य देव जब बृहस्पति के घर में प्रवेश करते हैं, तो देव गुरु का ध्यान एवं संपूर्ण समर्पण उन पर ही केंद्रित हो जाता है। इससे मांगलिक कार्यों पर उनका प्रभाव सुक्ष्म ही रह जाता है जिससे कि इस दौरान शुभ कार्यों का विशेष लाभ नहीं होता इसलिए भी खरमास में मंगल कार्यों को करना उत्तम नहीं बताया गया है।



क्या होता है मासिक कार्तिगाई दीपम

- इस दिन भगवान शिव और कार्तिकेय की पूजा करने से जीवन में नकारात्मकता शक्ति का नाश होकर सकारात्मक ऊर्जा और प्रकाश का संचार होने लगता है। भगवान कार्तिकेय की कृपा से परिवार में सबकुछ कुशल मंगल रहता है। कहते हैं कि यह पर्व ब्रह्मा और विष्णु की उस प्रतियोगिता से जुड़ा है जिसमें वे दोनों शिवजी को अपनी श्रेष्ठता का परिचय देने के लिए एक ज्योति स्तंभ के अंतिम छोर को देखने के लिए जाते हैं। कार्तिगाई दीपम पर भगवान शिव के इसी ज्योति स्वरूप का पूजन किया जाता है।
- इस दिन भगवान शिव के दिव्य ज्योति स्वरूप की पूजा होती है। इस दिन पंक्तिबद्धि तरह से दीपक जलाते हैं।
- प्रातः काल उठने के बाद स्नानादि से निवृत्त होकर व्रत संकल्प लें। इसके बाद भगवान शिवजी की पूजा-उपासना और आरती करें।
- यदि आप दिनभर निराहार उपवास करने में सक्षम नहीं हैं तो फलाहार कर सकते हैं।
- संध्याकाल में शुभ मुहूर्त में दीप

हिंदी पंचांग के अनुसार हर माह की त्रयोदशी को दक्षिण भारत में कार्तिगाई दीपम का पर्व मनाया जाता है। मार्गशीर्ष माह में इसका खासा महत्व रहता है। इस दिन सूर्यास्त के पश्चात दीप जलाकर भगवान शिव और उनके पुत्र कार्तिकेय की पूजा की जाती है। इस दिन का नाम कर्तिका नक्षत्र से लिया गया है, क्योंकि इस दिन कृतिका नक्षत्र प्रबल रहता है।

- प्रज्वलित करके भगवान शिव का आह्वान करें और पुनः उनकी पूजा और अरती करें।
- अगले दिन प्रातः भगवान की पूजा-अरती करने के बाद स्वयं भोजन ग्रहण करके व्रत का पारणा करें।



शनिदेव को समर्पित रत्न है नीलम

ज्योतिष मान्यताओं के अनुसार नीलम रत्न व्यक्ति को रंक से राजा बना सकता है। यह रत्न शनिदेव को समर्पित होता है। इस रत्न को हर कोई धारण नहीं कर सकता है। जहां ये रत्न रंक से राजा बना देता है वहीं अशुभ होने पर ये रत्न राजा को भी रंक बना सकता है। ज्योतिष गणनाओं के अनुसार नीलम रत्न को धारण करने से पहले कुंडली का विचार करना जरूरी होता है।

नीलम रत्न के फायदे

- जिन लोगों के लिए नीलम शुभ होता है उन्हें इसका तुरंत फायदा दिखने लगता है।
- स्वास्थ्य संबंधित समस्याओं से छुटकारा मिल सकता है।
- धन- लाभ होने लगता है।
- नौकरी और व्यापार में तरक्की होने लगती है।
- शनि की कड़ी चाल से इन राशियों को हो रहा है फायदा, जानें क्या आप भी हैं इस लिस्ट में शामिल

नीलम रत्न के अशुभ होने पर इन समस्याओं का सामना करना पड़ सकता है

- नीलम हर किसी को शुभ फल नहीं देता है। जिन लोगों के लिए ये शुभ नहीं है, उन्हें स्वास्थ्य संबंधित समस्याओं का सामना करना पड़ सकता है।
- धन- हानि हो सकती है।
- कोई बड़ी दुर्घटना हो सकती है।

ऐसे करें पहचान नीलम आपके लिए शुभ है या नहीं

नीलम रत्न को धारण करने से पहले उसको तकीया के नीचे रखकर सोएं। अगर आपको रात में कोई भी बुरा स्वप्न नहीं आता है और अच्छी गहरी नींद आती है तो इसका मतलब है ये रत्न आपके लिए शुभ है। अगर आपको अच्छी और गहरी नींद नहीं आती है तो इस रत्न को धारण न करें। रत्न धारण करने के बाद अशुभ घटना होने पर इस रत्न को तुरंत उतार दें।

बंद किस्मत खोल सकती हैं मिट्टी ये तीन चीजें

प्राचीन काल से ही मिट्टी के बर्तनों का इस्तेमाल होता आ रहा है। हालांकि वर्तमान समय में मिट्टी के बर्तनों की जगह प्लास्टिक या अन्य धातु से बने बर्तनों ने ले ली है। लेकिन आज भी सजावट के लिए ज्यादातर लोग मिट्टी से बनी चीजों का प्रयोग करते हैं। वास्तु शास्त्र के अनुसार, मिट्टी के बर्तन व्यक्ति की बंद किस्मत को जगा सकते हैं। विद्वानों के अनुसार, घर पर मिट्टी के बर्तनों का इस्तेमाल शुभ माना जाता है। कहते हैं कि ऐसा करने से नकारात्मकता दूर होती है और घर में सकारात्मक ऊर्जा का संचार होता है। जानिए वास्तु में किन तीन मिट्टी की चीजों को घर पर रखना शुभ माना जाता है।

मिट्टी का घड़ा

वास्तु के अनुसार, मिट्टी का घड़ा रखने से सुख-समृद्धि घर आती है। मिट्टी का घड़ा सदैव उत्तर दिशा की ओर रखना चाहिए। इसके साथ ही घड़े को कभी खाली नहीं छोड़ना चाहिए। मान्यता है कि घर पर मिट्टी का घड़ा रखने से सुख-समृद्धि का वास होता है। आपको बता दें कि आज भी आयुर्वेदाचार्य मिट्टी के घड़े का पानी सेहतमंद बताते हैं।

मिट्टी का प्रतिमाएं

वास्तु शास्त्र के मुताबिक, पूजा स्थल पर मिट्टी से बनी देवी-देवताओं की प्रतिमाएं रखना शुभ होता है। इसलिए घर के मंदिर में हमेशा मिट्टी से बनी देवी-देवताओं की मूर्ति रखनी चाहिए। इन प्रतिमाओं को हमेशा घर के ईशान कोण (उत्तर-पूर्व दिशा) या दक्षिण-पश्चिम दिशा में ही रखना चाहिए। मान्यता है कि ऐसा करने से मां लक्ष्मी प्रसन्न होती हैं।

मिट्टी का दीपक

वर्तमान समय में पूजा स्थल पर मिट्टी के दीपक का बहुत कम लोग इस्तेमाल करते हैं। मिट्टी के दीपक की जगह धातु से बने दीपक का इस्तेमाल होता है। वास्तु शास्त्र के अनुसार, मिट्टी से बने दीपक को घर पर जलाना शुभ होता है। कहते हैं कि ऐसा करने से घर पर सकारात्मक ऊर्जा का संचार होता है।



Avneet Kaur

And Shantanu Maheshwari's Love In Vietnam To Release In Korea On December 8

After connecting strongly with audiences in India, Rahhat Shah Kazmi’s cross-Asian romance Love in Vietnam is now set for its South Korea release — a key milestone for the India-Vietnam collaboration that has steadily earned attention across the region. The film, starring Shantanu Maheshwari and Avneet Kaur, has recently found traction among Korean viewers, helped by fan edits, social media buzz, and interest in its emotional tone and cultural mix. Korean singer Seaya, who also stars in the film, has added to the excitement with her latest track that has gone viral in Korea. Shantanu Maheshwari says the Korean release feels “surreal in the best way possible,” adding, “For me, the most touching part is seeing how Korean fans are responding to the small emotional details in the film. They notice things we never expected anyone outside India and Vietnam to pick up, and that kind of sensitivity is rare.” He adds, “I’ve always been curious about Korea’s artistic culture, so the fact that our film is opening there feels like life coming full circle. I’d love to visit during the release, meet the audiences, and talk to them about what the film meant to them. I’m grateful for every bit of love coming our way.”



Avneet Kaur calls this moment “a dream I didn’t even know I had.” Speaking about the Korean audience, she says, “What has moved me the most is how Korean viewers express affection. There is a grace in the way they admire stories and people, especially Korean men and their chivalry. It’s something the whole world smiles about, including me.” She adds, “The idea that our film will now live in Korean theatres feels like a gift. I want to be there when it releases, just to soak in their energy and thank them for letting our story into their world. I feel nothing but excitement and gratitude.” Inspired by the novel Madonna in a Fur Coat, Love in Vietnam marks an India–Vietnam partnership in Hindi cinema and stars Shantanu Maheshwari, Avneet Kaur and Vietnamese actor Kha Ngan in her Hindi debut, along with Raj Babbar, Gulshan Grover and Farida Jalal. Presented by Zee Studios and produced by Blue Lotus Creatives, Innovations India, Rahat Kazmi Film.



Ashnoor Kaur

Reacts To Malti Chahar Calling Her 'Selfish' In Bigg Boss 19: 'I Know Who I Am’

Popular television actress Ashnoor Kaur reacted to Malti Chahar calling her ‘selfish’ in the ‘Bigg Boss 19’ house. During an exclusive conversation with IANS, Ashnoor was asked to share her opinion on Malti reportedly calling her a ‘kid and selfish’ as she was exiting the house. Reacting to this, Ashnoor stated that everyone is entitled to their opinion. “I know who I am, and I don’t let such remarks define me”, she added. Ashnoor was evicted from the Salman Khan-hosted reality show for being violent with fellow housemate Tanya Mittal during the “Ticket To Finale” task. Given that Ashnoor’s journey in “Bigg Boss” came to an end rather abruptly, Ashnoor revealed if there is anything she would have done differently inside the house? To this, she said that she wished someone had told her earlier that Tanya was hurt. She added that if she had known, she would have apologised immediately, and things might not have ended so abruptly. “I was only a week away from the finale, and it felt like my dream was suddenly snatched away,” the ‘Patiala Babes’ actress added. Sharing which contestants surprised her the most, either positively or negatively, Ashnoor shared, “Before entering the house, I didn’t think I’d get along with Aves and Nagma, but they turned out to be absolute sweethearts. We connected instantly.” Disclosing that the show changed her perspective on friendships and alliances, the ‘Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai’ actress said, “I found true friendship in Abhishek. And I also learned how some people can flip when situations get tough.” Talking about her future plans after ‘Bigg Boss’, she shared that she has a New Year trip planned. “I’ve been celebrating it at Nanded Sahib Gurudwara for almost a decade now. There are also conversations happening professionally — things in the pipeline. When they materialise, you’ll know.”



On Their First Birthday, Shraddha Arya Reveals Faces Of ‘Tiny Tornadoes’ Siya & Shaurya



Shraddha Arya is marking the first birthday of her baby boy and baby girl by revealing their face to her millions of fans. Her twin babies, Siya and Shaurya, turned one on November 29. Just days after, the actress and her husband, Rahul Nagal, hosted an intimate, fun-filled bash to mark the special occasion. She took to Instagram on Tuesday, December 2, to share a series of photos from the celebration. This marks the first time Shraddha has unveiled her babies’ faces on her social media account. Her post opened with a sweet family picture of Siya and Shaurya sitting on a table, looking cute as buttons in their birthday outfits. While the actress dressed her son in a white shirt and blue trousers with a matching bow tie, she chose a pink-and-blue frock for her daughter.

In the next picture, Shraddha, wearing a pink-coloured one-shoulder dress, was seen carrying her son in her arms, while her husband, wearing a white shirt, beige pants, and a pink jacket, carried their daughter. The following photos capture some adorable moments from the family of four.

Shraddha Gives Fans A Look Into Her Twin Babies’ Birthday Celebration

One image captured the couple making a hand heart in front of a standee, which read, “Siya and Shaurya are One-Derful.” The place was decorated with blue, pink, yellow, and white-coloured balloons. Shraddha also gave her fans a look at her twins’ birthday cake, which was adorned with a rainbow and balloon details. She ended the carousel by offering a peek into the minimalistic place where the celebration took place. In the caption, Shraddha wrote, “Siya & Shaurya, Our Tiny Tornadoes Are Officially ONE! #MommyDaddyLoveYouSoMuch.”

Shraddha Arya Wished Her ‘Forever Miracles’ With Rare Pictures

Before revealing her kids’ faces, the Kundali Bhagya actress marked their birthday by sharing a series of rare pictures from last year and calling her babies “forever Miracles.” The photos were taken inside the hospital room after she gave birth. One tender moment showed her babies sleeping peacefully as she gazed at them with sheer adoration. In one photo, she was also seen getting visibly emotional while her husband hugged her.

Rupali Ganguly Is Rooting For Anupamaa Co-Star Gaurav Khanna: ‘Jeetenge Aap Hi’



After weeks of unlimited drama, unexpected twists and turns, intense brawls, and heart-breaking evictions, Bigg Boss 19 is inching closer to its grand finale. As the Salman Khan-hosted show is just a week away from announcing the winner, family, friends, fans, and supporters are rooting for their favourite contestants. Now the latest one to extend support for a Bigg Boss contestant is Rupali Ganguly. Any guesses? The actress is supporting her Anupamaa co-star Gaurav Khanna, who is the first finalist of the controversial reality show after winning the Ticket To Finale task.

Rupali Ganguly Believes Gaurav Khanna Deserves To Win

At a recent event, the television actress admitted that she is fond of Amaal Mallik and loves the content Farrhana Bhatt and Tanya Mittal are giving, but Gaurav deserves to win the reality show. Responding to Buzzoka, she said, “I am very, very fond of Amaal. I love the content that Farrhana, Tanya and everybody have given. And Gaurav deserves to win. Jeetenge toh aap hi, Kapadia ji.” Gaurav Khanna played the role of Anuj Kapadia in Rajan Shahi’s show Anupamaa for a long time. He was paired opposite Rupali, who plays the main role.

Grand Finale On December 7

With the last Weekend Ka Vaar wrapped after the eviction of Ashnoor Kaur and Sheebaz Badesha, Bigg Boss 19 now heads toward its grand finale on December 7. The episode will stream on JioHotstar at 9 PM and air on Colors from 10:30 PM. The top six contestants battling for the coveted trophy are Gaurav Khanna, Amaal Mallik, Tanya Mittal, Farrhana Bhatt, Pranit More and Malti Chahar.

Anupamaa’s Current Storyline And Star Cast

Headlined by Rupali Ganguly, Anupamaa has been one of the highest-rated television shows since its premiere. With its gripping storyline, shocking twists and solid cast, the show has kept its fanbase glued to their screens. Promising even more drama, the recent track is gearing up to show the titular character, Anupamaa (played by Rupali), going to Mumbai and exploring the world of showbiz. Besides Rupali, Anupamaa also stars Adrija Roy, Alpna Buch, Shivam Khajuria, Rahil Azam, Manish Goel, Zalak Desai, Randeep Rai and others in pivotal roles. Various popular stars, including Sudhanshu Pandey, Gaurav Khanna and Paras Kalnawat, among others, left the show, but the show continues to earn love from fans.

धनबाद निवासी सुरेश महतो की सड़क हादसे में मौत बरवाअड्डा किसान चौक के पास तेज रफतार वाहन ने मारी टक्कर

धनबाद,एजेंसी। धनबाद के झरिया निवासी 45 वर्षीय सुरेश महतो की बुधवार को सड़क हादसे में मृत्यु हो गई। यह घटना बरवाअड्डा के किसान चौक के पास उस समय हुई, जब सुरेश महतो सड़क पार कर रहे थे। इसी दौरान एक तेज रफ्तार वाहन ने उन्हें टक्कर मार दी, जिससे वह गंभीर रूप से घायल हो गए। बताया गया है कि सुरेश महतो कृषि बाजार समिति से फल खरीदने गए थे। वह प्रतिदिन की तरह बुधवार को भी फल लाने के लिए घर से निकले थे। सुरेश अपने परिवार के साथ ससुराल में रहते थे और डेला लगाकर विभिन्न इलाकों में फल बेचकर परिवार का भरण-पोषण करते थे।



अस्पताल में परिजनों के पहुंचने पर वे गहरे सदमे में थे : हादसे की सूचना मिलते ही स्थानीय लोग मौके पर पहुंचे और तुरंत पुलिस को जानकारी दी। बरवाअड्डा थाना पुलिस ने स्थानीय लोगों की मदद से सुरेश महतो को धनबाद के शहीद निर्मल महतो मेडिकल कॉलेज अस्पताल पहुंचाया। वहां डॉक्टरों ने जांच के बाद उन्हें मृत घोषित कर दिया। अस्पताल में परिजनों के पहुंचने पर वे गहरे सदमे में थे। स्थानीय लोगों का कहना है कि किसान चौक के पास तेज रफ्तार वाहनों के कारण अक्सर दुर्घटनाएं होती रहती हैं। इन दुर्घटनाओं को रोकने के लिए अब तक कोई ठोस कदम नहीं उठाए गए हैं।

झारखंड में बाघों की गिनती 15 दिसंबर से रांची,एजेंसी। मेदिनीनगर ऑल इंडिया टाइगर एक्टिवेशन (गिनती) की प्रक्रिया शुरू हो चुकी है। झारखंड में 15 दिसंबर से बाघों के साथ गिद्धों और हाथियों की भी गिनती की जाएगी। यह जानकारी झारखंड के नोडल सीसीएफ वाइल्ड लाइफ एवं पलामू टाइगर रिजर्व के निदेशक एसआर नटेश ने दी। इस दौरान फ्लिड डिप्टी डायरेक्टर कुमार आशीष व प्रजेशकांत जेना भी मौजूद थे। नटेश ने बताया कि राज्य में बाघों की गिनती चार चरणों में होगी। पहला चरण 15 दिसंबर से शुरू होगा और अंतिम चरण अप्रैल में होगा। इसके लिए झारखंड को छह रीजन पलामू टाइगर रिजर्व, दुमका, रांची, हजारीबाग, बोकारो और सारंडा में विभाजित किया गया है।

झारखंड में बाघों की गिनती 15 दिसंबर से

रांची,एजेंसी। मेदिनीनगर ऑल इंडिया टाइगर एक्टिवेशन (गिनती) की प्रक्रिया शुरू हो चुकी है। झारखंड में 15 दिसंबर से बाघों के साथ गिद्धों और हाथियों की भी गिनती की जाएगी। यह जानकारी झारखंड के नोडल सीसीएफ वाइल्ड लाइफ एवं पलामू टाइगर रिजर्व के निदेशक एसआर नटेश ने दी। इस दौरान फ्लिड डिप्टी डायरेक्टर कुमार आशीष व प्रजेशकांत जेना भी मौजूद थे। नटेश ने बताया कि राज्य में बाघों की गिनती चार चरणों में होगी। पहला चरण 15 दिसंबर से शुरू होगा और अंतिम चरण अप्रैल में होगा। इसके लिए झारखंड को छह रीजन पलामू टाइगर रिजर्व, दुमका, रांची, हजारीबाग, बोकारो और सारंडा में विभाजित किया गया है।

गुमला में कुएं में डूबकर महिला की मौत पानी भरने के दौरान हुआ हादसा

गुमला एजेंसी। गुमला जिले के घाघरा थाना क्षेत्र के चट्टी पतराटोली गांव में कुएं में डूबने से एक महिला की मौत हो गई। यह घटना पानी भरने के दौरान हुई। पुलिस ने मंगलवार को शव को पोस्टमॉर्टम के लिए गुमला भेज दिया है। मृतका की पहचान 45 वर्षीय फूलो देवी, पत्नी राजू उरांव के रूप में हुई है। परिजनों ने बताया कि मंगलवार सुबह करीब 12 बजे फूलो देवी घर के काम के लिए कुएं से पानी लेने गई थीं।

हादसे के वक्त घर पर नहीं था कोई: जब वह कुछ देर तक नहीं लौटी और घर में कोई नहीं था, तब परिजनों ने कुएं के पास बाल्टी देखी। तलाश करने पर उनका शव कुएं के अंदर मिला। आनन-फानन में उन्हें कुएं से निकालकर सामुदायिक स्वास्थ्य केंद्र घाघरा ले जाया गया, जहां चिकित्सकों ने उन्हें मृत घोषित कर दिया। पुलिस ने शव को कब्जे में लेकर पोस्टमॉर्टम के लिए गुमला सदर अस्पताल भेज दिया है। मृतका अपने पीछे दो छोटे बच्चे छोड़ गई हैं।

कोडरमा में पिता ने बेटे को जंजीरों से बांधकर पीटा मुखिया ने पीड़ित को पहुंचाया था

कोडरमा एजेंसी। कोडरमा जिले के तिलैया थाना क्षेत्र में एक पिता द्वारा अपने बेटे को जंजीरों से बांधकर पीटने का मामला सामने आया है। पीड़ित बच्चे मोहम्मद फैजु ने बताया कि पिछली रात करीब डेढ़ बजे उसके पिता मोहम्मद मुख्तार अंसारी कार बड़े भाइयों ने मिलकर उसे जंजीरों से बांध दिया। इसके बाद उसकी पिटाई की गई और उसे एक कमरे में बंद कर दिया गया। मौलवार दोपहर लगभग 1 बजे फैज किसी तरह अपने घर से भाग निकला। वह कोडरमा थाना क्षेत्र के छतरबर गांव के मुखिया गुलाम मुस्तफा के पास पहुंचा और उन्हें पूरी घटना बताई। मुखिया गुलाम मुस्तफा ने तुरंत फैज को तिलैया थाना पहुंचाया और उसे थाना प्रभारी को सौंप दिया। पिता के खिलाफ कड़ी कानूनी कार्रवाई की मांग गुलाम मुस्तफा ने थाना प्रभारी से मोहम्मद फैज के पिता मोहम्मद मुख्तार अंसारी के खिलाफ कड़ी कानूनी कार्रवाई की मांग की।

साइबेरियन डक से भरा गिरिडीह का खंडोली डैम, 4 हजार किमी की उड़ान के बाद पहुंचे फरवरी तक पर्यटकों को करते हैं आकर्षित

गिरिडीह,एजेंसी। गिरिडीह का लोकप्रिय पर्यटन स्थल खंडोली डैम इन दिनों प्रवासी पक्षियों की चहचहाहट से गुलजार है। सर्दियों की शुरुआत होते ही साइबेरियन डक समेत कई विदेशी पक्षियों ने यहां डेरा डाल दिया है। हर साल की तरह इस बार भी करीब 4 हजार किलोमीटर का कठिन सफर तय कर ये पक्षी खंडोली के शांत और स्वच्छ जलाशय में पनाह ले रहे हैं। सुबह की रोशनी में जब ये पक्षी झील की लहरों के बीच उड़ान भरते हैं, तो नजारा किसी प्राकृतिक उत्सव जैसा मनमोहक हो उठता है।

कड़ाके की ठंड और भोजन संकट में प्रवास का सफर : साइबेरिया में सर्दियों के दौरान तापमान -30एष्ट तक गिर जाता है। झीलों जम जाती हैं और



भोजन का गंभीर संकट उत्पन्न हो जाता है। ऐसे में ये पक्षी गर्माहट और भोजन की तलाश में एशिया के अपेक्षाकृत गर्म क्षेत्रों की ओर बढ़ते हैं। दिसंबर से फरवरी तक

ये खंडोली डैम में निवास करते हैं। जैसे ही साइबेरिया में बर्फ पिघलने लगती है, ये अपने मूल घर की ओर वापस लौट जाते हैं। इस बीच खंडोली का शांत वातावरण,

रिश्ते का खून शराबी बेटे ने पिता को कुदाली से मार डाला मां को किया जख्मी, चतरा के लिपदा गांव में मंगलवार रात हुई घटना

सिमरिया,एजेंसी। बानसाड़ी पंचायत के लिपदा गांव में मंगलवार देर रात शराब के नशे में धुत बेटे ने मामूली बात पर बुजुर्ग पिता की कुदाल से हत्या कर दी। बीच-बचाव करने आई मां को भी घायल कर दिया। घटना के बाद भी आरोपी खुलेआम गांव में घूमता रहा, जबकि परिवार और ग्रामीणों ने रातों-रात शव का अंतिम संस्कार कर दिया।



पुलिस को इसकी भनक तक नहीं लगी। जानकारी के मुताबिक, विनय भुइयां देर रात शराब पीकर घर पहुंचा और पिता बिफैया भुइयां से बहस करने लगा। उसने पिता पर आरोप लगाया कि सी रुपये रखने के लिए दिए थे, लेकिन वापस नहीं कर रहे। विवाद बढ़ने पर विनय ने पास पड़ी कुदाल उठाकर पिता पर ताबड़तोड़ वार कर दिए। मौके पर ही

बुजुर्ग की मौत हो गई। शोर सुनकर उसकी बुजुर्ग मां करंती देवी बचाव करने पहुंचीं, तो आरोपी ने उन पर भी वार कर दिया। उन्हें गंभीर हालत में

सिमरिया रेफरल अस्पताल ले जाया गया। प्राथमिक उपचार के बाद उन्हें घर भेज दिया गया। बुधवार को विनय ने भी कबूल किया कि पैसे न

देने पर उसने गुस्से में पिता और मां पर वार किया। उसने खून से सनी कुदाल भी दिखा दी।

इस संबंध में सिमरिया थाना प्रभारी सूर्य प्रताप सिंह ने कहा कि घटना की कोई सूचना थाने में नहीं दी गई है। पुलिस अब ग्रामीणों और परिजनों से जानकारी जुटा रही है।

बहु बोली-किसी को बताने पर हत्या की धमकी दी थी : मुतक के समर्थ और बहु ने बताया कि घटना के समय वे बच्चों के साथ सो रहे थे। शोर सुनकर जब बाहर आए, तब देखा कि विनय कुदाल से पिता पर वार कर रहा था। बहु के अनुसार, विनय ने धमकी दी कि यदि किसी को बताया तो वह उसे और उसकी सास को भी मार देगा, जिस डर से रातभर किसी को सूचना नहीं दी जा सकी।

ऑटो चोरी मामले में चार आरोपित गिरफ्तार



चतरा,एजेंसी। सदर थाना पुलिस ने ऑटो चोरी के मामले में चार आरोपितों को गिरफ्तार कर न्यायिक हिरासत में भेज दिया। इसकी जानकारी प्रेस वार्ता में एसडीपीओ संदीप कुमार सुमन ने बुधवार को दी। उन्होंने बताया कि 3 दिसंबर की

रात को नितेश कुमार यादव, साकिन गेरी अपने ऑटो से प्रतापपुर से चतरा लौट रहा था। इस दौरान संघरी घाटी में बाइक सवार अपराधियों ने नितेश से ऑटो और दो फोन लूटकर भाग गए थे। मामले में पुलिस ने मामला दर्ज कर जांच कर रही थी।

मामले को लेकर एसपी को गुप्त सूचना मिली कि ऑटो लूटने वाले अपराधी ऑटो को बेचने या छिपाने के इरादे से हंटरगंज की ओर आ रहे हैं। इस सूचना पर त्वरित कार्रवाई करने के लिए एसडीपीओ संदीप सुमन के नेतृत्व में एक छापेमारी टीम बनाई गई और घटना के अनुसंधानकर्ता पुलिस अवर निरीक्षक राहुल सिंह और थाना प्रभारी विपिन कुमार सशस्त्र बलों के साथ भुइयांडीह गांव पहुंचे। एसडीपीओ ने बताया कि इस दौरान बिहार के गया जिले के बाराचटटी निवासी बिरजू कुमार के अलावा विशाल पांडे, कमलेश कुमार, चंदन कुमार को पकड़कर लूटा गया पिगगो ऑटो, दो फोन और घटना में अपराधियों की ओर से इस्तेमाल की गई दो बाइक जबरत की गई है। गिरफ्तार सभी आरोपितों को पुलिस ने न्यायिक हिरासत में भेज दिया है।

मिलावटी शराब बरामद, तीन लोग गिरफ्तार

पश्चिमी सिंहभूम,एजेंसी। पश्चिमी सिंहभूम जिले के मंझारी थाना क्षेत्र में चाईबासा पुलिस ने मिलावटी अंग्रेजी शराब बरामद करते हुए तीन लोगों को गिरफ्तार किया है। पुलिस ने अलान-अलग ठिकानों पर छापेमारी कर भारी मात्रा में मिलावटी शराब और बीयर जब्त की है। सदर चाईबासा के अनुमंडल पुलिस पदाधिकारी बहामन टूटी ने बुधवार को अपने कार्यालय में आयोजित प्रेस वार्ता में बताया कि गुप्त सूचना के आधार पर सदर एसपी के नेतृत्व में एक विशेष छापेमारी टीम का गठन किया गया था। टीम ने 9 दिसंबर को कुन्दरगुटु गांव में छापेमारी कर एक किराना दुकान से बड़ी मात्रा में मिलावटी अंग्रेजी शराब बरामद की। मौके से दुकान संचालक कुन्दरा तांती को गिरफ्तार किया



गया। पूछताछ के दौरान कुन्दरा तांती की निशानदेही पर पुलिस ने हाटगम्हरिया और टोंटो थाना क्षेत्रों में दो अन्य स्थानों पर भी छापेमारी की, जहां से यदुनाथ लागुरी और हरिश चंद्र लागुरी नाम के दो लोगों को गिरफ्तार किया गया। छापेमारी के दौरान पुलिस ने कुल 111

बोतल 180 एमएल, 19 बोतल 375 एमएल, 14 बोतल 750 एमएल अंग्रेजी शराब के अलावा 27 बोतल बीयर और चार मोबाइल फोन जब्त किए। पुलिस ने कहा कि जिले में अवैध शराब कारोबार के खिलाफ आगे भी सख्त कार्रवाई जारी रहेगी।

गैरेज में लगी आग, कार और ऑटो जलकर राख

पूर्वी सिंहभूम,एजेंसी। सिदागोड़ा थाना क्षेत्र अंतर्गत एग्रिको सिमनल के समीप स्थित एक गैरेज में मंगलवार देर रात अचानक आग लग गई, जिससे इलाके में अफरा-तफरी मच गई। आग की तेज लपटें और घना धुआं दूर तक दिखाई देने लगा, जिसे देख आसपास के लोग दहशत में आ गए और अपने घरों से बाहर निकल आए। प्रत्यक्षदर्शियों के अनुसार गैरेज में खड़ी एक कार और एक ऑटो में शॉर्ट सर्किट के कारण आग भड़की, जिसने देखते ही देखते दोनों वाहनों को अपनी



चपेट में ले लिया। आग इतनी तेजी से फैली कि कुछ ही मिनटों में वाहन पूरी तरह जलने लगे। आग के बढ़ते स्वरूप को देखकर स्थानीय लोगों ने तुरंत दमकल विभाग और सिदागोड़ा थाना को सूचना दी। सूचना मिलते ही दमकल विभाग की टीम मौके पर पहुंची और कड़ी मशक्कत के बाद करीब आधे घंटे में आग पर काबू पाया गया। दमकल कर्मियों की तत्परता से आग को गैरेज के अन्य हिस्सों और आसपास की इमारतों तक फैलने से रोक लिया गया।

सरायकेला के रापचा मोड़ पर भीषण सड़क हादसा ,एलटी 407 ने बालू लदे हाइवा को मारी टक्कर, चालक की हालत नाजुक

जमशेदपुर (पूर्वी सिंहभूम),एजेंसी। सरायकेला जिले के गम्हरिया थाना क्षेत्र के रापचा मोड़ पर गुरुवार सुबह एक भीषण सड़क हादसा हो गया। पावर ग्रिड के सामने बालू लदे हाइवा और एलटी 407 के बीच जोरदार टक्कर हुई, जिसमें एलटी 407 का चालक गंभीर रूप से घायल हो गया। घटना सुबह करीब 8 बजे हुई, जब हाइवा मुख्य सड़क से मुड़कर बाईं ओर स्थित सर्विस रोड में प्रवेश कर रहा था।

इसी दौरान पीछे से तेज रफ्तार में आ रही एलटी 407 ने अचानक नियंत्रण खो दिया और हाइवा के पिछले हिस्से में तेज रफ्तार से जा भिड़ी। सह-चालक रिंकु सिंह ने बताया कि एलटी 407 की रफ्तार काफी अधिक थी और



ओवरटेकिंग के प्रयास में चालक वाहन को संभाल नहीं पाया। ग्रामीणों ने घायलों को निकाला बाहर : टक्कर इतनी जोरदार थी कि एलटी 407 का अगला हिस्सा बुरी तरह क्षतिग्रस्त हो गया। हादसे के बाद वाहन के केबिन का अगला हिस्सा पूरी तरह दब गया, जिसमें चालक स्टीयरिंग और लोहे की चादरों के बीच फंस गया था। घटना के तुरंत बाद आसपास के ग्रामीण मौके पर पहुंचे और कई मिनटों की मशक्कत के बाद चालक को बाहर निकाला। घायल चालक को पहले स्थानीय स्तर पर प्राथमिक उपचार दिया गया। इसके बाद हालत गंभीर होने के कारण उसे जमशेदपुर के टाटा मुख्य अस्पताल (झरू) रेफर कर दिया गया।

क्षतिग्रस्त वाहनों को पुलिस ने जब्त : हादसे की सूचना मिलते ही गम्हरिया थाना प्रभारी पुलिस बल के साथ मौके पर पहुंचे। पुलिस ने दोनों क्षतिग्रस्त वाहनों को जब्त कर लिया है और दुर्घटना के कारणों की पड़ताल शुरू कर दी है। प्रारंभिक जांच में तेज रफ्तार और गलत ओवरटेकिंग को दुर्घटना का मुख्य कारण बताया गया है। पुलिस का कहना है कि चालक के बयान के बाद ही हादसे की वास्तविक वजह सामने आ पाएगी।

नकली शराब फैक्ट्री का भंडाफोड़, चार गिरफ्तार

पलामू,एजेंसी। पलामू के पांकी थाना पुलिस ने मंगलवार को बड़ी कार्रवाई करते हुए सालमदिरी (ऐनवा-मैनवा) जंगल में संचालित अवैध नकली शराब फैक्ट्री का भंडाफोड़ किया है। पुलिस ने मौके से भारी मात्रा में नकली अंग्रेजी शराब, स्प्रिट, केमिकल, रैपर, खाली बोतलें सहित अन्य सामग्रियां बरामद कीं। बुधवार को इस संबंध में जानकारी दी गयी। कार्रवाई के दौरान पुलिस ने एक सफेद कार को पकड़कर 28 पेटी ओल्डमोक रम बरामद किया। वाहन में सवार दो आरोपियों आरीफ अंसारी उर्फ गाडेन और एजाज आलम को गिरफ्तार किया गया। पूछताछ में उन्होंने खुलासा किया कि शराब सालमदिरी जंगल स्थित फैक्ट्री से लोड कर बिहार भेजी

जाती थी और पूर्व में भी कई बार सफाई की गई है। उनकी निशानदेही पर छापेमारी कर फैक्ट्री से 750 एमएल की 384 बोतल ओल्डरम, स्टर्लिंग रिजर्व व रॉयल स्टेज की दर्जनों बोतलें, 300 लीटर स्प्रिट, केमिकल, 10 खाली गैलन, एक बड़ा ड्रम, दो वाहन तथा चार मोबाइल जब्त किए गए। मामले में राहुल प्रसाद उर्फ राहुल कुमार और सुनील प्रसाद को भी गिरफ्तार किया गया है, जिसका आपराधिक इतिहास रहा है। सभी आरोपियों के खिलाफ पांकी थाना कांड संख्या 153/2025 दर्ज कर न्यायिक हिरासत में भेज दिया गया। छापेमारी में लेस्लीगंज (पांकी) एसडीपीओ के नेतृत्व में पांकी पुलिस टीम के कई अधिकारी एवं जवान शामिल थे।

Nightclub constructed on agricultural land in North Goa sealed

Goa, Agency: In a crack-down on illegal nightclubs in the aftermath of the Arpora fire tragedy, the authorities on Thursday sealed ‘Goya The Night Club’ at Vagator in North Goa, claiming that it was constructed on agricultural land.

The action was taken on an order issued by the mamladar (revenue official) of Bardez taluka, said a senior official.

The club was constructed on farmland without changing the zone to commercial, he said.

While the establishment was sealed, the owner was given seven days to reply, he added.

Members of the nightclub's management were not available for comment.



Chief Minister Pramod Sawant ordered the administration to crack down on nightclubs operating illegally or violating safety norms after a blaze at Birch by Romeo Lane club at Arpora claimed 25 lives on Saturday midnight.

Goa club fire: Luthra brothers detained in Thailand; extradition process on

Goa, Agency: Saurabh and Gaurav Luthra, the brothers who owned the Birch by Romeo Lane nightclub in Goa — where a massive blaze caused by a suspected cylinder blast killed 25 people on Saturday — have been detained in Phuket, Thailand.

The nightclub co-owners, against whom an Interpol Blue Corner Notice had been issued, were detained at the request of the Indian government, officials said.

A process is underway to bring them to India, senior officials said. Sources said a



Goa Police team will travel to Thailand to take custody of the brothers and bring them back to India to face trial.

Their departure on an IndiGo flight, at a time when

the airline's massive flight cancellations and delays had triggered a nationwide meltdown, had initially raised suspicion over their "easy" escape.

The duo booked their tickets for Phuket through a travel portal at 1.17 am on December 7, within an hour of learning about the devastating fire at 'Birch by Romeo Lane', their nightclub at Arpora in North Goa, as per officials.

Election Commission extends timeline for SIR in 6 states and Union territories

New Delhi, Agency: The Election Commission on Thursday extended the timeline for Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in six states and Union territories following requests from the respective chief electoral officers.

In a statement, the Election Commission (EC) issued the revised schedule for SIR in Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and Uttar Pradesh. To ensure that no eligible elector is left behind, new electors are being encouraged to fill Form 6 and submit it to the block level officers or fill the form online using the ECINet app or website to get their names included in the final electoral rolls, which will be published in February next year.

The enumeration period for these six states and Union territories was to end on Thursday and the draft electoral rolls were to be published on December 16.

The enumeration period for Tamil Nadu and Gujarat has been extended to ensure that no eligible elector is left behind, new electors are being encouraged to fill Form 6 and submit it to the block level officers or fill the form online using the ECINet app or website to get their names included in the final electoral rolls,



which will be published in February next year. extended till December 14 and the draft electoral rolls will be published on December 19, the statement said.

For Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the enumeration period has been extended till December 18 and the draft electoral rolls will be published on December 23.

The enumeration period for Uttar Pradesh has been extended till December 26 and the draft electoral rolls will be published on December 31.

According to the statement, the enumeration period for Goa, Puducherry, Lakshadweep, Rajasthan and West Bengal to ensure that no eligible elector is left behind, new electors are being encouraged to fill Form 6 and submit it to the block level officers or fill the form online using the ECINet app or website to get their names included in the final electoral rolls, which will be published in February next year.

2 Naxalites carrying collective bounties of Rs 43 lakh surrender before security forces in MP

New Delhi, Agency: Two hardcore Naxalites carrying cumulative rewards of Rs 43 lakh surrendered before security forces in Madhya Pradesh's Balaghat district on Thursday, a police official said.

The duo, Deepak and Rohit, turned themselves in at the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) camp in Korka, which falls under the jurisdiction of Birsapal police station, he said.

Officials termed the surrender a



“major success” for security forces.

While Deepak, a resident of Palagondi in the district, carried a reward of Rs 29 lakh, there was a bounty of Rs 14 lakh

were wanted by security agencies, said officials. This surrender was made possible by the joint action of the CRPF and local police, continuous pressure, and effective strategy. This move will deal a major blow to the Naxalite network in the area,” an official said. SP Aditya Mishra said that after the surrender of Deepak and Rohit, there were no more hardcore Naxalites left in the district.

Dropped daughter to school, teacher killed minutes later as Chinese kite string slits neck in UP

New Delhi, Agency: A 40-year-old private school teacher died after his neck was slit by banned Chinese kite string while he was riding his motorcycle here on Thursday, police said.

The incident occurred around 8 am on the Shastri Bridge in the Kotwali area shortly after Sanjeev Tiwari dropped his daughter at school, Superintendent of Police (City) Ayush Srivastava said. Tiwari, a resident of Umarpur Haribandhanpur, had just crossed the bridge when a sharp kite



hanging over the road wrapped around his neck, causing a deep cut. He lost control of the motorcycle and collapsed on the spot with severe injuries, Srivastava said

Locals rushed to help and called an ambulance. He was taken to the district hospital, where doctors declared him dead during treatment, officials said.

Police reached the spot, took the body into custody and sent it for postmortem.

Meanwhile, residents have demanded strict action and an enforcement drive to completely curb the sale of banned Chinese 'manjha' (kite string coated with powdered glass) in the district.

Act in 3 days to protect Salman Khan’s personality rights, Delhi HC tells social media platforms

New Delhi, Agency: The Delhi High Court on Thursday directed social media intermediaries to act in three days on Bollywood actor Salman Khan's complaint seeking protection of his personality rights.

Justice Manmeet Pritam Singh Arora said she would pass a detailed interim restraining order regarding other entities impleaded in the matter.

The high court directed the social media intermediaries to treat Khan's suit as a complaint under the Information and Technology (Intermediaries Guidelines and

Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 and take the necessary steps within three days.

The court said in case the social media intermediaries had any reservations to any web link given by Khan, they should inform him.

Khan approached the high court seeking to prevent the unauthorised use of his name, images, persona and likeness by social media platforms and e-commerce websites, and to protect his personality rights.

The right to publicity, popularly known as per-



sonality rights, is the right to protect, control and profit from one's image, name or likeness.

Recently, Bollywood actors Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, her husband Abhishek Bachchan and her mother-in-law Jaya Bachchan, Hrithik Roshan

and Ajay Devgn, filmmaker Karan Johar, singer Kumar Sanu.

Telugu actor Akkineni Nagarjuna, 'Art of Living' founder Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, journalist Sudhir Chaudhary and podcaster Raj Shamani also approached the high court seeking protection of their personality and publicity rights. The court granted them interim relief.

Telugu actor NTR Rao Junior has also approached the Delhi High Court seeking protection of his personality rights.

The court is yet to pass an order on his plea.

Raped, forced to drink sanitiser’: UP policewoman claims horrific assault by in-laws for dowry



New Delhi, Agency: A police constable in Uttar Pradesh's Pilibhit has alleged that she was forced to drink sanitiser by her in-laws after she caught her husband and sister-in-law in an inappropriate situation in September last year.

The constable registered a case against her husband and her in-laws on Sunday for allegedly harassing her with dowry demands and subjecting her to cruelty, the report said citing a police official on Tuesday, reported news agency PTI.

While the complainant is posted in Pilibhit district's Bisalpur police station, her husband, also a constable, is posted at Sector-20 police station in Gautam Buddh

Nagar. In her complaint, the woman alleged that on September 5, 2024, she found her husband and sister-in-law in an inappropriate situation. However, when she confronted them, she was allegedly assaulted by her in-laws and was forced to drink sanitiser in a fatal attempt by them. She alleged that the incident led to her hospitalisation.

The woman alleged that in January last year, she gave birth to a son in Meerut, who now faces health complications due to the assault she endured when he was in the womb.

The case was registered at Bisalpur police station, as confirmed by the Station House Officer (SHO) Sanjeev Shukla.

India issues travel advisory amid Thailand-Cambodia border tensions

New Delhi, Agency: The Indian Embassy in Thailand has advised Indian travellers to check official updates before visiting areas near the Thailand-Cambodia border, where tensions have escalated in recent days. In view of the situation near the Thailand-Cambodia border, Indian travellers who plan to visit these areas are advised to

check updates from Thai official sources," the Embassy said. According to the Tourism Authority of Thailand Newsroom, travel across the country continues normally and restrictions are limited to selected border areas. Track updates on IndiGo crisis here Travel across Thailand remains normal. Security measures are in

place only in selected border areas near Cambodia," the agency said.

Rail services to Ban Khlong Luek have been suspended, while buses to Kantharalak are being diverted through the Karnchang Intersection. Travellers have also been advised to avoid Route 348 in Buri Ram. Major tourist destinations, including Bangkok,

Chiang Mai, Phuket, Samui, Krabi, Pattaya and Ayutthaya, remain open and continue to receive visitors as usual. In a statement, UNESCO called for urgent protection of cultural heritage in "all its forms" and reminded both countries of their obligations under the 1954 Hague Convention and the 1972 World Heritage Convention.

How Cybersecurity Certifications Can Secure the IoT Industry

The IoT industry requires global cybersecurity certification standards to help fight cybercrime and improve security, says Gary Jabara, founder and chairman of ioXt Alliance. Despite geopolitical obstacles, governments around the world are increasingly committed to adopting and enhancing cybersecurity certification standards to improve global trust and cooperation.

According to Cybersecurity Ventures' 2022 Cybersecurity AlmanacOpens a new window , cybercrime, if measured as a country, would be the world's third largest economy; cybercrime costs will reach US\$10.5 trillion by 2025, a more than threefold increase from US\$3 trillion in 2015, and the number of connected Internet of Things (IoT) devices, major components of the cybercrime attack surface, will reach 75 billion by 2025 and 200 billion by 2031. Facing these staggering statistics and predictions, the IoT industry is seeking to build a safer and more secure IoT world.

Cybersecurity Certification Standards Can Help Fight Cybercrime: Cybersecurity certification standards could



significantly help improve cybersecurity for everyone, especially in the fast-growing IoT industry. Certification is a qualification and assessment process in which a certification body tests and certifies that a product, service or management system complies with relevant technical specifications or standards. Cybersecurity certification evaluates the security risks of products and services, helps manufacturers and service providers maintain and improve

quality, and helps protect consumers and organizations from cybercrimes.

The IoT Industry Requires Global Cybersecurity Standards: A recent studyOpens a new window showed that 70% of IoT devices contain serious vulnerabilities and, with cybercrime continuing to increase each year, there should be international standards for cybersecurity certification in the IoT industry that ensure all products and services are safe and secure for users and businesses. Global

cybersecurity certification development for IoT devices is critical in improving cybersecurity for everyone. This is because it would provide a common global standard and commitment that would enhance trust among nations, a standard mechanism for IoT products and services in the market, and an authoritative and reliable shared standard for security for IoT developers. A common benchmark for cybersecurity certifications is also a clear solution to combat misinformation and reduce overall risk across the IoT market. According to the 2022 Global IoT Security White PaperOpens a new window , published by ioXt Alliance and Research Center for Cyberspace International Governance, the cybersecurity system framework and standards established by the United Nations (UN), the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), and other relevant international organizations are an ideal guide for IoT developers and can improve the quality and security of IoT products and services across the globe.

How To Research And Assess A Potential Employer So You Don't Get Burned

The decision to leave a job is often triggered by challenges that can make your current work environment untenable. Micromanaging bosses who stifle creativity and autonomy, colleagues who engage in destructive rumor-mongering and sudden policy changes like mandatory return-to-office orders can all contribute to employee dissatisfaction. Concerns about your company's financial stability may also prompt you to seek a more secure position elsewhere. However, you must resist the temptation to jump at the first available opportunity without doing your due diligence. Thorough research into a potential employer's culture, management style, financial health and organizational policies is mission-critical. Additionally, you will want to conduct research on your industry's current job market, trends, salaries and in-demand skills to accurately assess your value and set realistic expectations. To gain a well-rounded understanding of the job market, engage in discreet conversations with trusted colleagues and mentors, stay informed through relevant news articles and publications, monitor economic news that might impact your sector and tune into podcasts discussing labor market dynamics and economic factors. This investigative approach allows you to make informed decisions that can help you to potentially avoid a situation similar to that you are trying to escape. By carefully evaluating new opportunities against your personal and professional goals, you can increase your chances of landing in a work environment that not only addresses your current concerns, but also supports your long-term career goals.

How To Research A Company: When conducting preliminary research on a potential employer, begin by thoroughly exploring the company's website. Focus on key sections like "About Us" and "Careers" to gain deeper insights into the organization's mission statement, products and services, cultural values and compensation structure. These sections often provide a comprehensive snapshot of the company's identity, strategic objectives and workplace philosophies, which can help you determine whether the organization aligns with your professional goals and personal values before you invest time in submitting an application.

Being a Freelancer vs. an Employee

A growing number of Americans are working for companies that employ them on a freelance or independent contractor basis. According to one 2023 study, over a third (38%) of respondents worked as a freelancer in the past year.¹ Sites like Upwork empower gig workers to write copy, design websites and more. Airbnb enables people to rent out their home as an additional income stream. And Uber and Lyft empower anyone with a car to turn their vehicle into a metered cab. With the exploding gig economy (aka the freelance economy) comes a decision: to freelance or not to freelance. To many, it might sound attractive. But before shrugging off salaried employment altogether, it's time for a reality check.

Full-Time Benefits: There's much more to freelancing than flexible hours and being your own boss. One of the biggest pluses of full-time employment is employer-provided benefits, such as health insurance, 401(k) plans, sick days and paid vacation time. A staff job often comes with all of these perks, while freelancers must fend for themselves on all counts. You'll also have to manage your taxes yourself, including the self-employment tax.² And, if you'd like to start saving for retirement, or for a major purchase like a home, you'll have to figure out how to on your own.

Flexibility vs. Security: For many, the financial security of having full-time employment is pretty much mandatory. Freelancing offers no such security. It's also not necessarily something you can rely on for regular income. For instance, Airbnb income is dependent upon bookings, and revenue from Etsy is dependent upon making sales. If you don't sell anything, you don't make anything. Gigging can be a risky business.

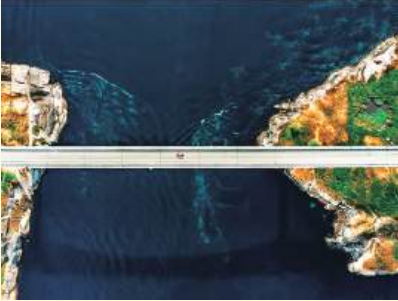
Per-Gig Pay vs. Paycheck: One of the major advantages to full-time employment is knowing that you have a regular paycheck coming in without fail, every pay cycle which can be crucial for budgeting and saving. This isn't the case in the world of freelancing. As a freelancer, you're paid as the gigs are completed or products are sold, however frequently (or infrequently) that is. Special Considerations: How old you are bears considerable influence over which direction you might take. For instance, if you're fresh out of college, chances are you don't have the financial safety net to risk relying on gigs, nor enough on-the-job expertise to embark on a freelance career. If that's the case, you might be better off exploring gigs and freelance opportunities on the side, in addition to a day job. Becoming a freelancer is like starting a business, so you need to be up for the responsibility that comes with it. If, on the other hand, you've been in the working world for several years; acquired solid skills; identified a services niche; and established contacts with potential clients, then you could have the foundation to establish a solid gig workflow and a successful freelance career.



Five actions to drive your career forward in the third space

In the third space of higher education, professionals such as learning developers, learning technologists and librarians will have responsibilities and duties that transcend the traditional two-sided coin of academia and professional services. Despite there being growing numbers of third space practitioners working in higher education, staff development structures within many universities are often still aligned to the more traditional academic/professional distinction. This means that these professionals may find themselves ineligible for internal promotion routes, or have limited access to institutional professional development opportunities that reflect their career aspirations. Here, I'll provide five actions that those working in a third-space capacity can proactively undertake to raise their profile. By doing so, they can best position themselves to drive forward their career.

Explain the third space: Within a university, it is very likely that some colleagues, including senior leaders, will still not be familiar with the concept of the third space. It's important that third space practitioners take the time to educate others as to the nature of their work, and how the third space is different from traditional academic and professional service roles. Given that the



third space can appear quite abstract, provide concrete examples of how policies or processes could negatively impact on career development opportunities. From an institutional perspective, this might include workload planning models or promotional pathways that are tailored to traditional academics. Working in partnership with other third space colleagues can help to ensure you're clear and consistent on how challenges present themselves. Likewise, third space practitioners should seek to be proactive in offering solutions for how policies and processes might be made more inclusive. Make the most of open sessions offered by senior leaders as an opportunity to discuss your work directly and make them aware.

Engage with professional associations: Third space practitioners should work to engage with communities beyond their institution. In the UK, many professional associations, such as the ALDinHE, RAISE, ALT, CILIP and SEDA, will have working groups and committees that will be well suited to those working in a third space capacity. Similarly, organisations such as Advance HE, JISC and the QAA will regularly make calls for contributors to new initiatives. Many universities may already be organisational members, which would provide access to participation with little or no additional cost. Engaging in opportunities like these will quickly expand a professional network and provide rich insights into wider sector practices. Involving yourself in as many associations as possible will extend your reach even further and is great for career development.

Disseminate work: Third space professionals need to actively share their practices within and beyond their institution. This could be through an integrated collection of outputs, such as conference publications, journal articles or blogs. Often third space practitioners will have go-to forums for sharing their work that are directly aligned to their field. For example, ALDinHE has a dedicated journal, annual conference, communities of practice and blogs related to learning development. Look to showcase your work through presenting at or publishing via forums offered by other professional associations.

It's time to rethink creative industries employability

When thinking of how to prepare students for careers in the creative industries, it has become typical in higher education to consult industry leaders. We ask them questions such as: "What skills might graduates need?" "Where are the gaps, the shortages?" "What behaviours and attributes are employers looking for?" and "How might we, as educators, better embed these skills and attributes into our curricula to empower our graduates as they navigate an increasingly competitive sector?" But what if we asked the students themselves? What might they tell us about their projected careers, about the kinds of lives they wish to live?

Over the past six years, we have been asking students enrolled in cultural and creative degree programmes to talk to us about their futures. What we found was that students rarely, if ever, made the transition from student to empowered graduate - despite all the teaching we had hoped would support them to do so. Rather, we heard over and over again of the pressure to live up to the "ideal graduate" - a fictional peer with better grades, more extracurricular achievements, stronger sector links, a driving licence and so on. This notion of an "ideal graduate" compels students to compete with each other. Importantly, universities also drive this narrative by



promoting a narrow view of employability "success" in their marketing materials, and where opportunities for placements or skills development tend to be based around competition. Perhaps unsurprisingly, we found that this pressure to live up to expectations simply reinforces students' self-perception as lacking or deficient. Thus, we witnessed anxious students, who, despite good grades and comprehensive extracurricular records, placed themselves at the bottom of their peer group. We saw students panic and witnessed their hopelessness, especially during the pandemic, as job markets collapsed and whole sectors in the creative industries shrank. We watched students grapple with a sense that they had come too late, that they had

missed the heyday of the cultural industries. We noted, with concern, that these feelings were often far more pronounced in students who lacked the privilege often needed to find relevant employment. A key issue here is that the concept of employability emerged during a period of relative socio-economic stability, and not in the extended periods of crisis that followed. In this sense, employability has largely been thought of as something done "to" or "for" students, and not as a lived and embodied phenomenon capable of transforming their understanding of self and their hopes for the future. Indeed, it has often been a conversation held without student input of any kind.

This leads us to a somewhat uncomfortable impasse. What if, for all our best ambitions, teaching for employability has done harm to our students? What if, rather than producing empowered graduates, we are instead forcing our students to develop psycho-emotive strategies and selves to contain a sense of threat and panic? As educators, we see the situation as urgent. We have a responsibility to listen to our students and to make space for their voices, their hopes and concerns. We cannot pretend that we are not in crisis. The pandemic and the climate emergency, combined with the effects of looming economic

recession, global conflict and rapid development of artificial intelligence systems, continue to impact and reduce opportunities in the creative and cultural labour market in a variety of ways. Similarly, structural inequalities in the cultural workforce, precarious working conditions, an increasing reliance on voluntary work and decreasing levels of pay mean that the sector has been in crisis for some time. We must urgently revisit the ways in which we talk about, and teach for, employability in the cultural and creative industries. We are trying to:Make space for students' voices and feelings We must pay attention to students' experiences and concerns, and how these shift over time. For us, this involves being honest with students about the challenges that we see in their prospective sectors. This means resisting the temptation to respond to students' concerns with platitudes about how things might "pan out" in the future in favour of making space to listen to and really hear students - even if we don't have any answers. It means both listening out for individual students' anxieties in our everyday teaching, as well as creating dedicated safe spaces for students to collectively explore their future plans (such as by drawing timelines that have multiple pathways and that pre-identify sources of support).