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UKRAINE SAYS LATEST PEACE TALKS WITH US, EUROPE 'PRODUCTIVE' P09

INDIA-NEW ZEALAND FTA TO ENSURE ZERO DUTY ON 100 PC OF INDIA'S EXPORTS PIYUSH GOYAL P11

NEERAJ HITS 90M HIGH BUT NO END TO COUNTRY'S DOPING WOES P12

India-New Zealand FTA: PM Modi, Luxon aim to double bilateral trade over 5 years

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22



Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a telephone conversation with New Zealand's Prime Minister, Christopher Luxon, on Monday as the two leaders jointly announced the successful conclusion of the historic, ambitious and mutually beneficial India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

During the conversation, both leaders expressed confidence in doubling bilateral trade over the next five years as well as an investment of $20 billion in India from New Zealand over the next 15 years.

The negotiations began in March this year and the two leaders concluded the FTA in a record time of nine months, reflecting the shared ambition and political will to further deepen ties between the two countries, according to a statement from Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

"The FTA would significantly deepen bilateral economic engagement, enhance market access, promote investment flows, strengthen strategic cooperation between the two countries, and also open up new opportunities for innovators, entrepreneurs, farmers, MSMEs, students and youth of both countries across various sectors," said the statement.

The leaders also welcomed the progress achieved in other areas of bilateral cooperation such as sports, education, and people-to-people ties, and reaffirmed their commitment towards further strengthening of the India-New Zealand partnership.

This historic FTA eliminates and reduces tariffs on 95 per cent of New Zealand's exports – among the highest of any Indian FTA - with almost 57 per cent being duty-free from day one, increasing to 82 per cent when fully implemented, with the remaining 13 per cent subject to sharp tariff cuts.

It puts New Zealand exporters on an equal or better footing to our competitors across a range of sectors and opens the door to India's rapidly expanding middle class, according to an official statement from New Zealand.

"The Indian economy is forecast to grow to NZ$12 trillion by 2030. The India-NZ Free Trade Agreement unleashes huge potential for our world-class exporters to the world's largest country and will significantly accelerate progress towards New Zealand's ambitious goal of doubling the value of exports over 10 years," it added. IANS

Modi to chair 5th national conference of chief secretaries from Dec 26-28

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will chair the fifth national conference of chief secretaries in the national capital this week, a senior government official said on Monday.

The fifth national conference of chief secretaries will be held in Delhi from December 26-28, and it will be a significant step towards further strengthening the partnership between the Centre and state governments, the official told PTI.

Several officials, including young district collectors and magistrates from states and Union Territories, as well as several Union ministries, are likely to attend the conference. PTI

CM Mann asks Vice Chairperson of Planning Board to work dedicatedly for Punjab's progress and prosperity

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, December 22



Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Monday asked the newly appointed Vice Chairperson of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, Gulzar Inder Singh Chahal, to make continuous efforts for the progress and prosperity of the state so that the welfare of the people can be ensured to the maximum extent.

The Vice Chairperson of the board called on Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann here today during which the CM asked him that the Economic Policy and Planning Board assists the state government in formulating development strategies, preparing plans for the progress of various sectors, and designing appropriate policies. "The Punjab government is already working to create employment opportunities for the youth and to frame welfare schemes for the common people adding that the Board should continue to play a key role in it," he added.

> 'The Punjab government is already working to create employment opportunities for the youth and to frame welfare schemes for the common people adding that the Board should continue to play a key role in it'

On this occasion, the Vice Chairperson profusely thanked the Chief Minister for entrusting him with the new responsibility.

India, New Zealand seal historic FTA; tariffs on 95 pc Kiwi goods reduced

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

New Zealand and India have concluded a Free Trade Agreement (FTA), offering New Zealanders unprecedented access to 1.4 billion Indian consumers, Trade and Investment Minister Todd McClay announced on Monday.

This historic FTA eliminates and reduces tariffs on 95 per cent of New Zealand's exports among the highest of any Indian FTA with almost 57 per cent being duty-free from day one, increasing to 82 per cent when fully implemented, with the remaining 13 per cent subject to sharp tariff cuts.

It puts New Zealand exporters on an equal or better footing to our competitors across a range of sectors and opens the door to India's rapidly expanding middle class, according to an official statement.

Negotiations began on March 21 and concluded after nine months of intensive effort.

"This once-in-a-generation Agreement creates opportunities New Zealand exporters have never had in India. This deal is in New Zealand's best interest and will deliver thousands of jobs and billions in additional exports," McClay said in a statement.

"The Indian economy is forecast to grow to NZ$12 trillion by 2030. The India-NZ Free Trade Agreement unleashes huge potential for our world-class exporters to the world's largest country and will significantly accelerate progress towards New Zealand's ambitious goal of doubling the value of exports over 10 years." IANS

Jaishankar to visit Sri Lanka today, hold talks with top leadership

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22



External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar will visit Sri Lanka on Tuesday as Special Envoy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to hold talks with the top leadership of the island nation.

"The visit underscores India's Neighbourhood First Policy and takes place in the context of Operation Sagar Bandhu launched to address the devastation caused by Cyclone Ditwah," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) stated. India launched Operation Sagar Bandhu on November 28, as the First Responder in the immediate aftermath of the devastating Cyclone Ditwah, to provide urgent Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) support to Sri Lanka.

Last week, India delivered relief supplies to various regions of flood-hit Sri Lanka, reflecting its steadfast commitment in assisting the neighbouring nation in time of crisis during the Operation Sagar Bandhu.

On December 18, India's High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, Santosh Jha, visited the Kolonnawa suburb of Colombo and the Bhaktivedanta Children's Home 'Gokulam' in Wattala - areas that have been severely affected by floods in the wake of Cyclone Ditwah.

As part of India's continued assistance to the island nation, High Commissioner Jha distributed assistance kits among families in Kolonnawa in coordination with All Ceylon Sufi Spiritual Association and among children of 'Gokulam' at the ISKCON Temple in Colombo, where they have been relocated. IANS

Authorities sitting like mute spectators: SC initiates suo moto case on forest land encroachment in Uttarakhand

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22



The Supreme Court on Monday came down heavily on the Uttarakhand government and its officials over large-scale encroachment of forest land by private entities.

As it registered a suo motu (on its own motion) case, a bench comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi observed that the authorities had remained "mute spectators" while forest land was being illegally grabbed. The apex court remarked that it was "shocking" to find protected land being encroached upon without any effective intervention from the government machinery.

"What is shocking to us is that the State of Uttarakhand and its authorities are sitting like mute spectators when forest land is being grabbed in front of their eyes. Therefore, we initiate a suo motu case," the CJI Kant-led Bench remarked.

As an interim measure, the Supreme Court ordered an immediate stay on all construction activities on forest land and restrained private parties from creating any third-party rights over the disputed land.

The CJI Surya Kant-led Bench further directed that all vacant land, except residential houses, be handed over to the Forest Department.

Private parties are restrained from alienating the land or creating any third-party rights. No construction shall take place. Vacant land, other than residential houses, shall be taken in possession by the Forest Department and the concerned Collector," the apex court ordered.

It directed the Chief Secretary and the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests to set up a fact-finding committee and submit a detailed report.

The Supreme Court observed that the fact-finding exercise was essential to understand the scale of the alleged land grabbing and how the government machinery had dealt with the issue over the years. IANS

National Herald case: Delhi HC seeks Gandhis' reply on ED plea against trial court order

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22



The Delhi High Court on Monday asked Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and others to respond to a plea by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) challenging a trial court order refusing to take cognisance of its chargesheet against them in the National Herald case.

Justice Ravinder Dudeja issued notice to the Gandhis and others on the main petition as well as on the ED's application seeking a stay on the December 16 trial court order, which held that cognisance of the agency's complaint in the case was "impermissible in law" as it was not founded on an FIR.

The high court listed the matter for further hearing on March 12, 2026.

While Solicitor General Tushar Mehta represented the ED in the case, senior advocates Abhishek Singhvi and R S Cheema represented the Gandhis. In its order, the trial court said an investigation and the consequent prosecution complaint (equivalent to chargesheet) pertaining to the offence of money laundering is "not maintainable" in the absence of an FIR for the offence mentioned in the schedule to the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). It said the agency's probe stemmed from a private complaint and not an FIR.

It said cognisance upon the complaint being liable to be declined on a question of law, other arguments relating to the merits of the allegations are not required to be adjudicated upon.

The trial court said despite receiving the complaint made by BJP leader Subramanian Swamy and the consequent summoning order in 2014, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) refrained from registering an FIR in relation to the alleged scheduled offence. PTI

Registry will scrutinise urgent cases and list accordingly: CJI to lawyers

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22



Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant on Monday asked lawyers to approach the Supreme Court Registry for urgent hearing of cases which will scrutinise the reasons and list the matter accordingly.

The CJI made three observations while sitting in a special vacation bench with Justice Joymalya Bagchi to hear some urgent matters that require immediate judicial intervention.

As the bench commenced hearing of the cases, lawyers started mentioning cases for urgent hearing.

"Instead of mentioning, furnish reasons to Registry. The reasons will be scrutinised, if found urgent, it shall be tentatively listed either on December 26 or December 29," the CJI said.

The special sitting was arranged on Monday to ensure timely consideration of pressing cases that require immediate judicial intervention during the vacation period, the bench said.

On Friday, CJI Kant said he was willing to sit on December 22, the first day of the Christmas and New Year holidays of the Supreme Court, for hearing urgent matters. PTI

Air India's Mumbai-bound plane suffers engine shutdown; returns to Delhi

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22



A Mumbai-bound Air India Boeing 777 aircraft made an emergency landing in the national capital in less than an hour after taking off due to its engine shutdown on Monday morning, according to sources.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) will be conducting a probe and the civil aviation ministry has sought details from Air India about the incident.

The plane, carrying around 335 people, was airborne for nearly an hour before returning to Delhi. The aircraft made an emergency landing, sources said.

"The crew operating flight AI887 from Delhi to Mumbai on December 22 decided to return to Delhi shortly after take-off due to a technical issue as per standard operating procedure," Air India said in a statement.

The aircraft landed safely at Delhi and the passengers and crew have disembarked, the airline said and regretted the inconvenience caused due to the unforeseen situation. The civil aviation ministry said it has taken note of the Air India incident involving a technical issue shortly after take-off.

"The ministry has sought a detailed report from Air India, and DGCA has been directed to conduct a thorough investigation. PTI

Save Aravalli movement intensifies across Rajasthan; clashes reported in many districts

JAIPUR, DECEMBER 22

A statewide protest erupted across several districts of Rajasthan on Monday against the approval of mining activities in the Aravalli mountain range.

Demonstrations were held in Udaipur, Jodhpur, Sikar, Alwar, and other cities, where protesters clashed with police at multiple locations.

In Udaipur, Congress workers and members of various social organisations staged a protest at the Collectorate. During the demonstration, slogans were raised against the decision, leading to a scuffle between protesters and the police.

Several activists were detained by the police to control the situation. Congress workers, Karni Sena members, other group representatives, and people from various communities protested at the Udaipur Collectorate. Protesters demanded the withdrawal of the court order and warned of intensified agitation. IANS

Goa nightclub fire: Police remand of Luthra siblings extended by five days

PANAJI, DECEMBER 22

A Goa court on Monday extended by five days the police custody of Saurabh Luthra and Gaurav Luthra, owners of the Birch by Romeo Lane nightclub where a devastating fire on December 6 resulted in 25 deaths.

The siblings had fled to Thailand after the incident and were deported from that nation on December 17. PTI

MLA hands over sanction letters to 60 more beneficiaries under PM Awas Yojana 2.0

HARISH MONGA
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ferozepur, December 22



Ferozepur City MLA Ranbir Singh Bhullar on Sunday handed over sanction letters to 60 more beneficiaries for the construction of permanent houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) 2.0.

The sanction letters were issued by the Municipal Council, Ferozepur, in accordance with government guidelines, enabling the beneficiaries to either upgrade their kutcha houses into pucca ones or construct new houses with financial assistance from the government.

Addressing the gathering, MLA Bhullar said that a total of 300 beneficiaries from Ferozepur city had been approved under the scheme. Sanction letters had earlier been issued to 115 beneficiaries, while the latest batch of 60 beneficiaries received their approval letters on Sunday. He explained that after receiving the sanction letter, beneficiaries can begin construction within 45 days, following which the first instalment of financial assistance will be released. Subsequent instalments will be disbursed as per the progress of construction.

Executive Officer of the Municipal Council, Poonam Bhatnagar, urged beneficiaries to commence construction at the earliest to ensure the timely release of funds and the smooth implementation of the scheme as per government directions.

DLSA Amritsar organises 'Youth Against Drugs' walkathon

N.P.S. CHAMAK
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Amritsar, December 22



Under the leadership of Justice Ashwani Kumar Mishra, Judge, Punjab and Haryana High Court and Executive Chairman, Punjab State Legal Services Authority, SAS Nagar (Mohali), and under the guidance of the Learned Member Secretary, Punjab State Legal Services Authority, SAS Nagar, as well as the Jatinder Kaur, Learned District and Sessions Judge-cum-Chairperson, District Legal Services Authority, Amritsar, the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Amritsar has successfully organized a WALKATHON under the banner "Youth Against Drugs" on 22nd December 2025 at 8:00 AM as part of its ongoing campaign to combat the growing menace of drug abuse and to sensitize the youth and general public about its harmful consequences.

The Walkathon commenced from the District Courts Complex, Amritsar and culminated at Saroop Rani Government College of Women, Amritsar. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from around 500 school students, who marched with banners and slogans conveying a strong message against drug abuse and highlighting the need for a drug-free society.

The Walkathon was flagged off by Jatinder Kaur, District & Sessions Judge, Amritsar, who emphasized the crucial role of youth in building a healthy and progressive society. She highlighted that drug abuse not only destroys individuals but also weakens families and society at large, and called upon the youth to stay away from drugs and adopt a positive and disciplined lifestyle.

Eight mobile phones seized from inmates during search operation at Ferozepur Central Jail

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ferozepur, December 22



Despite a stringent three-layer security protocol, the recovery of banned items, especially mobiles from within the walls of Ferozepur Central Jail continues unabated. In the latest crackdown, jail authorities conducted a massive search operation resulting in the seizure of eight mobile phones, including both high-end touchscreen models and keypad devices, from the possession of ten inmates.

The persistent influx of contraband has raised serious alarms regarding potential security lapses and the possible connivance of internal staff. This suspicion is bolstered by previous incidents where both jail and hospital staff members were booked for facilitating illegal activities. In fact, the jail's unique geography featuring open areas on two sides and a third side adjacent to high-rise residential buildings makes it highly vulnerable to "throw-ins," where packets containing banned items are tossed over the walls from the outside.

During the search, 10 prisoners were identified and booked for the possession of these devices. The accused have been identified as Jaswinder Singh, Subham alias Subhi, Sahil alias Kala, Sandeep Singh alias Seepu, Bhupinder Singh alias Monu, Arshad Khan, Akash Chauhan, Varinder Singh, Sarabjit Singh, and Sunil Singh.

A formal case has been registered under Section 52-A of the Prisons Act. Sharma Singh has been appointed as the Investigating Officer (IO) to lead the probe into how these devices bypassed security and whether any staff members assisted the inmates.

The scale of the challenge is further highlighted by alarming historical data, which shows a dramatic and steady escalation in mobile phone recoveries over the last six years: 2019: 70 recoveries, 2020: 130, 2021: 265, 2022: 437, 2023: 469, 2024: 510 and during the current year, to date 617 recoveries, including today's seizure.

The main concern is that the ability of prisoners to remain in constant contact with the outside world whether for personal reasons or to coordinate illegal activities undermines the very essence of incarceration and rehabilitation.

The continuous rise in these figures underscores an urgent need for a comprehensive overhaul of the surveillance and security measures at the facility.

Animal Husbandry Dept holds welfare camp at Kotla Gaushala; free medicines distributed



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ferozepur, December 22

In a significant move toward livestock welfare, the Department of Animal Husbandry organised a comprehensive Animal Welfare Camp at Sant Baba Karnail Singh Ji Gaushala, Kotla. The initiative was held under the guidance of Gurmeet Singh Khuddian, Minister for Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, and Dairy Development, and following the directives of Principal Secretary Rahul Bhandari and Director Dr. Paramdeep Singh Walia.

The camp, organized as per the instructions of the Punjab Gau Sewa Commission, was led by Deputy Director Dr. Himanshu Siyal and supervised by Senior Veterinary Officer Dr Gurvinder Singh. During the event, the department provided essential medicines worth Rs 25,000 to the Gaushala management. Furthermore, free deworming medication was administered to nearly 700 animals currently housed at the facility.

Addressing the gathering, Dr Himanshu Siyal stated that this camp is the first in a series of four such programmes planned for the district. He confirmed that each participating Gaushala would be provided with free medical supplies worth Rs 25,000 to ensure the well-being of the cattle.

Dr. Gurvinder Singh, Senior Veterinary Officer, educated the sewadars and local cattle owners on the critical need for vaccinations against Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Hemorrhagic Septicemia (HS). Adding to the technical session, Dr Arshpreet Kaur provided insights into effective deworming practices, while Dr Akashpreet Singh spoke on the importance of mineral mixtures in maintaining livestock health and immunity.

LPU conducts masterclass on 'Cracking Competitive Examinations through Strategy and Discipline'

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Phagwara, December 22



The Centre for Distance and Online Education (CDOE) at Lovely Professional University (LPU) recently organized an insightful Masterclass titled "Cracking Competitive Examinations through Strategy & Discipline" at the LPU Campus, inspiring our aspiring Learners enrolled in Distance and Online Mode Programmes.

The session, featuring Anmol Sharma (AIR 32, UPSC CDS), a distinguished professional who appeared for the Civil Services interview in 2022, proved deeply insightful and valuable for all participants. With his real-world experience and deep understanding of competitive exams, Mr. Sharma delivered powerful insights on preparation, discipline, and mindset transformation.

Drawing from his extensive journey, he delivered proven preparation frameworks, strategic planning techniques, and practical insights that enabled learners to pursue their examination goals with greater clarity, discipline, and confidence.

During the Masterclass, learners gained structured preparation frameworks tailored specifically to competitive examinations, along with effective study planning and time-management strategies. They also learned practical methods to overcome stress and sustain motivation throughout their preparation journey.

Dalit leaders demand immediate arrest of those using objectionable language against Dr Ambedkar on Facebook

ASHOK KAURA
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Phagwara, December 22

Demanding strict legal action against individuals allegedly using objectionable and derogatory language against Baba Saheb Dr BR Ambedkar on social media, members of Ambedkar Sena Mool Niwasi submitted a memorandum addressed to the Senior Superintendent of Police (SP), Phagwara, to Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Bharat Bhushan here on Sunday.

The memorandum was submitted under the directions of Punjab President Harbhajan Suman and under the joint leadership of Doaba President Balwinder Bodh, District President Dharamveer Bodh and Rural President Manjeet Mann. Members of the Bhagwan Valmiki Action Committee were also present on the occasion. Addressing the media, the Dalit leaders stated that through the memorandum, Ambedkar Sena Mool Niwasi and Bhagwan Valmiki Action Committee have urged the SP Phagwara to immediately register an FIR and arrest the persons allegedly responsible for repeatedly posting derogatory and offensive content against Baba Saheb Dr BR Ambedkar on Facebook.

They alleged that objectionable language is being used against Dr Ambedkar from Facebook IDs named Dinesh Singh and Nanak Singh Bhatti Rajput, and that posts have been uploaded by tampering with Dr Ambedkar's photograph. The leaders said such acts deeply hurt the sentiments of followers of Baba Saheb and are a deliberate attempt to insult and provoke the Scheduled Caste community.

They said Baba Saheb Dr BR Ambedkar is the architect of the Indian Constitution, a messiah of millions of Dalits across the country and abroad, and a pioneer of women's emancipation. Insulting him on social media is not only condemnable but also against the spirit of the Constitution, which does not grant anyone the right to use abusive language against any individual or community.

NGO Coordination Society installs reflective stickers to curb fog-related road accidents



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ferozepur December 22

To reduce the risk of road accidents during the foggy winter season, the NGO Coordination Society, under the leadership of its President Inder Singh Gogial, has launched a road safety initiative by installing reflective stickers on vehicles at various locations in Ferozepur.

Other members present during the initiative included Ashok Kumar, Balwinder Singh, and Kamlesh Vohra.

As part of the drive, more than 200 vehicles mainly heavy vehicles that often move slowly or remain parked on roads were fitted with round reflective stickers.

Green stickers were installed on the front, while Red stickers were placed on the rear to improve visibility at night and during low-visibility conditions. Poor visibility combined with stationary or slow-moving heavy vehicles is a major cause of accidents, especially when smaller vehicles collide with them in foggy weather.

Speaking on the occasion, Gogia said the fog season has already set in and urged motorists to regularly check their vehicle lights and immediately rectify any defects.

He appealed to vehicle owners to install reflectors on their vehicles and to drive at reduced speeds on highways, maintaining a safe distance to allow sufficient braking time in case of emergencies.

He further advised that vehicles developing technical faults should be safely parked on the roadside with parking lights switched on. Such precautionary measures, he emphasized, would play a vital role in preventing fog-related accidents and saving precious lives

VB nabs private person red handed accepting bribe of ₹1,500

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh December 22

The Punjab Vigilance Bureau (VB) during its ongoing drive against corruption in the state, has apprehended Sukhwinder Singh private person working under Patwari Pooja Yadav in district Faridkot red handed while accepting bribe of Rs 1,500.

Disclosing this here on Monday, an official spokesperson of the state VB said the above mentioned accused has been arrested based on a complaint lodged by a resident of Bhan Singh Colony, district Faridkot.

He further informed that the complainant approached the VB and alleged that the accused Sukhwinder Singh demanded a bribe of Rs 2,000 for executing the mutation of the plot. The complainant had recorded the entire conversation demanding bribe.

The spokesperson added that after a preliminary enquiry on his complaint the VB team laid a trap during which the accused Sukhwinder Singh was arrested while accepting bribe money from the complainant in presence of two official witnesses. In this regard, a case under prevention of corruption act has been registered against the accused at VB police station Ferozepur and further investigation into this case is under progress.

Two arrested in Nakodar theft case; investigation underway

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Phillaur December 22

The police have registered separate criminal cases under various Sections of the Indian Penal Code in Nakodar and Ludhiana districts, with arrests made in one case while investigations continue in another.

In the first case, registered under Sections 457 and 380 of the IPC, complainant Sandeep Singh, resident of Chak Mughlani under City Nakodar police station, alleged theft against Rajat Bhatti @ Doctor, and Nirandar Singh @ Sabi residents of Sianiwal, City Nakodar.

Acting on the complaint, the police registered case and initiated an in-depth investigation. Both accused have been arrested in connection with the theft case. In another incident, a case has been registered under Sections 323, 341, 447, 511, 148 and 149 of the IPC on the complaint of Manjeet Singh(59) a resident of Kuldip Nagar of Ludhiana. Manjeet Singh alleged that on December 15, the accused attempted to forcibly take possession of disputed land and assaulted Sahib Dial Singh during the incident.

The accused named in the case include Jaswinder Singh, Parmjeet Singh alias Pamma, Parmjeet Singh, Gurdeep Singh, Sahib Dial Singh, along with two unidentified persons. While none of the accused have been arrested so far in this case, police said raids are being conducted and further investigation is in progress.

Police officials stated that strict action will be taken against those found guilty, and all aspects of both cases are being thoroughly examined.

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Speaker congratulates Gurpreet Singh Kamon for completing 1,50,000 km by cycling

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, December 22



Punjab Vidhan Sabha Speaker Kultar Singh Sandhwan honoured Gurpreet Singh Kamon for completing one and a half lakh kilometers by cycling, who is a member of the renowned Kotkapura Cycle Riders (Regd.) Club of Malwa region. Speaker said that the entire region is proud of him. Gurpreet Singh Kamon remains active in the field of bicycling for the last 5 to 6 years. His record of 100 kilometers per day bicycling for 100 days is recorded in the Asia Book and the India Book of Records.

Speaker highlighted that Gurpreet Singh Kamon has participated in more than four dozen cycling competitions and brought laurels for Faridkot district. He has also won the title of Super Randonneur and the Star Independent Award. He also achieved Bharatiya Ratna Award from the USIS Company.

Sandhwan congratulated the entire family of Gurpreet Singh Kamon and all the members of the Kotkapura Cycle Rider team for this landmark achievement and also wished them a better future.

On this occasion, Kultar Singh Sandhwan appealed to the people that they must do regular exercise, walking, bicycling and make this a routine habit so that we can live a healthy life. These achievements of cyclist are inspiring for children and youngsters which reflects that no matter what the age be, if you have a strong determination to win or achieve any goal, then no destination is far away.

Sandhwan congratulated the entire family of Gurpreet Singh Kamon and all the members of the Kotkapura Cycle Rider team for this landmark achievement and also wished them a better future. Manpreet Singh Dhaliwal, Rabab Singh and Jashanpreet Kaur Dhaliwal were also present on this occasion.

Minister Mundian holds meeting with Israeli diplomat

PUNJABE XPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, December 22



Punjab Housing and Urban Development Minister Hardeep Singh Mundian, on Monday, held meeting with Fares Saeb, Minister and Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Israel, at his office in the Punjab Civil Secretariat here.

During the interaction, detailed discussions were held on the adoption of advanced Israeli technologies in the fields of water conservation and sewerage waste water recycling, particularly for application in urban areas of the state.

The Cabinet Minister said that sustainable water management and efficient reuse of treated wastewater are key priorities of the state government in view of rapid urbanisation and growing demand for civic services.

Fares Saeb shared Israel's globally recognised practices in water efficiency, reuse of treated sewage and modern urban infrastructure solutions. Both sides exchanged views on possible technical cooperation, knowledge sharing and future engagement to explore practical implementation of such technologies in Punjab's cities.

Saeb also extended invitation to Hardeep Singh Mundian to visit Israel to witness these technologies firsthand and to explore avenues for deeper collaboration. Besides this, other issues of mutual understanding and cooperation were also discussed in a cordial and constructive atmosphere. The Cabinet Minister assured that he would soon visit Israel to explore and adopt Israeli technologies for the overall development of the state.

Prominent amongst others who were present in the meeting included Principal Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Vikas Garg and other officers.

YEAR ENDER-2025

56 smart transport services made available 24x7: Bhullar

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, December 22

In line with its commitment to efficient and citizen-centric governance during the year 2025, the Punjab Government has made 56 smart services related to driving licences and vehicle registration available round the clock for the residents of the state. These services can be availed by applying online, through Sewa Kendras during office hours or by calling the 1076 helpline, enabling applicants to access services from their homes.

While divulging further, Punjab Transport Minister Laljit Singh Bhullar said that for the past nearly three and a half years, Chief Minister S. Bhagwant Singh Mann led government has been delivering improved transport-related services to the general public. This initiative has reduced inconvenience for citizens while ensuring transparent procedures, thereby curbing corruption through streamlined service delivery.

The Cabinet Minister said that these services are being provided 24x7 through the departmental portal https://www.parivahan.gov.in. Citizens can access these services from home using Aadhaar-based authentication. He said that smart cards for driving licences and registration certificates are being printed at a single location in Chandigarh and dispatched to applicants' residences through Speed Post. He further informed that essential documents such as Registration Certificates, Driving Licences and insurance documents stored on digital platforms namely mParivahan and DigiLocker are recognised as valid originals when produced before enforcement staff.

Bhullar said that the Punjab Government has extended the facility of free travel for women in state-run buses. From 2022-23 up to 2025-26 till October 15, 2025, women availed nearly 21 crore free journeys in Punjab Roadways and PUNBUS buses. For which, the state government has incurred an expenditure of around Rs.1157 crore.

The Transport Minister further informed that the state government has also introduced the facility of e-Learner's Licence for citizens. Under this system, eligible applicants can obtain their learner's licence from home using Aadhaar without any inconvenience. The motor vehicle dealers in Punjab have been authorised as registering authorities for on-the-spot registration of new vehicles through Aadhaar-based processes, said the Cabinet Minister, adding that the objective of this system is to spare citizens unnecessary hassle and enable issuance of Registration Certificates at the dealer level itself.

The Cabinet Minister further informed that Volvo buses have also been operated from Punjab to the Delhi International Airport. He said that a total of 19 Volvo buses of Punjab Roadways and PUNBUS are being run from various cities of the state to the Delhi Airport. The fare of these buses is much lower compared to private buses and they are providing comfortable travel facilities to passengers from Punjab, he added.

Duped of ₹8 crore, ex-IPS officer Amar Chahal shoots self in Patiala

BALINDER SINGH
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Patiala, December 22

Former IPS officer Amar Singh Chahal allegedly shot himself here on Monday and in a purported note, he claimed that he had been duped of Rs 8.10 crore by cyber thugs who posed as wealth management advisors. He was shifted to the hospital in a critical condition, Patiala Senior Superintendent of Police Varun Sharma said. Chalal was one of the accused in the 2015 police firing cases related to anti-sacrilege protests in Faridkot.

According to police, a note has been recovered from the scene, which shows that he was a victim of some financial fraud, police said. In the note addressed to Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav, Chahal alleged that fraudsters operated through WhatsApp and Telegram groups under the name 'F-777 DBS Wealth Equity Research Group', falsely claiming links with the DBS Bank and its CEO.

The group lured investors by promising unusually high returns through stock trading, IPO allotments, OTC trades and so-called "quantitative funds", as per the note. According to the note, fake dashboards were created to show inflated profits, gradually building confidence among investors and prompting them to deposit large sums.

Chahal claimed he was repeatedly pressured to reinvest profits and later asked to pay hefty "service fees," "taxes," and additional charges to withdraw his money, amounting to several crores.

The former police officer stated that despite making all payments through bank transfers, withdrawals were never processed. He alleged that the scam was highly organised, involving multiple bank accounts and individuals, and urged authorities to constitute a Special Investigation Team (SIT) or hand over the case to a specialised central agency to trace the money trail.

Expressing deep distress, financial ruin, and emotional trauma, Chahal wrote that he felt devastated and ashamed, apologising to his family and colleagues. He maintained that, except for the alleged scammers, no one else was responsible for his decision. Police said they are probing the firing incident and the alleged fraud, examining the note, bank transactions, and digital evidence.

Frustrated after repeated defeats, Congress and SAD presidents resorting to lies and excuses: Baltej Pannu

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, December 22



Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Punjab General Secretary and Media In-charge Baltej Pannu on Monday strongly rebutted the baseless allegations levelled by Punjab Congress President Amarinder Singh Raja Warring and SAD President Sukhbir Singh Badal regarding the recently concluded Zila Parishad and Block Samiti elections.

Addressing a press conference at the party office, Pannu said that both Congress and Shiromani Akali Dal failed to field candidates in several constituencies and are now falsely accusing AAP of "capturing" seats. "If Congress chose to boycott elections because it could not find candidates, then the responsibility lies solely with Congress. Someone had to win those seats, and AAP had candidates everywhere," he said.

Pannu pointed out that Congress first alleged that nomination papers were snatched, torn or rejected under pressure. "When these excuses failed, Raja Warring suddenly started claiming that Congress boycotted 18 seats and AAP benefited from it. This is nothing but an attempt to cover up political failure," he added.

He cited the Tarn Taran seat, where AAP won by a huge margin while Congress slipped to fourth position and lost its security deposit. "That happened because Congress virtually abandoned the contest," Pannu said, adding that Raja Warring should also introspect whether his own controversial remarks against SC and BC communities contributed to his party's humiliation there.

Taking on SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal, Pannu dismissed claims that hundreds of Akali nomination papers were rejected across constituencies. He reminded that the entire nomination and scrutiny process is videographed. "If their candidates existed and papers were wrongly rejected, they should produce video evidence. Were these candidates imaginary, or from some forgotten era like dinosaurs?" Pannu asked.

Punjab and Israel to forge strategic agri-partnership to establish state as seed capital

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, December 22



Punjab is set to emerge as a global seed capital as the state government is mulling to enter a strategic partnership with Israel to integrate cutting-edge agricultural technologies. This was discussed during a high-level meeting between Punjab's Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister, Gurmeet Singh Khudian and Minister, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Israel, Fares Saeb, here at Punjab Bhawan, on Monday.

Gurmeet Singh Khudian said that the collaboration will focus on four key areas including exporting food grain seeds to Israel, academic exchanges between Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), Ludhiana and Israeli institutions, exchanging citrus stocks and adopting advanced water-management technologies.

Punjab Agriculture Minister informed that a key focus of the deliberations was introducing Israel's precision 'N-Drip' irrigation system, saving up to 70 pc water and significantly reducing energy consumption. The state will also explore modalities to adopt Israeli's expertise in treating and utilising sewage and village pond water for irrigation, mirroring Israel's model where 95% of treated wastewater is reused in agriculture.

Safety of school children in fog top priority for Mann govt: Dr Baljit Kaur

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, December 22

Giving top priority to the safety of school children, the Punjab government has issued necessary instructions to prevent untoward incidents caused by dense fog during the winter season. In this regard, Punjab's Minister for Social Security, Women and Child Development, Dr Baljit Kaur, has directed the strict implementation of the Safe School Vehicle Policy across the state.

Dr Baljit Kaur stated that under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, the Punjab government is fully committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of children. She emphasized that it is the clear policy of the Mann Government that every child must commute safely from home to school and back. Accordingly, all safety norms related to school vehicles are being enforced rigorously during the foggy winter months.

The Minister informed that under the Transport Department's Safe School Vehicle Policy, regular checking of school vehicles will be conducted throughout the state and strict compliance with all prescribed norms will be ensured to avoid any kind of mishap.

Highlighting key safety measures, Dr Baljit Kaur said that during foggy conditions, ensuring proper visibility, reducing vehicle speed, using reflectors, and keeping headlights and fog lights switched on have been made mandatory. Clear instructions in this regard have been issued to school managements and vehicle drivers.

She further directed schools that no undue pressure should be put on drivers if school vehicles get delayed due to fog.

YUDH NASHIAN VIRUDH

On day 296, Punjab Police nab 100 drug smugglers

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, December 22

Continuing the war against drugs "Yudh Nashian Virudh" waged by Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann to eradicate drug menace from state consecutively for the 296th day, Punjab Police conducted raids at 324 locations on Monday leading to the arrest of 100 drug smugglers after registration of 75 first information reports (FIRs) across the state. With this, the number of total drug smugglers arrested has reached to 41,291 in 296 days.

The raids have resulted in recovery of 331 grams heroin, 854 intoxicant tablets/capsules and Rs 10,080 drug money from the possession of arrested drug smugglers.

Renowned musician Ustad Puran Shah Koti dies at 72

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, December 22



Veteran musician and respected teacher Ustad Puran Shah Koti passed away on Monday morning at the age of 72 after a prolonged illness. He had been battling health issues for the past several months.

Widely regarded as a towering intellectual and cultural figure, Ustad Puran Shah Koti was known not only for his mastery of music but also for his deep insight into society, politics, and literature. His sharp intellect and constant engagement with contemporary thought earned him immense respect among peers and students alike.

As a mentor, he played a pivotal role in shaping the careers of several well-known artists, including Hans Raj Hans, Jasbir Jassi, and Sabarkoti. His contribution to music and cultural thought leaves behind a lasting legacy that will be remembered for generations. Recalling his association with the late maestro, Deepak Bali, Advisor for Culture and Tourism to the Government of Punjab, said he first met Ustad Puran Shah Koti in 1993 and found him to be a rare blend of an outstanding teacher and a compelling communicator.

Bali described Koti as a deeply influential personality with an exceptionally sharp intellect. "He could speak with ease and authority on any subject—whether society, politics, music, or literature," he said. He noted that while many great teachers may not always be effective presenters, Ustad Puran Shah Koti was unique in his ability to engage, connect, and leave a lasting impression on audiences.

Recalling hearing him perform live, Bali said Koti's voice and music had the power to evoke profound joy and inner peace. Quoting the maestro, he added, "He often said that singing never truly stopseven when I fall silent, music continues."

Animal Husbandry Dept sails to success amid floods in 2025

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, December 22

The Punjab Animal Husbandry Department has culminated the current year on a high note, capping achievements in crisis management and sectoral advancement with a historic operation to safeguard the state's livestock during the unprecedented floods.

Punjab Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development and Fisheries Minister Gurmeet Singh Khudian said that the department's defining moment was its swift and massive mobilisation in response to flood hit 12 districts. He informed that 492 rapid-response veterinary teams were deployed across 713 affected villages, besides, establishing 24x7 emergency grid that provided free medical treatment to over 3.19 lakh livestock.

"Our teams worked tirelessly on the ground, not only healing but preventing spread of diseases, ensuring that the backbone of our rural economy was protected", Khudian stated, while adding that the flood mitigation efforts were both curative and preventive. To stave off Hemorrhagic Septicemia spreading, over 2.53 lakh animals administered free booster dose of HS vaccination. The department, coordinating with district administrations and NGOs, orchestrated the distribution of vital sustenance: over 20,000 quintals of feed, over 16,000 quintals of silage, thousands of quintals of fodder & straw, 234 quintals of mineral mixture, over 68k doses of dewormers and 194KG of potassium permanganate.

PAU scientists secure prestigious ISRO grant for research on groundwater sustainability and climate resilience

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, December 22

Scientists from Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) have achieved a major research milestone with the approval of a prestigious, nationally significant project funded by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) under its RESPOND programme. The sanctioned project, titled "Groundwater Regime Impact and Climate Change towards Sustainable Development Goals," aims to advance research on water sustainability and climate resilience in India.

The interdisciplinary PAU research team is led by Dr Samanpreet Kaur, Principal Scientist (Principal Investigator), Department of Soil and Water Engineering, and includes Dr Prabhjyot Kaur Sidhu, Principal Scientist (Co-PI), Department of Climate Change and Agro-Meteorology, and Dr Surbhi Gupta, Assistant Professor (Co-PI), Department of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology. The team will work in close collaboration with Rajarshi Saha, Co-PI, ISRO/NRSC, bringing together academic expertise and advanced space-based applications.

Giving details, Dr Samanpreet Kaur said that the project underscores PAU's growing role as a key academic partner in leveraging space-based and geospatial technologies to address critical national challenges related to groundwater depletion and climate variability.

UT appoints Nodal Officers for implementation of 'Zero Fatality District' initiative

A.S. PRASHAR
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, December 22



A meeting of the District Road Safety Committee was held on Monday under the chairmanship of Nishant Kumar Yadav, Deputy Commissioner, UT Chandigarh to review the status of various road safety measures and to deliberate upon initiatives aimed at reducing road accidents and fatalities in the district.

The meeting was attended by the SSP (Traffic), Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDMs), and senior officers from the Transport Department, Police Department, Engineering Wings, Health Department, Municipal bodies, along with other key stakeholders concerned with traffic management and public safety.

The Deputy Commissioner expressed satisfaction over the effective action taken for pruning of trees, which were earlier obstructing the visibility of traffic signals at several locations. It was noted that timely coordination among the concerned departments has significantly improved signal visibility, ensured smoother traffic movement, and enhanced overall road safety.

Directions were issued to the concerned agencies to ensure that zebra crossings are clearly marked, well-maintained, and visible at all times to safeguard pedestrians and promote orderly traffic behavior.

The committee was further informed about the appointment of Nodal Officers for the implementation of the "Zero Fatality District" initiative, being undertaken in collaboration with the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), with the objective of systematically addressing and reducing road crash fatalities in the district.

The designated Nodal Officers are as follows:

- Transport Department – Director Transport
- Police Department – DSP Traffic (R&D)
- Public Health Engineering Department – Superintendent Engineer
- Health Department – Head of Department, Emergency Services, GMSH-16

It was highlighted that the Zero Fatality District programme has already been initiated in several States and has demonstrated encouraging outcomes through pilot projects. Notably, a 58% reduction in road crash fatalities was achieved on the Mumbai–Pune Expressway under the "Zero Fatality Corridor" model.

PU Vice Chancellor chairs meeting of Chairpersons, stresses timely data submission for rankings

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, December 22



Panjab University Vice Chancellor Renu Vig on Monday chaired a meeting of department chairpersons and Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) coordinators, urging them to prioritise the timely submission of accurate data required for various national and international rankings.

Addressing the chairpersons and IQAC coordinators of the University Teaching Departments, Prof Vig emphasised that prompt and precise data uploads by faculty members are critical to improving Panjab University's performance in rankings. She asked all departments to ensure that faculty members upload their academic and professional details within prescribed timelines.

Highlighting student well-being, the Vice-Chancellor directed departments to organise workshops focused on mental health and substance use. She stressed the importance of keeping students meaningfully engaged through academic, cultural, sports and environment-related activities, and called for greater student involvement in campus life.

Prof Vig also advised faculty to remain closely connected with students and alumni, underscoring the need for a robust mentor–mentee system to ensure every student is assigned a faculty mentor. She added that departments must keep students well informed about placement opportunities and career pathways after completing their coursework. Regular interaction among faculty, students and alumni, she said, would help students make informed career choices while strengthening the University's placement outcomes.

Faculty members were instructed to enter complete details of Faculty Development Programmes (FDPs), refresher courses, orientation programmes and invited talks attended or delivered by them on the IRP portal within stipulated timelines. Departments were similarly asked to update full details of conferences, symposia, FDPs, workshops, seminars and other academic or co-curricular programmes on the IQAC portal. It was also informed that departments would circulate faculty achievement PDFs to individual faculty members for verification at the start of the January and July academic sessions.

The meeting was attended by Dean of University Instruction Yojna Rawat, IQAC Director Sonal Singhal, along with chairpersons and IQAC coordinators of University Teaching Departments.

MLA Kuljit Singh Randhawa chairs Rogi Kalyan Samiti meeting at CHC Dhakoli



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Zirakpur, December 22

MLA Derabassi Kuljit Singh Randhawa on Monday chaired a meeting of the Rogi Kalyan Samiti at the Community Health Centre (CHC), Dhakoli, to review healthcare services and discuss measures for further strengthening the infrastructure. The meeting was attended by SDM Dera Bassi Amit Gupta, Senior Medical Officer Dr. Gagandeep Singh Shergill and other concerned officials.

During the meeting, the MLA deliberated on various requirements necessary to enhance the healthcare infrastructure at the CHC for better service delivery to the residents. He informed that the proposal to upgrade the existing bed capacity of the CHC from 30 to 50 beds is already under active consideration with the Punjab Government. He said that the upgradation would facilitate the deployment of additional specialist doctors and other healthcare staff, thereby significantly improving medical services for the public.

MLA Randhawa assured the SMO that all issues related to local body support, including sewerage blockage, parking space, cleanliness and renovation of the health facility, would be addressed on priority to ensure a better patient-friendly environment.

Reaffirming the commitment of the Bhagwant Singh Mann-led Punjab Government, the MLA said that the state government is determined to provide quality and affordable healthcare facilities at government hospitals and health centres at par with private institutions. He emphasized that strengthening public health infrastructure remains a key priority of the government.

Jannat Club prepares for Xmas, New Year celebrations

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, December 22



Jannat Club, Sector 7, Chandigarh hosted an exclusive preview evening, inviting prominent bloggers and members of the media to experience the club's refreshed vibe and upcoming festive offerings.

Known for its elegant ambience and premium nightlife experience, Jannat Club is all set to make this festive season truly memorable. While Christmas at Jannat will be marked by beautiful, themed décor and a warm festive atmosphere, the highlight of the season will undoubtedly be the grand New Year's Eve celebration.

Adding star power to the evening, acclaimed Punjabi singer Jordan Sandhu will be performing live on New Year's Eve, promising an electrifying night filled with music, energy, and celebration. The club is curating special New Year packages for guests, combining great music, indulgent dining, and premium beverages.

Food lovers are in for a treat as Chef Sunil and his culinary team will be presenting an impressive spread, crafted to complement the festive spirit. Guests can enjoy a wide selection of cocktails, mocktails, and premium liquor, making it a complete celebratory experience.

Grand CBC exhibition showcases Central Government welfare schemes at Swadeshi Mahotsav 2025

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Panchkula, December 22



The Central Communication Bureau (CBC), under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, has organized a grand multimedia exhibition at Swadeshi Mahotsav 2025 to showcase key public welfare schemes and the major achievements of the Central Government over the last 11 years. The exhibition is being held at the Parade Ground, Sector-5, Panchkula.

The primary objective of the exhibition is to disseminate comprehensive and authentic information about various flagship schemes of the Government of India and to create awareness about their benefits, eligibility criteria, and application processes. Designed around the theme "Amrit Kaal of a Developed India – 11 Years of Service, Good Governance and Welfare for the Poor," the exhibition presents the government's journey through informative panels, digital displays, LED screens, short films, and audio-visual presentations.

Major initiatives such as Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Ayushman Bharat, Ujjwala Yojana, PM-KISAN, Swachh Bharat Mission, Jal Jeevan Mission, and Digital India are being showcased in a simple, engaging, and citizen-friendly manner. The exhibition highlights the tangible impact of these schemes on people's lives and reflects the government's commitment to inclusive and sustainable development.

To ensure active public participation, CBC has also organized a range of awareness activities, including painting competitions, quiz contests, and street plays. These activities are drawing enthusiastic participation from children, youth, and families, making the exhibition both informative and interactive.

Speaking on the occasion, the Programme Officer Deepak Dahiya, Central Communication Bureau, Chandigarh, stated that the exhibition has been receiving an encouraging response from visitors and has become a major attraction of Swadeshi Mahotsav 2025.

Engineers' body promotes sustainability, urges shift to eco-friendly alternatives

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, December 22



The Institution of Engineers India (IEI) and Institute of Marine Engineers India, Chandigarh Chapter, has launched an initiative to promote sustainability and reduce plastic waste. The body is urging individuals and organizations to switch to eco-friendly alternatives such as stainless steel cups and candle flowers.

Shivangi Bansal, who has been working on this initiative for a year, says, 'Leave flowers for bees , Let' Nature Breathe'. I'm thrilled to see our efforts taking shape and encourage everyone to join us in promoting sustainability."

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Dr Baljit Singh Khehra, Chairman, IEI, emphasized the importance of sustainable practices, "As engineers, we have a responsibility to promote sustainability and reduce waste. Our initiative aims to create awareness and encourage people to make conscious choices."

Iqbal Singh, Chairman, Institution of Engineers India, Chandigarh Chapter, added, "We are committed to reducing plastic waste and promoting sustainable practices. Our goal is to create a cleaner and greener environment for future generations."

Prof Jasjeet Suri, Vice Principal, Chitkara University of Maritime Studies, highlighted the role of educational institutions in promoting sustainability, "Universities play a crucial role in spreading awareness about sustainability. We are proud to support this initiative and encourage our students to adopt eco-friendly practices."

Arun Agarwal, Honorary Secretary, Institute of Marine Engineers India, Chandigarh Chapter, urged everyone to join the initiative, "Small changes can make a big difference. Let's switch to stainless steel cups and candle flowers and make a positive impact on the environment."

The candle flowers, which can be used as floating candles, are an innovative solution to reduce waste and promote sustainability. The initiative aims to raise awareness about the importance of sustainability and encourage people to make conscious choices in their daily lives. The body plans to distribute stainless steel cups and candle flowers to promote the cause.

Classifieds

CHANGE OF NAME

I Yashna Goel W/o Shubham Aggarwal R/o 769/6A, St. No. 2, Civil Lines, Patel Nagar, Ludhiana have changed my name to Yashna Aggarwal

I Dharminder Marken S/o Somnath R/o 11A, Opp. Mahal Hospital, South City, Ayali Khurd, Ludhiana have changed my name to Dherminder Kumar

I Prerna W/o Jatinder Kapoor R/o 4222, St. No. 4, Durgapuri, Haibowal Kalan, Ludhiana have changed my name to Prerna Bhasin

I, Iti Duggal W/o Vaneet Duggal R/o Flat No. 4B, 1st Floor, Flower Enclave, Basant Avenue, Phullanwal, Ludhiana have changed my name to Iti Prashar

I Karamjeet Kaur W/o Amrik Singh R/o Vill. Manewal, Teh. Samrala, Ludhiana have changed my name to Karmjit Kaur

I Ramit Ali S/o Gulam Mohammad R/o Kamal Cinema Road, Mohalla Jourian Wala, Malerkotla have changed my name to Rehmat Ali

I hitherto known as HARJINDER KAUR W/o SUKHWINDER SINGH residing at Village and Post Office Kaulgarh, District Nawanshahr, Punjab-144526, India, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as HARWINDER KAUR

I Balbir Singh S/o Mehar Singh R/o Phaguwala Tehsil Bhawanigarh Distt Sangrur have changed my name to Balvir Singh

I Pritpal Singh Vashishat S/o Malkeet Singh r/o H.No. 587, Guru Teg Bahadur Nagar, Kartarpura Basti, Sangrur, have changed my name to Pritpal Singh.

I hitherto known as BHARAT BHUSHAN MEHAN S/o OM PARKASH residing at House No. 1929/23C, Street No. 5, Ward No. 33, Surinder Nagar, Ludhiana, District Ludhiana, Punjab-141008, India, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as BHARAT BHUSHAN.

I, Nisha W/O Resham Kapoor R/O H.no. 3232 Near D. A. V. School Extension 10 Dugri Basant Avenue (Ludhiana) have changed my name from Nisha to Nisha Kapoor after marriage.

I, Guddu Gupta S/O Fagu R/O H.no.E-10-8898 Street no 4 Azad Nagar Bahadurke Road (Ludhiana) have changed my minor son's name from Ashutosh Gupta to Anupam Gupta.

I, Alpana Gupta D/o Sarjeewan Kumar Gupta R/o H.no-49,St.no:-2,Surjeet Enclave, Sangam Chowk, Opp Amar Sweets Haibowal Kalan Ludhiana Punjab 141001 Have Changed My Name From Alpana Gupta to Alpna Gupta.

I, Rahul S/O Parshotam Lal R/O H.no. 1681, St.no 4 Preet Vihar Colony Bajra P. O. Basti Jodhewal (Ludhiana) have changed my name to Rahul Kumar.

I, Surjit Singh Kakkar S/O Sant Singh R/O H.no.4-D, Gurudwara Road Sarabha Nagar (Ludhiana) have changed my name to Surjit Singh.

I, Aparna Singla D/O Anish Kumar Singla R/O H.no 131 Aastha Enclave Barnala, now at H. No. 238-A Aggar Nagar Ludhiana have changed my name to Aparna Goel.

I Amanpreet Kaur W/o Sukhdeep Singh Mangat R/o Street No. 2, Garcha Colony, Nandpur, Sahnewal, district Ludhiana-141120 have changed my name Amanpreet Kaur Mangat.

I, Charn Singh S/O Tara Singh R/O H.No.3346 Street no 4 Chet Singh Nagar (Ludhiana) have changed my name to Charan Singh.

I, Aashima Uppal W/O Rajat Khanna R/O H.no. 125 Janpath Estate South City, Jhamat (Ludhiana) have changed my name to Aashima Khanna.

I, Ruchika Rani W/O Ajay Garg R/O H.no. 282 Friends Colony Ramgarh (Ludhiana) have changed my name from Ruchika Rani to Ruchika Garg and shall hereafter be known as Ruchika Garg.

I, Vandana W/O Sandeep Kumar R/O H.no. 264 FH Basant Avenue Dugri Road (Ludhiana) have changed my name to Vandana Kwatra.

I,Jagdish Singh S/O Kirpal Singh R/O 6-Friends Colony, Taylor Road, Amritsar, Punjab have changed my name to Jagdish Singh S/O Gopal Singh.Concerned note.

I No. 15484626A Rank EX SWR Name MANPHOOL SINGH, UNIT-SKINNER'S HORSE (1 HORSE) PIN-912601 C/o 56 APO, That, I have changed my wife's name from ANITA DEVI to ANITA KUMARI.

I,Sukhdev Kumar S/o Nath Ram R/o H No 129/1,St No 3,,New Baldev Nagar,Basti Jodhewal,Ludhiana declare that Sukhdev Kumar and Sukhdev Raj are same person.I Am Known By Both above Names.

I Jasvir Kaur W/O Satwant Singh R/O. H.no. 81-C/1, Gali No. 2, New Partap Nagar, Gurlal Bazar, Amritsar have changed my name from Jasvir Kaur to Jasbir Kaur. All Concerned May Please Note.

I, Simranjeet Singh S/o Balwinder Singh R/o Isapur, Ludhiana-141115, Punjab have changed My Name to Simranjeet as First Name and Singh as Surname.

I Ram Gopal Sharma S/o Badri Dass R/o H.no. 247-F, Rishi Nagar, Block-Z,Near Ram Mandir, Ludhiana have changed my name from Ram Gopal to Ram Gopal Sharma.

I, Shashi Rai W/o Santosh kumar R/o H.no. 1340 Pushpac Complex, Sector 49 B, Chandigarh.have changed my name from Sushma Alias Shashi Devi to Shashi Rai

I hitherto known as AAYUSHI TYAGI D/o MANOJTYAGI, R/o Tansipur, Haridwar, Uttarakhand-247656, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as INAYA UTSHAAVEE.

I No. 15484626A Rank EX SWR Name MANPHOOL SINGH, UNIT-SKINNER'S HORSE (1 HORSE) PIN-912601 C/o 56 APO, That, I have changed my son's name from JOGENDER to JAYANT MEEL.

I, Aayushi Tyagi W/O Vebhav Datt Sanjiv Coomar, R/O Haria Bass, Naharpur (150), Yamunanagar - 135001, Haryana, Have Changed My Name As Inaya Utshaavee

I,Janak Dulari W/O Rajinder Kumar R/O Prabhdyal Dharamshala near Railway Station, Amritsar,Punjab have changed my name after marriage from Janak Dulari to Madhu Sharma. Please correct my name Madhu Sharma in my LIC Policy No.131908084.

I No.JC 812699X Sub Jagmohan S/O Sh.Ram Dass R/O H.NO.117,Gali No.4, Guru Nanak Enclave, Near Jandpeer, Colony,Khandwala,Amritsar have changed my name from Jagmohan to Jagmohan Singh.In future I shall be known as Jagmohan Singh

I, Malkit Ram S/o Pargat Ram R/o Village Nangal Sahama, PO. Ladhewali, Jalandhar, Punjab declare that my mother name wrongly written as Bimla Devi in my Passport. But her Actual name as Bimla Kumari. Please Note.

I, Bhupinder Kumar S/o Sh. Resham Lal, Village Sahibajpur, PO. Kot Ranjha, Distt. SBS Nagar (Nawanshahr) have changed my name Bhupinder Kumar to Kumar Bhupinder. Concerned Please note.

I, Bhupinder Singh s/o Onkar Singh R/o VPO Possi, Tehsil Garhshankar, Distt. Hoshiarpur, Punjab-144531, have changed my name from Bhupinder Singh to Singh Bhupinder. That given name as Bhupinder and Surname as Singh. All Concerned please Note.

I, Prince S/o Surinder Kumar R/o Ward No. 8, Garhshankar, Tehsil Garhshankar, Distt. Hoshiarpur, Punjab-144527, have changed my name from Prince to Kumar Prince. That given name as Prince and Surname as Kumar. All Concerned please Note.

I, Veerpal Kaur w/o Harpal Singh R/o Vill. Dogarpur, PO Basiala, Tehsil Garhshankar, Distt. Hoshiarpur, Punjab-144527, have changed my name from Veerpal Kaur to Kaur Veerpal. That given name as Veerpal and Surname as Kaur. All Concerned please Note.

I, Kavita Jairath W/o Sukhdev Raj R/o H.No. 213/4, Tagore Nagar, Jalandhar, Punjab have changed my name from Neelam to Kavita Jairath after marriage & declare that Neelam as well as Kavita Jairath is one and the same person. All concerned please note.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Bhag Singh S/o Jit Singh, R/o House No. 5612, Phase 2, Urban Estate, Patiala have declare that my son Sidak Singh is beyond my control. I disinherit him from my movable and immovable property. Whoever deals with him will be responsible for it. There will be no responsibility on my part or on my family.

It is for information that I MAMTA KASHAP W/o RINKU KASHAP R/o Village Dhadhrian, Distt Sangrur, Punjab, India, declares that the name of my mine, my daughter and my husband has been wrongly written as Mamta Kashyap, Priya Kashyap and Rinku Kashyap in my daughter's Priya Kashap in her Educational Certificate's The actual name of mine is Mamta Kashap my daughter name Priya Kashap and father name Rinku Kashap, which may be amended accordingly.

I Parmar Kalabhai F/O Service No. 15233347H Rank L/Nk Name Parmar Sanjaybhai Kalabhai Of Unit 311 Med Regt C/O 56 Apo Pin 926311 R/O Village Aslali, Post Office Tranja, Tehsil Matar, District Kheda, State Gujrat-387530 Have Declared That In Army Record Of My Son My Name Is Wrongly Written As Parmar Kalabhai But My Correct Name Is Sodha Parmar Kalidas Ichchabhai. All Concerned May Please Note.

I Surinder Kumar son of Gurbaksh Singh resident of Mohan Lal Gali no. 2 Sri Muktsar Sahib inform that both the names Gurbaksh Singh and Gurbaksh Rai are my father's. Therefore, he should be known by both names. Please note the relevant details.

I, Preeti wife of Surinder Kumar, resident of Mohan Lal Gali 2, Sri Muktsar Sahib, hereby inform that both the names Priti and Preeti are mine. Therefore, I should be known by both the above names. Please note the relevant details.

I Parveen Pathak W/o Sh. Davinder Pathak R/o Street No. 3, Mohalla New Karamsar Colony, Ludhiana declared that my son Varun Pathak are out of my control. So I disowned them from my moveable-immoveable properties. If anybody deals with them on their own responsibility

I Parmar Ranjan Ben M/O Service No. 15233347H Rank L/Nk Name Parmar Sanjaybhai Kalabhai Of Unit 311 Med Regt C/O 56 Apo Pin 926311 R/O Village Aslali, Post Office Tranja, Tehsil Matar, District Kheda, State Gujrat-387530 Have Declared That In Army Record Of My Son My Name Is Wrongly Written As Parmar Rnajan Ben But My Correct Name Is Sodhaparmar Ranjanben Karabhai. All Concerned May Please Note.

We Anil Kumar S/o Ramesh Kumar and Sarita Dhir W/o Anil Kumar R/o H.No- B-2/ MCH-39/10, Kothi No-19, Civil Line Extension Hoshiarpur declare that our Daughter Harshita is out of our control so we disinherited her from our moveable and immoveable property. We shall not be responsible if anybody dealing with her.

ਮੈਂ, ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਕੌਰ ਪਤਨੀ ਨਿਆਮਤ ਰਾਏ ਉਰਫ ਨਿਆਮਤ ਰਾਮ ਵਾਸੀ ਪਿੰਡ ਚੱਕ ਪੰਨੀਵਾਲਾ (ਭੋਡੀਪੁਰਾ) ਤਹਿਸੀਲ ਜਲਾਲਾਬਾਦ ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਫਾਜ਼ਿਲਕਾ ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰਦੀ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਮੇਰਾ ਲੜਕਾ ਕਰਨਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਨੂੰਹ ਕਮਲਜੀਤ ਕੌਰ ਮੇਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਦੇ ਕਹਿਣੇ-ਸੁਣਨੇ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਹਨ। ਮੈਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀ ਚੱਲ-ਅਚੱਲ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਤੋਂ ਬੇਦਖਲ ਕਰਦੀ ਹਾਂ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਲੈਣ ਦੇਣ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਖੁਦ ਜਿੰਮੇਵਾਰ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਸਾਡਾ ਕੋਈ ਤਲਕਵਾਸਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ। ਸਬੰਧਤ ਨੋਟ ਕਰਨ।

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MORE CLASSIFIED ADVTs ON PAGE-7

GLADA demolishes three unauthorised colonies, recommends FIR



YOGESH KAPOOR
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, December 22

On the directions of Housing and Urban Development Minister Hardeep Singh Mundian and Chief Administrator Sandeep Kumar, the enforcement team of GLADA Regulatory wing demolished three unauthorized colonies on Monday in village Kanija Ludhiana.

When developers did not stop the illegal construction work despite serving them with the notices, a special team on Friday carried out the demolition drive, which went unopposed. The GLADA has also recommended filing of FIRs against the developers.

A spokesperson stated that zero tolerance is being adopted against unauthorized and unplanned development with a special focus on illegal colonies. He said a special drive has also been launched to take punitive action against those who were fleecing innocent residents under the garb of offering cheaper plots in these unauthorized colonies, which lacked statutory sanction and compliance with the government norms.

Chief Administrator Sandeep Kumar appealed to general public not to purchase property/plots/buildings in unauthorized colonies as GLADA will not provide any facility like water supply, sewerage, electricity connections etc.

The list of approved & regularized colonies along with their sanctioned maps is available on the Official Website of GLADA, which may be checked by the prospective buyers before buying any property, he added.

Extensive improvement underway in access and quality of people-centric services in Inspirational Block Dhuri: Sumeet Jarangal

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Sangrur, December 22

A high-level review meeting was held on Monday at the District Administrative Complex, Sangrur, under the chairmanship of Sumeet Jarangal, Director, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. The meeting focused on further strengthening the comprehensive and fast-paced development of Inspirational Block Dhuri in district Sangrur.

Addressing the meeting, Director Jarangal stated that the Government of India has launched the Inspirational Blocks Mission as a major reform-oriented initiative aimed at integrating underdeveloped regions with the mainstream of national development. Under this mission, Dhuri Block is being developed as a Model Block, with focused efforts



to enhance the access and quality of people-centric public services.

He explained that the programme's primary objective is to significantly upgrade infrastructure and service standards in sectors such as education, health, nutrition, drinking water, sanitation, employment, agriculture, infrastructure development, digital services, and social welfare.

Jarangal directed all officials to ensure measurable progress in every sector as per the defined targets. He emphasised that services at the block level must be delivered in a timely and efficient manner. He further instructed that all Central and State Government schemes must be implemented in strict adherence to quality standards. No lapse in monitoring, data updation, or field-level execution would be tolerated, he added. He urged officials to work with complete dedication and integrity in implementing public welfare projects. Jarangal assured that the Government would provide full support for developing Dhuri Block as a Model Block, and that regular reviews of all projects would continue. Before the meeting, he also visited various field locations to assess the progress of ongoing schemes.

Deputy Commissioner Sangrur, Rahul Chaba, apprised the Director of the district administration's key initiatives, particularly the goals and achievements under the Inspirational Block Programme in Dhuri.

'Youth Against Drugs' campaign: Awareness material distributed across Ludhiana district



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, December 22

Under the 'Youth Against Drugs' campaign, the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Ludhiana, has intensified efforts to create awareness against drug abuse by distributing publicity material at various locations across Ludhiana district and its sub-divisions, including Khanna, Payal, Samrala, and Jagraon.

Providing details, CJM-cum-Secretary, District Legal Services Authority, Ludhiana, Sumit Sabharwal stated that the campaign is being carried out under the leadership of the DLSA, Ludhiana. As part of the initiative, teams comprising advocates, panel lawyers, and para-legal volunteers are visiting schools, colleges, and other public places to motivate students and youth to stay away from drugs.

Awareness rallies are being organised in educational institutions, along with poster-making competitions and other activities, with the aim of safeguarding Punjab's youth from the menace of drug addiction. Students were also informed about the toll-free helpline number 15100, launched under the campaign for guidance and assistance.

Awareness rallies are being organised in educational institutions, along with poster-making competitions and other activities, with the aim of safeguarding Punjab's youth from the menace of drug addiction.

Sumit Sabharwal further informed that, as per the directions issued by the Member Secretary, Punjab State Legal Services Authority, SAS Nagar, and the District & Sessions Judge-cum-Chairperson, District Legal Services Authority, Ludhiana, the district-level launch of the 'Youth Against Drugs' campaign was held on December 6, 2025. The campaign will continue till January 6, 2026, with sustained awareness and outreach activities planned across the district.

Revisit Dr Ambedkar's writings and speeches to strengthen social brotherhood: Chairman

GURKIRPAL SINGH
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, December 22



Chairman of the State Scheduled Castes Commission, Jasvir Singh Garhi, has called upon society to re-read and revisit the writings and speeches of Dr B.R Ambedkar to promote an ideology that builds social harmony and unity.

Garhi was speaking as the chief guest at a programme organised in memory of Bharat Ratna Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar on the occasion of his Mahaparinirvan Divas. The event was held at Punjab's largest Dr B.R Ambedkar Bhawan near Jalandhar Bypass under the theme "Break Caste, Build Society."

Prominent personalities including Ramanjit Lally, Khadi Board Vice Chairman Pawan Hans, Raj Kumar Happy, and representatives of various organisations were present on the occasion. Addressing the gathering, Chairman Garhi said that Dr Ambedkar's deeply researched works, such as "Who Were the Shudras?", "The Untouchables," and "Annihilation of Caste," were written to dismantle centuries-old social evils and ideological barriers. He stressed that these books must be taken to the masses, particularly the Ambedkarite community, as there is an urgent need to spread their true message.

Expressing concern, Garhi said that important facts highlighted by Dr Ambedkar in "Who Were the Shudras?"—related to Arya Samaj, Shudras, indigenous concepts, and the distinction between natives and outsiders—have not been adequately highlighted so far. He emphasised that such literature should be included in school curricula and urged the Ambedkarite community to revisit these writings as a "refresher course."

One year of Kar Sewa: Sant Seechewal's efforts bring visible revival of Buddah Dariya

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Phagwara, December 22



The second phase of the kar sewa (voluntary service) being carried out by environmentalist and Rajya Sabha Member Sant Balbir Singh Seechewal to free the sacred Buddah Dariya from pollution has completed one year. After successfully restoring the Kali Bein blessed by the footsteps of Guru Nanak Dev Ji Sant Seechewal took charge of the Buddah Dariya in Ludhiana.

On December 22, 2024, Sant Seechewal cancelled his overseas tour and dedicated himself completely to stopping the flow of filthy and toxic water into the Buddah Dariya. Within just one year, the kar sewa produced such visible and positive results that even critics were compelled to acknowledge and appreciate the effort.

Behind the bridge on Tajpur Road near the Central Jail, the river water now flows as a clean and clear stream instead of the earlier blackened sludge, resembling the purity of the Kali Bein.

The chirping of birds and their playful activity along the riverbanks bear testimony to this transformation.

At Sangat Ghat, where the Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) level of the water used to be above 2000 last year, it has now dropped to around 120–160.

Third city-level committee meeting held to review world-class road upgrade project

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, December 22



With the state government working to upgrade city roads to world class standards and Cabinet Minister Sanjeev Arora closely monitoring the progress under the project, the 3rd meeting of the city-level committee was held under the chairmanship of MC Commissioner Aaditya Dachalwal at MC Zone D office on Monday.

During the meeting, detailed deliberations were held to finalise the designs prepared by consultant firms for transforming urban road infrastructure to world class standards.

Under the current phase of the project, around 15 kms of city roads have been selected for transformation. These stretches include Sherpur chowk to Jagraon bridge, Jagraon bridge to old sabji mandi chowk, Fountain chowk to Bharat Nagar chowk, Fountain chowk to Aarti Cinema chowk, Chaura Bazar chowk to Ghas Mandi chowk, road outside DMC hospital, Field Ganj to civil hospital road, road leading to Gill Village from Gill chowk, Model Town road etc would be redeveloped under the project.

While MC Commissioner Aaditya Dachalwal chaired the meeting through video conferencing, MC Additional Commissioner Paramdeep Singh; DCP Rupinder Singh; ACP (Traffic) Jatin Bansal; SE Sham Lal Gupta; Director Punjab Road Safety and Traffic Research Centre Navdeep Asija; Member, Punjab road safety council Rahul Verma among other officials of PWD, PSPCL etc participated in the meeting.

Bodies of two women mixed up at Ludhiana Hospital; one cremated by mistake, case registered

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, December 22

A shocking incident came to light at Orison Hospital on Ferozepur Road here, where the bodies of two deceased women were allegedly exchanged due to negligence by the hospital staff. As a result, one body was handed over to the wrong family and was even cremated, while the other had been kept in the mortuary awaiting the arrival of relatives from abroad.

The incident surfaced on Monday when the family of one deceased woman reached the hospital to collect the body and discovered that it was missing. On further inquiry, they realized that the body had already been given to another family, who had performed the last rites. Following the revelation, angry relatives staged a protest at the hospital, accusing the management of gross negligence.

According to the affected family, the woman had been admitted to the hospital a few days ago and was later declared dead by doctors. Since her two sons live abroad, the family had requested that the body be kept in the hospital mortuary until their arrival. However, the body was mistakenly handed over to another family.

Hospital doctor Sunil said the management is conducting an internal inquiry to determine at what level the lapse occurred and assured that appropriate action would be taken after the investigation. Meanwhile Sharing the Information with Media ,Sarabha Nagar police station SHO Aditya Sharma confirmed that the Case has been registered against the Adminstration of the Hospital on the statements of the aggrieved family have been recorded

GNDU alumnus Jaspreet Singh gets elected to New Jersey Governing Council

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Amritsar, December 22

Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU) alumnus Jaspreet Singh, an attorney-at-law in the US, has been elected to the New Jersey Governing Council.

With the election, Singh aims to be the voice of the Indian Sikh community.

In this regard, he has held a series of meetings in New Jersey and New York with senior political and administrative leaders.

In New Jersey, he met members of the transition team of Governor-elect Mikie Sherrill, and also had an interaction with outgoing Governor Phil Murphy.

He also met former North Carolina Governor and US Senate candidate Roy Cooper.

Seven illegal under construction buildings and school demolished; 14 buildings, shops sealed

INDERJIT SINGH
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, December 22



Continuing crackdown on violators, the building branch of Municipal Corporation (MC) took action against 22 illegal buildings situated in different parts of the city on Monday.

Working on the directions of MC Commissioner Aaditya Dachalwal, the action against illegal buildings was taken in the areas falling under Zone D and C of MC.

Assistant Town Planner (ATP Zone D) Harvinder Singh stated that three illegal buildings have been demolished in HImmat Singh Nagar and Preet Nagar. Further, 14 buildings/shops have been sealed including five in Dugri area (opposite Chamkila Samaadh), three on Cemetery road and six on Jawaddi road.

Similarly, MC Zone C team demolished 4 under construction illegal industrial buildings in the Giaspura area. An under construction school building has also been demolished in the Lohara area.

The civic body officials stated that the owners had either started the construction works without getting the building plan approved from the civic body or they were constructing the buildings in violation of the building bylaws. The building branch officials stated that the drive against illegal constructions will continue in the coming days too. The residents have been appealed to start the construction works only after getting the building plans approved from the civic body.

Blood donation camp held

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, December 22



A blood donation and medical check-up camp was organised at Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Urban Estate Phase-1, Dugri, to commemorate the martyrdom of the elder Sahibzadas of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Baba Ajit Singh Ji, Baba Jujhar Singh Ji and Mata Gujri Ji. The leaders while addressing the gathering, said the supreme sacrifices of the Sahibzadas continue to inspire humanity to stand against injustice and preserve Sikh values.

They lauded the efforts of Mukh Sewadar Kulwinder Singh Benipal, youth leader Parakh Sharma and the Gurdwara management for organising the camp in collaboration with Samvedna NGO, Guru Nanak Charitable Hospital and Civil Hospital Ludhiana. They also appreciated the participation of youth and women donors, terming blood donation as a noble act that saves lives.

Organisers informed that a large number of donors participated enthusiastically, while doctors conducted free medical check-ups and distributed medicines. Certificates and medals were also presented to blood donors on the occasion.

Pall of gloom descends in Zira; 14-year-old student killed in tragic road accident

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Zira, December 22

A tragic road accident occurred this morning on the Mansoorwal Kalan–Pandori Khatrian road in the Zira area, claiming the life of a 14-year-old school student, while two other children were injured.

According to information received, children from the village of Mansoorwal Kalan were travelling to their school in Pandori Khatrian in a tempo, as part of their daily routine. While on the way, the tempo driver suddenly swerved on noticing an oncoming bus, causing the vehicle to lose balance.

As a result, three children fell off the tempo. One of them came under the bus and died on the spot. The deceased has been identified as Haskaran Singh (14), a student. Another student, Gurvinder Singh, who sustained serious injuries, has been admitted to Guru Gobind Singh Medical Hospital, Faridkot, where his condition is reported to be critical.

On receiving information, the police reached the spot and initiated an investigation into the incident. The accident has cast a pall of gloom over the entire area.

bright Punjab Express

A laudable step

The Government of Punjab has taken a laudable step in granting the status of holy cities to three Sikh religious cities. This is in keeping with the ethos of the state and in deference to sentiments of the people at large. The announcement in this regard was made by the Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann who said that an official notification in this regard has been formally issued.

To use his words, he said, the government has taken a historic decision by issuing a notification to grant Sikh religious cities the status of holy cities. The Chief Minister used the occasion of a state level function to commemorate the 350th 'Shaheedi Diwas' of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji.

The Chief Minister underlined that out of the five Sikh Takhts, three are located in Punjab. "Sri Akal Takht Sahib at Amritsar, Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib at Sri Anandpur Sahib, and Takht Sri Damdama Sahib at Talwandi Sabo are situated in Punjab. The cities associated with these sacred Takhts have now officially been granted the status of centres of faith and holy cities.

The state government will ensure all necessary facilities for devotees visiting these cities with reverence. The Punjab Government will make all necessary arrangements and provide facilities, including e-rickshaws, minibuses, and other public transport services, to ensure that devotees and sangat arriving from across the world in faith do not face any inconvenience.

He also said that strict regulations will now apply in these holy cities. In all these cities, the sale of meat, alcohol, tobacco, and any intoxicating substances will be completely prohibited in view of the sanctity of the places.

He also went on to assure that no effort will be spared in ensuring the overall and appropriate development of these cities. These cities are not only religious centres but also a very important symbol of our cultural heritage. He also said that this historic decision to declare holy cities should have been implemented long ago. With the issuance of the notification, this decision has now come into effect, and these cities have officially attained the status of holy cities.

On December 15, 2025, the Punjab Government officially issued a notification declaring the walled city of Amritsar in Amritsar district, the city of Sri Anandpur Sahib in Rupnagar district, and the city of Talwandi Sabo (Sri Damdama Sahib) in Bathinda district as Holy Cities of the State of Punjab. The notification formally accords these historically and religiously significant cities special status in recognition of their spiritual importance and global faith-based relevance.

SPIRITUAL WORLD



WHO, Ayush Ministry holds meeting to foster global integration of traditional medicine

'The integration of traditional medicine into ICHI is vital because intervention coding provides a common language for health procedures across different countries and medical systems. By standardising these codes, healthcare providers can better document, report, and analyse the frequency and efficacy of traditional treatments'

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Ministry of Ayush held a two-day key technical meeting to integrate traditional medicine into global health intervention standards, the Ministry said on Monday.

The Technical Project Meeting on traditional medicine (TM), held from December 20-21 in the national capital, aimed to set an intervention code.

The initiative was fundamentally driven by the landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and Donor Agreement signed between the Ministry of Ayush and WHO in May.

"The agreement serves as the cornerstone for developing a dedicated Traditional Medicine module within the International Classification of Health Interventions (ICHI), the international global standard for classifying healthcare interventions, with India facilitating both the financial and technical frameworks necessary to bring ayurveda, siddha, and unani (ASU) systems into the global healthcare mainstream," the Ministry said.

"The integration of traditional medicine into ICHI is vital because intervention coding provides a common language for health procedures across different countries and medical systems. By standardising these codes, healthcare providers can better document, report, and analyse the frequency and efficacy of traditional treatments," it added.



The technical sessions were chaired by Kavita Garg, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Ayush, who led the Indian team in the development of National Health Intervention Codes for Ayurveda, Siddha, and Unani medicine.

The meeting saw extensive participation from all six WHO regions, including Africa, Americas, Eastern Mediterranean, Europe, Southeast Asia, and Western Pacific, ensuring a comprehensive global perspective on traditional medicine.

Member states, including Bhutan, Brazil, India, Iran, Malaysia, Nepal, Mauritius, South Africa, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, the UK, and the US, participated to appraise their country status and harmonise intervention descriptions.

The Ministry noted that the project will be undertaken by the WHO with strict timelines, adopting a scientific approach.

It will not only aid in clinical research and policy support but also pave the way for scaling up traditional medicine within national health information systems globally. IANS

Meditation a scientific tool for stress management, neuroplasticity: MDNIY

Meditation is a scientific tool that can help manage stress and regulate the brain's emotional responses, said experts at the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), under the Ministry of Ayush.

The experts, celebrating World Meditation Day on Sunday, highlighted the clinical relevance of meditation in today's competitive world.

"Nearly 60-70 per cent of stress is occupational in nature and stressed the need to align body and mind through techniques prescribed in the Patanjala Yogasutra," said Prof. (Dr.) Kashinath Samagandi, Director, MDNIY.

Referring to contemporary research, he explained that neuroimaging studies show that Om chanting reduces activity in the amygdala -- the brain's centre for fear and negative emotions -- by activating the prefrontal cortex, which regulates emotional responses.

An fMRI study has demonstrated significant deactivation of the amygdala during loud Om chanting compared to the resting state.

He further cited findings from All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, indicating that Yoga Nidra produces measurable changes in brain activity associated with deep relaxation and emotional regulation, thereby reducing stress and systemic inflammation.



Notably, the UN General Assembly last year proclaimed 21 December as World Meditation Day, reaffirming the right of every individual to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

The initiative aligns with the Ministry of Ayush's ongoing efforts to integrate traditional Indian wisdom with modern lifestyle practices for a healthier society.

During the event, Swami Muktimayananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi, encouraged participants to turn inward for lasting peace.

"The calming mental fluctuations begin with self-understanding and recognition of one's true nature Sat Chit Anand Swaroop grounded in love and compassion," he said.

He also stressed adherence to Yama and Niyama to overcome ego, jealousy, and unfulfilled desires that disturb inner harmony.

The event saw specialised meditation sessions that brought together eminent scholars, yoga practitioners, and enthusiasts.

The programme also featured practical demonstrations of various meditation techniques, aimed at equipping participants with effective tools to enhance mental and emotional resilience. IANS

DoT's Financial Fraud Risk Indicator helps prevent ₹660 crore in cyber fraud in 6 months

The Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI) has helped prevent the financial loss of Rs 660 crore in cyber fraud across the banking ecosystem in just six months since its rollout, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) said on Monday.

The FRI is driven by active support of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), leading to large-scale onboarding of banks, financial institutions, and Third-Party Application Providers (TPAPs) on the Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP).

As on date, more than 1,000 banks, TPAPs, and Payment System Operators (PSOs), have onboarded the DIP and started adopting FRI actively.

DoT is also conducting regular knowledge-sharing sessions with stakeholders to enhance awareness and effective implementation of FRI, with 16 sessions held till date, according to the Ministry of Communications.



India's cybercrime landscape has shifted dramatically in recent years, with fraudsters operating like well-organized digital cartels. From digital arrest scams to sophisticated SIM-box networks bypassing legal telecom routes, the threat is evolving faster than ever.

Yet, amid this complexity, one factor has emerged as the most decisive force in combating cybercrime: Jan Bhagidari. Citizens, through Sanchar Saathi, which has emerged as India's most powerful crowdsourced cyber-intelligence tool, are providing continuous inputs for Financial Fraud Risk Indicator.

DoT acknowledges and appreciates the efforts of all vigilant citizens and Cyber Warriors who are actively leveraging the Sanchar Saathi platform (available at www.sancharsaathi.gov.in and through mobile App on both Android and iOS) to report Suspected Fraud Communications, report fraudulent connections obtained in their name, and lost/stolen mobile handsets.

The recent trends in downloads and usage of the Sanchar Saathi mobile App reflects the trust reposed by citizens in the platform and their proactive role in preventing cyber frauds.

This large-scale citizen engagement is significantly contributing in curtailing the misuse of telecom resources by fraudsters and creating a safer and more resilient digital ecosystem.

"DoT urges all the citizens to utilise Sanchar Saathi web portal and Mobile App for availing the citizen centric services. DoT reiterates its commitment to fostering a secure digital payments ecosystem through inter-agency collaboration, proactive fraud detection, and intelligence-driven policy interventions," said the ministry. IANS

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NEWSBRIEFS

Hyderabad to host kite, hot air balloon, drone festivals as part of Sankranti celebrations in Jan

HYDERABAD: The tourism department of Telangana has planned an international kite festival, hot air balloon and drone festivals in Hyderabad as part of Sankranti celebrations next month. The Kite festival will be organised from January 13 to 15 at the Parade Grounds, with participation from international and national kite flyers. According to the Tourism Department Managing Director, V. Kranti, the department has lined up several events as part of the Sankranti festival celebrations. **IANS**

Dharmendra Pradhan writes to Odisha CM seeking early reconstitution of State Backward Classes Commission

BHUBANESWAR: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has written to Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, urging his personal intervention for the early reconstitution of the Odisha State Commission for Backward Classes (OSCBC), which has remained non-functional after the completion of its tenure on January 3, 2024. In his letter issued on Monday, Pradhan pointed out that the OSCBC has become functus officio due to the absence of appointed members, resulting in the lack of a statutory mechanism to address the concerns of Socially and Educationally Backward Class (SEBC) communities in the state. **IANS**

Udhayanidhi Stalin accuses Centre of targeting minority votes, urges Tamils to verify names in voter list

CHENNAI, DECEMBER 22



In a strongly worded statement, Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin alleged that the Centre's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) drive has resulted in a massive number of voters being declared ineligible across the state.

During a press conference in Chennai, Udhayanidhi reiterated Chief Minister M. K. Stalin's earlier warning that the SIR process was being used as a tool to remove votes belonging to minorities, Dalits, and Muslims. "This is not just an administrative exercise. It is a deliberate attempt to disenfranchise vulnerable communities," he alleged.

According to Udhayanidhi, nearly 97 lakh names have been removed from the voters' list in Tamil Nadu alone, with Chennai accounting for around 14 lakh deletions. He urged citizens to promptly verify whether their names still remain on the electoral roll, insisting that the ruling DMK would support anyone who finds their name missing.

The Deputy Chief Minister also accused Union Home Minister Amit Shah of attempting to influence Tamil Nadu's political landscape through "external strategies devised from Delhi." Referring to Shah's claim that the BJP had secured victory in the Bihar elections and was now targeting Tamil Nadu, Udhayanidhi asserted that such statements were meant to intimidate the people.

He added that while such tactics may work in northern states like Bihar or Madhya Pradesh, they would not succeed in Tamil Nadu. "Maybe you can win in the North, but in Tamil Nadu your plans will never take off," he said, asserting that the people of the state were politically conscious and would not be frightened by threats.

Udhayanidhi urged citizens to treat the issue seriously and to take individual responsibility for confirming their voting rights. "Everyone must personally check whether their votes are intact. If your name has been removed, please re-register immediately. We have to safeguard our own rights," he emphasised.

He reassured that the DMK would extend full support to affected voters and ensure they are guided through the re-registration process.

With the 2026 Assembly elections nearing, the remarks are expected to fuel further political confrontation between the state government and the Centre over electoral reforms and voter roll revision. **IANS**

Suspended Trinamool MLA Humayun Kabir floats political outfit Janata Unnayan Party

KOLKATA, DECEMBER 22



Humayun Kabir, the suspended Trinamool Congress legislator from Bharatpur Assembly Constituency in Murshidabad district of West Bengal, on Monday announced his political party, christened the Janata Unnayan Party.

According to Kabir, the name of his new political outfit was the result of a well-thought-out exercise since he neither wanted to include the word 'Congress' nor 'Trinamool' in the name of his new party.

"The common people of West Bengal will be able to relate themselves to the name of the party. The sole aim of our party is mass development. Our party will work for the development of the people," Kabir said after announcing his party at Mirzapur in Murshidabad.

Incidentally, Kabir had connections with both the Congress and the Trinamool Congress in the past, as well as with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

In the 2011 West Bengal Assembly elections, which marked the end of the 34-year Left Front rule in West Bengal and the beginning of the current Trinamool Congress rule, Kabir got elected as a Congress legislator.

However, he shifted to Trinamool Congress after leaving Congress. Before the 2019 Lok Sabha election, he joined the BJP and also unsuccessfully contested as the party candidate from Murshidabad Lok Sabha constituency. **IANS**

No deaths in UP due to codeine cough syrup: CM Yogi

LUCKNOW, DECEMBER 22

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday informed the Assembly that no deaths have occurred in the state due to the consumption of codeine-based cough syrup.

Responding to the issue raised by the Leader of the Opposition at the start of the House proceedings, the Chief Minister questioned the intent of the opposition members. He said legislators should come to the House after properly studying the facts and must uphold its dignity.

"The issue was raised as soon as the proceedings began, which is why I had to intervene," he said.

Using the proverb "a guilty conscience needs no accuser," CM Yogi took a sharp dig at the Samajwadi Party, asserting that the allegations were politically motivated. He categorically stated that not a single death in Uttar Pradesh has been linked to codeine cough syrup.

The Chief Minister also targeted the Leader of the Opposition, Mata Prasad Pandey, saying that at such an age one is generally expected to speak the truth, but alleged that the Samajwadi Party compels him to make false statements. He reminded the House that the leader had served as Speaker for a long period and should set an example. CM Yogi informed the Assembly that the state's biggest wholesaler of codeine cough syrup had been apprehended by the Special Task Force (STF). **IANS**

Bihar DGP avoids questions on Hijab issue, controversy escalates

PATNA, DECEMBER 22

Bihar Director General of Police (DGP) Vinay Kumar on Monday avoided questions on the state Hijab issue controversy as the political bickering escalates in the state controversy involving Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, as the opposition has demanded an apology from the Chief Minister.

On Monday, when journalists questioned DGP Kumar regarding the controversy over whether any action would be taken against the Chief Minister, especially at a time when Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary has spoken about taking strict action against miscreants.

However, the DGP avoided giving a response to the question.

Instead of commenting on the incident involving the Chief Minister, he spoke at length about the government's and the police department's initiatives for women's safety. **IANS**

Security forces bust Maoist arms factory in Chhattisgarh's Bastar

RAIPUR/SUKMA, DECEMBER 22



In a significant blow to Maoist insurgency in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region, security forces have dismantled an illegal arms manufacturing facility operated by Naxals in the forested hills near Meenagatta village in Sukma district, said the officials on Monday.

Based on precise intelligence, a joint team from the 150th Battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the district police launched a targeted operation, completely neutralising the clandestine unit.

The facility was actively used by Maoists to produce weapons and ammunition, with the explicit aim of targeting security personnel and intensifying armed activities in this Naxal-affected hotspot.

During the raid, authorities recovered a substantial haul of arms, explosives, and manufacturing equipment.

Items seized included eight single-shot rifles, 15 12-bore cartridges, five electric detonators, 30 meters of Cordex wire, two kg of PEK explosives, one kg of ANFO (ammonium nitrate fuel oil), 10 kg of ammonium nitrate, eight wireless VHF sets, one welding machine, along with other materials, Maoist uniforms, and propaganda literature.

Sukma Superintendent of Police Kiran G. Chavan hailed the operation as a major disruption to the Maoists' logistical network. "The swift action of our forces has prevented potential attacks and dealt a severe setback to their capabilities," he stated.**IANS**

DELHI/NCR

Delhi pollution: Air quality remains in 'very poor' category, smog persists

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22



The national capital continued to reel under heavy smog on Monday morning, with air quality levels remaining in the "very poor" category and several areas slipping into "severe" pollution levels.

The deteriorating conditions once again raised health concerns for residents and disrupted normal daily activities across the city.

According to data from the Sameer app, Delhi's average Air Quality Index (AQI) was recorded at 366 at around 7.05 a.m. The worst air quality was reported from the Narela monitoring station, which logged an AQI of 418, the highest in the city so far on Monday. Several other areas, including Anand Vihar, Bawana, Jahangirpuri, Mundka, Rohini, and Wazirpur, also witnessed severe air quality, with AQI readings ranging between 401 and 408.

Even the least polluted parts of the city failed to offer respite. Dilshad Garden recorded the lowest AQI among the 40 monitoring stations at 301, which still falls under the "very poor" category.

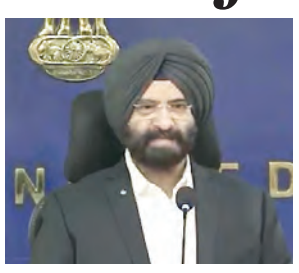
As per the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), AQI levels between 301 and 400 are categorised as "very poor", while readings between 401 and 500 are considered "severe". Such pollution levels can cause respiratory discomfort, particularly among children, the elderly, and people with pre-existing health conditions.

The dense smog also affected visibility across the national capital, prompting Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport to issue a passenger advisory. In a post on the social media platform X at 7 a.m., airport authorities stated that low-visibility procedures were in place, although flight operations were continuing normally. Passengers were advised to contact their respective airlines for the latest updates, as delays could occur due to weather conditions.

Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecast moderate fog for the day. The maximum temperature in Delhi is expected to be around 21 degrees Celsius, while the minimum temperature may hover near 9 degrees Celsius. **IANS**

Delhi pvt offices not adopting WFH to face action: Manjinder Singh Sirsa

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22



Ordering closure of all illegal industries, Delhi Environment and Industries Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa on Monday warned of strict action against private companies violating the government's direction to switch to work-from-home (WFH) under GRAP-4 rules.

Addressing a press conference, Sirsa said, "It has come to light that some private companies are not following these guidelines. All such companies are urged to fully comply with the GRAP-4 rules. If any complaint is received against any private company, the strictest possible action will be taken."

Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) is a pre-emptive and emergency framework of pollution response measures depending on the AQI levels. The GRAP-4 set of measures which includes WFH for staff in private and government offices kicks in around an AQI of 400.

Sirsa, while talking to mediapersons, also shared details of the crackdown planned against illegal industries in the city.

"Starting today, all Deputy Commissioners of MCD, in collaboration with DPCC, have begun the sealing action against non-legal industries. Illegal industries, whether polluting or non-polluting, will all be shut down as per the orders of the Supreme Court," he said.

"I want to inform you that as of today, an extensive drive has started in Delhi. Polluting factories identified by us will face strict action and their properties will be sealed. No more notices, no more chances, enough opportunities have already been given," he said.

"Along with this, action will also be taken against those industries that have not applied for Online Continuous Emission/Effluent Monitoring Stations (OCEMS) by December 31. This is Delhi's fight for clean air, and action against those violating the rules will continue," he said. **IANS**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Original sale deed no. 3697 Dated 22-11-2012 executed by Pavinder Kumar son of Darshan Kumar GPA Through Arun Kumar infavour of Deepak Kumar son of Ramesh Kumar , regarding Immoveable property measuring 3 marlas 27/1782 share out of 9 kanal 18 marlas khewat number 1625 khatauni No 2961 Sala Khatta Total Kitte 6 vide jamabandi for the year 2005-06 situated in the area of Muktsar-2 ,is lost with present owner Rajesh Bansal son of Darshan Kumar Bansal and the same is not mortgaged with any Bank or Financial Institution, in that regard DDR bearing No. 661637/2025 dated 22-12-2025 has been got registered if Anybody having objection regarding mortgage of property with HDFC Bank Ltd Sri Muktsar Sahib , may respond or raise objection within 14 Days, to Sh. SAHIL BHATIA Advocate, Mob.No. 9142900002.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, PRINCE SHARMA, S/O OM DUTT SHARMA R/O 76 ASHOK NAGAR, LUDHIANA, DECLARE THAT I SOLD MY HERO SPLENDOR BIKE (PB10EZ6133), AT TWO WHEELER MARKET NEAR BUS STAND LUDHIANA. THE ORIGINAL SALE AGREEMENT / AFFIDAVIT HAS BEEN LOST/MISPLACED AND THE PURCHASER (FROM LUDHIANA) HAS NOT YET TRANSFERRED THE OWNERSHIP. THROUGH THIS NOTICE, I INFORM THE RTO AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT I AM NO LONGER IN POSSESSION OF THIS VEHICLE. I SHALL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY CIVIL OR CRIMINAL LIABILITY, ACCIDENTS, OR MISUSE OF THE VEHICLE FROM THE DATE OF SALE. ANY PERSON DEALING WITH THIS VEHICLE DOES SO AT THEIR OWN RISK. **COMPLAINT NO. LR N: 661240/2025 DATE: 20/12/2025 AT LUDHIANA.**

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Nini w/o Kishor Kumar R/o H.No. 5 (186/15-4) Ram Bagh, Backside Chitra, Amritsar, have approached Equitas Small Finance Bank Limited at Amritsar, for availing a loan against mortgage of below mentioned immovable property owned and possessed by me vide sale deed dated 13.2.2012 bearing Doc. No.: 11102 registered at Sub-Registrar, Distt. Amritsar. Anybody having any claim or objection in creating mortgage over said property in favour of above Bank shall approach concerned authority within seven days from this publication, failing which it shall be presumed that there is no objection or claim of any one over this property and the bank may proceed further in advancing loan by way of mortgaging the said property. Further, any objection or claim made thereafter shall have no legal effect on me or on the Bank.
DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY :
All that pieces and parcels of non agricultural and residential Property bearing Khana Shumari no. 186/15-4 Total measuring 22 Square Yards situated at Urban Behrun Ram Bagh under Private Gali, Tehsil & District Amritsar as per sale deed with all present and future superstructure thereon.
Nini w/o Kishore Kumar
Vikas Verma (Advocate)
MB. 9815156302

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Prince Sharma S/o Om Dutt Sharma R/o 76 Ashok Nagar, Ludhiana, declare that I sold my Mitsubishi Lancer (PB10AM3131), Chassis No. 116966, in 2018 at Chandigarh Sector 43. The original sale agreement/ affidavit has been lost/misplaced and the purchaser (from Manajra) has not yet transferred the ownership. Through this notice, I inform the RTO and the General Public that I am no longer in possession of this vehicle. I shall not be responsible for any civil or criminal liability, accidents, or misuse of the vehicle from the date of sale. Any person dealing with this vehicle does so at their own risk. **Complaint No. ICMS/2025/043550 Dt. 20-Dec-2025 10:17:41 PM at Chandigarh.**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice for Public in Large that Labh Kaur W/o Mahinder Singh R/o Village Bugra, Tehsil Dhuri, District Sangrur, is owner of Residential Property area measuring 0-3 Marla 4.50 Sarsai i.e. 105 Sq. Yards, situated at Haripura Side, Inside Road, Sangrur-A, Tehsil and District Sangrur as per Sale Deed No.1426 dt.01.07.2021 executed by Anguri Rani w/o Ashok Kumar s/o Bhagwan Dass R/o Sangrur in favour of Labh Kaur w/o Mohinder Singh s/o Bhajan Singh (hereinafter referred to as 'customers') has approached IDBI Bank Limited for availing loan facility. The Original Sale Deed No.1632 dt. 09.09.1994 executed by Sardara Singh s/o Jagat Singh in favour of Sudhir Kumar s/o Vasdev, HAS BEEN LOST ANYWHERE & SAME IS NOT TRACEABLE. If anyone from public in large has the concern, please contact in writing to the undersigned with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned herein below within 7 days from the date of Publication, failing which the claim, if any of such person will be considered to have waived and my client shall proceed with the disbursement of loan and creation of mortgage in respect thereof. RAJNISH VERMA, ADV.CH NO.344, 2nd Floor, Distt. Court, Sangrur. Mob. No.98555-24882.

NOTICE TO APPEAR/ATTEND PROCEEDINGS OF DLM&SFC-LDH

Through this Publication This is for Constructive Notice for respondent M/S LAKSHMI HOSIERY WORKS having registered office at HAZURI ROAD, CHAWAL BAZAR, LUDHIANA, PUNJAB, 141007 to appear in person or through authorized representative before the District Level Micro & Small facilitation Council Ludhiana, District Industries Centre, Ludhiana on Dated 24-12-2025 regarding claim reference petition submitted by claimant M/S MASTER CARE HOSIERY U/s 18(1) of MSMED Act 2006 bearing reference: MSEFC/DIC/12/22/2464. If respondent still fails or omits to appear as above then arbitration proceedings shall be conducted as per section 23 & 25 of Arbitration and Conciliation Act and award shall also be passed on the basis of evidence before it.
Member Secretary cum General Manager
District Industries Centre
Industrial Estate, Ludhiana
Ph No:- 0161-2540695
Email Id:- dicludhiana5@gmail.com, Ludhiana.msefc@gmail.com

ਗਰੇਟਰ ਮੋਹਾਲੀ ਏਰੀਆ ਡਿਵੈਲਪਮੈਂਟ ਅਥਾਰਿਟੀ
ਜਨਤਕ ਸੂਚਨਾ



Plot No 1054, Sector 71, SAS Nagar ਦੇ ਅਲਾਟੀ Lt. Col. Rajinder Singh ਦੀ ਮੌਤ ਮਿਤੀ 14.07.2025 ਨੂੰ ਹੋ ਗਈ ਸੀ, ਜਿਸ ਸਬੰਧੀ Govt. of Punjab Department of Health and Family Welfare, Chief Registrar (birth & Deaths) Punjab ਵਲੋਂ ਮਿਤੀ 21.07.2025 ਨੂੰ ਡੈੱਥ ਸਰਟੀਫਿਕੇਟ ਜਾਰੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਮ੍ਰਿਤਕ ਅਲਾਟੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮਿਤੀ 21.09.2021 ਨੂੰ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਵਸੀਅਤ ਵਿੱਚ Plot No. 1054, Sector 71, SAS Nagar ਦੀ ਮਲਕੀਅਤ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਪਤਨੀ Gurmohinder Kaur w/o Late Lt. Col. Rajinder Singh, Plot No. 1054 Sector 71, SAS Nagar ਦੇ ਨਾਮ ਤੇ ਦਰਸਾਈ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਵਸੀਅਤ Sub-Registrar, SAS Nagar ਜੀ ਦੇ ਦਫ਼ਤਰ ਵਿਖੇ Document No. 2021-22/3/3/933 ਬੁੱਕ ਨੰਬਰ 3 ਮਿਤੀ 25.01.2022 ਰਾਹੀਂ ਰਜਿਸਟਰ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ।

Gurmohinder Kaur w/o Late Lt. Col. Rajinder Singh, Plot No. 1054, Sector 71, SAS Nagar ਵਲੋਂ ਉਕਤ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਡ ਵਸੀਅਤ ਦੇ ਆਧਾਰ ਤੇ Plot No. 1054, Sector 71, SAS Nagar ਦੀ ਮਲਕੀਅਤ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਾਮ ਤਬਦੀਲ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਬੇਨਤੀ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਬੇਨਤੀ ਮਿਲਖ ਅਫ਼ਸਰ (ਹ) ਐਸ.ਏ.ਐਸ. ਨਗਰ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਦਫ਼ਤਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਅਧੀਨ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਮਲਕੀਅਤ ਤਬਦੀਲ ਕਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਆਮ ਅਤੇ ਖ਼ਾਸ ਨੂੰ ਸੂਚਿਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜੇਕਰ ਮ੍ਰਿਤਕ ਅਲਾਟੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਉਕਤ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਡ ਵਸੀਅਤ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਇਤਰਾਜ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਇਸ ਇਸ਼ਤਿਹਾਰ ਦੀ ਮਿਤੀ ਤੋਂ 16 ਦਿਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਅੰਦਰ ਆਪਣਾ ਇਤਰਾਜ ਮਿਲਖ ਅਫ਼ਸਰ (ਹ), ਗਮਾਡਾ, ਐਸ.ਏ.ਐਸ. ਨਗਰ ਪਾਸ ਲਿਖਤੀ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਦੇ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਨਿਸ਼ਚਿਤ ਮਿਤੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋਏ ਇਤਰਾਜਾਂ ਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਉਕਤ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਡ ਵਸੀਅਤ ਦੇ ਆਧਾਰ ਤੇ Plot No. 1054, Sector 71, SAS Nagar ਦੀ ਮਲਕੀਅਤ ਬਿਨੈਕਾਰ Gurmohinder Kaur w/o Late Lt. Col. Rajinder Singh, Plot No. 1054, Sector 71, SAS Nagar ਦੇ ਨਾਮ ਤੇ ਟਰਾਂਸਫ਼ਰ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ।

ਮਿਲਖ ਅਫ਼ਸਰ (ਹ)

ਸੇਲਜ਼ਮੈਨ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ

ਦੀ ਵਡਾਲਾ ਵੀਰਮ ਬਹੁਮੰਤਵੀ ਸਹਿਕਾਰੀ ਸਭਾ ਲਿਮ: ਵੱਲੋਂ ਸੂਚਿਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਭਾ ਨੂੰ ਸੇਲਜ਼ਮੈਨ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ। ਚਾਹਵਾਨ ਉਮੀਦਵਾਰ ਆਪਣੇ ਬਿਨੈ ਪੱਤਰ ਸਭਾ ਦੇ ਸਕੱਤਰ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਤੀ 05.01.2026 ਨੂੰ ਸਵੇਰੇ 10 ਵਜੇ ਤੱਕ ਸਭਾ ਦੇ ਦਫਤਰ ਵਿਖੇ ਦੇਣ। ਵਿਦਿਅਕ ਯੋਗਤਾ ਗ੍ਰੈਜੂਏਟ ਨਾਲ ਕੰਪਿਊਟਰ ਕੋਰਸ (ਘੱਟੋ-ਘੱਟ 120 ਘੰਟੇ) ਉਮਰ 21 ਤੋਂ 35 ਸਾਲ, ਵਸਨੀਕ ਸਭਾ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਜ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਹੋਵੇ। ਤਨਖਾਹ ਡੀ.ਸੀ. ਰੇਟਾਂ ਤੇ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ। ਉਮੀਦਵਾਰ ਦੀ ਇੰਟਰਵਿਊ ਸਭਾ ਦੇ ਦਫਤਰ ਵਿਖੇ ਮਿਤੀ 05.01.2026 ਨੂੰ ਸਵੇਰੇ 11.00 ਵਜੇ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ।

ਸੰਪਰਕ 9781531872

Classifieds

PUBLIC NOTICE

ਮੈਂ, ਕੁਲਵਿੰਦਰ ਕੌਰ ਵਿਧਵਾ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਜੋਗਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾਸੀ ਪਿੰਡ ਮਾਂਗਾ, ਥਾਣਾ ਗੜ੍ਹਦੀਵਾਲਾ, ਤਹਿਸੀਲ ਦਸੂਹਾ, ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਹੁਸ਼ਿਆਰਪੁਰ ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰਦੀ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਮੇਰਾ ਲੜਕਾ ਅਮਰਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਉਰਫ ਬੂਈ ਮੇਰੇ ਕਹਿਣੇ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਮੈਂ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀ ਤਮਾਮ ਚੱਲ ਵਾ ਅਚੱਲ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਤੋਂ ਬੇਦਖਲ ਕਰਦੀ ਹਾਂ। ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਲੈਣ ਦੇਣ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਫੇ ਨੁਕਸਾਨ ਦਾ ਖੁਦ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ। ਮੇਰੀ ਜਾਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰਕ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਦੀ ਕੋਈ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ। ਸਬੰਧਿਤ ਨੋਟ ਕਰਨ।

CHANGE OF NAME

I, hitherto known as MONIKA alias MONIKA DEHRA alias MANIKA GUDWANI D/o RATTAN KUMAR W/o SUDHIR KUMAR R/o House No. 1227, Ward No. 23, Vikas Nagar, Rajpura District Patiala, Punjab-140401, India have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MONIKA.

I Sandeep S/o Ram Roop R/o Qtr. No. 3, Deputy Director Animal Husbandry, Rouni Farm, Patiala 147001, Punjab have Changed My Name to Sandeep Rana.

I, Angel, D/o Kawaljeet Dawar, resident of House No. 369, Block A, Model Town Ext. Ludhiana, Punjab 141002, have changed my name to Hridhi Dawar and shall be known by this name henceforth.

LOST AND FOUND

Original sale deed for Residential property situated at Rose Colony Distt.Kapurthala Garbi Khata No.978/1523, 979/1524,989/1534 (2000-2021), Khasra No.2390/5-10, 2391/1/4-6, 2392/1/4-18, 2385/1-17, 2386/7-0,2387/2/6-17,2388/3-7, 2389/2- 2,2393/1/6-6,Total area 0-7 marla,Vasika No.225,Bahi No.1, Safa 93,Jild 2 dated 23.04.2002 in favour of Saravpreet Singh S/O Jasbir Singh executed by Jasbir Singh S/O Surat Singh has been lost on 15.09.25. Its FIR is submitted on 21.12.2025 at PSOC City Kapurthala. Its SR No. is 661268/2025.

I Kamaljit Singh Hayre S/o Majhail Singh Hayre R/o 326 Chhoti Baradari Part-2 Garha Jalandhar (Punjab). I have lost the Omaxe original Payment receipt no. 1718563 & 1718564. Client ID: BSC/295. If anybody found please return it to the above mentioned address.

I Reema Rani W/O Raj Kumar S/o Sohan Lal, R/O Lohian Khass, Tehsil Shahkot, District Jalandhar do hereby inform that original Regd Sale Deed dt 06-03-2013 , Document No 1384 regarding Land 00K-03.72mls Situated in the area of Village Lohian, was lost by me on 20-11-2019 . In case this deed is found I may be contacted.

I Munish Kumar S/o Raj Kumar S/o Sohan Lal R/o Lohian Khass, Tehsil Lohian, District Jalandhar do hereby inform that original Regd. sale Deed date:-17/06/2021 and Doc No.2021-22/178/1/158 regarding Land 00K-04.50mls Situated in the area of Village Lohian, was lost by me on 17-11-2025 . In case this deed is found I may be contacted.

I, Manpreet Singh S/o Mahinder Singh R/o 528, Silver City Main, Zirakpur declares that I have lost my Original Sale Deed registered with sub registrar at Sr no. 13846 dated 12.12.2011 and 5733 dated 16.10.2008 on 01.12.2025 from Zirakpur. If found by someone, please contact - 7009844234

State govt formed with mandate, CM clarifies on 'vote chori'

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, December 22



Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Monday informed the Assembly that the people of the state formed the government with an overwhelming mandate. "In such a situation, despite this clear public confidence, the Opposition's attempt to create a perception of Vote Chor amounts to outright misinformation and also undermines the people's verdict," he said.

The Chief Minister said when the Assembly election results were declared on October 8, 2024, the Opposition had no complaints and everything appeared normal. "However, as time passed, the Opposition suddenly began raising allegations of vote theft. Not only were efforts made to take this narrative beyond Haryana and spread it across different parts of the country."

The Chief Minister said that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has specifically named Haryana while making allegations of vote theft. Such serious allegations, he said, deserve a responsible and fact-based discussion within the House, as the people of Haryana want to know the truth. The Chief Minister clarified that the proposed discussion is neither against the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) nor about the Election Commission of India. "However, if the Opposition believes there has been any irregularity, it should be discussed openly. If the Opposition has any concrete suggestions for improvement, those can also be presented."

The Chief Minister further stated that the proposal brought by member Ram Kumar Kashyap should be taken up for discussion in the House so that the people of Haryana receive complete and transparent information on the issue. "Since the Opposition has been repeatedly raising this unfounded matter, a detailed discussion would help clarify facts for everyone," the Chief Minister added.

Youth to become job creators through local skills and modern technology: CM Saini

RAJENDRA KHATRY
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, December 22

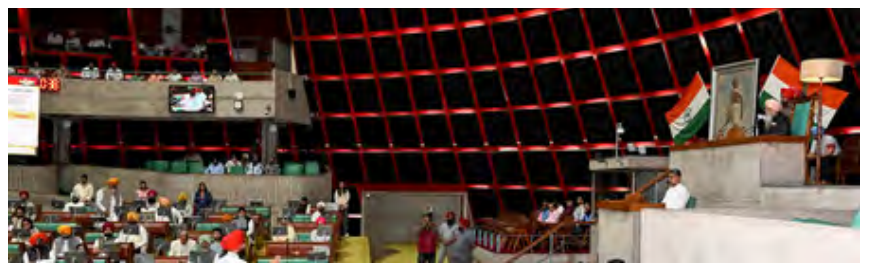
Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini has urged the youth to become job creators rather than job seekers by integrating their local skills with modern technology.

He said that the Haryana Government is fully committed to promoting youth entrepreneurship and is providing support through initiatives such as the Mudra Scheme, Stand-Up India, and special subsidies for the MSME sector.

He said that youth-led development of swadeshi technology will not only encourage new enterprises but also contribute significantly towards making India a global leader. The Chief Minister was addressing the gathering after inaugurating the Swadeshi Mahotsav-2025 in Panchkula on Sunday.

Nayab Singh Saini said that in the current startup era, the concept of Swadeshi is no longer limited to traditional products. Today, it is also being promoted in modern sectors such as technology, software, defense equipment, and semiconductors.

Haryana Assembly passes bill to reduce compliance burden on small establishments



CHANDIGARH, DECEMBER 22

The Haryana Vidhan Sabha on Monday passed the Haryana Shops and Commercial Establishments (Amendment) Bill of 2025 to reduce the compliance burden on smaller establishments through reforms for promoting economic growth while ensuring continued protection for workers.

Speaking on the issue, Labour Minister Anil Vij, who introduced the Bill, said it is beneficial for both workers and shopkeepers, and it's in the interest of workers as well as traders.

He said an increase in the threshold limit from zero employees to 20 or more employees in any establishment for registration and other regulatory provisions of the Bill, in order to reduce compliance burden for smaller businesses, encourage job creation and eliminate the fear of non-compliance.

Establishments with fewer than 20 workers will no longer need a registration certificate under the Bill, but they will only need to provide an intimation of their business.

Earlier, every shopkeeper was required to register. He pointed out that even today, in states like Karnataka, shopkeepers are required to register even if they do not have a single worker.

The minister said before finalising this Bill, he studied data from states across India. "In Haryana, registration has been mandated for establishments with 20 or more workers. Similarly, in Maharashtra, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha registration is compulsory for establishments having 20 or more workers."Likewise, the daily working hours are 10 hours in Haryana, as well as in Maharashtra, Punjab, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha. IANS



A woman crosses a railway track while a train approaches amid low visibility on a winter morning, in Gurugram on Monday. PTI

Gurugram Police's ASI held for taking bribe in Rajasthan's Jodhpur

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, December 22

A team of the Rajasthan's Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) arrested an assistant sub inspector (ASI) of the Gurugram police in Jodhpur while accepting a bribe of Rs 3 lakh. It is alleged that the ASI had demanded a bribe of Rs 3 lakh in exchange for not harassing the accused in a vehicle theft case during police remand and helping him in the case.

According to the Rajasthan police, the arrested



accused was identified as ASI Praveen Kumar, posted at Palam Vihar Crime Branch, Gurugram. Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Bhuvan Bhushan Yadav of the ACB, Rajasthan, said ASI Praveen of the Crime Branch in Gurugram's Palam Vihar was arrested red-handed while accepting a bribe of Rs 3 lakh. The role of other Haryana police officials accompanying him was not revealed yet.

According to the police, a vehicle theft case was registered at the Sadar police station in Gurugram. A person was arrested in the case and he was currently on remand. ASI Praveen brought the accused to Jodhpur on Friday for verification and investigation. During this time, he contacted family of the accused. According to the police, the family of the accused requested that he not be assaulted and be provided assistance during the remand period for which the ASI demanded Rs 3 lakh in return.

The victim filed a written complaint at the ACB's rural chowki. The ACB conducted a verification and confirmed demand for a bribe of Rs 3 lakh. After this, the ACB laid a trap and sent the complainant to ASI to give bribe. The complainant had Rs 1.50 lakh in real currency and the remaining Rs 1.50 lakh in dummy notes. ASI Praveen called him outside the Kaprada police station on the Jaipur highway, where the complainant handed him Rs 3 lakh. Upon receiving signal, the ACB, led by ASP Paras Soni, caught ASI Praveen red-handed with Rs 3 lakh. He was taken to the police station and an FIR was registered against him.

HIMACHAL/J&K

Terrorism, all other criminal activities under strict vigil of J&K Police: DGP Nalin Prabhat

JAMMU, DECEMBER 22

Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat said on Monday that terrorism and all other forms of criminal activities will always remain under the strict vigil of the UT's police force. Inaugurating the 14th police martyrs memorial T20 cricket tournament 2025-2026 in Kathua, the DGP said that whether it is drugs, gangsters, mafia or any other kind of crime, especially terrorism, everything will remain in the sight of the police gun.

He said that the constant aim and objective of the police is to stamp out all such anti-national and anti-social activities in Jammu and Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir Police and the security forces have been carrying out aggressive operations against terrorists, their over ground workers (OGWs), sympathisers, drug smugglers and those involved in hawala money rackets. The coordinated operations are aimed at dismantling the complete ecosystem of terror by eliminating its support system. Drug smugglers and those involved in hawala money rackets are also on the radar of the police and the security forces.

It is believed that funds generated by these unlawful activities are used for sustaining terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. The duties to check infiltration, exfiltration, drug smuggling and drone activities initiated from across the border are manned by the army and the Border Security Force (BSF) in Jammu and Kashmir. IANS

Himachal sets target to meet 90 pc energy requirement through renewables: CM Sukhu

SHIMLA, DECEMBER 22



Aiming to make the state self-reliant in the energy sector, the Himachal Pradesh government has set a target to meet more than 90 per cent of its energy requirement through renewable energy sources and to transform it into a Green Energy State by March 2026, said Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu here on Monday. At present, the annual energy consumption of the state is nearly 13,000 million units. He said the state has witnessed a massive shift towards harnessing solar energy due to the green initiatives and has set a target to set up 500 MW of solar power projects within the next two years.

Under the Green Panchayat Programme, gram panchayats have been placed at the centre of this initiative under which 500 kw ground-mounted solar power projects will be installed in all panchayats, he said.

In the first phase, approval has been granted for setting up 500 kw solar power plants in 24 gram panchayats, and work has already commenced in 16 such panchayats. Under this programme, a total solar power generation target of 150 MW has been set. The Pekhubela Solar Power Project in the Una district commenced commercial operations on April 15, 2024. So far, it has generated 79.03 million units of net electricity and earned revenue amounting to Rs 22.91 crore.

Generation from the Aghlour Solar Power Project in Una district started on May 21. The project has so far produced 5.89 million units of net electricity. The Bhanjal Solar Power Project in Una district began commercial operations on November 30, 2024, and has generated 8.57 million units of net electricity, earning revenue of Rs 3.10 crore to date. Currently, three solar power projects with a combined capacity of 31 MW are in the execution stage, while four solar power projects with a total capacity of 41 MW are at the tendering stage. A 200 MW solar power plant will also be established on barren land in the Damtal area of Kangra district. Solar off-grid systems have been installed in 148 households under corporate social responsibility in remote and tribal villages, Mud, Langza, Hikkim and Kaumik in Spiti.

Further, under the First Come, First Served policy, solar power projects ranging from 250 kw to 5 MW are being allotted. Electricity generated from these projects will be purchased by the Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board Limited (HPSEBL). So far, 547 investors have been allotted ground-mounted solar power projects with a total capacity of 595.97 MW. Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) have already been signed for projects with a capacity of 403.09 MW. IANS

Farooq Abdullah travels to Srinagar in Vande Bharat train from Katra



JAMMU, DECEMBER 22

National Conference president Dr Farooq Abdullah on Monday travelled to Srinagar by the Vande Bharat train from Katra, the base camp of Mata Vaishno Devi. Abdullah arrived in Katra town, from where he took the Vande Bharat train to Srinagar, officials said. He said that the railway link between Kashmir and the rest of the country has immensely benefited the valley as it has provided an all-weather connectivity for the residents here. "The train has benefitted immensely. Even if the flights don't operate or the road is closed, the train will still ply. It will ease the problems of the people," Abdullah told reporters here.

He said the snowfall has been a blessing for the people of Kashmir, as it was needed. "It has eased some of the problems. We pray for more snowfall as it will be beneficial for us," he added. When asked about the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, Abdullah said, "It will also come. Will come on time (waqt par aayega)."IANS

30,000 houses built in Doda under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana

JAMMU, DECEMBER 22



Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), one of the flagship schemes of the Modi government, is helping realise the housing target of poor and marginalised families across the country, by providing them monetary assistance to build a dream home of their own. Under the PMAY (Grameen), families in rural households are building houses of their own, while under PMAY (Urban), those in cities get govt assistance to build their residence.

In Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district, close to 30,000 houses have been built under the PMAY, making the beneficiaries happy and joyous over having all-weather homes of their own. According to a survey, the target was set much higher; however, out of the stipulated target, 29,197 PMAY houses have been built so far, while 1,215 more remain stuck at different stages of construction. The reason was delayed construction by the beneficiaries, who didn't begin work after receiving the payment. IANS

Season's first snowfall enlivens Kashmir; Gulmarg awaits Christmas, New Year eve revellers

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 22

Snow in the higher reaches and rain in the plains of Kashmir Valley during the last 24 hours broke the three-month-long dry spell on Monday as the 40-day-long period of harsh winter cold, locally known as the 'Chillai Kalan', started on a positive note.

Gulmarg ski resort received nearly nine inches of snowfall during the last 24 hours, giving the resort its pristine white blanket. Skiers, Christmas and New Year's Eve revellers and those associated with the tourism industry had been looking eagerly forward to the snowfall. Hill stations of Sonamarg and Pahalgam also received the season's first snowfall during the last 24 hours as hoteliers and tour, and travel operators look forward to tourist arrivals during the next two to three days. IANS

HP witnesses prolonged dry spell of 70 days

SHIMLA, DECEMBER 22



With the recurrence of winter drought becoming common, Himachal Pradesh this year saw the last rainfall on October 9 and has been experiencing a prolonged dry spell of about 70 days. This extended dry period has resulted in significant water stress across crops, including fruit plants, said Dr Y.S. Parmar, University of Horticulture and Forestry in Nauni on Monday. University experts have advised measures to help farmers mitigate the impact of drought stress. They say rainfall patterns in the state have remained erratic, with moderate to irregular distribution.

Traditionally, October to December are dry months, and long-term observations (1980-2024) indicate that November receives below-normal rainfall in nearly 68.2 per cent of the years. In sub-humid mid-hill regions, nearly 30-50 per cent of soil moisture is lost through evaporation, a figure likely to increase under the current conditions.

The recurrence of drought during these months has become common, and with nearly 70 per cent of the state's area being rainfed, the adoption of moisture-conservation agronomic practices has become essential. IANS

NEWSBRIEFS

Nearly 4,000 Afghan refugees deported from Iran, Pakistan in single day

KABUL: Nearly 4,000 Afghan refugees were repatriated from Iran and Pakistan in a single day, Taliban official stated on Monday. Sharing the High Commission for Migrants Issues report on X, Taliban Deputy Spokesperson Hamdullah Fitrat stated that 713 families, comprising 3,926 people, returned to Afghanistan from Iran and Pakistan on Sunday, Pajhwok Afghan News reported. He stated that Afghan refugees travelled to Afghanistan through Pul-i-Abresham in Nimroz, Bahramcha in Helmand, Islam Qala crossing in Herat, Torkham crossing in Nangarhar and Spin Boldak in Kandahar. Hamdullah Fitrat said that 1,788 Afghan families, comprising 7,669 people, were taken to their respective areas while 1,055 families were provided humanitarian assistance. He added that telecommunication companies provided 634 SIM cards to Afghan returnees. **IANS**

Another Awami League leader dies in police custody in Bangladesh

DHAKA: As custodial deaths of Awami League members rise in Bangladesh, another party leader died while being transferred for remand from Kashimpur Central Jail in Gazipur district, local media reported on Monday, citing prison authorities. The deceased, identified as 43-year-old Wasiqur Rahman Babu, hailed from Tungipara upazila in the Gopalganj district and served as youth and sports secretary of Badda Thana Awami League. Kashimpur Central Jail-2 Superintendent Al Mamun claimed that Babu died of a heart attack. He added that a police team arrived at the jail on Sunday afternoon to take Babu into custody for questioning. The Awami League leader was reportedly seated in the prison's admissions wing, while the formal handover process was carried out. "At that point, he suddenly fell from the chair and collapsed," Bangladesh's leading newspaper, The Daily Star, quoted the jail superintendent as saying. **IANS**

Ukraine says latest peace talks with US, Europe 'productive'

KYIV, DECEMBER 22



Ukraine's talks with US and European partners over the past three days in the US state of Florida were "productive and constructive," Ukraine's top peace negotiator Rustem Umerov said.

In a Facebook post, Umerov said discussions between Ukraine and the US focused on further development of a 20-point peace plan, aligning positions on multilateral and US security guarantee frameworks for Ukraine, and further development of an economic and prosperity plan, Xinhua news agency reported.

The sides also discussed timelines and the sequencing of next steps.

"Ukraine remains fully committed to achieving a just and sustainable peace," Umerov said. "Our shared priority is to stop the killing, ensure guaranteed security, and create conditions for Ukraine's recovery, stability, and long-term prosperity."

"Peace must be not only a cessation of hostilities, but also a dignified foundation for a stable future," he said, adding that Ukraine will continue "close coordination" with the US and Europe in the next stages.

He added that key European national security advisors joined the discussions to align on a shared strategic approach between Ukraine, the United States and Europe.

US presidential special envoy Steve Witkoff issued a similar statement on X, confirming that "a series of productive and constructive meetings" were held over the past three days.

The Ukrainian delegation included Umerov, who is also secretary of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine, and Andriy Hnatov, chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

The US delegation included Witkoff, Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner and White House staff member Josh Gruenbaum.

Over the weekend, Russian President Vladimir Putin's special envoy Kirill Dmitriev held separate talks with US officials in Miami, Florida. "The discussions are proceeding constructively," Dmitriev told reporters Saturday.

During his annual year-end press conference in Moscow on Friday, Putin said Russia agrees to end the Ukraine crisis through negotiations, alongside eliminating the root causes, noting that now "the ball is entirely in the court of Ukraine and its European sponsors." **IANS**

China says US seizure of Venezuelan oil tankers violates international law

BEIJING, DECEMBER 22



China on Monday condemned the US military's move to seize Venezuelan oil tankers in international waters, saying that the "arbitrary action" constitutes a serious violation of international law.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian made the comments while responding to a question on the US Coast Guard's seizure of an oil tanker on December 20, which a White House official claimed belonged to a so-called "shadow fleet."

The arbitrary seizure of foreign vessels by the United States constitutes a serious violation of international law, Lin said.

"China always opposes illegal unilateral sanctions that lack a basis in international law and are not authorised by the United Nations Security Council. It also opposes any actions that violate the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, infringe on the sovereignty and security of other countries, or constitute acts of unilateral bullying," Lin said.Venezuela has the right to independently develop mutually beneficial cooperation with other countries, and China believes that the international community understands and supports Venezuela's position on safeguarding its legitimate rights and interests, Lin added.

The US has recently been steadily reinforcing its military deployment in the waters near Venezuela. US President Donald Trump last week designated the Nicolas Maduro regime as a "foreign terrorist organisation".He ordered a "total and complete blockade" of all sanctioned oil tankers entering and leaving Venezuela, directly targeting Venezuela's economic lifeline.Maduro fiercely condemned this and accused the US of opening a "new era of criminal naval piracy" in the Caribbean.

The US military actions against Venezuela are a matter of concern for China, as it has shared a close strategic relationship with Caracas for decades.

China and Russia are Venezuela's two main partners. China is the largest buyer of Venezuelan crude, and Beijing reportedly provided Venezuela with more than USD 60 billion in loans and oil-backed credit lines.**IANS**

Nobel Peace Prize is symbol of justice, not silence: Calls grow for action against Yunus amid B'desh violence

OTTAWA, DECEMBER 22



Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, currently serving as the Chief Advisor of the Bangladesh interim government, remains silent instead of standing for justice while the South Asian nation continues to grapple with violence and human rights abuses, several human rights bodies said in a letter to the Norwegian Nobel Committee.

In the letter, issued by the human rights representatives, which was shared by Canada-based think tank organisation 'Global Centre for Democratic Governance (GCDG) in its social media platform X, they expressed grave concern over Yunus failing to publicly exercise moral leadership commensurate with the severity of the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Bangladesh.

The human rights institutions stressed that "when an individual entrusted with both global moral authority and national responsibility remains publicly silent" amid such widespread suffering in the country, that silence carries serious "ethical consequences".The letter was issued amid widespread violence in Bangladesh, under the Yunus-led interim government, targeting minorities, media houses, cultural institutions and diplomatic missions following the murder of radical Islamist leader Sharif Osman Hadi.

"For more than a century, the Nobel Peace Prize has represented humanity's highest ethical commitment to peace, justice, human dignity, and moral courage. Its authority rests not only on the prestige of its recipients but on the moral clarity it embodies during moments of widespread human suffering," the letter read.

Highlighting what they described as an alarming deterioration of human rights conditions in Bangladesh, the signatories cited credible reports and eyewitness accounts of targeted violence, destruction of homes and livelihoods, attacks on cultural and religious institutions, and systematic intimidation of vulnerable communities, particularly religious and ethnic minorities.Women and children, they said, are among those most affected.

"These violations are neither isolated nor spontaneous; they bear the characteristics of organised and sustained abuses of fundamental human rights," the human rights activists stated.

They asserted that the letter was not motivated by political alignment or opposition but was grounded solely in universal principles of "humanity, accountability, and justice".

"Peace cannot exist where fear governs daily life. Neutrality cannot be claimed where fundamental rights are systematically violated. We respectfully urge the Norwegian Nobel Committee and the Nobel Foundation to reflect on their ethical responsibility at this critical moment. Upholding the moral authority of the Nobel Peace Prize requires transparency, moral clarity, and the courage to confront suffering when it unfolds before the world," the letter added.

The human rights activists emphasised that the victims in Bangladesh deserve recognition, while the global conscience demands responsibility.

"And the Nobel Peace Prize must remain a symbol of justice, not silence. **IANS**

Russia's Su-57 makes maiden flight with new-generation engine

MOSCOW, DECEMBER 22

Russia's fifth-generation stealth fighter Su-57 has completed its maiden flight powered by a new-generation engine, state-owned aerospace company United Aircraft Corporation (UAC) said on Monday.

In a press release posted on its corporate website, the UAC said flight tests of the Izdeliye 177 engine have begun as part of the Su-57 aircraft system in cooperation with the United Engine Corporation, a subsidiary of the state-run Rostec group.

"Specialists from the United Aircraft Corporation and the United Engine Corporation have begun flight testing the Izdeliye 177 engine as part of the fifth-generation Su-57 aircraft system," the release said.

The advanced engine, developed specifically for the Su-57, is designed to deliver increased thrust and improved flight performance. Russia has claimed the Su-57 to be the only combat-proven fifth-generation fighter, citing its operational use in Syria and Ukraine.

"Honoured test pilot Roman Kondratyev took the aircraft into the air. The flight proceeded as planned, and the new engine performed reliably," the release said, without divulging further details.

According to Rostec, which controls almost the entire Russia's military-industrial complex, the Izdeliye 177 engine will enhance the aircraft's flight performance and facilitate further development.

The UAC said it is ramping up production of the Su-57 to increase deliveries to the Russian military and for export customers.

The Su-57 is designed to carry out a wide range of combat missions, including engagement of air, ground and maritime targets. **IANS**

Australian PM apologises to Jewish community over Bondi Beach terror attack

CANBERRA, DECEMBER 22



Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on Monday issued an apology to the nation's Jewish community following the mass shooting at Bondi Beach as he announced new laws that will target hate speech.

Albanese said at a press conference in Canberra on Monday afternoon that he feels the "weight of responsibility" for the fatal shooting of 15 people at an event celebrating the Jewish festival of Hanukkah at Sydney's Bondi Beach on December 14."I'm sorry for what the Jewish community and our nation as a whole have experienced," he said, Xinhua News Agency reported.

He said that his government would work "every day" to protect Jewish Australians and would not let the Islamic State-inspired terrorists responsible for the attack win by dividing Australian society.Albanese said that his cabinet met on Monday for the second time following the attack and agreed to move forward with a legislative package designed to combat hate speech and its consequences.

The new laws, which will be introduced to parliament in 2026, will increase existing criminal penalties for hate speech, make hate motivation a factor in sentencing crimes, and grant the minister for home affairs the power to cancel the visa of a person who engages in hate speech promoting violence or displaying hate symbols. **IANS**

Passenger bus crash in Indonesia kills at least 16 people, official says

JAKARTA, DECEMBER 22

A passenger bus crash killed at least 16 people on Indonesia's main island of Java just after midnight Monday, officials said.

The bus carrying 34 people lost control on a toll road and struck a concrete barrier before rolling onto its side, said Budiono, a search and rescue agency chief who goes by single name like many Indonesians.

The inter-province bus was traveling from the capital Jakarta to the country's ancient royal city of Yogyakarta when it overturned while entering a curved exit ramp at the Krapyak toll way in Central Java's Semarang city, he said.

"The forceful impact threw several passengers and left them trapped against the bus body," Budiono said.

Police and rescue teams arrived about 40 minutes after the accident and recovered the bodies of six passengers who died at the scene. Another 10 people died on the way to a hospital or while being treated, Budiono said. **IANS**

ASEAN Foreign Ministers urge Cambodia and Thailand to cease hostilities

KUALA LUMPUR, DECEMBER 22



The Foreign Ministers of Association of SouthEast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member countries, who held a 'special meeting' in Malaysia's Kuala Lumpur on Monday to address the current situation between Cambodia and Thailand, have urged both countries to exercise restraint and take immediate steps for the cessation of all forms of hostilities.

The meeting reaffirmed the commitment to ASEAN unity and solidarity as well as ASEAN Centrality in ensuring regional peace, security, stability and prosperity, in accordance with the ASEAN Charter. The participants of the meeting voiced serious concerns on the continued tensions and hostilities, which have caused significant casualties, damage to civilian infrastructure, and displacement of people on both sides of the border, according to the statement released by the ASEAN Chair.The members urged Thailand and Cambodia to ensure that civilians residing in the affected border areas are able to return, without obstruction and in safety and dignity, to their homes and normal livelihoods as they existed prior to the outbreak of hostilities.The meeting took place as the Cambodia-Thailand border conflict has reignited since December 7 with both sides accusing each other of initiating the attack.The statement said, "The Meeting urged Cambodia and Thailand to exercise maximum restraint and take immediate steps towards the cessation of all forms of hostilities. The Meeting called on both countries to restore mutual trust and confidence, and to return to dialogue, including through bilateral mechanisms as well as making use of the good offices of the ASEAN Chair, revive cooperation on humanitarian demining and implement military de-escalation along their shared border under the observation of the AOT, and to uphold the principles of international law, peaceful co-existence, and multilateral cooperation in the pursuit of a peaceful and durable resolution to the situation." **IANS**

Israel Army targets Hezbollah sites in Lebanon

JERUSALEM, DECEMBER 22



The Israeli military carried out airstrikes in southern Lebanon on Monday, saying it targetted Hezbollah sites.

"The IDF (Israel Defence Forces) struck several Hezbollah terrorists in the area of Sidon in southern Lebanon," a military spokesperson said in a statement.

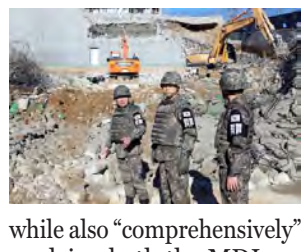
On Friday, the two sides held talks again as part of a security dialogue, focusing on Hezbollah's disarmament and the return of residents to their homes in Lebanon's southern border villages, according to Israeli and Lebanese sources.

The meeting, under US coordination, took place in the town of Naqoura in southwest Lebanon, near Israel's northern border, Xinhua news agency reported. Israeli Deputy Director for Foreign Policy at the National Security Council Yosef Dreznin represented Israel in the talks, while Lebanon's former ambassador to the United States, Simon Karam, led the Lebanese delegation. According to an Israeli statement, the meeting centered on Hezbollah's disarmament and the advancement of economic projects, highlighting a mutual interest in countering Hezbollah and ensuring long-term security for communities on both sides of the border.

A statement by the Lebanese presidency said that during the talks, Karam highlighted Lebanon's firm position on the humanitarian and national importance of enabling displaced villagers to return safely to their homes. **IANS**

South Korean military updates land border rule in responding to North Korean incursions

SEOUL, DECEMBER 22



The South Korean military has internally updated guidelines in defining the inter-Korean land border when dealing with incursions by North Korean soldiers to prevent the risk of accidental clashes, officials said Monday. The move comes as North Korean troops have repeatedly violated the Military Demarcation Line (MDL) within the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) separating the two Koreas since last year in the process of carrying out construction activities near the heavily fortified border.The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said it has ordered troops to prioritize markers that indicate the MDL when making decisions, while also "comprehensively" applying both the MDL on the South Korean military map and a line connecting the MDL markers set out by the US-led United Nations Command (UNC), Yonhap News Agency reported.The move effectively enables the military to use a line drawn farther southward in assessing whether North Korean troops' border crossings have occurred.

Under the updated guideline, even if North Korean troops cross the line connecting the MDL indicators, the South Korean military may not respond if it assesses it is not the MDL crossing in terms of its own military map.Nearly 1,300 markers were installed in 1953, a month after the signing of the armistice that ended the 1950-53 Korean War, but only about one-sixth of them are identifiable. **IANS**

lifestyle

Bhumi finds joy in family time and gorging on pizza



Actress Bhumi Pednekar believes happiness lies in the simplest of moments, and her latest post is proof as shared a cheerful "latergram" from her time she spent with her loved ones and savoring some pizza. Bhumi took to Instagram, where she shared a string of images from her latest outing with her family members.

She wrote: "No greater joy than spending time with the ones you love and pizza... #latergram." Bhumi is known for her portrayals of headstrong small-town women. She made her film She made her debut as an overweight bride in the company's romantic comedy Dum Laga Ke Haisha She rose to prominence with her work in successful films such as Toilet: Ek Prem Katha, Shubh Mangal Saavdhan, Bala, Pati Patni Aur Woh, Saand Ki Aankh and Badhaai Do.

She has since starred in the social dramas Bheed, Afwaah and Bhakshak. On November 14, the actress spoke about the film "Bhakshak" and shared how the role exposed her to the harsh realities many children face, the fear, the silence, and the invisibility—shaping her perspective and leaving a profound mark on her worldview.

She wrote: "This Children's Day, my heart is full thinking about all the children, whose stories have stayed with me, shaped me, and changed the way I see the world. Bhakshak was one of the hardest journeys I've taken as an actor. It opened my eyes to the harsh realities so many children face, the fear, the silence, the invisibility."

"Living that truth, even for a film, shook me deeply. And then there are the children I met at Abhyudaya Ashram, full of resilience, joy, dreams, and an inner strength that humbles me every time. They are a reminder of how far compassion, safety, and dignity can take a child."

She added: "But my idea of "children" extends beyond just us humans. Whenever I look at India's street dogs innocent, trusting, vulnerable, I see children of this earth. Born into the streets, dependent on our kindness, deserving of protection, care, and a place in our world without fear. They too are voiceless little beings trying to survive in a world that doesn't always make space for them. What the world needs to is empathy and space for all #HappyChildrensDay."

Bhumi was last seen in the film Mere Husband Ki Biwi with Arjun Kapoor and Rakul Preet Singh. On the OTT front, she was recently seen in The Royals directed by Priyanka Ghose and Nupur Asthana.

The series stars an ensemble cast including Bhumi Pednekar, Ishaan Khatter, Zeenat Aman, Sakshi Tanwar, Nora Fatehi, Vihaan Samat, Dino Morea, and Milind Soman. **IANS**



Sonakshi Sinha and Zaheer Iqbal reveal how they planned their parents' first meet

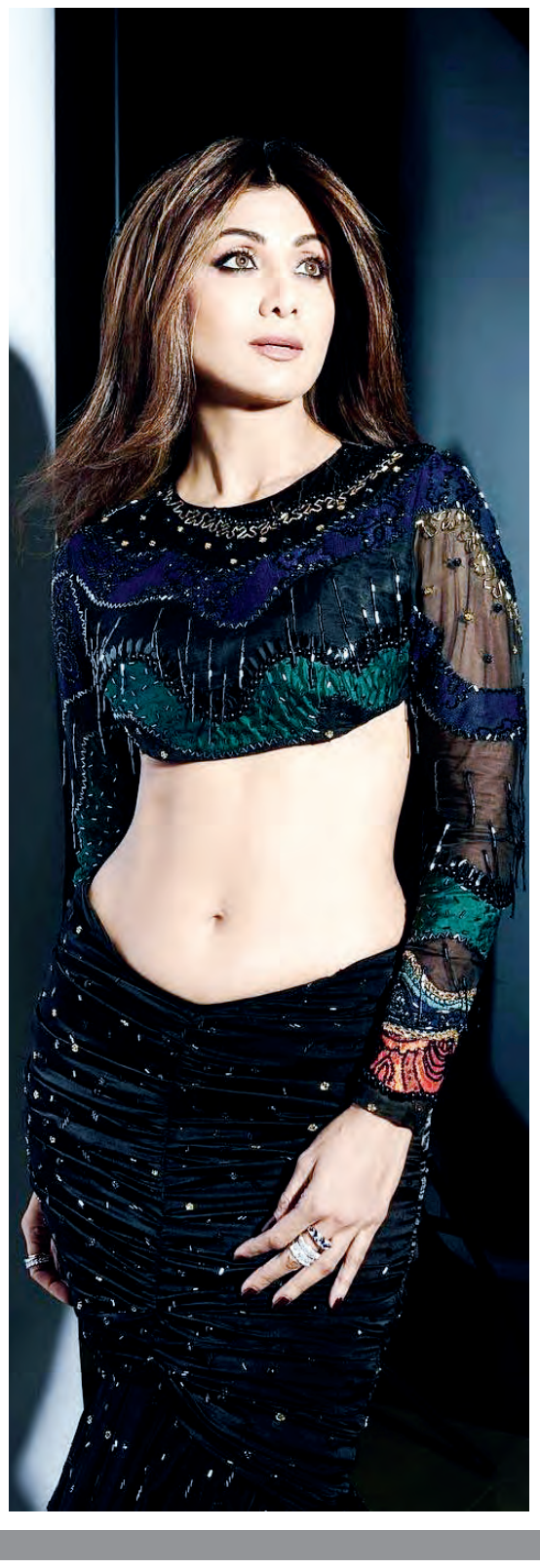
Adorable Bollywood couple, Sonakshi Sinha and Zaheer Iqbal, recently hosted director and choreographer Farah Khan and her cook Dilip at their home for her YouTube channel. Along with making food together, they also had some fun conversation in the presence of both Sonakshi and Zaheer's mothers. When Farah asked the lovebirds how their parents met for the first time, Sonakshi revealed that they had arranged a party at the actress and friend Huma Qureshi's house, which was like the first unofficial introduction for both sets of parents.

She added that all the parents, including Huma's, ended up having a great time at the get-together. When Farah asked Sonakshi's mom, Poonam Sinha if she came to suspect anything, she revealed that in fact she did. "Sonakshi was sitting on the foot of Zaheer's mother", she revealed. To this, Farah took a hilarious jibe saying, "No one sits on their own parent's feet". Recently, Sonakshi celebrated her father, Shatrughan Sinha, and husband Zaheer Iqbal's birthdays together.

Actress Pooja Ruparel, who was also part of the celebration, shared an inside video from the get-together on social media. The clip showed Sonakshi seated in the middle of both her father and her husband and cutting their birthday cake with them. We could also see filmmaker Ramesh Sippy having a good time at the birthday party of his friend Shatrughan.

Additionally, Sonakshi's mother, Poonam, also looked extremely happy witnessing her family having a gala time. For the unaware, Shatrughan and Zaheer's birthdays fall a day apart from each another. While Shatrughan was born on the 9th of December, Zaheer celebrates his birthday on the 10th. **IANS**

Shilpa Shetty calls 'Dhurandhar' one of the most patriotic films she's seen in years



Actress Shilpa Shetty has praised the recently released film "Dhurandhar," calling it one of the most patriotic films she has seen in a long time. The 'Hungama 2' actress, on Monday, took to Instagram to praise the entire cast and crew of the film. Shilpa singled out Ranveer Singh for his perfectly nuanced performance, Akshaye Khanna for his commanding presence, and R. Madhavan for delivering a role no one else could have played. She also appreciated Arjun Rampal, Sanjay Dutt, Gaurav Gera, Manav Gohil, and Rakesh Bedi for their fantastic performances.Highlighting the film's music, the actress gave a special mention to Shashwat for the background score and soundtrack, calling it her current favourite playlist. Shetty also applauded producer Aditya Dhar, describing him as a visionary for creating a film that left a lasting impact on her. The 'Dhadkan' actress posted a video of her where she is seen dancing on Akshaye Khanna's entry song "FA9LA" from the movie. For the caption, Shilpa Shetty wrote, "Fan toh mila nahi lekin mai fan ho gayi hu, toh yeh trend karna banta tha @ranveersingh aapka time aa gaya... underplayed, yet fit the character to a T. #AkshayeKhanna, OMG... aura maxxx. @actormaddy, no one could have played it better than you. @rampal72, a revelation. @duttsanjay, rockstar as always. @gauravgera, @manavgohil & @therakeshbedi were fantastically cast and that credit goes to @castingchhabra for putting it all together.

"Special mention to @shashwatology for the bg score and music, it's my favourite playlist right now And @adityadharfilms, you truly are a visionary. You've made one of the most patriotic films I've seen in a long time. Take a bow to the entire team of Dhurandhar."

Many Bollywood celebrities have lauded the film on social media. "Dhurandhar," directed by Aditya Dhar, stars Ranveer Singh, Akshaye Khanna, R. Madhavan, Arjun Rampal, Sanjay Dutt, Sara Arjun, Rakesh Bedi, Manav Gohil, Danish Pandor, Saumya Tandon, Gaurav Gera, and Naveen Kaushik. The action thriller was released in theatres on December 5. **IANS**



Zeenat Aman shares how she embraced 'vulnerability' in her latest enchanting photoshoot

Veteran actress Zeenat Aman has opened up about her latest photoshoot, describing it as a transformative experience that encouraged her to embrace vulnerability.

In her post on Instagram, she revealed how the creative vision of the team helped her step out of her comfort zone. On Monday, Zeenat Aman shared a few stunning photos from her shoot and revealed that she doesn't take her glasses off for many people, but she did so for this enchanting photoshoot.

The 'Satyam Shivam Sundaram' actress wrote, "I don't take my glasses off for many people, but I did it for Dulari. When the director has a compelling vision I am less conscious of mine. This photo shoot insisted on vulnerability. They fastened my hair away from my face, packed away my glasses in a padded case, and walked me into a garden of abstracted, handcrafted floral dreams."'I like my clothes to hold my story, and for my pictures to tell a story. These fabrics and cuts - so neat, comfortable, elegant. These images - so evocative. Of what? I suppose it will vary from viewer to viewer, each will interpret this project through the lens of their own experiences and memories. Truly, an enchanting photo shoot with ethereal results. Not to my credit, no. But to the credit of the team." **IANS**

Rashmika Mandanna finds a second job on the sets of 'Cocktail 2'

At the moment, actress Rashmika Mandanna is busy with "Cocktail 2", alongside Shahid Kapoor and Kriti Sanon. It seems like the 'Animal' actress has found her second passion after acting on the set of her next. Rashmika took to the Stories section of her Instagram handle and posted a photo of herself working behind the camera.

She was seen giving a goofy expression as she looked into the camera for the still captioned "Shots without actors". Taking a hilarious jibe at her DoP, Rashmika wrote, "My 2nd job is secure.. No? @santha_dop (sic)." Rashmika has been treating her InstaFam with various sneak peeks from her shoot diaries for "Cocktail 2". In September, Rashmika posted a few photos from the Italy schedule of the movie. From getting some shut-eye to making goofy faces using her hands, to enjoying the clear Italian sky during a run, to relishing ice cream, Rashmika's time in Italy seemed like all things fun.

"Italy - you beauty!!! (Red heart emojis) You have me for a couple of days and I hope amazing memories are created (Red heart emojis) #Cocktail2," Rashmika wrote in the caption. Backed by Dinesh Vijan's Maddock Films and penned by Luv Ranjan, the details for the plot of the much-anticipated drama have been kept under wraps for now.

The director of the movie, Homi Adajania, and Kriti also keep on providing a peek into the behind-the-scenes fun from the shoot of "Cocktail 2". The first instalment in the franchise, "Cocktail" featuring Saif Ali Khan, Deepika Padukone, and Diana Penty, which was also helmed by Homi Adajania reached the audience back in 2012.

"Cocktail 2" is expected to get a theatrical release in 2026. Over and above this, Rashmika also has Rawindra Pulle's "Mysaa" waiting to be released. Touted to be an emotional action thriller, the film will show Rashmika as a woman from the Gond community. **IANS**



NEWSBRIEFS

Samsung to unveil AI vision built with Google Gemini at CES 2026

CHANDIGARH: Samsung, India's leading consumer electronics brand, today announced that it will unveil its latest kitchen appliances lineup at CES 2026, including the latest iterations of its Bespoke AI refrigerator, over-the-range (OTR) microwave and slide-in range at CES 2026. Alongside refreshed designs across the lineup, the company will highlight meaningful improvements to vision-based AI functionality enhanced with Google Gemini and Google Cloud, showing how these innovations simplify everyday tasks and elevate the overall kitchen experience. **BPE**

Park Medi World Limited to acquire KP Institute of Medical Sciences, Agra, Uttar Pradesh

CHANDIGARH: Park Medi WorldLimited (NSE: PARKHOSPS, BSE: 544645), North India's second largest chain of hospitals, has entered into an agreement toacquireKP Institute of Medical Sciences (KPIMS),in an all-cash transactionamounting to Rs.245 Crore. The transaction involves the acquisition of the entire existing shareholding of KPIMS. The acquisition adds a major tertiary-care healthcare facility with a total capacity of 360 beds and aligns perfectly with Park Medi World's cluster-based growth strategy, which focuses on operational efficiencies and economies of scale by developing hospitals in close geographic proximity. **BPE**

Hyundai Motor to unveil AI strategy, debut humanoid robot at CES 2026

SEOUL, DECEMBER 22

Hyundai Motor Group said on Monday it will unveil its artificial intelligence (AI) robotics strategy at Consumer Electronics Show (CES) 2026 and debut its next-generation humanoid robot, Atlas, developed by its US subsidiary Boston Dynamics.

The group will hold a keynote presentation on Jan. 5 (local time) at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center in Las Vegas under the theme "Partnering Human Progress: AI Robotics, from the Lab to Life," reports Yonhap news agency.

The session will feature demonstrations of advanced AI robotics technologies, approaches to human-robot collaboration and plans to build a group-wide AI robotics ecosystem.

A key highlight will be the on-stage debut of Atlas, which the group said will serve as a key example of how its AI robotics technologies can be applied in real-world environments.

Hyundai Motor also plans to outline its vision of utilizing robotics technologies through its software-defined factory concept. The group aims to integrate robotics and software in manufacturing to establish itself as a comprehensive AI-based production solutions provider.Meanwhile, Hyundai Motor Group has said it plans to create a large-scale battery research and development (R&D) centre in South Korea as part of its strategy to strengthen its electric vehicle (EV) competitiveness. **IANS**

India-New Zealand FTA to ensure zero duty on 100 pc of India's exports: Piyush Goyal

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22



Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Monday that the India and New Zealand free trade agreement (FTA) will ensure zero duty on 100 per cent of India's exports, benefitting farmers, MSMEs, workers, artisans, women-led enterprises and youth, while providing immense opportunities for labour-intensive sectors such as textiles, apparel, leather and footwear.

Sectors like engineering and manufacturing, automobiles, electronics, machinery, plastics, pharmaceuticals and chemicals will also stand to benefit.

He said that agreement also provides a significant boost to investments, with New Zealand committing to facilitating $20 billion in FDI into India over 15 years, targeting manufacturing, infrastructure, services, innovation and job creation.

"Under the guidance and leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, New Zealand PM Christopher Luxon, and with the close and collaborative engagement of my friend and counterpart Minister Todd McClay, India and New Zealand have successfully concluded a landmark Free Trade Agreement in a record nine months. This marks a significant milestone in our bilateral ties," Goyal said in a post on X.

The minister further stated that with a focus on empowering farmers, the FTA opens new opportunities for Indian agricultural products in New Zealand's markets, including fruits, vegetables, coffee, spices, cereals, and processed foods.

Through the Agricultural Productivity Partnership, Centres of Excellence, and access to New Zealand's advanced agri-technologies, farmers will significantly benefit from higher productivity, improved quality, and higher incomes. Targeted initiatives for horticultural products such as honey, kiwifruit and apples further strengthen the sector and support sustainable growth.

In view of domestic sensitivities, India has safeguarded agriculture and allied products, including dairy, sugar, coffee, spices, edible oils, precious metals (gold and silver), precious-metal scrap, copper cathodes, and rubber-based products, thereby ensuring the protection of farmers, MSMEs, and domestic industries, the minister explained.

The FTA creates new opportunities for India's services sector, spanning IT and ITeS, finance, education, tourism, construction, and other areas. New Zealand's first-ever annexes on health, traditional medicine, student mobility, and post-study work open up unprecedented avenues for Indian professionals and students. **IANS**

Electronics sector creating large scale blue-collar jobs for Indian women: Ashwini Vaishnaw

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22



The electronics sector is creating large scale blue-collar jobs for women in India, said Ashwini Vaishnaw, the Minister for Electronics and Information Technology, on Monday.

He said this, referring to reports on Taiwan-based company Foxconn onboarding nearly 30,000 employees -- nearly 80 per cent women -- at its new iPhone assembly facility in Bengaluru, within just eight to nine months.

In a post on social media platform X, Vaishnaw noted that "a women-led mega factory would have been unimaginable just 10 years ago"."Electronics sector continues to create large-scale, skilled, blue-collar jobs, especially for women. Technology transfer, women empowerment, and Ease of Living in full display," he added.

For its new iPhone assembly facility in Devanahalli, Foxconn has reportedly hired women, most of whom are first-time entrants to the formal workforce, largely in the 19-24 age group. By next year, employment in the factory is expected to rise to nearly 50,000 workers.The trial production at the facility began in April-May this year with the iPhone 16. Currently, the plant is assembling the latest iPhone 17 Pro Max models. Over 80 per cent of the output is destined for export markets.

The Taiwanese contract manufacturing giant is investing approximately Rs 20,000 crore in the project.

With a production floor spanning nearly 250,000 square feet, the facility will also become the company's largest manufacturing facility in India in terms of both production capacity and employment.The new facility is also expected to overtake Foxconn's first iPhone manufacturing plant in Tamil Nadu, which currently employs around 41,000 workers.

In October, Foxconn announced it would invest Rs 15,000 crore in Tamil Nadu, creating 14,000 high-value jobs.

Foxconn currently has operations in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Telangana, and these new plans signal a major expansion of its footprint in India. **IANS**

India among highest AI adopters globally, 86 pc employees believe AI boosts productivity

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22



Around 62 per cent Indians are using GenAI at work regularly, whereas 90 per cent employers and 86 per cent employees believe that AI impacts productivity positively, a report showed on Monday.

Also, 75 per cent employees and 72 per cent employers believe that GenAI enhances decision making, 82 per cent employees and 92 per cent employers believe it positively impacts quality of work, said the 'EY 2025 Work Reimagined Survey'.

The report shows that India is among the highest AI adopters globally, and leads with 53 points on the 'AI Advantage' score, developed to quantify the real impact of AI at work by measuring how much time employees save, while the global average score sits at 34 points.

The survey, now in its sixth edition, draws insights from 15,000 employees and 1,500 employers across 29 markets globally.

In India, where 800 employees and 50 employers were surveyed, a strong environment supports employee engagement and resilience in the changing AI landscape, according to the report.

India also holds a 'Talent Health' score of 82, the highest among all geographies assessed. This score measures employee sentiment regarding culture, rewards, and development, areas that collectively form the foundation of Talent Health.

The global average 'Talent Health' score stands at 65 out of 100, with culture accounting for 44 per cent, rewards 32 per cent and development 24 per cent, the report mentioned.

"India has made strong strides in AI adoption, and organizations are taking a more intentional approach to balancing productivity, skills, and employee experience. Technology, including AI, is increasingly shaping how work gets done, but the real impact comes from how employers are using it to strengthen talent health, capability, and workforce resilience," said Anurag Malik, Partner and National Leader – People Consulting, EY India.The findings also reveal how employers and employees view AI governance. Around 94 per cent employers and 89 per cent employees consistently report higher levels of confidence across ethical and responsible AI.

While both 87 per cent employees and 90 per cent employers in India say learning new skills is essential — actual learning hours remain limited.

Most employees globally report spending fewer than 40 hours a year on AI learning.

The data makes a compelling case for structured skilling: employees who invest more time in AI learning show markedly lower intent to leave. Higher learning hours also translate directly into more hours saved per week, reinforcing the productivity impact of continuous skill development, said the report. **IANS**

Centre to hold next workshop on base revision of GDP, CPI, and IIP today

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22



The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is organising the second pre-release consultative workshop on the base revision of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Consumer Price Index (CPI), and Index of Industrial Production (IIP) at the Bharat Mandapam here on Tuesday.

The primary objective of the workshop is to share the proposed methodological and structural changes in the ongoing base revision of the GDP, the CPI, and the IIP for seeking feedback and comments of the participants. The first pre-release consultative workshop was held in Mumbai on November 26.

The second workshop will bring together a wide spectrum of participants, including eminent economists, experts from financial institutions and the banking sector, subject-matter specialists, users of core statistics, and senior officials from the Central and State Governments. The participation of this diverse group is expected to enrich the discussions and familiarise users with the changes in the revised series. **IANS**

India's REITs touch ₹2.3 lakh crore GAV, beat Hong Kong in market cap

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22



India's real estate investment trust sector has evolved from a policy experiment into a mainstream asset class with a gross asset value of about Rs 2.3 lakh crore eclipsing Hong Kong's REIT market in market capitalisation, a report said on Monday.

The report from Anarock Capital said that the sector's equity market capitalisation reached about Rs 1.66 lakh crore as of September 30, 2025, exceeding Hong Kong's REIT market even though only about 32 per cent of REIT worthy stock is listed.The five year annualised price return for Indian REIT indices was over 8.9 per cent, outperforming peers in Singapore, Japan and Hong Kong, the report said.Many of developed economies delivered negative or low-single-digit returns during the same period."The Q2 FY26 scorecard underscores a powerful total return proposition that has proven remarkably resilient to rate hikes and market volatility," Shobhit Agarwal, CEO - Anarock Capital said.

"Since listing, unit prices for the initial four REITs have surged between 25 per cent and 61 per cent, while the newly listed Knowledge REIT has already gained approximately 12 per cent, he added.The report noted that unit price growth coupled with steady income generation took the trailing 12 month distribution yields to an attractive 5.1–6 per cent band. The five REITs in India distributed over Rs 2,331 crore in Q2 FY26, recording a massive 70 per cent year on year growth, the report noted. **IANS**

Sensex, Nifty extend gains, climb 0.75 pc each

MUMBAI, DECEMBER 22

Indian stock markets ended on a strong note on Monday, extending the gains seen in the previous session, even as global cues remained mixed.

Buying interest in information technology and metal stocks helped push the benchmark indices higher.

Positive sentiment was also supported by optimism around the signing of the India–New Zealand free trade agreement, which boosted investor confidence.The Sensex closed at 85,567.48, rising by 638.12 points, or 0.75 per cent. Similarly, the Nifty settled at 26,161.60, up 195.20 points, marking a gain of 0.75 per cent."Nifty closed the session on a strong note after confirming a breakout above the 26,050–26,100 zone, validating a double-bottom pattern and reinforcing the ongoing daily uptrend," experts said.

"As long as the index holds above the 25,950–26,000 support band, the broader structure remains bullish, with a decisive close above 26,200 opening the path toward 26,300–26,500," they added.

On the BSE, shares of Trent, Infosys and Bharti Airtel were among the top gainers -- reflecting strong buying interest in these stocks.On the other hand, State Bank of India, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Larsen & Toubro weighed on the index and ended as the top laggards.

On the NSE, Trent, Shriram Finance and Wipro emerged as the top performers. Meanwhile, HDFC Life Insurance, Tata Consumer Products and State Bank of India were the major stocks that dragged the index lower. **IANS**

Indian rupee rises for 2nd session amid RBI interventions

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22



The Indian rupee rose for the second consecutive session on Monday from new lows amid continuous intervention by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

The currency opened 24 paise higher at 89.41 against the US dollar after closing at 89.65 on December 19.

Analysts noted that volatility remains the main focus amidst rupee's comeback and follow through in RBI actions and global dollar moves remains crucial in near future.

Currency market watchers said 89.20 has emerged as a crucial level and a sustained break below this could open the door toward the 88.50–88.30 zone in the near term.

The rupee's rise could have gained support from the lower trade deficit in November and foreign portfolio investors turning buyers of Indian equity and sellers of dollars.

On Friday, the rupee had appreciated 0.67 per cent in a single day, rose past the psychologically important 90-mark against the US dollar before closing lower but emerged as the best performing currency among Asian peers.

Consistent foreign institutional investor (FII) selling weighed on the Indian rupee in November while domestic flows supported equity markets and bond yields hardened.

India's external balance improved as the merchandise trade deficit normalised to $24.5 billion in November from a steep $42 billion deficit in October.

Services surplus continued to cushion India's external balance, the report noted. **IANS**

Gold rises to record high over strong safe haven demand

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

Driven by reports on expected US Federal Reserve rate cuts in 2026 and strong safe haven demand among investors, spot gold went up to a record high of $4,383.73 per ounce on Monday.

In 2025, gold has seen a meteoric rise, up around 67 per cent amid geopolitical uncertainties and tariffs.

According to analysts, gold and silver prices advanced last week and began the new week by touching fresh lifetime highs in both domestic and international markets.The rally followed the US Federal Reserve's third interest rate cut of 25 basis points this year."Further support came from softer US CPI inflation, which eased to 2.7 per cent year-on-year, strengthening expectations of additional rate cuts next year," said Rahul Kalantri, VP Commodities, Mehta Equities Ltd. **IANS**

OnePlus opens its first exclusive store in Mohali at HLP Gallerria

A. S. PRASHAR
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Mohali, December 22



OnePlus has unveiled its first exclusive retail store in Mohali at HLP Gallerria Sector 62, marking a significant expansion of the brand's premium offline retail footprint in the Chandigarh capital region.

Spread across 800 sq ft, the new store brings the entire OnePlus product ecosystem under one roof, offering customers an immersive hands-on experience.The store was inaugurated by R. Dominic Nandesh Kumar, Operations Head (Retail), OnePlus India.

Those present on the occasion included Gagan Marwaha, Regional Sales Manager (Punjab, Himachal, Haryana), OnePlus; Parminder , City Manager,OnePlus and Harman Preet Kaur, Store Manager.

The senior officials and operations' staff shared details about the new store with the media.

R. Dominic Nandesh Kumar said, "We are excited to open an exclusive store in Mohali where our consumer base is high.

This outlet will offer customers an elevated retail experience and direct access to the entire range of OnePlus devices, including the 15 series and our latest high-tech offering 15 R. After the Mohali launch, we are aiming to increase our retail footprint in Punjab where we will be coming up with 2-3 stores in the first half of 2026," added R. Dominic Nandesh Kumar.

OnePlus already has 3 stores in Punjab – Ludhiana, Jalandhar and now in Mohali.

The brand has one outlet in Chandigarh too. With the Mohali launch now OnePlus has 87 stores across India.

SPORTS

ROHIT SHARMA
"MY ONLY GOAL WAS TO WIN THE WORLD CUP, WHETHER IT WAS THE T20 WORLD CUP OR THE 2023 WORLD CUP. SO WHEN IT DIDN'T HAPPEN, I WAS COMPLETELY DEVASTATED."

Richardson set for Ashes recall as Cummins likely to rest

MELBOURNE, DECEMBER 22

Right-arm speedster Jhye Richardson is eyeing a comeback in Australia's squad for the upcoming Boxing Day Test in Melbourne against England following a successful recovery from shoulder surgery.

Australia Test captain Pat Cummins is expected to sit out of the Melbourne Ashes Test, and potentially the rest of the series, with Australia retaining the Ashes after an emphatic 82-run win over the Ben Stokes-led England in Adelaide, which helped the Aussies to gain an unbeaten 3-0 lead in the ongoing five-match Ashes series.

If Cummins sits out, then there is a vacant space in the Australian pace attack for the remainder of the Test matches against England in Melbourne and Sydney.

Brendan Doggett and Michael Neser, who played earlier in the series, are also in contention to return to the playing XI for the Boxing Day Test, but according



'Now that the series has been won, there might be a sense of job's done and let's reassess the risk.'

to ESPNcricinfo, Richardson is very close to being in consideration.

Notably, the right-arm pacer Richardson trained with the Australian side ahead of Adelaide but was not part of the squad.

If Richardson's is included in the Test side, it would come exactly a year after he was last included, against India in the Boxing Day Test. Shortly after that, the speedster opted to undergo shoulder surgery to fix long-standing issues and was ruled out of action for nearly 12 months.

Richardson has made a gradual return to action in recent months, starting in grade cricket before playing for a Cricket Australia XI against England Lions. He then featured for Australia A against the Lions, where he increased his workload, claiming five wickets across 26 overs.

Richardson has, so far, played three Test matches since making his debut in 2018-19. The pacer has picked up 11 wickets at an average of 22.09.

After retaining the Ashes in Adelaide, Cummins said that there are no injury concerns for speedsters Mitchell Starc and Scott Boland ahead of the Boxing Day Test.

"We had a pretty aggressive build-up knowing that it's the Ashes there to be won and we thought that was worth it," he said.

"Now that the series has been won, there might be a sense of job's done and let's reassess the risk," Cummins said.

"Good luck to anyone telling Starcy or even Scotty Boland that they're going to miss a Boxing Day Test if they're fully fit," he added. **AGENCIES**

Contemplated retirement after 2023 World Cup final defeat: Rohit

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

In a stunning revelation, former India captain Rohit Sharma has said that he contemplated retirement after the heartbreaking loss to Australia in the 2023 ODI World Cup final as he "felt that the sport had taken everything out of me."

Under the captaincy of Rohit, the Indian team enjoyed a dream run in that tournament at home and marched into the final with nine consecutive wins. However, Australia dashed their hopes in the game that mattered the most, with Travis Head scoring a match-winning hundred.

"After 2023 World Cup final, I was completed distraught and felt like I didn't want to play this sport anymore because it had taken everything out of me and I felt I had nothing left," Rohit said during a Masters Union event in Gurugram on Sunday.

"It took some time and I kept reminding myself that this is something I truly love,



that it was right in front of me, and I couldn't let it go so easy. Slowly, I found my way back, regaining the energy and getting myself moving again on the field.

"Everybody was extremely disappointed, and we just couldn't believe what had happened. It was a very tough time for me personally because I had put everything into that World Cup not just two or three months before it, but ever since I took over the captaincy in 2022," he added.

Rohit, who has retired from T20Is and Tests and was removed from ODI captaincy earlier this year, continues to play the 50-over format and would like to end his career with one final attempt at the 2027 World Cup.

"My only goal was to win the World Cup, whether it was the T20 World Cup or the 2023 World Cup. So when it didn't happen, I was completely devastated. There was no energy left in my body. It took me a couple of months to recover and bring myself back," said Rohit.

Less than a year after that loss to Australia in Ahmedabad, Rohit led the Indian team to the T20 World Cup title in the Americas, but overcoming the pain of the defeat in November 2023 was extremely difficult.

"I guess when you invest so much into something and don't achieve the result, it's a very natural reaction. That's exactly what happened with me. But I also knew that life doesn't end there.

"It was a big lesson for me how to deal with disappointment, reset, and start fresh. I knew that something else was coming the 2024 T20 World Cup in the USA and West Indies and I had to shift all my focus towards that.

"It's very easy to say this now, but at that moment, it was extremely difficult," Rohit said. **PTI**

Gill, Abhishek and Arshdeep in Punjab squad for Vijay Hazare Trophy

CHANDIGARH, DECEMBER 22

Indian ODI skipper Shubman Gill, world's No. 1 T20 batter Abhishek Sharma and pacer Arshdeep Singh were on Monday named in the Punjab squad for the Vijay Hazare Trophy, in line with BCCI's diktat of mandatory participation in the National One-Day Championship.

Gill, who was dropped from India's T20 World Cup squad and Arshdeep, who is a white-ball regular might just be available for two to three games with ODIs against New Zealand set to start on January 11.

Punjab, clubbed in group C along with favourites Mumbai, will play their first two games against Maharashtra (December 24)



Punjab's VHT squad: Shubman Gill, Abhishek Sharma, Arshdeep Singh, Prabhsimran Singh (wk), Harnoor Pannu, Anmolpreet Singh, Uday Saharan, Naman Dhir, Salil Arora (wk), Sanvir Singh, Ramandeep Singh, Jashanpreet Singh, Gurnoor Brar, Harpreet Brar, Raghu Sharma, Krish Bhagat, Gourav Choudhary, and Sukhdeep Bajwa.

and Chattisgarh (December 26). These are the games in which Gill and Arshdeep's availability is expected.

Abhishek, who will only be summoned for T20Is, might be available for more games. The marquee Mumbai vs Punjab match in Jaipur is slated for January 8 and by that time both Mumbai's Rohit Sharma and Punjab's Gill won't be available. **PTI**

INDIAN ATHLETICS IN 2025

Neeraj hits 90m high but no end to country's doping woes

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

Despite a rare blip in form, Neeraj Chopra was the biggest saving grace for India's doping-marred athletics landscape after getting the 90m "monkey off his back" even as the sport's administrators worked towards making the country a hub of big-ticket events in a bittersweet 2025.

The 27-year-old Chopra went past the coveted mark, considered the gold standard in javelin throw, in the Doha Diamond League but suffered a heartbreak when he failed to win a medal in the World Championships final in Tokyo later in the year. Young Sachin Yadav outperformed Chopra to emerge as a potential world-class javelin thrower with a fourth-place finish.

But the doping menace showed no signs of decline with several top Indians caught in the net, including Olympian javelin thrower Shivpal Singh and former Asian Games medallist discus thrower Seema Punia.

An athlete-coach duo was also suspended for doping in a first of its kind instance, while two minor athletes too joined the Hall of Shame.

There was a silver lining



though, as India staged two World Athletics Continental Tour events, with Chopra hosting and winning one of them.

The country also mounted bids on some high-profile continental and global events, including the 2031 World Athletics Championships with Ahmedabad as the proposed venue.

One of the most eligible bachelors in the country, Chopra tied the knot with tennis player Himani Mor in an intimate ceremony in a private resort in Himachal Pradesh with just a few close relatives and family members present.

The outside world got to know of the event only after Chopra himself posted the marriage photos in his social media handles.

A few months later, Chopra sent his spear to 90.23m to become the third Asian and 25th overall to achieve the feat.

Chopra clinched three more major titles the Paris Diamond League, the Golden Spike meet and the inaugural NC Classic. He realised his dream of hosting a world-class event in front of the home crowd and family members.

He, however, came up short in the Diamond League Finals, finishing second to German Julian Weber. He was bidding to regain the trophy he had won in 2022, but was barely able to touch the 85m mark.

But the most unexpected happened during the World Championships in Tokyo in September at the very venue where he achieved fame and Olympic gold in 2021. **PTI**



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