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# The Researchers'

## NEWS BOX

### King Charles Holds Private Meeting With Kate Middleton After Prince William's Succession Plans: Report

World King Charles reportedly held a private meeting with his daughter-in-law, Kate Middleton, as the palace initiated plans for Prince William's future ascension to the throne, the New York Post reported. The 76-year-old monarch gained a renewed outlook after navigating a difficult year, which included his cancer diagnosis in February. In March, Middleton also disclosed her cancer diagnosis, drawing attention as her health struggles closely followed those of the king. The duo is said to have grown closer while facing their respective health challenges, the media outlet reported. A source told Radar Online, "She and Charles had a private discussion about her stepping into her role sooner than anticipated."

### 17,000-Year-Old Remains Reveal Ancient Baby Likely Had Blue Eyes And Heart Disease

World. Scientists have discovered new details about an Ice Age baby who lived in southern Italy about 17,000 years ago. The remains, which were discovered by archaeologist Mauro Calattini in the Grotta delle Mura cave in Monopoli in 1998, indicate that the child probably died from congenital heart disease. DNA analysis determined that the baby, who was male, likely had blue eyes, dark skin, and curly dark brown to nearly black hair. The small remains also manifested symptoms of poor development and inbreeding. No grave goods were found within the child's grave, which was discovered beneath two rock slabs. This burial remains the only one uncovered within the cave. A paper, published on 20 September in Nature Communications, gives insight into this ancient child's life and appearance, yielding valuable clues about the early human population of southern Europe. "Genetic analysis highlighted a close relationship between the child's parents, suggesting that they were probably first cousins," explains University of Florence molecular anthropologist Alessandra Modi, "a phenomenon rarely found in the Paleolithic, but more common during the Neolithic."

### Donald Trump Vows Death Penalty For 'Rapists, Murderers, Monsters'

Washington, United States. Donald Trump hit out Tuesday at Joe Biden for commuting the sentences of almost every American federal prisoner on death row, as the president-elect prepares to replace the Democrat in the White House. President Biden, in his final month in office, announced Monday he was converting the sentences of 37 of the 40 federal inmates awaiting execution to life without the possibility of parole. They included nine people convicted of murdering fellow prisoners, four for murders committed during bank robberies and one who killed a prison guard. "Joe Biden just commuted the Death Sentence on 37 of the worst killers in our country," Trump posted on Truth Social, his social media platform. "When you hear the acts of each, you won't believe that he did this. Makes no sense. Relatives and friends are further devastated. They can't believe this is happening! Biden had imposed a moratorium on the federal death penalty but was under pressure to act further before leaving the White House on January 20, amid signals from Republican Trump that he would resume the practice. Biden rebuked the inmates he had spared and "their despicable acts," but said he had been guided by "my conscience and my experience" to prevent the incoming Trump administration from resuming executions. He excluded three men from his order, however -- one of the 2013 Boston Marathon bombers, a gunman who murdered 11 Jewish worshippers in 2018 and a white supremacist who shot nine Black churchgoers dead in 2015.

## Protect Rights Of All Faiths": America's Tough Talk To Bangladesh Amid Attacks On Hindus

San Francisco, US. Amid growing violence against minority Hindus in Bangladesh, the United Nations has asked Dhaka to ensure the protection of the human rights of all Bangladeshi citizens, irrespective of religion. During a phone conversation with US National Security Advisor (NSA) Jake Sullivan, Bangladesh's interim government chief Muhammad Yunus expressed commitment to protect human rights in the troubled South Asian nation. "Both leaders expressed their commitment to respecting and protecting the human rights of all people, regardless of religion," the White House said in a statement about the call between Mr Sullivan and Mr Yunus. The call comes less than a month before the Biden administration is set to pass on the power to Donald Trump, who would be sworn in as the 47th President of the United States on January 20 next year. It also came at the backdrop of attacks on Bangladesh's Hindu minority and their places of worship. Mr Sullivan during the call thanked Yunus for his leadership of Bangladesh during a challenging period, the White House said. "Sullivan re-iterated the United States'

support for a prosperous, stable, and democratic Bangladesh, and offered the United States' continued support in meeting the challenges Bangladesh faces," said the readout of the call. Outrage Of Killing of Hindus In Bangladesh There have been a spate of incidents of violence against Hindus and other minorities, as well as attacks on temples in Bangladesh after the fall of the Hasina government. On December 13, the White House said that President Joe Biden is closely monitoring the situation in Bangladesh and the US will hold the country's interim government accountable for ensuring the protection of religious and ethnic minorities.

The conversation between Mr Sullivan and Mr Yunus comes days after Indian American Democratic Congressman Shri Thanedar urged the White House to strongly raise the issue of the killing of Hindus and destruction of their temples in Bangladesh with the head of the country's interim government. "The United States has a storied history of championing the oppressed and this issue should be no different. When we receive a global call for help, we must respond appropriately as the world's bellwether of human rights. We must urge Prime Minister Muhammad Yunus to fulfil his promise of restoring peace and rebuilding the nation on principles of equality and justice," Thanedar said last week. Advocacy group HinduAction said that disturbing reports of brutal attacks against



the Hindus continue to surface, particularly over the past two weeks, as desperate pleas for help pour in from those affected on the ground. HinduAction executive director Utsav Chakrabarti said what has happened in the last five and half months in Bangladesh clearly reflects that "Muhammad Yunus has failed to contain" his allies in the Jamaat-e-Islami who are now running around the country, burning temples, killing people, raping women and indulging in atrocities against priests and leaders from the Hindu community by incarcerating them. "It is incumbent upon our current administration as well as the upcoming administration to put sanctions on Bangladesh, as Congressman Thanedar has pointed out," Chakrabarti said. It is important that we clearly chart out a path for safe autonomous zones for the Hindus, all 15 million of them, along with the Buddhists and Christians within the boundaries of Bangladesh," he added

## Iran Eases Internet Blockades, Lifts Ban On Whatsapp And Google Play

Tehran. Iranian authorities have officially lifted the ban on WhatsApp and the Google Play Store, signalling a significant shift in the country's internet restrictions, the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported. The decision, which comes after a meeting with top government officials, marks a new phase in the easing of internet blockades that have restricted access to major global platforms for some time. On Tuesday, a meeting was convened with the participation of heads of all three branches of government, ministers, and members of the Supreme Council, where discussions focused on reviewing and adjusting policies surrounding internet governance and restrictions. Following the presentation of assessments from relevant authorities, the council approved changes to the existing internet restrictions. Sattar Hashemi, Iran's



Minister of Information and Communications Technology, later took to X (formerly Twitter) to announce the development, stating, "Today, we took the first step towards lifting internet restrictions with unity and collaboration. I extend my gratitude to the President, media, and activists for their efforts. We need this solidarity more than ever. This path continues." The move to lift the ban aligns with the Iranian government's broader approach to managing its

digital landscape, emphasising the importance of regulated cyberspace governance while also stressing the need to support domestic platforms, reported the IRNA. The lifting of internet restrictions was one of the key promises made by President Masoud Pezeshkian during his presidential campaign, and this decision marks an early fulfilment of that commitment. However, despite the progress, the government has emphasised that its approach will continue to prioritise the development and use of local platforms alongside the reintroduction of global services like WhatsApp and Google Play, the IRNA reported. As these changes unfold, the broader impact on both local businesses and individual users is still to be fully assessed, but the easing of restrictions is a significant step forward for internet freedom in Iran.

## Pakistan's Big Airstrike On Taliban Bases In Afghanistan; Over 25 Dead - Details Inside

World Pakistan launched airstrikes on Taliban bases in Afghanistan on Tuesday. The strikes killed an estimated 25-30 people and destroyed training centers, according to officials. The operation targeted a mountainous region in Barmal district of Paktika province near the Pakistan border. Pakistani jets were responsible for the bombing, ANI reported citing local sources. According to media reports, Murg Bazaar village came under fire, causing severe civilian casualties and widespread destruction. However, Pakistani officials have not confirmed the strikes. Security sources linked to the military, said the operation targeted Taliban bases near the border. Reports from Khaama Press said the strikes on December 24 hit seven villages, including Laman. Five members of one family were reportedly killed. Recovery efforts are ongoing, and further investigation is needed to confirm details and assign responsibility, the report added. Afghanistan Vows Retaliation Against Pakistan The Taliban's Ministry of Defence has pledged to respond to the airstrike in Barmal, Paktika. The ministry condemned the attack and called it their 'legitimate right' to defend their land and sovereignty. The ministry further claimed 'Waziristani refugees' were among the victims. "The Islamic Emirate will not leave this cowardly act unanswered but rather considers the defense of its territory and territory to be its inalienable right," the statement said. The airstrikes came hours after Mohammad Sadiq Pakistan's special representative for Afghanistan travelled to Kabul to discuss various matters, including strengthening bilateral trade and improving relations. In Kabul, Afghanistan's Defence Ministry also criticised Pakistan's airstrikes. They stated the bombing targeted civilians, including women and children. "The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan considers this a brutal act against all international principles and blatant aggression and strongly condemns it," the ministry said. Pakistan-Afghanistan Tensions Tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan have been rising. Pakistan has blamed the Afghan Taliban for sheltering Pakistani militants. Recent months have seen a surge in attacks by Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) on Pakistani forces. Taliban defense ministry spokesperson Inayatullah Khwarazmi denied Pakistan's claims. He stated on X (formerly Twitter) that the airstrikes killed civilians, mainly Waziristani refugees. He mentioned that "several children and other civilians were martyred and injured," but did not give official casualty numbers. Sources said at least 25-30 bodies, including women and children, have been recovered. Search operations are ongoing. Waziristani refugees are civilians displaced by military operations in Pakistan's tribal regions. Pakistan claims that TTP commanders fled to Afghanistan and are sheltered in border areas by the Afghan Taliban. The Taliban deny aiding the TTP and reject accusations of collaboration.

## Denmark Strengthens Greenland Security and Deploys Sled Dogs After Trump's US Takeover Threat

US President-elect Donald Trump's renewed proposal to buy Greenland has drawn sharp international criticism.

control of the huge island was an "absolute necessity" for the US. Poulsen said the package would allow for the purchase of two new inspection ships, two new long-range



drones and two extra dog sled teams. It would also include funding for increased staffing at Arctic Command in the capital Nuuk and an upgrade for one of Greenland's three main civilian airports to handle F-35 supersonic fighter aircraft. "We have not invested enough in the Arctic for many years, now we are planning a stronger presence," he said.

World US President-elect Donald Trump once again caused international controversy through provocative comments about acquiring Greenland, reclaiming the Panama Canal, and jokingly suggesting annexation of Canada. Trump has reignited his earlier, unsuccessful calls to buy Greenland from Denmark, further intensifying tensions with allied nations even before officially taking office on January 20. The Danish government has reacted by promising the largest defense spending boost to Greenland since Trump's revived push for the Arctic region. Danish Defence Minister Troels Lund Poulsen told BBC, the package was a "double digit billion amount" in krone, or at least \$1.5bn. He described the timing of the announcement as an "irony of fate". On Monday Trump said ownership and

The defence minister did not give an exact figure for the package, but Danish media estimated it would be around 12-15bn krone. The announcement came a

day after Trump said on his social media platform Truth Social: "For purposes of National Security and Freedom throughout the World, the United States of America feels that the ownership and control of Greenland is an absolute necessity." Greenland's Prime Minister Mute Egede responded to Trump's comments, saying "we are not for sale." What is Greenland and what is its territorial status? Greenland, the world's largest island, is an autonomous territory within the Kingdom of Denmark. This means it has its own government and manages most of its internal affairs, but Denmark handles defense and foreign policy. Located between the Arctic and Atlantic Oceans, Greenland holds significant geopolitical importance, particularly for the United States due to its strategic location on the shortest air route between North America and Europe. The island is also home to Thule Air Base, a crucial US military installation. Greenland possesses vast natural resources, including substantial mineral deposits and a growing interest in renewable energy sources due to its abundant wind and hydropower potential.

## All About Pakistan Taliban, Terror Group Islamabad Attacked Inside Afghanistan Border

Peshawar, Pakistan. In rare airstrikes, Pakistan on Tuesday targeted multiple suspected hideouts of the Pakistani Taliban inside neighbouring Afghanistan, resulting in the death of at least 15 people, including women and children. The strikes were carried out in a mountainous area in Paktika province bordering Pakistan, where the local authorities said the number of deaths is expected to rise. The strike also dismantled a training facility and killed some insurgents, Pakistani security officials told the Associated Press (AP) on the condition of anonymity. It was reportedly the second such Pakistani attack on alleged hideouts of the Pakistani Taliban, known as Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), since March in the border regions inside Afghanistan. Islamabad often claims that the TTP use Afghan soil to launch attacks in Pakistan, a charge Kabul has denied.

following Pakistan military operations against Al-Qaida-related terrorists in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)-- a semi-autonomous region in the northwest region of the country that was made up of seven tribal agencies and six frontier regions. Formed under the leadership of Baitullah Mehsud, who has since died, TTP is rooted along the Afghanistan/Pakistan border. Some estimates suggest TTP has between 30,000 and 35,000 members. According to the United Nations, its stated objective is the overthrow of the elected government of Pakistan to establish an emirate based on its interpretation of Islamic law. To that end, TTP has worked to destabilize Pakistan by directly attacking the Pakistani army and assassinating politicians. Its attacks, which have included multiple suicide bombings, have killed hundreds of members of the Pakistan defence forces, law enforcement personnel and civilians. The terrorist group is responsible for some of the bloodiest attacks in Pakistan, including on churches, schools and the shooting of Malala Yousafzai, who



survived the 2012 attack after she was targeted for her campaign against the Taliban's efforts to deny women education. After the Afghan Taliban seized power in Afghanistan in 2021, it emboldened the TTP, whose leaders and fighters are hiding in Afghanistan. The terrorist organisation has stepped up attacks on Pakistani soldiers and police since November 2022, when it unilaterally ended a cease-fire with the government after the failure of months of talks hosted by Afghanistan's government in Kabul. The TTP in recent months has killed and wounded dozens of soldiers in attacks inside the country.

Kabul's Reaction In Kabul, the Afghan Defense Ministry condemned the Pakistani airstrikes, saying the bombing targeted civilians, including women and children. It said that most of the victims were refugees from the Waziristan region. "The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan considers this a brutal act against all international principles and blatant aggression and strongly condemns it," the ministry said. In a post on the X platform, the Afghan defence ministry said the Pakistani side should know that such unilateral measures are not a solution to any problem. "The Islamic Emirate will not leave this cowardly act unanswered but rather considers the defence of its territory and territory to be its inalienable right," it said. Syed Muhammad Ali, an Islamabad-based security expert told AP that Tuesday's airstrike "represents a clear and blunt warning to Pakistani Taliban that Pakistan will use all the available means against the terrorist outfit both inside and outside its borders."

SAIL Wins Eight National Awards for Communication Excellence

New Delhi: Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has been honored with eight prestigious national awards by the Public Relations Society of India (PRSI). The awards were presented at the 46th All India Public Relations Conference, held from December 20 to 22, 2024, in Raipur, Chhattisgarh. The recognition highlights SAIL's outstanding communication initiatives, with the company receiving awards across various categories for its efforts to enhance its image and engage with stakeholders. The following is a summary of the awards received by SAIL: E-Newsletter Category: SAIL's news bulletin SAIL-track was recognized for its informative content and effective presentation. Corporate Film Category:



The company's corporate film was commended for showcasing its achievements and future vision. Best Communication Campaign (Internal Publics) Category: The SAIL Gaurav Diwas celebrations were acknowledged for fostering unity and pride among employees. House Journal (English) Category: SAILnews was awarded for delivering up-to-date information to its readership. Best PR Programme for Promoting Science and Technology: The social

media campaign for Steel Plant Technologies won recognition in this category. Best Use of Social Media in Corporate Campaign: The social media campaign promoting Green Steel was highlighted for emphasizing the company's environmental commitment. Corporate Website: The SAIL website (www.sail.co.in) was lauded for its user-friendly interface, creative layout, and easy navigation. Annual Report: SAIL's Annual Report was acknowl-

edged for its excellent design and creative presentation. These accolades are a significant achievement for SAIL, affirming its leadership in the field of corporate communication. SAIL Chairman Shri Amrendu Prakash expressed his appreciation for the recognition, stating, "These awards reflect the success of our communication initiatives in enhancing SAIL's image and expanding our reach. Effective communication has always been a cornerstone of our strategy, playing a crucial role in promoting the company and strengthening stakeholder relations. This recognition is a testament to SAIL's commitment to excellence in communication. We will continue to innovate and set new standards in the future."

Azerbaijan Airlines Passenger Plane Crashes in Kazakhstan, Leaving Over 40 Dead



RNS: A passenger plane belonging to Azerbaijan Airlines, en route from Baku to the Russian city of Grozny, crashed near Aktau airport in Kazakhstan on Wednesday. Media reports confirm that the aircraft, carrying over 70 people, burst into flames upon impact. The plane had been diverted to Aktau due to heavy fog in Grozny, which made it impossible to land there. The cause of the crash remains under investigation. Kazakhstan's Ministry of Emergency Situations has reportedly confirmed that

at least 42 people are feared dead, while 14 survivors have been found. Further details are awaited as authorities continue their response to the incident.

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DAV-6 Bokaro Hosts Vedic Consciousness Camp



Bokaro: A two-day "Vedic Consciousness Camp" was inaugurated today at DAV Public School, Sector 6, Bokaro, with teachers, students, and parents actively participating in the program. The event was inaugurated by Ashok Kumar Pathak, Principal of Mithila Academy Public School, Bipul Kumar Singh of Rainbow Public School, Brahmadev Prasad, Member of the Local Managing Committee (LMC), and the Principal of the school, Anuradha Singh. The camp featured a special 'Panchkundiya Havan' Yagya, conducted by Sanskrit Acharya Balshekar Jha and NK Shastri from DAV 4, following the principle of 'Yagno Vai Shrestha Tamam Karma.' The event also included an inter-house presentation of the life stories of renowned figures like Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati, Swami Vivekanand, Mahatma Hans Raj, and Swami Shradhdhanand through a dance drama. Additionally, a Vedic Sandhya Bhajan was performed by school teacher Jhuma Chakraborty, which was highly appreciated by the audience. In her address, Principal Mrs. Anuradha Singh emphasized the importance of Vedic studies in understanding Indian culture and civilization, encouraging students to study the Vedas daily. She highlighted that the Vedas are not limited to any one religion but have been a source of inspiration for humanity for centuries. Mrs. Singh also praised the participants and spoke about the ideals of great leaders that students should adopt in their lives. The event was attended by teachers, staff, and parents, all of whom praised the initiative and expressed their enthusiasm for such programs.

Dhanbad Girl Anandita Makes It to ICC Under-19 T20 World Cup 2025 Squad



Dhanbad: Anandita Kishore Navy from Dhanbad has earned a spot in the Indian women's cricket team for the ICC Under-19 T20 World Cup 2025, set to take place in Malaysia from January 18 to February 2, 2025. Anandita, who has been selected for the Under-15 category, will join the team under the captaincy of Nikki Prasad. The talented cricketer's inclusion in the national squad is a proud moment for Dhanbad as she gears up to play on the international stage. The Indian team for the tournament includes Captain Nikki Prasad, Vice-Captain Sanika Chalke, along with players such as G Trisha, Kamalini G (Wicketkeeper), Bhavika Ahire (Wicketkeeper), Ishwari Awasthe, Mithila Vinod, Joshita VJ, Sonam Yadav, Parunika Sisodia, Kesari Druthi, Ayushi Shukla, Anandita Kishore, MD Shabnam, and Vaishnavi S. In honor of Anandita's selection, the Dhanbad Cricket Association organized an award ceremony, attended by all the association officials. The officials expressed their pride, emphasizing that Anandita's achievement marks a significant milestone in her career, as she will now represent not only her district but also the nation on international grounds.

Temperatures Plunge to -20°C in Ladakh, -10°C in Himachal

RNS: North India continues to experience a severe cold wave, with the effects of the western disturbance being felt across the region. Snowfall in the mountains and rainfall in the plains have led to a significant drop in temperatures. In Ladakh, temperatures plummeted to a chilling minus 20.3 degrees Celsius in Nyoma city, while in Himachal Pradesh, Tabo recorded a low of minus 10.6 degrees Celsius. Baltistan Muzaffarabad in Kashmir saw the temperature dip to minus 9.5 degrees Celsius. The cold wave is expected to persist, bringing continued snowfall and rainfall, with temperatures continuing to drop in affected areas. Authorities are urging residents to take precautions against the extreme cold. Jharkhand will experience foggy weather on 26th and 27th December, with gradual clearing expected thereafter. However, rain is likely to occur on 28th and 29th December across different parts of the state. On 28th December, rainfall is predicted in Garhwa, Palamu, Chatra, Latehar, Lohardaga, Hazaribagh, Koderma, Giridih, Gumla, and Simdega. On 29th December, rain is expected in Gumla, Khunti, Simdega, and West Singhbhum. Residents are advised to stay updated on weather conditions.

Pakistan May Get 40 5th-Gen Stealth Fighter Jets, J-35A From China Within 2 Years

RNS: Pakistan is reportedly in talks to procure 40 state-of-the-art J-35A stealth fighter jets from China, with delivery expected within two years. If finalized, this deal would make Pakistan the first country outside China to possess a squadron of these advanced multi-role fighter jets, marking Beijing's first export of its most advanced military aircraft. The J-35A, a twin-engine, supersonic stealth fighter, is China's second fifth-generation jet, following the J-20. Its design is similar to the U.S. F-35, but with a twin-engine configuration. This fighter is capable of both air superiority and multi-role missions, including operations against ground and surface targets, and intercepting fighters, bombers, and cruise missiles. China has already set up mass production for the J-35A, which could significantly enhance Pakistan's



air defense capabilities. The aircraft's purchase has been approved by Pakistan's Air Force, despite the country's ongoing economic crisis and reliance on bailout packages. While the financial terms remain unclear, experts speculate that China may extend additional loans to Pakistan, already deeply indebted to Beijing.

This deal, once confirmed, would provide Pakistan a major strategic advantage, especially given its efforts to replace its aging fleet of U.S.-made F-16s and French Mirage fighters. Although Beijing has not officially commented on the sale, discussions between senior Pakistani Air Force officials and Chinese representatives were reported

during the November Zhuhai airshow, where the J-35A was publicly unveiled. Pakistan's growing military relationship with China includes joint development of the J-17 Thunder fighter jet and deliveries of advanced naval frigates, further strengthening Islamabad's defense capabilities despite its financial challenges.

MCL Wins CIL Inter Company Volleyball Competition 2024

Ranchi: The CIL Inter Company Volleyball Competition 2024, held from December 22 to 24 at CCL's Gandhinagar Stadium, concluded successfully. The event, organized under the aegis of the Jharkhand Volleyball Association, saw a remarkable turnout, with the organizing committee of CCL playing a key role in its success. The final match of the three-day competition featured a thrilling clash between NCL and MCL. MCL emerged victorious, defeating NCL 3-1 in a fiercely contested match. The sets ended with scores of 26-24, 25-23, 19-25, and 25-17, with both teams delivering exceptional performances. In recognition of his outstanding contribution during the final match, Sudhanshu



Mohan Sahu was awarded the "Man of the Match" award, as well as the "Best Defender" title. Arun Kumar Vaidya was honored with the "Best Smasher" award, while Su-

jeet Kumar received the "Best Lifter" award. Kunal Sharma was named "Player of the Tournament" for his exceptional performance throughout the event. The final match was graced by Nilendu Kumar Singh, CMD of CCL, as the Chief Guest, with Harsh Nath Mishra, Director (Personnel) at CCL, attending as the special guest. In his address, Singh praised the organizing committee, emphasizing that sports foster not only physical and mental growth but also highlight the values of teamwork, discipline, and competitiveness.

Sindri Union Church Marks Christmas with Stunning Decorations & Renewed Spirit



RNS: Sindri Union Church (CNI-GEL) has been transformed into a stunning display of holiday cheer, with vibrant lights, sparkling stars, and a beautifully crafted Christmas crib, setting the stage for a memorable Christmas 2024 celebration. The festivities kicked off on December 21 with a Christmas gathering and sing-song service, filling the church with joyous songs and an atmosphere of celebration. The church's striking decorations created a magical ambiance that invited attendees for prayer and reflection. The spirit of Christmas was palpable, as both church members and visitors from other communities joined in the service, exchanging greetings of peace and goodwill. Attendees were also treated to a slice of cake, adding a sweet touch to the gathering. On Christmas Day, a special service was held at 8:00 AM to commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ. The service was marked by heartfelt exchanges of blessings, capturing the essence of the holiday season. The recently renovated Sindri Union Church, with its refreshed look, added to the sense of pride among its members. The renovation, completed in record time, was made possible by the dedication and generosity of the church community. Philip Kandulna, President of Sindri Union Church, expressed his gratitude to all those who contributed to the project. This year's Christmas celebration at Sindri Union Church was a heartwarming event, showcasing the unity, faith, and festive spirit that define the community.

Christmas Day Celebrated with Joy & Devotion in Kanpur



Kanpur: Christmas Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm across Kanpur on Wednesday, filling the city with a festive spirit. Churches and homes were abuzz with prayers, greetings, and celebrations as the Christian community came together to mark the occasion. The celebrations began the previous night and continued into the day, with prayers being offered in churches throughout the city. Devotees gathered to exchange Christmas wishes, spreading messages of peace and prosperity for the nation and the world. Many buildings in the city were adorned in vibrant Christmas colors, creating a welcoming atmosphere in honor of the holiday. Santa Claus made appearances at various locations, spreading joy and happiness among residents. Children, dressed as Santa Claus and angels, added to the festive cheer, bringing smiles to those around them. Families continued the tradition of cutting cakes at home, sharing the joy of Christmas and extending heartfelt greetings to one another. The celebrations in Kanpur reflected both the spirit of devotion and the joyous atmosphere of the holiday season.

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Vesuvius Enhances ESL Steel's CSR Efforts with Key Community Initiatives

Bokaro: Vesuvius, a key business partner of ESL Steel Limited, has made a significant contribution to ESL's CSR initiatives by investing in several community welfare projects at ESL project sites. The initiative included the inauguration of four Smart Bio Toilets, a Pure Drinking Water Machine, and the organization of a Hygiene Awareness session, with a focus on menstrual hygiene education for school children, especially girls. The Menstrual Hygiene Awareness session, which is a regular feature of ESL's CSR programs, aimed to promote better health and hygiene practices among students, encouraging them to adopt informed and healthier lifestyles. The program also involved the distribution of 450



school bags to students, ensuring their continued enthusiasm and participation in education. In addition, a tree plantation drive was conducted at Madhunia High School to promote environmental sustainability. The event saw the participation of several distinguished guests, including Pratima Das, Block Education Officer; Pradeep Kumar, Madhunia Panchayat; Mukhiya; Suman

Trivedi, Head Refractory, ESL; Kunal Daripa, Head CSR, ESL; and Arvind Kumar Singh, Business Head, VIL. The inauguration included a ribbon-cutting ceremony, followed by a traditional felicitation with shawls and bouquets.



The event was also attended by key officials from Vesuvius India Limited, including Atanu Mukherjee, Head Sales; Jalaram Aya, Senior Manager; Rajshree Das from Vesuvius' CSR Department; Sharda

school principal Suresh Jha, teachers, and students. Speaking at the event, Suman Trivedi, Head of Refractory at ESL, emphasized the importance of the initiative, stating, "By inaugurating the Smart Bio Toilets, a Pure Drinking Water Machine, and organizing a Hygiene Awareness session, we are taking meaningful steps to improve health and hygiene in our communities." "This initiative reflects our

commitment to fostering safer, healthier environments for students and empowering them with the knowledge to lead more informed and confident lives." A special training session on menstrual hygiene was conducted by Vesuvius India Limited, where school-girls were educated about menstruation and the importance of maintaining proper hygiene during their menstrual cycles. This initiative is part of ESL and Vesuvius' ongoing efforts to uplift local communities and create lasting, positive impacts. Notably, Vesuvius, a global leader in molten metal flow engineering, continues to support industries in high-temperature environments through its expertise and innovative solutions.

Vesuvius, a Business Partner of ESL Steel Limited, Invests in ESL's Project Sites Through CSR Initiatives

# After 'Lack Of Recognition' Post, Atishi Meets Chess Player Tania Sachdev

► **Atishi said that they are looking forward to using Tania Sachdev's expertise to promote Chess among children studying in government schools in Delhi.**



**New Delhi.** A day after gold-winning Olympiad and Arjuna awardee chess player Tania Sachdev slammed the Delhi government for the "lack of recognition" of the game in the state, Chief Minister Atishi met her on Tuesday evening and called her an "inspiration to all budding Chess players" in India.

In a post on X, Atishi said that Chess is not only an affordable sport but also has the potential to break all cultural barriers. "Had a wonderful meeting with Tania Sachdev who is an inspiration to all budding Chess players in India! Tania shared some very interesting insights on promoting Chess as a

sport in Delhi. We look forward to work with you," she wrote.

Atishi said that they are also looking forward to using Sachdev's expertise to promote the sport among children studying in government schools in Delhi. "We also thank you for sharing your concerns, I assure you that Delhi Government will resolve them at the earliest. Wishing you all the very best for future!" Atishi said as she also shared a picture with the chess player.

Tania Sachdev on Monday voiced her frustration about not being recognised by the Delhi government, despite playing for the state in 2008.

"Having played for India since 2008 It's disheartening to see a lack of recognition from the Delhi government for

achievements in chess. States that support and celebrate their champions, directly inspire excellence and motivate talent. Sadly, Delhi has yet to take this step. In 2022 Chess Olympiad I came back with a historic team bronze and an individual medal. Two years later 2024, the historic Chess Olympic gold, and till date there has been no acknowledgment or recognition by the state government," the 38-year-old Olympiad said in a post on X, tagging Atishi and former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

To this, Atishi responded by inviting Sachdev for a "conversation" and insisted that her government has been supportive of the sport. "Hi Tania, we have always supported all our athletes, sportsmen and sportswomen, especially in our schools. Would love to meet you and understand what more can be done especially for chess players. My office will reach out to you and I am really looking forward to hearing your thoughts and suggestions," Atishi said. Sachdev was part of the Chess team that claimed the top honours in the women's event of the 45th Chess Olympiad in Budapest, Hungary. It was the first time that the country had won the top award.

# PM remembers Atal Vajpayee on 100th birth anniversary: Stands tall as statesman

**New Delhi.** On the occasion of Good Governance Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid homage to former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on his 100th birth anniversary, hailing him as the architect of India's transition into the 21st century. The tribute included a detailed article by the Prime Minister reflecting on Vajpayee's political journey, his transformative leadership, and his indelible contributions to India's development. Taking to X, PM Modi expressed his respect for the late leader, calling him a guiding force for India's progress.

"Respectful tributes to former Prime Minister Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji on his 100th birth anniversary. He dedicated his life to building a strong, prosperous, and self-reliant India. His vision and mission will continue to give strength to the resolve for a developed India," he wrote.

In a separate post, the Prime Minister praised Vajpayee's leadership during a period of political instability in 1998 when he took office as Prime Minister. "When he took oath as PM in 1998 our nation had passed through a period of political instability. In about 9 years, we had seen 4 Lok Sabha elections. The people of India were getting impatient and also sceptical about

governments being able to deliver. It was Atal Ji who turned this tide by proving stable and effective governance."

PM Modi highlighted Vajpayee's foresight and governance, which ushered in stability and efficiency at a time when the nation had endured multiple elections



and uncertainty. Vajpayee's tenure marked a turning point for India's infrastructure and technological advancement, the PM noted. Initiatives like the Golden Quadrilateral project, the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, and the groundwork for the Delhi Metro were milestones that brought India closer while boosting economic growth. PM Modi credited Vajpayee's government for making technology accessible to ordinary citizens, paving the way for the IT and telecom revolution in the country.

# Rs 3 crore approved for Omar Abdullah's SUVs, ex-Srinagar Mayor jabs government

**The Jammu and Kashmir government said funds must be used exclusively for the purchase of SUVs for Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, with all expenditure certificates and raid accounts to be submitted by March 31, 2025.**

**New Delhi.** The Jammu and Kashmir government has sanctioned Rs 3.04 crore for the purchase of eight Toyota Fortuner vehicles for Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's official use, according to an order from the transport department.

The vehicles will be allocated across key locations, with four stationed in Delhi, two in Jammu and two in Srinagar. Reacting to the order, former Srinagar Mayor Junaid Mattu took a swipe at Abdullah in a post on X, criticising the government's priorities.

"200 units of free power. No business



rules, age relaxation for PSI. No powers. Rationalisation of reservations - sub-committee, but shopping spree for king's cavalcade, all powers available. Wow," Mattu wrote. The government order said that

funds must be used exclusively for the SUVs' purchase, with all expenditure certificates and raid accounts to be submitted by March 31, 2025. Officials assured that existing staff will manage the vehicles and no new posts for drivers will be created. The transport department has also been directed to ensure strict compliance to prevent misuse of funds. In the recent Assembly elections, Abdullah's National Conference secured 42 seats, emerging as the single largest party. Abdullah himself won two seats, Budgam and Ganderbal, while the BJP got 29. NC's ally, Congress, managed only six.

# MahaYuti in Maha slugfest over guardian ministry

**In Maharashtra, the guardian ministries of metro cities like Mumbai, Pune, Nasik, Nagpur, Kolhapur, are sought after.**

**MUMBAI.** After cabinet expansions and portfolio allocations, a slugfest is on among MahaYuti alliance partners over getting the guardian ministry of districts in Maharashtra. A guardian minister is the de facto head of a district. The person also decides allocations of development funds in district planning committees. Deputy CM Eknath Shinde wants the guardian ministry of Thane. The other DCM, Ajit Pawar, eyes Pune. But the BJP wants to retain both districts. In Maharashtra, the guardian ministries of metro cities like Mumbai, Pune, Nasik, Nagpur, Kolhapur, are sought after.

The Beed district, which came into limelight after the murder of Massajog village Sarpanch Santosh Deshmukh, is also in demand. NCP minister Dhananjay Munde, hailing from there, wants it. So does BJP minister Pankaja Munde. BJP MLAs from Beed have since asked Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis to accept the guardian ministry so that no Munde gets it. Aware of the jostling, Fadnavis on Tuesday hinted no one should take for granted that ministers will get guardian ministries of their choice.

Sources said Fadnavis wants to see no one will dominate any district. "In Thane, DCM Eknath Shinde is eager to get guardian ministry, but BJP is also pushing for its minister Ganesh Naik so that the party will control Thane and cut to size Shinde's dominance. The ministry can be used to expand the party base for electoral reasons."

**Beed district in demand**  
The Beed district, which came into limelight after the murder of Massajog village Sarpanch Santosh Deshmukh, is also in demand. NCP minister Dhananjay Munde, hailing from there, wants the district and so does BJP minister Pankaja Munde.



# Proposal To Name Mysuru Road After Siddaramaiah Evokes Strong Objections

**Mysuru.** A proposal by the Mysuru City Corporation council to name a stretch of road in the city after Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has evoked strong objections. According to official sources, the proposal calls for naming a stretch of KRS Road from the Lakshmi Venkataramanaswamy temple to the Outer Ring Road junction as Siddaramaiah Arogya Marga. Based on a suggestion by Chamaraja Congress MLA Harish Gowda, the Mysuru City Corporation (MCC) took the decision at its meeting on November 22. The matter was first placed before the Mysuru deputy commissioner prior to being tabled in the council meeting. The MCC then issued a newspaper notice inviting views from the public on the proposal within 30 days on December 13, the sources said.



Pointing out that Siddaramaiah is an accused in the MUDA site allotment case and is facing probe by the Lokayukta police, the opposition party said in a post on X, "There is no elected board in the Mysuru City Corporation. The officials appointed by the Congress government have decided to name the road after Siddaramaiah as they are indebted to him." Naming a road after the "corrupt" chief minister, who is involved in the

MUDA scam, is a "betrayal and insult" not only to the historic city of Mysuru, but also to the entire state, the JD(S) alleged. RTI activist Snehmayi Krishna, on whose complaint a case was registered in the alleged MUDA site allotment scam, said the road for which Siddaramaiah's name is proposed is "historic", as Maharaja Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wadiyar donated a vast swathe of land and established a tuberculosis hospital there in memory of his sister Princess Krishnammanni and her children who succumbed to TB. Speaking to reporters, Mr Krishna said, "The officials have decided to name a road after Siddaramaiah, who is an accused in the MUDA case, despite not having any power to do so. Several citizens have expressed their objections to the proposal. I'm also fighting against it legally. If the proposal is not dropped, we will challenge it in the high court and seek action against the concerned officials." Siddaramaiah is facing allegations of illegalities in the allotment of 14 sites to his wife Parvathi B M by the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA).

# AAP vs BJP after Delhi departments warn public against 'misleading schemes'

**Two Delhi departments have released public notices saying the welfare schemes launched by AAP have not been notified by the government and are 'non-existent'. It has triggered a slugfest between AAP and BJP ahead of the Delhi elections.**

**New Delhi.** A massive row erupted on Wednesday after two departments of the Delhi government issued public notices cautioning citizens against falling for "misleading schemes" launched by the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). The issuance of these notices adds another dimension to the ongoing tussle between the AAP and the bureaucracy, with accusations flying between parties. The Department of Women and Child Development (WCD), in a public notice in newspapers, has said the Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojana does not exist and has not been approved by the Delhi government. It has urged citizens



to refrain from sharing personal information with individuals or groups claiming association with this "fake scheme", as it could result in identity theft or financial fraud. Similarly, the Health and Family Welfare Department has debunked claims about a non-existent "Sanjeevani Yojana", which allegedly promises free healthcare for residents over 60 in Delhi hospitals. The notice advises

the public to exercise caution and not be misled by fraudulent claims about free medical services.

**'ADS ISSUED UNDER BJP PRESSURE'**

The notices come two days after Arvind Kejriwal and Chief Minister Atishi kickstarted registration to give Rs 2,100 to eligible women under the Mahila Samman Yojana. The latest flashpoint, which comes weeks ahead of the Delhi Assembly polls, sparked a slugfest between the AAP and BJP leaders. The BJP has accused the ruling party of duping people, since the two schemes have not been approved yet. AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh claimed that the advertisements were issued under BJP's pressure and action would be

**Notices say schemes launched by AAP not notified by government**  
**BJP accuses the ruling party of duping people**  
**Sanjay Singh says advertisements issued under BJP's pressure**

taken against the officials. "Arvind Kejriwal has officially announced these two schemes. The BJP is full of hate and disdain. They have started to oppose women, elderly," Singh told AajTak. Reacting to the row, Kejriwal took a veiled at the BJP, saying it was rattled by the AAP's announcement of welfare initiatives like the Mahila Samman Yojana and the Sanjeevani Yojana. "They have planned to arrest Atishi

in the next few days in a fabricated case. Before that, raids will be conducted on senior AAP leaders," Kejriwal tweeted.  
**'ARVIND KEJRIWAL CHEATING PEOPLE OF DELHI'**  
BJP leaders were quick to hit out at the party over the newspaper ads, with Manoj Tiwari cautioning people to be careful as the AAP could siphon off their money.

## Police reform augurs well for Himachal

HIMACHAL Pradesh is set to usher in a change for its police force. The newly introduced Himachal Pradesh Police Amendment Bill 2024 proposes transitioning police constables from a district cadre to a state cadre. This means that instead of individual districts conducting their own recruitments, a state-level Police Recruitment Board will handle this job. This is in line with the practice followed by states such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Supporters aver that centralised recruitment insulates the process from parochial pressures and ensures a more uniform and transparent means of selecting police personnel. A centralised exam eliminates the advantage held by candidates residing near district recruitment centres. The arm's length process also opens the door to a larger talent pool to recruit from. Others, though, feel that it does nothing to level the playing field as urban candidates often have the benefit of better education and accessible coaching facilities than rural folk.

The new amendment also allows for the subordinate police to be deployed outside their district anywhere in the state. Normally, they would stay put in the district they had been recruited from. This has always sparked a debate, with both potential benefits and drawbacks for recruitment, ground-level policing and the constabulary itself.

Proponents argue that a single state cadre for police constables allows for more efficient man management. The government can easily transfer officers to address manpower shortages, respond to emergencies and quickly redress vacancies or gluts across districts as circumstances demand. Quick and fluid deployment is particularly valuable in a state with seasonal tourist influxes.

On the other hand, there is concern that the much used and abused power to shift biased, corrupt or otherwise 'inconvenient' personnel from one place to another, while touted as being in aid of administrative necessity, will tighten executive and legislative hold over the establishment and tend to increase the chance of politicisation. Nevertheless, the change addresses a long-standing grievance of the constabulary: limited promotion prospects within a district cadre. A state cadre system offers more opportunities for advancement, as constables can compete for promotions anywhere across the state. This could boost morale and incentivise better performance. A side benefit: it may reduce litigation born out of perceived injustice in promotions and the like.

The flip side is the potential disruption to personal lives. Constables transferred to new districts often face challenges finding accommodation and adjusting to unfamiliar cultural environments. This could create a sense of instability and distances can fracture family lives and children's education. However, inter-district transfers are much more prone to the dangers of familial disruption and disorientation in large states than a compact one like Himachal. Unlike in big and heavily urbanised states, some of these risks may be minimal in Himachal's case. Police housing arrangements already involve a mix of Police Lines, government-provided housing and private residences. Housing is more easily available and affordable than in big metropolises. Thoughtful postings that send personnel to districts closest to where their families stay could go a long way in maintaining work-life balance. Concerns also exist about the impact on community policing. Critics argue that constables stationed outside the communities they have been born and brought up in may lack the cultural understanding and local knowledge necessary to effectively engage with new communities. This could hinder trust-building and communication, essential for effective ground-level policing.

To foster better police-public relations, some police stations in Himachal have already initiated community policing forums, elsewhere beat policing in specific areas help establish more stable engagement and frequent awareness programmes. Regular meetings and workshops help dispel misconceptions.

## Manipur conflict not just a local crisis

It is a microcosm of the broader challenges of managing diversity in a pluralistic society

THE conflict in Manipur, now in its 19th month, shows few signs of an early resolution. In his address on Vijay Diwas on December 16, Chief Minister Biren Singh blamed the unrest on 'certain agencies' that are attempting to destabilise the state. He further cited the role of politically motivated and one-sided information as a major contributor to Manipur's instability. He also claimed that misinformation had been conveyed to Central leaders, creating confusion regarding the appropriate course of action.

In evaluating the situation in Manipur, it is helpful to reflect on how the Indian State has effectively managed insurgencies across the Northeast and why Manipur has now diverged as an exception. The Northeast has long been a battleground of ethnic assertions, with armed movements emerging soon after Independence. These movements, primarily fuelled by tribal groups asserting their identities, have raised demands ranging from secession to calls for greater autonomy. The Indian State has adopted a two-pronged approach to address them: overwhelming military force to establish control and sagacious accommodation of ethnic aspirations.

The Army initially adopted harsh measures, like the forcible relocation of villages, large-scale cordon-and-search operations and retributive punishments. The military's role in suppressing insurgencies has often drawn criticism for human rights violations, yet it succeeded in establishing the writ of the State. Alongside, the government displayed great foresight in addressing the concerns of different ethnic identities. The states of Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya were carved out of Assam, while Manipur and Tripura went from UTs to statehood. Articles 371A, 371C and 371G were incorporated in the Constitution, providing special provisions for the tribal communities. Autonomous councils under the Sixth Schedule further empowered ethnic groups like Bodos, Dimasas, Karbis, Khasi, Garos and Chakmas, giving them legislative and administrative control over land and local customs.

A concerted effort was made to get the armed cadre to eschew violence through generous surrender programmes. One criticism of this was that the cadre remained in designated camps and were never absorbed into civil society through rehabilitation and, thus, retained their militant group identity. While not perfect, the dual strategy of control and accommodation was successful in significantly reducing violence in the Northeast, with terror-related deaths dropping from over



1,000 in 2008 to just 13 in 2022. Manipur represents a volatile blend of three major communities — Meiteis, Nagas and Kukis — each with distinct cultural traditions. All groups maintain armed militant factions, often regarded as crucial for safeguarding their identity in a multi-ethnic landscape. The Meiteis, as the majority community residing in the central valley, have traditionally held significant political power in Manipur. However, they lack the constitutional safeguards available to the tribal Nagas and Kukis, such as quotas in education, jobs and land rights. This imbalance has long been a source of tension. Frequent blockades by tribal groups to press their political demands also affected the Meiteis by disrupting daily life, deepening economic woes and worsening inter-community ties.

On the other hand, the tribal communities view the special provisions as essential protections against cultural erosion — protections that they argue are necessary due to their minority status. State and Central governments have sought to balance a complex interplay of differing types of accommodation — political power for the Meiteis and special safeguards for the tribals. While this meant that some grievances of the Meiteis remained unaddressed, a fragile status quo was maintained. In a sensitive ethnic environment, self-aggrandising politicians can exacerbate conflict by using ethnic

identities as a tool to mobilise support, portraying themselves as the protectors of one group while demonising another.

This is what happened in Manipur when the CM's rhetoric against the Kukis became strident. While he justified his actions as acting against illegal immigrants, drug traffickers and encroachers on forest land, they sparked alienation among the Kukis. In March 2023, the state government withdrew from the Suspension of Operations agreements with the Kuki National Army and Zomi Revolutionary Army, signalling an end to negotiated peace efforts.

David Lake and Donald Rothchild, in their seminal work *Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict*, argue that "stable ethnic relations can be understood as based upon a 'contract' between groups. Such contracts specify, among other things, the rights and responsibilities, political privileges and access to resources of each group... ethnic contracts channel politics in peaceful directions." Any perceived imbalance in this contract can ignite conflict.

In Manipur, this imbalance was exacerbated by exploitative politics and ethnic activism that created a deep polarisation between the Meiteis and Kukis. Violence appeared inevitable, and the spark came in May 2023 when the Manipur High Court directed the state government to recommend granting ST status to the Meiteis. Today, the geographical and psychological divide between the Meiteis and Kukis is nearly complete. The state forces appear to be helpless actors as armed civilian gangs from both sides roam the countryside in search of defenceless victims. Amid the civil war in Myanmar and instability in Bangladesh, the situation in Manipur is acquiring a larger national security dimension. We must learn some lessons. Manipur's conflict is not just a local crisis but a microcosm of the broader challenges of managing diversity in a pluralistic society. India's ethnic mosaic is both its strength and a vulnerability. Handling ethnic diversity is not about sharpening differences, but embracing them within the framework of mutual respect and shared aspirations. The Northeast experience shows that peace is possible when governance is inclusive, leadership responsible and ethnic harmony treated as the foundation of a resilient democracy.

## Blow to transparency

### Tweaking of poll rule raises eyebrows

WHEN the Supreme Court declared the electoral bonds scheme unconstitutional in February this year, it emphasised the voter's inalienable right to information — including the right to know the details of individuals and companies making donations to political parties. The landmark verdict also served as a reminder to the Union Government, which had backed the controversial scheme to the hilt, that there should be no compromise on transparency as the integrity of the entire electoral process was at stake. The Centre seems to have conveniently forgotten the SC's ruling. Based on a recommendation of the Election Commission of India (ECI), the Law Ministry has amended Rule 93(2)(a) of the Conduct of Election Rules in order to prevent public scrutiny of electronic documents such as CCTV and webcasting footage as well as video recordings of candidates. The unconvincing argument is that such material, if made accessible to one and all, can be misused



to the detriment of voter safety. Such fears and concerns just don't hold water in the age of

social media. Footage of voters coming out of polling stations is widely available. In many cases, electors themselves share their photos and videos on digital platforms. The CCTV cameras installed at polling stations merely keep an eye on the poll officials — they do not violate the secrecy of the ballot. There is no camera that records the voter pressing a certain button on the EVM. Still, the ECI is losing sleep over this non-issue.

The timing of the amendment is a dead giveaway. It comes in the wake of the Punjab and Haryana High Court's order that all documents related to the Haryana Assembly elections be shared with the petitioner in the 'Mehmood Pracha vs ECI' case, including CCTV camera footage as permissible under Rule 93(2). The ECI would be well advised to lift the veil of secrecy in the best interest of electoral democracy.

## Academic institutions must raise the bar to be future-ready

As foreign universities set up campuses in India, the existing domestic beacons of literacy face many challenges.

THE National Education Policy has offered opportunities for progressive institutions to step into the new dynamics of millennial academics. Subsequent statutes have envisaged an era where collaborative uplift, shared synergies, global partnerships and Vision-2050 shall define the academics of tomorrow. As foreign universities set up campuses in India, partnering with local organisations or embarking on singular forays, the existing domestic beacons of literacy face many challenges. Some institutions of faith had long back acquired significance and developed into arenas of higher learning. They include Banaras Hindu University, Aligarh Muslim University and Khalsa College, Amritsar. Khalsa College did not get the status of a university by default because of its non-cooperative attitude towards the British. Its pro-Independence stance led to its stagnation. That discrimination, however, did not stop in independent India either. Its aspiration of graduating into a university has been stalled at many junctures in its history since 1892.

Meanwhile, the Anglo-Vedic college network of DAV institutions grew at an aggressive pace, delivering sanatan-accented education across the northern region. In 2016, both Khalsa College and the DAV, along with nine other private bodies, were granted university status by the Akali-BJP government in Punjab. However, within months of this development, the subsequent Congress government singled out the Khalsa institution and repealed the Act under which it was set up. By then, it had 180 masters and PhD scholars on its rolls. They had to run helter-skelter to continue their courses. The fact that Khalsa University, independent of the Khalsa College, eventually came into being and was rescinded, was a body blow to the Khalsa College Charitable Society. It had aspired for this honour and nurtured

many other universities from within its campuses. However, in October this year, after a six-year delay, the Supreme Court gave a landmark judgment, setting aside an Act of legislature and adjudicated status quo to the 2017 formation. This victory for academic institutions has laid bare the illogical stance of politics.

Meanwhile, despite these adversities, the Khalsa society had made significant progress in the last two decades. It had set up professional colleges of pharmacy, nursing, law, veterinary sciences, education, engineering and others, while consolidating and increasing the number of students in the legacy institutions. A hospital and medical college is also in the offing.

The role of faith institutions in the field of school education, too, has been colossal. Over 55,000 Christian missionary schools are catering to 25 million children of all faiths in India. It is said that the majority of Indian Prime Ministers have received convent education at some point in their lives. In contrast, there are only around 24,010 madaras and some 4,500 Vedic gurukuls in the country. In the Sikh community, the Guru Harkrishan Public School movement and SGPC schools number just a few hundred. Various faiths follow an inclusive and secular approach to primary education, while Islamic institutions run on the strict madrasa system with a religious and ideological approach to learning. Though the higher echelons of learning are more transparent, the appetite for openness is limited. The Economic Survey 2024 has highlighted serious gaps in the education system, wherein 52.8 per cent of the graduates were found to be 'unemployable'. This is a telling comment on systemic failure and necessitates introspection. For academic institutions,

especially those with extensive networks, the time has come to either make it in the business of literacy or be left behind. Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar recently termed the quest for overseas education a 'new disease' which has caused a \$6-billion hole in our foreign



exchange kitty. Now, the global village itself is planting seeds of competition in our midst. To stem academic procrastination within India, the Central Government has opened its doors not just to the Cambridges and Harvards of the world, but also any institution that has substantive prowess and history of excellence in the field of knowledge. It has, perhaps, set a purposeful cat among the pigeons. The question, thus, shall be of leadership and educational acumen of institutions. It shall be a test of the managements — whether they can ride the change or will go under. Some faith organisations have built-in

systems of governance to improve their competence and service delivery. Anglo-Vedic institutions have a policy of bringing on board stalwarts like retired Army Generals, judges and government servants.

Christian missionary institutions have incorporated structures to ensure that new blood is nurtured. A case in point is the succession strategy of Christian Medical College. It selects its leadership five years in advance. The person is nurtured for the task at hand and even sent for an executive training programme to the IIM-Ahmedabad to hone his/her skills.

The future of successful enterprises in higher learning, thus, hinges on whether they can forsake nepotistic tendencies, political encumbrances and leadership fatigue. They must adopt a professional approach. The managements will be tested for their wisdom as well as the acumen and dynamism of their executive teams and educators. The latter will need to be open to unlearning and relearning the art of teaching. Their goalpost should be the placement and successful careers of their wards. The alumni base is an unmatched asset of any school. It will also be required to be primed for participation in this onward march. GenNext cannot be given short shift if we are to convert the nation's demography into a dividend. While India@75 has fallen way short of its target of having a fully productive generation, India@100 will require a larger number to be serviced along with more options and opportunities as well. It is the learners who will, henceforth, have the option to choose from a wider bouquet of academic institutions, of faith or otherwise. The deliverer of knowledge will need to compete and be future-ready. Otherwise, it is likely to be in for a future shock.





## NEWS BOX

**Jasprit Bumrah like Malcolm Marshall in reading batters and conditions: Ravi Shastri**

**New Delhi** Former India head coach Ravi Shastri heaped praise on Jasprit Bumrah's ability to quickly read an opposition batter's strengths and weaknesses as well as the playing conditions, likening the fast bowler to the legendary Malcolm Marshall. Bumrah has been leading India's charge in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, breaking records at will in Australia. Bumrah has taken 21 wickets in three Tests at a staggering average of 10.90. No other bowler in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy has managed to claim more than 15 wickets so far after three Tests. The Indian pace-bowling spearhead has been head and shoulders above the rest with his remarkable ability to adapt to the conditions in Australia. Bumrah also stood in for Rohit Sharma in the series opener, leading the team to a commanding 295-run victory in Perth. "He's a terrific reader of the game when it comes to batsmen. I thought when I played the best bowler I played against was Malcolm Marshall, because of his ability to suss out conditions, read batsmen's strengths and weaknesses. I think Bumrah is in that category. He's so quick to suss the strengths and



weaknesses of a player," Ravi Shastri told Fox Cricket. "He's taken close to 200 wickets and close to a hundred in India, and he's taken those at 17. In India, you must realise the ball starts reversing, because of the rough conditions. So if he doesn't take wickets with the new ball, he's dangerous at the end."

Bumrah, with 53 wickets, is already the leading wicket-taker for India in Australia in Test cricket, going past Kapil Dev's tally of 51 in the third Test in Brisbane. The Indian fast bowler needs one more wicket to become the most successful in the country at Melbourne Cricket Ground in Tests. With 15 wickets, he is currently tied with Anil Kumble. Bumrah will be key to India's success in the Boxing Day Test in Melbourne. With Mohammed Shami ruled out, Bumrah will hope for better support from fellow pacers.

**Great occasion for Pakistan: Mohammad Rizwan praises Champions Trophy scheduling**

**New Delhi.** Pakistan's white-ball captain Mohammad Rizwan and PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi praised the Champions Trophy schedule, describing the ICC's decision to hold the 50-over tournament in a hybrid model as a "significant milestone" for the country. Pakistan will host an ICC event after 28 years, with the last global tournament held here being the 1996 World Cup. "As a cricket-loving country, we are all very excited to host the ICC Champions Trophy 2025. It is a great occasion as Pakistan welcomes the first ICC event to its shores in 28 years, especially as we are the defending champions," Rizwan said in a



PCB media release. The eight-team tournament will feature 15 matches, played across Pakistan and Dubai. In Pakistan, Rawalpindi, Lahore, and Karachi will serve as the three venues hosting tournament matches. Each venue in Pakistan will host three group games, with Lahore also hosting the second semi-final.

Lahore is set to host the final on March 9, unless India qualifies, in which case the final will be held in Dubai. Both semi-finals and the final will have reserve days. The three group matches involving India, along with the first semi-final, will be played in Dubai. The Dubai leg of the tournament begins the following day, with India taking on Bangladesh. Naqvi expressed his delight at Pakistan hosting a part of the tournament under the hybrid system. We are pleased that an agreement has been reached based on the principles of equality and respect, showcasing the spirit of cooperation and collaboration that defines our sport," Naqvi stated in the release. The tournament opener will take place in Karachi on February 19, with Pakistan facing New Zealand, and the final is scheduled for March 9. Rawalpindi, Lahore, and Karachi will serve as the three hosting venues in Pakistan.

# Premier League set for decisive Boxing Day feat Liverpool, Chelsea, Manchester United

**Boxing Day in the Premier League is about to bring thrilling action as Liverpool extended their lead, Chelsea stumbled, and Manchester City regained momentum, reshaping the race for the title and European spots.**

**New Delhi.** The Premier League is gearing up for an electrifying Boxing Day, featuring crucial top-half clashes that could reshape the title race and European qualification battle. With table-toppers Liverpool, second-placed Chelsea, and a rejuvenated Manchester United among the teams in action, fans can expect a day of intense drama and high-quality football. Adding to the intrigue are Aston Villa, the resurgent Nottingham Forest, and Pep Guardiola's faltering Manchester City, all eager to make a statement. Here's why the Boxing Day



fixtures could prove decisive. A Decisive Premier League Boxing Day

**The Race to the Top**

The battle between Liverpool and Chelsea takes centre stage. The Reds, with a four-point cushion over Chelsea, will look to consolidate their position when they face Leicester City. Meanwhile, Chelsea must overcome Fulham to keep the pressure on Liverpool. A Chelsea victory, coupled with a Liverpool loss, would narrow the gap at the top to a single point, though Liverpool still

have a game in hand. Conversely, a Liverpool win and a Chelsea defeat could see the gap widen to seven points—likely an unassailable lead heading into the New Year. Manchester United's Resurgence Manchester United, under Ruben Amorim, have shown flashes of brilliance, particularly in their victory over rivals Manchester City. However, their momentum was disrupted by a shock 0-3 loss to Bournemouth. Amorim's side will now face Wolves, who are undergoing a transition. A win is imperative

for United to maintain their upward trajectory and establish themselves firmly in the top-four conversation. A Boxing Day victory would also restore confidence as the second half of the season approaches.

**Manchester City's Fight for Redemption**

Defending champions Manchester City find themselves in unfamiliar territory, sitting seventh on the table. Pep Guardiola's men have struggled for form, leading to their decision to train even on Christmas Day.

City's clash against struggling Everton presents an opportunity to regain momentum. With just 29 points from 17 games, Guardiola will hope his side can secure a much-needed win and begin their climb back up the table.

**The Nottingham Forest Revival**

Nuno Espirito Santo's Nottingham Forest have been a revelation this season, climbing to fourth place and aiming for European competition qualification. Their Boxing Day fixture against Tottenham Hotspur is crucial in maintaining their impressive run. A win could solidify their position in the top four, keeping them ahead in the race for a European spot. With these high-stakes matchups, Boxing Day promises to be a turning point in the Premier League season. Each fixture carries weight, making it a day no football fan can afford to miss.

**Ruben Amorim vows to revive Manchester United: One of lowest moments in our club**

**New Delhi.** Manchester United manager Ruben Amorim said that addressing the Premier League club's issues is frustrating, but he remains confident in his ability to overcome them. United will visit Wolverhampton Wanderers on Boxing Day, aiming to bounce back from two consecutive defeats. Amorim has overseen six Premier League matches since taking over as Manchester United manager, managing just two wins alongside three losses and a draw. This inconsistency left United in 13th place on Christmas Day—their lowest position at this point of the season since 1986. A dramatic comeback victory against rivals Manchester City was overshadowed by consecutive defeats—a 3-0 loss to Bournemouth in the league and a 4-3 exit to Tottenham in the League Cup quarter-finals.

**PREMIER LEAGUE: BOXING DAY PREVIEW**

Marcus Rashford's absence from United's last three games has intensified scrutiny. Rashford, now 27, hinted at a possible departure, stating he was "ready for a new challenge" in a recent interview. Amorim, however, made it clear that his stance



remained unchanged. "Some guys have a big responsibility here because they have been here for a long time," Amorim said, emphasising the need for key players like Rashford to step up. "If you have big talent, we need big performance, big responsibility, big engagement to push everybody forward in this moment." Acknowledging the gravity of United's situation, Amorim described the current period as "one of the lowest moments in our club." Yet, he remains confident in his ability to guide the team through these challenges. I know what I am going to do. That is so clear for me," Amorim told reporters. "I will not say I am feeling relaxed because I am really frustrated. It is a very difficult moment, but we will solve problems step by step and find answers for everything." Looking ahead to the Boxing Day clash with Wolverhampton Wanderers, Amorim stressed the importance of securing a win to lift the spirits. "I just want to win. I don't care about Christmas. I'm just focused on what we need to do for the next match," he said. The Portuguese manager also confirmed ongoing injury issues, with Matthijs de Ligt and Victor Lindelof remaining sidelined.

## Boxing Day Test: Australian stars celebrate Christmas with their families at MCG

**New Delhi.** The festive spirit was in full swing at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) as Australia's cricket team enjoyed a relaxed Christmas Day with family ahead of the much-anticipated Boxing Day Test. The players, alongside their families, took to the iconic pitch, creating a heartwarming scene of camaraderie and joy.

All-rounder Mitch Marsh, accompanied by his wife Greta and newborn daughter Olive, shared a touching moment as they strolled on the hallowed turf. Fellow players Marnus Labuschagne, Usman Khawaja, Nathan Lyon, and Alex Carey also made the most of the day, playing with their children on the field. Josh Inglis, who remains on the sidelines with Travis Head cleared to play, spent quality time with his partner Megan and son Oscar. Meanwhile, Perth Scorchers pacer Jhye Richardson, a surprise reserve bowler inclusion after his side's Big Bash League loss to the Renegades, remained in Melbourne to join the celebrations. Adding to the family atmosphere, Steve Smith was seen inspecting the MCG wicket alongside his father, Peter. Young sensation Sam Konstas, set to become the fourth-youngest Australian to play Test cricket, also enjoyed the day with his family, soaking in the



special moment. Assistant coach Andrew McDonald's son, Ollie, took part in the cricketing action, donning pads and facing throwdowns alongside Travis Head, who successfully passed a fitness test after

recovering from a quad injury.

Meanwhile, Indian star Virat Kohli enjoyed breakfast on Christmas with his wife Anushka and family at a local cafe in Melbourne. Australian captain Pat Cummins highlighted the unique camaraderie within the squad, describing the Christmas gathering as a cherished tradition:

"It's great, we spend probably more time on the road than we do at home, so this is kind of the big extended family. At the moment, it's chaos—there are probably two kids per person on average, so about 30 or 40 kids are running around between the staff and players." Cummins added, "It is great fun. All the partners get on so well. This year we haven't had as many partners traveling because everyone has young ones at home, but they all come together for the Melbourne and Sydney Tests. It's always a great time of year." The festivities included Christmas presents for the kids, followed by a team lunch, as families enjoyed a rare chance to unite during the gruelling cricketing calendar. While the Australian camp celebrated in high spirits, their opponents, India, opted for a rest day ahead of the big clash.

## Virat Kohli, Anushka Sharma enjoy Christmas breakfast in Melbourne ahead of MCG Test

**Melbourne.** Virat Kohli and Anushka Sharma enjoyed a Christmas breakfast at a cafe in Melbourne on Wednesday, 25 December. On the eve of the much-anticipated Boxing Day Test, the former India captain and his wife were spotted soaking up the festive atmosphere and enjoying their meal at a local restaurant.

Virat Kohli, dressed in a pink oversized T-shirt and grey jeans, appeared content after a hearty breakfast on the festive day. The Melbourne cafe expressed gratitude to Virat Kohli and shared how the Indian cricket superstar stepped into the kitchen to personally thank the chefs and pose for photos with them. The cafe revealed that they were not sure of whether to remain open on a public holiday, but were pleasantly surprised by the visit of the star couple. "This morning, while we were still debating whether to keep our cafe open on a public holiday, little did we know we were about to have the surreal experience of serving King @virat.kohli @anushkasharma, and the family at our

little cafe," the cafe said in an Instagram post. "Virat Sir was so kind to step into our kitchen, thank chefs and let us take pictures with him," the post read. Earlier in the day, a video of Virat Kohli and Anushka Sharma



taking a stroll down a busy lane in Melbourne went viral. Notably, Virat Kohli travelled to Australia with Anushka Sharma and their two children. Along with Jasprit Bumrah, Kohli has been travelling between cities in specially-arranged flights.

The Indian cricket team opted not to train on the eve of the Boxing Day Test. Australia, on the other hand, had an optional training

session at the MCG on Christmas after which captain Pat Cummins addressed the press conference. India began training for the Boxing Day Test earlier than Australia, hitting the nets for four days between Saturday and Tuesday. Australia trained from Monday, honing their skills for the fourth Test of the five-match Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Virat Kohli looked determined in the nets over the weekend, spending extra hours in a bid to tackle his weakness outside the off-stump. The former captain began the tour with a hundred in the first Test in Perth. However, he struggled to get going in Adelaide and Brisbane, often getting out while chasing deliveries bowled wide outside the off-stump. Virat Kohli was involved in a controversy when he confronted an Australian journalist for clicking photos of his family at Melbourne airport. Kohli asked the journalist to delete photos and videos of his family, reminding the media at the airport that he wanted privacy for his young children.

## Australia's 12th man stirs controversies before Boxing Day Test: Part of a plan

**Australia vs India, 4th Test: In the lead-up to the Boxing Day Test, there has been plenty of noise outside the field. From Virat Kohli to Ravindra Jadeja, Indian players were targeted by a section of the Australian media, who are known for making it difficult for touring sides.**

**New Delhi.** The Boxing Day Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground is one of cricket's most iconic fixtures, steeped in tradition and history. As expected, the tickets for one of the biggest fixtures of the Australian summer have been sold out. Packed stands with close to 90,000 people are expected on Boxing Day, highlighting the hype for the fixture between Australia and India. However, the build-up to the potential blockbuster has been overshadowed by off-field controversies. The off-field battle led by the Australian

media has added an unnecessary edge, targeting Indian players with baseless criticisms and unwarranted scrutiny.

**THE EASY TARGET?**

Indian cricket star Virat Kohli became the focus of controversy when an incident at the Melbourne airport was sensationalised by sections of the Australian media. Kohli, who had landed with his wife Anushka Sharma and their children, confronted a journalist from Channel 7 who had captured video footage of his family.

Concerned about privacy, Kohli requested the journalist delete images or footage of his family but allowed her to keep content featuring him alone. Under Australian law, photographing celebrities in public spaces is legal, which likely complicated the situation. Despite Kohli's polite but firm request, a section of the media reported it as a heated confrontation. Later, it became evident that the matter was a minor misunderstanding,



but the damage was done. Kohli's legitimate concerns as a father were overshadowed by sensational headlines.

**RAVINDRA JADEJA CRITICISM**

Shortly after the Kohli incident, Ravindra Jadeja found himself in the media's crosshairs. Following India's first practice session at the MCG, Jadeja addressed the press primarily in Hindi. This sparked frustration amongst some Australian

journalists, who accused Jadeja of refusing to answer questions in English. An Indian team media manager explained that the press conference was primarily arranged for the Indian media. However, the clarification didn't sit well with one Australian journalist, who lashed out at the media manager, calling the arrangement "hopeless."

Indian journalists present noted that many of their own questions went unanswered due to time constraints, but they refrained from creating a scene. "I was present there, and many Indian touring journalists didn't get the opportunity to ask questions due to time constraints. However, after the press conference ended, a few Australian journalists got annoyed and argued with the Indian team's media manager. They misbehaved as well, which was uncalled for. I cover press conferences regularly, and even during Australian press conferences.

# Katrina Kaif

## Reveals Vicky Kaushal's Advice On Balancing Work And Personal Life: 'Put Down The Phone'



**K**atrina Kaif and Vicky Kaushal, who recently celebrated their third wedding anniversary, continue to strike a balance between their flourishing careers and personal life. In a candid chat with The Week, Katrina opened up about the challenges of juggling her dual roles as an actress and entrepreneur. She also revealed how Vicky encourages her to take a break from work, saying, "Even now my husband asks me to put down the phone, and I want to send just one more email." Talking about the differences between her acting career and managing a business, Katrina explained that filmmaking comes with a fixed schedule, making it easier to coordinate with Vicky. However, running a business demands constant attention. "There's no schedule," she said, adding that setting boundaries is essential. "Otherwise, one would just go on sending emails and having discussions."

Katrina also shared a lighthearted detail about their life together. When asked if she and Vicky compete for counter space in the bathroom, she laughed and said no, calling him an "adjusting and understanding" husband. Katrina Kaif revealed that the secret to her gorgeous hair is her mother-in-law Veena Kaushal's homemade hair oil! The actress shares a close bond with Vicky Kaushal's mom and often spends time with her. "I'm equally passionate about skincare, because I have very sensitive skin. I



enjoy fun routines, like the gua sha. I know I'm late to the party, but I've just started using it and it's amazing. My mother-in-law also makes me this hair oil with onion, amla, avocado and two-three other ingredients. Home remedies are incredibly powerful too," she stated. The couple celebrated their third anniversary on December 9, 2024, with a romantic getaway. Katrina marked the occasion with a heartfelt Instagram post, sharing a selfie with Vicky and captioning it, "Dil tu, jaan tu... (My heart, my life)," along with a red heart emoji. Later, she treated fans to glimpses of their jungle retreat, showcasing wildlife, bonfires, and cozy evenings. On the work front, Katrina was last seen in Merry Christmas earlier this year and is set to star in Jee Le Zaraa. Vicky, meanwhile, has an exciting slate of films, including Chhaava, Love & War, and Mahavatar.

## Shah Rukh Khan's Jawan Co-star Ridhi Dogra On How She Dealt With Criticism



**R**idhi Dogra has carved a niche for herself in the entertainment industry. Starting her career on the small screen with the TV show Jhoomo Jiya Re, the actress featured in big-budgeted films like Shah Rukh Khan's Jawan, Salman Khan's Tiger 3 and The Sabarmati Report. Ridhi, who enjoys a significant fan base, recently shared some insights from her behind-the-scenes experiences during the initial stage of her career. During a chat with Pinkvilla, the actress recalled an incident while filming for a show where she offered some improvisation to her directors. In response, she shared that the director said things like she will get the Oscars.

"These are discouraging statements and I understand why people feel this way because no one takes pride in television. I even fought with them. If anyone comes and makes me feel small, I would always come back can tell them off," she added. Furthermore, the actress recalled another incident during the show's shoot, when one of her co-stars told her that the director mentioned that he couldn't shoot a show like a big film because the actress (Ridhi) wasn't Aishwarya Rai. "I confronted the director and objected to the situation. The director had stated, 'Yeh kaunsa Aishwarya Rai hai (She is not Aishwarya Rai),' and I replied him, 'Aap kaunsa Mani Ratnam ho (You're not Mani Ratnam),' said Ridhi. The actress revealed that she connects with those who don't take pride in calling themselves TV actresses. She stated that people in the TV industry degrade one another.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Ridhi was recently seen in the drama film The Sabarmati Report which also featured Vikrant Massey and Rashmi Khanna in the lead roles. Helmed by Dheeraj Sarna and backed by Ektaa Kapoor, the film received good responses from fans and critics alike. She will be next seen in the romantic drama Abir Gulaal, featuring Pakistani actor Fawad Khan and Vaani Kapoor in the lead roles. Directed by Aarti S Bagadi and produced by Vivek B Aggarwal, the film will also feature Lisa Haydon, Soni Razdan and Farida Jalal in significant roles.

## Varun Dhawan Confirms Alia Bhatt And His Daughters' First Meeting: 'Lara and Raha Have Met'



**V**arun Dhawan and Alia Bhatt, one of Bollywood's most adored onscreen pairs, have captured hearts with their chemistry in films like Student of the Year (2012), Humpty Sharma Ki Dulhania (2014), Badrinath Ki Dulhania (2017), and Kalank (2019). Offscreen, the two now share the joys of parenthood. Alia, alongside her husband Ranbir Kapoor, welcomed their daughter Raha Kapoor in 2022, while Varun and his wife Natasha Dalal became proud parents to baby girl Lara Dhawan this year. But have these little stars-in-the-making met yet? In a recent chat with Bollywood Hungama, Varun confirmed, "Raha and Lara have met, I think. Lara is still very small, but they have met." Will these adorable babies grow up to share a bond as cherished as Alia and Varun's friendship? Only time will tell, but fans can't wait to see this sweet connection blossom.

As for their much-awaited onscreen reunion, Varun revealed that he and Alia are actively searching for a project that does justice to their dynamic. "We haven't found the perfect fit yet," he shared. For now, their conversations are all about their little ones, and we can't help but find that absolutely endearing.

During the same interview, while promoting his upcoming film Baby John, Varun was asked which of his movies he would want Lara to watch first. His pick? The one that started it all: Student of the Year. "I think still the first one which she could watch is Student of the Year only. I think that would be the first one she could watch because it's a very easy watch for her to see," Varun said.

Varun is all set to bring his real-life experiences as a doting dad to the big screen in Atlee's Baby John, an action thriller releasing this Christmas. The film also stars Wamiqa Gabbi and Keerthy Suresh. Meanwhile, Alia is currently busy shooting for Sanjay Leela Bhansali's highly anticipated project Love & War, co-starring Ranbir Kapoor and Vicky Kaushal. Fans are eagerly waiting to see what's next for both stars, on and offscreen!

# Nikki Tamboli's

## Fun Interaction With Paparazzi Is Winning Hearts

**N**ikki Tamboli is back with another look to make her fans go crazy. The Chikati Gadilo Chithakkotudu actress was spotted last night entering the eatery Chin Chin Chu in Juhu, Mumbai. Before going inside, the gorgeousness even posed for the paparazzi stationed outside the restaurant, which is beautifully decorated with Christmas special adornments. Her appearance in a chic denim look raised the temperature even during the chilly winters. In a video making rounds on Instagram, Nikki Tamboli was seen posing for



the paparazzi in her sizzling style. For the outing, she wore a little halter-neck top with a plunging neckline and a small knot in the front and back. The Khatra Khatra Show star teamed her look with baggy jeans and white-hued sneakers. To amp up her fashion game, she carried a box bag with a broad strap on one of her shoulders. The diva ditched any heavy accessories and let her chic glam minimal. Tamboli left her freshly-coloured tresses middle-parted and open to cascade down her shoulders. A glowy foundation base with rosy cheeks and the perfect amount of contour on her face made her look

prettier. Thin strokes of eyeliner and pink lips finished off her overall appearance. The Bigg Boss 14 contestant's video is creating a ruckus on social media as she slayed her bold style in front of the camera. Soon after it was posted, her fans flooded the comments section, appreciating her bold look even during winter. While one person wrote, "Looking so pretty," another mentioned, "You look stunning." Not only this, Nikki Tamboli left her fans in a frenzy a few hours ago with another set of oh-so-glamorous photos from one of her recent photoshoots. On Instagram, she shared stunning pictures wearing an oversized white shirt. She layered her dress with a lacy bralette and paired them with denim shorts. Long boots teamed with open hair simply finished off her bold avatar. She opted for dewy makeup, which is setting the perfect style trend for this Christmas. On the work front, Nikki Tamboli made her acting debut in 2019 with the Telugu horror comedy film Chikati Gadilo Chithakkotudu. Following this, she appeared in a number of television shows, films and music videos. The actress even participated in reality shows such as Bigg Boss 14 and Bigg Boss Marathi Season 5, in both of which she emerged as 2nd-runner up. She was last seen in India's Best Dancer 4, also known as India's Best Dancer: Jab Dil Kare Dance Kar.

