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# The Researchers'

## NEWS BOX

### Giant waves kill one in Ecuador, Peru ports closed

**PERU.** One person died in Ecuador and ports closed across Peru as massive waves up to four meters (13 feet) high pummeled the region, officials said Saturday. Many beaches along the central and northern stretches of the Peruvian coastline were closed to prevent risk to human life, local authorities said. Waves there submerged jetties and public squares, sending residents fleeing to higher ground, according to images on local media.

In neighboring Ecuador, the National Secretariat for Risk Management said a body was recovered in the coastal city of Manta. "The Manta Fire Department reported that, at 6:00 am, the body of a missing person was found lifeless in the Barbasquillo sector," the agency announced on social media.

Peru closed 91 of its 121 ports until January 1, the National Emergency Operations Center said on its X social media account. The municipality of Callao, close to the capital Lima and the location of the country's main port, closed several beaches and barred tourist and fishing boats from venturing out.

"These waves are being generated thousands of kilometers away from Peru, off the coast of the United States," navy Captain Enrique Varea told Channel N television. "They are waves generated by a persistent wind on the surface of the ocean that is approaching our coasts," he said. Dozens of small fishing boats and businesses near the sea were affected, according to images broadcast on television and social networks.

### I've Always Been In Favour...': Donald Trump Backs H-1B Visa Programme

**World** In a major shift from his earlier stance, US-President elect Donald Trump has expressed his support for the H-1B visa programme and acknowledged frequently using it for his own properties, calling it a "great programme," according to a report by the New York Post. Calling it a "great programme," the President-elect said he has "always" been in its favour. I've always liked the visas, I have always been in favour of the visas. That's why we have them," Trump said in a telephonic interview with the New York Post. He added, "I have many H-1B visas on my properties. I've been a believer in H-1B. I have used it many times. It's a great programme. Notably, during Trump's first term, the administration imposed restrictions on H-1B visas, citing concerns over "abuse" and "economic strain." In 2016, Trump condemned the program, describing it as a means for companies to replace American workers with lower-paid foreign employees. Restrictions tightened further in 2020 in response to economic challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Trump's latest remarks comes after a major divide emerged within his MAGA team in the United States, as Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy who advocated for the expansion of the visa program for 'highly skilled workers' faced heavy backlash from within President-elect's base. Musk and Ramaswamy -- both foreign origin leaders heading Trump's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) -- reignited the debate on H-1B visas, while reflecting a divide over immigration policy as Trump prepares to assume office. The debate over H1B visas and immigration policy has intensified following Trump's announcement of Sriram Krishnan as the White House policy adviser on artificial intelligence. Krishnan has previously supported removing per-country caps for green cards, a stance that has sparked mixed reactions.

### Man, Fishing With Family In Australia's Great Barrier Reef, Killed In Shark Attack



**Sydney, Australia.** A shark has attacked and killed a 40-year-old pastor who was fishing with his family in the waters of Australia's Great Barrier Reef, officials and local media said. The predator bit him on the neck on Saturday afternoon off Humpy Island on the country's east coast, emergency services said. The victim was Luke Walford, a youth pastor at the Cathedral of Praise church in the central Queensland town of Rockhampton, according to local media including public broadcaster ABC. "The man was fishing with family members when he was bitten by a shark," Queensland state police said in a statement.

He sustained "life-threatening injuries" and died about an hour-and-a-half afterwards, police said, adding that a report would be prepared for the coroner.

They were unable to confirm whether he was spearfishing at the time. Photos posted by Walford on social media in 2021 showed him aboard a boat in a wetsuit holding up large fish.

A Queensland ambulance spokeswoman told AFP on Sunday that he died at the scene after sustaining a "significant life-threatening wound to his neck".

Humpy Island, which lies in the Great Barrier Reef's Keppel Bay Islands National Park, has a popular camping ground that gives easy access to reefs for diving and snorkeling. The country's last fatal shark attack was in December 2023, when what was believed to be a great white killed a 15-year-old boy at a remote surfing spot in South Australia.

There have been more than 1,200 shark incidents in Australia since 1791, of which over 250 resulted in death, according to a national database.

## 120 dead as plane carrying 181 people bursts into flames at Muan airport in South Korea

**SEOUL.** A plane carrying 181 people burst into flames after veering off a runway at Muan international airport in South Korea on Sunday, killing at least 120 people on board, The National Fire Agency confirmed. "120 people are confirmed dead after a Jeju Air plane crashed on landing in South Korea," the country's fire agency confirmed. "So far two rescued, 120 dead," the national fire agency said in a statement, adding that 25 of the victims were male, 37 female. Video shared by the local MBC broadcaster showed the Jeju Air plane -- a Boeing 737-8AS according to Flight Radar -- landing at the Muan airport runway, with smoke streaming out from the engines before the entire aircraft is quickly engulfed in flames. A collision with birds and adverse weather conditions were cited by the authorities as likely causes of the crash that flung passengers out of the plane and left it "almost completely destroyed", according to fire officials. One flight attendant and one passenger have been rescued so far, South Korea's fire agency said. Currently two have been rescued, one passenger and one flight attendant," the

national fire agency said in a statement, adding that 32 fire trucks and scores of firefighters had been deployed to the crash site at Muan airport. There was little chance that remaining passengers on a crashed Jeju Air flight survived, a South Korean fire department official said. "Passengers were ejected from the aircraft after it collided with the barrier, leaving little chance of survival," a local fire department said in a statement. "The plane is almost completely destroyed, and identifying the deceased is proving difficult. The process is taking time as we locate and recover the remains," the fire department in Muan said in a statement.

"The cause of the accident is presumed to be a bird strike combined with adverse weather conditions. However, the exact cause will be announced following a joint investigation," Lee Jeong-hyun, chief of Muan fire station, said during a briefing. A photo showed the tail section of the jet engulfed in flames on what appeared to be



the side of the runway, with firefighters and emergency vehicles nearby. Acting President Choi Sang-mok called for the mobilisation of all resources to save the passengers. "All related agencies... must mobilise all available resources to save the personnel," he instructed officials in a statement. Choi is convening an emergency meeting with cabinet members to discuss rescue operations and response, his office said. Jeju Air says 'sincerely apologises'

after fatal crash. Low-cost carrier Jeju Air apologised Sunday and vowed to do all it could to help after its plane carrying 181 people from Bangkok to South Korea crashed on arrival, killing scores. "We at Jeju Air will do everything in our power in response to this accident. We sincerely apologise for causing concern," the airline said in a statement posted on its social media channels. It is the first fatal accident in the history of Jeju air, one of South Korea's largest low-cost carriers, which was set up in 2005. On August 12, 2007, a Bombardier Q400 operated by Jeju Air carrying 74 passengers came off the runway due to strong winds at the southern Busan-Gimhae airport, resulting in a dozen injuries. South Korea's aviation industry has a solid track record for safety, experts say. Last year, a passenger opened an emergency exit on an Asiana Airlines flight as it was preparing to land, with the aircraft landing safely but several people hospitalised.

## Trump sides with Musk in right-wing row over worker visas

**WASHINGTON.** Donald Trump weighed in Saturday in a bitter debate dividing his traditional supporters and tech barons like Elon Musk, saying that he backs a special visa program that helps highly skilled workers enter the country. "I've always liked the (H-1B) visas, I have always been in favor of the visas, that's why we have them" at Trump-owned facilities, the president-elect told the New York Post in his first public comments on the matter since it flared up this week. An angry back-and-forth, largely between Silicon Valley's Musk and traditional anti-immigration Trump backers, has erupted in fiery fashion, with Musk even vowing to "go to war" over the issue. Trump's insistent calls for sharp curbs on immigration were central to his election victory in November over President Joe Biden. Trump has vowed to deport all undocumented immigrants and limit legal immigration. But tech entrepreneurs like Tesla's Musk -- as well as Vivek Ramaswamy, who is set to join Musk in co-chairing a government cost-cutting panel -- say the United States produces too few highly skilled graduates, and they

ferently champion the H-1B program. Musk, who migrated from South Africa on an H-1-B, posted Thursday on his X platform that luring elite engineering talent from abroad was "essential for



America to keep winning." Adding acrimony to the debate was a post from Ramaswamy, the son of immigrants from India, who deplored an "American culture" that he said venerates mediocrity, adding that the United States risks having "our asses handed to us by China. That angered several prominent conservatives who were backing Trump long before Musk noisily joined their cause this year, going on to pump more than \$250 million into the Republican's

campaign. "Looking forward to the inevitable divorce between President Trump and Big Tech," said Laura Loomer, a far-right MAGA figure known for her conspiracy theories, who often flew with Trump on his campaign plane. "We have to protect President Trump from the technocrats." She and others said Trump should be promoting American workers and further limiting immigration.

**MAGA civil war**

Musk, who had already infuriated some Republicans after leading an online campaign that helped tank a bipartisan budget deal last week, fired back at his critics. Posting on X, he warned of a "MAGA civil war" over the visas, which he said were critical "for those who want America to win." Musk swore at one critic, adding: "I will go to war on this issue." That, in turn, drew a volley from Trump strategist Steve Bannon, who wrote on the Gettr platform that the H-1B program brings in migrants who are essentially "indentured servants" working for less than American citizens would.

## Severe Cold Wave in Pakistan Triggers Seasonal Diseases, Spikes in Pneumonia Cases

**World** Severe cold waves sweeping through Pakistan have led to a spike in seasonal diseases, with health experts warning of a rise in pneumonia cases, particularly among children. According to the Pakistan's Health Department, the lack of rain will increase the spread of seasonal diseases. There are also concerns that pneumonia cases could rise among children due to the cold spell, the Express Tribune noted. Cold wave, combined with severe dust pollution in areas such as Peshawar has also led to widespread cases of chest infection, colds, sore throat and dry cough. The increasing cold is causing health problems among people of all ages, with doctors reporting that the majority of patients visiting hospitals are suffering from infections. Children aged 8-10 are the most affected, the Express Tribune reported.

Quoting the meteorological department, the Express Tribune noted that there is very little chance of rain until January 5. The intensity of the cold will persist during this period. In areas such as Kohistan, Ashiri Dara, Barawal and Lowari Pass, frost on roads has become a routine issue. Last week, seven districts of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa were engulfed by intense cold, with temperatures dropping below freezing. Residents of these areas have had to confine themselves indoors



to protect themselves from the severe weather. Even the provincial capital of Peshawar has recorded a significant drop in temperature, reaching as low as 1 degree Celsius due to the cold wave in the rural areas.

At least six people, including women and children, died, and three others were injured in a car accident caused by dense fog at Tandlianwala in Pakistan's Punjab, Ary News reported. Pakistan has seen severe smog blankets across the country as the cold wave intensifies. The crisis hits Pakistan's most populous province every winter, but in recent years, air pollution has worsened due to cold air trapping dust, emissions from low-quality diesel, and smoke from illegal crop burning. The combination of smog, low temperatures, and high pollution levels presents major health risks to residents, underscoring the urgent need for decisive action to address the growing crisis.

## New York Teacher Sexually Abused Teen Student In 'Escape Room' And Home 'Bat Cave': Report

**World** A disturbing report has revealed allegations of sexual abuse against Scott Biski, a 50-year-old music teacher at Jamaica Gateway to the Sciences High School in Queens. Investigators claim that Biski created a manipulative "escape room" environment to exploit a female student, whom he allegedly began grooming when she was just 14 years old. The abuse allegedly escalated into a sexual relationship when the student was a senior. Biski is also accused of inviting the student to his home, referred to as "the bat cave," for illicit encounters when his family was away, the New York Post reported.

"I now understand that these weird hugs, embraces were actually just groping. He was touching me for sexual pleasure without my consent," the now 25-year-old ex-student told investigators in 2022. Biski allegedly created a manipulative environment in his music

classroom and office by setting up "makeshift dividers and old desks" and inviting students to hang out in his so-called "escape room." According to the report, Biski made unwanted advances towards the student, touching her breasts and attempting to kiss her. The girl promptly pulled away and left.

Biski also invited the girl to his home under the guise of playing board games with other students. However, on one occasion, she arrived to find herself alone with him. The report further alleges that Biski showered the girl with lavish gifts, including a flute, his favourite childhood book, new clothes, and cash. He even gave her \$200 to buy Ugg boots. Moreover, the Special Commissioner of Investigation (SCI) found that Biski sent the teenager nearly 700 messages, with 82 of those messages being sent during school hours. He allegedly instructed the student to save his phone number under

a pseudonym, Arthur Dent to avoid raising suspicion. According to court documents and the SCI report, Biski engaged in explicit and non-consensual behaviour with the student in his school office. He allegedly forced her to touch him inappropriately and made suggestive comments. Biski seemingly used his position of authority to groom the student, granting her favorable treatment such as assigning her lead flute roles, providing coveted solos, and writing outstanding college recommendation letters. After the student graduated, Biski allegedly continued to harass her, persuading her to visit his home for illicit encounters when his family was away. The inappropriate text messages also persisted. "No Halloween party? No s\*\*t outfit?" he texted her during her first year in college. The student, who saw Biski as a "father figure," reported feeling "disgusted" by his behaviour.

## Syria's Interim Authorities Deploy Helicopters Against 'Former Regime Remnants' In Coastal Regions

**Damascus.** Military forces of Syria's interim administration have begun deploying attack helicopters against what it described as "remnants of the former regime" in the country's coastal regions, media reported.

The helicopters are taking off from Istamo Airfield in rural Latakia, targeting armed elements still active in the coastal countryside, media channels cited a statement by the administration, which did not elaborate on the number of helicopters in use or the scope of the operation. The deployment came as part of a series of security initiatives nationwide, aimed at consolidating the new leadership's authority, Xinhua news agency reported. On Saturday, Syria's newly-appointed intelligence chief Anas Khattab pledged in an official statement to restructure the country's security apparatus "in a manner befitting our people's sacrifices and long heritage". All existing security branches in Syria will be dissolved and reorganised, Khattab said, without outlining a timeline or providing specific details for the overhaul. Khattab's announcement came as Syria navigates a sensitive political

transition following the downfall of the previous government on December 8. A military coalition led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham waged a major military operation from northern Syria on November 27. It swept southwards, captured the capital Damascus, and overthrew former Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's government within 12 days. The Syrian Information Ministry declared a ban on what it described as "the circulation or publication of any media content or news with a sectarian tone aimed at spreading division" among Syrians. The Syrian civil war took on sectarian dimensions as Assad drew on Shia militias from across the Middle East, mobilised by his ally Iran, to battle the insurgency dominated by members of the Sunni Muslim majority, many of them Islamist. Dissent has also surfaced in the city of Homs, 150 km (90 miles) north of Damascus.

State media reported that police imposed an overnight curfew on Wednesday night, following unrest linked to demonstrations



that residents said were led by members of the Alawite and Shia religious communities. Footage posted on social media on Wednesday from Homs showed a crowd of people scattering, and some of them running, as gunfire was heard.

Assad's long-time Shia regional ally, Iran, has criticised the course of events in Syria in recent days. On Sunday, Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called on Syrian youth to "stand with firm determination against those who have

orchestrated and brought about this insecurity". Khamenei forecast "that a strong and honourable group will also emerge in Syria because today Syrian youth have nothing to lose", calling the country unsafe. Syria's newly appointed Foreign Minister, Asaad Hassan al-Shibani, said in a social media post on Tuesday that Iran must respect the will of the Syrian people and Syria's sovereignty and security. "We warn them against spreading chaos in Syria and we hold them accountable for the repercussions of the latest remarks," he said.

Lebanon said on Thursday it was looking forward to having the best neighbourly relations with Syria, in its first official message to the new administration in Damascus.

Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah played a major role in propping up Assad during the civil war, before bringing its fighters back to Lebanon over the last year to fight in a bruising war with Israel -- a development that weakened Syrian government lines.



## India Should Focus on Energy-Efficient & Eco-Friendly Green Buildings technology

Dr. Manmohan Prakash

The state of the environment in India is not very promising, as many small and large cities are grappling with environmental pollution. The situation in some cities, including the capital Delhi, is both alarming and distressing. In such a scenario, there is a need for the administration to promote environment-friendly green building techniques. This technology not only saves energy and uses less water but also emphasizes reducing pollution. Furthermore, it involves the use of eco-friendly materials like fly ash bricks, recycled steel, bamboo, and recyclable concrete as sustainable materials. The focus is on utilizing local resources to reduce carbon footprint and transportation costs. To enhance energy efficiency, the use of solar panels,

wind turbines, and energy-efficient appliances is advocated. Thermal insulation is recommended for walls and roofs, while LED lighting and five-star-rated electrical appliances are advised instead of traditional bulbs and tube lights. Water conservation is given importance through measures like rainwater harvesting, water recycling systems, and low-flow sanitation equipment. Drip irrigation and greywater utilization are promoted for gated colonies, offices, and city parks or gardens. The use of renewable energy is strongly encouraged, with recommendations to install solar panels, solar heaters, and solar cooking systems. Building designs incorporate features like wind energy integration, natural ventilation, and abundant natural lighting (through windows and ventilators), ensuring

ample airflow and sunlight to minimize daytime electricity consumption. Under cool roof technology, reflective coatings are applied to roofs. Smart building technology uses Internet of Things (IoT)-based smart devices like sensors, automated systems, and smart meters to monitor and reduce energy consumption. Additionally, the technique recommends developing greenery within and around buildings by using green roofs, vertical gardens, and planters. It is worth reflecting on the fact that in a country like India, where natural air and sunlight are abundantly available, very few responsible persons and agencies adopted green building technology. Projects such as the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (Hyderabad) and the Infosys Campus (Mysore) initiated the use of green

building technology. Both campuses are renowned for their energy efficiency and are recognized nationally and internationally. Today, it is essential that not only government and non-government systems but also the general public should adopt green technology for their buildings, shops, offices, and establishments. Urban local bodies should also consider providing incentives, such as reduced property tax, lower water tax, and reduced electricity tax, to promote this technology. In my opinion if green building technology is adopted on a large scale, it will not only help in resolving environmental issues but also lead to significant improvements in the environment condition. Additionally, users will benefit from better health and long-term economic gains.

## IIT-ISM Dhanbad Staff Recreation Club gets new executive body



**Dhanbad:** The IIT-ISM Dhanbad Staff Recreation Club successfully held its elections for 2024, for a total of eleven posts. The election process was overseen by Dr. Laldeep Gop, Returning Officer, with Arup Mukherjee and Subhash Gop serving as Election Officers. Indrajit Sarkar elected as President, Uttam Kumar Vice President, General Secretary Ashish Kumar Singh, Joint Secretary Ravi Saini (Elected Unopposed), Sports Secretary Anup Kumar, Library Secretary Gaurav Pratap Singh (Elected Unopposed) and Mukesh Tiwari elected as Treasurer. Megha Kumari unopposed elected as Cul-

tural Secretary of the club. Additionally, three Executive Members were also elected unopposed: Purushottam Kumar Paul, Mihir Chandra Mandal, and Mayank Kumar Yadav. Following the election, the newly elected office bearers were presented with certificates by the Registrar of IIT-ISM, Dhanbad, Prabodh Pandey, who also extended his best wishes to them for their new roles and responsibilities. The Staff Recreation Club at IIT-ISM Dhanbad organizes a variety of programs and events for the employees and their families, promoting engagement and community within the institute.

## Ranchi Press Club & RBS Vedic Trust Unveil Journalism Awards



**Ranchi:** The Ranchi Press Club, in collaboration with RBS Vedic Trust, has announced the launch of the Jharkhand Journalism Awards 2024, inviting applications from journalists across the state.

The awards will honor three journalists in three categories: Lifetime Achievement Award, Best Reporter Award, and Best Photography Award. Each award will include a cash prize, shawl, and memento. The selection committee for the awards includes senior journalists Bajinath Mishra, Sonali Das, Press Club President Surendra Lal Soren, Secretary Amarkant, former IAS officer Ranendra, Ranchi University VC Prof. Ajit Kumar Sinha, and Trustee Nityanand Shukla. The committee met on Sunday to discuss the selection process. Applications for the awards will be accepted until January 15, 2025. Journalists can submit nominations in all three categories, and separate applications must be submitted for each category. Application forms can be downloaded from the Ranchi Press Club website or collected from the Press Club office.

Senior journalist Bajinath Mishra highlighted the significance of the awards, stating, "Honoring journalists is akin to honoring society." He also praised the initiative, noting that it is the first time since the formation of Jharkhand that such awards are being given under the aegis of the Ranchi Press Club and RBS Vedic Trust.

## Dhanbad Photographers Association Hosts Photography & Editing Workshop



**Dhanbad:** The Dhanbad District Photographers Association organized a workshop on photography and video editing at the Nirsra Gurudwara to train its regional members.

The event began with a warm welcome to the guests, with Dilip Shah presenting a bouquet to photography mentor Rahul Barnwal from Hazaribagh, Dipankar greeting video editing trainer Vishwas Gupta, and Ranjan Ji welcoming Ratan Da with a bouquet and memento. During the workshop, Rahul Barnwal shared valuable photography tips and techniques with the attending photographers, while Vishwas Gupta provided insights into video editing using Premiere Pro. The workshop successfully trained around 35 photographers from Nirsra, equipping them with new skills in both photography and video editing.

## BJP Mayor Opens Long-Closed Temple in Kanpur

by Sunil Bajpai

**Kanpur:** In a continued effort to reopen long-closed temples in the communally sensitive areas of Kanpur, BJP Mayor Pramila Pandey successfully opened a temple that had been closed for years. On Sunday, she reached the temple located at Deputy's stop in the Raipurwa police station area, accompanied by two PAC companies and forces from five police stations.

Navigating through narrow streets, the Mayor arrived at the temple, which was surrounded by encroachments. Upon entering, she offered prayers and found the temple, which had been protected by a local Hindu family, in good condition.

The family had built houses around the temple to safeguard it in the Muslim-dominated area.

The Mayor remarked that illegal constructions around the temple would be demolished. Aadarsh Tiwari, who oversees the temple, mentioned that it is about 100 years old and has been safeguarded by nearby shops and houses.

This is the third such campaign led by the Mayor, following earlier actions on December 19 and 23 to remove encroachments from other temples in the area.

## Urdu Teachers Association Seeks Correction of Holiday Schedule with JCERT



**Ranchi:** A delegation led by Amin Ahmed, Central General Secretary of Jharkhand Rajya Urdu Shikshak Sangh, met with Banke Bihari Singh, Deputy Director of JCERT, to address discrepancies in the state's holiday schedule for schools.

The delegation reminded Singh of a JCERT order dated 30/08/2024, which stated that from 2025, separate holiday schedules would be issued for Urdu and general schools. However, the department violated its own order by issuing a unified schedule, failing to correct mistakes from the previous year. This included giving two holidays on the third Saturday and eight holidays on Fridays, despite the existing holidays for Urdu schools on Fridays and general schools on the third Saturday.

The association requested that the mistakes be corrected and a separate holiday schedule be issued for primary and middle schools. They also suggested that if the department struggles with creating a state-level schedule, the responsibility should revert to the districts. Additionally, they appealed to have Shab-e-Barat and Alvida Jumma removed from the local holidays category and placed under general holidays.

In response, Singh assured the delegation that two third Saturday holidays would be added to summer vacation, and the department is considering addressing the issue of Friday holidays for Urdu schools.

## STF, Gaya Police Recover Cartridges and Levy Receipts in Major Naxal Operation



by Rahul Kumar

**Gaya:** In a significant breakthrough, Bihar's Gaya Police and Special Task Force (STF) conducted a joint operation in a Naxal-affected region of the district, recovering a large quantity of ammunition and Naxal levy receipts.

On Saturday evening, authorities uncovered 414 INSAS rifle cartridges, 55 levy receipts, and a bag during a search operation in the Kariya Pahari area, located within the Lutua police station jurisdiction.

This region has long been known as a stronghold for Naxalites.

The discovery of levy receipts, which are typically used to extort money from locals, has raised concerns among white-collar workers in Gaya. The police are thoroughly investigating the implications of these receipts.

According to Gaya Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Ashish Bharti, the operation was launched based on confidential information about the presence of the banned Naxalite group CPI Maoist in the Kariya Pahari forest area. During the operation, the joint team recovered the ammunition and levy receipts, which are now under investigation. In light of the seizure, Lutua police have registered a case against four named Naxalites, including Nitesh Yadav, Vivek Yadav alias Sunil Yadav, and Akhilesh Singh Bhokta. Authorities are continuing their investigation to track down other individuals involved in the Naxal network.

The successful operation marks a significant step in countering Naxal activities in Bihar's Gaya district, with authorities continuing to monitor the situation closely.

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## Retired IPS Officer Acharya Kishore Kunal Dies of Cardiac Arrest at 74 in Patna

**Patna:** Acharya Kishore Kunal, the retired IPS officer and prominent social figure, passed away from a cardiac arrest in Patna on Sunday morning. He was 74. Kunal, a 1972 batch IPS officer, was the head of the Bihar State Board of Religious Trust (BSBRT) and the founding secretary of the Mahavir Mandir Trust in Patna, which operates hospitals and educational institutions across Bihar. Family members confirmed that Kunal suffered a cardiac arrest early Sunday and was rushed to a hospital, where he died around 8 am. His son, Saayan Kunal, and daughter-in-law, Shambhavi Chaudhary, an IJP (Ram Vilas) MP from Samastipur, were with him at the time of his passing. After retiring from the police force in 2000, Kunal dedicated himself to social causes, notably serving as the President of the Bihar State Religious Trust Board and the Secretary of the Mahavir Mandir Trust. Under his leadership, the trust ran hospitals and schools, in-



cluding the well-known Gyan Niketan in Patna. Kunal also played a key role in mediating religious disputes, including a significant assignment by the central government in the 1990s to facilitate dialogue between the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Babri Masjid Action Committee. Born on August 10, 1950, in Bihar, Kunal was a Sanskrit scholar who built a distinguished career in law enforcement. He served in high-

profile roles, including Senior Superintendent of Police in Patna and Officer on Special Duty in the Ministry of Home Affairs. His legacy of public service, religious reform, and community empowerment remains deeply respected in Bihar and beyond. Following his death, Kunal's body was taken to his residence in Gusain Tola, Patna, where a large crowd gathered to pay tribute. Kunal's cremation is scheduled to take

place in his ancestral village of Hajipur, Vaishali district, at 2 pm on Monday, as per family sources. Governor Rajendra V Arlekar and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar expressed their heartfelt condolences, praising Kunal for his immense contributions to both social and religious causes. Arlekar called his death an "irreparable loss" and acknowledged Kunal's efforts in integrating religious service with humanitarian work.

## BSPS to Push for National Media Policy, Plans National Conference in Ranchi

**Bokaro:** Bharti Shramjeevi Patrakar Sangh (BSPS), announced today that BSPS, in collaboration with the Press Club of India, is working towards initiating delegation-level talks with the central government to create a national media policy. Sanjay Singh, National President of Bharti Shramjeevi Patrakar Sangh (BSPS) said that, the proposed policy aims to establish a uniform framework in the interest of journalists across the country. Expressing concern over the poor condition of journalists



in smaller towns, Singh emphasized the need for government intervention to support journalists, including providing housing at the district level through a cooperative

for journalists. Sanjay Singh was in Bokaro to console the family of BSPS General Secretary Jitendra Pandey following the death of his mother. Upon his arrival, he was wel-

comed by local journalists at Hotel Hilltop, led by Santosh Pathak, National Secretary and Jharkhand In-charge of BSPS. During the visit, a detailed discussion was held regarding the upcoming National Maha Sammelan of BSPS, which is scheduled to take place in Ranchi this March. Several prominent BSPS members, including Jitendra Pandey, Dr. Sanghmita Singh, Nirmal Maharaj, Ashish Sinha, Ravi Verma, Omkar Tiwari, and Arvind Kumar, were present for the meeting.

## Literature, Music, and Art Play Key Role in Reducing Stress: Pranjal

by Arun Pathak

**Bokaro:** Sahityalok, Bokaro's prominent literary institution, marked its 33rd Foundation Day on Sunday with a grand celebration at the Vidyapati Auditorium of Mithila Academy Public School, Sector 4. The event was inaugurated by Chief Guest Pranjal Dhandha, SDO Chas, along with other dignitaries, including Jagannath Lohara (District Education Officer), Hari Mohan Jha (CGM, BSL), and the Chairman of Mithila Academy Public School. The ceremony began with garlanding Maa Saraswati's picture and Mahakavi Vidyapati's statue, followed by a lamp lighting. The celebration featured musical performances by Anju Jha and Sabita Mishra, and a special



Bhagwati Geet by Anchal Pathak. Prominent personalities were honored for their contributions to literature, including Buddhinath Jha, Vijay Shankar Mallik 'Sudhapati', and Poonam Jha. The event also saw the release of Bhent, a Maithili drama by Aman Kumar Jha. Pranjal Dhandha, in his address, highlighted the importance of literature, music, and art in reducing stress and promoting positivity. He congratulated Aman Kumar Jha for Bhent

and praised Sahityalok's literary contributions. Other dignitaries emphasized the significance of literature in education and personal growth. The event featured a Kavi Sammelan, presided by Buddhinath Jha, with poets like Sukhnandan Singh 'Sadya' and Vijay Shankar Mallik 'Sudhapati' participating. The celebration reaffirmed Sahityalok's dedication to preserving Maithili literature and promoting literary traditions in Bokaro.

## Mayank Kashyap's 'Odyssey of Days' Unveiled in Star-Studded Launch Event

**Ranchi:** Novelist Mayank Kashyap's much-anticipated book, Odyssey of Days, was officially launched today in a grand ceremony held at the BNR Chanakya Auditorium in Ranchi. The event saw the esteemed presence of the Chief Guest, Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Harivansh Ji, along with Padmashree Shri Ashok Bhagat, and CCL CMD Nilendu Kumar Singh. President of Arpita Mahila Mandal Preeti Singh and the author's family members were also present on the eve. The novel Odyssey of Days delves into the emotional journey of two orphaned siblings, Rishi and Nitika, as they navigate the trials of life, addiction, and their sibling bond. The book explores themes of resilience, the destructive effects of addiction, and the strength of human spirit. The launch event began with a welcome address by Alok Gupta, Head of CC & PR De-



partment at CCL, followed by an introduction of the author. Dr. Mrigakshi Alok presented a critical analysis of the novel, emphasizing its plot and literary craftsmanship. CCL CMD Nilendu Kumar Singh praised Kashyap's literary contribution, stating, "Such works leave a lasting impact on society and inspire positive change." Padmashree Ashok Bhagat lauded the author for his insightful portrayal of the brother-sister relationship, noting, "Literature not only promotes social awareness but also sparks critical thinking. This book reflects the struggles of our times and highlights the power of

storytelling." In his keynote address, Harivansh Ji emphasized the importance of literature as a societal mirror, stating, "Novels like Odyssey of Days inspire us to introspect and work towards societal betterment." He also addressed the pressing issue of drug addiction and stressed the role of family and society in the de-addiction process. Mayank Kashyap, who works as a Deputy Manager in the CC & PR Department of CCL, is also the author of two previous books: Fragments of My Imagination, a best-selling poetry collection, and The Heart That Was Yours, a fictional novel.



# Yogi Adityanath meets top BJP leaders in Delhi, invites them to Mahakumbh 2025

► **The Mahakumbh Mela, a spiritual gathering, will take place in Prayagraj from January. Held every 12 years, the event is one of the most important festivals in Hinduism, drawing millions of devotees from around the world.**



→ **Mahakumbh 2025 in Prayagraj starts on January 13**  
 → **Yogi Adityanath meets BJP leaders in Delhi, invites them for the mega event**  
 → **JP Nadda, Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh among leaders invited**

dignitary with an official invitation accompanied by symbolic gifts, including a Mahakumbh 2025 logo, a Kalash (sacred urn), literature about the event, and a New Year desk calendar and diary.

Adityanath's first meeting was with Mizoram Governor General (Retired) VK Singh at Uttar Pradesh Bhawan, where he personally extended the invitation. He later visited the official residences of former President Ram Nath Kovind, Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP National President JP Nadda, and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to invite them to the event. Sharing pictures of these meetings on X, the Chief Minister expressed his gratitude to the leaders for their time and support.

**New Delhi.** Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday met prominent leaders in New Delhi to extend invitations to the grand Mahakumbh 2025, scheduled to be held in Prayagraj.

Among those he met were former President Ram Nath Kovind, BJP National President JP Nadda, Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, and Mizoram Governor General (Retired) VK Singh. The Chief Minister presented each

The Maha Kumbh Mela 2025, a significant spiritual gathering, will take place in Prayagraj starting January 13, 2025. Held every 12 years, the event is one of the most important festivals in Hinduism, drawing millions of devotees from around the world to take a ritual dip at the Triveni Sangam, the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and the mythical Saraswati rivers. With just 15 days until the Mahakumbh, the Yogi government is ramping up efforts to invite prominent personalities and ensure the participation of the general public from across the country.

# Patna Diary: Nitish says no to INDIA bloc invite for return

**New Delhi.** RJD MLA Bhai Birendra invited Bihar CM Nitish to return to INDIA bloc ahead of Bihar assembly elections due next year. The one-day visit of Nitish to New Delhi on Sunday has heated up the state politics. Nitish is likely to meet family members of former PM Manmohan Singh following the latter's demise. He may also go for his routine health check up. The CM, however, turned down RJD's offer and reiterated that he would remain in NDA. Nitish said that he would not commit the mistake that he had done twice on earlier occasions. He resolved that the ruling NDA will focus more on development of the state.

initiatives for their empowerment, first offering the EBCs a stake in local governance, 20% quota in seats in three-tier panchayat samitis and gram panchayats in January 2006.

**PK urged to contest from Tejashwi constituency**



**JD(U) flags off 'Karpoori Rath' to broaden support**

With Bihar assembly elections less than a year away, all political parties have started preparations. CM Nitish Kumar's JD(U) flagged off 'Karpoori Rath' from the state party office. The objective is to broaden the party's support base among Extremely Backward Castes, which constitutes nearly 36.01% of the state's population. Opposition RJD and newly formed Jan Suraj Party are also trying to woo them. Nitish is credited with

The demand of a section of voters of Raghupur, the assembly constituency of RJD leader Tejashwi Prasad Yadav, has put Jan Suraj Party founder Prashant Kishor in a tight spot. They have requested Kishor to contest from Raghupur assembly seat in the assembly elections next year. The demand came during a meeting of the party held under Bidupur block in Vaishali district. Kishor has already declared to field party candidates in all the 243 assembly seats and provide 40 seats to Muslims alone.

# 'Trying To Delete Thousands Of Voters..': Kejriwal's BIG Allegations At BJP Ahead Of Delhi Polls

**Former Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal accused the BJP of filing 11,000 voter deletion applications in a single constituency.**

**New Delhi.** AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday alleged BJP's attempt to manipulate voter lists ahead of the Delhi Assembly polls. At a press conference with Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha and Delhi CM Atishi, Kejriwal accused BJP of resorting to 'unfair means' due to a lack of strong candidates or issues. Kejriwal termed the covert plan 'Operation Lotus,' claiming it has been underway since December 15. "BJP has already lost the elections. They don't have a chief ministerial face or even proper candidates. They only aim to win through manipulation, but we won't let them succeed," PTI quoted Kejriwal as saying.

Former Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal accused the BJP of filing 11,000 voter



deletion applications in a single constituency. He further added that the move was halted after the Chief Election Commissioner intervened. "We exposed this, and thankfully, it was stopped," Kejriwal stated.

**Kejriwal's Allegations On BJP**  
 Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal alleged a large-scale voter list operation in his New Delhi

constituency. He stated that since December 15, 5,000 voter deletion applications and 7,500 additional requests were filed. Kejriwal claimed this could impact 12% of the constituency's votes. The constituency has 106,873 voters, according to the October 29 voter list following a summary revision held between August 20 and October 20.

Kejriwal alleged the changes could affect 12% of the constituency's votes. The voter list, updated on October 29 after a summary revision conducted from August 20 to October 20, lists 106,873 voters in the constituency.

Delhi Assembly elections are likely to take place in early 2025. In the 2020 polls, AAP claimed 62 out of 70 seats, while the BJP won eight.

# DK Shivakumar pays tribute to Manmohan Singh, calls him architect of landmark bills

**New Delhi.** Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Saturday (December 28) paid tribute to former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, calling him the architect of transformative policies that changed the destiny of the nation.

Speaking to the media after laying a wreath on the former Prime Minister's mortal remains, Shivakumar highlighted his monumental contributions. "He was the architect of Forest Land Rights, the Food Security Bill, MGNREGA, the Right to Education Bill, among others. These landmark bills significantly improved the lives of rural citizens. He remains alive in our hearts through his pro-people policies," Shivakumar said. Reflecting on Singh's legacy, Shivakumar added, "He played a pivotal role in ensuring farmers received fair compensation for lands given for developmental projects. The media and even opposition parties are now recognising his immense contributions to the country."

The Deputy CM praised Manmohan Singh for upholding the Constitution and stabilising the country's economy. "He protected the sanctity of the Constitution and laws of the land. As an economist, he tried to make the country economically stable and secure. The opposition parties also agree on this today. Sonia Gandhi refused the PM's post and then handed it over to Manmohan Singh. History will not forget Nehru-Gandhi family's contribution," he said.

Shivakumar reflected on Singh's statement that history would treat him kindly. "He always used to say that, and as you see today, it is coming true," Shivakumar noted.

Manmohan Singh, former Prime Minister and a distinguished economist who spearheaded India's economic liberalisation, died at the age of 92 in Delhi, late on Thursday (December 26).

He was cremated with full state honours in New Delhi on Saturday, in the presence of dignitaries from India and abroad. His eldest daughter, Upinder Singh, lit the funeral pyre at Nigambodh Ghat amid the chanting of religious hymns. The ceremony was attended by President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President Jagdeep Thakkar, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, along with senior Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge, Sonia Gandhi, and Rahul Gandhi.



# Kerala: Congress high command to chalk out plans for organisation revamp

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM.** The call by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge for an organisational overhaul may derail the plans of some senior leaders in the state party who are engaged in image building, with their eyes set firmly on the assembly election scheduled for May of 2026.

Kharge's call came at the Congress working committee (CWC) meeting in Belagavi, Karnataka. Emphasising the need to fill organisational vacancies and introduce new leaders, he stressed that hard work alone won't win elections. The CWC also decided to fully implement the Udaipur declaration. "The call for organisational restructuring is giving a blank cheque to the high command," a KPCC leader said. "After the period of mourning for former PM Manmohan Singh, the high command will chalk out policies and modalities to be



implemented at various levels. We expect the high command to engage with the future course of action as it has declared that 2025 will be the year for reorganising the party. Next year is lean in terms of assembly elections, with only Delhi and Bihar being deciding. They want to complete the process by 2026, which will see

four states electing their legislatures, including Kerala," he said. The high command has a performance report of each of the PCC leaderships. Despite the fact that new DCC presidents have been named, they are not aware of the new status that gives the high command licence to intervene at any time and at any level. Since Kharge assumed leadership, there has been no restructuring carried out at the DCC and KPCC levels. "There might be a complete overhaul, or the high command may decide to restructure just KPCC and DCC office-bearers," a CWC member told TNIE. "The KPCC executive has not met as its leadership did not want to come under criticism from state leaders. As the KPCC executive morphed into a jumbo committee, they formed a political affairs panel, which has also not met. These are issues to be addressed," he said.

# Delhi polls round the corner, AAP vs BJP as Kejriwal claims electoral rolls manipulation

**The BJP, however, rubbished the charges saying that AAP was the one trying to manipulate the voters list by adding names of minorities.**

**New Delhi.** Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal Sunday alleged that the BJP was planning to manipulate electoral rolls data by deleting over 5,000 names from the voters list of the New Delhi Assembly constituency, from where the former chief minister is contesting. Calling it BJP's "operation lotus" in action, Kejriwal, while addressing a press conference at the party's headquarters, said: "BJP is trying to win this election by any means. BJP neither has any CM face, nor any candidates. Last time, they tried to remove the names of 11,000 voters from another constituency, from where we won the polls by 5,000 votes. If they would have been successful, we would have lost the election. The staff of the election offices had



even started working on the deletion but due to the intervention of the Chief Election Commissioner, this was stopped." Sharing some data from his constituency, Kejriwal said, "BJP started this 'Operation Lotus' from October 15 and in the last 15 days, applications for deleting nearly 5,000 voters have come. Moreover, applications for the addition of 7,500 names have also been received. This is clear manipulation of almost 12 per cent of votes. What is the need of the elections if such kind of activity is going on? They did this in Haryana and Maharashtra but

we will not let them do this in Delhi."

Kejriwal also wrote a letter to the Election Commissioner in this matter seeking details of individuals (objectors) who have submitted more than five applications for deleting names since October 29, 2024.

"Specifically, we seek either their EPIC details or copies of Form 7 filed by them. I have enclosed the list of such individuals who have filed more than 5 forms from 29 October to 25 December 2024. Who are these individuals who are so keen to get names of voters deleted at such a large scale? At whose behest are operating? What are their intentions?... To safeguard the integrity of the electoral process, I strongly urge that no further voter deletions be carried out in the constituency unless it is a case of Migration (i.e. Form 8) and a death case....," he added.

The BJP, however, rubbished the charges saying that AAP was the one trying to manipulate the voters list by adding names of minorities. "Lakhs of minority voters have been added to the electoral list after the Lok Sabha Polls. Many Hindu voters living in areas that come under South Delhi, like Kalkaji and Tughlakabad, have made complaints that people from the minority communities are being registered as voters," Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva said.

The Delhi Assembly elections are scheduled to take place in February where 70 seats will be up for grabs in a three-cornered fight between the AAP, BJP and Congress.



## Negotiate with China, but warily

THE wheel seems to be turning full circle, going by the recent interaction between India's National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi. The 3,488-km-long Line of Actual Control (LAC) between the two countries has been subjected to frequent turbulence since India became independent in 1947 and the Chinese Communist Party wrested power in China in 1949. While India extended a friendly hand by supporting the inclusion of China as a permanent member of the Security Council and recognising Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, China responded by attacking India in 1962 and occupying Aksai Chin in Ladakh as well as some areas in Arunachal Pradesh.

Since then, China has frequently indulged in expansionism in Ladakh and Arunachal by violating the LAC. However, having experienced the Chinese perfidy, India realised that the only way to respond to the Chinese moves was to maintain a firm and active stance. Thus, Chinese aggression at Nathu La in 1967 and Sumdorong Chu in 1987 was forcefully opposed, resulting in the maintenance of the status quo. It became clear that the Chinese respected strength, following Deng Xiaoping's maxim of "hide your capabilities, bide your time", the Chinese maintained a low profile for the next two decades while building up their economic and military might. During this period, a series of agreements between India and China were signed — in 1993, 1996, 2005 and 2013 — to ensure peace and tranquillity and recognise existing realities along the LAC.

However, as it grew stronger, the display of China's expansionist tendencies started becoming obvious, with frequent violation of the aforesaid agreements. Thus, in 2014, the Chinese occupied Y-Junction and debarred the entry of Indian patrols to the Depsang Bulge, thereby denying approximately 1,100 sq km area for patrolling up to the Indian claim line. Likewise, Charding La access to Indian patrols near Chumar in Ladakh was denied from 2017 onwards. Additionally, a serious attempt to capture the Doklam Plateau in Bhutan was made in 2017, with the likely aim of posing a threat to the sensitive Siliguri corridor of India. The PLA design of aggressively creeping to occupy/threaten India-claimed areas emerged clearly. Then, in 2020, amid the Covid-19 pandemic, China occupied territory north of Pangong Tso, Hot Springs and Galwan in Ladakh. The Indian Army retaliated strongly at Galwan, inflicting an undisclosed number of casualties on the PLA while suffering the loss of 20 personnel itself. Additionally, it also occupied its claimed areas on the Kailash Range. The resolute stand by the Indian forces put an effective spanner in the Chinese expansionist designs. Negotiations after the hostilities ensured partial restoration of the status quo ante in most of these areas. Since then, for the past four-and-a-half years, both sides have been in an eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation in the area, with more than 50,000 troops deployed on either side. Till the boundary question between the two nations is finally settled, any future dialogue must take into account lessons from the past. Trust has been the first casualty in this relationship. Time and again, China has gone back on previously concluded agreements. In an effort to increase territorial gains, it has blatantly disregarded principles agreed upon between the two. As its power has grown vis-à-vis India's, its stance has undergone changes to exploit its strengths. A similar tendency is also visible in its interactions with littoral states of the South China Sea. This lack of trust fuels unpredictability, making contending parties wary of each other.

The collusive relationship between China and Pakistan is well known. A close nexus has developed between the two over the past 50 years. Since both harbour an adversarial stance towards India, the possibility of a two-front threat to India cannot be ruled out. Therefore, the need to tread carefully in interacting and developing ties with either can hardly be overemphasised.

## State-specific agri policy is the way forward

The draft policy lacks understanding of the agrarian crisis. It has not taken into consideration the bitter experiences of farmers with private companies.

THE Indian economy seems to be on a slow downswing — 2024-25 is heading for 6.4 per cent growth against the earlier estimate of 7 per cent. The following financial year is expected to maintain the same trajectory, say a range of global analysts. The economy is clearly on a downward shift. Even on this lower gear, the economy will be moving at a faster pace than most of the other large countries. So, this slowdown is not worrying the leadership as this will still allow the system to function at a stable state. But finding the reason for the slowdown and its remedy is important as large sections of the people continue to remain very poor. What is worse is that there is a sharp difference in incomes, with only a small section enjoying the fruits of the country's high economy.

In 2022-23, the top one per cent of the population received 22.6 per cent of India's national income. Plus, there is a rural-urban divide. The per capita consumption expenditure in rural India was Rs 3,773 as compared to Rs 6,459 in urban India. Thus, it is the urban consumption that is doing the heavy lifting. The key reason for the slowdown is the inadequate consumption. This is particularly so for the urban middle class, which is the key mover for the overall demand. This will result in slack for consumption-producing businesses. These will cease to go ahead at full steam. As a result, the firms will hire fewer workers. This will slacken demand and heighten the slowdown in overall consumption. In rural India, the situation is, if anything, worse. To make ends meet, women in rural households are going out to work to help feed the families by supplementing the men's inadequate wages. But, critically, the women are working in fields, not in factories. So, they are missing out on the higher wages that factory workers earn. The high growth rate has been enabled by two forces — growing manufacturing and services. But the robust manufacturing is now slacking, as mentioned earlier. Broad-based growth would have taken place if the women in rural areas moved to factories instead of staying in farms. The high growth has also been enabled by a sharp rise in capital investment in more factories and public infrastructure, the latter made possible through higher public investment. Better roads, power and railways caused factories to feel optimistic and grow more. This caused cars, trucks and two-wheelers to face booming markets. Hence, it resulted in consumption expenditure by the middle class, particularly in urban areas. Today, these factories, mostly producing fast-moving consumption goods, are slacking. So, the dream that we have been waiting for — more jobs in factories in urban areas for more women from the rural areas — has paled. Now, let us look at services, which has been highly robust through the period of high growth. The robust consumption has caused more jobs to be created to service cars, two-wheelers, TV sets etc. As manufacturing slackens, the high growth in services is



also likely to see a slowdown. That leaves us the export services, which are made possible by the software engineers who are going up to the higher level of artificial intelligence. Here also, a negative impact is coming to the fore — nearshoring. Developed economies are becoming stricter with immigration so that there is a growing need for leading Indian software companies to go in for nearshoring. They are seeking to people development centres in the developed countries themselves with more local talent. The bright sign is that large companies of developed countries are setting up more and more highly sophisticated global development centres in India, which is creating more high-level engineering jobs.

This is good news for highly skilled Indians, but the total numbers are small. The service exports by these companies and the country are real, but the total impact on national growth is minimal. In response to the slackening growth and the exigencies of the elections, the government has decided to pay cash grants to women. This will be positive for the gender economy and demand push for consumption, but this is not a lasting economic solution. The right way to begin is to reform agriculture. This will raise agricultural productivity and raise farm incomes. This will raise rural consumption and do the economy good. But this will lead to fewer

farmhands through greater mechanisation and also better seeds and agricultural practices. The farmhands will have to be found jobs in urban areas through factories, construction and urban services by being used by municipalities to deploy services like handling of urban dry waste. But the key issue is how factories will find the need to grow capacity and set up new factories. So, the great need is to grow demand by persuading the Reserve Bank of India to lower interest rates and increase the money supply. The obvious risk will be a spurt in the inflationary level. Right now, the hope is that the rabi crop will deliver the goods, unlike the kharif crop which has been a partial letdown. The growing money supply will create higher demand for factories, which will hopefully expand their machineries and set up new plants. This will create higher demand for capital goods. The government, with its fiscal slight opening up, will create more supply for higher demand for capital goods, creating more roads, bridges and a better functioning railways. There is a need to give economic growth a push so that at the end of the day, higher demand will reduce poverty and increase the numbers of the middle class. But there is a catch in this whole scenario. If the climate lets us down, leading to droughts, floods and untimely rain damaging growing crops, it will all come to naught.

## Student visa fraud

### Canada needs to get its act together

AN ongoing investigation by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has found that over 260 Canadian colleges and universities allegedly entered into agreements with two Indian firms involved in a human trafficking racket. This revelation is a major embarrassment to the Canadian government, which asserted earlier this week that it was committed to strengthening the integrity of its immigration system. It's apparent that Canada's efforts to curb visa fraud have left a lot to be desired. Canadian immigration authorities have detected thousands of potentially fraudulent student acceptance letters this year, but this is a belated step to cover up regulatory lapses. The ED, which is probing a money laundering case linked to the trafficking of Indians, has unearthed a conspiracy under which applicants were charged Rs 55-60 lakh each to facilitate their illegal entry into the US. The modus operandi was simple: take admission in a Canadian college or university; obtain a student visa;



go to Canada but don't join the institution; sneak into America through the US-Canada border. The massive fraud might have gone undetected had a horrifying tragedy not happened. A family of four from Gujarat was found frozen to death near the border in January 2022. The desperate pursuit of the American Dream had claimed the lives of Jagdish Patel, his wife and two kids.

Canada continues to be a popular destination for Indian students, genuine or otherwise, even though Delhi-Ottawa relations have soured over the past year or so. In the current year, over four lakh Indians are studying in the Maple Country. The ED findings should prompt Canada to clean up its immigration system on priority. Considering that foreign students and immigrants have played a key role in the country's economic success, Canada should crack down on unscrupulous agents. Close cooperation with the US is a must to weed out fraudsters.

## Multipronged strategy a must to curb gender-based violence

It's high time the UN General Assembly started negotiations for a global convention on the elimination of gender-based violence.

CELEBRATED Mexican activist Norma Andrade was at the UN Office in Geneva on December 5 to raise awareness about femicide. She knew exactly what it means since her daughter, Lilia Alejandra, was murdered in that city in 2001. "A woman is just disposable," Andrade said. Her pithy comment reflects the reality of the new global scourge — femicide — that has afflicted societies around the world.

An estimated 2,526 women were murdered and hundreds disappeared in Mexico's Ciudad Juarez from 1993 to 2023. In many societies, an absence of community rootedness dehumanises people, who tacitly accept femicide as the new normal. Moreover, laxity in policing, the collapse of governance structures, the complicated maze of the justice delivery system and a lack of sensitivity lead to impunity for the perpetrators.

The term 'femicide' is used to refer to all types of gender-related killings of women and girls (also known as 'femicide/feminicide'). Cases are monitored by the UN Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) and UN Women. Home has become the "most dangerous place for women and girls". As per the 2024 UNODC report, as compared to 11.8 per cent killings of men, 60.2 per cent women were killed by their close partners or other family members. The UNODC report says that about 51,100 women and girls were killed in 2023 at home by their partners or other family members (48,800 in 2022) out of the total 85,000 killings of females (89,000 in 2022). Thus, femicides account for 60 per cent of all female killings globally. In other words, an average of 140 women and girls worldwide lose their lives every day at the hands of their partner or a close relative.

Gender-based violence remains a global challenge. Gender-related killings of women are "most brutal and extreme manifestation of violence against women and

girls", UN Women said on November 25, 2024. Femicide differs from other forms of homicides since there is an explicit intention to kill a female solely on the basis of her gender. In order to eliminate the root cause of femicide, the regulatory processes could trace the genesis and symptoms at home, at workplaces, schools or public spaces, including intimate partner violence, sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence, harmful practices and trafficking. Femicide transcends borders, socio-economic status and cultures. Its severity varies from region to region and country to country. Africa had the highest toll (21,700) of family-related killings of women in 2023, followed by Asia (18,500), Americas (8,300), Europe (2,300) and Oceania (300). In Europe and Americas, 64 per cent and 58 per cent of the victims were killed, respectively, by their close partners. Women in Africa and Asia are more likely to be killed by family members than by their partners. It calls for an end to the culture of impunity and holding the perpetrators accountable amidst challenges of non-reporting of killings and the collapse of the justice delivery mechanisms in fractured societies.

There have been organised efforts as well as framing of instruments and structures to emphasise that "a woman is as much human as a man". In the post-UN Charter (1945) era, the first breakthrough came with the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on December 10, 1948. A feisty Indian woman delegate, Hansa Mehta, is credited with getting the word



'men' replaced by 'human beings' during the drafting process. The UDHR emphatically declares: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights" (Article 1) to provide normative equality between men and women. However, it took 30 more years to address the issue of discrimination against women when the UNGA adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) through its resolution dated December 18, 1979. In defining discrimination against women, CEDAW has identified "any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex". Still, CEDAW refrained from addressing the challenge of violence faced by women. So, it was sought to be supplemented by the UNGA through resolution 48/104 of December 20, 1993, in the

Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. In defining the phrase "violence against women", the declaration brought into vogue a new global term, "any act of gender-based violence". The UNGA Declaration sought to establish an umbilical link with CEDAW. It aimed to fill the gaps in the latter.

In 1999, the UNGA designated November 25 as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. At the regional level, the only directly applicable instrument remains the 1994 Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women. With 34 parties, the convention has defined violence against women as "any act or conduct based on gender that causes death or physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, whether in the public or the private sphere". Notwithstanding the OAS (Organisation of American States) Convention, there is a rising tide of femicide in the Americas, as shown by 8,300 killings of women and girls in 2023. Femicide requires a multipronged strategy to attain the aspirational goal of 'elimination' of violence against women and girls. A 2022 book, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in International Law, has pointed out that "the control over female sexuality remains central to the social, cultural and State-driven global normative systems". It has called for de-legitimation that can help in the elimination of femicide in the foreseeable future.



**बेजल सरकार पिछू हटेछे, बाड़खणु थके बेजले यानवाहनेर प्रवेश शुरु**

प्राय २८ घंटा पर, बेजल सरकार पिछू हटेछे एबं बाड़खणु थके बेजले यांया समस्त पण्यवाही यानवाहनेर प्रवेश शुरु हय्छे। गत सन्ध्या ९टाँर पर बेजल सरकारे आदेशे बाड़खणु-बेजल मथन सीमासुते पण्यवाही यानवाहनेर प्रवेश निषिक्त करा हय्छिल। एर फले रात थके दुपूर पर्यंत प्राय २० किमि दीर्घ यानजट सृष्टि हय। चालकदेर समस्यार कथा विवेचना करे, MASS बेजल सरकारके चाप देय बाड़खणु सीमासुते थके बेजले प्रवेश करा समस्त यानवाहन बन्द करार जना। एर फले, बेजल सरकार पिछू हटेते बाध्य हय एबं अवशेषे भारी यानवाहनेर प्रवेश आवार श्वाभाविक हय। बेजल सरकारे एर अनुमतिर पर, ट्राक चालकरा शक्तिर निश्चास फेलन। प्राञ्जल निरसा विधायक अरूप च्याटर्जि बाड़खणुेर मुख्याम्बी हेमशु सारेनेर एरि उदेग्येगेर प्रशंसना करेन। तिन बलेन, मुख्याम्बी हेमशु सारेनेर एरि विषये क्रमागत शुक्रुट्टु दियेछेन। बेजल सरकारे साथे इतिबाचक आलोचना करार पर बेजल सरकार निषेधाञ्जा तुले नेय। एर पर, सारिसेते दाड़िये थाका समस्त पण्यवाही यानवाहन बीरे बीरे बेजले प्रवेश करते शुरु करेछे। NH-९ दीर्घ यानजट एखन सीमित ह्येछे एबं यानजट ७ भाँउते शुरु करेछे।

## भोजपुरी

### देश क बरकत

- श्याम कुंवर भारती (राजभर)

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# हरे निशान पर बंद हुआ शेयर बाजार

एजेंसी

**नई दिल्ली।** बैंकिंग और ऑटो शेयरों में खरीदारी के बीच शेयर बाजार को बेंचमार्क सूचकांक सेंसेक्स और निफ्टी बढ़त के साथ बंद हुए। तीस शेयरों वाला बीएसई सेंसेक्स 226.59 अंक या 0.29 प्रतिशत चढ़कर 78,699.07 अंक पर बंद हुआ। कारोबार के दौरान यह 570.67 अंक या 0.72 प्रतिशत चढ़कर 79,043.15 अंक पर पहुंच गया। एनएसई निफ्टी 63.20 अंक अथवा 0.27 प्रतिशत बढ़कर 23,813.40 अंक पर पहुंच गया। 30 ब्लू-चिप कंपनियों में से महिंद्रा एंड महिंद्रा, इंडसैड बैंक, बजाज फाइनेंस, टाटा मोटर्स, बजाज फिनसर्व, नेस्ले और आईसीआईसीआई बैंक सबसे ज्यादा लाभ में रहे। भारतीय स्टैट बैंक, टाटा

स्टील, अडानी पोर्ट्स, जोमेटो, अल्ट्राटेक सीमेंट और एचसीएल टेक पिछड़े वालों में शामिल थे।



शियाई बाजारों में, टोक्यो और शंघाई में तेजी रही, जबकि सियोल और हांगकांग में गिरावट रही। यूरोपीय बाजार सकारात्मक क्षेत्र

में कारोबार कर रहे थे। गुरुवार को अमेरिकी बाजार सपाट स्तर पर बंद हुए। वैश्विक तेल मानक बेंट क्रूड

अब तक के सबसे निचले स्तर पर पहुंच गया। उसके बाद केंद्रीय बैंक के संदिग्ध हस्तक्षेप से कुछ नुकसान की भरपाई हुई और शुक्रवार को बैंकों और आयातकों की ओर से माह के अंत में मांग बढ़ने के बीच डॉलर के मजबूत होने से रुपया अमेरिकी डॉलर के मुकाबले 23 पैसे गिरकर 85.50 (अंतिम) के रिकॉर्ड निचले स्तर पर बंद हुआ। एक्सचेंज के आंकड़ों के अनुसार, विदेशी संस्थागत निवेशकों (एफआईआई) ने गुरुवार को 2,376.67 करोड़ रुपये मूल्य की इक्विटी बेची। गुरुवार को कारोबार के दौरान बीएसई का बेंचमार्क सूचकांक 0.39 अंक गिरकर 78,472.48 अंक पर बंद हुआ था। निफ्टी 22.55 अंक या 0.1 प्रतिशत की बढ़त के साथ 23,750.20 अंक पर बंद हुआ था।

# देश में वित्त वर्ष 2023-24 में रिकॉर्ड कोयला उत्पादन

एजेंसी

**नई दिल्ली।** भारत ने वित्त वर्ष 2023-24 में 997.826 मिलियन टन का अपना अब तक का सर्वाधिक कोयला उत्पादन किया, जो वित्त वर्ष 2022-23 में 893.191 मिलियन टन कोयला उत्पादन की तुलना में 11.71 फीसदी की उल्लेखनीय वृद्धि को दर्शाता है। कोयला मंत्रालय ने एक्स पोस्ट में बताया कि 2024 में मंत्रालय ने एक परिवर्तनकारी वर्ष देखा है, जिसमें उत्पादन, स्थिरता और तकनीकी नवाचार में अभूतपूर्व उपलब्धियों दर्ज की गई हैं। प्रधानमंत्री के दूरदर्शी नेतृत्व में मंत्रालय भारत को विकसित भारत की ओर तेजी से आगे बढ़ा रहा है, ऊर्जा सुरक्षा को मजबूत कर रहा है और आत्मनिर्भरता को बढ़ावा दे रहा है। मंत्रालय ने बताया कि कोयला की आपूर्ति में भी उल्लेखनीय वृद्धि देखी गई है, 15 दिसंबर, 2024 तक 963.11 मिलियन टन

के उत्पादन का लक्ष्य रखा है। कैलेंडर वर्ष 2024 (15 दिसंबर तक) के

कोयले की अंतिम आपूर्ति की गई है, जो पिछले वर्ष की तुलना में



दौलन कोयला का उत्पादन अंतिम 988.32 मिलियन टन तक पहुंच गया, जो साल-दर-साल 7.66 फीसदी की वृद्धि को दर्शाता है। कोयला मंत्रालय ने बताया कि कोयले की आपूर्ति में भी उल्लेखनीय वृद्धि देखी गई है, 15 दिसंबर, 2024 तक 963.11 मिलियन टन

6.47 फीसदी अधिक है। इसी तरह बिजली क्षेत्र को 792.958 मिलियन टन कोयला मिला है, जिसमें 5.02 फीसदी की वृद्धि हुई। इसके अलावा गैर-विनिर्गमित क्षेत्र (एनआरएस) में 14.48 फीसदी की वृद्धि देखी गई, जिसमें 171.236 मिलियन टन की आपूर्ति की गई है।

## इंडिया पोस्ट को मुनाफे में लाने पर ज्योतिरादित्य और सीतारमण ने की चर्चा



एजेंसी

**नई दिल्ली।** केंद्रीय संचार मंत्री ज्योतिरादित्य सिंधिया ने नई दिल्ली में केंद्रीय वित्त मंत्री निर्मला सीतारमण के साथ बैठक की। बैठक में इंडिया पोस्ट को लाभदायक लांजिस्टिक कंपनी में बदलने की योजना पर चर्चा की गई। संचार मंत्री ज्योतिरादित्य सिंधिया ने वित्त मंत्री निर्मला सीतारमण से मुलाकात कर भारतीय डाक को मुनाफे में लाने पर चर्चा की। संचार मंत्री ने डाक विभाग के अधिकारियों के साथ केंद्रीय वित्त मंत्री के समक्ष पूंजीगत व्यय की अपनी मांग रखी, ताकि 2029 तक इसे मुनाफे में लाया

जा सके। संचार मंत्री ज्योतिरादित्य सिंधिया ने 'एक्स' पोस्ट पर जारी बयान में कहा कि केंद्रीय वित्त मंत्री निर्मला सीतारमण के साथ बैठक में इंडिया पोस्ट ऑफिस की पूंजीगत व्यय जरूरतों पर चर्चा की गई, क्योंकि यह ग्राहक-अनुकूल, डिजिटलीकृत लांजिस्टिक कंपनी के रूप में महत्वपूर्ण बदलाव के मांग पर तेजी से आगे बढ़ रही है। सिंधिया ने आगे लिखा कि यह साझा करते हुए खुशी हो रही है कि भारत सरकार इस लक्ष्य के लिए प्रतिबद्ध है और प्रत्येक वॉटिकल निकट भविष्य में इसे पूरा करने की दिशा में काम करेगा।

# आरबीआई की रिपोर्ट, दो साल से उच्च ब्याज दरों के स्थिर होने के बावजूद पर्सनल लोन में वृद्धि

एजेंसी

**नई दिल्ली।** दो साल से उच्च ब्याज दरों के स्थिर होने के बावजूद पर्सनल लोन के तहत आने वाले हार्डिंग, क्रेडिट कार्ड और शिक्षा कर्ज में 23 फीसदी से ज्यादा की वृद्धि हुई है। आरबीआई के आंकड़ों के मुताबिक, हार्डिंग के एवज में कर्ज मार्च, 2024 तक सबसे अधिक 36 फीसदी बढ़कर 27,18,715 करोड़ रुपये पहुंच गया। 7 मार्च, 2023 तक यह 19,91,164 करोड़ रुपये था। कुल पर्सनल लोन 20 फीसदी बढ़कर 53.31 लाख करोड़ के स्तर पर पहुंच गया है। इसी तरह, क्रेडिट कार्ड बकाया 25.6 फीसदी बढ़कर 2.57 लाख करोड़ और शिक्षा कर्ज 23.7 फीसदी बढ़कर 1.19 लाख करोड़ पहुंच गया। कंज्यूमर ड्यूरोबल खरीदों को लिया गया कर्ज 13.4 फीसदी, फिक्सड डिपॉजिट के बदले कर्ज 2.2

फीसदी, ऑटो लोन 17.4 फीसदी और गोल्ड लोन 14.8 फीसदी बढ़ा है।

आपसे कम ब्याज पर पैसा लेकर दूसरों को ज्यादा ब्याज पर देते हैं। सरकारी



कुल कर्ज में पर्सनल लोन का हिस्सा 2023-24 में बढ़कर 27 फीसदी पहुंच गया, जो 2022-23 में 20 फीसदी था। कृषि कर्ज 15.4 फीसदी से बढ़कर मार्च, 2024 में 20 फीसदी पहुंच गया। उद्योग कर्ज बढ़कर 8.5 फीसदी पहुंच गया। बैंकों का कारोबार मूलरूप से आपसे जमा लेकर उसी को किसी अन्य को कर्ज देकर चलता है।

बैंकों के फंड की लागत 2022-23 में 4.1 फीसदी रही थी और उनकी कमाई 7.5 फीसदी रही। 2023-24 में लागत बढ़कर 5 फीसदी तो हो गई, लेकिन कर्ज से कमाई भी बढ़कर 8.41 फीसदी पर पहुंच गई। निजी बैंकों का भी यही हाल है। उनकी लागत मार्च, 2024 में 5.4 फीसदी थी लेकिन कर्ज से कमाई 10.4 फीसदी

# बजट में उपभोग बढ़ाने के उपाय और ईंधन पर उत्पाद शुल्क कम हो : सीआईआई

एजेंसी

**नई दिल्ली।** भारतीय उद्योग परिसंघ (सीआईआई) ने वित्त वर्ष 2025-26 के बजट में ईंधन पर उत्पाद शुल्क को कम करने की वकालत करते हुये कहा है कि घरेलू उपभोग भारत को विकास कहानी के लिए महत्वपूर्ण रहा है लेकिन मुद्रास्फीति के दबाव ने उपभोक्ताओं की क्रय शक्ति को कुछ हद तक कम कर दिया है। सरकार के हस्तक्षेप से व्यय योग्य आय बढ़ाने और आर्थिक गति को बनाए रखने के लिए खर्च को प्रोत्साहित करने पर ध्यान केंद्रित किया जा सकता है। सीआईआई के महानिदेशक चंद्रजीत बनर्जी ने वित्त मंत्रालय के बजट की तैयारियों के बीच यह जारी एक बयान में कहा कि लगातार खाद्य मुद्रास्फीति के दबाव विशेष रूप से कम आय वाले

ग्रामीण परिवारों पर प्रभाव डालते हैं, जो अपने उपभोग की टोकरी में खाद्य को बढ़ा हिस्सा आवंटित करते हैं। उन्होंने कहा, हालांकि हाल की तिमाहियों में ग्रामीण खपत में सुधार के संकेत मिले हैं, लेकिन लिखित सरकारी हस्तक्षेप, जैसे कि मरंगरा, पीएम-किसान और पीएमएवाई जैसे अनुरूप समायोजित नहीं किया गया है। ईंधन पर उत्पाद शुल्क कम करने से समग्र मुद्रास्फीति को कम करने और व्यय योग्य आय बढ़ाने में मदद मिलेगी। दूसरा, व्यक्तियों के लिए उच्चतम सीमांत दर 42.74 प्रतिशत और सामान्य कॉर्पोरेट कर दर 25.17 प्रतिशत के बीच का अंतर बहुत अधिक है। इसके अलावा, मुद्रास्फीति ने निम्न और मध्यम आय वाले की क्रय शक्ति को कम कर दिया है। बजट में 20 लाख रुपये

प्रति वर्ष तक की व्यक्तिगत आय के लिए सीमांत कर दरों को कम करने पर विचार किया जा सकता है। इससे उपभोग, उच्च विकास और उच्च कर राजस्व के पुष्प चक्र को गति देने में मदद मिलेगी। तीसरा, 2017 में 'राष्ट्रीय न्यूनतम वेतन निर्धारण पर विशेषज्ञ समिति' द्वारा सुझाए गए अनुरूप मरंगरा के तहत दैनिक न्यूनतम वेतन 267 रुपये से बढ़कर 375 रुपये किया जाए। सीआईआई रिसर्च के अनुमानों से पता चलता है कि इससे 42,000 करोड़ रुपये का अतिरिक्त व्यय होगा। चौथा, पीएम किसान योजना के तहत वार्षिक भुगतान 6,000 रुपये से बढ़कर 8,000 रुपये किया जाए। 10 करोड़ लाभार्थियों को मानते हुए, इससे 20,000 करोड़ रुपये का अतिरिक्त व्यय होगा।

# वोडाफोन समूह ने वीआईएल के शेयरों के बदले जुटाए गए 11,650 करोड़ का कर्ज चुकाया

नई दिल्ली।

निजी क्षेत्र की दूरसंचार सेवा प्रदाता कंपनी वोडाफोन समूह ने वोडाफोन-आइडिया लिमिटेड (वीआईएल) के शेयरों के बदले जुटाए गए करीब 11,650 करोड़ रुपये (10.9 करोड़ पाउंड) का बकाया चुका दिया है। कंपनी ने नियामक फाइलिंग में शेयर बाजार को बताया कि वोडाफोन-आइडिया लिमिटेड के शेयरों के बदले जुटाए गए करीब 11,650 करोड़ रुपये (10.9 करोड़ पाउंड) का बकाया चुका दिया गया है। वोडाफोन समूह ने कर्ज जुटाने के लिए वीआईएल में लगभग पूरी हिस्सेदारी गिरवी रख दी थी ब्रिटेन स्थित वोडाफोन समूह ने कहा कि वोडाफोन के प्रवर्तकों के ऋणदाताओं को बकाया चुकाने

के बाद ऋणदाताओं के लिए सुरक्षा ट्रेस्टी के रूप में काम करने वाली एचएसबीसी कॉर्पोरेट ट्रेस्टी



कंपनी (यूके) लिमिटेड ने 27 दिसंबर, 2024 को गिरवी शेयरों को जारी कर दिया है। मॉरिशस और भारत स्थित वोडाफोन समूह की संस्थाओं द्वारा जुटाए गए कर्ज के लिए

# रिलायंस ने कार्किंजोस हेल्थकेयर का 375 करोड़ में अधिग्रहण किया

नई दिल्ली।

उद्योगपति मुकेश अंबानी की रिलायंस इंडस्ट्रीज लिमिटेड की सहकर्म कंपनी ने प्रौद्योगिकी आधारित स्वास्थ्य देखभाल प्लेटफॉर्म कार्किंजोस का 375 करोड़ रुपये में अधिग्रहण किया है। रिलायंस इंडस्ट्रीज ने रगुलेटरी फाइलिंग में दी जानकारी में बताया कि उसकी पूर्ण स्वामित्व वाली सहकर्म कंपनी रिलायंस स्ट्रैटिजिक बिजनेस वेंचर्स (आरएसबीवीएल) ने जल्दी शेयरों के आवंटन के साथ कार्किंजोस हेल्थकेयर प्राइवेट लिमिटेड का अधिग्रहण पूरा कर लिया है। कंपनी ने स्टॉक एक्सचेंज के मुताबिक रिलायंस स्ट्रैटिजिक बिजनेस वेंचर्स (आरएसबीवीएल) ने जल्दी शेयरों के आवंटन के साथ कार्किंजोस हेल्थकेयर प्राइवेट लिमिटेड का अधिग्रहण पूरा कर लिया है। कंपनी ने स्टॉक एक्सचेंज के मुताबिक रिलायंस स्ट्रैटिजिक बिजनेस वेंचर्स (आरएसबीवीएल) ने जल्दी शेयरों के आवंटन के साथ कार्किंजोस हेल्थकेयर प्राइवेट लिमिटेड का अधिग्रहण पूरा कर लिया है।

यह प्लेटफॉर्म कैसर का शीघ्र पता लगाने, निदान और प्रबंधन के लिए प्रौद्योगिकी-संचालित अभिनव समाधान प्रदान करने के व्यवसाय में है। इसका वित्त वर्ष 2022-23 में कारोबार लगभग 22 करोड़ रुपये था। उल्लेखनीय है कि ये कंपनी कैसर का जल्दी पता लगाने और प्रभावी उपचार से संबंधित सेवाएं देती है, जिनकी कीमत मौजूदा दरों से काफी कम है। इसके बावजूद कंपनी अच्छा लाभ कमा रही है।

# स्मार्ट विनिर्माण को बढ़ावा दे सरकार : रिपोर्ट

एजेंसी

**नई दिल्ली।** इंटरनेट ऑफ थिंग्स (आईओटी), आर्टिफिशियल इंटेलिजेंस (एआई), मशीन लर्निंग (एमएल), रोबोटिक्स और ऑटोमेशन जैसे अत्याधुनिक प्रौद्योगिकियों के विनिर्माण परिदृश्य को नया रूप देने के बीच भारतीय उद्योग परिसंघ (सीआईआई) ने इनको अपनाते विशेषकर छोटे और मध्यम उद्यमों के पास आ रही बाधाओं को दूर करने के लिए साझा प्रौद्योगिकी केंद्र स्थापित

करने, प्रौद्योगिकी के लिए बजट आवंटन बढ़ाने, उद्योग-अकादमिक सहयोग को मजबूत करने और स्मार्ट विनिर्माण को व्यापक रूप से अपनाने के लिए सहकर्म नीतियों को लागू करने के लिए सार्वजनिक-निजी भागीदारी को बढ़ावा देने की सिफारिश की है। सीआईआई ने भारत के विनिर्माण क्षेत्र पर स्मार्ट प्रौद्योगिकियों के परिवर्तनकारी प्रभाव पर ध्यान केंद्रित करते हुए अपने ऐतिहासिक विनिर्माण प्रतिस्पर्धात्मकता अध्ययन का दूसरा

भाग जारी किया है। 'स्मार्ट विनिर्माण-भारत की संभावनाओं को खोलना' शीर्षक वाली इस रिपोर्ट में इस क्षेत्र के चल रहे डिजिटल परिवर्तन और निकट भविष्य में विनिर्माण सक्ल परेलू उत्पाद (जीडीपी) हिस्सेदारी को 25 प्रतिशत तक बढ़ाने के महत्वाकांक्षी लक्ष्य को प्राप्त करने में इसकी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका पर प्रकाश डाला गया है। रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि कैसे आईओटी, एआई, एमएल, रोबोटिक्स और ऑटोमेशन जैसे अत्याधुनिक

प्रतिस्पर्धात्मकता के एक महत्वपूर्ण चालक के रूप में पहचानते हैं, वर्तमान निवेश मामूली है, कई अपने बजट का 10 प्रतिशत से भी कम आवंटित करते हैं। हालांकि, अगले दो वर्षों में उच्च निवेश की ओर बदलाव की उम्मीद है तथा बजट का 11-15 प्रतिशत लक्ष्य करना विशेष रूप से आईओटी, रोबोटिक्स और बिग डेटा में। उच्च लागत, अस्पष्ट निवेश पर रिटर्न और विरासत प्रणालियों के एकीकरण जैसे चुनौतियां बनी हुई हैं, खासकर छोटे और

मध्यम उद्यमों (एमएमई) के लिए। इसके अतिरिक्त, रिपोर्ट कोशिल अंतर को पाटने और उन्नत तकनीकों को निर्बाध रूप से अपनाने में सक्षम बनाने के लिए कार्यबल को बेहतर बनाने की तत्काल आवश्यकता को रेखांकित करती है। इन बाधाओं को दूर करने के लिए, अध्ययन में साझा प्रौद्योगिकी केंद्र स्थापित करने, प्रौद्योगिकी के लिए बजट आवंटन बढ़ाने, उद्योग-अकादमिक सहयोग को मजबूत करने और स्मार्ट विनिर्माण को व्यापक रूप से अपनाने के लिए सहकर्म नीतियों

को लागू करने के लिए सार्वजनिक-निजी भागीदारी को बढ़ावा देने की सिफारिश की गई है। सीआईआई में विनिर्माण उल्लेख्य परिदृश्य के अध्ययन और जैसीबी इंडिया लिमिटेड के सीईओ और प्रबंध निदेशक दीपक शेटी ने कहा, भारत का विनिर्माण परिदृश्य एक महत्वपूर्ण परिवर्तन से गुजर रहा है, जो नवीन प्रौद्योगिकियों के तेजी से अपनाने से प्रेरित है। यह रिपोर्ट विनिर्माण को नया रूप देने वाली तकनीकी क्रांति की खोज करती है।



# मेडिकल रिप्रजेन्टिव सदाबहार करियर

जैसे-जैसे मल्टी नेशनल कंपनियां भारतीय दवा बाजार में पैर फैला रही हैं वैसे-वैसे हर कंपनी आक्रामक विपणन नीति का सहारा ले रही है। इसके लिए दवा कंपनियां मेडिकल रिप्रिजेंटिव की नियुक्ति करती हैं जो चिकित्सक, दवा कंपनियों और उनके ग्राहकों के बीच की बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण कड़ी है। इनके बिना कोई भी कंपनी अपना व्यवसाय फैला नहीं सकती।

गला काट प्रतिस्पर्धा के इस दौर में बाजार में टिके रहने के लिए कंपनियां विपणन नीति का सहारा ले रही हैं। इससे दवा कंपनियां भी अछूती नहीं हैं। भूमंडलीकरण ने इस प्रतिस्पर्धा को और बढ़ा दिया है। जैसे-जैसे मल्टी नेशनल कंपनियां भारतीय दवा बाजार में पैर फैला रही हैं वैसे-वैसे हर कंपनी आक्रामक विपणन नीति का सहारा ले रही है। इसके लिए दवा कंपनियां मेडिकल रिप्रिजेंटिव की नियुक्ति करती हैं जो चिकित्सक, दवा कंपनियों और उनके ग्राहकों के बीच की बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण कड़ी है। इनके बिना कोई भी कंपनी अपना व्यवसाय फैला नहीं सकती। लिहाजा इस क्षेत्र में भी रोजगार के बेहतर अवसर खुल रहे हैं।

मेडिकल रिप्रिजेंटिव के क्षेत्र में करियर बनाने के इच्छुक अभ्यर्थी को विज्ञान स्नातक होना आवश्यक है। लेकिन फार्मसी में डिग्री और डिप्लोमाधारी अभ्यर्थी को सभी दवा कंपनी प्राथमिकता देती है। हालांकि

इस क्षेत्र में सफलता हासिल करने के लिए डिग्री से ज्यादा धैर्य, लगन तथा वाकपटुता की जरूरत होती है। इसके साथ ही आकर्षक व्यक्तित्व, बातचीत से दूसरे को प्रभावित करने की क्षमता और सकारात्मक सोच का होना भी जरूरी है।

एक मेडिकल रिप्रिजेंटिव यानी एमआर का काम मेडिकल व्यवसाय से जुड़े, व्यवसायियों, चिकित्सकों से संपर्क कर अपनी कंपनी द्वारा उत्पादित दवाओं की गुणवत्ता बताना होता है। उन्हें इस तरह समझाना होता है कि चिकित्सक रोगियों को उन्हीं की कंपनी की दवा लिखें। एक एमआर को अपनी कंपनी की उत्पादित तमाम दवाओं की जानकारी रखना होता है और चिकित्सकों और व्यवसायियों को बताना होता है। यानी वह कंपनी और व्यवसायियों के बीच एक पुल का काम करता है। एक तरह से उसके कंधे पर कंपनी की सफलता की पूरा दारोमदार टिका हुआ है। एक एमआर को वेतन उसकी योग्यता और कंपनी के

स्तर के आधार पर मिलता है। शुरुआत में एक एमआर को 5 से लेकर 15 हजार रुपए तक मिलते हैं। इसके अलावा वाहन, यात्रा भत्ता, हाउसिंग और सुविधाएं अलग से मिलती हैं। देश के कई संस्थानों में मेडिकल प्रशिक्षण और फार्मा मार्केटिंग मैनेजमेंट, बैचलर ऑफ फार्मसी और डिप्लोमा इन फार्मसी के कोर्स कराए जाते हैं। इनमें से कुछ प्रमुख संस्थान इस प्रकार हैं-

- हमदर्द कॉलेज ऑफ फार्मसी, मदनगौर, दिल्ली।
- कॉलेज ऑफ फार्मसी, पुष्प विहार, महरोली, दिल्ली।
- महिला पॉलीटेक्निक, महारानीबाग, नई दिल्ली।
- बनारस हिंदू विश्वविद्यालय, वाराणसी।
- बॉम्बे कॉलेज ऑफ फार्मसी, मुंबई, महाराष्ट्र।
- बिहार कॉलेज ऑफ फार्मसी, अनिसाबाद, पटना, बिहार।

## सफलता का आईना हो आपका रिज्यूमे

नौकरी प्राप्त करने का पहला कदम रिज्यूमे प्रेषित करना होता है। आपका रिज्यूमे आपकी सफलता का आईना हो, जिसमें सब कुछ स्पष्ट दिखे। वह केवल आपकी सफलता ही नहीं, बल्कि आपके कार्य-इतिहास के बारे में भी सब कुछ कहे, ताकि नियोजता को कहीं कोई शंका न रह जाए।

आज के प्रतिस्पर्धा भरे माहौल में आपको दूसरों से अलग बनानी है आपकी सफलताएं। यहां हम आपको कुछ टिप्स बता रहे हैं, ताकि आपके रिज्यूमे में आपकी सफलताएं भली-भांति प्रदर्शित हों। जहां प्रतिस्पर्धा बहुत ज्यादा बढ़ चुकी है, वहां केवल योग्यता और कार्यानुभव के दम पर अच्छी नौकरी पाना आसान नहीं है। ऐसे में आपकी छोटी-बड़ी सफलताएं ही हैं, जो आपको अन्य लोगों से आगे रखती हैं। आप किसी कंपनी के लिए कितने तरीके से लाभदायी सिद्ध हो सकते हैं, इस बात को अब नजरअंदाज नहीं किया जा सकता और इसे बताने के लिए जरूरी है कि आपका रिज्यूमे बेहतरीन तरीके से तैयार किया जाए, जो आपको साधारण आवेदक की श्रेणी से विशेष की श्रेणी में पहुंचाएगा।

उत्तरदायित्वों को पेश करें  
अपना रिज्यूमे तैयार करने का एक बढ़िया तरीका है कि आप शब्दों का चयन चतुराई से करें। यहां तक कि जब आप अपने कार्य उत्तरदायित्वों की बात करें तो उन्हें ऐसे पेश करें कि वे आपकी सफलताएं नजर आए। मिसाल के तौर पर..

पहले- उत्तरी क्षेत्र में सेल्स की जिम्मेदारी।

अब- समूचे उत्तरी क्षेत्र के सेल्स प्रमुख।

देखिए कैसे 'जिम्मेदारी' की जगह 'प्रमुख' क्रिया का इस्तेमाल करते ही रिज्यूमे आपकी जो छवि बनाता है, उसमें कितना अंतर दिखाई देने लगा है। अगर एक रिज्यूमे में सिर्फ आपके उत्तरदायित्वों का ही जिक्र होता है तो किसी भी कंपनी को यह बिल्कुल समझ में नहीं आता कि आप असल में करते क्या थे! साथ में उन्हें बमुरिक्ल ही पता चल पाता है कि आप उनके लिए क्या कर सकते हैं। इस बात का खास ख्याल रखें कि अपनी रोजमर्रा की जिम्मेदारियों को बताने के लिए दमदार क्रिया-शब्दों जैसे लेड, इनीशिएटिव, स्पीयरहेड, कंट्रोल, एक्सेलरेटिव, अटेंड, कॉन्सिच्युलाइज्ड, कडवेट, डिवाइस, डायरेक्ट, ड्रापेट, एक्जीक्यूटिव, एन्हांस, परस्टेब्लिश आदि का इस्तेमाल करें। इन शब्दों के माध्यम से आपकी छवि एक सक्रिय कर्मचारी की बनेगी और कंपनी पर सकारात्मक प्रभाव पड़ेगा। जब आप यह कहेंगे कि आपको क्या हासिल हुआ, बजाए इसके कि आप क्या संभालते थे तो आपकी छवि एक उत्तरदायी और पहल करने वाले कर्मचारी के रूप में बनेगी, न कि सिर्फ ऐसे व्यक्ति के रूप में, जो केवल दिया हुआ काम ही पूरा करता है।

जिम्मेदारियों के बारे में बताएं

किसी कंपनी को यह बताना भी बेहद महत्वपूर्ण है कि आप अपने काम को कितने अच्छे तरीके से संभालते हैं। इसके लिए भी आपको 'रिस्पॉन्सिबल फॉर' से कुछ अधिक कहना होगा, जैसे..

पहले- कंपनी में एमआईएस इंटरफेस की जिम्मेदारी।

अब- नए मार्केट्स की तलाश और क्लाइंट्स को बेहतर सेवा देने के लिए एमआईएस के साथ तकनीकी तरक्की के लिए कार्य (इंटरफेस)।

पहले जो रिज्यूमे में लिखा गया है, उससे कंपनी के दिमाग में यह बात स्पष्ट नहीं होती कि आप कितने प्रभावी तरीके से अपनी जिम्मेदारी संभाल रहे थे, वहीं दूसरे मामले में 'इंटरफेस' शब्द ने आपको एक सक्रिय आवेदक के रूप में प्रस्तुत किया है। इस तरह किसी भी कार्य के साथ जुड़ने ने यह दिखा दिया है कि आपका इसमें क्या योगदान रहा और यही आपकी सफलता भी है। साथ ही इससे कंपनी को यह भी समझ में आ गया कि भविष्य में आप किस प्रकार से उन्हें योगदान दे सकते हैं। दरअसल हम एक बेसिक रिज्यूमे में अपने संपर्क की जानकारी, अपना उद्देश्य, अपने बारे में जानकारी, कार्यानुभव, अतिरिक्त गतिविधियां और दूसरी जानकारी देने में काफी जल्दबाजी करते हैं। हम अक्सर ऐसी जगह आकर रुक जाते हैं, जहां हमें वास्तव में अपनी वर्तमान कंपनी में अपने योगदान का जिक्र करना चाहिए। एक दमदार रिज्यूमे का मुख्य तत्व 'प्रमाण' होता है। प्रमाण इस बात का कि आपने रिज्यूमे में जो कुछ भी कहा है, आप उसकी इज्जत रखेंगे - और यह प्रमाण आपके वाइटल स्टेटस में होता है, जिसमें तथ्य व आंकड़े या परिणाम दर्शाने वाले कथन होते हैं। ये सब आपके वर्तमान कार्य को दर्शाते हैं व आपको एक सफल व कार्य करने के इच्छुक कर्म के रूप में साबित करते हैं।

## जब भटक जाए करियर प्लान

कॉलेज डिग्री के बाद आप कॉर्पोरेट जगत में अपना प्रोफेशनल जीवन शुरू करते हैं। इसके लिए आप इंटरव्यू की तैयारियां भी पूरे मनोयोग से करते हैं, जहां 'आप पांच वर्ष में खुद को कहा देखते हैं?' जैसे प्रश्नों की आप खास तैयारी करते हैं। लेकिन पांच या दस वर्ष बाद आपकी महत्वाकांक्षाएं कितनी पूरी हो पाती हैं? क्या आप अपनी प्रगति से संतुष्ट होते हैं या आपको लगता कि यदि एक और मौका मिले तो आप अपने प्रयास कुछ अलग तरीके से करना चाहेंगे? जब करियर लक्ष्य पूरे न हों तो निराशा होनी स्वाभाविक होती है; फिर जरूरी हो जाता है कि आप अपनी मौजूदा स्थिति का आकलन करें और करियर ग्राफ को ऊपर ले जाने के लिए भावी योजना की रूपरेखा कुछ बार फिर तैयार करें।

निराशा से जुझना - क्या शुरुआत में वह नौकरी आपके हाथ से निकल गई थी जिसे आप सचमुच प्राप्त करना चाहते थे, और क्या आपका मौजूदा कार्य आपको तरक्की करने के पूरे मौके नहीं दे रहा और क्या कोई नया ऑफर भी आपकी ओर नहीं आ रहा, या फिर कई नौकरियां बदलने के बावजूद आप वहां नहीं पहुंच पा रहे हैं।

पहुंचने की आपने उम्मीद की थी, और इन सबके अलावा अर्थव्यवस्था का कठिन दौर भी आपके खिलाफ जा रहा है? कई बार आपके सच्चे प्रयासों के बाद भी परिस्थितियां शुरू से ही आपके विपरीत रहती हैं। फिर भी, यहां यह ध्यान रखना होगा कि आप जो रास्ता पार कर चुके हैं, उस पर आप वापस तो नहीं



जा सकते, लेकिन भविष्य की तैयारी अपने अनुसार जरूर कर सकते हैं।

पुनर्ग्रहण - तो यदि आपको लगता है कि आपके करियर चार्ट में कुछ कमी है तो उसका सही आकलन करें - क्या यह वह बुनियादी हुनर है जिसकी कमी से आप बड़ी परियोजनाओं का हिस्सा नहीं बन पा रहे हैं या कोई सॉफ्ट स्किल है जो महत्वपूर्ण कार्य संबंधों को आपसे दूर रख रहा है? इसके बाद, उपरोक्त कमियों को दूर करने के लिए जरूरी प्रशिक्षण के बाद की परिस्थितियों का भी आकलन करें। यह भी जरूरी है कि आप अपने करियर के मौजूदा दौर में प्रशिक्षण की महत्ता को समझें।

फोकस बदलें - आपने अपनी सारी ऊर्जा एक ही दिशा में लगा दी थी, परंतु वह आपके काम नहीं आई। तो अब समय आ गया है कि आप आगे बढ़ें और अन्य दिशाओं में अपने प्रयास शुरू कर दें। इसका मतलब करियर की दिशा में परिवर्तन नहीं होता, बल्कि मौजूदा कार्य के साथ नई जिम्मेदारियां उठाना, जिनमें आपको कुछ नए हुनर सीखने की जरूरत हो। याद रखें कई बार विपरीत परिस्थितियों में नए अवसर छुपे होते हैं; एक अदद निराशा को अपने समूचे करियर को नुकसान न पहुंचाने दें।

खुद पर भरोसा - दुविधा के समय अपने निर्णयों पर सवाल करना अक्सर एक प्राकृतिक क्रिया होती है; परंतु जरूरी है कि अपनी सोच और क्षमताओं पर विश्वास डगमगाना नहीं चाहिए। गलत नौकरी या विपरीत परिस्थितियों का शिकार होना ही आपके बारे में नहीं बताता। इसलिए, अपनी जमीन पर जमें रहें।

## कैसे पाएं प्रोमोशन

फर्ज करें आपके बॉस, आपके बॉस के बॉस और अन्य कंपनी एग्जीक्यूटिव्स एक साथ बैठकर आपके बारे में विचार कर रहे हों। इस दौरान वह आपके कार्य चरित्र, आपकी लीडरशिप क्वालिटीज, आपके प्रोजेक्ट्स, आपके अधीनस्थों, आपके द्वारा प्राप्त नतीजों और गत वर्ष के दौरान आपकी परफॉर्मंस के बारे में चर्चा करते हैं। यह समिति एक बहुत महत्वपूर्ण नतीजा लेती है- आपको तरक्की मिलनी चाहिए या नहीं? बेशक आपके संस्थान में इस कार्य से जुड़ा कोई अनौपचारिक तरीका न हो, लेकिन इस तरह की प्रक्रिया कम्प्लेक्स प्रत्येक छोटी या बड़ी कंपनी में होती है। दरअसल, इस प्रक्रिया के दौरान कुछ ऐसा होता है- प्रत्येक मैनेजर अपनी पसंद के प्रत्याशी को तरक्की प्राप्त करने के सबसे बड़े उम्मीदवार के तौर पर पेश करता है। उस समय समिति के अन्य सदस्य यह जानना चाहते हैं कि ऐसा क्यों है।

इसलिए ऐसे समय आपको एक ऐसे मैनेजर का सहयोग होना चाहिए जो आपके बारे में सही छवि पेश कर सके। आपके मैनेजर के साथ अन्य ऐसे मैनेजर्स और एग्जीक्यूटिव्स भी होंगे जिन्होंने आपके साथ काम किया है, वह भी अपने विचार रखेंगे। इसलिए यह जरूरी हो जाता है कि वह आपको सकारात्मक और असरकारी रूप सामने रखें। जाहिर है जब प्रत्येक मैनेजर अपने प्रत्याशी के पक्ष में बात सामने रखेगा, उस समय प्रतिस्पर्धा बहुत सख्त हो जाएगी। प्रत्याशियों की संभावना तरक्की के बारे में अधिकांशियों के बीच यह मंत्रणा ईमानदार और कड़वी भी हो सकती है। यदि आपको कोई पसंद नहीं करता, तो वह भी ऐसे समय स्पष्ट हो जाता है। कई बाद हालात उस समय सचमुच बिगड़ जाते हैं जब अपने प्रत्याशी को किसी भी कीमत पर तरक्की दिलाने पर उत्तारू कोई मैनेजर अन्य प्रत्याशियों की बढ-चढ कर बुराईय करने लगता है। तो तरक्की पाने का आपका मौका तब अधिक होता है जब आपको -

- हाई परफॉर्मंस रिव्यूज मिले हों।
- आपने दिए गए सभी लक्ष्य प्राप्त कर लिए हों।
- आपने भावी सभी लक्ष्यों को प्राप्त करने की शुरुआत कर दी हो।
- आपने टीम के कार्य पूरे कर दिए हों।
- कंपनी को बचत करने की विधि बताई

हो।  
- अतिरिक्त कार्यों की जिम्मेदारी ली हो।  
- नए संबंध स्थापित किए हों।  
- कार्य के दौरान ज्यादा देर तक काम किया हो।  
परंतु कुछ बिंदु आपके खिलाफ भी जा सकते हैं यदि -  
- समिति में सब आपको, आपके कार्य और उपलब्धियों से परिचित न हों।  
- मंत्रणा के दौरान यदि ज्यादा लोगों ने आपके पक्ष में न बोला हो।  
- आप दफ्तर की राजनीति से दूर रहते हों यानी आप समूचे 'खेल का हिस्सा' न हों।  
- आपने दिए गए कार्य से अतिरिक्त कुछ और न किया हो।  
- यदि नीति निर्धारक आपसे प्रभावित न हों और कम ही लोग आपके पक्ष में बात रख रहे हों।  
यदि प्रोमोशन नहीं मिलती तब?  
यदि ऐसा होता है तो तुरंत-फुरत अपने रिज्यूमे अन्य स्थानों को भेजने न शुरू कर दें। इससे अनुभव लें और अगली बार के लिए तैयार रहें। कुछ उपाय-

बॉस से सही फीडबैक लें

प्रोमोशन से जुड़ी मीटिंग की अधिकाधिक जानकारी प्राप्त करने का प्रयास करें। आपके बॉस बेशक ऐसे समय कुछ बातें आपको नहीं बताएं, परंतु फिर भी वह बिना नाम लिए जरूरी जानकारी आपको दे सकते हैं।

अपनी कमियों को भी जाहिर करें

रक्षात्मक न बनें। अपनी कमियों को दूर करने के लिए अपने बॉस के साथ काम करें। उदाहरण के लिए, यदि वरिष्ठ समूह कहता है कि आप वित्तीय मामलों में अधिक मजबूत नहीं हैं, तो कर्हें कि आप इस विषय में प्रशिक्षण लेने को तैयार हैं।

अगली मीटिंग का इंतजार न करें

यह कभी न सोचें कि आपका कार्य अपनी पहचान खूद बनेगा। आपका लक्ष्य होना चाहिए कि मीटिंग रूम में सब को आपकी उपलब्धियों का पहले से पता हो। इसके लिए कंपनी के हित में आपके कार्य के बारे में नीति निर्माताओं को समझाने के लिए अतिरिक्त प्रयास करें।

तरक्की प्राप्त करने से जुड़े तीन उपाय

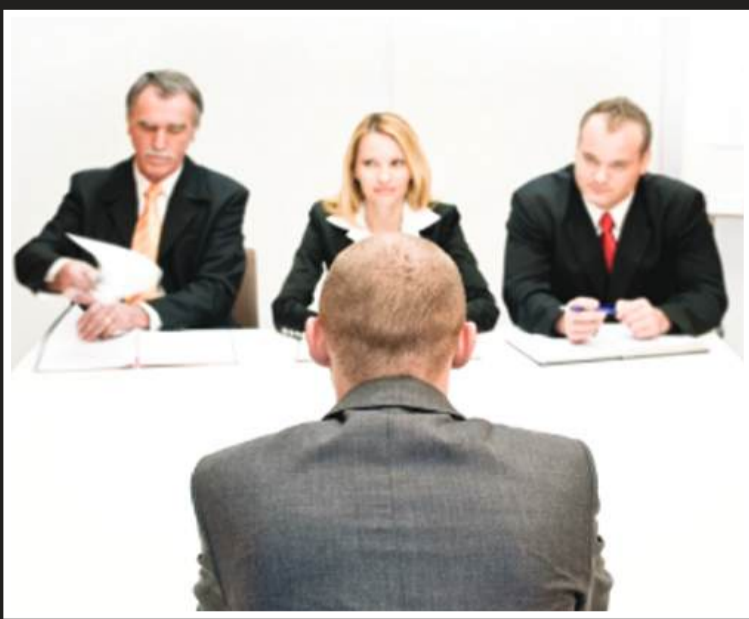
चूंकि अब आप जानते हैं कि इस दौरान 'खेल' खेला जाता है, तो प्रोमोशन प्राप्त करने से जुड़े कुछ उपाय जानिए।

बॉस को करें तैयार

इस बात पर ध्यान दें कि आपके बॉस के पास



अप्रेजल का समय आने को है। इसके बहाने आप अपने कार्य की समीक्षा स्वयं भी कर सकते हैं। तो शुरुआत कीजिए इस कार्य की जो आपको इस वर्ष तरक्की के मार्ग पर आगे बढ़ाने जा रहा है। बता रहे हैं जोल गार्फिकल





NEWS BOX

**'It's why we've got five-day Tests and really stick it up those who want four days!' – Mitchell Starc**

New Delhi. With Australia refusing to declare before Day 4 ended and their tail wagging for 55 runs for the 10th wicket, the MCG Test set itself up for an exciting Day 5, even as Nathan Lyon and Scott Boland continued to frustrate India. But Mitchell Starc speaking to ABC Cricket stressed this was exactly why Test matches needed to be 5 days long, as it built towards an enthralling contest.

"We've got 98 overs tomorrow. This why we've got five days for a Test match and really stick it up those who want four days!" Starc told ABC, even as an impatient restless cricket world has been brewing thoughts of making Tests into 4-day affairs. Suggestions are dime a dozen to truncate the longest format send cut it by a day, but Starc was clearly no fan of this brainwave. The Border-Gavaskar Trophy series has seen some exciting last sessions across venues from Adelaide to Brisbane, with drama pouring out in the last hour or over too. There was a smite of a chance that India dawdled and let things drift in the last hour on Day 4, not risking a bat. But concerns are swelling in Australia over

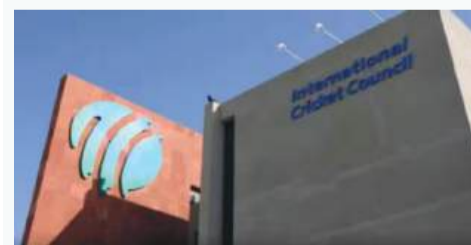


fitness of their bowling ace, Mitchell Starc, who received continuous treatment for his back problem, while he bowled in the first innings. The physio was stationed at the fine leg boundary, and Starc was even slow on a long shot attempt at a catch. Mitchell Starc however would tell ABC he wasn't stressed about what would be solid workload on Monday, Day 5: "It's not something that is bothering me. My pace is up ... If I need to bowl 20 (overs) tomorrow, I'll bowl 20." When asked if Australia should've chanced a declaration and bought itself more time and overs to enforce a win, Starc said, "You'll have to ask Pat Cummins... you'll have to ask the braintrust." Clearly, the Aussies reckoned there was something in the Melbourne pitch that could see Indians go after the total. At any rate, reports say MCG could witness over 40,000 trooping in on a Monday to watch the exciting final day, reiterating Starc contention that 5 days are worth spending over for a Test match.

**ICC Names First List Of Emerging Cricketers Of The Year Awards 2024**

New Delhi. The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Saturday unveiled the first wave of nominees for the ICC Awards 2024, spotlighting the emerging talents in men's and women's cricket. These nominees for the Emerging Men's and Women's Cricketer of the Year awards have made significant impacts over the past year, showcasing their skills in a year filled with international competition, as per ICC. With a host of exceptional new talent thriving on the international stage, the Emerging shortlists span eight nations, and are packed with elite performers from all formats of the game.

A hugely competitive field in the ICC Emerging Men's Cricketer of the Year sees four strong contenders vie for the accolade. England's Gus Atkinson enjoyed a memorable start to his Test career, and is joined on the shortlist by Pakistan's multi-format run-scorer Saim Ayub, West Indies pacer Shamar Joseph and record-breaking Sri Lankan batter Kamindu Mendis. Elsewhere, the ICC Emerging Women's Cricketer of the Year pits four leading short-format talents against each other for the coveted title. Comprising the nominees are South African all-rounder Annerie



Derksen, Scotland's Saskia Horley, India's Shreyanka Patil and Ireland's Freya Sargent, after all left a significant mark on international competition in 2024. More information about each of the nominees can be found in the news section of the ICC website. The ICC Awards 2024 comprises 12 individual awards, with shortlists in nine categories being revealed by the ICC between 28 and 30 December. Shortlists have been drawn up by a specialist panel of cricket writers and broadcasters, who selected the nominees according to on-field performances and overall achievements in international cricket throughout the calendar year. Fans are now able to vote for their favourite Emerging players at www.icc-cricket.com, with other categories unlocked as further nominees are revealed by the ICC over the next two days. Fan voting results will be combined with selections made by a prominent panel of international cricket media - the ICC Voting Academy - to identify the winner in each of the shortlisted categories.

**Rise of women's sports, in crowd, spirit**

**Riding the wave of 2023, the year 2024 has seen visible growth with attendance at venues multiplying and endorsements too climbing. More is to come in 2025.**

CHENNAI. It was the semifinal day of the 2024 Women's Asian Champions Trophy in Rajgir. Conventionally speaking, Bihar is not known for anything related to the sport. Odisha followed by Jharkhand and to a certain extent Chennai have come to be known as the centers of hockey when it comes to hosting in recent times. However, the roar the crowd let out when the ground announcer started introducing the Indian players at the Rajgir Sports Complex in late November would tell you that the state of Bihar had embraced the sport like never before. It is not just hockey, women's sports in India are slowly and steadily gaining the imagination of people. The crowd at various sporting events are an indication of what is to unfold in the coming years. Female athletes, who have played in front of empty chairs in the not-so-distant past feel this is one of those watershed moments they never thought they

would witness in their careers. Take Harmanpreet Kaur, for example, the current captain of the national side played in the 2013 ODI World Cup hosted in India. The fixtures were played across two cities, Mumbai and Cuttack, on five grounds. Despite Wankhede Stadium being within walking distance, the Indian team played their matches at the Cricket Club of India's Brabourne Stadium. The final of the ICC event was played at the same venue with empty stands and minimum fanfare. Ten years later, in March 2023, Kaur led Mumbai Indians to their title in the inaugural season of the Women's Premier League at the same venue in front of a packed house. "It was a great experience for all of us, we were waiting for this moment for so many years. I think everybody enjoyed in our dressing room. It feels like a dream, I think not only for me but for everyone here, even for the crowd also. So many people were asking us, "when the WPL is going to come?" and today that day is here and I'm so happy and so proud that our team did so well," Kaur had said after the final in Mumbai.

When the season expanded in two cities in the 2024 edition, the two iconic venues M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru and Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi showcased their love for the game. Royal Challengers Bengaluru's final home game of the season fetched a crowd of over 26k spectators at the Chinnaswamy Stadium, while the final of the competition saw close

to 30k loud audience in New Delhi. One must notice that these were the ticketed matches and even though the prices of those tickets were not as high as their men's counterpart competitions are, still spectators were ready to pay some amount of money to



watch these fixtures.

Apart from adding to the marketability of women's sports and athletes, these increased numbers have also motivated the players and put a different challenge in front of them. The crowd has well and truly made a difference for the teams in crucial events. India's hockey captain Salima Tete who played in Rajgir admits to the same. "The international hockey tournament was happening in Bihar for the first time, and it was a great experience for us as a team. We didn't expect that much crowd, but they were there to support India. I think it gives you added

motivation, especially since these many Hockey admirers were on the ground to watch us play," she told this daily.

Other than the attendance at the ground, viewing numbers over TV and OTT platforms have skyrocketed over the years.

The 39% increase in the Dedicated Global Audience views in the 2024 edition of WPL is one of the biggest indications of that. While there is no gender-specific data available, with over 17 crore viewers tuning in across digital and linear platforms, the 2024 Paris edition was the most-watched Olympic Games in India's history. That could be a watershed moment for many sports going forward. The trends we are currently witnessing in India are in line with the revolution many sports are witnessing all over the World. Almost two million fans attended the Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand - up by more than 600,000 from the previous record. Elsewhere in the USA, The average attendance for the 2024 Women's National Basketball League season was 9,807, the highest in 22 years - a 48% increase from the previous season. The league also witnessed 154 sellout games in 2024, which was a 242% increase from the 2023 season.

What has made this growth possible is the dedicated investments in the sport, giving players the facilities to show their talent and at the same time, making the sports-watching experiences spectator-friendly.

**IND vs AUS: What is the highest successful run-chase in Melbourne Tests**

The ongoing Boxing Day Test between India and Australia at the Melbourne Cricket Ground has been on a knife-edge. The game has ebbed and flowed throughout. Australia dominated in their first innings after Sam Konstas set the tone with a quick-fire 65. Usman Khawaja and Marnus Labuschagne carried the momentum with knocks of 57 and 72 respectively.

But it was Steve Smith's 140 that propelled Australia to 474. Later, Yashasvi Jaiswal's 82 laid the platform for India. Although India lost a few quick wickets, Washington Sundar and Nitish Reddy's 127-run stand for the eighth wicket kept India afloat. The 21-year-old Reddy carried on and scored 114 runs, bringing India's deficit down to 105 runs.

On Day 4, Jasprit Bumrah became the fastest Indian pacer to reach the landmark of 200 wickets in Tests. But Australia's lead is past the 200-run mark. With the target growing, how much can India chase down? Let's have a look at what history suggests.

Big challenge for India  
England hold the record for the highest successful run-chase in the history of Test cricket at the MCG after they tracked down 332 back in 1928. Out of 34 successful chases in Melbourne, England (8) and Australia (21) have achieved it as many as 29 times. Back in February 1953, South Africa chased down 295 to win by six wickets. As far as teams



from the sub-continent are concerned, only India achieved the feat once, back in December 2020 when they tracked down 70 to win by eight wickets. In the 21st century, barring India, only the Proteas are in the list of successful chases at the MCG by a visiting team after they chased down 183 to win by nine wickets.

Not impossible for India  
There have been 19 successful run-chases in the history of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, out of which India have featured 12 times. Nine out of the top 11 chases belong to India. In Australia, India have chased down a 200-plus target twice and a 300-plus target once.

The historic Brisbane Test in January 2021 where India tracked down 328 remains the all-time successful chase in the history of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Back in 2003, India chased 230 at the Adelaide Oval after Rahul Dravid's double century in the first innings.

**Jasprit Bumrah fastest Indian to take 200 Test wickets**

MELBOURNE. Pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah on Sunday became the second fastest Indian along with Ravindra Jadeja to complete 200 Test wickets and the first bowler ever to reach that milestone with a sub-20 average during the fourth day's play of the fourth Test against Australia here.

The milestone came after he took four wickets in Australia's first innings and then dismissed Travis Head for 1 in their second innings on Day 4, marking his 200th Test wicket in just his 44th Test match. The recently retired Indian spinner Ravichandran Ashwin was the quickest among Indians to have taken 200 wickets, a feat that he achieved in his 37th Test.

Among all bowlers who have crossed the 200-wickets mark in Test cricket, Bumrah is the only bowler with an average of under 20 which includes some of the fearsome fast bowlers from the West Indies such as Malcolm Marshall (376 wickets at 20.94), Joel Garner (259 wickets at 20), Curtly Ambrose (405 wickets at 20.99) as well as England's James Anderson (704 wickets at 26.45) and even Glenn McGrath (563 wickets at 21.64).



Ashwin is ranked third in the overall list of bowlers who were fastest to take 200 Test wickets, behind two leg-spinners -- Pakistan's Yasir Shah (33 Tests) and Australia's Clarrie Grimmett (36 Tests). The dismissal of Head was followed by that of

Mitchell Marsh's (0), caught behind the wicket, as Bumrah took his wickets tally in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy to 28. He had earlier dismissed opener Sam Konstas (8) for his first wicket in Australia's second innings.

**India's Koneru Humpy crowned World Rapid Chess Champion for historic second time**

India's Koneru Humpy scored a decisive win over Irene Sukandar in the final round on Sunday to clinch the World Rapid Chess Championship title for the second time in her career.

New Delhi. Indian Grandmaster Koneru Humpy won a historic second title at the World Rapid Chess Championship, emerging victorious in the tournament in New York on Sunday, December 29. Humpy has become only the second chess player after Ju Wenjun of China to win the title in the women's section more than once. Koneru Humpy, 37, sealed the title when she defeated Irene Sukandar with the black pieces in the final round. It was a decisive win for the Indian Grandmaster, who needed nothing less than a win in the ultimate battle.

The Indian No. 1 finished on top of the standings with 8.5 out of 11 points in an incredible display in the World Rapid

Championship. This is her second title in the format after her victory in 2019 in Moscow. Later, the 18-year-old Volodar Murzin of Russia bagged the corresponding title in the men's section. Murzin is the the second-youngest



FIDE World Rapid Champion, after Nodirbek Abdusattorov, who claimed the title at 17. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and former Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju were among the ones to congratulate Koneru on her historic achievement. It's been a sensational year for

India as Koneru Humpy's rapid world title comes weeks after D Gukesh won the Chess World Championship in the classical format. Gukesh became only the second Indian man after Viswanathan Anand to win the prestigious crown. She first made a mark in the tournament in 2012 when she secured a bronze medal in Moscow. In 2019, she reached the pinnacle of success by clinching the championship in Batumi, Georgia, where she defeated China's Lei Tingjie in a nerve-wracking Armageddon game.

Beyond her rapid chess accolades, Humpy has also excelled in other formats. She earned a silver medal at the 2022 Women's World Blitz Chess Championship and came close to winning the Women's Candidates Tournament in 2024, finishing with another silver.

**Australia keeper ruled out of series due to injury, Starc provides fitness update**

IND vs AUS: Australia wicketkeeper-batter Josh Inglis has been ruled out for the remainder of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Cricket Australia announced the development on Sunday, 29 December after Inglis suffered a calf strain.

Melbourne. Australia have been hit by a slight injury crisis in the Melbourne Test match of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Wicketkeeper-batter Josh Inglis has been ruled out of the series due to a calf strain and will not be taking further part in the series, Cricket Australia announced on Sunday, 29 December.

Inglis is the only keeper in the side, bar Alex Carey, and the injury comes as a big blow for

the Australian side, who will be left one short in that position going into the final Test match of the series in Sydney. Australia have not announced a replacement for the player, but are expected to draft in either Beau Webster or Nathan McSweeney as a specialist batter. Drafting either McSweeney or Webster will provide Australia choices in case they do not play Mitchell Marsh in the final Test of the series. Marsh has been a walking wicket throughout the 4 Tests so far against India and has not bowled a lot as well.

Apart from Inglis, there are concerns over Mitchell Starc's fitness as well. The pacer bowled through pain on Day 3 of the Boxing Day Test match. Starc did not take the ball on Day 4 of the game, with Pat Cummins, Scott Boland and Nathan Lyon finishing off the job of taking India's final wicket. Starc was questioned about his fitness on Day 4 of the Test match and said that



everything was fine. The fast bowler had suffered a back issue while bowling on Day 3 of the MCG Test. Starc played down his injury concerns and said that everything was good as he was bowling at 140k throughout his spells. All good. My pace didn't drop so I'm all good," Starc said.

The seriousness of his injury had remained unclear at the end of Day 3. Scott Boland had spoken about the pacer and had said that the pacer would be fine in the near future.

"He's okay. I think he's just had a bit of a niggle in his back or rib, but he came out after the (tea) break and was bowling 140 (kph) so I think he'll be fine," Boland told reporters.

Speaking to the ABC, Boland added: "Playing a Test match is pretty hard on your body and he's played all four Tests so far. I think he's just a little bit stiff in his back." "I think he's underrated for how tough he is. A couple of years ago here at the MCG he had a broken finger and we were planning for him not to bowl at all -- and then he came out and bowled 140k swingers." Boland had said.



# Shakti Kapoor Joined Bigg Boss To 'Stay Away' From Alcohol For Shradddha Kapoor

'Wanted To Prove...'

Veteran actor Shakti Kapoor has always been known for his larger-than-life personality, both on and off-screen. However, his appearance on Bigg Boss Season 5 in 2011 had a deeply personal motive tied to his daughter, Shradddha Kapoor. The actor revealed that Shradddha had encouraged him to abstain from alcohol, prompting his decision to join the reality show as a contestant. Shakti Kapoor stayed on the show for 28 days before being evicted as the fifth contestant.



In an interview with Rediff.com shortly after his stint, Shakti shared that his participation wasn't driven by the desire to win but by a promise to his children. "I was not there to win but to prove to my children that I can stay away from alcohol for a month. I am proud that I could prove that," he said. Shakti's commitment paid off, as his children and wife were thrilled with his efforts. Shradddha, in particular, expressed her admiration in a heartfelt way. "Now my daughter Shradddha says that she wants to be born as my daughter even in her next life," Shakti shared, reflecting on the emotional bond with his family. The actor also spoke about how his wife, Shivangi Kapoor, was equally impressed by his conduct during the show. "My wife is also proud of me and the way I have conducted myself on the show. She said that she loves me more than she ever loved me. So I told her that I will take her for another honeymoon,"

he added humorously. While Shakti Kapoor has significantly reduced his on-screen appearances in recent years, he did return in 2023 with a role in Sandeep Reddy Vanga's Animal, starring Ranbir Kapoor. Despite his limited presence in films, his legacy as one of Bollywood's most iconic comic and villainous actors remains intact.



## Aishwarya Rai's Jodhaa Akbar Lehenga Displayed At Academy Museum: 'All Hail Queen'



Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, a global icon and one of the most celebrated faces of Indian cinema, continues to make waves internationally. Her unforgettable performance as Jodhaa Bai in Ashutosh Gowariker's 2008 epic Jodhaa Akbar left an indelible mark on cinema lovers. The film's grandeur, storytelling, and intricate costumes transported audiences to a historical era of splendor. Recently, the red wedding lehenga worn by Aishwarya in the film made its way to the prestigious Academy Museum, earning praise from fans worldwide. The Academy took to its social media handle on December 24 to pay tribute to the iconic costume. Referring to it as "a lehenga fit for a queen, designed for the silver screen," the post celebrated the craftsmanship of designer Neeta Lulla. "Aishwarya Rai Bachchan's red wedding lehenga is a feast for the eyes: vibrant zardozi embroidery, centuries-old craftsmanship, and a hidden gem—quite literally. Look closely, and you'll spot a peacock, India's national bird, made entirely of jewels," read the caption.

Fans were overjoyed to see Indian cinema receiving recognition on such an international platform. "Finally, iconic Indian movies are getting featured on The Academy page," one user commented, while another praised Aishwarya's role in bringing global attention to Bollywood's artistry. "So academy finally recognised Aishwarya Rai Movie," a third user said. A fourth user wrote, "All Hail Queen." The lehenga, with its intricate zardozi embroidery and jewel-encrusted peacock motif, stood as a testament to India's rich cultural heritage and craftsmanship. Designed by Neeta Lulla, the ensemble was more than a costume—it was a work of art that reflected the essence of Jodhaa Bai's regal character. Jodhaa Akbar featured Hrithik Roshan as Emperor Akbar and earned widespread acclaim for its grand sets, compelling performances, and A. R. Rahman's memorable music. Fans have long regarded the film as a masterpiece, and the inclusion of Aishwarya's costume in the Academy Museum reinforces its legacy. Fans continue to celebrate this moment, hailing it as a win for Indian artistry on the world stage.

## Akshay Kumar, Abhishek Bachchan And Others Starrer Housefull 5 Shoot Completed



Akshay Kumar starrer comedy drama Housefull 5 shoot has been completed today. The makers shared the wrap photos on social media which have gone viral. Fans have also reacted to it. The film also features Riteish Deshmukh, Abhishek Bachchan, Shreyas Talpade, Chunky Panday, Jacqueline Fernandez, Nargis Fakhri, and more. Taking to their Instagram handle, Nadiawala Grandson shared a series of photos and wrote, "That's a wrap for Housefull 5! A rollercoaster of emotions, filled with laughter, hard work, and unforgettable memories. Get ready to laugh your hearts out on 6th June 2025 in cinemas near you!! #SajidNadiawala's #Housefull5. Directed by @tarun\_mansukhani". Akshay Kumar is missing from the photos. One of the fans wrote, "Housefull 5 biggest blockbuster loading." Another wrote, "Where is akki paaji."

Recently, Akshay Kumar addressed reports of an eye injury sustained on the set of his upcoming film, Housefull 5. The actor humorously assured fans and media about his well-being during a press conference. When asked about the injury, Akshay playfully responded, "I can see you," with a thumbs-up, quipping that his vision remained unaffected. For those unaware, reports from Hindustan Times revealed that the incident occurred during a stunt sequence in Mumbai. An object unexpectedly hit Akshay's eye, causing an injury. A specialist was immediately called to examine him, and his eye was bandaged. Although advised to rest, Akshay quickly returned to the set to resume shooting, ensuring the film's schedule wasn't delayed.

Known for his commitment, Akshay took only a brief break while the team proceeded with other cast members' scenes. The actor's dedication has always been a hallmark of his career, and this instance further reinforced his work ethic. Housefull 5 is highly anticipated by fans, as it marks the continuation of one of Bollywood's most successful comedy series. The buzz around the film has already begun, with fans eagerly awaiting the release of its first look.

Akshay Kumar's quick recovery and return to work have reassured his fans, showcasing his professionalism and resilience. With Housefull 5 in its final stages of production, audiences can expect another laughter-filled entertainer from the franchise that has delivered consistent box-office hits.

# Bhumi Pednekar's Hunt For Chole Bhature In Delhi Is So Relatable

Bhumi Pednekar is an ultimate foodie. Recently, the actress decided to try the quintessential Delhi street snack -Chole Bhature. Well, we don't blame here. The pipping hot bhature served with spicy chole has the power to take your tastebuds on a joyride. And, for Bhumi, it was no different. The actress has dropped a video of herself exploring the vibrant streets of the



National capital under the cold winter sun along with her team members to search for the Best Chole Bhature. In the clip, Bhumi could be heard saying, "I can't believe I'm once again on the streets of another city trying to find food. I think I have come to Nirula's after almost 10 years. I want chole kulche, but I can't believe they're not available!" She then makes a sad face and says, "We have no time, we really have to go and get it." The clip ends with the actress relishing over a hot tempting plate of Chole Kulche at a famous restaurant in Delhi,

while her teammate is seen holding a plate of Chole Bhature. "I've craved this. Just the best," Bhumi concluded the video. She wore a black sweatshirt paired with blue jeans and white sneakers. The video caption reads, "On the streets to find chole bhature."

As soon as the video was shared online, it captured the audience's attention. Bhumi's sister Samiksha Pednekar commented, "Yummm!!" Another one wrote, "Come to my home I make the best ever!!", while many users recommended different places to try the Best Chole Bhature in the National capital. Meanwhile, on the work front, the actress last appeared in the thriller film Bhakshak. Helmed by Pulkit, the film was backed by Shah Rukh Khan's production banner Red Chillies Entertainment and received good responses from fans and critics alike.

She will be next seen in an untitled romantic comedy film alongside Arjun Kapoor and Rakul Preet Singh. Any new update regarding the film is still awaited.

Bhumi will be making her web series debut with Daldal in which she will be seen playing a cop. Filming of the series is already completed. It will be released on Prime Video next year. Apart from this, she also has another web show titled The Royals opposite Ishaan Khatter. The show also features celebs like Nora Fatehi, Chunky Panday, Sakshi Tanwar, Dino Morea and Milind Soman.

