



The Researchers'

NEWS BOX

NYPD's new rules on high-speed chases focus on public safety

NEW YORK. New York City's police department is curbing its use of high-speed chases after finding that about one-quarter of more than 2,200 initiated by officers last year led to a collision, property damage, physical harm or death. A new policy effective Feb. 1 will limit vehicle pursuits to only the most serious and violent crimes, barring them for traffic infractions, violations and nonviolent misdemeanors. Officers will also have to take into account whether a pursuit would pass through a residential neighborhood or near a school or playground, Commissioner Jessica Tisch said. They will have discretion to terminate chases if they do not feel it can be continued safely.

Last October, a bicycle rider was struck and killed by a pickup truck that police were chasing after a suspected robbery in Queens. The NYPD's enforcement efforts must never put the public or the police at undue risk, and pursuits for violations and low-level crimes can be both potentially dangerous and unnecessary, Tisch said in a statement. The advanced tools of modern-day policing make it possible to apprehend criminals more safely and effectively than ever before, making many pursuits unnecessary. Of 2,278 pursuits last year, about two-thirds involved a vehicle fleeing a traffic stop. Many of those would not be allowed under the new policy, the NYPD said. The department said it will train all uniformed officers in the new policy and conduct monthly reviews to ensure it is being followed. It will also issue an annual report tracking compliance.

According to 911 data obtained by the website Streetsblog NYC, vehicle chases spiked from 15 in January 2022 to 227 in January 2024. Police made more than 100 pursuits each month from July 2023 to September 2024, the last month for which data was available, according to the site.

Cuba starts freeing prisoners a day after the US said it would lift terror designation

HAVANA. Cuba started releasing some prisoners Wednesday as part of talks with the Vatican, a day after President Joe Biden's administration announced his intent to lift the US designation of the island nation as a state sponsor of terrorism.

More than a dozen people who were convicted of different crimes and some of them were arrested after taking part in the historic 2021 protests, were released during the day, according to Cuban civil groups following the cases of detainees on the island.

Among those freed was tattooist Reyna Yacnara Barreto Batista, 24, who was detained in the 2021 protests and convicted to four years in prison for attacks and public disorder. She was released from a prison in the province of Camaguey and told The Associated Press that eight men were also freed along with her. On Tuesday, the US government said it notified Congress about the intent to lift the designation of Cuba as part of a deal facilitated by the Vatican. Cuban authorities would release some of them before Biden's administration ends on Jan. 20, officials said. Hours later, the Cuban foreign ministry said the government informed Pope Francis it would gradually release 553 convicts as authorities explore legal and humanitarian ways to make it happen.

Havana did not link the prisoners' release to the US decision on lifting the designation but said it was "in the spirit of the Ordinary Jubilee of the year 2025 declared by His Holiness," referring to the Vatican's once-every-25-year tradition of a Jubilee, in which the Catholic faithful make pilgrimages to Rome.

The Cuban Observatory of Human Rights, one of the civil groups, said that by 4 pm EST, 18 people had been released, including Barreto Batista.

"At three in the morning they knocked," Barreto Batista told the AP over the phone. "I was sleeping (in the cell) and they told me to gather all my things, that I was free." She said that she and the eight men were warned it was not a pardon or forgiveness and that they had to be on good behavior or they could be sent back to prison. "I am at home with my mother," she said. "The whole family is celebrating."

Now on the list of at-risk monuments & sites: The moon

World. For years, the World Monuments Fund has sought to draw attention and resources to endangered cultural heritage sites including Machu Picchu in Peru, temples in Cambodia and the old city of Taiz in Yemen. But this year's list of at-risk sites goes much further afield: to the moon.

"The moon seems so far outside of our scope," said Benedicte de Montlaur, the organization's president and chief executive. "But with humans venturing more and more into space, it is the right time to get ourselves organized."

Concerned that the space race could exacerbate space debris and expand tourism in orbit and beyond, the group named the moon as one of the 25 endangered sites on its 2025 World Monuments Watch. The other sites on the list, endangered by challenges like climate change, tourism, conflict and natural disasters, include Gaza, a damaged historical building in Kyiv, and eroding coastlines in Kenya and the US. With a growing number of wealthy people going to space and more govts pursuing human spaceflight, the group warns that more than 90 important sites on the moon could be harmed. In particular, researchers are worried about Tranquillity Base, the Apollo 11 landing site where astronaut Neil Armstrong first stepped onto the moon's surface.

"The moon doesn't belong to anybody," de Montlaur said. "It is a symbol of hope and the future." For almost 30 years, the World Monuments Fund has received nominations for its watch list from heritage experts around the world. The list is an educational and promotional tool serving the nonprofit's other efforts to preserve cultural heritage.

Biden demands Constitution amendment to end presidential immunity in jab at Trump

Washington. President Joe Biden used his farewell address to the nation Wednesday to deliver stark warnings of an "oligarchy" of the ultra-wealthy taking root in the country and of a "tech-industrial complex" that is infringing on Americans rights and the future of democracy. Speaking from the Oval Office as he prepares to hand over power Monday to President-elect Donald Trump, Biden seized what is likely to be his final opportunity to address the country before he departs the White House to spotlight the accumulation of power and wealth in the US among just a small few. "Today, an oligarchy is taking shape in America of extreme wealth, power and influence that literally threatens our entire democracy, our basic rights and freedoms, and a fair shot for everyone to get ahead," Biden said, drawing attention to a dangerous concentration of power in the hands of a few ultra-wealthy people. Dangerous consequences if their abuse of power is left unchecked."

Invoking President Dwight Eisenhower's warnings about the military-industrial complex when he left office in 1961, Biden added, "I'm equally concerned about the potential rise of a tech-industrial complex that could pose real dangers to our country as well." Biden used his 15-minute address to offer a model for a peaceful transfer of power and without mentioning Trump by name raise concerns about his successor. It marked a striking admonition by Biden, who is departing the national stage after more than 50 years in public life, as he has struggled to define his legacy against the return of Trump to the Oval Office. The president warned Americans to be on guard for their freedoms and their institutions during a turbulent era of rapid technological and economic change. His speech in the Oval Office is the latest in a series of remarks on domestic policy and foreign relations that were intended to cement his legacy and reshape Americans' grim view on his term. Earlier



in the day, he heralded a long awaited ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas, which could end more than a year of bloodshed in the Middle East. "It'll take time to feel the full impact of what we've done together but the seeds are planted, and they'll grow, and they'll bloom for decades to come," Biden said, tacitly acknowledging that many Americans say they have yet to feel the impacts of his trillions of dollars in domestic initiatives. Biden sounded the alarm about

oligarchy as some of the world's richest individuals and titans of its technology industry have flocked to Trump's side in recent months, particularly after his November victory. Billionaire Elon Musk spent more than \$100 million on helping Trump get elected, and executives like Meta's Mark Zuckerberg and Amazon's Jeff Bezos have donated to Trump's inaugural committee and made pilgrimages to Trump's private club in Florida for audiences with the president-elect.

While Biden criticized social media companies for retreating from fact-checking on their platforms, Trump's incoming communications director and press secretary were sharing posts on X that falsely claimed it was a prerecorded speech. The incumbent president has blamed his poor standing among the public on misinformation on social media and the challenges he has faced reaching voters in the disaggregated modern media ecosystem.

Chinese Billionaire Gifts Cash To Hometown Villagers As Thank You For Funding His Education Years Ago

World. In a heartwarming gesture, Richard Liu Qiangdong, the billionaire founder and former CEO of Chinese e-commerce giant JD.com, has moved the residents of his hometown by announcing that he would distribute gifts to them, ahead of the Chinese New Year. According to the South China Morning Post (SCMP), his generous gesture includes a significant cash gift of 10,000 yuan (approximately \$1,400) to each villager aged 60 and above, as well as a variety of gifts such as food, clothes and home appliances for every household, worth thousands of yuan in total.



at China Renmin University, the villagers rallied together, pooling their resources to fund his tuition fees. Their combined contribution included 500 yuan (\$70) and 76 eggs.

Born into a family struggling financially in Guangming village, Mr Richard's journey to success was paved by the collective support of his fellow villagers. According to SCMP, in the early 1990s, when Mr Richard left for Beijing to pursue his higher education

This kindness left a lasting impression on Mr Richard. So, upon achieving success, he returned to his village in 2016 and began his gift-giving tradition. He reportedly gifted each elderly villager a substantial sum and

sent gifts worth thousands of yuan to each family, including food, clothes and home appliances. This year, Mr Richard continued his philanthropic efforts. His team asked the villagers to submit their household registry and identity documents to ensure the smooth distribution of gifts.

Overwhelmed by his generous gesture, the villagers expressed their deep appreciation, acknowledging that no one had ever shown such kindness towards them. "Liu came last year, too, bringing down jackets and food. He's always been thoughtful, and we are truly grateful," said Xu, a local farmer.

Another 71-year-old villager reflected on the billionaire's ongoing support, saying, "Even if he doesn't give us presents in the future, we will always remember what he's done for us. He has worked hard for his success, and we're thankful for his contributions."

Israeli President Issac Herzog Calls On Cabinet To Approve Gaza Ceasefire Deal

Tel Aviv. Israeli President Isaac Herzog called on the Cabinet to approve the ceasefire agreement reached with Hamas on Wednesday night. Saying that the state had "failed in its duty" to prevent the October 7 attacks, "Now, we have an obligation to take a step toward righting this. I offer my support to the Prime Minister and the negotiation team in their efforts to finalize this deal and call upon the Cabinet and the Government of Israel to accept and approve it when presented--bringing our sons and daughters home," Mr Herzog said. "This is the right move. This is an important move. This is a necessary move. There is no greater moral, human, Jewish, or Israeli obligation than to bring our sons and daughters back to us--whether to recover at home, or to be laid to rest."

Mr Herzog added, "Let there be no illusions. This deal--when signed, approved, and implemented--will bring with it deeply painful, challenging, and harrowing



moments. It will also present significant challenges. This is not a simple situation; it is among the greatest challenges we have ever known."

Asserting that Israeli society is "much stronger than we imagine," Mr Herzog insisted "The decision must be clear and unequivocal--We save them. We free them. We bring them home urgently, down to the last one."

After describing the sacrifices of soldiers since October 7, Mr Herzog said, "At great cost in blood, through enormous security, diplomatic, and societal efforts, we have created a moment of opportunity. We must seize it. Our nation has an open, bleeding wound that cannot heal until all our sisters and brothers return to their homeland." The most contentious aspect of the agreement is the phased nature of the hostage release. The deal calls for the release of 33 hostages -- women, children, the elderly and the sick. Negotiations for the release of the remaining hostages will take place during the second phase if the ceasefire holds. Critics fear the remaining hostages will be held indefinitely. At least 1,200 people were killed, and 252 Israelis and foreigners were taken hostage in Hamas's attacks on Israeli communities near the Gaza border on October 7. Of the 95 remaining hostages, more than 30 have been declared dead. Hamas has also been holding captive two Israeli civilians since 2014 and 2015, and the bodies of two soldiers killed in 2014.

US inflation rises for third straight month, grows at fastest pace since July

Washington. US inflation accelerated last month as prices for gas, eggs, and used cars rose, yet underlying price pressures also showed signs of easing, bolstering hopes that the Federal Reserve could still cut its key interest rate this year. The consumer price index rose 2.9% in December from a year ago, Wednesday's report from the Labor Department showed, up from 2.7% in November. It was the third straight increase after inflation fell to a 3 1/2 year low of 2.4% in September. Yet excluding the volatile food and energy categories, so-called core inflation declined to 3.2% after remaining frozen at 3.3% for three months. Economists pay close attention to core prices because they typically provide a better guide of inflation's future course. The report presents a mixed picture, with consumers still grappling with high prices for essentials such as groceries, housing, and some services such as air fares. At the same time, increases in apartment rental prices are slowly easing and clothing costs barely rose last month. If core prices continue to match December's



pace, inflation should move closer to the Fed's 2% target.

The report shows that core inflation "is on the downside," said Mike Skordeles, head of US economics at Truist, a bank. "If the trends continue, the Fed might still end up cutting at some point." Some likely one-time price spikes pushed up overall inflation, with gas prices jumping 4.4% just in December. Prices at the pump have risen by much less since then, moving up 7 cents on Wednesday from last month to \$3.09 a gallon. Grocery prices had slowed for most of last year but began accelerating in the fall, rising 0.4% in September, 0.5% in November and 0.3% last month. Egg prices jumped 3.2% in December and are up 36.8% from a year ago. An outbreak of avian flu is

decimating many chicken flocks, reducing egg supply. On a monthly basis, consumer prices rose 0.4% in December, the biggest increase since last March. Core prices climbed just 0.2%, after four months of 0.3% increases, a positive sign that some price pressures could be cooling a bit. The slowdown in core price increases was greeted with relief on Wall Street, with the Dow Jones industrial average surging nearly 700 points, or 1.6%, in early trading. Many economists and investors are worried that inflation has become stuck above the Fed's 2% target after a steady decline in 2023 and for much of last year. Such concerns have sent interest rates on Treasury securities higher, which has also pushed up borrowing costs for mortgages, cars, and credit cards, even as the Fed has cut its key rate. The increase in overall consumer prices underscores that inflation remains sticky, even as the threat of potentially inflationary policies from the Trump administration, such as universal tariffs and mass deportations of unauthorized migrants, looms.

US short seller Hindenburg Research winds down: Been the adventure of lifetime

World. Hindenburg Research, the US short-selling firm that shook billionaire Gautam Adani's empire and wiped out billions from his companies, is shutting its doors, founder Nate Anderson revealed on Wednesday. Announcing the decision, Anderson in a note said that running the firm has "been the adventure of a lifetime". "The plan has been to wind up after we finished the pipeline of ideas we were working on," Anderson wrote in a heartfelt note. "That day is today." Since its founding in 2017, Hindenburg Research has gained a reputation for exposing fraud, corruption, and mismanagement across industries. Reflecting on the firm's achievements, Anderson shared, "We shook some empires that we felt needed shaking."

slick salesperson. I don't know any of the right clothes to wear. I can't play golf." Early on, the firm faced three lawsuits and financial difficulties that left Anderson on the brink of eviction, with a newborn child at home. "It is very easy to succumb to negative thoughts and believe what others think of you, especially when things feel low. But it is possible to shatter all of that. I was passionate about this, and I let that carry me forward despite my fears and insecurities." He credited his resilience and the support of his family, friends, and a dedicated team of 11 for transforming Hindenburg into a powerhouse of financial scrutiny.



investigative threads and edits even in his sleep. While deeply fulfilling, the relentless pressure led him to realise the need for a change.

Anderson described starting the firm without a traditional finance background, financial resources, or industry connections. "When I started this, I doubted I was capable," he admitted. "I didn't have a traditional finance background. None of my relatives are in this field. I went to a state school. I'm not a

"They are all smart, focused, and fun to work with. Little to no ego," he said, describing his colleagues as "ruthless assassins" when it came to their work but kind and collaborative otherwise. Anderson described the intensity and all-encompassing nature of running the firm, often finding himself consumed by

Ultimately, Anderson explained, the decision to close Hindenburg was a deeply personal one. "There is not one specific thing--no particular threat, no health issue, and no big personal issue," he clarified. Instead, he cited a desire for relief and the need to move on to new chapters. "Early on, I felt I needed to prove some things to myself. I

have now finally found some comfort with myself, probably for the first time in my life." Anderson also shared plans to open-source the knowledge and processes Hindenburg developed over the years. "In the past several years we've been flooded with thousands of messages from many of you asking how we do what we do," he said.

"So over the next six months or so, I plan to work on a series of materials and videos to open-source every aspect of our model and how we conduct our investigations." In closing, Anderson expressed gratitude to his wife, family, friends, team, and readers who supported him along the way. "To my wife, you have been so patient with me. To my family and friends, I'm sorry for the times I have ignored you while I let my attention be drawn away. Lastly, I want to express how grateful I am to our readers. Your messages of kindness and encouragement through the years have gone a long way to helping give us the strength to continue," he said.

ISRO Makes History with Successful Docking of Two Indian Satellites in Space

New Delhi: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has etched its name in history by successfully docking two Indian satellites in space on Thursday morning, marking a significant milestone in India's space exploration efforts. The achievement came on ISRO's fourth attempt, solidifying India as the fourth nation to accomplish this complex task. The docking took place 475 kilometers above Earth's surface, as part of the SpaceDeX mission, which was launched on December 30, 2024, aboard the PSLV C60 rocket. In a post shared on X, ISRO provided details of the successful docking process: "Spacecraft docking successfully completed! A historic moment. Let's walk through the SpaDeX docking process: Manoeuvre from 15m



to 3m hold point completed. Docking initiated with precision, leading to successful spacecraft capture. Retraction completed smoothly, followed by rigidisation for stability. Docking successfully completed." This remarkable success was achieved using ISRO's indig-

enous docking system, further highlighting the agency's technological advancements. Prime Minister Narendra Modi took to social media to congratulate the ISRO team, saying, "Congratulations to our scientists at @isro and the entire space fraternity for the successful demonstration of

space docking of satellites. It is a significant stepping stone for India's ambitious space missions in the years to come." This accomplishment positions India among the global leaders in space technology, opening new possibilities for future space exploration and satellite missions.

Jharkhand HC Sets 4-Month Deadline for Civic Elections



Ranchi: The Jharkhand High Court has given the state government a four-month deadline to conduct civic elections, following a contempt petition filed over delays in holding the polls. Justice Anand Sen, during the hearing, expressed dissatisfaction with the state's failure to comply with a previous court order mandating elections within three weeks. The state government explained that the process to determine reservation eligibility for backward classes, known as the "triple test," is nearing completion at

the district level, with only a few districts remaining. However, the government cited delays in obtaining the voter list from the Election Commission as a key factor in the postponement. Despite these explanations, the court was critical, referencing past rulings by both the Supreme Court and the High Court that stressed civic elections should not be delayed for the completion of the triple test. The court noted that the government's failure to hold the elections as directed constituted contempt of court.

ISM Dhanbad Launches Refresher Training Program for Coal India Executives



Dhanbad: Refresher Training Program kicked off for the second batch of Coal India Limited (CIL) executives on Thursday at IIT (ISM) Dhanbad. The event was inaugurated by Prof. Sukumar Mishra, Director of IIT (ISM), alongside Prof. JK Pattanayak, Ex-Officiating Director, Prof. Sandeep Mondal, Head of the Department of Management Studies & Industrial Engineering, and faculty members. The program, led by Dr. Shikha Singh and Dr. Preeti Roy, focuses on equipping executives with vital skills for navigating the rapidly evolving business environment. As industries face increased volatility and complexity, the course aims to enhance decision-making capabilities and promote organizational excellence. Prof. Mishra emphasized IIT (ISM)'s strong partnership with CIL and highlighted the importance of continuous learning in addressing both technical and strategic challenges. The curriculum is tailored to tackle issues like climate change, carbon reduction, and evolving regulations, offering participants practical insights into managing industrial projects and adapting to technological advancements. This initiative strengthens the collaboration between academia and industry, fostering sustainable development in the energy sector.

DPS Bokaro Students Shine in IAPT Exams, 5 Qualify for Next Level



Bokaro: Five students from Delhi Public School (DPS) Bokaro have achieved remarkable success in the National Standard Examinations (NSE), organized by the Indian Association of Physics Teachers (IAPT) in collaboration with the Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education. Shivam Ojha (Class IX) qualified in the National Standard Examination in Junior Science (NSEJS), while Aryan Kumar (Class XII) excelled in the National Standard Examination in Biology (NSEB). Aarush Ranjan (Class X), Kumar Anmol (Class XI), and Aarush Banerjee (Class XII) succeeded in the National Standard Examination in Astronomy (NSEA). This achievement marks the highest success rate for any school in Jharkhand in the IAPT 2024-25 Exams. The five students, having qualified for the Indian National Olympiads in their respective subjects, will now move to the next level of examinations in early February. Those who succeed in the Level II exams will represent India in the International Olympiads, school authority informed. Principal Dr. A.S. Gangwar congratulated the students, praising their dedication and wished them success in the upcoming challenges.

Rajni Devi Leads Indefinite Fast for Compensation and Jobs



by Ashok Kumar

Loyabad: Rajni Devi, under the banner of the Jharkhand Democratic Revolutionary Front, has begun an indefinite fast near the main gate of Bansjoda Deco Company, demanding employment and compensation for local villagers and farmers. Devi and her supporters previously staged a one-day dharna near Area Five Sijua on 22 July 2024, to bring attention to their demands. The BCCIL management had assured them of action, but to date, no employment or compensation has been provided. Devi emphasized that the fast would continue until the BCCIL and Deco Company meet their demands for fair compensation and job opportunities for the villagers and farmers.

SAIL Supplies 4,000 Tonnes of Special Steel for INS Nilgiri, Bolstering India's Defense Capabilities

New Delhi: In a significant contribution to India's defense capabilities and the vision of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' and 'Make in India,' Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), the country's largest public sector steelmaker, has supplied the entire 4,000 tonnes of special steel required for the construction of INS Nilgiri. The ship, a powerful addition to the Indian Navy, was commissioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 15 January. The steel provided by SAIL includes DMR 249A grade hot-rolled (HR) sheets and plates, with contributions from its plants in Bokaro, Bhilai, and Rourkela. The Bokaro Steel Plant supplied approximately 2,000 tonnes of HR sheets and plates, while the Bhilai and Rourkela plants contributed 1,600 tonnes and 400 tonnes, respectively. INS Nilgiri is the lead ship of the Nilgiri-class Project P17A frigates, designed and



constructed by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) for the Indian Navy. These advanced guided missile frigates are 149 meters long, with a displacement of 6,670 tonnes and a maximum speed of 28 knots. The Navy had ordered a total of seven stealth frigates under the P17A project, with four built by MDL and three by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE). SAIL's role in supplying the

steel for the P17A project underscores its critical support to India's defense indigenization efforts. Notably, SAIL has previously provided special steel for other prominent defense projects, including the construction of INS Vikrant, further solidifying its position as both a major steel manufacturer and a trusted partner in national defense initiatives.

Kite-Flying Event to Promote Road Safety Awareness



by Ravi Phillips

Dhanbad: As part of National Road Safety Month, an awareness program was conducted at Sri Sri Lakshmi Narayan Trust Mahila Mahavidyalaya (SSLNT) College on January 16, 2025. The event aimed at educating children and teachers about traffic rules and road safety. Senior Superintendent of Police Hrideep P. Janardanan, District Transport Officer Diwakar C. Dwivedi, and Superintendent of Police Traffic Arvind Kumar Singh addressed the gathering, encouraging participants to follow traffic rules and spread awareness among their families and friends. The event included the distribution of booklets and an oath-taking ceremony on road safety. The second phase of the program saw the participation of officials, including Dwivedi, Singh, and Motor Vehicle Inspector Abhay Kumar, as they flew kites at Ranghir Verma Stadium, sending a visual message about road safety to the public. Other officials present included Motor Vehicle Inspectors Shubham Kumar and Harish Kumar, District Road Safety Manager Sunil Kumar, and traffic police personnel.

Former Minister Shivkumar Beriya Refuses FIR in Kanpur Land Grab Case, to Approach Court

by Sunil Bajpai

Kanpur: In the ongoing AP Feni land grab case in Kanpur, former Samajwadi Party minister Shivkumar Beriya has declined to file an FIR against those involved in the illegal sale of Nazul land. Despite meeting with Police Commissioner Akhil Kumar, Beriya chose not to submit an application for a case, opting to take the matter to court instead. Beriya, who purchased two plots of land worth crores, claims to have paid 80 lakh rupees based on the circle rate. He fears losing the money if an FIR is filed. However, the police warn that if Beriya does not act against the accused, he could be made a defendant in the case, which involves illegal land transactions. The SIT investigating the case has already arrested three individuals, including Salim Biryani. Two FIRs have been filed in connection with the 500-crore land encroachment case. Beriya's refusal to cooperate may lead to further complications for him, as the investigation continues.

Tejashwi Criticizes CM Nitish Kumar at Karyakarta Darshan in Gaya

by Rahul Kumar

Gaya: Tejashwi Yadav, leader of the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), launched a sharp attack on Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar during his visit to Gaya for the Karyakarta Darshan cum Samvad program at the Mahabodhi Cultural Center in Bodhi Gaya on Thursday. Addressing a gathering of party workers, Yadav accused the state government of wasting billions on the Chief Minister's Pragati Yatra with no tangible outcomes. "Despite Bihar being one of the poorest states, enormous funds are being spent on the Pragati Yatra, but there is no visible progress," Yadav said. He further criticized the Chief Minister, claiming that Nitish Kumar's Yatra involved retired government officials and offered no real interaction with the public, allowing corruption to flourish unchecked. Yadav also referenced a report by Niti Aayog, highlighting that Bihar ranks

highest in both unemployment and poverty. "Students, youth, and citizens are suffering from rising inflation, while criminals operate freely and farmers continue to face hardships," he added. Taking aim at Nitish Kumar's shift in stance on Bihar's statehood, Yadav remarked, "This is the same Nitish Kumar who once demanded special status for Bihar and promised a padyatra if it wasn't granted. Today, he has abandoned that cause and is silent on the issue, clearly defeated and worn out." The former Deputy Chief Minister also criticized the two ministers who reportedly guide Nitish Kumar's actions, accusing them of lacking vision for the state's development. He further mentioned that RJD's tenure saw happiness among students and job candidates, contrasting it with the current situation where candidates are reportedly being beaten at Gandhi Maidan.

GTTC Trainee Teachers to Showcase Talent at Annual Sports Meet

Ranchi: The Government Teacher Training College (GTTC) Institute of Advanced Studies in Education is gearing up for its annual sports week, set to take place on 21 January. Trainee teachers from the 2023-25 and 2024-26 sessions will showcase their athletic skills in various competitions. The sports groups for this event have been organized by session leaders: Albert Ekka Group (2024-26) led by Abhishek Singh, Jaipal Singh Munda Group by Ranjit Bharti, Birsa Munda Group by Pradeep Soren, Veer Buddhu Bhagat Group by Robin Murmu, and others from the 2023-25 session. Dr. Sameer Chaudhary, Assistant Professor of Yoga and Sports, announced that the sports week would be inaugurated by the Prin-

icipal of the college, Alka Jaiswal, also the Regional Education Deputy Director for North Chotanagpur Division. Competitions will include both outdoor sports like cricket, volleyball, athletics, kabaddi, and shot put, as well as indoor games such as badminton and chess. The event aims to encourage teamwork, sportsmanship, and skill development among trainee teachers. Notable athletes from Jharkhand, who have made their mark at national and international levels, will also guide the participants throughout the week. Dr. Chaudhary emphasized the importance of developing knowledge of the games, team spirit, and sportsmanship, with support from faculty members including Dr. Raman Jha, Dr. Ritesh Mahato, and others.

IIT-ISM Extends Warm Welcome to Delegation of Uttarakhand under Yuva Sangam Initiative

Dhanbad: IIT (ISM) Dhanbad welcomed a delegation of 50 young participants from Uttarakhand as part of the Yuva Sangam initiative, a program by the Ministry of Education under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat. The five-day cultural exchange program was inaugurated at the Golden Jubilee Lecture Theatre, with Prof. Sukumar Mishra, Director of IIT (ISM), addressing the delegation and emphasizing the importance of such initiatives. The program, which officially begins on January 17, 2025, will provide the Uttarakhand youth an opportunity to explore Jharkhand's rich cultural heritage, natural beauty, and industrial capabilities. Prof. MK Singh, Dean



(Academics), SK Gupta, Dean (Students Welfare), and Prof. Sanjeev Anand Sahu, Jharkhand State Nodal Officer for Yuva Sangam, also attended the event, highlighting the significance of the exchange. The itinerary includes visits to Ranchi's Raj Bhavan, JHARCRAFT Centre, and Pahadi Temple on January 17-18,

followed by insights into industrial missions at IIT (ISM) Dhanbad. The delegation will also tour the Lodna and Moonidih coal mines on January 20 and explore the Damodar Valley Corporation's Hydro Power Project on January 21. The program will conclude with a valedictory session before the delegation heads back to Roorkee.

This exchange, aimed at fostering unity and understanding between the youth of Jharkhand and Uttarakhand, follows a similar visit by 43 Jharkhand youth to Uttarakhand in late 2024. Prof. Sahu noted that the participants would gain exposure in five key areas: tourism, traditions, development, people-to-people connect, and technology.

Temple tours, tridents, PPE Kits: Symbolism takes center stage in Delhi poll nominations

This symbolic move underlined the party's focus on women's welfare and their votes, especially in light of recent initiatives like the Mahila Samman Nidhi and the extension of free bus rides for women.



Recent initiatives like the Mahila Samman Nidhi and the extension of free bus rides for women. Kejriwal's roadshow culminated in a visit to Hanuman Mandir at Connaught Place and a Valmiki temple, where he sought blessings before filing his nomination—a ritual he has diligently observed ahead of major political or legal challenges, including elections, court appearances, and summons from central agencies. Over the years, Kejriwal has consciously projected himself as a devout Hanuman devotee, aligning with AAP's soft Hindutva approach. This strategy blends welfare politics with subtle religious undertones to counter the BJP's hardline stance. Meanwhile, BJP's Parvesh Verma also embarked on what his office described as a "spiritual journey" before filing his nomination. He sought blessings at the Gauri Shankar Temple in Chandni Chowk, the

Hanuman Mandir in Connaught Place, and the Maharishi Valmiki Mandir. However, Verma's "spiritual journey" took a dramatic turn into hardline Hindutva optics when he brandished a trident and a mace while standing atop his vehicle during his nomination rally. The spectacle drew significant attention, reinforcing the BJP's ideological stance. In a contrasting display of symbolism, 27-year-old transgender candidate Rajan Singh filed his nomination to contest against Delhi CM Atishi from the Kalkaji constituency. Singh donned the attire of Ardhanarishwar, the half-man, half-woman form of Lord Shiva, to honour and symbolise their transgender identity. Singh criticised the AAP government, stating, "The AAP government has neglected the needs and rights of the transgender community." In the Shahdara constituency, AAP candidate and Padma Shri awardee Jitender Singh Shunty brought his unique brand of activism to the forefront. Donning a PPE kit, Shunty highlighted his relentless relief work as a frontline worker during the COVID-19 pandemic. Before filing his nomination, Shunty visited a cremation ground and smeared himself with ashes, a tribute to his role in handling over 70,000 cremations during the pandemic. Known as the "Ambulance Man" and "Corona Warrior," Shunty's tireless efforts to alleviate suffering during the crisis have earned him widespread respect.

NEW DELHI. Traffic in New Delhi constituency came to a standstill this morning—not due to waterlogging or VIP movement, but as political heavyweights filed their nominations for the upcoming assembly polls. Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal led the charge, who held a grand roadshow alongside his wife, Sunita. In a departure from his usual style, Kejriwal incorporated a "ladies first" approach to the spectacle, with scores of women supporters taking the front row. This symbolic move underlined the party's focus on women's welfare and their votes, especially in light of

Not even celebrities are safe in Maharashtra: Oppn leaders slam state government after attack on Saif Ali Khan

MUMBAI. The knife attack on Bollywood actor Saif Ali Khan by an intruder shows that not even celebrities are safe in the state, and Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has failed to maintain law and order, Opposition leaders said on Thursday. "No one is safe. Let alone ordinary people, even celebrities who have their own security are not safe," said Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut.

Khan is a Padma Shri recipient and had recently met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Delhi along with his family, Raut noted. Police in the state are mostly deployed for the security of politicians, "especially those who defect", Raut said, adding, "There is no fear of law. The government stands exposed." Speaking to PTI Video, Congress spokesperson Atul Londhe said the law and order situation has deteriorated in the state, and the incidents in Beed -- where a village sarpanch was brutally killed for allegedly thwarting an attempt to extort money from an energy firm -- showed that the administration is working for anti-social elements.



If people like actors Saif Ali Khan and Salman Khan who live in high-security zones were being attacked and needed to install bullet-proof windows, it means nobody trusts the government, the Congress leader said. A bullet-proof glass panel was recently installed outside the balcony of Salman Khan's Bandra flat. Two members of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang had opened fire outside Salman's house last April. "If such big people are not safe, what about common people? Even the hometown of Home Minister Devendra Fadnavis has witnessed many murders and rapes in last ten days," he said, referring to Nagpur. Chief Minister Fadnavis also holds the home portfolio. "It clearly indicates that Fadnavis has completely failed in maintaining law and order in Maharashtra," Londhe said.

NCP (SP) Lok Sabha member Supriya Sule expressed concern over the attack on Khan, terming the incident as "worrisome." Another NCP (SP) leader and former home minister Anil Deshmukh said an attack on a big star like Saif Ali Khan was very unfortunate, and the police department should take strict action.

Modi, Shah to campaign for BJP candidates ahead of Delhi polls

NEW DELHI. The BJP on Wednesday named its 40 star campaigners for the Delhi Assembly polls, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Ministers Amit Shah and Rajnath Singh, as well as its seven chief ministers, including Yogi Adityanath.

The list also includes Purvanchali leaders, including Bhojpur stars and MPs Manoj Tiwari and Ravi Kishan, and Dinesh Lal Yadav Nirahua. Purvanchalis - people from eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar - constitute a sizeable vote bank in the national capital. Delhi will go to polls on February 5 and the results will be declared on February 8. The Union ministers named as star campaigners for the



Assembly polls are Nitin Gadkari, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Manohar Lal Khattar, Piyush Goyal, Dharmendra Pradhan, Hardeep Singh Puri and Giriraj Singh.

The seven chief ministers, who will campaign in Delhi as BJP's star campaigners, are Devendra Fadnavis, Himanta Biswa Sarma, Pushkar Singh Dhami, Yogi Adityanath, Bhajan Lal Sharma, Nayab Singh Saini and Mohan Yadav.

All the seven MPs from Delhi are also part of the list. Delhi BJP in-charge Bajjayant Panda, co-in-charge Alka Gurjar, and the party's state unit chief Virendra Sachdeva will also be star campaigners for the polls.

AAP ups ante on BJP leader's comments on Purvanchalis

NEW DELHI. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has accused BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla of publicly abusing Rituraj Jha, an AAP MLA representing the Purvanchal community. The party has announced a protest on Thursday, condemning the BJP's alleged repeated insults towards Purvanchalis. AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh criticised BJP leaders Manoj Tiwari and Giriraj Singh for their silence on the issue. He pointed to recent remarks by BJP president JP Nadda in Parliament, where he allegedly likened Purvanchalis to 'Bangladeshis' and 'Rohingyas'. Singh urged leaders from all political parties to denounce these statements and stand in solidarity with the Purvanchal community. "The BJP has systematically targeted Purvanchalis, hurling insults and branding them as outsiders. They have been

called Bangladeshis and Rohingyas, an orchestrated effort to demean them," Singh



said. He cited instances of derogatory comments from BJP leaders, noting that Purvanchalis, who hail from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Jharkhand,

have long faced discrimination. Singh highlighted that efforts to undermine the community have included deleting their votes and obstructing cultural practices such as the construction of Chhath Ghats in Delhi.

"This is not an isolated incident. BJP leaders have a history of disrespecting people from UP and Bihar, once even suggesting their only worth was to lay mats at events," Singh added.

Distancing himself from party colleague's comments, BJP MP Manoj Tiwari expressed concern over the trend of disrespecting Purvanchalis. "It has become fashionable these days to abuse Purvanchalis. In Delhi, they have made their mark through their relentless effort and dedication. I hope leaders from all parties will recognise this and refrain from making such remarks," he said.

Battle for Malviya Nagar intensifies as AAP, BJP gear up campaigns

New Delhi. As the battle for Malviya Nagar seat intensifies, the political stage is set for a fierce face-off between AAP's Somnath Bharti, a three-time MLA and his BJP rival, Satish Upadhyay, a former councillor and ex-NDMC chairperson. Both share their perspectives in conversation with 'sAshish Srivastava.



Satish Upadhyay
What are the key issues you see affecting Delhi today?

Delhi lacks proper governance under the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). They promised world-class healthcare, education, 24x7 quality drinking water, better infrastructure, clean air, a rejuvenated Yamuna, and a clean city. Arvind Kejriwal even claimed he would transform Delhi's infrastructure to match Singapore and turn the city into Paris. None of these promises have materialised. No new infrastructure, colleges, or hospitals

have been built. Sewage systems remain outdated despite the city's growing population. AAP has failed on all fronts, and these unfulfilled promises are the major issues facing Delhi. AAP has promised Rs 2,100 of monthly incentive for women. Did they actualise the scheme in Punjab or Delhi?

AAP and Congress have criticized BJP for not announcing a CM candidate. What's your

take?
We've successfully contested elections in states like Maharashtra, Haryana, and Madhya Pradesh without announcing a CM candidate. We won in these states because we focus on governance and addressing local issues. Similarly, in Delhi, we are fighting based on our track record, not on the strength of an individual face.

If BJP wins, what will be your primary development agenda for Delhi?

Our vision aligns with Modi ji's model of development and governance. We aim to implement schemes like "Har Ghar Jal" and build quality road infrastructure. Cleanliness will be a priority, with zero tolerance for poor sanitation.

We will tackle pressing issues like parking shortages and outdated sewage systems, which haven't been addressed for years. These problems will be resolved within a time-bound framework after we come to power.

Notorious 'Khan Brothers' of Siwan join Chirag Paswan's LJP(RV), eye Bihar assembly elections

► On Wednesday, the Khan brothers, along with their supporters, took membership of LJP (RV) in the presence of party chief Chirag Paswan.

PATNA. Crime and politics often go hand in hand, and this is exactly what happened when Ayub Khan and Rayees Khan, better known as the 'Khan brothers', formally joined the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), led by Union Minister Chirag Paswan, in Bihar's Siwan district late on Wednesday.

Ayub Khan and Rayees Khan, whose names once spelt terror across Bihar, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh, had initially tried to join Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal (United), but sources claimed that Nitish did not give his approval for their induction into the party. On Wednesday, the Khan brothers, along with their supporters, took membership of LJP (RV) in the presence of party chief Chirag Paswan. The Khan brothers had arranged a chopper for the party supremo for the 'Milan Samaroh' held at Sahuli High School Ground in Siwan. LJP (RV) on 'X' said, "Ayub Khan and Rayees



Khan, along with their supporters, joined the party after being inspired by Chirag Paswan's able leadership and his 'Bihar First, Bihari First' vision. This is a significant step towards commitment to the party's principles. "Rayees Khan, the younger brother of Ayub Khan, has allegedly been involved in at least 30 cases of murder, kidnapping, dacoity, and extortion across three states. The Bihar government had announced a reward for his arrest after his

name appeared in the kidnapping and murder of three youths from Siwan in 2022. In addition, he was also accused of being involved in the killing of two police personnel—B K Yadav and Ganesh Prasad Yadav—in Siwan district. "Rayees Khan's name appeared on the list of the 10 most-wanted criminals of Siwan," recalled a senior IPS officer who previously served as the SP of Siwan. In 2022, Rayees Khan unsuccessfully contested local body elections from Siwan. During the election campaign, his election vehicle was allegedly attacked by political opponents. Rayees had then accused former RJD MP Mohammad Shahabuddin's son Osama and his supporters of orchestrating the attack. Osama, along with eight others, were named as accused in the FIR lodged with the Siwan police. In the FIR, Rayees Khan alleged that bullets were fired at his vehicle with an AK-47 assault rifle with the intent to eliminate him. However, he luckily survived the attack. The

Khan brothers initially worked for Mohammad Shahabuddin's gang but parted ways after Shahabuddin's father, Mohammad Kamrul Haque, decided to contest the assembly elections in 2005.

Sources said that Shahabuddin got angry over the Khan brothers' decision and distanced himself from them. Rayees Khan was arrested from Noida, Uttar Pradesh, in 2006 after a warrant for his arrest was issued by a Siwan court. At least 30 cases of murder, loot, dacoity, kidnapping, and extortion were lodged against Rayees in different police stations of Siwan (Bihar) and Ballia (Uttar Pradesh).

Rayees recently announced that he would contest the assembly elections from Siwan. Sources close to the Khan brothers said that Rayees was lobbying for JD(U) and even held meetings with the party's working president Sanjay Kumar Jha and other senior leaders, but his efforts were in vain. He formally joined LJP (RV) in the presence of party supremo Chirag Paswan on January 15.

Trump's new term draws near amid scepticism

AS the United States readies for the inauguration of Donald Trump as its 47th President, I have a sense of déjà vu. Trump's swearing-in as the 45th President is the only presidential inauguration that I skipped since I was posted to Washington as a foreign correspondent in the final full year of the Bill Clinton presidency 26 years ago.

I skipped the ceremonies on the advice of bipartisan political contacts and reliable security sources. Behind their well-meaning advice was the primary fact that I am a journalist. My badge at the inaugural ceremonies would identify me as one. Moreover, I would be in the media enclosure near the Reflecting Pool, which, on a clear day, will reflect the swearing-in of new presidents on the steps of Capitol Hill. During that poll season which saw Trump emerging victorious, the Republicans treated the media as an enemy. This was not entirely without reason. The bulk of the US media — especially the mass subscription liberal media on the east and west coasts — was unfair to Trump throughout the campaign. He did not have a level playing field in dealings with American journalists. I am brown in complexion. Black people are an inalienable part of the US social fabric. If they are trifled with by rednecks in a city like Washington, which is predominantly black, there will be consequences for the perpetrators of white racism. Not so with the brown-skinned minuscule minority, who are also meek compared to African Americans. This also shows very visibly in the ongoing mud-slinging against H-1B immigrants. The underlying anger which culminated in the January 6, 2021, riot on Capitol Hill was already there when Trump was being sworn in for the first time. Trump began his presidency with a peeve that the US media had deliberately under-reported the crowds at his inauguration. If the most important day of a person's political life begins with a grievance against the institution of the Fourth Estate, he is likely to spend the rest of his public life undermining that institution. Never mind that the Fourth Estate is one of the pillars of democracy in the US. Trump did not succeed in this destructive mission as President. That was not for want of trying every day for four years from 2017.

But his next presidency may be different. The spate of resignations in the mainstream American media in recent weeks — including the dissolution and reconstitution of the Editorial Board of The Washington Post in October — are ominous. Partisan new owners of legacy media have chosen to kow-tow to Trump even before he has moved into the White House. Social media will mostly be the new President's facilitator instead of an outlet for free expression. Meta's latest decision to get rid of independent, third-party fact-checkers in the US is the latest assault on truth in that country.

A saving grace is that institutions in the US are strong. That is why they survived the tenure of the 45th President. Officers of the Metropolitan and Capitol Police paid with their lives to save the high-domed edifice, which is emblematic of the world over, of the oldest democracy on earth. On January 20, they will once again be prepared to offer the ultimate sacrifice to protect those they may not personally like and whom they have voted against in Washington, Maryland and Virginia, the tri-points which are similar to the National Capital Territory (NCT) surrounding Delhi. In a tribute to the strength of America's institutions, law enforcement agencies are allowing demonstrations against the incoming President. A major rally in Washington in support of Trump is also planned on the day before he takes office. It is praiseworthy that in a media briefing last week, US Secret Service spokesperson Anthony Guglielmi said such demonstrations are not being viewed as security threats and upheld the rights of people to protest. There are few other countries where this can happen. The Secret Service is the lead agency in charge of security at the presidential inauguration. Unlike the run-up to Trump's first swearing-in and the start of Joe Biden's presidency soon after the violent attack on the Capitol, fate ordained that there would be a dress rehearsal of safeguards on a presidential scale during all of last week.

Disclosure curbs enfeebling RTI law

Much remains to be done by the Supreme Court to ensure effectiveness of the Act

THE Supreme Court's recent ruling on the Right to Information (RTI) Act has invited widespread comment and much appreciation from activists. "An institution has been created," said Justice Surya Kant; he then pointedly asked Additional Solicitor General Brijender Chahar, appearing for the Union of India, "What is the use of this institution if you do not have persons to perform the duties under the law?" The Bench asked the government why only people from a specific background (bureaucracy) were the favoured few to be appointed information commissioners. "We can take judicial notice of how many people from different walks have been appointed... The entire Commission is overloaded with one set of candidates," was Justice Kant's telling comment. Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for RTI activist Anjali Bhardwaj, had pleaded, "There has been only regression and not progress after the court's intervention. They are killing the RTI because nobody is interested in giving information. So, the best way to kill the law is to render the information commissions defunct."

The intervention in question was the decision on a writ petition (civil) of 2019, of which the present ruling is a follow-up. Justice AK Sikri, a judge with high sensitivity to the nuances of the RTI Act, had referred to a report published in March 2018, titled, 'Report Card on the Performance of Information Commissions in India'. It found that eight information commissions had a waiting time of more than one year for an appeal or complaint to be heard, which was calculated on the basis of the number of appeals and complaints pending as on October 31, 2017, as against the monthly disposal rate. By not filling vacancies in information commissions in a timely manner, the Central and state governments are, in his view, frustrating the very purpose of the RTI Act as receiving information in a time-bound manner is the 'very essence' of the law. The judgment directed in Conclusion (v): "We would also like to impress upon the respondents to fill vacancies, in future, without any delay. For this purpose, it would be apposite that the process for filling of a particular vacancy is initiated one to two months before the date on which the vacancy is likely to occur so that there is not much time lag

between the occurrence of vacancy and filling up of the said vacancy." The ruling added: "We would like to place on record that aforesaid directions are given keeping in view the salient purpose which the RTI Act is supposed to serve. This Act is enacted not only to subservise and ensure freedom of speech. On proper implementation, it has the potential to bring about good governance, which is an integral part of any vibrant democracy. Attaining good governance is also one of the visions of the Constitution." Thus that writ petition was disposed. That order, followed as it is by Justice Kant's enforcement order,



no doubt merits appreciation by the public, to whom the right to freedom of speech belongs under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution, and therefore, ownership of the right to any information held by its server, which is the government that it elects.

Yet, in so lauding the judgment, it is well to remember that the apex court has much to answer for in enfeebling the exercise of this right by the citizenry, having gone so far as to exceed its own brief, which is limited, by actually amending the Act.

Former Information Commissioner Shailesh Gandhi, who served with me in the Central Information Commission (CIC) that I chaired and is now a leading RTI activist, lamented in a recent article in The Leaflet that "our right to information is being transformed into a right to deny information before our very eyes". After quoting from the Supreme Court ruling in P Ramachandra Rao vs State of Karnataka (2002), which lays down the limits of any

can be placed on the RTI while denying information on the grounds of privacy. These are defined in Article 19(2) of the Constitution and can be encapsulated in two words: 'decency' and 'morality'. Transgression of either would amount to an invasion of privacy. Yet, Justices KS Radhakrishnan and Dipak Misra have given short shrift to these limits and constricted the Act itself in a judgment repeatedly taken recourse to by those in authority seeking to deny disclosure. And so, while we might heave a sigh of relief at the stand taken to uphold the spirit of our Constitution by the SC, we should urge the revered institution that much remains to be done not only to make the instruments of enforcement — Central and state information commissions — useful but also to ensure the effectiveness of the law to uphold what has been described by the court as a constitutional right.

Workers in peril

Paying the price for employers' negligence

SITTING ducks — that's what all those nameless, faceless workers are who toil day and night on development projects across the country. Their safety is of little concern to their employers, even though the infrastructure sector continues to be a key driver of Indian economy. When 40-odd labourers were rescued from Uttarakhand's Silkyara tunnel in November 2023 — the risky operation was watched by the entire nation with bated breath — it was hoped that lessons would be learnt to ensure safer working conditions at construction sites. That hope has proved to be short-lived. Two workers were killed when a centring frame collapsed during the laying of a slab at an under-construction building in Raipur, Chhattisgarh, on Saturday. The same day, 28 workers were trapped when the shattering of an upcoming building caved in at Kannauj railway station in Uttar Pradesh. It took a 16-hour operation, involving personnel of the national and state disaster response forces and the railways, to rescue all of them. In contrast,



frantic efforts to save labourers from a watery grave in a flooded rat-hole coal mine in Assam have proved futile. Criminal negligence is at the core of such mishaps, even

as the rescuers put their own lives at risk to extricate survivors. Brazen disregard for the law by public or private entities shows enforcement agencies in a poor light. Why are the humble workers not regarded as nation-builders? Why are they left to fend for themselves? Such apathy does not behove a country that aspires to become developed (Viksit) by 2047. The Buildings and Other Construction Workers Act, 1996, puts the onus on employers to set up safety committees and ensure that steps are taken to prevent accidents. Non-compliance with provisions of the Act is a punishable offence, yet offenders rarely get their just deserts. For the hapless worker, there won't be a miraculous escape every time. He or she deserves a safety net — financial as well as physical.

Legal framework to protect digital data must be flexible

The goal of the draft DPDP Rules is to strike a balance between the right to privacy and technological advancement.

THANKS to our growing digital dependence, the majority of our personal data is now in the digital form. To facilitate the implementation of the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, which creates a framework for processing digital personal data in India, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has created the draft Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Rules, 2025.

By providing necessary details and in an effort to strike a balance between the need to process personal data for legitimate purposes and the right of individuals to protect their data, it seeks to fortify the legal framework for the protection of digital personal data. The government has given stakeholders 45 days to give inputs or comments on the draft rules. The journey of data protection legislation is intriguing. The World Economic Forum (WEF) started a project called "Rethinking Personal Data" in 2010 to deepen the collective understanding of how a principled, collaborative and balanced personal data ecosystem can evolve. The main goals of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which was created by the European Union in 2018, are to simplify the regulatory framework for international business and to improve individuals' ownership and rights over their personal data. In fact, the UK also kept the law even after breaking with the EU. Additionally, countries such as Brazil, South Korea, South Africa, Japan and Turkey — and the American state of California — adopted the GDPR as a model for protecting personal data. China's Personal Information Protection Law became operative in November 2021. In today's social media-driven world dominated by the Big Techs, data localisation is a delicate issue. Data localisation refers to actions

that restrict data flow within a jurisdiction's boundaries. Under the Data Protection Act cleared in August 2023, the Government of India had stated that it would merely inform the territories where Indian personal data cannot be taken to. Following immaculate lobbying efforts by the tech companies against a provision in an earlier draft bill that required severe localisation rules, this was viewed as a significant victory. Companies were required to keep copies of certain sensitive personal data, such as financial and health information, within India under the Data Protection Bill, which was first introduced in 2019 and later withdrawn from Parliament in 2022. Additionally, it was forbidden for companies to export any undefined "critical" personal data from India. Rob Sherman, vice-president and deputy chief privacy officer of Meta, said in 2022 that the country's data localisation regulations might make it "difficult" for the business to provide its services there. And Keith Enright, the chief privacy officer at Google, stated that norms for data localisation should be as "narrowly tailored as possible".

Significantly, the draft Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025, reinstated data localisation, a Big Tech annoyance that had been eliminated in the Data Protection Act, 2023. The goal is to establish a central body that will collaborate with sectoral regulators and other ministries to successfully deploy local data storage without interfering with business operations. The government is considering giving the industry two years to transition to the new law and set up their systems for compliance. The introduction of possible obligations for "significant data fiduciaries" with relation to cross-

border data sharing is an intriguing feature in the draft regulations. While businesses and organisations that gather and handle personal data are considered data fiduciaries, "significant data fiduciaries" will be chosen based on the quantum and sensitivity of the personal data they handle as well as



the potential threats to India's sovereignty and integrity, electoral democracy, security and public order. It is anticipated that the Big Tech companies, such as Amazon, Microsoft, Apple, Google and Meta, will be categorised as important data fiduciaries. Additionally, the draft regulations permit tech businesses to put in place a system for obtaining "verifiable" parental approval prior to processing children's personal data. In essence, when companies expressed dissatisfaction over the potential difficulty of implementing the rule, the government has decided not to propose a mechanism from its end and has instead left it up to the companies to choose a system. In the event of a data breach, data fiduciaries will be required to notify affected parties "without delay" about the breach, including its nature, scope, timing and location; the

implications that the breach is likely to have for the impacted user; and the steps that have been taken or are being taken to reduce risk, among other things. Failure to take adequate precautions to avoid a data breach could result in a fine of up to Rs 250 crore.

The Data Protection Act has given the government or its agencies broad exemptions for processing the personal information of residents on the basis of "public order", "friendly relations with other states", and "national security", among other things. Additionally, the government has suggested that health experts, educational institutions, creche and daycare facilities be excused from requiring parental agreement before processing children's personal data. "Yet, we can't just hit the 'pause button' and let these issues sort themselves out. Building the legal, cultural, technological and economic infrastructure to enable the development of a balanced personal data ecosystem is vitally important to improving the state of the world," the 2011 WEF report said. For similar reasons, we also urgently need a concrete law. The goal of the draft DPDP rules is to strike a balance between the right to privacy and technological advancement. In the near future, the quantum, dynamics and discoveries of the hidden potential and risks of personal data will undoubtedly vary due to the constantly shifting pattern, purview, domain, demand and scope of data transmitting into an unknown horizon. Additionally, there ought to be a dynamic alteration in the pattern with technological evolution, our intrusion into the AI world and changes in the global climate, geopolitics and trade. Any legislation pertaining to the protection of personal data should have the ability to easily and continuously adapt to the changes.

बच्चों का पसंदीदा खिलौना तकिया

बच्चों का बचपन एक ऐसा समय होता है जिसमें मां-बाप को सबसे ज्यादा परेशानी उठानी पड़ती। किसी भी मां के लिए सबसे कठिन काम होता है बच्चों को सुलाना। ऐसे में अगर बच्चों को उनका सबसे पसंदीदा खिलौना तकिया दे दिया जाए तो आपका आधा काम वैसे ही हो जाता है। क्योंकि तकिये के साथ खेलते-खेलते नंद के आगोश में चले जाना कोई बड़ी बात नहीं। चैन की नींद तो किसी को भी आ जाए, उसकी सारी थकान मिट जाती है। ऐसे में जरूरी है कि आप उनकी पसंद-नापसंद को जानें क्योंकि यदि उनके स्म की सजावट में रंगों एवं पैटर्न का ध्यान रखा गया है तो उनके तकिए और बैडशीट में भी बेबी प्रिंट एवं कलर्स होना बहुत जरूरी है।

सहारा देकर बैठाने को तकिया

बाजार में इस प्रकार के तकिए भी उपलब्ध हैं जिनके दोनों ओर बाजू लगे हों तथा बैठना सीख रहे बच्चों को उसके साथ बैठा कर साइड बाजू का सहारा दिया जाए या फिर उन्हें बंद कर दिया जाए तकि वे बैठे-बैठे आगे को लुढ़क न पाएं।

नवजात शिशुओं के लिए तकिया

वे दिन गए जब दादी-नानी नवजात शिशु के लिए स्वयं एक



खास तकिया बनाती थीं। आजकल तो नन्हे बच्चों के लिए टैडी और फ्लावर वाले तकिए से लेकर उसके सिर को सहारा देने तक के लिए तकिए बाजार में उपलब्ध हैं। इससे उसका सिर इधर-उधर नहीं होता और एक स्थान पर टिका रहता है।

विभिन्न रंगों में उपलब्ध

टैडी, लॉयन, मगरमच्छ, डॉग, रैबिट, फिश एवं फ्लोरल शेप में ये तकिए सॉफ्ट टॉयज के अलावा प्रिंस्, इंब्रायडरी एवं पैच



बच्चों के मूड को फ्रेश करता है कम्प्यूटर गेम

अक्सर पैरेंट्स को यह शिकायत होती है कि उनके बच्चे कम्प्यूटर गेम में अपना काफी समय बर्बाद करते हैं। पर क्या इसे समय की बर्बादी कहना सही है? पैरेंट्स तो यही कहेंगे कि हां! इन गेम्स का कोई लाभ नहीं बल्कि ये दिमाग पर बुरा असर डालते हैं लेकिन क्या यह सोच सही है?

कम्प्यूटर गेम खेलने से बच्चों में सीखने की क्षमता बढ़ती है। इससे होसले बढ़ते हैं और उनमें नई-नई चीजों के प्रति दिलचस्पी जगती है। यह सच है कि गेम की दुनिया में वर्ल्ड ऑफ वार क्राफ्ट, एक्स बॉक्स, प्ले स्टेशन, विस और रन स्केप जैसे गेम्स को मेंटल डिसऑर्डर पैदा करने वाला पाया गया है। इसी तरह कुछ गेम बच्चों में हिंसक और गुस्सेल प्रवृत्ति

को विकसित करते हैं लेकिन इधर हुए कई शोधों का आकलन है कि कुछ चुनिंदा गेम्स को छोड़ दे तो यह मानना सही होगा कि इनसे पर्सनैलिटी डेवलपमेंट में काफी मदद मिलती है। इससे बच्चों का न केवल भावनात्मक विकास होता है बल्कि उनमें मैनेजमेंट स्किल से लेकर टीम वर्क की भावना तक विकसित होती है।

यह स्किल उन्हें तमाम समस्याओं से निपटने में मदद करती है। मूड भी फ्रेश हो रखता है। इनके जरिये बोरियत और तनाव से भी बचा जा सकता है। वहीं इससे होसले बढ़ते हैं और उनमें नई-नई चीजों के प्रति दिलचस्पी जगती है। साथ ही, उनमें आजादी की भावना पैदा होती है और वे समाज से अपना जुड़ाव भी गहराई से महसूस करते हैं।

कई वैरायटी में मौजूद

इस बिजनेस से जुड़े लोगों की यदि मानें तो बच्चों के तकिए भी विभिन्न प्रकार के मैटीरियल से बने होते हैं जैसे-

फॉम का तकिया

फॉम के बारीक-बारीक टुकड़ों से भी तकिया बनता है। इस प्रकार के तकिए भी बाजार में बहुत बिकते हैं।

रेक्रान के तकिए

बच्चों के तकियों में सबसे ज्यादा रेक्रान के तकिए बिकते हैं। यह सबसे कोमल व नरम तकिया होता है। साथ ही वजन में बहुत हल्का व आरामदायक होने के कारण यह सबसे ज्यादा बिकता है।

काली रूई के तकिए

काली रूई वेस्ट मैटीरियल से बनती है। वेस्ट मैटीरियल को मशीनों में कई प्रक्रियाओं से गुजारकर सॉफ्ट बनाया जाता है। इस रूई से तकिया व गार्दियां दोनों बनाए जाते हैं।

बाल कहानी ईमानदारी

विककी अपने स्कूल में होने वाले स्वतंत्रता दिवस समारोह को ले कर बहुत उत्साहित था। वह भी परेड में हिस्सा ले रहा था।

दूसरे दिन वह एकदम सुबह जग गया लेकिन घर में अजीब सी शांति थी। वह दादी के कमरे में गया, लेकिन वह दिखाई नहीं पड़ी।

माँ, दादीजी कहाँ हैं? उसने पूछा।

रात को वह बहुत बीमार हो गई थी। तुम्हारे पिताजी उन्हें अस्पताल ले गए थे, वह अभी वहीं हैं उनकी हालत काफी खराब है।

विककी एकाएक उदास हो गया।

उसकी माँ ने पूछा, क्या तुम मेरे साथ दादी जी को देखने चलोगे? चार बजे में अस्पताल जा रही हूँ।

विककी अपनी दादी को बहुत प्यार करता था। उसने तुरंत कहा, हाँ, मैं आपके साथ चलूँगा। वह स्कूल और स्वतंत्रता दिवस के समारोह के बारे में सब कुछ भूल गया।

स्कूल में स्वतंत्रता दिवस समारोह बहुत अच्छी तरह संपन्न हो गया। लेकिन प्राचार्य खुश नहीं थे। उन्होंने ध्यान दिया कि बहुत से छात्र आज अनुपस्थित हैं।

उन्होंने दूसरे दिन सभी अध्यापकों को बुलाया और कहा, मुझे उन विद्यार्थियों के नामों की सूची चाहिए जो समारोह के दिन अनुपस्थित थे।

आधे घंटे के अंदर सभी कक्षाओं के विद्यार्थियों की सूची उन की मेज पर थी। कक्षा छे की सूची बहुत लंबी थी। अतः वह पहले उसी तरफ मुड़े।

जैसे ही उन्होंने कक्षा छे में कदम रखे, वहाँ चुपची सी छा गई।

उन्होंने कठारेतापूर्वक कहा, मैंने परसों क्या कहा था?

यही कि हम सब को स्वतंत्रता दिवस समारोह में उपस्थित होना चाहिए, गोलमटोल उषा ने जवाब दिया।

तब बहुत सारे बच्चे अनुपस्थित क्यों थे? उन्होंने नामों की सूची हवा में हिलाते हुए पूछा।

फिर उन्होंने अनुपस्थित हुए विद्यार्थियों के नाम पुकारे, उन्हें जॉटा और अपने डंडे से उनकी हथेलियों पर मार लगाई।

अगर तुम लोग राष्ट्रीय समारोह के प्रति इतने लापरवाह हो तो इसका मतलब यही है कि तुम लोगों को अपनी मातृभूमि से प्यार नहीं है। अगली बार अगर ऐसा हुआ तो मैं तुम सबके नाम स्कूल के रजिस्टर से काट दूँगा।

इतना कह कर वह जाने के लिए मुड़े तभी विककी आ कर उन के सामने खड़ा हो गया।

क्या बात है? महोदय, विककी भयभीत पर दृढ़ था, मैं भी स्वतंत्रता दिवस समारोह में अनुपस्थित था, पर आप ने मेरा नाम नहीं पुकारा। कहते हुए विककी ने अपनी हथेलियाँ प्राचार्य महोदय के सामने फैला दी।

सारी कक्षा साँस रोक कर उसे देख रही थी। प्राचार्य कई क्षणों तक उसे देखते रहे। उनका कठोर चेहरा नर्म हो गया और उन के स्वर में क्रोध गायब हो गया।

तुम सजा के हकदार नहीं हो, क्योंकि तुम में सच्चाई कहने की हिम्मत है। मैं तुम से कारण नहीं पूछूँगा, लेकिन तुम्हें वचन देना होगा कि अगली बार राष्ट्रीय समारोह को नहीं भूलोगे। अब तुम अपनी सीट पर जाओ।



अकबर को बीरबाल का जवाब



एक दिन बादशाह अकबर ने ऐलान किया कि जो भी मेरे सवाल का सही जवाब उदाहरण सहित देगा, उसे भारी इनाम दिया जाएगा। सवाल कुछ इस प्रकार से थे-

ऐसा क्या है जो आज भी है और कल भी रहेगा? ऐसा क्या है जो आज भी नहीं है और कल भी नहीं होगा? ऐसा क्या है जो आज तो है लेकिन कल नहीं होगा?

किसी को भी चतुराई भरे इन तीनों सवालों का जवाब नहीं सूझ रहा था। तभी बीरबल बोला, 'हुजूर! आपके सवालों का जवाब मैं दे सकता हूँ, लेकिन इसके लिए आपको मेरे साथ शहर का दौरा करना होगा। तभी आपके सवाल सही ढंग से हल हो पाएंगे।'

अकबर और बीरबल ने वेश बदला और सूफियों का बाना पहनकर निकल पड़े। कुछ ही देर बाद वे बाजार में खड़े थे। फिर दोनों एक दुकान में घुस गए।

बीरबल ने दुकानदार से कहा, 'हमें बच्चों की पढ़ाई के लिए मदरसा बनाना है, तुम हमें इसके लिए हजार रुपये दे दो।' जब दुकानदार ने अपने

मुनीम से कहा कि इन्हें एक हजार रुपये दे दो तो बीरबल बोला, जब मैं तुम्हें रुपये ले रहा हूँगा तो तुम्हारे सिर पर जूता माँसा। हर एक रुपये के पीछे एक जूता पड़ेगा। बोली, तैयार हो?

यह सुनते ही दुकानदार के नौकर का पारा चढ़ गया और वह बीरबल से दो-दो हाथ करने के लिए आगे बढ़ा। लेकिन दुकानदार ने नौकर को शांत करते हुए कहा, 'मैं तैयार हूँ लेकिन मेरी एक शर्त है। मुझे विश्वास दिलाना होगा कि मेरा पैसा इसी नेक काम पर खर्च होगा।'

ऐसा कहते हुए दुकानदार ने सिर झुका दिया और बीरबल से बोला कि जूता मारना शुरू करें। तब बीरबल और अकबर बिना कुछ कहे-सुने दुकान से बाहर निकल आए। दोनों चुपचाप चले जा रहे थे तभी बीरबल ने मौन तोड़ा, 'बंदोपकर! दुकान में जो कुछ हुआ, उसका मतलब है कि दुकानदार के पास आज पैसा है और उस पैसे को नेक कार्यों में लगाने की नीयत भी, जो उसे भविष्य में नाम देगी।

इसका एक मतलब यह भी है कि अपने नेक कार्यों से वह जन्नत में अपनी जगह पक्की कर लेगा। आप इसे यूँ भी कह सकते हैं कि जो कुछ उसके पास आज है, कल भी उसके साथ रहेगा। यह आपके पहले सवाल का जवाब है।

फिर वे चलते हुए एक भिखारी के पास पहुँचे। उन्होंने देखा कि एक आदमी उसे कुछ खाने को दे रहा है और वह खाने का सामान उस भिखारी को जख्त से कहीं ज्यादा है। तब बीरबल उस भिखारी से बोला, 'हम भूखे हैं, कुछ हमें भी दे दो खाने को।'

यह सुनकर भिखारी बरस पड़ा, 'भागो यहाँ से। जाने कहाँ से आ जाते हैं मांगने।'

तब बीरबल बादशाह से बोला, 'यह रहा हुजूर आपके दूसरे सवाल का जवाब। यह भिखारी ईश्वर को खुश करना नहीं जानता। इसका मतलब यह है कि जो कुछ इसके पास आज है, वह कल नहीं रहेगा।'

दोनों फिर आगे बढ़ गए। उन्होंने देखा कि एक तपस्वी पेड़ के नीचे तपस्या कर रहा है। बीरबल ने पास जाकर उसके सामने कुछ पैसे रखे। तब वह तपस्वी बोला, 'इसे हटाओ यहाँ से। मेरे लिए यह बेईमानी से प्राप्त पैसा है। ऐसा पैसा मुझे नहीं चाहिए।'

अब बीरबल बोला, 'हुजूर! इसका मतलब यह हुआ कि अभी तो नहीं है लेकिन बाद में हो सकता है। आज यह तपस्वी सभी सुखों को नकार रहा है। लेकिन कल यही सब सुख इसके पास होंगे।'

और हुजूर! चौथी मिसाल आप खुद हैं। पिछले जन्म में आपने शुभ कर्म किए थे जो यह जीवन आप शानो-शौकत के साथ बिता रहे हैं, किसी चीज की कोई कमी नहीं। यदि आपने इसी तरह ईमानदारी और न्यायप्रियता से राज करना जारी रखा तो कोई कारण नहीं कि यह सबकुछ कल भी आपके पास न हो। लेकिन यह न भूलें कि यदि आप राह भटक गए तो कुछ साथ नहीं रहेगा।'

अपने सवालों के बुद्धिमत्तापूर्ण चतुराई भरे जवाब सुनकर बादशाह अकबर बेहद खुश हुए।

NEWS BOX

Shafali Verma's emotional interview: 'I hid news of being dropped from Indian team from my father, who had suffered a heart attack'

New Delhi . Shafali Verma struggles to hold back tears when recalling the time she was dropped from the India team for the tour of Australia in November. The lead up to the squad announcement hadn't been easy for the 20-year-old Shafali, who was beside her father Sanjeev Verma who had suffered a heart attack only two days ago. With the family already going through a testing period she kept the news hidden for a week from her father, her go-to-person for all topics under the sun. "It's not easy to get over it. I didn't want to reveal because my father had a heart attack about two days before I got dropped from the team. I hid the news from him till he got better. He was in the hospital. I told him a week later," Shafali tells The Indian Express on the sidelines of the Senior Women's One Day Challenger Trophy where her team Team A lost to Team C in a thrilling final at the MA Chidambaram Stadium.

Once he learnt the news, Sanjeev didn't even give himself enough time to recover. Instead, with the Senior Women's One Day Trophy on the horizon, he began taking Shafali for practice. He was her first coach, who used to wake up at 5 and go looking for empty patches in the neighbourhood for practice when she was young. Now, yet again, at Rohtak, Sanjeev ensured her daughter got back on her feet immediately. Father knows everything, sometimes as kids even we forget our strengths but they don't forget. He reminded me of the workouts and drills from my childhood, and helped me to do the same. When I started, we had these knocking drills - where I play on-drive, straight drive and that's what I worked on. These are my strengths and sometimes you need to work on them to remember how good you are at them," Shafali says.

The result of it is evident in Shafali's game. In the two domestic tournaments she has played since being dropped from the national side, Shafali has amassed 527 and 414 runs in 12 matches, scoring three centuries and five fifties. A strike-rate of 152.31 and 145.26 tells how dominant she is at this level. But what is definitely not to be missed is, Shafali has worked on her game, especially regarding the rotation of strike and more importantly, fitness. "The constant work is on areas like when deliveries don't come to my strengths, how do I take singles, how do I rotate strike, how do I build my innings - this last thing is a work in progress throughout. Everyone knows my strengths, but the constant goal is to mentally get smarter by learning how to build an innings better," she says.

Rules From Virat Kohli's Captaincy Back? BCCI Planning Big U-Turn Amid Slump In Form: Report

New Delhi . Team India's struggles on the international circuit since the arrival of head coach Gautam Gambhir haven't gone down well with the board. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is reportedly keen to bring back the old rules over fitness tests that were applicable during Virat Kohli's captaincy days. The board had done away with the mandatory yo-yo fitness Test considering the workload and frequency of travel for the players. But, a report has claimed that the rule could be brought back.

According to the Times of India, the BCCI medical team has been asked to go back to fitness criteria for selection instead of just focusing on injury prevention because of the gruelling schedule. Yo-yo test mandate was



removed by the previous management to reduce the number of injuries but a U-turn could be on the cards now.

"The board had gone lenient on the players since they are mostly on the road. The focus had shifted to just injury prevention. This has been taken lightly by some players. It is being mooted that a certain fitness level criteria needs to be reintroduced so that complacency doesn't creep in," the paper quoted a source as saying. The BCCI is reportedly looking to make a few more changes to the way the team functions, with the stay of family members and wives of players also set to be curbed.

Officials believe having families present, especially during overseas assignments, can distract players and impact their performance. Additionally, the BCCI has introduced a rule requiring all players to travel with the team at all times. This change addresses concerns over some players opting to travel separately in recent years, which the board views as disruptive to team cohesion and discipline.

Trossard the hero as Arsenal win North London derby, Newcastle thrash Wolves

New Delhi . Leandro Trossard was the star of the show for Arsenal as he scored the winning goal in their 2-1 comeback victory over Tottenham Hotspur at the Emirates Stadium on Wednesday. The win in the North London derby propelled Arsenal back to second place in the Premier League, reigniting their title aspirations by narrowing the gap to leaders Liverpool to four points.

The Belgian's clinical finish just before halftime capped a spirited Arsenal fightback, lifting the mood at the club after a tumultuous week. A 2-0 home loss to Newcastle United in the League Cup semi-final first leg and a penalty shootout elimination against Manchester United in the FA Cup third round had threatened to derail their season. Adding to their woes, striker Gabriel Jesus was ruled out for the rest of the campaign due to injury. Tottenham struck first in the 25th minute when Son Heung-min's deflected volley wrong-footed Arsenal goalkeeper



David Raya, giving the visitors a lead against the run of play. However, Arsenal responded by keeping up the pressure. Five minutes before halftime, Declan Rice delivered a trademark corner that caused chaos in Tottenham's defence. Gabriel's back-post header deflected off Spurs forward Dominic Solanke for the equaliser. Moments later, Martin Odegaard capitalised on sloppy Tottenham play, threading a perfect pass to Trossard. The winger drilled a precise left-footed shot past Spurs keeper Antonin Kinsky, who might feel he should

have done better. Despite dominating possession after the break, Arsenal missed chances to seal the victory, with both Kai Havertz and Odegaard failing to convert opportunities. Tottenham nearly punished the Gunners for their profligacy in stoppage time when Pedro Porro struck the outside of the post, but Arsenal held firm to claim their third consecutive Premier League derby victory over Spurs their first such streak since 1989.

The win extended Arsenal's unbeaten league run to 11 games, keeping them within striking distance of Liverpool.

Isak Shines Again in Comfortable Win Over Wolves

Alexander Isak continued his red-hot scoring streak, netting twice in Newcastle United's commanding 3-0 victory over Wolverhampton Wanderers at St James Park. Anthony Gordon added a third as Newcastle climbed to fourth in the Premier League with 38 points from 21 matches, while Wolves remain in the relegation zone with just 16 points. Isak's brace marked his eighth consecutive Premier League match with a goal, a feat achieved by only three other players in league history: Jamie Vardy,

Ruud van Nistelrooy (twice), and Daniel Sturridge. The Swedish forward now has 15 league goals this season.

Wolves showed glimpses of promise but were undone by defensive frailties. Santiago Bueno thought he had pulled one back, only for his goal to be disallowed for handball. Jorgen Strand Larsen also came agonisingly close, hitting the woodwork twice. Despite these moments, Wolves' inability to shore up their defence continued to cost them dearly.

Other results

In other matches, Crystal Palace were able to continue their impressive away form by defeating Leicester City 2-0 at the King Power Stadium. Goals Jean-Philippe Mateta and Marc Guehi in the second half was enough for Palace on the day as the heaped more pressure on the Foxes in their bid to avoid relegation. David Moyes' return to Goodison Park ended on a sour note as Everton remained toothless and struggled for ideas all night.

Ollie Watkins scored the only goal of the match in the 51st minute to help Villa move to 7th place in the points table and level with Manchester City. The result left Everton just one point and two places away from the relegation zone.

Barcelona thrash Real Betis 5-1 to reach Copa Del Rey quarter-finals

New Delhi FC Barcelona continued their sensational January form on Wednesday, 15 January. After their Spanish Super Cup Final win against arch-rivals Real Madrid, Barcelona booked a place in the Copa Del Rey quarter-finals with a scintillating victory against Real Betis. Teenage sensation Lamine Yamal played a starring role in the 5-1 win, scoring once and providing two assists. Barcelona cruised past their La Liga rivals in a terrific performance which would surely have lifted their confidence after a terrible patch in December 2024.

Barcelona head coach Hansi Flick made several changes to his lineup, opting to rest key players such as Robert Lewandowski, Marc Casado, and Alejandro Balde. However, even with a rotated squad, Barcelona controlled the match from the opening whistle. The hosts wasted no time in taking the lead, with Gavi finishing low into the net from a Dani Olmo assist just three minutes into the



game. Barcelona continued to threaten throughout the first half, with Olmo almost doubling their advantage in the 20th minute, firing a powerful shot from inside the box that cannoned off the post. The second goal came in the 27th minute, as Jules Kounde latched onto a brilliant lobbed pass from Yamal and volleyed it home to make it 2-0.

Despite two goals being ruled offside by VAR, Barcelona were in control, and their third goal came in the 58th minute. A quick counter-attack led by Yamal saw Raphinha finish from close range to make it 3-0. Ferran Torres added a fourth in the 67th minute, converting from an Olmo cross. Yamal capped his excellent performance with a fifth goal in the 75th minute. Though the goal was initially ruled out for offside, the decision was swiftly overturned by VAR, confirming the 17-year-old's strike. Betis managed a late consolation in the 84th minute, as Brazilian forward Vitor Roque converted from the penalty spot. However, the match was already decided, with Barcelona comfortably advancing.

Do Or Die For Atalanta In Serie A Title Race, Face League Leaders Napoli

New Delhi . Atalanta's bid for a first Serie A title will come in for a huge test on Saturday when the plucky provincial upstarts host league leaders Napoli, while Inter Milan lurk in an intriguing three-way Scudetto battle. Gian Piero Gasperini's side are unbeaten in 15 league matches but three consecutive draws have left the ambitious outfit from Bergamo four points behind Napoli ahead of this weekend's big match at the Gewiss Stadium.

Napoli's visit comes after Atalanta were held to a 1-1 draw by Juventus on Tuesday night, a brilliant match but disappointing result which leaves an unprecedented challenge for a league crown somewhat in the balance.

Gasperini admitted after the Juve draw that Atalanta's Scudetto hopes had reached a "crossroads", as defeat on Saturday night would leave Atalanta some way off the pace. "We're also at a crossroads in the Champions



League, so if we're going to aim for anything then let's aim for that," said Gasperini, whose team also face Sturm Graz and Barcelona in consecutive weeks. A boost for Atalanta comes in the shape of Mateo Retegui who was back with a bang on Tuesday night, nodding home a classic poacher's goal shortly after returning as a

substitute from a hamstring injury. The 25-year-old may start on the bench on Saturday but will be key for Atalanta as they try to both stay in touch with Napoli and get direct qualification to the last 16 of the Champions League.

Napoli meanwhile are on a run of five straight wins coming into the weekend, and Antonio Conte's rebuild job has benefitted from his team having no midweek European football due to the disastrous nature of their title defence last season. Conte has already mentally said goodbye to wing wizard and the star of Napoli's historic third title Khvicha Kvaratskhelia, who is set to move to Paris Saint-Germain in the January transfer window. With Scudetto-winning coach Luciano Spalletti, Kim Min-jae, Victor Osimhen (albeit for now on loan), Piotr Zielinski and now Kvaratskhelia out of the picture, a new era has officially begun at Napoli.

"He Needs To Learn To...": Ruben Amorim's Clear Message To Alejandro Garnacho Amid Exit Rumours

New Delhi. Ruben Amorim has said it is "clear" that Alejandro Garnacho can have a bright future at Manchester United despite reports linking him with an Old Trafford exit during the January transfer window. Sunday's FA Cup match at Arsenal, which United won in a penalty shootout, was the first time Garnacho had made Amorim's starting XI since the 3-2 home defeat to Nottingham Forest on December 7. During that time the 20-year-old, who has eight goals in 30 appearances this season, had been left out of the squad entirely for the Manchester derby, while speculation has increased that United could be open to selling the academy product to free up funds.

But United have distanced themselves from suggestions that Garnacho could leave this month despite links with Napoli. When asked Wednesday if the Argentina international has the qualities to thrive at Old Trafford, Amorim said: "That is clear.

"He has talent. He needs to learn to play in a different position." Amorim, whose 15th-placed side host Premier League bottom club Southampton on Thursday, added:



"He's finding the best way to play in this system. He's improving during training. He started the last game. Let's see tomorrow (against Southampton)." United showed grit in Sunday's shootout win over Arsenal after being reduced to 10

men when Diogo Dalot was sent off, a week after a hard-fought 2-2 draw at Premier League leaders Liverpool. "I think we want to be a team that is hard to play," said Amorim. "It's like I had this feeling, especially at home in the last games, that we were easy to play. And we have to be honest with that.

"So if we face the competition the right way, we will be tough to beat for any opponent. So that's what I wanted. That's what I felt in the last two games." And the Portuguese manager singled out Harry Maguire for praise. The former captain clocked 104 minutes against Arsenal despite suffering from illness and missing training on the Friday beforehand and Amorim said that was the sort of attitude he wants to see across the whole squad.

"I think we have to praise Harry more than me," he said. "He's doing a great job. He was sick in the last game. He was dead in the end. That's what I want from every player. He has to continue to do a good job."

Australian Open: Iga Swiatek continues streak, Emma Raducanu beats Anisimova

New Delhi. Iga Swiatek put on a dominant display to breeze past Rebecca Sramkova into Round 3 of the Australian Open and keep her unique streak going while Emma Raducanu secured a hard-fought win against Amanda Anisimova on Thursday, January 16. Swiatek and Raducanu will now square off in the 3rd round of the competition. Swiatek, who is aiming to continue her good run of form, thrashed Sramkova 6-0, 6-2 to keep her unique streak in grand slams going. The win on Thursday meant that the 23-year-old is the only player to make it to the 3rd round or more in every single grand slam this decade. This was a run that started in the Australian Open 2020, where she reached the 4th round. The Polish star was dominant in all departments against Sramkova and was able to wrap up the win in just one hour.

Swiatek was relatively untested in the first set,



apart from the second game where she was trailing 0-40 at one point. The Polish star went on to win 7 straight games before Sramkova was able to get one under her belt. There was a bit more fight from the Slovakian star in the second set as she was able to tie it at 2-2. However, Swiatek proved to be too good on the day as she was able to



convert 5 out of the 6 break points available to her and have a first serve win percentage of 83.

Raducanu sets up Swiatek clash

Raducanu was made to work hard by her close friend Anisimova to make it to Round 3 of the Australian Open for the very first time. The match lasted close to 2 hours as both

women exchanged breaks at the beginning of the first set.

Raducanu found herself in trouble, trailing 1-3, before she was able to tap into her arsenal and win the next 5 games.

The second set was even tougher for Raducanu as she was trailing 0-3, before breaking Anisimova to make it all square. She would break the American once again to make it 4-4 before serving her way into the lead. But Anisimova was determined on the day and pushed the game to 5-5. Raducanu forced two errors from the American to take the lead and ultimately broke her to secure the win. In the other matches, Ons Jabeur overcame a stern test from Camila Osorio 7-5, 6-3 to make it to the next round. The 9th seed Daria Kasatkina had an easy day at the office as she defeated China Yafan Wang 6-2, 6-0 to setup a clash with the winner of the Putintseva and Zhang match.

Virat Kohli Wraps His Arms Around

Anushka Sharma

At Gateway Of India, Stunned Fans Look On In

Star couple Virat Kohli and Anushka Sharma were spotted at the Gateway of India in Mumbai as they made their way to the jetty from their luxury car. Anushka kept it casual yet chic in a blue oversized shirt paired with black shorts and pink flats, accessorising her look with a black clutch. Virat sported an all-black ensemble, keeping it simple and stylish. As the paparazzi greeted them with a cheerful "Good morning," Virat acknowledged them with a quick hello and returned the greeting. However, Anushka chose to avoid engaging with the paps and walked ahead. In another video, Virat can be seen putting his arm around Anushka's shoulders as they waited for their speedboat to dock. Despite the brief interaction, neither of them stopped to pose for the camera.



The couple has just returned from Australia, where the Indian cricket team faced a tough 3-1 defeat in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Virat and Anushka also recently visited Premanand Govind Sharan Maharaj, bringing along their children, Vamika and Akaay. A video that surfaced on social media showed the couple greeting the Maharaj with folded hands, sitting on the floor as they listened to his teachings. During her conversation with the Maharaj, Anushka mentioned that she listens to his spiritual talks. "Pichli baar jab hum aaye the toh mann mein kuch sawaal the, mujhe laga ke poochungi lekin jo bhi baitha tha wahan pe unn sabne kuch na kuch vaisa sawaal kar liya tha. Jab aapke pass aane ke hum baat kar rahe the, main man hi man aapse baat kar rahe the, jo bhi sawaal mere aa rahe the," she said. Virat Kohli was also seen looking at her, with a smile on his face.

Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli met in 2013 during an ad shoot and kept their relationship private. They married in Italy in 2017. The couple welcomed their first child, a daughter named Vamika, in January 2021, and a baby boy in February last year. On the work front, Anushka has taken a break from acting since her 2018 film Zero, but she's set to make a comeback in Chakda Xpress, a biographical film on cricket legend Jhulan Goswami, marking her return to the big screen.



Preity Zinta

Assures Fans She's 'Safe As Of Now' Amid LA Wildfires: 'I Never Thought I'd See...'

As the wildfires rage across Los Angeles, Bollywood star Preity Zinta took to social media to update fans about her safety and express her heartbreak over the devastation. Preity, who resides in the U.S. with her husband, financial analyst Gene Goodenough, reassured her followers, saying she is "safe as of now" but deeply affected by the ongoing crisis. Sharing her experience on X, Preity wrote, "I never thought I'd see a day when fires would ravage neighborhoods around us in LA. Friends and families



are either evacuated or on high alert, ash is falling from smoggy skies like snow, and there's fear and uncertainty with toddlers and grandparents by our side." She added, "I'm heartbroken at the devastation around us and grateful to God ?? that we are safe for now. My thoughts and prayers are with those displaced and those who've lost everything. A big thank you to the firefighters and everyone helping to save lives and property. Stay safe, everyone ??."

Fans of the actor poured in their support. One follower commented, "Take care of yourself, Preity. Thoughts

are with you and everyone affected." Another wrote, "It's heartbreaking to see this. Stay strong and safe."

Preity isn't the only Bollywood star caught in the chaos. Nora Fatehi, also in LA, shared her harrowing experience on Instagram. She revealed, "We just got an evacuation order. I quickly packed my stuff and I'm heading toward the airport. I hope my flight doesn't get canceled because this is terrifying. I've never experienced anything like this." Priyanka Chopra Jonas, who resides in LA with her husband Nick Jonas and daughter Malti Marie, also shared her thoughts. Posting photos and videos of the wildfire's impact, she wrote, "My thoughts are with everyone. I hope we can all stay safe tonight." The California wildfires have caused widespread destruction, with thousands displaced, homes reduced to ashes, and many others on high alert.



Ranveer Singh's Shaktimaan-Inspired Superhero Film May Feature Wamiqa Gabbi As The Female Lead



Wamiqa Gabbi has been turning heads online since her standout performance in Baby John alongside Varun Dhawan and Keerthy Suresh. After exclusively breaking the news of her involvement in Akshay Kumar's Bhooth Bangla, fresh reports now suggest that she may soon share the screen with Ranveer Singh in a superhero film inspired by the legendary Shaktimaan. As per a report by Mid-Day, Wamiqa is the frontrunner for Minal Murali director Basil Joseph's ambitious superhero project. This Bollywood adaptation of the iconic Indian superhero Shaktimaan will be led by Ranveer Singh.

A source close to the project revealed that the Baby John star continues to attract attention for her versatility in both Hindi and regional cinema. The actress is also rumored to be in talks for a Telugu film opposite Nani. "While discussions are still ongoing, the potential pairing of Wamiqa and Ranveer in Basil's film would bring a fresh dynamic to a project that's been in development for five years," the source shared. Though no official confirmation has been made, insiders report that pre-production is underway. Director Basil Joseph, despite not being fluent in Hindi, has been conducting script readings and meetings with Ranveer in Mumbai.

"Once the script is locked and schedules are finalized, the casting will be confirmed," said the source, adding that Ranveer Singh is currently wrapping up Aditya Dhar's spy thriller and will shift his focus to the superhero film after March.

Earlier, Pinkvilla reported that Shaktimaan has been in the writing phase for over three years. Directed by Basil Joseph and backed by Sony Pictures India and Sajid Nadiadwala, the film is expected to go on floors in May 2025, aiming for a grand release in 2026. This promises to be one of Bollywood's most ambitious superhero projects.

Is Ameesha Patel Dating Nirvaan Birla? He Clears The Air: 'We Were Both In Dubai...'



Ameesha Patel sparked dating rumors in November last year after sharing a delightful picture with entrepreneur and singer Nirvaan Birla during their time in Dubai. The image, showing the duo dressed in matching black outfits and sharing smiles, quickly went viral, prompting fans to speculate about a potential relationship. However, Nirvaan has now set the record straight, confirming their bond is purely platonic. In an interview with the Free Press Journal, Nirvaan clarified, "Ameesha and I are not dating. She is a family friend and has known my father since their school days. We were in Dubai because I was shooting for my music album, which she features in."

The rumors originated when Ameesha captioned the photo, "DUBAI — lovely evening with my darling @nirvaanbirla," accompanied by red heart emojis. The post, which even garnered a like from Nirvaan's father, Yash Birla, ignited a flurry of comments. Fans called them a "beautiful couple" and wrote messages like, "Happy you finally found your soulmate" and "You two look adorable together."

For the uninitiated, Nirvaan Birla is a successful entrepreneur and singer, known for initiatives like Birla Brainiacs and Birla Open Minds. As the son of Yashvardhan and Avanti Birla, he is continuing his family's legacy of excellence in business. Ameesha Patel, meanwhile, is enjoying a career resurgence. She recently celebrated the re-release of her iconic debut film, Kaho Naa Pyaar Hai, alongside Hrithik Roshan. Additionally, she starred in 2023's blockbuster Gadar 2, the sequel to the 2001 classic Gadar: Ek Prem Katha. The film, directed by Anil Sharma, was a massive box office success, earning over Rs 500 crore in India.

Set against the backdrop of the 1971 Indo-Pak war, Gadar 2 follows Tara Singh's (Sunny Deol) mission to rescue his son Jeete (Utkarsh Sharma) from Pakistan. Despite receiving mixed critical reviews, the movie's patriotic narrative, emotional depth, and nostalgia struck a chord with audiences, making it one of the highest-grossing films of the year. A star-studded celebration of its success featured Bollywood icons like Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan, and Aamir Khan. Ameesha is also part of Netflix's upcoming documentary, The Roshans. Reflecting on her involvement, she shared, "I'm absolutely looking forward to watching The Roshans."