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NIFTY 50	BSE SENSEX	Bitcoin INR	NIFTY FINANCIAL SERVICES	NIFTY BANK	\$1 (USD)	€1 (EURO)	Gold (24K) 10gm	Silver (1 Kg)	Petrol/L	Diesel/L	LPG/14.2Kg
25,683.30 ▼ -193.55 (-0.75%)	83,576.24 ▼ -604.72 (-0.72%)	8,253,616.58 ▲ +69,840.12 (+0.09%)	27,382.10 ▼ -290.50 (-1.05%)	59,251.55 ▼ -434.95 (-0.73%)	₹90.28 ▼ +0.38 (+0.42%)	₹105.00 ▼ +0.19 (+0.18%)	₹139,220.00 ▲ +1478.00 (+1.07%)	₹254,400.00 ▲ +1107.00 (+4.55%)	₹94.77	₹87.67	₹853.00

PM Modi Inaugurates Major Trade Show in Rajkot Ahead of Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference

New Delhi Jan 11 (Representative)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday inaugurated a large-scale trade show at Marwadi University in Rajkot,

setting the stage for the upcoming Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference (VGRC). The event, marked by extensive participation from leading corporations and international buyers, highlights Gujarat's strategic push to attract investments and accelerate its renewable energy ambitions. Accompanied by Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi, PM Modi emphasized the significance of the trade show as a platform to strengthen business partnerships. "This event not only showcases Gujarat's industrial strengths but also reinforces our commitment to sustainable growth and innovation," he said.

The trade show spans 26,000 square meters and features over 400 exhibitors from diverse sectors including agro and food processing, fisheries, defence, energy, petrochemicals, engineering, and ports and logistics. Prominent companies such as Torrent Power Limited, KOSOL, Adani Green, Essar Group, Nayara Energy, and Jyoti CNC are among the key participants. Officials expect more than 1,500 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) to be signed, supported by the participation of over 110 international buyers from 16 countries including the USA and several European nations and more than 1,800 scheduled business meetings. An official release stated, "The meet will see collaboration opportunities across sectors like engineering, agriculture, and textiles, with both ▶ Cont. to Page-7

Rajkot/New Delhi, Jan 11 (FN Reporter)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday declared India's fast-paced ascent towards the world's third-largest economy status at the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference (VGRC) in Rajkot, crediting Gujarat's dynamic role in this remarkable progress. "Gujarat has been a cornerstone in India's journey, fostering growth from MSMEs to attracting global

financial institutions," PM Modi said during his keynote address. The summit brings together government, corporates, startups, and investors to collaborate and accelerate India's development. Highlighting India's robust economic fundamentals, PM Modi said, "India is the world's fastest-growing major economy with inflation under control. Our agriculture sector continues to break records year after year, and we are proud to be the largest milk producer and a leading

global manufacturer of generic medicines." PM Modi emphasised the country's growing prominence in global markets: India is the third-largest startup ecosystem and aviation market globally, and its metro rail networks rank among the top three in the world, the PM said. He added that the government's reform agenda — including next-generation GST reforms, insurance sector liberalisation, and modernisation of the Income Tax Act — has strengthened the economy and benefited millions. Global institutions recognise India's economic stability and growth potential, PM Modi noted. "The IMF calls India the world's growth engine, S&P upgraded our credit rating after 18 years, and Fitch has

praised our fiscal credibility," he stated.

Despite global uncertainty, India remains politically stable with a growing middle class and a solid foundation for continued progress, he informed. Gujarat's contribution to India's vision was underscored by the announcement of key projects: "India's first semiconductor fabrication plant is coming up in Dholera, supported by a predictable policy environment," PM Modi said, adding, "In ▶ Cont. to Page-7



Micro-fertiliser industry urges uniform GST reform ahead of union Budget

New Delhi, Jan 11 (FN Bureau)

The Indian Micro-Fertilizers Manufacturers Association (IMMA) has written to the union Government pressing for major policy changes ahead of the union Budget 2026-27 to support the fertiliser sector's competitiveness and ease of business. In its pre-budget recommendations, the industry body has urged the Centre to extend the reduced 5 per cent Goods and Services Tax (GST) uniformly to

all fertilisers notified under the Fertiliser Control Order (FCO).

The call comes even after the introduction of GST 2.0, which cut tax rates on certain Schedule 1G items and their mixtures from 12 per cent to 5 per cent, a move the association described as a "landmark reform" but one that still leaves an inverted duty structure on certain inputs where raw materials and services attract higher GST than finished products. IMMA highlighted that the current tax mismatches lead to accumulated input tax credits that lock up working capital for manufacturers. To address this, it has proposed a clear and time-bound mechanism for faster refunds of excess GST credits, particularly important for sectors like fertilisers that ▶ Cont. to Page-7



Odisha CM lays foundation stone for Rs 451.24 cr mega water supply project

Sambalpur, Jan 11 (Representative)

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, on the second day of his two-day visit to Sambalpur on Sunday, laid the foundation stone for a Rs 451.24 crore mega water supply project in Sambalpur city with an objective to supply safe drinking water to the people of the district 24x7. The initiative on completion will benefit approximately 5 lakh people across 41 wards. "This ambitious project will not only solve the drinking water problems but also bring a qualitative improvement in the standard of living for Sambalpur residents," said Chief Minister Majhi in a statement. A release from Chief Minister's office said, the project, a part of the central government's 'Amrit 2.0' mission under the 'Drink from Tap' scheme, includes construction of one intake well and two state-of-the-art water treatment plants- one with a capacity of 65 million litres per day (MLD) in Sambalpur and another of 35 MLD in the neighbouring Burla town. A 340-km-long pipeline network will be laid across the city to ensure seamless distribution of treated water directly to households, eliminating the need for additional filtration. An intake well and two state-of-the-art water treatment plants- one with a capacity

NDMC set for major infra upgrades and beautification ahead of India AI Impact Summit 2026 in February

New Delhi, Jan 11 (FN Representative)

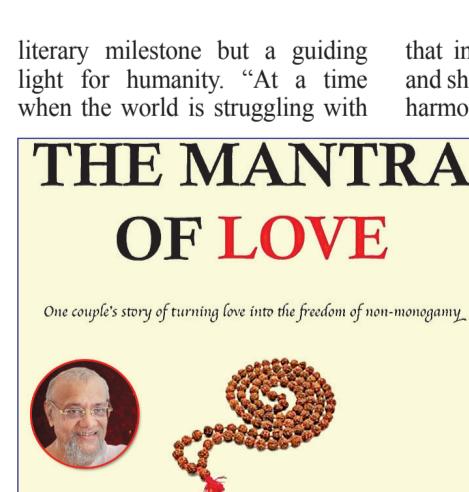
New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) gears up for the prestigious India AI Impact Summit 2026, scheduled to be held from February 15 to 20, 2026. Envisioned as a major global platform on inclusive artificial intelligence, the summit will bring world leaders, policymakers, innovators, and global AI experts to New Delhi, placing the city firmly in the international spotlight. The core focus of NDMC's preparations includes large-scale infrastructure upgradation, beautification, cleanliness drives, improved civic amenities, and seamless operational readiness. Special attention is being given to areas around key venues such as Bharat Mandapam, where the main inaugural

event will be held on February 19, along with prominent five-star hotels, major roundabouts, heritage buildings, gardens, and public spaces that are likely to be visited by international delegates. As part of this initiative, all 41 avenue roads under NDMC's jurisdiction were recently inspected by the Chairman, Secretary, and senior departmental heads. Following these inspections, clear responsibilities were assigned to bridge any gaps in preparedness. A detailed action plan has been drawn up for revamping key road stretches connecting the airport, Bharat Mandapam, important tourist hubs, and diplomatic zones. This includes addressing potholes, repairing footpaths, restoring damaged grilles, upgrading signage, repainting central verges, eliminating dark spots, and enhancing ▶ Cont. to Page-7

Jain Acharya Vijayaratna Sundar Surishwarji's 500th Book - 'Mantra of Love'

New Delhi, Jan 11 (FN Representative)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday described the 500th book of Jain Acharya Shrimad Vijayaratna Sundar Surishwarji Maharaj as a "mantra for peace and harmony" at a time when the world is grappling with conflict and division, saying the work powerfully reinforces the timeless values of love, non-violence and coexistence. Addressing a gathering through a video message at the release of the book during the Urja Mahotsav, the Prime Minister said the publication titled "Premnu Vishva, Vishvano Prem" (A World of Love, Love for the World) was not merely a



divisions and conflicts, Premnu Vishva, Vishvano Prem' is needed more than ever. This is not just a book, it is a mantra

literary milestone but a guiding light for humanity. "At a time when the world is struggling with that introduces the power of love and shows the path to the peace and harmony the world is seeking," PM Modi said. At the outset, the Prime Minister bowed at the feet of revered Bhawanbanusurishwar Ji Maharaj and paid respects to Prasamturi Suvishal Gachchadhipati Puja Shrimad Vijay Rajendra surishwar Ji Maharaj, Puja Gachchadhipati Shri Kalpatarusurishwar Ji Maharaj, Saraswati Kripapatra Param Puja Acharya Bhagwant Shrimad Vijayaratnasundarsurishwar Ji Maharaj, and other saints and sadhus present on the occasion.

He also congratulated members of the Urja Mahotsav Committee for organising the event. Calling the release of the 500th book a rare and blessed moment, PM Modi said Vijayaratna Sundar Surishwarji Maharaj had not limited knowledge to scriptures but lived it in practice. "Maharaj Sahib's personality is a unique blend of restraint, simplicity and clarity. When he writes, his words carry the depth of experience; when he speaks, his voice carries the power of compassion; and even in silence, he guides," the Prime Minister said. The Prime Minister noted that the Acharya's 500 works together form "a vast ocean containing countless gems of thought," offering simple, spiritual ▶ Cont. to Page-7

PM Modi says Somnath Swabhiman Parv celebrates India's enduring faith and civilisational resolve

Somnath/New Delhi, Jan 11 (Representative) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday described the Somnath Swabhiman Parv as a powerful symbol of India's eternal faith, resilience and civilisational self-pride, asserting that the historic Somnath Temple stands not for destruction or defeat but for "victory and renewal." Participating in the grand celebrations at the sacred Shri Somnath Temple, the Prime Minister said the festival reflected the unwavering resolve of "crores upon crores of Indians" and marked a journey spanning more than a thousand years. Calling the occasion deeply personal, Modi said becoming part of the Swabhiman Parv was an "unforgettable and invaluable moment" in his life. "Even after a thousand years, the flag still flies atop the Somnath Temple. It reminds the world of India's strength and spirit," the ▶ Cont. to Page-7

Sunday sees one of coldest January mornings in recent years

New Delhi, Jan 11 (Representative) Sunday marked one of the coldest January mornings in recent years as New Delhi's Palam area recorded a minimum temperature of 3.0 degrees Celsius. According to available records, this is the second-lowest minimum temperature observed at Palam since 2010. The only colder January day during this period was on January 7, 2013, when the mercury had dipped to 2.6 degrees Celsius. India Meteorological Department (IMD) data shows that the all-time lowest minimum temperature at Palam was recorded on January 11, 1967, when the temperature had plunged to minus 2.2 degrees Celsius. Cold wave conditions were recorded across parts of the national capital on Sunday, with several observatories reporting sharply low minimum temperatures, officials of the India ▶ Cont. to Page-7

CBI arrests WCL official in bribery case

New Delhi, Jan 11 (FN Reporter) The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) said on Sunday that it had arrested a foreman in-charge of the Naigaon open cast mine, Neelajai Sub Area, Western Coalfields Limited (WCL), for allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs. 40,000. The accused has been identified as Deepak Jaiswal. The CBI stated that it registered the case on January 9 based on a complaint against the accused. The case, as per the CBI officials, was registered on the allegation that the accused had demanded a bribe of Rs. 50,000 (25,000 each), through the complainant, who is also a WCL employee, to facilitate the mutual transfer of two WCL employees. One of those employees was a relative of the complainant. After negotiation, the accused agreed to accept a reduced amount of Rs. 40,000 (Rs. 20,000 each) to facilitate the transfer. The CBI laid a trap on January 10 and caught the accused red-handed while accepting the bribe of Rs. 40,000 from the complainant. He has since been arrested. Further investigation is underway.

Air India, IndiGo issues travel advisories amid low visibility

New Delhi, Jan 11 (Agency) Dense fog and cold weather conditions are expected to continue across large parts of northern and eastern India, raising the risk of flight delays, diversions and cancellations, airlines and the weather office said. Air India issued a travel advisory warning that poor visibility due to fog is likely on Sunday in several cities, including Delhi, Amritsar, Chandigarh, Udaipur, Varanasi and Jammu. The airline said flight schedules across its network could be affected. It added that proactive steps have been taken to reduce fog-related disruptions and that ground staff will remain available round the clock to assist passengers. Travellers have been advised to check their flight status before leaving for the airport. IndiGo also cautioned passengers about early-morning fog affecting visibility at ▶ Cont. to Page-7

Tamil superstar Vijay to appear before CBI on Monday in Karur Stampede Case

New Delhi, Jan 11 (Reporter) In a latest update in connection with the Karur stampede case, Tamil superstar Vijay is likely to appear before the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) tomorrow. Vijay is likely to visit the CBI's headquarters at 11 am, where he will be questioned by the elite team of CBI. In December, Tamilaga Vetti Kazhagam (TVK) General Secretary Adharva Arjun and Nirmal Kumar joined CBI's investigation. A team of elite officials of the CBI will record their statements. The CBI is currently looking into the matter which was initially lodged with the local police. The CBI summoned those who were involved in the matter. The central investigation agency is making efforts to know the exact roles of each one. Vijay was also summoned by CBI. It is noteworthy that several people ▶ Cont. to Page-7

Signature Global's Q3 sales bookings fall 27 pc despite festive demand

New Delhi (Agency): Realty firm Signature Global on Sunday reported a sharp decline in its sales bookings for the December quarter, even as the housing market usually sees strong demand during the festive season. The Gurugram-based company said its sales bookings fell 27 per cent to Rs 2,020 crore in the October-December quarter, compared to Rs 2,770 crore in the same period last financial year, according to its stock exchange filing. The company sold 408 housing units during the quarter, a steep drop from 1,518 units sold a year ago. In terms of area, sales book-



ings declined to 1.44 million square feet from 2.49 million square feet in the year-ago period. The October-December quarter is typically considered strong for real estate sales due to festivals, but Signature Global did not

cite any specific reason for the slowdown in its regulatory filing. One possible factor behind the lower numbers could be the timing of project launches. The company rolled out a major housing project on Dwarka Expressway only towards

the end of December, which may have limited sales during the quarter. For the first nine months of the current financial year, Signature Global's sales bookings dropped 23 per cent to Rs 6,680 crore, compared to Rs 8,670 crore in the same period last financial year. During this period, the company sold 1,746 units, down from 3,539 units a year earlier, Signature Global said. Commenting on the performance, Chairman Pradeep Kumar Aggarwal said the company delivered a healthy performance in the first nine months of FY26, supported by steady demand in its key micro-

markets. He added that the launch of its wellness-focused premium project, Sarvam at DXP Estate on Dwarka Expressway, received an encouraging response, reflecting changing buyer preferences. Signature Global had recorded sales bookings of Rs 10,290 crore in the last financial year, making it the fifth-largest listed real estate developer by sales. For the current 2025-26 fiscal, the company has guided for sales bookings of Rs 12,500 crore. To meet this target, the company will need to achieve sales of nearly Rs 6,000 crore in the current quarter.

Islamabad/New Delhi (Agency): More than poverty, lack of proper documents, fear, marginalisation, and gender are holding women in Pakistan away from accessing healthcare, according to a media report. Writing in Dawn, Tahera Hasan, a lawyer and founder-CEO of Imkaan Welfare Organisation, shares that women in Pakistan are more likely than men to lack documentation. They are also more dependent on male relatives to obtain or even present it. "The absence of identity documents interacts with restrictive social norms and institutional power imbalances to systematically exclude women from public services," Hasan said. "Insights from a community-based maternity

experienced as punitive rather than protective. Home births are chosen more due to the fear of mistreatment within formal health facilities -- particularly in male-dominated, overcrowded public hospitals. "Even where services are officially free... travel, repeated visits due to referrals, diagnostic tests, and the time spent away from household or income-generating work can make a single hospital visit a significant burden for low-income families. The cumulative impact of transport, lost wages, and logistical challenges often makes seeking institutional care a difficult and sometimes untenable choice," Hasan said. On the other hand, private healthcare offers little relief with higher costs.

Pre-budget meeting positive and constructive: States' Representatives

New Delhi (Agency): Chief Ministers, Deputy Chief Ministers and Finance Ministers from several states on Saturday described the pre-budget consultation meeting with Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman as a constructive platform to present their states' financial needs and development priorities ahead of the Union Budget. Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said his government raised state-specific issues during the meeting and requested the continuation of Central Sector Schemes that have been running for the past five years. "These schemes are important for Goa's development and should be extended further," he mentioned. Uttar Pradesh Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna said suggestions were invited from all

states and UP presented proposals aimed at moving towards becoming an "Uttam Pradesh." "Every state expressed its desire to strengthen its financial position and accelerate growth," Khanna stated. Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said his state highlighted the challenges faced by states and sought more funds for key sectors such as education, health and irrigation. "These sectors are crucial for long-term development and public welfare," Vikramarka stated. West Bengal Finance Minister Chandrima Bhattacharya said all ministers spoke on behalf of their states and placed their concerns before the Centre. "West Bengal requested that it should not be treated unfairly and sought the release of nearly Rs 1.97 lakh

crore in pending dues, explaining in detail the sectors to which these dues belong," she stated. Jharkhand Finance Minister Radha Krishna Kishor said Jharkhand had raised concerns about financial constraints and delays in receiving central funds. "Under a central scheme, the state has to bear a major share of the cost despite limited resources," he pointed out. He also alleged that central agencies are often misused in states where the ruling party at the Centre is not in power. Punjab Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema said Punjab suffered heavy economic losses due to border tensions and floods this year. He said a relief package of Rs 16 crore was announced earlier but has not yet been received, and the issue was raised again during the meeting.

New Delhi (Agency): Analysts on Sunday said that foreign institutional investors (FIIs) will turn buyers in India with positive developments on the US-India trade agreement and uptick in earnings growth, which will improve investor sentiment. FII investment in early 2026 has begun with the continuation of the trend of the previous year. In 2025, FIIs had net sold equity for Rs 166,283 crore, impacting the performance of the Indian market and also weakening the rupee by about 5 per cent. "At the beginning of 2026, the expectation was that FIIs will turn buyers on improve-

ment in GDP growth and corporate earnings," said Dr. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Ltd. Also, the market expectation was that the much delayed US-India treaty will materialise early in the year. "But geopolitical developments took a turn for the

worse with the US intervention in Venezuela and absence of positive developments on the trade talks. Some negative comments from the US commerce secretary gave the impression that the trade agreement will be further delayed," he noted. This impacted the market sentiments and FIIs continued selling by increasing the volume of selling in the last two trading days. The total FII selling (cash market) through January 9 stood at Rs 11,784 crore. The market sentiments have turned weak that despite DII buying of Rs 17,900 crore in January through 9, Nifty drifted down by 618 points in the week ending January 9. The sell-off last week was broad-based, with cyclical and policy-sensitive sectors bearing the brunt of the correction. Energy, metals, and realty stocks emerged as the top laggards, weighed down by concerns over global trade disruptions, commodity demand uncer-



growth phase in India's agricultural history, marked by strong and sustained expansion of the sector. This growth has been demand-led and increasingly diversified towards high-value crops and allied sectors, reflecting structural transformation within agriculture," said the report. During this period, agriculture has also demonstrated enhanced stability and resilience, even amid climatic and global economic uncertainties. "At the same time, the sector has absorbed a rapidly expanding workforce, particularly women, underscoring its continuing socio-economic importance. Taken together, these trends indicate that sustained agricultural progress will play a pivotal role in realising the national

vision of 'Viksit Bharat @2047,'" it added. Growth in GVA agriculture and allied activities accelerated after 2004-05 and further after 2014-15. Annual growth during 2015-16 to 2024-25 reached a historically highest level of 4.45 per cent. This is the highest growth in the last decade among major agricultural countries. India's agricultural growth during 2015-2024 was 4.42 per cent, surpassing China's 4.10 per cent, said the report. Instability in the growth of GVA agriculture and allied activities peaked in the 1980s and declined steadily thereafter. Instability in recent years is one-third of the peak level of the 1980s. Agriculture income did not witness a single year with negative growth during 2015-16 to 2024-25. The agriculture sector defied Covid, which failed to cause adverse effects on agriculture, unlike the non-agriculture sector, the report highlighted. Livestock and fisheries recorded much higher growth than the crop sector. Fisheries witnessed close to 9 per cent growth, more than three times the growth of the crop sector. Forestry growth turned positive after 2014-15 with close to 4 per cent growth. Within crops, fodder and grasses grew at 7.39 per cent, condiments and spices at 6.72 per cent, fruits at 3.68 per cent, pulses at 3.55 per cent, oilseeds at 2.47 per cent, while cereals grew at 2.36 per cent.

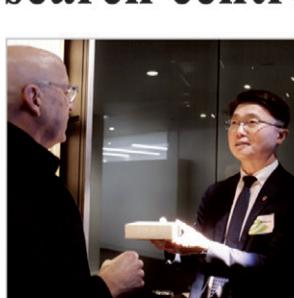
India's rice exports jump 19.4 pc after curbs lifted



New Delhi (Agency): India's rice exports rose sharply by 19.4 per cent last year to reach the second-highest level on record, after the government lifted all export curbs. The removal of restrictions made Indian rice more competitive in global markets and helped the country strengthen its position as the world's largest exporter of the staple grain, as per reports. The strong return of Indian rice to international markets led to a steady flow of supplies, which in turn reduced exports from rival producers such as Thailand and Vietnam. This surge in availability pushed rice prices in Asia to their lowest levels in nearly a decade. Lower prices have brought relief to poorer consumers, especially in Africa and other importing regions that depend heavily on affordable rice supplies. India's growing role in the global rice trade is also reflect-

ble regular rice grains and then mixed with ordinary rice to improve its nutritional value. Officials said such exports highlight India's technological capabilities in food fortification and its contribution to global food and nutritional security. Chhattisgarh has emerged as an important contributor to India's rice exports, with consistent efforts to support farmers, millers and exporters. The successful shipment to Papua New Guinea underlines the state's growing role in nutrition-oriented food supplies and aligns with India's broader ambition to be seen as a reliable supplier of safe, high-quality and value-added agricultural products. APEDA officials said the authority continues to focus on quality assurance, capacity building and market linkages to further strengthen India's standing in global agri-trade.

Science ministry, Nvidia share view on setting up research centre in S. Korea



Seoul The science ministry here said on Sunday it has shared a view with Nvidia Corp. on swiftly setting up a research centre in South Korea. Second Vice Science Minister Ryu Je-myung met with Jay Puri, executive vice president at Nvidia, in California on Friday (U.S. time), according to the Ministry of Science and ICT, reports Yonhap news agency. During the meeting, Ryu and Puri shared a consensus on the need to promptly establish Nvidia's research and development facility in South Korea and discussed ways to jointly foster artificial intelligence startups, the ministry said. Meanwhile, South Korean tech giant Naver said it has built the country's largest artificial intelligence (AI)

tiveness and self-reliance," Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Choi Soo-yeon said. "Naver will leverage the infrastructure that enables rapid training and iterative experimentation to more flexibly apply AI technologies to services and industrial sites, creating tangible value," she added. The cluster is designed for large-scale parallel processing and high-speed communications and offers performance comparable to that of the world's top 500 supercomputers, the release said. Naver expects the infrastructure to speed up AI model development by about 12 times and plans to expand training of so-called omni models that can process text, images, video and audio simultaneously, said the report.

India, Chile close to sealing social security pact as CEPA talks enter final stage



Chile reiterated their strong commitment to the timely conclusion of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) negotiations. The ministry acknowledged the strategic significance of further strengthening bilateral economic ties. "They under-

scored that the CEPA, once concluded, would play a pivotal role in boosting bilateral trade, deepening economic cooperation, enhancing market access and creating new opportunities for businesses in both countries," said the ministry. This was the fourth round of negotiations for the India-Chile CEPA concluded on December 9. The third round of India-Chile CEPA negotiations was held in Santiago, Chile, from October 27-30. Discussions during the third round had covered a wide range of chapters including Trade in Goods and Services, Investment Promotion, Rules of Origin, Intellectual Property Rights, TBT/SPS measures, Economic Cooperation and Critical Minerals. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said that India requested Chile to consider long term agreements for supply of mineral resources. During the meeting, the officials of two nations agreed to diversify bilateral ties in new and emerging areas of contemporary relevance such as Digital Public Infrastructure, innovation and green energy. Last year, India also concluded free trade agreement (FTA) with New Zealand, which expected to offer New Zealanders unprecedented access to 1.4 billion Indian consumers. This historic FTA eliminates and reduces tariffs on 95 per cent of New Zealand's exports -- among the highest of any Indian FTA -- with almost 57 per cent being duty-free from day one, increasing to 82 per cent when fully implemented, with the remaining 13 per cent subject to sharp tariff cuts.

Magh Mela Service App to provide digital guidance to devotees

Prayagraj, Jan 10 (Representative)

In order to facilitate the devotees visiting the Magh Mela, several innovations are being introduced by the Mela administration this time. The Mela Service App for visitors coming to the Magh Mela has also been included in this list. On Saturday, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated the app after visiting the Magh Mela in Prayagraj. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath visited the Magh Mela area to review the upcoming Snan festivals of the ongoing Magh Mela in Prayagraj and held a review meeting with officials and public representatives in this regard. During this meeting, CM Yogi also inaugurated the Magh Mela Service App to provide digital guidance to pilgrims in Prayagraj. Through this app, devotees visiting the Mela will be able to access services digitally. Rishiraj (Mela Officer) stated, the app has been digitally designed in such a way that any devotee or tourist sitting in any part of the Mela region can inform the Mela administration about their problem, and the Mela administration staff will be able to resolve it. For this purpose, QR codes have been pasted on all electricity poles in the Mela area. By scanning these QR codes, devotees can describe their problem in the form and send it to the administration. Teams from various departments of the Mela administration will take cognizance of the issue and resolve it immediately. This facility has been provided for the first time in the Magh Mela.

Singareni a Jewel of Telangana, says Dy CM

Ramagundam (Peddapalli Dist), Jan 11 (Reporter)

Reiterating the Telangana government's commitment to strengthening public sector institutions, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka on Sunday said Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) remains one of the state's most valuable assets, providing employment to over 42,000 regular workers and nearly 40,000 outsourcing employees. Addressing a public meeting, Bhatti stressed that safeguarding and further developing Singareni is a collective responsibility, adding that the company has unmatched expertise in mining compared to any other institution in the country. He said Singareni should look beyond coal mining and explore opportunities in rare earth minerals, which could elevate the company's global standing and create more employment opportunities. Highlighting worker welfare measures, the Deputy Chief Minister said the state government has announced accident insurance coverage of Rs 1 crore for Singareni employees to ensure financial security for their families in case of fatal accidents. The insurance scheme has also been extended to employees and workers across all power sector institutions in the state. He said the initiative underscores the government's dual focus on industrial growth and employee security.

Aundh-Bopodi Area to Get a Development Boost – Sunny Vinayak

Nimhan Pune, Jan 11 (FN Representative)

Chandrashekhar alias Sunny Vinayak Nimhan, the candidate from Aundh-Bopodi Ward No. 8 representing the BJP-Republican Party of India (Athawale) alliance, stated on Sunday that priority would be given to projects that make life easier for citizens. Nimhan was interacting with local residents during a meeting organized by the Aundh Road Society Association in Aundh today. Nimhan said that one metro route passes through Bopodi and another through Baner Phata in the area. To ensure that Bopodi residents can benefit from these metro routes and travel easily for shopping and daily needs, a circular shuttle bus service connecting the metro stations will be started. This will make it possible for citizens to travel from one part of the ward to another within 20 to 25 minutes. He expressed confidence that this shuttle service would save both time and money for residents. Nimhan also stated that an ambitious project for the planned development of the riverbed area within the ward is among his top priorities. He assured that while developing the riverbed, utmost care would be taken to ensure no harm to the environment. MLA Siddharth Shirode said that Sunny Nimhan comes from a political family. His father, Vinayak Nimhan, represented this area in the Legislative Assembly for three consecutive terms and also served as a corporator.

Telangana aims to emerge as global innovation capital: IT Min

Hyderabad, Jan 10 (Agency)

Telangana aims to emerge as a global "Innovation Capital," with Artificial Intelligence (AI), research-driven innovation, and ethical technology use at its core, said IT and Industries Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu. Speaking at the BITS Alumni Association Global Meet 2026 at BITS Pilani-Hyderabad on Saturday, Sridhar stressed that technology should extend beyond academic degrees to serve national priorities and the vision of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'. Highlighting India's Digital Public Infrastructure, such as Aadhaar and UPI, as a global model, he noted that Telangana has taken the lead with its AI-enabled Telangana Data Exchange (TGDeX), the first initiative of its kind in the country. Plans for a Telangana AI Innovation Hub and AI University are expected to set benchmarks for other States, he said. Sridhar called for a focus on data privacy, ethics, and responsible AI, urging companies to strengthen research and development. He said future business success would rely on robust system architecture, data ownership, faster decision-making, and public trust, while the job market would increasingly value creative problem solvers over coding skills alone. He emphasised that AI benefits must reach rural areas, addressing challenges in agriculture, education, and healthcare. The Minister invited BITS Pilani alumni to collaborate in advancing Telangana's vision of innovation and AI-driven growth.

Flexi Workspace Industry seeks policy support, GST Rationalisation in union Budget 2026

Hyderabad, Jan 11 (FN Reporter)

The Indian flexible workspace industry has urged the Government of India to introduce supportive policy measures and rationalise GST in the ensuing union Budget 2026 to sustain its rapid growth and strengthen India's position as a global business hub. The flexible office market in India, valued at USD 5.99 billion in 2025, is projected to reach USD 11.39 billion by 2030, growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 13.72%. Industry

estimates suggest that the total stock of flexible office space in the country will cross 100 million square feet by 2026-27, driven by increasing adoption from startups, large enterprises, Global Capability Centers (GCCs), and multinational companies embracing asset-light and agile operating models. To maintain this growth momentum, industry stakeholders are seeking GST rationalisation, regulatory clarity, and improved ease of doing business in the forthcoming Budget. "India's flexible workspace sector is becoming a critical enabler for global businesses, particularly

Global Capability Centers and digitally driven enterprises," said Ms. Archana Naidu, Board Member



and Head of Business, iKeva. In union Budget 2026, the industry expects clear policy support through tax reforms, streamlined regulations, and incentives that encourage expansion into emerging cities. She added that

GST rationalisation on flexible workspace services, clarity on satellite communication (SatCom) spectrum policies to support high-speed digital integration, and targeted incentives for Tier 2 and Tier 3 city expansion would be crucial for ensuring sustainable growth and global competitiveness. The industry has outlined key expectations from the Budget, including treating flexible workspace services as essential business infrastructure rather than hospitality for taxation purposes, faster regulatory approvals for new centres, and incentives for green buildings and advanced technologies

such as AI- and IoT-enabled offices. According to industry leaders, supportive measures in Budget 2026 would further enhance India's attractiveness as a destination for global businesses, accelerate digital transformation, and promote sustainable, asset-light growth models across the flexible workspace ecosystem. These measures will further strengthen India's attractiveness as a destination for global businesses, accelerate digital transformation, and promote sustainable, asset-light growth models across the flexible workspace ecosystem, she added.

Techno Paints ropes in Sachin Tendulkar as Brand Ambassador; plans Rs 500-cr IPO this fiscal

Hyderabad, Jan 10 (Reporter)



Hyderabad-based Techno Paints has roped in cricket legend and Bharat Ratna awardee, Sachin Tendulkar, as its brand ambassador for three years and announced plans to raise Rs 500 crore through an initial public offering (IPO) to support its expansion plans. The company said it will file its draft red-herring prospectus (DRHP) in the first quarter of FY 2026-27, with the IPO expected to be completed by September 2026. Addressing the media, Techno Paints and Chemicals' Chairman Akuri Srinivas Reddy said the association with Tendulkar would strengthen the brand as the company scales up its domestic and global presence. "We are honoured to collaborate with one of the world's most iconic cricketers," he said. Techno Paints, which has been operating in the domestic paints industry for 25 years, currently operates in eight states.

In 2023, the company had appointed film actor Mahesh Babu as its brand ambassador for a two-year term. Reddy said the company plans to begin exports this year to understand international markets and enter the Middle East region after March 2026. The company has an in-house research and development centre in Hyderabad and a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility at Pashamylaram near the city. As part of its expansion strategy, Techno Paints plans to

set up three manufacturing units, including a fully automated integrated plant at Maheswaram in Rangareddy district. All existing manufacturing units will be consolidated at this location, he said. The company also plans to establish one manufacturing unit each in northern and western India. The total investment for the proposed plants is estimated at around Rs 200 crore, he informed. Currently present in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Delhi, Odisha and Chandigarh, the company plans to expand into Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh by the end of this year. The company is targeting revenues of Rs 2,000 crore by FY 2029-30, compared with an expected Rs 450 crore in the current financial year. Reddy said the Indian paint industry is valued at about Rs 90,000 crore and is growing at an annual rate of 5-9 per cent, adding that low per capita paint consumption in India offers significant growth potential. He informed that Techno Paints is the only company in India offering an integrated "paints-cum-application" service and provides over 3,000 shades of decorative paints. Founded in 2001 with just 10 employees, the company now has over 450 staff and engages more than 5,000 trained painters. At present, 175 painting projects are underway in various states, while painting work has also commenced for 26,065 schools in Telangana, he stated.

Solar irrigation schemes transform farming landscape, strengthen farmers' economy in Himachal Pradesh

Dharamshala, Jan 11 (Agency)

Farming in Himachal Pradesh, a predominantly hill state, has traditionally faced major irrigation challenges due to difficult terrain and dependence on rainfall. However, with the continuous expansion of irrigation facilities by the state government, the agricultural landscape is witnessing a positive transformation, significantly strengthening farmers' livelihoods. To reduce dependence on rain-fed farming, the government is promoting water conservation tanks, lift irrigation, traditional kuhls, sprinklers and drip irrigation systems. Along with these, solar-powered irrigation schemes have emerged as a game changer, especially for remote and high-altitude areas. These initiatives have expanded the irrigated area and helped increase farmers' income. Underlining the importance of irrigation, Deputy Director of Agriculture Kuldeep Dhaman said irrigation is not merely a facility but the backbone of agricultural development. He said timely and adequate irrigation plays a crucial role in crop quality, productivity and farm income, particularly in vegetable cultivation, which is highly sensitive to water availability.

Dhaman said that while traditional crops like wheat require comparatively less irrigation, vegetable crops need regular and timely watering, failing which the entire crop may be lost. Therefore, irrigation facilities are given top priority in vegetable farming. Calling the solar irrigation scheme a "lifeline" for farmers, the Deputy Director said that over the past three years, the Agriculture Department has effectively implemented the scheme to address irrigation-related problems. Under the scheme, subsidies are

being provided for installing solar-powered water lifting pump systems. The primary objective of the scheme is to free farmers from dependence on electricity and diesel, reduce irrigation costs and promote environmental conservation. Solar-powered pumps are cost-effective and provide uninterrupted irrigation for longer durations. He added that the scheme also provides support for constructing water storage tanks, lining of tanks and laying pipelines for water conveyance. This has made irrigation accessible even in remote hilly regions.

Areas that earlier remained unirrigated due to water scarcity are now being successfully used for vegetable cultivation, leading to increased land productivity and agricultural expansion. In several areas, two to four farmers have collectively adopted the solar irrigation scheme, developing irrigation facilities over larger tracts of land. This has enabled regular irrigation without additional expenditure on electricity or diesel, lowering production costs and increasing profits. They said that under the flow irrigation scheme, a shallow borewell was constructed in their fields at a cost of Rs 2.20 lakh, of which Rs 1.10 lakh was provided as subsidy, ensuring year-round irrigation and significantly improving crop productivity. Under the solar irrigation scheme, a 5 HP motor was installed at a total cost of Rs 4.23 lakh, with a subsidy of Rs 3.81 lakh. This enabled irrigation of a larger area in less time, reducing labour and operational costs. Under the 'Water to Strengthen Agriculture' scheme, a 1.25 lakh litre water storage tank was constructed at a cost of Rs 4.92 lakh with 100 per cent subsidy, facilitating rainwater conservation and irrigation during dry periods.

Asian Thalassemia Conclave 2026 concludes in Hyderabad; experts stress prevention-first approach

Hyderabad, Jan 11 (FN Reporter)

The Asian Thalassemia Conclave (ATC) 2026, organised by the Thalassemia and Sickle Cell Society (TSCS), Hyderabad, in collaboration with Kamala Hospital Research Center, concluded here on Sunday with a strong call from global experts and policymakers to prioritise prevention to reduce the growing burden of thalassemia.



More than 400 delegates, including clinicians, public health experts, policymakers, researchers, representatives of non-governmental organisations and patient advocates from India and abroad, participated in the two-day conclave, which focused on coordinated strategies to address one of the most serious yet preventable genetic blood disorders. Telangana Minister for Health, Medical and Family Welfare, Damodar Raja Narasimha, who participated in the conclave, interacted with delegates. Reaffirming the State government's commitment to thalassemia prevention and patient welfare, the Minister said Telangana is moving towards introducing genetic and antenatal screening for thalassemia. He also announced plans to expand access to disability certificates, provide financial assistance and pensions for affected children, and strengthen blood bank infrastructure across all districts to ensure adequate and safe blood supply for patients requiring regular transfusions. "Thalassemia is

one of the few genetic disorders where most cases can be prevented through timely screening and counselling. The participation of experts from across the world highlights the urgent need for unified national and regional strategies to achieve a thalassemia-free India by 2035," he said.

A major highlight of ATC 2026 was the launch of the Bharatiya Federation of Thalassemia Societies (BFTS), a national platform aimed at unifying thalassemia organisations across the country to strengthen advocacy, standardise best practices and amplify the prevention agenda. The BFTS logo was formally unveiled in a symbolic moment by two young twins, underscoring the focus on protecting future generations. The conclave was held against the backdrop of TSCS's over 27 years of work in patient care, prevention and advocacy. The organisation currently provides free, comprehensive treatment and long-term support to more than 4,588 patients. Delegates also highlighted TSCS's public health success in Mahabubnagar district, which became the first district in India to achieve 100 per cent prenatal screening of pregnant women for thalassemia. India continues to carry one of the highest thalassemia burdens globally, with an estimated 15,000 children born every year with thalassemia major. Experts reiterated that most of these cases are preventable, but uneven implementation, limited awareness and gaps in access to genetic counselling remain significant challenges.

FDA seizes banned flavoured tobacco worth Rs 9.71 crore in Maharashtra

Nashik, Dec 11 (Reporter)

In Nashik district, a special flying squad of the FDA seized a stock of banned flavoured tobacco and gutkha worth approximately Rs 9.71 crore. Cases have been registered against 11 people under the Food Safety Act in this regard. The seized stock is valued at approximately Rs 9,71,02,365, and cases have been registered against 11 individuals under the Indian Penal Code and the Food Safety Act. The operation was conducted by a special team under the guidance of Nashik Divisional Joint Commissioner (Food) Manish Sanap and Special Squad Head Yaduraj Dahatonde, along with Assistant Commissioner (Food) Bhandara, and included officers Gajan Gore, Ashok Ilager, and Food Safety Officers, as well as the Nashik divisional team comprising Vinod Dhawad (Assistant Commissioner Food), Gopal Kasar, and Govind Gaikwad, Food Safety Officers. A case was registered at the Dindori police station following an operation conducted on January 8 at Elitecon International Limited, Talegaon, Dindori. During this operation, a stock of 508 boxes of Kash Premix Shisha containing flavoured tobacco, a banned food product, manufactured by Golden Cryo Private Limited, Ghat No. 395, Padli Deshmukh, Padli Phata, Tal. Igatpuri, was found. Accordingly, on January 10, a joint team of the LCB police and the Wadiware police station inspected the premises of Golden Cryo Private Limited, a cigarette manufacturing company. During the inspection, the police seized approximately 2000 boxes of packed cigarettes, a packing machine (Tipto), 40 rolls of unlabelled silver packaging material, a Hi Pack packing machine, and approximately 200 sacks of raw flavoured tobacco in plastic packaging. The packing machine (Tipto), along with 40 rolls of unlabelled silver packaging and a Hi Pack packing machine, have been sealed to prevent the manufacturing of prohibited food products, specifically flavoured tobacco. Instructions have been given not to use the machines until further notice, the police informed. The FDA has asked the citizens to share information about sale, production, storage, or transportation of flavoured tobacco, gutkha, or similar prohibited food products on their toll-free number 1800222365. The agency has also warned vendors against transporting, storing, or selling flavoured tobacco, gutkha, or similar prohibited food products.

EDITORIAL

Silence as statement of compliance

India's response to the United States' attack on Venezuela and the capture of President Nicolas Maduro was long on caution and bordered on acceptance. New Delhi struggled to articulate a response and when it came, it was formal and bland. In a carefully worded statement, the government expressed "deep concern" over the developments, but avoided naming the US or condemning the aggression. It reaffirmed support to the well-being and safety of the people of Venezuela, and called upon all concerned to address issues through dialogue, ensuring "peace and stability of the region". Considering that the US action violated international laws and flouted the UN charter, India's response was underwhelming. It is noted that the government had also failed to voice strong condemnation of other recent acts of aggression, such as the war in Ukraine and the genocide in Gaza.

The position revealed a lack of clarity in responding to a transgression that is set to have fallouts beyond the Americas. India has a history of condemning aggression by strong powers on weaker nations. It has stood for morality, decency, and respect for national sovereignty, and endorsed a principle of non-interference in internal affairs of other countries. But the world has seen significant changes over the last few decades, and India appears to have adjusted its sails to suit the winds. Now, it is not high ideals but immediate interests that guide the country's conduct and shape its responses to global events. India is increasingly seen as taking a realistic position on such matters. Important countries of the Global South, including South Africa, Brazil, and Mexico have condemned the attack on Venezuela. Though India is a leader of the Global South and has a voice that counts on the international stage, it has desisted from provoking the US.

This reaction has to be seen in the context of a reiteration of the tariff threat by Donald Trump. The US president wants India to stop buying Russian oil and has okayed a bill, which has been introduced in the US Senate, that prescribes a 500% tariff on countries that buy oil from Russia. This move, if enacted as law, will severely impact India; it threatens to put an end to the country's exports to the US. The uncertainty around the trade deal the two countries are negotiating has not been cleared. Trump has also made some uncomfortable remarks about Prime Minister Narendra Modi. India's response reflects a new diplomatic rationale that sees being right as coming at a price.

Trump Ends US Pretence; Now UN Must Dissolve

Surajit Dasgupta

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Formed after the First World War, the League of Nations was disbanded because it failed to prevent the Second World War, demonstrating its inability to enforce collective security against aggression from powers like Japan, Germany, and Italy, exacerbated by the United States never joining and major nations leaving, leading to its formal dissolution in 1946 and paving the way for the United Nations. Now, the UN has demonstrably failed too. For decades, political observers have noted, and books on international relations have posited that the US does not care to ask the other four permanent members of the UN Security Council whether the situation in another sovereign country calls for a joint intervention by the top five. The Americans have gone ahead regardless: the First Gulf War, the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, etc.

In the last instance, the US went ahead on the false pretext of weapons of mass destruction that Saddam Hussein never had. But now it is no longer a theory or an expert's opinion that the UNSC is useless. US President Donald Trump almost said it and also showed the world why and how. When the US president ordered the invasion of Venezuela and abduction of Nicolás Maduro and his wife Cilia Flores on 3 January, and blocked an oil-laden vessel whose passage to Russia had already been authorised, he and his Secretary of State Marco Rubio said that they did it because they could, implying Russia wouldn't dare use its submarine in the vicinity. The same day, the president pooh-poohed his allies' military power, writing on Truth Social, "Russia and China have zero fear of NATO without the United States," also mocking Europe's 2 per cent GDP growth. Trump's candour and rudeness apart, however, he did nothing his predecessors hadn't. Of course, the UN does a whole lot of valuable things for humanity, ranging from looking after children through UNICEF to preserving world heritage through UNESCO, from settling trade disputes via WTO to ensuring labour rights using the ILO, from helping financially distressed countries through the



IMF and World Bank to caring for people's health through WHO, but none of these was its primary responsibility. Stopping wars was, and it has failed spectacularly in this job. While no country will dare take on the might of the US military at the moment, Trump's in-your-face action has legitimised China's designs on Taiwan. As the US is busy on its southern coast, Beijing might well seize the opportunity, on the lines of its opportunistic invasion of India in 1962, in the midst of the Cuban missile crisis. The partial truth of Russian aggression, based on which NATO threw its weight behind Ukraine, crumbles as well, because, as per the US, if a country as much as perceives a threat from a neighbour, it holds the right to attack that country. On a lighter note, India may reclaim Akhand Bharat, ranging from Iran to its west to

Cambodia to its east, citing the expanse of its ancient civilisation! China may likewise get back 14.7 million sq km of the Middle Kingdom that it had under the Qing dynasty. The 300-year-old country of White land grabbers cannot cry "expansionism", as it had annexed Mexican territories of California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, parts of Colorado, Nevada, Utah, and sections of Wyoming, Kansas, and Oklahoma through the Mexican-American War and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) and the Gadsden Purchase (1854)! In such a free-for-all scenario, how is the UN supposed to discharge its fundamental duty? It cannot because right during the inception of the world body, a foundational provision rendered it partial to the US.

Washington is the largest

financial contributor to the UN, providing billions annually through mandatory assessed contributions and significant voluntary funding for specific programmes. In 2023, the total US funding was around \$13 billion, covering assessed portions for the regular budget (around 22 per cent) and peacekeeping (capped at 25 per cent) and substantial voluntary aid for UN agencies.

The US contribution was 39 per cent of the UN's needs in the late 1940s. Not only did the indebted UK and France not protest, but the rising powers of Russia and China also did not put their foot down. Further, with the exception of Geneva in Switzerland, a non-military entity housing the headquarters of the WHO, ILO, WTO, WIPO, WMO, UNHCR and UNAIDS, the maximum concentration of UN agencies' top offices - main UN headquarters, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women, UNDP - is in the US. If that does not skew the international mediator enough in favour of the US, the strength of the European military certainly does. In the eight decades following the end of the Second World War, the war machines of tiny European countries have remained a joke. Trump's 'Truth Social' post was actually a boorish but truthful reminder of that.

Is Brute Power The New World Order?

Pavan K Varma



Would America have dared to carry out the abduction of the President and his wife of a country, as part of planned pulverisation of the enshrined principle of national sovereignty, if that country was a nuclear weapon's power, and could also inflict, even if not in the same measure, unacceptable damage to America? The answer is clearly in the negative. So, the only inference to draw from the lawless world in which we live today is that, irrespective of the real merits of any situation, the only wrong that one can commit is to be helpless and vulnerable to the lunatic domination of the powerful. The blunt truth is that brute power is synonymous with the new world order. The grammar of diplomacy still invokes the United Nations, international law, human rights, democracy, sovereignty, and a rules-based order. Yet the lived reality of global politics increasingly suggests another, older language-one in which brute power speaks more fluently than principle, and outcomes are shaped less by norms than by naked capacity. True, the world has rarely been governed by idealism alone. Notions like the balance of power, spheres of influence, and realpolitik are not modern inventions; they are as old as Chanakya. What is different today is not the existence of might is right, but its brazenness-and the erosion of any shared moral embarrassment about its use. The post-Second World War order, painstakingly constructed amidst the ruins of unrestrained violence, sought to place some limits on this instinct. The

United Nations, international law, and a network of multi-lateral institutions were not designed to abolish power, but to civilize it-to embed it within procedures, norms, and a minimal consensus about restraint. For several decades, this architecture functioned imperfectly but meaningfully. Even the most powerful states felt obliged to cloak their actions in the language of legality and ethics. Hypocrisy, paradoxically, was a tribute paid to principle. That tribute now appears less obligatory. When Russia redraws borders by force, when the United States employs sanctions as instruments of economic siege, invades Venezuela and claims Denmark, when Israel continues its relentless bombing of Palestine, or when China asserts that Asia is its natural area of dominance, it is clear that the rules-based international order is dead. Frankly, the United Nations too is redundant. The UN was never a world government; it is a forum, a mirror held up to the international community. Its paralysis often reflects not its own irrelevance, but the deep divisions among its most powerful members. The Security Council does not fail because rules are meaningless; it fails because power is unequally distributed and jealously guarded. To blame the institution for the behaviour of states is to misunderstand both. Within borders, autocratic governments-including a powerful and self-assured China-have asserted control over dissent, information, and identity with little apology to liberal sensibilities. Liberal democracy once claimed not only moral superiority but historical inevitability. That confidence has dissipated. Autocratic regimes argue-sometimes persuasively to their own citizens-that order, growth, and national pride matter more than procedural freedoms. The spectacle of dysfunction in many democracies, marked by polarisation and inequality, is of a piece with global dysfunction. Only more pro-active citizens can counter this push towards internal national hegemony. Between international unilateralism and internal authoritarianism, three things are common. Both justify their actions on the basis of 'national interest' whose definition is solely their monopoly; both believe that any opposition to their wilful impunity is irrelevant, and should be suppressed by force; and, both are convinced of the 'ideological supremacy' of what they believe in. Donald Trump is a classic example of this confluence.

Somnath And The Unfinished

Rahul Shivshankar

The Somnath temple is where it all began. In 1026, Islamic zealotry erupted upon the Indian subcontinent in the form of Mahmud of Ghazni. The marauder's intent was unambiguous: to desecrate Hindu sacred space and assert religious supremacy. That first act of cultural destruction did not remain an isolated episode. It set in motion a long arc of civilisational trauma that assumed different forms across centuries. At Independence, that impulse resurfaced in a subtler but no less damaging form. In free India, Marxist historiography cast any legitimate appreciation of Hindu civilisation as inherently "communal" or anti-national. Author Gurcharan Das once remarked that inquiring into India's Hindu roots could risk earning an individual the moniker of a Sanghi. So pervasive was this mindset in a certain set of deracinated Indians that Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, himself deeply interested in history, recoiled when members of his own cabinet urged him to formally endorse the reconstruction of the Somnath temple, dismissing the demand as an exercise in "Hindu revivalism". From that jaundiced inheritance, India has now stepped into a new moment. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be at Somnath to offer tribute as part of the Somnath Swabhimani Parv, marking a thousand years of the temple's resilience. Somnath today is not merely stone reclaimed from ruin; it is memory reclaimed from suppression. A shrine broken repeatedly by religious exclusivism, yet rebuilt again and again through faith, defiance, and civilisational self-respect. As the Prime Minister has observed, "The attack of the year 1026 and the numerous assaults that followed thereafter could not shake our eternal faith. On the contrary, these attacks strengthened the sentiment of India's cultural unity, and the Somnath Temple was repeatedly revived and rebuilt." Yet while Somnath stands as a powerful symbol of Hindu civilisational reclamation, no civilisation can truly heal if its wounds are neither acknowledged nor discussed openly, and certainly not if every inquiry into Hindu history is reflexively branded "communal".

Can forest conservation make room for justice?

Prashanth N Srinivas

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In Nagarhole in southern Karnataka, a quiet but determined reclamation is underway. In May 2025, 52 families of the Jenukuruba, one of the twelve forest-associated Adivasi communities of Karnataka, reclaimed their ancestral haadi of Karadikallu Attur Kolli, inside the Nagarhole Tiger Reserve. Their elders had been evicted nearly four decades ago, when the area was first sealed off for conservation and later notified as a tiger reserve.

The families built makeshift huts, set up shrines, and publicly declared that they were asserting rights guaranteed under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (FRA). In December 2025, further news stories indicated similar acts of land assertion among other Adivasi communities. These were not new claims. They have filed applications since 2009-11, attended multiple rounds of surveys and committed hearings, and waited through years of bureaucratic delay. Yet, as they attempted to re-establish their settlement, they were repeatedly warned to leave. Citing wildlife laws, officials termed the return an "illegal occupation", even as community members stressed that they were not encroachers but rights-holders denied due process. As reported in several independent media outlets, over 250



forest guards, tiger force personnel, and police eventually raided the settlement, dismantling shelters despite the presence of women, children, and elderly people. The confrontation has become one of the most visible Adivasi assertions of land rights in a flagship tiger reserve, and a stark reminder that conservation policy in India continues to sit uneasily with

justice. This apparent act of defiance is also a symbolic return, rooted in memory, law, and belonging. The Jenukuruba struggle mirrors the long, unfinished history of India's forest-dwelling peoples and their fraught relationship with forest administration, a system that still struggles to see Adivasis as rightful citizens of landscapes now rebranded as protected

areas. The problem is not, as is often implied, one of "illiteracy" or ignorance among Adivasi communities. It lies in the tardy and obstructed implementation of the FRA, and in the persistence of a conservation mindset that continues to view Adivasis primarily as obstacles to ecological goals rather than as partners in sustaining forests. Notably, many conservation practitioners in India no longer support such exclusionary models, but the institutionalised practice of the colonial, protectionist style of forest administration has been slow to change.

The idea that effective conservation requires people-free forests remains deeply embedded in India's wildlife discourse. While such thinking is often framed as necessary for ecological recovery, it has produced a perverse outcome: Adivasi communities, who have historically con-

served biodiversity, bear the highest costs of conservation, even as cities and towns expand at the expense of biodiversity. Tigers they did not hunt, and forests they did not fell have become reasons to deny them roads, electricity, schools, and water; basic amenities that define equal citizenship.

A senior official in the Karnataka Forest Department, while calling the self-assertion in Nagarhole "illegal", suggested the Adivasis were "instigated". The National Tiger Conservation Authority, for instance, in its reports, including the 2024 report titled Bridging the Gap: Unveiling the Effectiveness of India's Tiger Reserve Management, identifies Soliga Adivasi villages inside the Biligiri Ranganathaswamy Temple (BRT) Tiger Reserve as a "threat", citing population growth and demands for infrastructure.

Amit Shah in Kerala to formally launch BJP's campaign for Assembly elections

Thiruvananthapuram (Agency): Union Home Minister Amit Shah will on Sunday formally launch the Bharatiya Janata Party's campaign in Kerala for the upcoming Assembly elections. The senior BJP leader landed at the Thiruvananthapuram International Airport on a special aircraft on Saturday night and is scheduled to participate in a series of political, organisational, and religious programmes in the state capital. According to the official itinerary, Amit Shah is set to begin his engagements with a visit to the historic Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple, where he will offer special prayers. Following the temple visit, the Home Minister will interact with newly elected Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) representatives from local self-government institutions. The interaction is aimed at strengthening the party's organisational base at



the grassroots level ahead of the upcoming elections. HM Shah is scheduled to address the BJP's elected representatives' conference at Kowdiar. The meeting will focus on election preparedness, booth-level coordination, and constituency-specific strategies. Later in the afternoon, he will attend the party's state core committee meeting, where key political

and electoral issues are likely to be deliberated in detail. Senior BJP leaders, including Rajeev Chandrasekhar, V. Muraleedharan, K. Surendran, and Shobha Surendran, will participate in the meetings. Party sources said discussions will include candidate selection for constituencies categorised as A Plus and A categories, which the BJP considers crucial for

expanding its electoral footprint in Kerala. Talks on seat-sharing arrangements among NDA partners are also expected to take place during HM Shah's meeting with alliance leaders later in the evening. BJP state president Rajeev Chandrasekhar, in a Sunday post on X, wrote, "Privileged to join our karyakartas in welcoming Amit Shahji to Thiruvananthapuram. 6 months ago, in July 2025, Amit Shah ji launched BJP/NDA's #Mission2025 and Kerala witnessed a political turning point in local body elections. Today, he is here to launch #Mission2026 and guide our karyakartas as we prepare for one of the most consequential Assembly elections in Kerala's history. Election that will decide the future of our state and the opportunities available to generations of Malayalees." He had earlier stated that Amit Shah's visit would officially mark the beginning of the NDA's election campaign activities in Kerala. The visit has gained added political significance as it comes in the backdrop of the arrest of chief priest Kandararu Rajeevaru in connection with the Sabarimala gold theft case. Sources indicated that the possibility of a probe by central agencies into the incident may also come up for discussion during the party's internal deliberations. Meanwhile, in view of the Home Minister's visit, the Thiruvananthapuram city police have imposed extensive traffic restrictions across major parts of the capital from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Parking will be prohibited on several key roads, and vehicles violating the restrictions will be towed away. Authorities have advised passengers traveling to the airport and railway stations to plan their journeys in advance to avoid inconvenience.

Cong to protest against 'scraping' of MGNREGA, observe fast nationwide: Ajay Rai



New Delhi (Agency): Congress UP Chief Ajay Rai on Sunday said that the party workers across the country will hold protests and observe a fast against the Central government's decision to "end" MGNREGA and replace it with an alternative scheme, which he claimed fails to protect the interests of the poor. Speaking to reporters, Rai said, "Today, across the country, our Congress workers will sit in protest under the statues of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr B.R. Ambedkar and observe a fast. They will protest against the government for ending MGNREGA and replacing it with schemes like 'G Ram G', which fail to provide proper support to the poor. Today, all of us will sit in silent protest, observe a fast, and voice our opposition to these actions." He alleged that the Centre's move has directly impacted

Traders in Jammu reject demand for 'separate' state seek statehood for J&K

Jammu (Agency): A section of traders and businessmen in Jammu on Sunday rejected the demand for a separate state for Jammu and instead demanded statehood for J&K. The group was reacting to the recently made demands by members of some right-wing organisations, including the RSS and Bajrang Dal, for a separate state of Jammu. These groups alleged that the interests of the Jammu region have been compromised by the ruling parties belonging to the Valley. The trading community group said that a separate state for Jammu would severely harm the economy, weaken trade, and adversely affect national interest. "Jammu lacks sufficient independent resources and is already facing economic distress due to declining business activity, the absence of tourism support, and limited government assistance. Separation from Kashmir would further aggravate these challenges and push traders into deeper hardship. Jammu's economic linkage with Kashmir has historically been beneficial for both regions, particularly in terms of trade flow, nation exists, it is the duty of politicians to resolve it. Dividing people is not the solution," they said. They criticised legislators who, according to them, engage in divisive rhetoric without delivering development. The traders warned that any further division would be fatal for regional harmony and against the interests of the nation.

"We strongly condemn the politics of division. As traders, we want unity, stability and development,"

they said. They also recalled the economic losses suffered after the cancellation of the Darbar Move in the past and welcomed its restoration, saying the move had earlier caused serious damage to trade in Jammu. The Darbar Move, a biannual practice of shifting the J&K government between Srinagar and Jammu, was scrapped by the L-G administration in 2021. The practice was restored by the NC government led by Omar Abdullah last year.



Is there a govt in Telangana, asks BRS leader Harish Rao



the movie theatres. Harish Rao took to 'X' to slam the government over the controversy in the wake of the High Court pulling up authorities for hiking ticket prices for Prabhas starrer 'The Raja Saab' and Chiranjeevi starrer

Mane Shankara Varaprasad Garu'. "On one hand, a government order is released increasing ticket prices while on the other hand, the Cinematography Minister, who is responsible for that department, helplessly throws up his hands saying the file didn't come to him," posted Harish Rao. "If such a major decision is being made in a department without the knowledge of a cabinet minister, then who is actually running this government?" he asked. Harish Rao questioned Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, if he were running a government or a "circus company". The BRS

Three drug peddlers arrested, contraband recovered in J&K's Sopore



Srinagar (Agency): Three drug peddlers were arrested, and contraband was recovered from their possession in two separate incidents in Jammu and Kashmir's Sopore district, police said on Sunday. "Continuing its sustained drive against drug trafficking, Sopore Police has apprehended three drug peddlers in separate NDPS cases across Police District Sopore, leading to the seizure of contraband substances and registration of multiple FIRs," police said in a statement. In the first incident, Police Station Boma established a naka on the Nathipora-Tujjar link road. During the check, a suspicious person attempted to flee but was apprehended. Jammu and Kashmir Police have been carrying out aggressive operations against drug smugglers, drug peddlers and those involved in hawala money rackets and other unlawful financial activities. It is believed that funds generated through these unlawful activities are used to sustain terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. Drug smugglers, drug peddlers and those involved in hawala money rackets are detained

another case, Police Post under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act. In addition to this, police also attached properties created by funds generated through these activities. These attachments of property are done after obtaining orders from the court of law. Operations against drug smuggling are carried out simultaneously by local police and the security forces with anti-terrorist operations against terrorists, their underground workers (OGWs) and sympathisers. These coordinated operations are carried out to dismantle the entire support system of terrorism rather than focusing just on the gun-wielding terrorists.

Left, BJP youth wings hold protests against Kerala MLA Rahul Mamkootathil



Thiruvananthapuram (Agency): The members of the Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI), which is the youth wing of CPI(M), and the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) on Sunday held separate demonstrations against Rahul Mamkootathil, the expelled Congress MLA, who has been arrested in connection with a rape case. The protest erupted when the police brought the arrested MLA, who was earlier the Youth Congress Kerala president, to the Pathanamthitta district general hospital for a mandatory medical examination following his interrogation. As the police vehicle arrived at the hospital premises, activists from the youth organisations surrounded it, raising loud slogans and shouting accusations against the MLA. Protesters were heard questioning why an individual facing multiple serious criminal allegations continued to enjoy political patronage and protection.

"This is not the first or second case, but the third one. Why is such a person being shielded?" the protesters shouted, demanding strict legal action. The situation soon escalated, prompting the police to deploy heavy security. Amidst intense sloganising, officers managed to escort Rahul Mamkootathil out of the police vehicle and into the hospital under tight protection. Brief scuffles reportedly broke out between the police and protesters as authorities attempted to clear the area and prevent further unrest. Rahul Mamkootathil was arrested dramatically in connection with what police say is the third rape case regis-

tered against him. He was taken into custody from a hotel in Palakkad around 12.30 a.m. on Sunday. After being detained, he was brought to the Pathanamthitta AR Camp for questioning. The interrogation was conducted by a Special Investigation Team under the supervision of DIG G. Poonguzhal. According to police sources, the case is based on a complaint filed via email by a woman from Pathanamthitta.

The complainant has levelled grave allegations against the MLA, including brutal sexual assault, forced abortion, and prolonged financial exploitation. Police officials stated that the accusations are serious in nature and that the investigation is being carried out with due diligence, given the sensitivity of the case and the public attention it has drawn. The arrest and subsequent protests have intensified political tensions in the district, with calls growing louder for accountability and an impartial probe.

Authorities have assured that law and order will be maintained and that no one will be spared if found guilty, irrespective of political stature.

Adani Group to invest Rs 1.5 lakh crore in Gujarat's Kachchh

Ahmedabad (Agency): The Adani Group will invest Rs 1.5 lakh crore in Gujarat's Kachchh region over the next five years, underlining its long-term commitment to the state, Adani Ports and SEZ Limited Managing Director Karan Adani said on Sunday. The investments reflect India's message to the world that economic growth, climate responsibility and energy security can move forward together, Karan Adani said. In his remarks at an event in Rajkot, attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said Gujarat is not just a state of investment for the Adani Group, but the very foundation of its journey. "Our Chairman, Gautam Adani, has always believed that the growth of our group must be inseparable from the growth of the nation," Karan Adani stated.

How Only 15 Minutes Of Daily Running Can Have Long-Term Health Benefits

New Delhi (Agency): In the modern rush of work, family, traffic and chores, 'no time' is often the biggest barrier people cite to exercise. Yet, what if the best thing you could do for your body each day was squeezing in just 15 minutes of running? It sounds almost too good to be true but a growing body of scientific evidence shows that even small doses of vigorous physical activity like running can produce meaningful, long-term health benefits for the body and mind. Even short daily runs may be a realistic, achievable step for many people to start improving health without the pressure of long workouts or gym routines. Below are long term benefits you can realistically expect from making a consistent 15-minute run part of your daily life.

Long-term benefits of only 15 minutes of daily running: Reduces risk of early death. Research following tens of thousands of adults over years found that even modest running, as little as 5-

10 minutes per day was linked with a significantly lower risk of death from all causes compared to not running at all. A short daily run may help you live longer even if you don't train for speed or distance. Keeps your heart healthier. Exercise scientists have demonstrated that moderate-to-vigorous activity like running protects the heart. Even when done in small daily doses, this activity helps lower blood pressure, improve cholesterol balance and reduce strain on the cardiovascular system.

Running boosts how efficiently your lungs, blood vessels and heart deliver oxygen to muscles.

Over time, your body becomes better at moving and using energy, which also helps with daily fatigue and breathlessness. Tasks like climbing stairs or running after a bus feel easier.

Running burns calories and improves insulin sensitivity.

Your heart works more efficiently when you run regularly, lowering your risk of heart attack and stroke. Improves cardiovascular endurance.

Running boosts how efficiently your lungs, blood vessels and heart deliver oxygen to muscles.

Over time, your body becomes better at moving and using energy, which also helps with daily fatigue and breathlessness. Tasks like climbing stairs or running after a bus feel easier.

Running burns calories and improves insulin sensitivity.

Over time, that helps strengthen your leg bones and improves muscle tone around the hips, glutes and core. You may feel steadier

on your feet and less prone to muscle weakness as you age. Mood booster and stress reducer. Physical activity releases endorphins that are feel-good hormones that can uplift mood and reduce anxiety. Running regularly also helps regulate sleep patterns, which further supports emotional well-being. A 15-minute run can help clear a foggy mind and improve your day. Better immune function. Moderate exercise has been shown to strengthen the immune system, potentially lowering the frequency of minor infections like colds. Feeling less under the weather during flu seasons or stressful times.

Helps reduce chronic disease risk. Running improves blood pressure, cholesterol, sugar control and body composition, all key risk factors for chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and certain cancers. Small daily activity lowers your risk of major lifestyle diseases.

Boosts brain health and cognition. Aerobic exercise like

running increases blood flow to the brain, which supports memory, focus and overall cognitive function.

Though long-term research continues, even short bursts of activity have been linked with improved executive function and mood. Sustainable habit that fits into busy lives. One of the most meaningful benefits may be behavioural: a 15-minute daily run is achievable for many people who otherwise struggle with time constraints. Making it a habit can be more powerful than trying to do long, infrequent workouts that are hard to maintain. A habit you can stick to long-term and long-term health improvements follow. While many recent studies focus on walking bouts of 10-15 minutes and their benefits, running is a vigorous-intensity activity, which means the same relative amount of time spent can produce equal or greater health advantages compared to moderate movements like brisk walking.

10-Minute High-Intensity Workout Can Trigger Anti-Cancer Molecules In Bloodstream



New Delhi (Agency): A recent study found that just 10 minutes of vigorous activity could hinder cancer progression. The study shows that short, high-intensity workouts can help alter the molecular profile of the bloodstream. Making it a habit can be more powerful than trying to do long, infrequent workouts that are hard to maintain. A habit you can stick to long-term and long-term health improvements follow. While many recent studies focus on walking bouts of 10-15 minutes and their benefits, running is a vigorous-intensity activity, which means the same relative amount of time spent can produce equal or greater health advantages compared to moderate movements like brisk walking.

In the future, these insights could lead to new therapies that imitate the beneficial effects of exercise on how cells repair damaged DNA and use fuel for energy. The team found that exercise increased the activity of genes boosting mitochondrial energy processes, enabling better oxygen utilization in cells. Conversely, genes driving unchecked cell division were suppressed, potentially taming cancer cell aggression. Post-exercise blood also improved DNA repair by activating the vital PNKP gene.

The study included 30 participants between the ages 50-78, all overweight or obese (a cancer risk) yet healthy otherwise. Each of them performed a 10-minute high-intensity cycling session. Blood analysis covered 249 proteins, with 13 increasing after exercise, including interleukin-6 (IL-6), which plays a key role in DNA repair. Dr. Orange, a Clinical Exercise Physiologist at The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, said: "These results highlight the role of exercise in reducing bowel cancer risk. Physical activity sends molecular messengers via blood that regulate the genes linked to tumour development and genetic stability.

Bowel cancer, also known as colorectal cancer, is cancer that is found anywhere in the large bowel, which includes the colon and rectum. While it is usually seen in older adults, it can happen at any age. Also, bowel cancer is now affecting young people. If detected at an earlier stage, treatment outcomes tend to be better. The above study builds on growing evidence that regular physical activity is important for the prevention of cancer.

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IND vs NZ 1st ODI: India won by 4 wickets

Vadodara, Jan 11 (Agency)

In India vs New Zealand, 1st ODI at Vadodara results India won by 4 wickets 6 ball remaining. Virat Kohli declared as the Players of the Match. India captain Shubman Gill remarked "always feels great to chip, especially when you're chasing. Staying in the present is most important, esp for athletes. That's what I try to do. At the moment, Kohli's making batting look easy, it's tough to start on these pitches. Tough to replicate what he does. Hope he keeps piling on runs. Arshdeep did well last series, Siraj wasn't there, we want to keep rotating as there aren't that many ODIs. Washington has a side strain, will go for a scan after the match". Earlier, Daryl Mitchell stood tall with a stroke-filled half-century to help New Zealand post 300 for 8 in the first One-Day International against India in Vadodara on Sunday (January 11, 2026). Mitchell, ranked world No. 3 behind India superstars Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, lived up to expectations with a gritty knock which gave New Zealand a much-needed impetus amid middle order collapse. Mitchell clobbered five fours and three sixes to make 84 off

71 balls after New Zealand middle order failed to build on an ideal start given by Devon Conway (56 off 67 balls; 6 fours, 1

Zealand skidded from 117 for no loss in the 22nd over to 198 for five in the 38th.

But Mitchell forged vital stands to come to



six) and Henry Nicholls (62 off 69 balls; 8 fours). Openers Conway and Nicholls had put on 117 runs to defy India for the first 21 overs, but Harshit Rana's (2/65) second spell of 2-0-13-2 turned the tables and the home side chipped away with regular strikes. New

their rescue, while debutant Kristian Clarke struck three late fours to make 17-ball 24 not out. In the 22nd over, Rana took pace off the ball to break the century partnership between Conway and Nicholls. An innocuous off-cutter, bowled away from the batter saw

Nicholls reaching out for it, only to get an edge that carried to the wicketkeeper for India's first breakthrough. In the 24th over, Rana mixed up the slower ones with a few in excess of 140 kmph to keep the Kiwis guessing. On the final delivery of the over, he had Conway's inside edge crashing into the wickets. But India and Rana would not have had to wait for a breakthrough had Kuldeep Yadav (1/52) hung on to a regulation catch at third man in the fifth over, when Nicholls was on five. Siraj sent down a slower one which had Will Young feathering one behind the wickets, while Prasidh Krishna (2/60) cleaned up Mitchell Hay (12) in the 37th. Under the weather for the last few days, Glenn Phillips appeared a tad sluggish in his brief stay which was ended by Kuldeep, and a brilliant direct hit by Shreyas Iyer from long-on caught Kiwi skipper Michael Bracewell short of his crease. Earlier, Conway began with a drive down the wicket for his first boundary while Nicholls took his time to get going, and used the sweep shot well at times to find the odd boundary. The duo grew in confidence to bring out the sweep and reverse sweeps with perfection while rotating the strike well to put on the century stand.

Top international runners to headline in 21st Tata Mumbai Marathon

Mumbai, Jan 11 (FN Representative)

The Tata Mumbai Marathon will enter its 21st edition on January 18 with a competitive elite field, featuring several international athletes capable of challenging the event records in both men's and women's races, according to a release. A World Athletics Gold Label Road Race, the Mumbai Marathon has eight men and six women on the start list whose personal best timings are faster than the current course records. The existing event records have stood since 2023 and are held by Ethiopians Hayle Lemhi Berhanu (2:07:32) in the men's category and Anchialina Haymanot (2:24:15) in the women's race. The total prize purse for the 2026 edition stands at USD 390,238. The top three finishers in both the men's and women's races will receive USD 50,000, USD 25,000, and USD 15,000, respectively, with an additional USD 15,000 incentive for athletes who break the event records. The men's field includes Eritrean's Merhawi Kese, who finished second at last year's Mumbai Marathon, along with Uganda's 2023 world champion Victor Kiplangat, South Africa's Stephen Mokoka, and Ethiopians Bazezew Asmara, Tadu Abate Deme, and Tesfaye Demeke. Several of the contenders have recorded sub-2:06 marathon timings, highlighting the depth of the field. Asmara holds the fastest personal best among the entrants with a time of 2:04:57, achieved at the Amsterdam Marathon. Kiplangat, Deme, Debela, and Kelkile Gezahagn have also clocked competitive times in previous major races. Kese's personal best of 2:06:36 was set in 2021. With a strong international line-up and the possibility of fast times, the Tata Mumbai Marathon 2026 is expected to draw significant attention on the global road racing circuit.

Top-seed Svitolina claims Auckland title

Wellington, Jan 11 (Agency) Top-seed Elina Svitolina claimed her 19th WTA title on Sunday, defeating China's Wang Xinyu 6-3, 7-6(8) in the ASB Classic final in Auckland, New Zealand. The 31-year-old Ukrainian saved all four break points faced, won 74 percent of first-serve points, and broke Wang at 4-2 for the only break of the match before sealing the second-set tiebreak. Svitolina ended a four-match skid from late 2025 due to injury with a five-match winning streak at the WTA 250 event. "It definitely feels amazing to win another title, especially after a not very pleasant end of the year for me," Svitolina said on court after the match that lasted one hour and 42 minutes. The seventh-seeded Wang, 24, reached her second career final after beating the Philippines' Alexandra Eala in the semifinals on Saturday.

Ice Hockey trials for Khelo India Winter Games 2026 on January 12

Shimla, Jan 11 (FN Reporter) The Youth Services and Sports Department, Himachal Pradesh, has announced trials for the selection of the state ice hockey teams (men's and women's) for the upcoming Khelo India Winter Games 2026. According to an official press release issued by the department, the trials are scheduled to take place on January 12, 2026. The selected teams would represent Himachal Pradesh in the Khelo India Winter Games-2026, the first phase of which is scheduled to begin on January 20, 2026, while the second phase will be held in Kashmir. As per the notification, the ice hockey trials for both men and women would commence at 11:00 AM. Interested players have been asked to report at the trial centre as per the schedule with their Himachali bona fide certificate and two passport-size photographs. Registration of players for the trials will begin at 10:00 AM on the same day.

Rishabh Pant ruled out of ODI series, Dhruv Jurel named replacement

New Delhi, Jan 11 (Representative) Indian wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant has been ruled out of the upcoming ODI series against New Zealand after suffering an injury during practice, the BCCI said on Sunday. Pant felt sudden discomfort on the right side of his abdomen while batting in the nets during India's practice session at the BCA Stadium in Vadodara. He was taken for MRI scans immediately. After reviewing the clinical and scan reports, the BCCI medical team confirmed that Pant has sustained a side strain, also known as an oblique muscle tear. He will miss the entire ODI series. The Men's Selection Committee has named Dhruv Jurel as Pant's replacement. Jurel has already joined the Indian squad. India's updated ODI squad includes Shubman Gill as captain, Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, KL Rahul, Shreyas Iyer as vice-captain, Washington Sundar, Ravindra Jadeja, Mohammed Siraj, Harshit Rana, Prasidh Krishna, Kuldeep Yadav, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Arshdeep Singh, Yashasvi Jaiswal and wicketkeeper Dhruv Jurel.

Sabenka beats Kostyuk in Brisbane International final for 22nd career title

Sydney, Jan 11 (Agency) World number one Aryna Sabalenka won her 22nd career singles title and first of 2026 by beating Marta Kostyuk in the Brisbane International final on Sunday. Sabalenka defeated Kostyuk, the world number 26, 6-4, 6-3 in one hour and 18 minutes on Sunday evening to win the Brisbane International title for the second consecutive year. The victory over Kostyuk completed Sabalenka's flawless run at the Australian Open warm-up event, where she did not lose a set in her five matches. It made Sabalenka the third women's player in the tournament's 17-year history to win consecutive titles at the Brisbane International and improved her record in matches in Australia since the start of 2023 to 38 wins and two losses. Sabalenka broke the serve of Kostyuk, who had beaten three top-10 opponents to reach the final, in the first and second sets to take 3-0 leads in both.

WTT Feeder Series: Payas wins mixed doubles title with Syndrela Das, reaches men's singles final

Vadodara, Jan 11 (Reporter) Payas Jain will be gunning for a triple crown in the WTT Feeder Series 2026 at the SAMA Indoor Sports Complex here after he bagged the mixed doubles crown with Syndrela Das and also reached the men's singles final on Sunday morning. The inaugural edition of the WTT Feeder Series in Vadodara, presented by Sports Authority of Gujarat, is being hosted by Table Tennis Association of Baroda and implemented by UTT. In the mixed doubles final, Jain and Das fought back after losing the opening game to beat second seed Harmeet Desai and Yashaswini Ghorpade 8-11, 11-9, 11-3, 11-6. Earlier, the Delhi-born player had packed off fifth seed Akash Pal 11-5, 12-10, 11-9 to reach the men's singles final. Payas Jain, who has also reached the men's doubles final with Ankur Bhattacharjee, will now face top seed Manish Shah, who defeated third seed Snehit Suravajula 6-11, 11-9, 14-12, 11-5 in the other semifinals.

Continued from Page-1

PM Modi Inaugurates Major...

international and 20 national buyers actively engaging." The VGRC will also feature high-level discussions led by the Energy and Petrochemicals Department (EPD), focusing on Gujarat's renewable energy roadmap under the Mission 100 GW (Shapath Patra). The state has pledged to exceed 100 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030, positioning itself as a leader in India's energy transition. Day one's agenda includes a CEO Roundtable titled 'Ocean of Opportunities - Blue Energy, Green Future', exploring nearshore wind and blue energy prospects. Other sessions will address innovations in green startups, sustainable agriculture, and Gujarat's pivotal role as India's energy gateway in oil and gas. The exhibition will highlight successful initiatives such as the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, which promotes daytime power usage for agriculture and renewable energy connectivity. Day two will showcase Gujarat's achievements in decentralised solar adoption through the flagship programme "Solar Dividends: Empowerment through PM-KUSUM & PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana." The day will also include the release of a best practices compendium by GUVNL and its subsidiaries, MoU signings, and recognition of contributors to the power sector. The trade show and VGRC collectively underscore Gujarat's dynamic business environment and its strategic focus on sustainable development and energy innovation, attracting both domestic and global stakeholders to participate in the state's growth story.

India's rapid economic rise...

Kutch, a hybrid power park five times the size of Paris is under development, and Jamnagar is emerging as a green energy hub." He also highlighted the importance of an industry-ready workforce and assured power supply to sustain India's data-centric growth in semiconductors, artificial intelligence, and research. "Nuclear power will play a critical role, and through the Shanti Act, the nuclear sector has been opened to private investors to ensure reliable energy for emerging technologies," PM Modi added. Focusing on regional strengths, the Prime Minister pointed to Saurashtra and Kutch as engines of Atmanirbhar Bharat, with Saurashtra alone hosting 2.5 lakh MSMEs producing everything from screwdriver parts to aircraft components. "The region is home to the world's largest ship-breaking yard and a major tire manufacturing hub, contributing substantially to industrial growth and investment opportunities," he said. The Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference continues to serve as a vital platform for fostering economic growth, innovation, and inclusive development, aligning Gujarat and India's broader goals for a sustainable and prosperous future.

Micro-fertiliser industry...

operate under price-sensitive and regulated regimes. Industry representatives say quicker refunds would ease liquidity stress and enable reinvestment in quality, production capacity and farmer outreach. Another key recommendation is the implementation of a single, unified licensing system, often described as a 'One Nation, One Licence' framework, to streamline regulatory compliance and reduce duplication. Currently, state-wise and even district-wise licensing increases administrative burden and delays, the association said. A centralised digital repository for all licence-related documents accessible by states could speed up verification and issuance of marketing permissions, reducing costs and improving market access for fertiliser manufacturers.

Odisha CM lays foundation...

of 65 million litres per day (MLD) in Sambalpur and another of 35 MLD in the neighbouring Burla town would be constructed for the purpose. Once completed, the project is expected to supply 100 million litres of safe drinking water daily, effectively resolving the problem of drinking water shortage during the summer. The Chief Minister also inaugurated a modern Trauma Care Centre (TCC) and a new OPD building at a cost of Rs 21.28 crore at the district headquarters hospital (DHH) in Sambalpur and inaugurated a Central Sterile Supply department building built at a cost of Rs 2.53 crore.

NDMC set for major infra...

overall road safety and visual appeal. The revamp plan also covers important locations hosting pre-event activities and bilateral engagements, including Hyderabad House, Vigyan Bhawan, Ambedkar Bhawan, Sushma Swaraj Bhawan, major five-star hotels, and the India Gate precinct. Additionally, roads leading to popular tourist destinations such as Connaught Place, Central Park, Lodhi Garden, Humayun's Tomb, Delhi Haat, Nehru Park, and surrounding areas are being comprehensively upgraded. Beautification and cleanliness form the cornerstone of NDMC's preparations. The Horticulture Department has been directed to enhance the city's visual appeal by installing flowering and ornamental plants at prominent locations, roundabouts, and major junctions. Sculptures, fountains, and public art spaces are being refurbished, while intensified cleanliness measures are being implemented at garbage-

vulnerable points. Daily mechanical road sweeping, deep cleaning, and mopping operations are underway in key markets and arterial roads, with special drives being conducted at regular intervals in Connaught Place and other major commercial hubs. Market Traders' Associations have also been engaged to ensure collective participation in maintaining high standards of cleanliness. In its efforts to improve air quality during the summit, NDMC is deploying smog guns, mist sprayers, water sprinklers, and strict enforcement measures against polluters. Given the high concentration of hotels and diplomatic movement in NDMC areas, focused efforts are being made to enhance the surrounding urban aesthetics and environmental quality. As part of the summit's public engagement initiatives, Central Park, Connaught Place, has been allocated to the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology from February 16 to 20, 2026, where leading AI companies are expected to set up interactive stalls for public outreach and demonstrations. To ensure improved civic amenities, NDMC is prioritising the maintenance of roads and footpaths, achieving 100 per cent functionality of street and pole lights across roads, roundabouts, and market areas, and removing overhead cables near monuments to enhance the city's visual landscape. Decorative and aesthetic illumination is also being planned to further elevate the city's ambience during the event. NDMC is also setting up a dedicated control room, deploying nodal officers, and optimally utilising mechanical road sweepers in sensitive and high-visibility zones. Close coordination is being maintained with security agencies, traffic authorities, and other civic bodies to ensure smooth movement of dignitaries, effective parking management, and seamless logistical arrangements. Measures to control stray animals in critical areas are also being intensified to ensure safety and order.

PM Modi says Somnath...

Prime Minister said, underlining the enduring legacy of one of the country's most revered 'Jyotirlingas'. Rejecting narratives that focus solely on repeated attacks on the temple in history, PM Modi said Somnath's story was not one of destruction. "The history of Somnath is not a history of defeat. It is a history of victory and renewal," he said, adding that those who came with the intent to destroy the temple "have today been reduced to a few pages of history." The Prime Minister noted that Somnath Swabhiman Parv symbolises India's continued existence, cultural continuity and self-respect. "Somnath Temple still stands tall by the vast sea, its soaring flag of faith flying high," he said, describing the shrine as a living testament to the nation's civilisational endurance. Located on the western coast of Gujarat, the Somnath Temple holds a unique place in India's religious and cultural history. Believed to be the first of the 12 Jyotirlingas of Lord Shiva, the temple has been rebuilt several times over centuries after repeated invasions and destruction. Its modern reconstruction after Independence came to symbolise national resurgence and cultural revival. The Somnath Swabhiman Parv is being observed to commemorate this long historical journey, celebrating the temple's survival, reconstruction and its role as a beacon of faith for millions of devotees across generations.

Sunday sees one of coldest...

Meteorological Department (IMD) said. According to the IMD, stations at Palam, Ridge and Ayanagar registered minimum temperatures below 4.1 degrees Celsius, meeting the criteria for cold wave conditions in the city. The weather office said the cold spell is likely to persist for a few days as well, prompting the issuance of a yellow alert for Delhi. Residents have been advised to take precautions against prolonged exposure to cold, particularly during the early morning and night hours. The IMD will continue to monitor the situation and issue updates as conditions evolve. Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said dense to very dense fog is very likely to persist during morning hours over northwest India and Bihar for the next five to seven days. The weather office added that isolated pockets of Madhya Pradesh, northeast India, and Sub-Himalayan West Bengal and Sikkim may also see fog over the next few days. The IMD officials warned that cold day conditions are likely in parts of Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Rajasthan, Bihar, and Sub-Himalayan West Bengal and Sikkim over the coming days. Cold wave to severe cold wave conditions are expected in isolated pockets of Rajasthan between January 12 and 13, while cold wave conditions may affect parts of Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Jharkhand and north interior Karnataka on different dates. The IMD said there will be no major change in minimum temperatures over northwest India and Madhya Pradesh in the next week. However, a gradual rise of around 2 to 3 degrees Celsius is likely in parts of east, central and northeast India over the next few days. Passengers are advised to stay updated on weather conditions and flight schedules, especially during early morning hours, as fog and cold weather continue to affect normal travel across several regions.

Tamil superstar Vijay...

were injured in the Karur stampede incident, after which, considering the seriousness of the matter, the investigation was handed over to CBI. The CBI has re-registered a case of the devastating Karur stampede that killed 41 people during a rally for actor-politician Vijay's Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) party on September 27. A CBI team earlier went to Tamil Nadu and visited the incident site in Karur. As part of the investigation, the team also met with the victims and their families to record their statements. The probe was handed over to the central agency by an order of the Supreme Court, which recently set aside a Madras High Court directive for a Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe. The High Court had previously formed an SIT, which was headed by Officer Asha Garg. The TVK party, led by Vijay, had challenged the High Court's SIT order in the top court. In response, a Supreme Court bench of Justices J.K. Maheshwari and N.V. Anjaria ordered a CBI investigation under the supervision of a three-member committee. This committee will be headed by former Supreme Court Justice Ajay Rastogi. The panel will also include two Indian Police Service (IPS) officers of the Tamil Nadu cadre, who are not natives of the state. These officers, not below the rank of Inspector General of Police (IGP), will be chosen by Justice Rastogi.

Jain Acharya Vijayaratna...

solutions to complex human problems. He said the teachings of non-violence, non-possessiveness and many-sidedness—central to Jain philosophy and propagated by the Tirthankaras and earlier Acharyas—find a modern and contemporary expression in these writings. "Depending on time and circumstances, these texts will continue to serve as guiding lights for society," he said, expressing confidence that the youth and humanity at large would benefit from the new book. Highlighting the Jain principle 'Parasparopagrahava Jivanam'—the interdependence of all life—PM Modi said this philosophy shifts focus from individual interests to collective welfare, encompassing society, the nation and humanity. Recalling his participation in Navkar Mantra Day, when all four Jain sects came together, the Prime Minister reiterated the nine resolutions he had proposed on that occasion: saving water, Ek Ped Maa ke Naam, cleanliness, being vocal for local, undertaking Bharat Darshan, adopting natural farming, following a healthy lifestyle, integrating yoga and sports into daily life, and helping the poor. Emphasising India's demographic strength, PM Modi said the country is among the youngest nations in the world, with its youth working towards building a developed India while remaining rooted in cultural values. "In this transformation, the guidance of saints like Maharaj Sahib, his literature and his words play a vital role," he said. The Prime Minister extended his best wishes on the release of the 500th book, expressing confidence that Vijayaratna Sundar Surishwarji Maharaj's thoughts would continue to illuminate the intellectual, moral and human journey for generations to come.

Tu Yaa Main teaser: Shanaya Kapoor, Adarsh Gourav deliver tension and thrills ahead of February

The makers of *Tu Yaa Main*, starring Shanaya Kapoor and Adarsh Gourav, unveiled its gripping teaser on Friday, January 9, promising a cinematic experience packed with tension, danger, and a thrilling ride that lingers long after the screen fades to black.

What's in the *Tu Yaa Main* teaser

The 2.19-minute-long teaser introduces two content creators from vastly different worlds, brought together for a collaboration fueled by curiosity, fame, and undeniable chemistry. What initially seems like an exciting adventure, brimming with youthful energy and influencer culture, soon takes a sharp turn into chaos. The high-energy fun quickly morphs into a life-or-death fight for survival when the duo finds themselves trapped in an unexpected and terrifying encounter with a deadly crocodile. As their innocent collaboration spirals out of control, the teaser leaves viewers with a chilling question: Will they escape with their lives, or will this collaboration turn into a nightmare they never expected?

Adarsh is introduced as a rapper from Nallasopara, while Shanaya's character is well-known for her presence in the influencer world. The chemistry between the two actors is palpable, and their contrasting personalities create the perfect setup for the film's tension-filled premise.

About *Tu Yaa Main*

Directed by Bejoy Nambiar, *Tu Yaa Main* combines the elements of romance, suspense, and survival, offering a fresh take on modern-day storytelling. The film promises to turn what could have been a typical date into a chilling and unforgettable experience, offering audiences something different from the typical Valentine's Day fare. The film is produced by Aanand L Rai and Himanshu Sharma under the banner of Colour Yellow Productions, alongside Vinod Bhanushali and Kamlesh Bhanushali of Bhanushali Studios Limited. The film is set to hit the theatres on February 13, clashing with *Shahid Kapoor* and *Triptii Dimri* starred *O Romeo*.



Emraan Hashmi opens up about his nerve-wracking experiences with customs

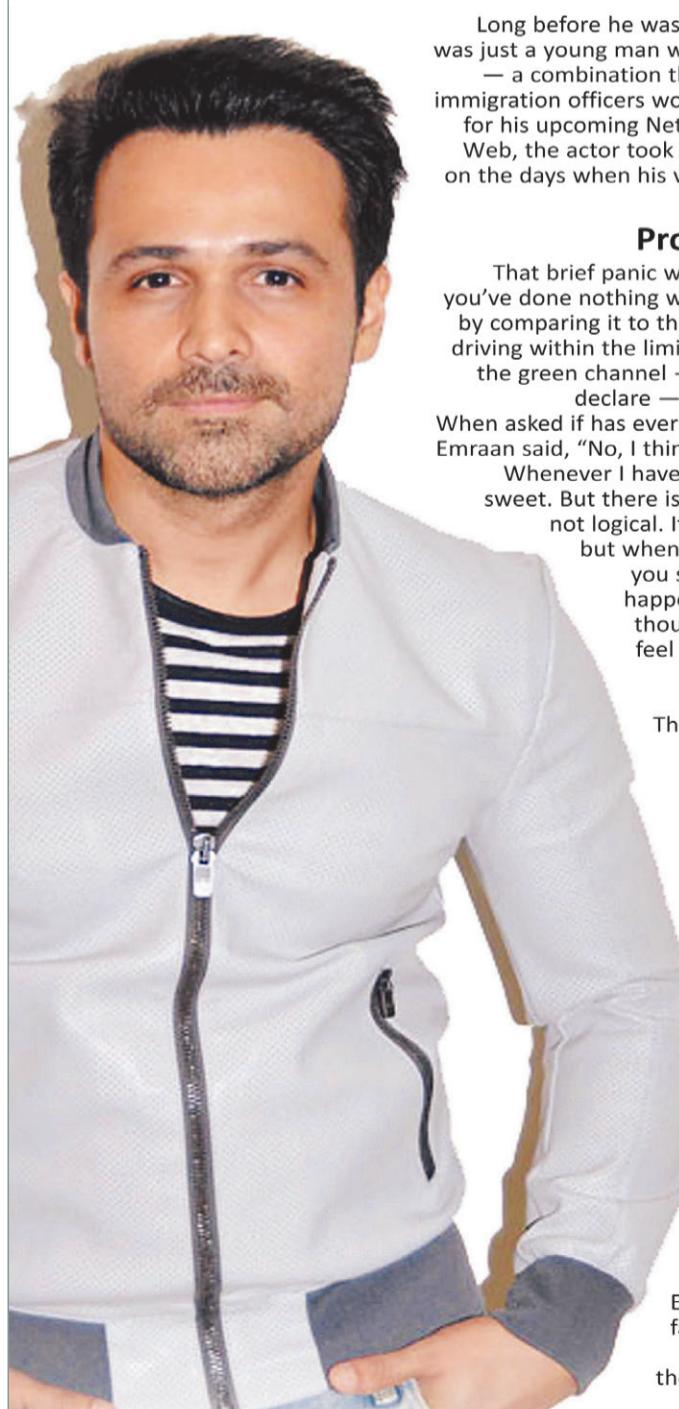
Long before he was a household name, Emraan Hashmi was just a young man with a pair of earrings and a passport — a combination that seemed to set off alarm bells for immigration officers worldwide. At the recent trailer launch for his upcoming Netflix series, *Taskaree: The Smuggler's Web*, the actor took a trip down memory lane, reflecting on the days when his vacations felt more like the start of a crime thriller.

Profiling in the early 2000s

That brief panic when you pass security — even when you've done nothing wrong? Emraan expressed the feeling by comparing it to the rush of spotting a traffic cop while driving within the limit. He admitted that walking through the green channel — the lane for those with nothing to declare — often felt like a high-stakes gamble. When asked if he has ever been stopped at the green channel, Emraan said, "No, I think they have been very sweet to me. Whenever I have travelled back, they have been very sweet. But there is this sense of overpowering fear, it's not logical. It's like when you learn how to drive, but when you see an RTO officer on the road, you suddenly get anxious. So that's what happens. When I'm travelling alone, even though I've packed only clothes, you still feel like you're carrying 100 kilos of contraband in your bag while walking through the green channel."

The actor revealed that his solo travels in the early 2000s were frequently interrupted by random checks. He suspects that his aesthetic at the time — specifically his earrings — might have triggered certain stereotypes among customs officials. He said, "But it's not at all logical. I have been called out at immigration checks very early on, probably because of earrings or stuff, when I used to travel alone. But now, when they see me with my sweet family, they don't suspect me. Earlier, in the early 2000s, I used to get whisked away to the side quite a bit. That is called profiling. I fit the bill of somebody, but I don't know who that person was."

Interestingly, the profiling seemed to vanish as his life changed. Emraan noted that travelling with his family nowadays is a much smoother experience, as he no longer attracts the same level of suspicion he did as a solo traveller in his youth.



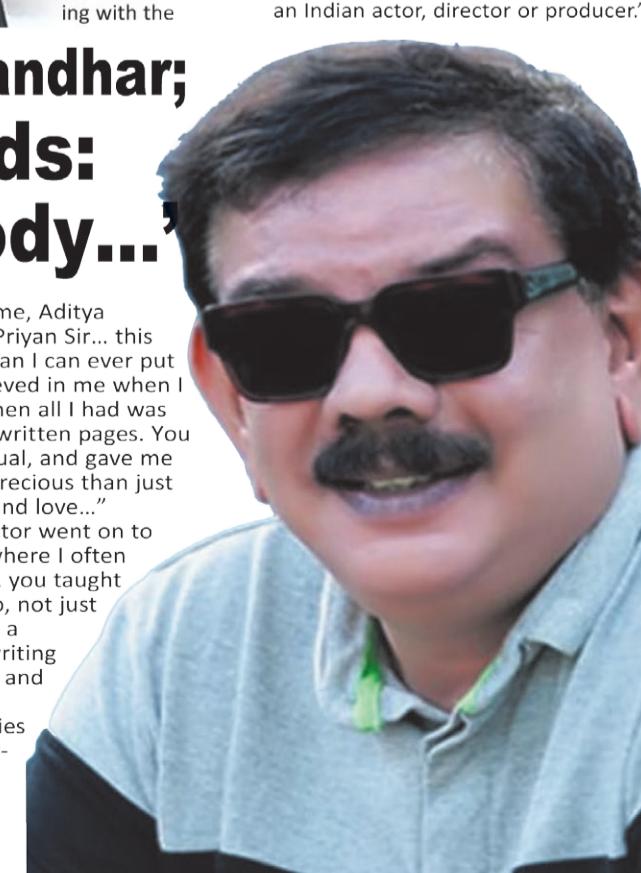
Priyadarshan louds Dhurandhar; Aditya dhar responds: 'When I was a nobody...'

Apart from getting rave reviews and taking the internet by storm, Aditya Dhar's *Dhurandhar* has made a record-breaking collection at the box office by pulling crowds to theatres. Within a month of release, the spy action thriller has emerged as the highest-grossing Hindi film in India of all time. Not just audiences but even celebrities have lauded Aditya, his film and the majestic star cast which includes Ranveer Singh, Akshaye Khanna, Arjun Rampal, Sanjay Dutt, R Madhavan, Sara Arjun and Rakesh Bedi. Well, the director has now received a congratulatory message from someone special — Aditya's mentor and filmmaker Priyadarshan.

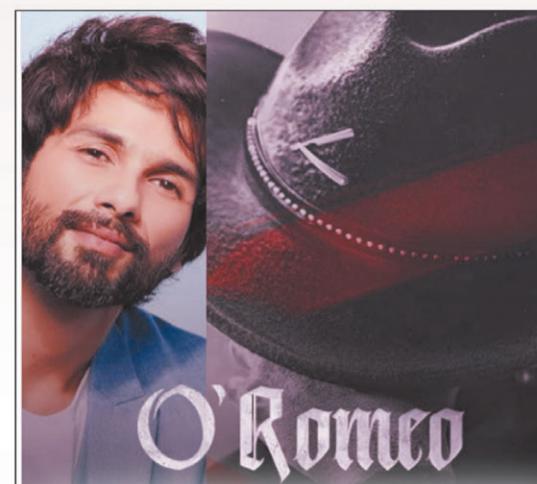
Along with an old picture of them on set, Priyadarshan penned a sweet note congratulating Aditya Dhar for *Dhurandhar*. The post read, "There is no greater happiness than watching my disciple rise with such remarkable success. Congratulations Aditya Dhar on *Dhurandhar*, and heartfelt best wishes for *Dhurandhar 2*."

Responding to the same, Aditya shared, "My Dearest Priyan Sir... this means more to me than I can ever put into words!! You believed in me when I was a nobody, and when all I had was conviction and a few written pages. You treated me like an equal, and gave me something far more precious than just work - dignity, trust, and love..."

The *Dhurandhar* director went on to add, "In an industry where I often learnt what not to do, you taught me exactly what to do, not just as a filmmaker, but as a human being. From writing dialogues for Aakrosh and Tezz to standing here today, every step carries your imprint. I will forever be your student first. Thank you for everything, Sir. This success is as much yours as it is mine."



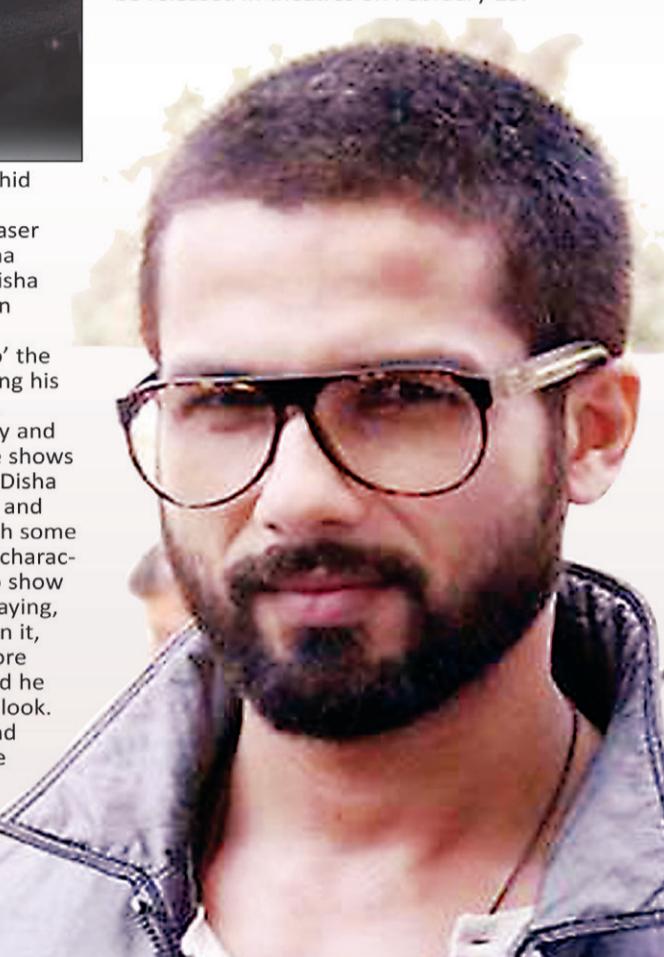
O' Romeo teaser: Shahid Kapoor is ready to risk it all for Triptii Dimri



The first glimpse of Vishal Bharadwaj's *O' Romeo* was released on Saturday. The 1 minute 35 seconds long teaser introduces quirky characters played by Nana Patekar, Vikrant Massey, Avinash Tiwary, Disha Patani, Triptii Dimri and others in the action drama. Named a 'peek into the world of *O' Romeo*' the glimpse begins with Shahid's character losing his cool while calling out for 'chotu' on a boat. Wearing a cowboy hat, black vest, jewellery and with tattoos covering his body, the glimpse shows his violent side. Glimpses of Nana Patekar, Disha Patani, Vikrant Massey, Tamannaah Bhatia and Avinash Tiwary's characters are shown, with some of them showing the same quirks Shahid's character does. However, the teaser soon cuts to show the usually maternal and soft Farida Jalal saying, "Rise in love, and you're a Romeo. Drown in it, and you're a c***tya." Shahid unleashes more chaos before Triptii Dimri is introduced, and he shows a softer side by giving her a long look. Aruna Irani, Hussain Dalal, ?Resh Lamba and Rahul Deshpande, though not shown in the glimpse, also star in *O' Romeo*. Fans couldn't seem to get enough of Farida Jalal uttering a curse word out of nowhere. "Farida Jalal saying ch***ya was sooooooo out of the blue. Loved it," wrote an X (formerly

Twitter), while another joked, "Farida Jalal comes out of the syllabus." Shahid's fans also seemed happy with the glimpse, with one of them writing, "The world reminds you of Kaminey vibes, the direction looks literally cool. Comeback ab aur bhi khatarnaak (The comeback will be killer)!!!" Another wrote, "Bollywood is peaking hard in 2026, Dhurandhar 2, O Romeo, King, Love and War, Ramayana."

O' Romeo written and directed by Vishal Bharadwaj, with Rohan Narula as his co-writer. Sajid Nadiadwala has produced the film which will be released in theatres on February 13.



Rohit Shetty talks about not winning a single award despite 17 films



Over the years, Bollywood filmmaker Rohit Shetty has entertained audiences with films such as the *Golmaal* franchise, *Singham* and more. However, the director has not received a single award so far. In a recent press interaction at the Indian National Ciné Academy (INCA), Rohit took a self-deprecating dig at himself, quipping that he has no relationship with awards. Rohit Shetty on not getting awards

Rohit was among the guests who attended the INCA press meet in Mumbai. The event was also attended by producer Dil Raju, director Anand L. Rai, Lakshmi Manchu, Manoj Tiwari and Khushboo, among others. While interacting with the

paparazzi, Rohit said, "There is absolutely no connection between me and awards. I've done 17 films and only invited there for hosting."

During the press meet, Rohit also spoke about the North-South debate and said, "If no one asks this question, then everyone will simply celebrate films. Ever since cinema began, production houses from there have been making films here, directors from there have been making films here, and films from here have been made in the South. It only becomes slightly controversial when someone makes an official remake. All of this has been happening since the 1950s. I think we should all celebrate cinema."

He added, "The world is getting smaller because of social media; everyone knows each other now. Why don't we all come together and create something so that when we are recognised globally, people don't ask which state someone is from? They should simply know that he or she is an Indian actor, director or producer."