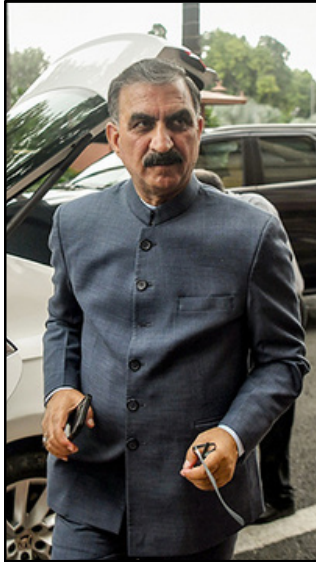


## CM Sukhu said- Employees who have completed two years of contract tenure will be regularized on 31st March



**Diary Times Desk :** Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu said that those who complete two years of contract tenure on March 31 will be regularized. Responding to the questions of MLAs Dr. Janak Raj, Lokendra Kumar, Kumari Anuradha Rana and Surendra Shourie, the CM said that at present sixty percent of the basic salary is being given to the contract employees as salary. The government has not taken any decision to give them annual salary increment at present. Contract employees do not get salary on the basis of the recommendations of the Pay Commission. The Chief Minister said that the vacant functional posts in various departments of the state are being filled as per administrative requirement. The Cabinet Sub-Committee has not yet given any recommendation for employment generation. Three amended bills reorganizing the powers of GST and Excise Department have been passed in the Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly on Friday. Chief Minister Sukhu introduced the Amendment Bill 2024, Taxation Amendment Bill 2024 and Value Added Tax Amendment Bill 2024 in the House on Thursday. All three bills were passed in the House on Friday. Under these bills, the powers of the officers of GST and Excise department have been mentioned. Earlier GST and Excise were one department. Some time ago, the government has divided them into two wings. GST wing will work under zone and circle. Excise department will work under district, zone and circle.

## ED files money laundering case against KT Rama Rao in Formula-E case

**Agencies :** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday filed a money laundering case against BRS leader KT Rama Rao in connection with a case linked to payments made for the formula-E race in Hyderabad. This came hours after the Telangana High Court directed the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) officials to not arrest the BRS leader till December 30 in the same case. The order was delivered by the High Court judge Justice Natcharaju Shruvan Kumar Venkat, who was hearing a Lunch Motion petition moved by Rama Rao seeking to quash the FIR filed against him by the ACB. The HC, while granting interim relief, directed the petitioner to cooperate with the probe.

## "Pushing Around An MP Not 'Mardangi'": Kiren Rijiju's Swipe At Rahul Gandhi

**Agencies :** Launching a volley against Rahul Gandhi for allegedly injuring two Members of Parliament from the BJP during the tussle on Thursday, Union Minister Kiren Rijiju has said that "pushing around" an MP is not a sign of 'mardangi' (masculinity). In an exclusive interview with NDTV on Friday, the Parliamentary Affairs minister said Thursday's incident involving Mr Gandhi, who is a Congress MP and the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, was "avoidable". The BJP has alleged that during the protest and counter-protest at one of the Parliament's gates on Thursday over Home Minister Amit Shah's 'fashion' remarks on BR Ambedkar, the Congress leader had pushed BJP MP Mukesh Rajput, who fell on fellow MP Pratap Sarangi, injuring both of them. The MPs were subsequently hospitalised. Referring to the First Information Report registered against Mr Gandhi based on a BJP MP's complaint, Mr Rijiju said, "There are heated exchanges in words in the Parliament. It's been there since 1952, it's nothing new. But when an incident leads to injury and a police case, then it's very unfortunate."



## Jaipur-Ajmer highway truck fire: 11 killed, 30 injured after collision of vehicles

**Agencies :** Eleven persons were killed and about 30 injured in a massive fire caused by a collision between a gas tanker and multiple vehicles on the Jaipur-Ajmer National Highway on Friday. The fire spread rapidly across a 300-metre stretch of the road and engulfed around 35 vehicles. The accident occurred early in the morning when the tanker carrying liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) was making a U-turn on the highway at Bhankrota and hit a truck coming from the opposite direction. A few other vehicles coming in high speed collided with them, resulting in an explosion that intensified the blaze.

## 'Treated like a terrorist': BJP's CT Ravi after bail in derogatory remarks case

**Agencies :** BJP MLC CT Ravi was granted interim bail on Friday by the Karnataka high court after he was arrested in connection with a 'derogatory' remarks case filed by minister Lakshmi Hebbalkar. He said he was treated like a terrorist. "Our custodian (chairman) clearly said it was a false case filed against me and they treated me like a terrorist, let them introspect what they have done. I'm not doing well as I didn't eat properly last night and in the morning," he said. He also said that though he was arrested without proof, the high court by awarding him bail had sent a clear message that everyone must follow the law. A single-judge bench, headed by Justice MG Uma, issued an interim order for his release on Friday. Earlier that day, the BJP leader was produced in front of a people's representative court in Bengaluru. MLC Ravi accused the Congress-led Siddaramaiah government of acting like "dictators" following his arrest.

## BJP's PP Chaudhary To Head Parliament Panel On 'One Nation, One Poll'

**Agencies :** BJP MP PP Chaudhary has been appointed chairperson of the Joint Parliamentary Committee to examine the simultaneous polls bill, the Lok Sabha Secretariat said. The JPC to review the 'One Nation, One Poll' bill has 27 members from the Lok Sabha and 12 from the Rajya Sabha, instead of the earlier 21 members from the lower house and 10 from the upper house, as was initially declared. The strength increased after former Maharashtra Chief Minister and Shiv Sena UBT leader Uddhav Thackeray and a few other parties pointed out that none of their members have been included in the committee. Even so, the committee - which the government wants to include all political parties - still does not have members from Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal (United) and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's Telugu Desam Party.

## Rahul Gandhi Faces Delhi Police Crime Branch Probe Over Parliament Tussle

**Agencies :** The Crime Branch of the Delhi Police will investigate the First Information Report (FIR) against Congress MP Rahul Gandhi, who has been accused of injuring two Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MPs at the Parliament complex, a senior officer said on Friday. Mr Gandhi has been booked under sections 117 (voluntary causing grievous hurt), 115 (voluntary causing hurt), 125 (act of endangering life or personal safety of others), 131 (use of criminal force), 351 (criminal intimidation), and 3(5) (common intention) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita in connection with the face-off between the Opposition and National Democratic Alliance (NDA) MPs on Thursday. "We have transferred the case from the local police to the crime branch," the officer was quoted as saying by PTI. On Thursday, ugly scenes unfolded between the Opposition and NDA lawmakers at the Parliament steps, during protests over Union Home Minister Amit Shah's alleged insult to B R Ambedkar in the House on Tuesday. A tussle between the two sides left former minister Pratap Chandra Sarangi and Mukesh Rajput injured.



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DIARY TIMES

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## Himachal Winter Session 2024: Opposition protest under the leadership of Jairam, demand to withdraw guest teacher policy

**Diary Times Desk :** BJP MLAs surrounded the Sukhu government on the issue of electoral guarantees and employment. Before the winter session on the third day, in the morning, BJP MLAs led by Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur protested and raised slogans outside the House from the opposition lounge to the entrance of the Assembly. They raised slogans against the government and demanded to give jobs to the youth and withdraw the guest teacher policy. After the procession, all the MLAs staged a dharna in front of Gate No. 1 of the Assembly. Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur, while addressing the media, said that this government is anti-youth and is playing with the youth. The youth are on the streets against the policies of the government. The guest teacher policy brought by the government is unfortunate and shameful. By guaranteeing a permanent job for 58 years, the government has now come up with a guest teacher policy. Under this, teachers will be hired to teach students on the basis of hours. In such a situation, the government is playing with the future of those who teach students and teachers. The most unfortunate thing is that the government is calling this also a master stroke. Jairam said that due to this failure of the government, parents are avoiding government schools. The enrollment of children in government schools has fallen by 58 percent. The number of children in schools is falling and the government has got an excuse to close the schools. Sukhu government has closed or merged more than a thousand schools. Jairam Thakur asked the government to remember the election manifesto of the Congress Party and implement it. The cases of compassionate and other employees should be resolved.

## Delhi's air quality remains in 'severe' category, average AQI at 429

**Agencies :** Delhi's residents continued to suffer from toxic air conditions on Friday, with an average 24-hour air quality index of 429, putting it in the 'severe' category, reported news agency PTI. 14 out of 36 monitoring stations in the city reported AQI readings above 450 as well, marking conditions as 'severe plus' in those areas. The remaining stations recorded levels between 401-450 in the 'severe' range. These levels indicate a severe decline in air quality, posing life-threatening risks to vulnerable groups, including children, the elderly, and individuals with respiratory or heart conditions. The predominant pollutant in the air on Friday was PM2.5. The fine particulate matter poses serious health risks, as they can penetrate deep into the lungs and enter the bloodstream. The maximum temperature was 23 degrees Celsius, warmer than usual for this period of the year, and featured high humidity levels.

## Sambhal authorities demolish steps of SP MP Zia Ur Rehman's home

**Agencies :** In a dramatic turn of events, steps leading into the house of Sambhal MP and Samajwadi Party leader Zia Ur Rehman Barq were demolished on Friday as part of the UP government's anti-encroachment drive in the Deep Sari area. The anti-encroachment drive has sparked widespread attention after a video of the bulldozer demolition went viral. According to PTI, officials stated that the demolition drive was part of a larger 15-day campaign to clear encroachments from public drains in the district. Earlier today, UP's electricity department imposed a massive fine of ₹1.91 crore on the Sambhal MP, accusing him of electricity theft. As part of the crackdown, the department also disconnected the power supply to his residence, following an inspection that found evidence of illegal power usage. "An electricity inspection drive is underway in Sambhal even today. A fine of ₹1.91 crore has been imposed on the MP by the Electricity department and the power supply to his residence has been disconnected," Sambhal Superintending Engineer Vinod Kumar told PTI. Notably, the power theft charges are linked to a police case registered against Rehman on Thursday under Section 135 of the Electricity Act, 2003. The case alleges that the MP and his family were involved in bypassing the electricity meter to steal power.

## HP Assembly Session: Zero hour started in Himachal Assembly on the lines of Lok Sabha,

**Diary Times Desk :** On the lines of Lok Sabha, Zero Hour has also started in Himachal Pradesh Assembly. On Friday, on the third day of the session, on the first day of Zero Hour in Tapovan Assembly, seven MLAs raised matters related to public interest. The time duration of Zero Hour will be half an hour. One hour before the start of the proceedings of the House, proposals will have to be given to the Assembly Secretariat under this. Every MLA will be given a maximum time of two to three minutes to speak. If more questions are received, questions will be included in Zero Hour on the basis of priority of the matter. Matters raised in the House during the last one year cannot be raised in Zero Hour. The Assembly Secretariat will select questions for Zero Hour only after checking the relevance of the questions. Matters raised during Zero Hour will be sent to the concerned ministers and the central government for further action. The concerned cabinet minister will also be able to present his side during zero hour. On the other hand, CM Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu, Deputy CM Mukesh Agnihotri, Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur congratulated Assembly Speaker for starting zero hour.

## Shimla Winter Carnival: Himachali folk singers including famous Sufi singer Satinder Sartaj will rock the Star Night

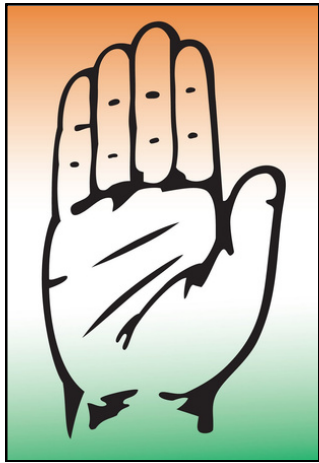
**Diary Times Desk :** This time the Winter Carnival will run for 10 days at the historic Ridge Ground in Himachal Pradesh's capital Shimla. It has been decided to extend the duration of the Winter Carnival, which is a favourite of the general public and tourists. This time the carnival will start from 24 December. It will run till 2 January. Winter Queen will also be chosen and Voice of Shimla will also be organised. In the cultural evenings of the Winter Carnival, many Himachali folk singers including famous Sufi singer Dr. Satinder Sartaj will perform. The list of artists for the Star Night of the Winter Carnival has been released by the Shimla Municipal Corporation and the District Administration. On 24 December, Crazy Hopper Group, Himachali folk singer Rajeev Sharma and Bollywood playback singer Shabab Sabri will perform. On 25 December, there will be performances by filmi bands and DJs including Himachali folk singer Arun Jasta. On 26 December, Himachali folk singers Kishan Verma, Bandana Dhiman, Ajay Chauhan and Ajay Tomar will rock the stage. Singer Sonu Himachali will also perform. On December 27, Himachali folk singer Saraji along with Mukul, Arun Gopal and Rajan Raghuvanshi, Muskan Thakur and Arun Sharma will spread the magic of their voice. On 28th December, Voice of Punjab Kumar Sahil and Nati King Kuldeep Sharma will rock the stage. On 29th December, Himachali folk singer Hemant Sharma and Saregama fame Tanmay Chaturvedi will perform. On 30th December, Indian Idol fame Neha Dixit and Voice of Punjab Gaurav Kandal will perform. On 31st December, there will be performances by various bands including Pahadi singer Pankaj Thakur. On 1st January, Himachali folk singer Indrajit Singh and Himachal Police's Harmony of the Pines Orchestra will rock the stage.

## India says will work with China on next steps for cross-border cooperation

**Agencies :** India on Friday said it will work with China on steps to take forward the understanding reached by the Special Representatives of the two sides on cross-border cooperation and exchanges, including the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra and border trade. The Special Representatives on the border issue - India's national security adviser Ajit Doval and China's foreign minister Wang Yi - met in Beijing on Wednesday for their first formal talks in nearly five years, following an understanding reached by the two sides on October 21 on the disengagement of frontline forces in Ladakh sector of the Line of Actual Control (LAC). During these talks, Doval and Wang provided "positive directions for cross-border cooperation and exchanges including resumption of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, data sharing on trans-border rivers and border trade", an Indian readout on the meeting said. When external affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal was asked at a regular media briefing to provide details on this development, he said, "It means that the discussions have gone into the positive direction, and thereafter, whatever else is required.



## Himachal Youth Congress: Three names shortlisted for the post of Himachal Youth Congress President, know who got how many votes



**Diary Times Desk :** As soon as the election process of Youth Congress was completed in Himachal Pradesh, the results were declared late on Friday night. Three names have been shortlisted for the post of state president. There will be a contest between Chhatar Singh Thakur, Akhil Agnihotri and Rahul Chauhan for the post of president. Aryan Chauhan, son of Chief Minister's Principal Media Advisor Naresh Chauhan, has secured the post of General Secretary by getting the highest number of 38,000 votes. Chhatar Singh Thakur, who was the state president of NSUI and belongs to Rohru assembly constituency of Shimla district, is close to CM Sukhu. Chhatar Singh Thakur has got 60 thousand votes. Akhil Agnihotri of Una has got 37 thousand votes and Rahul Chauhan of Sirmaur has got 15,000 votes. Now, interviews of these three youths will be taken by the party high command in New Delhi. The state will get a new president of Youth Congress on the basis of the interview. It is almost certain that Chhatar Singh Thakur, who got the highest number of votes for the post of state president, will become the Youth Congress president. Akhil Agnihotri is considered a supporter of Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri.

## Himachal Assembly Session: A complainant reached Tapovan from Kinnaur demanding construction of a road and a roof for the library

**Diary Times Desk :** There has been a demand for a long time that Leo bypass road and bridge of Kinnaur district should be connected to the main road at Chango. So far no work has been done in this direction. Meanwhile, Kinnaur resident Bhagwan Singh reached Tapovan on Friday to meet Public Works Minister Vikramaditya Singh with the demand of putting tin sheets on the roof of Chango Tashi Thond Dol Public Library. He said that till now it is the same whether the work on the road and bridge has been done or not. The distance of the road is only 11 kilometers and the length of the bridge is 75 meters. Some of the people living above Leo are in Kinnaur area and the rest are in Spiti area.

## HPRCA: Recruitment process will be done through single window soon, State Selection Commission will take demand from departments online

**Diary Times Desk :** Now single window system will be implemented in government job recruitment in Himachal Pradesh. To implement this system, Himachal Pradesh State Selection Commission has completed the design and other technical formalities in the wire frame i.e. portal. A detailed report in this regard has been sent to the Personnel Department for approval. State Selection Commission officials have also presented a report in this regard in Dharamshala before Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu. It is expected that the single window system will be implemented soon. Under this system, the requisition i.e. demand for recruitment from departments, corporations and boards will be taken online on the portal by the commission. This will bring speed and transparency in the organization of government job recruitment. The confusion of long correspondence regarding recruitment will also end. In such a situation, the unemployed who have been waiting for new recruitments through the commission for about two years will get relief. On one hand, the single window system will provide the departments the facility to give the recruitment requisition to the commission online. On the other hand, the candidates will get many facilities in this new system. Many new features are being added to the portal. The cabinet sub-committee will meet in Dharamshala on Friday.

## Himachal News: You will have to wait for edible oil, tender cancelled; Government claims- 3 months of oil will be available at once

**Diary Times Desk :** Consumers in Himachal will have to wait longer to buy oil from cheap ration depots. The government has cancelled the tender after there was no consensus on the rate. Now the tender process has been started afresh. Consumers in Himachal have not received oil for two months. Here, the government has claimed that after completing the tender process next month, consumers will be given oil for three months at once. There are 19.5 lakh ration card holders in Himachal Pradesh. Due to lack of oil in the depots for two months, consumers have to turn to the market. Mustard oil is available in the market at Rs 160 to Rs 200 per liter. This month the tender process was started by the department. This had raised the hope of consumers getting oil soon, but the government cancelled the tender when the rate was high. Now the Food Supply Corporation has invited tenders from companies for oil tender afresh. The last date for application for mustard oil has been fixed.

## Himachal News: Land Ceiling Act Amendment Bill passed in Himachal Assembly, this much land will be transferred by the organization

**Diary Times Desk :** In the winter session of the Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly on Friday, a bill to transfer 30 acres of land to charitable institutions was passed. The Land Holding Ceiling Amendment Bill 2024 was discussed in the first house. The opposition said that there should be no hurry while passing it. Radhaswami Satsang Sanstha should be helped, but the bill should first be sent to the Select Committee of the Assembly for discussion. The bill was passed by voice vote amid the bickering of both the sides. After the amendment bill is passed and it becomes a law, Radhaswami Satsang Beas will be able to transfer Bhota Hospital and its land to Jagat Singh Seva Trust. Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur said during the discussion that for me the state is above the institution and organization. There is full respect for the institution, but before passing the bill, it should be sent to the Select Committee. After the passage of the bill, the Chief Minister thanked the Congress Legislature Party and said that the BJP MLAs did not support it. In a way, there was a silent protest. Talking about sending it to the Select Committee is also a kind of protest. It is sad. Sukhu said that the interests of Himachal are paramount for him.

## Himachal News: Himachal team leaves for Madhya Pradesh for National Unity Camp, eight volunteers from the state will participate

**Diary Times Desk :** The Himachal Pradesh team under the National Service Scheme (NSS) left for the National Integration Camp to be held at Lakshmbai National Institute of Physical Education, Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh) on Friday. The camp will be held from 21 to 27 December, in which NSS volunteers selected from across the country will participate. District Nodal Officer NSS Dr. Pankaj Chandak said that a total of 8 volunteers from Himachal Pradesh are participating in this camp, including Akriti (Solan), Kashish (Pazhouta), Deepakshi Sharma (Shahpur), Himanshi (Nihri), Mohit (Bilaspur), Yograj (Banjar) and Nikhil Kumar (Kangra). NSS volunteer Deepak Sharma of Dr. Yashwant Singh Parmar Government Postgraduate College Nahan has also got the opportunity to participate in this camp. Nahan Principal Dr. Premraj Bhardwaj has congratulated the NSS unit.

## Himachal Weather: Alert of cold wave continuing for four days in six districts of Himachal

**Diary Times Desk :** Cold wave is likely to continue for the next seven days at some places in the lower hilly and plain areas of Himachal Pradesh. During the last 24 hours, cold wave was recorded in Una, Sundernagar, Hamirpur, Mandi and Chamba. The Meteorological Center Shimla has issued an orange-yellow alert for the continuation of cold wave till December 24 in some parts of Bilaspur, Hamirpur, Chamba, Kangra, Kullu and Mandi districts. According to the department, the temperature in some parts of the state will gradually drop by 2-3 degrees Celsius for the next three days. After this there will be no major change in temperature. On the other hand, a weak western disturbance is likely to become active from December 22. On December 27, another western disturbance will affect the western Himalayan region and the surrounding plains. Due to its effect, rain and snowfall is forecast in Chamba, Lahaul-Spiti and Kinnaur districts of the state. According to the department, light rain and snowfall is likely at high altitude places on December 23 and 26. In other parts, the weather is likely to remain clear till December 26.

## India registers 'strong protest' with Dhaka over remarks by Bangladesh leader

**Agencies :** The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Thursday that India lodged a "strong protest" with Dhaka over controversial statements made by a key aide of Bangladesh's interim government, Mahfuj Alam. Cautioning leaders in the neighbouring country, MEA Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said New Delhi wants to "remind all concerned to be mindful of their public comments". Jaiswal reiterated India's expression of interest in fostering relations with the interim government of Bangladesh. He said such remarks "underline the need for responsibility in public articulation". "We have registered our strong protest on this issue with the Bangladesh side. We understand that the post being referred to has reportedly been taken down. We would like to remind all concerned to be mindful of their public comments. While India has repeatedly signalled interest in fostering relations with the people and the interim government of Bangladesh, such comments underline the need for responsibility in public articulation," Jaiswal said at a press conference today.

## Delhi school gets bomb-threat mail, search underway

**Agencies :** A prominent Delhi school has received a bomb-threat e-mail, prompting security personnel to carry out a search operation on its premises, an official said on Friday, December 20, 2024. "We received a call regarding the bomb threat at 5.02 a.m. from DPS, Dwarka in Sector 23," the Delhi Fire Services (DFS) official said. Police, fire department, bomb detection teams and the dog squad are participating in the search operation, another official said. This is the sixth time in the last 11 days that schools in the national capital have received such threats.

## "Rumour": Ex Chief Justice DY Chandrachud On Being Considered For Rights Panel Chief Post

**Agencies :** Dismissing reports of him being considered for the post of the chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission, former Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud has said rumours are being spread and that he is enjoying his retired life as a private citizen. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has been without a full-time chairperson since former Supreme Court judge Justice Arun Kumar Mishra finished his tenure on June 1.

## 3-Day State Mourning In Haryana Over Ex-CM Om Prakash Chautala's Death



**Agencies :** The Haryana government declared a three-day state mourning from Friday as a mark of respect to former chief minister Om Prakash Chautala who passed away in Gurugram. "The state government has decided to observe a three-day state mourning... that is December 20-22. During this period, the national flag will fly at half-mast throughout the state on all buildings where it is flown regularly," an order issued by Haryana chief secretary's office said. It said all state government functions stand cancelled and there will be no official entertainment during this period. The Haryana government has also declared Saturday as a public holiday in all state government offices as a mark of respect to the departed soul, read the order. Om Prakash Chautala will be accorded a state funeral at 3 pm at Teja Khera farm in his family's native Sirsa district. Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) president and five-time Haryana chief minister Om Prakash Chautala died in Gurugram on Friday at the age of 89.

## Bombay High Court upholds Adani Properties' Dharavi slum rehabilitation bid

**Agencies :** The Bombay High Court has upheld the Maharashtra State Housing Department's award of the Dharavi Slum Rehabilitation Project to Adani Properties Pvt. Ltd., dismissing a legal challenge from Dubai-based Seclink Technology Corp. The ruling clears the way for the Gautam Adani-promoted entity to lead the redevelopment of the 259-hectare slum in central Mumbai, one of Asia's largest. Seclink, which lost the bid to Adani in 2022, had argued that its ₹7,200 crore offer was higher and more deserving than Adani's ₹5,069 crore bid. It alleged that the state's decision to cancel an earlier tender process and issue a fresh one had been biased.

## Defence ministry signs ₹7.6k-cr deal with L&T for Vajra artillery guns

**Agencies :** The defence ministry on Friday signed a ₹7,629-crore contract with Larsen & Toubro (L&T) for 100 more self-propelled K9 Vajra-T guns that will be manufactured locally with technology transfer from South Korean firm Hanwha Techwin. The procurement of the 155mm/52 calibre guns will catalyse the artillery modernisation and enhance the overall operational readiness of the Indian Army, the defence ministry said. "This versatile artillery gun, with its cross-country mobility, will play a pivotal role in enhancing the firepower of the Indian Army."

## Bail For BJP's CT Ravi, Arrested For Alleged Derogatory Remark On Woman Minister

**Agencies :** Karnataka BJP leader CT Ravi - arrested for allegedly making derogatory remarks against a woman Congress lawmaker in Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's cabinet - was given interim bail Friday evening. "Release him immediately... wherever he is," the High Court said, noting Mr Ravi was not served notice before his arrest. The protocol states the cops should have done so before questioning and detaining him over a complaint filed by Women and Child Development Minister Lakshmi Hebbalkar. "... a false case was filed against me and they (the Congress) treated me like a terrorist. Now let them introspect (on) what have they done. This is a win for the truth... the order is a clear message that we must all follow the law. There was no proof (but still) I was arrested," Mr Ravi said. "I'm not doing well... I didn't eat properly last night and this morning too," he told reporters. Mr Ravi was arrested following a complaint by Ms Hebbalkar - that he used objectionable language targeting her on the House.

## Health Of Farmer Leader Fasting For 25 Days Punjab's Responsibility: Top Court

**Agencies :** Warning that the Punjab government is responsible for the health of Jagjit Singh Dallewal, who has been on a fast for 25 days, the Supreme Court on Friday said it should take a call on shifting the farmer leader to a makeshift hospital where his medical parameters can be monitored. The Supreme Court's warning comes a day after Mr Dallewal fell and fainted for 8-10 minutes and doctors said that his life was "hanging by a thread". During Friday's hearing, a bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan asked Advocate General.

## Adani Group Plans ₹ 20,000 Crore Investment To Set Up Power Plant In Bihar: Pranav Adani

**Agencies :** The Adani Group plans to invest ₹ 20,000 crore to set up a thermal power plant in Bihar, said Adani Enterprises Director Pranav Adani on Friday. Sharing the conglomerate's investment roadmap at Bihar Business Connect in Patna, he said the power plant will open up thousands of new job opportunities in the state. "We are also exploring investments in Bihar's energy sector. Our plan is to invest around ₹ 23,000 crore to set up an ultra-super critical thermal power plant. We expect such a massive project to open up at least 12,000 job vacancies in the pre-commissioning phase and also lead to 1,500 skilled jobs during the operational stage," said Mr Adani. Asserting that Adani Group is the largest private investor in Bihar, the senior executive said they have already invested over ₹ 8,500 crore in logistics, gas distribution, and agri-logistics sectors in the state, and created 2,500 employment opportunities. The conglomerate will invest an additional ₹ 2,300 crore in these sectors, which will increase its warehouse and handling capacity, and also generate an additional 25,000 local jobs, he added.



## Croatia: 7-year-old killed, 5 injured in knife attack in Zagreb school, attacker detained

**Agencies :** A 7-year-old girl died and six other people, including a teacher and five students, were injured in a knife attack at a school in the Croatian capital, Zagreb, police said on Friday. Police said the attack happened at 9:50 a.m. at the Precko Elementary School in the neighbourhood of the same name. According to the victims, the attacker was a "young male" and said he had been detained. The attacked has been detained and is currently in police custody, AFP reported. Health Minister Irena Hristic said the attacker was over 18, while media reported he was 19.

## Malaysia approves new search for missing flight MH370



**Agencies :** The Malaysian government says it has agreed in principle to resume the search for a passenger jet that vanished 10 years ago in one of aviation's greatest mysteries. Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 disappeared in March 2014 while on its way to Beijing from Kuala Lumpur with 239 people on board. Efforts to locate the wreckage of the Boeing 777 have sputtered over the years and hundreds of families of those on board remain haunted by the tragedy. On Friday, Malaysia's transport minister Anthony Loke said the cabinet approved in principle a \$70m (£56m) deal with US-based marine exploration firm Ocean Infinity to find the aircraft. Under a "no find, no fee" arrangement, Ocean Infinity will get paid only when the wreckage is found. A 2018 search by Ocean Infinity under similar terms ended unsuccessfully after three months. A multinational effort that cost \$150m ended in 2017 after two years of scouring vast waters.

## 'Buy Oil And Gas From US, Or Else...': Donald Trump Threatens Europe



**Agencies :** A new day, a new threat - that's what Donald Trump's mantra seems to be as he sets his eyes on his new prey - the European Union. Weeks before his oath-taking ceremony, which will officially make him the next US President, Mr Trump today threatened the EU with consequences, if it does not reduce the "tremendous" trade gap with Washington. Donald Trump has demanded that Europe buy most of its oil and gas from the US. He also said that if it doesn't, then there will be "TARIFFS all the way" - capitalising the word to show greater emphasis to it, implying they may be steep. Writing on his platform Truth Social, Mr Trump stated that "I told the European Union that they must make up their tremendous deficit with the United States by the large scale purchase of our oil and gas - Otherwise, it is TARIFFS all the way!!!"

## Luigi Mangione, Sean "Diddy" Combs, Sam Bankman-Fried To Share Hellish Brooklyn Jail

**Agencies :** "Hell on Earth" is how Brooklyn's Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC) is described. And who else could one expect to share it other than Sean "Diddy" Combs, Sam Bankman-Fried and the newly infamous - Luigi Mangione. It is also the only operating federal detention center in New York. Apart from sharing the same prison, Combs and Mangione coincidentally share the same lawyer. Marc Agnifilo, who represents Combs, will also defend Mangione in his upcoming trial. On Sunday, Agnifilo and his wife, Karen Friedman Agnifilo announced their involvement in Mangione's case and in a press statement, Karen Agnifilo said, "Mangione appreciates everyone's support." Mangione is an accused in the murder of UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson who was arrested in Pennsylvania after a five-day search and brought to New York.

## 'I bought my son's death': Families mourn victims of migrant shipwreck

**Agencies :** Javed Iqbal, a Pakistani carpenter working in Saudi Arabia, tells BBC Urdu that he deeply regrets his decision to illegally send his 13-year-old son to Europe. "The agents had sent dozens of boys from the village to Greece and Italy," he says. "My son, who was stubborn and fell for their tricks, told us repeatedly, 'If you don't send me to Europe, I will leave home.'" Javed's son, Mohammad Abid, was among five Pakistani nationals who authorities confirm died in waters near Greece after three boats carrying migrants capsized last week. Pakistani authorities have urged parents to stop their children from embarking on such journeys. But it has not stopped hundreds of youths from trying. While 47 people from the recent disaster have been rescued, according to embassy officials in Greece, the 35 who remain missing are now presumed dead after the Greek Coast Guard called off rescue efforts on Wednesday.

## This Video Of Shark Feasting On Crocodile Is Not For Faint-Hearted

**Agencies :** A video of a hungry shark feasting on a dead crocodile has surfaced online. The incident took place on December 13 at Town Beach, in Nhulunbuy, Australia. The clip was shared by Alice Bedwell, who witnessed the unusual event, on Storyful. The video begins with a medium-sized crocodile lying on its back, while its head resting in the water. Soon after, a large shark can be seen slowly swimming up to the reptile to its immediate right. The predator then snaps up the crocodile's head, thrashing violently for a few seconds before dragging it into the water. Eventually, both of them disappear beneath the surface. Sharing the video on Instagram, a user wrote, "Bull shark feed on crocodile carcass in a beach at Nhulunbuy, Australia." The clip has recorded 117k views on the platform. People are shocked to see the intense face-off. A person said, "Wow, how easy it rips through that croc. Amazing animals." "Be a risk taker. Even the Shark knows it, he came out (of) his comfort zone just to get his prize..." wrote a user. A few stated that "things like this happen only in Australia." Sharks and crocodiles are both apex predators and most of the time they end up sharing the same habitats. At times, they are seen competing for the same territory or resources, according to American Oceans. Sharks, which are often called opportunistic feeders across.

## US attorney who indicted Gautam Adani in New York court to resign

**Agencies :** United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, Breon Peace, has announced his resignation, effective January 10, 2025, just days before the inauguration of Donald Trump as the President of the United States. Breon Peace, who has served in the role since October 15, 2021, has been a key figure in several high-profile cases, including the fraud indictment against the Adani Group. In his farewell statement, Peace expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to serve, calling it "the honour of a lifetime". Reflecting on his tenure, he said, "I have had the singularly rewarding experience of being called to public service and leadership in a district that is filled with people of different backgrounds and life experiences - yet share a common bond of humanity." He praised his colleagues, describing them as "some of the most talented prosecutors and staff to be found anywhere in the country", and emphasised the Office's unwavering commitment to justice.



## Campaigning for civic body elections ends, polling today



**Agencies :** As many as 3,336 candidates are set to battle it out in the civic polls scheduled to be held in the state on December 21. Elections will be held to five municipal corporations, 41 municipal councils, nagar panchayats and vacant seats in other civic bodies. The campaigning for the elections ended today. The Amritsar and Jalandhar MCs have 85 wards each, Ludhiana has 95, Patiala 60 and Phagwara 50. The ruling AAP is seeing these polls, which are being fought on party symbols, as an ideal opportunity to wrest control of all major municipal corporations. Other parties, including Congress, BJP and SAD, are crying foul over alleged abuse of official machinery by the ruling party, alleging that their candidates were prevented from filing nomination papers. SAD leader Daljit Singh Cheema said, "After panchayat polls, AAP had set a new low by allegedly abusing official machinery to reject or tear the nomination papers of a number of candidates." BJP leader Vineet Joshi said, "Amid the alleged abuse of the government machinery, 921 nominations have been filed by our party candidates." Even as Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, along with other senior party leaders in the state, have held back-to-back to rallies in Amritsar, Phagwara, Jalandhar, Ludhiana and Patiala.

## Om Prakash Chautala, Haryana ex-chief minister, dies of cardiac arrest

**Agencies :** Indian National Lok Dal president and former Haryana chief minister Om Prakash Chautala died in Gurugram on Thursday, a party spokesperson said. He was 89. Chautala, a five-time chief minister of Haryana and former deputy prime minister Devi Lal's son, suffered a cardiac arrest at his Gurugram home and was immediately rushed to hospital but could not be saved. Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, while condoling Chautala's death, said: "His contribution to the state politics will always be remembered." Chautala was born to Devi Lal, the former Deputy Prime Minister of India. He is survived by three children -- Abhay Singh Chautala, Ajay Singh Chautala and a daughter Sunita Chautala. Abhay is a former MLA from the Ellenabad constituency and has also been the Leader of Opposition in the Haryana Legislative Assembly from October 2014 till March 2019.

## Farmers observe 1-day fast in solidarity with Dallewal in Karnal, Kaithal



**Agencies :** Farmers under the banner of Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU-Charuni) observed a one-day fast in Kaithal and Karnal district headquarters on Thursday to express their solidarity with Punjab farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal, who has been observing fast for the past around 25 days at Khanauri border to press the demands of Punjab's farmers. As many as 13 farmers participated in hunger strike from 10 am to 4 pm in Kaithal, while 11 farmers observed fast in Karnal. Vikram Kasana, state youth president of BKU (Charuni) led the fast in a park outside Mini Secretariat in Kaithal, while Ajay Rana, Karnal district president, led the dharna outside Mini Secretariat in Karnal. A memorandum addressed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi was submitted to Tehsildar Ravindra Hooda, highlighting key farmer demands, including the guarantee law to ensure MSP and the resolution of pending issues from the 2020 farmer protests.

## SC wants Dallewal to be shifted to hospital; leaves it to Punjab authorities to take call

**Agencies :** Making it clear that it wanted farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal - who has been on a fast-unto-death since November 26 - to be shifted to a make-shift hospital set up near the protest site, the Supreme Court on Friday left it to the Punjab government authorities to take a call on the issue. "It is entirely the responsibility of the state of Punjab to ensure stable health condition of Dallewal, for which, if he requires hospitalisation, the authorities will take a call as to whether Dallewal can be shifted to a make-shift hospital which is said to have been set up at a distance of 700 metres from the (protest) site, or otherwise," a Bench led by Justice Surya Kant said. The Bench - which also included Justice Ujjal Bhuyan - asked the Punjab Chief Secretary and the Chairperson of the Medical Board constituted to monitor Dallewal's health to file a fresh medical report by January 2, 2025 on stability of his health along with the necessary steps taken to ensure that no harm was caused to him.

## HC seeks clarification on rules for appointment of PPSC chairman

**Agencies :** The Punjab and Haryana High Court has directed the state of Punjab to provide clarity on the rules or notifications governing the appointment the Punjab Public Service Commission chairman. The order came during the hearing of a public interest litigation filed by Preet Harinder Singh Pannu, who raised concerns about the advertisement inviting applications for the post. Appearing in person before a Division Bench, Pannu submitted that certain notifications were lying in the office of respondent-state, governing the "field of appointment to the post of chairman". The court, after hearing his submissions, instructed the counsel representing the state to seek instructions and clarify whether these rules or notifications were in place and had been duly notified.

## No plan to operate old airport terminal for passengers: Govt

**Agencies :** The Civil Aviation Ministry has clarified that there is no plan to make the old terminal building at Chandigarh Airport operational for passengers. In reply to a question raised by city MP Manish Tewari in the Lok Sabha today, Murlidhar Mohol, Minister of State for Civil Aviation, stated: "Since the old terminal building at Chandigarh Airport has been repurposed for various functions, but, at present, there is no proposal to make the old terminal operational for passenger movement." Tewari had asked whether the government has any plans to make the old terminal operational again and if so, the details thereof along with the timelines fixed in this regard; and if not, the reasons for allowing the wastage of public resources to continue by keeping the renovated infrastructure idle. Tewari also sought the details of total expenditure incurred by the government on reconstructing, renovating or refurbishing the building between 2010 and 2014. The minister stated that the cumulative expenditure incurred by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) on reconstructing, renovating, refurbishing or rebuilding the old terminal between 2010 and 2014 was Rs 43.86 crore.

## Biting cold grips Punjab, Haryana; Chandigarh records 6.7 degrees Celsius



**Agencies :** Cold weather conditions continued in several areas of Punjab and Haryana on Friday, with the common capital of the two states, Chandigarh, recording a minimum temperature of 6.7 degrees Celsius, the MeT department said. In Punjab, Pathankot experienced intense cold, recording a minimum temperature of 4 degrees Celsius. While Bathinda, and Gurdaspur shivered at 4.6 degrees Celsius and 4 degrees Celsius, respectively. Amritsar recorded a low of 6.4 degrees Celsius, Ludhiana registered a low of 5.7 degrees Celsius, while Patiala recorded a temperature of 6.5 degrees Celsius, the India Meteorological Department said. In Haryana, Sirsa was the coldest place, recording a low of 4.2 degrees Celsius.

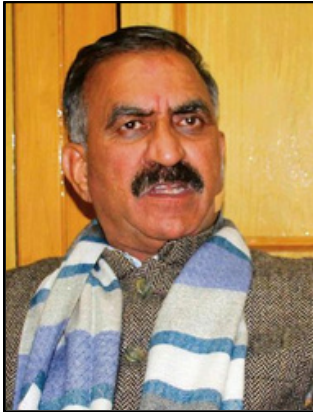
## HC orders weekly inspection of stone crushers in Nalagarh

**Diary Times Desk :** The Himachal High Court has taken serious note of the issue of violation of environmental norms by a majority of the stone crushers in Nalagarh and directed the Assistant Environmental Engineer to inspect these units every week and submit a report to the Chief Environmental Engineer. A Division Bench comprising Acting Chief Justice Tarlok Singh Chauhan and Justice Satyen Vaidya directed the Chief Environmental Engineer to inspect the stone crushers every fortnight and submit a report to the Member Secretary, HP State Pollution Control Board, who after inspecting the stone crushers every month would compile the reports and submit these to the court as and when called for. The court directed the authorities concerned to ensure that all trucks carrying raw material as well as finished goods would be covered with dust suppression cloth(s) and this would be duly ensured by the Baddi SP.

## Ballot boxes with QR codes to be used in PRI polls: Election Commissioner

**Diary Times Desk :** State Election Commissioner Anil Khachi announced that ballot boxes in the upcoming Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) elections will be tracked and scanned using QR codes. During a review meeting of the election preparations, he emphasised that officials concerned should stay updated on the election process. Khachi instructed that the ballot boxes be prepared in advance, including necessary repairs, greasing and oiling, so they can be ready for use at any time. Once refurbished, QR codes will be affixed to the boxes to facilitate tracking and location tracing. Other election materials and stationery will also be distributed through an inventory management system, ensuring proper record-keeping of each item, he said. The commissioner further mentioned that the reorganisation and delimitation of panchayats and wards of block and zila parishads, if necessary, would be completed promptly, along with the updating of electoral rolls. The electoral rolls would be prepared.

## BJP govt allotted 150 bighas in Baddi to pharma firm for mere Rs 1.81 cr: CM



**Diary Times Desk :** The two-day debate on corruption concluded in the Vidhan Sabha today with Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu filing a reply to allegations levelled by the BJP against his government. While the Opposition targeted the state government over corruption during its two-year tenure, the Congress legislators highlighted corruption during the previous BJP government in the state. The BJP legislators, led by Leader of the Opposition Jai Ram Thakur, challenged the government to get cases registered against them over alleged corruption charges, as the Congress was in power in the state. They walked out of the House alleging that the Chief Minister was giving false information. They raised slogans against the government and the Chief Minister. Sukhu, while participating in the debate, alleged that the previous Jai Ram Thakur government had given 150 bighas worth around Rs123 crore to Indo Pharma Pvt. Ltd at Malku Majra in the Baddi Assembly constituency for Rs 1.81 crore at the rate of Rs 250 per square metre. The government gave additional 150 bighas to the company at the rate of Re 1 per square metre.

## Holiday special train begins on UNESCO world heritage Shimla-Kalka railway line

**Diary Times Desk :** Northern Railways on Friday commenced New Year and winter season special trains on the UNESCO world heritage Shimla-Kalka narrow gauge railway line, an official said. The trains will operate until February 28, 2025 for tourist visiting Shimla during the holiday season, Station Superintendent Shimla Railway Station Sanjay Ghera. He said that 81 passengers boarded the train on the very first day. According to the schedule, train number 52443 (KLK-SML) will depart from Kalka at 8:05 am and will reach Shimla at 1:35 pm. Similarly, another train number 52444, will depart from Shimla at 4:50 pm and will reach Kalka at 9:45 pm. These special holiday trains would not only be instrumental in promoting tourism but will also generate revenue for the railways, Ghera said and added that the train can accommodate about 156 passengers. The trains will stop at Dharampur, Barog, Solan, Kandaghat and Summerhill railway stations. There are a total of seven coaches including three general coaches and two each of chair car and first class. An official of Northern Railways, Ambala Division said the decision to run two holiday trains was prompted.

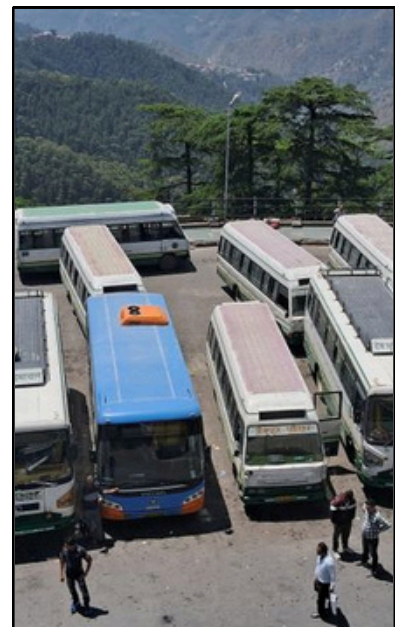
## Home Minister must apologise: Pratibha



**Diary Times Desk :** Himachal Pradesh Congress Committee (HPCC) president Pratibha Singh today said that Union Home Minister Amit Shah should tender an apology for his alleged objectionable remarks about Baba Saheb Ambedkar. Pratibha, while addressing mediapersons here, said that Shah's remarks about Ambedkar had hurt everyone. "The use of such a language against the maker of our Constitution is unacceptable and condemnable. The Congress will not tolerate insult to Ambedkar and will continue with its protest," he added. She said that the Congress demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi should take action against Shah and remove him from the Cabinet.

## 96% of HRTC routes under loss, government plans 701 new buses

**Diary Times Desk :** Himachal Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri told the state assembly that 96 per cent of the Himachal Road Transport Corporation (HRTC) routes are currently operating at a loss. Despite this, the state government remains committed to continuing the corporation's services, which have been vital for state connectivity over the last 50 years. The government contributes Rs 60-65 crore annually to cover salaries and pensions for HRTC employees. Congress MLA Chander Shekhar from Dharampur highlighted the poor condition of HRTC buses in his constituency, with 36 out of 51 buses condemned. Shekhar raised concerns about the risk to passenger safety due to frequent accidents involving these outdated vehicles. In response, Agnihotri confirmed that HRTC is in the process of procuring 701 new buses, including 327 electric buses, 250 diesel buses, 24 Volvo buses and several tempo travellers. These buses would be distributed across various depots, including Dharampur. In another query, Minister for Panchayati Raj Anirudh Singh reported the Centre has sanctioned 92,864 houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) for Himachal Pradesh. The Central Government is providing Rs 1.3 lakh per house, while the state contributes Rs 20,000. However, several MLAs raised concerns that claims had been cancelled for applicants who had already built homes. Singh clarified the guidelines do not allow the reassignment of claims.



## R Ashwin "Could Take Over ICC Or BCCI": Huge Prediction Made On Spin Great

**Diary Times Desk :** As Ravichandran Ashwin, one of cricket's most celebrated spinners, left fans and experts shocked by his sudden exit from international cricket, the former Pakistan cricketer Rashid Latif showered huge praise on the India star for his tactical acumen and sharp cricketing brain, saying the 38-year-old has the ability to "take over the BCCI and ICC in future". Ashwin called time on his prolific career at the end of the Gabba Test, which ended in a draw on Wednesday, leaving a rich legacy as one of India's finest match-winners. His last international game was the day-night Test against Australia in Adelaide, where he took 1-53 in his 18 overs and made 29 runs with the bat in the losing cause. "Ashwin, as a cricketer, maybe he hasn't received the respect he deserves in the dressing room; I don't know about it. He's wondering if he'll be in the playing XI or not. He's the world's No. 3 bowler, and taking 537 wickets for India is a huge achievement," Rashid told IANS. "Perhaps he feels that his career might be nearing its end, especially when players like Washington Sundar are getting preference.



## Short TAKES

### "No Disrespect But...": Brett Lee's Huge Jasprit Bumrah Verdict Amid Best Bowler Debate

**Agencies :** Former Australia fast bowler Brett Lee reserved blockbuster praise for India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, who leads the wicket-taking charts in the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Bumrah has picked up 21 wickets so far in three Tests, and single-handedly won India the series opener in Perth last month. While Australia outplayed India in the last two Tests, Bumrah's performances have not dropped one bit. There has been much criticism of India's other frontline pacers, especially Mohammed Siraj. Despite bagging 13 wickets so far, Siraj has been criticised for not playing the ideal support act at times. However, Lee defended Siraj and said that Bumrah has set a benchmark so high that it often overshadows the contributions of his fellow pacers. "He is world class, Jasprit Bumrah. Unfortunately, they had no Mohammed Shami, but I think the backing of Mohammed Siraj-there has been a bit of conjecture around him but I think he has bowled really well," said Lee.

### Gill needs to show his substance outside Asia to prove his worth

**Agencies :** At every net session, it becomes clear why India believe in Shubman Gill. He plays shots that are supposed to be hard ever so easily. There was this pull to a ball that was climbing up towards his rib cage at the Gabba. He swayed inside the line, just a subtle realigning of his torso, nothing more followed by a swivel of the back foot to direct the ball where he wanted it to go. The eye test in cricket is a rudimentary measure of how good a batter is based on how comfortable they look in the middle. Are they moving into the ball, or are they stuck on the crease? Are they rushed by quality bowling, or do they actually make it look a bit meh? Gill has been very good at passing the eye test in this Border-Gavaskar Trophy. But his highest score is 31. This has been happening for a while. In Birmingham 2022, as India attempted to build on their 2-1 lead in the Pataudi Trophy, he began his innings with a couple of crisp drives, and then he pulled Stuart Broad disdainfully in front of square. Each of those shots was a rendition of his natural instincts. Letting them take over got him to 17 runs from 20 balls. Letting them run unchecked got him dismissed for 17 off 24.

### Want to throw something different at India: Bailey on AUS squad changes

**Agencies :** Australia announced a change to their squad on Friday (December 20) as 19-year old Sam Konstas was roped in for the final two Tests of the Border Gavaskar Trophy in place of Nathan McSweeney. Konstas scored twin hundreds in the opening round of the Sheffield Shield for New South Wales against South Australia earlier this year. On the back of that, he raised the selectors' eyebrows with another century in the two-day practice match in Canberra against India. Chief Selector for Cricket Australia, George Bailey, stated that they were looking for something to throw India off their lines and lengths and felt a different approach from Konstas could help them achieve that. Australia's highest opening partnership in the series is 31 in the six innings so far in the first innings in Adelaide. "You can say the way our top three are playing has been reasonably similar and we'd like the ability to throw something different at India off the back of that," Bailey said. "If you look more broadly, I don't necessarily think the top six has quite functioned to the level that we need in this series as a whole. "Think Sam's method, his style, is different to Nathan's.

### Prithvi Shaw his own enemy: Mumbai Cricket official on Vijay Hazare snub

**Agencies :** The Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) has dismissed Prithvi Shaw's dramatic outburst following his withdrawal from the Vijay Hazare Trophy squad, claiming that the volatile batter has repeatedly violated disciplinary guidelines and is "his own enemy". The official revealed that Shaw's fitness issues were so significant during the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy that the team was "forced to hide" him on the field. "The ball would pass near him, and he would barely make an effort to reach it," the official said, speaking anonymously to the news agency PTI. "Even while batting, he struggled to reach the ball. His fitness, discipline, and attitude are lacking, and we cannot have different rules for different players." The concerns extended beyond his on-field performance, as Shaw reportedly missed training sessions and frequently returned to the team hotel at odd hours. These behaviors have led to mounting frustration among senior team members, who have begun voicing their displeasure. Prithvi Shaw, excluded from the 16-member Vijay Hazare squad despite being part of Mumbai's title-winning Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy campaign.

### "There's One Area Of Disappointment": What Gautam Gambhir Said On R Ashwin's Career

**Agencies :** A legend of the game in Test cricket, Ravichandran Ashwin didn't quite earn a similar reputation in white-ball cricket despite playing over 100 ODIs and 65 T20Is for India. As Ashwin calls time on his international career, an old comment from Gautam Gambhir on the spinner's ODI stint with the team has resurfaced. While Ashwin's statistics speak for themselves in the red-ball format, Gambhir feels he should've gotten the opportunity to play more in the 50-over format for India. In an interview with Sportskeeda, Gambhir lauded how Ashwin continued to evolve himself to match the pace and tempo of the game, always staying a step ahead of the challenges he faced on the pitch. But, his ODI career, Gambhir remains a little unfulfilled. "Very good (his evolution as a bowler). In fact, if there is one area of disappointment, it is that I feel he should have played a lot more of one-day cricket. The kind of bowler that he is - someone who can take 500 Test wickets. ... I don't know how many ODIs he has played, but if he had featured in more one-day games, the country could have seen his potential, not only as a bowler but an all-rounder as well."

