

## Himachal CM: Chief Minister Sukhu gave instructions to pay the bills of PWD and Jal Shakti Department



**Diary Times Desk :** Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu has directed to pay all the pending bills of Public Works Department (PWD) and Jal Shakti Department. He told the departments to complete the work within the stipulated time after budget allocation. The CM said that the present government has taken effective steps towards financial discipline during its two-year tenure. The Chief Minister conducted a detailed review of subjects related to e-distribution, budget, expenditure, treasury etc. While chairing the review meeting of the Finance Department in Shimla on Tuesday, the CM said that the government is ensuring ideal financial management with the aim of system transformation. The government is committed to the welfare of every section of the society by making balanced use of resources. In the review meeting, the CM took details of various subjects related to the financial position, resources and loans of the Energy Department, Electricity Board, Himachal Pradesh Energy Corporation Limited and other undertakings.

## Himachal Electricity Subsidy: On the request of CM, 387 consumers in Himachal gave up subsidy

**Diary Times Desk :** In Himachal Pradesh, 387 consumers have given up electricity subsidy in the last 12 days. On the request of Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu, 279 employees, 42 pensioners and 66 common people have given up the option of cheap electricity. The electricity bills to be issued in February for these consumers will come at non-subsidized rates. Many consumers who have given up electricity subsidy have registered themselves on the online portal. Many consumers also filled up the forms for giving up subsidy by visiting the local offices. Electricity Board's Managing Director Sandeep Kumar said that continuous awareness.

## Arvind Kejriwal's "Gold Chain" Charge, BJP's Liquor Case Counter

**Agencies :** Amid political attacks and counter-attacks in the run-up to the Delhi Assembly election, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Arvind Kejriwal has accused the BJP of hatching a plan to distribute gold chains to lure voters. Mr Kejriwal has alleged that the BJP leadership had sent the chains to be distributed, but local BJP leaders are pocketing them. The former Chief Minister has asked Delhi voters to take those chains if they want but urged them not to sell their votes because the election results would determine their and their family's future. In a post on X, Mr Kejriwal referred to the BJP as a "slangs party", doubling down on his charge that the BJP had no agenda for Delhi, but was only bent on abusing the AAP leader. "Now they have sent their leaders gold chains to distribute among voters. But they are not distributing them. Those going to their offices and creating an issue are being given the chains to silence them. If you want the chain too, go and get it from their offices," he said.



## Bharat got 'true independence' on Ram temple consecration day: RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat

**Agencies :** Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat claimed that India achieved its 'true independence' on Ram Mandir's construction day in Ayodhya. According to him, the date of Ram temple consecration should be celebrated as "Pratishtha Dwadashi". "After India got political independence from the British on August 15, 1947, a written Constitution was made according to the path shown by that specific vision, which comes out of the 'self' of the country, but the document was not run according to the spirit of the vision at that time," Mohan Bhagwat said on Monday. The RSS chief said the date should be celebrated as "Pratishtha Dwadashi" as the true independence of Bharat, which had faced "parachakra" (enemy attack) for several centuries, was established on this day. Mohan Bhagwat was speaking after presenting the 'National Devi Ahilya Award' to Champat Rai, general secretary of Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, in Indore. According to the Hindu calendar, the consecration of the Ram temple in Ayodhya took place on Dwadashi.

## AAP accuses BJP of 'politicising' bomb threats to schools: 'Fabricated stories'

**Agencies :** Aam Aadmi Party's Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh on Tuesday accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of "politicising" the issue of school children getting bomb threats, after the Delhi Police claimed that a student arrested for the same was linked to an NGO that supports a political party. "You (BJP) are politicising the issue of school children getting threats... The first threat was given in May 2024. After almost 9 months now, the Delhi police have given no statement but the BJP leader Sudhanshu Trivedi is holding a press conference. He is telling stories of different NGOs, he knows everything... There was no investigation for 10 months but now 15 days before the elections, they are narrating fabricated stories," ANI quoted Singh as saying. Addressing a press conference, BJP MP Sudhanshu Trivedi had said, "A few months ago.

## Water Supply Scam: 22 people including JE workers questioned in water supply case through tankers

**Diary Times Desk :** 22 people were questioned at the Vigilance Headquarters in Shimla in the ongoing investigation into the crores of rupees scam in the water supply through tankers in Theog of Shimla district of Himachal Pradesh. The Vigilance officials also recorded the statements of junior engineers of the Jal Shakti Vibhag. The Vigilance has also questioned contractors in this scam. In this case, the Vigilance is questioning officials, contractors and local people on the basis of the records seized. In the scam of water supply through tankers under Theog Assembly constituency, the Vigilance on Monday questioned 22 people related to the case. These included field employees of the Jal Shakti Vibhag who came under the scope of the investigation. Along with the interrogation, the vigilance is also analysing the records seized in connection with the case. According to vigilance sources, the statements given by some officials and contractors during the interrogation are not matching.

## 6 soldiers injured in mine blast near LoC: Sources

**Agencies :** Six soldiers of the Indian Army were injured in a mine blast near the Line of Actual Control in Nowshera sector, Rajouri, Jammu and Kashmir, on Tuesday. The incident occurred around 10:45 AM while a troop from the Gorkha Rifles was on a routine patrol near Khamba Fort, with sources indicating the blast was accidental.

## Himachal Youth Congress: Chhatar Singh Thakur of Rohru becomes the new president of Himachal Youth Congress

**Diary Times Desk :** Himachal Pradesh Youth Congress has got a new state president. On Tuesday late evening, All India Youth Congress President Uday Bhanu issued a letter appointing Chhatar Singh Thakur of Rohru as the new state president of Himachal Youth Congress. Three names have been shortlisted for the state president. There was a competition between Chhatar Singh Thakur, Akhil Agnihotri and Rahul Chauhan for the post of president. After the interview in Delhi on Tuesday, Chhatar Singh Thakur was selected for the post of president. 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 had received 60 thousand votes under the election process held in the state recently. Akhil Agnihotri of Una got 37 thousand votes and Rahul Chauhan of Sirmour got 15,000 votes.



## In 'karyakarta' push, BJP fields local leader to take on SP's aura in Milkipur

**Agencies :** Keeping the caste equations in mind and looking to galvanise the party cadre, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Tuesday declared Chandrabhan Paswan, who is not a big name but an "aam karyakarta" (ordinary party worker), as its candidate for the Milkipur assembly bypoll in Ayodhya district to challenge the dominance of the Samajwadi Party in the seat and neutralise the Pasi factor. The Samajwadi Party has won the Milkipur assembly seat six times, including twice in by-elections, and its candidate Ajeet Prasad belongs to the Pasi caste while his father Awadhesh Prasad, a veteran SP leader with considerable political aura in the constituency, is the sitting Faizabad MP and former MLA from Milkipur. Ajeet Prasad will file his nomination on Wednesday. For the BJP, wresting the Milkipur reserved assembly seat from the Samajwadi Party has become a matter of prestige.

## HPSEBL: Big gift to pensioners on Makar Sankranti, Electricity Board management released 44 crores

**Diary Times Desk :** The pending arrears of the new pay scale have been released to about three thousand pensioners above 75 years of age in the State Electricity Board. On Tuesday, on the occasion of Makar Sankranti, the Board management released an amount of 44 crores to pay the pending arrears. An amount of 9 crores was released some time back. A few months ago, Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu had announced to release the entire arrears to pensioners above 75 years of age. In this connection, the Board has deposited 77.5 percent of the arrears of the revised pay scale from January 1, 2016 in the bank accounts of the pensioners on Tuesday. Electricity Board Chairman Sanjay Gupta said that the pending arrears have been released as per the instructions of the government. This benefit has been given to retired employees above 75 years of age. 77.5 percent of the arrears of the revised pay scale from January 1, 2016 were pending for the pensioners. Earlier, Rs 9 crore was released on the instructions of the government. He said that the arrears of the new pay scale will soon be released to other pensioners and employees and officers too.

## After Uddhav Sena, Sharad Pawar's "INDIA Bloc Only For National Polls" Message

**Agencies :** INDIA bloc is only for national elections, said Sharad Pawar today amid reports that everything is not alright between the constituents of the opposition alliance. The statement holds significance as it echoed the statement of Sanjay Raut of Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) who recently said that the INDIA bloc and Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) alliances - comprising Sena (UBT), Congress and NCP (SP) - were only meant for Lok Sabha and assembly elections. Sharad Pawar said, "There has never been any talk regarding state and local elections in the INDIA alliance," adding in the same breath, "Everyone will meet and decide on this (local body elections) in the next 10 days". Earlier today, Mr Raut, while saying that it was difficult to form an alliance in the local body elections, expressed confidence in the survival of the INDIA bloc and called on Congress as the "larger partner" in the alliance, to take responsibility for maintaining unity among the opposition parties. "In Delhi, the Congress and AAP think that they are big powers... In Maharashtra also we have said that the local body elections are of the workers.

## Himachal: Vikramaditya and Dharmani said - Bills worth Rs 550 crores were passed from the treasury on January 13; targeted Jairam Thakur

**Diary Times Desk :** Public Works Minister Vikramaditya Singh and Technical Education Minister Rajesh Dharmani have said that Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur is trying to mislead people by making baseless statements. He is making misleading statements regarding the treasury. They said that in just one day, i.e. on January 13, bills worth Rs 550 crore have been passed from the state treasury. This has led to the payment of about 10,000 beneficiaries. Vikramaditya and Dharmani have said that the state treasury is closed only when the state government has declared and notified a public holiday on that day. The baseless statements of the opposition leaders reflect the opposition's lack of understanding and awareness about the policies and transformative initiatives implemented by the Congress government in the last two years. The ministers said that the state is continuously achieving achievements under the leadership of Chief Minister Sukhu. The state has become the first state to implement minimum support price for milk. The MSP of cow milk has been increased from Rs 32 to Rs 45 per liter, while the MSP of buffalo milk has been increased from Rs 47 to Rs 55 per liter. The government has set an example by giving the highest support price for wheat and maize to encourage natural farming in the country. The long-standing demands of the orchardists have also been fulfilled by paying the dues of Rs 153 crore under the Universal Carton and Mandi Mediation Scheme for apple growers. Public Works Minister Vikramaditya Singh and Technical Education Minister Rajesh Dharmani targeted Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur. They said that Jairam Thakur is trying to mislead people by making baseless statements.

## Rahul Gandhi vs Arvind Kejriwal Continues With "Paris Wali Delhi" Swipe

**Agencies :** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi today visited an area in northwest Delhi to highlight the filth-covered underbelly of the national capital while also exposing fissures in the opposition alliance INDIA, which was formed as a united front to fight against the BJP. "See, this is Delhi, this is shining Delhi," the Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Lok Sabha was heard saying in a video as he walked past an overflowing drain in Rithala. He looked at the sewage water and the garbage-covered dirt track he was walking on and remarked, "Paris jaisi Dilli. Sab jagah yahi haal hai (Delhi which is like Paris. This is the situation everywhere)." And, Rahul Gandhi's caption for the video on X - "This is (Arvind) Kejriwal's 'shining' Delhi - Paris wali Delhi (Paris-like Delhi)". "Arvind Kejriwal had promised to make Delhi shine like Paris. But, all his claims turned out to be hollow. Today, the people of Delhi are forced to live in clogged sewers, overflowing drains and immense filth," the Congress posted on X. Mr Gandhi's remark was a swipe at Aam Aadmi Party convener Arvind Kejriwal who, in 2019, had pledged to transform Delhi into a city as clean as "Tokyo, London and Paris".



## Makar Sankranti 2025: On Makar Sankranti, thousands of devotees took a holy dip in Tattapani and performed Tuladan

**Diary Times Desk :** Thousands of devotees gathered in Tattapani on Tuesday morning to take a bath on Makar Sankranti. Devotees had come from far and wide to take a holy dip. People started taking bath from four in the morning. People also performed Tuladan for planetary peace. People performed the ancient tradition by donating Khichdi. A district level fair is also being organized in Tattapani from 13 to 15 January. It is believed that Tattapani has been the place of penance of Maharishi Jamadagni. In such a situation, people have deep faith in the holy festival of Makar Sankranti in Tattapani. Local Pandit Bhakti Prakash said that people come to perform Tuladan for the peace of Navgrah. There were hot water springs here. People used to take bath on the banks of Sutlej. Now the hot water springs have been submerged in the Kol Dam project. Arrangements have been made on the banks of Sutlej for taking bath. Apart from Makar Sankranti, devotees come here every Saturday. Pandit Sanju Sharma said that when the Sun enters Capricorn in the month of Magh, then donation has special significance. Maha Kumbh is going on in Prayagraj. It is believed that one gets as much virtue in Tattapani as in Prayagraj.



## Himachal: Adventure activities banned in Sissu of Lahaul for 44 days from today

**Diary Times Desk :** On Wednesday, tourists will be able to enjoy amidst snow at Sissu, a famous tourist spot in Lahaul Valley of Himachal Pradesh. After this, there will be silence for 44 days. Adventure activities will be completely closed in Sissu from January 16 to February 28. To avoid any kind of disturbance in religious faith and Dev Karj in Chandraghati, no adventure activities will be available in Panchayat Sissu. These mainly include the thrill of ATV riding, hot balloon, zip line, skiing and tube sliding. Panchayat representatives, Raja Ghepan Committee, Devi Bhoti Committee, Labrang Gompa Committee, members of the Women and Youth Board of Sissu Panchayat have unanimously decided not to conduct adventure activities. The district administration has also been informed about this. During this time, tourists will be able to travel only on Highway 3 from Pagalnala to Ropsang. In these 44 days, tourists will not be able to get many traditional food items including Pahadi Maggi, salty tea.

## Shimla: Vikramaditya Singh said- Government will release 80 crores to contractors in two days

**Diary Times Desk :** Himachal Pradesh government will release the pending payment of Rs 80 crore to the contractors of Public Works Department in two days. Public Works Minister Vikramaditya Singh said that Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu has given instructions regarding this during a meeting with the officials of Finance Department and Public Works Department on Tuesday morning. Talking to the media, Vikramaditya said that the Chief Minister has asked to release the payment of small works on priority basis. Responding to the question raised by Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur regarding the closure of the state treasury, Vikramaditya Singh said that the former Chief Minister should worry about the general public and not the contractors. The government is making the entire payment of the contractors in a phased manner and will continue to do so in future.

## Basant Panchami: Lord Raghunath will come to Dhalpur on February 2 to bless the devotees, gulal will fly on Basant Panchami

**Diary Times Desk :** Lord Raghunath will come to Dhalpur on February 2 to bless the devotees. In the Vasant Panchami festival being celebrated for centuries, Raghunath will reach his temporary camp in Dhalpur to the beat of drums. Raghunath's main workers took this decision on the occasion of Makar Sankranti on Tuesday. He told that Raghunath will travel to Rath Maidan in a palanquin from the temple on February 2 at 12:00 noon. All the traditions will be followed here. Preparations have already started for this. Raghunath will celebrate Vasant Panchami in Dhalpur. During this time, gulal will be thrown in abundance. Along with this, the festival will be celebrated for 40 days in Raghunath's city from Vasant Panchami to Holi festival. During this time, people of the Bairagi community will go from house to house and sing Holi songs every day. Raghunath will come to the temporary camp of Dhalpur from Rath Maidan riding on a chariot. During this time thousands of people will pull his chariot. Thousands of people will gather from all over the district to see this grand and divine sight.

## Himachal: Rape case registered against Haryana BJP president Mohanlal Badoli and singer Rocky Mittal in Kasauli

**Diary Times Desk :** A woman has accused Haryana BJP state president Mohan Lal Badoli and singer Jai Bhagwan alias Rocky Mittal of gang rape. The victim woman, a resident of Delhi, has lodged a complaint in Kasauli police station on December 13, 2024. However, this case is of July 3, 2023. The victim has alleged in the complaint that she was gang-raped in a hotel in Kasauli on the pretext of giving her a government job and making her an actress in a video album. The police have registered a case against the accused under section 376D in gang rape and 506 for criminal intimidation and started investigation. The victim has also been brought for identification two to three times in a month. The police have also called the accused for questioning. According to Solan Superintendent of Police Gaurav Singh, the woman alleges that both the accused raped her by forcibly making her drink alcohol and also made her obscene photos and videos.

## HRTC Driver Suicide Case: HRTC driver's suicide case, corporation will question staff and family

**Diary Times Desk :** The Divisional Manager of Himachal Path Parivahan Nigam (HRTC) Mandi has completed the preliminary investigation of the allegations levelled by driver Sanjay Kumar against the Regional Manager Dharampur in the viral video. On Monday, when the matter came to light, HRTC Managing Director Rohan Chand Thakur has handed over the responsibility of investigating the matter to Divisional Manager Mandi Vinod Thakur. DM Mandi prepared the preliminary investigation report and termed the allegations of harassment levelled by the driver against the Regional Manager and non-payment of salary for four months as baseless. He said that the said driver has been receiving salary from time to time as per the rules. On January 12, the driver's family had informed the Dharampur bus depot through phone.

## Jairam Thakur: Leader of Opposition asked Sukhu government- If everything is fine in the state, then why is there anarchy everywhere

**Diary Times Desk :** Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur has fiercely attacked the Sukhu government. He said that people sitting in the government come every day and give statements that everything is fine in the state, everything is going well. When everything is going well, then why is there such anarchy in the state? Why is the state treasury closed? Why are people not getting even 5 thousand and 10 thousand rupees? He said that why are the development works stalled? Why do the suppliers who supply medicines to the hospitals of the state have to come to the media and demand their pending payments for 9 months? When everything is fine, why is the condition of the health department of the state so bad? Why are people's operations being postponed? Why are people wandering in hospitals for life saving medicines? Why are they not getting free medicines and treatment? Why are stents not being put in place for heart patients these days? Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur said that why is the oxygen PSA plant closed amidst the threat of human.

## Steve Jobs' Wife Falls Ill At Maha Kumbh: "Never Been To Such Crowded Place"

**Agencies** : Late Apple co-founder Steve Jobs' wife Laurene Powell Jobs developed allergies on her second day at the Maha Kumbh 2025 in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj, but will participate in the ritual of taking a dip in the Ganga river. Spiritual leader Swami Kailashanand Giri on Tuesday told ANI, "She will participate in the ritual of taking a dip (at the Sangam). She is resting in my 'shivir'. She has some allergies. She has never been to such a crowded place. She is quite simple. She stayed with us during the pooja. Our tradition is such that those who have never seen it - they all want to join," Giri told ANI. Ms Jobs arrived in Prayagraj on Monday to attend the Maha Kumbh, which marks a rare celestial event in 144 years. Named 'Kamala' by Giri, she will stay in the Kumbh tent city at the Niranjani Akhara camp till January 15, before returning to the US to attend the swearing-in ceremony of President-elect Donald Trump on January 20. At the first Amrit Snan or sacred dip on Tuesday, at least 3-4 crore people will take a holy dip at the Triveni Sangam, a confluence point of the Ganga, Yamuna and mystical Saraswati rivers. Sodus of the 13 Akhadas of the Sanatan Dharma took a holy dip at the Triveni Sangam one by one. The 13 akhadas are divided into three groups -- Sanyasi (Shaivite), Bairagi (Vaishnav) and Udaseen. The Shaivite akhadas include Shree Panch Dashnam Juna Akhada, Shree Panchayati Akhada Niranjani, Shree Shambhu Panchayati Atal Akhada, Shree Panchayati Akhada Mahanirvani, Shree Shambhu Panchagni Akhada, Shree Panchdashnam Aavahan Akhada and Taponidhi Shri Anand Akhada Panchayati.

## "Would Have To Apologise...": House Panel To Summon Mark Zuckerberg's Meta

**Agencies** : Social media giant Meta is set to get a summons from a Parliamentary Standing Committee over its boss Mark Zuckerberg's remark on the 2024 Indian general election. Nishikant Dubey, BJP MP and chairman of the House panel on Communication and Information Technology, said Meta would be summoned on grounds of spreading misinformation. "Misinformation on a democratic country maligns its image. The organisation would have to apologise to the Parliament and the people here for this mistake," Mr Dubey said in a post on X.

## 44 Arrested After Dalit Teen Alleges Rape For Over 5 Years In Kerala



**Agencies** : The special investigation team (SIT) of Kerala police probing the sensational case of alleged sexual abuse of a Dalit girl in the district has arrested 44 people so far in connection with the matter, a senior police officer of the district said on Tuesday. DIG S Ajeetha Begum, who is overseeing the investigation, said that 30 FIRs have been registered in connection with the alleged sexual assault of the girl and out of the 59 accused mentioned in the cases, 44 have been arrested. "Two of the accused are on the run. They are abroad at present. We are considering issuing Look out Circulars for them. We are also planning to issue a Red Corner notice for them through Interpol," the officer told TV channels. Besides them, 13 more have to be arrested, she said. "We are searching for their locations. They will be arrested soon. A foolproof and scientific investigation will be carried out by the SIT. We will not spare any of the accused. There will be no compromise. We will bring all of them before the law," the officer said.

## Piyush Goyal launches National Turmeric Board to boost India's turmeric industry

**Agencies** : Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal inaugurated the National Turmeric Board on Tuesday to help promote balance in the production and export of turmeric. As per the PR released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry Palle Ganga Reddy will hold the office of Chairperson on the Board which shall be governing from Nizamabad. The Board shall endeavour to strengthen the infrastructure and use of supply chains in turmeric for new exploring looking into international markets for new countries and for developing better markets.

## 6 soldiers injured in landmine explosion in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri

**Agencies** : At least six army personnel sustained injuries on Tuesday following a landmine explosion in a forward village in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district. The incident took place at 10.45 am near Khamba Fort in the Nowshera sector when troops on patrol duty accidentally triggered a landmine as one of the soldiers stepped on it, PTI reported. The injured soldiers were immediately rushed to a hospital, and their condition is said to be stable. Officials officials, the report added that landmines are placed.

## "Erroneous": Denied Bail, Ex- IAS Trainee Puja Khedkar Approaches Supreme Court

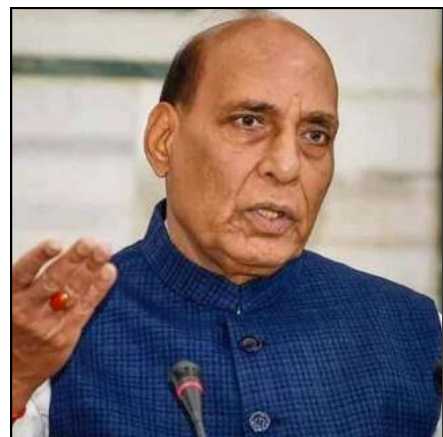
**Agencies** : Former IAS Trainee officer Puja Khedkar, who made headlines last year over claims that she lied about disabilities, changed her surname and forged a backward class certificate to clear the civil services exam, has approached the Supreme Court against a Delhi High Court order denying her anticipatory bail. In strong comments while turning down her petition in December, the High Court had said the charges against her, which include forgery and cheating, are a "classic example of fraud committed not only against an authority but also the nation at large". The court said her intentions seemed to be to dupe authorities and that "her steps (were) part of a larger conspiracy". Ms Khedkar, it observed, is "unfit for appointment". "Conduct of the petitioner was purely driven with a motive to dupe the complainant UPSC, or the Union Public Service Commission, and all documents allegedly forged by her were done to reap benefits of schemes.

## "Strongly Taken Up...": Centre After Another Indian Dies Fighting For Russia

**Agencies** : A day after it emerged that a man from Kerala died while fighting in the Russian army on the frontlines of the country's war against Ukraine, the Ministry of External Affairs on Tuesday said that it has strongly taken up the issue with the Russian government. India, the ministry said, has also reiterated its demand for the early discharge of others from the country who have been inducted into the Russian army. The family of Binil Babu, 32, from Thrissur in Kerala, had said that he and a relative had been injured in a drone attack.

## 'Jammu and Kashmir incomplete without PoK': Defence minister Rajnath Singh

**Agencies** : Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday said that Jammu and Kashmir is "incomplete" without Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK), warning the neighbouring country against running terrorist training camps there. "Jammu and Kashmir is incomplete without PoK. PoK is nothing more than a foreign territory for Pakistan... PoK's land is being used to run the business of terrorism. Terrorist training camps are being run in PoK... Pakistan will have to destroy them otherwise," ANI quoted the minister as saying at the 9th Armed Forces Veterans' Day event in J&K's Akhnoor. Rajnath Singh said that the then Lal Bahadur Shastri government could have ended cross-border terrorism in 1965. "The war between India and Pakistan was fought in Akhnoor in 1965. India succeeded in thwarting the efforts of the Pakistani army. Pakistan has been promoting illegal infiltration and terrorism since 1965," he said.



## Fake Brad Pitt uses love poems, AI photos to swindle French woman out of ₹7 crore

**Agencies :** A scammer posing as Brad Pitt has duped another woman, this time in France. Using altered photos and sweet talk, a French woman was trapped into believing that she was being a pursued online by Hollywood actor Brad Pitt, whom she sent over 800,000 euros ( ₹7 crore) over the course of a year. The cyber criminal, posing as Pitt, messaged 53-year-old Anne on Instagram and convinced her to help him with his medical treatment as his bank accounts were blocked due to his ongoing divorce with estranged wife Angelina Jolie. Anne told on local news channel that she first received a message from an account posing as Pitt's mother Jane Etta Pitt while she was on a ski trip. A day later "Brad Pitt" himself was talking to her and the two soon became friends. Anne, who was married a millionaire but was headed for divorce, continued to receive poems and declarations of love from the fake actor. Soon after, she was convinced that she in a long-distance relationship with Mr Pitt. "There are so few men who write such things. I liked the man I was talking to and he knew how to talk to women," she told news media.

## Washington Braces For Trump 2.0 Inauguration With Fortress-Like Fencing

**Agencies :** With 30 miles (48 km) of tall black temporary fencing, 25,000 law enforcement officers and security checkpoints set up to process hundreds of thousands of spectators, Washington is braced for President-elect Donald Trump's inauguration next week. The Monday swearing-in on the steps of the U.S. Capitol and parade to the White House will follow a weekend featuring protests by Trump's opponents and parties and rallies by the Republican's supporters. The inauguration follows a campaign marked by two attempts on Trump's life - including one from a would-be assassin who nicked his ear with a bullet - and a pair of New Year's Day attacks on ordinary Americans. In one, 14 people were killed and dozens injured when a U.S. Army veteran rammed a truck into a crowd of New Year's Eve revellers in New Orleans.

## Los Angeles faces monstrous wildfires fueled by high Santa Ana winds, 24 lives lost



**Agencies :** Los Angeles firefighters braced for high winds on Monday expected to fuel two monstrous wildfires that have already leveled entire neighborhoods, killed at least two dozen people, and burned an area the size of Washington, D.C. Dry Santa Ana wind gusts of 45 to 70 miles per hour (72 to 112 kph) were forecast to resume on Monday and persist through Wednesday, according to the National Weather Service, which issued a "particularly dangerous situation" red flag warning, the agency's most serious advisory. More than 8,500 firefighters attacked the fires from the air and on the ground, preventing the conflagrations at either end of Los Angeles from spreading overnight. But the National Weather Service in Los Angeles warned, "This setup is about as bad as it gets," and Los Angeles City Fire Chief Kristin Crowley told Angelenos, "We are not in the clear."

## US Buying Greenland Takes Official Turn, Trump To Get Powers To Negotiate

**Agencies :** Donald Trump's plan to buyout Greenland has taken a serious turn. Republicans have started gathering support in the House of Representatives to pass a new bill to authorise the US President to enter formal negotiations to purchase Greenland. The bill titled 'Make Greenland Great Again Act' is being circulated to gather co-sponsors for it. As of Monday, the bill already had 10 sponsors. It is being led by Republican congressman Andy Ogles and congresswoman Diana Harshbarger. This makes it official that Donald Trump, who will become US President next week, is serious about buying Greenland and making its a part of the United States. He had said it on multiple occasions in recent weeks and had even asked his advisers back in 2019 - during his previous term as President - how it can be done.

## China Tests Strategies To Counter Starlink Satellites Amid Taiwan Tensions

**Agencies :** Starlink, SpaceX's satellite network designed to deliver affordable internet to remote areas, may not be as secure as believed. A group of renowned Chinese scientists recently simulated a space mission aimed at targeting the massive satellite constellation, according to the South China Morning Post. Results from the computer simulation showed that China could effectively approach nearly 1,400 Starlink satellites within 12 hours using just 99 Chinese satellites. These could be equipped with lasers, microwaves, and other devices to conduct reconnaissance, tracking, or other operations. "The potential military application value of the Starlink megaconstellation has been highlighted in the Russia-Ukraine conflict. In recent years, the militarisation of space has intensified, posing a significant threat to China's space security. It is particularly important to track and monitor its operational status," wrote the project team led by Wu Yunhua, director of the aerospace control department at Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics. Their peer-reviewed paper was published on January 3 in the Chinese academic journal Systems Engineering and Electronics.



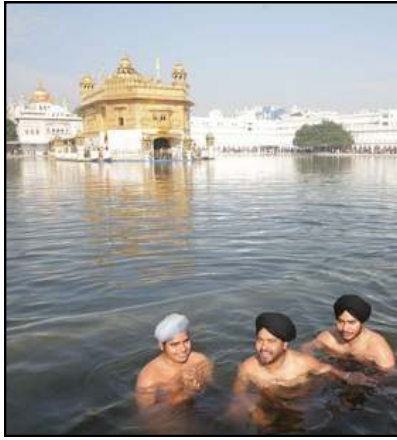
## 300 North Korean Soldiers Killed Fighting Ukraine: Seoul

**Agencies :** Around 300 North Korean soldiers have been killed and 2,700 wounded while fighting in Russia's war against Ukraine, a South Korean lawmaker said Monday, citing information from Seoul's spy agency. Seoul has previously claimed North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has sent more than 10,000 soldiers as "cannon fodder" to help Moscow fight Kyiv, in return for Russian technical assistance for Pyongyang's heavily sanctioned weapons and satellite programmes. Over the weekend, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Kyiv had captured two North Korean soldiers, releasing video of the injured combatants being interrogated and raising the possibility of a prisoner swap for captured Ukrainian troops. "The deployment of North Korean troops to Russia has reportedly expanded to include the Kursk region, with estimates suggesting that casualties among North Korean forces have surpassed 3,000," lawmaker Lee Seong-kweun told reporters after a briefing from the spy agency. This includes "approximately 300 deaths and 2,700 injuries," Lee said, after a briefing from Seoul's National Intelligence Service. The soldiers, reportedly from North Korea's elite Storm Corps, have been ordered to kill themselves rather than be taken prisoner, Lee said.

## Spain seeks to set 100% tax on non-EU citizens buying houses

**Agencies :** Spain wants non-European Union residents to pay as much as 100% tax for home purchases in the country, a move that could affect buyers from the UK and Latin America. "Just to give us an idea, in 2023 alone non-European Union residents bought some 27,000 houses and flats in Spain and they didn't do it to live in, they didn't do it for their families to live, they did it to speculate, to make money from them, which we cannot allow in the context we live," Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said in Madrid on Monday. The government's proposal on the 100% tax on non-EU residents' house purchases will be sent to parliament, Sanchez said. The plan is inspired on tax regimes in Denmark and Canada, he added. Spain's extensive Mediterranean coastline is a popular destination for foreigners seeking a holiday residence, with the Balearic Islands one of the most popular locations. British citizens are the biggest group of non-EU property buyers.

## Braving cold, devotees converge at Golden Temple to mark 'Maghi'



**Agencies :** Braving cold, tens of thousands of devotees converged at the Golden Temple in Amritsar and other gurudwaras across Punjab to pay obeisance and for a holy dip in the 'sarovar' to mark Maghi or Makar Sankranti on Tuesday. Makar Sankranti, a major harvest festival celebrated in various parts of the country, also marks the beginning of warmer and longer days compared to the nights. Devotees in the Golden Temple started assembling much before sunrise. Some preferred to stay overnight on the temple premises to take a holy dip early in the morning. "January 14 is the first day of the traditional Punjabi month of Maghi. Devotees feel blessed to have started it by taking a dip in the holy sarovar," a temple priest said. Langars (community kitchens) were organised to mark the day. Though Maghi is celebrated with fervour in Muktsar district, many consider that taking the holy dip in the Golden Temple sarovar is also significant.

## Worker dies as under-construction showroom collapses in Mohali

**Agencies :** Another building collapse in less than a month here has claimed the life of a labourer and left three injured. The lintel of an under-construction two-storey showroom came crashing down on them in TDI City, Sector 118, this afternoon. The deceased has been identified as Jaswinder Singh (41), a resident of Chuhar Majra near Landran. On December 21, the collapse of a three-storey building had claimed the lives of two youths in Sohana. The gym-cum-PG facility came crashing down amid digging work being carried without proper permission in the adjacent plot. The three injured in the TDI City incident — Uday Paswan (42), Karan Kumar (30) and Kuldeep Paswan (25), all residents of Aerocity — were admitted to the Phase-6 Civil Hospital. One of them sustained serious injuries. The supervisor was not present at the spot at the time of the incident, which took place around 4.30 pm.

## CTU to add 60 buses to its long-route fleet

**Agencies :** The Chandigarh Transport Undertaking (CTU) will add 60 more diesel buses to its existing fleet of long-route buses. Punjab Governor and UT Administrator Gulab Chand Kataria will flag off the buses from the ISBT, Sector 17, tomorrow. Each 51-seater non-AC buses will ply on 31 routes to Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and other states. According to officials, these buses were acquired to replace condemned buses. Procured at a cost of nearly Rs 22 crore, the buses were purchased through the tendering process. The officials said several buses would run on new routes, while a few discontinued routes would also be restored. Meanwhile, the CTU will get 100 new electric buses later this year under the PM e-Bus Seva scheme for local routes. At present, 80 electric buses are operational in the city. The UT Transport Department has planned to convert the existing fleet of 358 diesel buses on local routes and 36 buses on suburban routes with electric ones by 2027-28.

## Dallewal's fast unto death: Supreme Court to take up contempt plea against Punjab Chief Secretary, DGP



**Agencies :** Amid growing concern over the health of farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal — who has been on fast unto death since November 26, 2024 to press for farmers' demands — the Supreme Court will take the matter on Wednesday. A bench of Justice Surya Kant and Justice N Kotiswar Singh is scheduled to take up a petition challenging Punjab and Haryana High Court's order to remove barricades erected by police and a contempt petition against Punjab Chief Secretary and DGP. It will also take up a plea filed on behalf of Dallewal, seeking a direction to the Centre to implement a proposal, including a legal guarantee of MSP on crops. This proposal was made to protesting farmers in 2021, following the repeal of the farm laws. The Supreme Court had on January 6 adjourned the hearing after being told that Dallewal has agreed to meet Justice (Retd) Nawab Singh-led High-Powered Committee set up by the top court.

## Amritpal's supporters float 'Akali Dal Waris Punjab De' party

**Agencies :** Radical leaders and supporters of jailed Khadoor Sahib MP Amritpal Singh on Tuesday floated a new regional political outfit, 'Akali Dal Waris Punjab De' in Muktsar district on Maghi. Amritpal's father Tarsem Singh and Faridkot MP Sarabjeet Khalsa were present on the occasion. Addressing the gathering here, Khalsa expressed hope that people would support and strengthen the new party. He asked them to bring as many people as possible to join the party. "The party will be successful with the blessings of Almighty," said Khalsa. Amritpal won the Lok Sabha polls held last year as an independent candidate from Khadoor Sahib. He is currently lodged in Assam's Dibrugarh Jail under the National Security Act (NSA). Amritpal, who heads the 'Waris Punjab De' outfit, was jailed along with nine of his associates under the NSA.

## Saini announces plots for 1 lakh poor families

**Agencies :** Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini announced that the state government will soon provide plots to one lakh underprivileged families, fulfilling its commitment to ensure "a roof over every head." Speaking at the Abhinandan Samman Samaroh organised by Rashtrasant Mahayogi Upadhyayshree Dr Gupti Sagar Gurudev at Gupti Dham in Ganaur, Sonapat, the CM revealed that the government had finalised a plan to distribute these plots. "Previous governments only made hollow promises of giving 100-sq yd plots to the poor. They neither handed over possession nor provided registry papers. Our government, however, has ensured both registry and possession for the people," Saini said, addressing the gathering. The CM, who also took blessings from Jain saint Gupti Sagar Maharaj, wished everyone a happy Lohri and Makar Sankranti. He credited the public's support and the blessings of saints for the BJP's formation of government in Haryana for the third time. Highlighting the government's employment initiatives, Saini said, "With our commitment to transparency, we've ensured that jobs are provided without 'parchi and kharchi' (recommendations and bribes). The Opposition tried to mislead people during the Assembly elections by making false promises of jobs in exchange for votes. But the people of Haryana rejected their lies and chose the BJP once again."

## Cold weather conditions in Punjab, Haryana

**Agencies :** Cold weather conditions prevailed in Punjab and Haryana on Tuesday with Moga being the coldest place with a minimum temperature of 3.8 degrees Celsius. Among other places in Punjab, Amritsar recorded a low of 7.9 degrees Celsius, according to a meteorological department report. The mercury settled at 4.6 degrees Celsius in Pathankot district, 5 degrees Celsius in Bathinda and Faridkot, 5.5 degrees Celsius in Gurdaspur and 5.8 degrees Celsius in Patiala. In neighbouring Haryana, Ambala recorded a minimum temperature of 8.8 degrees Celsius. Karnal recorded a low of 5.2 degrees Celsius, Sirsa 5.4 degrees Celsius, Narnaul 5.8 degrees Celsius, Hisar 7.1 degrees Celsius, Bhiwani 8.6 degrees Celsius and Rohtak 9.2 degrees Celsius. Chandigarh, the common capital of Punjab and Haryana, recorded a low of 7 degrees Celsius.

## HRTC orders probe into death of driver who died by suicide

**Diary Times Desk :** The Himachal Pradesh Transport Corporation (HRTC) management has ordered an inquiry into the death of its driver. The driver, who was posted in Mandi division, allegedly committed suicide, blaming a higher official of the division of harassment. A video of the deceased driver has gone viral on social media in which he is seen accusing the official of harassment while he was admitted in the hospital. Taking note of the viral video, HRTC Managing Director Rohan Chand Thakur has ordered an inquiry by Divisional Manager, Mandi, into the incident.

## Providing enough water to cantonment town residents tough task for govt

**Diary Times Desk :** Arranging adequate water for the civilian population which will be excluded from the three cantonment towns of Kasauli, Dagshai and Subathu after the excising exercise will be a tough task for the Jal Shakti Department (JSD). Significantly, discussions have been held between the Ministry of Defence and the officials of the Jal Shakti Department where the former have clearly stated that the existing facility would continue to the civilian population for six months where water would be provided at the rate of Rs 60.52 per 1,000 litres which is the existing rate. Water supplied by the Military Engineering Services is thrice the amount charged by the state government in urban areas while it was minimum Rs 110 in rural households, as per an estimate made by the Jal Shakti Department. With limited scope to provide water in places like Subathu and Dagshai, the Jal Shakti Department faces a major challenge in arranging adequate water for the civilian population of 2,904 in Dagshai and 8,720 of Subathu. Though the Jal Shakti Department can lift water from Ghamber Khud for Subathu but since there are many stakeholders it would not be an easy task. "Even if the villagers give a no objection certificate to permit the Jal Shakti Department to lift water it will take one to two years to streamline the scheme," stated Jal Shakti Department officials. In Dagshai the water scenario was more dire.

## Sukhu announces aid for families hit by devastating fire at Kullu village



**Diary Times Desk :** Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu today announced the setting up of a new fire station in Banjar during his visit to the disaster-stricken Tandri village in Jibhi valley of Banjar subdivision. On the first day of the New Year, a devastating fire destroyed 17 houses and six cowsheds, rendering 33 families homeless. Nearly half of the village was reduced to ashes and residents were unable to save their belongings as the fire spread rapidly through the wooden houses, which contained stocks of firewood and fodder. The Chief Minister reviewed the relief efforts for those affected by the blaze, emphasising that the government had mobilised all available resources to assist the victims. He said, "Our first priority is to provide shelter to the affected families until their homes are rebuilt. An allowance of Rs 5,000 per month will be provided to the families who offer temporary shelter to the victims for an initial period of six months, with the possibility of extension if necessary, as it is particularly challenging to rebuild homes in rural areas."

## Snow, rain likely in Himachal from Wednesday evening

**Diary Times Desk :** The weather department has issued a forecast for light snow at many places and moderate snow at some places, in the high and mid hills of the state from Wednesday. The precipitation, likely to start from Wednesday night, is likely to continue till the night of January 16. A few spells of light rain/snow, with one or two moderate spells, are likely at tourist destinations of Naldehra, Manali and Shimla. A few spells of light snow, with one or two moderate spells in Kufri, Narkanda, Solang Valley and Sissu are likely. Light rain and a few spells of moderate rain are likely over some parts of low hills/plain areas of the state. A dense fog is likely to continue over isolated parts of the state from early morning till night on Wednesday. The maximum temperature is likely to rise by two to four degrees Celsius in the next 24 hours. Thereafter, maximum temperatures are likely to fall by 4-5 degrees Celsius over many parts of the state for the next two to three days. There will be no significant change in minimum temperature in the next 48 hours, but it will fall by 2-4 degrees Celsius in the subsequent two to three days. The precipitation, likely to start from Wednesday night, is likely to continue till the night of January 16

## Temples will be beautified, infra strengthened, says CM

**Diary Times Desk :** Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh today stated that a master plan would be prepared for the beautification of the premises of Baba Balak Nath, Mata Shree Chintpurni, Shree Naina Devi and Maa Jwalaji temples. Sukhu, while chairing a review meeting of the Art, Language and Culture Department here today, said temples will be beautified and infrastructure will be strengthened to provide the devotees top notch facilities. This will also encourage religious tourism, he added. The Chief Minister said that from the next financial year, district level festivals would be organised in all the districts. At least one cultural evening will be reserved for local artists in these fairs and festivals as provision would be made to spend 33 per cent of the total expenditure on local artists. He also favoured fixing the honorarium of the artists. Sukhu said that 107 fairs have been notified by the state government, which include four international level, five national level, 29 state level and 69 district-level fairs. In the financial year 2024-25, the state government has provided an assistance grant of Rs 1.10 crore for organizing these fairs.

## 7 solar projects of 72 MW to be allotted soon: CM

**Diary Times Desk :** Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu today said tenders have been invited for setting up of seven solar power projects with a total capacity of 72 MW, which will be allotted within this month. The Chief Minister said that the state government is taking several steps towards making Himachal Pradesh the country's first 'Green Energy' by 2026 so that there is no damage to the environment of the state. Sukhu said apart from this, survey and investigation for setting up of eight projects of 325 MW is underway. "It is for the first time that the state government is moving towards developing 200 panchayats of the state as 'Green Panchayats' in which 200 KV ground mounted solar plants would be installed," he said. The income from these solar plants would be spent on the development works of the panchayat, he added. Sukhu said in the solar energy sector, the 32 MW Pekhubela solar power project in Una district was dedicated to the public on April 15, 2024 and in the six-and-a-half months 34.19 million units of electricity has been produced, generating an income of Rs 10.16 crore. He said that apart from this, a 5 MW solar power project at Bhanjal in Una district has been started on November 30, 2024 while the construction work of 10 MW Aghlaur Solar power project is expected to be completed this month.



## BCCI Set New Guideline For Indian Cricketers, Wives Won't Be Allowed To Stay For Entire Tour: Report

**Agencies :** After a shocking whitewash in the home Test series against New Zealand and a 1-3 defeat in the away series against Australia, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has set new guidelines for Indian players. According to a latest report in Dainik Jagran, during a review meeting between BCCI officials, captain Rohit Sharma, head coach Gautam Gambhir, and chief selector Ajit Agarkar, it has been decided that the wives of Indian players won't be allowed to stay for the entire tour. The BCCI is planning to reintroduce the pre-Covid rule. The wives and family members will not be allowed to travel with the players of the Indian team for the entire tour. For a tournament or a series lasting more than 45 days, the wife or family can stay with the player only for 14 days. However, for shorter tours, the limit on stay will be reduced to just seven days. In the recently concluded series against Australia, the wives of several cricketers, like Virat Kohli and KL Rahul, were seen in attendance for all games. The board feels that the performance of players is getting impacted due to the presence of family during the entire tour. It has also been reported that all the Indian players will have to travel in the team bus.



## Rohit joins Mumbai training camp in bid to rediscover form

**Agencies :** Rohit Sharma has linked up with Mumbai's squad for their training sessions ahead of the second phase of the 2024-25 Ranji Trophy, starting January 23. The group had a two-hour centre-wicket session at Wankhede Stadium on Tuesday, and are expected to train through the week as they build up to their sixth-round home fixture against Jammu and Kashmir. India Test and ODI captain Rohit's participation in the game is not yet confirmed, but his keenness to train with the group in consultation with head coach Omkar Salvi suggests that there is a possibility he could be available for at least one of the two remaining fixtures. The Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) is expected to announce the squad later this week. Rohit's return to train with his first-class side comes at a time when his Test future has become a subject of great debate. Rohit, 37, isn't ready to give up just yet, having clearly stated his intention to continue playing in the longest format despite having "stood down" from India's XI for the fifth and final Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Sydney earlier this month. He had scored just 31 runs in five innings across three Tests on tour in Australia. Prior to that, he had averaged 13.30 over 10 innings against Bangladesh and New Zealand.

## 'Crack hai, kuch bhi bol deta hai': Former India cricketer on Yograj Singh's 'pistol' remark for Kapil Dev

**Agencies :** Yograj Singh is a big talking point on social media after he claimed in an interview that he took a pistol to Kapil Dev's house and wanted to kill him after the 1983 World Cup-winning captain dropped him from the national side. This particular clip is gaining a lot of traction on social media. Former India cricketer Surinder Khanna has reacted to the burning topic, saying Yograj, the father of Yuvraj Singh, has the habit of saying anything. He even called him "crack." Recently, Kapil Dev was also asked about the same comment. However, he refrained from commenting on the same. Instead, he reacted humorously, saying, "Who is Yograj Singh?" "Wo kuch bhi boldeta hai yaar. Jaisa bhi hai, humara yaar hai. Kapil bhi janta hai wo kuch bhi boldeta hai. Happy Lohri kehke khatam kardo iss baat ko. (He says anything, he's our friend. Even Kapil Dev knows he's a bit of a crack and speaks without thinking. Just say Happy Lohri and forget about it)," Times of India quoted Surinder Khanna as saying. "That was 1983, and now is 2025, my friend. Hi Yog, don't do this stuff (laughs)," he added.

## "Gautam Gambhir Wants To End...": Tiff With Seniors Out In The Open, Says Report. BCCI To Evaluate Contract After...

**Agencies :** Gautam Gambhir's position as head coach will be "reevaluated" on the basis of India's Champions Trophy performance next month amid concerns that there is discontent in the dressing room due to his push to end the long-prevalent "superstar culture" in the team. Since Gambhir took over in July last year, the Indian team has lost six out of 10 Tests and also a bilateral ODI series in Sri Lanka. The results have left Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma's international future in significant disarray thanks to their own poor form. But Gambhir's position has also become slightly shaky. Adding to the drama is his speculated rift with prominent players during the Border-Gavaskar Test series in Australia which India lost 1-3. "If India doesn't do well in the Champions Trophy, the head coach's position could become untenable. Yes, his contract runs till the 2027 World Cup but the process of evaluation continues. "Sport is result-oriented and till now, Gambhir hasn't given any tangible results," a senior BCCI source told PTI on conditions of anonymity. There has already been a review of the team's performance in Australia by the BCCI. It is understood that Gambhir and senior players aren't on the same page on the issue of team culture.



## Short TAKES

### India Beat Nepal In Kho Kho World Cup Opener

**Agencies :** India got off to a brilliant start in the inaugural Kho Kho World Cup as they registered a comfortable 42-37 victory over Nepal at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium in New Delhi on Monday. Led by captain Pratik Waikar, India's all-round performance rounded off a magnificent day of Kho Kho action, providing the team with the perfect platform. India's bright start defined the match as they wrapped up Nepal's first three defenders just 60 seconds into Turn 1. Spearheaded by brilliant flying jumps from Pratik Waikar and Ramji Kashyap, India raced to a massive 14-point lead with three minutes remaining in Turn 1, having dismissed two batches of Nepal defenders. Sachin Bhargo, who replaced Pratik Waikar as the 'Wazir', displayed the move of the night. He produced a spectacular skydive to take the score to 24 touch points at the break, preventing the Nepal team from achieving a 'Dream Run'.

### Heather Knight wants England to 'be braver with the bat' after collapse

**Agencies :** England captain Heather Knight believes her side needs to be braver with the bat following a calamitous collapse for 159 in the second ODI in Melbourne to hand Australia a four-point lead in the Ashes. England slumped from 68 for 2 and 120 for 5 to be bowled out 21 short of Australia's 180. Their shot selection and execution was so woeful that Australia could afford to drop four catches and still win. There was a moment late in the match that will be scrutinised when set batter Amy Jones was 47 not out with England needing 21 off 13 with one wicket in hand. Jones had a free-hit off the final ball of the 48th over, which had to be bowled by Tahlia McGrath because Annabel Sutherland was removed from the attack for bowling two high full tosses in the over. Jones skied a ball to deep square and did not run, either forgetting it was the last ball of the over or forgetting it was a free-hit. That left No.11 Lauren Bell on strike at the start of the 49th over. Bell had survived 15 balls for one run but could not keep out her 16th as Megan Schutt rattled her off stump to seal Australia's victory. But Knight was supportive of Jones in the aftermath, suggesting the rest of the batting needed to be braver. "It's frustrating," Knight told BBC TMS. "I feel like it was there for the taking. The wickets cost us.