

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### "NATIONAL SONG MARGINALISED": RAJNATH SINGH SLAMS CONGRESS IN PARLIAMENT

**Diary Times Desk :**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh delivered a blistering speech today slamming the Congress for "fragmentation" of the national song Vande Mataram due to its "appeasement politics" that started in the days of Jawaharlal Nehru. "Restoring the glory of Vande Mataram is the need of the hour and also a demand of morality," he said.

Addressing the Lok Sabha during the discussion on the 150th anniversary of Vande Mataram, Rajnath Singh said the "justice that should have been done to Vande Mataram did not happen" and unequal treatment was given to the national anthem and the national song.

The National Anthem found a place in the national consciousness, but the National Song was "marginalised". The "injustice to Vande Mataram was not an isolated incident, but a beginning to the appeasement politics by Congress... This was not an injustice to a song, but to the people of independent India," he added.

### GOA CLUB OWNERS FLED TO PHUKET VIA INDIGO FLIGHT AFTER FIRE KILLED 25: POLICE

**Diary Times Desk :**

Barely five hours after a deadly fire broke out at Goa's nightclub Birch by Romeo Lane, killing at least 25 people late on Saturday night, India Today has learnt that both owners, Gaurav and Saurabh Luthra, fled to Phuket, Thailand, on December 7 via an IndiGo flight from Mumbai. The police filed an FIR against both Saurabh and Gaurav after they went absconding soon after the incident at Goa's Arpora. Even while on the run, Saurabh Luthra took to his Instagram handle and wrote: "The management expresses profound grief and is deeply shaken by the tragic loss of lives resulting from the unfortunate incident at Birch. In this hour of irreparable sorrow and overwhelming distress, the management stands in unwavering solidarity with the families of the deceased."

## PM MODI

## NEHRU BETRAYED VANDE MATARAM, COMPROMISED ITS SPIRIT UNDER MUSLIM LEAGUE PRESSURE: PM



**Diary Times Desk :** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said that the first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru 'betrayed' Vande Mataram by compromising its spirit under the pressure of Muslim League and Congress policy of appeasement later had it accept the Partition of India too.

Initiating a special discussion on "The 150th Anniversary of the National Song" in the Lok Sabha today, the Prime Minister said the Muslim League leader — MA Jinnah — first intensified his opposition to Vande Mataram on October 15, 1937, from Lucknow, and on October 20, Nehru wrote to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose associating with Jinnah's sentiments and noting that Vande Mataram's Anandmath background had the potential to "irritate the Muslims."

Quoting Mahatma Gandhi on Vande Mataram, PM Modi said there were forces and urges that got the better of even Gandhi's views about Vande Mataram. Gandhi, writing in Indian Opinion, a weekly published from South Africa, on December 2, 1905, said: "The song Vande Mataram, composed by Bankim Chandra, has become extremely popular in Bengal. During the swadeshi revolution, Bengal saw massive rallies where lakhs congregated and sang Bankim's song. The song has become so popular it seems as if it has become our National Anthem. Its sentiments are lofty and it is sweeter than the songs of other nations. Its sole objective is to inspire us to win freedom. It sees India as a mother and inspires us to worship it." Recalling the genesis of Vande Mataram from 1875 when Bankim Chandra Chatterjee first wrote it, the PM asked if the song was so great, its sentiments lofty and if it had the strength to bind Indians across regions into one thread of unity against the British, "why was there betrayal with Vande Mataram in the bygone century?"

## COMMUNALISTS BEHIND VANDE MATARAM OBJECTION: PRIYANKA READS NEHRU'S LETTER, SLAMS PM

**Diary Times Desk :** Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Monday dismissed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's claim that Jawaharlal Nehru had written to Subhash Chandra Bose saying the origins of Vande Mataram may incite Muslims, stating that the Prime Minister had selectively quoted from the letter during his address in the Lok Sabha earlier.

Citing the 1937 letter written by former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Priyanka Gandhi said, "The so-called objection against the remaining stanzas of Vande Mataram was manufactured by the communalists." She went on to say that PM Modi did not mention this part in his speech. Earlier in the day, PM Modi, citing Nehru's letter to Subhash Chandra Bose, said that the first Indian Prime Minister had accepted Muhammad Ali Jinnah's sentiments on Vande Mataram. PM Modi went on to quote Nehru as saying that he had communicated to Bose that the background of Vande Mataram might end up instigating Muslims. "On October 20, Nehru wrote to Netaji, informing him that he accepted Jinnah's sentiments regarding Vande Mataram. He noted that the song's Anandmath association could instigate Muslims. 'I have read the background of Vande Mataram, and I believe this context may indeed offend Muslims,' Nehru wrote to Bose," PM Modi had said in the Parliament.



## BILL TO LEVY NATIONAL SECURITY CESS ON PAN MASALA RETURNED TO LOK SABHA



**Diary Times Desk :** In a move projected as essential for safeguarding both national and public health priorities, the Rajya Sabha on Monday returned The Health Security se National Security Cess Bill, 2025, to the Lok Sabha after a detailed consideration.

The legislation proposes a new cess on pan masala, tobacco and other "demerit goods" to create a dedicated revenue stream for national security and health security.

The Bill comes at a critical moment, with the existing GST compensation cess — levied atop the 28% GST on these products — being phased out. The new cess, capped at 40%, is intended to replace that revenue without disturbing the GST architecture. "This is a dedicated and predictable resource stream for two domains of national importance," Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said while moving the Bill. Stressing that the levy targets only demerit goods and not essential commodities, she added, "It does not burden the common man. It acts as a deterrent for those who consume harmful products and does not alter the GST regime."

## BRS WELCOMES HEALTH AND NATIONAL SECURITIES BILL, SEEKS PROTECTION FOR 7 LAKH BEEDI WORKERS



**Diary Times Desk :** BRS Parliamentary Party Deputy Leader and Rajya Sabha MP Vaddiraju Ravichandra on Monday welcomed the Health and National Securities Bill-2025, calling the proposal to share revenue from increased cess on tobacco products with States a positive step. He said the BRS extended its support for the bill.

Speaking in the Rajya Sabha, Ravichandra cautioned that the cess hike could hurt beedi workers, especially nearly 7 lakh workers who were mostly poor and women in rural areas of Adilabad, Nizamabad, Karimnagar, Warangal and Khammam districts. He urged the Centre to provide alternative livelihoods, including a Rs 1.5 lakh grant per worker, jobs in food processing units, skill development, and support for those shifting to agriculture.

The BRS MP also raised alarm over rising cases of mouth and throat cancer caused by gutka, pan masala and other tobacco products, especially among beedi workers who comprise around 16 of every 100 patients admitted to Hyderabad's MNJ Hospital, which is higher than the national average. He warned the numbers could reach alarming levels by 2030.

He sought more de-addiction centres, regular screening, free health services, and stronger publicity on the dangers of tobacco. He also called for stricter vigilance as tobacco products continue to flood tea stalls and pan shops under misleading labels.

## INDIGO FLIGHTS CANCEL

## INDIGO CANCELS 500 FLIGHTS, TO OPERATE 1,802 SERVICES ON MONDAY: MINISTRY



**Diary Times Desk :** Crisis-hit domestic carrier IndiGo has cancelled 500 flights and plans to operate 1,802 services on Monday, the civil aviation ministry said.

The airline has delivered 4,500 bags to the passengers out of the total 9,000, and will deliver the remaining in next 36 hours, the ministry said in a statement. "Today (Monday) IndiGo plans to operate 1,802 flights to 137 out of 138 destinations, with 500 cancellations. (Also) 4,500 bags were delivered to customers out of the total 9,000 bags. (the airline) targets to deliver balance bags in the next 36 hours," the ministry said.

It also said that 5,86,705 PNRs for period December 1-7 were cancelled and refunded, amounting to total Rs 569.65 crore. Total 9,55,591 PNRs for period November 21 to December 7 were also cancelled and refunded, amounting to Rs 827 crore.

IndiGo has been facing heat from both the government and the passengers for cancelling hundreds of flights since December 2, citing regulatory changes in the pilots' new flight duty and regulations norms, which resulted in lakhs of passengers getting stuck at airports pan-India. Aviation safety regulator DGCA has already issued show cause notices to IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers and Chief Operating Officer and Accountable Manager Isidro Porqueras over the ongoing disruptions in the airline's operations. They have been asked to submit their replies to these show cause notices by 6 pm Monday.

## INDIA ASKS CITIZENS TO USE 'DUE DISCRETION' WHILE TRAVELLING TO CHINA



**Diary Times Desk :** India on Monday advised its nationals to exercise due discretion while travelling to or transiting through China.

New Delhi's move came over two weeks after an Indian woman from Arunachal Pradesh was detained at Shanghai airport after the authorities refused to recognise her Indian passport as valid during a transit halt.

"We expect the Chinese authorities to provide assurances that Indian citizens transiting through Chinese airports will not be selectively targeted, arbitrarily detained or harassed and that regulations governing international air travel will be respected by the Chinese side," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

He was responding to a query about the November 21 incident involving the woman from Arunachal Pradesh. "The Ministry of External Affairs would advise Indian nationals to exercise due discretion while travelling to or transiting through China," Jaiswal said.



GOVT WANTED DEBATE ON VANDE MATARAM AS BENGAL POLL  
COMING, AIMED AT DIVERTING ATTENTION: PRIYANKA IN LOK  
SABHA



**Diary Times Desk :** Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Monday said the government pushed for a debate on Vande Mataram as the West Bengal Assembly polls were approaching and that it wanted to divert attention from the problems people were facing. Participating in a discussion in the Lok Sabha on 150 years of national song Vande Mataram, she hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying he is not the Prime Minister he used to be as his "self-confidence was decreasing and policies were weakening the country". The Congress MP from Wayanad slammed the BJP for targeting first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and alleged that the government wanted this debate to make fresh allegations against those who fought for the country's freedom. "Since you keep talking about Nehru, let's do one thing, let's assign a time for a discussion, list out all the insults against him... debate it and let's close the chapter for once and all," she said.

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DGCA PANEL PROBING INDIGO FLIGHT DISRUPTIONS LIKELY TO  
SUMMON CEO, COO ON WEDNESDAY: SOURCE

**Diary Times Desk :** The Directorate General of Civil Aviation-appointed panel investigating the flight disruptions at IndiGo is likely to summon the airline's CEO Pieter Elbers and Chief Operating Officer Isidre Porqueras on Wednesday as part of the ongoing probe, according to a source on Monday. The four-member panel, comprising Joint DG Sanjay Brahamane, Deputy Director General Amit Gupta, senior Flight Operations Inspector Kapil Manglik, and FOI Lokesh Rampal, has been tasked with identifying the root causes of widespread operational disruptions. Its mandate includes assessing manpower planning, fluctuating rostering systems, and the airline's preparedness to implement the latest duty period and rest norms for pilots. The panel, announced by Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Faiz Ahmed Kidwai on December 5, will also review the extent of compliance with the revised FDTL provisions, including analysis of gaps admitted by the airline and ascertain the accountability and responsibility for planning failures that led to the breakdown of operational stability, among others.

SUPREME COURT ORDERS 30 PER CENT SEATS FOR WOMEN  
ADVOCATES IN STATE BAR COUNCILS

**Diary Times Desk :** The Supreme Court on Monday directed that 30 per cent seats in state Bar councils, where the election process has not been set in motion, be kept for women advocates.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi said for the current year, the state Bar councils where elections are yet to be held should fill 20 per cent seats with women candidates and 10 per cent by co-option if there are not many desirous lawyers to contest. The top court directed that a proposal for co-option shall be placed before the court in regard to the state Bar councils where the number of contesting women lawyers are inadequate. At the outset, senior advocate Manan Kumar Mishra, who is also the chairperson of the Bar Council of India (BCI), informed the bench that the election process as per court's earlier direction has commenced in six Bar bodies with notification of the poll. He submitted that BCI, in principle, is of the view that there should be at least 30 per cent women's reservation in the state Bar councils, and suggested that for the present year, the councils should be permitted to fill up the posts by co-opting women candidates.



IN MODI'S VANDE MATARAM REMARKS,  
RICH REFERENCES TO BENGAL, TAMIL NADU

**Diary Times Desk :** At a time of constant political jousting with the ruling Trinamool Congress and DMK of West Bengal and Tamil Nadu respectively, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday made rich references to both the states when recalling the glories of Vande Mataram, the National Song. Bengal featured repeatedly in PM's speech on the 150th anniversary of Vande Mataram, which was written by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee in 1875 and included in his epic 'Anandmath' in 1882. PM Modi spoke of the Song written in the aftermath of the 1857 war of independence which made the British realise that "they could not rule over India without dividing it". "The song was written at a time of a conspiracy to take the British song 'God save the queen' to every house. At that time, Bankim Babu dared the British and wrote the song that united Indians in the common cause of freedom. The British soon realised that they needed to divide India to rule and that is how they partitioned Bengal," said Modi. The PM said there was a time when the British saw Bengal's intellectual might as the core of India's inspiration for freedom.

'WHO APPLAUDED JINNAH — IT WAS  
ADVANI': JAIRAM AFTER PM MODI  
ATTACKS NEHRU IN LOK SABHA



**Diary Times Desk :** Moments after Prime Minister Narendra Modi accused Jawaharlal Nehru of compromising the spirit of Vande Mataram to appease the Muslim League, the Congress hit back asking which leaders praised MA Jinnah. "JL Nehru is being accused of appeasement. But will the PM — the Master Distorian — answer: Which Indian leader formed a coalition in Bengal in the early 1940s with the person who moved the Pakistan resolution in Lahore in March 1940? It was Syama Prasad Mookerjee," Congress general secretary in charge of communications Jairam Ramesh said. Ramesh went on to ask PM Modi which Indian leader applauded Jinnah in Karachi in June 2005? "It was LK Advani. And which Indian leader praised Jinnah in his book 2009? It was Jaswant Singh," Ramesh said.



INDIGO CRISIS REACHES SC;  
CJI REFUSES URGENT HEARING,  
SAYS GOVT HAS TAKEN  
COGNISANCE

**Diary Times Desk :** As hundreds of IndiGo flights continue to get cancelled, a petition was moved in the Supreme Court on Monday seeking judicial intervention to deal with the crisis. On behalf of the petitioner, 'IndiGo All Passenger and Another', an advocate mentioned the matter before a Bench led by the Chief Justice of India (CJI) and sought urgent listing of the petition on the ground that more than 2,500 flights have been cancelled and a large number of passengers were facing problems. However, a Bench led by CJI Surya Kant refused to list the petition for urgent hearing, saying the Government had already taken cognisance of the issue. "It is a serious matter. Lakhs of people are stranded at airports. We know the Government of India has taken timely action and cognizance of the issue. Let them handle it...We know people may have health issues etc.," the CJI told the petitioner's counsel. Over 250 IndiGo flights from the Delhi and Bengaluru airports were reportedly cancelled on Monday as disruptions in the airline's operations entered the seventh day.

DELHI FAMILY'S LONG-AWAITED GOA BREAK ENDS IN NIGHTCLUB BLAZE; RELATIVES SCRAMBLE TO SHELTER KIDS

**Diary Times Desk :** Vinod Kumar, along with his wife and her three sisters, left Delhi less than a week ago for their long-awaited vacation in Goa, as his mother watched them step out with bags and bade them a cheery farewell.

On Monday, she sat by the same door waiting, unaware that her younger son, elder daughter-in-law and two close relatives would never return after losing their lives in a fire. The massive blaze in the early hours of Sunday tore through a Goan nightclub in Arpora, killing 25 people. Four of the five Delhi residents, all members of Kumar's family, were among those who died. The fifth, Bhavna Joshi, survived with injuries, police said. The deceased were identified as Vinod Kumar (43), Kamla Joshi (42), Anita Joshi (41) and Saroj Joshi (39). The injured, Bhavna, is Vinod's wife and a sister to the three deceased women. Kamla was married to Vinod's elder brother, Naveen. Their relatives said the four sisters had been planning the trip for months -- hoping for a few days of rest now that their children were older and no longer wholly dependent on them. Vinod had accompanied them so that they would feel safe and supported during the journey.

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COMPROMISED ITS SPIRIT UNDER MUSLIM  
LEAGUE PRESSURE: PM

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'DEEPLY SHAKEN BY TRAGIC LOSS':  
GOA CLUB OWNER SAURABH LUTHRA  
SAYS 'PROFOUNDLY GRIEVED' BY FIRE

**Diary Times Desk :** A day after a devastating fire at Birch By Romeo Lane in North Goa claimed 25 lives and left several injured, the club's owner, Saurabh Luthra, on Monday expressed "profound grief" and assured full cooperation to authorities and families affected by the tragedy. The blaze erupted in the early hours of Sunday at the upscale club located in North Goa's Arpora. Luthra said the management stands in "unwavering solidarity with the families of the deceased as well as those injured" and offered "heartfelt condolences with utmost sincerity".

In a post shared on Instagram, Luthra wrote, "The management expresses profound grief and is deeply shaken by the tragic loss of lives resulting from the unfortunate incident at Birch. In this hour of sorrow and distress, the management stands in unwavering solidarity with the families of the deceased as well as those injured, and conveys its heartfelt condolences with utmost sincerity."

ELGAR PARISHAD BHIMA KOREGAON CASE: FORMER DELHI UNIVERSITY  
PROFESSOR HANY BABU WALKS FREE AFTER 5 YEARS

**Diary Times Desk :** Former Delhi University associate professor and social justice advocate Hany Babu Tharayil was released from prison this week after more than five years of incarceration in the Elgar Parishad Bhima Koregaon case. His release followed an order of the Bombay High Court granting him regular bail, observing that his continued detention without a completed trial or framed charges violated his constitutional right to liberty. Babu, who taught English and linguistics at Delhi University, is known for his work on language rights, caste justice and academic freedom. Before his arrest, he was widely regarded as a scholar who encouraged critical thinking and supported campaigns for marginalised communities. He was arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in July 2020 under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). The agency accused him of having links with banned Maoist groups and participating in an alleged conspiracy connected to the violence that broke out near Bhima Koregaon in January 2018. Babu has consistently denied the charges, asserting that he was targeted for his academic and rights-based work rather than any criminal activity.



JASPAL BHATTI'S VIRAL OLD CLIP  
THAT NARRATES INDIGO'S 2025  
MELTDOWN 30 YEARS BACK? WATCH  
CRAZY VIDEO

**Diary Times Desk :** As India's aviation sector grapples with severe disruption, an unlikely figure has re-entered public conversation: legendary satirist Jaspal Bhatti. A decades-old clip from his cult '90s series Full Tension has resurfaced online, with many jokingly asking whether Bhatti "predicted" the chaos engulfing IndiGo today. The clip, now circulating widely on Instagram and X, shows Bhatti portraying a clueless airline official desperately pretending that everything is under control.

In the skit, flights are overbooked, counters are in disarray, pilots are missing and every delay is attributed to convenient "technical issues". Passengers sprint from one counter to another demanding answers — a scene originally meant as exaggerated satire but now uncannily mirroring India's real airport chaos.

The viral post carrying the video reads: "When you realise Jaspal Bhatti had predicted the IndiGo 2025 chaos in '89".

'CONGRESS HAS ALWAYS BEEN ANTI-WOMEN': WHAT KANGANA RANAUT SAID  
ON VANDE MATARAM AS LOK SABHA  
HOLDS SPECIAL DEBATE

**Diary Times Desk :** BJP MP Kangana Ranaut said it was a "matter of pride" that the national song—described by her as a spark that fuelled India's freedom movement—was finally receiving its rightful recognition. She accused the Congress of removing stanzas in the original composition that referenced Goddess Durga, alleging that the party had "always been anti-women." Lok Sabha held a special discussion on Vande Mataram on Monday. "It is a matter of pride for the country that the song which rose as a spark of the freedom struggle and reduced the British empire to ashes is now receiving its due credit. The Congress government had removed the portion mentioning Goddess Durga. Congress has always been anti-women," Ranaut told reporters outside Parliament. Her remarks came amid repeated allegations by BJP leaders that the Congress had deliberately altered the national song.

## 'DONALD TRUMP AVENUE', HYDERABAD'S BOLD MOVE TO GRAB GLOBAL ATTENTION, BJP REACTS



**Diary Times Desk :** Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has proposed naming a primary road in Hyderabad after US President Donald Trump, a move aimed at grabbing global attention ahead of the "Telangana Rising Global Summit". The road running alongside the city's US Consulate General will be designated "Donald Trump Avenue".

This isn't the only road being renamed; the state is also honouring global business and technology pioneers. 'Google Street' will acknowledge the tech giant's significant presence, while 'Microsoft Road' and 'Wipro Junction' are also under consideration. The 100-metre 'Greenfield Radial Road' will be named after Padma Bhushan Ratan Tata, with the Raviryalu interchange already designated the "Tata Interchange".

Chief Minister Reddy believes naming roads after influential figures and corporations serves a dual purpose: paying tribute and inspiring commuters, while boosting Hyderabad's global recognition.

However, Union Minister and BJP leader Bandi Sanjay Kumar has criticised the move, suggesting Hyderabad should be renamed "Bhagyanagar" instead. "If the Congress government is so eager to change names, they might as well start with something that actually has history and meaning," he posted on X. Revanth Reddy is renaming places after "whoever trends", he said.

The Telangana Rising Global Summit, scheduled for December 8-9, aims to position the state as a hub for innovation-driven development, attracting global investments and partnerships.

## TRUMP SAYS NETFLIX DEAL TO BUY WARNER BROS. 'COULD BE PROBLEM' BECAUSE OF SIZE OF MARKET SHARE

**Diary Times Desk :** President Donald Trump said on Sunday that a deal struck by Netflix to buy Warner Bros. Discovery "could be a problem" because of the size of the combined market share. "There's no question about it," Trump said, answering questions about the deal and various other topics as he walked the red carpet at the Kennedy Centre Honours. The Republican president said he would be involved in the decision about whether the federal government should approve the USD 72 billion deal. If approved by regulators, the merger would put two of the world's biggest streaming services under the same ownership and join Warner's television and motion picture division, including DC Studios, with Netflix's vast library and its production arm. The deal, which could reshape the entertainment industry, has to "go through a process and we'll see what happens," Trump said. "Netflix is a great company. They've done a phenomenal job. Ted is a fantastic man," he said of Netflix CEO Ted Sarandos, noting that they met in the Oval Office last week before the deal was announced Dec. 5.



## TRUMP 'DISAPPOINTED' THAT ZELENSKY HAS NOT YET READ US- AUTHORED PROPOSAL TO END RUSSIA- UKRAINE WAR

**Diary Times Desk :** President Donald Trump on Sunday claimed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy "isn't ready" to sign off on a US-authored peace proposal aimed at ending the Russia-Ukraine war. Trump was critical of Zelenskyy after US and Ukrainian negotiators completed three days of talks on Saturday aimed at trying to narrow differences on the US administration's proposal. But in an exchange with reporters on Sunday night, Trump suggested that the Ukrainian leader is holding up the talks from moving forward. I'm a little bit disappointed that President Zelenskyy hasn't yet read the proposal, that was as of a few hours ago. His people love it, but he hasn't," Trump claimed in an exchange with reporters before taking part in the Kennedy Centre Honours. The president added, "Russia is, I believe, fine with it, but I'm not sure that Zelenskyy's fine with it. His people love it. But he isn't ready."

## THAILAND LAUNCHES AIRSTRIKES ALONG DISPUTED BORDER WITH CAMBODIA

**Diary Times Desk :** Thailand launched airstrikes along the disputed border with Cambodia on Monday as both sides accused the other of attacking first.

Tensions have simmered since the Southeast Asian neighbours signed a truce agreement in October pushed by US President Donald Trump after their territorial disputes led to five days of combat in July that killed dozens of soldiers and civilians.

Thai army spokesperson Maj Gen Winthai Suwaree said the Cambodian troops fired first into Thai territory in multiple areas. He said one Thai soldier was killed and four other soldiers were wounded, and civilians were being evacuated from the affected areas. Thailand used aircraft "to strike military targets in several areas to suppress Cambodian supporting fire attacks," he said. Cambodian Defence Ministry spokesperson Maly Socheata said the Thai military attacked the Cambodian troops first. She said Cambodia did not retaliate during the initial attacks on Monday. "Cambodia urges that Thailand immediately stop all hostile activities that threaten peace and stability in the region," she said. The US-brokered ceasefire that ended the brief conflict was threatened last month after Thai troops were injured by land mines. Both sides continue to trade accusations over responsibility, even as they are supposed to be cooperating in getting rid of the mines.

## AUSTRIAN WOMAN REPORTEDLY LEFT TO FREEZE TO DEATH BY BOYFRIEND IDENTIFIED AS KERSTIN GURTNER

**Diary Times Desk :** The woman who allegedly froze to death after being abandoned near the summit of Austria's highest mountain has been identified as 33-year-old Kerstin Gurtner, reports New York Post.

Gurtner died on January 19 less than 150 feet below the peak of the Grossglockner during a night climb led by her boyfriend, 39-year-old experienced mountaineer Thomas Plamberger, according to the Daily Mail. Gurtner, who described herself on social media as a "winter child" and a "mountain person," reportedly had little experience with high-altitude alpine climbing.

Plamberger has now been charged with negligent homicide for planning and guiding the demanding winter ascent, which required the pair to climb more than 12,000 feet in temperatures around -4°F. According to the Innsbruck public prosecutor's office, the couple became effectively stranded from around 8:50 p.m. onward.

## 'SPIDERMAN GETS SPIRITUAL': WATCH THE SUPERHERO JOIN HARE KRISHNA CHANTS

**Diary Times Desk :** In a bizarre yet delightful viral video, 'Spiderman' traded his superpower for chanting beads as he joined a Hare Krishna group on a busy street somewhere abroad. The unexpected fusion has left netizens in stitches and awe.

The video shows Spiderman (men), dressed in their iconic costumes, dancing and chanting along with the devotees, creating a surreal atmosphere. Passersby couldn't help but stop and stare, capturing the moment on their phones. The clip has sparked a social media frenzy, with users coining phrases like "Spiderman: Far From Ashram" and "Spiderman — Far from the material world and near Krishna world". Others hailed it as the "Multiverse of Bhakti", praising the creativity and humour behind the moment. While some viewers were confused, others appreciated the light-hearted approach to spirituality, showcasing the evolving nature of global spiritual communities. The video has sparked a conversation about the intersection of pop culture and spirituality. As one user put it, "Spiderman iskon coming". Another joked, "Spider-Man: Into the Sanatani Multiverse". Whatever the interpretation, one thing's for sure — Spiderman has brought a fresh wave of enthusiasm to the Hare Krishna movement.



'KOREAN PUNJABAN' LEAVES BHAGWANT MANN SPEECHLESS; PUNJAB CM SAYS 'OUR IDENTITY'

**Diary Times Desk :** In a heartwarming video, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann was left speechless and mighty impressed by a Korean woman's fluent Punjabi, and the Internet is loving it! The clip, shared on his official Instagram account @bhagwantmann1, shows the CM interacting with the woman, who spoke Punjabi like a native.

Mann was clearly impressed, captioning the post: "Our mother tongue, Punjabi, is not just a language for us...it is our identity...I got the opportunity to meet a couple during my visit to South Korea...it was very nice to hear the mother tongue, Punjabi, from the mouth of a Korean-born daughter."

The video has gone viral, with netizens praising the woman's command of Punjabi. "Got a beautiful glimpse of Punjabi culture," one user commented. Another wrote, "This moment is truly a proud one."

The video showcases the global appeal of Punjabi language and culture, with people from different backgrounds embracing and celebrating it.



INDIA WELCOMES UK SANCTIONING PRO-KHALISTAN TERROR GROUP BABBAR KHALSA: MEA

**Diary Times Desk :** The Ministry of External Affairs on Monday welcomed the UK government's decision to impose sanctions on pro-Khalistan extremist networks linked to the banned outfit Babbar Khalsa, terming it a significant step in strengthening global efforts against terrorism and illicit financial flows. Responding to queries at the weekly press briefing, MEA Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said that New Delhi appreciates London's action targeting individuals and entities involved in anti-India extremist activities. He added that such individuals pose a threat not only to India and the UK but to people across the world. "We welcome the steps that have been taken by the UK."

BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY EXTENDS UNUSUAL PRAISE TO PM MODI

**Diary Times Desk :** In a path-breaking statement, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), which is the largest political party in Bangladesh at present, has expressed high praise for Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his wishes for the speedy recovery of its leader Begum Khaleda Zia. PM Modi, in a post on X, had noted that Begum Khaleda Zia, a former Bangladesh Prime Minister, had contributed to her country's public life for many years. BNP's senior leader Ishtiaq Aziz Ulfat on Monday termed the message sent by PM Modi wishing Begum Khaleda Zia a speedy recovery a "great move." "Well, it is a great move. I think the Indian government took the right decision to give this message. Also, BNP was reciprocal in a similar way of accepting."

TOKYO DISMISSES CHINA'S RADAR-LOCK ACCUSATION AS TENSIONS RISE OVER TAIWAN REMARKS

**Diary Times Desk :** Japan on Monday rejected China's accusation that interference by its Self-Defence Forces (SDF) led to Chinese military aircraft locking fire-control radars on Japanese fighters, calling the claim "baseless" amid heightened tensions following Japan's Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's recent comments on a potential Taiwan contingency, Kyodo News reported.

Speaking at a press briefing, Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Minoru Kihara said that the country's Air Self-Defence Force (ASDF) jets maintained a "safe distance" from Chinese aircraft during the incident off Okinawa on Saturday.

He stressed that clear communication between the defence authorities of both nations remains "extremely important", even as China continues to retaliate diplomatically over Takaichi's earlier remarks on Tokyo's possible response to an attack on Taiwan, as reported by Kyodo News. According to Japan's Defence Ministry, Chinese J-15 fighters from the Chinese carrier Liaoning locked their radars on an ASDF F-15 at around 4:32 pm (local time) and again on another aircraft at 6:37 pm (local time) on Saturday over international waters southeast of Okinawa.



AIR AMBULANCE FOR BANGLADESH'S EX-PM KHALEDA ZIA TO LAND IN DHAKA ON TUESDAY

**Diary Times Desk :** An air ambulance arranged to fly Bangladesh's critically ill former prime minister Khaleda Zia to London for medical treatment will land in Dhaka on Tuesday, aviation officials have said.

A senior official at the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) said on Sunday the aircraft has been allotted an 8 am landing slot on Tuesday, with a departure time of 9 pm the same day, news portal bdnews24.com reported.

According to tbsnews.net, the Qatar government has arranged the aircraft, renting it from the Germany-based FAI Aviation Group after opting for a replacement air ambulance to conduct the long-range medical evacuation.

FAI Aviation Group's initial application had sought clearance to land on Tuesday and depart for London on Wednesday. Zia, the 80-year-old Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) chairperson, has been receiving treatment for multiple ailments at Dhaka-based Evercare Hospital for nearly two weeks.

MEA URGES CHINA TO PROVIDE ASSURANCES INDIAN TRAVELLERS NOT TO BE HARASSED AT AIRPORTS

**Diary Times Desk :** The Ministry of External Affairs on Monday sought "assurances" from China that Indian citizens transiting through Chinese airports will not be "selectively targeted, arbitrarily detained or harassed" and that Beijing will "respect" regulations governing international air travel.

Addressing the weekly press briefing, MEA Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal also issued a travel advisory warning Indians travelling to or transiting through China to "exercise due discretion."

Jaiswal was responding to media queries when asked what the MEA recommends for Indian nationals travelling to or through China after an Indian woman from Arunachal Pradesh, Pema Wangjom Thongdok, was detained at Shanghai Airport for 18 hours last month, with Chinese officials claiming her Indian passport was invalid since Arunachal Pradesh is part of China. "We fully share your concern following the recent incident at Shanghai airport that you have cited. We expect the Chinese authorities to provide assurances that Indian citizens transiting through Chinese airports will not be selectively targeted, arbitrarily detained or harassed and that regulations governing international air travel will be respected by the Chinese side," Jaiswal said.

**QUAD UNDERSCORES INDO-PACIFIC DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AT 4TH ANNUAL HADR STRATEGIC MEET**

**Diary Times Desk :** Reinforcing its longstanding commitment to a stable, secure and resilient Indo-Pacific, the Quad convened the 4th Annual Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response (HADR) Strategic Meeting and Tabletop Exercise in Honolulu, Hawaii, the Ministry of External Affairs stated on Monday.

In a release, the MEA stated that the meeting that took place between December 2 and December 5 was hosted by the United States, and the exercise brought together senior government officials from India, Australia, Japan and the US to sharpen collective disaster-response coordination across the region. "This annual event brought together government officials from India, Australia, Japan, and United States to strengthen the Quad's disaster-response capabilities across the Indo-Pacific. It underscored the Quad's commitment to reliable and effective lifesaving support for the people of the region," the release stated.

**BRAZIL STEPS UP DIPLOMACY TO CONTAIN RISK OF POSSIBLE US STRIKE ON VENEZUELA**

**Diary Times Desk :** The Lula administration has placed the escalating Venezuela-US tensions at the top of Brazil's diplomatic agenda, following intelligence assessments warning of a possible US airstrike on Venezuelan territory. As first reported by Valour Economico, officials at the Planalto Palace believe recent American military activity in the Caribbean signals preparations for a potential offensive, prompting political, defence and humanitarian alerts within the Brazilian government, as reported by Brasil 247.

According to internal evaluations, President Lula is manoeuvring on two parallel tracks: first, trying to prevent any initial strike, and second, preparing diplomatic strategies to contain regional fallout should an attack occur. Despite Washington's hardening tone, Brasilia still hopes to maintain a channel of communication between Caracas and the United States.

**FAMILIES DEMAND LAST HOSTAGE RETURNED BEFORE GAZA DEAL ADVANCES**

**Diary Times Desk :** The Hostages and Missing Families Forum said Monday that Israel must not advance to the next phase of its hostage agreement with Hamas until the remains of the last hostage, Police Master Sgt. Ran Gvili, is returned home.

"The return of 27 deceased hostages so far proves what we've been saying all along -- Hamas knows the location of every hostage and is using this information as a bargaining chip," the Forum said in a statement. "Hamas committed to returning everyone, and the Israeli government and mediators must demand they fulfill this commitment in full."

The group emphasized that the success of any agreement will be measured by the return of all hostages and urged that the Gvili family receive closure.

**PM MODI'S MESSAGE WISHING KHALEDA ZIA'S RECOVERY A GREAT MOVE, SAYS BNP LEADER ULFAT**

**Diary Times Desk :** Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) senior leader Ishtiaq Aziz Ulfat on Monday termed the message sent by Prime Minister Narendra Modi wishing former Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia a speedy recovery a "great move."

"Well, it is a great move. I think the Indian government took the right decision to give this message. Also, BNP was reciprocal in a similar way of accepting this with gratitude," Ulfat, the President of the Jatiyatabadi Muktijoddha Dal, an affiliated organisation of the BNP, told ANI in an interview.

"Yes, Begum Khaleda Zia is one of the greatest women that we have not seen for a long, long time. What she did for the country after her husband's brutal murder was extraordinary. From a housewife, she became a politician, and through her personality, she not only won the heart and respect of almost every Bangladeshi but also got a lot of love from all over the world. So with India and Modi coming out with this message, I think it is very positive," he added. Prime Minister Modi recently expressed concern over the health of former Bangladesh Prime Minister and BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, extending India's support and wishing her a quick recovery.

**PAKISTAN: NOKUNDI ATTACK SENDS SHOCKWAVES THROUGH FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN BALOCHISTAN**

**Diary Times Desk :** The recent militant attack on the residential compound linked to the Reko Diq and Saindak mining projects in Nokundi, Balochistan, has marked a significant escalation in the region's conflict and raised serious alarm among foreign investors.

The assault, carried out in the late hours of November 30, targeted a facility housing foreign engineers and staff working on Pakistan's most valuable mineral projects.

According to a statement issued by the Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF), the operation was conducted by its newly formed Saddo Operational Battalion (SOB). The attack began with a suicide bombing at the entrance of the Frontier Corps headquarters, followed by an armed breach into the residential zone.

The group claimed its fighters held their positions against Pakistani security forces for more than 36 hours, making it one of the most prolonged and coordinated assaults in recent years.

**INDIA SENDS MORE NAVAL SHIPS TO SRI LANKA WITH RELIEF SUPPLIES UNDER OPERATION SAGAR BANDHU**

**Diary Times Desk :** India has expanded its humanitarian assistance to Sri Lanka in the aftermath of the recent cyclone, with four more naval ships deployed to deliver essential relief material as part of Operation Sagar Bandhu, the Indian Navy said on Monday.

According to the Navy, INS Gharial, LCU 54 LCU 51 and LCU 57 have been tasked with transporting humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) stores to affected regions across Sri Lanka.

Three of the ships, LCU 54, LCU 51 and LCU 57, reached Colombo on the morning of December 7 and handed over critical supplies to local authorities. INS Gharial is expected to arrive in Trincomalee on December 8 to continue the relief operations. The latest deployment follows earlier assistance delivered by INS Vikrant, INS Udaygiri and INS Sukanya, which carried out relief missions and helicopter-borne search and rescue operations under the ongoing effort. With 1,000 tonnes of relief supplies onboard, this mission reinforces the strong people-to-people ties between India and Sri Lanka.



FAO FLAGS LOW SOIL FERTILITY AND SEVERE NUTRIENT DEFICIENCY ACROSS PAKISTAN



**Diary Times Desk :** During the observance of 'World Soil Day,' on Friday, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations released a new assessment indicating that Pakistan's soils are generally characterised by low fertility and significant nutrient deficiencies, as reported by Dawn. According to the FAO analysis, the levels of organic matter in most soils are alarmingly low, compromising soil structure and diminishing water retention capacity. As of 2022, approximately 36 million hectares are categorised as agricultural land, with around 30.2 million hectares dedicated to arable farming, 5 million hectares for permanent meadows and pastures, and 0.72 million hectares allocated to permanent crops. Additionally, around 2.5 million hectares of the nation's territory is classified as forest land. The soil primarily exhibits alkaline traits, with vast areas suffering from issues of salinity and sodicity, especially in irrigated farming regions. The analysis also highlights that erosion and pollution are prevalent problems. It recommended the establishment of a comprehensive national soil policy.

BRIDGE SUMMIT 2025 OPENS IN ABU DHABI

**Diary Times Desk :** The BRIDGE Summit 2025 opened today in Abu Dhabi, bringing together more than 60,000 creators, media and content professionals, artists, producers, publishers, entrepreneurs, investors, universities and research centres.

The event features over 400 international speakers and 300 exhibitors taking part in the region's largest media and content gathering.

The summit, taking place at the ADNEC Centre Abu Dhabi until 10th December, presents a varied programme of more than 300 activities, including 200 panel discussions and 50 workshops.

Interactive platforms and designated areas for deal-making and strategic partnerships form a key part of the summit's offering, which aims to strengthen production ecosystems, enhance value chains and promote knowledge exchange among leading global stakeholders.

ISRAELI PRESIDENT CRITICIZES NEW YORK MAYOR-ELECT MAMDANI, WARNS OF RISING ANTISEMITISM

**Diary Times Desk :** Israeli President Isaac Herzog sharply criticized New York City's mayor-elect, Zohran Mamdani, for comments he described as "outrageous" and harmful to Jewish communities during a speech at Yeshiva University in New York City. Herzog said the mayor-elect's remarks questioning Jews' right to move to Israel and participate in traditional Zionist practices not only delegitimize the Jewish people's ancient homeland but also "legitimize violence and undermine freedom of religion." He labeled such rhetoric both anti-Jewish and anti-American. Herzog, who was presented with an honorary doctorate, described a climate in which Holocaust inversion, conspiracy theories, and new forms of Jew-hatred proliferate online and in public discourse. He noted that while overt slurs have become socially unacceptable, targeting Jews under the guise of anti-Zionism.

INDIA-AUSTRALIA REVIEW EDUCATION TIES "FROM PRE-SCHOOL TO PHD" AS TOP AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY GETS NOD TO SET UP CAMPUS IN INDIA

**Diary Times Desk :** India and Australia on Monday held wide-ranging discussions on expanding cooperation in education, skills, and research, as Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan met his Australian counterparts, Jason Clare and Julian Hill, in New Delhi.

After the meeting, the Union Minister posted on X that it was "a great delight" to meet Clare and Hill. He said the talks covered the full spectrum of cooperation "from pre-school to PhD", with both sides focusing on fostering critical thinking among students and preparing them for an AI-driven future.

Pradhan said the two countries remained committed to adding "new dynamism" to the India-Australia education partnership through deeper collaboration between higher education institutions, joint research programmes and smoother pathways for two-way student and academic mobility. "Both of us remain committed to add new dynamism to the vibrant India-Australia educational partnership, including through collaborations between HEIs of both our countries, joint research funding in areas of strategic importance and smoother pathways for two-way mobility, among others," he wrote on X.



NINE REPORTEDLY DISAPPEARED AFTER DETENTIONS IN QUETTA, TURBAT AND KARACHI CTD RAID

**Diary Times Desk :** Reports from different regions of Balochistan suggest that Pakistani forces in Quetta and Turbat reportedly apprehended nine individuals and have since vanished, as per The Balochistan Post (TBP).

Eight men were allegedly detained late on Tuesday during a wedding celebration. Their current location remains unknown since the arrest.

In a different incident in Turbat, a university student's family has been notified that Noor Khan, the son of Nazar Muhammad and a student at Turbat University, was taken by Pakistani security forces on Wednesday night.

Family members assert that he has been unaccounted for since the purported detention. Human rights groups have consistently expressed concerns over forced disappearances in Balochistan, observing an apparent rise in such cases, despite ongoing demands for transparency and accountability, TBP reported. This situation aligns with a significant operation that took place overnight in Karachi, where residents in Sharafi Goth, Malir, reported that personnel from the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) detained numerous individuals and transported them to an undisclosed location.

CHINESE EMBASSY IN INDIA TO LAUNCH ONLINE VISA APPLICATION SYSTEM ON DECEMBER 22

**Diary Times Desk :** The Chinese Embassy in India is set to launch the online visa application system on December 22, Chinese Ambassador to India, Xu Feihong said on Monday.

Sharing the details in a post on X, he said that the applicants could fill out the form and upload application materials online by visiting [https://visaforchina.cn/DEL3\\_EN/qiazhengyewu](https://visaforchina.cn/DEL3_EN/qiazhengyewu). "Notice Regarding Online Visa Processing Approval-China Online Visa Application System will be officially launched by the Chinese Embassy in India on December 22, 2025. Applicants could enjoy convenience of filling out the form and uploading application materials online by visiting [https://visaforchina.cn/DEL3\\_EN/qiazhengyewu](https://visaforchina.cn/DEL3_EN/qiazhengyewu). Welcome to visit this website for more details. Earlier on November 26, the Ministry of External Affairs confirmed that the visa regime for tourism and business purposes for Chinese nationals is now "fully functional."

## TATA, INTEL SIGN MOU TO EXPLORE STRATEGIC COLLABORATION FOR SEMICONDUCTOR AND AI DEVELOPMENT

**Diary Times Desk :** Tata Group and Intel Corporation have announced a strategic alliance to explore a collaboration aimed at advancing semiconductor and systems manufacturing, packaging, and the AI compute market in India.

According to a Tata Group press release, the move marks a key step towards strengthening India's domestic semiconductor ecosystem and creating a more resilient supply chain for electronics manufacturing.

The two companies have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to explore opportunities in consumer and enterprise hardware, including the manufacturing and packaging of Intel products at Tata Electronics' upcoming Fab and Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test (OSAT) facilities. The proposed partnership also aims to develop advanced packaging capabilities within India, which could serve as an important milestone for the country's growing role in the global semiconductor landscape.

## REFUND WORTH RS 827 CRORE INITIATED, REST UNDER PROCESS: INDIGO AIRLINES ON CANCELLATION FIASCO

**Diary Times Desk :** The crisis-ridden IndiGo Airlines on Monday said that it has processed refunds worth Rs 827 crore for thousands of passengers, till now, with the rest of the refunds for cancellations up to December 15, 2025, in process, amid widespread flight cancellations in early December 2025.

In a statement, IndiGo Airlines said, "Over 4500 bags have been delivered to respective customers, and we are on track to deliver the rest in the next 36 hours." The airlines also claimed that they have assisted over 2 lakh customers every day, across various communication channels. In its statement, the airlines said it has facilitated stranded customers and arranged over 9,500 hotel rooms, and close to 10,000 cabs/buses between 1 to December 7. The airlines further claimed to have optimized its operations, saying, "Today (December 8), we are all set to operate over 1800 flights.

## SENSEX TANKS 610 POINTS; NIFTY SLIPS BELOW 26,000 ON PROFIT BOOKING, FOREIGN FUND OUTFLOWS

**Diary Times Desk :** Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty nosedived on Monday after two consecutive days of gains, as investors rushed to take profits amid the unabated selling of stocks by foreign investors. Analysts said investors turned defensive ahead of this week's US Federal Reserve policy decision, which further weakened the sentiment.

The 30-share BSE Sensex plunged by 609.68 points, or 0.71 per cent, to close at 85,102.69. During the day, it plummeted by 836.78 points, or 0.97 per cent, to hit the intraday low of 84,875.59. Snapping a two-day gaining streak, the 50-share NSE Nifty declined by 225.90 points, or 0.86 per cent, to settle at 25,960.55. In the intraday session, it dropped 294.2 points, or 1.12 per cent, to hit a low of 25,892.25. Among the Sensex constituents, Bharat Electronics Ltd, Eternal, Trent, Tata Steel, Bajaj Finance, Adani Ports, Bajaj Finserv, State Bank of India, PowerGrid, Asian Paints, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles, Titan, NTPC, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Larsen & Toubro and Bharti Airtel were among the laggards.

## ADANI GROUP INVESTED RS 10,000 CRORE GENERATING OVER 7,000 JOBS IN LAST 3 YEARS IN TELANGANA: KARAN ADANI

**Diary Times Desk :** The Adani Group has so far invested nearly Rs 10,000 crores in the last three years in Telangana to build state infrastructure and manufacturing facilities and has contributed to employment generation of more than 7000 people, said Karan Adani, Managing Director of Adani Ports and SEZ Limited on Monday.

Karan Adani was addressing the Telangana Rising Global Summit 2025, the mega event of the State government led by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, and witnessing a few top-notch businessmen promising huge investments in the state. "Over the last few years, the Adani Group has forged a strong and growing relationship with the state of Telangana. In line with our earlier commitments, we have initiated investments in sectors such as Defense manufacturing, Green Data Centers, Renewable energy projects and Cement manufacturing facilities across the state," Karan Adani said. Highlighting Adani Group's action towards pushing the goal of Atmanirbhar Bharat, he said the Adani Group has developed a leading defense and aerospace park in Hyderabad. "This state-of-the-art facility is the first UAV manufacturing facility in the country, where long endurance UAV's are manufactured.



## EQUITY MARKETS DECLINE IN EARLY TRADE DRAGGED BY SERVICES, REALTY STOCKS, FII OUTFLOWS

**Diary Times Desk :** Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty declined in early trade on Monday weighed down by losses in services and realty stocks and sustained foreign fund outflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped 316.52 points, or 0.37 per cent, to 85,395.85 in the morning trade. The 50-share NSE Nifty declined by 106.70 points, or 0.41 per cent, to 26,079.75.

From the Sensex firms, Bajaj Finance, Bharat Electronics Ltd, Axis Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Maruti Suzuki India, Asian Paints, Mahindra & Mahindra, NTPC, ICICI Bank, PowerGrid, Hindustan Unilever and Larsen & Toubro were the laggards.

However, Tech Mahindra, Infosys, Eternal, Reliance Industries, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles, Tata Consultancy Services, Trent, HCL Technologies and Tata Steel were among the gainers. Meanwhile, foreign institutional investors offloaded equities worth Rs 438.90 crore on Friday, while Domestic Institutional Investors bought stocks worth Rs 4,189.17 crore, according to exchange data. In Asian markets, Japan's Nikkei 225, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and South Korea's Kospi were trading in the green territory while Hong Kong's Hang Seng index was quoting in the red zone.





CHENNAI-BASED INITIUM PARTNERS WINS 'TAX AND FINANCIAL CONSULTING FIRM OF THE YEAR 2025'

**Diary Times Desk :** Initium Partners, a Chennai-based financial and strategic advisory firm, has been awarded the 'Tax and Financial Consulting Company of the Year - India' at the prestigious Forttuna Global Excellence Awards 2025 - Global Edition. The honour recognises the firm's growing leadership in financial due diligence, business restructuring, and transaction support. The award was presented today at JA Resorts, Soul Beach, Dubai.

The award jury commended Ms Kanakadhara Srinivasan, Founder of Initium Partners, for her exceptional contribution to the financial services industry, highlighting her depth of expertise, commitment to precision, and impact on India's evolving business ecosystem. "Your dedication to excellence has set a remarkable benchmark. We are honoured to recognise your achievements and present this trophy celebrating your success," the committee noted. Accepting the award, Ms Kanakadhara said, "Receiving this award is a meaningful reminder of why I do what I do. At Initium Partners, our focus has always been to bring clarity, discipline and strategic thinking to every business we support.

BISLERI STRENGTHENS ITS UAE PRESENCE WITH A STRATEGIC THREE-YEAR HYDRATION PARTNERSHIP WITH THE EMIRATES CRICKET BOARD

**Diary Times Desk :** Bisleri International, India's leading packaged drinking water brand, has entered a landmark three-year partnership with the Emirates Cricket Board (ECB) as its Official Hydration Partner. The agreement was formalised today at the Dubai International Stadium. This strategic alliance marks a significant step in Bisleri's expansion in the UAE and reinforces its commitment to championing hydration, wellness, and peak athletic performance across global sporting platforms. Being the official governing body for cricket in the UAE, the ECB oversees the development of the sport across men's, women's, and U19 categories. Over the years, the ECB has played a crucial role in elevating the UAE's standing as an official cricketing hub.

WE WANT TO BECOME A USD 1 TRILLION ECONOMY BY 2034: TELANGANA CM REVANTH REDDY

**Diary Times Desk :** Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Monday said the state aims to become a USD 1 trillion economy by 2034 and a USD 3 trillion economy by 2047, outlining a roadmap for growth at the Telangana Rising Global Summit 2025.

Speaking at the opening of the two-day event, Reddy said Telangana, India's youngest state, was moving with ambition and clear planning. "We want to become a 1 trillion dollar economy by 2034, and a 3 trillion dollar economy by 2047," he said, adding that the state, though home to about 2.9 per cent of India's population, already contributes nearly 5 per cent to the national GDP.

The Chief Minister said Telangana's goal was to double that share by 2047, contributing 10 per cent to India's GDP. "Our strategy is to make Telangana India's first and only state to be divided into three clear zones: for services, manufacturing, and agriculture," he said, emphasizing that the approach will help the state unlock sector-specific growth. Earlier, Governor Jishnu Dev Varma, in his inaugural address, said Telangana would fulfill its mission of becoming a USD 3 trillion economy by 2047. He added that the state's economic path was aligning with India's broader vision of becoming a USD 30 trillion economy by that time.



TIDE NOW SUPPORTS OVER 1 MILLION SMALL BUSINESSES IN INDIA



**Diary Times Desk :** The platform saw a 100% y-o-y increase in adoption since launch in December 2022 New Delhi, India (NewsVoir) • Gen Zs and millennials make up over 85% of Tide's MSME community – a powerful reminder that young India is steering the country's entrepreneurial momentum • Tier 2, 3, 4 and beyond cities driving growth with over 96% members (MSMEs) on the platform, from towns like Bareilly,

Bhopal, Murshidabad, Lucknow and North 24 Parganas Tide, the UK's leading business management platform, today announced that it has surpassed 1 million members (MSMEs) in India. This rapid growth reflects the deep trust that Indian small businesses – from nano to micro and emerging SMEs – have placed in Tide to simplify how they register, run and grow their businesses. The platform has doubled adoption since its launch in December 2022. India has emerged as Tide's largest and fastest-growing market globally in member acquisition, showcasing the success of its India-first strategy and strong product-market fit.

Gurjodhpal Singh, CEO, Tide in India, said, "This milestone is more than a number – it's a story of trust. In just under three years, one million Indian entrepreneurs have chosen Tide to be their partner in growth. This reflects our commitment to helping small businesses – who have been gravely underserved – save time and money by giving them business critical tools across finance, admin and related commercial services that they need, to grow. India is where some of Tide's most innovative products are being developed, creating strong use-cases to be implemented globally." A trusted business partner for India's entrepreneurs Tide's success has always been rooted in scaling responsibly and delivering real-world impact. The company is doing so by building a unified, highly-connected digital platform that reduces the burden of business finance and admin. Over the past year, Tide has delivered product innovation at pace across India with products including: Bill Payments: SMEs in India can pay their utility bills with no extra costs and earn rewards. The product is backed by enhanced security.

SAD PRESIDENT SUKHBIR BADAL TO CONTEST UPCOMING ASSEMBLY POLLS FROM GIDDERBAHA

Diary Times Desk : Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) president Sukhbir Singh Badal today announced that he will also contest from Gidderbaha in the forthcoming Assembly elections.

The SAD president made the announcement following a demand from party workers while inaugurating the party office here. He also declared that people who had betrayed the party – including Hardeep Singh Dhillon – would never be taken back into the party fold.

The SAD president also interacted with party candidates contesting the block samiti and zila parishad elections from this constituency. He said the Panchayati Raj elections were a litmus test for the party and urged the party rank and file to ensure candidates were elected with flying colours in these elections.

PUNJAB SEEKS DISMISSAL OF AMRITPAL'S PAROLE PLEA; CITES THREAT TO STATE SECURITY

Diary Times Desk : Just about a week after Punjab told the Punjab and Haryana High Court that "a single speech" by Khadoor Sahib MP Amritpal Singh could "set the five rivers afire", it today sought the dismissal of his parole plea for attending the ongoing Parliament session by referring to the grounds of detention.

In an affidavit placed before the Bench headed by Chief Justice Sheel Nagu, the State said the "gravity and enormity of the grounds of detention and petitioner's conduct as reflected therein necessitated his continuous and uninterrupted detention for maximum period of 12 months from April 23 in the interest of the security of the state and the maintenance of public order. The affidavit in this regard was filed by Alok Shekhar, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Home Affairs, Punjab. The fresh grounds of detention by Amritsar district magistrate said – among other things – that Amritpal Singh had been found to be conspiring with anti-national elements, notorious and dreaded gangsters and terrorists with the intent and objective to physically eliminate persons.

CRACKDOWN ON DRUG TRADERS: SOLAN POLICE DETAIN 4 HABITUAL OFFENDERS IN PREVENTIVE CUSTODY

Diary Times Desk : In a decisive strike against drug traffickers, the Solan police takes four habitual offenders under preventive detention for three months. They have been identified as Ankush Thakur (36), Naresh Kumar alias Nishu (37) – both residents of Sirinagar panchayat in Kandaghat – Deepak Kumar alias Honey (40), a resident of Dharampur, and Vikas alias Khaula, a resident of Solan. All four had been involved in heroin trade in various parts of the district and had been booked in multiple cases. Solan SP Gaurav Singh informed that under the state-wide campaign being run by the government against heroin traffickers, the Solan police are continuously acting against habitual offenders. "As per the state government's directions, four habitual offenders have been taken into preventive custody under the provisions of the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs & Psychotropic Substances Act, 1988, for a period of three months," the SP said.



SNOW, RAIN LIKELY IN HIMACHAL'S HIGHER REACHES ON DEC 14

Diary Times Desk : The higher reaches of Himachal Pradesh are likely to experience snow and rain on December 14.

According to the State Meteorological Department, the snow and rain are likely to affect isolated areas of Kullu, Kinnaur, Chamba and Lahaul-Spiti, while the rest of the state is expected to remain dry. Dry weather is also likely to prevail across all districts until December 13.

In addition to this, a yellow warning has been issued for dense fog on December 9. The advisory covers parts of the Balh valley in Mandi district and areas surrounding the Bhakra dam reservoir in Bilaspur, particularly during the early morning hours. Minimum temperatures are expected to rise by 2°C to 3°C over the next two to three days, though maximum temperatures are likely to stay near normal. The past 24 hours saw mostly dry weather across Himachal. Both day and night temperatures stayed 2°C to 4°C above normal at several locations. Minimum temperatures varied from -6°C to 11°C, while maximum temperatures were recorded between 9°C and 25°C.

HIMACHAL GOVERNOR FOR COLLECTIVE, COORDINATED BATTLE TO DEFEAT DRUG MENACE

Diary Times Desk : Himachal Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla today inaugurated a state-level workshop on the theme 'War on drugs – Chitte Par Chat', organised by the NGO consortium Sanjeevani, and underscored the urgent need for unified, determined and compassionate efforts to curb the drug crisis in Himachal Pradesh. Addressing a gathering of social workers, activists and community leaders, the Governor said the war against drugs demands both firm policing and empathy for those trapped in addiction. Strict enforcement, he stressed, must go hand in hand with rehabilitation, awareness and support systems that prevent vulnerable youth from falling deeper into dependency. He also emphasised the role of religious institutions, noting that their moral influence and extensive community reach are vital to dismantling networks driven by foreign-backed drug cartels. Praising the state government's initiatives, he particularly lauded the rare and meaningful show of unity between the ruling and opposition parties on the issue in the Vidhan Sabha. "Without a collective political will, it is impossible to protect this Devbhoomi from the growing threat of synthetic drugs.

### YOUR HOROSCOPE

09-12-2025

**Aries**  
Today, you will meet old friends, which will refresh old memories. Employed people may be fired from the job due to heavy arguments with colleagues in the workplace. People doing business should thank God for getting financial benefits from the advice of their spouse. Due to irritation in the eyes, you should consult an ophthalmologist.

**Taurus**  
Today you will get success as your long pending legal proceedings will come in your favor. There will be an atmosphere of happiness in the family as employed people will get progress in their workplace. People doing business should make a budget and spend the money in order to get financial benefits. Housewives should change their food according to health and season.

**Gemini**  
Today you should include yoga and meditation in your daily routine. For employed people, your responsibilities may increase due to promotion in the workplace. People doing business may suffer financial loss from any unknown person today. There may be difficulty in walking due to nerve pain problems.

**Cancer**  
Today you will get relief from all your problems due to sudden financial gain. Employed people may have to get scolded by their boss due to being hasty in the workplace. People doing business may face increased difficulties in business due to arguments with business partners. As the problem of foot pain increases, you must consult a specialist doctor.

**Leo**  
Today, you should offer water to Lord Shiva to avoid difficulties. A heated argument with HR in the workplace will spoil your whole day. Businessmen have to exercise patience, there are chances of improvement in business. Today, you may face stomach and pancreas problems due to eating too much fried food.

**Virgo**  
Today you should take special control over your speech and behavior. People in employment will get success in the workplace with the help of friends. People doing business will get financial gain due to some special offer, your financial condition will be strengthened. Old diseases of elders in the house may emerge.

**Libra**  
Today is going to be a busy day for you. Employed people will get a chance to work with senior officers due to advancement in their professional field. People doing business should avoid exchanging money with any unknown person today. Pregnant women may have to face problems due to changing weather.

**Scorpio**  
Today you may have to face huge arguments in your family over small matters. Employed people may have to face mental problems due to extra workload in the workplace. People doing business may have to travel abroad in connection with business expansion. Diabetic patients should get themselves checked by a doctor in case of any problem today.

**Sagittarius**  
Today you should take all important decisions of your career thoughtfully. Employed people may have to face some problems due to the start of a new job in the workplace. Due to financial gain for business people, you can invest in a new business. Problems like leg pain and headache may bother you.

**Capricorn**  
Today you can invest especially in land and buildings. Employed people may have to travel long distances due to office work, due to which your health may deteriorate. People doing business may face difficulties in repaying business loans due to loss of money. High BP and cholesterol problems will increase the problems of your spouse.

**Aquarius**  
Today you may have to face huge arguments in your family over small matters. Employees will be suspended due to indiscipline in the workplace. People doing business should solve all the problems of their customers in time. Due to worsening weather, problems related to cold and cough may increase in the family.

**Pisces**  
Today your interest in creative work will especially increase. Employed people may be given an important project by their boss to handle important projects in the workplace. People doing business should control their speech and behavior with their customers. You should walk carefully on the road, problems may arise due to injury.



3 KILLED AS BUS HITS BIKE ON HANUMANGARH HIGHWAY

**Diary Times Desk :** A road accident near Manaksar village on the Hanumangarh-Sangria highway today claimed the lives of three people and injured nearly a dozen others.

According to police, a private bus on the Hanumangarh-Dabwali route went out of control while trying to avoid a motorcycle that suddenly appeared in front of it. The bus first hit the motorcycle, then collided with an electric pole and overturned. Two people on the motorcycle died on the spot, while a female passenger from the bus died at the Civil Hospital. The deceased motorcycle riders have been identified as Lakhwinder Singh (40) and Bagga Singh (28) – residents of Nagrana village. Kamaldeep Kaur (35), a government school teacher from Hanumangarh, who was travelling by the bus, died during treatment. The injured were immediately admitted to government hospitals.

NO IMPACT ON HEALTH SERVICES AT AMBALA CANTONMENT CIVIL HOSPITAL DESPITE STRIKE CALL



**Diary Times Desk :** Despite the call for a two-day strike given by the Haryana Civil Medical Services Association (HCMSA), all OPDs and emergency service were seen functional at the Civil Hospital in Ambala Cantonment on Monday.

Doctors were seen attending to patients, with no visible impact of the strike here. To assess the situation, Civil Surgeon Dr Rakesh Sehla also inspected the OPDs.

Dr Sehla said all doctors have been on duty and none had applied for leave on Monday.

“However, in view of the strike call, backup arrangements were made with doctors from the National Health Mission (NHM), Ayush and medical colleges. Since no doctor was on leave, there was no requirement to use the backup services,” he said.

NAVJOT KAUR SIDHU SUSPENDED FROM CONGRESS OVER ‘RS 500 CRORE FOR CM POST’ CLAIM

**Diary Times Desk :** Dr Navjot Kaur Sidhu, wife of cricketer-cum-politician Navjot Singh Sidhu, has been suspended from the primary membership of the party with immediate effect. The action came days after the former MLA made a sensational claim that “a briefcase full of Rs 500 crore” was required to become Chief Minister in the state, something she said her husband could not pay. She also claimed that five CM aspirants in the Congress were pulling down the party.

Though no official reason has been cited in the suspension letter signed by PPCC chief Amarinder Raja Warring, sources said the party had taken a serious view of her utterances that seemed to be taking a dig at Punjab Congress leaders at a time when party leaders were busy with the Zila Parishad and Panchayat Samiti elections. Her statement had created a stir in Punjab Congress, with senior leaders demanding that the Sidhu couple be shown the door. The suspension was seen as an act of discipline, sending a message to disgruntled leaders who had been taking on the top state leadership in the past.



AMID DOCTORS’ STRIKE, DISTRICT MAGISTRATE INVOKES SECTION 163 BNSS; PROHIBITORY ORDERS ISSUED ACROSS KARNAL

**Diary Times Desk :** To ensure the uninterrupted functioning of essential health services amid an ongoing two-day strike of doctors under the banner of the Haryana Civil Medical Services Association (HCMSA), District Magistrate Uttam Singh has invoked Section 163 of the BNSS, 2023, and issued immediate prohibitory orders across the district.

The directive has been enforced to prevent potential protests, disruptions, or public disorder near health institutions during the strike. As per the order, any form of demonstration, protest, sit-in, shouting of slogans, setting up of tented gatherings, marches, or obstruction of access to healthcare facilities is strictly prohibited within a 200m radius of any government health institution in the district. This includes government hospitals, Community Health Centres (CHCs), Primary Health Centres (PHCs), and trauma/emergency units. The order aims to ensure that all essential health services, including OPD, IPD, emergency care, labour room operations, post-mortem procedures, medico-legal cases (MLCs).

BJP OUTLINES PLAN FOR SIR, HARYANA CM SAINI ACCUSES CONG OF CREATING ‘FALSE ISSUES’

**Diary Times Desk :** The BJP organised a state-level meeting in Kaithal on Sunday and outlined a future plan for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), exhorting party workers and leaders to work dedicatedly including the appointment of booth-level agents (BLAs). “SIR is a step being taken by the Election Commission. Workers have been asked to be vigilant. Appointment of BLAs should be done effectively,” said CM Saini while interacting with mediapersons on the sidelines of the state-level meeting at RKSD College on Sunday. Targeting the Congress over allegations related to the SIR voter list corrections, Saini said the Opposition was “misleading people through deliberate misinformation”, even citing the recent controversy involving the photograph of a Brazilian woman. “The Congress survives only on lies and confusion. Their leaders have no real issue left. So, they have turned to baseless propaganda,” he added. In the presence of the CM, BJP state president Mohan Lal Badoli, party’s organisational secretary Phanindranath Sharma, state general secretary Surinder Punia.

HARYANA GOVT DOCTORS GO ON TWO-DAY STATEWIDE STRIKE



**Diary Times Desk :** On the call of the Haryana Civil Medical Services Association (HCMSA), government doctors across the state went on a two-day strike starting Monday to press their demands, including a halt to the direct recruitment of Senior Medical Officers (SMOs) and issuance of a notification for the already approved Modified Assured Career Progression (ACP) structure. The strike affected healthcare services across the district, including OPDs, emergency care and operations.

To manage the situation in Karnal, the health authorities deployed consultants, directly recruited specialists and doctors from Kalpana Chawla Government Medical College (KCGMC). However, their numbers were insufficient to handle the patient load. Around 1,500 patients visit the Karnal District Civil Hospital every day. The doctors had earlier held a meeting with Health Minister Arti Singh Rao, Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Sudhir Rajpal and other senior officials on December 3. This was followed by another meeting on December 5 with Chief Secretary Anurag Rastogi, Chief Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Rajesh Khullar, Sudhir Rajpal and Director General Health Dr Manish Bansal. While their demand to stop the direct recruitment of SMOs was accepted, the request for implementation of the modified ACP structure was not fulfilled. Despite this, the doctors decided to go ahead with the strike.

Drones have already revolutionized warfare. They're about to do it again

"Invention, it must be humbly admitted, does not consist in creating out of void, but out of chaos." Mary Shelley, "Frankenstein," 1818.

"War is chaos. It always has been. But technology makes it worse. It changes the fear." Pierce Brown, "Golden Son," 2015.

Drones – and artificial intelligence – have reshaped the modern battlefield and are about to do so again. Nowhere is that more evident than in Ukraine.

Invaded by Russia in 2022, outmanned and outgunned by one of the world's strongest militaries, Kyiv quickly proved that drones – in the air, on the ground, and at sea – could hold off a Russian victory that many expected within weeks, if not days.



Brad Lendon But drones came to the forefront of warfare relatively recently, some analysts say, with the 2020 conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh a major turning point.

Cheaper and easier to build than manned vehicles, and in some cases more effective, drones are a military planner's dream – and greatly reduce the risk of a pilot or operator being killed in action.

Much like the Kalashnikov rifle in the previous century, mass adoption of drones became an asymmetric weapon of choice for forces facing long odds in global warfare, such as the Hamas militant group in Gaza; anti-junta rebels in Myanmar's civil war; and the militaries of poorer nations, including many in Africa.

But the Goliaths have caught up, while – according to one report – drug cartels the world over are innovating, improving and adapting drones to fight the narco-wars of the future. "It's like gunpowder. That's how insanely it's changed the war," Patrick Shepherd, a former US Army officer, said of the advent of cheap aerial drones.

It's invention from chaos, as myriad regional conflagrations coincide with an era of unparalleled technological advance.

It's probably just the beginning.

The evolution of drones

Drones aren't a recent invention. Britain and the United States experimented with radio-controlled unmanned aircraft during World War I, according to the Imperial War Museum in London.

"We were flying hundreds of drones over North Vietnam during the war," said Russ Lee, a curator in the aeronautics department at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington. During that Southeast Asian conflict in 1960s and early '70s, US forces began using drones for many of the same missions we see today – reconnaissance or carrying munitions, or for use as decoys and psy-ops platforms, according to the Imperial War Museum.

The US began widespread use of drones during Operation Desert Storm, the response to Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The Tomahawk land-attack missile – a cruise missile but also an unmanned aerial vehicle as it can change course and target in-flight – saw its first combat in 1991.



Australia's About To Find Out

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU KICK MILLIONS OF TEENS OFF SOCIAL MEDIA?

It's August, and a show of hands in an auditorium filled with 300 students at All Saints Anglican School in Australia shows that few of the Grade 9 and 10 students sitting in plush red seats had heard of the country's impending ban on social media, much less how to prepare for it.



Hilary Whiteman

Yoti advises social media platforms including Meta about their age verification options. The group now has 12 methods, including phone, email, and ID checks, and the list is growing. Age-restricted sites give users a choice about which method they'd prefer.

"It's very important to save photos," Kirra Pendergast, founder of cyber safety organization Ctrl+Shift, lectures from the stage. "You need to prepare."

An alarmed murmur spreads around the room as the students realize what's about to be lost. "Can you get your account back when you turn 16?" one girl asks. "What if I lie about my age?" asks another.

Less than two weeks before the ban, we have more answers.

From December 10, sites



"People have basically thought, what is it we do offline? Do we let young people into strip clubs, into bars, buying alcohol, buying cigarettes? What are the norms that we have and what are the norms that we want to have online?"

that meet the Australian government's definition of an "age-restricted social media platform" will need to show that they're doing enough to eject or block children under 16 or face fines of up to 49.5 million Australian dollars (\$32 million).

The list includes Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, Kick, Reddit, Threads, TikTok, Twitch, X, and YouTube. The government says it's protecting children from potentially harmful content; the sites say they're already building safer systems.

Meta says it'll start deactivating accounts and blocking new Facebook, Instagram and Threads accounts from December 4. Under-16s are being encouraged to download their content.

Snap says users can deactivate their accounts for up to three years, or until they turn 16. Snap streaks – the daily swapping of photos of ordinary life, vacations, walls, foreheads, anything to signal an online presence – will end.

There's another sting in the ban, too, coming at the end of the Australian school year before the summer break in the southern hemisphere. For eight weeks, there'll be no school, no teachers – and no scrolling.

For millions of children, it could be the first school break they spend in years without the company of time-killing social media algorithms, or an easy way to contact their friends. Even for parents who support the ban, it could be a very long summer.

Other countries around the world are taking notes as Australia explores new territory that some say mirrors safety evolutions of years past – the dawning realization that maybe cars need safety belts, and that perhaps cigarettes should come with some kind of health warning.

As with any seismic step in social policy, there are cheer squads, naysayers and those who don't care what Australia – a country known to love rules – is doing to (and for) its children.

INFA

A Blue Schoolbag In A Mass Grave

SRI LANKA'S BLOODY PAST IS RE-EMERGING FROM THE SOIL

Two human skeletons lie entangled on the rough earth – the arms of one wrapped around the other's head, as though protecting them from danger. Simply known as numbers 177 and 178, their identities remain a mystery.



Helen Regan

Tamils, who have lived in the north and east of Sri Lanka for thousands of years, are primarily followers of Hinduism, with a significant Christian minority population, but the commission determined that the fact the bodies were buried naked rules out customary Hindu burials. "There is a reasonable likelihood that the burials were unlawful and pursuant to extrajudicial killings," it said.

They are among 240 human skeletal remains, including children and babies, uncovered at this mass gravesite in Chemmani in Sri Lanka's northern Jaffna district.

"This place is a crime scene no entry," reads a sign at the entrance.

Numbered white cards placed alongside the bones mark how many skeletons have been found since digging began in May of this year, reviving decades-old allegations of wartime atrocities and cover-ups.

In the heartland of the country's ethnic Tamil minority, a bloody and brutal history is re-emerging from the soil.

But it is difficult to bury the past entirely.

From 1983 to 2009, the South Asian island nation of 21 million endured a brutal civil war between the Sri Lankan army and the separatist militant group the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). More commonly known as the Tamil Tigers, the group was listed as a terrorist organization by many countries including the United States.

The war was fought along ethnic lines, pitting the majority Buddhist Sinhalese state against the predominantly Hindu ethnic minority rebels fighting for a separate Tamil homeland in the north and east after years of anti-Tamil violence. The Tigers were ultimately defeated.

Atrocities were committed by both sides, according to the United Nations, which estimates up to 100,000 people were killed in the conflict, with thousands of others forcibly disappeared.

Sixteen years after the war ended, families of the victims and missing are still fighting for justice and accountability.

"One day the truth will come," said V S Niranjan, a lawyer representing relatives of people who went missing in Jaffna.

A blue school bag

Just a stone's throw from a main road, the Chemmani gravesite is one of more than 20 mass graves identified in Sri Lanka.

Many of the gravesites that pockmark the north and east of the country are believed to contain the victims of atrocities committed during the civil war. Caught between warring rebel fighters and the Sri Lankan army, the Tamil community in these regions bore the brunt of the violence.

The military occupied Jaffna from 1995 until the end of the war. Chemmani first gained international attention in 1998 when Sri Lankan soldier former Lance Cpl. Somaratne Rajapakse, who was on trial for the rape and murder of schoolgirl Krishanthi Kumaraswamy, confessed that hundreds of Tamils had been buried there after the Sri Lankan army retook Jaffna.

For decades, the mass grave remained hidden until construction workers clearing land in the grounds of a Hindu cemetery in February unearthed human skeletal remains.

Their discovery prompted a court-ordered forensic excavation of the site in May and June, which initially uncovered 19 skeletons. Since then, the bones of hundreds more people have been found.

A baby's milk bottle, a blue schoolbag, bangles and cloth fragments have been uncovered alongside the bones.

More than 90% of the remains had no form of clothing. The bodies were buried in a disordered way, heaped together in shallow graves of 1.5-2 feet, according to the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, an independent national body that investigates violations of fundamental rights.





A COLLECTOR’S GUIDE TO BUDDHIST SCULPTURE

Diary Times Desk :

Anthropomorphic images of the Buddha, the enlightened being who lived and taught in south Asia sometime between the 6th and 5th centuries B.C., originated in northern India and present-day Pakistan and Afghanistan in the 1st century A.D. Over time, sculptural representations of Buddha and the associated pantheon of Buddhist deities became an important artistic tradition in nearly every culture between Afghanistan and Japan.

Today, Buddhism is one of the five largest global religions, with around 500 million adherents. Although many enthusiasts, scholars and collectors of Buddhist sculpture are drawn to the religion, others simply appreciate its rich history, encompassing more than 2,000 years of teachings and art.

Buddhist art encapsulates diverse traditions across millennia and throughout the world. As a result, the range of sculpture to explore is extraordinarily wide.

Not surprisingly, given the far reach of his teachings, the Buddha, bodhisattvas, and other Buddhist deities have been interpreted widely, in many different styles and materials. To begin to be able to distinguish between cultures, styles and historical periods, one should view as many examples of Buddhist sculpture as possible.

Among the many fine collections in Asia are the Tsz Shan Monastery Buddhist Art Museum in Hong Kong, the Capital Museum, Beijing, Japan’s Tokyo National Museum and the Indian Museum in Kolkata. In the United States, visits to institutions such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), the Norton Simon Museum (Pasadena), the Cleveland Museum of Art and the National Museum of Asian Art (Washington, D.C.) provide in-depth insight across a range of categories. In Europe, the Musée Guimet in Paris, Berlin’s Museum für Asiatische Kunst, the British Museum in London, the Museum Rietberg in Zurich and the Tibet Museum in Gruyères all have significant holdings of Buddhist art.

Great reference books are also worth seeking out. Two definitive works are Ulrich von Schroeder’s authoritative Indo-Tibetan Bronzes and Buddhist Sculptures in Tibet, which are carefully organised by type.

Another very useful source of information is Himalayan Art Resources — a website run by one of the world’s leading Himalayan art scholars, Jeff Watt — which catalogues tens of thousands of images and serves as an excellent starting point for research.



CERAMICISTS LUCIE RIE AND HANS COPER

Diary Times Desk :

This is the story of two artists: Lucie Rie and Hans Coper, émigrés who escaped to England from the Nazis in the late 1930s, and who would then spend the next 40 years transforming the landscape of studio ceramics in Great Britain.

‘It is almost impossible to imagine ceramics in this country without them,’ says British artist and ceramicist Giles Round. ‘They brought an urban European sensibility to what was, until then, a kind of rustic nostalgia, and they have been a touchstone for British ceramicists ever since.’

Lucie Rie was born into the Jewish-intellectual environs of Sigmund Freud’s Vienna in 1902. She trained at the Wiener Werkstätte, the highly influential graphic arts workshop established by Josef Hoffman, and in 1925 opened her own workshop. Here, she created austere bowls in dense matt glazes — ‘The perfect objects for a modernist apartment,’ according to Edmund de Waal, a long-time admirer of her work.

In 1938, as the Nazis annexed Austria into the German Reich, Rie fled Vienna for England, settling in a mews house in Bayswater from where she established a small pottery studio. She took on émigrés as her assistants, and in 1946 met the young Hans Coper.

Like Rie, Coper was Jewish; he had abandoned an engineering degree in Dresden to escape to Britain in 1939. The journey was the culmination of a traumatic four years of persecution by the Nazis, which had ended with his father’s suicide and his brother’s exile to South America. In London, Coper was arrested as an enemy alien, and spent two years in an internment camp in Canada. Subsequently, along with thousands of other Austrian and German nationals, he served in the British Army’s Pioneer Corps. Rie instantly recognised Coper’s talent. Together they ran a successful workshop, producing beautiful, essential objects of impeccable quality. Rie used silicon carbide to create mottled, pitted surfaces that seemed to emerge almost by chance. For Coper, function was secondary to sculptural form. ‘You can see how Rie inspired Coper to take risks,’ says Round. ‘Coper’s works are thrown and then reassembled to make these very complex constructions.’



BARCELONA CAPTAIN MIGHT NOT PLAY AGAIN FOR CLUB AS PSYCHOLOGICAL SITUATION VERY SERIOUS – REPORT



**Diary Times Desk :** Ronald Araujo’s constant mistakes in high-stakes games saw the fans lash out at the Uruguayan defender after his latest blunder against Chelsea in the UEFA Champions League.

After all, the defender had himself sent off on the night at Stamford Bridge, virtually throwing the game away for the Catalans and not for the first time.

Since that game, however, Araujo has not featured for Barcelona again. He was initially left out of the squad, citing gastroenteritis, but it soon came to light that the player was not doing well on a psychological level and had requested some time off. As relayed by COPE in a report now, Araujo’s situation could be far more concerning than meets the eye. Indeed, it was initially reported that the player had asked for a few days to weeks off to recover on a psychological level and return to the right mindset to defend the club’s crest once more.

RELIEF FOR BARCELONA AS KEY TRIO WILL BE AVAILABLE TO FACE EINTRACHT FRANKFURT

**Diary Times Desk :** FC Barcelona held their final training session on Monday, ahead of Tuesday’s match against Eintracht Frankfurt at the Spotify Camp Nou in the sixth round of the UEFA Champions League’s league phase.

The Catalans aim to return to winning ways after a 3-0 defeat at Stamford Bridge against Chelsea in their last European outing.

The training session at the Ciutat Esportiva brought positive news for Hansi Flick and Barça as they get set to face the Bundesliga outfit.

Indeed, according to SPORT, Joan Garcia, Alejandro Balde and Raphinha, all trained normally with the rest of the squad and will be fit for Tuesday. Garcia ended the game against Real Betis with discomfort and was seen limping while stepping off the team bus and boarding the plane back to Barcelona. However, there is no injury for the 24-year-old key player as he was able to train normally in the gym and then on the field with the other goalkeepers, confirming his availability to face Eintracht.

FOUR BARCELONA STARS AT RISK OF SUSPENSION HEADING INTO EINTRACHT FRANKFURT CLASH

**Diary Times Desk :** FC Barcelona will be aiming to continue their winning momentum when they take on Eintracht Frankfurt in the UEFA Champions League at the Spotify Camp Nou on Tuesday night.

The Blaugrana are currently 18th in the table, with chances of securing a top-eight finish hanging by a thread. So, winning the remaining league phase matches becomes extremely pivotal for Hansi Flick & co.

Given the importance of the match against Eintracht, a full-strength line-up is expected to take the field on Tuesday at the Spotify Camp Nou. However, the manager must keep in mind that four players are one booking away from suspension and would miss the next European match against Slavia Prague on 21 January. The players in question are Frenkie de Jong, Marc Casado, Fermin Lopez and Lamine Yamal. All four have two yellow cards in the Champions League and are on the brink of an automatic one-game suspension if they pick up another booking. De Jong and Lamine are very much guaranteed to start in Tuesday’s match against Eintracht Frankfurt, while Fermin also has high chances of featuring.

BARCELONA LEGEND GERARD PIQUE BACKS TEAM FOR SUCCESS UNDER FLICK – ‘THEY ARE CONTENDERS FOR EVERYTHING’

**Diary Times Desk :** Speaking on Moeve Futbol Zone (h/t SPORT), former Barcelona defender Gerard Pique openly discussed the current situation of the Blaugrana team, the style of play and defensive risks taken under Hansi Flick.

Flick’s team has attracted criticism for their high-risk defensive line, with some pundits stating that the Catalans would find it hard to win the UEFA Champions League.

Pique, however, believes that Barcelona are strong contenders for all trophies this season and that their style of play gives fans a lot of entertainment.

“I think there has been much more noise than what is actually happening on the pitch. They are in line with what we saw last year,” said Pique. “A very offensive team, taking a lot of risks, but at the same time putting on a great show, which is ultimately what people want, scoring a lot of goals and also conceding, as is evident with Flick’s approach.”

“I think they are contenders for everything,” he added.



BARCELONA RULE OUT JANUARY LOAN EXIT FOR LA MASIA TEENAGE PRODIGY

**Diary Times Desk :** Although it has been quite some time since Marc Bernal returned to full fitness at Barcelona, his involvement in the first team has been pretty limited so far.

Even with injuries and niggles to star midfielders Pedri and Frenkie de Jong this season, Bernal has mustered only 120 minutes of competitive action so far.

This led to speculation earlier in the day that Barcelona might be looking to replicate the Eric Garcia strategy by loaning Bernal out in the upcoming January transfer window. It must be remembered that Garcia was loaned out to Girona, where he was able to find his mojo, and he came back as a much more complete individual. Reports had suggested that Barça could look for the same with Bernal, recognising that the youngster does require more regular game-time. However, according to Mundo Deportivo, it appears that Barcelona are not too keen on offloading Bernal in the January transfer window and a loan move has been ruled out. The youngster, despite his lack of game time and interest from Girona, is considered a key player in the Barcelona setup, especially heading into the second half of the season.

BARCELONA CAPTAIN WILL HAVE A NEW ROLE IN THE SQUAD AS HE NEARS RETURN FROM INJURY

**Diary Times Desk :** A new report from journalist Javier Miguel has thrown fresh light on the uncertain situation of Marc-Andre ter Stegen, revealing that the long-time Barcelona goalkeeper is expected to return not as first choice, not even as second choice, but as the third-choice goalkeeper once he receives medical clearance.

It is an extraordinary development for one of the club’s captains and one of the most influential figures in the dressing room over the past decade.

Ter Stegen is set to be given the medical green light ahead of this weekend’s clash with Osasuna.

Naturally, with the January transfer window approaching, speculation surrounding his future has resurfaced. What once seemed unthinkable, Ter Stegen fighting for minutes at Barcelona, now feels very real. The situation has changed dramatically during his absence.

Joan Garriá has seized the number-one spot with authority, producing commanding performances and earning the total trust of Hansi Flick.