

NEWS IN BRIEF

FORCES THAT KILLED GANDHI TRYING TO ERASE HIS NAME NOW: AMETHI MP KISHORI LAL SHARMA ON VB-G RAM G BILL

Diary Times Desk : Congress MP from Amethi Kishori Lal Sharma on Sunday targeted the BJP, saying the communal forces that assassinated Mahatma Gandhi are now trying to "erase his name from the country and shatter his dreams". Speaking at a press conference held at the district Congress office in Amethi's Gauriganj, Sharma said Gandhi's dream was being realised through the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

The meeting was organised to protest against the repeal of the rural jobs scheme, which has been replaced with the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Act. The MP said Gandhi wanted development schemes to be formulated in villages, its blueprint prepared there, the rural landscape to be prosperous and everyone to have employment. The MGNREGA helped realise this dream, he said.

EXPELLED CONGRESS MLA RAHUL MAMKOOTATHIL ARRESTED IN SEXUAL ASSAULT CASE

Diary Times Desk : Expelled Congress MLA Rahul Mamkootathil was arrested in connection with a sexual assault case after being taken into custody from Palakkad in the small hours on Sunday, police sources said. He was shifted to a police camp here on Sunday morning, officials added. According to police, a third sexual assault case was recently registered against the Palakkad MLA following a complaint filed by a native of Pathanamthitta district. The victim, who is currently in Canada, gave her statement to the police via video conference. According to sources, the complainant is a married woman who became acquainted with Mamkootathil following issues in her marital life. She told the police that Mamkootathil allegedly raped her after promising to marry her.

PM MODI NEWS

1,000 YEARS AFTER ATTACK, SOMNATH TEMPLE STILL STANDS TALL: PM MODI



Diary Times Desk : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday reaffirmed the enduring significance of the Somnath Temple, stating that the passage of time has reduced the fanatical invaders who once sought to destroy it to mere chapters in history, while the temple continues to stand as a symbol of resilience and faith.

Addressing a gathering at the Somnath Swabhiman Parv, the PM said, "Standing firmly on the shores of the vast ocean, Somnath's towering dharma-dhwaja still proclaims an unwavering message of spiritual strength, I rely on Chandra Shekhar Shiva, what can even time do to me?"

The PM underscored that despite facing waves of invaders and repeated assaults of religious terror throughout history, Somnath was always re-established. "The centuries-long struggle, resistance, creativity and immense resilience in reconstruction, combined with unwavering faith in our culture and beliefs, is unparalleled in world history," Modi remarked, highlighting the temple as a symbol of India's spiritual strength.

He also addressed the historical challenges faced during the reconstruction of Somnath after India's independence. He recalled that when Sardar Patel took the pledge to rebuild the temple, there were strong efforts to stop him. Even President Dr Rajendra Prasad faced opposition when he visited the temple in 1951.

Drawing a sharp contrast, PM Modi pointed out that even today, forces exist within the country that had once opposed the temple's reconstruction. He called for vigilance, strength and unity to defeat those who seek to divide the nation. Modi also underlined that the Somnath festival is not merely a remembrance of the destruction that took place a thousand years ago, but a celebration of a thousand-year-long journey symbolising India's survival, pride and continuity. He said the history of Somnath mirrors the history of India itself, marked by repeated attempts at destruction and an equally powerful tradition of renewal.

AMIT SHAH SEEKS NEUTRAL PROBE IN SABARIMALA GOLD CASE, SIGNALS BJP PUSH FOR KERALA POLLS

Diary Times Desk : Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday raised the Sabarimala gold loss case to target the ruling Left Democratic Front in Kerala, accusing it of protecting the real culprits and demanding a probe by a neutral investigation agency.

Visiting the Kerala capital for the first time after the BJP-led NDA won the Thiruvananthapuram city corporation in the recent local body elections, Shah virtually sounded the poll bugle for the Assembly elections due in a few months. He was addressing newly elected BJP representatives of local bodies in the state while inaugurating the party's Mission 2026 programme.

Shah said the Assembly elections in Kerala and West Bengal would be held together and asserted that the BJP would form governments in both states. Targeting Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan over the Sabarimala issue, he said those who failed to protect the properties of the hill shrine could not safeguard the faith of the people. "Only the BJP can safeguard the faith of believers in Kerala," he said.

According to Shah, the alleged theft of gold at Sabarimala was not just a concern for people in Kerala but for devotees across the country. He claimed to have examined the FIR in the case and alleged that it appeared to be drafted in a manner that protected the accused.



INDIA TIGHTENS CRYPTO NOOSE; LIVE SELFIES, GEO-TAGGING NOW MANDATORY FOR USERS



Diary Times Desk : In an effort to eliminate illegal activity in the digital asset market, India's Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) has unveiled stringent new Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Know Your Customer (KYC) protocols for cryptocurrency exchanges, including mandatory liveness detection and geographical tracking during the onboarding process.

The updated guidelines, issued on January 8, classify crypto exchanges as Virtual Digital Asset (VDA) service providers who will now have to do more than just allow simple document uploads.

Under the new rules, users must take a "live selfie" using software that verifies their presence, typically through eye-blinking or head movement. The measure helps prevent the use of static photos or deepfakes. Exchanges must record the exact latitude and longitude, date, timestamp and IP address from which a user starts creating an account. The "penny-drop" method, which involves processing a nominal Re 1 transaction to confirm that the bank account is active and belongs to the registrant, is required.

X ADMITS LAPSES, DELETES 600 ACCOUNTS OVER GROK OBSCENITY ROW: GOVT SOURCES



Diary Times Desk : After facing regulatory action from the IT ministry, microblogging site X has acknowledged shortcomings in its content moderation practices and admitted lapses in enforcing its standards. The company has assured that it will operate strictly in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations in the country going forward.

According to government sources, X has blocked around 3,500 pieces of content and deleted more than 600 accounts as part of its corrective measures. The platform also stated that it will not permit obscene imagery on its service. Notably, on January 2, the government issued a notice to X citing serious lapses in statutory due diligence under the Information Technology Act and related IT Rules.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) raised concerns over the alleged misuse of X's AI tool, Grok, for generating and circulating obscene, sexually explicit, and derogatory content, particularly targeting women and children.

The ministry described such content as a grave violation of dignity, privacy, and digital safety, in clear contravention of India's cyber and child protection laws. MeitY has directed X to immediately review Grok's technical architecture and governance mechanisms to prevent further misuse. The social media platform has been instructed to remove all unlawful content without delay.

I-PAC RAIDS

I-PAC RAIDS: ED MOVES SC AGAINST 'INTERFERENCE' BY WEST BENGAL CM MAMATA BANERJEE



Diary Times Desk : The Enforcement Directorate has approached the Supreme Court alleging interference and obstruction by the West Bengal government, including by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, in its probe and search operation at the I-PAC office and premises of its director Pratik Jain in connection with the coal pilferage scam.

The West Bengal government has also filed a caveat in the top court seeking that no order should be passed without hearing it in connection with Enforcement Directorate (ED) raids against political consultancy firm I-PAC.

A caveat is filed by a litigant in high courts and the Supreme Court to ensure that no adverse order is passed against it without being heard. The ED has also alleged that the chief minister entered the raid sites and took away "key" evidence, including physical documents and electronic devices from the premises of I-PAC and obstructed and interfered with the investigation in the case. The probe agency further claimed in its plea that the chief minister's presence at the search site and the alleged removal of documents had an intimidating effect on officers and seriously compromised the agency's ability to discharge its statutory functions independently.

BJP'S SANJAY KUMAR CHALLENGES OWAISI TO MAKE HIJAB-CLAD WOMAN AS AIMIM CHIEF



Diary Times Desk : Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Sunday challenged AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi to show the courage to make a hijab-clad woman as his party's chief before dreaming of a Burqa-clad lady as Prime Minister of India.

Strongly reacting to the Hyderabad MP's recent statement that India will one day have a hijab-clad woman as PM, Kumar in a post on 'X' asked, "How many Muslim women has All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen actually given tickets to as MLAs or MPs? How many Muslim women hold real decision-making posts in the Majlis? Slogans cannot hide zero representation". He said in 2018 (Assembly polls), BJP fielded Shahzadi Syed against AIMIM leader Akbaruddin Owaisi in the Old City. "She was threatened, targeted and defeated. This is your true face. Today, she serves on the National Commission for Minorities," Kumar said.

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NO ARREST YET IN DELHI WOMAN'S MURDER; SHOOTER CAUGHT ON CCTV: POLICE

Diary Times Desk : No arrest has been made so far in the killing of a 44-year-old woman who was shot dead at point-blank range in northwest Delhi's Shalimar Bagh, police on Sunday said. All the same, several teams are working on the case, and CCTV footage from many sources are being examined to identify the accused, they said. "Several teams have been formed, and they are working on different leads. The accused will be arrested soon," an officer said. Rachna Yadav, a resident of Shalimar Bagh and the president of the resident welfare association (RWA) of her locality, was shot in the head and died on the spot. Police suspect the murder to be linked to the 2023 killing of her husband, Vijendra Yadav, a case that is currently under trial. Investigators believe the shooting may have been aimed at weakening the prosecution's case and intimidating witnesses. "In the 2023 case, Vijendra Yadav was murdered due to enmity. Bharat Yadav and five others were named as accused. While five accused were arrested and are facing trial, the main accused, Bharat Yadav, is still absconding and has been declared a proclaimed offender," another officer said earlier.

DELHI SHIVERS AS FIRST COLD WAVE HITS; AIR QUALITY REMAINS 'POOR' AT 291

Diary Times Desk : Biting cold gripped the capital on Sunday as it experienced the first cold wave of the season, with minimum temperatures falling below 3.0°C at some places, according to India Meteorological Department (IMD) officials. Similar conditions are likely to prevail over the next two days, and a yellow alert has been issued in this regard, they added. The Safdarjung Observatory, Delhi's principal weather station, recorded minimum temperature of 4.8°C, 2.6 notches below the seasonal average, while the maximum temperature settled at 18.8°C, 1.1 notches below normal, IMD data showed. Intense cold wave conditions were observed at isolated places, with Palam, Ridge and Ayanagar stations reporting minimum temperatures below 4.0°C, the IMD said. According to an IMD official, this is the first instance of cold wave in the national capital during this winter season. Palam recorded its lowest minimum temperature in 13 years on Sunday, with the mercury dipping to 3°C, 4.3 notches below normal. Earlier, the Palam station had logged a minimum temperature of 2.6°C on January 7, 2013. The all-time lowest minimum temperature at Palam, however, remains minus 2.2°C, recorded on January 11, 1967. Ayanagar was the coldest place in the city, logging a minimum temperature of 2.9°C, 4.2 notches below normal.

1 JEEP, 60 PASSENGERS: THIS 'RECIPE FOR DISASTER' IN RAJASTHAN SPARKS PUBLIC OUTCRY

Diary Times Desk : A shocking video has surfaced showing around 60 passengers crammed into a 16-seater jeep in Rajasthan's Banswara district. The vehicle is overloaded with elderly people, women and small children hanging outside on the bonnet, roof and even the driver's door. The driver appears to be driving at high speed, putting everyone's safety at risk. The jeep is so overcrowded that the driver appears to have visibility only through the front windscreens. The area suffers from a shortage of public transport services, forcing people to undertake such risky journeys. District Transport Officer Pankaj Sharma stated that the situation is largely due to inadequate transport facilities, but strict action will be taken against those who violate traffic rules. After the video went viral, teams from the Transport Department and Traffic Police conducted raids and issued challans to several overloaded vehicles. The administration has promised to take strict action to ensure passenger safety.

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"Keeping this in mind, the Congress government had launched the MGNREGA, in which 90 per cent of the budget was borne by the Central Government and 10 per cent by the state government," Sharma said. He added that the entire country considers Mahatma Gandhi as the 'Father of the Nation', but the BJP wants to "erase his name".

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KARNATAKA: 56-YEAR-OLD MAN FOUND DEAD IN BURNT CAR; POLICE SUSPECT SUICIDE

Diary Times Desk : The charred body of a man was found in a car on Sunday, with police suspecting suicide. The body is suspected to be Chandrashekhar Sankol (56), a local BJP leader and former corporator, police said. Forensic teams have collected samples, and the identity of the body will be confirmed after laboratory tests, they added. Preliminary investigations suggest that Sankol may have set himself on fire, and police said both the body and the vehicle were destroyed in the blaze. Sankol was reportedly facing financial difficulties and family disputes related to heavy debt. Sources said his son and daughter, both in their early twenties, had attempted suicide earlier. After they were admitted to the hospital for treatment, Sankol went to his farm, where the incident occurred. The burnt car and body were found on a plot of land near Hadadi Road. Police said Sankol had reportedly gone to his farm in Bisseri village in the taluk on Saturday night.

APPREHENSION OF DETENU ENGAGING IN CRIME IF GRANTED BAIL NO GROUND FOR PREVENTIVE DETENTION: SC

Diary Times Desk : Mere apprehension on the part of the detaining authority that if a detenu is released on bail, he/she would indulge in similar crimes that would be prejudicial to public order will not be a sufficient ground to order preventive detention, the Supreme Court has said. A Bench of Justices J K Maheshwari and A S Chandrakar set aside the detention order of a woman from Hyderabad, who was found to be a "drug offender" under the 1986 Telangana law Prevention of Dangerous Activities on the ground that the detention order did not indicate in what manner the maintenance of public order was either adversely affected or was likely to be adversely affected so as to detain the detenu. "Thus, mere apprehension on the part of the detaining authority that in the event of the detenu being released on bail, she was likely to indulge in similar crimes that would be prejudicial to maintenance of public order would not be a sufficient ground to order her preventive detention.

HC CAUTIONS COURTS AGAINST HARSH CONDITIONS WHILE RELEASING SEIZED PROPERTY

Diary Times Desk : The Punjab and Haryana High Court has made it clear that courts must not impose harsh or unrealistic conditions while releasing seized property on 'sapurdari'. Such conditions, the court held, should protect evidence, not punish citizens indirectly. Justice Sumeet Goel also made it clear keeping the property away from its rightful owner for long periods—or burdening its release with excessive conditions—became unreasonable and unfair once the evidentiary value of seized property could be preserved through photographs, videography or detailed panchnamas. "The continued withholding of the property from rightful claimant ceases to be a proportionate investigative measure," Justice Goel observed, adding that release conditions "must serve the intended purpose of temporary custodianship and not operate as an indirect punitive measure against the claimant or arbitrary hurdle to the release."

KEEP SWIMMING, NEVER GIVE UP: SHUBHANSU SHUKLA'S 'FINDING NEMO' LESSON FOR YOUNGSTERS

Diary Times Desk : Learn to bounce back from failures, never be satisfied and keep moving towards progress. These were the mantras for success shared by astronauts Shubhanshu Shukla and Prasanth Nair in an interactive session with youngsters on Sunday. At the ongoing Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue here, Shukla recalled the message from the movie "Finding Nemo" — "keep swimming", "never give up" — and urged the youngsters from across the country to give their best to the tasks chosen by them to achieve success. "We should learn to realise what we have. We actually try to focus on what we do not have. Respect what you have, make the best of it and success will keep coming back to you without even asking," said Shukla in a fireside chat at the event organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. Nair, who also trained with Shukla for the Axiom-4 mission last year, urged the youngsters to keep 'Bharat' as the role model and an inspiration, and work for the welfare of the country. "My role model is this great country, Bharat. All great souls who have walked on this soil have been energised by this place. Whenever you do anything, do remember (that) it is not a single person that will bring you to Viksit Bharat, it is the entire nation."



'OPERATION HAWKEYE STRIKE': US LAUNCHES 'LARGE-SCALE' AIRSTRIKES AGAINST ISIS IN SYRIA



Diary Times Desk : The US has launched another round of retaliatory strikes against the Islamic State in Syria following last month's ambush that killed two US soldiers and one American civilian interpreter in the country.

The large-scale strikes, conducted by the US alongside partner forces, occurred around 12:30 pm ET, according to US Central Command. The strikes hit multiple Islamic State targets across Syria.

Saturday's strikes are part of a broader operation that is part of President Donald Trump's response to the deadly ISIS attack that killed Sgt Edgar Brian Torres-Tovar, Sgt William Nathaniel Howard, and Ayad Mansoor Sakat, the civilian interpreter, in Palmyra last month.

"Our message remains strong: if you harm our war fighters, we will find you and kill you anywhere in the world, no matter how hard you try to evade justice," US Central Command said in a statement on Saturday.

The administration is calling the response to the Palmyra attacks Operation Hawkeye Strike. Both Torres-Tovar and Howard were members of the Iowa National Guard.

It launched Dec 19 with another large-scale strike that hit 70 targets across central Syria that had IS infrastructure and weapons.

US TROOPS, ISRAEL WILL BE TARGETS IF AMERICA STRIKES OVER PROTESTS, WARNS IRAN



Diary Times Desk : Nationwide protests challenging Iran's theocracy saw protesters flood the streets in the country's capital and its second-largest city into Sunday, crossing the two-week mark as violence surrounding the demonstrations has killed at least 116 people, activists said. With the internet down in Iran and phone lines cut off, gauging the demonstrations from abroad has grown more difficult. But the death toll in the protests has grown, while 2,600 others have been detained, according to the US-based Human Rights Activists News Agency. Meanwhile, Iran's parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf warned the US military and Israel would be "legitimate targets" if America strikes the Islamic Republic, as threatened by President Donald Trump. Qalibaf made the threat as lawmakers rushed the dais in the Iranian parliament, shouting: "Death to America!" Those abroad fear the information blackout will embolden hard-liners within Iran's security services to launch a bloody crackdown.

ISRAEL ON 'HIGH ALERT' FOR POSSIBILITY OF US INTERVENTION IN IRAN

Diary Times Desk : Israel is on high alert for the possibility of any US intervention in Iran as authorities there confront the biggest anti-government protests in years, according to three Israeli sources with knowledge of the matter. President Donald Trump has repeatedly threatened to intervene in recent days and warned Iran's rulers against using force against demonstrators. On Saturday, Trump said the US stands "ready to help". The sources, who were present for Israeli security consultations over the weekend, did not elaborate on what Israel's high-alert footing meant in practice. Israel and Iran fought a 12-day war in June, in which the US joined Israel in launching airstrikes. In a phone call on Saturday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and US Secretary of State Marco Rubio discussed the possibility of US intervention in Iran, according to an Israeli source who was present for the conversation.

TENS OF THOUSANDS PROTEST IN MINNEAPOLIS OVER FATAL ICE SHOOTING

Diary Times Desk : Tens of thousands of people marched through Minneapolis on Saturday to decry the fatal shooting of a woman by a US immigration agent, part of more than 1,000 rallies planned nationwide this weekend against the federal government's deportation drive. The massive turnout in Minneapolis despite a whipping, cold wind underscores how the fatal shooting of 37-year-old Renee Good by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer on Wednesday has struck a chord, fueling protests in major cities and some towns. Minnesota's Democratic leaders and the administration of President Donald Trump, a Republican, have offered starkly different accounts of the incident. Led by a team of Indigenous Mexican dancers, demonstrators in Minneapolis, which has a metropolitan population of 3.8 million, marched towards the residential street where Good was shot in her car. The boisterous crowd, which the Minneapolis Police Department estimated in the tens of thousands, chanted Good's name and slogans such as "Abolish ICE" and "No justice, no peace — get ICE off our streets." "I'm insanely angry, completely heartbroken and devastated, and then just like longing and hoping that things get better," Ellison Montgomery, a 30-year-old protester, told Reuters.



'365 BUTTONS' TREND: WHAT DOES THIS FIRST VIRAL MEME OF 2026 MEAN?

Diary Times Desk : A simple yet powerful trend has taken over TikTok, encouraging people to prioritise self-care and set boundaries. The '365 buttons' trend, which started with a comment from Tamara on Abbie Keeler's video, has become a viral sensation, with people sharing their own interpretations and meanings behind carrying a button every day.

Tamara commented that she wanted to buy 365 buttons, one for each day of the year. Her goal was to be more mindful of time and get more things done. Other TikTok users were confused and asked if she would wear the buttons, put them in a jar or sew them onto her clothes. She said she didn't know and didn't need to know. She simply wanted to carry a button with her every day. Her straightforward answer resonated with people online. That unapologetic answer struck a chord.

MOTHERS PASS ON MATHS ANXIETY TO KIDS, SURVEY BY RISHI SUNAK'S UK CHARITY FINDS

Diary Times Desk : Mothers tend to pass on their own anxiety over mathematics to their daughters, creating a gender gap of confidence in the subject over time, new research by an education charity set up by former prime minister Rishi Sunak and his wife Akshata Murty has discovered. The findings of the survey by the Richmond Project, reported in 'The Sunday Times' ahead of its official publication next week, reveal that girls become less confident and hence less able in maths from the age of eight. It found that 51 per cent of boys aged four to eight thought that maths was "easy" compared with 41 per cent of girls. This gap widened over time, with 86 per cent of boys aged nine to 18 saying they were confident in the subject compared with 63 per cent of girls. "Our survey shows, if they are parents, women tend to struggle more with helping children with their maths homework compared to men. And so that goes on and on," Murty told the newspaper. "There is this anxiety that women feel more so than men. I'm not saying men don't feel it at all, but women tend to feel it more and that translates intergenerationally. "If a young girl sees her mother feeling anxious then she subconsciously buys into that anxiety. So I think that's how that cycle goes on and on," she said. Murty, daughter of Infosys co-founder Narayana Murty and Sudha Murty, pointed to her own strong role models in STEM — science, technology, engineering and maths — from an early age. While her mother trained as an engineer.

WORLD HINDI DAY CELEBRATED IN SHANGHAI WITH PARTICIPATION FROM CHINESE UNIVERSITIES

Diary Times Desk : The Indian Consulate in Shanghai celebrated World Hindi Day with the active participation of Hindi students and teachers from leading universities in eastern China.

Addressing the gathering on Saturday, Consul General of India in Shanghai Pratik Mathur said Hindi connects people beyond borders. Emphasising the dignity and global relevance of the language, he read out Prime Minister Narendra Modi's message, stating that Hindi is not merely a language but a powerful link that carries India's sensitivity, values and thought to the world, according to a post shared by the Consulate on X.

Students and teachers from prestigious institutions such as Fudan University, Shanghai International Studies University and East China Normal University shared their creative works and perspectives on Hindi with the audience. Several Chinese universities currently offer Hindi as a regular academic course, reflecting growing interest in the language.

Members of the Indian diaspora and representatives from the Shanghai based diplomatic community also attended the event. The celebration featured cultural performances, including presentations by children from the Shanghai Theatre Academy and a Bharatanatyam performance, adding a vibrant artistic touch to the occasion.

"NO MORE OIL OR MONEY GOING TO CUBA," SAYS US PRESIDENT TRUMP

Diary Times Desk : US President Donald Trump on Sunday claimed that Cuba had lived for many years on Venezuelan oil and money but said that this would now stop after the United States launched a strike in Venezuela and captured its President, Nicolas Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores. In a post on Truth Social, Trump wrote, "Cuba lived, for many years, on large amounts of OIL and MONEY from Venezuela. In return, Cuba provided "Security Services" for the last two Venezuelan dictators, BUT NOT ANYMORE! Most of those Cubans are DEAD from last weeks U.S.A. attack, and Venezuela doesn't need protection anymore from the thugs and extortionists who held them hostage for so many years. Venezuela now has the United States of America, the most powerful military in the World (by far!), to protect them.

"LOOKING FORWARD TO HAVING PRESIDENT ZELENSKY THIS YEAR IN INDIA", SAYS UKRAINIAN AMBASSADOR TO INDIA

Diary Times Desk : Ambassador of Ukraine to India, Oleksandr Polischuk, said that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is expected to visit India later this year to discuss projects that the two countries can undertake together. Speaking to ANI at the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference, Ambassador Polischuk said the event provided an excellent platform to explore cooperation and business opportunities. "Vibrant Gujarat is a very good opportunity for us to discuss business projects and cooperation. We had a very great time. We are looking forward to having President Zelenskyy this year in India so we can discuss the projects we can run together in India and Ukraine," he said. Polischuk's remarks come as India and Ukraine continue to explore avenues for collaboration across sectors such as infrastructure.

POPE HOPES FOR PEACE IN MIDDLE EAST, UKRAINE AMID RISING VIOLENCE IN IRAN

Diary Times Desk : Pope Leo on Sunday expressed deep concern over escalating violence in the Middle East and Ukraine, offering prayers for peace and urging renewed dialogue to end conflicts that continue to claim civilian lives. During his address, the Pope said his thoughts were with people affected by unrest in West Asia, particularly Iran and Syria, where prolonged instability has led to widespread suffering. "My thoughts turn to the situation currently unfolding in the Middle East, especially in Iran and Syria, where ongoing tensions continue to claim many lives. I hope and pray that dialogue and peace may be patiently nurtured in pursuit of the common good of the whole of society," Pope Leo XIV wrote in an X post. The Pope's remarks come amid heightened tensions and violence across Iran, where anti-government protests snowballed into widespread tension. According to the US-based human rights organisation HRANA, at least 116 people have been killed since the protests began in Iran, which have escalated into widespread violent confrontations across 30 provinces. Turning to the conflict in Eastern Europe, the Pope highlighted the worsening humanitarian impact of attacks in Ukraine, especially as winter conditions intensify.

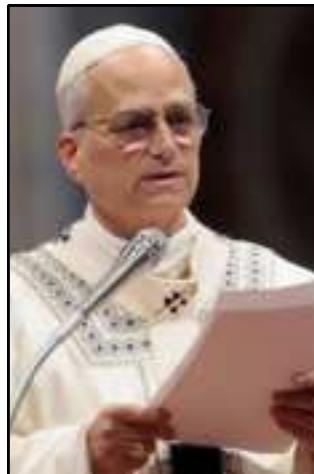


US, ISRAEL WANT TO "SOW CHAOS AND DISORDER" BY ORDERING "RIOTS" IN IRAN: PRESIDENT PEZESHKIAN

Diary Times Desk : Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian has accused the United States and Israel of seeking to destabilise the country, saying they want to "sow chaos and disorder" in Iran by ordering "riots" and urging citizens to distance themselves from "rioters and terrorists," Al Jazeera reported. The remarks came as Iran's state media reported mounting casualties among security forces amid protests driven by an economic crisis. State television said on Sunday that 30 members of the police and security forces were killed in Isfahan province and six others in Kermanshah in western Iran during the latest unrest. The semi-official Tasnim news agency put the nationwide toll among security personnel at 109. The Iranian Red Crescent Society said one staff member died during an attack on one of its relief buildings in Gorgan, the capital of Golestan province. State media also reported that a mosque was set on fire in Mashhad in eastern Iran on Saturday night. Iranian authorities have stepped up action to quell what has been described as the country's largest protests in years.

KHAMENEI TELLS TRUMP TO "MANAGE HIS OWN COUNTRY" AMID IRAN PROTESTS

Diary Times Desk : Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Sunday took a sharp jibe at US President Donald Trump for backing anti-government protests in Iran, telling him to "manage his own country" instead of commenting on Iran's internal affairs. In a message posted on X, Khamenei accused the US President of encouraging unrest in Iran while failing to address serious problems at home. "The President of the United States declared that if the Iranian government did this or that, he would side with the rioters. The rioters have placed their hopes in him. If he is so competent, let him manage his own country then," Khamenei wrote.



Khamenei's remarks came after Trump said the United States was "ready to help" Iranian protesters, as demonstrations across the country entered their second week. Trump made the remarks in a post on Truth Social. Trump said, "Iran is looking at FREEDOM, perhaps like never before. The USA stands ready to help!!! The Supreme Leader's comments reflect growing tension between Tehran and Washington as protests spread across Iran. The unrest is now being seen as one of the most serious challenges to Khamenei's authority in recent years. Earlier, Khamenei also accused the US administration of being behind the large-scale protests in Iran.

RUSSIA BEGINS CLINICAL USE OF CELL-BASED TECHNOLOGY FOR EARDRUM REPAIR

Diary Times Desk : The Clinical Centre of IM Sechenov First Moscow State Medical University, commonly known as Sechenov University, has begun performing innovative eardrum repair procedures using tissue equivalents created from patients' own cells. According to the university's official portal, this is the world's first reported clinical application of a cell-based medicinal product (CBMP) for the regeneration of the tympanic membrane. The breakthrough marks a significant milestone in regenerative medicine. Sechenov University Rector Petr Glybochko said the institution is the only medical university in Russia to have completed the entire translational pathway, from fundamental research to certified production of a cell product and its clinical use within its own medical facility, as reported by TV BRICS. The research is being conducted under state programmes supporting science and education. The technology involves extracting cells from a patient's adipose tissue and forming them into cell spheroids. These spheroids are implanted along with a resorbable membrane at the site of the damaged eardrum. Over time, the membrane dissolves and is replaced by the patient's own regenerated tissue, which closely matches the structure and function of a natural eardrum.



BANGLADESH: SHARIATPUR BOMB EXPLOSION DEATH TOLL RISES TO 2

Diary Times Desk : The death toll in the bomb explosion in Zajira upazila of Shariatpur increased to two after Md Nabin Hossain, 22, died while receiving treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), The Daily Star reported. Another person injured in the blast, Arman Nayan Molla, 25, is still in critical condition.

According to The Daily Star, the explosion occurred early Thursday inside a tin-shed house in Beparkandi village under Bilashpur Union. The blast destroyed the structure and blew off its roof. Police later recovered materials used for making bombs from the site, the report said. Md Faruk, in-charge of the DMCH police camp, confirmed that Nabin died around 4:30 pm while doctors were assessing the injured and the extent of the damage. Nabin, who worked as a mechanic, suffered serious injuries to his face and hands. His body has been kept at the hospital morgue. In a related development,

IRAN: ISFAHAN GOVERNOR CONFIRMS 30 SECURITY PERSONNEL KILLED IN FOREIGN-BACKED RIOTS

Diary Times Desk : Isfahan Governor Ali Ahmadi confirmed that 30 security personnel lost their lives in what he described as foreign-backed unrest in the province, according to Iranian state broadcaster Press TV. Addressing the issue on Sunday, Ahmadi stated that funeral processions for the slain personnel are scheduled to take place on Monday. He also said that civilian casualties included a two-month-old infant during the violence. Press TV reported that the riots resulted in extensive destruction, with 10 mosques in Isfahan set on fire. In the adjacent province of Fars, at least 12 security personnel were also killed during the riots, as quoted by Press TV from Ibrahim Bayani, Director General of the provincial Martyrs' Foundation department. Separately, Police Special Units Commander General Masoud Modaqq said on Sunday that eight members of his unit.

CANADIAN PM CARNEY URGED TO PRIORITISE HUMAN RIGHTS DURING CHINA VISIT: HRW



Diary Times Desk : Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney should make human rights a central element of his upcoming visit to China from January 13 to 17, 2026, Human Rights Watch (HRW) has said. The visit marks the first trip by a Canadian prime minister to China in more than eight years, amid strained bilateral relations following years of intensified repression by the Chinese government, as cited by the HRW report.

According to HRW, relations between the two countries deteriorated significantly after China detained two Canadian citizens between 2018 and 2021 in apparent retaliation for Canada's arrest of a Huawei executive.

The organisation warned that Beijing's deepening repression not only threatens the rights of Chinese citizens but also poses risks to Canada's broader interests.

"Prime Minister Carney should recognise that the Chinese government's deepening repression threatens not just the rights of people in China but, increasingly, Canada's core interests and values," said Maya Wang, HRW's deputy Asia director, as cited in the report. She emphasised that engagements on trade and security should align with Canada's commitment to human rights.

TAIWAN'S TOP INTELLIGENCE AGENCY SAYS CHINA USING FAKE NEWS SITES, BOT NETWORKS FOR 'COGNITIVE WARFARE'

Diary Times Desk : Taiwan's National Security Bureau (NSB) has revealed that China is allegedly using Chinese IT and marketing companies to run large-scale disinformation campaigns aimed at influencing Taiwanese public opinion and weakening social cohesion, according to a report cited by the Central News Agency (CNA). In its analysis of the People's Republic of China's "cognitive warfare tactics against Taiwan in 2025," the NSB said Taiwan's intelligence system identified over 45,000 fake social media accounts and more than 2,314 million pieces of disinformation circulating online. According to the NSB, these efforts are part of a coordinated operation overseen by China's Central Publicity Department and the Ministry of Public Security (MPS). Chinese IT companies have reportedly built databases and developed automated systems to manage fake or bot-operated accounts, CNA reported. The report further noted that marketing firms such as Haikunshe, Haimai, and Huya have been used to create fake news websites that promote Beijing-friendly narratives.

PROTESTERS ACROSS EUROPE DEMONSTRATE SOLIDARITY WITH THE IRANIAN PROTESTS

Diary Times Desk : Protesters rallied in several European cities to express solidarity with Iranian protests against the regime, EuroNews reported. People of Iranian descent living abroad, or of Iranian descent, gathered on the Malieveld, a large grass field in The Hague, and expressed concern about being unable to contact their kin amid the internet blackout. Another demonstration was also held in the German capital, Berlin, to support the two-week-long protests, which they say have become one of the greatest challenges to Iran's authorities since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, as per EuroNews. Protesters in Berlin told EuroNews that they hoped their activism would lead Europe and the United States to assist the Iranians in their struggle to topple the regime. Meanwhile, the Iranian army issued a warning that it will defend the country's "national interests" as anti-government protests escalated amid widespread arrests and an internet blackout, Al Jazeera reported. In a statement carried by semi-official news sites on Saturday, the military alleged that Israel and "hostile terrorist groups" were trying.

IRAN PARLIAMENT SPEAKER WARNS US BASES, SHIPPING CENTRES WOULD BE "LEGITIMATE TARGETS" IF WASHINGTON INTERVENES MILITARILY



Diary Times Desk : Iran's parliamentary speaker, Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, warned that Tehran would view US military and commercial bases as "legitimate targets" for retaliation if Washington intervenes militarily amid continuing unrest in the country. "If the US takes military action towards Iran or the occupied territories, the US military and shipping centres will be considered legitimate targets," Qalibaf said. "We do not limit ourselves to only reacting after an action has been taken," he added. Qalibaf's remarks came after United States President Donald Trump reiterated his threat to attack Iran if authorities used force to suppress a growing wave of nationwide protests triggered by public frustration against the government. Trump said on Friday (local time) that the situation in Iran is being monitored very closely and expressed hope that protesters remain safe, warning that if protesters were killed, the US would get involved and would hit the country where it hurts. Trump made the remarks while responding to media questions during a meeting with top oil and gas executives at the White House. "Iran's in big trouble. It looks to me that the people are taking over certain cities that nobody thought were really possible. We're watching the situation very carefully."

SOMALIA DEFENCE MINISTER ALLEGES ISRAEL PLAN TO RELOCATE PALESTINIANS TO SOMALILAND

Diary Times Desk : Somalia's Defence Minister Ahmed Moalim Fiqi alleged that Israel is working on a plan to forcibly move Palestinians to the breakaway region of Somaliland, describing the reported move as a "serious violation" of international law, Al Jazeera reported. Speaking to Al Jazeera on Saturday, Fiqi claimed Somalia has "confirmed information that Israel has a plan to transfer Palestinians and to send them to [Somaliland]". The report said the comments came amid long-standing concerns voiced by Somali officials over the possibility of Palestinians being forcibly expelled from Gaza to Somaliland, allegations denied by both Israel and Somaliland. Somaliland declared independence from Somalia in 1991, but has not received United Nations recognition. Al Jazeera reported that Israel's decision in December made it the first country to recognise Somaliland as independent. Israel's Foreign Minister Gideon Saar told Israel's Channel 14 last week.

"BEST TIME FOR NEW INVESTORS TO COME TO INDIA," SAYS COMMERCIAL COUNSELLOR AT NORWEGIAN EMBASSY

Diary Times Desk : At Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conferences, Bjørn Iversen, Commercial Counsellor at the Norwegian Embassy in Delhi and Country Head of Innovation Norway, said that this is the best time for new investors to come to India. Iversen said that they were looking to increase business between India and Norway. Speaking to ANI, he said, "We are looking to increase business between India and Norway. That's based on the fact that last year in October, we entered into an agreement between India and EFTA, including Norway, on reducing tariffs, increasing trade and motivating investments, especially in India. I think this is the best time for the new investors to come to India. So, I am here and hopefully we will find some attractive opportunities." Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference for Kutch and Saurashtra Region in Rajkot on Sunday.

RUSSIA LAUNCHED OVER 1,000 DRONES INTO UKRAINE IN PAST WEEK: ZELENSKY

Diary Times Desk : Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Sunday said that Russia launched almost 1,100 attack drones against Ukraine over the course of this week. He informed that Russia has launched more than 890 guided aerial bombs, and over 50 missiles of various types - ballistic, cruise, and even the Oreshnik medium-range ballistic missile. Zelenskyy further said that the attacks were made on establishments like energy infrastructure, residential buildings, which have no military purpose. "Over the course of this week, Russia launched almost 1,100 attack drones against Ukraine, more than 890 guided aerial bombs, and over 50 missiles of various types - ballistic, cruise, and even the Oreshnik medium-range ballistic missile. And they struck targets that have no military purpose whatsoever - energy infrastructure, residential buildings," the Ukrainian President posted on X. "They deliberately waited for freezing weather to make things worse for our people. This is deliberate, cynical Russian terror specifically against civilians. I thank our mobile fire groups that defend Ukraine from these attacks day and night, and all our other warriors from air defence units and electronic warfare units," he added. Zelenskyy said that energy workers and repair crews were working to restore electricity, heat, and water supply for people. "In many regions, the situation remains difficult after Russian strikes on our critical infrastructure. Energy workers and repair crews are working around the clock to restore electricity, heat, and water supply for people."



PTI SHIFTS KARACHI RALLY TO MAZAR-I-QUAID, ALLEGES POLICE CRACKDOWN AND ROADBLOCKS

Diary Times Desk : Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders insisted they would hold a public gathering at Mazar-i-Quaid in Karachi on Sunday after the party alleged that Sindh police raided Bagh-i-Jinnah, the earlier planned rally venue, on Saturday night and subjected party workers to violence, Dawn reported. The rally was part of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister's three-day visit to Sindh, during which he is leading PTI's street mobilisation drive. The visit began with his arrival in Karachi on Friday afternoon. He visited Hyderabad on Saturday, and PTI planned to conclude the tour with a public gathering in Karachi. PTI spokesperson Mohammad Ali Bozdar told Dawn that police blocked roads and did not allow PTI workers to enter Bagh-i-Jinnah, where the government had permitted the party to hold the rally. Bozdar said the KP chief minister would now arrive at Mazar-i-Quaid at 3 pm, repeating his allegation that roads were blocked in various areas and workers were being stopped from reaching the venue. PTI also said in a post on its X account around 8 am on Sunday that the gathering would be held at Mazar-i-Quaid at 2 pm. PTI Sindh President Haleem Adil Sheikh said in a video statement that the rally would be held at Mazar-i-Quaid on Sunday.

THAI PM CALLS FOR OVERHAUL OF BORDER MOUS WITH CAMBODIA AMID POLL CAMPAIGN TENSIONS

Diary Times Desk : Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul has renewed calls for a fundamental review of two long-standing memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with Cambodia governing unresolved land and maritime border disputes, arguing that advances in technology and internationally recognised standards make the existing frameworks outdated, reports Bangkok Post. Speaking this week, Anutin said the MoU signed in 2000, which covers land border demarcation, and the one signed in 2001, dealing with overlapping maritime areas, should be revised or replaced altogether. He suggested a new, updated framework -- potentially under a different title -- that would reflect modern surveying methods and clearer legal principles. However, Anutin stressed that his caretaker administration could not push through binding changes.

JIO TO LAUNCH PEOPLE-FIRST AI PLATFORM, FOR INDIA AND THE WORLD: MUKESH AMBANI

Diary Times Desk : Jio will launch a people-first artificial intelligence platform built in India, for India, and the world, Reliance Industries Chairman and Managing Director Mukesh Ambani announced on Sunday, at the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference for Kutch and Saurashtra Region in Rajkot. According to Mukesh Ambani, the platform will enable every citizen, starting from Gujarat, to access AI services in their "own language, on their own device, every day to make them more efficient and productive." He vowed to make Gujarat India's artificial intelligence pioneer. "In Jamnagar, we are building India's largest artificial intelligence-ready data centre with a single goal -- affordable AI for every Indian," Mukesh Ambani said. This regional summit in Rajkot will be a true force multiplier for the manifold development of Saurashtra, he said.

NEW DELHI TO SHINE ON GLOBAL STAGE, NDMC PREPARES FOR INDIA AI IMPACT SUMMIT

Diary Times Desk : The national capital is set to witness a transformative makeover as the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) gears up for the prestigious India AI Impact Summit 2026, scheduled to be held in February. Envisioned as a major global platform on inclusive artificial intelligence, the summit will bring world leaders, policymakers, innovators, and global AI experts to New Delhi, placing the city firmly in the international spotlight. In line with the vision of delivering a G20-level experience, NDMC has launched an extensive and comprehensive civic revamp across its jurisdiction. The preparations aim to project India's technological prowess, urban excellence, and renowned hospitality through world-class infrastructure, immaculate cleanliness, enhanced lighting and aesthetic beautification. These initiatives are being undertaken under the directions of the Chief Secretary, Government of NCT of Delhi, to ensure a lasting global impression of a modern, efficient, and welcoming capital city. The core focus of NDMC's preparations includes large-scale infrastructure.

MCAP OF TOP 7 MOST VALUED FIRMS ERODES BY RS 3.63 LAKH CRORE; RELIANCE BIGGEST LAGGARD

Diary Times Desk : The combined market valuation of seven of the top-10 most valued firms eroded by Rs 3,63,412.18 crore last week, with Reliance Industries emerging as the biggest laggard, amid a bearish trend in equities. Last week, the BSE benchmark declined by 2,185.77 points or 2.54 per cent. "Indian equity markets ended last week on a negative note, reflecting heightened risk aversion triggered by renewed US tariff threats and rising geopolitical tensions," Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said. While Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Bharti Airtel, Infosys, Bajaj Finance and Larsen & Toubro faced erosion from their valuation, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, and Hindustan Unilever were the gainers. The market valuation of Reliance Industries tumbled Rs 1,58,532.91 crore to Rs 19,96,445.69 crore. HDFC Bank's valuation eroded by Rs 96,153.61 crore to Rs 14,44,150.26 crore. The market valuation of Bharti Airtel declined by Rs 45,274.72 crore to Rs 11,55,987.81 crore, and that of Bajaj Finance plunged Rs 18,729.68 crore to Rs 5,97,700.75 crore.



KANDLA PORT SIGNS MOU WITH GREEN-KUTCH NEXTGEN TO PROMOTE GREEN HYDROGEN ECOSYSTEM

Diary Times Desk : Deendayal Port Authority (DPA), Kandla, Chairman, Sushil Kumar Singh, IRSME, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Green-Kutch NextGen Pvt. Ltd. during the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference at Rajkot on Sunday. This is a significant step to promote community participation in the Green Hydrogen ecosystem at Kandla under the National Green Hydrogen Mission, a release said. The partnership aims to empower Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), generate youth employment and accelerate decarbonisation. DPA will develop "Kutch Green Hydrogen Park" with plug-and-play infrastructure, enabling industry partners to set up modular green hydrogen production & storage facilities, advancing India's Net Zero Vision. On January 1, DPA Kandla successfully went fully live with all modules of the Enterprise Business System (EBS), marking a significant step in the port's digital transformation. The launch was attended by Sushil Kumar Singh, IRSME, Chairman, and Nilabhra Dasgupta, IRS, Deputy Chairman, along with senior officials from DPA, EBS, and Tech Mahindra, according to a release. The implementation of EBS at DPA Kandla is expected to significantly reduce the cost of doing business, improve supply chain visibility, and enhance ease of doing business for port users and stakeholders.



ADANI GROUP TO INVEST RS 1.5 LAKH CRORE IN GUJARAT'S KUTCH REGION OVER NEXT 5 YEARS: KARAN ADANI

Diary Times Desk : The Adani Group has committed to invest Rs 1.5 lakh crore over the next five years in the Kutch region of Gujarat, Karan Adani, Managing Director, Adani Ports and SEZ Limited, announced on Sunday, at the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference for Kutch and Saurashtra Region. Karan Adani vowed that the Group will complete its mega Khavda project and commission the full 37 gigawatt of capacity by 2030. Adani Group will also double its port capacity at Mundra in the next 10 years time, he said. "Every one of these investments aligns with India's national priorities, employment generation, industrial competitiveness, sustainability, and long-term resilience," he said. As India advances towards Vixit Bharat 2047, Gujarat will remain a cornerstone of this national transformation, he said. "The Adani Group remains deeply committed to being a trusted partner in building a strong, self-reliant, and globally respected India," Karan Adani said. The Managing Director of Adani Ports and SEZ Limited said Kutch represents a very powerful symbol of transformation. "Once considered remote and challenging, Kutch today has emerged as one of India's most strategic industrial, logistics and energy hubs," he said. "For Adani Group, Mundra is our Karma Bhoomi. It is not only India's largest commercial port and a fully integrated multimodal logistics gateway, but it is also home to India's largest copper smelter plant, coal to PVC complex and solar manufacturing complex."



INDIA AUTO ANCILLARY SECTOR POISED TO BENEFIT FROM DEMAND UPCYCLE, EV PUSH: REPORT

Diary Times Desk : India's auto ancillary sector is entering a favourable phase, supported by a structural demand upcycle, policy tailwinds and rising vehicle content intensity, according to a recent research report by Share India Securities. Citing industry analysts, the report asserted that the sector is expected to deliver steady growth over the coming quarters, aided by improving domestic vehicle production, export momentum, and gradual margin recovery. The Indian auto-component industry recorded a turnover of approximately Rs 6.7 lakh crore (around USD 80 billion) in 2025-25, marking nearly 10 per cent year-on-year growth, as per the report. Exports reached nearly USD 23 billion, underscoring the increasing competitiveness of Indian suppliers in global markets. Analysts estimate revenue growth of 7-9 per cent in 2025-26, supported by resilient replacement demand and operating leverage benefits as volumes scale up.

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN DRIVES DEVELOPMENTAL TRANSFORMATION ACROSS KARNATAKA, ANDHRA PRADESH THROUGH MP FUNDS

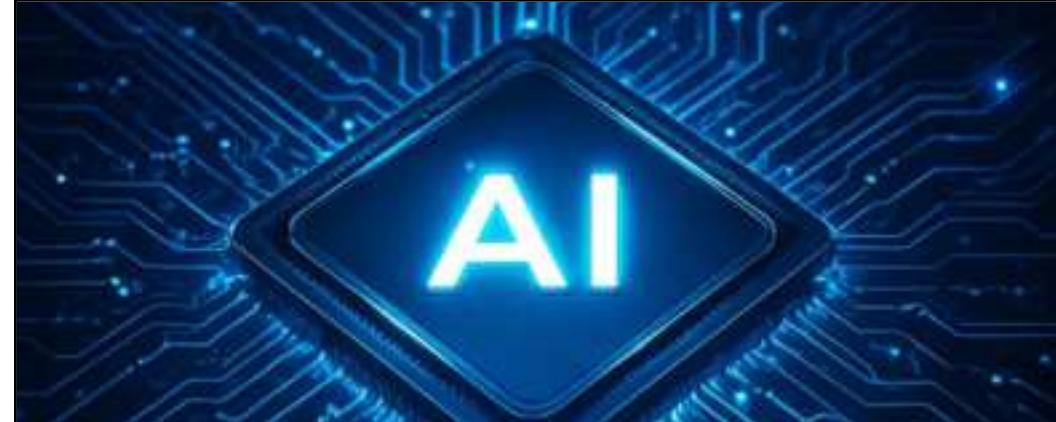
Diary Times Desk : Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has led a series of impactful development initiatives across Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, leveraging the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) to deliver tangible benefits in infrastructure, livelihoods, environment, technology, and education. A thread of tweets from the Finance Minister's office highlighted on Sunday how these initiatives, undertaken during her tenure as a Rajya Sabha Member from Andhra Pradesh (2014-16) and Karnataka (since 2016), are driving grassroots-level transformation. One of the earliest and most visible interventions in Karnataka was the restoration of Kalena Agrahara Lake in Bengaluru in 2017, funded with Rs 75 lakh under the MPLADS scheme. The rejuvenation included desilting, strengthening of bunds, and ecological restoration of the seven-acre lake.

RELIANCE INDUSTRIES TO DOUBLE INVESTMENT IN GUJARAT TO RS 7 LAKH CRORE: MUKESH AMBANI

Diary Times Desk : Reliance Industries Chairman and Managing Director Mukesh Ambani on Sunday announced that the conglomerate will double its investment in Gujarat, to Rs 7 lakh crores, over the next five years. He announced five firm commitments for Gujarat, at the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference for Kutch and Saurashtra Region in Rajkot. "First, investment at unprecedented scale. Reliance is already Gujarat's largest investor. In the last five years, we have invested over Rs 3.5 lakh crores," he said. The second commitment is to make Gujarat a global leadership in clean energy and green materials. "At Jamnagar, we are building the world's largest integrated clean energy ecosystem, spanning solar, battery energy storage, green hydrogen, green fertilizer, sustainable aviation fuel, and maritime fuels, and advanced materials. These are not only industries of the future, they are foundations of India's prosperous tomorrow. Jamnagar, once the largest hydrocarbon energy exporter, will in the coming years become India's largest exporter of green energy and material, from Gujarat," he said. Third, he vowed to transform the Kutch region into a global clean energy hub. "Our multi-gigawatt utility scale solar project, among the world's largest, will deliver round-the-clock clean power through advanced storage and modern grid integration, powering India's green future, and reinforcing Gujarat's leadership in renewables," Mukesh Ambani said. Jio will launch a people-first artificial intelligence platform built in India, for India, and the world, Reliance Industries Chairman and Managing Director Mukesh Ambani announced on Sunday, at the According to Mukesh Ambani, the platform will enable every citizen, starting from Gujarat, to access AI services in their "own language, on their own device, every day to make them more efficient and productive."



INDIA MUST ACCELERATE AI, INDUSTRIAL AUTOMATION TO UNLOCK MANUFACTURING POTENTIAL: REPORT



Diary Times Desk : India must accelerate AI-led innovation, industrial automation, and the adoption of frontier technologies to fully realise its manufacturing ambitions, according to The Make-in-India Upgrade: Advanced Manufacturing Trends, a December 2025 chartbook by Ionic Wealth. India stands at a critical juncture in its industrial journey, with advanced manufacturing emerging as a decisive lever for long-term economic competitiveness. The report noted that failure to unlock advanced manufacturing could leave India with a manufacturing GDP gap by 2047 Viksit Bharat vision.

Under a business-as-usual scenario, manufacturing GDP would reach only USD 2.3 trillion, far below the USD 7.4 trillion potential, highlighting what the report calls a "significant gap" if decisive action is not taken. At the core of the recommended strategy is AI-led innovation and productivity gains, combined with automation, digitisation, and product and process innovation. The report stated that AI-led innovation and productivity gains, along with industrial automation and adoption of frontier technologies, are the key enablers to foster India's manufacturing progress. Technologies can help Indian firms move up global value chains, reduce costs, and compete with manufacturing powerhouses.

India has already made progress on foundational reforms. The report noted advances made in labour code implementation, GST rationalisation, easing of FDI norms, land reforms, and infrastructure modernisation, including single-window digital clearances under PM Gati Shakti and the rollout of the National Logistics Policy. Large investments such as Micron's USD 2.75 billion semiconductor assembly plant and Google's combined USD 25 billion commitment to digitisation and AI-led data centres are cited as early indicators of momentum in the report.

UGC TEAM INTERACTS WITH DHARAMSALA COLLEGE FACULTY, ALUMNI OVER GIRL STUDENT'S DEATH

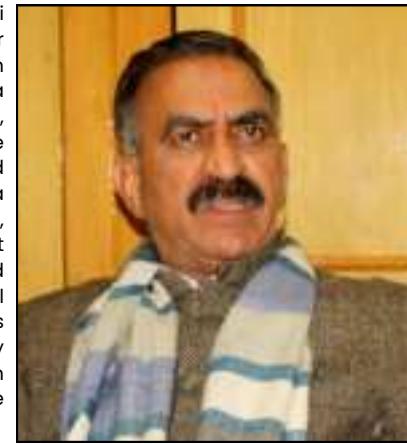
Diary Times Desk : An insensitive approach of the state government in fully implementing the National Education Policy (NEP)-2020 and the absence of an effective students' counselling mechanism may have increased stress level in 19-year-old Pallavi, a student of Government Degree College, Dharamsala. Pallavi died on December 26 last year amid allegations of sustained ragging and physical, sexual and mental harassment. These observations emerged during an interaction of a high-level fact-finding committee constituted by the University Grants Commission (UGC) with the faculty members, students and old students of the college. The team visited Dharamsala this week to examine the circumstances leading to the student's death. The five-member committee was headed by Prof Raj Kumar Mittal, Member of the UGC and former Vice-Chancellor of Chaudhary Bansi Lal University. The other members included Prof Sushma Yadav, former UGC member; Dr Neerja Gupta, Vice-Chancellor of Gujarat University; Prof P Prakash Babu, Vice-Chancellor of Pondicherry University; and Dr Sunita Siwach, Joint Secretary, UGC, as coordinator.

SISSU PANCHAYAT BANS TOURIST ACTIVITIES IN VALLEY FROM JAN 20 TO FEB 28

Diary Times Desk : Tourism activities in the scenic Sissu valley of Himachal Pradesh's tribal district of Lahaul-Spiti will remain suspended for 40 days, from January 20 to February 28, in order to preserve the sanctity of traditional religious rituals and age-old customs. The decision has been taken collectively by the Sissu gram panchayat, along with prominent religious and community bodies, reflecting the region's deep-rooted respect for its cultural and spiritual heritage. Sissu, located in the Chandra valley and often bustling with tourists, especially during winter due to easy access through the Atal Tunnel, has witnessed a steady influx of visitors in recent weeks. Despite harsh cold conditions, hundreds of tourists have been reaching Lahaul daily, drawn by snow-covered landscapes and adventure activities. However, local institutions felt that the growing tourist presence could disrupt the solemn religious

HIMACHAL'S FISH PRODUCTION LIKELY TO REACH 19,000 METRIC TONNES IN FY26: CM

Diary Times Desk : Highlighting the success of the Mukhya Mantri Carp Matsya Palan Yojana, Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Sunday said the state's total fish production has surged from 17,000 metric tonnes in 2022-23 to a projected 19,000 metric tonnes in the current fiscal. "For decades, Himachal Pradesh has been known as the 'fruit bowl' of the country, but as of today, it is charting a new course toward becoming a hub of blue prosperity," the chief minister said in a statement. "When our government took over three years before, we realised that our rural youth were looking for more than just traditional employment, they were seeking dignity, innovation and 'self-reliance' within their own villages." This inspired an overhaul of the fisheries sector, moving away from stagnant policies toward a more dynamic, incentive-based model, he noted. "By launching the MMCMPY (Mukhya Mantri Carp Matsya Palan Yojana) in the 2024-25, the state government didn't just introduce a scheme, but took measures to transform the rural economy."



CRACKS APPEAR IN BUILDING DUE TO BLASTING FOR TUNNEL IN SHIMLA, 15 FAMILIES EVACUATED

Diary Times Desk : At least 15 families were forced to evacuate a building in the Chalaunti area of Shimla on Friday night after visible cracks developed on it due to blasting done for the construction of a tunnel on the Kaithlighat-Dhali road. Cracks also developed on the road and a retaining wall and as a result, traffic coming from the Sanjauli-Dhali bypass was halted. The construction of the four-lane road near the site was also halted. As per the locals, the cracks grew more visible on Friday night after which 15 families, including the building owners as well as tenants, started evacuating it.

As a precautionary measure, people staying at a hotel as well as in an adjoining building were also evacuated. Upon receiving information, district administration officials reached the spot and took stock of the situation. Deputy Commissioner, Shimla, Anupam Kashyap assured the affected families that the district administration would ensure all possible assistance to them. The evacuation continued on Saturday as well as the families shifted their belongings from the building. Locals said that the families were forced to spend night on the road. Outraged local residents blamed the incident on the negligence of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) officials.

ON GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA TEAM'S ADVICE, SHIMLA ADMINISTRATION LIFTS BAN ON KAITHLIGHAT-DHALLI ROAD WORK

Diary Times Desk : The construction of the Kaithlighat-Dhali four-lane road near Bhattakuffer in Shimla will resume soon after the district administration lifted the ban imposed following road subsidence in November 2025. The decision follows the recommendation of a Geological Survey of India (GSI) team that studied the site. Additional District Magistrate (Law and Order) Pankaj Sharma said that the permission aligned with the GSI guidelines, with the work strictly adhering to the prescribed conditions. The administration would monitor the work closely to prevent future lapses. In November 2025, a portion of the road in Bhattakuffer had sunk, leading to the formation of a large pit. At that time, a schoolgirl had fallen into the pit and was rescued by people with the help of a rope. The incident had triggered outrage amongst local people, who alleged that the pit was formed due to the construction of a tunnel nearby. The district administration ordered a ban on the work to widen the road to four lanes at the site. Additionally, the blasting licence issued to the company executing the four-lane project was also temporarily withdrawn. A preliminary inspection of the site by geologists revealed a large depression on the Mehli-Dhali road.

YOUR HOROSCOPE

12-01-2026

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.

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.

PROBE REVEALS LUDHIANA MAN FOUND CHOPPED IN DRUM WAS INJECTED BEFORE MURDER

Diary Times Desk : Fresh details have surfaced in the brutal murder of a 35-year-old man, whose dismembered body was recovered from an abandoned plot near Jalandhar Bypass on Thursday. A three-member medical board of experts, which conducted the postmortem, has found indications that the victim was injected with some substance in his left hand before being killed. However, the exact cause of death will be ascertained only after viscera samples, sent to the Forensic Science Laboratory, are analysed, official sources said on Sunday. The body was brought for postmortem examinations in six pieces, with the right hand missing. Police are searching for the missing hand. Two accused — husband and wife — were arrested on Friday in the case. The accused man has been identified as Shamsher alias Shera, a carpenter by profession. The severed body was recovered from an abandoned plot near the bypass on Thursday. The victim, Davinder Kumar, a resident of Bharti Colony in Ludhiana, had recently returned from Mumbai, where he worked at a printing and graphic design shop. A passerby had spotted the drum after which police were alerted.

INTENSE COLD IN PUNJAB, HARYANA: BATHINDA SHIVERS AT 1.6°C, HISAR BRAVES A LOW OF 2.2°C

Diary Times Desk : Several parts of Punjab and Haryana reeled under intense cold conditions on Sunday, with minimum temperatures settling below the season's average. Bathinda was the coldest place in Punjab recording a minimum temperature of 1.6 degrees Celsius while Hisar, at a low of 2.2 degrees Celsius, was the coldest place in Haryana, according to the weather office. Fog reduced visibility in the morning at some places in Punjab and Haryana. In Punjab, Faridkot reeled under severe chill at a minimum of 2.9 degrees Celsius. Ludhiana, Patiala, Amritsar and Gurdaspur registered respective minimums of 4.6 degrees, 3.8 degrees, 3.2 degrees and 3.8 degrees Celsius. Chandigarh, the common capital of the two states, also experienced a cold night at 5 degrees Celsius. In Haryana, biting cold swept Narnaul, which recorded a low of 3 degrees Celsius.

PUNJAB CM MANN HITS OUT AT BJP, CONGRESS, SAD OVER 'COMMUNAL POLITICS'

Diary Times Desk : Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, on Sunday, the second day of his two-day tour of Bathinda district, targeted the opposition parties and accused the BJP of attempting to divide people on the basis of religion. "The BJP survives on hatred and seeks to inflame Punjab for political gain. But Punjab's brotherhood is too strong to be broken," said the Chief Minister, while interacting with scribes after formally inaugurating the district library, built at a cost of nearly Rs 9 crore, near the district administrative complex (DAC) here. Referring to the controversy over a video of former Delhi CM and senior AAP leader Atishi allegedly making remarks against Guru Tegh Bahadur, Mann said the clip circulated was "tampered with and malicious". "Not a word against the Guru was spoken on record. It is BJP's frustration," he claimed. Mann also criticised the BJP, Congress and the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), calling their statements "identical" and reflective of "panic". The CM said all three parties had no agenda except targeting him.



PUNJAB BJP CHIEF SUNIL JAKHAR WRITES TO DGP, SEEKS FORENSIC PROBE INTO ALLEGED SACRILEGE VIDEO

Diary Times Desk : Punjab BJP president Sunil Jakhar has written a letter to the Punjab Director General of Police (DGP) demanding a forensic investigation by a credible laboratory into a video that is circulating and allegedly shows a person resembling the chief minister. Jakhar said that if the Punjab Police could investigate a video related to former Delhi CM Atishi within one day, then the authenticity of this video linked to religious sacrilege — whether real or fake — can also be determined within a day. He said Punjab is a sensitive state and such a video could cause massive unrest. Therefore, it was essential that its authenticity be examined and the truth established. He added that this is why he has written to the DGP seeking an immediate forensic examination so that it can be clearly ascertained whether the person shown in the video is the Punjab CM or whether it is a fabricated video. He also urged Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann to obtain an impartial forensic investigation report of the video before appearing at Sri Akal Takht Sahib on January 15, so that the situation regarding this issue can be clarified. He further said that on January 16, the BJP state core committee will gherao the CM's residence in Chandigarh.

BKU (CHARUNI) SEEKS CBI INQUIRY INTO PADDY SCAM IN KURUKSHETRA

Diary Times Desk : Demanding a CBI inquiry into the alleged Rs 5,000-crore paddy scam and the irregularities observed during the paddy procurement season 2025-26 in Haryana, Bhartiya Kisan Union (Charuni), on Saturday held a protest march in Kurukshetra. The union members led by union chief Gurnam Singh Charuni gathered at Jat Dharmashala, took out a march, reached the Mini-Secretariat and submitted memorandums, addressed to Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, to ADC Vivek Arya. Charuni said, "Despite repeated requests, the state government hasn't initiated strict action against the officials involved in the paddy scam yet. Serious irregularities in the paddy procurement, bogus registration and suspicious verification have come to light in the state. Though, the Karnal district administration has taken some action, no FIR has been registered in Kurukshetra so far. The people involved in the paddy scam have caused loss to the tune of crores of rupees to the government exchequer." He said on the Meri Fasal Mera Byora Portal, over 4.83 lakh farmers had registered 28,80,192 acres land but the total verified area was 30,16,285 acres. "There is a huge difference between the registered.

FOUR CRIMINALS ARRESTED AFTER ENCOUNTER WITH POLICE IN HARYANA'S REWARI



Diary Times Desk : Two wanted criminals were injured and arrested along with two of their associates following a brief encounter with police near Mirpur University here, police said on Sunday. The accused who were injured in the operation on Saturday night were admitted to a hospital for treatment, they said.

The injured have been identified as Vikas alias Motu, a resident of Anandpur in Rohtak district, and Harsh alias Popla of Gokalgargh village here. Police had announced a reward of Rs 5,000 for information leading to the arrest of Harish. Both Vikas and Harish were wanted in connection with an October 2025 murder case, police said. The remaining two accused were identified as Hritik, a resident of Guda Kheda village in Jind district, and Neeraj alias Aju of Gokalgargh village, they said. Police said they received specific information that Vikas and Harsh, along with their accomplices, were hiding near Dharuhera. When a Crime Branch team tried to intercept them, the accused tried to flee in a car. The team chased and surrounded the accused near Jeetpura village. Finding themselves cornered, the criminals opened fire at the police team. Vikas and Harsh sustained bullet injuries in their legs during retaliatory firing by police personnel. All four accused were subsequently arrested, police said.

EDITORIAL

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 spyops 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?



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 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.

"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.

INFA

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 49.5 million Australian dollars (\$32 million).

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 its children.

A Blue Schoolbag In A Mass Grave

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



Tamilis, 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.

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.

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.



TOP PICKS FROM AMERICANA WEEK, SELECTED BY OUR EXPERTS

Diary Times Desk : 'It's astoundingly rare for this important series of Eastman Johnson's Nantucket paintings to come to market, as most of the series reside in museum collections, including a closely related work at Yale. This painting's provenance from the Rockefeller family makes it even more special. Johnson began visiting Nantucket around 1870 and continued to go back every year, buying a home there. Cranberry Pickers is a study of the characters that formed the unique atmosphere of Nantucket, and it captures the light and air in a magical way. It represents the best of Johnson as a leading genre painter of the 19th century.'

'Fifty years ago, in an apartment in Mountain View, California, Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak and Ronald Wayne signed an agreement establishing the Apple Computer Company. Wayne, a 41-year-old product designer at Atari, was enlisted by Jobs to help convince Wozniak to bring his prototype for a revolutionary new computer to market. The elder Wayne mediated between Jobs and Wozniak, then 21 and 25, and drafted the founding document. Just twelve days after signing, wary of the financial risk, Wayne sold his 10 per cent stake in the company for \$800. This document marks an extraordinarily important moment in history: the birth of the information revolution.'

'Jamie Wyeth was just 20 years old when, in the wake of President John F. Kennedy's assassination, he was approached by Jacqueline Kennedy and her family to create a portrait of the late president. Wyeth would not accept the commission unless he was allowed to keep the final painting. That final painting was later acquired by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, about 10 years ago. This related work captures Kennedy striding to the podium to accept the Democratic nomination for president in 1960. To make it, Wyeth studied videos and sketches and accompanied Kennedy family members including Robert F. Kennedy on the campaign trail. Man from Boston combines these inspirations into a picture, which the artist has said is not just a portrait of Kennedy but of "all candidates, all people who want to make a difference."

'At their peak, the Shaker community numbered around 5,000 members, but their simple, functional and beautifully crafted furniture and objects had a profound influence on architecture and design. This set of 20 oval utility boxes were made of bentwood and secured with distinctive swallowtail joints, a hallmark of Shaker craftsmanship. My favorite part, though, is a handwritten letter tucked inside one box, from a Shaker woman named Elizabeth. As you read it, you realize she's writing to a man who left the community, and that she's heartbroken. Her note is funny and deeply human. It makes these objects feel incredibly intimate.'



COLLECTING GUIDE: AMERICAN IMPRESSIONISM

Diary Times Desk :

In the late 19th century, a period that witnessed the full flowering of the Impressionist movement, a handful of American artists — including Guy Rose, Frederick Frieseke, Theodore Earl Butler, Robert Vonnoh, Willard Metcalf, Jane Peterson, Theodore Robinson and Lila Cabot Perry and Louis Ritman — travelled to France. Many studied at the prestigious Académie Julian art school in Paris, and a number moved to Giverny to join the artist's colony established by Monet.

At the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, most of the American artists at Giverny returned home. There, many continued to paint in the Impressionist style, translating techniques first explored in France to American scenes.

John Leslie Breck is widely credited with introducing Impressionism to American audiences. After working in Giverny, where he was briefly engaged to Monet's stepdaughter Blanche, he returned to his native Boston, holding a solo exhibition at the city's St. Botolph Club in 1890. When back in the French countryside in 1891, Breck was painted by his friend and fellow Impressionist painter James Carroll Beckwith. He exhibited again in 1893, prompting a local critic to dub Breck 'the head of the American Impressionists'.

Considered to have been the leader of the Boston School, Frank Weston Benson is known for his pictures of New England, painted en plein air. This technique was also favoured by William Merritt Chase, the artist and teacher, who founded what became the Parsons School of Design.

Perhaps the most famous American Impressionist, however, is Childe Hassam. Although he studied at the Académie Julian, he found it to be 'the personification of routine', seeking inspiration, instead, in the city's bustling streets.

Hassam's New York City imagery reflects his fascination with his urban surroundings and the people he encountered — demonstrating his growing ingenuity with Impressionist technique. Likewise, his paintings from France depicting the Blumenthal garden at Villiers-Le-Bel as well as Parisian rooftops and city-life are among the most important works from his output.



SPANISH ATTACKER ONCE COMPARED TO PEDRI WAS CLOSE TO JOINING BARCELONA – REPORT



Diary Times Desk : The search for the "next Pedri" has been a recurring theme in Spanish football, and for a long time, all fingers pointed to Alberto Moleiro. The comparisons were inevitable: both are natives of Tenerife, both were overlooked by CD Tenerife, and both exploded onto the scene through the UD Las Palmas academy. However, a new report confirms that the similarities almost went a step further. Moleiro was on the verge of joining FC Barcelona. As reported by Diario SPORT, the Blaugrana technical secretariat had monitored Moleiro closely, identifying him as a talent that fit the club's DNA perfectly. But just as the stars seemed aligned for the two Canary Islanders to reunite in Catalonia, reality intervened. Barcelona's delicate financial situation at the time made the operation unfeasible, and the deal collapsed before it could be finalised. Instead of Camp Nou, Moleiro remained at Las Palmas until their relegation, eventually moving to Villarreal this season for €16 million to replace Alex Baena.

REAL MADRID MANAGER IDENTIFIES BARCELONA'S BIGGEST THREAT AHEAD OF EL CLASICO

Diary Times Desk : Barcelona step into tonight's El Clasico with a close to fully-fit squad, and Hansi Flick will be pleased to have so many players available for selection. The lineup virtually picks itself for the big night, especially with several players proving to be undisputable starters for the manager this season.

The likes of Pedri, Lamine Yamal, Ferran Torres, Fermin Lopez, and Raphinha are all capable of being differential players on their own, and Real Madrid will have several attacking options to defend against. As reported in a recent update by Defensa Central, Real Madrid manager Xabi Alonso has identified Barcelona's biggest threat for the game tonight and it is neither Pedri nor Lamine Yamal.

Indeed, it is Raphinha that the opposition coach sees as the most important player in Flick's team and he has reportedly asked his team to put more emphasis on marking and defending the Brazilian on the night. "For me, Raphinha is the best of them because he gives them many things, goals, assists, and that defensive work that is key," he reportedly told his dressing room ahead of the big game.

DECO MEETS 28-YEAR-OLD WINGER'S AGENT IN SAUDI ARABIA TO DISCUSS FUTURE

Diary Times Desk : In a breaking report, SPORT bring to light that Barcelona's sporting director Deco has met with Marcus Rashford's agent in Jeddah today.

The meeting regarding the English winger's future took place at the Ritz-Carlton hotel, the same place where the team are currently residing for the Spanish Super Cup and the topic of discussion was the purchase clause in Rashford's contract.

As has been relayed in recent weeks, Barcelona are pleased with the player's attitude, integration and contributions and are seriously considering triggering the €30 million purchase clause at the end of the season. Deco's meeting with Rashford's agent earlier today was informal in nature and primarily meant to inform the player's entourage of the club's decision to likely trigger the clause. Barcelona value how the player has adapted to life in Spain, mingling with both the English-speaking and non-English-speaking crowds in the dressing room, and placed the team's interests above his own. The decision is still not certain and the club prefer to wait until the end of the season to take a clear stance.

WHAT BARCELONA STAND TO EARN IF THEY WIN THE SPANISH SUPER CUP FINAL – REPORT

Diary Times Desk : The relocation of the Spanish Super Cup to Saudi Arabia served to improve the competition's brand in Asia, but the major factor behind the switch was the financial upgrade.

Scheduling the event in the Middle East has helped both the federation and individual participating clubs secure more money, even for mere participation.

Needless to say, however, progressing further in the event leads to better payouts with the eventual champions taking home a relative fortune. As confirmed by Diario AS in a recent update, the total prize sum in 2025 was around €19 million but has been upgraded to €21.3 million this time around. In total, a sum of €16.3 million has already been disbursed to the teams involved for merely travelling to attend the event. When the participation pool was €14.95 million last year, Barcelona pocketed €6 million and all signs point to this year's payout being higher. Given the skewed distribution towards Barcelona and Real Madrid, the Catalans can expect to earn as much as €7 million.



DECO HAS A PLAN TO BEYOND CANCELO AS BARCELONA LOOK AT KEY OPTIONS FOR THE SUMMER OF 2026

Diary Times Desk : There is much excitement at Barcelona right now surrounding the return of Joao Cancelo.

The Portuguese international has rejoined the club on a short-term loan deal and is likely to be unveiled soon as an official Barça player.

However, Cancelo is only here until the end of the season, after which Barcelona may once again struggle with a lack of depth in the fullback department. However, as reported by Diario SPORT, Barcelona sporting director Deco has a plan to mitigate the risks of losing Cancelo at the end of the season.

While the club will certainly monitor the Portuguese international's performances during the second half of the season and make a decision on whether or not they should retain his services, the club are also looking at other options.

Barcelona's priority is to avoid relying on the transfer market. Keeping that in mind, the club are looking at Hector Fort with much hope. The young right-back is currently on loan at Elche CF. He was showing a lot of promise before his progress was marred by an injury. The Catalans believe that if Fort can continue that development after returning from an injury, he could quite the prospect for the Blaugrana and the club won't need to rely on the transfer window. The role of Bojan becomes critical here, as he is in charge of monitoring all the loaned players.

DECO'S €2.5M GAMBLE PAYS OFF AS NEW SIGNING SHINES WHILE REAL MADRID'S €63M BET FALTERS

Diary Times Desk : The transfer strategy of Barcelona and Real Madrid last summer was very much alike, especially when it came to improving the attack. While Barcelona signed Roony Bardhjji for €2.5 million and Marcus Rashford on loan, Real Madrid signed one of the finest young talents in South America, Franco Mastantuono, for a fee reaching up to €63 million. A recent report from Diario AS has highlighted how Barcelona sporting director Deco's €2.5 million bet on Bardhjji is actually paying off, whereas Mastantuono is heading in the opposite direction. After impressing in the pre-season campaign, many expected Bardhjji to earn a lot of action this season. While that didn't exactly come, largely due to an already packed.