



# Prime Minister Narendra , Netanyahu review India-Israel Strategic Partnership, discuss regional situation

(Gns).  
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday spoke with his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu, during which the two leaders discussed ways to further strengthen the India-Israel Strategic Partnership and exchanged views on the regional situation.

"Glad to speak with my friend, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and convey New Year greetings to him and the people of Israel. We discussed ways to further strengthen the India-Israel Strategic Partnership in the year ahead," Modi said on X.

## Somnath Swabhiman Parv - A Symbol of the Nation's Unwavering Self-Respect

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to Chair Grand Shaurya Yatra with 108 Horsemen at Somnath Swabhiman Parv Atmosphere Resonates with 'Har Har Mahadev' Chants by Trained Gujarat Police Cavalry Horsemen

Grand Ashwayatra to Proceed from Veer Hamirsinhji Gohil's Statue to the Assembly Venue

Gandhinagar, 08 January 2026: Under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, a grand Shaurya Yatra will be held on January 11 as part of the Somnath Swabhiman Parv. In this Shaurya Yatra, 108 horsemen of the Gujarat Police Cavalry will participate in traditional attire. The horse symbolises

He further added that they "exchanged views on the regional situation and reaffirmed our shared resolve to fight terrorism with greater determination."

In a separate post on X, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the conversation focused on strengthening cooperation on national security.

"We discussed the strength of India-Israel relations and how we can unleash the boundless potential of this partnership for the benefit of our peoples," Netanyahu said.

He also hinted at a likely meeting with Modi, saying "I look forward to meeting



Prime Minister Modi in the near future to continue these discussions in person."

Earlier last year, Netanyahu had postponed his India visit following Red Fort bomb blast in Delhi.

The talks between Modi and Netanyahu come amid heightened geopolitical tensions and days after a US operation in Venezuela.

The US launched "Operation Absolute Resolve" in the Venezuelan

capital Caracas last week, capturing its President, Nicolas Maduro and his wife Cilia Flores.

### Nehru opposed Somnath Temple reconstruction, claims BJP

(Gns).  
Upping the ante against Opposition Congress ahead of the Somnath Swabhiman Parv, which will also be attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the BJP on Wednesday alleged that India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru harboured "deep hostility" over the reconstruction of the Somnath Temple after Independence and accused him of prioritising "appeasement politics" over India's civilisational heritage.

Addressing media persons, BJP national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi said he held no personal animosity towards Nehru but was against his "terrible and frightening ideology". "Just as PM Narendra Modi is not merely an individual, but an insti-

Denmark and Greenland. The conversation also came days after Netanyahu hinted that the second

phase of the US-backed Gaza ceasefire plan could begin "very shortly".

### Nehru opposed Somnath Temple reconstruction, claims BJP

He claimed Nehru also wrote to chief ministers, arguing that the reconstruction harmed India's image abroad and also urged the then information and broadcasting minister to limit coverage of the conse-



cration ceremony, describing it as ostentatious.

He also cited the correspondence between Nehru and Pakistan's first prime minister Liaquat Ali Khan, in which Nehru allegedly

dismissed the narrative surrounding the Somnath temple doors as false. Citing the correspondence by diplomat K M Panikkar, Trivedi also alleged that Nehru was more concerned about international reactions, including China's views, than domestic sentiment. While invaders physically looted the temple, Nehru harboured "deep hostility" towards the reconstruction, he said, accusing the former PM of downplaying Hindu symbols to "appease Pakistan rather than defend India's cultural legacy".

The remarks came from the ruling party ahead of PM Modi's visit to the Somnath Temple on January 11 to participate in the Somnath Swabhiman Parv, being held from January 8 to 11.

### BJP govt plotting phase out MNREGA: Akhilesh Yadav

Vadav said this way the states would be forced to abandon the scheme. Furthermore, the BJP government has also deprived hundreds of Gram Panchayats of their budget by reclassifying them into the 'urban category'.

(Gns).  
Samajwadi Party National President Akhilesh Yadav has alleged that the BJP government is secretly plotting to gradually eliminate MNREGA by changing its name.

"On one hand, the BJP government is continuously reducing the MNREGA budget while on the other, putting pressure on the states, which are already struggling with empty treasuries, to spend money on it. They (the states) won't be able to arrange the additional budget as they are

not getting their due share in the GST," he pointed out.

Yadav said this way the states would be forced to abandon the scheme. Furthermore, the BJP government has also deprived hundreds of Gram

BJP's real agenda is not to change the name of MNREGA, but to completely abolish it. The party cannot tolerate seeing anyone else prosper besides themselves.

In another statement,



Panchayats of their budget by reclassifying them into the 'urban category'.

He claimed that the

Akhilesh Yadav appealed to his party leaders and workers for full support and complete dedication in the

ongoing SIR process, which, he said, must be taken seriously. "One must be vigilant against the BJP's cunning tactics. However, this time, no trick of the BJP will work in the assembly elections. The BJP is rattled by the growing strength of the Samajwadi Party. The hard work of 2026 will bring success in 2027," he said.

On Wednesday, after meeting with party workers and leaders from various districts of the state at the Samajwadi Party state headquarters, the SP president said the Election Commission's credibility is at stake in the SIR process. "Why is there a difference in the number of voters in Gram Panchayats and Assembly/Lok Sabha constituencies," he questioned.

### Bio-bitumen transformative step towards vision of Viksit Bharat 2047: Gadkari

(Gns).  
Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari on Wednesday highlighted how agricultural waste can be converted into a valuable natural resource.

He noted that bio-bitumen is a transformative step towards the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. By utilising agro-waste, it reduces pollution caused by crop burning and strengthens the circular economy.

With 15 per cent blending, India can save nearly Rs 4,500 crore in foreign

exchange and substantially reduce its dependence on imported crude oil.

Speaking at CSIR's Technology Transfer Ceremony titled "From Farm Residue to Road: Bio-Bitumen via Pyrolysis," the Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways said, "Today marks a historic milestone in India's road infrastruc-

ture, as the nation becomes the first in the

world to commercially produce bio-bitumen."

Gadkari congratulated CSIR and its dedicated sci-

entists, and thanked Union MoS Jitendra Singh for his constant support in achieving this pioneering breakthrough.

He further stated that this innovation will empower farmers, generate rural livelihoods, and boost the rural economy.

Bio-bitumen, Gadkari said, truly reflects the Modi Government's commitment to sustainable development, self-reliance, and environmentally responsible growth, paving the way for a cleaner and greener future.

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## Editorial

### Might and Right

The capture of Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro by the United States has forced the international community to confront an uncomfortable reality: the widening gap between power and its justification. Mr Maduro's removal did not occur in a political vacuum. His claim to democratic legitimacy was already gravely weakened by the disputed 2024 election, while allegations linking senior figures in the Venezuelan state to transnational drug trafficking are longstanding and widely acknowledged. Even critics of Washington's actions rarely argue that these charges emerged without basis.

The question raised by recent events, therefore, is not whether Mr Maduro was a credible democratic leader, but whether the method used to remove him can be reconciled with the principles that ostensibly govern international conduct. That method matters. The US did not rely on diplomatic isolation, economic pressure, or recognition of an alternative authority. It conducted a direct military operation on foreign soil, seized a sitting head of state, and declared its intention to administer the country until a "safe and proper" transition could be arranged. In doing so, it moved decisively from influence to control. Regime-change operations, overt and covert, are not unprecedented. Powerful states have repeatedly acted beyond the strict confines of international law, particularly when strategic interests were at stake. What distinguishes the Venezuelan episode is not novelty, but its candour.

The intervention was openly claimed, publicly celebrated, and explicitly tied to strategic and economic objectives, including the management of oil infrastructure and reimbursement of costs. This openness sharpens the dilemma rather than resolving it. If legitimacy is conferred through criminal indictments and enforced by superior force, international law risks becoming conditional ~ applied when convenient and suspended when it is not. The argument that Mr Maduro forfeited sovereignty through misconduct may persuade some, but it establishes a principle that cannot be selectively contained. Many governments would reject the idea that their internal failures justify external seizure, however flawed their leadership. For Venezuela, the path ahead remains uncertain.

Removing an entrenched ruler does not automatically restore institutions weakened by years of misrule and economic collapse. An interim authority perceived as externally managed risks lacking domestic credibility, however compromised the previous regime may have been. Stability imposed from outside can prove brittle if not followed by a genuinely inclusive political reconstruction led by Venezuelans themselves. For US President Donald Trump, the operation signals a governing philosophy that privileges decisiveness over restraint. Whether such an approach produces durable order or accelerates global volatility remains an open question. Ultimately, the Venezuelan episode is less about the fate of one leader than about the trajectory of the international system itself.

Mr Maduro's fall may be defensible on moral or practical grounds. But the manner of his removal ensures that the debate will not end with his arrest. It instead forces a reckoning with how far the world is willing to drift from rules toward results ~ and what that drift will cost when power shifts and today's justifications are tested against tomorrow's realities.

## When Water Kills

**The deaths linked to contaminated tap water in Indore are not merely a tragic municipal failure; they expose a deeper contradiction at the heart of India's urban governance.**

A child collects water from a pipe in buckets in Indore's Bhagirathpura area, where cases linked to contaminated water have been reported.

The deaths linked to contaminated tap water in Indore are not merely a tragic municipal failure; they expose a deeper contradiction at the heart of India's urban governance. A city celebrated repeatedly for cleanliness has revealed, in the most brutal way possible, how fragile that reputation can be when infrastructure, accountability and public health oversight do not keep pace with accolades.

At the centre of this tragedy is a familiar but deadly lapse: sewage entering drinking water lines due to neglected or poorly maintained pipelines. What makes the incident particularly disturbing is not just the number of lives lost ~ the toll still conflicting between official statements and local accounts ~ but the fact that residents had reportedly complained of foul-smelling, contaminated water weeks before the outbreak escalated. The warning signs were there. They were simply ignored. Urban India often treats water supply as a logistical issue rather than a public health lifeline. When water smells bad, people adapt.

They boil it, filter it, dilute milk, or assume the risk is manageable. That adaptive behaviour, born out of necessity and habit, becomes lethal when con-

tamination reaches a tipping point. In this case, even precautions such as boiling proved tragically insufficient. The outbreak also exposes the limits of India's obsession with rankings and optics. Clean streets, waste segregation

harder questions remain unresolved: why routine water quality monitoring failed, why complaints were not escalated, and why preventive maintenance was allowed to lapse in a densely populated area.

This tragedy should



drives and glossy municipal dashboards create the impression of well-run cities, but underground realities ~ ageing pipelines, unchecked leakages and poor sewage segregation ~ remain invisible until disaster strikes. Cleanliness, when measured narrowly, can mask deeper vulnerabilities rather than eliminate them.

Equally troubling is the uncertainty surrounding the death toll. When official numbers lag behind local reporting, public trust erodes. Families grieving sudden deaths are left with unanswered questions, while authorities appear defensive instead of transparent. In public health crises, credibility matters as much as corrective action. Minimising numbers may limit political fallout, but it magnifies long-term distrust. The administrative response ~ suspensions, dismissals, emergency water tankers ~ follows a familiar script. Yet these are reactive measures. The

(Gns).

In the early hours of 3 January, the United States crossed a moral, legal, and historical threshold that should alarm the world. American forces bombed targets in Venezuela, including areas in and around its capital, and seized the country's sitting president and his wife, transporting them in custody to New York to face trial. This extraordinary act was announced not through Congress, nor through any international body, but through a presidential declaration. This was not law enforcement. It was not diplomacy by other means. It was an act of war.

The administration would like the world to accept this as routine ~ another "operation," another "strike," another exercise in

Ghazni's attack in January 1026. A thousand years later, Somnath stands as glorious as ever, thanks to sustained restoration efforts, including the milestone of 75 years since the Temple reopened to devotees on May 11, 1951.

Somnath: Faith, Footfall, and Grandeur

With 1,666 gold-plated kalash at the Shikhar and 14,200 dhwajas reflecting the perseverance, faith, and artistry of three generations, Somnath shines in devotion and grandeur. Nearly 98 lakh pilgrims visited the temple in 2020, and the footfall has remained steady at 92 to 97 lakh annually through 2024. Rituals such as the Billa Pooja have drawn 13.77 lakh devotees, with Maha Shivratri 2025 alone seeing 3.56 lakh worshippers. Online booking and postal prasad ensure Somnath's sanctity reaches devotees far beyond the temple.

Connectivity That Makes Somnath a Global Gateway

To make the journey to Somnath easier and more comfortable for pilgrims, connectivity has been sig-

nificantly upgraded. The Jetpur-Somnath four-lane highway, a ₹828 crore proj-

ect, has drawn over 10 lakh visitors in three years, transforming history into a



ect, now offers expressway efficiency, while the Sabarmati-Veraval Vande Bharat Express has shortened the journey from Ahmedabad to Somnath into a semi-high-speed commute. Keshod Airport, once a relic of 2000, reopened in 2022, and the Rajkot International Airport, inaugurated in 2023, has turned Somnath into a global gateway.

The Spectacular Light and Sound Show

The Light and Sound Show, launched in 2003 and enriched in 2017 with Amitabh Bachchan's narration and 3D laser technolo-

gy, has drawn over 10 lakh visitors in three years, transforming history into a

nightly spectacle. The 2025 Vande Somnath Kala Mahotsav revived dance traditions dating back 1,500 years, showing that Somnath is as much about rhythm as it is about ritual.

Somnath: A Swachh Iconic Place

Somnath was crowned a Swachh Iconic Place in 2018, a recognition that reflects the temple's commitment to sustainability and innovation. Waste segregation centres now convert temple flowers into vermicompost, nourishing 1,700 billa trees across three sacred sites. Under Prime Minister Shri

Narendra Modi's Mission LiFE initiative, plastic waste is transformed into paver blocks. Around 4,700 plastic-fly ash blocks will be produced monthly, generating income for local women's SHGs and aiming to recycle 125 tons of plastic annually. Six rainwater harvesting wells and a reservoir, restored at ₹62 lakh, treat nearly 30 lakh litres of sewage water each month, feeding afforestation and greening projects, while eight sewage treatment plants, with ₹160 lakh invested in 2019–20, have filtered 20.53 crore litres of water for agriculture and landscape irrigation.

A Miyawaki forest of 7,200 trees, spanning 72,000 square feet, thrives with coconut palms absorbing saline winds and saru trees shielding the forest from harsh sea breezes. An IIT Kanpur study estimates it will absorb around 93,000 kilograms of CO<sub>2</sub> annually after two years. Even the sacred abhishek water is now purified through a nine-layer treatment plant and bottled as Somganga, available to devotees for ₹15 with no

profit earned by the trust. By December 2024, over 1.13 lakh families had received this divine blessing. Through these and other initiatives, Somnath is now envisioned as a net-zero temple.

Ranks in India's Top Ten Most Searched Destinations

Somnath now features among India's top ten most searched destinations. Its growing digital footprint mirrors its physical footprint, with social media impressions crossing 1.37 billion in 2025 alone, reflecting the temple's expanding reach among devotees across the world.

Over the past two decades, Somnath has stood as a living example of faith moving with time. It reflects a quiet balance between tradition and progress, where the first Jyotirling continues to be part of everyday life for millions. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Somnath has found renewed direction while staying true to its civilisational roots.

Congress to power, acted as a catalyst for a radical shift in Muslim politics. The perceived marginalisation of Muslim interests by the Congress ministry led to the formal establishment of the Muslim League branch in Cuttack in 1938.

The transition was seamless as the prominent leaders of the OMA, including legal luminaries such as Muhammad Abdus Sobhan Khan (grandfather of the famous Odia actress Aparajita Mohanty), formally joined the League. A major psychological turning point occurred when A.K. Fazlul Huq, the Premier of Bengal, visited Cuttack and delivered a fiery address to the local Muslim community. He urged them to abandon the "nationalist" rhetoric of the Congress and recognise the Muslim League as their sole protector.

This local organisation was eventually affiliated with the All-India Muslim League in February 1940, just weeks before the historic Lahore Resolution was passed. The affiliation transformed the local grievances of Odisha's Muslims into a quest for a separate sovereign homeland. The League's influence grew rapidly in the urban centres of Cuttack, Balasore, and Bhadrak. The argument was no longer just about Urdu or job quotas; it was about the survival of a "distinct nation." The League argued that the "composite nationalism" of the Congress was merely a facade for the establishment of a Brahmin-Karanda-dominated social and political order in Odisha. The resignation of the Congress ministry in 1939, following the outbreak of World War II, provided an unexpected opportunity for Muslim League leaders to gain executive experience.

Between 1939 and 1944, a series of Coalition Ministries were formed, primarily involving the United Party and the Muslim League, to fill the political vacuum. Muhammed Abdus Sobhan Khan and Maulvi Latifur Rahman emerged as key figures during this period. Latifur Rahman served as a Minister in the 1941 coalition cabinet led by the Maharaja of Paliakhemundi. During their tenure in these ministries, these leaders focused heavily on provincialising Muslim grievances.

## Odisha's struggle with language and religion

from 1905 to 1947 in Odisha was not just a quest for a linguistic homeland, but also a crucible where a distinct Muslim communal consciousness evolved, the "Odia Movement" for a separate province was viewed with profound scepticism. The elite Muslim leadership of the time, consolidated under the Orissa

population. However, for the Muslim minority, which constitutes approximately 2 per cent of the population, the "Odia Movement" for a separate province was viewed with profound scepticism. The elite Muslim leadership of the time, consolidated under the Orissa

imposition of Odia was an attempt at cultural assimilation. This divergence became glaringly evident during the 1905 Partition of Bengal. While the Odia Hindu intelligentsia largely opposed the partition, fearing it would dilute the Odia-speaking tracts within a

larger Bengali-dominated Eastern province, Odia Muslims were notably sympathetic to the partition. They viewed the creation of a Muslim-majority province in Eastern Bengal as a vital safeguard for their interests. This sentiment was further institutionalised in 1906, when the Hindu majority would hold absolute power. This period saw the OMA leaders perfecting the narrative that Muslims were a "historically significant" community that deserved representation far exceeding their numerical strength, a concept known as "weightage." The linguistic conflict over Urdu versus Odia remained the primary flashpoint. The OMA successfully lobbied for special grants for Maktabs and Madrasas, insisting that the "secular" curriculum of the British-Odia schools was culturally alien to Muslim children. By the late 1920s, when the Simon Commission visited India, the OMA presented a memorandum that was a precursor to the Two-Nation Theory.

They demanded separate electorates and guaranteed quotas, asserting that the Muslim community's interests could never be safely entrusted to a "joint electorate" dominated by the Hindu majority. The leaders who drafted these petitions were the same individuals who would later facilitate the community's transition toward the Muslim League. With the eventual creation of the separate province of Odisha in 1936, the fears of the Muslim leadership were realised. The 1937 provincial elections, which brought the Indian National

Mohammedan Association (OMA), perceived the drive for a linguistically unified Odisha as a move toward "Hindu Raj." This early communal consciousness was not initially separatist in a territorial sense but was deeply protective of cultural markers.

Central to this was the linguistic divide; while the Hindu leadership sought to establish Odia as the sole official and educational medium, the OMA and its prominent members, such as the Zamindars of Cuttack, adamantly vouched for Urdu. They argued that Urdu was the indispensable carrier of Islamic heritage, and any

larger Bengali-dominated Eastern province, Odia

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democratic processes, and presided over economic collapse that has driven millions from their homes. These facts are well documented. They are also beside the point.

International order does not survive by granting powerful nations the discretion to

itself. Under the United States Constitution, the authority to initiate war rests with Congress.

This requirement is not symbolic; it is fundamental. It exists precisely to prevent unilateral military action by a single individual. No such authorization was sought or granted in this case. There was no public debate, no vote, no collective

reckoning before bombs fell on a foreign capital. A decision of irreversible consequence was made by executive fiat. International law is even more unequivocal. The United Nations Charter prohibits the use of force against another state's territorial integrity or political independence except in cases of genuine self-defense or with Security Council approval.

overthrow weaker ones they deem immoral, inconvenient, or expendable. At stake here is not the character of a single leader, but the survival of restraint



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# WR Press Release No. 2026/01

## Mumbai, 07th January, 2026

### WR's MAJOR BLOCK IN CONNECTION WITH WORK OF 6th LINE OVER KANDIVLI - BORIVALI SECTION

To carry out the work in connection with the construction of the 6th line between Kandivali and Borivali section, Western Railway has undertaken a block of 30 days from the night of 20th/21st December, 2025, which will continue up to 18th January, 2026. Due to this block, a few Western Railway trains will be affected.

According to a press release issued by the Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, Shri Vineet Abhishek, in connection with the above work, a major block will be undertaken during the night of 09th/10th January, 2026, for insertion and dismantling of points at Kandivali on the Up Fast line from 23:15 hrs to 03:15 hrs and

on the Down Fast line from 01:00 hrs to 04:30 hrs. Additionally, on 10th/11th January, 2026 a major block will be undertaken for insertion of point 101 on the Down Fast line between Kandivali and Malad stations. The block will be from 01:00 hrs to 06:30 hrs on Up and Down Fast lines and from 01:00 hrs to 04:00 hrs on the Up Slow line.

Due to the above blocks and suspension of the 5th line as well as speed restriction imposed, some suburban services will remain cancelled, while some Mail/Express trains will be affected.

#### Short Termination of Trains:

1. Train No. 19426 Nandurbar - Borivali Express, journey commencing on 10th January, 2026 will short terminate at Vasai Road.

2. Train No. 19418 Veraval - Bandra Terminus

Ahmedabad - Borivali Express, journey commencing on 10th January, 2026 will short terminate at Vasai Road

#### Short Origination of Trains:

1. Train No. 19417 Borivali - Ahmedabad Express, journey commencing on 11th January, 2026 will short originate from Vasai Road.

2. Train No. 19425 Borivali - Nandurbar Express, journey commencing on 11th January, 2026 will short originate from Vasai Road

#### Rescheduling of Trains:

1. Train No. 12902 Ahmedabad - Dadar Express, journey commencing on 10th January, 2026 will be regulated by 20 minutes enroute stations.

2. Train No. 19218 Veraval - Bandra Terminus

Express, journey commencing on 10th January, 2026 will be rescheduled by 45 minutes from Veraval i.e it will depart at 12.35 hrs.

3. Train No. 22953 Mumbai Central - Ahmedabad Express, journey commencing on 11th January, 2026 will be rescheduled by 30 minutes i.e it will depart at 06.10 hrs.

4. Train No. 22921 Bandra Terminus - Gorakhpur Express, journey commencing on 11th January, 2026 will be rescheduled by 1 hour i.e it will depart at 06.10 hrs.

The detailed list of suburban trains affected due to the block is furnished in Annexure-I & II. Detailed information to this effect is available with the concerned Station Masters. Passengers are requested to take note of the above changes and plan their journey accordingly.

## Sabarimala gold loot: Court rejects former TDB president Padmakumar's bail plea

(Gns).

The Kollam Vigilance Court on Wednesday rejected the bail application of former Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) President and CPM leader A Padmakumar in the Sabarimala temple gold heist case, observing that he could not absolve himself of responsibility for the alleged act.

Meanwhile, the Special Investigation Team (SIT),

observed that Padmakumar, as the board president at the relevant time, could not absolve himself of responsibility for the alleged act.

Padmakumar, who was the TDB president, committed grave official misconduct by deliberately making false entries in official correspondence, which ultimately led to the misappropriation and misappropriate the gold.

The report further stated that despite having clear knowledge that the plates were gold-clad in 1998, none of the TDB officials inquired about the gold that was stripped from the plates at Smart Creations. "By not effectively supervising the works at Smart Creations, by failing to record the weights of the gold-plated door frame plates, connected plates, and dwarapalaka plates and pillar plates on reinstallation, and by not making prompt entries in the relevant registers, the devaswom officials committed grave official malpractice, which led to the commission of misappropriation," the report said.

The acts and omissions on the part of the TDB officials are tantamount to official misconduct, thereby abetting and aiding Unnikrishnan Potty and others to misappropriate the gold, the SIT said in its report.

which is probing the cases, informed the Kerala High Court on Tuesday that the theft of gold from Sabarimala is part of a larger conspiracy and an organised crime committed by the accused persons.

The SIT also informed the Kerala High Court that former CPM MLA

Padmakumar, who was the TDB president, committed grave official misconduct by deliberately making false entries in official correspondence, which ultimately led to the misappropriation and misappropriate the gold.

The SIT, in its report to the High Court, said the accused had a wider plan to dismantle other gold-clad items of the temple's sreekovil (sanctum sancto-

rum) and misappropriate the gold.

The report further stated that despite having clear knowledge that the plates were gold-clad in 1998, none of the TDB officials

— the AIADMK and the BJP — ahead of the upcoming Tamil Nadu Assembly elections. Coming on the same day that EPS announced an alliance with the Anbumani Ramadoss-led Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK), the Delhi visit assumed added significance.

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## UP govt cancels Assistant Professor exam after STF uncovers rigging

(Gns).

The Uttar Pradesh government has cancelled the Assistant Professor examination held in April 2025 by the UP Public Service Commission due to irregularities.

Special Task Force (STF) of Uttar Pradesh, while gathering intelligence on cheating syndicates, received inputs regarding irregularities, malpractice, and illegal extortion linked to the Assistant Professor examination held under Advertisement No. 51 by the Uttar Pradesh Education Service Selection Commission, Prayagraj, in April 2025.

Taking cognizance of the gravity of the matter, the Chief Minister ordered a confidential inquiry.

Acting on credible inputs, the STF on April 20, 2025, arrested three

accused, Mehboob Ali, Commission was asked to resign, as the prime accused, Mehboob Ali, who were part of a gang involved in preparing fake question papers for the Assistant Professor examination conducted on April 16 and 17, 2025, and defrauding candidates through illegal means. The arrests were made on charges of examination rigging and extortion.

In this regard, the UP STF registered a case (FIR No. 144/25, Sections 112, 308(5), 318(4) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023) at Vibhutikhand Police Station, Lucknow.

To ensure the impartiality and confidentiality of the probe, the then Chairperson of the

served as the confidential assistant to the outgoing Chairperson.

During interrogation, Mehboob Ali admitted to procuring question papers of various subjects during the moderation process and supplying them to candidates in exchange for money. His confession has been substantiated by the STF through detailed investigation and data analysis.

Further investigation,



## Redevelopment works at Badrinath shrine suspended in view of biting cold

(Gns).

Biting cold in the Badrinath shrine area has forced the ongoing redevelopment works to stop for the rest of the winter. As the temperatures plunged to minus 10 degrees Celsius, unable to bear the chill, workers have returned to the lower areas.

According to officials, the work can resume only in March once the cold subsides.

Construction works at the Badrinath Shrine were allowed to continue even after annual closure of the temple portals after Diwali. More than 50 workers were allowed to stay on for the Badrinath shrine master plan development project as there was no snowfall till

a few days ago. The Master Plan implementing agency of the state government

drop in temperature has now made it difficult to continue works for riverfront,

degrees Celsius. This has forced the workers to leave the Badrinath suburb and come down to Joshimath and other low lying places.

According to the local administration, persistent overcast has intensified the cold even during the afternoons for the past few days. This has forced the project implementing and masterplan executing agency to halt all construction works at the shrine.

"Cold in Badrinath Dham has reached a point where it is no longer possible to continue work. Operations have been suspended till March, and further decisions will be made after assessing the conditions in coming days" said Manral.



went ahead with the construction but with continuous decline in temperatures has forced the officials to stop the work.

Joshimath Project Implementation Unit (PIU) Executive Engineer Yogesh Manral informed that the

building construction and other projects the continuously falling temperatures have made it difficult to work.

According to Manral, these days temperatures at the shrine area are touching as low as -8 to -10

## "Donald Trump should face the same legal action as a terrorist" - Vishwatma

Govardhana (Baksa), 7 January : Mr. Vishwatma, Founder of the Mission for Global Change and author of dozens of books on international political systems, stated that if a person levels an accusation against someone and then goes to that person's home and forcibly takes them away, it is not an arrest but an abduction. Therefore, the conduct of the current President of the United States,

Donald Trump, towards the President of Venezuela is not an arrest, but an act of terrorism. Hence, the international court should issue an arrest warrant against Trump, and he should be awarded the same punishment that is given to a terrorist.

Accordingly, the Commission was requested to provide data related to the suspected candidates. Cross-verification of this data confirmed that the sanctity of the examination had been compromised.

In view of these developments, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has ordered the cancellation of the Assistant Professor examination.

The Uttar Pradesh Education Service Selection Commission has been directed to conduct the examination afresh at the earliest, ensuring complete fairness, transparency, and integrity.

be preventable.

Mr. Vishwatma said that last year he had sent a proposal to 193 countries to establish the rule of law at the global level. The proposal suggested upgrading the United Nations and

cold storage at the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India for the past one year.

The author of the book "Reinventing Democracy" on the democratic World Order, Mr. Vishwatma, said

treaty and grant a share of sovereignty to the International Court of Justice functioning at The Hague. He further stated that the President of Venezuela should be freed from the clutches of Donald Trump and handed over to the International Court of Justice.

The founder of the Mission for Global Change said that for this court to function effectively, laws are required. To formulate these laws, there is an urgent need for a World Parliament. Likewise, to implement the orders of the International Court of Justice, there is an immediate need for a "United National Government, (UNG)" that is, a World Government. He said that just as the rule of law is necessary within a country, the same is equally necessary at the global level. Only then can judicial participation in peace and prosperity be ensured across the world.



transforming it into a "United National Government. (UNG)" He stated that he had met the Minister of State for External Affairs of India and requested the creation of a new ministry for this purpose. In the proposal, this ministry has been named the "Ministry of Peace."

Mr. Vishwatma was addressing a Renaissance Assembly held in auditorium of Bodo Sahitya Sabha situated at Govardhana in Baksa district. He said that if the people of the world take this incident lightly, the Third World War will not

Mr. Vishwatma said that this is why it is essential for the world to immediately enter into an international

conditions.

Hailing from the rugged terrain of Kinnera, Himachal Pradesh, Angmo has emerged as a global inspiration for the differently abled community. With each expedition, she continues to challenge stereotypes and redefine the meaning of "vision," proving that it is not limited to sight but rooted in courage, perseverance and an unyielding belief in oneself.

With her successful Kilimanjaro summit, Angmo reinforces a powerful message to the world: limitations exist only when one stops believing.

## Chhonzin Angmo Becomes the Only Visually Impaired Woman to Conquer Everest, Elbrus, and Kilimanjaro

January 7, 2025: Chhonzin Angmo, Union Bank of India Employee, and a visually impaired mountaineer has successfully summited Mount Kilimanjaro (5,895 metres), the highest peak in Africa. Already a world record holder as the only visually impaired woman to have conquered Mount Everest and Mount Elbrus, Angmo has now added the "Roof of Africa" to her historic list of achievements. Union Bank of India Congratulates her for the proud achievement.

The summit was reached under extreme and unpredictable weather conditions, further amplifying the significance of the climb. Though Mount Kilimanjaro is often seen as a trekking mountain, the climb proved difficult during this expedition. While ascending through the Lemosho Route, the team faced heavy snow, very cold temperatures and poor visibility. In spite of these challenges, Angmo showed great strength and focus to reach the summit.

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In spite of these challenges, Angmo's grit, determination & extensive mountaineering experience ensured a safe and successful summit despite the treacherous

conditions.

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## सोमनाथ स्वाभिमान पर्व

अदृष्ट आस्था के 1000 वर्ष

“ 2026 marks 1000 years since the first attack on Somnath took place. Despite repeated attacks subsequently, Somnath stands tall! ”

- Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi

### Major Highlights of the Festival:

72 hours of Akhand Omkar

Devotional music performances by India's renowned artists

Somnath Gatha Drone Show

Shankhnaad Maha Aarti

8 - 11 January 2026 | Venue | Shri Somnath Temple Premises, Prabhas Patan

