

Editorial

Independence Under Threat

The spectacle of a sitting Federal Reserve chair publicly disclosing a criminal investigation into himself is without precedent in modern American governance. Central bankers are designed to be invisible operators – technocrats who move interest rates, not headlines. When the head of the world's most influential central bank steps into the political arena to defend the institution's independence, something has gone badly wrong in an America that is seeing more wrong than right in recent times.

At the surface, the dispute revolves around renovation costs and congressional testimony. But to treat this episode as a narrow legal or administrative matter is to miss the deeper structural shift it reveals. This is about power. More specifically, it is about whether monetary authority can still exist beyond the reach of political retaliation in an increasingly personalised political system. For decades, the Federal Reserve's credibility has rested less on law than on convention. Presidents grumbled, markets speculated, but the boundary between elected power and monetary policy largely held. That boundary now looks alarmingly thin. When public pressure over interest rates is followed by legal scrutiny, even if formally justified, the sequence itself sends a message.

It tells future central bankers that policy decisions may carry personal risk. That is not how independent institutions are supposed to function. The danger here is not limited to one individual, Jerome Powell, or one presidency. Once the idea takes root that legal machinery can be deployed against inconvenient officials, the logic becomes transferable. Today he is a central banker. Tomorrow it could be a regulator, a prosecutor, or a judge. Institutions built on restraint cannot survive sustained pressure from leaders who view independence as insubordination. The muted market reaction should not reassure anyone. Financial markets are often slow to price in institutional decay because it unfolds gradually, not explosively. A small rise in safe-haven assets is an early tremor, not the quake. The real risk lies ahead: a Federal Reserve led by officials chosen in a climate of intimidation, where loyalty is valued over judgement.

That would change not just policy outcomes, but the character of the institution itself. Globally, the implications are profound. The Federal Reserve is not merely an American body; it is a pillar of the international financial system. Its credibility anchors currencies, stabilises capital flows, and shapes risk calculations across continents. If that credibility becomes contingent on political favour, uncertainty will spread far beyond American borders. This episode also exposes a deeper contradiction. Political leaders demand accountability from unelected institutions, yet bristle when those institutions refuse to bend.

Accountability, however, is not the same as obedience. Democracies require both responsiveness and restraint. When restraint is treated as defiance, the system begins to tilt. In the end, this is a test not of one man's integrity, but of a country's institutional maturity. Strong systems protect their referees, even when they dislike their calls. Weak systems go after the referee. The United States is now uncomfortably close to finding out which one it is.

The Kashi-Tamil confluence

(Gns).

A few days ago, I was in the sacred land of Somnath to be part of the Somnath Swabhiman Parv, marking a thousand years since the first attack on Somnath, which took place in 1026. People from across the country had come to be part of this moment of remembrance, united by a shared reverence for history, culture and the enduring spirit of the people of India. During the programme, I met a few people who had previously come to Somnath during the Saurashtra-Tamil Sangamam and had been to Kashi during the Kashi-Tamil Sangamam.

Their words of appreciation for such platforms touched me and so, I thought of sharing a few thoughts on this subject. During one of the Mann Ki Baat programmes, I had said that not learning Tamil is a major regret of my life. Fortunately, over the last few years, our Government has had several opportunities to further popularise Tamil culture across India and to deepen the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat.' A prime example of such an effort is the Kashi-Tamil Sangamam. In our ethos, Sangam or confluence has a special place. Seen in this light, the Kashi-Tamil Sangamam stands out as a truly distinctive initiative, one that celebrates the living unity of India's many traditions while honouring their unique identities.

And what can be a better place than Kashi to host such a Sangamam. The same Kashi, which has remained a civilisational anchor from time immemorial... where, for thousands of years, people from all over have come in search

of knowledge, meaning and Moksha. Kashi's connection with Tamil people and culture is very deep. It is in Kashi that Baba Vishwanath resides, while Tamil Nadu has Rameswaram. Tenkasi in Tamil Nadu is known as

engagement, thus ensuring that the Sangamam continued to evolve while remaining rooted in its core spirit. In the second edition in 2023, technology was used on a larger scale to ensure that language does not become a barrier for people.



Kashi of the south or Dakshin Kashi. Saint Kumaraguruparar Swamigal forged a lasting link between Kashi and Tamil Nadu through his spirituality, scholarship and institution-building.

Mahakavi Subramania Bharati, one of Tamil Nadu's greatest sons, found in Kashi a space of intellectual growth and spiritual awakening. It was here that his nationalism deepened, his poetry sharpened and his vision of a free, united India took clearer shape. There are several such instances that highlight this close bond. The first edition of Kashi-Tamil Sangamam took place in 2022. I recall attending the inauguration programme. Scholars, artisans, students, farmers, writers, professionals and many others from Tamil Nadu travelled to Kashi, Prayagraj and Ayodhya.

Subsequent editions expanded the scale and depth of this effort. The aim was to keep introducing fresh themes, innovative formats, and deeper

In the third edition, the focus was on Indian knowledge systems. At the same time, academic discussions, cultural performances, exhibitions and interactions witnessed greater participation. Thousands of people have taken part in these events. The fourth edition of the Kashi Tamil Sangamam commenced on 2 December 2025. The theme picked was very interesting- Tamil Karkalam – Learn Tamil. It presented a unique opportunity for people in Kashi and other parts to learn the beautiful Tamil language. Teachers came from Tamil Nadu and the students of Kashi had a very memorable experience! There were many other special events this time.

Tholkappiyam, the ancient Tamil literary classic, was translated into four Indian languages and six foreign languages. A unique event, Sage Agasthya Vehicle Expedition (SAVE), was undertaken from Tenkasi to Kashi. On the way, various initiatives such as eye

India's shrimp exports must seek to diversify

(Gns).

India's shrimp industry – one of the country's most globally competitive export sectors – stands at a defining crossroads today. For years, the United States served as its top and most lucrative export destination, especially for frozen shrimp under HS Code 030617. However, this dependence turned into a vulnerability in August 2025 when the U.S. sharply increased tariffs on Indian shrimp, triggering significant trade distortions that rippled across India's coastal economy. The cumulative duty rose to an unprecedented 58.26 per cent – combining 5.77 per cent countervailing duty, 2.49 per cent anti-dumping duty, a 25 per cent reciprocal tariff, and an additional 25 per cent penalty tariff linked to India's Russian energy purchases.

As the U.S. accounted for over 37 per cent of India's shrimp shipments in 2024, the shock was severe: exporters lost competitiveness overnight, and farm-gate prices crashed by 8-20 per cent. Andhra Pradesh, being the epicentre of shrimp production and export, has been severely affected, followed by Bengal, another crucial

production centre, which produces nearly 70,000 tonnes of shrimp every year, 85 per cent of which is exported, earning approximately Rs 8,000 crore annually from the export of frozen shrimp, with nearly 80 per cent of the revenue coming from the US. These tariff shocks severely shook these shrimp markets. The episode exposed how dangerously over-concentrated India's shrimp export basket had become, and how a single policy intervention by a dominant partner could destabilise an otherwise high-growth sector.

Recognising the gravity of the crisis, the Government of India moved swiftly to restore stability and create a more "level playing field" for producers. The Export Promotion Mission (2025-2031) places certification and compliance at the centre of India's long-term shrimp strategy. The government is expanding credit support to help farmers and processors upgrade facilities to meet ASC and BAP requirements – standards that are now essential for entry into high-value markets. Investments in modern testing labs, stronger residue monitoring, and digital traceability sys-

tems are aimed at guaranteeing antibiotic-free, fully trackable supply chains that can withstand rigorous EU checks, as India is gearing up to expand its seafood

Additionally, policymakers should need to recognise the need to support other shrimp categories beyond HS 030617 – such as HS 030616, 030635, and



exports, particularly shrimp, to Russia, the European Union (EU), and Australia, offering much-needed relief to domestic fisheries struggling under steep US tariff. Upgrading processing plants to global benchmarks ensures consistency, food safety, and smoother clearance in Europe, where compliance failures often result in shipment rejections and market losses.

By strengthening farm biosecurity, enforcing tighter quality controls, and promoting transparent sourcing, these measures help India shift from volume-driven exports to premium, certified products.

China, now India's second-largest market, shows

consistently strong demand for frozen shrimp and has become a stabilising anchor amid U.S. volatility. Japan and South Korea offer premium, stable markets, although they require stringent adherence to quality standards and competition from Vietnam. The European Union and the United Kingdom present a renewed opportunity, especially as India advances trade negotiations that could reduce tariff disadvantages. Russia offers especially attractive openings with tariffs around 3 per cent and a history of high Indian market share. Vietnam serves as a major re-export hub, with Indian shipments doubling for processing and onward sale. Several African nations – notably South Africa – have also emerged as new demand centres, though purchasing power fluctuations require careful market development.

Strengthening production and exports under other HS codes-030616, 030635, and 030636 – will distribute risk and unlock new market opportunities. Finally, aligning aquaculture policies with sustainability, disease management, and global regulatory expectations will ensure a stable supply and higher farmer incomes. The recent turbulence in the U.S. market is a reminder that India's shrimp success story cannot rest on a single pillar. With strategic policy support, diversified markets, and upgraded capabilities, the sector can not only recover but also emerge stronger, more competitive, and more globally integrated in the years ahead.

Rattled regime

Iran today stands at an uneasy intersection of internal decay and external pressure. The streets are restless, the economy is brittle, and the leadership is visibly unsettled. Yet the Islamic Republic is not collapsing. It is something more complex and, in many ways, more dangerous: a hardened state entering a prolonged phase of instability. The immediate trigger is domestic. Years of inflation, currency erosion and shrinking opportunities have hollowed out daily life for millions. What began as

economic anger has matured into political resentment. The protests that now surface across cities and social groups are no longer confined to students or activists.

They cut across class, geography, and ideology. This breadth matters. It signals not a single grievance but a systemic loss of faith. The regime's response has followed a familiar script: force, fear and information control. Arrests, internet shutdowns and lethal crackdowns have restored order on the surface but

solved nothing underneath. Each cycle of repression

the United States and threats of retaliation by

Tehran now in a defensive crouch. The leadership sees foreign hostility as an existential risk. That perception shapes its behaviour: harder lines, fewer concessions, and greater reliance on coercion.

The danger is not that outside pressure causes unrest, but that it convinces the regime that compro-

mise is weakness. The more threatened the state feels, the less flexible it becomes. Some observers draw parallels with other fallen regimes like Venezuela's that hollowed out their economies and lost public trust. But Iran is not a personality cult balanced on a single strongman. It is a dense system of institutions, ideology, and security power. It can endure pain. It can absorb isolation. It can suppress revolt. That makes it resilient ~ but not stable. The most likely path ahead is neither reform nor revolution.

It is a grinding middle: periodic protests, recurring crackdowns, worsening economic conditions and rising emigration – a society that no longer believes.

Festive spirit in full glow as COLORS' stars celebrate Lohri and Makar Sankranti

Karan Kundrra from COLORS' 'Laughter Chefs Unlimited Entertainment' shares, "As a kid, Lohri was simply about having fun – the music, the dancing, the food, and how it brought everyone together. But over the years, I've realised how deeply it is woven into my family's identity and upbringing. Although I couldn't be a part of the Lohri special episode on Laughter Chefs, I absolutely loved watching it. The energy, the colours, and the festive vibe felt like home. What makes this time even more special for me is that I get to celebrate not just Lohri, but Makar Sankranti as well with Tejasswi. She introduced me to how Makar Sankranti is celebrated in her family, and I find it amazing that the same turning point of winter is marked so differently across India. It's endearing that while traditions may vary, the emotions remain the same. I hope there is food on every plate and happiness in every home. Wishing everyone a very happy Lohri and Makar Sankranti!"

Ayesha Singh, who plays Mannat in COLORS' 'Mannat Har Khushi Paani Ki', shares, "I'm grateful to have had an exciting year with Seher Hone Ko Hai, and I promise to continue giving my best to entertain the audience. Festivals like Lohri make me especially happy because they bring families together, and I pray that all those reunions are full of love. Happy Lohri!"

Priyanka Chahar Choudhary essaying the titular role in 'Naagin 7' shares, "I am not a Punjabi, but Lohri has always been one of those festivals that felt like a chance to re-do the new year celebrations. During my Udaariyaan days in Chandigarh, we

celebrated Lohri with so much love, the bonfire, the music, the laughter, and of course, all the delicious food. I remember how the entire vibe would just wrap you in this beautiful sense of togetherness. This year, I'm welcoming Lohri with a new family - the team of Naagin 7. I'm extremely grateful to the viewers for showering so much love on the show and making it India's most loved mytho-fantasy. The year has begun on a wonderful note for me, and I promise to continue giving my best to entertain the audience. Festivals like Lohri make me especially happy because they bring families together, and I pray that all those reunions are full of love. Happy Lohri!"

Ayesha Singh, who plays Mannat in COLORS' 'Mannat Har Khushi Paani Ki', shares, "Every year, I look forward to the bonfire, singing old folk songs, and enjoying gajak and til laddoos with my loved ones on Lohri. It's time to slow down, savour the little joys of life, practise gratitude, and put my socialising cap on - catching up on what's been happening in the lives of the people I care about. This year feels especially exciting because I'll be cel-

brating Lohri with the cast of Mannat Har Khushi Paani Ki. As the show moves through important turns in Mannat's journey, marking the festival with my onscreen family adds an extra layer of meaning. I might even get inspired by my character Mannat, who is a chef, and try preparing some Lohri delicacies myself. Here's wishing everyone a very Happy Lohri!"

Rishita Kothari, who essays the role of Seher in COLORS' 'Seher Hone Ko Hai', shares, "I'm grateful to have had an exciting year with Seher Hone Ko Hai, and I promise to continue giving my best to entertain the audience. Festivals like Lohri make me especially happy because they bring families together, and I pray that all those reunions are full of love. Happy Lohri!"

Manasi Salvi, who essays the role of Bhanu in COLORS' 'Mahadev & Sons', shares, "Being a Maharashtrian, Makar Sankranti holds a very special place in my heart. I grew up watching my aai and aji make fresh Tilgul and Puran Poli early in the morning, while the house was packed with warmth and festive energy. One tradition I have followed since childhood and still do is waking up early on Sankranti and sharing tilgul while saying 'tilgul ghya goad goad bola'. As kids, we would rush to the terrace with our kites and spend hours laughing, competing, and soaking in the winter sun. Even today, no matter how busy my schedule gets, I make it a point to celebrate the festival the traditional way. This year, I plan to take tilgul for my co-stars on the sets of Mahadev & Sons and share a little bit of home and happiness with them."

older and life became busier, many of these traditions changed. But no matter what, I still try to make time to meet my friends and extended family in the evening, enjoy lots of homemade food and cherish the little quality time we get together. Festivals like these remind us to pause and stay connected to our loved ones, even in the middle of our hectic lives."

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WR's major block in connection with work of 6th line over kandivali - borivali section

Mumbai,
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 nights of 16th/17th & 17th/18th January, 2026. Due to this block, a

from 23:15 hrs to 03:15 hrs on the UP fast Line and from 01:00 hrs to 04:30 hrs on DOWN fast line between Borivali and Malad.

Due to the above block and suspension of the 5th line as well as speed restriction imposed, some suburban services will remain cancelled.

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.

Indian army celebrates 78th army day at jaipur

(Gns).
The Indian Army celebrated its 78th Army Day at Jaipur, Rajasthan, on 15th January 2026. The parade commenced with a Wreath Laying ceremony at the Prerna Sthal, where General Anil Chauhan, Chief of Defence Staff; General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) paid tribute to the brave soldiers who have made the supreme sacrifice for the nation. Air Vice Marshal M Bandhopadhyay and Commodore P Verma also laid the wreath on behalf of the Indian Air Force and Indian Navy.

This marks the fourth occasion that the Army Day Parade was held outside Delhi, following the decision to bring this event to other parts of the country. It was for the first time that the Parade was conducted outside army cantonment, at the heart of the city at Mahal Road, Jaipur, starting from Akshay Patra Circle and culminating at Bombay Hospital. South Western Command has hosted parade for the first time, after being conducted in Bangalore, Lucknow & Pune since 2023.

General Upendra Dwivedi, as the Reviewing Officer, took the salute during the spectacular parade. The event at Mahal Road,

Regimental Centre, RAJPUT Regimental Centre, Regiment of Artillery, Mixed Scouts Contingent and a NCC Girls Contingent. In a

camaraderie and partnership that continues to strengthen India-Nepal defence relations.

The Army Day Parade also witnessed performance by seven Military Bands. The military bands included teams from various regimental centers, including the SIKH Regimental Centre, DOGRA Regimental Centre, MARATHA LI Regimental Centre, BEG Centre, Artillery Regimental Centre, EME Centre and a mixed band of NCC Boys and Girls.

The 78th Army Day Parade also witnessed an impressive array of vehicle mounted contingents, equipment and cutting-edge technologies, showcasing the Indian Army's advancements and preparedness for modern warfare. These formations presented a rare opportunity for the public to witness the advanced weaponry and military technology that empowers the Indian Army in safeguarding the nation.

The Nepal Army Band was part of the military bands participating in the parade, reflecting the deep-rooted bonds of friendship, mutual trust and shared military traditions between the two armies. Their participation symbolised enduring cultural ties and close cooperation, while underscoring the spirit of

designs for rapid, high-impact operations along its borders. These contingents reflected Bhairav Battalions as a "lean and mean" force representing India's resolve to "fight smarter and strike faster" in the modern battlefield. A fly-past by Army helicopters such as LCH, ALH, WSI and APACHE aircrafts further enhanced the grandeur of the parade.

The parade featured over 30 entities participating in an impressive march-past with seven distinguished marching contingents, representing various Regimental Centers, including MADRAS



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Ministry of Coal Executes Agreements for Three Commercial Coal Blocks with Damodar Valley Corporation, Advancing India's Energy Security and Employment Goals

(Gns).

In a significant step towards reinforcing India's energy security and accelerating economic growth, the Ministry of Coal has executed Coal Mine Development and Production Agreements (CMDPAs) with Damodar Valley Corporation for three commercial coal blocks—Dhulia North, Mandakini B, and Pirpainti Barahat. These blocks were successfully auctioned under the 13th round of commercial coal mining auctions.

The execution of these

agreements represents a significant milestone in India's journey towards self-reliance in the coal sector. All three coal blocks are fully explored and together account for a cumulative Peak Rated Capacity (PRC) of 49 million tonnes per annum (MTPA), underscoring

their strategic importance in meeting the country's growing energy requirements.

The projects are envisaged to generate an esti-

mated annual revenue of Rs. 4,621 crore, while attracting a capital investment of approximately Rs. 7,350 crore, thereby contributing substantially to economic activity and industrial growth.

In addition to strengthening energy availability, the development of these coal blocks is expected to deliver significant socio-economic benefits. The three projects are projected to create around 66,248 direct and indirect employment

opportunities, fostering livelihood generation and regional development in the coal-bearing areas.

The Ministry of Coal remains steadfast in its commitment to expanding domestic coal production through a transparent, competitive, and investor-friendly auction framework. These efforts are aimed at ensuring long-term energy security, stimulating economic growth, and advancing inclusive development, in alignment with the national vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

The projects are envisaged to generate an esti-

feature information, process, compliance, and market research modules, supported by AI chatbots, dashboards, and mobile access for real-time support to MSMEs.

Convergence of Cluster Development Schemes: Integration of the Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI) with the Micro and Small Enterprises – Cluster Development Programme (MSE-CDP). It proposes a dedicated sub-scheme for traditional industries, a unified governance structure under MSE-CDP, and consolidated funding with earmarked resources to preserve crafts, arts, and endangered traditional industries while improving scale and efficiency.

Convergence of skill development programmes: The report proposes rationalising of skill initiatives into a three-tier structure covering entrepreneurship and business skills, MSME technical skills, and training for rural and women artisans. This approach merges overlapping schemes, improves coordination among institutions, and retains targeted programmes to promote traditional crafts, inclusion.

and process convergence. Information convergence focuses on integrating government-generated data at the central and state levels to improve coordination,

undertake corrective measures to improve efficiency, outreach, and impact of MSME schemes.

Need for Convergence The Ministry of MSME currently administers 18 schemes spanning critical support areas such as credit assistance, skill development, marketing support, innovation and R&D, technology and quality upgradation, and infrastructure development. While these initiatives have played a significant role in MSME growth, overlapping objectives and fragmented implementation across ministries often lead to duplication, inefficiencies, and limited outreach. The report underscores that effective convergence and rationalisation of schemes can simplify access for beneficiaries, ensure better translation of resources into outputs and outcomes, and reduce duplication and confusion, thereby amplifying overall impact.

Framework for Convergence

The report recommends a two-pronged approach to convergence, comprising information convergence

and process convergence.

Centralized Portal for MSMEs: The report proposes an AI-powered centralized digital platform integrating MSME schemes, compliance, finance, and market intelligence. Drawing on global best practices, the portal would

informed decision-making, and strengthen governance outcomes.

Process convergence aims at aligning and unifying schemes to reduce redundancies, streamline operations, and improve service delivery. This includes merging similar schemes, combining common components, and fostering collaboration across ministries and states to create a cohesive MSME support ecosystem.

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Process convergence aims at aligning and unifying schemes to reduce redundancies, streamline operations, and improve service delivery. This includes merging similar schemes, combining common components, and fostering collaboration across ministries and states to create a cohesive MSME support ecosystem.

Key recommendations

52 Maoist cadres surrender in Chhattisgarh, ₹1.41 crore bounty neutralised

(Gns). In a major breakthrough for Chhattisgarh's counter-insurgency and rehabilitation efforts, 52 Maoist cadres surrendered in the Bijapur district on Thursday, signalling a further weakening of the outlawed organisation in the Bastar region. The surrendered group, 21 women and 31 men, was collectively carrying a reward of ₹1.41 crore, reflecting their operational significance within the Maoist hierarchy.

The surrender was facilitated under the state government's rehabilitation policy 'Puna Margem', which focuses on encouraging armed cadres to renounce violence and rejoin the mainstream. Police officials said the development was the out-

come of sustained pressure by security forces, focused intelligence work, and parallel confidence-building measures under development initiatives such as 'Mera Sundar Gaon' (Niyod Nellanar).

According to official figures, the surrendered cadres belonged to the South Sub-Zonal Bureau and included operatives holding key ranks such as DVCM, PPCM, ACM, divisional and bureau members, platoon commanders, militia members and Janatana Sarkar functionaries. Several among them had been involved in ambushes, IED blasts and armed attacks that together

claimed the lives of 56 security personnel over the years.

Police data highlight the scale of recent gains in Bijapur district alone. Since



January 1, 2024, a total of 824 Maoists have surrendered, 1,126 have been arrested, and 223 killed in encounters, marking a decisive shift in the security landscape of the region.

All surrendered cadres

formally expressed faith in the Indian Constitution and

committed themselves to a democratic and non-violent way of life. As part of the rehabilitation process, each individual was provided ₹50,000 as immediate financial assistance, with further benefits to follow as per policy provisions.

Senior officials credited the success to coordinated operations by the District Reserve Guard (DRG), Special Task Force (STF), CoBRA, Bastar Fighters, and CRPF battalions deployed in the area.

Bijapur Superintendent of Police Dr Jitendra Kumar Yadav appealed to remaining Maoists to abandon violence, stating that the government's policy is designed to ensure a secure, dignified and sustainable future for those who choose peace.

Sanskriti University and Samtva together will prepare useful teachers

Mathura. An important MoU has been signed between Sanskriti University and Samtva National Teaching Academy (SAMTVA), a wing of Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry. Under this agreement, the teachers have to become such teachers who can do the teaching work in an enjoyable manner and with completeness.

The main objective of this collaboration is to empower teachers to become effective facilitators of integral and joyful learning. As a professionally designed, transformative education certification program for teachers of all dis-

ciplines, Samtva (E.D.Jt. And Sanskriti University will provide a great opportunity to teachers where they can develop through reflective practice, collaboration and a deep understanding of the principles of lifelong learning based on the educational philosophies of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother.

Samtva and Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya will train both serving and aspiring teachers by offering various certification programs integrating holistic



Vishnu Goyal, Chairman of Sri Aurobindo Society (Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand), Dr. Sachin Gupta, Chancellor of Sanskriti University and Dr. Ajit Sabnis, Chairman of Sri Aurobindo Society, Karnataka, displaying the MoU signed between Sanskriti University and Samtva.

Education Policy 2020, NCF and NCERT framework. Through their thoughtfully designed initiatives and courses, they together aim to strengthen the educational fabric by creating teachers who have the vision, skills and commitment for the 360-degree development of the child.

This important MoU was signed during a program by Vishnu Goyal, Chairman of Aurobindo Society (Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand), Dr. Sachin Gupta, Chancellor of Sanskriti University and Dr. Ajit Sabnis, Chairman of Sri Aurobindo Society, Karnataka

educational philosophy with contemporary education in line with the recommendations of the National

and

facilities along with the interests

of the students.

Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel participates in the celebrations of the Makar Sankranti festival in Ahmedabad

CM celebrates the Uttarayan festival by flying kites along with the residents of Vadigam

Gandhinagar, 14 January 2026: Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel celebrated the festival of Makar Sankranti with residents at Vadigam in the historic Dariapur area of Ahmedabad.

On this occasion, CM extended Makar Sankranti greetings to all citizens of the state and conveyed his wishes for happiness, peace, and prosperity.

Expressing the belief that just as kites soar to great heights in the sky, Gujarat should also achieve new heights of development, the Chief Minister enjoyed the festivities by flying kites at



among the residents created remarkable enthusiasm. Residents of the pole welcomed the Chief Minister with cheers and warm greetings from their terraces. CM greeted

Along with the Chief Minister, Ahmedabad MP Shri Dinesh Makwana, Dariapur MLA Shri Kaushik Jain, local councillors, and other political leaders were present on

enjoy kite flying with the Chief Minister made the Makar Sankranti celebrations a memorable experience for the people and kite enthusiasts present.

From Lucknow University Student Union to BJP Politics: Pradeep Singh's journey

Pradeep Singh, who made his mark in the politics of Lucknow University Students Union, showed leadership, organization and struggle in his youth. As an active leader of the student union, he raised the problems of the students prominently and played a vocal role on issues related to education, facilities and rights.

During student politics, Pradeep Singh earned the trust of the youth by working with communication, coordination and discipline. This experience later became a strong foundation for his political journey. He was recognized in the university campus as a leader who believed in positive and constructive policies

of the students. Coming out of the politics of Lucknow University Association, Pradeep Singh played an active role in the organizational structure of the Bharatiya Janata Party. Today, as a dedicated leader of BJP, he is working as a bridge between the organization and the workers. His journey from student union to active politics shows that strong leadership often begins with student politics, which later paves the way for service to society and

the nation. BJP leader Pradeep Singh Babbu (Lucknow) met the Honorable State President of Bharatiya Janata Party Shri Pankaj Choudhary in Lucknow and sent his hearty greetings for the Makar Sankranti festival. On this occasion, he expressed his gratitude to the State President for continuously strengthening the organization and encouraging the workers.

Organizational issues were also discussed during the meeting. Pradeep Singh Babbu said that



under the guidance of Shri Pankaj Chaudhary ji, the party is expanding in the state and the morale of the workers is continuously increasing, due to which the public welfare policies of BJP are reaching the last person of the society.

State President Shri Pankaj Choudhary, while wishing Makar Sankranti, called upon the workers to remain continuously active with dedication towards the organization. He said that the party is further strengthening public trust due to the hard work and unity of the workers.

The meeting took place in a cordial atmosphere and brought the message of further strengthening the organizational energy.

Live-in relationship cannot override valid marriage: Chhattisgarh HC

(Gns). In a landmark ruling that reaffirms the primacy of statutory marriage under Indian law, the Chhattisgarh High Court has held that a live-in relationship or even a man's acceptance of children cannot confer legal status when a woman's first marriage remains valid and undissolved.

In charge Inspector Sanjay Pandey, Inspector Dharmendra Kumar, Senior Sub Inspector Abhay Sharma, Sub Inspector Kulveer Singh, Sub Inspector Shiv Kumar Sharma, Sub Inspector Arun Kumar etc. were present in the arresting team

and legal heirs of a Bilaspur-based businessman. Upholding the Family Court's verdict, the Bench refused to recognise the claimed relationship, underscoring that legal status cannot be created in violation of statutory provisions.

The case stemmed from a claim that the woman, married in 1960, later entered into a ceremonial marriage with another man in 1971 and lived with him as his wife. The daughters asserted that they were born from this relationship and were acknowledged as his children throughout his lifetime. The courts, however, found no evidence that the woman's first marriage had ever been legally dis-

solved through divorce, annulment, or proof of the first husband's death.

The High Court noted that Sections 5 and 11 of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, render a second marriage void if a prior marriage subsists. It further relied on Section 112 of the Indian Evidence Act, which creates a strong presumption that children born during the continuance of a valid marriage are deemed to be the offspring of the lawful husband, unless non-access is conclusively proved through medical and legal evidence.

Official records, including Aadhaar and other government documents, were also cited by the Bench, as they consistently recorded

the first husband as the father of the daughters. The court made it clear that a later acknowledgment by another man, even one recorded before a court, cannot override statutory presumptions or rewrite succession laws.

Dismissing the appeal, the High Court observed that the dispute was closely tied to property claims and reiterated that "legal relationships and inheritance cannot be fashioned through personal arrangements or statements that run contrary to law." The ruling brings finality to the case, denying the petitioners any marital or succession rights over the respondent's estate.

Rafale fighter jet deal: Around 80% of 114 aircraft may be built in India as talks focus on localisation

(Gns). The proposed Rafale deal includes plans to shift parts of manufacturing from France to India. Government sources told ANI that the focus is firmly on increasing local content and strengthening long-term operational readiness.

India's proposed plan to acquire 114 Rafale fighter jets for the Indian Air Force could mark a major shift in defence manufacturing, with nearly 80 per cent of the aircraft slated to be built in India.

Reiterating the Congress party's commitment to public welfare and accountability, Bhalla assured the people that their genuine concerns would be raised forcefully at every appropriate forum.

Restoring trust, dignity, and responsive governance remains the Congress party's foremost priority, and that the voices of the people will not be allowed to go unheard, he added.

He also raised an alarm over the delay in addressing public grievances, arbitrary decision-making, and the lack of effective local-level administration. Bhalla said that people feel unheard and helpless as their complaints continue to move from office to office without resolution.

He said unemployment among youth, insecurity among contractual workers, weakening of welfare schemes, and rising cost of living have created deep economic distress across the Union Territory. He added that farmers are struggling due to high

input costs and lack of market support, while border residents continue to face neglect in terms of infrastructure, healthcare, and education facilities.

ongoing, also involve moving parts of the manufacturing ecosystem from France to India. Government sources told ANI that the focus is firmly on increasing local content and strengthening long-term operational readiness.

At the centre of the talks is a proposal to establish a

Overhaul (MRO) facility in India. Officials believe this would significantly improve serviceability and reduce dependence on overseas support.

Local manufacturing, exports and MRO hub under discussion

Sources said cost negotiations are still underway. The French side's pricing proposal factors in an annual inflation-linked increase of about four per cent.

The force is currently facing a steady decline in fighter squadrons. Delays in indigenous programmes have compounded the challenge, with setbacks linked to engine availability and the integration of foreign systems into the LCA Mark 1A aircraft.

Strategic pressures are also mounting. With active fronts involving Pakistan and China, and Bangladesh emerging as a fresh security concern, officials say the IAF's fighter squadron requirement is now exceeding the long-accepted benchmark of 42 squadrons.



only. In this sequence, passenger tax officer Ms. Pooja Singh launched an enforcement and awareness campaign. Sources added that the Rafale has been found best suited to meet current Indian Air Force require-

Vrindavan police caught three vicious snatchers

Police caught after the encounter, weapons and cash recovered



Mathura. Kotwali Vrindavan Police has arrested three accused wanted in snatching incidents in injured condition after an encounter. Three pistols, cartridges, two mobile phones, cash and an unnumbered motorcycle have been recovered from their possession. On the information of the informer, the police team laid siege in Chaitanya Vihar area from Gau Gram intersection towards Daurera. Seeing themselves surrounded, the accused opened fire on the police, in

response to which all three were injured in the encounter. Police arrested him from the spot and sent him to the district hospital for treatment. Arrested accused Gaurav son of Jagdish resident of Chandrasakhi Mohalla KC

Ghat Vrindavan, Rohit son of Ramesh resident of village Syahara police station

Shergarh, Vimal alias Laddu son of Rambabu resident of KC Ghat, Vrindavan have been arrested. The arrested accused had carried out incidents of snatching

from a woman in front of Mithila Kunj and snatching purse and mobile from another woman near Yamuna Ji Radhavallabh Temple. Against whom cases were registered. Police action necessary action has been taken in Vrindavan police station on the basis of arrest and recovery.

In-charge Inspector Sanjay Pandey, Inspector Dharmendra Kumar, Senior Sub Inspector Abhay Sharma, Sub Inspector Kulveer Singh, Sub Inspector Shiv Kumar Sharma, Sub Inspector Arun Kumar etc. were present in the arresting team

and legal heirs of a Bilaspur-based businessman. Upholding the Family Court's verdict, the Bench refused to recognise the claimed relationship, underscoring that legal status cannot be created in violation of statutory provisions.

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Public alienation growing amid governance crisis in J&K: Congress leader Bhalla

(Gns). J&K Pradesh Congress Committee working president Raman Bhalla has said that the absence of responsive and accountable governance in the Union Territory has deepened public alienation and frustration.

He said that the people of Jammu and Kashmir are grappling with multiple unresolved issues that have collectively eroded their quality of life.

Interacting with locals today, he stated that rising unemployment, shrinking livelihood opportunities, inflation, and deteriorating basic services have placed an unbearable burden on households, particularly in rural, border, and semi-urban areas.

Expressing serious concern over frequent unscheduled power cuts, Bhalla said that erratic electricity supply during the prevailing biting-cold has made daily life extremely difficult. He pointed out that prolonged outages have forced families to endure harsh winter nights without heating, while students struggle to study and small traders suffer business losses. Hospitals, clinics, and essential services

workers.

Bhalla further noted that despite repeated assurances and tall claims, there has been no tangible improvement in power infrastructure, transmission capacity, or distribution management. He attributed the situation to poor planning, weak monitoring, and a lack of accountability, which have resulted in avoidable hardship for the public. Senior citizens, children, and chronically ill patients, he said, are paying the highest price for administrative apathy.

Highlighting other pressing public concerns, the JKPC working president drew attention to inade-

quate and irregular water supply, dilapidated road networks, poor drainage sys-

tems, and growing sanitation issues.

He also raised an alarm over the delay in addressing public grievances, arbitrary decision-making, and the lack of effective local-level administration. Bhalla said that people feel unheard and helpless as their complaints continue to move from office to office without resolution.

He said unemployment among youth, insecurity among contractual workers, weakening of welfare schemes, and rising cost of living have created deep economic distress across the Union Territory.

He added that farmers are struggling due to high

input costs and lack of market support, while border residents continue to face neglect in terms of infrastructure, healthcare, and education facilities.

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