



## PM Modi to kick off NDA's Tamil Nadu assembly poll campaign on January 23

(Gns). Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to kick off the NDA's campaign for the Tamil Nadu Assembly Elections 2026 with a mega rally at Madurantakam on January 23.

The announcement was made by Tamil Nadu BJP president Nainar Nagenthran on Sunday.

Speaking to reporters, Nagenthran said that Prime Minister Modi would address the rally to mark the formal launch of the

### The Fadnavis - Satam 'Ram - Laxman' Duo Sparks a Saffron Surge: Mahayuti Ends Thackeray-Era Dominance in BMC

(Gns). Mumbai's political landscape has been decisively reshaped by the recent Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) elections. In a result that marks a clear break from decades of entrenched control, the Mahayuti alliance, led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) alongside Eknath Shinde's Shiv Sena, won a majority, ending the dominance of the Thackeray family,

where BJP secured 89 seats, Devendra Fadnavis and Ameet Satam's leadership was central, focusing on infrastructure and a ₹74,400-crore budget for smart-city reforms.

At the centre of this watershed moment stands the formidable partnership between Devendra Fadnavis, Maharashtra's Chief Minister, and Ameet Satam, BJP's Mumbai President, widely hailed as the political "Ram-Laxman"

In the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation

## RJD may see leadership transition as Tejashwi Yadav set for bigger role

(Gns). Bihar's political circles are abuzz with speculation over a possible leadership change in the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD).

Amid concerns over his deteriorating health, the party's founder and national president, Lalu Prasad may decide to step down after holding the reins for 28 years and appoint Tejashwi Yadav as the new national president. Alternatively, he may elevate his younger son to the post of National Executive President.

The final decision is expected to be taken at a special meeting of the RJD Working Committee sched-

### Jairam Ramesh cites World Bank report to criticise Modi Govt's response to India's worsening air pollution crisis

(Gns). Senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Sunday launched a strong critique against the Narendra Modi-led government, highlighting a recent World Bank report to emphasise the Centre's ongoing "denial" of the escalating air pollution and public health emergency in India. He drew attention to alarming figures on premature deaths and economic impacts in northern India, stating that the data demands immediate and decisive policy measures.

In a post on X, Ramesh referenced the World Bank's new report, A Breath of Change, which examines air pollution in the Indo-Gangetic Plains and Himalayan foothills. Describing the report as "comprehensive, evidence-based, and unambiguous," he said its timing was criti-

culated for 25 January.

According to party sources, there is near-consensus within the organisation to officially assume charge of the party.

Lalu Prasad's declining health is considered the primary reason behind the move. Doctors have advised him to avoid stress and take adequate rest, limiting his ability to participate in active politics as he once did.

Lalu Prasad has served continuously as the RJD's national president since the party's formation on 5 July, 1997. In June 2025, he was elected unopposed to the post for a record 13th time. His current term will run till 2028.

In a significant political development ahead of the 2025 Bihar Assembly elections, the RJD National Executive Committee had authorised both Lalu Prasad and Tejashwi Yadav to take all major decisions related to the Assembly polls. This decision was formally ratified at the party's National Council meeting held in July 2025.

He also advocated for a significant expansion of the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) in both funding and geographic reach, insisting that PM2.5 measurements should be the key performance indicator, as current metrics underestimate the problem's magnitude.

Additionally, Ramesh called for "tougher and uncompromising enforcement of air pollution norms and standards without any relaxations or dilutions," implicitly criticizing periodic exemptions granted to industries and power plants.

Raising a pointed political challenge, Ramesh asked, "How long will the Modi Govt live in denial?" underscoring Congress's effort to frame air pollution as both an environmental crisis and a critical governance and public health failure ahead of forthcoming elections.

NDA's poll campaign in the southern state.

"On January 23, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch the NDA campaign in Madurantakam. He will participate in the meeting to send home the anti-people DMK government currently ruling Tamil Nadu," he said.

In Singur, PM Modi accuses Mamata Banerjee govt of non-cooperation in Bangladesh border fencing

However, Nagenthran did not disclose the full list of parties that would be part

of the NDA alliance in Tamil Nadu. Reports suggest that

DMDK could also be included in the alliance.

T.T.V. Dhinakaran's AMMK, former Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam, and the

He hinted that all alliance partners would be present on the stage during

the rally. "You will see that on the stage on January 23," the Tamil Nadu BJP chief said.

Nagenthran also dismissed allegations that the

Modi rally. "Permission has not been denied. Certain clarifications have been sought, and it would be wrong to term it a rejection," he clarified.

The All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) and the BJP have already formed an alliance to contest the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, which are due later this year.

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## Editorial

### Frosty Aspirations

In the Arctic, ambition wears a colder mask. It speaks the language of security, wraps itself in maps and radar arcs, and insists it is driven by necessity rather than desire. The renewed American fixation on Greenland must be read in this light, not as a passing provocation, but as an assertion of power in a region where the ice is melting and old instincts are thawing. What is unfolding is not just a debate over territory; it is a stress test for international law, alliance politics, and the meaning of self-determination in the twenty-first century.

At one level, the strategic logic is undeniable. Greenland sits astride critical sea routes, hosts missile-warning infrastructure, and will become more accessible as ice recedes. Security planners have studied its value since the Cold War. That part is not new. What is new is the language. The real fault line is between two incompatible ideas of power. US President Donald Trump's is transactional: leverage creates rights, control creates security, and pressure is simply a tool. Denmark and the European Union's is institutional: law creates rights, consent creates legitimacy, and alliances exist precisely to remove coercion from relationships among friends. Greenland now sits uncomfortably between these philosophies.

Legally, the territory remains part of the Kingdom of Denmark under a self-rule arrangement that recognises Greenlanders as a people with the right to self-determination. That framework is built for autonomy and, if chosen, independence. It is not built for transfer to the United States. Independence is decolonisation. Annexation by the US, militarily or otherwise, is alienation. International law treats them very differently. Even a hypothetical vote to join the United States would not erode Denmark's sovereignty. Without Danish consent, any attempted acquisition would collide with the UN Charter, the principle of territorial integrity, and post-war norms that protect borders. Referendums do not magically override sovereignty. The world has been clear about that elsewhere. Then there is Nato. Denmark is an American ally, not a neutral bystander.

If the idea takes hold that alliance membership does not shield a country from territorial pressure, the psychological architecture of collective security collapses. European unease is therefore rational. The fear is not simply about Greenland changing hands, but about hierarchy returning to a system built on equality. None of this means security concerns in the Arctic are imaginary. They are real, and they will grow. But there is a difference between partnership and possession. There is a difference between access and ownership. There is a difference between influence and annexation. The likely endgame is therefore less dramatic and more ambiguous: expanded US bases, military integration, rare earths and oil for America and US dominance without ownership. It satisfies security planners without detonating alliance politics. Greenlanders have been clear. They are open to cooperation, not ownership. In the race for the Arctic, that distinction matters. Cold ambition may be understandable, but it is not automatically legitimate.

## Rising up in defence of the Fed Chair

(Gns).

Central bankers from around the world have issued a joint statement of support for US Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell, as he faces a criminal probe on top of mounting pressure from US President Donald Trump to resign early. It is very unusual for the world's central bank governors to issue such a statement. But these are very unusual times. The reason so many senior central bankers – from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Europe, New Zealand, South Africa, South Korea, the United Kingdom and other countries, as well as the central banks' club the Bank for International Settlements – have spoken up is simple.

US interest rate decisions have an impact around the world. They don't want a dangerous precedent set. Over the course of my career as an economist, much of it at the Reserve Bank of Australia and the Bank for International Settlements, I have seen independent central banks become the global norm in recent decades. Allowing central banks to set interest rates to achieve inflation targets has avoided a repeat of the sustained high inflation which broke out in the 1970s. Returning the setting of monetary policy to a politician, especially one as unpredictable as Trump, is an unwelcome prospect. Trump has repeatedly attacked the US Federal Reserve (known as the Fed) over many years. He has expressed his desire to remove Powell before his term as chair runs out in May.

But legislation says the president can only fire the Fed chair "for cause", not on a whim. This is generally taken to mean some illegal act. The Supreme Court is

## THE EVOLUTION OF INDIRECT TAXATION REACHED GST

(Gns).

In India, the evolution of indirect taxation reached a historic milestone with the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) from 1 July 2017. This reform marked one of the most ambitious and transformative policy shifts in the country's economic history. Prior to GST, India's tax landscape was fragmented, characterized by a web of Central and State levies such as excise duty, service tax, VAT, and entry tax – often leading to cascading effects, inefficiencies, and lack of transparency. The introduction of GST aimed to dismantle this complexity by subsuming multiple indirect taxes into a unified, destination-based tax system.

The main objectives of GST were to enhance economic efficiency, promote ease of doing business, and create a seamless national market by eliminating inter-state tax barriers. With a view to carry the growth-oriented, transparent, and equitable reform process forward, the Government restructured the GST system in September 2015, referred to as GST Reforms 2.0. By means of this restructuring, the Government has streamlined the tax slabs with the main aim of reducing rates on those items which had been affected by higher import duty imposed by the USA.

The basic assumption underlying this GST reform is that the reduction in GST rate would concurrently reduce the cost of sales on one hand and on the other, there would be a reduction in cash outflow, thereby making a situation that might save them from facing working capital deficiency. But then, how has it

been done? On September 3, the GST Council replaced the four intricate tax slabs of 5, 12, 18, and 28 per cent with a more straightforward two-tier structure of 5 per cent (merit rate) and 18 per cent (standard rate).

Also, a new rate of 40 per cent has been kept for luxury and sinful goods like tobacco, sugary drinks, expensive cars, yachts, and private planes. Common wisdom would want to know how the affected companies would derive benefit from this reform? The answer is that in the face of global uncertainty, these changes would increase retail consumption and directly benefit labour-intensive industries like textiles, micro, small, and medium-sized businesses (MSMEs), and the automotive sector. Lower tax rates will generally result in lower prices for many consumer goods, which would boost consumption because consumers with more disposable income will spend more.

The GST Council has reduced rates in several areas: on cement it has been cut from 28 to 18 per cent, while small cars, two-wheelers up to 350cc, buses, trucks, and ambulances will now attract 18 per cent. Healthcare and education items like medical devices, life-saving medicines, and study materials now face either 5 per cent tax or are tax-free. Essential foods, daily necessities, and consumer goods such as packaged foods, dairy, textiles, electronics, footwear, and paper products have to pay taxes of 0 or 5 per cent only. Now, let us look at the issue from a macro angle.

According to preliminary estimates from the Ministry

of Finance, India's gross GST collections in FY 2024-2025 reached a record Rs 22.08 lakh crore. The country's taxpayer base also increased from

safeguard American manufacturers, it has caused a stir in India's export industries. Up to two-thirds of India's exports to the US market are anticipated to

would lend support to the sectors hit hard by the 'tirade of tariffs' and would ensure that exporters were not left 'high and dry'.

Keeping in view these steps taken by the Government, one would understand that notwithstanding the sharp rise in U.S. tariffs straining India's export performance, the timely and concurrent steps taken by the central Government by putting into operation the GST Reforms 2.0 has emerged as a powerful tool to stabilise the economy. The logic is a matter of accentuation. While there will be increase in the landed cost of Indian goods abroad by virtue of higher tariff, reduction in GST rate will offset that adverse impact and maintain overall price competitiveness.

The higher costs will

make them less competitive, pushing American buyers to seek alternatives

from countries like Vietnam, Mexico, and Bangladesh.

Economists estimate that these new tariffs could

pose a 60-80 basis point downside risk to India's annual GDP growth, primarily through falling exports.

Additionally, a drop in export earnings could

weaken the rupee and

reduce the current account balance.

Now the question is

whether the effective

GST cut will be significant

enough to fully compensate export losses from tariffs?

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman mentioned that the government

will

provide a sufficient, strategic domestic stimulus

to mitigate the loss, sustain competitiveness, and reinforce the economy's resilience.

Ultimately, the GST reform would serve as

a strategic fiscal tool that stabilizes India's price

competitiveness, which will

strengthen the nation's economy in the midst of a

volatile global trade situation, arising from the increase in tariff by the US Government.

Sectoral estimates made by the Progress

Harmony Development

Chamber of

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## Democrats Take Narrow Lead Before 2026 Midterms as Trump Disapproval Rises: Poll

(Gns). A CNN poll conducted by SSRS in late October 2025 indicates Democrats hold a five-point lead on the generic congressional ballot, with 47% of registered voters supporting Democratic candidates compared to 42% for Republicans; President Trump's approval rating has fallen to 37% amid public dissatisfaction with the direction of the country.

While the margin is narrower than past midterm cycles, the findings suggest growing dissatisfaction with the direction of the country and renewed energy among Democratic voters.

According to the CNN survey conducted by SSRS, Democrats currently hold a five-point advantage on the generic congressional ballot. About 47 percent of

registered voters say they would support the Democratic candidate in

about governance, democracy and the economy intensify.

President Trump's approval rating has fallen to 37 percent, marking the lowest level of his second term and equalling the weakest point of his first presidency. His disapproval rating now stands at 63 percent, the highest across both terms.

While CNN's polling places his approval slightly higher at 41 percent, both figures underline a steady erosion of support across partisan lines and demographic groups since mid-2025.

Public frustration extends to major national issues, with 68 percent saying things in the United States are going badly and 72 per-

cent describing the economy as poor. A majority, 61 percent, believe Trump's policies have worsened economic conditions.

Voter motivation tilts towards Democrats

Democratic voters appear far more energised heading into 2026. Nearly 67 percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents say they are "extremely motivated" to vote, compared with 46 percent among Republican-aligned voters.

Motivation is strongest among those worried about the "state of democracy". About 82 percent of voters who prioritise this issue report high enthusiasm to turn out, well above the 57 percent of those who consider the economy their top concern.

their district, compared with 42 percent who favour the Republican option.

Though smaller than the Democrats' double-digit edge at a similar point before the 2018 midterms, the lead reflects a favourable environment for the party as concerns

### Five Killed In Road Accident On Solapur-Pune Highway

### During Pilgrimage; Preliminary Report Says Car Lost Contr

(Gns).

A tragic road accident on the Solapur-Pune National Highway claimed the lives of five devotees late Saturday night, turning a religious journey into a heartbreaking incident.

On the Solapur-Pune National Highway near Devdari Pati, a car carrying pilgrims from Panvel to Akkalkot for temple darshan met with an accident late Saturday night, resulting in five fatalities and one critically injured person; the Mohol police are investigating the cause.

Switch To Shorts

The crash took place near Devdari Pati in the

Mohol area when a car carrying pilgrims from Panvel met with a severe accident while travelling towards Akkalkot for darshan at a well-known temple.

The impact of the accident was fatal for most of the occupants, while one woman sustained critical injuries and is currently undergoing treatment.

The victims were on their way from Panvel to Akkalkot to visit the revered temple for worship. The car veered off the road and crashed into a tree with great force. Five people died on the spot due to the impact, while the lone survivor, a woman, was rushed to the government

hospital in Mohol in a critical condition.

Police Begin Investigation, Identification Underway

The sudden crash left little time for help to arrive, and the severity of the impact resulted in the immediate death of five passengers.

The accident occurred near Devdari Pati when the driver reportedly lost control of the vehicle. The car veered off the road and crashed into a tree with great force. Five people died on the spot due to the impact, while the lone survivor, a woman, was rushed to the government

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near Devdari Pati in the

area.

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## Kozhikode man commits suicide after video of his misbehaviour with woman in bus goes viral

(Gns). A youth in Kerala's Kozhikode committed suicide after a video went viral, allegedly showing him misbehaving with a woman on a bus journey. The young woman has accused him of sexually assaulting her on a bus journey, and the video filmed by her while she was travelling on a busy bus went viral on social media.

The deceased has been

identified as Deepak (40), a native of Govindapuram, Kozhikode. Relatives of Deepak allege that the young woman had spread false propaganda on social media and that Deepak was under severe mental stress after the video went viral. The family said that Deepak committed suicide following a sexual assault allegation against him.

Deepak was found hanging in his house in Govindapuram on Sunday morning. Only his father and mother were at home. As he didn't wake up in the morning and there was no response from inside the room, the parents called the neighbours. When the neighbours came and broke open the door, they found Deepak hanging on the fan hook of the ceiling.

The Kozhikode Medical College Police reached the spot, registered a case of unnatural death and started an investigation. Deepak was a sales manager in a textile store here.



## Raghavendra became president of Bar Association and Manoj became secretary, huge enthusiasm among supporters, sweets distributed

Mathura. In the prestigious election of the Bar Association, the presidential candidate Raghavendra Singh defeated his nearest rival Trilok Chand Sharma by 111 votes. Raghavendra got 1171 votes while Trilok Chand Sharma got 1060 votes. There was a lot of commotion among the lawyers for the last several days regarding this prestigious election. Manoj Sharma has won the post of Secretary. Manoj Sharma secured 1013 votes, while his nearest rival Atal Bihari got 708 votes, thus Manoj Sharma won the post of Secretary by 305 votes.

Late night in the Bar elections, there was a wave of happiness among the can-

candidates who won the posts of President and Secretary, besides the candidates who won the posts of Vice President and other posts. His supporters enthusiastically welcomed their officials by wearing patukas and garlanding them. Drums were played and sweets were distributed. The entire court complex was busy welcoming the victorious candidates in the hustle and bustle of elections.

It is noteworthy that on Saturday, the counting of votes started from morning and continued till late night. It took about 15 hours to



Supporters Raghavendra President and Manoj Secretary welcoming other officials after victory

count the votes. There is a wave of joy among the victorious candidates and

their supporters. In the counting of votes after the Bar elections, Raghavendra Singh, the President, continued to lead from the first round. Rajkumar Upadhyay, who

contested for the post of President, got 785 votes, Prahad Singh Tarkar got 241 votes and Krishna Kumar Choudhary got 44 votes. Rajkumar Upadhyay, who got 1409 votes, has won the post of Vice President. Ballabh Sharma got 854 votes. Devendra Singh Insan got 824 votes, Surendra Sharma got 920 votes for the post of Joint Secretary, he defeated Sunil Sagar by 404 votes. Devaki Nandan Sharma has won on the post of Auditor and Vinod Sharma has won on the post of Treasurer. There were 12 candidates in the fray for the post of Secretary. Among these, Gopal Prasad Sharma has got 697 votes.

## District Magistrate inspected Mega Camp-Special Booth Day

Special Booth Day/Mega Camp organized at all 2266 polling places of the district

Forms 6, 7 and 8 were received by BLOs at all polling places.

Mathura. District Magistrate / District Election Officer Chandra Prakash Singh inspected the polling place located at Government Inter College Mathura and Primary School Aurangabad First Mathura in connection with the Special Intensive Revision Campaign 2026. The District Magistrate took information from the BLO that how many names have been deleted in his area, how many Forms 6, 7 and 8 have been received and how many people have been given notices.

The District Magistrate informed that as per the instructions of the Election Commission of India, the draft of the special intensive revision of the electoral rolls of the Assembly

Constituency on the basis of eligibility date dated 1 January 2026 will be published on 06 January 2026 under the district 81 Chhata, 82 Mant, 83 Govardhan, 84 Mathura and 85 Baldev (SC) Claims/objec-

tions are being received from 06 January 2026 to 06 February 2026 at all the polling places/designated places (polling centres) of the Assembly constituencies. District Magistrate Chandra Prakash Singh has informed that as per the instructions of the Election Commission of India, a special booth day was organized today, January 18, 2026, at all the 2266 polling places in the district. In the said special booth day, claims/objections were received from eligible citizens by being present at all the BLOs and designated



District Magistrate Chandra Prakash Singh while inspecting and giving instructions for Mega Camp and Special Booth Day

abled personFor correction of entries/transfer of residence, you can fill your application on Form 8 and submit it to BLO and designated officers and the said work can also be done online. The District Magistrate instructed all the BLOs that no eligible citizen should be left out and no ineligible person should be included. He said that the administration is committed to making the final electoral roll completely pure and error-free. The final electoral roll will be published on 6 March 2026. District Magistrate Chandra Prakash Singh, Additional District Magistrate Finance and Revenue Dr. Pankaj Kumar Verma, Additional District Magistrate Administration Amresh Kumar, Deputy District Magistrate Sadar/Joint Magistrate Abhinav J Jain, Deputy Collector Narendra Yadav and other officers were present in the inspection

officers posted at designated polling stations. The list of absent-shifted/deceased/duplicate etc. was also read out by the BLO. The District Magistrate has appealed to the general public that the eligible citizens of the district, who are completing 18 years of age on January 1, 2026, should fill Form 6 for adding their name, Form 7 for erasing the name from the voter list, Form 8 for existing electoral roll/EPIC replacement/ marking dis-

finishing duty on Saturday evening. After getting down from the bus at Sikandra intersection in Agra, he was crossing the road when a speeding unknown truck hit him hard. The collision was so severe that Shailendra Kumar Singh had left from Mathura for his residence in Agra after



File photo of deceased JE

died on the spot. As soon as the news of Shailendra Kumar Singh's untimely death was received, a wave of mourning ran among the officers and employees of the Electricity Department. Department colleagues remembered him as a dutiful and friendly officer. He has left behind a full family, which includes his wife and two daughters. After this accident, the family members are in bad condition and crying. As soon as information about the incident was received, the local police took possession of the body and sent it for post-mortem. Police is busy searching for the unknown truck driver through CCTV

## INS Sagardhwani flags off for Sagar Maitri V

(Gns). INS Sagardhwani, India's oceanographic research vessel under the Naval Physical and Oceanographic Laboratory (NPOL) of DRDO, was flagged off for the fifth edition of the Sagar Maitri (SM-5) initiative from Southern Naval Command, Kochi, on Saturday, January 17.

The vessel was flagged off by Radha Mohan Singh, Member of Parliament and Chairperson, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence.

Sagar Maitri is a flagship collaborative initiative of the Indian Navy and DRDO, aligned with the

vision of 'Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions (MAHASAGAR)'. The initiative aims to promote closer cooperation in socio-economic aspects and greater scientific interaction, especially in ocean research, among Indian Ocean Rim (IOR) countries.

The ceremony was done in the presence of Members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence, Dr Samir V Kamat, Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman DRDO;

RAdm Upal Kundu, Chief of Staff, Southern Naval Command; Dr R. V. Hara Prasad, Director General (Naval Systems & Materials); and Dr Duvvuri Seshagiri, Director, NPOL, along with senior officials from the Indian Navy and DRDO.

Naval Physical and Oceanographic Laboratory (NPOL), Kochi, has been conducting oceanographic

missions under the Sagar Maitri programme to strengthen scientific cooperation and build capacity among IOR nations. Under the aegis of this programme, DRDO initiated a scientific component titled 'MAITRI (Marine & Allied Interdisciplinary Training and Research Initiative)' to establish long-term collaboration with IOR countries in the field of ocean research and development.

According to the official release, under the Sagar Maitri programme, INS Sagardhwani will retrace the historic routes of INS Kistna, which participated in the International Indian Ocean Expedition during 1962-65.

RAF Upal Kundu, Chief of Staff, Southern Naval Command; Dr R. V. Hara Prasad, Director General (Naval Systems & Materials); and Dr Duvvuri Seshagiri, Director, NPOL, along with senior officials from the Indian Navy and DRDO.

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Naval Physical and Oceanographic Laboratory (NPOL), Kochi, has been conducting oceanographic

## Car mows down two labourers in Jabalpur

(Gns).

At least two labourers were killed on the spot and around a dozen were injured when a speeding car ran them over in Jabalpur town of Madhya Pradesh on Sunday afternoon.

The incident occurred at around 2.30 pm near the Sigma Colony, police said.

The official said one of

the injured is in critical condition, while the erring car driver sped away from the spot after the mishap.

The incident occurred at

Efforts are on to trace the absconding driver.

All the injured were referred to the Jabalpur Medical College for treatment.

Police said the workers were sitting near iron railings installed on the road divider near Ekta Chowk and were having lunch when a white, high-speed

car without a registration number, coming from Barela towards Jabalpur, mowed them down and fled the spot.

More than 24 labourers were working at the site at the time of the incident. After the accident, locals informed the police and called for ambulance services.

## The Great Khali assails opponents of Sanatan Dharma, says 'make them squat like chickens'

(Gns).

WWE legend 'The Great Khali' is known for his outspoken style. Recently, during the 'Sanatan Influencer Award' programme held in Vrindavan, he strongly defended Sanatan Dharma and reacted sharply against those who target it.

Khali unequivocally stated that those who raise their voices against Sanatan Dharma should be made to 'squat like chickens'.

Khali, who attended the special programme in Vrindavan, highly praised the efforts of spiritual guru Devkinandan Maharaj. He said, "The step taken by Devkinandan Maharaj to unite the followers of

Sanatan Dharma is commendable. We are proud that we have such saints in our country who are living

Expressing concern over the attacks on Sanatanis around the world and incidents like those in Bangladesh, Khali said that all this is very wrong. Giving a message of unity, he said, "We all have to come together so that no one can target us in the future."

## 86th All India Presiding Officers' Conference (AIPOC) to begin at UP Vidhan Sabha tomorrow

(Gns).

The 86th All India Presiding Officers' Conference (AIPOC) will begin at the Uttar Pradesh Vidhan Sabha here on Monday.

UP Governor Anandiben Patel will inaugurate the conference with her address. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will also address the inaugural session. UP Assembly Speaker Satish Mahana will deliver the welcome address, and the Chairman of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Council, Kunwar Manvendra Singh, will deliver the vote of thanks at the inaugural session.

Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, S Harivansh, and Leader of the

Opposition in the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Mata Prasad

Legislative Assembly, and other dignitaries will also grace the occasion.

Pandey, will also address the distinguished gathering on the occasion.

Ministers of the Uttar Pradesh government, members of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Council and Uttar Pradesh

ive processes; ii. Capacity building of legislators to increase efficiency and strengthen democratic governance; and

iii. Accountability of the legislature towards the public.

The conference will conclude on January 21 with the valedictory address by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla. UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha Harivansh, Chairman of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Council Kunwar Manvendra Singh, and Speaker of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly Satish Mahana will grace and address the valedictory session.

## Former CPM MLA S Rajendran joins BJP in Kerala

(Gns).

In a major setback to the CPM in Kerala ahead of the Assembly elections, the left party's three-time MLA, S Rajendran, joined the BJP on Sunday.

Rajendran accepted the party membership from BJP state president Rajeev Chandrasekhar at a function held at the BJP state committee office in Tiruvananthapuram.

Speaking after accepting the party membership, Rajendran said that he had decided to change politics after losing faith in the movement that he had been working with for many years. He clarified that he is joining the BJP not for personal interests but for the general needs and development of Idukki district. He said there are no

special conditions for joining the BJP. Rajendran added that he has received an assurance from the BJP president that he will intervene to resolve the issues in the high range.

Rajendran was the CPM's Devikulam MLA for three consecutive terms from 2006 to 2021. His relationship with the CPM strained after the 2021 Assembly elections. It was alleged that Rajendran had worked against LDF candidate Raja in Devikulam. A party-level inquiry later found the allegations to be true, following which

Rajendran was suspended from the CPM in 2022 for a period of one year. Though the party leaders made repeated efforts to bring him back into the CPM, Rajendran remained unwilling to return.

Earlier, he had gone to Delhi and held discussions with BJP Kerala president Prakash Javadekar. Rajendran was in the news recently for seeking votes for BJP candidates in the local body elections. He went out to seek votes in the plantation areas, including Idamalakudy and Devikulam.

CPI leader Gurunathan from Idukki and CPM activist Santosh also accepted BJP membership along with Rajendran. The BJP leadership announced that hundreds of people will accept membership under the leadership of S Rajendran at a public programme to be held in Munnar shortly.

Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray's "God willing" remark.

As suspense over Mumbai mayor continues, Fadnavis dismisses rumours of dispute, says decision will be taken by him and Eknath Shinde

(Gns).

As suspense over Mumbai mayor continues, Fadnavis dismisses rumours of dispute, says decision will be taken by him and Eknath Shinde

Who will become the mayor, when the mayor will be elected, where it will be

Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray's "God willing" remark.

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