



On National Girl Child Day, PM Modi emphasizes govt's pledge to empower every girl child

(Gns). Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday reiterated the Union government's dedication to ensuring dignity, opportunity, and a promising future for every girl child. He highlighted that a decade of focused efforts in education, skill development, and healthcare has created a supportive environment for girls to thrive and contribute to India's progress.

□ In a message shared on X to mark National Girl Child Day, PM Modi stated that empowering girls

remains a cornerstone of India's development. "On National Girl Child Day, we renew our steadfast commitment to ensuring that every girl child leads a life filled with dignity, opportunity, and hope," he said. The prime minister credited targeted initiatives in education, skill enhancement, and health for the improved outcomes seen among girls nationwide.

□ PM Modi further explained that the advancement of girls and women is crucial to realizing the vision of a Viksit Bharat. "This progress has

established conditions where the girl child can flourish and actively con-



tribute to nation-building," he added.

□ Over the past ten years, the government has

introduced and expanded several schemes aimed at uplifting the girl child,

including Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, and programs focused on nutrition, maternal health, and education access. Government data shows a steady rise in female enrollment in schools and colleges, as well as improvements in institutional deliveries and immunization coverage for girls.

Observed annually on January 24, National Girl Child Day was established by the Ministry of Women and Child Development to raise awareness about girls' rights and promote gender equality. The day also calls attention to ongoing challenges such as child marriage, gender discrimination, and unequal access to opportunities.

□ Officials reaffirmed the government's commitment

to strengthening policies and programs that ensure girls not only survive but thrive, describing their empowerment as a "non-negotiable pillar" of India's social and economic development.

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President, PM and other national leaders extend greetings on Uttar Pradesh Foundation Day

(Agency) File Photo: IANS President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday extended their heartfelt greetings to the people of Uttar Pradesh on the occasion of the state's Foundation Day.

President Droupadi Murmu, in her message on Uttar Pradesh Day, said the land of glorious history and rich culture has been a strong pillar in India's journey of development. Expressing confidence in the state's future, she said Uttar Pradesh would continue to move forward on the path of progress and wished a bright future for its hardworking and talented people.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, extending his greetings to the people of the

state, said, "Many congratulations to all my family members of Uttar Pradesh on the state's Foundation Day. The people of this state have made invaluable

an exemplary one over the past nine years. The Prime Minister expressed firm confidence that the state's immense potential would play a crucial role in sus-

infrastructure. He also expressed his best wishes for the continued progress of the state.

Mr Shah is scheduled to attend a function in Lucknow today on the occasion of Uttar Pradesh Day at Prerna Sthal.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also extended greetings to the people of the state on Uttar Pradesh Day.

Addressing expatriate residents of Uttar Pradesh, he said, "My dear sisters and brothers living abroad, through your hard work, talent, and values, you have enhanced the prestige of Uttar Pradesh and India at the global level. Our government is fully committed to connecting your experience and knowledge with the development journey of the state. Heartiest congratulations and best wishes to all of you on Uttar Pradesh Day."



contributions to the richness of Indian culture and heritage."

He added that with the double-engine government and the active participation of people committed to development,

Uttar Pradesh has transformed from a backward state into

taining the country's development momentum.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said that under the leadership of the double-engine government, Uttar Pradesh is scaling new heights of development and setting fresh benchmarks in world-class

Badlapur sexual abuse case exposes failure of school administration, state to protect children: Saamana

(Agency) Shiv Sena Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray (UBT) on Saturday launched a scathing attack on the BJP-led MahaYuti government over the alleged sexual abuse of a four-year-old girl by a school bus driver in Badlapur, near Mumbai, calling it a grave failure of both the school administration and the state machinery to protect children.

In an editorial published in the party mouthpiece Saamana, the Thackeray camp criticised the state leadership, remarking that while senior officials, including Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, are in Switzerland seeking foreign investment, criminals appear emboldened and law and order have deteriorated in Maharashtra.

The editorial alleged that the incident took place at a private school in Badlapur and that when the traumatised parents informed the school principal, the management attempted to suppress the matter instead of taking

immediate action. It was only after the parents approached the police that an FIR was registered and the accused driver arrested.

fine of Rs 24,000, the editorial said.

Calling the incident a "grim repetition of history" for Badlapur, Saamana



Further investigations revealed that the school bus did not have a valid permit and was operating without a female attendant, in violation of government norms. The Regional Transport Office (RTO) has since cancelled the vehicle's licence and imposed a

recalled that two years ago, two schoolgirls were sexually assaulted by a cleaning staff member at another local school. In that case, too, the school management had allegedly tried to cover up the incident, leading to widespread public outrage and a controversial

police encounter of the accused.

The editorial further alleged that if the ruling BJP projects individuals linked to such cases as "co-opted corporators," it sends a message that sexual offenders need not fear the law. It also cited recent criticism by the Bombay High Court of the state government in the Gogawale case, terming it indicative of a breakdown in the rule of law.

Despite repeated assurances by the RTO, transport police and the government to tighten regulations governing school transport, the latest incident shows that those promises were "hollow," the editorial said.

Targeting the government's "Laadki Bahin" and "Laadki Lek" welfare schemes, Saamana accused the state of seeking women's votes while failing to ensure their safety. The editorial described the authorities' response as "locking the stable after the horse has bolted," arguing that official action only follows after tragedies occur.

From Labour Supplier To Growth Engine, Amit Shah Hails UP's Change Under Yogi Government

(Agency) Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday asserted that Uttar Pradesh has undergone a major transformation since 2017, claiming the state has moved from being a supplier of migrant labour to becoming a key driver of national growth.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah stated that Uttar Pradesh has transformed since 2017, moving from a source of migrant labor to a key driver of national growth, citing improvements in law and order,



connectivity, and the rise of industries like electronics and IT. Shah mentioned cultural milestones like the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya

and the Mahakumbh in Prayagraj as well.

Addressing a public event in Lucknow, Shah launched a sharp attack on

the Samajwadi Party and Congress, accusing them of years of misgovernance.

Shah said that before the BJP formed the government in Uttar Pradesh, the state had been reduced to what he described as a "Bimaru rajya" by the Congress and SP. He argued that the political shift in 2017 marked a turning point for the state's economy and governance.

"Every district of the state will have employment opportunities. Youth will not have to go out of state for a job.

Only Aadhaar should be made mandatory for SIR: Akhilesh Yadav

(Agency) Demanding that only Aadhaar be made mandatory for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, Samajwadi Party National President Akhilesh Yadav on Saturday alleged that the BJP government is colluding with officials to manipulate voter lists and commit fraud.

"They are adding fake voters and deleting the names of PDA (Pichhda, Dalit, Alpsankhyak) voters. The Election Commission is also not acting impartially. If a constitutional institution does not function impartially, who will trust it?" he

alleged. Addressing a press conference here, Yadav said the BJP government is acting arbitrarily and discrimination is taking place at every level.

Demanding the linking of Aadhaar cards with the voter list, he said Aadhaar cards should be made of metal and linked to electoral rolls, which would help prevent irregularities and fraud in the voter list.

Referring to discrepancies in the voter list even

after the Special Intensive Revision, Yadav said the kind of reports emerging on the issue were bringing dis-



repute to the Election Commission. Displaying a list of over 200 fake and duplicate voters in the

Kannauj Assembly constituency, he alleged that the BJP was colluding with certain officials to create bogus voters.

He said it was claimed that after the SIR, the voter list would be pure and inclusive, and that no eligible voter's name would be deleted. "However, it appears that the Election Commission itself is confused," he said.

Yadav further alleged that through the SIR, the BJP government was preparing a conspiracy to weaken the opposition. "It seems the Election Commission had no preparation for the SIR.



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गरवी गुजरात हिंदी चैनल देखिये

Editorial

QUEST FOR ECONOMIC FREEDOM

Economic freedom is one of the most desired fundamental human rights. It gives one confidence and ability to live in peace and to combat the hurdles of life boldly. Economic liberty includes freedom to decide how to use one's labour and work, to enjoy the fruits of labour; the freedom to own and control private property and also to participate in a free market. Free markets and free people are the two major propellants of economic progress. We value freedom as individuals and as a society, and a good economy is one that promotes freedom.

The common belief that enthrals millions of minds is that more the GDP, the better is the condition of the people. It is not just economic size that can bring true prosperity and freedom. It ignores crucial factors like income inequality, environmental damage, health, education, and quality of life, focusing only on market transactions. GDP measures material goods and services, but leaves out the assessment of the state of freedom. Economic freedom is being measured and expressed as a numerical figure. The Heritage Foundation of America has published every year since 1995 an Index of Economic Freedom covering every country. The index takes a comprehensive view of economic freedom.

The Index Report 2025 conceded that economic freedom is under attack worldwide. India is no exception. In the 2025 Index, India ranked 128th among 176 countries. India's status, with a score of 53 on a scale of 0 to 100, is described as 'mostly unfree'. India is consistently being marked as 'mostly unfree' since 2002. Prior to that India was designated as a 'repressed' country. The report observed that freedom of the middle-class is stifled while the powerful are getting richer. It recommends rebuilding the well-functioning and healthy institutions of civil society that we need and deserve. India's GDP growth is predominantly consumption driven, about 60 per cent of the GDP. The main 'consuming class' is the top 10 per cent of the population.

They have the power for 66 per cent of the discretionary spending on non-essential goods in the country. They enjoy real economic freedom. Capacity to spend on non-essential goods is the critical indicator of economic freedom. This top 10 per cent group is not widening but is deepening. The Indus Valley Report 2025 published by Blume Ventures designates this top 10 per cent of population as 'India1', the "engine of the Indian consumer economy". The report advocates that India1 constitutes a 'high income country' within India, and will be an advanced economy well before India overall becomes a developed country. India1 alone would form the tenth most populous country in the world, with 14 crore people.

In terms of per capita income, India1 would rank 63rd in the world, way ahead of India's 140th rank, as per World Bank data. The spending pattern in the market is changing over recent years based on mostly the preferences of the top 10 per cent population. These people suggest how the consumption pattern should look like from gated communities, travel, destination weddings to luxury brands and even 'the way our cities look'. The India1 segment prefers living in gated communities which are the concentrations of affluence. Their rights are well protected here. These are the 'islands' where 'people pay a premium not for quality but for invisibility of other Indians. Currently 16 million such gated households comprise 32 per cent of the population in 50 cities. These communities have become an economic powerhouse as they account for a disproportionately large share – 45 per cent – of overall spending in top cities despite having fewer households. The trend of 'luxury living' in gated communities reinforces existing disparities in society.

India's real estate market is now booming and is projected to reach the milestone of \$ one trillion by 2030. The sector is driven by strong demand in residential (especially luxury), commercial housing. Share of high end to ultra luxury housing has doubled in last five years. This sector is gradually being overtaken by big builders and developers. India's housing market is shifting as more buyers seek larger, premium homes. Survey shows 36 per cent buyers now prefer properties priced between Rs. 90 lakh- Rs 1.5 crore up from 18 per cent before Covid-19. Luxury home demand in India remained strong in 2025, with sales of Rs. 4 crore and above rising nearly 28 per cent YoY across seven major cities. Share of foreign travel expenses in outward remittances increased from 21 per cent in 2014-15 to 54 per cent in 2023-24.

India's car market experiences slow growing passenger vehicle sales while a sharp rise has been seen in premium segment cars over the years from FY 2019-20 to 2023-24. The market forces consumers to behave in certain ways. On the other hand, the market is also energised by the high-income household's spending, which leads to skewed growth. The luxury market has experienced exponential growth signifying economic inequality in society. This implies that while GDP increases, along with it increases inequality. Premium-brand products give high profit margins. Corporates' rising focus on producing and selling high-margin premium luxury items divert resources, innovation, and attention away from providing affordable quality products to low-income consumers.

The monopolistic inclination of the market poses constraints for the enhancement of freedom of individuals. Without free markets and free enterprises, big corporations can exploit both consumers and their own workers thus expanding their profit. They enjoy freedom in the economy through the power of coercion. The bottom 90 per cent in India are not in a position to join the top 10 per cent. A staggering one billion Indians are left with no money for discretionary spending after meeting their basic needs. Most are operating on razor-thin margins, with rising food costs, housing, healthcare and education consuming their entire incomes. They have nothing to save; luxury is a dream. Poverty is the major obstacle to economic freedom.

The ability of individuals to find good employment opportunities and work is essential to the advancement of economic freedom. But job creation remains weak. Individuals in India are being faced with difficulties in choosing work. Inflation overshoots increase in wages, resulting in decline in real wages. Markets are not delivering what a majority in society want and need – like social security, jobs, increase in wages and better working conditions for labour. The problem is not only about poverty in the traditional sense but also about the growing financial constraints among all segments of society barring the top 10 per cent. Society faces a serious imbalance of freedom. Economic freedom in general is in danger. Freedom of a few has increased at the expense of freedom of many. The problems in our economy and society were not inevitable.

Time to revisit premises of doctoral degrees

In India, and particularly in states like Odisha, pursuing a PhD has long been considered the highest academic achievement. A doctoral degree carries prestige, social respect, and the promise of intellectual contribution. However, an important question needs to be asked today: Are we truly nurturing researchers, or are we merely producing degree holders through rigid categories and traditional systems that often neglect the future of the scholar? One of the most debated issues surrounding PhD admissions in India is the emphasis on category.

Reservation policies based on social categories were introduced with the noble intention of ensuring social justice and equal opportunity. Undoubtedly, these policies have helped many deserving students from marginalized backgrounds to access higher education. However, when category becomes more important than research aptitude, innovation, and vision, it raises concerns. Many talented students feel discouraged when merit alone is not the decisive factor. At the same time, some scholars enter PhD programmes primarily

because they qualify through a category, without clear research motivation or long-term academic goals. A PhD is not merely a continuation of postgraduate studies; it demands deep commitment, originality, and perseverance. The critical question is not which category a student belongs to, but whether the student can create knowledge that benefits society.

A balanced system is required – one that upholds social justice while also prioritizing research quality and potential impact. Another serious concern is that many students enrol in PhD programmes without a clear understanding of their prospects. In Odisha, as in many parts of India, PhD admission is often seen as a "safe option" when employment opportunities are limited. Students join doctoral programmes hoping that "something will work out" in the future – either a teaching position or a research role. Unfortunately, the reality is harsh. Academic positions are limited, postdoctoral opportunities are scarce, and industry-linked research remains underdeveloped. Many PhD scholars spend five to seven years of their productive

youth only to face unemployment or underemployment at the end. This raises a fundamental issue: Is the system responsible for

tive, incremental, and sometimes irrelevant to societal needs. Scholars are encouraged to "play safe" rather than take risks



guiding scholars about career pathways beyond the PhD? At present, the answer is largely no. Career counselling, industry exposure, entrepreneurship training, and interdisciplinary skill development are mostly absent from traditional PhD structures.

The traditional method of pursuing a PhD in India emphasizes coursework, literature review, data collection, thesis writing, and viva voce. While these elements are essential, the system often becomes rigid, outdated, and disconnected from real-world problems. In many universities, including those in Odisha, research topics are repeti-

or explore innovative ideas. Supervisors, overburdened with administrative work, may not always provide active mentorship.

As a result, creativity is compromised. Moreover, the traditional PhD system values quantity over quality – number of years, number of publications, number of formalities – rather than the actual contribution of the research. This leads to frustration among scholars and limits the global visibility of Indian research. Perhaps the most painful truth is that the future of many PhD scholars is neglected. Financial insecurity, mental stress, delayed fellowships, and lack of

recognition are common experiences. In Odisha, many scholars rely on limited fellowships that are often delayed, forcing them into personal and financial hardship. After completing the PhD, the struggle does not end. With limited faculty positions and minimal research funding, scholars often feel abandoned by the system. Years of rigorous effort do not translate into stable careers. This situation not only wastes human potential but also discourages future generations from choosing research as a career. PhD stands for "Doctor of Philosophy", derived from the Greek word philosophia, meaning "love of wisdom."

A PhD scholar is expected to be a seeker of truth, a creator of new knowledge, and a problem-solver for society. A true PhD would be: · Conducting original research · Creating new knowledge or new applications · Addressing real problems of humanity · Contributing to the progress, sustainability, and well-being of mankind A PhD is not meant to be just a degree for promotion, salary increment, or social status. It is a responsibility – to science, society, and the future. To restore the

true meaning of a PhD, reforms are urgently needed: · Merit with Equity: Balance category-based access with rigorous assessment of research aptitude. · Career – Oriented PhD Programmes: Integrate industry collaboration, startups, policy research, and interdisciplinary skills.

· Outcome-Based Research: Focus on societal impact, innovation, and real-world solutions.

· Strong Mentorship: Train and support supervisors to guide scholars effectively.

· Future Security: Create post-PhD pathways through research institutions, think tanks, and industry. A PhD should not be a journey of uncertainty and neglect. It should be a platform for intellectual growth, innovation, and service to humanity. In Odisha and across India, we must move beyond rigid categories and outdated traditions to build a research ecosystem that values ideas, nurtures talent, and secures the future of scholars. Only then will the PhD truly fulfil its purpose – to give something new to the world, to save and improve lives, and to benefit mankind.

Next census will confront a dilemma that numbers alone cannot resolve

India's next census will confront a dilemma that numbers alone cannot resolve. It is not merely about where people live on a given night, but about how a society built on mobility can be counted using tools designed for settlement. Migration in India is rarely a one-way journey. Most workers who leave their villages, towns or home cities do not sever ties with them. They retain property, inherit land or houses, support families left behind, and plan – implicitly or explicitly – to return. Their place of work, by contrast, is often temporary, rented, and uncertain. This is true across social classes.

A mason moving from one construction site to

another, a driver switching neighbourhoods based on where employment emerges, or a nurse relocating near a hospital posting – all share the same condition of impermanence. Even highly paid professionals in metropolitan cities live on rent close to their offices, not because they lack attachment elsewhere, but because ownership in large cities has become financially unreachable and daily commuting physically exhausting. Work determines location. Property belonging. India's labour economy therefore runs on circulation, not migration in the classical sense. People move repeatedly between origin and destination,



sometimes annually, sometimes seasonally, sometimes across decades – yet rarely do they fully transfer their economic roots. This is where the census encounters friction.

Enumeration captures physical presence. But governance, welfare design and political representation are shaped by assumptions

of stable residence. The result is a mismatch between how Indians live and how institutions imagine them. At the same time, their home regions remain economically relevant to them. Assets lie there. Parents live there. Inheritance awaits there. Old age will likely return them there. Their political

The tricolour flies high as COLORS' stars share heartwarming Republic Day tributes

Krushna Abhishek from COLORS' 'Laughter Chefs Unlimited Entertainment' shares, "Republic Day for me is about celebrating what makes India special. At home, we gather around the TV to watch the Republic Day parade, and it is always nice to share that moment with my children and Kashmera. That same feeling reflects in Laughter Chefs

Unlimited Entertainment where people from different backgrounds come together to cook, laugh, and entertain. Everyone brings their own flavour, and that is what makes the show work. Now, with the final face-off between Team Kaanta and Team Chhuri, all the fun and chaos come together in one last set of challenges and it fills me with joy to be part of a show that brings families together and embodies the spirit of India. Jai Hind!"

Tejasswi Prakash from COLORS' 'Laughter Chefs Unlimited Entertainment' shares, "I still remember growing up I would rush out of my house in the early morning for the flag hoisting in our society. There was this overwhelming sense of pride that I couldn't quite put into words. As we approach the final face-off on Laughter Chefs Unlimited Entertainment, I'm reflecting on what this show means to millions of people of India, known as a food-loving country. This Republic Day, I'm grateful for the opportunity to chase my dreams, to entertain, and to be part of a nation

that gives us the courage to be ourselves. May we strive to make our country proud. Happy Republic Day!"



Priyanka Chahar Choudhary essaying the titular role in 'Naagin 7' shares, "Every time I see our national flag, I'm reminded of the visionary leaders of our country, to whom we owe this day. Republic Day has been about pondering over the responsibility we all carry to protect and honour our nation. In Naagin 7, my character is on a mission to save the country from dark forces - she's already saved the Mahakumbh from the dragon's destruction and now faces even greater challenges as evil continues to threaten our land. Just like she stands guard over India with unwavering resolve, each of us also has a role to play in upholding what our tricolour represents. I'm incredibly grateful to be part of a show that India has embraced wholeheartedly, and on this Republic Day, I want to salute every Indian who contributes to putting our country on the global map. Vande Mataram!"

Adnan Khan, who plays Vikrant in COLORS' 'Mannat Har Khushi Paane Ki', shares, "Republic Day

is a powerful reminder of who we are as a nation and what we stand for. It fills me with immense pride to belong to a country built on equality, and the strength of unity in diversity. As an actor, I feel grateful to have the opportunity to entertain and connect with audiences across the country through Mannat Har Khushi Paane Ki, a show that speaks with every Indian household. This Republic Day, let us honour our Constitution by being mindful citizens, standing against injustice, and working together to build a stronger, more united India. Happy Republic Day!"

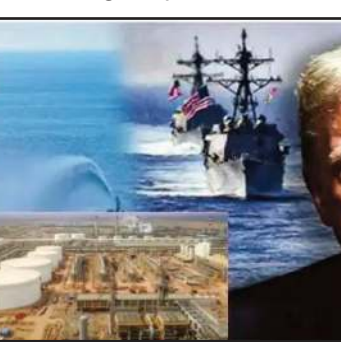
Deepika Singh, who essays the role of Mangal in COLORS' 'Mangal Lakshmi', shares, "I feel incredibly fortunate to be remembered as the onscreen woman in uniform, a character that audiences, especially children, have held close to their hearts. Through such roles, they learn responsibility and patriotism by example, which I believe is the most powerful way to nurture love for our country and its values. I've always taken pride in being a conscious and responsible Indian, aware of both my rights and duties, and I carry that awareness into my life and work. Seeing my son develop on a growing love for India, inspired by the stories and characters I've portrayed, fills me with a sense that something meaningful is being passed on to the next generation. As I play ...

There is hardly any room for surprise in the forced exile of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and the way the ruse of anti-narcotics operations was used to interdict oil

tankers and to kill civilians on boats in Caribbean waters. Because to cut a long story short, the U.S. administration and military, has resorted to a huge variety of killing machines including the use of napalm, white phosphorous, bunker-busting bombs, cluster bombs, radioactive weapons such as depleted uranium shells, and weapons of mass destruction that have over the last 50 years left millions dead.

It had armed and funded death squads in places such as East Timor, Argentina, Chile, Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras (especially the CIA-created "Battalion 316"), Colombia, Bolivia, Angola, and Mozambique with an enviable degree of impunity. Ever since the election of Hugo Chávez, Washington has been trying to overthrow the Bolivarian Revolution but in recent years, regime-change efforts have mostly relied on an all-out economic war against Venezuela. And in case we are overawed by the US operation to capture Maduro carried out by the Army's elite Delta Force and the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, known as the

Night Stalkers, we have seen massacres carried out by the infamous "Tiger Force" of the US Army's 101st Airborne Division before; not to speak of extra-legal operations such



as the CIA's Operation Phoenix that assassinated between 20,000–40,000 civilian Vietnamese "activists" between 1967 and 1971; the American-style death squads of Iraq's "Salvador Option", and last but not the least, executive assassination rings under the aegis of the Joint Special Operations Command that engage in pre-emptive and proactive attacks on foreign nationals in their own countries.

America has been a nation of moralisers since the days of Benjamin Franklin who would surely say that America did it for the good of Venezuela. Nevertheless, the truth is, armed with what is unmistakably the most feared and powerful war machine ever created, America has been the leading violator of international legality and prime perpetrator of international outlawry. Therefore, the apprehension and forced exile of Maduro being violative of international law and Article 2 of the UN Charter

is of a piece with the character of an American administration regardless of its dispensation. So it suits the narrative that the pre-dawn US operation to capture and transport Maduro to New York on charges of drug trafficking was conducted to make Venezuela a safer place.

One could see it coming the way Trump kept claiming that the Venezuelan leader was funneling drugs and criminals into the US based on which the US carried out more than two dozen strikes in international waters against vessels it alleged were engaged in drug smuggling, killing over 100 people. The US has a penchant for fighting wars in areas of petroleum reserves with the aid of drug-trafficking allies or drug proxies. While Trump's National Security Strategy calls for "a hemisphere whose governments cooperate with us against narcotics terrorists," it is well documented how the CIA has made systematic use of drug trafficking forces to increase its covert influence – first in Thailand and Burma, then in Laos and Vietnam, and later in Afghanistan. Since World War II, more and more covert programmes and agencies have been employed using drug traffickers to different and opposing ends as part of the American expansion overseas.

Dr Pemmasani Chandra Sekhar Addresses Rozgar Mela, Highlights Youth Empowerment and Vision of Viksit Bharat

(Agency)
Union Minister of State for Communications and Rural Development, Dr Pemmasani Chandra Sekhar today, addressed a Rozgar Mela at ITBP RTC, Shivagangai, Tamil Nadu, as part of the Union Government's ongoing efforts to promote employment generation and youth empowerment. Across the participating departments of ITBP, BSF, CISF, SSB, DFS (Union Bank of India), ISRO and Assam Rifles, offers of appointment were handed over to a total of 148 candidates at the venue today. The Minister of State, in his speech, said that the Rozgar Mela is not just about appointment letters, but about creating opportunities, dignity and a stronger nation.

Dr Pemmasani Chandra Sekhar stated that India is

witnessing a historic transformation under the vision-

laid a strong foundation for youth to succeed across



ary leadership of the Prime Minister, guided by the mantra of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas. He noted that initiatives such as Skill India, Make in India and Digital India have

traditional and emerging sectors. The Rozgar Mela, he said, is another step towards empowering India's youth.

Highlighting Tamil Nadu's contribution, Dr Chandra Sekhar described

the state as a hub of talent and innovation. Chennai contributes over 10 percent of India's automobile exports, while the IT sector employs more than six lakh professionals. He added that skill development and entrepreneurship initiatives have enabled thousands to transform aspirations into livelihoods, and the Rozgar Mela builds on this legacy of empowerment.

The Minister of State informed that over 10 lakh appointment letters have been distributed across the country under the Rozgar Mela initiative so far, and 51,000 jobs are being provided nationwide as part of the current programme. He urged job seekers to seize the opportunity to learn, grow and contribute to India's journey towards becoming a global powerhouse.

India Emerges as Global Platform for Buddhist Dialogue under PM Modi: Gajendra Singh Shekhawat

(Agency)
Highlighting India's global leadership in promoting Buddhist dialogue, Union Minister for Culture and Tourism, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, noted that since Shri Narendra Modi assumed office as Prime Minister, India has taken proactive responsibility in providing an international platform for Buddhist monks, gurus, scholars, and thinkers, reinforcing the nation's enduring commitment to peace and harmony. He made these remarks while addressing the inaugural session of the Second Global Buddhist Summit at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, on 24 January 2026.

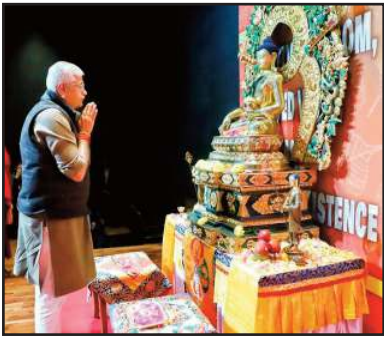
"Under Gyan Bharatam, the Government of India is undertaking one of the world's largest initiatives for

the digitisation of ancient manuscripts," the Minister stated, emphasising that this landmark effort reflects India's commitment to preserving and sharing its vast civilisational and spiritual knowledge with the world.

Shri Shekhawat encouraged delegates and citizens to visit the grand international exhibition "The Light & The Lotus: Relics of The Awakened One", currently on display at the Rai Pithora Cultural Centre, New Delhi, and pay reverence to Bhagwan Buddha. Recalling the Piprahwa Relics, repatriated to India after 127 years, he described them as living symbols of India's ancient civilisation and timeless spiritual legacy.

The two-day Second

Global Buddhist Summit was organised by the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) in col-



laboration with the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, on 24-25 January 2026. The Summit was attended by Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Minority Affairs, Shri Kiren Rijiju, remarked that Buddha Dharma is not only for those who identify as Buddhists, but for everyone, underlining its inclusive and universal appeal.

Held on the theme "Collective Wisdom, United Coexistence", the conference witnessed participation from nearly 200 international representatives from across the world, including leaders of major Buddhist organisations, eminent monks, scholars, and followers of the Dhamma. The Summit provided a common platform for dialogue on contemporary and future global challenges from a Buddhist perspective.

Speaking on the occasion, Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Minority Affairs, Shri Kiren Rijiju, remarked that Buddha Dharma is not only for those who identify as Buddhists, but for everyone, underlining its inclusive and universal appeal.

Rozgar Mela organised at Jammu as part of nationwide appointment letter distribution led by Prime Minister

(Agency)
Jammu, Jan 24: As part of the nationwide Rozgar Mela programme for distribution of appointment letters to newly recruited youth, a Rozgar Mela was organised at Frontier Headquarters of BSF in Paloura Jammu today. This was the eighteenth tranche of Rozgar Mela that took place simultaneously at 40 other locations across the country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the newly appointed candidates through virtual mode.

The event at Jammu was presided over by the Union Minister for Food Processing Industries, Sh. Chirag Paswan who distributed the appointment letter to newly recruits from different regions of Jammu.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Paswan highlight-

ed the Government's assurance to youth empowerment, employment generation and inclusive development, stating that the Rozgar Mela reflects the Prime Minister's vision of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas."

Acknowledging the role of armed forces, he emphasised that the soldiers guarding the nation on the frontlines are making immense sacrifices to ensure peace, security, and happiness for citizens, and through their dedication, they have earned India a respected and dignified position on the global stage.

The Union Minister emphasized that initiatives like the Rozgar Mela stand as a strong example of the

Government of India's guarantee towards transparent, merit-based and corruption-free recruitment.



He urged the newly appointed candidates to move ahead with honesty, dedication, and a sense of national service in realising the Prime Minister's vision of a Viksit Bharat by 2047. The minister added that Rozgar Mela highlights the Government's mission to create meaningful employment avenues and

strengthen institutional recruitment mechanisms.

Shri Paswan further stated that bringing marginalised and underrepresented sections of society into the mainstream is essential for building a truly developed nation. He added that structured recruitment drives like the Rozgar Mela not only provide employment but also ensure dignity, stability, and long-term career opportunities for the youth.

The event witnessed participation of officials from various departments, representatives of recruiting agencies, and newly appointed candidates. Family members of the candidates appreciated the Government's efforts towards employment generation through a transparent recruitment process.

Best-Performing Women Artisans under Mahila Coir Yojana invited as 'Special Guests' to witness Republic Day Parade 2026 at Kartavya Path, New Delhi

PM Vishwakarma artisans, SRI Fund Beneficiaries, artisans trained under Khadi Vikas Yojana and Best-Performing Women Artisans under Mahila Coir Yojana invited as 'Special Guests' to witness Republic Day Parade 2026 at Kartavya Path, New Delhi. Union Minister for MSME Shri Jitan Ram Manjhi and Minister of State for MSME Sushri Shobha Karandlaje to host dinner in honour of beneficiaries on 25th January, 2026 at National Small Industries Corporation Ltd. (NSIC)

(Agency)
The Beneficiaries of the PM Vishwakarma Scheme and the Self Reliant India (SRI) Fund, along with artisans trained under the Khadi Vikas Yojana and best-performing women

artisans under the Mahila Coir Yojana, have been invited by the Ministry of Defence as 'Special Guests' to witness the Republic Day Parade 2026



at Kartavya Path, New Delhi.

A total of 100 beneficiaries of the PM Vishwakarma Scheme, along with their spouses; 199 artisans trained under the Khadi Vikas Yojana, along with

their spouses; 50 beneficiaries of the SRI Fund, along with their spouses; and 50 best-performing women artisans under the Mahila Coir Yojana, are

Minister for MSME, Shri Jitan Ram Manjhi and Hon'ble Minister of State for MSME, Sushri Shobha Karandlaje will host a dinner in honour of the beneficiaries on 25th January, 2026 at the National Small Industries Corporation Ltd. (NSIC), Okhla, New Delhi. During their stay in the national capital, the special guests will also visit historic monuments and the Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya, providing them an opportunity to experience India's rich heritage and democratic legacy.

The PM Vishwakarma Scheme, launched on 17 September 2023 by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, is a holistic initiative aimed at providing end-to-end support to artisans and craftspeople engaged in 18 traditional trades.

attending the Republic Day celebrations on 26 January, 2026. These beneficiaries represent various States and Union Territories across the country.

As part of the programme, the Hon'ble

Shishir Bajaj and the entire Bajaj Group family pay tribute to Shri Kamalnayan Bajaj on his 111th Birth Anniversary

Special Short Film Dedicated to the Life and Legacy of Shri Kamalnayan Bajaj Released
Mumbai, 23rd January. On the occasion of the 111th birth anniversary of renowned Indian industrialist and freedom fighter Shri

Kamalnayn Bajaj, a special short film dedicated to his glorious life journey was released by his son and Chairman of the Bajaj Foundation, Shri Shishir Bajaj, on Friday, 23rd January, 2026.

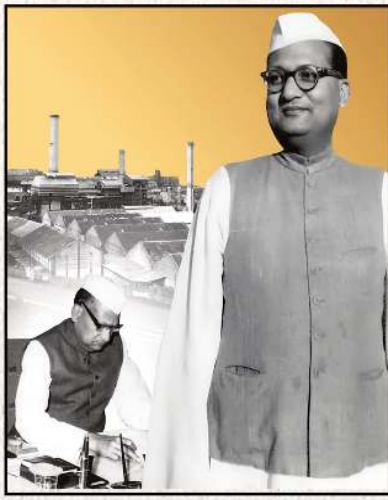
This special short film, produced by the Bajaj Group family and available on YouTube, brings to life the great personality of Shri Kamalnayan Bajaj and his extraordinary life and times. He laid the true entrepreneurial foundation of the Bajaj Group and played a significant role in shaping India's journey towards self-reliance. This commemorative film depicts Shri Kamalnayan Bajaj's journey from a young freedom fighter inspired by Mahatma Gandhi to a visionary industrialist and nation-builder. He believed that business was not merely a means of earning profit, but a sacred patriotic duty to serve the nation. Born on January 23, 1915, to Jamnalal Bajaj and Jankidevi Bajaj, Kamalnayan Bajaj grew up under the moral influence

of three great personalities—his father Jamnalal Bajaj, his mentor Mahatma Gandhi, and his guru Acharya Vinoba Bhave. His values were clear from the very beginning of his life. At the young age of 15, he

"Atmanirbhar Bharat" (Self-Reliant India) at a time when the term itself was not yet in vogue. Archival footage shows him frequently visiting the Gola sugar mill in Uttar Pradesh, which his father had estab-

bile business. These pioneering partnerships proved Kamalnayan Bajaj to be a true entrepreneur of the Bajaj Group, transforming a value-based legacy into a globally respected industrial conglomerate.

Beyond business, Kamalnayan Bajaj served as a Member of Parliament from the Wardha constituency in Maharashtra for 15 years and dedicated himself to the social and economic development of rural communities. He consistently contributed to strengthening education, healthcare, relief efforts, and cultural institutions. He also played a quiet but significant role in India's political integration, particularly assisting Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel during the integration of the princely states. This contribution is mentioned by V.P. Menon in his book. The video also revisits Bajajwadi in Wardha, which became a symbol of camaraderie, dialogue, and national service. Many leaders visited there, including Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Chandra Bose, Sardar Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Sarojini Naidu, Morarji Desai, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, and even the King and Queen of Nepal.



bajaj GROUP
THINK TOMORROW
Pays Tribute to the Legend on his 111th Birth Anniversary!

#AITribute

A scene from the special short film created on the 111th birth anniversary of renowned Indian industrialist Shri Kamalnayan Bajaj, along with the YouTube link to the newly released short film.

https://youtu.be/hLRYxLKb7jc?si=Hh8wqHu54ewEM0_3

participated in the Dandi March and became an early supporter of the Swadeshi and Khadi movements. In an era when economic empowerment was essential for the freedom movement, he believed that purpose should come before position or power, and that the goal of enterprise should be to serve the national interest. The short film illustrates how Kamalnayan Bajaj consciously established industries that reduced India's dependence on imports and realized the vision of

lashed to curb sugar imports. These scenes also feature his family and his younger son, Shishir, who later spearheaded the significant expansion of Bajaj Hindusthan Sugar. The film also illustrates how he forged global collaborations at a time when India's economy was quite weak. One such collaboration was with the global electronics company Philips for Bajaj Electricals, and another with the Italian scooter manufacturer Piaggio for Vespa, which launched Bajaj's automo-

Rs 40 Lakh Fraud Allegations Against Palash Muchhal: What Really Happened In The Sangli Case?

(Agency)
Music composer and filmmaker Palash Muchhal denied allegations by Sangli-based actor and producer Vidnyan Mane, who claimed Muchhal cheated him out of Rs 40 lakhs related to a film project; Muchhal stated he would take legal action, while Mane approached Sangli police.

Palash has vehemently denied these allegations as completely false. He has stated on his Instagram Stories on Friday that the allegations made against him are completely unfounded and misleading, and therefore, he will be taking legal action against those making these allegations.

In a statement made by Palash, he stated that these allegations were intended to be malicious towards him. He stated that these accusations being

spread on social media are false and without basis.

Palash added that he

Mane, a 34-year-old actor and producer, approached the police in Maharashtra's



will not stay silent on the matter. He said his lawyer, Shreyansh Mithare, is looking into the issue and will take the matter forward through proper legal channels. According to Palash, the case will be handled strictly as per the law.

What Are the Allegations?

According to a report by news agency PTI, Vidnyan

Sangli district with a complaint against Palash. Vidnyan alleged that Palash cheated him of Rs 40 lakh.

However, no FIR has been registered so far.

As per the complaint, Palash and Vidnyan met in Sangli on December 5, 2023. Vidnyan claimed he showed interest in investing money in film produc-

560 Roads Closed, Electricity Hit: Himachal Pradesh Faces Disruptions Amid First Snowfall Of The Year

(Agency)
Himachal Pradesh experienced heavy snowfall on January 24, leading to the closure of 565 roads, the disruption of power supply to nearly 4,800 transformers, and a yellow alert issued for several districts. Lahaul and Spiti was the worst-hit district, with Kothi village recording the highest snowfall at 15 cm and more heavy snowfall predicted for the next two days.

According to the State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC), the tribal district of Lahaul and Spiti is the worst hit. As many as 292 roads in the district are closed, including the key Leh-Manali National Highway (NH-03) and NH-505 connecting Kaza and Gramphu.

Roads Closed Across Several Districts

Apart from Lahaul and Spiti, several other districts have also reported road closures. Chamba has 105 roads blocked, followed by Una with 70 roads and

Mandi with 64. In Sirmour, 20 roads are shut, while Kullu has nine closures. Kangra has four blocked roads and Solan has one. Authorities are working

leaving many areas without electricity. Solan district has reported the highest number of affected transformers at 1,856, followed by Mandi with 901 and



to clear snow from major routes, but continuous snowfall in higher areas has slowed restoration work. People have been advised to stay indoors and avoid unnecessary travel, especially on hilly and snow-covered roads.

Power Supply Hit as Transformers Fail

The snowfall has also damaged the power infrastructure in the state. Nearly 4,800 power transformers have been affected,

Kullu with 682.

Chamba has 659 affected transformers, while Sirmour reported 624. Lahaul and Spiti recorded 53 damaged units, Kinnaur 20, and Una two. Electricity department teams are working to restore supply, but harsh weather conditions are making the task difficult.

Weather Forecast and Snowfall Details

The Meteorological Department has predicted

more heavy snowfall in the higher reaches of Himachal Pradesh over the next two days, on January 24 and 25. While lower areas may see clearer weather, a yellow alert for dense fog and cold wave has been issued for districts including Kangra, Mandi, Solan, Una, Bilaspur, Hamirpur, and Sirmour.

Friday marked the first snowfall of this winter in the state, ending a dry spell that lasted nearly three months. Kothi village near Manali recorded the highest snowfall at 15 cm.

WESTERN RAILWAY
REPLACEMENT OF FITTED BED PLATE OF BRIDGES
Dy. CE (Bridge-Line)-Dadar, Western Railway invites E-Tender Notice No: **DY-CE-BR-PDR-2026-01**, Date: **20.01.2026**. Name of work: Replacement of Fitted Bed Plate of Bridge No. 192UP, 192DN, 228UP, 228DN, 264UP, 264DN, 336UP, 336DN, 339UP, 339DN, 340UP, 340 DN, 411UP & 411DN & Supply, fabrication & Galvanization of C.C. Crib & Saphale-Surat Section under SSE (S) Valsad in Mumbai Central Division. **Approx. cost of the work: ₹ 1,59,23,449.89** **EMD: ₹ 2,29,600/-**. **Date and Time of Submission: Till 17.02.2026, 15:00 hrs.** **Date and Time of Opening: On 17.02.2026 at 15:30 hrs.** For further details please visit our website www.rps.gov.in
Like us on: [facebook.com/WesternRly](https://www.facebook.com/WesternRly)

IndiGo surrenders 700 slots after DGCA ordered 10% cut on its winter flight schedule

India's largest airline, IndiGo has vacated more than 700 slots at multiple airports across India following the 10 per cent cut on its winter flight schedule ordered by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in December 2025. The DGCA had issued the orders to trim its services after the airline suffered massive operational disruptions last month.

This means that the airline will have reduced designated time windows for aircraft take-offs and landings at airports. The drop in the number of slots may improve maintenance of flight schedules and restore stability in IndiGo's operations.

Furthermore, IndiGo

has committed to complying with the DGCA's order to prioritise reliability and passenger experience



moving forward.

The measure was taken to decrease the number of frequent last-minute cancellations and delays by IndiGo. Before the disruptions, IndiGo typically operated more than 2,200

flights in a day.

The airline has submitted a detailed list of 700 slots to the Ministry of Civil

ed other airlines to submit requests for operating domestic flights on these newly available slots, so that they don't remain unutilized.

Reportedly, the surrendered slots will be allocated to airlines that have enough capacity, in terms of aircraft and staff, including pilots, cabin crew, ground support equipment and maintenance engineers. To avail the slots, airlines are required to share operational preparedness, failing which allotted slots will be cancelled and reassigned.

The Ministry will ensure that it does not remain limited to reshuffling of existing flights but also improves operational efficiency.

Aviation, as per sources familiar with the matter. Now, the winter flight schedule from January to March 2026 has these 700 slots available for other airlines. For the slot redistribution, the Ministry has invit-

BJP President will come to Vrindavan today, CM Yogi will be with him

Will start his tenure with the darshan of Banke Bihari, will listen to Mann Ki Baat in Akshaya Patra.

CM Yogi Adityanath will reach Mant MLA's house today

Mathura. BJP's newly elected national president Nitin Nabin and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath are coming to Mathura on Sunday. There is also a possibility of arrival of Deputy CM Brijesh Pathak. BJP people have started preparations to welcome him. The administration is also busy finalizing the preparations.

Bharatiya Janata Party's newly elected national president Nitin Naveen is coming to Mathura for the first time today on Sunday. On reaching Mathura on a one-day visit, he will formally start his tenure by having darshan of Lord Banke Bihari. As per the sched-



Bharatiya Janata Party's newly elected national president Nitin Naveen

Naveen will reach Banke Bihari Temple in Vrindavan at around 12 noon. Before this, the National President will listen to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's popular program Mann Ki Baat at Akshaya Patra Complex. The official program of his visit is likely to be released

visit of the National President, State Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, State President Pankaj Chaudhary, Deputy Chief Minister, Cabinet Ministers and many senior BJP leaders will also be present with him. The party organization and the district administra-

tion have become fully active regarding this. Regarding the preparations and security arrangements of the program, District Magistrate Chandra Prakash Singh and Senior Superintendent of Police Shlok Kumar along with subordinate officers inspected the Banke Bihari Temple and Akshaya Patra Complex. Necessary guidelines were also given to the officers. Regarding the program, BJP Metropolitan President Harishankar Raju Yadav said that when the National President arrives in Mathura for the first time, he will be given a grand welcome by the party workers. There is a lot of enthusiasm among the workers regarding this. The National President will also reach the residence of Mant area MLA Rajesh Chaudhary to pay tribute to his mother on her demise

Police arrested three robbers in the encounter, illegal weapons recovered

Mathura. Three vicious accused, who carried out incidents of robbery, have been arrested by Mahavan police station and anti-rewarded team in injured condition during a police encounter. Police have recovered cash, mobile phone, lady purse, motorcycle used in the incident and illegal weapons from the possession of the accused. CO Mahavan Shweta Sharma said that on the basis of information received from the informer, checking was being done by Mahavan police station and anti-rewarded team at Service Road, Chintharan Temple turn on Bareilly Highway. Meanwhile, three accused riding a suspicious

motorcycle tried to escape by firing at the police. In police retaliatory action, two of the accused were injured by bullets, while the third was nabbed from the



Police Station Mahavan and Anti Rewarded Team

spot. Injured accused Kishanveer son of Het Singh, resident of village Parauli Suhagpur police station Jaithra district Etah, Rohit alias Rohitash son of Bhuri Singh resident of Maidua police station

Baldev have been sent to District Hospital Mathura for treatment, while the third accused Varun son of Mohan Singh resident of village Solna police station

Sadar Agra Hall, resident of a rented houseMahesh Nagla Chandrabhan Police Station Highway has been taken into safe custody by the police.A total of Rs 2100, mobile phones of Redmi and Oppo compa-

nies, a ladies purse, two illegal pistols of 315 bore, two live cartridges, two spent cartridges and the Hero Splendor motorcycle used in the robbery have been recovered from the possession of the arrested accused. Police investigation has revealed that robbery cases are already registered against the arrested accused in Mahavan police station. On the basis of arrest and recovery, necessary legal action is being taken by Mahavan police station. Officers and employees of Mahavan police station and Special Task Rewarded Team were included in the police team that carried out this successful operation

Bihar Minister dares Raj Thackeray's MNS to stop construction of Bihar Bhavan In Mumbai

(Agency) Bihar Minister Ashok Choudhary has dared the Raj Thackeray-led Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) to try and stop the construction of the 30-storey Bihar Bhavan near Mumbai Port Trust, days after MNS leader Yashwant Killedar stated that his party would never allow its construction in Mumbai under any circumstances.

"What kind of language is this? How can an MNS leader speak like this? We dare the MNS to stop construction of Bihar Bhavan in Mumbai. We will go ahead with its construction soon," Bihar minister Ashok Choudhary said.

Recently, the Bihar cabinet had approved Rs 314.2 crore for its Bihar Bhavan project which is to be constructed on a 0.68-acre plot near Mumbai Port Trust in order to house Bihar

migrants arriving in Mumbai for medical treatment and seeking employment opportunities.



The latest statement by Bihar Minister Ashok Choudhary is being viewed as a reaction to MNS corporator Yashwant Killedar's statement on January 19 that "We will not allow anything like Bihar Bhavan to be built here (in Mumbai). Maharashtra already has many serious problems. There is an untimely crisis on farmers, inflation is rising, children's education is

becoming expensive, unemployment among the youth is increasing and with many such problems,

instead of spending Rs 314 crore to build Bihar Bhavan, attention should be paid to basic problems of the people".

"Instead of spending so much money in Mumbai for the people from Bihar who come to Mumbai for medical treatment, they must construct big hospitals in Bihar itself, so that people will not need to go outside Bihar for treatment. Our

problems are not being solved and these projects are being pushed on our heads. We will not allow Bihar Bhavan to be built in Mumbai," Killedar said on January 19.

MNS leader Yashwant Killedar's statement was a reaction to a report that Bihar government's Public Works Department Secretary Kumar Ravi had announced that a Bihar Bhavan building will be constructed at Elephant Estate in the Mumbai Port Trust area, in Mumbai as a facility for citizens from Bihar who come to Mumbai for treatment or work.

The Mumbai unit of the BJP had criticized MNS leader Killedar's statement on January 19. "If Bihar Bhavan is going to be built in Maharashtra, what is wrong in it? There is a Maharashtra Bhavan in Bihar too.

Vizhinjam Port Phase 2 launch puts Kerala firmly on global maritime map

(Agency) Kerala, on Saturday, marked a decisive moment in its infrastructure journey with the formal launch of Phase II of the Vizhinjam International Seaport, a project that has rapidly transformed the state's standing in global maritime logistics.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said the port's progress decisively counters the long-held criticism that "nothing happens in Kerala", asserting that Vizhinjam has already etched the state's name into the world's shipping routes.

"Operational for nearly more than a year, Vizhinjam has emerged as a rare success story in port development. The first mothership berthed in July 2024, and the port was formally dedicated to the nation in May 2025. Designed initially for an annual capacity of one mil-

lion TEUs, the port crossed that milestone within 10

describing the state as a vital gateway between



months, handling 615 vessels and 1.32 million containers in its first year — a feat few global ports can claim. In December 2025 alone, it processed 1.21 lakh TEUs, with some of the world's largest and deepest-draft container vessels calling at the port," Vijayan added.

Union Minister for Shipping, Ports and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal, said that Kerala occupies a special place in India's maritime future,

India and the world.

He noted that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, shipping has gained renewed strategic importance, with India's maritime strength expanding significantly over the past decade.

Vizhinjam, Union Minister Sonowal said, stands as a "shining symbol" of this transformation, underlined by its strong operational performance.

Phase II of the Vizhinjam Port marks a major capacity expansion.

The GST registration threshold needs to be raised in the upcoming budget: Aman Gupta

Fatehpur. Since the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) system, small and medium businesses (MSMEs) have faced a significant challenge. Currently, the GST registration threshold is set at ₹20 lakh for services and ₹40 lakh for goods, effective July 1, 2017. This threshold has remained unchanged for nearly eight years, despite a steady increase in inflation, rent, salaries, raw materials, and other business costs. As a result, many small businesses are falling under the GST ambit

solely due to inflation, not actual business growth. The compliance obligations associated with GST regis-



Aman Gupta CA

context, the government is expected to raise the GST registration threshold in line with inflation and the actual

business situation in the upcoming budget. The GST registration limit for the services sector should be increased from 2 million to 3 million to 4 million, and for goods trade from 4 million to 6 million to 7.5 million. Such an increase would

provide real relief to the MSME sector, reduce business burdens, and improve ease of doing business. It would also increase voluntary tax compliance, which would be beneficial for the economy. Economic policies should aim not only at tax collection, but also at empowering small and medium-sized businesses and promoting employment generation. Therefore, this timely amendment to the GST registration limit in the upcoming budget is not only necessary but also highly welcome.

Blackout mock drill demonstrated at IOC Refinery

Mathura. On the occasion of Uttar Pradesh Day and Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Jayanti, a grand and live imaginary demonstration of blackout mock drill for protection from air attack was done by the Civil Defense Department, Mathura in the premises of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (Mathura Refinery).

This mock drill was organized under the direction of District Magistrate/Controller Civil Defense Chandra Prakash Singh and Senior Superintendent of Police Shlok Kumar. All emergency services including Mathura Refinery staff, fire department, police, health department, DDMA, SDRF took coordinated participation in the drill. During the drill, the general public was made to practice alertness, taking shelter, relief and rescue operations through yellow, red and green signals of air attack. As soon as the siren sounded, citizens took shelter in safe places. Fire fighter teams controlled the fire, first aid



During the demonstration of blackout mock drill, Mathura Refinery staff, fire department, police, health department,

team gave first aid to the injured and seriously injured were taken to the hospital through ambulance. Chief Development

Officer Manish Meena from Welfare Service, Chief Medical Officer from Casualty Service, Chief Fire Officer Mathura from

Fire Service, and Assistant Deputy Controller (CV) Civil Defense from Communication/Training Service played an active role in the program. Under the leadership of Additional District Magistrate/In-charge Deputy Controller Civil Defense Rajesh Kumar Yadav, all the commanding officers successfully discharged their responsibilities. On behalf of Indian Oil Corporation Limited, Anil Kumar (CGM-HR), A.K. Mishra (CGM), Rajneesh Tiwari (DGM Fire) and their subordinates provided full cooperation. Bharatbhushan Tiwari (Divisional Warden), Rajesh Mittal (Deputy Divisional Warden), Deepak Kumar Banker, Dr. from Civil Defense Warden ServiceMahesh Sharma, Ashok Yadav, Pawan Sharma, Tahir Khan, Yatendra, Nitin Soni, Sunaina Gupta, Shaili Agarwal and other wardens and volunteers participated. The program was conducted by Neeraj Srivastava, Assistant Deputy Controller (VWD) Civil Defense

Hemant Soren visits Imperial College London, discusses collaboration on critical minerals

(Gns). Chief Minister Hemant Soren on Saturday visited the Royal School of Mines at Imperial College London as part of Jharkhand's international engagement on critical minerals, advanced research and clean energy technologies.

During the visit, the Chief Minister toured key laboratories and interacted with faculty members and researchers working in mineral processing, advanced materials and nuclear-linked research.

Experts including Professor Stephen Neethling, Professor Mark

Wenman, Professor Mark Sephton, Professor Mukesh Kumar of Cambridge University and Dr Surya Kumar Singh briefed the delegation on ongoing work in mineral beneficiation,

materials science, nuclear engineering and advanced sensing technologies. Laboratory demonstrations highlighted modern techniques in mineral characterisation, processing optimisation, modelling and imaging, showing how



early-stage scientific research can be translated into industrial-scale applications.

Discussions focused on how such technologies could assist resource-rich states like Jharkhand in moving beyond raw mineral extraction towards value addition and stronger participation in the critical minerals value chain.

Addressing the gathering, Hemant Soren said Jharkhand was working to build a research and devel-

opment-driven industrial ecosystem aligned with a just and future-oriented development approach. He emphasised the importance of global academic and institutional partnerships to support sustainable mining practices, clean energy transition and industrial decarbonisation.

Faculty members outlined Imperial College London's interdisciplinary approach, integrating earth sciences, materials engineering, computational modelling and policy studies to address complex challenges related to mining and clean energy.