

IN BRIEF

Massive fire breaks out at godown in Kurla

Mumbai Nov 28 (UNI) : A major fire broke out at Khalil Shaikh Chawl, Kismat Nagar, Kurla (W), Mumbai, on Thursday night.

Several fire engines were rushed to the spot to douse the fire. Officials confirmed on Friday that it was a Leve

I-III fire and that no injuries were reported.

The fire, which started at 11:08 pm., affected 25–30 ground-plus-three commercial structures and an equal number of residential structures, covering an area of approximately 100 x 150 sq. ft.

The Mumbai Fire Brigade (MFB) declared the blaze a Level-III fire at 11:44 p.m. and brought it under control by 3:15 a.m. on Friday. The cause of fire is under investigation .

Toddler from Pune enters India Book of Records

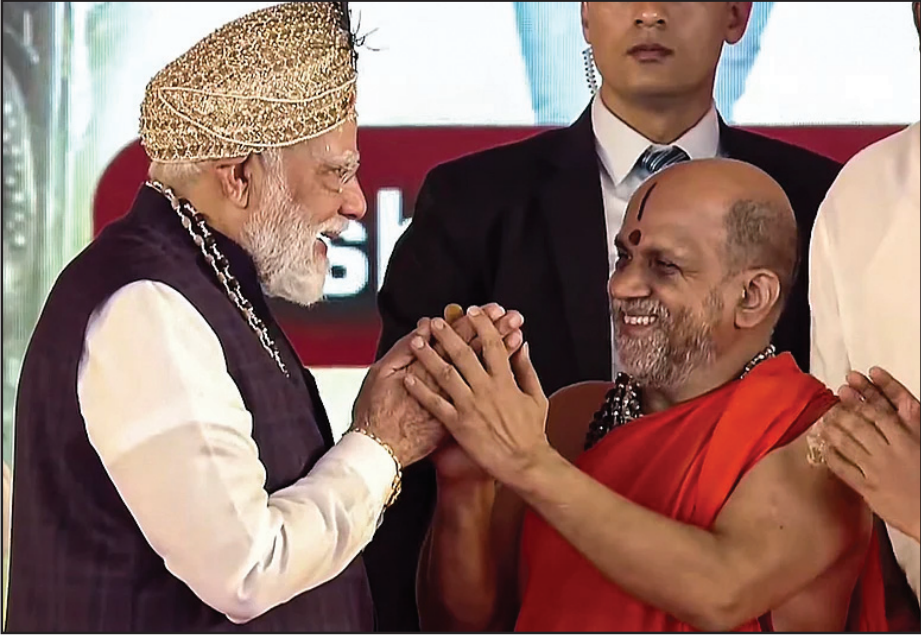
Pune, Nov 28 (UNI) : One-and-a-half-year-old boy from the city has created a record by entering the India Book of Records for identifying around 45 car brands from around the world in just 2 minutes and 53 seconds.

Neel Nikhil Bhalerao's achievement is not limited to numbers; it also highlights his potential for even greater accomplishments in the future, said a release here today.

At such a young age, memorizing a large number of names and presenting them confidently is remarkable, and he is being praised everywhere. Being included in the India Book of Records is a matter of pride for anyone, but achieving it at such a young age makes it even more significant.

Behind this success, along with Neel's determination, the guidance, patience, and encouragement of his parents — mother Prerana Bhalerao and father Nikhil Bhalerao — have played an important role.

If the qualities present in such young children are recognized and nurtured in the right direction, they can reach great heights. Neel's success has brought pride not only to Maharashtra but to the entire country, added the release.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Paryaya Puttige Mutt seer Sri Sugunendra Theertha Swamiji during 'Laksha Kantha Gita Parayana' programme at Sri Krishna Mutt, in Udupi, Karnataka.

SC issues interim order to go ahead with Maha elections

New Delhi, Nov 28 (UNI) : The Supreme Court on Friday asked the Maharashtra government and the Maharashtra State Election Commission to conduct local civic body elections in its interim order.

The court restrained the Maharashtra State Election Commission from notifying reservations in excess of 50 per cent in the local bodies, where elections are yet to be notified. Elections to local civic bodies where reservations in excess of 50% have already been notified will be subject to the outcome of the result of the writ petitions, the court stated.

It clarified that poll results of all local civic bodies in Maharashtra, including where the 50 per cent ceiling on quota has been breached, will depend on its final verdict, which will be delivered on January 21, 2026. After Friday's Supreme Court order, pending municipal elections will be held by maintaining the 50 per cent reservation limit. However, in exceptional

cases, if this limit is exceeded, then those elections will be held.

The Supreme Court did not give any stay regarding the 57 seats whose issues have been resolved due to the court's decision. However, the final fate of these 57 seats will now depend on the next hearing to be held on January 21, 2026. If the Supreme Court verdict goes against the elected candidates, they may lose their elected positions, according to lawyers familiar with the matter.

Election Commission lawyer Advocate Balveer Singh stated that the reservation limit has been exceeded in some municipal councils and town councils. There is more than 50 per cent reservation in 40 municipal councils and 17 town councils. Besides this, elections have not been announced yet in about 32 Zilla Parishads and 29 metropolitan municipalities, which include the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) as well as 332 village councils.

Elections to village councils and other local bodies are expected to be announced in the first week of December 2025, while elections to municipal corporations are likely to be announced by the end of December 2025.

The 50 per cent reservation limit has been exceeded in some municipal corporations. Among these, the 50 per cent reservation limit has been exceeded in Nagpur Municipal Corporation and Chandrapur Municipal Corporation.

Elections will be held in these places as per the decision of the Maharashtra State Election Commission.

However, the outcome of the hearing to be held on January 21, 2026 will be applicable to municipal corporations. Therefore, if elections in places where the 50 percent limit has been exceeded are cancelled, the elected candidates may have to step down from their positions and contest elections again, lawyers said.

Shinde says Sena-BJP alliance ideological, not situational

Nashik, Nov 28 (UNI) : Amidst ongoing speculation over the future of the Shiv Sena-BJP alliance in Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde today asserted that the alliance is rooted in ideology and not driven by political convenience or circumstances.

“The Shiv Sena-BJP alliance is not based on power or situations. It was forged on ideology by Balasaheb Thackeray, Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Lal Krishna Advani. This partnership is old, strong and will remain permanent,” Shinde told reporters during his visit to Nashik.

His remarks come in the backdrop of heightened political discussion triggered by BJP leader Ravindra Chavan's recent comment that the alliance “should last at least until December 2.” Tensions between grassroots workers of both parties—particularly

after the Sindhudurg district dispute—have further fuelled speculation, making Shinde's assertion politically significant.

Earlier in the day, the Supreme Court delivered an important verdict on Maharashtra's local body elections, ruling that polls cannot be postponed on the grounds of crossing the 50 percent reservation limit due to OBC quota provisions. The court has completed its hearings on the matter.

Responding to the verdict, Shinde said, “We will announce an official stance only after studying the Supreme Court order in detail. However, we fully respect the court's decision.” Against the backdrop of upcoming local body elections, the sensitive issue of OBC reservation, and visible strains within the alliance, Shinde's statement is being viewed as a crucial political message.

India, US sign key MH-60R helicopter support pact amid tariff dispute

New Delhi, Nov 28 (UNI) : In a significant boost to defence cooperation, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) on Friday signed Letters of Offer and Acceptance (LOAs) with the Government of the United States for five-year sustainment support of the Indian Navy's MH-60R helicopter fleet, in a deal valued at approximately Rs 7,995 crore.

The LOAs were inked under the US Foreign Military Sales (FMS) programme, in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh in the national capital. The deal aims to provide comprehensive support, including spares, technical assistance, training, and periodic maintenance facilities in India. The LOAs were inked under the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) programme of US, in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh

Govt stops accepting Aadhaar card as proof of date of birth

Nagpur, Nov 28 (UNI) : The Maharashtra government has decided to discontinue the use of Aadhaar cards as valid proof of date of birth and the decision, was taken under the leadership of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, after rising complaints of forged birth certificates and misuse of documents.

According to the Revenue Department, Aadhaar card is not a proof of date of birth. Hence any birth certificates issued solely on the basis of Aadhaar will be cancelled, and action will be taken against officials responsible for approving such documents.

The department clarified that Aadhaar is not linked to any official birth registration record and therefore cannot serve as birth proof.

The state has also issued a 16-point verification

guideline for processing birth registrations. Several orders issued by tehsildars will be withdrawn and pending applications that do not meet the standard operating procedures will be cancelled.

Corresponding entries on the Civil Registration System portal will also be deleted. Officials say the tightened procedures aim to curb the growing use of forged documents.

Revenue Minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule has directed authorities to investigate suspicious certificates and take necessary action.

With this decision, the Aadhaar card will remain valid only as identity proof and not as a document confirming date of birth.

Citizens will be required to present an official birth certificate or other legally recognised documents for birth-related verification.

MNS faces setback as Kalyan-Dombivali chief quits

Mumbai, Nov 28 (UNI) : In a significant setback for the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) ahead of the upcoming municipal elections, the party's Kalyan-Dombivali District President Prakash Bhoir resigned from all posts today.

His resignation has dealt a political blow to MNS chief Raj Thackeray.

Bhoir said he had submitted his resignation from both the primary membership of the MNS and the position of District President to Raj Thackeray. He stated that he felt undervalued within the organisation and therefore decided to step down.

Bhoir added that he would announce his next political move shortly. Amidst his resignation, Bhoir's presence at a meeting with BJP State President Ravindra Chavan in the Kalyan-Dombivali region has fuelled speculation of his possible entry into the Bharatiya Janata Party.



Avani Lekhara lauds Deaflympics shooters for record show in Japan

Paralympian Avani Lekhara and Olympian Manu Bhaker praised India's best-ever performance at the recently-concluded 25th Summer Deaflympic Games held in Tokyo, Japan, where the country clinched 20 medals including nine Gold, seven Silver and four Bronze medals. India finished sixth in the medal standings out of 62 participating nations. Interestingly, deaf shooters fuelled India's strong display at the Deaflympics, clinching a total of 16 medals including 7 Gold, 6 Silver and 3 Bronze medals. (See on page 7)

Jairam Ramesh challenges PM to advocate for South Africa's ...



Congress General Secretary Jairam Ramesh on Friday called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi to actively champion South Africa's cause following US President Donald Trump's announcement that South Africa will not be invited to the 2026 G20 summit in Miami. (See on page 2)

Akhilesh Yadav hits out against SIR exercise, appeals to



Samajwadi Party National President Akhilesh Yadav has appealed to all opposition parties, and even to all NDA allies, to "unite and expose the BJP's grand conspiracy" to delete the names of genuine voters through the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the country. (See on page 4)

BNP leader says former premier Khaleda Zia in 'extremely



BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has said party chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia's health has deteriorated to an "extremely critical" state, urging people across Bangladesh to pray for her recovery. (See on page 5)



India strengthens AI readiness with new military handbook and predictive disaster alert System

Name of the work with its location: Reconditioning & Overhauling of EOT Cranes Capacity 25/5 Ton, Make: AVON & SAICO at LTT Coaching Depot of Mumbai Division. **Approx. cost of work:** ₹49,39,745.50/- (Rupees Forty-Nine Lakh Thirty-Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Forty-Five and Fifty Paise Only) **Date of completion:** 120 Days **Bid Security:** ₹98,800/- (Rupees Ninety-Eight Thousand Eight Hundred Only) **Date and Time of closing of tender submission:** 17.12.2025 up to 11:00 hrs. Tenders shall be accepted only in E-tendering format through the website www.ireps.gov.in Tender document is available in the website. "This tender complies with Public Procurement Policy Order 2017/dated 15.06.2017." OPEN TENDER Notice No. BB.M.LTT.TC. 52. EOT.Recondition.Vol2 dated 25.11.2025.

Congress Gears Up for Crucial Winter Session Battle, Focuses on Electoral Integrity and National Security

Sit-in demanding "Bharat Ratna" for Phule couple

Ganesh Naik Hints at 'Clean-Up' in Kalyan-Thane



Name of the work with its location: Reconditioning & Overhauling of EOT Cranes Capacity 25/5 Ton, Make: AVON & SAICO at LTT Coaching Depot of Mumbai Division. **Approx. cost of work:** ₹49,39,745.50/- (Rupees Forty-Nine Lakh Thirty-Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Forty-Five and Fifty Paise Only) **Date of completion:** 120 Days **Bid Security:** ₹98,800/- (Rupees Ninety-Eight Thousand Eight Hundred Only) **Date and Time of closing of tender submission:** 17.12.2025 up to 11:00 hrs. Tenders shall be accepted only in E-tendering format through the website www.ireps.gov.in Tender document is available in the website. "This tender complies with Public Procurement Policy Order 2017/dated 15.06.2017." OPEN TENDER Notice No. BB.M.LTT.TC. 52. EOT.Recondition.Vol2 dated 25.11.2025.

WESTERN RAILWAY INVITATION FOR ENGAGEMENT OF ATVM FACILITATOR	
No. C 548/45/1/ATVM Facilitator Vol. VI [E-File No.-629307]	dated 27.11.2025.
Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Western Railway, Mumbai Division, invite application from Retired Railway Employees at all department of Mumbai division, Head Quarters, Work-shops, of Western & Central Railway as well as from General Public for working as "ATVM Facilitator" . The contract is valid for 2 years, which can be extended to further one year subject to extension of the scheme and satisfaction of the Competent Authority. No remuneration will be paid by the Railway for engaging as a facilitator, except the bonus on smart card recharge shall be @ 3% for journey upto 150 kms. The bonus for journey between 151km and 500 km shall be admissible @ 2% and thereafter, bonus shall be given @ 1% for tickets issued for distance beyond 500kms. The list of stations requiring ATVM facilitators and other terms & conditions are available on the official website - https:// wr.indianrailways.gov.in/ Tender Details_cpp.jsp?7_ID=21509&lang=1&id=0,3	
The filled in application forms will be received by this office	From 11:00 hrs of 02.12.2025
Last date for submission of applications	Upto 17:00 hrs of 01.12.2026
Place of submission of applications	Passenger Marketing Cell Office of Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Commercial Department, Mumbai Central, Western Railway, Mumbai- 400008
The applications after completion of all required formalities will be processed for scrutiny and on fulfillment of all conditions; the allotment will be done on FIRST COME FIRST SERVED (FCFS) Basis only . All detailed terms and conditions are available on the website mentioned above.	
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Tree cutting in Powai halted amid protests; concerns raised after 100 trees reportedly lost

Renowned Poet and humorist Dr Mirza passes away in Amravati

Sting operations going on across Sindhudurg: Rane

Fadnavis aide accused of campaigning for BJP while in govt job: Cong

Few complaints in Pune voters' list, discrepancies will be resolved: PMC official

HC asks state to file an ATR on air pollution in Mumbai

Meanwhile, in a related development, the BMC has issued stop-work notices to 53 construction sites for contributing to air pollution, as the city grapples with deteriorating Air Quality Index (AQI). The civic body had earlier directed that the air pollution guidelines it had laid down should be followed strictly.

CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tender Notice No. RR/PR/SNPDI/291/24-25/67/R 1. **Name of Work:** Construction of Wheel shop shed (size 80x10 m2) with General Electrification and gantry grider for 5T Capacity EOT Crane for maintenance & POH of loco wheel & misc. activities etc At EMU POH Workshop, Sanpada. 2. **Approx. Cost of work:** Rs. 23027254.7 3. **Earnest Money:** Rs. 265100/- 4. **Cost of Tender Form:** NIL 5. **Completion period:** 12 Months 6. **Date and time of closing of tender submission:** 18/12/2025 upto 14:30 hrs. 7. **Bidding start date:** 04/12/2025 8. **Tenders shall be accepted only in E-tendering format through the website www.irsps.gov.in. Tender document is available on the website.** **[696]**


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WESTERN RAILWAY

VARIOUS WORK

Sr. DEN (South), MMCT, Mumbai Central, Mumbai - 400008. invites **Sr. No.: 1**
E-Tender Notice No: BCT/25-26/265, dt.26.11.2025. Work and Location: Churcharge-Virar section: Removal and disposal of muck, garbage, plastic, plastic bags, papers and other waste materials from the track under ADEN (T/S) PL section. **Approx. cost of work:** ₹ 1,17,15,686.80. **EMD:** ₹ 2,08,600/-
Sr. No.: 2. E-Tender Notice No: BCT/25-26/266, dt.26.11.2025. Work and Location: Churcharge-Virar section: In Situ Reconditioning of CMS crossing by using Robotic welding technology in Churcharge-Virar suburban Section. **Approx. cost of work:** ₹ 1,38,78,753/-
EMD: ₹ 2,19,400/-
Date and Time of Submission of both Tender: Till 23.12.2025, 15:00 hrs. **Date and Time of Opening of both Tender:** On 23.12.2025 at 15:30 hrs. For further details please visit our website www.irops.gov.in 0845

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BRIHANMUMBAI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Hydraulic Engineer's Department

No. E.E.(Maint)/5384/MW dated : 28-11-2025

e-Tender Notice

The Commissioner of Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation invites online tenders for the following works from the eligible bidders. The Bid start date and time and Bid End Date and Time is specified in the detailed tender notice on B.M.C's website under Tender Section and Mahatender Portal.

Sr. No.	Bid No.	Name of Work
1.	2025_MCGM_1253217	Supply of SS304 repair clamp fixtures of various sizes for emergency repair and maintenance works of water mains under AE WW (ERC) office. Tender Start Date : - 29-11-2025 Tender Due Date : - 08-12-2025

The intending tenderers shall visit the BMC website at **<http://portal.mcgm.gov.in>** and Mahatender portal website at **<http://mahatenders.gov.in>** for further details of the tender.

PRO/2450/ADV/2025-26

Sd/-

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Mumbai Malaria free.**

**Executive Engineer
(Maintenance) Meter Workshop**

STANDARD POST

The Great Home Collapse, visitors rule the roost

By the time India folded for another humiliating defeat at home, there was a sense of dread that felt eerily familiar — the dread of a great institution collapsing not in a blaze of catastrophe, but in a slow, steady, almost bureaucratic slide.

After the 0-2 home debacle against South Africa, Indian cricket has seemingly arrived at a moment where its own mythology weighs more than its performance.

What follows is not just a report on cricket. It is a case file. A dossier. A dissection of how a team that once commanded the world on its own soil began stumbling like a heavyweight who suddenly forgot how to punch.

The official statements that emerged after the series sounded strangely serene. "Learnings." "Long-term plans." "Transition." Familiar words from the familiar vocabulary of evasion. But beneath these glossy phrases lies a year of chaos — selections that seemed whimsical, roles that lacked definition, senior players pushed in and out like pieces in a political reshuffle, and youngsters catapulted into roles without the apprenticeship earlier generations endured.

The whirlwind begins at the selection table under Gautam Gambhir, where the whiteboard has constantly been wiped clean and rewritten. Nineteen Tests, forty-five changes, a churn so violent that it has left India's red-ball identity pulverised.

Players speak off the record about being unsure about their place even after scoring runs. Net sessions resemble job interviews more than team preparations. There are whispers — the sort that echo in corridors but never reach microphones — that the constant flux has created a climate of insecurity the dressing room has not felt in two decades.

Look closer, and the most alarming symptom emerges: the No. 3 position, once the sanctum of Rahul Dravid's tranquillity and Cheteshwar Pujara's stoicism, reduced to a slot of experimentation.

Sai Sudharsan's elevation is the most debated chapter of this season-long novel of curiosities — a talented player, yes, but one whose first-class record did not demand that he be entrusted the most intellectually and temperamentally demanding position in Test cricket. The numbers paint an unflattering picture. The optics paint an even grimmer one: a system chasing the romance of potential rather than the discipline of pedigree.

Meanwhile, visiting teams have dismantled the foundations of India's once impregnable fortress. South Africa's seamers, New Zealand's swing-bowlers, their batsmen armed with sweep shots and patience, walked into Indian venues as if carrying roadmaps authored in Bengaluru, Kolkata, and Mumbai. They read the soil, the cracks, the bounce, and the breeze better than India. They adapted quicker. They adjusted faster. They showed a hunger that India — numbed by years of home dominance — seemed to have misplaced. Behind the scenes, coaches and analysts have been caught off guard by how thoroughly opponents have prepared for Indian conditions. A South African support-staff member reportedly joked, "We know what to expect here more than some of your own boys do." His tone was light, but the sting was heavy. For decades, India's home conditions were their textbook and their weapon. Suddenly, they had become a riddle India could not solve. In the quiet of the dressing room after the losses, there seemed to be a faint drift of uncertainty. Nothing explicit, but a sense that some roles may not always feel sharply defined. Likewise, there appeared to be a gentle undercurrent of debate about the team's broader direction.

A few in the ecosystem seemed to wonder, almost to themselves, whether the current emphasis on multi-format adaptability might, at times, blur the old distinctions that Test cricket traditionally rewards — the sort of craftsmanship built over seasons of domestic grind rather than the quick polish of franchise bursts. But perhaps the most damning indictment is the decline of India's spin supremacy. For years, it was not just a strategy — it was a doctrine, a religion, a cultural heritage. Now, foreign willowers wander into Indian pitches with the confidence that Indian batsmen once reserved for their own backyard. They sweep, reverse-sweep, paddle, slog. They dictate the pace. Indian spinners, by contrast, appear caught between philosophies — should they dart it in, float it up, rip it across, or simply hope for magic in conditions no longer reliably enchanted?

The underlying picture is grim: India are not merely losing matches. They are losing their identity, the very soul of their red-ball cricket. Previous regimes — John Wright, Gary Kirsten, Ravi Shastri, Rahul Dravid — built blueprints that balanced aggression with discipline, talent with experience, flair with structure. The current regime, if insiders are to be believed, has spent more energy on finding new doors than on walking through the ones that already existed.

Among legends of the game, the murmurs are growing. Some blame injuries. Others blame scheduling.

A few daring souls even whisper about "leadership incompatibility." But the one word that surfaces repeatedly is drift. Not collapse — drift. A drift subtle enough to be denied but potent enough to erode confidence, strategy, and direction.

Chilling effect of a privacy upgrade

(By Shrey Madaan)

A few days ago, the government notified the Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025, touted as proof that India is finally taking privacy seriously. On paper, they promise stronger citizen rights, greater trust, and real accountability in the digital economy. However, as the fine print makes clear, India's new data framework does something very different: it grants sweeping powers to the State while imposing heavy burdens on journalists, start-ups, and everyday consumers.

For a country that prides itself on being the world's largest democracy and a rising digital superpower, this should worry us. On paper, the DPDP framework promises control and consent. But for millions of Indians, especially those who rely on an independent press and the Right to Information to hold power accountable, these rules threaten to shrink the very transparency that keeps democracy healthy.

Two of the country's most important media watchdogs, DIGIPUB and the Editors Guild of India, have sounded the alarm. Their message is simple: the new rules could make journalism itself a consent-based activity. If routine newsgathering is reinterpreted as "data processing," reporters may need consent from the very people they are investigating. That's not privacy protection. That's a muzzle. And the consequences do not stop at the newsroom.

The rules weaken the RTI framework by diluting the public-interest override, a principle that enables journalists and citizens to access and publish sensitive information, when public interests outweigh potential harm caused by disclosure. This safeguard

has enabled people to uncover corruption, exposed wrongdoing, and empowered ordinary citizens for nearly two decades. At the same time, Rule 23 gives the government the authority to demand personal data from any platform or company, without notifying the user whose data is being accessed.

Companies are explicitly prohibited from telling you when the State comes knocking. So, while citizens may soon be forced to jump through more hoops to access information, the State gets an express lane. Start-ups innovate because they aren't bogged down by compliance paperwork. Journalists investigate because they can protect their sources. RTI activists ask difficult questions because they know the law backs them.

Under the new regime, these pillars wobble. Small Firms and startups now

face the same stricter audits, annual impact assessments, and compliance certifications that even global tech giants follow. This is a huge blow for India's start-up ecosystem, which is already struggling funding winters and regulatory whiplash, this is not protection; it's a hurdle. When young companies are compelled to divert their scarce resources into paperwork instead of developing products, innovation suffocates, competition and consumers pay the ultimate price.

And for journalists, researchers, and public-interest watchdogs, the chilling effect is immediate. When the line between reporting and "processing personal data" becomes blurry, over-compliance becomes the safe, and undemocratic, choice. A law that claims to empower citizens while

tightening its grip on press and limiting transparency neither safeguards democracy nor consumers. The world already shows us what happens when data laws go too far. Europe's GDPR, despite its good intentions, created a compliance maze that hurt small businesses and cemented the dominance of Big Tech.

Innovation stalled, smaller players suffered and consumers lost out on competition and choice. India risks repeating the same mistakes, but this time it could lead to weaker transparency at home and a press that's even more constrained to question the authority. A smarter path is possible. The government must introduce an explicit journalistic exemption to protect reporters, whistleblowers, and public-interest investigations, and

reinstate the RTI public-interest override that has long empowered citizens to hold power accountable.

And it must ensure that privacy safeguards don't morph into more surveillance or unchecked access to personal data. India has built bold digital public infrastructure before, UPI, CoWIN, and DigiLocker. But the success of these systems came from clarity, openness, and trust. Not opacity. Not uncertainty. Not silence in the face of democratic concerns. A fair data regime should empower the citizens, not intimidate them. It should strengthen their control over personal data, not create rules that leave them second-guessing the State. Protect consumers, not burden innovators.

(The writer is Indian Policy Associate, Consumer Choice Center) In arrangement with The Statesman

Main artery in a woman's heart severely swollen

(Standard Post Bureau)

The heart is the most vital organ in the human body. However, a 49-year-old woman recently developed a life-threatening cardiac problem. The major artery of her heart—responsible for supplying blood from the heart to the rest of the body—had become dangerously swollen. In addition, her aortic valve had completely failed. As a result, the blood that should have flowed to the body was instead leaking backward into the heart. This caused extreme pressure on the heart chambers, leading to significant enlargement and strain.

Doctors at KIMS Hospital, Kondapur performed a high-risk, six-hour open-heart surgery and saved her life. Chief Consultant Cardiac Surgeon Dr. Nisarga shared



details of the case. Due to these complications, the woman had been experiencing severe breathlessness and was unable to walk even short distances. She could not manage her daily activities. With her husband no longer alive and her son recently finishing his studies but still unemployed, she had been completely dependent on her brothers for daily needs. Realizing the seriousness of her condition, her brothers brought her to KIMS Hospital with great hope.

Under the supervision of Dr. Aluri Ravikumar, the cardiology team conducted essential pre-operative cardiac evaluations. The family was counseled in advance about the complexity and risks involved in the surgery.

extremely important to identify such conditions early and seek medical attention immediately. A swollen aorta can rupture at any time, and if that happens, the patient dies instantly. Because we were able to replace it at the right time, she can now live a normal life. Modern artificial organs and advanced hemostatic techniques have completely transformed recovery after complex heart surgeries, helping patients return to normal life much sooner," said Dr. Nisarga.

The surgical team included Chief Cardiac Surgeon Dr. Nisarga, Cardiac Surgeon Dr. Vineeth, Cardiac Anesthesiologists Dr. Divya, Dr. Gorinta, and Dr. Bhavani, Senior Surgical Assistant Mano, and Senior Clinical Perfusionists Dayakar Swamy, Jagan Mohan, and Abhishek.

UAE Awards prestigious Golden Visa to Sundeep Makthala



(Standard Post Bureau)

Global technology leader and cross border strategist Sundeep Kumar Makthala has been awarded one of the rarest and most prestigious honours offered by the United Arab Emirates — a Palace-Endorsed UAE Golden Visa, granted with the support of the Ras Al Khaimah Palace Office.

This distinguished 10-year residency recognition was awarded without any investment requirement, with all visa-associated

costs fully sponsored by the UAE Government, reflecting the nation's extraordinary trust in Makthala's global contributions.

The UAE Golden Visa, introduced in 2019, is considered one of the

region's most prestigious long-term recognitions, extended only to individuals with exceptional global influence. A select group of distinguished Indians — including Shah Rukh Khan, Sonu Sood, and M.A. Yusuff Ali — have previously received this honour. Receiving it purely on merit, and without investment, places Makthala in a very exclusive category.

In a notable gesture of warmth and respect, the UAE has also extended Golden Visas to Makthala's entire family, including his wife, children, and parents, acknowledging the values and global orientation the family represents.

Makthala's work across technology, innovation d i p l o m a c y , entrepreneurship, and

global peace initiatives has earned international recognition. He represents 2,843 companies across 63 countries as the Chairman of WTITC, serves as Global President of TITA, and has facilitated cross-border innovation through Tconsult and his Middle East expansion mission ExpandME. His Cyber Satyagraha Peace Mission, endorsed by Nobel Laureates, amplifies his global influence in ethical technology and peace-building. He has addressed audiences in 63 countries, including at the United Nations, Microsoft Headquarters, and the World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates, and has been acknowledged by leaders such as Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi and international business icon Carlos Slim.

Governor takes quick action against cutting of trees inside Raj Bhavan

Kolkata, Nov 28 (UNI) : West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose today took stern action against unauthorized cutting of heritage trees within the Raj Bhavan premises in Kolkata. The Governor, who was present at the scene,

immediately stopped the cutting and ordered an inquiry upon learning that the action was taken without his knowledge or approval. The Governor has directed the removal of the concerned PWD engineer and assistant engineer from Raj Bhavan with immediate effect. The truck which was taking timber was also detained. The Governor also convened an emergency meeting and summoned the officers from Police, Forest , Public Works Department, for

a concurrent evaluation. He ordered the formation of an enquiry committee to fix up responsibility for the attempted selection of felling of the trees of the Raj Bhavan Estates. Sources said the Raj Bhavan expressed serious concern over unauthorised people entering into a high security zone with axes, chainsaw, pruning saw and other cutting tools.

The Raj bhavan is taking expert legal opinion for further action in the matter, sources added.

Akhilesh Yadav hits out against SIR exercise, appeals to opposition, NDA allies to 'expose BJP's conspiracy'

Lucknow, Nov 28 (UNI) : Samajwadi Party National President Akhilesh Yadav has appealed to all opposition parties, and even to all NDA allies, to "unite and expose the BJP's grand conspiracy" to delete the names of genuine voters through the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the country.

"The BJP will first destroy those parties that consider it their ally. Therefore, we appeal to every citizen of our country to abandon all work and stop the SIR's fraud," he said in his appeal to the NDA alliance partners.

Yadav, in a statement here on Friday, termed the SIR as "a fraud on democracy". "The public should be aware, today votes are being cut; tomorrow, names will be removed from farms, land, houses, ration cards, caste, and reservations, and then they will reach to the accounts and lockers of the middle class. This is a huge conspiracy against the countrymen, which will lead to a situation worse than the British slavery. This is the time to wake up and save every vote," he stated.

Akhilesh Yadav said that complaints have been received that District Magistrates/District Election Officers, Additional District Magistrates (Elections), SDMs (EROs), and Supervisors are pressuring BLOs to submit voter enumeration forms under the third option.

"By submitting voters who are under the third option, BLOs will send notices to millions of voters upon publication of the draft voter list on December 9, requesting documents from them for verification. Consequently, the names of most voters will be deleted from the final voter list on February 7, 2026," he claimed.

Takaichi's remarks on Taiwan send severely wrong signal to "Taiwan independence" separatist forces

Beijing, Nov 28 (UNI) : Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's remarks concerning Taiwan have sent a gravely wrong signal to "Taiwan independence" separatist forces, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said on Friday, while also blasting Taiwan leader Lai Ching-te's stunt in support of Japan.Takaichi's remarks, which imply the possibility of armed intervention in the Taiwan Strait, drew opposition and criticism from the international community and insightful individuals within Japan. However, Lai posted a photo on social media showing himself holding sushi made with Japanese seafood in a show of support for Japan.

"Japan imposed colonial rule in Taiwan for half a century and committed innumerable crimes there. Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) authorities' attempt to court Japan for so-called Taiwan independence is contemptible," Mao said.

Takaichi's comments on Taiwan interfere in China's internal affairs, send a seriously wrong signal to "Taiwan independence" separatist forces, and jeopardize peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, Mao added.

She noted this year marks the 80th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the 80th anniversary of Taiwan's restoration to China.

She urged Japan to deeply reflect on its historical crimes, draw lessons from history, adhere to the one-China principle, and exercise caution in its words and deeds regarding the Taiwan question.

"We demand that Japan retract its erroneous remarks, cease interfering in China's internal affairs, and demonstrate its commitments to China through concrete actions," the spokesperson said.

EU condemns surge in West Bank settler violence, urge Israel to protect Palestinians

Paris, Nov 28 (UNI) : France, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Italy condemned what they called a "massive increase" in Israeli settler violence against Palestinian civilians in the occupied West Bank, warning that the escalation is destabilising the territory and undermining efforts to restore regional security.

In a joint statement, the foreign ministers of the four countries, often referred to as the E4, cited United Nations data showing a sharp rise in incidents in recent weeks. Figures from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs recorded 264 settler attacks in October, the highest monthly total since the UN began tracking such cases in 2006.

"These attacks must stop," the ministers said, adding that the violence "sows terror among civilians" and threatens not only ongoing peace efforts but also "the lasting security of the State of Israel itself." They urged the Israeli government to meet its obligations under international law to protect Palestinians in the occupied territories, saying public condemnations by Israeli leaders "must be translated into action."

The ministers urged Israel to ensure accountability for perpetrators and to prevent further violence by addressing its "root causes." They also renewed their opposition to any form of annexation, "partial, total or de facto," and criticised settlement policies they said violate international law.

Warning that further weakening of the Palestinian Authority would harm prospects for governance in Gaza, the ministers reaffirmed their support for a negotiated two-state solution.

At least 10 people killed in Israeli attack on Syria

Damascus, Nov 28 (UNI) : Israeli airstrikes early on Friday killed at least 10 people, including women and children, in the town of Beit Jinn in the southwestern countryside of Damascus, following reported clashes between Israeli troops and local residents, Syrian state media said.

Syrian state-run Al-Ekhbariya TV reported that several others remained trapped under the rubble as rescue efforts were hampered by continued Israeli drone activity over the area.

The broadcaster said the strikes were carried out shortly after an Israeli military patrol reportedly entered Beit Jinn and was surrounded by local residents, leading to an exchange of fire before the patrol withdrew, and air raids intensified.

Citing medical sources, Al-Ekhbariya said the body of a woman arrived at Al-Mouwasat Hospital in Damascus, along with 11 wounded, including a woman and a child, suffering injuries ranging from moderate to severe.

The channel also reported a wave of displacement, with dozens of families fleeing Beit Jinn toward nearby towns and villages deemed safer, amid continued drone flights along the road between Beit Jinn and Mazraat Beit Jinn.

Meanwhile, the Syrian Civil Defence said on its official Telegram channel that its teams had been unable to enter the town to evacuate the wounded or assess the damage due to the danger posed by unexploded ordnance and ongoing Israeli targeting of movement around the town's entrances. It warned that the obstruction of rescue efforts was putting the lives of civilians at further risk.

Earlier reports said Israeli forces had withdrawn from the town and taken positions on Bat al-Warda hill on its outskirts.

No official figures have yet been released regarding the total casualties or extent of the destruction.



INS Kora and INS Khanjar, two frontline guided missile corvettes of the Eastern Naval Command, at their port call during a visit to the city as part of Navy Week celebrations 2025, in Kolkata. The ships are being displayed at Khidderpore Docks.

Russia, Venezuela sign 19 cooperation agreements

Moscow, Nov 28 (SPUTNIK/UNI) : The Russian and Venezuelan delegations have signed the final act of the high-level intergovernmental Russian-Venezuelan commission meeting, along with 15 cooperation agreements and three additional accords covering education, research, youth policy, oil production, peaceful atomic energy, and other areas, a Sputnik correspondent reported.

The signing ceremony was held via videoconference, with Russia's delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Chernyshenko, and Venezuela's delegation headed by Executive Vice President and Minister of People's Power of Hydrocarbons Delcy Rodriguez.

Among the documents signed were the final act of the 19th meeting of the commission, a protocol of intent between the Russian

state nuclear corporation Rosatom and Venezuela's Ministry of Science and Technology on peaceful atomic energy cooperation, and a memorandum between the Russian manufacturing company Welltechs and the Venezuelan state-owned oil and natural gas company Petroleos de Venezuela, S.A. on artificial nitrogen-based oil production technologies.

Further agreements were inked between Russian and Venezuelan geological agencies and universities to advance mineral exploration and research, as well as an education agreement on additional programs between Petroleos de Venezuela, S.A. and Russian National University of Oil and Gas "Gubkin University." Additionally, the parties agreed on youth policy cooperation through a memorandum between

Russia's Federal Agency for Youth Affairs and Venezuela's Ministry of the Popular Power for Youth and Sports.

"The Russian side highly values the outcomes and the agreements reached. We set a clear course and identified next steps on all key bilateral issues," Chernyshenko said during the meeting. The official reaffirmed Venezuela's status as a reliable partner and ally for Russia in Latin America and on the global stage, highlighting the trustful political dialogue at all levels. The May meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro confirmed their commitment to deepening cooperation, he said. The two countries continue to expand collaboration in nuclear energy, military-technical fields, and healthcare, Chernyshenko added.

BNP leader says former premier Khaleda Zia in 'extremely critical' condition as party urges nationwide prayers

Dhaka, Nov 28 (UNI) : BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has said party chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia's health has deteriorated to an "extremely critical" state, urging people across Bangladesh to pray for her recovery.

Making his comments after offering the Friday Jumma prayers at a gathering in Naya Paltan, Dhaka, the BNP leader said that the former PM's long political struggle had taken a severe toll on her health.

"Her contribution to the democratic movement is undeniable. She spent her entire life fighting for democracy," he told

supporters."She endured imprisonment and persecution. And in the end, she became seriously ill and had to be hospitalised. You know she again fell ill over the last few days and was admitted to Evercare Hospital."

Alamgir confirmed, that her condition had worsened on Thursday night. "Doctors said her condition is extremely critical. That is why, on behalf of our party, we sought prayers after Jumma from people across the country for the recovery of the leader of democracy, the mother of democracy, our national leader Begum Khaleda Zia."

"Once again, we are urging the entire nation to pray for her," he added.

Historically noted for her virulent anti-India and strong pro-Pakistan stance, Zia's own tenure in the country was a mixed bag, seeing on one end, a greater shift towards Islamic radicalism, distancing itself from secularism, engaging in strong national corruption and political violence, while also liberalising Bangladesh's economy in the 90's, restoring parliamentary democracy, making education for girls free and mandatory, launching infrastructure projects, and strategic

US administration considering deportation of shooting suspect's family: Trump

Washington, Nov 28 (UNI) : President Donald Trump said the US administration is exploring the possibility of deporting the family of Rahmanullah Lakanwal, the Afghan national accused of shooting two National Guard members in Washington, D.C.

He also called for an even more aggressive immigration crackdown following the attack.

Lakanwal, who arrived in the US in 2021 under Operation Allies Welcome after assisting the CIA in Afghanistan, had his electronic devices seized by authorities. His family was also interviewed, according to FBI Director Kash Patel

Extensive investigation is on as the FBI has been searching multiple properties including Lakanwal's residence in Washington state.

As per US media reports, the probe agencies have announced reviews of asylum cases and even some green card holders.

The Afghan man shot Sarah Beckstrom, 20, and Andrew Wolfe, 24, at close range just a few blocks from the White House. Beckstrom later died from her injuries, while Andrew Wolfe, 24, remains in critical condition.Lakanwal had been living in Bellingham, Washington, with his wife and children, US Attorney for the District of Columbia

Jeanine Pirro said.The 29-year-old had previously worked in Afghanistan with the CIA, according to the agency's director, John Ratcliffe. He was granted asylum in April under the Trump administration, multiple law enforcement officials told CNN. When asked whether Lakanwal was granted asylum under his administration, Trump said, "When you—it comes to asylum, when they're flown in, it's very hard to get them out."Trump, responding to the incident, condemned the Biden administration's handling of Afghan evacuees, claiming the vetting process for those resettled under the program was inadequate. "They came in unvetted," he said, criticizing the administration for allowing potentially dangerous individuals to enter the country.The suspect, who was wounded during the attack, had reportedly passed all security checks before arriving in the US, according to officials. However, Trump argued that such incidents point to larger failures in the Afghan resettlement process. He further warned, "We have a lot of others in this country. We're going to get them out." The attack occurred near the White House, close to the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, where senior White House staff work.

Pakistan Finance Minister pledges to address all problems highlighted by IMF ahead of its \$1.2bn bailout package

Islamabad, Nov 28 (UNI) : Pakistan's Finance Minister Mohammad Aurangzeb has pledged that the government will address all the problems plaguing its treasury, as highlighted by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and expressed the hope to reach an agreement with the lending agency.

Stating that reforms were a need of the hour, Aurangzeb said Islamabad will strive to remove them. Pakistan is working to secure its next \$1.2 billion bailout package next month, extended under the body's \$7bn Extended Fund Facility (EFF).

"These are points identified by the IMF that require action, and we will work to resolve them," Aurangzeb told Geo News on Nov 27, expressing confidence that Pakistan will succeed in reaching a staff-level understanding.

"God willing, an agreement with the IMF will be reached. The IMF board's upcoming decisions will show the way forward."

His comments came post the release of the IMF's 'Governance and Corruption Diagnostic Assessment: Pakistan', a sweeping evaluation report which studied all the problems in depth, and identified the deeply entrenched corruption within every institution in Pakistan as the core of its problems.

Noting its institutions were extremely weak amid the rampant corruption in every sphere, the IMF report added that the country's elite has seized control of all the policy-making mechanisms, and greatly suppressed all prospects for growth while severely undermining the state's capacity to deliver services.The Fund acknowledged that efforts under the EFF have brought "significant progress" in stabilising the macroeconomic environment and restoring confidence. But it said systemic corruption remains a major obstacle, eroding public trust, draining resources and weakening policy implementation.

US tightens immigration rules, reviews asylum and green cards following WH shooting

Washington, Nov 28 (UNI) : US administration officials announced a sweeping re-examination of asylum cases and green cards issued to citizens of certain countries following the shooting of two National Guard members near the White House in Washington, D.C.The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) identified the suspect as Rahmanullah Lakanwal, a 29-year-old Afghan national who entered the US under a policy initiated during the Biden administration after the 2021 US withdrawal from Afghanistan and continued under the Trump administration.Hours after the attack, US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) indefinitely suspended the processing of immigration requests for Afghan nationals, pending review. DHS said the review would extend to all asylum cases approved under the Biden administration, though it did not clarify if only Afghan nationals or individuals from other countries were included. USCIS Director Joseph Edlow stated that, at President Trump's direction, a "full-scale, rigorous re-examination" of all green cards issued to aliens from countries of concern would also be conducted.

economic contest with Russia.

"Even without the conflict, tensions would have increased. Sanctions today are also a new practice of competitive struggle," said Yegor Sergeev of MGIMO University.

Yet the effectiveness of the existing 19 packages is increasingly questioned in the West. Russian President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly noted that sanctions failed to inflict the economic collapse many in Europe had hoped for.

depending on the security situation.The US media platform, Politico, had earlier reported that Brussels plans to start drafting its 20th sanctions package early next year, targeting Russia's energy income and its alleged "shadow fleet".

Analysts, however, argue that the EU's determination to tighten sanctions is driven less by Ukraine and more by the desire to restrain a strategic competitor.Many in Brussels view sanctions not only as a political instrument but as a form of



A well-designed cooking area has minimal clutter and maximum efficiency. Whether you're redecorating or totally remodelling, we list some of the best ideas for small spaces as we know every inch counts

Choose Pretty Tools

If your cabinets are too cramped to fit all of your kitchen gear, stealthily use the cuter items as decor. For instance, chunky vintage cutting boards or bright colanders can double as artwork. And a row of matching mixing bowls stuck above cabinets looks intentional, not messy.

Try a Drop-Leaf Table

If you yearn for an eat-in kitchen, but a large table just won't fit, consider a foldable option. The leaves flip up so everyone has a spot come dinner time, but tuck out of the way when not in use.

Add a Breakfast Bar

Open space, like the edge of a

counter, windowsill, or kitchen pass-through, magically morphs into extra eating space with a board and a few benches.

Lighten Up

Barbara Westbrook, interior designer and author of Gracious Homes, knows the power of pale hues. She chose Pratt and Lambert's Chalk Grey paint for this kitchen's walls and range hood to brighten the room and impart a sense of openness.

Go with big shelves

Open shelving can offer a ton of flexible storage, but requires a full commitment for it to look stylish. A wall dedicated to shelves looks like a purposeful design statement, but a lowly cart just looks like clutter.



Get Rolling

While you're cooking, a wheeled cart is as helpful as a big island, but can roll out of the way when you're done.

Squeeze in Seating

Even an awkward, narrow nook can comfortably seat six, if you choose efficient built-in benches instead of chairs. Bonus: Extra storage hides under the lovely seats.

Look Up

Hanging pots and pans from the ceiling frees cabinets of bulky equipment and creates visual



interest, too. Designer Jason Grant used a natural timber to



create a rustic look - try a vintage ladder for a similar effect.

(With inputs from good-housekeeping)

FINGER LICKING GOOD



Whether you love cozying up with a well-written memoir or just want a little juicy entertainment this weekend, these are the ones that you need to get on your shelf

The discovery of a new recipe usually involves an interesting background story. In many cultures the art of cooking and eating is central to national identity and heritage. Take one classic Julia Child recipe, add a tablespoon of food blogger Molly Wizenberg and stir in some of Marco Pierre White's reminiscences, now simmer: before you can utter the word diet, you'll have cooked up a sexy literary feast well worth a nibble.

MY LIFE IN FRANCE BY JULIA CHILD

Julia Child may be better known as the person who introduced average Joe America to the art of French cooking, but here she recounts her trials and tribulations of becoming a successful chef, moving to France, enrolling in cookery classes at Cordon Bleu and immersing herself in French culture. She doesn't boast or brag, simply retells in pages of pure enjoyment how she got to her revered position in the nation's hearts.



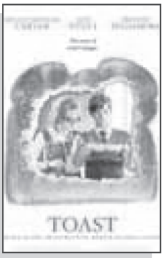
EHRlich

Published in the late 1990s, Elizabeth Ehrlich's memoir recounts how she spent her formative years being quite undecided about her Jewish heritage. Cooking family favorites with her mother, a Holocaust survivor, provides Elizabeth with the chance to hear stories and anecdotes that are not just part of immediate family history but also important to Jewish history as a whole.



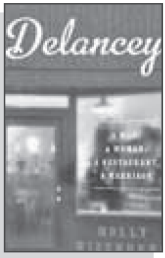
TOAST BY NIGEL SLATER

Remembering the reason for his life-long passion for food and cooking, chef Nigel Slater recounts the early 1960s, when British cuisine was the laughing stock of the world. Following his mother's untimely death, Slater's father hired a housekeeper. The housekeeper teaches young Nigel the basics of cooking and the rest, as they say, is British food legend.



DELANCEY BY MOLLY WIZENBERG

Closing each chapter with a mouth-watering recipe, Molly Wizenberg discloses in this book what happened when her husband left school without graduating to become a pizza chef. Years of pizza research later, they are still married and their love for pizza's still going strong. Beware: you'll develop cravings for melted mozzarella on crispy pizza dough while devouring this book!



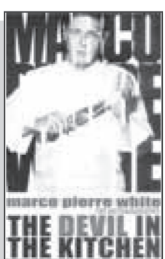
A TIGER IN THE KITCHEN BY CHERYL LU-LIEN TAN

This is a delicious tale of growing up in Singapore and emigrating at 18 years of age to New York, a personal journey as aromatic as Singapore Noodles that explores not just Tan's love for food and cooking, but also her culture and family heritage.

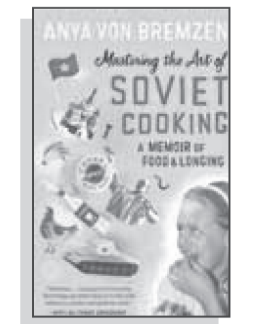


THE DEVIL IN THE KITCHEN BY MARCO PIERRE WHITE

This book simply oozes sex appeal, which cannot come as a total surprise, given that the world's first celebrity chef and bad boy of the kitchen, Marco Pierre White, is the perpetrator. Recounting his UK upbringing in a working class environment to the moment when he transformed himself into one of the most revered and feared chefs in the industry, White gives us valuable insight into why he's so temperamental.



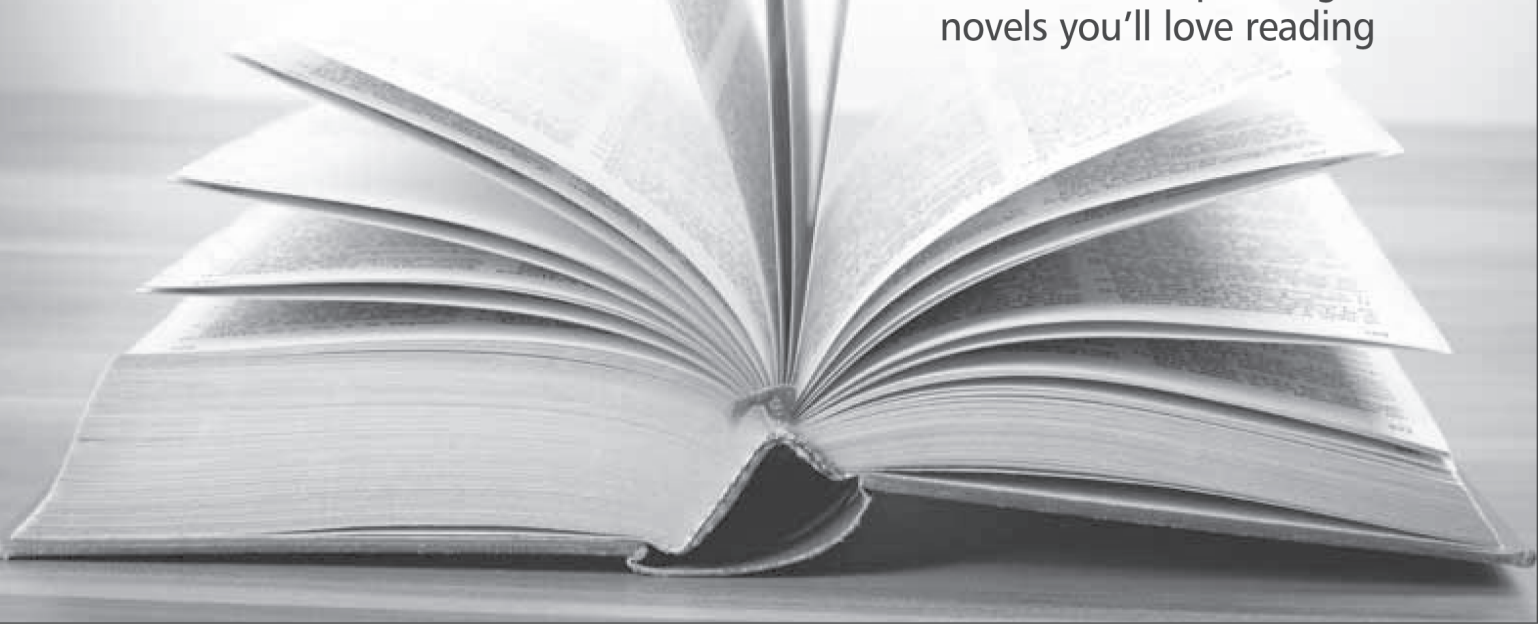
MASTERING THE ART OF SOVIET COOKING BY ANYA VON BREMZEN



Anya grew up in Russia, where food was scarce, before moving to Philadelphia and Queens, New York, where the von Bremzen family were overwhelmed by the sheer variety of ingredients available. Her mother begins to cook enormous Russian family dinners and, while preparing and eating such culinary luxuries, Anya, her grandmother and mother exchange stories about their family's history.

MIRIAM'S KITCHEN BY ELIZABETH

In the world of words...



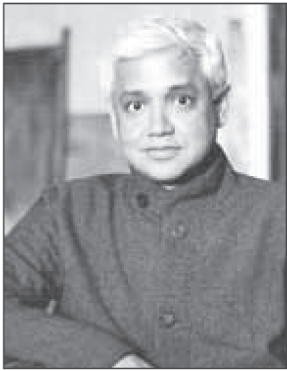
Although English has been passed over in India as a colonial tradition, the novels written in English have been deeply expressive, rich and culturally embedded. Check out some of the top selling Indian novels you'll love reading

Jhumpa Lahiri



An Indian American author, Lahiri won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 2000 for her debut collection of short stories, The Interpreter of Maladies. Her 2013 The Lowland was short-listed for the Man Booker Prize and the National Book Award For Fiction. Drawing from her own life, Lahiri's writing often explores the conflict Indian immigrants feel when adapting to a new life in America.

Amitav Ghosh



Amitav Ghosh is a Bengali writer from India living and teaching in New York. He's the author of some absolutely wonderful literary gems like The Circle of Reason, The Calcutta Chromosome, The Hungry Tide, Sea of Poppies and River of Smoke

(the first two installments of the Ibis Trilogy) etc. I simply love the attention to detail in his books something that literally transports you into a different time and place.

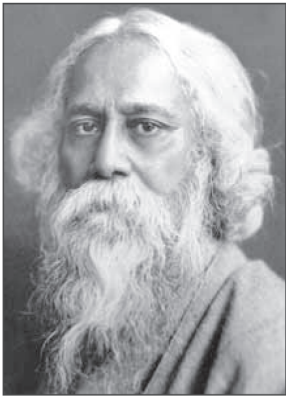
Vikram Seth



An Indian writer and poet, Vikram Seth is an established author in the international literary field. His book A Suitable Boy is the longest single volume novel in the English language and his collection of poems such as Beastly Tales is an important

contribution to the English language poetry Canon.

Rabindranath Tagore



Tagore was the first non-European to win the Nobel Prize in Literature (1913). Gitanjali (translates to 'offerings of song') is considered to be one of the most beautiful examples of verse. He is also the author of the Indian, Bangladesh and Sri Lankan national anthems. Tagore famously returned his knighthood to the British in 1919 in response to the

Jallianwala Bagh Massacre.

Devdutt Pattanaik

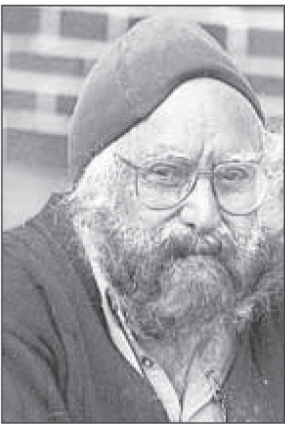


A physician turned writer, Pattanaik is a mythologist, author and illustrator. Author of the hugely popular Jaya, Sita, The Pregnant King etc, Devdutt Pattanaik has a huge fanbase in India. His simple yet gripping retelling of Hindu epics, coupled with some absolutely charming illustrations make his books very popular. If you're interested in Hindu mythology, he has to be on your reading list.

Ruskin Bond



Born to English parents in pre-independent India, Ruskin Bond continues to live in the country of his birth. He is the author of children's classics such as The Room On The Roof, The Blue Umbrella, Ghost Stories From The Raj, Funny Side Up etc. His writing draws heavily from his own life living in the hills in north India and his rich experiences there. A must read author for all age groups!



Khushwant Singh

Lawyer, politician, journalist and novelist, Khushwant Singh did it all. Best known for his biting wit, sarcasm and acid laced opinions, he is the author of internationally acclaimed books like Train To Pakistan, The Company Of Women, Truth, Love and a Little Malice etc Khushwant Singh is definitely an interesting addition to any reading list.

Avani Lekhara lauds Deaflympics shooters for record show in Japan

Jaipur, Nov 28 (UNI) : Paralympian Avani Lekhara and Olympian Manu Bhaker praised India's best-ever performance at the recently-concluded 25th Summer Deaflympic Games held in Tokyo, Japan, where the country clinched 20 medals including nine Gold, seven Silver and four Bronze medals. India finished sixth in the medal standings out of 62 participating nations.

Interestingly, deaf shooters fuelled India's strong display at the Deaflympics, clinching a total of 16 medals including 7 Gold, 6 Silver and 3 Bronze medals.

Double Paralympic gold medallist Avani, who graced the medal ceremonies at the ongoing Khelo India University Games in Jaipur, said: "It's really nice seeing India doing so good. Especially, we have seen a lot of medals coming up in shooting. I'm very happy and proud of them. I just want them to keep on doing this, and we also keep on supporting them as an audience so that they do better and better in upcoming years as well."

Many of the Indian shooters won multiple medals at the Deaflympics. Mahit Sandhu lead the medal charge, securing four medals, followed by Pranjali and Abhinav Deshwal, claiming three medals each, and Dhanush Srikanth pocketing two medals. Double Olympic medallist Manu Bhaker, who began her shooting journey by winning multiple medals in the Khelo India School Games back in 2017, said that she herself gets inspired by the resilience shown by specially-abled sportspersons.

"We ourselves get motivated when we watch specially-abled athletes performing so well in international competitions. It is their passion and their fighting spirit that inspires us. From my side I want to give my best wishes to each and every one of them and congratulate them for their amazing performances at the Deaflympics. We look up to you and if we can be of any help, we would love to help whenever needed," Manu Bhaker said. Having won gold in the women's 10m Air Rifle standing SH1 category at the Khelo India Para Games 2025, Avani highlighted how the Government of India's initiative has helped strengthened the grassroots-level sports ecosystem.

"Government of India and especially SAI is doing a really nice job because competitions like Khelo India University Games, especially for the athletes at grassroots level, it gives them massive motivation. It gives them a platform to showcase their talent and serves as a launching pad for them for performing well in international events. If we see a lot more competition coming up at grassroots level, we'll see more elite level athletes in the future," Avani signed off.

BCCI confirms India U19 squad for ACC Asia Cup

Mumbai, Nov 28 (UNI) : The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Friday announced a 15-member India U19 squad for the upcoming ACC Men's U19 Asia Cup, scheduled to be held in Dubai from December 12.

Top order batter Ayush Mhatre has been named captain of the side, while Vihaan Malhotra will serve as vice captain. "The Junior Cricket Committee has picked the India U19 squad for the upcoming ACC Men's U19 Asia Cup to take place in Dubai from 12th December," the BCCI statement said.

The Junior Selection Committee has also named four standby players: Rahul Kumar, Hemchudeshan J, B.K. Kishore and Aditya Rawat, who will be available should any changes be required before the tournament begins.

India has been placed in Group A, alongside arch-rivals Pakistan, Qualifier 1, and Qualifier 3, setting the stage for a high-voltage group phase. Group B features Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, and Qualifier 2. India U19 squad for Asia Cup: Ayush Mhatre (C), Vaibhav Sooravanshi, Vihaan Malhotra (vc), Vedant Trivedi, Abhigyan Kundu (wk), Harvansh Singh (wk), Yuvraj Gohil, Kanishk Chouhan, Khilan A. Patel, Naman Pushpak, D. Deepesh, Henil Patel, Kishan Kumar Singh, Udhav Mohan, Aaron George.

UP Warriorz strongest on paper ahead of WPL 2026

Bengaluru, Nov 28 (UNI) : The 2026 Women's Premier League (WPL) is set to be one of the most exciting seasons yet, with the recent mega auction leaving fans speculating on which franchise will dominate.

Among the six teams, UP Warriorz have emerged as the most balanced and inspiring side, combining star power with depth and versatility.

UP Warriorz, retaining only uncapped Shweta Sehrawat, went all out in the auction to assemble a formidable squad. The team secured World Cup winner Meg Lanning, Deepti Sharma, Phoebe Litchfield, Deandra Dottin, and Sophie Ecclestone, ensuring a strong overseas presence.

The Indian contingent has been reinforced with Kiran Navgire, Harleen

Deol, Pratika Rawal, Kranti Gaud, and Asha Sobhana, providing a perfect blend of experience and young talent. While the team's wicketkeeping options are yet to be fully strengthened after letting go of former skipper Alyssa Healy, the overall squad balance is impressive.

UP Warriorz's strategy focused on assembling a core of reliable allrounders alongside explosive batswomen, giving them flexibility in all conditions. Their aggressive auction moves, including the successful right-to-match bids for Sophie Ecclestone and Kashvee Gautam, indicate the franchise's intent to dominate the season.

Analysts say this approach, combined with

a deep roster of match-winners, makes UP Warriorz a team to watch closely.

Mumbai Indians, the reigning champions, retained continuity by bringing back Amelia Kerr for Rs 3 crore and building around their successful core. They also added uncapped Indian talent, though their medium-pacer options remain limited.

Delhi Capitals focused on allround strength and leadership depth with Laura Wolvaardt, Chinelle Henry, and Marizanne Kapp, while relying heavily on overseas fast bowlers.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru, 2024 winners, targeted allrounders and capped players, including Smriti Mandhana, Ellyse Perry, and Nadine de Klerk, forming a powerful

batting lineup but with some concerns over Indian middle-order experience.

Gujarat Giants invested heavily in overseas stars like Beth Mooney and Sophie Devine but remain top-heavy due to a less experienced Indian bench.

Experts say while all franchises have their strengths, UP Warriorz's combination of explosive batting, reliable allrounders, and strategic auction planning makes them arguably the strongest and most inspiring team heading into WPL 2026.

Strongest XI for UP Warriorz: Meg Lanning, Phoebe Litchfield, Harleen Deol, Kiran Navgire, Deepti Sharma, Deandra Dottin, Sophie Ecclestone, Asha Sobhana, Shipra Giri (wk), Kranti Gaud, Shikha Pandey.



Germany and South African players exchange greetings after the former won the inaugural match of the Hockey Men's Junior World Cup 2025, in Madurai on Friday.

BFI names Nieva as women's boxing head coach

Bengaluru, Nov 28 (UNI) : The Boxing Federation of India (BFI) on Friday announced the appointment of Santiago Nieva as Head Coach of the India Women's National Boxing Team, bringing back one of world boxing's most respected high-performance minds at a time when Indian women pugilists are riding unprecedented momentum. The Swedish strategist, who earlier served as India's High Performance Director from 2017 to 2021, returns with a clear mandate: to elevate India's women boxers into consistent global medal contenders as the nation enters a decisive new Olympic cycle leading to Los Angeles 2028.

Indian women's boxing has recorded a string of standout performances in recent months, capped by a clean sweep at the World Boxing Cup Finals 2025 in Greater Noida, where the squad claimed seven gold, one silver and two bronze medals—several in Olympic weight divisions.

With competitive parity now integral across seven women's Olympic categories, Nieva will be tasked with developing depth, refining technical systems, and institutionalising world-class training structures.

BFI said the move reinforces its long-term investment in scientific training and high-performance systems. Expressing his

excitement, Nieva said he was delighted to return to India. "Super excited to come back to India. I had five wonderful years here in my previous stint. I am very much looking forward to this next chapter, and hopefully, we can create something big together. There is huge potential within the Indian women's team, and in LA 2028, we'll be aiming for something big and create history."

Nieva brings over two decades of elite coaching experience spanning multiple continents, having served as Boxing Australia's National Head Coach and Technical Lead, and earlier as Head Coach and Sports Director of Sweden's national program. His previous

stint with India was marked by major breakthroughs, including two medals at the 2019 Men's World Championships and India's largest-ever Olympic boxing contingent at Tokyo 2020, where Lovlina Borgohain won a landmark bronze.

BFI President Ajay Singh welcomed Nieva's return, calling it "an important step forward for our women's programme" and emphasising the international expertise he would inject into the system. He also acknowledged the significant contribution of former head coach D Chandralal, who will continue to play a key role in the national coaching set-up.

Kamboj headlines Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy Round 2

New Delhi, Nov 28 (UNI) : In a thrilling set of Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy T20 cricket encounters, Haryana, Maharashtra, Railways, Rajasthan, Puducherry, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra, and Delhi registered notable victories across the country.

Haryana edged out Punjab in Hyderabad in a Super Over finish after both sides scored 207 in the regulation 20 overs. Anshul Kamboj was the star with figures of 2-26 and then picked up two more wickets in the Super Over, including first-ball dismissals of Abhishek Sharma and Sanvir Singh. Nishant Sindhu scored 61 off 31

balls and Ankit Kumar made 51 to set up Haryana's total, while Sumit Kumar contributed 28. Punjab's chase saw Anmolpreet Singh blaze 81 off 37 balls, ensuring a tie before the Super Over. Ashwani Kumar picked up 3 for 31 in Haryana's bowling effort. Haryana required just 2 runs in the Super Over, which they achieved with Nishant Sindhu hitting 4 off one ball. In Hyderabad, Maharashtra chased down 192 set by Kolkata, with Arshin Kulkarni remaining unbeaten on 89 off 54 balls and Prithvi Shaw hitting a blistering 66 off 36 balls, sharing a 117-run opening stand. Rahul Tripathi added

a quick 26 from 11 balls to seal an 8-wicket win in 18.4 overs. Hyderabad had earlier posted 191/8 with Chama Milind 35 and Tanay Thyagrajan 32, while Jalaj Saxena picked up 2-25.

Railways defended 149 against Kerala by 32 runs at Lucknow. Atal Bihari Rai picked up 3 for 23 and Shivam Chaudhary claimed a brace as Kerala faltered, managing only 117/8.

Sanju Samson scored 19 off 25 balls, Rohan Kunnummal 8, while Salman Nizar (18) and Ankit Sharma provided minor resistance. Navneet Virk (32) and Ravi Singh (25) had earlier supported Railways' innings. Rajasthan recorded

their second consecutive victory by chasing 170 set by Tripura. Opener Shubham Garhwal blitzed 51 off 20 balls before falling on the last ball of the PowerPlay. Kunal Singh Rathore contributed 33 as Rajasthan reached 171/5 in 18.5 overs. Tripura's M B Mura Singh hit 40 and Sridam Paul 37, while Kamlesh Nagarkoti claimed a three-wicket haul of 3-34. Puducherry defeated Baroda by 17 runs, posting 166/9 thanks to Aman Khan's 72 and Jayant Yadav's 34. Baroda were restricted to 149, with Adil Ayub Tunda picking up 4-30 and Raj Limbani taking 3 wickets. Only Shivalik

India Women to face Sri Lanka in five T20Is from Dec 21-30

Bengaluru, Nov 28 (UNI) : India's women cricket team is set to face Sri Lanka in a five-match T20 International (T20I) series from December 21 to December 30, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) announced on Friday. The opening two matches of the series will be hosted at the ACA-VDCA Stadium in Visakhapatnam, while the remaining three encounters will take place at the Greenfield International Stadium in Thiruvananthapuram. India were last seen in T20I action in July this year, during their tour of England, where they clinched the series 3-2. Sri Lanka, on the other hand, last played a T20I series in March, drawing 1-1 against New Zealand after the final match was washed out.

India-South Africa ODI: Excitement peaks in Ranchi as teams tune up

Ranchi, Nov 28 (UNI) : The city of Ranchi is witnessing heightened excitement ahead of the first One-Day International (ODI) between India and South Africa, scheduled for November 30 at the JSCA International Stadium. With both teams having arrived in the city, preparations are in full swing as players sweat it out in intensive practice sessions.

On Thursday, the Indian and South African squads trained rigorously at the JSCA Stadium. Indian players focused heavily on regaining their form, engaging in extended batting, bowling, and fielding drills. The South African camp also undertook deep practice

Srihari finishes with nine Golds

Jaipur, Nov 28 (UNI) : World Champion Aditi Gopichand Swami continued her unbeaten run in the Khelo India competitions with the Shivaji University archer claiming gold in compound women's individual event on Day 5 of the Khelo India University Games Rajasthan 2025 at the Jagatpura Archery Range here on Friday.

On the other hand, Olympian Srihari Nataraj and Bhavya Sachdeva helped Jain University stamp their authority in the pool, ending the contingent's swimming campaign with 27 gold medals. Jain University sit atop the medal standings with 45 medals.

The fifth edition of KIUG 2025 is being held across seven cities in Rajasthan. A whopping 4448 athletes from 222 Universities are competing in 23 medal disciplines. The Games are being held under the aegis of the Sports Authority of India in collaboration with the Rajasthan State Sports Council and is being hosted by Poornima Aditiy.

19-year-old Aditi, who had won the gold medal in all the Khelo India Youth Games she entered, made a fantastic Khelo India University Games debut by securing gold in the women's compound individual event. In the individual final, Aditi defeated Taniparthi Chikitha of Lovely Professional University

147-143 to top the podium.

"The Khelo India Games provided me the platform to experience how top level competitions are held and that helped me immensely when I went for international competitions. My form was a bit indifferent in the last few months and I was keen on performing well here as I am looking forward to the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics where Compound Archery has also been included," she told SAI Media.

Just like Aditi has been a dominant force in archery, Bangalore's Jain University underlined their stature as the best swimming contingent.

The second edition champions, who boast of the country's best swimmers including Olympian Srihari Nataraj, bagged seven gold medals out of nine events on the final day of swimming action to complete their eventual tally, including 27 gold medals, 9 silver and 9 bronze.

Lovely Professional University is second with 22 gold medals and Guru Nanak Dev University is third with 21 gold medals.

Olympian Srihari Nataraj was the star of the final day at the SMS Swimming pool winning the 100m freestyle gold with a time of 52.30s and 50m backstroke (26.53s) before joining his teammates in the 400m Medley Mixed relay to finish the Games with nine gold and two silver medals.

Sharma (56) and Atit Sheth (37) offered resistance.

Madhya Pradesh posted 174/8 with fifties from Venkatesh Iyer and Harsh Gawali, before dismissing Bihar for 112. Shivang Kumar's 3-wicket haul along with Shivam Shukla and Tripuresh Singh (2 wickets each) helped secure a 62-run victory. Vaibhav Suryavanshi managed just 13 for Bihar.

Andhra defeated Odisha by 66 runs, scoring 184/7 with contributions from Ricky Bhui (47), KS Bharat (42), and a quick cameo by Shaik Rasheed (24 off 12). Prithvi Raj Yarra and Saurabh Kumar picked up three wickets each as

Odisha were bowled out for 118, with Sourav Gouda top-scoring 24. Delhi clinched a last-ball thriller against Tamil Nadu, chasing 198 with Himmat Singh hitting the winning six. Yash Dhull top-scored with 71 and Ayush Badoni added 41. Prince Yadav took 3-43. Tamil Nadu's innings included Tushar Raheja's 72 and Amit Sathvik's 54, but Varun Chakaravorthy went wicketless despite bowling 4-47. Among all performances, Anshul Kamboj's Super Over heroics for Haryana and Arshin Kulkarni's unbeaten 89 for Maharashtra stood out as the top individual contributions of the day.

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Ashwini Vaishnaw Inspects Chandigarh Station Redevelopment Work

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Nov 28 : Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister of Railways, Information and Broadcasting, and Electronics & Information Technology, today undertook a comprehensive inspection of the ongoing redevelopment work at the Chandigarh Railway Station. The Minister was briefed by senior officials regarding the progress of the station's modernization project. Following the detailed review, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw expressed his satisfaction with the progress of redevelopment of Chandigarh station. During the inspection, Shri Ravneet Singh, Minister of State for Railways and Food Processing Industries, Shri Ashok Kumar Verma, General Manager Northern Railway and senior officials were present.

While addressing the media at Chandigarh Railway Station, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw said,



“Chandigarh Railway Station is being redeveloped as a world-class station. Many innovations have been carried out, one of which is a modular design, in which pre-fabricated designs are used. The station will bridge the two ends of the city Panchkula and Chandigarh via roof plaza. The station is being redeveloped at a cost of ₹462 crores. The work is going on at a fast pace. The

team is investing its best efforts to redevelop the station at a faster pace.

The redevelopment of Chandigarh Railway Station aims to transform the station into a world-class facility. Chandigarh station holds significant importance as a key gateway, serving a high volume of tourists and travelers heading to popular destinations in Himachal Pradesh and Punjab. The expedited

efforts will focus on enhancing passenger amenities, improving connectivity, and creating a modern, accessible, and efficient travel hub that reflects the city's planned architecture and meets the growing demands of its users.

Earlier, The Union Minister inspected Semi Conductor Laboratory (SCL), Mohali. He conducted the review meeting at SCL. He

informed that SCL is being modernized and expanded with an investment of Rs 4500 Crores. Latest technologies are being adopted by SCL.

This morning, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw along with Shri Ravneet Singh, conducted window trailing inspection of New Delhi-Chandigarh section. During the inspection, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw interacted with track maintainers, PWI, and Signal Department maintenance staff. The staff shared their experiences with the Minister regarding their fieldwork. During the interaction, the Minister inquired about the maintenance of signals, relays, points, turnouts, crossings, and other related tasks. The track maintainers briefed him on the challenges they face in the field. Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw shared his experiences on the best signal and track maintenance procedures being followed globally and encouraged the staff to adopt better practices.

Modification in Tatkal booking system : Western Railway

OTP authentication for Mumbai Central - Ahmedabad Shatabdi Express

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Nov 28 : Western Railway will be implementing an important modification in the Tatkal booking system in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Railway Board.

Tatkal tickets will now be issued only after authentication of a system-generated One Time Password (OTP). This OTP will be sent to the mobile number furnished by the passenger at the time of booking, and the ticket will be issued only after

successful validation of the OTP.

According to press release issued by Chief Public Relations Officer, Western Railway Shri Vineet Abhishek, this OTP-based Tatkal authentication system will be implemented with effect from 01st December 2025 at 00:00 hrs and will initially apply to Train No. 12009/12010 Mumbai Central - Ahmedabad Shatabdi Express.

The new system will be applicable for Tatkal bookings made through

computerized PRS counters, authorized agents, IRCTC website and IRCTC mobile app. The objective of this change is to ensure transparent Tatkal bookings and to facilitate genuine passengers in getting better access to Tatkal tickets. Passengers are advised to provide a valid, accessible mobile number at the time of booking to ensure smooth completion of the OTP verification process. Western Railway urges all passengers to take note of this important change.

Western Railway Extends the trips of special train between Mumbai Central - Indore

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Nov 28 : For the convenience of passengers and with a view to meet the travel demand, Western Railway has extended the trips of Special Train on Special Fare between Mumbai Central & Indore.

According to a press release issued by Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, Shri Vineet Abhishek, the details of the train is as under: Train No. 09085/09086 Mumbai Central - Indore (Tri - Weekly) Special: Train No. 09085

Mumbai Central - Indore Special departs from Mumbai Central every Monday, Wednesday & Friday at 23.20 hrs and reaches Indore at 13.00 hrs, the next day. The trips of this train have been extended further from 28th November to 31st December, 2025. Similarly, Train No. 09086 Indore - Mumbai Central Special departs from Indore every Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday at 17.00 hrs and arrives Mumbai Central at 07.10 hrs, the next day. The trips of this train have been extended further from 29th

November to 01st January, 2026. Enroute this train will halt at Borivali, Vapi, Surat, Vadodara, Dahod, Ratlam and Ujjain stations in both directions. This train comprises of First AC, AC 2-Tier and AC 3-Tier Coaches.

The booking for the extended trips of Train Nos. 09085 & 09086 opens from 29th November, 2025 at all PRS Counters and on IRCTC website. For detailed information regarding timings of halts and composition, passengers may please visit www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in.

Extension of Visakhapatnam–Bengaluru and Bhubaneswar–Yesvantpur Special train services : SWR

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Nov 28 : The East Coast Railway has notified the extension of services for Train Nos. 0 8 5 8 1 / 0 8 5 8 2 Visakhapatnam–Sir M. Visvesvaraya Terminal Bengaluru–Visakhapatnam Weekly Express Special and Train Nos. 02811/02812 B h u b a n e s w a r – Yesvantpur–Bhubaneswar Weekly Express Special, in order to manage the increased passenger rush.

Train No. 08581 Visakhapatnam–SMVT Bengaluru Weekly Express Special, running on Sundays, has been extended from 7th

December 2025 to 28th December 2025. Similarly, Train No. 08582 SMVT Bengaluru–Visakhapatnam Weekly Express Special, operating on Mondays, is extended from 08th December 2025 to 29th December 2025.

Train No. 02811 Bhubaneswar–Yesvantpur Weekly Express Special, running on Saturdays, will now continue its services from 06th December 2025 to 27th December 2025.

Likewise, Train No. 02812 Yesvantpur–Bhubaneswar Weekly Express Special, operating on Mondays, is extended from 08th December 2025 to 29th

December 2025.

Each train will operate four additional trips in each direction during the extended period. These special services will continue to run with their existing timings, stoppages, and composition.

II. Extension of Hyderabad–Belagavi–Hyderabad Special Train Services

The South Central Railway has notified the extension of services for Train Nos. 07043/07044 Hyderabad–Belagavi–Hyderabad Weekly Express Special to clear the heavy rush of passengers

during December 2025.

Train No. 07043 Hyderabad–Belagavi Weekly Express Special, running on Thursdays, has been extended from 04th December 2025 to 25th December 2025. Similarly, Train No. 07044 Belagavi–Hyderabad Weekly Express Special, operating on Fridays, is extended from 05th December 2025 to 26th December 2025.

Each train will operate four trips during this extended period. These services will continue to operate with the existing days of service, timings, stoppages, and composition.

Mumbai Passenger Reservation System : CR

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Nov 28 : Mumbai PRS will be shut down from 23.45 hrs of 30.11.2025 to 01.12.2025 for change of station code of Banaras station from “BSBS” to “BNRS”. “Due to the shutdown, following services will not be available during the above period:

- Passenger Reservation System,
- Coaching refund,
- Charting activities,
- Train Firing,
- IVRS,

- Current Reservation,
- Chart Display,
- Touch Screen,
- Refund counters and
- Coaching refund terminal

However, TDR will be issued for refund as per extant refund rules.

Internet booking for Mumbai PRS trains will not be available during the above mentioned period.

Passengers/Rail users are requested to bear with the Railway Administration for this important maintenance work.

ECI deploys 12 senior IAS officers as electoral roll observers for Bengal’s special revision drive

Kolkata, Nov 28 (UNI) The Election Commission of India (ECI) has appointed 12 Electoral Roll Observers for the state, with the mandate to oversee every crucial layer of the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls based on the qualifying date of January 1, 2026. The observers have also been tasked to ensure all instructions issued by the Commission are followed without drift or delay.

Calling West Bengal a state of “large area, numerous electors and complex geography,” the Commission emphasised that the deployment of experienced observers is essential to maintain

oversight across districts that also share substantial international borders.

The observers will monitor every stage of roll preparation, guide district authorities, and ensure timely corrective action, while following directives issued earlier on October 27 and November 4. Among those appointed is Smita Pandey (IAS, WB:2005), tasked with supervising Paschim Bardhaman, Purba Bardhaman and Birbhum.

Tanmay Chakraborty (IAS, WB:2006) will oversee Malda and Murshidabad, while Shri Randhir Kumar (IAS, WB:2006) has been assigned North 24 Parganas and Kolkata North—two of the state’s most densely

populated electoral jurisdictions. In south Bengal, C. Murugan (IAS, WB:2007) will monitor South 24 Parganas along with Kolkata South, reflecting the Commission’s focus on urban-rural cross-verification. In the northern part of the state, R. Arjun (IAS, WB:2010) will oversee Coochbehar, Alipurduar and Jalpaiguri and Rajeev Kumar (IAS, WB:1997) has been given charge of Howrah.

Neelam Meena (IAS, WB:1998) will cover East Medinipur, West Medinipur and Jhargram—districts where population mobility requires vigilant roll management. The twin districts of Uttar and Dakshin Dinajpur have

been placed under Ashwini Kumar Yadav (IAS, WB:2001), and the hill districts of Darjeeling and Kalimpong will be monitored by Niranjan Kumar (IAS, WB:2007).

Further west, Devi Prasad Karanam (IAS, WB:2008) has been assigned Purulia and Bankura, Rachna Bhagat (IAS, WB:2009) will oversee Nadia, while Vishwanath (IAS, WB:2010) will take charge of Hooghly, bringing the list of observers to 12. All observers have been directed to prepare district-wise review and visit plans in consultation with the CEO and ensure that every instruction related to SIR is implemented without exception.

Electricity bill collection campaign in Bhandup circle in full swing: “Electricity bill payment centers will remain open on holidays

(Standard Post Bureau)

Bhandup, Nov 28 : Currently, an electricity bill collection campaign is underway in the entire Bhandup circle. In this, the electricity supply of 27,498 customers with outstanding dues has been disconnected.

For the convenience of customers, electricity bill payment centers in Bhandup circle of Mahavitaran will be kept open even on holidays. Accordingly, on Saturday, November 29, 2025 and November 30, 2025, all the authorized electricity bill payment centers under the circle have been kept open and the facility to pay bills has been made available.

However, Mahavitaran has appealed to customers to cooperate in paying their electricity bills.

Along with the electricity bill payment centers, Mahavitaran has provided various options for paying electricity bills. A discount of Rs. 10 is being given for paying electricity bills online. The payment can be made on the website of Mahavitaran or through Mahavitaran's mobile app as well as offline options such as banks, private secured payment centers. The Chief Engineer of Bhandup Circle, Mr. Sanjay Patil, has appealed to the customers to pay their current and overdue electricity bills using the facilities available for uninterrupted electricity service.



(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Nov 28 : The Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), a leading organisation in the travel and tourism sector, has announced the launch of an innovative travel initiative – the **Multiple Origin, Single Destination (MOSD)** tour model. This pioneering concept enables travellers from different parts of India to converge at a single international destination through **coordinated departures managed by IRCTC’s regional offices**.

Under the MOSD initiative, IRCTC is introducing two major international tour packages:

- **Dubai Tour**
Departure: 22 January 2026 (Ex-Mumbai)
Duration: 4 Nights / 5 Days
Destinations: Dubai & Abu Dhabi
Price: ₹ 91,500 per person (twin sharing)
- **Europe Tours**
Scheduled Departures: April & June 2026
Duration: 12 Nights / 13 Days
Destinations: Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam, Cologne, Mannheim,

Zurich, Innsbruck, Venice, Pisa, Florence, Rome & Milan
This initiative will bring together an estimated **100–200 passengers** from multiple IRCTC regional offices, representing a significant step forward in operational expansion and customer convenience by integrating multiple travel origins into a single coordinated journey.

Early Bird Discount Offers
To enhance value for customers, IRCTC has introduced **Early Bird Discounts of ₹ 5,000 to ₹ 6,000 per person** on select upcoming international tours.

- **Cherry Blossom Japan Tour**
Departure: 29 March 2026 (Ex-Mumbai)
Duration: 9 Nights / 10 Days
Destinations: Tokyo, Mt. Fuji, Hakone, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka & Hiroshima
Price: ₹ 3,49,700 per person (twin sharing)
- **Astonishing Australia Tour**
Departure: 5 May 2026 (Ex-Mumbai)
Duration: 11 Nights / 12 Days
Destinations: Melbourne, Cairns, Gold Coast & Sydney

Price: ₹ 3,90,000 per person (twin sharing)

Offer validity: Bookings made on or before **17 December 2025**

To avail discount: Travellers must pay **30% of the package cost** by the due date. Remaining payments will follow a **cut-and-pay** schedule.

Christmas & New Year Holiday Specials

IRCTC has also rolled out exclusive **festive season holiday packages** for Christmas and New Year, designed to provide seamless, enjoyable, and memorable travel experiences.

Domestic Packages:- Kerala, Andaman, South India, Odisha, Rann of Kutch, Ayodhya, Varanasi & Saurashtra

I n t e r n a t i o n a l Packages:- Nepal & Sri Lanka

Each curated package includes:

Flight tickets, accommodation, meals, transfers, sightseeing, tour manager services, travel insurance, and GST—ensuring a complete and hassle-free holiday experience.
Shri Gaurav Jha, Group General Manager, IRCTC West Zone, stated that these specially curated packages aim to offer travelers comprehensive comfort and convenience during the festive season.

Travellers can explore and book all packages through:

IRCTC’s official website: www.irctctourism.com