

Coldest morning of the season grips Bengal, fog deepens chill

Winter tightened its grip on West Bengal on Sunday as the state witnessed the coldest morning of the season so far, accompanied by widespread dense fog. In Kolkata, the minimum temperature dropped to 14.4 degrees Celsius, marginally lower than the 14.5 degrees recorded on December 6, marking a new seasonal low. Just a day earlier, the city had recorded a minimum of 16.2 degrees, highlighting the sharp fall in mercury within 24 hours. This is the second consecutive day that large parts of the state have been enveloped in thick fog, significantly reducing visibility and intensifying the cold, damp conditions. On Sunday, the sun struggled to break through the fog cover, leaving the day gloomy and biting cold. Visibility remained poor even as the day progressed.

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Morning India

Severe fog: 97 flights get cancelled, over 200 services delay

MI News Service, New Delhi: A total of 97 flights were cancelled and over 200 delayed due to low visibility conditions amid fog at the Delhi airport on Sunday. An official said 48 arrivals and 49 departures were cancelled at the airport.

According to latest information available on flight tracking website Flightradar24.com, more than 200 flights were delayed and the average delay time was around 23 minutes for departures at the airport. In a post on X at noon, Delhi airport operator DIAL said operations are running smoothly. DIAL operates the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA), the country's largest airport that generally handles around 1,300 flights daily.

Flight operations have been disrupted for the past many days at Delhi and other airports due to dense fog. The Airports Author-



Fog conditions in parts of Northern India are affecting visibility and may lead to delays or changes in flight operations at select airports. Passengers are advised to check flight updates with their airlines through official channels and allow extra time for airport travel and formalities

AAI's advisory read

ity of India (AAI) issued an advisory on Sunday, warning that fog conditions in parts of northern India are affecting visibility and may lead to delays or changes in flight operations at select airports. "Fog conditions in parts of Northern India are affecting visibility and may lead to delays or changes in flight operations at select airports. Passengers are advised to check flight updates with their airlines through official channels and allow extra time for airport travel and formalities," AAI's advisory read. The air quality in the national capital was recorded in the "very poor" category on Sunday morning, with an overall Air Quality Index (AQI) reading of 386, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). Data from the CPCB's Sameer app revealed that 16 monitoring stations in the city reported air quality in the "severe" category, while the remaining stations recorded "very poor" levels. As per CPCB standards, an AQI between 0 and 50 is considered "good", 51 to 100 "satisfactory", 101 to 200 "moderate", 201 to 300 "poor", 301 to 400 "very poor", and 401 to 500 "severe". The minimum temperature settled at 9.4 degrees Celsius, which is 1.3 degrees above the season's average, while the humidity was recorded at 91 per cent at 8:30 am, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). The maximum temperature is expected to hover around 17 degrees Celsius, with the IMD forecasting a yellow alert for the city due to moderate fog.



Awe-inspiring illumination at Bow Barracks in Kolkata marks the pre-Christmas celebration on the last Sunday before the Holy Christmas Day. Pic: Prabir Bhattacharya

JIHADIS ransack B'Desh Parl, burn BNP leader's house, 7-yr old daughter dies in fire

INDIA SHUTS DOWN VISA CENTRE AT CHATTOGRAM

MI News Service, New Delhi/Dhaka: The Indian Visa Application Centre (IVAC) in Bangladesh's Chattogram city has suspended its operations until further notice amid heightened security concerns following violent protests near the Indian mission. In a statement issued on its official website, IVAC Bangladesh said Indian visa services at its Chattogram centre would remain suspended from December 21 pending a review of the situation.

"Due to the recent security incident at AHCI Chattogram, Indian visa operations at IVAC Chattogram will remain suspended until further notice," the statement said, adding that an announcement on reopening would be made after an assessment of the prevailing conditions. The suspension comes against the backdrop of days of unrest triggered by the death of prominent student leader Sharif Osman Hadi, whose killing has sparked nationwide protests and attacks on key institutions.

According to sources, massive



Due to the recent security incident at AHCI Chattogram, Indian visa operations at IVAC Chattogram will remain suspended until further notice
--the statement said

security, including army personnel, was deployed outside the Assistant High Commission of India in Chattogram after protesters staged a sit-in near the mission late Thursday night. Demonstrators hurled bricks and stones at the residence of the assistant high commissioner around 1.30 am on Friday, though no damage was reported. Police used tear gas and baton charges to disperse the crowd, detaining 12 protesters. Senior officials later assured the Indian envoy of full security, while additional personnel were de-

ployed around the mission. The protests followed one of the most violent nights Bangladesh has witnessed in recent years after Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus confirmed late Thursday that Hadi had died while undergoing treatment at Singapore General Hospital.

Hadi, a candidate in the February 12 general elections and a leader associated with last year's student-led July Uprising, had been shot in the head by masked gunmen in Dhaka's Bijoy Nagar area while launching his campaign. He died after six days on life support. Soon after Yunus' televised address, mobs went on the rampage across Dhaka and other cities, targeting media houses, political offices, cultural institutions and private residences.

One of the most serious incidents occurred in Dhaka's Karwan Bazar area, where the offices of English daily The Daily Star and Bangla daily Prothom Alo were vandalised and set on fire. Visuals showed extensive damage, with newsroom staff forced to flee as thick smoke engulfed the build-

ings. At least 28 journalists were trapped for hours inside The Daily Star office before being rescued by firefighters, amid continued vandalism below.

Following the attacks, both newspapers announced they would not publish their Friday editions, with online operations also severely disrupted. Violence spread to several parts of the country. In Dhaka's Dhanmondi area, the cultural institution Chhayanaut was vandalised and torched, while offices of the disbanded Awami League were attacked in multiple cities.

In Chattogram, protesters also torched the residence of former city mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury (Nowfel). Road blockades were reported in districts including Barisal and Jhalakathi, leaving hundreds of vehicles stranded as demonstrators raised slogans against India and the Awami League. Student groups staged protests at Shahbagh in Dhaka, while a faction announced a march towards the Indian High

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BANGLADESH tightens security amid rising ISLAMIST rampage

MI News Service, Dhaka: Bangladesh tightened security deploying police and paramilitary forces in the capital Dhaka ahead of funeral prayers for slain youth leader and election candidate Sharif Osman Hadi whose death has sparked a surge of violence. The unrest after the shooting death of Hadi has included coordinated mob attacks on major newspapers and cultural institutions.

A Hindu man named Dipu Chandra Das, 25, was lynched in Mymensingh for which seven men have been arrested, according to a statement from Muhammad Yunus, chief adviser to the interim government. Das was beaten to death by a mob and his body set on fire over alleged blasphemy in Mymensingh city on Thursday. Taslima Nasreen, the Bangladeshi writer who is in exile in India, alleged in a social media post that Das was framed by a coworker who wanted to punish him over some trivial matter. According to the police, Das, a factory worker, was first beaten up by a mob outside the factory over blasphemy allegations and hanged from a tree.

In a statement on X, Yunus said that the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) has arrested seven individuals as suspects in the case. The arrests were made during operations at various locations, and the ages of those arrested range from 19 to 46, the statement



Thousands of protesters took to the streets in Bangladesh

The prime suspect in Osman Hadi's killing is Faisal Karim Masud, a former leader of the Chhatra League [currently banned], the student wing of the ousted Awami League
Bangladeshi journalist

said. Hadi, 32, a key figure in the student-led uprising last year that toppled longtime Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, was shot in the head by masked assailants in Dhaka last week while launching his campaign. He died on Thursday night in Singapore after six days on life support. "The prime suspect in Osman Hadi's killing is Faisal Karim Masud, a former leader of the Chhatra League [currently banned], the student wing of the ousted Awami League," a Bangladeshi journalist told Online on Friday. "It appears that Faisal joined Hadi's campaign with the intention of killing him." Bangladesh is to elect a new parliament on February 12, a transition

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Bollywood actress Soha Ali Khan participates in a run during the Tata Steel World 25k Kolkata 2025 in Kolkata on Sunday.

HINDU lynching in B'Desh: INDIA formally reacts by saying it a 'HORRENDOUS ACT'

MI News Service, New Delhi: India on Sunday issued its first official response after a Hindu man was lynched and his body burnt in Bangladesh, voicing strong concern over continuing atrocities against minorities and saying it is closely tracking the fast-evolving situation in the neighbouring country. The Ministry of External Affairs said the killing of Dipu Chandra Das in My-

mensingh was "horrendous" and confirmed that New Delhi has conveyed its concerns to Dhaka, urging that those responsible for the crime be identified and punished without delay. In a detailed statement, the MEA also rejected reports in sections of the Bangladesh media describing a protest outside the Bangladesh High

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ISRO to launch next-gen satellite on Dec 24



The communication satellite developed by the U.S.-based AST SpaceMobile will be launched as part of the LVM3-M6 mission

MI News Service, Sriharikota: ISRO's upcoming LVM3 M6 mission will carry the BlueBird Block-2 satellite into orbit on December 24, as part of a commercial deal with US-based AST SpaceMobile. The historic mission will deploy the next-generation communication satellite designed to provide high-speed cellular broadband directly to smartphones worldwide.

AST SpaceMobile (AST & Science, LLC) is building the first and only space-based cellular broadband network, which is accessible directly by smartphones and designed for both commercial and government applications. "We are on a mission to eliminate the connectivity gaps faced by today's nearly six billion mobile subscribers and bring broadband to the billions who remain unconnected," the company said in its website.

AST SpaceMobile has launched five satellites -- BlueBird 1-5 in September 2024, which enable continuous internet coverage across the US and other select countries. The US-based company has planned to launch similar satellites to augment its network support and has partnered with over 50 mobile operators across the globe. For the upcoming mission, AST SpaceMobile has planned to launch its next-generation communication satellite, BlueBird Block-2, which has been designed to deliver 24/7 high-speed cellular broadband direct to smartphones worldwide. The BlueBird Block-2 satellite features a 223 m2 phased array, making it the largest commercial communication satellite ever deployed into low Earth orbit.

According to ISRO, the mission would be a dedicated commercial launch as part of the agreement signed between NewSpace India Ltd and AST SpaceMobile (AST & Science, LLC). NewSpace India Ltd is the commercial arm of the Bengaluru-headquartered ISRO. The BlueBird block-2 mission is part of the global Low Earth Orbit constellation to provide direct-to-mobile connectivity through a satellite. This constellation would enable 4G and 5G voice and video calls, texts, streaming and data for anyone at anytime, ISRO said. The BlueBird Block-2 spacecraft would be the heaviest payload to be launched into Low Earth Orbit in the history of LVM3 rocket.

In previous missions, the LVM3 rocket has successfully launched Chandrayaan-2, Chandr ayaan-3 and two OneWeb missions carrying 72 satellites. The latest launch made by ISRO was the communication satellite in the LVM3-M5/CMS-03 mission that was successfully accomplished on November 2, 2025.

Train mows down three BJP supporters bound for PM's meeting in Nadia

MI News Service, Nadia: Three BJP supporters from Murshidabad were run over by a Sealdah-bound local train near the Taherpur railway station in the early hours of Saturday while they were relieving themselves close to the tracks amid dense fog and poor visibility. The trio had travelled to Nadia's Taherpur to attend Prime Minister Narendra Modi's public meeting. The deceased were Ramprasad Ghosh, 74, Saktipada Sutradhar, 55, and Gopinath Das, 35. Two others, Bhairav Ghosh, 47, and Bikash Ghosh, 40, sustained critical injuries and were admitted to the Nadia district hospital in Krishnanagar. All the victims were residents of Burwan in Murshidabad district. According to local sources and fellow party supporters, the group had set out from Sabaldaha village in Burwan, nearly 150km from Taherpur, in a bus around 11pm on Friday night. While nearing their destination, the bus halted on a stretch of road running alongside the railway tracks between Taherpur and Badkulla stations. The incident occurred around 4.30 am, when several members of the group got down to relieve themselves near the tracks. With thick fog severely limiting

visibility, they misjudged the distance of an approaching train and were struck by the Sealdah-bound Krishnanagar local, killing three on the spot. Some of the accompanying supporters said that curiosity also drew them close to the tracks, as Burwan, from where they hail, does not have railway connectivity. The shock of the incident spread rapidly back to the village as news reached family members in the morning. Jamuna Ghosh, 68, the widow of Ramprasad Ghosh, a physically challenged woman, struggled to come to terms with the loss. "I got the news that they were run over by a train. I don't know how this happened. I don't know what to do now. I can't walk properly anymore, and I don't know how I will live my life," an inconsolable Jamuna said. The tragedy triggered a sharp exchange between the BJP and the Trinamool Congress. Trinamool accused the BJP of insensitivity, alleging that the party went ahead with the Prime Minister's programme without any senior leader immediately reaching out to the bereaved families. Krishnanagar MP Mahua Moitra was the first to react publicly, posting on

X and accusing the BJP of attempting to hush up the incident. "Terrible tragedy hushed up at the altar of @BJP4India supporters brought from far Murshidabad for PM rally in Ranaghat today. Rally next to rail line. Four went to answer nature's call and were killed by 31814 DN local train near Taherpur. BJP ignored, blacked out and went ahead with rally," she wrote. The Prime Minister began his virtual speech by expressing condolences to the victims' families. "I have learnt that while reaching the venue, some BJP supporters were killed in a railway accident. I convey my deep condolences to the bereaved family members of the deceased and to those who were injured. I wish them a speedy recovery in this hour of distress and shock. We are all with the bereaved families," Modi said in his brief virtual speech. Trinamool moved swiftly on the ground. Acting on the direction of Trinamool's all-India general secretary Abhishek Banerjee, a delegation went to Burwan to meet the families of the deceased and the injured. Burwan South block Trinamool president Mahe Alam Sarkar and North block president

Golam Morshed visited the victims' homes and offered condolences. "Our leaders, Mamata Banerjee and Abhishek Banerjee, have instructed us to stand by the families of the deceased. As soon as we received directions from the district leadership in the morning, we came here to cooperate with the families in every possible way," Sarkar said. In contrast, local BJP leaders acknowledged that most of the party functionaries from the area were away attending the Prime Minister's programme in Nadia when the accident occurred. BJP's Behrampur district president Malay Mahajan said: "All of us had gone out for Modi's public meeting. That is why none of us could immediately go to their homes. After the meeting, we will go straight to the houses of the families in Burwan. It is a very sad incident, and we will fully support the families." Later in the afternoon, after the Prime Minister's programme concluded, senior BJP leaders rushed to the Nadia district hospital in Krishnanagar. Leader of the Opposition Suwendu Adhikari paid tribute to the deceased after the bodies were released following the post-mortem.

HC judges inspect Circuit Bench complex

MI News Service, Jalpaiguri: Justice Sujoy Paul, the acting Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court, visited the permanent building of the Jalpaiguri Circuit Bench of the court. He was accompanied by four other judges of the Calcutta High Court. The new building complex, built on a 40-acre plot near Jalpaiguri town's Paharpur More, is likely to be inaugurated on January 17, 2026. Since 2019, the Jalpaiguri Circuit Bench of the Calcutta High Court has been operating in a temporary building - a bungalow of the Zilla Parishad - in Station Road of the town. The state government had planned a new and permanent building for the bench. Justice Paul visited the new complex to review the overall arrangements in the presence of senior officials of the district administration. He inspected the infrastructure and facilities of the new building and held a meeting regarding the upcoming inauguration ceremony. A source said that the event is expected to be attended by the Chief Justice of India, chief justices of different High Courts, the chief minister and other eminent personalities. After inspecting the new complex, Justice Paul visited the existing circuit bench at Station Road.



Photography Exhibition of renowned photographer Dr. Kausik Ghosh, along with the launch of his 13th photography book, "BLUES", was inaugurated recently at Birla Academy of Art & Culture, Kolkata. The programme was filled up with host of dignitaries from Kolkata like Samik Bandopadhyay, Critic; Atri Bhattacharya, IAS; Chandra Bhattacharya, Artist; Raju Raman; Barun Chanda, Indian actor and author; Sudripto Tagore; and Ashok Viswanathan, Indian filmmaker; Abir Chatterjee, Actor; Ishaa Saha, Actor; Amrita Chattopadhyay, Actor; Premendu Chaki, Indian cinematographer; Arghyo Kamal Mitra, Indian Film Editor; Srikantha Acharya, Singer etc.

Save the Constitution People's Forum's Malda District Conference

Nurul Islam Khan : The main slogan was, "The Constitution is under attack, the country is in danger; it is our responsibility to protect it." This conference was held to confront the critical situation across the country, guided by this principle. The central government has passed several highly controversial laws using its parliamentary majority. These laws are going to have a devastating impact not only on Hindus, Muslims, Jains, and Christians, but on all minorities, backward classes, and marginalized communities. The alarming aspect is that behind this effort, a dangerous conspiracy is underway to weaken the Indian Constitution through the force of majority rule. This district conference was organized with the participation of intellectuals and responsible leaders of the country to strengthen public opinion against this situation. The meeting began with the hoisting of the national flag. A procession started from the Old Malda BDO office and ended at the Jalanga Football Ground. Anirban Banerjee and Firoz Ahmed Molla hoisted the national flag. The meeting was conducted by the organization's secretary, spokesperson, and North Bengal observer, Sajidur Rahman. Among those present were Srimanta Roy - Advocate, Supreme Court; Working President; Rajab Ali Khan - Treasurer, Save the Constitution People's Forum; Debarun Roy - renowned journalist, writer and spokesperson; Hefzur Rahman - President, Malda District Committee. Leaders from various districts, prominent personalities, and numerous ordinary people were also present. North Bengal observer and spokesperson Sajidur Rahman stated: "Three days before the conference was announced, I had the opportunity to visit Malda district and speak with ordinary



people in various blocks and villages. Their experiences and statements clearly show that people's trust in the current central and state governments has drastically decreased. An atmosphere of fear and uncertainty has been created in people's minds. Divisions and distances are being deliberately increased in society; the RSS has been virtually successful in this attempt to destroy social harmony. Therefore, all democracy-loving people must unite. The struggle to protect our rights, justice, and the Constitution must be further strengthened," the organizers said. Through this conference, a pledge was made to further strengthen the movement for the protection of democracy, the constitution, and human rights in Malda district.

Howrah hosts state-level Yoga Competition

MI News Service, Howrah: A state-level Yoga Competition was recently organized in Howrah. The main focus of this event is to highlight the importance of Yoga among the masses and youth. The event was organized by Devlok Socio-cultural Foundation, in association with Manmathapur Pranav Mandir, UC-MAYPSF, Yogam and Howrah Sanskrita Sahitya Samaj at Ramgopal Mancha near Howrah Maidan. The chief guest at the occasion was Swami Divyaganananda from Bharat Sevashram Sangha. Several judges and other dignitaries were present in this program from all over West Bengal. Participants came from all the districts of West Bengal.

Smuggler and anti-social arrested with weapons in Kharagpur, police foiled murder plan

Manish ramtaka (Kharagpur, west midnapore) : Police of Kharagpur Town police station arrested a criminal along with weapons and cartridges on Saturday night. The name of the arrested accused is Dipankar Shukla. He is a resident of Kumarpada area of Ward No. 9 of Kharagpur city. According to the police, the accused has been taken on police remand for 8 days. The arrested accused is said to be a professional criminal. Many cases have already been registered against him. On Sunday, at Kharagpur Town police station, SDPO Dheeraj Thakur and IC Parthasarathy Pal informed about the arrest of the smuggler along with weapons through a press conference. SDPO Dheeraj



Thakur said that on Saturday night at around 8:30 pm, two people came on a bike 200 meters away from Nimpura petrol pump. The police had advance information that firearms would be traded and dealt with. The police was sitting in ambush, as soon as two people came on a bike, the police surrounded them. But the criminal named Bam Raja escaped with the bike. He is a resident of Gatebazar area. The second Dipankar Shukla was arrested by the police. SDPO said, 'Accused Dipankar Shukla had planned to murder someone. Before this, there were 9 cases registered against him. After interrogating him, the names of Umesh Kumar, resident of Kharidi, Kharagpur and Radheshyam Singh, resident of Harhargutu area of Bagberia police station area of Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, have come to light. Accused Shukla had come to give them weapons. They are also involved in the murder plan. A black bag containing 4 cm automatic pistol, 1 8 mm cartridge loaded desi katta, 16 fresh cartridges, 1 big knife and some clothes were seized from the accused. The police took the accused into custody. The police is interrogating the arrested accused and trying to find out whom they were planning to kill. The police hope that this will become clear soon. It is noteworthy that on the night of December 7, after receiving information from a secret source, the city police had arrested a miscreant in a white Scorpio with a country-made pistol and one fresh 8 mm cartridge.



On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Bhavapagala Mahasammelan, organized by the Bhavar Harbola Temple Trust, and the 47th anniversary of the Maha Puja of Maa Harbola at the Digha temple, Padma Shri Purna Chandra Das, the Baul Emperor, was felicitated today at the Bhavapagala Mahasammelan at Mahamilan Math by Acharya Dr. Gopal Kshetri, Priyanath Chatterjee, and other distinguished personalities.



Kolkata recently witnessed a rare painting exhibition of young aspirants where around 2000 children participated in this unique venture. The venue of the event was South City International School. Renowned painter Subrata Gangopadhyay was present at the occasion.

Factionalism resurfaces in TMC at Balurghat

MI News Service, Balurghat: The infighting in the Trinamool Congress resurfaced in Balurghat as 14 councillors of the Balurghat municipality submitted a letter to the subdivisional officer, requesting steps so that they could table a no-confidence motion against civic chairman Ashok Kumar Mitra. According to the councillors, the move was necessitated by allegations of widespread corruption against Mitra. With the Assembly elections approaching, the councillors claimed that a change in leadership was required to restore the Trinamool-run municipality's image. In February 2022, when the municipal elections were held, Trinamool bagged 23 of 25 seats in Balurghat, and Mitra, the councillor of Ward 5, took oath as the chairman. Out of the 23 Trinamool councillors, 14 have signed the no-confidence proposal against the chairman. However, the councillors who signed the letter refrained from commenting publicly on the issue. Swarup Choudhury, the South Dinajpur district BJP president, alleged that the municipality had witnessed large-scale corruption during Mitra's tenure. "I had repeatedly highlighted various cor-



ruption issues, but no action has been taken. The entire party is corrupt. Although factionalism is an internal matter of Trinamool, it is clear that the tenure of the municipality will not last long. The BJP will come to power in the future," he said. Former municipal chairperson and RSP's district secretary Sucheta Biswas was also critical of the ruling party. "Corruption exists in every layer of Trinamool. The chairman's post here keeps revolving. The people of Balurghat know how corrupt the current municipal board is," she said. Subhash Bhowal, the district Trinamool president, said he was unaware of the non-trust motion. "I am out of station for medical treatment. I will look into the matter after gathering full details," he said. Told about the councillors' move, Mitra said he had not received any official communication. "It seems some individuals are misleading others to fulfil their personal interests. I have informed the party and will act on the party's direction," he said. Subrata Kumar Barman, the SDO of Balurghat, confirmed that he had received the letter. "We have received the letter from the councillors and will take appropriate steps according to the law," he said.

Doma Sangh distributed winter clothes among the needy people



Manish Ramtaka (Kharagpur, west midnapore) : Cold clothes were distributed among the needy people on behalf of Doma Confederation in Ambedkar Park located in the South Side area of Kharagpur city. State President of Doma Confederation Basude Mandal, State General Secretary Rakiya Bibi alias Lakshmi and many dignitaries were present. During this, cold clothes were distributed among more than thirty hundred needy people. State General Secretary of Doma Confederation Rakiya Bibi alias Lakshmi says that her organization is working to eliminate discrimination in the society by following the path shown by Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar and Doma Confederation chief Udit Raj. Our whole effort is that the person of Dalit community can live with his head held high and walk in step with the society.

2 youths found dead, suicide suspected

MI News Service, Malbazaar: Two youths were found dead in a rented room at Malbazar town of Jalpaiguri district. Police suspect that the duo committed suicide by hanging. The deceased are Sanjib Barman, 20, of Chhoto Salkumar village within the Falakata police station limits of Alipurduar district, and Anup Roy, 21, of Dhupjhora village under the jurisdiction of Jalpaiguri's Matiali police station. The police found that Barman's family had filed a missing person report at the Falakata police station in December. His last location had been traced to Malbazaar.

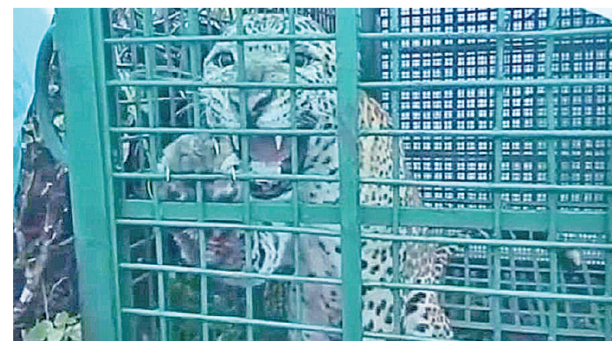
CYBER CRIME has escalated in Bengal: Experts

MI News Service, Kolkata: Bengal's expanding IT and ITes footprint has brought the focus on cybersecurity to the fore, prompting a call for the state government to introduce baseline cyber standards at its IT parks and fast fund-freeze protocols to curb escalating digital fraud risks. Bengal currently hosts 22 IT parks, two electronic manufacturing clusters and a hardware park, while several marquee IT and telecom companies are scaling up operations in Kolkata's Bengal Silicon Valley hub. "The city today has a rapidly expanding IT-ITes ecosystem, and Bengal Silicon Valley has emerged as a key technology hub. This naturally attracts businesses - but it is also drawing financially motivated cybercriminals," said Rajesh Chhabra, general manager, India and South Asia, Acronis, a global cybersecurity and data protection firm. He warned that the widespread adoption of AI - across enterprises and by individuals - has lowered the cost and complexity of cybercrime. "Attackers now use AI voice cloning, deepfake IDs and automated phishing tools to run hyper-targeted, highly realistic scams at scale. Many

organisations adopt AI tools without securing data pipelines, access controls or model integrity, creating openings for attackers. This imbalance is enabling AI-powered fraud to grow faster than the defences designed to stop it," he told The According to Chhabra, states that have seen measurable improvements in cyber outcomes share three common elements: integrated reporting and analytics through national platforms to map mule accounts and criminal networks; strong coordination between police, banks and telecom operators to enable rapid fund freezes; and sustained public-awareness campaigns, especially targeting senior citizens and first-time digital users. "It is essential for the government to further strengthen cyber units, establish rapid fund-freeze mechanisms, enforce baseline cyber standards for IT parks and important industries, and combine regional data with national platforms for faster inquiry," he said. Enterprises, he added, must also adopt a "cyber-resilience" framework, including immutable backups, multi-factor authentication, timely patching and secured AI/ML workflows.

Foresters trap Leopard in cage at Naxalbari

MI News Service, Siliguri: A leopard was trapped in a cage at a Tirrihanna tea estate in Siliguri subdivision's Naxalbari block in Darjeeling district. A source in the Kurseong forest division stated that residents of the estate, situated approximately 25 kilometres from Siliguri, had reported that a leopard had strayed into the garden. Over the past couple of weeks, it had taken away cattle and poultry from the workers' quarters, they added. Panicked, a section of them stopped going into the plantations in the estate's Jabra division and pluck tea leaves. "We had also submitted a memo-



randum at the Panighata forest range, requesting immediate measures to capture the animal," said a worker. Foresters installed a cage in the Jabdra division. The workers heard the animal growling and found that it had walked into the cage. Foresters were informed and a team took away the leopard. "A full-grown male leopard was successfully caged at the Naxalbari tea garden. The animal will be kept under observation before being released into the core forest area," said a forester.

The 26th Kharagpur Book Fair will be held from January 3-11 at Gitanjali Auditorium premises

Manish Ramtaka (Kharagpur WestMedinipur) : The 26th Kharagpur Book Fair will be organized in Kharagpur city from January 3 to January 11, 2026. Regarding the organization of the book fair, a press meet was held by the Book Fair Committee in the Khya area of Kharagpur city. Many people including committee advisor Prashant Kumar Pal, Hema Choubey, B Harish Kumar, Mrinal Shatpathy were present in the press conference. It was told by the committee that this year the Kharagpur Book Fair will be inaugurated by prominent journalist and writer Surbek Biswas and Yuva Sahitya Akademi awardee Hamiruddin Midya. Committee secretary Devashish Chaudhary said, "This time the promotion of the book fair is starting a little late. Publishing houses



like Anand, Days Publishers, Deep Prakashani, Patrabharti from Kolkata will come. The book seller is very happy because a good number of books were sold last year. I hope that this year too readers will buy a lot of books. This time, apart from the main stage, there will also be stages for authors, publishers, book launches, discussions etc. There will be a special platform for small magazines also. This year the 'Anil Ghodai Memorial' award will be given to Professor Indranil Acharya of Vidyasagar University. Poet Kaushik Bazari of Bishnupur will be given the award of best

poet. Organizers of Kharagpur Book Fair said that among the programs organized in the fair, there will be Baul song by Fakir Noor Alam on 5th January, Hindi Kavi Sammelan on 7th January, Bengali Band Trap on 9th January, Bengali-Hindi song by Barshiya Sen on 10th January and a concert by Saregamapa champion Mansi Ghosh on 11th January. Committee member Apoorva Chattopadhyay said, 'Along with the poet's conference, there will be painting, singing, alpans, chess and quiz competitions on the occasion of the book fair. There will be stalls of Patua artists of Pingla Naya village. This year, apart from various programs for school students, it has been decided to give more opportunities to local artists to perform on the main stage.

Sudden exit of workers sparks focus on Aadhaar authenticity

MI News Service, Kolkata: Heightened security concerns across the city have pushed the issue of identity verification of domestic workers into sharp focus, prompting police authorities to issue fresh reminders to residents. Officials have emphasised that personal safety can no longer rely only on locked doors, intercoms or CCTV cameras. Anyone employed inside homes—including domestic helps, drivers and private security staff—must undergo proper identity verification, with Aadhaar details submitted at the local police station.

The matter has gained urgency following reports from several urban pockets such as Salt Lake, Belegghata and New Town, where residents have noticed the sudden disappearance of domestic workers over the past month. Preliminary inquiries suggest that many workers left abruptly around the time the SIR process began in the state. This trend has heightened concerns about undocumented residents, forged identity documents and possible security gaps in residential neighbourhoods. Police officials caution that merely checking an Aadhaar card visually is no longer adequate. With reports of fake Aadhaar cards in circulation, a simple glance offers little assurance of authenticity. To address this challenge, the Unique

Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has introduced a digital solution that allows citizens to independently verify Aadhaar credentials within minutes. UIDAI's official Aadhaar application now features a QR code-based verification system. Every Aadhaar card carries a QR code containing encrypted personal information. When scanned using the official app, the system instantly verifies the card. If the Aadhaar is genuine, details such as the holder's name, photograph and address appear on the screen. If the card is fake or altered, no information is displayed, immediately raising a red flag. The process is simple: users need to download the official Aadhaar app, log in with their Aadhaar number, and use the QR scanner to scan the code on the card presented.

Authorities have advised residents to report any suspicious or unverifiable Aadhaar cards to the police without delay. Law enforcement agencies stress that identity verification is no longer a routine formality but a crucial layer of urban security. As cities grow and population movement increases, digital authentication tools like Aadhaar QR verification are being positioned as essential safeguards, placing responsibility on both the state and citizens to remain vigilant.

Messi praise Kolkata statue minister responds to criticism



MI News Service, Kolkata: Eight days after Lionel Messi's high-profile visit to Kolkata, State Fire Service Minister Sujit Basu addressed public scrutiny regarding the recently unveiled 70-foot statue of the football star at Sribhumi Sporting Club and faced questions about the Yuva Bharati incident.

Minister Sujit Basu, who was present during Messi's appearance at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, claimed that the Argentine superstar appreciated the statue dedicated to him. Responding to widespread criticism of the statue's design, the minister said, "He (Messi) liked the statue. He praised it. No one asked questions about it. One or two critics always raise concerns, but Messi himself appreciated it and highlighted the picture on his social media." Reports indicate that Messi shared a short video on his official social media handle, which featured the statue prominently. Sujit Basu suggested that this video corroborated his statement regarding Messi's approval. The statue was erected to commemorate Messi's visit to Kolkata and stands as a centerpiece in front of the Sribhumi Sporting Club. Social media reactions, however, had sparked debates over the statue's likeness to the footballer. Sujit Basu's remarks mark the first official response from the state government defend-

ing the monument. In addition to addressing the statue, Minister Sujit Basu was questioned about the violent incident at Yuva Bharati during Messi's visit, which had previously led to the resignation of Sports Minister Arup amidst public and political scrutiny. Basu, who was not present at the Yuva Bharati venue, refrained from commenting in detail, noting that a government-appointed inquiry committee is reviewing the events. "I will not say anything about this right now. The committee's report will determine where there was error and where there was compliance," he stated. Sujit Basu further highlighted that Bengal has hosted numerous major events during the current government's tenure and assured that all necessary steps are being taken to address concerns arising from Messi's stadium visit. The inquiry into the Yuva Bharati incident is ongoing, and the government has maintained that all findings will be acted upon according to protocol. This statement from the minister comes amid heightened public interest in both the cultural significance of Messi's visit and the security lapses observed during the Yuva Bharati incident, reflecting the delicate balance of event management, public safety, and celebrity engagement in high-profile international visits.

INDIA SHUTS DOWN VISA CENTRE AT CHATTOGRAM

From PG 1

Commission in the capital, demanding the return of what it termed "fugitive accused", including former prime minister Sheikh Hasina. Amid escalating tensions, Yunus vowed swift justice and appealed for restraint, warning that no leniency would be shown to Hadi's killers. The interim administration has declared Saturday a day of state mourning, with national flags to fly at half-mast and special prayers planned. Security forces remain on high alert across Bangladesh ahead of the February 12 elections, even as authorities insist the situation is now under control.

Tata Steel World 25K delivered a riveting spectacle as records tumbled



MI News Service, Kolkata: On a chilly winter Sunday, the Tata Steel World 25K delivered a riveting spectacle as records tumbled, champions asserted their dominance and Indian distance running announced another leap forward. While Uganda's Joshua Cheptegei underlined his mastery of the distance in the international elite men's race, the day truly belonged to India's Gulveer Singh and Seema, both of whom rewrote the course records in their respective elite categories. Cheptegei, the double Olympic champion, stamped his authority early, dictating the pace from the flag-off and never relinquishing control. He crossed the line in 1:11:49 to win his maiden title, finishing ahead of Tanzania's Alphonse Felix Simbu (1:11:56) and Lesotho's Tebello Ramakon-

gona (1:11:59) in a tightly contested podium finish. Though he fell short of the course record of 1:11:13 set by Daniel Simiu Ebenyo in 2023, Cheptegei composed and commanding run reaffirmed his stranglehold over the event. For a major part of the race, the trio kept in a close pack with nothing separating them at the 15 km or 20 km mark. But Joshua, at par with others at 01:00:49 at the 21.1 km half-marathon distance, pulled away the last four kilometres to leave his stamp on the course. Joshua Cheptegei said, "Winning mattered more than the record for me. Coming back to Kolkata and winning is special for me. I have won in Bangalore, and this was a big race with world-class athletes. This victory gives me confidence and positivity as I prepare for my next marathon." In the international elite women's race,

Ethiopia's Degitu Azimeraw produced a clinical performance to dethrone defending champion Sutmese Asefa Kebede. Running the Kolkata course for the third time, Azimeraw, the winner here in 2017 and a fourth-placer a year later, broke away decisively and led from start to finish, clocking 1:19:36. Sutmese settled for second in 1:20:28, while Meselech Alemayehu completed an Ethiopian clean sweep in 1:20:48. Despite Azimeraw's victory, the course record remained with Sutmese. In the women's race, Degitu showed her intention to grab the course by its scruff and control it from the minute they flagged off. She always led the pack at the 10, 15 and 20 km marks by a good few seconds, but that turned into a minute's difference by the 22 km mark, and when she won the race, she was a good 500 mts

ahead of her closest competitor. After the race, Degitu said, "It wasn't the plan before for me. It was a little crazy. My legs were a little stiff, so I just focused on going strong. But after 10km, my legs got better, and then I continued to build my race and speed, and with that, I won. I am very happy." The Indian elite races, however, provided the most compelling narratives of the day. Gulveer Singh delivered a statement run of rare authority, slicing more than two minutes off his own Indian course record. With smooth, fluid strides, Gulveer surged to the front of the Indian pack early, briefly mixing it with the international elite before powering home in 1:12:06. He eclipsed the previous mark of 1:14:10, set by himself in 2024, underlining the remarkable progress he has made over the

past two seasons. Harmanjot Singh (1:15:11) and Sawan Barwal (1:15:25) followed him onto the podium. Gulveer ran the race on a different level from the beginning. He always had a minute over his closest competitor from the 15 km mark; it steadily progressed to a difference of two minutes, and by the time he crossed the 21.1 km mark, he was at 01:00:58, to Harmanjot's 01:03:17. Talking about the win, the Asian long-distance double gold medalist Gulveer Singh said, "Records aren't created just like that. They come from consistency. With strong support, dedicated coaches, and relentless training, the only goal is to be better than yesterday. I don't believe in fixing ceilings for myself. Diet, workout, and rest is all I do. Nothing else matters. Progress takes time. There are no shortcuts."

Coldest morning of the season grips Bengal, fog deepens chill

MI News Service, Kolkata: Winter tightened its grip on West Bengal on Sunday as the state witnessed the coldest morning of the season so far, accompanied by widespread dense fog. In Kolkata, the minimum temperature dropped to 14.4 degrees Celsius, marginally lower than the 14.5 degrees recorded on December 6, marking a new seasonal low. Just a day earlier, the city had recorded a minimum of 16.2 degrees, highlighting the sharp fall in mercury within 24 hours. This is the second consecutive day that large parts of the state have been enveloped in thick fog, significantly reducing visibility and intensifying the cold, damp conditions. On Sunday, the sun struggled to break through the fog cover, leaving the day gloomy and biting cold. Visibility remained poor even as the day progressed. According to the Meteorological Department, the prevailing weather conditions are linked to an active western disturbance. The impact of this system is being felt across the region, with snowfall reported in Ladakh since



morning. Kargil alone received 2 to 3 inches of fresh snow, indicating the strength of the disturbance influencing northern and eastern India. In Kolkata, dense fog also affected early morning operations at the international airport. Visibility at around 8 am stood at approximately 600 metres, while visibility on the main runway was about 1,000 metres. Despite the reduced visibility,

air traffic remained largely unaffected, with airport authorities deploying advanced lighting systems to ensure smooth operations. The fog situation is expected to intensify in the western districts of the state. Bankura remained under cloud cover since morning, accompanied by strong northerly winds, further adding to the chill. The Meteorological Department has warned that temperatures in Kolkata and its adjoining districts may dip slightly further from December 25. A dense fog warning has been issued for Purulia, West Burdwan and Birbhum, where visibility may drop to as low as 50 metres in isolated pockets. Over the next few days, minimum temperatures in the western districts are expected to hover between 12 and 15 degrees Celsius. Coastal districts are likely to record minimum temperatures between 15 and 18 degrees Celsius. There is no forecast of rainfall across the state for the next seven days, and overall temperature patterns are expected to remain largely stable.

Real voter left out as fake name appears in Draft list

MI News Service, Kolkata: A case of administrative confusion in the ongoing Special Summary Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls has left a government employee in Behala struggling to assert his voting rights. Subrata Mistry, a clerk in a school in New Alipore, discovered that despite correctly submitting his SIR form online, his name did not appear in the draft voter list, while a duplicate entry in another location surfaced instead.

The duplicate voter, also named Subrata Mistry, resides in Sonarpur North and allegedly submitted the enumeration form using the real Subrata's personal details, including his father's name and EPIC number.

As a result, the SIR correspondence was directed to the residence of the fake voter, forcing the real Subrata Mistry to re-submit his

information online. Despite these efforts, the Election Commission's draft list still carries the name of the impersonator, leaving the legitimate voter unlisted. "I filled up the form online last month and checked the list, only to find that the name of the fake person appeared."

My serial number was changed from 347 to 289, and the age is shown as 37. This is clearly a lapse on the part of the Commission," said Subrata Mistry, highlighting the administrative irregularity. Subrata has approached local election authorities, including the Booth Level Officer (BLO) and AERO, but no resolution has been reached so far. The incident raises serious questions about the verification process during the SIR and the measures in place to prevent identity duplication in electoral rolls.

N. Dum Dum launches Sebaashray camp until January 11

MI News Service, Kolkata: Following the footsteps of similar initiatives in other constituencies, a comprehensive public service camp under the banner of 'Sebaashray' has been inaugurated in the North Dum Dum Assembly area. The program, spearheaded by local MLA and state minister Chandrima Bhattacharya, began on Sunday and is scheduled to continue until January 11, aiming to provide extensive healthcare and welfare support to residents.

The Sebaashray camps will operate on designated days across different wards within the North Dum Dum Assembly, mirroring the model of service camps previously organised in the Diamond Harbour Lok Sabha constituency. The initiative is designed to cater to a wide spectrum of public needs, combining medical

consultations, diagnostic tests, and free distribution of essential medicines. Residents attending the camp will have access to specialist medical advice, a variety of free health tests, and referral services for advanced care where necessary. Medicines for common ailments will also be made available on-site, ensuring immediate relief for those in need. Officials overseeing the program have highlighted that the camp is expected to benefit a significant number of people across the assembly area, reinforcing the government's commitment to accessible healthcare and community welfare. The initiative reflects a continued emphasis on preventive and primary healthcare, particularly in urban and semi-urban constituencies where timely medical support can significantly impact public well-being.

BANGLADESH tightens security amid rising ISLAMIST rampage

From PG 1

many hope will help the Muslim-majority nation of 175 million people recover from nearly two years of instability and reclaim its position as a regional success story. Rights groups condemn killing, attacks on media But frequent bouts of violent protests and political wrangling among disparate groups including Islamist hardliners have punctured the national sense of euphoria that arose after Hasina was ousted in August 2024.

It has also exposed the limitations of the interim government of Nobel Peace Prize winner Yunus, analysts say, raising questions over his grip on governance in the world's largest apparel producer after China. Yunus's government, which declared Saturday a day of state mourning for Hadi, urged citizens to resist "mob violence by fringe elements", warning that turmoil threatens Bangladesh's fragile democratic transition. Human Rights Watch called Hadi's killing a "terrible act" and urged the government to act urgently to halt the vio-

lence that has gripped the country since Hasina's ouster. The group also condemned the attacks on media as an assault on free expression. Bangladesh ranks 149th of 180 countries in the World Press Freedom Index. Rights groups warn that continued attacks on journalists and activists could further shrink civic space ahead of the election. Amnesty International urged prompt, independent investigations into Hadi's killing and the subsequent violence, including the burning of newspaper offices and harassment of journalists. Demonstrations continued in the Shahbagh area of the capital, where crowds demanded justice for Hadi and accountability for the attacks. A mob stormed the Dhaka office of Udichi Shilpigosthi, Bangladesh's premier progressive cultural organisation. The violence has spread beyond the capital. In Chittagong, protesters attacked the Indian Assistant High Commission, reflecting growing anti-India sentiment since Hasina fled to New Delhi after her ouster.

HINDU lynching in B'Desh: INDIA formally reacts by saying it a 'HORRENDOUS ACT'

From PG 1

Commission as violent, calling such claims "misleading propaganda". MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said that only around 20 to 25 youths had gathered outside the mission on December 20 to protest against the killing of Das and to demand protection for minorities in Bangladesh. "There was no attempt to breach the fence or create a security situation at any time," Jaiswal said, adding that the police deployed at the spot dispersed the group within minutes. He noted that visual evidence of the protest was publicly available and reaffirmed India's commitment to ensuring the safety and security of all foreign missions in accordance with the Vienna Convention. The MEA said India remains in constant touch with the Bangladesh authorities as unrest spreads across the country.

"Our officials have conveyed our strong concerns at the attacks on minorities and have urged that the perpetrators of the barbaric killing of Das be brought to justice," the statement said. Security was heightened outside the Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi as violence escalated in several parts of Bangladesh following the death of student activist Sharif Osman Hadi. Hadi, a spokesperson of Inqilab Mancha, died after sustaining injuries in an assassination attempt in Dhaka, according to an official statement issued by Singapore's foreign ministry. His death triggered widespread protests in Dhaka and other cities, with interim leader Muhammad Yunus promising justice and "no leniency" for those involved.

Name Change I, Tanima Rani Bhadra (Old Name) W/O Ashit Kumar Bhadra Residing at Nungi Bazar (Chakhandul) P.O. - Batanagar, P.S. - Maheshwala, District - South 24 Parganas, Pin - 700140, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Sabiha Anjum (new name) as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata, vide an affidavit No. 4352, dated 30/04/2024. Saita Parveen (old name) and Sabiha Anjum (new name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Saita Parveen (old name) daughter of Ekhaloo Ullah, residing at 14/H/2, Bibi Bagan Lane, Tangra, Kolkata - 700015, West Bengal, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Sabiha Anjum (new name) as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata, vide an affidavit No. 4352, dated 30/04/2024. Saita Parveen (old name) and Sabiha Anjum (new name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, ETHAN LI HAO YAP (old name) son of Mr. Chi Sui Yip and Mrs. Kathaline Yip, residing at HA-321, Sector-III, Salt Lake City, Bidhannagar (South), District- North 24 Parganas, Pin- 700097, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as LI HAO YAP (new name), as declared before the Ld. 1st Class Judicial Magistrate at Calcutta, vide an affidavit No. 872, dated 12/12/2025. LI HAO YAP (new name) and ETHAN LI HAO YAP (old name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Maska Rahaman Mondal (old name), W/O Md. Nazibur Rahaman Mondal, of Dist- Vill- Neora, P.O.- Bhabha, P.S.- Basirhat, Dist- 24 Parganas (n), pin 743422 WB.I also declared my name has been recorded in my spouse passport (no N 4875853) as Maska Rahaman Mondal, My name also recorded in my old passport (no K 6847918). Voter, Aadhar, Ration & Pan card as Maska Rahaman Mondal, W/O Md. Nazibur Rahaman Mondal/ Nazir Rahaman Mondal (English spelling) also my name recorded in my marriage certificate as Miss Maska khatun, Shall henceforth be known Maska Bibi, Maska Rahaman Mondal, Miss Maska khatun, W/O Nazibur Rahaman Mondal, Md Nazibur Rahaman Mondal & Nazir Rahaman Mondal as declared before the affidavit first class Executive Magistrate in Barasat court, 24 Parganas (n)WB, Dt on 17/11/2025 both are same and one identical person in eye of law .

Name Change I, Mohd. Ashraf (old name) son of Late Md. Nazir Ahmed, residing 14/C, Bibi Bagan Lane, Tangra, Kolkata - 700015, West Bengal, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Ashraf Ahmed Abbasi (new name) as sworn before the Ld. 1st Class Judicial Magistrate at Sealdah vide affidavit No. 4352 dated 30/04/2024. Mohd. Ashraf (old name) and Ashraf Ahmed Abbasi (new name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, CHI SUI YAP, son of Late Shih Yen Yue residing at HA-321, Sector-III, Salt Lake City, Bidhannagar, P.O. - Purbachal, P.S. - Bidhannagar (South), District- North 24 Parganas, Pin- 700097, West Bengal, India, I have changed my son name "ADRIAN LI FUNG YAP" (son old name) to (I shall henceforth be known as) "LI FUNG YAP" (son new name), as declared before the Ld. 1st Class Judicial Magistrate at Calcutta, vide an affidavit No. 871, dated 12/12/2025. "LI FUNG YAP" both are same and one identical person (my son).

Name Change I, Rajesh Kumar Agarwal (Old Name) S/o Late Mahabir Prasad Gupta Residing at The 64 Earth-point, Block 3, Flat 1A, 4 Kundan Bye Lane, Jindal Tower, Ullah, P.O. - Liluah, District - Howrah, Pin - 711204, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Rajesh Agarwal (New Name) as declared before Ld. Executive Magistrate (1st Class) at Howrah vide affidavit no 20073/25 Dated 09-12-2025. Rajesh Kumar Agarwal (Old Name) and Rajesh Agarwal (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Pankaj Kr Dey, Pankaj Dey (Old Name) S/o Late Pushpa Ranjan Dey Residing at 3/32A Arabinda Nagar, Regent Park, Regent Park S.O., District - Kolkata, Pin - 700040, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Pankaj Kumar Dey (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata vide affidavit no 19/2025 Dated 19-12-2025. Pankaj Kr Dey, Pankaj Dey (Old Name) and Pankaj Kumar Dey (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Md. Jakir Hossain Gazi & Mohammad Jakir Hossain Gazi (old names) S/o Md Icha Haque Ali Gazi, residing at Vill- Dandirhat, P.O.- Dandirhat, P.S.- Basirhat, Dist.- North 24 Parganas, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Jakir Hossain Gazi (new name), as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata, vide an affidavit dated 19/12/2025. Jakir Hossain Gazi (new name) and Md Jakir Hossain Gazi & Mohammad Jakir Hossain Gazi (old names) all are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Akteri Begum (Old Name) W/O Nesar Ahmed Residing at 7/B, Tiljala Road, Vtc - Gobinda Khatick Road S.O, District - Kolkata, Pin - 700046, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Akteri Begum (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata vide affidavit no 15/2025 Dated 19-12-2025. Akteri Begum (Old Name) and Akteri Begum (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Tahamina Bibi (old name) W/O Jakir Hossain Gazi, residing at Vill- Dandirhat, P.O.- Dandirhat, P.S.- Basirhat, Dist.- North 24 Parganas, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Tahamina Bibi Gazi (new name), as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata, vide an affidavit dated 19/12/2025. Tahamina Bibi Gazi (new name) and Md Jakir Hossain Gazi (old name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, ASLAM (old name) S/o LATE SAFIR MOHAMMAD, residing at H. NO-10/1, S.P. GHATROAD, JAGTADAL, BHATPARA, NORTH 24 PARGANAS, WEST BENGAL, PIN- 743125, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as MD ASLAM ALI (new name), as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata, vide an affidavit dated 19/12/2025. MD ASLAM ALI (new name) and ASLAM (old name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Masuda Bibi Laskar W/O Md Emadul Laskar Resi of - vill- Subarnapur, P.O Chakla, P.S- Deganga, Dist- 24 Parganas (N), Pin- 743424, WB, I also declared my name has been recorded in my spouse Indian valid passport (vide no- N 9194056 issue at Riyadh, Saudi Arabia) name as Masuda Bevi in spite of Masuda Bibi Laskar W/O Md Emadul Laskar. Also my name has been recorded in my all documents such as Aadhar, Voter, Ration & Pan card, as Masuda Bibi Laskar. Shall henceforth be known as Masuda Bevi & Masuda Bibi Laskar W/O Mohammad Emadul Laskar/ Md Emadul Laskar as declared before the affidavit first class Executive Magistrate in Barasat Court, 24 Pgs (n), WB, dated on 16/12/2025 both are same and one identical person in eye of law.

Name Change I, Debosmita Some (Old Name) D/o Debashis Shome Residing at 20A, East Road, Jadavpur University, Vtc - Jadavpur University S.O, District - Kolkata, Pin - 700032, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Debosmita Shome (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata vide affidavit no 18/2025 Dated 19-12-2025. Debosmita Some (Old Name) and Debosmita Shome (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Swakhar Mukherjee (old name) S/o Swapan Mukherjee, residing at VTC- Mathurapur, P.O.- Kholapota, Dist.- North 24 Parganas, Pin- 743428, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Swakhar Mukherjee (new name), as declared before the 1st Class Magistrate at Barasat, vide an affidavit No. 15971, dated 05/10/2021. Swakhar Mukherjee (new name) and Swakhar Mukherjee (old name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Nutan Khemka (Old Name), Son Of Dilip Kumar Khemka, Residing At 40B/2, Kasi Mitra Ghat Street, Bagh Bazar, Kolkata - 700003, West Bengal, India, Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Nutan Kumar Khemka (New Name) As Declared Before The Notary Public At Kolkata On 19/12/2025. Nutan Khemka And Nutan Kumar Khemka Both Are The Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change I, Gouri Shankar (Old Name) S/o Ratan Lal Mundhra Residing at Dulchakra, Bikaner, Rajasthan - 331811, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Gouri Shankar Mundhra (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata vide affidavit no 16/2025 Dated 19-12-2025. Gouri Shankar (Old Name) and Gouri Shankar Mundhra (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Priyanka Sah (old name) D/o Jagdish Shaw, residing at GC-2, Jyngra Rabindrapally Joramandir, Bidhannagar, Pin- 700059, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Priyanka Sah (new name), as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata, vide an affidavit dated 19/12/2025. Priyanka Sah (old name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Manab Kumar Bhattacharya (Old Name) S/o Jagabandhu Bhattacharya Residing at Haripur, District - Purba Medinipur, Pin- 721631, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Manab Bhattacharya (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata vide affidavit no 17/2025 Dated 19-12-2025. Manab Kumar Bhattacharya (Old Name) and Manab Bhattacharya (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Hussain Saifuddin Virpurwala (Old Name) Son Of Saifuddin Virpurwala, Residing At 23n, Dr Ambedkar Sarani, 3rd Floor, Kolkata-700046, West Bengal, Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Husain Virpurwala (New Name) Vide An Affidavit Sworn Before The Notary Public At Kolkata On 18/12/2025. Hussain Saifuddin Virpurwala Old Husain Virpurwala Both Are The Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change I, MD REAJUDDIN S/O- AMIRUDDIN Residing at, Vill - Taleb Maulabhi Para Brohmottor, Post- Choto Sujapur, P.S- Kalichak, Dist- Malda, Pin- 732206, West Bengal, Do hereby declare that I have changed my name from MD RYAJUDDIN (New name) and hence forth I shall be known as (New name) MALEK MAHALDER in all purpose Vide an affidavit Sworn before the notary public at Berhampore Murshidabad On 17 Dec 2025, MALEK MAHALDER and MALEK MAHALDER both are Same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Manab Kumar Bhattacharya (Old Name) S/o Jagabandhu Bhattacharya Residing at Haripur, District - Purba Medinipur, Pin- 721631, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Manab Bhattacharya (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata vide affidavit no 17/2025 Dated 19-12-2025. Manab Kumar Bhattacharya (Old Name) and Manab Bhattacharya (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Faroj (Old Name) S/o Mir Abadat Ali Residing at Vill-Po - Uttar Madhabpur, P.S - Bhangar, District - South 24 Parganas, Pin - 743502, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Mir Faraj (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata vide affidavit Dated 19-12-2025. Faroj (Old Name) and Mir Faraj (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Md REAJUDDIN S/O- AMIRUDDIN Residing at, Vill - Taleb Maulabhi Para Brohmottor, Post- Choto Sujapur, P.S- Kalichak, Dist- Malda, Pin- 732206, West Bengal, Do hereby declare that I have changed my name from MD RYAJUDDIN (New name) and hence forth I shall be known as (New name) MALEK MAHALDER in all purpose Vide an affidavit Sworn before the notary public at Berhampore Murshidabad On 17 Dec 2025, MALEK MAHALDER and MALEK MAHALDER both are Same and one identical person.

Name Change I, SK. FIROJ, Son of Sk. Abu Taher, on behalf of my minor son SEKH JONATHAN, presently residing 14/1, Ramchandrapur (Julpia Road), P.O. R. C. Thakurani, Police Station Haridevpur, Kolkata 700104, District South 24-Parganas, W. B., have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as SEKH JUNAID as declared before the Notary Public, Alipore, W. B. vide Affidavit No. 82 dated 18.12.2025. Sekh Jonath son of Firoj Sekh and Rina Sanpu and SEKH JUNAID son of Sk. Firoj and Rina Sanpu both are same and identical person.

Name Change I, Esha Hak Dhali (Old Name) S/o Late Asraf Dhali Residing at Dakshin Bhandarpur, P.O-P.S - Magrahat, District - South 24 Parganas, Pin - 743502, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Esak Dhali (New Name) as declared before the Ld. Judicial Magistrate (1st Class) at Dh/Harbour, South 24 Parganas vide affidavit no 11864 Dated 24-10-2025. Esha Hak Dhali (Old Name) and Esak Dhali (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Md REAJUDDIN S/O- AMIRUDDIN Residing at, Vill - Taleb Maulabhi Para Brohmottor, Post- Choto Sujapur, P.S- Kalichak, Dist- Malda, Pin- 732206, West Bengal, Do hereby declare that I have changed my name from MD RYAJUDDIN (New name) and hence forth I shall be known as (New name) MALEK MAHALDER in all purpose Vide an affidavit Sworn before the notary public at Berhampore Murshidabad On 17 Dec 2025, MALEK MAHALDER and MALEK MAHALDER both are Same and one identical person.

Name Change I, SK. FIROJ, Son of Sk. Abu Taher, on behalf of my minor daughter SEKH JENIFA, presently residing 14/1, Ramchandrapur (Julpia Road), P.O. R. C. Thakurani, Police Station Haridevpur, Kolkata 700104, District South 24-Parganas, W. B., have changed her name and shall henceforth be known as SK. ZUNAIRA as declared before the Notary Public, Alipore, W. B. vide Affidavit No. 81 dated 18.12.2025. Sekh Jenifa daughter of Firoz Sekh and Rina Sapui and SK. ZUNAIRA daughter of Sk. Firoj and Rina Sapui both are same and identical person.

Name Change I, Sawan Chowdhury (Old Name) S/o Asif Chowdhury Residing at 984, Netaji Sarani, Madhyabharua, P.O - Nabapally, P.S - Barasat, District - North 24 Parganas, Pin - 700126, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Sowan Chowdhury (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata vide affidavit Dated 19-12-2025. Sawan Chowdhury (Old Name) and Sowan Chowdhury (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Kaifud Hoda Khan (old name) S/o Nasaruddin Khan, residing at Vill - Rajanpura Ke Tola, Rajanpura, Siwan, Rajanpura, Bihar, Pin- 841236, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Md Kaifud Hoda Khan (new name), as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata, vide an affidavit dated 19/12/2025. Md Kaifud Hoda Khan (old name) and Kaifud Hoda Khan (new name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, SK. FIROJ, Son of Sk. Abu Taher, residing 14/1, Ramchandrapur (Julpia Road), P.O. R. C. Thakurani, Police Station Haridevpur, Kolkata 700104, District South 24-Parganas, W. B., in my PAN Card and Aadhar Card has been recorded my name as SK. FIROJ. Son of Sk. Abu Taher, D.O.B. 01.01.1984 but in my PASS PORT my name has been recorded as FIROJ SEKH son of SEKH ABU TAHER, D.O.R. 16.12.1983, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as SK. FIROJ, Son of Sk. Abu Taher, D. O. B. 01.01.1984 as declare before the Notary Public, Alipore, W. B. vide Affidavit No. 80 dated 18.12.2025. Firoj Sekh S/o Sekh Abu Taher D.O.B. 16.12.1983 and Sk. Firoj S/o. Sk. Abu Taher, D. O. B. 01.01.1984 both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Shabana Rafique (Old Name), Wife Of Mohammad Rafique, Residing At 68, Ripon Street, Ak Fazrul Haque Girls' H School, Vtc & Po Park Street, Kolkata-700016, West Bengal, Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Shabana (New Name) Vide An Affidavit Sworn Before The Notary Public At Kolkata On 18/12/2025. Shabana Rafique (Old Name) And Shabana (New Name) Both Are The Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change I, Fahad Iqbal (old name) S/o MD EQBAL, residing at 36B LINTON STREET, P.S. - BENIAPUKUR, KOLKATA 700014, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as MD FAHAD IQBAL (new name), as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata, vide an affidavit dated 19/12/2025. MD FAHAD IQBAL (new name) and Fahad Iqbal (old name) both are same and one identical person.

Smart Engineering For Safer Railways – Eastern Railway Achieves Another Milestone

From Renewal to Reliability: Eastern Railway Advances Infrastructure in the Azimganj-New Farakka Section
MI News Service, Kolkata, 21 Dec.25 : The Engineering Department of Malda Division, Eastern Railway successfully executed the regrading of Bridge No. 336 and the dismantling of an abandoned Road Over Bridge (ROB) on December 20, 2025, in the Azimganj-New Farakka section. These works were carried out through meticulous planning and effective coordination under controlled traffic and power arrangements, thereby enhancing the safety, reliability, and operational efficiency of train services.
The regrading of Bridge No. 336 was undertaken on the Jangipur Road-Sujinpara UP line of the Azimganj-New Farakka section. This critical renewal has significantly improved the structural strength and service life of the bridge, ensuring safer and smoother train operations.



Simultaneously, the dismantling of the abandoned ROB on the Ballalpur-New Farakka UP and Down lines was completed. Removal of the obsolete structure has eliminated potential safety hazards and improved operational flexibility in the area. In addition to these major works, substantial progress was

achieved under shadow block operations. Continuous Track Renewal (Primary) [CTRP] work covering 520 track metres was completed within Basudebpur station limits, along with Thick Web Switch renewals. Plain track tamping was carried out using Continuous Tamping Machine (CSM) and DUO-MATIC machines over 5,650 and 4,350 track metres respectively, while UNIMAT tamping ensured proper track geometry and stability. Ultrasonic Flaw Detection (USFD) testing and rail welding works were also undertaken to enhance rail integrity and overall track reliability.
These achievements reflect the dedication, teamwork, and technical excellence of the Engineering Department of Malda Division. Eastern Railway remains committed to continuous infrastructure upgradation and proactive maintenance to ensure safe, smooth, and punctual train operations for both passenger and freight services.

East Coast Railway Promotee Officers Association (ECoRPOA) Successfully Organizes Annual Picnic at Konark

MI News Service, Kolkata, 21 Dec.25 : The East Coast Railway Promotee Officers Association (ECoRPOA) today successfully concluded its Annual Picnic at Coco Resort, near the iconic Konark Sun Temple and Chandrabhaga Beach in Odisha.
A large number of members, along with their families, participated in the day-long event, which featured a visit to the Konark Sun Temple, beach time, engaging recreational activities, and a sumptuous lunch. The in-house programme was meticulously arranged, fostering camaraderie and relaxation among the railway officers' community.
President Sri R.R. Mishra and General Secretary Sri S.K. Sahoo expressed heartfelt gratitude to all participants for their enthusiastic involvement.



The association extended special thanks to Sri Abhaya Behera, Secretary to AGM, and Sri N.R. Mohanty, Sr. PRO of East Coast Railway, for their invaluable support in ensuring the smooth and successful conduct of the programme.

Diversion Of Two Express Trains For Maintenance Work

MI News Service, Kolkata, 21 Dec.25 : Due to feeder wiring works for all line between Jaugram & Palla Road stations in Howrah Division, 90 minutes Traffic & Power block has been planned for 02 days on 23.12.2025 & 24.12.2025. Consequently, 12370 Dehradun-Howrah Kumbh Express will be diverted via Bardhaman - Bandel on 23.12.2025 & 24.12.2025 and 15272 Muzaffarpur - Howrah Jansadharan Express will be diverted via Bardhaman - Bandel on 24.12.2025.

Law College gang-rape trial to begin last wk of Dec

MI News Service, Kolkata: The trial in the alleged gang-rape of a law student inside South Calcutta Law College is likely to start in the last week of December.
The Alipore court, where the case is being heard, ordered the commencement of framing charges against Monojit Mishra, Pramit Mukherjee, Zaib Ahmed and Pinaki Banerjee on December 26, sources said.

Railway rationalises fare

Railway has rationalised fare structure w.e.f. 26.12.2025 as follows:
● No Increase in Fare in Suburban and Monthly Season Ticket
● No increase up to 215 Km in Ordinary Class
● Ordinary Class more than 215 km - 1 paise per km
● Mail/express Non AC-2 paise per km
● AC class 2 paise per km
MI News Service, New Delhi, 21 Dec.25 : Railways will earn about 600 crore rupees this year as a result of this rationalisation.
For a 500 km journey

Higher cargo loading and a small amount of passenger fare rationalisation.

Due to these efforts on safety and improved operations, railways have been able to substantially improve safety. India has become the second largest cargo carrying railway in the world.
The recent successful mobilisation of more than 12,000 trains during festival season is also an example of improved operational efficiency.
Railways will continue to strive for more efficiency and containing cost to meet its social goals.

Lost Mobile Recovered And Returned To Its Owner

MI News Service, Kolkata, 21 Dec.25 : After a while a passenger came to the Station Master's office of Netaji Bhawan Metro station and claimed the ownership of the mobile phone. After proper verification and fulfilling all official formalities, the phone was handed over to her. She expressed her heartfelt gratitude to Metro Railway authorities for helping her to get back her lost phone.

CU prepares convocation after 5 yrs

MI News Service, Kolkata: Calcutta University (CU) preparing to hold its convocation after a gap of five years, with the ceremony likely to be organised in late February or early March, university officials said.
Around 1,200 PhD scholars are expected to be formally conferred degrees at the convocation, while about 150 students are likely to receive gold medals. The university last held a convocation in 2020. Since then, the event was not held due to the pandemic and administrative transitions. In October last year, the university held a medal and PhD award ceremony at its Centenary Auditorium, where 536 PhD degree certificates were conferred on recipients who completed their PhD between December 31, 2022, and December 31, 2023, and 235 gold medals were awarded. Registrar Debashis Das said PhD scholars who completed their degrees during the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years would be awarded degrees at the proposed convocation and that preparation of certificates was underway.

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Name Change I, Esha Hak Dhali (Old Name) S/o Late Asraf Dhali Residing at Dakshin Bhandarpur, P.O-P.S - Magrahat, District - South 24 Parganas, Pin - 743502, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Esak Dhali (New Name) as declared before the Ld. Judicial Magistrate (1st Class) at Dh/Harbour, South 24 Parganas vide affidavit no 11864 Dated 24-10-2025. Esha Hak Dhali (Old Name) and Esak Dhali (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change I, Md REAJUDDIN S/O- AMIRUDDIN Residing at, Vill - Taleb Maulabhi Para Brohmottor, Post- Choto Sujapur, P.S- Kalichak, Dist- Malda, Pin- 732206, West Bengal, Do hereby declare that I have changed my name from MD RYAJUDDIN (New name) and hence forth I shall be known as (New name) MALEK MAHALDER in all purpose Vide an affidavit Sworn before the notary public at Berhampore Murshidabad On 17 Dec 2025, MALEK MAHALDER and MALEK MAHALDER both are Same and one identical person.

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Woman shooter alleges rape at Faridabad hotel

MI News Service, Faridabad: A 23-year-old woman shooter has alleged that she was raped at a hotel in Faridabad while staying in the city for a shooting competition, leading to the arrest of three people — including her friend — police said. The woman managed to lock the accused inside a hotel room after the alleged assault on Wednesday evening and alerted the police, officials said. A case was registered on her complaint at the Sarai Khawaja police station, following which the accused — Satendra, Gaurav and the shooter's female friend — were arrested from the hotel premises, police said.

According to investigators, the woman had arrived in Faridabad on Tuesday along with her friend to participate in a competition. On Wednesday evening, after the event concluded, her friend contacted Gaurav, an acquaintance who lives in Faridabad, requesting him to drop her at a metro station. Gaurav arrived with his friend Satendra, and the four decided to stay back in the city and leave the next day, police said. They later booked two rooms at a hotel, where they had a party in one of the rooms, police added. The complainant alleged that around 9 pm, when her friend went downstairs with Gaurav, Satendra — who was present in the room — raped her. She told police that when her friend returned, she informed another acquaintance about the incident, locked the accused inside the room and approached the police. A police team reached the hotel and arrested the three accused. They were produced before a city court and sent to judicial custody, Station House Officer Rakesh Kumar said.

J&K: Bus accident injures 35 students



MI News Service, Srinagar: Over 35 students were injured when a bus they were travelling in turned turtle while returning from a picnic in Jammu on late Saturday evening, officials said. The incident took place at Ring Road near Ratnal in the Bishnah area. The condition of all the injured students was stated to be stable, the officials said. The bus was carrying 40 students and 10 members of the teaching staff from a school in the Pragwal border area. They were returning after a day-long picnic in Samba when the driver lost control of the vehicle after hitting a divider, causing it to overturn, they said. Rescue teams rushed to the spot immediately after the accident and shifted the injured students to hospital, the officials said.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the foundation stone laying of Rs 10,601-crore brownfield ammonia-urea plant of Assam Valley Fertilizer and Chemical Company Ltd (AVFCL), at Namrup, in Dibrugarh district. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and others were present at the occasion.

MODI'S VISION: ICAI conceives transformative reforms

MI News Service, New Delhi: Aligning with the Prime Minister's vision of strengthening Indian firms and showcasing India's professional excellence on the global stage, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has announced a landmark set of reforms. ICAI President CA. Charanjit Singh Nanda along with Vice-President CA. Prasanna Kumar D briefed the media on the transformative decisions taken by the 447th Council. A major highlight of the reforms is the Council's approval of key amendments to the Advertisement Guidelines through the

revised Code of Ethics. This long-awaited move opens new possibilities for Indian CA firms, especially emerging and mid-sized practices, to enhance visibility, expand their reach and compete confidently at a global level.

The significant step toward building Big Indian Firms, the Council has approved the ICAI (Global Networking) Guidelines, 2025, a milestone that unlocks a new era of global partnerships for Indian CA firms. These guidelines provide a structured, transparent and compliant framework for Indian CA firms, domestic networks and ICAI-

registered consultancy companies to forge international affiliations and access opportunities across global markets. They further empower domestic networks to collaborate with overseas entities across jurisdictions. The objective is clear: create a level playing field where small and medium Indian CA firms can participate meaningfully in global collaborations. With this framework, Indian firms gain access to shared global knowledge, specialised expertise, advanced tools and technology, and the collective brand strength of international networks.

UDIN crosses historic 10-cr milestone

MI News Service, New Delhi: Informing the media of a major achievement, the President announced that Unique Document Identification Numbers (UDINs) crossed the landmark figure of 10 crore during the reporting year—yet another significant milestone for the Institute. This 10-crore UDIN milestone embodies ICAI's vision of a future where trust, transparency, and technology converge to elevate India's standing as a global financial leader. It reflects the profession's collective resolve to uphold integrity and strengthen public confidence in the fi-

ancial ecosystem.

The highlight of the press conference was The World Forum of Accountants (WFOA) 2.0, scheduled from January 30 to February 1, 2026, at the India Expo Centre, Greater Noida. The grand event, under the theme "Nation Building to Global Collaboration: Strengthening Trust, Enabling Growth," is expected to bring together more than 20,000 delegates from across 40 countries. This global platform will strengthen ICAI's mission to encourage global partnerships and showcase India's leadership role in the account-

ancy world.

As India advances with renewed purpose, Chartered Accountants continue to anchor the nation's economic momentum with integrity, insight, and innovation. ICAI's initiatives—strengthened standards, expanded global mobility, and future-ready reforms—reinforce its role as a trusted architect of financial resilience. The collective resolve of professionals, industry, and policymakers will define India's next leap, positioning the country as a global force in finance, governance, and sustainable development.



Bollywood Actors Kartik Aaryan and Ananya Panday arrive at Indira Gandhi International Airport, ahead of the launch of their film 'Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera Tu Meri', in New Delhi.

ED raids 13 sites in illegal immigration case

MI News Service, New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate raided 13 locations in Punjab, Haryana and Delhi as part of a money-laundering probe in connection with the illegal immigration racket in which 330 Indians were deported from the US in military cargo planes early this year. "The racket involved illegally transporting Indians to the US through the dunki route. A probe revealed that the deported Indians sent to the US were facilitated by a complex web of persons involved in the chain, including travel agents, middlemen, overseas associates, hawala operators and other logistics arrangement providers," said an ED official. In February, a US military aircraft carrying 330 Indians, mostly from Haryana, Punjab and Gujarat, were deported by the Donald Trump government as part of a crackdown against illegal immigrants. Videos shared by the US border patrol showed the deportees in handcuffs and their legs in chains. The ED's money-laundering case stems from 19 FIRs registered by the Punjab and Haryana police against travel agents



and middlemen who allegedly cheated Indians willing to enter the US illegally. These deportees had attempted to cross the US-Mexico border illegally between January 23 and 28, only to be apprehended by US border security patrols and sent to detention centres. Sources said that based on evidence gathered during searches in February and July, the names of "second and third layer" persons involved in human trafficking came to light. "The names of sev-

eral travel firms surfaced in the investigation, following which raids were conducted on Thursday at their offices in Haryana, Punjab and Delhi," an ED official said. Earlier, the agency had recorded the statements of the deportees, which led it to the suspects who were being raided. The deportees told investigators that each of them paid between ₹45 lakh and ₹55 lakh to travel agents whom they had never met in person but were connected to through local contacts.

They furnished all documents to the sleuths, including bank account details of the travel agents to whom payments were made.

Recently, the ED provisionally attached movable and immovable properties worth ₹5.41 crore, equivalent to the proceeds of crime generated by agents — Shubham Sharma, Jagjit Singh and Surmukh Singh — who were involved in the trafficking racket. The properties include agricultural land, residential premises, business premises and bank accounts in the names of such agents and their family members. In July, the offices and houses of suspects and agents in 11 cities, including Amritsar, Sangrur, Patiala and Moga in Punjab and Ambala, Kurukshetra and Karnal in Haryana, were raided, during which bogus immigration and visa stamps were seized. In a separate case, the ED is probing the alleged involvement of some Canadian colleges and several Indian entities, mostly based in Gujarat, in a money-laundering case involving the trafficking of Indians into the US from the Canada border, sources said.

MP suspends blood bank staff as 6 thalassemia children test HIV +

MI News Service, Bhopal: The Madhya Pradesh government has suspended the in-charge of a blood bank and two laboratory technicians at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Government Hospital in Satna district after six children undergoing thalassemia treatment tested HIV positive following suspected contaminated blood transfusions, a senior official said. The action was taken based on the preliminary report of a committee constituted by the state's Public Health and Family Welfare Department on December 16 to probe the transfusion of infected blood in Satna.

Following the report, blood bank in-charge Dr Devendra Patel and lab technicians Ram Bhai Tripathi and Nandlal Pandey have been suspended, the official said. A show-cause notice has also been issued to Manoj Shukla, former civil surgeon of the district hospital, directing him to submit a written explanation. According to the official, Shukla has been warned of strict department-

al action if his reply is not satisfactory. The six children, aged between 12 and 15, were found to be HIV positive after receiving blood transfusions at district hospitals in Satna, Jabalpur and elsewhere. The cases came to light between January and May this year, and all the children are being treated as per HIV protocols. Officials had earlier said that the parents of one of the children were also found to be infected. In a related development, three people were arrested for their alleged involvement in selling blood outside the government hospital in Satna.

Officials said the racket was busted using a decoy customer and investigations were underway to ascertain whether any blood bank employee was involved. "There were frequent complaints of people offering to sell blood outside the hospital. Following this, a person was sent as a buyer for verification," sub-divisional magistrate Rahul Siladia told PTI Videos. "A man offered him a unit of blood for

Rs 4,500 and was arrested during the actual transaction," he said, adding that two more people were arrested based on his questioning. Police also shot a video of the transaction.

A police officer identified the accused as Ranjeet Sahu, Mohammad Kaif and Anil Gupta, and said investigations were on to determine if any hospital blood bank staff had links to the illegal trade. The state government has constituted a six-member inquiry committee to investigate how the children contracted HIV. Tarun Rathi, Commissioner of the Public Health and Medical Education Department, issued the order announcing the probe team and directed it to submit a detailed report within seven days. Satna Collector Satish Kumar S said, "Children suffering from thalassemia were receiving regular blood transfusions. Six of them were found to be HIV positive during routine testing." He added that the parents of one of the children were also found to be HIV positive.

Chinese GPS on seagull: Security agencies begin probe

MI News Service, Bengaluru: Security agencies and forest officials have launched an inquiry after a Chinese-made GPS tracking device was found attached to a migratory seagull along the Karwar coastline in Karnataka's Uttara Kannada district, close to a sensitive naval zone. Authorities, however, said preliminary findings indicate the device was likely part of a scientific research project rather than an espionage attempt.

The incident came to light when local residents and the Coastal Marine Police Cell separately noticed an unusually tagged seagull resting near Rabindranath Tagore Beach and the Thimmakka Garden area along the Karwar coast earlier this week. Finding the device suspicious, they alerted the Marine Wing of the Forest Department. Forest officials who reached the spot safely captured the injured bird and examined the tracker, which included an electronic unit fitted with a small solar panel. The device also carried an email address with a message requesting that anyone who found the bird contact the provided ID. Police said the GPS tracker bore markings and an email address linked to the Research Centre for Eco-Environmental Sciences under the Chinese Academy of Sciences, indicating its use for academic and ecological studies. "The tracker appears to have been fitted to study the movement, feeding patterns and migration routes of seagulls. At this stage, there is no evidence to suggest any espionage activity," the police said, while adding that authorities are exercising caution given the strategic importance of the coastal region. Uttara Kannada Superintendent of Police Deepan MN said, "Several angles are being examined, including whether the bird was part of a scientific research project to study migratory patterns." The seagull has been shifted to the Marine Forest Division office for observation, and officials are attempting to formally contact the concerned research institution to ascertain details of the study, including its origin, timeline and scope. Authorities are also analysing the device's data transmission capabilities. This is not the first such incident in the region. In November last year, a war eagle fitted with a tracking device was spotted within the limits of Baithkol port in Karwar, a case that was later found to be linked to wildlife research.

However, given the proximity of the INS Kadamba naval base—one of the Indian Navy's most strategic installations—the discovery has once again raised concerns about the possibility of sensitive data exposure under the guise of research. "While wildlife tracking using GPS devices is a globally accepted scientific practice, the location where the bird was found makes it imperative for multiple agencies to verify all aspects," the police said. Officials said further action will depend on responses received from the research body and the outcome of the technical analysis.

MI News Service, New Delhi: Petrol dealers' body DPDA has flagged several challenges in implementing the Delhi government's order barring fuel sell to vehicles without valid Emission Check Certificates (ECC).

Vehicles without a valid pollution under control certificate (PUC) will not be provided fuel at petrol pumps in the national capital from Thursday, as the Delhi government's stringent "no PUC, no fuel" rule and a ban on the entry of all private non-Delhi vehicles below BS VI standards come into effect. Delhi has already put in place automatic number plate recognition cameras at petrol pumps, which will identify vehicles without valid PUC certificates. The Delhi Petrol Dealers' Association (DPDA), in a representation to environment minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa, said it extends "whole-hearted support" to all measures taken by the Delhi government aimed at combatting the severe air pollution.

However, it said that while "extraordinary steps are indeed necessary", the effective enforcement of the directive remains "an extremely difficult and arduous task" unless key concerns are addressed. The association said Delhi's residents are suffering more from transboundary pollution than from sources within the city limits and that "measures confined solely to the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi are unlikely to yield the desired results unless uniformly implemented across the entire National Capital Region (NCR). It pointed out that refusal of an essential commodity by any retail outlet is covered under Section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and the Motor Spirit and High Speed Diesel (Regulation of Supply, Distribution and Prevention of Malpractices) Order, 1998, and said the "refusal of sale has to be decriminalised by the relevant authority" for petrol pumps to effectively carry out the directive. DPDA said that petrol pumps are not an enforcement agency, and the implementation of the "No PUC, No Fuel" rule "has to be done by the competent authorities vested with statutory powers". It added that petrol pump staff are "never looked upon by the customers as an enforcing authority" and that denial of fuel could lead to "law-and-order disturbances". The association also sought that "penal actions against petrol pump dealers should be avoided", stating they are "helping the government in implementing the order."

Centre retains funding power in Higher Edu Law

MI News Service, New Delhi: The government acknowledged that the proposed law on the regulatory architecture for education, which gives the education ministry power to fund institutions, was a departure from its own National Education Policy (NEP) that recommended the creation of a separate body for the purpose. The NEP 2020 had proposed a higher education commission with four verticals, including a Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC).

However, the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan (VBSA) Bill, introduced in the Lok Sabha, proposes three councils to take care of regulation, accreditation and standards setting while entrusting the education ministry with the power to handle disbursement of grants to institutions. Defending the proposed bill, a government official said the idea of one single funding agency under the NEP was not logical anymore, given multiple sources of funding. The official referred to the setting up of the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) in 2023 for funding scientific and technical research in institutions, although the HEGC was also supposed to fund research. "The NEP says there should be a single funding agency. But a separate research funding agency has already been set up. A lot of corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds are also coming to institutions. Funding has become a wide area, necessitating a change in the funding arrangement," the official said. The Federation of Central Universities Teachers' Association opposed the provision, saying it would lead to education ministry interference in the functioning of higher educational institutions.

Neck muscle inflammation primary cause of headache: Study

CHICAGO [US] : Researchers disclosed genuine proof of how the neck muscles are implicated in primary headaches in a study presented at the annual meeting of the Radiological Society of North America (RSNA). The findings could lead to improved treatments.

The distinct underlying causes of primary headaches are still not fully understood. The most common primary headaches are tension-type headaches and migraines.

"Our imaging approach provides first objective evidence for the very frequent involvement of the neck muscles in primary headaches, such as neck pain in migraine or tension-type headache, using the ability to quantify subtle inflammation within muscles," said Nico Sollmann, M.D., Ph.D., resident in the Department of Diagnostic and Interventional Radiology at University Hospital Ulm, and the Department of Diagnostic and Interventional Neuroradiology at University Hospital Rechts der Isar in Munich, Germany.

Tension-type headaches affect two out of every three adults in the U.S. People with tension-type headaches often feel a tightening in the head and mild to moderate dull pain on both sides of the head. While these headaches are typically associated with stress and muscle tension, their exact origin is not fully understood.

Migraines are characterized by a severe throbbing pain. Migraines generally occur on one side of the head, or the pain is worse on one side. Migraines may also cause nausea, weakness and light sensitivity. According to the American Migraine Foundation, over 37 million



people in the U.S. are affected by migraine, and up to 148 million people worldwide suffer from chronic migraine. Neck pain is commonly associated with primary headaches. However, no objective biomarkers exist for myofascial involvement. Myofascial pain is associated with inflammation or irritation of muscle or of the connective tissue, known as fascia, that surrounds the muscle. For the study, Dr. Sollmann and colleagues aimed to investigate the involvement of the trapezius muscles in primary headache disorders by quantitative magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and to explore associations between muscle T2 values and headache

and neck pain frequency. The prospective study included 50 participants, mostly women, ranging in age from 20 to 31 years old. Of the study group, 16 had tension-type headache, and 12 had tension-type headache plus migraine episodes. The groups were matched with 22 healthy controls.

All participants underwent 3D turbo spin-echo MRI. The bilateral trapezius muscles were manually segmented, followed by muscle T2 extraction. Associations between muscle T2 values and the presence of neck pain, number of days with headache, and number of myofascial trigger points as determined by manual palpa-

tion of the trapezius muscles were analyzed (adjusting for age, sex and body mass index).

The tension-type headache plus migraine group demonstrated the highest muscle T2 values. Muscle T2 was significantly associated with the number of headache days and the presence of neck pain. The increased muscle T2 values could be interpreted as a surrogate of inflammation arising from the nervous system and increased sensitivity of nerve fibers within myofascial tissues.

"The quantified inflammatory changes of neck muscles significantly correlate with the number of days lived with headache and the presence of subjectively perceived neck pain," Dr. Sollmann said. "Those changes allow us to differentiate between healthy individuals and patients suffering from primary headaches."

Muscle T2 mapping could be used to stratify patients with primary headaches and to track potential treatment effects for monitoring.

"Our findings support the role of neck muscles in the pathophysiology of primary headaches," Dr. Sollmann said. "Therefore, treatments that target the neck muscles could lead to a simultaneous relief of neck pain, as well as headache."

Dr. Sollmann pointed out that non-invasive treatment options that directly target the site of pain in the neck muscles could be highly effective and safer than systemic drugs.

"Our imaging approach with delivery of an objective biomarker could facilitate therapy monitoring and patient selection for certain treatments in the near future," he added.

Eating within 10-hour window is good for health, finds study



LONDON [UK] : According to new findings from the largest UK community research project, eating within a 10-hour window improves mood, energy, and hunger.

The outcomes of the trial were reported at the European Nutrition Conference by researchers from King's College London.

Intermittent fasting (IF), or restricting your food consumption to a set time frame, is a popular approach for losing weight. You limit your daily eating schedule to 10 hours and fast for the remaining 14 hours with a ten-hour window. For example, if you start eating at 9 a.m., you must finish by 7 p.m.

Those who maintained a regular eating window outperformed those who altered their eating habits.

Despite the fact, a certain intermittent fasting advocates frequently promote restrictive eating windows as short as six hours, data presented in the abstract suggest that eating within a less restrictive window of ten hours has beneficial health effects such as changes in mood, energy, and appetite.

Dr Sarah Berry from King's College London and chief scientist at ZOE said, "This is the largest study outside of a tightly controlled clinic to show that intermittent fasting can improve your health in a real-world setting. What's really exciting is that the findings show that you don't have to be very restrictive to see positive results. A ten-hour eating window, which was manageable for most people, improved mood, energy levels and hunger. We found for the first time that those who practised time-restricted eating, but were not consistent day to day, did not have the same positive health effects as those who were dedicated every day."

37,545 people on the ZOE Health app completed the core intervention period of three weeks. Participants were asked to eat as normal for the first week and then a ten-hour eating window for two weeks.

More than 36,231 participants opted for additional weeks and 27,371 users were classified as highly engaged. Highly engaged participants were 78 per cent female, with a mean age of 60 and a BMI of 25.6.

Participants with a longer eating window before the intervention saw an even greater benefit to their health.

Kate Bermingham PhD, from King's College London and ZOE, said, "This study adds to the growing body of evidence showing the importance of how you eat. The health impact of food is not just what you eat but the time at which you choose to consume your meals, and eating window is an important dietary behaviour that can be beneficial for health. Findings show that we don't need to be eating all the time. Many people will feel satiated and even lose weight if they restrict their food to a ten-hour window."

Protein present in brain associated with frontotemporal dementia: Study



INDIANAPOLIS [US] : A protein present in the brains of patients suffering from frontotemporal dementia (FTD) has been identified by an international team of researchers, which includes specialists from Indiana University School of Medicine. This finding opens up a new target for possible treatments for FTD.

The National Institutes of Health state that injury to neurons in the brain's frontal and temporal lobes causes frontal lobe dementia (FTD). Symptoms of this kind of dementia usually appear in people between the ages of 25 and 65. These symptoms can include odd behaviours, emotional issues.

Neurodegenerative disorders, including dementias and Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), occur when specific proteins form amyloid filaments in the nerve cells of the brain and spinal cord. The multidisciplinary team of researchers—including members from the Medical Research Council (MRC) Laboratory of Molecular Biology, the IU School of Medicine and the University College London Queen Square Institute of Neurology—found that in cases of FTD, a protein called TAF15 forms these amyloid filaments in the cells of the brain and the spinal cord. On December 6, they published their findings in Nature.

Cryo-EM structure of TAF15 amyloid filaments as discovered in patients with frontotemporal dementia

Bernardino Ghetti, MD is a Distinguished Professor at the IU School of Medicine and has been studying neurodegenerative dementias for 50 years. As a lead neuropathologist on the project, Ghetti and his team studied the protein aggregates from brains donated by four people who had frontotemporal dementia and motor weakness. Together with their colleagues in the UK, IU researchers used neuropathological and molecular techniques and cutting-edge cryo-electron microscopy (cryo-EM) at atomic resolution to discover the presence of the amyloid filaments made of TAF15 protein in multiple brain areas. However it is important to note that TAF15 amyloid affects also nerve cells of the motor system.

"This discovery represents an important breakthrough that recognizes TAF15 as a potential target for the development of diagnostic and therapeutic strategies toward a lesser-known form of frontotemporal lobar degeneration associated with frontotemporal dementia," Ghetti said.

Study finds how surgery beneficial is for some children with mild sleep-disordered breathing

NEW YORK [US] : Researchers discovered that surgical removal of the tonsils and adenoids in children with snoring and minor breathing issues during sleep seemed to enhance their sleep, quality of life, and blood pressure a year after surgery.

The study was done to examine the effects of adenotonsillectomy on children with moderate sleep-disordered breathing (SDB). Adenotonsillectomy is one of the most common surgical operations performed on children, and moderate SDB affects a high number of these individuals.

The findings were reported in the American Medical Association Journal.

"Our data suggest that for children with no symptoms other than snoring, it's reasonable to monitor them over time without proceeding to surgery," said study leader Susan Redline, M.D., M.P.H., of Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School, both in Boston. "However, for children who are having issues with disturbed sleep, daytime sleepiness, and behavioral problems, our data suggest that surgery may be a very reasonable option."

SDB refers to breathing disturbances during sleep that can range from loud snoring to sleep apnea. SDB affects 6-17% of typically developing children in the United States. Some research indicates that if left untreated, the condition may increase the risk



for behavioral problems, reduced quality of life, and cardiovascular diseases, including heart disease and high blood pressure. Researchers and parents are showing increasing interest in how sleep problems such as sleep apnea might also affect brain development, cognition, and academic performance.

Adenotonsillectomy, or removal of enlarged tonsils and adenoids, is a standard treatment for children with moderate to severe SDB and is aimed at reducing snoring and improving breathing in those with the condition. However, data are unclear whether the surgery is beneficial for children with mild forms of SDB.

The Pediatric Adenotonsillectomy Trial for Snoring (PATIS) was a randomized clinical trial that involved 459 children and adolescents with mild SDB who were enrolled at seven aca-

demie sleep centers in the United States between 2016 to 2021. The participants were ages 3 to 12, racially diverse, and followed for a year. The study did not include children with moderate to severe SDB.

During the trial, half the participants received an adenotonsillectomy and the other half received supportive care without surgery, which included standardized education on healthy sleep and lifestyle and referral for untreated allergies or asthma. Researchers then evaluated neurodevelopmental, behavioral, health, and sleep-related outcomes in these groups, using measurements of attention and executive function, which includes a set of cognitive skills that help children manage everyday activities. Sleep outcomes were measured by polysomnography, a standard sleep test that measures breathing, heart

rate, eye movement, and other factors.

At the end of the study period, cognition and attention improved in both groups, but improvement was not significantly greater in the children who were treated with surgery compared to the group who did not receive surgery. However, the secondary results of the study did show several beneficial changes in the surgery group. These included less daytime sleepiness, reduced SDB, less snoring, fewer behavioral problems, better quality of life, and lower blood pressure. The children treated with surgery were also less likely to show disease progression into full-blown sleep apnea, the researchers said.

Researchers plan to explore the long-term impacts of surgery in this population and note the need to develop improved screening tools that better identify which children are most likely to benefit from adenotonsillectomy.

"It is clear that adenotonsillectomy can help some children with mild sleep-disordered breathing. However, it may not be appropriate for everyone," said Marishka Brown, Ph.D., director of the National Center on Sleep Disorder's Research within the NHLBI. "Parents with concern over their children's nighttime breathing should discuss options with their pediatrician to develop a plan of action."

Research shows specific genetic variant can help prevent obesity

WASHINGTON DC [US] : A preclinical study conducted by Weill Cornell Medicine researchers reveals that a certain human genetic variant of a receptor that increases insulin release may help individuals be more resistant to obesity. The researchers revealed that this version operates differently in the cell, which may lead to more effective metabolism.

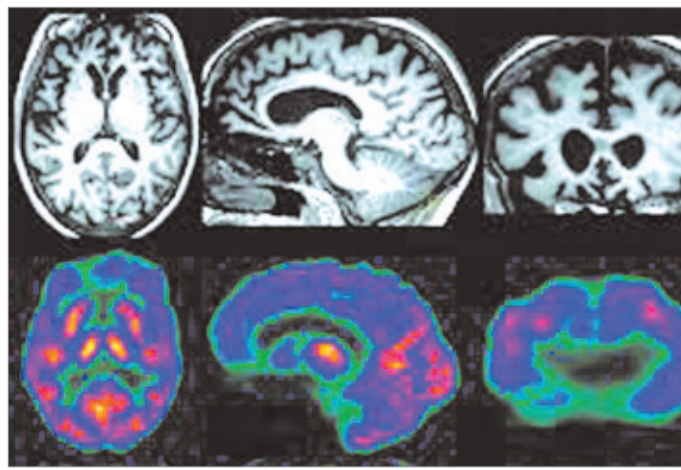
The study, posted online in Molecular Metabolism on Nov. 2, provides new insight into how human genetic variations affect an individual's susceptibility to weight gain. The researchers developed mice with a human genetic variant in the glucose-dependent insulinotropic polypeptide (GIP) receptor associated with leaner body mass index (BMI). They found that the mice were better at processing sugar and staying leaner than mice with a different, more common variant of the receptor. The discovery may point to new potential strategies to treat obesity, which affects more than a 100 million adults in the United States according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Our work demonstrates how basic science research can yield important insights about complex biology," said the study's senior author Dr. Timothy McGraw, a professor of biochemistry in cardiothoracic surgery and in biochemistry

at Weill Cornell Medicine. "These GIP receptors and their behavior at the cellular level profoundly impact metabolism and weight regulation."

Genetic Variants of the GIP Receptor

Genetic variants are differences in DNA sequence that occur naturally between individuals in a given population. Genome-wide association studies, which use statistics to carefully link genetic variants to particular traits, show about 20 percent of people of European descent have one copy of the GIP receptor with the Q354 gene variant and about 5 percent have two copies of the variant. The GIP receptor interacts with a hormone released in response to glucose levels after a meal. "Studies suggest that people with at least one copy this GIP receptor variant have altered metabolism that reduces their risk of developing obesity," said the study's lead author Dr. Lucie Yammine, a post-doctoral associate in biochemistry at Weill Cornell Medicine. To understand how this gene variant may be decreasing the risk of obesity, the team used CRISPR-Cas9 technology to genetically engineer mice with the variant in the gene encoding the GIP receptor, similar to the human version. They found that female mice with the variant were leaner on a typical mouse diet than



"Our work demonstrates how basic science research can yield important insights about complex biology," said the study's senior author Dr. Timothy McGraw, a professor of biochemistry in cardiothoracic surgery and in biochemistry at Weill Cornell Medicine. "These GIP receptors and their behavior at the cellular level profoundly impact me

"We found that a change in one amino acid in the GIP receptor gene affected the whole body in terms of weight," Dr. Yammine said. Mice with the variant were more sensitive to the GIP hormone that triggers the release of insulin which controls blood sugar levels and helps the body convert food into energy.

female litter mates without it. Male mice with the gene variant were about the same weight as litter mates without it while consuming a regular diet, but the gene variant protected them from weight gain

when fed a high-fat diet, which caused obesity in litter mates.

"We found that a change in one amino acid in the GIP receptor gene affected the whole body in terms of weight," Dr. Yammine

said. Mice with the variant were more sensitive to the GIP hormone that triggers the release of insulin which controls blood sugar levels and helps the body convert food into energy. How the Variant May Provide an Advantage Against Obesity

The researchers compared what happened to mouse cells with and without the variant when exposed to glucose or the GIP hormone. Pancreatic cells from mice with the genetic variant produced more insulin in response to both glucose and the GIP hormone, which may explain why they are better at processing glucose.

"What's interesting about these receptors is their location in the cell has a big impact on how they signal and their activity," Dr. McGraw said. He explained that when the GIP hormone binds to the receptor, the receptor moves from the cell surface to inside the cell. When the GIP hormone eventually falls off the receptor, the receptor returns to the cell surface. The team found that the GIP receptor variant stays inside the cell compartment four times longer than the typical receptor. Dr. McGraw suggested that this may allow the receptor to send more messages to the machinery inside cells, which helps in processing sugar more efficiently.

Still, more research is needed

to confirm the effects of this variant on the receptor's behavior. The researchers also want to learn if there are differences in the receptor's behavior in other cell types, like brain cells, which play a crucial role in regulating hunger. Recently, the Food and Drug Administration has approved several weight loss drugs that mimic natural hormones in the body and interact with receptors like GIP, including semaglutide (Wegovy) and tirzepatide (Zepbound). This has increased the interest in studying new ways to target the GIP receptor for obesity.

"Our work suggests that the movement of the receptor from the cell surface to the interior is an important factor in controlling metabolism. Therefore, drugs that could regulate the GIP receptor behavior and location could provide an important new avenue to combat obesity," said Dr. Yammine. In the meantime, Dr. McGraw noted that it is essential to understand how people with different genetic variants in the GIP receptor respond to currently available weight loss medications. "A better appreciation of how different variants of receptors impact metabolism might allow for a precision medicine approach—matching a specific drug to a genetic variant—for weight loss," he said.



Vehicles pass through a snow-covered valley after fresh snowfall on the first day of 'Chillai Kalan', in Gulmarg, Baramulla district, Jammu and Kashmir. 'Chillai Kalan' is a 40-day harsh winter period in Kashmir which begins on December 21 every year and ends on January 31.

Maritime Hostilities Begins Between the United States and Iran

MI NEWS Service, US/Iran: Until the first half of December, there has been a spurt in action in the seas. The US conflict in Venezuela is getting all the more close. There may be a full-fledged war between the two. Russia has thrown its weight behind Venezuela President Nicolas Maduro, towards which US President Donald Trump is 'not at all concerned'. US is already into a massive military buildup aimed to overthrow Maduro and ensue a regime change there. The US prime interests are the oil and gas fields of Venezuela, which ensures Venezuela play a dominant role inside OPEC. Venezuela has the largest oil reserves in the world. US, on December 11, seized a Venezuela oil tanker, what US called a shadow-fleet of tankers, engaged in transporting oil to China, Russia and Iran, informed Reuters 1



took over it several hundred miles from Sri Lanka. US called that Chinese ships were carrying military applications meant to enhance 'Iran's conventional weapons'. But, Iran has topped the US actions on December 13, Iran has seized an oil tanker carrying 6 million liters of diesel! Taken over its 18 crew members in the Gulf of Oman, tells Marineinsight 3. The crew members are from India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Iran has alleged that the vessel was carrying smuggled diesel fuel and had deliberately switched off its navigation systems. Iran has not named the ship's

name and flag as it was operating without active navigation systems.

Iran, Venezuela, Russia and China are all under US sanctions. All the three sell oil at heavily subsidized rates while China remains as one of their biggest buyers of oil. Iran currency has been the worst ever hit, since decades, and only the oil economy has kept it afloat. It is a well known fact that US, as a standard practice, never puts its names on ships engaged in oil/diesel/arms smuggling, likewise Iran and other nations too, as operations are done after data of containers on shipments, is routinely changed,

and it becomes almost impossible to know about ship's origin. Recently in the year 2023, Indonesia had seized one such Iranian ship.

The latest Iran's action has definitely upped the ante as hostilities between US and Iran are age old. Iran has answered US in the same coin. Iran and Russia with China are in the same bloc. All the three are on US radar. US is keenly in support of Ukraine in the war against Russia and Iran is supportive of Russia from the first day on the war since February 2022. US must have been into back door channel negotiations for the release of its ship, but Iran, has proved that it remains a dominant player in the seas. It is noteworthy that Iran supported Yemen went for a war against Israel and had stalled all the ships heading for Israel inside Red sea, all could happen due to Iran's training to Ansar-ul-Lah, group supported by Iran, inside Yemen. If US is to get more bogged-down in this latest imbroglio, it is likely that more fissures are to erupt in the region

Israel kills 5 Palestinians in Gaza, violates ceasefire again



MI News Service, Gaza: Israel military fired across the ceasefire line in the northern Gaza Strip on Friday, December 19, killing five Palestinians, violating the US-brokered ceasefire again, news reports said. "The deaths occurred in the Tuffah neighbourhood east of Gaza City," Rami Mhanna, managing director of Al-Shifa Hospital, told Saudi Gazzette. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said its forces identified "a number of suspicious individuals" west of the Yellow Line — the demarcation separat-

ing Israeli-held areas from the rest of Gaza — and began firing. The incident was being reviewed, the IDF said, added that it "regrets any harm to uninvolved individuals." The Yellow Line was established under the US-brokered ceasefire that took effect in October after two years of Israel's onslaught on Palestine. Despite largely holding for months, the truce has slowed amid mutual accusations of violations. Also on Friday, a US official said Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff planned to host senior offi-

cial from countries mediating the Gaza ceasefire in Florida, in an effort to push negotiations into a far more complex second phase. The first phase began in October, shortly after the two-year anniversary of the Hamas-led attack on Israel that killed about 1,200 people and the subsequent Israeli genocide in Palestinians. All but one of the 251 hostages taken that day have since been released, alive or dead, in exchange for Palestinian prisoners and detainees.

Israel's war in Gaza has killed more than 70,660 Palestinians, roughly half of them women and children, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between civilians and militants but is widely regarded by international observers as maintaining reliable records. While the ceasefire has reduced large-scale fighting, progress toward a second phase remains uncertain.

At least 10 killed in South Africa shooting



MI news service, Johannesburg: At least 10 people were killed and 10 others wounded in a shooting at a township near Johannesburg, South Africa's largest city and economic hub, police said Sunday. "Some victims were randomly shot in the streets by unknown gunmen," local media reported quoting a police statement.

U.S. forces seize 2nd oil tanker off coast of Venezuela



MI News Service, Washington: U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem said Saturday that the U.S. forces seized another oil tanker off the coast of Venezuela earlier in the day. "In a pre-dawn action early this morning on Dec. 20, the US Coast Guard with the support of the Department of War apprehended an oil tanker that was last docked in Venezuela," Noem said on X.

The U.S. military seized an oil tanker off the coast of Venezuela on Dec. 10, a move the Venezuelan government condemned as "a blatant theft and an act of international piracy." U.S. President Donald Trump said on Tuesday that he has ordered a total blockade of all U.S.-sanctioned oil tankers traveling to and from Venezuela. He also said in a later interview that the United States will continue seizing additional oil tankers.

Israel approves 19 new settlements in West Bank

MI News Service, Jerusalem: Israel's security cabinet has approved the establishment of 19 new settlements in the occupied West Bank, bringing the number of settlements legalized or approved over the past three years to 69, an official said on Sunday.



Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, a pro-settler politician, said in a statement that Israel's security cabinet approved the proposal that he "advanced together with Defense Minister Israel Katz to declare and authorize 19 new settlements," without specifying when the approval was granted. The approvals cover both entirely new settlements and the retroactive authorization of settlements built without permits from Israeli authorities.

Smotrich said the step is part of a broader effort to strengthen Jewish settlement across the West Bank, which Israel captured in the 1967 Middle East war and which Palestinians seek as the core of a future independent state. He said the move is preventing "the de facto establishment" of a Palestinian state. "We will continue to develop, build and settle the land of our ancestral inheritance," he said. The approval comes amid heightened international criticism of Israeli settlement activity, which most countries regard as illegal under international law. Israel has accelerated settlement approvals since the formation of the current right-wing government, which includes parties that strongly oppose Palestinian statehood and advocate expanding Israeli control over the territory. Palestinian officials have warned that continued settlement expansion undermines prospects for a two-state solution and fuels tensions on the ground, while Western allies have repeatedly urged Israel to halt such moves.

Zelensky expresses cautious optimism about proposed trilateral meeting of Ukrainian, U.S., Russian security advisors



MI News Service, Kiev: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Saturday he generally supports the idea of a trilateral meeting involving the national security advisors of Ukraine, the United States and Russia, expressing cautious optimism about the prospect of such a meeting. Zelensky said the proposal was put forward by the United States and conveyed to him by Ukraine's chief peace negotiator, Rustem Umerov, according to the Interfax-Ukraine news agency. Zelensky said that he was not sure that the meeting would bring something new, but noted that the result of previous talks in Türkiye was the return of captured soldiers and civilians. "I am very glad that we had exchanges. Our people, our military, primarily prisoners, returned home. And civilians. And therefore we need to take such steps," he said. Zelensky added that "if the results are exchanges or some other agreements, I cannot be against it, then we support the proposal of the United States of America. Let's see how it goes." He noted, however, that the most difficult issues in the ongoing peace process remain unresolved, including territorial issues, control over the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, and funding for Ukraine's reconstruction.

Brazilian president warns armed intervention in Venezuela would be "humanitarian catastrophe"

MI News Service, Foz Do Iguaçu: Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said Saturday that an armed intervention in Venezuela would be "a humanitarian catastrophe" for the region and set a dangerous precedent for the world.



Speaking at the 67th Summit of Heads of State of Mercosur and Associated States, Lula referred to U.S. threats and actions against Venezuela, including a naval blockade and military pressure on the Caribbean nation. Latin America is shocked by "the military presence of an extra-regional power," Lula said, stressing that "building a prosperous and peaceful South America is the only doctrine that suits us." "The limits of international law are being tested. An armed intervention in

Venezuela would be a humanitarian catastrophe for the hemisphere and a dangerous precedent for the world," he said. Lula said he told U.S. President Donald Trump in a recent phone call that negotiation is a more effective and less costly path than military confrontation. The Trump administration has blocked oil tankers sailing to or from

Pakistan's infrastructure fails as winter rain paralyzes Balochistan, two killed

MI News Service, Quetta, Pakistan, 21 Dec.25: Two women were killed and several others injured as the first winter rain of the season triggered widespread disruption across Balochistan, exposing weak infrastructure and poor emergency preparedness in Pakistan's largest province, Dawn reported. The fatalities occurred in Noshki district, where a passenger wagon travelling from Quetta to Chagai skidded on a rain-soaked highway near the Sher Jan Agha area and collided with a truck coming from the opposite direction. At least five others were injured in the crash. While some victims were treated locally, two critically injured passengers were shifted to Quetta for advanced care. Hospital officials said at least eight people injured in rain-related incidents were brought to the Civil Hospital.

IDF chief, while discussing Iran, says military will strike 'wherever required'



MI News Service, Tel Aviv: IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir warns that the military will strike Israel's enemies, "wherever required, on near and distant fronts alike," apparently hinting that Israel will again need to strike in Iran. "At the center of the longest and most complex

war in Israel's history stands the campaign against Iran. Iran is the one that financed and armed the ring of strangulation around Israel and stood behind the plans for its destruction," he says at a handover ceremony for the head of the IDF Planning Directorate. Also in his speech, Zamir takes a veiled jab at Defense Minister Israel Katz, who has been holding up senior appointments in the military, including plans to promote outgoing Planning Directorate chief Vice Adm. Eyal Harel as the next Navy commander. "Eyal, you are arriving mature and ready to command the Navy and to lead it in the coming years, as I hope will be finalized in the very near future," Zamir says.

Eight months into marriage, woman beaten to death over dowry in Tandu

MI News Service, Hyderabad: In a disturbing incident, a woman was beaten to death by her husband in Tandu district after constant torture for dowry just eight months into their wedding.



After being in a relationship, Paramesh, 28, and Anusha, 22, were married with the consent of both families. Her family had paid Rs 1.11 lakh as dowry. However, within three months of their marriage, Paramesh and his mother Lalamma started demanding additional dowry. Police said that Anusha faced domestic violence from her husband and her mother-in-law would constantly rebuke her cooking. As the harassment of beatings escalated, Paramesh's father Mogilaiah dropped an injured Anusha at her maternal home on

December 15. Anusha's family decided to take her to the hospital. On December 18, three days later, as they were leaving for the hospital, Paramesh approached them and insisted, even as Anusha and her mother objected, The News Minute (TNM) reported. However, he took her by force. "He took her to two hospitals, and both told him that they would have to treat it as a medico-legal case and involve the police.

emerged showing an angry Paramesh shoving his wife's head to the wall, dragging, kicking and then hitting her incessantly with a stick. A passerby woman tried to help but he continued the assault till she collapsed. As per the police, Paramesh's family owns about 10 acres of land. "His mother kept taunting they could have got more dowry if he had married someone else," Yadaiah said. Anusha had refrained from filing a police complaint, fearing repercussions. Paramesh and his parents have been arrested by the Vikarabad police. He has been charged with Section 101 (murder), Section 80 (dowry death), and Section 85 (husband subjecting a woman to cruelty) of the BNS. Further investigations are on. A CCTV footage has

Thousands gather at Sydney's Bondi Beach to mark one week after fatal mass shooting



MI News Service, SYDNEY: Thousands of people gathered at Sydney's Bondi Beach on Sunday evening to mark one week since a fatal mass shooting claimed the lives of 15 innocent people there. A minute's silence was held at 6.47 p.m. local time, marking the time that the first gunshots rang out, Australia's 9News network reported. Premier of the Australian state of New South Wales Chris Minns apologized at the ceremony. "I acknowledge the government and its highest duty is to protect the citizens and we did not do that one week ago," he said. Australia's Governor-General Sam Mostyn said she had received letters from leaders around the world following the mass shooting. She read the letter from King Charles III, which said that in times of hurt, Australians always rally together in unity and resolve. The fatal shooting, which targeted an event celebrating the first day of the Jewish festival of Hanukkah, was Australia's most deadly mass shooting since 1996.

Earthquake of magnitude 4.8 strikes Tajikistan

MI News Service, Dushanbe, Tajikistan, 21 Dec.25: An earthquake of magnitude 4.8 struck Tajikistan on Sunday, as reported by the National Centre for Seismology (NCS). Sharing the details in a post on X, NCS said, "EQ of M: 4.8, On: 21/12/2025 10:45:08 IST, Lat: 39.61 N, Long: 71.44 E, Depth: 10 Km, Location: Tajikistan." Tajikistan is a mountainous country with diverse topography and is especially vulnerable to climate hazards. It is prone to earthquakes, floods, drought, avalanches, landslides and mudslides. The most susceptible areas are the glacier-dependent river basins supplying hydropower and

water resources for irrigation, fragile mountain ecosystems and isolated forests with mountainous and riverine terrain, which makes it prone to landslides and land degradation. As per the World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Portal, climate change is exacerbating Tajikistan's vulnerabilities, given that 30 per cent of glaciers are predicted to disappear by 2050. Tajikistan also remains one of the most isolated countries in the world - a situation made worse by landslides, debris flows and floods that can render bridges unsafe and roads impassable and, through time, weaken the flood defences which protect its most exposed communities.

La Liga: Real Madrid takes controversial win against Sevilla

MADRID : Real Madrid moved to within a point of FC Barcelona at the top of La Liga with a controversial 2-0 home win over Sevilla on Saturday.

A goal from Jude Bellingham in the first half and a late penalty from Kylian Mbappe gave Real Madrid the win after another uneven display in which Sevilla missed several good chances, while the Santiago Bernabeu crowd at times voiced its frustration, reports Xinhua.

Real Madrid had an early let-off when Sevilla striker Isaac Romero clipped the ball wide when clean through on goal, with the home fans making their displeasure known.

The visitors had four attempts on goal in the first 45 minutes but failed to convert any of them, while Bellingham put his side ahead in the 38th minute.



The second half brought controversy when Rodrygo escaped what looked like a second yellow card for treading on Marcao's heel, only minutes before the Sevilla defender himself was sent off for a second booking after fouling Bellingham.

Sevilla's frustration deepened when it was Rodrygo who drew the late foul from Juanlu that allowed Mbappe to score his 59th goal of the year for Real Madrid from the penalty spot in the 86th minute.

Guillermo Almada's debut as Oviedo's third coach of the season ended in a fourth consecutive 0-0 draw at the Carlos Tartiere Stadium against Celta Vigo.

Osasuna climbed away from the relegation zone with a 3-0 home win over Alaves thanks to a spectacular 72nd-minute volley from Ante Budimir, who then

added a penalty nine minutes later, before Raul Garcia struck a third in stoppage time.

A 94th-minute penalty from Adrian de la Fuente saved a point for bottom side Levante at home to Real Sociedad, who had taken the lead with Take Kubo's goal in first half injury time.

Real Sociedad announced Pellegrino Matarazzo as its new permanent coach until June 2027 soon after the game had finished.

Valencia and Mallorca ended 2025 with a 1-1 draw on Friday night that helps neither side clear of danger, with Samu Costa putting Mallorca ahead in the first half and Hugo Duro leveling for Valencia after the break.

League leader FC Barcelona will visit third-placed Villarreal in Sunday's standout match, while Atletico Madrid travels to face struggling Girona.

3rd Test: Conway, Latham set 462-run target for West Indies on Day 4

MOUNT MAUNGANUI : Devon Conway and Tom Latham shone bright once again, thanks to their 192-run partnership, as New Zealand posted a mammoth 462-run target for the West Indies to chase. With just three sessions in hand, the visitors will walk into Day 5 with a mammoth task ahead.

West Indies' start to Day 4 of the third and final Test against New Zealand was dull as they lost a wicket in just the second over of the day after continuing from their overnight score of 381/6. With Shai Hope fit and available to bat, he made his way into the field but his innings was cut short by Jacob Duffy in the fourth over of the day as the visitors were reduced to 390/8.

Kavem Hodge and Jayden Seales looked to stretch through the session and cut the hosts' lead short, but Ajaz Patel and Michael Rae dismissed Seales and Kemar Roach as the Windies closed their first innings at 420/10.

New Zealand only allowed the visitors to add 39 more runs to their overnight score and took the remaining four wickets, resulting in a significant 155-run lead. Hodge was the standout for the visitors with his unbeaten 275-ball 123.

The hosts ended the session on a high note, as after dishing out the West Indies, Devon Conway and Tom Latham started nicely and looked in sublime touch yet again as their side stretched the lead to 190 runs at the end of the second session.

The opening pair went on to share another century partnership and added 192 runs to the first wicket. New Zealand notched up 157 runs in the second session, courtesy of Conway's ton and Latham's 80, before tea was taken. Conway (100) etched his name into history with a rare and outstanding feat as he became the first New Zealander to score both a double-century and a century in a Test match. He followed up his magnificent 227 in the first innings with a composed 100 in

the second, reaching the milestone shortly before tea on Day 4.

This century was Conway's seventh in Test cricket, further underlining his consistency at the highest level. The left-hander was eventually dismissed on the third ball after tea when Jayden Seales made a great catch at deep mid-wicket off Kavem Hodge.

Latham (101) was also dismissed soon after reaching the three-figure mark, with the same duo of Hodge and Seales doing the work for the Windies. Kane Williamson (40*) and Rachin Ravindra (46*) then played beautiful knocks. They tried to race to their respective half-centuries, but Latham signalled for declaration as the hosts posted a 462-run target for the visitors to chase.

John Campbell and Brandon King opened the final innings for the Windies, aiming not to lose a wicket in that final hour, and they accomplished just that as the visitors finished at 43/0 at stumps.

They have all 10 wickets remaining ahead of Day 5, and a mammoth 418 to chase. While a win seems unlikely at this stage, a draw looks achievable. The cracks are causing some variable bounce, but King and Campbell managed to see out the first 16 overs without much trouble. King played with regal stroke-play, carrying his form from the first innings, whereas Campbell concentrated more on defence.

Both teams will now head into the final day aiming for a win. While a win for New Zealand would take the series 2-0 in their favour, a West Indies victory would lead to a 1-1 draw after the first game in Christchurch ended in a stalemate.

Brief Scores: New Zealand 575/8 & 306/2 dec (Tom Latham 101, Devon Conway 100; Kavem Hodge 2-80) lead West Indies 420 & 43/0 (Brandon King 37*, John Campbell 2*) by 418 runs.



Mansukh Mandaviya officiates first anniversary of Fit India Sundays with cycling event in Puducherry

PUDUCHERRY : Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Mansukh Mandaviya, summarised the entire year's experience with a short update: "Over 2 lakh locations, more than 20 lakh people. One Mission - Fit India. Celebrating 1 year of #SundaysOnCycle," he shared on X on Sunday morning.

Over 1,500 cyclists from diverse backgrounds, including school students, NaMo Cycling Clubs, and Puducherry University students, transformed the scenic Rock Beach in Puducherry into a lively fitness festival. This event highlights the growing national significance of cycling and its rising popularity.

Padma Bhushan and Khel Ratna awardees P R Sreejesh and Sharath Kamal joined the youth in a ride, inspiring participants to embrace sports and fitness.

The landmark first anniversary of Fit India Sundays on Cycle in Puducherry turned into a vibrant fitness festival, featuring a range of fun games and activities, including Zumba, carrom, chess, mallakhamb, silambam, yoga, and rope skipping. Coinciding with World Meditation Day on December 21, the event emphasised that Fitness is essentially Meditation in Motion.

Today's Sunday morning gathering in Puducherry included Lieutenant Governor K. Kailashnathan, chief minister N. Rangasamy, legislative assembly speaker R. Selvam, Puducherry home minister A. Namassivayam, and other notable government officials, along with Union sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya, who inaugurated the very first event in New Delhi a year ago.

Mandaviya addressed the gathering, describing how Fit India Sunday on Cycle has grown from a humble start into a nationwide movement.

"When we started this initiative a year ago, it was organised at just five locations with about 500 participants. Today, more than 10,000 locations across the country take part every Sunday, with over 10 lakh citizens joining regularly. It has become a passion, a culture and a powerful solution for pollution. Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also helped in turning this movement into a nationwide fight against obesity," he said.

Lieutenant Governor K. Kailashnathan of Puducherry described the initiative as a timely message for society.

"Mandaviya's own village in Bhavnagar Gujarat, consists of 4000 people only. And everyone there commutes in a cycle, no other two-wheeler or four-wheelers. As citizens, we often don't realise how small lifestyle changes can collectively make a big difference for the environment, especially in terms of

reducing the carbon footprint," he said.

Puducherry's Chief Minister N. Rangasamy commended the Fit India Movement for its role in promoting accessible fitness for all. "Cycling is one of the easiest and most effective ways to stay healthy. Only when our body is fit can we achieve our goals in life. I truly appreciate the Prime Minister's vision behind the entire Fit India movement," he said.

Today, more than 10000 locations across the country hosted events organised by the Sports Authority of India and Khelo India centres. These events took place in Hazaribagh, Kargil, Patiala, Lucknow, Golaghat, Rajnandgaon in Chhattisgarh, Hissar, Tinsukia, Visakhapatnam, Kashipur in Uttarakhand, Cuttack, and other places, with various banks across the country serving as special partners.

The celebrity gathering also featured Arjuna Award-winning archers Jyothi Surekha and Abhishek Verma from SAI Sonapat. A significant boost to Sundays on Cycle has been provided by NaMo Fit India Cycling clubs and My Bharat volunteers, who have played a vital role in the campaign.

The morning event in Puducherry included the launch of the highly anticipated Fit India Mobile App Carbon Credit Incentivization, which encourages cycling enthusiasts. During the event, the three cyclists who achieved the highest carbon credits - Bharatbhair Parmar, Shashikant Veerkar, and Govind Singh- were honoured.

Citizens have the option to cycle and earn carbon credits, which they can redeem later. "From now on, every month, cyclists from every State and Union Territory will be mapped through the Fit India mobile app and the top three performers will be incentivised. This is to encourage and reward citizens for adopting cycling as a daily habit," Mandaviya added.

The Fit India Ambassadors and Influencers who have continued to play a vital role and have actively supported the cause of Sundays on Cycle were also recognised. Their names included Nidhi Nigam, Aishwarya Raj (Champion), along with ambassadors Dr. Shikha Gupta, Yukti Arya, mountaineer Divya Arul, and Tamil Nadu Cycling State champion Siva Senthil.

Indian hockey's Sreejesh, known as the 'wall,' summed up the entire journey of the cycling movement.

"Being fit is not about training for medals alone; it is about building discipline and balance in everyday life. Cycling is a simple habit, but when adopted collectively, it builds a healthier society and a stronger nation.



Responsibility is more because expectations are going to be more, says Jemimah ahead of SL T20Is

NEW DELHI : India batter Jemimah Rodrigues believes the Women's World Cup triumph has brought greater responsibility for the team as they gear up for the five-match T20I series against Sri Lanka, starting Sunday. The series marks India's first international assignment since lifting the World Cup last month.

Reflecting on the aftermath of the title win, Jemimah said the tournament's impact has already been felt beyond the field. "It's been a while since, you know, life has definitely changed after the World Cup. A lot many people have been recognising women's cricket, and I think that is one of the biggest achievements that this World Cup has had," she said in a video shared by the BCCI.

Jemimah echoed the sentiments earlier expressed by vice captain Smriti Mandhana, underlining the long-term significance of the victory. "I was just hearing Smriti's interview after the World Cup, what she had given, and she said that we will not realise it now, but the kind of impact this World Cup is going to have is going to impact the generations. And it's going to be big, it's going to be massive, so can't wait to see that. And yeah, at the same time, you know, now what has happened has happened."

While the team takes pride in its achievement, Jemimah stressed that the focus has already shifted to future challenges. "Yes, we take pride in what we've done as a team, but it's just the beginning. Now is the time when I think the responsibility is more because the expectations are going to be more, and at the same time, the T20 World Cup, that's our focus now. Yes, it's about winning World Cups, but it's also how we can be the best Indian team we've ever been."

The 25-year-old highlighted the need for continuous improvement, especially with the shorter format demanding higher intensity. "And when we think of it that way, I think that hard work never stops. You improving never stops. You keep improving every single day, little by little by little."

Jemimah added that complacency would be the biggest enemy following success. "So I think it's a greater responsibility for us, and we know what we've done, but we also know that we can't stop them. We need to keep going. T20, I feel, compared to the ODIs, the intensity is much higher."

She also spoke about the tactical demands of T20 cricket, particularly for bowlers. "It's a shorter format and we know that it has a lot of explosiveness to it. And I think that even as a team, we are working towards. T20, we know, even for bowlers, the batter is going to come hard at least but if we can nail those yorkers, nail those wide yorkers, the slow ones, I think it's also going to be a game of smartness and preparation where we can go out and execute what we do."

Looking ahead, Jemimah described the Sri Lanka series as a crucial step in India's build-up to the T20 World Cup, set to be played in England from June 2026. "This Sri Lanka series that we're having is, yeah, the first I could say the first tournament for us as a team, also to prepare for that and to work towards that. It's going to be a good challenge with the dew coming in under lights. I think it's going to be good preparation for us for the 2026 World Cup."

India will take on Sri Lanka in the first of the five T20Is at the ACA-VDCA Cricket Stadium in Visakhapatnam.

Joshna Chinappa and Veer Chotrani claim men's and women's singles titles in Western India Squash Tournament

MUMBAI : Top seeds Joshna Chinappa and Veer Chotrani emerged champions in the women's and men's categories respectively, clinching their titles in contrasting fashion at the final of the 80th CCI Western India Squash Tournament at the historic Cricket Club of India (CCI) courts on Sunday.

In the women's final, the 39-year-old Chinappa lived up to her top billing with a spirited come-from-behind victory over second-seed Sanya Vats. After dropping the opening game, the seasoned campaigner raised her intensity and control to outlast Vats 7-11, 11-8, 11-8, 11-5 in a commanding performance that underlined her experience on the big stage.

"I have been playing here at the CCI since I was 12 years old and have trained here regularly. Hence, winning here at the CCI is very special. I feel very proud of winning the title," said Chinappa after winning the title for the fifth time. The last time she won the crown was in 2007-08.

The men's final, however, was a far more one-sided affair. Chotrani was at his ruthless best as he completely outclassed second seed Suraj Chand, cruising to an emphatic 11-9, 11-9, 11-2 win



to lift the title. It marked Chotrani's second triumph at the prestigious tournament, having last won the crown in the 2022-23 season. "I have been practising at this venue since I was seven. The venue is special because of the history attached to it. It is great to be among the great names who have won the tournament," said Chotrani after emerging as the champion.

RESULTS
Women's Final: Joshna Chinappa (1) bt Sanya Vats (2) 7-11 11-8 11-8 11-5

Men's Final: Veer Chotrani (1) bt Suraj Chand (2) 11-9 11-9 11-2
BU11 Final: Ved Sanganaria (1) bt Avyayanveer Luthra (2) 11-4 14-16 11-2 11-5; 3rd/4th: Yuvaan Verma (5/8) bt Rudransh Prabhakar (5/8) 5-11 11-5 15-17 11-8 11-6
BU13 Final: Dhairya Gogia (1) bt Aaron Arambhan (2) 11-5 17-15 11-5; 3rd/4th: Viaan Khemani (5/8) bt Rohan Khurana (5/8) 11-8 11-5 11-6
BU15 Final: Vivan Khanna (1) bt Fareed Andrabli (5/8) 5-11 11-8 11-7 11-7; 3rd/4th: Swarit Patil

[3/4] bt Yusuf Pardiwala (2) 12-10 11-3 11-3

BU17 Final: Hridhaan Shah (5/8) bt Saharsh Shakra (1) 11-8 11-1 11-1; 3rd/4th: Mithun Mahadu Darvada (9/16) bt Agastya Bansal (3/4) 11-4 11-8 14-12

BU19 Final: Purav Rambhia bt Rahul Sanjay Balakrishnan 11-4 11-4 11-7; 3/4th: Rachit Shah bt Arjun Morey 11-7 11-3 11-7

GU11 Final: Sameeksha Sugumar (1) bt Naina Anand (2) 11-1 12-10 11-9; 3rd/4th: Avisha Agarwal (3/4) bt Anshika Kumari (3/4) 11-4 8-11 11-5 11-7

GU13 Final: Riya Dalal (2) bt Shanaya Roy (1) 11-8 11-9 11-8; 3rd/4th: Aadhya Grover (3/4) bt Gargi Kadam (5/8) 11-9 11-6 8-11 9-11 14-12

GU15 Final: Vasundhara Nangare (1) bt Diva Parasrampur (2) 11-9 7-11 11-9 11-1; 3rd/4th: Divyanshi Jain bt Aashi Shah (3/4) 14-12 13-11 11-6

GU17 Final: Riyansika Verma (3/4) bt Fabiha Nafees (5/8) 11-6 15-13 11-2; 3rd/4th: Aarika Mishra (2) bt Kaashvi Mangal (1) 11-3 14-12 9-11 13-11

GU19 Final: Akanksha Gupta bt Aadya Budhia 3-11 11-2 15-13 11-9; 3/4th: Eesha Shrivastava bt Karina Phipps 11-6 11-4 11-1