



Dera Sacha Sauda chief and rape convict Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh addresses his followers in a video message, in Haryana



Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) activists take out a protest march against the alleged attempt to vandalise a statue of B R Ambedkar, in Amritsar, Punjab



BJP and Congress councillors clash during the General meeting of Jaipur Municipal Corporation (Greater), in Jaipur, Rajasthan



Shiv Sena (UBT) workers stage a protest against the hike in Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) bus fares, in Thane

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Devotees gather to take a holy dip at the Sangam on the eve of 'Mauni Amavasya', during the Maha Kumbh Mela 2025, in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh

Tramadol worth Rs 40 crore seized by Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad

**AHMEDABAD:** The Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) has seized opioid pain-reliever Tramadol worth Rs 40 crore from a warehouse owned by a trader recently arrested for allegedly manufacturing 'alprazolam' without a license. On January 24, the ATS had busted a factory manufacturing alprazolam illegally near Khambhat in Anand district and arrested six persons including Ranjit Dabhi. As much as 107 kg of alprazolam worth Rs 107 crore was seized, said an official release on Tuesday. Though originally intended for use as pain medication, production and sale of Tramadol is regulated strictly as it can be misused as 'psychotropic' (mind-altering) drug. During his questioning, Dabhi, who owns a trading firm, allegedly admitted to have stored 500 kg of Tramadol at his godown in an industrial estate near Dholka in Ahmedabad district without any permit.

Fake call centre busted in West Bengal, 18 arrested

**KOLKATA:** Eighteen people were arrested as a fake call centre was busted in New Town near Kolkata, police said on Tuesday. Those arrested used to target US citizens, posing as Microsoft employees, offering technical support and then used to dupe them, a police officer said. Acting on a tip-off, officers of the Cyber Crime Wing of the West Bengal Police along with personnel of the Eco Park and Bidhannagar Cyber police stations conducted a joint raid at two offices of the fake call centre housed in a building in New Town, he said. Among those arrested were three women, he added. Several documents, 32 laptops and 41 mobile phones were seized in the raid. "It is being investigated how the transactions were done, whether through cryptocurrency or hawala or some other means," the officer said.

Four killed, 5 injured in road accident in UP's Raebareli

**RAEBARELI:** Four people, including two women died while five others were injured on Tuesday in a collision between an SUV and a tractor-trolley, police said. The victims, from Baldu Bihar Durga Mandir area in Lucknow's Telibagh, were en route to Prayagraj for a holy dip in the Mahakumbh fair, officials said. The accident occurred near Kanha Dhaba on the Munshiganj bypass in the Badohar area, a police officer said. Upon receiving information, police went to the spot and took the injured to the district hospital, where doctors declared -- Rajni Devi (70), Ashish Dwivedi (42), Deependra Rawat (40), and Maya Devi (45) - dead, he said. According to police, the injured - Shubham (28), Lalita Negi (47), Kavita Rawat (40), Rajni Devi (50), and Anuj Kumar Tripathi (30) - are undergoing treatment. A critically injured person has been referred to AIIMS, Raebareli for further treatment.

Two criminals arrested after encounter with police in Noida

**NOIDA:** Noida Police on Tuesday arrested two criminals, against whom a dozen cases have been registered for robbery and theft, following an encounter here, an official said. One of the criminals was injured during the encounter after a bullet fired by the police hit his leg, the official added. According to Deputy Commissioner of Police Rambadan Singh, on Monday night, the police team was conducting checks at the Sector 56 T-point when they saw two suspicious persons coming on a motorcycle. The policemen signalled them to stop, but they did not comply, he said. The police chased the miscreants and seeing themselves surrounded, the miscreants opened fire on the police team. The police also retaliated in self-defense and a bullet fired by them hit the leg of one of the criminals, Vijay Singh alias Ajuba (32), who was later taken to the hospital for treatment.

3 injured as car rams into a shop in Himachal Pradesh

**UNA (HP):** Three tourists were injured when their vehicle rammed into a shop in Himachal Pradesh's Una district, police said on Tuesday. The accident, which occurred in Chitpurni town late Monday, caused huge damage to two shops near Jagdamba Vaishno Dhaba, officials said. According to police, a Scorpio car broke into the shop and injured the three occupants inside the car. The three were taken to a hospital and later referred to Jalandhar for treatment, a police officer said, adding that the injured hailed from Jalandhar in Punjab. Ram Kumar, who runs a toy shop suffered a loss of about 3 lakhs, while Vandana, who runs another shop, has suffered a loss of 2 lakhs. The car driver, Mandeep said the accident happened due to brake failure. A case has been registered and further investigation is underway, sub-Inspector Sanjeev Kumar said.

Panel allows non-Muslims in Waqf matters, makes concessions for Shia sects

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** The parliamentary committee studying the Waqf (Amendment) Bill is set to endorse the government's move to include non-Muslims in Waqf boards, saying they can be "beneficiaries, parties to disputes, or otherwise interested in Waqf matters", sources said on Tuesday. The Joint Parliamentary Committee, which is scheduled to adopt its report on Wednesday, has also agreed with the submissions of Dawoodi Bohra and Agha Khani communities, two small sects of the Shia Muslims, that they have their unique and distinct set of identities and should be treated as such, the sources said. They had demanded to be kept out of the purview of the proposed law. The committee may recommend a proviso that "nothing in this Act shall, notwithstanding any judgement, decree or order of any court, apply to a trust established before or after" the enactment of this law in connection with public charities by a Muslim for purposes similar to a Waqf, a source said. Dawoodi Bohras had argued before the committee that their 'al-Dai al-Mutlaq', a living community leader who enjoys absolute and unquestioned power in its affairs, is their sole trustee who administers all the properties of the community. The committee, which is headed by BJP MP Jagdambika Pal, is of the view that the Bill's proposal to expand state Waqf boards to include two non-Muslim members and ensure

OUR SUGGESTIONS ACCEPTED BY WAQF COMMITTEE: JANATA DAL UNITED (JD)

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** The Janata Dal (United) said on Tuesday that the changes suggested by it have been accepted by the Joint Parliamentary Committee scrutinising the Waqf (Amendment) Bill and accused the opposition of politicising the issue. The BJP's allies like the Telugu Desam Party, JD(U) and the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) had come around to endorsing the bill with some amendments in the committee's meeting on Monday. All the three parties had refrained from wholeheartedly endorsing the bill when it was introduced in Parliament during the Monsoon Session last year and had pushed for a wider consultation to allay concerns of the Muslim community. JD(U) spokesperson Rajeev Ranjan Prasad said, "Whatever the JD(U) suggested in the bill, it was all accepted. The amendments will have our suggestions. We don't have any complaints regarding the functioning of the JPC. The opposition has a habit to politicise every issue." JD(U) MP Dileshwar Kamait had moved the amendment to the bill's clause which had made it mandatory for Waqf properties to be listed with details on the portal within six months of the new law coming into force.

broader representation from Shia, Sunni and backward Muslim communities will promote inclusivity and diversity in Waqf management, the sources said. One amendment that the committee is set to make is non-Muslim members of the board will exclude ex-officio members, which means that it may have a maximum of four non-Muslim members. Opposition parties have been vehemently critical of the Bill, and have accused Pal of bulldozing proceedings to reach a pre-decided set of recommendations. Committee members were given the draft report on Tuesday evening, drawing another round of protest. DMK MP A Raja alleged on X that the committee has been reduced to a farce.

Budget Session begins on Jan 31 with Prez's address

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha will take up discussion on President Droupadi Murmu's address to Parliament on Monday as the Budget Session begins on January 31. The President will address both the Houses of Parliament assembled together in the Lok Sabha chamber on Friday and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the General Budget on Saturday. The Finance Minister will table the Economic Survey on Friday when both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha will convene briefly after the President's address. Lok Sabha has provisionally allotted two days (February 3-4) for discussion on the Motion of Thanks to the President's address, while Rajya Sabha has earmarked three days for the debate.

Delhi polls: Over 770 cases of violation of Model Code of Conduct registered

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** More than 770 cases of alleged violations of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) have been registered ahead of the February 5 Delhi assembly polls, an official said on Tuesday. The cases were lodged between January 7, when the MCC came into force, and January 27. During this period a total of 24,081 people have been arrested under various legal provisions, including those under the Excise Act, according to a statement. Ahead of the polls, the police have intensified vigilance at border checkpoints and conducted crack-

DELHI COURT QUASHES SUMMONS TO CM ATISHI IN DEFACTION CASE

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** A Delhi court on Tuesday quashed the summons issued to Chief Minister Atishi in a defamation case filed by a BJP leader. Special judge Vishal Gogne passed the order on an appeal filed by the AAP leader against an order of a magisterial court, which issued summons to Atishi on the complaint of Praveen Shankar Kapoor. The judge observed the submission of Atishi's counsel that Kapoor was not defamed by her as the alleged defamatory statement was against the BJP and not an individual.

downs on illegal activities, including the smuggling of arms, liquor and drugs. Delhi Police has recorded 774 cases of alleged MCC violations and confiscated 374 illegal firearms and 453 cartridges, the statement said. The police have also seized 68,636 litres of liquor worth more than Rs 12 crore, 158.126 kg of drugs worth over Rs 72 crore and more than 1,200 banned injections.

SACRED OFFERING



Devotees carry a chadar to offer at the tomb of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan during Urs at Taj Mahal, in Agra, Uttar Pradesh

7 killed, over 60 injured as wooden structure collapses at religious event in UP

**PTI, BAGHPAT (UP):** Seven people died and about 60 were injured after a temporary wooden structure collapsed at a religious event in Baraut city of this district on Tuesday, officials said. The incident occurred at around 8 am during a programme organised for the 'Abhishek' of Lord Adinath on Shri Digambar Jain Degree College ground on Gandhi Road in Baraut, they said.

The event was part of the Moksha Kalyanak Nirvana Mahotsav of the Jain community under the aegis of Shri 1008 Adinath Bhaktaambar Prachar. Of the injured, 20 were discharged after they were administered first aid while 39 are undergoing treatment at various hospitals, the officials said, adding that about 100 people were present at the event. The wooden stairs of the



The wooden structure which collapsed during a Jain community event, in Baghpat district, Uttar Pradesh

65-foot temporary stage built in the Maanstambh Complex broke due to which the devotees on the stage and standing near it fell down, police said. A case has been registered against a contractor in connection with the incident, the officials said, adding a magisterial inquiry has been ordered. Earlier in the day, District Magistrate Asmita Lal told reporters that five people were killed and 39 sustained injuries in the accident. She added that the annual event has been held here

Poultry birds test positive for bird flu in Maha

**PTI, LATUR:** Some poultry birds in Ramnagar area of Udgir town in Maharashtra's Latur district on Tuesday tested positive for bird flu infection, prompting the authorities to begin the culling process and undertake other safety measures, an official said. These domestically-reared poultry birds tested positive days after more than 60 crows died of bird flu infection in parts of Udgir town. "Samples of these poultry birds had been sent for testing on January 24. The National Institute of High-Security Animal Diseases in Bhopal today afternoon confirmed that these birds were infected with bird flu infection," district deputy commissioner of animal husbandry department Dr Shridhar Shinde said. "Following this, the district administration has

implemented preventive measures to curb the spread of the infection. Around 200 poultry birds and other native birds within one kilometre radius are being scientifically culled and eggs, feed and any bird-related remnants are being destroyed. In addition, a 10-kilometre radius has been declared as an alert zone," he said, adding that the affected area was undergoing disinfection. Guardian minister Shivendrasinhraje Bhosale has been apprised of the situation by the district collector, and the administration has expedited necessary actions, he added. Multiple departments and agencies, including animal husbandry, revenue, forest, water resources, public works, land records, transport, municipal corporation and police are working together in this effort, officials said.

People's Conference, Apni Party Unite for J&K Statehood Restoration

**PTI, JAMMU:** People's Conference chief Sajad Gani Lone and Apni Party supremo Altaf Bukhari on Tuesday highlighted the need for a united struggle for the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood. The Jammu and Kashmir unit of the Shiv Sena (UBT) also demanded an end to the dual-power system and advocated for an immediate return of statehood. "Statehood is very important and we should all strive together to get it back. Without statehood, we have no existence," Lone, a former minister and the incumbent Handwara MLA, told reporters.

Asked for an opinion on the 100 days of the National Conference-led government, he said, "I do not want to sound critical but look at its manifesto and compare it with these 100 days in power. It has done nothing promised in the manifesto." Referring to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, the People's Conference chief said he was holding 20 portfolios and it was not possible for anyone to run such a large number of departments. In a separate interaction with reporters, Bukhari said 100 days were not enough to judge a government.

Teens use smartphones more for social media than education: Report

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** More than 57 per cent children in the 14-16 age group use smartphones for educational purposes, while 76 per cent of them use the device for accessing social media, according to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) released on Tuesday. The report noted that more than 82 per cent of the children in the said age group know how to use a smartphone and more boys than girls own one. The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2024 is a nationwide rural household survey that reached 6,49,491 children in 17,997 villages across 605 rural



districts in India. Facilitated by an NGO, "Pratham", in each surveyed district, a local organisation or institution conducted the survey. For the first time, the nationwide household survey had a section on digital literacy, which applied to older children in the 14-

16 age group. It included self-reported questions on access, ownership and use of smartphones, as well as a one-on-one assessment of some basic digital skills. The report said "82.2 per cent of all children in the 14-16 age group reported knowing how to use a

smartphone. Of these, 57 per cent reported using it for an educational activity in the preceding week, while 76 per cent said that they had used it for social media during the same period. While the use of a smartphone for educational activities was similar among girls and boys, girls were less likely than boys to report using social media (78.8 per cent boys as compared to 73.4 per cent girls)". "Kerala stands out in this respect, with over 80 per cent children who reported that they used a smartphone for educational activities and over 90 per cent using it for social media," the report said.