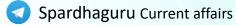


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NATIONAL NEWS

Sand Artist Sudarsan Pattnaik Sets World Record With Giant Santa Claus



That is an incredible feat of artistic engineering! Sudarsan Pattnaik continues to push the boundaries of sand art by integrating perishable elements like fruit to create massive, recordbreaking installations.

To give you a better sense of the scale and context of this achievement, here is a breakdown of what makes this installation so unique:

The Scale of the "Apple Santa"

The sheer dimensions of this sculpture are difficult to visualize without comparing them to everyday objects. At **60 feet long** and **22 feet high**, the Santa Claus was roughly the height of a two-story building and the length of three large SUVs parked end-to-end.











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Key Installation Details

Feature	Details
Primary Materials	1.5 tons of fresh apples and sea sand
Dimensions	60ft (L) x 45ft (W) x 22ft (H)
Location	Niladri Beach, Puri, Odisha
Record Status	Certified by the World Records Book of India
Theme	"Global Peace and Harmony"

Shri (India's fourth-highest civilian award) in 2014. He has represented India in over 60 international sand art championships, winning numerous awards for his intricate designs and "Art for Cause" philosophy.

National News

First Indian Standard for Agarbattis Unveiled By BIS



Why This Record Matters

Sudarsan Pattnaik's work is rarely just about the visual spectacle; it almost always carries a social or environmental message. By using apples—a symbol often associated with health and sharing—he transformed the beach into a space for reflection on global peace.

- Sustainability: After such records are set, Pattnaik often ensures the fruit used is distributed or composted, though the specific distribution for the 2025 installation usually follows a tradition of sharing with local communities.
- Tourism Impact: Puri is already a major spiritual hub, but these world-record attempts have turned Niladri Beach into a global landmark for "Sand Art Tourism."

About the Artist

Sudarsan Pattnaik is a world-renowned sand artist from Odisha. He was awarded the Padma This is a landmark move for a product found in nearly every Indian household. By introducing IS 19412:2025, the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) is addressing a long-standing "silent" health issue: the inhalation of toxic fumes from unregulated incense sticks.

The timing of this announcement on National 2025 Consumer Dav underscores government's focus on consumer rights and health. Here is a more detailed look at the impact and specifics of this new standard:

The "Banned List": Why It Matters

The standard explicitly prohibits substances that were often used to make agarbattis double as mosquito repellents or to artificially boost scent at a low cost.

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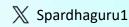
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Category	Banned Substances	Primary Health/Env. Concern
Insecticides	Alethrin, Permethrin, Cypermethrin, Deltamethrin, Fipronil	Neurotoxicity, respiratory distress, and harm to aquatic life.
Synthetic Chemicals	Benzyl cyanide, Ethyl acrylate, Diphenylamine	Inotential

more ethical and sustainable manufacturing practices for these workers.

Three-Tier Classification

To respect traditional craftsmanship while ensuring safety, the BIS has categorized agarbattis into three types:

- 1. Machine-made: Produced in large volumes with automated rolling.
- 2. Hand-made: Traditionally rolled, often in cottage industries.
- 3. Masala Agarbattis: Traditional sticks made using natural pastes, herbs, and resins rather than charcoal and oils.

Note: Products that meet these new norms will be eligible to carry the BIS Standard Mark (ISI mark), allowing you to identify safer options on the shelf.

Industry & Economic Significance

India dominates the global incense market, and this standard acts as a "quality passport" for international trade.

- Market Size: The Indian agarbatti industry is valued at approximately ₹8,000 crore annually.
- Exports: India exports roughly ₹1,200 crore worth of incense to over 150 countries (major markets include the US, UK, and Nigeria).
- Global Compliance: Many of the newly banned chemicals are already restricted in Europe and North America. This standard helps Indian exporters meet global norms more easily.
- **Social Impact:** The sector provides massive employment, particularly for women in rural areas, and this move encourages

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

China **Opens** World's Longest **Expressway Tunnel in Xinjiang**



The opening of the **Tianshan Shengli Tunnel** marks a historic moment in civil engineering, effectively "erasing" a natural barrier that has

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separated northern and southern Xinjiang for centuries.

Officially opened to traffic on December 26, 2025, this 22.13 km marvel is now the crown jewel of the G0711 Urumqi-Yuli Expressway. It has turned a once-treacherous seven-hour journey across the "Celestial Mountains" into a swift trip of just over three hours.

Engineering & Record-Breaking Feats

The tunnel is not just long; it is deep and technically complex, setting two significant world records:

- World's Longest Expressway Tunnel: At 22.13 km, it surpasses previous expressway records, specifically designed to handle high-speed traffic flows.
- Deepest Vertical Shaft: To ensure air circulation and safety in such a long stretch, engineers built a vertical ventilation shaft reaching a depth of 1,112 meters (about 3,648 feet)—the deepest of its kind for a highway tunnel globally.

Vital Project Data

Feature	Technical Detail	
Total Length	22.13 Kilometers	
Maximum Depth	1,112 Meters below the mountain ridge	
Construction Period	April 2020 – December 2025 (approx. 5 years)	
Total Project Cost	~46.7 Billion Yuan (\$6.6 Billion USD)	

Feature	Technical Detail
Key Equipment	Indigenous Hard Rock Tunnel Boring Machines (TBMs)
Geological Challenge	Crossed 16 major active fault zones

Impact on the Region

The Tianshan Mountains traditionally divided the regional capital, **Urumqi**, from southern hubs like **Korla**. The tunnel changes the logistics landscape of the Silk Road Economic Belt:

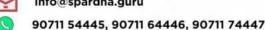
- 1. Safety & Reliability: Previously, the mountain passes were often closed due to heavy snow and ice. The tunnel provides an all-weather, year-round passage.
- 2. **Economic Integration:** Logistics companies expect freight delivery times between northern and southern Xinjiang to be cut by nearly half, significantly reducing costs for fresh produce and industrial goods.
- 3. **Tourism & Environment:** The expressway includes 17 tunnels and 36 bridges designed specifically to allow for wildlife passages, ensuring that the migration of local species is not disrupted by the new high-speed link.

Driver Experience

To combat the monotony and "tunnel hypnosis" often felt in ultra-long tunnels, engineers installed three scenic zones featuring murals and special lighting to keep drivers alert and engaged during the roughly 20-minute transit through the mountain.

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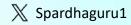
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Watch this documentary on the construction of the Tianshan Shengli Tunnel

This video provides a visual overview of the immense engineering challenges faced during construction, including the extreme cold and high-altitude conditions.

APPOINTMENTS

PV Sindhu Elected Chair of BWF Athletes Commission



This is a defining moment for **PV Sindhu** as she transitions from being a champion on the court to a powerful voice in the boardroom.

On **December 24, 2025**, the Badminton World Federation (BWF) officially announced that Sindhu has been elected **Chair of the BWF Athletes' Commission** for the 2026–2029 term. This elevation is especially significant because it grants her a full voting seat on the **BWF Council**, allowing her to directly influence the global governance of the sport.

Key Highlights of the Appointment

- Leadership Role: Sindhu will lead a fivemember commission as Chair, succeeding Indonesian legend Greysia Polii.
- Direct Governance: As Chair, she becomes a member of the BWF Council, the highest decision-making body in world badminton.
- **Experience:** This is Sindhu's third consecutive term on the Commission (having served since 2017).⁵ She has also been a BWF Integrity Ambassador since 2020.
- Mandate: Her focus will be on athlete welfare, mental health, injury prevention, and acting as a bridge between the players and the administration.

The 2026–2029 Athletes' Commission

The new commission is a "powerhouse" of current world-beaters and veteran stars:

Role	Name	Country	Key Achievement
Chair	PV Sindhu	India	2x Olympic Medallist, 2019 World Champion
Deputy Chair	Debora Jille	Netherlands	European Games Silver Medallist
Member	An Se- young	South Korea	Paris 2024 Olympic Gold Medallist

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Role	Name	Country	Key Achievement
Member	Jia Yifan	China	Paris 2024 Olympic Gold Medallist
Member	Doha Hany	Egypt	6x African Games Medallist

Para-Badminton Leadership

In a parallel development, the **BWF Para Badminton Athletes' Commission** also saw significant leadership changes:

- Chair: Chan Ho Yuen Daniel (Hong Kong China) was elected to the role full-time.
- Indian Representation: Indian para-shuttler
 Abu Hubaida was elected as a member of
 this commission, ensuring India has a strong
 voice in both able-bodied and para badminton governance.

Sindhu's Vision: "I step into this role with a deep sense of responsibility... My focus is to ensure that athletes' voices are heard clearly, consistently, and with respect at every level of decision-making."

SPORTS

RRU to Host World Police & Fire Games 2029 Disciplines

Hosting the **World Police and Fire Games** (WPFG) in 2029 is a major landmark for India,

as it becomes only the second Asian nation (after China) to host this "Olympic-style" event.



While the primary hub for the games will be Ahmedabad, the involvement of Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU) as a nodal agency is central to the project's success. RRU will not only provide technical expertise but will also transform its campus into a primary competition venue for specialized events.

The 8 Disciplines at RRU

RRU will specifically host eight of the 60+ disciplines, chosen to showcase its advanced sports science and strength-training infrastructure:

- 1. Wrist Wrestling
- 2. Bench Press
- 3. Bodybuilding
- 4. Cross Country (10 km)
- 5. Push-Pull Lifting
- 6. **Muster** (A traditional firefighting competition)
- 7. Indoor Rowing
- 8. Darts

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India's Performance in 2025

The momentum for the 2029 host bid was significantly boosted by India's record-breaking performance at the 2025 Games in Birmingham, Alabama, USA (June 27 - July 6, 2025):

- Final Tally: India finished 3rd in the overall medals table with a total of 588 medals (280 Gold, 178 Silver, and 130 Bronze).
- Top Performer: The Uttar Pradesh Police contingent emerged as the most successful Indian unit, winning 95 medals.
- **Other Notable Units:** The BSF (73 medals) and CISF (64 medals) also played a massive role in the historic 3rd-place finish, behind only the USA and Brazil.

Key Hosting Details for 2029

Category	Information
Primary Host Cities	Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar, and Ekta Nagar (Kevadia)
Expected Participation	10,000+ athletes from 70+ countries
Nodal Institution	Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU)
Organization Prep	A dedicated Secretariat and 500 trained volunteers

Looking Ahead: The Road to 2029

Before the 2029 Games, India and RRU will host another significant international event-the 2nd International Olympic Research Conference (IORC) in Gandhinagar from January 27-30,

2026. This is part of a broader strategy to strengthen India's sports governance and research ecosystem as the country prepares for a potential 2036 Olympic bid.

AWARDS

Vaibhav Suryavanshi Receives Rashtriya Bal Puraskar from President of India



Vaibhav Suryavanshi's recognition with the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar on December 26. **2025**. is the crowning achievement of what has been a truly historic year for the young cricketer.

> At just 14 years old, the Bihar-born prodigy received the honor from President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan. The award recognizes him as a "once-in-a-generation" talent who has systematically dismantled longstanding records in world cricket.

A Season of World Records

Suryavanshi's 2025 season has been nothing short of extraordinary, featuring milestones that have made him a global sensation:

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- Youngest List A Centurion: On December 24, 2024, he smashed 190 off 84 balls for Bihar against Arunachal Pradesh in the Vijay Hazare Trophy. At 14 years and 272 days, he became the youngest player in history to score a List A century, breaking a 39-yearold record held by Pakistan's Zahoor Elahi.
- Fastest 150 in History: During that same 190-run knock, he reached 150 in just 59 balls, eclipsing the world record previously held by AB de Villiers (64 balls).
- **IPL History Maker:** Playing for **Rajasthan** Royals, he became the youngest player to debut in the IPL (14 years and 23 days) and the youngest to score an IPL century (101 off 38 balls against Gujarat Titans).
- Digital Phenom: Reflecting his massive impact, he was the most-searched Indian on Google in 2024 and only the second Indian cricketer (after Virat Kohli) to be personally spotlighted by Instagram's official global Sparunaguru page.

The 2025 Bal Puraskar at a Glance

Vaibhav was one of 20 children honored this for exceptional achievements. ceremony coincided with Veer Bal Diwas, adding further significance to the event.

Award Detail	Information
Awarded By	President Droupadi Murmu
Category	Sports
Age Eligibility	5 to 18 years

Award Detail	Information
Key Achievement	Redefining age-group cricket and holding multiple world records
Upcoming Mission	ICC Under-19 Men's Cricket World Cup (starting Jan 15, 2026)

The "Wait" for Team India

Despite his record-breaking form, Suryavanshi faces a unique hurdle for the senior national team. Under ICC regulations, a player must be at least 15 years old to debut in international cricket. Having been born on March 27, 2011, he will become eligible for a potential Team India call-up starting March 27, 2026.

Until then, he remains a vital part of the India Under-19 squad and will be traveling to Zimbabwe shortly to prepare for the 2026 U-19 World Cup.

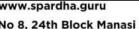
STATE NEWS

Udhayanidhi Stalin lays foundation for Mudhalvar Padaippagam at Harbour constituency

The recent development projects in North Chennai highlight the Tamil Nadu government's commitment to bridging the infrastructure gap through the Vada Chennai Valarchi Thittam (North Chennai Development Plan).









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On December 28, 2025, Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin launched two major initiatives in the Harbour Assembly constituency aimed at urban renewal and public welfare.

Mudhalvar Library 1. Modern & **Padaippagam**

This ₹23.06 crore project is more than just a library; it is a "Creativity Hub" designed for students and entrepreneurs.

- Concept: A "Mudhalvar Padaippagam" (Chief Minister's Creative Space) is a government-run co-working facility and learning center.
- Facilities: These modern facilities typically include air-conditioned halls, individual work desks with charging points, high-speed Wi-Fi, and specialized book collections for competitive exams like NEET, JEE, and UPSC.
- To professional Purpose: provide a environment for freelancers, startups, and students at highly subsidized rates, ensuring that residents of North Chennai have access to the same resources as those in the city's southern hubs.

2. Broadway Power Substation

To address long-standing electricity issues in the dense commercial hub of Broadway, a new 33/11 kV substation was inaugurated.

- Location: Davidson Road, Broadway.
- **Cost:** ₹18.24 crore.
- **Impact:** Over **15,000 consumers** (residential and commercial) will benefit from a more stable power supply. This will specifically reduce low-voltage issues in high-traffic Mannady, Sowcarpet, areas like Kothawal Chavadi.
- Technical Detail: It is equipped with two 8 MVA transformers and five new 11 kV feeders.

Understanding "Vada Chennai Valarchi Thittam"

Launched with a significantly expanded budget—allocated at **₹6,858 crore** in the 2025-26 State Budget—this flagship scheme aims to bring North Chennai on par with the rest of the city.

Project Category	Key Focus Areas
Infrastructure	Modernizing 700+ housing units, new bus terminals, and road expansions.
Education	Upgrading government schools and building 30+ "Mudhalvar Padaippagams."

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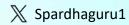
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Project Category	Key Focus Areas
Utilities	New water storage tanks (15 lakh liters each) and power substations.
Health & Parks	Building dialysis centres, fish markets, and lakefront developments (e.g., Retteri).

Additional Highlights

During the visit, the Deputy CM also:

- Inspected Water Projects: Reviewed the construction of underground and overhead drinking water tanks worth ₹27 crore in the Harbour constituency.
- Safety Upgrades: Inaugurated 128 new streetlights on Prakasam Road (Broadway), installed at a cost of ₹1.26 crore to enhance pedestrian safety.



■ Detailed Analysis of Recent Current Affairs: Multiple Choice Format

- Q.1. Which state government recently made Khasi and Garo languages compulsory in the curriculum up to Class 1?
- A. Assam
- B. Mizoram
- C. Meghalaya
- D. Nagaland
- 1. C

Recently, the Meghalaya government mandated Khasi and Garo languages in the curriculum from preschool to Grade 1, to connect children to their local culture and mother tongue in early education and strengthen their identity. This decision, taken by the state cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma, is a major step towards the linguistic and cultural development of children.

- Q.2. In which state was the first pollution control vessel, Samudra Pratap, recently inducted into the Indian Coast Guard?
- A. Maharashtra
- B. Tamil Nadu
- C. Goa
- D. Gujarat
- 2. C

The Indian Coast Guard commissioned its first pollution control vessel, Samudra Pratap, at Goa Shipyard Limited. This is the Indian Coast

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Guard's first indigenously designed and built vessel. The vessel is equipped with state-of-theart technology and indigenously developed systems. More than 60 percent of its construction made from indigenous materials.

Q.3. Which language was recently included in the Scheduled Languages of the Constitution?

- A. Ho
- B. Santhali
- C. Kurukh
- D. Maithili
- 3. B

President Draupadi Murmu released the Constitution of India in the Santhali language at a function held at Rashtrapati Bhavan. The Santhali language, which was included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution by the 92nd Amendment Act of 2003, is one of India's oldest surviving languages. It is spoken by a large number of tribal people in Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal, and Bihar.

Q.4. Where was the Anti-Terrorism Conference 2025 recently held?

- A. Mumbai
- B. Kolkata
- C. New Delhi
- D. Hyderabad
- 4. C

Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the National Investigation Agency (NIA)-organized Anti-Terrorism Conference in New Delhi. At the conference, Mr. Shah presented service medals and gallantry medals to nine NIA personnel for their outstanding service and contributions to counter-terrorism operations. The Home Minister also launched the NIA's latest crime manual, organized crime network, and database of lost and recovered weapons.

Q.5. Who has recently been appointed as the first Indian brand ambassador of New Balance?

- A. Deepika Padukone
- B. Alia Bhatt
- C. Janhvi Kapoor
- D. Kiara Advani
- 5. C

New Balance recently signed actress Janhvi Kapoor as its first Indian brand ambassador, with a term lasting until the end of December 2025, as the brand expands its presence in India and strengthens local engagement.

Q.6. At the mouth of which river will the 40th Asian Waterfowl Census be conducted?

- A. Krishna
- B. Kaveri
- C. Godavari
- D. Mahanadi
- 6. C

The 40th Asian Waterbird Census (AWC) and the 60th International Waterbird Census (IWC) will be conducted on January 10-11, 2026. The census will take place in the Godavari Estuary, which includes the biodiversity-rich Coringa

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Wildlife Sanctuary in Andhra Pradesh. This biodiversity exercise demonstrates India's growing role in wetland conservation, bird migratory monitoring, and ecological research.

Q.7. Which state government recently made newspaper reading compulsory in all its government schools?

- A. Bihar
- B. Uttar Pradesh
- C. Rajasthan
- D. Madhya Pradesh

7. B

In a significant move, the Uttar Pradesh government has made daily newspaper reading mandatory for all students in government schools across the state. This initiative aims to enhance students' general knowledge, language skills, and critical thinking by connecting classroom learning to real-world events.

- Q.8. From which city did the DRDO recently successfully test-fire the K-4 ballistic nuclear missile from INS Arighat?
- A. Chennai
- B. Kochi
- C. Visakhapatnam
- D. Mumbai
- 8. C

India has added a new dimension to sea-based nuclear deterrence by successfully test-firing the K-4 nuclear-capable ballistic missile from INS Arighat. The test, conducted off the coast of Visakhapatnam in the Bay of Bengal, is a significant step towards making India's nuclear triad complete and more reliable.

- Q.9. Which anniversary of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana was recently celebrated?
- A. 20th
- B. 22nd
- C. 25th
- D. 27th
- 9. C

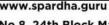
The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) recently celebrated its anniversary. Launched in 2000, it aimed to provide all-weather road connectivity to eligible rural areas that previously lacked road connectivity. It laid the foundation for universal road connectivity by connecting villages to markets, educational institutions. healthcare facilities.

- Q.10. Where was the fifth National Chief Secretaries Conference recently held under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Modi?
- A. Shimla
- B. Jaipur
- C. Bhopal
- D. Delhi
- 10. D

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi chaired the Fifth National Conference of Chief Secretaries in Delhi. This conference marks another important milestone in strengthening the Centre-State

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partnership based on continuous dialogue and national development priorities.

Q.11. Who has recently been appointed as the Chairman of the Atal Samithi Trust?

A. Amit Shah

B. M. Venkaiah Naidu Venkaiah Naidu

C. Nitin Gadkari

D. Rajnath Singh

11. B

Former Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu has been elected chairman of the Atal Smriti Trust Society in New Delhi. Ram Bahadur Rai, a founding member of the society, proposed Mr. Naidu's name for the post after consulting with other members, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Q.12. How many Prime Minister's National Children's Awards were recently presented by President Draupadi Murmu on the occasion of Veer Bal Diwas?

A. 15

B. 18

C. 20

D. 25

12. C

On Veer Bal Diwas, 20 children were honored with the Prime Minister's National Child Award. The awards were presented by President Draupadi Murmu. These children were selected from 18 states and union territories for their outstanding and courageous work in various fields.

0.13. Who recently became the first disabled artist to win the Turner Prize 2025?

A. Jessica Warner

B. Nnena Kalu

C. Lucy Hicks

D. Sarah Miller

13. B

Nena Kalu has become the first artist with a learning disability to win the Turner Prize 2025. She is autistic and largely non-verbal. She is known for her large-scale abstract paintings and sculptures made from recycled fabric and VHS tape. She has been creating art since the 1980s and has been associated with the London organization Actionspace since 1999.

Q.14. Which country recently became the first to formally recognize the self-proclaimed Republic of Somaliland as an independent and sovereign Private Limited

A. Egypt

B. United States

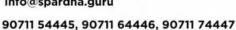
C. Israel

D. India

14. C

Israel became the first country to officially recognize the self-proclaimed Republic of Somaliland as an independent and sovereign nation. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced plans for immediate cooperation with Somaliland in agriculture, health, technology, and the economic sector. Somaliland is located in the Horn of Africa and borders Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, and the

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Puntland region, and has a strategic coastline along the Gulf of Aden. Its capital is Hargeisa.

Q.15. In which state was the 150th Shri Baba Harivallabh Music Conference held recently?

- A. Punjab
- B. Haryana
- C. Himachal Pradesh
- D. Uttarakhand

15. A

The 150th Shri Baba Harivallabh Sangeet Sammelan begins at the historic Shri Devi Talab Temple in Jalandhar, Punjab. It is India's oldest Hindustani classical music festival, with a tradition dating back to the 19th century. This three-day event is a living testament to the rich heritage and ongoing flow of Indian classical

Dear Aspirants,

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We wish best for your studies & Exams

Best Wishes

Murthy sir (MSM)

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