



Mandhana, Deepti in ICC women's ODI Team of the Year; no Indian in men's side



Putin ready to talk to Trump, waiting for US 'signals': Kremlin

There was a sense of fear earlier, now I'm comfortable as an actor: Khushi Kapoor



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MARKET	
SENSEX	NIFTY
76520.38	23205.35
115.39	50.00
GOLD SILVER	
79,615.00	91,130.00
51.00	-814.00

WEATHER	
Sunrise	7:14 AM
Sunset	5:54 PM
Moonrise	2:34 AM
Moonset	1:00 PM
Today's Prediction	
Maximum	Minimum
22°C	7°C
Tomorrow's Prediction	
21°C	7°C

Opposition members suspended for a day from JPC on Waqf Bill

■ Suspended MPs write to Lok Sabha Speaker to ask committee's Chairman Jagdambika Pal to postpone January 27 meeting **■ Opposition members claim the suspension came after Chairman, BJP leader Jagdambika Pal, got a phone call during the meeting**

New Delhi
Ten Opposition members attending the joint committee of Parliament meeting on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill were suspended on Friday as they accused its chairperson of reducing its proceedings to a "farce", while the committee readies to adopt its draft report next week.



The appearance of Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, a moderate Hurriyat leader who is also the religious head of Muslims in Kashmir, before the panel to voice his disapproval of the proposed law was the highlight of the meeting but not before Opposition members' noisy protests drowned its proceedings till their suspension.

Opposition MPs alleged that Jagdambika Pal, the committee's Chairman, was steamrolling the agenda at the government's behest with an eye on the February 5 Delhi Assembly polls.

They later wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om

conduct of Banerjee, often the most vocal Opposition member, as "disgusting" and said Opposition members created a ruckus as part of a design to sabotage the meeting.

Banerjee said Pal informed them on January 21, when the committee members were in Lucknow meeting stakeholders, that the next meetings would be held on January 24-25, Raja wrote on behalf of Opposition MPs, requesting the Chairman to schedule the meeting after January 30 or 31 but in vain.

He said the agenda of Friday's meeting was changed late on Thursday and intimated to members close to midnight.

"The Chairman is treating Opposition members as domestic helps and ordering them around," Banerjee said.

He said Pal received several phone calls in the meeting and alleged that he was taking orders from senior government ministers.

CONTO ON PAGE-2

7K paramilitary forces, 15K cops to man Delhi on R-Day



New Delhi
Over 70 companies of paramilitary forces and more than 15,000 police personnel are set to be deployed across the capital for Republic Day celebrations, an official said on Friday.

The city will be monitored by drones and CCTV surveillance and cyber-specialist officers will be deployed to oversee operations, a senior police officer said.

"We have already installed a multi-layered security arrangements. We have six layers of checking and frisking arrangements. Apart from this, we will have multi-layered barricading. We have several thousand CCTV cameras installed in the New Delhi district, including those with Facial Recognition Systems (FRS)," the officer said.

Moving vehicles with FRS system will also be deployed, he said.

The officer said the cameras are linked to a database to identify criminals immediately.

"Delhi Police is well prepared to tackle any kind of situation," he said.

The officer further said that police teams are conducting mock drills with multiple security agencies. Over 70 companies of paramilitary forces and more than 15,000 police personnel will be deployed in the national capital to ensure robust security arrangements.

The DCPs of all districts are properly briefed about the security arrangements. Police officers would remain on high alert and promptly report any suspicious activity immediately, he said.

Agency

Birla to ask Pal to postpone the January 27 meeting and consult other members on the next date and agenda.

Pal accused Opposition members, especially the Trinamool Congress Kalyan Banerjee, of hurling abuses and insults at him in their bid to scuttle the proceedings.

They broke all boundaries, he said.

The suspension was for Friday and Opposition MPs can attend the next meeting.

The January 27 meeting is set to consider the Bill clause by clause before finalising the report.

Opposition MPs have sought more time to allow them to frame their views after studying the views of stakeholders.

These members, including Banerjee, DMK's A Raja, Congress' Naseer Hussain, and BJP MPs traded allegations, with the former insisting that they protested in a civilised manner after not getting a response from Pal.

BJP MP Aparajita Sarangi termed the



A mesmerising drone show lights up the night sky over the Maha Kumbh Mela 2025 in Prayagraj on Friday.

8 dead after blast at Bhandara ordnance factory

Mumbai
Eight people were killed in a blast at an ordnance factory in Maharashtra's Bhandara district on Friday morning, according to Union Minister Nitin Gadkari. He confirmed that, as per preliminary information, eight individuals had died and seven were injured.

While the minister put the death toll at eight, district collector Santaj Kolte said that so far four bodies had been retrieved and five injured persons rescued. "Rescue operation was on for four to five persons still trapped under the debris", he added.

The explosion occurred around 10:30 am at the factory in Jawahar Nagar, causing a fire and leading to a building collapse. The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) was deployed immediately for the



rescue operation, using specialized equipment to ensure the safety of those involved.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said he was "deeply saddened" by the incident. All efforts were being made to provide assistance to the affected people, he said on X.

"Deeply saddened to know about the blast at Ordnance Factory at Bhandara, Maharashtra. My condolences to the bereaved families. Praying for the speedy recovery of the injured," he said on X.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis had said that 13 to 14 workers were stuck at the site. According to police and district authorities, the explosion occurred in the "LTP section".

As per collector Kolte, 13 to 14 people were working in the unit at the time of the incident.

Agency

Job security plea of workplace harassment panel members important: SC

New Delhi
The Supreme Court on Friday said the plea for job security for members of the internal complaint committees for sexual harassment at workplace was "important" and sought the assistance of the solicitor general of India.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kottiswar Singh said despite issuing notice to the Central government, neither anyone appeared nor a reply was filed.

"This is an important cause which has been raised in the matter. We would like to examine it. You serve the copy on the solicitor gener-



al. If no one appears on the next date, we will appoint an amicus," the bench told the petitioner's counsel.

The petitioners are Janaki Chaudhry, former member of a ICC committee, and former journalist Olga Tellis.

The bench posted the hearing next week.

On December 6, the top court, while agreeing

to examine the plea, issued notice to the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

The PIL sought security of tenure and protection from retaliation for members of internal complaints committees constituted under the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013 (PoSH Act) in private work places.

The petition filed through advocate Munawwar Naseem claimed women ICC members in the private sector were not entitled to the same level of protection and security of tenure that ICC members of public sector enjoyed. Agency

India will bring back its nationals overstaying in US or elsewhere: MEA

New Delhi
Amid the "massive deportation operation" in the US, India on Friday reiterated its stance against illegal immigration, with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) stating it will facilitate the return of Indian nationals "overstaying" or residing without proper documentation in the United States or "anywhere in the world."

During a weekly press briefing in New Delhi, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said, "We are against illegal immigration, especially because it is linked to several forms of organised crime."

He added, "For Indians not just in the United States, but anywhere in the world, if they are Indian nationals and they are overstaying, or they are in a particular country without proper documentation, we will take them back, provided documents are shared with us so that we can

verify their nationality and that they are indeed Indians. If that happens to be the case, we will



take things forward and facilitate their return to India."

Jaiswal also informed that EAM S Jaishankar during his visit to the US for Trump's inauguration also raised the issue of visas with Secretary of State Marco Rubio.

"We have been continuously raising the issue (with the concerning countries) of the delay in issuing visas. If visas are conveniently issued, the people-to-people and economic ties between the two countries will improve. EAM S Jaishankar raised this matter with the US Secretary of State Marco Rubio," Jaiswal said. Agency

Opposition members suspended for a day from JPC on Waqf Bill

CLAM FROM PAGE-1 Slamming his critics, Pal said he was steering the committee in the most democratic manner and allowed every opposition MP to register their view whenever they wanted.

It was the 35th meeting on Friday, he added. The seasoned BJP MP claimed that opposition members were spreading propaganda against the Bill's proposal in a similar way they allegedly stoked fears over the implication of the abrogation of Article 370 and instant triple talaq.

Pal added that he adjourned the meeting twice as to restore order and was forced to suspend them on a motion moved by BJP member Nishikant Dubey due to their "ruckus". The suspended members were Banerjee and Nadeem-ul Haque (Tirunelveli Congress), Mohammad Jawed, Imran Masood and Husain (Congress), Raja and Mohamed Abdullah (DMK), Asaduddin Owaisi (AIMIM), Mohibullah (Samajwadi Party) and Arvind Sawant (Shiv Sena-UJT).

The suspension of Opposition members came on a day when a delegation from Jammu and Kashmir led by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, the religious head of Muslims in Kashmir, appeared before the committee to share their concerns about the draft legislation.

Official sources said the committee might adopt its final report on January 29.

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, was referred to the Joint Committee of Parliament on August 8 following its introduction in the Lok Sabha by Union Ministry Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju.

The Bill aims to amend the Waqf Act, 1982, to address issues and challenges in regulating and managing Waqf properties.

The committee was first tasked with submitting its report in the Winter Session but its tenure was extended till the end of upcoming Budget Session, which begins from January 31.

The Mirwaiz told reporters that he strongly opposed the Bill and favoured non-interference by the government in matters of religion.

"We hope our suggestions would be heard and acted upon and no such step would be taken that would make Muslims feel that they are being disempowered," he said.

"The issue of Waqf is a very serious matter, especially for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, as it is a Muslim-majority state. Many people have concerns regarding this, and we have prepared a detailed memorandum addressing these concerns point by point. We want the government to refrain from interfering in Waqf matters," the Mirwaiz said.

There is already an atmosphere of tension in Jammu and Kashmir when there is talk of mosques and temples, he claimed.

India witnessed unparalleled growth under Modi, to be vishwa guru by 2047: VP Dhankhar

Samastipur (Bihar) Vice-president Jagdeep Dhankhar on Friday lavished praise on the Narendra Modi government at the Centre, asserting that the country has witnessed "unparalleled" growth in the last decade, causing people's aspirations to soar.

Dhankhar made the observations at Samastipur district in Bihar, the birthplace of former chief minister and Bharat Ratna awardee Karpoori Thakur, where a function was organised on the 101st birth anniversary of the late socialist leader.

"The growth witnessed by the country in the last 10 years is unparalleled. We are already the fifth largest economy and twice as fast as most nations. We will occupy the third spot... vishit Bharat is not a pipedream. It will be realised by 2047, when we celebrate the centenary of Independence. Bharat shall become the vishwa guru," said Dhankhar.

He lauded Modi for "zealously (gunton ke saath)" bringing in schemes that improved the quality of life of the common people by providing them with gas connections, electricity and



VP Dhankhar at the birthplace of former chief minister and Bharat Ratna awardee Karpoori Thakur, where a function was organised on the 101st birth anniversary of the late socialist leader.

toilets. "The people have now tasted development. Their aspirations are reaching the skies," said Dhankhar, even as he urged the youth "do not constrict yourselves by thinking in terms of government jobs. The government's policies of today are meant to tap your unlimited potential. Make full use of the opportunities".

The VP also took a veiled dig at the governments preceding Modi's

rise to power in 2014 for failure to give the likes of Karpoori Thakur and former Prime Minister Chaudhary Charan Singh their due.

"I recall the excitement in Rajya Sabha when the announcement of Bharat Ratna for Karpoori Thakur and Chaudhary Charan Singh was made. A thought sprung in my mind - the honour came 36 years after Thakur's death. Why did it not happen earlier? There is now definitely a shift. Our

heroes (Adarsh) are being pulled out of obscurity and being given what is their due".

The Vice-President was speaking in the presence of a host of dignitaries, including Governor Arif Mohammad Khan and Union ministers Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Nitayand Rai and Ram Nath Thakur, who is Karpoori Thakur's son.

Although Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, a staunch follower of Karpoori Thakur, was conspicuously absent at the function, Dhankhar made it a point to utter a few words of praise for the JD(U) supremo.

"Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who is present on this stage, are shining examples of those who have devoted their lives to the ideals espoused by Karpoori Thakur," said the Vice President.

In his nearly 30 minutes long speech, Dhankhar also spoke at length about the tenure of Thakur as chief minister, after the Janata Party formed the government in Bihar in the late 1970s, describing the socialist leader as a "statesman" who worked for "social justice".

He made specific mention of Thakur's efforts to universalise education by making it free till Class 10 and his pitch for equality by throwing open for Class IV employees the elevator at the secretariat in Patna, to which only officials had access earlier.

"Karpoori Thakur was the messiah of social justice. He always believed in equality, fraternity, and justice for all. He used his influence to help the poor and downtrodden," Dhankhar said.

The late leader was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna by the Union government last year.

"Karpoori Thakur was a true statesman... an exception and a man of the people. He is credited with developing the idea of social justice in the country. The government's decision to award him the Bharat Ratna is a testament to his enduring efforts as a champion for the marginalised and a stalwart of equality and empowerment," the vice-president said.

He added that Thakur's efforts were pivotal in setting the stage for reservations for the socially marginalised and downtrodden.

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KidZania India Celebrates R-Day in Spirit of Swarnim Bharat

New Delhi KidZania India is set to celebrate Republic Day aligned with the Government of India's theme of "Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas" with engaging activities on 25th and 26th January, offering Delhiites/Mumbai-kars the chance to celebrate India's incredible heritage, and learn how they can contribute to a brighter, sustainable future for the country.

KidZania has lined up a number of activities to unleash creativity amongst kids while also allowing them to explore India's rich cultural heritage & the history of the constitution, iconic freedom fighters and significant landmarks. A key highlight of this year's event is the representation of India's rich shared societal heritage through art & craft activities. From intricate paper craft to making their own constitution scrolls, these activities help children celebrate their connection with the Indian Constitution in a creative and meaningful way.

Advt Contact: 9818-799941

INS Tushil visits Walvis Bay, Namibia after patrolling the Gulf of Guinea

New Delhi In a significant milestone, INS Tushil, the Indian Navy's stealth-guided missile frigate, visited Walvis Bay, Namibia, after successfully patrolling the Gulf of Guinea, marking its maiden passage around the west coast of Africa.

The visit was aimed at strengthening bilateral ties between India and Namibia, with a focus on enhancing maritime cooperation and tackling common threats.

During the visit, INS Tushil participated in various official, professional, and sports engagements with the Namibian Navy. Captain Peter Varghese, Commanding Officer of INS Tushil, called on Ms Saara Nadapewoshali Muntokoda, Deputy Mayor of Walvis Bay city, and

Rear Admiral Junior Grade Eratus Lazarus, Commander Naval Operations of the Namibian Navy.

The visit included professional interactions, such as operational planning, cross-visits, and subject matter expert exchanges. The crew of INS Tushil also engaged in a friendly volleyball match and a joint yoga session with the Namibian Navy and the Police personnel along with the staff from the High Commission of India.

The visit of INS Tushil to Walvis Bay, Namibia, underscores the growing maritime cooperation between India and Namibia and highlights the Indian Navy's commitment to promoting peace and stability in the region.

Manifesto released for the people of Delhi, new political initiative launched

Staff Reporter New Delhi

Janniti and Sudda Khidda Punjab Federation in collaboration with Global Midas Foundation on Friday unveiled a Manifesto for the people of Delhi, aiming to give a positive direction to the political future of Delhi and Punjab.

The organisation during a press conference at the Press Club of India, Delhi criticized the Aam Aadmi party government led in Punjab and New Delhi.

Prominent leaders like Inder Preet Singh, Abhishek, Aam Bandvi, and Harmeet Singh visited Karimnagar. Criticizing the 'AAP' government, they questioned the breach of electoral promises and accused the party of de-



Press conference at the Press Club of India, Delhi, where a Manifesto for the people of Delhi was unveiled. Prominent leaders like Inder Preet Singh, Abhishek, Aam Bandvi, and Harmeet Singh visited Karimnagar.

viating from administrative issues. Also, they announced the start of a new movement for the renaissance of Punjab.

Aman Bandvi stressed the need to make the manifestos of political parties legally binding. He described the Sudda Khidda Punjab Federation as the harbinger of the development of the state. Inder Preet Singh accused AAP of being anti-development and doing appeasement politics.

Khattar inaugurates smart city projects in Karimnagar

Karimnagar Union Minister of Housing & Urban Affairs, Manohar Lal Khattar visited Karimnagar Smart City Friday and inaugurated 4 prominent projects working in the sector of education, solid waste management and social infrastructure.

This ₹22 crore project includes a commercial complex, renovation of the indoor hall, modern toilets, parking area, and landscaping, providing an inclusive space for recreation and sports.

Multi-purpose School Park: Spread over 5.96 acres, this ₹12.35 crore park has a walking track, musical fountain, and recreational facilities, providing a vibrant public space for families.

24x7 Water Supply: This ₹18 crore initiative has introduced a new water distribution network in the Housing Board Colony, increasing efficiency and accessibility in water management for residents.

Smart classrooms have been developed in 53 government schools, and improved infrastructure and sports facilities have been provided in 27 schools. These efforts ensure a modern learning environment for students and empower them with e-learning tools. Over 1 lakh metric tons of legacy waste has been processed under the bio-ming project, reflecting the city's commitment to environmental sustainability. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Stadium has been transformed into a world-class sports facility, with structures including cycle tracks, skating rinks, basketball courts, and parking areas, among others.

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SC refuses to cancel bail of actor Darshan, others in murder case

New Delhi The Supreme Court on Friday refused to cancel the bail granted to Karnataka actors Darshan Thoogudeep, Pavithra Gowda, and five others in the Renukaswamy murder case but agreed to examine the Karnataka government's challenge.

A bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan issued notice to Darshan and others on the state's plea against the Karnataka High Court's bail order.

The state government, the apex court said, apprehended other co-accused would be allowed to take advantage of order passed by the high court in the impugned order.

"Since state is praying for cancellation of bail, it would not be proper to stay the operation of the order as it would amount to cancellation of bail. Yet, to protect the interest of prosecution, if any co-accused prays on bail, the court concerned shall not place reliance on the order challenged before us. Any bail application filed shall be decided on its own merit," the bench said.



The Karnataka High Court on December 13, 2024, granted bail to the actor Darshan and others.

Darshan was arrested on June 11, 2024, for allegedly killing his fan Renukaswamy on June 8 the same year after he reportedly sent obscene messages to Gowda.

Before the grant of bail, the actor was lodged at the Parappana Agrahara Jail in Bengaluru but when a photograph of him relaxing with some other jail inmates went viral, he was transferred to Ballari Central Jail.

The state moved the top court against the

Advt Contact: 9818-799941

NEWS IN BRIEF
"UP Diwas" begins in Noida

Noida
The three-day long "UP Diwas" was inaugurated by minister in charge Brijesh Singh here on Friday. Among other activities, a presentation was given on the development story of Noida, telling how Noida has been developed from 1976 till now.

Further, information was given about the big projects of the three authorities including the Noida International Airport, Noida metro to name a few.

One District One Product (ODOP) stalls were set up to showcase products in the exhibition. Apart from this, stalls of different departments have been set up. A stall of police commissioner, fire brigade and traffic police were also set up.

People were seen buying clothes, dry fruits and Kahwa. Apart from this, more than 100 stalls have been set up. Colourful programmes were also held. The cultural programmes were presented by children of different schools including GIC, Ramaega and many NGOs.

Cultural programmes will be organised on 25 January from 10 am. After this, folk dance will be performed by rock band and Ranjana Naib. On 26 January, Ashrut band will perform. Vishal Shivastav will perform under Bollywood night show.

Jewar MLA Dharendra Singh, Gautam Buddha Nagar DM Manish Verma along with the authority officials were present on this occasion.

DPCC president seeks Badli voters' support

Staff Reporter
New Delhi
Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee (DPCC) president Devender Yadav, who is also the Congress candidate for the Badli assembly seat, while addressing public meetings, appealed to the voters of Badli to vote for his party on February 5.

He said that Congress had an excellent track record of good governance during its 15-year rule, which turned the capital into a world class city. He said that the support for the Congress was overwhelming in Badli, as women, youth, elderly, Dalits, and every section of people were waiting to throw out the corrupt AAP government from power.

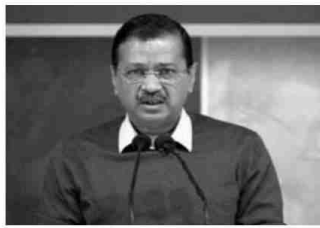
Yadav said that the Badli voters were showing lots of love on him as people have now realised that Congress was returning to power in Delhi and people have resolved to elect him with a record margin.

He said that the dirty drinking water, water shortage, inflated power and water bills, broken roads, waterlogged areas, stoppage of welfare pensions were major issues affecting the Badli assembly. These issues would be tackled on returning to power, Yadav added.

The five guarantees announced by the Congress ahead of the Delhi assembly elections will be fulfilled, like the Congress had done in Karnataka, Telangana, Himachal Pradesh and Jharkhand, which will make qualitative improvement in the life of the people, he added.

CM Adityanath should 'guide' Shah to improve law and order in Delhi: Kejriwal

New Delhi
Union Home Minister Amit Shah about how to improve law and order and eliminate gangsters in Delhi, AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal said on Friday.



Adityanath, in back-to-back to election rallies in Delhi on Thursday, slammed Kejriwal over a host of issues, alleging the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) settled Bangladeshi and Rohingya infiltrators in Okhla and other parts of the city.

Addressing a press conference, Kejriwal claimed that Adityanath said in Delhi that he improved law and order and eliminated gangsters in Uttar Pradesh. "Yogi said a very good thing yesterday. He said law and order has collapsed in Delhi. I hundred per cent agree with him. There are 11 big groups of gangsters in Delhi, who are openly operating, dividing the city into 11 sections," Kejriwal said.

Chemist shopkeepers expressed support to Krishna Nagar BJP candidate Dr. Anil Goyal



New Delhi
BJP president J P Nadda on Wednesday launched a blistering attack on the AAP, alleging that the party broke all records of corruption during its 10-year rule in Delhi.

Addressing a public meeting in west Delhi's Uttam Nagar in the run-up to the Delhi Assembly polls, the Union minister listed the excise policy case among "scams" that allegedly took place during the AAP's two consecutive terms. The party cut pockets of everyone in Delhi during its tenure, he charged.

The AAP government broke all records of corruption during its 10-year rule in Delhi, Nadda told the gathering. "Waqf Board scam... they did not even spare Muslims. They committed a scam worth Rs 100 crore (in Waqf Board)," he said. Nadda called AAP national convenor and former chief minister Arvind Kejriwal a "liar".

"He lies with so much innocence on his face that if a competition of lying is organised at the national level, he will come first. But the people of Delhi will give a befitting reply to the AAP in the assembly polls," the BJP leader said. Nadda said this election is for the future of Delhi and the voters should keep that in mind. The 70-member Delhi Assembly goes to polls on February 5 and the counting of votes will be taken up on February 8.

Biggest Scam of Kejriwal's regime in Collaboration with Power Discoms: Praveen Shankar Kapoor

New Delhi
Delhi BJP Spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor on Friday said that nothing can be more shameful than Arvind Kejriwal claiming that the biggest achievement of his regime has been 24 hours electricity supply in Delhi.

Delhiites know that actually biggest scam of his regime has been done by Arvind Kejriwal in collaboration with Power Discoms



by taking kickbacks for allowing levying of hefty PPAC, Pension Surcharge, Meter Rent Fixed Charges in the consumers bills. Moreover today in Delhi

the middle class residential & commercial consumers including small traders are forced to buy electricity at abnormally high rates of Rs. 9 to 13 per unit.

Truth is Delhi's power supply situation started improving around 1997 in the erstwhile BJP regime after formation of Delhi Vidut Board and by the Commission for Regulated Charges in the consumers bills. Arvind Kejriwal had achieved almost zero power cuts stage.

Centre, Delhi Police conspiring to kill Kejriwal: AAP

New Delhi
The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Friday accused the BJP-led Centre and the Delhi Police of conspiring to "kill" its supreme Arvind Kejriwal, and urged the Election Commission to restore his security cover provided by the Punjab Police that was withdrawn.



There was no immediate reaction from the BJP or the Delhi Police to the allegation.

Addressing a press conference here, Delhi Chief Minister Atishi and his Punjab counterpart, Bhagwant Mann, said they have written to the EC demanding "fairgrounds" to the AAP in the February 5 Delhi Assembly polls and the restoration of Kejriwal's security cover given by the Punjab Police, along with an audit of "life-threatening" attacks on him.

"They alleged that the Delhi Police, which comes under the Centre, has turned a blind eye to the alleged attacks on Kejriwal under Arvind Shah's order."

"There are two players involved in this conspiracy to kill Kejriwalji -- the BJP and the Delhi Police. They are both conspiring

Delhi Police nabs man in ₹15 crore Covid-19 vaccine scam

New Delhi
The Economic Offences Wing of the Delhi Police has arrested a man who had been absconding for nearly three years in a ₹15 crore fraud case, an official said on Friday.



The accused, Prafulla Kumar Nayak, who impersonated an officer from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, played a key role in duping victims by promising orders related to Covid-19 vaccine transportation during the pandemic, the EOW statement read.

The case originated in 2022 following a complaint by one Sunil Kaushik, who alleged that he was defrauded of ₹4 crore under the pretext of securing government contracts for vaccine transportation.

"Four additional complaints revealed a similar modus operandi, with the accused collectively duping victims of over ₹15 crore," Additional Commissioner of Police Amrutha Guguloth said in the statement.

Investigations revealed that in May 2021, the accused lured victims by arranging meetings within the premises of Nirman Bhawan, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's headquarters. Forged work

orders were issued, and trust was gained by leveraging illicit access to the government complex through a bribed ministry employee, the statement read.

Nayak was arrested on Tuesday by the EOW, police said.

"Previously, eight other accused, including the kingpin, Hermenn Sabherwal, were arrested in 2022. Ministry employees, including a reception officer and two multi-tasking staff members, had already been apprehended for their involvement," the officer said in the statement.

Nayak, 48, a resident of Panday Nagar in Delhi and originally from Odisha, facilitated the group's entry into Nirman Bhawan.

He also posed as a ministry official and handled financial transactions through two different organisations led by one of the arrested accused, Pawan Rai. Further investigation into the matter is underway.

PUBLIC NOTICE

MY CLIENT SH. SANJAY JAGDISH CHOUHARY R/O PARARI CHAMELI TOLA WARD NO.01 PARARI PARRI SAHARS BIHAR 852212, HAS DISOWNED / DEBARRED HIS SON SH.PANKAJ KUMAR FROM HIS ALL MOVEABLE AND IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES AND SEVERED ALL HIS RELATIONS WITH HIM AS HIS BEHAVIOUR IS NOT WELLS TOWARDS MY CLIENTS. MY CLIENTS IS NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY CIVIL OR CRIMINAL ACT OF HIM, IF ANY ONE DEALS WITH THE SON OF MY CLIENT HENCEFORTH, SHALL BE DOING SO AT ONCE OWN RISK AND RESPONSIBILITY AND MY CLIENTS SHALL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS ANY ACT/DEED/THING ETC.

AMIT BAGHEL
ADVOCATE
Ch. 1024, 10 Floor, Lawyer's Chamber Block, Rohini Courts, sector-14 Rohini, Delhi-85

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is informed to the public at large that my clients Dinesh Kumar Mangla S/o Late Sh. Hukum Chand and his wife Nirmla both R/O H. No. 1, S/F, Om Vihar Phase-1, Goukul Dham Society, Uttam Nagar, N.D.-59 have disowned and debarred their son namely Deepanshu Mangla and his wife Aarushi Jain from their movable and immovable properties and also severed all kinds of relationship from them due to their matrimonial disputes, debts and disobedience, disrespectful towards my clients. Any one dealing with them i.e. socially, economically shall be doing so at their own risk and responsibility. My clients shall not be liable/responsible for any act or conduct done by them in any manner whatsoever.

ASHWANI KUMAR
ADVOCATE
SUPREME COURT OF INDIA, DELHI HIGH COURT CH. NO. 640, LAWYERS CHAMBER, DWARKA COURT COMPLEX, SECTOR-10, DWARKA, NEW DELHI-110075.

Sachdeva questioned how Kejriwal aide Gopal Mohan acquired wealth during COVID crisis

Staff Reporter
New Delhi

Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva along with MOS Sardar Rameet Singh Bittu stated that during the COVID crisis, Arvind Kejriwal sought ways to profit and exploit it.

Spokesperson Subhendhri Awasthi was present. Arvind Kejriwal makes statements on global issues, but he has yet to answer how his income increased 40 times during the COVID period. Nor does his associate Manish Sisodia explain how a couple of industrialists from Punjab lent him ₹1.5 crore.

Mr. Sachdeva claimed that until now, Arvind Kejriwal has evaded answering questions about constructing his "Sheeshmahal" during the COVID period and the liquor policy scandal. Now, a new property transaction scandal involving his associate Gopal Mohan has surfaced.

Those familiar with Arvind Kejriwal know his aide Gopal Mohan, who as-



sists in managing his New Delhi constituency.

In 2020-21, Kejriwal not only increased his earnings but also facilitated financial gains for his close aides. To prevent scrutiny of his own accounts, he utilized his associate's resources.

During the peak of the COVID period on July 16, 2021, Gopal Mohan bought a flat at 32 Aradhana Enclave, Sector 13, R.K. Puram, for ₹2.44 crore in the name of his mother, Veena Kumari, wife of R.S. Thare-

ja. The witness column in the registry bears the signatures of a certain Manish Bhatia and Gopal Mohan himself.

The New Delhi Assembly office, forged by 87 R.K. Dutt Colony, Jorbagh, New Delhi, and Gopal Mohan, along with his mother, have Aadhaar cards and bank accounts registered at this address.

Virendra Sachdeva questioned how Gopal Mohan acquired such wealth during

an economic crisis and how the costly flat was bought at a surprisingly low price during the COVID period.

He also pointed out that under Arvind Kejriwal's influence, authorities expedited approval for additional construction on the flat overnight. This allowed Gopal Mohan to add another floor and earn crores in profits.

The Aadhaar cards of Gopal Mohan and his mother are linked to the AAP office in New Delhi to ensure all transaction documents remain in Arvind Kejriwal's custody.

The Delhi BJP President demanded answers from Kejriwal:

How did someone from a modest background like Gopal Mohan afford to buy property in such an upscale area?

The Delhi BJP believes this transaction happened with Kejriwal's collusion, and the party demands a complete explanation from him regarding the source of this money.

Delhi Metro services to start early on Republic Day

New Delhi

Delhi Metro will begin operations at 3 am on Republic Day to facilitate public travel to Kartavya Path, as stated in an official announcement.

To mark the celebration of Republic Day, metro services will start at 3 am on all lines this Sunday, enabling people to attend the ceremony at Kartavya Path, the statement added.

Trains will run at 30-minute intervals until 6 am to ensure smooth commuting, after which the regular schedule will resume for the day. Passengers are advised to plan their journeys accordingly and take advantage of the early metro service to avoid last-minute hassles.

Meanwhile, over 70 companies of paramilitary forces and more than 15,000 police personnel will be deployed in the capital for the Republic Day celebrations, according to an official statement.

The city will be under drone and CCTV surveillance, with cyber-specialist officers overseeing operations, a senior police officer



Delhi Metro train.

noted.

"We have implemented multi-layered security measures, including six layers of checking and frisking, along with barricading. Thousands of CCTV cameras, including those equipped with Facial Recognition Systems (FRS), have been installed in the New Delhi district," the officer said.

Mobile vehicles with FRS systems will also be operational, and these cameras are linked to a database for instant identification of criminals. "Delhi Police is fully prepared to handle any situation," the officer assured.

Mock drills involving multiple security agencies are being conducted, and the DCPs of all districts have been briefed on security arrangements.

Pure politics behind move to remove security cover: Kejriwal

New Delhi
A day after Punjab Police personnel deployed in the security of AAP convenor Arvind Kejriwal were withdrawn, the former Delhi chief minister on Friday dubbed it as "pure politics".

"I regret that personal security has been politi-

cised," he said addressing a press conference here. His remarks also came after the AAP chief alleged that the police allowed a rival candidate's men to attack his car on Thursday on the orders of Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Delhi Police dismissed the claim.

At the press conference on Friday, Kejriwal also took a dig at the BJP and Shah over the law and order situation in Delhi due to the activities of gangsters.

At the press conference on Friday, Kejriwal also took a dig at the BJP and Shah over the law and order situation in Delhi due to the activities of gangsters.

Kejriwal said that Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath who claims to have eliminated

gangsters in his state, should give tips to Shah on how to rein in Delhi's gangsters.

The AAP chief said "pure politics" was behind the move to "withdraw his security cover". There should not be any politics at least over personal safety and security, he

added.

Director General of Punjab Police Gaurav Yadav on Thursday said the component of the Punjab Police deployed for Kejriwal's security was withdrawn following the directions of the Delhi police and the Election Commission.

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- 2 Quantity : 10 Set
- 3 Tender due on : 12:02:2025, 11:00 Hrs.
- 4 Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen : www.ircpa.gov.in

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SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE



By Priyanka Saurabh

A comprehensive approach in agricultural reforms is necessary for a developed India in 2047



To achieve Developed India 2047, a comprehensive approach to agricultural reforms is necessary that combines welfare measures with market-driven mechanisms. India can guarantee an agriculture sector that is inclusive, resilient, and environmentally sustainable, empowers farmers, and safeguards the country's future by adopting technology-driven solutions, encouraging sustainable practices, and promoting public-private partnerships.

India's agricultural reforms have changed dramatically, from the MSP system of 1965 which guaranteed price stability, to today's tackling of the complex problems of market integration, sustainability, and welfare. Recent discussions about changes in the MSP and programs such as PM-KISAN reflect efforts to strike a balance between welfare and economics. Still, pursuing sustainable agriculture is essential to achieving a developed India in 2047. The MSP system was introduced to reduce food shortages by providing incentives for the production of rice and wheat. For example, by importing Mexican wheat varieties in 1966, India launched the Green Revolution, which relied on guaranteed MSPs for rice and wheat. Political pressures eventually led to the MSP being expanded to cover more crops, resulting in regional imbalances.

MSP and free electricity have forced Punjab and Haryana to focus heavily on rice, harming the environment and depleting groundwater. For rice and wheat in particular, the system shifted to open procurement, leading to inefficiencies and surplus inventory. The Food Corporation of India has rice stocks almost three times higher than buffer requirements, leading to wastage and storage problems. The introduction of power, fertilizer, and irrigation subsidies reduced farm-

ers' costs but harmed the environment and degraded soils. Free electricity for tubewells in Punjab has led to an alarming decline in groundwater levels. Direct cash transfers and digital beneficiary records are two examples of recent reforms that emphasize digitization to increase efficiency. The PM Kisan Samman Nidhi eliminates middlemen and ensures targeted benefit delivery by providing direct income support to farmers. To improve soil health and reduce groundwater depletion, encourage farmers to grow pulses, oilseeds, and millets from water-intensive crops like wheat and rice. The Odisha Millet Mission encourages the production of millets, which improve soil quality and incomes while reducing the use of water-intensive paddy cultivation. Price deficiency payment schemes should be used in place of MSP to ensure farmers get fair prices and

discourage overproduction of particular crops. In Madhya Pradesh, farmers get compensation for market price losses through the Bhavantar Bhugtan Yojana, which maintains income stability without changing market dynamics. Rationalize fertilizer and electricity subsidies to promote the use of eco-friendly technologies like drip irrigation and organic farming. The PM-KUSUM program encourages solar-powered irrigation pumps, which reduce dependence on government-subsidized electricity and groundwater extraction. Provide farmers with the latest information on crop selection, soil health, and water use to maximize resources in a sustainable way. Using drones to spray pesticides in Tamil Nadu reduces wastage while guaranteeing effectiveness and environmental safety. Build effective cold storage facilities and value chains

to increase market access and reduce wastage. In dry areas, the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana has improved irrigation coverage and water use efficiency. Support agroforestry and the development of drought-resistant varieties to tackle climate change and increase productivity. By encouraging farmers to plant trees, Punjab's agroforestry policy enhances biodiversity and reduces carbon footprint. Boost agricultural R&D spending to create sustainable farming practices and guarantee information sharing through extension services. Zero-tillage farming is promoted by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research because it reduces costs and improves soil health.

To achieve Developed India 2047, a comprehensive approach to agricultural reforms is necessary that combines welfare measures with market-driven mechanisms. India can guarantee an agriculture sector that is inclusive, resilient, and environmentally sustainable; empower farmers; and safeguard the country's future by adopting technology-driven solutions, encouraging sustainable practices, and promoting public-private partnerships.

About the Author

(Priyanka Saurabh, Research Scholar in Political Science)

Andhra Pradesh's land leasing policy provides security to tenant farmers, making it easier for them to access benefits and institutional credit.

Boost public spending on storage facilities, irrigation systems, and rural roads



By Dr. Satyavan Saurabh

Difficulties in deciphering the script of the Indus Valley Civilization



The script of the Indus Valley Civilization, which consists of more than 4,000 seals and inscriptions, makes this highly developed Bronze Age society (2500-1900 B.C.) difficult to understand. According to UNESCO estimates, the script contains 400-600 distinct symbols. It is difficult to interpret because of its brief inscriptions, lack of bilingual texts, and disagreement over linguistic lineage. Very few script samples exist, and the script of the Indus Valley Civilization is still incomprehensible. Since the inscriptions are often brief—containing only four to five symbols—it is challenging to determine grammar, syntax, or language structure. The Rosetta Stone contained extensive text for deciphering, while most of the Indus seals are only 1-2 inches tall and contain small symbols. Unlike the Rosetta Stone, no bilingual texts that compare and decode the Indus script have been discovered. There are similarities between cuneiform and other ancient languages in Mesopotamian inscriptions, but not in the Indus seals.

discovered outside their original archaeological context, leading to controversial interpretations.

At Mohenjo-daro, seals were often found in layers of debris during excavations, with no obvious association with artifacts or urban functions. The destruction of many sites due to urban development and neglect has resulted in a reduced amount of decipherable artifacts. Due to encroachment, access to inscriptions and archaeological layers at sites such as Kalibangan has been restricted. The script is difficult to decode due to inaccessible databases. Lack of full digitization and restrictive deciphering policies often prevent researchers from having full access to Indus inscriptions.

Politicians often oppose and debate interpretations that link the script to particular linguistic or cultural groups. Opponents of the "Aryan" interpretation challenge claims of a "Dravidian" connection, making objective research more difficult. Because of political and logistical differences, South Asian countries have not coordinated well on joint research.

The Voynich Manuscript was decoded using machine-learning algorithms that were trained on well-known medieval scripts. Emphasize how important the Indus script is to understanding ancient history to generate interest and funding. Tamil Nadu's prize initiative is an example of how financial incentives can rekindle interest in cultural and linguistic mysteries.

More regulation is needed to prevent natural disasters or urbanization from destroying archaeological sites. For example, the preservation of Egypt's Valley of the Kings provides insights on how to protect cultural heritage from human interference. Archaeologists, linguists, and AI researchers should work together across different disciplines to decipher the script. Global funding for AI-based pattern recognition and UNESCO's digital collections programs are two examples of initiatives that can bridge the gap.

A committed international research consortium can foster innovations to help reconstruct the socio-cultural and economic aspects of this mysterious civilization.

About the Author

(Dr. Satyavan Saurabh, Poet, freelance journalist and columnist, radio and TV panelist)

It is a matter of debate among academics whether the script is a writing system or administrative or symbolic signs with no linguistic basis. Rather than being a full-fledged writing system, Western scholars argue that the Indus symbols are more like tokens of early trade systems. Many seals and symbols have been discovered outside their original archaeological context, leading to conjectural interpretations.

Many seal databases are still unannotated, hindering researchers' ability to perform systematic linguistic or computational analysis.

Breaking Time Sudoku

What to do
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digit 1 to 9. Every puzzle has only correct solution.

	4							
		9		6	3			
3			2		9			4
6	4	1						9
	8							7
	3				8	5		6
2		9		6				7
			3	5		8		
								2

Solution, Sudoku

1	3	9	7	5	4	6	8	2
8	7	4	1	2	6	3	9	5
5	2	6	8	9	3	7	4	1
6	5	7	4	1	8	2	3	9
4	1	3	2	7	9	5	6	8
9	8	2	3	6	5	4	1	7
3	9	5	6	8	2	1	7	4
7	4	8	5	3	1	9	2	6
2	6	1	9	4	7	8	5	3

THE WISDOM TREE BY SUVEEN KUMAR

LOVE SOFTENS, LOVE HARDENS

Loss of love is not the loss of life if love was not your life, but loss of love is loss of life if love was your life. People say, "Love comes and goes and it is okay" but what they don't tell is, when it comes, it brings abundance even in poverty and when it goes it takes away even the hope of living. Most of the time a life suffered in love, tortures, love in life. A person rejected in love, selects the hated in life. A person cheated in love, cheats love in life. A person abandoned in love, abandons love in life. A person surrendered in love, is taken for granted in life. A person weakened in love, strengthens distance in life. A person broken in love, gets harden in life.

hunger for food, thirst for water and interest for things. Love can recreate itself, regenerate itself and remake itself, it can repair itself, fix itself and mend itself, but it can not refill the past, refund the lost and define the loss. A life before love can be put in the words but a life in love and a life after love are better beyond words.

People say, "It is better to love and lost than never love" but perhaps they do not say: Once you love and lost you will never be like before, no matter how much you try no matter how badly you miss". Love does change the life, but how and how much? Well, see yourself after you have lost it!



Moral: Love comes to everyone but how it will change you, depends, what you are made of.

TOP STORY

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Adityanath accuses SP of opposing Ambedkar, supporting mafia elements

■ CM Yogi Adityanath said the SP leaders' act shocked the people by cheering Moeed Khan, who disrespected a Dalit daughter exposing their true colours. This is the real character of SP.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Friday, launched a scathing attack on the Samajwadi Party (SP), accusing it of opposing leaders like Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar while supporting mafia elements.

Addressing a rally in support of BJP candidate Chandrabhanu Paswan for the Milkpur by-election to be held on February 5 next, the chief minister said, "You (the SP) mourn the deaths of mafia members and even recite 'marsiya' (elegy) for them. The devotees of Moeed Khan must not succeed. It is time to ensure the victory of nationalists from Milkpur."

He said the SP leaders' act shocked the people by cheering Moeed Khan, who disrespected a Dalit daughter exposing their true colours. This is the real character of SP.

He pointed out that the SP MPs from Ayodhya openly



support Moeed Khan and even take pride in being associated with him. "Those who glorify someone like Moeed Khan pose a threat to the safety of our daughters. They should not be allowed to succeed," he added.

Highlighting BJP's stand for justice, Yogi recounted an incident of Bhadrara where a chairman had unlawfully occupied Dalit land. "We made it clear that such actions won't be tolerated here.

In Uttar Pradesh, justice will prevail for the poor and Dalits, not for mafias or criminals," he added.

He stated that his entire cabinet had the privilege of taking a dip at the Triveni Sangam on January 22. He expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve millions of devotees arriving from around the world. "In just 10 days, 10 crore devotees have taken a dip at Triveni. While India and

China have a population of over 45 crore, we visit over 45 crore devotees to expect the Kumbh between January 13 and February 26," he said.

The chief minister highlighted the inclusive nature of the Mahakumbh, where people of all backgrounds are coming together at the Sangam without discrimination. The message of Mahakumbh is clear—only through unity can our nation

remain strong. However, casteism and dynastic politics remain the biggest obstacles to unity and development.

Criticising the politics of casteism and nepotism, he said these were promoted by those who cared only for their families and ignored the wellbeing of the marginalised, Dalits, and backward communities.

Referring to Dr. Lohia's teachings, he said, "Those chasing wealth and legacy are not true socialists. However, today's so-called socialists are obsessed with property."

He accused the SP of using their flag to shield criminals and mafias rather than standing up for the poor and the oppressed. "Their sympathy has never been with the weak and the marginalised," he added.

CM Yogi slammed SP President Akhlesh Yadav for allegedly spreading false propaganda about the Mahakumbh and playing with India's faith. "On January 22, 2024, when Lord Ram's idol was installed in Ayodhya, the Samajwadi Party also opposed it. This is the same party whose hands are stained with the blood of karsevaks. They stained the Sarayu River with the blood of those who fought for Ram Jannabhoomi," he said.

The CM highlighted several initiatives taken by his government but were opposed by the SP, including the naming of the Ayodhya Airport after Valmiki, developments at significant religious sites like the birthplace of Sant Ravidas in Seer Govardhan, and the beautification of historical landmarks like the Raja Subhdevy memorial in Bahraich and the Lakhimpur Khari fort. "When we named three PAC women battalions after Veerangana Uda Devi, Jhalkari Bai, and Avanti Bai, the SP opposed that too. They even dismantled the 54 companies of the UPFAC that were formed to deal with rioters," CM Yogi added.

throughout the country." CM Yogi also emphasized the importance of this year, marking 75 years since the adoption of the Indian Constitution under the leadership of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. He said, "The Constitution was handed to the Constituent Assembly on November 26, 1950." He also noted that Uttar Pradesh was established on January 24, 1950, making this day a symbol of the state's glorious journey.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, while discussing the historical evolution of Uttar Pradesh, traced its journey from 1775 to 1833, when the region was part of Fort William (Bengal). In 1834, it was separated from Bengal, forming the Agra Presidency, and by 1836, it

Top leaders extend wishes for 'UP Diwas'

Lucknow
On the occasion of Uttar Pradesh Foundation Day, the country's top leaders conveyed heartfelt wishes to the people of the state, emphasizing its crucial role in the economic, social, political, and spiritual development of India.

President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Defense Minister Rajnath Singh, and former Governor Ram Naik all took to social media to send their greetings to the people of Uttar Pradesh, wishing for the state's continued progress, prosperity, and happiness.

"My heartfelt greetings to all the residents of Uttar Pradesh on this Foundation Day. This state plays an important role in the economic, social, political, and spiritual development of the country. I am confident that the state will continue on the path of overall development. I wish for the continued progress, happiness, and prosperity of the hardworking and talented people of Uttar Pradesh," said President Droupadi Murmu in her message.

"My best wishes to all my brothers and sisters in Uttar Pradesh on the foundation

day of this holy land. This land has witnessed countless mythological and historical periods in Indian culture and is now engaged in creating new chapters of development. With the government's dedication to public welfare and the tireless hard work of its people, I am confident that Uttar Pradesh will continue to contribute immensely to the vision of a developed India," Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated.

"Warm greetings to all the residents of Uttar Pradesh, the land of religion, knowledge, and rich cultural heritage. I pray to Lord Shri Ram for the all-round development of the state and the welfare of its people," Home Minister Amit Shah expressed.

"My heartfelt greetings to all the brothers and sisters of the state on the foundation day of Uttar Pradesh. This state is a symbol of India's rich nature, culture and traditions. Over the past several years, there has been unprecedented development in the state. I pray that Uttar Pradesh continues to write new chapters of progress and prosperity," said Defense Minister Rajnath Singh.

2 lakh govt jobs will be given to youth over 5 years: Haryana CM

Komal Ramola Chandigarh

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said on Friday that the state government would provide government jobs to 2 lakh youth over five years.

Saini also said that during the past ten years, the BJP government in Haryana has provided government jobs to 1.71 lakh youth on merit.

Along with offering government jobs, the government has also implemented various schemes to help youth set up their businesses, Saini said, while speaking at the Golden Jubilee celebration function at the Indira Gandhi National (IGN) College, Ladwa, Kurukshetra.

He said that IGN College was established in 1974 to provide education to rural children and over its 50-year journey, the institution has played a crucial role in shaping thousands of students into skilled and responsible citizens.

Colleges like IGN play a vital role in achieving the vision of developed Haryana. Educational institutions are the backbone of the state's and country's progress, the CM said.

Saini said to promote higher education, the state government has opened 79 government colleges, 32 of which are exclusively for girls.

Now, there is a govern-



He said that IGN College was established in 1974 to provide education to rural children and over its 50-year journey, the institution has played a crucial role in shaping thousands of students into skilled and responsible citizens.

ment college within a 20-kilometer radius across the state. Besides this, 13 new universities have also been established in the state, he said.

The chief minister said that 1.71 lakh youth have

been provided government jobs on the basis of merit without any 'Parchi-Kharchi' (favouritism or bribe) and the government will provide 2 lakh more jobs in the next five years. There is a lot of enthusiasm among the youth regarding the schemes being run by the government in their interest and the recruitments being done on the basis of 'Mission Merit', he said.

Saini further said under the New Education Policy, the government is committed to providing quality education and employment to the youth.

Haryana's youth have excelled not only in sports but also in various other fields, making the state proud on a global level, he said.

UP Diwas celebrates state's prosperity & pride: CM Yogi

Lucknow

The grand inauguration of Uttar Pradesh Diwas, celebrating the state's remarkable journey and achievements, took place at Awadh Shilp Gram in Lucknow. From January 24 to January 26, this three-day celebration was inaugurated by the Vice President of India, Jagdeep Dhanikar, with Governor Anandiben Patel and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also in attendance. During this, CM Yogi remarked, "Uttar Pradesh Diwas celebrates the state's prosperity and pride."

The e-portal for the Mukhyamantri Yuva Udayam Vikas Abhiyan (M YUVA) was launched during the event. Loans and approval letters were distributed to

25,000 young entrepreneurs to help them establish their enterprises. Additionally, Uttar Pradesh Gaurav Samman was conferred upon six distinguished individuals from the state.

In his address, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath extended a warm welcome to the Vice President and conveyed his congratulations to Uttar Pradesh's people on Uttar Pradesh Foundation Day. He highlighted the significance of this year, with the Mahakumbh being held in the state. He said, "Over the past 10 days, devotees from across India and abroad have taken a holy dip in the Ganges at Triveni Sangam, receiving blessings from revered saints and spreading the message of unity

throughout the country."

CM Yogi also emphasized the importance of this year, marking 75 years since the adoption of the Indian Constitution under the leadership of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. He said, "The Constitution was handed to the Constituent Assembly on November 26, 1950." He also noted that Uttar Pradesh was established on January 24, 1950, making this day a symbol of the state's glorious journey. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, while discussing the historical evolution of Uttar Pradesh, traced its journey from 1775 to 1833, when the region was part of Fort William (Bengal). In 1834, it was separated from Bengal, forming the Agra Presidency, and by 1836, it

was renamed the North Western Provinces.

He added: In 1902, it became known as North-Western Provinces and Awadh' in 1937, it was further rebranded as the 'United Provinces'. Finally, on January 24, 1950, the state was officially named 'Uttar Pradesh'. Today, Uttar Pradesh stands as a beacon of immense potential.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also highlighted that the first Uttar Pradesh Diwas was celebrated in 2018 under the leadership of the then-Governor, Ram Naik. He said, "This year marks the seventh anniversary of the event. During this time, Uttar Pradesh has launched several significant initiatives. The One District One Prod-

uct (ODO) scheme was introduced on the first foundation day, followed by the Vishwakarma Shram Saman Yojana on the second foundation day, among other initiatives in subsequent years."

Yogi announced the launch of the Mukhyamantri Yuva Udayam Vikas Abhiyan by the Vice President. He said, "This scheme aims to offer opportunities for 1 lakh youth to become entrepreneurs each year. Interest-free loans will be available to individuals aged 21 to 40, with loans of up to ₹5 lakh in the first phase and up to ₹10 lakh in the second phase. 27,500 applications have been received, and ₹254 crore in loans have been sanctioned."

UP Day celebrated with great enthusiasm in Agra

Aakash Jain Agra

The 75th Foundation Day of Uttar Pradesh was celebrated with great enthusiasm in Sursadan in Agra here on Friday.

MP Fatehpur Sikri Rajkumar Chahar, Rajya Sabha Member Mr. Naveen Jain, District Panchayat Chairman Dr. Manju Bhadoria, MLAs Punshottam Khan-deval, Dr. Dharmapal, Mr. Chaudhary Babul, Dr. GS Dharmesh, Mr. Chhotel Verma and Mrs. Nirmala Dixit, Divisional Commissioner Mr. Shaikhand Kumar Singh were welcomed by District Magistrate Mr. Arvind Mallappa Bangari and Chief Development Officer Mrs. Pratibha Singh.



While addressing the program, MLA Dr. G.S. Dharmesh said that we are celebrating the foundation day of Uttar Pradesh, this land is the city of Ayodhya of Lord Rama, Mathura of Lord Krishna and Kashi of Lord Shankar, our Gods have incarnated on this holy land, he described in detail the population, food grains and ge-

ographical features of Uttar Pradesh. Rajya Sabha member Naveen Jain said in his address that after the successful Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Ji became the Chief Minister, he understood the importance of celebrating UP Day and from 2018 it was celebrated with enthusiasm and dignity and its form was expanded.

District Panchayat President Dr. Manju Bhadoria said that Lord Ram, Krishna and divine saints were born in Uttar Pradesh, the holy land of creation, sanskar, culture and valor. Today, UP is making unprecedented progress in all the fields of education, self-governance, development, law and order. We are continuously progressing from milk production to agricultural production, highways, expressways, airports etc. The divine Kumbh, a symbol of unity and equality, is being organized with great pomp by Yogi Ji, where 40 crore people, leaving aside caste, religion and high and low, will take a holy dip, such is our Uttar Pradesh.

VP inaugurates UP Foundation Day celebrations in Lucknow

Lucknow

Vice President Jagdeep Dhanikar inaugurated a three-day celebration marking Uttar Pradesh's Foundation Day at Awadh Shilp Gram, Lucknow. The event was graced by the presence of Governor Anandiben Patel and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. Spanning from January 24 to 26, the grand occasion showcases the state's rich cultural heritage, developmental journey, and strides in economic empowerment.

As part of the celebrations, six distinguished individuals who have brought international recognition to the state's growth and pride were honored with the 'Uttar Pradesh Gaurav Samman'. The awardees included Krishnakant Shukla from Varanasi, Himanshu Gupta, an entrepreneur and environmentalist from Vrindavan, Mathura, Manish Verma, an agricultural entrepreneur from Kanpur, Krishna Yadav, a woman entrepreneur from Balanshahar, Colonel Subhash Deswal, an agricultural expert from Bulandshahr, and Dr. Jai Singh, a banana cultivation expert from Bahraich. Each recipient was presented with ₹11 lakh, a certificate of appreciation, and a ceremonial stole by the Vice President.

Haryana CS reviews 25 infrastructure projects of over Rs 100 crore each

Chandigarh

Haryana Chief Secretary Dr Vivek Joshi on Friday chaired a review meeting for 25 infrastructure projects, each with a cost exceeding Rs 100 crore. With a total of over Rs 17,516 crore, these projects span over the departments of Industries and Commerce, Medical Education and Research, Irrigation and Water Resources, and Public Health Engineering.

During the meeting, he instructed officials to establish a panel comprising officers from the irrigation, industry, PWD&R, and pub-



lic health departments. This panel will review project timelines and propose proactive, long-term solutions to ensure strict adherence to schedules and the timely completion of projects.

Issuing strict instructions, the CS also directed officials to take action against negligent contractors, including

blacklisting them. He directed that all necessary clearances, including environmental and forest approvals, should be obtained prior to issuing tenders for projects, ensuring their completion within the stipulated timelines.

The meeting was informed that the Rs 100-crore project to provide canal-based drinking water supply to 35 villages of Badhra Assembly constituency has been completed in Charkhi Dadri district. Similarly, the improvement of water supply in 52 villages and 5 Dhyanies in Nagina and Pingwan blocks

of Nuh district is also nearing completion.

Additional Chief Secretary, Medical Education and Research, Sudhir Rajpal, said the construction work of six government nursing colleges in the state at a cost of Rs 194.30 crore is likely to be completed as per schedule by this May 31.

He said the construction of Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya transformative Institute of Health Sciences in Kuttal, Karnal, has also been completed while the procurement of medical equipment and recruitment of faculty and other staff is in progress.

LG Sinha asks youth to propel J&K's growth trajectory to new heights

Jammu

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor (LG) Manoj Sinha on Friday emphasized the role of educational institutions and youth in developing India as knowledge economy and realising the vision of 'Viksit Bharat'.

He inaugurated 'BRICS Youth Council Entrepreneurship Run-up Event' at the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Jammu. He congratulated the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, the Global Counter Terrorism Council (GCTC), IIM Jammu and all other associate departments for providing a dynamic platform



for innovators, aspiring entrepreneurs, youth leaders to showcase innovative business ideas and entrepreneurial initiatives. The LG highlighted the transformative initiatives of the government through the Department of Industries & Commerce that have redefined innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem and empowering youth of the

UT. "In the past few years J&K's industrial ecosystem has witnessed an unprecedented surge, supporting the culture of innovation, research & development and scientific advancements. I want to see our youth among top-notch entrepreneurs of the country, contributing to its growth," Sinha said.

He said the sincere efforts and policy interventions of the government have made J&K a vibrant startup hub. He also shared the key initiatives including Mission Yuva to develop a business support ecosystem for the enterprising youth of J&K.

Rohit shows some spark but falls for 28 in second essay on Ranji Trophy return

Mumbai
He pulled Umar Nazir for a trademark six, effortlessly lofted Aaqib Nabi and Yuvraj Singh for a couple of more hits over the ropes to give a glimpse of his absolute best. But eventually, a fifty on Ranji comeback was not meant to be for India captain Rohit Sharma who fell for 28 here on Friday.

Playing his first game for Mumbai in domestic red-ball cricket in nearly a decade, Rohit's first day on the field was a disaster with the 37-year-old falling for a 19-ball 3 in the opening hour of the Ranji Trophy clash against Jammu Kashmir.

But on Friday, Rohit gave a far better account of himself to notch up a fluent 28, his best in first-class cricket since a 52 in the second innings of the Bengaluru Test against New Zealand last year.

It indeed has been that long for Rohit, who has since scored 0, 8, 18, 11, 3, 6, 3 and 9 in subsequent outings against New Zealand and Australia.

Back then in mid-October, India were cemented on top of the World



Test Championship points table and the house was in complete order for the national side.

But it came crumbling down following defeats to New Zealand and Australia which forced Indian superstars to play domestic cricket.

On Friday, he looked for a big one but it wasn't to happen. Rohit's knock of 28 was mixed with hits and misses in the initial stages, which all began with a tough dropped chance by Nazir in the fourth over when he could not grab a return catch on his follow through.

Rohit immediately responded with a pull shot for a six over the square leg. A thick outside edge then flew between the fielder at gully and second slip, and on the final ball Rohit fished hard and wide to put the ball away for another four on the off-side.

Dropped on one, Rohit had raced to 21 off 11 balls at one stage but he remained cautious mostly, even though there were a few times he was beaten.

With comparatively no moisture on the second day wicket here at the BKC, J&K bowlers also had to work hard to keep it tight but could not stop Rohit from freeing up his arms for a total of three sixes and two fours.

Eventually, it took a perfectly-timed leap for a one-handed grab from J&K's Abid Mushtaq at mid-wicket off Nazir, who dismissed Rohit for the second time in the contest, to end the Indian captain's stay in the middle.

While the lanky Nazir had the last laugh, Rohit walked off with an innings had elements of all that was and could have been, hits and misses infused with promise that a big knock could just be around the corner for the struggling mainstay.

Raksha Khadse applauds World Cup-winning kho kho teams

New Delhi
Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, Raksha Nikhil Khadse, met and congratulated both the men's and women's kho kho teams, who recently won the World Cup, here on Friday. The Minister applauded the dominating manner in which both the teams clinched the glittering World Cup trophies.

"It is such a momentous occasion for the country that both our men's and women's teams clinched the first-ever World Cup in kho kho, especially the dominating fashion in which we won gives me immense pride. This is our indigenous sport, the sport of our soil, our villages. The entire country celebrated the victory, even in distant parts. I want to congratulate Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI) president (Sudhanshu) Mittal ji and his entire team for putting a lot of effort into helping the game earn the much-required fame and create ripples internationally," Khadse said while addressing the World Cup-winning teams.

Pratik Waikar-led Indian men's team defeated Nepal in the title clash while the women's team that was captained by Priyanka Ingle, also triumphed against Nepal in the finale. The first-ever Kho Kho World Cup saw 23 coun-



tries across 6 continents featuring in the week-long tournament with 20 men's and 19 women's teams being a part of it.

"Not only Maharashtra, where the sport originated, but other states also performed very well, which is very heartening to see. I would urge all the players to promote the sport in their states/districts/cities etc. You need to tell people in your region about your achievements so that more children get inspired to take up the sport. I would like to extend my best wishes to each player present here for more success in the future," she added.

The Sports Authority of India (SAI) supported KKFI to organise a month-long national camp from December 10, 2024, to January 11, 2025, at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium at no cost.

Aaqib Javed slams former cricketers over 'spin vs pace' debate

Multan
Pakistan's interim head coach and senior selector Aaqib Javed on Friday defended the strategy to prepare rank turners at home, saying if such tracks were prepared before, the team could have been in contention to make the World Test Championship (WTC) final.

Pakistan beat England 2-1 at home and have already taken 4-1 lead in the ongoing series against the West Indies by winning the opening Test by 127 runs with spinners Abrar Ahmed and left-arm Noman Ali wreaking havoc.

"I am surprised by this debate. If we can win Test matches at home through our spinners, you say our cricket is regressing and if we win matches through pace bowlers you say our cricket is moving forward," Aaqib told reporters.

"It is not the first time Pakistan has won by preparing spin matches. And definitely, we should make spin tracks to take advantage of home conditions.

We should have taken such decisions before and we would have been in the race in the ICC World Test Championship cycle."

Aaqib said that everyone needed to understand that the eventual aim is to win matches as a team and it didn't matter who starred be it batters, spinners, or pacers.

"We need to become that team again where touring sides know it is not going to be easy in Pakistan and they will face big challenges.

In recent times we have lost home series because we didn't or couldn't prepare pitches to suit our bowlers."

The coach said that every team understands that the format of the WTC was such that they have to win their home series and a couple of games on away tours to become a candidate to play in the final.

He noted that every country had pitches suited to their strength and cited the example of South Africa where no Test match lasted the distance in the last few years, and many contests ended within three days.

The Pakistan coach also pointed out that on their recent tour to South Africa, they came close to winning the first Test through its all-pace attack but unfortunately couldn't get the last two wickets.

"We didn't play a spinner there so it is all about conditions and playing eleven is based on that."

He said that he had been working with the bowlers in the team and even at the domestic level to make them find again the art of reverse swing bowling on abrasive and spin tracks in the subcontinent.

"Our top bowlers in the past mostly used to rely heavily on reverse swing to win matches and also clean up the lower order of other teams. Unfortunately, nowadays our bowlers are not able to do that and we are working on that."

An injured Djokovic quits in Australian Open semifinal against Zverev



Melbourne
An injured Novak Djokovic quit because of a torn muscle in his left leg after dropping the first set of his Australian Open semifinal against Alexander Zverev on Friday.

Djokovic lost the opener 7-6 (5) in a tiebreaker and immediately walked around the net to concede the match to Zverev. Fans booed as Djokovic walked off towards the locker room, and he responded by giving two thumbs-up.

"It was getting worse and worse," Djokovic said later at his news conference, referring to the pain in his leg, which he hurt during his quarterfinal victory over Carlos Alcaraz on Tuesday night. "I knew, even if I won the first set, it was going to be a huge uphill battle for me."

Djokovic was bidding for an 11th championship at the Australian Open and record 25th Grand Slam title overall. He withdrew from last year's

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French Open before the quarterfinals after tearing the meniscus in his right knee. The only set of Djokovic vs Zverev lasted 1 hour, 20 minutes and included 19 points that lasted nine strokes or more apiece. The first four games alone lasted 31 minutes.

It was gruelling—and would have been even without dealing with a problem with one's body. But Djokovic showed up with his left thigh taped up, a reminder that he finished the contest against Alcaraz that way after hurting himself late in the first set.

Jadeja shines as other India international stars continue to disappoint in Ranji Trophy

Mumbai
Ravindra Jadeja turned out to be the only Indian superstar to live up to expectations, returning with a 12-wicket haul for Saurashtra even as the likes of Rohit Sharma and Rishabh Pant once again failed to score big for their respective teams in the Ranji Trophy on Friday.

Jadeja, who claimed 5/66 in the first innings, returned with 7/38 figures in the second essay at Rajkot's Niranjan Shah Stadium as Saurashtra trounced Delhi by 10 wickets to win with a bonus point in their Elite Group D match on Friday.

The contest had also marked the return of India wicketkeeper-batter Pant, who endured twin failures scoring 1 and 17 in two outings.

While Jadeja ruled the roost in his backyard on expected lines, his performance was the only positive output from the national team's perspective as the much-anticipated return of Rohit for defending champions Mumbai turned out to be another disappointing affair.

Dismissed for a wobbly 19-ball 3 on the opening day, Rohit appeared to be hitting his strides when he hit three at-



tractive sixes and put on a 54-run stand for the first wicket with his Test opening partner Yashvi Jaiswal. Despite looking good in patches, Rohit failed to convert the start and perished for 28 off 35 balls with two fours and three sixes, which was his highest first-class score since 52 in the second innings of the Bengaluru Test against New Zealand last October. Rohit's innings was marked with

flashes of brilliance as well as misses but some of the strokes he played — twice he lifted Jammu and Kashmir pacers over their head for sixes — showed the promise of the Indian Test and ODI captain rediscovering his long lost form.

Jaiswal, who was the only Indian batter to get considerable runs against New Zealand and Australia, also endured a forgettable return to Ranji Trophy as he fell for 4 and 26.

After being surprised with one that skidded in to trap him leg-before on a fresh wicket, Jaiswal chose to keep taking strides towards the pitch of the ball to negate movement off the surface, while showing more intent to get runs. While he did hit a few attractive strokes, Jaiswal could not impose himself on the opposition bowlers. Shreyas Iyer, who was in peak form in the first round of five group stage matches with 233 against Maharashtra and another hundred against Odisha, flopped too when he fell for a 16-ball 17 in Mumbai's second innings.

Iyer, who is a member of India's squad for the Champions Trophy, had made a 77-ball 11 during his brief stay in the first essay.

Mandhana, Deepti in ICC women's ODI Team of the Year; no Indian in men's side

Dubai
Star batter Smriti Mandhana and all-rounder Deepti Sharma were on Friday named in the ICC women's ODI Team of the Year 2024 but none of their male counterparts found a place in the men's side that was dominated by Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The women's all-star team has three players from England, two Australians, two South Africans and one each from Sri Lanka and West Indies, besides the two Indians. South African batter Laura Wolvaardt, who scored 697 runs in 12 matches in 2024, was named captain of the ICC team.

The men were, however, absent from the ICC XI and that can be attributed to lack of ODI engagements for the country last year. India played only three ODIs — an away series against Sri Lanka — losing two of them while the third one ended in a tie.

The 28-year-old Mandhana accumulated 747 runs in 13 matches to be the highest run-scorer in women's ODIs in 2024. She is also in the running for the ICC Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year award.

In the home series against South Africa, Mandhana was in sublime form, beginning with back-to-back centuries in the first two ODIs. She narrowly missed a third consecutive ton, falling for 90, though her remarkable tally of 343 runs in the series earned her the Player-of-the-Series award.

Mandhana had a shaky start in the first two ODIs against New Zealand in October, but ended the series on a high note with a brilliant century in the final match. With his hundred, Mandhana became the most prolific century-maker for India in the Women's 50-over



format. Deepti scored 186 runs and took 24 wickets in 13 matches in a fine all-round show in 2024.

Sub-continent shines in Men's all-star line-up — The men's all-star ODI team announced by the ICC features four players from Sri Lanka, three each from Pakistan and Afghanistan and one from the West Indies.

Sri Lanka captain Charith Asalanka was named skipper of the ICC team as well for his stupendous batting through the year.

In his 16 ODI appearances in 2024, Asalanka scored 605 runs at an average of 50.2 including a century and four fifties.

Sri Lanka played 18 ODIs in the year gone by, the highest among all teams, and won 12 of them.

Pakistan picked up seven victories from its nine ODI engagements, while Afghanistan won eight of their 14 one-dayers.

Big-hitting West Indian Shereane Rutherford, who made his interna-



tional debut in 2023, was the lone non-Asian in the all-star XI for his 425 runs from nine games at an astonishing average of 106.2.

ICC Women's ODI Team of the Year for 2024

Smriti Mandhana (India), Laura Wolvaardt (Sri Lanka), Chamari Athapaththu (Sri Lanka), Hayley Matthews (West Indies), Marizanne Kapp (South Africa), Ashleigh Gardner (Australia), Annabel Sutherland (Australia), Amy Jones (WK) (England), Deepti Sharma (India), Sophie Ecclestone (England), Kate Cross (England).

ICC Men's ODI Team of the Year for 2024

Charith Asalanka (C) (Sri Lanka), Saim Ayub (Pakistan), Rahmanullah Gurbaz (Afghanistan), Pathum Nissanka (Sri Lanka), Kusal Mendis (WK) (Sri Lanka), Shereane Rutherford (West Indies), Arzathulla Omarzai (Afghanistan), Wanindu Hasaranga (Sri Lanka), Shaheen Shah Afridi (Pakistan), Haris Rauf (Pakistan), AM Ghazanfar (Afghanistan).

Jannik Sinner beats Ben Shelton to return to the Australian Open final



Melbourne
Defending champion Jannik Sinner overcame some third-set cramming and beat Ben Shelton 7-6 (2), 6-2, 6-2 on Friday to return to the Australian Open final as he pursues a third Grand Slam title.

The No. 1-ranked Sinner, a 23-year-old from Italy, fell behind in the opening set and twice was a point from losing it when Shelton served at 6-5. But Sinner broke there, then dominated the ensuing tiebreaker, and broke again to begin the second set.

The only trouble Sinner ran into in the

rest of the way was when he clutched at his left hamstring, and then his right thigh. In the third set, he was treated by a trainer, who massaged both of Sinner's legs during changeovers.

Sinner won his first major title at Melbourne Park a year ago, then grabbed No. 2 at the U.S. Open in September.

He'll try to add to that total when he faces No. 2 Alexander Zverev on Sunday for the championship.

Zverev advanced when Novak Djokovic quit after one set of their semifinal Friday because of a leg injury.

WHO says reviewing priorities ahead of US exit

Geneva
The World Health Organization said Friday it was reviewing its priorities in preparation for the withdrawal of its largest donor the US, and stressed that it provides vital services that protect the country from health threats.

Trump on Monday signed an executive order directing the United States to withdraw from the WHO, a body he has repeatedly criticised over its handling of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"This announcement has made our financial situation more acute, and we know it has created significant concern and uncertainty for the WHO workforce," the organisation's chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a letter sent to WHO staff Thursday and seen by AFP on Friday.

He stressed that the UN health agency regretted the decision by the United States -- by far its biggest donor -- and hoped the new administration will reconsider it.

"We are open to engaging in constructive dialogue to preserve and strengthen the historic relationship between WHO and the USA," he said.

WHO spokesman Christian Lindmeier stressed to reporters Friday that the US withdrawal would be a mistake.

"WHO protects the US with a sophisticated health intelligence system that works to detect, characterise and assess threats in real time," he said.

Putin ready to talk to Trump, waiting for US 'signals': Kremlin

Moscow
The Kremlin said Friday that President Vladimir Putin was ready to talk to US counterpart Donald Trump but was waiting for "signals" from Washington.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists: "Putin is ready. We are waiting for signals" from the United States.

Putin and the newly inaugurated American president have both said they are ready to meet for talks on Ukraine.

Trump has threatened Russia with tougher economic sanctions if Moscow does not agree to end the conflict.

Peskov said that he could not comment further on a meeting between the leaders, saying it was "hard to read coffee grounds" to predict the future.



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The Kremlin spokesman rejected a claim from Trump that the conflict in Ukraine could be ended by lowering the price Russia receives for its oil, saying: "This conflict does not depend on oil prices."

Speaking at the World Economic Forum in Davos on Thursday, Trump said that he

would ask Saudi Arabia and OPEC to lower oil prices, saying: "If the price came down, the Russia-Ukraine war would end immediately."

Peskov said the conflict was instead based on "threats to Russia's national security" and "threats to Russians" living in Ukraine and the complete refusal of Americans and Europeans to listen to Russia's concerns.

UN concerned by Israel's 'war fighting' methods in West Bank

Geneva
The United Nations voiced serious concerns Friday over the Israeli military's use of force during its raid this week in the West Bank, including methods "developed for war fighting".

The Israeli military this week launched a raid in the Jenin area, a hotbed of Palestinian militancy, days into a ceasefire in its war with Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

"We are deeply concerned by the use of unlawful lethal force in Jenin, in the occupied West Bank," UN human rights office spokesman Thameen Al-Kheetan told a media briefing in Geneva.

"The deadly Israeli operations in recent days raise serious concerns about unnecessary or

disproportionate use of force, including methods and means developed for war fighting, in violation of international human rights law, norms and standards applicable to law enforcement operations."

"This includes multiple airstrikes and apparently random shooting at unarmed residents attempting to flee or find safety."

UN human rights chief Volker Turk has called for Israel to adopt and enforce rules of engagement that are fully in line with applicable human rights norms.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said the objective of the operation, dubbed "Iron Wall", was to "eradicate terrorism" in the area.

Smriti Irani calls for greater global cooperation to empower women

Davos
Former Union minister Smriti Irani has called for greater global cooperation on women empowerment and pitched for empowering women entrepreneurs with latest technological advances like AI.

Irani, founder and chairperson of Alliance for Global Good-Gender Equity and Equality, said in an interview here during the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting that India has taken several ambitious initiatives to empower women, enhance their skills, and improve their overall well-being.

Irani emphasised the need for global collaboration, citing efforts to uplift women through the Alliance.

"Our mission is to connect people worldwide and empower women in business, build their skills, and focus on their health and well-being," Irani said.

She highlighted the pivotal support of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in driving these efforts forward.

"So far, we have initiated projects involving 4,000 international delegates. This year, particularly in Davos, we have introduced significant schemes. In India, we aim to reach nearly 250 locations and em-



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power 1,00,000 women entrepreneurs," she said. "The plans include facilitating capital access, helping entrepreneurs repackage products for international markets, and guiding them on meeting global certifications and standards."

Acknowledging the transformative role of technology, Irani said, "At Davos, we recognise that this is the era of AI. We are exploring how technology can assist women entrepreneurs and how they can adapt to and leverage these advancements."

Irani said that a newly signed agreement with the Commonwealth's 56 member countries would ensure the extension of India's efforts to other nations.

Irani said a strategic partnership agreement with a US-based industry forum has been formed, which will focus on upskilling women in Asia for the carbon credit market, creating employment opportunities while addressing environmental concerns.

"This initiative not only focuses on empowering women but also positions India as a global leader in both sustainability and women's development," Irani said.

She said the potential for innovation, resilience and progress gets unlocked when women are empowered in a society.

The Alliance was launched last year on the sidelines of the WEF Annual Meeting 2024, which also she had attended.

Anchored in the CII Centre for Women Leadership, supported by the Gates Foundation and the World Economic Forum as its network partner, the Alliance focuses on three core pillars of health, women's enterprise, and education and skilling.

The Alliance, in partnership with the Women Collective Forum, has designed the 100K initiative, which aims to equip and support 1,00,000 women - corporate leaders, entrepreneurs, business owners, and professionals across India.

BUSINESS

Keeway India Unveils K300 SF with Exclusive Launch Offer



Hyderabad

Keeway India, under the aegis of Adishwar Auto Ride India (AARI), is excited to announce the introduction of a special edition of its popular K300 motorcycle series, named the Keeway K300 SF (Street Fighter). As part of an exclusive offer, the first 100 customers can own this stunning machine at a special price of just ₹1.69 lakhs (ex-showroom).

The K300 SF is an upgraded version of the K300N, and the limited period offer will make it a great value for money product for performance motorcycle enthusiasts.

In this ever-growing 300cc segment, the K300 SF with its exclusive pricing, will give the first 100 set of customers a unique opportunity

to step into the premium 300cc segment, standing out from the rest in the Indian market.

Speaking on the launch, Mr. Vikas Jhabakh, Managing Director of Keeway India, said, "The Keeway K300 SF embodies our focus on delivering world-class products tailored to the needs of Indian riders. By introducing the K300 SF at a special price for the first 100 customers, we're offering a touch of exclusivity to early adopters who share our passion for innovation and performance. This initiative makes the K300 SF a compelling offering with immense value for money. We're confident that it will resonate deeply with motorcycling enthusiasts across the country."

It, however, did not name the firms. In November last year, the US Department of Justice's

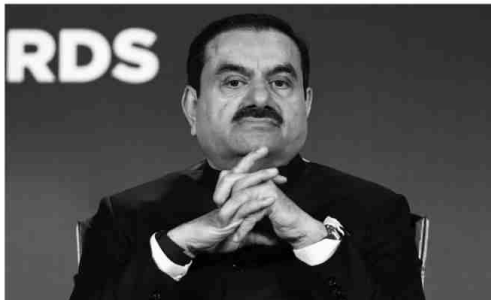
Adani Group appoints Law firms to review US bribery indictment

New Delhi
Adani group has appointed independent law firms to review the US indictment against its founder chairman Gautam Adani, his nephew and another key executive in a USD 265 million bribery case, according to a stock exchange filing by a group firm.

Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL), which is said to have benefited from getting renewable energy supply contracts in lieu of payment of the bribe to unnamed Indian officials, in the filing, asserted that it was in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

"The company, in discussion with Adani group management, has appointed independent law firms to perform independent review" in the US indictment matter, AGEL said in notes to the third quarter earnings statement.

They were charged with securities fraud conspiracy, wire fraud



(US DoJ) indictment filed in a New York court charged Gautam Adani, founder chairman of the ports-to-energy conglomerate, his nephew Sagar, and AGEL executive Vneet Jaan for allegedly being part of a scheme to pay bribes to secure solar power sale contracts that could benefit bring in USD 2 billion of profits over 20 year period to the firm.

They were charged with securities fraud conspiracy, wire fraud

conspiracy and securities fraud.

The Adani group has denied all charges, calling them "baseless". AGEL said it has not been named as a defendant in the indictment and civil complaint and added that "it had made all appropriate disclosures in the past, including in bond offering circulars".

"As per the indictment, these directors have been charged on three counts in the crim-

inal indictment, namely (i) alleged securities fraud conspiracy (ii) alleged wire fraud conspiracy and (iii) alleged securities fraud for making false and misleading statements, and as per US SEC civil complaint, directors omitting material facts that rendered certain statements misleading to US investors under Securities Act of 1933 and the Securities Act of 1934," AGEL said in the filing.

It went on to assert

Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL), which is said to have benefited from getting renewable energy supply contracts in lieu of payment of the bribe to unnamed Indian officials, in the filing, asserted that it was in "compliance with applicable laws and regulations".

that it complies with applicable laws and regulations. "Having regard to the fact that there is no allegation/charge to the company, these unaudited financial results do not carry any adjustments in this regard," it added.

AGEL's auditors - SRBC & Co LLP and Dharmesh Parikh & Co LLP - in their note to the October-December 2024 quarter accounts stated that they are "unable to comment on the possible consequential effects thereof, on the unaudited financial results".

NTPC Green Energy Wins 300 MW Solar Project



New Delhi

NTPC Green Energy Limited (NGEL) on Friday said its arm has won a 300 megawatt (MW) solar project from NHPCC.

NTPC Renewable Energy Limited (NTPC REL) has emerged as a successful bidder in the e-reverse auction conducted by NHPCC, NGEL said in an exchange filing.

The tender was for the selection of solar power developers to set up 1200 MW inter-state transmission system (ISTS) connected solar power projects under tariff-based competitive bidding with a green shoe option, it added.

The tender included 600 MW/1200 MWh energy storage systems (ESS).

NTPC REL has secured a capacity of 300 MW at a tariff of Rs 3.09/kWh (kilowatt hour). The project will include the establishment of an ESS with a capacity of 150 MW/300 MWh.

The auction was concluded on January 23, 2025, and NTPC REL is now awaiting the issuance of the Letter of Award (LOA) from NHPCC Limited.

LIC Mutual Fund launches Multi Asset Allocation Fund

New Delhi
LIC Mutual Fund, one of the reputed fund houses in India, is launching LIC MF Multi Asset Allocation Fund, an open-ended scheme investing in equity, debt and gold.

Commenting on the NFO, Mr. R.K. Jha, Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of LIC Mutual Fund Asset Management Ltd., said, "The Multi-Asset Allocation Funds are increasingly getting popular nowadays as it reduces the concentration

risks and ensures better diversification of assets. Hybrid mutual funds saw a 27% surge in assets under management in 2024, increasing from ₹6.90 lakh crore in January 2024 to ₹8.77 lakh crore in December 2024 according to data published by Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI). Notably, Multi-Asset Allocation Funds saw significant growth in the AUM under Hybrid category. Currently this reflects a clear investor incli-

nation towards hybrid funds and our new fund is ideally suited to cater to their interests."

Mr. Nikhil Rungta, Co-Chief Investment Officer-Equity, LIC Mutual Fund Asset Management Ltd., said: "A Multi-Asset Allocation Fund is a solution that combines the power of equities for growth with income generation from debt and the resilience of commodities. It provides a balanced pathway to maximize opportunities during volatile



times. Investors who wish to invest in all the 3 asset classes at once

and need a product having relatively lower volatility than pure equity

schemes may invest in this product. Clearly, the market's long-term outlook is bullish, and the new fund is offering an opportunity for all the investors to ride on this wave."

The New Fund Offer (NFO) will open on 24th January 2025 and close on 07th February 2025. The investment objective of the scheme is to generate long-term capital appreciation by investing in a diversified portfolio of equity and equity related instru-

ments, debt and money market instruments and units of gold Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs).

The benchmark of the scheme is a combination of 65% Nifty 500 TRI + 25% Nifty Composite Debt Index + 10% price of domestic gold. Mr. Nikhil Rungta, Mr. Sunil Bhatnagar and Mr. Pratik Shroff will be the Fund managers of the scheme. The scheme will reopen for continuous sale and repurchase on 18th February 2025.

Advt Contact : 9818-799941

There was a sense of fear earlier, now I'm comfortable as an actor: Khushi Kapoor

Mumbai actor Khushi Kapoor says she has gained more confidence after her movie debut "The Archies" and hopes that shows in her second movie, "Loveyapa", where she stars opposite Aamir Khan's son Juanaid Khan. The upcoming romantic-comedy is directed by Advait Chandan of "Laal Singh Chaddha" and "Secret Superstar" fame. "This film allowed me to explore my abilities as an actor. In the first film, I was very comfortable in Betty's role because it is very similar to how I am. This one was challenging but fun at the same time for me. It feels like I've gained more experience. For me, it was not to let fear hold me back," Khushi, the younger daughter of legendary actor Sridevi and producer Boney Kapoor, said.

an adaptation of the popular comic series, marked the movie debut Khushi, Shah Rukh Khan's daughter Suhana and Amitabh Bachchan's grandson Agastya Nanda.

my best. As you learn and grow, you should keep getting better. So, hopefully, I'm learning more and doing more and that will help," she said. Described as a "tangled tale of love and its complications with a mix of fun and laughter", "Loveyapa" is the story of a young couple (Khan and Kapoor) whose lives take a turn as unspoken secrets come to light after they exchange their mobile phones.

Khushi said that the idea of romance may have changed over the years but the emotion of love between a couple remains the same. "We can keep adding new words and phrases and call it a different thing, but essentially it remains the same," she said.

Sunny Deol's high-octane action thriller 'Jaat' set to release in April

Mumbai Bollywood's action star Sunny Deol is all set to make a grand comeback on the big screen in the upcoming action thriller 'Jaat', directed by Gopichand Malineni.

The highly anticipated film will hit theatres worldwide on April 10 and promises to be a visual feast for fans of high-octane action. The film will be available in Hindi, Telugu, and Tamil. Sunny Deol, known for his intense action roles, will be seen in a gritty new avatar, taking on his enemies with unmatched intensity. In the film's teaser, unveiled in December 2024, fans got a glimpse of the actor wielding a bazooka, hinting at the explosive action sequences that await.



Happy Saif Ali Khan returned from hospital: Javed Akhtar

Mumbai veteran writer Javed Akhtar on Friday said he is happy that Bollywood star Saif Ali Khan has recovered following a knife attack at his residence last week. "All of us were extremely concerned. And I'm happy that he has come back from the hospital," Akhtar said on the sidelines of the convocation ceremony of filmmaking institute Whistling Woods.

Khan was attacked in his 12th-floor apartment in the upscale Bandra area during an attempted robbery. He sustained multiple stab wounds and underwent two surgeries at the Lilavati Hospital here.

The 54-year-old actor was discharged from the hospital on Tuesday.

Police have arrested the intruder, identified as Sha-reeful Islam Shehad Mohammad Rohilla Amin Fakir, a 30-year-old Bangladeshi national who illegally entered India last year and assumed the alias Vijay Das.

Akhtar and veteran actor Pankaj Kapur on Friday attended the Convocation of the Class of 2024 at the Whistling Woods International, the film institute run by filmmaker Subhash Ghai.

The duo were presented with the Maestro Awards in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the art of storytelling, cinema, and culture.



DJ Tiesto returning to India for three-city tour

New Delhi Dutch DJ and record producer Tiesto is all set to return to India after a decade for his highly-anticipated Tiesto India Tour 2025.

DJ Tiesto, whose real name is Tijs Michiel Verwest, will perform in three cities – Gurugram, Mumbai and Bengaluru from February 13 to 16, according to a press release.

The Dutch musician's India tour is presented by EVA Live, a leading live entertainment company. "I'm beyond thrilled to return to India after 10 years! The incredible en-

ergy and passion of the people here are unlike anything else. Gurugram, Mumbai, Bengaluru – get ready to party with me because this is going to be unforgettable! India has always held a special place in my heart, and I can't wait to experience that magic once again," DJ Tiesto said in a statement.

Tiesto will begin his tour on February 13 at Backyard Sports Club, Gurugram, followed by a performance at NESCO Exhibition Centre in Mumbai on February 14. The concluding performance will be at Terraforma Arena, Bengaluru, on February 16.



Siddharth Roy Kapur thanks Subhash Ghai for passing on title 'Deva'

Mumbai producer Siddharth Roy Kapur has expressed his gratitude to veteran filmmaker Subhash Ghai for passing on the title "Deva" for the upcoming action thriller, starring Shahid Kapoor.

"The title 'Deva', which has been under Ghai's cinematic custody since 1987, was initially reserved for a project featuring Amitabh Bachchan. And for decades, the filmmaker safeguarded the title, envisioning it as a major film with Bachchan in the lead.

In a statement, Kapur wished Ghai on his 80th birthday and said he granted permission to use the title after just a single phone call. "We are truly honoured and grateful to Subhashji for trusting us with such an iconic title. In just one call, he graciously agreed to pass the torch, with Mr. Bachchan's blessing..."

"We are committed to upholding its essence and delivering an action-packed film that lives up to the impact he once imagined. A very happy 80th birthday to Subhashji! We hope to make you proud," Kapur said.

In "Deva", Shahid is essaying the role of a brilliant but defiant police officer. It is directed by Rosshan Andrews and also stars Pooja Hegde and Pavai Gulati.

Produced by Roy Kapur Films in collaboration with Zee Studios, the movie will hit the screens on January 31.



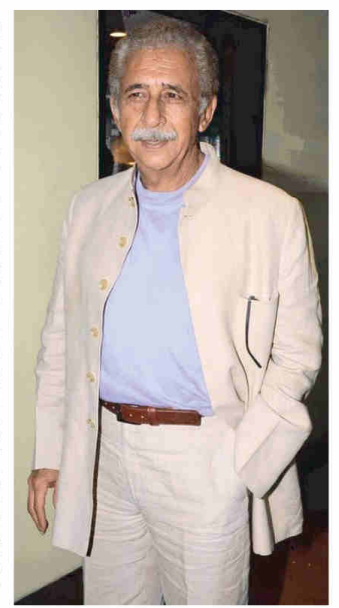
Bollywood films would be a 'tragic' lens to understand India 100 years later: Naseeruddin Shah

Kozhikode actor Naseeruddin Shah believes cinema's most important function is to be the record of its times but he is worried that it would be a "big tragedy" if future generations look at Bollywood movies to understand India of now.

Shah, known for his powerful performances in films such as "Nishant", "Aakrosh", "Sparsh" and "Masoom", was speaking at the ongoing eighth edition of Kerala Literature Festival (KLF).

"I think the most important purpose that serious cinema serves is not to bring change in the world. I don't think anybody's thinking is changed after seeing a film, no matter how wonderful it may be. Yes, it may help you raise a few questions. But the really important function of cinema, to my mind, is to act as a record of its times. Those are the most valuable films," the veteran star said in a conversation with actor Parvathy Thiruvothu.

"Because these films will be seen 100 years later, and if 100 years later people want to know what India of 2025 was like, and they find a Bollywood film, that would



be a big tragedy I think." Shah also highlighted the difficulties filmmakers face when creating "honest pictures" that reflect the realities of the times. He noted that films attempting to portray the truth often face bans or struggle to find an audience because they lack the commercial elements that make successful films.