



Kriti Sanon to star alongside Dhanush in Aanand L Rai's 'Tere Ishk Mein'

Jaishankar says India sees Middle East region as 'crucial passage to world beyond'

Jasprit Bumrah named ICC men's Cricketer of the Year



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MARKET	
SENSEX	NIFTY
75366.17	22829.15
-824.29	-263.05
GOLD SILVER	
79,735.00	90,675.00
-291.00	-924.00

WEATHER	
Sunrise	7:12 AM
Sunset	5:57 PM
Moonrise	6:23 AM
Moonset	4:40 PM
Today's Prediction	
Maximum	22°C
Minimum	10°C
Tomorrow's Prediction	
23°C	11°C

EC asks Kejriwal to prove Yamuna 'poisoning' claim amid slugfest

The Commission has directed Kejriwal to furnish his response on the complaints, especially on the factual and legal matrix along with evidentiary support thereof by BPM on 29th on Wednesday so as to enable the Commission to examine the matter and take action as appropriate.

New Delhi The Election Commission of India has asked AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal to provide factual evidence to substantiate his serious allegations that the river Yamuna was poisoned by the neighbouring Haryana state; the nature and extent of the chemical used for the poisoning Yamuna that would have killed the people in large numbers resulting into mass genocide; and that the engineers of Delhi Jal Board have actually detected and prevented it timely, much before it could mix with the waters of Yamuna in Delhi and caused genocide.



Notably, both BJP and Congress have complained to the Election Commission against Kejriwal for making serious false allegations on Monday.

The Commission has directed Kejriwal to furnish his response on the complaints, especially on the factual and legal matrix along with evidentiary support thereof by 8PM on 29th January,

so as to enable the Commission to examine the matter and take action as appropriate. It has inter-alia been stated in a complaint by the BJP that, "Kejriwal has not produced any evidence or basis of the allegations of such poisoning." "His claim that the Delhi Jal Board engineers discovered attempted poisoning of the Yamuna

also attempted to create discord between the residence of Delhi and Haryana, potentially leading to social unrest and regional tensions." These preposterous statements are factually unsubstantiated, mischievous, inflammatory and clearly intended to create unrest among two states of Indian union," it said. "Demonstrate a deliberate attempt to mislead the voters of Delhi during the ongoing assembly elections, creating unwarranted alarm and influencing electoral outcomes through misinformation," it added. Similarly, in his complaint to EC, Congress' Sandeep Dixit, stated: "For action against Mr. Arvind Kejriwal who made shocking and irresponsible statements to the press yesterday alleging that Delhi's water supply had been 'poisoned' and that the neighboring state government had planned a 'genocide' against the people of Delhi."

CONTO ON PAGE-2

Police can't serve accused notice via WhatsApp: SC

New Delhi The Supreme Court has said police cannot serve notices to accused persons through WhatsApp or other electronic modes under the Criminal Procedure Code or Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023.



A bench of Justices M M Sundresh and Rajesh Bindal directed all states and union territories (UT) to issue appropriate directions to police for issuing notices under Section 41A of CrPC, 1973 or Section 35 of BNSS, 2023 only through the mode of service permitted under the law. "All the states/UTs must issue a standing order to their respective police machinery to issue notices under Section 41-A of CrPC, 1973/ Section 35 of BNSS, 2023 only through the mode of service as prescribed under the CrPC, 1973/BNSS, 2023," the bench said on January 21.

Luthra flagged instances where a notice under Section 41-A of CrPC, 1973 was sent through WhatsApp, but the accused did not appear before the investigating officer. He said the police machinery must not circumvent the mandate of Section 41-A of CrPC, 1973 or Section 35 of BNSS, 2023 by serving notices via WhatsApp or other electronic modes, instead of following the normal mode of service. Agency

BJP richest party with Rs 7,113-cr fund balance: EC data

New Delhi The BJP, which claims itself as the biggest political party in the world, has a whopping cash and bank balance of Rs 7,113.80 crore against the principal opposition Congress party's Rs 857.15 crore as on March 31, 2024, according to figures provided to the Election Commission.



The BJP spent as much as 1,754.06 crore during 2023-24 when Lok Sabha elections were announced, a whopping 60 per cent rise than Rs 1,092 crore spent in 2022-23. In comparison, the Congress spent as much as Rs 619.67 crore during 2023-24, against Rs 192.56 crore in 2022-23. The Lok Sabha elections were announced on March 16, 2024. According to the figures provided to the EC in their annual audit reports, the BJP has

received voluntary contributions through the now banned electoral bonds of Rs 1,685.69 crore during 2023-24, against Rs 1204.15 crore in the previous year. The ruling party has also shown having received other contributions to the tune of Rs 2,042.75 crore during the year, against Rs 648.42 crore in the previous year 2022-23. In its audit report to the EC, the Congress has shown having received total contributions of Rs 1,225.11 crore during 2023-24, including Rs 1129.67 crore through grants, donations and contributions. Agency

Hosting 2036 Olympics will take Indian sports to new heights, says PM Modi

Pawan Lalchand Dehradun Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said his government is putting all its might behind the ambitious bid to bag the hosting rights of 2036 Olympics, which will take Indian sports to new heights and create opportunities across different sectors.



Speaking at the opening ceremony of the 38th National Games here as a guest of honour, the PM reiterated that the bid, if successful, will be a game-changer for country's infrastructure. "We are pushing for hosting rights of 2036 Olympics, it will take Indian sports to new heights," the PM said here. "Olympics is not just a sporting event. Wherever Olympics happen, all sectors gain. It creates better facilities for athletes. It spurs con-

struction, creates new connectivity, transport facilities and most important of all, boosts tourism," he submitted the official letter of intent to the IOC. "The IOC will not decide before 2026 and the next step for India is to prepare an official bid, detailing its broad plan the International Olympic Committee's Session in Mumbai in 2023. The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has submitted the official letter of intent to the IOC. "The IOC will not decide before 2026 and the next step for India is to prepare an official bid, detailing its broad plan

HIGHLIGHT
■ Highlighting the long-term benefits of hosting the Olympics, the Prime Minister stated, "Wherever the Olympics happen, all sectors gain. It creates better facilities for athletes and boosts the entire nation."

for the Games. Countries like Qatar, and Saudi Arabia are also in the running for the 2036 hosting rights and it would take a significant effort to upstage their bids. "It is our endeavour to enhance your capabilities and we are focussed on supporting you. We consider sports an essential aspect in development of country," Modi said addressing the gathered athletes at the ceremony. CONTO ON PAGE-2

Seven killed, 60 injured after wooden structure collapses in UP's Baghpat

Baghpat Seven people died and about 60 were injured after a temporary wooden structure collapsed at a religious event in Baraut city of this district on Tuesday, officials said. The incident occurred at around 8 am during a programme organised for the 'Abhishhek' of Lord Adinath on Shri Digambar Jain Degree College ground on Gandhi Road in Baraut, they said. A massive crowd of devotees had descended on the venue to celebrate 'Nirvana Laddu



HIGHLIGHT
■ The wooden stairs of the 65-foot temporary stage built in the Maanastambh Complex broke due to which the devotees on the stage and standing near it fell down, the police said. collapsed leading the devotees to fall over each other. All of the injured were rushed to the district hospital for treatment. Twenty people were sent home after treatment, and the rest of

injured is ongoing," said the District Magistrate Asmita Lal. According to the police authorities, the event pertained to a ritual of touching the feet of the first Tirthankara during the festival. "While they were going to touch that, the stairs first collapsed, leading to the collapse of the stage," said an senior police officer. Those who lost life in the incident were identified as Amit (40), Usha(65), Tarashpal Jain (75), Shilpi Jain (25), Arun Jain (48), Kamlesh (65) and Vipin Jain (44).

China flags handling differences, resolving misgivings in India talks with Foreign Secretary Misri

Beijing China said it stressed on properly handling differences, and promotion of India-China relations on a stable track in the just concluded talks with Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri while highlighting decisions to resume Kailash Mansarovar Yatra and direct flights. Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri who arrived here on Sunday for a two-day visit held talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Sun Weizhong on Monday to stabilise and rebuild relations stalled for over four



reviewed the state of India-China bilateral relations comprehensively and agreed to take certain people-centric steps "to stabilise and rebuild ties". In its issued in Mandarin on early Tuesday, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said the dialogue focussed on promoting the implementation of the important consensus reached by the leaders of China and India in the Kazan meeting on the sidelines of the BRICS summit last year and discussed measures to improve and develop China-India relations. Agency

NEWS IN BRIEF

Gr. Noida Auth distributes compensation among Astauli farmers

The Greater Noida Authority distributed additional compensation about Rs 10 crore among the farmers of Astauli village.

The farmers, under the banner of Bharatiya Kisan Union, were given about Rs 10 crore as additional compensation. They had protested continuously for 65 days from March 2024 for additional compensation. They had a total of 14 demands, out of which 12 demands were already fulfilled.

After the assurance of fulfilling the compensation demand in three months, the farmers ended the protest. A meeting was held with the farmers in Greater Noida Authority on Tuesday. Apart from the officials concerned, Jewar MLA Dharendra Singh, was also present in this meeting. The rest of the farmers will also be given compensation soon.

On March 12, farmers of Astauli village sat on a dharna against the Greater Noida Authority for 24 demands including compensation. The farmers alleged that years ago the Greater Noida Authority acquired their land but they were not given proper compensation. The farmers had been demanding proper compensation for years.

The dumping ground of Noida Greater Noida Authority is to be built at Astauli village. Two companies will set up their plants here, through which charred and biogas will be produced from garbage.

Doctor found dead at his house in Greater Noida, tenants missing

A 50-year-old doctor was found murdered in a house he had rented out in Greater Noida, while the two tenants living there are absconding, police said on Tuesday.

Dr Dinesh Gaur's body was found soaked in blood in a room of his house in Sanjay Vihar Colony, Kulesara village, on January 26, police said.

Police suspect that a man and a woman who were living on rent in the house murdered the doctor.

The accused woman and man had rented the doctor's house just three days ago and have been absconding since the incident, they added.

"Gaur used to live with his family in Pocket-D, Kundli, Delhi. He also had a house in Sanjay Vihar Colony, Kulesara village, Greater Noida, where he had built a room to rent out. He had made this room his temporary rest area," said Lakshmi Singh, Media In-charge of Noida Police Commissioner.

"On the evening of January 25, Gaur came from Delhi to his house in Kulesara. His son called him on January 26 but did not get any response. When he reached the house late at night, the door of the room was found locked from outside," Singh further said. Singh added that when the doctor's son opened the door, he found his father lying in a pool of blood followed by him informed the police.

While Gaur's body has been sent for post-mortem, police said that the accused are being tracked using CCTV footage and a search team.

2 girls among 5 killed in Delhi building collapse, property owner booked

The victims have been identified as Saadhna (17) and seven-year-old Radhika. The other three are Anil Gupta (42) and labourers Md Sarfaraz (22) and Md Qadir (40).

Five people, including two girls, were killed in the four-storey building collapse in north Delhi's Burari area, police said on Tuesday and added that the property owner had been booked.

"An FIR has been registered under sections 105 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder), 110 (attempt to commit culpable homicide) and 2(5) (common intention) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita against building owner Yogendra Bhati and others," Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) Raja Banthia said in a statement.

The newly-constructed building near Oscar Public School collapsed late on Monday. So far, 12 people have been rescued and five bodies retrieved from the debris, they said.

The victims have been identified as Saadhna (17) and seven-year-old Radhika. The other three are Anil Gupta (42) and labourers Md Sarfaraz (22) and Md Qadir (40).

The police said the injured were identified as Lata Prasad, his wife Savita and their six children — Ajay, Choti, Khushi, Priyanka, Sonia and Simran.

Their other two children Saadhna and Radhika died, the police said.

The identities of the other injured are yet to be ascertained.

Banthia said a rescue operation was still underway.



In a statement issued on Monday, the Delhi Police had said it received information about the collapse around 7 pm.

The building was a new construction spread over 200 square yards.

Soon after the incident was reported to the Delhi Police and the Delhi Fire Services, a rescue operation was launched.

"The rescue operation is still underway. Personnel from agencies such as police, fire services and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) are on the spot. The police have cordoned off the area and are collecting more details from locals to ascertain how many people could still be trapped," Banthia said.

"We launched an investigation into the matter and multiple teams have been formed," he added.

The officer further said the police would be able to

comment on the situation only after the rescue operation concluded.

"During incidents of this nature, the administration appoints an incident commander who issues directions to officials. The area's subdivisional magistrate is currently acting as incident commander and has ordered the evacuation of nearby buildings for structural safety and fitness checks. The entire area has been cordoned off and no one is allowed to cross the restricted zone," the senior officer said.

He mentioned that the rescue operation might continue till early on Wednesday to ensure the area was thoroughly checked and those still trapped under the rubble rescued.

"Those who were rescued suspect that more people are still trapped inside. The police, Delhi Fire Services, NDRF and other agencies are working round-the-clock

to complete the rescue operation as quickly as possible," Banthia said.

He also said those rescued were being referred to higher medical facilities based on the severity of their health conditions.

"Initially, we shifted some patients to Burari Hospital but they were referred to LNJP Hospital," he added.

AAP MLA Sanjeev Jha said that this was not the time for political disputes and demanded adequate compensation for the families affected.

He announced compensations of Rs 10 lakh for each adult victim and Rs 5 lakh for the families of minor victims.

"We hope that the central government also announces compensation for the families at the earliest," Jha said.

At the spot, many were seen anxiously waiting for news about their family members working in the col-

lapsed building as labourers.

Md Bariq said his 22-year-old brother Md Sarfaraz was working inside. His body was later discovered by the police.

"I work as a labourer at another site. I received a call about the building collapse around 8:30 pm on Monday. The caller informed me that my brother was trapped in the rubble. Later, I got news of his death," Bariq said.

Md Arif said they were hoping for their relatives' safety. He later received news that his relative Md Qadir had died.

The victims' family members demanded strict action against the building owner as well as compensation.

Some locals who were nearby when the incident occurred described the entire episode as "horrible".

"We heard a very loud noise and a bubble of dust emanated from the area. It took more than five minutes to realise what had happened. We rushed to the site, informed the police and fire officials," a witness said.

Shortly after the incident, Delhi Chief Minister Atishi said on X that all possible help would be provided to the people affected.

"The incident of building collapse in Burari is extremely sad. I have spoken to the local administration to ensure speedy relief and rescue operations. All possible help will be provided to the affected people," she said in Hindi.

Biggest liquor scam took place in Delhi under Kejriwal: Rahul

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi launched a blistering attack on AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday, saying the former chief minister came talking about bringing in clean politics but the biggest "liquor scam" took place in Delhi under his watch.

Addressing a public rally in Patparganj here for the upcoming assembly polls, Gandhi also took a swipe at former deputy chief minister and AAP leader Manish Sisodia, calling him, along with Kejriwal, the "architect of the liquor scam".

Gandhi urged people to vote for the Congress candidate Anil Chaudhary as Sisodia had "run away" from the Patparganj constituency after indulging in corruption. He said Kejriwal stared off with a promise of bringing in a new kind of politics but he now lives in a "sheesh mahal".

Gandhi said the AAP chief was nowhere to be found when the poor needed him the most and when there

was violence in Delhi, an apparent reference to the February 2020 riots.

The Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha also launched a stinging attack on the BJP, saying they talked about '400 paar' with the intention of changing the Constitution. "A few days ago, (RSS chief) Mohan Bhagwat stated that India did not get true independence on August 15, 1947, and it was achieved when Modi came. This means he insulted the Constitution and (BR) Ambedkar ji. If independence wasn't achieved on 15th August 1947 then what is the meaning of this," he said with a copy of the Constitution in his hand.

"The fruit of freedom is our Constitution and BJP leaders say that we got freedom when Modi ji came and Ram temple was inaugurated. At the Ram temple inauguration, not one poor person was seen. Our tribal President was not allowed there. When Parliament was inaugurated, there also she was not called," he said.

Manoj Tiwari launches the remake of his song 'BJP Dil Mein, BJP Dilli Mein'

Staff Reporter
New Delhi

Former Delhi BJP President and Member of Parliament, Manoj Tiwari on Tuesday launched the remake of his popular election song "BJP Dil Mein, BJP Dilli Mein" in the presence of Chandni Chowk MP Praveen Khandelwal.

The original song had already garnered immense love from Delhi residents.

The launch event also witnessed the presence of Media Chief Praveen Shankar Kapoor, Media Relations Head Vikram Mittal, former Media Relations Head Neelkanth Bakshi.

Shri Praveen Khandelwal congratulated MP Shri Manoj Tiwari on the launch and said that this song has proven to be a key strategy for the party's electoral success. Delhi citizens are humming this song, and it is expected that today's song "BJP Dil Mein" will also leave a similar impact.

Manoj Tiwari stated that it is the people who determine the appeal of a song's lyrics. Some songs become timeless due to their enduring relevance, and one such song was "BJP Dil Mein, BJP Dilli Mein" first released in 2017.

Given the continued popularity of that song, a remake was created to reflect the current scenario, which was launched today. He also mentioned that there is widespread



Manoj Tiwari at a public event.

disatisfaction among people in Delhi against Arvind Kejriwal's government, which is evident on the ground. He emphasized that only the BJP's "double-engine government" can provide new momentum to Delhi's development.

Manoj Tiwari expressed confidence that just as "BJP Dil Mein, BJP Dilli Mein" became a victory anthem for the 2017 elections, its remake will serve as a catalyst for success in the upcoming assembly elections.

Jangpura voters weigh candidates as Delhi Assembly elections approach

As the Delhi Assembly elections draw near, voters in the Jangpura constituency remain divided on who will emerge victorious.

Residents in the area have expressed mixed opinions about their current representatives, citing ongoing issues like poor civic management, lack of safety, and insufficient engagement from elected officials.

The 2020 elections saw Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) candidate Praveen Kumar defeating BJP's Impreet Singh Bakshi. This time, AAP has fielded senior leader Manish Sisodia, while BJP has nominated Tarvinder Singh Marwah and Congress putting forward Farhad Suri



As its candidate.

permits parking in no-parking zones. The AAP MLA has not visited to address these concerns," said Avinash, a Lajpat Nagar-2 resident.

A 55-year-old woman shared concerns over rising thefts, saying, "My grandson's bicycle was stolen in broad daylight, and thieves have entered homes. Despite informing the police, no action was taken. But I appreciate the zero electricity bills and improved government schools." Concerns over safety have also surfaced since the implementation of the 2021 liquor policy. Residents pointed to the rise in alcohol shops as a factor contributing to safety issues.

The Congress delegation demanded that the EC hold a probe and if the allegation made by Kejriwal were found to be false, an FIR should be registered against him for spreading rumours during the election campaign, which is a clear violation of the Model Code of Conduct," the party stated in a press statement.

The delegation consisted of Chairman of the Legal

Congress files complaint to EC seeking probe against Kejriwal

New Delhi

A delegation of the Delhi Congress on Tuesday submitted a complaint to the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), seeking a probe against AAP National Convener, Arvind Kejriwal over his allegations of poisoning Yamuna water by the Haryana government.

"The Congress delegation demanded that the EC hold a probe and if the allegation made by Kejriwal were found to be false, an FIR should be registered against him for spreading rumours during the election campaign, which is a clear violation of the Model Code of Conduct," the party stated in a press statement.

The delegation consisted of Chairman of the Legal



Member of the Congress delegation speaking.

AAP accuses Cong of parroting 'BJP-manufactured lies'

New Delhi

Following Congress' allegation of stalling money flow to the 'Laadli Yojana', the AAP on Tuesday accused the grand old party of parroting BJP-manufactured lies in poll-boulevard Delhi.

In a press statement, the party said, "It's unfortunate how the Congress is parroting BJP-manufactured lies using forged documents cooked up in BJP offices to hurl baseless accusations at

the AAP. Congress must publicly declare its alliance with the BJP now."

The party also reacted to Sandeep Dikshii's letter to Delhi Police Commissioner Sanjay Arora demanding action against Chief Minister Atishi and Arvind Kejriwal for their remarks on "poisoning" of Delhi's water supply.

CHANGE OF NAME

1. PURAN CHAND JOSHI C/O HARIDUTT JOSHI R/O K-165B, SECTOR-09, VIJAY NAGAR, BAJARIYA, GHAZIABAD, U.P.-201001 do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under:

1. That my above name and address is true and correct.
2. That I am citizen of India.
3. That my address no-5232 4701 2698.
4. That my name PURAN CHAND JOSHI AND PURAN CHAND IS one and the same person.
5. That my father name HARIDUTT JOSHI AND HARIDUTT IS one and the same person.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is notified to General Public that my client Sh. Vinod Kumar S/O Late Shri Chandar R/O 88D, Arambagh, Ambedkar Bhawan, Delhi-110055, do hereby disown and disinherit his Wife Smt. Sheela D/O Surajima W/O Sh. Vinod Kumar and his Daughter Ms. Shivani D/O Vinod both R/O 14/328, Dakshin Puri, Delhi from all of his moveable and immovable properties, since they have severed all relationship with me and thereby residing separately from me since last 30 years, and also disown them from all social and personal relations for all time to come.

My aforesaid clients & Ionessees have no concern with them. Any one dealing with them, shall do so at their/her/his risk and responsibilities and my clients shall not in any way/manner be held liable for any act and deed of the aforesaid persons.

PYVISH PAHUA ADVOCATE
OFFICE: 201, Second Floor, A-23/24, Satija House, Connaught Complex, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi-110009

PUBLIC NOTICE

BE IT KNOWN TO ALL CONCERNED THAT my client Shri Ram Prasad Bhaskar S/O Late Shri Biri Singh, R/O F-2/582, Sangam Vihar, New Delhi had irrevocable differences and strained relationship with his Mr. Pankaj Bhaskar, Mr. Naresh Bhaskar and their wives. Thus, on 02.08.2023, in the newspaper "Top Story" my client had severed/disowned all relations from his sons Mr. Pankaj Bhaskar, Mr. Naresh Bhaskar and their wives for all manners and purposes relating to moveable and immovable property. Now, my client wants to restore their rights in his moveable and immovable property.

RAVI LOMOD & ASSOCIATES (ADVOCATES AND CONSULTANTS)
Chamber No.437, Lawyer's Block Saket Courts, New Delhi-110017

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-Tender No.: DVYCE/JHSW-72 Date: 27.01.2025

(E-Tender Notice)
By Chief Engineer (works)/ JHSW for and behalf of President of India invites "Open Tender" through On-Line (E-Tendering) for the following work:

Description of Work: JHSR(RNKH):HS - Rainwater harvesting and related work in RKNKHJHS.

Approx Cost : ₹ 1,16,39,434.93 Earnest Money : ₹ 2,00,000.00

Cost of Tender Form: Nil Date of closing of Tender: 24.02.2025 at 15:00 hrs

Date of Completion/Period from issue acceptance letter: 09 Months.

For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.irps.gov.in. 17425(DD)

NORTHERN RAILWAY
Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

NTF No. 112-2024-25-W-V

Name of work: Dismantling of LHS Durva Section in the section of ADENJH with its location: Simlaur Nature of Work: Any civil work other than track work.

Rs. 999999.03

Earnest Money Deposit: (It should be in the form of net banking or payment gateway. Only. Note: EDR will not be accepted as EMD for tender invited on IRPS as per Railway Boards letter no 201025/CE-CT/SI dated 31.08.2016)

Rs. 1,00,000.00

Completion period of Work: 09 Months

Date and time for submission of tender and opening of tender: Upto 15:00 hrs on 21.02.2025 Opening of tender at 15:00 hrs. On 21.02.2025

Website particulars notice board location: complete details of tender can be seen and above tender available on address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc.

IRPS site i.e. www.irps.gov.in

No. 128/W280/EC/2024-25/W-V/NTF-112 Date: 27.01.2025 2962025

Serving Customers With A Smile

UP CM slams Arvind Kejriwal, calls Yamuna's condition a 'dirty sewer'

New Delhi

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday criticized the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Delhi over the deteriorating condition of the Yamuna River.

He accused AAP national convener and former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal of reducing the once-revered river to the state of a "dirty sewer."

"Yamuna ji, which was once a mythological river of India and a symbol of faith for all of us, has been turned into a dirty sewer by Kejriwal," the Chief Minister remarked.

Addressing public meetings at Mangolpuri, Vikaspuri, Tlak Nagar, and Rajendra Nagar in support



of BJP candidates ahead of the February 5 Delhi Assembly elections, Adityanath lambasted Kejriwal and the AAP government for their alleged failure to tackle Yamuna pollution.

Highlighting the BJP's commitment to preserving India's rivers, Adityanath said, "On January 22, our government took a holy dip in the Triveni of Prayagraj. If Kejriwal had any moral courage, he and his minis-

ters should have taken a dip in the Yamuna to witness its current state firsthand." He went on to accuse the AAP government of mismanagement and corruption. "The AAP government in Delhi has be-

come synonymous with anarchy. They once promised transparency and accountability but have now abandoned their own Jan Lokpal agenda. Their leaders and party stand for corruption."

Addressing the condition of basic amenities in the national capital, Adityanath said, "The roads in Delhi are in terrible shape, with sewer water flowing onto the streets. Drinking water is scarce, and residents must rely on tankers, which come only once or twice a week."

The Chief Minister urged voters to choose BJP for a cleaner and better-governed Delhi. "The sins of the AAP government have burdened the people of Delhi. The only way to free them from this suffering is to establish a BJP government in Delhi," he said.

Atishi & Bhagwant Mann meet CEC over Yamuna water issue

New Delhi

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Atishi, along with Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, met with the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) on Tuesday to address the worsening water crisis in Delhi by underlining the alarming rise in ammonia levels in the Yamuna River, which is allegedly affecting the capital's water supply.

Atishi warned that continued contamination could lead to the shutdown of several water treatment plants, leaving 30 per cent of Delhi without water.

Addressing the media after the meeting, Atishi said that the discussions focused on the current condition of the Yamuna water. "We discussed the water issue in Delhi. We told the EC how the ammonia levels in the Yamuna river coming from Haryana have reached a toxic level. If we continue receiving contaminated water, many of our water treatment plants will be forced to shut down and 30 per cent of Delhi would not receive water..." she said.

Further, the Chief Minister stated that Haryana CM Nayab Singh Saini's remarks on the Yamuna water issue were not just an opinion but a factual statement. "It is not a matter of opinion. It is a factual statement. He himself has exposed his lies. Even the letter written by Delhi Jal Board's CEO has said that the Delhi water treatment plants can treat ammonia



"I have given a suggestion to both the Haryana CM and EC that a joint team should be formed comprising concerned officers from both governments to check the quantity of ammonia and the quality of the Yamuna river water...we are ready to check how much ammonia is entering from Haryana into Delhi..." she added.

comprising concerned officers from both governments to check the quantity of ammonia and the quality of the Yamuna river water...we are ready to check how much ammonia is entering from Haryana into Delhi..." she added.

Earlier, Haryana CM Nayab Singh Saini, while addressing a public rally, took a dig at AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal over the Yamuna water issue.

Addressing the media, Saini said "He (Arvind Kejriwal) used to say that he would clean Yamuna. After 10 years, he is asking for five more years. He will not be able to clean no matter what he does..."

The Chief Minister further claimed that the people of Delhi had already made up their minds. "This is not AAP. This is 'aapda'. The people of Delhi have made up their minds such that he will not even get the time to look outside from the Thiraj jail... You sold lies, you never worked, only led people water work done today..." he added.

"Delhi needs change, not excuses": BJP MP Manoj Tiwari



New Delhi

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Manoj Tiwari on Tuesday took a dig at AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal over his allegation against the BJP-ruled Haryana government of 'poisoning Yamuna water, saying that the national capital needs change, not excuses.

Manoj Tiwari said that AAP is even stealing songs. "They stole water, Delhi's happiness, please don't steal songs now," Tiwari said.

"We are saying what the public wants to say... We conducted national water sports in Haryana's water. We bathe in the water that is coming from Haryana... Arvind Kejriwal should be ashamed... Delhi needs change, not excuses," the BJP MP added.

The remark came after Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal levelled serious allegations against the Bharatiya Janata Party, stating that the BJP-ruled Haryana government has "poisoned" the Yamuna water supplied to Delhi so that "people die" and the blame comes on the AAP. "BJP's Haryana government has poisoned the water in Yamuna. If this water had entered Delhi only to be mixed with the drinking water, many people would have died in Delhi. It would have caused mass genocide," the former Delhi chief minister alleged. Kejriwal said in a press conference while claiming that the alertness of the Delhi Jal Board prevented the mixing of alleged poisoned water with drinking water.

Vibrant Buildcon 2025: India's Premier Building Material Expo to Propel Industry Growth

New Delhi

The highly anticipated Vibrant Buildcon 2025, India's largest building material expo, is set to take place from April 13 to 16, 2025, at the prestigious Yashobhoomi Exhibition and Convention Centre, New Delhi.

Spanning a massive area of 50,000 square meters, the expo is poised to attract over 150,000 domestic visitors and more than 2,000 international buyers, creating a dynamic platform for glob-

Showcasing Innovation and Excellence Bollywood icon Suniel Shetty, the brand ambassador of Vibrant Buildcon 2025, is lending his support to this remarkable initiative, emphasizing its importance for the industry.

Vibrant Buildcon 2025 will feature participation from 600+ exhibitors, each bringing cutting-edge innovations in building materials to the forefront. From sustainable solutions to digitalized manufacturing techniques, the

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expo promises to be a showcase of India's advancements in the sector, reflecting the country's prowess in meeting global standards and demands. A Boost for India's Economy Supported by the Government of India, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Commerce, Vibrant Buildcon 2025 is envisioned as 'One Nation One Expo,' promising to become a landmark event in the future of the building materials industry.

Rahul slams BJP, AAP; says contractual jobs take away rights of poor



New Delhi

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi met New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) employees after visiting the Maharishi Valmiki Temple here on Tuesday and said "privatisation and contract jobs" were instruments to snatch rights of the poor.

Gandhi, who is the Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha, said that due to the 'privatisation and contract jobs' policies of the BJP-led government at the Centre and the AAP government in the national capital, there was unemployment and many were not getting proper wages for their work.

"Today I visited Maharishi Valmiki Temple in Delhi. After the darshan, I met

NDMC employees in a nearby colony. They told me that due to the privatisation and contract job policies of the BJP's central government and the AAP's Delhi government, thousands of people are unemployed and not getting proper salaries," he said in a post on X.

"We are constantly raising this issue - privatisation and contract jobs are weapons to snatch the rights of the poor and the Bahujans. We will check this first," he added.

Congress has stepped up its campaign for Delhi assembly polls scheduled for February 5. The party has performed poorly in the last two elections and has not been able to open its account.

Karti Chidambaram moves Delhi HC seeking quashing of fresh FIR filed by CBI

New Delhi

Congress leader Karti Chidambaram has approached the Delhi High Court, seeking the quashing of a fresh FIR filed against him by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

The new FIR accuses Chidambaram of allegedly providing favourable treatment to Diageo Scotland, an alcoholic beverage company, by intervening to lift a ban on the duty-free sale of its whisky.

In his petition, Chidambaram has sought the quashing of the FIR, which includes charges under Sections 120B, 420, and 471 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), as well as Sections 8, 9, 12(c), and 13(1)(d) of the Prevention of Corruption (PC) Act.

According to the CBI, Chidambaram is accused of accepting bribes through sham contracts and share transactions. Chidambaram has contended in his plea that he was never summoned to join the preliminary inquiry and that no public servant allegedly influenced by him is named in the FIR.

Ajay Maken hits out at Kejriwal over "poisoned water" remark

New Delhi

Congress leader Ajay Maken on Tuesday criticized Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal over allegations regarding Delhi's water supply, stating that if the former Chief Minister's claims are false, it amounts to "treason."

Maken's remarks came in response to Kejriwal's statement on Monday, in which he alleged that Delhi's water supply had been "poisoned" and accused the Haryana government of planning a "genocide" against Delhi residents.

"Arvind Kejriwal is lying about mixing poison in the water, it is treason," Maken said in a press conference, adding that the statements made by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in Haryana and Kejriwal must be investigated. "If the Haryana government is wrong, action should be taken. If Arvind Kejriwal is spreading rumours, action should be taken against him," Maken said.

Shifting focus to the disparity in the sex ratio in north Indian states, Maken attributed the issue to female foeticide. He highlighted former Delhi Chief Minister



Sheila Dikshit's Ladli scheme, which provided financial aid to girl children as a deterrent against female foeticide.

"In order to deter the incidents of female foeticide, Sheila Dikshit introduced 'Ladli Yojana' that gained traction across the globe. As per this scheme, the family of a newborn girl will be provided financial aid worth Rs 10,000. Not only this, Rs 5,000 was given to the family of the girl at the time of admission into first standard and the same amount was given each time when the girl child entered class sixth, ninth, 10th, and 12th. The financial aid worth Rs 1 lakh was given to the girl when she turned 18,"

has been stopped. The AAP government has withheld Rs 618 crore of the benefit to be given to more than 3,20,000 girls, all these revelations have been made in the CAG report," Maken said.

Maken also commented on the support extended by Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav and other INDIA bloc parties to AAP ahead of the Delhi Assembly elections. He urged the INDIA bloc allies to recognize that only Congress could effectively fight the BJP, and they should not weaken the party.

The Delhi Assembly elections are scheduled for February 5, with the counting of votes set for February 8. A total of 699 candidates are contesting for 70 assembly seats in the national capital.

The Congress, which held power in Delhi for 15 consecutive years, has faced major setbacks in the last two assembly elections, failing to win any seats. In contrast, AAP dominated the 2015 and 2020 assembly elections, securing 67 and 62 seats, respectively, out of 70, while BJP won only three and eight seats in these elections.

Rahul Gandhi calls Manish Sisodia "Architect" of liquor scam

New Delhi

Congress MP and Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday slammed Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Manish Sisodia, accusing him of being the "architect" of the alleged "liquor scam" along with former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

While addressing a public rally at the Patparganj Assembly Constituency, Gandhi alleged that Sisodia, the former AAP candidate from the constituency, fled the seat out of fear after being implicated in corruption.

Gandhi said, "Manish Sisodia, who was earlier the AAP candidate from Pat-



parganj, the architect of the liquor scam with Arvind Kejriwal. He did a lot of corruption here, got scared and ran away from this seat. Now you should vote for Manish Sisodia or for Pat-

palace - 'Sheesh Mahal'... he was not there even when riots happened here."

Gandhi further stated that he envisions a country of love and harmony, not hatred. "Nafrat ka Hindustan nahin chahiye, mohabbat ki dukaan chahiye. AAP's Arvind Kejriwal says anything that comes to his mind. When he came, he said that he would bring a new kind of politics. He had said that he would change Delhi but when the poor people were in need, he was not there..."

The Congress leader also criticized Prime Minister Narendra Modi, accusing him of ignoring the struggles

of unemployed youth while indulging in extravagant events. "The youth of the country does not have employment, but PM Modi dances in parties worth eight to ten crores... The RSS and BJP only want to create fights between brothers," he said.

Referring to a recent statement by RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat, Gandhi accused him of insulting the Constitution. "A couple of days ago, Mohan Bhagwat insulted the Constitution and said that the country had gained freedom when PM Modi came to power. This is an insult to Ambedkar and the poor."

Amit Shah dares Kejriwal to make DJB report on Yamuna poisoning public

New Delhi

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday dared AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal to bring out the Delhi Jal Board report public which claimed Haryana poisoning the waters of river Yamuna.

Shah slammed Kejriwal for accusing Haryana with such baseless allegations and also spreading fear amongst the people of Delhi, and further said that the kind of politics Kejriwal has done in this regard is of the lowest order. Shah also dared the former Delhi CM to come forward and tell people of the



national capital as to what was the name of the toxic material, which he claims was mixed in the Yamuna water by the neighboring state of Haryana.

HM also mentioned that Kejriwal claimed that water was stopped from entering Delhi, and asked as to where was the official order regarding the same, asking the AAP chief to show it.

He added, "Yesterday I returned after taking a holy dip at the Kumbh, and Arvind Kejriwal claimed that the Haryana government had poisoned the Yamuna. However, when we investigated, the Jal Board said nothing of that sort happened. This shows that Arvind Kejriwal has resorted to lying."

Addressing a public meeting in Kalkaji assembly, Shah urged the locals to ask the Delhi CM Atishi, who represents the area as to what was the poison which her party chief claimed was mixed in Yamuna.

Tayang Abu Charitable Society organised a program at Eden Garden Public School

Won't end indefinite fast till farmers' demands accepted: Dallewal

Staff Reporter ITANAGAR:

On the occasion of 194th birth anniversary of the life and Legacy of Savitribai Phule who was an Indian social reformer post and educator, Savitribai Phule played a crucial role in improving the women's rights and education during the post-independence.

She was the founder of India's first girl's school in Pune (1848) she was a prominent figure in the 19th Century who work for the up-liftment of oppressed class castes and advocated for widow remarriage she was a great social reformer.

The program was sponsored by BABU JAGJIVAN RAM NATIONAL FOUNDATION, MINISTRY of Social Justice and empowerment, Government of India.

On the occasion various activities were organized like literary competition, cultural competition etc. in which the students showcased their talents. The chief guest invited for the program was Shri R. B. Yadav (Principal Govt. Higher Secondary School, Yangte) and Smt. Tarh Yajar (Public Leader) graced the program as guest of honour. The program was attended by more than 340 people including school children and staff of the school besides the guests who were from different Institutions and local Panchayat leaders of Yangte area.

On the occasion the students were distributed certificate and momentous and vote of thanks by Shri Tarh Tapung, Chairman, Tayang Abu Charitable Society. The program was concluded by a mass community feast.

Court awards man life term for wife's murder

Bareilly (UP):

A local court has awarded life sentence to a man, for allegedly killing his wife after she objected to his drinking habits.

On January 27, fast-track court judge Ravi Kumar Diwakar awarded life-term imprisonment to 35-year-old Shravan Kumar and saddled him with a Rs 50,000 fine.

The verdict said the act of killing one's spouse was not only a crime under IPC's Section 302 but also a moral sin.

The judge drew a parallel with Hindu mythology, referencing Lord Shiva's Ardhanarishwara form, which symbolised the sanctity of the marital bond.

It also contrasted the convict's actions with the legendary Shravan Kumar, who selflessly carried his parents on a pilgrimage, outlining the stark contrast in characters.

According to additional district government counsel Digambar Singh, the court relied on the testimonies of 10 witnesses, including the victim's brother Kallu and their mother Shanti, aside from other evidence presented during the trial.

Chandigarh: Punjab farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal on Tuesday maintained that he would not end his fast-until-death till the Centre accepts farmers' demands, including a legal guarantee to minimum support price for crops.

Briefing the media at the Khanauri protest site, Dallewal said the whole country needs MSP.

"Punjab also needs MSP to save its underground water level," he said.

After a high-level delegation of the central government invited the protesting farmers on January 18 for a meeting on February 14 in Chandigarh to discuss their demands, Dallewal started taking medical aid though he did not end his fast.

Dallewal, who is the convener of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political), has been on the indefinite hunger strike at the Khanauri border point since November 26 last year in support of various demands,



including a legal guarantee to minimum support price for crops.

Thanking farmers and labourers for supporting the ongoing agitation, the farmer leader further said he took medical aid after both the forums - Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha - asked him to do so following the invitation

from the high-level delegation of the Centre for a meeting on February 14.

"I took medical aid only. (After that) vomiting has stopped. My fast-until-death continues and it will continue till the government fulfills our demands," he noted.

On the participation in the February 14 meeting, Dallewal said

everyone wants him to attend the meeting. "But the health is not allowing it. I do not have strength to go," he said.

Dallewal appealed to farmers to assemble at the Khanauri protest site on February 12.

"If all come, I will get more strength and if God wishes, I may be able to go to the (February 14) meeting to

put forth points. Therefore, I urge you to gather here in a big number on February 12 as I get energy on seeing you," he said.

A high-level delegation of the Centre government, led by joint secretary of the ministry of agriculture, Priya Ranjan, on January 18 had invited SKM (Non-Political) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM) for talks to discuss their demands in a meeting to be held on February 14 at Chandigarh.

Following the announcement of the proposed meeting, Dallewal took medical aid but he did not end his indefinite fast.

Farmers, under the banner of the SKM (Non-Political) and KMM have been camping at the Shambhu and Khanauri border points between Punjab and Haryana since February 13 last year, after security forces did not allow them to march to Delhi to press for their various demands, including MSP for their crops.

AAP MP calls for action against airlines profiteering during Mahakumbh

Chandigarh:

AAP Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha has raised concerns over the steep hike in airfare to Prayagraj during the ongoing Maha Kumbh, calling it an exploitation of faith by airlines.

Highlighting how ticket prices have surged from Rs 5,000 to as high as Rs 60,000, he urged the government to intervene and either cap flight prices or ensure affordable travel options for devotees attending this sacred event.

He expressed concern over the exorbitant airfare prices during the ongoing Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj, calling it an exploitation of faith by airlines.

In a statement, highlighting the sanctity of the Maha Kumbh, the AAP MP said, "For Santan Dharma followers, the Maha Kumbh is the ultimate celebration of faith and spirituality."

After 144 years, this sacred festival is being held in Prayagraj, attracting millions of devotees from across India and the world who wish to bathe, meditate and engage in spiritual practices. However, it is shocking that airlines have

turned this holy event into a profiteering opportunity."

Drawing attention to the steep hike in airfare, Chadha added, "Flights to Prayagraj, which normally cost between Rs 5,000 to Rs 8,000, are now being sold for an outrageous Rs 50,000 to Rs 60,000."

"This blatant profiteering by airlines is unacceptable and unfair to devotees who simply want to participate in this pious event. On behalf of all pilgrims, I urge the government to intervene and introduce economic flight options to devotees or introduce a price cap for these flights."

Referring to past successes in addressing travel-related issues, the MP said, "When we raised the issue of overpriced food at airports in the Parliament, the government listened, and 'Udaan Yatri Cafe' was introduced for passengers. Similarly, I hope that our appeal today will reach the government and airlines will be directed to provide reasonably priced flights for pilgrims heading to the Maha Kumbh."

Amritsar grenade attack: Two operatives of US-based terrorist held

Chandigarh:

The Punjab Police on Tuesday said it has arrested two persons for their alleged involvement in the hand grenade lobbing incident outside the Gurntala police post in Amritsar.

Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav said the accused were operatives of US-based terrorist Harpreet Singh alias Happy Passion and US-based drug smuggler Sarwan Bholu.

Yadav said those arrested have been identified as Bagga Singh of Guru Teg Bahadur Nagar in Sirsa, Haryana, and Puskaran Singh alias Sagar of Amarkot in Amritsar.

Police also recovered one hand grenade and two sophisticated pistols along with ammunition from their possession.

On January 9, a loud boom was heard outside the Gurntala police post. Police at that time had denied any explosion and claimed that the sound was that of a car radiator exploding.

Following the incident, terrorist organisation Babbar Khalsa



International had used a social media platform to claim responsibility for this terror act.

Yadav said investigations revealed that accused Bagga Singh is a relative of Sarwan Bholu, who is the brother of notorious smuggler Ranjit Singh alias Cheeta, currently lodged in Bathinda jail in the 532-kg heroin recovery case.

Sarwan is also wanted in the heroin recovery case and carries Rs 2 lakh reward announced by the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

The DGP said further investigations are in progress in a scientific manner to establish forward and backward linkages in this case and unweave the entire terror module.

Assistant Inspector General, Amritsar, Sukhminder Singh Mann said following the attack at Gurntala police post, police launched an intelligence operation and arrested Bagga Singh from Sirsa and Puskaran Singh from Amritsar.

Their arrest led to the recovery of explosives and weapons, police said.



Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said on Tuesday that the people of Jammu and Kashmir will continue to seek restoration of statehood for J-K from the status of a Union Territory.

Speaking to reporters in the Hazratbal area, National Conference chief Abdullah also said that Article 370, which was abrogated by the Centre in 2019, was meant to safeguard Jammu and Kashmir and the identity of its people in the erstwhile state.

"We are waiting for it (restoration of statehood). Ask those who are delaying it. We will continue to pray for statehood and pray to God to protect us," Abdullah said.

Asked about his earlier statement that Article 370 was for the protection of the Dogra community, the former Union minister said the now-abrogated constitutional provision was for everyone in J-K.

"It was to safeguard Jammu and Kashmir, it was about the identity of its people. Be it they

People of J&K will continue to seek restoration of statehood: Omar Abdullah

Srinagar:

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said on Tuesday that the people of Jammu and Kashmir will continue to seek restoration of statehood for J-K from the status of a Union Territory.

Speaking to reporters in the Hazratbal area, National Conference chief Abdullah also said that Article 370, which was abrogated by the Centre in 2019, was meant to safeguard Jammu and Kashmir and the identity of its people in the erstwhile state.

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"It was to safeguard Jammu and Kashmir, it was about the identity of its people. Be it they



Dogra, Ladakhis or the people of Jammu and Kashmir, it was for everyone and not just one of them.

"When the Maharaja of Kashmir brought the law, he wanted to protect our jobs as there were apprehensions that people from outside will take away jobs. That came under (Article) 35 (A) then. (Article) 370 came in 1949," he said.

Amid the ongoing debate on the proposed amendments to the Waqf Bill, Abdullah said that "God is great and he will protect the Waqf".

"Let people do what they want... They can-

not erase the name of Allah or his Messenger," the NC chief added.

To a question on drug menace in J-K, Abdullah said, "We must remember that those selling drugs are Kashmiris, and those using them are also Kashmiris. May God show them the right path and bring them out (of drug menace). I am happy that our police are taking strong action in this matter."

"I hope the police will unmask those behind it and take stringent action against them. But until the people of Kashmir don't stand against drugs, it will be difficult to control the

problem."

When told that the government and security agencies blame Pakistan for pushing narcotics into J-K, Abdullah said the "people of Kashmir were responsible for destroying themselves".

"I don't know who is to blame. But we are responsible... We Kashmiris are responsible for destroying ourselves. The problem with the drugs nexus is that it involves big money and a lot many people. Until we Kashmiris wake up and fight this menace, we will never be able to overcome it," Abdullah said.

Army unveils monolith to pay homage to '71 war heroes near Indo-Pak border in Jammu

Jammu:

The Indian Army on Tuesday unveiled a monolith commemorating the historic victory of its Chenab Brigade in the 1971 war with Pakistan near the Pargwal border along the Line of Control here, a defence spokesman said.

The Chenab Brigade under the aegis of the Jammu-based Tiger Division established and inaugurated the monolith as a testament to the bravery and sacrifice displayed by Indian soldiers in the Battle of Phuklian (Chenab enclave) in Jammu and Kashmir, the spokesman said.

He said the aim of installing the monolith is to educate the border residents, especially the youth, about the heroic victory of the Indian Army and the great valour of its troops.

Chenab Brigade unveiled the monolith in the presence of ex-servicemen, commanders and officers of Border Security Force (BSF), police personnel, civil administration representatives and schoolchildren from the border village of Pargwal, the spokesman said.

At the inaugural ceremony, the commander of the Chenab Brigade engaged with civilians and veterans, encouraging them to strengthen military-civil cooperation in facing future challenges and threats. The monolith named 'Pargwal Prakarman Pillar' will serve as a permanent reminder of the selfless sacrifice of our soldiers, the spokesman said, adding that it embodies the spirit of nationalism and it is meant to inspire future generations to reflect upon the glorious past.

Kejriwal is blaming others for his failure: CM Saini

Komal Ramola Chandigarh:

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said that the statement of poisonous water made by former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is a political stunt by the Aam Aadmi Party aimed at influencing voters in the upcoming Delhi Assembly elections and deflecting attention from its own failures. He added that the issue has been raised with the Election Commission. The Chief Minister said that ensuring a reliable water supply to the national capital is a collective responsibility, which Haryana is fulfilling diligently and without any shortcomings.

Exposing the failure of the Delhi government, the Chief Minister said that in 2021, Delhi filed a petition, to which the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) responded. The CPCB's reply highlighted the issue of ammonia nitrogen in the



Wazirabad pond and mentioned that there is a water treatment plant in Agra capable of treating water with ammonia levels up to 24 mg/l. However, the Delhi government has not taken any steps to upgrade the Wazirabad plant. As a result, the people of Delhi are still forced to consume contaminated water, while Arvind Kejriwal is now blaming Haryana to cover up his own failures.

Nayab Singh Saini said that the people of Haryana regard the Yamuna River as their mother. He said that the Yamuna is a life-giving resource for both Haryana and Delhi, and it is our collective responsibility to preserve its purity. He condemned the allegation made by former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, calling it an insult to the faith of Haryana and its people. The people of Haryana view the Yamuna as a sacred river and worship it. He further stated that

Kejriwal's accusations are not only baseless but also disrespectful to Haryana's cultural traditions and beliefs.

He said that Delhi receives its drinking water supply of 1049 cusecs at Munak from the waters of the Yamuna and Ravi-Beas rivers. Haryana is consistently supplying this water to Delhi through two canals: the Carrier Line Channel (CLC) and the Delhi Branch. Since the commissioning of the Carrier Line Channel in 2014, Haryana has not supplied any water to Delhi through drains or directly from the Yamuna River; instead, clean water is being supplied exclusively through the canal system of CLC and Delhi Branch. He further assured that the Haryana Government is committed to ensuring the purity and continuous supply of water to Delhi.

The Chief Minister informed that between

January 7th and 13th, 2021, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) tested the water from Yamunanagar (Haryana) to Wazirabad (Delhi) and investigated the primary causes of pollution. The investigation revealed that dirty water is being illegally discharged between Palla and Wazirabad. In addition, the accumulation of sediment in the Wazirabad pond is causing an increase in ammonia nitrogen levels. However, the Delhi government has not taken any action on the CPCB's report since 2021. Neither has the illegal discharge of polluted water between Palla and Wazirabad been halted, nor has any effort been made to clean the Wazirabad pond.

The Chief Minister urged citizens to prioritize water conservation and use water resources judiciously.



By Dr. Anil Singh

Congress: Jai Bapu Jai Bhim & Jai Samvidhan; A Legacy of Struggles for Justice

Mau, the site of today's rally, holds a historical significance that makes it a fitting venue for a movement centered on social justice and constitutional values. Situated in Madhya Pradesh, a state with deep ties to India's freedom struggle and social reform movements, Mau has often been a battleground for ideological clashes and social change. The town has been a hub for grassroots mobilizations and progressive initiatives, particularly in advocating for the rights of marginalized communities, including Dalits, tribal populations, and backward classes.

Rahul Gandhi, addressing the rally, invoked the spirit of this historical legacy. He emphasized that the Congress party's mission is aligned with the aspirations of the people of Mau, who have long stood as torchbearers of social justice. By connecting the rally's purpose with the town's enduring spirit of equality and resistance, Gandhi set a tone of solidarity with the people.

Ambedkar's Vision and Its Relevance in Today's India

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, whose legacy was at the heart of the "Jai Bapu Jai Bhim" rally, remains a towering figure in the fight for social justice in India. As the principal architect of the Indian Constitution, Ambedkar envisioned a society where liberty, equality, and fraternity would form the bedrock of national progress. His relentless efforts to uplift Dalits and ensure equal opportunities for all resonate strongly in today's political landscape, where issues of caste and class discrimination persist.

Rahul Gandhi, drawing on Ambedkar's vision, point-



ed out the BJP's failure to uphold these ideals. He accused the ruling party of perpetuating policies that exacerbate inequalities and suppress the voices of the underprivileged. "Dr. Ambedkar gave us the tools to build a society based on justice and equality, but today, these very tools are being dismantled," Gandhi said, as he pledged Congress' resolve to bring transparency and equity to governance through this initiative.

The Fight for Social Justice: A Continuing Battle

The rally also underscored the long road ahead in the fight for social justice. With caste-based discrimination, economic inequalities, and institutional biases still prevalent, Gandhi emphasized the need for systemic reforms. He highlighted Congress' commitment to initiatives like affirmative action, robust education policies, and comprehensive welfare programs targeted at Dalits, backward classes, and minorities.

One of the key promises made during the rally was the implementation of a nationwide caste census. Gandhi argued that without accurate data on caste demographics, policies aimed at social justice would remain ineffective. "How can we ensure justice if we don't even know who needs it the most?" he asked, reiterating Congress' resolve to bring transparency and equity to governance through this initiative.

Love as the Answer to Hatred: Rahul Gandhi's Vision

A highlight of Rahul Gandhi's speech was his now-iconic phrase: "Nafarat ke bazar mein mohabbat ki dukaan kholni hai" (We must open shops of love in the marketplace of hatred). This resonated deeply with the audience, as Gandhi contrasted the politics of love and unity with what he called the BJP's divisive and polarizing tactics. He argued that the BJP thrives on sowing seeds of hatred among communities, whereas

the principles enshrined in the Indian Constitution.

By invoking the town's historical legacy, Gandhi sought to inspire a renewed sense of purpose among the masses. "Mau has always stood for justice and equality. Today, we are here to reclaim that legacy and build a future that reflects the dreams of our forefathers," he said.

Conclusion: A Rally with a Purpose

Rahul Gandhi's speech at the "Jai Bapu Jai Bhim" rally was not just a critique of the BJP but a clarion call for action. By weaving together the legacies of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Ambedkar, the historical significance of Mau, and Congress' vision for a just and inclusive India, Gandhi sought to reassert his party's commitment to the principles of democracy and equality.

His promise to conduct a caste census, defend constitutional rights, and fight for social justice resonated with the audience, as did his message of love and unity in the face of hate. For Congress, the rally marked a pivotal moment in its efforts to rebuild its grassroots base and challenge the BJP's dominance in India's heartland.

As the crowd dispersed, the echoes of Rahul Gandhi's words—"Nafarat ke bazar mein mohabbat ki dukaan kholni hai"—lingered in the air, signaling a renewed hope for a future built on the foundations of equality, compassion, and justice.

About the Author

(The writer is an editor, Dr Anil Singh Editor, STAR Views)

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Since the upcoming budget for the financial year 2025-26 is coming against the backdrop of slow domestic economic growth, weakening currency and global geopolitical situation. Hence, Govt. can fulfill the peoples expectation by boosting house hold income, simplifying indirect taxes and increasing the income tax limit. We can keep the Indian economy on the path of speedy growth by maintaining fiscal balance and increasing employment through the provisions of budget.

Status of Indian economy and expectations and suggestions for the upcoming budget



By Prof. Ripudaman Singh

On February 1, the Central Government will present the Union Budget for 2025-26. US President Donald Trump's threats of import duty hikes, visa bans and other immigration related actions, as well as capital outflows due to a strong dollar and rising fiscal yields may be a matter of concern. But the rupee has stabilized somewhat since mid-January. For example, it has risen from an all-time low of 86.7 to 86.2 against the dollar. The upcoming budget will present an opportunity for the Central Government to give an important message that India's development road map is unwavering, and the country remains a profitable place for both domestic and global investors to invest their capital. But it is also necessary to evaluate the State of Indian economy at present.

Currently, it is generally believed that the growth rate of the economy is falling. But there is also a perception that the Indian economy is the fastest growing economy in the world, growing between 6% - 7%. Other big economies are growing at a slower pace. For example, the US is growing at 2.7% and China at 4.9%. But it is also true that in 2024, the United States (at current prices) added US\$ 787 billion to its GDP and China added US\$ 895 billion to its GDP. On the other hand, the Indian economy added only about US\$ 256 billion to its GDP. It is clear that the Indian economy



will have to continue growing at an even faster rate to keep pace with the US and China. Since this budget is coming against the backdrop of slow domestic economic growth, weakening currency, global geopolitical situation (especially the Trump-led US administration), everyone has very high expectations. According to recent statements from people, there are some expectations from the upcoming budget like boosting household income, simplifying indirect taxes, providing capital loans to states on certain conditions, promoting MSME (Micro and Small Enterprises) and increasing the income tax limit to at least Rs. 10 lakhs.

It is a common opinion that the growth rate of urban consumer has slowed down while the rural economy has improved in the financial year 2024-25. Therefore, there is a high expectation from the government to increase consumption, but this is not right approach, the government should make efforts to improve household income growth instead of consumption. Apart

from simplifying and reducing indirect taxes, the construction sector should be promoted, so that workers from the agricultural sector can get work in the construction sector, apart from this, informal sectors like MSME should be promoted. Therefore, it is very important to provide assistance to micro and small industries in the budget.

It is clear that personal income rates are high but the burden of indirect taxes is more extensive and onerous. Based on the Central Government's gross tax figures, direct taxes (personal and corporate income tax) now account for 57% of total taxes, yet the combined share of the Central and the states in indirect taxes is 60%, which is the same as the decade ago. Therefore, it is suggested that there is a dire need to eliminate double taxation on dividend income. Apart from this, the government should also take other measures to reduce indirect taxes by reducing tax slabs to simplify GST.

Recently, a worrying trend in public finance has emerged in the

area of welfare schemes. Many states have announced unconditional monthly assistance to various groups like women, students and unemployed without any economic criteria. If the states have the resources to announce welfare schemes, it would be beneficial for the Centre to provide capital expenditure loans to the states with certain conditions. This policy would help in instilling fiscal discipline among the states. But the Centre will have to show courage to do so.

The government needs to recognise its limitations in encouraging corporate investment, with government capital expenditure registering a CAGR of 16% during FY 2019-20 to 2023-24 while domestic investment grew by 12%. The government must therefore recognise that the growing prominence of stock markets and independent management has reduced the ability of policymakers to influence corporate investment. It is imperative for the government to analyse whether corporate investment in India can grow beyond the current level with sustainability.

In a suggestion, the CII believes that the income tax rate on bank deposits should be lower than the normal rate because in the financial year 2019-20, 56.9% of the savings of Indian families were deposited in banks, which has come down to 45.2% in the financial year 2023-

24. The main reason for this is that compared to the stock market and mutual funds etc., there is low return as well as tax levied on it. This step will affect the elderly and people who keep their savings in the bank.

Employment generation is a key aspect of India's long-term development strategy. The government should make provisions in the budget to promote employment-oriented sectors such as construction, tourism and textiles.

It is estimated that the government wants to keep its fiscal deficit target at 4.9% for the financial year 2025. The objective of the budget should be to keep the fiscal deficit at such a level that the central government can be successful in reducing its debt. Thousands of wishes have reached the Finance Minister, but how many of these are fulfilled, will depend on the state of the government treasury. The signs so far are good, but there are some concerns on the development aspect. In this situation, only such measures can be effective, which not only provide relief to the common man but also help the economy to gain momentum.

About the Author

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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.

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

Solution, Sudoku

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

THE WISDOM TREE BY SUVEEN KUMAR

CHANGE

The biggest reason why you should never belong to anything because nothing belongs to you, changing with the change brings a lot of happiness and trying to remain constant brings a lot of pain. If attachment is natural so is the change, if happiness is natural so is the pain. One of the happiest ways to live the life is, to live for nothing and die for nothing, knowing the change is beginning of happiness, practicing the change is finding the happiness and accepting the change is living in happiness. nothing ever will make you anything because everything changes from something to nothing, it is not a spiritual or philosophical talk, it is simply a sensible talk. The kingdom of change is from slums to palace, from ocean to cosmos, from life to death, from pure mode of goodness

to worst mode of badness, a friendship with change will make you king and enmity with it will make you beggar.

it is sad to see good time changing, it's sad to see good people changing, it's sad to see your loved ones loving someone else, it's sad to see your friend becoming others friend, it's sad to see that nothing seems, it's sad to see that nothing remains the same, change teaches you not to be dependent, change makes you versatile, change keeps you from being hostile, change brings in you some style.

Moral : change is a boat that can take you anywhere you wish, constant is graveyard once you are in, you are dead.

THE WISDOM TREE - BY SUVEEN KUMAR



TOP STORY

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Can't accept export of raw materials, value addition must happen in India: PM Modi

Bhubaneswar
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said he cannot accept raw materials getting exported and finished products being shipped into the country, asserting that value additions must happen in India.



Inaugurating the Utkarsh Odisha, Make in Odisha Conclave in Bhubaneswar's Janata Maidan, Modi said he considers eastern India as the growth engine of the country, and the state plays an important role in it. "The country's development is not possible only by exporting raw materials. Therefore, we are changing the entire ecosystem and working with a new vision," he said. "The minerals are extracted here and exported to some other country where value addition is done and finished products are then sent back to India. This trend is not acceptable to Modi," he added, citing the example of the export of marine products for processing in other countries. Urging all to recognise the challenges of the global supply chain in a changing world, the PM said India cannot rely on fragmented and import-based supply chains. "Instead, a robust supply and value chain must be built within India to minimise the impact of global fluctuations. This responsibility lies with both the

government and the industry," he said. "Today, India is moving on a path of development driven by the aspirations of crores of people. This is an era of AI. However, the aspiration of India, not just AI, is the power of our country. Aspiration grows when the needs of the people are fulfilled. In the last decade, the country has witnessed the benefit of empowering crores of people. Odisha represents the same aspiration," he said. "Modi said the 21st century is about connected infrastructure and multi-modal connectivity. "India is building specialised infrastructure at unprecedented speed and scale. It will make India a great destination for investment," he said.

The PM said ASEAN countries have shown interest in strengthening trade ties with Odisha. "I consider eastern India as the growth engine of the country, with Odisha playing a crucial role in this. History shows that during times when India significantly contributed to global growth, eastern India also made important contributions," he said. "A country that has such a rich heritage of music, dance and storytelling and a huge pool of youngsters who are big consumers of concerts, there are many possibilities in the concert economy. You have witnessed that in the last 10 years, the demand and trend for live events have increased. Over the last few days, you must

have seen the beautiful pictures of Coldplay concerts in Mumbai and Ahmedabad. This proves that there is a massive scope for concerts in India," he said. "Big artistes from around the world are attracted to India. I expect the state and the private sector to focus on developing necessary infrastructure and skills for the concert economy," he added. The PM said that next month, India will host the World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit for the first time, and showcase the country's creative power to the world. Highlighting that India has significant potential for conference tourism, the PM said venues like Bharat Mandapam and Yashobhoori in Delhi were becoming major centres for this. Industrialists like Vedanta Group chairman Anil Agarwal, Aditya Birla Group chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla, and Jindal Steel and Power chairman Naveen Jindal were present at the function. Governor Kamdhampati Hari Babu, CM Mohan Charan Majhi, and Union ministers Dharmendra Pradhan, Jai Oram and Ashwini Vaishnaw were also present. The PM also inaugurated the 'Make in Odisha' exhibition, showcasing the state's achievements in developing an industrial ecosystem.

Visited Odisha nearly 30 times as PM: Modi

Bhubaneswar
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said that he has visited Odisha nearly 30 times as the PM and toured most of the state's districts. Modi said this while addressing the Utkarsh Odisha, Make in Odisha Conclave, 2025, attended by around 7,500 business delegates from around the country and abroad. "I have great affection for Odisha. As a Prime Minister, I have visited Odisha nearly 30 times. In independent India, I am the Prime Minister who has visited the state the most number of times," he said.

Modi asserted that Odisha is the most suitable place for investment and it plays a significant role in building a developed India. Stating that this is his second visit to the state in January this year, Modi said the love and affection of people has dragged him to Odisha. He highlighted that the people have resolved to build a prosperous state, and the Union government was providing all support to achieve this goal. The Prime Minister expressed confidence that the investments made by all partners will elevate both their businesses and the state's progress to new heights. Modi also noted that there were huge industrial hubs, ports, trade hubs in Eastern India and Odisha's participation in this was remarkable. "Odisha used to be an

"I have great affection for Odisha. As a Prime Minister, I have visited Odisha nearly 30 times. In independent India, I am the Prime Minister who has visited the state the most number of times," he said.

important centre in South Eastern Asian trade and the ports were a gateway to India," the Prime Minister said. Stating that Bali Yatra celebrated every year in Odisha, he recalled the recent visit of the President of Indonesia to India. "Indonesian President told me that there were probably traces of Odisha in his DNA," Modi said. Including Tuesday's tour, Modi visited Odisha five times in eight months. Earlier, he came to Bhubaneswar to attend the swearing-in ceremony of the BJP government led by Mohan Charan Majhi on June 12 last year and to launch the women empowerment scheme-Subhadra on September 17. He also inaugurated the DGP/IGP conference on November 30 and Pravasi Bharatiya Divas on January 9.

CISF to establish first Mahila Reserve Battalion in Nuh, Haryana

New Delhi
In a significant step towards empowering women in security forces, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) is set to establish its first Mahila Reserve Battalion in Nuh, Haryana, said a press statement on Tuesday. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) approved the creation of 1,025 posts for the battalion on November 11, 2024. Haryana has allocated 50 acres of land for the project, which received MHA clearance for its location plan on January 24, 2025. The battalion aims to address the increasing demand for women personnel in the Delhi NCR region, home to key CISF units such as the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGI), Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC),

the Parliament House Complex, and Central Government Building Security. The upcoming Jewar International Airport will further elevate this need. With the battalion located in Nuh, CISF will ensure cost-effective and rapid deployment of trained women personnel during high-alert situations. The facility will feature modern security gadgets to meet evolving operational requirements. Additionally, CISF has secured land at Indri village in Nuh for relocating its 1st Reserve Battalion, currently stationed temporarily at Barwaha, Madhya Pradesh. The proximity of the two battalions will enhance CISF's ability to secure sensitive installations across Delhi NCR.

This dual establishment in Nuh will streamline operations, improve readiness, and bolster CISF's capability to address security needs efficiently. In November 2024, in a firm step towards realizing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of enhancing women's participation in every field of nation-building, the government approved the establishment of the first all-women battalion of the CISF. To be raised as an elite troop, the Mahila Battalion will shoulder the responsibility of protecting the nation's critical infrastructure, like airports and metro rails, and providing VIP security as commandants. The strength of Mahila Reserve Battalion is 1,025 of different ranks headed by Senior Mahila Commandant.

SC seeks Centre's response on plea by non-believer Muslim woman for Succession Act over Sharia law

New Delhi
The Supreme Court on Tuesday sought a response from the Centre on a petition filed by a non-believer Muslim woman seeking to be governed by the Indian Succession Act, 1925, instead of the Muslim Personal Law (Sharia Law) regarding inheritance. A bench led by Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna, along with Justices Sanjay Kumar and KV Viswanathan, directed the Central government to file its response within four weeks. The matter was postponed for hearing in the first week of May. During the hearing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, explained that the petitioner, who has only one daughter, wants to bequeath her entire property to her



daughter. However, under Sharia law, she would be allowed to bequeath only 50 per cent of her property. "She wants the benefit of the Indian Succession Act, the secular law," Solicitor General said. Last year, the Supreme Court issued a notice to the Centre and the State of Kerala regarding the petition. The petition was filed by a Kerala-based woman, Safiya PM, who stated that she is a non-believer Muslim and, therefore, should be governed by the Indian Succession Act, 1925, with respect to inheritance, instead of the Muslim Personal Law (Sharia Law). She claimed

that her father is a non-practicing Muslim but has not officially renounced the religion. According to Sharia law, a person who leaves Islam is ousted from the community and is thereafter not entitled to any inheritance rights in parental property, the petition said. The petitioner further stated that under Sharia law, a Muslim individual cannot bequeath more than one-third of their property via a will. The petitioner noted that her father cannot bequeath more than one-third of his property to her, with the remaining two-thirds going to her brother, who suffers from Down's syndrome. It was also stated that the petitioner has a daughter, and after her death, the entire property will not pass on

to her daughter, as her father's brothers will also have a claim. "The absence of any provision for having the inheritance rights, even after leaving the religion, puts the citizen in a dangerous situation as neither the secular laws of the State nor the religious laws would protect her. As per Sharia law, one who has left Islam will lose her inheritance rights. It is the prayer of the petitioner that she should be governed by the provisions of the Indian Succession Act, 1925," the petition stated. Additionally, the petitioner strongly believes that practices under Sharia law are "highly discriminatory towards women," and therefore, violate the fundamental rights guaranteed under the Indian Constitution.

75 yrs of SC: A true people's court, embodies aspirations of 1.4 billion, says CJI Sanjiv Khanna

New Delhi
On a ceremonial bench marking 75 years of the Supreme Court, Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna said it was a "true people's court" that evolved into the world's most vibrant apex court, embodying the aspirations of 1.4 billion people. "What began in 1950 as a successor to the federal court, has evolved into perhaps the world's most vibrant and dynamic apex court, one that truly embodies the aspirations and diversity of 1.4 billion Indians. What sets our Supreme Court apart on the global stage is its unique character as a true people's court," he said. The apex court came into existence on January 26, 1950 when the Constitution came into force and was inaugurated on January 28, 1950. It initially functioned from the old Parliament House



and moved its functioning to the present building on Tikla Marg in 1958. Justice Khanna said 75 years after the constitutional journey began, the Supreme Court stood transformed, yet anchored in its foundational mission. "This transformation reflects a deeper recognition - that justice must be both principled and practical. In doing so, it makes the constitutional promise of justice - social, economic, and po-

litical - a living reality for millions of Indians," he said. While the apex court's journey reflected remarkable evolution in rights and reach, three challenges demanded attention, said the CJI. "Firstly, the weight of arrears which continues to delay justice. Secondly, mounting costs of litigation threatens true accessibility. Thirdly, and perhaps most fundamentally - justice cannot thrive where and

when falsehood is practised," shared CJI Khanna. The challenges marked the next frontier in the pursuit for justice, he said. The CJI was a part of the ceremonial bench assembled to mark the diamond jubilee year of the Supreme Court. CJI Khanna said the apex court remained accessible to the public and in its diversity of the judges in these courtrooms, the multitude of voices found representation at the highest level of our judiciary. Referring to the journey of 75 years, he said each decade of the court's jurisprudence served as a mirror to our nation's challenges with several landmark judgments. "What emerges is not an unmovable structure carved from sandstone, but a living, breathing institution. It has been responsive to the conscience of our democracy,

adapting and evolving to embrace the complexities of each era while remaining rooted in the bedrock of constitutional values," said the CJI. While terming the first decade of 1950s as "sunrise years," he said the second decade of 1960s was "years of anchorage as well as discovery". The CJI termed the 1970s and 80s as "years of turbulence leading the way to social justice and equality jurisprudence". "The 1990s ushered in an era where the Supreme Court not only remained vigilant in protecting individual rights but also stepped in to address legislative and executive gaps," added the CJI. Justice Khanna said the two decades of the 21st century stood a testament to the apex court's evolving role in our constitutional framework.

Congress questions BJP govt over steps announced to normalize relations with China

New Delhi
The Congress on Tuesday questioned the steps announced by the Ministry of External Affairs like the agreement on the resumption of Kailash Mansarovar Yatra and direct flights with China, saying the Narendra Modi government has not yet satisfactorily explained to the country why this is the right time to normalize relations with Beijing. In a statement, Congress General Secretary in-charge of Communications Jairam Ramesh reiterated the questions that his party had asked the government earlier, saying they must be answered before normalization with China can be attempted. "Will Indian troops be able to patrol up to our claim line in Depsang to five patrolling points that they were able to earlier? Will our troops be able to reach the three patrolling points in Demchok that



our government ceded to the Chinese, which included the site of a memorial in Rezang La to war hero and posthumous Param Vir Chakra awardee Major Shaikhan Singh, now a thing of the past?" Ramesh questioned. He stated that the Congress party notes the announcement by the Modi government of normalisation of ties with China at a time when there are still many unanswered questions about the disengagement agreement of 21st October 2024. "New Delhi and Beijing have agreed to restore commercial and cultural ties including direct flights between the two capitals, resumption of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, liberalised visa regime and other measures following the recent Beijing visit of the Foreign Secretary. The Modi government has not yet satisfactorily explained to the country why this is the right time to normalise relations with China," the Congress leader said.

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Widow mother of 4 gets lecturership by order of Rajasthan HC

Jaipur: The Rajasthan High Court has ordered the appointment of a widow having four children, overruling the norm that limits the number of children to two for the appointment of a widow as a lecturer in the school education department.

The bench of Justice Samir Jain while disposing of the petition filed by Sunita Dhawan, a widow and mother of four children, held that if a widow mother with more than two children can be given an appointment on compassionate grounds, then why should a widow mother of four, who has qualified for the appointment on merit by clearing the recruitment examination for school lecturers conducted by the RPSC, be denied the job?

The petitioner, a widow and mother of two girls and two boys (one specially abled) from the Scheduled Caste category, secured merit in the school lecturer recruitment exam in 2018. However, she was denied a posting for being the mother of more than two children.

The judge held that given the petitioner's responsibility to care for her four children, this court finds itself duty-bound to order

Akhilesh Yadav calls for harmony, tolerance, and improved facilities at Mahakumbh

Lucknow: Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav has emphasized the Mahakumbh, a once-in-144-years event, is a rare occasion in a lifetime and should inspire resolutions for harmony and tolerance.

"In life, we encounter streams of thoughts coming from different directions. Like the confluence of rivers at the Sangam, we should foster positive interactions throughout life. The Triveni of harmony and tolerance should be experienced by everyone during Mahakumbh," he stated.

Mr Yadav also stressed that the focus of Mahakumbh should be on providing exceptional systems and facilities, not on accommodating VIPs. Highlighting the challenges faced by pilgrims, he remarked on issues such as inadequate transportation arrangements despite the availability of buses.

"These inconveniences should not be treated as surprises but as opportunities for improvement. Efforts must be made on a war footing to enhance facilities for pilgrims," he urged.

Criticizing the BJP government, Mr. Yadav said, "Mahakumbh should not be used as a platform for self-promotion. It should be seen as an opportunity to provide selfless service so that spiritual travelers seeking peace can complete their journey without struggle."

He further called for a humane approach towards the officers and employees managing the event, ensuring their proper rest, food, and water so that the system operates smoothly.

Despite a budget of ₹10,000 crore allocated for Mahakumbh, Mr. Yadav pointed out several essential facilities such as sufficient toilets and clean water, are lacking.

Mahakumbh witnesses unprecedented rush for Wednesday's Mauni Amavasya

Mahakumbh Nagar: A sea of devotees have thronged the Mahakumbh Mela area on the eve of the auspicious Mauni Amavasya and the main bathing day on Tuesday. In the world's largest human congregation, around 40 million people have taken a dip in the Sangam on Tuesday alone, taking the total number of pilgrims attending this Mahakumbh to 170 million.

The second and the most important Amrit Snan of the 13 akharas will commence at 5 am on Wednesday and will continue till evening. The saints and naga sadhus of these akharas will bathe in a special ghat where common people would not be allowed.

Sources said the 15 km area of the Sangam region is a jam packed since early morning on Tuesday so much so that there is no place to set foot. Roads and streets are all packed. In the photos taken from drones, pilgrims seemed like crawling. Devotees were forced to walk up to 20 km to take a dip in Sangam which is taking 5-6 hours to reach the ghat. The police have



barricaded places to control the crowd.

The ADG and the DM are constantly monitoring the proceedings but the pressure of the crowds at the confluence is increasing with the devotees coming from all directions. Shastri Bridge, Nag Vasuki Road, Jhansi Road along with Triveni Marg, Kali Marg are all jam packed with head-to-head people. Authorities have already banned entry of

four-wheelers in the city as well as in the Mela area.

In view of the Mauni Amavasya bath, 5,000 additional forces have been deployed from today. This police force will be deployed on the boundaries of the city, besides various inter-sections. It includes traffic police and civil policemen. Duty of about 10,000 policemen has been imposed on the boundaries of the city.

Besides, 4000 additional police forces along with several companies of PAC, RAF, NDRF and SDRF have been deployed.

The fair administration and the police have intensified safety measures to ensure a secure and comfortable experience for them. Devotees have also been urged to remain vigilant, steer clear of rumors, and report concerns promptly. A dedicated team com-

The second and the most important Amrit Snan of the 13 akharas will commence at 5 am on Wednesday and will continue till evening.

prising fair police, traffic police, and specialized doctors has been deployed around the clock to assist devotees in case of emergencies.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Mahakumbhnagar, Rajesh Dwivedi, stated, "Robust arrangements have been made for the second Amrit Snan of Mahakumbh, especially for Mauni Amavasya."

He urged devotees to cooperate with the police, remain cautious, and seek assistance. The police and administration are available 24/7 to support the devotees at Mahakumbh.

The police have also issued special instructions to the pilgrims for their safety.

Meanwhile, the Uttar Pradesh government has deployed over 1,000 medical personnel at the Mahakumbh Mela to ensure devotees' safety and health.

Himachal Pradesh Forms Carbon Credit Panel for Revenue

Shimla: The Himachal Pradesh government has constituted a Carbon Credit Committee to explore various aspects of the carbon market and generate additional revenue for the state.

The ten-member committee under the Chairmanship of Additional Chief Secretary, Forests, will study the existing International and domestic carbon market in order to develop sector specific study for the state. Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said in a statement on Tuesday.

The initiative seeks to enhance the capacity of the state government in identifying, developing and implementing carbon credit projects, he said and added that the committee will also work to identify the potential carbon credit projects in collaboration with various government departments.

Sukhu said that the committee would also provide recommendations for re-aligning the new and existing schemes and pro-

grammes to maximize the benefits of carbon credits besides studying the best practices and the successful projects implemented in India across other states to analyze their strategies.

Additionally, it will assist in framing a state climate policy and related frameworks for carbon credits. The Departments will be guided in formulating projects to secure carbon credits, while the committee will help to develop procedures for engaging project developers, consultants, buyers, traders, the statement added.

Furthermore, it would also arrange regular interaction with administrators of Indian Carbon Market and other International carbon standards.

Experience 'Samudra Manthan' on Mauni Amavasya

Mahakumbh Nagar: The sacred Amrit Snan of Mauni Amavasya, the most significant festival of Mahakumbh and a cornerstone of the Sanatan faith, will take place on Wednesday (January 29).

This year, a rare celestial alignment called 'Triveni Yog', occurring after 144 years, amplifies the spiritual significance of the day.

According to astrologers, 'Triveni Yog', akin to the Samudra Manthan Yog, will begin on Tuesday, January 28, at 2:35 PM and last till 7:25 AM on February 8. During this period, bathing at the holy Triveni Sangam is believed to bestow virtues equivalent to performing a Saahasra Vajpayee Yagya or a hundred Ashwamedha Yagyas.

The scriptures describe bathing in the Sangam on Mauni Amavasya as Mokshadayak (granting liberation).

Astrologers suggest that devotees can bathe at any ghat at their convenience, without focusing on specific Yogas or Nakshatras, and still receive the same spiritual benefits as a Sangam bath.

This rare 'Triveni Yog' occurs due to the Sun, Moon, and Mercury aligning in Capricorn, with Jupiter casting its ninth aspect. This configuration mirrors the cosmic dynamics of the Samudra Manthan period.

Astrologer H K Shukla on Prayagraj highlights that Mauni Amavasya Tithi will start at 7:32 PM on January 28 and end at 6:05 PM on January 29, with Brahma Muhurta (the pre-dawn hours) being the most auspicious time for bathing.

Mauni Amavasya derives its name from observing silence and fasting on this day, symbolising inner purification. Devotees are advised to bathe at any convenient ghat or Sangam (mix) of Ganga water with regular water for the same spiritual benefits as a Triveni Sangam bath.

The day is also auspicious for ancestors, as well as for peace rituals, charity, and worship, especially during Brahma Muhurta and other favourable times like Amrit and Shubh Chaughadiya.



Women from poor financial section of society were provided ration and other homey assistance at a programme organised by the Lions Club of Prayags on Tuesday.

The program was inaugurated by Dr. Ranjana Bansal and SP Sarin of Lions Club district. Bansal praised the efforts to help needy women. Lions Club of Prayags tried to provide both self-reliance and support to women.

The Spice House run by Aakanksha Samiti at Khandari, 50 poor women were provided one month's ration, blankets and food packets for their families.

Chairman Ashu Mittal said that, "The Spice House" is run by Aakanksha Samiti, an organization of wives of IAS-PCS officers.

The spices, mathri etc. available here are made with purity by poor women. Along with encouraging and helping those women,

Akash Jain/ Rajesh Tomar Agra:

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The spices, mathri etc. available here are made with purity by poor women. Along with encouraging and helping those women,



Aparna Poddar and Dr. Saroj Prashant of Aakanksha Samiti said that spices, mathri etc. are available with 100 percent purity in The Spice House.

On this occasion Lions Club Prayags founder president Sanjeev Mittal, secretary Manish Bansal, Dr. Parinitha Bansal, Dr. Sandeep Agarwal, Dr. Parul Agarwal, Nutan, Mayuri Mittal, Neetu, Padmini Surana, Abha, Garima, Al-

pana, Ashu Jain, Lovey Katheria, Sangeta, Sheena, Reshma, Rupali, Shivangi, Neeti, Sanjana, Rachna, Vibha, Priya, Rekha etc were present.

President Ashu Mittal, Subhashini Palwal, Aparna Poddar, Dr. Saroj Prashant, Manish Bansal, Sanjeev Mittal etc. providing ration and blankets to poor women in the Annadaam Mahadaam program organized by Prayags.

Those infamous for appeasement politics now taking dip at Triveni Sangam: Adityanath

Lucknow: In an obvious attack on Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, without naming anyone, said on Tuesday that even those infamous for their politics of appeasement are now taking a dip at the Triveni Sangam.

He, however, added that it will be a mistake to expect that those who have never respected the faith of India will respect the faith in Sanatan Dharma.

Speaking at the Mahakumbh Samagam organised by Times Now-Navbharat, Adityanath said, "I am pleased to see that those once disrespected India's faith and were



infamous for their appeasement politics are now eager to take a dip at the holy Sangam of the Ganga, Yamuna and

mythical Saraswati to seek 'punya' (virtue)."

Responding to a question on whether opposition parties have

appreciated his government's organisation of the grand Maha Kumbh, the chief minister said, "Prayagraj belongs to

everyone and faith transcends all."

He added that the growing participation of people in the Maha Kumbh from diverse political ideologies demonstrates the enduring influence of Sanatan Dharma.

Adityanath's remarks came after Yadav took a dip at the Sangam on Sunday.

The SP chief also advised Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders to visit the Kumbh with "sahanshilita" (patience).

Asked if opposition leaders joining the Kumbh is a victory for Sanatan Dharma, Adityanath said, "This is not a question of victory or defeat. It is a testament to the eternal presence and power of Sanatan

Dharma, which continues to thrive and inspire."

He, however, added that "to expect that those who have never respected the faith of India will respect the faith in Sanatan Dharma will be a mistake."

"Those who did not believe in Sanatan and only did appeasement were not only forced to take a dip but were also forced to install the statues of their stalwarts (at the Sangam) to show that this is also a place, it also has importance. If we ignore this faith, then this faith will ignore who knows how many people."

SP workers have installed the statue of party founder Mulayam Singh Yadav at the Sangam. Akhilesh Yadav had garlanded his father's statue after taking a bath at the Sangam.

Highlighting the massive turnout, Adityanath shared that in the last 15 days, more than 16 crore devotees have taken a holy dip at the Maha Kumbh.

"By the conclusion of the Kumbh on February 26, the number is expected to surpass the population of the third-largest country in the world," the chief minister said.

Can be fined or arrested: UK cautions against satellite phone use in India

London: UK tourists travelling to India have been warned about carrying certain phones and GPS devices after several British citizens were arrested.

The Foreign Office issued an alert to travellers on January 27 after receiving reports of holidaymakers being detained for bringing restricted items into the country. The incidents involved people that were found to be carrying satellite phones or GPS devices. Tourists who are caught doing so without a licence can be fined or arrested.

The Foreign Office said: "It is illegal to possess and operate satellite phones and GPS devices in India without a licence, even if you are only transiting through India. This may also cover other satellite-enabled devices, including handheld or cycling GPS."

"You can be fined or arrested for possession of these devices without permission and the item can be confiscated. A number of British nationals have been arrested or detained for bringing satellite phones and other satellite-enabled navigational devices into the country without prior permission." E-cigarettes and related products are also banned, cannot be purchased in India and cannot be brought into the country.

Jaishankar says India sees Middle East region as 'crucial passage to world beyond'

Abu Dhabi: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Tuesday highlighted the significant expansion of India-Middle East engagement driven by strong trade, connectivity, and people-to-people linkages, saying India sees the Middle East as a crucial passage to the world beyond.

Addressing the inaugural session of Raisina Middle East here, Jaishankar said the Middle East region, which India calls West Asia, is crucial to India's strategic interests. The country's trade in the Gulf region amounts to about USD 160 to USD 180 billion. "Our presence in the Gulf is both pervasive and crucial. More than 9 million Indians live and work here, but the Gulf also serves as a gateway to the MENA region and the Mediterranean," Jaishankar said, adding this larger geography is a very critical connection between the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic. "And as our history



underlines, there is a symbiotic relationship between us. We certainly have stakes that are continually rising; but increasingly, India also has contributions to make that would influence the direction of events," a Ministry of External Affairs statement quoted Jaishankar as saying.

"Our annual trade with the Mediterranean, incidentally, is another USD 80 billion, and the Indian diaspora there is close to half a million," the minister said, adding that India's projects in the region include airports, ports, railways, phosphates, green hydrogen, steel and submarine cables.

Jaishankar said the endeavours of India and the Middle East can be projected further into Africa, Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. "Perhaps there is no domain that has a stronger case for such plurilateral cooperation than that of connectivity... Maritime security and safety is another is-

sue where understandings and mechanisms will have to step in to fill global deficits.

Jaishankar said the two regions, long connected by the flow of people, have a common interest in the emergence of a global workplace.

"This is all the more necessary when new industries like semiconductors or electric mobility scour the world for skills and talent. The Gulf, in particular, has been a trendsetter in this regard. As Middle Eastern nations themselves explore emerging and critical technologies, as they fully exploit the current and future energy potential, they will surely utilize the current foundation of goodwill and experience to bolster their capabilities," he said.

Jaishankar said the Middle East is an extended neighbourhood with which India has fully reconnected, and New Delhi needs to deepen its engagement with the region.

Sri Lanka ends ban on vehicle imports

Colombo: Cash-strapped Sri Lanka has officially lifted the ban on the vehicle import which was put in place in 2020 to ease the pressure on foreign exchange reserves due to the COVID-19 pandemic, authorities said on Tuesday.

"This will be with effect from February 1. President Anura Kumara Dissanayake has issued a gazette dated January 24 which ended the ban on vehicle imports imposed in early 2020 with the COVID outbreak. The ban was continued when Sri Lanka suffered its economic crisis triggered by forex shortage.

In April 2022, Sri Lanka declared its first-ever debt default. Commenting on the lifting of the import ban the Cabinet spokesman and minister Nalintha Jayathissa said only trucks, buses and double cabs would be allowed in the first phase. President Dissanayake said last week

that the government would allocate USD 1.2 billion for vehicle imports for the first phase. In 2019, before the ban came into force the island had spent USD 1.4 billion for vehicle imports.

"We will be wary of maintaining the dollar reserves", Jayathissa said. "We will keep watching the reserves while trying to raise government revenue. So at which tax these imports would come would be soon announced".

Having entered the IMF bailout the island's economy was turned around and the current levels of 6 billion reserves were reached aided by stringent austerity measures. According to the IMF bailout and its rigid reform regime Sri Lanka has to achieve given targets for maintaining the reserves to avoid another balance of payments crisis as the one in 2022.

Pakistan's Senate passes bill amid protest by opposition, media

Islamabad: Pakistan's Senate on Tuesday passed the controversial cyberspace laws amid protest by the opposition and the media.

The Prevention of Electronic Crimes (Amendment) Bill 2025 or Peca laws was moved by Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain, days after its approval by the lower house.



The amendment adds Section 26(A) to the original Peca Act of 2016 to penalise perpetrators

of "fake news" online, by providing that anyone who intentionally spreads, displays, or transmits false information likely to cause fear, panic, or unrest in society may face up to three years imprisonment, a fine of up to Rs 2 million, or both.

The bill now awaits President Asif Ali Zardari's assent to become law. The changes add a

key provision for the establishment of a Digital Rights Protection Authority (DRPA) tasked with regulating social media platforms and removing unlawful content.

The DRPA will have powers to investigate complaints, remove content, and enforce digital ethics. The amendments also redefine social media platforms and mandate compliance from

social media companies, which may require registering and appointing local representatives.

While supporters believe the amendments are essential to combat fake news and hate speech, critics warn of potential censorship and misuse.

The Senate passed the bill despite protests by the opposition Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party and journalists.

Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Shibli Faraz, spoke out against it, highlighting that the laws were made to protect people while the purpose of the said bill was "to target a specific political party".

"When a new law is introduced, its intent is scrutinised... Whether it's social media or any other medium, it should operate within specific boundaries," Faraz said.

BUSINESS

Road Accident Fatality Rate Concerns in India: IRF

New Delhi: More than 26,000 road accidents took place in school zones, including colleges, in the country in the year 2024, the International Road Federation (IRF) said on Tuesday and expressed caution about increasing number of road accidents.

Addressing an event organised by IRF, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways Director General (Road Development) & Special Secretary D Sarangi said despite the road safety audit at all stages of National Highways the national fatality rate is not coming down.

"As per the latest year 2024 electronic Detailed Accident Report (e-DAR), out of total 5.7 lakh road accidents in the country, 4.6 per cent road accidents took place in the school zones including colleges," IRF said in a statement.

On calculation, 4.6 per cent of 5.7 lakh amounts to 26,220. "DAR" in the context of road accidents stands for "Detailed

Accident Report' refers to a comprehensive document detailing the circumstances of a road accident, usually filled out by the police at the scene, and in the Indian system, the 'e-DAR' refers to an electronic version of this report, allowing for faster data collection and analysis to improve road safety initiatives.

Sarangi said the major cause of road accidents in the country is high speed, the higher the speed the more the accidents.

As mobility is the concern, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MORTH) is increasing the design speed of the roads in the country, he added.

Sarangi also said road safety audit is being mandated at every stage of road construction including the operational stage but still road accidents are rising.

"Either our auditors are not capable or consultants are not as serious... So, the fatality rate is not coming down," he added.

FICCI Urges Tax Review for Growth & Demand

New Delhi: head of the Budget, a majority of the members surveyed by FICCI favoured review of the direct tax structure with a view to spur demand and boost growth.

A re-look at the slabs and the tax rates is warranted as this could lead more money in the hands of people and spur consumption demand in the economy, FICCI said.

The current round of FICCI's Pre-budget 2025-26 survey was conducted between late December 2024 and mid-January 2025. The survey drew responses from over 150 companies spanning across diverse sectors, offering a comprehensive insight into India Inc's sentiments amid moderating economic growth.

The surveyed members expect that the country's GDP growth will be 6.5-6.9 per cent in 2025-26 financial year beginning March. Respondents also



called for a strong policy push on simplifying the tax regime, incentivizing the development of green technologies/renewables and EVs, and easing compliance through digitization.

On the taxation front, providing tax certainty, addressing custom duty inversion, and ration-

ization of TDS provisions were highlighted as important themes by the participants.

The participants also showed support for an amnesty scheme under customs, with 54 per cent favouring its introduction to enable swift resolution of disputes.

According to the survey, the government's

commitment to fiscal consolidation has put the country in good stead as the participants expect the government to remain on that course.

About 47 per cent of participants expected the government to meet the fiscal deficit target of 4.9 per cent for FY 2024-25 and another

24 per cent reporting that the government could improve and report a lower fiscal deficit number for the current year.

Besides, a majority of respondents highlighted the need for sustaining public capital expenditure, with 68 per cent calling for a thrust on capex to sustain the growth momentum.

At least a 15 per cent increase in capex allocation for FY 2025-26 is being looked forward to by members of Indian industry. Additionally, over half of the respondents emphasized the importance of reforms to further enhance the ease of doing business. Reforms pertaining to factors of production - particularly in areas like land acquisition, labour regulations, and power supply - remain important.

The Union Budget 2025-26, to be presented on February 1, will be the first full budget of the Modi 3.0 government.

Sebi Launches iSPOT Portal for Reporting Technical Glitches

New Delhi: Markets regulator Sebi on Tuesday said it has developed a web-based portal for submission of preliminary and final root cause analysis (RCA) reports of technical glitches by stock exchanges and other market infrastructure institutions (MIIs).

The new portal - Integrated Sebi Portal for Technical Glitches (iSPOT) - is aimed at streamlining the reporting process



of technical glitches across MIIs as well as creating a centralized

repository of technical glitches.

Presently, the MIIs - stock exchanges, clearing corporations and depositories - are required to report information about technical glitches and submit the Root Cause Analysis (RCA) reports to Sebi on a dedicated email ID.

In its circular, the regulator said, "The preliminary and RCA report of technical glitch shall be shared

by the MII with Sebi through a dedicated web-based portal of Sebi viz. iSPOT".

This would help to improve the data quality, traceability of historical submissions related to technical glitches at the end of Sebi and MIIs, system-generated reports for monitoring of various compliance requirements in a more focused manner and automated intimation to MIIs for

submission of RCA report within Sebi defined timelines pursuant to submission of preliminary report by concerned MII, the regulator said.

iSPOT has been integrated with Sebi's Intermediary (SI) portal for ease of access to MIIs and can be accessed by MIIs by using the existing login credentials of SI portal. The new circular will come into force from February 3.

Adani Invests Rs 2.3 Lakh Cr in Odisha Power, Cement

New Delhi: Adani Group on Tuesday committed to investing Rs 2.3 lakh crore over the next five years across power, cement, industrial parks, aluminium and city gas expansion in Odisha.

According to a statement by the group, the investment commitment was made during Utkarsh Odisha 2025 - the state's investor meeting.

Karan Adani, Managing Director of Adani Ports and SEZ Limited (APSEZ), met state Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and exchanged MOUs for investment in Odisha over the next five years, it added.

"The Adani Group committed to invest Rs 2.3 lakh crore over the next five years across power, cement, industrial parks, aluminium, city gas etc," the statement said.

It, however, did not give details. "This is the biggest investment in budget by any group in Utkarsh Odisha 2025."

Also, the first test flight landed at Dhamra Airstrip successfully on Tuesday.

Additionally, on the occasion of Utkarsh Odisha, six projects of ATGL in Odisha were commissioned. These include an EV charging station at Bhubaneswar airport and the completion of the city gate station cum mother station project.

Other projects include the groundbreaking for an LNG cum multi-fuel hub at Bhadrak, a CNG station in Balasore, the first domestic piped cooking gas changing and burner in Bhadrak and a CNG station project completion at Raingarup (1st in city) of Mayurbhanj district.

Cricket

Jasprit Bumrah named ICC men's Cricketer of the Year

Dubai
India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah on Tuesday won the prestigious Sir Garfield Sobers Award for ICC men's Cricketer of the Year after delivering "a master-class in skill, precision and relentless consistency" across formats in a record-shattering 2024.

The 31-year-old was adjudged the ICC's Test Cricketer of the Year on Monday and was also named in the Test Team of the Year last week.

"Jasprit Bumrah has been honoured with the prestigious Sir Garfield Sobers Award for ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year at the ICC Awards, recognising his extraordinary 2024, in which he dominated opponents in the longest as well as the shortest format of the game," the ICC said.

Bumrah played a key role across formats for India as he became the fifth winner of the award from the country after Rahul Dravid (2004), Sachin Tendulkar (2010), Ravichandran Ashwin (2016) and Virat Kohli (2017, 2018).

"The pacer's brilliance was reflected in his ICC Test Bowling Rankings, where he crossed the elusive 900-point mark, ending the year with a record-breaking 907 points, the highest for any Indian bowler in history," the governing body stated in its tribute.

"Across formats, Bumrah's 2024 exploits were a masterclass in skill, precision, and relentless consistency, as he shattered record after record and cemented his place as the world's premier



fast bowler," it added.
Bumrah had a stellar year 2024 in which he played a decisive role for India with 15 wickets in their title-winning campaign in the T20 World Cup in the Americas and also became the fastest Indian pacer to reach 200 Test wickets with a bowling average of sub-20, which is also the best in history.

At the T20 World Cup, his 15 wickets came at an astonishing average of 8.26 and an economy of just 4.17, making him the Player of the Tournament.

He also garnered 900 points in ICC Test bowling rankings and ended the year with 907 points, which is the highest for any Indian bowler in his-

tory. In Tests, Bumrah finished the year with 71 wickets in only 13 matches at an average of 14.92, which was also the second best among fast bowlers to former India captain Kapil Dev's 100 wickets in 1983.

The right-arm pacer was at the peak of his performance in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy Under One Towards the Oval of 2024, taking 32 wickets in five Tests.

Overall, Bumrah claimed 77 wickets in the World Test Championship points table for India but the two-time finalists failed to make a third appearance in the summit clash for the 2023-25 cycle.

Mumbai announce 16-member squad for must-win Ranji Trophy clash against Meghalaya

Mumbai
Defending champions Mumbai announced their 16-member squad sans India stars Rohit Sharma, Yashasvi Jaiswal and Shreyas Iyer to take on Meghalaya in their must-win Ranji Trophy Elite Group A clash against Meghalaya starting here on Thursday. Angkrish Raghuvanshi, Suryansh Shedge and Atharva Anolekar have been called back.

Mumbai, who are coming off a five-wicket defeat against Jammu and Kashmir last week, will be without the India stars Jaiswal, Iyer and Rohit, who all have joined the Indian team for the upcoming ODI series against England starting on February 6.

These three players had featured in the sixth round game here at the BKC Ground, with Rohit and Jaiswal following the BCCI diktat to play domestic cricket regularly.

Iyer, on the other hand, has been a vital cog in Mumbai side for domestic competitions across formats this year.

The trio is also a part of the Indian squad for the Champions Trophy next month.

Karsh Kothari, who also featured in Mumbai's playing XI against Jammu and Kashmir, was not picked.

The defeat against Jammu and Kashmir has dented Mumbai's title defence as the Ajinkya Rahane-led side will now be required to record a big victory — with a bonus point — against Meghalaya and hope that Baroda beat the table-toppers Jammu and Kashmir in their backyard.



Mumbai, who are coming off a five-wicket defeat against Jammu and Kashmir last week, will be without the India stars Jaiswal, Iyer and Rohit, who all have joined the Indian team for the upcoming ODI series against England starting on February 6.

Mumbai squad: Ajinkya Rahane (c), Ayush Mishra, Angkrish Raghuvanshi, Amogh Bhatkal, Siddhesh Lad, Akash Anand (wk), Hardik Tamore (wk), Suryansh Shedge, Shardul Thakur, Shams Mulani, Tanush Kotion, Mohit Avasthi, Sylvester D'Souza, Royston Dias, Shreyas Gurav, Atharva Anolekar.

Virat Diaries: Maestro declines captaincy; BCCI set to live stream

New Delhi
Just like Rishabh Pant did in the last game against Saurashtra, legendary Virat Kohli has politely declined to captain Delhi in their last Ranji Trophy home game against Railways as he wanted Ayush Badoni to continue leading the side.

"Virat was asked if he would like to captain but he has also said that he would like Ayush to continue leading the side," a DCCA official said on conditions of anonymity.

Meanwhile, the BCCI and domestic broadcasters JioCinema have decided to live-stream the match, which the immense fan interest sparked by Kohli's presence.

The general news is BCCI has one premier match which is aired both on TV and streaming app and for this round it is Karnataka versus Haryana as the star attraction of that game is KL Rahul.

The other two games that were supposed to be only live streamed were Punjab vs Bengal at the Eden Gardens and Baroda vs Jammu and Kashmir in Baroda.

The move was decided well in advance and had this match not involved Kohli, there was no chance of any deviation from it.

But there was a furor in social media about the most high profile match being ignored by the broadcasters.

Virat Kohli checks in at Delhi's training ahead of Ranji comeback



New Delhi
At exactly 6am when his jet black Porsche zoomed in through the Feroz Shah Kotla ground's 'Virender Sehwag Gate', it was homecoming for Delhi's very own Virat Kohli, who checked in for a training stint with his first-class team after more than 12 years.

Save for pacer Navdeep Saini, all other 18 members of Delhi's squad had only seen him on TV and grown up listening to the tales of how 'Cheeku', the cherubic talent, became the 'King' of Indian cricket.

In the last 15 years, Delhi's 'Cheeku' became a hazy memory as he turned into the most commercially viable brand in global cricket, the face that ICC sold in its Olympic bid presentation.

On Monday, he was at his home ground for around three hours and had everyone in his vicinity hypnotised. Whether the young impressionable players, or seasoned head coach Sarandeep Singh or batting coach Bantu Singh — all of them evidently wanted to be close to him.

Though courteous with all, the former India skipper seemed more comfortable with his former U-19 coach Mahesh Bhati, who is also the administrative manager of this team.

"Woh hadlaa nahi hain. Usko chhole-poori pasand tha aur humne manganake rakhi tha. Usne bola chole puri nahi khawonga (He loves chhole poori, we made arrangements for him but he said he didn't want it)," a senior DCCA (Delhi and Districts Crick-

et Association) official said.
What he did seek out after practice was the sight of his first Ranji appearance in 12 years from January 30 was also an old favourite.

"Practice ke baad purane time ki tarah ladhi chawal khaya sabke saath (He had kadhli chawal with everyone)," revealed the official.

Everyone shadowed the icon like it was an event. Ranji Trophy matches are covered by a select bunch of domestic cricket faithfuls but on Monday, the numbers trebled.

Every move by the 'King' was followed. The two coaches — Sarandeep and Bantu — were by his side throughout and it would be difficult for photographers or videographers to edit them from the frame.

"I remember it was Ajit Chaudhary, the erstwhile manager of the Delhi Ranji team, who nicknamed him 'Cheeku' back in 2006-07," DCCA secretary Ashok Sharma, fondly called 'Mama', recollected as if it was yesterday. He has seen Kohli since he first came here for U-15 trials.

The Training
It was an occasion to remember for the Sanat Sangwan, Arpit Mathe and Siddhant Sharma but for Kohli it was business as usual. It seemed he had left the star outside the ground and had turned up as their very own 'Virat Bhैया'.

The 35 minute warm-up before an inconsequential final game against the Railways was the longest that the senior team has spent to loosen up prior to net session.

Trisha scores first ever ton in women's U-19 T20 World Cup as India crush Scotland by 150 runs

Kuala Lumpur
Opener Trisha Gongadi etched her name in the record books by scoring the first ever century in women's U-19 T20 World Cup that powered India into the semifinals with a 150-run victory over Scotland here on Tuesday.

Trisha, who was deservedly adjudged player of the match, slammed 110 not out off just 59 balls with the help of 13 boundaries and four maximums after India were sent in to bat by Scotland at 108.

The Indians will next face England in the first semifinal on January 31. She was ably supported by fellow opener and wicketkeeper Kamalini G (51 off 42 balls) and Sanika Chalke, who remained unbeaten on 29 off 20 balls as India scored 208 for 1 in 20 overs.

In reply, Scotland cut a sorry figure as they were bowled out for 58 in 14 overs.

For Scotland, openers Pippa Kelly (12) and Emma Walsingham (12) were joint top-scorers.
Left-arm orthodox spinner Ayushi



Shukla was the star for India with the ball returning with figures of 4 for 8, while left-arm Vaisnavi Sharma (3/5) and Trisha (3/6), after her exploits with the bat, also performed with the ball in hand.
The 19-year-old Trisha, who hails

from Telangana, has been in tremendous form in the tournament and notched up two 40-plus scores before the big knock on Tuesday.

Meanwhile in other matches of the day, Bangladesh finished their campaign in style with an easy 10-

wicket victory over the West Indies. The Asian side performed well with the ball to restrict the West Indies to just 54 for 6 from their 13 overs and cruised past the victory target inside nine overs on the back of an unbeaten 25 not out from opener Jauiya Ferdous.

Bangladesh won the toss and elected to bowl at Bayemas Oval after tireless effort from ground staff in the nation's capital, with spinner Nishita Akter Nishi collecting three wickets. Anisa Akter Saha claimed a pair of wickets as the West Indies struggled in the conditions and Bangladesh eased home to move up to third place on the Group 1 standings.

In another Group 2 match, no play was possible in Sarawak, with heavy rain leaving the Super Six contest between South Africa and the USA abandoned without a ball being bowled.

South Africa had already qualified for the semi-finals of the event, while USA picked up a point to move to third in Group 2.

"Trav will go to the top": Steve Smith confirms Travis Head as opener for Galle Test

Galle
Australia have not confirmed the playing XI for the first Test against Sri Lanka in Galle, but captain Steve Smith has said that Travis Head will open the batting alongside Usman Khawaja, cricket.com.au reported on its website.

This decision marks a strategic shift as Head steps into the role previously occupied by teenager Sam Konstas.

Head impressed in the opening role during Australia's 2023 tour of India, stepping in for an injured David Warner. While speculation surrounded his inclusion, Smith clarified that Head is a definite starter for the two-match series, with only minor adjustments expected in the overall line-up.

"Trav [Travis Head] will go to the top, outside of that I think it will be pretty stable," Smith told reporters prior to Australia's final pre-Test training session," Smith said, as quoted from cricket.com.au.

"I don't see it being a great deal of change from that," he added.

"The selectors liked what they saw in India when (Head) had that opportunity," he said.

"He got after the new ball, scored quickly and put the pressure on them straight away so I guess similar thinking here," he noted.

The final composition of the team depends heavily on the unpredictable



nature of the Galle pitch, which saw a significant trim of grass following Australia's training session yesterday. Spin is expected to play a critical role, and this may influence Australia's selection strategy.

"He's going to have a lot of practice if he doesn't play, which in itself is great for development," Smith said of Konstas, as quoted from the official website of cricket.com.au.

"I only have to think back to 2013 (in India) where I didn't play the first two Tests, and just the amount of balls I was hitting in the nets and the skills I was able to develop from facing loads of net bowlers and things like that," he added.

"So whether he plays or not, I think it's going to be a wonderful experience for him," he noted

"He's going to learn a lot," he said. Konstas, who made a remarkable debut with a fearless half-century against India on Boxing Day, has reportedly adjusted his approach during practice sessions in Galle and Dubai, focusing on a more orthodox technique. If he is not slotted into the middle order, uncapped keeper-batter Josh Inglis could make his Test debut, while Nathan McSweeney, known for his part-time off-spin, is also an option.

Smith, recovering from an elbow injury sustained during the Big Bash League (BBL), is fit to bat but remains restricted in fielding, particularly throwing. Meanwhile, left-arm spinner Matthew Kuhnemann is being considered for a recall despite recently fracturing his thumb.

"Apparently the surgeon's done an incredible job for him to be able to field and do some of the things he (Kuhnemann) has been able to do the last couple of days, we're a bit gobsmacked," Smith said, as quoted from cricket.com.au.

"Either he's a tremendous actor or he's got great pain tolerance, but he's ticked all the boxes and should be ready to go," he said
"We'd love to name a team as early as possible but things can change really quickly in this part of the world," he added.

New Zealand star Melie Kerr named ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year

Dubai
New Zealand all-rounder Melie Kerr made history on Tuesday by becoming the first Kiwi recipient of the prestigious Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy, earning the title of ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year for her exceptional performances in 2024.

The 24-year-old stood out among her peers, surpassing Laura Wolvaardt, Chamari Athapaththu, and Annabel Sutherland to claim the top honour in women's cricket.

Kerr is not only the first New Zealander to win the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy, but also the first Kiwi to be recognised as ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year in any category.

Throughout the year, Kerr demonstrated her prowess as a world-class all-rounder, excelling in every facet of the game. Her outstanding fielding repeatedly lifted New Zealand, while her skill as a leg-spinner established her as one of the most dangerous strike bowlers in the world. Kerr was often the White Ferns' go-to match-winner with the ball.

With the bat, she was a cornerstone of New Zealand's lineup, capable of playing expansive innings to capitalise on strong starts or anchoring the innings when the top order faltered.



PM in attendance as 38th National Games kick off with colourful opening ceremony

Dehradun
A modest but colourful opening ceremony showcasing Uttarakhand's religious heritage and bio-diversity kicked off the 38th National Games here on Tuesday with guest of honour Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterating his commitment to bring the 2026 Olympics to India during his address. Around 10,000 athletes are gearing up to compete for podium finishes across 32 disciplines in the Games that will run till February 14. Events will be held across seven cities of the hill state with Dehradun being the main venue.

Around 450 gold medals, and a similar number of silver and bronze medals are at stake.

Modi declared the Games open after the teams marched in and he was presented the flame at the ceremony.

"It is our endeavour to enhance your capabilities and we are focused on supporting you. We consider sports an essential aspect in development of country," Modi told the gathered athletes at the ceremony.

"It is a beautiful portrait of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshth Bharat'," Modi said referring to the Games.

The Prime Minister also used the opportunity to pass some health tips, urging youngsters to fight the growing menace of obesity by cutting down the oil in their food and adding more walks and exercise to their daily routines.

The ceremony started with a performance of 'Tandav', a classical dance form that is an ode to Lord Shiva. The Games were declared open with blowing of 2025 conches to mark the year.

Local favourite and popular Bollywood singer Jubin Nautiyal also performed during the ceremony.

Earlier, Modi arrived at the stadium riding on a decked-up golf cart along with Uttarakhand Chief Minister



Pushkar Singh Dhami.

After taking a round of the stadium, he was presented a traditional cap, shawl and a memento containing replicas of Games mascot 'Mauli' and the medals.

An estimated 25,000 spectators packed the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium despite the chilly weather to catch the ceremony live.

The PM had also opened the last two editions of the Games in 2022 (Gujarat) and 2023 (Goa).

Uttarakhand Governor Lieutenant General Gurmit Singh, Union Minister of State for Sports Raksha Khadse, and Uttarakhand Sports Minister Rekha Arya were the dignitaries present on the occasion.

Indian Olympic Association President PT Usha and Commonwealth Games Federation chief Chris Jenkins were also in attendance at the cere-

mony. Uttarakhand's own Lakshya Sen, a world championships medal-winning shuttler, brought the Games torch and handed it over to Modi, who placed it in its designated place.

During the Athletes' Parade, Uttarakhand expectedly received the loudest cheer. Almera's Sen and distance runner Ankit Dhyani were Uttarakhand's flag-bearers in the parade.

Sen later took oath on behalf of the participating athletes.

Under IOA's objective of inclusivity, the National Games also following established norms of having a male and a female flag bearer leading each team.

Hosting the National Game holds a special significance for Uttarakhand as the state is celebrating the 25th year of its creation.

'Mauli', inspired by Uttarakhand's state bird 'Monal', is the Games mascot,

symbolising the region's unique natural beauty, diversity and cultural heritage.

Most of the established sporting stars of the country such as javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra, shuttler PV Sindhu, shooter Manu Bhaker are giving it a miss, leaving the stage for other athletes to make a mark.

Among the prominent names who will turn up are Olympic medal-winning shooters Swapnil Kusale and Sarabjot Singh, world championships medalist shuttler Lakshya Sen and Tokyo Games bronze-winning boxer Lovlina Borgahain.

Four sports — kalariipayattu, yogasana, malakhambh and rafting — will be demonstration (non-medal) sports.

With the theme of 'Green Games', the event aims to inspire individuals and organisations to adopt eco-friendly and sustainable practices.

Sreenidi Deccan snap leaders Namdhari's winning streak

Sri Bhaini Sahib (Punjab)

I-League leaders Namdhari FC's four-match winning run came to an end as they were held to a 1-1 draw by Sreenidi Deccan FC here on Tuesday.

Both goals came in the first half from two Brazilian strikers taking the centrestage.

Cledson Carvalho da Silva (33rd minute) scored his seventh I-League goal for Namdhari before William Alves (45th) equalised at the stroke of half-time for Sreenidi Deccan.

Namdhari remained at the top of the table with 21 points from 11 games, but Churchill Brothers can overtake them should they beat Real Kashmir on Thursday.

Sreenidi Deccan, who have now drawn three of their last four, continue to stay in eighth place with 12 points.

There were a lot of long-range attempts by both sides.

Namdhari's Francis Addo and Peter Seiminthang Haokip shot wide from 25 yards, while Lalnunluanga Bawitlung served a half-volley off target from just outside the box. It took a defensive lapse by Sreenidi Deccan for the hosts to score the opener.

It should've been a routine back pass to the goalkeeper for Eli Sabia but

a bit of hesitation allowed Cledson Carvalho da Silva to muscle past him and slot the ball past Aryan Lamba. Alves cancelled out the goal with a well-taken header.

The Sreenidi striker got on the end of a cross from the top of the box by Angel Orelan, who got his fifth assist of the season.

Namdhari goalkeeper Jaspreet had rushed out to punch the cross, but William did well to get to it ahead of him and glance it into the net.

Six minutes into the second half, Lamba pulled off a brilliant save to prevent Namdhari from regaining the lead. Addo's looping delivery found Peter inside the box.

The latter skipped past his marker and pulled the trigger from close range but Lamba palmed it out.

The second-half turned into a more cagey affair with less goalmouth action and rough midfield battles with lots of fouls and stoppages.

Namdhari's Addo, Cledson and Sreenidi's Lalromawia were shown yellow cards.

The teams did grow desperate for a winner towards the end and Orelan and Dharmpreet Singh saw their shots from outside the box drift wide of the target.



Lions strengthen backroom staff for Australia tour

Sydney

Former Australia international David Nucifora will join the British and Irish Lions as general manager of performance ahead of this year's tour of Australia, the team said on Tuesday.

Ireland's head of athletic performance Aled Walters will assume the same role on head coach Andy Farrell's backroom staff after this year's Six Nations Championship.

"David's unrivalled experience will help us shape and deliver such a challenging and exciting rugby programme, whilst also bringing essential insight into Australian rugby and the country as a whole," Farrell said in a statement.

"Aled is a World Cup winner who has worked with players across England and Ireland and has also coached in Australia and Super Rugby with the Brumbies."



The Lions are set to play nine tour matches in Australia starting in June, including three tests against the Wallabies.

CUK organizing 2-day All-India Inter-University Winter Games, says VC A Ravinder Nath

Srinagar

The Central University of Kashmir (CUK) is organizing a two-day All India Inter-University Winter Games at the famous ski-resort of Gulmarg in which 200 athletes across the country would be participating, its vice-chancellor A Ravinder Nath said here on Tuesday.

Addressing a press conference here, Nath said the games will be held from January 30 to 31.

This event will feature skiing and ice stock competitions for both male and female athletes. On January 30, the Giant Slalom event will occur for both genders, followed by the Slalom ski event on January 31, he said.

The VC said the ice-stock event will be held on both days for male and female athletes.

"The primary goal of this prestigious event is to promote sportsmanship, enhance participation in winter sports



among university students, and increase recognition of Gulmarg as a premier destination for winter sports in India," he said.

Lyon sack coach Sage amid poor run

Moscow

Olympique Lyonnais have sacked coach Pierre Sage, the French Ligue 1 club announced on Tuesday, after a winless run of five matches across all competitions.

Lyon are sixth in the French top-flight after managing just one win in their last five league games. They were also knocked out of the French Cup following a defeat by French fifth-tier club Bourgoign-Jallieu in the round of 32.

Frenchman Sage, 45, was hired on an interim basis in November 2023 before being rewarded with a new contract until June 2026 after he guided the club to Europa League qualification last season.

"Olympique Lyonnais has been compelled to suspend coach Pierre Sage and staff members Jamal Aloui, Rui Lemos, Denis Valour and Remy Veroutre, pending a decision in the next few days," Lyon said in a statement.

"This sporting decision, made in the current context of the 2024-2025 season, does not call into question the tremendous work carried out at the beginning of 2024, for which Olympique Lyonnais will always be grateful to Pierre Sage and his team." Lyon next host Bulgarian side Ludogorets in the Europa League on Thursday.



Extreme E reveals narrowing of gender performance gap

London

Extreme E, an electric off-road race series using identical SUVs with a male and female driver in every team, published data on Tuesday showing women had narrowed the gender performance gap by almost 70% over the first four seasons.

The series, launched in 2021 with a focus on green technology and races held in remote locations to raise awareness of climate change, is switching to hydrogen this season with a new Extreme H tag.

Extreme E crunched the numbers from a timed section of each race where teams can secure two additional points if they are fastest.

In season one, female drivers were on average 4.5 seconds slower than their male counterparts. By season four the gap had shrunk to 1.1 seconds, a 68.64% reduction.

There was a 29.76% improvement in season two and a further 29.67% in season three. In season four, when only four of 10 scheduled rounds were held, the gender gap closed by 36.5% on the previous year's figures.

"Extreme E's mixed-gender format is a game-changer, and this data



proves just how powerful equal opportunity can be," said 2009 Formula One world champion and Extreme E team owner Jensen Button in a statement.

Australian Molly Taylor, who races for the E.ON Next Veloce team and won the inaugural championship with Sweden's Johan Kristoffersson, said Extreme E had changed the course of her career.

"What Extreme E has proven is that with the right opportunity, ex-

posure, development and investment we can see women reach the top," she said.

"It can be a difficult cycle to break; you need the seat time to prove your potential, but you need results to attract the support needed to access that very seat time."

"We have built some strong momentum and, whilst this doesn't alleviate the continuing challenges of motorsport, we are making change."

Raducanu clings to positives after early Singapore Open exit

London

Emma Raducanu refused to be too downcast after suffering an opening round exit at the Singapore Open when the British seventh seed lost 5-7 7-5 7-5 to the 101st-ranked Cristina Bucsa.

Raducanu progressed to the third round of the recently concluded Australian Open for the first time in her career before losing to five-times Grand Slam champion and Polish second-seed Iga Swiatek in straight sets.

Having dealt with a string of injuries since capturing the 2021 U.S. Open, her only major, Raducanu went down in Singapore after a three-hour and three-minute battle against her Spanish opponent on Monday.

But the 22-year-old was happy with the way she handled herself following the end of her partnership with coach Nick Cavaday, who stepped back from the role last week to prioritise getting back to full health.

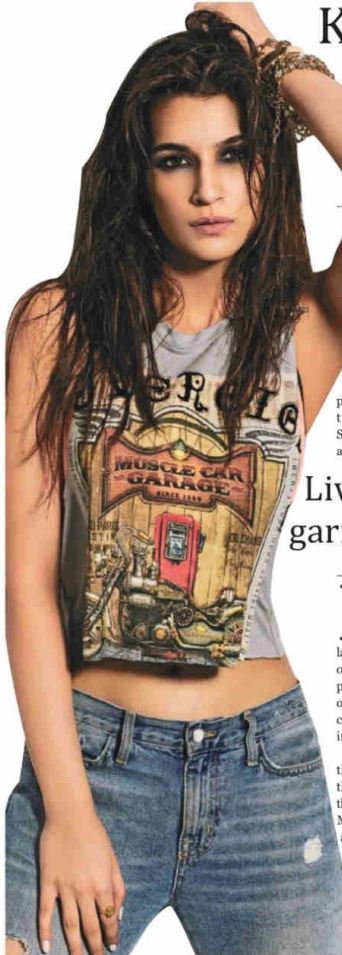
"I have the positives (from) this week, coming here on my own with Yutaka and my mom, but I'm really proud of how I dealt and handled myself this week," Raducanu told

ESPN after the match, referring to her fitness coach Yutaka Nakamura.

"I feel OK. I feel like I have certain things we all manage as the year goes on. I think it's pretty early in the season.

"For me to be playing this kind of match, all I need is time on court and a match-competitive situation, which I got today. I got it in abundance — over three hours of it — so, for me, it's really valuable because every match I play, I feel like it's a win.

"And I fought really hard. I gave everything. So I just got to keep building and moving on."



Kriti Sanon to star alongside Dhanush in Aanand L Rai's 'Tere Ishk Mein'

New Delhi — Kriti Sanon has boarded the cast of Aanand L Rai's 'Tere Ishk Mein', co-starring Dhanush, the makers said on Tuesday. The 'Crew' star will play the character of Mukti alongside Dhanush's Shankar in the new film, according to her Instagram post.

'Tere Ishk Mein' marks a third collaboration between

The 'Crew' star will play the character of Mukti alongside Dhanush's Shankar in the new film, according to her Instagram post.

Dhanush and director Rai after

2013's 'Raanjhanaa' and 'Antrangi Re' (2021). The upcoming movie is slated to be released in theatres on November 28. "Some love stories are destined to rise from the flames. Witness SHANKAR and MUKTI in #TereIshkMein. From the #WorldOfRaanjhanaa - a story that's unforgettable. In cinemas 28.11.2025," Sanon wrote in her post. The actor also shared

an Instagram Story expressing her excitement about joining the project. "An intense love story directed by my fav @aanandrai, music by the maestro @arrahman !! A huge (tick) in my wish list. Need your love and blessings. P.S. Reallyyyy looking forward to collaborating with you @dhanushkraj (sic)" she wrote. Sanon was last seen in 'Do Patti', which marked her debut as a producer.

Live stream of Coldplay's last India concert garnered 83 lakh views: Disney+ Hotstar

Mumbai — Digital platform Disney+ Hotstar on Tuesday said it garnered 83 lakh views for the live stream of British rock band Coldplay's concert in Ahmedabad on January 26, clocking 16.5 crore minutes of watch time in three hours.

As part of their 'Music of the Spheres World Tour', the band had three shows at the DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai on January 18, 19 and 21.

Coldplay, led by vocalist Chris Martin, regaled fans at Ahmedabad's Narendra Modi Stadium on two dates: January 25 and January 26, their last stop in India.

According to a press release issued by JioStar Dig-



ital, the live stream of Sunday's show "attracted 83 lakh views and garnered an impressive 16.5 crore minutes of watch time. Delighting fans across the nation with an unmatched experience, viewers tuned in from all parts of the country with Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, NCR Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil

Nadu, and West Bengal contributing 85 per cent viewership." The group, also comprising guitarist Jonny Buckland, bassist Guy Berryman, drummer and percussionist Will Champion, and manager Phil Harvey, performed on popular tracks "Yellow", "Charlie Brown", "All My

Love", "Clocks", "People of the Pride", "Hymn for the Weekend" and "Viva La Vida". Sanjay Gupta, CEO-Sports at JioStar, said their aim has always been to deliver an immersive experience to viewers and feels glad they achieved that with Coldplay's concert.

Sooraj Barjatya on Saif Ali Khan knife attack: He's a warrior, my wishes are with him



Mumbai — Saif Ali Khan is a "warrior" who will come out stronger from the stabbing incident, says director Sooraj Barjatya.

Barjatya directed Khan in 1999 blockbuster family drama 'Hum Saath Saath Hain'.

Khan, 54, was attacked in the early hours of January 16 at his Bandra home in Mumbai. He was stabbed six times by an unknown assailant. The actor was immediately hospitalised and underwent spinal and plastic surgeries at the Lilavati Hospital. He was discharged on January 21.

"My wishes are always with him. We did a beautiful film

together. We shot it for almost 150 days and it did so well. I wish him all the best, he's such a warrior. He's going to come out very strongly," the filmmaker said.

In 'Hum Saath Saath Hain', Khan essayed the role of the happy-go-lucky Vinod, the youngest son of the affluent Chaturvedi family. The multi-starrer drama also featured Tabu, Mohish Bahi, Salman Khan, Sonali Bendre, Karisma Kapoor, Neelam Kothari Soni, Reema Lagoo and Alok Nath.

Barjatya is awaiting the premiere of his web series 'Bada Naam Karenge', slated to stream on SonyLIV on February 7. He serves as the showrunner for the series.

Was 16 when I fell in love with theatre, says Junaid Khan



Mumbai — Junaid Khan, the son of Bollywood icon Aamir Khan and producer Reena Dutta, says he would continue to straddle the twin worlds of theatre and cinema throughout his career, as each offers a unique form of satisfaction for his passion for acting.

The newcomer, who studied theatre at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts and briefly worked for their repertory company, made his film debut in 2024 with the period drama 'Maharaj'.

While there are technical differences between cinema and theatre, at the end of the day, acting is acting, he said.

"Once you get used to it (doing both film and theatre) it is not difficult. I love theatre, that's why I do it, and I'll keep doing it all my life. I was a 16-year-old (when I fell in love with theatre)."

"I was shy but I always

wanted to go in front of people, be comfortable and make a fool of myself. Between the seven to eight plays I did, I must have done 100 or 110 shows cumulatively," Junaid said in an interview here.

The actor said he wants to be part of "good" stories irrespective of the genre of the movie.

"I wish to work with good people and have that trust that it (those films) will do well. I'm fairly genre-agnostic," he added.

Junaid is awaiting the release of his second film 'Loveyapa'. The romantic-comedy, also starring Khushi Kapoor, is directed by Advait Chandan of 'Laal Singh Chaddha' starring Aamir.

'Loveyapa', backed by Phantom Studios and AGS Entertainment, is set to be released in theatres on February 7. The actor said he hopes he has "grown" as an artist in his journey from 'Maharaj' to 'Loveyapa'.

'Superboys of Malegaon' to release in theatres on February 28

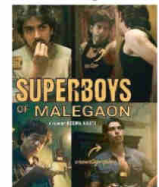
New Delhi — Reema Kagi's 'Superboys of Malegaon' is slated to hit the big screen on February 28, the makers announced on Tuesday.

Set in Malegaon, a small town in Maharashtra, and inspired by real events, the upcoming film is written by Varun Grover and features Adarsh Gourav, Vineet Kumar Singh, Shashank Arora, and Anuj Singh Duhani in lead roles.

According to a press release, "Superboys of Malegaon" will be released theatrically in India, the US, the UK, the UAE, Australia, and New Zealand. Following its theatrical run, the movie will have its digital debut on Prime Video, it added.

"Superboys of Malegaon" is a film based on the life of Nasir Shaikh, an amateur filmmaker from the town of Malegaon. Gourav, known for 'The White Tiger' and 'Kho Gaye Hum Kahan', stars in the role of Shaikh.

"The residents of the town



look to Bollywood cinema for a much-needed escape from daily drudgery. Nasir gets inspired to make a film for the people of Malegaon, by the people of Malegaon.

"He bands together his ragtag group of friends to bring his vision to life, thereby bringing a fresh lease of life into the town.

The film is a poignant yet uplifting take on both filmmaking and friendship - and what happens when those two worlds collide," read its synopsis.

The film recently received a special mention in the Young Cineastes Award category at the 36th Palm Springs International Film Festival.

Malayalam filmmaker Sanal Kumar Sasidharan booked over actress's complaint

Kochi — Noted Malayalam filmmaker Sanal Kumar Sasidharan has been booked on charges of harassing a prominent actress on a social media platform, police said on Tuesday. Elamakara Police here registered a case against the 'Kayam' director under

The actress lodged a complaint on Monday, and a case was registered against him, they said.

various sections of the BNS for alleged stalking, criminal intimidation, and defamation, they added. The actress lodged a

complaint on Monday, and a case was registered against him, they said. In a recent Facebook post, the director claimed that the lives of the actress and her daughter were under threat.

Interestingly, he shared the copy of the FIR registered against him in this case on his FB page on

Monday, claiming that someone else had given a complaint against him in the name of the actress.

Sasidharan had been arrested and released on bail in May 2022, based on the complaint from the same actress, for allegedly blackmailing her and maligning her reputation through social media platforms.

