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Ram Charan, Kiara Advani-starrer 'Game Changer' to stream on Prime Video

US aid freeze puts at risk Ukraine's wartime help for frontline evacuees

Virat and Rohit's form will be key to India's success in Champions Trophy; Raina

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Anmol wins women's singles gold, Satish Kumar claims men's singles, mixed doubles titles

MARKET	
SENSEX	NIFTY
77186.74	23361.05
-319.22	-121.10
GOLD	SILVER
83,399.00	94,295.00
1,428.00	1,081.00

WEATHER	
Sunrise	7:08 AM
Sunset	6:03 PM
Moonrise	10:43 AM
Moonset	11:21 PM

Today's Prediction	
Maximum	Minimum
24°C	11°C
Tomorrow's Prediction	
23°C	9°C

'Urban naxals, sheesh mahal': Modi's double-barrel salvo in LS

■ **Modi took aim at leaders who "resort to photo sessions in huts of the poor" and suggested they would find discussions about poverty in Parliament "boring."**

New Delhi In a scathing attack on Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said some people are openly speaking the language of urban naxals and asserted that those who "declare a war" against the Indian State can neither understand the Constitution nor about the country's unity.

He also took a dig at Arvind Kejriwal and AAP a day before the Delhi assembly polls, saying "some parties are like 'AAP-da' for the future of the youth".

Modi asserted that while his government's schemes saved lot of money, it was not used to build 'Sheesh Mahal'.

Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address in Lok Sabha, he made several veiled attacks at former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi, saying those who entertain themselves by getting photo sessions done in huts of the poor will find the talk about the poor in Parliament boring.

"Those who walk around with Constitu-



tion in pockets, do they know how they forced Muslim women to live in hardship. We brought in the triple talaq law to give right to them," Modi said.

"Today some people are openly speaking the language of urban naxals. The things that urban naxals say (are being said). These people who speak the language

of urban naxals, who declare war against the Indian State, can neither understand the Constitution nor about the country's unity," Modi said.

Though Modi did not name anyone, his remarks were an apparent reference to Gandhi's comments last month that "we are now fighting the BJP, the RSS and

the Indian State itself".

In a veiled jibe at AAP convener Kejriwal, Modi said some leaders focus on jacuzzi and stylish showers while his government's focus of providing water to every household.

Some leaders speak the language of urban naxals, talk of waging war against Indian state, they cannot understand the Constitution," "Some people feel they are not mature enough if they don't talk about foreign policy, even at the cost of the nation."

- Narendra Modi

at the type of elections but never fulfil them. "Some government schemes saved lot of money, but we did not use it to build 'Sheesh Mahal', Modi said.

Without naming Gandhi, Modi took a swipe at him for his reaction on the President's address, saying those who entertain themselves by getting photo sessions done in huts of the poor will find the talk about the poor in Parliament boring.

Soon after the President delivered her address to a joint sitting of Parliament on January 31, Sonia Gandhi, Leader of the Opposition in

SC slams Assam over delay in deporting foreigners

New Delhi Are you waiting for some muhurat", the Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the Assam government, which was censured for keeping persons declared foreigners in detention centres indefinitely and not deporting them.

Observing Assam was suppressing facts, a bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan said once the detainees were identified as foreigners, they ought to be deported immediately.

"You have refused to start deportation saying their addresses are not known. Why should it be our concern? You deport to their foreign country. Are you waiting for some muhurat (auspicious time)?" the bench asked.

The top court expressed surprise at Assam government's explanation that it was not sending nationality verification forms to the ministry of external affairs as detainees' addresses in the foreign country were unknown.

"Once you declare a person foreigner, then you have to take the next logical step. You cannot detain them till eternity. Article 21 of the Constitution is there. There are many



foreigner detention centres in Assam. How many have you deported?" the bench questioned the Assam government counsel.

The top court directed the Assam government to initiate the deportation process of 63 declared foreign nationals, whose nationality was known, and file a status report in two weeks.

"We direct the state to file a proper affidavit reporting compliance with this order. If the state government finds that nationality verification forms have been sent two months back, the state will immediately issue a reminder to ministry of external affairs. As soon as such reminder is received by the ministry, effective action shall be taken by the Ministry on the basis of nationality status verification," it said.

Agency

US sending military transport aircraft carrying migrants to India

New Delhi A military transport aircraft of the US is bringing a group of Indian migrants, in the first such deportation to India as part of the big crackdown on illegal immigrants by President Donald Trump in his second term at the White House.

Without directly commenting on the deportation flight carrying the Indians, a spokesperson at the US embassy in New Delhi said Washington is tightening immigration laws and removing illegal migrants.

The US action comes in the midst of India and the US finalising various elements of a likely visit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Washington from February 12 to 13.

It is learnt a C-17 Globemaster aircraft of the US Air Force is bringing the Indians. However, there is no



clarity on the number of people on board the plane and its specific destination.

A C-17 aircraft can carry up to 140 people. There is no official word from India yet on the US action.

The US embassy spokesperson declined to provide details of the deportation flight but said: "The United States is vigorously enforcing its border, tightening immigration laws, and removing illegal mi-

grants."

"These actions send a clear message: Illegal migration is not worth the risk," the official added.

The Trump administration has so far used military aircraft to deport illegal migrants to Guatemala, Peru and Honduras.

India has emerged as the farthest of the destinations to send military aircraft to deport people by the Trump administration.

CONTD ON PAGE-2

Delhi goes to polls in 70 Assembly seats

New Delhi The stage is set for the high-stakes Assembly elections in Delhi, where the Aam Aadmi Party is eyeing a third straight term, while the BJP and the Congress are looking at resurgence.

Over 1.56 crore voters are eligible to cast their ballots from 7 am onwards on Wednesday.

Voting will take place across 13,766 polling stations in all the 70 Assembly constituencies to decide the fates of 699 candidates in a contest that could reshape the political landscape of the capital.

Led by Arvind Kejriwal, the AAP is seeking a third straight term, banking on its governance record and welfare schemes.

On the other hand, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is making a determined push to reclaim the capital after more than 25 years.

The Congress, which



ruled Delhi for 15 years in a row till 2013, is striving to stage a comeback after failing to win a single seat in the previous two elections.

Polling will begin at 7 am on Wednesday and continue until 6 pm under tight security arrangements.

The Election Commission has deployed 220 companies of paramilitary forces, 35,626 Delhi Police personnel, and 19,000 home guards to

ensure peaceful voting.

Nearly 3,000 polling booths have been identified as sensitive, and special security arrangements, including drone surveillance, have been made at some of these locations.

According to Delhi Police, additional police forces will be deployed for the sensitive booths where Quick Reaction Teams (QRTs) will also be stationed to maintain law and order.

HIGHLIGHT

■ Voting will take place across 13,766 polling stations in all the 70 Assembly constituencies to decide the fates of 699 candidates in a contest that could reshape the political landscape of the capital.

Special provisions have been made for senior citizens and persons with disabilities, with 733 polling stations designated for their accessibility.

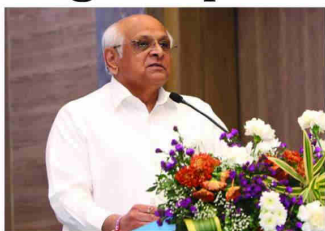
In an effort to streamline the process, the Election Commission has introduced a Queue Management System (QMS) app, which will enable the voters to check crowd levels in real time.

Additionally, 6,980 out of 7,553 eligible voters under the home voting facility have already cast their ballots. Agency

Gujarat's UCC panel headed by SC ex-judge, report in 45 days

Ahmedabad The Bharatiya Janata Party government in Gujarat on Tuesday formed a committee headed by a retired Supreme Court judge to assess the need for the Uniform Civil Code in the state, and also draft a bill for the same.

While the Opposition said the decision was aimed at diverting attention from pressing issues ahead of the upcoming local body polls, the government claimed rights of the tribal communities will be protect-



ed if the UCC is implemented.

The five-member committee, to be headed by Justice (ret'd) Ranjana

Desai, will submit its report within 45 days, following which a decision about implementation of the UCC will be taken,

HIGHLIGHT

■ While the Opposition said the decision was aimed at diverting attention from pressing issues ahead of the upcoming local body polls, the government claimed rights of the tribal communities will be protected if the UCC is implemented.

Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel told reporters in Gandhinagar. The committee will meet religious leaders,

including those from the Muslim community, for consultations.

"To assess the need for a Uniform Civil Code and to prepare a draft bill, we have decided to form a committee under a former judge of the Supreme Court," CM Patel said.

Other members of the committee are retired IAS officer CL Meena, advocate RC Kodekar, former vice chancellor of Veer Narmad South Gujarat University Dakshesh Thakar and social worker Gita Shroff. Agency

BJP MP seeks privilege motion against Rahul over LS speech

New Delhi Bharatiya Janata Party MP Nishikant Dubey on Tuesday wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla for initiating breach of privilege proceedings against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for "blatant lies and vilification campaign" during his speech in the House.

With the Leader of Opposition's speech on Monday during the discussion on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address drawing strong protests from the ruling BJP, Dubey submitted his notice to the Speaker and claimed that the Congress leader



is using his parliamentary privilege to spread canards without authenticating his charges.

Gandhi had also alleged that India had sent Foreign Minister S Jaishankar to the US get an invite for Prime Minister Narendra Modi for US President Don-

ald Trump's swearing-in ceremony. His charges also related to the electoral rolls for the Maharashtra Assembly polls and the law for the appointments of the elections commissioner.

The seasoned BJP MP said Gandhi's speech carried mainly claims, including that mobile phones were not made in India but only assembled here and China has captured the Indian territory.

In his letter, Dubey touched on the issues as well as the Congress leader's allegations related to his demand for caste census. Agency

'Urban naxals, sheesh mahal': Modi's double-barrel salvo in LS

CONT FROM PAGE-1 Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra were seen discussing the speech in the Parliament complex. During the discussion, Rahul Gandhi was heard asking Sonia Gandhi if the President's speech was "boring".

"We did not give false slogans, but real development to people," Modi said. "Till five decades, slogans of 'garibi hatao' were heard and now 25 crore poor have come out of poverty," he said.

He said till now poor people have got 4 crore house. "The one who has lived that kind of life knows what it means to have a house with a proper roof," Modi said.

"Pain of poor, troubles of common man, cannot be understood just like that; it requires passion and some just don't have it," he said in a swipe at the opposition.

"We live by the spirit of the Constitution and do not resort to politics of poison," he said.

In a dig at former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, Modi said a PM who used to chant '21st century' was so far from reality that he was unable to provide for needs of 20th century.

Modi also hailed his government's decisions in the Budget. In 2002, there was no tax on incomes of up to Rs 2 lakh and now there is no income tax on earnings up to Rs 12 lakh, he pointed out.

Modi said his government started the Ayushman Bharat for poor, but some states have stalled the scheme, leaving poor people in hardship.

US sending military transport aircraft carrying migrants to India

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Following his phone conversation with Prime Minister Modi on January 27, Trump said India "will do what is right" on the deportation of illegal migrants from the US.

According to estimates, around 18,000 illegal immigrants from India have been identified by American authorities.

Days after Trump came to power for a second term, India indicated its willingness to work with Washington to address issues relating to illegal immigration.

India is opposed to illegal immigration because of its links to several forms of organised crime, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said last month, adding New Delhi will take back all Indians who have either overstayed in the US or are there without documentation.

"We will take them back provided documents are shared with us so that we can verify their nationality, that they are indeed Indians," he said.

At the same time, Jaiswal said it would be "premature" to talk about the number of illegal Indian immigrants staying in the US.

In October last year, the US hired a chartered flight to deport Indian nationals who had been staying in the country illegally.

Advt Contact : 9818-799941

'Something happening in Delhi' over Bhutan PM's visit to Bengal for BGBS: Mamata

Kolkata: Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said that "something is happening in Delhi" over Bhutan Prime Minister Dasho Tshering Tobgay's scheduled visit to the state to attend the eighth edition of Bengal Global Business Summit (BGBS), which will commence on Wednesday.

Banerjee, however, did not elaborate on what she was referring to about "something happening in Delhi".

"As of now, the prime minister of Bhutan is coming to Kolkata on Wednesday. But I don't know whether Delhi (Centre) has any problem with it or not... he (Bhutan PM) was invited in October last year regarding his presence at BGBS," Banerjee told reporters here.

Tobgay is the special guest for the two-day business event.

"I have information that he (Bhutan PM) will be arriving here tomorrow morning. But I am also getting some information that something is happening (in Delhi), I am not certain about it... I cannot talk much about it," she said.

Banerjee, however, asserted that she was keen on Tobgay attending the two-day event because she believes that India should have a strong relationship with its 'helpful' neighbours.

"I want them (Bhutanese delegation) to come here because West Bengal shares borders with Bhutan. We must develop good relationship between India and its adjacent countries, especially those that are helpful," she said.

Elaborating on the BGBS meet, Banerjee said that over 200 delegates from 40 countries will be participating in the event.

"Out of the 40 countries, 20 are partner nations. Over 200 foreign delegates will attend the event," she said.

Banerjee said that apart from Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren, industrialists Mukesh Ambani and Sajjan Jindal have confirmed they would come to Kolkata to attend the event.

"All the captains of the local industry will also be present. Those who have been attending BGBS all these years will also be present this time. So, this is very unique," she said, adding that 22 ambassadors have already arrived.

Starting Wednesday, the eighth edition of the BGBS 2025, aims to promote business opportunities in the state. The event will bring together business leaders, policymakers, and industry experts to discuss key sectors, including infrastructure, manufacturing, and technology.

He also said that these thoughts and tendencies have to be "reinstilled" in social and individual lives as "that is the only way for us and the world to survive".

"This will have to be given by Bharat to the world and that is the God-given duty of the Bharatiya samaj, of the Hindu samaj. We have to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Act and that no job card of deserving or eligible households is deleted or cancelled.

In a written reply to another question, Paswan said the Aadhaar seeding of 13.34 crore of the total 13.41 crore active workers (99.47 per cent) was completed as on February 1.

He said to streamline the process of deleting job cards, the Ministry of Rural Development has recently issued a standard operating procedure (SOP) vide a letter dated January 25 to all the states and Union territories, with clear guidelines for deletion and restoration of job cards.

"The SOP ensures compliance with the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS guidelines, promotes transparency, protects the rights of workers by defining conditions for deletion, setting up a grievance redressal mechanism, and ensures the settlement of pending liabilities if any before deletion/cancellation," the minister said in his reply.

The Union minister said the responsibility of the scheme's implementation is vested with the governments of the states and Union territories concerned, adding that updating or deleting job cards is a regular exercise conducted by the states. However, while deleting or removing workers or job cards, the states have to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Act and that no job card of deserving or eligible households is deleted or cancelled.



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Indian tradition to work for self and everyone else is dire necessity: RSS chief

Kochi: RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on Tuesday said the Indian tradition to work for the salvation of the individual self and the well-being of all on earth was the "dire necessity" of today's world and it expects "Bharat" to preserve it.

Speaking after inaugurating the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Tapasya Kalasahitya Veda at Rajendra Maidan here, Bhagwat said that the world expects India to preserve its traditions, including its 'vicharas' (thoughts) and 'sanskaras' (tendencies), in order to "save their own lives and set an example" for everyone to follow.

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"The SOP ensures compliance with the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS guidelines, promotes transparency, protects the rights of workers by defining conditions for deletion, setting up a grievance redressal mechanism, and ensures the settlement of pending liabilities if any before deletion/cancellation," the minister said in his reply.

The Union minister said the responsibility of the scheme's implementation is vested with the governments of the states and Union territories concerned, adding that updating or deleting job cards is a regular exercise conducted by the states. However, while deleting or removing workers or job cards, the states have to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Act and that no job card of deserving or eligible households is deleted or cancelled.

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done this many times in the past and once again the task is upon us.

"Therefore, the celebration of the 50th anniversary of Tapasya's work will prepare the minds of the workers, will facilitate the furthering of this goal... that is the expectation," the RSS chief said.

He further said that if the intellectual and artistic world of India goes ahead with the spirit of working for the salvation of the individual self and the well-being of all on earth, then a great change can be brought about in our social psyche in a very few years.

Bhagwat is in Kerala for a two-day visit.

On Wednesday, he will address a conference being held as part of the Cherukolpuzha Hindu Religious Convention in Pathanamthitta district and will leave the state on February 6.

The RSS Chief was in the state for six days in January, part of organisational activities.

RG Kar corruption case: Hearing for framing of charges likely to start on Wednesday

Kolkata: Hearing for framing of charges against the accused persons in a corruption case related to alleged financial irregularities at R G Kar Medical College and Hospital during the tenure of its former principal Sandip Ghosh is likely to commence on Wednesday before a special court at Alipore here.

The CBI, which was handed over the investigation in the case by the Calcutta High Court, last week produced all documents related to it before the special court.

During the proceedings on Tuesday, the special court judge said that hearing for framing of charges against the accused persons in the case will commence on Wednesday.

Framing of charges in criminal proceedings is a stage where a court formally accuses a person of committing a particular offence based on prima facie evidence and allegations presented by the prosecution.

CHANGE OF NAME I. Manorma (Existing Name of spouse as per change of Name of Kin Record/Service Documents) spouse of No 7238584/EX.L.DSR Name Virendranath Ram (Name of the husband) resident of H/152/B/1, P-11 Arbia Mohan (Address) have changed my Name from Manorma (Existing Name of spouse as per change of Name of Kin Record/Service Documents) to Manorma Devi (proposed/adopted New Name) vide Affidavit dated 30/01/2025 (Date of Affidavit) DPO/MFY/YYY (format) before SDM, Ghazabad (Name and place of the Court)

PUBLIC NOTICE GENERAL NOTICE IS HEREBY informed that my clientless Smt. Geeta W/o Lt. Sh. Devender Kumar R/o - 238 Ganga Well Public School, Area Surakhpur Road Gopal Nagar, Najafgarh South West Delhi - 110043 vide newspaper dated 04/02/2025 had set aside her relations and have discovered her Son Kalish Dhanya S/o Lt. Sh. Devender Kumar from her all movable and immovable properties due to his questionable and disobedient nature. Now the above name my Son has changed their behavior and my clientless has withdrawn her relations public notice dated newspaper dated 04/02/2025.

ABHISHAK AGGARWAL & DEVENDER KUMAR ADVOCATES DELHI HIGH COURT SEAT NO-11, ROOM NO 4, LAWYER'S CHAMBER DWARKA COURTS, NEW DELHI MOBILE NO.-9818021130

Save Thiruparnkudram hill movement in Mudurai temple

N Sivakumar. Madurai:

Thousands thronged Thiruparnkudram, Murugan (Karthikeya) temple in Madurai District of Tamil Nadu, to protest against making temple issue as communal one by minority communities, recent activities of minority community claiming temple hill and conducted various anti Hindu programme in which many hindus and devotees hurt. The Hindu Munnani and VHP and other hindu Group called to condemn the minority community.

The Madurai Collector invoked 144 action yesterday and today 144 in Madurai over temple row, pro-Hindu groups clash with police. The Tamil Nadu government imposed Section 144 across Madurai to prevent protests over the Thiruparnkudram temple issue.

B.P state chief K Annamalai slammed the DMK government for arresting party leaders and restricting democratic protests. Tamil Nadu's Madurai district witnessed heightened security on Tuesday after the government imposed Section 144 across the region to prevent protests linked to the Thiruparnkudram

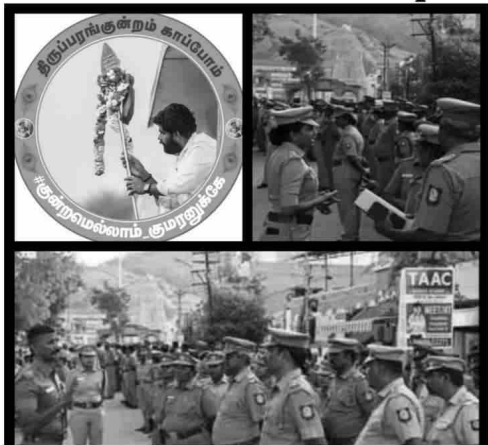
groups, Hindu Munnani had planned a protest near the Subramaniya Swamy Temple despite being denied permission by the authorities. There is also a daragh located at the hillock, and a section of Muslims reportedly attempted to rename Thiruparnkudram hills as Sikkandar Malai. With Hindu Munnani and other Hindu organizations announcing a protest in Nearly 4,000 police personnel have been de-

ployed, and officials are conducting thorough checks at various entry points. front of Thiruparnkudram Temple on Tuesday over the temple-daragh issue, security has been tightened in the area. Most shops remain closed, and police have restricted access to the Kasi Vishwanathan Temple at the top of the hill, allowing entry only to the Murugan Temple, while access to the daragh is also prohibited.

der this initiative, a large number of pilgrims from across the state have visited Ayodhya and other key pilgrimage destinations.

It is worth noting that under the Mukhyamantri Tirtha Darshan Yojana, free pilgrimage trips are arranged for senior citizens aged 60 and above, provided their family's annual income is less than Rs 1.8 lakh. Devotees must register on the Saral portal to avail of this benefit. The Haryana government's aim is to ensure that even families from economically disadvantaged backgrounds can experience the blessings of visiting sacred temples, which is a work of great importance.

citizens to visit the Mahakumbh fair and participate in the holy dip, the state government has expanded the scope of the



Arulmigu Subramaniya Swamy Temple hill issue. The move came in response to pro-Hindu organisations planning a demonstration against the alleged actions of "anti-Hindu" groups and the state government.

The controversy stems from viral visuals that allegedly showed individuals consuming non-vegetarian food at the Thiruparnkudram hills, sparking outrage among pro-Hindu groups. Hindu Munnani had planned a protest near the Subramaniya Swamy Temple despite being denied permission by the authorities. There is also a daragh located at the hillock, and a section of Muslims reportedly attempted to rename Thiruparnkudram hills as Sikkandar Malai. With Hindu Munnani and other Hindu organizations announcing a protest in Nearly 4,000 police personnel have been de-

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It is

On poll eve Kejriwal meets EC alleges voter intimidation by Delhi Police

Kejriwal accused the BJP and Delhi Police of engaging in "hooliganism" to create an atmosphere of fear among voters.

New Delhi
AP national convenor Arvind Kejriwal, along with Delhi Chief Minister Atishi, met the Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday and raised concerns over alleged intimidation tactics being used in the national capital ahead of the assembly polls.

Talking to the media after the meeting, Kejriwal, accompanied by party leader Raghav Chadha, accused the BJP and Delhi Police of engaging in "hooliganism" to create an atmosphere of fear among voters.

"We told the EC how Delhi Police is being misused for violence and intimidation. Many people are scared, and it is possible that they may not come out to vote due to fear," he said.

The former chief minister also alleged that attempts were being made to suppress voter turnout, particularly among slum dwellers.

"There are reports that people's fingers are being marked with black ink in an attempt to disenfranchise them, and that money and threats are being used to influence voters. We raised these concerns with the EC," Kejriwal said.

He thanked the EC for granting them a meeting despite the silence period and said that officials have assured them of a free and fair election. "The EC has assured us that they will take necessary steps to prevent any such wrongdoing."

Delhi goes to polls on February 5 and the results will be declared on February 8.

Chief Minister Atishi accused the BJP of engaging in "hooliganism" and alleged that the EC and Delhi Police are shielding saffron party workers, while targeting AAP leaders and members.

Atishi, who is contesting from the Kalkaji constituency, claimed at a press conference here that democracy



in India was now in the hands of Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar and the country is watching "if it survives in the national capital."

"The BJP is openly engaging in hooliganism. But instead of taking action against them, Delhi Police is protecting them, while the Election Commission is filing cases against those who are raising complaints," she alleged.

The chief minister accused BJP candidate Ramesh Bidhuri, who is contesting the polls against Atishi, and his family members of engaging in "hooliganism" in Kalkaji, and alleged no action had been taken against them.

"The people of Delhi are watching everything. On one side, there is a party that wants to stop free welfare schemes and is engaging in violence. On the other, the AAP is working so that every household saves Rs 25,000 per month," she asserted.

Atishi's remarks came hours after Delhi Police registered an FIR against her for allegedly violating the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) and obstructing a public servant from discharging his duty. Police officials said she and a group of 50-70 supporters with 10 vehicles were found blocking Fateh Singh Marg, violating Model Code of Conduct. When instructed to vacate the area, she allegedly obstructed a police officer from carrying out his duty.

A police official claimed an AAP worker slapped a head constable.

In response, Atishi took to X, accusing the EC of bias. "BJP candidate Ramesh Bidhuri and his family members are openly engaging in hooliganism, yet no action is taken against them. Instead, a case has been filed against me," she wrote.

Earlier, Kejriwal also posted on X in Hindi, stating that "the Election Commission has filed a police case against the Delhi CM after she complained about open hooliganism."

"So now, this is the official stand of the Delhi Police and the Election Commission - their 'job' is to indulge in hooliganism against the Aam Aadmi Party, protect the hooliganism of the BJP, and distribute liquor, money, and goods. If anyone tries to stop them from doing this 'work', a case will be filed against them for obstructing the 'work' of the police and the Election Commission," he said.

AAP to deploy teams at booths to detect anomalies foul ploy



New Delhi
The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has formed a team of volunteers to verify polling booth setups, cross-check presiding officer details, and monitor the Control Unit ID on polling day.

In a statement, AAP said, "The party will deploy its trained volunteers to verify voting procedures, check for irregularities, and remain vigilant against any potential tampering."

The party said the volunteers have been trained to verify booth details, confirm the assigned presiding officers, and keep track of the total votes cast to ensure accuracy.

The volunteers will also monitor the battery per-

The party said the volunteers have been trained to verify booth details, confirm the assigned presiding officers, and keep track of the total votes cast to ensure accuracy.

centage of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) at the end of polling to detect any anomalies and record the presence of party polling agents to maintain accountability, it said.

The AAP will launch a web portal where all this data will be uploaded on Wednesday night, after the polling is over.

Late night showers expected in Delhi with clear sky by morning

New Delhi
Late night showers are expected in the national capital on Tuesday, with the weather department predicting a clear sky by morning.

Delhi, which received light rain on Monday night too, recorded 0.5 mm of rainfall, according to the city's primary

weather station, Safdarjung.

The city's minimum temperature settled at 12.8 degrees Celsius, 4.4 degrees above average, while the maximum temperature was 26 degrees Celsius, 3.7 notches above normal, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

The department said that humidity levels fluctuated between 91 and 76 per cent during the day.

On Wednesday the sky is likely to remain clear with predominant surface wind predicted to be from the northwest at a speed of less than 6 kmph during the morning, the weather office said.

Police ask banks to freeze 380 FIITJEE accounts

Noida
The police have written a letter to banks to stop transactions in 380 accounts related to FIITJEE, which has abruptly shut all its coaching centres in Noida and Ghaziabad, officials said on Tuesday.

FIITJEE founder DK Goyal and 11 other people have been booked after the closure of its coaching centres last month. Three separate cases have



been lodged in Noida, Greater Noida and Ghaziabad and FIITJEE chief financial officer Rajiv Babbar,

chief operating officer Manish Anand and its Greater Noida branch head Ramesh Batlesh have been named in the FIRs.

Noida Police has identified 380 bank accounts of FIITJEE in three private banks. Five accounts in one private bank have Rs 60 lakh, deputy commissioner of police (Noida) Rambadan Singh said.

"Letters have been sent to the banks to stop transactions in all the accounts," he said. Singh said information on money stored in other accounts is being collected.

The DCP said police sent notice to nine people, including FIITJEE founder DK Goyal but no one came to record their statement, except a former employee of the coaching centre.

Last month, many centres of the institute that provide coaching for competitive exams in Delhi-NCR were suddenly closed and many teachers resigned for not getting their salaries for months.

"Mark of Responsibility"

Vote with Pride to Celebrate the Great Festival of Democracy



Voting Day - Wednesday, 05 February 2025
Time 07 AM to 06 PM



Dear Voters Greetings

05 February 2025 is the voting day for the Delhi Assembly Election. I hope that all of you will be ready to cast your vote. In a democratic system, any mandate is healthy and complete only when people from every section and community of the society exercise their franchise in maximum numbers.

Please give top priority to voting, encourage all the people in your family and neighbourhood to vote. Especially the youth who are going to vote for the first time are requested to participate enthusiastically in this festival of democracy. To ensure that senior citizens voters above 80 years of age and PwD voters do not remain deprived of voting, arrangements have been made to 'pick and drop' such voters to the polling station by 'pick and drop' facility. We have introduced Queue Management System for ease of voting, so that you can get real time information about the status of queues at the polling station, estimated waiting time at the polling stations and turn-by-turn navigation. Apart from this, you can identify your polling booth in the polling station by the color code given on the voter information slip. Further, the poll day has been declared as public holiday.

The Commission has made all arrangements to ensure that the voting is free, fair and peaceful. All the voters are appealed to exercise their valuable right to vote with discretion and without any fear, pressure or inducement. Please carry your voter information slip and voter identity card (or any identity document allowed by the Commission) with you to the polling booth. Mobile or other electronic gadgets are prohibited inside the polling booth. Let us all come together and vote for our Delhi.

"No voter to be left behind"

My heartiest congratulations and best wishes to all of you on this festival of democracy.

R. Alice Vaz
Chief Electoral Officer, Delhi

PM Modi takes 'sheesh mahal' 'jacuzzi' digs at Kejriwal on Delhi poll eve

New Delhi
In a veiled dig at Arvind Kejriwal on the eve of Delhi elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said the former chief minister focussed on jacuzzis and stylish showers and building a 'sheesh mahal' instead of fulfilling the tall promises made to the people.



Replying to the debate in Lok Sabha on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address, he also listed out his government's initiatives such as Ayushman Bharat health insurance scheme and housing for poor that were stalled by some governments, an apparent reference to the AAP administration in the national capital.

"Earlier, seams and corruption used to dominate the headlines of newspapers. But, over the last 10 years, we have saved crores of rupees which have been used for the people. We saved a lot of money, but we have not used it to build a 'sheesh mahal' (glass palace). We have used that money for nation building," Modi said.

The BJP has been using the term 'sheesh Mahal', a colloquial Hindi term for an opulent house, to allege a "big scam" in the reconstruction of Kejriwal's official bungalow. In an apparent reference to Kejriwal, the prime minister also said some leaders were focussed on jacuzzi and stylish showers, while his government's priority has been to provide water to taps in every household. Modi further took a jibe at some opposition parties for making "tall promises" of unemployment allowances to the youth and struggling to fulfill them. "We have been working continuously keeping in mind the future of youth. But there are a few parties that cheat the youth. They promise allowances at the time of elections but do not fulfill those promises. These parties are 'aap-da' on the future of youth," Modi said. He said when the BJP came to power in Haryana, it ended favouritism in government jobs and the people of the state responded by re-electing the party. "In Haryana, the nation has seen how we work. We promised jobs and as soon as the government was formed, youth got jobs. As a result, we registered a grand victory in Haryana for the third time. In Maharashtra too, we delivered historic results with the blessings of people," he said. AAP, BJP and Congress are locked in a triangular fight in Delhi which votes on Wednesday to elect a new government.

Cong accuses BJP candidate of making misogynistic remarks

New Delhi
The Congress on Tuesday accused the BJP candidate from Delhi's Moti Nagar, Harish Khurana, of making misogynistic and derogatory remarks against women and questioned the silence of the saffron party's leadership. Mahila Congress chief Alka Lamba played a video at a press conference here in which in which Khurana is purportedly heard using abusive language against women and making allegations about how tickets to fight polls are bagged in the BJP.



Khurana is also purportedly heard saying that he was promised Rs 2-5 crore by the party for distributing in the slum areas but received only Rs 70 lakh. Lamba questioned the Election Commission as to whether it was taking note of these comments by the BJP candidate himself. She said this was also indicative of how the BJP was using money and power for winning elections, and even treating women as a commodity. The Congress leader questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP president J P Nadda and New Delhi MP Bansuri Swaraj whether they would take note of the abusive and objectionable remarks made by their party candidate against women.

The Mahila Congress president also played a separate video purportedly showing a car from Punjab with a Punjab government sticker on it, carrying liquor, money and publicity material of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). Her clients RAM KISHAN S/O SH. RAMSARUP AND HIS WIFE ANITA DEVI RESIDENT OF HOUSE NO. 328A, LADPUR, KANHAWALA, DELHI sever all relations/disonned/debarred their sons SANJIV AND DEWITER-IN-LAW POOJA RANI AND AJAY KUMAR AND DAUGHTER-IN-LAW NISHA from all movable/immovable property/assets due to their misbehavior. Anybody dealing with them shall do at their own risk.

Patanjali to set up Rs 1,600 cr food and herbal park



Gurgaon
In honor of World Cancer Day, Artemis Hospitals, in association with Signature Global Foundation, proudly announced the launch of its pioneering health project, AarogyaRise earlier this month. This initiative will look to address the alarming issue of lack of access to healthcare in the rural and underserved communities by adopting a mobile health clinic and fully equipped healthcare buses offering cancer screenings and other critical services. These buses will focus on villages and slums around Gurgaon and shall then provide essential screenings to people and much-needed ICU services. The key focus of the Artemis Hospitals is cancer awareness and early detection. AarogyaRise will provide a range of vital services, from cancer screenings to lung screenings, and support for critically ill patients. Taking medical care into underserved areas will make an enormous difference to the health and well-being of rural populations. The AarogyaRise buses are an important part of the broader vision of Artemis Hospitals in transforming healthcare for rural populations so that every individual, irrespective of their location or socio-economic status, can have access to quality medical care. Apart from cancer screenings, the buses also provide ICU services for patients requiring urgent care, thereby making life-saving interventions accessible even in the most remote areas. To flag this initiative, Present at the event were the experts of Artemis Hospitals including Dr. Lalit Kumar (Chairperson - Oncology & BMT) Dr. Priya Tiwari, (Head - Medical Oncology) Dr. Mukesh Patkar, (Unit Head - Medical Oncology) Dr. Gaurav Dixit, (Unit Head - Haematology) Dr. Parveen Yadav, (Chief & Sr. Consultant - Thoracic Surgery & Surgical Oncology) Dr. Deepak Jha, (Chief - Breast Surgery & Sr. Consultant - Surgical Oncology) Dr. Biswipriya Hazarika, (Chief - Head & Neck Surgery) Dr. Tapan Singh Chauhan (Sr. Consultant - Surgical Oncology, Robotics, GI & HPB, Gynae & Peritoneal Surface Oncology), Dr. Rupinder Shekhan, (Chairperson - Gynae Oncology) Present at the event Dr. Lalit Kumar, Chairperson - Oncology & BMT Said "Each step we make towards better health access brings us closer to making a healthier and more resilient community. With AarogyaRise, it's not just about screenings for cancer but hope for people who need it the most. The battle against cancer begins early with detection, and we're dedicated to reaching the most remote villages to ensure no one is left behind. Our mission is to unite together for the cure in the cancer fight to ensure care reaches everyone."

United Against Cancer: An Initiative by Artemis Hospitals



Noida
The Noida Authority to provide parking facilities at 27 places in sectors 62 and 63 in a week. About 3,000 vehicles will be parked at 27 places in both the sectors. The officials concerned said that MS Contractor was selected in the tender process for sector-62. This agency had quoted the lowest rate to get the tender. Vehicles will be able to park at around 15 places in this area.

Noida Authority to provide new parking facilities in sectors 62 and 63 soon

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Police Commissioner inspected Surajkund fair premises to ensure security arrangements



New Delhi
The Police Commissioner in Faridabad has inspected the Surajkund fair premises to ensure security arrangements. The inspection was conducted by Deputy Commissioners of Police Headquarters Abhishek Jorwal, NIT Kuldeep Singh, and Traffic Jaseem Kaur. The Commissioner visited the fair premises, checking the boundaries, VIP pandal, VIP gate, zones, and parking places. He gave instructions to police officers to strengthen security arrangements. An adequate number of policemen will be deployed to ensure fair security, and surveillance will be done through cameras. Women Rapidex Police, SWAT Commands, and police personnel in civil clothes will also be deployed to monitor criminal activities. Cameras have been installed at all gates, zones, and parking places connected to the control room in Surajkund. Policemen will be deployed for CCTV surveillance. The Police Commissioner has given important guidelines to ensure fair security and prevent traffic problems for passengers.

Students facing difficulties in getting jobs says AAP member

New Delhi
AAP Rajya Sabha member Vikramjit Singh Sahney on Tuesday expressed concern over students facing difficulties in getting job placements and suggested several measures, including boosting manufacturing, to address the problem of unemployment. Raising the issue in the Rajya Sabha during Zero Hour, he said IITs and NITs are the premier educational institutions of the country, but 38 per cent of IIT graduates remained unemployed last year. He further said the Indian IT sector, a major job creator, too witnessed a decline in new hirings. The AAP member highlighted that it was difficult to get loans under the PM Mudra scheme due to the stringent norms of banks. He further said that while self-employment and entrepreneurship are critical solutions to address the issues related to employment, there remains a huge difference between policies on paper and activities on the ground. Sahney urged the government to revitalise the MSME sector, boost manufacturing under the Make In India programme and create linkages between academies and industries, to address the problem of unemployment. In his Zero Hour mention, Ghanshyam Tiwari of BJP spoke on accidents on national highways and demanded preventive measures to check road accidents. Ashok Kumar Mittal (AAP) called for insurance sector reforms. He said while poor and common man face difficulties in getting insurance claims, celebrities get it in no time.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The public at large is hereby notified on behalf of my client Mr. Girish Singh Rawat and his wife Deekhi Devi R/O. FLAT NO.-A, KHARSA NO. 547/2, BUILDING NO.-5, NDPL OFFICE, MANGLAM APARTMENT, BURARI, DELHI, that my clients do hereby disown their son HITESH SINGH RAWAT & his Monika Rawat due to their misconduct and behavior. That they shall not inherit any of properties nor be entitled to any share in my movable and immovable properties and of our assets and they shall further not be entitled to the probate of any will of my clients. Now my clients would have no concern with their son & his wife. Any person dealing or transacting with aforesaid son or daughter in law in any respect of my clients shall be doing that at his or her own risks. General public take note.

VIKRANT BHARDWAJ
ADVOCATE
CIVIL BAR ROOM NO.3, CIVIL WING, TIS HAZARI COURTS, DELHI

CHANGE OF NAME

1. TARKEEN W/O SH. ABDUL WAHID R/O H NO. 373C, FIRST FLOOR, NAWADA VILLAGE, MAIN NAJAFGARH ROAD, UTTAM NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110029, U/D NO.7482 9133 1073) do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under:-
1. That I am citizen of India.
2. That I am residing of above said address.
3. That the exact and correct name of myself is TARKEEN W/O SH. ABDUL WAHID R/O H NO. 373C, FIRST FLOOR, NAWADA VILLAGE, MAIN NAJAFGARH ROAD, UTTAM NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110029, U/D NO.7482 9133 1073) do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under:-
4. That due to mistake my name was written/typed as JANKI and due to mistake my husband name was written/typed as MD WAHID in the school record my daughter named MUSKAN.
5. That hereby I declare the name is JANKI and TARKEEN is one and the same person.
6. That hereby I declare the name is MD WAHID and ABDUL WAHID is one and the same person.
7. That my change my correct name from JANKI and TARKEEN and change my husband correct name from MD WAHID and ABDUL WAHID in the school record my daughter named MUSKAN.
8. That if any information or substance including the statement in the affidavit is found to be false or incomplete now or at any Stage, I am liable for prosecution under the relevant law.
9. That it is my true and correct statement.

NORTHERN RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE
Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

S.N.	Particulars	Estimate No.	Approx Cost of work	EMD amount	Completion period of Work
(A)	Repair to leaky roof of staff Qtrs. Toilet, Bath, kitchen and room flooring in type-I & II quarters & replacement of SCI stack to PVC stack of Bt no.36 to 4 in the section of SSEW/Ts Hazari under ADENE-I.	A.B.C.D.E.F.24-25/25	Rs. 795994.46	Rs. 999997.63	06 Months
(B)	Repair to exterior plaster, repair to beams, chajjas, balcony sunshades etc. & repair to SCI and GI stack in the section of SSEW/WG under ADENE-I.		Rs. 7885408.00	Rs. 22410273.99	06 Months
(C)	Construction of a boundary wall to prevent encroachment at a highly dense area of Salm Girth, Gas Factory & More Salar in the S/O SSEW/WG Hazari under ADENE-I.		Rs. 1999966.32	Rs. 9999998.76	06 Months
(D)	Construction of 100 beds dormitories in kamal singh stadium in the S/O SSEW/WG Camp under ADENE-I.		Rs. 160000.00	Rs. 200000.00	06 Months
(E)	Repair to wooden door, window, replacement of jaffies and safety gate at Tikki Bridge Railway Colony & Providing Platform/Podium for Vintage Heritage Coach at National Gandhi Darshan Museum, Rajghat & Repair to boundary wall of Baroda House complex in the section of SSEW/RT under ADENE-III.		Rs. 159700.00	Rs. 282100.00	06 Months
(F)	Exterior white washing and painting at PK Road etc railway colony in the section of SSEW/WG under ADENE-I.		Rs. 247500.00	Rs. 200000.00	06 Months

Date and time for submission of bids: 28.02.2025 at 15:00 hrs.
Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased are:
SatevendraGautam Advocate Shop no. 3, Property no. 126, Lal Kauna Ghaziabad, U.P.

SAD membership drive Akal Takht panel meets for first time

Patiala (Punjab): The first meeting of the Akal Takht-appointed seven-member committee to oversee a new membership drive of the embattled Shiromani Akali Dal was held here on Tuesday.

The development came days after Akal Takht Jathedar Giani Ragbir Singh asked the working committee of the SAD to make the committee functional.

Speaking to reporters here on Tuesday, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) President Harjinder Singh Dhani said that according to the order of the Akal Takht, the first meeting of the committee was held.

The meeting took place in a cordial atmosphere where all seven members kept their views frank, he said.

The committee invited the working president of SAD, Balwinder Singh Bhundar, to attend its next meeting on February 11 at Bahadurgarh, Patiala.

Dhani urged all the SAD leaders to work for the unity of the party.

On December 2 last year, the Akal Takht pronounced religious punishment for SAD leader Sukhbir Singh Badal for the "mistakes" committed by the party and its government from 2007 to 2017. It had also formed the seven-member committee for starting the membership drive and holding the elections for the post of party president and other office bearers within six months.

Rebel Akali leader Gurbart Singh Wadala, who is member of the committee, accused the SAD leadership of creating hurdles in the implementation of the edict of the Akal Takht.

He said that SAD working president Bhundar has been called in the next meeting to make the SAD's stand clear on the responsibility given by the Akal Takht to the panel.

Ex-MLA Zira claims some people opened fire at his vehicle

Ferozepur: Former Congress MLA Kulbir Singh Zira on Tuesday claimed that some unidentified people opened fire at his car when he was going to Zira town from Ferozepur near Sher Khan village on Monday night.

District Congress Committee (DCC) president Zira said that he was coming back from Ferozepur.

"When our car reached near Sher Khan village, my driver alerted that a car was continuously following us. We stopped our vehicle near the village and the car which had been following us also stopped right behind us," Zira claimed.

"Then, I told my driver to speed up the car but the other vehicle continuously followed us and suddenly someone started firing, targeting my car. Overall six rounds were fired at my car," he said.

Zira, who had remained MLA from Zira seat, said he provided CCTV footage of the car which was following him. "I have been receiving threats from the gangsters in the past," he claimed.

Superintendent of Police Randhir Kumar said police had received a call on the emergency number. They are verifying the facts and investigating the matter, he said.

Haryana made significant strides in all-round development since BJP came to power: CM Saini

Chandigarh: Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Tuesday said since the formation of the BJP government in the state, it has made significant strides in all-round development.

Since 2014, there has been a remarkable transformation in every aspect of the state, from infrastructure improvements to welfare initiatives, with the common people experiencing these positive changes firsthand, Saini claimed after chairing a Cabinet meeting here.

Responding to a question on the upcoming urban local body polls in Haryana, Saini said, "We are fully prepared for the elections."

Lasting out at the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), Saini claimed that during the campaign for Delhi polls scheduled Wednesday, people expressed their dissatisfaction, saying they have been deprived of the benefits of the Centre's Ayushman Bharat health cover scheme.

"The Delhi government has confined the needy to Mohalla Clinics, which only provide first aid, with no coverage



"The Delhi government has confined the needy to Mohalla Clinics, which only provide first-aid, with no coverage under the Ayushman Bharat scheme for hospital admissions during health emergencies," Saini said.

under the Ayushman Bharat scheme for hospital admissions during health emergencies," Saini said.

AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal only made "empty promises" to the people of Delhi over the past two years, he alleged.

The people of Delhi are "extremely frustrated" with the AAP government, and they will vote to vent this "frustration" when Delhi goes to polls on Wednesday, the chief minister said.

Saini also said that Prime Minister Narendra

Modi has announced that under the Ayushman scheme, free treatment of up to Rs 10 lakh will be provided to the needy and poor in Delhi.

To a question on the ongoing crackdown on gangsters in Haryana, Saini said it is the state government's responsibility to ensure the safety and security of its people.

Anyone involved in wrongdoing will face consequences, and the police will take strict action against those involved in criminal activities, he said.

Asked about corruption, Saini said there is no tolerance for it in Haryana, assuring that strict action would be taken against anyone found indulging in corrupt practices.

Describing the Union Budget 2025-26 as a strong foundation for a developed India, Saini said it reinforces Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to transform India into a developed nation by 2047. "The Budget serves

Haryana Cabinet approves Wild Life Protection Rules 2024

Chandigarh: The Haryana Cabinet on Tuesday gave its approval to the Haryana Wild Life (Protection) Rules, 2024 under which criteria has been established for obtaining various types of permits related to the wildlife department.

The Haryana Cabinet meeting was held here under Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini's chairmanship, said an official release.

The Haryana Wildlife (Protection) Rules, 1974 have been repealed under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, and the Haryana Wildlife (Protection) Rules, 2024 were approved by the Haryana government.

Under the Haryana Wildlife (Protection) Rules, 2024 guidelines and procedures have been formulated for the public regarding the process of obtaining permits and approvals from the wildlife department.

The rules provide detailed procedures and prescribed formats for granting permits related to wildlife education, scientific research or scientific management, it said.

They also outline the procedures and for-

mats for granting permits for the conservation of specified plants for special purposes. The enactment of the Haryana Wildlife (Protection) Rules, 2024 will make the process of obtaining permits from the wildlife department more transparent and simplified for the public.

The Cabinet also approved the amendment in the Haryana Village Common Lands (Regulation) Act, 1961.

A decision has been taken to grant ownership rights to those who have houses on panchayat land for 20 years at collector rates, the chief minister told reporters after the Cabinet meeting.

"Through Act No. 19 of 2024, land in 'Shamlat Deh' (village land used for common purposes), which was leased out before the commencement of the Punjab Village Common Lands (Regulation) Rules, 1964 by the Collector under the Haryana Utilization of Lands Act, 1949 for a period of 20 years, has been excluded from the ambit of 'Shamlat Deh'."

As a result, the provision related to leasing such lands has been approved for deletion," said the statement.

Punjab Honored with 'Best State' and 'Best District' Awards under Green Schools Programme



Chandigarh: Punjab has achieved a remarkable milestone in environmental education and sustainability by winning the prestigious 'Best State' and 'Best District' awards at the Green Schools Awards 2025, organized by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The awards were presented by renowned environmentalist Sonam Wangchuk and Ms. Sunita Narain, Head of the Centre for Science and Environment to Er. Prithal Singh, Executive Director and Dr. Kulbir Singh Bath, Joint Director of the Punjab State Council for Science & Technology (PSCST).

A unique initiative of CSE the Green Schools Programme (GSP) has been actively implemented in Punjab by PSCST under its Environment Education Programme. The program encourages schools to optimize resource management by conducting rigorous environmental audits across six key domains like air, energy, food, land, water and waste. These awards recognize Punjab's leadership in fostering environmental sustainability and awareness among students and educational institutions.

Out of 11,917 registered schools nationwide, 7406 schools from Punjab completed environmental audits, accounting for 84% of all audits conducted across the country. A total of 196 schools from Pun-

jab were awarded Green School status, including 171 government schools and 25 private schools. Best District Award bestowed to Hoshiarpur District with setting up a national record with 1,945 schools completing environmental audits, the highest number from any district in India.

These accolades solidify Punjab's position as a leader in environmental education and underscore the state's dedication to creating a sustainable future. The success of the Green Schools Programme serves as a model for other states to emulate, highlighting the importance of integrating environmental consciousness into the education system.

CM Mann reiterates firm commitment of state govt to ensure welfare of soldiers

Chandigarh: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Tuesday said that the state government is laying major thrust for enhancing the share of recruitment of youth from the state in the Indian Armed forces.

Interacting with a delegation led by Air Marshal Hardeep Bains AVSM VSM, the Commandant of National Defence College, the Chief Minister said that Punjab has a glorious history of serving the country in Indian Armed forces. He said that though this trend has now dipped, the state government is making concerted efforts for giving fillip to the recruitment of youth in Armed forces by encouraging them. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that already the Mal Bago Armed Forces Preparatory Institute and Maharaja Ranjit Singh Armed Forces Preparatory Institute set up by the state government and C-Pyte centres are doing a commendable job in this direction.

The Chief Minister said that besides being the nation's food bowl,



Punjab also has a distinction of being the sword arm of the country and its people are well known all over the world for their courage, resilience and spirit. He said that every inch of this sacred land has the footprint of great Gurus, saints, seers and martyrs, who have shown us the way to oppose tyranny, injustice and oppression. Bhagwant Mann also said that the state has 532 kilometre of border with Pakistan due to which support of Armed forces is pivotal.

The Chief Minister said that Recognising the immense contribution of jawans of Armed

forces, Paramilitary forces, Police and even Agnivirs in safeguarding unity and integrity of the country, the state government gives financial assistance worth Rs 1 crore to the family in case the jawans attain martyrdom in line of duty. He said that this is in consonance with the commitment of the state government to ensure the well-being of the soldiers (from Armed forces, paramilitary and Police) and their families. Bhagwant Singh Mann hoped that this humble initiative by the state will go a long way in helping the aggrieved family on one hand and securing their future on

the other. The Chief Minister said that the state government has launched the first of its kind initiative in the country, a dedicated Sadak Suraksha Force to ensure enhanced security and to save precious lives on the State and National Highways. He said that specially trained, freshly recruited 1597 personnel including girls are acting as the backbone to this force, who have been provided with the latest, fully equipped 144 vehicles and since its launch in February last year the state has witnessed a 48% reduction in casualties due to accidents.

Police will be held accountable for crimes in areas under their jurisdiction, says CM Mann

Chandigarh: Reiterating the firm commitment of the state government to check crime in the state, the Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Tuesday said that the Police officers will be held accountable for major crimes taking place in the areas under their jurisdiction.

Interacting with the Commissioners of Police and Senior Superintendent of Police here today, the Chief Minister said that effective and responsive Policing should be ensured to check crime in the state. He said Punjab Police is one of the best forces in the country and the glorious tradition of the Punjab Police to preserve unity, integrity and sovereignty of the country should be maintained by all means. Bhagwant Singh Mann said the state government has already laid major thrust on the modernisation of the Police in the state



brotherhood should be cemented.

The Chief Minister said that the state government will embark major Police reforms to ensure that people are benefited from it. He said that the motive is to ensure that the hard earned peace of the state is maintained by all ways and means. Bhagwant Singh Mann said the state government has already laid major thrust on the modernisation of the Police in the state

and Punjab Police is today being equipped with world class vehicles.

The Chief Minister further said that unlawful activities should be dealt with a heavy hand and those involved in this crime should not be spared. He said that the Police officers should on intelligence gathering and dispensation of justice to the common man. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that war against drugs

should be transformed into a mass movement and Panchayats should be encouraged for this motive.

The Chief Minister said that the supply line of drugs in the state must be further snapped with heavy hand. He said that a zero tolerance policy should be adopted against the drug menace and no one involved in this heinous crime should be spared. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that strict action

that he will monitor the action against drugs on a daily basis adding that strategy must be formulated to make the youth at school and college level aware against the curse of drugs.

The Chief Minister said that the properties of the drug smugglers should be confiscated and no laxity should be adopted in this noble cause. He said that the time has arrived when we must take decisive action against the scourge of drugs so that our coming generations can be saved from it. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that the perpetrators of organised crime will not be allowed to flex muscles in state and they should be taught a lesson. He also asked the officers to make sure that a complete roadmap is formulated for checking the petty crimes in the state.

The Chief Minister said that the state government is firmly committed for wiping out organised crime in the state and strict action should be taken against the gangsters. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that no one should be allowed to take law in his hand and exemplary action should be taken against them. He said that gangsters should be taken to task and severe action should be taken against them so that they are not able to create any nuisance.

The Chief Minister said that strict action should be taken against the gangsters so that it acts as a deterrent for these anti-social elements. Bhagwant Singh Mann unequivocally said that the perpetrators of organised crime will not be allowed to flex muscles in state and they should be taught a lesson. He also asked the officers to make sure that a complete roadmap is formulated for checking the petty crimes in the state.

The Chief Minister said that the state government is committed to check the corruption in the state and even in echelons of Police needs to be checked with a heavy hand. He said that all the black sheeps amongst the Police force should be identified and strict action should be taken against them. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that these cops with dubious character are bringing bad name to the Police and this should be checked.

The Chief Minister also batted for better coordination of Police with the general public to check the crime rate across the state. He said that this will help in eliminating crime in the state thereby giving impetus to the peace, progress and prosperity of the state. Bhagwant Singh Mann recalled the stellar role of Punjab police in curbing the black days of terrorism with the active support of the common man.

Uttarakhand's Char Dham priests meet PM Modi Amit Shah

Dehradun: Priests of Char Dham called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Delhi on Tuesday to invite them to reopening of the portals of the famous Himalayan temples of Uttarakhand.

The portals of Badrinath are scheduled to reopen after the winter break on May 4 while the dates for the reopening of the other three temples including Kedarnath, Gangotri and Yamunotri will be announced soon.

The priests thanked the prime minister for the construction of all-weather roads, plans for beautification of the temples and efforts being made for creating better passenger facilities, saying they have increased the grandeur of the temples. Pauri Garhwal MP Anil Baluni who accompanied the delegation said in a post on X.

"Due to the vision of the Prime Minister, the Dhams are improving in accordance with the Sanatan beliefs. This is the golden age of restoration of mythological traditions. May our deities give you strength, may the country sit on the throne as developed India under your leadership," Baluni quoted the priests as saying at their meeting with Modi.

The priests also met Home Minister Shah and invited him to the opening of the doors of the Char Dhams for the upcoming season.

They described ongoing construction works around the temples and upgradation of facilities as "extraordinary".

Fraud posing as army officer arrested in Dehradun

Dehradun: The Uttarakhand police Special Task Force has arrested a man for allegedly cheating people of lakhs of rupees by posing as an army officer and promising a job in the force.

Pramod Kumar alias Vasu was arrested from Chandramani Road here late Monday night on the basis of information shared by Army Intelligence, Dehradun, Uttarakhand STF Senior Superintendent of Police Navneet Singh Bhullar said.

Vasu is a resident of Nukkad area of Saharanpur district in Uttar Pradesh, he said. A fake army identity card, an army uniform, other army-related clothes and a mobile phone were recovered from the possession of the man.

During interrogation, it was found that Vasu, who is currently living in Patel Nagar, cheated youths by posing as an army officer and promising them jobs in various positions such as a driver's.

To win their trust, Vasu often showed up dressed in an army uniform at the military hospital here, the SSP said. One of his victims, Parvez, said Vasu gave him an admit card for recruitment as a driver in the army and later also showed him a merit list and told him that he had been selected.

Parvez later came to know that the merit list was fake and approached Patel Nagar Police Station, Bhullar said.

Days after deadly stampede 2.5 cr devotees take holy dip at Maha Kumbh under stricter security

Mahakumbh Nagar: Under a fire over since the stampede that killed at least 30 devotees, the Yogi-Adityanath-led Uttar Pradesh government left nothing to chance for the Basant Panchami bathing at Maha Kumbh, moving personnel with a "zero error" approach under the Operation 11.

Monday's Basant Panchami 'Amrit Snan' saw over 2.5 crore devotees taking a dip at the Maha Kumbh under a new set of security measures. The situation remains challenging for the authorities still, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi set to visit Maha Kumbh on Wednesday for a dip.

The state government has been parrying charges of concealing the death toll from the January 29 Mauni Amavasya stampede and was hard pressed to rejig its security apparatus for the rest of the 12-year mega gathering.

Not taking chances, the authorities unveiled 'Operation 11' — a set of measures focused on managing the crowd for the Basant Panchami rush.

The plan included deploying additional security forces at key locations where pilgrim pressure was greater and extensive traffic diversions to prevent congestion, particularly on pontoon bridges leading to the Triveni Sangam, "an official said.

Lessons from the Mauni Amavasya stampede were factored into the updated plan, officials said, adding,

"The plan included deploying additional security forces at key locations where pilgrim pressure was greater and extensive traffic diversions to prevent congestion, particularly on pontoon bridges leading to the Triveni Sangam, "an official said.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath conducted an aerial survey of Maha Kumbh before he tasked officials with

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Inter-agency coordination was strengthened to ensure multiple forces, comprising the state police, PAC, and CAPF, work in unison to regulate crowd movement, an officer said.

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Hindus Buddhists branches of same banyan tree: UP CM

Mahakumbh Nagar: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday said Hindus and Buddhists are branches of the same banyan tree, asserting that they will form the strongest banyan tree in the world if both come together on a common platform.

Inaugurating the Buddhist Maha Kumbh Yatra during his visit to Prayagraj, the chief minister praised the coming together of different worship traditions on a single platform, calling it a commendable initiative. After the event, he showered flowers on Buddhist saints and scholars.

He emphasised that Lord Buddha's teachings of compassion and friendship continue to guide the world, according to an official statement.

"As long as India exists, his teachings will endure," he remarked.

He also pointed out that while some forces attempt to divide India, events like these have left anti-India elements restless.

He further stated that such forces were spreading propaganda through

various means but the truth remains unshaken. Quoting Lord Buddha, he said, "Truth is to be experienced. It is difficult to express it in words."

This truth, he added, is being witnessed by millions of saints and devotees gathered at the event.

The chief minister said while Maha Kumbh is spreading a message of unity, there are some who oppose such events. He highlighted how 38 crore devotees have gathered at Prayagraj Maha Kumbh and how India's presence has resonated globally.

"Such events have left anti-India elements restless," he remarked. He further stressed that Maha Kumbh is the "greatest platform to promote unity and social realisation" and its message should reach the entire world.

Expressing his happiness, he said, "I am glad that you have come here, witnessed the Maha Kumbh and by taking a holy dip in the Triveni Sangam, you will carry forward this message of unity to every village and every home."

Mathura District Panchayat Raj Officer held for taking bribe



Mathura District Panchayat Raj Officer (DPRO) Kiran Chaudhary and retired driver Vijendra Singh have been arrested red-handed while accepting a bribe of Rs 70,000, the Vigilance Department of the Uttar Pradesh Police said in a statement on Tuesday.

A team of the Vigilance Department, Agra unit, took this action on the complaint of Pratap Singh Rana, the pradhan of Jhudasai village under Farah police station area of Sadar tehsil area of Mathura district.

Acting on a complaint of irregularity by the pradhan in a case, the district magistrate of

Mathura had constituted a three-member committee of the Gram Sabha, while divesting DPRO Kiran Chaudhary of financial and administrative powers and directed action.

The DPRO had issued a notice against the Gram Pradhan to provide the records and files in this case in compliance with which he and the secretary provided the records and files related to the case to the District Panchayat Raj Officer's office.

The complainant Gram Pradhan alleged that the District Panchayat Raj Officer was misusing her position and demanding Rs 70,000 as bribe through

her retired driver Vijendra Singh to file a report in his favour.

The Gram Pradhan complained about the matter to the Vigilance Establishment.

It was said in the statement that a confidential investigation was conducted on the complaint and the investigation found the case to be true.

After getting permission from the government, the Vigilance Establishment team arrested District Panchayat Raj Officer of Mathura Kiran Chaudhary and retired driver Vijendra Singh red-handed on Tuesday while taking a bribe of Rs 70,000 from the complainant Pratap Singh Rana.

Sharma said that if their will power is strong, vision is there and people are with them, then villages can be transformed.

He said that as panchayat representatives, sarpanchs have

Raj govt focusing on welfare of farmers infrastructure development in villages: CM

Jaipur: Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma said that the focus of the state government's schemes is on the development of the infrastructure of villages, increasing the income of farmers, and promoting rural industries.

The dream of Gramodaya of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar and Chaudhary Charan Singh can be realised only by strengthening the poor, farmers and cattle rearers, he said.

Sharma was addressing the Panchayati Raj Empowerment and Felicitation Ceremony organised by Sarpanch Sangh, Rajasthan on Tuesday.

He said that the sarpanchs have the reins of development of villages in their hands and a sarpanch is the most important link in the upliftment of the last person of the society.

Sharma said that if their will power is strong, vision is there and people are with them, then villages can be transformed.

He said that as panchayat representatives, sarpanchs have



the opportunity to serve the people and with this spirit of service, talented and dedicated sarpanchs of Rajasthan are taking their villages on the path of development.

Recalling his tenure as a Sarpanch, the chief minister said, "Seeing you people, my heart is filled with the same feeling today as when I was a Sarpanch. I have grown up in the soil of the village and have lived life and its challenges."

Sharma said that the state government is working with priority for the empowerment of Panchayati Raj and rural development. The state government has made provisions in the

budget for the villages of all 200 assembly constituencies of the state without discrimination.

The honorarium of the public representatives of Panchayati Raj institutions was increased by 10 percent from April 1, 2024, he said.

He said that the work of 371 Gram Panchayat buildings has been completed by the state government. To strengthen the rural road system, 1,621 kms of missing link and non-patchable roads have been started in 200 assembly constituencies for Rs 1,000 crore and 309 works of 530 km length have been completed.

Sharma said that the state government is

making schemes, programs and policies for farmers and animal husbandry in the state. He said that it is the goal of the government to provide electricity to farmers during the day by the year 2027.

For this, PM-Kusum Yojana is being implemented rapidly. Farmers are also becoming energy producers by installing solar power plants on their barren land, he said.

The Chief Minister said that along with PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, the state government is also giving the benefit of an additional grant of Rs 2,000 to the farmers under Chief Minister Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana. So far, Rs 1,355 crore to the accounts of farmers.

Sharma said that a three-day camp is being organized at the Gram Panchayat headquarters from February 5 to create Farmer ID in the state. By registering in this, the benefits of all the agricultural schemes of the Central and State Government will be available without any hindrance through the digital identity card.

Lions Club Prayas & Maya Mittal Charitable Trust launched mobile medical van

Akash Jain/ Rajesh Tomar Agra: On the occasion of Cancer Day, Lions Club of Prayas launched a mobile medical van in collaboration with Maya Mittal Charitable Trust, taking a step towards creating awareness in the society and finding solutions.

Lions Club of Prayas organised a special Cancer Day programme at Purushottam Das Savitri Devi Cancer Care and Research Centre, located on Sikandra Highway.

Chief guest ADM FR Subhangi Shukla said that the contribution of Lions Club Prayas in creating awareness about cancer is commendable.



Former International Director of Lions Club Jitendra Chauhan announced that soon a vaccination campaign will be launched to prevent cervical cancer. In which one thousand girls will be vaccinated free of cost.

Presya President Ashu Mittal said that the mobile medical van will visit rural areas. The van equipped with modern facilities will work for the prevention of cancer, under which early detection of cancer, especially superficial cancers like oral cancer, skin cancer, breast cancer, whose symptoms are directly visible and can be caught by touching with hands, will be

screened.

Information will be given on dental examination and teeth maintenance, so that people consuming tobacco in rural areas can be alert. Apart from this, eye examination, cataract examination and free spectacles will be distributed. Prevention of anemia, medicine for insects and iron medicine will be distributed.

JR Thakur cross swords over preparation of DPRs for opposition BJP MLAs

Shimla: A day after Leader of Opposition Jai Ram Thakur said that detailed project reports (DPRs) for opposition MLAs in Himachal Pradesh have not been prepared for the past two years, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Tuesday said that Rs 421 crore has been approved across the 28 Assembly segments represented by BJP legislatures.

Talking to media persons here, Sukhu said that in the past two years -- from January 1, 2023 till February 3, 2025 -- the state government has submitted 210 DPRs for various projects worth Rs 1,863 crore to NABARD for approval, of which 62 DPRs amounting to Rs 421 crore across the 28 Assembly constituencies have already been approved.

Most opposition MLAs have fully availed themselves of



this funding, successfully reaching the maximum limit set for their respective constituencies during this period, Sukhu added.

"About 50 per cent of BJP legislatures contacted me and said they wanted to attend the MLAs' priorities meeting but could not do so due to the adamant attitude of Jai Ram Thakur," he claimed, adding that there are five groups in the BJP at present, and the leader of the opposition is fighting to save his seat and making excuses to not attend the

meeting. On Monday, Thakur claimed that only the priorities of the Congress MLAs close to the chief minister were being considered, while the BJP legislatures were being ignored and disrespected.

A few Congress MLAs contacted him and told him that their priorities were also being ignored, and that they were sitting in the same boat, Thakur claimed.

"For the past two years, BJP legislatures have been attending the MLAs' priorities meeting but unfortunately even the process of preparing detailed project report of their priorities has not been initiated for majority of the projects," Thakur claimed.

"The meeting is a routine exercise that has been going on for more than three decades, and district-wise meetings were scheduled for February 3 and 4.

Rajnath reaffirms India's readiness to support Bhutan in enhancing defence preparedness

New Delhi
Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday reaffirmed India's readiness to support Bhutan in boosting its defence preparedness, including through the supply of military hardware and assets.

Singh conveyed this to Chief Operations Officer of Royal Bhutan Army Lieutenant General Batoo Tshering in a meeting.

The top Bhutanese military commander is on a six-day visit to India from Saturday.

The defence ministry said Singh and Lt Gen Tshering held discussions encompassing a variety of issues on bilateral relations.

"The defence minister reaffirmed India's readiness to support Bhutan in capability enhancement



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh (right) and Lt Gen Batoo Tshering (left) of the Royal Bhutan Army during their meeting in New Delhi.

for defence preparedness, including provisioning of defence equipment and assets to augment capacities of Bhutan, as per its national priorities and in line with India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy," it said.

On his part, Lt Gen Tshering appreciated India's continued support and thanked India in assisting Bhutan in augmenting its defence capacities and imparting

training on Royal Bhutan Army (RBA) personnel. He also reaffirmed the RBA's firm commitment to work closely with India

in realising the shared vision for peace and prosperity in the region.

Tshering's visit has provided an opportunity to further deepen the India-Bhutan defence and security relations, the ministry said in a statement.

The overall situation in the Doklam plateau is understood to have figured in Lt Gen. Tshering's talks with Indian officials.

The commander already held talks with Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan.

Tshering was also scheduled to meet Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi, National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri.

The Indian and Chinese armies were locked in a 73-day standoff at the Doklam tri-junction in 2017 after China tried to extend

a road in the area that Bhutan claimed belonged to it.

The India-China standoff in the Doklam plateau even triggered fears of a larger conflict between the two neighbours. Bhutan had said the area belonged to it and India supported the Bhutanese claim.

In the last couple of years, Bhutan and China were looking at an expeditionary resolution of their festering boundary row.

"This visit by Lieutenant General Batoo Tshering paves the way for continued collaboration between the two militaries," an Indian readout said on Saturday.

"The visit will further deepen the strategic relationship between the two friendly nations and enhance their cooperation on matters of mutual interest," it said.

Asked about the PM's remarks, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi said, "I think he has lost his connect with people and their needs. This is what it seemed from his speech."

PM has lost connect with people and their needs: Priyanka

New Delhi
Opposition leaders on Tuesday slammed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address in the Lok Sabha with Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra stating it seemed from his speech that he has lost his connect with people and their needs.

Replying to the two-day discussion on the Motion of Thanks on the President's address, Prime Minister Modi hit out at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, saying those speaking of fighting the Indian state can appreciate neither the Constitution nor national unity as he launched a counter-offensive in Lok Sabha against the Opposition.

Asked about the PM's remarks, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi said, "I think he has lost his connect with people and their needs. This is what it seemed from his speech."

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor also hit out at Modi, saying he made a "typical election speech".

"It was a typical election speech with the Delhi elections tomorrow. Just a long laundry list of things the government has done. What is surprising is that, the opposition had raised very specific criticisms of the president's address and those criticisms were not answered by the prime minister," Tharoor said.

"There were a few political statements which I think the nation could have done without, there are very many avenues for politics, this is about the president's address to the nation, agenda of the nation and the response of the prime minister, that was unfortunately missing," the Congress leader said outside Parliament.

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav expressed disappointment with no mention of the Kumbh stampede. "It is very sad that when such a big incident has happened in Kumbh... It is not about the opposition, the whole country saw the incident that had happened in Kumbh. The government was earlier hiding figures of injured and those who have been deceased and now no homage was paid today. I had requested for two-minute silence," he said.

Go ahead with 158 civil judges appointments SC to Karnataka HC

New Delhi
The Supreme Court on Tuesday allowed the Karnataka High Court to proceed with the recruitment of 158 civil judges despite a state government circular prohibiting it.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjay Kumar and Justices Sanjay Kumar and KV Viswanathan passed the direction after being informed that the state government issued a circular in November, last year halting the direct recruitment process by making changes to reservations under the Karnataka Judicial Service (Recruitment) (Amendment) Rules 2024.

"Issue notice, and as an interim measure we direct that the process of direct recruitment of 158 civil judges in Karnataka shall continue notwithstanding the circular issued by the state government. This order is subject to the final outcome/decision on the application," it said.

The CJ said the total sanctioned strength of judges in subordinate judiciary had risen from 21,000 to 29,000 in the country and the states, where the numbers rose significantly, would have to bear more expenses and



file an affidavit detailing the present status of land at 206, Rouse Avenue in the national capital.

On the issue of residential accommodations for Delhi judiciary officers, the bench directed the Land And Development Office (L&DO) of the Centre to

increase the spending to meet the demand.

The bench would deal with the issues faced by the district judiciary in Bihar, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, UP and Delhi on the next hearing.

Parliamentary panel flags delays in youth empowerment programme

New Delhi
A parliamentary report has flagged delays in fund allocations, lack of targeted outreach, and insufficient government action on key recommendations for the youths on disaster preparedness, skilling, and hostel facilities for women.

The 360th report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth, and Sports, presented in Parliament on Tuesday, reviewed the government's response to its earlier recommendations on the Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram (RYSK), a key youth empowerment scheme.

The committee expressed dissatisfaction with the pace of implementation and urged the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports to take urgent corrective steps.

The report flagged concerns over the lack of a structured approach to youth volunteerism in disaster response, citing a 2022 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) assessment.

It urged the government to integrate Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan, or NYKS, volunteers into mandatory disaster management committees at the village and district levels and establish Disaster Risk Reduction Teams in every district.

While the Ministry reported that over 12,000 NYKS volunteers have been trained, the committee called for better coordination with disaster relief authorities to ensure effective deployment.

The committee also criticised delays in transforming NYKS centres into District Youth Resource Centres (DYRCs), which could serve as hubs for skill development, employment, and entrepreneurship.

The Ministry of Youth Affairs stated that it had forwarded the proposal to the Finance Ministry, but the committee urged stronger follow-ups to secure the required funding.



The committee also noted a lack of collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Employment to turn NYKS into a gateway for youth employment. It also called for the creation of 'Girl Child NYKS Centres' to ensure greater participation of young women in skill training programmes and job placements.

The committee found gaps in representation from rural youth and students from tier-2 and tier-3 colleges in international exchange programmes. It recommended tracking the long-term impact of such initiatives and ensuring a more inclusive selection process to provide equal opportunities for marginalised students.

The report expressed serious concerns over the lack of youth hostels exclusively

for women, particularly in state capitals, educational hubs, and cultural sites.

While the Ministry cited the construction of one hostel in Kota, Rajasthan, the committee deemed it inadequate and directed the government to seek additional funds in the 2025-26 Union Budget for dedicated women hostels with Wi-Fi, CCTV surveillance, and round-the-clock security.

The committee also noted discrepancies in use of funds under the National Youth Leaders Programme (NYLP) and recommended more transparent budgeting and expenditure tracking. It criticised the limited awareness and outreach of Scouts and Guides programmes, recommending an expansion of gender sensitisation, environmental protection, and digital literacy initiatives in rural schools.

While the government has acknowledged some recommendations, the committee's report indicates that several key youth empowerment measures remain under-implemented.

The committee urged the MYAS to act swiftly and report back on pending issues before the next parliamentary review.

Amit Shah reviews JK security situation with top officials

New Delhi
Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday reviewed the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir which has witnessed a few terror incidents in the recent past, sources said.

Top officials of the Army, Jammu and Kashmir Police and intelligence agencies briefed Shah about the prevailing situation in the Union territory and ongoing operations against terrorists, they said.

The meeting was held a day after a terror attack in south Kashmir's Kulgam district, in which ex-serviceman Manzoor Ahmad Wagon was killed and his wife and niece were injured.

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, DCP Nalin Prabhakar, Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi and other top army, police and civil officials attended the meeting.

Shah is also likely to chair another security review meeting with top officials of the paramilitary forces on Wednesday.

During the last review meeting on December 19,



Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Shah had directed all security agencies to continue working in a coordinated manner to eliminate terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir.

The government has maintained that there is a significant decline in terrorist incidents, infiltration and recruitment of youth in terrorist organisations.

The security forces last week launched a massive operation in Jammu and Kashmir, mostly in the higher reaches and forest areas along the Line of Control, to locate and eliminate the terrorists who carried out multiple attacks in different districts last year.

Areas such as Reasi, Doda, Kishtwar, Kathua, Jammu and Rajouri have seen increased terror activity in the last couple of years.

59 cases of HMPV; 2 deaths due to co-morbidities reported in India: Govt

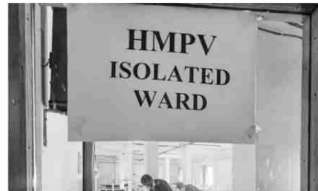
New Delhi
Fifty-nine cases of HMPV and two deaths due to co-morbidities have been reported from January 6-29, as per the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), Union minister Pratapnara Jadhav told the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday.

The 59 cases include 11 from Gujarat and nine from Puducherry, Jadhav said in a written reply.

The virus primarily affects young children, the elderly, and immunocompromised individuals, leading to respiratory illnesses that range from mild cold-like symptoms to severe pneumonia.

The Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV) has been present globally since 2001 and the data does not indicate any unusual rise in Influenza Like Illness (ILI) or Severe Acute Respiratory Illness (SARI) cases anywhere in the country, Minister of State for Health Jadhav said.

The Union Ministry of Health has taken several specific measures to monitor



and control the spread of HMPV cases and to create public awareness through campaigns regarding HMPV symptoms and prevention strategies, Jadhav said.

That there was no unusual rise in ILI/SARI cases anywhere in the country has also been corroborated by the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) sentinel surveillance data, he said.

Listing the steps taken for the control of HMPV, Jadhav said the Public Health Emergency Operation Centre (PHEOC) has been activated at the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) since January 6, 2025, for

regular monitoring of the HMPV situation.

Daily Situational Report (SitRep) is shared with the concerned stakeholders. States and Union territories have been advised to be vigilant and send respiratory samples of hospitalised SARI cases to designated Virus Research and Diagnostic Laboratories (VRDLs) for testing and sequencing of positive samples, he said.

A robust surveillance system for ILI and SARI is already in place in India through both ICMR and IDSP networks, Jadhav said.

States have been advised to enhance information, education and communication (IEC) and awareness among the population regarding the prevention of the virus' transmission through simple measures such as washing hands with soap and water.

Avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands, avoid close contact with people who are exhibiting symptoms of the disease and cover mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing etc, according to the advisory to the states. The government conducted a preparedness drill across the country and it is ascertained that the health system is adequately prepared to deal with the seasonal increase in respiratory illness, Jadhav said.

Beant Singh murder: Punjab govt opposes Hawara's plea for jail transfer in SC

New Delhi
The Punjab government on Tuesday opposed in the Supreme Court a plea by Jagtar Singh Hawara, who is serving life term in the killing of former Punjab chief minister Beant Singh in 1995, seeking his transfer from Delhi's Tihar jail to any prison in Punjab.

The submissions were made before a bench of Justices BR Gavaia and KVind Chandran.

The counsel appearing for Punjab informed the bench that Hawara was earlier lodged in a Chandigarh jail.

The bench asked senior advocate Colin Gonsalves, appearing for Hawara, whether the Union Territory of Chandigarh was made a party respondent in the plea.

Gonsalves said he would implead Chandigarh as a party respondent. While granting leave to implead Chandigarh in the matter, the bench issued notice to the UT administration seeking its response on Hawara's plea within four



Delhi's Tihar jail.

weeks.

Punjab advocate general Gurminder Singh said Hawara filed a plea in the Delhi High Court in 2018 seeking similar relief but it was dismissed.

He said Hawara was relying on the Punjab prison manual, which was not applicable to him as he was tried in Chandigarh and was lodged in a jail there.

"In Punjab, he has no claim. If at all he is to be transferred, it is to the UT Chandigarh," Singh said.

Gonsalves said Hawara's limited prayer sought a transfer to any prison in Punjab.

He said Hawara's only family member was his daughter who resided in Punjab.

Maldives sets target to woo 3,00,000 Indian tourists in 2025

MALE: The Maldives' government has set a target of attracting 3,00,000 Indian tourists in 2025 after their number went from top place in 2023 to sixth in 2024 following the strained relations between Male and New Delhi.

Maldives' Ministry of Tourism's statistics shows that Maldives received 20,46,615 visitors in 2024 compared to 18,78,543 tourist arrivals in 2023.

China occupied the top slot followed by Russia in 2024 as Indian tourists shunned away till about October last year with the number slowly rising after that.

Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (MMPRC) chairman Abdulla Ghiyas told a local news portal Adhathu on Monday that monthly events will be held in India to achieve the goal to attract 3,00,000 tourists.

"We are conducting it as a very big campaign. For the first time, we are targeting to hire a brand ambassador to advertise in the Indian mass media. We are also trying to hold cricket summer camps in Maldives," he said.

The MMPRC is also working with airlines, both Indian and Maldivian, to bring tourists from more destinations in India, which Ghiyas said adding, they are targeting to fly from newer destination cities such as Kolkata, Pune, Chennai too.

US aid freeze puts at risk Ukraine's wartime help for frontline evacuees

Pavlohrad (Ukraine): In what used to be the concert hall in this town in eastern Ukraine, cots are arranged on stage. Instead of music, the room is filled with the muffled sobs of local people driven from their homes by fighting in the country's almost three-year war with Russia.

The Russian army's recent advances have engulfed towns and villages in the area. The Pavlohrad concert hall was requisitioned as a temporary centre for local civilians fleeing the relentless Russian bombardment.

"It's good here. There's the food, warmth, and a place to wash," said 83-year-old Kateryna Odraha, who lived through the Nazi German occupation of her village during World War II.

That refuge may now be in peril.



The shelter costs the equivalent of \$7,000 a month to run, and 60% of that was being covered by US funds sent to help Ukraine.

President Donald Trump's decision last week to freeze for 90 days the humanitarian,

development and security programmes. The consequences have ripple effects across the world.

"This news was abrupt and unexpected," said Illia Novikov, the coordinator of the Pavlohrad transit centre, which is

run by the charity organisation Relief Coordination Centre. "At this moment, we have no idea what the future holds."

The US funding covered fuel for evacuation vehicles, salaries for aid workers, legal and psychological support, and tickets to help evacuees reach safer locations, he said.

Usually about 60 people pass through the shelter each day, but when the Russian bombardment worsens, that can climb to more than 200, according to Novikov.

Many people heading here have spent months living in their basement without electricity, running water or enough food.

Vasyli Odraha, 58, remained in his local village for months, even as artillery fire and Russian guided bomb strikes became more frequent as the war moved closer.

China launches an antitrust probe into Google

Hong Kong: China Tuesday announced a flurry of retaliatory measures against the US, including tariffs on imports of products such as coal, liquefied natural gas products and crude oil, as well as an antitrust probe into Google.

The US funding also placed two other US firms on an unrelenting list that could bar them from investing in China.

China and Google have had a long and entangled relationship going back to the early 2000s.

Here's a look at Google's history in China and what the antitrust probe means for the company.

Google launched Chinese-language search engine google.cn in 2006. It was censored to comply with Beijing's laws, and in 2009, was a major search engine in China with about 36% market share.

In 2010, in response to a cyberattack and an increasing unwillingness to comply with censorship rules, Google said

it was no longer willing to block search results and shut down its Chinese search engine, redirecting users to its Hong Kong site instead.

Beijing later blocked Google services under its Great Firewall censorship system, including its email service Gmail, as well as its Chrome browser and search engine, making it inaccessible to users in mainland China.

China typically blocks most Western internet platforms, such as Google, as well as social media platforms including Facebook and Instagram.

Although Google services are not accessible in China, the company still maintains a presence in the country, primarily focused on sales and engineering for its advertising business.

It also has employees working on services including Google Cloud and customer solutions.

Google maintains offices in the major Chinese cities Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen.

Gangs attack neighbourhood in Haiti that's home to country's elite

Port-au-Prince (Haiti): Heavily armed gangs in Haiti have attacked a neighbourhood that's home to most of the country's elite and had been largely untouched by criminals, and police have demanded help repelling the assault that has killed at least 40 people.

"It's been eight days since Kenscoff has been under attack," Mayor Jean Mussillon told The Associated Press on Monday. He blamed the attack on the Viv Ans-



ann gang coalition, with the gunmen going home to help and indiscriminately opening fire.

"As we speak, they

have surrounded the area," Mussillon said as he called for reinforcements.

The dead include pas-

tors, teachers and children, although the number is expected to be higher because authorities haven't been able to reach certain parts of the neighbourhood, which is home to many politicians and business leaders.

Many victims are working-class people who tend crops on the outskirts of the neighbourhood in the foothills of a mountain range.

Gangs already control 85% of Port-au-Prince, and the United Na-

tions secretary-general warned last month they could overrun the capital.

The assault on Kenscoff occurred days after the government and police warned about imminent attacks in the capital, but the warnings did not say where they might occur.

Jean Bertho Valmo, a 45-year-old farmer who fled Kenscoff, told the AP that 12 members of one family were among the dead.

He said he woke to an-

other round of gunfire before dawn Monday. He and his family sought shelter in the yard of the mayor's office along with dozens of others.

"There is not enough water and food for everyone," he said, and lamented the loss of his crops including cabbage, carrots and broccoli.

"I invested everything I had in them," Valmo said. "The police, the government need to put a stop to this."

The attack on Kenscoff that began Jan. 27

has left more than 1,660 people homeless, according to the International Organisation for Migration on Monday.

Overall, gang violence has left more than 1 million people homeless across Haiti in recent years.

On Friday, one police unit said the attack on Kenscoff "could have been avoided if police had good equipment" including helicopters and an all-terrain vehicle, as well as funds to gather intelligence.

BUSINESS

PM Gati Shakti Data Access for Private Sector: DPIIT Secy



New Delhi:

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) will "quickly" come out with detailed guidelines regarding sharing of certain data, and maps from the PM Gati Shakti portal to the private sector, a top government official said on Tuesday.

DPIIT Secretary Ananddeep Singh Bhatia said a list of options are under discussion on the manner in which data from the government-owned portal can be shared with the private sector.

One of the options includes providing data based on queries raised by the private sector for a project, he said adding that this would be the most secure way to share data.

The government on Saturday announced to provide certain data and maps from the PM Gati Shakti portal to the private sector, a decision which could help them optimize last-mile delivery services and develop infrastructure-based applications.

"Let us wait for the detailed guidelines to come out... Very shortly or quickly... I am hopeful as this is a budget announcement," Bhatia told reporters here.

PM Gati Shakti national master plan initiative was launched in October 2021 for integrated and planned development of critical infrastructure projects to reduce logistics costs.

GST Council to Reduce Rates & Slabs: FM Sitharaman

New Delhi:

The GST Council will soon take a decision on having fewer and lower rates as the review work is almost complete, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Tuesday.

Currently, Goods and Services Tax (GST) is a four-tier tax structure with slabs at 5, 12, 18 and 28 per cent. Luxury and demerit goods are taxed at the highest bracket of 28 per cent, while packed food and essential items are in the lowest 5 per cent slab.

The Council, chaired by Sitharaman and comprising her state counterparts, has set up a group of ministers (GoM) to suggest changes in GST rates as well as reduce slabs.

"To be fair to the GST and the ministers who are all in the council, the work on rationalizing and simplifying GST rates has already commenced. In fact, it had



commenced nearly three years ago," she said at the India Today-Business Today Post Budget Round Table.

Sitharaman said later the scope was widened and now the work is almost complete.

Mentioning that she told ministers in the Council to have a more in-depth look at the rates since they relate

to everyday items consumed by common people, the minister said it was important to ensure that an opportunity was not lost.

"For me, it was also important that we don't lose an opportunity, that we can even bring down the number of rates, which is also the original intent that we wanted fewer rates and lower

rates. So work has got to happen on that, and I hope the GST Council will decide on it soon," Sitharaman said.

Days after presenting the Union Budget 2025-26 that also provides significant income tax relief to the middle class, the minister asserted the country's economic fundamentals are strong and there is no structural

slowdown.

Tax relief in the Budget is a reflection of the prime minister's commitment to the taxpayers, Sitharaman said and refuted speculations that the move was aimed at Delhi assembly elections.

She also told the gathering that there is no proposal to "shut down" the old tax regime.

On a question related to capital expenditure, the minister further said the capex has not come down, in fact it has increased to Rs 11.21 lakh crore which is 4.3 per cent of the GDP.

The Council, chaired by Sitharaman and comprising her state counterparts, has set up a group of ministers (GoM) to suggest changes in GST rates as well as reduce slabs.

Market investors added Rs 5.95 lakh crore to their wealth on Tuesday as benchmark indices rallied nearly 2 per cent after US President Donald Trump delayed tariffs on Mexico and Canada for a month.

The BSE benchmark Sensex jumped 1,397.07 points or 1.81 per cent to settle at a month's high of 78,583.81. During the day, it surged 1,471.85 points or 1.90 per cent to 78,658.59.

The NSE Nifty soared 378.20 points or 1.62 per cent to 23,739.25, a level not seen since January 9.

Following the sharp rally in equities, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms surged Rs 5,95,996.51 crore to Rs 4,25,50,826.11 crore (USD 4.88 trillion).

"Indian equity markets witnessed sharp rally after US President deferred the planned tariffs both on Canada and Mexico by 30 days, providing a major relief to the escaper trade war," Siddhartha Khemka, Head Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said.

From the 30-share blue-chip pack, Larsen & Toubro rallied nearly 5 per cent. Adani Ports, Inland Bank, Tata Motors, Reliance Industries, UltraTech Cement and Asian Paints were also among the major gainers.

ITC Hotels, Zomato, Nestle and Maruti were among the laggards.

Global markets, Seoul, Tokyo and Hong Kong ended significantly higher.

FDI Limit Hike to Boost Indian Insurance Sector: Moody's

New Delhi:

Increasing foreign investment limit in the insurance sector to 100 per cent from 74 per cent is likely to attract more global players in the growing Indian insurance market, Moody's Ratings said on Tuesday.

Additionally, strong premium growth is expected to boost profitability of the sector.

Currently, many foreign insurers are present in the country through joint ventures and could seek to increase their ownership stakes in their Indian affiliates



following this change in regulation.

"We view foreign investment as credit positive because it increases product innovation. The presence of foreign stakeholders also brings

benefits in the areas of capital adequacy, financial flexibility and governance standards," Moody's Ratings said in a statement.

Presenting Budget 2025-26, Finance Min-

ister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed to raise the foreign investment limit to 100 per cent from 74 per cent in the insurance sector as part of new-generation financial sector reforms.

Moreover, Moody's believes that the reduction in personal income tax will have positive trickle-down effects for the insurance sector.

"Increased levels of disposable income in the middle-class segment, the insurance sector's largest target market, bodes particularly well for health insurance,

given increasing awareness around well-being and protection in the post-COVID era," it added.

These changes will further boost the Indian insurance industry's growth prospects, which are already favourable.

In the budget, Sitharaman announced an increase in the personal income tax threshold below which taxpayers owe no tax to Rs 12 lakh, from Rs 7 lakh, as well as a rejig in tax brackets that would help those earning higher than that save up to Rs 1.1 lakh.

Moody's said that strong economic growth supports average household incomes and increasing demand as a result of consumers' increasing risk awareness and the steady digitalization of the Indian economy, which facilitates the distribution and sale of insurance products.

Indian insurers' total premium revenue rose 16 per cent to Rs 9.2 lakh crore in the first eight months of fiscal 2024-25, driven by a 21 per cent increase in health insurance and an 18 per cent increase in new

business written in the life sector. This marked an acceleration from fiscal 2023-24, when premiums were up 8 per cent year-on-year to Rs 11.2 lakh crore.

On fiscal consolidation, Moody's said the budget signalled a "slowing pace of fiscal consolidation as focus shifts to reinforcing growth".

The planned cuts to personal income tax rates will bolster middle-class spending power and consumption, which is credit positive for many corporates and the financial sector.

Cricket

With Champions Trophy in mind, Varun Chakravarthy added to Indian ODI squad

Nagpur
In-form mystery spinner Varun Chakravarthy has been included in the Indian ODI squad after his heroics in the just-concluded T20I series against England as the team management wants the KKR mystery spinner to "keep up the momentum".

There is a fair chance that Chakravarthy might just replace one of the four specialist spinners in the Champions Trophy squad. It could be one among Kuldeep Yadav or Washington Sundar, who could be axed to accommodate Chakravarthy before the final squad is announced. A lot will depend on how he fares in the ODIs. Chakravarthy, who got 14 wickets in five T20Is against England and was adjudged the 'Player of the Series', hasn't been picked for the three ODIs against England and the Champions Trophy later this month.

Chakravarthy was seen training and bowling in the nets on Tuesday. "Yes, Varun Chakravarthy is part of the squad," India vice-captain Shubman Gill confirmed in a media interaction after the team's training.

It is understood that head coach Gautam Gambhir wants Chakravarthy to remain in rhythm and bowl to the likes of Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, and Rishabh Pant.

With the deadline for squad changes



for the Champions Trophy set for February 12, he remains a strong candidate for selection. However, it is unlikely that he will be added to the CT squad without playing a single ODI.

India have got three finger spinners — two left-armers (Ravindra Jadeja and Axar Patel) and one right-arm off-spinner in Washington Sundar. Kuldeep Yadav, who is returning to the Indian team after undergoing a sports hernia surgery in October 2024, is the lone wrist spinner in the squad.

"As of now, the team management

wanted Varun to bowl in ODI squad nets ahead of England series. Varun doesn't play red-ball cricket," a senior BCCI source said on conditions of anonymity.

"With domestic white ball season already concluded, he doesn't have any assignments till start of IPL end March. He is in good rhythm and they want him to continue that," he added.

When asked if there is a possibility of him being selected for the ODI series and subsequent Champions Tro-

phy based on current form, the source replied: "The selectors have already picked four spinners and you only have three ODI games."

"But if team management wants Varun, it will certainly have to speak to the chairman of selection committee. Whether they intend to or not, it still not known." The Men in Blue don't have a second wrist spinner and Chakravarthy's strong form could work in his favour.

When he last played on the flatter tracks in Dubai during the 2021 T20 World Cup, Chakravarthy struggled to make an impact.

However, he has significantly improved since then, focusing more on over-spin to refine his variations.

The English team has not read him well and in Champions Trophy, one of the opposition is Bangladesh, which was bamboozled by him in October during the T20I series. He could also be an unknown entity for most of the New Zealand and Pakistan teams.

Additionally, he has performed consistently on batting-friendly surfaces in the recent T20I series against England, finishing as the leading wicket-taker at an impressive average of 9.85. India are set to play all their league matches in Dubai.

Chakravarthy picked up 18 wickets for Tamil Nadu in the National One Day Championship.

Australia's Khawaja backs dumped journalist over Gaza stance

Melbourne
Australia batsman Usman Khawaja has condemned a radio station's decision to drop cricket journalist Peter Lalor from its coverage of the Sri Lanka test series over social media posts related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Australian radio station SEN confirmed on Tuesday it had parted ways with Lalor, the former chief cricket writer of The Australian newspaper, after dialogue with him about some of the commentary on his social media.

Lalor's feed on X includes re-posts of news stories about Israeli attacks in Gaza and accusations of genocide levelled at the Israeli government.

Pakistan-born Khawaja, who has been vocal in his support for Palestinians, wrote on Instagram that Lalor "deserved better".

"Standing up for the people of Gaza is not antisemitic nor does it have anything to do with my Jewish brothers and sisters in Australia, but everything to do with the Israeli government and their deplorable actions," Khawaja said.

"It has everything to do with justice and human rights. Unfortunately hatred towards the Jewish and Muslim community will always exist."

Australia has been grappling with a series of antisemitic attacks on syna-



gogues, buildings and cars since the beginning of the Israel-Gaza war in late-2023.

Lalor, who was working as a freelance commentator for SEN, said he was told by the station's management that there were accusations he was antisemitic, which he objected to.

"I was told my retweeting was not balanced, and insensitive to one side and that many people had complained," he said in a statement to subscribers on his Cricket at AI substack.

SEN station boss Craig Hutchison said he and Lalor had a different view of the impact of the commentary on his social media.

"We respect Pete as a journalist and long-time contributor to the game but also acknowledge the fear that many families in our community feel right now, and we also need to respect that," Hutchison told the Sydney Morning Herald.

Concussion substitution in 4th T20I not correct: KP



Mumbai

Former England captain Kevin Pietersen on Tuesday termed Varun Chakravarthy's inclusion in the Indian squad for three ODIs against England as "a great decision" but backed the visitors to fare better against the right-arm spinner in the longer version.

Chakravarthy was all over England in the five-T20I series taking 14 wickets in India's 4-1 series win, following which he has been added to the ODI side with the series starting in Nagpur on Thursday.

"The English batters would be better against him in the one-dayers because they can spend more time. It's a longer format, not every ball is an event. But I think it is a great decision (to add Chakravarthy)," Pietersen told media on the sidelines of an event in Mumbai on Tuesday.

Pietersen termed England's loss in T20Is as a "disaster", adding that the series would have been levelled in Pune if a like-for-like concussion substitution for Shivam Dube had been used instead of tearaway quick Harshit Rana.

"It was a disappointing series from England's perspective. I think that in the fourth T20I, if the concussion substitution had been done correctly, maybe England would have got there," he said.

"It would have been 2-2 coming to the Wankhede (Stadium for final T20I). It would have been way more on the game. But it didn't happen."

Pietersen said India great Yuvraj Singh is "rubbing off" now on Abhishek Sharma who played the "best T20I innings I've ever seen".

"Abhishek is amazing. He had the shades (of Yuvraj)... Obviously, Yuvraj is rubbing off now on Abhishek. His batting was fantastic. It was the best T20 international innings. I've ever seen and I said that to him afterwards," Pietersen said.

"It was effortless. The stroke play was great, there was no funky shots, no ramping, no sweeping, reverse sweeping. It was just perfection," the former England captain wouldn't stop gushing about the Punjab southpaw's hitting ability.

Varun Chakravarthy bowls during Indian ODI team's net session

Nagpur
In-form mystery spinner Varun Chakravarthy has linked up with the Indian ODI squad after his heroics in the just-concluded T20I series against England as the team management wants the KKR mystery spinner to "keep up the momentum".

Chakravarthy, who got 14 wickets in five T20Is against England and was adjudged the 'Player of the Series', hasn't been picked for the three ODIs against England and the Champions Trophy later this month.

Chakravarthy was seen training and bowling in the nets on Tuesday. "Yes, Varun Chakravarthy is part of the squad," India vice-captain Shubman Gill said in a media interaction after the team's training.

It is understood that head coach Gautam Gambhir wants Chakravarthy to remain in rhythm and bowl to the likes of Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, and Rishabh Pant.

With the deadline for squad changes for the Champions Trophy set for February 12, he remains a strong candidate for selection. However, it is unlikely that he will be added to the CT squad without playing a single ODI.

India have got three finger spinners — two left-armers (Ravindra Jadeja and Axar Patel) and one right-arm off-spinner in Washington Sundar. Kuldeep Yadav, who is returning to the Indian team after undergoing a sports hernia surgery in October 2024, is the lone wrist spinner in the squad.

"As of now, the team management wanted Varun to bowl in ODI squad nets ahead of England series. Varun doesn't play red-ball cricket," a senior BCCI source said on conditions of

anonymity. "With domestic white ball season already concluded, he doesn't have any assignments till start of IPL end March. He is in good rhythm and they want him to continue that," he added.

When asked if there is a possibility of him being selected for the ODI series and subsequent Champions Trophy based on current form, the source replied: "The selectors have already picked four spinners and you only have three ODI games."

"But if team management wants Varun, it will certainly have to speak to the chairman of selection committee. Whether they intend to or not, it still not known." The Men in Blue don't have a second wrist spinner and Chakravarthy's strong form could work in his favour.

When he last played on the flatter tracks in Dubai during the 2021 T20 World Cup, Chakravarthy struggled to make an impact.

However, he has significantly improved since then, focusing more on over-spin to refine his variations.

The English team has not read him well and in Champions Trophy, one of the opposition is Bangladesh, which was bamboozled by him in October during the T20I series. He could also be an unknown entity for most of the New Zealand and Pakistan teams.

Additionally, he has performed consistently on batting-friendly surfaces in the recent T20I series against England, finishing as the leading wicket-taker at an impressive average of 9.85. India are set to play all their league matches in Dubai.

Chakravarthy picked up 18 wickets for Tamil Nadu in the National One Day Championship.

Virat and Rohit's form will be key to India's success in Champions Trophy, says Raina

New Delhi
They may have struggled in recent times but the form of skipper Rohit Sharma and his longtime colleague Virat Kohli will be key to India's success in the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy, reckoned former batter Suresh Raina on Tuesday.

The Champions Trophy starts in Pakistan from February 19 and will conclude on March 9 but India will play all their matches in Dubai as per the hybrid model agreement signed by the concerned parties.

Speaking to broadcaster Star Sports, Raina said, "Rohit Sharma's strike rate has improved significantly after the ODI World Cup in 2022. Since then, he has scored runs at a strike rate of 119-120, making him one of India's best ODI batsmen."

"For Rohit and Virat, I would say that when you have a strong record of past performances, it gives you a lot of confidence. They complement each other well, and both have the skill to score big runs. If they perform well, India's Champions Trophy campaign will benefit immensely."

India have been clubbed with arch-rivals Pakistan, New Zealand and Bangladesh in the group stage of the tournament.

Speaking about the spin department and team combination, Raina said, "I think (Ravindra) Jadeja will definitely play because of his effectiveness in ODIs. Kuldeep (Yadav) has not played a match since his injury, but we also have Axar Patel, who has been consistently performing well."

"The pitches in Dubai will offer some seam movement, but spin will also play a role. That's why Kuldeep, Axar, and Jadeja need to be in top form. Rohit's choice of team combi-



nation will be crucial." Before the Champions Trophy, India are also playing a three-match ODI series at home against England, and Raina believed it will help the likes of Kohli and Rohit to get some valuable game time before the mega event.

"When it comes to white-ball cricket, Virat knows how to switch on and switch off. He has scored the most runs against England, so his energy will be at a different level automatically. The three ODIs will be played in Nagpur, Ahmedabad, and Cuttack — all of which are high-scoring venues," Raina said of Kohli, who has struggled for runs in the Test series in Australia.

Sharing his thoughts on the upcoming series, Raina said Rohit should continue to go after the bowlers from the get-go as it has also brought him success in the last ODI World Cup in 2023.

Speaking on his expectations from Rohit, Raina said, "I think Rohit should play aggressively. You saw how he batted in the ODI World Cup — he was attacking even in the final. So, I believe his approach will remain the same."

"The key question is who will open alongside him — will it be Shubman (Gill)? I remember, whenever they play together, they maintain an aggressive intent." Raina also lauded Rohit's captaincy.

"Rohit Sharma is an attacking captain. The way he utilises his bowlers is commendable — bringing in Mohammad Shami at crucial moments and relying on spinners strategically."

"When Rohit scores runs, it also reflects in his captaincy. This could be his last ICC trophy as captain, and if he wins, he will become the first Indian player to win four ICC trophies."

"He has already won the T20 World Cup, and securing the Champions Trophy would be a remarkable achievement. He will be motivated to make it happen, but scoring runs will be crucial for him."

From 'rough trot' to top dog: Head crowned Australia's MVP

Melbourne
Four years after being dumped from the Australian team during a bleak period with the bat, Travis Head has risen to the top of the heap as a devastating power hitter in all three formats.

The popular lefthander was awarded the Allan Border Medal late on Monday as Australia's top men's cricketer in 2024, crushing second-placed pacesman Josh Hazlewood in the voting.

The 31-year-old scored 1,427 runs in the three formats in the 12-month polling period starting with the drawn test series against West Indies last January and ending with the recent 3-1 home series win over India.

Unable to attend the Australian Cricket Awards in Melbourne while on the test squad's tour of Sri Lanka, the no-frills South Australian accepted the medal from coach Andrew McDonald wearing a team polo shirt and



shorts.

The low-key ceremony was fitting for a player who often seems a throwback to the 20th century when great Australian players wore moustaches and guzzled post-match beers.

Head has come to make the game

look easy wherever thrown in the batting order, mixing middle order India in back-to-back tests against

India with fast runs as a white-ball opener.

His stocks as a part-time offspinner have also risen; he contributed a couple

of key wickets during the India series.

A few years ago, though, Head's career was at a cross-roads when he was dropped during the 2020-21 home summer and went to English county team Sussex looking for runs.

"I had a pretty rough trot at it, went to Sussex, didn't get that consistency that I was after, tried to play a certain way, didn't work," he told Australian media in Sri Lanka.

Head averaged 18.30 with the bat during his Sussex stint and returned home thinking he had to "pull (his) finger out" to get back into the test team in time for the Ashes.

He said he made a conscious choice to go all-out as an attacking batter in tests, having had mixed results when quashing his natural instincts.

The approach worked as he earned a recall for the 2021-22 Ashes and smashed a match-winning 152 off 148

balls in the series-opener at the Gabba.

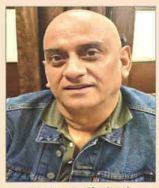
It set the tone for Australia's rollicking 4-0 win over England, with Head finishing top of the runs-list with 357 from six innings.

Now an automatic selection for Australia in all formats and a team leader, Head is spoken of as a possible future captain.

Pat Cummins leads the test and ODI teams, while all-rounder Mitchell Marsh is the T20 captain.

Head, who was also named Australia's best player in ODIs at Monday's awards night, said he was happy to "step in" as captain when called upon but was not eyeing the role permanently. "I probably don't see it as a long-term thing," he added. "Me and Pat (Cummins) are the same age, Pat's doing a wonderful job."

PM Modi's Address: A Decade of Governance, Progress, Challenges



By Dr. Anil Singh

On February 4, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Lok Sabha, responding to the Motion of Thanks on President Droupadi Murmu's address. His speech encompassed reflections on India's developmental trajectory, particularly in the education and health sectors, counter-arguments to opposition allegations concerning Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST), insights into India's foreign policy, a sharp critique of corruption under previous governments, and a strong assertion on the sanctity of the Indian Constitution.

Development Vision: A Decade of Progress

Prime Minister Modi emphasized the transformative changes India has witnessed over the past decade under his administration. He highlighted that approximately 25 crore (250 million) people have been lifted out of poverty during this period, attributing this achievement to the government's targeted welfare schemes and economic reforms.

In a critique of previous administrations, Modi remarked on the inefficiency of longstanding slogans like "Garibi Hatao" (Eradicate Poverty), suggesting that while such slogans resonated for decades, tangible outcomes were lacking. He asserted that his government has de-

veloped genuine development, focusing on actionable initiatives rather than mere rhetoric.

Corruption: A Systematic Loot by Previous Governments

A significant portion of Modi's speech was dedicated to attacking corruption under previous governments, particularly during Congress rule. He accused the opposition of systematically looting the country for decades and highlighted how scams such as 2G spectrum, coal block allocation, and Commonwealth Games had eroded public trust in governance.

"Those who ruled the country for decades treated corruption as their right. They built an ecosystem where power meant personal gain, and the national interest was always secondary. The people of India have rejected this model, and our government has taken stringent action to root out corruption at all levels," he said.

Modi underscored how his administration had eliminated leakages in welfare schemes through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) and promoted transparency through digitization. He claimed that initiatives like the Jan Dhan Yojana and Aadhaar-based verification had prevented billions from being siphoned off by middlemen.

However, the opposition countered, arguing that while the Modi government claims to be tough on corruption, agencies such as the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) have been selectively targeting opposition leaders while ignoring corruption within the ruling party.

Education Sector: Initiatives and Investments

While the Modi government claims to be tough on corruption, agencies such as the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) have been selectively targeting opposition leaders while ignoring corruption within the ruling party.



While the Prime Minister's speech did not delve deeply into specific educational policies, the past decade has seen significant initiatives aimed at overhauling India's education system. The introduction of the National Education Policy (NEP) aimed to make education more holistic, flexible, and aligned with the needs of the 21st century. Emphasis has been placed on vocational training, digital literacy, and research and development.

However, critics argue that challenges persist, including disparities in educational access between urban and rural areas, quality of education, and the need for substantial investment in teacher training. The effectiveness of these reforms in bridging socio-economic divides remains a topic of debate.

Health Sector: Achievements and Challenges

In the health sector, the Modi government launched the Ayushman Bharat scheme, touted as the world's largest health assurance program, aiming to provide coverage to over 50 crore (500 million) citizens. The initiative focuses on two components: Health and Wellness Centers (HWCs) and the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY), which provides financial protection for secondary and tertiary

This defense underscores the administration's stance on social equity. However, critics point to ongoing issues such as caste-based discrimina-

tion and violence, arguing that systemic challenges remain unaddressed. The effectiveness of government policies in ensuring social justice and equity continues to be a subject of scrutiny.

The Constitution: A Guarantee for Every Citizen

Prime Minister Modi also spoke at length about the Indian Constitution, emphasizing its role in safeguarding the rights of every citizen. In a veiled attack on the opposition, he accused several political parties of selectively interpreting the Constitution for their own benefit while disregarding its true spirit.

"For some, the Constitution is just a tool to grab power. But for us, it is the guiding principle for empowering every Indian, irrespective of caste, creed, or class. It is our duty to uphold the Constitution in letter and spirit, not just in slogans," he asserted.

He reiterated that his government has worked to ensure that constitutional rights are accessible to all, not just the privileged political class. Modi's remarks seemed aimed at countering opposition claims that the ruling party is undermining democratic institutions.

Foreign Policy: Navigating Global Dynamics

While the Prime Minister's speech did not extensively cover foreign policy, his tenure has been marked by efforts to enhance India's global standing. Initiatives such as the Act East policy, deeper engagements with neighboring countries, and strategic partnerships with major powers have been pivotal.

However, challenges persist, including managing complex relationships with neighboring countries like China and Pakistan, navigating global trade dynamics, and ad-

ressing criticisms related to human rights. The government's foreign policy approach aims to balance national interests with global responsibilities, striving for a prominent role on the world stage.

A Way Forward

Prime Minister Modi's address in Parliament reflects his administration's narrative of a transformative decade for India, emphasizing economic upliftment, social inclusion, and a crackdown on corruption. While significant achievements have been made, critical analysis reveals areas where challenges persist, particularly in ensuring equitable access to quality education and healthcare, addressing systemic social issues, and navigating complex foreign policy landscapes.

The discourse underscores the need for continued efforts to translate policy initiatives into tangible outcomes for all sections of society. The Prime Minister's speech not only reaffirmed his government's developmental agenda but also set the tone for the forthcoming electoral discourse. With a strong emphasis on economic growth, social inclusivity, corruption-free governance, and constitutional fidelity, Modi positioned his leadership as a driver of India's progress.

However, the opposition's concerns over caste-based inequalities, selective anti-corruption measures, educational disparities, and foreign policy challenges indicate that the government's achievements will continue to be debated in the public and political spheres. As India approaches the next phase of its democratic journey, the key question remains: how effectively can these policies be translated into long-term, sustainable development for all citizens?

(The writer is an Editor, Star View)

Breaking Time Sudoku

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.

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

Solution, Sudoku

4	1	2	5	6	7	3	8	9
8	6	3	9	4	2	7	5	1
5	7	9	1	8	3	4	6	2
1	9	4	6	3	5	2	7	8
6	2	7	4	9	8	1	3	5
3	8	5	2	7	1	9	4	6
9	5	8	7	2	4	6	1	3
2	4	1	3	5	6	8	9	7
7	3	6	8	1	9	5	2	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 enemy 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 to stay the same, 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 your some style.



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

'Nipun Bharat' moving towards better understanding of language and reading



By Priyanka Saurabh

The Ministry of Education launched the Nipun Bharat Programme 2021, a national initiative for proficiency in reading with comprehension and arithmetic to ensure that every child in the country acquires basic literacy and arithmetic comprehension by the end of Grade 3 by 2026-2027. The Nipun Bharat Mission has been launched under the aegis of the centrally sponsored Samagra Shiksha Yojana; it will focus on providing access and retaining students in the basic years of schooling, building teacher capacity, tracking each child's progress towards learning outcomes, and developing high-quality and diverse student and teacher resources/learning materials. The recent Annual Status of Education Report provides a ray of hope by revealing significant improvement in basic learning outcomes, especially in Grade III. This development is partly due to the Government of India's concerted efforts to improve educational quality, in which the Nipun Bharat is playing a key role.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 established the framework for promoting foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN). It emphasized early childhood



education as a critical component of holistic educational development. Nipun Bharat Mission: A Game Changer The National Initiative for Reading, Comprehension, and Numeracy (NIPUNA) Bharat, launched in 2021, is a mission of the Ministry of Education. Nipun Bharat aims to improve the reading, writing and arithmetic skills of children aged 3 to 9 years. The components of Nipun Bharat are Improve your oral language listening comprehension, vocabulary, and conversational abilities. Learn to read written words by learning the relationship between symbols and sounds. Learn basic numeracy to use simple math ideas to solve everyday situations. Plans for Nipun Bharat implementation are made by the state and union territory administrations.

to 34%) and subtraction skills (29% to 41%).

Young readers like Shragitika Ghosh are examples of how the adoption of vibrant and relevant workbooks has improved literacy outcomes in Odisha. Mathematics is taught through songs by primary school teacher Ravi Sharma. As they learn numbers, they chant the slogan, "Eko thaaga lo, teen-char chalo bazaar." Shragitika Ghosh, a second grader, can now read Odia books with confidence. Colorful and relevant workbooks enhance core literacy. Nipun is essential, but it has some difficulties. After initial academic progress, many children struggle in later classes. Marginalized children often enter school lacking basic competencies. Nipun Bharat took four years to deliver results. Its impact will be greater if it is extended to 2030. It is important to invest in early childhood education (ECE) and provide learning support to classes III-V.

As they move on to more complex ideas, many children still struggle with basic education. Lack of early preparation creates additional barriers for marginalized communities. As the four-year journey of Nipun Bharat shows, systemic change requires

sustained efforts. To have a more profound and lasting impact, Nipun Bharat 2.0 is being expanded to grades III-V to bridge the knowledge gap between higher-order and basic skills, improve preschool instruction, and prioritize early childhood education to increase student readiness for primary school. The results demonstrate that progress is possible with the right resources and policies. The goal of expanding Nipun Bharat is to transform lives, not just increase numbers. India has a chance to guarantee high-quality education for all children and set a worldwide standard in basic education by committing immediately to Nipun Bharat 2.0.

The Nipun Bharat program has resulted in a remarkable improvement in the language, writing, learning, and reading skills of each child. It aims to teach National Initiative Proficiency in Comprehension and Numeracy to Class 3 primary school children.

(Priyanka Saurabh, Research Scholar in Political Science Poetess, Independent journalist and columnist)

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Anmol wins women's singles gold, Satish Kumar claims men's singles, mixed doubles titles

Dehradun
Anmol Kharb, an 18-year-old badminton player, made it to the headlines after defeating top seed Anupama Upadhyaya in the 38th National Games. The tournament has been going on since 28 January in Utrakkhand, and she has been playing tremendously since the first match. She has previously won the Belgian International and the Asia Team Championships in 2024.

On 4 February, she won the gold medal in women's singles after beating the top seed by 21-16, 22-20 in a match against Anupama, who is a BWF World Junior Number 1 and Indian National Badminton Champion 2023. Unnati Hooda also clinched the gold medal playing against team Utrakkhand.



Tamil Nadu players Satish Kumar and Aadya Variyath won against the Maharashtra team with a score of 21-11, 20-22, 21-8 to win the top spot.

Nithin HV and Prakash Raj S defeated Karnataka's Vaibhav and Ashith Surya in men's doubles, by 21-16, 21-14 to win the gold medal. Later in the day, top seed Satish Kumar Karunakaran of Chennai will face Utrakkhand's 16-year-old local hope Suryaksh Rawat in the men's singles final.

After the Victory Fans React on the X: Anmol Kharb defeated Anupama Upadhyaya 21-16, 22-20 to win the Gold Medal at the 38th National Games.

Anmol Kharb claimed the women's singles gold medal in the 38th National Games. She overcame after a minor injury clinched the team gold & now smashed her opponent in the finals for the Individual gold for Haryana.

Tottenham defender Radu Dragusin to have surgery on injured ACL

London
Radu Dragusin faces a lengthy absence after Tottenham announced his anterior cruciate ligament injury. The injury occurred during Spurs' Europa League match against Elfsborg last week. Dragusin had been one of the few available defenders for Ange Postecoglou, especially with Cristian Romero and Micky van de Ven also sidelined. Unfortunately, Dragusin will be out for the remainder of the season. To strengthen their defence, Spurs have brought in Kevin Danso on loan from Lens in Ligue 1. Meanwhile, Micky van de Ven has made his return to the field. These moves aim to fill the gap left by Dragusin's injury and ensure defensive stability.



Dragusin closely after his surgery. They aim to determine when he might resume training. The team and fans are rallying behind him during this challenging period.

Tottenham is set to face Liverpool at Anfield in the EFL Cup semi-finals on Thursday. They hold a narrow 1-0 lead from the first leg, which they hope to maintain or extend to secure a spot in the finals. The club's medical team will monitor

Dr. Mallika Nadda inaugurated three-day Special Olympics in Agra



Akash Jain/ Rajesh Tomar
Agra
Special Olympics President Dr. Mallika Nadda here on Tuesday inaugurated National Handball Championship organized by Special Olympics India at JP Auditorium located in Khandari Campus.

During the inauguration she said 'Special Olympics India is becoming a powerful medium to establish the speciality and respect of abnormal people in the society of normal people.

An effort is emerging to lay the foundation of the structure of a prosperous and capable society along with sports talent development, she adds. Chief Guest Higher Education Minister Yogendra Upadhyay and Program President Dr. Mallika Nadda inaugurated the championship ceremony by hoisting the flag and lighting a lamp.

Welcome Chairman and Vice Chancellor of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar University Prof. Ashu Rani, State President of Special Olympics India Mukesh Shukla, Sports Director Ekta Jha, Special Child Harshit Choubey were also present. Athletes from 23 states will participate in the Handball Championship (women and men) to be held on 5th and 6th February at the campus of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar University located at Chhalasar.

In the national level handball championship organized for mentally challenged players, efforts will be made to enhance their confidence and skills.

Dr. Mallika Nadda said that three percent of the country's total population are mentally challenged people. There are about 75 lakh mentally challenged people in Uttar Pradesh alone. A large part of the society cannot remain cut off from the society. She said that for the last 35 years, efforts have been made by them to connect abnormal people with the mainstream of normal society. Special Olympics India is becoming the most powerful medium for this. She said that competitions will soon be organized in the state through Khelo India.

She said that a team of 49 special players is going from India to the World Winter Games to be held in Italy, in which three special players are from Uttar Pradesh. The aim of Special Olympics India is to ensure that special people get respect in life and place in society.

Chief guest Higher Education Minister Yogendra Upadhyay called the event divine. He said that he was stunned to see the extraordinary talents. The venue of the opening ceremony echoed with thunderous applause when more than 300 special athletes represented their respective states by marching past with the NCC cadets and handed over the Olympic torch to the program chairperson.

State President of Special Olympics India Mukesh Shukla said that Special Olympics India is a national sports federation, which is registered in 2001 under the Indian Trust Act 1882.

Chiefs and Eagles handle the Super Bowl opening night spectacle like they've been here

New Orleans
Patrick Mahomes treated Super Bowl opening night like a two-minute drill, providing rapid-fire answers to one question after another. Travis Kelce passed on an inquiry about popping the question to Taylor Swift.

Been here, done that. That's how the Kansas City Chiefs handled the annual extravaganza that kicks off Super Bowl week.

The Philadelphia Eagles were here two years ago so they weren't fazed by the silliness either, though their most dynamic player is new to the wild experience that could overwhelm teams that aren't used to the circus atmosphere.

Saquon Barkley got his first taste of this made-for-television spectacle. Nick Sirianni received letters, and a kiss from Chad Johnson. Jan Hurts even cracked a smile or two.

Before Mahomes, Kelce and the Chiefs take on Hurts, Barkley and the Eagles in the Super Bowl on Sunday, they had to tackle the media in waves. Barkley wasn't here two years ago when the Eagles lost to the Chiefs 38-35. He left the rival New York Giants to join a winning team and did his part with a historic season.

"That's why me and my family made the decision to come to Philadelphia, to have an opportunity to play in the Super Bowl. And here we are," Barkley said.

The Chiefs have been here five times in the past six years so they're used to the strange questions and odd requests that have become far too common on opening night.

Mahomes picked NBA players for a mock football team, choosing Russell Westbrook at quarterback and Anthony Edwards at wide receiver. He even asked the media for restaurant recommendations.

Kelce talked up Swift's pop parts and said he hopes to match her energy on stage when he's on the field. But asked if he plans to propose to his Grammy-winning superstar girlfriend, Kelce



pullled a Drew Rosenhaus: "Super Bowl Ring! Next question."

Players were asked their favorite foods, colors, Kendrick Lamar songs and more. A Mexican television reporter gave Sirianni a stack of letters from fans. He also got a kiss on the head from Johnson, the former Bengals star also known as Ochocinco. The usually stoic Hurts cracked a laughing when someone tossed him a cookie — it was an errant throw. Browns quarterback Jameis Winston, working for a television network, fired questions at Darius Slay before telling him to eat a "PW."

The Eagles went first, spending an hour talking to thousands of reporters from across the globe inside the Superdome. The Chiefs came later and received a loud ovation.

Media day has evolved from a daytime event on Tuesdays to a live, ticketed, prime-time showcase on national television. More than 6,000 media members from 26 countries were accredited to cover the Super Bowl last year in Las Vegas.

Yes, this is where a female reporter showed up in a wedding dress and veil and proposed to Tom Brady in the locker room in 2008. He politely declined.

Football's Xs and Os take a back seat for the first night. The Big Easy is hosting its 11th big game and first since the Baltimore

Ravens beat the San Francisco 49ers in the Harbaugh Brothers Bowl in February 2013.

The Chiefs are chasing history, aiming to become the first NFL team to three-peat in the Super Bowl era. The Eagles are seeking the franchise's second Vince Lombardi trophy.

"We're obsessed with winning," owner Jeffrey Lurie said.

Both teams arrived Sunday and every player and coach was available to the media for one hour on Monday night. A select group of players, including head coaches and quarterbacks, also had media sessions on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Due to the hectic schedule, most of the preparation was completed last week. Game plans were installed and both teams held normal practices because this week won't be routine.

One person who'll be under the microscope this week is Eagles offensive coordinator Kellen Moore, who is a frontrunner to become the head coach of the Saints. Moore can't accept the job until after the Super Bowl but he has to be preparing to assemble a coaching staff while focusing on the task at hand.

Staying focused will be a priority for everyone on both teams. Avoiding distractions, especially the first night, could set the tone for winning it all Sunday.

Cooper Kupp says the Rams intend to trade him

Los Angeles
Receiver Cooper Kupp says the Los Angeles Rams are attempting to trade him after eight seasons with the club, and he doesn't like the decision.

The Super Bowl 56 MVP made the announcement on social media Monday, saying the Rams told him they "will be seeking a trade immediately and will be working with me and my family to find the right place to continue competing for championships." The 2021 AP NFL Offensive Player of the Year essentially bade farewell to the city where he has spent his entire career.

"I don't agree with the decision and always believed it was going to begin and end in LA," Kupp wrote. "Still, if there's one thing that I have learned over the years: there are so many things that are out of your control, but it is how you respond to these things that you will look back on and remember."

Kupp's future with the Rams was an obvious question mark because he is signed for the next two seasons as part of the three-year, \$80.1 million contract extension he got after having one of the greatest seasons by a receiver in NFL history in 2021-22. He would have been up nearly \$30 million in cap space next season, but the Rams could clear a large chunk of that by releasing or trading him with a post-June 1 designation.

"Preparations start now for 2025," Kupp wrote. "Highly motivated, as healthy as ever, and looking forward to playing elite football for years to come. Love you guys... But coming for it all."

The Rams took calls on Kupp's availability in October after they started the season 1-4, but they decided to keep him. Los Angeles' front office is not sentimental about its stars: General manager Les Snead traded or released Jared Goff, Todd Gurley and Robert Woods in recent years before their own massive contract extensions had even kicked in.

The Rams declined to comment on Kupp's social media post.

Kupp usually has been a prolific receiver whenever healthy for the Rams, who drafted him in the third round out of Eastern Washington a few months after hiring Sean McVay as his head coach. Kupp has been a centerpiece of McVay's offensive game plans throughout his career, catching 634 passes for 7,776 yards and 57 touchdowns.

"I have taken so much pride in playing alongside my teammates for the LA community, so thank you for embracing my family and making this such a special place for us," Kupp wrote.

Kupp won the triple crown of receiving three seasons ago by leading the league in catches (145), yards receiving (1,947) and TD catches (16). In the playoffs, he capped another dominant stretch by winning the Super Bowl MVP award and scoring the eventual winning touchdown late in Los Angeles' victory over the Cincinnati Bengals. But Kupp's production tailed off in the past three seasons and he had a rough finish this season after he missed four early games with an ankle injury. He struggled to get the ball down the stretch for the Rams, making just 12 catches for 162 yards in the final five games of the regular season during the least productive stretch of his career.

Cleveland Browns star Myles Garrett requests to be traded so he can have chance at Super Bowl

CLEVELAND
Star defensive end Myles Garrett has requested a trade from the Cleveland Browns for two more seasons under a five-year, \$125 million extension he signed in 2020.

The Browns finished last in the AFC North with a 3-14 record and general manager Andrew Berry had said last week he would not trade Garrett in the offseason, saying he anticipated Garrett going directly from the Browns to the Pro Football Hall of Fame. A Browns spokesman said Monday the team is not entertaining trade offers for Garrett.

Garrett is under contract with the Browns for two more seasons under a five-year, \$125 million extension he signed in 2020.

"As a kid dreaming of the NFL, all I focused on was the ultimate goal of winning a Super Bowl — and that goal fuels me today more than ever," Garrett said in his statement. "My love for the community of Northeast Ohio and the incredible fanbase of the Cleveland Browns has made this one of the toughest decisions of my life.



These past eight years have shaped me into the man that I am today.

"While I've loved calling this city my home, my desire to win and compete on the biggest stages won't allow me to be complacent. The goal was never to go from Cleveland to Canton, it has always been to compete for and win a Super Bowl. With that in mind, I have requested to be traded from the Cleveland Browns."

Garrett, The Associated Press NFL

defensive player of the year last season, is a finalist for the award again. His 14 sacks ranked second in the league, and he became the first player in NFL history to record 14 or more in four consecutive seasons. He holds the franchise record with 102.5 career sacks. During preparations for the Senior Bowl in Mobile, Alabama, last week, Berry told reporters he would not trade Garrett even if a team were to offer two first-round draft picks.

Will you resign? Carlsen accuses FIDE chief of coercion, broken promises

New Delhi
World number one Magnus Carlsen has demanded that International Chess Federation President Arkady Dvorkovitch resign for "coercion of players, misuse of power and broken promises" after talks to thrash out an agreement between the world body and the Freestyle Tour co-founded by him collapsed.

The 34-year-old Norwegian superstar was reacting to FIDE's statement on Monday in which it declared that efforts to work out a consensus with the Freestyle Chess Tour, co-founded by Carlsen and German entrepreneur Jan Henric Buettner, had failed over the use of the term world championship.

FIDE also asked players wanting to participate in the Tour's events to sign a waiver to remain eligible for the official World Championship cycle.

The Freestyle Tour reacted by lambasting FIDE but at the same time, agreed to postpone the use of term world championship for its grand finale this year. The decision means that players will not be required to sign a FIDE waiver anymore.

Sharing a few personal messages

from Dvorkovitch, Carlsen said the Russian had promised to leave players out of this tug of war in a text to his father before the world rapid and blitz championship in New York last month. "I tried to convince me to play the Rapid & Blitz in New York, you wrote Dec 19th to my 'Just want to pass a message to you and Magnus that whatever happens between FIDE and Freestyle in terms of recognition, players will NOT be affected in any way. They can decide on their own and FIDE will not take any negative action,'" Carlsen revealed.

"You added later that day: 'I will step down if my word will be undermined by the Council.' By forcing players to sign an unacceptable waiver you have reneged on your promise. Will you resign?" Carlsen asked.

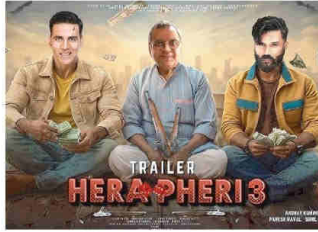
Neither FIDE nor Dvorkovitch did not immediately respond to Carlsen's sharp statement.

The first leg of the five-round Freestyle Tour, featuring classical games, starts February 6 in Germany. Tournaments will then be planned in Paris (April), New York (July), New Delhi (September) and Cape Town (December).

Hera Pheri 3' cast would be incomplete without me, says Tabu

New Delhi Actor Tabu, one of the original stars of Priyadarshan's superhit 2000 comedy 'Hera Pheri', has teased fans on social media about her possibility of joining the cast of the film's potential third part.

Her comments come days after her 'Hera Pheri' co-star Akshay Kumar shared a birthday post on Instagram for Priyadarshan, following which the filmmaker said he was 'willing to do 'Hera Pheri 3.' 'Hera Pheri' revolves around a quirky, kind-hearted garage owner Baburao Ganpatrao Apte (Paresh Rawal), a cunning loafer Raju (Kumar) and a struggling pauper

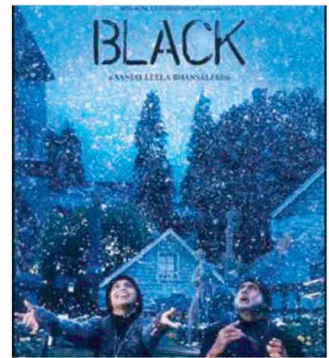


Shyam (Suniel Shetty) with Tabu as Anuradha, who has a hidden agenda. The trio — sans Tabu — returned for the 2006 sequel 'Phir Hera Pheri', directed by Neeraj Vora. On Monday night, Tabu re-shared Kumar's birthday post for Priyadarshan

Rawal are currently shooting for Priyadarshan's upcoming horror-comedy 'Bhooth Bangla', which is slated to be released on February 2, 2026.

Tabu was last seen in the Hindi series 'Dune: Prophecy'.

On her Instagram Story: "Of course, the cast won't be complete without me @priyadarshan.official (sic)". The makers of the 'Hera Pheri' film franchise are yet to officially announce the third installment. Tabu, Kumar, and Paresh



Bhansali Productions marks 20 years of 'Black'

Mumbai Sanjay Leela Bhansali, the maestro of Indian cinema, gifted the world a timeless masterpiece with his 2005 film Black. Today, as the film completes 20 glorious years, it is a testament to Bhansali's unparalleled vision and storytelling.

As we celebrate Black, Bhansali Productions shared another gem from film; it's an emotional journey that transcends boundaries, exploring the profound relationship between a teacher, Debraj (played by the legendary Amitabh Bachchan), and his student, Michelle (portrayed by the brilliant Rani Mukerji). The film's poignant narrative, breathtaking visuals, and soul-stirring music left an indelible mark on audiences worldwide, earning critical acclaim and numerous accolades. Bhansali Productions shared a heartfelt post, saying, "A student who never gave up. A student who never stopped learning. An incredible journey of Michelle and Debraj, from darkness to the light! Here's to a film that is forever etched in our hearts, celebrating 20YearsOfBlack."

Ram Charan, Kiara Advani-starrer 'Game Changer' to stream on Prime Video

New Delhi 'Game Changer', starring Ram Charan and Kiara Advani, will start streaming on Prime Video from February 7, the platform announced on Tuesday.

The high-octane political actioner marks the Telugu cinema debut of director S Shankar, known for superhit Tamil titles such as 'Indian', 'Anjanyan', 'Sivaji: The Boss', 'Enthiran' and '2.0'. 'Game Changer', produced by Dil Raju under the banner of Sri Venkateswara Creations, released in theatres on January 10.

"Raa macha, buckle up the rules are about to CHANGE. #GameChangerOnPrime, Feb 7," Prime Video said on



its official X handle. According to the makers, "Game Changer" follows Ram Nandan (Charan), a principled IAS officer from Visakhapatnam who takes on the herculean task of uprooting the deep-seated corruption within the political system. Charan plays dual

roles as Ram Nandan and Appanna.

"Packed with high-stakes action, gripping drama, and a fierce battle between power and principle, the film explores one man's unshakable will to rewrite the rules," the streamer said in a press release.

The film also stars S J Suryah, Srikanth Anjali, Sunil, Jayaram, and Sanuthirani in pivotal roles. It will be available for streaming on Prime Video in Telugu, with dubs in Tamil and Kannada languages.



North vs South cinema debate great for clickbait, but there's no reality to it: Huma Qureshi

New Delhi Dismissing the ongoing North versus South cinema debate, actor Huma Qureshi says rather than engaging in these 'petty' divisions, the Indian film industry should unite to create its own versions of hit global franchises like 'Avatar', 'Squid Game' and 'Money Heist'. According to Qureshi, there is one film industry in India and anyone who has an understanding of creativity or market economics would recognise that it's advantageous for every artist across the country. "It is such a silly debate; we are one country. A Drishyam' is loved across the entire

country. We need to find storytellers from all over the nation. Today with the way the world is growing, our focus should be on what local, specific Indian stories we want to take globally. Like, where is the 'Squid Game' from India? Where is our 'Money Heist'? Why can't we make our version of 'Avatar'? "These are the questions that should be asked. The whole industry should come together to answer them, as opposed to being engaged in these petty, divided conversations about which industry is taking over. I feel it's a rubbish debate — great for clickbait, but there's no reality to it," the 'Maharani' star said on the sidelines of the recently concluded Kerala Literature Festival (KLF). Having worked in South Indian films herself, including two Tamil movies — Rajinikanth's "Kaala" (2018) and Ajith's "Valimai" (2022) — as well as the Malayalam romantic drama "White" (2016) with Mammooty, Qureshi said cross-pollination of artists from the north and south is not a new phenomenon. "I have been fortunate enough to have worked in the South and I hope to get more opportunities because you get to learn so much," she added. The 38-year-old, who made her debut as an author last year with the fantasy fiction novel "Zeba: An Accidental Superhero", said that writing a book was a "bit brave" on her part.

Priyanka Chopra's 'shaadi ka ghar' is all about love, family, fun; take a look

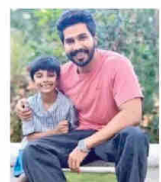
Mumbai Priyanka Chopra gave fans a sneak peek into her 'shaadi ka ghar' as the wedding celebration of her brother, Siddharth Chopra, is set to begin. Taking to her Instagram on Monday evening, the 'Barfi' actress shared a series of pictures where she can be seen enjoying dance rehearsals for her brother's saangeet ceremony. In one picture, PeeCee is seen sitting at the dining table with her mother-in-law, Denise Miller-Jonas, and father-in-law, Kevin Jonas Sr. Her daughter, Malti Marie Jonas, is also soaking in the celebrations. One picture shows her happily drawing

with other kids, while another shows her enjoying the beach outside their Mumbai residence. Along with the pictures, the actress added a caption that read, "Shaadi ka ghar!! And it begins tomorrow (red heart emoji) mere bhai ki shaadi hai (It's my brother's wedding) @siddharthchopra89 with @neelamupadhyaya!! Saangeet practice to fam jams. So good to be home."



Vishnu Vishal wraps shooting 'Aaryan'

New Delhi Tamil cinema actor Vishnu Vishal, who has completed filming for "Aaryan", has described the upcoming crime thriller as a "unique viewing experience" for the audience. "Aaryan" is directed by Praveen K and produced by Vishnu Vishal Studios. It also stars Selvaraghavan



Vishal, known for Tamil

films such as "Vennila Kabadi Kuzhu", "Kullanari Koottam", and "Ratsasan", shared the update on his Instagram handle on Monday. "I just have one promise to make today #Aaryan will be a unique viewing experience to all the audiences. Shoot wrapped! @vvsstudios @praveenkno9 @compa-

nyOffi @kvdurai @selvaraghavan @shraddhasrinath @samsmusic@harish_dop @sanlokes@silva_stunt @p.c.stunts.prabu @jeyubfa@vynod.sundar @prathool@sarathnivas @ssaravanan_7676@teammipro @ursvamsishekar@decoffil #APerfectCrimeStory," he wrote

in the caption. Vishal was last seen in 2024's "Lal Salaam", which was directed by Aishwarya Rajinikanth.