



RCB captain Patidar reflects on his "quiet, calm" captaincy style

Day after UN report, BNP expects India to repatriate former Bangladesh PM Hasina

CM Dhama stresses public participation, strict measures to tackle forest fire



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MARKET

SENSEX	NIFTY
76138.97	23031.40
-32.11	-13.85
GOLD	SILVER
85,771.00	95,260.00
-38.00	27.00

WEATHER

Sunrise	7:02 AM
Sunset	6:11 PM
Moonrise	6:58 PM
Moonset	8:01 AM
Today's Prediction	
Maximum	26°C
Minimum	11°C
Tomorrow's Prediction	
26°C	13°C

President's rule imposed in Manipur; assembly suspended

■ Assembly has been put under suspended animation; announcement comes four days after the resignation of Chief Minister N. Biren Singh.

New Delhi: President's rule was imposed in strife-torn Manipur on Thursday and the state assembly put under suspended animation, days after Chief Minister N Biren Singh resigned from his post that led to political uncertainty in the northeastern state.



The Manipur assembly, which has a tenure till 2027, has been put under suspended animation, according to a notification issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Singh, who was heading the Bharatiya Janata Party government in Manipur, resigned as chief minister after nearly 21 months of ethnic violence that has claimed over 250 lives so far.

He resigned on February 9 and submitted his resignation to Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla in Imphal, hours after his meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah here.

The decision to impose the central rule was taken after the governor

sent a report to President Droupadi Murmu.

"After considering the report and other information received by me, I am satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the government of that state cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of India," the notification said.

It further said, "Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by article 356 of the Constitution, and of all other

powers enabling me in that behalf, I hereby proclaim that I assume to myself as President of India all functions of the government of the state of Manipur and all powers vested in or exercisable by the Governor of that state."

The notification said powers of the legislature of the state shall be exercisable by or under the authority of Parliament. It also said any reference in the Constitution to the governor shall, in

relation to Manipur be construed as a reference to the President.

The decision to impose the President's rule by the BJP-led Centre came as the party failed to have a consensus chief ministerial candidate despite having several rounds of discussions between party's northeast in-charge Sambit Patra and party legislators.

Patra had met Bhalla a few days before Thursday's decision by the

central government that comes at a time when Prime Minister Narendra Modi is in the US.

The governor has already declared the seventh session of the 12th Manipur legislative assembly, which was set to commence on February 10, as null and void.

The last session of the assembly in the restive state concluded on August 12, 2024. Singh's tenure as chief minister was marked by a number of controversies, primarily centered on his handling of ethnic violence, allegations of instigating conflict, and questions regarding his governance.

Singh, who started as a footballer and then became a journalist before entering politics, served as the chief minister for two terms - 2017 and 2022. He represents the Heingang assembly constituency in Imphal East district.

In 2022, he managed to win the approval of his party to get a second term as chief minister.

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Trump posts 'reciprocal tariffs' ahead of Modi's meeting



Washington: US President Donald Trump said on Thursday that a news conference on reciprocal tariffs will be made later on Thursday.

In a post on Truth Social on Thursday, US President Trump wrote, "THREE GREAT WEEKS, PERHAPSTHE BEST EVER, BUT TODAY IS THE BIG ONE: RECIPROCAL TARIFFS!! MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!!!"

In a follow-up post he added, "NEWS CONFERENCE ON RECIPROCAL TARIFFS TODAY, 1:00 P.M., THE OVAL OFFICE. MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!!!"

Trump's announcement comes ahead of his meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi who reached the United States on Thursday on an official visit.

has said are unfair trade practices.

"Very simply, it's if they charge us, we charge them," Trump said Sunday, explaining why he intends to enact reciprocal tariffs, CNN reported. Speaking about reciprocal tariffs on Wednesday, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said, "This is something he believes strongly in, and it's very simple logic as to why the president wants to impose reciprocal tariffs."

Other nations have been "ripping off" the US, she said, "and that's why the president believes this will be a great policy that will benefit American workers and improve our national security," CNN reported.

Earlier, speaking to reporters aboard Air Force One en route to the NFL Super Bowl on Sunday, Trump said that the tariffs from Monday will impose a 25 per cent charge on all steel imports entering the United States, as well as a 25 per cent tariff on aluminium imports.

CONTD ON PAGE-2



(Had a very good meeting with @elonmusk in Washington DC. We discussed various issues, including those he is passionate about such as space, mobility, technology and innovation. I talked about India's efforts towards reform and furthering 'Minimum Government, Maximum Governance'.)

Opposition protests 'censoring' of JPC Waqf report

New Delhi: Amid uproar over the alleged redaction of certain portions of the dissent notes in the joint parliamentary committee report on the Waqf Amendment Bill, 2024, Bharatiya Janata Party MP Medha Vishram Kulkarni tabled a corrigendum in the Upper House on Thursday afternoon.

The corrigendum to Appendix 5 of the report was tabled in the post-lunch sitting in the Rajya Sabha by Kulkarni. She had tabled the report in the House in the morning. Chapter 5 of the Appendices of the report pertains to "Notes/minutes of dissent received from the Members of the Joint Committee", and contains the notes that were redacted in the earlier tabled report. As she tabled the corrigendum, an Opposition MP quipped that it



HIGHLIGHT

Report tabled in both Houses amid uproar; Shah says BJP has no objection to inclusion of dissent notes, and asks Speaker to decide

proved the House was misled by a minister earlier.

Earlier in the day Opposition MPs led by Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge had alleged that dissent notes were deleted from the report, a charge de-

nied by Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju.

"Thanking the government for the corrigendum, Chairman Jagdeep Dhanekar said, "This shows that parliamentary institutions are blossoming, sentiments are taken into consideration, steps are taken and this gives us another message, we must take recourse to law rather than engage in something which people cannot approve or is to their distaste." Agency

New Income Tax bill introduced in Lok Sabha

New Delhi: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday introduced the Income Tax Bill, 2025, in the Lok Sabha and urged Speaker Om Birla to refer it to a select committee of the House. Opposition members opposed the Bill at the introduction stage but the House passed a motion by voice vote for its introduction. While moving the Bill for introduction, Sitharaman urged Birla to refer the draft law to a



select committee of the House, which will submit its report by the first day of the next session. She urged the speaker to take a call on the proposed panel's composition and rules. The much-anticipated Bill will replace terminologies such as "assessment year" and "previous year"

HIGHLIGHT

The new I-T bill simplifies language, such as replacing 'assessment year' with 'tax year'. It will also remove complex provisions and aim to improve clarity while reducing legal disputes, with the easier-to-understand "tax year" as part of a move to simplify language while removing provisos and explanations.

CONTD ON PAGE-2

India, US to sign new defence framework: White House official

Washington: India and the United States will be signing a new defence framework during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ongoing visit to the US, which will give a further fillip to the partnership between the two countries, a senior White House administration official said on Thursday. "Today's meetings with PM Modi and his government will build up on the accomplishments of the last Trump administration and the two leaders will focus on key areas of defence, trade, energy infrastructure,



regional partnerships. Relating to build on defence sales to India, to ensure they are prioritising the use of American technology, the Presi-

dent is also focused on unleashing American energy to the rest of the world and will prioritise India as the key importer of America's natural resources to power their economy," the US official said.

Ahead of Prime Minister Modi's meeting with President Donald Trump at the White House on Thursday, the White House official said that the two sides are also having conversations about new procurements which will help in reducing US trade deficit with India.

CONTD ON PAGE-2

President's rule imposed in Manipur; assembly suspended

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The journey since then has been not without hiccups.

One of the most significant controversies of Singh's tenure was the ethnic violence in the surrounding hills, which finally cost him the key post.

The ethnic strife, which saw brutal clashes between the majority Meitei community in the Imphal Valley and the Kuki-Zo tribal groups in the surrounding hills, resulted in over 250 deaths and displaced thousands of people. The state's inability to contain it raised serious concerns about Singh's leadership.

Singh's response to the violence, however, included a public apology in December 2023, where he expressed regret for the deaths and displacement caused by the unrest.

He called for reconciliation, urging the various communities to forgive past mistakes and work toward rebuilding a peaceful Manipur.

In February, a new controversy erupted when audio tapes allegedly featuring Singh were leaked, in which he was purportedly heard discussing how the ethnic violence was instigated with his approval.

Kuki Organisation for Human Rights Trust (KOHUR), a vocal critic of Singh's handling of the ethnic conflict, sought a court-monitored investigation into the authenticity of the tapes.

This led to a Supreme Court ruling ordering the Central Forensic Science Laboratory to verify the tapes' authenticity and submit a report.

Singh's resignation came amidst dwindling support among BJP MLAs, many of whom have met party leaders in Delhi to convey their unhappiness with his continuation and had expressed the hope that his stepping down will help boost the central government's efforts to broker peace between the two main ethnic communities in the state.

Meanwhile, the Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum said President's rule will give a ray of hope to the Kuki-Zo community.

Trump posts 'reciprocal tariffs' ahead of Modi's meeting

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In many cases, the US has lower tariffs than other nations for the same product, although Trump did not mention whether there would be exclusions to the new round of tariffs.

The US President often speaks about high tariffs imposed by foreign governments on cars, where the US duty is only 2.5 per cent.

During his presidential campaign, Trump had announced he would work with Congress to pass the Reciprocal Trade Act that would give him the authority to increase the tariff on a particular foreign good to the level imposed by that nation.

In a campaign video, he said, "Under the Trump Reciprocal Trade Act, other countries will have two choices -- they'll get rid of their tariffs on us, or they will pay us hundreds of billions of dollars, and the United States will make an absolute FORTUNE."

Centre proposes amendments to Advocates Act to strengthen legal framework

New Delhi: To enhance the legal framework in India, the Government of India has proposed amendments to the Advocates Act, 1961.

The original Act was introduced in 1961 to regulate the legal profession, safeguard client interests, and elevate the professional standards of advocates. It established the Bar Council of India and State Bar Councils to oversee the conduct and discipline of lawyers across the country.

Ministry of Law and Justice, through a press communication, stated that as part of its ongoing commitment to reform, the Government has been introducing changes aimed at making the legal profession fair, transparent, and accessible to all. It stated that the Department of Legal Affairs is proposing to amend the Advocates Act, 1961 to address contemporary



challenges and meet the needs of a growing nation.

These amendments aim to align the legal profession and legal education with the best practices across the globe. The reforms will

focus on improving legal education, equipping lawyers to meet the demands of a rapidly changing world, and raising professional standards.

The ultimate goal is to ensure that the legal

profession contributes to the creation of a just and equitable society, and a developed nation, stated the Ministry.

In view thereof, the Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 2025 and a tabular statement

These amendments aim to align the legal profession and legal education with the best practices across the globe.

depicting existing provisions and proposed amendments have been prepared. The Department invites comments/feedback from the public as a part of the public consultation exercise on the draft amendments.

The Bill repeals certain provisions of the Legal Practitioners Act, 1879, which have become obsolete. It also seeks to make the offence of 'touting' punishable, allowing judges to publish a list of people who engage in such acts. A tout is a person who tries to procure the employment of a legal practitioner in return for payment. The court can exclude from its premises any person whose name is included in the list of touts.

Karnataka HC quashes fake news case against journalist Arnab Goswami



Bengaluru: The Karnataka High Court on Thursday passed a judgement in favour of renowned journalist Arnab Goswami, the editor-in-chief of Republic News Channel, and quashed the case filed by the Bengaluru Police last year. The case was filed following accusations that Goswami broadcast a false news report about the Chief Minister of Karnataka.

The bench of Justice M Nagarasanna has passed the order in the matter. A detailed order is awaited in the matter.

In December 2024, the Karnataka High Court had put a hold on the criminal proceedings initiated by the Karnataka police against journalist Goswami. During the issuance of the inter-

im order to halt the investigation against the Republic TV editor-in-chief, the court referred to the filing of the FIR as a "reckless registration of a crime."

The case was filed based on a complaint by an office bearer of the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee.

Bengaluru police registered a case against Arnab Goswami, the editor-in-chief of Republic TV, and the editor of R Kannada, the Kannada news channel of the same group. The allegations claim that they aired a fake news report about Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. The report supposedly created or promoted enmity, hatred, or ill-will between classes, leading to the duo being booked under Section 505(2) of the Indian Penal Code.

The bench of Justice M Nagarasanna has passed the order in the matter. A detailed order is awaited in the matter.

Raphe mPhibr and HENSOLDT Announce Strategic Collaboration

Bengaluru:

Raphe mPhibr, India's largest UAV manufacturer, has joined forces with HENSOLDT, a global defense technology leader, to co-develop cutting-edge landing aid Radar based on Multiple-Input Multiple-Output (MIMO) technology for next-generation aviation platforms.

The partnership, formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at Aero India 2025, marks a significant leap in India's pursuit of self-reliance.

Raphe mPhibr will spearhead R&D efforts to transform MIMO-0 a sophisticated system enhancing data transmission and radar capabilities—into deployable solutions tailored for both unmanned drones and manned aircraft.

Vivek Mishra, CEO of Raphe mPhibr, emphasized the partnership's strategic value: "By merging Raphe's design and manufacturing prowess with HENSOLDT's sensor expertise, we're creating a globally competitive MIMO solution."

Building on the MIMO initiative, the two firms



inked a second MoU to localize production of HENSOLDT's advanced sensor payloads in India.

The move aims to establish a co-production facility to bolster domestic manufacturing capabilities while meeting global demand.

Raphe mPhibr's unique closed-loop innovation model—integrating research, design, and production under one roof—enables rapid prototyping and stringent quality control.

This approach earned praise from HENSOLDT Group Global Business Head Russell Gould, as he remarked "Raphe's infrastructure rivals global benchmarks. Their agility complements our vision for scalable, high-tech solutions."

The partnership underscores a shared commitment to advancing India's technological ecosystem while catering to international markets.

By combining HEN-

India, US to sign new defence framework: White House official

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"The defence portion of the partnership is strong, and my anticipation will continue to get stronger under this administration...Indians were our first United States major defence partner. I can tell you we are moving towards signing a new defence framework between the United States and India which will portend good things for the partnership," the White House official told reporters.

"Yes, we're having conversations with them about a number of new procurements which will add to the relationship and also bring down the trade deficit. I can confirm those talks are ongoing and are moving in a positive direction," the official added.

Prime Minister Modi, who is on a two-day visit to the US, is set to hold bilateral meetings with US President Donald Trump and other prominent American personalities. Asked on the trade relationship between the two countries, a White House official said the "early

body language' from the Indian government has been well received by the Trump administration and the today's meeting between PM Modi and President Trump will give further momentum towards a more 'solidified fair' trade arrangement.

"With respect to trade, there's been some early body language from the Government of India that has been well received by the Trump administration. They're early but modest steps. To do, I anticipate what you'll see coming out of a meeting today is further momentum towards a solidified fair, and I emphasise that we're fair, bilateral trade arrangement between our two dynamic and growing economies and the hope would be to have such a deal in place in the calendar year 2025," the official said.

He also affirmed that announcements will also be seen in the area of technology, adding that semiconductors, critical minerals and supply chain resilience are some of the key areas for the two nations.

New Income Tax bill introduced in Lok Sabha

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While moving the Bill for introduction, Sitharaman urged Birla to refer the draft law to a select committee of the House, which will submit its report by the first day of the next session.

She urged the speaker to take a call on the proposed panel's composition and rules.

The much-anticipated Bill will replace terminologies such as "assessment year" and "previous year" with the easier-to-understand "tax year" as part of a move to simplify language while removing provisions and explanations.

Responding to the objections raised by some opposition members at the introduction stage of the bill, the finance minister said Manish Tewari of the Congress and N K Premechandran of the Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP) were incorrect in stating that the new bill has more sections in comparison with the existing income tax law.

Advt Contact: 9818-799941

Imran Masood calls Waqf Bill "attack" on minorities' rights

New Delhi:

Congress MP Imran Masood thinks the Waqf (Amendment) Bill is an attack on rights enshrined in the Constitution, suppressing the rights of minorities. The report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) was tabled in Lok Sabha before being tabled in Rajya Sabha on Thursday.

Imran Masood said, "The Waqf Bill is being tabled now. It is an attack on the rights provided to us in the Constitution. Waqf Bill is an example of suppressing the rights of minorities. They (the government) have not included our dissent notes. We have put forward our views, but we don't know what they have done. They are running their agenda by targeting the minorities in the nation."

As per the List of Business of Lok Sabha,



Jagdambika Pal, Chairperson JPC on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, presented the committee's report in Lok Sabha, along with BJP MP Sanjay Jaiswal.

The duo will also lay the record of evidence on the table which was given before the Joint Committee. The report of the Committee was presented before Lok Sabha speaker Om Birla

on January 30, 2025.

In Rajya Sabha, Media Visham Kulkarni and Gulam Ali will be presenting the Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2024. The JPC which was formed on the bill has adopted the draft report and amended the revised bill on January 29. The committee had earlier cleared the bill with 25 amendments across 14 sections and clauses.

"For the first time, we have included a section stating that the benefits of Waqf should go to the marginalised, poor, women, and orphans," Jagdambika Pal said.

"We had 44 clauses before us, out of which amendments were proposed by members in 14 clauses. We conducted a majority vote, and these amendments were then adopted," he added.

MHA grants Z-category CRPF security cover to Dalai Lama

New Delhi:

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs accorded and upgraded the security drill of Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama on Thursday after receiving a threat assessment report from the Intelligence Bureau (IB).

For many years, intelligence reports have indicated a potential threat to the spiritual leader's life from various sources, including China-backed groups.

According to sources, Dalai Lama has been accorded Z-category security, as he would get a total of 32 security staff in Himachal Pradesh's Dharamshala and outside. Under the security cover category the spiritual leader would be protected by the CRPF commandos in all parts of the country, they added.

Dalai Lama, till now, remained under the

protection of the Himachal Pradesh Police and other security agencies, but the MHA has now assigned the task to the CRPF to ensure a more coordinated and robust protection plan, the sources said.

Dalai Lama is a globally respected figure and the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism. He has been residing in India since 1959 after fleeing Tibet following the Chinese occupation.

Many in the country's intelligence and security establishment believe that given Dalai Lama's status and the complex geopolitical tensions surrounding Tibet, his security has been a key concern for Indian authorities.

Under the Z-category security protocol, the Dalai Lama will be protected by a CRPF team of CRPF

commandos, along with an escort and close-protection officers during his travels within the country.

Dalai Lama's presence in India has been a sensitive issue in Sino-Indian relations. While India officially considers Tibet an autonomous region of China, it has continued to provide a home to the spiritual leader and his followers. Over the years, Chinese authorities have repeatedly criticised his global engagements, viewing them as a challenge to their control over Tibet.

The government's move also reflects India's proactive approach to securing high-profile individuals who may face security threats.

Meanwhile, in a similar decision the MHA has also accorded Z-category security to the leader Sambit Patra in Manipur,

MCD's revenue collection at Rs 1,908 cr: Commissioner

New Delhi
The Municipal Corporation of Delhi received a revenue of Rs 1,908.06 crore till January 2025, for the financial year 2024-25, which is up by 11.3 pc from last financial year, but still falls short of the target of Rs 4,300 crore to be collected, said the Corporation's Commissioner according to a statement on Thursday.

"In the financial year 2024-25, as compared to the property tax target of Rs 4,300 crore, MCD received a revenue of Rs 1,908.06 crore till January, 2025. In the last financial year 2023-24, a revenue of Rs 1,692.41 crore was received till January, 2024, this year more revenue of Rs 215.65 crore has been received, which is 11.30 percent more than last year.



However, it is still much less than the target," said the MCD Commissioner.

Kumar tabled the Revised Budget estimates for 2025-26 at the Civic Centre in the national capital today. The

area under the MCD produces 6000 tonnes of construction waste everyday, out of which 5000 tones is being processed at various areas, according to MCD Commissioner Ashwani Kumar.

According to the statement released by the Commissioner, waste management plants at Bakkarwala, Ranikhedla, Shastri Park and Barahi have been set up,

which in total have the capacity to manage 5000 tonnes of waste.

"Another plant is being set up at Tehkhand. Work is underway to set up biomethanation plants to process 200 metric tonnes of cow dung / vegetable waste per day, which is likely to be completed by March 2025," the MCD Commissioner added.

The Corporation has also installed 211 small pit composters for wet waste, which has a capacity of managing 543 tonnes per day.

"Three contracts of 80 lakh tonnes have been awarded for legacy waste at Okhla, Ghazipur and Bhalawa landfill sites. Work is in progress," Commissioner Kumar said.

The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has also given over 47 acres of land to the Corporation, which has allowed for setting up an engineering landfill site on 32 acres of land in March 2024.

"Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has given 47,348 acres of land to the Corporation, out of which an engineering landfill site has been set up on 32,346 acres of land in March 2024. At this place, ash from Tehkhand, Okhla and other power plants is being disposed of."

Okhla, Narela-Bawana, Tehkhand and Ghazipur areas in the national capital region also has waste-to-energy plants, according to Commissioner Kumar.

"The plants process 6,550 TPD of waste to produce electricity. Apart from this, there is also a proposal to start the work of setting up a waste-to-energy plant of

3600 TPD capacity in Narela-Bawana and a waste-to-energy plant of three thousand TPD capacity is planned to be set up in Ghazipur," read the statement.

The new plants are expected to be operational in December 2027. "After the establishment of these plants, the garbage going to landfill sites will almost end," the Commissioner claimed.

MCD has also regularised 453 safai karamcharis. Additionally, 308 Electronic Vehicle (EV) charging stations have been installed, with plans to start 262 new EV stations too.

According to the Corporation's statement, 105 illegal garbage sites have been converted too.

"MCD has established 51 centers for green waste management, in which 60 quin-

PUBLIC NOTICE

known to all that my client Manoj Kumar Das S/o Sh.Surya Narayan Das owner of the entire property address, H-100, PVT. FLAT NO. 5, AREA 58 SQ. YDS. OUT OF KHASRA NO. 412, VIL-LAGE NAWADA HASTSAL MOHAN GARDEN IN BLOCK-H, UTTAM NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110059, NOW THIS PROPERTY PURCHASE - RAJAT DUTT FROM MANOJ KUMAR And Mr. Manoj Kumar Das S/o Sh.Surya Narayan Das purchased aforesaid property from Mrs. Smt. Sayara VIDE GPA, ATS, and WILL dated 20.02.2016, and it is informed that any deal with said documents by any person except my said client and said institution regarding said property, shall be deemed as null and void. If any person having any claim, right in said property then he may contact and handover the same and apprise his claim to undersigned within 15 days of this publication.

Dhananjai Kumar
Advocate & Legal Consultant
Chamber No.635 Dwarka Court New Delhi-110075

Jamia Maillia protesters claim police detained over 10 students, released later

New Delhi
More than 10 students of Jamia Millia Islamia were allegedly detained by the Delhi police in the early hours of Thursday for protesting against the university's disciplinary action against two PhD scholars.

The protesters later said the detained scholars were released after nearly 12 hours, but the sir continues.

Some of the students involved in the protest claimed that they got suspension letters from the Jamia administration on charges of vandalism, unauthorised and unlawful protests, and defamation of the university.

However, the university could not be reached for comments on the allegation.

The demonstration began on Monday, with students condemning what they called the administration's "crackdown on student activism".



The university, however, accused the protestors of vandalising property, including damaging the central canteen and breaking the gate of the security advisor's office.

This prompted the JMI administration to seek police intervention, it said.

"We removed over 10 students around 4 am after receiving a request from the university administration. Heavy police security has been deployed outside the

campus to maintain law and order," a police source said.

Some protestors gathered outside the Kalkaji police station during the day, claiming 20 students had gone missing following the police intervention.

"Multiple students were detained from the campus early in the morning. Their whereabouts remain unknown," a protestor claimed.

However, by evening, they said all detainees were released.

BJP plans a grand oath ceremony for new Delhi CM as PM returns

Abhishek Byahut
New Delhi
The BJP is planning to organize a grand oath-taking ceremony for the new chief minister of Delhi, planned for the Jawaharlal Nehru stadium after PM Modi returns from a foreign trip.

Other potential venues being considered include locations along the banks of the Yamuna or Ramliya Maidan, which has historical significance for past rallies and ceremonies, sources said.

The BJP has emphasized the cleaning of the Yamuna in their campaign, with PM Modi criticizing AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal's comments about the water quality.

After a 27-year gap, the BJP secured power in Delhi, generating excitement among party members



who want to attend the ceremony. While the stadium is not yet confirmed, it is the leading option due to its multiple VIP entrances and expected attendance of PMs and other officials.

Around 200 MPs and former MPs involved in the Delhi campaign, along with party workers and over 700 vistaraks who supported the ground-level effort, will be invited, said a senior functionary.

"Though, it is difficult to say who would become CM but it could be from three communities Bania, Punjabi and Poorvanchali who have backed the party in large numbers in the Vidhan Sabha poll," he said.

A senior BJP leader said that Discussions are on-

going regarding the selection of a Deputy CM with CM.

The Delhi Cabinet will include the Chief Minister and seven ministers. The meeting for the legislative party and the oath-taking ceremony are anticipated to occur after February 16.

NDMC to organise classical music concert on Feb 15

New Delhi
Staff Reporter
The NDMC is going to organise classical music concert 'Music in the Park' on coming Saturday, February 15, 2025 here at Nehru Park, Chanakypuri to welcome the spring season.

In the background of new blooming of white and purple Tulips in Nehru Park, the NDMC organising first concert of the 'Music in the Park' series in 2025 in association with SPIC MACAY & SRF.

The NDMC invites classical music lovers to experience the beauty of Indian classical music in harmony with nature in the spring season with new blooming Tulips in Nehru Park, Chanakypuri.

This year, the event is dedicated to Ustad Zakir Hussain, the tabla maestro who has graced the 'Music in the Park' stage multiple times, leaving an indelible mark on its history with his extraordinary performances.

The evening will feature performances by sitar expert Kushal Das and acclaimed vocalist Ulhas Kashalkar. The artists will be accompanied by an ensemble of musicians, including Ram Kumar Mishra, Aashay Kulkarni, Vinay Mishra, Sarwar Hussain, and Sai Mahashabde.

The entry for the programme at Nehru Park is from Nitij Marg and is free to all. The musical events are held in the beautiful serene settings of Nehru Park where audiences can enjoy free live performances of renowned and upcoming artists.

Over 7 Lakh Books Sold by Children's Book Trust in New Delhi World Book Fair 2025

New Delhi
The World Book Fair, held at Bharat Mandapam in Delhi from February 7 to 9, witnessed enthusiastic book shopping. Among the most vibrant spots in the world book fair was Children's Book Trust (CBT) stall in Children pavilion at Hall No.6, Bharat Mandapam . The CBT stall remained a major attraction among children and young readers, drawing large crowds throughout the event.

According to the CBT officials, the combination of a 10-20% discount on books and the immense popularity of CBT publications among children resulted in record-breaking sales this year. They reported that over 7 lakh books were sold within the 9-day fair.

Children's Book Trust reg-



isters record sales both at the New Delhi World Book Fair and the International Kolkata Book Fair this year. The books and the stalls during all these Book Fairs have been attracting children and their guardians in large numbers. This year the Book Trust has registered record sales from its participation at the fairs, both at Kolkata and New Delhi.

Ms. Rana Siddiqui Zaman; Lead Strategist, Content, Communications & Promotions; Children's Book Trust said, "Looking at the enthusiastic response in the fairs in the East and based on our internal survey, CBT is mulling over opening Book Stores designed as Children's Fun Zones in prominent Eastern Indian Cities with engaging activities for children. The idea to engage children in good books that represent Indian cultural and moral values as well as physical games and fun activities."

Mr. Kishore Lal; Chair-

No power outages in Delhi, but delays in fixing issues by Acting CM Atishi: Sachdeva

New Delhi
Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva on Thursday declared that there are no power outages in Delhi, but delays in fixing issues are being caused by the Acting Chief Minister, Atishi Marlena, and the power companies working together.

He accused the Aam Aadmi Party leaders of spreading lies and creating confusion about power cuts. Sachdeva claimed that for years, the government led by Arvind Kejriwal has exploited residents with unfair electricity charges. With the BJP government expected to take over, he suggested that the Acting Chief Minister is using the power companies to manipulate the power companies. He emphasized that, based on their information, there are no outages, only slow repairs due to the collaboration between the Chief Minister and the power companies.

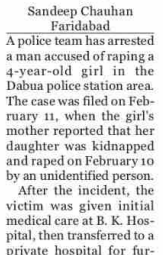
Mr Lal further added, "We have had our presence internationally through our books which we sell in many countries, with the coming up of our SICC, we would like to have them here physically and see them grow intellectually and artistically."

ing fear tactics to manipulate the power companies. He emphasized that, based on their information, there are no outages, only slow repairs due to the collaboration between the Chief Minister and the power companies.

Faridabad police arrested man who kidnapped & raped a 4-year-old girl in Dabua

Sandeep Chauhan
Faridabad
A police team has arrested a man accused of raping a 4-year-old girl in the Dabua police station area. The case was filed on February 11, when the girl's mother reported that her daughter was kidnapped and raped on February 10 by an unidentified person.

After the incident, the victim was given initial medical care at B. K. Hospital, then transferred to a private hospital for further treatment. Due to the seriousness of the case, Police Commissioner Santendra Kumar Gupta ordered the formation of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to look into the matter. The Deputy Commissioner of Police



This case was classified as a blind case initially. The SIT and crime branch teams worked together, examining CCTV footage from the victim's house and the surrounding area.

Javed alias Jabid, a 22-year-old scrap collector. During questioning, Jabid admitted he saw the girl playing alone, gave her money for biscuits, and lured her into a nearby bush where he raped her. He attempted to silence her when she screamed and then abandoned her. The accused will be placed in police custody for further questioning.

This case was classified as a blind case initially. The SIT and crime branch teams worked together, examining CCTV footage from the victim's house and the surrounding area. They gathered information from secret sources, which led to the arrest of

Javed alias Jabid, a 22-year-old scrap collector. During questioning, Jabid admitted he saw the girl playing alone, gave her money for biscuits, and lured her into a nearby bush where he raped her. He attempted to silence her when she screamed and then abandoned her. The accused will be placed in police custody for further questioning.

PUBLIC NOTICE

General public is hereby informed that my client, Mrs. Shahida Qureshi W/O Late Sh. Jamaluddin Qureshi, R/o House no 7271, Gali Garhhyya, Quresh Nagar, Sadar Bazar, Delhi GPO Dist: North Delhi 110006, has disowned her son Md. Kamaluddin from her all movable & immovable properties and has severed all relations with him due to his undesirable, unwarranted and unsocial activities. Any person dealing with him shall be doing so at his/her own risks and cost. My client shall not be liable for any of their acts, deeds and things.

Ashish Chopra
Advocate
Chamber-342, Dwarka District Court, Sector 10 Dwarka New Delhi-110075
Mob:7011855374

Mehbooba's remarks 'irresponsible and condemnable': Ravinder Raina



Jammu:

BJP's national executive member Ravinder Raina on Thursday dismissed PDP president Mehbooba Mufti's statement on the national party as "irresponsible and condemnable" and demanded an apology from her.

Addressing the PDP workers at the launch of her party's membership drive here, Mehbooba termed the move of Jammu and Kashmir as an "incurable disease" and said the BJP seemed not interested in its resolution like the Pakistani military leadership to polarize the situation for votes in the country.

"Her statement is irresponsible, highly condemnable and controversial. It looks she has started toying the line of separatism to mislead the masses and regain the lost political turf," Raina said reacting to Mehbooba's statement.

Raina, a former president of BJP's J&K unit, accused the former chief minister of "speaking the language of anti-nationals and having her sympathies for them".

"Her statement is akin of supporting terrorism and separatism. She should remember that Narendra Modi is the prime minister, Amit Shah is home minister of the country and under their leadership no anti-national activity, terrorism, separatism or nationalism will be allowed," he said.

The BJP leader said Pakistan-sponsored terrorism has wreaked havoc in Jammu and Kashmir over the past three decades, claiming thousands of innocent lives.

"Security forces are sacrificing their lives for the country. The terrorists are not friends of anyone as they are enemies of people and the peaceful atmosphere. They will not be spared. She should seek an apology for her statement," he said.

Punjab govt's big bonanza to six lakh employees and pensioners of state

Komal Ramola Chandigarh:
In a big bonanza to the employees and pensioners of the state government, the Punjab Cabinet led by Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Thursday accorded consent to disburse pending arrears worth Rs 14,000 crore to them.

A decision to this effect was taken in the meeting of the Council of Ministers held here under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister today, at his office in Punjab Civil Secretariat-1.

A spokesperson of the Chief Minister's Office said that the Cabinet gave approval to release arrears of revised pay/pensions and leave encashment from period of January 1, 2016 to June 30, 2022 and that DA/DR from July 1, 2021 to March 31, 2024 for pensioners and employees. This sum worth Rs 14,000 crore will be released in stages and will give a much needed relief to the employees and pensioners. Pertinently, there are three lakh employees and three lakh pensioners of the state government who will be directly benefited by this move.

The Cabinet also gave nod to create new posts in Punjab State Legal Services Authority for setting up 22 new Lok Adalats in the state to dispense justice to the people. The Cabinet also gave approval to create three new posts of Assistant Director, Senior Assistant and Sewadar in the newly created district of Malerkotla. In order to check the pilferage of taxes in the state by proper utilization of the human resources in the Taxation department, the Cabinet also gave approval for creation of 476 new posts in the department.

Haryana's gymnasts win 7 medals in National Games in Uttarakhand

Chandigarh:
In the 38th National Games being held in Dehradun, Uttarakhand, Haryana's players performed brilliantly by winning 7 medals in the gymnastics competition, including 2 silver and 5 bronze medals.

Haryana's Sports Minister Gaurav Gaudin felicitated the winning players and said they are getting a lot of benefits from Haryana's excellent sports policy.

"Our players are bringing laurels to the country and the state by winning medals in Olympics, World Championships, Asian, Commonwealth and National Games. Haryana has become the hub of sports. Other states of the country are also following Haryana's sports policy," he said.

The Sports Minister praised the excellent performance of Haryana's gymnasts in the National Games and said this achievement is not only the result of the hard work of the players, but is also a



A decision to this effect was taken in the meeting of the Council of Ministers held here under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister today at his office in Punjab Civil Secretariat-1.

proof of the encouragement being given to sports by the state government. The Sports Minister said our gymnasts should continue to bring pride to the state in this way and the Haryana Government is committed to provide them the best facilities and training.

The Haryana Government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, is constantly striving to encourage sports and provide all possible assistance to the players, so that it maintains its leading role on the sports map of the country.

signal was given for changing the nomenclature of the posts of the Inspectors in the department as they will be now known as State Taxation Officers. The Cabinet also accorded consent for recruitment of 53 drivers in the Excise department on a regular basis. The Cabinet also gave green signal for amending the rules and qualifications for the direct recruitment of Physical Training Instructors (PTI teachers) in the Elementary Education department. This will facilitate the recruitment of 2000 such teachers across the state in the coming days.

In order to impart quality health services to the people of the state, the Cabinet also gave nod for revival of 822 posts of Group C cadre in the Health and Family welfare department. This will help in enhancing the efficiency of the department thereby immensely benefiting the people by providing them quality healthcare services. The Cabinet also gave approval for creation of 97 posts of various cadres in the Dr BR Ambedkar State Institute of Medical Sciences, SAS Nagar. This will further help in increasing the efficiency of the institute to provide quality medical services to the people.

A decision to this effect was taken in the meeting of the Council of Ministers held here under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister today at his office in Punjab Civil Secretariat-1.

In a move aimed at generating more than 50,000 jobs for youth, the Cabinet also gave nod for Waiver of Stamp Duty, Registration Fee and other additional Charges for transfer of land to the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) "NICDC Punjab Industrial Corridor Development Corporation Limited" for Integrated Manufacturing Cluster (IMC) being developed as a part of Amritsar Kalkata Industrial Corridor (AKIC) Project. The project aims to serve as a catalyst for local commerce, business with global competitiveness and creating an environment conducive to investment. The project will generate employment of about 32724 from Industrial and 14880 from Non Industrial support amenities.

9 Students from Aakash Educational achieves 99 Percentile in JEE Mains

Hisar:
Aakash Educational Services Limited (AESL), the national leader in test preparatory services, proudly announces an exceptional achievement in the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Mains 2025 (Session 1). An impressive 9 students from Hisar have scored above 99 percentile in the first session of the examination.

Top achievers include Lakshit 99.95 percentile, Abhisar 99.90, Himesh Soni 99.80, Harsh with 99.69, GorishGarg with 99.63, Nainish with 99.52, Muskan99.49, Garvit 99.26, MitulGarg with 99.10 percentile.

These results highlight the students' dedication and academic excellence in one of India's most challenging exams. The National Testing Agency announced the results on 11th Feb, marking the beginning of this year's two scheduled JEE sessions.

Most of these students enrolled in Aakash's classroom program, aiming to crack the prestigious IIT JEE, recognized

Top achievers include Lakshit 99.95 percentile, Abhisar 99.90, Himesh Soni 99.80, Harsh with 99.69, GorishGarg with 99.63, Nainish with 99.52, Muskan99.49, Garvit 99.26, MitulGarg with 99.10 percentile.

globally as one of the toughest entrance exams.

Congratulating the students, Amit Singh Rathore, Chief Academic and Business Head, Aakash Educational Services Limited, congratulated the students on their impressive results. He said, "We are proud of our students' achievements in JEE Main 2025. Their hard work and determination, combined with the right coaching, have led to these excellent outcomes. At Aakash, we focus on providing quality education that helps students reach their full potential. Congratulations to all our successful students, and we wish them the best for the next steps in their journey."

Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann announces 1,746 new police department posts

Chandigarh:
Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Thursday announced the creation of 1,746 new posts in the Punjab Police Department.

Taking to the social media platform X, the Punjab CM said the 'youth' can apply from February 21 to March 13 for the posts, with 1261 posts available in the district cadre and 485 posts available in the armed cadre.

"As per the promise, a total of 1746 new posts have been created in the Punjab Police Department. Youth can apply from 21 February to 13 March. Recruitment will be made for 1261 posts in the district cadre and 485 posts in the armed cadre," CM Mann wrote in a post on X.

"Our government aims to create a colourful Punjab in which the role of youth is the most important and this dream can be fulfilled only by providing maximum employment to the youth," he added.

He further assured that more government jobs for youth will be



announced in the future, and details will be shared soon.

Meanwhile, earlier, the Punjab CM took a jibe at Congress leader and Leader of Opposition in the Punjab Assembly, Pratap Singh Bajwa's claims of a rift in the Punjab unit of the Aam Aadmi Party and asked how many MLAs the Congress party has in Delhi.

He also slammed Bajwa over his criticism of law and order in Punjab and said the situation was better than in most of the states.

"I would ask Pratap Singh Bajwa to count how many MLAs they

have in Delhi. The law and order of Punjab is better than most states... We have to put in extra effort being a border state, and we are doing that..." Mann said, speaking to the media.

Speaking on his meeting with the AAP convener, he said that Kejriwal thanked the party's MLAs for their work in the elections and added that the party would use their experience of work in Delhi to work in Punjab and make the state a "role model" for the whole nation to look up to.

"Arvind Kejriwal thanked the MLAs for their work in the Delhi elections... We will use Delhi's experience in Punjab... We will work together. Our party is known for its work... In today's meeting, it was decided that in the coming two years, we will make Punjab a model that the whole nation will look up to... Punjab has always been at the forefront in all the fights... The Punjab government is working for the welfare of the people..." he further stated.

The AAP convener met Punjab MLAs to discuss strategies for the party after their crushing defeat in the Delhi assembly elections.

CJM & DLSA conduct surprise inspection of Bal Niketan in Panchkula

Panchkula:
Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM) and Secretary, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Panchkula, Ms. Aparna Bhardwaj, conducted a surprise inspection of Bal Niketan, Sector 2, Panchkula, to assess the functioning and compliance of the shelter home with established regulations.

During her visit, CJM Bhardwaj meticulously reviewed all registers maintained by the shelter home, including records related to donations. She also examined the receipt book to ensure proper documentation and transparency in financial transactions. Additionally, she inquired about the authorities responsible for conducting regu-



lar inspections of the shelter home. The officials informed her that apart from DLSA, vis-

Top achievers include Lakshit 99.95 percentile, Abhisar 99.90, Himesh Soni 99.80, Harsh with 99.69, GorishGarg with 99.63, Nainish with 99.52, Muskan99.49, Garvit 99.26, MitulGarg with 99.10 percentile.

mittee (CWC), and the District Child Protection Officer (DCPO).

The shelter home officials further apprised CJM Bhardwaj that on the second Saturday of every month, a team of doctors, along with a counselor from Sector 16, visits Bal Niketan to conduct medical check-ups for all the children.

At the time of inspection, a total of 30 children were residing in Bal Niketan.

CJM Bhardwaj emphasized the importance of maintaining proper records and ensuring that all permissions are duly documented to safeguard the welfare of the children. She directed the shelter home authorities to take immediate corrective measures and ensure strict adherence to legal and procedural requirements.

The visit highlighted the need for continuous monitoring and accountability to ensure that shelter homes operate transparently and in the best interest of the children under their care.

Development works will be fast-tracked after municipal elections: CM Saini

Komal Ramola Chandigarh:
Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said that following the municipal elections, various public development projects will be fast-tracked and new projects will also be implemented at an accelerated pace.

The Chief Minister made these remarks during a program organized by party workers in Narnaud on Thursday.

He urged the workers to ensure the victory of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidates in the civic elections and to push for further development of the region.



In his address, Chief Minister also criticized former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, recalling how, during the Delhi elections, Kejriwal spread various rumors, including the false claim that Haryana had

The people of Delhi proved this by giving a decisive mandate to the Bharatiya Janata Party, turning the Prime Minister's vision into a reality. Chief Minister said that voting in Haryana took place on the 5th, with results announced on the 8th, where the Bharatiya Janata Party secured 48 seats. A similar outcome occurred in Delhi, where 48 BJP candidates also emerged victorious.

Kejriwal had promised to clean the Yamuna over the last decade, he had delivered nothing but false promises, using the issue to boost his own political profile, he added.

Chief Minister encouraged workers to accept any decisions the party makes regarding the civic elections, stressing the importance of unity to ensure the BJP's victory.

Tripura CM, family take holy dip in Triveni Sangam

Maha Kumbh Nagar: On the auspicious occasion of Mahakumbh 2025, Tripura Chief Minister Dr Manik Saha took a holy dip in the Triveni Sangam along with his family on Thursday and sought divine blessings.

The Chief Minister bathed in the sacred confluence of Maa Ganga, Maa Yamuna, and the invisible Maa Saraswati, earning spiritual merit on this sacred occasion.

After the bath, CM Dr Manik Saha shared his experience on his official social media handle, writing, "Today, I had the privilege of taking a holy dip at Mahakumbh, Prayagraj. The sacred waters, divine energy, and spiritual ambience made this an unforgettable experience."

He further expressed that witnessing the deep faith of crores of devotees and experiencing the spiritual energy of Mahakumbh 2025 was truly special.

Dr Saha stated that he prayed to Maa Ganga for the prosperity and peace of Tripura. He emphasised that the holy dip in Sangam purifies life and grants spiritual tranquillity.

Raj CM approves over Rs 24 Cr for Infrastructure Development in Krishi Upaj Mandi Samitis

Jaipur:

In order to develop more and more facilities in Krishi Upaj Mandi Samitis for farmers and traders, Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma has given administrative and financial approval for development works worth more than 24 crores rupees.

According to a press release from the office of Chief Minister, Sharma has approved an amount of more than 7.27 crore rupees for developing infrastructure in Krishi Upaj Mandi Samiti, Bhawanisandi, Deoli and Kotputli.

The release states, "Also, Rs 16.73 crore has been approved for the construction of connecting roads in Krishi Upaj Mandi Samiti Lunkaransar, Srikaranpur, Bikaner (grain), Pugal Road (grain), Bikaner, Kharjuwala, madhopur, Nokha, Sridungargarh and Padampur."

As per the release, the amount of about Rs 24 crore approved by CM Sharma for the above works will strengthen the infrastructure of Krishi Upaj Mandi Samitis, which will provide maximum facilities to traders and farmers.

At the same time, the construction of connecting roads will facilitate the farmers and the general public to reach the Mandi Samiti.

Along with this, farmers will also save time and fuel in selling agricultural commodities, the release stated.

CM Dhama stresses public participation, strict measures to tackle forest fire

Dehradun: Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama has emphasized the need for public participation and coordinated efforts among various departments to combat forest fires in the state.

He directed officials to formulate future action plans based on lessons learned from past incidents and ensure active engagement of social organizations, NGOs, Mahila Mangal Dals, Yuvak Mangal Dals, and forest panchayats in fire prevention measures. He also called for strict action against anti-social elements responsible for igniting forest fires, said a press statement.

The Chief Minister issued these directives while attending a mock drill on forest fire control, organized at the State Disaster Management Authority in IT Park, Dehradun, on Thursday.

The exercise was conducted jointly by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), the Union Home Ministry, and



the Uttarakhand State Disaster Management Authority.

Dhama stressed the importance of inter-departmental coordination and directed Additional Chief Secretary RK Sudhanshu to issue necessary instructions ensuring collective action against forest fires.

He highlighted the effectiveness of the Shitlakhet model and traditional water conservation methods like Chaal-Khal and Talaiya, urging the involvement of the Jalagam department for their implementation.

The Chief Minister also underscored the role of modern technology in forest fire management. He pointed out that Uttarakhand faces severe challenges due to forest fires, which not only destroy valuable forest resources but also result in significant wildlife loss. To address this, he emphasized the need for large-scale awareness campaigns and innovative approaches to forest fire control. Appealing to citizens, he urged them to actively participate in prevent-

The Chief Minister issued these directives while attending a mock drill on forest fire control, organized at the State Disaster Management Authority in IT Park, Dehradun, on Thursday.

ing such incidents.

During the mock drill, officials identified 16 locations across six districts for scenario-based exercises aimed at reducing response time and improving community co-operation.

Dhama expressed confidence that such drills would enhance preparedness and mitigation efforts. He also thanked the Union Home Ministry for equipping the state with modern fire prevention tools.

BJP's Navneet Rana visits Prayagraj to take

Assam Rifles crackdown on PREPAK, KCP cadres in Manipur

Imphal: Assam Rifles and the Indian Army have apprehended two cadres of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (Progressive) and four active cadres of the banned Kangleipak Communist Party (People's War Group) on Wednesday in two separate operations in Manipur, officials said on Thursday.

The crackdown is part of ongoing efforts to curb militant activities in the region, said Assam Rifles.

In the first operation, Assam Rifles and Manipur Police launched a search in the general area of Dingku Road, Imphal East district, based on intelligence about the presence of the cadres. The operation resulted in the apprehension of two cadres, who claimed allegiance to the People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (Progressive) or PREPAK (PRO).

In a similar intelligence-based operation, the Indian Army and Manipur Police apprehended four cadres in the general area of Kameng Sabal Village, Imphal West District. The operation also led to the recovery of five pistols, ammunition, and war-like stores. The apprehended cadres expressed their allegiance to Kangleipak

Communist Party (People's War Group) or KCP (PWG).

Meanwhile, Assam Rifles, in coordination with the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and Manipur Police, launched a joint search operation to identify and destroy illicit poppy cultivation in an area of Sejhing village, Kangpokpi district.

Acting on credible intelligence inputs on February 12, following an intensive search, two large poppy plantations spanning approximately six acres, with a potential to yield 30 kg of opium were uncovered and destroyed.

Nearby huts and makeshift shelters were also burned down, dealing a deep blow to opium cultivators.

As per an official statement, "Assam Rifles remains dedicated to maintaining peace and combating illegal drug trade in the area."

On February 10, the Indian Army, along with the Assam Rifles and in coordination with the Manipur Police and other security forces, nabbed eight cadres and recovered 25 weapons, ammunition, and warlike stores in a series of joint operations conducted in multiple districts of Manipur, officials said.

Cultural festivities set to resume on Feb 14 as Magh Purnima snan concludes

Lucknow/Mahakumbh Nagar: The Yogi government has transformed Mahakumbh 2025 into a unique, unprecedented, and unforgettable event. With the Magh Purnima snan already completed, the spiritual and cultural fervor is set to continue into the Phalgun month, with a fusion of culture, environment, and the Bird Festival along the Sangam banks.

Starting Friday, the evening of Phalgun month. The event will also showcase classical music, violin, tabla, flute recitals, and traditional dance forms such as Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, Kathak, and Odissi, bringing India's artistic diversity to life.

Mahakumbh 2025 is not just about faith but also about nature and environmental conservation. Under Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's vision, a special eco-tourism plan has been designed for pilgrims. From February 16 to 18, an International Bird Festival will take place, featuring around 200 bird species, including rare Indian skimmers, flandings, and Siberian



cranes. Visitors will also get a glimpse of migratory birds from Siberia, Mongolia, Afghanistan, and more than a dozen other countries.

The event will host photography, painting, slogan-writing, debate, and quiz competitions, with winners receiving awards. The International Bird Festival will be a unique blend of Indian culture, love for nature, and scientific awareness.

Moreover, the Uttar Pradesh Department of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change will organize a Climate Conference on "Kumbh ki Aastha aur Jalvayu Parivartan" (faith and climate change) during Mahakumbh.

Cleanliness drive restores Sangam Ghats to a pristine state after Magh Purnima Snan

Mahakumbh Nagar: Demonstrating its unwavering commitment to cleanliness, the Maha Kumbh 2025 administration once again proved its efficiency by swiftly restoring the Sangam Ghats after the Magh Purnima bathing festival.

As soon as the sacred snan concluded, a dedicated team of cleaners launched a large-scale cleaning drive by the evening itself. Their prompt and tireless efforts ensured that, by night, the Sangam Ghats were once again pristine and beautiful, ready to welcome the next influx of devotees.

On the occasion of Magh Purnima, more than 2 crore devotees took a holy dip in Sangam on Wednesday. As part of the ritual offerings, a large number of devotees left flowers, garlands, clothes, and food at the ghats, and the extensive use of public toilets was observed.

Following the decrease in crowd density, the mela administration launched



an intensive cleaning drive, restoring the ghats to their pristine condition by morning.

To ensure prompt cleanliness, all sector magistrates were instructed to initiate a large-scale sanitation campaign as soon as the crowd dispersed. In response, the administration swiftly disposed of solid waste left behind during the bathing festival.

Special cleaning vehicles were deployed to collect garbage from the ghats and the fairgrounds, while cesspool operations were carried out to

maintain hygiene in public toilets.

Anand Kumar Singh, the sanitation in-charge of the fair, stated that under the cleanliness drive, sanitation workers thoroughly swept and cleaned all roads.

"Dustbins and liner bags placed throughout the fair area were emptied using tippers and compactors. The administration has been running these cleaning initiatives daily to uphold the vision of a Clean Mahakumbh. However, on major bathing days, the campaign is intensified to ensure that

pilgrims arriving the next day experience a holy and hygienic environment," he explained.

The swift action of the fair administration left both devotees and locals highly impressed. Expressing their appreciation, many acknowledged the efforts of the Yogi government in ensuring a well-organized and spotless Mahakumbh 2025. One devotee remarked that the administration's commitment to cleanliness has reaffirmed its dedication to making the Mahakumbh a model of order and sanitation.

BJP's Navneet Rana visits Prayagraj to take holy dip at Triveni Sangam

Pravagraj: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Navneet Rana on Thursday arrived Prayagraj to take a holy dip in Triveni Sangam at the ongoing Mahakumbh.

"We are fortunate to attend Mahakumbh that will come after 144 years... I am happy to see that the young generation is also visiting here in huge numbers..."

Earlier today, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai along with his cabinet members, state Governor, MPs, and MLAs arrived Prayagraj and took a holy dip in the Triveni Sangam on the ongoing Mahakumbh.

After taking a holy dip at the Maha Kumbh, he congratulated the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath



for the arrangements.

"The Governor, Speaker, ministers and MLAs of Chhattisgarh, a total of 166 people came here for the holy dip... This moment has come after 144 years. We congratulate the CM of Uttar Pradesh for these arrangements and thank him for inviting us. We will go to the

thousand Kalpavasis and over 2.2 million pilgrims have taken a dip till 10 am.

A look at the numbers until February 12 shows that the total number of devotees who have taken a dip in the Triveni Sangam has exceeded 482.9 million, marking a significant milestone in the grand event.

Lucknow wedding 'gaterashed' by leopard; 4-hour rescue operation follows

Lucknow: A leopard entered a wedding ceremony at MM Lawn on Budheshwar Ring Road in the Para police station area in Lucknow at around, an official said.

The feline made its entry at 11.40 PM on Wednesday, after which, the forest officials rescued the leopard after four hours. SDO Mohanlaljan and three doctors arrived immediately at the venue.

Lucknow Divisional Forest Officer Sitanshu Pandey said, "It took almost 4.5 hours to rescue the leopard from the MM Lawn Guest House. SDO Mohanlaljan and three doctors arrived here immediately. Around 203 people were present at the venue. One person from the forest staff was also injured, and he has also received treatment."

Because of the dense



forest around the area, the leopard strayed into the wedding venue. "There is a huge dense forest above Malihabad, which has mango trees. Beyond that, there are also Lakhimpur Khari, Dudhwa Tiger Reserve and Pilibhit Tiger Reserve. Since the leopard is an agile animal, it could have come from anywhere," Pandey said.

Recently, five people were injured in a leopard attack in Uttar Pradesh's Bahraich. The injured were rushed to local hospital for treatment. The incident took place in Bargada village on February 7.

Katarniaghat Bahraich, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) B Shivshankar, said "A leopard injured five people, and our staff took them to the hospital—three are being treated, and two have been referred for further care."

"Regarding the human-wildlife conflict, the forest department advises people not to go alone into sugarcane fields or leave meat or livestock outside. Leopards tend to avoid groups, so staying in pairs or groups can help prevent attacks," the DFO added.

Contact for Advt: 9818799941

Opposition MPs calls Waqf JPC report "biased, one-sided"; stages walkout from Rajya Sabha

Gaurav Gogoi alleges JPC "rushing through" Waqf report

New Delhi
Rajya Sabha Opposition MPs staged a walkout on Thursday amid the discussion on the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) report on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024.



Opposition MPs alleged that the JPC on the Waqf Bill is "biased" and "one-sided," adding that the dissent notes submitted by the panel members weren't included in the JPC report.

JMM MP Mahua Maji and AAP MP Sanjay Singh went on to claim that this bill is just beginning and soon the government would bring the bill to "grab" lands of other religions too.

Speaking to reporters, Mahua Maji said, "The INDIA Alliance staged a walkout against the report of the JPC on the Waqf Amendment Bill. The JPC has been biased. Today, the government is eyeing

the land belonging to the Waqf; tomorrow, they will grab the properties of other religions."

Panel member and Congress MP Dr Syed Naseer Hussain alleged that the JPC had not followed the procedures and key parts of the dissent notes were

blurred.

Hussain accused the Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju of "lying."

"It (JPC report on Waqf) is biased and one-sided. The procedures were not followed in the JPC. Non-stakeholders were called, 97% of them opposed this

bill. We were not given the minutes of the meeting... Key parts of our dissent notes were blurred, and the minister of minority affairs lied about it..." he told reporters.

Slamming the JPC, AAP MP Sanjay Singh said, "It is disappointing that the

Opposition's dissent notes have not been included in the report... This is just the beginning. Soon, they will bring a bill to possess the lands of Gurdwaras, Temples and Churches and give this land to their capitalist friends."

However, AIMIM MP and JPC member Asaduddin Owaisi said that a group of Lok Sabha MPs, including A Raja, Kalyan Banerjee, Imran Masood, Mohammad Jawed, and Gaurav Gogoi, went to meet Lok Sabha speaker Om Birla and told him that many pages and paragraphs of dissent notes had been redacted from the JPC report.

However, AIMIM MP and JPC member Asaduddin Owaisi said that a group of Lok Sabha MPs went to meet the Lok Sabha speaker Om Birla to inform him about the redacted pages and paragraphs of dissent notes, after which most of them were included in the report.

Owaisi stated that the report will be presented in the Lok Sabha at 2 pm.

"Today, a group of Lok Sabha MPs, which included A Raja, Kalyan Banerjee, Imran Masood, Mohammad Jawed, Gaurav Gogoi, and me, went to meet the Speaker. We told him that many pages and paragraphs of our dissent notes have been redacted from the JPC report. He was kind enough to ask the Secretary-General to include from our dissent notes whatever the rules permitted... Later, we sat in the Parliamentary library and included most of the redacted pages in the report, which will be presented in the Lok Sabha at 2 pm... The paragraphs that expressed aspersions on the working of the committee were not included since they were against the rules..." Committee member and AIMIM Chief Asaduddin Owaisi said.

Earlier today, a major uproar erupted in both

houses of the Parliament before the JPC report on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, was tabled.

The Lok Sabha was adjourned till 2 pm amid Opposition sloganeering against the report, while the Rajya Sabha also witnessed heated exchanges.

Congress National President and Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge, opposed the JPC report on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, alleging that dissent notes from Opposition members were removed.

The Waqf Act of 1995, enacted to regulate Waqf properties, has long been criticised for issues such as mismanagement, corruption, and encroachments.

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, aims to address these challenges by introducing reforms such as digitisation, enhanced audits, improved transparency, and legal mechanisms to reclaim illegally occupied properties.

New Delhi
Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi on Thursday alleged that the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Waqf (Amendment) Bill has been "rushing through" the report as they held "no clause-by-clause" discussion over it.

Gogoi also said the "genuine" stakeholders were also not invited for the discussion.

"This JPC committee and the way it has been functioning, they have been rushing through. There was no clause by clause discussion. The genuine stakeholder were not invited," Gogoi said.

He added that the committee had no intention of doing a "democratic, deliberative, parliamentary exercise" and just "bulldozed" through the report relating to matter of "utmost sensitivity".

"The way they bulldozed shows that they had no intention of doing a democratic, deliberative, parliamentary exercise on the matter of such utmost sensitivity," Gogoi said.

Alleging JPC's of not taking all views into account, Gogoi also stressed about the lack of time opposition had to read the report and present objections.

"We wanted JPC to have taken into account all the views but this has not been done. 665 pages report was presented and members had only one night to read the whole report to present our objections. We have all been part of many JPCs there's always clause by clause discussion and it was completely bypassed. Why? under whose pressure the chairman was acting?" Gogoi said.

The JPC report on Waqf Amendment Bill was tabled in the Lok Sabha today after being presented in Rajya Sabha earlier in the day.

Opposition MPs alleged that the JPC on the Waqf Bill is "biased" and "one-sided," adding that the dissent notes submitted by the panel members weren't included in the JPC report.

In response to the opposition claims Home Minister Amit Shah said that the government has no opposition if dissent notes of the Opposition are added to the JPC report.

"The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, aims to address these challenges by introducing reforms such as digitisation, enhanced audits, improved transparency, and legal mechanisms to reclaim illegally occupied properties.

EU India agree to intensify cooperation on smart and sustainable urbanization



New Delhi
Building on the 2017 Joint Declaration on Partnership for Smart and Sustainable Urbanization, the 4th India-EU Urban Forum was held today in New Delhi, marking a significant milestone in the EU-India collaboration on sustainable urban development. This high-level event brought together officials and experts from India, the European Union (EU), and its Member States to discuss policies and best practices to work towards integrated approaches to sustainable urban development, reinforcing the EU's Global Gateway strategy in India.

of EU-India cooperation in urban development, stating, "Since 2017 the EU has been engaged in accompanying and supporting Indian Government's planning the development of Indian cities. With the right policies in place, urbanization can be an enormous opportunity for sustainability. Smart and sustainable urbanisation has been at the core of our partnership: to improve the eco-design of cities; to improve waste disposal, to improve water recycling; to facilitate urban mobility with financing of metros." He added that, "With over C 45 million [EUR 400 crores] we have leveraged over C 1 billion [EUR 9000 crores] of capital to support sustainable urbanisation. It is our commitment to pursue this effort in the period 2025-2027."

Setting the tone for the forum, Shri Srinivas Katikihala, Secretary, Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs, underscored India's commitment to urban innovation, stating, "Indian cities are embracing smart solutions, building green infrastructure, and implementing inclusive policies to sustainable urbanisation for generations to come." Emphasizing the significance of the India-EU partnership, he added, "India and Europe are collaboratively creating sustainable cities of the future, fostering innovation, resilience, and inclusive growth while addressing pressing climate challenges."

The forum served as a crucial step in shaping a collaborative approach to India's urban transformation, ensuring alignment with evolving challenges and opportunities. It reinforced the commitment of India and the EU to drive smart, sustainable, and inclusive urban development in line with MoHUA's programs and missions.

H.E. Hervé Delphin, Ambassador, Delegation of the European Union to India highlighted the importance

of EU-India cooperation in urban development, stating, "Since 2017 the EU has been engaged in accompanying and supporting Indian Government's planning the development of Indian cities. With the right policies in place, urbanization can be an enormous opportunity for sustainability. Smart and sustainable urbanisation has been at the core of our partnership: to improve the eco-design of cities; to improve waste disposal, to improve water recycling; to facilitate urban mobility with financing of metros." He added that, "With over C 45 million [EUR 400 crores] we have leveraged over C 1 billion [EUR 9000 crores] of capital to support sustainable urbanisation. It is our commitment to pursue this effort in the period 2025-2027."

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Waqf panel has ignored opinion of Muslims, will run nationwide movement if bill passed: AIMPLB

New Delhi
With the report of the Joint Committee on Waqf (Amendment) Bill tabled in Lok Sabha, the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) on Thursday alleged that the panel has completely ignored the opinion of Indian Muslims and unilaterally moved ahead with an "arbitrary undemocratic process". The AIMPLB said if the Waqf bill is passed, it will run a nationwide movement against it within the framework of the Constitution.

The board urged the government not to move forward with any such bill on Waqf and withdraw its steps. Addressing a press conference here, AIMPLB president Khalid Saifullah Rahmani said the founding fathers of the country dreamed that this would be a country which is different from other nations in the world as people of different religion, language, culture and traditions live here.

He said a lot of lies have been spread on the Waqf issue and the Waqf bill is based on "religious discrimination". "It is our constitutional right to live our life according to our religion and run institutions as per our customs and traditions," he said. Rahmani pointed out that the religious places of Sikhs and Hindus are run by members of the respective communities.

"We have no objection to



the management of the religious places be done by people of that religion but we should have the same rights. The mosques, cemeteries and other places must be run by Muslims," he said. "The current government spreads lies and dislikes truth. They propagate that Waqf will take over all properties and can take any land. When there are courts in the country how someone can take over any property like this," Rahmani asked.

The Waqf issue is not a fight between Hindus and Muslims or between minority and majority but it is a fight for justice, the AIMPLB chief said. Rahmani said AIMPLB representatives had conveyed their message to BJP allies -- JD(U) chief Nitish Kumar and TDP president N Chandrababu Naidu -- to not support the bill and side

with justice.

Deputy Ameer Jamat-e-Islami Hind Malik Moatassim Khan said if Kumar and Naidu do not pay heed to the calls against the bill, they will have to pay a political price for it. Speaking at the presser, Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind president Arshad Madani slammed the government over the Waqf issue and said it was against the Constitution.

His remarks came after the report of the Joint Committee on Waqf (Amendment) Bill was tabled in the Lok Sabha on Thursday. In a statement, the AIMPLB said it is unfortunate that the Waqf Amendment Bill was presented in Parliament. "The way the ruling party, its allies and the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) have completely ignored the stance and opinions of Indian Muslims, views of op-

position members within the JPC and have unilaterally pushed their arbitrary undemocratic process is highly condemnable," the AIMPLB said.

"We believe that the government still has an opportunity to not bring this bill, which poses a direct threat to Waqf properties and aims to deprive Muslims of their mosques, eidgahs, madrasas, dargahs and graveyards etc.," it said. The government must act responsibly and uphold its stated commitment of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikaas', the Muslim body said.

"Muslims across India, including scholars from various sects, religious and community organisations, prominent madrasas and intellectuals have collectively opposed this bill. Crores of Muslims have submitted their objections via

email, presenting well-reasoned arguments. In matters of this nature, the opinions of the affected stakeholders hold paramount importance, as this is a fundamental democratic principle. However, these voices have been completely ignored," it alleged.

"We urge all opposition parties and even the ruling BJP's allies to ensure that this bill is not passed in Parliament," the AIMPLB said. The Muslim body also said it will not accept the bill even if it is passed and will pursue all "peaceful, legal and democratic" options.

The report of the joint committee of Parliament on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill was submitted to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on January 30. The panel had adopted by a majority vote its report that contained changes suggested by members of the ruling BJP, prompting the opposition to dub the exercise an attempt to destroy Waqf boards. The AIMPLB also hit out at the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in Uttarakhand.

"Another alarming move by the ruling party is the Uttarakhand government's enforcement of the UCC. Following this, the Gujarat government has also formed a committee to draft UCC in its state. We categorically state that no state has the authority to enforce UCC on its own," it said.

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"No deletions or removals from JPC report": Kiran Rijiju

New Delhi
Aid uproar in the Rajya Sabha over the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) report on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, Union Minister Kiren Rijiju on Thursday said that the JPC report has no deletions or removals of dissent from the report.

Opposition leaders staged a walkout during the discussion on the JPC report, alleging irregularities.

Refuting these claims, Rijiju accused them of creating an unnecessary controversy.

"I have checked the concerns raised by the Opposition. There have been no deletions or removals from the report. Everything is on the floor of the House. On what basis can such an issue be



raised? The members of the Opposition are creating an unnecessary issue, which is not a fact. The allegation is false," Rijiju said in the Rajya Sabha.

He further clarified that the JPC followed due procedure and that opposition members actively participated in all proceedings over the past six

months.

"The JPC conducted the entire proceedings as per the rules. All the Opposition members of the JPC participated in all the proceedings over the last 6 months. All the dissent notes are attached in the Appendix of the report. They cannot mislead the House," he added.

Rijiju also claimed that no JPC had worked as transparently as this one.

The JPC report on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, was tabled in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday amid protests and continuous sloganeering from opposition members.

Bharatiya Janata Party

(BJP) MP Medha Vishram Kulkarni presented the report. She also tabled a copy of the record of evidence given before the panel on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024.

The presentation of the JPC report was followed by uproar in the Upper House of Parliament, leading to the adjournment of the session until 11:20 am. However, as the proceedings resumed, the house again witnessed disruptions from the opposition MPs.

Earlier today, Jagadambika Pal, BJP MP and Chairman of the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, said that the JPC would present its report in Parliament after six months of nationwide consultations.

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The JPC Chairman emphasized that the committee toured the country to collect input before finalizing the report, which included the adoption of 25 amendments across 14 clauses.

"Today, the JPC will produce its report in Parliament. To have a detailed discussion and deliberation, the JPC was formed six months ago. In the last six months, we have prepared a report after touring the whole nation. We have adopted 25 amendments in 14 clauses," he said.

Meanwhile, Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi said that instead of focusing on the already available Waqf Act, an attempt is being made to bring a politically motivated amendment.

British Indian minister announces new Windrush scandal redressal approach

London: The UK government on Thursday announced a reset in its approach towards addressing the historic Windrush scandal, which wrongly denied citizenship rights to thousands of migrants from Commonwealth countries including India.

The Home Office is inviting applications to appoint a new Windrush Commissioner, who will be tasked with driving forward change and holding officials to account. The new Commissioner will be an "independent advocate" for all those affected by the scandal, which saw thousands suffer through no fault of their own because of their inability to produce documents to prove their right to live in the UK.

"The appointment of a Windrush Commissioner will mark a vital step in resetting the government's response to the Home Office Windrush scandal and delivering the change that the victims of this scandal want and deserve to see," said Seema Malhotra, UK's Minister for Migration and Citizenship.

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Day after UN report, BNP expects India to repatriate former Bangladesh PM Hasina

Bangladesh: Former prime minister Khaleda Zia's party on Thursday said it expects India to repatriate her rival counterpart Sheikh Hasina to stand trial after a UN fact-finding report claimed her ousted regime tried to hold onto power through systematic attacks and killings of protesters last year. The nearly 16-year-long Hasina's Awami League (AL) regime was toppled in a students' uprising on August 5, 2024 when she secretly fled Bangladesh for India.

Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party's (BNP) secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir told a press conference here that the UN report said the mass killings, human rights violations and the destruction of democracy and institutions were carried out on Hasina's orders, and it was "proven that Hasina is a fascist who has tortured, persecuted and killed the people of this country."

He said he thanked the UN fact-finding committee for the report, "which correctly states that the killings were carried out as per the orders of a particular individual, fascist Hasina."

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the Awami League party, systematically engaged in a range of serious human rights violations during last year's student-led protests.

"We therefore call upon the Indian government today to immediately return her (Hasina) and her accomplices to Bangladesh and hand her over to the government for trial," Alamgir said.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Fact-Finding Report: 'Human Rights Violations and Abuses related to the Protests of July and August 2024 in Bangladesh' was released on Wednesday.

'Haven't received any letter from any one': COAS

Islamabad: Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir on Thursday has denied receiving any letter from any one, stating that 'even if any such letter was received, he would forward it to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.'

Speaking informally to journalists during a luncheon hosted by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the Prime Minister's House, General Munir said, "I have not received any letter from anyone, and even if I do, I will not read it. I will send it to the Prime Minister."

The army chief highlighted that Pakistan is progressing well and reiterated his commitment to the country's development and stability.

The statement comes a day after PTI lawyer Faisal Chaudhry claimed outside Adiala Jail that Imran Khan had sent a third letter to the army chief, raising concerns about alleged electoral fraud that he

said favoured a minority over the majority.

Chaudhry stated that Imran Khan has shared the contents of the letter with PTI leadership, and the letter will cover six main points. He confirmed that the letter would address issues such as the need for deep structural reforms, the damage caused to democracy by the government's policies, and other critical matters.

Chaudhry also revealed that Khan and other party leaders had appeared in the GHQ case, and that PTI has decided to appoint Aamir Dagar as a member of the opposition's negotiation committee. He added that new members would also be included in the political committee, with a formal notification set to be issued today.

Former Prime Minister Imran Khan had earlier written a second open letter to Army Chief General Asim Munir, following up on a previous letter that aimed to address the widening gap between the military and the public.

Erdogan urges India, Pakistan to resolve Kashmir issue through dialogue

Islamabad: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Thursday said that the Kashmir issue should be resolved through dialogue between India and Pakistan, with due consideration for the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

President Erdogan, who is in Pakistan on a two-day visit, made the comments after holding one-on-one and delegation talks with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.



The leaders also witnessed the signing ceremony of 24 agreements and a Memorandum of

Understanding between the two sides.

Following this, they read statements to the

media, expressing resolve to strengthen their bilateral ties, during which Erdogan also talked about the Kashmir issue.

"The Kashmir issue should be addressed according to the UN resolution through dialogue and keeping in mind the aspirations of the people of Kashmir," Erdogan said.

"Our state and our nation, as in the past, stands in solidarity with our Kashmiri brothers

today," he added. India has repeatedly emphasised that the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh were, are, and shall forever remain an integral part of the country.

The ties between the two countries nosedived after India abrogated Article 370 of the Constitution, revoking the special status of Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcating the State into two Union Territories on Au-

gust 5, 2019. In his statement, President Erdogan also showed keen interest in promoting ties with Pakistan. "In the seventh session of our council, which we just concluded, we have agreed to further strengthen our relationship," he said.

"Within the framework of this visit, we have signed a total of 24 agreements and MoUs in the fields of trade, water resources, agriculture, energy, culture,

family, and social services, along with science, banking, education, defence, and health."

Speaking on the occasion, Shehbaz said that Pakistan was the second home of the Turkish leader and added that it was wonderful to have him back after five years. "The people of Pakistan are extremely happy today to see you, along with your delegation, visiting our brotherly country," he said.

BUSINESS

Adani Withdraws From USD 1 Billion Sri Lanka Power Project

New Delhi: Adani Green Energy, the renewable arm of billionaire Gautam Adani's conglomerate, has withdrawn from two proposed wind power projects in Sri Lanka, following the island nation's new government deciding to renegotiate tariffs.

"Adani Green Energy has conveyed its Board's decision to respectfully withdraw from further engagement in the renewable energy (RE) wind energy project and two transmission projects in Sri Lanka," the firm said in a statement.

The company was to invest a total of USD 1 billion in generating electricity from wind at two projects and laying transmitting lines to take it to users. The plan came under the scrutiny of the newly elected administration Anura Kumara Dissanayake who wanted to reduce electricity costs.

"However, we remain committed to Sri Lanka and are open to future collaboration if the government of Sri Lanka so desires" AGL said. Adani group, however,

continues to be invested in a USD 700 million terminal project at Sri Lanka's largest port in Colombo.

AEGL was originally supposed to develop two wind farms with a total capacity of 484 megawatts in Sri Lanka's Mannar and Pooneryn regions, with an investment of USD 740 million.

The project, slated for completion by mid-2026, had a rough start with opposition from environmental groups and legal challenges in Sri Lanka's Supreme Court over ecological concerns.

In May last year, Sri Lanka's previous government agreed to purchase power from the project. Adani wind plant at USD 0.826 per kilowatt-hour. The new government began investigating the contract following an indictment against the Adani group founder chairman Gautam Adani and his key associates in a US Court for allegedly paying bribes to Indian officials to secure contracts to supply renewable energy in the country.

VI Faces Rs 6,091 Cr Bank Guarantee Demand from DoT

New Delhi: The Department of Telecom (DoT) has asked debt-ridden telecom operator Vodafone Idea to either deposit a bank guarantee of Rs 6,090.7 crore or Rs 5,493.2 crore in cash for shortfall of aggregate payment made for spectrum auctions the company acquired in 2015, the company said.

The company, however, is in discussion with the DoT to pay the dues through equity.

"The aggregate payment made by the company for each of spectrum auctions are greater than the pro-rated value of spectrum other than for the 2015 auction, where there is one-time partial shortfall and DoT has requested either to provide bank guarantee of Rs 60,907 million (Rs 6,090.7 crore) for one year or make a cash payment of Rs 54,932 million (Rs 5,493.2 crore) by March



10, 2025." Vodafone Idea Non-Executive Director Himanshu Kapania said in a note.

As on December 2024, the outstanding debt from banks (including interest accrued but not due) of the group is Rs 2,345.1 crore and deferred payment obligation towards spectrum payable over the years till FY 2044 and AGR

(including interest accrued but not due) payable over the years till FY 2031 of the group aggregates to over Rs 2.27 lakh crore.

"The company continues to be in discussions with DoT and has requested to arrive at a solution for this requirement as envisaged in the telecom reforms package 2021," Kapania said.

aggregate to Rs 32,723.5 crore.

Kapania said in case there is any shortfall in payment to the government then the company expects it to be converted into equity.

The government is the largest single shareholder in Vodafone Idea with 23.45 per cent stake as of December 31, 2024.

VII. Promoters -- Aditya Birla Group and Vodafone Group -- hold 14.76 per cent and 22.56 per cent stake in the company, respectively.

Vodafone Idea on Tuesday reported narrowing of losses to Rs 6,609.3 crore during the December quarter, as the debt-laden telco clinched a sequential rise in ARPU.

The revenue from operations stood at Rs 11,117.3 crore during the quarter, over 4 per cent higher than the corresponding period last year.

GAIL To Exit US Shale Venture

New Delhi: State-owned gas utility GAIL (India) Ltd plans to exit its shale gas venture in the US, following in the footsteps of Reliance Industries Ltd and Oil India Ltd.

India's largest gas transportation and marketing company has floated a tender to sell its 20 per cent interest in Eagle Ford Shale Assets in Texas US, according to the tender document. Bids have been invited by February 14 for the sale of GAIL's entire holding in the Eagle Ford.

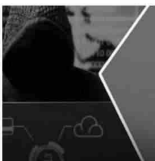
The transaction will be effective January 1, 2025, the document showed. "We are not making much money there because of the low gas prices (in the US)," a company source said on the sidelines of India Energy Week. "The venture is housed in a private company (which is a subsidiary of GAIL). If it is not making profits the owners will ask questions."

GAIL had in September 2011 acquired its first shale gas asset in the US when it took a 20 per cent interest in Nasdaq-listed Carrizo Oil & Gas Inc's Eagle Ford Shale acreage for USD 95 million. The Eagle Ford asset was spread over 20,000 acres, out of which GAIL Global (USA) Inc - the wholly owned subsidiary of the state-owned firm that was for the acquisition - got 4,040 net acres spread over four countries in Texas.

At that time, the partners had agreed to spend around USD 300 million over a period of the next five years to develop the asset. This was besides the acquisition cost of GAIL, which consisted of an upfront cash payment of USD 63.7 million and a carry amount of USD 31.3 million linked to Carrizo's future drilling and development costs.

The WazirX Hack: A costly lesson in Crypto Security that India can't ignore

New Delhi: For thousands of Indians, WazirX wasn't just a crypto exchange—it was a trusted bridge to the future of digital finance. But that trust crumbled overnight. On July 18, 2024, a cyberattack rocked the platform, with hackers making off with INR 2000 crores worth of digital assets. The breach exposed alarming gaps in security, sending a chill through India's crypto community and raising urgent questions: How safe are our digital investments? And what's stopping this from happening again?



Picture this: You check your crypto wallet, expecting to see your hard-earned investments. Instead, there's nothing. That was the grim reality thousands of WazirX users woke up to. Hackers manipulated the platform's multisignature wallets and smart con-

tracts—critical security features that should have protected funds but, in this case, became the very loophole that the attackers exploited.

Authorities suspect North Korea's infamous Lazarus Group, a state-backed hacking network notorious for draining

crypto exchanges worldwide. In 2024 alone, they've stolen over \$659 million in digital assets, with WazirX contributing a painful \$235 million to that staggering total. These hackers use sophisticated laundering methods like cross-chain bridges and crypto mixers, making stolen funds nearly impossible to track. If one of India's biggest exchanges can be breached, it raises a sobering truth—no platform is truly safe without airtight security measures.

While Indian banks and Capital Market par-

ticipants are bound by strict security frameworks enforced by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), the crypto industry operates in a grey zone. Banks must conduct regular cybersecurity audits, maintain real-time threat monitoring, and follow rigorous risk management protocols—measures that have effectively minimized large-scale fraud in traditional finance. However, there is no such requirement mandated for Cryptocurrency Exchanges, leaving it to their own wisdom.

Japan and Singapore have adopted regulatory approaches for crypto exchanges, implementing mandatory audits and strict security policies to curb fraud. The results speak for themselves: significantly fewer breaches in those regions. If India, home to one of the largest crypto user bases in the world, doesn't act now, it risks becoming an easy hunting ground for cybercriminals.

For too long, rapid expansion has taken precedence over security in the crypto space. While some platforms boast ISO certifications, there's no

universal cybersecurity standard. Many smaller exchanges don't even have the resources for thorough security audits, leaving gaping holes for cybercriminals to exploit. The WazirX breach isn't just a wake-up call—it's a blaring siren. This is a pivotal moment for India's crypto ecosystem. Without strong regulations and proactive security investments, the risk of another devastating attack looms large. The government must take decisive action, while the exchanges must step up and prioritize user protection.

Cricket

RCB captain Rajat Patidar reflects on his 'quiet, calm' captaincy style

Bengaluru
Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) batter and newly-appointed skipper Rajat Patidar on Thursday talked about his style of captaincy and his self-belief after being chosen as Faf Du Plessis' successor ahead of the 2025 Indian Premier League (IPL) season.

Thursday marked the start of a new era for RCB as the 31-year-old Patidar, who has played a crucial role in his franchise's and state Madhya Pradesh's success over the years, was chosen as the new skipper of the Red and Gold franchise ahead of the 2025 season.

Speaking in a video posted by RCB on their Instagram, Patidar expressed his happiness at being chosen as the captain and elaborated on his captaincy style, which relies on calmness, game awareness and being rock solid under pressure.

"My way of captaincy is slightly different. I am more quiet, calm and at the same time, I am aware of the situations, what is needed and what is not needed. I do not express much and I do not really panic in pressure situations and I think this is my strength. There are a lot of experienced leaders in the group of Indians and overseas as well. So I think their input will definitely help me in my leadership role," he said.

Reflecting on his journey with RCB, which saw him get released by the team after playing four games in 2021 and being welcomed back as a replacement player following an injury in the camp during 2022 for Rs 20 lakhs, Patidar expressed happiness on his ongoing



stint with RCB and support from its loyal fanbase over the years.

"I started playing in 2021 for RCB when I got a chance. I did not get picked in the mega auction and I was a bit emotional that I would not get a second chance. All these things were going on in my mind and RCB picked me as a replacement. I had a belief that if this happens, something good will happen," recalled Patidar.

"I am very thankful that they have given me a second chance. I was very confident that if I can come this far, I can go further. It was a belief that brought me here and the whole scenario changed," he added.

It was Patidar's century against Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) during the 2022 IPL eliminator, the first by an uncapped player in an IPL playoff that shot the right-hander into stardom. However, injuries kept him away from the 2023 season. While he spent time

away from the sidelines, fans kept supporting him.

"I got injured in 2023 and I was away from the game for a year. I had ups and downs in my IPL journey. The way the fans supported me during that time (during injury) was a good moment for me. I felt that I have RCB fans with me who are supporting me. When I came back in 2024, everyone knew that it is tough to come back after an injury," recalled Patidar.

However, there is one thing that kept Patidar going despite all hurdles, his belief in himself.

"Wherever I go, that word (belief) is always with me. That belief is my strength. I carry that belief with me wherever I go. The way we took the team to the next level and qualified from the bottom (in the 2024 season), that was a happy moment for me," he added.

Patidar said that getting appointed

as a captain has been the "best moment" of his IPL career.

"I am very happy and ready for the upcoming challenges," he concluded.

Patidar has captaincy experience as a part of the Madhya Pradesh team across all formats. In last year's Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, he led MP to the finals and played a crucial role in their campaign with 428 runs in 10 matches at an average of 61.14, a strike rate of over 186 and five fifties, ending as the second-highest run-getter in the tournament.

Patidar's game against spin and ability to tonk sixes against them has been a standout feature of his game.

He has been one of RCB's standout Indian talents since 2022, scoring 799 runs in 24 innings at an average of 34.73 and a strike rate of 158.84, with a century and seven fifties. His century against LSG during the 2022 IPL eliminator is a standout knock, making him the first uncapped player ever with a century in the IPL playoffs.

Last season for RCB, he scored 395 runs in 13 matches at an average of over 60 and strike rate above 177, with five fifties. His fiery knocks were crucial in RCB's late surge into playoffs after just one win in first eight games.

He has also played an ODI and three Tests for India, having made his international debut against South Africa in 2023-end, playing a fiery 22-run knock.

In Tests, he struggled against England at home last year, with just 63 runs across six innings and best score of 32.

MI, RCB pick Parunika Sisodia, Nuzhat Parween as injury replacements ahead of WPL 2025

New Delhi
Mumbai Indians (MI) picked Parunika Sisodia as a replacement for Pooja Vastrakar for the upcoming edition of the Women's Premier League (WPL) 2025, as stated in a release from WPL.

Vastrakar was ruled out of the third edition of the WPL due to an injury. Parunika Sisodia who was picked by the Gujarat Giants in the inaugural edition of the league, will now feature in the Mumbai Indians squad for WPL 2025. The left-arm spinner pitched in with crucial breakthroughs during the recently concluded ICC Women's U19 T20 World Cup and was adjudged the Player of the Match in the semi-final against England. She joined MI for Rs 10 lakh.

Meanwhile, Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) picked Nuzhat Parween as replacement for injured Asha Soghana. Parween, the wicketkeeper from Railways has represented India in 5 T20s and will join RCB for her base price of Rs. 30 lakh.

The WPL 2025 is set to begin on February 14 and will be played across multiple venues, including Vadodara, Bengaluru, Lucknow, and Mumbai. Gujarat Giants will take on the defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru in the WPL 2025 opener on February 14, 2025, at BCA Stadium in Vadodara.

In the previous season of the WPL, the Bengaluru-based franchise emerged as the winner of the tournament after beating Delhi Capitals by eight wickets. On the other hand, Mumbai Indians, secured the second spot in the WPL 2024 standings with 10 points. The Mumbai-based franchise's voyage came



to an end in the play-offs after conceding a five-run defeat against RCB.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru Squad: Smriti Mandhana (C), Sabbineni Meghana, Richa Ghosh, Elyse Perry, Georgia Wareham, Shreyanka Patil, Nuzhat Parween, Kim Garth, Renuka Singh, Heather Graham, Ekta Bisht, Kanika Ahuja, Danni Wyatt (traded), Prema Rawat, Joshitha VJ, Raghvi Bist, Jagrivi Pawar, Niki Prasad, Charlie Dean, Prema Rawat, Joshitha VJ, Raghvi Bist, Jagrivi Pawar, Niki Prasad.

Mumbai Indians Squad: Amanjot Kaur, Amelia Kerr, Chloe Tryon, Harmanpreet Kaur (C), Hayley Matthews, Jintimani Kalita, Natalie Sciver, Parunika Sisodia, Saika Ishaque, Yasika Bhatia, Shabnim Ismail, Amundesh Kaur, S. Sajana, Keerthana, Nadine de Klerk, G. Kamalini, Sanskriti Gupta, Akshita Maheshwari, Nadine de Klerk, G. Kamalini, Sanskriti Gupta, Akshita Maheshwari.

"India was nothing we had not seen...": Former Pakistan captain Sarfaraz

Islamabad
Former Pakistan captain Sarfaraz Ahmed, who secured the ICC Champions Trophy for his country in the 2017 edition, recalled how the Men in Green regrouped with the help of seniors after a shock start to their campaign eight years back and the message that was communicated to the group ahead of the high-profile final against arch-rivals India.

Pakistan delivered India one of its biggest cricketing jolts when they defeated the Men in Blue in the title clash at The Oval in 2017 by a thumping margin of 180 runs while defending 339 runs. This was Pakistan's third major title in white-ball cricket, after the 50-over World Cup triumph in 1992 and the T20 World Cup win in 2009.

Unlike in the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup or the Men's T20 World Cup, where India has a significant advantage over Pakistan, the Men in Green have a 3-2 advantage against the latter in the Champions Trophy.

However, their 2017 campaign got off to a shocking start when they lost to a strong India side by 124 runs. Rohit Sharma (91), Shikhar Dhawan (68), and Virat Kohli (81) starred with the willow before the bowling attack finished the job.

Sarfaraz recalled how the side regrouped under the guidance of senior players like Shoaib Malik and Mohammad Hafeez, something he feels that the present Pakistan side will need too.

"Afterwards (following defeat to India in the group stage), we had a great team meeting, and some of our senior guys - Shoaib Malik, Mohammad Hafeez - all said their piece. You need those types of characters around you. We changed our mindset from that day. The acrimony was very good for us, we made a couple of changes to the team and it helped our confidence," said the former captain as quoted by ICC.

Pakistan turned it around after the loss to India, beating South Africa, Sri Lanka, and England on the way to the Finals.

While the addition of Fakhar Zaman, who debuted in the group stage game against South Africa, added solidity and firepower to the top, the likes of Junaid Khan and Rumman Raees gave Pakistan control and wickets with the new ball as they showed in the semi-final against England, which Pakistan won by eight wickets.

Pacer Spencer Johnson reflects on replacing Starc in Australia squad for CT 2025

Melbourne
Australia pacer Spencer Johnson opened up on replacing Mitchell Starc in the Aussie squad for the upcoming Champions Trophy 2025 and said that he will try to play a similar role to what the 35-year-old has done for Aussies in the past.

Mitchell Starc had been withdrawn from the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy, citing personal reasons, as Australia reshuffled their 15-player squad under the leadership of Steve Smith.

Australia was already dealing with significant setbacks following the injuries to Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood, and Mitchell Marsh. Starc's withdrawal further depletes their frontline pace attack for the tournament, which begins on February 19 in Pakistan and the UAE.

The left-arm pacer, who has requested privacy regarding his decision, showed signs of discomfort during the latter stages of the second Test against Sri Lanka in Galle.

Johnson accepted that he has big shoes to fill in the upcoming Champions Trophy 2025.

"It's obviously something I've pictured in my mind, to come in and play a similar role to him. There were a few nerves there and obviously big shoes to fill. I think I am better for the run, it's only my third ODI, hopefully a few more and I'll be able to replicate some of the stuff he's done," Johnson was quoted by ESPNcricinfo as saying.

He added that the pitches in Pakistan will be a bit flatter in the forthcoming ICC tournament.

"Guys like Trent Boult and Starc, left-armers who are aggressive, hopefully it's what I can bring to Pakistan. I think this wicket is not what we're



Mitchell Starc had been withdrawn from the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy, citing personal reasons, as Australia reshuffled their 15-player squad under the leadership of Steve Smith.

going to get over in Pakistan. It was nice to bowl on early with the new ball, and there was a bit of nip and carry. But [Pakistan] will be different to what we got here, potentially a bit flatter," he added.

Australia Champions Trophy squad: Steve Smith (C), Sean Abbott, Alex Carey, Ben Dwarshuis, Nathan Ellis, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Aaron Hardie, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Spencer Johnson, Marcus Labuschagne, Glenn Maxwell, Tanveer Sangha, Matthew Short, Adam Zampa.

"He is a different Babar to the one...": Former skipper Sarfaraz Ahmed

Islamabad
Former Pakistan captain Sarfaraz Ahmed, the winning captain of the 2017 ICC Champions Trophy, spoke on how batting of openers Fakhar Zaman and a more "mature" Babar Azam will help the hosts in their title defence starting from February 19 onwards.

Pakistan will kickstart the Champions Trophy with the tournament opener against New Zealand at Karachi on February 19. This time around, Pakistan is going with the duo of Fakhar, the team's centurion in the 2017 final against arch-rivals India, and Babar as openers.

Speaking on the team composition, Sarfaraz, who last played an ODI for Pakistan back in 2021 and an international match in 2023, said as quoted by ICC, "Pakistan has a really good chance of defending that title and I think they have a strong team. Some of the boys from 2017 are still there and we are talking about some of the best - especially Babar Azam."

"He is a different Babar to the one that played in 2017, a more mature player and a dominant player in the game. His batting will be so important for Pakistan and so will Fakhar Zaman's."

However, Babar is under scrutiny for his form, having last hit an ODI century against Nepal during the Asia Cup in August 2023. It was also his last international century and has been struggling with his conversion rate across all formats. Across the last eight ODIs since 2024, Babar has made 261 runs in eight innings at an average of 43.50, with two half-centuries and best score of 73.

Fakhar, on the other hand, has been in red-hot form since 2023. Since then, he has played 22 ODIs,



scoring 989 runs at an average of 52.05 and a strike rate of around 96, with four centuries and three fifties. If Babar is known for calculated risks, it is Fakhar who takes the game on since ball one.

He also said that pacers Shaheen Shah Afridi and Haris Rauf are also performing well.

"The captain, Mohammad Rizwan, is also a wicketkeeper-batter, which worked pretty well for me back in 2017," he added.

Ahead of the intense, blockbuster clash against arch-rivals India at Dubai on February 23, Sarfaraz wants Men in Green to play intense but smart cricket against arch-rivals India on February 23, when the two sides face off in Dubai.

"Whenever we meet, it is a special occasion and there is so much hype and pressure around it. But as players, you need to stay calm, try and block that noise out, and just play with the same intensity as you would play Australia or any other team," said the former batter.

The ICC Champions Trophy 2025 marks the tournament's return after

an eight-year hiatus and is set to take place in Pakistan, starting February 19th. As the host nation and defending champions, Pakistan will compete against seven of the world's best teams to retain their title.

The eight teams are divided into two groups for the tournament's opening stage. Each team will play three group-stage matches, with the top two from each group advancing to the semi-finals.

Group A features Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and New Zealand, while Group B includes Afghanistan, England, Australia, and South Africa.

Pakistan squad for Champions Trophy: Mohammad Rizwan (c), Babar Azam, Fakhar Zaman, Kamran Ghulam, Saud Shaqueel, Tayyab Tahir, Faheem Ashraf, Khushdil Shah, Salim Ali Agha, Usman Khan, Abrar Ahmed, Haris Rauf, Mohammad Hasnain, Naseem Shah, Shaheen Shah Afridi.

Pakistan fixtures for Champions Trophy: Against New Zealand (February 19 at Karachi), India (February 23 at Dubai and Bangladesh (February 27 at Rawalpindi).

Gujarat Giants ready to bring "aggressive approach" as they begin WPL 2025 campaign at home

Vadodara
The third season of the Women's Premier League (WPL) is upon us, and Gujarat Giants are all set for their home debut as they take on defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru in Vadodara.

Speaking ahead of the match, both Head Coach Michael Klinger and Captain Ashleigh Gardner shared their thoughts on the team's readiness for the season and their excitement about playing at home for the first time.

"Our first three games are in front of a Gujarat crowd. Hopefully, not just from Baroda, but fans from across the



region will come in, wear orange, and support us. Last year, we had to

play against RCB in Bangalore and Delhi Capitals in Delhi, and they had some big crowds there. It would be great if we can create the same atmosphere here," Klinger was quoted in a release from Gujarat Giants as saying.

Gardner, who will lead the side for the first time, added, "We get to play in front of our home fans for the first time, which is exciting. I feel like we've built a really strong base with our fans, and hopefully, we can start the season the way we really want to - especially here at home, playing in front of our fans."

In their home leg, Gujarat Giants

will also face UP Warriorz on February 16, followed by Mumbai Indians on February 18. Speaking about the conditions at BCA Stadium, Klinger said, "The stadium looks fantastic, and from all reports, the wicket is really good - a proper batting wicket that will hopefully produce a lot of runs, mainly for our team, but either way, it'll make for exciting cricket for the crowd."

When asked about expectations for the season, the 27-year-old Aussie all-rounder said, "With the team we have at the moment, I think we can play some really competitive and exciting cricket, which is really cool."

Meanwhile, Klinger revealed that the team will take an aggressive approach in the tournament.

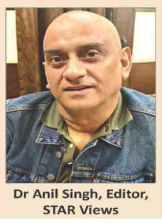
"I think you can expect some attacking cricket. I feel we have the squad now, with the batting depth and firepower, to play really aggressively. We've set some targets that we're looking to achieve, and we're certainly aiming to play entertaining cricket," Klinger said.

"But more than anything, I hope people see us as an enthusiastic group with a lot of energy. That will be most evident in our fielding because, for us, that's a non-negotiable," he concluded.

"Look its tough and there is always going to be hype when you have a 19-year-old making debut because he is in rare company at his age." — Simon Katich



Rajya Sabha: A pillar of Parliamentary Democracy amidst political hostilities



Dr Anil Singh, Editor, STAR Views

The Rajya Sabha, the upper house of India's Parliament, has long been a crucial institution in the country's legislative framework. Designed to be a house of elders, it serves as a forum for comprehensive debates, policy scrutiny, and legislative refinement. In the current parliamentary session, the Rajya Sabha assumes even greater significance as it navigates an increasingly contentious political landscape.

Under the leadership of Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar, a seasoned lawyer and a constitutional expert, the Rajya Sabha has maintained its decorum despite an increasingly confrontational opposition. His legal acumen and nuanced understanding of the Constitution have enabled him to conduct proceedings with firmness and fairness. However, the ongoing hostilities between the government and the opposition have raised questions about the role and relevance of the Rajya Sabha in India's democratic framework. Is it merely a forum for political theatrics, or does it continue to serve its intended purpose of providing constructive deliberation and a check on hasty legislative decisions? The Constitutional Mandate of Rajya Sabha:

The Rajya Sabha, as outlined in the Indian Constitution, is not merely a replica of the Lok Sabha. Unlike the lower house, which is directly elected and reflects the immediate political will of the people, the Rajya Sabha represents the states and provides a more stable and long-term perspective on national governance.

Key constitutional functions of the Rajya Sabha include Legislative Oversight, reviewing and suggesting modifications to bills



passed by the Lok Sabha, ensuring a thorough examination of laws.

Federal Representation: It allows states to have a voice in national policymaking, reinforcing the federal structure of governance. Checks and Balances: It acts as a buffer against majoritarian tendencies by giving space to diverse political opinions. Continuity in Governance: Since the Rajya Sabha is a permanent body, with one-third of its members retiring every two years, it ensures legislative continuity even when Lok Sabha is dissolved.

Given these functions, the Rajya Sabha remains indispensable in maintaining a balanced, well-deliberated legislative process. Jagdeep Dhankhar's Chairmanship, Legal Expertise Amidst Political Challenges:

Jagdeep Dhankhar brings to the Rajya Sabha an authoritative command over constitutional principles, owing to his extensive legal background. As a former lawyer and governor, he understands the intricacies of governance and parliamentary norms. His approach to conducting debates and maintaining decorum has been characterized by strict adherence to parliamentary rules while allowing robust discussions.

In the current session,

opposition parties have frequently challenged the government's legislative agenda, often targeting the Chairman himself. Allegations of bias and procedural deviations have been raised, but Dhankhar's responses have remained rooted in constitutional principles. His emphasis on discipline, decorum, and adherence to parliamentary procedures has ensured that despite disruptions, the Rajya Sabha functions effectively.

Challenges in the Current Session:

Intense Political Polarization: With opposition parties aggressively questioning government policies, debates often turn into heated exchanges. Dhankhar's role in managing these tensions is crucial. Disruptions and Walkouts: The opposition frequently resorts to walkouts and protests, making it difficult for the Rajya Sabha to function smoothly. The Chairman has been firm in discouraging disruptions while allowing healthy debates. Allegations of Bias: Some opposition leaders have accused the Chairman of favoring the ruling party. However, his legal background ensures that he operates within the constitutional framework, emphasizing rule-based governance.

Relevance of Rajya

Sabha in Today's Political Landscape:

Despite criticism and confrontations, the Rajya Sabha remains a crucial institution for Indian democracy. Its relevance is underscored by several factors. A Platform for Serious Debate: Unlike the Lok Sabha where political rhetoric often dominates, the Rajya Sabha provides a space for more nuanced discussions. Experts, former bureaucrats, and intellectuals contribute to policy-making. Preventing Hasty Legislation: In a highly charged political environment, when governments may push laws quickly through the Lok Sabha, the Rajya Sabha acts as a reviewing chamber, ensuring due diligence before a bill becomes law. Ensuring Federal Balance: With members representing states, it maintains India's federal structure, ensuring that regional voices are heard in national decision-making. Safeguarding Constitutional Values: The upper house serves as a guardian of the Constitution by questioning government actions that may threaten democratic principles.

A strong and responsible opposition is essential for democracy. Instead of boycotts and walkouts, the opposition should engage in meaningful discussions. Technological Integration: Adopting digital platforms for policy deliberations and engaging with experts outside the Parliament can make Rajya Sabha proceedings more informed and effective. Balancing Chairman's Authority with Debate Freedom: While maintaining decorum is essential, the Chairman must also allow enough space for opposition voices to be heard. A well-balanced approach is key to Rajya Sabha's credibility.

The Way Ahead

The Rajya Sabha continues to be a vital institution in India's democracy, serving as a house of reasoned debate, legislative scrutiny, and federal representation. Despite the hostile political climate, Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar has effectively upheld constitutional values while managing challenges from both the government and the opposition.

Moving forward, the Rajya Sabha must evolve to meet the demands of modern governance. By fostering a culture of informed debate, ensuring transparency, and strengthening institutional credibility, the upper house can continue to be a pillar of democratic resilience.

As India navigates complex domestic and global challenges, the Rajya Sabha's role as a stabilizing force in democracy remains more relevant than ever. It is not just a chamber of Parliament—it is a guardian of the nation's constitutional spirit.

(The writer is an Editor, STAR Views, New Delhi)

Breaking Time Sudoku

What to do

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

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

Solution, Sudoku

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

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

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

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



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

is from pure mode to cosmos, from life to death, from pure mode

Fake travel agents, agencies, and websites only rob



By Dr Satyavan Saurabh

Illegal immigration occurs when a person leaves his or her country of origin and goes to live in another country in violation of immigration laws. It is an important and delicate matter. Often, young people without jobs who are innocent get caught in the trap of illegal immigration while trying to find employment abroad. Instead of sending a person wishing to travel abroad to the country of his or her choice, unauthorized agents and agencies send him or her to another country. The government has warned people, especially the youth, to be wary of unscrupulous unauthorized travel agencies and agents who deceive them into sending them abroad for work, education, or other reasons. In many of these situations, the life of the person traveling abroad is also at risk. Before making payments, people should contact the travel agencies and companies that have been given permission by the government to travel abroad and ask them all their questions.

People are constantly reminded by the state government to travel abroad only through

authorized travel agencies and agents. Many agents who dupe people by pretending to send money abroad are often found to be unregistered. These fraudulent or unapproved agents post and broadcast their advertisements in various media, thereby deceiving the public and causing them to lose their hard-earned money, property, jewelry, and other assets. The number of such cases is comparatively higher in Punjab and Haryana. It is worrying that in the last six years, Haryana has witnessed an annual increase in the number of illegal immigration cases. These cases involve comparatively many rural residents. Travel agencies make promises of employment to lure unemployed people to travel abroad on work and education visas. After making the payment and applying for a visa, the person often finds that his application has been rejected.

Next, the travel agent recommends the "donkey route." Most people involved in this process are stopped at the border, detained, and sent back to India. There are instances where victims are illegally detained by their

relatives and forced to pay more than they are owed. Additionally, fake tickets and visas may be provided by the travel agent, which may result in the person being denied air travel. People are sometimes duped by fake job offers and official-looking documents sent through emails, etc. Also, agents may send people to countries like Russia and Ukraine on the false pretext of getting a visa for another country. Anyone can create a website with attractive images of popular tourist destinations and claim to provide tour packages. They can connect with more and more people thanks to social media platforms. In fact, when I looked at the websites of various travel agencies, it became clear to me that most of those websites were fraudulent.

For example, according to one of them, it was founded in 2020 and was the "largest and most experienced travel company in the world." I did a lot of research but could not find the names of the company's owners or partners. It did not even have a headline number. Since such frauds are becoming more

common these days, there are some of the warning signs one must consider while choosing an agency. This is the Travel Trade Division of the Union Ministry of Tourism approves travel agencies in the country. In my opinion, customers should approach agencies approved by the ministry. Although the accreditation program is optional and only a few businesses have opted to participate, customer choice may push more businesses to do so. The public should be wary of these unscrupulous travel agents and should not trust any travel agency without doing proper due diligence.

Every state has posted the list of authorized travel agents on their police website for the convenience of the general public. Also, anyone who still falls prey to such frauds should immediately inform the local police station or helpline. Not only can a person lose all his savings, but even a small act of negligence can endanger the lives of his family. As a result, people should take proper safety measures. Citizens should be aware of

such fraudulent immigration activities, not fall prey to false promises of travel agencies offering lucrative job opportunities abroad, especially in Southeast Asian countries, thoroughly check the background of the potential employer, especially when jobs are offered under false pretenses, avoid getting involved in any illegal cyber activity, and contact the Indian Embassy.

The Overseas Workers Resource Centre, a one-stop facilitation center set up by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, provides essential support services to individuals wishing to travel abroad for work. In its recognition and revocation scheme, the ministry should prioritize consumer complaints of unfair trade practices and substandard and negligent services against approved service providers. On its portal, it should also include a section for customer complaints.

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

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MoS Youth Affairs and Sports Khadse releases "Beyond the Field: Report

New Delhi
The Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, Raksha Khadse, on Thursday released the insightful report titled "Beyond the Field: India's Sportstech Evolution," a collaborative effort between the Federation of Indian Fantasy Sports (FIFS) and Deloitte.

The launch event, was attended by some of the prominent dignitaries, industry leaders, and sports professionals like Secretary (Sports) Smt. Sujata Chaturvedi, FIFS Director General Joy Bhattacharya, Deloitte Partner Prashant Rao and FIFS CEO Neil Castelhino, marking a significant milestone in understanding the evolving role of technology in shaping India's sports landscape, as per a press release from FIFS and SAI Media.

Khadse, in her address, welcomed all participants and acknowledged the remarkable collaboration between FIFS and Deloitte in producing this comprehensive report on fan engagement and sports technology. The MoS highlighted India's rapidly evolving sports ecosystem, fueled by various government initiatives like Khelo India, SAI National Centres of Excellence (NCOEs), TOPS (Target Olympic Podium Scheme), ASMITA, and KIRTI, along with the nation's commitment to promoting fitness through the Fit India Movement.

Role of Technology in Transforming Sports

Khadse emphasized the pivotal role of technology in advancing athlete performance, fan engagement, and the overall growth of the sports sector. She



noted that India's rise in sports consumption, driven by digital platforms, OTT streaming, fantasy sports, and social media, has provided new opportunities to increase fan engagement, which is essential for making sports a mass movement.

The report sheds light on how emerging technologies such as wearables, athlete management systems, and sports science tools are revolutionizing athlete training, injury prevention, and performance analysis. The MoS stressed that smart stadiums, along with Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) experiences, are enhancing both in-stadium and virtual fan engagement, making sports more immersive and interactive.

Private Sector and CSR Contributions

Khadse also acknowledged the crucial

role of the private sector in the growth of sports in India. Through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts and strategic collaborations, leading corporations have significantly contributed to the development of various sports disciplines. Notable partnerships include NTPC for archery, REC for athletics, ONGC, Reliance Foundation, and Glenmark, among others. She also highlighted recent initiatives like Odisha's Naval Tata Academy, JSW Sports Centres, and Olympic Gold Quest (OGQ), which have furthered the cause of sports in India, offering world-class training and facilities for athletes.

Public-Private Partnerships and the Role of Startups

The Minister emphasised the need for continued public-private partnerships (PPP) to drive further innovation

and growth within the sports-tech sector. She pointed out that government initiatives such as Startup India and Make in India are playing a critical role in fostering innovation and encouraging Indian entrepreneurs to create homegrown sports technologies.

The collaboration between industry leaders, tech companies, and academic institutions is crucial to ensuring that India remains a global hub for sports excellence, the Minister added. Regulatory clarity, she stated, will be vital to ensuring a fair and thriving sports-tech ecosystem.

Khadse concluded by calling on stakeholders, investors, and entrepreneurs to join hands in shaping the future of sports in India. She praised Deloitte and FIFS for their efforts in producing this important report and encouraged continued discussions and policy recommendations that will drive the next phase of growth for Indian sports.

"The Indian government is committed to nurturing a vibrant sports culture, one that reaches from the grassroots to the national level," she said. "We are optimistic about India's future in sports, and with continued collaboration, we will achieve excellence on the global stage," she added.

The report launched today is expected to serve as a critical tool in understanding the intersection of technology and sports, offering valuable insights into how technology can further revolutionize sports in India.

Yuvraj Sandhu shoots a steady 68, holds on to lead

Kolkata (West Bengal)

Yuvraj Sandhu of Chandigarh hung on to a one-shot lead courtesy his steady two-under 68 on day three of ten referred to as 'moving day' in golf. Yuvraj (63-61-68), a past winner at Tollygunge Club, has a three-day total of 18-under 192 as he continued in the lead for the third consecutive day at the PGTI Players Championship 2025, the 2025 PGTI season-opener.

Bangladesh's Jamal Hossain (65-62-66), fresh from a standout season on the PGTI last year, narrowed down the gap with the leader after he returned a 66 in round three. Jamal's total reads 17-under 193, as he is just one shot behind the leader.

Rahil Gangjee (63-67-66) of Bengaluru, playing at a course where he spent most of his childhood, struck a 66 in round three to be placed third at a total of 14-under 196.

The legendary SSP Chawrasia (71) was the highest-placed among the Kolkata-based professionals as he ended the day in tied 14th at nine-under 201.

Kolkata's Anshul Mishra, the only amateur to make the cut, carded a 69 to be tied 20th at seven-under 203.

Yuvraj Sandhu, the overnight leader by three shots, endured a horrid start on Thursday after he dropped bogeys on the first two holes. Yuvraj, who holds the record for the lowest winning total at Tollygunge Club, then got his round back on track thanks to his consistent hitting and a couple of good up and downs that earned him four birdies.

The putts didn't roll in for the 27-year-old Sandhu on Thursday as he



“We struggled to impose our game, some faced Indian spinners for first time: Jos Buttler



missed multiple birdie conversions from within four to eight feet.

Yuvraj said, "It wasn't a nervous start, I would say, but just a result of some wrong club selections. I soon got a wake-up call when Jamal tied with me for the lead. I did manage to get my act together soon but it was one of those days when the putts just didn't roll in for me. However, I'm glad it happened on the third day and not the last day."

"I'm quite pleased with my hitting and looking at continuing the good rhythm into the final day. I just hope my putter treats me kindly come the last round."

Jamal Hossain, also a former winner at Tollygunge, came up with five birdies and a bogey on Thursday to keep himself on the leader's tail and in the hunt. Jamal missed a chip-in for birdie on the last hole by a whisker.

Last year's champion Manu Gandas (65) closed the day in tied 20th at seven-under 203.

Four Indians in Saudi Ladies International golf



Rivadh

Pranavi Urs and Aditi Ashok will join Diksha Dagar and Tvesa Malik at the 5 million USD sixth Saudi Ladies International golf tournament. The quartet will be part of a field of 112 players in an event that has a combination of individual and team events.

Last season Pranavi Urs, was the top Indian at 17th on the LET Merit List, with Diksha 29th and Tvesa 60th. Aditi played just four events on LET season and focussed on LPGA, where she retained her card.

After a successful pro start on her home Tour, the Women's Pro Tour, Pranavi came close to winning twice, finishing third each time in the Dormy Open and in the Open de Espana.

Diksha was off to a roaring start to 2025 last week as she got into a play-off, but missed out on a third LET win as she lost the play-off to Cara Gainer at the season-opener 2025 Lalla Meryem Cup. Last season, Dagar, who represented India at the Olympics for a second time in Paris had four Top-10s.

Also in 2024, Tvesa Malik regained her LET card and also came close to her first win before losing a play-off to Alice Hewson at the VP Swiss Bank Ladies Open.

This week, there is a huge prize fund on offer. The team competition has a prize fund of 500,000 USD, and the individual competition has a total prize pool of 4.5 million USD.

There will be a 54-hole Individual stroke play alongside a 36-hole Team competition. The field is made up of eight tournament invitations, 62 LET players and 42 players from the top 300 in the Women's World Golf Rankings.

National Equestrian Championship Showjumping 2025 kicks off at Meerut

New Delhi

The Punjab Warriors bounced back in style, securing their second win of the InBL Pro U25 season with a commanding 81-72 triumph over the Delhi Dribblers at the Thyagraj Indoor Stadium on Thursday.

Uche Dibiama led the charge with a game-high 20 points, while Boston Mazelin was lights out, sinking all four of his attempts from beyond the arc to fuel the Warriors' return to winning ways. The Dribblers struggled to keep pace offensively after a strong first quarter, further hampered by the absence of their playmaker, Alex Mudronja, as stated in a release from InBL Pro U25.

The Warriors stormed into the first quarter, relentlessly attacking the paint through the powerhouse duo of Samuel Taane and Stokley Chaffee.

Meanwhile, the Delhi Dribblers countered with a more aggressive defensive stance, ready to strike from deep with Sahil and Lachlan Barker firing from beyond the arc. Despite the contrasting strategies, the scoreboard stayed tight, with the Dribblers eking out a razor-thin one-point lead as the buzzer sounded.

The intensity only skyrocketed in the second quarter as both teams battled to break the deadlock. It was a high-octane back-and-forth until the Warriors turned up the heat on defence, forcing



turnovers and capitalizing on fast breaks. Manoj and Uche Dibiama lit up the three-point line, sparking an electrifying run that pushed the lead to 11.

Just when it looked like the Warriors might run away with it, James Montgomery kept the Dribblers in the fight, trading buckets with Boston Mazelin, who drained back-to-back clutch threes to keep the Warriors ahead by 11 points at halftime.

The Dribblers faltered at the start of the third quarter, struggling to find their rhythm while the Warriors pounced on the opportunity.

Lucas Barker and Uche Dibiama wasted no time, draining deep threes to stretch the lead even further. With relentless hustle, the Warriors dominated the boards, crashing for rebounds and capitalizing on second-chance opportunities to keep the pressure on.

Punjab Warriors roar back with 81-72 victory over Delhi Dribblers

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Wildcards for Manas Dhamne, Aryan Shah, Karan Singh at MahaOpen ATP Challenger 100 Men's C'ships

Pune (Maharashtra)

In keeping with the vision to support the Young India Tennis Brigade, upcoming players Manas Dhamne, Aryan Shah and Karan Singh have been handed over the Main Draw wildcards at the Maha Open ATP Challenger 100 Men's Tennis Championship organized by Maharashtra State Lawn Tennis Association (MSLTA) in association with the Department of Sports and Youth Services, Government of Maharashtra, PCMC and PMC at the Mhalunge Baleward Tennis Stadium.

The premier high-level ATP Challenger will see top tennis players from 28 countries in action at the Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex at Mhalunge Baleward from February 16 to February 23, 2025. The Pune event is the third of a series of four ATP Challenger events being held in India. The previous tournaments were held in Chennai and Delhi, while the last event will be played in Bengaluru, as stated in a release from



MSLTA.

"Providing international competition of high quality to Indian players is one of the main reasons for us and the PMRDA getting involved and supporting this event. The MahaOpen Challenger is another feather in the cap

of the Indian Tennis Calendar organised by MSLTA. We are thrilled to organise this huge international event which goes a long way in promoting the image of the Pune Metropolitan Region universally," Prashant Sutar was quoted in a release from MSLTA as saying.

Organizing the PMR Challenger event is a continuation of a grand vision of MSLTA for tennis development and promotion in Maharashtra. Especially following the successful completion of the L&T Mumbai Open WTA 125 K Series," Sutar added.

Sutar and Sunder Iyer, the organisers of the event, announced the main draw wildcards to 17-year-old Manas Dhamne, who is fresh off a USD 15000 ITF win at Monastir last week. Meanwhile, 10-year-old Aryan Shah, who has been performing well at ITF events held in the last year, and 21-year-old Karan Singh, who made his Davis Cup debut two weeks ago, were also announced as wildcards.

Indian women's team bank on home support ahead of FIH Pro League

Bhubaneswar (Odisha)

After the remarkable Women's Asian Champions Trophy title win in November last year, the Indian Women's Hockey Team is all set to continue its run of form into the FIH Pro League matches at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar from February 15 to 25.

India will kickstart their campaign with two matches against England on February 15 and 16 followed by clashes against Spain on February 18 and 19. The side will also face challenging opponents in World No. 4 Germany and World No. 1 Netherlands on February 21, 22 and February 24, 25 respectively, as per a Hockey India press release.

India is led by Arjuna Awardee Salma Tete with deputy Navneet Kaur by her side. With a blend of experienced players of the likes of Savita, Sushila Chanu, Nikki Pradhan, Vandana Kataria, Udita, Lalremsiami and Sharmila Devi alongside star youngsters like Deepika, Sumelita Toppo and Jyoti in the ranks, India have a well-balanced



squad.

The Indian players are heading into the tournament after their recent performances in the Hero Women's Hockey India League which followed their ionic Women's ACT'win in Rajgir. Last season, India had a disappointing campaign finishing eighth with only eight points won in 16 games and could only score 16 goals over the course of the prestigious Pro League and will be eyeing to put up an improved show backed by a home crowd.



संकल्प से शिखर तक



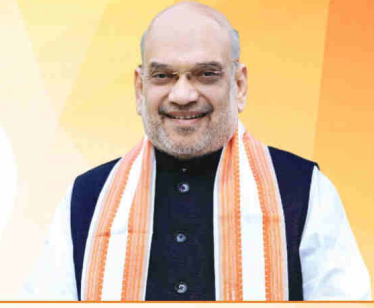
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38वें राष्ट्रीय खेल
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28 जनवरी-14 फरवरी, 2025

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भारत सरकार

गरिमामयी उपस्थिति



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एवं सांसद

14 फरवरी, 2025 | दोपहर 2:00 बजे
स्थान: अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय स्पोर्ट्स कॉम्प्लेक्स, हल्द्वानी, नैनीताल



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