



Ponting hails Kohli's Pakistan ton, calls him best ODI batter



29 dead due to hail, rain in Afghanistan: officials

A sneak peek into Kunal Kemmu, Soha Ali Khan's Herath festivities



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MARKET	
SENSEX	NIFTY
74602.12	22547.55
147.71	-5.80
GOLD	SILVER
85,680.00	94,000.00
-504.00	-1,089.00

WEATHER	
Sunrise	6:50 AM
Sunset	6:19 PM
Moonrise	5:00 AM
Moonsset	3:26 PM
Today's Prediction	
Maximum	Minimum
29°C	17°C
Tomorrow's Prediction	
26°C	16°C

Rs 2,002 cr loss to Delhi govt due to liquor policy: CAG

The Delhi government suffered cumulative losses of over Rs 2,000 crore due to the 2021-2022 excise policy for reasons ranging from weak policy framework to deficient implementation, according to a CAG report tabled in the assembly on Tuesday.

New Delhi
The report, one of 14 on the previous Aam Aadmi Party government's performance to be tabled by the new Rekha Gupta-led dispensation, has also flagged violations in the process of issuing licences.

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The report, one of 14 on the previous Aam Aadmi Party government's performance to be tabled by the new Rekha Gupta-led dispensation, has also flagged violations in the process of issuing licences. It has pointed out that recommendations of an expert panel, formed to suggest changes for the

CBSE to conduct Class-10 board exams twice a year

New Delhi
From 2026, Class 10 students will be able to take CBSE board exams twice in an academic session or choose between the two editions—one in February and another in May, officials said.



examination as well as particular subjects in the first attempt as well. As per the draft norms, the first phase of the exams will be held from February 17 to March 6, while the second phase will be conducted from May 5 to 20.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Tuesday approved draft norms which will now be put in the public domain and the stakeholders can submit their feedback by March 9 following which the policy will be finalised, they said. Candidates will also

have the option to appear for both examinations if they wish. Additionally, students will be allowed to skip specific subjects in the second attempt if they are already satisfied with the scores they have achieved in the first

"Both the examinations will be conducted on full syllabus and the candidates will be allotted the same examination centres in the two editions. Exam fees will be enhanced and collected for both exams at the time of application filing," a senior board official said. Agency

Ex-Congress MP

Sajjan Kumar sentenced to life term in anti-Sikh riots



New Delhi

A Delhi court on Tuesday sentenced former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar, 79, to life imprisonment for his role in the murder of a father and son during the 1984 anti-Sikh riots. Special Judge Kaveri Baweja pronounced the judgment in connection with the killing of Jaswant Singh and his son, Tarandeep Singh, on November 1, 1984.

The prosecution, along with the complainant, Jaswant's wife, had sought the death penalty for Kumar. While the offence of murder carries a maximum punishment of the death penalty, the minimum sentence prescribed is life imprisonment.

The court had convicted Kumar on February 12 and had subsequently sought a psychiatric and psychological evaluation report from Tihar Central Jail, following a Supreme Court directive in cases where capital punishment is a possibility. Kumar, who has been behind bars since 2018 in connection with another anti-Sikh riots case in Delhi Cantt, is currently lodged in Tihar Jail.

CONTD ON PAGE-2

21 AAP MLAs suspended amid chaos over CAG report



New Delhi
Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta Tuesday suspended 21 AAP MLAs, including Leader of Opposition Atishi, for three days for disrupting Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena's inaugural address to the newly constituted House. The proposal for their suspension was moved by Delhi Public Works Department (PWD) Minister Parvesh Verma and passed through a voice vote in the House.

The suspended MLAs will not be allowed to participate in the assembly proceedings on February 27 and 28.

As the House proceedings began on Tuesday, Atishi along with other AAP legislators protested against the alleged removal of B R Ambedkar's portrait from the chief minister's office. The AAP MLAs accused the BJP-led government of disrespecting Ambedkar and raised slogans against the move. Agency



Heartiest Greetings
on the pious occasion of
Maha Shivratri
February 26, 2025



Rs 2,002 cr loss to Delhi govt due to liquor policy: CAG

CONT FROM PAGE-1
formation of the new scrapped policy, were ignored by then deputy chief minister and excise minister Manish Sisodia. The report on the alleged liquor scam, a hot button issue in the run-up to the elections, claimed a loss of revenue to the tune of Rs 941.53 crore, saying timely permissions were not taken for opening the liquor vents in "non-conforming municipal wards".

Non-conforming areas are areas which do not conform to land use norms for opening of liquor vents.

"The excise department suffered a loss of approximately Rs 890.15 crore on account of license fee from these zones owing to their surrender and failure of the department in re-tendering," the report, tabled by the chief minister, added.

Besides, there was loss of revenue to the tune of Rs 144 crore due to "irregular grant" of waiver to the licensees because of Covid pandemic related closure, the report said.

The alleged irregularities in the formulation and implementation of the policy had snowballed into a political punching bag used by the BJP after Lt Governor V K Saxena recommended a CBI probe in July 2022. Top leaders of AAP, including Arvind Kejriwal, Sisodia and Sanjay Singh, have spent months in jail after probe agencies arrested them in the case.

The report said the Master Plan Delhi-2021 prohibited opening of liquor vents in non-conforming areas, but the Excise Policy 2021-22 mandated opening at least two retail vents in each ward.

Ex-Congress MP Sajjan Kumar sentenced to life term in anti-Sikh riots

CONT FROM PAGE-1
The case was initially registered at the Punjabi Bagh Police Station but was later taken over by a Special Investigation Team (SIT). According to the prosecution, a large mob, armed with deadly weapons, carried out widespread looting, arson, and destruction of Sikh properties in the aftermath of the assassination of then-Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The mob allegedly attacked the complainant's house, killed her husband and son, looted their belongings, and set the house on fire.

Kumar, who had previously served as a Member of Parliament from Outer Delhi, resigned from the Congress party after being convicted in another case related to the riots. During the sentencing, he stated that he was nearly 80 years old and had maintained good conduct while in prison. He also noted that he had never used force or any other legal remedy during his incarceration.

While acknowledging that Kumar's actions were brutal and reprehensible, the judge considered mitigating factors such as his 80 years of age and medical conditions, which influenced the decision to impose life imprisonment rather than the death penalty.

Murder carries a maximum punishment of death, but the minimum is life imprisonment.

'Changed circumstances' may see better implementation of Yamuna cleaning plans: SC

New Delhi — The Supreme Court on Tuesday observed that there might be better implementation of plans, such as cleaning of Yamuna river, in view of the "changed circumstances".

The observation by a bench of Justices B R Gavai and Augustine George Masih assumes significance in the wake of the BJP unseating the Aam Aadmi Party government in Delhi in the recently-conducted assembly elections.

The apex court is hearing a suo motu case titled 'Remediation of polluted rivers' in which it is dealing with the issue of contamination of Yamuna river.

"I think with the changed circumstances now, there may be better implementation of plans," Justice Gavai said during the hearing.

Senior advocate Meenakshi Arora, who's assisting the apex court as an amicus curiae, said earlier that the National Green Tribunal (NGT) was monitoring the issue concerning Yamuna



river through a committee.

She said after the top court took suo motu cognisance of the matter in January 2021, the tribunal disbanded the committee.

The bench observed that it appeared there were some other petitions concerning pollution

in Yamuna river, which were pending before another bench of the apex court.

It asked additional solicitor general Aishwarya Bhatt, who appeared for the Centre, to find out from the authorities as to whether there were any other petitions pending with regard to

the same issue. The bench posted the matter for hearing after the Holi vacation.

The amicus said the NGT had passed several orders, giving directions from time to time regarding various compliances to be met with regard to Yamuna river. She said the moni-

toring committee constituted by the tribunal was supervising what was being done between Haryana and Delhi regarding the setting up of sewage treatment plants and common effluent treatment plants under the Constitution framework and a welfare state is "bound" to ensure the same.

The observation by a bench of Justices B R Gavai and Augustine George Masih assumes significance in the wake of the BJP unseating the Aam Aadmi Party government in Delhi in the recently-conducted assembly elections.

The amicus suggested this might be better monitored by the NGT. The bench observed that all these matters can be consolidated.

"You take instructions if the NGT can monitor it or we can get it monitored through a CEC (central empowered committee), if you all agree on that," the bench said.

On January 13, 2021, the apex court took cognisance of contamination of rivers by sewage effluent and observed that pollution-free water forms a basic right under the Constitution framework and a welfare state is "bound" to ensure the same.

ICD Bestows Honorary Fellowship on SRM Chancellor



Chennai: The International College of Dentistry (ICD) Section VI (India, Sri Lanka & Nepal) has conferred the prestigious Honorary Fellowship upon Dr. T.R. Paarivendhar, Founder Chancellor of SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST).

This distinguished fellowship was presented to Dr. Paarivendhar, a distinction rarely bestowed upon non-dentists/non-medical. This honour recognises his contribution to the fields of education and healthcare delivery.

Dr. Paarivendhar was recognised for his exceptional contributions to both fields during ICD's annual meeting and convocation, held

at SRMIST in Kattankulathur, in collaboration with SRM Kattankulathur Dental College and Hospital.

The Honorary Fellowship was presented by ICD's Global President, Dr. Ian M. Doyle, and ICD's Section VI President, Dr. Meera Verma, among other distinguished guests.

In his acceptance speech, Dr. Paarivendhar highlighted the unique importance of dentistry, stating that it plays a vital role in helping individuals walk upright, speak clearly, and laugh with confidence. He expressed heartfelt gratitude to ICD for honoring him, a non-medical professional, with such a prestigious recognition.

SC dismisses H D Kumaraswamy's plea seeking quashing of proceedings in graft case

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed a plea of former Karnataka chief minister H D Kumaraswamy seeking quashing of the proceedings in a corruption case relating to de-notification of two plots of land.

A bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Rajesh Bindal refused to entertain the plea of Kumaraswamy, now the Union minister, against an October 9, 2020 order of the Karnataka High Court. The high court had refused to quash the proceedings against him in the matter.

Senior advocate Harin Ravul and Additional Advocate General Aman Panwar appeared for the state of Karnataka and opposed Kumaraswamy's plea in the apex court.

The case relates to a private complaint filed by one M S Mahadeva Swamy before the special judge under the Prevention of Corruption Act in Bengaluru



seeking prosecution of Kumaraswamy and others.

The complaint alleged that de-notification of two plots of land in Halagevaderahalli Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk, during Kumaraswamy's tenure as chief minister between June 2006 and October 2007, was carried out for pecuniary gains.

On January 18, 2021, the top court had issued notice to the complainant and the Karnataka government on Kumaraswamy's plea.

filed under section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

The apex court had issued notice on his plea limited to the question as to whether without sanction, the special judge could have taken cognizance.

The high court had said there were sufficient materials to proceed against Kumaraswamy for the alleged offences and in the absence of any material to show that the action initiated against him was an abuse of process of court and had resulted in failure of justice, there was no ground to quash the impugned proceedings.

On the point of a prior sanction, the high court said it had in 2012 passed the order that in the circumstances of the case and having regard to the nature of the allegations levelled against the petitioner, sanction under section 19 of Prevention of Corruption Act was not necessary.

Section 16 of the Advocates Act deals with senior designation of lawyers.

"If an advocate, by virtue of his standing at the Bar, his ability or special knowledge, deserves designation as a senior advocate, the question which arises is, by making such an advocate appear for an interview, are we not compromising on the dignity of the advocate? Are we not converting the process of designation into a selection process," it had added.

Andhra achieved growth rate of 13 per cent under NDA govt in one year: CM Naidu

Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Tuesday stated that the state has achieved a projected growth rate of 13 per cent for the fiscal year 2024-25 under the TDP-led government, compared to just 8.6 per cent under the previous YSRCP regime in 2023-24.

Addressing the Assembly, the Chief Minister highlighted the growth of the NDA government coming to power, the state's GDP grew by Rs 62,000 crore at this improved growth rate.

"The growth rate in 2023-24 (under YSRCP) was only 8.6 per cent. Though we were not in power for three months in 2024-25, we still achieved a growth rate of 12.94 per cent (rounded to 13 per cent)," Naidu told the House, adding that the current fiscal year's GDP



stands at Rs 16.06 lakh crore.

According to the CM, the state's growth rate declined from 11.4 per cent under the previous TDP government in 2018-19 to just 5.25 per cent in the first year of the Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy-led YSRCP regime. He further stated that within one year, a loss of Rs 45,000 crore in

that the detailed project reports (DPRs) for both cities—estimated at Rs 11,479 crore and Rs 11,009 crore, respectively—have been completed.

He assured that work on the metro rail projects in these cities would commence soon and emphasised that the NDA alliance government, comprising TDP, BJP, and Janasena, is committed to completing them.

Asserting that the alliance was not formed for selfish interests, Naidu stated that it came together to work for the betterment of the state, providing a "double-engine sarkar" (government). He remarked that this was especially crucial at a time when the state had been "destroyed" over the past five years—hinting at the period between 2019 and 2024.

Raut lauds Fadnavis for not allowing 'fixers' to become OSDs or PSs of ministers

Mumbai: Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut on Tuesday lauded Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis for not allowing "fixers" to be named as personal secretaries or OSDs of cabinet members and said most of those ignored for the posts were of Shiv Sena ministers.

He claimed that of the 16 personal secretaries (PSs) or Officers on Special Duty (OSDs) for cabinet ministers whose appointment was not approved by Fadnavis, 13 were of Shiv Sena ministers.

Talking to reporters, the Rajya Sabha MP lauded Fadnavis, who holds the home portfolio, for stopping the appointment of "fixers" as personal staffers or OSDs of cabinet ministers.

"I have the names of 16 PSs of which 13 are of deputy CM Eknath Shinde (Shiv Sena ministers) and remaining are of the Ajit Pawar camp. He (Fadnavis) is taking tough decisions. We may have political differences, but we support important decisions taken in the interest of the state," Raut stated.

The Rajya Sabha member said Fadnavis stopped the "state loot" by suspending the work on projects approved when Eknath Shinde was the CM (June 2022-November 2024) and whose costs were inflated.

Fadnavis has stopped the "loot" of Maharashtra treasury, he said.

Fadnavis on Monday said he cleared 109 out of 125 names referred by cabinet ministers for their appointment as PSs or OSDs, but didn't approve others because they are either facing inquiries or known as "fixers".

SC issues notice to HCs on reconsideration of process of designation of senior advocates

New Delhi — The Supreme Court on Tuesday sought response from all the high courts and other stakeholders on the issue of reconsideration of the process of the designation of senior advocates.

A three judge bench of Justices Abhay S Oka, Ujjal Bhuyan and S V N Bhatti posted the matter for hearing on March 21, and clarified that Attorney General R Venkatesh followed by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta will initiate arguments in the matter.

"We direct the Registrar (Judicial) to forward a copy of this order along with the copy of the order in the Jitender Kalla case to the Registrar Generals of all the high courts, informing them that the date is fixed on March 19 and the high courts are free to submit their responses and suggestions, if any, well in advance," the bench said.

During the hearing, senior advocate Indira Jaising submitted that if the judgments regarding designation of senior advocates is reconsidered, it must be done by a larger bench.

The top court on February 26 said a "serious introspection" was required when it came to designating lawyers as senior advocates and referred the issue to Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna for deciding whether a larger bench should hear the matter.

Expressing its reservations, a bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih said it was doubtful whether by interviewing a candidate for a few minutes, his personality or suitability could really be tested.

"The question that needs serious consideration is whether the court should permit applications to be made for grant of designation, though the statute does not contemplate it. If the legislature intended to allow advocates to make applications for designation, sub-section (2) of Section 16 would not have provided for this court or high courts to take the consent of advocates before designation," the bench had said.

Section 16 of the Advocates Act deals with senior designation of lawyers.

"If an advocate, by virtue of his standing at the Bar, his ability or special knowledge, deserves designation as a senior advocate, the question which arises is, by making such an advocate appear for an interview, are we not compromising on the dignity of the advocate? Are we not converting the process of designation into a selection process," it had added.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General public is hereby informed by this advertisement that my late husband's name is Shri Kishan Choudhary and Smt Anjali Bala W/O Shri Ashwani Kumar both R/o RZ - 11, Minskabad Colony, West Bengal, South West Delhi - 110043 has severed all relations from their daughter Neha Sharma. F.O.W. 19/01/1992, Adhar Card and Name 3088 took 6485 and both of them disowned and departed her from all their movable and immovable properties and my children will not be responsible for any of her acts and deeds. That any person dealing with her in any manner shall be at her sole and exclusive liability their own risk and consequences.

D S Dagar Advocate Chamber No. 729, Lawyers Chambers, Dwarka District Court, New Delhi-110043 Ph: 09718297664

Atishi cites CAG report to defend AAP's excise policy, claims BJP's role in revenue loss

New Delhi Senior AAP leader and Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Atishi on Tuesday defended the previous Aam Aadmi Party government's now-scrapped excise policy, citing a CAG report to claim that the old policy was marred by corruption and smuggling.

A performance audit report by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India on the regulation and supply of liquor in the national capital has shown lapses in the functioning of the excise department and its policy, leading to revenue losses exceeding Rs 2,026.91 crore.

The CAG report -- "Performance audit report on regulation and supply of liquor in Delhi" -- was tabled during the first session of the newly-elected Delhi Assembly on Tuesday.

Addressing a press conference, Atishi accused the BJP-appointed lieutenant governor (LG), the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) of obstructing the implementation of the new liquor policy, causing an annual revenue loss of Rs 8,900 crore to Delhi.

Atishi said seven out of the eight chapters in the CAG report highlight the shortcomings of the old excise policy, while only one focus-



the implementation, creating

hurdles. The CBI filed an FIR within a year of the policy's launch, and the ED registered an enforcement case information report (ECIR) soon after. This led to a situation where no officer was willing to sign or execute the policy, fearing legal action. As a result, Delhi lost Rs 2,000 crore in expected revenue and Rs 8,900 crore annually," she claimed.

Atishi demanded an investigation into the roles of the LG, the CBI, and the ED in obstructing the policy. She also raised allegations against industrialist Gautam Adani, accusing him of corruption in multiple states

concerning inflated electricity tariffs. She claimed this led to losses of Rs 20,000 crore. In 2024, the US Department of Justice (DOJ) under President Joe Biden's administration had initiated an investigation, accusing Adani of orchestrating a scheme to pay over USD 250 million (around Rs 2,100 crore) in bribes to Indian officials to secure favourable solar power contracts, she said.

These transactions were allegedly concealed from the

US investors. Atishi urged the authorities to probe the alleged corruption in electricity pricing and hold those responsible accountable.

The Delhi government and the BJP have been at loggerheads over the excise policy, with AAP leaders maintaining that it aimed at boosting revenue, while the BJP accused the Arvind Kejriwal government of irregularities.

The controversy remains a key political flashpoint in the capital with the assembly session underway.

tion is underway at Patel Nagar police station," Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) (Central) M Harsha Vardhan said in a statement.

On Tuesday a robbery was reported in Rajinder Nagar police station, following which police identified two accused with the help of CCTV footage in the area, the statement said.

A police team was sent to Anant Prabhad area to arrest the two during which a scuffle broke out between the accused and the team, Vardhan said.

Two persons were arrested on Tuesday morning from Patel Nagar here for allegedly stabbing a sub-inspector while he was tracking down a robbery accused, a Delhi Police official said.

The accused, Anish alias Loha (23) and Anurag Yadav alias Fruti (22), were injured in the encounter, which took place around 4-25 am in Patel Nagar area, he said.

"Both the accused have been shifted to a hospital for treatment and legal ac-

Speaker extended suspension of AAP MLAs for 3 days; Session continued till March, 3

New Delhi Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta has suspended all 21 Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLAs, including Leader of Opposition Atishi, for three days.

They were removed from the Assembly for protesting against the BJP for allegedly taking down photos of Baba Saheb Ambedkar and Bhagat Singh.

Gupta also extended the Assembly session until March 3, 2025, and discussions on 14 pending CAG reports will continue.

During the second day assembly session, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta reported that the Delhi Government lost Rs 2,002 crore due to problems with the excise policy in 2021-22, which has since been

scrapped. Meanwhile, action was taken against AAP MLA as opposition leaders were raising slogans inside the House on the second day. They continued to protest against the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for allegedly removing the photographs of Baba Saheb Ambedkar and Bhagat Singh from the CM's office.

The first day of the Delhi Assembly session began with Cabinet ministers, including Delhi CM Rekha Gupta, and other Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) taking oath in the House. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA Vijender Gupta was elected as the Speaker of the Delhi Assembly.

Delhi man kills wife over suspicion of affair surrenders to police



New Delhi A 24-year-old man allegedly strangled his wife to death over suspicion of an affair and later surrendered to the police on Tuesday, an official said. According to police, Aman, a resident of Nand Nagri, walked into the Harsh Vihar police station around 5 pm and informed officials that he had murdered his 20-year-old wife at their home.

"Acting swiftly, a team from Nand Nagri police station took him into cus-

tody and escorted him to the crime scene. Upon arrival, officers found the woman unconscious," he said.

Crime and forensic teams were called to examine the scene before the body was sent to GTB Hospital, where doctors declared her brought dead, said the officer.

Preliminary investigation revealed that Aman and his wife were married in November 2023. However, they frequently engaged in arguments.

On Tuesday afternoon, around 2 pm, an argument escalated after Aman suspected his wife of having an extramarital affair, he said, adding that in a fit of rage, he strangled her to death. An FIR was registered at Nand Nagri police station, and further investigation is underway.

ॐ तत्सुब्रह्मण्य विद्महे महादेवाय धीमहि।
तन्नो रुद्रः प्रचोदयात्॥

Divine-Grand-Digital
Mahakumbh of Unity

**Mahakumbh 2025
Prayagraj**

Maha Shivratri

Holy Dip

26th February, 2025

**Mahakumbh of
Unity**

**64 Crore+
Devotees
so far**

Message of Mahakumbh : One Nation, Stronger Together

Mahakumbh Helplines

1920 Mahakumbh Mela Helpline	112 Emergency Service	1010 Food and Civil Supplies Helpline	102, 108 Ambulance Service	18004199139 Railway Helpline
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NEWS IN BRIEF

Verma takes charge as PWD minister

New Delhi
Cabinet minister of the new BJP government in Delhi, Parvesh Verma on Tuesday officially assumed charge as Public Works Department (PWD) minister, vowing to serve the people of the city as family members.

Verma, who defeated AAP supremo and former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal from the New Delhi seat in the recent polls, also holds the portfolios of Legislative Affairs, Irrigation & Flood Control, Water, and Guduwara Elections.

The minister shared a picture of him taking charge as PWD minister, on X saying he took charge with a vow to serve his family of Delhi people.

Verma was accompanied by another Environment minister of the BJP government Manjinder Singh Sirsa.

"We all are fortunate to have the guidance and leadership of the world's most popular leader and the country's Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he said in the post. The minister asserted that the double-engine BJP government will work non-stop for the mission to transform Delhi into a leading, developed state of the country.

He assured Delhiites that the BJP government will dedicatedly work for the welfare of the economically weaker section, good governance, service and equality.

Delhi Cong welcomes tabling of CAG report in assembly

Staff Reporter
New Delhi

Delhi Congress president Devedev Yadav here on Tuesday said that it's better late than never that the CAG report on the liquor scam has been tabled in the assembly as the CAG findings validate the corruption in the liquor policy first exposed by the Delhi Congress.

He further said that what the Delhi Congress had been insisting for the past few years that the Excise Policy 2021-2022, implemented by the AAP government, had caused huge losses to the government, has been validated by the CAG report tabled in the assembly by CM Rekha Gupta today.

Yadav said that the tabling of the 14 CAG reports in the assembly for discussion will not address the corruption in the liquor deal by former CM Arvind Kejriwal and his cronies over the past 11 years. The BJP government should take strict follow up action to punish those responsible for misappropriating the tax payers' money to line their pockets.

He said that it was a commendable decision to extend the assembly session till March 1, 2025 to table all the 14 CAG reports as the rattled AAP MLAs once again created a ruckus in the assembly to prevent the tabling of the CAG reports, which was a familiar play of the AAP MLAs, to cover up their misdeeds. Yadav said that people will believe the BJP government's intentions only when those who indulged in corruption, as revealed in the CAG report, are held accountable.

Delhi Ruckus in MCD house as AAP, BJP councillors protest over two key proposals

New Delhi
C has erupted in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) House on Tuesday as councillors from the AAP and BJP engaged in verbal clashes and raised slogans over two key proposals—a house tax waiver and the regularisation of 12,000 contractual municipal workers.

Despite the chaos, MCD Mayor Mahesh Kumar later claimed in a press conference that both proposals had been successfully passed, asserting that the required number of councillors from their side were present to meet the quorum.

However, the Leader of Opposition strongly contested this, arguing that proper procedures were not followed and, hence, the proposals could not be considered officially approved.

Meanwhile, a top official said that the issue was under examination.

The commotion began when the AAP-led MCD attempted to introduce the proposals and the deputy commissioner did not appear, leading to a standoff. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) demanded that the



session proceed with the additional commissioner in charge, triggering a heated argument.

Members from both parties began displaying banners and raising slogans. AAP councillors chanted "Gundaagardi nahin chalegi" (hunger will not be tolerated) and "Jai Bhim," while BJP supporters countered with slogans like "Arvind Kejriwal, Sharm Kara" and "Mayor, Sharm Kara."

The two key proposals on the table included a house

tax waiver, under which homeowners who clear their 2024-25 house tax dues would have their previous pending taxes waived.

Additionally, residential properties between 100 and 500 square yards would get a 50 per cent tax exemption, while properties under 100 square yards would be fully exempt. The second proposal aimed at regularising 12,000 municipal workers, a long-standing demand from employees.

Later, as the House was adjourned, Mayor Mahesh Kumar Khinchi, along with Deputy Mayor Ravindra Bhardwaj and Leader of the House Mukesh Goel, addressed a press conference and declared that both proposals had been passed despite the disturbances.

He said that more than 70 AAP councillors were present in the House, ensuring the required quorum for the meeting.

He added that the session started on time but, like previous occasions, was once again disrupted by chaos.

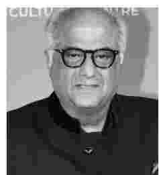
Boney Kapoor to take Noida Film City land possession on Feb 27

Noida
Physical possession of 230 acre of land of International Film City will be given to Bayview Bhutani Film City Private Limited on February 27.

Company chairman and film producer Boney Kapoor will arrive to take physical possession. Preparations for this have been completed. Next month chief minister Yogi Adityanath may lay the foundation stone of the Film City.

The Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA), CEO Dr. Arunvir Singh, has instructed the project department to make preparations for handing over the possession of the Film City land. For the development of International Film City in sector 21 of the Yamuna Authority, the Bayview Bhutani Film City Private Limited had won the tender by bidding for 18 per cent revenue share. The first phase of the Film City is proposed in 230 acres. Shooting and other works will start in the Film City in three years.

The company had given



the land use plan of the Film City to the Yamuna Authority for approval. In January, the Yamuna Authority approved it and also instructed to prepare a map for internal development. The company has prepared a blueprint for the internal infrastructure development of the Film City.

Along with taking physical possession of the land, the company will also apply for map approval. Yamuna Authority CEO Singh said that on February 27, physical possession of the allotted land of the Film City will be given to the developer company Bayview Bhutani Film City Private Limited. After the map is approved, the construction of the film city can begin from next month.

Delhi L-G says govt to adopt 'Viksit Delhi Sankalp Patra' as guiding document

New Delhi

The new Delhi government will adopt the Viksit Delhi Sankalp Patra as a guiding document to fulfil promises made to the people, Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena said on Tuesday.

Addressing the newly-constituted eighth Delhi Assembly, Saxena outlined the city government's vision and priorities for the national capital.

He said the new dispensation would focus on corruption-free governance, empowerment of women, a cleaner Delhi, rejuvenation of the Yamuna and providing clean drinking water.

Continuous political clashes and blame games over the past decade had hindered Delhi's progress, the lieutenant governor claimed and added that the new government would work in coordination with the Centre and other states to ensure effective governance.

Listing the new government's key priorities, Saxena highlighted several focus areas—corruption-free administration, improved education, empowerment of women, welfare of the poor,



world-class roads, pollution-free Delhi, clean drinking water, regularisation of unauthorised colonies, and rejuvenation of the Yamuna.

All departments have been directed to prepare 100-day action plans to implement these priorities, he said.

The government will also present Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) reports during the session to analyse the previous dispensation's shortcomings and create a roadmap for improvement, he added.

Slamming the AAP dispensation, Saxena said, "The primary objective of my government will be to dismantle the sub-par system created by extensive advertising and bring governance

back on track." Earlier in the day, Speaker Vijendra Gupta expelled 12 AAP MLAs, including Leader of Opposition Atishi, for raising slogans during Saxena's address.

Among those expelled were Gopal Rai, Veer Singh Dhingra, Mukesh Ahlawat, Chaudhary Zubair Ahmed, Anil Jha, Vishesh Ravi and Jamaal Singh.

Following her expulsion, Atishi accused the BJP of disrespecting BR Ambedkar by removing his portrait from the chief minister's office.

She alleged the BJP-led dispensation had taken down Ambedkar's portraits from the chief minister's office in both the Delhi Secretariat and the Assembly.

Public Notice

General public is hereby informed that Mrs. Suresh Devi w/o Late Mr. Shynder Singh is the owner of Freehold Residential Property (Under Bulandshahr Development Authority) Area Measuring 99.52 Sq. Mtrs. i.e. 119.03 Sq. Yrds., Situated at Village Vair Badshahpur, Tehsil Sikar, drabad and District Bulandshahr, U.P. vide Regd. Gift Deed executed by Mr. Kaili Charan Singh s/o Mr. Murari Singh Vide Doc. No. 1314, Book No. 1, Vol. No. 11719 on pages 361 to 374, Regd. on 25.01.2025 at SRO - Sikandrabad, Bulandshahr in the property chain Original Regd. Sale Deed dated 17.10.1989 Vide Doc. No. 4647, Book No. 1, Vol. No. 1608 on pages 143 to 144, Regd. on 17.10.1989 at SRO - Sikandrabad, Bulandshahr was lost / misplaced from customer and to be financed by SBC Finance Ltd, and on line FIR already lodged vide LR No.2455390/2025 if anybody has any charge/interest/title in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present, failing which I am aware that in case default with the mortgage property that borrower (Mr. Ompal Singh & Mrs. Suresh Devi) is responsible.

Lalit Koushik
Advocate
Chamber No. 194, 1st Floor, Lawyers Chambers Building, District Session Courts, Sector 12, Faridabad

Public Notice

I am giving this public notice as per instruction of My client LIC HFL branch, Hapur, That Mr. Rahul Kumar S/o Buddha Prakash R/o Village Saina, Tehsil Garhmukteshwar Distt. Hapur is raising housing loan with our institution vide E.Q.M. of his property a residential plot no. 15, having area 87.51 sq. meter, out of kharsa no. 75M1, situated at Patna Tehsil & Distt. Hapur which owned by him vide Sale deed dated 22.03.2022 Sr. No. 2315. Now Mr. Rahul Kumar Declare that in the title of chain previous original sale deed dt 24.12.2011 which was duly registered in the office of SR-Hapur-1, at vide book no. 01, volume no. 7719, on pages 259/274, at Sr. No. 18592 has been lost. Which F.I.R. lodged by him online via E-Thana on the dt 25.02.2025. So original sale deed dt 24.12.2011, Sr. No. 18592 is not possible to deposit in the office of LIC HFL. If any bank or financial institution or any other person have any objection or claim to obtain housing loan by equitable mortgage in favour of My Client Then contact to me by my below address & Mobile No. with evidence within 15 days of publication of this notice. After 15 days any claim or objection will not be acceptable & My Client LIC HFL would be providing Housing loan by mortgage the said property. Address: LIC HFL Branch Hapur by Rajendra Kumar Saini Advocate Chamber No. 21, 1st Floor, Dr. Bheem Rao Ambedkar Shopping Complex, Zila Panchayat Market, Near District & Session Court Free Ganj Road Hapur.

RAJENDRA KUMAR SAINI
Advocate
21, First Floor Zila Panchayat Market, Hapur
Mobile No. 9897274522

Public Notice

1. That my Client Mr. Phool Singh age about 62 years (Aadhar No 4702 0478 6513) s/o Late Mr. Lathi R/O KH. No. 35-B Allahabad Bank Road, Nehru Enclave, Alipur North Delhi-110036, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under:
2. That my client is law abiding citizen of India and residing permanently at above mentioned address.
3. That Amit is my real son (Aadhar No. 8137 746 3806) age about 35 years.
4. That due to anti-social behaviour of my son Amit. I have debarred them from my all movable and immovable properties. That now I have no any relation with above named son.
5. Anybody dealing with Amit will do so that at their own risk and responsibilities and my client will not be responsible for any act, deed or dealing done by Amit.

DILSHAD
(ADVOCATE)
Chamber No. 1116, Lawyer's Chamber Block, Rohini Court Complex, Rohini, Delhi-110085.
Off: DP-140, Ground Floor, DP Block Pitam Pura, Mau-rya Enclave, Delhi-110034.

Uzbekistan's Renowned Dance Ensemble 'Bakhor' Entrhralls Audience at MERI

New Delhi

The Management Education & Research Institute (MERI) Centre for International Studies in New Delhi witnessed a mesmerizing cultural evening as Uzbekistan's celebrated State Dance Ensemble 'Bakhor' set the stage ablaze with their breathtaking performances. The ensemble, founded in 1957, comprises over 60 talented dancers, singers, and musicians who have showcased the richness of Uzbek art in more than 200 countries.

The event opened with a soulful Ganesh Vandana, setting a serene and auspicious tone. Led by Uzbekistan's Tourism Minister, Mr. Umid Shodiev, the ensemble performed in the presence of esteemed dignitaries, including Ambassador Sardor Rustambayev and MERI President I.P. Aggarwal. Faculty members, Uzbek diplomats, and cultural enthusiasts also attended, making it a truly special occasion.



The audience was enthralled by a mix of traditional Uzbek music and dance, accompanied by the rhythmic beats of the Rubab and Doira. Dancers in vibrant costumes performed the high-energy Lagzi Dance, the graceful Bukhara Dance, and the lively Khorezm Dance, immersing everyone in Uzbekistan's cultural spirit. Performers like Husmoza, Rushona,

Mamurjon, Sanjar, and Farukh left a lasting impression with their artistry. The evening concluded with a vote of thanks by Prof. (Dr.) Deepshikha Kalra, Dean of MERI College, who praised the event as a beautiful cultural exchange. As the performance ended, the audience departed with a newfound appreciation for Uzbekistan's artistic excellence and MERI's commitment to global cultural connections.

Not entry without helmet in factories

Noida

To curb road accidents, the Noida Entrepreneurs Association (NEA) has joined hands with the local administration, asking the factory owners to ban the entry of employees coming to work without helmets.

NEA president Vipin Kumar Malhan said that the businessmen have been informed through a letter that most of the employees coming on two-wheelers do not reach the units wearing helmets. Due to this, most of them get seriously injured in road accidents, which leads to their death.

In such a situation, there is a need for strictness in the units and companies on people who are negligent. Provision of punishment should be made for this. Campaigns should be conducted inside factories and companies for awareness.

PUBLIC NOTICE

MY CLIENT MR. NAVAL KISHORE MANDAL S/O MR. RAM PRAKASH MANDAL. OWNER OF PLOT OF LAND MEASURING 150 SQ. YARDS, (42 X 32), OUT OF KHARSA NO.34/13, SITUATED AT SANJAY COLONY SANOLI ROAD, NARELA DELHI. THROUGH REGD. AUTHORIZATION SUIP (PMU) DEED DATED 27.01.2025 EXECUTED POI WIDE REG. NO. 2025/21/471, AT SR-VI B DELHI THE ABOVE-MENTIONED PROPERTY IS GOING TO BE MORTGAGE WITH FED-BANK FINANCIAL SERVICES LIMITED. IF ANY PERSON/BANK/ FINANCIAL INSTITUTION HAVING ANY CLAIM / RIGHT, LIEN, ANY OBJECTION WHATSOEVER IN REGARD TO THE ABOVE PROPERTY, SHOULD NOTIFIED TO THE UNDERSIGNED/ADV. VISHAL MEHAN, E-713, KARAK-DOOMA COURT, DELHI-110092 ALONG WITH DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE UNDER ADDRESS THROUGH REGISTERED WITHIN 15 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE FAILING WHICH ANY CLAIM, LIEN OR OBJECTION SHALL BE DEEMED TO HAVE BEEN WAIVED.
VISHAL MEHAN,
E-713, KARAK-DOOMA COURT, DELHI -110092

PUBLIC NOTICE

1. Meenakshi Khokhra D/o Shri Jai Prakash R/o H.No.83, Poll No.83, Masjid Wali Gali, Mundka, West Delhi, Delhi-110041. That my name mentioned in my Army record as Binay Rani instead of Meenakshi Khokhra. And in my all other documents my name written as Meenakshi Khokhra. My all documents submitted with Army Department with the name of Meenakshi Khokhra. Both the names i.e. Meenakshi Khokhra and Binay Rani are one and of the same person. In future I may be known and correct as Meenakshi Khokhra for all purposes in Army record.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Sh. Anand Singh Rawat and his wife Smt. Gangra Rawat both R/O Plot at Kharsa no. 10/10/2 and 9/2 Qutub Vihar, Phase-2, E-713, Najafgarh, Opposite Ram Mandir, Qutub Vihar, South-West, Delhi-110071, have debarred and disowned their Son Sandeep Singh Rawat and his Wife Anita Rawat and Grand-Daughter namely Rudrakshi Rawat from all movable and immovable assets due to their disobedience and disrespectful behavior and out of control of my clients.

My clients have also severed all their relations with them if anybody deals with them in any manner, they shall do so at his/her own risks, costs and consequences. My clients shall not be responsible for the same in any manner.
PARWESH KUMAR
(ADVOCATE)
CHAMBER NO.1120, 11TH FLOOR, ROHINI COURT, DELHI

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Dr. Suhail Qureshi S/o R. Z. Qureshi & Sahar Qureshi D/o R. Z. Qureshi both R/o 243, Kucha Mir Ashiq, Chawli Bazar, Delhi-110006 do hereby notify for public that they are executing the WILL DEED of Late Haji Fayizuddin after his death who expired on 28/04/2021 as per his WILL DEED made on dated 21/03/2019, in favour of Dr. Suhail Qureshi S/o R. Z. Qureshi & Sahar Qureshi D/o R. Z. Qureshi only, any person's has any objection/claim (s) interest for the will deed registration of aforesaid WILL of Late Haji Fayizuddin may contact the undersigned within 05 days from the publication of this Notice, failing which the claim of any of such person will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned and the will deed shall be registered and application with immediate effect.
RAGIB GAYYUR
Advocate
Plot No. 8 & 1st Floor, Shiva Market, Opposite H.P. Petrol Pump Khureji, Delhi-110051

Every promise of 'Sankalp Patra' will be fulfilled: Haryana CM

Chandigarh
Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini has said the state government has fulfilled 18 promises of the Sankalp Patra in first 100 days while the work is going on to promises.
He has assured that every promise of the Sankalp Patra will be fulfilled. Haryana will move ahead on the path of development at a faster pace and will realize the dream of Prime Minister Narendra Modi of making a 'Viksit Bharat', he said.
The Chief Minister was addressing a programme organized in Karnal on Tuesday. Targeting the Opposition, Saini said the Congress has always tried to spoil brotherhood.
People know the state of development work before 2014 whereas the present government is continuously getting development work done at a fast pace, he said.
He said under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, the people of the country are continuously expressing their trust in the welfare policies of the government and recently, in the Delhi elections, the people put their stamp of trust on the policies of the government.
He said after the formation of a government in local body elections, the state government will work at three times the speed.

Punjab Assembly unanimously rejects Centre's draft farm policy

■ Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann led the charge against the Centre's alleged anti-farmer policies discussion on the resolution brought by the state government to reject the Draft National Policy on Agricultural Marketing.

Chandigarh
The Punjab Assembly unanimously passed a resolution against the Union Government's draft National Policy Framework on Agricultural Marketing, stating that it is an attempt to reintroduce the three farm laws repealed by the Centre in 2020-21 after widespread farmer protests.
The policy was unanimously rejected by the House in the Vidhan Sabha, with MLAs from across all parties rejecting it. The two BJP MLAs, Ashwani Sharma and Jangli Lal Mahajan, were not present during the two-hour discussion on the policy.



Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann led the charge against the Centre over the latter's alleged anti-farmer policies during the discussion on the resolution brought by the state's Aam Aadmi Party government to reject the Draft National Policy on Agricultural Marketing.
Introducing the resolution, state agriculture minister Gurneet Singh Khudian said, "The House rejects the draft National Policy Framework on Agricultural Marketing. The House feels that this draft policy is an attempt to bring back the contentious provisions of the three farm laws repealed in 2021 by the Government of India after a long protest by farmers."
"The House feels since this issue is a state subject, according to the Constitution, the Centre should not come up with any such policy and should leave it to the wisdom of the states to frame suitable policies on the subject according to its concerns and requirements," he added.
Speaking on the resolution, CM Mann said that the central government wants to replicate the three controversial farm laws through other means.

"Be it the issue of rural development fund (RDF) or any other issue concerning the state, the Centre does not leave any issue to target Punjab." The most recent example is the issue of Indians being deported from the US. Even though few Punjabis were among the deportees, the US military planes were made to land in Amritsar so that Punjab's name gets tarnished," CM Mann said.
While rejecting the policy, MLAs from both treasury and opposition benches said that bringing a policy on agricul-

ture marketing, which is a state subject, is interference by the Centre and against the spirit of the Constitution.
They added that the broad spirit of the policy is to promote private markets and to significantly dilute the Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) markets, so as to eventually make them irrelevant.
Leader of the Opposition and senior Congress leader Partap Singh Bajwa lent support for the resolution brought by the government. He said that the draft of the National Policy Framework

on Agricultural Marketing is going to be fatal for the farming sector of Punjab, and the Punjab Congress is prepared to support the Punjab government against the same.
"The Punjab Congress will do anything to defend the interests of Punjab. We don't even shy away from fighting together with the Punjab government to protect the rights and causes of Punjab," Bajwa added.
Terming the BJP as the anti-Punjab party, Bajwa said that the BJP is hell-bent on weakening Punjab both economically and politically.
"The BJP only serves the interests of multinational companies and big corporations and is least bothered about working for the interests of farmers and other underprivileged sections, he said.
"The saffron party has been conspiring to undermine the farming sector for a long time. During the Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led BJP government, the Shanta Kumar Commission on Agriculture recommended dismantling the Food Corporation of India (FCI). The BJP government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is still pursuing the same," Bajwa added.

Mann slams Cong's Bajwa for claiming Punjab AAP MLAs in touch with him to switch sides

Chandigarh
A day after Punjab Congress leader Partap Singh Bajwa claimed that 32 ruling AAP MLAs were in touch with him to switch sides, Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann Tuesday asked him to focus on keeping his party's legislators together.
Mann had also claimed that Mann was in touch with the BJP. "When (Arvind) Kejriwal decides to remove him, he (Mann) will pack his bags and join them (BJP)," he had claimed.
Winding up a debate in the Assembly on a resolution against the Centre's draft National Policy Framework on Agricultural Marketing, Mann lashed out at the leader of the opposition for his "baseless statement" about AAP MLAs and termed it a rhetoric to hog media limelight.
"They are into establishing contact with other MLAs but do not have any contact with their own," said the chief minister in a jibe at the Congress.
Mann said that ever since he assumed office, Congress leaders have been claiming that he will not remain chief minister for six months or one year. "A day after the Delhi assembly polls, they again claimed that I will be replaced," the

chief minister said.
Asking the Congress to introspect, he said, "You scored a zero for the third time in Delhi. You set your house in order. There are four to five groups (in Punjab Congress)."
Lashing out at Bajwa, the chief minister said such leaders unabatedly issue such irrational statements but never raise the issue of the Punjab before the Union government.
During Congress rule, the chief ministers were the "most inaccessible, corrupt and inefficient leaders due to which they were rejected by the people," he alleged.
People have seen the previous chief minister only on a few occasions in the state as the "epicurean monarch" was either busy in his personal works or was glued to his chair in the palace, Mann said.
On the draft agricultural marketing policy, Mann said it was rightly rejected by the Punjab government as it was totally against the interests of the state.
"Though Prime Minister Narendra Modi boasts a lot about the initiatives taken by his government for food growers, he and his government are inimical to farmers, especially those from Punjab," he alleged.

CM Mann accuses Centre of step-motherly treatment of Punjab

Chandigarh
Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Tuesday slammed Prime Minister Narendra Modi led BJP government for meting out a step-motherly treatment to the state thereby trying to jeopardise development and progress of Punjab.
Taking part in discussions on the floor of Punjab Vidhan Sabha, the Chief Minister, while citing the stalling of funds of RDF, said that it reflects the discriminatory attitude of the Union government against Punjab and Punjabis.
He said that the Central government leaves no stone unturned to defame Punjab and recent landing of US planes carrying deportees in Amritsar despite the fact that most of them were from other states is an example of it.
Mann said that he had vehemently opposed it and sole motive was to tarnish the image of state the plane carrying deportees is being landed here without any rationale.
The chief minister said if the plane carrying former Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina can be landed at Hindaon airport then why can't this plane be taken to any other part of the country.
Mann said that illegal immigration is not only the problem of Punjab but it is a national problem whereas projection is being made that Punjab is severely affected by this so only Punjabis were being deported from the United States.
He said that such an attitude towards the state is intolerable, unwarranted and undesirable as we cannot compromise with the dignity and pride of the state.

Closure of Shambhu Khanauri border has impacted trade and industry: Punjab minister



Komal Ramola
Chandigarh
Punjab Cabinet Minister Aman Arora on Tuesday stressed the need to open the Shambhu and Khanauri border points, saying that their closure has left Punjab "cut off" from the rest of the country, resulting in a "big impact" on the state's trade and industry.
If trade and industry are finished, how will Punjab be saved, said Arora, who is the also Punjab AAP president.
He made this statement while participating in a debate on the resolution against the Centre's draft National Policy Framework on Agricultural Marketing on the concluding day of the two-day Punjab Assembly session.
Notably, farmers under the banner of the Sarvika, Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha are leading the 'Delhi Chalo' march to press the government to accept their various demands, including the provision of a legal guarantee for Minimum Support Price (MSP) on crops.
The protesting farmers have been stationed at the Shambhu (Shambhu-Ambala) and Khanauri (Sangrur-Jind) border points between Punjab and Haryana since February 13 of last year, when their march was halted by security

Punjab Assembly sees unruly scenes following allegations against Power minister: Harbhajan Singh

Chandigarh
Unruly scenes were witnessed in the Punjab Assembly on Tuesday after Congress leader Partap Singh Bajwa alleged collection of money from officials of the state power utility for the AAP in the wake of recently held Delhi assembly polls.
Punjab Power Minister Harbhajan Singh refused the charge, slamming the leader of opposition for leveling baseless allegations against him.
Heated exchanges



were witnessed between Bajwa and Singh, prompting Speaker Kulraj Sandhwan to intervene and ask them to sit down. Sandhwan even banged his gavel to restore order in the House.
During the zero hour on the concluding day of the two-day Vidhan Sabha session here, senior Congress leader Bajwa claimed that an engineers' association of the power utility -- Punjab State Power Corporation -- recently wrote to the chief minister claiming that money was demanded from a superintendent engineer in Hoshiarpur for "helping" the AAP in the Delhi polls.
Bajwa further alleged that it came to the fore that money was demanded from the PSPCL at the behest of the power minister.
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Bajwa further alleged that it came to the fore that money was demanded from the PSPCL at the behest of the power minister.

Punjab Police raid 1,274 immigration firms across state

Chandigarh
In a bid to protect the youth aspiring to settle abroad from falling prey to illegal travel agents, Punjab Police conducted raids and carried out search operations at as many as 1274 immigration firms across the state.
The massive operation against illegal travel agents was carried out in the directions of Punjab Director General of Police (DGP) Gurav Yadav simultaneously across all the 28 Police districts from 11 am till late evening on Monday.
The development came amidst the ongoing crackdown against illegal travel agents across the state in the wake of the deportation of Indians from the USA.
Divulging details, Special DGP Law and Order Arpit Shukla, who was personally monitoring this daylong state-level operation, said police teams have registered at least 24 first information reports (FIRs) against defaulter travel agents and arrested seven of them.
He said all CPs and SSPs were asked to constitute special police teams under the supervision of gazetted officers to carry out

searches at all the immigration and travel agent firms in their respective jurisdictions.
"All the CPs and SSPs were directed to ensure strict action against those travel agents, who were found violating the mandatory provisions and procedures of the Punjab Travel Professionals' Regulation Act, 2012, or have defrauded innocent people with false promises of facilitating illegal entry into foreign countries," said the Special DGP.
As per the provisions of the Punjab Travel Professionals' Regulation Act 2012, all travel agents are mandated to obtain a license from the Deputy Commissioner's office, which is valid for five years and renewable for subsequent five-year periods.
Licensed agents are also required to display their licenses prominently, maintain records

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE is hereby given that Mumbadevi Developers filed R.A.C. Suit, being Suit No. 483 of 2006 against Shri Bhagwant Singh Sethi, who expired and his legal heirs were bought on record in Court Room No. 9 of Small Causes Court of Mumbai - 400002 and daughter of deceased Mrs. Manmeet Kaur who is residing at B-168, 1st Floor, Shashank Lok, Gurgaon, Haryana (a last known address) in the proceeding of Court records.
As Plaintiff filed to serve Mrs. Manmeet Kaur by R.P.A.D., but the said case is back and henceforth Mrs. Manmeet Kaur remained to be served.
So as per Court Order this Public Notice is given to complete service upon the unserved daughter.
The next date is within 15 days from the date of this publication, hereto. Failing the Court proceeding will be at ex-parte. Sd/-
UTTAM PARMAR
ADVOCATE HIGH COURT
ADVOCATE FOR PLAINTIFF
19, Shrihar Bhawan, 27
Picket Cross Road, Mumbai-400002.
Mobile No. 7021916184
Date: 28/02/2025

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority
Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida-201301 (U.P.)
Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.in

E-TENDER NOTICE
E-Tenders are invited from firms/contractors registered with UPLC Lucknow for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website : www.noidaauthorityonline.in & <https://tender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes / amendments / corrigendum etc.

(A)
1. 25/GM(E/M)SrM (E/M)-IV/2024-25, Maintenance of 30 Mtr/16 Mtr High Mast in Sector-163, 165, 166, 167, 168 and Related Villages, Noida. Cost - Rs. 20.46 Lacs
2. 26/GM(E/M)SrM (E/M)-IV/2024-25, Supply, installation, Testing and Commissioning of 62.5 KV DGS Set in Gaushtala Sector-135, Noida. Cost - Rs. 17.39 Lacs
Which can be uploaded by date 12.03.2025 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date 17.03.2025 at 11.00 AM.

(B)
1. 23/GM(E/M)SrM (E/M)-IV/2024-25, Maintenance of 30 Mtr/16 Mtr High Mast Expressway from Sector-14A to Greater Noida Border, Noida. Cost - Rs. 28.38 Lacs.
Which can be uploaded by date 06.03.2025 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date 07.03.2025 at 11.00 AM.
General Manager (E&M)
Office : Sector - 5, Noida
Noida
CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

NORTHERN RAILWAY
OPEN TENDER NOTICE
The Divisional Engineer/Track, Northern Railway, DRM Office, Delhi Division, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110065, for and on behalf of the President of India invites sealed open electronic-tenders for under noted works:-

S. No.	MTI No.	Name of work	Approximate cost of work	Earnest money to be deposited	Completion period	Date of opening
1	31	Supplying, stacking and loading of 30,000 Cum, 85 mm gauge stone ballast (Machine crushed) into Railway Wagons (with ballast sub Depot No. 01 at TKD. (including all leads & fit, GST, taxes etc., so nothing will be paid extra whenever the cases may be).	Rs. 3,88,41,900/-	Rs. 3,43,200	12 Months	18.03.2025
2	22	Fabrication assembly of 2-3L type Glass (insulation joints at Track Depot Shikharwari) under DEN/Track/DLI.	Rs. 2,48,99,085/-	Rs. 2,74,500/-	12 Months	18.03.2025

The e-tender is to be submitted through railway website <https://www.reps.gov.in/>. The tenders can be submitted on website up to 15.03.2025, on 18.03.2025 and shall be opened thereafter.
NO: 128-W/Str. DEN-C/NT-31-32-2024-25-WC Date: 24.02.2025

6882925

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

The challenge is increasing temperature and changing atmospheric patterns



By Priyanka Saurabh

Climate action must be decisive to prevent dangerous declines in global sea ice. Adaptive policies and improved polar monitoring will increase climate resilience. A sustainable future depends on everyone's determination to reduce emissions and protect the planet's fragile cryosphere. Many communities lack preparedness to deal with the threats of climate change. Investing in resilient infrastructure that can withstand future climate risks is vital for communities.

An important factor controlling the Earth's climate is the amount of sea ice floating in the polar regions. However, due to changing atmospheric patterns and rising temperatures, this has declined to a record low of 15.76 million square kilometres. Global temperatures are rising, ocean currents are becoming turbulent, and extreme weather events are becoming worse as a result of this decline. Extreme weather events around the world are being affected by changes in the Earth's climate. The frequency and intensity of devastating wildfires, year-long droughts, heavy rainfall, severe flooding, record-breaking heat waves on land and sea, and widespread flooding during storms are all increasing. Since the Industrial Revolution, human activities, particularly the burning of fossil fuels, have caused a rapid increase in the atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gases. Methane, carbon dioxide, and other gases act like a blanket, trapping heat and warming the Earth as their concentrations increase. As a result, the air and oceans on Earth become warmer, ice on land melts, weather patterns change, and the water cycle is affected by this temperature rise, making extreme weather conditions worse. Climate change affects our society in many ways.

Droughts can affect human health and food production. Floods can damage infrastructure and ecosystems and spread disease. In addition to changing food availability and limiting worker productivity, human health problems caused by droughts, floods and other weather events also increase mortality. The physical infrastructure of our transportation and communication systems includes roads, bridges, ports, electric grids, broadband internet and other components. It is often designed to last for many years. Therefore, the infrastructure in most communities was built without considering climate change. Current infrastructure may not be able to handle severe weather conditions such as wind, snow, flooding, heavy rain or temperature fluctuations. The impacts of these events can take many different forms. For example, higher temperatures cause indoor cooling needs, which can put pressure on the energy grid. Flooding caused by unexpectedly excessive rainfall that exceeds stormwater drainage capacity can close major routes, businesses and highways.

Coastal infrastructure, such as water supplies, roads, bridges and more, are at risk due to sea level rise. Since much of the population lives in coastal areas, millions of people will be affected by the risks. In addition, sea level rise can lead to coastal erosion and flooding due to high tides. Research suggests that some communities will reach or be at sea level by the year 2100. Now it will be up to them to decide what to do. During a process called managed retreat, communities will likely move away from the shoreline and make changes to their infrastructure. Ocean heat transport is primarily responsible for the global decline in sea ice. When warm ocean currents enter the polar regions, sea

ice melts faster at the base. Warmer water is brought into the Arctic by the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC), which reduces the stability of the ice. These climate patterns affect oceanic and atmospheric conditions as well as the rate of ice formation and melting. The 2015-2016 El Niño event increased ocean temperatures and reduced Antarctica's sea ice to record lows. Large volcanic eruptions release aerosols, which have the potential to temporarily cool the atmosphere, but they can also be a contributing factor to warming oceans in the long term.

The 2022 Hunga Tonga eruption released acetone vapor into the stratosphere, potentially increasing the warming effect over time. More powerful storms cause fragile sea ice to break up, making it more likely to melt and be affected by ocean currents. Storms in the Barents and Bering Seas, which cause ice to break up in 2024, resulting in record lows of Arctic sea ice cover. Methane and carbon dioxide trap heat in the atmosphere, raising global temperatures and accelerating polar ice melt. Arctic sea ice has been declining at a rate of 12-23 per cent since 1981, due to the dramatic increase in carbon dioxide levels caused by the Industrial Revolution. Ocean acidification and atmospheric temperature rise are caused by pollutants released from the burning of coal, oil, and gas. Arctic amplification is the process whereby the Arctic warms up to four times faster than the global average due to heat-absorbing emissions from industrial

activities. When forests are destroyed, less carbon is absorbed and when cities grow, more heat is retained, which affects atmospheric circulation. Sea ice degradation and global warming are indirectly caused by deforestation in the Amazon, which reduces carbon absorption. Drilling and increasing marine activities in the Arctic region disrupt the sea ice ecosystem and generate pollution and heat, which contribute to local temperature rise. The rapid migratory activity in the Arctic region following the discovery of natural resources in the region has further reinforced this mechanism, resulting in greater loss of polar ice.

Climate action must be decisive to prevent dangerous declines in global sea ice. Ice loss can be reduced by strengthening global climate pledges such as the Polar Code, promoting the clean energy transition, and funding geoeengineering initiatives. Adaptive policies and improved polar monitoring will increase climate resilience. A sustainable future depends on everyone's determination to reduce emissions and protect the planet's fragile cryosphere. Many communities lack preparation to deal with the threats of climate change. Scientists are researching how communities are affected by climate change now and in the future, and can suggest best practices. Investing in resilient infrastructure that can withstand future climate risks is important for communities. All members of our society, including teachers, risk communicators, emergency managers, and city planners, should receive environmental education about this. Through environmental education, anyone can learn how to prepare for climate change.

(Priyanka Saurabh, Research Scholar in Political Science)

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.

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

Solution, Sudoku

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

THE WISDOM TREE BY SUVEEN KUMAR

REFELCTION

Everything clearly reflects. It reflects when you are loved, it reflects when you are unloved, it reflects when you are relaxed, it reflects when you are disturbed, it reflects when you think of someone and blush, it reflects when someone waits for you and your rush, a mere reflection of love sweetens everything around you and a bare reflection of love poisons everything around you. Eyes with kindness, mouth with sweetness, skin with softness and thoughts with greatness stay desirable. don't let anything come in you that you don't want the world to see, because everything that is in there will reflect, everything throws some signals that are felt by everyone around you. reflection doubles your power when it brings you inside out and it halves your power when it brings you outside in.

life is easy when you and your reflection are on the same page, life is difficult when you are your reflections don't really talk to each other and life is death when your own reflection is your enemy, clean yourself everyday as you get yourself dirty everyday, nourish yourself everyday as you fight a battle everyday, cherish yourself everyday as you remain with yourself everyday, adjust with yourself everyday as you change yourself everyday, hold yourself everyday as you let fall yourself everyday, save yourself everyday as you spend yourself everyday, praise yourself everyday as you remain with yourself everyday, celebrate yourself everyday as you find yourself everyday.

Moral: Be so clean in life that you can feel proud of your reflection.



By Dr Satyavan Saurabh

Street theatre developed in the early 20th century to liberate the working class and strengthen revolution against the established authority. It was initiated primarily by leftist theater activists in India during the anti-colonial era. Although street theatre and folk theatre have many similarities, street theatre is a participatory social communication process rather than a straightforward artistic medium. This essay examines the function and potential of street theatre as a tool for community development that seeks to promote social change. Soon after India gained independence in 1947, the theater industry experienced significant upheaval.

Performing arts and theatre are linked to sociopolitical movements

As regional theater traditions have evolved, India's theater and performing arts have been catalysts for social and political change. Theatre has proven to be a powerful medium for promoting justice, resisting authority, and drawing attention to social injustice. Growing regional nationalism, the question of nation, and the complex narratives of anti-colonial struggle have influenced the development of regional theater traditions. For example, the Bengali play Nil Darpan (1860) narrated how indigo farmers were exploited during British rule. Modern theatre. The intersection of colonial production and traditional cultural practices as shaped modern theatre. Performing arts, including theater, have remained a powerful tool for promoting social change and a vibrant platform for debate. Theatre has long been a powerful tool for raising awareness, reform, and resistance in India, influencing political movements as well as social structures. From classical rituals to contemporary street plays, it has never stopped changing to reflect and influence social changes. Social

injustice has long been brought to light through theater. The exploitation of indigo farmers during British rule was depicted public by the Bengali theatre's Nil Darpan in 1860. During the independence movement, people were largely organized through plays and folk performance. Through theatre, the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA) promoted anti-colonial sentiment in 1943. Lower-class communities have been able to express their identity through theater. Dalit empowerment and Ambedkarite philosophy are promoted by Bhima Natya (Maharashtra). Theater has been used to expose corruption and criticize policies. In the 1980s, Saifdar Hashmi's Jan Natya Manch presented street plays that criticized government policies; this led to his assassination in 1989. Law and social reform have been influenced by theater. Vijay Tendulkar's 1972 book Sakharam Binder's discussion of women's rights and revelations of domestic abuse resulted in strict censorship laws. Religious and social traditions: Ancient theater had strong religious and social roots. Kutiyattam (Kerala), recognized by UNESCO in

2001, still upholds the traditions of Sanskrit theatre. Social commentary through folk theatre: Current socio-political issues are reflected in folk traditions. Class struggle was depicted in Jatra (Bengal) during the Naxalite movement. Human rights, democracy, and corruption became new themes in modern theater. Habib Tanvir's Naya Theatre in the 1950s portrayed social issues by combining folk and modern themes. State intervention and censorship: Politically sensitive plays are banned by the government. Vijay Tendulkar's 1972 film Ghasiram Kotwal was banned for exposing caste-based corruption and exploitation. The popularity of digital platforms has increased the influence and reach of theater. YouTube-based theater groups, such as Jana Natya Manch, use digital performances for social activism. Government and private sources in India and abroad have supported Indian theater in its many forms since independence, but it has always been driven by elite talents and influenced by Western culture, while also turning to indigenous resources. Modernist playwrights such as Vijay Tendulkar,

Badal Sarkar, Dharmavir Bharati, Mohan Rakesh, Girish Karnad, Chandrasekhara Kambur, P. Lankesh, and Vidura Parthasarthy were born during this period; their plays have been used and studied all over the world.

These playwrights brought intense formalism and thematic focus to the modernist angst in theater. The crisis of identity and the consequences of globalization are among the themes that young writers are currently discussing in many places. Modern Indian theatre is primarily influenced by three traditions: Sanskrit theatre, folk theatre, and Western theatre. In fact, the third is the one that can be considered the cornerstone of Indian theatre today. We can all see how theater and performing arts have evolved over time, challenged authority, promoted justice, and preserved cultural heritage. Today, there are numerous theater groups and many theater acting institutes across the country, from private to government institutions. To maintain their influence, they have to strengthen their initiatives through cultural preservation, digital integration, and policy support. While

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

TOP STORY

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No place for aggression indecency in Parliament or Assembly: SC

■ The top court said the right to speak inside the House cannot be harnessed as a tool to insult, humiliate and defame a fellow member, ministers and most importantly, the chair itself.

There is no place for aggression and indecency in the proceedings of Parliament or the legislature and members are expected to show complete respect and deference towards each other, the Supreme Court said on Tuesday.

The top court said the right to speak inside the House cannot be harnessed as a tool to insult, humiliate and defame a fellow member, ministers and most importantly, the chair itself.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kottiswar Singh deprecated the conduct of Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) MLC Sunil Kumar Singh in Bihar Legislative Council (BLC) for sloganeering against Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, but set aside his expulsion from the House while terming it as harsh and excessive.

"It needs no emphasis that there is no place for aggression and indecency in the proceedings of Parliament or the Legislature. Members are expected to show complete respect and deference towards each other. This expectation is not merely a matter of tradition or formality; it is essential for the effective functioning of democratic



processes," the bench said. The top court said this ensures that debates and discussions are productive, focused on the issues at hand, and conducted in a manner that upholds the dignity of the institution.

"The right to speak inside the House cannot be harnessed as a tool to insult, humiliate or defame a fellow member, Ministers and most importantly, the Chair itself," it said.

While dealing with the aspect of the role of courts in scrutinising the action of the House, the bench said constitutional courts assume a crucial role in ensuring that the actions imposing punishments on members are proportionate and just.

"There is no gainsaid that imposing a disproportionate punishment not only undermines democratic values by depriving the member of participating in the proceedings of the House but also affects the electorates of the constituency who remain unrepresented," it said, adding that in India's representative democracy, the main function of a legislator is to act as a reflection of the people's will.

Justice Surya Kant, who penned the verdict on behalf of the bench, said instead of being a free agent to follow their conviction, the legislators are agents of the electorates and thus obligated to reflect the opinions and val-

ues of the people they represent.

"The removal of a member from the House therefore is a significant issue for both the member and the constituency they represent. The democratic process relies on the active participation of all members, and even brief absences can impede a member's ability to contribute to critical legislative discussions and decisions," the bench said.

It added that the absence of members from the House can have far-reaching implications on the legislative outcomes and the representation of their constituents' interests.

"We clarify that while representation of the con-

stituency is not the sole factor in determining the punishment to be imposed on a member, it nonetheless remains an important aspect that merits due consideration," the bench said.

Emphasising that the absence of a duly elected representative disrupts the democratic process and undermines the voice of the electorate, the bench said in such a situation, if the punishment inflicted upon the member concerned appears to be prima facie harsh and disproportionate, Constitutional courts owe a duty to undo such gross injustice and review the proportionality of such disqualifications or expulsions.

"It is pertinent to add that the said responsibility involves a delicate balance where courts must act decisively to strike down excessively harsh actions that threaten our democratic fabric while simultaneously exercising restraint to avoid encroaching upon the legislative domain."

"We reiterate that courts must reflect a certain degree of deference to the legislative will and wisdom, intervening only when the action prescribed is so disproportionately harsh that it shocks the intrinsic sense of justice," the bench underscored.

It held that there is no absolute bar on the Constitutional courts to examine the proportionality of the punishment imposed on a member while reviewing the validity of the action taken by the House.

"By focusing on the proportionality of punishment, courts must ensure that justice aligns with constitutional values and societal norms, thereby upholding the integrity of the democratic process," the bench said.

On July 26, 2024, Singh was expelled from the Bihar Legislative Council for his unruly behaviour in the House.

Singh, considered close to RJD supremo Lalu Prasad and his family, was charged with sloganeering against the chief minister on February 13, 2024, during a heated exchange in the House.

In 2024, the motion for Singh's expulsion was passed by voice vote, a day after the ethics committee submitted its report to acting chairman Awadhesh Narain Singh.

Singh was also charged with "insulting the chief minister by mimicking his body language" and questioning the competence of the members of the ethics committee after appearing before it.

India-China relationship entering 'phase of recovery': Chinese envoy

New Delhi
India-China ties are entering the "phase of recovery" and the relationship between the two nations is "one of the most important" bilateral engagement globally, Chinese ambassador Xu Feihong said on Tuesday.

In an address at an event, Xu also said that the recent Special Representatives (SR) dialogue and the talks under Foreign Secretary-Vice Minister mechanism between the two sides produced common understandings on the boundary question and created an opportunity to reboot the ties.

New Delhi and Beijing are in the process of normalising bilateral ties following an understanding last year to end the face-off on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh.

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi held the 23rd Special Representative dialogue in Beijing on December 18.

Weeks later, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri travelled to the Chinese capital and held talks with his Chinese counterpart Sun Weidong under the framework of Foreign Secretary-Vice Minister mechanism.

"The 23rd Special Representatives meeting on China-India boundary question and Vice Foreign Minister-Foreign Secretary dialogue were successfully held in Beijing, and reached a series of common understandings on the boundary question and practical cooperation," Xu said.

"This creates an important opportunity for the reboot of China-India relations and provides a broader platform for exchanges and cooperation between the youth of our two countries," he said.

The ambassador, speaking at the third China-India Youth Dialogue, however did not elaborate on specific outcomes of the talks.

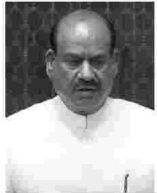
"The China-India relationship is one of the most important bilateral relationships in the world. A sound and stable China-India relationship meets the expectations of the two peoples and the international community," he said.

Xu said both sides should implement the important consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries, mutually respect each other's core interests and view each other's development as an opportunity besides encouraging exchanges and visits in various fields.

"The ambassador added: "China-India relations are entering the phase of recovery. We will celebrate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations this year."

India and China completed the disengagement process late last year after firming up a pact for withdrawal of troops from Depsang and Demchok, the last two friction points in eastern Ladakh.

Lok Sabha Speaker constitutes committee to sanction leave of MPs



New Delhi
Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has formed a committee, chaired by BJP member Bipal Kumar Deb, to review the leave applications of House members regarding their absence from proceedings.

The 15-member committee was constituted on Monday as the Punjab and Haryana High Court is hearing a petition filed by Lok Sabha member Amritpal Singh, who is detained in Dibrugarh jail, seeking permission to attend the Parliament session.

Singh had contended that he stood to lose his membership of the Lok Sabha if he remained absent from the House for 60 days.

Elected to the Lok Sabha from the Khadoor Sahib constituency in the general elections last year, Singh has been detained in Assam under the National Security Act since 2023.

The Committee on Absence of Members from the Sittings of the House is chaired by Deb, a former Tripura chief minister, and includes 14 members: Saumitra Khan, Gyaneshwar Patil, Jai Prakash Gopal Thakur, Mansukhbhai Vasava (all BJP), Anand Bhaduria (SP), Asit Kumar Mal (Tribhram), Gowaal Padavi, V K Sreekandan, and Prashant Padole (Congress), Amra Ram (CPI-M), Kesineni Sivanath (TDP), and Nalin Soren (JMM).

Ex-CJI Lalit other legal experts appear before ONOE committee

New Delhi
Former Chief Justice of India U U Lalit and former Law Commission of India chairperson Ritu Raj Awasthi shared their views on Tuesday before the Joint Parliamentary Committee studying the two bills for simultaneous polls as the panel began consulting experts and stakeholders.

Opposition members criticised the concept, with Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra claiming "one nation one election" (ONOE) will weaken democracy by tinkering with tenure of legislatures and impinge on people's rights, sources said.

A BJP ally wondered if a gap of five years between two elections will weaken elected representatives' accountability to people, they added.

IAS officer Niten Chandra, secretary of the high-level Kovind committee, and E M Sudarsana Natchiappan, a senior advocate and former Congress MP who had headed in 2015 a parliamentary committee that favoured simultaneous polls, also appeared before the panel.



el. They could not share their views due to paucity of time and are expected to present their views later.

Awasthi spoke in detail about the benefits of the simultaneous Lok Sabha and state assembly elections in terms of savings and boost to development.

The parliamentary committee's agenda for the February 25 meeting is briefly listed as "interaction with legal experts".

The high-level committee headed by former president Ram Nath Kovind was constituted by the Modi government on 'one nation one election' and it had in its voluminous report strongly

battled for the concept. Subsequently, the Union Cabinet accepted the committee's recommendations and the government tabled two bills, including one seeking to amend the Constitution, in Lok Sabha.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla constituted a 39-member Joint Parliamentary Committee headed by BJP MP and former law minister P P Chaudhary.

The parliamentary committee had so far held two meetings, excluding Tuesday's, in which prepared broad details of its agenda and the list of stakeholders and experts to be consulted is given.

Railways to run more than 350 trains from Prayagraj on Maha Shivaratri: Ministry

New Delhi
Elaborate plans have been put in place for the safe return of pilgrims who have gathered at Prayagraj Maha Kumbh from various parts of the country for the final Amrit Snan on Maha Shivaratri, the Railway Ministry said on Tuesday.

"As the final Amrit Snan of Maha Kumbh 2025 is scheduled for February 26, a large number of pilgrims from various states, including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, West Bengal have gathered in Prayagraj to bathe at the Sangam, the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati rivers," a press statement from the Ministry said. A total of 350 trains have been planned to run for the safe and comfortable return of pilgrims.

According to the Ministry, for the past two days, Sunday and Monday, there was a high number of passengers at stations in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand etc who travelled to Prayagraj for final Amrit Snan.

"After the Amrit Snan, a large number of people are expected to return to their hometowns, which will likely lead to a heavy crowd at the railway stations," the Ministry said. It added, "Keeping this in mind, North Central Railway, North Eastern Railway, and Northern Railway have made extensive preparations, and all officials and staff have been directed to remain vigilant at their workstations." The Ministry is expecting a huge rush of pilgrims similar to Mouni Anavasya day for which over 350 trains were run, transporting more than 20 lakh people to their destinations.



"Similarly, special arrangements have been made to run additional trains after the Maha Shivaratri Snan, and extra rakes have been stationed near Prayagraj for use as needed," the Ministry said.

It added, "Initially, the railway had planned for the operation of approximately 13,500 trains during the Maha Kumbh, and as of the 42nd day, more than 15,000 trains, including a large number of special trains, have already been run."

The press note said that the entire railway operation is being closely monitored by Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and the Chairman and CEO of the Railway Board, Satish Kumar along with other senior railway officials.

"In light of the en masse pilgrims expected on Maha Shivaratri, the railway administration has made arrangements for the convenience of passengers, including security, shelters, and easy ticketing apart from

running a large number of trains," the Ministry said.

It added, "Over 1,500 commercial department staff and 3,000 Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel have been deployed at all stations in Prayagraj region."

Besides, according to the Ministry, 29 squads of the Railway Protection Special Force, two squads of Women Railway Protection Special Force, 22 dog squads, and two bomb disposal squads have been stationed in Prayagraj.

The press note said that medical facilities were also available at various stations, where serious cases of pilgrims were treated in observation rooms.

"During the Maha Kumbh 2025, many pilgrims made use of the digital services offered by the railway. Millions of passengers accessed the website and the Kumbh app for their travel needs," the Ministry said.

It added, "In the final weekend of Maha Kumbh, the railway continued to manage regular and special trains at good fettle. On Sunday, the railway successfully operated 335 trains, transporting over 16 lakh people to their destinations."

SC lays down parameters over punishment to members by legislature

New Delhi
The Supreme Court on Tuesday laid down guidelines for the consideration of courts when it comes to action taken by the legislature against its members.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kottiswar Singh said the determination of what constituted a disproportionate measure was inherently complex and subjective and such an assessment required a nuanced scrutiny of the specific circumstances surrounding each case.

A one-size-fits-all definition, the bench said, was impractical while adjudicating proportionality and the courts must exercise



their discretion in a prudent and judicious manner.

The top court, therefore, laid down the parameters in a case where it deprecated the conduct of RJD MLC Sunil Kumar Singh in Bihar legislative council (BLC) for sloganeering

against Chief Minister Nitish Kumar but set aside his expulsion from the House while terming it as harsh and excessive.

The bench said the court while examining the disproportionate measure should consider the conduct of members in the

house. The parameters include degree of obstruction caused by the member in the proceedings of the house, and whether the behaviour of the member brought disrepute to the dignity of the entire house.

Other parameters outlined by the bench include the previous conduct of the erring member; the subsequent conduct of the erring member -- expressing remorse, cooperation with the institutional scrutiny mechanism -- and availability of lesser restrictive measures to discipline the delinquent member. The bench said courts should also consider

whether crude expressions uttered were deliberate and motivated or a mere outburst of language largely influenced by the local idiom and whether the measure adopted was suitable for furthering the desired purpose aside from balancing the interest of society, particularly the electorate, with those of the erring members.

"A scrutiny of the punishment given to the members by the House on the above mentioned framework will ensure that the legislative actions are justified, necessary, and balanced, protecting both the integrity of the legislative body and the rights of its

members, as well as the larger societal objective," the bench said.

It was imperative, the court said, such legislative action remained mindful of the fundamental principle that the purpose of imposing punishment was not to serve as a tool for retribution but uphold and enforce discipline within the house.

"The primary objective should be to maintain decorum and foster an environment of constructive debate and deliberation. Any punitive measure must be proportionate and guided by considerations of fairness, reasonableness, and due process, ensuring that

it does not unduly stifle democratic participation or undermine the representative nature of the institution," the court added.

On July 26, 2024, Singh was expelled from BLC for his unruly behaviour in the house.

Singh, considered close to RJD supremo Lalu Prasad and his family, was charged with sloganeering against CM Kuring on February 13, 2024, during a heated exchange in the house.

He was also charged for "insulting the chief minister by mimicking his body language" and questioning the competence of the members of the ethics committee after appearing before it.

Meitei village volunteers
Arambai
Tenggol hold talks with Manipur gov

Imphal:

Manipur-based Meitei village volunteers Arambai Tenggol on Tuesday held discussions with Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla, who sought their cooperation in restoring peace and normalcy in the strife-torn state, officials said.

The talks also covered surrendering weapons under specific terms and conditions, they added.

The Arambai Tenggol delegation was led by its chief Koroungba Khuman and other functionaries, they said.

Following the meeting, Arambai Tenggol PRC Robin Mangang said, "We reached an understanding, which will soon be conveyed to the public. The governor assured us of efforts to bring back peace in Manipur."

"The governor requested us to give up arms. We have some terms and conditions and when those are fulfilled, we will surrender the weapons," he added.

The group also submitted a memorandum to the governor outlining key demands, including border fencing, NRC implementation (1951 as base year), deportation of illegal immigrants, and strict action against militants who violated the Suspension of Operations (SoO) treaty.

It also sought protection from legal action against the village volunteers and ST status

Ensure cleanliness tight security at temples on Maha Shivratri Adityanath to

Gorakhpur:

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed officials to ensure comprehensive security arrangements and cleanliness at temples across the state for Maha Shivratri on Wednesday. Adityanath on Tuesday held a meeting with senior officials at the Gorakhnath Temple here to review preparations for the festival, the UP government said in a statement.

The chief minister asserted that the devotees should not face any inconvenience and the highest standards of cleanliness should be maintained at all the temples.

He noted that massive crowds of people are expected at temples across the villages and cities, and instructed the authorities to make special arrangements to ensure security and convenience. Traffic management around major temples should be a priority, and adequate deployment of police and traffic personnel must be in place, the CM said during the meeting.

Special security measures should also be in place for women visiting temples in both urban and rural areas, he said. He also directed officials to regulate temporary shops that are set up outside temples during the festival, according to the statement.

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Want kids to embrace modern education not become 'mulla' 'maulvi': Adityanath

Lucknow:

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday said his government wants to educate children to become "doctors, engineers and scientists", not "mullas" or "maulvis" (religious clerics).

Addressing the Legislative Council, Adityanath said, "The double-engine government is ensuring modern education for all children without any discrimination. 'Kathmullapan ki sanskriti nah chaheli' (the culture of religious extremism will not be tolerated)."

Quoting former president late A P J Abdul Kalam, Adityanath said modernising education is key to social progress. "The Samajwadi Party has a narrow mindset. The BJP government does not want to confine the minority children only to traditional madrasas and turn them into mullas and maulvis. We want to provide them with opportunities to become doctors, engineers, scientists and writers," Adityanath said.

The chief minister said his government is providing free education



and upgrading schools with funds from both the Centre and the state.

"Our goal is to equip every child with quality education, ensuring that they become valuable contributors to the society," he said.

Reiterating the state's commitment to educational reforms, Adityanath said, "Every child is God's greatest creation. They deserve the best education without any discrimination. While religious education has its place, those aspiring to be good writers, scientists, mathematicians, teachers and engineers must embrace

modern education," Adityanath also highlighted the Chief Minister's Abhyudaya Yojana, which offers free coaching to underprivileged students preparing for competitive exams.

Accusing the opposition of being ignorant of the dire realities faced by the tribal and marginalised communities, Adityanath said his government has endeavoured to bring them into the mainstream.

He said tribal communities like Tharu, Musahar and Gond were previously deprived of land ownership papers, ration cards and housing,

but "the double-engine government has brought all these tribes into the mainstream, ensuring that they receive essential services and economic opportunities".

The chief minister also highlighted his government's poverty alleviation efforts, stating that six crore people in Uttar Pradesh and 25 crore people across India have moved above the poverty line in the last seven-and-a-half years.

"In the next three years, we aim to uplift 13.5 lakh more families above the poverty line,"

The chief minister said his government is providing free education and upgrading schools with funds from both the Centre and the state.

he said.

A state survey has identified the families in need, and the government will work to increase their annual income to at least Rs 1.25 lakh by providing basic amenities and economic opportunities, he said.

Adityanath also slammed the Samajwadi Party's 'PDA' (Pichhda, Dalit, Alpasankhyak - Backward, Dalit, Minority) model, calling it a "dikhawa" (gimmick).

He further said the previous governments ignored serious health crises like encephalitis, which claimed thousands of lives.

"In contrast, our government tackled it as a mission, launching mass vaccination drives, improving healthcare infrastructure, and promoting sanitation. As a result, the disease has almost been eradicated but the opposition refuses to acknowledge it," he said.

Varanasi gears up for Mahashivratri Akharas to lead grand procession

Varanasi: With an increased influx of devotees from the Maha Kumbh, Varanasi is all set to celebrate Mahashivratri with grandeur, officials said here on Tuesday.

Various Akharas, along with a large number of saints and Naga sadhus, will take out a grand procession before offering prayers at the revered Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple on Wednesday.

The district administration and the Kashi Vishwanath Temple management have completed preparations for the celebrations, Commissioner Kaushal Raj Sharma said on Tuesday.

Discussions have been held with the heads of Akharas and other saints who have arrived from the Maha-kumbh regarding their scheduled visit to the temple, he said.

According to Sharma, the saints and Akhara members will be allowed to offer prayers at the temple from 6 am to 9 am.

In the evening, at 5:30 pm, a grand procession will commence from Hanuman Ghat and Harishchandra Ghat, proceeding towards Godaulia.

From there, the

saints and Akhara heads will walk to the temple and enter through Gate No. 4 for darshan, he said.

The temple visit is expected to take approximately two to two-and-a-half hours, after which they will exit via the Annapur-naji and Dhundhiraj Ganesh routes. Meanwhile, two separate lines will remain open at the ghats and Saraswati Phatak for the general public.

As per Akhara traditions, another darshan window of 30 minutes has been scheduled at 2 pm in the afternoon, Sharma said.

He also confirmed that the traditional "Shiv Baraat" procession, organised in coordination with the administration, will take place on February 27, a day after Mahashivratri, considering the heavy rush of devotees and Akhara members.

UP ministers accuse SP MLA of comparing Siksha Mitras with dogs

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh ministers

Tuesday accused a Samajwadi Party MLA of comparing Siksha Mitras -- ad-hoc teachers in primary schools -- with dogs and sought an apology from him for the insult.

The Chief Minister emphasized Uttar Pradesh's top position in implementing various central government schemes under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. He stated, "Uttar Pradesh continues to lead the nation in schemes like the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban & Rural), PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, Ujjwala Yojana, PM SVANidhi, PM Swamitva Yojana, Swachh Bharat Mission, Ease of Doing Business, Jan Dhan Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana, and Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana."

He said, "In the latest budget, the government also announced a minimum wage policy for outsourced and contract workers to prevent their exploitation. Additionally, under the Mukhyamantri Yuva Udyami Yojana, youth are being encouraged to become self-employed, marking the beginning of a new era of entrepreneurship in the state."

The CM further mentioned that the Uttar Pradesh government is dedicated to creating new job opportunities for young people. Over 2 crore youth have found employment in the MSME sector, while more than 7.5 lakh youngsters have secured

Semiconductor plant created entire ecosystem in Assam: Vaishnav

Guwahati:

Union minister Ashwini Vaishnav on Tuesday said the semiconductor plant in Assam's Morigaon district has created an entire ecosystem, attracting investment interest from multiple countries.

Speaking at a session on semiconductors, the minister for railways, electronics and information technology said the setting up of the semiconductor assembly unit at Morigaon will position Assam as a major hub and very soon, another such unit will be set up in the state.

Several companies from Singapore, Malaysia, and Japan are expected to sign Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) and set up offices near the semiconductor plant, he added.

"Apart from semiconductors, Assam will soon have manufacturing units for mobile phones and electronics, further boosting the state's industrial landscape," he said.

The decision to set up the National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology



(NIELIT) University was taken a few months ago at Jagiroad on an en-croached railway land, the minister said.

"The land has been cleared, and the university will come up soon," he said.

In addition, an electronics manufacturing cluster will be set up at Bongora in Kamrup district, with both the central and state governments working together to create a vibrant industrial hub, Vaishnav said.

Also detailed significant railway projects in the region, emphasising the sector's close connection to semiconductor growth.

Two new Amrit Bharat

trains—Silchar-Guwahati Intercity and Guwahati-Agartala Intercity—have been sanctioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and are expected to be operational within the next 10 months, he said.

"To improve connectivity, the government is working on doubling and tripling railway tracks, with plans to quadruple lines in the Chicken's Neck area—the narrow strip connecting the Northeast with the rest of India," he added.

Among 90 railway stations in the Northeast, 60 stations in Assam will be upgraded to world-class Amrit stations, including Guwahati railway station.

Over 2 crore youth have secured jobs in the MSME sector: UP CM

Lucknow:

CM Yogi said that Uttar Pradesh has become one of the most favorable states in the country for investment. The Uttar Pradesh government has made several reforms to attract investors and make the state the country's leading investment destination.

He said that investment is now being approved only through NOC in the state, due to which investors do not need to make rounds of offices. The government has ensured that all facilities are easily available to the investors and they get the benefit of incentive schemes without any kind of human hindrance.

The Chief Minister highlighted the state government's efforts to promote 'Ease of Doing Business' by introducing several policy reforms. He stated, "The land bank has been expanded, and new policies have been implemented across various sectors, making it easier for industries to grow."



He mentioned that the government has also ensured transparency in the investment process, leading to the establishment of large-scale industrial units. As a result, Uttar Pradesh has emerged as a top destination for business and investment in the country.

Talking about 'Ease of Living', CM Yogi described the government's initiatives as 'milestones in improving people's quality of life.' He shared that over 2.61 crore toilets have been built, enhancing sanitation and health conditions. More than 50 lakh poor families

have received housing, while 1.86 crore households have benefited from free LPG connections under the Ujjwala Scheme. Additionally, 1.56 lakh underprivileged families have been provided with free electricity connections, significantly improving the standard of living, especially in rural areas.

The CM further mentioned that the Uttar Pradesh government is dedicated to creating new job opportunities for young people. Over 2 crore youth have found employment in the MSME sector, while more than 7.5 lakh youngsters have secured

'Insulting those searching missing loved ones' Akhilesh slams UP CM

Kannaui (UP):

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Tuesday accused Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath of insulting families searching for their missing loved ones in the Maha Kumbh by calling them "vultures".

Yadav was referring to Adityanath's recent statement in the state assembly in which he took a dig at the opposition and said that "vultures got dead bodies, pigs got dirt, devotees got God" in the Maha Kumbh.

Talking to reporters in Kannaui, Yadav said, "Even now, many people are searching for their loved ones — brothers, children and parents (lost in Maha Kumbh stampede last month).



Some are still missing. Is the chief minister calling these grieving families vultures? This is the height of insensitivity from someone holding a constitutional position."

The SP chief said that the chief minister's reference to vultures was particularly inappropriate, given that he is setting up a cul-

ture breeding centre in Gorakhpur, according to a statement.

Yadav held the BJP government responsible for the stampede and mismanagement at the Maha Kumbh and asked "what was the chief minister inspecting when such a major tragedy occurred?"

The loss of lives and chaos in Maha Kumbh is proof of his government's failure," he said, demanding an official list of the deceased and missing persons.

The former chief minister also claimed that the BJP government is fighting against each other, while the UP government is fighting against the Centre and the Centre are fighting against each other.

ing among themselves. And now we see central and state agencies clashing over the quality of Ganga water in Prayagraj," he said.

Yadav pointed out that while the UP State Pollution Control Board claims the Ganga water is clean, a central agency's report states that it is unfit for bathing, and the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has raised concerns over pollution in the river.

On Adityanath's attack on the SP in the assembly, Yadav said, "The language of the chief minister is undemocratic, he is making baseless comments on the socialists. He does not know anything about 'samajwad' (socialism), 'samajwadi' (socialists) and 'democracy.'"

UP ministers accuse SP MLA of comparing Siksha Mitras with dogs

Lucknow:

Uttar Pradesh ministers Tuesday accused a Samajwadi Party MLA of comparing Siksha Mitras -- ad-hoc teachers in primary schools -- with dogs and sought an apology from him for the insult.

During the Question Hour in the Assembly, SP MLA Rakesh Kumar Verma sought to know from the state's basic education minister about the honorarium paid to Siksha Mitras and whether the government was considering increasing the amount and confirming their services as teachers.

Unsatisfied with the government's reply, he said, "The servant in the house of the minister who takes the dog for a walk also earns a salary of Rs 30,000. The person who goes to the minister's house, hammer nails earns a wage of Rs 1,000 per day. But Siksha Mitras are paid

only about Rs 350 a day, which is very less compared to inflation."

Before the minister concerned could respond to this, senior minister Laxmi Narayan Chaudhary sought to corner Verma and said, "The member said that our dog walkers also earn Rs 20,000. Will Siksha Mitras be compared to dogs?"

The ruling party members immediately started raising "shame shame" slogan and demanded an apology from the SP legislator. Basic Education Sandeep Singh said the MLA should apologise for "insulting" Siksha Mitras.

Addressing the House, Singh alleged that the MLA raised a question about Siksha Mitras and compared them to animals. In the last session, a member of the opposition had compared them to animals, he said.

Iraq proposes new security pact to US Defense Minister

Doha: Iraq has proposed to the United States to agree on a new security pact that will include intelligence cooperation, Iraqi Defense Minister Thabit Al-Abbasi said on Tuesday.

"We have proposed a new security agreement to the United States, and we think it is still under consideration," the minister told Saudi TV channel Al-Hadath.

He explained that a new security agreement would provide for a "sustainable security partnership and cooperation in intelligence."

Iraq expects US troops to withdraw from its soil this fall, ending more than a decade of US military presence in the country. The US sent troops to Iraq in 2014 as part of an international coalition against the Islamic State terror group (banned in Russia). Baghdad is preparing to sign new security agreements with coalition partners.

Commenting on the US military presence in Syria, Al-Abbasi said that Iraq wanted the US to keep boots on the ground until Syria builds an army or an agreement is reached with the Kurdish-led rebel Syrian Democratic Forces, which control northeastern Syria with US's help.

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29 dead due to hail, rain in Afghanistan: officials

Herat, Afghanistan: Twenty-nine people died in two provinces in Afghanistan due to hail and heavy rain, officials said Tuesday.

"Twenty-one people were killed and six others were injured" because of hail in western Farah province, said Mohammad Israel Sayar, head of the province's Disaster Management Department.

The victims are members of two families who had gone for a picnic, he said.

In southern Kandahar, the local disaster management department said in a statement that eight people -- including women and children -- were killed in several locations due to heavy rain.

"Today, four women who were busy washing clothes were swept away by floodwaters... and



only one woman survived," the statement said.

It added that a child drowned in Kandahar while a roof collapsed

on a family killing one woman and three children.

Among the poorest countries in the world after decades of war, Af-

ghanistan is particularly exposed to the effects of climate change, which scientists say is spurring extreme weather.

It is ranked as the

In southern Kandahar, the local disaster management department said in a statement that eight people -- including women and children -- were killed in several locations due to heavy rain.

country sixth most vulnerable to climate change.

Drought, floods, land degradation and declining agricultural productivity are key threats, the UN development agency's representative in Afghanistan, Stephen Kodrigues, said in 2023.

Flash floods in May last year killed hundreds and swamped swaths of agricultural land in Afghanistan, where 80 percent of people depend on farming to survive.

Taiwan coast guard detains Chinese-crewed ship after subsea cable break

Beijing: Taiwan's coast guard (CGA) detained the Chinese crew of a 'Togolese-registered vessel suspected of severing an undersea fiber optic cable connecting the islands of Taiwan and Penghu on Tuesday.

The CGA says the vessel the Hong Tai 168, had been loitering within roughly 925 meters of the cable since 7 p.m. local time on Feb. 22. A coast guard vessel was dispatched to the ship at 2:30 a.m. on Tuesday, demanding that the vessel leave the area, Taiwan's state-owned media said.

Coast guard officials received confirmation that the Taiwan-Penghu No. 3 undersea cable had been cut at 3 a.m. Tuesday, and they began efforts to detain the ship's Chinese crew. All eight crewmembers were Chinese nationals, according to the coast guard.

Taiwan's Ministry of Digital Affairs confirmed that communications were diverted to other cables following the inci-

dent and that there was no disruption to service. The coast guard classified the incident as potential 'gray zone' activity by China. The term refers to hostile actions that do not amount to an act of war.

Taiwan's government says it will investigate the incident. The incident comes roughly a week after Chinese officials expressed frustration with President Donald Trump's administration for removing language on the State Department's website opposing Taiwan's independence.

Prior to Trump taking office, the State Department's fact sheet on U.S. relations with Taiwan had previously stated "we do not support Taiwan independence," but the phrase was removed earlier this month and continues to be absent. Chinese officials called on the U.S. to "immediately correct its wrongdoing," on Sunday, arguing it "sends a wrong signal to the Taiwan independence forces."

Palestinians struggle to restart their lives in ruins of Gaza

BEIT LAHIYA:

When night falls over northern Gaza, much of the cityscape of collapsed buildings and piled wreckage turns pitch black. Living inside the ruins of their home, Rawya Tamboura's young sons get afraid of the dark, so she turns on a flashlight and her phone's light to comfort them, for as long as the batteries last.

Displaced for most of the 16-month-long war, Tamboura is back in



her house. But it is still a frustrating shell of a life, she says: There is no

running water, electricity, heat or services, and no tools to clear the rub-

ble around them. 600,000 Palestinians flooded back into northern Gaza under the now month-old ceasefire in Gaza, according to the United Nations. After initial relief and joy at being back at their homes -- even if damaged or destroyed -- they now face the reality of living in the wreckage for the foreseeable future.

Some people wish the war had never ended, feeling it would have been better to be killed,"

Tamboura said. "I don't know what we'll do long-term. My brain stopped planning for the future." Six-week ceasefire is due to end Saturday, and it's uncertain what will happen next. There are efforts to extend the calm as the next phase is negotiated. If fighting erupts again, those who returned to the north could find themselves once again in the middle of it.

A massive rebuilding job has no way to start

A report last week by the World Bank, UN and European Union estimated it will cost some USD 53 billion to rebuild Gaza after entire neighbourhoods were decimated by Israel's bombardment and offensives against Hamas militants. At the moment, there is almost no capacity or funding to start significant rebuilding.

A priority is making Gaza immediately livable. Earlier in February, Hamas threatened to

hold up hostage releases unless more tents and temporary shelters were allowed into Gaza. It then reversed and accelerated hostage releases after Israel agreed to let in mobile homes and construction equipment.

Humanitarian agencies have stepped up services, setting up free kitchens and water delivery stations, and distributing tents and tarp to hundreds of thousands across Gaza, according to the UN.

BUSINESS

Nestlé India Brings Warmth and Togetherness to Maha Kumbh 2025 Through Unique Experiences

Gurugram/Faridabad: Through vibrant on-ground activations, Nestlé India is all set to add warmth, comfort, and a sense of community to Maha Kumbh 2025. With iconic brands like MAGGI and KITKAT, the company aims to make every visitor's experience more special, offering moments of togetherness, relaxation, and joy amidst the world's largest cultural gathering.

At the core of these activations is the MAGGI Maha Kumbh campaign, "2 Minute Apno Ke Lye," highlighting MAGGI's role in bringing people together. MAGGI has set up special branded zones and dedicated selfie points, where visitors can enjoy steaming bowls of MAGGI and capture their "MAGGI Moments." As part of its community initiative, Nestlé India distributed 12,000 blankets to Safai Karamcharis and served 2-minute MAGGI meals, offering warmth and nourishment to those who contributed to making the

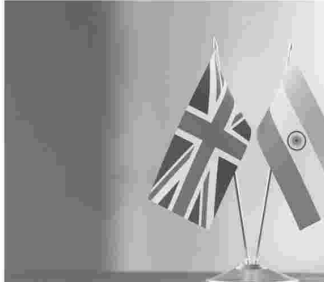
event possible. Commenting on the initiatives, Rupali Rattan, Director, "Rupali Rattan, Director, Prepared Dishes and Cooking Aid, Nestlé India said, "This Maha Kumbh, Nestlé MAGGI has brought people together with its campaign, '2 Minutes Apno Ke Lye.' A beloved part of Indian households for over four decades, MAGGI has always been a symbol of togetherness. Through this campaign, MAGGI has set up MAGGI Corners--resting pods for people at the Kumbh Mela to create spaces where people can connect, share stories, and make meaningful memories. In addition, MAGGI has also reaffirmed its commitment to responsible waste management. Honoring the community of waste management professionals (safai karamcharan) who work tirelessly to keep the Kumbh Mela clean, MAGGI will provide them with MAGGI meals and blankets to help them stay warm during the winter."

India, EU to Review FTA, Firm Up Strategic Agenda

New Delhi:

India and the European Union will this week take stock of their negotiations for an ambitious free trade deal and broadly firm up a new strategic agenda at a time Europe is looking at de-risking its relations with China.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, accompanied by the European Union College of Commissioners, is paying a two-day visit to India from Thursday to hold talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and senior Indian ministers.



freely negotiating a free trade agreement, an investment protection pact and a geographical indications agreement.

President Leyen and Prime Minister Modi will be taking stock of where we are on the negotiations and how we can push them forward, a senior EU official said.

The EU is looking at an "ambitious" as well as a "commercially meaningful" free trade agreement that addresses tariffs and non tariff barriers, he said. The official indicated that there have been issues between the two sides in terms of tariffs for wine as well as agricultural products.

For us, speed is less important than substance, he said declining to give a timeline for finalisation of the free trade pact.

India and the EU relaunched the negotiations for the trade pact in June 2022. The two sides had first launched the negotiations for the

India and the EU are currently negotiating a free trade agreement, an investment protection pact and a geographical indications agreement.

free trade pact in 2007, before the talks were suspended in 2013 due to a gap in ambition.

India and the EU are also set to explore ways to expand cooperation in areas of defence and security as well as new technology.

We are looking at boosting security cooperation with India as we are fundamentally interested in a free and open and secure Indo Pacific, the official said.

India is indeed a very important partner for the EU, including for its outlook on its neighbour China, he said.

FinMin Defers PSU Bank Review Meeting to Mar 5

New Delhi:

The finance ministry has deferred performance review meeting with heads of public sector banks (PSBs) by a day to March 5.

The meeting, to be chaired by Financial Services Secretary M Nagaraju, would review financial performance and progress of financial inclusion schemes, among others, sources said.

Earlier, Department of Financial Services had fixed March 4 for the meeting.

This is going to be the first meeting after presentation of Union Budget 2025-26 in Parliament.

The 12 PSBs have posted highest-ever net profit of Rs 1.29 lakh crore in the April-December period of the current fiscal year, marking an annual increase of 31.3 per cent.

The performance of PSBs has shown significant improvement on key financial parameters, like record net profit growth, improved asset quality, and built-up adequate capital buffers, during the period under review.

Further, improved asset quality is also visible from significantly low net NPA ratio at 0.59 per cent (aggregate net NPA outstanding of Rs 61,222 crore), the finance ministry had said in a statement.

ReiseMoto Brings Largest Premium Riding Gear & Accessories Experience Store at Gurugram

Gurugram:

ReiseMoto, the premium motorcycle gear and accessories brand, is making its second entry into the brick-and-mortar space with the launch of its biggest brand experience store in Gurugram, spanning over 3,000+ sqft. Located at 92, Mehrauli-Gurgaon Road, this store is designed as the ultimate hub for riders, showcasing 20+ renowned brands and over 1,000 SKUs across helmets, jackets, gloves, and other specialized riding gear and accessories.



popular riding routes, this store is set to become a key destination for Gurugram's motorcycle community. Positioned near top

motorcycle brands like Triumph, Harley Davidson, Honda and Royal Enfield, it caters to both seasoned motorcyclists and newcomers looking

for high-quality riding gear.

This new physical location gives riders in and around Gurugram, the opportunity to see,

touch and experience premium European and Indian brands firsthand, ensuring they get the best fit and functionality for their riding needs.

"With the inauguration of our largest store in Gurugram, we are reinforcing our commitment to the Indian biking community by offering them a comprehensive range of riding gear, accessories and premium tyres," said Mr. Yogesh Mahansaria, Founder & Managing Director, ReiseMoto.

"Our goal is to build a trusted and engaging retail space where riders across Northern India, can connect, explore

and elevate their riding experience with the best products available."

The store is designed not just as a retail space but as a community hub, where riders can share experiences, connect with fellow enthusiasts, and participate in exclusive events. The Gurugram outlet will also host expert sessions, product launches, showcases and meetups, making it an integral part of the local riding ecosystem.

European & Best-in-class Indian brands like Acerbis, SPIDI, Tucano Urbano, Icon, Viaterra, Carbanado, etc will be showcased alongside Reise's in-house prod-

ucts, offering a diverse selection that spans the entire price spectrum of premium riding tyres and accessories. Whether riders seek cutting-edge performance gear or reliable essentials, the store caters to all levels of riding enthusiasts.

ReiseMoto's expansion strategy includes a robust online and offline presence, with plans to open more stores in key metropolitan areas and Tier-1 cities across India. The Gurugram store is a major milestone in this journey, setting a new benchmark for biking gear and accessories in the country.

Cricket

Ponting hails Kohli's Pakistan ton, calls him best ODI batter

New Delhi

Former Australian captain and multi-time World Cup-winning icon hailed the star India batter Virat Kohli's century against Pakistan in the ICC Champions Trophy, calling him the "best ODI player" he has ever seen.

The game was headlined by Virat Kohli's carefully crafted unbeaten century, which not only secured India's win but also saw him achieve remarkable individual milestones of completing 14,000 ODI runs and going past Ponting to become the third-highest run-getter in international cricket. This was also Virat's first ton in the ICC Champions Trophy.

Speaking on the ICC Review, Ponting lauded Kohli's ability to produce clutch knocks in crucial moments, and for breaking a plethora of records on his way.

"I have always said big games equal big names. You need your big names to stand up in those big moments, and no bigger game for India than a game against Pakistan," the ICC Hall of Famer said as quoted by ICC.

"Your reputation is forged in what you do in the biggest contests on the international stage. So it is no surprise



me that that has happened," he added, describing Kohli's unbeaten 100 off 111 balls as a testament to his temperament and ability to deliver in crucial situations.

Ponting drew parallels between the batting stalwart's clutch knock in Melbourne at the ICC Men's T20 World

Cup 2022, against the same opponent, that steered India to a win to his brilliance in Dubai.

"Yeah, as you say, 2022 and now, he stood up against the team that he would probably sell himself the most to play against," Ponting said.

"And no bigger moment than last

when Pakistan had batted first on a tricky wicket. It needed someone at the top of the order to play a match-winning innings like that. And once again, it was Kohli to get the job done."

Opting to bat first, Pakistan posted 241 in 49.4 overs, a total that seemed competitive but ultimately fell short against India's batting prowess.

Pakistan had several batters who got starts but failed to convert them into bigger scores, something Ponting pointed out as a key shortfall.

Saud Shakeel (62), Mohammad Rizwan (46) and Khushdil Shah (38) all contributed, but none of them played a defining innings for the hosts.

"You look at the two scorecards, it's one. Virat making a 100, and lots of Pakistan starts without anyone going on and making a big score," Ponting noted.

"I have said forever, in any format of the game, a 50 or a half-century never wins you or your team anything. You have to get big scores. And so the individual big scores were not there, but the big partnerships were not there either."

Experienced duo Kuldeep Yadav (5/40) and Hardik Pandya (2/31)

were instrumental for India in restricting Pakistan, ensuring that they couldn't set a more daunting target.

Chasing 242, India lost early wickets, but Kohli anchored the innings with composure and precision.

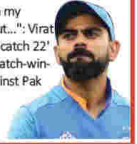
Forming a crucial partnership with Shreyas Iyer (56), he guided India home with several well-timed strokes and controlled aggression.

Ponting, himself among the leading ODI run-scorers, acknowledged Kohli's consistency and greatness. During his innings, Kohli also surpassed the 14,000-run mark in ODIs, now trailing only Kumar Sangakkara and Sachin Tendulkar.

"He has obviously been a champion player for a long time. And particularly in the white-ball formats, where he is an unbelievably good 50-over player," Ponting said. "I do not think I've ever seen a better 50-over player than Virat Kohli. Now that he has gone past me and only two ahead of him, I am sure he would want to give himself the best chance to be remembered as the all-time leading run scorer in the game."

"As long as the hunger is there, obviously physical-wise, he is probably as fit as he has ever been and works ex-

Kind of been my weakness but...": Virat Kohli on his 'catch 22' shot after match-winning ton against Pak



Basit Ali backs India to lift the title

Pakistan's dreadful run in the ICC events continued after the defending champions lost two games on the trot in the group stage against New Zealand and India.

Islamabad

After Pakistan's title defence in the Champions Trophy ended in the group stage, former cricketer Basit Ali apologised for his statement that the final would be played in Lahore and backed India to lift the title.

Pakistan's dreadful run in the ICC events continued after the defending champions lost two games on the trot in the group stage against New Zealand and India.

The Men in Green needed a favour from Bangladesh to stage a victory over New Zealand. However, on Monday, the relentless Kiwis took the Tigers down with a five-wicket win in Rawalpindi to seal their trip to the semi-finals with India.

The shock of Pakistan's exit continued reverberating on Tuesday, with Basit apologising for his prior statement that the Champions Trophy final would be held in Lahore.

"I apologise for saying that the final will be played in the final. I didn't expect Pakistan to play like this," Basit said on his YouTube channel.

After Pakistan's title defence ended on a bitter note, Basit hopes India goes on to dominate the tournament and eventually walk away with the title on March 9.

"I genuinely wish India would dominate the tournament and win it. If South Africa and India play the final, it would be good because it will be like the T20 World Cup final," he added.

As a global cricket event returned to Pakistan after nearly three decades, New Zealand stepped up to spoil the party. The Blackcaps drew confidence from their success in the ODI tri-nation series and forced Pakistan to surrender to a 60-run defeat.

With Pakistan's campaign in jeopardy and signs pointing towards the defending champions leaving their party early, the high-voltage encounter against India became a must-win affair. With the odds stacked against them, Pakistan paid the price for their sub-par attempts to orchestrate a victory in Dubai.

Pakistan's premier batter, Babar Azam, couldn't trouble India's bowling unit. Shaheen Afridi, Haris Rauf and Naseem Shah hardly threatened India's star-studded batting unit.

As a result, India outwitted the Men in Green in all facets of the game and eventually succumbed to a six-wicket defeat. With the hopes of the semi-finals dead and buried, Pakistan will wrap up its campaign against Bangladesh in a dead-rubber match on Thursday in Rawalpindi.

Danish Kaneria hails "legendary" Virat for ton against Pakistan



Former Pakistan cricketer Danish Kaneria hailed star India batter Virat Kohli for his century against Pakistan in the ongoing ICC Champions Trophy, calling him a legendary player not because of how not only he scores runs, but also makes his batting partners score runs, which instils a sense of fear in the opponents.

The game was headlined by Virat Kohli's carefully crafted unbeaten century, which not only secured India's win but also saw him achieve remarkable individual milestones of completing 14,000 ODI runs and going past Ponting to become the third-highest run-getter in international cricket. This was also Virat's first ton in the ICC Champions Trophy.

Speaking in an interview after the match, Danish said, "Virat Kohli is a world class cricketer, a legend. When India is in a pressure situation, he de-

livers. In Pakistan, players play for themselves. In India, they play for their nation. He knew he had to stay in the crease and finish the game. He batted well with Shreyas Iyer and carried the game forward with his other partners too. Teams often worry about a particular player, who even if he does not score, he will make the other player with him score runs. This makes him such a legendary player."

On Virat's future in international cricket, Kaneria said that he is super fit and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) would like to have him play as long as he can and groom future batters.

"He (Virat) is super fit. He trains well. He practices well. He is passionate about his game and is a role model for youngsters. His form never left. He was always scoring runs in and out.

Incessant rain in Rawalpindi forces Australia-South Africa clash to be called off

The highly anticipated Champions Trophy clash between Australia and South Africa has been called off without even the toss taking place due to incessant rain in Rawalpindi on Monday.

ICC took to X to confirm the match had been abandoned due to continuous rain in Rawalpindi and wrote, "Incessant rain forces the Group B #ChampionsTrophy contest between Australia and South Africa to be called off."

It had been raining since the morning, which hardly gave the ground staff any chance to prepare the venue for the match. A relentless downpour washed away the game, and both teams shared a point each.

South Africa and Australia are now on three points each, occupying Group B's first and second spots, respectively. The washout has turned Wednesday's clash between Afghanistan and England into a virtual knockout. The team that suffers a defeat will become the third team to be knocked out of the tournament.

Bangladesh and Pakistan, the defending champions in Group A, were eliminated from the tournament on Monday. New Zealand orchestrated a comfortable five-wicket win to qual-



ify for the semi-finals along with India.

Australia will now bolster its preparations to face Afghanistan on Friday at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore. South Africa will play its final group-stage game against England on Saturday at the National Bank Stadium, Karachi. The Baggy Greens began their campaign by pulling off a record 352-run chase against England. On the other hand, South Africa sailed to a 107-run victory against Afghanistan in a one-sided affair.

Squads: Australia Squad: Matthew

Venkatesh Iyer "definitely ready" to lead KKR in IPL 2025 if offered captaincy

Madhya Pradesh

India and Madhya Pradesh all-rounder Venkatesh Iyer is "definitely ready" to lead defending champions Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in the Indian Premier League (IPL) this year if the captaincy is offered to him.

The defending champions KKR will start their trophy defence in the tournament opener against Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) on March 22 at their home arena of Eden Gardens. KKR are yet to appoint their skipper for new season after they released Shreyas Iyer, who will be now captaining Punjab Kings (PBKS) coached by Ricky Ponting. Venkatesh was brought back by KKR for a massive sum of Rs 23.75 crores. He is understood to be a top contender for captaincy alongside Indian veteran Ajinkya Rahane.

Iyer, currently 30, has never led in competitive cricket, but he is willing for a captaincy experience.

"Definitely. Definitely, I am ready. Again, I have always said this captaincy is just a tag. I believe in leadership. That is a bigger role to play, being a leader," said Iyer as quoted by ESPNCricinfo.

Iyer said that one does not need the tact of captain to be a leadership in the dressing room, but one needs to "set examples" and be a "good role model", both on and off the field, something he admits he is doing for his state side, Madhya Pradesh.

"I am not the captain of the MP team, but my opinions are respected and I really love to be in an atmosphere where every individual - again, new or



experienced, 20 lakhs, 20 crore, whatever - you just need to have the freedom to voice your opinion. Or you just need to have the freedom to give opinions and give suggestions and then to be taken in the right spirit."

"I have always wanted to be that person. And if captaincy comes my way, I would definitely want to do it. There is no ambiguity surrounded to this. I will definitely do it, if it comes my way. There is no reason not to do it," he added.

Iyer made his IPL debut in 2021 and was important in changing their fortunes after four losses in six games, helping them pull seven wins in the next nine games to make it to the finals. In 10 matches, Iyer made 370 runs at an average of 41.11, with a strike rate of over 132.8, with four fifties and best score of 67. Over the years, he has batted at number three and lower and also con-

tributed with the ball. In 51 matches, he has scored 1,326 runs at an average of 31.57, with a strike rate of over 137, with a century and 11 fifties. He also has taken three wickets with his useful pace bowling.

One reason why KKR have not announced the captain for IPL 2025 could be the busy domestic calendar, as during the time of mega auction last year in November, Iyer was among several KKR stars playing in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, where MP lost to Mumbai in the final. After that came the second leg of the Ranji Trophy, with the final on February 26.

Iyer said that he was happy that KKR did not bother the players when a busy domestic season was on.

"It is good that they're giving players their space and letting them focus on domestic cricket. Whenever it comes, we will see about it," he concluded.

"I thought eight or nine runs might not be enough": Mithali Raj

Bengaluru

In a gripping encounter that went down to the wire, UP Warriorz outclassed Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) in a Super Over to claim victory in the Women's Premier League (WPL). The match marked a historic moment, as it was the first time a WPL game was decided in a Super Over.

The high-scoring contest ended in a dramatic tie. UP Warriorz scored Grace Harris and Chinelle Henry to bat first in the Super Over, they managed 8/1. RCB made 4, and lost the match.

Former Indian captain and cricketing legend Mithali Raj, reflected on the tense finale and the exceptional performance of the UP Warriorz. She admitted she had doubts about whether their total in the Super Over would be enough.

"At one point, I thought that eight or nine runs might not be enough in a Super Over, especially in the WPL, where scoring rates often soar to 12 or 13 runs per over, making chances highly achievable," Raj said on JioHotstar.

She added, "With just eight runs on the board and RCB needing nine to win, the odds seemed in their favour. However, what a remarkable over Sophie Ecclestone delivered for UP Warriorz!"

Sophie Ecclestone, who had already made her mark with the bat, rose to

the occasion once again with the ball in the decisive over. Raj praised her match-winning efforts, highlighting the electrifying atmosphere inside the stadium.

"Just imagine—the team winning in a Super Over in front of a packed stadium, where the entire crowd was backing RCB. It was truly an unforgettable moment," she added.

Raj also pointed out that UP Warriorz had opportunities to close the game earlier, particularly in the final ball of regulation play.

"The UP Warriorz, right until the final ball, when Kranti Goud completely missed making contact with the bat. However, overall, the team was exceptional. Sophie Ecclestone was outstanding, both with the bat and in the Super Over with the ball. Her performance was simply sensational," Raj concluded.

Kim Garth, who had conceded 40 runs in her four-over spell, was lauded for the responsibility by RCB captain Smriti Mandhana. Garth repaid the faith entrusted to her by keeping Harris and Henry silent.

After giving away a couple of runs on her first two deliveries, Garth made Henry commit to slog the ball away, who gave away a healthy edge to Richa Ghosh.

India women's team scripts remarkable comeback to beat Netherlands 2-1

Bhubaneswar
After a thrilling 2-2 draw, the India women's team grabbed the bonus point by overwhelming the Netherlands 2-1 in the shootout during the FIH Hockey Pro League at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar on Tuesday.

Despite being two goals down, India made a remarkable comeback in the third quarter with goals coming from Deepika (35') and Baljeet Kaur (43'). Captain Pien Sanders (17) and Fayvan der Eek (28') scored for the Netherlands.

Following the incredible upset victory, Hockey India announced a cash award of Rs 1 lakh to each Indian player and Rs 50,000 to each support staff member in addition to their existing policy of rewarding Rs. 50,000 for every victory.

The Dutch were dominant in the first quarter, both in terms of possession and attempts on goal. The visiting team won the first penalty corner of the evening in the 5th minute, as Matla Frederique took a powerful shot, which a breathtaking save by Savita made, but the Netherlands won three back-to-back corners in the remaining minutes, but India's tight defence denied them the opening goal.

The Dutch continued to pile on the pressure in the second quarter and found the opening goal in the 17th-



minute courtesy of a penalty corner. The Netherlands played out a variation perfectly, as Captain Sanders received the ball on the baseline and found the net from a tight angle to give her side the lead. The Netherlands won their sixth penalty corner in the 23rd minute and tried to play the same variation as before, but this time, Sanders' shot was blocked by an Indian defender. In the 28th minute, Lalvanshi made a brilliant individual run with the ball from the left flank and pierced into the circle but unfortunately for India, they couldn't make an attempt on goal.

With two minutes left in the first half, the Netherlands extended their lead in fine fettle. Luma Fokke received a lofted pass on the baseline and played it across perfectly to Elst in front of goal, who made a diving finish into the net.

India improved on the attacking front in the third quarter as they found two crucial goals to get back on level terms. In the 35th minute, Deepika dribbled down the left flank brilliantly as she went around the Netherlands' backline and found the net with a perfect finish.

The Dutch continued to exert pressure on the Indian defence with their re-

lentless attacks. In the 39th minute, the Orange won yet another penalty corner, but Savita ensured the scores remained the same.

India created another scoring opportunity as Deepika did well to hold the ball in the circle and pass it on to Salma Tete on the far post but the Indian Captain failed to connect and squandered the chance.

India scored the much-needed equaliser in the 43rd minute courtesy of a brilliant finish from Baljeet. Sharmila Devi dribbled down the right wing and found Baljeet, whose first-time finish to past the near post snaked into the net past the Dutch keeper.

With all to play for in the final quarter, both teams went hammer and tong, searching for the winner. The Netherlands piled on multiple attacks but were wasteful in front of the goal. In the 53rd minute, India launched a counterattack as Salma paced down the middle into the shooting circle, but the Dutch were quick to fall back and fend off the attack. India ensured they defended their goal in the dying embers of the game as it went into a shootout for the bonus point.

Deepika and Mumtaz Khan scored for India, while Savita made crucial saves as they ensured the home team won the shootout 2-1 against defending champions the Netherlands.

'Army service sparked my kabaddi potential,' reveals PKL 11's



Cuttack
Patna Pirates and Services' star raider Devank Dalal emerged as one of Pro Kabaddi League's (PKL) most electrifying talents in Season 11, finishing as the league's top raider with 301 raid points and 18 Super 10s to his name. Backing up these credentials, he was also recently crowned the 'Best Player' in the 71st Senior National Men's Kabaddi Championship. Devank led the Services team to victory in the championship finals held at Cuttack's Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium, where they overcame Railways in a nail-biting contest.

"I first started by watching kabaddi. I was inspired by watching Pardeep Narwal play," Dalal recalled as quoted by a press release. His early sports journey included stints in football and cricket before finding his true calling in kabaddi after tenth grade.

The turning point in Dalal's career came with his entry into the armed forces. "When I joined the army, I realized that yes, I could play," he said. This realization sparked a journey that would see him rise through the ranks of Indian kabaddi, eventually leading to his selection for the Jaipur Pink Panthers, before he moved to the Patna Pirates ahead of PKL Season 11.

His selection for the Patna Pirates marked a moment of celebration in his village. "There was a different feeling at home. My family and villagers were happy that I was selected for the Patna team. People distributed ladoos and rasgullas in the village," he reminisced.

The 71st Senior National Men's Kabaddi Championship showcased Dalal's exceptional talent on a national stage. The tournament, featuring top state and institutional teams from

Cuttack, culminated in a heart-stopping finale where Services faced off against a formidable Railways squad. The match ended in a 30-30 deadlock, forcing a suspenseful tie-breaker where Services ultimately prevailed 6-4, with Dalal playing a pivotal role in securing crucial raid points during the pressure situation.

In the PKL, his journey with Patna Pirates has been equally impressive. In Season 11, he emerged as the league's best raider with an outstanding 301 raid points, including 18 Super 10s, leading his team to the finals, where they faced a tough 3-2 defeat against the Haryana Steelers.

Speaking about his growth in the sport, Dalal emphasized the importance of continuous learning and team spirit. "We used to practice together, play together. When you have your own people, there's trust," he explained. This philosophy has been crucial to his success, as evidenced by his remarkable performances.

The young raider's humility shines through when discussing his achievements. "In our team, there's nothing like main raider. All the attackers raid equally. Our partnership (with Avant Lohchab) works well," he said, reflecting on his team dynamics.

Looking ahead, Dalal remains focused on continuous improvement and team success. His technical understanding of the sport is profound: "Wherever I raid - whether it's in six, four, or five - movement and stopping make a difference.

If I stop my movement, I get caught quickly, and if I don't move, points come easily," he concluded, looking forward to his future in the sport with an eye on becoming the best raider in the game.

Gopichand unveils winning traits that set Saina Nehwal, PV Sindhu apart

New Delhi
Pullela Gopichand, India's chief badminton coach, opened up about what makes Saina Nehwal and PV Sindhu stand out in the world of sports.

In an exclusive conversation he reflected on their relentless drive, work ethic, and the impact they've had on Indian badminton. Speaking about Saina Nehwal's early days, Gopichand recalled, "Well, Saina was maybe about 13 years when I started coaching her. At that time, Indian women, they said, were not strong enough. Because at least in the men's side, we had me or Prakash sir or even Dinesh Khattari or Suresh Gode or people in the past who were actually achievers at the world level. But women, we didn't have the same highest level of women.

So they would always say, our girls are not strong. That's the kind of language you would get to hear. We needed somebody who actually had the guts to actually go and break the glass ceiling, as they say. And that we needed somebody with a mindset like Saina. She was that kind who would be like go out there and just push and achieve kind of a thing. So once she did this, then I think everybody started to believe."

Nehwal won bronze in the 2012 London Olympics. Her hunger for success, he noted, was unmatched. "Saina, especially in that initial years... was hungry. She would want more and more and we needed somebody with that attitude because even when she won her first satellite event or a challenger event, she would have been the best Indian woman ever but she wanted more and more and that's the reason I think hats off to her," he noted.

Speaking about two-time Olympic medal winner PV Sindhu, Gopichand highlighted her incredible consistency and longevity in the sport.

"I think Sindhu was one of the only ones. She was there from much younger as well. So she went out there. Both of them are physically very strong, great work ethic," he said.

"Sindhu has been phenomenal because to have a career so long and to perform so well over time, I think both have been fantastic for India," he added.

Sindhu won medals in the Olympics on two occasions, in 2016, she won the silver, and in 2020 Tokyo, she received a bronze.

Beyond physical endurance, Gopichand emphasized the importance of mental strength in shaping champions.

"I think one of the key factors is that you have to love what you're doing. That has to be a priority. When they lose, they have to be smart enough to forget it and believe that the next time, they're going to win.

"Be careful, educate yourself...": Gopichand pitches for safety net for players who exit sports

New Delhi
Noting that there is a "substantial gap in the ecosystem" for budding players who do not achieve desired success in sports, India's chief badminton coach Pullela Gopichand has urged players to be careful about their alternate options.

Gopichand, a former All England Champion who commands a following not only for his sports achievements but also for his stance on various sports issues, said a very small percentage of sportspeople achieve celebrity status, and there is a need for opportunities such as skilling for those who make an exit.

"The thing is that out of the hundred people, maybe a per cent or less than a per cent are these numbers whom we

are talking about, who gain celebrity status and are taken care of. There's no problem with us. I am also in that... where I've made a great life out of sport that's one per cent of the population or even less. Then you have maybe another four-five per cent of them who come from rich backgrounds with parents who can afford failure and still end up in a family business. No problem. There's no issue there. Maybe another 10 per cent come from families who are very poor and who have a Rs 40,000 job and it's an upgrade to their lifestyle also. That's also not a problem. Still, you're left with a 75-80 per cent population. There is actually a substantial gap in the ecosystem," Gopichand said. "When I was playing... after 12th is when this call was to be made.

"Concerned about the safety net," Pullela Gopichand

New Delhi
India's chief badminton coach Pullela Gopichand revealed that the people and parents have interpreted his statement about children's participation in sports in a different manner. Last week, Gopichand in an interview to News-papper was quoted as saying that children can't take up sports as their career if their parents are not financially stable. This statement provoked a sharp debate.

The Indian Badminton Coach elaborated on the statement he had made earlier to the newspaper.

"I think when you have a newspaper which is writing it, it's typically you talking to a reporter. He understanding it and writing it, writing a column and his editor editing it, something else coming up on the front page, something in the article because of place constraints and eventually the reader. There are about four to five filters which actually happen in the process where probably the entire gist of it might be changed a little bit, not necessarily because I've said anything wrong or people have understood it wrong, but to actually put an entire context in place is very important," Gopichand said. Further, the 51-year-old said he is ready to explain to everybody what he really meant if he gets an opportunity to talk.

"Rather than going into the specific one line, which I'm not unhappy about because I think today we are having this conversation because that statement came up that way. I think it's important. I would rather take an opportunity to make them understand what the real scenario is," Gopichand added.

The former Badminton player also revealed what made him to make a statement on children's participation in sports.

"Year after year, I see players, I see hardworking players, parents actually bringing them, burning their resources,

time. And then you realize that not everybody makes it. It's not their fault. It's the nature of sport. They don't get the jobs. They don't get a secure future. And they come with a big dream. And the dream is actually shattered. I come from a very middle-class family. Many of my players who've made it also come from middle-class families. Across sports also, if you look at it. Actually, it's the middle class and the poorer people who actually have made it. That's the reality," Gopichand said.

"Today, when I see national champions, when I see Commonwealth medalists, when I see Asian Games medalists not having jobs, and that starts to pain me that what is the future they have? But I know out of the hundred people, one might make it. So where is the safety net? And that's all I'm concerned about," he added.

When asked whether bureaucracy is failing Indian sports, he pointed to a systemic flaw. "Because people come for short term. Their thought is next Olympics. Their thought is short, short. And this is a long-term issue. This needs to be addressed. At 35, when you're all the same age, you're probably better than them, you have a bigger car than them, it doesn't hurt. But at 50, when you're telling your kid, I am an Olympian, he's like, what are you talking about? You haven't earned anything. You don't have any respect. Your officer is calling you, sir, what do I do? Every time you have to... do that to an officer, then it hurts you and that hurt will stop the next generation from taking up sport."

Gopichand has reached the pinnacle of his sport winning the All England championship in 2001 and then coaching the likes of Saina Nehwal and PV Sindhu to Olympic glory knows what it takes to make it in sport in India. His unfiltered take now raises important questions about India's sports ecosystem.

Today with the nature of education, the nature of sport... people at age of 7 and 8 stop studying almost completely and they start focusing on sport, various sports. And when you reach 18, 19, 20, you actually spend the best years of your life, the most productive years, when everybody else in every other career is actually building up a CV to earn more for the rest of their lives.

Here are people who are actually spending their best years. And if they don't make it, then what happens to them is the big question which I'm saying," Gopichand said.

The former badminton player said that sportspeople should be careful with education in their years of study and that society also needs to have a safety net.

Pullela Gopichand reveals reasons behind Southeast Asia outdoing Europe in badminton

New Delhi
Badminton legend and India head coach Pullela Gopichand revealed how a great culture of the sport and physicalities have helped Southeast Asia do better than Europe in badminton.

Pullela said in an exclusive interview. A Commonwealth Games and Asian Championships medalist and winner of the prestigious All England Open, he is one of the most decorated Indian shuttlers ever. As a coach, he is also a Dronacharya awardee for contributing to rise of star players like PV Sindhu, Saina Nehwal, Parupalli Kashyap, Kidambi Srikanth among others.

Speaking during the interview, Gopichand said, "Culture is there. Physicalities matter. In tennis, if you're big, if you look at the top guys in tennis, you actually have them very tall, 6'3", 6'4". So luckily for us in badminton, we in this room, both of us or the 10 people outside, most of us can be decent badminton players. Because the physicalities of Indian, Indian physicalities in general fit into a badminton frame. So, we can do well."

"Likewise, the Southeast Asian nations also have a physicality which is pretty okay for badminton. But they're not the best physicalities for a basketball or a sprinter or a javelin thrower or whatever that is. So I think physicalities make a difference and these countries have the physicalities and also the culture of the sport. And they have systems in place," he added.

Speaking on what culture of the sport truly means, Gopichand said that it is about having the right inspirations and systems.

"As a kid, you grow up and say, I aspire to be like a Prakash sir. I aspire to be a Saina Nehwal. I want to be like a Sindhu. I want to be like Satvik and Chirag. I think that is the culture, the inspiration which comes in, the systems which are there," he said.

"Like I have an academy which is



close to my house. I have a coach who is actually there. And if I win, I go to the national team. And if I win, I go internationally and make a move. The pathways are defined. But if you have a sport which is very new, we don't know how to do it, then the guy is not inspired. He might have the talent, but he is not inspired. We do not have any champions to refer to. That would be the challenge," he concluded.

Coming to the Southeast Asia domination in badminton, in men's singles world rankings, there are three Southeast Asian players, Jonathan Christie (Indonesia), Kunlavut Vitidsarn (Thailand) and Lee Zii Jia (Malaysia) as compared to only two Europeans, Anders Antonsen and Viktor Axelsen (Denmark) in the men's singles top 10. Players from China, Japan, India and Chinese Taipei make the top 10, which are all situated in Asia.

In the women's singles, there are five players from Southeast Asia in the top 10, with no European presence at all. Gregoria Tanjung (Indonesia), Pornpawee Chochuwong, Supanida Katethong, Ratchanok Intanon and Busanan Ongbamrangphan (all Thailand) are the Southeast Asian stars. Rest of the top 10 is made by players from

China, Japan and South Korea. Indonesia is the most successful team in Thomas Cup history, a top men's team badminton championship, with 14 titles. It has also captured three Uber Cup titles, which is a top women's team championship played alongside Thomas Cup, but their success is not much in comparison to China (16 titles) and Japan (six titles).

Indonesia is also having second-highest number of gold medals at BWF World Championships (23), with China (70) at the top. With overall 80 medals, Indonesia is the second-most successful team in BWF World Championships history, followed by China (202).

Indonesia is also a one-time Sudirman Cup winner in 1989, which is a mixed team championship. Southeast Asian nations like Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia, along with other countries of Asia, have also been a big part of medal tally at the recent 2023 BWF World Championships and Paris Olympics 2024, with only Denmark (World C's silver and bronze, and an Olympics gold) and Spain (one World Championship silver) being able to make an impact as far as European countries are concerned.

Raveena Tandon, daughter Rasha Thadani visit Maha Kumbh Mela



Mahakumbh
Bollywood star Raveena Tandon and her daughter Rasha Thadani has visited



Saraswati and sought his blessings on Monday. A couple of friends were also accompanying the duo. Raveena said that as the Kumbh Mela is here after 144 years, she along with her friends came to the Kumbh from Mumbai. She added that "We have come not just for Ganga Snan but also to our 'home'. Swami ji's

home is my home, my children's home." Raveena also shared that she plans to visit Kashi and celebrate Maha Shivratri there. Many other celebrities have attended the Kumbh Mela. Recently, Bollywood star Katrina Kaif along with her mother-in-law also took a holy dip at the Kumbh mela and met Swami Chidanand Saraswati and took his blessings. Katrina expressed her

gratitude and excitement about being part of the sacred event and said "I am very fortunate that I could come here this time. I am really happy and grateful. I met Swami Chidanand Saraswati and took his blessings. I am just starting my experience here. I like the energy, beauty, and significance of everything. I am looking forward to spending the whole day here."



A sneak peek into Kunal Kemmu, Soha Ali Khan's Herath festivities

Mumbai
Soha Ali Khan, her husband Kunal Kemmu and daughter Inaaya celebrated Herath with the Loocease actor's parents.

Taking to Instagram, Soha posted a video from her fam-jam Maha Shivratri celebrations. Look at how cute Inaaya looks in ethnic attire. "Herath Mubarak! #happyamahashivratri love peace and prayer (red heart emoji)," she captioned the post.

In the video, we can see Kunal and Soha performing puja with their family.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Kunal is all set to direct his second project soon.

He shared that he will be directing a movie for which the shoot will start by the end of 2025.

He also talked about

working with Saif Ali Khan in 'Go Goa Gone' and would love to direct its sequel if given a chance.

"I briefly got to work with Saif in Go Goa Gone. So I really enjoyed doing that. I mean, it would be lovely to work with these guys (Saif and Sharmila Tagore). Not just because they're family, but also because they're great actors who I really respect the work of. If they ask me to direct a sequel to Goa Goa Gone, I'll definitely make it," said Kunal.

Go Goa Gone was directed by the renowned filmmakers Raj & DK. It starred Saif Ali Khan, Kunal Kemmu, Vir Das, and Anand Tiwari in the lead roles. It was released in 2013. The film follows a group of friends who go to Goa for a vacation and find themselves fighting zombies.

Guy Pearce says he is "not gonna" win at Oscars for 'The Brutalist'

Washington
Actor Guy Pearce, who has been nominated in



the category of Best Supporting Actor for his performance in Adrian Brody's The Brutalist at the upcoming Academy Awards, shared who actually would take the

prize. "I've been nominated for a few of these awards, and I haven't won any!" said Pearce, adding, "I'm not gonna win! Kieran [Culkin] will win, again," reported People.

At the SAG Awards, Culkin won for outstanding performance by a male actor in a supporting role for A Real Pain, in which he stars with the movie's writer/director Jesse Eisenberg, reported People.

During his acceptance speech, Culkin noted how "incredibly heavy" the trophy was (and later joked that it was "funny" how his "heaviest of all awards is the one given by actors"), before reminding Brody, 51, of the 45-second "allotted time" for acceptance speeches.

Kajol, Ajay Devgn she celebrates 26th wedding anniversary

Mumbai
The town couple Ajay Devgn and Kajol celebrated their 26th wedding anniversary on Monday, February 24, and now, a day later, the 'Do Patti' actress shared a special post for her husband.

Taking to Instagram on Tuesday, Kajol posted a beautiful picture of the two, calling it a "late post." In the picture, Kajol looked stunning in a floral saree, while Ajay stood casually beside her in a black kurta.

Along with the picture, she wrote, "26 years and

counting. Thank you for all your good wishes."

Earlier on Monday, Ajay also shared a special anniversary post on his Instagram.

Ajay shared a throwback picture with Kajol, and the second image showed animated characters. "Beating this trend by 26 years. Happy anniversary to us," the 'Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam' actor wrote in the post.

The actors tied the knot on February 24, 1999, and share two beautiful children, a daughter, Nysa, and a son, Yug.

Isha Ambani offers prayers at Triveni Sangam in Prayagraj

Prayagraj
Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani and Founder-Chairperson of Reliance Foundation Nita Ambani's daughter Isha Ambani visited Prayagraj to participate in the Maha Kumbh Mela and offered prayers at Triveni Sangam.

Isha Ambani can be seen offering prayers in the presence of Swami Chidanand Saraswati, president of Parmarth Niketan Ashram.

Several celebrities, including Katrina Kaif, Akshay Kumar, Preity Zinta, Sonali Bendre, and others, took a dip at the Triveni Sangam.

Devotees continue to arrive in large numbers at the Triveni Sangam in Prayagraj to participate in the ongoing Mahakumbh ahead of the Mahashivratri festival on Wednesday. The Mela, which has witnessed a historic turnout, will continue until February 26.

So far, over 62 crore devotees have participated, with more than 1.30 crore taking a dip on Monday alone.

On Monday, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath posted on X, "More than 1.30 crore devotees today and over 63.36 crore devotees so far have taken a holy dip in the Triveni



Fatima Sana Shaikh's latest post is a whole mood as summer approaches; take a look

Mumbai
The heatwave may not have arrived yet, but Fatima Sana Shaikh is surely feeling its effects.

The 'Dangal' actress took to her Instagram account on Tuesday to share a series of stunning black-and-white pictures that reflected her mood as summer approaches.

The pictures showed Fatima lying on a bed with an unimpressed expression. She looked effortlessly elegant in a stylish black saree, with the monochrome effect giving her a timeless and classic appeal.

Along with the photos, the actress added a funny caption about how the "mood shifts" when one realizes that summer is about to come.

"If 'Heatwave aane wala hai padh ke, mood off ho gaya' had a face. This is just that," read her post. Earlier in October, Fatima, who walked the ramp at Lakme Fashion Week FDCI 2024, spoke about her off-screen fashion preferences.

"Usually, I prefer to wear sarees, but I don't really follow any trends. Typically, by the time I hear about a trend, it has already passed," she said.

As for her upcoming projects, she mentioned, "I am very excited for a project that is coming soon. I don't know if I can talk about it. I've read about it somewhere, but I'm not sure if I can disclose it. But I am very excited."

"Next year, everything will come out. I have worked a lot this year; everything will come!" she added.

Meanwhile, the actress, who was last seen in Dhak Dhak and Sam Bahadur, is now set to star in Anurag Basu's Metro In Dino.

Loan waiver reports: Kerala Cong and Preity Zinta in X spat

Mumbai
Actor Preity Zinta on Tuesday termed "vile gossip" an X post by Congress Kerala unit alleging that she had handed her social media accounts to the BJP and got a Rs 18 crore loan waiver. The Congress Kerala back-



tracked soon after and said it was just sharing media reports and is glad to accept mistakes if any.

At the heart of the controversy is the Reserve Bank of India dissolving the New India Co-operative Bank's board on February 15 amid reports of financial irregularities.

On Monday, Congress Kerala's X account posted a news article with a caption that Zinta gave her social media accounts to BJP to get a Rs 18 crore write off and depositors are on the streets now that the bank has collapsed.

