

# AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

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UNIQUE GIFT OF KRIYAYOGA ASHRAM AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO GIVE IMPETUS TO WORLD BUILDING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

## Briefs

### CHANDIGARH Speaker urges PM for Indians safe return

Punjab Vidhan Sabha (VS) Speaker Kulraj Singh Sandhwan on Sunday urged he immediately intervene of PM Narendra Modi to ensure safe evacuation of Indians stranded in Dubai airport and various Arab countries in view of the ongoing Iran-Israel conflict. Expressing serious concern over reports of several Indians facing distress due to the prevailing situation, the Speaker emphasised that the Government of India must accord top priority to their safe and dignified return. Sandhwan appealed to the PM to personally intervene and direct the concerned ministries and authorities to coordinate swift diplomatic and administrative measures.

### PATNA JD(U) prez calls EAM on Biharis safety

JD (U) national working president and MP Sanjay Jha on Sunday expressed his concern about the evolving situation in parts of West Asia and the safety of Indians, including a large number from Bihar and also spoke to external affairs minister S Jaishankar in this connection. Jha said that in addition to expatriates from other states, a large number of people from Bihar also lived in the Gulf countries and were receiving calls from their families. He also appealed to expatriates living in Gulf countries to stay indoors, as the central government was monitoring the situation.

### VETLAPALEM Toll in Andhra cracker unit blast up to 21

The death toll in the cracker unit blast here in Kakinada district rose by one overnight to reach 21, said an official on Sunday. As many as 20 people, including nine women, were killed and nine more were critically injured in the powerful blast at a licensed crackers unit at Vetlapalem village of Samarakota mandal on Saturday.

### MAHASAMUND Senior Naxal, 14 others surrender

Fifteen Naxalites, including Special Zonal Committee-level member Vikas, surrendered before security personnel in Mahasamund district on Sunday, Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma said. According to police, the surrendered cadres, including nine women, belonged to the Balangir-Bargarh-Mahasamund division of Maoists and were active along the Chhattisgarh-Odisha border. Sharma termed the development as a significant step under the state government's rehabilitation policy.

## BACKLASH | From Kashmir to Karnataka, Shia mourners take to the streets to express grief and anger

# Protests erupt over Khamenei's killing

SRINAGAR/LUCKNOW

From Kashmir to Karnataka, Shia mourners took to the streets in various parts of India to express outrage and grief over the death of Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in a US-Israel strike.

Khamenei was killed in an airstrike in Tehran on Saturday during a joint Israel-US attack on Iran. Iranian state media confirmed the same on Sunday, triggering a wave of protests and mourning across the world, including India. Kashmir — which has about 15 lakh Shias — witnessed major protests at Lal Chowk, Saida Kadal, Budgam, Bandipora, Anantnag and Pulwama, an official said.

The protesters were seen beating their chests as they shouted anti-US and anti-Israel slogans.

J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed deep concern over the developments in Iran and appealed for calm amid widespread protests.

Abdullah said that his government is in close coordination with the Union Ministry of External Affairs to ensure the safety and well-being of J&K residents, including students, currently in Iran.



Shia Muslims mourn during a protest over the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in Israeli-US strikes, at Lal Chowk, in Srinagar on Sunday

Many Muslim bodies and organisations across the country announced a multiple-day mourning period and scheduled their protests on Monday as well in memory of the Iranian leader.

In Uttar Pradesh's capital, Lucknow, scores of people gathered near the Bara Imambara mosque and shouted slogans during the protest, with women mourners clinging to the Iranian leader's photo and weeping.

### Indians stranded

As flight operations to and from West Asia remain disrupted after the US and Israel's attack on Iran, hundreds of Indians have been left stranded in Dubai and other key hub airports.

Olympic medalist PV Sindhu, JD(S) MLC from Karnataka SL Bhojgowda and his family, Bengali actor Subhashree Ganguly along with her son, tourists and student groups are among those held up in Dubai. Over 700

people from Madhya Pradesh, including two former MLAs, are stranded in UAE. Former MLA and BJP leader Sanjay Shukla is among those stranded in Dubai.

CBSE exams postponed  
Meanwhile, The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Sunday postponed the class 10 and 12 board exams scheduled for March 2 in the Middle East region amid the Iran-Israel conflict, officials said.

### 350 flights cancelled

NEW DELHI / MUMBAI

Indian airlines cancelled 350 international flights on Sunday as operational disruptions continued for the second day due to the escalating Middle East conflict.

With airspace closures in the Middle East and security concerns, Air India and IndiGo have also cancelled their flights that use these airspaces.

"In view of airspace restrictions arising from geopolitical developments in the Middle East, a total of 350 flights operated by Indian domestic carriers have been cancelled on 01.03.2026," the civil aviation ministry said in a post on X at 1634 hours on Sunday.

At 0125 hours, the ministry in an X post said that 444 international flights were expected to be cancelled on Sunday due to airspace restrictions over Iran and parts of the Middle East.

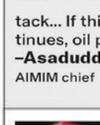
On February 28, the ministry said 410 flights of domestic carriers were cancelled.



The targeted assassination of the leadership of a sovereign nation by the so-called leaders of the democratic world and the killing of multitudes of innocent people is despicable and deserves strong condemnation  
—Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Congress



A respected leader of Iran was killed; the Iranians will definitely retaliate... This is a cowardly and inhuman attack... If this war continues, oil prices will rise  
—Asaduddin Owaisi, AIMIM chief



Our country and the world are currently in a state of great shock. I have sent a letter to the Prime Minister today requesting urgent intervention  
—Pinarayi Vijayan, Kerala Chief Minister



Our country's government should clarify its stance on this international issue and state whether it stands with war or with peace, and, as a neutral country, what diplomatic efforts it is making to stop the war and restore peace  
—Akhilesh Yadav, SP chief



The targeted assassination of the leadership of a sovereign nation by the so-called leaders of democratic world and killing of multitudes of innocent people is despicable and deserves strong condemnation  
—Mehbooba Mufti, PDP president



US-Israel-Iran war is very shameful and is not going to stop; UN has lost its meaning. Khamenei was killed in an attack by Israel and US. State media reported the 86-year-old was killed in an air strike targeting his compound  
—Manoj Jha, RJD MP



PM Modi visited Israel on February 25-26, 2026, at a time when the entire world was aware that a US-Israel military attack on Iran for regime change was imminent. The assault began just two days after Mr. Modi left Israel, where his speech to the Knesset was a display of shameful moral cowardice  
—Jairam Ramesh, Congress leader

### All efforts underway to bring back stranded Indians: Union Minister

Union Minister Pralhad Joshi on Sunday said the Centre was making continuous efforts to ensure the safe return of Indians stranded amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, describing the situation as "volatile". Joshi said he would take up the matter with the concerned authorities in New Delhi. "The situation there (Middle East) is very difficult. It has come to my attention that Kannada people are

stranded," Joshi said. Noting that the government was closely monitoring developments, he added, "I will go to Delhi today and talk to the concerned ministers. All efforts will be made to bring back the Indians there safely." Referring to past evacuations, the Minister said, "We have successfully brought everyone back during the war in the Modi government." He cautioned that conditions in the region remained unstable.

### Oppn condemns killing of Iran leader, questions govt silence

Opposition parties on Sunday condemned the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in US-Israel strikes and questioned the Centre's "silence", with the Congress saying that it shows the Modi government's "abdication of moral leadership". Opposition leaders also criticised the Centre's foreign policy and said the government's response to the war unleashed on "friend" Iran has been a "betrayal" of India's values, principles and interests. Questioning the government's silence over the developments in West Asia, Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Kherra said it is a "complete betrayal" of all that India has stood for. "The silence of the Modi Govt on the targeted assassination of Khamenei demonstrates its abdication of moral leadership and its reluctance to say anything remotely critical of US and Israel."

## Eye on polls, PM launches ₹4,400 cr projects in TN

MADURAI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the Centre's "collective goal" was a developed India, and assured that the Centre remained fully committed to enabling inclusive development and the state's progress.

In his address after inaugurating infrastructure projects worth over Rs 4,400 crore, he said, "Our collective goal is a developed India. Every Indian is inspired to build a developed nation by 2047. Tamil Nadu will play a decisive role in shaping the nation's destiny." He assured that the Centre would remain fully committed to enabling inclusive development and the state's progress.

Tamil Nadu, he said, has a rich history, and historic sites



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being welcomed during the inauguration and foundation stone laying of various projects, in Madurai on Sunday

such as Adichanallur will be developed into global heritage destinations. "Ecotourism initiatives around Lake Pulicat and Podhigai Malai will create new job opportunities while preserving natural ecosystems", he said.

"I feel honoured to be in the sacred and historic city of

Madurai. I bow to Meenakshi Amman and Bhagwan Sundareswarar. Today's event marks a proud chapter in Tamil Nadu's development journey. We have laid foundation stones, inaugurated and dedicated to the nation, projects worth over Rs 4,400 crore," he said.

### 'Cong made Puducherry an 'ATM' for one family'

PUDUCHERRY

Attacking Congress, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday alleged that its rule in this Union Territory was marked by political instability, corruption, and that the UT was an "ATM for one family" in Delhi.

Hitting out at the DMK, Modi said the public was able to see a long list of "scams" that were happening in neighbouring Tamil Nadu, ruled by the Dravidian party.

During the earlier Congress regime in Puducherry, ration shops had no rice, salaries were delayed, goons and drug mafias ruled the streets, he alleged.

"Congress had made Puducherry an ATM for one family in Delhi," he said.

## Countdown for BJP's exit has begun, says Kejriwal

NEW DELHI

Forty-eight hours after being discharged by a Delhi court in the liquor policy case, AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal launched a scathing attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday, claiming that the countdown of the BJP's removal from power has begun.

Addressing the party's rally at Jantar Mantar here, Kejriwal accused the prime minister and Shah of conspiring to frame him in the excise policy case and said that the court in a recent "historic" judgement proved that he was "Kattar Imandar" (hardcore honest person). The 140 crore Indians will unite to uproot "dictatorial government from country," said the AAP chief.

A trial court on Friday granted the relief to Kejriwal,



his deputy Manish Sisodia and 21 others in the case and criticised the CBI, saying the charge sheet "suffers from internal contradictions, striking at the root of conspiracy theory." Addressing the gathering of party leaders and workers from several states, Kejriwal alleged that the prime minister feared every-

one and asserted that when a "tyrant" is scared, it signals the end of his reign.

"He sent Sonam Wangchuk to jail, who is a big scientist and worked for the education of children. Modi ji did not go to Parliament one day, fearing women MPs would assault him. He is scared of Trump, too," Kejriwal stated.

## Bengal BJP starts 'Parivartan Yatra' ahead of polls

KOLKATA

Bengal unit of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Sunday started its 'Parivartan Yatra' ahead of the state Assembly elections.

After the 'Parivartan Yatra', Prime Minister Narendra

Modi will hold a rally at Kolkata's iconic Brigade Parade Ground on March 15.

On Sunday, from Rasmela Math in Siliguri, BJP's newly elected national president Nitin Nabin said, "The mood on the ground reflects Bengal's clear aspiration for Parivartan and a develop-

ment oriented government under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi that truly cares and works for the people of Bengal."

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and West Bengal Legislative Assembly Leader of Opposition Suwendu

Adhikari addressed the Parivartan Sankalpa Yatra from Garbeta.

Remembering the revolutionaries of Midnapore, Pradhan stated that even though the central government sends Rs 10 lakh crore, it doesn't reach the common people due to TMC's alleged

'extortion'.

Union Health Minister JP Nadda and MoS Sukanta Majumdar started the 'Parivartan Yatra' from Krishnanagar where Nadda promised to bring back the 'lost' glory of Bengal if BJP forms the new government in the state.

## Lalu, Tejashwi to take call on RS candidates

PATNA

Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) chief Lalu Prasad and the party's national working president Tejashwi Yadav were on Sunday authorised to take the final decision on the selection of candidates for the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections.

Elections will be held for five Rajya Sabha seats in Bihar. With the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) having 202 MLAs, both the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Janata Dal (United) JD(U) are expected to win two seats each, while the RJD is eyeing the fifth seat.

The decision was taken at the RJD's parliamentary board meeting held at the official residence of Tejashwi Yadav. Several senior leaders participated in the meeting. Lalu Prasad joined the meeting through video conferenc-



ing from New Delhi.

There is speculation in a section of the media that Tejashwi Yadav himself might contest the Rajya Sabha election from Bihar.

The name of Hena Shahab, wife of former RJD MP and strongman late Mohammad Shahabuddin, is also doing the rounds.

The last date for filing nominations for the five vacant seats in Bihar is March 5, while the elections, if necessary, will be held on March 16.

Filing of nominations for the five seats began last Thursday.

### offgrid

## In Rajasthan, Mount Abu becomes Abu Raj

JAIPUR

The BJP government in Rajasthan has changed the names of three cities, including the renowned hill station Mount Abu.

The other two cities that have been renamed are Jahazpur and Kama.

As per the announcement made by CM Bhajan Lal Sharma in the Rajasthan assembly, Mount Abu will be

renamed to Abu Raj, Jahazpur as Yagyapur, and Kama as Kamvan.

"We are committed not only to development but also to the preservation of our heritage. Considering public sentiment, I announce that Mount Abu will be renamed Abu Raj, Jahazpur as Yagyapur, and Kama as Kamvan," he told the legislators.

CM Sharma made the announcement while replying

### Two other cities Jahazpur and Kama have renamed Yagyapur and Kamvan

to the debate on the Finance and Appropriation Bill, 2026, in the assembly on Friday.

Located in the Sirohi district, Mount Abu is the highest point of the Aravalli mountain range and the only hill station

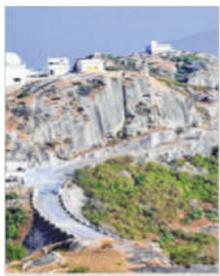
in Rajasthan. Ancient texts refer to it as Arbuda Parvat.

Jahazpur, located in the Bhilwara district, is also associated with ancient religious traditions. According to historians, its ancient name is believed to be Yajnapur or Yajnपुर.

Located in Bharatpur district, Kaman was known as Kamavan or Kamyavan in ancient times. According to religious texts, it is considered one of the twelve forests of the

Braj region. It is mentioned in the Bhagavata Purana and Skanda Purana. It is believed that this area is associated with the childhood and adolescence of Lord Krishna, as described in Braj literature and Puranas.

Notably, earlier, the Bhajanlal government had renamed places and many schemes of the previous government, but renaming cities has been done for the first time.



## Holika Dahan to be held at 3,994 locations in Prayagraj, 114 identified as sensitive

1,146 CCTV cameras monitored by ICCC, QRT deployed at every police station, social media under strict surveillance

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

**Prayagraj.** To ensure a peaceful and safe Holi festival, the police administration has prepared a comprehensive and multi-layered security plan this year. Holika Dahan will take place at a total of 3,994 locations in the district, of which 114 have been declared sensitive. These locations have been identified based on incidents and controversies that have occurred in previous years. According to police officials, the Ganganagar zone will have the highest number of locations, 1,646. Yamunanagar has 1,499 locations, and the City Zone has 849 locations. All station in-charges have been directed to ensure mandatory picket duty at each location. A sub-inspector and two constables will be deployed at each point, who will maintain constant vigilance while remaining in contact with the organizing committees. Special Vigilance in Urban and Rural Areas Georgetown, Khuldabad, Lakdamandi, Kotwali, and Muthiganj areas in the city have been designated as sensitive. Additional police forces have been deployed in several rural and urban areas, including Nawabganj, Mauaima, Manda, and Kareli. Arrangements have been made to immediately dispatch reserve forces to the scene if necessary. Quick Reaction Teams in Every Sensitive Police Station Quick Reaction Teams



(QRTs) have been deployed in police stations in sensitive areas to deal with emergencies. Each team consists of two sub-inspectors and five constables. They have been instructed to immediately respond to the scene upon receiving information and control the situation. The fire department has also been put on alert to ensure prompt action in case of any fire or accident. 24-Hour Monitoring from ICCCLive monitoring of the 1,146 CCTV cameras installed in the city will be conducted from the Integrated Command and Control Center (ICCC). 24-hour shift duty has been imposed here since the evening of March 2nd. An ACP-level officer has been appointed as the nodal officer, who will immediately alert the field force to suspicious activities. Strictness on Social Media To prevent

inflammatory posts and rumors on social media during the festival, the social media cells of all three zones, along with the Commissionerate Police, have been activated. Various platforms are being monitored. Any objectionable posts or videos will be immediately reported to the concerned police station in-charge and senior officers, so that timely action can be taken. List of troublemakers prepared. According to Dr. Ajaypal Sharma, Additional Police Commissioner, Law and Order, a list of elements who have previously disrupted the atmosphere during Holi has been prepared. Special attention is being paid to such suspects. The administration has clarified that strict action will be taken against those who take the law into their own hands under the guise of the festival

## Relief for Injured Teacher, Manavta Parivar Extends Financial Support



Raebareli

Manavta Parivar has once again demonstrated its commitment to humanitarian service by extending its eighth accidental medical assistance under its welfare schemes. In this instance, an injured teacher Brijesh Kumar Yadav received financial support of 9842 under the organization's Accidental Treatment Assistance Scheme. According to the organization, a total of 2,52,109 has so far been disbursed toward accidental medical treatment, while 6,24,767 has been provided to nominee families of deceased members. The initiative reflects the group's continued dedication to social responsibility, service and community support. Dr. Sanjay Singh, Legal Advisor to Manavta Parivar, stated that members who renew their annual membership with a contribution of 200 are eligible for accidental

medical assistance of up to 1,00,000. Membership renewal remains optional. Individuals who enroll as lifetime members by paying a one-time registration fee of 200 are also entitled to accidental assistance coverage of up to 1 lakh for one year. He further explained that financial support of up to 80 Percent is extended in cases of nominee Claims due to death, Permanent 100 Percent disability, serious illness or major accidents, strictly for valid and active members through mutual community contributions. Reaffirming its commitment to stand firmly with families in times of crisis, Manavta Parivar appealed to the general public to join and support this welfare initiative. The event was attended by Himanshu Kumar, Pankaj Kumar, Project Coordinator Sandeep Singh, Anurag, and other office Bearers.

## Good thoughts are generated through the company of saints and Satsang



Ghazipur

The Ramhit Yatra of Swami Shri Bhawani Nandan Yati Maharaj, the 26th Mahant of Siddhpeeth Hathiyaram Math and senior Mahamandaleswar of Juna Akhara, concluded on Saturday in Manjhanpur, Jakhania tehsil area. The Procession was organized by villagers under the leadership of Shri Ram Singh, the Kanpur Province Pracharak of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and his Disciples. Mahamandaleswar Shri Kaushalendra Giri Maharaj, the Peethadhishwar of Shrinath Math, Rasra, Ballia, was also Present on the stage. Swami Bhawani Nandan Yati Maharaj Ramhit Yatra, which began in the first week of November, lasted for four months. During this Period, the Peethadhishwar stopped in various villages in Azamgarh, Ballia, Chandauli and Ghazipur districts, Preaching the Dharma and spreading the message of living a life based on the traditional Sanatani way. He also initiated devotees and believers into Dharma through worship, discourses and Guru Diksha. Following his daily Harihara worship, Mahamandaleswar Swami Bhawani Nandan Yati, in his sermon, stated that even in today's busy lives, finding time to worship God is crucial. He described devotional worship as the best way to make human life meaningful. He said that being in the company of saints and in the company of saints cultivates Positive thoughts.

## LIG Auditorium Resonates with Applause as Dr. Madhav Anuragi Receives 'Rashtrahit Seva Atal Samman'

Delhi

At a ceremony held at the LIG Auditorium in East Delhi, Vrindavan-based tantra astrologer and Peethadhesh of Har Kameshwar Dham, Dr. Madhav Anuragi, was conferred with the 'Rashtrahit Seva Atal Samman' in recognition of his contributions to social service and spiritual Guidance. The award was jointly Presented by Ravinder Singh Negi and Vinod Chauhan, founder of Sarju Foundation. Attendees applauded as Dr. Anuragi received the honor. According to the



organizers, the award acknowledges individuals who have made notable contributions in the fields of social welfare and Spirituality. Through his initiative titled "Divine Counseling," Dr. Anuragi seeks to guide individu-

als dealing with stress, confusion and negative thought Patterns. He emphasizes calm reflection, Positive thinking and self-confidence as essential Pillars of effective life management. Addressing the gathering, he noted that

Patience and thoughtful decision-making are key to overcoming Challenging Circumstances. Speakers at the event Stated that Dr. Anuragi periodically conducts free counseling sessions, offering guidance to youth on career direction and life values. He also Provides advice on family and marital concerns. However, it was Clarified that individuals facing serious mental health conditions should seek Professional medical consultation. One of the distinctive aspects of Dr. Anuragi's approach is

Providing written notes after consultations, outlining key Points and suggested measures to help individuals gain clarity about their Situation. He has also established a growing digital Presence, with his discourses and advisory videos being shared widely on social media Platforms, attracting a significant number of Viewers. Concluding the ceremony, organizers stated that the Primary objective of such events is to Promote a Positive social environment through spirituality and service-oriented .

## Five Solvers Nabbed in UP Board Exam, FIR Filed

Fatehpur

Five impersonators were caught during the Uttar Pradesh Board Mathematics examination in Fatehpur on Friday. The action was taken by a flying squad on the directions of District Inspector of Schools (DIOS) Rajesh Kumar. Acting on prior intelligence inputs regarding candidates appearing in Place of registered students, the team conducted a raid at Pandit Deendayal Inter College and apprehended five youths red-handed. Preliminary investiga-



tion revealed that the accused were writing the exam on behalf of students from different institutions. During questioning, the detained individuals also named certain Persons, including Gyanendra Kumar Srivastava and Manoj Kumar Ekari, along with a concerned prin-

cipal. All accused have been handed over to the police and an FIR is being registered. The DIOS stated that recognition of the institutions involved may be cancelled and strict legal action will be taken against those found Guilty.

## Nabicon 2026 inaugurated at the India Habitat Centre

**Delhi.** The 33rd Annual Conference of the National Academy of Burns – India (NABICON 2026) was Inaugurated today at the Silver Oak Hall India Habitat Centre New Delhi in the august Presence of distinguished dignitaries, eminent burn care specialists, & healthcare Professionals from across the Country. The theme of the conference, "Healing Beyond Burns: Elevating Standards & Transforming Lives," reflected its core objective of Promoting a holistic approach to burn care. The theme underscored the need for specialists and medical Professionals to look beyond mere clinical management and recognize that burn survivors endure not only Physical injuries but also emotional and Psychological trauma. It emphasized the responsibility of healthcare Providers to move beyond wound healing and scar management and to actively support rehabilitation, emotional recovery and social reintegration—thereby truly transforming lives. The inaugural ceremony was graced by Anupriya Patel, Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare,

Government of India, as the Chief Guest and Dr. Sunita Sharma, Director General of Health Services New Delhi as the Guest of Honour. Faculty and delegates from Vardhman Mahavir Medical College (VMMC) & Safdarjung Hospital actively participated in the conference, reflecting the institution's continued commitment to academic excellence, research, and Quality burn care Services. In her welcome address, Dr. Sujata Sarabahi, President emphasized the need for standardized and uniform treatment Protocols, Prevention strategies and comprehensive rehabilitation in burn care. She also emphasized the importance of unity and collaborative efforts among burn care specialists to strengthen and advance the burn care sector across India. A major highlight of the ceremony was the release of the Standard Guidelines for Burns Management, marking a significant achievement towards ensuring uniform and standardized burn care across the country. The newly released guidelines eliminate the existing gaps in burn care Protocols and incorporate valuable inputs

from a majority of NABI members, including the President. They were developed under the supervision of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare as part of the National Programme for Prevention and Management of Burn Injuries (NPPMT & BI Scheme). Dr. Smita Segu, Secretary NABI, announced the academy awards recognizing excellence in burn care and Dr. S.P. Bajaj, Patron, NABI, addressed the gathering, underscoring the importance of training, research and Collaboration. The dignitaries appreciated the efforts of institutions including VMMC & Safdarjung Hospital for their contribution to patient care, teaching and capacity building in burn Management. The ceremony concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Deepak Nanda, Organizing Secretary, NABICON 2026 followed by the National Anthem. A deeply inspiring ramp walk by burn and acid attack survivors emerged as the centre of attraction at the event.

The powerful Presentation symbolized resilience, confidence, courage and strength of human will.

Varanasi

Senior Cabinet Minister of the state and Nodal Minister of Varanasi district Suresh Khanna conducted a site inspection of Pandeypur Slum and Sarasoli Slum this morning. During the inspection, he took stock of the basic civic amenities of the area and Provided Necessary guidelines to the concerned officials. During the inspection, instructions were given to immediately reset the broken squares in the streets and ensure smooth traffic movement. Also, when a Problem of sewer overflow was found at one Place, instructions were given to clean it immediately and improve the Drainage. The Minister directed the government to launch a special Cleanliness drive in the area to ensure comprehensive cleanliness and to make special efforts to improve Varanasi ranking under the Swachh Survekshan. He said that citizens should ensure a Clean, safe and The Minister

## UP Minister Suresh Khanna inspected Pandeypur and Sarasuli Slums



directed the government to launch a special Cleanliness campaign in the area to ensure comprehensive Cleanliness and to make special efforts to improve Varanasi ranking in the

Swachh Survey. He stated that Providing clean, safe and better living facilities to citizens is the government top Priority. Municipal Commissioner Himanshu Nagpal, Additional

Municipal Commissioner Savita Yadav, officials from related departments and local Public representatives were Present during the inspection.

# 32nd GNM graduation, 36th lamp lighting held at Nazareth Hospital School of Nursing



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

**PRAYAGRAJ:** The Nazareth Hospital School of Nursing celebrated a twin milestone on campus with the 32nd batch of General Nursing and Midwifery (GNM) graduation and the 36th lamp lighting ceremony for Preliminary Training School (PTS) students. The event, themed around the "Flame of Knowledge" and the "Light of Compassion," paid tribute to the spirit of service and dedication associated with the nursing profession. The ceremony was presided over by Most Rev Louis Mascarenhas, Bishop of the Diocese of Allahabad. Shri Mudit Chandra (IRPS), Principal Chief Personnel Officer of North Central Railway, attended as



chief guest, while Mrs Ayushi Bhatnagar was the guest of honour. Rev Fr Vipin D'Souza, director of Nazareth Hospital, congratulated the graduating students

and encouraged them to carry forward the institution's legacy of compassionate care. Addressing the gathering, Mudit Chandra — an alumnus of Motilal Nehru



National Institute of Technology Prayagraj — urged the graduates to uphold integrity and commitment in public service.

Referring to his experience

during the Covid-19 pandemic, he highlighted the critical role played by frontline workers and called upon the young nurses to remain steadfast in challenging situations. Bishop Mascarenhas blessed the students and advised them to serve humanity with a "heart of gold" as they step into professional life. During the ceremony, certificates were distributed to the graduating students. Sr Monica Lobo received the Excellence Award for consistent academic performance and dedication. Outstanding Student Awards were conferred on Eli Minj and Annu in recognition of their clinical skills, leadership qualities and overall conduct. A key highlight was the traditional lamp lighting ceremony, in which 39 students of the 36th batch

received lighted lamps from the guest of honour. The oath-taking ceremony was administered by Principal Rev Sr Alweena, with students pledging to follow the ideals of Florence Nightingale. The graduating batch also reaffirmed their commitment to patient care by taking the professional oath. The institution also acknowledged the role of parents and family members in the success of the students. A festive meal was organised in the auditorium in honour of the families. The programme concluded with cultural performances, including Bollywood and Telugu dance presentations and a Konkani "Love Dance" by visually impaired students of Divya Jyoti Niketan, followed by the national anthem.

## A typical Allahabadi-style Phagun gathering was held in Prayagraj, with laughter, fun, and songs, including the titles of Murkhanand and Bewakoofanand

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj. On the occasion of Holi, a typical Allahabadi-style Phagun gathering was held, filled with laughter, fun, songs, and flowers. The event showcased a unique blend of literature, satire, and Sufi influences. Poet Anwar Abbas Naqvi accepted the title of "Murkhanand" and presided over the event. Dr. Pradeep Chitranshi was the chief guest, while the title of "Bewakoofanand" was bestowed upon Lokesh Shukla, former Director of All India Radio. The program was conducted by Phagun Queen Sangeeta Srivastava. Lokesh Shukla began the program with Ganesh Stuti and Saraswati Vandana. This was followed by a series of presentations laced with color, gaiety, and satire. In his presidential address, Anwar Abbas Naqvi said that Holi is not just a festival of playing with colors, but also an opportunity to embrace its spirituality.

Each color has its own energy, which influences emotions and decision-making.



ing. He said that Holi in Kashi, Mathura-Vrindavan, and Allahabad has its own identity, but Holi in Allahabad conveys the message of tolerance and belonging. Chief guest Dr. Pradeep Chitranshi narrated the story of 'Gujjia' in his unique style. He explained that in Sanskrit, Gujjiya is called 'Karnika'. When this sweet dish, filled with mawa, dry fruits, and sugar, is dipped in boiling ghee, its sweetness and aroma connect people. Holi is a festival where the colors, along with the dishes, have their own distinct identities, and this festival teaches us to add sweetness to communi-

cation. Dr. Rahul Shukla 'Sahil' highlighted the scientific and medical significance of colors. He explained that different colors have a positive impact on mental and physical health. The audience found his insights helpful. Ranjan Pandey captured the diverse dimensions of color in words, describing "Allahabadi Holi." Saqib Siddiqui "Badal" greeted everyone with a Holi greeting and expressed his gratitude, applying gulal to everyone in Allahabadi style amid a shower of flowers. The entire event was filled with humor, satire, and warmth.

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

**Utran.** A Holi Milan celebration was held on Sunday at Madhu Hospital in Samodhipur village. The chief guest of the Holi Milan celebration was BJP District President Gangapar Nirmala Paswan.

Former Director of the National Scheduled Caste Commission Kanhaiya Lal was the special guest. Dr. S.K. Singh, manager of Madhu Hospital, the event organizer, welcomed all guests by presenting them with robes and garlands. The Tiwari brothers mesmerized everyone by singing Holi songs at the Holi Milan celebration. In her address, chief guest BJP District President Nirmala Paswan said that we should all celebrate Holi, the sacred festival of colors, with joy, enthusiasm, and traditional customs, applying gulal to each



other and celebrating Holi with mutual love and harmony. Holi was celebrated with a shower of rose petals at the Holi Milan celebration. And in the colourful programme, all the people present enjoyed the Holi songs. Special guest Kanhaiya

Lal said that the real purpose of the festival is to unite the society and spread positive energy.

On this occasion, Saidabad Block Chief Rajendra Singh Patel, former Block Chief Mauaima Sudhir Maurya, Village Head Falraj Bhartiya,

Anil Kumar, social worker Pappu Pasi, Dr. Vinod Patel, Rajkumar, Kamlesh, etc. were present in the programme. Programme organiser Dr. S.K. Singh offered refreshments to all the guests while expressing gratitude to them.

## Holi Milan carries the message of social harmony and brotherhood – Neeraj Tripathi

**Prayagraj.** The annual function and Holi Milan celebrations were held on Sunday at Anandi Prasad Junior High School, located in Dagwan, Kaundhiara area, in a grand and dignified atmosphere. The school campus was awash with the colors of abir-gulal, enthusiasm, and joy. The program began with the lighting of lamps and Saraswati Vandana, followed by the Holi Milan, which imbued the entire event with the spirit of social harmony and brotherhood. Chief guest Neeraj Tripathi, Additional Advocate General, Government of Uttar Pradesh, said that Holi is not just a celebration of colors, but a



festival to strengthen social bonds. He said that events like the annual festival, along with education, impart the message of values, social awareness, and unity. Such events

inspire children to become responsible citizens of society. Presiding Block Head Kaundhiara, Indranath Mishra, praised the school family and said that such events in rural



areas promote social harmony and instill confidence in students. Special guest, Bara Sub-Divisional Magistrate Prerna Gautam, emphasized the need to encourage rural

talents and stated that education is the strongest foundation for development. At the event, students captivated everyone with their Holi songs, folk dances, theatrical per-

formances, and colorful cultural programs. Meritorious students were honored and encouraged. During the Holi gathering, guests, parents, and teachers applied gulal to each other, strengthening the spirit of mutual love, harmony, and cooperation. Many dignitaries, including Vibhav Nath Bharti, Ramanand Tripathi, Amit Pandey, Ambuj Tripathi, PK Tripathi, Supply Inspector Ajay Shukla, were present at the event. School patron Janardan Prasad Shukla, manager Vinod Kumar Shukla, organizer Subhash Tiwari, and headmaster Manoj Kumar Shukla welcomed the guests and expressed their gratitude.

## Editorial

### Reimagining democracy: Why India's call for transparent rankings rattles the West

Over the years, democracy has come to mean many things, often abstract and distorted, especially used to invoke a necessary "value" of the global order. Such a "value" has depended upon a few aspects: economic and military hard power and alignment with Western interests. As India finally announced its democracy rankings, nations that depend on using inaccurate "expert opinions" to subvert data raised a hue and cry. Domestically, there is a cohort that disagrees with the idea of such rankings and argues one of two ideas: That the collective West has more expertise in deciding such rankings and must be unchallenged; That India and other nations can eschew Western validation and need not care about the rankings and other indices. The first is a group that believes in Western supremacy and has formed the ideological collaborator class of any foreign group that has sought to "govern" as a euphemism for colonisation by other means. This is reflected in their calling directly for foreign interference regarding India's domestic policy setting and makes no bones about their preference for externalised decision-making. This is not a group with the interests of Indian citizens at heart, seeking only to maintain their position as an intellectual and social elite, watching self-righteously from atop a high horse made of colonial dreams. As such, malintent entails that their ideas cannot pertain significantly to the will of the people of the country. The second group is made of those with well-intentioned naivete. A little knowledge would go a long way in explaining an economic, and otherwise, interconnected world. The fact that interests and debt ceilings on investments and loans are dependent on credit ratings and indices such as these need us to be concerned about them. Moreover, they create a legacy for judgment by other nations we interact with. At its peak of wealth, knowledge and value creation, Bharat stood as a beacon, inviting engagement, not insularity, and not content in hubris. That is a later doing, a subject of an era of turmoil preventing recognition of a national conscience underlying its diversity. For an endeavour such as a democracy index to fill a void in data and not in propaganda, the rankings need to take into consideration several true indicators of the values that define self-governance. To prevent further distortions, though, it is necessary to reiterate what democracy means – governance by the representatives of all citizens. The universal adult franchise is the most inclusive indicator of true democracy and a basic pre-requisite. Other parameters aid in measuring the refinement of processes that allow for universal franchises to be executed during elections. The below parameters offer a relevant set of data that measures people's participation in governance and are significant in calculating the functioning of democracy in a nation: Women voting percentage: Women form a major part of the population, and yet, across the world, have been kept away from the ballot system for socio-cultural reasons. Their participation determines the freedom of a notable part of the population to implement universal franchises.

**Voter percentage:** A clear determinant of a population's participation in the democratic exercise, voter turnout in percentage terms is a necessary parameter for inclusion in such an index.

**Electoral malpractices** (such as poll-related violence, ballot stuffing, coercion regarding voting choice etc.): The prevention of exercising individual freedom of choice in electing one's representative through safe and secret exercise of ballot options is a hindrance towards an exercise in democracy.



## Status of Indian job market: Fact versus fiction

Every once in a while, there will be news items and columns on the state of employment in India. Some of this is ill-informed, based on old or unreliable data. Essentially, there are three sources of data on employment: (1) Household-based surveys; (2) Establishment-based surveys; and (3) Administrative data. (I am leaving out private surveys.) These are the three official sources of data. EPFO, ESIC, and NPS are examples of administrative data. For instance, in 2022–23, almost 14 million net members were added to EPFO. Is this a meas-

ure of new job creation? For various reasons, it isn't. As an example, the moment an establishment crosses the threshold of 20 workers, all of it gets counted as a net addition. Administrative payroll data are indicators of formalisation, not employment. Establishment-based surveys are ASI by MoSPI (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation) and QES by MoLE (I wish people would stop using this acronym for the Ministry of Labour and Employment). In an informal economy like India, where there are usually no clear employer-employee rela-

tionships, unlike in more advanced countries, I am sceptical about establishment-based surveys telling us much about employment. Don't get me wrong. They do tell us something about demand for employment and, potentially, about skills and their lack. At present, both the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) and the Quarterly Employment Survey (QES) have biases. Agriculture is a different proposition. But even outside of agriculture, neither is comprehensive in coverage. Both can be streamlined and improved, and time lags can be reduced.

Outside of agriculture, until the Indian economy changes dramatically, I think there is no getting away from household-based surveys. This means the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS). We can complain about PLFS: The quarterly estimates only cover urban India, not rural. It is annual or quarterly, and why can't it be monthly, like the Current Population Survey (CPS) in the US? To emulate the US, data collection would have to move from personal interviews to personal interviews spliced with telephone interviews. Is that feasible? In the US.

# Strategic shield: Need to recalibrate defence diplomacy

Ever since ancient times, military officers have been employed in foreign lands as part of a politico-military approach to national security to safeguard national interests. There are references to such a role in Kautilya's Arthashastra, in the history of the pre-Judean era, and in Roman history. In those times, the role of military officers was largely focused on spying. In the 17th century, when the Prussians found ambassadorial reports neither sufficiently detailed nor updated for the purpose of decision making in war, they began to employ generals in diplomatic assignments. Napoleon frequently used generals as ambassadors. By the mid-nineteenth century, most European powers were assigning military officers to foreign countries, and in 1857, these military officers were designated as military attaches and given diplomatic status. In more recent times, defence diplomacy has emerged as one of the most important tools of military statecraft. The term "defence diplomacy" was perhaps first used by the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defence (MoD) to consolidate a bouquet of military activities being conducted by the MoD. Although there is no universally accepted definition of defence diplomacy, it is generally considered the nonviolent use of a state's defence



apparatus to advance the strategic aims of a government through cooperation with other countries. Typically, the term includes activities such as officer exchanges, ship visits, training missions, and joint military exercises. The significance of defence diplomacy dimmed for Indian decision makers post-independence, and it was in the early 1990s that India's defence engagement began to gain momentum. C Raja Mohan, as late as 2015, lamented: "...India's military diplomacy has been severely limited by the lack of adequate political support and insufficient coordination between the armed forces, the ministry of defence, and the foreign office. While the services and the MEA see the value of leveraging India's military strengths, the MoD has neither the aptitude nor the institutional capability to meet the growing interna-

tional demand for defence cooperation with India. Fortunately, things have begun to change. The MoD and the services are proactively involved in defence diplomacy, and as of date, the Indian Army is engaging with 110 countries through defence cooperation activities. In 2023, the Indian Army participated in 39 joint exercises with foreign armies, out of which it was lead service in 28 exercises. In addition, the Indian Army and the US Army co-hosted the 13th Indo-Pacific Armies Chiefs Conference (IPACC), the 47th Indo-Pacific Armies Management Seminar (IPAMS), and the 9th Senior Enlisted Leaders Forum (SELF). The Army has been playing a crucial role in promoting multilateralism by organising the Inaugural India-Africa Army Chiefs' Conclave (IACC) and AFINDEX (2023), themed on Humanitarian Mine Action &

Peace Keeping Operations. Several high-level visits were conducted in 2023 in pursuit of the objectives of defence diplomacy. Based on the recommendations of the MoD's Study on Realignment of Defence Wings, new defence wings are being established in Algeria, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Poland by the end of 2024. Reportedly, new defence wings are also being established in Armenia, Djibouti, the Philippines, and Tanzania. These wings are being established through optimisation of the existing billets of the defence attaches in countries like Russia and the United Kingdom. Although the establishment of new defence wings is a welcome development, there are certain issues that require institutional attention. Among the varied tasks the military attaches would be undertaking, they would be expected to help achieve the target for defence exports set by the government, facilitate India's defence procurements, secure supply chains, and mitigate causes of national security risks. Defence exports require building a long-term relationship with the importing countries and their armed forces. Business also requires special aptitude, which goes beyond formal training and the learning of manuals and procedures. Military attaches are expected to navigate the

realm of defence business, which is unlike any other. In addition, they must be prepared for adverse PR from inimical interests and business competitors. India has supplied weapon platforms and radars to Armenia. Should the war between Azerbaijan and Armenia flare up again, Indian systems would be tested under extreme conditions. It is possible there would be some failures, like those of any other equipment produced anywhere in the world. Indian military attaches must be prepared to face the barrage of adverse PR in all forms of media. The character of warfare is changing. If the Russia-Ukraine war is indicative of the wars of the future, India must prepare for a protracted war and secure supply chains against sanctions and export control regimes.

The export control measures imposed by the West on Russia are, perhaps, the most stringent applied against a single country since the Cold War.

India may face a similar situation, which may include measures aimed at cutting off high-tech imports, restricting access to vital technological inputs, weakening its industrial base, and undercutting its influence on the world stage. The defence sector may be subjected to sweeping restrictions due to the denial of sensitive technology.

## Finance surveillance radars for the Navy

This is unacceptable with regard to the freedom of the seas and a potential flashpoint for all, including India, already plagued by China. Chinese spy ships, navy and submarines, constantly ply in the Malacca Straits and Andaman/Nicobar Islands area, the broader Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea, and the Bay of Bengal. This is aided by Chinese bases in Sri Lanka at Hambantota, in Bangladesh where it has ostensibly built a submarine base for it, from the Maldives, from the Coco Islands of Myanmar, farther afield at Djibouti. India is helped in guarding the Indian Ocean area by the US Navy, plus the French and British navies in particular. India, not only participates in QUAD and the Malabar Exercises on a

regular basis with other countries but joins in the naval exercises in the South China Sea as well. It has now opened two shipyards, in Kattupalli, near Chennai, and another in Cochin, to repair and service US and British ships. Ever since the legendary Ferdinand Marcos' son, Ferdinand Marcos Jr., nick-named Bongbong in his youth, came to power, the Philippines has upped the ante against Chinese hegemony. There is no longer much effort to appease China or deal with it using do-nothing but hot rhetoric, though diplomatic and political dialogue is still maintained. The Philippines is the first foreign country to order three batteries of Brahmos anti-ship shore-based supersonic cruise missiles from India. It has

had its navy personnel trained in their use by India. These missiles, ordered a couple of years ago, are presently being delivered and placed. They are being deployed to protect Filipino interests in the South China Sea. The Indo-Russian Brahmos, manufactured in India, come in air, sea, land and submarine variants, and are widely acknowledged to be the fastest and most devastating missiles in the world. In November 2023 Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. began work on a security pact that would allow the conduct of joint military exercises. Japan has also agreed to finance surveillance radars for the Philippine Navy.

## Manama mosaics: 72 hours of heritage and history in Bahrain

In Manama, the ancient and the modern intertwine like the threads in its vibrant souqs. Skyscrapers pierce the azure sky while narrow alleyways whisper tales of a bygone era. At the aromatic chaos of the Bab el-Bahrain Souq, spices dance with textiles and shimmering pearls hold the secrets of the deep. Then, turn a corner and you will find yourself transported to the serenity of the Al Fateh Grand Mosque. Manama is a city of contrasts, a blend of tradition and progress, waiting to be explored by the curious traveller. And the beauty lies in the fact that you can experience it in just 72 hours.

**Al Fateh Grand Mosque interiors**  
No matter how long you linger in this Middle Eastern land, a breakfast extravaganza awaits. As you step into one of the city's cherished cafes, let the intoxicating aroma of Bahraini cuisine envelop you, a prelude to a flavour-filled odyssey that will tantalize your taste buds and ignite your spirit for the day to come. Dive into the gastronomic classics by indulging in the timeless delights of Balaleet vermicelli noodles, the rustic allure of



Khameer and Regag, alongside the hearty flavours of Foul Fava beans and the savoury embrace of Samboosa fried pastries. Elevate your culinary journey with falafel and shawarma, and don't forget to snag some Halwa, a quintessential Middle Eastern sweet sensation.

Among the culinary havens dotting Bahrain's landscape, seek refuge in esteemed establishments such as Al Ameer, renowned for its culinary finesse; Emmawash celebrated for its mastery of dried shrimp and mung beans; and Freej Bin Al Rashdan, nestled near Dohat Arad Lagoon, where the aromas of lamb machboos and Bahraini kebabs beckon the discerning palate. Conclude your epicurean odyssey at Haji Gahwa, nestled within the bustling enclave of Manama Souq, where authenticity reigns supreme and traditional Bahraini cuisine is savoured with a gen-

erous sprinkle of heritage and charm. Manama delivers all the bling you'd expect from a modern Arab metropolis – sleek malls and skyscrapers that wouldn't look out of place in a sci-fi movie. But amidst the shiny veneer, you'll find whispers of a charming past, a reminder of Manama's days as a bustling port. Old and new coexist with playful harmony, most evident in the legendary Manama Souq, where ancient market vibes and the scents of exotic spices swirl. Before you hunt down the perfect gold bangle or spice up your culinary repertoire at the Souq, soak in the history of Bab Al Bahrain, the gateway to Manama's bustling souq.

This venerable archway, erected in 1949, once held court by the waterfront but now finds itself a few kilometres inland. Today, it's a colossal arch framing a road—flanked by two smaller arches for pedestrians.

## Traffic Inspector Rakesh Kumar Singh goes hunter in the city, people who do not wear helmet face trouble

Bhadohi

Newly appointed traffic inspector Rakesh Kumar Singh hunter, who was driving in the city, was in trouble for not wearing a helmet and having three passengers on a two-wheeler. When they started checking at Lippan Tiraha and Station Road of the city, about 35 to 40 two-wheelers and four-wheelers were caught. Helmets were not found on most of the heads and many two-wheelers were found with three passengers, while most of the four-wheelers were found not wearing seat belts. Seeing the checking going on, many two-wheelers were seen turning their vehicles and running away and some parked on the side of the road and kept roaming here and there. During checking, Traffic Inspector Rakesh Kumar Singh said that helmet is mandatory for two wheelers. He said to avoid traveling on two wheelers with three passengers. Due to the



checking campaign, there was panic among the riders without papers and helmets at Lippan Tiraha, Station Road and Azimullah intersection. Traffic Inspector Rakesh Kumar Singh said that driving at high speed, without helmet and riding a three-rider bike is against the traffic rules. When three passengers are traveling, it is not possible for the driver to maintain balance on the bike and

suddenly the bike cannot be controlled in any adverse situation. In such a situation, considering your own safety during the three rides, make sure to wear a helmet. Keep speed under control. The inspector said that the bike was issued a challan for lack of helmet and three riders. Traffic Inspector Rakesh Kumar Singh said that driving at high speed, without helmet and riding a three-rider bike is against the traffic rules. When three passengers are traveling, it is not possible for the driver to maintain balance on the bike and

## Doctors met former Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav on Cancer Day



Bhadohi

On Cancer Day, a team of doctors met Samajwadi Party national President and former Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav. Where former Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav discussed a serious disease like cancer and its treatment. Leading doctors of Bhadohi district said that whatever was done under the Samajwadi government for the treatment of this serious disease and sensitive behavior towards the people sick with it will always be remembered. It was said that Akhilesh Yadav vision was for international level treatment. Doctors

said that the present BJP government has shown negligence in this regard. Akhilesh Yadav said that in the Samajwadi government, arrangements for high level treatment for serious diseases like cancer, kidney, liver and heart were made free of cost. Cancer Hospital and Research Institute was built on 100 acres in Lucknow in the year 2016 at a cost of Rs 1,000 crore. Bablu Bind told that the former Chief Minister had given assistance of Rs 4.56 thousand for the treatment of his mother cancer. Our family is still grateful to him. Akhilesh Yadav said that the real quality of Samajwadi Party is to serve the

people. Doctors said that if patients do not get treatment under the BJP government, then what is developed India for? On this occasion, former Cabinet Minister Rajendra Chaudhary, State President Shyam Lal Pal, Bablu Bind, Dr. Ajay Prajapati, Juhi Singh Dr. Nand, Dr. Rajit Bind, Dr. Sujit Bind, Dr. Virendra Patel, Dr. Sangam Lal Gupta, Dr. Virendra Bind, Dr. Zuber Khan, Dr. Mehboob Qureshi, Ishaan Milky, Pradeep Modanwal, Suraj Bind, Govind Yadav, Ravi Ranjha, Adivasi Vijay Border Gond, Mita Jaiswal, Pavarti Kannaujya, Ranjit Bind, Sanjay, Aamir etc.

## State Women Commission Chair Leads Public Hearing, Review Meeting in Etah



Etah

In compliance with the directions of the Chief Minister, a programme was organised under the aegis of the Women and Child Development Department at Medical College, Etah under the chairmanship of Chairperson of the State Women Commission, Dr. Babita Chauhan. The event included Kanya Janmotsav (Girl Child Celebration), God Bharai (Baby Shower), and Annaprashan ceremonies, aimed at encouraging the birth of girl children and raising awareness about maternal and child health. On the occasion of the Girl Child Celebration, the Probation Department distributed baby kits, mosquito nets, and other useful items to 20 newborn girls. The Women and Child Development Department also formally conducted the God Bharai and Annaprashan programmes. Those present included Medical College Principal Dr. Balveer Singh, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Chief Medical Superintendent Dr. Suresh Chandra, Head of Department Dr. Sadhana Singh, Programme Officer Sanjay Singh, Circle Officer Kirtika Singh and officials from the Probation Office including Satendra Singh, Jagrati Chaturvedi, Pankaj Yadav, Ankita Saxena, Pooja Mishra and Pooja Chauhan, along with Medical College staff. Later in the afternoon, a public hearing and departmental review meeting was held at the Police Lines meeting hall in Etah. During the public hearing, complaints related to crimes against women, harassment and family disputes were received. Several complaints were resolved on the spot by the Chairperson, while remaining cases were forwarded to the concerned officers with instructions for prompt and effective action. During the review meeting, Dr. Babita Chauhan reviewed various schemes related to the Women and Child Welfare Department and directed that the benefits of government welfare schemes must reach all eligible women and girls without exception. She also instructed officials to ensure the enrolment of workers' children in Atal Residential Schools and to prominently display all women's helpline numbers at Gram Panchayats and development blocks at public and easily visible locations, so that victims can receive immediate assistance when needed. The meeting was attended by Chief Medical Officer Dr. Rajendra Prasad, CO Saket Kirtika Singh, District Backward Classes Welfare Officer Yash Kumar Verma, Women Police Station In-charge Nandini Singh and officers and staff from the police department and other Concerned Departments.

## Success Mantras Given to Students at Farewell Ceremony

Bahraich

A farewell ceremony was organized at Pt. Radheshyam Pandey Saraswati Inter College, Jamog Bazar Charda, by the students of class 9 to honor the class 10 students appearing for their board exams and to wish them a bright future. On this occasion, important tips for success were given to the students keeping in mind the upcoming board examinations. Addressing the ceremony, school manager Kaushalendra Pandey shared his experiences and said that maintaining self-confidence during exams is extremely important. He said that regular study, effective time management and a positive attitude are the real keys to success. He advised the students to revise difficult subjects repeatedly, read the ques-



tion paper carefully, and write the answers in clear, coherent

and balanced language. He emphasized the importance of

continuous study while avoiding mental stress during exami-

nations. The chief guest, Principal Prachar Bas Mishra, while explaining ways to achieve maximum marks, said that sufficient sleep, a balanced diet and light exercise keep the brain healthy and every student should follow these practices. He also appealed to the students to stay away from mobile phones and social media to maintain concentration in their studies. Principal Mishra said that only through discipline, hard work and dedication to their goals can students reach great heights in life and move forward while upholding the dignity of the school. Senior teacher Abhay Dixit, addressing the students, said that the examination is not only a test of knowledge but also a test of patience and self-control. Every goal can be achieved

with the right strategy and continuous practice. At the end of the ceremony, Manager Kaushalendra Pandey wished all the students a bright future and said that education is the foundation of society and nation-building. He inspired the students to move forward with moral values. On this occasion, Gyanendra Bhushan Pathak, Vishwas Kasaudhan, Deepak Sharma, Vinay Pathak, Ashish Sharma, Rakesh Verma, Pramanand Bajpai, K.D. Arya, Brijesh Kumar Arya, Richa Jaiswal, Jyoti Rani Pandey, Nishat Khan, Pooja Pathak, Shivam Mishra, Avneesh Gupta, Anil Kumar Sharma, and other teachers were present. During the program, students of class 9 also presented cultural performances and encouraged their senior students.

## Voluntary Surrender of Arms Licences Gains Momentum in Etah, 192nd Licence Deposited



Etah

The initiative encouraging the voluntary surrender of arms licences to strengthen peace, law and order and social harmony in the district continues to gain momentum. In this ongoing drive, another commendable example was witnessed on Monday at the Collectorate parisar, where the 192nd arms licence in the district was voluntarily surrendered. On this occasion, Small Lal, son of Shaitan Singh, a resident of Nagla Banuwa under Mirchi police station limits, was honoured with a certificate of appreciation

by District Magistrate Prem Ranjan Singh for voluntarily depositing his arms licence. The district administration described the initiative as a significant step towards reinforcing peace, harmony and the spirit of responsible citizenship in society. Addressing the gathering, District Magistrate Prem Ranjan Singh said that the voluntary surrender of arms licences reflects positive thinking in public interest and a strong sense of civic responsibility. Such citizens, he said, act as partners of the administration and play an important role in maintaining peace and

security in society. Expressing hope that more arms licence holders would come forward, the District Magistrate stated that wider participation in this initiative would help create an even more peaceful and secure environment in the district. He added that honouring responsible citizens is aimed at sending a positive message to society and promoting awareness towards peace. Additional Sub-Divisional Magistrate Rajkumar Maurya, Arms Clerk Kunwar Mohit and other concerned officials were Present on the occasion.

## MNREGA: Development ran only on paper, not on the ground!

Bahraich

Allegations of large-scale irregularities have surfaced in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGA) in Sati Jor village panchayat under Nawabganj block. Villagers say that while development work is shown as completed on paper, the ground reality is completely different. According to the villagers, instead of actual verification of MNREGA works, pre-existing photos are being uploaded. There is a huge difference between the number of laborers shown at the worksite and the actual number of laborers. The same pictures have been used repeatedly in several muster rolls, the morning and after-



noon pictures do not match and in many cases, the afternoon photos have not been uploaded at all. Villagers said that in the land development work from Bhuj field to Babu field in Sati Jor village panchayat, 44 laborers were shown daily from February 1st to February 7th, while online attendance of approximately 308 laborers was recorded during this period. Similarly, in the drain excavation work from Sati Bridge

to Dharmanagar border, the presence of 36 to 45 laborers has been shown on five muster rolls. Online attendance of 457 laborers has been recorded for this work from January 25th to February 7th, while villagers claim that no drain excavation has taken place anywhere. Not only this, women names are registered in the muster rolls, while men are visible in the uploaded pictures. There are also allegations of the

same photo being uploaded repeatedly. Villagers Jamaluddin Khan, Gayasuddin, Anil Singh, Saddam and others said that the drain excavation is completely fake and has only been shown on paper. The shocking thing is that even on January 26th, Republic Day, the attendance of laborers was recorded in the muster roll, even though no work was done that day. The government's intention is to provide employment to the villagers in their own village, but in Sati Jor, the MNREGA scheme seems to be becoming a "money-making scheme" for some officials instead of benefiting the villagers. At the block level, the monitoring cell has been instructed to conduct 100% photo verification

daily, but the fact that the Additional Programme Officer is in charge of both the Mihinpara and Nawabganj blocks raises questions about the effectiveness of the monitoring. When contacted regarding this matter, the Village Development Officer, Block Development Officer, and Additional Programme Officer did not provide any clear answers. Meanwhile, Gram Panchayat Development Officer Janardan Vishwakarma said that the matter would be investigated and the relevant muster rolls would be cancelled. Now the question is, will MNREGA provide employment to the villagers, or will it remain confined to paper and fall prey to Corruption?

# Actresses who rule the screen with their dance

Over the years, several actresses have stood out by commanding the screen not just through acting, but through movement and expression

**W**hether in classical or commercial numbers, their dance has added depth and impact to their performances. Here are five actresses who have successfully balanced both acting and dance on screen.

## MADHURI DIXIT

Madhuri Dixit remains the gold standard for dance in Hindi cinema. Trained in classical Kathak, her performances are marked by flawless technique, expressive storytelling, and effortless grace. Songs like Ek Do Teen, Dhak Dhak Karne Laga, and Dola Re Dola are iconic not just for their choreography but for how Madhuri brought emotion and character into every movement. Alongside her celebrated acting career, she redefined how dance could become central to a film's narrative.

## TAMANNAAH BHATIA

Tamannaah Bhatia has emerged as one of the most impactful performers when it comes to combining a strong screen presence with memorable dance numbers. Her performances in chartbusters like Kaavaalaa, Aaj Ki Raat and Ghafoor showcased her ability to balance sensuality, rhythm, and expressive storytelling, making the songs widely popular across audiences. Tamannaah's dance style is defined by fluidity, confidence, and strong expression, enabling her to command attention while staying true to the narrative. Alongside her acting career across industries, dance remains a key strength that enhances her on-screen appeal.



## KATRINA KAIF

Katrina Kaif carved her own space as one of Bollywood's most consistent and powerful performers in dance-driven songs. Known for her precision, stamina, and stage presence, she has delivered multiple chart-topping numbers such as Sheila Ki Jawani, Chikni Chameli, Kamli, and Kala Chashma. Over the years, Katrina has balanced dance & acting, proving that discipline and performance energy can turn dance into a defining strength.



## LAUREN GOTTLIEB

Lauren Gottlieb is one of the most accomplished dancers in mainstream Indian cinema. Her global presence was highlighted by her performance at the 95th Academy Awards on Naatu Naatu. Trained in contemporary and commercial styles, she blends strength, fluidity, and emotion in every performance. From the iconic Tattoo in ABCD 2 to the graceful Sadda Dil Vi Tu (Ga Ga Ga Ganpati in ABCD), she turns choreography into storytelling, captivating audiences on screen, stage, and reality shows alike.



## JACQUELINE FERNANDEZ

Jacqueline Fernandez is known for her infectious energy and versatility as a dancer. Whether it's upbeat party tracks like Ek Do Teen (reprise), Genda Phool, or Lat Lag Gayee, her performances are marked by confidence and strong screen appeal. Jacqueline balances glamour with performance ease, making her dance numbers widely popular while continuing to evolve as an actor in commercial cinema.

# Anupam Kher lauds security guard's honesty



Anupam Kher was impressed by the honesty of a security guard who returned his lost credit card, misplaced during a morning walk in Mumbai a few days ago

**V**eteran actor Anupam Kher was left impressed by the honesty of a security guard who came to his Mumbai home to return a credit card he had lost during a morning walk a few days ago. He said that when he got home, the guard, Sanjay Yadav, who works nearby, had found the card. After making some inquiries, he somehow managed to reach Anupam's house and returned it to him.

On Sunday, February 8, Anupam shared a video on his social media with the guard Sanjay, praising his honesty. In the video, the actor, standing alongside the guard, said, "Sanjay Yadav ji, aap bada mahaan aadmi hain. Mera subah morning walk jaate samay, credit card gir gaya tha, aur main bada dhundha, kaafi pareshaan tha, because us par PIN nahi tha. Phir mujhe Dattu ji ka phone aaya ki kisko credit card mila. What a beautiful thing to do! He found my credit card and he returned it."

Sharing the video, Kher wrote, "Imaandari zinda hai!" He recounted how last week he had dropped his credit card and searched for it everywhere but couldn't find it. Later, when he returned home, a nearby security guard, noticing his name on the card, had found it and personally delivered it to his home. Anupam added, "Sabse mazedaar aur



impressive baat yeh thi ki woh apni imaandari ko lekar bilkul casual the. Jab maine tareef ki toh bole, 'Ismein kaunsi badi baat hai! Wah Yadav ji, bahut accha laga! Jai ho!'"

Anupam will next star in the highly anticipated sequel, Khosla Ka Ghosla 2, marking his 55th film.

The original cast returns, including Anupam Kher (Khosla), Boman Irani (Khosla), Ranvir Shorey, Parvin Dabas, Tara Sharma, and Kiran Juneja, with Ravi Kishan joining as a new addition.

The release date of the sequel is yet to be announced. It is directed by Umesh Bisht.



# Vidhu Vinod Chopra's son denies reports

Bollywood director and producer Vidhu Vinod Chopra and film critic Anupama Chopra's son Agni Dev Chopra shared a social media post and denied reports of him registering for the upcoming season of Pakistan Super League (PSL) 2026

**A**gni Dev Chopra's name has appeared on the list of players who registered for the 11th edition of the PSL. He has been registered as a US citizen on the list with the base price of PKR 6,00,000.

Agni Dev's mother Anupama shared his Instagram Story on her social media account in which he stated that the reports are misleading and that he has not enrolled to play in the Pakistani tournament. The list can be checked on the official web-

**Fake and misleading reports are being circulated in my name regarding a tournament. I would like to clarify that I have not enrolled for the PSL. I remain fully focused on my cricket journey in the USA and my long-term career goals. I request everyone not to fall prey to misinformation.**

I remain fully focused on my cricket journey in the USA and my long-term career goals. I request everyone not to fall prey to misinformation."

His mother shared the screenshot from Agni Dev's Instagram Story and did not say anything. There is no response from the Munna Bhai MBBS producer and his

father Vidhu Vinod

Chopra so far.

Agni Dev is US

citizen and can

participate in

the leagues

worldwide.



# One year later, the words still echo

shift made a huge difference and gave me the freedom to experiment without fear."

"What makes the film special is that it's not just a father-son story it reflects every relationship shaped by ego, silence, and miscommunication. I'm grateful to everyone who watched the film and reached out to say how deeply it resonated with them. That love means everything to me." He further added

In The Mehta Boys, Avinash delivered one of his most restrained and intimate performances, a struggling junior architect in Mumbai who has spent nearly a decade trying to prove his worth, both to the world and to himself. It was characterised by his portrayal of imposter syndrome with unnerving accuracy.

The film's emotional core lay in its central relationship: an estranged father and son forced to spend 48 hours together in a small apartment after the death of Amay's mother. Opposite Boman Irani's stubborn, gruff Shiv Mehta, Avinash's Amay carried years of unspoken resentment, disappointment, and longing. Their involuntary togetherness be-

came a conflict - one shaped by silence, authority, and the inability to articulate love. Across the film, Avinash charts Amay's journey of emotional reckoning alongside professional awakening, as he slowly learns to confront his father, his grief, and ultimately, his own voice.

As The Mehta Boys completes a year, the film stands as another reminder of Avinash Tiwary's instinct for choosing characters that highlight his versatility. While the celebration of the film's first anniversary is ongoing, his upcoming film O Romeo already generating buzz for his fierce and transformative turn. The actor also has Imtiaz Ali's O Saathi Re and Prashant Jha's Ginny Weds Sunny 2 lined up, reinforcing his position as one of the most exciting and dependable talents of his generation.

**A**vinash Tiwary, who has consistently earned praise for his nuanced performances in Bulbbul, Khaakee: The Bihar Chapter and beyond, struck a deep emotional chord with audiences through his portrayal of Amay Mehta in The Mehta Boys. The performance not only drew widespread acclaim but also cemented yet another memorable character in the actor's growing repertoire.

As The Mehta Boys completes one year since its 2025 release, Avinash took a moment to look back at the film that quietly stayed with viewers long after the credits rolled. Marking the milestone, the actor shared a post, reflecting on the journey of the film and the character that found a lasting place in the hearts of audiences.

Talking about working on the film and with Boman Irani, he mentioned, "It's been a year since The Mehta Boys released, and I still feel deeply connected to this film. From the moment the story came to me, I connected with its honesty and emotional depth. Amay felt real, flawed, vulnerable, and human and that made it impossible for me to say no. I remember thinking, 'If you truly call yourself an artist, you can't let this go,' and I jumped at it."

Working with Boman Irani was incredibly special. As an actor and director, he was a joy and constantly pushed me to explore. He kept telling me, 'Arre, dhai actor nahi hai tere jaise. Avin'

## Briefs

## Publisher of Washington Post resigns

Washington Post publisher Will Lewis said on Saturday he's stepping down, three days after the troubled newspaper said it was laying off one-third of its staff. Lewis sent an email to the Post's staff, saying that "difficult decisions have been taken in order to ensure the sustainable future of The Post." Lewis and the newspaper's billionaire owner Jeff Bezos, did not participate in a meeting with staff announcing the layoffs this week. The Post's chief financial officer, Jeff D'Onofrio, was named acting publisher and CEO. He joined the newspaper last June. UK-born Lewis was a former top executive at 'The Wall Street Journal' before taking over at The Post in January 2024.

## Starlink's entry into Pak delayed

The licence to Starlink to enter Pakistan's satellite internet market is delayed over data security concerns, the Musk-Trump fallout and competition from Chinese firms, local media reported on Sunday. Starlink, owned by tech billionaire Elon Musk, is among several companies seeking approval to operate in Pakistan, but officials say unresolved security and geopolitical considerations have slowed the approval process. The government has come to know Starlink could transmit certain data bypassing monitoring, regulatory and safety checks.

## Shooter of general held, says Russia

Russia's Federal Security Service said on Sunday the man suspected of shooting a deputy chief of Russia's military intelligence agency in Moscow was detained in Dubai and handed over to Russia. Federal Security Service said a Russian citizen, Lyubomir Korba, was detained in Dubai on suspicion of carrying out the shooting. FSB said it had also identified two "accomplices", one of whom was detained in Moscow and another who "left for Ukraine".

## Anchor ready to pay for mom's return

US news anchor Savannah Guthrie and her family have released a video pleading for the safe return of their mother. "We received your message, and we understand," Guthrie said in the video posted to Instagram, flanked by her two siblings. "We beg you now to return our mother to us so that we can celebrate with her." "This is the only way we will have peace," she continued. "This is very valuable to us — and we will pay." Her video did not provide any details about the message she referenced. Nancy Guthrie disappeared in the middle of night from her home in Arizona, US, last weekend. Officials say she was taken against her will.

## Man drives car into US pedestrians

A vehicle plowed into and injured pedestrians at the entrance of a grocery store in a scenic California mountain town on Saturday, police reported. Four people, including some children, were hurt when the 49-year-old man drove into the front of the Truckee Safeway in the afternoon, town police said. Their injuries were said not to be life-threatening. Police said they believe the man, from San Joaquin Valley city of Coalinga, intentionally struck the pedestrians and the store.

## SNAP ELECTION | Japanese electors brave snowfall to cast votes

## Landslide win for PM Takaichi: Polls

TOKYO

Japanese PM **Sanac Takaichi's** governing coalition is almost certain to win a single-party majority in a key parliamentary election on Sunday, NHK public television and other networks say, citing their exit poll results.

NHK says Takaichi's ruling coalition, led by her Liberal Democratic Party, could win more than two-thirds of the 465-seat lower house, the more powerful of two-chamber parliament.

People across Japan braved snow to vote in the country's first mid-winter poll in 36 years. Japan's transport ministry said 37 train lines and 58 ferry routes were closed and 54 flights cancelled as of Sunday morning. There was rare snowfall in Tokyo as



people headed out to vote.

The huge jump from the pre-election share could allow Takaichi to make progress on

a right-wing agenda that aims to boost Japan's economy and military capabilities as tensions grow with China, and she tries to nurture ties with the US.

The ultraconservative Takaichi, who took office as Japan's first female leader in

October last, pledged to "work, work, work", and her style, seen as both playful and tough, has resonated with younger fans.

Surveys indicated a landslide win in the lower house for LDP. The opposition, despite the formation of a new centrist alliance and a rising far-right, is seen as too splintered to be a real challenger. If the LDP fails to win a majority, "I will step down," she said.

## Counting on, Thailand faces hung House

**Bangkok:** Vote counting was underway in Thailand's early general election on Sunday, seen as a 3-way race among competing visions of progressive, populist and old-fashioned patronage politics.

The battle for support from 5.3 crore voters comes against a backdrop of slow economic growth and heightened nationalist sentiment. While 50+ parties contested the poll, only three—People's Party, Bhumjaithai, and Pheu Thai—have the nationwide organisation and popularity to gain a winning mandate.

A simple majority of the 500 elected lawmakers selects the PM. Polls project no single party will gain a majority, necessitating the formation of a coalition gov't. Pheu Thai Party is latest political vehicle for billionaire former PM Thaksin Shinawatra. Thaksin-backed parties repeatedly made comebacks, to be ousted by courts and watchdog agencies. —AP

## Iran minister strikes hard line on US talks

Araghchi says Tehran's power comes from saying 'no'



NOBEL LAUREATE SENTENCED

**Dubai:** Iran's minister insisted on Sunday Tehran's strength came from its ability to "say no to the great powers", striking a maximalist position after negotiations with the US over its nuclear programme and in the wake of nationwide protests.

Speaking to diplomats in Tehran, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi signalled Iran would stick to its position that it must be able to enrich uranium, a major point of contention with US President Donald Trump.

While Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian praised the Friday talks in Oman with the Americans as "a step forward", Araghchi's remarks show the challenge ahead.

"I believe the secret of the Iran's power lies in its ability to stand against bullying, domination and pressures from others. They fear our atomic bomb, while we are not pursuing an atomic bomb. Our atomic bomb is the power to say no to the great powers. The secret of the Islamic Republic's power is in the power to say no to the powers," he said.

Pezeshkian, who ordered Araghchi to pursue talks with

peaceful resolution. The Iranian nation has always responded to respect with respect, but it does not tolerate the language of force." Araghchi noted after multiple rounds of talks last year, the US "attacked us in the midst of negotiations". "If you take a step back (in negotiations), it is not clear up to where it will go," he said, adding, he expected a new round of talks with the US "soon", describing the recent meeting as a positive start, cautioning rebuilding trust would take time.

In an interview with 'Al Jazeera', Araghchi made it clear Tehran would not relinquish its uranium enrichment programme, which he called an "inalienable right". Meanwhile, Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu's office said he would travel to Washington DC on Wednesday to discuss the Iran-US talks with US President Donald Trump. The two will discuss "the negotiations with Iran", PM's office said, adding, Netanyahu "believes any talks must include restrictions on ballistic missiles and an end to support for Iranian axis." —AP

## Portugal chooses between moderate, populist

**Lisbon:** Centre-left Socialist candidate Antonio Jose Seguro is heavily favoured to defeat hard-right populist Andre Ventura in Portugal's runoff presidential election on Sunday in a vote that will test the depth of support for Ventura's brash style of politics.

Recent opinion polls say Seguro will collect twice as many votes as Ventura in the head-to-head between the two top candidates in last month's first round of voting, when none of the runners captured more than 50% of the vote

## RUNOFF PREZ POLL

required for victory.

But making it through to the runoff is already a milestone for Ventura and his Chega (Enough) party, which has quickly grown into a significant force in Portuguese politics during a wider European shift to the right.

Seguro, a longstanding Socialist politician, has positioned himself as a moderate candidate who will cooperate with

Portugal's centre-right minority government, repudiating Ventura's anti-establishment and anti-immigrant tirades.

In Portugal, the president is largely a figurehead with no executive power. Traditionally, the head of state stands above the political fray, mediating disputes and defusing tensions. However, the president can veto legislation from parliament, and the veto can be overturned. The head of state also possesses an "atomic bomb", the power to dissolve parliament and call early elections. —AP

## Russia has made £239bn from oil tankers in English Channel: Probe

LONDON

A probe by 'The Sunday Times' has revealed Russia has made £239 billions from oil tankers in the English Channel.

The journey of a sanctioned tanker past British and French shores is not a one-off event. Along the Strait of Dover, it is a story that is unfolding every day, allowing President Vladimir Putin to fund his war in Ukraine — right under the noses of Kyiv's allies.

The Times investigation has uncovered the scale of Russian oil exports passing through British waters. It has revealed how the Royal Navy plans to use drone boats to identify sanctioned ships and, where it can, seize them.

Since early 2022, Russia has shipped 550 million tonnes of oil (nearly 4 billion barrels) through the English Channel,

worth £239 billion.

The analysis is based on data supplied by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air, a Helsinki-based think tank that has recorded every oil export from Russia since its invasion of Ukraine four years ago. Researchers also track registered oil trades to calculate exports.

The analysis shows over four years, ships carrying

Russian oil made 9,584 voyages through the Strait of Dover. Numbers have risen sharply during the Ukraine war: in 2022, 958 tankers carrying Russian oil were recorded, jumping to 2,919 in 2023 and 2,987 in 2024, before easing slightly to 2,720 in 2025.

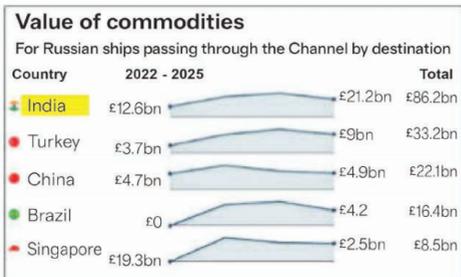
In one week alone last December there were 57 shipments. On one day that week 11 ships left Russian ports to

pass unhindered through the English Channel.

As Europe has sought to wean itself off Russian oil and gas, Times investigation has also shown how oil exports to China and India have increased exponentially. The bulk of Russia's oil, worth £85.5 billion, was sent to India between 2022 and 2025.

While India received 29 million tonnes in 2022, it more than doubled to 67 million in 2023 and peaked at 71.1 million tonnes (521 million barrels) in 2024. However, these revenue streams may finally be cut off, after Trump last week signed a trade deal with India. As part of the tariff-cutting deal, Modi vowed to stop buying Russian oil.

Shipments to China totalled £21.1 billion over the period, jumping from 10.2 million tonnes in 2022 to a high of 18.9 million the following year.



## 2 die after avalanche near Winter Oly site

**Valtellina:** Two skiers have died in an avalanche that happened near the site of the Winter Olympics in the Italian Alps on Saturday, local authorities said.

Fire and rescue officials said a serious avalanche accident left three skiers caught in the early afternoon, two of whom later died and the third person sustaining injuries.

The avalanche happened on Alpe Meriggio in Valtellina. The risk of avalanches in the area was very high at the time, according to AINEVA, Italy's snow and avalanches risk association. Valtellina is a major hub for the 2026 games, with Bormio hosting men's alpine skiing and ski mountaineering, and Livigno hosting freestyle skiing and snowboarding, valley officials said.

Bormio is approximately 40 miles from the site of the avalanche, and Livigno is 60 miles away. A helicopter worked to rescue one of the skiers buried under the snow, but were pronounced dead.

## SKIER DIES ON EXPERT RUN AT MAMMOTH

A skier died at Mammoth Mountain on Thursday following a fatal accident in full view of other skiers riding a nearby lift. It was the fourth death at the resort this season.

The unidentified skier was trying a run called Dropout 2, among the steepest marked trails in California, which descends from the summit ridge of the 11,000-ft mountain. The run falls 1,200 vertical feet below a slow, three-person lift that ferries expert skiers to some of Mammoth's most adventurous terrain.

## Feels like you are in Pakistan not Dallas: US Congressman

NEW YORK

An American lawmaker has voiced concern over the "Islamisation" of areas in certain constituencies in the US state of Texas, saying visiting local malls there "feels like you're in Pakistan, not Dallas."

"I hear from constituents all the time who are deeply and desperately concerned about the Islamisation of the Dallas area," Congressman Brandon Gill said during an interview with Real America's Voice.

The Republican lawmaker said his constituents are hearing about "mosques that are popping up near land that they or their family have owned for generations."

"We have entire communities who are being transformed. And you hear about

constituents talking about going to their local malls, and you look around, and it feels like you're in Pakistan, not Dallas, Texas. That's a problem," he added. "Mass Islamic migration is killing the America we know and love," he said in a social media post.

Gill represents Texas' 26th Congressional District in the US House of Representatives.

## JAILING IMMIGRANTS SANS BOND: COURT AFFIRMS TRUMP POLICY

Trump administration can continue to detain immigrants without bond, marking a major legal victory for the federal immigration agenda and countering a slew of recent lower court decisions across the country that argued the practice is illegal.

A panel of judges on the 5th

Circuit Court of Appeals ruled the Dept of Homeland Security's decision to deny bond hearings to immigrants arrested across the country is consistent with the constitution and federal immigration law.

Specifically, circuit judge Edith H Jones wrote in the 2-1 majority opinion the government correctly interpreted the Immigration and Nationality Act by asserting that "unadmitted aliens apprehended anywhere in the US are ineligible for release on bond, regardless of how long they have resided inside the US."

Meanwhile, police arrested several demonstrators outside a federal building in Minneapolis, breaking up a protest marking the one-month anniversary of Minnesota woman Renee Good's death. —PT/AP

## Greenland crisis boosted Danish apps to identify &amp; help boycott US goods

**Copenhagen:** The makers of mobile apps designed to help shoppers identify and boycott American goods say they saw a surge of interest in Denmark and beyond after the recent flare-up in tensions over US President Trump's designs on Greenland.

"Made O'Meter" app creator Ian Rosenfeldt said he saw around 30,000 downloads of the free app in three days at the height of the transatlantic diplomatic crisis in late January, of more than 100,000 since it was launched in March.

Rosenfeldt, who lives in Copenhagen and works in digital marketing, decided to create the app a year ago after joining a Facebook group of like-minded Danes hoping to



boycott US goods. "Many people were frustrated and thinking, how do we actually do it?" the 53-year-old recalled. "If you use a bar code scanner, it's difficult to see if a product is actually American or not, if it's Danish or not."

In the latest version of "Made O'Meter", which uses AI to identify and analyse products, users can set preferences, like "No USA-owned brands" or "Only EU-based brands". —AP

## Ukraine Inc struggles due to power cuts, uncertainty

**Kyiv:** It is pre-dawn in the historic Podil district of Ukrainian capital Kyiv, and warm light from the Spelta bakery-bistro's window pierces the darkness outside. On a wooden surface dusted with flour, the baker Oleksandr Kutsenko skillfully divides and shapes soft, damp pieces of dough. As he shapes the first loaves into the oven, a sweet, delicate



aroma of fresh bread fills the space. Seconds later, the lights go out, the ovens switch off, and darkness envelops the room. Kutsenko, 31, steps outside into the freezing night, switches on a large rectangular generator, and the power kicks back in. This pattern is repeated many times as the business struggles to keep working through the power outages

caused by Russia's bombing campaign on Ukraine's energy grid. "It's more than impossible to imagine a Ukrainian business operating without a generator," said **Olha Hrynychuk**, 28, the co-founder and head baker of Spelta.

The cost of purchasing and operating generators to overcome power outages is one of the chal-

lenges facing Ukrainian businesses after four years of war. Labour crisis due to mobilisation and migration, security risks, declining purchasing power and complicated logistics add to the pressure, officials say.

Hrynychuk opened the bakery 10 months after Russia launched invasion in 2022. That winter was the first year Russia targeted Ukraine's

energy system. She says they barely know what it is to work under "normal" conditions, but have never faced such challenges. Production is dependent on electricity, and the generator burns 700 hryvnias (\$16) worth of fuel per hour. "We run on a generator for 10-12 hours a day. You have no fixed schedule, but have to adapt and refuel it." —AP

## Briefs

COLOMBO

## Jayasuriya to step down as SL coach



Sanath Jayasuriya has decided to step down as Sri Lanka head coach following the team's disappointing campaign in the T20 World Cup. Co-hosts Sri Lanka lost all their matches in the Super Eight stage. In the preliminary round, they were beaten by Zimbabwe but recorded wins against Australia, Oman and Ireland. "My contract ends in June but I will leave before that. I will speak to Sri Lanka Cricket to finalise my stepping down," Jayasuriya told reporters after Sri Lanka's loss to Pakistan. "We should have done better. I am sorry and I apologise to the fans," said Jayasuriya. He said the side was badly affected by injuries to Wanindu Hasaranga, Matheesha Pathirana and Kusal Mendis.

NEW DELHI

## Zimbabwe await clarity on travel



Having completed their commitments in the T20 World Cup, Zimbabwe are awaiting clarity on their departure plans following the closure of Dubai airport due to escalating tensions in the Middle East. Majority of the Sikandar Raza-led squad was supposed to fly out of Delhi in three batches from Monday morning but those plans have now been put on hold, informed head coach Justin Sammons following the loss in their final game against South Africa. Zimbabwe all-rounder Graeme Cremer is based in Dubai and his plans are also up in the air following the closure of the airspace in major airports in the Middle East. The team members were supposed to take the connecting flight from Dubai.

KUALA LUMPUR

## Attacks on Iran disrupt AFC fixtures



The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has postponed continental club championship matches scheduled in the Middle East this week following the US and Israel attacks on Iran. The AFC said on Sunday that the AFC

BLINDER | India beat WI by five wickets to set up England clash at Wankhede

## Samson takes India into semis

KOLKATA

Perpetually under scrutiny, Sanju Samson rose above the noise to produce a match-winning 97 not out as India defeated West Indies by five wickets in their T20 World Cup Super Eight match to reach the semifinals, here on Sunday.

Defending champions India face England in the semifinals at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on March 5.

Asked to bat, West Indies executed a clear attacking blueprint as they rode on Roston Chase's foundation before unleashing a late assault by Rovman Powell (34 not out; 19 balls) and Jason Holder (37 not out; 22 balls) to post an imposing 195 for 4.

In front of a packed Eden Gardens with over 65,000 in attendance, Sanju stood tall on a night when India's in-form batters faltered under pressure. His magnificent knock helped India reach 199 for 5 in 19.2 overs.

Abhishek Sharma (10 off 11 balls) endured a forgettable outing and also survived two dropped catches, while Ishan Kishan (10 off 6 balls) also got out cheaply.

Skipper Suryakumar Yadav (18 off 16 balls), the otherwise dependable Tilak Varma (27 off 15 balls) and Hardik Pandya (17 off 14 balls) also failed to convert their starts.

Amid that backdrop, Sanju, playing in only his third match of the T20 World Cup, became the defining figure, striking 12 fours and four sixes in his 50-ball unbeaten knock. He batted through the chase with poise and authority to seal the win with four balls to spare.

Sanju brought the scores level in the 19th over by heaving Romario Shepherd's attempted yorker high over square leg for a towering six.

He then sealed the chase



India's Sanju Samson plays a shot during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 Super 8 Group 1 match against the West Indies at Eden Gardens Stadium in Kolkata on Sunday. ANI

## Scoreboard

**West Indies:** S Hope b Chakaravathy 32, R Chase c Suryakumar b Bumrah 40, S Hetmyer c Samson b Bumrah 27, S Rutherford c Samson b Pandya 14, R Powell (not out) 34, J Holder (not out) 37 **Extras:** (LB-1, W-10) 11 **Total:** 195-4 (In 20 Overs) **FoW:** 68-1

102-2, 103-3, 119-4 **Bowling:** Arshdeep Singh 4-0-43-0, Hardik Pandya 4-0-40-1, Axar Patel 4-0-35-0, Jasprit Bumrah 4-0-36-2, Varun Chakaravathy 4-0-40-1. **Australia:** A Sharma c Hetmyer b Hosein 10, S Samson (not out) 97, I Kishan c Hetmyer b Holder 10, S Yadav c Rutherford b Joseph 18, T Varma c Hetmyer b Holder 27, H

Pandya c Holder b Joseph 17, S Dube (not out) 8 **Extras:** (LB-5, W-7) 12 **Total:** 199-5 (In 19.2 Overs) **FoW:** 29-1, 41-2, 99-3, 141-4, 179-5 **Bowling:** Akeal Hosein 2-0-22-1, Matthew Forde 3-0-22-0, Jason Holder 4-0-38-2, Gudakesh Motie 2-0-18-0, Romario Shepherd 2.2-0-34-0, Shamir Joseph 4-0-42-2, Roston Chase 2-0-18-0.

cleanly over a leaping mid-on for four to take India into the semifinals and end West Indies' campaign at the very venue where they lifted their second and last World Cup in 2016. As "Maa Tujhe Salaam" echoed the stands, Sanju dropped to his knees, removed his helmet and said a quiet prayer in a moment of relief, gratitude and redemp-

tion while the BCCI top brass gave a standing ovation.

Sanju first steadied the innings in a 58-run third-wicket stand off 35 balls with Suryakumar, absorbing pressure before shifting gears.

After the captain's dismissal, India briefly stalled, but Sanju remained composed, shunning reckless strokeplay and keeping the chase on

track. The decisive push came through a 42-run partnership off 26 balls with Tilak, which tilted the contest firmly India's way.

Suryakumar fell against the run of play just after the mid-way mark, slicing Joseph to deep point where Sherfane Rutherford held a fine catch.

From being 98/2 needing just as many from the back

end, India then drifted into a brief lull eating up 15 deliveries without a boundary and was further pushed back by the loss of their well-set captain. But there was no sense of panic as the duo batted with composure.

Samson's 26-ball fifty reflected both control and intent and he finished off in style in pressure game.

## Raza's all-round effort in vain as SA win

Proteas five-wicket win over Zimbabwe sets up semifinal with New Zealand

NEW DELHI

Sikandar Raza produced a fine all-round performance but South Africa held their nerve to register a five-wicket win over Zimbabwe in their final Super Eight match of the T20 World Cup on Sunday.

After opting to bat, Zimbabwe rode on Raza's 73 off 43 balls to post 153 for seven against a disciplined South African attack.

Raza then struck twice in the powerplay, removing Aiden Markram and Quinton de Kock, and later dismissed Dewald Brevis (42 off 18 balls) to leave South Africa at 101 for five in the 11th over.

With 53 runs still required and the pitch offering variable bounce, the Proteas were under pressure. However, Tristan Stubbs (21 not out off



Zimbabwe's captain Sikandar Raza (L) during the match against South Africa in New Delhi on Sunday. PFI

24 balls) and George Linde (31 not out off 21 balls) combined to guide the side home in 17.5 overs. Earlier, South Africa had lost three wickets inside the powerplay before Brevis and David Miller counter-attacked to shift momentum briefly in their favour.

Zimbabwe finished the Super Eight phase without a win. Despite the result, Raza stood out with both bat and ball. The Zimbabwe captain struck boundaries and sixes at will, while the rest of the batting line-up struggled against the pace trio of Kwenza Maphaka, Anrich Nortje and Lungi Ngidi.

South Africa, who rested Kagiso Rabada, Marco Jansen and Keshav Maharaj ahead of the semifinal, carried their unbeaten run into the last-four clash against New Zealand in Kolkata.

## Scoreboard

**Zimbabwe:** T Marumani b Maphaka 7, B Bennett c Markram b Nortje 11, D Myers c Brevis b Linde 11, S Raza c Miller b Maphaka 73, R Burl lbw b Ngidi 5, T Munyonga b Bosch 2, C Madande (not out) 26, B Evans b Bosch 8, W Masakadza (not out) 1 **Extras:** (LB-1, B-1, W-3) 5 **Total:** 153-7 (in 20 overs) **FoW:** 1-14, 2-28, 3-66, 4-

82, 5-87, 6-126, 7-146 **Bowling:** George Linde 3-0-22-1, Kwenza Maphaka 4-0-21-2, Lungi Ngidi 4-0-29-1, Anrich Nortje 4-0-29-1, Corbin Bosch 4-0-40-2, Aiden Markram 1-0-11-0.

**South Africa:** A Markram b Raza 4, Q de Kock c Marumani b Raza 0, R Rickelton c Burl b Evans 31, D Brevis c Burl b Raza 42, D Miller c Mayers b

Muzarabani 22, T Stubbs (not out) 21, G Linde (not out) 30 **Extras:** (NB-1, W-3) 4 **Total:** 154-4 (in 17.5 overs) **FoW:** 1-1, 2-14, 3-43, 4-93, 5-101

**Bowling:** Sikandar Raza 4-0-29-3, Blessing Muzarabani 3.5-0-32-1, Brad Evans 3-0-22-1, Graeme Cremer 2-0-27-0, Wellington Masakadza 2-0-23-0, Ryan Burl 2-0-12-0, Brian Bennett 1-0-9-0.

## HEALY SIGNS OFF WITH 158 IN ODI FAREWELL

India fold for 224 in huge chase of 410, lose series 3-0

HOBART

Captain Alyssa Healy signed off from ODI cricket in style, smashing 158 to power Australia to a 185-run victory over India in the third and final match on Sunday and complete a 3-0 whitewash.

The 35-year-old produced a fitting swansong, combining with Beth Mooney, who struck an unbeaten 106, to propel Australia to 409 for seven after being asked to bat.

Chasing 410, India were bowled out for 224 in 45.1 overs. Healy, playing her 126th ODI, struck 27 boundaries and two sixes in her 98-ball knock for her eighth ODI century. She shared 134 runs for the second wicket with Georgia Voll (62 off 52) and added 145 for the third with Mooney to lay the foundation for the mammoth total.

Phoebe Litchfield departed early for 14, while Annabel Sutherland (23) and Nicola Carey (34 off 15) provided late impetus.

For India, Sneha Rana (2/66) and Shree Charani (2/106) picked up two wickets each, with Charani becoming only



Skipper Alyssa Healy powered Australia to a 185-run victory over India in the third ODI in Hobart. X

Alyssa Healy combined with Beth Mooney, who struck an unbeaten 106, to propel Australia to 409 for seven.

the third bowler to concede more than 100 runs in an ODI. India never recovered from early setbacks. Smriti Mandhana fell in the second over, though Pratika Rawal (27 off 21) and Jemimah Rodrigues (42 off 29) added 54 runs. Once Rawal was trapped leg before wicket, wickets tumbled at regular intervals.

Harmanpreet Kaur managed 25 before Alana King dismissed her leg before wicket, while Richa Ghosh and Kashvee Gautam failed to make an impact.

Deepthi Sharma (29 off 47) and Rana added 63 for the eighth wicket, but the target proved insurmountable. Rana capped a strong all-round effort with 44 off 74 balls.

## Ordeal

## Sindhu recounts 'tense and scary' moments in Dubai

NEW DELHI

Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu on Sunday described a "tense and scary" ordeal at Dubai International Airport, where she and her Indonesian coach were stranded after an explosion occurred close to the area where they were staying amid escalating tensions in the Gulf region.

The disruption followed a major offensive launched by the United States and Israel

on Iran, which triggered retaliatory missile strikes across parts of the Gulf, including the United Arab Emirates. Several airlines cancelled or rerouted flights.

Sindhu, scheduled to compete at the All England Open Badminton Championships in Birmingham from March 3, has been stuck in Dubai since Saturday after flight operations were suspended due to airspace closures.

"Once our flight landed in Dubai, events beyond our control began to unfold.

Shortly after, the airspace was shut down and the last few hours have been extremely tense. We could hear the sounds of interceptions overhead," Sindhu told PFI.

"A few hours later there was an explosion very close to where we were at Dubai airport. My coach was about 100 metres away and had to quickly move out of the area. Experiencing something like this in such close quarters truly shakes you," she added. Her coach, Irwansyah Adi

Pratama, termed it a narrow escape.

"There was an explosion at the airport, so we are stuck here. They have put us in a hotel. We are okay but there is a little bit of worry. We want to go to the All England. I hope we can fly out today because Sindhu's match is on Wednesday," he said.

Sindhu said she and her support staff were later moved to a secure location and thanked the Dubai authorities and the Indian High

Commission for their assistance.

Air India cancelled its services to and from major Gulf destinations, while Dubai International Airport suspended operations due to airspace restrictions.

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) said it was monitoring the situation with Badminton England and national associations, adding that the safety and wellbeing of athletes and officials remained its highest priority.

