

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

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MORNING EDITION PRAYAGRAJ Thursday, 11 December, 2025 UNIQUE GIFT OF KRIYAYOGA ASHRAM AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO GIVE IMPETUS TO WORLD BUILDING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

Diwali declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site

New Delhi

Diwali, the festival of the triumph of light over darkness, was included on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity on Wednesday. This decision was taken during a key UNESCO meeting held at the Red Fort in Delhi. On this



decision, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that Diwali is the soul of our civilization and every citizen, both at home and abroad, is excited

by this decision. This is the first time India is hosting a session of the Intergovernmental Committee, which works to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage. The 20th session of this committee is being held at the Red Fort from December 8 to December 13. When UNESCO announced that Diwali had been

included in the list of UNESCO festivals, the people present there started chanting "Vande Mataram" and "Bharat Mata ki Jai." Currently, 15 elements of India are listed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. These include the Kumbh Mela, Kolkata's Durga Puja, Gujarat's

Garba dance, yoga, the tradition of Vedic chanting, and Ramlila (a traditional performance of the epic 'Ramayana').What did PM Modi say about UNESCO's decision?Regarding UNESCO's decision, PM Modi said, "People in India and around the world are excited. For us,

Delhi High Court said – what did the government do when Indigo failed



New Delhi

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday strongly criticized the Central Government and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) while hearing the case regarding the ongoing crisis at IndiGo Airlines. Describing IndiGo's frequent flight cancellations and delays as a serious crisis, the High Court questioned the Central Government as to how the situation had deteriorated to such a level. The High Court also directed that necessary steps be taken to provide immediate compensation to passengers.Hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) seeking assistance and

refunds for passengers affected by the cancellation of hundreds of IndiGo flights, the High Court stated that the cancellations not only caused inconvenience and harassment to passengers but also harmed the economy. The court questioned why other airlines took advantage of the situation and increased ticket prices when IndiGo flights were grounded.The court bluntly asked how the price hikes by other airlines could be justified in such a situation. During the hearing, a bench comprising Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyay and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela stated that delays in implementing revised Flight Duty.

Parliament: Only three districts are now affected by Naxalites

New Delhi

In a major blow to the Maoists, security forces have eliminated 29 top Maoist leaders since 2019, including 14 Central Committee members and a Politburo member killed this year. Only three districts are now classified as "most LWE-affected." This information was provided by Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai while answering a supplementary question during Question Hour in the Lok Sabha. He said that the number of states affected by LWE has decreased from 10 in 2014 to five in 2025 (by October), representing a 50 percent reduction. The number of affected districts has also seen a sharp decline of 91 percent during this period, from 126 to 11. The number of districts affected by



Census forms to include questions on reasons for migration

The 2027 Census will also include questions related to the duration of stay at the current residence and the reason for migration. In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai stated that the census collects information about each individual at the place where they are found during the enumeration period. Whether a separate data collection process is proposed for this purpose.

LWE has declined from 126 in April 2018 to 90 in July 2021, 70 in April 2024, 38 in April 2025, and 11 in October 2025. Now, only three districts are considered "most affected" by LWE. He said, "To prevent the CPI (Maoist) from re-

establishing itself in areas recently liberated from LWE influence, 27 districts have been included as 'legacy and critical districts' under the security-related expenditure plan." Under the leadership of the Prime Minister and the successful guidance

PM Modi hacks hearts: Kangana

New Delhi

During a discussion on electoral reforms in the Lok Sabha, MP Kangana Ranaut launched a scathing attack on the opposition. She said that the entire year in Parliament was spent amid opposition uproar, and that as a new MP, the experience was disturbing. Kangana described the opposition's methods of controversy, sloganeering, and disruption of House proceedings as against democratic norms. Opposition's allegations of EVM hacking. She said that PM Modi does not hack EVMs, but rather hacks the hearts of the people.

of the Home Minister, LWE will be "eliminated by March 2026 and there will be no escape for them now." Highlighting the results of the central government's zero-tolerance policy, Rai said that



UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath addressing the public in Gorakhpur district and listening to the problems of the people.

"Providing affordable energy to citizens is a priority of the govt.," the Ministry of External Affairs

New Delhi

The central government has reiterated that energy procurement decisions are driven by national interests, global market dynamics, and the need to provide affordable energy to

India's 1.4 billion citizens."Decisions to procure energy supplies are based solely on commercial considerations."Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said during the weekly media briefing

on Monday that decisions by Indian companies to purchase oil and other energy supplies are based solely on commercial considerations. This statement comes in response to the question of continued energy supplies from

Russia despite geopolitical pressure from Western countries. Randhir Jaiswal's comments come after Russian President Vladimir Putin reaffirmed Russia's continued status as a stable and uninterrupted .

For the first time, station redevelopment is taking place without stopping traffic: Minister

New Delhi

During a discussion in the Lok Sabha on questions related to passenger amenities at railway stations, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav stated on Wednesday that station redevelopment is a highly complex process, involving large-scale construction without disrupting traffic. He clarified that this is the first time such extensive station redevelopment work has been undertaken

since independence. Responding to a question from Dharmendra Yadav, Samajwadi Party (SP) member from Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh, the minister stated that station development poses a new challenge in the country. Citing examples like Chandigarh, extensive construction work is underway, traffic has not been halted. While in many countries, traffic is suspended for three to four years during station redevelopment.

Rohingya case: 44 former judges support Chief Justice

New Delhi

Forty-four judges from the Supreme Court and High Courts across the country have come out in support of Chief Justice Surya Kant's comments on the Rohingya issue. A letter signed by all the judges was issued on December 9th. It stated, "We, retired judges, strongly object to the false campaign being launched against Chief Justice Surya Kant's comments on the Rohingya migrants issue. Criticism is welcome, but this cam-



paign is an attempt to tarnish the image of the judiciary." This response by the 44 judges comes in response to a letter issued on December 5th by retired judges, lawyers, and the Campaign for Judicial Accountability and

Reforms against the CJI and the Supreme Court.It stated, "The comments made on the Rohingya are inhumane and against constitutional values. The Rohingya are described as one of the most persecuted minorities in the world. They also

assert that the Rohingya people have a right to protection under Article 21." In fact, on December 2, while hearing a habeas corpus petition, a bench of Justices U.K. Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi asked whether someone who enters India illegally should be given a "red carpet welcome," when the country's own citizens are struggling with poverty.Facts revealed by 44 judges on the Rohingya situation in the countryRohingyas are not considered refugees under Indian law.

Court refuses urgent hearing on IndiGo's recent crisis

New Delhi

Union Minister Prahlad Joshi attacked Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday. He said that Rahul Gandhi's visit to Germany during the winter session of Parliament is an example of the Congress MP being a "part-time" politician. Joshi told reporters, "Rahul Gandhi always spends most of the time abroad during Parliament sessions".

India made a special offer to the US on the trade deal, claims Trump official

New Delhi

For the past several months, Donald Trump has adopted a tough stance against India. The US has imposed the highest tariff in the world, at 50 percent, on India. Trump's stricter rules regarding the US-1 visa have dealt a significant blow to India. However, some good news has emerged regarding trade talks between the two countries. According to US



Representative Jamieson Greer, who is negotiating the trade deal with India, the trade deal between the two countries is on a positive note. India has made the best

offer to the US so far. During a speech in the US Congress, Greer said, "India has agreed to open its market to American products like sorghum and soybeans.

Only by avoiding drugs can youth save themselves and the future of the country: CM Yogi

Gorakhpur

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has stated that today's youth face two challenges: drug addiction and mobile phone or smartphone addiction. Both addictions must be avoided. The more youth can avoid these, the more they will protect themselves and the nation's future. Only by avoiding addiction will they be able to fulfill their responsibilities to their



families, society, and nation. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath was presiding over the main ceremony held at the auditorium of Mahayogi Gorakhnath University on Wednesday, marking the conclusion of the 93rd Founder's Week

celebrations of the Maharana Pratap Shiksha Parishad. Welcoming the chief guest, Lieutenant General Gurmeet Singh, Governor of Uttarakhand, the Chief Minister advised youth to stay away from the

addiction of mobile phones. As teachers and guardians, the Chief Minister told youth that they must remain vigilant, as the drug mafia is rapidly making nefarious attempts to ensnare the younger generation. Academic institutions must also be equally vigilant. CM Yogi said that the youth will have to prepare themselves to fight a new battle against this, because the enemy of the country wants to infiltrate.

Sahara India Challenges Municipal Corporation Action in High Court

Lucknow

Sahara India Commercial Corporation Limited has approached the Lucknow Bench of the Uttar Pradesh High Court against the possession proceedings initiated by the municipal corporation. The company termed the sealing of Sahara City by the municipal corporation as unilateral and against the fundamental principles of justice. Serious Allegations Raised in High Court Petition In its petition filed before the High Court, Sahara India alleged that the municipal corporation forcefully took possession and sealed Sahara City without giving the company an opportunity to present its side and overlooked previously issued stay orders. The petition demands the cancellation of the municipal



orders. Instructions for Lease Extension Already Issued Sahara India has also informed the court that clear instructions for extending the lease term had already been given as part of the ongoing arbitration process. Despite this, the municipal corporation allegedly violated these orders and proceeded to seal Sahara City, which Sahara claims is a breach of judicial proceedings. Sealing Action Termed Unjust Sahara India contends that the municipal corporation's action is not only unjust but has also caused seri-

ous damage to the company's reputation and commercial activities. The petition further states that the corporation did not provide any opportunity for a hearing, which is against the principle of natural justice. Hearing Expected This Week The petition filed before the Lucknow Bench of the High Court is likely to be heard this week. Given the seriousness of the matter, the court is expected to intervene there has been no official response from the municipal corporation regarding this issue.

Mathura

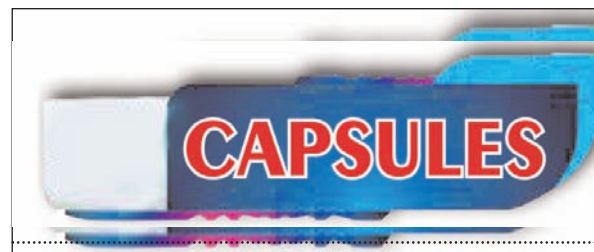
The sixth meeting of the Thakur Shri Banke Bihari Temple High Powered Management Committee, Vrindavan Mathura was held in the auditorium of the Laxman Shaheed Memorial Building, Vrindavan, under the chairmanship of Justice (Retired) Ashok Kumar of the Allahabad High Court. Six points were discussed at the meeting, including the views of the Goswamis regarding the impasse in complying with the decision taken at the committee meeting on September 29, 2025 to extend the darshan timings at the Shri Banke Bihari Temple.

The progress of the opening of the Golas (circles) located in the Shri Banke Bihari Temple, as discussed at the committee meeting on September 29, 2025. The progress of the opening of the closed rooms located in the Shri Banke Bihari Temple, as discussed at the committee meeting on September 29, 2025. The progress of



the investigation by the three-member committee formed to investigate irregularities in the 357-square-yard vacant, semi-constructed site in the courtyard of the Thakur Shri Banke Bihari Temple. Presentation by Chief Executive Officer, Uttar Pradesh Braj Teerth Vikas Parishad, Mathura, regarding the corridor of Thakur Shri Banke Bihari Temple, Vrindavan. Status of compliance of the decisions taken by the committee in the previous meetings. President Justice (Retd.) Allahabad High Court Ashok Kumar Member/ District and Sessions Judge (Retd.) Mukesh Mishra Member/ District and Sessions Judge Mathura Vikas Kumar Member/ Munsif/Civil Judge

Mathura Shipra Dubey Member Secretary/ District Magistrate/ Collector Mathura Chandra Prakash Singh Member/ Senior Superintendent of Police Mathura Shlok Kumar Member/ Municipal Commissioner Mathura Vrindavan Municipal Corporation Mathura Jag Pravesh Member/ Vice Chairman Mathura Vrindavan Development Authority Mathura Shyam Bahadur Singh Member/ Superintendent Archaeologist Archaeological Survey of India Agra Dr. Smita S Kumar Member/ Goswami Rajbhog Group Shrivardhan Goswami son of Jugalkishore Goswami were present in the meeting.



Jaipur-Ajmer highway inferno: LPG truck collision triggers massive fire

NEW DELHI: A major fire broke out on the Jaipur-Ajmer highway late night after a truck carrying LPG cylinders collided with another vehicle near the Dudu area, officials said. The impact of the crash triggered multiple explosions as gas cylinders began to burst, sending flames and shockwaves across the stretch. The blaze and loud explosions were visible and audible from several kilometres away, according to news agency PTI. Police personnel and fire brigades rushed to the scene, halting traffic on both sides of the busy highway. Rescue and fire-fighting operations continued late into the night as teams worked to bring the situation under control. Rajasthan chief minister Bhajanlal Sharma directed deputy chief minister Dr Prem Chand Bairwa and MLA Kailash Verma to visit the site and assess the situation. In a post on X, he wrote, "The accident of a fire breaking out in a truck loaded with gas cylinders on the Jaipur-Ajmer National Highway in the Mauzamad police station area of Jaipur Rural is extremely tragic. Fire brigade and disaster management teams are engaged in relief and rescue operations at the incident site." "Instructions have been given to the district administration to ensure proper treatment for the injured and to provide all possible assistance to those affected. I pray to God for the safety and well-being of all citizens affected by this heart-wrenching incident", he further added. Jaipur district collector and other senior officials also head-post on X, confirmed that relief and rescue efforts were underway near Sawarda culvert in the Mojmabad area.

Himachal tragedy: 18 dead as landslide strikes bus in Bilaspur; many missing

KULLU: At least 18 people were killed after a massive landslide slammed into a private bus near Barthi village in Bilaspur district of Himachal Pradesh, around 100km from Shimla, on evening. Many are missing and the rescue operation was on when this report was filed.

The bus was carrying 30-35 passengers to Ghumarwin when the landslide struck around 6.30pm, said an official. Rocks and boulders crashed through the roof, crushing passengers to death in their seats. Debris completely enveloped the 42-seater vehicle. Bilaspur administration immediately dispatched a team to the site. Before police or rescue per-



sonnel arrived, however, local people rushed to the spot in large numbers and began digging through the mound of debris to reach survivors. The rescue team brought along a JCB to clear the debris. With the help of locals, police

pulled out four survivors, three of them children. They have been admitted to a govt hospital in Barthi. None of the deceased had been identified till night. Bilaspur ADC Om Kant Thakur and SP Sandeep Dhawal were supervising the

search and rescue mission on the spot. It has been raining heavily in Himachal for the past two-three days and the landslide was triggered by a downpour, said an official. Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief over the tragedy. "Saddened by the loss of lives due to a mishap in Bilaspur, Himachal Pradesh. My thoughts are with the affected people and their families during this difficult time. Praying for the speedy recovery of the injured," a PMO statement said. An ex gratia of Rs 2 lakh from PM National Relief Fund will be given to the next of kin of each deceased, and the injured would be given Rs 50,000, it said.

Fat-loss drug Mounjaro now India's No. 2 pharma brand

NEW DELHI: Soaring demand for weight-loss therapies has brought Eli Lilly's Mounjaro within striking distance of Indian pharma market's long standing leader GlaxoSmithKline's Augmentin, an antibiotic. During September, Mounjaro recorded sales of Rs 80 crore, becoming the second-largest brand in the pharma retail market, latest data culled by TOI from market research firm Pharmatrac showed. As against this, Augmentin gen-

erated sales of Rs 85 crore during the month. Typically, top-selling medicines in the pharmaceutical market are either Augmentin or anti-diabetic therapy, Mixtard, which generates around Rs 75-80 crore in monthly sales. Launched in March this year, Mounjaro generated a cumulative revenue of Rs 233 crore by September. Bulging sales Augmentin unit value lower than Mounjaro's Industry experts said the introduction of

Mounjaro in a pre-filled device, KwikPen, in August has boosted sales. A key reason for the sales is the higher unit value of the drug even though the volumes are lower. Average monthly cost of Mounjaro for a patient starts from Rs 14,000 and goes up to Rs 27,000, depending on the prescription. In contrast, a strip of 10 tablets of Augmentin 625 Duo costs under Rs 200. Sales of Mounjaro's rival, Wegovy, marketed by Novo Nordisk, have.

Assam's "Kohinoor" Superstar Zubeen Garg's Mysterious Death

Assam

The death of Assam's iconic singer, actor and superstar Zubeen Garg continues to stir widespread outrage and suspicion nearly a month after the tragedy. Officially, his death on September 19, 2025 in Singapore was attributed to drowning, but allegations of murder and conspiracy have fueled intense public and political turmoil across the state. Multiple individuals, including Garg's manager, event organizers, and personal security staff, have been detained for questioning. On Wednesday, five accused were sent to judicial custody in Baksa District Jail,

triggering large-scale protests and clashes between the police and demonstrators outside the facility. According to public sentiment, the government's handling of the case—marked by alleged manipulation, slow investigation, and attempts to shield powerful figures—has severely eroded confidence in administration. Protesters claimed that efforts are being made to suppress the truth behind the singer's mysterious death. Several post-mortem and forensic reports remain under review as various investigative agencies, including the CID, continue their probe. However, justice appears elusive, deepening frustra-

tion among the late artist's fans and the general public. The controversy has grown into a full-blown political crisis, testing the credibility of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's government. Observers say the case has exposed cracks in the justice system and raised serious concerns about administrative transparency in Assam. Zubeen Garg's demise has not only robbed the state of one of its most beloved cultural icons but has also ignited a movement demanding accountability and fairness. As protests intensify, calls for an independent and impartial investigation grow louder.

TN drug inspectors had failed to detect toxic cough syrup production for 14 years

CHENNAI: For 14 years, Sresan Pharmaceutical, the manufacturer of toxic Coldrif cough syrup that has been blamed for the deaths of 17 children in Madhya Pradesh, operated unchecked from a dingy building in Kancheepuram, Tamil Nadu, even as drugs were manufactured in patently unhygienic conditions with no proper facilities and zero adherence to rules. It took the fatalities in MP's Chhindwara district for the Tamil Nadu drug authorities to finally wake up and inspect the manufacturing unit, which held a licence since 2011, and subsequently seal the premises. The inspection, carried out



a day after receiving a letter from MP's drug controller, confirmed 364 critical and major violations at every stage — right from sourcing raw materials to drug making, testing and packing. On October 3, Tamil Nadu's deputy director of drugs control S Gurubarathi, who is the licensing and controlling

authority in the state, directed the pharma firm to halt the manufacture, sale and distribution of drugs, after lab test revealed the Coldrif solution manufactured in the unit contained 48.6% diethylene glycol, an industrial chemical that causes acute renal failure when ingested. Sriperumbudur drug control inspector Manimegalai

issued a show-cause notice to the company on afternoon. The company has been called upon to provide a detailed explanation for the discrepancies in the medicine's quality and labelling. A police team from MP reached Chennai on evening and are likely to visit the facility on Wednesday morning to conduct a detailed probe. A release from the Tamil Nadu directorate of drugs control said despite October 1 and October 2 being public holidays, the inspection of the manufacturing facility was begun just hours after receiving MP's request on October 1. The entire investigation, including inspection, sam-

pling, analysis of the syrup and stopping production, was completed within two days, it added. **What churned out killer syrup: Filthy unit, leaking equipment** Senior drug inspectors P Nithin Kumar in Kancheepuram and R Sasikumar in Tiruvallur inspected the premises and found that the company purchased a non-pharmaceutical grade of propylene glycol, a raw material for manufacture of drugs, but there was no invoice for the purchase. Four other syrups manufactured with propylene glycol as an excipient were found to be safe. The drug inspectors stated

Cough syrup tragedy: Toll hits 17; doctors say toxic

NAGPUR/BHOPAL: Toxic cough syrup Coldrif prescribed to children in MP's Chhindwara snuffed out two more lives on , taking the toll to 17 in 43 days. Jayashu Yaduvanshi and Vedansh Pawar, both aged two and suffering from renal failure, suc-



cumbed during treatment in Nagpur, report Sarfaraz Ahmed and Amarjeet Singh. Both died following severe brain damage inflicted by diethylene glycol. Dr Ashish Lothe GMCH said DEG sticks to brain tissues and is impossible to filter. "Permissible

limit is 0.1%, but DEG was at 48.6%, nearly 500% more," he said. Civic & health officials in Nagpur said 11 children remain critical. A door-to-door survey was launched to trace bottles of Coldrif that were already sold. by the time the ban was

The District Tree Plantation Committee, District Ganga Protection Committee, and District Environment Committee held a meeting under the chairmanship of the District Magistrate

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj

A meeting of the District Tree Plantation Committee, District Ganga Protection Committee, and District Environment Committee was held in the Sangam Auditorium on Wednesday under the chairmanship of District Magistrate Manish Kumar Verma. During the meeting, the District Magistrate directed all departments to take special care of the protection of the trees planned for the year 2025. The District Magistrate directed the concerned departments to select sites in advance, prepare departmental action plans and micro-plans, and submit them to the Forest Department, in view of the upcoming tree plantation campaign in 2026. He also directed them to ensure timely advance soil work. During the review of the Ganga Protection Committee,



he gave clear instructions that special attention should be paid to the cleanliness of the Ganga River to keep it clean. He reviewed the work related to cleaning the Ganga River, tapping drains, and upgrading the environmental plan and issued necessary guidelines. He said that under no circumstances should untreated sewage and polluted water be released into the Ganga River, and that all drains should be cleaned. He directed that necessary action be taken to restore the rivers. During the review of the District Environment Committee, the District

Magistrate directed all concerned officials to provide timely information to the National Green Tribunal (NGT). He also directed them to take necessary action to control the use of single-use plastic, keeping the environment in mind. He also issued guidelines to control air pollution. Additional District Magistrate (Finance and Revenue) Vinita Singh, Divisional Forest Officer (Arvind Yadav), District Development Officer (GP Kushwaha), District Economics and Statistics Officer (Santosh Kumar), and other relevant officials were present on the occasion.

Twelve years of waiting: We are human beings too... Let us find a place to live



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Gazipur. On a freezing cold morning, hundreds of flood victims from Semra Sherpur village, from teary-eyed old men to shivering children, reached the tehsil premises on Wednesday, clutching at the last shred of hope. A leaflet in hand and years of pain in their hearts... each made a single request to Sub-District Magistrate Dr. Harshita Tiwari: "Madam, please give us some land to live on." The suffering of these families is not recorded in stories, but in their torn beds, wet rags, and tired eyes. The floods that began in 2013 have now become a 12-year-long tragedy. Every year, the raging Ganges sweeps away their homes, dreams,

and hard-earned huts. Sometimes erosion, sometimes rising water levels—every time they are forced to leave their home, as if life isn't theirs but merely a temporary stopover. The land that temporarily shelters these families has no electricity, no water, and no safe nights. The children's blue lips in the bitter cold, the elderly's labored breathing, and the women's veils soaked with tears, all tell us that they have come here not just to find land, but to find their very existence. How many times can we say this? Our suffering goes unheard... The children cry from the cold, but to whom can we turn? An old man's broken voice pierced the silence. The families demanded that the

land they have long sheltered be measured and granted a permanent lease, so that stability and dignity can return to their lives. After repeated uprooting, they now have only one desire—a home of their own, a place where next year's floods won't rob them of everything. Hundreds of people, including Santosh Kumar, Prahlad, Shivanarayan, Harishankar, and Hiralal, signed the letter, as if each signature were saying: "No more... Let our generations live on their land with their rights." Their caravan of hope stood in the courtyard of the tehsil today, confident that perhaps this time, a ray of hope would emerge from the closed doors of some office.

Driver's body found in suspicious circumstances in a mini truck Police arrived at the scene upon receiving information



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

The body of a 49-year-old man was found in a vehicle on the highway near Lakhrawa in the Tharwai police station area. He had brought a DCM vehicle to Krishna Dhaba near Lakhrawa last night and had stopped there for the night and slept. On Wednesday morning, the vehicle had not left even after a considerable time had passed. When the Dhaba owner went to the vehicle to remove it, he found the driver had not even woken up. Police arrived at the Dhaba owner's information and found the body in the vehicle's cabin. A mobile phone was also recovered during the search. The deceased was identified as Raju, approximately 48 years old, son of Bani Singh, a resident of village Bhojpur under the Chharras police station in Aligarh district. Inspector Santosh Kumar Pandey, who arrived at the scene, stated that the vehicle was empty and was traveling from Varanasi to Aligarh. The body has been taken into custody and sent for postmortem examination, and the family has been informed of the incident. An investigation is underway, taking cognizance of the matter.

Panchayat secretaries reached the Secretariat by bicycle The tenth consecutive day of the Panchayat secretaries Satyagraha

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Ghazipur. The Satyagraha peaceful protest of the Gram Panchayat secretaries continued for the tenth consecutive day at the call of the provincial leadership of the district's Gram Panchayat Officer-Gram Vikas Officer Coordination Committee. The Gram Panchayat secretaries are conducting a peaceful protest/ Satyagraha to press for their ten-point demands. Giving information about the program, Suryabhanu Rai, District President of the Gram Panchayat Officers' Association, said, "We manage various government schemes. We



neither pay attention to time nor holidays while implementing the schemes, yet despite this, the government is not paying attention to our basic facilities and is continuously neglecting the secretaries." Currently, secretaries are only given a bicycle allowance of ₹200 per month as a vehicle allowance, while secretaries have to travel to the block, tehsil, and district to implement various

schemes. Therefore, we are conducting a peaceful Satyagraha while serving the government and the public. In protest, secretaries across the state are abandoning their personal vehicles and traveling to their Gram Panchayats or development blocks by foot, bicycle, bus, auto, or toto. Baijnath Tiwari, District President of the Village Development Officers' Organization, stated that secretaries are

being tasked with the responsibility of most of the work of other departments, affecting their core departmental work. Therefore, this time, a fight will be fought to the finish. If the government does not heed our demands even after the peaceful Satyagraha, a complete work boycott will be initiated, for which the government and administration will be solely responsible. Today, on the tenth day of the Satyagraha, all secretaries cycled to their development block headquarters and participated in departmental meetings. From there, they traveled to their Gram Panchayats, the SIR Gaushala, and the

Rural Secretariat, where they performed departmental tasks. In the remote development blocks, secretaries travelled in public transport buses or autos in groups. Some secretaries were also seen walking. Seeing the secretaries on bicycles, there was curiosity among the public and various discussions also took place. In this sequence, in development block Bhavarkol, secretaries Hariom Kanaujia, Devag Singh, Pankaj Sisodiya, Brijesh Kumar Shashikant, Mahatab Alam Pintu Saroj travelled collectively in autos. This Satyagraha will continue till 14th December.

Circle Officer Held a Meeting with Staff Appointed to the Mission Shakti Center and Anti-Romeo Team at Aurai Police Station

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Bhadohi. On Wednesday, Chaman Singh Chawda, Circle Officer, Aurai Police Station, held a meeting with all officers and staff assigned to the Mission Shakti Center and Anti-Romeo Team at Aurai Police Station. During the meeting, relevant registers were checked, including information on the functioning of the Women's Help Desk, women's beat officers, women's helpline numbers (1090, 181, 112), and the process for



resolving incoming women's complaints. The Circle Officer directed the concerned officers and staff to implement the schemes related to women's safety, respect, and self-reliance under Mission

Shakti 5.0 more effectively, to treat each female complainant's complaint sensitively, to provide 360-degree counseling to the victimized women, and to resolve their problems on a priority basis.

Awareness Program Organized as Part of the Child Marriage Free India Campaign



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Bhadohi. On Wednesday, an awareness program for a Child Marriage Free India was organized under Mission Shakti 5.0. The Mahila Shakti Kendra provided detailed information on the social and legal implications of child marriage and encouraged children to be aware of their rights.

The program

was conducted by Mrs. Priyanka Gupta and Reshma Bhartiya, who emphasized that no child, whether boy or girl, should be married at an early age. The legal age for marriage is 21 years for boys and 18 years for girls. Child marriage not only affects the future of children but is also a punishable offense. They urged children to immediately report

such cases to the Child Helpline 1098. Early marriage has a serious impact on their education, health, and personal development. They encouraged children to pursue their dreams by obtaining a good education. They also administered the pledge for a child marriage-free India. Anand Maurya and boys and girls from Women Welfare Department were present.

A marital dispute in Kaundhiara escalates, with the victim submitting a complaint to the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP)

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj. A young man from Piprahata in the Kaundhiara area has filed a complaint with the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Yamunanagar, making several serious allegations regarding a marital dispute. The victim, Amit Kumar Tiwari, has accused his wife, in-laws, and some policemen of conspiring to forcibly enter his house, break the lock, take away his belongings, and threaten to kill him. Calling it a deliberate conspiracy, the victim has demanded impartial action. According to the complaint, Amit was married to Priyanka, daughter of Ram Achal Dubey, a resident of Kukudhi village in the area, about two and a half years ago. However, a few days after the wedding, Priyanka left for her parents' home with her father due to a family dispute. Amit alleged that his wife's father, Ram Achal Dubey, abused and threatened his family and forcibly took Priyanka with him. Priyanka subse-

quently filed cases related to dowry, domestic violence, and maintenance at the Kaundhiara police station, which are currently pending in court. The victim also stated in her complaint that on Tuesday evening at around 7:30 p.m., Priyanka, her brother Vivek Dubey, her father Ram Achal Dubey, and other influential individuals arrived at her home and began abusing and threatening her family. Upon receiving the information, the 112 police arrived and took Priyanka and Amit's mother, Manavti, to the police station. It is alleged that the police exerted pressure and forcibly returned Priyanka to her home. According to the victim, the matter escalated further on Wednesday. Priyanka, her father Ram Achal Dubey, Vivek Dubey, Kaushal, and five others arrived at her home again. A police vehicle accompanied them, carrying Sub-Inspector Sachidanand, two constables, and a female Sub-Inspector. Amit alleges that at the police officers' behest, the men began breaking open the

locks of her house. When the villagers tried to protest, they were threatened with imprisonment under false charges. After this, the villagers left the scene in fear. However, one villager filmed the breaking of the lock. The victim says that the attackers broke into the house, forcibly entered, and stole belongings. Since then, his mother, Manavti, has been switched off and is missing from the house. The family fears that she has gone into hiding out of fear or that something untoward has happened to her. The victim also stated that people from Priyanka's side have threatened to kill him over the phone. Amit Tiwari alleged that the entire incident took place under the protection of the Kaundhiara police and that his family could be seriously attacked at any time. He has demanded a high-level investigation by the DCP into the matter and strict action against the accused and the police officers involved. Citing threats to his life, the victim has appealed for a case to be registered and action taken.

Goods worth lakhs stolen in the blink of an eye, Salesman's bag stolen



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Jhansi. At around 4 pm on Wednesday evening, two scooter-riding thieves snatched a salesman's bag at Tiranga Square, a busy Awas Vikas Colony Scheme 3 in the local police station area. This incident has caused panic among the local traders. Vikas Kesarwani, a resident of Atrasuiya, had gone to a cigarette stall to deliver cigarettes. He had placed his bag, containing cigarettes worth approximately 80,000 rupees and 20,000 rupees in cash, on his bike. As Vikas turned to deliver the goods, two scooter-riding criminals, who were lying in wait, snatched the bag and fled towards the police station. The victim immediately informed the police. The entire incident was captured on a CCTV camera installed nearby, the footage of which has been handed over to the police. Police are investigating the matter, but a complaint regarding the theft of lakhs of rupees in a crowded area in broad daylight has been filed with the Jhansi police.

Editorial

Navigating India's choppy geopolitical waters

India appears beset on all sides by disruptive forces. China remains a toxic element. Pakistan, fresh off a turbulent election, is a loose cannon. Small fry like the Maldives are irritants. Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka blow hot and cold. Beyond the neighbourhood, strategic partners like the United States use the deep state, packed with neo-cons, to needle India when New Delhi's autonomous foreign policy rankles beyond a point. Canada hasn't recovered its poise from India evicting 41 Canadian diplomats from the country. First World nations aren't used to such peremptory treatment from the Third World. The second anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine falls on February 24, 2024. Western sanctions haven't worked on Moscow. The rouble has recovered. Defying expectations, Russia's GDP grew 3.6 per cent in 2023. India continues to buy Russian crude, refine it, and sell it back to Europe as diesel. India's economy meanwhile powers on at above 7 per cent a year while Europe's largest economy, Germany, slips into recession. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) projects average global growth in 2024-25 at just over 2 per cent. It projects India's GDP growth at more than thrice the global average. With China caught in a downward economic spiral, President Xi Jinping recently met with the country's top finance authorities to stem China's fall into Japan-like stagflation. Beijing last week sacked Yi Huiman as chairman of China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC). He has been replaced by Wu Qing, a former head of the Shanghai Stock Exchange. The US economy, in contrast, is growing faster than expected at 2.5 per cent a year. Inflation has dipped to 2 per cent. The Federal Reserve is likely to start lowering interest rates from May 2024. Three rate cuts of 0.5 per cent each — from the current level of 5.25 per cent down to 3.75 per cent — are likely in calendar 2024. If that happens, India's already bullish stock market will be on steroids. Foreign funds have few places to invest profitably once the Fed's rate falls to 3.75 per cent. China remains an outcast. In a presidential election year, US politicians, Republicans and Democrats, will vie with one another to be tough with China.

Cutting China Off

Technology sanctions on Beijing are likely to widen. The US-led ban on selling advanced chips to Beijing has already set China's semiconductor industry back by half-a-decade. China has meanwhile shot itself in the foot. It passed draconian criminal laws on foreign companies sharing their data with headquarters outside China. This has caused an exodus of foreign executives from China fearing prosecution and jail terms if they transmit their own corporate data back to Washington or London. With JP Morgan including India in its widely tracked Government Bond Index-Emerging Markets (GBI-EM) from June 2024, over \$20 billion is expected to flow into Indian securities, boosting overall sentiment and integrating Indian financial markets into the global ecosystem. India's stock market capitalisation of \$4.3 trillion overtook Hong Kong's stock market cap last month. It is now the world's fourth largest stock market by capitalisation after the US (\$50.86 trillion), China (\$8.44 trillion) and Japan (\$6.36 trillion). With CIA agents thick on the ground in India, Washington knows exactly what this data means. For America's deep state, dealing with one Asian power — China — is bad enough. Dealing with another rising Asian power — India — which is supposed to be America's strategic partner requires more nuanced policymaking.

No proof

For a country that assassinates targets on foreign soil at will, it takes exceptional hubris for the US to move a New York court over an unproved allegation of a murder-for-hire plot by Indian businessman Nikhil Gupta.



India's temple diplomacy in the UAE



India's temple diplomacy has seen the most astounding diplomatic success overseas under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. There are several examples of his diplomatic skill, but the building of the biggest temple in the UAE is the most outstanding among them. On behalf of the Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS) Hindu temple, Swami Ishwarcharandas, and Swami Brahmaviharidas have invited PM Modi to inaugurate the massive Hindu temple in Abu Dhabi on Basant Panchami on 14 February 2024. The location where the temple stands is exactly called the Abu Mureikha area. The preparation for this temple building and, most importantly, the land allocation began in 2015. The area for its construction constitutes around 5.4 hectares, combining features such as a large amphitheater, a gallery, a library, a food court, a majlis, a garden, a children's play area, and two community halls with an accommodation capacity of nearly 5,000 people. The temple strictly follows the sacred Hindu methods and traditions of temple building. Indian artisans have gone to Abu Dhabi in thousands to make statues and carvings following the Hindu sculptural and architectural traditions. The stonework is most intricate to add an authentic aesthetic taste and visual exceptionalism. This explains the depth of the India-UAE bilateral rela-

tionship and the strength of the Indian diaspora in the UAE. Abu Dhabi is the fourth-largest investor in India and the third-largest trading partner. The 3.5 million Indian diaspora in the UAE is arguably the largest by the standard of an individual country. India's soft power diplomacy has been instrumental in reinvigorating the sense of the Indian diaspora's great pride in Indian heritage, culture, and civilisation and promoting the global resurgence of 'Bharatiya-Indianness' as a dharmic process that believes in universal well-being, mutual respect, and peace.

The 'Ahlam Modi' meaning 'Hello Modi' is scheduled for 13 February at the Sheikh Zayed Sports City Stadium in Abu Dhabi, just a day before the temple's inauguration. It also explains the popularity the Indian Prime Minister enjoys among the Indian diaspora. The zeal and enthusiasm of the diasporic community in

the inauguration of the BAPS Hindu Temple in Abu Dhabi amplified this dharmic and civilisational wave. The spirit of enthusiasm from both sides is reflected through the recent signing of four MoUs in the areas of healthcare, renewable energies, food park, aerospace, port, and other technologies between the Ministry of Investment of Dubai and the Government of India, and between the Government of Gujarat and (Dubai Port) DP World. Apart from the recent ones, the India-UAE bilateralism in export-import, port infrastructure, real estate, agriculture, space technology, defense equipment, herbal medicine, etc., has made remarkable achievements in various areas of engagement. The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) to connect Europe involving India, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel, and Greece is a connectivity project in this direction. It embodies the

potential to revolutionise the import-export architecture between Asia and Europe. It will also decouple singular reliance on the Suez Canal to transport the cargo to the Mediterranean Sea to connect with Europe. In the event of an IMEC corridor, the stress and congestion emanating from the traffic in the Suez Canal linking the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden will be significantly eased. These developments keep India at the center of things, displaying India's diplomatic depth and soft power engagement in the region. No doubt, India is poised to be the Vishwaguru (World teacher), profoundly expanding the transnational knowledge space crisscrossing the territorial spatiality while reinforcing a strong sense of confidence among the Indian diaspora. BAPS Hindu Mandir in Abu Dhabi is a remarkable example of the diasporic rootedness in India's culture and its dedication to developing centers of Sanatan culture and spirituality overseas. Apart from BAPS Hindu Mandir, the UAE also has several Hindu and Buddhist temples and Gurudwara that include Shiva Temple (Dubai), Shree Krishna Haveli (Dubai), Shrinath Temple (Dubai), Shirdi Sai Baba Mandir (Dubai), Geeta Shangha (Sharjah), SMVS Mandir (Dubai), Gurdwara Mata Sahib Kaur ji (Abu Dhabi), Guru Nanak Darbar Gurudwara (Dubai), Mahamevnawa Buddhist Temple (Dubai), Lankaramaya

Buddhist Temple (Dubai), etc. This shows the strength of India-UAE bilateralism. It does not remain confined to commerce alone. It goes to the sphere of culture. On the scheduled inauguration of the BAPS Hindu temple, the Ambassador of the UAE to India, Abdulnasser Alshaali said, "It's going to be a phenomenal monumental day, a special occasion to celebrate tolerance and acceptance, and to further strengthen this relationship." The persistence of confidence and collaborative work has tirelessly contributed to building India's strong presence in West Asia through the UAE and other regional partners, which gives good dividends. The rise of India as a global player, its vibrant diaspora, civilisational value, and ethical gravity have cumulatively worked in its favor to emerge as a bankable partner. Its rich culture, inclusive outlook, youth energy and talent, significant strides in science and technology, art and culture, accommodative and enterprising people, and, more importantly, its ethical and spiritual value and unparalleled antiquity have attracted attention everywhere. The inclusivity that the Sanatana Dharma has shown to the world has generated significant interest across the globe. Bharat is the future and a global guide through virtue and spirituality. Its Yoga and Ayurveda have taught the world the incredible therapeutic dimensions they embody.

How another weak coalition in Islamabad will open a floodgate of issues for India

There is complete fusion among the ranks of analysts, both inside and outside Pakistan. Much-debated television debates and so-called expert commentators predicted that Imran Khan was destined to get a whopping vote and that the rest of the parties were history. As always, reality proved them wrong. What Pakistan is looking ahead to is yet another coalition, which means instability and, surprise, more space for army manoeuvring. Everyone now knows the extent of pre-poll match fixing. Not just Imran Khan and an entire cohort of his party leaders jailed, but the sheer overkill in even charging his wife

Bushra Bibi to seven years in jail, along with a Rs 0.5 million fine each, for "contracting marriage during the 'Iddat' (period of waiting)" of the former first lady. That was the third conviction of the former Prime Minister in a week, and the 'Iddat' case was widely seen as an attempt at character assassination when really nothing else was available. That's the key to Khan's success. No matter how much the army tries, it has not been able to prove personal corruption, other than a case on taking gifts meant for the prime ministerial office at a fraction of their price. That's peanuts in South Asian politics.

The rigging thereafter

Post-poll fixing is not that easy, though there were no shortage of attempts. The most widely discussed case is that of Nawaz Sharif himself, whose win at the Lahore seat (NA-130) and the Mansehra seat are both highly suspicious. In the first, the numbers don't match on Form 47, which the Election Commission of Pakistan issues, and in the latter, a fact check seems to conclude that Nawaz bagged 80,382 votes to PTI's Gushat Khan, who secured 105,249 votes and won the seat. There's more, which this author noticed while watching emerging numbers. In Multan, where PTI leader Shah Mehmood Qureshi's family.

The "White Paper on the Indian Economy", tabled by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Lok Sabha on February 8, 2024, outlines the inheritance of loss and the economic misadventures faced by India due to the policies of the previous UPA government. According to the document, the UPA's tenure from 2004 to 2014 was characterised by economic mismanagement, financial indiscipline, and widespread corruption, which significantly hindered India's growth prospects. The paper claims that these issues relegated India to one of the "fragile five" economies globally, creating hurdles that impeded economic activity and growth. Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered a stark critique of the decade preceding 2014, characterising it as a period that gravely endangered India's economic stability. He also alluded to the White Paper on India's economic conditions, which has since ignited widespread discussions. PM's remarks were not just reflections but a scathing indictment of the previous administration's governance, which, according to him, was marked by egregious financial mismanagement, riddled with scams, and paralysed by indecisive policymaking. This eroded

investor confidence but also brought the nation perilously close to a precipice of distrust and despair. There are four areas in which the current administration has worked to deal with the fiscal misadventures between 2004-14. First one of this is the practice of "phone banking" was identified as a contributing factor to the Non-Performing Assets (NPA) crisis in India during the NPA era. This term refers to the alleged influence exerted by politicians over banking decisions, where it is claimed that phone calls from influential figures could sway lending decisions of public sector banks. This led to the approval of loans for certain businesses without proper due diligence, contributing to the accumulation of NPAs within the banking system.

Under the NDA government led by PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Gross NPA ratio in public sector banks was reduced from 16.0% to 7.8%, but during the UPA era, it escalated to 12.3% by 2013, partly due to political meddling in bank lending decisions. The crisis deepened by 2014 with the banking sector grappling with a substantial increase in bad loans, much of which were not recognized in official accounts. A Credit Suisse report from

March 2014 highlighted that top companies with poor interest coverage ratios contributed significantly to the unrecognised NPAs, suggesting a systemic underestimation of the banking sector's distress during this period. This period saw a massive escalation in gross advances by public sector banks from Rs 6.6 lakh crore in 2004 to Rs 39.0 lakh crore by 2012, with a large portion of loans turning problematic, particularly those originated between 2006 and 2008, as noted by a former RBI Governor in a 2018 parliamentary panel response. The Modi government addressed the NPA crisis through a strategic approach termed the '4R' strategy, encompassing recognition, resolution, recapitalization, and reforms. This strategy led to a significant reduction in bad loans, with public sector banks (PSBs) witnessing a decline of Rs 89,189 crore in their gross non-performing assets (GNPAs) during the financial year 2018-19. The efforts were part of a comprehensive plan to clean up the banking system, which included the implementation of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) and the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, among other measures.

Russia-Ukraine war: How Zelenskyy's sacking of his General shows brewing conflict in the Kyiv regime

The Ukrainian forces under General Zaluzhnyi had contained the initial Russian onslaught. Image courtesy: Reuters On 8 February, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announced that he was removing General Valerii Zaluzhnyi from command of the military and promoting General Oleksandr Syrskiy, the Commander of the Ukrainian Ground Forces, to replace him. "I thanked him for two years of defence of Ukraine," President Zelenskyy said on social media, adding: "We also discussed who could be in the renewed

leadership of the Armed Forces of Ukraine." General Zaluzhnyi had gained enormous credit for spearheading the successful effort by Ukraine's forces to halt and then reverse Russia's initial attack launched on 24 February 2022. He was appointed Commander-in-Chief in July 2021, just half a year before Russia launched its all-out invasion. The Armed Forces of Ukraine, under his leadership, had succeeded in pushing back initial Russian advances near the capital, Kyiv, and then led successful counteroffensives later in 2022,

freeing parts of eastern and southern Ukraine. Both General Zaluzhnyi and General Syrskiy played key roles in those campaigns. The dismissal ended weeks of speculation about the fate of General Valery Zaluzhnyi, whose relationship with President Zelenskyy had deteriorated, and there were strong rumours regarding his exit.

Brewing friction

The Ukrainian forces under General Zaluzhnyi had contained the initial Russian onslaught. That was a great achievement, because almost

everybody expected the Russian forces to steamroll their way across the plains of Ukraine. But lately, his record has been tarnished by the failure of last year's counteroffensive, which ran into well-prepared Russian defences. Last year's highly anticipated Ukrainian counteroffensive, using soldiers trained by NATO allies and Western weapons and equipment, reclaimed little territory, falling far short of expectations. General Zaluzhnyi and his American counterparts disagreed sharply over tactics.

The 'Electricity Bill Relief Scheme' echoes across the state, lakhs of consumers are being benefited

Lucknow

Energy and Urban Development Minister A. K. Sharma is continuously active in ensuring the effective implementation of public welfare schemes being run in the state. He is constantly touring various districts and by reaching the camps organized under the 'Electricity Bill Resolution/Relief Scheme', is encouraging people to avail the benefits of the scheme and is also directly interacting with the general public to ensure the resolution of their problems. This scheme, implemented in the interest of electricity consumers in Uttar Pradesh, is proving to be extremely successful. So far, several lakh consumers have availed its benefits, making it possible to resolve electricity bill cases pending for many years. In this sequence, the camps organized in the remote areas of Fatehpur Mandav and Parashurampur villages of Mau district were inspected.



Thereafter, the camps of the 'Electricity Bill Relief Scheme' set up at Sipah Ibrahimpurabad and 33/11 KV Electricity Substation Madhuban Raju in the Madhuban area, as well as at 33/11 KV Electricity Substation Badgaon and Tadiyav, Mau, were also inspected. A great enthusiasm was seen among the consumers at all places and a large number of people were seen getting themselves registered at every camp. This scheme is extremely attractive for consumers. In the first phase of the scheme, a special rebate of 25 percent on the principal amount is being provided. Consumers have been appealed to definitely avail the benefit of this scheme

in the first phase itself. For registration under the scheme, consumers can get themselves registered at any billing counter of the department, the concerned SDO or XEN office or through the website uppcl.org. In addition, at the camp organized at Shekhpur Maharajanji in Ghazipur district, even after 7:00 PM yesterday evening, hundreds of consumers were present and they completed the process of getting relief from old electricity bills by getting themselves registered. All consumers have once again been urged to take maximum advantage of this welfare scheme and, in time, get themselves registered to obtain relief from old outstanding electricity bills.

Women Renaissance in Sarojini Nagar-Dr. Rajeshwar Singh Empowerment Campaign

Lucknow

With the sentiment "Empowered Women - Empowered India", Sarojini Nagar MLA Dr. Rajeshwar Singh issued a powerful message on the social media platform X on Wednesday. In his message, Dr. Singh said that when women progress, India rises. According to the World Bank, if women in India enter the workforce at the same rate as men, India GDP could increase by 27%. Yet today, only 41% of women are active in the workforce (PLFS 2023). "The awakening of Matrushakti is the greatest engine of India's progress." -Dr. Rajeshwar Singh. Self-Reliant Women- Self-Reliant India. According to an ILO report, when a woman earns, spending on family education increases by up to 90%. Dr. Rajeshwar Singh emphasized that working mothers not only support their families but also build the nation's social capital. "When a mother earns, her children dream take flight." -Dr. Rajeshwar Singh. Sarojini Nagar- A National Example of Women Empowerment. Under the leadership of Dr. Rajeshwar Singh, Sarojini Nagar has transformed the women self-reliance model into a mass movement: At 160 Tarashakti Centres, thousands of women are becoming self-reliant through stitching, embroidery, designing and micro-entrepreneurship. In 14



RBS Digital Empowerment Centres, girls are learning AI, Coding and English Communication. The Sarojini Nagar Sports League with the 8 championship has sparked a new wave of confidence among young women. "This is not just development; it is a social renaissance." -Dr. Rajeshwar Singh. Education, Skills and Sports- The Three Wings of Matrushakti. Dr. Singh said that government initiatives have provided new direction and opportunities to girls: Scholarships and cycle distribution have enabled lakhs of girls to reach schools. In Sarojini Nagar, more than 700 meritorious girls have been provided laptops and bicycles, sending a strong message that "hard work is honour." Digital & AI Empowerment - Daughters Building a New India. At the RBS Digital Empowerment Centres, girls are now learning Python, AI and Data Analytics. Under the "Digital Sarojini Nagar" model, more than 14 digital libraries serve over 500 children every day. "If our daughters

become digital leaders in the age of AI, India will lead the world." -Dr. Rajeshwar Singh. From Data to Evidence- India Wave of Transformation. Female labour participation rate: 23.3% (2017) ? 41.7% (2023). Rural female participation: 24.6% ? 47.6%. Women in self-employment: 51.9% 67.4%. These figures show that women are no longer confined by boundaries- they are rewriting history. From Every Panchayat to Every Institution- Commitment to Equal Participation. Dr. Singh said, "This is the time to move from 'permission' to 'participation'. Equal representation of women in every panchayat, office and institution is the true meaning of Atmanirbhar Bharat, Viksit Bharat and Digital Bharat." Towards the Future The Role of Women in Viksit Bharat 2047. India has the world's youngest population. If every daughter receives opportunities in education, employment and entrepreneurship, India can become not only Viksit Bharat, but also Vishva Guru Bharat by 2047. "When half the population shoulders half the responsibility, India achieves its full flight." -Dr. Rajeshwar Singh. Conclusion: Sarojini Nagar today sends out a powerful message, "When women work, families rise and when millions of women work, India stands tall before the world."

Nature Welfare Council: A strong step towards nature conservation

Mathura

An important meeting was held at the Nature Welfare Council central office in Delhi (Okhla) under the guidance of Chairman Rahul Dwivedi and Vice Chairman Udayan Kulshrestha. During the meeting, it was clarified that "only if nature survives, life will survive" - with this core motto, the Council is continuously breaking new ground through various schemes and campaigns. Key Points: The meeting included a detailed review of the Council initiatives across India on the five key elements of nature conservation: earth, water, air, fire and forest. Furthermore, activists were informed of their responsibilities according to their capacities and provided guidelines for playing an active role in upcoming campaigns. Council Center Directors Sudhir Sharma and Ramkumar Sharma were present.



"Happy Farmers" Become the Pride of Uttar Pradesh

Muzaffarnagar: Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has brought prosperity to the lives of the farmers who feed the state. Farmers are no longer committing suicide, instead, they are leading a happy life, contributing to the progress of their families and the prosperity of Uttar Pradesh. Farmers are receiving fair prices for their crops, benefiting from the Kisan Samman Nidhi, the PM Kusum Yojana and the MSP. Every district is equally provided with electricity, roads and water. This is making farming easier and transporting their crops to the market. These views were expressed by more than 500 farmers present at the Krishi Chaupal held in Yahapur village on Wednesday. They all noted the positive changes in the lives of farmers due to the government's positive initiatives over the past eight and a half years. Developed Agriculture Resolution Campaign Proves Effective, Government Directly Communicates with Farmers. Through the Developed Agriculture Resolution Campaign, the Chief Minister, Central and State government ministers and public representatives interacted.

The Yogi government is accelerating the "Polytechnic Chalo Abhiyan-2026" nationwide

Lucknow

The Yogi government is emphasizing the widespread implementation of this campaign at the state level, aiming to make technical education industry-oriented and directly connect youth with employment. In this regard, a meeting was held in Lucknow under the chairmanship of Additional Chief Secretary, Technical Education, Narendra Bhushan, regarding the successful implementation of the "Polytechnic Chalo Abhiyan-2026." It was decided at the meeting that the presentation prepared by the Joint Entrance Examination Board would be widely disseminated in all districts of the state to attract more students to technical education.



Special emphasis was placed on increasing the use of digital media, especially audio-visual promotional materials. The Additional Chief Secretary directed officials to make the Polytechnic Chalo Abhiyan-2026 a success by making candidates aware of industry-oriented

diploma courses. A decision was also taken to introduce new courses in line with the changing industrial environment and market demands, so that students can acquire modern technical skills and find employment opportunities upon completing the course. According to data

presented at the meeting, in the year 2024, 412,759 candidates applied online and 115,444 students received admission, while in the year 2025, 425,993 applications were received and 134,628 students received admission. Senior officials of the Technical Education Department, including Director General of Technical Education Selva Kumari J, Special Secretary Vinod Kumar, Director of Technical Education Aziz Ahmed, Director of Research, Development and Training Institute F.R. Khan, Secretary of the Technical Education Council Santosh Kumar, and Sanjeev Kumar Singh of the Joint Entrance Examination Council were present at the meeting.

Mathura Police honored for their commendable work

Mathura

Successfully uncovering a theft incident in the Highway Police Station area, Chief Constable Akhil Pratap Singh, Chief Constable Harijendra Singh, Constable Ashutosh and Constable Yogesh Kumar arrested the accused and recovered the stolen goods. This prompt and commendable work by the team has once again proven the efficiency of the police. In the same sequence, Sub-Inspector Arvind Singh and Sub-Inspector



Suresh Chandra of Refinery Police Station achieved a significant achievement by arrest-

ing the accused involved in the silver robbery. For demonstrating excellent and committed policing in both these cases, the Senior Superintendent of Police, Mathura, honored the concerned officers/employees with commendation certificates. The Mathura District Police is continuously committed to effectively controlling crime, promptly uncovering crimes and strengthening the sense of security among the public.

Uttar Pradesh receives another major gift in the field of energy production

Lucknow

The commercial operation of the third unit of the 1000 MW Tehri Pump Storage Plant, the country's first variable-speed pump storage project, was formally inaugurated today in the virtual presence of Union Power and Housing Minister Manohar Lal Khattar and Uttar Pradesh Government Energy Minister A.K. Sharma. On this occasion, Uttar Pradesh has gained a new capability in the energy sector, which will contribute to the state's development and provide affordable and quality electricity to consumers. The Tehri PSP is the country's first pump storage project with variable-speed technology, which will store excess power during off-peak hours and provide peaking power of up to 1000 MW to the grid. The first two of the project's four units are already successful.



fully generating commercial power, while the operation of the third unit further strengthens the project's capacity. Variable-speed PSP technology will enable real-time storage and release of energy according to power demand. This will further strengthen load management on the national grid and enable seamless integration of renewable energy into the grid. Energy Minister A.K. Sharma congratulated the people of Uttar Pradesh on this significant achievement, stating that this occasion is a matter of pride for the entire country. He stated that under the leadership of the Prime Minister India

is rapidly progressing towards energy self-sufficiency and the Tehri project is a prime example of this. Sharma stated that Uttar Pradesh will receive 25 percent of the electricity generated from the third unit, which will significantly help meet the state's energy needs. He expressed his gratitude to Union Energy Minister Manohar Lal Khattar and expressed hope that the fourth unit of the project will also be inaugurated in the coming months. Sharma stated that if any assistance is required from the Uttar Pradesh government, the state will be fully prepared. Union Minister of State for Energy Shripad Naik, Additional Chief Secretary (Energy) of Uttar Pradesh Narendra Bhushan, Secretary, Ministry of Power, Government of India Pankaj Agarwal and several senior officials joined the event virtually.

Strict action will be taken if child labor is employed- Chief Development Officer.

Mathura

On the instructions of the District Magistrate Mathura, a meeting of the District Committee for the Elimination of Child Labor and the District Transport Child Labor and Bonded Labor Vigilance Committee was held in the Collectorate auditorium, chaired by Chief Development Officer Manish Meena. Assistant Labor Commissioner M.L. Pal welcomed all participants and provided detailed information regarding the Child and Adolescent Labor Act, 1986, as amended in 2016. He stated that children under the age of 14 cannot be employed in any employment. Employing children under the age of 14 carries a fine of 20,000 rupees or imprisonment of 6 months to



2 years or both. He also stated that on government instructions, the District Magistrate has formed a team and, as part of a special campaign running from December 1st to 15th, has been directed to remove child laborers from work in the district and rehabilitate them. During the campaign period, 19 child laborers were removed from work in 16 establishments in the district and action is being taken against the employers. The Chief Development Officer

directed the District Basic Education Officer to cover the identified child laborers under various government welfare schemes and integrate them into mainstream education. He also stated that as many child laborers as possible should be identified during the campaign period and their economic and educational rehabilitation should be ensured. In accordance with the government's intention, all possible measures should be taken to free the district from child labor by 2027.

The annual inspection of Raya Police Station in Mathura district was conducted

Mathura

Additional Superintendent of Police (Rural Mathura) Suresh Chandra Rawat conducted the annual inspection of Raya Police Station. The inspection commenced formally with a police guard of honor. The Additional Superintendent of Police visited the police station premises and directed them to improve cleanliness. He directed them to ensure the painting of the police barracks and residential buildings, to complete the process for the prompt auction of approximately 150 two-wheelers parked on the premises and to systematically organize the vehicles. Instructions were also given to submit a reasonable proposal for the repair of the dining hall and kitchen located in the police station premises. During the inspection, the adequacy and functionality of the weapons and ammunition on hand were checked. Instructions were also given to keep all records updated and updated. In a seminar with village heads, prominent individuals, village watchmen and police pensioners in the police station area, they were provided detailed information about the usefulness and functionality of helplines 112, 1930, 1090 and 181. Awareness was also created to promptly report incidents of cyber fraud. The Additional Superintendent of Police directed all sub-inspectors to motivate the public to install CCTV cameras at four public places and at least 20 houses in each Gram Sabha. The Mission Shakti Center, beat book, and the work of the sub-inspectors were also reviewed. Circle Officer Mahavan Sanjeev Kumar Rai, Station Incharge Ravi Bhushan and the police team were present during the inspection.



Briefs

Autistic artist wins ₹29 cr Turner Prize



Nnena Kalu's bold, hanging sculpture gained international acclaim overnight as she won the Turner Prize 2025, UK's top contemporary art award. The artist has a learning disability and limited verbal communication. Shooting to fame after the award, she became the first neuro-divergent or learning-disabled artist to win £25,000 (₹29 crore) at the ceremony in Bradford on Dec 9. Born in Glasgow in 1966 to Nigerian parents, Nnena Kalu was raised in London under supportive care. In her early years, she began her practice at the Hill House day centre.

Nepal airport graft: Dozens charged

Former Nepali ministers, officials and a Chinese company were charged with corruption over financial irregularities during the construction of an international airport. The Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority filed cases against 55 people and the China CAMC Engineering, accusing them of inflating construction expenses by more than \$74 million.

Gunmen kill 3 Revolutionary Guards of Iran

Gunmen killed 3 members of the Revolutionary Guard in Iran's Sistan and Baluchistan near the Pakistan border, media reported. The Guard members were ambushed while patrolling near the city of Lar in a mountainous area 1,125 kms southeast of Tehran.

Student killed in US school stabbing

A student was killed and another injured in a stabbing following a fight at a high school in the US state of North Carolina, police said. Forsyth County Sheriff Bobby Kimbrough told a news conference there had been a "loss of life" after an "altercation" between two students at North Forsyth High School.

British Indian nurse jailed for rape

A 47-year-old nurse from Kerala has been sentenced to 7 years and 9 months' jail after pleading guilty to rape and sexual assault offences at a care home in Scotland. Najjil Paul admitted to raping a vulnerable colleague and sexually assaulting two women while he was the manager of a care home in North Lanarkshire 7 years ago. He was charged with the offences in 2018 and fled to Kochi before his trial in Dec 2019. In Oct 2025, Paul pleaded guilty after his extradition from India and was sentenced in Glasgow High Court on Monday.

'Epstein case records can be released'

A federal judge in New York has ruled the US Department of Justice can publicly release grand jury records from Jeffrey Epstein's 2019 sex trafficking case. US District Judge Richard Berman's ruling reverses his previous decision to keep the material sealed. He cited a new law passed by Congress requiring the justice dept to release files about Epstein by the end of next week.

PENNSYLVANIA RALLY | Why can't US have people from Norway, Sweden: Prez

'Filthy, dirty, disgusting'

Trump's racist tirade against African migrants

WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump has admitted he used the slur "shithole countries" to disparage Haiti and African nations during a 2018 meeting with lawmakers, bragging about a comment that sparked global outrage during his first term.

Back then, Trump had denied making the contemptuous statement during a closed-door meeting, but on Tuesday, he showed little compunction reliving it during a rally in Pennsylvania. He went on to further disparage Somalia as "filthy, dirty, disgusting, ridden with crime."

Trump was boasting in his speech he had last week "announced a permanent pause on Third World migration, including from hellholes like Afghanistan, Haiti, Somalia and many other countries," when someone in the crowd yelled out the 2018 remark.

That prompted him to recall the 2018 incident. His telling hewed closely to the description offered at the time by people who were briefed on the Oval Office meeting.

"We had a meeting and I said, Why is it we only take people from shithole countries,' right? Why can't we have some people from Norway, Sweden?" Trump told rallygoers. "But we always take people from Somalia," he continued. "Places that are a disaster. Filthy, dirty, disgust-



A US judge blocked deployment of National Guards in Los Angeles

ing, ridden with crime."

Further, he described Democrat Ilhan Omar, a Minnesota representative who migrated to the US from Somalia as a refugee, as "garbage." "Ilhan Omar, whatever the hell her name is. With her little turban. I love her. She comes in, does nothing but bitch. She's always complaining," he said.

PRESIDENT LAUDS TARIFF STRATEGY

Earlier, Trump began his address on affordability by underscoring his tariff strategy, arguing it has delivered significant economic benefits

Ended India-Pakistan war, Don claims again

New York/Pennsylvania: US President Trump said India and Pakistan "were going at it" and he ended the conflict between the two nuclear-armed neighbours, repeating the claim once again. Trump has so far repeated the claim nearly 70 times that he stopped the conflict in May between India and Pakistan. "In 10 months, I ended eight wars, including Kosovo (and) Serbia, Pakistan and India, they were going at it. Israel and Iran, Egypt and Ethiopia..

Armenia and Azerbaijan," Trump said on Tuesday in remarks to his supporters at a rally on the economy in Mount Pocono, Pennsylvania. India has consistently denied any third-party intervention in resolving the conflict.

Meanwhile, Trump said Cambodia and Thailand have started fighting again and "tomorrow," he will make a phone call to those countries. "Who else could say I'm going to make a phone call and stop a war of two very powerful countries, Thailand and Cambodia. They are going at it. But I'll do it. So we're making peace through strength. That's what we're doing," Trump said.

70TH TIME

to Pennsylvania. Trump highlighted the scale of revenue he believes tariffs have generated, saying, "We've taken in hundreds of billions of dollars, really trillions."

He claimed the policy had encouraged major investment in states, adding, "If you add to that all of the companies that are pouring their money into building plants in Pennsylvania and many other states. Auto plants, AI plants, plants of every type, which we would have never had if we didn't put the tariffs on. Over the next two years, a miracle will take place."

TRUMP: BIRTHRIGHT CITIZENSHIP WAS FOR BABIES OF SLAVES

Trump has said birthright citizenship was primarily intended for the babies of slaves and not a way for "rich" immigrants to make their "whole family US citizens". The remarks came days after the Supreme Court agreed to review the long-simmering controversy over birthright citizenship. Talking to news outlet Politico, he defended his executive order against birthright citizenship and said it would be "devastating" if his administration loses the case.



POTUS heaps praise on press secy Leavitt

'That beautiful face, lips like machine gun'

The president heaped effusive praise on his White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt's "beautiful face" and "lips" during the speech that was meant to tout his economic agenda. "We even brought our superstar today, Karoline. Isn't she great? Is Karoline great?" he asked a cheering crowd. The 79-year-old Republican leader lauded the physical appearance and confidence of Leavitt, 28. "You know, when she goes on TV, Fox, like, I mean, they dominate, they dominate. When she gets up there with that beautiful face and those lips that don't stop-op-op-op, like a little machine gun," Trump said.

America could ask foreign tourists for five-year social media history before entry

China tensions cast shadow as Senate grills US trade chief

WASHINGTON

China loomed over a contentious Senate hearing as US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer defended the administration's high-tariff strategy, its negotiations with Beijing, and controversial decisions affecting critical technologies and rare-earth supply chains.

Pressed repeatedly by lawmakers, Greer insisted that the administration was maintaining leverage over Beijing while securing stable flows of strategic materials. "China has not always been a reliable partner to say the least," he said, adding, "China this year has controlled rare earths and threatened to do so. This is unacceptable."

Greer told the panel the US had conditioned discussions with China on "the way of tariffs", stressing the administration was keeping pressure on Beijing even as it negotiated new purchase agreements. "Right now, the rare earths are continuing to flow. The Chinese have resumed their purchases of soybeans and

sorghum, and we continue to maintain leverage on the Chinese," he said in response to a question.

About the administration's decision to lift restrictions on AI-related "diffusion rules" and allow exports of high-end chips to certain countries amid concerns the technology could reach China, Greer said: "The AI diffusion rule was withdrawn for the world, we're just relying on the country groups that are already established."

CANADA'S ENVOY TO US TO QUIT AHEAD OF FREE TRADE PACT REVIEW

Canada's ambassador to the US for the last six years said she is resigning next year as the two major trading partners plan to review the free trade agreement. Ambassador Kirsten Hillman said in a letter it is the right time to put in place someone who will oversee talks about the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement up for review in 2026. Canadian PM Mark Carney said Hillman "prepared the foundations for Canada in the upcoming review" of the pact.

US govt notifies \$686m F-16 upgrade for Pak

The Trump administration has notified Congress of a proposed \$686 million sale to upgrade Pakistan's F-16 fighter aircraft, a move expected to draw scrutiny from lawmakers and attention in India as the package enters a mandatory 30-day review period. The US also announced a significant investment to boost mining activity in Balochistan, with the US Export-Import Bank (EXIM) approving \$1.25 billion in financing to support the development of the Reko Diq critical minerals project.

19 die as Morocco buildings collapse

FES

Two four-storey buildings collapsed overnight in the Moroccan city of Fes, killing 19 people in the second fatal collapse there this year, authorities said on Wednesday.

Morocco's state news agency reported the two residential buildings housed eight families. Sixteen people were injured and sent for treatment at a hospital. Authorities said the neighbourhood had been evacuated and search and res-

cue efforts were ongoing.

It was unclear what caused the collapse or how many people were unaccounted for on Wednesday morning.

Fes is Morocco's second-largest city and one of the hosts of this month's Africa Cup of Nations and the 2030 FIFA World Cup. It is best known for its walled city packed with medieval souks and tanneries. But beyond tourism, it's also one of the country's poorest urban centres, where aging infrastructure is common in many neighbourhoods.



12 killed in China blaze

BEIJING

A fire that broke out in a residential building in southern China killed 12 people, media reported on Wednesday.

The blaze at the four-storey building in Shantou, Guangdong, erupted at 9:20 pm on Tuesday, and was extinguished just after 10pm, the fire department said.

It comes after a huge blaze last month engulfed several high-rise residential towers in Hong Kong, neighbouring Guangdong, killing 160 people.

Polls in months if security ensured: Zelenskyy

Kyiv: Ukrainian officials were expected to hand their latest peace proposals to US negotiators on Wednesday, according to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who said Ukraine would be ready for elections within 3 months if partners can guarantee a safe vote during wartime and if its electoral law can be altered.

Zelenskyy was responding to comments by US President Donald Trump in which he questioned Ukraine's democracy and suggested the Ukrainian leader was using the war as an excuse not to hold an election. He said he was "ready" for an election but would need help from the

US and possibly Europe to ensure security for a vote to happen. Ukraine could be ready to hold balloting in 60 to 90 days if that proviso is met.

"To hold elections, two issues must be addressed: primarily, security — how to conduct them, how to do it under strikes, under missile attacks; and a question regarding our military — how they would vote," Zelenskyy said.

AMERICA, RUSSIA SEEK CLOSER RELATIONSHIP

A new US national security strategy released last Friday made it clear President

Trump wants to improve America's relationship with Moscow and "reestablish strategic stability with Russia". The document also portrays European allies as weak.

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on Wednesday praised Trump's role in the Ukraine peace effort, saying in a speech at the Federation Council, the upper house of Russia's Parliament, that Moscow appreciates his "commitment to dialogue."

Trump, Lavrov said, is "the only Western leader" who shows "an understanding of the reasons that made war in Ukraine inevitable."



RUSSIAN BOMBERS JOIN CHINESE AIR PATROL

Japan has scrambled jets to monitor Russian and Chinese air forces conducting joint patrols, the Japanese Defence Ministry said, amid rising tensions between Tokyo and Beijing, Reuters reports.

Two Russian Tu-95 nuclear-capable bombers flew from Sea of Japan toward East China Sea to rendezvous with two Chinese H-6 bombers, and performed a "long-distance joint flight" in the Pacific. Four Chinese J-16 fighters joined the bombers as they made a trip flight between Japan's Okinawa and Miyako islands.

Renewed Thailand-Cambodia fighting displaces thousands

Surin: Renewed border fighting between Thailand and Cambodia showed no signs of abating on Wednesday, leaving hundreds of thousands of displaced people in both countries living in strained conditions as more flooded into temporary shelters. About 400,000 people have been evacuated from affected areas in Thailand, and 700 schools closed while fighting was ongoing in four border provinces, Thai military spokesperson Rear Adm. Surasant Kongsiri said. Cambodia evacuated over 127,000 villagers, and hundreds of schools closed. —AP

2 advisers of B'desh interim govt resign

DHAKA

Two student leaders-turned-advisers of the interim government in Bangladesh tendered their resignations on Wednesday ahead of the Election Commission's announcement of the schedule for the polls in February.

The resignation by Mahfuj Alam and Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuiyain comes in wake of the Election Commission's (EC) decision that no adviser can contest the polls while holding a position in the interim government.

"Alam and Bhuiyain have stepped down from their posts as advisers in the interim government led by Muhammad Yunus," reported Prothom Alo newspaper, quoting sources in the chief adviser's office.

Both Alam and Bhuiyain --

who were heading the ministries of information & broadcasting and local government respectively -- were inducted as representatives of Students Against Discrimination (SAD), the organisation which led a violent street movement that toppled former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's government on August 5, 2024.

'WILL CONTINUE EFFORTS TO BRING BACK HASINA FROM INDIA'

Bangladesh's interim government said it will continue diplomatic efforts to bring back from India deposed PM Sheikh Hasina, who has been convicted and sentenced in multiple cases.

"We will try to convince India to send her back to Dhaka," Foreign Adviser Md Touhid Hossain was quoted as saying by the state-run BSS news agency.



Machado's daughter accepts Nobel

OSLO

Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado's daughter accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on her mother's behalf on Wednesday, hours after officials said Machado would miss the ceremony.

Machado has been in hiding and has not been seen in public since January 9, when she was briefly detained after joining supporters in a protest in Caracas, Venezuela's capital. Jorgen Watne Frydnes, chair of the Norwegian Nobel committee, told the award ceremony that "Maria Corina Machado has done everything in her power to be able to attend the ceremony here today - a journey in a situation of extreme danger."

"Although she will not be able to reach today's events, we are profoundly happy to confirm that she is safe, and that she will be with us here in Oslo," he said to applause.

US jets tracked circling Gulf of Venezuela as tensions mount

Two US fighter jets were tracked circling the Gulf of Venezuela on Tuesday as tensions continue to escalate between the two countries.

The F/A-18 Super Hornets appeared on flight tracking sites near Maracaibo, Venezuela's second-largest city, at 17:00 GMT, before circling the gulf for 40 mins.

Social media ban for children under 16 kicks off in Australia

MELBOURNE

Australian PM Anthony Albanese welcomed a world's first social media ban for kids younger than 16 that took effect on Wednesday as families taking back power from tech giants but warned the implementation would be difficult.

Parents reported distraught children discovering

they'd been shut out of platforms as the landmark law took effect. Some kids reported fooling the platforms' age estimation technology by drawing on facial hair. Parents and siblings are expected to help kids circumvent the restrictions.

"This is the day when Australian families are taking back power from these big tech firms and they're assert-

ing the right of kids to be kids and for parents to have greater peace of mind," Albanese told the ABC.

"This reform will change lives. For Australian kids, allowing them to have their childhood. For parents, enabling them to have greater peace of mind. But also for the global community, looking at Australia and saying: if Australia can do it, why can't we?"

Author Sophie Kinsella dies

Sophie Kinsella, author of the bestselling Shopaholic series of novels, has died at age 55, her family have announced.

The writer, whose real name is Madeleine Sophie Wickham, was diagnosed with an aggressive form of brain cancer in 2022.



media probe

Sperm donor with cancer-causing gene sired 200 kids

A sperm donor who unknowingly harboured a genetic mutation that dramatically raises the risk of cancer has fathered at least 197 children across Europe, a major investigation has revealed. Some children have already died and only a minority who inherit the mutation will escape cancer in their lifetimes.

The sperm was not sold to UK clinics, but the BBC can confirm a "very small" number of British families, who have been informed, used the donor's sperm while having

fertility treatment in Denmark.

Denmark's European Sperm Bank, which sold the sperm, said families affected had their "deepest sympathy" and admitted the sperm was used to make too many babies in some countries.

The investigation has been conducted by 14 public service broadcasters, including the BBC, as part of the European Broadcasting Union's Investigative Journalism Network.

The sperm came from an anonymous man who was paid to donate as a student,

starting in 2005. His sperm was then used by women for around 17 years. He is healthy and passed the donor screening checks. However, the DNA in some of his cells mutated before he was born.

It damaged the TP53 gene — which has the crucial role of preventing the body's cells turning cancerous. Most of the donor's body does not contain the dangerous form of TP53, but up to 20% of his sperm do.

However, any children made from affected sperm will have the mutation in every cell of their body.

This is known as Li Fraumeni syndrome and comes with an up to 90% chance of developing cancer, particularly during childhood as well as breast cancer later in life. "It is a dreadful diagnosis," Prof Clare Turnbull, a cancer geneticist at the Institute of Cancer Research in London, told the BBC. "It's a very challenging diagnosis to land on a family, there is a lifelong burden of living with that risk, it's clearly devastating."

MRI scans of the body and the brain are needed every year, as well as abdominal



ultrasounds, to try to spot tumours. Women often choose

to have their breasts removed to lower their risk of cancer.

'I'm on the other side of my sacrifice'

Priyanka Chopra Jonas reflects on early career hustle, major sacrifices and now having the privilege to be selective with work at Abu Dhabi summit

At the BRIDGE Summit in Abu Dhabi, Priyanka Chopra Jonas spoke openly about her early career, describing a period marked by constant work, personal sacrifice and a drive to take every opportunity that came her way.

Priyanka said that she did not start her career with the ability to be selective. "When I first started working, I was not selective at all. Whatever work I would get, I would do because it's a privilege to just get work... I would say yes to everything. I was really greedy in my 20s. I wanted to work every day," she said.

Reflecting on how that phase shaped her current life, she quoted Beyoncé: "Now Beyoncé said this, and I'm going to quote her. I feel like I'm on



the other side of my sacrifice." Priyanka noted that her early years came with significant personal costs. "I worked really hard. I missed birthdays. I missed when my father was in the hospital... I missed Christmases, I missed Diwali. I missed time with my family... That time, I needed to work that hard."

She added that those sacrifices made it possible for her to have more control over her schedule today. "And that 20-year-old me needed to make those sacrifices for this woman to have the life that I have now."

Priyanka also pointed out that being able to slow down is itself a privilege. "I do think it's a luxury... sometimes you've got to hustle. There's no other way around it... having a work ethic, having discipline, and going after it will get you to a point where you can pull back."

Looking back, she expressed gratitude for her younger self.

"Now I can choose when I want to say yes, but I couldn't have done that if she hadn't worked so hard. So I thank her a lot sometimes. Thank your younger self," she said.



Gaurav Khanna reveals personal side

BB 19 winner Gaurav Khanna opens up about personal life, wife Akansha and views on marriage and children

'GK'ya karega?' This is what everyone has been asking in the *Bigg Boss* 19 house. Anupama star Gaurav Khanna not only won the show but also *Bigg Boss* Season 19's title. "Maine trophy ke sath sath logon ke dilon me bhi jagah banayi hai (sic)," said Gaurav.

While having a candid chat with the *Bigg Boss* 19 winner addressed the personal question that he was asked during the media round. In case you don't know, a media person said to Gaurav, 'Aapki wife ko kids nahi

chahiye, wo bhot calculative move than sympathy card khelne ka (sic)."

Replied, to what was going on in his mind when the question was asked, Gaurav said, "Firstly, I had nothing against the person who asked me that question; she was doing her job (sic)."

Further addressing why he got emotional, the television superstar said, "I felt a little like—why would somebody think this way? Because agar mujhe sympathy leni hoti to—I have been married for 9 years, I could have taken it much earlier. Why would I wait for 9 years (sic)?"

Gaurav also addressed the topic of not having children,

stating that he has no issues if his wife prefers so. "Loving my wife a certain way is not questionable," he said. The actor added that if his perspective inspires other husbands, he would be happy, and he emphasised that he does not believe his wife, Akansha, is wrong for expressing her views about not wanting children.

Gaurav emerged as the winner of *Bigg Boss* 19, with Farrhana Bhatt finishing as the season's runner-up. Along with the title, Gaurav took home a prize of Rs 50 lakh and also won a car, which he had secured during a task inside the house.



John Abraham



Jackie Shroff



Tiger Shroff

Messi to walk runway

Lionel Messi to share Mumbai runway with Bollywood stars Tiger Shroff, Jackie Shroff, and John Abraham during G.O.A.T. India Tour

Mumbai's entertainment world is brimming with excitement as Lionel Messi's G.O.A.T. India Tour

2025 prepares to merge global football royalty with the shimmer of Bollywood glamour. What was initially expected to be a sports-centric appearance has now transformed into one of the biggest celebrity nights of the year, with Messi set to walk the ramp alongside some of the biggest names in Indian cinema.

Organisers confirmed that Messi, joined by Luis Suárez and Rodrigo De Paul, will headline a 45-minute philanthropic fashion show on December 14. But what has electrified the city's celebrity circuit is the calibre of Bollywood stars expected to share the same stage.

Tiger Shroff, Jackie Shroff, and John Abraham are among the prominent names slated to appear, setting the tone for a night where football greatness meets film-industry elegance. With celebrity models, high-profile cricketers, and influential founders also in attendance, the event promises the atmosphere of a blockbuster Bollywood premiere blended with the exclusivity of a global fashion gala. For Mumbai, this is more than just an event, it's a rare convergence of two universes that command India's deepest passions: cinema and sport. Watching Messi glide down a fashion runway alongside beloved Bollywood figures promises a visual spectacle that goes beyond fandom. It represents the fusion of global icons and homegrown stars, all gathering for a cause that adds meaning to the glamour.

CAUGHT ON CAM

Several Bollywood actors had gathered for the Indian Street Premier League Season 3 player auction event in Mumbai



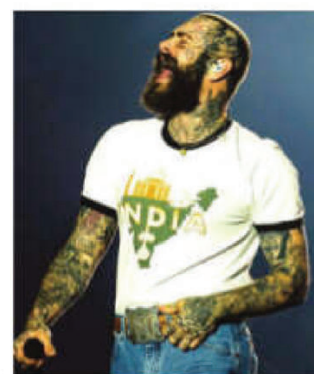
Hrithik Roshan

Akshay Kumar

Salman Khan

Ajay Devgn

Saif Ali Khan



Post Malone concert sparks harassment claims in Guwahati

American singer Post Malone had a concert in Guwahati, Assam, and many videos of him have gone viral on social media. However, one more video has grabbed everyone's attention, in which a foreign woman named Emma has claimed that she and her friend, Amina, were harassed and touched without consent at the concert by men in the crowd.



Kritika confirms relationship on Instagram

Kritika has made her relationship with cricket host and content producer Gaurav Kapur official on Instagram. She shared a series of candid pictures from a breakfast date with Kapur, confirming their romance. One post featured their sneakers, while another showed the couple clinking coffee mugs with "Bubby's" written on them. Kritika, who has been dating Kapur for the past few months, captioned the posts simply and playfully: "breakfast with."

Pics: Instagram @kkkama



Gaurav |

Briefs

DUBAI

Kohli rises to No 2 in ODI rankings



India great Virat Kohli's push to regain the top ODI batter spot received a boost as he moved up to the second place in the latest ICC rankings released on Wednesday. Kohli hasn't held the No.1 position for ODI batters since he was displaced by Pakistan's Babar Azam in April 2021. But the right-hander is closing in on the top spot following his superb recent efforts for India in the three-match ODI series against South Africa. The 37-year-old was adjudged Player of the Series for his 302 runs across the three matches and he was duly rewarded on the latest set of rankings as he improved two places to second overall behind teammate Rohit Sharma. Rohit amassed 146 runs across the series to hold on to his spot at the top of the rankings, with Kohli closing to within 8 rating points.

LONDON

Karthik joins London Spirit in Hundred



Former India batter Dinesh Karthik joined London Spirit as the Hundred franchise's mentor and batting coach, the team management announced on Wednesday. This is Karthik's maiden foray into a support staff role outside the Indian Premier League, where he works in a similar role with champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru. "It's a pleasure to welcome DK to the London Spirit. He is a truly original thinker and his vast experience in short-format and franchise cricket will be invaluable to us," Spirit director of cricket Mo Bobat said in a statement. "He's also great fun to work with and brings an infectious energy and enthusiasm to everything he does," said Bobat.

MUMBAI

Global coach upskilling program begins



The International School Sport Federation (ISF) Academy, in association with leading world federations, has launched an ambitious global initiative to upskill Physical Education

2ND T20I | India look to press advantage against SA in Mullanpur

Pressure mounts on Gill

MULLANPUR

Yet to stamp his authority in the shortest format, Shubman Gill would be eying major gains on home soil when a well-rounded India look to extend their dominance over South Africa in the second T20 International here on Thursday.

With only a travel day separating the first two games of the five-match series, Gill won't mind getting straight into the middle in search of a substantial knock.

India steamrolled South Africa in the series opener but the middling returns from Gill, since his T20 comeback in Asia Cup back in September, remains a talking point.

Following an impressive debut as Test captain in the UK, Gill was brought back into the T20 setup.

Even though Sanju Samson and his Punjab teammate Abhishek Sharma were doing the job at the top of the order, the team management showed immense faith in Gill's abilities as a T20 opener. The batter from Kerala was displaced and he has since then struggled to find a place in the playing eleven.

The Test and ODI captain can seamlessly perform the role that Virat Kohli performed for India till the T20 World Cup last year but the

team, with batting options till number eight, has doubled down on its fearless approach since the triumph in Barbados, leaving little room for an anchor.

Gill certainly can't go hammer and tongs like Abhishek Sharma in the

powerplay and therefore needs to figure out what works best for him.

Besides Gill, captain Suryakumar Yadav, who has failed to find consistency over the past 12 months, is also facing additional scrutiny. Couple of months down the

line, Suryakumar would be leading India's World Cup defence at home and considering the added responsibility, flow of runs from his bat form a crucial piece of the puzzle heading into the ICC showpiece.

In the colder environment of New Chandigarh, India are unlikely to tinker with the winning combination. The selection on Tuesday also indicated that two strike bowlers, Arshdeep Singh and Kuldeep Yadav, will not be part of the same eleven due to the need for batting till number eight.

Arshdeep got the nod on this occasion and India's leading wicket-taker in the format was once again able to provide the early wickets bowling alongside Jasprit Bumrah.

South Africa, on the other hand, would be looking for a drastically better outing with the bat after being bundled out for 74 in the run chase of 176.

Squads:

India: Suryakumar Yadav (captain), Abhishek Sharma, Shubman Gill, Tilak Varma, Hardik Pandya, Shivam Dube, Jitesh Sharma, Axar Patel, Varun Chakravarthy, Arshdeep Singh, Jasprit Bumrah, Kuldeep Yadav, Washington Sundar, Harshit Rana, Sanju Samson.

South Africa: Aiden Markram (captain), Quinton de Kock (wk), Tristan Stubbs, Dewald Brevis, David Miller, Donovan Ferreira, Marco Jansen, Keshav Maharaj, Lutho Sipamla, Anrich Nortje, Lungi Ngidi, George Linde, Kwena Maphaka, Reeza Hendricks, Corbin Bosch, Tony de Zorzi, Ottneil Bartman.



India's Shubman Gill in Cuttack on Tuesday. PTI

GE Academy defeats Parag English School in MSSA's Giles Shield

MUMBAI

General Education Academy defeated Parag English School by 118 runs in the 124th Giles Shield U-14 MSSA Inter-School cricket tournament at United CC Cross Maidan on Wednesday.

Batting first, General Education Academy made 281 all out in their allotted 45 overs. Opening batter **Shardul Fagare** top scored with a brilliant 134 runs. Shardul took the entire responsibility on his shoulders, playing some elegant shots in the middle. Sharvil Parab was amongst the pick of the bowlers, snapping up (3-50) in his 7 overs. Hridant Naik and Fahad Shaikh picked two wickets each. Coming out to chase down their total, Parag English School were bowled out for 163 in 42 overs. Left arm spinner Vihaan Wade bowled well and grabbed a five-wicket haul in the process. (5-50) in 13 overs thus winning the Man of the Match. General Education won by 118 runs.



Meanwhile, General Education Academy Chembur will meet Al-Barkaat MMI English School at DY Patil Stadium in the first semifinal of the Harris Shield U-16 tournament while defending champions Anjuman I-Islam Allana English School will face Dnyandeep Seva Mandal at MIG Cricket Club in the second semifinal.

Our Lady of Salvation High School defeated Thakur Ramnarayan HS by 319 runs at Matunga Gymkhana. Oor Lady made 367-3 in 40 overs, including 36 penalty runs. Anish Tatikonda played well for his 100 runs.

ISPL Auction: Pawle receives highest bid from Majhi Mumbai

Chennai Singams reacquire Ketan Mhatre via RTM

MUMBAI

The Indian Street Premier League (ISPL), India's pioneering tennis-ball T10 cricket tournament, delivered a blockbuster Season 3 Player Auction with close to ₹10 crore spent on 144 players as eight franchises went head-to-head in an intense day of bidding in Mumbai on Tuesday.

Vijay Pawle emerged as the auction's biggest headline, fetching ₹32.50 lakh, the league's highest ever price tag, from defending champions Majhi Mumbai. The star all-rounder from the West Zone returns to familiar territory, having led Mumbai to the title last season. Ketan Mhatre, also from the West Zone, was retained by Chennai Singams through the Right to Match (RTM) card for ₹26.40 lakh, making him the second-highest pick of the day.

Two new teams, Ahmedabad Lions and Delhi Superheros join the league. The Season 3 will be held from January 9 - February 6, 2026 in Surat. Tickets will be available on BookMyShow



TOP-FIVE BUYS:

Vijay Pawle - ₹32.50 lakh (Majhi Mumbai) RTM
Ketan Mhatre - ₹26.40 lakh (Chennai Singams) RTM
Rajendra Singh - ₹26.10 lakh (Bengaluru Strikers)
Sanjay Kanojjiya - ₹24.55 lakh (Ahmedabad Lions)
Saif Ali - ₹23.65 lakh (Tigers of Kolkata)

soon.

This year's auction showcased ISPL's growing influence, with 408 players from 101 cities going under the hammer. ISPL Core Committee members Sachin Tendulkar, Ashish Shelar, Minal Amol Kale, Suraj Samat, and Dipak Chauhan, President - Operations were

present at the auction.

The U-19 category saw spirited bidding. Ankit Yadav emerged as the costliest youngster, snapped up by the Tigers of Kolkata for ₹6.50 lakh. Meanwhile, 16-year-old Rudra Patil created history as the youngest player of Season 3, picked by Srinagar Ke Veer at his base price of ₹3 lakh.

Champions League

Liverpool without Salah beats Inter; Barca, Bayern win

LONDON

Even from the penalty spot, Liverpool managed just five without Mohamed Salah.

After leaving the Egypt forward in England, Liverpool got a much-needed boost with a 1-0 win over Inter Milan in the Champions League on Tuesday. Barcelona and Bayern Munich celebrated comeback wins and Chelsea lost. With regular penalty taker Salah out of the squad

following his public criticism of the club last week, Dominik Szoboszlai stepped up instead to score the 88th-minute penalty which earned a 1-0 win over one of the competition's best-performing teams.

It was all the more valuable for coming after a run of one win in six games in all competitions for Arne Slot's under-pressure team, which moved up to eighth and is now back in contention for a direct spot in the round of 16. Inter dropped to fifth.

Liverpool's players thought they had taken the lead with Ibrahima Konate's header in the 31st minute. After a video review that lasted several minutes, it was ruled out for handball as Virgil van Dijk had earlier nodded the ball on to the arm of Hugo Ekitike. VAR later came to the visitors' aid when it spotted that Alessandro Bastoni had tugged Florian Wirtz's shirt in the area, with the midfielder flailing to the ground. Szoboszlai converted the penalty.

Bayern's new star shines

Bayern's 17-year-old midfielder Lennart Karl produced an audacious bit of skill to continue his high-scoring start to life in the Champions League in a 3-1 win over Sporting Lisbon which lifted Bayern to second behind Arsenal.

Karl scored his third goal in four career Champions League games, controlling a pass from Konrad Laimer in mid-air before volleying a shot from a tight angle.

Chelsea was beaten in the

SCORELINE

Liverpool-Inter Milan 1-0
Bayern Munich-Sporting Lisbon 3-1
Atalanta-Chelsea 2-1
Barcelona-Eintracht Frankfurt 2-1
Tottenham-Slavia Prague 3-0

Champions League for the first time in nearly three months as Atalanta came from behind to win 2-1.

Headers by Jules Koundé three minutes apart gave Barcelona a 2-1 comeback win over Eintracht Frankfurt.

Hardik feels injuries put doubts in mind

The Indian all-rounder wanted to come back stronger

CUTTACK

India's ace all-rounder Hardik Pandya feels a positive mindset has helped him return to the ground "stronger, bigger and better" after injury setbacks led to self-doubt.

Pandya's return from a nearly two-month layoff due to left quadriceps injury propelled India to a massive 101-run win against South Africa in the opening T20I here on Tuesday.

The 32-year-old all-rounder blazed to an unbeaten 28-ball 59 and 1/16 with the ball as he announced his return to the side after suffering the injury during the Asia Cup.

"My mindset was really about coming back stronger, bigger, better. Injuries test you mentally and at the same point in time, it kind of puts a lot of doubts... and a lot of credit to the loved ones," said Pandya in a video posted on bcci.tv.

"I've stood strong, I've done a lot of things with grace and that has helped me to become even more confident, back myself and really trust my skillset... I really believe in myself as a player. I've always believed that if you don't believe in yourself, how would others believe you," Pandya, who will be a key member in India's T20 World Cup campaign in two-months' time, added.

The cricketer said that he is someone who derives confidence from within and doesn't bother too much about what others think about him.

"I think I have been a very honest, very real person in life as well, which has helped me a lot. I don't really sugarcoat a lot of things in my life. It's never about the other person, it's never about how others think or how others perceive.



India's Hardik Pandya celebrates with Jitesh Sharma after taking the wicket of South Africa's David Miller during the first T20I in Cuttack on Tuesday. PTI

It's always about how I feel inside.

"Now, it's time where Hardik Pandya wants to just play the sport, enjoy every second on the ground... and bigger and better will be the motto in my life."

Pandya says he derives a energy from the crowd, which helps him live up to the expectations.

"You should be a rockstar. You come, perform for 10 minutes and the crowd goes berserk... I think that has been the biggest motivation for me." Pandya turned a hostile Mumbai crowd, when he moved in as Mumbai Indians skipper from Gujarat Titans in 2024, into loving fans with his triumphant performance in the T20 World Cup in the Caribbean.

"Life has thrown a lot of lemons at me, I've always though I'll make a lemonade," he said. Every time I walk in, I feel like all the crowd is just waiting... they've come for this moment to watch me bat.

Jitesh shrugs off Samson 'rivalry'

Jitesh Sharma, who has emerged as India's preferred wicketkeeper-batter in T20

format with less than two months left for the World Cup, has played down his 'competition' with Sanju Samson in the squad, saying it only brings out his "A-game" to the fore, strengthening the side. India once again preferred Jitesh over Sanju for the opening T20I of the five-match series against South Africa, a game the hosts won convincingly by 101 runs at Barabati Stadium on Tuesday.

"He (Sanju) is a great player. If you have to compete against him and play shoulder to shoulder, then I have to bring my A-game. I think we both are trying to play for India, not for other teams," the 32-year-old said at the post-match interaction.

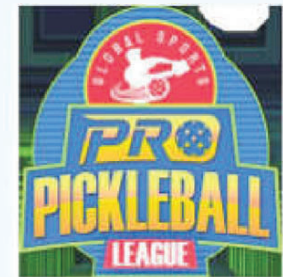
Sanju, who finished last year as India's leading T20I run-getter with 436 runs including three centuries, had formed a formidable opening pairing with Abhishek Sharma. But the return of Shubman Gill to the T20I top order has unsettled the batting line-up, pushing Sanju lower than his preferred opening position. In the last three T20Is against Australia, the management leaned towards Jitesh.

Pickleball for All

MUMBAI

The rise of pickleball has been fueled by one of its greatest strengths: its inclusivity. As the world's fastest-growing sport, pickleball stands out because it welcomes players from the age of six to sixty and beyond. Its rules are simple, its learning curve is gentle, and its equipment is inexpen-

been the growing number of public events, tournaments, and leagues that showcase the sport's energy. The Global Sports Pro & Challenger League, from December 16-23, has emerged as a major spectacle, drawing large audiences and offering players the chance to compete in an electrifying atmosphere. With top Indian and international players participating, specta-



sive, making it one of the most accessible sports for both beginners and experienced athletes. Whether someone approaches it for fitness, fun, competition, or social interaction, the sport accommodates everyone. This inclusivity is evident in the consistently high registrations in mixed doubles, where players across age groups and skill levels come together purely for the joy of play.

A significant catalyst for pickleball's expansion has

tors witness high-quality competition that highlights the sport's intensity and strategy. The upcoming league in December has also acted as a gateway for new players, inspiring many to pick up a paddle and try the sport themselves.

Beyond big events, year-round local tournaments ensure continuous participation across regions. Besides, accessible coaching and community-driven play sessions, help nurture players.



Liverpool's Dominik Szoboszlai celebrates during CL match against hosts Inter Milan on Tuesday. AP