

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

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MORNING EDITION PRAYAGRAJ Monday, 02 February, 2026 UNIQUE GIFT OF KRIYAYOGA ASHRAM AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO GIVE IMPETUS TO WORLD BUILDING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

Government allocates Rs 708 crore aid to Assam, Gujarat for last year's floods

NEW DELHI: Centre has allocated Rs 708 crore in assistance to Assam and Gujarat, affected by floods and landslides, during the previous year. A special allocation of Rs 904 crore was also made to Haryana, Rajasthan and MP for modernising their fire services. A high-level committee headed by home minister Amit Shah made these allocations under NDRF. During the current financial year (2025-26), the government has already released over Rs 13,603 crore to 27 states under the SDRF and Rs 2,024 crore under NDRF to 12 states. In addition, Rs 4,571 crore has been released from the State Disaster Mitigation Fund (SDMF) to 21 states and Rs 372 crore from the National Disaster Mitigation Fund (NDMF) to nine states. "Under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi, Centre stands shoulder to shoulder with the states during natural calamities and disasters and provides all necessary support," an official statement said.

Beggars and transgender people are ordered off crossroads

Delhi: The Delhi Traffic Police have issued a directive to all employees stating that they must prevent transgender people, vagrants, hawkers, and beggars from obstructing traffic flow at crossings. According to sources, this action is being taken since there has been a growing awareness that these types of gatherings at high-traffic areas greatly slow down traffic and cause congestion. According to law enforcement officials, field workers have been directed to enforce strict regulations that prohibit these groups from loitering, gathering, or engaging in any behavior that could impede traffic flow or inconvenience commuters.

Better tomorrow's budget today: Budget presented by Nirmala

New Delhi Until now, whenever the budget came, the attention of the media of the whole country as well as the general public was only on how much income tax rates should be lowered or higher, which goods should be sold cheaply or expensively to the government. Which state has given the scheme in gift. But Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has presented a vision in the 2026 budget that appears to strengthen the backbone of the country's economic system instead of appealing to any section. The budget clearly shows the idea of making the country a global power by strengthening the traditional economic sectors of the country and strengthening the future sectors. Before the



budget was presented, many economic experts were assessing that the government would increase the amount of financial assistance given to farmers under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Yojana from Rs 6,000 to Rs 90,000 per annum. It was expected to cost up to Rs 90,000 crore per annum. Similarly, the Ayushman Scheme was expected to cover a larger class and special schemes for other classes. But the government refrained from any such populist policy. Perhaps the fact that the government does not face any major elections has given it the opportunity to make such a budget. Assembly elections will be held in states like Assam, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh in the coming days. But the government seems to think of handling it only at the state level politics.

Finance Minister announces Semiconductor Mission 2.0, sets new direction for IT sector



New Delhi Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) 2.0 in the Union Budget 2026-27 presented in Parliament. The Finance Minister said in his budget speech that the emphasis will be on equipment and materials manufacturing, Indian IP design and strengthening supply chains. Industry based research and training centers will be established to develop technical and skilled manpower. Rs 1,000 crore has been provided for this in the financial year 2026-27. The Finance Minister announced an increase in the budget allocation for the Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS) to Rs 40,000 crore. Launched in April 2025, the scheme has received twice the investment proposals than the previous target. New safe harbor provisions have been introduced to provide tax certainty to the IT and ITES sector. Under this, all IT services will be kept in the same and a normal safe harbor.

HIV jab for 115 nations rests on Indian regulators

Mumbai: There will be a dramatic shift in how the world prevents HIV and the timelines depend on how quickly Indian drug regulators act. A US-based pharma giant has granted royalty-free licences to four Indian generic manufacturers to produce lenacapavir, which prevents transmission by almost 100%, at \$40 per person per year, roughly 0.1% of the original cost. Lenacapavir is an injectable drug whose



protection from one jab lasts six months. The licensed manufacturers by Gilead Sciences

include Dr Reddy's, Hetero, Emcure and Mylan. The first two have announced their pricing. The drugs are estimated to roll out in 2027. But, it could be much sooner or delayed, and what happens in India will impact local access, as well as 115 low- and middle-income countries as these firms will be key exporters. Twenty-six additional such countries where people participated in crucial.

3 Ayurvedic AIIMS, seven high-speed rail corridors to be built

New Delhi Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union Budget 2026-27 in the Lok Sabha on Sunday. Presenting the budget for the ninth time, he spoke for 85 minutes in Parliament, but did not make much space for the common man. Whereas, concessions in filing of income tax, 7 railway projects and three new Ayurvedic AIIMS have been proposed in the budget speech. Finance Minister must have arrived in the Lok Sabha wearing Tamil Nadu's famous Kanjeevaram saree, but the year 2026 will be announced in West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Assam and Assam and Puducherry.



No worm. In the first central budget after Operation Sindur, the Finance Minister discussed geopolitics and challenges. increased from Rs 6.81 lakh crore to Rs 7.85 lakh crore. Thus, the defense budget is that Rs 2.19 lakh crore will be spent on weapons procurement and modernization of the army compared to Rs 1.80 lakh crore last year. This is a direct increase of 22 percent in capital expenditure. In his budget speech, the Union Finance Minister said, "To provide relief to patients, especially cancer sufferers, I propose to exempt basic duty on 17 medicines. I also propose to add 7 and rare diseases with a view to exempting import duties on individual imports of medicines, medicines.

Budget reflects aspirations of 140 crore Indians: Prime Minister

New Delhi. Reacting to the Union Budget 2026-27, Prime Minister Narendra Modi described it as historic and said that India will meet the aspirations of 140 crore Indians. presents. Reacting on the budget through video conferencing, the Prime Minister said that this budget realizes the dreams of the present and lays a strong foundation for



India's bright future. She described Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's presentation of the budget for the ninth consecutive time as a strong example of women's power. He said that this budget is a high-

way of immense opportunities and provides a strong foundation towards the goal of a developed India of 2047. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that India will get new speed with this budget. Path breaking reforms give open skies to the bold, talented and aspirational youth of the country to move forward. The Prime Minister said that India is

not satisfied with being the fastest growing economy but wants to become the world's third largest economy as soon as possible. 140 crore citizens are determined that India will soon become the world's third largest economy. He said that India's global role as a reliable democratic partner and reliable quality supplier is steadily strengthening.

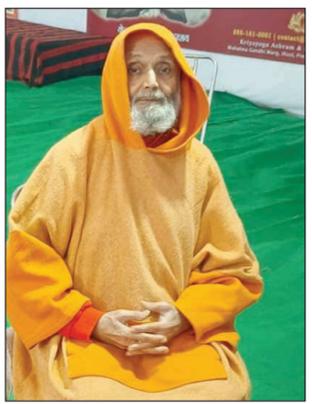
Unique Experience of Self Realization at Kriya Yoga Camp

Seekers learn the simplest and scientific spiritual kriyayoga method in the presence of Swami Shri Yogi Satyam Ji Maharaj

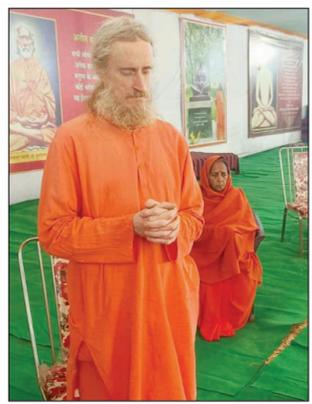


Akhand India Sandesh Prayagraj. A special class was held at the Kriya Yoga Shivir on Sunday at the junction of Sangam Mori Road on Mahatma Gandhi Marg during the Magh Mela, which was attended by seekers from home and abroad. A special

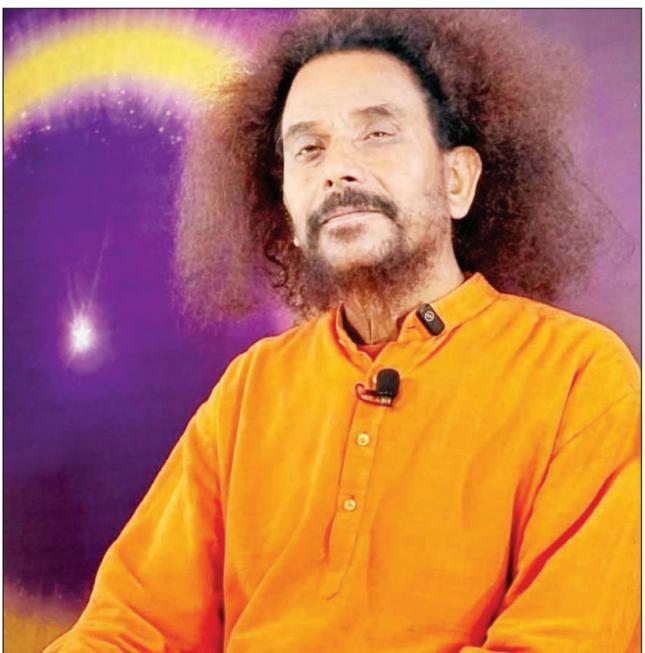
Kriyayoga practice was organized in the camp under the guidance of Swami Shri Yogi Satyam Ji Maharaj, founder of Kriyayoga Ashram. **Kriya Yoga is the highest method of self-realization** According to Kriyayoga Guru Swami Shri Yogi Satyam Ji



Maharaj, the practice of Kriyayoga is the simplest, highest and most scientific spiritual technique of self-realization. Seekers can experience mental peace, spiritual elevation and body-mind balance through this practice. **The class included foreign seekers**



Foreign seekers from many countries also attended the camp and he experienced various techniques of Kriya Yoga and meditation. Swami Shri Yogi Satyam Ji Maharaj gave detailed information about the scientific and spiritual aspects of Kriya Yoga to the seekers.



Farmers neglected again in Budget 2026, BKU targets government

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj: The Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) has strongly objected to the Central Government's Budget 2026. Anuj Singh, the youth state president of the organization, said that this budget once again proves that farmers are not among the government's priorities and that their concerns remain limited to speeches and documents. Anuj Singh alleged that the government calls agriculture the backbone of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-Reliant India), but the budget



lacks any concrete provisions for increasing farmers' income,

providing a legal guarantee for Minimum Support Price (MSP), waiving loans, and ensuring crop prices commensurate with costs. He said that subsidies related to agriculture are being cut, while the budgets for irrigation and rural development have also been reduced. According to the BKU leader, inflation is constantly rising, and the prices of fertilizers, seeds, and diesel are skyrocketing. In such a situation, this budget will prove to be more detrimental to farmers than empowering them. He questioned the government's slogans—'Save

the Daughter, Save the Farmer, Save the Youth'—saying that less work is being done on the ground in these schemes, while more money is being spent on publicity. Anuj Singh also said that the budget neither includes any law regarding MSP, nor does it mention implementing the recommendations of the Swaminathan Commission, nor has any assessment been made of the actual cost of farming. Calling the budget another betrayal of farmers, he demanded that the government prioritize farmers'.

Dr. Balkrishna Pandey Honored at International Poetry Festival

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj: An international poetry festival and awards ceremony was organized on Saturday at the Hindustani Academy, Civil Lines, under the joint auspices of the National Poets' Forum and the Googledi Literary Foundation, Nepal. At the event, Dr. Balkrishna Pandey, Advocate and President of the Revenue Council Bar Association, was honored by Mayor Ganesh Kesarwani. The program was presided over by Anand Ji Samarth Shukla, President of the National Poets' Forum. Senior poets and literary figures, including Dr. Shambhu Nath Tripathi and Anshul Ji, along with several renowned literary figures from Nepal, were also present. Poetry recitation and literary discussions added to the prestige of the event. At the end of the program, poetess Pratima Mishra presented the vote of thanks. The event saw a good turnout of literature enthusiasts, and it was noted that the event would give a new direction to international literary cooperation.

E-Rickshaw Overturns After Collision with BJP Mahila Morcha Leader Car

Auraiya

Several passengers were injured after an e-rickshaw overturned following a collision with a speeding car on the Dibiyapur–Auraiya road near the bend at Kadhore Ka Purva village. All the injured were rushed to the medical college for treatment, while the occupants of the car also sustained minor injuries. According to reports, the accident occurred when a car allegedly being driven at a speed exceeding the permissible limit rammed into the e-rickshaw. The impact was so severe that the e-rickshaw overturned, throwing all passengers onto the road. The injured e-rickshaw passengers have been identified as Anmol Singh, son of Gauriganga Prasad, Sangeeta, wife of Mahendra, Mary, daughter of Rajkumar and residents of Kamalpur—



Priya, daughter of Ashok, Sachin, son of Ashok, Pooja, wife of Kuldeep, Sunita, wife of Amit and Sheetla, wife of Kalandri. They had gone to the market at Kakore Bujurg and were returning to their village by e-rickshaw when the accident took place. The car involved in the accident was a Dzire, in which Ravindri, Mandal

President of BJP Mahila Morcha and a resident of Erwa Katra, was travelling towards Auraiya. The vehicle was being driven by a driver. Eyewitnesses stated that the e-rickshaw suddenly took a turn at the bend, leading to the collision. However, they also claimed that the car was at a very high speed, which caused the e-rickshaw to

overturn. Due to the collision, the car radiator was damaged, resulting in coolant spilling onto the road. Ambulances were called immediately, and all the injured were admitted to the medical college for treatment. Police also reached the spot after receiving information and initiated further Proceedings.

National Road Safety Month Concludes with Awareness Programme in Etah

Etah

Under the directions of Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Etah, Shyam Narayan Singh, the concluding ceremony of the public awareness campaign organized under "National Road Safety Month" was held on Friday at Delhi Public School, Etah. The programme was conducted in accordance with government guidelines with the objective of sensitizing the general public about traffic rules and road safety. The closing ceremony was organized under the close supervision of Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Etah Shwetabh Pandey and in the presence of Circle Officer (Traffic) Sanjay Singh. Addressing the students



and members of the public on the occasion, CO Traffic Sanjay Singh emphasized that road safety is a collective responsibility and that strict adherence to traffic rules is the only effective way to reduce road accidents. During the programme, school students presented cultural performances based on traffic rules and road safety awareness, which were widely appreciated by the dignitaries present. Students who delivered outstand-

ing performances were felicitated with prizes in recognition of their efforts. The ceremony was attended by Commandant Home Guards Vinod Kumar, District Inspector of Schools Indrajit, Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO) Satendra Kumar, Traffic In-charge Sub-Inspector Anil Verma, along with other officers and personnel of the traffic police, school staff, and a large number of students.

Agra Youth Killed After Falling Under Train While Alighting from Moving Express



Auraiya

A tragic accident occurred at Phaphund railway station in Auraiya district when a 35-year-old man from Agra lost his life after coming under a moving express train while attempting to alight. The incident took place when the train did not halt at the station, leading to the fatal mishap. According to information, the deceased was identified as Rocky, the only son of Pappu, a resident of village Kabulpur under Manpur police station limits in Agra district. Rocky

earned his livelihood through daily wage labour and was on his way to Dibiyapur for work. He had traveled from Agra to Tundla and then boarded a non-stop express train from Tundla to Phaphund. As the train passed through Phaphund station without stopping, Rocky attempted to get down from the moving train. During the attempt, he lost his balance, fell onto the tracks and was run over by the train, resulting in his death on the spot. Upon receiving information, the Government Railway

Police (GRP) reached the spot and sent the body to the post-mortem house. The deceased was identified through an Aadhaar card recovered from his pocket, following which the police informed his family through the concerned police station. The family arrived on Saturday afternoon and formally identified the body, after which the post-mortem examination was conducted. The sudden loss of the only son left the father inconsolable. The deceased is also survived by a ten-month-old son, adding to the family Grief.

Additional Commissioner, Aligarh Division and Deputy District Election Officer Inspect Polling Stations

Etah

In compliance with the directions of the Election Commission of India, a Special Booth Day was organized across all polling stations in the four Assembly constituencies of Etah district on Saturday under the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) campaign. The initiative was carried out as per the guidelines issued by the State Election Commission with the objective of ensuring a clean, transparent, and error-free electoral roll. During the campaign, Booth Level Officers (BLO) conducted public readings of the draft published electoral rolls, reading out voter details to citizens up and seeking their cooperation in verifying the accuracy of entries. Voters were encouraged to check their particulars and assist officials in rectifying any discrepancies. As part of the monitoring process, Additional Commissioner, Aligarh Division, Arun Kumar, along with Additional District



Magistrate (Administration) and Deputy District Election Officer, Satya Prakash, inspected several polling stations. These included Booth No. 196 at Primary School Sunna, Booth Nos. 199, 200 and 201 at Janta Inter College Pilua under Assembly Constituency 105–Marhara, and Booth No. 278 at Aspur under Assembly Constituency 104–Etah Sadar. The officials reviewed on-site arrangements and issued necessary

instructions to concerned officers and BLO. The Additional Commissioner also reviewed the progress of applications received under Forms 6, 7 and 8. Providing details of the campaign, the Deputy District Election Officer stated that under the SIR campaign, public reading of the draft electoral roll and the ASD (Absentee, Shifted and Dead) list is being conducted at all 1,644 polling stations across the district. A total of 1,143 designated

officers have been deployed for this purpose. Adequate numbers of Forms 6, 7, and 8 are available at all booths. In addition, BLOs have been provided with ASD lists and lists of voters not yet mapped. For effective supervision, 131 district-level officers have been appointed as Sector Officers. The primary objective of the campaign is to ensure that no eligible voter is left out of the electoral roll and that no ineligible voter is included.

Eligible citizens whose names were previously omitted, those listed in the ASD category and new voters who have attained the age of 18 years as of January 1, 2026 are being enrolled as per prescribed norms. Continuous monitoring of the campaign is being carried out by senior district officials through regular field visits. Across the four Assembly constituencies, four Electoral Registration Officers (ERO), 37 Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs) and 165 Supervisors have been deployed. As per the directions of District Election Officer and District Magistrate Prem Ranjan Singh, all 131 Sector Officers are actively monitoring arrangements at polling stations. During the inspection, ERO and Sub-Divisional Magistrate (Sadar) Vipin Kumar Morwal, Supervisors Ram Niwas and Rajesh Kumar, along with concerned Booth Level Officers and other officials, were Present.

Grand Bath of Faith at Sangam on Maghi Purnima; Over Two Crore Devotees Take a Dip Return journey of devotees and Kalpavasis begins as Kalpavas concludes



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj. On Sunday, the fifth and main bathing festival of the Magh Mela, Maghi Purnima, witnessed a magnificent display of faith at the Sangam. Despite the dense fog and biting cold, a massive crowd of devotees gathered at the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and the invisible Saraswati. From the Brahma Muhurta (pre-dawn hours), devotees took a holy dip in the Sangam during the Ravi Pushya Yoga and performed rituals, prayers, and offered lamps. The bathing continued until late evening. With

Maghi Purnima, the month-long Kalpavas also concluded. After the bath and religious rituals, the Kalpavasis began their journey home. According to the administration, by 6 PM on Maghi Purnima, more than two crore devotees had bathed at the Sangam and other ghats. The Mela administration claims that over 21 crore devotees have bathed during the entire duration of the Magh Mela so far. Extensive and robust arrangements were made by the Prayagraj Mela Authority for the fifth



bathing festival. A total of 24 ghats were constructed in the Mela area, including Sangam, Daraganj, Arail, Naini, and Phaphamau. The Magh Mela, spread over 800 hectares, was divided into seven sectors. For the first time this year, nine pontoon bridges were constructed for the smooth movement of devotees. District Magistrate Manish Kumar

Verma said that the family members of the Kalpavasis had started arriving at their camps from Saturday night. From dawn, devotees began bathing with chants of 'Har Har Gange'. The weather was clear in the city in the morning, but dense fog covered the Mela area. After 6 AM, the fog became even thicker, however, the enthusiasm of the devotees remained undiminished despite the cold winds. Around 10 AM, the fog began to dissipate, and by noon, the sun had come out. After bathing, devotees donated sesame seeds, jaggery, khichdi (a rice and lentil dish), and clothes, while



many also performed cow donations. Sadhus and saints, along with their disciples, bathed in the Sangam and performed religious rituals. The Kalpavasis (pilgrims observing the month-long religious vow) listened to the story of Lord Satyanarayan in their camps and organized community feasts, distributing prasad (blessed food). Recitations of the Ramcharitmanas were also held in several camps.

After completing the religious rituals, the Kalpavasis donated their remaining belongings in the camps to the pilgrim-age priests and departed for their

homes using their respective means of transport. The administration has made strict arrangements to ensure the safe return of the Kalpavasis and the security of the devotees. The Magh Mela will continue until Mahashivratri on February 15th, although the camps in the area have started to empty after Maghi Purnima. During this time, District Magistrate Manish Kumar Verma, Mela Officer Rishiraj, Additional CP Ajay Pal Sharma, SP Mela Neeraj Pandey, and other senior officers continuously toured the Mela area to review the arrangements.

The budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is dedicated to the youth power of the country - Yogesh Shukla-

Meja. Senior Bharatiya Janata Party leader Yogesh Shukla on Sunday expressed happiness over the Union Budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, saying that this budget is dedicated to the youth power of the country. He said that due to several schemes including the semiconductor revolution, AVGC sector, new economic zones, construction of girls' hostels, assistance to private universities, creative technology, and startup businesses, this budget will be dedicated to the youth. Mr. Shukla said that major announcements related to



Uttar Pradesh have been made in the Union Budget. Uttar Pradesh's share in central taxes has increased. Budget approved for Delhi-Varanasi and Mumbai-Varanasi high-speed corridors. A new AIIMS will

open in Western Uttar Pradesh. Bundelkhand youth have received the gift of IIT. Special fund for a new industrial node in Prayagraj. Green signal for the country's first semiconductor design and manufacturing park near Jewar Airport. Budgetary support for developing an AI City in Lucknow. An integrated logistics hub will be constructed in Varanasi. Additional loan of 22,500 crore for the expansion of Ganga Expressway and industrial corridors, establishment of Agri-Export Processing Zones in Hapur and Saharanpur. 732,075 crore

has been allocated for the next phases of Lucknow, Kanpur and Agra Metro. BJP leader Yogesh Shukla expressed special gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and Union Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman and said that the people of Prayagraj extend their greetings for agreeing to provide a special package for the industrial node in Prayagraj. This budget will prove to be a gateway to new opportunities for the youth of India and will make the double-engine government run at a faster pace.

Accused wanted in abetment to suicide case arrested

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj. Jhansi police have arrested an accused who was wanted in a case of abetment to suicide. The police achieved a major success by apprehending the accused from the Triveni Puram area. The accused, Anurag Pandey, son of late Manoj Kumar Pandey, a resident of Hemapur Tarathi, Mungra Badshahpur police station, Jaunpur district, who was wanted in case number 28/2026, under Section 108 of the BNS (Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita), registered at Jhansi police station, was arrested on Friday near the Triveni Puram



South parking area. The accused is said to be about 21 years old. According to the police, further legal action is being taken against the accused as per rules after the arrest. Police officials said that the campaign against criminals in the area is continu-

ously underway and strict action against wanted accused will continue in the future as well. Sub-Inspector Janmejay Kumar, Chowki In-charge Chamanganj, and Constable Abhishek Singh played a key role in this operation.

Grand Procession in Mohammadabad Yusufpur on the 649th Ravidas Jayanti; the town was immersed in devotion

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Ghazipur: The birth anniversary of Saint Shiromani Ravidas was celebrated with great pomp and show in the urban and rural areas of the district. On the auspicious occasion of the 649th birth anniversary of Saint Shiromani Guru Ravidas, a grand procession filled with devotion, enthusiasm, and reverence was organized in the urban and rural areas under the local police station. On this historic occasion, a large number of devotees from the town and surrounding rural areas participated in the procession. The attractive and beautifully decorated tableau of Saint Ravidas was the center of attraction for the devotees. Seeing the tableau, the devotees were overwhelmed with emotion, and the entire area resonated with the resounding slogans of "Victory to Saint Ravidas!" Through bhajans, kirtans, and slogans,



the devotees spread the message of Saint Ravidas—equality, love, brotherhood, and humanity—to everyone. In the procession that started from the State Bank Harijan Colony in the town, the devotees displayed their amazing artistic skills. Traditional attire, the melodious tunes of drums and other musical instruments, dances, and devotional songs made the procession even more magnificent. Children, youth, women, and the elderly—everyone participated in this sacred event with full enthusiasm and devotion. The procession passed through various main roads and areas of the town, where devotees

were welcomed with showers of flowers at many places. A wonderful scene of social harmony and brotherhood was witnessed. To ensure the peaceful and orderly conduct of the event, the police administration remained vigilant and accompanied the procession, ensuring tight security. Overall, this procession organized on the occasion of the 649th Ravidas Jayanti not only became a symbol of religious faith but also conveyed the message of imbuing the ideals of Saint Ravidas. The town and rural areas were immersed in devotion, and this sacred festival concluded with reverence, peace, and harmony.

Brother-in-law turns out to be the killer of his sister-in-law; police solve Phulpur murder case

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj: Police have made a sensational revelation in the murder case of Seema Devi, a married woman from Balikaranpur village in the Phulpur police station area. The investigation revealed that the murder was not committed by an outsider, but by the deceased woman's brother-in-law, along with an accomplice. After the murder, the body was stuffed into a plastic sack and thrown into a village well to conceal the identity. Police arrested the named accused, Pradeep Kumar, son of Sangamlal (approximately 22 years old),



a resident of Balikaranpur, Phulpur police station, near the Jogiyashekhpur canal. According to the police, the accused confessed to his crime during questioning. According to the police, on January 29, 2026, Seema Devi's

family members filed a missing person report at the police station after she suddenly disappeared. During this time, a foul odor was reported coming from a well in the village. Police arrived at the scene and, with the help of villagers, searched the

well, where they recovered a decomposed body tied in a plastic sack. It was later identified as Seema Devi. The investigation revealed that Seema Devi was murdered by her brother-in-law, Pradeep Kumar, along with his accomplice,

Pappu Musahar alias Ramsajeevan. After the murder, the body was stuffed into a sack and thrown into the well to dispose of it. In this case, on January 30, 2026, a case was registered at the Phulpur police station under case number 40/2026, sections 103(1), 238, 61(2) BNS, based on a complaint filed by the deceased's mother, Shanti Devi. During the investigation, the accused was identified based on evidence and technical evidence. Police say that raids are being conducted continuously to arrest the other accused involved in the case. The entire case will be revealed soon.

Editorial

Has Britain been taken over by Islamists?

British MPs have been forced to hire personal bodyguards following threats by Islamist groups over Britain's support of Israel in the Gaza war. Three unnamed women MPs have been given additional security. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak issued a statement following the direct threats to British MPs: "Legitimate protests (have been) hijacked by extremists to promote and glorify terrorism, elected representatives verbally threatened and physically, violently targeted and antisemitic tropes beamed onto our own Parliament building." Threats of physical violence against British MPs have increased further since the killing by the Israeli army last week of over 100 Palestinian civilians seeking food aid in north Gaza. London has become a safe haven for Islamist extremists. Pakistan-origin mayor Sadiq Khan, in office since 2016, is accused of being soft on Islamists because he relies on Muslim votes in mayoral elections. As in India, Muslims in Britain vote in blocs. This was highlighted by the victory of controversial politician George Galloway last week in a by-election in Rochdale, a town in Greater Manchester. The by-election showed how deeply the Gaza war is influencing British politics. Labour party leader Keir Starmer is widely expected to be the next British prime minister given Labour's lead in opinion polls of more than 15 per cent over the Conservative party. In the Rochdale by-election, Starmer, a staunch supporter of Israel, suspended Labour's official candidate Azhar Ali for making antisemitic comments on Israel's war in Gaza. In the absence of party support for a Labour candidate, Galloway romped home to victory. A strong backer of Palestine, Galloway, who leads the small Workers Party of Britain, said after his win: "Labour will pay a high price for the catastrophe in the Gaza war." This alarmed Starmer enough to apologise to Rochdale voters after Galloway's win: "I regret we had to withdraw our candidate (Ali) and apologise to the voters of Rochdale." Galloway has promised to make life difficult for both Starmer and Sunak as campaigning gets under way for the UK general election later this year. Putting aside their parties' differences, Starmer and Sunak have come together to support Israel which could alienate young Britons, both white and ethnic minorities. It could make the result of the general election less predictable. It's not only British politicians who are under threat of violence. Crime in London has soared. Young knife-carrying gangs on mopeds snatch expensive watches, mobile phones and other personal effects. Several Indian tourists speak of being robbed in broad daylight in central London. According to a Sky News report: "India's business elite feel they have to look over their shoulder while visiting areas such as Mayfair in London due to the risk of being mugged. The theft of high-value timepieces sold on the black market has become a criminal enterprise in the UK capital in recent years with one former watch dealer telling Sky News it is 'more lucrative than drugs'." "High-profile targets include former world boxing champion Amir Khan, who was forced to hand over his £70,000 Franck Muller watch in a gunpoint robbery in east London." The man blamed for the descent of London into a crime-laden metropolis is mayor Sadiq Khan. On his watch crime in London has soared. British tourism authorities have issued a warning to London police that foreign holiday-makers have safer cities to visit in Europe other than London and more action is needed to make the city safer for tourists. The demographics of London are changing rapidly. According to the latest census, British whites now comprise only 30 per cent of London's population. Other European whites permanently resident in London account for another 20 per cent. The balance 50 per cent are ethnic minorities from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, China and the Caribbean.



Despite favourable tailwinds and a visibly rudderless political opposition it is to the credit of the Prime Minister that he has neither taken the electorate for granted, nor left room for overconfidence to creep in within his party. Image: PTI

The battle for the general elections 2024 in India has started well before the formal announcement of the poll schedule by the Election Commission. With the Narendra Modi-led BJP releasing its first list of candidates, the race to control the Lok Sabha is off to an early start for the ruling dispensation while the Opposition continues to flounder from blunder to blunder. The deft manner in which key regional alliances have been struck by the BJP even as the Congress witnesses an exodus of leaders points to the stark divergence in confidence levels between the two political formations. By now it ought to be clear that the I.N.D.I. alliance is a non-starter in most states with the failure to coordinate seat sharing. Barring the deep south, the opposition alliance is not much of a factor in most states. A key leading indicator of the direction in which the political winds are blowing is the steady flow of talent towards the BJP. If the first list of candidates released by the BJP is anything to go by, a generational shift is underway with several veterans bowing out of the electoral race.

62 years since Indo-China War

The year 2024 could mark the proverbial "anniversary" of the fateful 1962 China's aggression on India. Sixty-two years will have passed since our northern neighbour sought territories that history, and even later-day detente, had proclaimed as rightfully India's. Deliberation and debate can continue until 2062 about how a conference in Simla in 1914 determined a line, and the huff with which Ivan Chen, the Chinese plenipotentiary, left was otherwise a tripartite cordial. History, at this point, must be revisited. The two most important aspects of the meeting in the then British India retreat were that Tibet was free. The roof of the world had an emissary in Lonchen Shatra. Indeed, Shatra signed the Simla (readers must note that I am using the spelling of the hill sta-



tion as it was in 1914!) Conference document, which not only outlined inner and outer Tibet in unambiguous terms but also endorsed Sir Henry McMahon's Line, which determined the border between India and Tibet. Much of historiography will also ponder aspects such as why Major Bob Khatting and his posse of the noble Assam Riflemen "liberated" Tawang only in 1951, decades after McMahon drew a thick-nibbed terrain line that today subtly corresponds to the Thagla Ridge as well as the "Watershed," which determines borders, boundaries and frontiers in the sense by

which the Westphalian concept came to be enacted. The fact that a newly-cast Peoples Republic of China, post its communist innards, invaded Tibet several years later cannot change the iron-clad nature of the border agreement between two sovereign entities: the fact that India achieved independence in 1947 and Tibet was conquered in 1951. The McMahon Line, although a soldier-diplomat drew it, will continue to confuse people worldwide, especially India and China. A 1914 quill continues to contest ground in terms of simple grazing expanse. But it is as inviolable as the 14th Parallel. Therefore, even as two powers exchange knights, rooks, and bishops, it must not behave sacrifices that incorporate destinies.

Why India is the best bet for big cats

Numbers tell an astonishing tale. India is one of the most densely populated nations in the world, with 481 people per sq km. China, with only marginally less people has less than one-third of India's density at 152 per sq km. The first five countries on the list are just city-states: Macau, Monaco, Singapore, Hong Kong and Gaza. Ranked 30th, India is the first really large country in that list with a high density; those above and below it (Tuvalu and Curacao) are tiny. The purpose of this peroration? To put in context, India's feat in safeguarding and increasing its complement of critical wildlife in the face of increasing pres-



sure on land due to population. This week India revealed that the numbers of another iconic 'big cat'—the leopard—have risen by 8 per cent overall, from 12,852 in 2018 to 13,874 in 2022, although several states have reported a decline. The actual number would be higher as the survey did not cover all

habitats. Also from 2018 to 2022 India's tiger population rose by nearly 24 per cent from 2,967 to around 3,682 though the figure is probably closer to 4,000 as not all tiger areas were included in that survey. India has 75 per cent of the world's population, most of them in 54 tiger reserves. India is also the last habitat of the Asiatic lion with around 600, all of them in Gujarat as well as 718 snow leopards—around 1/6 of the world's total number. And all four felines' numbers are rising here. A valid comparison would be the state of another big cat, the jaguar, in the Americas, whose population is currently estimated to be around

170,000. Their habitat once stretched from Texas, through central America down to Argentina but is now half that area. Brazil, with a population density of only 26 per sq km, has nearly half the world's jaguars, mostly in the Amazon jungle and the Pantanal bordering Bolivia and Paraguay. But jaguar numbers are falling. The US has around 30,000 pumas (also called cougars or mountain lions) and the species can be found across the Americas from Canada to Chile. So far they are not close to extinction as their numbers hover around the 60,000 figure but their habitat has shrunk by over 30 per cent.

2047 sets the tone



by Taboola Sponsored Links The minutiae of electoral arithmetic notwithstanding, the battle for 2024 is in many ways a battle over the next decades to realise a developed India by 2047. Recording a stunning 8.4% GDP growth during the third quarter of 2023-24, the economic tailwinds and geopolitical undercurrents seem to be working in concert to propel the country towards the goal. Recognising the significance of the moment, PM Modi's government has bet big on sunrise technology sectors that will fuel the Indian economy in the decades to come. In the last few weeks a slew of decisions by the government underscore the central role technology has come to occupy in Modi's vision for a Viksit Bharat by 2047. From announcing to the nation, the final shortlist of astronauts for India's first manned space mission Gaganyaan to approving the first semicon-

ductor fab to come up in the country, Modi's techno-nationalism is emerging as the crucial mantra in this race to 2047 with 2024 as an important stopover. Semiconductor investments spanning from the east in Assam to the west in Gujarat, underscore how Modi's thrust on a technology-driven economy has become a political priority. With the decision to completely liberalise the space sector opening up to a hundred percent in foreign direct investment (FDI), sunrise sectors are poised to play a crucial role in sustaining and further accelerating the economic momentum. Casting a wide social safety net has been a hallmark of Modi's techno-nationalism over the past decade. The results from this laser focus on keeping the socio-economic fabric intact is most visible in the declining levels of extreme poverty across India. For the first time the World Poverty

Clock, a monitoring tool of the World Data Lab based in Vienna, has estimated extreme poverty in India to be below three percent. Writing for the Brookings Institute, an American think tank, noted economist Surjit Bhalla alongside Karan Bhasin, observed that extreme poverty stands eliminated in India as commonly defined in international benchmarks. This important socio-economic milestone on the road to a developed India by 2047 comes on the eve of general elections with a confident PM Modi making his case to the voters for what he believes to be an imminent third term. It also comes at a time when the aspirational middle class in India is experiencing accelerating growth as witnessed in the rising levels of automotive ownership, mobile phone penetration and exponential growth in digital payments. In stark contrast to the decadal growth vision of the Modi led-BJP rooted in techno-nationalism, the narrative from the opposition continues to be regressive and lacking in a vision. Far from laying out a roadmap for a developed India, the political opposition's messaging has been a mish-mash of unsustainable entitlement programs bordering on fiscal irresponsibility and scorched earth politics of caste that is seeking to inflame social faultlines. The sullen petulance of the political opposi-

tion was most visible in its boycott of the pran pratishtha ceremony of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya on specious grounds, having completely misread the mood of the nation. Despite favourable tailwinds and a visibly rudderless political opposition it is to the credit of the Prime Minister that he has neither taken the electorate for granted, nor left room for overconfidence to creep in within his party. Borrowing a leaf from best practices in business management of setting wildly impossible goals, Prime Ministers' Modi exhortation of a stretch target of 370+ seats for the BJP in the Lok Sabha, not only challenges the rank and file with a clear and unambiguous goal but it also forces his electoral machinery to think out of the box in breaking new ground in states that have remained beyond the BJP's grasp. Underlying the push to engage first time voters is the realpolitik of this not only being one of the largest cohorts of first-time voters but also a group that practically has no memory of the lost decade during the UPA era. By locating the central narrative for the battle of 2024 within the decadal vision for a Viksit Bharat by 2047, Prime Minister Modi has made the election as much about the future of India's first-time voters as about "India being the Future" in a world divided by geo-political conflicts.

How failure of Nehru-Liaquat pact served as a starter for CAA

Even as the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) is set to be implemented, did the failure of the Nehru-Liaquat pact of 1950 play a key role as a starter of a 'benign and narrowly tailored legislation' aimed to protect the minorities in 'non secular' countries within our neighbourhood? The CAA provides that persons belonging to six minority communities, namely Hindus, Sikhs, Parsis, Buddhists, and Christians in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, who were compelled to seek shelter in India on grounds of religious persecution would no longer be treated as illegal migrants. Liaquat Ali Khan was the prime minister of Pakistan when he and Indian premier Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru signed an agreement in Delhi in 1950, commonly called the Nehru-Liaquat pact. The accord was signed to protect religious minorities in each other's territories. Under the Nehru-Liaquat pact, forced conversions were unrecognised, and minority rights were accorded complete equality of citizenship and a full sense of security with respect to life, culture, freedom of speech, and worship. However, Pakistan quickly went back on its promise. Liaquat Ali was assassinated in October 1951. When the holy relic in



Hazratbal, Srinagar, was stolen on January 3, 1964, there were large-scale disturbances in East Pakistan [now Bangladesh], leading to the loss of lives, arson, and looting targeted at the minority community. Even though the holy relic was recovered the next day, communal disturbances went on. In fact, responding to a calling attention motion in the Lok Sabha, the then Union Home Minister Gulzari Lal Nanda said that while India was implementing the Nehru-Liaquat pact, Pakistan was not doing its part.

Regarding minorities in Pakistan, Nanda [who twice served as caretaker prime minister of India after the deaths of Nehru and Lal Bahadur Shastri] said India cannot shut its eyes to those "who were part of ourselves, with whom we have ties of blood and who are our relations and friends and that we can not turn our face against sufferings, the torture of their bodies and spirit and all that they are undergoing there." This was the time Nehru was prime minister and sitting in parliament when his home minister stated,

"If they [the Hindu minority in Pakistan] find it impossible to breathe the air of security in their country and they feel they must leave it, then we can not bar their way. We have no heart to tell them, 'You go on staying there and be butchered.' Three days later, Nehru suffered a paralytic stroke on his left side in Bhubaneswar, prompting Nanda to temporarily assume the executive responsibilities of ailing Prime Minister Nehru. A ministry of home affairs document on CAA quotes Nehru's 'Tryst with Destiny' speech delivered at midnight of the country's independence as saying, "We think also of our brothers and sisters who have been cut off from us by political boundaries and who unhappily can not share at present in the freedom that has come. They are of us and will remain of us whatever may happen, and we shall be sharers of their good and ill fortune alike..." The CAA has excluded Ahmadias, Shias, Bahais, Hazaras, Jews, Baloch, and Atheist communities on the grounds that persecu-

Medical seat domicile rule of T'gana flawed: SC

Delhi : The

Supreme Court criticized the Telangana government's domicile policy, which requires students to have attended Classes 9-12 in the state to be eligible for state quota medical seats through NEET, saying it was distant from reality. Many students now study in Kota for Class 11 and 12 to get better coaching for medical and engineering entrance exams. Should they be denied admission because they are not Telangana residents? "CJI BR Gavai, Justices K Vinod Chandran and Joymalya Bagchi asked. "You must have a humane approach." Such students should not be harassed. Students whose parents are from Telangana are entitled for state quota seats regardless of where they finished Class 11 and 12, "CJI warned, "Either



you (the govt) rectify the matter, or we will set it right." Advocate Raghenth Basant told the bench that the domicile bar has created a sensitive situation for kids whose parents were born in Telangana and have lived there.

Children of a Kerala resident posted in Telangana for four years who complete Class 9-12 in Telangana are eligible for state quota medical seats. He said youngsters who study outside Telangana despite their parents being natural citizens cannot apply for state quota medical seats.

Hindu University establishes public policy institute

Delhi: Hindu College at Delhi University has set itself apart from other Indian universities by creating a public policy lab. Officials have stated that the goal is to include real-world policymaking into both undergraduate and graduate programs. With the goal of democratizing and decentralizing the process of knowledge generation, the lab is designed to serve as a hub for policy simulations, applied research, and field-based insights. This will bring

CEO tells DUSU hopefuls to submit bond and affidavit, no deposit required

Delhi : The DUSU Election Commission has made it clear that all that is needed to run for student union office in the forthcoming elections is an affidavit and a Rs 1 lakh surety bond. Neither the school nor their own bank accounts will require them to deposit this sum. It is sufficient for a candidate to submit an affidavit and a surety bond, stated Chief Election Officer Prof. Raj Kishor Sharma during a news conference. Neither the university nor their account will request the payment



of this sum. He emphasized that the goal of this measure was to increase clarity and simplicity. In addition, the presiding officer, Dr. Rajesh Singh, emphasized the Election Commission's dedication to holding fair and free elections and urged all parties involved to work

together. While outlining the DUSU 2025-26 election program and code of conduct, Sharma made sure to mention that campaigning with hand-made posters is strictly forbidden and can only be done on dedicated "Democracy Walls."

Assess UV technology in sewage treatment, NGT directs IIT Delhi

Delhi : National Green Tribunal (NGT) asked IIT Delhi to examine the effectiveness of UV technology in sewage treatment and directed the DPCC to take punitive action against 14 STPs, which, as per a report, failed to meet the standards.

A tribunal

bench, headed by NGT chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava, in an order took notice of a report by Delhi Jal Board (DJB).

The report stated that of 37 STPs in the city, seven were yet to be installed with a disinfection system, four had not installed any sys-

tem, while among others, 15 had deployed UV and 11 had chlorination-based disinfection systems to treat bacteria in sewage before discharging the treated water into drains. For those yet to be installed, the process was initiated or tenders awarded.

Delhi dominates India's top college list

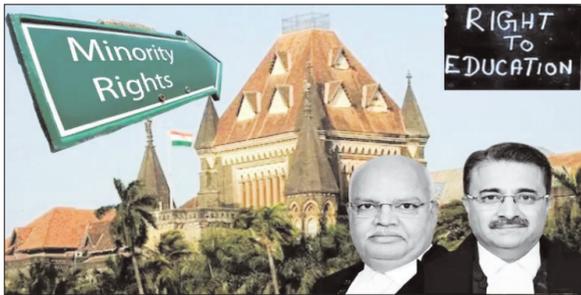
Delhi : Delhi University's Hindu College has topped the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2025 list, followed by Miranda House, Hans Raj, Kirori Mal and St Stephen's, emerging as the top five colleges in the country. Delhi University (DU) also recorded its best-ever performance in the Universities category, rising to fifth position from last year's sixth. It advanced to 12th place in the Research Institutions list and retained the 15th spot overall. Vice Chancellor Yogesh Singh called the achievement "a landmark moment", crediting the collective efforts of faculty, students, alumni and staff. Hindu College Principal Anju Srivastava said the recognition reflected the college's focus on holistic education. "We have created an ecosystem where students get opportunities for research, innovation and practical exposure. Under NEP reforms, they are pursuing interests beyond the classroom with flexibility and industry linkages," she told. Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) secured the second spot among universities. Vice Chancellor Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit said the ranking was a matter of great pride, highlighting JNU's model of "excellence with equity and innovation with inclusion".

CBSE and NCB to Raise Drug Abuse Awareness

Delhi : Together, the NCB and the Central Board of Secondary Education are working to eliminate drug use from schools and raise public awareness about the dangers of substance misuse. The CBSE board headquarters hosted an agreement signing event. The CBSE announced in an official statement that the two organizations have reached an agreement that will allow them to work together on various projects. These projects will include community outreach, counselling services for students and parents, e-modules on drug prevention, capacity-building workshops for teachers and counsellors, and quarterly awareness programs.

SC: Why are minority institutions excluded from RTE?

Delhi : The Supreme Court said its 2014 verdict by a five-judge constitution bench that the Right to Education (RTE) Act did not apply to religious and linguistic minority educational institutions "strikes at the heart of good quality universal elementary education, its consequences are far-reaching" and should be reconsidered. A two-judge bench forwarded a bundle of Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra appeals on whether minority-run schools required passing the Teacher Eligibility Test to CJI to consider advancing the matter to a larger bench. It claimed exempting minority institutions from the Act would erode inclusion. Minority schools are exempt



from teacher appointment and free education for underprivileged children laws. The SC court noted its 2014 verdict basically divided RTE under Article 21A from collective rights under Article 30(1), which allow minority communities to construct and run educational institutions.

The Pramati Educational

and Cultural Trust (case) exempts minority schools, whether aided or unaided, from the RTE Act using clause (1) of Article 30 of the Constitution, which we disagree was correctly decided. Thus, a revisiting of the ruling seems inevitable "Justice Dipankar Datta, who wrote the bench verdict with Justice Manmohan, stated.

Companies in the electronics industry are the most welcoming to LGBTQIA+ apprentices.

Delhi : A whopping 71% of businesses in the electronics sector have shown a great desire to hire LGBTQIA+ apprentices, making it one of the most welcoming sectors for this demographic. Overall, 64 percent of Indian companies are welcoming of LGBTQIA+ apprentices, so this is just one more example of a larger trend. The January-March TeamLease Degree Apprenticeship Outlook Report emphasizes this change. The majority of electronics and telecom firms (71%) are eager to hire LGBTQIA+ apprentices.

Supreme Court asks Centre, NCERT on transgender-inclusive

Delhi :The Supreme Court notified NCERT, the Union government, and six states to respond to a plea to integrate transgender inclusive sex education in school curricula. Chief Justice of India (CJI) Bhushan R Gavai and Justice K Vinod Chandran sent notices to the Centre, NCERT, and Maharashtra, Punjab, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu on the case brought by 16-year-old Delhi student Kaavya Mukherjee Saha.

Class 12 student from Vasant Valley School in Delhi filed the case, com-



plaining about the lack of transgender-inclusive Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in NCERT and SCERT textbooks. The student wants binding gender sensitisation and transgender-inclusive CSE rules in all schools nationwide. Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, representing Saha,

told the bench that NCERT had recently admitted in a Right to Information (RTI) reply that it had "no information" on integrating CSE into school education, despite a 2024 Supreme Court order. Saha's petition claimed that NCERT and most state councils of educational research and training (SCERTs) have failed to include structured or examinable content on gender identity, gender diversity, and sex and gender despite Sections 2(d) and 13 of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.

Pradhan Mantri Kalyan Yojana relies on NCERT

Delhi : Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan voiced his faith in NCERT's ability to push educational reforms and bring about a paradigm change in teaching and learning, despite the fact that the council has been criticized for its textbook updates. In his support of NCERT's initiatives to implement the reforms proposed in NE, Pradhan compared it to a "Gyan Kumbh" that has had a profound impact on the lives of many Indians. At its 65th Foundation Day, Pradhan emphasized that NCERT needs to take the lead in transforming India's education system by adopting a reform-oriented and tech-driven role. It has come a long way since its start, especially in terms of education's role in nation-building. He emphasized that



the organization needed to "don a new avatar" that was reform-oriented, tech-driven, and focused on best practices in order to embrace its role as a change leader. With unwavering conviction, Pradhan declared that NCERT will "bring a paradigm shift in teaching and learning and play a key role in actualising the goal of Samridhh Bharat." "Confident that NCERT will continue shaping critical and creative thinking in the 'Amrit Peedhi,'" stated the professor.

DU teachers raise issues of unoccupied reserved seats

Delhi: Teachers from Delhi University brought up issues with professor recruitment in front of a Parliamentary Committee, claiming that the SC/ST populations were marginalized on a systematic level. Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. They paid a visit to DU and had in-depth interviews with eighty people, including faculty, stu-

IIT Madras, IISc B'luru, IIT Bombay top 3 in NIRF 2025

Delhi : The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras has topped the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2025 for the seventh consecutive year, and also emerged the top engineering college in India for the 10th year since the rankings were introduced in 2016. Like last year, the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru is ranked second in the overall ranking, and IIT Bombay third. The first non-engineering institution in the Top 10 of the overall ranking is the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi at eighth (seventh last year); the IITs at Delhi, Kanpur, Kharagpur, and



Roorkee (which swapped places with AIIMS) hold the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh places. Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi) and Banaras Hindu University (Varanasi) have moved up to the ninth and tenth spots, respectively. Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan and minister of state for education Sukanta Majumdar

announced the overall rankings and rankings across 17 categories for higher education institutions (HEIs).

The categories include engineering, management, medicine, university, law, research, and agriculture. There is also a category just for colleges. A total of 14,163 higher education institutions participated in the 10th edition of NIRF Rankings.

BCCI to hold AGM on Sept 28 to elect president, secretary, other office bearers

Delhi : The Board of Control for Cricket in India will conduct elections for the post of all its office-bearers - president, vice-president, secretary, joint secretary and treasurer, in Mumbai on September 28. In a notice, seen by to all the state associations, BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia stated, "Notice is hereby given that the 94th Annual General Meeting (hereinafter referred to as "AGM") of the Board of Control for Cricket in India ("BCCI"), which will be held at 11.30 AM on September 28, 2025, at BCCI headquarters at Mumbai, to transact the business as per the agenda provided below." "The minutes of the 93rd Annual General Meeting held on September 29, 2024, the minutes of the Special General Meeting held on January 1, 2025, and the minutes of the Special General Meeting held 2025, are attached herewith. Rest of the agenda papers will follow shortly. You are kindly requested to attend the meeting," Saikia concluded.

NMC asks medical colleges to deploy PG students in flood-affected areas

Delhi : The National Medical Commission (NMC) has asked all medical colleges across the country to deploy post-graduate medical students in flood-affected areas. The deployment would be a part of the district residency programme, according to its recent directive. The directive states: "In view of recent floods/disaster-like situations in northern states/UTs, there is an urgent requirement for healthcare professionals as part of the ongoing relief measures.

Army issues tender for highly mobile air defence system

NEW DELHI: India kicked off the acquisition process for three highly mobile regiments of indigenous quick reaction surface-to-air missile (QRSAM) systems that can detect and destroy aircraft, attack helicopters, drones, rockets and missiles at ranges of over 30km, at a cost of about Rs 30,000 crore.

The Army this week issued the tender or 'request for proposal' for the three regiments of the system named "Anant Shastra". QRSAM offers 360° radar, jamming shield, mobile launchers Anant Shastra has been developed by DRDO and will be co-produced by defence PSUs Bharat Electronics



and Bharat Dynamics. The move comes after the intense cross-border hostilities with Pakistan from May 7 to 10 under Operation Sindoor. The Army Air Defence (AAD) has projected a requirement of 11 such QRSAM regiments in the long term, each with nine firing units, while the IAF at present is looking to induct three QRSAM squadrons, as was first reported by TOI. With missile launchers, 360-degree radars, automated command and control

systems and all-weather tracking systems mounted on high-mobility 8x8 vehicles, the QRSAM systems are designed to provide air defence cover to tanks, infantry combat vehicles and artillery guns. "With their 'search, track and fire at short halt' capabilities, the QRSAM systems will be able to operate on the move with mechanised columns across plains, deserts and mountains both on the western (Pakistan) and northern (China) fronts.

Putin praises India's highest economic growth rate in world

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin held a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, reaffirming the strong and time-tested nature of relations between Moscow and New Delhi last week. Putin disclosed details of the exchange during a meeting with members of the Russian govt, according to the official website of the Kremlin. Putin underlined the stability of Russian-Indian relations, describing them as "based on a national consensus." He went on to commend India's achievements in governance and economic growth under Modi's leadership. "Under the leadership of Prime Minister



Modi, India is pursuing a completely independent, sovereign policy and, most importantly, is achieving very good results in the economic sphere. India is demonstrating the highest economic growth rates among the world's major economies," Putin said. As reported by TV BRICS, the call came shortly after Putin sent a congratulatory telegram to Modi on his 75th birth-

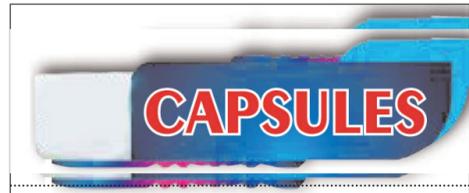
day. In his message, he emphasised the Indian leader's personal contribution to strengthening bilateral ties. "You (Narendra Modi) are making a great personal contribution to strengthening the special privileged strategic partnership between our countries and developing mutually beneficial Russian-Indian cooperation in various areas," Putin noted.

Health and wealth benefit from flexible work hours

Delhi: The Economic Survey supports allowing manufacturers to average legally capped working hours over three weeks or longer rather than week-by-week. Industry captains want larger hours. It claims that agile regulations will assist management satisfy production

demands and grow."New Labour Laws are an improvement. With flexible legislation and competent implementation, firms may develop and create more jobs. "They protect labor rights and boost wages," it stated. The Survey complained that labor laws like the

Factories Act (1948) limit working hours to 48 per week, whereas other nations "allow these caps to be averaged over multiple days and weeks". It said India's working hour laws impede manufacturers from satisfying demand and competing globally.



Sebi to attract rural investors with MF-life insurance



Delhi: Sebi chief Madhabi Puri Buch stated that the regulator will offer mutual fund schemes with term life insurance. She added the FDA will soon release a combo product consultation paper. Puri Buch said the MF-insurance combo targets investors, particularly rural ones, where SIPs have great potential but low investment values. "We are now proposing to come out with a consultation paper again, to try and include insurance pure and simple vanilla life, term life insurance, along with our mutual funds, which is our main product for financial inclusion, and so that we are able to go, including to people where we have very, very low value SIPs coming from the hinterland, and to be able to offer them a combo product of term life insurance along with the mutual fund investment," said Buch. UTI Mutual Fund offers life insurance and tax savings. This 1971 program has a portfolio value of Rs 5,434 crore in December 2024. Even if existing investors can invest, UTIMF's website revealed no new applications for the schemes.

AAP slams Rahul's silence on activist's arrest

NEW DELHI: The Aam Aadmi Party and Congress crossed swords on Saturday, with AAP questioning the silence of Rahul Gandhi over the detention of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk under the stringent NSA and Congress hitting back by saying AAP was on the verge of collapse.

In a post on X, AAP said, "India's renowned social worker and scientist Sonam Wangchuk has been imprisoned by Modi's dictatorial govt on a false charge of sedition, and the country's so-called opposition leader has maintained silence on the issue." The Arvind Kejriwal-headed party further said, "Rahul Gandhi, who asks how many of our aircraft were lost in Operation Sindoor, why is he silent on Sonam Wangchuk



now? Is Rahul Gandhi a BJP agent." Hitting back, Congress social media head Supriya Shrinete said in a post on X, "Arvind Kejriwal ji, your party is on the verge of collapse. Do you know why? Because the foundation of your party was laid by the RSS from behind the scenes. You managed to

seize power by levelling fabricated accusations against the Congress, but the very entity that created you has now swallowed you up." Meanwhile, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday condemned Centre's "pathetic handling" of the situation and arrest of Wangchuk.

Foreign insurers gain ownership via 100% FDI

Delhi: 100% FDI will attract new capital, as multinationals can now invest without worrying about control or Indian partners. The capital gains tax rate of 12% applies to ULIP proceeds, which do not benefit from tax exemptions, instead of the higher marginal tax rate of 30%. Crop cover reinsurance is exempt from service tax, and the threshold for tax deduction at source on insurance commission has risen from Rs 15,000 to Rs 20,000. M Nagraju, financial services secretary, said the FDI relaxation was one of the suggested insurance measures.

BJP objects to Kaaba song at Bengal pandal in CM presence

NEW DELHI: BJP Saturday objected to the singing of a song with reference to Kaaba and Madinah at a Durga pandal in West Bengal in the presence of CM Mamata Banerjee, slamming it as a "deep shadow of extremist and appeasement politics" over Hindu traditions. BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi also raised the issue of Booker prize-winning author Banu Mushtaq inaugurating the Dasara festival in Mysuru recently, and wondered if it was all a part of INDIA bloc's



efforts to "eradicate" Sanatan Dharma. Trivedi asked critics of the waqf law brought by Modi govt, who have objected to the provision on the presence of non-Muslims in managing waqf assets, if they consider the rendition of a song glorifying another religion in the Durga pandal as "sweet, secular music". There is nothing wrong in eulogising a religion but doubts grow as it is being done in a Durga pandal in the presence of the state's CM, he told reporters. BJP's IT department head and its co-incharge for West Bengal, Amit Malviya, also slammed Banerjee for the choice of song in the

Public infrastructure spending rises, but private sector participation falls

Delhi: The 2024-25 Economic Survey delivered to Parliament found that India still struggles with infrastructure development despite government efforts. The union government's capital investment on major infrastructure sectors grew 38.8% from FY20 to FY24, although private sector participation in core areas remained low, according to the survey. "India needs a continued step-up of infrastructure investment over the next two decades to sustain a high rate of growth," the research says. The National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) program has met its FY22-24 objective of 4.30 lakh crore with transactions totaling 3.86 lakh crore. In Q1 FY25, average monthly capital spend-



The National Critical Mineral Mission gets 16,300 crore from the cabinet

Delhi: The Union Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, launched the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) with a 16,300 crore expenditure and a projected 18,000 crore investment from PSUs and other businesses. "Several crucial decisions have created new scientific and technology prospects for our children, future generations, and the economy. Minister told a Cabinet briefing that PM Modi the National Critical Minerals Mission today.

ing dropped to 0.60 lakh crore from 0.66 lakh crore in July-November 2024. Railway network expansion remained constant at 2,000 kilometers, with 17 Vande Bharat train pairs and 228 carriages added.

Price pressure caps senior citizen health premium hikes at 10%

As medicare policy rates skyrocket for seniors over 60, Irdai has ordered insurers not to raise senior people's health premiums by more than 10% without approval. Before canceling senior health coverage, insurers must get regulator clearance. As healthcare prices rise, insurers are



advised to standardize hospital empanelment and negoti-

ate package rates like the government's PM Jan Arogya Yojana. Irdai reported a large increase in prices for various health insurance policies for subscribers over 60. Premium rates depend on projected claims, administrative expenditures, and acquisition costs, the regulator said. Private

insurance doesn't standardize hospitalization expenses, unlike PMJAY, which negotiates consistent package rates, which drives these rises. Seniors have reported virtually doubling their costs when entering a higher age category during an insurer's pricing change.

Ladakh unrest: Sonam arrest sparks outcry

SRINAGAR: Authorities in Ladakh allowed Saturday a four-hour curfew relaxation in Leh amid public outrage over the arrest of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk and police defending the use of force that left four people dead and about 80 wounded during clashes on Sept 24. Magsaysay Award winner Wangchuk was held Friday under NSA and shifted to Jodhpur central jail in Rajasthan, a prison known for housing gangsters, terrorists, film stars, and convicts like Asaram. Sources said he has been placed in a sepa-



rate cell, kept in complete isolation, and attended to directly by jail staff. Authorities refused to disclose reasons for his transfer to the high-security desert facility. Police accused Wangchuk of making "provocative" remarks

during his Sept 9-24 hunger strike for Sixth Schedule status and statehood for Ladakh, and of derailing talks with govt. The curfew was clamped after violence during a shutdown called by Leh Apex Youth, part of the Leh Apex Body — an

Norms to stop annoying calls and surrogate advertisements next month

Delhi: Thirteen businesses, including significant producers of alcohol, tobacco, and paan masala, have received notifications from the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) for using surrogate advertising. The dishonest practice of using the

alliance of political and religious groups. Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) accused authorities of "shoot-on-sight" firing without warning and with intent to kill. Ladakh DGP SD Singh Jamwal

same brand name to promote products that are prohibited from direct advertising is known as "surrogate advertising." Pralhad Joshi, the union minister of consumer affairs, stated that the CCPA is creating regulations to control the countered: "Security forces fired in self-defence to stop the attack... CRPF deployment was not pre-planned. They helped save lives as some protesters tried to set security quarters.

BIS raids Amazon warehouses for dangerous, non-certified products



Delhi: Amazon, BigBasket, and Flipkart have been warned by the Bureau of Indian Standards BIS for breaking certification requirements. BIS, part of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distributions, visited Amazon and Flipkart warehouses and seized uncertified merchandise. BIS sued responsible parties under the BIS Act 2016 after material was seized.

BIS sued the entities twice for violations. Amazon mandates compliance with laws, rules, and policies for all merchants. "We build unique technologies to prevent harmful products from being listed and ensure our selection matches industry standards. We remove non-compliant products and contact sellers, producers, and government organizations for more information to keep our clients safe."

At an Amazon warehouse in Lucknow, BIS

seized 215 toys and 24 hand blenders without BIS certification. operation at the e-commerce giant's Gurugram factory uncovered 58 aluminum foils, 34 metallic water bottles, 25 toys, 20 hand blenders, seven PVC cables, two food mixers, and 1 speaker without certification. At a Flipkart warehouse in Gurugram run by Instakart Services Pvt Ltd., authorities seized 534 stainless steel vacuum-insulated bottles, 134 toys, and 41 speakers that did not fulfill regulations. BIS investigations linked various non-certified products to Techvision International Pvt Ltd.

For a long time, Lifebuoy was a germ-fighter

Delhi: Lifebuoy, one of the top-selling soap brands in India that is worth more than 2,000 crore in sales, is getting a makeover. Citing declining sales in the 'hygiene soap' segment, a top executive at HUL said that Lifebuoy will now be positioned within the broader 'skin protection' category, moving beyond its traditional 'germ protection' focus. "It is a big transformation that we are doing on the brand and that entails pivoting the brand from the world of germ protection to the world of skin protection along with a change in packaging and new communication."

India-EU FTA talks continue: Key issues remain unresolved

The potential free trade agreement (FTA) and investment protection pact between India and the EU could be a "game changer" amid rising tariffs and market access restrictions in other regions, said EU Ambassador Herve Delphin. Speaking ahead of the 14th round of FTA negotiations in Brussels, Delphin acknowledged that talks remain "challenging" with several unresolved issues. The comments come after Prime Minister Narendra Modi and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen committed to concluding the trade deal by December 2025.

The EU is India's largest trading partner, with goods trade reaching \$135 billion in 2023-24. Delphin, addressing the Federation of European Business in India (FEBI) on Tuesday, highlighted the FTA's potential to open new opportunities and strengthen bilateral trade ties, particularly in light of trade disruptions caused by policies under the Trump administration. "The FTA can open new opportunities for EU and Indian businesses and create conditions to significantly increase our bilateral trade and investment," Delphin said. "While some countries are raising tariffs or otherwise closing their

markets, we should use the FTA to diversify trade, hedge against uncertainties and strengthen our supply chains," he further added at Federation of European Business in India (FEBI) on Tuesday, the script of which was released Saturday. EU Ambassador Herve Delphin also said the negotiating teams from India and the EU are working diligently on the free trade agreement (FTA). (It is) fair to say the negotiations are challenging and important issues remain to be solved. The 13th round earlier in September ended with the agreement of Commissioner.

Delhi Metro will add urban freight (cargo) services

Delhi: A DMRC spokeswoman said the Delhi Metro will include urban freight cargo services. "The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation DMRC and Blue Dart, a leading Indian express logistics service provider, have signed an urban logistics MoU.

This service is a strategic partnership between the DMRC and Blue Dart, India's leading express logistics operator. This first-ever South Asia Pacific effort strengthens the DMRC and Blue Dart's commitment to environmental stewardship and sus-

tainable logistics solutions. Under this agreement, Blue Dart will use metro train capacity to transfer time-sensitive freight faster and more reliably during off-peak hours. This novel approach decreases road traffic and pollution.



Gold, silver outlook for Diwali 2025: How high could prices go after 50% surge? Analysts weigh in

As Diwali 2025 approaches, gold and silver markets have shown remarkable performance, with increases of over 47% and 52% respectively this year. On the MCX, prices have exceeded Rs 1,18,000 per 10 grams, leading investors to speculate about further growth potential during the upcoming festive period. The 2025 precious metals surge has been driven by various factors including festival demand, accommodative central bank policies, global political tensions and sustained ETF investments, leading to unprecedented price levels. Silver prices have also risen significantly, trading above Rs 1.44 lakh per kg, with projections suggesting Rs 1.50 lakh by the festival period. Renisha Chainani of Augmont Research anticipates a "bullish-to-consolidation phase" during Diwali, noting that whilst recent gains might encourage profit-taking, the overall positive trend continues. "Gold has surged past Rs 1,18,000 on MCX while silver trades above Rs 1,44,000, supported by safe-haven demand amid the US government shutdown, tariff uncertainty, and expectations of further Fed rate cuts," Chainani forecasts that by October 21, gold could reach \$3950-\$4000 internationally (Rs 1,20,000-Rs 1,22,000 on MCX), while silver might achieve \$49-\$50 (Rs 1,48,000-Rs 1,50,000), particularly if global tensions increase. She notes that "key drivers of bullishness include dovish Fed policy, a weaker US dollar, continued ETF inflows, and robust Indian festive demand."

India's services, manufacturing's export potential untapped; FDI a concern: World Bank South Asia chief economist

India's services and manufacturing exports hold significant untapped potential for overseas investors, according to Franziska Ohnsorge, Chief Economist for South Asia at the World Bank.

"I draw attention to two opportunities for investment. One is in services exports and the other is in goods exports because it's the export industry rather than tradable industries that foreign investors tend to be interested in," Ohnsorge told ANI on the sidelines of the Kautilya Economic Forum in New Delhi. She added that India's strong government readiness



for AI further strengthens this potential. Ohnsorge pointed to the rapid expansion of computer services exports, which surged 30 per cent following the launch of ChatGPT in November 2022, compared to a 10 per cent rise in overall services exports. "Computer services

exports have been soaring relative to average services exports since the introduction of ChatGPT in November 2022. So computer services exports have grown by 30 per cent, but overall services exports only by 10 per cent. There seem to be real opportunities in that sector," she said. On manufacturing, she underlined constraints posed by limited trade agreements and high tariffs on intermediate goods. "India currently has much fewer trade agreements than other emerging markets and developing economies and has higher tariffs on interme-

diated goods and this is something that holds back its manufacturing sector. So I'll show that if these trade agreements that are currently under negotiation materialise, it would increase the market access of India's manufacturing industry by multiples," she noted. India is currently negotiating free trade agreements (FTAs) with partners including the UK, EU, Oman, Canada, and members of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF). Bilateral trade discussions with the US are also ongoing. On investment trends, she observed that private investment growth in India.

Sebi approves LG Electronics' Rs 15,000-crore share sale

Delhi: LG Electronics' domestic unit has received regulatory approval for a Rs 15,000-crore public float and offer for sale, making it the second Korean company to go public after Hyundai. Hyundai Motor India was the first Korean business to launch a Rs 27,870.2-crore share sale on Dalal Street, the largest ever. The huge issue comes as over 45 Sebi-approved issuers have called off or delayed their issues due to the market collapse that began last October and contin-



ues. The indexes are down more than 18% since September 27, with investors losing almost Rs 70 trillion in share value and the market cap falling over Rs 112 trillion. The company has not specified the issue size, but a source said it is expected to be Rs 15,000 crore.

Last month,

the company began IPO roadshows. LG India will not receive any money from the public issuance, which is simply an OFS. Instead, the earnings will go to LG Life's Good. LG submitted preliminary paperwork with Sebi in December to sell 10.18 crore shares, or 15%, of its ownership.

"Speculative reports" should be avoided, warns RBI of IndusInd Bank's stability

Delhi: After IndusInd Bank disclosed inconsistencies in its derivatives portfolio and cautioned of a one-time impact to its net worth last week, the Reserve Bank of India reassured depositors that the bank's financial situation "remains satisfactory," putting their money at ease. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued a press release stating that the bank is "well-capitalised" and that its financial health is being continuously watched.

The message emphasised that the bank is not vulnerable to "speculative reports at this juncture" and encouraged depositors to have patience. According to the central bank, the bank



The lender's board and management to finish fixing the problem

has already hired an outside auditing firm to look over its systems and determine how serious any problems are based on what is already known to the public.

After informing all relevant parties, it ordered the lender's board and management to finish fixing

the problem by the month's end.

For the quarter ended December 31, 2024, IndusInd Bank had a strong capital adequacy ratio of 16.46% and a provision coverage ratio of 70.20%, which is higher than the 9% and 70% required by the RBI, respectively, according to the bank's auditor-

Inflation impact of raised MSP for Rabi crops limited

The latest Minimum Support Price (MSP) increases for six rabi crops will likely have a modest effect on retail inflation, according to The ICICI Bank Global Markets report. The analysis indicates that whilst MSP adjustments influence inflation, their effectiveness is determined by various

elements including buffer stock quantities, weather conditions, and supply chain reliability.

The report indicates that adequate reservoir levels and sufficient buffer stocks should maintain stable retail food prices throughout the remaining year, despite the increased

MSPs. "However, we expect muted MSP hikes, good buffer stocks and higher reservoir levels to keep retail prices low in the remainder of the year," the report added, as quoted by ANI. The government declared revised MSPs on October 1, 2025, for the 2026-27 rabi marketing season, implementing

increases between 4.0 per cent and 10.1 per cent for crops including wheat, barley, gram, lentils, mustard, and safflower. Following the Union Budget 2018-19 pledge, MSPs have been established at minimum 50 per cent above the all-India weighted average production costs.

Swadeshi Campaign' launch: Govt pushes to boost Indian textiles; domestic market

The ministry of textiles has launched the 'Swadeshi Campaign' to boost domestic demand for handloom, handicrafts, and textile products across India. The initiative, which will run for six to nine months, aims to reposition Indian textiles as symbols of pride, style, and heritage, particularly among urban youth and Gen Z consumers.

According to the government press release, the campaign's objectives include stimulating domestic textile consumption, empow-



ering weavers, artisans, and textile MSMEs, and aligning efforts with flagship government initiatives such as the PLI scheme for textiles, PM MITRA Parks, and One District One Product (ODOP). It will

also encourage institutional procurement, urging ministries, PSUs, and educational institutions to adopt Indian-made textiles for uniforms and furnishings. Amit Shah Sounds Big 'Swadeshi' Threat From

Bastar, Urges 140 Crore People To Adopt Local Products Awareness will be created through events, social media outreach, and partnerships with state governments. The campaign will run

under the slogan: " (Swadeshi fabric is the pride of the nation—this is India's identity). India's textile and clothing market, valued at \$179 billion in 2024, is expanding at an average annual growth rate of over 7 per cent. Household consumption accounts for 58 per cent of the domestic market and is growing at 8.19 per cent annually, while non-household consumption contributes 21 per cent with 6.79 per cent growth. With the government's continued initiatives.

Rohit Sharma's first comment after losing ODI captaincy to Shubman Gill

“Look, I love that team, loved playing with them and it's a journey that we were all into for many years,” Rohit said. “It's not about one year or two years of work

Dream

It was about getting into work from many years. We'd come so close to winning



NEW DELHI: In his first public remarks since being replaced as India's ODI captain, Rohit Sharma on Tuesday reflected on the journey that took India from heartbreak in the 2023 ODI World Cup final to back-to-back ICC titles — the 2024 T20 World Cup and the 2025 Champions Trophy. Speaking at the CEAT Cricket Rating awards in Mumbai, the veteran opener credited former head coach Rahul Dravid and the players'

collective belief for the team's transformation. “Look, I love that team, loved playing with them and it's a journey that we were all into for many years,” Rohit said. “It's not about one year or two years of work. It was about getting into work from many years. We'd come so close to winning that trophy many times but we couldn't just get

over the line. That is where everyone decided that we need to do something different.” The 38-year-old skipper emphasised how India's success stemmed from a mindset shift that Dravid and he had instilled during their partnership. “There's always a thought of doing that and then actually going and doing that. It cannot be

done by one or two players. We needed everyone to buy into that thought, which was good from everyone,” Rohit explained. While accepting a memento for India's Champions Trophy triumph earlier this year, Rohit spoke passionately about the process that defined their recent ICC dominance. “All the guys who took part in that

competition got into that thought process of how to win games and how to challenge ourselves and not be complacent or take anything for granted. Those were the qualities we tried to bring in, and we thought it was a good method of just going and doing that repeatedly,” he said.

The veteran batter said the consistency and unity within the side became India's biggest strength. “Everyone enjoyed that process. Once we got over the line when we won the first game, we completely put that game aside and then started focusing on the next one. That was really good from the team and that is something that helped me.

Unbelievable umpiring blunder! 14-year-old Vaibhav pleads with umpire

India U19 batter Vaibhav Suryavanshi was controversially given out for 20 in the second Youth Test against Australia U19. The 14-year-old prodigy, who previously scored a century, protested the umpire's decision. Earlier, India's bowling attack, led by Henil and Khilan Patel, dismissed Australia for 135, giving India a slight first-innings lead. Vaibhav Sooryavanshi



of India bats during the Men's U19 One Day International series match between Australia and India at Ian Healy Oval on September 21, 2025 in Brisbane, Australia. (Photo by Albert Perez/Getty Images)

India U19 batter Vaibhav Suryavanshi was left stunned after being given out in controversial fashion during the second Youth Test against Australia U19 in Mackay on Tuesday. The 14-year-old visibly protested the decision, signaling to the umpire that there was a clear gap between bat and ball. The teen prodigy was dismissed for 20 off the bowling of Charles Lachmund.

'They will not shake hands'

He highlighted India's superior skill, spin strength, and team depth. Karim also confirmed the Indian team will not shake hands with Pakistani players, mirroring the men's team's stance, emphasizing focus on cricket despite the current political situation. “They will not shake hands’.

Rohit Sharma makes first public appearance since ODI captaincy axe



NEW DELHI: Former India captain Rohit Sharma made his first public appearance since being stripped of the ODI captaincy — and he did it in trademark style. Attending the 27th edition of the CEAT Cricket Rating Awards in Mumbai on Tuesday, Rohit looked leaner, fitter, and more determined than ever, sending a strong message to selectors that he remains ready for the international stage. The veteran opener, who led India to two successive ICC titles — the 2024 T20 World Cup and the 2025 Champions Trophy earlier this year — stole the spotlight at the glitzy event.

Receiving a special recognition award from Sunil Gavaskar, Rohit charmed fans and experts alike with his renewed energy and physical transformation. Rohit's fitness has often been a talking point,

Charmed

Rohit charmed fans and experts alike with his renewed energy and transformation

with critics quick to scrutinise his appearance. But on Tuesday night, the 38-year-old looked in peak form — slim, sharp, and confident — a clear statement of intent to those questioning his readiness. Having shed noticeable weight, Rohit's transformation was evident as he interacted warmly with fans and the media. His focus, however, remained on cricket. “I love playing against them. I love going to Australia. It's a very challenging country to play cricket. People there love the game as well,” Rohit said about the upcoming ODI series starting October 19.

'I want to punch him': Pakistan spinner Abrar



Pakistan spinner Abrar Ahmed has once again found himself in the spotlight, but this time for comments made off the field. During a recent appearance on a Pakistani YouTube channel, the 27-year-old leg-spinner was asked which cricketer he would like to face in a boxing ring. Responding to the question — “Konsa aisa player hai duniya ka jo aap chahate hai ki apke saamne ho aur aap boxing karey, jispe bada gussa aata ho?” — Abrar replied, “Main chahta hu ki main boxing karu aur khada Shikhar Dhawan ho saamne (Which player do you want to want to face in the boxing ring, and you have a lot of anger against? - I want to box and want Shikhar Dhawan in front of me)” The comment, referring to former India opener Shikhar Dhawan, quickly went viral after a clip of the interview surfaced online. Fans shared

mixed reactions, with some calling it a light-hearted jibe and others viewing it as unnecessary provocation. Abrar represented Pakistan in the recently concluded Asia Cup, where India defeated Pakistan in the final. His statement has gained attention especially after the fiery exchanges and celebrations that marked the India-Pakistan clash in Dubai. The Asia Cup final was a memorable one for India, who clinched their ninth title with a five-wicket win. Chasing 147, India recovered from 20/3 as Tilak Varma's unbeaten 69 and Shivam Dube's 33 powered the team home with two balls to spare. Earlier, Pakistan had collapsed from 113/1 to 146 all out, with Kuldeep Yadav's 4/30 triggering the slide. Abrar, who took 1/29 in his four overs, also drew attention for his signature wicket celebration.

Why Prithvi Shaw grabbed Musheer Khan's collar and almost hit him with the bat

Prowess

Prithvi Shaw showcased his batting prowess for his new side Maharashtra



Prithvi Shaw's century for Maharashtra against his former team Mumbai in a Ranji Trophy warm-up match ended in a heated exchange with bowler Musheer Khan. Following a dismissal, alleged sledging led to a confrontation, though Maharashtra's captain downplayed the incident as a practice match occurrence. The reason behind the heated fight between Maharashtra opener Prithvi Shaw and Mumbai all-rounder Musheer Khan on the

opening day of the warm-up fixture ahead of the Ranji Trophy 2025-26 season has been revealed. Prithvi Shaw showcased his batting prowess for his new side Maharashtra by scoring a century against his former team Mumbai in a Ranji Trophy warm-up match on Tuesday. The 25-year-old reached his hundred off 140 balls and shared a massive

305-run opening stand with Arshin Kulkarni. Shaw's innings ended at 181, but not before a brief heated exchange with his ex-teammates. The confrontation occurred after Shaw was caught at deep fine leg attempting a slog sweep off Musheer Khan. Tensions flared momentarily with Mumbai players, but the umpire stepped in to calm the situation, allowing Shaw to walk

off. Maharashtra were 430 for three at the stumps on Day 1. Cricbuzz reported that Musheer allegedly sledged Prithvi Shaw by saying, “Thank you.” The send-off angered Shaw, who also tried to grab Musheer's collar and also swing his bat at the Mumbai player. “It's a practice match. They are all former teammates. Such things happen. It's all okay now and there is no issue,” said Ankit Bhawne, the captain of the Maharashtra side. Having recently switched from Mumbai to Maharashtra, Shaw had already hinted at his intent with the new team by scoring 111 against Chhattisgarh in the Buchi Babu tournament.

'Kagiso Rabada will go down as one of the greats of the game'

Privileged

I mean, statistically, that speaks for itself. I was having a conversation



Mumbai: Hailing Kagiso Rabada, South African captain Temba Bavuma said he feels “super privileged” to have the country's leading fast bowler in the team, adding that “KG will definitely go down as one of the greats of the game.” “As a captain, I am super, super privileged to be able to call upon him. He takes charge of the fast bowling group, sets the stan-

dards, and others follow him. I'm sure he'll probably continue for a couple more years, as long as the hunger is there, but KG will definitely go

down as one of the greats of the game,” Bavuma said about Rabada, who has taken 336 wickets in 71 Tests @21.74. Bavuma made

the remarks while speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the CEAT Cricket Rating Awards in Mumbai on Tuesday. The 30-year-old pacer was instrumental in

South Africa's World Test Championship final win over Australia at Lord's in June, taking five for 51 and four for 59 to finish with a match haul of nine for 110, bowling the Aussies out for 212 in both innings. “I mean, statistically, that speaks for itself. I was having a conversation with Hashim Amla a couple of days ago, and he spoke about Dale Steyn,

saying Kagiso is at the same level as Steyn, arguably even a bit better. That conversation speaks volumes for a guy like KG,” Bavuma added. “Statistically, it's his character that stands out — competitiveness and the hunger to remain the world's No.1 bowler,” he complimented. Bavuma termed South Africa's WTC final triumph a “massive step forward”.

“Rajkot was the first time I saw him play. And then in Ranchi, he played a fantastic knock

Dhruv Jurel's rise from Agra to Team India: Batting temperament of Dravid and safe hands like Saha



NEW DELHI: Meticulous is the word which former India batting coach Vikram Rathour generously uses when he talks about Dhruv Jurel.

Rathour has seen the 24-year-old closely — first in the Indian dressing room and then with the Rajasthan Royals (RR) in the Indian Premier League (IPL).

“Great work ethic. Very sincere guy. Nice kid. Very nice to speak to. Understands his cricket. Very intelligent as far as his game is concerned,” Rathour says in a free-wheeling chat about Jurel. Jurel had played only 15 first-class matches, with a highest score of 249 against a weak Nagaland side. But there was something about him that caught the eye of the Indian selection panel,

headed by Ajit Agarkar, and he received his maiden call-up. Rishabh Pant was still recovering from a horrific car accident, KS Bharat played the first two Tests against England, and then in Rajkot, Jurel got his chance. “Rajkot was the first time I saw him play. And then in Ranchi, he played a fantastic knock, that partnership with Kuldeep was phe-

nomenal. In that series, a couple of knocks he played were incredible. The chase in Ranchi is something I will always remember. It was difficult conditions, we were under pressure, and the series was on the line,” recalls Rathour. Jurel burst onto the scene during the 2020 Under-19 World Cup and then had a breakthrough campaign as a finisher in IPL 2023.

La Liga: Vinicius Junior scores brace, helps Real Madrid beat Villarreal

MADRID: Vinicius Junior fired Real Madrid to the top of La Liga with a brace in a 3-1 win over Villarreal on Saturday, while Kylian Mbappe was also on target. Los Blancos moved two points clear of champions Barcelona, who visit Sevilla on Sunday, as they bounced back from last week's derby drubbing. Having returned from their long midweek trip to Kazakhstan, where they beat Kairat in the Champions League, Madrid turned their focus back to domestic matters. Thrashed 5-2 by city

rivals Atletico Madrid last weekend, Xabi Alonso's side had plenty to prove against a strong Villarreal team, who are third. “I played very well and I want to continue like this, keeping this confidence and doing even more,” Vinicius told Real Madrid TV. “We have good feelings... when we come back (from the international break) we have big games and we need confidence,” added Vinicius. The winger did not start the season well but has found form in recent outings.