

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Title Code - UPENG04488

MORNING EDITION PRAYAGRAJ

Tuesday, 13 January, 2026

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

Briefs

NEW DELHI

2 nurses show Nipah virus symptoms

Two suspected cases of Nipah virus have been detected at the Virus Research and Diagnostic Laboratory at AIIMS Kalyani, West Bengal, official sources said on Monday. According to a senior official of the West Bengal health department, two nurses working at a private hospital in North 24 Parganas district were showing symptoms of Nipah virus. The condition of the two nurses, one male and one female, is stated to be "very critical", he said. "Both nurses work in the same hospital in Barasat. They are suspected of being infected with Nipah virus. Samples of both nurses were sent to Kalyani AIIMS, and preliminary reports indicate a possible Nipah infection," the official told PTI.

NEW DELHI

Dhankar admitted in AIIMS

Former Vice President of India Jagdeep Dhankar has been admitted to the Cardiology Department of All-India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi, on Monday. According to sources, the former Vice President is in stable condition. Further details are awaited. The former Vice President resigned in July 2025 "to prioritise health care and abide by medical advice."

CHANDIGARH

Kabaddi murder case: 3 more held

Punjab police on Monday claimed to have arrested two shooters and their accomplice involved in the sensational murder of Kabaddi promoter Kanwar Digvijay Singh alias Rana Balachauria from Howrah in West Bengal. The accused have been identified as Karan Pathak alias Karan Defaulter, a resident of Amritsar; Tarandeep Singh, of Barhewal in Ludhiana and Akashdeep, a resident of Upala in Tarn Taran. It may be recalled that Balachauria was shot dead by assailants during a Kabaddi tournament at Sohana in SAS Nagar on December 15, 2025.

KOLKATA

Poster row between BJP, TMC

Controversy erupted between BJP and Trinamool Congress on Monday during birth anniversary celebration of Swami Vivekananda, after TMC posters featuring picture of party's national secretary Abhishek Banerjee with the caption 'Welcome Yuvaan' outside the ancestral house of Swami Vivekananda in Simla street in north Kolkata. Notably, the posters were set up Jorasanko TMC MLA Vivek Gupta ahead of Banerjee's visit to that area. Leader of Opposition Suvenu Adhikari said, "By setting such posters TMC has insulted Swami Vivekananda."

TO SIR WITHOUT LOVE | AI-driven digitisation errors causing widespread hardship during SIR, says the West Bengal CM

Procedural lapses: Didi writes fifth letter to EC

KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee wrote to CEC Ganesh Kumar again on Monday, claiming that AI-driven digitisation errors in the 2002 electoral rolls were causing widespread hardship to genuine voters during the SIR exercise in the state.

In her fifth letter to the chief election commissioner (CEC) since the beginning of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, Banerjee said serious errors occurred in electors' particulars during the digitisation of the 2002 voters' list using AI tools, leading to large-scale data mismatches and wrongful categorisation of genuine voters as having "logical discrepancies".

Accusing the EC of disregarding its own statutory processes followed over the last two decades, she said electors were being compelled to re-establish identity despite earlier corrections made after "quasi-judicial hearings".

"Such an approach, disowning its own actions and mechanisms spanning more than two decades, is arbitrary, illogical and contrary to the letter



Police personnel detain a protester during BLO workers protest, in Kolkata on Sunday

BLOs protest over deaths, work stress

Kolkata: A section of BLOs on Monday staged a protest in front of the office of the West Bengal Chief Electoral Officer, alleging that the EC has remained indifferent to the deaths of several BLOs during the ongoing SIR of electoral rolls. The protesters, who are members of the BLO Adhikar Raksha Committee, claimed that BLOs across the state have been under "tremendous mental and physical pressure" ever since the revision exercise began, with the workload taking a serious toll on their health.

and spirit of the Constitution of India," she alleged.

Banerjee further claimed that no proper acknowledgement was being issued for documents submitted during SIR, claiming that the procedure was "fundamentally flawed".

Highlighting the human cost, she wrote that the exercise, which should have been constructive, "has already seen 77 deaths with 4 attempts to

suicide and 17 persons falling sick and necessitating hospitalisation," attributing it to "fear, intimidation and disproportionate workload due to unplanned exercise undertaken by ECI."

SC seeks EC reply on fresh pleas

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday sought a response from the Election Commission on fresh interim pleas of Trinamool Congress MPs alleging arbitrariness and procedural irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls in West Bengal. A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi took note of applications filed by lawmakers Derek O'Brien and Dola Sen in their pending petitions challenging the procedural actions taken in the ongoing SIR in the state.

Shaksgam Valley is Indian territory. We have never recognised the so-called China-Pakistan 'boundary agreement' signed in 1963. We have consistently maintained that the agreement is illegal and invalid," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on Friday.

"We also do not recognise the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

rights of Pakistan and China as sovereign states, she said.

On India's criticism of the CPEC, Mao repeated Beijing's narrative that it is an economic initiative aimed at local economic and social development and improving people's livelihoods.

"Such agreement and CPEC will not affect China's position on the Kashmir issue and China's position remains unchanged in this regard," Mao said.

China's official stand on the Kashmir issue, as often reiterated by Beijing, is that "Jammu and Kashmir dispute is left over from history, and should be properly and peacefully resolved in accordance with the UN Charter, relevant UN Security Council resolutions and bilateral agreements".

In his response to a question on China's infrastructure development in the Shaksgam Valley, Jaiswal said, "The entire Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are an integral and inalienable part of India. This has been clearly conveyed to Pakistani and Chinese authorities several times."



Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning

Economic Corridor, which passes through Indian territory that is under forcible and illegal occupation of Pakistan," Mao said.

Reacting to Jaiswal's comments, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a media briefing here that "first of all, the territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

China reaffirms claims over Shaksgam Valley

NEW DELHI / BEIJING

China on Monday reaffirmed its territorial claims over the Shaksgam Valley in the backdrop of India's objections, stressing that the Chinese infrastructure projects in the area are "beyond reproach".

India last Friday criticised China's infrastructure development projects in the Shaksgam Valley, saying it reserves the right to take necessary measures to safeguard its interests as it is an Indian territory.

Pakistan illegally ceded 5,180 sq km of Indian territory in the Shaksgam Valley to China in 1963 from areas illegally occupied by it.

Shaksgam Valley is Indian territory. We have never recognised the so-called China-Pakistan 'boundary agreement' signed in 1963. We have consistently maintained that the agreement is illegal and invalid," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on Friday.

"We also do not recognise the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities in its own territory are beyond reproach," she said while responding to a question on India's criticism. Mao said China and Pakistan have signed a border agreement and determined the border since the 1960s. These are

the so-called China-Pakistan

territory you mentioned is part of China's territory". "China's infrastructure activities

Sangam Ghat illuminated again from Kali Ghat, Water Laser Show begins at Magh Mela

Grand 45-minute show every evening, showcasing the stories of Prayagraj and the Kumbh tradition

Akhand Bharat Sandesh



associated with Prayagraj, along with the religious and historical significance of Magh Mela, Kumbh, and Mahakumbh, will be presented through modern technology.

Water sports and a floating restaurant are also being operated near Kali Ghat under the

Smart City project. With the restart of the water laser show, an increase in the number of devotees and tourists visiting Sangam city is expected. The Tourism Department believes that this event will further strengthen the cultural identity of the city during the Magh Mela.

Random Water Quality Testing Continues for Second Day in Greater Noida

Greater Noida

As a Precautionary measure, the Greater Noida Authority has continued its citywide water quality testing for the second consecutive day. Eight teams of the authority conducted water quality checks in Sector Alpha 1 and 2, Beta 1 and 2, Knowledge Park 1, 2 and 3, Chi-1, Mu-1, Ecotech 1, 6, 7 and 8, Techzone-4, Sector-10 and residential societies in Greater Noida West. The teams are carrying essential testing equipment such as TDS meters, PH meters and chlorine testing kits. The water samples collected were found to be within the prescribed standards. Wherever the teams visited, they interacted directly with residents and also took feedback from a precautionary measure.



RWA (Resident Welfare Associations). Residents appreciated the authority random inspection campaign. The teams are also recording written statements from residents regarding water quality along with their name, contact number and address. Notably, Greater Noida Authority CEO N.G Ravi Kumar had directed random water quality testing at various locations as a precautionary measure.

Following his instructions, eight work-circle-wise teams have been formed. The campaign will continue for four consecutive days. Saturday marked the second day of the drive, during which water quality was tested in over 100 houses across different sectors. Additionally, two teams from Shriram Institute for Industrial Research Laboratory have also been deployed by the authority to conduct independent random testing. The inspection teams are thoroughly checking for any leakage in water supply lines, sewer choking/overflow and drainage-sewer-water connection points. Samples are also being collected from UGR (Underground Reservoirs) and pumping stations. Eight teams comprising managers and assis-

tant managers of the Water-Sewer Department are actively involved in this inspection drive. Authority Appeal Greater Noida Authority ACEO Sunil Kumar Singh stated that the authority is fully committed to providing clean drinking water in the Greater Noida area. If anyone receives information about contaminated water supply in any area, they should immediately inform the Water Department.

Contact numbers issued:
Senior Manager (Water): 9205691408
Manager (Water): 8937024017

The authority team will promptly resolve the issue. Residents are also requested to operate water motors only during the scheduled water supply timings.

Chandauli will soon get the gift of roadways bus depot



Chandauli

A historic good news has emerged in the field of transportation for the residents of the district. All the major obstacles to the construction of the proposed Chandauli Roadways Bus Depot at Bichhian, near Vikas Bhawan located at the district headquarters, have now been completely removed. Preparations to launch this long awaited project have now been completed. According to administrative sources, there is a strong possibility that the construction work of this modern bus depot, which will be built at a huge cost of about Rs 22 crore, will start by the end of this month. The

department is completely confident about the current status of the project. The survey work required for the construction of the depot has already been completed and the Detailed Project Report (DPR) has received the green signal from the government. At present the Transport Department is only waiting for the release of the first installment of the budget. This new bus depot to be built in Bichhian will be spread over a vast land of about 4.5 acres. Keeping in mind the future needs, this depot has been designed in such a way that all the modern facilities like drinking water, rest rooms and informa-

tion center are available to the passengers under one roof. At present, due to Chandauli district not having its own depot, about 50 government buses here are operated from the Cantt Bus Depot of Varanasi. For maintenance and stoppage of these buses one has to depend on Kashi depot located at Golagadda in Varanasi. Due to this arrangement, not only extra time is spent in operating the buses, but the revenue benefit of Chandauli also goes elsewhere. Construction of an independent depot in Chandauli will ease the operation of buses and the economic development of the district will get a new impetus.

STATE

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

A mother lands in lockup for fraud



Ghazipur. The Sadat police station has taken strict action against the plaintiff who filed a false case against her in-laws, claiming her living daughter was dead. It is noteworthy that the plaintiff, Rajwanti Devi, wife of the late Ramji Das, resident of village Barharpur Bhojurai, Sadat police station, Ghazipur district, had filed a case alleging that her daughter, Ruchi (a fictitious name) was harassed for dowry by her in-laws, murdered her and then disappeared with her body. The investigation into the case was conducted by the Circle Officer, Saidpur. Electronic records and evidence collection revealed that the Plaintiff daughter was alive and currently residing in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. To locate her, the Circle Officer, Saidpur formed a police team from the Sadat police station and obtained permis-

sion from a senior officer to travel to another state. The formed team was dispatched to Gwalior. During the investigation of the victim, it was found that she was coming from Gwalior to Sadat area. On the basis of electronic evidence and informant, the police team promptly recovered the alleged deceased Ruchi alive and safe from near Barheta bridge in Sadat area. Meanwhile, the Station House Officer of Sadat along with his team arrested the complainant Rajwanti Devi from Barharpur Bhojurai Police Station, Sadat, who had registered a false case against her in-laws by declaring her living daughter dead. Legal action was taken against the accused. The police team that arrested the accused included Sub-Inspector Puneet Kumar along with his team and lady constable Gayatri Yadav.

BJP Shahdara District Minority Front performed Rudrabhishek of Lord Bholenath: Deepak Gaba

Delhi

The 1000th anniversary of the Mughal invaders attack on the Somnath temple, the BJP Shahdara District Minority Front performed the Rudrabhishek of Lord Bholenath. Currently, the entire nation of India is celebrating "Somnath Swabhiman Parv" on "January 2026" to mark 1000 years since the attack by Mughal invaders on the Somnath Temple (located in Gujarat). In this series, under the leadership of BJP Shahdara District President Deepak Gaba, the BJP Shahdara District Minority Front, led by its District President Vipin Jain, performed the Rudrabhishek of Lord Bholenath at "Siddh Peeth Shri Sitaram Santseva Mandir evam Gahala" located in Chandu Park, Old Anarkali Colony, Krishna Nagar Assembly Constituency, wishing for the prosperity of the country. It is noteworthy that BJP workers performed the Rudrabhishek of Lord Bholenath under the guidance of Mahamandaleshwar Ram Govind Das Mahatayagi Maharaj. On this occasion, BJP Shahdara District



President Deepak Gaba, Krishna Nagar MLA Dr. Anil Goyal, BJP Shahdara District Spokesperson Advocate Bharat Gaur, Municipal Councilors Meenakshi Sharma and Raju Sachdeva, Front District General Secretaries Shubham Jain and Mohd. Shamim, Ashraf Ali Khan, social worker Rajiv Sharma, Sanjeev Jain, Jasbir Singh Bhatia, Rajiv Jain, Sanjay Gupta, along with Manmohan Sharma and a large number of BJP workers were present. After performing the Rudrabhishek of Lord Shri Bholenath, BJP Shahdara District President Deepak Gaba said that Somnath Temple is a symbol of our faith and belief. History bears witness that

Maternal Distress Compounded by Gross Administrative Indifference, Maternity Grant Hanging in Limbo for Months

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Ghazipur. In most areas of the district, the joy of motherhood is turning into worry and distress for mothers who gave birth at the district hospital or local government hospitals. The funds from the maternity grant scheme, launched by the government to provide financial support to pregnant and new mothers, have not yet reached many beneficiary mothers. As a result, this grant has been stuck in administrative files for months, hanging in limbo. For these poor and middle-class mothers, this grant is not just government assistance, but a crucial support system for the upbringing, nutrition, medicines, and other essential needs of their newborns. Unfortunately, the delay in the payment of the maternity grant has further exacerbated the financial difficulties of these families. Many mothers are forced to take loans for their own treatment and their child's care after delivery. When local hospital and district hospital officials were contacted regarding this matter, they clearly stated that all necessary documents related to the maternity grant have been sent to higher authorities several times. Despite this, the payment process has not moved forward. This situation not only raises questions about the administrative system but also affects the intent of the government's welfare schemes. Most surprisingly, the very schemes designed to provide safe motherhood and financial support to women are falling victim to bureaucratic procedures and negligence. The affected mothers are forced to repeatedly visit hospitals, block offices, and concerned departments, but they are only receiving assurances, not solutions. Now the question arises: who is responsible for this delay—administrative indifference or the negligence of the concerned officials? And most importantly, when will these helpless mothers receive their rightful dues? The government and administration are expected to take immediate notice of this serious problem and ensure the prompt payment of the pending maternity grants so that the joys of motherhood are not overshadowed by the burden of financial hardship.

Human Rights Commission Shows Strictness in Gahmar Triple Murder Case

Ghazipur

Taking Cognizance of the triple murder that took place on the night of December 24, 2025 when three young men were returning from a birthday celebration. About a dozen attackers, lying in ambush, chased and brutally murdered the three young men, Vicky Singh, Saurabh Singh and Ankit Singh with sharp weapons. The fearless killers then threw the bodies of the three young men into a pond. The next day, the bodies of Vicky Singh and Saurabh Singh were recovered from the pond. After much effort, Ankit Singh's body was also recovered from the same pond on December 30. The post-mortem confirmed fatal injuries to

their heads and other parts of their bodies. The police registered a case against more than a dozen attackers in the murder. So far, the police have arrested five of the accused. The other attackers are still at large.

In the complaint, the applicant demanded a fair investigation into the entire matter, the arrest of the absconding accused, action against the guilty officials and compensation for the victim families. The State Human Rights Commission taking cognizance of the matter and issuing directives has given the victim families hope for justice.

Dr. Mayank receives Vidyawas Niwas Mishra Award

Varanasi

The Vigyan Srinivasa Foundation, established in memory of Pandit Vidyawas Niwas Mishra, announced its annual awards for the year 2026 on Friday. The awards will be held from January 13th to 15th. Vidyashree Trust Secretary Dr. Daya Nidhi Mishra said that this year the Vigyan Niwas Award will be given for his work Jambu Deepa Bharatkhanda. The Folk Poet Award will be given to poet Dr. Jaiprakash Mishra. The Radhika Devi Folk Art Award will be given to Santosh Srivastava and the Lyricist Shrikrishna Tiwari Award will be given to poet and storyteller Dr. Amit Dubey. This year, the Acharya Vidyawas Niwas Mitra Journalism Award will be given to Dr. Atri Bhardwaj. In memory of Shahid literary scholar Arunesh Niraj, the first Arunesh Niraj Bhojpuri Vaibhav Award is being given to storyteller, critic and thinker Professor Ramdev Shukla. Poet, storyteller, Mukta artist Sunil Kumar Vishwakarma, Manish Khatri, poet Brijendra Narayan Dwivedi Shailesh, Kavindra Narayan Srivastava, sculptor Dnyaneshwar Nath Sharma, and poet and writer Kanchan Singh Parihar will be honored.

Magh Mela: Minister AK Sharma Reviews Preparations, Says Convenience and Safety of Devotees are Top Priority



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj. Urban Development and Energy Minister A.K. Sharma held a meeting with officials at the Integrated Command and Control Center (ICCC) auditorium on Monday to review the preparations for the fair. He clearly stated that the convenience, safety, and well-organized arrangements for the devotees are the government's top priority. He instructed all departments to fulfill their responsibilities with mutual coordination. The minister directed that proper arrangements for cleanliness, uninterrupted drinking water

supply, electricity, night shelters, and bonfires be ensured in the fair area. He also emphasized the need for clear and sufficient signage at routes, ghats, medical services, and other essential locations for the convenience of the devotees. Regarding crowd management, the minister said that continuous monitoring and quick action are crucial during major bathing festivals. He instructed the officials that the fair and festivals are also a major source of livelihood for street vendors, therefore, if there is no obstruction to traffic, a humane approach should be adopted, and unnecessary

anti-encroachment drives should be avoided, so that a balance is maintained between order and employment. In the meeting, Fair Officer Rishiraj gave information about the preparations for the Magh Mela through a PowerPoint presentation. He informed that due to two major bathing festivals between January 14 and 18, a large crowd of devotees is expected, and keeping this in mind, all necessary prepa-



rations have been completed. Officials

Special emphasis on cleanliness, drinking water, electricity, and night shelters; strict instructions for crowd management

informed that the lighting system in the fair area has been completed, electricity connections are available in all camps, and there is no problem with drinking water. Giving information about health facilities, the Fair Officer informed that two large hospitals named 'Triveni' and 'Ganga' have been established in the fair area, where facilities including X-ray are available. So far, 31,651 OPD registrations have been done. In addition, 80 ambulances have been deployed and 12 community health centers are fully operational. Regarding security arrangements, the SP Mela gave information about the traffic control room, fire fighting arrangements, and cyber security arrangements.

After the meeting, Minister Shri Sharma also inspected the ICCC (Integrated Command and Control Centre) and gave necessary instructions regarding crowd management. Present on the occasion were Special Secretary Urban Development Satyaprakash Patel, MD Purvanchal Vidyut Vitran Nigam, Municipal Commissioner Seelam Sai Teja, SP Mela Neeraj Pandey, Additional Mela Officer Dayanand Prasad, Chief Engineer Water Corporation (Urban) Sanjay Kumar Gautam, and other senior officers from various departments.

Swami Vivekananda's Birth Anniversary Celebrated as Youth Day: Students from the School Held a Grand Rally

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Tharwai Swami Vivekananda Vidyashram Senior Secondary School in Tharwai celebrated Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary with great pomp and show on Monday. ??A grand "Swadeshi Swabhiman Yatra" (Indigenous Pride March) was organized on this Youth Day. Approximately 250 students from classes 9 to 12 and 20 teachers participated in this rally. The main



objective of the march was to guide the nation towards prosperity through the use of indigenous products. The school principal, Dinesh Kumar Pandey, shed inspiring light on Swami Vivekananda's life values and the importance of indigenous products in his philosophy. Senior teacher Chandradhar Tiwari elaborated on Swami Vivekananda's life philosophy and the concept of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (the world is one family). The program was conducted

by Gaurav Upadhyay, who presented a concise explanation of the human values of the Bhagavad Gita and Swami Vivekananda's thoughts. Ashutosh Pandey, Yaduvendra Pandey, Ashutosh Mishra, Girish, Himanshu, Ramsur, Tungnath Tiwari, and Saroj Tiwari, Vinita Sharma, Aparna Singh, Siddhi Datri, Shalini Shukla, and the entire Swami Vivekananda Vidyashram family were present, making the program a success. The inspiring slo-

gans and chants raised by the students made the program even more impactful and special. Inspector Santosh Kumar Pandey of Tharwai was also present on the occasion, ensuring security arrangements. He was present throughout the rally and the program and, in his address, stated that Swami Vivekananda was not only a spiritual guru but also a skilled orator. He was considered a master of science, art, religion, philosophy, and literature.

Potato Production in the State Remains Strong

Uttar Pradesh is among the leading Potato-Producing states in the country. Potatoes are cultivated over an area of more than 600,000 hectares in the state and this year too, as in the previous year, a good yield of potatoes is expected. Due to surplus production, potatoes from Uttar Pradesh are supplied to other states of the country as well as exported abroad.

Motivational Seminar on Swami Vivekananda's Ideas Held at Women's PG College on National Youth Day



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Ghazipur A seminar was organized at the Women's Postgraduate College, Ghazipur, on the occasion of National Youth Day, under the auspices of the Youth Welfare and Regional Development Department, Ghazipur. The program was attended by Chief Guest Anita Kumari, Principal of Women's PG College, Ghazipur, senior professors, Regional Youth Welfare Officer Chandrakant Yadav, Akhilesh Yadav, Chief Program Officer Rammath

Kesharwani, and other program officers of the National Service Scheme. The seminar began with the chief guest and other dignitaries offering garlands and flowers to a portrait of Swami Vivekananda. The chief guest and other guests informed the students of the PG College and others about Swami Vivekananda's life and achievements and encouraged them to internalize his ideals. The program concluded with the felicitation of meritorious students. Finally, Regional Youth Welfare Officer Ms. Anchal Singh expressed her gratitude to all.

Divisional Commissioner Inspects Information and Public Relations Department Exhibition at Magh Mela

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj: Divisional Commissioner Saumya Agarwal on Monday inspected the exhibition organized by the Information and Public Relations Department on Fort Road at Parade Ground in the Magh Mela area. The exhibition showcased the works, schemes, projects, and achievements of the Central and State Governments, as well as exhibits related to the historical, cultural, and religious sites of Prayagraj district. She praised the exhibition, stating that it would provide visitors with information about the welfare schemes, projects, works, and achievements of the Central and State Governments, enabling them to benefit more from these government initiatives. The exhibition featured pictorial displays based on various schemes and projects, including the Chief Minister's message to the people of the state, Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi, Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, ODP, Pradhan Mantri and Chief Minister Awas Yojana, Jal Jeevan Mission, religious, spiritual and cultural tourism, Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, air connectivity, MSME units, payment of subsidies



through DBT, zero tolerance policy towards crime and criminals, improved law and order, expansion of medical facilities, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Atal Pension Yojana, free irrigation, and expressways, among others. The Divisional Commissioner also visited the "Historical, Cultural and Religious" exhibition in the same complex, which compiled information about the religious, historical, and cultural sites of Prayagraj at one place.

She said that this exhibition would be useful for devotees visiting the Mela, providing them with information about the importance of Prayagraj's historical, cultural, and religious sites. She added that the compilation of information about Prayagraj's historical, cultural, and religious sites in one place further enhances the importance

of the exhibition. The exhibition conveys the religious, cultural, and historical significance of the Magh Mela and the message of preserving Indian culture. The exhibition features photographs of various religious, historical, and cultural sites, including Bade Hanuman Ji, Akshayavat, Sangam,

Ulta Qila, Khusro Bagh, Shringverpur Dham, Mankameshwar Temple, Naulakha Temple, Allahabad University, Anand Bhavan, Jain Temple, Planetarium, Bharadwaj Muni, Lalita Devi, Nag Vasuki Temple, Curzon Bridge, Naini Bridge, Allahabad Library, Ashoka Pillar, Jain Temple (Jhansi), Shri Narayan Ashram, and Prayag Mahatmya.

Information

I, Sunil Kumar Singh, S/O of Ashok Kumar Singh resident of H. No-19/10 PURANA SINDHI BHATTA PATEL NAGAR SHAH SHAH DISTT FATEHPUR (UP) 212601. Have changed my name from "Sunil K Singh" to "Sunil Kumar Singh" on my son's class 10th marksheets. This has been done vide an affidavit sworn before a notary public dated 03-01-2016. Henceforth, my name should be read and addressed as "Sunil Kumar Singh" for all future purposes.

Sunil Kumar Singh

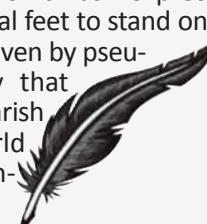
Information

I'm Aryan Singh S/o A.K. Singh (Arun Kumar Singh) R/o 191H/3J/1k Ops Nagar. Kalindipuram Prayagraj up - 211011. I completed High school in the year 2022 from Bishop Johnson School & College Allahabad. Unique Id 7670466, Index no. 1223810/326. In my school certificate, my father's name print "A.K Singh" which is the abbreviated form of Arun Kumar Singh. The name of Arun Kumar Singh and A.K Singh refer to same person. The name Ak Singh and Arun Kumar Singh should be considered and read as the same name.

Editorial

Halal certification is turning into a scam. It's creating a Muslim-only economy

Halal is the latest Islamic fad. The internet is buzzing with content on Halal living, Halal dating, and even Halal sex. Halal certification is a booming global industry created by New Islam. A religion that has so far been proudly political is becoming brazenly commercial too. And why not, when catchphrases like "Islam is the complete way of life"—making detailed prescriptions for politics, economy, and every imaginable aspect of life—go unchallenged? In an ongoing Supreme Court case, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta submitted that while nobody had any objection to Halal certification for meat, nowadays even cement, iron rods, and bottled water were being certified as Halal. Since such certification comes at a cost—charged by private agencies in the Halal certification business—even customers who have no interest in such labels are being made to pay higher prices for the commodities thus certified. Halal certification preys on the naïveté of the newly prosperous Muslim masses. The Indian economy has been steadily growing, and Muslims have shared in this prosperity as much as anyone else. But this upward mobility has to be matched by enhanced self-esteem and social respectability, which, for a Muslim, still comes through overt piety and demonstrative religiosity. The Halal industry sows such fervour and reaps a good harvest from it. In the process, not entirely unwittingly, it also fosters a narrow and rigid religious attitude among Muslims—one that leads, inevitably, to radicalisation. The growth of the Indian economy has placed unprecedented purchasing power in Muslim hands too. And though the Halal certification business is aimed at tapping into the vast and growing Muslim market, it is bound to have some insidious and unforeseen consequences. For one, it will result in economic separatism, creating a Muslim-only parallel economy. In effect, it will lead to the systemic economic boycott of other communities. Stray calls to boycott Muslim street vendors, which keep circulating on social media, are a red herring compared to the harm the Halal market is insinuating into the political economy. Its normalisation and mainstreaming will have far-reaching consequences for inter-community relations—even greater than what Muslim Personal Law or vote bank politics have had so far. If a non-Muslim were to buy and sell in the Halal market, he would have to comply with the terms prescribed by Sharia, as interpreted by the agents of Halal certification. In such a market, they would be second-class citizens. Dhimmis. We would have the economic version of an Islamic state. Having suffered from the Two-Nation Theory, are we now sleepwalking into a Two-Economy reality? The path is nearly charted as a parallel economy develops around Islamic banking, Halal stocks, Halal mutual funds, Halal investments, and Halal travels. This trend will eventually lead to demands for the Halal certification of India itself as a country fit for Muslims. Then for the Constitution as a document that doesn't conflict with Sharia. And, as has already been happening informally, Halal certification for political parties—determining whether it is right for a Muslim to vote for some of them. One wonders, why should the religious lens be used to look at everything from iron rods and cement to electric wires and batteries? How will someone who looks at iron and cement through an Islamic filter see people of other religions? An outlook like this, even if genuinely Islamic, would have no place in the modern world. But as I will show in the latter part of this article, this isn't even Islamic. It has no precedence in history or theological feet to stand on. It's pop Islam—faux piety, driven by pseudo-Islamic power theology that seeks to paint the world in garish green. It divides the world between Islamic and non-Islamic and posits.



Why Syrians Are Between A Rock And A Hard Place

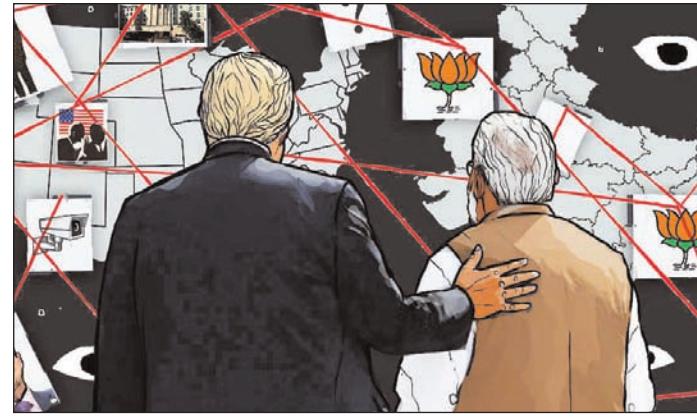
The replacement of the much-reviled Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria by a so-called "rebel force" that is actually just an Islamist offshoot of al-Qaeda and ISIS—which, remember, was headquartered in the Syrian city of Raqqa from 2014 to 2017—once again underlines how the turbulent history of that region is painted in countless shades of grey. As if the ongoing war between Israel and the equally Islamist Hamas left you in any doubt about that, of course. The Assads had ruled Syria with a mix of fear and murderous brutality for over 50 years. But that family, their Ba'th Party and that general cohort were not religious fanatics. In fact,

they professed the sort of secular socialism which evolved into the crony socialism-cum-authoritarianism seen in many countries ruled by similarly inclined people and parties. Even India and the Congress Party of the mid-1970s were not unlike Syria during that same period. The difference, of course, is that the Emergency in India marked the apogee and also the end of authoritarianism. India never degenerated into a single-party rule—which appears to be the main cause of the rise of the Islamist factions all over West Asia today. Ironically, authoritarian secularism (and in Syria's case, also minority rule by the Shia Alawite tribe of the Assads) has

led to the ascent of doctrinaire Sunni Islam and power being captured by its adherents. As the news channels broke the news of the fall of Assad's government in Syria, I saw London's Oxford Street become an impromptu victory procession of cars with young men honking, shouting and hanging out of windows brandishing their homeland's distinctive opposition flag. It continued for well over an hour without any of London's uniformed finest visible. Maybe the Metropolitan Police were just relieved it was not yet another fraught pro-Gaza demonstration. But having lived in Syria during the regime of this just-ousted socialist dic-

tator's father, I had mixed feelings. How would those fashionably puffer-jacket-clad Syrians cheering in London fare under the country's new rulers whose roots are in the Salafi-jihadist school although they profess to have "moved" to a more accommodating position? Do Syrians not know what's happening in Afghanistan, whose Taliban rulers mouthed similar lines and then recanted? When my father was India's ambassador to Syria, the then President Hafez al-Assad ordered the Hama massacre in 1982, triggered by a long-brewing uprising in that city 200km north of Damascus by the Muslim Brotherhood.

Deep State is the convenient bogeyman of modern politics. It's entered India too



Rians remain sceptical of Curzon's assertions. Is the hue and cry about the Deep State similar to the Great Game? Whether or not it exists, whether it operates in all countries, and whether the 'deep state' of one country is connected with others through the dark web or entrenched corporate interests remains unclear, as the discourse is more ideological than empirical. Sometimes, those who claim to be part of the deep state ascribe to themselves a larger-than-life role in state affairs—for example, AS Dulat and Asad Durrani in their 2018 book *The Spy Chronicles: RAW, ISI and the Illusion of Peace*. Their claim to be arbiters of one of the most tense and difficult relationships in the region has been widely critiqued by reviewers. The term first gained wide currency in the context of Türkiye as derin devlet, which literally translates to "deep state" in English. In Türkiye, it refers to a non-elected military elite dominating elected governments, especially when they attempt to dismantle the secular foundations of the Republic, established by Mustafa Kemal Pasha after

the abolition of the caliphate in 1923. In Pakistan, "deep state" refers to a government controlled by powerful military leaders, as documented by Stephen Cohen in *The Idea of Pakistan and Ishaq Ahmed in Pakistan: The Garrison State*. Elected governments in Pakistan have rarely exercised real control over defense and foreign policy. In the US, Democrats and Republicans accuse each other of controlling the 'deep state.' Democrats claim the pro-Republican arms lobby and military-industrial complex constitute the deep state, while Republicans argue that Ivy League universities promote 'wokeism' and diversity, equity, and inclusion narratives that, according to Donald Trump, undermine America's greatness. Trump has accused the deep state within the Democratic regime of election interference, citing the Freedom Medal awarded to George Soros as evidence. However, skeptics argue that if the deep state were so powerful, how could Daksh Patel dismantle it simply by firing 'interns and associates' whose tenure is co-terminus

with that of President Biden? Ultimately, the deep state serves as a convenient scapegoat for anything that goes wrong or for political parties losing popular support. If Republicans and Democrats are battling it out in Washington, India faces a similar scenario, with Left liberals and Right nationalists accusing each other of leveraging the 'deep state' to gain or retain power. Publications like *The Caravan* and *Organiser Weekly* lead these respective narratives. Left liberals claim the RSS is India's deep state, while Right nationalists accuse the Ford Foundation and George Soros' Open Society Foundations of attempting to discredit the democratically elected Modi government. Left liberals find support in the speeches of Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, while Right nationalists, led by Vice President Dhankhar, minister Kiren Rijiju, and BJP spokespersons like Sambit Patra, vehemently counter these claims. In a pre-budget article for *The Indian Express*, economist Surjit Bhalla, a former member of the PM's Economic Advisory Council, alleged that India's deep state comprises "major industrialists, senior IAS babus, and their friendly influencers in the media", slowing down economic growth. This claim was firmly repudiated, point by point, by Vivek Kaul in *Newslaundry*, who questioned the logic behind such allegations. Kaul argued that neither the IAS, corporates, nor the media benefit from econo-

India's GST system is now a mess. Those who designed it also are confused

While this may seem like a trivialisation of GST, it actually lays bare how the system has now rebounded on its initial promise of bringing ease of doing business in the country. The Finance Minister's four-minute explanation on the taxation of popcorn highlighted how complex the system has become. It shouldn't take anybody that much time to explain the applicable tax rates on a single product. Since then, GST has been ridiculed, derided, lamented about, and generally panned by laypeople and even former government officials who worked on its implementation. That is why India's Goods and Services Tax is ThePrint's Newsmaker of the Week. So, what is the issue behind GST on popcorn? You see, as per the taxman, depending on your taste preferences, popcorn can either be a namkeen (salty) or a mithai (sweet)—forget that those

two terms have never been used by anyone to refer to popcorn. Ready-to-eat popcorn, salted and spiced for taste, and sold loosely attracts a GST rate of 5 per cent. That same popcorn, if packaged and labelled, attracts a rate of 12 per cent. One wonders what happens if the vendor tears open the packet and sells loose popcorn to the customer. Perhaps the universe will explode, who knows? Things get even trickier when you talk about caramel popcorn. Those who prefer this flavour will have to shell out 18 per cent GST, regardless of whether it is packaged or sold loose. Then some head to the movie hall and ask for salted and caramel popcorn mixed together. What happens to them? Over the week, one particular meme stood out among the lot. It was a picture of salted caramel popcorn packets with questions along the lines of:

Tax cuts won't fix low growth. Govt must look beyond fiscal policy

The Modi government's main move in the Union Budget 2025 has been to cut personal income tax. As finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in her speech, it is meant to boost demand in the economy. However, the government doesn't expect a higher-than-usual increase in other non-debt receipts and has budgeted a decline in the deficit. The budgeted capital expenditure is the same as the revised estimates for 2024-25. The tax cut should be seen in the context of other fiscal policy moves the Modi government has made in the last decade to boost growth. Since 2016, the Indian economy has struggled to sustain rapid growth. From 2016 to 2019, it was in a relentless slowdown, with GDP growth falling to 3.9 per cent in 2019-20. The GDP then fell sharply in 2020-21 due to the pandemic. After this sharp decline, high GDP growth numbers created a false sense of complacency, but the compound annual growth rate between 2019-20 and 2024-25 is only 4.8 per cent. The latest GDP estimates suggest that the economy is slowing down again—with growth clocking at 5.4 per cent in the July-September quarter of 2024. Even if we set aside the critiques of GDP estimation in India, growth remains a topic of concern in policy conversations. The government's response to an economic challenge depends on what it considers to be the root cause. The Modi government's actions over the past decade suggest that it seeks to address India's economic growth pangs through fiscal policy. Consequently, fiscal policy has done much of the heavy lifting in the government's growth strategy over the past decade. In the economic slowdown from 2016-17 to 2019-20, the government sought to maintain its expenditure. To do so without increasing the reported fiscal deficit, from 2017-18 to 2019-20, it

transformed a significant part of its on-budget expenditure into off-budget expenditure done by public enterprises. It also sharply raised cesses and surcharges on petroleum products, which are not shared with the states. These unusual tactics allowed the government to spend more, and expenditure continued to outpace GDP growth. These tactics also allowed the government to introduce new cash transfer schemes such as PM KISAN and increase allocations to existing schemes. In 2019, in an effort to stimulate investment, the government announced major tax breaks for corporates, especially in manufacturing. At the time, corporate tax collection had been growing rapidly while other taxes were struggling to deliver the budgeted increase. The tax cut led to a sharp reduction in the corporate tax to GDP ratio in the subsequent years. As the pandemic hit, fiscal policy became even more central.

The pandemic allowed the government to suspend its concern for deficits and bring the off-budget expenditure to the Budget in 2020-21. For a few years, revenue expenditure as a percentage of GDP was higher than its pre-pandemic levels.

Among other things, this allowed the government to increase subsidies and cash transfers, and introduce production-linked incentives for manufacturing in India. Total subsidies as a percentage of GDP have now gone back to their pre-pandemic levels. The most important change in expenditure since the pandemic has been in its composition. Of the Union government's total expenditure, the share of capital expenditure has increased. Its share rose from 12.5 per cent of total expenditure in 2019-20 to 22.2 per cent in 2023-24. In 2019-20, capital expenditure was 1.67 per cent of GDP. It rose to 3.21 per cent.

Over 60% of June three-wheeler sales are EVs

Delhi: The Federation of Indian Automobile Dealers Associations reported that over 60% of three-wheeler retail sales in June 2025 were electric, indicating a strong increase in green mobility. From 55.5% in the same month last year, electric three-wheelers jumped to 60.2%. From little under 6% in June 2024, two-wheeler EV sales rose to 7.3%. The penetration of passenger electric vehicles—cars and SUVs—rose to 4.4% from 2.5% a year earlier. EVs made up 1.6% of truck and bus sales and 0.1% of construction equipment sales in the business sector.

June car retail sales reached 2 million, up 5% year-over-year. Construction equipment sales rose 55% due to infrastructure



spending. Tractor sales grew 9%, passenger vehicles 2.5%, commercial vehicles 6.6%, and two-wheelers 4.7%. FADA president C.S. Vigneshwar said early monsoon rains and the rise in electric vehicle options had influenced customer purchase decisions, especially for two-wheelers.

He noted that incentives and fresh bookings helped passenger vehicle sales, but liquidity and geopolitical concerns remain. According to experts, EV penetration across several industries is nearing an inflection point.

8th Pay Commission Could Hike Salaries 30–34%



fitment factor, a multiplier for revised pay. Ambit Capital expects a higher fitment factor than the 7th Pay Commission 2.57. One important point: A new Pay Commission eliminates the Dearness Allowance (DA), which is

currently 55% of the basic wage. Even if nominal basic pay rises dramatically, salary calculation is recalculated. For example, the 6th Pay Commission made Rs 7,000 a take-home wage of Rs 15,750.

Even if the visa is approved, the individual may still face deportation proceedings



Priya Nair will replace Rohit Jawa as HUL's first female CEO

Delhi: American officials have reiterated their stance that visitors must adhere to all regulations or face deportation. Screening for US visas continues even after the visa has been awarded. We make sure that visa holders respect all US laws and immigration rules by checking them constantly. According to the US embassy in India, if they do not comply, their visas will be revoked and they will be deported. Representative picture: The visa process has become more stringent under the Trump administration. After halting processing of student visas at the end of May due to social media screening, it has only now begun processing them again for this fall. "Effective immediate-

ly, all individuals applying for an F, M, or J nonimmigrant visa are requested to adjust the privacy settings on all of their social media accounts to public to facilitate vetting necessary to establish their identity and admissibility to the United States under US law," the embassy stated.

Elon Musk says Tesla will ask shareholders about investing in xAI

Delhi: Elon Musk says Tesla will ask shareholders about investing in xAI. After the Wall Street Journal reported that SpaceX would invest \$2 billion in xAI, the billionaire spoke. Musk wrote on X that shareholders decide whether to invest in xAI. Musk also asked X users last year if Tesla should invest \$5 billion in xAI, saying he was testing the waters. It's not my call. To my mind, Tesla should have invested in xAI long ago. Musk replied to a post that a shareholder vote will be held. In reaction to



ChatGPT's popularity, Elon Musk founded xAI in early 2023. Since then, the company has released its Grok AI chatbot, which was updated to Grok 4 models. The chatbot rivals ChatGPT, Gemini, and Claude. Musk merged xAI and X earlier this year, image.png

ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund to sell 10% of Rs 10k crore IPO

Delhi: Another huge IPO is anticipated for this year. Prudential Corp of UK, ICICI Bank's joint venture partner in ICICI Prudential Asset Management, is selling 10% of the company through an IPO worth roughly Rs 10,000 crore. ICICI Bank, the

fund house's primary owner, said AMC filed the filings with Sebi. Two IPOs over Rs 5,000 crore have occurred this year: HDB Financial Services, an HDFC bank unit, completed its 12,500-crore IPO last month. February saw Hexaware Tech raise

valuing the AI startup at \$80 billion and X at \$33 billion. Musk wants \$200 billion in investments in the combined business, Bloomberg reports. Tesla investing in xAI looks to be part of his aim to integrate his corporate empire.

roughly Rs 8,760 crore. ICICI Prudential AMC manages I-Pru MF, which manages over Rs 9.5 lakh crore in investors' assets (AMFI data for April-June quarter). ICICI Bank owns 51% of the fund firm and the UK financial giant 49%. As countries like Vietnam adopt crypto, following America's example in the global digital economy, the timing is perfect. These bills may give Wall Street's top players the confidence to invest after waiting for clearer rules. There's significant emphasis on safeguarding average investors from frauds and dubious activities, not just luring big money. Instead of distrusting crypto, politicians are helping it grow and remain transparent. This amazing turnaround could change our understanding of digital assets and blockchain.

All EU and Mexico imports will be subject to 30% tariffs as imposed

Delhi: President Trump of the United States has decided to levy a 30% tariff on goods imported from Mexico and the European Union, with the duty going into effect on August 1. The new tariffs on two of the US's most important trading partners were announced by Trump in separate letters uploaded to his Truth Social platform. He blamed a trade imbalance with the European Union and

Korea, Japan, and South Korea. The tariffs are more severe than the 25% tax that Trump levied on Mexican imports earlier this year, with the exception of items that enter the US through the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement.



Tesla May Start Indian Deliveries in August

Delhi: Tesla Inc. will open its first showroom in India and begin deliveries next month, according to sources, as the Elon Musk-led electric vehicle maker seeks to capitalize on demand in the third-largest auto market to offset slowing sales elsewhere. The Mumbai showroom will mark



Tesla's formal market entry, giving prospective customers access to pricing, variants, and trim

options, according to one person, who requested anonymity, and Bloomberg News documents. Last month, Bloomberg News claimed that the Mumbai store was opening in mid-July and that the first Model Y rear-wheel drive SUVs from Tesla's China factory had arrived. People

say a second Tesla showroom in New Delhi would open in late July. Tesla's highly anticipated foray into the Indian market comes at a vital time for the EV maker, which suffered a drop in global sales in the second quarter despite Musk's claims that business.

JPMorgan may reduce EM Bond Index China, India shares

Delhi: JPMorgan Chase & Co. may reduce the weight of China and India, the major bond issuers in its flagship emerging-market index, to reflect more developing-nation debt.

According to Bloomberg documents, the Wall Street bank is seeking customer opinion on changes to its GBI-EM Global Diversified Index, which tracks local-currency developing-nation debt by more than \$200 billion of assets. According to the documents, cutting a cap on individual countries

from 10% to 8.5% might increase the benchmark rate if nations with higher borrowing costs gain a larger position. Bigger yields represent bigger risks and returns. The documents indicate that the revisions are tentative and may not be implemented. At a consultation last year, JPMorgan proposed a

methodology adjustment that would have reduced China's index contribution to 6%, but then withdrew it. The latest modifications will reduce weighting for the major bond sellers in emerging countries like Indonesia, Mexico, Malaysia, China, and India, according to the documents.

Trump's latest announcements raise trade concerns for textile exporters

Delhi: Trump's newest tariff announcements have raised uncertainty, and purchasers are anticipated to postpone new orders. Textile exporters seem to have an advantage over Bangladesh, which Trump has slapped with 35% duty, but industry is watching India's bilateral trade deal with the US because Trump claims the agreement with Vietnam allows him to impose a 20% tariff, although there may be

exceptions. As usual, countries like Bangladesh are racing to Washington to equalize tariffs in the coming weeks. We must monitor tariffs. Buyers are confused, "SNQS International managing director V Elangovan said from Tirupur. "Retailers must stock shelves."

Since the Chinese were offering greater prices this year, our merchandisers in Shanghai last week could not compete.



Bitcoin first reaches \$121,000: What drives the rally?

Delhi: Bitcoin crossed \$121,000 for the first time, rising over 3%. In one year, the world's largest cryptocurrency doubled investors' wealth, rising almost 103%. Bitcoin traded at \$121,068. One bitcoin would be worth around Rs 1.04 lakh in Indian rupees. Ethereum and other cryptocurrencies rose over 3% to \$3,046 (approximately Rs 2.62 lakh each). Solana rose about 3.5 percent to \$167 (Rs 14,352). 'Crypto week' confidence has boosted cryptocurrencies in recent days. The US House of Representatives will discuss the 'Clarity Act' this week to regulate the crypto business. A bill to regulate stablecoins, U.S.-dollar-pegged cryptocurrency tokens, will be considered by the lower house of Congress. Bitcoin has risen about 30% in 2025 on Trump's pro-crypto stance. The cryptocurrency has risen 1,414 percent in five years. The crypto fear and greed index is 70, signaling an overheated market. Crypto funds received \$1.23 billion in one day on July 11 (latest statistics), with Bitcoin ETFs contributing approximately \$1.03 billion. This large institutional money inflow and frenzy around US 'Crypto Week', which begins today, are driving the crypto boom "Sivam Thakral, BuyUcoin CEO. As countries like Vietnam adopt crypto, following America's example in the global digital economy, the timing is perfect. These bills may give Wall Street's top players the confidence to invest after waiting for clearer rules. There's significant emphasis on safeguarding average investors from frauds and dubious activities, not just luring big money. Instead of distrusting crypto, politicians are helping it grow and remain transparent. This amazing turnaround could change our understanding of digital assets and blockchain.

Briefs

Landlord kills Hindu farmer in Pak's Sindh

A Hindu farmer was shot dead in Pakistan's Sindh allegedly by his landlord for building a shelter on his land, leading to widespread protests by the Hindus. Police arrested landlord Sarfaraz Nizamani and his facilitator Zafarullah Khan from Hyderabad.

Bride, groom, 6 others die in cylinder blast

A newlywed couple was among 8 people who died in a gas cylinder blast in Islamabad on Sunday. The incident occurred at a house where a wedding was underway. Rescuers said 8 people were killed and 11 hurt, as they pulled 19 people out of the debris.

At -37°C, air travel badly hit in Finland

Thousands of tourists were stranded in Finland on Sunday after flights at Kittilä were cancelled due to severe cold. The airport temperature dropped to -37°C on Sunday morning, after days of similar frigid weather, making de-icing of aircraft and other operations difficult, Finland's national public broadcaster Yle reported.

Mamdani flays language used at stir

New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani criticised the language used during a protest outside a synagogue in Queens, where pro-Palestinian demonstrators chanted in support of Hamas while pro-Israel demonstrators shouted racial and homophobic slurs, 'The New York Times' reported. The NYT said the protest was held on Thursday night and featured chants of "Say it loud, say it clear, we support Hamas here", after which Mamdani was questioned by reporters on Friday about the demonstration.

Renowned US historian Howe dies

Daniel Walker Howe, a Pulitzer Prize-winning historian whose "What Hath God Wrought" became a widely acclaimed chronicle of the vast technological and social changes in the US in the first half of the 19th century, has died at age 88. Walker died on December 25, according to a spokesman for the University of California, Los Angeles, where he was a professor emeritus.

Killer nurse gets 'top' job in UK prison

Lucy Letby, the UK nurse convicted of murdering 7 babies and attempting to kill 6 others, has landed a new job at a prison in Surrey. After working as a cleaner at the prison, where she has been held since 2020, Letby is now working as a librarian.



FIRST INDIA-FUNDED BAILEY BRIDGE OPENS FOR TRAFFIC IN CYCLONE-HIT SRI LANKA: The first Bailey Bridge built with India's aid to Sri Lanka has been opened for traffic in the cyclone-hit island nation, the Indian mission said in Colombo on Sunday. The 100-ft Bailey bridge was erected by the Indian Army, restoring a vital road link between the Central Province and Uva Province, the Indian High Commission said.

TALKING TOUGH | Havana will get no more oil, money: Trump Make a deal: US to Cuba

WASHINGTON/CARACAS



US President Donald Trump on Sunday warned Cuba to "make a deal" with the United States or face serious consequences, warning that Venezuelan oil and money flowing to Havana would stop.

Trump posted on his Truth Social platform that Cuba had long relied on large amounts of Venezuelan oil and financial support, but that would no longer continue.

"Cuba lived, for many years, on large amounts of oil and money from Venezuela. In return, Cuba provided 'security services' for the last two Venezuelan dictators, but not anymore!

Most of those Cubans are dead from last week's USA attack, and Venezuela doesn't need protection anymore from the thugs and extortionists who held them hostage for so many years. Venezuela now has the US, the most powerful military in the world (by far), to protect them, and protect them we will," Trump said.

Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel condemned the US for attacking Venezuela and capturing its president at a massive rally near the US embassy in Havana.

"Cuba condemns and denounces these actions as an act of state terrorism," Diaz-Canel said. "It is a shocking violation of the norms of international law — the military aggression against a

"The lawyers told us they

America launches new retaliatory strikes against ISIS in Syria after deadly ambush

WASHINGTON

ing to US Central Command. The strikes hit multiple IS targets across Syria.

The Jordanian military later announced it had taken part in the strikes.

Saturday's strikes are part of a broader operation that is part of President Trump's response to the deadly ISIS attack that killed Sgt Edgar Brian Torres-Tovar, Sgt William Nathaniel Howard, and Ayad Mansoor Sakat, the

The large-scale strikes, conducted by the US alongside partner forces, occurred around 12:30 pm ET, accord-

There will be no more oil or money going to Cuba — zero! I strongly suggest they make a deal, before it is too late. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Donald Trump, US President

peaceful nation that poses no threat to the US," he added.

Venezuela supplies around 30% of Cuba's already scarce oil imports in exchange for thousands of medical personnel who work in the South American country.

Also, Trump signed a new executive order on Venezuelan oil revenue, which is meant to ensure the money remains protected from being used in judicial proceedings.

The executive order said if the funds were to be seized for such use, it could "undermine critical US efforts to ensure economic and political stability in Venezuela." "I love the Venezuelan people, and am already making Venezuela rich and safe again," Trump said. "Congratulations and thank you to all those people who are making this possible!"

JAILED MADURO: WE'RE WELL, I AM A FIGHTER Venezuelan lawmaker Nicolas Maduro Guerra said his father President Nicolas Maduro sent a message through his lawyers saying he was in good condition and remained resolute in US custody.

PRISONERS RELEASED The release of prisoners continued on third day in Venezuela, as Diogenes Angulo was freed on Saturday after a year and five months.

Members of Venezuela's opposition, activists, journalists and soldiers were among the detainees that families hoped would be released.

Angulo was detained two days before the 2024 presidential election after he posted a video of an opposition protest in Barinas, the home state of the late President Hugo Chavez. He was 17 at the time.

Trump said the release of people detained for political reasons came at US's request. "Venezuela has started the process, in a big way, of releasing their political prisoners," Trump wrote on Truth Social. "Thank you! I hope those prisoners will remember how lucky they got that the US came along and did what had to be done." Trump added should prisoners forget, "it will not be good for them."

'DON'T STAIN INDIA TIES' An eminent Republican Indian American warned the proposed US bill targeting countries importing Russian oil could hurt India-US relations.

Ashok Mago, founder chairman of the Greater Dallas Indo American Chamber, now the US-India Chamber of Commerce, said the move was "not very helpful while negotiations are going on between Delhi and Washington about the tariffs", and argued lawmakers should allow talks to reach a conclusion before escalating pressure.

"The 500% tariff is not a very good idea," Mago said. "The lawyers told us they

Not 1, not 1,000: Azhar's suicide bombers alert

An audio recording allegedly by Masood Azhar, the chief of the banned terror group Jaish-e-Mohammed, has surfaced, where he claims a large number of suicide attackers are prepared to strike at any moment, "NDTV" reported.

Azhar is heard saying over 1000 suicide bombers are ready and pressing him to allow them to infiltrate India.

He said the sheer number of fighters would shock the world if made public. He said, "Ye (suicide bombers) ek nahi, do nahi, 100 nahi, ye 1000 bhi nahi, agar poori taatad bata doon, tuh kal duniya ki media par hungama mach jayega."

(These suicide bombers are not one, not two, not 100, not even 1,000. If I tell you the number, there will be an uproar in the world media.)

He said the individuals are motivated to carry out attacks and achieve martyrdom. The date and authenticity of the tape could not be verified.



Anti-ICE stirs continue in US

MINNEAPOLIS (US)

Thousands of people have marched in Minneapolis to protest the fatal shooting of a woman by a federal immigration officer there and the shooting of two protesters in Portland, Oregon, as Minneapolis leaders urged demonstrators to remain peaceful.

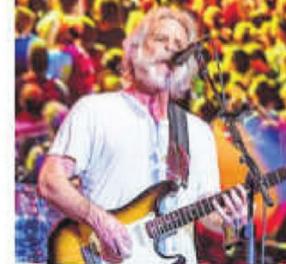
The Minneapolis gathering on Saturday was one of hundreds of protests planned in towns and cities across the country over the weekend. It

Moms pass on maths anxiety to girls: Sunak charity survey

London: Mothers tend to pass on their own anxiety over maths to daughters, creating a gender gap of confidence in the subject over time, new research by an education charity set up by UK's former PM Rishi Sunak and wife Akshata Murty has found.

The findings of the survey by the Richmond Project, reported in 'The Sunday Times' ahead of its official publication next week, reveal girls become less confident and hence less able in maths from the age of 8. It found 51% of boys aged 4 to 8 thought maths was "easy" compared to 41% of girls. This gap widened over time, with 86% of boys aged 9 to 18 saying they were confident in the subject compared to 63% of girls. "Our survey shows if they are parents, women tend to struggle more with helping kids with maths homework compared to men," Murty said. —PTI

'The Grateful Dead' guitarist-singer Bob Weir, 78, passes away



LOS ANGELES

Celebrated singer-guitarist and co-founder of 'The Grateful Dead', Bob Weir, has passed away at 78.

As confirmed by his family on social media, Bob Weir died after a long battle with cancer and lung issues. "It is with profound sadness that we share the passing of Bobby Weir. He transitioned peacefully, surrounded by loved ones, after courageously beating cancer as only Bobby could. Unfortunately, he succumbed to underlying lung issues," they wrote.

In a statement, his family reflected on his journey that started six decades ago and added, "For over sixty years, Bobby took to the road. A guitarist, vocalist, storyteller, and founding member of the Grateful Dead. Bobby will forever be a guiding force whose unique artistry reshaped

'AI may be used as bioterror weapons'



Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates has warned AI could be used to develop bioterrorism weapons by non-government groups who may have access to open-source software. In his annual letter titled 'Optimism with footnotes', Gates claimed though AI will change society the most, it carries considerable threats to the global population.

"In 2015, I gave a TED talk warning that the world was not ready to handle a pandemic. If we had prepared properly for the Covid pandemic, the amount of human suffering would have been dramatically less," wrote Gates. "Today, an even greater risk than a naturally caused pandemic is that a non-government group will use open source AI tools to design a bioterrorism weapon."

Gates said humanity needed to be deliberate about how AI is developed, governed and deployed. He added there was no upper limit on how intelligent the AIs would become. "I

believe the advances will not plateau before exceeding human levels," said Gates.

Apart from the threat of bioweapons, Gates said the next big challenge will be the disruption to the job market. The pace of growth of AI was already disrupting the job demand in areas like software development. Biological weapons involve the use of bacteria, viruses, or toxins to cause disease or inflict harm on people, animals, and agriculture. This practice is categorised as biowarfare when conducted by nation-states and bioterrorism when orchestrated by non-state actors. The illicit trafficking of biological materials pose a challenge for the future of humanity.

Kim Jong Un's sister seeks explanation from Seoul

SEOUL

AIRSPACE BREACH

The influential sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has called for Seoul to provide a detailed explanation about recent drone incursions, claiming the drones from South Korea clearly violated the North's airspace.

Kim Yo-jong, vice department director of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, made the remarks as South Korea's

Defence Ministry denied Pyongyang's claim about the drone incursions from the South's military, raising the possibility that private entities may have been involved in the alleged drone operations. Yonhap News Agency reported.

"Fortunately, the ROK's

Apple extends hotel stays in S Korea

media reports said.

Apple has stationed executives in South Korean hotels close to Samsung and SK Hynix factories as the company works to secure long-term memory chip supplies. The move comes amid a global shortage of DRAM, with RAM prices surging up to 300% since mid-2025. The team is negotiating multi-year contracts for LPDDR5X modules required in upcoming iPhone models, currently costing \$70/12GB unit more than double the price at the start of 2025.

Apple's purchasing teams are residing in hotels in Hwaseong, Gyeonggi, within easy access to semiconductor plants. The strategy aims to ensure a stable supply of critical components as AI-driven demand continues to strain the global memory market.

TECH GIANTS COMPETE FOR SCARCE MEMORY Apple is not the only tech company taking extreme measures. Dell, Google, and Amazon have also established

extended stays in South Korea to secure memory chips. The high demand has even benefited hotels, with business accommodations like Doubletree and Nine Tree in Pangyo seeing significant rises in long-term bookings.

Samsung and SK Hynix remain firm on short-term contracts, providing quarterly agreements, anticipating further price hikes through 2027. Server DRAM prices in Q1 2026 have risen 60-70% compared to Q4 2025, highlighting the tight supply situation.

AI DEMAND FUELS MEMORY CRUNCH

The shortage is largely driven by AI infrastructure needs, particularly high-bandwidth memory (HBM3E) for AI accelerators like Nvidia's H200, which requires eight HBM3E units per card.

Chinese orders alone have added \$3 billion in new demand since receiving US export approval, limiting DRAM availability for smartphones and other consumer devices.

Briefs

NAVI MUMBAI
Harris' 22-ball fifty powers RCB



Grace Harris produced a breathtaking display of power-hitting en route to a 40-ball 85 to script Royal Challengers Bengaluru's emphatic nine-wicket win over UP Warriorz in their Women's Premier League match here on Monday. UP Warriorz had recovered admirably from a dramatic collapse to post 143/5, thanks to a superb rescue act by seasoned all-rounders Deandra Dottin and Deepi Sharma. Harris then smashed the fastest fifty of the season, racing to the landmark in just 22 balls before finishing with a scintillating knock that was studded with 10 fours and five sixes. The second successive victory lifted the former champions to the top of the standings. Skipper Smriti Mandhana played the perfect foil with an elegant unbeaten 47 from 32 balls, including nine boundaries.

NEW DELHI
IOA brings NOA with Usha at helm



Calling it a major step towards strengthening the Olympic movement in India, the IOA on Monday announced the "formal reactivation" of a National Olympic Academy (NOA) in Ahmedabad with its President and sprint legend PT Usha leading its management. The IOA (Indian Olympic Association) also said that a National Olympic Education and Development Programme (NOEDP) will also be launched. "The IOA General House unanimously approved President PT Usha as the President of the National Olympic Academy, and Shri Gagan Narang, Vice President of the IOA and Olympic medallist, as the Director of the National Olympic Academy."

NEW DELHI
All ISL clubs give written confirmation



All the 14 Indian Super League (ISL) clubs have written to the All India Football Federation (AIF), formally confirming participation in the delayed 2025-26 season, clearing

Kohli walks the talk, says Iyer

He struck 93 off 91 balls as India chased down a target of 301

VADODARA

India vice-captain Shreyas Iyer lavished praise on Virat Kohli, saying the batting great has been "walking the talk" for years, the latest being his masterclass in a successful run chase against New Zealand in the ODI series opener.

Kohli struck a fluent 93 off 91 balls as India chased down a target of 301 to register a four-wicket win and take a 1-0 lead in the three-match rubber here on Sunday.

During the innings, Kohli also became the fastest player to reach 28,000 international runs across formats and the second-highest run-scorer in international cricket, behind Sachin Tendulkar.

"Whatever we talk about his innings, it would be less. We have been seeing it for so many years now he's been

doing it consistently. The way he rotates the strike and he takes on the bowlers, he basically walks the talk," Iyer said in a video posted by BCCI.

Iyer, who returned to international action after a long injury layoff following a spleen laceration with internal bleeding sustained during the third ODI against Australia in Sydney in October last year, said he was delighted to begin the series on a winning note.

"Great start to the series. Coming back after a while into the team, it feels great to be a part of this squad. More than that, it was a great feeling to share the dressing room with each and every one. I was missing it for quite a while, but I am happy to be back," Iyer said. Fast bowler Harshit Rana has confirmed that the team management has asked him to work on improving his batting skills.

Rana played a vital role in India's four-wicket victory in the opening ODI against New Zealand here on Sunday, taking a couple of wickets at the top to derail the Kiwis' progress and chipped in with a vital 29 off 23 late in the chase.

Rana batted ahead of an injured Washington Sundar, who suffered from a side strain, putting his availability in doubt for the second ODI on Wednesday.

"The team management wants to groom me as an all-rounder and it is my task to keep working on it," Rana told reporters here.

"I am working on it in the nets as well, and it was a matter of confidence which KL (Rahul) bhai helped me with when I went in (to bat). I kept my focus on it and made the runs," he added.

With premier all-rounder Hardik Pandya not available for the ODI series, India's playing eleven featured both Ravindra Jadeja and Washington in the opening ODI, whereas the team combinations in other formats now regularly features more than one all-rounder.

Both Pandya and Shivam Dube played four games each in India's five-match T20I series against South Africa last month, whereas the playing elevens for the two-Test series which the hosts lost 0-2, featured at least three all-rounders each in both matches including Jadeja, Washington, Axar Patel and

their arms over for India and they bowl in their domestic appearances as well.

In the build-up to the second ODI against South Africa last month, both Jaiswal and Tilak were seen

putting in equal time

in the nets to hone their skills as a batter and a bowler.

After he helped



India's Virat Kohli plays a shot during the first ODI. PTI

Whatever we talk about his innings, it would be less. We have been seeing it for so many years now he's been doing it consistently. The way he rotates the strike and he takes on the bowlers, he basically walks the talk

Virat Kohli
India batter

Backing | He played a vital role in India's 4-wicket victory in the opening ODI

Rana says management wants to groom him as all-rounder

Nitish Kumar Reddy.

Playing multiple all-rounders in the Test side following the crushing loss was criticised heavily by former Indian pacer and KSCA president Venkatesh Prasad, who had expressed that "the all-rounder obsession is absolute brain-fade".

The idea of having so many all-round players as possible can be gauged with the fact that specialist batters Yashasvi Jaiswal, Tilak Varma and even Abhishek Sharma have rolled



I am working on it in the nets as well, and it was a matter of confidence which KL (Rahul) bhai helped me with when I went in (to bat). I kept my focus on it and made the runs

Harshit Rana
India all-rounder

their arms over for India and they bowl in their domestic appearances as well.

In the build-up to the sec-

ond ODI against South Africa

last month, both Jaiswal and Tilak were seen

putting in equal time

in the nets to hone

their skills as a

batter and a

bowler.

After he helped



India's Harshit Rana plays a shot during the first ODI. PTI

India win the Asia Cup T20, the world No 1 T20I bowler

Varun Chakravarthy had told the media that the head coach has asked him to work on his batting skills, for bolstering his chances for selection in ODI team where he gets picked on as-per-need basis.

"My team wants me to bat at No 8 as an all-rounder and whatever time I can give to it in the nets, I focus on that. I believe I can score 30-40 runs for the team lower down the order whenever needed and that's what the team management believes that I can do as well," Rana added.

Rana put on 37 runs for the sixth wicket to stabilise India's innings in the chase with Rahul, after they lost Virat Kohli (93), Jadeja (4) and Shreyas Iyer (49) in quick succession.

Till Virat bhai was there it felt that the match would end early, maybe with 5-6 overs to spare but a game of cricket can change anytime and you cannot predict it."

When asked if the Indian bowlers struggle to take wickets upfront with the new ball in the absence of Jasprit Bumrah, Rana retorted by saying the troika of Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna and he bowled well to contain the South African batters.

tion will be an issue.

"It's a complete falsehood...There is no such advisory in formal communication," an ICC source told PTI.

The upcoming T20 World Cup is scheduled to be held from February 7 to March 8 across venues in India and Sri Lanka.

The BCB's apprehensions followed the release of Mustafizur from IPL franchise Kolkata Knight Riders amid attacks on Hindus in Bangladesh.

As per the existing fixtures, Bangladesh are scheduled to play their first three group matches in Kolkata and the final one in Mumbai.

Following Mustafizur's removal from the KKR franchise, the Bangladesh government banned the broadcast of the IPL in the country.

However, former captain Tamim Iqbal and current Test skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto have cautioned against a hard-line approach on the matter with the former saying that the decisions taken today would have repercussions 10 years down the line.

'A complete lie', ICC rejects Bangladesh's fresh claims

Bangladesh have expressed reluctance to tour India

DHAKA/NEW DELHI

Bangladesh sports advisor Asif Nazrul on Monday claimed that the ICC has acknowledged his country's specific security concerns on travelling to India for the T20 World Cup but the game's global governing body termed his assertion "a complete lie".

Bangladesh have expressed reluctance to tour India for the tournament, scheduled to begin on February 7, and have sought to shift their matches to co-host Sri Lanka citing security concerns. This was after pacer Mustafizur Rahman was released from the IPL on instructions of the BCCI which cited unspecified "developments" as the reason.

"I need to inform you that the security team of the ICC and those in charge of security have sent a letter (to BCB). In that letter, it has been said that three things will increase the security threat to the Bangladesh team," Nazrul said during a press conference in Dhaka, according to local newspaper 'Daily Star'.

"One is if Mustafizur



(Rahman) is included in the Bangladesh team.

Two, if the supporters of the Bangladesh team walk around wearing the national jersey of Bangladesh. And the third is that the security threat of the Bangladesh team will increase as the (Bangladesh) elections approach," he added.

However, the ICC, while admitting to have contacted the BCB, denied Nazrul's claims that it has accepted Bangladesh's listed concerns.

"There has been an internal communication from ICC to BCB with regards to security in India. But what Asif Nazrul said is a complete lie. ICC's communication never mentions that Mustafizur's selec-

all praise

Jamieson marvels about superstar Kohli's greatness

VADODARA

Having been a rival as well as a teammate to Virat Kohli, New Zealand all-rounder Kyle Jamieson says he can only marvel at the Indian superstar's craft as he operates at a "different level", one where great batters have their way even if bowlers try to contain them.

Kohli looked set for a record-extending 54th ODI century on Sunday in the opening ODI against the Kiwis

All disputes of news and publication against the AKHAN BHARAT SANDESH are the subject matter of Allahabad Jurisdiction.

Email ID: akhanshreeyogisatyan@gmail.com

Mob. 9415235084, 9565333000

that India won by four wickets. However, Kohli fell seven runs short of his milestone when the imposing Kiwi bowler had him caught at mid-off for 93.

Jamieson, who has shared the dressing room with Kohli at Royal Challengers Bengaluru in the IPL, said it's tough to determine if the Indian batter has been at his best right now.

"It's hard to say from an opposition point of view whether this is the best version of him or not -- he's

been pretty good for a long time, right?" Jamieson told the media after Sunday's loss.

"You feel every time you come up against him, you've got to be at your absolute best to even compete. He's on a different level, he plays the game on a different level to most cricketers, (and) he looked pretty good for the most part. "We'll just have to try and come up with some plans to try and contain him, but (then) you don't contain the greats, they have their way a little bit, so just

enjoyed watching him play for sure," Jamieson added.

Jamieson was by far the best bowler from both the teams returning figures of 4/41 but could not avert a defeat for his side even as he sparked a minor collapse, dismissing Kohli, Ravindra Jadeja (4) and Shreyas Iyer in quick succession.

"He (Kohli) controlled the tempo through the middle and set the innings up for his team," Jamieson admitted.

Jamieson said he looks at his career with more grati-

tude than ever before.

"Like any player's journey has got its ups and downs and its own experiences, I was fortunate to (have) burst onto the scene in a way and have a bit of an impact and spend some time here with the IPL early on," he said.

"(It) certainly (was) an eye-opening experience and something I probably wasn't quite ready for at that stage in my life, and (I've) been on a bit of a journey as well with the back issues over the last couple of years.



New Zealand's Kyle Jamieson bowls a delivery during the first ODI. PTI