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

Briefs

CHANDIGARH

Police seize 51.5 kg of heroin; 2 held
Punjab police on Friday claimed to have busted a cross-border narco-smuggling network with the arrest of its two operatives and recovered 51.5 kg heroin from their possession in Amritsar area. Those arrested are Gurjeet Singh alias Jeet and Ranjeet Singh alias Dhillon, both residents of Amritsar, DGP, Punjab, Gaurav Yadav said.

JAIPUR

In 2 yrs, med negligence led to 14 deaths

As many as 14 deaths have been reported in government hospitals of Rajasthan due to medical negligence in the past two years. This was stated by the department of medical and health in a reply in the Rajasthan legislative assembly. These deaths include two due to mismatched blood transfusions in the Sawai Mansingh Hospital of Jaipur. These included 23-year-old Sachin Sharma from Dausa in February 2024 and 23-year-old China Devi from Tonk in May 2025.

LUCKNOW

Flight makes emergency landing

A Jeddah-bound Saudia Airlines aircraft returned to Lucknow and made an emergency landing on Friday after a cabin pressure problem was reported mid-air, triggering breathing discomfort among some passengers, officials said. The aircraft, operating flight SV-891 from Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport to Jeddah, developed a technical issue when it was near Mumbai. Sources said the cabin pressure problem led to uneasiness and breathing difficulty for a few passengers, prompting the pilot to seek an immediate landing.

KOLKATA

Arrest food chain owners: LoP on fire

Following Calcutta High Court's order, Leader of Opposition Suwendu Adhikari on Friday led a rally at Narendrapur near Kolkata over the devastating fire that claimed 25 lives. Talking to the media, Adhikari demanded the arrest of food chain owners after the arrest of warehouse owner Gangadhar Das. The LoP also showed a purported photo of one of the owners of the city-based food chain with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee as a part of her business delegation in the foreign shore.

RAJKOT

Three killed as car falls off bridge

Three persons were charred to death after the car they were travelling in fell off a bridge and burst into flames in Gujarat's Rajkot district early on Friday, police said. The accident occurred around 5.30 am on the Gondal-Atkot highway when the car was going from Chhota Udepur towards Gondal, they said. The car hit the side wall of an 8-foot-tall bridge over a small stream, broke through it and plunged to the ground. The vehicle immediately caught fire after the fall, leaving its occupants trapped inside. All three passengers died at the scene, police said.

B'LURU SHOCKER | Real estate tycoon shoots himself at home as taxmen searched his office

Wary of I-T raids, magnate ends life

BENGALURU

Real estate giant Dr CJ Roy allegedly died by suicide fearing income tax raids in Bengaluru on Friday. The 57-year-old chairman of the Confident Group shot himself at his residence in Anepalya.

The I-T department carried out searches on Thursday at multiple premises associated with Roy, including his office on Richmond Road.

Officials reportedly detected assets allegedly disproportionate to his known sources of income. Police said Roy had been under stress following repeated tax investigations. Bengaluru Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh said Roy was rushed to a nearby hospital after the incident but was declared brought dead. "The Income Tax team had been searching the premises for the last two to three days. Family



Police stand guard outside Confident Group's office building in Bengaluru on Friday

members are currently not in India.

The incident came to light after staff members alerted authorities.

Senior police officers and forensic teams visited the spot, and a post-mortem examination was initiated. Police said the motive is yet to be established and it remains unclear whether a suicide note was recovered.

Founded in 2005, the Confident Group is a prominent real estate and infrastructure developer with projects across Karnataka and other parts of the country. Roy, a native of Kochi, Kerala, was also a film producer and had backed Malayalam films, including Casanova (2012).

The group had also been the title sponsor of several seasons of Bigg Boss Malayalam.

OK with Trump 'Riviera' idea: Palestine min

NEW DELHI

Palestine may not be averse to US President Donald Trump's idea of transforming the Gaza Strip into a Mediterranean "Riviera", but only if such a plan is meant for Palestinians themselves and not imposed at their expense, Palestinian Foreign Minister of State Varsen Aghabekian Shahin said on Friday.

In an interview to PTI Videos, she also said that India's participation in President Trump's 'Board of Peace' could help.

"Well, a Riviera for its people. I mean, why not? If it's a Riviera for Gazans, the Palestinians, to enjoy, yes. But if it's a Riviera for others to enjoy without the Palestinians, no," Shahin said while answering a question on Trump's view of turning the strip into a Riviera of Middle East.

Her remarks come amid renewed global focus on Gaza's reconstruction and a US-led Peace Board proposed by Trump.

Nation pays tribute to Gandhi



President Droupadi Murmu pays homage to Mahatma Gandhi at the Raj Ghat on the occasion of his 78th death anniversary, in New Delhi on Friday

Modi: Gandhiji will continue to inspire forever

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi on his death anniversary, saying the Father of the Nation's ideals and emphasis on Swadeshi continue to guide India's journey towards becoming a developed and self-reliant nation. PM Modi posted, "My hundredfold salutations to the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, on his death anniversary. Revered Babu always laid strong emphasis on Swadeshi, which is also a fundamental pillar of our resolve for a developed and self-reliant India. His personality and accomplishments will forever continue to inspire people of the country to walk the path of duty."

Bapu is a way of thinking, says Rahul

New Delhi: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday said Mahatma Gandhi is not just a person, but a way of thinking that an empire, an ideology of hatred and arrogance of power unsuccessfully tried to erase at different points in time. "Termining Mahatma Gandhi the 'immortal soul of India', Rahul Gandhi, the leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha, paid tributes to the Father of the Nation on his death anniversary, saying that along with Independence, he gave the nation a fundamental principle that the power of truth is greater than the power of authority."

Ramesh reveals Nehru's letter to Mookerjee

New Delhi: On Mahatma Gandhi's death anniversary, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Friday recalled two separate letters written in 1948 to Syama Prasad Mookerjee by Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in which they strongly criticised and raised questions over the activities of the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS. The Congress general secretary in-charge communications said two days before Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated, Jawaharlal Nehru had written to Mookerjee, and a few months later, on July 18 1948, Sardar Patel had also written to Mookerjee.

Stalin slams BJP over AIADMK graft

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin on Friday launched a sharp attack on the BJP asking whether their alliance partner AIADMK allegedly involved in corruption cases has been cleaned in their "washing machine".

Targeting the saffron party for making "baseless allegations" on the DMK, Stalin, after inaugurating the NDTV Tamil Nadu Summit here, said those who cannot digest the growth of Tamil Nadu spread lies through "Whatsapp university".

"All the allegations made against us follow an old script. The first of these is the political dynasty charge. I have already answered this. Anyone is free to enter politics, but they must stand before the people, earn their trust and win votes to succeed. This is a baseless accusation made by those who cannot face us on the ground," the DMK chief said.

The second allegation they make against us is "corruption". Has anyone proven a single allegation made against us so far, he asked.

Made in Assam chips to power India's global rise, says Shah

GUWAHATI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said that Assam is poised to emerge as a global technology hub, with the upcoming semiconductor manufacturing facility set to generate employment for over 27,000 youths and carry the label 'Made in Assam' to markets across the world by the end of 2026.

Addressing the 10th Mising Youth Festival at Dhemaji, Shah said the project symbolises a new chapter in Assam's development journey.

Referring to the Mising community, Shah said the

Assam's second capital on track

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday laid the foundation stone of the state's second Legislative Assembly complex in Dibrugarh, formally setting the stage for the city's emergence as Assam's second capital. Shah also laid foundation stones and inaugurated a series of key projects spanning legislative infrastructure, sports, wildlife conservation and flood mitigation. These included the Assembly complex and MLA hostels, Institute of Wildlife Health and Research at Dinjan, and the expansion of Khanikar Stadium, alongside the launch of a major wetland restoration initiative across the state.

Assam government's decision to introduce the Mising language as a medium of instruction in 200 schools reflects its commitment to protecting indigenous identities. He



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'Assam tea to reach Europe with zero tariff'

Amit Shah on Friday said that the EU-India free trade agreement will ensure that Assam tea shipments will reach European countries with zero tariff. "The EU-India trade pact will further boost Assam tea exports to European countries," he asserted. Dibrugarh, which has the highest concentration of tea gardens, will get the biggest advantage from this trade pact, Shah said. "Tea from these gardens will now reach 27 countries and the people of these countries will enjoy the morning cup of tea from Dibrugarh", he added.

'Rahul disrespected NE by not wearing gamosa'

Amit Shah on Friday accused Congress leader Rahul Gandhi of disrespecting the North East by refusing to wear a 'gamosa', presented by President Droupadi Murmu at the 'At Home' reception hosted by her on Republic Day. All dignitaries, including those from abroad, had worn the scarf as a mark of respect, but Gandhi was the "only person to refuse" to do so, Shah claimed, at a public rally in Dibrugarh. "Rahul Gandhi can do whatever he wants, but as long as the BJP is in power, it will not allow any disrespect of the North East's culture," he said.

Contractors' graft barb stings Sidda govt now

BENGALURU

In 2023, the Congress rode high on an election campaign called 'Pay-CM', after the Contractors' Association in Karnataka alleged that the then BJP government headed by Basavaraj Bommai was receiving 40% bribe on all contracts in the State.

However, the same allegations have come back to haunt the present Congress government, where the same Contractors' Association is alleging that the present dispensation is more corrupt and had overruled to the con-

tractors to the tune of around Rs 38,000 crore.

The Contractors' Association has threatened to stop ongoing government works and hold a huge protest rally on February 5, demanding payment to the contractors.

Association's President R Manjunath said that the situation of contractors in the state was miserable and the government had taken the contractors for granted. At the moment, the government has to pay Rs 37,370 crore to the contractors for the works executed. The Association had decided to write letters to LoP Rahul Gandhi.

BJP prepares budget blitz

NEW DELHI

The BJP has prepared a nationwide Budget Outreach Campaign 2026 from Feb 1 to 15, during which media events, programmes and interactions will be organised at around 150 venues to create awareness around key features of Union Budget 2026 that would be presented on Sunday.

The party said all union ministers, chief ministers of BJP-ruled states and senior party leaders will address the media through press meets from nearly 150 locations across the nation.

Top cleric calls for protection of Kashmiris after assault

SRINAGAR

Expressing deep concern over the incident of the brutal assault on Kashmiri Muslims in other parts of India, Mirwaiz Kashmiri Molvi Umar Farooq, on Friday said it reflects the disturbing pattern of communal profiling and hostility faced by Kashmiris outside Kashmir.

He expressed deep anguish and concern over the brutal assault using iron rods on 18-year-old Kashmiri shawl vendor Tabish and his brother Danish in Uttarakhanda's Vikas Nagar area, causing grievous injuries to them. He recalled similar incidents of harassment and attacks on Kashmiri traders, labourers and students were reported from Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and other parts of country.

Seer sets gau raksha deadline for UP govt

LUCKNOW

Tensions between Shankaracharya Swami Avimuktshwaranand and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath escalated on Friday after the seer issued a 40-day ultimatum to the state government over cow protection, questioning its commitment to Sanatan Dharma.

The Shankaracharya demanded that the cow be declared Rashtramata and that beef exports from Uttar Pradesh be completely banned. He warned that if the demands were not met by March 10, saints from across the country would gather in Lucknow on March 11 to launch a major protest against the government.

In sharp remarks, he said wearing saffron did not make someone a saint if cow slaughter continued under their

Admin seeks to defuse row

The UP govt has initiated backchannel efforts to defuse the row with Shankaracharya, with indications that the Prayagraj administration is now ready to issue an apology. As per Shankaracharya's media in-charge Yogiraj Sarkar, officials are likely to travel to Varanasi to escort the Seer back to Prayagraj for his Magh Purnima bath at the Sangam.

rule. Drawing a parallel with Kalnemi, a demon from Hindu mythology who disguised himself as a sage, he questioned the gap between the Chief Minister's religious image and ground reality.

RLM chief reshuffles party amid dissent

PATNA

Rashtriya Lok Morcha (RLM) chief and Rajya Sabha MP Upendra Kushwaha on Friday carried out a major organisational reshuffle in his party amid speculation about discontent among its MLAs. He appointed party MLA Alok Kumar Singh as the new state president of the RLM.

Kushwaha announced the decision at a press conference amid protests by three of the party's four MLAs over the induction of his son, Deepak Prakash, as a minister in the Nitish Kumar government. Deepak is not a member of the Assembly or Council. RLM MLAs include Alok Kumar Singh, Snehlata,

Madhav Anand and Rameshwar Mahto. Earlier, Madhav was named legislative party leader.

Kushwaha said the party's Bihar unit had been dissolved after the Assembly elections and would now be run by an interim committee until a formal structure is set up. Prashant Pankaj and Subhash Chandravanshi were named state working presidents, Himanshu Patel as principal general secretary, and Madan Chaudhary as national vice-president.

He said the new team would appoint district presidents and other office bearers. A special membership drive was also announced, and the party's national unit will be formed soon.

'Mollified' Tharoor vows to work for UDF's Kerala win

NEW DELHI

A day after meeting Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and party leader Rahul Gandhi in the Parliament Complex, Congress MP Shashi Tharoor on Friday declared that he would continue to "be in the Congress" and was "not going anywhere". He also announced that he would be "part of the poll campaign (in Kerala) and will work for the victory of the United Democratic Front."

The Thiruvananthapuram MP, who had met Kharge and Gandhi in the backdrop of his simmering differences with the party leadership over his praise of the Centre and



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, as also his decision to skip at least four party meetings, had earlier on Thursday posted on "X" that "we are all on the same page".

On reaching Thiruvananthapuram, he interacted with the reporters and sang paeans to the Congress leadership. Tharoor described Gandhi as a "sincere leader" who is liked by everyone because "he constantly speaks against the politics of communalism, hatred and divisiveness in the country."

Bihar horror

Mahadalit woman 'cremated' on road

PATNA

In a shocking incident, a Mahadalit woman has been allegedly cremated in the middle of a road under Goraul police station limits in Vaishali district.

The incident occurred at Sondho Andhari Gachhi Chowk on Thursday. The deceased has been identified

as 91-year-old Jhapi Devi, a resident of Sondho Vasudev village. According to the family members, they were taking Jhapi Devi's body to the cremation ground, but could not proceed due to encroachment on the path. It is alleged that local shopkeepers have been encroaching the path leading to the crematorium for a long time.

Despite repeated attempts,

Family members could not reach the cremation ground in Vaishali district due to road encroachment

when family members could not find a way, they made a pyre in the middle of the road and performed the last rites at

the road intersection. Upon receiving information about the incident, local police arrived at the scene but remained silent spectators for hours. Local residents claimed that the path leading to the cremation ground had been closed for a long time, causing problems for villagers trying to reach there. Despite this, the administration had not taken any concrete action until now,

they alleged. Taking serious note of the matter, Vaishali district magistrate Varsha Singh has constituted a committee, comprising sub divisional officer (SDO) of Mahua, deputy superintendent of police (DSP), and block development officer (BDO) of Goraul. Strict action will be taken against those found guilty after the investigation, sources added.



Civil Defense pays tribute through siren on Martyrs' Day, remembers Mahatma Gandhi



Akhand India Sandesh

Prayagraj. On the occasion of Martyrs' Day, Civil Defense paid tribute to Rashtrapita Mahatma Gandhi by sounding sirens at various major places on Friday. On the occasion of Martyrs'

Day, Civil Defense visited High Court Complex, Collectorate Complex, MNIT Teliarganj, Fourth Vahini PAC Dhumanganj, Railway Station Rambani Navir Line, Vidhut K. The siren sounded for 1 minute at 10:59 am.

After the siren sounded, the people observed a 2-minute silence paying tribute to Mahatma Gandhi. After this, the sirens sounded simultaneously again at 11:02 p.m. District Collector Manish Kumar Verma and Controller of Civil Security Rakesh Kumar



Tiwari, along with Collectorate staff and volunteers, laid wreaths at the statue of Mahatma Gandhi at the Collectorate premises. Ashish Srivastava and Deputy Controller Civil Security Neeraj Mishra led the sirens, while senior court officials

and learned advocates also observed two minutes of silence. Chief Warden Anil Kumar, Mahendra Saxena, Rohit Kesarwani, Manoj Singh, L.K. Thursday, Ashish Bajpai, Nagendra Singh, Shailendra Kushwaha, Nitesh Dwivedi, Shri

Krishna Tiwari, Rajkumar Gupta, Ajay Kumar Singh and Dr. Subhash Pandey yoga donation workers. At the collectorate premises, District Collector Manish Kumar Verma paid tribute to Rashtrapita Mahatma Gandhi.

Tribute paid to heroic martyrs on Martyrs' Day at North Central Railway Headquarters

Akhand India Sandesh



Prayagraj. On January 30, 2026, a tribute meeting was held at North Central Railway Headquarters, Subedarganj on the occasion of Martyrs' Day. In the dignified presence of General Manager Shri Naresh Pal Singh, the officers and employees of the Headquarters paid tributes to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives in India's freedom struggle. On this occasion, all observed two minutes of silence and paid their respects in memory of the brave martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the nation. As per the instructions of the Railway Board and the Home Ministry, all work was stopped at the headquarters premises as soon as the siren sounded at 11:00 a.m. and a silence was observed for two minutes. General Manager Shri Naresh Pal Singh said on the occasion that "Today reminds us of the sacrifices of the freedom struggle. He appealed to all railway workers to make their best contribution in nation building. Heads of various departments of the headquarters and other senior officials were also present in the programme. Martyrs' Day was also organized at major stations and offices of Prayagraj, Jhansi and Agra mandals. The purpose of the event was to strengthen the spirit of patriotism among the railway workers and express gratitude to the brave fighters of the freedom struggle.

Hearing to add names to electoral roll in Pasma, 40 voters apply

Akhand India Sandesh

Korav. A hearing was held at Pasma Composite Vidyalaya premises of Korav tehsil for addition of names in the voter list. Notices were distributed by the BLO to a total of 161 voters of Booth No. 161 of Babhanpatti. Of these, 40 voters appeared with their documents and applied for name addition. The voters presented their applications before Appellate Officer and Return Inspector Korav Sunil Singh. Ramnarayan Vishwakarma, Shashikant Pathak, Brijesh Pathak, Bhole Pal, Savita Devi and Saroj Devi were among the voters who applied. Voters submitted available documents to



the officials among the necessary documents requested by the Election Commission. Officials registered his information in the 2026 voter list online. Supervisor

Sandeep Mishra and BLO Amaresh Kumar Tiwari were also present to cooperate with Inspector Sunil Singh. The hearing will continue tomorrow at Pasma Composite

Vidyalaya. Officials have appealed to all voters to respond to their notices and appear on time for name amendment or addition of new names.

Instead of giving justice to rape victims, former judge started blackmailing FIR on three including Daroga

Akhand India Sandesh

Jhansi. When the guardian of justice becomes a devourer, the victim pleaded for justice. A similar sensational case has faced a similar case in the Jhansi police station area, where a victim of a crime committed a case against him. Together with his wife, he started blackmailing her. In view of the seriousness of the matter, a case has been registered against the three persons, including

Daroga, on the orders of the Commissioner of Police. The victim, a resident of Keedganj, worked in a pathology in Jhansi. It is alleged that the pathology director mistreated him and later started blackmailing him. A case was registered on September 13 on the complaint of the victim and handed over to Sub-Inspector Ramnaresh Yadav. It is alleged that Ramnaresh Yadav was replaced during the trial, but despite this he was constantly exposed to torture. The victim alleged

that the judge Ramnaresh Yadav conspired with the main accused and his wife. The three then worked together to falsely accuse the victim and threaten to kill her. Fed up with the mental torture, the victim filed a written complaint with the police commissioner and warned of suicide if she did not get justice. After the intervention of the commissioner, Jhansi police have registered a case against Ramnaresh Yadav, pathology director Vinod Mishra and his wife Amrita.

Health Supervisor Hariram Arya Honored for Outstanding Work in Family Planning Program



Bahraich

Hariram Arya, a health supervisor at the Charda Community Health Center (CHC), was honored by Chief Medical Officer Dr. Sanjay Kumar

Sharma for his outstanding work under the family planning program. On this occasion, Hariram Arya dedication and commitment to public service were highly praised. Officials stated that

the role of hard-working and dedicated employees is crucial in such programs, as they play a vital role in promoting health services and raising awareness about family Planning.

Rs 73.61 lakh water tax evasion revealed in Prayagraj Municipal Corporation, FIR filed against employees

Prayagraj. The Water Works Department of the Municipal Corporation has faced a huge financial embezzlement. Saurabh Nishad, an employee deployed at the water tax collection counter of the Public Suvidha Kendra at the Smart City Building, is accused of embezzling Rs 73.61 lakh. In this case, an FIR has been registered against him under relevant sections at Khuldabad police station. According to the information, Saurabh Nishad, a resident of Mori Daraganj, was deployed on July 02, 2024 at the water tax collection counter of



the public amenity center of Smart City Building. His responsibility was to collect water tax, sewer tax and sewer charges from consumers and deposit them in the bank accounts of the

department. According to the departmental records, the accused recovered a total of Rs 13.83 lakh 954 during the deployment, but deposited only Rs 6.442 lakh 907 in the Municipal Corporation account.

The remaining Rs 7.361 lakh 47 was not deposited. An examination of 878 receipts confirmed this fraud. When the accused did not produce the deposited invoice despite repeated notices and

orders, he was suspended on 05 July 2025. In an audit conducted by the Chief Municipal Auditor on the direction of the Municipal Commissioner, the accused was also found guilty of embezzlement of Rs 73.61 lakh and recovery of the amount was granted. Police have registered an FIR and started investigation after the Tahrir of the Water Works Department. The municipal corporation and the department have been in turmoil after this revelation. Officials say there could be more revelations as the investigation moves forward.

District Collector found 38 employees of different divisions of collectorate absent in surveillance, directed to obtain explanation and withhold 1 day's salary



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj. District Collector Manish Kumar Verma inspected the offices at the Collectorate Complex at 10:00 am on Friday and gave necessary directions. He inspected the attendance register in all the rooms and obtained explanations of 38 Patal Assistants and employees of various sections who were absent at the time of inspection and directed to withhold one day's pay if the explanation was not satisfactory.

He shall visit all the offices and Patal in the collectorate premises and inspect the administrative works, maintenance of records, public hearing arrangements and working methods of personnel giving necessary directions. He directed all Additional District Collectors and Municipal Magistrates to inspect all rooms regularly and ensure timely attendance of all employees during the inspection. During this time, he took information from officials

and employees about the progress of works and directed them to ensure transparency, timeliness and quality in administrative works.

The District Collector directed to make good cleanliness arrangements in the collectorate premises and all rooms and improve the maintenance of stationery. He gave instructions to streamline the storage of pamphlets so that they could be easily removed when needed. The District Collector



inspected the status of record keeping and gave necessary instructions. He directed to ensure office discipline and attendance of employees. Suman Srivastava of ERK section, Kriti Srivastava, Mayan Kumar of Kavita Rey, Sino Jais, Sinhakha of Kavita Anuj Jais, inspected the attendance panjika. Srivastava, Amit Agarwal of JRK section, Vivek Kumar Yadav of JA section, Priyanka Srivastava, Laxmish Shankar Yadav, Mohd Kaunen Ahmed,

Additional District Collector Finance and Revenue Section Ashish Mehrotra, Rajman Hassan of Rajman Hasida Mahendra Kumar Pandey, Monika Yadav, Pratima Srivastava, Additional District Collector Nanda Gopal Tiwari of Municipal Division, Radharaman Choudhary, Rangoli Srivastava of Additional District Collector Najul Division, Divisional Officer of Police Afsheen Islam Rajesh Kumar Verma of RRR

division, Manju Srivastava, Seema Tripathi, Keshavi Devi, Shivangi, Manoj Kumar Sharma of Upper Nagar Magistrate's first division, Vima of Upper Nagar Magistrate's second division Brijesh Srivastava, Sudha, Richa Srivastava, Radheshyam Kesarwani of Geography Section, Pradeep Kumar of Arms Section, Additional District Collector Finance and Revenue Court Kamal Kumar Yadav, Sujeet Kumar and Sub-District Collector Judge Let's go.

Car falls 10 feet below Machli Mandi due to accident, epileptic seizure at Gau Ghat in Mutthiganj



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj. Heavy incident occurred at Gau Ghat in Mutthiganj police station area on Saturday. The car driver suffered a sudden epileptic seizure, causing the vehicle to lose control and plummet into a fish beach about 10 feet below the road. Three women including the driver were in the car. After Hadsa, there was a lot of Afra-Tafari on occasion. With the help of locals, all the occupants were evacuated safely. The relief was that no one was reported injured in the accident. Police rushed to the scene and brought the situation under control. According to police, the accident occurred when the driver suffered a sudden seizure. All are safe and necessary action is being taken in the matter.

Children took cleanliness oath in school under Clean Spring Festival

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Ghazipur. Municipal Council Muhammadabad organized an awareness program on cleanliness and environmental protection at Public National School Nawapura under the Swachh Basant Utsav. The program was led by Administrative Officer of the Municipality Ravindra Mohan. Rangoli competition was held among the students at the school premises. The children gave messages of cleanliness, environmental protection and civic responsibilities through colors. Rangoli got a glimpse of a clean city and a healthy future, which



was appreciated by the audience. The students were informed about the importance of waste separation. Measures to segregate wet and dry waste, proper disposal of waste and maintaining a clean environment were discussed in detail. The harmful effects of single use plastic were also explained and an appeal was

made to avoid its use. On this occasion, the officials and staff took the oath of cleanliness to the children. The students resolved to keep their surroundings clean, not use plastic and make the society aware of hygiene. Shyam Babu Saini, hygiene brand ambassador Santosh Yadav, Amarendra Singh from Geo State, officers and employees of the municipal council were present in the programme. The event was described as a commendable initiative towards developing a sense of cleanliness and responsibility towards the environment among children.

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DM conducted monthly inspection of EVM warehouse, expressed satisfaction with security arrangements

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Ghazipur. District Collector and District Election Officer Avinash Kumar inspected the EVM warehouse at the District Election Office on Monday. During this time, he took stock of the security arrangements of EVMs and VVPAT machines. During the inspection, the status of CCTV cameras installed in the warehouse, deployment of security personnel and



other security standards related to the strong room were reviewed in detail. The district collector expressed satisfaction with the arrangements while inspecting all security protocols and directed the officials to maintain vigilance. Additional District

Collector (Finance and Revenue) Dinesh Kumar, AR Co-Operative Vipin Kumar and concerned officers were present on the occasion. The administration made it clear that negligence will not be tolerated at any level regarding the security of EVMs.

DCM and trailer in head-on collision on Hata Bridge, driver injured



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Ghazipur. A serious road accident occurred at Hata Bridge in Kotwali-Muhammadabad area late Friday night. There was a head-on collision between a gravel trailer heading towards Ballia and an oncoming DCM. The driver of the trailer was seriously injured in the accident, while the driver of the DCM and Khalasi escaped. The incident is reported to have occurred around 2:30

p.m. The trailer was heading towards Ballia from Mohammadabad, while the DCM was coming towards Mohammadabad from Ballia. According to witnesses, the DCM driver suffered a flash of drowsiness, which caused the vehicle to go uncontrolled into the wrong lane and collide with an oncoming trailer. The collision was so severe that both vehicles were badly damaged. After the attack, the driver and support vehicle fled the scene

leaving the DCM. Passers-by immediately reported the incident on dial. Police rushed to the scene and the injured trailer driver was sent to Community Health Center Tiwaripur. After first aid there, his condition was declared stable and he was discharged. No casualties were reported in Ganimat Rahi. Police said the absconding DCM driver and Khalasi are being identified. Investigate the matter and take necessary legal action.

Case of illegal ITC claims on 362 brick kilns exposed in Ghazipur, tax department investigates Tej

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Ghazipur. There is a big case of illegally claiming Input Tax Credit (ITC) by brick kilns in the district. The state tax department has expedited the process of reversing wrongfully deducted ITC by initiating probe against 362 brick kilns. An important meeting was held with brick kiln owners under the business dialogue program held at State Tax Office, Prakash Nagar Ghazipur. The meeting was presided over by Additional Commissioner Tax Grade-1, Varanasi Zone I. It was decided that the kilns would be surveyed on the basis of annual tax payable. A monthly random survey of bakers paying less than ₹2 lakh annual tax, once every two months of those paying tax from ₹2



to 5 lakh and random survey of bakers paying more than ₹5 lakh. According to departmental figures, a total of 383 brick kilns are registered in Ghazipur district. Of these, 362 sewerage solutions fall under the Sewage Solution Scheme (Composition Scheme), on which the tax rate is 6 per cent (from SGST 3% and CGST 3%) for the years 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25. Under the resolution scheme, the

benefit of ITC is not allowed as per the rules, despite the fact that returns were filed illegally adjusting the ITC by these kilns. The state tax department has identified a total of 394 such returns, in which ITC was illegally claimed. Proceedings have now been initiated to determine the tax liability by reversing ITC in all these cases. Joint Commissioner (Executive) State Tax,

Division-5 Varanasi Surendra Bahadur, Deputy Commissioner Jaisen, Sarvesh Kumar Singh, Vivek Mishra and Assistant Commissioners Prabhakar Singh, Dr. Satish Kumar Singh, Rajesh Ojha were pres-

ent. General Secretary of the Brick Manufacturers Committee Lallan Singh, kiln owner Sanjay Singh, Pawan Kumar, Ashutosh Rai and other kiln operators also attended the meeting. Strict action continues against.

INFORMATION

The general public is informed that I am Vijendra Kumar son of Late Girija Shankar Bind My mother's name is Late Indra Devi Address 42 Composite School Village Gudia Post Tathra Vikas Khand Sevapuri Tehsil Ragna Praja Tala My birthday is July 8, one hundred and eighty-eight. My Aadhaar number is 960520361678 in my Aadhaar card my name Vijendra Kumar's place has become Vivek Jaishankar Dubey and my father's name's Girija Shankar's place has become Jaishankar 19 Meri 8 The place is August 7, While my real name is Vijendra Kumar and my father's name is Girija Shankar and my date of birth is July 8, Which is true. Sworn- Vijendra Kumar son of late Girija Shankar Address 42 Composite School Village Gudia Post Tathra Vikas Khand Sevapuri Tehsil Raja Talab District Varanasi Uttar Pradesh.

Editorial

India's online gaming ban shows today's thriving sector could be tomorrow's casualty

It took a mere six minutes in the Lok Sabha and a few minutes more in the Rajya Sabha to wipe out an established industry. In a matter of 48 hours, the passing of the Bill on Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill 2025 has adversely impacted 2,00,000 direct employees, Rs 23,613 crore in investments, over Rs 4,500 crore in advertisements and Rs 20,000 crores in direct and indirect taxes. The Bill, now an Act, was introduced in Parliament without undergoing the due process of a draft for public opinion, stakeholder consultations, or, at the very least, a warning. Policy corridor whispers imply that even allies were not aware of such a move. A decade-old, established sector constitutionally guaranteed under Article 19 has been asked to wrap up operations and told it will be held liable for criminal actions, including those of its employees, if it doesn't comply. While the Act aims to safeguard public health and address the concern of offshore illegal platforms, any ban, especially in the digital space, has consistently proven to have amplified the issue multiple times. The immediate fallout would include economic disruptions, shifts in user behaviour, and social harms. The opaque strategy adopted by the government in this case highlights the grave direction that policy-making is taking in India. The uncertainty goes far beyond the online real money gaming sector and will set a precedent for future policies in each sector. This swift and unconsulted legislative strike is not just a regulatory misstep but a stark warning of the growing unpredictability in India's policy landscape, one that could unravel investor confidence, domestic business trust, and exacerbate systemic issues like brain drain of talent and businesses. The immediate economic toll is staggering and underscores the bill's shortsightedness. Beyond the 2,00,000 direct jobs at risk, it affects ancillary industries like fintech, advertising, and content creation. Annual GST revenues of Rs 20,000-25,000 crore and TDS of Rs 1,080 crore (FY24) will evaporate, creating fiscal gaps at a time when India's fiscal deficit stands at Rs 15.77 lakh crore, amounting to 4.8 per cent of GDP. But the real cautionary tale lies in the investor disarray this creates. A reported foreign direct investment (FDI) of \$2.7 billion and startup funding of \$2.8 billion in real money gaming are now stranded. This unpredictability echoes broader patterns in India's policy environment, where sudden changes deter long-term commitments. For instance, the 2019 e-commerce FDI rules, which restricted inventory models for e-commerce platforms, led to a reported slowdown in US-India tech investments, with firms citing regulatory whiplash as a key barrier. Similarly, retrospective tax demands in the past (e.g., the Vodafone case) have been linked to a dip in FDI inflows, with studies showing that economic policy uncertainty reduces FDI by up to 30 per cent in emerging markets like India. The 2025 Kearney FDI Confidence Index highlights regulatory complexity and ease of doing business as concerns for investors in India, potentially shoving off billions in inflows amid global uncertainties like US tariffs. Businesses, particularly in the digital economy, thrive on stability. This bill's passage without stakeholder input, bypassing the Pre-Legislative Consultation Policy, sends a chilling message: Today's thriving sector could be tomorrow's casualty. As the industry voices alarm, with petitions likely heading to courts, the precedent risks cascading effects on adjacent digital fields where India aims for global leadership but faces investor hesitation due to such volatility. In the larger scheme, this policy unpredictability is accelerating India's brain drain, particularly in tech and digital innovation, where skilled professionals seek more stable environments abroad. Data from 2025 reveals a stark reality: Over 1,05,000 global tech layoffs this year alone, with 20 per cent occurring in India, have pushed thousands of engineers and developers to migrate.



Why hasn't India won the Nobel Prize for literature after Independence? Quality of education

Speaking in a distinguished institution, a political leader expressed concern that after Rabindranath Tagore in 1913, no Indian has received the Nobel Prize in Literature. His question—"Is the writing of our country not at the level anymore? Or has it been ignored by international institutions?"—was thought-provoking. But the tone was aloof. However, when you think about it, the answer is obvious. During the British Raj, India produced a number of great poets, artists, scientists, scholars, and thinkers. Many of

them have an international reputation. The solitary Nobel Prize in literature was also received during the British period. Under the British, our talents flourished. The educational institutions of the British rulers encouraged talents without discrimination on any ground. Did our desi leaders, post-British rule, continue that noble tradition? It is well-recognised that the educational institutions of British India declined rapidly after Independence. Instead of nurturing talent, new policies, knowingly or unknowingly,

worked toward their suppression or migration to the West. Isn't it curious that during the British Raj, hardly any Indian writer, scientist, artist, or scholar decided to settle abroad? Whereas in Independent India, talent of all kinds began settling in Europe and America, leaving India for good. To come to the issue, the leader who pointed out our lack of Nobels seems unaware that there are two essential prerequisites to help grow quality writers. One, to connect children & youth with great literature, taking care that they also get time

and encouragement to savour it. Second, to maintain a whole system of good institutions and platforms for learning, teaching, writing, publishing, and interacting. To ensure all this, staying away from narrowness or compromise must be a rule. But desi leaders, preachy and voluble, did the opposite! The British made arrangements in every field of knowledge and science to promote talent—modern public institutions, great libraries, newspapers, magazines, entire new learning disciplines like history, civics, etc.

India-US relationship has survived darker times. Intelligence ties bind us together

Edward Heath, Great Britain's Prime Minister, felt the words wash over him, hot like a dragon's breath: "The United States had received nothing from India except a kick in the teeth, in exchange for \$¾ billion last year," President Richard Nixon raged. The Indians, Nixon went on, thought "the white nations had no choice but to come in and bail India out." Alarmed, British Foreign Secretary Alec Douglas-Home stepped in. "The Indians were admittedly intolerably high-minded," he accepted. "But there was an important common interest in preserving Indian independence from Soviet and Chinese domination." The invective against Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her nation, provoked by her refusal to back down on Bangladesh, continued in the privacy of Nixon's office, though: "A slippery, treacherous people," "bastards," "old witch," "b*tch". Even as the political leadership in both countries raged against each other, the relationship between the Central Intelligence Agency and the Research and Analysis Wing remained robust, historian Paul McGarr writes. In 1973, the head of Prime Minister Indira's secretariat, Prithvi Nath Dhar, and the chief of R&AW, Rameshwar Nath Kao, lobbied for CIA chief William Colby to visit New Delhi. As President Donald Trump appears to be leading the India-United States relationship into an abyss from which there is no return—adding restrictions to the outsourcing of jobs on the back of crippling tariffs—the period



between 1971 and 1973 shows the two countries have been locked in airless places before. The intelligence services of both countries, though, found ways to bypass potholes and cul-de-sacs, ensuring strategic conversation continued. Little understood, India-US intelligence ties flourished in the shadow of the Cold War, as New Delhi resolutely proclaimed its commitment to non-alignment. Late in the summer of 1949, India was struggling to contain its first post-Independence insurgency, an uprising by communists in the Telangana region. The Indian Army, sent to Hyderabad to battle the Nizam's armies, found itself at war with peasant insurgents in Telangana. Thousands died in the brutal conflict, Jonathan Kennedy and Sunil Purushotham have recorded, as the Army herded Adivasis into concentration camps in near-starvation conditions. Less than forty-seven

years old and with little experience in global politics, an unassuming police officer was tasked with helping India find the right tools to deal with the crisis. TG Sanjeevi, earlier a Superintendent of Police in Madras, and now Director of the Intelligence Bureau, was ordered to make a three-week visit to Washington. For decades before Independence, the Intelligence Bureau had been relentlessly focused on the threat of communist terrorism. Telangana was its first challenge after Independence—and, it seemed, its first potential failure. To Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, it seemed that the threat was transnational and a danger to the survival of the Indian republic. The colonial legacy meant India had a substantial relationship with the United Kingdom's intelligence services. The Security Service, popularly known as MI5, was a

critical source of assistance in the first years after Independence. India became debilitatingly reliant on this relationship, Avinash Paliwal has recorded. "This is satisfactory," an MI5 memo on general dependence smugly noted—but India understood the need to widen its partnerships. George Kennan, then director of policy planning at the State Department, agreed with Prime Minister Nehru's assessment. To address the challenge, Kennan recorded, Sanjeevi would have to "look beyond India's borders and seek to influence policy in regard to dangers from without." This meant that, despite Nehru's socialism, America would help him push back against the Communist threat. The visit did not begin well, though. Sanjeevi was affronted by the imperious behaviour of the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, J Edgar Hoover, and vowed never to allow contact between the Intelligence Bureau and the FBI. The damage was contained, however, during his subsequent meetings with the Central Intelligence Agency. Sanjeevi came away with positive impressions of his meetings with Colonel Richard Stilwell, Kermit "Kim" Roosevelt, and the director of central intelligence, Roscoe Hillenkoetter. Even though the two countries clashed over questions of ideology and global politics, the alignment of their interests wasn't particularly opaque. India's government provided arms and training to Tibet's ramshackle military after 1949, and even considered deploy-

ing troops in support of its independence. The problem was that the Indian Army just didn't have the resources. In 1954, India formalised this reality, ceding many of its colonial-era rights, like stationing troops in Lhasa, historian Karunakar Gupta has written. The Intelligence Bureau, though, looked the other way, as the CIA supplied weapons and equipment to Khampa insurgents from 1958 on, historian Claude Arpi has written. India also ignored CIA flights in support of Tibetan insurgents, which crossed over its territory en route from Dhaka. Langley supported the founding of the Special Frontier Force, intended to carry the PLA along the China-India Line of Actual Control. The CIA also oversaw the insertion of nuclear-powered surveillance equipment to gather intelligence on China's nuclear-weapons programme. Even as this intelligence cooperation continued, Prime Minister Nehru publicly complained that the United States was interfering in Indian politics, "buying up newspapers and spreading a network of publicity organisations." Later, Prime Minister Indira assailed foreign powers plotting to "run down India." CIA agents, American intelligence officer Russell Jack Smith wrote sharply, "were to be found according to Madame Gandhi, beneath every charpoy and behind every neem tree." Even as Prime Minister Indira frequently railed against CIA intervention to bring about regime change—and public erupted when the journal Ramparts.

China will be more central to India now. Though an anti-US unity is premature

As I write this column from Boston, the biggest American newspapers have the Tianjin meeting of Prime Minister Modi, President Putin, and President Xi—all three smiling and shaking hands—as a leading news item. The sub-theme is also that President Trump's policies are driving them closer, perhaps opening the door to an anti-US unity in international geopolitics. The talk of an anti-American unity is perhaps premature. At least two of the three nations, China and India, have significant ties with the US, which can be ruptured only at a very great cost. Despite the talk of a decline, the US is still the world's largest economy. At the end of 2024, according to the World Bank, America's GDP was \$29.18 trillion, which amounted to 26.2 per cent of the world economy (\$111.33 trillion). A market of that size cannot easily be shunned. Indeed, most countries and corporations would covet access to it. But there is no doubt that Trump's radi-

cal break from America's post-Cold War foreign policy, especially his use of tariffs as an economic and political tool, is creating new geopolitical and economic scenarios. Countries must take into account these changes as they make adjustments in their foreign policies. Of course, Trump is known to be mercurial and abrupt changes in his policies cannot be wholly ruled out. However, three things are likely to remain constant: use of trade tariffs, opposition to immigration, and smaller American investments in international security. The changes in these realms, if any, are likely to be of degree. Fundamental changes can take place only if the results of these policies are catastrophic for his MAGA base, especially via inflation or if the judiciary intervenes more firmly than it has done so far. How should India, severely jolted by Trump's tariffs, imagine its way forward? Let me suggest that China will become even more central to India's foreign policy.

Vijay is winning the nickname war in Tamil Nadu. He's attacking Brand Stalin with 'uncle' taunt

In the world of marketing, a new entrant's toughest task is to break the perception built around the old guard. Established brands don't crumble because of direct attacks. They erode when their aura is punctured, when their carefully constructed image is made to look smaller, or even laughable. Politics is not different. Though for decades, MK Stalin was no more than a 'possible' political heir to former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu M Karunanidhi, things changed in 2019. Stalin was turned into a brand, crafted meticulously as the only answer, as an able administrator, and a calm and composed CM post the 2021 elections. He was present-

ed as the inevitable figure, the steady numero uno of contemporary Tamil Nadu Politics, a man positioned above ridicule. Even his critics rarely succeed in dismantling his image. Actor turned politician Vijay was out to destroy that brand when he called him, "My dear Stalin uncle." With such an open taunt at his second public rally, Vijay wasn't merely addressing the Chief Minister; he was reframing him. What at first sounds like cinema dialogue is, in LinkedIn lingo, classic disruption. A single word that wedges into the aura of authority, triggering what one might call the 'uncle-ification of a statesman'. Stalin was recast as just another politician, a figure who is now the

subject of memes. This is not an insult for insult's sake, but rather is a strategy through vocabulary. Political authority in Tamil Nadu has always been theatrical. MGR's heroism, Jayalalithaa's imperiousness, Karunanidhi's oratory skills, Stalin's calm—these are curated performances. Brands with narratives. "Uncle" in this context is not reverential. It's casual, familiar, and even patronising. The strength of Stalin's brand lies in the distance it creates, and Vijay's jab collapses that distance instantly. It is lethal in politics. It forces a new narrative onto the mainstream discourse, away from discussions on policy and performance, and instead drags it into a battle of personalities.

The disease of pride is like alcohol

"Every breath and word is precious." The disease of pride is like alcohol. Everyone knows it's intoxicated except the person himself. One who is intoxicated with pride, neither sees the virtues of others nor his own shortcomings. Keep in mind that pride is

very hungry, and its favorite food is exclusively his own. The worst thing about pride is that it will never let you realize you're wrong. I was very proud of the roof being the roof. One more floor was built, and the roof became the floor. What's there to be proud of? There

will come a night after which there will be no morning. The body is made of clay, even the breaths are borrowed. What's the point of pride? We're all tenants here. Keep laughing, keep smiling. Whether you help someone or not, be the reason for everyone's smile.

Five Vehicles Collide in Dense Fog on Bundelkhand Expressway in Auraiya, Two Seriously Injured

Auraiya

A major road accident occurred on Thursday morning on the Bundelkhand Expressway under the Sadar Kotwali area of Auraiya due to dense fog, resulting in a collision involving five vehicles. Two people sustained serious injuries and were admitted to hospital for treatment. According to information, a truck loaded with moram had already overturned near Miholi on the expressway. Owing to extremely poor visibility caused by thick fog, traffic movement slowed down and a jam-like situation developed at the spot. Vehicles approaching from behind failed to apply brakes in time,



leading to a series of collisions. Rahees Pal, son of Jagat Ram and a resident of Firozabad, stated that he was travelling

from Andhra Pradesh to Firozabad with a truck. On noticing the traffic congestion ahead, he had stopped his vehicle when

another truck coming from behind rammed into it at high speed. Subsequently, more vehicles approaching from the rear collided

with one another, bringing the total number of vehicles involved in the accident to five. Prashant, son of

Shivram and a resident of Gangapura in Etawah district, who was travelling in the second truck, was also injured in the mishap. He was reportedly transporting goods from Orai to Karhal. The impact of the collision was so severe that the front portions of both trucks were badly damaged. Upon receiving information, the police rushed to the spot and initiated rescue operations. With the help of ambulances, the injured were taken to the 50-bedded district hospital in Auraiya. After initial treatment, Rahees Pal was referred to Chicholi due to his critical condition, while Prashant continues to receive treatment at the hospital.

Woman Drives Car from Passenger Seat in Auraiya, ARTO Imposes 31,300 Fine

Auraiya

A video showing a young woman holding the steering wheel of a moving car while seated on the passenger seat went viral on Instagram on Wednesday, triggering widespread concern over road safety. In the video, the driver seat is seen vacant, raising serious questions about reckless driving on a public highway. Notably, the same young woman was seen a day earlier taking photographs with officials during the National Road Safety Month programme held on Tuesday at Devkali Chauraha in the city. Following the viral clip, the police have taken cognisance of the incident and initiated an investigation. As soon as the 14-second video of the woman, who had participated in the road safety pledge programme, surfaced on social media, citizens began sharply criticising the police and administrative authorities. The incident has sparked a debate on the credibility and seriousness of road safety campaigns. Traffic Circle Officer P. Punit Mishra stated that an inquiry is being conducted on the basis of the vehicle number and the viral video. Taking swift action, ARTO N.C. Sharma imposed a fine of ₹31,300 on the car owned by the woman seen in the video. According to officials, the woman has identified herself as a YouTuber. Further investigation is underway to ascertain all aspects of the incident and to ensure strict compliance with traffic laws.

SP Abhishek Bharti Cracks Dibiyaipur Murder Case, Three Accused Arrested

Auraiya

The Auraiya Police have solved the murder case reported from the Dibiyaipur area and arrested three accused involved in the killing. Superintendent of Police Abhishek Bharti stated that the incident took place following a dispute over rash motorcycle riding. Illegal firearms and the weapon used in the murder have also been recovered from the accused. According to the Police, Dibiyaipur police arrested Pavnesh Dohare, Piyush alias Shippy Dohare, and Jeetu Dohare on January 29 during a checking operation near Budhadana Pulia. Two country-made pistols of 315 bore, four live cartridges, and a motorcycle were recovered from their possession. On the basis of their disclosure, the police also recovered a sharp iron rod used in the murder, which had been hidden in bushes after the crime. SP Abhishek Bharti informed that on the intervening night of January 18 and 19, Dibiyaipur police received information about the body of a young man lying in a field near Kakore Bamba. The police reached the spot and identified the deceased as Anuj alias Chhotu (21), a resident of



Tulsipur under Phaphund police station area. After the forensic team collected evidence from the spot, the body was sent for post-mortem examination. On the complaint of the victim's father, a case was registered against unknown persons. During interrogation, the accused confessed that on January 18 they were consuming liquor near a closed brick kiln in village Bhiyapur. At the same time, a dispute arose with Anuj over riding a

motorcycle at high speed and in a zig-zag manner. The argument escalated, following which the accused chased Anuj into a field, caught him and assaulted him on the head with an iron rod, leading to his death. After committing the murder, they fled the spot after concealing the weapon. On the basis of recovery and evidence, the police have added Section 3(5) of the BNS to the case. Separate cases under the Arms Act have also been

registered against two of the accused for possession of illegal weapons. The police are making efforts to arrest other suspects who have emerged during the investigation. The police team that played a key role in solving the case included Dibiyaipur Station House Officer Rudra Narayan Tripathi, Crime Inspector Sher Singh, Surveillance and SOG In-charge Samit Chaudhary, Sub-Inspector Rajendra Kumar and Surendra Kumar.

Departmental Review Meeting on the \$1 Trillion Economy Held Under the Chairmanship of Minister Sunil Kumar

With the objective of achieving the target of making Uttar Pradesh a \$1 trillion economy, the Department of Information Technology and Electronics, Government of Uttar Pradesh organized a high-level presentation and review meeting today at the auditorium on the second floor of Bapu Bhawan, Lucknow. The meeting was chaired by IT and Electronics Cabinet Minister Sunil Kumar Sharma and focused on departmental schemes and progress made so far. During the meeting, a detailed review was conducted of the schemes, Policy initiatives and investment-related activities being implemented by the IT and Electronics Department in line with the \$1 trillion economy goal. Discussions were held on accelerating technology-driven development, promoting investment and increasing employment opportunities. The progress of the proposed AI City in Lucknow was also reviewed. It was informed that the pre-feasibility study for the AI City has been completed and discussions were held on land identification and investment processes. The draft of the UP AI Mission, being prepared to promote AI-based



skilling, research, innovation, and startups, was also discussed. Initiatives to develop Gautam Buddha Nagar as a global hub for IT/ITES and Global Capability Centers (GCCs) were reviewed. The meeting was briefed on the progress of operational guidelines issued under the GCC policy, investor facilitation mechanisms, and ongoing engagement with companies. The meeting also reviewed activities related to the proposed Drone Hub to promote drone technology in the state. Proposals related to drone manufacturing, testing, and research, along with the potential applications of drone technology across various sectors, were discussed. Efforts being undertaken under the UP

Startup Mission and UP Startup Policy 2025, in line with the \$1 trillion economy target, were reviewed. Discussions included incentives for startups, funding mechanisms and their participation in public Procurement. Investment proposals related to electronics and semiconductor manufacturing, infrastructure availability in industrial areas and future strategy were also discussed. Special emphasis was laid on developing this sector as a key pillar of the state economic growth. The meeting was attended by IT and Electronics Cabinet Minister Sunil Kumar Sharma, Minister of State for IT and Electronics Ajit Pal, Principal Secretary (IT & Electronics) Anurag Yadav (IAS), Managing Director of UP Electronics Corporation Limited Ravi Ranjan (IAS), senior departmental officers, and representatives of Deloitte. Deloitte representatives delivered a presentation during the meeting. The participants emphasized coordinated efforts to propel Uttar Pradesh towards becoming a \$1 trillion economy through technology-driven development, innovation, and investment

Municipal Corporation Headquarters; Municipal Commissioner Reviews Progress with Construction Team

A major renovation of the council hall is currently underway at the Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation headquarters for conducting council meetings. Keeping in mind the seating arrangements for all councillors, improved lighting, sound systems with microphones and internet facilities, the council hall is being given a completely new look. Work is also in progress to install an LED wall for presentations, and camera installation is being carried out inside the hall. Municipal Commissioner Vikramaditya Singh Malik is continuously reviewing the progress of the work along with the construction department team. He has directed the construction team to expedite the work. Chief Engineer (Construction) Narendra Kumar Chaudhary, Additional Municipal Commissioner Avinindra Kumar and Municipal Health Officer Dr. Mithilesh were present on the site during the inspection.



tion. Chief Engineer (Construction) Narendra Kumar Chaudhary stated that the council hall had deteriorated significantly and, as per the instructions of the Mayor and the Municipal Commissioner, renovation work is being carried out to give it a new appearance. The work is being done keeping in mind proper seating arrangements for councillors, officials, clerks, and other staff, as well as dedicated seating for media personnel. All AC units, lights, and equipment that were damaged due to a fire have been replaced, and electrical wiring has also been changed.

Along with the council hall, the executive committee room is also being pre-

pared so that meetings and other important programs can be conducted smoothly. The Municipal Commissioner stated that the demand for renovation of the council hall had been pending for a long time. Considering this, efforts are being made to give the hall a grand and modern appearance under the planned development process. Repair work and replacement of furniture are also being carried out in the council hall and executive committee room as per requirements. The work is expected to be completed by February, after which a well-organized council hall will be available for meetings of councillors and ex-officio Members.

Three-Day International Seminar on 'Loka Drishti and Human Values in Indian Philosophy' Inaugurated

Varanasi

Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Ajit Kumar Chaturvedi, has underlined the need to understand the essence of Indian civilisation to ensure that the continuity of its journey remains strong. The Vice-Chancellor was speaking at the inaugural session of the three-day International Seminar on "Loka Drishti and Human Values in Indian Philosophy" at the Mahamana Hall, Malaviya Moolya Anusheelan Kendra, Varanasi. The seminar is being organised from 29-31 January 2026 under the joint aegis of the Department of Sanskrit, Faculty of Arts and Bharat Adhyayan Kendra with the support of the Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR) and the Central Sanskrit University, New Delhi. Prof. Chaturvedi stated that for thousands of years, Indian civilisation has witnessed many phases of rise and decline, but it has always overcome them and emerged even stronger



than before. He underlined that philosophy lies at the foundation of all disciplines and that academic forums should promote questioning, critical inquiry and dialogue rather than being limited to appreciation alone. He noted that seminars serve as platforms for understanding and intellectual exchange. Presiding over the session, Padma Bhushan Acharya Vashishtha Tripathi, former Vice-Chancellor of Sampurnanand Sanskrit University, highlighted the importance of sustaining India philosophical traditions and value systems. He noted that Indian philoso-

phy offers a holistic framework for understanding life, society, and human values and stressed the need for deeper scholarly engagement with classical knowledge systems. Prof. Sushma Ghildyal, Dean, Faculty of Arts, emphasised the role of academic institutions in preserving and promoting Indian knowledge traditions. She observed that interdisciplinary dialogue and scholarly discussion are essential for connecting traditional wisdom with contemporary academic discourse.

Prof. Kamala Prasad Singh, former Head, Department of Sanskrit,

spoke as a distinguished speaker and recalled the ancient and rich teaching tradition of the Department. He stated that the department long-standing dedication to academic work and scholarship has found meaningful expression in the form of this seminar. The programme proceedings were conducted and the vote of thanks was delivered by Prof. Shardindu Kumar Tiwari, Coordinator, Bharat Adhyayan Kendra, who expressed gratitude to all dignitaries, scholars and participants for their presence and contribution to the seminar. The seminar has

attracted participation from scholars in the USA, Trinidad & Tobago, Italy, Germany, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal and Iran, as well as delegates from institutions across India. Seven technical sessions are scheduled on themes including the harmony of lok and shastra in Indian knowledge traditions, philosophy and society, language and folk culture, environment, health and education, and contemporary interpretations of Indian philosophical values. A cultural evening titled "Vasantotsava" will be organised on 30 January 2026 in collaboration with the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Varanasi. Directed by Pt. Om Prakash Mishra, the Kathak presentation will portray the beauty and spirit of the spring season through rhythm and expression. The valedictory session on 31 January 2026 will be headed by Prof. Pradyot Kumar Mukhopadhyay of Jadavpur University.

Bhumi

furious over child rape

Bhumi Pednekar condemns a horrific assault on a six-year-old girl in Delhi, questioning society, upbringing and systemic failure to protect children

Bollywood actress Bhumi Pednekar reacted to a deeply disturbing case of rape involving a six-year-old girl. On January 18, the girl was sexually assaulted by three boys aged 10, 13 and 14 in northeast Delhi's Bhajanpura area, police confirmed on Tuesday.

According to officials, two of the accused minors have been taken into custody, while the third boy and his family are currently absconding. Authorities have launched a search operation to trace them, and the case remains under investigation.

Reacting to the news, Bhumi shared her anguish on Instagram. She re-shared a news report related to the case and questioned the repeated failures of society and systems in preventing crimes against children. Expressing her shock, she wrote that it was alarming how perpetrators believe they can escape accountability for sexual violence, calling it a sign of a moral and institutional collapse.

"What is going on. We clearly are failing cause we haven't till now been unable to instill fear into these monsters who think they can get away with sexual violence. Breaks my heart to see under age boys go through with something so heinous. Imagine the environments they are growing up in," the actress wrote.

Bhumi also drew attention to the troubling fact that the accused are themselves minors. She said it was heartbreaking to see such young boys allegedly involved in a crime of this nature.

"We are punishing the voiceless in our country, and have sensationalised dogs being a threat! What about the fact, that a 6-year-old isn't safe on our streets and actually no child is, cause in this case the perpetrators are also the victims. Wake up India," she added.



Photo: Instagram

PV Sindhu

moved by Mardaani 3

Badminton icon PV Sindhu says Mardaani 3 trailer hit her hard, praising its strong message on crimes against young girls

Indian badminton star PV Sindhu has reacted strongly to the trailer of *Mardaani 3*, saying it left a deep impact on her. Sharing her thoughts on social media, Sindhu said the line highlighting the disappearance of thousands of daughters every week in India was particularly disturbing.

The ace shuttler praised the film for addressing crimes against young girls and said she was eager to see how justice is served in the story. She described the trailer as hard-hitting and relevant, reflecting the harsh reality faced by many families across the country.

Mardaani 3, starring Rani Mukerji as fearless cop Shivani Shivaji Roy, focuses on the kidnapping of young girls from economically weaker sections. Directed by Abhiraj Minawala and produced by Aditya Chopra, the film continues the franchise's tradition of socially driven storytelling.

The film is scheduled for a worldwide theatrical release on January 30, 2026, marking Rani Mukerji's 30 years in the film industry.



Photos: Instagram

Manu Bhaker

backs Mardaani 3

Indian shooting star Manu Bhaker has extended her support to *Mardaani 3*, praising its message on the urgent need to keep girls safe. Taking to social media, the 23-year-old Olympian said films like *Mardaani* remind people that they cannot remain silent spectators when it comes to social responsibility. Bhaker said that creating a safe environment for girls is essential for them to dream, grow and thrive. Calling *Mardaani 3* a powerful film, she added that the franchise has always delivered impactful stories.

Mardaani 3 once again sees Rani Mukerji reprise her role as cop Shivani Shivaji Roy, who races against time to rescue missing girls. The film delves into crimes against minors, continuing the franchise's focus on hard-hitting social issues. Produced by Yash Raj Films, *Mardaani 3* will release globally on January 30, 2026, and is already receiving strong reactions from across the film industry and beyond.



Electrifying chemistry steals spotlight

Shahid Kapoor and Disha Patani bring electrifying chemistry in Aashiqon Ki Colony song from O'Romeo



The second song from Shahid Kapoor and Tripti Dimri starrer film *O'Romeo* has been unveiled, packed with electrifying dance moves, peppy music, and a magnetic chemistry between Shahid and Disha Patani.

Titled *Aashiqon Ki Colony*, the song opens on a poetic note, with Shahid entering as the "raw and untamed" Ustara, while Disha clearly steals the spotlight in her glamorous avatar.

Both look flawless and utterly charming on the screen, with their unfiltered

performances enhancing the song's vibrant visuals and infectious mood.

Composed by Vishal Bhardwaj and lyrics from Gulzar, *Aashiqon Ki Colony* has been sung by Madhubanti Bagchi and Javed Ali. Earlier on Monday, the makers teased the song's release with a teaser video and wrote, "*Aashiqon Ki Colony Mein Ghar Le Liya!! #AashiqonKiColony* out tomorrow! #SajidNadiadwala presents A #VishalBhardwaj film. *#ORomeo* releasing in cinemas on 13th Feb, 2026."

The first song *Hum To Tere Hi Liye* was unveiled earlier this month.



Sonakshi gifts mechanical elephant

Actor Sonakshi Sinha and PETA India donate a mechanical elephant to a Thrissur temple, promoting cruelty-free & safer religious practices

Actor Sonakshi Sinha, along with People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India, has donated a life-size mechanical elephant named Pallipuram Unnikrishnan to Pallipuram Sreekrishna Temple in Kerala's Thrissur district. The mechanical elephant was unveiled on Tuesday in the presence of temple authorities, local representatives and devotees.

The initiative recognises the temple's decision to stop using live elephants for rituals and festivals. Until 2024, the temple used multiple elephants during its annual *Pooram* celebrations, but later adopted a mechanical elephant to prioritise animal welfare and devotee safety. Pallipuram Unnikrishnan will now be used for ceremonies in a cruelty-free manner.

This donation marks PETA India's 19th mechanical elephant contribution nationwide and the tenth in Kerala. The inauguration included traditional rituals and a *Panchari melam* performance.

Sonakshi Sinha said the initiative reflects how tradition and technology can coexist compassionately. Temple Thantri Sri Anni-mangalam Narayanan Nambodiri said devotees warmly welcomed the shift, calling it safer and meaningful.

PETA India highlighted that elephants face severe suffering in captivity, while mechanical elephants offer a humane alternative without compromising religious customs.



Richa Chadha backs non-fiction series

Actress announces a non-fiction travel and culture series, exploring India's diverse communities, traditions & human stories through an empathetic lens

Actor-producer Richa Chadha is taking on a new venture, a non-fiction series that delves into travel, culture, and the stories that define people and places across India. She says it is coming from a place of curiosity and empathy.

The upcoming series will explore the richness of India's diverse landscapes, communities, traditions, and lived experiences, offering audiences a vibrant, immersive look at culture through a contemporary lens.

Richa said: "I've always been drawn to stories that live beyond the obvious, in everyday lives, in forgotten corners, and in cultures we rarely stop to engage with truly. This series comes from a place of curiosity and empathy, and from my desire to keep evolving as a storyteller."

people, real journeys, and real connections in a way that feels deeply personal. I briefly explored this space during the second COVID wave, and that experience reaffirmed my belief that such stories resonate strongly with audiences. I'm excited to take this leap and share these narratives with viewers across India and beyond."

With this non-fiction series, Richa aims to inspire audiences to see familiar places with fresh eyes while discovering lesser-known narratives that celebrate India's cultural depth and human spirit. Details regarding the format, collaborators, and platform will be announced in due course.

Richa recently cut her hair to a short bob for an upcoming project that she is set to shoot from the first week of February.



Photo: Instagram, @therichachadha



Science Exhibition Organized at Baba Kadhera Singh Vidya Mandir

A science exhibition was organized at Baba Kadhera Singh Vidya Mandir. The exhibition was inaugurated by the school Chairman Suresh Singh, Managing Director Gaurav Singh, Manager Prahlad Singh, and Principal Devashish Sen by lighting the ceremonial lamp. Chairman Suresh Singh said that today's era is the era of science. Science exhibitions play an important role in developing scientific thinking, interest, awareness, and innovation among students. They also help nurture a scientific outlook along with a spirit of healthy competition. In the exhibition, students showcased several models based on Wi-Fi technology, auto-



matized systems, water conservation, earthquakes, rainwater har-

vesting, modern transportation systems, road safety, modern irriga-

tion methods, DNA-based technologies, and other innovations

that make life easier and more convenient. School Managing Director Gaurav Singh appreciated the attractive and meaningful models prepared by the students and encouraged them. More than 200 students participated in the exhibition. He informed that the best models would be selected for participation in the district-level competition. Principal Devashish Sen motivated the students and encouraged others to take part in such exhibitions in the future. Students from various schools including Brajdhama Vidya Mandir (Saunkh Mathura Road), Murari Kunj Saraswati Vidya Mandir Govardhan, Krishnam School

Govardhan, Harish Raghav School, Baba Patiram School, Chaudhary Narottam School, Vatsalya School, Govardhan Vidyapeeth, Navodita School, and others visited the exhibition and gained valuable knowledge. Those present on the occasion included Chairman Suresh Singh, Managing Director Gaurav Singh, Manager Prahlad Singh, Principal Devashish Sen, Birpal Pradhan, G.S. Satanand Sharma, Vice Principal Rambabu, Dr. Ashok, Headmaster Surendra Singh, Coordinator Bipin Singh, Ramveer Singh, Deepak, Amit Kumar, Asha, Varsha, Apna Sharma, Jayshree, Vishakha, Rakesh Raheja, and many others.

Shiksha Mitras Thank Chief Minister for Inclusion in Cashless Medical Scheme

Lucknow: In a significant decision taken during a recent cabinet meeting, the Uttar Pradesh government has approved the inclusion of approximately 143,000 Shiksha Mitras along with nearly 25,000 instructors and cooks under the Cashless Medical Scheme. With this approval, Shiksha Mitras, instructors, cooks, and their family members will be entitled to cashless medical treatment, with all healthcare expenses borne by the state government. Following the cabinet's approval, Sushil Kumar Yadav, State General Secretary of the Uttar Pradesh Primary Education Mitra Association, expressed gratitude to the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Basic Education Minister Sandeep Singh, and MLC Shrichand Sharma (Meerut-Saharanpur Teachers' Constituency), who is also the State Convenor of the BJP Teachers' Cell, for their continuous efforts in addressing the long-standing issues of Shiksha Mitras. Mr. Yadav stated that the inclusion in the cashless medical scheme will provide major relief to Shiksha Mitras and their family members who were unable to afford treatment for serious illnesses due to financial constraints. The scheme will now enable them to receive timely and quality medical care without financial burden. Calling it a major welfare initiative by the government, he said that Shiksha Mitras across the state are grateful to the Uttar Pradesh government. He also expressed confidence that, similar to the cashless medical scheme, the government will soon take positive steps toward resolving issues related to return to original schools and financial stability, for which assurances have already been given by the Chief Minister and the Basic Education Minister.

Only 5,000 E-Rickshaws and Autos Registered— Saurabh Singh

To ensure smooth and organized traffic management in the Mathura-Vrindavan Municipal Corporation area, a total of 16 routes have been designated for the operation of e-rickshaws and autos. Only registered e-rickshaws and autos will be allowed to operate on these approved routes. The Municipal Corporation has clearly stated that permission to operate on the designated routes will be granted only after registration. At present, only about 5,000 e-rickshaws and autos have been registered in the Mathura-Vrindavan Municipal Corporation area, while a large number of vehicle operators have not yet completed the registration process. Regarding this matter, Additional Municipal Commissioner Saurabh Singh said that drivers who have not yet registered their e-rickshaws



and autos should complete the registration process at the Municipal Corporation office as soon as possible with the required documents. He warned that in the coming time, unregis-

tered vehicles will not be provided any facilities, which may cause inconvenience to the operators. The Municipal Corporation has appealed to all e-rickshaw and auto operators to

get their vehicles registered in time and strictly follow the designated routes so that traffic management remains smooth and the general public does not face any inconvenience.

SP Listens to Public Grievances, Directs Timely Resolution of Complaints



Fatehpur

On Thursday, Superintendent of Police (SP) Anoop Kumar Singh conducted a public hearing at the Police Office, attentively listening to complaints and issues raised by citizens from various police station jurisdictions in the district. During the session, complainants presented a wide range of grievances, including land disputes, family conflicts, assault, cyber fraud, and cases of harassment against women. SP Anoop Kumar Singh carefully reviewed each case and instructed the con-

cerned officers and police station in-charges to ensure fair, efficient, and timely resolution of all complaints. He emphasized that addressing the public's concerns is the highest priority of the police, and any negligence in this regard will not be tolerated. For several matters, immediate investigations were ordered, and officers were directed to submit reports without delay. In more serious cases, strict legal action was instructed to be taken in accordance with the law. Speaking on the occasion, the SP highlighted that the primary objective of the

public hearing is to provide prompt justice to citizens and strengthen police-public communication. He urged officers to interact with complainants with sensitivity and respect, reinforcing public trust in the police force. Fatehpur Police appealed to all citizens to contact their nearest police station or the police office without hesitation for any problem or grievance. The department reaffirmed its commitment to the safety, service, and trust of the public, assuring citizens that the police remain ever vigilant and responsive to their concerns.

Meeting Held with Recognized Political Parties on Special Intensive Revision of Electoral Roll-2026

Etah



claims and objections are filed in time so that they can be disposed of as per rules within the stipulated Period. He further informed that, in accordance with the directions of the State Election Commission, a special Booth Day (Special Day) will be organized on Saturday, January 31, 2026. On this day, all Booth Level Officers (BLO) will remain present at their respective polling booths from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to receive claims and objections and to fill forms for the registration of new voters, ensuring that no eligible citizen is left out of the electoral Roll. The Additional District Magistrate appealed to the representatives of political parties to establish coordination with BLO through their appoint-

ed BLO/agents and actively support training and Public awareness activities. He emphasized that collective efforts would help in preparing a more accurate, updated, and error-free electoral roll. The meeting was attended by Assistant Sub-District Magistrate Rajkumar Maurya, Congress District President Ashiq Ali, BJP General Secretary Sushil Kumar Gupta, Pradeep Gupta Bhamashah, Aam Aadmi Party State Secretary Rajkumari Yadav, Samajwadi Party District President Parvez Zubairi, General Secretary Bhupendra Prajapati, Santosh Chauhan, Rajesh Sarani, Gaurav Pathak, Gaurav Yadav, representatives of other Political Parties and Jitendra Kumar from the Election Office,

Meeting Held at Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority Regional Office

A meeting was held at the regional office of the Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA), located in the Gita Research Institute building in Vrindavan, under the chairmanship of Shailja Kant Mishra, Vice Chairman of the Uttar Pradesh Braj Teerth Vikas Parishad. During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on several important issues, including the proposed suspension bridge for connectivity from the proposed parking site across the Yamuna to Thakur Shri Banke Bihari Temple, construction of ghats along the Yamuna, the proposed ropeway project and other key development points. Important



discussions also took place regarding the construction of a cable bridge at Jugal Ghat, along with parking arrangements, public amenities, traffic management and implementation of a one-way traffic system. Instructions were issued to the Executive Engineer (Irrigation Department) to prepare an action plan to make the various ghats along the

Yamuna riverbank more beautiful, attractive and well-organized. On this occasion, concerned officials presented detailed information about the proposed projects through on-screen design presentations. The progress of major construction works and future action plans were reviewed and necessary guidelines were issued. The administration is making

comprehensive arrangements to ensure better facilities for devotees, tourists and visitors. It is committed to providing smooth and convenient darshan, with the objective of prioritizing devotees' comfort and promoting religious, tourism and cultural development. The meeting was attended by Vice Chairman of Uttar Pradesh Braj Teerth Vikas Parishad

Shailja Kant Mishra, District Magistrate Chandra Prakash Singh, Additional Chief Executive Officer of YEIDA Nagendra Pratap, Chief Executive Officer of Uttar Pradesh Braj Teerth Vikas Parishad Suraj Patel, Additional District Magistrate (Namami Gange) Rajesh Kumar, Additional Municipal Commissioner C.P. Pathak, Executive Engineer (Irrigation) Rajesh Kumar, Mathura-Vrindavan Development Authority Prashant Kumar, along with officials from the implementing agencies, Bridge Corporation, Irrigation Department, and other concerned Departments.

Briefs

NEW DELHI
Chotrani, Anahat in quarterfinals

India's Veer Chotrani stunned French world No. 19 Baptiste Masotti in a five-game thriller to secure a place in the quarterfinal, while compatriot Velavan Senthilkumar went down to second seeded Mexican Leonel Cardenas at the Squash on Fire Open in Washington. World No. 49 Chotrani beat the fourth-seed Frenchman 11-6, 7-11, 8-11, 11-1, 11-9. In the women's section, seventh seed Anahat Singh beat South African Hayley Ward 11-5, 11-8, 12-14, 11-5.

NAVI MUMBAI
DY Patil to host T20 WC warm-ups

D Y Patil Stadium, Navi Mumbai, will be one of the venues where warm-up matches and official team practice sessions for the ICC Men's World Cup 2026 will be conducted, beginning 31st January 2026 onwards. This marks a significant milestone for Navi Mumbai, as an ICC Men's International Cricket Tournament event will be conducted in the city for the first time. D Y Patil Stadium has been selected as one of the warm-up match venues following its successful delivery of several major international cricketing events in recent years.

DUBAI
Monank Patel to lead USA at T20 World Cup

As many as 10 of the 15 players who played in the last edition in the Americas were on Friday named in the USA squad, led by **Monank Patel**, for the T20 World Cup to be held in India and Sri Lanka starting on February 7. USA will face co-host and defending champions India in the tournament opener in Mumbai. The International Cricket Council had suspended USA Cricket on September 23 last year on

RANJI TROPHY | Skipper scored fifth Ranji Trophy ton of the season

Lad sparkles for Mumbai

MUMBAI

Skipper Siddhesh Lad scored his fifth First Class century of the season to guide Mumbai to a comfortable situation in the Elite Ranji Trophy Group D encounter against Delhi at MCA's BKC ground here on Friday. It was the fourth consecutive century in the longest format from Lad's bat, who was elevated to captaincy in the last game against Hyderabad after Shardul Thakur missed out due to injury. The 33-year-old Lad hit an unbeaten 102 in 178 balls, studded with 12 boundaries.

Mumbai ended the day strongly at 266/5 in 84 overs when the second day was called off ten minutes earlier due to bad light. The hosts have a lead of 45 runs after Delhi made 221 in their first innings on Thursday, thanks to Sanat Sangwan's century. Musheer Khan (57) and Suvud Parkar (53 not out) struck fifties while Delhi seamers Divij Mehra and Money Grewal shared two wickets apiece. For Mumbai also seamers Mohit Avasthi (5/62) and Tushar Deshpande (2/36) were among the wickets on the first day.

Lad was involved in an undefeated 130-run stand with Parkar for the sixth wicket to drive Mumbai ahead. He had earlier shared a 63-run partnership with Musheer to take Mumbai out of the doldrums after Mumbai were reduced to 44/3 in the morning session. Musheer was out to a dubious caught behind decision, and Sarfaraz Khan's cameo of 24 runs in 27 balls had an anticlimax to leave the hosts tottering at 5/136.

However, on a wicket that supported the seamers and runs were hard to score, crisis



Mumbai's captain Siddhesh Lad plays a shot during the second day. PTI

Brief scores:

In Mumbai: Delhi 221 trail Mumbai 266/5 in 84 overs (Musheer Khan 57, Siddhesh Lad 102 not out, Suvud Parkar 53 not out; Divij Mehra 2/38) by 45 runs.

In Hyderabad: Chhattisgarh 283 trail Hyderabad 415/4 in 105 overs (Aman Rao 52,

Abhirath Reddy 121, Himateja Kodimela 125 not out; Pragnay Reddy 52 not out; Ayush Pandey 1/26) by 132 runs.

In Puducherry: Rajasthan 168 & 77/2 in 23.3 overs (Ramnivas Golada 47; Karan Kannan 2/18) trail lead Puducherry 349 in 93.2 overs (Neyan Kangayan

120, Aman Khan 118; Mohit Chandra 3/78) by 104 runs.

In Nadaan: Himachal Pradesh, 168 trail Jammu and Kashmir 387/5 in 103 overs (Shubham Pundir 165, Paras Dogra 52, Abdul Samad 61, Kanhaiya Wadhawan 56 not out; Divesh Sharma 2/54) by 219 runs

man Lad played the role of an anchor, and Parkar, making a comeback to the side, latched on to the opportunity to play a fluent knock. He reached his century at the fag end of the day, thanks to overthrows, sending jubiliations around the ground.

Lad equals record for Mumbai

Lad equalled Rusi Modi and

Sachin Tendulkar in hitting at least five tons in a season for Mumbai. He earlier scored hundreds against Hyderabad (104), Puducherry (170), and Himachal Pradesh (127). He had also scored a hundred against Jammu and Kashmir in the first Ranji Trophy match of the season. He has already scored over 700 runs in his seventh match and has an

astonishing average of over 100. Lad who contemplated quitting cricket after a season with Goa in 2022-23, has been enjoying a purple patch after comeback to the Mumbai team, last season. But it was his father, Dinesh Lad, who had coached International players like Rohit Sharma and Harmeet Singh.

Construction work continues to disturb game

MUMBAI

The air and noise pollution around MCA's BKC ground has attracted attention in the ongoing Ranji Trophy match between Mumbai and Delhi. Few Mumbai players were wearing face masks during fielding on Thursday. It continued to disturb players on Friday as the continuous hammering during building construction work outside the ground made hearing things difficult in the middle.

It is learnt the ground representatives had sought Police intervention to stop the major work during match time or at least keep proper netting to prevent dust and cement particles coming on the ground with air and stop noise.

Mumbai skipper Siddhesh Lad said, that the players informed the team manager after the first day on Thursday about inconvenience caused due to construction work and they passed the message to concerned authorities.

He also pointed out it was difficult to hear things in the middle at times and that could have been the reason for Musheer Khan's doubtful decision.

"Umpire's task in the middle is difficult and with no DRS available, we didn't have options. It is part of the game and it happens. There has been a lot of noise at times due to construction work going around, so it is difficult to hear the sound of the nick," Las said after the end of second day's play.

Samson's form, Axar's fitness concerns for India

Hosts were in an experimental mode in the fourth T20I at Vizag

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Sanju Samson would expect passionate home support to lift his game even as India fret over Axar Patel's fitness when they wind up their T20 World Cup preparations in the fifth and final T20 International against New Zealand here on Saturday.

India were in experimental mode in the fourth T20I at Visakhapatnam, sticking to five front-line bowlers without resorting to all-rounders Hardik Pandya and Shivam Dube. The plan didn't yield the desired result as the hosts lost even though the result does not alter the series outcome, which India has already sealed.

As has been the case through this series, the bowling department might see some shake-up again and the management could give a chance to mystery spinner Varun Chakravarty after resting him from the previous two matches.

The batting department might not see too many changes, but the management will keep an eye on Samson. A free-flowing batsman, Samson now appears to be holding the weight of the world on his shoulders.

More than the drying up of runs, the think-tank will be worried about technical discrepancies that have crept into his batting of late, and the subsequent draining of confidence.

A laden back-foot, and improper bat swing might require some deep correction ahead of



Teams

India: Suryakumar Yadav (Capt.), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson (wk), Shreyas Iyer, Hardik Pandya, Shivam Dube, Axar Patel (Vice-Capt.), Rinku Singh, Jasprit Bumrah, Harshit Rana, Arshdeep Singh, Kuldeep Yadav, Varun Chakaravarty, Ishan Kishan (wk), Ravi Bishnoi.

New Zealand: Mitchell Santner (Capt.), Michael Bracewell, Mark Chapman, Devon Conway (wk), Jacob Duffy, Zak Foulkes, Matt Henry, Kyle Jamieson, Bevon Jacobs, Daryl Mitchell, James Neesham, Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Ish Sodhi, Lockie Ferguson.

the ICC showpiece starting February 7.

Since Samson is a contender for the pivotal opening slot at the marquee event, the lean patch cannot be allowed to enter a terminal phase.

Match starts at 7.00 P.M
Live on Star Sports

Inclusive vision, strong prize structure at Maha Open

MCA Secretary Arun Kedar said carrom tournament carries a total prize money of Rs eight lakh

MUMBAI

The 3rd Maharashtra Open Carrom Challengers Trophy 2025-26, organized by the Maharashtra Carrom Association (MCA), is set to redefine competitive carrom in India.

The prestigious tournament was held from 29th to 30th January 2026 at the Shri Halari Visa Oswal Samaj Air-Conditioned Hall located at Dadasaheb Phalke Road, Dadar (East), Mumbai.

For the first time in the tournament's history, the competition is being played in an open category, allowing men and women to compete together. The event has attracted players from 17 Indian states, including Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Bengal, Goa, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Bihar, Uttarakhand, Pondicherry, Odisha and Jharkhand. Adding to its stature, international players from Canada, Sri Lanka and the Maldives are also participating.



Inclusive Vision and Strong Prize Structure

Speaking to The Free Press Journal, **Arun Kedar**, MCA Secretary explained the thinking behind the open format and the measures taken to ensure fairness.

"Usually men and women play in separate categories, but this is an open tournament and our focus is player welfare," Kedar said. "When men and women compete together, it becomes tougher for women to go far. So this time, we decided that if a woman wins the first round, she will receive a separate cash prize, and the amount increases as she progresses."

Kedar revealed that the tournament carries a total prize pool of nearly 8 lakh.

The winner receives 1.5 lakh, the runner-up 1 lakh, followed by 75,000 for third place and 50,000 for fourth place. He also highlighted Maharashtra's dominance in carrom, stating that since 2015, nearly 50 percent of India's international players have come from Maharashtra.

Innovative Format to Boost Excitement

Mahesh Sekhri, Technical Director, spoke about the evolution of the sport and the changes introduced to make matches more exciting. "Most tournaments in India still conduct separate events for men and women. This time, we wanted women to compete in the draw to improve their skills and confidence," Sekhri explained.

"This exposure helps them flourish," Sekhri added that international participation motivates young Indian players by showing them that carrom is growing worldwide.

Indian player Komaravelli Srinivas expressed his excitement about participating in the tournament for the first time.

Alcaraz and Djokovic to meet in Aus Open final

Djokovic pulls off victory in 5-set thriller in the semifinal against Sinner

MELBOURNE

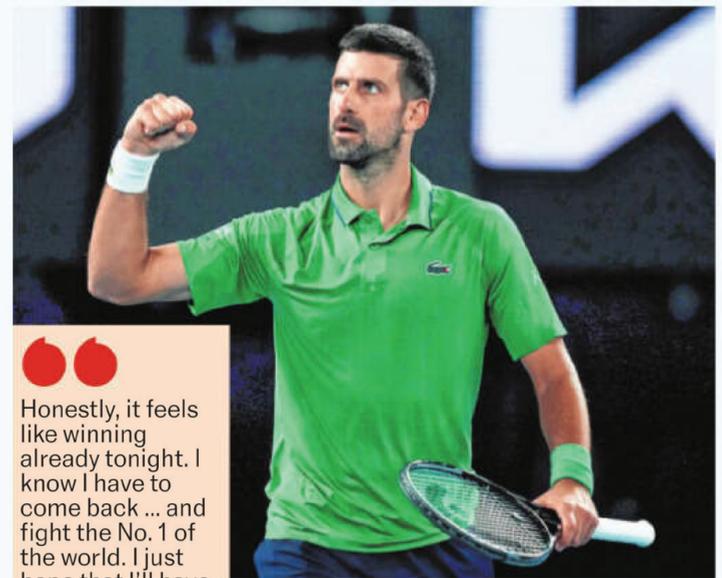
Novak Djokovic finally beat one of the two men who have been blocking his path to an unprecedented 25th Grand Slam singles title when he edged Jannik Sinner in five sets Friday to reach the Australian Open final.

Next, he'll have to beat the other: top-ranked Carlos Alcaraz.

They're both chasing history in Sunday's championship decider, with the 22-year-old Alcaraz striving to become the youngest man ever to complete a career Grand Slam.

The top-ranked Alcaraz also had to come through a grueling five-setter. He fended off No. 3 Alexander Zverev 6-4, 7-6 (5), 6-7 (3), 6-7 (4), 7-5 in a match that started in the warmth of the afternoon Friday and, 5 hours and 27 minutes later, became the longest semifinal ever at the Australian Open.

That pushed the start of Djokovic's match against Sinner back a couple of hours, and the 38-year-old Djokovic finally finished off a 3-6, 6-3, 4-



Honestly, it feels like winning already tonight. I know I have to come back ... and fight the No. 1 of the world. I just hope that I'll have enough gas to stay toe-to-toe with him.

Novak Djokovic
24-time Grand Slam champion

6, 6-4, 6-4 win just after 1:30 a.m.

He fended off a staggering 16 of the 18 breakpoints he faced against the two-time defending Australian Open champion. It ended a run of five losses to Sinner, and a run

of four semifinal exits for Djokovic at the majors.

Alcaraz and Sinner have split the last eight major titles between them since Djokovic won his last title at the 2023 U.S. Open to get closer to the 25th one.

Preview

Sabalenka's new mentality faces Rybakina's resolve



MELBOURNE

When Aryna Sabalenka is really deeply contemplating her Australian Open final rematch with Elena Rybakina, it won't be that breakthrough success in 2023 that she'll be dialing in on.

It won't be the other three Grand Slam finals she's won, either, including the most recent at the U.S. Open. Top-ranked Sabalenka will be trying to derive more motiva-

tion from the five finals she lost in 2025.

"I actually know what was wrong in all of those finals that I played and I lost," Sabalenka said. "I would say that last year was lots of lessons, lots of things to learn about myself, and definitely not going to happen again this season."

The list of finals losses included the WTA Finals decider in November when she lost in three sets to Rybakina, who took a record \$5.2 million in prize money.

Sabalenka was upset in the Australian Open final 12 months ago by Madison Keys, ending her 20-match winning streak at Melbourne Park. She lost the French Open final in three sets to Coco Gauff - after beating Iga Swiatek, winner of the three previous championships at Roland Garros - in the semis. At Wimbledon, she lost in the semifinals to Amanda Anisimova. She also lost finals in Stuttgart and Indian Wells in a year when she won four titles.

"It's just a different mentality that I will try to have in each final that I play," the top-ranked Sabalenka said. "I feel like those frustrations were coming from not agreeing of what's going on in the moment."

Sabalenka has had to learn to let go of those frustrations, or distractions or things that make her mad, and return her focus solely to winning the next point. She achieved that in her semifinal win over Elina Svitolina, when the chair umpire called her

for hindrance in the fourth game - a decision that she said was unprecedented, and which she disputes. Sabalenka broke serve in that game and pretty much dominated the match.

"Right now my mentality is like I'm ready to do whatever, whatever is going to be in that final, I'm ready to go out there and fight with what I have," she said. "When I have this mentality, I play my best tennis. That's my approach to the finals this season."