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

Briefs

ROURKELA

Plane makes emergency landing, 6 hurt

At least six persons were injured when a nine-seater aircraft made an emergency crash landing near Rourkela in Odisha on Saturday, officials said. The incident took place around 10 km from the city at Jaldai, when the aircraft, operating under the UDAN scheme, was flying from Bhubaneswar to Rourkela. The crew had issued a 'Mayday' call to the nearby airport before landing in an open area. While the cause of the crash landing is not known, Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) director Prasanna Pradhan said a team from the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) is on its way to Rourkela to ascertain the reason of accident.

NEW DELHI

UPSC: Facial recognition must for exam

All candidates appearing in recruitment examinations conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) will undergo face authentication at the venues, officials said on Saturday. They said it would further strengthen the integrity of the examination process. "All candidates appearing in the UPSC examination will undergo face authentication at the venue," read a note on the Commission's website. The commission conducts various recruitment examinations for government jobs, including the civil services exam to select officers of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and Indian Police Service (IPS), among others.

KORBA

Driver of police van held for gangrape

A 19-year-old woman was allegedly raped by five men, including the driver of police's emergency response service vehicle, in Chhattisgarh's Korba district, police said on Saturday. Two accused, including the driver of Dial 112 police helpline vehicle, have been taken into custody. The incident took place on January 8 night when one of the five accused known to the victim called her. The accused took the girl to a deserted house in Bankimongra, where the driver and four others allegedly took turns to rape her, he said. After the incident, the accused fled the spot, leaving the victim in an unconscious condition. The victim later managed to reach her home and narrated the ordeal to her family members, who immediately took her to the medical college hospital and later informed the police, he said.

WAR GAMES: Ahead of Bengal Assembly polls, political heat has intensified with ED raids on TMC's strategy firm I-PAC

Mamata writes to EC, ups institutional war

MUMBAI

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has sharply escalated her confrontation with constitutional and central institutions, alleging that both the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and recent Enforcement Directorate (ED) raids are part of a concerted effort to undermine the Trinamool Congress ahead of the assembly elections.

In a strongly worded three-page letter to Chief Election Commissioner of India (EC), Banerjee accused the poll panel of turning the SIR into a voter-exclusion drive rather than a corrective exercise. She alleged political bias and "high-handedness", claiming that the hearings were being conducted mechanically, with officials relying blindly on technical data and showing no sensitivity to ground realities.

According to Banerjee, minor discrepancies such as spelling errors or small variations in age were triggering



Congress supporters stage a protest at Jadubabur Bazar against the ED raid at the I-PAC office, in South Kolkata on Saturday

ANI

coercive hearings, harassment and loss of daily wages for ordinary citizens. She expressed particular concern over married women who had changed their surnames, saying they were being repeatedly summoned to prove their identity — an exercise she described as humiliating and insulting. The chief minister alleged that the objective of the SIR appeared to be "neither correction nor

inclusion, but solely deletion and exclusion", warning that selective targeting of "logical discrepancies" in certain constituencies raised serious questions about intent.

Even as the electoral roll controversy simmered, a parallel flashpoint erupted over ED raids on the residence of Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC) co-founder Pratik Jain and the Salt Lake office of political consultancy firm I-PAC.

TMC song targets BJP

Kolkata: The Trinamool Congress on Saturday launched its campaign song for the upcoming West Bengal assembly elections, asserting that the party would return to power for a fourth consecutive term. "Bengal will win again despite all attacks against it," the main refrain of the campaign song says, asserting,

"We march on a new path with a new direction, your darkness will lose against the new dawn." The lyrics also make references to political issues. "We will not be afraid of the SIR or NRC, there is still time for you to recognise Mother Bengal's strength," goes the song's lyrics, which is accompanied by a video showcasing Mamata Banerjee and the party second-in-command Abhisekh Banerjee.

Hijab-clad woman will be PM: Owaisi

BJP hits back, says AIMIM neta's remark irresponsible

MUMBAI

AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi has said a hijab-clad woman would one day become India's prime minister as the country's Constitution accords equal status to people from all communities, unlike in Pakistan where members of only one religion can occupy the top constitutional posts.

His remark drew a sharp reaction from the ruling BJP, which said that through his "irresponsible" statement, the Hyderabad MP was presenting only half-truth as Muslim women were against the practice of wearing hijab.

Addressing an election rally on Friday in Maharashtra's Solapur ahead of the January 15 civic polls, Owaisi said, "The Constitution of Pakistan says that only a person belonging to one religion can become the country's prime minister or the president. But the Constitution, written by Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar, clearly states that any citizen can become the prime minister, the chief minister of a state or even a mayor." "By the grace of Almighty, the day will come,



when neither I nor the present generation will be around, but a daughter wearing a hijab would become the prime minister of India," the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) president said.

"I am confident that the day will surely come...The hate you are spreading against Muslims will not last long," he said, targeting the ruling party.

Reacting to it, BJP MP Anil Bonde said Owaisi was making irresponsible statements, and accused him of presenting only half-truth.

Claiming that Muslim women were against wearing hijab as nobody wanted subjugation, he said women in Iran were protesting against this practice. He alleged that demographic imbalance was rising in India, and urged Hindus to unite.

'Indian PM will always be a Hindu'



Guwahati: Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday responded to AIMIM Chief Asaduddin Owaisi's "hijab-clad woman as PM" statement, saying that even though it is constitutionally possible, India, being a Hindu nation, will see a Hindu person becoming the Prime Minister of the country.

"Constitutionally, there is no bar. Anyone can become the Prime Minister. But India is a Hindu nation, Hindu civilisation, and we will always believe, and we are extremely confident that the Indian Prime Minister will always be a Hindu person," he said.

Man attempts to offer namaz inside Ram temple complex

55-yr-old Kashmir resident mentally unsound: Family

AYODHYA

Panic briefly gripped the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi complex in Ayodhya on Saturday after a man was spotted attempting to offer namaz inside the high-security temple compound. Alert security personnel immediately intervened and detained him, prompting swift action by local police, intelligence agencies and senior administrative officials.

According to eyewitnesses, devotees noticed the man on the southern parikrama wall of the temple complex and informed security personnel. When security forces tried to stop him, he allegedly began raising slogans, after which additional forces were rushed to the spot and security arrangements were further tightened.

Police said the detained man has been identified as Ahmad Sheikh, 55, a resident of the Shopian area in Srinagar district of Kashmir. He is currently being questioned by Ayodhya police, intelligence agencies and senior officials.

Meanwhile, the family of the man claimed



that he is "mentally unsound" and does not stay at home for long.

Earlier in the day, a brief alert was sounded in the complex after reports that three people, including two young men and a woman, had entered the premises and one of them attempted to offer namaz near Sita Raso, around 200 metres from the main temple. Security personnel intervened immediately and all were stopped for questioning.

Goa warden suspended for feting gangster

PANAJI

Prison authorities in Goa on Saturday suspended the warden of a central jail in the state after a video emerged, purportedly showing him celebrating with a gangster following his release from the jail, an official said.

The undated reel video, involving warden Laxman Padloskar of the Central Jail at Colvale, around 20 km from the state capital, went viral on social media recently.

The video shows Padloskar celebrating with gangster Amogh Naik and his supporters after he walks out of the jail. The jail warden is seen spraying some liquid, presumably liquor, from a bottle on Naik, and later posing for a group photo, with Naik resting his hand on Padloskar's shoulder.

Rohini slams family for 'ruining legacy'

PATNA

RJD president Lalu Prasad's daughter Rohini Acharya on Saturday criticised the members of her family for allegedly destroying a legacy, and claimed that outsiders are not needed for that.

Acharya did not name anyone in her post on X.

She also alleged that attempts were being made to "wipe out signs of those who gave identity and existence to a legacy".

"There is no need for outsiders to destroy the great legacy that was created and established with a great effort...our loved ones are enough for that. 'Newly made own' and 'our own' are more than enough", Prasad's daughter wrote a post on X.

Without naming anyone,

she also claimed that it was "shocking that our own are trying to wipe out signs of those who gave identity and existence to a legacy".

"When arrogance takes over, destructive forces become the eyes, nose and ears...such forces control a person's thinking and judgment. It happens when the veil falls over wisdom," she said.

It was speculated that she was "unhappy" over the expulsion of Tej Pratap Yadav, elder son of Prasad, from the party.

After the RJD was drubbed in the Bihar assembly polls last year, Acharya, a doctor by qualification, who chose to become a homemaker and settled down with her Singapore-based husband, had announced that she was "quitting politics" and severed ties with the family.

Stampede probe: CBI seizes Vijay's campaign vehicle used in TN's Karur

CHENNAI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) seized actor-politician Vijay's campaign vehicle as part of its ongoing investigation into the deadly stampede that occurred during his public meeting in Karur on September 27 last year, which claimed 41 lives and left several others seriously

injured.

According to officials, the campaign bus, used by Vijay during the rally and transported from Panaiyur to Karur, was currently being examined by investigators to verify movement logs, travel timings, and compliance with permissions granted for the event.

The driver of the vehicle is also being questioned to corroborate details related to

the rally day schedule and crowd movement.

The tragedy reportedly occurred amid massive crowding and alleged lapses in crowd-control arrangements at the venue where Vijay addressed supporters.

Following directions to ensure an impartial inquiry, the case was transferred to the CBI, which has since intensified its probe by questioning political leaders and

district-level officials associated with the event.

Earlier, on November 25, senior leaders of the Tamilaga Vetttri Kazhagam (TVK) appeared before the CBI in New Delhi. Those questioned included party General Secretary Bussy Anand, Election Campaign Management General Secretary Adhav Arjun, and Joint General Secretary C.T.R. Nirmal Kumar.

money special

Trade deals driven by policy, not leader-level symbolism: GTRI

NEW DELHI

Major trade agreements hinge largely on policy convergence between the parties and the stakeholders involved, and not leader-level symbolism, asserted India-based think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), after US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick's claims that the Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) did not fructify because Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not personally call President Donald Trump.

Earlier, the US Commerce Secretary had claimed that the trade deal between India and the United States did not happen as PM Narendra Modi



did not place a call to Donald Trump. In a conversation with Chamath Palihapitiya on Thursday, Lutnick said that while contracts were negotiated and the entire deal structure was prepared, the final step required direct, leader-level engagement.

As India-US trade talks continue to face delays, a remark by the US Commerce Secretary has shifted the focus from substance to symbolism,

according to GTRI.

The explanation by Lutnick raises more questions than it answers about how complex trade negotiations actually break down, GTRI said.

Lutnick had said PM Modi later agreed to place the call, but by then it was "too late", as the US had already shifted focus to concluding trade deals with other countries.

The US trade agreements with Indonesia, Vietnam and the Philippines were concluded around July 2025, but India-US negotiations continued well beyond that period, with multiple official-level engagements on market access, tariffs and regulatory issues taking place afterward, GTRI recalled.

NOC for NSE IPO likely this month: SEBI Chief Pandey

MUMBAI

India's market regulator is set to clear a major regulatory hurdle for the long-delayed initial public offering (IPO) of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) by the month-end, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey said on Saturday.

Speaking at a press conference in Chennai, he said that the regulator is likely to issue a no-objection certificate to NSE soon.

"The approval could come before the end of the month, after which it would be up to NSE to take the listing process forward," Tuhin Kanta Pandey stated.

"SEBI's no-objection certificate will be issued soon, possibly before the end of this month. It is then up to NSE to

take the process forward," he mentioned.

NSE's IPO plans have been stuck for several years due to the so-called dark fibre case. The case involved allegations that some high-frequency traders were given preferential access to NSE's co-location servers between 2010 and 2014 through faster private communication lines. This allegedly allowed them to execute trades more quickly than other market participants.

In April 2019, Securities and Exchange Board of India directed NSE to disgorge Rs 62.58 crore in alleged unlawful gains and barred some senior officials from holding market-related positions.

In 2022, SEBI also imposed a penalty of Rs 7 crore on the exchange, but this was later set aside by the Securities Appellate Tribunal.

Warburg Pincus to buy APG's 41% stake in Lemon Tree arm Fleur

Lemon Tree Hotels on Saturday said its board has approved Warburg Pincus' acquisition of 41.09 per cent stake of APG Strategic Real Estate Pool NV in its subsidiary Fleur Hotels and an investment of Rs 960 crore in tranches. The acquisition will be done by Coastal Cedar Investment BV, an affiliate of Warburg Pincus. Lemon Tree Hotels board has approved the execution of a share purchase agreement enabling the acquisition by Coastal Cedar, a regulatory filing said. The company's board has also approved execution of an agreement providing for a primary investment of up to Rs 960 crore by Warburg Pincus in tranches, to support the future growth of Fleur, which will be listed separately on the exchanges. -PTI

Lenders sanction ₹3,362 cr under CGS for exporters in a month

Lenders have sanctioned Rs 3,361.83 crore to 774 applicants under the Rs 20,000-crore Credit Guarantee Scheme for Exporters (CGSE) in one month to help promote exports facing the heat of the steep US tariffs. The scheme approved by the Union Cabinet on November 12 provides 100 per cent credit guarantee coverage by the National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Ltd (NCGTC) to Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) for extending additional credit facilities up to Rs 20,000 crore to eligible exporters, including MSMEs.

D-Mart's Q3 profit jumps 18% to ₹855.8 cr, sales rise to ₹18,100.9 cr

Avenue Supermarts Ltd, which owns and operates the retail chain D-Mart, on Saturday, reported an increase of 18.27 per cent in its consolidated net profit at Rs 855.78 crore in the December quarter of FY26. The company had registered a net profit of Rs 723.54 crore in the October-December quarter a year ago

ICICI Lombard reports WhatsApp leak of draft financial results

ICICI Lombard General Insurance said on Saturday that a designated employee "inadvertently" uploaded draft Q3 FY26 financial figures to his personal WhatsApp status. However, the firm said that upon becoming aware of this incident within an hour, the designated person deleted the above status from the phone.

Mantra chants

Marking a millennium of faith, PM Narendra Modi joined the 72-hour 'Omkar' chants at the Somnath Temple. The visit was part of the 'Somnath Swabhiman Parv', organised to honour the temple's historic survival 1,000 years after it was first attacked -PTI



DM and SP inspect under-construction cyber Police station



Bahraich

District Magistrate Akshay Tripathi, along with Superintendent of Police Ramnayan Singh, conducted a surprise inspection of the cyber police station under construction at the Police Lines premises at a cost of Rs. 361.68 lakh. During the inspection, Assistant Engineer Ashish Srivastava of the Uttar Pradesh Housing and Development Board Construction Unit, the imple-

menting agency, informed them that the project includes the construction of a two-story administrative building, along with a concrete road, interlocking road, drainage system, boundary wall, gate and rainwater harvesting system. The Assistant Engineer stated that the project is scheduled for completion by December 31, 2026. He informed them that the sub-structure work has been completed and the superstructure work is in progress.

He assured them that the project would be completed ahead of schedule. The DM instructed that the pace of construction be maintained and that the project be completed as soon as possible, without considering the completion date as the target. The DM also directed the implementing agency to complete the construction work in accordance with the standards and quality prescribed by the Government.

Young Man Who Went to Meet a Friend Found Dead Near Canal the Next Morning

Incident in Parasinpura village, Phulpur police station area; panic spreads in the village

Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Phulpur. A young man who left home Friday evening saying he was going to meet a friend was found dead Saturday morning near a canal, causing a sensation. A large crowd gathered upon hearing the news of the body's discovery. Phulpur police arrived at the scene, took the body into custody, and sent it for post-mortem examination. Deepak Kumar alias Guddu, the youngest son of Chhotelal, a farmer from Parasinpura village in the Phulpur police station area, left home around 5 PM on Friday, saying he was



going to meet a friend. However, when he did not return by late evening, his family became worried. The family members said they called Deepak several times, but the phone was not answered, which further increased their anxiety. They searched for him in other possible locations. On Saturday morning, the body of 26-year-old Deepak was found near the canal, causing panic. According to eyewitnesses, the deceased Deepak had serious head injuries from which blood was flowing. The family members who arrived at the

scene were devastated. The police arrived, took the body into custody, and sent it for post-mortem examination. Deepak was the youngest of three brothers. Villagers said that Deepak was the youngest of three brothers; both of his older brothers are married. Deepak earned a living by driving a tractor to support his family. His three sisters, brothers, and other family members are inconsolable with grief. Deepak's engagement was scheduled in two days. The deceased Deepak alias Guddu was to be engaged in just two days. The girl's family had come to see him a few days earlier. Deepak's family was scheduled to visit the girl's family on Monday. Preparations were underway at home for the engagement when this news plunged the entire family into sorrow.

KDC Deputy Principal Honored for Efficient Conduct of Examinations

Bahraich

Professor Dr. Muhammad Usman, the Deputy Principal of Kisan Post Graduate College, an autonomous institution, was honored for efficiently conducting examinations at the college for the past two decades. Dr. Usman has been successfully handling the responsibility of conducting examinations not only at his own college but also at other colleges for nearly twenty years. His efficiency, discipline and dedication have ensured the smooth conduct of examinations. In recognition of his services, Dr. Satyabhushan Singh, In-charge of the Center for Historical Studies and a social worker at the college, honored him. Dr. Muhammad Usman appeared emotional on this occasion. In his address, he said that this important responsibility was entrusted to him by Major Dr. S.P. Singh during his tenure as Principal. He said that the experience gained while working under his guidance is still benefiting him today. The program was attended by Dr. Anand Srivastava, President of the Self-Financing Teachers' Association, Dr. Dayanand, Assistant Professor of the B.Ed. Department, Dr. Merajuddin Khan, Assistant Professor of the Urdu Department, Dharamveer Singh, Assistant Professor of the Medieval History Department and many other teachers and Dignitaries.



Ramraipur Congressmen distributed blankets among the helpless and needy at the residence of Jitendra Rai

Bhadohi

On Friday, on the call of Sanjeev Dubey, former PCC member of All India National Congress Committee, blankets were distributed among dozens of poor, helpless and needy at the residence of senior social worker Jitendra Rai in Ramraipur. On this occasion, former PCC member Sanjeev Dubey said that in this cold wave and severe cold, if the poor, weavers, laborers and forest dwellers get warm clothes or blankets, then they can be saved from the cold. He said that if someone fulfills the needs of those who do not have a house to live in and no shelter to protect them from the cold, then it is a divine service. He said that



serving the deprived and the poor beyond politics is the identity of Congressmen. He said that in this winter, the service of the poor and the needy should be done by the enlightened, capable and affluent people and not by distributing blankets to some people on contract basis, by doing this the contractors praise themselves by giving blankets to their favorite and affluent people and the blankets are not able to reach the poor and helpless people. Social worker Jitendra Rai respectfully

made those destitute and needy poor people sit at his residence by spreading his bedsheet on the ground and distributed blankets among the people one by one. It is said that whoever served a man, then understand that he served Narayan.

Said that the affluent people of the society should actively participate in such charitable works. Rai said that he is feeling happy to be a part of this noble cause. Rai wife Sudama Devi distributed blankets among those helpless people and said that we get spiritual satisfaction in serving the poor. Senior Congress leaders Kashinath, Uttam Dubey, Manish Dubey, Alok Dubey etc. were present on this occasion.

Special Preparations Underway in Tinsukia District for Republic Day Celebrations

Assam

Like in previous years, the administration in Assam Tinsukia district is making elaborate preparations to celebrate Republic Day on January 26 with great enthusiasm and fervor. On Friday evening, a key meeting was held in the conference hall of the District Commissioner office under the chairmanship of the newly appointed District Commissioner, Sumit Chattopadhyay. In the meeting, the District Commissioner directed all concerned officials to properly discharge their respective duties to organize the event fittingly and provided better suggestions to make it even more outstanding. He



instructed the launch of special cleanliness drives in Tinsukia and all other major towns on Republic Day. He appealed to every government office to clean not only their office premises but also the surrounding areas. Additionally, he directed departmental officers to promptly auction off old, idle vehicles parked in government office premises. The Executive Officer of the Municipal Board was instructed to take special steps to keep the town clean. District Senior

Superintendent of Police Mayank Kumar, who was present at the meeting, offered some important suggestions from a security perspective. Besides him, District Development Commissioner Javed Arman, Chief Executive Officer of the Zilla Parishad Deepak Kumar Deka, Additional Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners, Additional of Police and all district heads of departments were present.

Greater Noida Authority begins precautionary random testing amid complaints of contaminated water

Greater Noida. Random inspections of water, sewer and drains have begun in the Greater Noida Authority area. As a precautionary measure, Authority CEO N.G. Ravi Kumar has decided to conduct random water testing at different locations. On the CEO instructions, eight work-circle-wise teams have been formed and inspections have started. This drive will continue for four consecutive days. In addition, the Authority has also deployed two teams from the Shriram Institute for Industrial Research laboratory, which have begun random testing. Taking complaints of contaminated water supply in the Greater Noida area seriously, CEO N.G. Ravi Kumar has directed thorough and random inspections of water supply lines for any kind of leakage, sewer choking/overflow and drain-sewer-water connection points. Acting immediately on these



instructions, eight teams comprising all managers and assistant managers of the Authority water and sewer department have started inspections. On the first day, the teams inspected more than 20 locations. The teams are carrying testing equipment such as TDS meters, PH kits and chlorine kits for water testing. The supplied water has been found to be within prescribed standards for all these parameters. Inspections were conducted in Sector 1, 2, 4, 16, 16B, Knowledge Park-3, Ajnara Daffodil Society, Ace City, Panchsheel Hynish and other areas. Additionally, the Shriram Lab teams collected samples from UGR, pumping stations,

etc., in areas such as Delta One (D Block), Delta Three (F Block), Alpha One (D Block), Alpha Two, Beta Two (F Block), Gamma One, Eta One, Theta and Chi Four. The Authority has asked the Shriram Lab teams to submit their reports at the earliest. However, the lab has stated that the testing process may take 10 to 12 days to complete. Authority Appeal CEO Sunil Kumar Singh of the Greater Noida Authority stated that the Authority is committed to ensuring clean water supply in the Greater Noida area. If information regarding contaminated water supply in any area is received, residents should immediately inform the Authority

Bhadohi shivered with cold, massive bonfires were lit in the ward by councilor Ghulam Hussain Sanjari

Bhadohi

Wahid of Bhadohi Nagar is one such councilor who has been becoming a councilor for 5 consecutive times due to the affection and love of the public. The people of the ward say that there has been no public servant like you and there will be no one like you. The people of the ward fondly call that lucky councilor Sanjari who hails from Sanjar, the city of Khwaja Garib Nawaz. The residents of the ward said that if a person is from Sanjar city then why should he not do good to the people. People of the ward said that due to cold the condition has become bad and it is very difficult to leave the house. Bhadohi shivered due to cold and in order to provide relief to his dear ward residents, Ghulam Hussain Sanjari, senior councilor of Har Dil Aziz Municipal Council, Bhadohi, reached every intersection of Sanjari ward with his children with wood in his hands, where the people



already present thanked their dear councilor from the bottom of their heart. Paid and said that you are not a councilor but a leader and commander of our people. There are about half a dozen shops near the Kujrane Mosque, where after offering Namaz, people went crazy after seeing the arrangement of bonfire and started offering blessings to their sympathetic councilor who provides relief from the harsh winds and cold. Some namazis called Sanjari and called him near the mosque and offered their love and prayers.

People said, Ghulam Bhai, even though

the storms are strong, they do not destroy houses made of pillars. People said that you all have peace in your heart and stars in your eyes. No matter who comes into the field, there has never been anyone like you and there never will be. As long as we live, you will continue to get the title of councilor. Hearing the words of the people, Sanjari eyes became moist and he blurted out that this is all your doing and Aaka words still stand. However Sanjari arranged bonfires at every block and intersection of the ward including streets and shops, which provided relief to the people from the cold.

CEO Issues Strict Directives on Public Services

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) today chaired a high-level review meeting with senior officials from various departments and issued strict instructions concerning public interest issues, urban infrastructure and sanitation. The CEO made it clear that any negligence in the delivery of public services would not be tolerated under any circumstances. Taking serious note of the recent loss of lives caused by water pollution in Indore, the CEO constituted a high-level technical committee comprising senior officials of the Water Department. The committee has been tasked with identifying leakage and corrosion in pipelines, as well as checking the quality of water in reservoirs and Water ATM. The committee will collect samples from different areas and submit a detailed report at the earliest to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in the future. Regarding the Ganga Water Project, clear instructions were issued to complete all works related to the 80-cusec Ganga water supply project by January 2026. During the review of ongoing works, a special team has been formed to improve road infrastructure, with Additional CEO Vandana Tripathi and OSD Mahendra Prasad as its members. In compliance with the directions, the team conducted an inspection of the entire stretch of Master Plan Road-3 today and will submit a comprehensive improvement.



Magh Mela: Devotees' Convenience Paramount, Instructions Issued to Strengthen Traffic and Security Arrangements



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Prayagraj. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday held a high-level review meeting regarding the preparations for the upcoming bathing festivals of Magh Mela 2026 at the ICCC auditorium located in the Prayagraj Mela Authority. The Chief Minister clearly stated that successfully organizing two major bathing festivals in a short period is a big challenge for the administration, which must be accomplished with complete promptness, responsibility, and coordination.

Special Emphasis on Cleanliness, Security, and Order

The Chief Minister said that the cleanliness arrangements in the Magh Mela area should be of a high

standard. The bathing areas and circulating areas at the ghats should be further expanded so that devotees do not face any inconvenience during bathing. He instructed that no devotee should throw clothes, plastic, or puja materials into the Ganges and should not use soap etc. while bathing, so that the purity of the water is maintained.

Strict Action Against Encroachments and Illegal Hoardings

The Municipal Corporation was instructed to keep the roads and pathways free from encroachments. The Chief Minister ordered the immediate removal of unnecessary and illegally erected hoardings so that traffic and the movement of devotees remain smooth.

Focus on Devotee Safety and



Bathing at Sangam and Darshan of Hanuman Ji

During his visit to Prayagraj, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath reached Sangam Nose, took a holy dip, performed puja, and prayed to Mother Triveni for the successful organization of Magh Mela 2026. Afterward, he performed puja at the Lee Hanuman Ji temple and prayed for the prosperity and well-being of the state. Cabinet ministers, Members of Parliament, Members of the Legislative Assembly, senior administrative and police officers, and a large number of public representatives and officials were present at the meeting.

Traffic Plan

The Chief Minister instructed the police department to conduct regular patrolling, prevent the sale of narcotics, and keep a close watch on anti-social elements. Special arrangements were ordered to be made in view of the excessive crowd at the Sangam Nose during

the main bathing festivals.

Instructions were also given to ensure better traffic management and to arrange for holding areas in the bordering districts if needed.

Bonfires and Blanket Distribution Due to Cold Weather

Keeping the cold weather in mind, instructions were given to light a



sufficient number of bonfires in the Mela area and to identify and distribute blankets to the needy. The Chief Minister said that the behavior of the police and administration towards the saints, sages, and devotees should be cordial. Instructions on Honorarium and Facilities for Sanitation Workers The Chief Minister directed that the honorarium of sanitation workers working in the fair area be paid on time and that essential facilities, including education for them and their children, be provided.

Proposal for a Memorial to Jagadguru Ramanandacharya

At the request of saints and sages, the Chief Minister instructed the administration to identify land and take necessary steps for the construction of a grand memorial to

Jagadguru Ramanandacharya. He said that Prayagraj is the land of sages and saints, and such memorials here will strengthen the cultural heritage.

Launch of the Mela Seva App

Before the meeting, the Chief Minister launched the 'Mela Seva App' prepared for Magh Mela 2026. Devotees will be able to register their complaints and suggestions on this app through a QR code.

Instructions for Prompt Action on Suggestions from Public Representatives

The Chief Minister said that action should be taken on the suggestions given by public representatives on a priority basis. Instructions were also given on other issues, including pontoon bridges and airport lighting, during the meeting.

Laborer falls at guesthouse construction site, dies on fourth day of treatment

Utraon. In a tragic accident in Motih village, under the Utraon police station area of Prayagraj district, a laborer working at a guesthouse died during treatment. The laborer, who was working under a contractor, sustained serious injuries after falling from a height of about 7-8 feet and was being treated at the district hospital. He succumbed to his injuries four days later. The deceased has been identified as Pramod alias Pappu Patel (40 years old), son of Lav Kush, a resident of Motih village. Pramod earned his liveli-



hood through daily wage labor. On Monday, he went to work at a guesthouse in Motih through a contractor from his village. While working, he lost his balance on a scaffolding stool



and fell to the ground, sustaining a serious head injury.

Immediately after the accident, his family members rushed him to the

district hospital, where he was undergoing treatment. However, he died on the

fourth day of treatment. Upon receiving the information, the police took the body into custody and sent it for post-mortem examination. Pramod was the eldest of four brothers. His three brothers are Rinku Patel, Om Prakash, and Puneet. He is survived by his wife Sanjana Devi, his mother Meena Devi, and three daughters—Nidhi (14 years old), Nandini (11 years old), and Anshi (5 years old). The laborer's death has plunged the family into grief, and his wife and mother are inconsolable.

Burglary at Army Jawan Residence in Bidhuna

Bidhuna

A burglary was reported at the residence of an Indian Army jawan in Ambedkar Nagar locality of Bidhuna town on Monday night. Unknown miscreants broke open the lock of the house and decamped with cash and jewellery. Before carrying out the theft, the burglars reportedly bolted the doors of some neighbouring houses from outside, preventing residents from noticing the incident.

Magh Mela 2026: Sanitation Drive Intensified at Sector-7 Arail Ghat, Devotees' Convenience is Paramount

Akhand Bharat Sandesh



Prayagraj. The administration appears fully prepared for the Prayagraj Magh Mela 2026. Considering the arrival of millions of devotees during the Magh Snan (holy bath), the sanitation drive has been intensified in Sector-7 of Arail Ghat. Regular cleaning and sanitization are being carried out throughout the area to ensure the health and safety of the devotees and a clean environment. The sanitation arrangements in Sector-7 are being managed under the leadership of Inspector Dr. Dharmendra Kumar Yadav. He stated that the convenience, safety, and health of the devotees are being given top priority during the ? (fair) period.

Special cleaning is being carried out daily at the ghats, roads, toilets, and surrounding areas. Teams of sanitation workers are deployed 24 hours a day to prevent any inconvenience. Nagendra Pandey, President of the Gramin Jagriti Shiksha Samiti (Rural Awakening Education Committee), said that special monitoring is being done on sanitation in Sector-7. Sanitation workers are working diligently every day to provide a clean and safe environment for the devotees. With the cooperation of the administration and social organizations, Sector-7 is being developed as a model sanitation zone.



Akhand Bharat Sandesh

Phulpur. A joint team of Phulpur police and SOG arrested two wanted criminals after an encounter on Saturday morning at around 5 AM. The police recovered illegal weapons, explosives, and cash from the arrested accused. The police seized the motorcycle of the injured accused and initiated legal proceedings. Shani Soni, a resident of Jamilabad town in the Phulpur police station area, alleged that on the evening of January 7, Azam Rain, a resident of Jamilabad, and Mohammad



Suhail, a resident of Sarai Abdul Malik, along with two of their accomplices, assaulted him. In his complaint to the police, the victim also alleged that they fired at him with the intention of killing him. The police registered a case and launched a search for the accused. On Saturday, the police spotted two suspicious individuals near Baudhai turn in the Phulpur police station area and tried to stop them. The police alleged that the suspects on the motorcycle, seeing themselves surrounded, opened fire on the police. In the retaliatory

firing, one of the suspects on the motorcycle was injured. Upon questioning, both identified themselves as Azam Rain and Mohammad Suhail. According to the police, illegal weapons, explosives, and cash were recovered from the arrested accused. The motorcycle was seized, and the police initiated

Notice

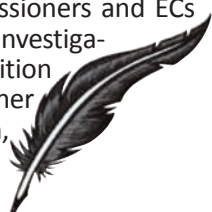
This is to inform the All public that my daughter Avya Rawat issue birth certificate, serial number B-2022:9-91760-007317 in her name as Avya and her address as Palhanpur Badoli Noniyan, District Jaunpur is incorrect. My daughters correct name is Avya Rawat, daughter of Ashok Kumar and the correct address is Palhanpur Bhadkhin, District Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh. She should be known by this correct name.

Ashok Kumar, son of Jokhu Ram Palhanpur Bhadkhin, Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh PIN - 222203

Editorial

Amit Shah looks sure of ruling till 2049 but Team Modi is losing steam and imagination

Amit Shah had declared at the Bharatiya Janata Party's national executive meeting in 2018 that the party will win the 2019 Lok Sabha election and "no one can dethrone the BJP for the next 50 years"—that is, till 2069. Last month, the Union Home Minister and BJP chief strategist said in the Lok Sabha that the Opposition parties would be there (on the Opposition benches) "for the next 20 years"—that is, till 2045. Let's make it 2049 because the Lok Sabha election will have taken place in 2044. It also takes into account Prime Minister Narendra Modi's goal of making India a developed country by 2047. Modi is looking to remain at the helm till 2035, at least. In his Independence Day address, he said that "in the coming 10 years, till 2035, I want to expand this (national security shield) ...strengthen it, modernise it". "I" is key here. He will be only 85 by then. And he is much fitter than Joe Biden who demitted the US President's office at 82. Mahathir Mohamad was the Prime Minister of Malaysia till he was almost 95. You may think I can't be serious. Talks of 20 or 50 years are just rhetorical, aren't they? A former BJP MP advised me not to take PM Modi's reference to 2035 seriously. "The day a leader throws a hint that he is even thinking of a retirement plan, everybody around him starts abandoning him. You can't afford to do that in politics," he explained. Maybe. What if BJP leaders truly believe what they say? How else could you explain the Modi-led government's sudden decision to bring the Constitution (130th Amendment) Bill, envisaged to unseat the Prime Minister, chief ministers, and ministers on the 31st day of their arrest or detention in custody? The PM figures in it for effect, of course. The proposed legislation places the CMs and ministers at the mercy of mostly Central investigation agencies whose track record in impartiality is better left undiscussed. These central agencies are known to often go out of their way to please the political bosses. The CMs and ministers who are not from the ruling party/coalition at the Centre have reasons to be alarmed by the proposed legislation. It is always prone to being used against the Opposition. Former Union minister Sharad Pawar recently pointed out how during the Manmohan Singh government, it was P Chidambaram who had backed the amendment in the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) to put the onus to prove innocence on the accused. Pawar told Singh that it was dangerous. "If the government changes, we will also have to face consequences. But the advice was not heeded," disclosed Pawar. In 2019, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) arrested Chidambaram in a PMLA case. He had to spend 106 days in jail before he got bail. The proposed law—Constitution (130th Amendment) Bill—can potentially be weaponized by a ruling party at the Centre (not necessarily BJP) to destabilise governments in states ruled by rival parties (the BJP, included). So, why would Shah or the BJP want to make such a law? The most conceivable answer is that the BJP doesn't see itself sitting on the Opposition benches in the Lok Sabha ever—till 2049, at least. Look at the Centre's stand on the Supreme Court setting a timeline for the governors to act on the bills passed by state assemblies. It wants the elected governments in the states to be placed at the mercy of its nominees in the Raj Bhawans. Only a party that is confident of being in power at the Centre forever would want to take such a stand. This confidence of the BJP is reflected in so many other ways—from overturning the SC's ruling to end government's control over the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioners and ECs to the alleged use of central investigative agencies to target Opposition leaders. There are many other instances. Here is the catch, though.



GST reform is pointless if it doesn't simplify tax slabs

Over the last few days, there have been extensive discussions on the prospects of reforming India's Goods and Services Tax (GST). An important element of the proposed reform is to reduce the present 4-rate structure to a 3-rate one. There could be several objectives behind such a reform. Simplification of the tax structure is an obvious one. Revenue mobilisation could be another, as simpler tax structures are easy to administer and improve compliance. The third is to provide a stimulus to the economy, which is presently dealing with significant uncertainty. I am young enough to be excit-

ed by the prospects of tax reforms, but old enough to know better. More so, given my prior experience in trying to understand the GST. Popular perception suggests there are just four GST tax slabs: 5, 12, 18, and 28 per cent. Why so many slabs for an indirect tax? Because somehow Indian policymaking believes in the progressivity of taxes—even for consumption goods. A lesser-known reality of the GST is that it has a total of eight tax slabs, excluding the exemptions. These start at 0.25 and go all the way up to 28 per cent. Tax rates of 0.25, 1.5, 3 and 7.5 per cent apply to just 1.5 per cent of total

goods traded in India. Some sectors, such as construction services, have six different applicable tax rates ranging from 0 to 18 per cent. The sheer complexity of India's present GST, even after nine years of existence, should be reason enough for an urgent reform. A major issue with the GST's present structure is the pervasive use of end-use exemptions. That is, for certain items, a GST rate is applicable — but if the goods are used for a specific purpose, then there is no GST on the item. Therefore, the same item has two different tax slabs depending on the buyer and end-use of the item.

Moreover, it creates room for rent-seeking, as many would exploit the tax arbitrage introduced by having a 0 per cent and 18 per cent tax rate as applicable on the same goods. Administering such exemptions is excessively costly and goes against the spirit of a self-enforcing tax such as the GST. A comprehensive reform would do away with such end-use exemptions and identify a specific list of items, such as food — irrespective of whether packaged, processed, or prepared in a restaurant — to be classified as exempt. Similar exemptions could be extended to certain kinds of insurance.

Why Modi, BJP should worry about bad blood between CEC Gyanesh Kumar and Rahul Gandhi?

Amit Malviya must be a harried man as Rahul Gandhi set out on his 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' in Bihar on Sunday. Bharatiya Janata Party's social media department, headed by Malviya, is facing flak in the Right-wing ecosystem. The reason: its purported failure to counter the Opposition's narrative about the Election Commission's special intensive revision of electoral rolls in Bihar. Let's look at one such thread. Tushar Gupta, whose bio proclaims him to be "anti-Left", took to X to express his concern about the "fake news" being spread about the electoral process. "Absolutely zero resistance. EC's press releases are not going to cut it....," he wrote. His argument was that the 18-24 age group in 2029 would be "reelers", not readers, and could be easily swung by Gandhi. "And this is exactly what he (Gandhi) is doing right now," he added. X users reacted to the thread, venting their ire on Malviya, with some even demanding his resignation as the BJP's IT cell chief. Dr Ratan Sharda, who has written several books on the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), agreed with Tushar and said that Gen Z is "not clued on" to the BJP. "The communication, the enunciation, the slogans — all present a middle-aged projection of a young successful party led by the most popular PM of all times whom youth love. @BJP4India needs to reinvent its SM approach and communication," he wrote. To be fair to Malviya, headline management and narra-



tive-building aren't so easy after 11 years in power. The belligerence of the Election Commission (EC) in dealing with the Opposition isn't helping him either. "Give an oath or apologise to the nation. There is no third option," Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar said at a press conference Sunday, taking on Gandhi's 'vote theft' charge. Many Constitutional experts like former Lok Sabha Secretary General PDT Achary have rubbished the EC's demand for Gandhi's oath under Rule 20(3)(b) of the Registration of Electors Rules 1960, maintaining that it does not apply in this case. Kumar wouldn't bother. Since when has the CEC assumed the authority to instruct public representatives to apologise? Even former CEC MS Gill, who joined the Congress and went on to become a Union Minister after retirement, never demanded it from Opposition leaders as long as he helmed the EC. One may not agree with Gandhi's phraseology—from 'chowkidar chor hai (the gatekeeper is the thief)' to 'vote chori (vote theft)'. He often gets carried away, trying to bring

'earthquakes' in Indian politics. But that can't be the reason for a constitutional body to publicly berate the Leader of the Opposition. Also, it's not the first time that the EC has been accused of favouring the ruling party. After all, the fact is that the CEC was and still is essentially Prime Minister Narendra Modi's handpicked man—the ruling party's choice in that chair. After losing the South Delhi Lok Sabha seat to the Congress in the 1971 elections, Jan Sangh leader Balraj Madhok had gone to court complaining of rigging allegedly facilitated by the ruling Congress and the EC. He had alleged that the ballot papers were chemically treated and mechanically stamped to favour the Congress candidate, Shashi Bhushan. The Supreme Court dismissed his appeal. In 2002, then Gujarat Chief Minister Modi drew censure from Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee for attacking CEC JM Lyngdoh. There are myriad instances of politicians attacking the EC, but no CEC made it a personal issue until now. The body is entrusted to conduct free and fair polls, with no malice toward any party or politi-

cian. If there is bad blood and a public spat between the CEC and the Opposition leaders, it will shake the people's trust and faith in the election results. And that is the worst thing that could happen to Indian democracy. Instead of attacking Rahul Gandhi, the EC could have simply ordered an investigation into his claims of fake voters in Bengaluru's Mahadevapura—or, for that matter, the supposedly inflated number of voters in Maharashtra. It could have done a Bihar-like special intensive revision (SIR) in Mahadevapura immediately to rebut the allegations. That would have bolstered its credibility and its Bihar SIR case. BJP leader Anurag Thakur also made allegations about fake voters in the constituencies of Opposition leaders such as Gandhi, Akhilesh Yadav, and others. Thakur also accused them of 'vote theft'. Gandhi and Thakur were making the same disclosure—that voter lists across the country have issues. CEC Kumar hasn't reacted to Thakur's allegations yet. Fake voters' list is no news, anyway. The CEC could have thanked the Congress and BJP leaders for highlighting this issue again and used it to justify a countrywide SIR. What to speak of allegations of irregularities in Assembly or Lok Sabha elections, in the recent Delhi Constitution Club election (in which incumbent and former MPs are voters), Congress leader and former MP Brijendra Singh found to his dismay that his vote had already been cast. So did

another former MP from the BSP. It's plausible that Kumar—who was Secretary in Amit Shah's cooperation ministry—is extremely upset by Gandhi's diatribe against the Commission. The best way to deal with this would have been to invite Gandhi over for Kashmiri Kahwa, as he used to treat journalists with, and thrash it out. But Kumar has chosen to slug it out publicly with the Opposition. What must worry the BJP is the fact that the Opposition's diatribe against the EC seems to be resonating on the ground. As per a Lokniti-CSDS survey published in The Hindu on Sunday, 45 per cent of the respondents believe that genuine voters may get removed from the voters' list under the SIR, as against only 25 per cent who said 'no'. Only 60 per cent of respondents were very or somewhat confident of the EC's ability to ensure inclusivity. The survey was conducted in six states: Delhi, Assam, Kerala, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh. The Lokniti-CSDS survey, as compared to its 2019 and 2024 post-poll surveys, shows declining trust in the Commission. In Assam, the number of respondents who said they have "no trust" in the EC increased from 6 per cent in 2019 to 10 per cent in 2024 and 17 per cent in 2025. In Kerala, this increased from 10 per cent in 2019 and 2024 to 24 per cent in 2025. In Madhya Pradesh, the lack of trust in the EC rose from 6 per cent in 2019 to 22 per cent in 2024 and 2025.

After rosogolla, Odias and Bengalis fight over Mamata's Jagannath Dham

In the season of Conclave, what if a church suddenly decided to call itself Vatican — not just a tribute, but a claim to spiritual status? That's what the Mamata Banerjee government effectively did, as far as Odias are concerned, when it named the new Jagannath temple in Digha after Jagannath Dham in Puri, Odisha. For the Odias, this 'appropriation' was the last straw and has put them eyeball to eyeball with the Bengalis like never before. Why did Banerjee tread this path? If a temple was her big trip, why a Puri Jagannath lookalike and not something in the tradition of Bengal's own terracotta temples that dot Bishnupur in Bankura district? Alternatively, it could have opted for something original. Bengalis, it seems, have a peculiar fondness for replicas. During Durga Pujas, Buckingham Palaces, Golden Temples and the Pyramids pop up all over the state — pandals built with bamboo and tarpaulin to house the goddess in the festive season. But

those are temporary structures, dismantled once the pujas end. The Jagannath Temple in Digha is permanent, a silent testimony to the Bengalis' copycat gene. A few months after becoming the chief minister in 2011, Banerjee was on her way home via Newtown, parts of which today resemble Gurgaon from 50 years ago, when she suddenly halted her vehicle, got off, and stood to survey 480 acres of green dotted with waterbodies. On the spot, she declared it a park — and the next thing we know, in 2013, she was inaugurating Eco Park, a brand-new destination in Kolkata a la Victoria Memorial, or the historic Botanical Gardens with the centuries-old Banyan Tree. That wasn't the end of it. Past the tree-lined boundary came up the Pyramids of Giza, an Eiffel Tower, a Taj Mahal, a Colosseum, and even a towering Christ the Redeemer — all of them exact replicas of the originals in miniature form.

History teaching requires revision more than textbooks

What does it mean to be a historian in India? Both of us have formally studied the subject. In the years we've spent working as public historians, we've told myriad stories of India's chequered pasts through heritage walks, museum trails, cultural events, podcasts, an annual journal, book reviews, articles, and social media posts. We've pored over archives and conducted on-ground research. We've also translated scholarship into language and experiences that anyone, from an academic to a casual listener, can connect with. Yet, despite this range of work, one question almost always follows when we explain what we do: "Okay, but what is your real job?" The question says as much about our profession as it does about how history itself is perceived in India. After all, how often do Indian households encourage history as a job? A base-level problem here is: how do you support the study of history when it isn't even clear what a historian does? In childhood, history may occasionally bask in the dreamy, cinematic glow of Indiana Jones and Night at the Museum. Or Bharat Ek Khoj, Akbar-Birbal adaptations, the delightfully

gory Horrible Histories, and Amar Chitra Katha. In adulthood, though, it either fades into collective amnesia, gets wrapped in nostalgia, or turns into a battlefield of contested claims. Where is the middle ground where we carry forward that childlike curiosity, tempered with adult discernment, to engage with the past with the depth and nuance it deserves? A polarising debate has recently been sparked after yet another round of revisions in NCERT history textbooks. But more than textbooks, history teaching requires revision. What do you remember from your history classes? For most, the answers fall into familiar buckets: rote learning of names, dates, dynasties, and wars. There was little room to explore the texture of lived experience, or to ask: how can this subject help me become a better thinker, a more reflective human? The discipline was frozen in time, and with it, many of us felt we too were trapped — learning about the past in a way that felt wholly disconnected from the present, let alone the future. This is part of the reason historical studies aren't seen as foundations for sustainable careers. But

paradoxically, history seems to dominate our headlines. It's everywhere: in TV debates, political speeches, social media threads. Everyone, it seems, has something to say about the past. That's why the current debate on revisions matters. The problem isn't with 'updating' history. Our understanding of the past evolves as our present changes. Every historian is shaped by their time, drawing not only on the materials and theoretical bases available, but also on their own perspectives and questions. So revisions themselves aren't the issue.

The real concern is how history textbooks are revised. If these changes were aimed at helping students approach the past critically, and provided them with the historian's toolkit — by introducing them to a range of sources, perspectives, and debates — then they would be fruitful. Our NCERT textbooks have been subject to regular revisions, with new theories and ideas inserted alongside scholars' evolving approaches to history. This exercise is necessary, so long as the emphasis remains on updates that accurately convey the latest reflections on continuities.

Integrated Grievance Redressal Day Held in All Three Tehsils on Monday

Etah

As per government directives, the Integrated Grievance Redressal Day (Sampoorna Samadhan Diwas) was organized on Monday across all three tehsils of Etah district—Etah Sadar, Aliganj and Jalesar—since the first Saturday of the month was a public holiday. Senior officials listened to public grievances and issued instructions for their prompt, transparent and effective resolution. District Magistrate Prem Ranjan Singh heard complaints at Etah Sadar tehsil and directed concerned officials to ensure quality, time-bound and transparent disposal of grievances. He emphasized that redressal of public complaints is among the top priorities of the government and that any negligence or laxity would not be tolerated. He further stated that satisfactory resolution of complaints is essential with continuous feedback being taken at the government level. The District Magistrate instructed that no application should remain pending beyond the stipulated time frame. He directed revenue officials, beat constables and village secretaries to conduct regular village visits and resolve local issues on the spot.



Strict action will be taken against officials found negligent in discharging their duties. Considering the winter season, the District Magistrate also directed urban local bodies and tehsil administrations to ensure adequate arrangements at night shelters and bonfire sites. He instructed executive officers, disaster management officials and tehsil staff to carry out regular inspections so that no individual is adversely affected by cold wave conditions. Additionally, the District Magistrate appealed for wider public participation in the Prime Minister Surya Ghar Yojana, being implemented through the NEDA department. He stated that the scheme would promote self-reliance in the energy sector, provide relief from high electricity bills and offer the benefit of subsidies to consumers. During the programme at Etah Sadar tehsil, a total of 12

complaints were received, of which three were resolved on the spot. At Aliganj tehsil, Additional District Magistrate (Finance & Revenue) Lalita Prasad Shakya, in the presence of Sub-Divisional Magistrate Jagmohan Gupta and other tehsil-level officers, heard public grievances, where 12 complaints were received. At Jalesar tehsil, Chief Development Officer Dr. Nagendra Narayan Mishra, along with Sub-Divisional Magistrate Bhavna Vimal and other officials, heard grievances, during which 17 complaints were registered and two were disposed of on the spot. Senior officials present on the occasion included SDM Sadar Vipin Kumar Morol, Tehsildar Neeraj Varshney, Additional Chief Medical Officer Dr. Ram Mohan Tiwari, Nayab Tehsildars, Block Development Officers, Station House Officers and officials and staff from various departments.

Major Action by Environment Department at Khatu Shyam Brick Kiln, Burning Furnace Extinguished

Etah

In a significant administrative action, the Environment Department on Monday shut down the operational brick kiln at Khatu Shyam Brick Industry located in Rai village of the Aliganj Assembly constituency. The department ordered the extinguishing of the burning kiln furnace amid heavy police deployment and the presence of the fire brigade, triggering a stir across the region. The action was taken against the brick kiln owned by Samajwadi Party leader Mukesh Yadav, popularly known as Mukka, who is considered close to former Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav. According to official sources, the Divisional Commissioner had received complaints alleging violations of pollution control norms and operation of the brick kiln without valid authorization. Taking the complaint seriously, a joint team of the Environment Department (Aligarh Range) and the Revenue Department was dispatched to the site. Upon the team arrival, security arrangements were tightened and



personnel from the local police station along with the fire brigade were deployed. Subsequently, the fire burning in the brick kiln was extinguished as per departmental directives. Administrative sources estimate that the kiln owner may have suffered losses amounting to several lakhs of rupees due to the action. Officials stated that the brick kiln had been operating for a long time without a valid No Objection Certificate (NOC), resulting in environmental pollution and blatant violation of established norms. The Environment Department clarified that the NOC of Khatu Shyam Brick Industry had expired in July 2025, yet operations continued without obtaining fresh permission from the department. This is not the first action against the said brick kiln.

Earlier, on Friday, the Mining Department had also taken stringent action by seizing a JCB machine and a soil-mixing machine from the same premises. Acting on complaints of illegal mining and non-payment of royalty, the mining team sealed both machines and deposited them at Aliganj police station. Environment Department Junior Engineer Abhishek Singh confirmed that the inspection was carried out based on the complaint received by the Divisional Commissioner. The investigation revealed that the brick kiln was operating illegally without a valid environmental NOC. He stated that, following departmental orders, the burning furnace has been extinguished and further legal proceedings are underway.

Cold Wave Poses Serious Risk to Pregnant Women in Auraiya



Auraiya

The continuous cold spell and chilling winds have significantly increased health complications for pregnant women in the district. Due to the prevailing cold conditions, many expectant mothers are falling victim to pneumonia and severe respiratory infections, posing serious risks not only to their own health but also to the development of the unborn child. According to doctors, 10 to 15 such cases are being reported daily at the medical college hospital. Medical experts explain that during pregnancy, a woman's immune system is naturally weaker than usual. In such circumstances, exposure to cold air and fluctuating temperatures accelerates infections. Ignoring common cold and cough symptoms can often lead to serious illnesses like pneumonia, resulting in breathing difficulties, fever and a dangerous drop in oxygen levels in the body. In cases of pneumonia, reduced oxygen levels in the mother can directly affect the fetus. This increases the risk of low birth weight, premature delivery and other pregnancy-related complications. Dr. Parul Jadon, a gynecologist at the medical college, advised pregnant women to wear warm clothing, avoid cold winds and refrain from visiting crowded places. She emphasized that at the first sign of cold, cough or fever, expectant mothers should immediately consult a doctor instead of self-medicating. Highlighting the importance of proper care, Dr. Rashmi Yadav stated that pregnant women should never consume medicines purchased over the counter without medical advice. She also stressed the need for a nutritious diet, warm fluids and adequate rest during the winter season. Meanwhile, hospitals are also witnessing an influx of elderly patients and other residents suffering from cough, cold and fever due to the cold weather. Doctors have urged everyone—not just pregnant women—to take precautions by avoiding cold food, drinking lukewarm water and covering the head while stepping outdoors to protect themselves from harsh winter conditions.

BLO Accused of Registering Vote in the Name of Minor Daughter, Villagers Protest

Etah

Tension has gripped Daulatpur Gram Panchayat in the Jaitara Development Block under Aliganj tehsil of Etah district after serious allegations were levelled against a Booth Level Officer (BLO). Villagers have accused BLO Manoj Kumar of violating rules during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process by allegedly registering a voter ID in the name of his own minor daughter. According to villagers, despite repeated complaints over the past several months, no action has been taken by the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM), Aliganj, prompting growing resentment among residents. The villagers allege that Manoj Kumar misused his position and



showed arbitrariness due to his alleged political and familial influence. It is claimed that Manoj Kumar is a close relative of former village head Asha Devi, being the nephew of her husband Pramod Kumar. Villagers allege that this relationship enabled him to act without fear of consequences, further alleging that he enjoys the patronage of an influential ruling-party leader. As per the allegations, at serial number 101 of the voter list, Manoj

Kumar minor daughter Aradhya—currently a Class 7 student—has been illegally enrolled as a voter. Additionally, villagers have raised objections to the inclusion of other allegedly ineligible voters. At serial numbers 768 and 769 the names of village head Asha Devi and her husband Vijendra are reportedly listed, despite the claim that they neither reside in the village nor own any immovable property there. Similarly, the names of

Ramakant and Ritu Yadav have allegedly been added improperly at serial numbers 776 and 777. Villagers stated that if these allegations are found to be true, the matter would be extremely serious. They pointed out that the District Magistrate has issued strict instructions to ensure transparency and fairness in the SIR process and any such act by a BLO would amount to a blatant violation of official orders. Repeated attempts to contact BLO Manoj Kumar for his response were unsuccessful, as he did not answer phone calls. Efforts to reach the SDM, Aliganj, also failed. The villagers have demanded a fair and impartial investigation into the matter and strict action against those found guilty.

IPS officer Debajyoti Mukherjee Awarded DGP Gold Medal

Assam

Efficient Assam Police officer IPS Debajyoti Mukherjee has been conferred with the Director General of Police Gold Medal. Mukherjee, who is currently serving as Inspector General of Police (Border) and Inspector General, Fire & Emergency Services, Assam, has received the DGP Gold Medal in recognition of his commendable and outstanding service in Assam Police. Notably, Mukherjee was born in Tezpur and began his schooling in Shillong



and Dhubri. He later obtained his postgraduate degree in Economics with first class from Gauhati University. A 2005-batch IPS officer, Mukherjee had earlier received the Medal for Excellence in Investigation from the Union Home Minister in 2020, as well as the Police Medal for

Meritorious Service. Mukherjee, who likes to listen to music and travel in the midst of his busy job, is the husband of Dr. Sudesna Bhattacharya, the director of Anandaram Barua Bhasha Kala Sanskritik Sanstha in North Guwahati in Kamrup district of Assam.

Mircha Ghazipur defeated Assam in the inaugural match, entered the next Round

Chandauli

The football tournament organized under the aegis of Amar Shaheed Sporting Club on Monday in the premises of Amar Veer Inter College located in the town was grandly inaugurated by Syedraja MLA Sushil Singh and special guest Dhanapur Block Chief Ajay Singh by cutting the ribbon and kicking the football. Addressing the inaugural ceremony, MLA Sushil Singh said that such sports events are highly commendable, in which the participation of teams from remote states like Assam further strengthens the sports

spirit. He said that sports is not only a medium for physical and mental development, but it also promotes discipline, unity and a sense of brotherhood. Such competitions enhance the talent of the youth and provide positive direction to the society. The inaugural match was played between Mircha Ghazipur vs Assam in two halves of 45 minutes each. After winning the toss, Mircha Ghazipur team started aggressively. In the 10th minute of the match, Ehtesham gave the team the lead by scoring a brilliant goal. After this, Sachin Yadav scored two consecutive goals in the 18th and 34th

minutes to make the score 3–0. For Assam, Wajid opened the team account by scoring a goal on an accurate pass from Visham, but ultimately Mircha Ghazipur won the match 3–1 and entered the next round. On this occasion, club patron Shah Alam Khan, Haji Bismillah, President Rustam Khan, Ashok Singh, Dilshad Khan, Kamalakant Mishra, Manish Singh, Durgesh and a large number of sports lovers were present. Rashid Khan played the role of referee in the match, while commentary was done jointly by Atif Khan and Inam Khan.

Rural India towards self-reliance through cultivation of aromatic plants

Varanasi

A one-day entrepreneurship awareness workshop was organized by the Office of the Development Commissioner, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India, in collaboration with the Fragrance and Flavour Development Centre (FFDC) Extension Unit, Kanpur and the Sai Institute of Rural Development, Varanasi. The theme of the workshop was "Cultivation and Marketing of Aromatic Plants." The workshop was held at the Vishal Bharat Sansthan headquarters, Subhash Bhawan, Indresh Nagar, Lamhi, Varanasi. The program began with the lighting of the lamp by chief guest Dr. Bhakti Vijay Shukla. The Azad Hind Battalion, led by Commander Dakshita



Bharatvanshi, saluted the guests. Chief Guest Dr. Bhakti Vijay Shukla, in her address, praised the program and said that cultivating aromatic and medicinal plants can become a powerful and sustainable source of livelihood for rural youth and women. This sector offers great potential at a low cost and by adopting a scientific approach, the rural economy can be strengthened. Guest of Honour Ajay Singh, Director, Sai Institute of Rural Development, Varanasi, said, "Aromatic and medicinal plants can

not only contribute significantly to the country economy, but also provide a new direction to rural entrepreneurship. Such training programmes inspire youth and women to become self-reliant." In the technical session of the workshop Sanjay Rastogi, IPR Expert, provided detailed guidance on important technical points related to commercial cultivation, processing, branding, Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and marketing of aromatic plants.

Efforts to Address the Issues Faced by Divyang Students

In this regard, the university has taken important decisions in line with the issues raised by students during the 'Divyang Vidyarthi Samvaad' (Interaction with divyang students) with the Vice-Chancellor Prof. Ajit Kumar Chaturvedi held on 29th September, 2025 at the Centenary Agricultural Auditorium. The decisions taken at the meeting of the Standing Committee for Persons with Disabilities held on 30th September, 2025 have been approved by the Vice-Chancellor. The OBC & Disability Cell has written to all Deans, Heads of Departments and administrative wardens of hostels requesting details of ramps, lifts and other facilities available for divyang students in their respective departments, faculties and hostels. The HOD have also been requested to do the needful for immediate allocation of supervisors to divyang research scholars, along with other research students. All Directors, Deans, HOD and administrative wardens of hostels have also been requested to prepare a panel of scribes for visually impaired students with 40 percent or more disability in regular and competitive examinations and to send a copy of the panel to the Disability Cell.

Brisk Shopping Marks Conclusion of Doba Fair

Erwa Katra. The fair organized at the Samadhi site of Sage Rishi Durvasa in Doba Mafi village of the region concluded on with heavy footfall and vibrant shopping activity. Pleasant weather and relief from the cold encouraged devotees and buyers to visit the fairgrounds from early morning, adding to the festive atmosphere. Devotees paid homage at the Samadhi of Sage Durvasa with deep faith and offered prayers, seeking the fulfillment of their wishes. The final day of the fair witnessed special enthusiasm among shoppers, leading to strong sales of daily household items. Goods such as wooden planks and tables, rolling pins,

'Public trust is weakened'

Actor-politician Kamal Haasan raises questions over film certification norms as a legal controversy erupts around upcoming film *Jana Nayagan*



Veteran actor-politician Kamal Haasan has issued a strong statement amid the ongoing controversies surrounding the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), raising broader concerns about the freedom of expression and the censoring process in the film industry.

While refraining from mentioning any institution or any specific film, Haasan, in his statement, noted, "India's Constitution guarantees freedom of expression, guided by reason, never diminished by opacity.

This moment is larger than any one film; it reflects the space we accord art and artists in a constitutional democracy. Cinema is not the labour of an individual alone but the collective effort of an ecosystem of writers, technicians, performers, exhibitors, and small businesses whose livelihoods depend on a fair and timely process."

Emphasising the need for clarity, the actor underscored how such censorship processes could stifle creativity and disrupt livelihoods across the film ecosystem.

"When clarity is absent, creativity is constrained, economic activity is disrupted, and public trust is weakened. Tamil Nadu and India's cinema lovers bring passion, discernment, and maturity to the arts; they deserve openness and respect. What is required now is a principled relook at the certification processes with defined timelines for certification, transparent evaluation, and written, reasoned justification for every suggested cut or edit," he said.

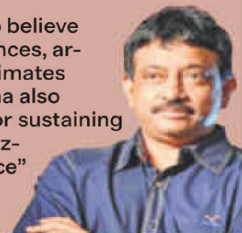


Haasan called for the film industry to "unite and engage in meaningful, constructive dialogue" and added, "Such reform will safeguard creative freedom, uphold constitutional values, and strengthen India's democratic institutions by affirming trust in its artists and its people." Kamal Haasan's reaction came in the wake of Thalapaty Vijay's *Jana Nayagan* row.

RGV calls CBFC outdated

Filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma has strongly criticised the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) over the censor row surrounding actor-politician Vijay's *Jana Nayagan*. In a lengthy post on X following the Madras High Court judgment, Varma called the censor board "outdated" and questioned its relevance in an age where graphic content is freely accessible online.

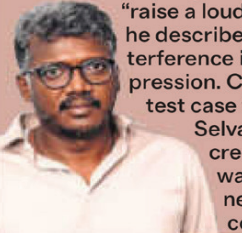
He said it was "foolish" to believe censorship protects audiences, arguing that it only underestimates viewers' intelligence. Varma also blamed the film industry for sustaining the system, stating that "laziness to debate its relevance" has allowed censorship to continue unchecked.



A still from Vijay's *Jana Nayagan*

Mari Selvaraj urges unity

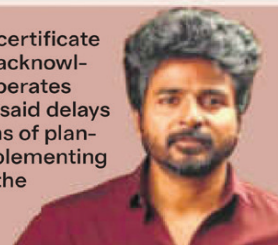
Tamil filmmaker Mari Selvaraj has joined the growing criticism of the CBFC's handling of *Jana Nayagan*. In a post on X, the director urged fellow creators to "raise a loud voice" against what he described as increasing interference in artistic expression. Calling the issue a test case for political cinema, Selvaraj said fear around creative freedom was spreading and needed to be resisted collectively.



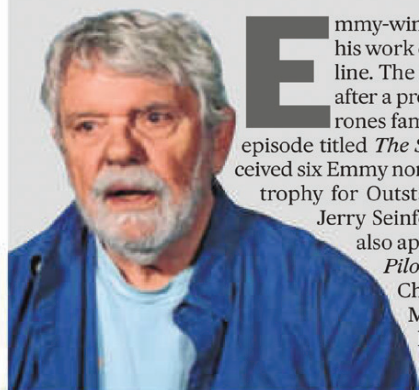
Sivakarthikeyan flags losses

Actor Sivakarthikeyan expressed disappointment over certification hurdles faced by both *Jana Nayagan* and his film *Parasakthi*, saying such uncertainties impact producers, theatres and workers across the industry. Speaking at a press interaction after

Parasakthi received its certificate on January 9, the actor acknowledged that the CBFC operates under its own rules but said delays should not derail months of planning. He added that implementing changes suggested by the board was challenging under tight timelines.



Tom Cheronos dies



Emmy-winning producer, director Tom Cheronos, known for his work on *Seinfeld*, has passed away at 86, reported Deadline. The filmmaker died at his home in Florence, Oregon, after a prolonged battle with Alzheimer's disease. Tom Cheronos famously directed and produced the second *Seinfeld* episode titled *The Stakeout*, which was released in May 1990. He received six Emmy nominations along the way and even won the coveted trophy for Outstanding Comedy Series, sharing it with creators Jerry Seinfeld and Larry David in 1993. During this stint, he also appeared on the show, just once in episode four, *The Pilot*. Born on September 11, 1939, in Tuscaloosa, AL, Cheronos did his graduation the University of New Mexico with a bachelor's degree in journalism. He later received a master's degree in telecommunications from the University of Alabama.

Shahid Kapoor turns ruthless



A still from *O'Romeo*

The much-awaited teaser of Vishal Bhardwaj and Shahid Kapoor's collaborative *O'Romeo* has been unveiled, offering a glimpse of the gritty, dark tale of Romeo.

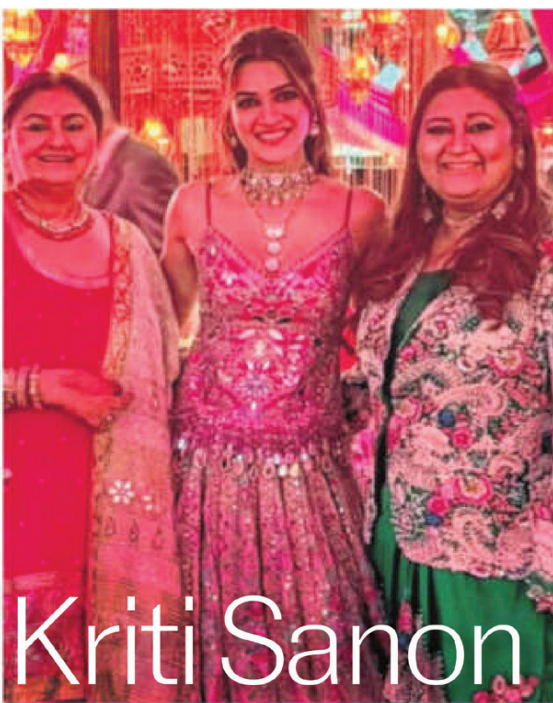
The makers, on Saturday, dropped the one-minute-35-second teaser, introducing key characters played by Shahid Kapoor, Triptii Dimri, Disha Patani, Vikrant Massey, Tamannaah Bhatia, Farida Jalal, and Nana Patekar.

The teaser opens to show Shahid as the rugged and ferocious Romeo, ready to take on a fight. Sporting a raw, unpolished look with a brutal demean-

our, Shahid's character appeared to be shaped by violence, carrying anger beneath the surface.

The teaser is also packed with a lot of high-octane fight sequences that underline the film's narrative. What further stands out are the glimpses of actors Triptii Dimri, Disha Patani, Vikrant Massey, Tamannaah Bhatia, Farida Jalal, and Nana Patekar, likely to add more layers to the story.

Actor Avinash Tiwary also makes a powerful appearance in the teaser. Others in the cast are Aruna Irani, Hussain Dalal, Resh Lamba, and Rahul Deshpande.



Pics: Instagram

Kriti Sanon grooves to *Lollipop Lagelu* at Nupur's wedding celebrations

Bollywood actress Kriti Sanon is in the news for her sister Nupur Sanon's wedding celebrations. Photos and videos from the pre-wedding ceremonies in Udaipur are going viral on social media. Kriti's dance at Nupur's *sangeet* ceremony has especially caught attention.



She celebrated the occasion wholeheartedly and impressed everyone with her energy and enthusiasm. In a video from the event, Kriti is seen performing a lively dance to the popular Bhojpuri song *Lollipop Lagelu*. Actor Varun Sharma also joined her on the dance floor. Fans loved their fun chemistry and desi vibe, and the video quickly went viral. Kriti's carefree attitude and traditional style have been widely appreciated.

Swimming through shards of memory

TITLE: *The Chronology of Water*
DIRECTOR: Kristen Stewart
CAST: Imogen Poots, Thora Birch, Susannah Flood, Tom Sturridge
WHERE: In theatres near you
RATING: ★★ ★



story but to inhabit its psychological architecture.

Actors' performance

Imogen Poots delivers a performance of astonishing transparency. She captures the contradictions of Yuknavitch with rare precision: the defiance that masks fragility, the recklessness that cohabits with longing, and the strange tenderness that emerges even in the midst of self-destruction. Her embodiment is not polished; it is lived-in, scraped, and startlingly vulnerable.

The supporting cast enriches the portrait with textured performances. Thora Birch brings a quiet, quivering sorrow to the older sister, Claudia, who escaped early but carries the bruise of abandonment. Jim Belushi, in a gentle and unexpectedly layered turn, embodies Ken Kesey as both eccentric mentor and unlikely emotional ballast. Earl Cave's portrayal of a kind-hearted partner adds warmth, while Michael Epp's chilling restraint as the father creates an oppressive shadow that lingers long after his scenes end.

Even the briefest appearances, such as Kim Gordon's enigmatic photographer or Susannah Flood's emotionally detached mother, leave impactful impressions.

Music

Shot on grainy 16mm, the film

appears like memory left too long in sunlight, faded at the edges, vivid at its core. Stewart relies heavily on visual collage, letting jump cuts, colour washes and intrusive light do the psychological heavy lifting. At times, it borders on sensory overload, yet this very excess creates an emotional texture that lingers.

The soundscape is discordant, rhythmic, and always slightly unsettling. It acts like a second narrator. Audiences familiar with mainstream cinema's tendency toward melodic reassurance may find the score's jagged edges alienating, but here dissonance is the point. The aesthetics reflect the book's spirit: fragmented, fluid, and aware that healing rarely looks polished.

This film is not designed for comfortable viewing. It is uneven, risky, and sometimes overwrought. It is also courageous, deeply felt, and astonishingly personal. The film undeniably marks the arrival of a filmmaker unafraid of discomfort or complexity.

Overall, the film rewards with a singular, unsettling, and ultimately hopeful meditation on survival.

Humming through heartache & hope

TITLE: *Song Sung Blue*
DIRECTOR: Craig Brewer
CAST: Kate Hudson, Hugh Jackman, Ella Anderson, King Princess, Jim Belushi
WHERE: In theatres near you
RATING: ★★ ★



fortune at its protagonists.

Actors' performance

Hugh Jackman slips into the role of Mike Sardina with infectious delight, delivering a performance that fuses showmanship with lived-in grit. Whether he's singing his heart out in glittering shirts or quietly navigating the pains of sobriety and responsibility, he brings depth to a man who knows he is not a star but hopes to shine anyway.

Kate Hudson is the film's revelation. Her Claire is vibrant, vulnerable, and grounded, a woman who finds her joy amplified onstage but who must also confront a devastating personal setback. Hudson's singing is confident and rich, yet it's her emotional intelligence that anchors the film. Together, Jackman and Hudson lift the story with unforced chemistry, offering a partnership that is as musically spirited as it is tenderly human.

The supporting cast adds colour, with Imperioli, Anderson, Stevens and Belushi enriching the story through warm, witty, and grounded performances.

Music

The film revels in the full-bodied sentiment of Neil Diamond's catalogue, treating each track as both narrative punctuation and emotive

oxygen. Instead of rapid-fire medleys, Brewer allows many performances to unfold in generous stretches, giving audiences time to bathe in the familiarity of the music. These sequences are where the film sparkles most.

Visually, *Song Sung Blue* embraces its unabashed kitschy world with affection. Sequined outfits, swirling lights, and Midwest venues come together to create an atmosphere that is proudly uncool yet strangely irresistible. The aesthetic choices echo the film's thematic heartbeat: ordinary people finding extraordinary release in music that speaks directly to the soul.

This film is neither a polished biopic nor a glossy music drama. It is a tender salute to the quiet brilliance of small lives lived sincerely. The film falters when it indulges in melodrama, yet its heart is firmly in the right place. Those who appreciate stories about second chances, imperfect families, and the sheer courage it takes to keep going will find much to enjoy.

For audiences willing to lean into its sentimentality, Brewer's film offers something delightful: a reminder that joy can be loud, love can be off-key, and nostalgia, when handled with care, can still bring a room to its feet.

Briefs

Don repeats Indo-Pak war stopped claim

Claiming again he solved the conflict between India and Pakistan, US President Donald Trump has said "no one in history is more deserving than him" of the Nobel Peace Prize, as he criticised former President Barack Obama for getting the honour even though he "didn't do anything". "Look whether people like Trump or don't like Trump, I settled eight wars, big ones. Some going on for 36 years, 32 years, 31 years, 28 years, 25 years, some just getting ready to start like India and Pakistan, where already eight jets were shot out of the air," Trump said.

Cannot be shared: Nobel Committee

Days after Nobel Laureate and Venezuela opposition leader María Corina Machado vowed to share her Nobel Peace Prize with US President Trump, the Norwegian Nobel Committee clarified the coveted award cannot be "shared, revoked or transferred" to another person. "A Nobel Prize can neither be revoked, shared, nor transferred to others. Once the announcement has been made, the decision stands for all time," the Nobel Committee said.

Six killed in Mississippi, suspect held

Authorities say a person was in custody on Saturday after six people were killed in a series of related shootings in Mississippi. Clay County Sheriff Eddie Scott said in a Facebook post "multiple innocent lives" were lost "due to violence" in the town of West Point, near the Alabama border. The sheriff told WTVA 6 people were killed in 3 locations. A suspect was in custody and there was no threat to the community, the sheriff wrote on Facebook.

Porn content? Indonesia blocks Grok

Indonesia temporarily blocked Elon Musk's Grok chatbot on Saturday due to the risk of AI-generated pornographic content, becoming the first country to deny access to the AI tool. The move comes after governments, researchers and regulators from Europe to Asia have condemned and some have opened inquiries into sexualised content on the app.

Russian oil depot hit by Kyiv drone

A Ukrainian drone strike sparked a fire at an oil depot in Russia's southern Volgograd region, officials said on Saturday, after Russia launched a powerful hypersonic missile along with drones and other weapons that disrupted Kyiv's power supply and heating. There were no reports of casualties, Volgograd Gov Andrei Bocharov was quoted as saying in a Telegram post.

Fighting resumes in Aleppo after ceasefire collapses

Aleppo: Fighting resumed in Syria's Aleppo after Kurdish militias rejected the government's order to abandon their positions late on Friday.

Syrian forces, in response, targetted the Sheikh Maqsoud and Ashrafieh neighbourhoods, which have remained under the control of Kurdish militias since the early days of the civil war that broke out in the country in 2011.

Syrian defence ministry, while announcing a ceasefire on Friday, had called on

OIL GIANTS MEET | Trump vows total safety, urges execs to invest billions; Exxon says Venezuela currently 'uninvestable'

Don: Repair Venezuela's rotting energy industry

WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump met executives from the oil giants at the White House on Friday to discuss Venezuela, saying he wants them to invest \$100 billion in the country to vastly expand its production.

"American companies will have the opportunity to rebuild Venezuela's rotting energy infrastructure and eventually increase oil production to levels never, ever seen before," Trump said.

He was flanked by top executives from Exxon Mobil, ConocoPhillips, Chevron and others. "We are going to be making the decision as to which oil companies are going to go in. One of the things the US gets out of this will be even lower energy prices," the Republican president said.

Companies including Chevron, Vitol and Trafigura are competing for US licences to market Venezuela's existing crude oil, but oil majors are hesitant to commit to big, longer-term investments due to high costs and political instability. CEO Darren



One thing I think everyone has to know is if we didn't do this (capturing Maduro and reviving oil industry), China or Russia would have done it.

China can buy oil only from US markets.
Donald Trump, US President

Woods said Exxon sees Venezuela as currently "uninvestable" and needs to see significant changes to return there.

"We have had our assets seized there twice, and so you can imagine to reenter a third time would require significant changes," he said. "You have total safety. You are dealing with us directly and not dealing with Venezuela at all. We don't want you to deal with Venezuela," Trump said.

Exxon and ConocoPhillips departed Venezuela nearly 20

years ago after their assets were nationalised.

Chevron Vice Chairman Mark Nelson said the company is committed to investments in Venezuela. Chevron is the only US oil major still operating in the country.

"You know, these are not babies," Trump said of the oil industry executives. "These are people that drill oil in pretty rough places. I can say a couple of those places make Venezuela look like a picnic." Other companies repre-

sented at the meeting include Halliburton, Valero, Marathon, Shell, Singapore-based Trafigura, Italy-based Eni and Spain-based Repsol.

After the meeting, Energy Secretary Chris Wright told reporters the firms showed "tremendous interest," adding, Chevron made a specific pledge. Trump said the discussions with oil firms are aimed at securing commitments. "We have to get them to invest and then we have to get their money back as quickly as we can," Trump said.

Woods said apart from security guarantee Exxon needed durable investment protections introduced and the Venezuela's hydrocarbons law needed to be reformed.

Chevron Vice Chairman Mark Nelson highlighted the company's 100-year history in Venezuela and its current status as the only American oil major operating there.

Meanwhile, pusing 1-year, 10% cap on credit card interest, Trump wrote on Truth Social: "We'll no longer let Americans be ripped off by credit card companies charging interest rates of 20-30%."

NICARAGUA NABS US 'SUPPORTERS'

Authorities in Nicaragua have arrested at least 60 people for reportedly celebrating or expressing support for the capture of Venezuelan president Nicolás Maduro, a human rights watchdog group and local media outlets said.

Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega and wife vice president Rosario Murillo are staunch allies of Maduro, reported 'The Guardian'. Since the capture of Maduro, "at least 60 arbitrary arrests" have occurred over alleged support for the operation, the NGO Blue and White Monitoring, which compiles reports of rights violations in Nicaragua, said, adding, 49 people remained in detention on Friday "without information about legal status," while 9 people have been released and 3 were temporarily detained. "This new wave of repression is carried out without a judicial order and is based solely on expressions of opinion: comments on social media, private celebrations, or not repeating official propaganda," the group said.

Beaten up & humiliated, another Hindu youth dies in Bangladesh

DHAKA

As violence against minorities continues to mount across Bangladesh, another Hindu man died after consuming poison over a debt of 500 Bangladeshi Taka in Dirai upazila of Sunamganj district, local media reported.

The deceased, **Joy Mohapatra**, 19, died on Friday morning while undergoing treatment at MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital in Sylhet. Citing the deceased's cousin, Ayan Das, Bangladeshi Bengali media outlet Sylhet View 24 reported Joy had purchased a mobile phone for 5,500 Taka from grocery shopkeeper Amirul Islam. He



paid 2,000 Taka cash and agreed to pay the balance in weekly installments of 500 Taka. Although he made the payments regularly, the final installment was delayed.

It is alleged Joy went to Amirul Islam's shop on Thursday to pay the installment but was beaten up, humiliated and had his mobile phone seized.

Ayan said Joy admitted to consuming poison on Thursday evening. He was

'Protesters enemies of God'

Iranian regime warns of death penalty in crackdown

DUBAI

Protests in Iran neared the two-week mark on Saturday, and the Islamic Republic's government acknowledged the demonstrations despite an intensifying crackdown and as the nation remains cut off from the world. An internet blackout imposed by the authorities was also ongoing.

With the internet down in Iran and phone lines cut off, gauging the demonstrations from abroad has grown more difficult. But the death toll in the protests has grown to at least 65 people killed and over 2,300 others detained, according to the US-based Human Rights Activists News Agency.

Iranian state TV is reporting on security force casualties while portraying control over the nation.

Iran escalated its threats against demonstrators, with the country's attorney general warning that anyone taking part in protests will be considered an "enemy of God", a death-penalty charge.

The comments by Iran's attorney general Mohammad Movahedi Azad were reported by Iranian state TV.

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has signalled a coming clampdown, despite US warnings.

"The US supports the brave people of Iran," US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on X on Saturday. The State Department separately warned: "Do not play games with President Trump. When he says he will do something, he means it."

TV SPLIT-SCREEN

Saturday marks the start of the work week in Iran, but many schools and universities reportedly held online classes, Iranian state TV reported.

State TV played a driving, martial orchestral arrangement from the "Epic of Khorramshahr" by Iranian



So Iran's in big trouble. It looks to me the people are taking over certain cities that nobody thought were really possible just a few weeks ago. I have made the statement very strongly if they start killing people like they have in the past, we will get involved. We will be hitting them very hard where it hurts.

Donald Trump, US President

composer Majid Entezami, while showing pro-government demonstrations. The song, aired repeatedly during the 12-day war launched by Israel, honours Iran's 1982 liberation of the city of Khorramshahr during the Iran-Iraq war. It has been used in videos of protesting women cutting away their hair to protest the 2022 death of Mahsa Amini as well.

"Field reports indicate that peace prevailed in most cities of the country at night," a state TV anchor reported.

"After a number of armed terrorists attacked public places and set fire to people's private property last night, there was no news of any gathering or chaos in Tehran and most provinces last night."

That was directly contradicted by an online video that showed demonstrations in Tehran's Saadat Abad, with

what appeared to be thousands on the street. "Death to Khamenei!" a man chanted.

The semiofficial Fars news agency, believed to be close to Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard and one of the few media outlets able to publish to the outside world, released surveillance camera footage of what it said came from demonstrations in Isfahan. In it, a protester appeared to fire a long gun, while others set fires and threw gasoline bombs at what appeared to be a government compound.

Iran's exiled Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi, who called for protests on Thursday and Friday, asked demonstrators to take to streets on Saturday and Sunday with Iran's old lion-and-sun flag, used during the time of the shah.

Pahlavi claimed he was preparing to return to Iran.

Meanwhile, the Institute for the Study of War, a policy research organisation, on Saturday said it recorded 116 protests in at least 100 cities across all 31 provinces since 3.30pm on January 8. As per the report, Iran saw 20 huge protests, ones that have a turnout of over 1,000 people.

Meanwhile, Australia, Canada and the EU in a joint statement condemned the killing of the anti-government protesters, asking the regime to end the use of lethal force.

Blow as judge blocks Trump's polls order

Washington: A federal judge has blocked US President Donald Trump's administration from enforcing most of his executive order on elections against the vote-by-mail states Washington and Oregon, in the latest blow to Trump's efforts to require documentary proof of citizenship to vote and to require that all ballots be received by Election Day.

US District Judge John H Chun in Seattle found that those requirements exceeded the president's authority, following similar rulings in a Massachusetts case brought by 19 states and in a Washington case by Democratic and civil rights groups.

"Today's ruling is a huge vic-

tory for voters in Washington and Oregon, and for the rule of law," Washington Attorney General Nick Brown said.

'US GOVT CAN'T BLOCK CHILD CARE MONEY'

A federal judge ruled Trump administration cannot block federal money for child care subsidies and other programmes aimed at supporting needy children and their families from flowing to 5 Democratic-led states for now.

California, Colorado, Illinois, Minnesota and New York argued a policy announced to freeze funds for three grant programmes is having an immediate impact on them and creating "operational chaos".

Priti calls for UK intervention to protect Hindus in Bangladesh

London/Dhaka: UK Shadow Foreign Secretary **Priti Patel** has called on the British government to intervene in the "increase in violence" in Bangladesh that has involved murders of Hindus and use its influence to bring about stability in the country.

The British Indian Opposition Conservative MP posted her letter to Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper on social media on Friday, which also calls upon the Labour Party government to make a statement on the issue in the House of Commons.

"The situation in Bangladesh is very concerning. Religious freedoms should be protected and the murders of Hindus and persecution taking place are wrong and must stop," said Patel.

"The UK government must use its influence and convening powers to work to bring about stability in Bangladesh and a future where religious freedoms are protected and Hindus as safe," she said.

In her letter to Cooper, the shadow minister points to reports of at least six Hindus being killed within an 18-day



period in recent weeks.

"This level of persecution and violence is unacceptable. Given the increase in violence, can you advise what steps have been taken over the last year to monitor and make representations?" she said.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has condemned a "disturbing pattern" of recurring attacks on minorities in Bangladesh.

"We continue to witness a disturbing pattern of recurring attacks on minorities as well as their homes and businesses by extremists. Such communal incidents need to be dealt with swiftly and firmly," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

"We have observed a troubling tendency to attribute such incidents to personal rivalries, political differences,

or extraneous reasons. Such disregard only emboldens the perpetrators, and deepens the sense of fear and insecurity among minorities," he said.

B'DESH MUST NOT RETURN TO PRE-AUG 5 PERIOD: RAHMAN

Newly-appointed BNP chairman Tarique Rahman on Saturday said there is "no reason" for Bangladesh to return to the political conditions that existed before the toppling of Sheikh Hasina's regime on August 5, 2024.

Weeks ahead of Feb 12 general elections, Rahman claimed his Bangladesh Nationalist Party would lead the country "in the right direction if it comes to power".

Rahman, 60, has emerged as a leading contender for the post of the prime minister.

The Standing Committee of the BNP approved Rahman's appointment as the chairman of the party in a meeting on Friday, days after the demise of his mother, party chairperson and three-time prime minister Khaleda Zia on December 30 after a prolonged illness.

Dutch couple's marriage annulled as ChatGPT vows fail legal test

AMSTERDAM

A Dutch couple had their marriage annulled after the person officiating used a ChatGPT-generated speech intended to be playful but failed to meet legal requirements, as per a court ruling, 'Reuters' reported.

The couple from the city of Zwolle, whose names were redacted from the January 5 decision under Dutch privacy

rules, argued they had intended to marry regardless of whether the right wording was used when they took their vows. According to the decision, the person officiating their ceremony last April 19 asked if they would "continue supporting each other, teasing each other and embracing each other, even when life gets difficult".

The pair said "I do" and the officiant declared them "not only husband and wife, but

above all a team, a crazy couple, each other's love and home base".

But the judge found they had not actually sworn to fulfil their marriage duties — something that is required under Dutch law. "The court understands that the date in the marriage deed is important to the man and woman, but cannot ignore what the law says." It ordered the marriage removed from the Zwolle city registry.

Briefs

KUALA LUMPUR

Sindhu loses to Wang in semifinals



Ace Indian shuttler **P V Sindhu's** impressive run came to an end after a straight-game defeat to China's Wang Zhiyi in the women's singles semifinals of the season-opening Malaysia Open Super 1000 here on Saturday. The two-time Olympic medalist could not sustain the pressure against the world number two, committing too many unforced errors in a 16-21, 15-21 loss, which brought down curtains on India's campaign in the tournament. Playing her first tournament after recovering from a foot injury that kept her on the sidelines since October last year, Sindhu also let slip an 11-6 lead in the second game. "I think 11-6, I took a break, maybe I should have taken 2-3 points there, but I think even though I was leading, there were a couple of small errors."

MUMBAI

Ex-Mizoram Ranji Trophy cricketer dies



Former Mizoram Ranji Trophy cricketer **K. Lalremruata** passed away on Thursday after collapsing during a local cricket match in Mizoram. He was 38. The incident occurred during a Khaled Memorial 2nd Division Screening Tournament match between Venghnuai Raiders Cricket Club (VRCC) and Chawnpui ILMOV CC at the Suaka Cricket Ground near the Sairang railway station. Lalremruata, who was representing VRCC, suddenly collapsed on the field while the game was in progress. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) also mourned Lalremruata's death, expressing grief over the untimely loss of the former domestic cricketer.

MACCLESFIELD (UK)

Palace loses to Macclesfield in huge FA upset



Minnow Macclesfield beat title holder Crystal Palace 2-1 in one of the biggest upsets in FA Cup history on

Captain Gill says he respects selectors' T20 WC decision

India ODI skipper feels whatever is written in his destiny will happen

VADODARA

Left out of next month's T20 World Cup, India's ODI and Test captain Shubman Gill on Saturday said he respects the selectors' decision and remains focused on giving his best whenever the opportunity arises.

The 26-year-old was not considered for next month's T20 World Cup despite leading India in the longer formats. He has played 36 T20Is for India, scoring 869 runs at an average of 28.03 with a strike rate of 138.59.

"My belief is that in my life, I am right where I have to be and whatever things are written in my destiny, no one can take those things from me," Gill told reporters ahead of the first ODI against New Zealand here on Sunday.

"Obviously as a player, you have a belief that if you play in the World Cup, you will win (it for) your team, (and) you will win (it for) your country."

"Having said that, I respect the selectors' decision and (I am) wishing the T20 team all the very best and I really hope that they win the World Cup for us."

Asked if his exclusion could have an adverse mental impact, Gill said it's important to keep it simple.

"Being a sportsperson, it's all about being in the present, the more (in the) present you are, even when you are on the field, more you are not thinking about what's going to

happen, or what has happened in the previous moment, it gives you more chances of succeeding," he said.

"I try to look at what I need to do now and what is important. The more we can be in the present moment, it makes our life more simpler, and if you make your life more simpler, it's a much peaceful and a happier space that you would want to be in." The New Zealand series is only his second assignment since becoming India's full-time captain in ODIs.



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Shubman Gill
India ODI skipper



PREVIEW | Team India eye winning start in Vadodara against New Zealand

VADODARA

Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma's prime form is expected to drive India's progress in ODIs as the full-strength hosts take on a new-look New Zealand in the first match of the three-match series here on Sunday.

Even as focus remains on the T20 World Cup which is less than a month away, Kohli and Rohit will hog the lime-light in the three ODIs over the next seven days.

There has been no dearth of game-time for the two superstars who played a couple of matches each in the Vijay Hazare Trophy's league round, piling up big runs to underline that they are not going away anytime soon.

But it remains to be seen how India captain Shubman Gill responds after being axed from the T20 World Cup side, with his form being a concern apart from the injuries that kept him out of the majority of the series against South Africa late last year.

Gill's return, however, is likely to take Yashasvi Jaiswal out of the top order where he scored his maiden ODI ton in the last match against South Africa.

The return of Shreyas Iyer should end a largely unsuccessful run of experiments in the batting order, with the 31-year-old set to claim his No 4 spot back.

KL Rahul's continued role as a lower-order batter and wicketkeeper is set to keep Rishabh Pant out of the XI, with the latter remaining second choice in the 50-overs format.

While Iyer, Pant and Mohammed Siraj were not part of the preparations for the ODI series here in Kotambi until Saturday, Ravindra Jadeja trained at full tilt on Friday, signalling his availability.

Jasprit Bumrah and Hardik Pandya are

KOHLI, ROHIT TAKE CENTRE STAGE



not part of the ODI series to keep them fresh for T20 assignments, leaving the pace-bowling duties to Mohammed Siraj, Arshdeep Singh, Harshit Rana and Prasidh Krishna.

Kuldeep Yadav, Washington Sundar and Jadeja will share the spin-bowling responsibilities in a format where evening dew and the flat nature of wickets across the country ensure that the emphasis shifts to containment rather than aggressive wicket-taking.

It will be the first time that the new Baroda Cricket Association Stadium in Kotambi will host a men's international. The venue has previously hosted a women's ODI series between India and the West Indies. For New Zealand, their loss to India in last year's Champions Trophy final carries little significance, as this series presents an ideal opportunity to test new and second-line players.

Whether they have their preferred players available or not, the Black Caps will stick to the team mantra which worked wonders in their last visit to India in 2024-25 when they hammered India 3-0 in the Test series.

During that tour, several Kiwi players spoke about wanting to "fire the first shot" against India and the team mantra on this trip is "you are where your feet are", something that is meant to keep the

players' minds on the task and not on the challenges around them, given New Zealand are without several of their front-line players and facing India in their backyard.

Mitchell Santner is missing the ODIs due to a groin injury and Tom Latham is back home for the birth of his first

child. Former captain Kane Williamson is in South Africa, fulfilling his T20 commitments in the SA20.

Rachin Ravindra and fast bowler Jacob Duffy have been rested, while Matt Henry, returning from calf tear, is focused on returning in the T20I series keeping the World Cup in mind. Michael Bracewell will lead the side in

Teams :

India: Shubman Gill (c), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, KL Rahul (wk), Rishabh Pant (wk), Ravindra Jadeja, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Washington Sundar, Kuldeep Yadav, Arshdeep Singh, Prasidh Krishna, Mohammed Siraj, Harshit Rana.

New Zealand: Michael Bracewell (c), Devon Conway (wk), Mitchell Hay (wk), Nick Kelly, Henry Nicholls, Will Young, Josh Clarkson, Zak Foulkes, Daryl Mitchell, Glenn Phillips, Adithya Ashok, Kristian Clarke, Kyle Jamieson, Jayden Lennox, Michael Rae.

Santner's absence, who will return for the T20Is, while attention will also be on how the lanky all-rounder Kyle Jamieson and the 23-year-old leg-spinner Adithya Ashok perform. Jayden Lennox has been brought into the Kiwis' side as a like-for-like replacement for Santner. Even as they have plenty of new and inexperienced faces in the squad, New Zealand still have a formidable batting strength which includes Devon Conway, Daryl Mitchell, Henry Nicholls, Will Young and even Glenn Phillips.

Bracewell will lean on Jamieson

Michael Bracewell on Saturday said he would lean on all-rounder Kyle Jamieson to lead the pace attack and confirmed an ODI debut for 24-year-old Kristian Clarke in the first match against India.

The top two ranked ODI teams India and New Zealand will face-off in the opening match here on Sunday.

"We have Kyle Jamieson, who's been around the game a long time and has plenty of experience. I'll be leaning a lot on him as captain to lead the bowling attack. He's a very skilful bowler," Bracewell said.

Keightley feels 154 was under-par score for MI

Mumbai Indians head coach also lavishes praise on G Kamalini

NAVI MUMBAI

Mumbai Indians head coach Lisa Keightley felt the score of 154 was definitely under par given the conditions at the DY Patil Stadium in their heart-breaking opening match defeat against Royal Challengers Bengaluru in the Women's Premier League (WPL).

Keightley was speaking to the media after the hum-dinger of a loss by three wickets against RCB spurred by Nadine de Klerk's last over blitz.

"It was definitely under-par, it looked hard to bat early on. Lauren Bell bowled extremely well early on in those conditions. To get to the score was good and if we could have got another 10 off the last over, it could've been different. But it was well under-par. The dropped catches really hurt us in the long run," she added.

However, Keightley gave full credit to De Klerk for her incredible batting.

"We only had a small



amount of runs on board and to bowl in these sort of conditions with the dew, I think they did extremely well. But Nadine did extremely well with some clean ball striking. So yes, it's the first game, we fought well, we were competitive and there were parts of the game we could have done well and we did not. We have a chance tomorrow to change things, we know the condi-

tions well and we will go again and hope to get those two points tomorrow," the MI head coach said.

When asked about her impressions of G Kamalini, who opened the batting for the defending champions, Keightley had only good things to say.

"She is an extremely talented batter, left handed and I've seen her in her state-level



It was definitely under-par, it looked hard to bat early on. Lauren Bell bowled extremely well early on in those conditions.

Lisa Keightley
Mumbai Indians head coach

matches and for her to go there and bat in those conditions, she did very well in her first hit out. We have to see how she goes from here and hopefully she has a great tournament going from strength to strength."

Talking about what sets Kamalini apart, Keightley felt it was her well-rounded ability against both spin and seam. "It's really exciting, she plays spin and seam really well. Her game is very sound. We saw her dominate the spin and seam. It's a big challenge for her to grow and build on that potential."

All-round MI overwhelm DC

NAVI MUMBAI

A supreme all-round effort from the batters and bowlers powered Mumbai Indians to a big 50-run victory against Delhi Capitals in their Women's Premier League (WPL) match, here at the DY Patil Stadium, on Saturday.

Chasing a massive 196 for victory, DC were never in the race losing wickets at regular intervals to get bowled out for 145 in 19 overs. Nicola Carey and Amelia Kerr scalped three wickets apiece for the Mumbai Indians.

Earlier, Nat Sciver-Brunt and **Harmanpreet Kaur** showcased why they are among the most feared batters in limited-overs cricket, smashing scintillating unbeaten half-centuries to propel Mumbai Indians to a competitive 195 for 4.

A day after a below-par outing against Royal Challengers Bengaluru, 33-year-old all-rounder Nat Sciver-Brunt roared back to form, smashing 13 boundaries in a fluent 46-ball 70.

She anchored the defending champions' innings alongside skipper Harmanpreet



Kaur, who was equally beligerent, striking eight boundaries and three sixes in her unbeaten 42-ball 74.

The pair's 66-run partnership for the third wicket became the cornerstone of MI's competitive total, steadying the innings after opener Amelia Kerr's first-ball duck.

Kerr's woes continued as she was trapped by an unnecessary expansive shot, edging a ball moving away from her behind to Lizelle Lee. However, Sciver-Brunt quickly turned the tide. She took aim at West Indian pacer Chinelle Henry, scoring 10 runs in the second over and adding two more boundaries in the fourth. Sciver-Brunt's 49-run partnership with opener Gunalan Kamalini helped steady the MI innings.

Fynbos wins India Oaks at Mahalaxmi

MUMBAI

Fynbos crowned a memorable afternoon by capturing the Ladies' Derby in emphatic fashion, running away with the prestigious Viloo C. Poonawalla Indian Oaks (Grade I), the feature event at the Mahalaxmi Racecourse here on Saturday.

The four-year-old filly continued her rich vein of form as she registered the sixth victory of her career from nine starts, underlining her class at the highest level. Ridden by G. Vivek and trained by champion conditioner Pesi Shroff, Fynbos was patiently handled in the eight-horse field. She was settled in fifth position for much of the journey as Azalea took charge soon after the gates opened and dictated the pace, holding on to the lead until the field negotiated the turn into the home straight.

Making his first appearance aboard the filly, Vivek timed his run to perfection. Fynbos began to assert herself about 150 metres from the finish, quickening decisively to put the issue beyond doubt.

killer knock

RCB head coach Rangarajan all praise for De Klerk



Nadine de Klerk exults after hitting the winning runs. BCCI

NAVI MUMBAI

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) head coach Malolan Rangarajan felt the value of all-rounders was showcased when Nadine de Klerk produced an astonishing victory for them in the last over of the chase against Mumbai Indians at the DY Patil Stadium, here on Friday.

Rangarajan felt it was great to be on the winning side after a nail-biting encounter.

"The value of all-rounders came to the fore. My blood pressure, everything is okay. I've gotten used to this. I've been with RCB for six years. Very good to be on the winning side," Rangarajan said.

The RCB head coach also revealed that al-rounder Pooja Vastrakar has been ruled out of action for two weeks of the ongoing league due to a hamstring injury.

"Pooja Vastrakar was not available for selection (against Mumbai Indians)," the franchise's head coach



The value of all-rounders came to the fore. My blood pressure, everything is okay. I've gotten used to this. I've been with RCB for six years.

Malolan Rangarajan
RCB head coach

Malolan Rangarajan said after the team's opening match here on Friday. Two weeks prior to her release from the CoE (Centre of Excellence), she unfortunately tweaked her hamstring. The information that we have is that she will be there for two weeks more.

"Earlier, she was there (at the CoE) for her shoulder, now she has a hamstring issue. It's a week by week process. So let's see where she is at." De Klerk's superlative effort of 4/26 while

bowling and then the incredible batting pyrotechnics in the last over that saw her finishing with 63 off 44 balls won her the Player-of-the-Match award.

Head coach Rangarajan was effusive in his praise of De Klerk applauding her for her plans and execution.

"Nadine was very clear with her plan, how she was going to approach the next 11 overs. That's the first time I met her inside [at the strategic time out] was over (number) nine."