

Abhishek on TMC's Foundation Day, envisions a bright future

The Trinamool Congress (TMC) celebrated its foundation day on Wednesday with events across West Bengal, commemorating its journey since its inception on January 1, 1998. The celebration was marked by cultural performances, flag-hoisting ceremonies, and public gatherings, underscoring the party's deep-rooted connection with the grassroots. Abhishek Banerjee, TMC's national general secretary and Member of Parliament, took to social media to acknowledge the hard work and sacrifices of the party workers. **PG 3**



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Morning India

Armed militants open fire in Imphal West district village

MI News Service, Imphal : A heavily armed group of suspected militants launched fresh attack in the Kadangband area of Manipur's Imphal West district in the early hours of Wednesday. According to the police, militants from their hill positions in Kangpokpi district fired several rounds from sophisticated weapons and hurled bombs at the low-lying Kadangband area in Imphal West district around 1 am. They said village volunteers deployed in the area returned the fire even as additional security forces were rushed to the area to control the situation. No injuries were, however, reported in the firing. The attack forced several villagers living in Kutcha homes to flee to safer places, they said. Kadangband area has witnessed several attacks by suspected militants since violence broke out in the state in May 2023.

Meanwhile, Manipur chief minister N Biren Singh's apology on Tuesday over the ethnic strife in the state has evoked mixed reactions, with Meitei groups welcoming it as a "positive step" and Kuki outfits maintaining it "remains short of taking full responsibility" for the violence. "I want to say sorry for what happened in the state. Many people lost their loved ones and many had to leave their homes. I regret and want to apologise," Biren Singh said while addressing a press conference in Imphal since May 3, 2023. Manipur has been split by ethnic clashes between Meitei community, which is in majority in the Imphal Valley, and the tribal Kukis, who are dominant in hill districts. The violence has claimed at least 260 lives and rendered about 50,000 people homeless. "This is a positive step from the chief minister. Countless lives have been lost. The violence has been ongoing for the last 20 months. It is high time peace must return to the state," Khuraijam Athouba, spokesperson of COCOMI, a joint body of Meitei civil society, said. "As the head of the state, he is responsible for everything that happens, so maybe this is why he held the press conference and apologised... The state has been trying to contain the violence but some forces in the hills are not

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TMC celebrates 28th Foundation Day with various programmes

MI News Service, Kolkata : Taking a pledge to work for the welfare of the common people and for the downtrodden without any discrimination of caste, creed and religion, the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) celebrated its 28th foundation day on Wednesday with various programmes across West Bengal to mark its tumultuous journey since inception on January 1, 1998.

Celebrating the day with various cultural programmes, public gatherings, and flag-hoisting events across the city and in all district towns and villages, reflecting the party's close connection with the grassroots since the party's formation 28 years ago, senior TMC leaders emphasized their commitment to the welfare of the common people.

In Kolkata, several senior TMC leaders gathered at the party's headquarters in the morning along with hundreds of party workers and hoisted the TMC flag and paid tributes to those party workers and sympathisers who have lost their lives in different incidents since 1978. The Youth wings of TMC also organized separate rallies in which many women supporters participated in cultural programmes showcasing the rich heritage of Bengal. In South and North 24 Parganas, Nadia, Purulia and in Midnapore districts celebrations comprised traditional dance performances, distribution of sweets, and interactive sessions to discuss the party's vision for the future. In many areas enthused party workers decorated streets with banners,

posters, and festoons in TMC's signature green and white colours.

The TMC, which was founded by party supremo Mamata Banerjee, emerging from the Congress in 1998, came to power in West Bengal and thereby rose to prominence after defeating the Left Front regime in 2011. This historic victory came after two unsuccessful attempts in the 2001 and 2006 assembly elections, as the party capitalized on growing public discontent with the communists. Mamata Banerjee, a pivotal figure in West Bengal politics, has led the party to three consecutive terms in power, including a resounding victory in the 2021 assembly elections, cementing her position as one of the most successful chief ministers of the nation. On this occasion, TMC National General Sec-

retary and MP Abhishek Banerjee took to social media and shared an optimistic message for the new year. "As we welcome 2025, let us look ahead with hope and determination," he posted on X on Wednesday.

He further stated, "Each new year brings an opportunity to start afresh, to chart a path guided by courage, compassion, and purpose. Let this year inspire us to rise above challenges, foster harmony, and work hand in hand towards a brighter future for all. May we find strength in unity, kindness in our hearts, and resilience in the face of every trial. Here's to a year filled with meaningful progress, shared joy, and abundant opportunities. Wishing you all a Happy and Prosperous New Year 2025"



People visited Victoria Memorial on the first day of Year 2025 in Kolkata on Wednesday.

President Murmu, PM Modi greet nation on New Year

MI News Service, New Delhi: President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended their New Year greetings on Wednesday to the nation, hoping that 2025 will bring new opportunities, success, and joy to one and all. President Murmu urged people to renew their commitment to work together to create a brighter, more inclusive, sustainable future for India and the world. She wrote on X, "Wishing everyone a very Happy New Year! May the year 2025 bring joy, harmony and prosperity to all! On this occasion, let us renew our commitment to work together for creating a brighter, more inclusive and sustainable future for India and the world."

Vice-President Jagdeep Dhanekar said this year marks the nation's entry into the final quarter of our Constitution's centenary and is the time to rededicate ourselves towards realising the vision of our Constitution makers. "Warm greetings to all citizens as we enter 2025 a mo-



President Murmu, PM Modi Wish Happy 2025

mentous juncture in our republic's journey. This year marks our entry into the final quarter of our Constitution's centenary. Time for us to rededicate ourselves towards realizing the vision of our #Constitution makers while advancing towards #ViksitBharat at 2047. Let us move forward with determination, nurtur-

ing democratic values with resolve to keep nation first. Wishing all a happy and purposeful," he wrote on X. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also extended his New Year greetings, hoping that 2025 brings new opportunities and success to all. Taking to

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Entire North India shivers on New Year's day

MI NEWS Service, New Delhi : The entire North India felt the effects of biting winter chill on Wednesday morning as temperatures dipped further on New Year's Day to below 5 degree Celsius in many places including at the National capital, causing severe inconveniences to the poor people. As temperature continued to plummet across several North Indian states including Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh besides the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Delhi, coupled with a thin layer of fog on Wednesday, the local weather offices recorded the temperature of 4.5 degree celsius or

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Mamata marks TMC's Foundation Day with renewed commitment to people's rights



MI News Service, Kolkata: Celebrating the 28th Foundation Day of the Trinamool Congress on Wednesday, party Supremo and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said the party's struggle for the rights of the people of the state is ongoing and will continue into the future. "Our struggle for the rights of the people of Bengal is ongoing and will continue in the days ahead," she announced. In her address to mark the occasion, Mamata Banerjee shared a song composed and written by her and sung by renowned singer and her cabinet colleague Indraneel Sen. The foundation day celebrations were accompanied by a series of events designed to reinforce the party's core values and message of progress for the people of Bengal. As the party gears up for the upcoming state Assembly elections in 2026, TMC is stepping up its efforts to engage with the people.

"With Maa, Mati, and Manush, Bengal is doing well. Let TMC continue to lead the way into a new dawn," Mamata Banerjee said in her message for the new year. She emphasized that in 2025, the fight for the people's rights will continue unabated. The Chief Minister on the first day of the New Year, coinciding

with TMC's foundation day also stated in a verse that "Roshni chand se hoti hai, sitaron se nahi, Mohabbat Trinamool Congress se hoti hai, aur kisi se nahi! On Trinamool Congress Foundation Day, I wholeheartedly thank every single member of our extended family.

Over the course of two decades, every protest, every victory, and even every challenge has reaffirmed our core belief: politics is not about power but about SERVICE. As we celebrate this milestone, I urge every Trinamool soldier to renew their pledge to fight for the people, and remember that the soul of our party is rooted in the ethos of 'Maa, Mati, Manush,' she said.

In a separate message on her social media X, Mamata Banerjee expressed, "Once again, we have succeeded in overcoming challenges. Our achievements have been possible because of your love and unity." Mamata Banerjee also shared a video collage on her X handle, showcasing key events of 2024. She expressed gratitude for the unwavering support of the people, stating, "We thank Maa, Mati, and Manush for their constant support. Your trust strengthens our resolve to fight against any power that seeks to suppress us."

Tigress Zeenat returned to Simlipal Tiger Reserve after three weeks



MI News Service, Bhubaneswar / Simlipal : The four year old fully grown up Royal Bengal tigress Zeenat which has terrorised villagers in Jharkhand and West Bengal for nearly three weeks since December 8, was finally brought back to the Simlipal Tiger Reserve (STR) in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district on Wednesday. According to STR Field Director Prakash Chand Gogineni, the animal, which walked into Jharkhand forests on December 8 and later entered West Bengal after escaping from STR, was brought to Simlipal in the early hours of Wednesday and released in an enclosure in the core area of the Tiger Reserve immediately afterwards. "Tigress Zeenat reached Simlipal.

The animal was soft released into an enclosure at 5.30 AM today. It is in good health," the STR Field Director said. Tigress Zeenat had terrorised residents of several villages near the jungles in Jharkhand and several districts in South Bengal, before it was caught on Monday after she was hit by a tranquiliser dart near a bush in Bankura district successfully. Soon she was brought to Alipur Zoo in the city and treated for being able to be returned to Simlipal forest in Odisha from where she escaped about three weeks ago. The process of getting her back from West Bengal started on Tuesday night following talks with Odisha's Principal Chief

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Awami League may contest Bangladesh elections if not banned, says CEC

MI News Service, Dhaka : The former ruling party of Bangladesh, Awami League will be able to participate in the next elections only if it is not banned either by the government or the judiciary, the country's Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin has said.

The Bangladesh CEC has made this comment about the possibility of the former ruling party, under the leadership of ousted Prime minister Sheikh Hasina, joining the electoral battle later this year, during a meeting with election officials at Chittagong on Tuesday, informed sources quoting the CEC said on Wednesday. Assuring and reiterating the role of the Commission to run elections with



complete independence and without any pressure from any quarters, external or otherwise, CEC Nasir Uddin said "We are committed to taking all neces-

sary steps to ensure a free, fair and transparent election". The CEC also acknowledged the issue of fake voters in previous elections and attributed a decline in

voters registration to mistrust in the voting process. He announced plans to initiate a voters list update soon to address these concerns. "The voters list will be updated within the next six months. This time, elections will not follow previous patterns. Since August 5, there has been significant progress in fostering national consensus on electoral matters," he said. During the meeting, the CEC provided detailed guidelines on voters list updates and preparations for the upcoming national election. A few days ago, former prime minister Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party said that the Interim Government's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus' suggestion to set the minimum

voting age at 17 would put pressure on the Election Commission and could delay the election process. Yunus, 84, who was sworn-in to lead the interim government after the ouster of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina in August, had suggested that the minimum voter age should be lowered to 17 years. During his Victory Day speech on December 16, Yunus also indicated that the much awaited elections in Bangladesh might be held either by late 2025 or by early 2026. "Broadly speaking, the election can be scheduled between the end of 2025 and the first half of 2026," Yunus said but made it clear that the elections would be held only after updating the voters' list.

Entire North India shivers on New Year's day

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even below in several areas of most of these states brining untold miseries to poor and shelter less people. In view of this unprecedented chill, the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB) has set up 235 pagoda tents to provide shelter to homeless people. Night shelters have also been set up in several areas of the national capital including AIIMS, Lodhi Road, and Nizamuddin flyover. In order to get rid of this chilly weather to the best of their abilities and warm themselves, many people were seen gathering around instant bonfires, while others took shelter in night homes as temperatures continued to drop even by hours early in the morning. The cold has also intensified in Rajasthan, severely affecting daily life. In Jaipur, the temperature was recorded at 5.2 degree celsius at 6:30 am, while Bikaner and Churu saw temperatures of 4 degree celsius and 3.9 degree celsius respectively as per the IMD. In Uttar Pradesh's Ayodhya, a layer of fog engulfs the city as the temperature dipped in the city. In Meerut temperature was recorded at 8 degree celsius, while in Lucknow it was as low as 6 degree celsius, IMD said.

In Jammu and Kashmir, the cold conditions persisted, with temperatures plummeting below zero in many areas. As a result the picturesque Dal Lake has frozen, while Srinagar recorded a temperature of minus 1.5 degree Celsius. In Gulmarg it was minus 3.4 degree, minus 6 degree in Pahalgam, minus 4 degree in Banihal and in Kupwara, as per IMD.

Armed militants open fire in Imphal West district village

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allowing this to happen," the spokesperson added. Ph Nando Luwang, head of the All Manipur United Clubs' Organisation (AMUCO), another Meitei group, said the CM's apology should be seen as an "initiative towards peace". "While the state government has repeatedly appealed to the Kuki-Zo community for peace, such appeals have often been followed by instances of violence. The apology should be seen as an initiative towards peace but the government should enforce the rule of law if appeals are ignored." He added that central leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah should "issue similar apologies and take collective steps to restore peace in the state." Kuki bodies, however, demanded Singh should step down as the CM taking "full responsibility" for the violence. "It's about time Biren Singh apologised to the people of Manipur for all the violence and killings. He is unable to bring about law and order in the state and he should take full responsibility for all the violence. And for this he should step down from the CM chair. He should stop discriminating against the Kuki-Zo people if he really wants to bring about peace in Manipur." Ginza Vualzong, spokesperson of the Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum (ITLF), a Churachandpur-based umbrella group of tribal bodies, said. "So much blood has been shed and the divide is too deep now for reconciliation. A political solution is the only solution, a separate administration is the only way out. The sooner the government gives us a political solution the sooner peace would prevail," the ITLF spokesperson added.



Devotees visit Dakshineswar Kali Temple on the occasion of Kalpataru Utsav, on Wednesday.

Abhishek on TMC's Foundation Day, envisions a bright future

MI News Service, Kolkata: The Trinamool Congress (TMC) celebrated its foundation day on Wednesday with events across West Bengal, commemorating its journey since its inception on January 1, 1998. The celebration was marked by cultural performances, flag-hoisting ceremonies, and public gatherings, underscoring the party's deep-rooted connection with the grassroots. Abhishek Banerjee, TMC's national general secretary and Member of Parliament, took to social media to acknowledge the hard work and sacrifices of all the TMC workers. "TMC is dedicated to the welfare of the people of the country and the state. I salute the hard work and sacrifices of all the TMC workers. They are the backbone of our party. In the new year, let's prepare with new vigour for the future struggles ahead," he posted on Facebook. His message was a heartfelt tribute to the party's base of supporters, emphasizing the ongoing commitment to improving



the lives of the people. In Kolkata, the party's headquarters saw bustling activity as senior leaders hoisted the TMC flag and paid tribute to the party's martyrs. Youth wings organized rallies and cultural events, while women supporters participated in various cultural programmes showcasing Bengal's rich heritage. TMC has consistently aligned itself with the common people, focusing on their welfare and addressing the needs of the marginalized sections of society. Founded as a breakaway

faction from the Congress, TMC rose to prominence after its defeat of the Left Front government in 2011, which had been in power for over 34 years. Since its formation, the party has successfully battled against opposition forces, with Mamata Banerjee leading TMC to victory in multiple elections. TMC has maintained a strong presence in the state, with Mamata Banerjee serving as the Chief Minister for over a decade. In addition to marking the party's foundation day, Abhishek Banerjee shared a hopeful message for the upcoming year, calling on people to face challenges with resilience and optimism. "As we welcome 2025, let us look ahead with hope and determination," he wrote on X. "Each new year brings an opportunity to start afresh, to chart a path guided by courage, compassion, and purpose. Let this year inspire us to rise above challenges, foster harmony, and work hand in hand towards a brighter future for all."

College student arrested in Kolkata for rape allegation

MI News Service, Kolkata: The last night of the year brought a shocking incident to light in Kolkata as a college student was arrested for allegedly raping a young woman. The accused, a student of a reputed college, was apprehended by Garfa Police late Tuesday night after the victim filed a complaint. The victim, an engineering student, claimed she was drugged and assaulted. The victim reported that the incident took place on December 21. However, due to severe mental trauma, she couldn't file the complaint immediately. It was only on December 31 that she approached Garfa Police Station and lodged her grievance. Insiders from the city police said the alleged rape took place on December 21, 2024, at the flat in the Garfa area in South Kolkata owned by another friend of the accused engineering student.

According to initial investigations, the accused and the victim were former schoolmates. Although they had not been in contact for a long time, they recently reconnected. The victim alleged that this renewed interaction led to the unfortunate incident. The victim stated that the accused spiked her drink, causing her to lose consciousness, and then raped her. Following her complaint, the police quickly acted and arrested the accused, who resides in Baguiati. As per the com-

plaint lodged by the victim and her parents, she was first taken to the empty residential flat by the accused. There she was intoxicated by mixing alcohol with the soft beverage and after she went into an inebriated state she was raped by the accused. Insiders said the victim during the initial stage of shock did not reveal anything to her parents. However, later finally she narrated the entire incident following which a complaint was lodged at Garfa Police Station on Tuesday night. The accused was summoned to the police station on Tuesday night only and after a nightlong interrogation was arrested. The accused will be presented at a lower court in Kolkata on Wednesday afternoon and the public prosecutor will seek his police custody. The friend of the accused, who owns the flat, has also been summoned by the cops of Garfa Police station for questioning. It is learnt that a couple of months back the accused and the victim had a tiff between them and for some time they were not on talking terms. However, in December only they patched up and started normal conversations. The Garfa Police's swift action has been appreciated. The accused was taken into custody shortly after the complaint was filed. However, critics argue that preventing such crimes requires more than just reactive measures.

Opening ceremony of Bangla Sangeet Mela 2024-25 held at Rabindra Sadan with colorful folk performances

MI News Service, Kolkata: The opening ceremony of the 'Bangla Sangeet Mela 2024-25' was held today at Rabindra Sadan, featuring vibrant folk performances including Chou dance, Baul songs, and Adivasi dances, followed by a curtain-raiser ceremony with Minister Indranil Sen and other dignitaries. The event is one of the largest cultural celebrations in Bengal, offering local folk artists a platform to showcase their talent to the world. It is part of Mamata Banerjee's initiative to organize such cultural events throughout the year. The Bangla Sangeet Mela will run from January 2 to January 9, 2025, at 11 venues across Kolkata, including Sirir Mancha, Rabindra Sadan, Mahajati Sadan, Hadua Park, Madhusudhan Mukto Mancha, Ektra Mukto Mancha, and others. The daily program will take place from 2:00 PM to 11:00 PM.

After the curtain-raiser ceremony, Indranil Sen addressed a press conference, crediting Mamata Banerjee for making the event possi-



Indranil Sen, State Minister for Tourism and Technical Education, Training & Skill Development and MOS, Information and Cultural Affairs Departments, flags off the curtain raiser of Bangla Sangeet Mela 2024-25 in presence of eminent personalities at Rabindra Sadan Premises in Kolkata on Wednesday.

ble. He shared that on December 28, Mamata Banerjee decided to compose a new song for the New Year, which will be launched this year. He emphasized that the Chief Minister personally oversees all events, ensuring their success. Sen also announced that the Sangeet Mela would be extended and they are working on this project. "We are

very concerned, and everyone is working to ensure that everything is done. However, this doesn't mean that people will be deprived of 'Utsab' (festivities)," Sen said. "Our Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee always wants to see happiness on the faces of the people of Bengal. I feel honored to be a part of all these efforts."

He also mentioned the Children's Film Festival scheduled for January 22 and stressed the importance of bringing such cultural events to all sections of society, including the so-called elite class. Sen concluded by announcing that more events will follow the Bangla Sangeet Mela, with many renowned artists slated to participate.

Devotees flock to celebrate Kalpataru Utsav on New Year's Day

MI News Service, Kolkata: Like every year, the first day of the New Year is marked by the grand celebration of Kalpataru Utsav. Devotees thronged Kashipur Udyanbati and Dakshineswar from early morning to participate in this auspicious event. Special Mangalarati was performed at Kashipur Udyanbati, followed by day-long rituals and prayers. Discussions on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa were also organized. Temples in Belur, Kalighat, and Tarapith witnessed similar crowds of devotees. Every year, on January 1, devotees gather in large numbers at Kashipur Udyanbati and Dakshineswar to participate in Kalpataru Utsav. This annual celebration is steeped in spiritual significance, marked by havan, pujas, and chanting. This year was no exception, as thousands of devotees assembled at these holy sites from Tuesday night itself. On Wednesday morning, long queues of devotees holding offerings of flowers and fruits were seen outside temples.

The significance of Kalpataru Utsav lies in the belief that wishes made with a pure heart on this day are fulfilled. This faith brings devotees in droves to seek blessings and divine grace from Sri Ramakrishna. From that day onward, January 1 has been observed as Kalpataru Utsav at Kashipur Udyanbati and Dakshineswar, commemorating Sri Ramakrishna's blessings and his divine manifestation. This year's Kalpataru Utsav saw fervent participation from devotees across the state. Rituals and offerings began early in the morning, creating an atmosphere of devotion and joy. Priests performed special pujas, while scholars and monks reflected on Sri Ramakrishna's teachings. Temples like Belur Math, Kalighat, and Tarapith also attracted thousands of devotees seeking spiritual solace and blessings. The event not only marks the spiritual significance of Sri Ramakrishna's teachings but also celebrates the unity of faith and devotion. On the occasion of the New Year, a large crowd of devotees also gathered at Tarapith to offer prayers to the goddess, wishing for a prosperous year ahead. Since Wednesday morning, the devotees have been seeking the goddess's blessings, hoping that the New Year brings good fortune. Many are also visiting the renowned Kankalita temple in the district, offering prayers to fulfill their desires.



People visit Alipore Zoological Garden on the eve of New Year in Kolkata.

Rabindra Ghosh hospitalized before court hearing

MI News Service, Kolkata: Rabindra Ghosh, a septuagenarian lawyer representing religious leader Chinmoy Krishna Das Brahmachari in Bangladesh, was admitted to the cardiology department at SSKM Hospital on Tuesday evening after suddenly falling ill. Ghosh, 88, reported experiencing chest pain following a fall at home and was promptly rushed to the hospital. He was scheduled to travel to Bangladesh to represent Brahmachari, but his medical condition has delayed the trip. Doctors confirmed that Ghosh's condition is currently stable. Ghosh said, "Yesterday (Tuesday) evening, I suddenly felt a slight pain in my chest after I fell at home. I was rushed to the hospital. I was to go to Bangladesh to represent religious leader Chinmoy Krishna Das Brahmachari, but now, I am under treatment."

On Tuesday, Ghosh expressed to TMC leader Kunal Ghosh his desire to meet with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to discuss alleged atrocities against Hindu minorities in Bangladesh and the arrest of Chinmoy Krishna Das on November 25. Ghosh had planned to represent Brahmachari in a Bangladesh court on January 2, where he intended to file for his client's bail. He alleged that efforts were being made to prolong Brahmachari's imprisonment.

Ghosh also revealed that he had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi regarding the arrest of Chinmoy Krishna Das and had sought Modi's assistance to protect the rights of minorities in Bangladesh. However, Ghosh stated he had not received a response from the Prime Minister.

President Murmu, PM Modi greet nation on New Year

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X, he wished that all be blessed with good health and prosperity. "May this year bring everyone new opportunities, success and endless joy. May everybody be blessed with wonderful health and prosperity," the PM wrote on his X handle. The nation welcomed the year 2025 with various celebrations. Some prayed to enter the New Year offerings at temples and other religious places and many took to the streets to celebrate with friends and acquaintances. Several leaders also took to social media to greet the people on the occasion. Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) Chief Mayawati in her greetings wished for a happy, peaceful and prosperous life for all. She wrote on X (in Hindi): "Heartly congratulations to all Indians living in the country and across the world and their families for the New Year 2025 and many best wishes for a happy, peaceful, prosperous and prosperous life. May the struggle of all hardworking people be successful and make their lives happy and prosperous. I wish the nature (almighty) for the same," she said.

Several other leaders also took to social media to greet the people on the occasion. Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) Chief Mayawati in her greetings wished for a happy, peaceful and prosperous life for all. She wrote on X (in Hindi): "Heartly congratulations to all Indians living in the country and across the world and their families for the New Year 2025 and many best wishes for a happy, peaceful, prosperous and prosperous life. May the struggle of all hardworking people be successful and make their lives happy and prosperous. I wish the nature (almighty) for the same," she said.

Tigress Zeenat returned to Simlipal Tiger Reserve after three weeks

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Conservator of Forest (PCCF) Prem Kumar Jha, who said Zeenat would be released in a natural enclosure in the core area of the Simlipal Tiger Reserve where another tigress, Jamma, was earlier kept. "After watching her activities, the authorities will take a decision to release her into the wild," he added. Zeenat was brought to Simlipal from Maharashtra's Tadoba in November to strengthen the tiger population in the reserve. She crossed over to Jharkhand from Simlipal in the early hours of December 8, and from there to West Bengal, covering more than 200 km in about three weeks in search of new territory after terrorising villagers and eluding forest guards on its way. Zeenat was caught on December 29 in Bankura district of West Bengal after a tranquiliser dart hit her successfully after days of chase and failed attempts.

Name Change

I, Puja Brahma (old name) wife of Tapas Brahma, residing at Barujibi Colony, Rishra M, Morepukur, Hooghly, Pin- 712250, West Bengal, INDIA, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Puja Brahma Das (new name) as declared before the Notary public at Kolkata, dated 31/12/2024. Puja Brahma Das (new name) and Puja Brahma (old name) both are same and identical person.

Name Change

I, Shaikh Moniruddin Ali(Old Name), S/O Late SK Nader Ali, Residing At Vill-Durbachati, Po-Bais hnah Chak, Ps-Kolaghat, Dist- East Medinipur Pin-721158, West Bengal, Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Sk Maniruddin Ali(New Name) As Declared Before The Notary Public At Kolkata On 31/12/2024. Shaikh Moniruddin Ali (Old Name) And Sk Maniruddin Ali (New Name) Both Are The Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change

I, Sajjad Alam(Old Name), S/O Late Md Mohiuddin, Residing At 73/8, Topsia Road, Ward No.66, Ps-Tiljala, Pin-700039, West Bengal, Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Md Sajjad Alam(New Name) As Declared Before The Notary Public At Kolkata On 31/12/2024. Sajjad Alam (Old Name) And Md Sajjad Alam (New Name) Both Are The Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change

I, Prarthana Begam, W/O Mizanur Rahaman, R/O 2nd-Fr-FI-2d, 105a, Al Mohan Bhatterjee Road, Vtc & Po- Entally, Kolkata-700014, West Bengal, Shall Henceforth Be Known As Prarthana Bibi, Vide An Affidavit Sworn Before The Notary Public At Kolkata On 31/21/2024. That Prarthana Begam And Prarthana Bibi All Are The Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change

I, Paramjeet Singh, Residing At 103/D Debdra Chandra Dey Road, Tangra, Kolkata - 700015, West Bengal. Do hereby Inform That My Father Bavyant Singh Also Known As Baint Singh And S. Baint Singh Vide An Affidavit Sworn Before The Notary Public At Kolkata On 31/12/2024. That Bavyant Singh & Known As Baint Singh And S. Baint Singh All Are The Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change

I, Md Parvez Ansari (old name) son of Abdul Rashid Ansari, residing at 6/1, Nil Madhab Sen Lane, P.O.- Chittaranjan Avenue, Kolkata-700073, West Bengal, INDIA, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Parvez Ansari (new name) as declared before the Notary public at Kolkata, dated 31/12/2024. Parvez Ansari (new name) and Md Parvez Ansari (old name) both are same and identical person.

Name Change

I, Soumali Ghosh, W/O- Pradyote Ghosh, R/O 129, Nayabad, Shraci Dakshin, Flat No- 4a, Ps-Panchasayar, Kolkata-700094, West Bengal, Shall Henceforth Be Known As Soumali Basu Ghosh, Vide An Affidavit Sworn Before The Notary Public At Kolkata On 30/12/2024. That Soumali Ghosh And Soumali Basu Ghosh All Are The Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change

I, Rishma S Chowdhury alias Rishma Sundaram Chowdhury (Old Name) W/o Sundaram Chowdhury and D/o- Tapan Kumar Ghosh Residing at AA-23 Prafulla Kanan West, Kestopur (new name) and Parganas, WB- 700101 India shall henceforth be known as Rishma Ghosh (New Name) as declared before the Learned Metropolitan Magistrate at Kolkata vide affidavit No 121 Dated 03-06-2024. Rishma S Chowdhury and Rishma Sundaram Chowdhury (Old Name) and Rishma Ghosh (New Name) all are same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, Khalek Molla S/o Kalu Mollia residing at III, Uttar Kashiadanga, Bhongore, P.o - Protapnagar, Ps - Chandaneswar, District - Kolkata, Pin- 743330 West Bengal India shall henceforth be known as Abdul Khalek Molla. I declare that Khalek Molla and Abdul Khalek Molla is same and one identical person by virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Notary Public, Kolkata on 31-12-2024.

Name Change

I, Rubaiya Sultana, W/o Abdul Barik Molla, D/o Abul Kalam Laskar, residing at Dihimedanmalla, P.O- Dakshin Gobindapur, P.S- Baruipukur, Dist - South 24 Parganas, Kolkata - 700145, WB declare that my father's name has wrongly been written in my Pass Certificate of High Madrasah Examination 2009 as Md. Abul Kalam Laskar in place of my correct name Abul Kalam Laskar. That Md. Abul Kalam Laskar and Abul Kalam Laskar both are same and one identical person vide affidavit no. 7914 sworn before the Ld. 1st Class Judicial Magistrate at Baruipukur, Kol- 144 on 24.10.2024.

Name Change

I, Arefa Begam Molla, W/O Late Lalimya Molla, resi- of vill- Ghungur paschim para P.O - Shankshar, P.S - Bhongor, Dist- South 24 parganas. I) I also declare my name has been recorded in my all papers such as Aadhar card as Arefa Begam Molla W/O Late Lalimya Molla. Voter Card as Molla Arefa Begam W/O Lalimya 2) I also declared my name in my daughter passport name as Arefa Bibi 3) My Husband name in my Voter List as Lalimya Molla. I'm Shown my affidavit in first class executive magistrate in Barasat court dated on 26 th Dec 2024 name as Arefa Begam Molla, Molla Arefa Begam & Arefa Bibi is same one identity person in eye of law.

RBI permits UPI transactions via 3rd-party apps

MI News Service, New Delhi: The Reserve Bank allowed prepaid payment instruments holders to make and receive UPI payments through third-party mobile applications. It has been decided to enable Unified Payments Interface (UPI) payments from/to full-KYC prepaid payment instruments (PPIs) through third-party UPI applications, the central bank said in circular. "A PPI issuer shall enable holders of only its full-KYC PPIs to make UPI payments by linking its customer PPIs to its UPI handle. UPI transactions from PPI on the issuer's application shall be authenticated using the customer's existing PPI credentials," it said. Such a transaction will, thus, be pre-approved before it reaches the UPI system. A PPI issuer, in its capacity as a payment system providers, should not on-board customers of any bank or any other PPI issuer, the RBI said. The RBI's decision is aimed at providing more flexibility to holders of PPIs such as gift cards, metro rail cards, and digital wallets, among others. Currently, UPI payments from/to a bank account can be carried out using the UPI application of that bank or of any third-party application provider. However, UPI payments from/to a PPI can only be carried out using the mobile application provided by the PPI issuer. UPI is an instant real-time payment system developed by National Payments Corporation of India to facilitate inter-bank transactions through mobile phones.



Devotees arrive to pay obeisance at the Golden Temple on the first day of the year 2025, in Amritsar.

Govt cancels auction of 11 critical mineral blocks

MI News Service, New Delhi: The government has cancelled the auction of 11 critical mineral blocks in the fourth round due to poor response. While no bids were received for four blocks, the remaining seven mines got less than three technically qualified bidders, according to the annulment notice. The four blocks, which include tungsten and glauconite, are located in the states of Chhattisgarh and Arunachal Pradesh. "Since there were no bids received the auction process for four mineral blocks stands annulled," the notice said. Critical minerals, such as cobalt, copper, lithium, nickel and rare earths, play crucial roles in the production of clean energy technologies, ranging from wind turbines to electric vehicles. "Since there were less than three technically qualified bidders auction process of these seven mineral blocks stands annulled," the notice said. The government had earlier cancelled the auction of three critical mineral blocks in the third round, 14 blocks in the second round and 14 in the first tranche of critical minerals as the response was lukewarm. The government had earlier said that 24 critical and strategic mineral blocks have been sold in four rounds of auction. "Out of 48 blocks put to e-auction, 24 have been successfully auctioned, including four mining lease (ML) and 20 composite licenses (CL) blocks," the mines ministry had said. India is all set to launch a Critical Mineral Mission in the upcoming

year to secure vital resources for green energy and technology. The initiative involves government, industry, and research collaboration, focusing on acquiring overseas assets like lithium and cobalt, particularly in Australia, and boosting domestic mining through auctions and road shows. With a series of high-profile road shows abroad along with plans to acquire critical mineral assets in Australia, India is set to woo international investors and make its mark on the global mining map. The countries are now racing in a bid to secure these vital resources, which include lithium and cobalt, through a complex web of policies and alliances, realising that critical minerals are the new lifeblood of the 21st-century economy.

Release of SER's New Working Time Table by General Manager



Shri Anil Kumar Mishra, General Manager, South Eastern Railway releasing the new Working Time Table of South Eastern Railway which is effective from 01.01.2025 at SER Headquarters, Garden Reach, Kolkata on 01.01.2025. Shri Soumitra Majumdar, Additional General Manager, SER, Shri Deepak Kumar Jha, Principal Chief Operations Manager, SER and other senior officers were also present on the occasion.

Noble gesture of RPF, ER: rescued 967 minors under operation "Nanhey Faristey"

MI News Service, Kolkata: Demonstrating unwavering dedication to child protection, the Railway Protection Force (RPF) of Eastern Railway has achieved a remarkable milestone under "Operation Nanhey Faristey". From the period of January 2024 and November 30, 2024, RPF personnel rescued a total of 967 minors from various railway stations and railway premises within the Eastern Railway's jurisdiction. The RPF personnel, through their vigilance and prompt action, have played a crucial role in reuniting these children with their

Revolutionizing train operations with "E-Gyan": A technological leap For Sealdah Division

MI News Service, Kolkata: The Electric Operation Department of Sealdah Division has launched "E-GYAN", an innovative Android mobile application designed to enhance safety, technical knowledge, and operational efficiency for running staff and supervisors. Advantages of "E-GYAN": • Enhanced Safety: Provides comprehensive safety counselling and guidelines in audio-video format, minimizing risks during operations. • Streamlined: Troubleshooting: Fault-specific quick troubleshooting instructions, especially for 3-phase locomotives, significantly reduce downtime. • Knowledge Upgradation: Continuous access to technical guidelines, questionnaires, and important G&SR ensures staff remain well-informed and competent. • Secure Access: Password-protected usage ensures data confidentiality, restricting access to predefined users. • Efficiency Boost: Simplifies the management of SPM data analysis and enables quick reference to signal location charts and technical circulars. Key Features of the App: • Latest instruction & Videos on prevention of Signal Passed At Danger (SPAD). • Technical Guidelines and Quick Troubleshooting: Step-by-step instructions for resolving technical issues efficiently. • Safety Counselling and Audio-Video Resources: Engaging safety instructions in an easy-to-follow format. • Yard Layouts in Audio-Video Format: Detailed representations of major yards under Sealdah Division. • Important G&SR for Safe Operations: Essential guidelines for error-free train management. • SPM Data Analysis Upload: Simplified data management for staff and supervisors. • CLI Knowledge: Questionnaires: Regular updates to boost professional competency. Special Features: • Fault Number Wise Troubleshooting: A dedicated feature for 3-phase locomotive troubleshooting. • Admin Panel: Enables seamless updating of instructions, user management, and activity tracking. How to Access "E-GYAN": • The app is now available for download on the Google Play Store. Simply search for "E-GYAN" or click on the provided link to access. • With its user-friendly interface and cutting-edge features, E-GYAN represents a major step forward in leveraging technology to ensure safe, efficient, and informed train operations in Sealdah Division.

CII calls for consumption fix in budget for 2025-26

MI News Service, New Delhi: Industry body CII in its budget suggestions for 2025-26 has recommended lowering the excise duty on fuel to boost consumption, especially at the lower income level, arguing that fuel prices significantly drive inflation. The budget could also consider reducing marginal tax rates for personal income up to ₹20 lakh per annum. This would help trigger the virtuous cycle of consumption, higher growth and higher tax revenue, said the CII. "The central excise duty alone accounts for approximately 21 per cent of the retail price for petrol and 18 per cent for diesel. Since May 2022, these duties have not been adjusted in line with the approximately 40 per cent decrease in global crude prices. Lowering excise duty on fuel would help reduce overall inflation and increase disposable incomes," the industry body said. Chandrajit Banerjee, director-general, CII, said domestic consumption has been critical to India's growth story, but inflationary pressures have somewhat eroded the purchasing power of consumers. According to him, while recent quarters have shown promising signs of recovery in rural consumption, targeted government interventions, such as increasing per unit benefit under its key schemes like MGNREGS, PM-KISAN and PMAY, and providing consumption vouchers to low-income households, can further enhance the rural recovery. The CII suggested the introduction of consumption vouchers, targeted at low-income groups to stimulate demand for specified goods and services over a designated period. The vouchers could be designed to be spent on designated items (specific goods and services) and could be valid for a designated time (like six-eight months), to ensure spending. The beneficiary criteria can be defined as Jan-Dhan account holders who are not beneficiaries of other welfare schemes.

Metallurgical coke imports up 8%, Aus still largest supplier

MI News Service, New Delhi: India is poised to record an 8 per cent rise in metallurgical coke imports in calendar year 2024 to 77 million tonnes (mt) as domestic steelmakers light up new capacities through the blast furnace route. While Australia continues to be the largest supplier to India, Russia has managed to secure a greater share of the domestic market in the year. Data available with market research firm BigMint showed coking coal imports are projected to rise around 7 per cent year-on-year to 59mt in CY24 and pulverised coal injection (PCI) coal imports are slated to increase to 18mt. Met coal includes both coking and PCI coal, used for injection into BF during iron making. India relies mostly on imports (90 per cent of the total domestic requirement) for met coal as the country does not have good adequate resources. Among the large integrated steelmakers, only Tata Steel and public sector SAIL have captive coking coal mines, albeit they produce a small quantity compared with their own requirement. India has produced about 136mt steel from January to November, up by 5.9 per cent from the same period of CY23, according to the World Steel Association, despite a 1.4 per cent contraction worldwide. The trend is likely to continue both in December and on to CY25 as top steelmakers such as Tata Steel and JSW Steel are going to ramp up their expanded capacities that are being commissioned in phases. BigMint predicted that the country's hot metal production in CY25 is expected to go up 7 per cent, and the demand for coking coal is projected to increase roughly by 5 per cent, as many of the new capacities are coming by the BF route. The firm believes imports of met coal may rise to around 84-85mt next calendar year, which includes both coking coal and PCI. Imports are likely to rise by 9-10 per cent y-o-y.



families or ensuring their placement in safe custody through the appropriate authorities. This commendable effort highlights the RPF's commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of children in distress. Of the 967 rescued minors, 642 were boys and 325 were girls. The division wise rescue breakdown given as follows: Howrah Division: Rescued 329 boys and 140 girls Sealdah Division: Rescued 53 boys and 44 girls Asansol Division: Rescued 117 boys and 65 girls Malda Division: Rescued 143 boys and 76 girls The success of "Operation Nanhey Faristey" underlines Eastern Railway's commitment to the safety and security of its passengers, especially vulnerable children.

Temporary stoppage of Three trains at Champapur Halt & Salimpur Bihar Stations from 01.01.2025 to 31.03.2025

MI News Service, Kolkata: Railway has decided to provide one (01) minute temporary stoppages of following trains at Champapur Halt and Salimpur Bihar Stations with effect from 01.01.2025 to 31.03.2025: • 13207 Jasidih - Patna Express (arr.- 22:13/dep.- 22:14) and 13208 Patna - Jasidih Express (arr.- 10:15/dep.-10:16) will stop at Champapur Halt station. • 03273 Deoghar - Patna MEMU (arr.- 11:54/dep.- 11:55) will stop at Salimpur Bihar station.

Temporary stoppage of Poorva Express (12382 down) at Prayagraj Station from 10.01.2025 to 28.02.2025

MI News Service, Kolkata: Railway has decided to provide two (02) minutes temporary stoppage of 12382 New Delhi - Howrah Poorva Express at Prayagraj station of Lucknow Division over Northern Railway with effect from 10.01.2025 to 28.02.2025.

Two Express Trains to run via diverted route & stop at Sogaria Station

MI News Service, Kolkata: Railway has decided to divert the following two Express trains via Gurla - Sogaria Chord line avoiding Kota station with stoppages at Sogaria station with effect from 01.01.2025: • 19608 Madar Jn. - Kolkata Weekly Express (journey commencing on and from 02.01.2025) will arrive at Sogaria station at 12:10 hrs. & 15:30 hrs. respectively. Above two Express trains will stop at Sogaria station for 10 minutes in both directions.

Lost bag returned to a Metro Commuter

MI News Service, Kolkata: On 31.12.2024, at 19:50 hrs an on-duty RPF staff posted at Dum Dum Metro station while conducting a routine patrolling recovered an unclaimed bag at the platform and deposited it to the Station Master's Office of the station. After opening the bag, some valuable items were found therein. Thereafter, Station Master made repeated announcements requesting the owner of the bag to collect it from the Station Master's Office and a control message was also communicated to all the stations. After sometime at about 20:30 hrs., a commuter came to the Station Master's Office of Dum Dum Metro station and claimed the ownership of the recovered bag and the items containing therein. After proper verification and fulfilling all official formalities, the bag along with all other items were handed over to him. He expressed his heartfelt gratitude to Metro Railway authorities for helping him to get back the lost bag along with all other items.



Firhad Hakim as chief guest on occasion of Inaugural Ceremony of 28th Foundation Day of All India Trinamool Congress organised by 80 Block Trinamool Congress at Taratala New CPT Colony, Kolkata 88 on January 1st, 2025.

B R Singh Hospital organised first aid and CPR training empowering non-medical staff attending Kumbh Mela 2025

MI News Service, Kolkata: In preparation for the upcoming Kumbh Mela 2025, Eastern Railway has taken a proactive step to ensure the safety and well-being of pilgrims by equipping its non-medical staff with essential life-saving skills. A series of intensive CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) and First Aid training sessions are being conducted at B.R. Singh Hospital (BRSH), Sealdah, under the leadership of Dr. Adrish Banik (DMO, Anesthesia) and the guidance of Dr. Ashok Saha (ACHD/C, Anesthesia). This training initiative, organized on an emergency basis, is designed to empower front-line railway staff to respond promptly and effectively to medical emergencies during the high-volume congregation at the Kumbh Mela. Multiple batches of staff are being trained to ensure wide coverage, with a focus on practical, hands-on learning of critical techniques such as CPR, bleeding control, and other first aid measures.



First Aid Procedures: Equipping participants to handle injuries, burns, and fractures effectively. Emergency response protocols: To ensure efficient coordination during crises. This initiative reflects Eastern Railway's commitment to passenger safety and preparedness during one of the world's largest gatherings. By equipping non-medical staff with vital medical skills, the Railway aims to ensure a safe and secure environment for millions of pilgrims attending the Kumbh Mela.

Key highlights of the training include: CPR Techniques: Training staff to provide immediate care during cardiac emergencies.

EASTERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. : SG.Tender/DSTE/SDAH/525, dated 31.12.2024. e-tender is invited by Sr. DSTE, Eastern Railway, Sealdah, 2nd Floor, Control Building, DRM Building, Kaizer Street, Sealdah, Kolkata-700014 for the following work: e-Tender No. SDSTE/Te/7/21/24-25/RRSK. Name of work with its location : Provision and strengthening of data networking backbone system for the provision of Railnet in different health units and also smooth operation of e-Office at various field offices and units over Sealdah Division. Tender Value : ₹ 4,98,98,070.59. Earnest Money/ Bid Security to be deposited : ₹ 3,99,500/- . Cost of tender document : Nil. Completion period of the work : 09 Months. Tender Submission start date : 13.01.2025. Tender Submission end date: 27.01.2025 upto 14.00 hrs. Tender bid opening date : 27.01.2025 at 14.30 hrs. Details may be available : www.traps.gov.in Technical Eligibility Criteria : The tenderer must have successfully completed or substantially completed any one of the following categories of work(s) during last 07 (seven) years, ending last day of month previous to the one in which tender is invited : (i) Three similar works each costing not less than the amount equal to 30% of advertised value of the tender, or (ii) Two similar works each costing not less than the amount equal to 40% of advertised value of the tender, or (iii) One similar work costing not less than the amount equal to 60% of advertised value of the tender. Financial Eligibility Criteria: The tenderer must have minimum average annual contractual turnover of V/N or V/ whichever is less; where V=Advertised value of the tender in crores of Rupees, N=Number of years prescribed for completion of work for which bids have been invited. The average annual contractual turnover shall be calculated as an average of "total contractual payments" in the previous three financial years, as per the audited balance sheet. However, in case balance sheet of the previous year is yet to be prepared/audited, the audited balance sheet of the fourth previous year shall be considered for calculating average annual contractual turnover. The tenderers shall submit requisite information as per Annexure-VIB of GCC 2022 (Form-6 of the instant tender document), along with copies of Audited Balance Sheets duly certified by the Chartered Accountant/Certificate from Chartered Accountant duly supported by Audited Balance Sheet. Other document to be submitted : As mentioned in the tender document. Similar nature of Work : Any Telecom work involving provision of MIS/LAN/WAN/HelpLine/UTS/PRS/FOIS/value added enquiry system/ video enquiry system/Data connectivity/Datacom equipment/video conferencing/wireless communication/ secured communication/Wi-Fi/Telecom work involving computer based enquiry system to be considered as similar nature of work for the instant tender work. Note : The tenderer shall submit along with the tender offer, documents in support of his/her claim to fulfill the eligibility criteria as mentioned in the tender document. Each page of the copy of documents/certificates in support of credentials, submitted by the tenderer, shall be self-attested/digitally signed by the tenderer or authorized representative of the tendering firm. Self-attestation shall include signature, stamp and date (on each page). (SDAH-299/2024-25) Tender Notice is also available at websites : www.e.inrailways.gov.in / www.traps.gov.in Follow us at : @EasternRailway @easternrailwayheadquarter

Gujarat Cabinet approves granting Municipal status to 9 Municipalities

MI News Service, Gandhinagar: The Gujarat Cabinet chaired by Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel on Wednesday approved the formation of nine new Municipal Corporations across the state. This decision follows the significant budget announcement for the year 2024-25, where the state government committed to upgrading municipalities- Navsari, Vapi, Anand, Nadiad, Mehsana, Surendranagar/Wadhwan, Morbi, Porbandar/Chhaya, and Gandhidham- into Municipal Corporations. In keeping with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's policy of 'Je Kahevu Te Karvu' (Delivering on Commitments), Bhupendra Patel's government has swiftly moved to make these Municipal Corporations operational. Gujarat Minister Rushikesh Patel mentioned that Bhupendra Patel remains committed to realizing the vision of Viksit Gujarat@2047, focusing on the goals of 'Earning Well' and 'Living Well' as part of PM Modi's broader vision for Viksit Bharat@2047. "In the Growth Engine Gujarat, there are currently 8 Municipal Corporations-Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodra, Rajkot, Bhavnagar, Junagadh, Jamnagar, and Gandhinagar. Junagadh Municipal Corporation was established in 2002, and Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation came into existence in 2010," he said. Patel said that after almost 14 years, the state is set to form 9 new Municipal Corporations, doubling the number of Municipal Corporations to 17.

Sealdah Division Prepares Two Special Trains for Maha Kumbh



MI News Service, Kolkata: Eastern Railway, Sealdah Division has successfully completed extensive preparations for two special trains that will be deployed for the upcoming Maha Kumbh Mela. Under the expert guidance and leadership of Sr.DME Sealdah and DRM Sealdah, a dedicated team of employees worked tirelessly day and night to ensure these trains are ready to provide exceptional service to pilgrims. A comprehensive makeover was undertaken for each train, which included: VINYL Wrapping: The exterior of the trains was adorned with eye-catching vinyl wraps, adding a festive and visually appealing touch. Interior Decoration: The interiors were meticulously decorated to create a comfortable and spiritually uplifting ambience for passengers. Deep Cleaning: Every nook and cranny of the trains was thoroughly cleaned using advanced machinery, ensuring the highest standards of hygiene. Complete Paint Job: Both the interior and exterior of the trains received a fresh coat of paint, giving them a renewed look. Sealdah Division is committed to providing safe, comfortable, and convenient travel for all passengers, especially during large-scale religious gatherings like the Maha Kumbh. These specially prepared trains are a testament to the division's dedication to enhancing the railway travel experience.



Kerala Cabinet approves rehabilitation plan for Wayanad landslide victims

MI News Service, Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Wednesday said that the state cabinet has approved the rehabilitation plan for the victims of Wayanad landslides that occurred on July 30, last year. Addressing the press conference, the Kerala CM said that rehabilitation is about restoring people's livelihood. "The cabinet meeting discussed today the rehabilitation plan in Wayanad. A special cabinet meeting had earlier discussed the matter. It's difficult to find land in Wayanad to rehabilitate all of them who lost their homes. Rehabilitation will be also

about restoring their livelihood. The townships will be built at Elstone Estate and Nedumpala Estate. 5 per cent of the land will be given in the Elstone tea estate and 10 per cent will be allotted in the Nedumbala estate," Vijayan said. He further said that the list of final beneficiaries will be released in three weeks, by January 25. "The township will include all the basic amenities required in a town. We have planned the designs of homes based on the foundation. Markets, educational institutions, hospitals, and recreational centres are all part of the township. The final list of

beneficiaries will be finalised before 25th January 2025," he added. Earlier, the Centre informed the state of Kerala that the Meppadi landslide disaster in Wayanad district has been considered by the Inter-Ministerial Central Team as a disaster of "severe nature" for all practical purposes. In a communication, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs stated, "Keeping in view the intensity and magnitude of the Meppadi landslide disaster in Wayanad district, it has been considered by the Inter-Ministerial Central Team (IMCT) as a disaster of severe nature for all practical

purposes." The communication was shared by the Congress unit of Kerala on its official social media account on December 30. "Following a request submitted by the delegation led by Wayanad MP @priyankagandhi, the Centre has classified the Mundakkai-Chooralmala landslide in Wayanad as a disaster of 'severe nature,'" Kerala Congress wrote on X. On December 5, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and MPs from Kerala met Union Home Minister Amit Shah, urging the Centre to provide immediate relief to the landslide-affected people of Wayanad.

"We have given representation to the PM and Home Minister. The devastation in the area (in Wayanad) is complete. The people who are affected have lost absolutely everything. In such circumstances, if the Centre cannot step up, then it sends a very bad message to the entire country and especially to the victims," Priyanka Gandhi had told reporters. On July 30, the state of Kerala was hit with a landslide, the deadliest one in the state, killing more than 300 people and destroying numerous houses and other buildings. The people were affected in Mundakkai and Chooralmala areas.

Kolkata experiences sudden dip in temp, fog disrupts North Bengal air services

MI News Service, Kolkata: After a relatively warm December, the first day of the new year brought some respite to winter enthusiasts as Kolkata's temperature dropped significantly. On Wednesday, the mercury plummeted by three degrees, providing a chillier start to the year. While the city embraced the colder weather, North Bengal faced dense fog that disrupted air traffic at Bagdogra Airport. The Regional Meteorological Department reported that Kolkata's minimum temperature fell from 17°C to 14°C in just 24 hours. Early morning fog blanketed the streets, creating a wintry atmosphere across the city. Both day and night temperatures dipped, maintaining a pleasant winter vibe throughout the day. However, meteorologists caution that the cold spell is unlikely to last. By the weekend, temperatures are expected to rise again due to the influence of a western disturbance. The current chill is forecast to persist only until Friday, with temperatures hovering near the seasonal average. In North Bengal, dense fog caused significant visibility issues, with some areas reporting visibility dropping below 200 meters. This severely affected air traffic at Bagdogra Airport on New Year's Day. Several flights were delayed, leaving passengers stranded at the airport for hours. The low visibility posed challenges for pilots, forcing delays and disruptions in the airport's operations. Travelers expressed frustration over prolonged waits, although airport authorities assured passengers of resumed services once conditions improved. The temperature dip was more pronounced in the western districts of Bengal, where the mercury dropped below 10°C in several places. Regions such as Purulia, Bankura, and Birbhum experienced colder conditions compared to Kolkata, with residents wrapping up in woollens to combat the chill. North Bengal continued to grapple with dense fog throughout the day. The weather office noted that fog and low temperatures were typical for this time of year, although the combination of reduced visibility and disrupted services added to the challenges. While the current cold spell has excited winter lovers, the joy is expected to be short-lived. A western disturbance is likely to bring warmer winds, causing temperatures to rise over the weekend. The Met Office predicts that Kolkata and surrounding regions will return to milder conditions by Saturday, reducing the intensity of the winter chill. Despite the brief duration of the cold wave, residents across the state have welcomed the seasonal weather. Markets saw a surge in the sale of winter clothing, and early morning walkers reveled in the foggy atmosphere. The New Year's Day drop in temperature offered a refreshing change for Kolkata and its surrounding regions. However, with warming trends on the horizon, the city's winter enthusiasts may need to savor the fleeting chill while it lasts. Meanwhile, North Bengal awaits improved conditions to restore smooth air traffic operations.

Air Marshal Jeetendra Mishra assumes command of IAF's Western Air Command on New year

MI News Service, New Delhi: Air Marshal Jeetendra Mishra assumed the prestigious role of commanding the Indian Air Force's (IAF) Western Air Command on Wednesday, a vital position that oversees the defence of India's western borders. With a career spanning over three decades, Air Marshal Mishra was commissioned into the Indian Air Force as a fighter pilot in December 1986 and has accumulated more than 3000 flying hours throughout his career. A graduate of the National Defence Academy in Pune, Mishra has also attended



The Western Air Command, which is one of the IAF's most strategically important formations, is tasked with defending India's western frontier and providing support during times of conflict. In his service career spanning over 38 years, the Air Marshal has tenanted important command and staff appointments. These include the Commanding Officer of a Fighter Squadron, Chief Test Pilot at the Aircraft and Systems Testing Establishment (ASTE), Air Officer Commanding two frontline air bases, Director (Operational Planning and Assessment Group), Principal Director

(ASR) and assistant chief of Air Staff (Projects) at Air HQ (VB), Commandant ASTE and Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (Doctrine, Organisation and Training). He was Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (Operations) before taking over his present appointment. The Air Officer is a recipient of the 'Ati Vishisht Seva Medal' and 'Vishisht Seva Medal'. Air Marshal Jeetendra Mishra succeeds Air Marshal Pankaj Mohan Sinha who superannuated on December 31, 2024 after putting in more than 39 years of distinguished service in the IAF.

Cabinet approves continuation of PM Fasal Bima Yojana, restructured weather-based crop insurance scheme

MI News Service, New Delhi: The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Wednesday approved the continuation of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme till 2025-26 with an overall outlay of Rs 69,515.71 crore from 2021-22 to 2025-26. The decision will help in risk coverage of crops from non-preventable natural calamities for farmers across the country till 2025-26. In addition, for large-scale technology infusion in the implementation of the scheme leading to increasing transparency and claim calculation and settlement, the Union Cabinet has also approved the creation of the Fund for Innovation and Technology (FIAT) with a corpus of Rs 824.77 crore. The fund will be utilised towards funding technological initiatives under the scheme namely, YES-TECH, WINDS, as well as research and development studies. Yield Estimation System using Technology (YES-

TECH) uses Remote Sensing Technology for yield estimation with minimum 30 per cent weightage to Technology based yield estimates. Nine major states are currently implementing (namely AP, Assam, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, MP, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka). Other states are also being on-boarded expeditiously. With wider implementation of YES-TECH, Crop Cutting Experiments and related issues will be gradually phased out. Under YES-TECH Claim calculation and settlement has been done for 2023-24. Madhya Pradesh has adopted 100 per cent technology based yield estimation. Weather Information and Network Data Systems (WINDS) envisages setting up Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) at block level and Automatic Rain Gauges (ARGs) at panchayat level. Under WINDS, 5 times increase in current network density is envisaged to develop hyper local weather data. Under the initiative, only data rental costs are payable by

Central and State Governments. Nine major states are in the process of implementing WINDS (Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Puducherry, Assam, Odisha, Karnataka, Uttarakhand & Rajasthan are in progress), while other states have also expressed willingness to implement. WINDS could not be implemented by states during 2023-24 (1st year as per EFC) due to various background preparatory and planning work required before tendering. Accordingly, the Union Cabinet has approved 2024-25 as the first year of implementation of WINDS as compared to 2023-24 earlier to give benefit to state governments with higher central fund sharing in 90:10 ratio. The government said all efforts are made and will continue to be made to saturate all farmers of northeastern states on priority. However, due to the scheme being voluntary and low gross cropped area in the northeastern

states, flexibility has been given to avoid surrender of funds and for reallocation in other development projects and schemes with fund requirements.

"Dual face of BJP revealed through such orders," Atishi on Delhi's Religious Committee decision



order issue and hence it comes under Delhi LG and hence Delhi CM or Home Minister has nothing to do with it. Now the Religious Committee is directly under Delhi LG. The Chairman of the committee is the Principal Secretary of the Home Department and he sends the committee's suggestions directly to Delhi LG for approval," she added.

MI News Service, New Delhi: Delhi Chief Minister Atishi on Wednesday attacked the BJP for ordering the demolition of several temples in the national capital, accusing them of pretending to protect Hinduism while secretly instructing officials and the LG to destroy temples. Addressing a press conference, Atishi said, "The dual face of BJP is revealed through such orders. On one hand, they pretend to protect Hinduism, while on the other, they secretly instruct their appointed officers and LG to demolish temples." She stated that during a meeting of the Religious Committee on November 22, it was decided to demolish several temples located in West Patel Nagar, Dilshad Garden, Seemapuri, Gokalpuri, New Usmanpur and Sultanpuri and a Buddhist temple located in Sundar Nagari. All this is in the minutes of the meeting. "Delhi LG has approved it and now DMs and SDMs are preparing to demolish these temples," she added. "Religious Committee used to come under the Home Minister of the Delhi government. Till last year, all the decisions of this committee were first placed before the Home Minister and any action was taken only after his approval. But last year Delhi LG ordered that the demolition of any religious place is a law and

LEGAL NOTICE This is to bring to notice of the public that Original Sale Deed of Beauti Sen Baidya (Mondal), for the property situated under Mouza-Khastika, Dag No. 311, under Khatian No. 1251, J.L. No. 48, is lost from the custody of Beauti Sen Baidya (Mondal), and on 26.12.24, she has sent a Complaint letter to the Bishnupur P.S. through speed post for lodging a G.D.E.. Any person having any claim/information thereof may inform the same to the undersigned within 15 days from today or else thereafter the same be treated as non-entertainable. - Biswambhar Paul, B.Com (Hons), LL.B (Advocate), Alipore Judges' & Criminal Court, Kolkata- 700027, Mobile: 9748029017.

Notice This is in continuation of our earlier communication dated August 28, 2024 wherein we informed about the closure of our office situated at First Floor, Check Post Memari Ward No. 13, Memari Municipality, Memari District Purba Bardhaman, Pin-code-713 146, West Bengal. Due to the certain restrictions, closure of the said office has got extended beyond the mentioned time and we thus intimate you about the extended time for closure of the office. We, therefore, wish to inform our esteemed customers, intermediaries and public at large that our branch situated at First Floor, Check Post Memari Ward No. 13, Memari Municipality, Memari District Purba Bardhaman, Pin-code-713 146, West Bengal shall be closed within 2 to 3 months. You are requested to take note of the same and visit to our nearest office situated at Second Floor, City Tower, # 23, G.I. Road, Bardhaman-713 101, West Bengal or visit our website www.icici Lombard.com for the nearest office or download I.L take care app to avail services available for your policy including renewals and claim related assistance. For ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Ltd. All the concerned are requested to take note of the same. Authorized Signatory

Table with 3 columns: Train name, Revised Timings at Sogaria (Arr., Dep.), and Chief Passenger Transportation Manager EASTERN RAILWAY. Includes train names like 19608 Madar (Ajmer) - Kolkata Weekly Express and 13424 Ajmer - Bhagalpur Weekly Express.

Artificial heart patients can regenerate heart muscles: Study

WASHINGTON: A research team at the University of Arizona College of Medicine--Tucson's Sarver Heart Center found that a subset of artificial heart patients can regenerate heart muscle, which opens the possibilities of new ways to treat and perhaps someday cure heart failure.

The results of the research which was co-led by a physician-scientist were published in the journal *Circulation*.

Comparing the repair of skeletal muscles to heart muscles, Hesham Sadek, MD, PhD, director of the Sarver Heart Center and

chief of the Division of Cardiology at the University of Arizona College of Medicine -- Tucson's Department of Medicine said that when a heart muscle doesn't grow back if it gets injured, "We have nothing to reverse heart muscle loss."

Sadek led a collaboration between international experts to investigate whether heart muscles can regenerate. The study was funded through a grant by the Leducq Foundation Transatlantic Networks of Excellence Program.

The project began with tissue from artificial heart patients provided by col-

leagues at the University of Utah Health and School of Medicine led by Stavros Drakos, MD, PhD, a pioneer in left ventricular assist device-mediated recovery.

Jonas Frisen, MD, PhD, and Olaf Bergmann, MD, PhD, of the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, led teams in Sweden and Germany and used their innovative method of carbon dating human heart tissue to track whether these samples contained newly generated cells.

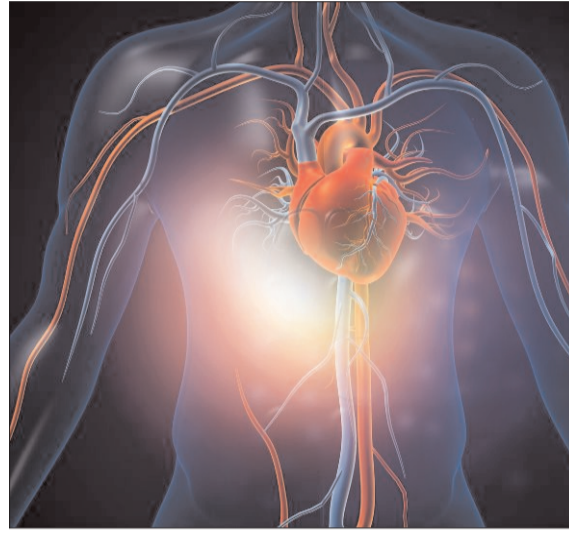
The investigators found that patients with artificial hearts regenerated muscle cells at more than six times

the rate of healthy hearts.

"This is the strongest evidence we have, so far, that human heart muscle cells can actually regenerate, which really is exciting, because it solidifies the notion that there is an intrinsic capacity of the human heart to regenerate," Sadek said.

Earlier, Sadek published a paper in *Science* showing that while heart muscle cells actively divide in utero, they stop dividing shortly after birth to devote their energy to pumping blood through the body nonstop, with no time for breaks.

In 2014, he published



evidence of cell division in patients with artificial hearts, hinting that their heart muscle cells might have been regenerating.

"The pump pushes blood into the aorta, bypassing the heart," he said. "The heart is essentially resting."

Sadek's previous studies indicated that this rest might be beneficial for the heart muscle cells, but he needed to design an experiment to determine whether patients with artificial hearts were actually regenerating muscles.

"Irrefutable evidence of heart muscle regeneration has never been shown

before in humans," he said. "This study provided direct evidence."

However, Sadek wants to figure out why only 25 per cent of patients responded to the regeneration of the muscle.

"It's not clear why some patients respond and some don't, but it's very clear that the ones who respond have the ability to regenerate heart muscle," he wrote.

Sadek believes that in future a mechanical heart will not be a therapy on which people will rely and with this study, he hopes to deliver regeneration of heart muscles in future. (ANI)

Winter Health: How to Protect Your Heart and Body This Season

How Does Winter Affect

HEART HEALTH?



NEW DELHI : Winter often brings health challenges, such as dry skin, joint pain, and seasonal illnesses like the flu. However, by following the principles of Ayurveda and making a few lifestyle changes, it is possible to turn winter into a season of wellness.

Ayurveda teaches us to approach winter with caution, advising an increased focus on self-care, including a balanced diet and regular physical activity. Research from JAMA Cardiology has revealed that cold weather significantly raises the risk of heart attacks due to the constriction of blood vessels and changes in cholesterol levels. With this knowledge, we can better prepare ourselves to combat winter health risks [JAMA Cardiology Study].

The Risks of Winter Ailments

Winter's cold, dry, and windy weather mimics the doshas of Vata and Kapha, both of which dominate the season and contribute to the increased risk of health issues. Here are some common winter health challenges:

Cold mornings make it difficult to wake up and stay active.

Reduced physical activity leads to weight gain, especially when paired with higher calorie intake.

Higher caffeine consumption, often as a way to stay warm, may impact heart health.

Cold temperatures can cause blood vessels to constrict, increasing the risk of hypertension and heart disease [Harvard Medical School Study].

Changes in temperature and humidity affect blood viscosity, which can worsen conditions like diabetes and heart disease.

Taking Control of Your Winter Health

Ayurveda emphasizes the importance of living in harmony with nature and the seasons. By adapting your lifestyle to the rhythms of winter, you can maintain good health. Here are a few Ayurvedic tips for winter wellness:

1. Mindfulness - Continue your daily routines, particularly mindfulness meditation, to stay aware of your body and any changes. This will help you quickly identify and address issues such as poor digestion, dry skin, or joint stiffness.

2. Routine Health Checks - Diseases like diabetes and heart disease often progress without noticeable symptoms. Make sure to schedule regular health check-ups, including blood sugar tests and heart health assessments, to catch any issues

early on.

3. Panchakarma Therapy - For those looking for a holistic approach to managing their health, Panchakarma therapy is highly recommended. Available at reputable clinics like Madhavbaug, this Ayurvedic detox treatment has proven effective for heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, and other lifestyle conditions. Research published in JAPI shows that Panchakarma, combined with dietary modifications, can help manage type 2 diabetes [JAPI Study].

Winter Precautions for Heart and Diabetes Patients

Those with pre-existing conditions such as diabetes and heart disease need to be extra vigilant in winter. Cold weather poses additional risks, even for otherwise healthy individuals. A study from Harvard Medical School recommends adopting lifestyle changes and taking steps to prepare for the colder months to reduce the risk of winter heart attacks [Harvard Study].

At Madhavbaug, we use a multidisciplinary approach to help patients manage and reverse conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and hypertension. Our research-based therapies, including Panchakarma, have shown positive results in improving blood circulation and overall heart health, as noted in a study published by the European Society of Cardiology [European Society of Cardiology Study].

By incorporating Ayurvedic principles into your routine and taking preventive measures, you can enjoy good health throughout the winter season.

About Madhavbaug

Dr.Rohit Sane, Founder and CEO of Madhavbaug is a pioneering healthcare organization that specializes in treating chronic conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension through a combination of Ayurveda, modern diagnostics, and Panchakarma therapies. With a research-driven approach, Madhavbaug aims to help patients manage and reverse lifestyle diseases, offering an integrative model of care that blends traditional wisdom with modern science.

References:
1. JAMA Cardiology Study
2. Ritucharya in Ayurveda
3. Harvard Medical School Study on Winter Heart Attacks
4. JAPI Study on Ayurveda and Diabetes
5. European Society of Cardiology Study



Tourists enjoy rafting in the Beas river on New Year's Day, in Manali on Wednesday.

(ANI Photo)

Influenza viruses can use two ways to infect cells

ZURICH : Most influenza viruses enter human or animal cells via specialised routes on their surfaces. Researchers at the University of Zurich have revealed that certain human and avian influenza viruses may infect cells via a second entrance mechanism, an immune system protein complex.

This ability helps the viruses infect different species - and potentially jump between animals and humans. The majority of type A influenza viruses found in birds and pigs do not pose a health concern to people. However, the viruses might represent a problem if there is an outbreak, such as the one presently occurring in dairy cattle in the United States, or during seasonal epidemics. In rare situations, a virus can spread from animals to people, potentially causing a worldwide pandemic.

Most influenza viruses enter host cells by using their envelope proteins, which stand up from the surface like spikes. The so-called hemagglutinin binds to sialic acid, a chemical group on the surface of human cells and the cells of various animal species. An international research team led by Professor.

Gujarat leading way on path to agricultural excellence

AHMEDABAD (GUJARAT) : Gujarat, once central to India's White Revolution, is now spearheading a new era of sustainable agriculture through high-value crops, modern irrigation systems, and farmer empowerment.

Known as India's "Growth Engine," the state's agriculture and allied sectors have grown at an impressive 9.7 per cent annually, surpassing the national average of 5.7 per cent.

Gujarat is reaping the benefits of two decades of pro-farming policies that have transformed the state into a diversified, market-driven agricultural economy.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, initiatives such as the Soil Health Cards and the Jyotigram Scheme continue to promote sustainable practices and expand irrigation.

During his visit to Gujarat last year, Prime Minister Modi stated, "In our North Gujarat, every district has started using drip irrigation, micro-irrigation, and new techniques, resulting in improved possibilities for various crops for North Gujarat farmers. Today, almost 70 per cent of Banaskantha has adopted micro-irrigation. The benefits of such irrigation and new technology are also reaching the drought-prone areas of Gujarat." As Gujarat's Chief Minister, Narendra Modi launched the KrushiMahotsav, an annual event connecting farmers with modern techniques and expert advice, boosting productivity and promoting sustainability. Since 2001, Gujarat's farmers have shifted towards horticulture, with crop area increasing by

181 per cent and production by 326 per cent. By 2022, the state's fruit production reached 82.91 lakh MT across 4.48 lakh hectares, with major crops including mango, banana, citrus, pomegranate, and sapota.

Gujarat is also a leading producer of spices like cumin, fennel, coriander, and chilli, covering 6.57 lakh hectares with an output of 12.01 lakh MT. It is among the



first states to implement the Model APMC Act, enabling farmers to sell their produce outside regulated markets. The government promotes high-value crops like dates and dragon fruit (Kamalam) through subsidies and market support, improving farmers' livelihoods and fostering sustainable, profitable agriculture. Vinodbhai Ahir, a farmer in Rajkot, said, "There are govern-

ment drip irrigation schemes, with farmers receiving 30-40 per cent subsidies. The farmers are benefiting from the schemes launched by the Modi government. Small farmers also receive 6,000 rupees annually, in instalments of 2,000 rupees each. We are getting that as well." The Gujarat government is also encouraging farmers to adopt natural farming techniques that reduce chemical use, improve soil health,

and boost biodiversity. It promotes traditional crops like millet, which are well-suited to these methods, with the Dang district designated as a hub for natural farming. CM Patel said, "To promote natural farming in the state, the government is fully committed. Fortunately, our state is blessed to have a Governor who is an expert in natural agri-

culture. He has intensified this campaign, providing training in natural farming to over 18 lakh farmers in the state, with more than 8.5 lakh farmers adopting natural practices."

Gujarat is also a dairy powerhouse, with over 10,000 milk cooperatives producing around 150 lakh litres daily.

Encouraged by the proactive approach of the government, many farmers in Gujarat have adopted modern farming techniques that combine crop cultivation and livestock raising, allowing them to diversify their income sources.

Schemes like the Jyotigram Scheme, which provides 24-hour electricity for irrigation, along with drip irrigation techniques in arid regions like Kutch and Saurashtra, have transformed barren land into productive fields.

GopalBhaiSutariya, a Progressive Farmer and Agri Expert, said, "In Kutch, where we couldn't even imagine it, pomegranates are now grown. Dates are being cultivated, and many farmers are involved in this. They are growing multiple crops. This is a significant change in Gujarat."

Under CM Patel, the Gujarat government is further enhancing farmers' welfare by digitizing land records, significantly improving the "Ease of Doing Business."

By championing modern techniques and empowering farmers, Gujarat sets a powerful example for the rest of India. This forward-thinking approach not only boosts productivity but also promotes environmental stewardship, positioning Gujarat as a leader in the agricultural landscape.

Inauguration of Dada Peer's Madrasa at Swastayangachi



Nurul Islam Khan

Shaykhul Hadith Allama Mufti Abdul Qayyum Sahib inaugurated the Sayyidatun Nisa Ra, Girls Orphanage and Madrasa at Polerhat Swastayangachi on Wednesday. He said getting education is mandatory, there is no alter-

native. Mufti Abdul Matin discussed in the light of Quran and Hadith. Furfura Sharif Sitapur Suffia Durbar Sharif's Peerzada Hafeez Maulana Mashum Siddiqui gave the last prayer. The enthusiasm of the common people in this meeting under the direction of All India Sunnat Wal Jamaat

was noticeable. This educational institution is established in the ideology of Peer Mojadid Jaman Ala Hazrat Dada Huzur of Furfura Sharif. It is said that the madrasa was established in his memory. Madrasah secretary Monayem Hossain and many others were present.

9 per cent increase in passenger traffic at Egyptian airports in 2024

MI News Service, Cairo: The passenger traffic at Egyptian airports rose 9 per cent in 2024 compared to 2023, the Middle East News Agency (MENA) reported, citing the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

The total number of passengers at Egyptian airports in 2024 reached 22.097 million, up from 20.276 million in 2023. Additionally, the number of flights also rose by 3 per cent, reaching 167,684 in 2024, compared to 162,773 the year before. Cairo International Airport recorded 28.775 million passengers with a total of 211,664 flights in 2024, compared to 26,463 million passengers and 198,943 flights in 2023.

India, Pakistan exchange list of nuclear installations, facilities

MI News Service, New Delhi: India and Pakistan on Wednesday exchanged the list of their nuclear installations and facilities, under an agreement that prohibits two nations from attacking each other's atomic facilities, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

"India and Pakistan on Wednesday exchanged, through diplomatic channels, simultaneously at New Delhi and Islamabad, the list of Nuclear Installations and facilities, covered under the Agreement on the prohibition of Attack against Nuclear Installation and Facilities between India and Pakistan," the MEA said.

It is the 34th consecutive exchange of such lists between India and Pakistan, the first one having taken place on January 1, 1992.

According to MEA, the agreement between India and Pakistan was signed on December 31, 1988 and entered into force on January 27, 1991.

"The Agreement, which was signed on 31 December 1988 and entered into force on 27 January 1991 provides, inter alia, that India and Pakistan inform each other of the nuclear installations and facilities to be covered under the Agreement on the first of January of every calendar year," it said.

Arabic Poetry Festival to kick off Monday

MI News Service, Sharjah: The 21st Sharjah Arabic Poetry Festival will run from January 6-12, featuring over 70 poets, literary critics, and media personalities from across the Arab world and several African nations.

The festival is held under the patronage of Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah. Abdullah bin Mohammed Al Owais, Chairman of the Department of Culture in Sharjah, said, "The Sharjah Arabic Poetry Festival, over its 21 editions, has become a vital cultural event, significantly enriching the Arab literary scene. Guided by the vision of Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, the festival continues to support Arab poets and encourage the production of authentic Arabic poetry."

Beyond the poetry readings, the festival will feature book signings for collections by various poets and unveil 12 new names celebrated for their contributions to the "Golden Qawafi Award" in its third edition. These poets have been contributors to "Qawafi" magazine over its 12 editions for 2024.

The festival will also include an intellectual symposium titled "Arabic Poetry: From Stability to Transformation," exploring critical issues and developments in Arabic poetry through studies and research.

The festival will honour two poets with the 13th Sharjah Award for Arabic Poetry for their outstanding contributions to Arabic literature: Emirati poet Talal Al Junaibi and Syrian poet Hussein Al Abdullah.

Al Owais said that the festival will host poets from African countries, including Senegal, Mali, Niger, and Chad, highlighting that this marks the festival's openness to new poetic landscapes and its role in strengthening connections between Arabic poetry and African literary traditions.

The festival will open at the Sharjah Cultural Palace with a documentary titled "A Decade of Giving: The Houses of Poetry". This will be followed by poetry readings from Talal Al Junaibi (UAE), Hussein Al Abdullah (Syria), and Talal Al Salti (Oman).

BYC and its supporters staged protest against extrajudicial killings and violence in Balochistan

MI News Service, Balochistan: The Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) and families of victims staged widespread protests across Balochistan, demanding justice for Zareef Umar, who was recently killed, and for Naveed Hamid, allegedly slain by Pakistani security forces, The Balochistan Post reported.

According to the Balochistan Post, the protests, organised by the BYC, saw large participation from victims' families and supporters. The demonstrations commenced in Turbat with a significant rally at Fida Chowk, near a camp set up by the families and BYC members.

Protesters, including women and children, marched through the city's main bazaar and surrounding areas, before gathering outside the Deputy Commissioner's office. Holding placards and chanting slogans, they demanded justice for both Umar and



Hamid, alongside an end to human rights violations in the region.

A sit-in was held outside the Deputy Commissioner's office, with initial talks conducted with ADC Maqbool Anwar and later with ADC Khalil Murad. The protesters demanded the immediate registration of an FIR against the killers of Zareef Umar and their prosecution. Families

of the victims pledged to continue their sit-in at Fida Chowk until justice was served, reported The Balochistan Post.

Solidarity protests took place in Quetta, where BYC leaders, including Mahrang Baloch and Sibghatullah Baloch, addressed large crowds. They condemned the killing of Zareef Umar, describing it as a reflection of "the growing

impunity among state forces" and called for public unity against such injustices, as reported by the Balochistan Post.

In the Kech district, tensions escalated as businesses shut down in protest while security forces imposed restrictions, harassed demonstrators, and confiscated mobile phones.

In Hub Chowki, security forces used tear gas and live ammunition to disperse peaceful protesters, resulting in injuries and arrests, including among women, children, and the elderly, The Balochistan Post reported.

Protesters demanded an independent investigation into Zareef Umar's killing and justice for Naveed Hamid. The BYC warned of intensified protests across Balochistan if their demands were not met and called on local and international human rights organisations to intervene and support their cause.

Russia's Gazprom halts gas transit through Ukraine



MI News Service, Moscow: Russian state-owned energy company Gazprom on Wednesday said that it had halted the transit of gas through Ukraine due to Kyiv's refusal to extend a gas transit agreement with Moscow, TASS reported.

The Russian company in a statement said that the five-year agreement between Gazprom and Ukraine's Naftogaz, which governed the cooperation between the two countries' gas transportation systems, had expired on January 1.

"As Ukraine repeatedly and clearly refused to extend these agreements, Gazprom was deprived of the technical and legal ability to supply gas for transit through Ukraine from Jan-

starting January 1, 2025, citing contract violations and the Moldovan government's failure to settle debts for gas deliveries.

In a statement, the Russian energy company said it had notified Moldovagaz, one of the largest enterprises in the energy sector in the country, on Saturday about Moldova's repeated failure to meet payment obligations under the current contract, which constitutes a breach of its terms.

"In this regard, based on the provisions of the contract and applicable norms of Russian legislation, PJSC Gazprom will introduce a restriction on natural gas supplies to the Republic of Moldova to 0 cubic metres per day from 8:00 a.m. Moscow time (5:00 a.m. GMT) on January 1, 2025," the Russian company said in a statement, TASS reported.

The company in its statement noted that the restriction will remain in effect until Gazprom notifies Moldovagaz in writing otherwise, TASS reported. Gazprom emphasised that it reserves all legal rights, including the option to terminate the contract and to seek compensation for damages and penalties from Moldovagaz for non-compliance or inadequate fulfillment of its contractual responsibilities.

A few days earlier, Gazprom had announced that it will reduce natural gas supplies to Moldova to zero

starting January 1, 2025, citing contract violations and the Moldovan government's failure to settle debts for gas deliveries.

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South Korea to send Jeju Air Flight data recorder to US for analysis

MI News Service, Seoul: The South Korean government announced on Wednesday that it will send the flight data recorder from the crashed Jeju Air plane to the United States for further analysis, according to a report by Yonhap News Agency.

The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport stated that the timeline for transferring the flight recorder will be determined in coordination with the US National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).

Recovered from the wreckage of the Jeju Air B737-800 aircraft at Muan International Airport, the flight recorder was found to have sustained external damage, including a missing connector that links the data storage unit to its power

source. Joo Jong-wan, director of the aviation policy division at the ministry said, "We have determined that extracting data from the damaged flight data recorder here is not possible. And so we have agreed with the NTSB to send it to the US and analyse it there," Yonhap reported.

A team from the United States had arrived in South Korea on Monday and began joint investigations with South Korean officials, led by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, the following day at Muan.

During their initial joint on-site investigation, investigators focused on a navigation system that assists in aircraft landings, known as a localizer. The localizer, installed on a concrete struc-

ture, at Muan International Airport has been blamed for exacerbating the severity of casualties in the Jeju Air crash, Yonhap reported.

South Korean authorities had confirmed that 179 people were killed and two people were rescued out of 181 aboard following a plane crash in South Korea's Muan region.

The incident occurred on Sunday morning when a Jeju Air passenger jet, carrying 175 passengers and six crew members, belly-landed and exploded at Muan International Airport, the Yonhap News Agency reported.

The aircraft veered off the runway while landing, with its landing gear not deployed, skidding across the ground, hitting a concrete wall, and bursting into flames.

29 injured in aerial firing in Karachi

MI News Service, Karachi: The New Year celebrations in Karachi were overshadowed by a series of aerial firing incidents across the city, leaving at least 29 people injured, including women and children. Rescue officials confirmed the injuries, which resulted from celebratory gunfire during the early hours of January 1, 2025, ARY News reported.

The incidents took place in various areas of Karachi, including Liaquatabad, Tariq Road, Shah Faisal, Orangi Town, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Azizabad, and Korangi. In Liaquatabad, three people were injured by stray bullets.

Tariq Road and Shah Faisal reported incidents where two women sustained injuries due to celebratory firing. Orangi Town and Gulshan-e-Iqbal also witnessed two injuries, while Azizabad saw a child being hurt by a stray bullet.

Additional cases of aerial firing were reported in other parts of the city. Three individuals in Gulzar-e-Hijri and Korangi No. 6 were injured, while Lyari and Aram Bagh saw three more injured. Other locations, including Agra Taj, Malir Kala Board, Tipu Sultan, Ferozeabad,

and Alfalah Dastagir, reported bullet injury cases, adding to the overall toll from the reckless celebratory gunfire.

Rescue teams quickly responded to the incidents, transporting the injured individuals to nearby hospitals for treatment, reported ARY News.

Authorities are urging the public to exercise caution and avoid dangerous activities like aerial firing during celebrations to prevent harm and ensure the safety of citizens.

Earlier, AIG Karachi Javed Alam Odho had issued a stern warning to Karachiites about the dangers of aerial firing, particularly during New Year's Eve. He reminded the public that such reckless actions would lead to serious legal consequences.

"The police would register cases under the attempted murder section for aerial firing incidents that occurred on New Year's Eve," AIG Odho said. He added that last year, 31 individuals were injured in similar incidents, with several individuals subsequently being booked by the police, ARY News reported.

"Fair trial is a fundamental right," BNP VC says ex B'desh PM Hasina may challenge extradition request

MI News Service, Dhaka: Abdul Awal Mintoo, Vice-Chairperson of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and Former President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, while speaking about the extradition of former Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said that while Bangladeshi government has the right to ask India for Hasina's extradition, Hasina too has the right to fight for her right in an Indian Court.

Mintoo told ANI that Hasina is entitled to fair judgement through due process of law.

"This is a highly political issue," Mintoo said, when asked about the current status and if there is any problem in the extradition process.

Mintoo further explained that as Hasina is living in

a democratic country, i.e. India, she has the right to fight against the extradition request in an Indian court. In such an event, the court's decision shall prevail. However, the situation is tangled as in such cases, even international laws get involved.

"But then as a democratic country, because she is staying in India right now, or in any other country, she has also own right to go to the court in that country. So the court of that country will decide ultimately that what will be the process of our return to Bangladesh. It is not that easy, because the international law is involved, international humanitarian laws is involved," he said.

"There are three issues involved here. One is our demand, which we are entitled to demand, because if a country's judicial system thinks that anyone has

done a crime, whether it be a Prime Minister or not, and if he or she is residing in India, we have a right to demand that she should be repatriated to Bangladesh," Mintoo said.

He said that under the repatriation treaty between the two countries, Bangladesh exercised their right to ask for repatriation.

"India and Bangladesh has a repatriation treaty. So under that treaty we have additional right to demand. Now Bangladesh government already demanded her return to Bangladesh," he said.

Mintoo said that every Bangladeshi has the right to a fair trial, which must be upheld.

"It is the right of every Bangladeshi citizen to have a fair trial. If the trial is not fair, judgment will not be fair either. If judgment is not fair, that is not con-

sidered to be a fair in any respect. So that's why I am saying that we have a right to ask for extradition. She has a right to go to Indian court to defend herself. Why she should not be extradited? It all depends on how the treaty is being treated by the Indian court at this point," he said.

On December 23, the Ministry of External Affairs confirmed that it received a Note Verbale from the Bangladesh High Commission in connection with an extradition request of ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. However, it offered no comments on this matter.

"We confirm that we have received a Note Verbale from the Bangladesh High Commission today in connection with an extradition request. At this time, we have no comment to offer on this matter," said the spokesperson of the MEA.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's health sector struggles despite billions in allocated budget

MI News Service, Peshawar: Despite over ten years of governance by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province, Pakistan's public health system continues to face major challenges. The anticipated improvements in healthcare services and reforms have not materialized, leaving millions of residents unable to access even basic medical care.

2024, as in previous years, the provincial government declared an emergency in the health sector. However, the reality on the ground told a different story, as major initiatives, such as the highly publicized Sehat Sahulat Card, were plagued by inefficiencies, with many hospitals either lacking services or having them partially suspended as reported by Express Tribune.

Despite the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's assertions of prioritizing health care, the utilization of the health budget was disappointing.

The KP government allocated PKR 232 billion for health spending in 2024, including PKR 35.76 billion for development projects. However, by the end of the first half of the fiscal year, only 15 per cent of the budget of about PKR 5.29 billion had been used. Similarly, the ambitious air ambulance project, another key initiative, remained stuck in bureaucratic delays, showing no indication of becoming operational in the near future.

The Sehat Sahulat Card, initially praised as a transformative initiative for KP's healthcare system, was allocated PKR 35 billion for 2024. However, the government is still struggling with more than Rs12 billion in unpaid dues from the previous year, leaving patients without the expected benefits of the welfare program. This funding shortfall and operational inefficiency have significantly undermined the program's impact, creating uncertainty for those who depend on it for essential healthcare

services.

A high-ranking official from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Health Department, who requested to remain anonymous, disclosed that despite budget allocations, the actual provision of healthcare services often failed to meet expectations.

The official stated, "Patients with conditions such as cancer and tuberculosis face significant difficulties in accessing medication and treatment. Despite assurances of universal health coverage, many people in KP continue to struggle with even basic healthcare services. Both KP and its merged areas still lack Basic Health Units and District Headquarter Hospitals, forcing people to transport their patients to Peshawar for treatment."

Additionally, the promised expansion of specialized cardiac care to districts outside of Peshawar has not been realized. In fact, many regions still lack access to essential life-saving facilities, forcing patients to travel long

distances for treatment--an exhausting journey that frequently leads to the loss of lives.

According to the Health Department K-P, the province is currently overseeing 120 projects under the Annual Development Program (ADP), which includes 90 ongoing initiatives and 30 new projects launched this fiscal year.

The total ADP budget for the health sector is PKR 19.79 billion, with PKR 18.19 billion allocated for ongoing projects and PKR 1.59 billion for new ones. So far, PKR 6.46 billion has been released under the ADP, with 89 per cent utilized. While this figure appears promising, many essential projects remain unfinished or underfunded, leaving citizens without critical healthcare services.

The official concluded, "KP requires a comprehensive health policy for 2025, focused on measurable goals and enhanced service delivery. Without a strong strategy, the health crisis in KP will only worsen."

US Defence Bill includes key measures to address Uyghur repression in China

MI News Service, Washington DC: Uyghur-American activists have hailed the inclusion of critical measures in the 2025 US defence spending bill, which aims to address the ongoing repression of Uyghurs in China's Xinjiang region, according to a report by Radio Free Asia. The bill, officially known as the 2025 National Defence Authorization Act (NDAA), was passed by Congress on December 18 and signed into law by President Joe Biden on December 22.

According to Radio Free Asia, the bill includes provisions that mandate the US government to monitor human rights abuses in Xinjiang and impose sanctions on Chinese officials linked to the oppression of Uyghurs. The NDAA, which allocates USD 895 billion for

US defence spending in 2025, also incorporates the bipartisan Uyghur Human Rights Policy Reauthorization Act of 2024. This act, co-sponsored by Senators Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Jeff Merkley (D-OR), extends the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act passed in 2020 under Donald Trump.

Originally set to expire in 2025, the renewed legislation will now remain in effect until 2030. It authorises targeted sanctions against Chinese officials accused of committing atrocities against Uyghurs, which the US government has labelled as "genocide."

Omer Kanat, executive director of the Uyghur Human Rights Project, praised the passage of the bill, calling it "a gift of hope for Uyghurs." He expressed gratitude

to both Republican and Democratic lawmakers for their bipartisan efforts to keep the pressure on China over its treatment of Uyghurs. "Congressional leaders stand with the Uyghur people to dial up the pressure to end the atrocities in our homeland," Kanat added.

The measures are seen as a strong signal of continued US commitment to addressing human rights abuses in Xinjiang, where millions of Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities have been subjected to mass detentions, forced labour, and other repressive tactics by the Chinese government. The inclusion of these provisions in the defence bill reflects ongoing concerns in the US over China's human rights record and its policies in the region.

'The Kardashians' set to return for season 6, first-look teaser unveiled

MI News Service, Washington: The highly anticipated sixth season of 'The Kardashians' is officially set to premiere on February 6, 2025, streaming on Hulu in the US and Disney+ internationally. Following a groundbreaking fifth season, the Kardashian-Jenner family is gearing up for another season of drama, milestones, and personal challenges that have kept fans hooked worldwide. The first-look teaser was shared by the official Instagram handle of Hulu. The official logline for 'The Kardashians' season 6 hints at a year filled with both highs and lows, as the famous family faces an unpredictable future. "The Kardashian-Jenners return with a year full of challenges, milestones and new adventures," it reads. The upcoming season will delve deeper into the lives of Kourtney, Kim, Khloe, Kendall, Kylie, and Kris, as they navigate their complicated roles as mothers, businesswomen, and public figures.

All is not well in Indian dressing room? Under-fire coach Gautam Gambhir 'warns' players after MCG defeat

India have been having a torrid time in Tests recently, with a rare home series whitewash against New Zealand, and now trailing 1-2 against Australia in the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy series.

The visitors lost the fourth Test by 184 runs at the MCG, with the Indian batters once again failing to rise to the occasion. Playing for a draw on day 5, India lost the last seven wickets for 34 runs with some batters falling to loose shots-drawing criticism from former cricketers like Sunil Gavaskar, and fans alike.

According to a report in The Indian Express, Gambhir gave the players a piece of his mind in the dressing room after the defeat. Saying that he has had enough, he slammed some players for continuing to play their "natural game" without considering the match situation. The jibe is believed to be aimed at senior pros like Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and Rishabh Pant. None of



them have accumulated even 200 runs in the four Tests so far, and have repeatedly fallen to irrational shots. Gambhir, who took

over as coach in July, reportedly told the players that he had given them the freedom to play in the first six months, but will now dic-

tate play. The TIE report said that Gambhir also fired a veiled warning that the players who continue to defy his instructions would be dropped.

Gambhir wanted Pujara for Australia series

Gambhir, the report said, wanted veteran Cheteshwar Pujara in the team for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy series, but the selectors turned down his request. Proven Test specialists like Pujara and Ajinkya Rahane have been out of favour with the selection committee headed by Ajit Agarkar. The 36-year-old, who last played for India in the 2023 World Test Championship final, has scored 993 runs in 11 Tests at an average of 47.28 in Australia.

Interestingly, Australian pacer Josh Hazlewood had said that he was happy that Pujara was not in the squad, ahead of the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy series.

'Gambhir as coach was a compromise' Communication, it is learnt, has been a major casualty

in Gambhir's tenure. A PTI report said that skipper Rohit Sharma, who is known to talk to players personally, has not been clarifying to players the reason for their exclusion from the playing XI, since Gambhir took charge.

The head coach and the players are yet to be on the same page, the report added. There is speculation already that if India lose the final Test at Sydney and if their performance in the Champions Trophy is not satisfactory, tough questions will be asked of Gambhir. PTI quoted a senior BCCI official as saying that Gambhir was never the BCCI's first choice as the head coach. Since the other foreign candidates were not willing to coach in all three formats, and because there were "other compulsions", Gambhir was appointed as a "compromise".

Time, and results, will tell if the BCCI would be forced to take a tough call and, perhaps, appoint a different coach for the longer format.

CIL Ranchi Prize Money Marathon official website launched



PC JHA

RANCHI : The Coal India Prize Money Ranchi Marathon organised by the Central Coalfields Limited (CCL) is scheduled on February 9 from Birsa Munda Football Stadium, Morhabadi.

On Wednesday the CCL CMD NK Singh launched at CCL conference hall of the official website for the 3rd edition of the full and half prize money Ranchi marathon.

The CCL CMD giving details about the upcoming marathon said, "The Marathon is registered with Athletic Federation of India (AFI) and the route of the marathon is certified by the Association of International Marathon and Distance Races."

He said, "There are separate categories of run for women and men. The total prize money of the event is Rs 35.10 lakh which will be distributed in different categories. This year top ten runners of each category of full marathon, Half marathon and 10KM run will get prize money." "The winners of full marathon of 42KM run in men

and women categories will get Rs 3.30lakh each while the half marathon winners in both categories will receive Rs 2.20 lakh each. The winners of the 10KM winners would get 1.10 lakh of first position holders," the CCL CMD added.

CCL Director Personal Harshnath Mishra said, "The last date of the registration for runner athletes is January 31st."

"We are trying to contact India's super star athlete Neraj Chora as chief guest of the marathon mega event but till date we are for his confirmation," Mishra said.

He said, "Our ability to conceptualize and organise such a large-scale event with extraordinary success is a testament of CCL's commitment to excellence and innovation. The coal India Ranchi Prize money Marathon is more than just a race, it is movement to inspire people to prioritize their health and fitness. We are proud to have led the way in creating an event that has set the standard for others to follow."

Yuva Kabaddi Series: UP Falcons finish first in Division 2, set to play Chandigarh Chargers in the final

COIMBATORE (TAMIL NADU) : The Division 2 stage of the 11th Yuva Kabaddi Series is heading toward an exciting conclusion as UP Falcons solidified their position at the top and secured a spot in the final against Chandigarh Chargers, according to a release from the Yuva Kabaddi Series.

The Day 9 of Division 2 was hosted at the Karpagam Academy of Higher Education in Coimbatore and featured intense clashes as teams battled to end on a high note.

The opening match saw UP Falcons defeat Delhi Dhurandhars 48-38 in a high-scoring encounter. This victory not only propelled the Falcons to the top of the table but also confirmed their place in the final. Substitute Rachit Yadav turned the game around with a brilliant Super 10, while Navneet Nagar and Ayush Kumar earned High 5s. Delhi's Shubham Bhiduri impressed with 11 points, and Vinod Pal contributed a High 5 off the bench, but the overall team effort fell short against the in-form Falcons.

In the second game, Hampi Heroes defeated Panchala Pride 46-21, consigning the Pride to a winless Division 2 campaign. Raiders Chetan Jangama and Krupasagar D were unstoppable, securing 11 raid points each, while Darshan R added to Hampi's dominance with a High 5. For Panchala, Aditya Kumar displayed a fight with four points each in raiding and defence but received no support from his teammates, leading to yet another disappointing outing.

The third game saw a commanding performance from Chola Veerans, who trounced Sindh Sonics 57-16. Iyappan Veerapandian led the charge with 14 raid points, supported by A Balabharathi's defensive brilliance, as he notched six tackle points.

Sindh's Balraj Singh fought valiantly with nine raid points, but the lack of contributions from the rest of the team made the contest one-sided. In the final match of the day, Vizag Victors registered a strong 48-34 win over Hyderabad Hurricanes. Pirati Srisrivatejesh and Gali Lakshma Reddy were the stars for Vizag, both scoring 11 raid points, while Pavan Gopineedi shone in defence with a High 5.

For Hyderabad, Suresh Oruganti put up a valiant fight with a stunning 18 raid points, but his efforts went in vain as the rest of the team failed to step up.



"Sam didn't take it to heart...": Carey opens up on Konstas-Kohli's 'shoulder bump'

SYDNEY [AUSTRALIA] : Australia wicketkeeper-batter Alex Carey on Wednesday opened up Sam Konstas and Virat Kohli's bumping incident which took place on the first day at the Melbourne Test and said that the Aussie youngster didn't take it to heart.

Australia clinched a thrilling 184-run victory over India in the Melbourne Test and took a 2-1 lead in the series, also ending India's chances of qualifying for the World Test Championship (WTC) Final at Lord's early next year. Currently, Australia lead 2-1 over India in the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Speaking at the pre-match press conference, Carey said that he saw a photo of Konstas and Kohli shaking hands after the end of the Melbourne Test. The wicketkeeper-batter added that he is not 100 per cent sure of what happened between the two cricketers.

"I think I saw a photo of them shaking hands and a little tap on the back. Oh, it's Test Cricket. Yeah, I'm not 100% sure. But Sam didn't take it to heart," Carey said.

The 19-year-old Konstas was called into the squad in place of Nathan McSweeney and had an uphill task to open for Australia in front of a sell-out crowd against a proven Indian pace attack. Konstas was entertaining



throughout his stay on the crease and became a popular face among Australian fans. He made the headlines with a sublime ramp shot off Bumrah in the first inning at the Melbourne Test, declaring his intent to be aggressive even against the brand-new red ball. Konstas' much-anticipated debut in Australia turned out to be one of the most entertaining in a long while. Not only did the 19-year-old make headlines by toying with Indian pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah and scoring 34 of his 60 runs against him, but Virat also got involved in a heated exchange with the youngster after bumping into him, making a direct

physical shoulder-to-shoulder contact. The 36-year-old was fined 20 per cent of his match fee by the International Cricket Council (ICC) and handed over one demerit point for this altercation.

Australia set a target of 340 runs to India at the start of Day 05 of the Melbourne Test. The visitors had the whole day but couldn't make it count. Fiery spells from the Aussie bowling attack bundled out India at 155 in the 80th over.

India will take on Australia in the final match of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy (BGT) at the Sydney Cricket Ground from January 3.

Barcelona hoping to have another financial lever approved to get Olmo registered in time

BARCELONA : Barcelona will need to have another financial lever approved by the Spanish league in order to register playmaker Dani Olmo for the rest of the season after a judge ruled against the club.

It was the second consecutive court setback against Barcelona as it tries to register the player before the end-of-the-year deadline.

Without the court's backing, Olmo's contract can't be registered beyond the end of 2024 unless Barcelona convinces the league that it will be able to make up enough salary cap room to register him in the squad. Olmo moved from Leipzig to Barcelona in August.

Spanish media reported that Barcelona is set to get approval from the league in time after it reached a deal to sell VIP seats at the renovated Camp Nou stadium



for 100 million euros (\$104 million). That would reportedly be enough to allow Barcelona to add Olmo and forward Pau Victor to the squad.

Each Spanish league club has a salary cap which is calculated based on a series of factors that include revenues, costs and debts. It is proportional to roughly 70%

of a club's revenues.

Barcelona has endured difficulties registering some players recently because of its financial struggles. It has resorted to a series of financial levers in recent years, including the sale of future television rights. The club's financial struggles led to the departure of Lionel Messi in 2021.

Verona wins 3-2 at 10-man Bologna in Serie A thanks to late own-goal

ROME : Benjamin Domínguez scored a brace for Bologna but a red card for Tommaso Pobega and a late own-goal by Santiago Castro sent the host team crashing to a 3-2 defeat against Verona in Serie A.

Domínguez scored in the 20th and 58th minutes, either side of a Verona double from Amir Sarr and Casper Tengstedt.

But Pobega's red card, shown for striking an opponent in an off-the-ball incident early in the second half, hampered the home side and with three minutes left on the clock, a free kick from Ondrej Duda hit Castro to wrong-foot his own goalkeeper and give Verona all three points.

The result was a blow to Bologna's hopes of securing a European place and leaves it in seventh place, four points behind Juventus. Verona moved four points clear of the relegation zone.



Como beats Lecce 2-0 Nico Paz missed a first-half penalty earlier Monday but made amends in the second period with the goal that sent Como on its way to a 2-0 win over Lecce in Serie A.

The 20-year-old Argentine international saw his weak spot kick saved by the legs of Wladimiro Falcone after half an hour but he was on target in the

50th minute when he side-footed home from just outside the box.

Patrick Cutrone, who hit the bar early in the game, got a second goal with 10 minutes remaining when he seized on a rebound in the box and slotted home. It was Como's first league win over Lecce since 1994 and lifts it into 15th place, two points and one spot above its opponent.

MCGRATH FOUNDATION TO PROVIDE CARE TO ANYBODY WITH CANCER: SCG CEO KERRIE MATHER

SYDNEY [AUSTRALIA] : Sydney Cricket Ground CEO, Kerrie Mather said that from 2025 onwards the McGrath Foundation is all set to provide care to each and everyone who is suffering from any type of cancer.

The fifth and final Test at Sydney which is also the first Test of the New Year is a special event as it marks the Jane McGrath Day. On the third day of the match venue is covered with a full sea of pink and millions of dollars are typically raised for cancer support and awareness in Australia, as per cricket.com.au.

"Today we are announcing that the new purpose for the McGrath Foundation is that we are going to go beyond the breast and we will start providing care to anybody with cancer. This is a really important moment in time because there are so many people who are without the support that they need. In the last 20 years, the McGrath Foundation has provided care to 150,000 people diagnosed with breast cancer and their loved ones," Kerrie Mather said in the press conference.

Further, the CEO said it is a very big day for the McGrath Foundation.

"It's always a day where we make resolutions and commitments and today is a massive day of change for the McGrath Foundation. It's also a huge day of change for cancer care in Australia," Kerrie



Mather added.

In the end, the CEO concluded by saying that they have got huge support from McGrath Cancer Care Nurse.

"Our focus is going to be on equity of care to make sure that anybody diagnosed with cancer will have the support of a McGrath Cancer Care Nurse. I am so excited that we are joined by the Wendt family today, Jade and David, who are here with their boys. They've travelled all the way from Bundaberg and they truly know what it means to have a nurse but also not have a nurse," Kerrie Mather concluded.

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and took a 2-1 lead in the series, also ending India's chances of qualifying for the World Test Championship (WTC) Final at Lord's early next year. Currently, Australia lead 2-1 over India in the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

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