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The Researchers'

More than 250 Bangkok schools close over air pollution

THAILAND. More than 250 schools in Bangkok were closed on Thursday due to pollution, authorities said, as officials urged people to work from home and restricted heavy vehicles in the city. Seasonal air pollution has long afflicted Thailand, like many countries in the region, as colder, stagnant winter air combines with smoke from crop stubble burning and car fumes. Level of PM2.5 pollutants -- cancer-causing microparticles small enough to enter the bloodstream through the lungs -- hit 122 micrograms per cubic metre. The World Health Organization recommends 24-hour average exposures should not be more than 15 for most days of the year. Bangkok authorities said earlier this week schools in areas with elevated levels of PM2.5 could choose to close. And by Thursday morning, 194 of the 437 schools under the Bangkok Metropolitan Authority had shut their doors, affecting thousands of students. Since 2020, when all schools under BMA authority closed over air pollution. Another 58 schools out of the 156 under the Office of the Basic Education, a central government body, had also decided to close by Thursday.

There are several other schools in the capital under different authorities, and private establishments, but figures for them were not available.

Children are especially vulnerable to the impacts of air pollution, but rights advocates warned that closures disproportionately affect the most vulnerable students.

After Trump withdrawal order, UN says US to exit WHO by January 2026

World. The United States will leave the World Health Organisation on January 22, 2026, the United Nations said on Thursday, after being formally notified of the decision by President Donald Trump, who has accused the agency of mishandling the pandemic and other international health crises. Trump announced the move on Monday, hours after he was sworn in for a second four-year term. The WHO said on Tuesday that it regretted the move from its top donor country. Trump must give a one-year notice of US withdrawal from the Geneva-based body and pay Washington's dues under a 1948 joint resolution of the US Congress. The United States is by far the WHO's biggest financial backer, contributing around 18% of its overall funding. WHO's most recent two-year budget, for 2024-2025, was USD 6.8 billion. It was not immediately clear how much the US owes.

"I can confirm we have now received the US letter on the WHO withdrawal. It is dated January 22, 2025. It would take effect a year from yesterday, on January 22, 2026," said deputy UN spokesperson Farhan Haq. The US departure will likely put at risk programs across the organisation, according to several experts inside and outside the WHO, notably those tackling tuberculosis, the world's biggest infectious disease killer, as well as HIV/AIDS and other health emergencies. The withdrawal order signed by Trump said the administration would cease negotiations on the WHO pandemic treaty while the withdrawal is in progress.

Living in a cage': Checkpoints in Israel-occupied West Bank proliferate after Gaza ceasefire

TAYBEH. Father Bashar Basiel moved freely in and out of his parish in the occupied West Bank until Israeli troops installed gates at the entrance of his village Taybeh overnight, just hours after a ceasefire began in Gaza.

"We woke up and we were surprised to see that we have the iron gates in our entrance of Taybeh, on the roads that are going to Jericho, to Jerusalem, to Nablus," said Basiel, a Catholic priest in the Christian village north of Ramallah.

All over the West Bank, commuters have been finding that their journey to work takes much longer since the Gaza ceasefire started. "We have not lived such a difficult situation (in terms of movement) since the Second Intifada," Basiel told AFP in reference to a Palestinian uprising in the early 2000s. He said he was used to the checkpoints, which are dotted along the separation barrier that cuts through much of the West Bank and at the entrances to Palestinian towns and cities.

Progress made on massive fire north of Los Angeles as new blazes ignite in southern California

LOS ANGELES. Evacuation orders were lifted Thursday for tens of thousands of residents of the Palisades Fire, which was 95% under control Thursday. The two fires have killed at least 28 people and destroyed more than 14,000 structures since they broke out Jan. 7. Rain was expected to start Saturday, according to the National Weather Service. Officials welcomed the wet weather, but crews also were shoring up hillsides and installing barriers to prevent debris flows as residents returned to the charred Pacific Palisades and Altadena areas.

The California fires have overall caused at least \$28 billion in insured damage and probably a little more in uninsured damage, according to Karen Clark and Company, a disaster modeling firm known for accurate post-catastrophe damage assessments. On the heels of that assessment, California Republicans are pushing back against suggestions by President Donald Trump, House Speaker Mike Johnson and others

that federal disaster aid for victims of wildfires should come with strings attached. The state Legislature approved a more than \$2.5 billion fire relief package Thursday, in part to help the Los Angeles area recover from the fires.

Trump plans to travel to the state to see the damage firsthand Friday, but it isn't clear whether he and Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom will meet during the visit. Thousands as firefighters with air support slowed the spread of a huge wildfire churning through rugged mountains north of Los Angeles, but new blazes erupted in San Diego County, briefly triggering more evacuations. Southern California is under a red flag warning for critical fire risk through Friday.

The area has been facing constant challenges in controlling the fires, as dangerous winds gained strength again Thursday. The Hughes Fire broke out late Wednesday morning and in less than a day charred nearly 16 square miles (41 square kilometers) of trees and brush near



Castaic Lake, a popular recreation area about 40 miles (64 kilometers) from the devastating Eaton and Palisades fires that are burning for a third week. Crews made significant progress by late afternoon on the Hughes Fire, with more than one-third of it contained. Two new blazes were reported Thursday in the San Diego area. Evacuations were

ordered but were later lifted after a brush fire erupted in the late afternoon in the wealthy enclave of La Jolla near the University of California, San Diego, School of Medicine.

Further south, near the U.S.-Mexico border, another blaze was quickly spreading through the Otay Mountain Wilderness, home to the

endangered Quino checkerspot butterfly and other unique species.

In Ventura County, a new fire briefly prompted the evacuation of California State University Channel Islands in Camarillo. Water-dropping helicopters made quick progress against the Laguna Fire that erupted in hills above the campus of about 7,000 students.

The evacuation order was later downgraded to a warning. Rain is forecast for the weekend, potentially ending Southern California's months-long dry spell. Winds are also not as strong as they were when the Palisades and Eaton fires broke out, allowing for firefighting aircraft to dump tens of thousands of gallons of fire retardant.

That helped the fight against the Hughes Fire in the Castaic area north of Los Angeles, allowing helicopters to drop water, which kept it from growing, fire spokesperson Jeremy Ruiz said. "We had helicopters dropping water until around 3 a.m. That kept it in check," he said.

'Blatantly unconstitutional': Federal judge blocks Trump's executive order redefining birthright citizenship

Decision prevents Trump administration from taking steps to implement executive order for 14 days. Meanwhile, parties will submit further arguments about merits of Trump's order.



SEATTLE. A federal judge on Thursday temporarily blocked President Donald Trump's executive order redefining birthright citizenship, calling it "blatantly unconstitutional" during the first hearing in a multi-state effort challenging the order. The 14th Amendment to the Constitution promises citizenship to those born on U.S. soil, a measure ratified in 1868 to ensure citizenship for former slaves after the Civil War. But in an effort to curb unlawful immigration, Trump issued the executive order just after being sworn in for his second term on Monday. The order would deny citizenship to those born after February 19 whose parents are in the country illegally. It also forbids U.S. agencies from issuing any document or accepting any

state document recognizing citizenship for such children. Trump's order drew immediate legal challenges across the country, with at least five lawsuits being brought by 22 states and a number of immigrants rights groups. A lawsuit brought by Washington, Arizona, Oregon and Illinois was the first to get a hearing. "I've been on the bench for over four decades. I can't remember another case where the question presented was as clear as this one is," U.S. District Judge John Coughenour told a Justice Department attorney. "This is a blatantly unconstitutional order." Thursday's decision prevents the Trump administration from taking steps to implement the executive order for 14 days. In the meantime, the parties will submit further arguments about the merits of Trump's order. Coughenour scheduled a hearing on Feb. 6 to decide whether to block it

long term as the case proceeds. Coughenour, 84, a Ronald Reagan appointee who was nominated to the federal bench in 1981, grilled the DOJ attorney, Brett Shumate, asking whether Shumate personally believed the order was constitutional. "I have difficulty understanding how a member of the bar could state unequivocally that this is a constitutional order," he added. Shumate assured the judge he did -- "absolutely." He said the arguments the Trump administration is making now have never previously been litigated, and that there was no reason to issue a 14-day temporary restraining order when it would expire before the executive order takes effect. The Department of Justice later said in a statement that it will "vigorously defend" the president's executive order, which it said "correctly interprets the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution." "We look forward to presenting a full merits argument to the Court and to the American people, who are desperate to see our Nation's laws enforced," the department said. The U.S. is among about 30 countries where birthright citizenship -- the principle of jus soli or "right of the soil" -- is applied. Most are in the Americas, Canada and Mexico are among them. The 14th Amendment was ratified in 1868, in the aftermath of the Civil War, to ensure citizenship for former slaves and free African Americans.

How Microsoft powered Israel's war machine in Gaza: Report

World. Leaked internal documents reveal Microsoft's role as a major purveyor of cloud services and artificial intelligence (AI) technology to the Israeli military, with its support picking up pace after Hamas's October 7 attack on Israel ignited the Gaza conflict. A joint investigation by the Guardian, +972 Magazine, and Local Call details how Microsoft bolstered its relationship with Israel's defence establishment following the unprecedented Hamas assault, signing deals worth at least \$10 million. These agreements reportedly provided thousands of hours of technical support, alongside expanded computing and storage services. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF), facing increased demand for computing power after launching its offensive in Gaza, turned to tech companies to scale its infrastructure, triggering a "gold rush". As firms vied for military contracts, Microsoft offered steep discounts to edge out rivals. According to one military commander who spoke to the Guardian, this marked a shift toward "the wonderful world of cloud providers." The documents, first obtained by Drop Site News, show the IDF's reliance on Microsoft, Amazon, and Google for data storage and intelligence analysis grew sharply. Between June 2023 and April 2024, Microsoft's cloud storage usage within the military surged by over 155 per cent, peaking before the Rafah offensive in May 2024. Microsoft's Azure platform and ChatGPT-maker OpenAI's language model tools accounted for nearly 75 per cent of the IDF's usage. These services supported combat and intelligence activities, including projects with Unit 8200, the IDF's elite surveillance division, and Unit 81, which develops advanced spy technology. The tech behemoth was frequently involved in sensitive and highly classified projects. It played a role in maintaining "Rolling Stone," a system that tracks the movement of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. During the military operation in Gaza, Ofek, an air force unit responsible for managing databases of targets for strikes, relied on Microsoft's communication and messaging systems. The leaked files also detail Microsoft's provision of AI tools like Lavender, which reportedly analysed data on 2.3 million Gaza residents to identify potential Hamas connections. The system flagged about 37,000 Palestinians as suspects, according to Tel Aviv-based +972 Magazine. The revelations come as Google also ramped up its support to Israel's Defence Ministry, offering increased access to its AI technologies.

Massive LA wildfires slow down after days of devastation

World. Evacuation orders in Los Angeles were lifted for thousands of residents on Thursday after firefighters succeeded in slowing down the spread of massive fire. The hilly region still remains under a red flag warning for critical fire risk until Friday, with strong winds challenging containment efforts. The Hughes Fire, which erupted near Castaic Lake on Wednesday, quickly engulfed a vast green patch of almost 41 square kilometres of trees and brush. Firefighters had made significant effort by Thursday afternoon, containing about a quarter of the blaze. The lake, a popular recreation spot situated at the distance of 64 kilometres from the sites of the weeks-old Palisades and Eaton fires, also remains under threat. Meanwhile, two new fires broke out in San Diego County on Thursday. A blaze in La Jolla, near the University of California, prompted temporary evacuations before being

brought under control. Another fire near the US-Mexico border spread rapidly through the Otay Mountain Wilderness, home to endangered species like the Quino checkerspot butterfly. Rainfall, which is forecasted for the weekend, has ignited hopes of relief from the months-long dry spell. "We had helicopters dropping water until around 3 a.m., which kept the fire in check," said fire spokesperson Jeremy Ruiz. While nearly 54,000 residents in the Castaic area remain under evacuation warnings, no homes or structures have been reported damaged. Among those affected was Kayla Amara, a nurse from Valencia. She rushed to a friend's home in Castaic's Stonegate neighbourhood to retrieve belongings but found herself hosing down the property as the fire grew. "It's been stressful with those other fires, but now that this one is close to home it's just super stressful," she said. The Palisades Fire is now

almost 75 per cent contained, while Eaton Fire is 95 per cent under control. These two devastating blazes, which began earlier this month, have claimed 28 lives and destroyed more than 14,000 structures. California officials are preparing for potential debris flows as rain approaches, particularly in the Pacific Palisades and Altadena areas, where damage is extensive. Statewide, the fires have caused an estimated \$28 billion in insured damage, with additional losses likely uninsured, according to disaster modelling firm Karen Clark and Company. In response, the California Legislature approved a \$2.5 billion fire relief package on Thursday to assist recovery efforts in Los Angeles and other affected areas. President Donald Trump is set to visit the state on Friday to assess the damage, though it remains unclear whether he will meet with Democratic Governor Gavin Newsom during the trip.

Syria's economic pains are far from over despite Assad's ouster

DAMASCUS. Samir al-Baghdadi grabbed his pickaxe and walked up a wobbly set of stairs made of cinderblocks and rubble. He is rebuilding his destroyed family home in the Qaboun neighborhood near Damascus. The traditional building, which once housed his family, parents and some relatives, had a courtyard decorated with plants and tiled floors where guests were received. But the house, like scores of others nearby, has been reduced to heaps of rubble during years of civil war. Al-Baghdadi can't afford to hire workers or rent a bulldozer to clear the debris and fix the house. He makes just about enough money as a mechanic to feed his family. But he's desperate to rebuild it because he is struggling to pay skyrocketing rent for an apartment. "Economic opportunities are basically nonexistent," al-Baghdadi said, sitting on a pile of rubble and debris where the house's entrance used to be. "So we're going to slowly rebuild with our own hands." Although Syrian President Bashar Assad was toppled last month in a lightning insurgency, the country's dire economic conditions that protesters decried have not changed. The economy has been battered by corruption and 13 years of civil war. Coupled with international sanctions

and mismanagement, inflation skyrocketed, pulling some 90% of the country into poverty. Over half the population -- some 12 million people -- don't know where their next meal will come from, according to the UN World Food Program. With no sign of a full-scale withdrawal of international sanctions and continuing caution among potential overseas investors, the honeymoon period for the country's new rulers could be short-lived. Qaboun, just a stone's throw away from the city center, and other eastern Damascus neighbourhoods became rebel strongholds in 2012, when the country's mass protests against Assad spiraled into all-out war. It suffered government airstrikes and artillery fire, and at one point Islamic State group extremists. In 2017, government forces reclaimed the neighbourhood, but when al-Baghdadi tried to return in 2020, security forces kicked him out and forced him to sign a pledge to never return, saying it was a security zone that was off limits. After Assad's fall, al-Baghdadi was finally able to return. Like many, he was euphoric and hoped it would pave the way for better times despite the many challenges that lay ahead, including rampant power cuts and fuel shortages. For years, Syrian

families have relied on humanitarian aid and remittances from family members living abroad to survive. n top of the gargantuan costs of rebuilding the country's destroyed electricity, water and road infrastructure,



money is needed to restore its battered agriculture and industrial sectors to make its hobbled economy productive again. The United Nations in 2017 estimated that it would cost at least \$250 billion to rebuild Syria. Some experts now say that number could reach at least \$400 billion. Wealthy Gulf countries have pledged to build economic partnerships with Syria's new interim rulers, while Washington

has eased some restrictions without fully lifting its sanctions. The US Treasury Department issued a six-month license authorizing some transactions with Syria's interim government. While it includes some energy sales, Syrians say it isn't enough. Sinan Hatahet, an economic researcher at the Washington-based Atlantic Council think tank, said the US actions were the "bare minimum" needed to show good faith to Damascus and aren't enough to help Syria jumpstart its economy. "It doesn't help the private sector to engage," Hatahet said.

"The restrictions on trade, the restrictions on reconstruction, on rebuilding the infrastructure are still there." While countries are hesitant to make more impactful decisions as they hope for a peaceful political transition, many Syrians say the economy can't wait. "Without jobs, without huge flows of money and investments ... these families have no way of making ends meet," Hatahet said. The executive director of the World Food Program echoed similar sentiments, warning Syria's neighbors that its food and economic crisis is also a crisis of security. "Hunger does not breed good will," Cindy McCain said in an interview during her first visit to Damascus.

Rajnath Singh Unveils USD 278 Million SANJAY Surveillance System for Indian Army

New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh officially launched the 'SANJAY - The Battlefield Surveillance System (BSS)' from South Block, New Delhi, on Friday. SANJAY is an advanced, automated system that integrates data from ground and aerial sensors, ensuring its accuracy, eliminating redundancy, and creating a unified surveillance picture of the battlefield through secure Army Data and Satellite Communication Networks. The system aims to boost battlefield transparency by providing real-time data to Command and Army Headquarters via a centralized web application, supporting the Indian Army Decision Support System. Equipped with cutting-edge sensors and analytics, SANJAY will enhance surveillance along India's extensive land borders, prevent intrusions, and assist in assessing various situations. The



system is expected to be a significant asset for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) operations, enabling commanders to effectively operate in both conventional and sub-conventional settings within a network-centric environment. Developed jointly by the Indian Army and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), SANJAY represents a major step towards achieving 'Atmanirbharta' (self-reliance) in defense technology, as part of the Indian Army's

'Year of Technology Absorption' initiative. The system will be progressively inducted into the Army's Brigades, Divisions, and Corps across three phases, starting in March 2025 and concluding in October 2025, which has been designated as the 'Year of Reforms' by the Ministry of Defence. With a total cost of Rs 2,402 crore (USD 278.42 million), SANJAY was developed under the 'Buy (Indian)' category, marking a significant leap in India's defense modernization efforts.

Trump Administration Launches Major Crackdown, Arrests Over 500 Illegal Immigrants



Washington: The Trump administration has arrested more than 500 individuals involved in illegal immigration and deported hundreds of others as part of a significant enforcement operation, just days after President Donald Trump vowed to intensify efforts to tackle illegal immigration. According to reports, the operation utilized military aircraft to deport those arrested. The White House confirmed the arrests, with 538 individuals detained, and 373 detainees lodged. The names of the arrested individuals were also shared publicly. White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt emphasized President Trump's commitment to securing U.S. borders, telling

Fox News, "President Trump is using every lever of his executive power to ensure the security of our nation... He is sending a very clear message that those attempting to illegally enter the country will face consequences." After securing a significant mandate in the November 5 elections, Trump reiterated his commitment to border security in his inaugural address. "All illegal entry will immediately be halted, and we will begin the process of returning millions of criminal aliens back to their home countries," Trump stated, underscoring his administration's ongoing crackdown on illegal immigration.

Coal Secretary Virtually Inaugurates Smart Classes, ICT Labs



Ranchi: The Secretary of the Ministry of Coal, Vikram Dev Datt, virtually inaugurated the smart classrooms and ICT labs established under the 'Digital Vidya' project by Central Coalfields Limited (CCL). The initiative, aimed at promoting digital education in Jharkhand, has been implemented in 193 government schools across eight districts, including Ranchi, Ramgarh, Hazaribagh, Bokaro, Chatra, Latehar, Giridih, and Pakur. With a total investment of Rs 26.13 crore, the project is being executed by Educational Consultants India Limited (EDCIL). The virtual inauguration ceremony took place at the upgraded middle school in Kishunpur, Tandwa block, Chatra district, with the participation of local villagers, teachers, school management committee members, public representatives, parents, and CCL officials. CCL CMD Nilendu Kumar Singh and Director (Personnel), Harsh Nath Mishra joined the event online, extending their best wishes to students, teachers, parents, and the community. Attendees praised CCL's contribution to shaping a brighter future for students through digital education. This project is expected to significantly strengthen the education system in Jharkhand, preparing students for the digital age and enhancing their future prospects. CCL's commitment to socio-economic development is reflected in this project, showcasing its dedication to providing quality education and technological empowerment to students in the region.

GNLU, NUSRL Sign MoU for Academic & Research Collaboration

Ranchi: Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) and the National University of Study and Research in Law (NUSRL) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen academic and research ties. The MoU was signed by GNLU Director Prof. (Dr.) S. Shanthakumar and NUSRL Vice Chancellor Prof. (Dr.) Ashok R. Patil. The agreement aims to foster collaboration in academic programs, research, and workshops, along with the exchange of students and faculty. It also includes sharing educational materials, library resources, and organizing joint seminars and conferences. Prof. Patil emphasized that this MoU would enhance research and teaching environments at both universities, offering global opportunities for students and faculty.

BCCL Launches Smart Class Facilities in 79 Dhanbad Schools

Dhanbad: Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) has rolled out smart class and ICT lab facilities in 79 government schools across Dhanbad under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative. The project began at Bari Buniyadi Middle School in Jagjivan Nagar and aims to bring digital education to government schools, providing students with the same access to technology as their counterparts in private institutions. BCCL CMD Samiran Dutta stated that the project, which has been in the works for a year, will benefit around 1,00,000 students and 400 teachers in Dhanbad, Baghmara, Egarkund, Govindpur, and Jharia. The total investment of Rs 10.69 crore will cover the cost of Rs 13.54 lakh per school. The initiative also includes teacher training and ICT curriculum implementation, with Giridih district set to benefit in the second phase.

Mithila Cultural Council to Hold General Meeting in Bokaro on 2 February

Bokaro: The Mithila Cultural Council, a renowned social and cultural institution in Bokaro, will hold its general meeting on February 2nd at 11:00 am. The meeting will take place at the council-run Mithila Academy Public School in Sector-4, specifically in the Vidyapati Auditorium. During the meeting, members will discuss future programs and the approval of the newly formed executive committee of the Mithila Cultural Council. Neeraj Chaudhary, the council's general secretary, has urged all general members to attend the meeting.

JEE Main First Session Successfully Conducted in Bokaro



Bokaro: The first session of the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Main, conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA), was held smoothly in Bokaro on Friday. Out of 2069 candidates, 1986 appeared for the exam, with 83 absentees. The three-day exam, from January 22 to 24, took place at two centers: RR Technology in Navadih Murtaand (Chas) and Alpha ICT Center near Dr. S. Radhakrishnan B.Ed. College in Chiksia (Chas). Dr. A. S. Gangwar, NTA City Coordinator and Principal of DPS Bokaro, expressed satisfaction over the successful, peaceful, and malpractice-free conduct of the exam. He thanked all the center staff and district administration for their cooperation. On January 22, 658 candidates appeared with 33 absentees, while on January 23, 676 candidates appeared with 25 absent. On January 24, 652 appeared, and 25 were absent. The second session of JEE Main is scheduled to take place from 1 to 15 April.

10,000 Special Guests Invited to Attend 76th Republic Day Parade in New Delhi



New Delhi: In a move to boost public participation in national celebrations, the government has invited around 10,000 special guests to witness the 76th Republic Day Parade at Kartavya Path on January 26. Among the invitees are volunteers and beneficiaries who have made significant contributions to public service and safety, including AAPDA Mitra volunteers, ASHA workers, Farmers' Producer Organisations (FPOs), PM Kisan Samman Nidhi beneficiaries, and My Bharat Volunteers. The inclusion of these individuals highlights the government's effort to recognize and honor the dedication of those working tirelessly for society's welfare. Pankaj Dass, an AAPDA Mitra volunteer from Pandav Nagar, Delhi, expressed his excitement, calling it a "dream-come-true" moment. Neelam, an ASHA worker from North District, thanked the government for acknowledging their contributions and offering them much-needed recognition.

UN Chief Calls for AI Integration in Global Education Focused on Humanity

RNS: On the occasion of the International Day of Education, UN Secretary-General António Guterres reaffirmed education as a fundamental human right and crucial for both individual and societal development. In his message, he underscored the importance of education in unlocking potential and driving economic growth, while also addressing the opportunities and risks associated with technological advances, particularly Artificial Intelligence (AI). Guterres acknowledged AI's potential to enhance education by providing greater access to information and learning tools for students and teachers but also warned about the risks of misalignments between human intentions and AI-driven impacts. He called for careful and ethical use of AI in education, emphasizing that human rights and agency must remain central to its development.



This year, UNESCO is focusing on AI's role in education, with Director-General Audrey Azoulay urging increased investment in training for both teachers and students. She highlighted the importance of ethical principles to guide AI deployment in schools and the need for AI to complement, not replace, human elements of learning. However, the use of AI in education remains divisive.

Data from UNESCO reveals that while over two-thirds of secondary school students in high-income countries are using AI tools, only 10% of educational institutions have formal guidelines for AI use. Additionally, nearly 40% of nations have imposed restrictions, such as mobile phone bans in schools, as part of efforts to control new technologies. The UN also highlighted the persistent barriers to education, with 250 million children and youth still out of school globally. Despite progress, issues like gender inequality, conflict, and social barriers continue to prevent access to quality education for many children. In closing, Guterres emphasized the need for education systems worldwide to keep humanity at the center, ensuring safe, inclusive, and high-quality education for all.

ISM Hosts International Conference on SRISTI

Dhanbad: IIT-ISM Dhanbad recently hosted the International Conference on Smart, Resilient, and Sustainable Infrastructure (SRISTI), bringing together over 150 civil engineering experts from around the world. The two-day event, organized by the Civil Engineering Department in partnership with the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), focused on exploring innovative and sustainable solutions for infrastructure development. The conference kicked off at the Executive Development Centre, where IIT-ISM Director Professor Sukumar Mishra

delivered the keynote address. The event was attended by notable figures, including Professor Dheeraj Kumar, Deputy Director of IIT-ISM, and Dilip Kumar Dhar, Secretary of ASCE's Eastern Region. The session began with a welcoming speech from Conference Convenor Professor Piyali Sengupta, while Professor Rajib Sarkar concluded with a vote of thanks. In his keynote, Professor Mishra highlighted the importance of a comprehensive approach to infrastructure, emphasizing the integration of mechanical, social, and energy-efficient design prin-

ciples in line with Sustainable Development Goals. Professor Dheeraj Kumar stressed the urgent need for zero-waste and zero-discharge practices to ensure the resilience of infrastructure against climate change. Dilip Kumar Dhar also shared ASCE's rich history of contributions to civil engineering, from its founding in 1852 to its ongoing leadership in technological advancements and professional development. The conference featured keynote speeches from 28 prominent experts, including Professor Fernando Ortiz Quintana from ETH Zurich, Professor Li Bing from Nanyang Tech-

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Delhi Assembly polls: Can Kejriwal bathe in Yamuna, asks UP CM Yogi Adityanath

Yogi further criticised the AAP for creating "false narratives" and focusing more on spreading lies than addressing the public's needs.



New Delhi. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath took aim at Arvind Kejriwal and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) during his first public address in the Delhi Assembly election campaign on Thursday. Addressing BJP candidates Bajrang Shukla (Kirari), Dushyant Gautam (Karol Bagh), and Ashish Sood (Janakpuri), Yogi criticised the Delhi government's handling of the Yamuna and the city's overall infrastructure. Yogi said, "As Chief Minister, I bathed with my 54-member cabinet at

the Sangam in Prayagraj. Can Arvind Kejriwal and his team bathe in the Yamuna? The person who turned Yamuna into a dirty drain should not be forgiven by the people." He went on to highlight the progress Uttar Pradesh has made in recent years under his leadership. Referring to the ongoing Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj, Yogi said, "Over 10 crore devotees have bathed at Sangam between January 13 and 23. The city now boasts improved infrastructure with better roads, electricity, rail and air connectivity. The UP and central governments jointly invested Rs

7,500 crore for the Maha Kumbh, generating over Rs 2 lakh crore for the state's economy and creating thousands of jobs." The CM accused Arvind Kejriwal of being the "biggest criminal" responsible for Delhi's decline. He stated, "Except for the MDMC area, the rest of Delhi is suffering from worsening road conditions, sewage issues, and poor sanitation. The roads are riddled with potholes, garbage is rampant, and sewage flows freely on the streets. The tanker mafia exploits the city's drinking water crisis. The people of Mathura and Vrindavan are also suffering due to Kejriwal's mismanagement." Yogi further criticised the AAP for creating "false narratives" and focusing more on spreading lies than addressing the public's needs. "Had they focused on development as much as they do on falsehoods, Delhi would have transformed in the last decade. Instead, they have turned Delhi into a garbage dump," he added. The CM also accused the AAP of playing a role in instigating unrest in Delhi.

Ajit Pawar Attends Meet, Rearranges Seating For 'Distance' From Sharad Pawar

Pune. Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Thursday attended the annual general body meeting of Vasantdada Sugar Institute (VSI) for the first time since the NCP split in 2023 but sat at an arm's length from NCP (SP) chief and the institute's chairperson Sharad Pawar. Ajit Pawar is a member of the Pune-based VSI, a prominent research institute of the sugar industry. While the two were supposed to sit next to each other as per the initial arrangement, the Deputy Chief Minister moved his nameplate one chair away, allowing state cooperation minister Babasaheb Patil to sit between them. "Babasaheb wanted to speak to Pawar saheb. I can speak to him (Sharad Pawar) anytime. Even if I sat one chair away, my voice is loud enough for someone further away to hear," the deputy Chief Minister explained when asked about this seat rearrangement.



NCP MLA Dilip Walse Patil. Asked about his absence from the annual general body meetings of VSI over the past two years, Ajit Pawar attributed it to his work commitments, adding in a lighter vein that he was "busy thinking about how to get the maximum number of my members elected".

The closed-door meeting centred on issues of the sugar industry and was attended by representatives from agriculture, excise, cooperation, and energy departments, all of which are closely associated with the sugar sector, he pointed out.

NCP (SP) MLA Rohit Pawar said "the two captains coming together for a discussion must be welcomed". Queried about this meeting, Maharashtra BJP chief and state minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule said he did not know if the discussion was political in nature. "If it was political, then Ajit dada had to discuss it among the Mahayuti. If it was personal, then it was purely a family affair," Mr Bawankule said.

During his speech at the meeting, Ajit Pawar suggested increasing the prize money of two awards from Rs 10,000 to Rs 1 lakh. The suggestion was accepted and an announcement to this effect was made by Sharad Pawar during his address. Sharad Pawar, a former Union agriculture minister, addressed the gathering despite being unwell. He was seen coughing during his 18-minute address.

AAP vs BJP Over Punjab Cops' Security Cover For Arvind Kejriwal

The Delhi Assembly election will be held on February 5 and results for the city's 70 seats will be announced three days later - on February 8.

New Delhi. The Aam Aadmi Party and the Bharatiya Janata Party went head-to-head Friday with the Delhi Assembly election less than two weeks away. The clash, though, wasn't over public infrastructure, education, health services, or cost of living in the national capital; it was over the Punjab Police withdrawing additional security cover for AAP boss Arvind Kejriwal.



The police force from the neighbouring state - which is also ruled by the AAP - had been providing the ex-Chief Minister with a security detail, in addition to that from Delhi Police.

But it withdrawn last night after Delhi cops complained to the Election Commission. "Following directions from Delhi Police and Election Commission, we have withdrawn..." Punjab Police chief Gaurav Yadav said, adding details of any threats would be shared with his Delhi counterparts. Arvind Kejriwal is assigned a Z+ protection detail, which consists of 63 security

officers, including a pilot, escort teams, an inner ring of guards, and search-and-frisk units. In addition, 15 uniformed personnel from the Central Armed Police Forces, or the CAPF, are deployed for his protection. The Punjab Police's escort was over and above this security detail.

AAP vs BJP On Punjab Cops' Security All of this has led to a furious spat between the two

parties. The BJP has accused the AAP of "making an issue out of nothing" and has asked, "Are Delhi cops incapable of providing security?"

The AAP, meanwhile, has accused the BJP - which controls the Union Home Ministry, to which office the Delhi Police answer - of having "forcibly removed" Arvind Kejriwal's security. Mr Kejriwal, the party has pointed out, has faced four 'attacks' in as many months, including one in Delhi's Hari Nagar neighbourhood just hours after the Punjab Police escort was removed. Delhi Chief Minister Atishi issued a fierce statement on X, accusing the BJP and its two senior-most leaders - Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah - of "playing with the life" of her party leader. She also slammed the EC for being a "mute spectator". "Shameful. On the instructions of Amit Shah, Delhi Police today forcibly removed Arvind Kejriwal's Punjab Police security.

Gujarat private school gets bomb threat via mail, holiday declared

A private school in Vadodara on Friday received an email at 4 am threatening to blow up the campus, police said.



Vadodara. A private school in Vadodara on Friday received an email at 4 am threatening to blow up the campus, police said. After receiving the bomb threat, school authorities immediately informed the parents and declared a holiday for students and staff to ensure their safety.

"All agencies are actively investigating the matter. Several schools in other states also received similar threat mails yesterday. The authorities are taking no chances. The whole building has been sanitised, and the cyber cell is also trying to trace the email's origin," a senior police official told. While cops have confirmed that there are no credible threats associated with these events, the Vadodara Police have emphasised that ensuring public safety remains at the top of their priorities. Further updates will depend on the findings from the cyber team's ongoing probe into the threat mails, police added.

N Biren Singh slams Congress for criticising his handling of Manipur situation

Imphal. Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Thursday slammed the Congress for its criticism of his government's handling of the present crisis in Manipur, and for also raising its fingers at Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Singh accused the Congress of indulging in unnecessary politics and said the party failed to prioritise Manipur's interests when it was in power in the state. "Did Prime Minister PV Narashima Rao visit Manipur during the 1992-97 ethnic clashes between Nagas and Kukis? Did the PM visit the state when ethnic clashes took place between Paites and Kukis which cost more than 300 people their lives, during 1993-97? So why are they playing politics", Chief Minister Biren Singh asked.

Speaking at a media briefing at the Chief Minister's Secretariat on Thursday, he questioned the sincerity of the opposition. "We want a concrete resolution to the ongoing conflict. This is not a mere political issue. It's a chronic problem created by Congress. They are the ones who caused these issues and are now blaming us. Not just



God, even people won't forgive them," Singh claimed.

Commenting on remarks made by Union Minister Kiren Rijiju, the Chief Minister Singh noted that not everyone is fully aware of the complexities of the state's situation. He emphasised that those

closely dealing with the issue, such as Union Home Minister Amit Shah, understand the realities on the ground. N Biren Singh described Rijiju's comments as his personal opinion and a general observation. Last week, Union Minister Kiren Rijiju said the problem in Manipur was not an uprising against the BJP-led centre but ethnic clashes between two dominant groups - Meiteis and Kukis.

In a bid to deal with misinformation that could flare violence in the state, N Biren Singh issued a stern warning to social media users, urging them to act responsibly or face consequences under the "law of the land," which he stated could have long-lasting effects on their lives. He emphasised that the government will not tolerate hate speech, content inciting communal tensions, or any material that infringes on someone's personal life and negatively impacts families. "It's my earnest appeal to all social media users in Manipur to behave responsibly, ensuring no misunderstandings are created unnecessarily in the state due to irresponsible statements or posts", Biren said, adding that legal action will be taken against violators.

Prove I had non-veg on sacred hill or quit, Muslim League MP dares Annamalai

IUML MP from Ramanathapuram Navas Kani challenged Tamil Nadu BJP chief K Annamalai to prove allegations of consuming non-vegetarian food at Thiruparankundram Murugan temple or resign.

New Delhi. An Indian Union Muslim League MP, accused of eating non-vegetarian food atop a hill housing the famous Thiruparankundram Murugan temple in Tamil Nadu's Madurai district, dared the state BJP chief K Annamalai to prove the charge or resign.



"He (Annamalai) made false accusations. He said that I went to Thiruparankundram temple and ate biryani. I never went to the hill or ate non-vegetarian (food)," Navas Kani, the MP from Ramanathapuram said. The IUML MP asserted that he was being falsely accused. "BJP leaders Annamalai, L Murugan and Vanathi Srinivasan are falsely accusing me of having non-vegetarian food in temple premises," he told India Today, adding, "If Annamalai is unable to prove his allegation, is he

willing to resign?" When asked if someone who accompanied him ate non-vegetarian food he said: "I didn't go to the hill. Nobody came with me. Nobody ate non-vegetarian food who accompanied me."

However, this was a marked change from what he told India Today the previous day. On Thursday, he said he didn't eat non-vegetarian food, but someone else did. The controversy of non-vegetarian food erupted after the police stopped animals from being transported to the Thiruparankundram hill, on which Sikandar Badusha Dargah is also located, apart from the Arulmigu Subramaniaswamy Temple.

Massive blast at ordnance factory in Maharashtra's Bhandara, 6 critical

As a result of the blast, a roof collapsed with 12 people stuck inside. While two have been rescued, ten people are still stuck inside, according to district officials.

Mumbai. A powerful explosion was reported at an ordnance factory in Maharashtra today. According to initial reports, at least 6 people have been critically injured.

The blast took place at 10 am in Maharashtra's Bhandara district. According to initial reports, the blast took place at the factory's RK Branch section.

As a result of the blast, a roof collapsed with 12 people stuck inside. While two have been rescued, ten people are still stuck inside, according to district officials. "After the accident blast in Ordnance Factory Jawahar



Nagar Bhandara, firefighters and ambulances have been dispatched to the spot and a rescue operation is currently underway. A roof has collapsed which is being removed with the

help of JCB," a district official told news agency.

Several ambulances and firefighters have been rushed to the site. Fire department personnel, police officials, the land revenue officer, and other administrative officials reached the spot of the blast. The State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) has also been deployed. Reacting to the ordnance factory blast, Maharashtra Congress chief Nana Patole said, "This is the failure of the Modi government." The cause of the explosion is not yet known. An investigation is underway.

Lives, not machines: Human cost of overwork

While Infosys founder Narayana Murthy keeps advising the young generation—the bunch of software engineers and other techno-managers—to work for 70 hours a week, Larsen and Toubro chairperson SN Subrahmanyam has begun to plead for a 90-hour workweek, including Sundays, to promote competitiveness and efficiency.

Never mind that, as far as the findings of the International Labour Organisation are concerned, India ranks 13th among the world's most overworked countries! Furthermore, 62 per cent of the Indian employees experience severe burnout—three times the global average. And this is one of the top occupational risk factors contributing significantly to disease and early death. Have these corporate bosses forgotten so early the tragic tales of the death of Anna Sebastian Perayil—a 26-year-old Ernst and Young employee in Pune — because of work-related stress? No, it is not an aberration. As the 'Healthy Work Survey' conducted by the US-based Centre for Social Epidemiology reveals, there are more than 1,20,000 deaths caused by work stress every year in the world. There are three reasons why we must resist this sort of insensitivity, or the act of reducing a human being into a mere 'resource' for enhancing the mythical 'productivity'. First, as the kind of work most of us are compelled to do for survival or economic mobility, far from being inherently fulfilling and creative, causes alienation, estrangement and existential anguish. Converse with a software engineer sitting in front of the laptop in a tiny cubicle, fulfilling the ever-expanding 'targets' and, thereby, spending sleepless nights; engage with an employee in a crowded bank, counting cash from 9 am to 5 pm without a breathing space; or, for that matter, talk to a delivery boy running like a horse to supply — quickly and instantly — what the affluent classes from their gated societies order. It is quite unlikely that they will say that they are happy with what they do. They do it because they have to survive, pay the house rent, give their medical insurance premium or send their kids to schools. In fact, asking them to work more, or to teach them the lessons of 'hard work' is the worst form of psychic violence the insensitive corporate elites can inflict on them. The fact is that most of us are psychologically wounded and feel extreme form of alienation and boredom in our workplaces. However, for these business tycoons, it seems, we are nothing but mere 'resources', to be extracted continually till we break down. Second, when these corporate elites lecture on long working hours for India's economic prosperity, they safely forget to mention that without distributive justice, the nation's prosperity will mean essentially the prosperity of the select billionaires, or a tiny section of the upwardly mobile professional class, like techno-managers, doctors in private hospitals, and real estate entrepreneurs. Thanks to an Oxfam report, we know that the top 10 per cent of Indian population holds 77 per cent of national wealth. Is it, therefore, surprising that India has 185 billionaires — the third largest in the world after the US and China? Keep your eyes open and see the manifestations of this gross inequality.

For instance, while Narayana Murthy's net worth is not less than \$520 crore, the estimated total package for a fresher at Infosys is Rs 3-to-5 lakh per annum. While the Ambanis can spend Rs 5,000 crore for their son's lavish wedding, it is exceedingly difficult for a construction worker to earn more than Rs 700 per day, or a delivery boy Rs 13,000 per month. Is it because they are lazy? Or, is it because the system that the corporate elites seek to hide is inherently violent and exploitative? In this context, I must say that it is equally important for people like us — I mean middle class, university-educated professionals who are complaining against this kind of long working hours — to look at ourselves critically, accept our hypocrisy and admit that we, too, do not necessarily behave nicely, eg with the entire brigade of domestic helps. Quite often, we pressure them to work even on holidays or in festive seasons.

Budget shouldn't disappoint as economy is on an even keel

The govt still has to keep financing capital investment and infrastructure. It should give up the thought that it can step back so that the private sector can take over.

THE Union Budget looks ahead for several key pointers: signals for key sectors of industry and agriculture; public investment in foremost infrastructure sectors like electricity, roads and railways; how the fiscal scene (the government's own finances) is likely to fare during the year; and, of course, the average citizen's keenness to find out if the income tax burden will go up or down. With inflation under control and growth going steady at 6 per cent plus, there is no serious concern over the economy and the tax collection. There are, however, some imponderables. Will we be able to keep buying Russian oil at a decent price with US sanctions being tightened? But the overarching concern and the greatest imponderable is the way in which the country and the world will cope as the planet gets hotter and extreme climate events like drought and floods keep coming. And what it will do to agriculture, from which many poor people eke out an existence. The expectation is that the fiscal deficit in the coming financial year will be pitched lower at 4.5 per cent from the likely deficit in the current fiscal of 4.8 per cent. This will bring the number in line with the medium-term fiscal goal. From this, it is clear that we are looking at a small realignment and not a serious overhaul. As against this, a sharper change will be sought and expected in capital expenditure, seeking to take it up by 12-13 per cent to Rs 11 lakh crore. This is because where the capital spending goes matters a lot to roads, highways and railways. Plus, there is an expectation that interest-free loans for capital expenditure will continue to be passed onto the states so as to raise regional infrastructure growth. Capital expenditure will be delivered because the revenue part will be expected to coast along evenly. This will be enabled by indirect taxes growing at 8.8 per cent, with the GST (goods and services tax) expected to grow by 10.5 per cent, reflecting a resilient domestic consumption. Direct tax revenue, in good part from taxes paid by companies out of their profits, will grow healthily at 11.8 per cent as the base of companies will grow, with the economy growing healthily and corporate profitability remaining stable. With the economy

expected to remain on an even keel, let us examine what individual industries have mentioned in their wish lists as they have met government representatives so as to build a castle firmly anchored in the ground and not in the air. Technology moves forward with funding and incentives for research and development (R&D). The tech sector, which is rolling in money, still seeks government support as hugely important new sectors are emerging, like artificial intelligence, block chain and quantum computing. These can transform daily life as well as businesses and enable future growth. Right behind is the healthcare sector, without whose robustness the people will not be

healthcare. Students of high schools and colleges should be able to access the digital knowledge world and download e-books so that the age of the photocopier is left far behind. The government must to develop the IT backbone and take it to villages so that youngsters can use their smartphones, which will have to work as mini libraries. And, of course, the smartphones will perform with signals from towers or satellites. The need for power and signals for smartphones brings us back to infrastructure. Along with power, the villages will need roads, which must lead to highways and railway lines so that youngsters can easily go to coaching schools to prepare for competitive examinations and those who

do well can go and live in towns where better jobs are offered. In sum, the government still has to keep financing capital investment and infrastructure. It should give up the thought that it can step back so that the private sector can take over. Here, the Budget will have a critical role to play. In the old days, the Budget presentation, through which the country came to know about it, was overblown. The country stopped to pause to hear or see the Finance Minister through radio or TV and the media spent endless hours trying to highlight a few aspects of the Budget. This gave the minister a chance to do a good bit of grandstanding. Today, the Budget papers are released online, allowing the media, analysts and



healthy or be able to provide the skills that will be the sinews of technology. And the way to begin is at the bottom, with rural healthcare facilities. These will have to be revolutionised by telemedicine, which will deliver better care at controlled costs. If we jump to the top of the sector, the aspects we see before us are pharmaceuticals and medical equipment. India is already the global leader in affordable medicines, which have to go up the ladder as new chemicals or molecules are invented all over the world. These must be made in India and these will have to be offered at the village level itself, through prescriptions generated by telemedicine. And there will have to be cameras and scanners to capture the images which will have to be generated. This will need the government to help out. To transform countryside education, it must go hand in hand with

corporates to pore over the numbers quickly to come to their conclusions.

But some of the mystique still remains, particularly for the layman, who wants to know whether he will have to pay more or fewer taxes and turns to the tax accountant to find out if his tax bill will go up or not. The layman forgets that since the time when Manmohan Singh, as Finance Minister, transformed the economy, incomes tax rates for individuals have gone down. But the layman does not notice it as he sees his tax bill going up and forgets that his income has gone up much more. What he also does not notice is that the present dispensation has introduced the revolutionary GST regime, which has lowered taxes that consumers have to pay through sales tax and excise duty; he thinks he is paying a lot more as GST, when, in fact, he is consuming a lot more.

Letdown for Abhaya

CBI must dig deeper into rape-murder case

LESS than six months after a doctor's horrifying rape-murder at a state-run hospital in Kolkata sparked a nationwide outrage, a district and sessions court has sentenced convict Sanjoy Roy to life imprisonment until death. Justifying his decision to reject the CBI's demand for the death penalty, the judge has observed that the crime did not fall in the "rarest of the rare" category. The verdict has been given the thumbs-down not only by the victim's parents but also by the ruling Trinamool Congress and its main political rival in West Bengal, the BJP. It's obvious that the last word on this case has not yet been said or written. Perhaps no other crime has evoked so much anger and revulsion across the country since the Nirbhaya gangrape-murder of December 2012. A doctor duty-bound to save the life of every patient entrusted to her care was sexually assaulted and killed; it was undoubtedly an act of bone-chilling brutality.



Circumstantial evidence seems to have proved Roy's guilt beyond any doubt. Thus, it's baffling that the Abhaya case

was not regarded as the "rarest of the rare". The controversial judgment has left several questions unanswered: Was this really a 'lone wolf' incident? If not, who were the convict's accomplices and what was their role in the crime? Has the CBI thoroughly probed all aspects of the case? And what about the lapses on the part of the hospital authorities?

Even as the CBI must get to the bottom of the matter, the unsavoury political slanging match should be avoided. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has claimed that had the case been handled by the Kolkata Police, the death penalty would have been a certainty. The BJP, in its turn, has demanded an investigation into the alleged role of then Kolkata Commissioner and the CM in the destruction of vital evidence. This is an unfortunate turn of events. One thing is clear: Abhaya deserves nothing less than complete justice. This must be ensured for the sake of every daughter of the nation.

Empower CAPFs with designated roles for a safer India

The CAPFs must have their own integral cadres, like the Coast Guard. The army, too, should yield control of the Assam Rifles.

The spurt in terrorist incidents in Rajouri-Doda-Kathua last year was blamed on gaps in the security grid caused due to pulling out of the army division for the more pressing task of beefing up deployment to combat the Chinese build-up on the northern border. Even after this much-belated rebalancing, described as RB-1.0, we have just around 30 per cent force level deployed against China, our main adversary on the northern borders. Out of the balance, 30-40 per cent is deployed to combat the proxy war in J&K.

Notwithstanding the recent agreement on the restoration of patrolling in Depsang and Demchok, it is imperative to maintain vigil and enhance the deployment levels. The army is reportedly working on RB-2.0. The critical determinant for such rebalancing is whether the designated forces — the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and police — would rise to the challenge and free the army for addressing the primary challenge. The CAPFs, with around 10,45,750 personnel, comprise seven formidable forces for maintaining law and order, internal security (IS) and counter-insurgency (CI) and protecting the borders. They can be broadly grouped as per their functions. The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) is meant for industrial and airport security. The Ministry of Railways also has a 75,000-strong Railway Protection Force (RPF). The question is whether the overburdened Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) should give control of the CISF to the designated ministries of aviation and industry, like the RPF. The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) is mandated to beef up the state police forces for maintaining law and order and internal security. It was created as a reserve to the state police forces. Besides the regular constabulary, most states have around 10 armed police battalions, funded by the Central government, with a shared understanding

on their deployment. These are also referred to as the Rapid Action Force (RAF). Then, there are the Border Security Force (BSF), the Indo-Tibet Border Police (ITBP), the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) and the Assam Rifles (AR). Their mandate is border management (BM). The Kargil Review Committee in 1991 had enunciated the principle of 'one border, one force' for border management and it recommended that the CRPF be dedicated for internal security. Consequently, rationalisation was attempted: the BSF for Pakistan and Bangladesh, the ITBP for China, the SSB for Nepal and Bhutan and the AR for Myanmar.

Each border has its own challenges. There is the problem of narcotics delivery by drones in Punjab, cattle and human trafficking on the Bangladesh border and terrorist intrusions in J&K. The Pakistan border is properly fenced in the International Border (IB) sector and has a modified fencing along the Line of Control (LoC). The Bangladesh border is approximately 80 per cent fenced, but it has treacherous riverine and jungle stretches. Except for the 60-odd km out of 1,643 km, the border with Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet — the Line of Actual Control (LAC) — and Myanmar is unfenced. Border management has two categories: border guarding or patrolling on settled borders and border defence on active frontiers (LoC and LAC), where the BSF and ITBP work in supportive role with the army.

The Assam Rifles is dual-tasked for the Myanmar border and the counter-insurgency role in the NE. It is paramilitary in nature as the officer cadre is from the army on a deputation basis. The challenges of managing internal security and counter-insurgency are such that battalions of the CRPF, BSF, ITBP, SSB

and AR are deployed in Manipur, reflecting the fire-brigade response of mustering whatever and whoever is available.

The force mix in J&K is similar, though the Rashtriya Rifles (RR), CRPF and J&K Police have become the main components. However, the recent induction of Assam Rifles units in J&K is indicative of the fire-fighting approach. The reputation of the AR — the



original mainstay of North-East — has been tarnished in Manipur. It is not only unfortunate but also shortsighted. If there are black sheep in a force, fix them by all accounts, but why trash the 189-year-old legacy? The National Security Guard (NSG) or Black Cat Commandos are on the other end of the spectrum. They do specialised counter-terrorism work, including hostage rescue. The combined strength of the CAPFs and the armed police

battalions matches that of the army in numbers. They also enjoy similar benefits in pay and perks and wear a similar uniform. They have recently even created similar sounding HQs, like the Command HQ, further adding to confusion. The first and foremost requirement is empowerment of the CAPFs for their designated roles. It is predicated on the implementation of the police reforms recommended by the Prakash Singh Committee. They have been duly reiterated by the Supreme Court. While the states have not implemented the suggested reforms, the Union government can set the pace for empowering the CAPFs and police in states ruled by NDA governments. Next, the CAPFs have roles that require specialisation and force ethos. The use of the CAPFs as a cadre management avenue for senior ranks in the IPS needs to be reviewed. Para-dropping in CAPFs at apex ranks and shifting of DGs degrade cadre cohesion. The CAPFs must have their own integral cadres, like the Coast Guard. The army, too, should yield control of the Assam Rifles.

Regarding the border defence role, the BSF on the LoC and the ITBP on the LAC should operate under the undiluted operational control of the army. Additionally, the large-scale deployment of the CAPFs for elections has impacted their availability for other mandated tasks. The electoral process should be made less dependent on the CAPFs, with the police and Home Guards shouldering the challenge. The influx of infiltrators as an electoral issue has resulted in the counter-accusation that border management is ineffective and porous.

सर्दियों में कैसे बचाएं अपने दिल को

बदलते लाइफ स्टाइल के इस दौर में हार्टअटैक के मामले ज्यादा देखने को मिल रहे हैं। पहले लोगों का ऐसा मानना था कि 60 वर्ष से ऊपर के बुजुर्ग ही इसकी चपेट में आते हैं, परन्तु अब ऐसा नहीं रह गया है। 30 से 40 साल के लोगों में भी इसका खतरा होता है। वैसे तो हार्ट अटैक कभी भी हो सकता है परन्तु जाड़े में ऐसे मरीजों का औसत दर ज्यादा बढ़ जाता है। इसका मुख्य कारण जाड़े में खून की नलियों का सिकुड़ना है। राजेंद्र आयुर्विज्ञान एवं प्रशिक्षण संस्थान, रांची के डॉक्टर संजय सिंह का कहना है कि जाड़े में खून की नलियां ज्यादा सिकुड़ती हैं। जब खून की नलियां सिकुड़ने लगेंगी तब रक्त का प्रवाह धीरे-धीरे कम होने लगेगा, जिससे हार्ट अटैक की आशंका बढ़ जाती है।

बचाव के उपाय - डॉक्टर संजय के अनुसार जब ठंड ज्यादा बढ़ जाए तो उससे बचने के लिए कुछ बातों का ध्यान रखना जरूरी है। सुबह टहलने वाले लोग मौसम के अनुकूल अपने समय में बदलाव करें। ज्यादा सुबह न निकलें। ज्यादा दूरी तक न टहलें। जो लोग ब्लडप्रेशर, हार्ट, शुगर आदि के मरीज हैं वे डॉक्टर से जरूर सलाह लें।

खाने में क्या लें - मौसमी फल, सलाद एवं आंवले जरूर लें। सलाद में भी प्याज एवं टमाटर ज्यादा से ज्यादा लें।

लक्षण - जब अपने शरीर में अप्रत्याशित बदलाव महसूस करें। जैसे ज्यादा पसीना आना, घबराहट, चक्कर आना एवं सीने में दर्द महसूस होना। पेट खराब एवं उल्टी होना ठंड लगने के लक्षण हैं। जैसे ही इसका अहसास हो, डॉक्टर के पास तुरंत जाएं।



वेडिंग डाइट प्लान

फिट रहना हर किसी के लिए जरूरी है, लेकिन होने वाली दुल्हन के लिए अपनी सेहत और फिटनेस पर ध्यान देना अनिवार्य है। दौड़भाग, शादी की तैयारियां और तनाव के चलते डाइट पर कंट्रोल करना मुश्किल होता है। फोटोस हॉस्पिटल की चीफ डाइटेशियन किरण दलाल और वलीनिकल न्यूट्रिशनलिस्ट निधि सरिन बता रही हैं भावी दुल्हन अपनी डाइट का प्लान कैसे करे कि वजन नियंत्रित रहे....

आमतौर पर लड़कियों का वजन शादी से पहले तीन कारण से बढ़ता है- भागदौड़, तनाव और लगातार पार्टी। इसी तरह शादी के बाद वजन बढ़ने के तीन मुख्य कारण हैं- प्रेग्नेंसी, शादी के बाद परिवार, घर और अन्य जिम्मेदारियों में इतना व्यस्त हो जाना कि खानपान पर ध्यान न दे पाना, पति के साथ उनकी तरह ही पोर्शन लेना, जाने-अनजाने वे एक्स्ट्रा कैलोरी ले लेती हैं। एक बार फैट शरीर पर चढ़ने लगता है तो उसे रोकना काफी मुश्किल होता है। बेहतर होगा अगर पहले से ही खानपान की कुछ आदतों पर अमल किया जाए और डाइट प्लान बनाया जाए। अगर आप शादी से पहले और बाद में अतिरिक्त वजन को हटाना चाहती हैं तो यहा दी गई बातों पर गौर फरमाएं।

शादी से पहले

- अपने दिन की शुरुआत नींबू मिले गर्म पानी से करें। इसमें ऊस किए हुए पुदीने के पत्ते भी मिला सकती हैं।
- जब भूख लगे सूप या जूस पिएं।
- अगर आप कैलोरी में कटौती करना चाहती हैं तो सबसे पहले चीनी, आइसक्रीम, केक, पेस्ट्री और प्रोसेस्ड फूड को अपने आहार से हटाएं।

- रोजाना के हिसाब से अपना लक्ष्य बनाएं। प्रतिदिन आपको 1,600 कैलोरी मिलनी चाहिए, लेकिन इससे कम करने की कोशिश करें। यह ध्यान रखें कि दिनभर में आपको कम से कम तीन मीलस और दो स्नेक्स मसलन फल या रोस्टेड नट्स या फिर स्टीम्ड फर्मेंटेड फूड लेने हैं।
- दिन की शुरुआत के लिए ब्रेकफास्ट बहुत जरूरी है। इसमें मीठे से बचें। लो फैट मिल्क प्रोडक्ट्स को प्राथमिकता दें। एक-दो सर्विंग मल्टीग्रेन सीरियल, स्पाउटस या बींस और कटे हुए फल लें। इससे आपको ब्रेकफास्ट से लगभग 300 कैलोरी मिलेगी। बाकी कैलोरी आपको लंच और डिनर से मिलनी चाहिए।

- लंच/डिनर में होलग्रेन सीरियल, दालें या ग्रिल्ड फिश या चिकेन के एक टुकड़े के साथ लो फैट प्रोबायोटिक दही, सलाद और एक बोल स्टीम्ड रंगीन सब्जियां लें।
- शादी से एक महीने पहले अचानक पांच किलो वजन घटाना भी ठीक नहीं है। अगर ऐसा चाहती हैं तो इसके लिए आपको शादी से छह महीने पहले अपने आहार पर ध्यान देना होगा। इसका सीधा असर आपके बाल और त्वचा पर पड़ेगा।
- अच्छी त्वचा के लिए गाजर, एप्रिकॉट, पीले और नारंगी रंग के फल व सब्जियां खाएं। पालक और अन्य हरी पत्तेदार सब्जियों को प्राथमिकता दें। टमाटर खाएं, उसमें लाइकोपीन पाया जाता है।
- अखरोट खाएं, इसमें ओमेगा फैटी एसिड पर्याप्त मात्रा में पाया जाता है, जो बालों को चमकदार और त्वचा को बेहतर बनाता है।

- दिनभर में चार-पांच कप ग्रीन टी पिएं।
- इस दौरान अल्कोहॉल व धूम्रपान से दूर रहें।
- सैलेड, सूप और फलों का सेवन करने से फैटी एसिड मिलेगा, जिससे आपको एनर्जी भी मिलेगी।
- त्वचा में पानी की कमी न होने दें। दिनभर में पर्याप्त पेय पदार्थ जैसे जूस, सूप, पानी खूब पिएं।

शादी के बाद

- जो कुछ भी खाएं धीरे-धीरे और खुश होकर खाएं। टीवी के सामने या बात करते हुए न खाएं। धीमी गति से खाने से आपको जल्दी ही पेट भरा हुआ महसूस होगा।
- ब्रेकफास्ट एक साथ करें। जिसमें एक बाउल फर्स्ट्स, मूसली या फिर ओटमील हो।
- लंच में हरी सब्जियों वाला सूप जरूर लें। नॉन वेजेटेरियन हैं तो प्रॉन्स को प्राथमिकता दें।
- उस समय कर्टई न खाएं, जब आप तनाव या गुस्से में हों।
- ब्लैक कॉफी, जंक फूड, चाय से जहा तक हो सके दूर रहें। रिफाइंड प्रोडक्ट से बचें।
- पार्टनर के साथ एक्सरसाइज जरूर करें। फिजिकल एक्टिविटी बढ़ाने से दिल की सेहत अच्छी रहती है। कोलेस्ट्रॉल और ब्लडप्रेशर नियंत्रित रहता है। डिनर के बाद रोजाना एक घंटा टहलने का लक्ष्य बनाएं।
- एक-दूसरे के पोर्शन को मेच न करें, क्योंकि पुरुषों को दिनभर में अलग कैलोरी और स्त्रियों को भिन्न कैलोरी की जरूरत होती है। पुरुषों को स्त्रियों की अपेक्षा अधिक कैलोरी की जरूरत होती है।
- जो भी खाएं पौष्टिक हो, लेकिन खाने की मात्रा हमेशा ध्यान में रखें।
- सब कुछ खाएं, लेकिन सीमित मात्रा में ताकि आप फिट और स्वस्थ रहें। संतुलित डाइट लें। खाने पर नियंत्रण का यह मतलब नहीं कि आप एक्सरसाइज करना छोड़ दें। साथ-साथ वह भी जरूरी है।



डांस करके घटाइए वजन

डांस के दौरान हाथ-पैरों के साथ ही पूरे शरीर की एक्सरसाइज हो जाती है। डांस करने से शरीर का ब्लड सर्कुलेशन बहुत तेज होता है, साथ ही शरीर की मांसपेशियों पर भी काफी खिंचाव पड़ता है, जो स्वस्थ बनाए रखता है। मोटापे से ग्रसित वे लोग, जिन्हें योगा और जिम जाना अच्छा नहीं लगता है, डांस के द्वारा मोटापे पर नियंत्रण पा सकते हैं। जी हां, डांस करने से मनोरंजन तो होता ही है, साथ ही इससे पूरे शरीर की कसरत भी हो जाती है। यह खुद को फिट रखने का सबसे अच्छा तरीका है। इससे शरीर के हर एक अंग की अच्छी कसरत हो जाती है। हर रोज डांस करने से पूरा शरीर स्वस्थ रहता है। डांस का दिमाग पर भी अनुकूल असर पड़ता है। इससे शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य के साथ-साथ मानसिक स्वास्थ्य भी ठीक बना रहता है। जो लोग थोड़ी देर तक ही सही लेकिन नियमित डांस करते हैं, उनको मोटापे की समस्या नहीं होती और वे स्वस्थ बने रहते हैं। डांस फ्लोर पर कम से कम पांच मिनट डांस करने मात्र से शरीर की तीस कैलोरी ऊर्जा बर्न हो जाती है। शोधकर्ताओं का कहना है कि जो लोग कम उम्र में ही डांस करना शुरू कर देते हैं, उन्हें कम तनाव होता है और उनकी सेहत फिट बनी रहती है।

मन को जोड़ें सांसों से

मन को काबू में करने का मतलब है अपनी अनियंत्रित विचारशैली को नियंत्रित करना। मन को सांसों से जोड़िए। प्राणवायु से जुड़ते ही बेलगाम मन पर नियंत्रण करना आसान हो जाएगा। अपने विचारों को रोकने का प्रयास करें। विचार रुकते ही मन धीमा होगा, इसे फिर सांसों से जोड़ दें। मन का सांस से गहरा संबंध है। मन सारी इंद्रियों का स्वामी है और सांस मन का। इसलिए ध्यास के नियंत्रण से हम चित्त को स्थिर करके आंतरिक शांति प्राप्त कर सकते हैं। जब भी बेचेनी हो, मन अशांत हो, तनाव हो, तो पद्मसन में बैठकर सांस भीतर खींचे, उसे थोड़ी देर भीतर ही रोकें, फिर धीरे-धीरे छोड़ दें। ऐसा प्रयोग दिन में दो-तीन बार करने से आप काफी सहज महसूस करेंगे।

एलोवेरा बनेगा किडनी का सुरक्षा कवच

वनस्पतियों में छिपे औषधीय गुणधर्म हजारों साल से जीवन को संजीवनी देते रहे हैं, लेकिन उनके अनुसंधान पर परिणामी काम नहीं हुआ। अंग्रेजी दवाओं की भेंट चढ़ती जिंदगी में फिर से जान फूंकने के लिए चिकित्सा जगत आयुर्वेद की शरण में खड़ा है। लाला लाजपत राय मेडिकल कॉलेज के फार्माकोलोजी विभाग में गिलोय के बाद अब एलोवेरा पर चल रहे एक शोध में इसे किडनी रोगों पर अत्यंत लाभकारी पाया गया है। चरक संहिता में भी एलोवेरा को औषधीय गुणों से लवरेज बताया गया है, किंतु वैज्ञानिक शोध पर आधारित पुष्टि की कमी रही। फार्माकोलोजी विभाग की एमडी की छात्रा डॉ. शालिनी वीरानी ने चूहों पर किए गए एक शोध में पाया कि एलोवेरा के सेवन से एक माह में उनकी किडनी पूरी तरह ठीक हो गई।

महंगी डायलिसिस से मिलेगी निजात

किडनी रोगियों की संख्या बढ़ने से चिकित्सा के समक्ष एक कठिन चुनौती है। एलोपैथिक में किडनी रोगियों को डायलिसिस पर रखा जाता है, जो महंगा होने के साथ-साथ साइड इफेक्ट भी करता है। एलोवेरा से किडनी रोगों में चमत्कारिक सुधार के संकेत से अब विभाग ट्रायल का दूसरा चरण शुरू करेगा। बाद में इसके पेटेंट के लिए आवेदन किया जाएगा।



सर्दी-जुकाम-खासी को ऐसे दें शिकस्त

सर्दियों का मौसम आम तौर पर स्वास्थ्य के लिए अच्छा माना जाता है, किंतु यदि आप कफ विकार से ग्रस्त है तो इससे आप सर्दियों के पूरे मौसम में जुकाम-खासी व सांस रोग से परेशान हो सकते हैं। प्रस्तुत हैं, इन तकलीफों से निजात पाने के उपाय

- ठंडा पानी या ठंडे पेय लेने के बजाय गुनगुना पानी पिएं। अदरक डालकर सब्जियों का सूप पिएं।
- तेज भूख लगने पर ही भोजन करें, क्योंकि कम भूख या भूख के बगैर भोजन लेने से हाजमा सही नहीं होगा और कफ बनेगा।
- गेहू के आटे में चौथाई या आधी मात्रा में चने का आटा मिलाकर रोटी बनाएं। यदि चावल खाना है, तो उसमें काली मिर्च, तेज पत्ता आदि गर्म मसाला मिलाएं।
- भोजन खूब चबाकर करें और भूख से थोड़ा कम खाएं।
- कब्ज न रहने दें। इसके लिए प्रातः गर्म पानी पीकर व्यायाम करने के बाद शौच जाएं।
- दिन में तीन से चार बार सरसों का या बादाम का तेल 4-5 बूंद नाक में डालकर कफ निकालें।
- नासिका क्षेत्र में मैग्नेट का साउथ पोल 5 मिनट तक घुमाने से साइनोसाइटिस में लाभ मिलता है।
- पीठ की ओर से गर्म पानी की थैली से सुबह शाम सेंक करने से फेफड़ों की सर्दी बहुत जल्दी दूर हो जाती है।

सावधानियां

- रात को बायीं करवट सोएं।
- कानों में ठंडी हवा का झोंका न लगे, इसके लिये कान में रुई लगाए रखें।
- अगर आप जलनेति करते हैं, तो उसके बाद विरेचन प्राणायाम करें।
- खुले पैर घास में न टहलें।
- ठंडे खाद्य व पेय पदार्थ ग्रहण न करें।



NEWS BOX

Australian Open: Novak Djokovic retires with injury in semis, Zverev into final

Australian Open 2025: Seventh seed Novak Djokovic retired from his semi-final match against Alexander Zverev at the Rod Laver Arena after losing the first set.

New Delhi On Thursday, Djokovic, reportedly, also cancelled his training session, mostly as a precautionary measure before the all-important semi-final. In the match against Zverev, Djokovic again came in with his leg taped-up. This time around, after he couldn't come up trumps in the first set, he decided to throw in the towel. In the first set, Djokovic got three chances to break Zverev's serve, but could not convert any of them. Zverev dominated him with eight aces and 24 winners, but Djokovic managed to hold his nerve and take the set into a tie-break.

At 6-6, it was even Stevens before Djokovic lost the set after an unforced error. Djokovic was looking for his 11th title in the hard court



major and his 100th win in the Australian Open, but the veteran has to wait for a year to achieve the landmarks. Djokovic has had his fair share of trouble with injuries in the last 12 months. Last year at Roland Garros, he withdrew due to a right-knee injury ahead of his quarterfinal match against Casper Ruud. He also missed the ATP Finals in Turin, Italy, due to an injury. As far as Zverev is concerned, he advanced to his maiden final at Melbourne Park. In the summit clash to be held on Sunday, January 26, Zverev will be up against the winner of the second semi-final between World No. 1 Jannik Sinner and USA's Ben Shelton. Back in 2020, Zverev lost to Dominic Thiem in the US Open final. Last year, it was Alcaraz who got the better of him in the grand finale of the French Open. Zverev will be looking to come out on the winning side in his third appearance in a final at Grand Slams.

Ronald Araujo shuts transfer rumours after signing FC Barcelona contract extension

NEW DELHI. Uruguayan centre-back Ronald Araujo has put an end to ongoing transfer speculation by signing a six-year contract extension with La Liga giants FC Barcelona. The deal, which secures Araujo's services until 2031, reaffirms the club's faith in the 25-year-old defender, who has become a key figure in their backline since joining in 2018.

Despite battling injuries that limited his appearances this season, Araujo remains a pivotal part of Barcelona's defensive unit. His performances and leadership qualities have earned the trust of coach Hansi Flick, who has consistently backed the centre-back amidst growing rumours linking him to Serie A side Juventus. His (Araujo's) winning mentality and supreme defensive skills quickly made him a fan favourite, and he is now regarded as one of the best centre backs in the whole world. Not only that, but he has also proved his worth as a full back too." Barcelona said in their statement. Barcelona's decision not to disclose the exact value of Araujo's release



clause has raised intrigue. Reports suggest that Araujo's representatives pushed for a reduction in the release clause, which had been initially set at a staggering €1 billion. This adjustment underscores the club's willingness to accommodate the player's requests while ensuring his long-term commitment to the team. Araujo's extension comes at a time when Barcelona are looking to maintain stability within their squad amid financial challenges and transfer market uncertainties. The Uruguayan's presence offers reliability and a sense of continuity as the Blaugrana aim to strengthen their defensive solidity in pursuit of domestic and European success. By retaining one of their captains, Barcelona have not only secured a talented defender but also sent a clear message about their intent to build a competitive squad around key players. Araujo's long-term stay reflects his belief in the club's vision and his desire to contribute to its future triumphs.

Europa League: Fernandes hands Manchester United dramatic victory over Rangers

← **United move up to fourth in the table with one match of the league phase remaining.**

MANCHESTER. Manchester United closed in on a direct passage to the Europa League last 16 thanks to Bruno Fernandes' late winner to beat Rangers 2-1 on Thursday.

The Red Devils looked set to suffer more disappointment at Old Trafford when Cyriel Dessers levelled for an injury-ravaged Rangers in the 88th minute.

But Fernandes spared United's blushes and possibly the playoff round by blasting home in stoppage time. "It was a victory that we truly needed in this moment," said under-fire United boss Ruben Amorim. United move up to fourth in the table with one match of the league phase remaining.

The top eight will qualify directly for the last 16, which may now be beyond Rangers, who slip to 13th. However, the Glasgow

giants battled bravely in the circumstances as coach Philippe Clement had to turn to two teenagers off the bench in the second half as his injury problems mounted.

"I saw everybody gutted in the dressing room that we lost after playing that kind of game," said Clement.

"I am also very proud what the team did today, sticking to the plan with really young players coming on the pitch,"

Amorim had blasted United's current crop as the worst in the club's history after a bruising 3-1 defeat to Brighton at the weekend. That was a fourth defeat in five home games and United's nervousness in front of an expectant crowd was clear to see in the early stages before they began to take control. Alejandro Garnacho has been linked with a move away in the closing weeks of the transfer window as United look to ease their issues with meeting profit and sustainability rules. The Argentine is attracting interest from Napoli and Chelsea and should have signed off with at least one goal if it is to be his final appearance for the club.

Garnacho's goalbound effort was deflected



over by Nico Raskin before United had the ball in the net from the resulting corner.

Matthijs de Ligt's towering header was controversially ruled out for a foul on Robin Propper and VAR did not intervene.

Butland's nightmare return

Already shorn of John Souttar, Neraysho Kasanwirjo, Ianis Hagi, Danilo and Oscar Cortes, Rangers had to cope with three more injuries as Leon Balogun and Connor Barron did not appear for the second half and Vaclav Cerny limped off on the hour mark. Clement had to throw on two 18-year-olds with barely any first team experience in Bailey Rice and Findlay

Curtis. Yet, they were ultimately only beaten by a huge error from one of their most experienced players. Jack Butland did not play for United during a spell with the Red Devils in 2023. The former England international goalkeeper endured a nightmare return as he punched Amad Diallo's corner into his own net to break the deadlock. United failed to press home the advantage as Garnacho fired a glorious chance off the post from close range. And they could have been punished as Dessers smashed home after Harry Maguire got caught underneath a long ball.

Not for the first time this season, Fernandes rode to United's rescue with the one moment of quality in a scrappy game when he cushioned Lisandro Martinez's cross through Butland's legs.

Rangers are still set to at least make the playoff round and have an outside chance at making the top eight if they beat Union Saint-Gilloise at Ibrox next week.

United travel to Romanian side FCSB with a point likely enough to secure place in the last 16.

Gadecki, Peers win first all-Aussie mixed doubles final in 58 years at the Australian Open

MELBOURNE. Olivia Gadecki and John Peers combined for a 3-6, 6-4, 10-6 victory over John-Patrick Smith and Kimberly Birrell on Friday to win the first all-Aussie Australian Open mixed doubles final since 1967. The two wild-card pairings faced off on Rod Laver Arena to start the action on Day 13 at the year's first major.

Gadecki hit an overhead winner to secure the match and claim her first major title. Peers added to his collection which already included an Olympic gold medal and an Australian Open title in men's doubles, and a mixed doubles title at the 2022 U.S. Open.

"It's so nice to play an all-Aussie final, so



congrats," the 22-year-old Gadecki said during the trophy presentation. To Peers, she added: "Thanks for letting me ride the wave, and just having a great time out there."

Peers responded: "You're a class act — keep going. This is just the start for you." For Smith, the loss coincided with his 36th birthday, something Birrell didn't forget, leading off the singing of "Happy Birthday" during the presentation ceremony. Gadecki and Birrell played women's doubles together at the Australian Open and reached the third round. Later Friday, 10-time Australian Open champion Novak Djokovic was scheduled to play No. 2 Alexander Zverev in the first of the men's singles semifinals. Defending champion Jannik Sinner faced No. 21 Ben Shelton in a night match

People say I look like Jasprit Bumrah while bowling: Australia's Lily Basingthwaite



NEW DELHI. Australia's Under-19 fast bowler Lily Basingthwaite revealed her admiration for India fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah and mentioned that people say that she looks like him when she bowls. Basingthwaite is currently participating in the ICC Women's Under-19 T20 World Cup 2025 and starred with the ball for his team in their opening fixture against Nepal. Recently, the rising star revealed that she's a big fan of Jasprit Bumrah as people often compare her action with the India fast bowler. She also praised the India speedster for his mentality and his ability to get wickets at crucial stages of the game. "I want



to say Jasprit Bumrah because his elbow also hyperextends and mine do that a bit too, so people say that I look like him when I bowl. I just like his mentality as he always finds a way to get wickets. I don't know if it's great when it's against Australia but he's good to watch," Basingthwaite said in a video shared by the ICC (International Cricket Council) on Instagram. Basingthwaite was the pick of bowlers for Australia U-19 during their win in the opening fixture against Nepal U-19. The right-arm seamer registered figures of 2/4 in three overs to restrict Nepal to 56/8 in reply to Australia's score of 139/6. Caoimhe Bray was adjudged

← **Australia's Under-19 star Lily Basingthwaite has revealed that people often compare her action with India speedster Jasprit Bumrah.**

Player of the Match for top scoring for Australia with her knock of 45 (34) in Australia's 83-run win. Bumrah in contention to win ICC Test Cricketer of the Year. Meanwhile, Bumrah is in contention to be awarded ICC Test Cricketer of the year after his phenomenal performance in the format in 2024. The India speedster took 71 wickets from 13 Tests at an average of 14.92 and claimed the top spot in the ICC Test bowling rankings. Bumrah has been nominated alongside Joe Root, Kamindu Mendis and Harry Brook. Meanwhile, India are fretting over the fitness over his fitness ahead of ICC Champions Trophy 2025 after Bumrah injured himself during the fifth Test against Australia in Sydney. The speedster is currently at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bengaluru as Indian fans await confirmation on his fitness.



sport. "Please, do not boo any player, much less Novak. He has done everything imaginable for this sport, he has tried to compete despite his problems. I know you have paid for a ticket, but he has been giving everything to this sport for 20 years and won this tournament with a torn abdominal muscle. Show a little love... I had to play the best set of the tournament to beat him while he was injured. He is too good," Zverev said.

"There's no guy on tour I respect more than Novak. He's been one of my closest friends. Whenever I struggled, I could always call him. I have nothing but respect for him" he added. The highly anticipated clash had begun with both players showcasing exceptional tennis, with Zverev narrowly clinching the opening set in a tense tie-break, 7-6(7-5). However, the excitement turned to disbelief when Djokovic, visibly struggling with discomfort, walked over to embrace Zverev before retiring from the match. The sight of Djokovic leaving the court stunned the Rod Laver Arena, as fans were left disappointed by the abrupt end to the contest.

Manoj Tiwary recalls being 'targetted' by former KKR captain Gautam Gambhir

Manoj Tiwary opened up about being unfairly targeted by Gautam Gambhir during their time at Kolkata Knight Riders, detailing strained moments, including a confrontation where Wasim Akram had to intervene.

NEW DELHI. Former Indian cricketer Manoj Tiwary has shed light on his strained relationship with Gautam Gambhir during their time together at Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in the Indian Premier League. In an interview with Lallantop, Tiwary shared instances of being unfairly targeted by Gambhir, who was KKR's captain during his tenure with the team. Renowned for his determined and fiery personality, Gambhir's leadership style brought KKR great success, including two IPL titles. However, it also led to friction with teammates, including Tiwary,

who described Gambhir's behaviour as unnecessarily harsh and, at times, hurtful. Tiwary revealed that their disagreements often escalated to the point where others had to intervene. He recalled one specific incident when KKR's then bowling coach, Wasim Akram, had to step in to prevent a war of words between the two. "I would get scolded without any reason. I couldn't understand why he would target me. In fact, when I came to KKR in 2010, he and I got along nicely. But then he would lose his cool at me out of the blue. He would use very hurtful words. Then, when I started thinking about it, I realised that out of all the local boys at KKR, I was the one who used to perform consistently. And since I was a promising youngster, the media was giving me attention. So, he didn't react to it well. That is what I believe," Tiwary said on Lallantop. "Once, we had a heated argument about my batting position at the Eden Gardens. I was upset and had gone to the

washroom. He barged in and said 'This attitude won't work. Tujhe kabhi khilaunga nahi (I won't give you a game). This and that.



I never liked such words. He was giving me a threat. Aaj ke baad, tujhe kabhi khilaunga nahi. Wasim Akram also came in. He was our bowling coach, so he calmed things down. He said 'You are the captain. Cool down' He understood, he knew what was happening. He had said good things about my talent a

few years ago," Tiwary said. Gambhir, who now serves as India's head coach, has often been a divisive figure in cricket. His no-nonsense attitude and strict approach have drawn criticism from players and commentators alike. Recently, Tiwary openly criticised Gambhir's appointment as head coach following India's Test series defeats to New Zealand and Australia. He questioned Gambhir's credentials for the role, labelling him a "hypocrite" who fails to practise what he preaches. Tiwary argued that Gambhir lacks clarity in his coaching philosophy and has yet to establish a distinctive style that benefits the national team. Gambhir's uncompromising approach has also been evident in his current role as head coach. Reports suggest he recommended the BCCI impose restrictions on family time for players during tours, a move aimed at fostering focus and discipline but one that has sparked debate about maintaining a healthy balance between personal and professional commitments.

Priyanka Chopra

Offers Glimpse Of Prayagraj As She Arrives At Maha Kumbh 2025

Priyanka Chopra never misses out on any opportunity to embrace Indian traditions. Earlier, she was clicked visiting the Ayodhya Ram temple with her daughter Malti Marie and her husband Nick Jonas. Now, she is headed to take a holy dip at the Maha Kumbh 2025. The biggest religious congregations this year began on January 13 and will conclude on February 25. As devotees from across the world arrived in Prayagraj to attend the divine event, Priyanka, too, joined them to participate and seek blessings from deities. Hours ago, Priyanka Chopra posted a clip on her Instagram stories. Looking at the clip, it seemed that the actress was enroute to Maha Kumbh 2025 as she offered a glimpse of the city, recorded from inside a car.

This is not the first time Priyanka Chopra marked her presence at a religious event or visited a temple during her time in India. Last year, Priyanka was spotted at Ram Mandir in Ayodhya with her daughter Malti Marie and husband Nick Jonas. The photos featuring the trio quickly went viral.



A bunch of photos shared by Viral Bhayani saw Priyanka wearing a yellow colour saree and looking beautiful. Nick, on the other hand, opted for a cream colour embroidered kurta and pajama. The duo posed with the security officials at the temple, showcasing their humble demeanour.

It was just two days back that Priyanka Chopra arrived in India and was captured at Hyderabad airport. The global sensation also dropped a video on Instagram as she flew down from Toronto to Hyderabad via Dubai. In her caption of the post, she wrote 'Om' emoticon. However, what caught the attention of her fans was the song that she added to her post. It was from SS Rajamouli directorial RRR.

Soon after the clip went viral, fans started speculating about her comeback to Indian cinema, starring opposite Mahesh Babu in the much-anticipated adventure film, SSMB29, directed by SS Rajamouli. According to an insider close to Pinkvilla, Priyanka was the top choice for the project. The source said, "The film is in the final stages of writing and is all set to go on floors in April 2025. SS Rajamouli was looking for a female lead with a global presence, and who better than Priyanka to play the lead role." Priyanka Chopra's last Bollywood film was The Sky Is Pink which was released in 2016.

Shehnaaz Gill's

Dubai Trip Was All About Good Food And A Game Of Golf

Shehnaaz Gill is a true blue golf enthusiast. The actress loves playing the sport. When not busy with work and vacations, she spends her time with her friends and sometimes playing sports as well. Channeling her inner sportsperson, Shehnaaz recently took some time out to dedicate her time to the sport. How do we know? She posted a bunch of clips on Instagram wherein she is seen playing golf on a playground. Though unsuccessful, her attempt to hit the



ball was praiseworthy. But, she is not one to give up. In a subsequent clip, Shehnaaz Gill tried again and this time, she hit it out of the park. The child-like excitement on her face was truly adorable. For her golf game, the actress wore a red cosy winter wear top with ash grey bootcut jeans and white sneakers. Shehnaaz is most likely Shehnaaz Gill achieved a new milestone as she turned producer

for her next which has remained untitled for a long time. Weeks ago, she unveiled the title, poster and release date. On her Instagram stories, she unveiled the poster of her next, Ikk Kudi wherein she will be seen acting alongside taking charge as the producer. The film will be a joint venture by Kaushal Joshi's Raaya Picturez, Shehnaaz Gill Production and Amarjit Singh Saron's Amor Film Presents. It is written and directed by Amarjit and is scheduled to hit the theatres on June 13. Making the announcement, she wrote, "With overwhelmed hearts announcing our film - Ikk Kudi RELEASING WORLDWIDE ON 13th JUNE 2025."

Before this, Shehnaaz Gill, in another post, revealed that she would start shooting for her new Punjabi film. She even posted pictures from the muhurat of the film. Posing with a clapperboard, she radiated simplicity and was even seen praying before the shoot. Meanwhile, a group picture featured her with the entire cast, producers and her manager for the film.

"Starting a new journey today and I am immensely proud and happy to announce that today we commence the shooting of my Punjabi film with my dream team," wrote Shehnaaz alongside the photos. Fans are eagerly awaiting the release of Ikk Kudi, thanks to its talented cast, captivating storyline, and debut production of Shehnaaz Gill.

As for her last project, she won hearts with her appearance in an item song of Rajkumar Rao and Triptii Dimri's Vicky and Vidya Ka Woh Wala Video.



Darshan Raval And Dharal Surelia's Wedding: A Night Of Love, Music And Glamour



Darshan Raval's dreamy wedding announcement post broke many hearts. On January 18, he married his best friend and love of his life, Dharal Surelia. The couple's wedding day was nothing short of magical, with stunning photos that gave off major couple goals. Recently, some inside glimpses from their sangeet night surfaced, and Darshan left everyone spellbound with his soulful singing. In a video posted on Reddit, Darshan mesmerised viewers with his heartfelt performance at the sangeet. He dedicated a romantic song to Dharal, expressing emotions he hadn't yet shared. The love between Darshan and Dharal was undeniable, with the singer showing his affection while standing beside his bride-to-be. Dharal blushed and shared the sweet moment, enjoying every second of the song.

In the second part of the clip, another segment from Dharal and Darshan's sangeet night, the couple filled the evening with even more love and entertainment. The deeply in-love pair danced to one of Darshan's songs and the video beautifully captured the depth of their affection for each other.

Although we couldn't get more glimpses of the sangeet night, the video proved the blast of enjoyment they had. The entire stage was decked up with magical lights and many performers were seen performing beside the couple - everything accounting for the party's vibrant mood. For the sangeet, Darshan looked dashing in a navy blue embellished sherwani, exuding charm. He paired it with a matching doshala and pants, keeping the accessories minimal and completing the look with a pair of matching loafers. Dharal, on the other hand, turned heads in a silver-embellished lehenga choli, radiating fashionista vibes. She complemented the skirt with a rustic-hued V-neck blouse featuring short sleeves and paired it with a sheer, cut-out dupatta. Her messy, open tresses and shimmery makeup further elevated her glamorous appearance.

Karan Veer Mehra Breaks Silence On Mocking Vivian Dsen's Bond With His Daughter: 'The Low Point...'



The grand finale of Salman Khan's Bigg Boss 18 was held on Sunday night with Karan Veer Mehra emerging victorious and taking home the grand prize of Rs 50. Karan Veer defeated his friend Vivian Dsen to lift the coveted trophy. Although Karan and Vivian had a friendship, things turned sour when during a roast, Karan said that Vivian's daughter doesn't recognise him. After the finale, Karan spoke to SCREEN to discuss his highs and lows on the show. He said, "The task where I lifted Edin or trimmed Rajat's beard were my high points. The low point was the roast I did with Vivian, I should have avoided that."

Karan Veer said, "We had a lover's spat on the show, actually both of our definitions of friendship are very different. He thought of me as a dearer friend and I was coming from a space where I thought he was getting things very easily. But now it's a 100-day friendship." As for winning the Bigg Boss 18 title, Karanveer Mehra said, "I share this trophy



with all those who have voted and loved me and of course the media who I have not paid." He also added that he dedicated his victory to all the fans and friends who supported him tirelessly. "I have gotten used to winning, I want to have a hat-trick now. So please Colors TV announce another show now which I could win, maybe Laughter Chefs."

The Bigg Boss 18 finale was held in Mumbai's Film City on Sunday, January 19. The mega show, hosted by Salman Khan, was attended by several celebrities including Aamir Khan and Veer Pahariya. Bollywood superstar Aamir Khan joined his son, Junaid Khan, and Khushi Kapoor to promote their upcoming movie, Loveyapa. Former Bigg Boss finalists, Ankita Lokhande and Vicky Jain also attended the finale and talked about their upcoming show, Laughter Chefs 2. While Karan Veer Mehra won Bigg Boss 18, Vivian Dsen was the runner-up. Other contestants who were a part of the finale besides were Rajat Dalal, Avinash Mishra, Eisha Singh and Chum Darang.