



The Researchers'

NEWS BOX

OpenAI board unanimously rejects Elon Musk's \$97.4 billion takeover proposal

SAN FRANCISCO. OpenAI says its board of directors has unanimously rejected a \$97.4 billion takeover bid by Elon Musk. OpenAI is not for sale, and the board has unanimously rejected Mr Musk's latest attempt to disrupt his competition," said a statement Friday from Bret Taylor, chair of OpenAI's board. OpenAI attorney William Savitt, in a letter to Musk's attorney Friday, said the proposal "is not in the best interests of OAI's mission and is rejected." Musk, an early OpenAI investor, began a legal offensive against the ChatGPT maker nearly a year ago, suing for breach of contract over what he said was the betrayal of its founding aims as a nonprofit. OpenAI has increasingly sought to capitalise on the commercial success of generative AI. But the for-profit company is a subsidiary of a nonprofit entity that's bound to a mission—which Musk helped set—to safely build better-than-human AI for humanity's benefit.

OpenAI is now seeking to more fully convert itself to a for-profit company but would first have to buy out the nonprofit's assets. Throwing a wrench in those plans, Musk and his own AI startup, xAI, and a group of investment firms announced a bid Monday to buy the nonprofit that controls OpenAI. Musk, in a court filing Wednesday, further detailed the proposal to acquire the nonprofit's controlling stake.

Savitt's letter Friday said that the court filing added "new material conditions to the proposal. As a result of that filing, it is now apparent that your clients' much-publicised 'bid' is in fact not a bid at all."

In any event, "even as first presented," the board has unanimously rejected it, Savitt said.

Musk has alleged in the lawsuit that OpenAI is violating the terms of his foundational contributions to the charity. Musk had invested about \$45 million in the startup from its founding until 2018, his lawyer has said.

He escalated the legal dispute late last year, adding new claims and defendants, including OpenAI's business partner Microsoft, and asking for a court order that would halt OpenAI's for-profit conversion.

Musk also added xAI as a plaintiff, claiming that OpenAI was also unfairly stifling business competition. A judge is still considering Musk's request but expressed scepticism about some of his claims in a court hearing last week.

Jaishankar Meets Ukrainian Counterpart On Sidelines Of Munich Security Conference

Munich. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Saturday met his Ukrainian counterpart Andrii Sybiha on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference and discussed the resolution of the Ukraine conflict.

"Good to meet FM Andrii Sybiha of Ukraine on the sidelines of #MSC2025 today (Friday). Discussed ongoing efforts towards the resolution of the Ukraine conflict. Also spoke about further advancement of our bilateral cooperation," Jaishankar said on X. The minister, who is here to attend the Munich Security Conference 2025, met several world leaders and joined Norway PM Jonas Gahr Store, Michigan Senator Elissa Slotkin, and Warsaw Mayor Rafal Trzaskowski in a panel discussion on 'Live to Vote Another Day: Fortifying Democratic Resilience' at the event. Highlighted India as a democracy that delivers. Differed with the prevailing political pessimism. Spoke my mind on foreign interference," Jaishankar said in another post on X.

Jaishankar also participated in Ananta Aspen Centre's 'Coming of Age: Evaluating Rising India's Security Challenges' session at the conference and "shared India's thinking on global engagement, regional strategy and key bilateral partnerships".

The minister also met Bavarian Prime Minister Markus Soder here and discussed cooperation in economy and technology between the two countries.

"Exchanged views about the international situation. Look forward to welcoming him to India," Jaishankar said in another post on X. Jaishankar also met Germany's Defence Minister Boris Pistorius on Friday and discussed bilateral cooperation and the Ukraine development during the meeting.

Abortions To Resume In Missouri After A Judge Blocks Restrictions

Kansas City. Abortions are set to resume in Missouri after a judge blocked regulations that had restricted providers even after voters approved enshrining abortion rights into the state's constitution. Friday's ruling came after a Kansas City judge ruled last year that abortions were now legal in the state but kept certain regulations on the books while a lawsuit by abortion-rights advocates played out. One regulation required abortion facilities to be licensed by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. Planned Parenthood said most of its facilities could not comply with some of the licensing rules, including "medically irrelevant" size requirements for hallways, rooms and doors. Planned Parenthood argued that the licensing law required providers to give "medically unnecessary and invasive" pelvic exams to anyone receiving an abortion, including medication abortions, according to court documents. The plaintiffs also said some of the regulations on Planned Parenthood centre were so strict, "most health centre or doctors' office simply do not meet" them.

Jackson County Circuit Judge Jerri Zhang said in her ruling that the licensing requirement is "facially discriminatory because it does not treat services provided in abortion facilities the same as other types of similarly situated health care, including miscarriage care." Voters approved the measure adding abortion rights to the constitution in November. That amendment did not legalise abortion in the state outright but instead required judges to reconsider laws that had almost completely banned the procedure.

Trump's reciprocal tariffs will overturn decades of trade policy

WASHINGTON. President Donald Trump is taking a blowtorch to the rules that have governed world trade for decades. The "reciprocal" tariffs that he announced Thursday are likely to create chaos for global businesses and conflict with America's allies and adversaries alike.

Since the 1960s, tariffs — or import taxes — have emerged from negotiations between dozens of countries. Trump wants to seize the process. "Obviously, it disrupts the way that things have been done for a very long time," said Richard Mojica, a trade attorney at Miller & Chevalier. "Trump is throwing that out the window ... Clearly this is ripping up trade. There are going to have to be adjustments all over the place." Pointing to America's massive and persistent trade deficits — not since 1975 has the U.S. sold the rest of the world more than it's bought — Trump charges that the playing field is tilted against U.S. companies. A big reason for that, he and his advisers say, is because other countries usually tax American

exports at a higher rate than America taxes theirs. Trump has a fix: He's raising U.S. tariffs to match what other countries charge.

The president is an unabashed tariff supporter. He used them in his first term, and three weeks into his second he has already slapped 10% tariffs on China; effectively raised U.S. taxes on foreign steel and aluminum; and threatened, then delayed for 30 days, 25% taxes on goods from Canada and Mexico. Economists don't share Trump's enthusiasm for tariffs. They're a tax on importers that usually get passed on to consumers. But it's possible that Trump's reciprocal tariff threat could bring other countries to the table and get them to lower their own import taxes. "It could be win-win," said Christine McDaniel, a former U.S. trade official now at George Mason University's Mercatus Center. "It's in other countries' interests to reduce those tariffs." She noted



that India has already cut tariffs on items from motorcycles to luxury cars and agreed to ramp up purchases of U.S. energy. What are reciprocal tariffs and how do they work? They sound simple: The United States would raise its tariff on foreign goods to match what other countries impose on U.S. products. "If they charge us, we charge them," the president told reporters on Sunday. "If they're at 25, we're

at 25. If they're at 10, we're at 10. And if they're much higher than 25, that's what we are too." But the White House didn't reveal many details. It has directed Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick to deliver a report April 1 about how the new tariffs would actually work. Among the outstanding questions, noted Antonio Rivera, a partner at ArentFox Schiff and a former attorney with U.S. Customs and Border Protection, is whether the U.S. is going to look at the thousands of items in the tariff code — from motorcycles to mangos — and try to level the tariff rates out one by one, country by country. Or whether it will look more broadly at each country's average tariff and how it compares to America. Or something else entirely. "It's just a very, very chaotic environment," said Stephen Lamar, president and CEO of the American Apparel & Footwear Association. "It's hard to plan in any sort of long-term, sustainable way."

Zelensky seeks 'security guarantees' as US presses end to Ukraine war

MUNICH. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said he sought "security guarantees" as he met with the US vice president on Friday to discuss the Trump administration's efforts to broker a truce deal with Moscow. Zelensky's sitdown with JD Vance at the Munich Security Conference comes as Kyiv scrambles to ensure it is not sidelined in Washington's push to wrap up the three-year war. President Donald Trump stunned allies and upended the status quo of US support for Ukraine this week when he announced he would likely soon meet Russian leader Vladimir Putin to start truce talks.



Speaking with reporters in Munich, Zelensky stressed the need to "speak more" with the White House before any endgame to the war is formulated. "We want peace very much but we need real security guarantees," he said after his first meeting with Vance. Zelensky's anxiety was also on display in

a preview of his interview with US media outlet NBC, saying Ukraine "will have low, low chance to survive without support of the United States". Vance meanwhile described "good conversations" with Zelensky, and acknowledged the administration's goal of bringing the war to a close. "We want to achieve a durable, lasting peace, not the kind of peace that's

going to have Eastern Europe in conflict just a couple years down the road," Vance said at the meeting wrapped up. Zelensky later wrote on X that an envoy from Washington would visit Kyiv. "We are ready to move as quickly as possible towards a real and guaranteed peace," he wrote. The Ukrainian leader has acknowledged that it was "not very pleasant" that his own phone call with Trump this week came after Putin's 90-minute call.

US officials have insisted that Ukraine will not be left in the cold after three years of battling Russia's invasion. Vance said ahead of the Munich meeting that the United States was prepared to pressure Russia, adding that Europe should "of course" be at the table. But he also told Europe to "step up" bolstering its own defence to allow Washington to focus on threats elsewhere in the world.

Anger, chaos and confusion take hold as US government workers face mass layoffs

NEW YORK. Workers across the country responded with anger and confusion Friday as they grappled with the Trump administration's aggressive effort to shrink the size of the federal workforce by ordering agencies to lay off probationary employees who have yet to qualify for civil service protections. While much of the administration's attention was focused on disrupting bureaucracy in Washington, the broad-based effort to slash the government workforce was impacting a far wider swath of workers. As layoff notices were sent out agency by agency, federal employees from Michigan to Florida were left reeling from being told that their services were no longer needed. In a sign of how chaotic the firings have been, some who received layoff notices had already accepted the administration's deferred resignation offer, under which they were supposed to be paid until Sept. 30 if they agreed to quit, raising questions about whether others who signed the deal would nonetheless be fired. On Friday evening, the Office of Personnel

Management, which serves as a human resources department for the federal government, acknowledged that some employees may have received termination notices in error and said the buyouts agreements would be honored. "This has been slash and burn," said Nicholas Detter, who had been working in Kansas as a natural resource specialist, helping farmers reduce soil and water erosion, until he was fired by email late Thursday night. He said there seemed to be little thought about how employees and the farmers and ranchers he helped would be impacted. "None of this has been done thoughtfully or carefully," he said. The White House and OPM declined to say Friday how many probationary workers, who generally have less than a year on the job, have so far been dismissed. According to government data maintained by OPM, 220,000 workers had less than a year on the job as of March 2024. OPM has given agencies until 8 p.m. Tuesday to issue layoff notices, according to a person familiar with the plan who requested anonymity because they were not

authorized to speak publicly. The probationary layoffs are the latest salvo in the new administration's sweeping efforts to reduce the size of the federal workforce, which are being led by billionaire Elon Musk and his Department of Government Efficiency. Trump, in an executive order Tuesday, told agency leaders to plan for "large-scale reductions" after their initial attempt to downsize the workforce—the voluntary buyout—was accepted by only 75,000 workers.

The layoffs begin
On Thursday night, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced the dismissal of more than 1,000 employees who had served for less than two years. That included researchers working on cancer treatment, opioid addiction, prosthetics and burn pit exposure, U.S. Sen. Patty Murray, a Democrat, said Thursday. Dozens were fired from the Education Department, including special education specialists and student aid officials, according to a union that represents agency workers.

Israeli hostages, Palestinian prisoners set for release after truce crisis

GAZA CITY. Gaza militants are due to release three Israeli hostages on Saturday in exchange for 369 Palestinians in Israeli custody, the sixth swap of a truce that came close to collapse this week. Israel and Hamas have traded accusations of violating the January 19 ceasefire, with the Palestinian group saying it would pause releases and Israel threatening the resumption of war in the Gaza Strip.

But on Friday both sides signalled that the hostage release scheduled for Saturday would go ahead. The office of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu named the hostages due for release as Israeli-American Sagui Dekel-Chen, Israeli-Russian Sasha Trupanov and Israeli-Argentinian Yair Horn, who have been held by Gaza militants since Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack on Israel that sparked the war. The Palestinian Prisoners' Club advocacy group said that Israel was to release 369 inmates in exchange, with 24 of them expected to be deported.

The vast majority, 333 people, are "prisoners from the Gaza Strip who were arrested after

October 7", the group said. After the crisis that appeared to bring the fragile truce to a breaking point, Hamas said on Friday it expected talks on a second phase of the ceasefire to begin early next week. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, whose country is Israel's top backer and has been involved in mediation efforts during the war, is due to arrive in Israel late Saturday ahead of expected talks with Netanyahu on the Gaza truce.

Last week's release sparked anger in Israel and beyond, with the emancipated state of the freed Israeli hostages sparking concern over conditions in captivity.

Israeli-American hostage Keith Siegel, who was released in a previous exchange, said he was "starved and... tortured, both physically and emotionally" during his captivity. There were also fears for Palestinians in Israeli custody after some prisoners required medical treatment on their release. "Power games"

The ceasefire has been under massive strain since US President Donald Trump

proposed a takeover of the Gaza Strip under which the territory's population of more than two million would be moved to Egypt



or Jordan. For Palestinians, any forced displacement evokes memories of the "Nakba", or catastrophe — the mass displacement of their ancestors during Israel's creation in 1948. Arab countries have come together to reject the plan, and Saudi Arabia will host the leaders of Egypt, Jordan, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates

on Thursday for a summit on the issue. Trump warned this week that "hell" would break loose if Hamas failed to release "all" remaining hostages by noon on Saturday.

Israel later insisted Hamas release "three living hostages" on Saturday or "the ceasefire will end". If fighting resumes, Defence Minister Israel Katz said it would not just lead to the "defeat of Hamas and the release of all the hostages" — Israel's stated objectives since the start of the war — but also "allow the realisation of US President Trump's vision for Gaza". Mairav Zonszein of the International Crisis Group said despite their public disputes, Israel and Hamas were still interested in maintaining the truce. "They're just playing power games," she said. Arab countries have put on a rare show of unity in their rejection of Trump's proposal for Gaza.

After the Riyadh summit, the Arab League will convene in Cairo on February 27 to discuss the same issue.

WHO Chief Warns US Funding Cuts Could Undermine Global Health Efforts

RNS: World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has raised alarms over the impact of recent US funding cuts, warning they could significantly disrupt global health initiatives and threaten public health worldwide.

During a media briefing on Wednesday, Tedros highlighted the immediate consequences of these funding suspensions, including disruptions to HIV treatment, setbacks in the fight against polio, and limited resources for responding to the mpox epidemic in Africa. He specifically pointed to the suspension of funding for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), which halted HIV treatment, testing, and prevention services in 50 countries. Despite a waiver for life-saving services, preven-



tion programs for high-risk groups have been excluded, clinics have been shut down, and health workers have been placed on leave. Tedros called on the US Government to reconsider its funding cuts, urging them to find alternative solutions to maintain essential health services globally. The WHO also provided updates on the recent Ebola outbreak in Uganda, which has resulted in nine confirmed cases, including one death.

Emergency teams have been deployed, and a vaccine trial has already begun, with plans for a therapeutics trial awaiting approval. To support these efforts, WHO has allocated an additional \$2 million from its Contingency Fund for Emergencies, in addition to the \$1 million already provided. The ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has further strained health services, with over 900 deaths and more than 4,000 injuries

reported amid increasing violence in the region. WHO reports that only one-third of the people in need of health services in North and South Kivu are able to access care, with critical shortages of supplies like medicines and fuel hindering their response. On a positive note, WHO announced progress in expanding access to childhood cancer treatments in low- and middle-income countries. As part of the Global Initiative on Childhood Cancer, shipments of childhood cancer medicines have been distributed for free to Mongolia and Uzbekistan, with plans for four more countries. The initiative aims to reach 120,000 children across 50 countries over the next five to seven years, addressing the stark disparities in cancer survival rates between high-income and low-income nations.

India, Sri Lanka hold talks to strengthen ties in Critical Minerals, Exploration, Mining



RNS: India and Sri Lanka today held talks to strengthen ties in critical minerals, exploration and Mining. Minister of State for Coal and Mines Satish Chandra Dubey held a meeting with Minister of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development of Sri Lanka Sunil Handunnetti in New Delhi. During the meeting, the discussions focused on fostering bilateral cooperation in mineral exploration and mining, particularly in securing critical minerals essential for both nations' economic and industrial growth. Speaking on the occasion, Dubey emphasized that In-

dia's National Critical Mineral Mission is aimed at securing a steady supply of essential raw materials like lithium, graphite, nickel, and copper to meet the country's ambitious renewable energy target. He stated that India is actively working towards granting mining rights for critical minerals, forging international partnerships, and encouraging Indian companies to acquire mineral assets globally. The Minister said, India and Sri Lanka share a long-standing partnership, and the cooperation in the mining sector will further strengthen the economic ties.

NIPM Eastern Region Conference Concludes at CCL Headquarters in Ranchi



Ranchi: The two-day NIPM Eastern Region Conference concluded today at CCL Headquarters, Ranchi on Saturday. The event focused on the theme "Future of Work: Redefining HR for a Prosperous India," exploring trends, challenges, and opportunities in human resources to support India's sustainable growth. Inaugurated by Rabinranath Mahato, Speaker of the Jharkhand Legislative Assembly, the conference featured speeches from key figures, including CCL CMD Nilendu Kumar Singh and CIL Director Vinay Ranjan. Attended by HR professionals, business leaders, and scholars, the event offered technical sessions on employee wellness, skill development, AI, automation, and analytics in HR. Cultural programs were also held, contributing to the conference's success in fostering meaningful discussions on the future of HR.

Qatar Amir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani to visit India on February 17-18

RNS: The Amir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani will pay a State Visit to India on 17th and 18th of this month at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, including Ministers, senior officials and a business delegation. External Affairs Ministry said in a statement that this would be the second visit of the Amir of Qatar to India. He had earlier visited India on in March 2015. Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani will be accorded a ceremonial welcome at the forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhawan on 18 February. During his visit, the Amir will hold discussions with President Droupadi Murmu, who will also host a banquet in his honour. The Amir will hold talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi covering various aspects of the bilateral relations. India and Qatar have deep-rooted historical ties of friendship, trust and mutual respect. In recent years, the ties between the two countries have continued to strengthen, in the areas of trade, investment, energy, technology, culture and people-to-people ties. The Indian community residing in Qatar forms the largest expatriate community of Qatar. It is appreciated for its positive contribution in the progress and development of Qatar. The visit of the Amir of Qatar will provide further momentum to the growing multifaceted partnership.

Akhilesh Yadav Urges Extension of Maha Kumbh Amid Overwhelming Crowds



Paryagraj: Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav on Saturday called for an extension of the Maha Kumbh festival, citing the overwhelming number of devotees still en route to the religious gathering in Prayagraj. Yadav criticized the festival's poor arrangements, highlighting that elderly and economically disadvantaged individuals were unable to attend due to long walks and high travel costs. He also pointed out that local residents could not participate due to traffic jams. In a statement on X (formerly Twitter), Yadav demanded the fair's duration be extended to allow those affected a chance to participate and "earn merit." He further accused the BJP-led state government of downplaying the actual number of attendees, claiming that 60 crore people had bathed at the Triveni Sangam, far higher than the 50 crore reported by the government. Yadav argued that the government was intentionally underreporting the figure to hide its administrative failures. The ongoing Maha Kumbh, which began on January 13, is scheduled to end on February 26. However, the event has seen severe congestion on roads and packed railway coaches, with visuals circulating on social media. The Uttar Pradesh government has touted the festival as a success, despite criticisms over its handling.

Mahakumbh in Prayagraj Sets World Record with Over 50 Crore Devotees



Prayagraj: The Mahakumbh in Prayagraj has created history by becoming the first event in the world where more than 50 crore people are direct participants. Over 50 crore 4 lakh devotees have taken a holy dip at the Triveni Sangam so far, with 90 lakh devotees taking the holy dip today till 6 pm. The Uttar Pradesh government said that this participation marks the largest congregation in human history for any religious, cultural, or social event. The UP government noted that nations like the United States of America, Russia, Indonesia, Brazil, Pakistan, and Bangladesh all have smaller populations than those who have immersed themselves in the sacred waters at the Mahakumbh.

Centre is taking proactive steps to integrate AI into Higher Education: President

Ranchi: President Droupadi Murmu, on the final day of her two-day visit to Ranchi, attended the Platinum Jubilee celebrations of Birla Institute of Technology (BIT) Mesra as the Chief Guest. In her address, President Murmu emphasized the crucial role of youth in achieving the vision of a 'Viksit Bharat' (Developed India), praising BIT Mesra for its pioneering efforts in technical education in eastern India. The President also highlighted the institute's success in empowering girl students, noting how many have excelled in technology fields. Murmu further stressed the importance of innovation and the role Artificial Intelligence (AI) can play in transforming people's lives. She encouraged the promotion of AI integration in higher education to bring about significant changes in society.



Governor Santosh Kumar Gangwar, who also spoke at the event, praised the educational progress of girls, pointing out their superior performance over boys in the field of education in New India. The event also marked the inauguration of the Research and Development Exhibition, showcasing cutting-edge innovations by BIT Mesra's faculty

and students. On the occasion of BIT Mesra's 70th Foundation Day, President Murmu presented awards to distinguished alumni and faculty, while releasing a commemorative souvenir highlighting the institute's legacy. She also unveiled a special commemorative medal to mark the milestone. The ceremony was attended by several dig-

nitaries, including CK Birla, Chairman of the Board of Governors, Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Indranil Manna, and Registrar Professor Dr. Sandeep Dutta. Professor Dr. Shradha Shivani, Dean of the Department of International Relations, also shared insights into the institute's achievements and future goals.

XLRI Hosts Spirituality Conclave, Calls for Ethical Leadership, Lasting Impact

Jamshedpur: XLRI concluded its inaugural Spirituality Conclave today, hosted by the Centre for Spirituality in collaboration with international partners. Themed "Integrating Spirituality into Business: Drawing Wisdom from India's Diverse Traditions," the conclave brought together scholars, corporate leaders, and thought leaders to explore spirituality's role in business ethics and leadership. The event kicked off with a prayer and lamp-lighting cer-



emony, followed by addresses from notable speakers including Aarti Sharma, Senior Director at Coca-Cola. Sharma highlighted the importance of redefining success in business, emphasizing that true leadership requires authentic-

ity, empathy, and mindfulness to foster meaningful, long-term impacts in organizations and communities. Panel discussions delved into various spiritual perspectives, addressing leadership, inclusivity, and human flourishing. Experts from diverse traditions, including Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian, shared insights on how spirituality can guide ethical decision-making and enhance workplace dynamics. The conclave concluded with a valedictory session, where certificates were awarded to participants, and Fr. Kuruvilla Pandikattu, SJ, expressed satisfaction with the event's success in showcasing spirituality's interdisciplinary relevance in shaping effective and ethical managers.

Navika Sagar Parikrama II: Lt Cdr Dilna K & Lt Cdr Roopa Script History As Sailing Vessel INSV Tarini Crosses Cape Horn



RNS: Lieutenant Commander Dilna K and Lieutenant Commander Rupa A of the Indian Navy have achieved a historic milestone by sailing INSV Tarini past Cape Horn, the southernmost tip of South America, during the third phase of the 'Sagar Parikrama II' expedition. Navigating this region demands exceptional maritime expertise and the resilience to endure the harsh conditions of the Southern Ocean. With this remarkable feat, the two officers have earned the prestigious title of 'Cape Horners,' which is a recognition reserved for skilled sailors who successfully conquer Cape Horn. Cape Horn is situated just over 432 nautical miles from Antarctica, making it one of the closest land points to the icy continent. The journey through this region not only requires exceptional navigational expertise but also resilience to the harsh conditions characteristic of the Southern Ocean.

US Author, Ashley Claims She Gave Birth to Elon Musk's Child Five Months Ago

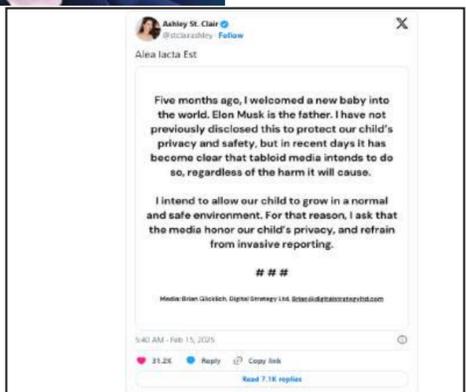
Washington DC: Ashley St. Clair, an author and influencer, has recently claimed that she gave birth to a child fathered by tech entrepreneur Elon Musk. In a post on the social media platform X, St. Clair revealed that the child was born five months ago but did not share any further details, citing concerns over the child's privacy and safety.



St. Clair wrote, "Five months ago, I welcomed a new baby into the world. Elon Musk is the father," and expressed her desire to shield the child from public attention. She mentioned that despite her efforts to protect the child's identity, tabloids are pushing to reveal it, which she believes could cause harm. "In recent days, it has become clear that tabloid media intends to do so, regardless of the harm it will cause," she added. The influencer also called

on the media to respect her child's privacy, saying, "I intend to allow our child to grow up in a normal and safe environment" and asked journalists to avoid invasive reporting. Musk has not responded to these claims as of now. In a follow-up post, St. Clair expressed her discomfort with the situation, saying, "I wish I did not feel the need to make a statement. Kids should be off-limits for journalists." If St. Clair's allegations are

verified, it would make Musk the father of another child, adding to his already large family. Musk shares five children with his ex-wife Justine Wilson, three children with singer Grimes, and twins with Neuralink executive Shimon Zilis.



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S Jaishankar calls out West's 'double standards' on democracy, schools them

Flagging the "double standards" of the West over its view on global democracy, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said Western leaders treated democracy as a "Western characteristic". He urged them to embrace the successful models of non-Western countries.

► **S Jaishankar said India's democratic model seen as relatable by Global South**
 ► **He said West treated democracy as 'Western characteristic'**
 ► **Earlier, Jaishankar jabbed West on India buying Russian oil amid Ukraine war**

New Delhi. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar once again took on the West over what he described as the "double standards" of global democracy at a panel discussion at the Munich Security Conference. In front of the Western leaders, including a US Senator, Jaishankar said straight out of the talk that the West treated democracy as a "Western characteristic" and had been busy encouraging "non-democratic forces" in the Global South.



Apart from Jaishankar, the panel comprised Norway's Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store, US Senator Elissa Slotkin and Warsaw Mayor Rafal Trzaskowski. During the panel discussion, Jaishankar said the

countries of the Global South are more likely to relate and say that the "Indian experience is more transposable to their societies than perhaps to those of others". He also said it was key for the West to

embrace the successful models of non-Western countries if it wants democracy to prevail. There was a time and I would have to say this in all honesty when the West treated democracy as a Western

characteristic and was busy encouraging non-democratic forces in the Global South, and it still does. I mean in many cases, I can point to some very recent ones where everything that you say you value at home, you don't practice abroad. So, I do think the rest of the Global South will view the successes, shortcomings and the responses of other countries," he said.

Asked whether countries in the Global South still aspire to a democratic system and the model that would attract people, the External Affairs Minister said, "Look, to an extent, all big countries are unique to an extent. But, we would certainly hope, I mean to the extent, we think of democracy as a universal aspiration, ideally a reality. India chose a democratic model after

independence and it chose a democratic model because we have been fundamentally a consultative pluralistic society."

Jaishankar said that India has "historically been an open society" and stayed true to being a democratic model despite challenges.

"I would argue in many ways that India has historically been an open society, one very much linked with the world. So, I do think that in our progress as a democracy, the fact that for all the challenges that we have had, even at a low income, we have stayed true to the democratic model. When you look at our part of the world, we are pretty much the only country that has done that," he said.

"So, I think this is something the West should look at because if you do want democracy eventually to prevail, it is important that the West also embraces the successful models outside the West," he added.

Actor Vijay gets 'Y' security cover, BJP asks why DMK didn't do so on its own

Chennai. The Ministry of Home Affairs has granted actor-politician, Vijay, the chief of the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), 'Y' category security in Tamil Nadu. Sources said the security was accorded after an internal security audit by the Intelligence Bureau. In a notification issued by the Union Home Ministry on February 13, eight to 11 CRPF personnel, along with one or two commandos, will be with Vijay round-the-clock as per the 'Y' security coverage.

There are four types of security covers - X, Y, Z and Z+ - provided by the central government - which are allotted to an individual based on his or her perceived risk level.

According to sources, the 'Y' security cover will be applicable while managing the crowd whenever Vijay makes a public appearance. They believe that the huge crowds that would throng any venue where the actor-politician would appear would be better managed in the presence of the security.

Meanwhile, Tamil Nadu BJP chief K Annamalai questioned the ruling DMK government for not having the foresight to provide the security detail. "The central government has given CRPF security to Opposition leader EPS (Edappadi K Palaniswami), regardless of whether the AIADMK (All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam) is in alliance with the BJP or not," Annamalai said. According to Annamalai, the security cover was granted after several agencies flagged there was a threat to his life. "Likewise, the central government gave 'Y' security to Vijay. The reason that Vijay is not able to meet the public is because of the huge crowds. Why didn't the state government give Vijay this security? When there is a security threat, whenever huge crowds come together, why didn't the state government come forward and give him security? There are X, Y, Z security category in Tamil Nadu," he added.



Vice President questions Chief Justice's involvement in executive appointments

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Friday wondered how can the Chief Justice of India, even by "statutory prescription", get involved in executive appointments such as that of CBI director, and said it was time to "revisit" such norms. Speaking at the National Judicial Academy, Bhopal, he also said that in his view, the 'doctrine of basic structure' has a very "debatable jurisprudential basis".

rationale for it? I can appreciate that the statutory prescription took shape because the Executive of the day has yielded to a judicial verdict. But time has come to revisit. This surely does not merge with democracy. How can we involve the Chief Justice of India with any executive appointment!" he said.

Executive governance by judicial decree is a "Constitutional paradox that the largest democracy on the planet cannot afford any longer," the vice president further said. All institutions must operate within their constitutional bounds, he said.

"Governments are accountable to the legislature. And periodically accountable to the electorate. But if



executive governance is arrogated or outsourced, enforceability of accountability will not be there," he said. Any intervention in governance, from the legislature or judiciary, is "antithetical to constitutionalism", the vice president added.

"Democracy thrives not on institutional isolation, but in coordinated autonomy. Indisputably, institutions contribute productively and optimally while working in their respective domains. Out of deference, I will not advert instances except to observe that executive governance by the judiciary is being frequently noticed and discussed in nearly all quarters," he said. On the power of judicial review, Dhankhar said it was a "good thing" as it ensures that laws conform to the Constitution. But when it comes to amending the Constitution, the ultimate authority is Parliament, he stressed.

'Sheeshmahal' row: Chief Minister's bungalow used by Arvind Kejriwal faces probe

The complaint by the BJP leader highlighted that government properties, including Plot Nos. 45 and 47 on Rajpur Road—previously housing senior officers and judges in Type-V flats—along with two bungalows on Flag Staff Road, were demolished and merged into the new residence.

► **BJP's Vijender Gupta filed complaint on October 14, 2024**
 ► **Allegations of flouting building norms for lavish mansion**
 ► **CPWD tasked with detailed investigation by Vigilance body**



New Delhi. The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) has ordered a detailed investigation into alleged irregularities in the renovation of the former official residence of ex-Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. The probe follows allegations that building norms were flouted to transform the former Chief Minister's official residence into a lavish mansion covering 40,000

square yards (8 acres). The CVC has asked the Central Public Works Department to conduct a detailed investigation in response to a complaint filed by BJP leader Vijender Gupta on October 14, 2024. The complaint by the BJP leader highlighted that government properties, including Plot Nos. 45 and 47 on Rajpur Road—previously housing

senior officers and judges in Type-V flats—along with two bungalows on Flag Staff Road, were demolished and merged into the new residence. Gupta claimed that the construction violated ground coverage and floor area ratio (FAR) norms and lacked proper layout plan approvals.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

October 14, 2024: BJP leader Vijender Gupta filed a complaint with the CVC, alleging illegal construction at Arvind Kejriwal's former official residence. He accused the former Delhi Chief Minister of flouting building regulations to construct a mansion. October 16, 2024: The CVC registered the complaint for examination.

November 5, 2024: The CVC acknowledges receipt of the complaint and forwards it to CPWD for further investigation. The Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO) of CPWD is directed to look into the matter.



assigned Haryana, and Rahul Gandhi's close aide Krishna Allavaru will take charge of Bihar, a key election-bound state. Other key appointments include Ajay Kumar Lallu as in-charge of Odisha, K Raju for Jharkhand, Meenakshi Natarajan for Telangana, and Girish Chodankar for Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka has been given charge of party affairs in Manipur, Tripura, Sikkim, and Nagaland.

The reshuffle saw the exit of several senior leaders, including Dipak Babaria, Mohan Prakash, Bharat Singh Solanki, Rajeev Shukla, Ajoy Kumar, and Devendra Yadav, whose contributions were acknowledged by the party. Congress' official statement confirmed that all new appointments will take effect immediately. The changes come at a crucial time as the party prepares for upcoming elections in multiple states.

Opposition, Centre spar over US flights with Indian deportees landing in Punjab

Punjab politics is simmering again with the opposition slamming the Centre for choosing Amritsar as a landing port. The first flight landed in Amritsar on February 5, now two more are coming this Saturday and Sunday.

Amritsar. A political flashpoint has erupted between the Opposition and the Centre over two more US military flights scheduled to land in Punjab's Amritsar over the weekend instead of Delhi. Punjab Chief Minister and AAP leader Bhagwant Mann criticised the NDA-led central government for choosing Amritsar, questioning whether it was a deliberate attempt to defame the state. He even mentioned US President Donald Trump, asking if the latest scheduled flights carrying Indian deportees were his "gift" to PM Modi, who concluded his two-day visit to America on Friday. The first flight carrying 104 Indian deportees landed in Amritsar on February 5 and now the second flight, carrying 119 Indian deportees, will land on February 15 at Amritsar at 10.05 pm. The flight will include 67 passengers from Punjab, 33 from Haryana and 19 from Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, and Maharashtra. The third flight will touch down on the night of February 16. Hitting out at the Centre, Punjab Finance Minister Harpal Cheema said, "The government of India wants to defame Punjab



by ensuring that aircraft coming from US lands in Amritsar. Why does this plane not land in Haryana or Gujarat? It is clear that the BJP is set to defame Punjab. This aircraft must land in Ahmedabad."

Congress MLA Pargat Singh also attacked the BJP-led central government over the issue and said, "I think this is very unfortunate that again and again planes are made to land in Punjab. I agree that there are people from Punjab too but why not landings in other states. PM Modi must take up with the US administration why our people were handcuffed and chained while being deported.

Congress MP Manish Tewari also criticised the Centre over the matter and questioned the central government over US flights landing in Amritsar. "Why are these planes landing in Punjab? What is the kind of message you're trying to send? Are you trying to send a message that every illegal immigrant to the USA is from Punjab? Punjab CM is absolutely correct to that extent. There were people from Gujarat and Haryana. You could have landed this plane in Delhi or anywhere else. Why in Amritsar all the time? Delhi does not understand that Punjab does not take very easily to humiliation and there is always a cost to pay when Delhi tries to humiliate Punjab," he said. Joining the issue, senior journalist and political analyst, Kanwar Sandhu said, "First it must be seen whether the second set of deportees are treated the same way as the first. As I believe this is the way they do deportation. Ideally the planes must land in Delhi as the flight trajectory showed that it came through south and had deportees from other states too and not only Punjab. It should land in Amritsar only when the number of deportees from Punjab is higher," he added.

► **Opposition criticises Centre for US flights landing in Amritsar**
 ► **Punjab Chief Minister questions Centre's intent over the matter**
 ► **Punjab BJP calls Opposition's reaction exaggerated, urges introspection**

The many ways America first hurts global trade

When he visits Washington tomorrow, Narendra Modi would need to bank on the excellent personal relationship he enjoys with Donald Trump to stave off possibilities of higher tariffs on more exports from India. Last week, Trump announced plans to impose 'reciprocal tariffs' on many countries, with indications that India could be in the crosshairs. This week, he imposed across-the-board tariffs on steel and aluminium imports that affect India too; but it's not targeted at India alone.

The announcements signal a major escalation of Trump's strategy to dismantle the existing trade order and reshape relationships in keeping with his 'America First' policy. It supports the unilateral use of trade policy instruments to protect the "American economy, the American worker, and national security interests". It disregards the principles of fair play that form the basis of the multilaterally agreed rules for the orderly conduct of global trade. The intent of the new US administration is hardly surprising, as Trump has underlined that "the most important element of [his] plan to make America extraordinarily wealthy again is reciprocity". The first set of tariffs was announced last month against three countries—Canada, Mexico and China. Though the implementation of a 25 percent tariff hike for the US's two neighbours was postponed by a month, the 10 percent hike on China is being levied. In several ways, the America First trade policy is not only an extension, but is a significantly more potent form of trade unilateralism that Trump had pursued during his first term in office. Even before he assumed charge this time, Trump had promised to rewrite trade agreements "to achieve or maintain the general level of reciprocal and mutually advantageous concessions". He had declared that his administration would impose "reciprocal tariffs" on India, arguing, "[I]f they tax us, we tax them the same amount. They tax us. We tax them. And they tax us. Almost in all cases, they're taxing us, and we haven't been taxing them". Trump has clearly been targeting India's relatively higher tariffs and has in the past labelled the country as the "tariff king". Trump's commerce secretary Howard Lutnick emphasised during his recent Senate confirmation hearings that reciprocity was "going to be a key topic for the Trump administration". He favoured the use of across-the-board import taxes to strong-arm trade partners into lowering their tariffs on US exports.

Trump's threat puts at serious risk the agreements on tariff liberalisation that the US entered into with WTO members while acceding to the multilateral trading system. These agreements took into consideration the ability and institutional capacities of countries to adopt lower tariffs, and allowed developing countries like India to maintain relatively higher tariffs to prevent disruption in sensitive sectors.

Thus, India imposes higher tariffs on major agriculture commodities, especially foodgrains, to ensure adequate availability at home, protect the livelihoods of small farmers and promote self-sufficiency. Now, in the name of reciprocity, India could face pressure to lower its high tariffs on farm products, to bring them down to the levels the US imposes. But India must argue that the US never used tariffs to protect its agricultural sector, since the sector has historically benefited from high subsidies that kept prices well below those in the international markets. This would be the foremost challenge of the Modi government.

India may also be targeted as the US president has directed his administration to investigate the causes of US's "large and persistent annual trade deficits in goods, as well as the economic and national security implications and risks resulting from such deficits, and recommend appropriate measures, such as a global supplemental tariff or other policies, to remedy such deficits". India maintains a trade surplus with the US, which has more than doubled during the past five years from \$17 billion in 2019-20 to \$35 billion in 2023-24.

The urgent need for a national skill census

India's demographic dividend is a fleeting opportunity that must be used in time. A few states have attempted a skill census, but the scale and complexity of a national one demand a concerted effort

India's demographic transition will see it emerge as the most populous nation in the working age group by 2030. However, while the overall unemployment rate is only 4.1 percent, youth unemployment remains a serious issue at above 12 percent. The situation is further enervated by the low share of 4.7 percent of the total workforce having been trained. A National Skill Census might help fill this gap. While caste-based census issues have taken most of the political discourse, Karnataka 2023, along with Haryana and Maharashtra 2024, have found their voters focusing more on jobs, development and safety. The MSME is rising to challenges with schemes like 'Approaches for MSME Development 2024' and a new executive development programme aimed at reducing the skill gap. The India Skills Report 2024 emphasises how skill will determine global competitiveness and inclusive growth, especially with AI steering the future of work in the MSME sector. As of 2020, the Uttar Pradesh government mapped skills within the migrant worker population of about 2.35 million, identifying a skills matrix to facilitate fit job placements for those returning home. The survey incorporated the mapping of 94 categories of labourers to match workers with MSME organisations. In such amicable terms with major industry bodies like the Indian Industry Association and the Confederation of Indian Industry, jobs were promised for about 11.5 lakh workers, with 2.5 lakh by the real estate sector and 7 lakh provided by other sectors.

In May 2021, the Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement was signed by India and the UK to facilitate legal movement of students and professionals. By 2024, cooperation was focused on scaffolding skills. An important initiative was connecting India's National Career Service portal with the UK job platform.

India and the UAE launched a pilot project to align India's skill development programmes with UAE's job requirements. The NSDC partnered with the UAE's Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization to standardise qualifications. In October 2024, the Andhra Pradesh government initiated India's first-ever skill census, which began in the Mangalagiri constituency and Thullur mandal. The initiative was aimed at analysing skill sets across 1,63,421 families to promote employment opportunities and bridge gaps between industry and workforce skills. The data gathering efforts were led by some 675 enumerators with an app called Naipunyam, targeting individuals aged 18-40.

What hampered the pilot run of the app was data collection. To gather the information, the enumerators were supposed to make candidates login with authentication through OTP, but many candidates refused to cooperate and provide their OTPs to the enumerators, thereby slowing down the process. Ritwik Mehta

Looking at these cases, we have been able to identify some



main issues we face: 1. Existing skill mapping systems often rely on outdated or static data, limiting their ability to adapt to rapidly changing market demands.

- Limited involvement of industries in designing skill training programmes results in a mismatch between training outcomes and market requirements.
- States like Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh have made progress, but many regions lack adequate infrastructure for skilling programmes.
- Most initiatives fail to monitor the long-term impact of skilling efforts on employability and career progression.
- Women, people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups face barriers to accessing skill development programmes.

The scale and complexity of a national skill census demand a concerted effort involving key stakeholders. The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), NITI Aayog and state skill development missions must spearhead this initiative, supported by industry associations. Educational institutions, vocational training centers, and international organisations like UNESCO and the World Bank can provide technical expertise and funding.

To ensure its success, the census must be executed over three years at an estimated cost of ₹3,000-5,000 crore.

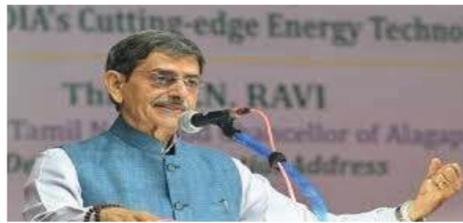
A Skill India Commission must be established under the MSDE to oversee the census, which should be conducted biennially. A robust survey structure incorporating demographic data, skill categories, and employment trends is crucial. Develop a digital platform akin to Singapore's SkillsFuture portal, incorporating AI for real-time analytics, multilingual support, and offline accessibility to cater to rural populations. A phased rollout across states and Union Territories will ensure manageability and adaptability. Collaborate with industries to design skilling programmes that address market demands, taking cues from Australia's Job Outlook tool to match skills with labour market trends. Establish an independent monitoring body for real-time progress tracking and impact assessments. India's demographic dividend is not a perpetual boon—it is a fleeting opportunity. Without urgent and decisive action, the country risks squandering its potential, perpetuating cycles of unemployment and underemployment. A national skill census is not just a policy option, it is an economic and moral imperative. The time to act is now. Policymakers, industries, and civil society must rally together to ensure India's youth are not merely participants in the workforce but architects of a prosperous future.

Wilful violation: On the Tamil Nadu Governor's conduct

Cutting down on imports a big challenge

The Supreme Court of India's probing questions to the Tamil Nadu Governor, R.N. Ravi, have exposed a pattern of wilful violation of constitutional duty on his part. The questions related to the lawfulness of Mr. Ravi's act in referring to the President of India a set of Bills for which he had earlier "withheld assent", but was constitutionally bound to grant assent after their adoption for a second time by the State Assembly. The Bench was speaking on behalf of everyone when it asked whether Mr. Ravi had referred these Bills to the President only to avoid granting assent, as required by the first proviso to Article 200 of the Constitution. The earlier understanding that the withholding of assent puts an end to the life of a Bill was altered by the Court's judgment in 2023, holding that whenever Governors opt for that course of action, they should return the Bill to the legislature, as required in the proviso; and if passed again by the House, they were bound to grant assent. Faced with queries, the Attorney-General of India (A-G) raised the issue of possible repugnancy with central law. He argued that the Governor had rightly referred these Bills to the

President due to an apparent conflict with UGC Regulations, as these Bills seek to change the manner in which university vice-chancellors are appointed.



The A-G also maintained that when the Governor had earlier withheld assent, the Bills ceased to exist and the Assembly had presumed that these had been "returned" by the Governor and adopted them a second time. In a related contention, he has also argued that the

requirement to return a Bill does not hold good if the issue of repugnancy is noted. These arguments may appear fascinating in determining the right course of action to be followed by Governors in dealing with Bills, and the Bench, which has reserved its judgment, may come up with answers. However, the fact that the Governor has been using his powers to scuttle legislation is quite obvious. He had not acted on some of these Bills for a year or two or expressed his reservations relating to the repugnancy aspect while withholding assent. Also, he ignored the fact that he was bound to grant assent when the Bills were presented to him a second time, but referred them to the President. Even in a 2023 hearing, the Court had questioned whether a Governor, having chosen to withhold assent, could exercise another option by referring the same Bill to the President. Mr. Ravi appears bent on scuttling any law that does not suit his world view. It is time the Union government took note of the challenge his continuance in office poses to constitutional governance in Tamil Nadu.

When the prime minister goes to Washington

Trump is yet to fill some key posts that have a bearing on India-US relations. For now, the two sides are talking at higher levels to reset the course

What do Indian prime ministers and US presidents talk about when they have summit meetings, which have become regular only in the last 25 of the 77 years since independence? Quite often, they lean on each other's shoulders to share experiences because it is quite lonely at the top for those holding high offices.

Barack Obama and Narendra Modi easily broke ice at their first meeting in the residential East Wing of the White House in September 2014, contrary to expectations among aides on both sides. They did this by effortlessly finding common ground as leaders of their respective countries who had stepped into high offices as rank outsiders in their capitals. Modi had never held any elected public office in New Delhi until he became prime minister. Obama was only a first-time senator who had not even completed his term when he was elected president. There was a time when American presidents were condescending and talked down to Indian prime ministers. When Indira Gandhi and Ronald Reagan met for the first time in Cancun in 1981, the president spent most of their 45-minute meeting lecturing the prime minister with a memorable closing line: "India must pull itself up by its bootstraps to survive." Janki Ganju, a family friend and the Indian embassy's one-man lobbyist in Washington for some 30 years, who was with Indira Gandhi, was surprised that she listened to Reagan in silence. When the president finished, her reply was just one crushing sentence: "Mr President, in order for us to pull ourselves up by bootstraps, first we must have boots." End of meeting.

A quarter century later, the roles had been completely reversed. When Manmohan Singh went to Washington on a farewell visit for George W Bush, the president was a deeply troubled man. The global economic meltdown in 2008 had blemished Bush's legacy. It had already been tainted by his ill-conceived war against Iraq and a

disastrous attempt to recreate this cradle of civilisation in America's image. As was typical of him, Singh gave Bush a lesson in economics without being patronising. After the prime minister left the White House, their spokesperson said at an informal gaggle that Bush had told Singh he felt comforted and at peace after their conversation. Obama expressed similar feelings to Singh at their lunch in New Delhi in 2010.

It would be a mistake to be judgemental about Modi's ongoing meetings with Donald Trump solely based on the popular caricatures of the new White House occupant. Taranjit Singh Sandhu, who was the ambassador in Washington during Trump's visit to India in 2020, is on record that the incumbent president absorbs his talking points and retains the essence of briefings by his aides. When Sandhu presented his credentials to Trump and again called on him to discuss his visit to India, the ambassador found the president intimately aware of Modi's home state of Gujarat, even about the world's biggest cricket stadium named after the prime minister. The crucial difference between then and now is that today, there are few people in the White House and the state department who are capable or authorised to prepare Trump for dealing with India while Modi is in Washington. The senior director of the National Security Council (NSC) dealing with India and the assistant secretary of state for South and Central Asia normally brief the US president ahead of a visit like Modi's. The ambassador in New Delhi also reaches Washington in time for it. Trump has not nominated an ambassador to India after Eric Garcetti, a Democrat, left the post when Joe Biden failed to win a second term. Till the time of writing this, Trump has not appointed a new NSC director to deal with India. In the absence of a new

assistant secretary of state, career diplomat Eric Meyer is the 'senior bureau official' for South Asia. This is his second job at the moment—the first being as chargé d'affaires ad interim at the US embassy in Norway, which is his priority. Meyer was rushed to Washington on 'temporary duty' by new Secretary of State Marco

Trump has not even found a nominee for assistant secretary for Indo-Pacific security in the department of defence. It is pertinent to ask if these mid-level officials have any relevance when External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has been dealing with National Security Adviser Michael Waltz since December and has met Rubio twice. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh spoke to his Pentagon counterpart a few days ago. Vitality, they are the ones who chart the India policy that trickles up the political ladder; they can put up roadblocks, too. The political leadership often does not have the time or inclination to challenge them. And, typically, they are not sheep. In the coming days and weeks, both sides



Rubio on January 20, probably because Rubio saw in Meyer's bio-data a stint many years ago as a senior adviser in the state department's South Asia bureau. Ahead of Modi's arrival in Washington, Meyer would have lacked institutional support within the state department. The critical post of deputy assistant secretary for India is vacant; so are the positions of several others who keep the bureau well-oiled and functioning.

In the commerce department, which provides significant inputs on trade tariffs, not a single senior employee has been confirmed by the Senate. Operationally, the most

will window-dress the Modi-Trump meeting as the resurrection of their personal chemistry and the starting point of a great relationship for the next four years, concessions by New Delhi to incentivise Trump notwithstanding. Both sides will also repackage Biden's important bilateral initiatives to paint them in Trump's image. Setbacks, if any, will be given a softer face. This is not to rule out better India-US relations; but the meat in the relationship will take time to cook. If only because, right now, Trump has bigger priorities than India, which cannot make America great or rich, as his favourite slogan demands from the rest of the world.

जब भी हम जल्दबाजी में अपने कपड़े आयरन करते हैं तो कभी-कभी प्रेस इनती ज्यादा गरम हो जाती है कि हमारे कपड़े सड़ जाते हैं। ऐसे में हम प्रेस के दाग को हटाने की बहुत कोशिश करते हैं पर यह दाग धोने के बाद गहरे हो जाते हैं जो कि धुलाई से भी नहीं जाते। अगर यह दाग सफेद कपड़े पर लग जाए तो उन्हें छुड़वाना बहुत ही मुश्किल हो जाता है। आज हम आपको बताएंगे कि कैसे आप इनसे कपड़ों के दाग निकाल सकते हैं।

1. सिरका

अगर आप के सफेद कपड़ों पर दाग लगा हो या पीला पड़ गया है तो उन्हें हटाने के लिए कपड़े को धोने के बाद एक बाल्टी में गरम पानी से और उसी में एक चम्मच सिरका मिलाकर उस कपड़े को फिर से धोएं। ऐसी करने से सफेद कपड़ों का पीलापन दूर हो जाता है।

2. नमक

नमक हर घर में पाया जाता है। आप इसका इस्तेमाल कपड़ों के दाग और पीला पर दूर करने के लिए अपना सकते हैं। इसके लिए आप गरम पानी में नमक को मिला कर कपड़े को 10-20 सेकेंड के लिए भिगो दें। ऐसा करने से दाग बहुत ही जल्द गायब हो जाते हैं।

3. सर्फ

कपड़ों के दाग को हटाने के लिए ब्लीच का उपयोग न करें। इसकी जगह पर आप अच्छी क्वालिटी के सर्फ का इस्तेमाल कर सकते हैं।

4. कपड़े को जमीन पर फैलाना

अगर आपके कपड़े पर आयरन से दाग लग गया है तो कपड़े को जमीन पर फैला कर सफेद सिरका और नमक को छिड़का कर रगड़ें। रगड़ने के बाद इसे 5 मिनट तक धोड़ दें और फिर पानी में डुबो कर दाग छुड़ा कर साफ कर लें।

5. नींबू और काला नमक

कपड़ों पर लगे दागों को आसानी से छुड़वाने के लिए नींबू और काला नमक डाल कर रगड़ें।

6. बेकिंग सोडा

पानी की आधी बाल्टी में एक चम्मच बेकिंग सोडा मिला कर उसमें कपड़ों को 15 मिनट के लिए भिगो दें। बाद में कपड़ों को निकाल कर साबुन या सर्फ से साफ कर लें।

7. कपड़े ड्रायर से न सुखाएं

अगर कपड़े पर आयरन के दाग लगें हैं तो कभी भी ड्रायर से न सुखाएं। ड्रायर का साथ कपड़े सुखाने से लगे दाग और भी गहरे हो जाते हैं।

कपड़े

पर लगे आयरन के दाग को हटाने के लिए अपनाएं ये टिप्स



वास्तु दोष को दूर करना चाहते हैं तो घर में रखें

मछली का एक्वेरियम

कई बार घर में पैसे और अन्य किस्म की सारी सुविधाएं होने के बावजूद भी क्लेश खत्म नहीं होता। इसके पीछे की वजह वास्तुदोष हो सकता है हालांकि वास्तुशास्त्र पर कुछ लोग यकीन करते हैं तो कुछ नहीं। लेकिन क्या आपको पता है कि मछली का एक्वेरियम भी वास्तु दोष का कारण बन सकता है। आपके घर में जो भी मछली घर हो, उसमें नौ मछलियां रखनी चाहिए न कि आठ। एक्वेरियम को रखने की जगह भी उचित होनी चाहिए। मछलियों को बार-बार एक से दूसरी जगह पर नहीं रखना चाहिए और उन्हें सिर्फ एक ही व्यक्ति के द्वारा भोजन देना चाहिए। मछली के टैंक या जार को बिल्कुल साफ रखना चाहिए। फिल्टर्स, एरिएशन आदि बिल्कुल सही तरीके से चलने चाहिए। अगर आप अपने फिश एक्वेरियम को अच्छे और रंगीन रखना चाहते हैं तो उसमें कुछ प्रकार के आर्टिफिशियल प्लांट भी लगा सकते हैं। वास्तु दोष का कारण ये एक्वेरियम आसानी से बन सकते हैं। इसलिए अगर आपको ये दोष दूर करने हैं तो आपको निम्न बातों पर विशेष रखना चाहिए।

1. बुरी नजर से दूर रखें

कहते हैं कि घर में मछली को रखना शगुन होता है क्योंकि मछलियां घर को बुरी नजर से दूर रखती हैं। ऐसा माना जाता है कि अगर आपके द्वारा पाली गई मछलियां प्राकृतिक मृत्यु मरती हैं तो आपके घर या ऑफिस की भी समस्याएं खतम हो जाती हैं।

2. सकारात्मक ऊर्जा का संचार

मछलियों का पालन करने से घर और कार्यालय में काफी ज्यादा सकारात्मक ऊर्जा का संचार होता है। जब आप थके हुए होते हैं तो उस समय इन मछलियों को देखें। ऐसी करने से आपके दिमाग को आराम मिलता है और एक सुकून

भरा वातावरण बन जाता है।

3. घर या ऑफिस में वास्तु दोष

अगर आपको लगता है कि आपके घर या ऑफिस में परेशानियां आ रही हैं तो इसका मतलब है कि वास्तु दोष है। अगर है तो इसे मिटाने के लिए उस जगह पर फिश एक्वेरियम रखें। इससे समस्याएं भी सुलझेंगी और पैसा भी खूब आएगा। मछलियों को दाना देने से घर में सकारात्मक ऊर्जा का संचार होता है।

4. वातावरण खुशनुमा रहता है

मछलियां बहुत एक्टिव होती हैं, जो हमें प्रोत्साहित करती हैं और हमारे अंदर उमंग भर देती हैं। एक्वेरियम रखने से पूरे घर का वातावरण खुशनुमा रहता है। ऐसे बुरी ऊर्जा का संचार नहीं होता है और रंगीन मछलियां आकर्षित करती हैं।

5. मछलियों को घर में रखने से ऊर्जा आती है

वास्तु शास्त्र के अनुसार, एक फिश टैंक में ढेर सारा पानी भरा जाता है जो भार को सही तरीके से बैलेंस करता है। भार को बैलेंस करने के लिए फिश टैंक को हॉल या वरंडा साउथ वेस्ट कोने में रख जाना चाहिए। जिससे घर में आने वाले हर इंसान की नजर उस पर पड़े। चीनी फेंग शुई के मुताबिक, मछलियों को घर में रखने से ची नामक ऊर्जा आती है जो धन और स्वास्थ्य को बढ़ाती है।

रूम को यूनिफ़ लुक देना चाहते हैं तो करें इन वॉलपेपर की सलेक्शन

हर कोई चाहता है कि उनका घर सुंदर दिखे। ऐसे में आजकल हर कोई अपने घर के इंटीरियर सजावट की ओर बहुत ज्यादा ध्यान दे रहे हैं। अगर आप भी स्वीड होम को मेकओवर करना चाहती हैं, तो दीवारों का कलर बदलने के साथ ही कुछ अलग वॉल डेकोर के लिए वॉलपेपर का यूज करें। इससे आप अपने आशियाने को यूनिफ़ लुक देकर खूबसूरत बना सकती हैं। वैसे तो मार्केट में बहुत से वॉलपेपर उपलब्ध होते हैं, लेकिन आप अपने कमरे की स्पेस और अपनी पसंद, दोनों को देखते हुए इनका चुनाव करें। ऐसा करके आप घर को कन्टेम्प्रेरी, डिजाइनर लुक देने के साथ-साथ अपने मॉनी भी बचा सकती हैं। आइए जानते हैं कैसे...

1. विनाइल या फैब्रिक वॉलपेपर

आप अपने बेडरूम या लिविंग रूम को यूनिफ़ लुक देने के लिए ट्रेडिशनल वॉलपेपर विनाइल या फैब्रिक वॉलपेपर में से कोई भी कलर, डिजाइन, पसंदीदा चित्रों वाले वॉलपेपर को ट्राई कर सकती हैं। इन जगहों पर वॉलपेपर सलेक्ट करते हुए सिर्फ आपकी पसंद ही जरूरी है।

2. टेक्सचर्ड वॉलपेपर

टेक्सचर्ड वॉलपेपर से मिलता है नैचुरल लुक भी इन दिनों खूब पसंद किए जा रहे हैं, क्योंकि ये नैचुरल दिखते हैं। इनमें वुड, ब्रिक जैसे कई प्राकृतिक टेक्सचर उपलब्ध हैं। ओरिजनल लुक वजह से इनकी मांग बहुत तेजी से बढ़ रही है।

3. मेटैलिक वॉलपेपर

आज की जेनरेशन को ध्यान में रखकर इस तरह के वॉलपेपर लॉन्च किए गए हैं। इनका मेटैलिक कलर व इफेक्ट लोगों द्वारा बहुत पसंद किया जा रहा है।

4. वेस्ट क्वालिटी वाले वॉशेबल वॉलपेपर

इस बात का ध्यान रखें कि आप जिस भी तरह का वॉलपेपर पसंद कर रहे हैं वह वॉशेबल है या नहीं। वॉशेबल वॉलपेपर लम्बे समय तक सुंदर दिखते हैं, क्योंकि उन्हें किसी भी माइल्ड साबुन पानी व गीले कपड़े से साफ कर नया जैसा बनाया जा सकता है।



डिशवॉशर से कभी न साफ करें ये चीजें, नहीं तो...

डिश सोप हर घर में पाया जाता है। इसका इस्तेमाल बर्तनों को धोने के लिए किया जाता है। पर कुछ लोग इसे बहुत सी ऐसी चीजों को धोने के लिए उपयोग करते हैं जो कि उन चीजों की चमक खत्म कर देता है। आज हम आपको कुछ ऐसी ही चीजों के बारे में बताएंगे जिनमें डिशवॉशर से कभी नही साफ करना चाहिए। तो आइए जानते हैं उन चीजों के बारे में...

1. कार को डिश सोप से ना धोएं

अगर आपकी कार बहुत गंदी है और आप उसे धोना चाहते हैं तो आपको बता दें कि इसे कभी भी डिश सोप से न धोएं क्योंकि इससे आपकी कार का रंग धीरे-धीरे से फेड हो कर निकल जाएगा। ऐसे में आप कार को वाश करने के लिए शैंपू का उपयोग कर सकते हैं।

2. डिश सोप से कपड़े न धोएं

हम सब यह तो जानते हैं कि जब कपड़ों पर दाग लग



जाते हैं उन्हें आसानी से नही छुड़या जा सकता। ऐसे में इन दागों को हटाने के लिए कठोर डिटजेंट की जरूरत होती है। कुछ लोग दागों को हटाने के लिए बर्तन धोने वाले डिश सोप का इस्तेमाल कर लेते हैं। पर यह कपड़ों को धोने के लिए काफी हल्का होता है। इसे आप सिर्फ गिलास, प्लास्टिक और मेटल की चीजें ही धो सकते हैं।

3. डिश सोप से कभी हाथ ना धोएं

कभी-कभी जगबाजी में हम सभी बर्तन धोने वाले डिश सोप से ही हाथ धो लेते हैं। पर हमें इसे हाथ नही धोने चाहिए क्योंकि यह सोप हमारे हाथों की खूबसूरती को और हमारे हाथों की कोमल स्किन को खराब देते हैं।

4. लेदर की चीजें

आजकल देखा गया है कि हर किसी के घर में सोफे पर लेदर कवर चाड़े होते हैं क्योंकि इन पर दाग लगने पर आसानी से साफ किया जा सकता है। ऐसे में अगर सोफे पर कुछ गिर भी जाए तो उन्हें कभी भी बर्तन धोने वाले डिश सोप से न धोएं। लेदर को इससे साफ करने से इसकी चमक खो जाती है।

5. डिशवॉशर

डिशवॉशर काफी हल्का होता है और इसकी झाग ज्यादा होती है। इससे कपड़े अच्छे से नही धूल पाते इसीलिए इसका उपयोग बर्तनों को साफ करने के लिए ही करें।

NEWS BOX

Champions Trophy: Pakistan firm on Babar Azam opening despite tri-series flop show

New Delhi. Pakistan head coach Aqib Javed has thrown his full support behind star batter Babar Azam, backing him to continue opening for the side in the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy despite his recent struggles. Javed emphasised that the team management remains confident in Babar's ability to deliver crucial performances, particularly in the powerplay, where he can make the most of fielding restrictions. Babar's form has been a talking point in the lead-up to the tournament, especially after a disappointing Tri-Series campaign against New Zealand and South Africa on home soil. Despite mounting concerns, Javed insisted during the post-match press conference, that Babar's form is not a major worry for the team. The head coach underlined the batter's experience and past performances, stating that Pakistan will continue to trust him to find his rhythm in high-pressure matches.

PAK vs NZ, Tri-series Final: Highlights
Our rationale behind the change was that if you



look at the away series against South Africa, Babar Azam had to bat in the first over in all games. Then Saim got injured, and he had to open in Tests too. These pitches are not troubling the batters at the start, we wanted our best batter to make good use of the powerplay, that suits us more," Aqib said. "So, I think, in these conditions, Babar should open and I am hopeful that he will play a big innings in important matches," he added.

The 29-year-old failed to make a significant impact, managing just 62 runs in three matches. His highest score came in the final against New Zealand on February 14, where he was dismissed for 29 as Pakistan fell short in the title clash. One of the key concerns from the Tri-Series was Babar's struggle against pace, as he was dismissed inside the powerplay in all three of his innings. However, Pakistan's think tank appears to be standing firm in their decision to persist with him at the top of the order.

RCB's Richa Ghosh reveals 'positive' game plan with Kanika Ahuja behind GG win

New Delhi. Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) star batter Richa Ghosh credited a fearless mindset and coaching influence for their stunning comeback win over Gujarat Giants (GG) in the WPL 2025 opener on February 14. Ghosh explained how she and Kanika Ahuja approached the massive chase with confidence, emphasising that their self-belief and training played a key role in pulling off the record-breaking run chase. RCB got off to a dream start in WPL 2025, scripting the highest successful run chase in



tournament history. Chasing a daunting target of 202, RCB secured a thrilling six-wicket victory at the Kotambi Stadium in Vadodara. The match saw standout performances from Richa Ghosh, who smashed an unbeaten 64 off just 27 balls, Ellyse Perry with 57 off 34, and Kanika Ahuja's quick-fire 30 off 13 deliveries.

RCB vs GG, WPL 2025: Highlights
Speaking at the post-match presentation after receiving the Player of the Match award, Ghosh revealed the tactical planning behind RCB's chase. She stated that she and Ahuja remained positive, even when their team required 92 runs off 46 balls. Their focus on calculated aggression, along with trust in their training, helped them execute the chase successfully. "I wanted to take a bit of time to see how the pitch was reacting. Wanted to take it deep and wanted to focus on my natural game. (Partnership with Kanika Ahuja) We felt we could chase it down and wanted to play a positive game. The preparations, the match simulations (with the coaching staff) have helped us. I did not think too much about the shorter and longer boundaries, wanted to react as the ball came," Richa said. GG, led by Ashleigh Gardner, had earlier set a formidable total thanks to Gardner's explosive innings and Beth Mooney's crucial contributions.

Champions Trophy classics: When Dhoni-led India outsmarted England to win title

MS Dhoni's tactical prowess and some brave performances from Ravindra Jadeja and Virat Kohli saw India defeat England by 5 runs to win the Champions Trophy 2013 final in Birmingham. This was the last time India lifted the Champions Trophy.

New Delhi. God is not coming to save us, if you want to win the trophy we have to fight it out. "These was the message MS Dhoni had for his team ahead of their 2013 Champions Trophy final clash against England. And there was a good reason behind it. The match, which was supposed to decide a 50-over tournament, was made into a 20-over game. India were on a golden run as Dhoni's tactics and bold decisions worked wonders. The then-Indian captain decided to use Rohit Sharma as an opener alongside Shikhar Dhawan in the tournament and the duo were in incredible form. However, that wasn't the

case in the final. England won the toss and decided to bowl first. Stuart Broad gave the hosts the first breakthrough as he cleaned up Rohit for 9 runs. Shikhar and Virat Kohli would steady the ship but the opener's wicket when the score was 50 triggered a major collapse. India lost Dinesh Karthik, Suresh Raina and MS Dhoni in the space of just 2 overs and were reeling at 66 for 5 in 13 overs. The onus was on Kohli and Ravindra Jadeja to bail their team out. The duo stitched together a crucial 47-run stand with Kohli hitting 43 off 34 balls and Jadeja scoring 33 off 25 balls. Ravi Bopara was the star bowler for England as he picked up 3 wickets for 20 runs in 4 overs. This meant India scored 129 runs for 7 in their 20 overs. Now even though T20 cricket was slowly moving into its teenage years at that time, such a score seemed to be an easy one. But Dhoni had some other plans as he wanted to make the game have the feel of a 50-over game.

Dhoni's magic gets the win for India
A 20-over game and Dhoni decided to defend his target with a slip, gully and a silly point for spinners and taking a Joginder Sharma-esque call with Ishant Sharma. We will come to that later but England's chase wasn't off to the best of starts as they lost captain Alastair

Cook for 2 runs. Jonathan Trott showed some fluency and hit some delightful shots, but the spinners Ashwin and Jadeja brought their side into the contest and allowed India to take control with the wickets of Trott, Joe Root and Ian Bell. England were reeling at 4



for 46 when Eoin Morgan and Ravi Bopara arrived at the crease. Both men steadied the ship and started to go after Ishant, who was the least effective bowler on the day at that point. He conceded 27 runs in 3 overs, with the last one seeing him concede a six to see the target come down to 48 off 30 balls.

The last 3 overs saw the equation come down to 28 off 3 overs. India had Umesh Yadav with 2 overs to go, Ashwin, Jadeja and Bhuvneshwar with 1 each. But Dhoni threw the ball to Ishant. The initial signs weren't great, but Ishant would change the game on its head with his 3rd delivery of the

over. A slower ball induced a false shot from Morgan, and he hit it straight to the fielder. Ishant revealed that Dhoni wanted him to bowl wide yorkers but the pacer decided to go for the slower delivery.

"He [MS Dhoni] asked me again to come over the stumps and try [to] bowl wide yorkers. I asked him to let me try to bowl a slower ball then something might happen. That's how the game suddenly changed," said Ishant.

The pacer would then get Bopara in the same over as England started to crumble. Jadeja was nearly unplayable in the 19th over and 2 more wickets followed. The final over was given to Ashwin, who conceded a boundary but came back to strangle the English batters. The final delivery saw James Tredwell and Dhoni miss the ball, but the celebrations were well underway as India won the match by 5 runs. Dhoni, known for his muted celebrations, started to jump in the air in delight as he became the first Indian captain to win it all. He graciously allowed Shikhar to lift the trophy and Kohli decided to bring out the Gangnam Style dance. India were once again at the top of the 50-over format once again, 2 years after they lifted the World Cup at home. Land to chase.

Virat Kohli would have declined RCB captaincy to focus on batting: Kris Srikkanth

New Delhi. Indian cricket legend Kris Srikkanth believes that Virat Kohli himself would have chosen not to return as the captain of Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB), prioritising his batting for the upcoming IPL season. Srikkanth also lauded RCB's decision to appoint Rajat Patidar as their new skipper, citing reduced expectations on the 31-year-old as a positive factor for his leadership.

RCB surprised many by announcing Patidar as their fourth Indian captain on February 13. Speculation had been rife about a potential return of Kohli to the leadership role after stepping down in 2021. However, speaking on his YouTube channel Cheeky Cheeka, Srikkanth suggested that Kohli may have personally opted against reclaiming the captaincy, making way for a fresh approach under Patidar. "I think Virat would have said no to the captaincy. He would have said 'I want to focus on batting'. I think all this must have happened in consultation with Virat Rajat Patidar is a good choice. He has been doing well in the



IPL. The good thing is he will not have a lot of expectations. When we appointed Dhoni in 2007 as the T20 World Cup captain, not a lot was expected of him and the team. It's a

bit like that...Expectations from Rajat Patidar as a captain are not high. He will take his own calls. He will consult Virat Kohli, who will be a guiding force," he added.

During the official announcement event in Bengaluru, RCB's Team Director Mo Bobat acknowledged Kohli's leadership presence within the franchise, even during Faf du Plessis' captaincy last season. Bobat emphasised that Kohli's influence extends beyond a title, as leadership comes naturally to him. Kohli, Srikkanth said. Having led RCB for nine seasons from 2013 to 2021, Kohli relinquished the role along with his decision to step down as India's T20I and ODI captain. While he never secured an IPL trophy as captain, his tenure helped build RCB's identity as a competitive force in the tournament.

RCB's head coach, Andy Flower, also spoke about Kohli's reaction to the decision, describing the star batter as highly professional and supportive of Patidar's appointment. With Kohli focusing solely on his batting, RCB hopes to see him return to his explosive best in IPL 2025.

Smriti Mandhana's cheeky response on 'dinner' with Gardner after record dismissal

New Delhi. Ash Gardner etched her name in the record books on Friday despite Gujarat Giants losing to Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) by six wickets in the Women's Premier League (WPL). On Friday, February 14, Gardner dismissed Smriti Mandhana for the ninth time in Women's T20s, the most by any bowler, going past Nat Sciver Brunt's eight. After RCB were asked to chase down 202 at the Kotambi Stadium in Vadodara, Gardner dismissed Mandhana LBW, after which she also dismissed Danni Wyatt-Hodge. Overall, Gardner has got the better of the Indian vice-captain 15 times. After the match, Smriti was asked about whether she would like to take Gardner out for dinner after the Australian spinner dismissed her yet another time in competitive cricket. Replying to the presenter, the RCB skipper



said, "I think I have to take her for runs, I think it is time now (laughs)."

Praising Richa, Perry Mandhana was delighted after RCB recorded the highest successful run-chase in the history of the WPL. Ellyse Perry scored 56 to lay the platform in the run-chase, after which Richa Ghosh's unbeaten 64 off 27

took RCB past the finish line. Kanika Ahuja, who returned after missing the last season, lent Richa support with an unbeaten 30-run knock.

"I am really happy that we were on the winning side. The way Richa and Pez (Perry) batted, it was amazing to watch. Brilliant to watch, they have been doing that in the nets. Really happy that after the first innings, we knew it would be tough to bowl, so always thought we were in the game. We lost the top three wicket-takers of last year, but luckily we had good options (coming in)," Mandhana added.

After taking down the Giants, Mandhana's RCB will be up against Meg Lanning's Delhi Capitals (DC) on Monday, February 17 in Vadodara. Hings clicked," Mandhana said.



yeah, I think it's just picking them to play at the right time and he hasn't quite got going here. "But he played a couple of nice shots out there and we know the talent that he possesses so that's why he's in this squad."

"Fraser-McGurk is dangerous" Smith said that the 22-year-old is a dangerous player and the wickets in Pakistan could suit his playing style. The Australia captain also said that Fraser-McGurk will gain a lot from being with the main squad.

"He's dangerous, I think the wickets in Pakistan potentially suit him so yeah I think he's going to learn a lot just being around the group, continuing to work with all of us as the coaches and just talking about the game and yeah, you'll definitely take a lot out of that," said Smith. Australia have a depleted squad going into the Champions Trophy as they are without the likes of Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood, Mitchell Marsh and Mitchell Starc.

Champions Trophy: Can New Zealand grab their second title without key stars

New Delhi. New Zealand's journey in ICC tournaments has often been one of near-misses, and with the Champions Trophy approaching, they face a significant challenge. The BlackCaps will field a fresh squad, missing several key players. Under Mitchell Santner's leadership, with experienced minds like Kane Williamson in support, New Zealand will look to claim their second Champions Trophy title, their first having come in 2000 in Kenya. They will also feature in the tournament opener against co-hosts Pakistan on February 19.

After heartbreak in the 2019 ODI World Cup final and an early exit in the 2023 ODI World Cup at the hands of India, New Zealand will aim to rewrite their ICC tournament narrative. Williamson, who captained the team in both those losses, will now serve as a guiding figure for Santner, offering strategic input and anchoring the batting order. However, injuries have added to their

concerns, with Rachin Ravindra and Lockie Ferguson still uncertain for the tournament. New Zealand's recent experience, which came in winning a Tri-series, playing in Pakistan against the hosts and South Africa may give them an edge in conditions, but whether that will be enough remains to be seen.

New Zealand Champions Trophy squad

Mitchell Santner ©, Devon Conway, Tom Latham (WK), Kane Williamson, Rachin Ravindra, Will Young, Mark Chapman, Glenn Phillips, Daryl Mitchell, Nathan Smith, Lockie Ferguson, Ben Sears, William O'Rourke One of the biggest changes in New Zealand's Champions Trophy squad is the absence of veteran pacers Trent Boult and Tim Southee. Santner will instead rely on Matt Henry, Jacob Duffy, and William O'Rourke. While this pace attack has shown glimpses of effectiveness in recent ODIs, it still needs to prove itself as a cohesive unit.



Battle Against Injuries

Injuries could be a major obstacle for New Zealand. Rachin Ravindra suffered a serious injury during the ongoing tri-series against Pakistan, putting his participation in doubt. Ben Sears has already been ruled out with a hamstring injury, with Jacob Duffy stepping in as his replacement. Lockie Ferguson, who also sustained a hamstring injury in the T20, has resumed training but remains under medical supervision.

Lack of Spin Options

Spin depth is another area of concern. Beyond Santner, New Zealand lacks established spinners. Rachin Ravindra and Michael Bracewell have provided some assistance in recent ODIs but are yet to prove themselves as consistent match-winners. This could be a challenge, particularly in spin-friendly conditions like Dubai. The BlackCaps will rely on a pace-heavy attack, a strategy that will be tested as the tournament unfolds.

New Zealand's ODI Form Since the 2023 World Cup

New Zealand's ODI performances have been inconsistent since the 2023 World Cup. In a tri-series match against South Africa in Lahore, they successfully chased a 305-run target, thanks to Kane Williamson's unbeaten 133. However, in the 2024 ODI series against Australia, they struggled and suffered a 3-0 series loss, highlighting their fluctuating form in the format.

Parineeti Chopra

Makes A Statement With Her Laid-Back Airport Look



Parineeti Chopra made a stylish touchdown in Mumbai on Tuesday morning. Just days back, the actress had headed home to Delhi right to celebrate her cousin Siddharth Chopra's wedding, who tied the knot with his ladylove Neelam Upadhyaya in an intimate yet lavish ceremony. Now, back in the city once again, the actress caught eyeballs with her bubbly personality, proving why she is a paparazzi favourite.

In a video shared on Instagram, the 36-year-old actress was spotted effortlessly strutting out of the airport terminal amid a flurry of camera flashes. Rocking an all-black outfit featuring an oversized tee and comfy shorts, Parineeti surely nailed the casual yet chic look. She paired her simple outfit with a baseball cap and white sneakers, proving that airport fashion can be simple yet statement-worthy.

As the clip played, the Amar Singh Chamkila actress could be seen pausing along her way to exchange a few words with the paparazzi while flashing her radiant smile. She even stopped briefly for the paps to click her pictures before she hopped into her car.

In other news, Parineeti created a lot of buzz in the media when she skipped attending Priyanka Chopra's brother's pre-wedding festivities. Her initial absence raised many eyebrows. However, she shut the murmurs when she arrived in Mumbai with her husband, Raghav Chadha, to celebrate the 'SidNee' wedding.

For the ceremony, the Ishaqzaade actress opted for an intricately embroidered crop blazer paired up with a printed lehenga and a silk bustier. The lehenga set is from Gazal Gupta's brand. She opted for a statement neckpiece and bangles to add an oomph factor to her overall look. Parineeti dropped a series of pictures on her Instagram, delighting her fans by giving a closer look at her modern, regal outfit. In the caption, she wrote, "A blazer and lehenga? YES!"

Speaking of her work front, the 36-year-old actress is busy filming her next project after the success of Imtiaz Ali-directed Amar Singh Chamkila, in which Diljit Dosanjh played the titular character. Parineeti portrayed his wife and singing partner, Amarjot Kaur. The biography, released on Netflix, immediately became a hit among viewers. As for her new film, the actress has not divulged many details about it except sharing about shoot locations, timings and a bunch of her co-stars.

Urvashi Rautela

Reacts To Backlash Over Dabidi Dibidi Dance Moves: 'During Rehearsals...'

Urvashi Rautela and Nandamuri Balakrishna's dance moves in the song 'Dabidi Dibidi' from their recently released film 'Daaku Maharaaj' faced massive backlash on social media. Netizens slammed the choreography by Shekhar Master, calling the moves 'crass' and 'vulgar'. Urvashi has now addressed the criticism over the dance moves, saying that the team absolutely didn't anticipate this kind of a reaction. She said that they thought it would be taken positively, and that they didn't expect people to talk about the song in this manner. While speaking with The Hollywood Reporter India, Urvashi Rautela said that the song Dabidi Dibidi is made for Nandamuri Balakrishna's fans, and that every lyric is crafted according to their mindset. "When you look at my rehearsal clips, everything went really well. It was like how we usually choreograph for any song. I was working with Master Shekar, with whom I've collaborated before this was my fourth time. So it wasn't like I was shocked or doing something completely out of the ordinary. During rehearsals, everything was smooth and under control. But honestly, everything happened so suddenly that it's been hard to assess why people are talking about the choreography in this way. We didn't realise it would be received like this because,



during rehearsals, everything went as planned," said Urvashi. She further added that the way the song was received was surprising for her. She said that it is a peppy, massy song, and that they never anticipated the backlash. "We never expected people to talk about it in this manner. As a team, we truly didn't anticipate this reaction," she said. Urvashi thought that it would be taken positively. However, she said that she has always kept her identity and professionalism separate. She said that while she embraces constructive criticism, she doesn't let it overshadow her passion for her work. The music video of the song Dabidi Dibidi, composed by S Thaman, shows Urvashi Rautela dressed in a crop top and skirt, while Nandamuri Balakrishna is seen hitting her belly button on beats, and pulling her up by her dress. Later in the song, the 64-year-old actor is seen hitting the actress on the rear. Clips from the music video went viral on social media last month, as netizens called out the 'cringe' and 'vulgar' moves.



Vidhu Vinod Chopra Kept Bobby Deol's Kareeb Co-Star Shabana 'Hidden': 'He Wanted The World To See Her Only..'



Vidhu Vinod Chopra's reputation as a perfectionist on set is well known, and filmmaker Siddharth P Malhotra recently shared some fascinating insights into his working style during Kareeb. The film starred Bobby Deol, who was still finding his footing in Bollywood, alongside Shabana (introduced as Neha). Years later, Shabana stepped away from films and tied the knot with actor Manoj Bajpayee. Siddharth recalled that VVC was so particular about Shabana's debut that he insisted she stay hidden from the public eye until the big reveal. "Vinod sir had kept me in-charge of Shabana. She was supposed to be kept in an apartment somewhere in Bandra. He wanted the world to see her only the day he brings her out," he revealed in a chat with Siddharth Kannan.

Years later, in a 2008 interview with Rediff, Shabana opened up about being forced to change her name and how she never actually wanted to act. "But they saw me on television and coaxed me to do the film. They chased me. I was not interested and refused. They spoke to my parents and got their approval," she shared.

Siddharth also recalled a nerve-wracking moment on set when a water snake made an unexpected appearance during the filming of Chori Chori. Bobby, submerged in water for the shot, spotted the snake and immediately called out to the director. But VVC, determined to capture the perfect lighting, refused to cut the shot. "There was a water snake close to Bobby and he kept saying 'Vinod, there's a snake here,'" Siddharth recounted. Once the take was complete, Bobby bolted in the opposite direction.

Reflecting on the experience in the same Filmfare interview, Bobby admitted that while Shabana had a "tough time" with VVC constantly yelling at her, he himself was treated differently. "No one pulled me up, maybe because my father's famous," he had said.

Harshvardhan Rane Celebrates Sanam Teri Kasam's Successful Re-run In Theatres



Harshvardhan Rane is overjoyed as his Bollywood debut Sanam Teri Kasam is finally getting the recognition it deserves with its re-release. Originally released in 2016, the film struggled at the box office, collecting only Rs 9.11 crore despite receiving positive reviews. However, the re-release is proving to be a success, earning an impressive Rs 3-3.25 crore on Day 4 and bringing its total revenue to Rs 22.09 crore, as per the makers. Amid the film's renewed success, Harshvardhan was recently spotted in the city, channelling his character Inder from Sanam Teri Kasam.

In a video shared by Viral Bhayani on Instagram, the actor is seen posing for the paparazzi in a grey shirt paired with brown cargo pants—the same outfit he wore in the film. As the clip progresses, the Haseen Dillruba actor is seen engaging with the paps, further delighting his fans.

Not just this, the actor also recently surprised his fans watching Sanam Teri Kasam in the theatres. During his appearance, Harsh wore the same black suit that his character Inder wore in the film's climax scene.

Sharing a video of the same on Instagram, the actor wrote in the caption, "I went below the producer's office to request for re-release, now next step I will do an 11 day (water only) fast below his office to request him for Part 2. 9 years ago, the Producer gave it their blood, Director gave it their sweat, Mawra gave it her soul, and now you gave it your tears!! I will give my life for part 2, Tumhaari Kasam."

Helmed by Radhika Rao and Vinay Sapru, the film also featured Pakistani actress Mawra Hocane, Manish Chaudhary, Murali Sharma and Sudesh Berry in pivotal roles. Recently in an interview with India Forums, filmmakers Radhika Rao and Vinay Sapru disclosed that the sequel is already in the works, and they have a clear idea of where Inder's (Harshvardhan Rane) journey will take him next. Moreover, the makers are planning to release Sanam Teri Kasam 2 on the occasion of Valentine's Day 2026. Keywords: Harshvardhan Rane Sanam Teri Kasam, Harshvardhan Rane spotted in the city, Harshvardhan Rane Instagram.

