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# The Researchers'

## NEWS BOX

### California fire official, dubbed 'DEI hire' by Trump, stabbed to death at home

**World.** A veteran California Fire captain, who recently helped to lead the fight against the devastating wildfires that raged across southern California, was found dead with multiple stab wounds at her San Diego home. Now, police are seeking her 53-year-old wife, Yolanda Olejniczak, who is at large. While an investigation in the matter is underway, conspiracy theories have been circulating online about Rebecca Marodi's death. Some social media commentators said that US President Donald Trump had called her a DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) hire and blamed her for the Los Angeles wildfire.



Since the wildfires, Elon Musk has been accused of a Los Angeles Fire Department of prioritising diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) policies over operational effectiveness. The 49-year-old Rebecca Marodi was found dead inside her home around 9 pm on

Monday and was identified by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection on Tuesday. Investigators believe she may have known her attacker and they are treating this case as a potential domestic violence incident, The Independent reported.

According to a statement by San Diego County Sheriff's Office (SDCSO), officers tried to save her but she succumbed to her injuries before she could be taken to a hospital. Marodi spent almost 30 years working as a firefighter, making her way from a volunteer in 1993 to captain in 2022.

### Donald Trump seeks Supreme Court battle to overturn landmark federal agency ruling

**WASHINGTON.** A month into President Donald Trump's second term, lawyers for the Republican administration seem intent on provoking a legal fight to overturn a 90-year-old Supreme Court decision known as Humphrey's Executor that has been critical to the development of the modern U.S. government.

Humphrey's Executor ushered in an era of powerful independent federal agencies charged with regulating labor relations, employment discrimination, the airwaves and much else. The unanimous 1935 Supreme Court ruling established that presidents cannot fire the appointed leaders of the alphabet soup of federal agencies without cause.

But that decision has long rankled conservative legal theorists who argue that the Constitution vests immense power in the president and they reject limits imposed by Congress and upheld by the courts. They say the modern administrative state gets the Constitution all wrong and that all federal agencies that are part of the executive branch answer to the president. That includes his ability to fire their leaders at will. The current Supreme Court, with a conservative majority that includes three justices nominated by Trump, has at times agreed.

#### Who was Humphrey and what's an executor?

Born during the Civil War, William Humphrey became a Republican member of Congress from Washington state. He was appointed to the Federal Trade Commission by President Calvin Coolidge and reappointed by President Herbert Hoover, both Republicans. A few months after taking office in 1933, Democratic President Franklin D. Roosevelt sought Humphrey's resignation, preferring his own choice at an agency that would have a lot to say about the New Deal.

### New York governor won't remove NYC mayor Adams, for now, but plans, but Plans stricter oversight

**NEW YORK.** Gov. Kathy Hochul won't immediately remove New York City Mayor Eric Adams from office, but will instead push for increased oversight of City Hall as he faces intense scrutiny over his relationship with the Trump administration.

Hochul will announce Thursday that she has, for now, decided against removing Adams from office, according to three people familiar with the governor's plan who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to disclose its details. The decision came after she solicited opinions this week from a roster of New York political figures over questions about whether Adams could independently govern after the Justice Department moved to drop his corruption case so he could help with Republican President Donald Trump's immigration agenda.

Rather than remove Adams, Hochul plans to propose legislation that would require City Hall to operate within new guardrails.

Two of the sources familiar with the strategy said the proposals include establishing a new deputy inspector focused on New York City, a fund for the city's comptroller, public advocate and council speaker to launch lawsuits against the federal government, and more money for the state comptroller to investigate the city's finances.

Hochul — a centrist Democrat, as is Adams — has faced questions about the mayor's future since his indictment in September on bribery and other charges. He has pleaded not guilty and said at a court hearing Wednesday that he hadn't committed a crime. Hochul has been reluctant to oust him, arguing that doing so would be undemocratic, while thrusting the city into a complex, court-like removal process that has never been used before against a sitting mayor of the country's most populous city.

## Elon Musk's spat with astronaut over Sunita Williams in space: Lie vs idiot

**World.** SpaceX CEO Elon Musk, who has been tasked by US President Donald Trump to bring astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore back from space, got into a spat on X with Danish astronaut Andreas 'Andy' Mogensen over the matter on Thursday. Mogensen, who is the former commander of the International Space Station (ISS), called out Musk for claiming Williams and Wilmore were abandoned in space by ex-US President Joe Biden. Mogensen, 48, shared a clip on X of a joint interview to Fox News by Musk and Trump, in which the SpaceX CEO alleged that Williams and Wilmore - who have been aboard the ISS for nearly 300 days - were abandoned by Biden due to "political reasons".

"What a lie. And from someone who complains about lack of honesty from the mainstream media," Mogensen wrote on the social media platform. Musk countered by calling the ex-ISS commander an "idiot." "You are fully retarded. SpaceX

could have brought them back several months ago. I OFFERED THIS DIRECTLY to the Biden administration and they refused. Return WAS pushed back for political reasons. Idiot," the tech billionaire replied.

Mogensen, a European Space Agency astronaut, had flown to the ISS twice, including aboard a SpaceX Crew Dragon capsule during a 2023 mission.

The 48-year-old astronaut responded to Musk's dig by accusing the latter of delaying Williams and Wilmore's rescue mission. "Elon, I have long admired you and what you have accomplished, especially at SpaceX and Tesla. You know as well as I do, that Butch and Sunita are returning with Crew-9, as has been the plan since last September. Even now, you are not sending up a rescue ship to bring them home. They are returning on the Dragon capsule that has been on ISS since last



September," Mogensen tweeted. During the Fox News interview, Trump asked Musk when the tech billionaire would be bringing the astronauts back. To this, the SpaceX CEO replied, "I think it's about four weeks to bring them back." The 78-year-old President also chimed in to jab Biden, saying the ex-President was going to "leave them (astronauts) in space" because he "didn't want the publicity". This is not the first time that Trump has

accused Biden of abandoning astronauts in space. Last month, after making a similar claim, the US President said on Truth Social that he has tasked SpaceX to bring them home "as soon as possible". "Terrible that the Biden administration left them there so long," he tweeted. Butch Wilmore and Indian-origin Sunita Williams flew to the ISS in June last year onboard a Boeing Starliner for a mission that was supposed to last eight days to certify the new spaceship. But due to thruster issues, NASA decided that Starliner would return without the astronauts, whose return was then tasked to SpaceX. Later, the space agency announced that Williams and Wilmore would return on the SpaceX Crew-9 mission's spaceship, which was launched in September last year with a crew of two instead of four to accommodate them. After being initially scheduled to return in February, the astronauts will now return to earth on March 19.

## Trump claims BRICS 'broke up' after tariff threat: Haven't heard from them lately

**World.** US President Donald Trump claimed on Friday that the BRICS, which includes India, "broke up" after he threatened 150% tariffs for undermining the dollar. BRICS is an intergovernmental organisation made up of 10 countries - Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates.



"BRICS states were trying to destroy our dollar. They wanted to create a new currency. So when I came in, the first thing I said was any BRICS state that even mentions the destruction of the dollar will be charged a 150% tariff, and we don't want your goods and the BRICS states just broke up," said Trump.

He added that he hasn't heard about the BRICS after the 150 per cent tariff

threat. "I don't know what the hell happened to them. We haven't heard from the BRICS states lately," Trump said. On February 13, US President Donald Trump threatened the BRICS nations that they could face 100 per cent tariffs from the United States "if they want to play games with the dollar." He said that the BRICS is dead

## China supports Trump's push for Russia-Ukraine peace deal at G20 meet

**Beijing.** China came out in support of US President Donald Trump's bid to strike a deal with Russia to end the war in Ukraine, at a G20 meeting in South Africa on Thursday, while US allies rallied around Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Less than a month into his presidency, Trump has upended US policy on the war, scrapping a campaign to isolate Moscow with a phone call to Russian President Vladimir Putin and talks between senior US and Russian officials that have sidelined Ukraine.

Trump on Wednesday then denounced Zelenskyy as a "dictator," prompting statements of support for the Ukrainian president from G20 members such as Australia, Germany and the United Kingdom.

"China supports all efforts conducive to peace (in Ukraine), including the recent consensus reached between the United States and Russia," Wang Yi told other

G20 foreign ministers gathered in Johannesburg, according to a statement from his ministry. "China is willing to continue playing a constructive role in the political resolution of the crisis," he added. Wang did not reiterate the point he made at the Munich Security



Conference last Friday that all stakeholders in the Russia-Ukraine conflict should participate in any peace talks. Beijing wants to ensure its involvement in whatever deal Trump seeks to strike with the Kremlin to prevent a currently diplomatically-isolated Russia from slipping out from

under its influence, and because its ties to Russia offer China an "in" with European officials worried about being frozen out of any talks, analysts say. "By going straight to Putin, President Trump has erased what Beijing had hoped could be a key piece of initial leverage," said Ruby Osman, a China expert at the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change. "Instead, China might turn its attention to discussing a Chinese role in eventual reconstruction and peacekeeping - something that would give Beijing a significantly more vested interest in European security architecture," she added. The Trump administration said on Tuesday it had agreed to hold more talks with Russia

## Body released by Hamas not of mother of youngest hostages, Israel alleges

**World.** Israel's military said on Friday that one of the four bodies handed over by Hamas did not belong to any of the hostages taken during the October 7, 2023, attack, accusing the group of violating the fragile ceasefire agreement. The remains of two children, 10-month-old Kfir Bibas and his four-year-old brother Ariel, were confirmed among those returned. However, the third body, which was expected to be that of their mother, Shiri Bibas, did not match any known hostage, leaving her fate uncertain. "This is a violation of utmost severity by the Hamas terrorist organisation, which is obliged under the agreement to return four deceased hostages," the Israeli military said in a statement, demanding the immediate return of Shiri and all remaining hostages. The fourth body was identified as that of hostage Oded Lifshitz.

Hamas has yet to respond to Israel's accusations. The release of the remains came amid heightened tensions, as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed retaliation against Hamas. The bodies were transferred



in a highly publicised event, with Palestinian militants handing over four black coffins in a public display watched by armed Hamas fighters and a gathered crowd. The scene drew sharp criticism from international leaders, including UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who condemned the "abhorrent and appalling" display.

The remains were handed over as part of a ceasefire agreement brokered by the United States, Qatar, and Egypt. Israelis lined the roads near the Gaza border, braving the rain to pay their respects as the convoy carrying the coffins passed by. In Tel Aviv, mourners gathered in Hostages Square, the symbolic site of demonstrations calling for the return of captives. President Isaac Herzog expressed the nation's grief, saying, "Agony. Pain. There are no words. Our hearts - the hearts of an entire nation - lie in tatters. Netanyahu, in a recorded address, said the return of the bodies only strengthened Israel's resolve to eliminate Hamas and ensure such an attack never happens again. "Our loved ones' blood is shouting at us from the soil and is obliging us to settle the score with the despicable murderers, and we will," he declared. Israel has repeatedly vowed to destroy Hamas and bring home the roughly 250 hostages taken during the October attack.

## Explosions on three buses in Israel in a suspected 'terror attack'

**Explosions on three buses in a parking lot shook central Israel on Thursday, suspected to be a militant attack. No injuries were reported. The blasts occurred as Israel mourned the return of four hostage bodies from Gaza.**

**World.** A series of explosions on three buses in a parking lot rattled central Israel on Thursday in what authorities suspected was a militant attack. No injuries were reported. The explosions happened on a day when Israel was already grieving after Hamas returned the bodies of four hostages from Gaza. The bus explosions were reminiscent of bombings during the Palestinian

uprising of the 2000s, but such attacks are now rare. Police spokesman Asi Aharoni told Channel 13 TV that explosives were found on two other buses. Israeli police said the five bombs were identical and equipped with timers, and said bomb squads were defusing the unexploded bombs. Bomb disposal units had also finished searching buses and trains nationwide for additional explosives and police were on the scene Bat Yam, a city outside Tel Aviv, as they searched for suspects. "We need to determine if a single suspect placed explosives on a number of buses, or if there were multiple suspects," police spokesman Haim Sargrof told Israeli TV. Tzvika Brot, mayor of Bat Yam, said it was a miracle no one was hurt. The buses had finished their routes and were in a parking lot, he said. The Shin Bet internal security agency was taking over the investigation, police said, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said he was receiving updates from



his military secretary and following the events. Sargrof, the police spokesperson, said the explosives matched explosives used in the West Bank, but he declined to elaborate. Israel has repeatedly carried out military raids on suspected Palestinian militants in the occupied West Bank since Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack sparked the devastating war in Gaza. As part of that

crackdown, it has greatly restricted entry into Israel for Palestinians from the occupied territory. A group identifying itself as a branch of Hamas' military wing, Qassam Brigades, from the northern West Bank city of Tulkarem, posted on messaging app Telegram: "We will never forget to take vengeance for our martyrs as long as the occupation is on our lands." Tulkarem and two refugee camps in the city have been a focus of the recent Israeli army raids. Since the ceasefire with Hamas in Gaza took effect on Jan. 19, Israel has been conducting a broad military offensive in the West Bank. In the past, militants have entered Israel and carried out shootings and bombings in Israeli cities. Brot, the mayor, urged the public to keep their routines. Schools will be open tomorrow and public transport will be operating. "Keep your routines at school, with public transportation, and with heightened awareness," he told Channel 13 TV.



## Defence Ministry Signs Rs 1220 Crore Deal for Radios with Bharat Electronics

**New Delhi:** In a significant move to bolster maritime security, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has signed a contract with M/s Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Bengaluru, for the procurement of 149 Software Defined Radios (SDRs) for the Indian Coast Guard. The contract, valued at Rs 1220.12 crore, falls under the Buy (Indian-IDDMM) category.

These advanced SDRs will provide secure and reliable communication capabilities, facilitating high-speed data and secure voice transmissions. The new technology is expected to improve information sharing, collaboration, and situational awareness, all critical for the Coast Guard's operations. The acquisition of these radios will enhance the



Indian Coast Guard's ability to carry out its vital responsibilities, including maritime law enforcement, search and rescue missions, fisheries protection, and marine environment conservation. Moreover, the SDRs will enable better interoperability for joint operations with the Indian

Navy, further strengthening the nation's defense capabilities. This project marks a key step toward enhancing the Coast Guard's operational readiness while supporting the Government of India's Blue Economy vision by reinforcing maritime security. Additionally, the

contract aligns with the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, aiming to boost India's manufacturing capabilities for advanced military communication systems. It is expected to generate employment opportunities and foster the development of specialized expertise in the defense sector.

## Jharkhand Ministers Receive New Bungalows in Smart City Area



**Ranchi:** Ministers in Jharkhand have finally received their new bungalows, ending a long wait. Eleven bungalows, built at a cost of Rs 70 crore, have been allotted to the ministers.

These bungalows, each covering an area of 16,321 square feet with around 8,000 square feet of building space, are located in the Smart City area. They have been designed with modern amenities, including parks, swimming pools, and enhanced security measures.

The Chief Minister of Jharkhand personally inspected the construction of these bungalows twice and ensured that they were completed promptly. Ministers are now set to move into their new homes, with each one being assigned a specific bungalow number. The ministers are expected to conduct their "griha pravesh" ceremonies soon to officially settle into their new residences.

## XLRI Jamshedpur Honors Women Entrepreneurs at XL-JESEY 2025



**Jamshedpur:** The second edition of the XLRI Jamshedpur Emerging Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award (XL-JESEY 2025) took place on February 9, 2025, celebrating women social entrepreneurs who have made a significant impact through innovative and sustainable business models. Organized by XLRI's Centre for Inclusiveness, the award aims to recognize social entrepreneurs who are driving positive change in their communities.

This year's theme, "Novel Approaches in Women Entrepreneurship," focused on initiatives that empower women while addressing important social, economic, and environmental challenges. The award spotlighted transformative efforts that contribute to gender equality and inclusive development.

The XL-JESEY 2025 award was presented to three exceptional entrepreneurs. Premlata Poonia, founder of Hamari Laado, received the top honor for her commitment to girls' education and women's empowerment in rural India. Through her initiative, she provides educational resources, mentorship, and skill development programs to help marginalized women achieve economic independence.

Anuradha Richhariya, Managing Director of Lalitpur Mahila Kisan Producer Company, was recognized for her work in strengthening women-led agricultural enterprises. She focuses on improving market access, financial literacy, and sustainable farming practices, thus enhancing the economic well-being of female farmers.

Aruna Tirkey, founder of Ajam Emba, was honored for her efforts in reviving indigenous cuisine and empowering tribal women through sustainable food entrepreneurship. By promoting traditional culinary practices and providing employment opportunities for tribal women, she has helped preserve cultural heritage while fostering economic self-sufficiency.

Each of the three winners received a cash prize of ₹1,50,000 in recognition of their contributions to social entrepreneurship.

The ceremony was part of the eighth edition of the Social Entrepreneurship Conclave (SEC-8), organized by the SIG-MA-oikos committee at XLRI Jamshedpur. The conclave brought together over 150 participants, including students, industry leaders, and social entrepreneurs, to discuss the theme "Women Entrepreneurship & Inclusive Growth." Roopa Roshan Sahoo, IAS, gave the keynote address, discussing policy frameworks and the challenges of creating an equitable entrepreneurial ecosystem for women in India. The event also featured two panel discussions on the role of women in shaping the entrepreneurial landscape.

## India, UK Forge Key Collaboration in Telecom, AI, and Space Technology

**New Delhi:** India and the United Kingdom have entered into a significant collaboration focused on advancing next-generation telecommunications, artificial intelligence (AI), and space technology, further strengthening bilateral ties in these vital sectors.

The Secretary of Telecom in India recently visited the United Kingdom to engage with the Department of Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). During the visit, discussions centered on exploring collaborative opportunities in emerging technologies such as 5G, 6G, digital infrastructure security, and AI applications.

During the visit, the Secretary toured the UK's Federated Telecom Hubs, focusing on 6G research, and held discussions with leaders from the Alan Turing Institute on AI-driven telecom security.

Collaboration was also explored with the University of Strathclyde's 5G Centre and the University of Glasgow's 6G Research Centre.

A UK-India Telecom Roundtable, organized by the High Commission of India, brought together stakeholders from DSIT, BT, Ericsson, and innovation hubs like SONIC Labs and UK Telecom Labs, to discuss further cooperation in telecom and space technology.

Neeraj Mittal, India's Telecom Secretary, highlighted India's leadership in next-gen network technologies, underscoring the strategic value of this collaboration.

## Congress Claims USAID Funds Was For Bangladesh, BJP Hits Back



**New Delhi:** The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and opposition Congress are engaged in a war of words over US President Donald Trump's claim that the Biden administration spent \$21 million to boost voter turnout in India.

On Friday, Congress rebutted the claim, citing a news report that stated the funds were actually directed to Bangladesh in 2022, not India. Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, sharing the article on X, accused the BJP of spreading falsehoods, asking, "Will the Liars apologise?"

The BJP, however, swiftly countered. Amit Malviya, BJP IT Cell head, dismissed the report as "fake" and defended Trump's statement. He suggested that the money was part of a broader scheme to sustain "deep-state assets" defending such actions. Malviya also shared a report about Elon Musk calling USAID a "criminal organization" after Trump froze its funding.

The controversy stems from Trump's recent remarks about the \$21 million, which he claimed was a "kickback scheme" aimed at influencing India's elections. Speaking in Washington, Trump questioned why such funds were being used for Indian voter turnout and accused the Biden administration of interfering in Indian politics.

Trump's accusations were echoed by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), which clarified that the \$21 million was part of a larger \$486 million budget for election-related programs. Additionally, \$29 million was allocated to Bangladesh. The debate over foreign involvement in Indian elections continues to spark heated political discussions.

## FIVB Criticizes IOA Over National Games Volleyball Controversy

**Bokaro:** The International Volleyball Federation (FIVB) has slammed the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) for mishandling the volleyball event at the 2025 National Games in Uttarakhand.

FIVB criticized the IOA for disregarding the decisions of the VFI Ad-hoc Committee, which was set up to govern volleyball in India.

The international body also condemned the IOA for inviting individuals from the disbanded VFI, which had been suspended by the Central Government in 2020. FIVB expressed concerns over the political and polarized environment caused by the IOA's actions, calling for better governance in Indian volleyball.

## Railways Orders Removal of 285 Posts on New Delhi Station Stampede from X



**New Delhi:** The Ministry of Railways has directed X (formerly Twitter) to remove 285 links containing videos related to the February 15 stampede at New Delhi Railway Station, according to The Hindustan Times. This is one of the first major actions taken by the ministry since being granted direct content takedown powers in December.

The ministry issued the notice on February 17, citing ethical concerns and X's content policies. It warned that such videos could incite public unrest and disrupt railway operations, especially during peak traffic. The directive targeted several accounts, including those of major news organizations, for sharing "sensitive or disturbing media" showing deceased

individuals. This follows a similar takedown action in January, when the ministry instructed YouTube and Instagram to remove content containing misleading information. Meta confirmed it complied with the request. Meanwhile, the Delhi High Court has called for a review of passenger limits and platform ticket sales in light of the stampede. The

court raised concerns over overcrowding and inadequate crowd management, asking the Railway Board to submit an affidavit outlining corrective measures. The stampede, which occurred on platforms 14 and 15, resulted in at least 18 deaths as large crowds gathered to board trains for the Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj.

## Jaishankar Leads Trilateral Talks with Australia, France; Engages EU, Angola, Ireland at G20

**New Delhi:** External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar met with Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong and French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot in Johannesburg for the India-Australia-France trilateral meeting. In a social media post, Dr. Jaishankar highlighted the shared interests of the three countries in the Indo-Pacific region and emphasized the potential to strengthen their positions through collaboration. He expressed appreciation for the ideas discussed during the trilateral meeting and looked forward to im-



plementing them in practical ways. On the sidelines of the G20 Foreign Ministers Meeting, Dr. Jaishankar also met with

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Kaja Kallas. Their discussions centered around strengthening India-EU rela-

tions, developments in Europe, the ongoing Ukraine conflict, and other global matters. Dr. Jaishankar expressed anticipation for the upcoming visit of the EU Commission and the EU College to India. In addition, Dr. Jaishankar met with the Foreign Minister of Angola, Ambassador Tete Antonio, where they focused on enhancing bilateral cooperation and strengthening India-Africa ties. The Minister also briefly conversed with Ireland's Foreign Minister Simon Harris during the event.

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# Mayawati's 'BJP's B team' barb at Rahul Gandhi amid INDIA bloc war of words

**BSP chief Mayawati doubled down on her dig at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi by calling his side 'BJP's B team' in the Delhi elections, which she claimed was instrumental in handing the saffron party a win in the capital after 27 years.**

New Delhi. Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati fuelled her war of words with Rahul Gandhi in a series of fresh tweets on Friday, claiming that the Congress worked as the BJP's "B team" in the Delhi elections that played an instrumental role in bringing the saffron party back to power in the capital after 27 years. "It's a common discussion that this time the Congress contested the

Delhi Assembly elections as BJP's B team, due to which BJP came to power here. Otherwise, Congress's condition would not have been so bad in this election that the party could not even save the deposit of most of its candidates," Mayawati's tweet, roughly translated from Hindi, read. She doubled down on the attack, asking Rahul Gandhi to look at his own party instead of "pointing fingers at others and especially at the BSP chief". "This is my advice to him," she tweeted. The former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister also had a piece of advice for the newly formed BJP government in Delhi, saying that it has the challenge of fulfilling all the promises made during election campaigns, "especially those related to public welfare and development, on time". She didn't spare the BJP from a dig either. "Otherwise, the condition of this party (BJP) may also become as bad as that of the Congress, in the future," Mayawati tweeted in Hindi.

The fresh attacks aimed at Rahul



Gandhi came a day after war of words between the two leaders, following the former Congress President's claim that the BJP would not have won the 2024 Lok Sabha elections had Mayawati not stayed away from the INDIA bloc. "I wanted Behenji to fight alongside us against the BJP, but for some reason, she did not. That was deeply disappointing. If all three parties had united, the BJP would never have won," he said while interacting with

► **Mayawati's war of words with Rahul Gandhi escalates**  
 ► **Row after Rahul Gandhi criticises her for staying away from INDIA bloc in Lok Sabha polls**  
 ► **BSP chief asks him to look at 'own self' before pointing fingers**

Dalit students in Rae Bareilly during his first visit to the region after winning the election, on Thursday. He is on a two-day visit to his parliamentary constituency. Mayawati, however, hit back at Rahul Gandhi by accusing the Congress of having a "casteist mindset and dual character". "Wherever the Congress is strong or in power, it harbours hostility and casteist attitudes towards the BSP and its followers. But, in states like UP, where it is weak, it tries to mislead people by talking about an alliance with BSP. If this is not hypocrisy, then what is?" Mayawati tweeted in Hindi. She further argued that previous alliances with the Congress had always been damaging to her side.

## BJP slams Karnataka's Rs 5.67 crore land grant to Congress office for Rs 28 lakh

The Karnataka cabinet approved the allotment of land worth Rs 5.67 crore to the state Congress committee for Rs 28 lakh to build a district party office. Law Minister HK Patil defended the move, citing past allocations to BJP and NGOs. BJP MLA Mahesh Tenginkai criticised Congress, questioning its financial priorities.



New Delhi. The Karnataka Cabinet has approved the allotment of 2,988.29 sq m of land in Hubballi-Dharwad to the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) for the construction of a district Congress office. The land, belonging to the Hubballi-Dharwad Municipal Corporation, is valued at Rs 5.67 crore as per the guidance value but has been allotted for about Rs 28 lakh. According to the Cabinet agenda, the KPCC had sought the land for the construction of the party office as part of Chief Minister DK Shivakumar's earlier promise to build 100 Congress offices across the state.

Justifying the move, Law Minister HK Patil stated, "There are conventions in Karnataka where concessions are given. Based on that, we have allotted land for various parties in the past. This is not new. When non-governmental organisations (NGO) request land, we consider the purpose and allot accordingly. The cabinet has made this decision in line with past precedents, and even the BJP has received land for party offices." However, BJP has slammed the decision, accusing Congress of prioritising its party infrastructure over governance. BJP MLA Mahesh Tenginkai remarked, "Congress is planning a new office, but I have one question for them, your party has enough money, but you don't have funds for guarantees and development? It is clear that Congress is not short on funds, so they should get the land at its actual value."

## Andhra Chief Minister assures relief for chilli farmers, seeks Centre's help

New Delhi. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday assured chilli farmers of necessary assistance and urged them not to be alarmed by the recent decline in prices. Addressing the media in New Delhi, Naidu stated that he had discussed the sharp drop in chilli prices with the Centre, pointing to reduced global demand as the main factor. He explained that while farmers previously secured better rates due to high international demand, the current market downturn has led to a significant price fall. He explained that farmers had earlier received better prices due to high demand, but the market slowdown has now led to a decline. The Chief Minister informed that he had taken up the matter with Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan through a video conference, as the Minister was on tour. Chouhan is scheduled to review the issue with officials on Friday.

He stated that while the state aims to procure 12 lakh metric tonnes of chilli this year, only four lakh metric tonnes have been purchased so far. He reassured farmers that all concerns had been conveyed to the Centre and that further clarity on possible relief measures is expected following the Union Minister's review meeting on Friday. Continuing his discussions with the Centre, Naidu also raised concerns related to the Jal Jeevan Mission and the Polavaram project with Patil. He informed the Minister that the state government aims to complete the Polavaram project by 2027. Naidu further sought the Centre's support in diverting water from Polavaram to Banakacherla and stated that central representatives would soon visit the state to assess the proposal. Highlighting the government's focus on water management, Naidu reaffirmed that the TDP-led NDA government is committed to efficient resource utilisation and timely completion of major projects.



## Mamata Banerjee backpedals on 'mrityu kumbh' row: We respect all religions

Kolkata. Amid the controversy over her remarks describing Maha Kumbh as 'mrityu kumbh', West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday said she respects all religions and cultures. The Trinamool Congress supremo also emphasised that religion could belong to an individual, but religious festivals are for all.

While addressing the assembly on Tuesday, Banerjee criticised the Uttar Pradesh government over its management of the ongoing Maha Kumbh at Prayagraj, and said the event has turned into "mrityu kumbh" with people losing their lives in incidents of stampede. She

also accused the authorities of suppressing the death toll.

The BJP has been attacking the chief minister over the remark. "Who said I do not respect my religion? Remember, religion belongs to an individual, but festivals are for all.

In our country, we have several states and each of them has different languages, education, cultures and beliefs. But we respect all cultures and that is why unity in diversity is our philosophy and ideology," she said.

The Chief Minister was addressing a programme after laying the foundation stone of Narayana



Health City in Newtown near here. "Sometimes people ask me whether you are a man or a woman and I reply that I consider myself as a human being and humanity is my subject," she said.

Later, in a social media post, Banerjee

thanked the founder of Narayana Health, Dr Devi Shetty, for setting up the hospital in the state.

"On this auspicious occasion, I extend heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to our esteemed guests and the Narayana Group family.

I am especially grateful to Dr Devi Shetty for placing his trust in us and taking this significant step in Bengal," she posted. "At the last Bengal Global Business Summit, Dr Shetty promised to invest in Bengal, and today he is fulfilling that promise by building a health centre that will serve as a centre of excellence with a capacity of 1100 beds," Banerjee said.

# Accommodation crisis for some Maharashtra MLAs as predecessors refuse to move out

**Also, the offices of some of the ministers are complaining that the accommodation allotted to them is not well-furnished, and renovations are underway.**

Three months after the formation of the Devendra Fadnavis government in Maharashtra, several MLAs are having to grapple with a crisis as they are struggling to find accommodation at the MLA hostel in Mumbai. There has been a delay in allotting government accommodation to the MLAs as many former legislators and ministers have yet to vacate their rooms, despite being served notices by the Assembly secretariat. Prominent faces like Girish Mahajan (Water Resource Minister), Sanjay Savkare (Textiles Minister), Makrand Patil (Relief and Rehabilitation Minister), Babasaheb Patil (Co-operation Minister), Pankaj Bhojar (Home Rural MoS) and Yogesh Kadam (Home Urban MoS), are among the MLAs/ministers who



are finding it hard to secure accommodation for themselves. Meanwhile, the offices of some of the ministers are complaining that the accommodation allotted to

them is not well-furnished, and renovations are underway.

However, this has not prevented several MLAs from queuing up outside the offices of the concerned authority, awaiting the allotment of their rooms. In some cases, MLAs have even ended up quarrelling over the same room.

This development highlights the challenges faced by the new government in Maharashtra, where the transition of power has been slow. With the budget session scheduled to begin in the first week of March, the accommodation issue needs to be resolved urgently to ensure smooth functioning.

The budget session will be held for nearly two weeks, and it remains to be seen how the government will address this pressing issue.

# No room for coercion: Jaishankar's veiled dig at China during G20 ministers' meet

**Jaishankar said that the member nations must also recognise that multilateralism itself lies deeply damaged and that the UN and its Security Council are often grid-locked.**

New Delhi. In a subtle dig at China, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said there must be no room for coercion, and, in a push for plurilateralism, stressed that the global agenda cannot be narrowed down to the interests of a few. Speaking at the first G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Johannesburg, Jaishankar said that the member nations must also recognise that multilateralism itself lies deeply damaged and that the UN and its Security Council are often grid-locked.

During the foreign ministers' meeting, held in the runup to the G20 Summit to be held in Johannesburg on November 22-23 this year, Jaishankar firmly stated that international law, especially the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) of 1982, must be respected. "Agreements entered into must be observed and there must be no room for coercion," Jaishankar stressed. "Just getting the UNSC back to work is not enough; its working methods and representation must change. More plurilateralism is required to plug global deficits. International cooperation itself must be less opaque or unilateral. And



the global agenda cannot be narrowed down to the interests of a few," the external affairs minister added. Jaishankar's remarks came days after China participated in Pakistan's multinational AMAN-2025 naval exercise, which also saw participation from Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, the US and observers from 32 other nations.

China's participation in the naval exercise aligned with its naval expansion in the Indian Ocean. Beijing said its focus was on anti-piracy and maritime security, protecting key sea lanes and overseas interests. The drill coincided with India's TROPEX

exercise, a large-scale Indian Navy drill testing combat readiness. India remains wary of China's "String of Pearls" strategy, which involves building military bases and alliances across the region.

Last month, China reportedly sent two research vessels to the Indian Ocean, further raising concerns in New Delhi. S Jaishankar also highlighted India's commitment to safeguarding maritime security, particularly in the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden, where the Indian Navy has played a critical role. He stressed the need to restore normal maritime commerce, which has been disrupted due to geopolitical tensions. "Ensuring maritime security in and around this region is also essential. Indian naval forces have contributed to that in the Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden. Restoring normal maritime commerce remains a priority," he said. During the discussions, the external affairs minister also reflected on other issues of global and regional interests, including the end of the Gaza war, the exchange of hostages and the recent developments in the Russia-Ukraine war.

**S Jaishankar stresses multilateralism is deeply damaged**  
**Says international law, especially UNCLOS, must be respected**  
**India focusses on maritime security in Arabian Sea, Gulf of Aden**



## Manipur's troubles deeper than political fixes

THE Supreme Court's handling of the Ranveer Allahbadia case has offered a glimpse of the tightrope the judiciary walks — between moral indignation and constitutional propriety. The interim relief granted to the influencer came after a tough hearing, where moral outrage took centre stage. The court's decision to protect Allahbadia's personal liberty was correct. Yet, the manner in which the case proceeded will lead to a chilling effect on free speech. Allahbadia, a prominent social media figure, is facing multiple FIRs for his remarks on the show India's Got Latent. The remarks, though intended to be funny, have led to a nationwide furor. An outcry from media houses and politicians has only added fuel to the fire. But as his counsel, Abhinav Chandrachud, rightly argued, the legal question was not whether Allahbadia's language was distasteful — everyone, including his own lawyer, admitted that — it was whether it amounted to a criminal offence under Indian law. The court, however, seemed in no mood to consider such fine distinctions. Throughout the hearing, it expressed visible disgust, calling the language 'dirty', 'perverted' and a 'vomit' from Allahbadia's mind. At one point, the judge asked Chandrachud, "Are you defending this kind of language?" The question, though rhetorical, pointed to a fundamental misunderstanding of a defence lawyer's role: Not to endorse, but to ensure that even the most reviled person receives fair treatment under the law.

The Supreme Court is not a custodian of morality. Its primary duty is to uphold constitutional rights, including free speech and personal liberty. Protection of free speech is not necessary for popular speech. Constitutional protection is invoked only by unpleasant, unpopular speech that gets prosecuted. Chandrachud, in an effort to bring the focus back to legal principles, cited the Apoorva Arora judgment, which held that profanity alone does not amount to obscenity. The test, the court had ruled, was whether the speech appealed to prurient interests and crossed the line to become criminal obscenity. But the court appeared unmoved: "If this is not obscenity, then what is obscenity?" it asked. Courts do not operate in a moral vacuum, but neither should they allow their moral disgust to cloud legal reasoning. By asking if the Arora case provided a "licence to say whatever you want," the court betrayed an unwillingness to separate protection of free speech from its personal sense of decency.

This exchange reminds me of what Justice Potter Stewart of the US Supreme Court wrote in his threshold test for obscenity in *Jacobellis vs Ohio* (1964). Explaining why the material at issue in the case was not obscene, Stewart wrote: "I shall not today attempt further to define the kinds of material I understand to be embraced within that shorthand description [ 'hard-core pornography' ], and perhaps I could never succeed in intelligibly doing so. But I know it when I see it, and the motion picture involved in this case is not that." Taking a cue from this reasoning, stand-up comedians went on to joke that obscenity was whatever aroused a judge. Indian comedians would be well advised not to say that obscenity is whatever angers a judge. The most disturbing aspect of the hearing was the court's near-dismissal of the death threats against Allahbadia. When Chandrachud mentioned that his client was receiving threats, Justice Surya Kant remarked, "If you can try to attain cheap publicity by saying these kind of things, there might be others also who might want to get cheap publicity by making threats." Regardless of how offensive Allahbadia's words were, death threats are not, and should never be, viewed as a predictable consequence — let alone a deserved one. The court's repeated references to the shame Allahbadia had brought upon his parents bordered on moralistic grandstanding. "What embarrassment he has caused to [his] parents!" the judge exclaimed, as though the court's role was to act as a collective moral guardian.

## Why Modi-Trump statement has raised Pakistan's hackles

Islamabad might have feared that the Trump administration is now blaming Pakistan for allegedly enabling the 2021 Kabul airport bombing.

The joint statement of PM Modi and President Donald Trump on February 14, 2025, is the strongest Indo-US declaration against terrorism in recent years. It mentions strengthening Indo-US cooperation on terrorism "against threats from groups, including Al-Qaeda, ISIS, Jaish-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, to prevent heinous acts like the attacks in Mumbai on 26/11 and the Abbey Gate bombing in Afghanistan on August 26, 2021."

It highlights the US government's approval of Tahawwur Rana's extradition to India as an example of the commitment of both governments to bring the perpetrators to justice. It then puts Pakistan squarely on the mat with this key sentence: "The leaders further called on Pakistan to expeditiously bring to justice the perpetrators of the 26/11 Mumbai and Pathankot attacks and ensure that its territory is not used to carry out cross-border terrorist attacks."

In the past, the only joint statement between US President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Narendra Modi which mentioned terrorism emanating from Pakistan was on June 22, 2023. Their meetings on September 8, 2023, and September 22, 2024, did not refer to terrorism at all. On June 22, 2023, both leaders "strongly condemned cross-border terrorism, the use of terrorist proxies and called on Pakistan to take immediate action to ensure that no territory under its control is used for launching terrorist attacks". They "reiterated the call for concerted action against all UN-listed terrorist groups including Al-Qaeda, ISIS/Daesh, LeT, JeM and Hizb-ul-Mujahideen." Pakistan reacted sharply to the Modi-Trump declaration and called it "one-sided, misleading and contrary to diplomatic norms" since it ignored "Pakistan's counterterrorism cooperation with the US." It added that this statement cannot "cover up India's sponsorship of terrorism, subversion and extra-judicial assassinations in the region and beyond." It gave a further punch in labelling "India as a safe haven of the perpetrators of hate crimes against Muslims and other minorities." Why did Pakistan react so aggressively? My assessment is that Islamabad might have feared that a global impression might arise that the Trump administration is now blaming Pakistan for allegedly enabling the 2021 Kabul airport bombing too, which had killed 13 US service members and 170 Afghan civilians. The reason for

this unprecedented vitriol against India and anger against the US for "violating diplomatic norms" by ignoring Pakistan's cooperation with the US on terrorism might have been the reason for challenging



the Trump-Modi statement.

This, in turn, leads to a question: Why the 2021 Abbey Gate bombing (Afghan airport), which was in no way related to India, was included in this bilateral joint statement? Two explanations are possible: one, the White House also wanted to convey its deep anguish, like how India had felt at the 26/11 attack. Second, more possible, was to blame the Biden administration for not taking adequate care of US troops during the hurried evacuation on August 28, 2021.

The second impression arises as Trump himself answered a loaded question, originally put to our PM at the White House press meet, on the so-called "inefficient" Biden administration.

Also, the 118th US Congress (previous) was very agitated at the Abbey Gate bombing, which was the largest single loss of lives of US military personnel since 2011. They were particularly upset that this had occurred despite advance intelligence warnings on August 16 on the strong possibility of an ISIS suicide bombing. Despite this, Abdul Rahman Al-Logari, an ISIS-K member who was known to the CIA and kept in coalition custody, could become the suicide bomber wearing a 25-pound suicide vest.

The New York Times (January 1, 2022) said that the CIA had located Al-Logari in India in 2017, planning suicide attacks, and had taken him into custody at the Bagram base near Kabul after secretly

liaising with the Indian agencies. However, he, along with thousands, was released by the Taliban when it took over Kabul on August 15, 2021. This was originally reported by the ISIS mouthpiece, Amaq, on September 19, 2021.

The reason why the Modi-Trump statement included the 2021 Abbey Gate bombing might have been on the initiative of Mike Waltz, US National Security Adviser, as he had challenged the Pentagon conclusions on August 5, 2024, on the attack, while he was a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee in the previous Congress.

In a letter to the then US Secretary of Defence, Lloyd Austin, the committee had pointed out the apparent discrepancies between the newly reported footage of the Abbey Gate attack, as shown on CNN, and the conclusions of two US Central Command (CENTCOM) investigations into the bombing, which the latter had presented to the committee in April 2024. However, the US

Army Central Command defended their stand, saying that a review investigation since September 2023 had found that "the attack could not have been preventable at the tactical level." In this scenario, the Trump administration's permission on Tahawwur Rana's extradition after the US Supreme Court verdict assumes only symbolic importance when compared to the general spectre of terrorism facing us.

As regards Rana, we faced initial judicial setback in our pursuit since 2009 after his arrest in Chicago as the court did not accept our evidence on his involvement in the 26/11 case although he was convicted for aiding the Lashkar's activities, specifically for plotting an attack in Denmark.

Since then, our agencies have been pursuing the case vigorously in US courts. The latest information is that this extradition might be delayed as Rana has appealed and filed a "mercy" petition.

At the same time, no US government could help us by putting pressure on Pakistan to extradite the other known 26/11 plotters and current perpetrators given sanctuary there. We have other problems on the terrorism front which we alone must tackle. The change of government in Bangladesh and the reported visit of a Pakistani ISI delegation to Dhaka on January 21 adds a new dimension, with terrorism emanating from our east, which is already under strain due to the Manipur turbulence.

## Judicial overload

The Supreme Court's recent rebuke for the flood of petitions concerning the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991, highlights the growing politicisation of religious disputes. The Act, introduced during the PV Narasimha Rao government, was meant to prevent further communal discord by freezing the religious character of places of worship as of August 15, 1947, with the sole exception of the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute. However, it now finds itself at the centre of legal and political manoeuvring. The SC's frustration is understandable. The surge of intervention applications, many filed by political leaders and organisations, reflects an unsettling trend — using the judiciary as a battleground for religious and electoral gains. On December 12, 2024, the SC had already issued an interim order restraining lower courts from entertaining fresh suits or ordering surveys concerning religious sites.



Yet, fresh petitions continue to pour in, prompting Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna to declare, "Enough is enough."

The court has rightly refused to entertain new pleas unless they raised entirely fresh legal questions. At stake is not just the integrity of the judicial process but also India's secular fabric. The law was designed to ensure communal harmony, yet its very existence is now being challenged by certain groups who argue that it unjustly legitimises historical wrongs. Meanwhile, political parties like the Congress, Samajwadi Party and the AIMIM have intervened in favour of the Act, alleging that legal challenges to it are aimed at targeting Muslim religious sites.

The judiciary must tread carefully, balancing legal scrutiny with the need to prevent communal tensions from escalating. With the hearing deferred to April, the legal battle over the Places of Worship Act is far from over. But one thing is clear — the courts must remain a space for justice, not a stage for political theatrics.

## How the Akal Takht became a political tool

December 2, 2024 was the historic day when Sukhbir admitted to his mistakes. It was generally believed that it had set the tone for SAD's revival. However, he messed up the chance.

THE doctrine of miri-piri (co-existence of the spiritual and the temporal) is central to the Sikh philosophy. It envisages an ideal society. It means living in divine consciousness while attending to the mundane, everyday life. It makes a person see divinity in each being and consider reaching out to the needy as his divine duty. It holds the ruler responsible for doing his temporal duty in line with the spiritual and moral ethics. It definitely does not mean using religious institutions for individual political benefits.

Looking back at the history of Sikhs, the Akal Takht was the rallying point for the bickering Sikhs when confronted with a common enemy, the place where they became one, as the "Guru Khalsa Panth". In the 18th century, when the Sikhs were divided into small groups, they would fight with each other. Maharaja Ranjit Singh also fought smaller Sardars to consolidate his kingdom. But no one went to the Akal Takht, seeking its intervention to resolve their differences. Rather, when they met for the Sarbat Khalsa on issues impacting the whole community, they would sort out their personal grudges before gathering at the Akal Takht. The phenomenon of seeking the Akal Takht's intervention to sort out differences among parties with differing views and play a peace-broker started in the late 1970s.

Jathedar Jagdev Singh Talwandi, president of the Akali Dal, and jathedar Gurcharan Singh Tohra, president of the SGPC, called for separate meetings on October 10, 1979 to elect the Akali Dal president. They sent in their resignations to the Akal Takht jathedar, seeking its intervention to unite them.

At that time, their resignations were sent back. The MLAs who had contested on the 'Panthic ticket' were asked to support CM Parkash Singh Badal and a seven-member committee headed by Sant Longowal was formed in view of the upcoming Lok Sabha

elections. The committee was to "make adjustments" with other political parties and choose party candidates. But before the seven-member committee could meet, Jiwan Singh Umrangal announced an alliance with the Janata Party in Ajnala. He was declared 'tankhaiya' and had to seek his forgiveness at the Akal Takht in November, 1979. Thereafter, complaints about politically influential people began to come to the Akal Takht. However, the turning point was the period after Operation Bluestar in 1984.

Many Akali leaders were in jail. Sikhs' passions against the Indian government in general and Indira Gandhi in particular were high. At that juncture, the 'Panj Piare' at the Akal Takht stepped in to provide leadership. Gradually, the Akal Takht institution transformed into a tool in the power struggle for supremacy. Personal enmities and one-upmanship became the unwritten code for most of the complaints coming to the Takht. The court-style hearings gave the Takht the new name of 'sarb-uch kacheri' (supreme court) of the Sikhs.

This practice degenerated into interference in local issues and Punjab-based political statements. The 'jathedar' and the institution of the 'Akal Takht' became synonymous. As the political and religious ground began to slip from under the SGPC's feet, the Akal Takht was used to empower it. Religious issues that were handled by the Dharam Parchar Committee of the SGPC were referred to the Akal Takht jathedar.

On the issue of the Sirda Dera Sacha Sauda's blasphemy, the SAD discarded any pretence of being a representative party of the Sikhs and went all out to use the Akal Takht for votes in the upcoming Punjab Assembly election. The panthak tradition was



disregarded and a person who had not sought an apology was pardoned. When the Sikhs stood up in defiance, the jathedars had to take back the 'hukamnama', thereby eroding its sanctity. The SAD kept losing ground among the Sikhs in various successive elections, till it became a 'deposit-lost' party. The Akalis knew that the mistake they had committed was backfiring. So, in a damage-control bid, they went to Gurdwara Baba Gurbaksh Singh, which is situated behind the Akal Takht, and sought forgiveness for the sins committed "knowingly and unknowingly." It did not work. Sukhbir Singh Badal, SAD chief, had to appear before the Akal Takht when a splinter group of the party went to the Akal Takht and admitted to being silent supporters of the SAD's non-panthak decisions and sought its forgiveness. December 2, 2024 was the historic day when the unlikely happened. Sukhbir admitted to his mistakes. It was generally believed that it had set the tone for SAD's revival. Most of Sukhbir's detractors

were willing to give him a chance. However, he messed up the chance by first undergoing 'tankhah' selectively and then trying to negotiate the hukamnama.

When that failed, it was time to target the jathedars personally. Giani Harpreet Singh became the first target because he is believed to have been the mastermind, though all five jathedars had taken the decision unanimously. The Sikh tradition was again flouted. Not only was a shameful allegation made against him, no consideration was shown for the Sikh woman who is married to another man after divorce with the complainant for the last 18 years. Another young Sikh woman was targeted, alleging impropriety of attending a programme with Giani

Harpreet Singh. Disgusting character assassination! Not long ago, strangers trusted Sikh men for the safety of their daughters. The next on the agenda is to get Giani Harpreet Singh excommunicated from the Sikh Panth. For this, the tainted Giani Ranjit Singh, jathedar of the Patna Takht, is the front to lodge a complaint at the Akal Takht. An Akal Takht jathedar, Giani Ragbir Singh, has shown his disapproval with the SGPC regarding the dismissal of Giani Harpreet Singh. Taking moral responsibility, SGPC president Harjinder Singh Dhama has chosen to resign. However, his offer to resign from the Akal Takht-constituted seven-member committee raises a question. Is he being pressured to choose between obeying the hukamnama and Sukhbir's diktat?

It is a classic case of the Akal Takht being used selectively for political reasons and "teaching a lesson" to those who do not conform to the Sukhbir group.







बाल गीत :



बच्चों को जब गुस्सा आया

जाड़ा आया, जाड़ा आया शीतल पवन साथ में लाया। गद्दा उठा अभी बिस्तर से, फिर रजाई से हाथ मिलाया। चाय पिलाई अदरक वाली, केसर वाला दूध पिलाया। छुपा रखा था पेटों भीतर, निकला स्वेटर बाहर आया। धोकर और सुखाकर मां ने, छुनू-छुनू को पहनाया। शीत लहर जब चली भयानक, पापा ने हीटर जलवाया। सी-सी करते दादाजी ने, दादी से टोपा मंगवाया। इस घर घर के सब बच्चों को, बड़ों-बड़ों पर गुस्सा आया। डोंट-डोंट कर सभी बड़ों को, बिस्तर के भीतर घुसवाया। -प्रभुदयाल श्रीवास्तव

# युवाओं के करियर में पैरेंट्स की भूमिका

आज के युवा अपने निर्णय खुद लेने में विश्वास करते हैं। अक्सर वे अपने निर्णयों में माता-पिता को शामिल नहीं करते। घूमने के लिए बाहर जाने से लेकर बात चाहे करियर की क्यों न हो।

अक्सर यह देखा जाता है कि किसी छात्र ने अगर 10वीं पास की है। उसे 11वीं में किसी विषय का चयन करना है। वह अपने माता-पिता या बड़े भाई या बहन से सलाह लेना उचित नहीं समझता, बल्कि वह बाहरी माहौल से प्रभावित होकर अपने निर्णय खुद ही लेता है। अगर किसी विषय में उसकी रुचि हो भी जिसमें वह करियर बनाना चाहता हो तो उस विषय में क्या करियर संभावनाएं हैं, इसकी तलाश उसे करनी चाहिए। साथ ही अपने माता-पिता या बड़े भाई-बहन से भी उस पर सलाह लेना जरूरी है। सलाह में फायदे हैं, इसलिए कि पहले ही अपने घर के वरिष्ठ लोगों से सलाह-मशविरा कर लें।



कॉम्पिटिशन से युवाओं पर भी अपेक्षाओं को बोझ बढ़ा है। बात करियर बनाने की क्यों न हो। आज भले ही संचार माध्यमों में वृद्धि हो गई। इंटरनेट से कोई भी जानकारी का आसानी से जुटाई जा सकता है। युवाओं को यह नहीं भूलना चाहिए कि अनुभव सबसे बड़ी चीज है। अनुभव कोई बाजार में मिलने वाली वस्तु नहीं है। माता-पिता या परिजनों से ही हमें जीवन के सही मायने समझ में आएं। वे जो भी रास्ता दिखाएंगे वह सही होगा। कभी-कभी माता-पिता की अपेक्षाएं भी बच्चों से बढ़ जाती हैं। इन

अपेक्षाओं के बोझ तले युवा दब जाते हैं। इससे उनकी जिंदगी निराशा की ओर मुड़ जाती है। माता-पिता या परिजन भी यह ध्यान रखें कि वे अपने निर्णय युवाओं पर थोप कर उन पर अनावश्यक दबाव न बनाएं। अपने

बच्चों को रुचि पहचानकर ही उन्हें भविष्य के लिए कोई सलाह दें और सही करियर चुनने में उनका मार्गदर्शन करें। सही मार्गदर्शन, सही विषय को चुनने के बाद अगर युवा उस पर मेहनत और लगन से पढ़ाई करेंगे तो सफलता मिलेगी।

विकी अपने स्कूल में होने वाले स्वतंत्रता दिवस समारोह को ले कर बहुत उत्साहित था। वह भी परेड में हिस्सा ले रहा था। दूसरे दिन वह एकदम सुबह जग गया लेकिन घर में अजीब सी शांति थी। वह दादी के कमरे में गया, लेकिन वह दिखाई नहीं पड़ी। 'मां, दादीजी कहाँ हैं?' उसने पूछा। 'रात को वह बहुत बीमार हो गई थीं। तुम्हारे पिताजी उन्हें अस्पताल ले गए थे, वह अभी वहीं हैं उनकी हालत काफी खराब है।' विकी एकाएक उदास हो गया। उसकी माँ ने पूछा, 'क्या तुम मेरे साथ दादी जी को देखने चलोगे? चार बजे मैं अस्पताल जा रही हूँ।' विकी अपनी दादी को बहुत प्यार करता था। उसने तुरंत कहा, 'हाँ, मैं आप के साथ चलूँगा।'

## विकी की ईमानदारी



वह स्कूल और स्वतंत्रता दिवस के समारोह के बारे में सब कुछ भूल गया। स्कूल में स्वतंत्रता दिवस समारोह बहुत अच्छी तरह संपन्न हो गया। लेकिन प्राचार्य खुश नहीं थे। उन्होंने ध्यान दिया कि बहुत से छात्र आज अनुपस्थित हैं।

उन्होंने दूसरे दिन सभी अध्यापकों को बुलाया और कहा, 'मुझे उन विद्यार्थियों के नामों की सूची चाहिए जो समारोह के दिन अनुपस्थित थे। आधे घंटे के अंदर सभी कक्षाओं के विद्यार्थियों की सूची उन की मेज पर थी। कक्षा छे की सूची बहुत लंबी थी। अतः वह पहले उसी तरफ मुड़े।

जैसे ही उन्होंने कक्षा छे में कदम रखे, वहाँ चुपों सी छा गई। उन्होंने कठोरतापूर्वक कहा, 'मैंने परसों क्या कहा था?'

'यही कि हम सब को स्वतंत्रता दिवस समारोह में उपस्थित होना चाहिए।' गोलमटोल उपा ने जवाब दिया। 'तब बहुत सारे बच्चे अनुपस्थित क्यों थे?' उन्होंने नामों की सूची हवा में हिलाते हुए पूछा।

फिर उन्होंने अनुपस्थित हुए विद्यार्थियों के नाम पकारे, उन्हें डाँटा और अपने डंडे से उनकी हथेलियों पर मार लगाई।

'अगर तुम लोग राष्ट्रीय समारोह के प्रति इतने लापरवाह हो तो इसका मतलब यही है कि तुम लोगों को अपनी मातृभूमि से प्यार नहीं है। अगली बार अगर ऐसा हुआ तो मैं तुम सबके नाम स्कूल के रजिस्टर से काट दूँगा।' इतना कह कर वह जाने के लिए मुड़े तभी विकी आ कर उन के सामने खड़ा हो गया।

'क्या बात है?'

'महोदय, विकी भयभीत पर दृढ़ था, मैं भी स्वतंत्रता दिवस समारोह में अनुपस्थित था, पर आप ने मेरा नाम नहीं पकारा।' कहते हुए विकी ने अपनी हथेलियाँ प्राचार्य महोदय के सामने फैला दी। सारी कक्षा साँस रोक कर उसे देख रही थी। प्राचार्य कई क्षणों तक उसे देखते रहे। उनका कठोर चेहरा नर्म हो गया और उन के स्वर में क्रोध गायब हो गया।

'तुम सजा के हकदार नहीं हो, क्योंकि तुम में सच्चाई कहने की हिम्मत है। मैं तुम से कारण नहीं पूछूँगा, लेकिन तुम्हें वचन देना होगा कि अगली बार राष्ट्रीय समारोह को नहीं भूलोगे। अब तुम अपनी सीट पर जाओ।'

विकी ने जो कुछ किया, इसकी उसे बहुत खुशी थी।

## इन पांच तरीकों से होगा बच्चों का दिमाग तेज

केवल परीक्षा के समय ही नहीं बल्कि दिमाग का हर समय सक्रिय होना जरूरी है। इसके लिए आप खानपान से लेकर अन्य कई तरीके भी आजमाते हैं ताकि बच्चों का दिमाग तेज हो और वे हर परीक्षा में बेहतर प्रदर्शन करें। जानिए 5 आसान और प्रभावकारी तरीके, जो दिमाग तेज करने में मदद करते हैं -

### 1 दिमागी कसरत

दिमाग तेज करने का सबसे प्रभावकारी तरीका है, दिमागी कसरत। इसके लिए आप बच्चों के साथ कोई दिमागी खेल जैसे-प्रश्नोत्तरी, शब्दकोश भरना या सही विकल्प चुनो खेल सकते हैं। दोस्तों की मदद से इस तरह के खेल खेले जा सकते हैं। यह बच्चे की याददाश्त को बढ़ाने के साथ ही याद रखने की इच्छा भी बनाए रखेगा।



भाषाओं का ज्ञान होने से उनका दिमाग ऐसे बच्चों की तुलना में तेज चलता है, जो केवल एक ही भाषा जानते हैं। इस तरह से बच्चे में और भी योग्यताएं विकसित होती हैं।

### 2 नई भाषा

बच्चों को कम उम्र में भी अन्य

### 3 खेलकूद

बच्चे खेलकूद में जितने फुर्तीले होते हैं, उनका दिमाग उतना ही तेज और सक्रिय होता है। इस तरह से बच्चों के दिमाग में ऑक्सीजन का प्रवाह भी सही होता है, जो उनके दिमाग के लिए बहुत अच्छा होता है।

### 4 कलात्मकता

बच्चों का कला के प्रति रुझान दिमाग को विकसित करता है और नई चीजों के सीखने में मदद करता है। इस प्रकार बच्चों की कल्पनाशीलता में भी वृद्धि होती है, और वे बहुआयामी सोच रखते हैं।

### 5 गणित

जी हाँ, बचपन से ही बच्चे को गणित का अच्छा अभ्यास होना उसके दिमाग को तेज

करने में मदद करता है। यही कारण है कि जिन लोगों की गणित में अधिक रुचि होती है, वे अन्य लोगों की तुलना में ज्यादा बुद्धिमत्त होते हैं।



## ई-बुक नहीं बुक पढ़ें

आधुनिक तकनीक ने जहाँ एक ओर हमारे जीवन को आसान बना दिया है, वहीं दूसरी ओर इसकी वजह से कई तरह की स्वास्थ्य समस्याएँ भी पैदा हो रही हैं। रात में आईपैड, लैपटॉप या ई-रीडर पर कितने पढ़ने से नींद की गुणवत्ता कम हो जाती है। इससे सोने के लिए तैयार होने में लगने वाले वक्त और नींद के कुल समय पर नकारात्मक असर पड़ता है। हाल ही में अमेरिका में हुए इस शोध की प्रमुख एक यूनिवर्सिटी में असिस्टेंट प्रोफेसर एना मारिया का कहना है कि इस शोध के लिए कुछ लोगों पर कई हफ्ते तक नजर रखी गई। इसमें से आधे लोगों को रात में सोने से पहले ई-बुक और आधे लोगों को सामान्य किताब पढ़ने के लिए कहा गया। इसके बाद इन लोगों में नींद वाले हॉर्मोन मेलाटोनिन के स्तर, नींद की गहराई और अगली सुबह उनकी सजगता के स्तर की जांच की गई। शोध में पाया गया कि जो लोग रोज ई-बुक पढ़ते हैं, वे कई घंटे कम सोते हैं और उनमें रैपिड आई मूवमेंट स्लीप का समय भी कम हो जाता है। गौरतलब है कि नींद की इसी अवस्था में यादें संरक्षित होती हैं। इसलिए ज्यादा समय तक ई-बुक पढ़ने से स्मरणशक्ति कमजोर होती है और डिमेंशिया का भी खतरा बढ़ जाता है। वैज्ञानिकों का कहना है कि अगर आप पढ़ने की शौकीन हैं तो ई-बुक के बजाय किताबों के साथ वक्त बिताएं। अगर किसी वजह से ई-बुक पढ़ना जरूरी हो तो भी रात में सोने से पहले ई-बुक पढ़ने से बचें।



## बच्चों की परवरिश में ध्यान रखनी चाहिए ये बातें

बेटे-बेटों के लालन-पालन में भेद नहीं होना चाहिए। शास्त्रों के अनुसार तो यह पाप है। इस संसार की जो पहली पांच सतानें हुई थीं, उनमें से तीन बेटियाँ थीं। मनु-शतरूपा हिंदू संस्कृति के अनुसार मनुष्यों के पहले माता-पिता थे और उनसे जो मैथुनि सृष्टि निर्मित हुई उसमें दो पुत्र- उत्तानपाद और प्रियव्रत तथा तीन बेटियाँ -आकुति, देवहृति और प्रसूति ने जन्म लिया था। समझदार माता-पिता अब दोनों को एक जैसा पाल रहे हैं, लेकिन इसी के साथ एक जागरूकता और आनी चाहिए। लालन-पालन में भेद न करें, लेकिन दोनों के सामने जो भविष्य में चुनौतियाँ आने वाली हैं, उस फर्क को उन्हें जरूर समझाएं। बेटियों को एक दिन बहू बनना है, जो सबसे बड़ी चुनौती है। इस समय की पढ़ी-लिखी बच्चियाँ अपने वैवाहिक जीवन के बाद के भविष्य को लेकर थोड़ी चिंतित तो हैं पर फिर भी एक बेफिक्री है कि संबंध नहीं जमा तो तोड़ लेंगे। किंतु उनके मां-बाप के लिए तो यह जीवन-मरण का प्रश्न है, इसलिए बच्चों के लालन-पालन में बेटे-बेटों को यह एहसास जरूर कराया जाए कि स्त्री के लिए क्या मायने हैं ससुराल के। पहला तो बदलाव, दूसरा अपेक्षा और तीसरा अपने ससुराल में आत्मनिर्भर होकर बिना कलह के मार्ग ढूँढ़ना। ये तीन बड़ी चुनौतियाँ स्त्री के सामने आती हैं। स्त्री जब बहू बनती है तो उसे नए घर में दो बातें नहीं भूलनी चाहिए। योजनाबद्ध तरीके से विनम्रता के साथ सबको जीता जाए। पेट की भूख सही ढंग से यदि मिटा दी जाए, तो दिल जीता जा सकता है, इसलिए अन्न पर माता-बहनों का नियंत्रण किसी भी घर में समाप्त नहीं होना चाहिए। जिस घर में माता-बहनों के हाथ से अन्न का नियंत्रण निकलेगा, उस घर में शांति संदेहास्पद हो जाएगी। इस चुनौती को इसी तरह से समझाया जाए।

## बच्चों की परीक्षा के समय ध्यान रखें ये बातें

कई बार परीक्षा में पेपर देखते ही हम ब्लॉक हो जाते थे। कई शोधों में ये बात सामने आई है कि इसकी वजह अत्यधिक तनाव बढ़ता है। अक्सर टिनएजर्स इस तनाव से गुजरते हैं। वे इसे अपने दोस्तों, माता-पिता और शिक्षकों के सामने मान-प्रतिष्ठा से जोड़कर देखते हैं। परीक्षा के समय में बच्चों से जुड़ी इन बातों का ध्यान रखना चाहिए...



### 1. व्यवस्थित बनाएं

उसकी जरूरत की चीजों को उसके पास रखें। सारी चीजें का ढेर न लगा दें। अगर बच्चों की अंग्रेजी की परीक्षा है तो ध्यान रहे उस वक्त व गणित की किताबें न पलटें। टाइमटेबल बनाने में उसकी मदद करें। मैक्स हेल्थकेयर गुडगांव की क्लिनिकल साइकोलॉजिस्ट एनी सिमि जॉन कहती हैं उसे एक बार में एक ही काम करने को कहें।

### 2. ब्रेक लेने के लिए कहें

शोध बताते हैं कि ज्यादा वक्त तक बैठना उपयोगी नहीं होता। लगातार 50 से 90 मिनट तक बैठना सही माना जाता है। अपने बच्चे को हर चार घंटे बाद करीब 15 मिनट का ब्रेक लेने को कहें। यह दिमाग को सूचनाएं याद रखने में मदद करता है। उसे बाहर वॉक करने के लिए कहें। ऑक्सीजन रक्त संचार को बढ़ाता है।

### 3. पावर फूड दें

पढ़ाई के दौरान दिमाग सारे रक्त को उपभोग कर लेता है। कोलकाता की न्यूट्रिशनिस्ट होना नफीस कहती हैं बच्चे को पढ़ाई के दौरान शरीर को फिर से प्यूल देना पड़ता है। उसे ओमेगा थ्री और



### 4. समय पर सोने को कहें

जर्मनी में यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ ल्यूबेक की एक रिसर्च के मुताबिक दिमाग नींद के दौरान नई चीजों को स्टोर करता है। इसके लिए 8 घंटे की नींद जरूरी है।



NEWS BOX

"Coach Has To...": Anil Kumble's Blunt Message To Gautam Gambhir Over 'Legacy Players'

New Delhi . The ICC Champions Trophy 2025 began on a promising note for the Indian team, with a comprehensive victory against Bangladesh in the opener on Thursday. Skipper Rohit Sharma and opening batter Shubman Gill got the team off to a flying start at the top but No. 3 batter Virat Kohli didn't look his usual self. Kohli and Rohit's form has been a concern for the team management for a long time. While the skipper scored a 36-ball 41, Virat could only contribute 22 runs off 38 balls. Though India won the match, the team's former coach Anil Kumble sent a straightforward message to Gautam Gambhir, the current head coach,



about the transition from 'legacy players'. Kumble, who himself has been in Gambhir's position, feels it's the coach's responsibility to take 'tough calls' as the team transitions from veteran players to the new generation. "You could say this is a very important tournament for a coach who has to make those tough calls in terms of transitioning from the legacy players to the others. But that's the job of the coach, to make those hard decisions," he said on ESPNcricinfo.

"This tournament could determine where those seniors would go, and where India would look at making those changes. Win or lose, you need these tough calls to be made at the earliest. You need to start looking ahead in white-ball cricket, especially at the 2027 World Cup," Kumble further said.

Though India have a long way to go for the 2027 ODI World Cup, the Champions Trophy will be the last big event the team will participate in as far as the 50-over format is concerned. Kumble feels the chatter over certain players' future needs to start after the Champions Trophy ends. "In any World Cup, you're looking at building a squad that has played at least 20 or 25 matches together. That's when you understand the nuances of match situations, and who to rely on. Ideally, at the end of this tournament, you must start looking ahead to the next World Cup. Do the seniors make it there? Or do we give the opportunity to youngsters to take the team forward in the shorter formats and build a strong unit? These are questions Gambhir needs to address," he said.

Yuzvendra Chahal, Dhanashree Verma Now Divorced. Report Reveals 'Reason' They Cited In Court

New Delhi . Indian cricketer Yuzvendra Chahal and his wife Dhanashree Verma are officially separated. The news of their divorce was doing rounds on social media for months. Both shared cryptic posts on the internet, hinting that they had gone their separate ways. But, none of them firmly spoke on the topic to highlight possible reasons behind the decision. However, it has now been reported that the couple's final hearing and all necessary formalities took place at the Bandra Family Court on Thursday, where both were physically present.

According to a report in ABP news, the judge advised the couple to seek counseling, which lasted for about 45 minutes. After the counselling session, the judge was informed



that both wanted to part ways with mutual consent. It was further revealed that Chahal and Dhanashree were living separately for the past 18 months. When asked about the possible reason behind seeking divorce, the couple said that had 'compatibility issues'.

At around 4:30 PM on Thursday, the judge officially granted them divorce. Chahal shared a post on social media right before the final hearing which read: "God has protected me more times than I can count. So I can only imagine the times I've been rescued that I don't even know about. Thank you, God, for always being there, even when I don't know it. Amen."

Dhanashree also shared a message about faith on her Instagram account. "From stressed to blessed. Isn't it amazing how God can turn our worries and trials into blessings? If you're stressing about something today, know that you have a choice. You can either keep worrying or you can surrender it all to God and choose to pray about everything. There is power in having faith that God can work all things together for your good."

8 hours a day at NCA: Mohammed Shami's relentless grind for Champions Trophy glory

← Mohammed Shami stamped his authority with the ball in India's Champions Trophy opener against Bangladesh. Shami picked up 5 wickets and overtook Zaheer Khan as India's most successful bowler in the ICC white-ball tournaments.

New Delhi . November 2023 - February 2025: 15 months apart, Mohammed Shami once again worked his magic with the ball in an International Cricket Council (ICC) 50-over tournament for India. It seemed as if the senior fast bowler had never been away from competitive cricket. Steaming into the bowling crease and hurling rockets at 140 km/h, he was back to his vintage best for India. Shami tore through the Bangladesh batting order with both the new and old ball,

claiming five wickets in India's Champions Trophy opener. This performance saw him surpass Zaheer Khan as India's most successful bowler in ICC white-ball tournaments. Shami now boasts 74 wickets from just 33 matches at an astonishing average of 15.77. As it stands, he is India's most prolific bowler in ODI World Cups, Champions Trophies, and T20 World Cups-even ahead of Jasprit Bumrah.

However, the 15 months between those performances were incredibly challenging for the fast bowler. An ankle surgery immediately after the ODI World Cup 2023 final put his career on hold just when he was experiencing the best phase of his international career. At 34 years old, with a heavy build, the consequences of surgery were always going to be significant.

Shami endured a lengthy recovery process. While it was certain that he would miss the T20 World Cup 2024, his absence from India's home Test season raised eyebrows.

"For the first two months, I often doubted whether I would be able to play again, as an injury like this followed by a 14-month break can really pull you down," Shami revealed in a conversation with the ICC ahead of the tournament. His rehabilitation at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) was



also surrounded by uncertainty. While Shami insisted that he was nearing peak fitness, India captain Rohit Sharma provided a contrasting assessment. It later emerged that Shami's knee was swelling up while bowling in the nets, delaying his return.

USED TO TRAIN 8 HOURS EVERYDAY: SHAMI

Despite these setbacks, Shami looked in outstanding form against Bangladesh. He bowled with good pace, hit the right areas, and made life difficult for the batters. Speaking at the post-match press conference, Shami acknowledged the challenges of regaining his rhythm. "When you're injured and lose the form you had in the World Cup, you have to repeat everything you did to regain it. That takes a

toll. But, by God's grace, I played a lot of domestic matches and assessed how my body reacted to different situations post-surgery. I played four international matches and eight or nine domestic games to prepare for this," he said.

The pacer admitted that his unwavering hunger to play international cricket for India was the driving force behind his comeback. He revealed that he had been training for eight hours daily at the NCA, battling persistent knee flare-ups in pursuit of his best form. "It is God's blessing. What I focus on is bringing loyalty to my game-loyalty in executing my skills. I spent 14 months away from international cricket, working at the NCA and playing domestic matches. During that period, what mattered most was my hunger. I wanted to return to my World Cup form and find my rhythm again. I used to train for eight hours a day at the NCA during my rehabilitation," Shami added.

Shami's return to peak form is particularly crucial in the absence of Jasprit Bumrah. India's main concern heading into the Champions Trophy was that their fast-bowling unit lacked the necessary firepower. However, with Shami back in full flow, India can be confident that opposition batting line-ups will struggle against a fully fit, experienced fast bowler.

Champions Trophy: Pakistan handed big fine for slow-over rate against New Zealand

Pakistan were fined 5 percent of their match fee for maintaining a slow over-rate against New Zealand in their Champions Trophy opener, adding to their struggles as they prepare for a high-stakes clash against India on February 22.



New Delhi. Pakistan have been fined 5 percent of their match fee for maintaining a slow over-rate against their Champions Trophy opener against New Zealand on February 19 in Karachi. According to the International Cricket Council (ICC), Pakistan were found to be one over short of the target even after considering time allowances. The slow over-rate penalty only adds to Pakistan's troubles in the tournament. The Mohammed Rizwan-led side, who are also co-hosts of the Champions Trophy, suffered a 60-run

defeat to New Zealand. The loss has put them in a challenging position in the race for the semi-final stage, making every upcoming match crucial for their survival in the tournament.

On-field umpires Richard Kettleborough and Sharfuddoula, third umpire Joel Wilson, and fourth umpire Alex Wharf were responsible for identifying the over-rate violation. However, it was match referee Andy Pycroft who imposed the sanction on Pakistan. Rizwan pleaded guilty to the charge, resulting in no need for

a follow-up hearing.

ICC Rulebook on Slow Over-Rate

As per Article 2.22 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, teams must adhere to the minimum over-rate requirements. The rule states that players are fined five percent of their match fee for every over their side falls short of bowling within the allocated time.

The slow over-rate issue is something teams must remain mindful of, as repeated offenses can result in harsher penalties, including potential captaincy bans in future games.

Pakistan's Next Challenge - The India Clash

With this penalty behind them, Pakistan have already arrived in Dubai to prepare for their high-stakes clash against arch-rivals India on February 22.

With qualification on the line, Rizwan's side will need to ensure they maintain discipline both with the ball and in time management to avoid further setbacks in the tournament.

Pakistan Face Brutal Criticism, Asked To Leave Champions Trophy And Join Series With Zimbabwe

New Delhi. Pakistan got off to a forgettable start in their Champions Trophy 2025 campaign as they lost against New Zealand by 60 runs. Opting to bowl first, Pakistan gave away 320 runs after Will Young and Tom Latham smashed centuries. Later, the hosts got bundled out for 260 as their batters completely failed to put up a strong fight against the Kiwis. For New Zealand, skipper Mitchell Santner and William O'Rourke scalped three wickets each. After this loss, former Pakistan wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal slammed Mohammad Rizwan and co for their poor performance.



In a conversation on ARY News, Kamran asked lashed out at Team Pakistan and called them undeserving for Champions Trophy.

"Zimbabwe aur Ireland ki series ho rahi hai, udhar jaayein. Wahan jaake khelein aur agar hum udhar jeette hain toh hum deserve karte hain (Champions Trophy). Humari iss tarah

ki cricket ho rahi hai. Itni neeche gir gayi hai humari cricket pichle 6-7 saal mein. (There's a series going on between Zimbabwe and Ireland. Go there and play with them. And if you win against them, then only you deserve to play the Champions Trophy. This is

condition of Pakistan cricket. Our cricket standards have fallen drastically in the last 6-7 years," said Kamran.

During the Champions Trophy opener, New Zealand were struggling at 73/3 but centuries from Will Young and Tom Latham helped them reach 320/5 in 50 overs. Kamran went on to praise New Zealand for their mature brand of cricket.

"They (New Zealand) were three wickets down in the early stages of the match. Look at their maturity that they took time, rotated the strike and started firing only after getting the full control. This is what a mature team does. They always come with a backup plan.

Their batter Rachin Ravindra got injured and even his replacement (Will Young) scored a century," said Kamran. After the match, Pakistan skipper Mohammad Rizwan admitted that the team made mistakes against the Kiwis.

Virat Kohli more worried about middling the ball instead of scoring: Robin Uthappa

Former India batter Robin Uthappa commented on Virat Kohli's poor form after he got dismissed for 22 in India's first match of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 against Bangladesh.

New Delhi. Former India batter Robin Uthappa feels Virat Kohli is more worried about middling the ball instead of scoring runs at the moment. Kohli's search for a big knock continued as he once again got dismissed cheaply against Bangladesh for 22 (38) in the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 on Thursday, February 20 in Dubai. He walked in to bat on 69/1 after a solid start from captain Rohit Sharma (41 off 36). However, the star batter

failed to get going, playing nine dot deliveries on the trot against Tanzim Hasan Sakib and Mehidy Hasan Miraz. After getting off the mark on his tenth delivery, he was further troubled by Rishad Hossain.

Throughout his innings, Kohli looked completely out of rhythm as the only boundary he got was through an uncontrolled pull shot. He was finally dismissed while trying to cut Hossain and was caught at backward point to leave India on 112/2. Following his rusty innings, Uthappa mentioned how Kohli was more worried about finding the middle of his bat throughout his innings instead of scoring runs. He suggested him to break free from his mental blocks to find his mojo back. "Virat, the great batter that he is, will have to address himself because, I think in a sense he's in his head a little bit. It feels like that from the outside. It feels like he's looking to middle the ball versus when he actually is batting well, he's looking to get runs. He's not worried about middling the ball because the



intent itself is different. And I think he's trying to break free from that space of trying to middle the ball versus scoring runs and he's finding himself caught in between is what I'm feeling from the outside. I think it's a matter of time, the minute he frees his head up and just goes out there and expresses himself, the runs will flow," said Uthappa on Star Sports.

Furthermore, Uthappa also highlighted a technical flaw in Kohli's technique which isn't allowing him to meet the ball with the

full face of the bat. "I do think there's a slight technical adjustment that he needs to make. Generally, his bat comes from the 2nd slip or 3rd slip. When he scored most of his runs, his bat generally comes from the 2nd or 3rd slip. Right now you see it's coming from right at the wicketkeeper or 1st slip. And from there, every time he looks to play the cover driver or on the offside, he's gonna not come with a full face of his bat.

He's gonna come with maybe 50-60% of his bat, and that also will make that cover driver his favourite shot, a very dangerous shot to play.

So, it's something that he will have to kind of figure out, and I hope someone speaks to him about it and helps him figure that piece out, because I think that one bit will make a huge difference. I think he's searching for his feel and form, and it's a very natural thing to happen when you're, when you are short of runs, and I think it's a matter of time," he added.

Sourav Ganguly Accident: Former India Captain Involved In Car Accident, No Injuries Reported

New Delhi. Former India captain Sourav Ganguly met with a minor accident while traveling to Burdwan for an event but fortunately escaped unhurt. The incident occurred at Dantanpur on the Durgapur Expressway when a lorry suddenly overtook his convoy, forcing the driver of Ganguly's car to apply brakes abruptly. This led to a chain reaction, causing the cars behind him to collide, with one vehicle hitting Ganguly's car. Despite the accident, Ganguly remained composed and continued with his journey after a brief halt of about 10 minutes. Two vehicles in his convoy sustained minor damage, but no injuries were reported. The former BCCI president proceeded to Burdwan University, where he attended a scheduled event and interacted with students and dignitaries.

According to reports, Ganguly was on his way to Bardhaman when a lorry attempted to merge into his convoy unexpectedly. In response, his driver immediately applied the brakes, leading to a chain reaction where a vehicle following his Range Rover collided with it. Thankfully, Ganguly and his entourage remained unharmed.

Ganguly's Address At Burdwan Event

During the event, Ganguly expressed his joy at being in Burdwan and acknowledged the contributions of local sports associations. "I am overwhelmed. It feels great to be in Burdwan. I am even happier that you invited me. The Burdwan Sports Association has been asking me to come for a long time, and it's a pleasure to be here today. The Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) has worked with the Burdwan sports organization for 50 years, and many players have emerged from this district. We must continue recruiting talented players from here in the future," Ganguly said.

Ganguly's Enduring Influence in the Endorsement World

Meanwhile, despite stepping away from cricket administration, Sourav Ganguly continues to be one of the most sought-after names in brand endorsements. The 52-year-old is associated with over 40 brands, spanning sectors like banking, real estate, automobiles, consumer goods, and fantasy sports. His popularity and credibility make him a valuable face for leading companies across various industries. Even after the incident, Ganguly's commitment to fulfilling his engagements demonstrates his resilience and dedication, a trait that has defined him throughout his cricketing and administrative career.



# Prince Narula

Loses Cool As Roadies Contestant Accuses Him, Wife Yuvika Of Demanding ?20 Lakh Bribe

Reality TV star and Roadies mentor Prince Narula found himself at the center of controversy after a contestant accused him and his wife, Yuvika Chaudhary, of demanding Rs 20 lakh bribe. The allegation surfaced during the show's selection process of MTV Roadies Double Cross. Prince is currently seen as a judge on the TV reality show alongside Rhea Chakraborty, Neha Dhupia and Elvish Yadav. Rannvijay Singha hosts the show. During a recent Roadies audition, a contestant claimed that Prince Narula and his wife, Yuvika Chaudhary, asked for Rs 20 lakh in exchange for a spot on the show's audition.

It all started when Rannvijay opened a contestant's file, revealing shocking allegations that Prince had accepted money in exchange for a guaranteed spot on Roadies. However, Prince denied the claims and responded firmly, saying, "Mera bhai pichle paanch saal se aa raha hai auditions dene aur last year ke baad usne finally band kiya auditions dena kyunki uska nahi hua! Aur maine kisi ko nahi bola ki mera bhai aa raha hai please dekhna, khud auditions de aur aa." The situation escalated when another contestant, Dayali, alleged that she had heard Siwet Tomar, a Roadies contestant from last year, secured his spot after contacting Prince's wife, Yuvika Chaudhary.

This accusation angered Prince, who immediately responded, "If this was just about me, I wouldn't have said anything. But now that you've mentioned my wife, I won't stay silent." To get to the bottom of the issue, Kushdheer, the original source of the allegation, was called in. However, he completely denied any mention of money, revealing that the entire controversy was built on rumours and misinformation. In anger, Prince said, "Tujhe lagta hai hum bikau hain." Prince Narula and Yuvika Chaudhary got married in 2018. After six years of togetherness, the couple welcomed their baby girl, Ekleen, on October 19, 2024.



Kartik Aaryan's Mom Has Hilarious Reaction To His Bearded Look In Upcoming Film: 'Aaj Se Ye Lambi Daadhi...'



Kartik Aaryan is all set to star in Anurag Basu's upcoming romantic film opposite Sreeleela. The film's first look was unveiled yesterday, and the teaser clip showed Kartik in a bearded look and long hair. His mother Mala Tiwari has now shared a heartfelt post on social media, praising how great Kartik looks on screen. She also humorously reacted to his rugged, bearded look, joking about wanting to cut his hair. She wished him success, blessings and a bright future.

Kartik Aaryan's mother Mala Tiwari shared a picture with her son. The picture shows her lovingly kissing Kartik's forehead. In her caption, she wrote, "AAJ SE MERE ACHHE DIN SHURU Bhagwan ki bahut daya huyi ki ab tum lambe samay ke liye shoot par ghar se bahar jaoge. (From today, my good days begin. Thank God, now you'll be away from home for a long time due to shooting). NOW I WILL GET TIME TO BREATHE. (laughing emojis)." She playfully reacted to his bearded look in the film, and wrote, "Aur aaj se ye lambi dadhi aur Balon ko dekhne se chutkara panne ki ulti ginti bhi shuru MAIN TEREKO JAB SOYA DEKHTI HOON, MAN KARTA HAI KI CHUPCHAP SE CUT KAR DOON. (And today, the countdown to get rid of this long beard and hair starts. When I see you sleeping, I just feel like secretly cutting them)."

She then added, "But sach kahun to screen par SOLID lag raha hai beta... Bhagwan tujhe buri nazaron se bachaaye. (But honestly, you look SOLID on screen, beta... May God protect you from the evil eye). May Your hard work and dedication shine brighter this Diwali too. GOD BLESS U. All the very Best always."

Her post went viral on Reddit, with fans lauding how wholesome it is. "That's so desi mother coded," wrote one netizen, while another one commented, "Awww this's beautiful. His mum is always there for him, lucky Kartik..." A third fan wrote, "OMG, Mama Tiwari has such a good sense of humor. This is so cute... Mom's love." The taser clip of Anurag Basu's romantic musical shared by Kartik Aaryan shows the crowd cheering, while the actor plays guitar and performs on stage during a concert. He is seen singing 'Tu Meri Zindagi Hai'.

Zaheer Iqbal Relishes Biryani While Sonakshi Sinha Watches Him Eat: 'He Knows How To Test My Will Power'



Another day, another goofy video. Sonakshi Sinha and Zaheer Iqbal have been treating fans to videos from their daily life, leaving everyone in splits. This time, it got funnier. Well, if you are on a diet and your partner is not, you know there will be some 'test of patience'. Sonakshi-Zaheer's new video is just about that. On Sunday, February 16, Sonakshi posted a video from their Sunday lunch. Zaheer was seen relishing some biryani as his wife sat on the other chair, recording them. As Zaheer went on to feed her some from his plate, Sonakshi quickly reminded him that she was on a diet. He still insisted. When the Heeramandi actor leaned forward to grab a bite, he quickly pulled back and broke into laughter.

The video ended with a visibly miffed Sonakshi, playfully smacking his head. "He knows how to test my will power... and my patience," she wrote, while sharing the video. Check it out here:

Sonakshi recently went live from her YouTube channel and replied to fans' queries. She also spoke about Zaheer, lauding him for his support. "By being my biggest cheerleader. I think Zaheer is the kind of person, meri khushi mein uski khushi hai (his happiness lies in my happiness), and when he sees me happy and thriving, he is the happiest. It's very important that your partner supports you no matter what you do." Sonakshi and Zaheer tied the knot on June 23, 2024, in Mumbai. They first met at a party hosted by Salman Khan. Zaheer made his debut with Salman's home production in Notebook. They worked together in Double XL co-starring Huma Qureshi. Together, they also featured in a music video titled Blockbuster. In 2024, Sonakshi Sinha was seen in Heeramandi and Kakuda. She will next be seen in her brother Kuss Sinha's directorial debut, Nikita Roy And The Book Of Darkness, and Karan Rawal's upcoming untitled romantic thriller. Apart from this, the actor has also signed another project which she is extremely excited about but has decided not to talk about until further development.

# Ekta Kapoor

Plans Rs 100 Crore Defamation Suit Against False Accusations And Misinformation

Media mogul Ekta R. Kapoor, along with her family and ALT Digital Media Entertainment Ltd., is preparing to take decisive legal action against those allegedly disseminating false and misleading information about them. In an official statement issued by her legal representative, Advocate Rizwan Siddiquee, Kapoor has signaled her intent to file a Rs. 100 Crore civil defamation lawsuit, coupled with criminal proceedings, against individuals propagating what has been labeled as defamatory and baseless claims.

Siddiquee's legal notice asserts that certain parties, driven by "personal vested interests coupled with hidden agendas and criminal motives," are circulating misleading narratives regarding Kapoor. These allegations are tied to a 2020 police complaint, which, as confirmed in the statement, "was already closed by the said Police Department." Despite this closure, certain individuals have allegedly continued to exploit the matter, leveraging it to defame Kapoor and her media brand.

The recent legal developments stem from the fact that when the case was revisited, the 9th Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate of Bandra Court refrained from taking cognizance of the complaint. Instead, the magistrate instructed the police to conduct an inquiry "to first ascertain the veracity and genuineness of the complaint brought before him."

This legal process, known as "postponement of issuance of process under law," indicates that the court has yet to substantiate the allegations. The legal notice underscores that given this judicial stance, no individual should have taken it upon themselves to "recklessly issue any public statement or article, therein directly or indirectly insinuating or suggesting that my client has committed any wrong, as alleged."

Despite this clear legal position, Kapoor's legal counsel highlights that certain individuals persist in "criminally trying to defame my clients and garner publicity, at the cost of their name and reputation." In response, Kapoor is resolute in her stance, initiating legal proceedings under both civil and criminal laws against these parties.

The statement categorically warns that "my clients are inter alia contemplating to sue such wrongdoers by filing a 100 Crores civil defamation suit against them, besides criminal proceedings." This legal maneuver is intended to deter the proliferation of unverified and defamatory accusations and to hold accountable those responsible for such claims.

The controversy surrounding Kapoor has reignited following a complaint filed by social media personality and Bigg Boss fame Hindustani Bhau (Vikas Pathak), who accused her OTT platform, ALT Balaji, of allegedly disrespecting Indian soldiers. Based on his 2020 complaint, a Bandra magistrate court has now ordered the Mumbai Police to investigate the matter, directing them to submit a report by May 9 under Section 202 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

