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PM Modi hails India adding 58th tiger reserve to its tally



NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday hailed the development of India adding the 58th tiger reserve to its tally with Madhya Pradesh's Madhav Tiger Reserve, and said it was "amazing news for wildlife lovers".

Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav had on Saturday said he was thrilled to announce that the country has added the 58th tiger reserve to its tally with the latest entrant being Madhav Tiger Reserve.

Tagging Yadav's post, Modi said on X, "Amazing news for wildlife lovers! India is blessed with wildlife diversity and a culture that celebrates wildlife." "We will always be at the forefront of protecting animals and contributing to a sustainable planet," Modi said. PTI

Modi visits AIIMS Delhi, inquires about Vice-President Dhankhar's health

NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday went to the AIIMS here and inquired about the health of Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar.

The vice-president was admitted to AIIMS early on Sunday after complaining of uneasiness and chest pain, sources said.

In a post on X, Modi said, "Went to AIIMS and inquired about the health of Vice President Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar Ji. I pray for his good health and speedy recovery." Dhankhar (73) was taken to the hospital around 2 am on Saturday, and was admitted to the critical care unit (CCU) under Dr Rajiv Narang, head of cardiology at AIIMS.

The vice-president is stable and under observation, a source said, adding that a group of doctors is monitoring his condition.

Union Health Minister J P Nadda also visited AIIMS to inquire about Dhankhar's health. PTI

FM says GST rates to be reduced further, rationalised; Cong demands overhaul

NEW DELHI, MARCH 9



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has said that Goods and Services Tax (GST) rates will be reduced further as the process of rationalising tax slabs is nearing completion.

FM Sitharaman mentioned that the revenue neutral rate (RNR), which was 15.8 per cent when GST was introduced in July 2017, has now come down to 11.4 per cent in 2023 and will decrease further.

Speaking at a media event in the national capital, FM Sitharaman said that the work on simplifying GST slabs is almost finished. The GST Council, which is led by the Finance Minister and includes state finance ministers, is expected to take a final decision soon.

"Now, at this stage, there is one more look that I would (take) the groups (GoM) have done excellent work, but I still have taken it upon myself to, once more, completely review each of the groups' works, and then probably take it to the Council to see if we can come to a final conclusion on this," the Finance Minister stated.

The GoM was set up in September 2021 to suggest changes in GST rates and slabs. This committee consists of finance ministers from six states and has been working on making the tax system more efficient.

The rationalisation process includes reducing the number of tax slabs, streamlining rates, and addressing key concerns raised by different industries.

The Union Minister emphasised that a final review is underway before presenting the proposal at the next GST Council meeting. PTI

India looks for good trade agreement with US: Sitharaman

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said India is looking for a "good" trade agreement with the US to promote economic growth and ensure smooth supply chains.

She also said that amid a growing global tariff war, India will have to move "smartly" to guard against possible dumping of goods from countries that are facing higher US tariffs.

At the same time, India will protect the interests of domestic industries that rely on affordable imports.

"In a broad sense, I think, both sides should have ambition for a good treaty, and nobody can fault that.

"Particularly for India, when you are looking at Viksit Bharat, you need to have good traction.

"Everybody is concerned about the growth numbers," she said at The Economic Times Awards. The minister said that a lot more steps are required to strengthen the country's exports across the board, wherever there is potential.

Budget Session set for showdown; Waqf bill top priority for govt



NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

Parliament's Budget Session resumes on Monday amid indications of a showdown between the government and the Opposition which is planning to raise issues such as the alleged manipulation of electoral rolls, the fresh bout of violence in Manipur and India's handling of the Trump administration.

The focus of the government will be on getting Parliament nod for the demands for grants, completion of the budgetary process, seeking approval for the Manipur budget and passage of the Waqf Amendment Bill.

Home Minister Amit Shah is expected to move a statutory resolution seeking Parliament approval for the proclamation of President's Rule in Manipur.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is also scheduled to table the budget for Manipur on Monday. Manipur has been under President's Rule since February 13 after the resignation of Chief Minister N Biren Singh.

The Opposition said that it is set to corner the government over the issue of duplicate Electoral Photo Identity Card (EPIC) numbers.

The Trinamool Congress has taken the lead in flagging the issue, following which the Election Commission declared that it would take corrective measures within the next three months.

The Election Commission had rejected the Trinamool Congress claim that the voter lists were manipulated to allow voters from other states to exercise their franchise in West Bengal.

The poll body also made it clear that while the EPIC numbers of some voters "may be identical", other details such as demographic information, Assembly constituency and polling booth are different. PTI

India win third Champions Trophy title with four-wicket victory over NZ

DUBAI, MARCH 9

Skipper Rohit Sharma led from the front with an excellent half-century as a resolute India held their nerve to win an unprecedented third Champions Trophy title with a four-wicket victory over New Zealand in the final here on Sunday.

Bowling first after Rohit lost his 12th straight toss, India's spinners restricted New Zealand to 251 for seven in the allotted 50 overs, with Kuldeep Yadav (2/40) and Varun Chakaravarthy (2/45) making significant contributions with the ball.

India completed the chase of 252 with six balls to spare after Rohit (76 off 83 balls) and Shreyas Iyer (48 off 62 balls) shone with the bat. PTI

DETAILED STORY ON PAGE 12

Climate change more robust now, La Nina may not be effective in warmer future: Scientists



IMD predicts an early summer this year, with above normal temperatures and intense, long heatwave spells

NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

Climate change is growing stronger and more robust, and the cooling, counter-effects of La Nina may not be effective in a warmer future, climate scientists said, assessing current heat trends seen in large parts of the country.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted an early summer this year, with above normal temperatures and intense, long heatwave spells.

The country experienced its warmest February since 1901, with the fifth lowest rainfall since 2001, it said.

While human-caused climate change is increasingly driving a 'new normal' marked by a warmer winter and shorter spring, scientists also draw attention to the yearly changes in weather patterns, termed 'year-to-year variability'.

"For example, updates from the IMD this year suggest that it was an unusually dry winter," Arpita Mondal, associate professor at the centre for climate studies at IIT Bombay, told PTI.

She explained that rain is a natural cooling process helping bring temperatures down.

Raghu Murtugudde, an earth system scientist and professor at IIT Bombay, said, "I see a global wave of warm and cold temperature anomalies during Dec-Feb that are related to the swings of jet streams."

Jet streams are strong winds blowing in the upper levels of the atmosphere and influence weather by shifting north and south.

A northward shift in these winds during pre-monsoon is directly linked with heatwave character, such as its duration and temperature, Mondal said. PTI

Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar admitted to AIIMS-Delhi

NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

The 73-year-old complained of uneasiness and chest pain

Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar has been admitted to AIIMS in New Delhi in the wee hours on Sunday after he complained of uneasiness and chest pain, said sources. The 73-year-old was taken to the hospital around 2 am.

Dhankhar is admitted to the Critical Care Unit (CCU) under Dr Rajiv Narang, Head of Department of Cardiology at AIIMS.

He is stable and under observation, a source said, adding that a group of doctors is monitoring his condition.

Union Health Minister JP Nadda visited AIIMS to enquire about Dhankhar's condition. PTI

US warns against travel near India-Pakistan border

WASHINGTON, MARCH 9



The United States has issued an advisory cautioning against travel to the immediate vicinity of the India-Pakistan border and the Line of Control due to terrorism and the potential for armed conflict and to the provinces of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The US State Department issued the travel advisory on Friday. The advisory states that people should 'reconsider travel to Pakistan due to terrorism and the potential for armed conflict'.

The travel advisory asks Americans to not travel to Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which include the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), due to terrorism.

It also cautions against travel to the immediate vicinity of the India-Pakistan border and the Line of Control due to terrorism and the potential for armed conflict.

"Violent extremist groups continue to plot attacks in Pakistan. Terrorist attacks are frequent in Balochistan province and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, which include the former FATA. Large-scale terrorist attacks have resulted in numerous casualties, and small-scale attacks are frequent.

"Terrorism and ongoing violence by extremist elements have led to indiscriminate attacks on civilians, as well as local military and police targets. Terrorists may attack with little or no warning, targeting transportation hubs, markets, shopping malls, military installations, airports, universities, tourist attractions, schools, hospitals, places of worship, and government facilities. Terrorists have targeted US diplomats and diplomatic facilities in the past," the advisory said.

It said Pakistan's security environment remains fluid, sometimes changing with little or no notice.

There are greater security resources and infrastructure in the major cities, particularly Islamabad, and security forces in these areas may be more readily able to respond to an emergency compared to other areas of the country, it said. PTI

Indiscipline in party won't be tolerated: SAD chief Bhunder



Says the party has taken a serious note of the statements/videos by some party leaders against the decisions of the SGPC and SAD

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, March 9

The crisis in the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) deepened further with party working president Balwinder Singh Bhunder on Sunday saying that indiscipline in the party would not be tolerated at any cost.

"Everyone is free to express his views at the party forum but nobody would be allowed to violate the party discipline. All anti-party statements and videos are being referred to the party's disciplinary committee and show-cause notices will be issued. Action will be taken after considering their replies," said Bhunder after attending the meeting of the party's parliamentary board here.

He said the party had taken a serious note of the statements/videos by some party leaders against the decisions of the SGPC and SAD.

The meeting was attended by Gulzar Singh Ranike, Janmeja Sekhon, Mahesh Inder Grewal, Heera Gabria and Daljit Cheema.

Revolt in the Sukhbir Badal camp of the SAD has been building up over the removal of the jathedars of Akal Takht and Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib on March 7, with several senior leaders, including Bikram Majithia, condemning the SGPC interim committee's decision.

Moga district admn gears up to tackle flood situation

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Moga, March 9



DC conducts thorough inspection of the Satluj River embankment to assess the situation

With the monsoon season approaching, the Moga district administration has swung into action to prevent flooding in the region well in advance. The administration is leaving no stone unturned to safeguard the district, particularly Moga city, from potential flood threats.

District Commissioner Sagar Setia conducted a thorough inspection of the Satluj River embankment to assess the situation. During his visit, he observed that the embankment on the Ludhiana side, specifically in the Sidhwan Bet area, is lower and needs to be elevated urgently to prevent breaches.

To address this issue, Setia instructed officials to maintain constant vigilance and coordinate with the Ludhiana administration to ensure the embankment's height is increased before the flood season. This will help prevent flooding in Moga city and other low-lying areas.

In addition to embankment strengthening, the administration has also initiated other measures to prevent flooding. These include Planting more trees along the Satluj River under the MGNREGA scheme to prevent soil erosion and strengthen the embankment, Filling gaps in the embankments to prevent breaches, Cleaning drains to ensure smooth water flow, Conducting regular inspections to identify vulnerable areas and take corrective measures.

The district administration is working tirelessly to ensure that the region is prepared to face any flood-like situation. With the monsoon season approaching, the administration is taking all necessary precautions to safeguard the lives and property of the people.

Other officials present during the visit included Additional Deputy Commissioner Charumita, SDM Dharamkot Himanshu Gupta, Gitesh Upweja XEN Mining and other officials of concerned departments.

Clash over motorcycle collision in Amritsar; vendor attacked with burning oil

RAMAN CHAMAK
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Amritsar, March 9



A shocking incident in Amritsar has raised concerns about rising crime. A motorcycle collided with a parked vehicle near a vendor's stall, leading to a violent clash. The motorcyclist allegedly poured burning oil on the vendor, causing severe burns.

The entire incident was captured on CCTV. Police arrived at the scene and assured action would be taken. However, the footage shows the youth being taken into custody and later released.

The stall owner claims that after the collision, the youth attacked him and poured burning oil on him. He reported the incident to the police, but they allegedly let the accused go. A journalist spoke to a police officer, who confirmed that an investigation is underway and strict action will be taken against those found guilty. The vendor says he was attacked after the motorcycle crash. Eyewitnesses saw the entire incident unfold. The police officer claims an investigation is ongoing. A motorcycle crashed into a parked vehicle near a vendor's stall. The motorcyclist and/or his companions allegedly poured burning oil on the vendor. The incident was recorded on CCTV. The vendor accuses the police of releasing the suspects. The police say they are investigating and will take action.

The victim claims the police are helping the culprits escape. The incident has put the police under scrutiny once again.

2,367 candidates appear for Labour Inspector recruitment exam in Ferozepur



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ferozepur, March 9

The Labour Inspector recruitment examination was successfully conducted, as confirmed by District Education Officer (Sec. Edu.) Munila Arora. She informed that a total of 12 examination centres were set up in Ferozepur for the recruitment process, with 4,358 candidates applying. However, only 2,367 candidates appeared for the exam.

Providing further details Deputy District Education Officer (Sec. Edu.) Dr Satinder Singh stated that special observers from the district administration were appointed at each of the 12 centres to ensure smooth and fair conduct of the examination.

The nodal centre for the exam was M.L.M Senior Secondary School, Ferozepur, where Principal Sudhir Dhawan was assigned the responsibility. The successful completion of the examination was made possible with the dedicated efforts of staff members Lavdeep Singh, Sukhchain Singh, and Dinesh Kumar.

Three drug peddlers arrested under NDPS Act



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Nakodar, March 9

The Nakodar City police have arrested a drug peddler on the charge of selling heroin. Station House Officer (SHO) Aman Sainni said that 4 grams heroin was recovered from the possession of the accused identified as Sukhdeep Singh alias Goldi a resident of Mohalla Sherpur, Nakodar.

SHO said that a case under Sections 21-/61/85 of the NDPS Act has been registered against the accused.

The Mehatpur police arrested drug peddlers Chandan Sharma of Mohalla Guru Nanak Pura Nakodar and Sahil Kumar alias Sanju a resident of Balachaur in Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar with 4 gram of heroin and impounded a Ford Classic car in which they were travelling with the contraband said investigating Officer Gurnam Singh.

2,136 cases settled in National Lok Adalat, Tarn Taran

INDER PAL SINGH
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Tarn Taran, March 9



The National Legal Services Authority, Delhi, and the Punjab State Legal Services Authority organized a National Lok Adalat on March 8. Regarding this, Kanwaljit Singh Bajwa, District and Sessions Judge and Chairman of the District Legal Services Authority, Tarn Taran, stated that a large-scale Lok Adalat was held in the Tarn Taran Sessions Division. A total of eight benches were formed for the convenience of the public.

The first bench was presided over by Pooja Andhotra, Additional District & Sessions Judge, Tarn Taran. The second bench was led by Rajni Shokra, Additional District and Sessions Judge (Principal Judge, Family Court), Tarn Taran. The third bench was headed by Pratima Arora, Chief Judicial Magistrate, Tarn Taran. The fourth bench was overseen by Itu Sodi, Civil Judge (Junior Division), Tarn Taran. The fifth bench was chaired by Ajaib Singh, Chairman of the Permanent Lok Adalat, Tarn Taran. Additionally, two benches were presided over by Jagjit Singh, Sub-Divisional Judicial Magistrate, Patti, and Harsimrandeep Kaur, Civil Judge (Junior Division), Patti.

Another bench was set up at Khadur Sahib under the leadership of Indu Bala, Sub-Divisional Judicial Magistrate, Khadur Sahib. The presiding officers of these benches, under the guidance of the Chairman of the District Legal Services Authority, interacted with litigants with great empathy, listened to their disputes, explained the benefits of resolving cases amicably, and encouraged settlements through mutual consent. With public participation, 2,136 cases out of 4,163 were settled in the National Lok Adalat, resulting in decisions amounting to Rs 1,35,04,55,84. It was also informed that if a case is resolved in the Lok Adalat, the court fees paid in the case are refunded. Pre-Lok Adalat sessions were also organized periodically to facilitate dispute resolution through mutual consent.

Veterinary students from Anand, Gujarat visit KCVAS

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Amritsar, March 9



Sixty-five students from the College of Veterinary Science, Kamdhenu University, Anand (Gujarat), recently embarked on an enriching educational tour to Khalsa College of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (KCVAS), Amritsar.

The tour included a series of interactive sessions, live demonstrations, and exposure to advanced veterinary practices. The students were given a guided tour of the college's well-equipped laboratories, animal housing facilities, and clinical units, allowing them to observe and understand modern veterinary techniques in real time. Dr H.K. Verma, Principal of KCVAS, briefed the students on the history of the college, highlighting its establishment and key milestones in veterinary education. The students learned about the institution's contributions to the field, various initiatives, and its commitment to advancing veterinary science.

Additionally, Dr S.K. Kansal, Head of the Department of Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Extension Education, addressed the students, providing insights into the high-quality education offered at KCVAS.

He emphasized the college's dedication to academic excellence and its role in shaping competent veterinary professionals. Dr Nitasha Sambyal highlighted the importance of such educational tours in bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical implementation.

Police conduct Cordon and Search Operation in various parts of Phagwara

ASHOK KAURA
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Phagwara, March 9



In an effort to crack down on drug peddlers and miscreants causing law and order issues, Phagwara police, led by SP Rupinder Kaur Bhatti, conducted a Cordon and Search Operation (CASO) in various areas of the city on Sunday.

The operation was personally supervised by SP Bhatti, with DSP Bharat Bhushan and Inspectors Aman Kumar Deveshvar, Gaurav Dhir, and Hardip Singh also participating.

CASO was carried out in multiple locations, including Chajj Colony, Bus Stand, Railway Station, Village Wajidowal, Kirpalpur, Law Gate Maherru, and Village Lakhpur—all areas known for rampant drug abuse, peddling, and crime. During the operation, police checked houses and vehicles, questioned suspicious individuals, and investigated the activities of drug peddlers, snatchers, and previously arrested miscreants now out on bail. Police teams visited their homes, inquired with family members, and gathered information from local residents.

"The main objective of CASO is to instill fear among criminals and drug traffickers while ensuring a sense of security among the citizens," said Senior Superintendent of Police Gaurav Toora.

He emphasized that the operation aimed to strengthen police-public coordination and urged residents to support law enforcement by sharing any information about drug peddlers.

He assured that the police would take immediate action on credible leads and guaranteed that the identity of informants would be kept confidential.

Expert talk on Bhartiya Vigyanik organised

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Mandi Gobindgarh, March 9

Desh Bhagat University (DBU) successfully organized an expert talk on Bhartiya Vigyanik, bringing together distinguished experts from the field of science and research. The event aimed to highlight India's scientific heritage and advancements, fostering a deeper understanding of indigenous knowledge systems and modern scientific developments.

The session was graced by eminent speakers, including Prof. Dr S K Mehta, Professor of Chemistry at Panjab University, Chandigarh, Dr Som Dev Bhardwaj, Organizing Secretary, North India of Vijnana Bharati and Dr. Adarsh Pal Vij, Chairman of the Punjab Pollution Control Board. The event was inaugurated by Dr Zora Singh, Chancellor, and Dr Tajinder Kaur, Pro-Chancellor of Desh Bhagat University. In their address, they emphasized the importance of integrating traditional Indian scientific knowledge with contemporary research to drive innovation and sustainability.

During the session, the experts shared valuable insights on India's rich scientific legacy, environmental concerns, and advancements in chemistry and sustainable development. Prof. Dr S K Mehta elaborated on the significance of chemistry in everyday life and research, while Dr Som Dev Bhardwaj highlighted the role of Vijnana Bharati in promoting Indian scientific contributions. Dr Adarsh Pal Vij focused on environmental challenges and the need for sustainable solutions through scientific innovations.

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Fueling Viksit Bharat: Mayank Foundation empowers future innovators on National Science Day

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ferozepur, March 9



Mayank Foundation celebrated National Science Day with great enthusiasm and participation, aligning with the theme, 'Empowering Indian Youth for Global Leadership in Science and Innovation for Viksit Bharat'. The event, held at Shanti Vidya Mandir, brought together students, educators, and science enthusiasts to honour the contributions of science in building a developed India.

The ceremony was graced by several distinguished guests, including the chief guest Dr Prof Suresh Sharma, who has been serving Ferozepur for over five decades since 1974. His exceptional contributions to the field of education were acknowledged as he inspired the audience with his valuable insights.

The event also featured Guest of Honour, Prof. SK Gupta, a renowned Chemistry Professor and Director of Administration at Guru Nanak College; Principal Inderjeet Singh, an accomplished Physicist; and Prof. Rajesh Aggarwal, a respected physicist serving at RSD College for 35 years. Their motivational speeches left an indelible mark on the students, encouraging them to pursue excellence in science and innovation.

The event saw active participation from over 200 students from 10 colleges and universities, engaging in a variety of inter-college competitions including declamation, exhibitions, quizzes, poster making, and rangoli creation. These competitions allowed students to showcase their creativity and scientific knowledge, with the winners receiving recognition for their exceptional talent and dedication to the field of science.

Project Coordinator, Yogesh Talwar, shared that the celebration of National Science Day is an annual tradition for Mayank Foundation, supported by the Punjab State Council of Science & Technology, Department of Science & Technology, Government of India, and NCSTC. He emphasized the Foundation's continued efforts to promote scientific knowledge and innovation among the youth.

Financial assistance of ₹1,042.63 cr provided to widows and destitute women till January

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, March 9



The Punjab government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, is committed to the welfare of all sections of society, including widows and destitute women. Providing details in this regard, Social Security, Women, and Child Development Minister Dr Baljit Kaur stated that financial assistance amounting to Rs 1042.63 crore has been provided to widows and destitute women in the state till January 2025.

Further elaborating on the matter, Dr Baljit Kaur mentioned that approximately 6.47 lakh widows and destitute women in the state are benefiting from this scheme. She also highlighted that under various schemes, the state government has disbursed a total of Rs 5555.94 crore till January 2025.

Cabinet Minister further informed that during the current financial year, a budgetary provision of 1086 crore was allocated for widows and destitute women, out of which Rs 1042.63 crore has already been utilized by January 2025.

Dr Baljit Kaur urged officials to ensure transparency in the implementation of government schemes meant for widows and destitute women. Additionally, she emphasized that every eligible beneficiary should receive the benefits of these schemes.

Cabinet Minister also stated that along with initiatives for women's welfare, the Social Security Department provides financial assistance to persons with disabilities and dependent children.

Ajnala's electricity grid upgraded after 60 years: Dhaliwal



N.P.S. CHAMAK
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ajnala, March 9

In a significant development, the electricity grid in Ajnala has been upgraded after 60 years, paving the way for industrial growth in the area. This upgrade is a result of the joint efforts of Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann and Power Minister Harbhajan Singh.

Cabinet Minister Kuldeep Singh Dhaliwal announced that the 66kv power plant in Ajnala has been upgraded at a cost of 34.74 crore. This upgrade will improve the power supply to 115 villages in the area, which were previously supplied with 220 KV power from the grid sub-station Fatehgarh Chudi.

The new 220 kV grid sub-station in Ajnala will provide uninterrupted and high-power supply to consumers. The project includes the installation of new power transformers and the construction of an 18 km long transmission line.

This development is expected to attract industries to the area, creating new opportunities for economic growth. The upgraded electricity grid will be operational within a year.

Dhaliwal emphasized that the Punjab government is committed to providing reliable and efficient power supply to its citizens. This upgrade is a significant step towards achieving that goal.

Fire station to be shifted shortly out of city at suitable location: Dr Ravjot Singh

DALJEET AJNOHA
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Hoshiarpur, March 9



Punjab Local Government Minister Dr Ravjot Singh stated that the existing fire station would be shifted to a new suitable site at an open place out of city. He said that the site identification was on and shortly the process is to be finalised.

The Minister, who was listening to the public issues in his office, said that public problems and concerns would be addressed on priority. He pointed out that the fire tenders always faced issues in case of emergency as the present station was situated in the congested area and new fire station will be set up at an open space at a cost of about Rs 2.50 crore.

Punjab government under CM Bhagwant Mann Singh's leadership, said Dr Ravjot, constant efforts were being made to ensure holistic development in all areas. Apart from the education and health sectors, the employment opportunities are being provided to the youngsters especially in Government sector jobs, he added.

The Minister said that cleanliness of the cities of the state and sewerage system had made more mechanised as the Chief Minister recently provided ultra modern machinery to seven districts worth Rs. 14.30. He said the state government had procured 730 machines at an outlay of Rs 40 crore for cleanliness purposes in different cities of the state. The new machinery also ensures mechanized cleaning instead of manual process as the requisite training was also being imparted to employees. He said various works related with the Local Government department would be initiated in the district in days to come.

Edu Dept organises talent search contests for CWSN

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Amritsar, March 9

The Education Department has launched district-level competitions in talent search and culture for children with special needs (CWSN) studying in government schools. Under the programme, competitions were also held in Amritsar with more than 50 students participating at the event hosted at BBK DAV College.

DEO (Elementary) Kanwaljit Singh, in his address, motivated the students to continue the process of learning through aided methods. Cultural performances were presented by the students with special needs from different blocks of the district, earning applause from the audience.

Earlier, as part of talent search, essay, drawing, painting and poetry recitation contests were organised for the students. DEO (Elementary) Kanwaljit Singh appreciated the art performances by children with special needs and said that one should learn from these children and strive to create one's own unique identity in society with skills. The DEO (Elementary) also honoured the winners and students who took part in the competition.

Strict action to be taken against those found guilty in Sunanda Sharma case: Chairperson Raj Lali Gill

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, March 9



The Punjab State Women Commission had directed Punjab Police Headquarters to submit an action-taken report by Sunday, regarding the matter concerning renowned singer Sunanda Sharma, following her public plea, "Mennu roti joga taan chhad dio" (If you allow me to earn my livelihood, then let me be).

Taking suo moto cognizance of media reports, the Commission had instructed an SP-rank officer to conduct an inquiry into the matter. Exercising its powers under Section 12 of the Punjab State Women Commission Act, 2001, the Commission had sought an urgent response from the police.

Chairperson Raj Lali Gill stated that strict action will be taken against those found guilty of harassment or exerting undue pressure on the singer based on the findings of the investigation.

She emphasized that the Commission will not tolerate any form of intimidation, harassment, or violation of women's rights. She further assured that the Punjab State Women Commission remains committed to ensuring justice and preventing such incidents in the future.

The Commission also urges all girls who are suffering in silence to come forward and seek help. It reaffirms its dedication to standing with victims and ensuring their safety, dignity, and justice.

The Commission is closely monitoring further developments and will take all necessary legal actions as per the law.

Punjab Police conduct search operation at 262 bus stands across state

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, March 9



In order to ensure peaceful celebrations of forthcoming Holi festival as desired by Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, Punjab Police on Sunday conducted a cordon and search operation (CASO) at as many as 262 Bus Stands across the state.

The operation was carried out on the directions of Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab Gaurav Yadav in all the 28 Police districts.

Special Director General of Police (Special DGP) Law and Order Arpit Shukla, who was personally monitoring this state-level operation, said that all the CPs/SSPs were asked to ensure heavy deployment of police force under the supervision of Superintendent of Police (SP) rank officers to make this operation successful.

He said that police teams with the assistance of sniffer dogs frisked people arriving and departing at Bus Stands, he said, while adding that teams have also rounded up suspicious people for verification. "We had strictly instructed all the Police Personnel to deal with every person in a friendly and polite manner while frisking them during the course of this operation," he added.

The Special DGP said that as many as 400 police parties, involving over 3000 Police Personnel, were deputed under the supervision of 121 gazetted rank officers across the state to look for suspicious persons at different bus stands in the state while ensuring minimum inconvenience to the general public.

Around 3868 people were checked during the operation conducted at around 262 bus stands in the state, he said, while adding that police teams have rounded up 175 persons for questioning. Police teams have also registered two criminal cases during the operation and recovered 100 grams heroin, he added.

He said that during the operation, police teams have also conducted checking of vehicles stationed at and around the bus stands. As many as 208 vehicles were challaned and 14 vehicles have been impounded by the teams, he added.

Special DGP Arpit Shukla reiterated that such operations would continue to ensure peace and harmony in the border state.

Truck drags car on highway, all passengers safe

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Abohar, March 9



A vehicle got stuck between a truck and a bus on the terminal of Government Seed Farm on Sunday. It was a miraculous escape for the five people travelling in the car as the truck allegedly dragged the vehicle for a long distance. The car was badly damaged but the passengers escaped narrowly.

Ramesh Kumar of Malout said he was coming to Abohar with his family. When the car reached near Government Seed Farm terminal, it got stuck between a bus and a truck parked on the roadside of the highway and the truck dragged the vehicle for a long distance. The truck driver left the vehicle and fled from the spot. Due to this incident, traffic on the highway was affected for over an hour.

As soon as the accident came to light, the Sadak Suraksha Force team reached the spot. They helped the car and truck move aside and restored traffic movement.

Abohar police said they were investigating the matter.

Comprehensive ban on speaker usage on tractors and trucks during Hola-Mohalla

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, March 9



The vibrant celebration of Hola-Mohalla at Sri Anandpur Sahib and Sri Kiratpur Sahib is set to take place from March 10 to March 15, 2025. In a bid to ensure the safety and well-being of the devotees, a comprehensive ban has been imposed on the use of speakers on tractors and trucks during the festivities.

Announcing this, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Rupnagar, Gulneet Singh Khurana, said that police administrations across all districts in Punjab have been informed to issue instructions to Station House Officers (SHOs) and Traffic Incharges. These instructions will be passed on to representatives of truck unions and panchayats, prohibiting double-decker trucks/vehicles, large speakers on tractor trolleys, pressure horns on motorcycles, and motorcycles without silencers from entering Sri Anandpur Sahib and Sri Kiratpur Sahib during the Hola-Mohalla celebrations.

Additionally, strict actions will be taken against those violating traffic rules and laws. Vehicles found causing noise pollution will have their speakers removed on the spot before being allowed to proceed further.

SSP Gulneet Khurana highlighted that the decision to ban loudspeakers was made to prevent inconvenience to the Sangat (devotees) arriving from various parts of the country and abroad. During the 2023 Hola-Mohalla celebrations, a tragic incident occurred where a Sikh youth lost his life due to a conflict caused by a tractor loudspeaker. This incident underscores the necessity for stringent measures to ensure the safety of all participants.

The SSP appealed to all Sangat to adhere to the instructions and traffic rules issued by the police administration, thereby preventing any untoward incidents during the celebration.

2 IPS, 14 PPS officers transferred

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, March 9

Punjab government issued transfer and posting orders for two IPS and 14 PPS officers with immediate effect on Sunday.

Dayama Harish Kumar Omprakash, IPS's services placed at the disposal of Vigilance Bureau, Punjab, Rupinder Singh as DCP City, Ludhiana, Jaskiranjit Singh Teja as Commandant, 7th IRB, Kapurthala against vacant post, Harpreet Singh's Services placed at the disposal of Vigilance Bureau, Punjab, Gursewak Singh as AIG, Counter Intelligence, Ferozepur, Lakhbir Singh, services placed at the disposal of Vigilance Bureau, Punjab, Rajeshwar Singh as AIG, ARP & SDRF, Jalandhar, Manjit Singh's services placed at the disposal of Vigilance Bureau, Punjab, Ravinderpal Singh as DCP Investigation, Amritsar, Harpreet Singh's services placed at the disposal of Vigilance Bureau, Punjab, Swarandeep Singh's services placed at the disposal of Vigilance Bureau, Punjab, Daljit Singh as AIG, Armament, Punjab, Chandigarh, Harpal Singh as Assistant Commandant, 4th IRB, Shahpur Kandi, Pathankot against vacant post, Rajpal Singh's services placed at the disposal of Vigilance Bureau, Punjab, Rupinder Kaur's services placed at the disposal of Vigilance Bureau, Punjab and Arvind Meena to look after the work of SP Hqrs., Ropar.

Webinar dwells on challenges faced by women in work life

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Patiala, March 9

The Student Welfare Department, Jagat Guru Nanak Dev Punjab State Open University (JGND PSOU), in collaboration with the Institution of Engineers (India), Punjab, and Chandigarh state centre, organised a webinar titled "Work, life, women: Finding balance" on the occasion of International Women's Day.

The webinar was held under the leadership of Anindita Mitra, Vice-Chancellor, JGND PSOU.

The event aimed to explore the current status of women, challenges they face in professional spaces and necessary steps to address these issues. Madanjit Kaur Sahota, former member, Consumer Redressal Forum (I), UT, Chandigarh; Juvenile Justice Board, Chandigarh, and Child Welfare Committee, Chandigarh, was the chief guest on the occasion. She exhorted participants to learn lessons from Gurbani to overcome challenges of work and life.

Kataria honours women entrepreneurs at COWE India's Fempreneur Rising Stars 2025 award ceremony



A.S. PRASHAR
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, March 9

In a resounding celebration of female empowerment and entrepreneurial spirit, the Governor of Punjab, Gulab Chand Kataria, presided over the Fempreneur Rising Stars 2025 Award ceremony, held on Sunday at Raj Bhawan. This prestigious event, perfectly timed to coincide with International Women's Day, honoured the exceptional achievements of women entrepreneurs who are making significant contributions to their communities and industries across India.

As the esteemed chief guest, Governor Kataria emphasized the pivotal role that women play in driving economic growth and positive societal change. He lauded the award recipients for their remarkable resilience, unwavering determination, and groundbreaking innovations. "Today, we gather at Punjab Raj Bhavan on the occasion of International Women's Day," Governor Kataria stated. "This ceremony symbolizes the immense power of women's entrepreneurship and the spirit of innovation. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to each and every one of the award-winning women present here today. You have proven, through your indomitable courage and tireless hard work, that women are capable of achieving excellence in any and every field they choose to pursue. It is imperative that we provide our daughters not only with access to higher education but also with meaningful opportunities for professional training and comprehensive skill development. When women are truly empowered, our nation as a whole will inevitably become more self-reliant, more prosperous, and undeniably more progressive."

Dr. Monica B. Sood felicitated at Punjab Raj Bhawan

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Mohali, March 9

A prominent socio-economic and geopolitical strategist Dr. Monica B. Sood, who is also an eminent Ayurveda expert overseeing the production of Ayurvedic formulations at Mohali, that are exported to over 40 countries, was honored by Punjab Governor Gulab Chand Kataria at the Punjab Raj Bhawan. Dr. Sood, who leads Navjivan Health Services a 102-year-old institution dedicated to Ayurveda and holistic health practices has garnered national and international recognition for her multifaceted contributions to the fields of health, diplomacy, and socio-economic development.

Dr. Sood's true distinction lies in her remarkable ability to bridge the traditional wisdom of Ayurveda with global healthcare, while simultaneously contributing to vital socio-economic and geopolitical conversations.

During the felicitation ceremony, Dr. Sood expressed her heartfelt gratitude, stating, "This recognition not only honors my work in Ayurveda but also acknowledges my contributions to national security, international relations, and socio-economic progress. It fuels my commitment to the vision of a stronger, self-reliant India that plays an active role in global peace and prosperity."

PHDCCI's 3-day Renewable Energy & EV Expo 2025 concludes

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, March 9



The 3rd edition of the Renewable Energy and EV Expo, organized by the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI), successfully concluded on Sunday, reinforcing its position as a premier platform for advancements in sustainable mobility and renewable energy.

During the valedictory session, the Chief Guest, Sanjeev Chawla, Additional Development Commissioner, Ministry of MSME, Government of India, emphasized that electric vehicles (EVs) and renewable energy represent the future of the country's energy and transportation landscape. He highlighted the critical role of the MSME sector in the production of EV-related components and solar energy solutions, stating that aligning with future demands would significantly strengthen the sector. He further elaborated on various schemes initiated by the Central Government for the MSME sector, particularly referencing the Union Budget 2025-26, which introduced several measures aimed at enhancing credit accessibility. He also noted the launch of a ₹10,000 crore fund for startups to foster innovation and growth in both the EV and renewable energy domains.

As part of the closing ceremony, representatives from vehicle and renewable energy technology companies participating in the event were specially honored by PHDCCI for their contributions to the industry.

Naveen Seth, Deputy Secretary General, PHDCCI, highlighted that over 100 companies from across the country were provided a platform to showcase their innovations in electric mobility, battery storage, and solar energy applications during the Expo. He further announced that future editions of the event would be expanded to accommodate a larger audience and a more diverse range of exhibitors, ensuring a broader impact on the industry.

Madhusudan Vij, Chair, Chandigarh Chapter, PHDCCI, extended his gratitude to the esteemed guests and dignitaries, emphasizing that PHDCCI has been at the forefront of promoting both electric mobility and renewable energy adoption in India. He noted that the significant increase in business visitors surpassing 35,000 in just the third year reflects a growing public and industry interest in electric vehicles, solar power, and sustainable energy solutions.

100 delegates attend workshop on Neonatal Sepsis at PGIMER



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, March 9

A single theme workshop on Neonatal Sepsis (meaning serious infections in newborn babies) is currently underway at the Advanced Pediatric Centre, PGIMER, Chandigarh. 100 delegates from all over India are attending this workshop. On the second day of the workshop, several important lectures were delivered followed by case discussions of real-life cases of newborn babies with serious infections.

The second day's proceedings started with a talk on newborn meningitis (infection of the covering of the brain) by the organising secretary of the workshop, Prof Sourabh Dutta. He stressed that the occurrence of meningitis is more common in the newborn period than in any other age group. The consequences of missing a diagnosis of meningitis or undertreating meningitis are devastating and lifelong. A sample of spinal fluid has to be analysed for diagnosing meningitis.

Dr Sajan Saini spoke about a dangerous but rare complication of meningitis called ventriculitis. In this the central fluid spaces inside the brain get infected. This disease requires prolonged periods of antibiotics and long hospitalisation. There are typical changes on MRI of the brain and ultrasound of the brain which help to identify this dreaded complication.

Dr Nandkishor Kabra spoke about urinary tract infections in newborn babies. He said that paediatricians need to look more actively for urinary infections in newborn babies than what they are currently doing. To be able to get a clean sample of the urine without contamination, the urine has to be collected either by catheterisation of the urinary bladder or by inserting a needle in the urinary bladder. A diagnosis of urinary infection may require further investigations such as ultrasounds of the kidneys.

Dev Samaj College for Women organises its annual F\fest MOSAIC-2025



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, March 9

Dev Samaj College for Women (DSCW) hosted MOSAIC-2025, the college's cultural extravaganza at its premises in Sector 45-B, Chandigarh. The vibrant festival was a dynamic celebration of talent, creativity, and inspiration. Vivek Atray,ex-IAS a renowned motivational speaker & visiting professor at Shoolini University was the chief guest. Prof. (Dr.) Agnese Dhillon, Secretary, Dev Samaj College Managing Committee; Maanvinder Singh Mangat, Joint Secretary, DSCW; Sabeeha Dhillon Mangat, Principal, Ishwar Singh Dev Samaj Senior Secondary School graced the occasion as the guests of honour along with Prof. (Dr.) Neeru Malik, the principal of the college.

The event, compered by anchor Akash, had an impressive line-up of competitions and events such as Mr. and Ms. Mosaic, Chaupal auditions, Dance Mania, Ad-Mad Show, Photography, Bollywood Mania, Face Painting, Rangoli, Videography and extempore among other competitions judged by the best from the respective fields. Deep Singh was adjudged Mr. Mosaic and Khushi Verma were adjudged Miss Mosaic. The first and second runners-up were Anmol and Ankush Channe among boys, and Khushi and Kaashvi Singh among girls, respectively.

Former Femina Miss India World's initiative to empower women entrepreneurs

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, March 9



In a path-breaking development, the Women Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Development (W.E.E.D) initiative, a structured one-year programme dedicated to fostering women-led start-ups, was officially unveiled at a press conference held at Press Club, Chandigarh.

W.E.E.D, a brain child of Navneet Kaur Dhillon, a former Femina Miss India World, actress, and entrepreneur, is a significant step towards empowering women entrepreneurs by providing them with mentorship, funding opportunities, and industry connections crucial for scaling their ventures.

"W.E.E.D initiative is designed to address key areas vital for business where we will provide women entrepreneurs access to a strong network of mentors, investors, and experts," said Navneet Kaur Dhillon at the press meet.

Navneet, on being asked about the reason for crossing over from the entertainment industry and taking on a new role of 'mentor to women entrepreneurs' said: "I have always been passionate about women empowerment. I conceptualised W.E.E.D as I wanted to do something concrete to empower women. I feel that as a pageant winner, my exposure & experience will help me connect and reach out to women with start-up ideas and encourage them to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams."

Sharing his thoughts on the occasion, Sahil Makkar, Chairman and CEO of Punjab Angels Network (PAN) – which is committed to developing the start-up ecosystem in the region, and owns W.E.E.D as its subsidiary, said: "Through W.E.E.D, we will facilitate collaborations and partnerships for expanding reach. Through investor engagement, we will link high-potential women-led start-ups with investors for business scaling. We will help start-ups connect with financial resources to accelerate growth"

Navneet Kaur Dhillon & Sahil Makkar revealed that the W.E.E.D Programme will initially select 10 women entrepreneurs for an intensive three-month mentorship, followed by the inclusion of 10 more women, focusing on scaling their businesses over the next nine months.

With a strong vision to support women from Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities, WEED aims to create a lasting impact by addressing challenges faced by women entrepreneurs and providing them with the tools and networks necessary for success, they said.

Panjab University achieves historic podium finish at 38th AIU National Youth Festival



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, March 9

Panjab University (PU), Chandigarh, has achieved a historic milestone by securing the second Runner-Up Champion Trophy at the 38th AIU Inter-University National Youth Festival. The national festival was hosted by Amity University, Noida.

This marks the first time PU has attained a podium finish at this prestigious national event. Notably, every PU participant who qualified for the national level secured a position, showcasing the university's commitment to excellence in cultural and artistic pursuits.

PU students delivered stellar performances across various categories, with top achievements including a first-place finish in Skit by Mahin Vaidya, Arshiya Verma, Khushi Sehgal, Eishit Goel, Tanmay Goel, and Garv Rajora from G.G.D.S.D. College, Sector 32, Chandigarh. Esha from D.A.V. College, Sector 10, Chandigarh, secured first position in Western Vocal Solo, while Rupali Sharma from Khalsa College for Women, Civil Lines, Ludhiana, won first place in Mimicry. Neelam from Govt. College for Girls, Ludhiana, claimed the top spot in Mehndi Designing.

The Installation team, comprising Sahil and Prateek Dutt Sharma from Govt. College of Art, Sector 10, Chandigarh, along with Mohammad Atif from G.G.D.S.D. College, Sector 32, Chandigarh, and Achom Lamnganba from D.A.V. College, Sector 10, Chandigarh, secured second place.

Classifieds

CHANGE OF NAME

I Raj Kumar S/o Tilak Chand Jain R/o 603, Malerkotla House, Opp. Old DMC, Civil Lines, Ludhiana have changed my name to Raj Kumar Jain

I Malkiat Singh S/o Gurdiyal Singh R/o Patti Sameria, Vill. Kila Raipur, Ludhiana have changed my name to Malkit Singh

I Jagpreet Singh Grewal S/o Malkit Singh R/o Patti Sameria, Vill. Kila Raipur, Ludhiana have changed my name to Jagpreet Singh

I Shakuntala Devi mother of no Jc249116K Rank RIS Name Anil Kumar R/o Vill Chatha Barrjala Distt Satwari State Jammu and Kasmir Pin 180003 have changed my name from Skuntala Devi to Shakuntala Devi

I Khajesab Fakarusab Araganji father of No. 15794948M Rank Hav Name Dadapeer Araganji R/o Durgadevi temple Shirol Gadag, Shirol Karmataka 582207 have change my Name From Kajhesab To Khajesab Fakarusab Araganji

I Akkubayi Araganji mother of No. 15794948M Rank NK Name Dadapeer Araganji R/o Durgadevi temple Shirol Gadag, Shirol Karmataka 582207 have change my Name From Akkubai To Akkubayi Araganji

I, Navjot Kaur W/O Gurdial Singh R/O Machhian Kalan, Borra, Ludhiana changed my name as Gurjot Kaur.

I, Pawan Kumar Gupta S/O Sat Parkash R/O H.no, B-1,809/8, Prem Nagar Bindraban Road Civil Lines (Ludhiana) have changed my name to Pawan Kumar.

I, Anshika Yadav W/O Sham Singh R/O 8 Near Railway Line Shiv Colony Focal Point (Ludhiana) Have Changed My Name To Anshika.

I, Jagdeep Kaur W/O Preet Inder Singh Dhaliwal R/O H. no. 48, Fatehpur Awana Near Sanjha Sahib Gurudwara Barewal, Rajguru Nagar (Ludhiana) have changed my name to Jagdeep Kaur Dhaliwal.

I, Monika Kakkar W/O Vikas Chhabra R/O H.no. 1932/109 St.no. 14, Near SDP College for Woman Gandhi Nagar (Ludhiana) have changed my name to Monika Chhabra.

I, Rachan Rani W/O Sumesh Kumar R/O 555 L, Near Preet Hospital Model Towan (Ludhiana) Have Changed My Name To Rachna Singla.

I, SUMESH GUPTA S/O Subhash Chander R/O 555 L, NEAR PREET HOSPITAL MODEL TOWAN (LUDHIANA) have changed my name to SUMESH KUMAR.

I, Shriya C/O Raman Kumar R/O H.no. 9227, St.no. 1, Sai Enclave Joshi Nagar Haibowal Kalan (Ludhiana) have changed my name to Shriya Nayyar.

I, Sarita W/O Raman Kumar R/O H.no. 9227, St.no. 1, Sai Enclave Joshi Nagar Haibowal Kalan (Ludhiana) have changed my name to Sarita Rani .

I, Mittali Gupta D/O Jatinder Kumar W/O Kashish Bansal R/O H. No. 662 Sector 39, Chandigarh Road (Ludhiana) have changed my name to Mittali Bansal.

I, Sunita W/o Rakesh Verma R/o H.No. 61, Adarsh Nagar, Jalandhar, Punjab have changed my name from Sunita to Sunita Rani. All concerned please note.

I, Rakesh Kumar S/o Pran Nath Verma R/o Hno. 61 Adarsh Nagar Jalandhar, Punjab have changed my name from Rakesh Kumar to Rakesh Verma. All concerned please note.

I, hitherto known as Priyanka D/o Jatinder residing at C-294, Nakodar Road, Wadala, Jalandhar, Punjab, India have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Priyanka Randhawa.

I, Neelam Dhiman W/o Mansih Dhiman R/o Village Kunail, PO. Khanpur, Tehsil Garhshankar, Distt. Hoshiarpur, Punjab have changed my name from Neelam Dhiman to Neelam. Concerned Note.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Sanjeev Kumar (Aadhar No.6522 3485 9366) Son of Chandra Prakash R/o House No. 28, Sector 21A, Chander Lok Colony, VTC Mandi Gobindgarh, District Fatehgarh Sahib,147301, Punjab changed my Name to Sanjeev Kumar Aggarwal for all future purposes.

I hitherto known as PUNPREET KAUR D/o TEJWANT SINGH and W/o MANU NANDA R/o House No. 81-B, Near Hero DMC Heart Hospital, Tagore Nagar, Ludhiana, District Ludhiana, Punjab-141001 India, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as EKTA NANDA. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection.

I Gurdayal Kaur, Dob 01 Jul 1942 Widow Of Army No. 1147409X Ex Hav Late Malkit Singh R/O Village Nim Wala Mour Tehsil Tapa Distt Barnala (Punjab) Have Changed My Name And Date Of Birth To Gurdial Kaur, Dob 15/02/1935 Vide Affidavit Dated 08 Mar 2025

I Bhola Singh S/o Surat Singh Noor R/o Village Noor Kheria, Punjabi University, Tehsil and District Patiala, declare that my daughter Harjit Kaur W/o Rajinder Singh, R/o Village Matthi, District Fatehgarh, is beyond my control. I disinherit my daughter Harjit Kaur W/o Rajinder Singh, from my house and all my movable and immovable property and from any person who has any kind of relationship or does any transaction with her. I or any person in my family has no relationship with her

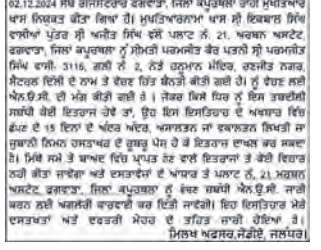
I, Parmjit Kaur W/O Mohinder Singh R/O H No 226/2, Vill Giaspura , Dhandari Kalan Ludhiana Have Declare That Parmjit Kaur And Paramjit Kaur Is One And Same Person

We, Bharti Kapil W/O Rajesh Kapil and Rajesh Kapil S/O Dharampal Kapil R/O H.no. 267, Jhandu Enclave Balloke Road, Near Petrol Pump Haibowal Kalan Bachan Singh Marg Ludhiana declare that our Daughter's Aastha W/O Mohit is out of our control so we disown them from our Movable and immovable properties anybody deal with them at their own risk.

I, Jhanda Ram S/O Bansi Lal R/O H. No. 105 Noorwala Road Near Gurudwara Sukhmani Sahib Anandpuri Colony Ludhiana declare that my son Varun Kumar is out of my control then I disown him from my movable and immovable properties , but now he is in my control so he is my legal heirs in future.

ਮੈਂ, ਸਤਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਮੁਖਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾਸੀ ਮਕਾਨ ਨੰਬਰ 11/2, ਪਠਾਨਕੋਟ ਰੋਡ, ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਬਾਬਾ ਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਗਰ, ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਜਲੰਧਰ, ਪੰਜਾਬ ਸੂਚਿਤ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਮੇਰਾ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਕੁਲਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾ ਉਸਦੀ ਪਤਨੀ ਮਨਦੀਪ ਕੌਰ ਮੇਰੇ ਕਹਿਣੇ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਮਨ ਮਰਜੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਮੈਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀ ਚੱਲ ਵਾ ਅਚੱਲ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਤੋਂ ਬੇਦਖਲ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਲੈਣ ਦੇਣ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਖੁਦ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ। ਮੇਰੀ ਜਾਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਦੀ ਕੋਈ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ। ਸਬੰਧਿਤ ਨੋਟ ਕਰਨ।

ਮੈਂ ਨਛੱਤਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਲਾਭ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾਸੀ ਪਿੰਡ ਬਿਸ਼ਨਪੁਰ ਜੱਟਾਂ ਤਹਿਸੀਲ ਵਾ ਜਿਲਾ ਕਪੂਰਥਲਾ ਹਲਫੀਆ ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਮੇਰਾ ਵੱਡਾ ਲੜਕਾ ਮੰਗਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਦੀ ਪਤਨੀ ਪਰਮਜੀਤ ਕੌਰ ਅਤੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਪੋਤਰਾ ਸਖਜੋਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਮੇਰੀ ਪੋਤਰੀ ਗੁਰਲੀਨ ਕੌਰ ਇਹ ਚਾਰੇ ਹੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਕਹਿਣੇ ਤੇ ਪੂਰੀ ਤਰਾਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਹਨ, ਮੈਂ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਚਾਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀ ਸਾਰੀ ਚਲ, ਅਚੱਲ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਤੋ ਬੇਦਖਲ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਅਜ ਤੋ ਬਾਅਦ ਅਗਰ ਇਹ ਚਾਰੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਨਾਲ ਕਿਸੇ ਤਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਲੈਣ ਦੇਣ ਕਰਣਗੇ ਤਾਂ ਉਸਦੇ ਇਹ ਚਾਰੇ ਖੁਦ ਜ਼ੁੰਮੇਵਾਰ ਹੋਣਗੇ, ਮੇਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਤਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਕੋਈ ਜਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀ ਨਹੀ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ।


ਜਲੰਧਰ ਵਿਕਾਸ ਅਥਾਰਟੀ ਜਲੰਧਰ
ਐਸ.ਸੀ.ਓ.ਨ 41,ਲਾਡੋਵਾਲੀ ਰੋਡ, ਪੰਡਾ ਕੰਪਲੈਕਸ
ਜਨਤਕ ਸੂਚਨਾ
ਹਰ ਆਮ ਅਤੇ ਖਾਸ ਨੂੰ ਸੂਚਿਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪਲਾਟ ਨੰ. 21, ਅਰਬਨ ਅਸਟੇਟ, ਫੇਜ਼ਦੂਜਾ, ਜਿਸਦਾ ਅਪਾਰਟਮੈਂਟ ਦੀ ਮਾਲਕੀ Sh. Rashpal Singh Bahia & Sh. Sandeep Singh Bahia s/o Sh Jaswinder Singh Bahia, R/o 10-B, Model Town, Phagwara ਦੇ ਨਾਮ ਤੇ ਸੁਰੱਖਿਅਤ ਹੈ। ਅਲਾਟੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਸ੍ਰੀਮਤੀ ਜੈਸ ਕੌਰ ਪਤਨੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਜਸਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਉਕਤ ਪਲਾਟ ਲਈ ਮੁਖਤਿਆਰ ਆਮ ਵਜੀਕਾ ਨੰ. 782 ਮਿਤੀ 21.03.2002 ਨੂੰ ਸਬ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਾਰ ਫਗਵਾੜਾ ਰਾਹੀ ਲਿਖਵਾਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਮੁਖਤਿਆਰ ਆਮ ਜੀਆਜੀ ਜੈਸ ਕੌਰ ਪਤਨੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਜਸਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਇਕਬਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ, ਵਾਸੀ ਮਕਾਨ ਨੰ. 10-ਬੀ, ਮਾਡਲ ਟਾਊਨ, ਫਗਵਾੜਾ, ਤਹਿ. ਫਗਵਾੜਾ, ਜਿਸਦਾ ਅਪਾਰਟਮੈਂਟ ਨੂੰ ਵਜੀਕਾ ਨੰ. 2024-25/32/4483 ਮਿਤੀ 02.12.2024 ਸਬ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਾਰ ਫਗਵਾੜਾ, ਜਿਸਦਾ ਅਪਾਰਟਮੈਂਟ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਮੁਖਤਿਆਰ ਧਾਮ ਨਿਯੁਕਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਮੁਖਤਿਆਰਨਾਮਾ ਧਾਮ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਇਕਬਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾਸੀਆਂ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਪਲਾਟ ਨੰ. 21, ਅਰਬਨ ਅਸਟੇਟ, ਫਗਵਾੜਾ, ਜਿਸਦਾ ਅਪਾਰਟਮੈਂਟ ਨੂੰ ਸ੍ਰੀਮਤੀ ਪਰਮਜੀਤ ਕੌਰ ਪਤਨੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਪਰਮਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾਸੀ. 3116, ਗਲੀ ਨੰ 2, ਨੇੜੇ ਹਨੁਮਾਨ ਮੰਦਿਰ, ਰਣਜੀਤ ਨਗਰ, ਸੈਟਰਲ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਦੇ ਨਾਮ ਤੇ ਵੇਚਣ ਹਿੱਤ ਬੈਨਤੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਨੂੰ ਵੇਚਣ ਲਈ ਐਨ.ਓ.ਸੀ. ਦੀ ਮੰਗ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਜੇਕਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਤਬਦੀਲੀ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਕੋਈ ਇਤਰਾਜ਼ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ, ਉਹ ਇਸ ਇਸ਼ਤਿਹਾਰ ਦੇ ਅਖਬਾਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਛੱਪਣ ਦੇ 15 ਦਿਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਅੰਦਰ, ਆਸਤਰਨ ਜਾਂ ਦਸਖਤਨ ਲਿਖਤੀ ਜਾਂ ਜੁਬਾਨੀ ਨਿਮਨ ਹਸਤਾਖਰ ਦੀ ਕੁਰਬ ਪੇਸ਼ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਇਤਰਾਜ਼ ਦਾਖਲ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਮਿਥੇ ਸਮੇ ਤੋ ਬਾਅਦ ਵਿੱਚ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋਏ ਵਾਲੇ ਇਤਰਾਜਾਂ ਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਨਹੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜਾਂ ਦੇ ਆਧਾਰ ਤੇ ਪਲਾਟ ਨੰ. 21, ਅਰਬਨ ਅਸਟੇਟ, ਫੇਜ਼ਦੂਜਾ, ਜਿਸਦਾ ਅਪਾਰਟਮੈਂਟ ਨੂੰ ਵੇਚਣ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਐਨ.ਓ.ਸੀ. ਜਾਰੀ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਅਗਲੇਰੀ ਕਾਰਵਾਈ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ। ਇਹ ਇਸ਼ਤਿਹਾਰ ਮੇਰੇ ਦਸਤਖਤਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਦਫਤਰੀ ਮੋਹਰ ਦੇ ਤਹਿਤ ਜਾਰੀ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ।
ਮਿਤੀਲਖ ਅਫਸਰ,ਜੇਡੀਏ, ਜਲੰਧਰ।

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is inform that Khushwinder Kaur W/o Lachhman Singh has approached LIC HFL to Avail Housing Loan for Construction of House against proposed mortgaged of Plot No. 7, Street No. 8/3, Dashmesh Nagar, Bathinda Road, Near H.P. Petrol Pump, Talwandi Sabo District Bathinda comprised Khasra No. 108//13 (8-0), 14 (8-0), 17 (8-0), 18 (8-0), 23 (8-0), 24 (8-0), 140//3 (8-0), 4/1 (4-13) Khewat/Khatuani No. 29,31/30,32. The previous sale deed No. 2020-21/75/1/4404 dated 09-03-2021 in favour of Inderjit Kaur W/o Sant Lal Dass registered with Sub Registrar Talwandi Sabo of the above said property is reportedly missing. Any Kind of objection on interest of Sale/Gift/Mortgage etc. pertaining to said property may kind of intimated to the undersigned immediately, Latest with 15 days of this publication, otherwise said property would be deemed fit for equitable with our institution.

Harpal Singh Dhillon Advocate
Chamber No.507, District Courts, Bathinda.

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PGIMER and AMRIT Pharmacy initiative steps to check fraudulent activity

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, March 9

The Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) in collaboration with AMRIT Pharmacy has reported a serious incident involving the misuse of a stolen indent book and counterfeit stamps to divert medications intended for patients enrolled in the Ayushman Bharat cashless schemes.

The unauthorized individual was apprehended on February 18, 2025, and subsequently handed over to local police authorities for further investigation.

In response to this fraudulent activity, PGIMER and AMRIT have jointly filed a formal complaint with the relevant law enforcement agencies and have established an internal committee tasked with investigating the matter and providing recommendations to prevent future occurrences.

As part of our commitment to safeguarding the integrity of our healthcare services, PGIMER is implementing the following immediate measures:

Transition to Online Indenting System: The existing manual indenting system for patients under cashless schemes will be discontinued and replaced with a secure online indenting process.

The Computer Section of PGIMER, in collaboration with the internal committee, has developed a solution to be integrated into the existing Hospital Information System (HIS 1). We anticipate this transition will be completed within one week.

Dedicated Service Area for Cashless Beneficiaries: A designated area outside the Emergency department has been identified for AMRIT to exclusively serve beneficiaries of cashless schemes, including Ayushman Bhara

Enhanced Manpower for improved service : PGIMER will work with AMRIT to increase staffing levels to ensure that medications and implants processed through the new online system are delivered directly to patients at their bedside.

FACTORY ROOF COLLAPSE

Two dead, four unharmed; rescue efforts underway to save one trapped

- MAGISTRATE PROBE ORDERED; CASE FILED AGAINST FOUR



INDERJIT SINGH
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, March 9

Ludhiana Deputy Commissioner Jitendra Jorwal on Sunday stated that two workers have died due to the collapse of a factory roof at Focal Point Phase VIII on Saturday evening and four workers were rescued unharmed.

The rescue operations are still ongoing to locate one worker who is reportedly trapped beneath the debris.

Jorwal explained that three teams from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), along with local police, the fire brigade, the Municipal Corporation, and factory departments, have been working at the site for the last 21 hours. They have successfully rescued four workers who were unharmed. However, due to the substantial amount of debris, rescue teams are required to remove it carefully using manual equipment in order to reach the trapped worker.

The Deputy Commissioner further stated that according to the building owner, as many as 29 workers were present in the unit on Saturday morning. At the time of the collapse, only seven workers were inside.

Jorwal also indicated that a magisterial probe, led by the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) East, has been ordered to investigate the exact cause of the incident. Additionally, the Commissionerate Police have also filed a First Information Report (FIR) against four individuals. The government will cover the medical expenses for the injured workers, and adequate compensation will be provided to the families of the deceased.

Revenue Minister Hardeep Singh Mundian also visited the site and emphasized that the top priority is to rescue the trapped worker beneath the debris. Police teams, led by DCP Jaskiranjeet Singh Teja, are assisting the rescue teams at the location.

Sources said repair work was being taken up in the factory when a pillar gave way.

An eyewitness on Saturday said a loud sound was heard before the building caved in.

Due to the substantial amount of debris, rescue teams are removing it carefully using manual equipment, they said.

YUDH NASHIAN VIRUDH

Unprecedented results within 12 days of campaign launch

- 875 FIRS REGISTERED, 1,188 DRUG TRAFFICKERS ARRESTED, RS 35 LAKH SEIZED, AND OVER 68 KG HEROIN CONFISCATED



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, March 9

The AAP government's resolute "Yudh Nashian Virudh" campaign, launched on February 25, has yielded extraordinary results within just 12 days. Harpal Singh Cheema, Punjab's Finance Minister and Chairman of the Anti-Drug Campaign Sub-Committee, shared the impressive statistics at a press conference today, underscoring the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government's commitment to eradicating drugs from Punjab.

Minister Cheema said that so far 875 FIRs have been registered, 1,188 drug traffickers arrested, Rs 35 lakh in drug money seized and narcotics, including 68 kg heroin, 873 kg poppy husk, 42 kg opium, 3.5 kg charas, and 6,74,370 intoxicating tablets are confiscated. Additionally, a widespread awareness campaign is actively mobilizing citizens to contribute towards building a drug-free and prosperous Punjab.

Minister Harpal Singh Cheema strongly criticized previous governments led by the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD)-BJP alliance and the Congress for creating and fostering the drug epidemic in Punjab. He accused these parties of pushing Punjab's youth into drugs as part of a deliberate strategy.

"Before 2007, Punjab had never heard of synthetic drugs like heroin or 'chitta.' It was during the SAD-BJP regime that these drugs entered Punjab and destroyed our youth. Instead of providing jobs and opportunities, they designed a system to trap Punjab's young generation into addiction," said Cheema.

He also lambasted the Congress government, "Captain Amarinder Singh took a false oath in 2017, promising to eradicate drugs within four weeks. Instead, his government deepened ties with drug peddlers. Even during the COVID-19 lockdown, while basic necessities were inaccessible, drug trafficking flourished under Congress rule. This is why the people of Punjab rejected them in 2022."

Rajya Sabha MP Sanjeev Arora announces mega overhaul of power infrastructure in Ludhiana



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, March 9

Ludhiana residents are set to receive significant relief in the upcoming summer season, as announced by Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament (MP) Sanjeev Arora, during a press conference held on Sunday.

In a major development aimed at addressing the long-standing power supply issues, new power transformers will be installed in various parts of the city within the next 90 days. This step has been taken following a comprehensive study conducted by Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL) to identify areas where new transformers are required. Faulty transformers, which have caused repeated disruptions in the past two years, will also be replaced with new and efficient transformers. This move is expected to provide major relief to consumers during the peak summer season when power consumption increases due to the heavy use of air conditioners and other electrical appliances.

Arora informed that on an average, two to three new transformers will be installed daily to ensure an uninterrupted power supply. Additionally, a new Sherpur Grid, costing approximately Rs 65 crore, will also be commissioned shortly to further enhance the power distribution capacity in Ludhiana.

In another significant announcement, 37 new power feeders, each spanning 2 to 2.5 km in length, will be set up across different areas to streamline power distribution and reduce load on existing infrastructure. This step is expected to greatly minimize power breakdowns during the summer season.

Arora also assured the public that the long-standing issue of loose wires and faulty jumpers at various transformers will be resolved promptly. Further, clear directions have been issued to the PSPCL officials to ensure the completion of the work within the stipulated timeframe. To address any grievances from consumers, toll-free number 1912 and the PSPCL mobile app have been made available for lodging complaints. The public has been urged to reach out in case of any power supply issues or faults.

The Rajya Sabha MP also made it clear that strict action will be taken against PSPCL officials found guilty of negligence or dereliction of duty during this crucial period. Additionally, he stated that if there is a shortage of staff in PSPCL, necessary steps will be taken to fill the vacant posts at the earliest to ensure smooth operations.

CMC and Hospital celebrates Women's Day with enthusiasm and empowerment



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, March 9

Christian Medical College and Hospital, Ludhiana, organised a vibrant celebration in honour of women, recognizing their invaluable contributions in healthcare and beyond.

The event brought CMC staff together to celebrate the spirit of womanhood and acknowledge the dedication and achievements of women in various fields.

Dr William Bhatti, Director CMCL, Dr Allen Joseph, Medical Superintendent, Dr Kavita Bhatti, HoD Obs and Gynae, Dr Harjeet Principal CON and Sangeeta Nichols, Nursing Superintendent, graced the event with their presence.

Hospital authorities stated that they were honored to host the distinguished Geetanjali Bakshi, whose presence made this occasion even more meaningful. Bakshi participated in various initiatives and generously donated funds as part of CSR activities dedicated to supporting women's health projects.

Dr William Bhatti, Director CMCL, Dr Allen Joseph, Medical Superintendent, Dr Kavita Bhatti, HoD Obs and Gynae, Dr Harjeet Principal CON and Sangeeta Nichols, Nursing Superintendent, graced the event with their presence.

The event featured insightful talks from the internal speakers who shed light on various aspects of women's well-being.

Free treatment under Ayushman Bharat Scheme for individuals aged 70 and above: Ludhiana Civil Surgeon

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, March 9



Punjab government has decided to further enhance healthcare services by providing free treatment under the Ayushman Bharat - Mukh Mantri Sehat Bima Yojana to all individuals aged 70 years and above.

Civil Surgeon Ludhiana Dr Pradeep Kumar Mahindra stated that in addition to government hospitals, treatment will also be available at empanelled private hospitals. Individuals aged 70 and above can obtain their e-card and avail treatment at any hospital registered under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme. Currently, in Ludhiana district, 18 government and 75 private hospitals are recognized under this scheme.

Deputy Medical Commissioner and Nodal Officer Dr Reema Gogia further elaborated that under the Mukh Mantri Sehat Bima Yojana, each beneficiary is entitled to free treatment up to Rs 5 lakh per year. This initiative will be a significant relief for the elderly and those in need.

To ensure maximum awareness and participation, people are being encouraged to obtain their e-cards at the earliest so that no eligible individual is left out from availing the benefits of this scheme.

BSF-ANTF nab two smugglers with 3.339 kg heroin, drone in Ferozepur

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ferozepur, March 9



In a major crackdown on cross-border smuggling, the Border Security Force (BSF) and Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) seized 3.339 kg of heroin and a drone, arresting two smugglers in Ferozepur.

The arrested smugglers are Joginder Singh (24), son of Jitender Singh, resident of Mahitab Wala, Ferozepur and Jash Singh (25), son of Bhagwan Singh, resident of Mahitab Wala, Ferozepur.

As per operation details, on March 6; security forces detected suspicious activities in border area.

Acting on intelligence inputs, the 182nd BSF battalion conducted a search operation on March 7, leading to the recovery of 640 grams of heroin from the accused, with technical assistance.

Further investigation led to another seizure of 2.699 kg heroin and one drone near the 699 border pillars in the Ferozepur sector on March 8. SP ANTF revealed that these smugglers were managing the consignment through a social media app.

Intensify war against drugs, Fatehgarh Sahib DC exhorts officials

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Fatehgarh Sahib, March 9



If we do not take prompt steps to eliminate the menace of drugs, the coming generations won't forgive us for ruining the lives of youths, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Dr Sona Thind said, while presiding over a meeting with officers of various departments and representatives of NGOs here today called to make the "war on drugs" campaign a mass movement.

Thind directed all the officers to prepare an action plan to make Fatehgarh Sahib, the land of martyrs, drug-free by involving Panchayats, Civic bodies, social and religious organisations. She said the "war" has now reached a crucial phase and if this campaign continues with full force it will soon sound the death knell of drugs from the district and the state. The DC directed all the SDMs to personally monitor the awareness campaign to make it result-oriented. She said a mass awareness movement should be launched in schools and colleges.

Thind instructed the SDMs to check the private drug de-addiction centers running at the sub-division level from time to time and directed the drug inspector to check the medical stores in collaboration with the police department and take action as per the law against the owners of the medical stores selling drugs.

Woman ends life, husband held for abetment, mother-in-law booked

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, March 9

Ludhiana Police have registered a case against a 34-year-old woman's in-laws on abetment charges after she ended her life Jassowal village of Dehlon area, officials said. Police said the woman's husband was arrested. The woman's kin said in the complaint that she was being harassed by her husband and mother-in-law, which led her to taking the extreme step.

The woman was married for the past 14 years, and the couple have an 11-year-old son and an eight-year-old daughter. At the time of the incident, the children had gone for tuition, and the woman and the accused were home. Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Karamjeet Singh, Investigating Officer from Dehlon Police Station, said that deceased's brother alleged her husband and mother-in-law used to harass her over petty issues such as her dressing sense or cooking.

European Sikh representatives reject SGPC's decision and demand transparent appointments of Jathedar

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Belgium, March 9

We, the representatives of Gurdwaras across Europe, strongly condemn the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) backed Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) for prematurely and arbitrarily removing Jathedar of Akal Takht Giani Raghbir Singh and Jathedar of Takht Kesgarh Sahib Giani Sultan Singh by the Executive Committee (EC) of the SGPC without due consideration for the profound religious significance of the position of Jathedar, and instead, the decision is driven by political motives aimed at advancing their own interests.

On Sunday, representatives from Gurdwaras across Europe held meetings in their respective Gurdwaras which was followed by an online meeting, where they unanimously rejected the EC's decision to remove the two Jathedars. They denounced the earlier decision to terminate Jathedar of Takht Damdama Sahib Giani Harpreet Singh .

Furthermore, we urge the SGPC to establish a transparent and honorable process for the appointment and removal of Jathedars, in consultation with Sikh organizations worldwide.

The actions of the SGPC which is predominantly composed of members from the SAD are politically motivated and designed to serve the interests of the Badal family while undermining the esteemed status and authority of the Jathedars.

We demand that the SGPC reinstate the Jathedars to their rightful positions and we also demand from SAD to refrain from interfering in religious matters.

Furthermore, we urge the SGPC to establish a transparent and honorable process for the appointment and removal of Jathedars, in consultation with Sikh organizations worldwide.

Woman employee of Aam Aadmi Clinic robbed

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Tarn Taran, March 9

The Sarhali police have booked three unidentified miscreants who robbed an employee of the Aam Aadmi Clinic in Ratta Gudda village who was on her way back home on Wednesday after shutting the clinic. Gitanjali, the victim employee, a resident of local Mohalla Ganga Singh Nagar, in her complaint to the Sarhali police, said that she along with her colleague was on way back home on a moped.

When they reached near Gurdwara Baba Wisakha Singh, Dadehar Sahib, three car-borne robbers suddenly appeared from the rear. The robbers threatened her by pointing sharp-edged weapons and took away her purse. They managed to flee from the spot. Gitanjali stated in her complaint that her purse contained Rs 4,500 in cash besides three mobiles, an official tab, ATM cards, and other documents.

The robbers threatened her by pointing sharp-edged weapons and took away her purse. They managed to flee from the spot. Gitanjali stated in her complaint that her purse contained Rs 4,500 in cash besides three mobiles.

Over 5.8 lakh intoxicating pills seized in Fazilka, 2 held

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Fazilka, March 9



The Fazilka police recovered over 5.8 lakh intoxicating tablets from a house that was being used as a godown by a chemist shop owner, the biggest such seizure in the area so far.

A three-member special investigation team has also been formed to unearth the supply chain. The police have arrested shop owner Charanpreet Singh and his accomplice Jatinder Singh. The house was located behind a chemist shop at Jhuge Jawar Singh Wala in Jalalabad subdivision.

Fazilka SSP Varinder Singh Brar said they recovered 5,68,200 habit-forming pregabalin capsules and 18,150 tramadol tablets.

The medicines are used to treat body aches and anxiety issues, and can't be given without a doctor's prescription.

Their intake in excess leads to intoxication due to which they are used by addicts as a cheaper alternative to drugs. Brar said the tablets were concealed in boxes kept in the house.

The SSP said the tablets were supplied by factories based in Himachal Pradesh's Baddi and Delhi.

bright Punjab Express

Empowering women

The Government of Punjab led by the Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann is launching two new initiatives aimed at empowering the women. The Chief Minister has said that the state Government will open two brainstorming centres at Amritsar and Mohali for students to share business ideas on the pattern of Speakers Platform at Munich in Germany.

The state government has already introduced Business Blasters initiative at school level for idea sharing and Rs 11 crore has been disbursed to the students. He said that the sole motive is to provide platforms for brainstorming to the students so new business ideas can prop up. On the same pattern the state government is going to set up Brainstorming Centres for new business ideas at Amritsar and Mohali.

He went on to point out that the great Sikh Gurus have kept the women in high esteem. He also expressed concern over the social evil of female foeticide which was still prevalent in the society but needs to be changed. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that the girls have excelled in every arena of life and have emerged as role models with their hard work and success. These girls have made their parents, society and the state proud by achieving success in even those areas which were considered fiefdom of men.

The Chief Minister said that the state government has made concerted efforts for empowering women in the state. He said that his party has made 11 women as MLAs adding that eight officers have been appointed Deputy Commissioners and three women have been appointed Senior Superintendent of Police. Bhagwant Singh Mann further said that One lady has been appointed Commissioner of Police, 19 women have been appointed ADCs and Seven have been appointed Secretaries of various departments.

The Chief Minister further said that required amendments have been made in the rules for changing the physical criteria for recruitment of ladies in Fire Fighting staff. He said that none of the previous governments had bothered to change these rules because they were least bothered about the people and their problems. Bhagwant Singh Mann announced that Punjab will be the first state in the country to recruit girls in the fire fighting staff.

Replying to a student's query about introducing technology in the state, he said that the state government is already integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) across various sectors. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that the State Government has introduced AI in policing, agriculture, finance and other fields to ensure efficiency and transparency.

The Chief Minister said that with these advancements, the state government aims to rope in experts to the forefront to run the affairs of the state effectively. Encouraging students to embrace the digital era, he said that this is the era of digitalization and Punjab is moving forward with a vision to become a leader in technological innovation. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that the main Focus of state government is on employment-based education and to develop skills that align with the demands of the modern world.

The Chief Minister underlined the importance of skill development adding that the education should not be confined just to degrees rather it should be about acquiring skills that make you employable and capable of contributing to society. Describing girls as "creators", Bhagwant Singh Mann hailed them for their invaluable contributions to society adding that Girls are not just achievers; they are creators. He said that God has blessed them with the unique ability to create, nurture and transform the world so it is our bounden duty to ensure they have every opportunity to flourish.

SPIRITUAL WORLD



#SheBuildsBharat: A Vision for Women-led Development



ANNPURNA DEVI, UNION MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Today as the world celebrates the 50th anniversary of International Women's Day, I want to reflect on how India is embarking on an inspiring journey from the era of women development to a new dawn of women-led development. This transformation marks a crucial distinction: development that includes women is an essential step that provides women with access to opportunities, services, and spaces, ensuring equality.

However, women-led development goes beyond inclusion—it empowers women to take the reins of leadership, drive innovation, and shape policies from the forefront.

There has been a paradigm shift in the notion of the women empowerment, one that will go down in history as India being a nation that emphatically declared women at the center of development, shifting power dynamics so they can drive change themselves. For all levels of government now, women are not just passive beneficiaries of policies and programs but are the active change makers. India envisions a future where women are at the heart of decision-making, leadership, and execution of policies, businesses, and community initiatives, not only giving strength to the empowerment of our nation but contributing to what our PM advocates for "when women prosper, the world prospers". The progress of women gives strength to the empowerment of our nation.

India has always cherished and upheld its rich traditions of female leadership, deeply ingrained in its cultural and historical tapestry. In the ancient Vedic period, Gargi and Maitreyi were philosophers who contributed to the Vedas, participated as equals in debates with other philosophers, and served as symbols to how educational opportunities were available to women even in those times. Women like Rani Lakshmibai and Kittur Rani Chennamma symbolized India's regional diversity in its freedom movement. Today, our Honorable President, Shrimati Droupadi Murmu holds the distinction of being the first person belonging to a tribal community and the second woman to hold the office. Our Chandrayaan and Mangalyaan missions were successful largely because of India's stellar female scientists. They led these positions because 43% of India's graduates in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) courses are women. The worldwide share of female STEM graduates is around 30%. Today, women are leading in business, medicine, and the armed forces. But the change isn't restricted to these fields.

Millions of grassroot women are being empowered across India. The National Rural Livelihoods Mission has nearly 11.5 million Lakhpati Didis, women who are members of self-help groups (SHGs) and have an annual household income above Rs. 1,00,000. The Drone Didi scheme aims to provide drones to 15000 selected Women SHGs during the period from 2024-25 to 2025-2026, to apply liquid fertilizers and pesticides to fields, spray herbicides, manage water resources and irrigation by identifying areas that need water and analyze soil quality and fertility. Since its inception, over 69% of the loans provided under the PM Mudra Yojana – the government's collateral free credit scheme – have gone to women. Nearly 80 percent women in India have a bank account that they operate themselves. Programs like Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) and Jal Jeevan Mission have benefitted nearly 100 million and 122 million households, providing access to toilets and tap water, respectively, benefiting millions of women. Under the Prime Minister's rural housing program, 74 percent of houses have been registered either solely or jointly in women's names. The government's program to distribute free gas cylinders has helped 103 million women get access to smoke free kitchens. As of May 2024, over 1.4 million women were elected members of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), which includes the position of Sarpanch. This makes up 46% of the total elected representatives of PRIs. Women Sarpanches have been involved in projects to improve water, solar power, paved roads, toilets, and banks in their villages.

To enable women with voice and agency to lead, an extra push is required. Our government has demonstrated commitment to this agenda through landmark legislations such as the Women's Reservation Bill that guarantees 33% of all seats in the directly elected Lok Sabha and State Assemblies. The amendment to the Maternity Benefit Act guarantees women with paid maternity leave for up to 26 weeks. Initiatives like the Women's Helpline and SHe-Box provide support to women in distress while the Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI) aims to setup 1000 Working Women Hostels across the country thereby fostering economic independence.

The Honorable Prime Minister's clarion call for women led development during India's G20 presidency has been endorsed by Brazil during its presidency in 2024. It is our nation's commitment towards harnessing the full potential of our women, recognizing their invaluable contribution, and celebrating their role as leaders in the journey towards progress and prosperity. Let's come together and unite for #AccelerateAction, leading the charge to shape the future of India. Join hands, embrace change, and be a part of this inspiring journey towards progress and empowerment.

Scientists link new gene to high Parkinson's disease risk

A team of scientists has revealed a breakthrough discovery, linking genetic variants in the gene ITSN1 to a significantly elevated risk of Parkinson's disease, a neurodegenerative condition that affects nearly 2 per cent of adults older than 65 years.



The work, led by an international team of researchers at Baylor College of Medicine, AstraZeneca and the Jan and Dan Duncan Neurological Research Institute at Texas Children's Hospital, could pave the way for new treatments aimed at slowing or preventing Parkinson's disease progression.

Parkinson's disease, the second most common neurodegenerative disorder, still has no cure.

"To tackle this unmet need, we analysed genetic data from nearly 500,000 UK Biobank participants and discovered that individuals carrying rare ITSN1variants that impair the gene's normal function face up to a tenfold higher risk of developing Parkinson's disease," said author Dr Ryan S Dhindsa, assistant professor of pathology and immunology at Baylor College of Medicine.

These findings, published in Cell Reports, were subsequently validated across three independent cohorts comprising more than 8,000 cases and 400,000 controls.

Notably, ITSN1 carriers trended toward earlier age of disease onset.

What makes this discovery so significant is the exceptional magnitude of the effect of ITSN1 in increasing Parkinson's risk, especially when compared with variants in other well-established, genes such as LRRK2 and GBA1.

"We focus on rare genetic mutations because they often confer large effects on disease risk that reveal critical disease mechanisms. These genetic discoveries not only deepen our understanding of Parkinson's biology but also unveil promising new targets for therapeutic intervention," Dhindsa explained.

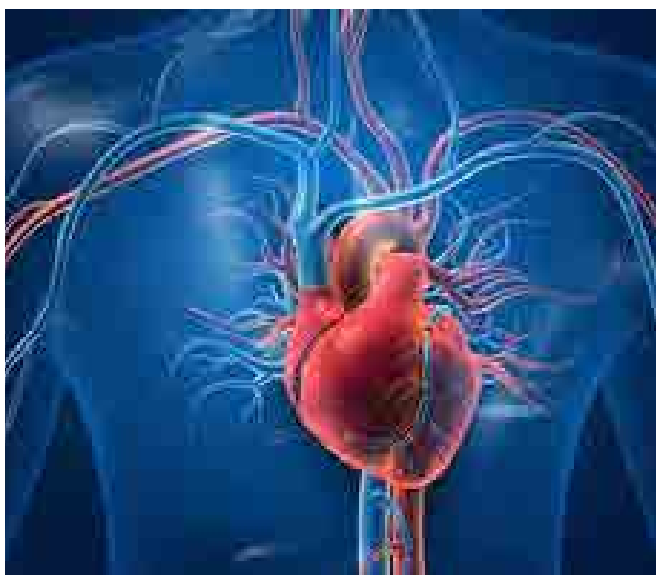
ITSN1 plays an important role in how neurons send messages to each other – a process called synaptic transmission – making it particularly relevant to Parkinson's disease, a condition in which disruption of nerve signals leads to the typical symptoms of impaired gait and balance, tremors and rigidity.

"We also showed in fruit flies that reducing ITSN1 levels worsens Parkinson's-like features, including the ability to climb. We plan to extend these investigations to stem cell and mouse models," Dhindsa said.

The study highlights ITSN1 as a promising therapeutic target and underscores the value of large-scale genetic sequencing in identifying rare mutations that contribute to complex neurological disorders. **IANS**

Breakthrough research offers hope for treatment of ischemic heart failure

A global team of researchers has reported a groundbreaking discovery in cardiac regeneration that offers new hope for the treatment of ischemic heart failure.



Published in the journal npj Regenerative Medicine, the study by Baylor College of Medicine in the US, the QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute in Brisbane, Australia, and collaborating institutions reveals a novel approach to promoting cardiomyocyte proliferation.

"When the heart cannot replace injured cardiomyocytes with healthy ones, it becomes progressively weaker, a condition leading to heart failure. In this study, we investigated a new way to stimulate cardiomyocyte proliferation to help the heart heal," said Dr Riham Abouleisa, assistant professor in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Baylor.

Previous studies showed that calcium plays an important role in cardiomyocyte proliferation.

In the current study, the team explored how modulating calcium influx in cardiomyocytes would affect their proliferation.

"We found that preventing calcium influx in cardiomyocytes enhances the expression of genes involved in cell proliferation," Abouleisa said.

"We prevented calcium influx by inhibiting L-Type Calcium Channel (LTCC), a protein that regulates calcium in these cells. Our findings suggest that LTCC could be a target for developing new therapies to induce cardiomyocyte proliferation and regeneration," she informed.

The study demonstrates that both pharmacological and genetic inhibition of LTCC can induce cardiomyocyte replication and that this occurs by modulating the activity of calcineurin, a known regulator of cardiomyocyte proliferation.

This innovative approach showed promising results both in human cardiac slices grown in the lab and in live animals.

The multi-continent collaborations led to a discovery that can revolutionise the use of current medicines that regulate calcium entry to the cells, such as Nifedipine, in heart failure patients, said Dr Tamer Mohamed, co-author and director of Baylor College of Medicine's Laboratory for Cardiac Regeneration.

The research highlights the importance of targeting calcium signaling pathways to unlock the regenerative potential of the heart and opens new avenues for developing cardiac regenerative therapies, potentially transforming the treatment landscape for patients suffering from heart failure. **IANS**

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NEWSBRIEFS

Kerala mass murder case: Police to probe financial dealings of accused's mother

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: The Kerala Police's Special Investigation Team (SIT) has decided to interrogate Shemi, the mother of Affan, the prime accused in the brutal murder of five people in Venjaramoodu, Thiruvananthapuram, on February 24. The decision comes after Affan claimed during interrogation that his mother was responsible for the family's massive debt of Rs 65 lakh, which he alleged led to his violent action. According to police sources, the family fell into a severe financial crisis after 2021. Investigators suspect that Shemi played a key role in handling the family's financial affairs, borrowing heavily from both relatives and local loan sharks. **IANS**

Heavy rain forecast for next four days in TN

CHENNAI: The Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC) has predicted heavy rainfall across multiple districts of Tamil Nadu for four days, starting March 10. The affected districts include Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli, Tenkasi, Thoothukudi, Virudhunagar, and Ramanathapuram. In response to the forecast, the state government is considering declaring holidays for schools and colleges in these districts on March 10. Authorities have urged residents to take necessary precautions and remain indoors during the heavy rain. Officials will closely monitor the situation and provide updates as needed. Citizens are advised to stay informed through local news and weather alerts. **IANS**

Noida has become a city of opportunities for youth: Yogi Adityanath

NOIDA/GREATER NOIDA, MARCH 9



Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath today said Noida has made a name on the global front with the opening up of IT firms and data centre projects in the city, crediting Prime Minister Narendra Modi for reshaping the state's economic and industrial landscape.

The CM made the remarks while laying the foundation stone for a number of projects in Gautam Budh Nagar district, including that for US tech firm Microsoft's new research and development facility in Noida Sector 145. He also inaugurated a number of ventures in Noida and Greater Noida, including two projects in Sector 132 — a Sify data centre and an MAQ artificial intelligence centre.

"Noida has made a name on the global front with the opening up of IT firms and Data centre projects as it has not only created thousands of jobs but also business opportunities. Today Noida alone makes at least 70% of the mobiles in the country, creating history by becoming the city of opportunities for the youth," he said.

"The Noida centre of Microsoft will be the company's largest research and development facility in India, further solidifying the city's role in the country's growing technology landscape. This new hub is expected to boost India's technical ecosystem, contribute to advancements in artificial intelligence, cloud computing, and cybersecurity, and help realise Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for a digitally empowered nation," he said.

To be sure, Noida already is home to a Microsoft office, and the addition of this 15-acre centre will further expand the company's presence in the region. **AGENCIES**

Life crippled in Manipur's Kuki-Zo areas due to indefinite shutdown

IMPHAL, MARCH 9



Normal life was badly affected in Kuki-Zo areas of Manipur on Sunday due to the indefinite shutdown called by the Kuki-Zo Council (KZC), the apex body of the tribals, to protest the resumption of the bus services between state capital Imphal and the hill districts.

Ginza Vualzong, spokesman of the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF), a constituent of the KZC, claimed that the indefinite shutdown is total and successful in Kangpokpi, Churachandpur, Tengnoupal, and Pherzawl districts.

However, police officials said that the shutdown badly affected normal life in Kangpokpi district and partially affected the other Kuki-Zo-dominated districts.

The KZC activists and volunteers put up blockades on major highways while shops, markets and business establishments were closed in Kangpokpi, Churachandpur, and other districts.

The KZC, in a statement, also said that during the movement of buses from Imphal to tribal-dominated districts on Saturday, violent confrontations erupted in numerous locations between security forces escorting the vehicles and the protesters.

A police official in Imphal said that a huge contingent of security forces, comprising both Central and state forces, have been deployed on Sunday in Kangpokpi, Churachandpur, Tengnoupal, Pherzawl and Jiribam districts. **PTI**

Criminal carrying reward of ₹1 lakh killed in encounter in UP's Mathura

NEW DELHI, MARCH 9



A wanted criminal carrying a reward of Rs one lakh was killed in an encounter with police in Uttar Pradesh's Mathura here early Sunday, police said.

In an operation led by Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Mathura, the accused, identified as Fati alias Assad, sustained bullet injuries. He was rushed to a hospital, where doctors declared him dead.

SSP Shailesh Pandey said the police had received an intelligence input, following which the operation was held.

"We had received information that he was seen in a house near Krishna Kunj colony along with his three accomplices. We identified the place, and when we rounded it, they fired indiscriminately. In retaliation, he was injured. We took him to hospital where he was declared dead by doctors. His three accomplices managed to flee. A combing operation has been launched to nab them," he said.

The SSP said Fati was the leader of the Chhaimar gang and was wanted in over three dozen cases of loot, dacoity, and murder in multiple states, including Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. The slain criminal was originally from Gadmukteswar in Hapur, the SSP said. He had 18 cases registered against him in different police stations in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir. **IANS**

DMK calls for nationwide opposition to delimitation exercise

CHENNAI, MARCH 9



The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) has decided to mobilise political parties across India to oppose the Union government's proposed delimitation exercise.

The decision was taken during a meeting of DMK Parliamentarians at the party headquarters, 'Anna Arivalayam', under the leadership of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK president M. K. Stalin.

According to sources within the party, CM Stalin assigned key ministers to visit different states and engage with regional political parties, urging them to join a joint action committee that will scrutinise the implications of the delimitation proposal.

State IT Minister Palanivel Thiaga Rajan has been tasked with reaching out to Kerala, while Ministers EV Velu, Kanimozhi Karunanidhi, and TRB Rajaa will travel to Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, and Odisha, respectively.

Additionally, DMK MPs have been directed to collaborate with other opposition MPs in Delhi to mount a strong challenge against the delimitation exercise in Parliament.

The party has consistently voiced concerns about the issue, alongside its opposition to the Union government's three-language policy.

The DMK plans to raise multiple issues in the upcoming parliamentary session. Apart from delimitation and the three-language policy, the party will focus on the delay in the allocation of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) funds, the denial of flood relief assistance, and the non-disbursement of funds under the Samagra Shiksha scheme due to Tamil Nadu's rejection of the National Education Policy (NEP). **PTI**

Telangana CM cries foul over Central funds, BJP says pressure of fulfilling guarantees

HYDERABAD, MARCH 9



As the pressure to fulfil election promises continued to build on the Congress government in Telenagana, its tussle with the Centre over fund allocations and disbursal has also increased.

A political slugfest between the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) over the projects pending with the Centre and the claims that it is not releasing adequate funds has erupted in the state.

Recently, Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy alleged that Union Minister for Coal and Mines G. Kishan Reddy was blocking the projects. The Chief Minister made the allegation on February 26 after meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi to seek the Centre's approval for the key infrastructure projects.

When Kishan Reddy threw a challenge to Revanth Reddy to prove his allegation, the latter claimed that the Union Minister from the state blocked the Centre's approval for the second phase of the Hyderabad Metro.

The Chief Minister alleged that Kishan Reddy did not want him to get the credit for the project. Revanth Reddy also claimed that the Union Minister was trying to please his secret friend and former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao. **PTI**

DELHI/NCR

Delhi Assembly Speaker starts allotting offices to MLAs in their constituencies

NEW DELHI, MARCH 9



Delhi Legislative Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta has ordered allocation of offices to the newly-elected Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) in their respective constituencies, an official said on Sunday.

Speaker Gupta said, "Providing our elected representatives with the necessary resources to serve the people efficiently is our top priority."

He said constituency offices serve as a crucial link between MLAs and the public, facilitating direct communication and problem-solving.

"We have taken the necessary steps to ensure that all MLAs receive their offices in a timely manner," said the Speaker, highlighting that the step aims to enable MLAs to maintain seamless communication with their constituents.

As per the protocol, constituency offices allocated to former MLAs were vacated following the 2025 Delhi Assembly elections and the process of assigning offices to new legislators has commenced, according to a statement issued by the Assembly Secretariat.

Speaker Gupta emphasised that the allocation of MLA offices is a significant step towards strengthening good governance and enhancing democratic processes. **IANS**

Speaking for herself: Delhi BJP MP hits back at Atishi over 'fraud' allegations

NEW DELHI, MARCH 9



Delhi BJP MP Yogender Chandolia on Sunday strongly criticised AAP MLA Atishi over her remarks against the BJP government for delaying the implementation of the Mahila Samridhi Yojana in the national capital.

Responding to Atishi's allegations, Chandolia told IANS, "She is probably speaking for herself. She is not speaking for the BJP government because the AAP government has been in power in Punjab for almost three years. There, a promise was made to give Rs 1,000 to women, which they have not received yet. She should talk about that first."

Atishi had earlier slammed the BJP-led Delhi government for failing to fulfil its promise of depositing Rs 2,500 in the accounts of eligible women by March 8, accusing the party of misleading voters with "lies" and "fraud."

Her criticism came a day after Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta approved the scheme in a Cabinet meeting, calling it "Modi ki Guarantee." The scheme aims to provide Rs 2,500 in monthly financial aid to eligible women, particularly those from families with an annual income of up to Rs 3 lakh, with a special focus on Below Poverty Line (BPL) sections.

Chandolia defended the BJP government, saying, "The Prime Minister had pledged that we will give Rs 2,500 to poor women. The whole plan is ready for the occasion of International Women's Day. Rs 51 crore has been allocated, and the portal will be launched soon. The AAP should wait and see. Did Kejriwal implement such a scheme when he was Chief Minister? Did you (Atishi) do it?"

He further attacked the AAP, saying, "The AAP was in power for over 10 years and did not do any work for women, poor, youth, or children. They only engage in politics of allegations and counter-allegations. There is nothing left for them except this."

Under the Mahila Samridhi Yojana, beneficiaries must be residents of Delhi for the past five years and have a bank account linked to their Aadhaar number.

The registration process for beneficiaries will take place online, with a multi-level verification system in place to prevent fraudulent claims, similar to the Union government's Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) model.

Despite BJP's assurances, Atishi maintained that no money had been credited to beneficiaries' accounts by the promised deadline of March 8, nor had any registration process begun. **IANS**

Fraud, lies: Atishi slams BJP over delay in Mahila Samridhi Yojana implementation

NEW DELHI, MARCH 9



AAP MLA and former Delhi Chief Minister Atishi on Sunday criticised the BJP-led government in Delhi for failing to implement the Mahila Samridhi Yojana, accusing the party of misleading voters with "lies" and "fraud" to win elections.

The criticism came a day after Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta approved the scheme, which aims to provide Rs 2,500 monthly financial assistance to eligible women. The scheme, branded as "Modi ki Guarantee," was passed in a Cabinet meeting chaired by CM Gupta on Saturday.

The scheme is designed to benefit 15-20 lakh women between the ages of 18 and 60 from families with an annual income of up to Rs 3 lakh, particularly those from Below Poverty Line (BPL) sections.

According to the eligibility criteria, beneficiaries must have been residents of Delhi for the past five years and possess a bank account linked to their Aadhaar number.

Beneficiaries are expected to register online, with a software system ensuring multi-level verification to prevent fraudulent claims, similar to the Union government's Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) programme.

However, Atishi lashed out at the BJP government, claiming that despite the March 8 deadline set by the party, no money had been credited to beneficiaries' accounts, nor had any registration process commenced. **IANS**

UP Police remove illegal loudspeakers from Sambhal mosque, Imam booked

NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

Loudspeakers of a mosque in Uttar Pradesh's Sambhal district were removed for violation of rules related to control of noise emanating from places of worship, a police official said on Sunday.

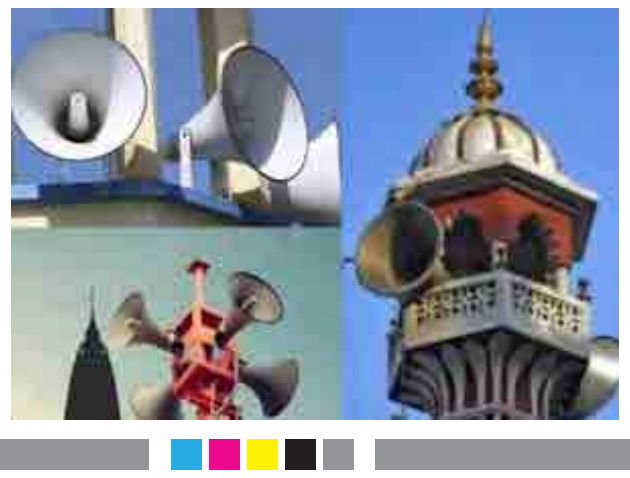
The loudspeakers were removed from Mosque Punjabian for issuing messages at very high volume, said a police official from Chandosi Police station.

The FIR said since the loudspeaker's volume was found to be violative of the guidelines issued by the Allahabad High Court, the policemen on patrol removed the horn-shaped loudspeakers of the mosque.

The incident was reported by beat constable Jitender Kumar on Saturday around 7 p.m., said the FIR.

The name of the mosque's Imam, Shakeel Shamsi, son of Abdul Shamad Shamsi, was also mentioned in the FIR.

The FIR was registered under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Sections 223 (Disobedience to order duly promulgated by a public servant, 270 (Public nuisance) and 292 (punishment for public nuisance. Provisions of noise pollution law were also added in the



FIR. In 2022, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath-led Uttar Pradesh government issued a set of guidelines to restrict the use of loudspeakers at places of worship.

The move, which came in the backdrop of communal violence during religious processions, resulted in the removal of over 3,000 illegal loudspeakers from places of worship belonging to all religions.

The rules related to limiting the use of loudspeakers say that these must be installed within the premises of a shrine. All loudspeakers installed outside the premises are liable to be removed by the authorities.

In January this year, the Allahabad High Court observed that religious places are primarily for offering prayers to the divine and the use of loudspeakers cannot be claimed as a matter of right. Showing zero tolerance for the nuisance created by the misuse of loudspeakers, Justice Ashwani Kumar Mishra and Justice Donadi Ramesh made these observations while dismissing a writ petition filed by a resident of Pilibhit district seeking direction to state authorities to permit the installation of loudspeakers at mosques. **IANS**

Women will have the biggest contribution in making India a developed nation by 2047: CM

RAJENDRA KHATRY
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, March 9



Haryana Chief Minister, Nayab Singh Saini while addressing a state level Mahila Samman Samaroh organised on the occasion of International Women's Day in Panchkula on Saturday said that women play the most crucial role in the progress of any society. When women progress, they uplift their families, strengthen society, and drive the nation's growth, he said.

Nayab Singh Saini expressed his firm belief and pride that in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a Developed India by 2047, the greatest contribution will come from the mothers, sisters, and daughters of this nation.

Legislative Assembly Speaker, Harvinder Kalyan, Women and Child Development Minister, Smt. Shruti Choudhary, and Health Minister, Kumari Arti Singh Rao also present during the programme.The Chief Minister while extending his greetings on International Women's Day, announced several key initiatives for women's welfare, these include increase in the leave granted to the women employees on special days.

Nayab Singh Saini announced that regular women government employees in Haryana will now receive 25 annual leaves instead of 20. Similarly, women employees deployed under Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam (HKRN) were previously entitled to 10 annual leaves, but now, they will receive one additional leave every month, increasing their total leave entitlement to 22 days per year.

The CM also announced that women in Haryana will be provided interest-free loans of up to Rs.1 lakh to establish dairy units. He shared that under the Mahila Kirshi Virdhi Yojana, the government is committed to providing interest-free loans to women from farming families for activities such as livestock rearing, beekeeping, poultry farming, dairy farming, and other agricultural enterprises.

Nayab Singh Saini virtually inaugurated 44 new Anganwadi centers across the state and laid the foundation stone for Bal Bhavan in Charkhi Dadri. He also launched three key portals to enhance governance and welfare services, namely the Domestic Violence Complaint Registration and Monitoring portal to streamline reporting and tracking of domestic violence cases, the MIS Portal for Aapki Beti-Hamari Beti to improve the scheme's implementation, and the Supplementary Nutrition programme (SNP).

The Chief Minister said that today is not only a day to honour women but also to express our gratitude towards them. He emphasised that if we see the world as beautiful, empowered, and strong today, it is largely due to the contributions of women. Nayab Singh Saini said that the theme of International Women's Day 2025 is 'For ALL Women and Girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment.'

The Chief Minister said that empowering women by making them self-reliant is both a priority and a resolve. He said that over the last 10 years, under the leadership of Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, the atmosphere towards women in the country has transformed, and respect for women has increased.

Civic polls in Panipat, 52.2 pc turnout recorded

CHANDIGARH, MARCH 9



Polling was held on Sunday to elect the mayor and 26 councillors for the Panipat Municipal Corporation in Haryana, with 52.2 per cent of the over four lakh eligible voters exercising their franchise, officials said.

Polling began across 365 booths at 8 am and continued till 6 pm. A poll percentage of 52.2 was recorded in the elections.

Four candidates are in the fray for the mayor's post, while 103 contested for the 26 councillors' seats in the Panipat Municipal Corporation.

Polls to elect mayors and ward members in seven municipal corporations were held on March 2, including in Gurugram, Manesar, Faridabad, Hisar, Rohtak, Karnal and Yamunanagar.

The bypolls for the mayoral posts in Ambala and Sonipat and the elections for presidents and ward members in 21 municipal committees were also held on March 2.

The votes will be counted on March 12, and the results for all the municipal corporations will be declared the same day.

Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini has exuded confidence that the BJP would win the civic polls, saying that work would be done three times faster after the formation of a "triple-engine" government, a reference to the saffron party being in power at the Centre, the state and the civic bodies.

The Congress also appealed to the voters to elect the party candidates with a full majority. The grand old party, out of office in Haryana for more than 10 years, is looking to turn around its electoral fortunes in the civic polls. PTI

Towards Equality, Emancipation, and Empowerment: O P Jindal Global University hosts national convention on Women

SONIPAT, MARCH 9



To mark the International Women's Day (IWD 2025) O.P. Jindal Global University is hosting a three-day national convention on Women in India titled "Towards Equality, Emancipation, and Empowerment", at its campus in Sonipat.

The Convention, which began on March 8 and will go on till March 10, brings together diverse and distinguished voices on women and gender spanning across fields of academia, industry, civil society, public administration, media, arts, and literature. In her keynote address, the Guest of Honour, former Supreme Court judge and current Chairperson of the Press Council of India, Justice Ranjana P. Desai said: "It is the duty of every citizen of India to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women. Supreme Court, I can say that I was a part of that institution once, there are several judgments which have brought this women's right to equality, in effect, judgments that women and then there are several legislations like women's right to equality. So, there is a robust legal favour which can help women receive enforcement of their right to equality."

"We can't deny that women in India were victims of these restrictions imposed by society. These restrictions were the outcome of long cultural interpretation. Earlier, women have been vulnerable and dependent on men. A lack of education further increased their dependence. Today we have women in all spheres: as judges and lawyers, entrepreneurs, Chief Ministers, soon the first Indian female Supreme Court Chief Justice, and even astronauts! We have had women Prime Ministers across all South Asian Countries. But we have to make sure that our sisters in the villages and rural areas are not left behind and it is our duty to ensure that they also get access."

Delivering the inaugural address on the theme "Equality, Emancipation and Empowerment", Jindal Foundation Chairperson Shallu Jindal said: "We must recognise and celebrate the immense contributions of women to our nation's history, economy and society that has enabled us to visualise a world of equality, emancipation and empowerment. The freedom struggle was not just a fight for independence from colonial rule. It was also a fight for the recognition of women's voices in shaping the nation leaders and that women are equal partners in nation-building. PTI

Japanese woman found dead in Gurugram, falls from 14th floor balcony

GURUGRAM, MARCH 9

A Japanese woman was found dead after supposedly having fallen from a balcony on the 14th floor here, police said on Sunday.

The woman was identified as Madoko Thamano (34), a resident of Japan. She had come to Gurugram with her husband in September last year, police said. She was living in a society here with her husband and two children.

The incident occurred on Friday morning when the police received a call regarding a woman's blood-soaked body being found lying on the ground, a senior police officer said.

The body was handed over to the family after post-mortem and further investigation into the matter is underway, police said.

"The embassy has also been informed about the incident", said Inspector Sandeep Kumar, SHO of sector 53 police station. PTI

HIMACHAL/J&K

JP Nadda's two-day visit to Himachal beneficial, says state BJP chief Bindal

SHIMLA, MARCH 9



Himachal Pradesh BJP President Rajeev Bindal on Sunday said the party's national President J.P Nadda's two-day visit to the state was extremely beneficial. "While Jagat Prakash Nadda and Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji have played a major role in developing All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Bilaspur, starting from day one. Scans like PET scan, through which diseases like cancer are detected, is the first such machine which was installed in a government institute of Himachal and dedicated to the people," Bindal said in a statement here. He said the 250-bed Vishram Sadan is being built at a cost of Rs 13.57 crore on the campus of AIIMS that will help the poor and needy, requiring shelter during the treatment of patients.

He said Nadda also laid the foundation stone for a highly sophisticated lab in terms of virology at a cost of approximately Rs 14 crore. "Jagat Prakash Nadda's contribution in this direction brought a revolution in the field of medicine in Himachal, whether it was the medical colleges of Chamba, Hamirpur or Nahan, all have been provided with a grant of Rs 265 crore each. Crores of rupees have been provided to several maternal and child institutions," he said. Bindal said not only this if today Himachal "is emerging on the world map by developing four-lane highways, this is the biggest contribution of the Modi's government. Similarly, whether it is the development of railways, providing tap water to every household or any kind of help for Himachal, the state is constantly getting the support of the Bharatiya Janata Party at the Centre". PTI

CM Sukhu inspects Shimla underground utility duct site

SHIMLA, MARCH 9

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu inspected the construction of the underground utility duct from Chhota Shimla to Willy Park, a statement issued on Sunday read.

According to the statement, Sukhu visited the site on Saturday to oversee the work on Rs 146.34-crore utility duct project under construction in Shimla.

"This project will strengthen the city's infrastructure and enhance its aesthetic appeal. Essential utilities such as drinking water pipelines, electricity lines, and fiber cables will be laid within the underground ducts," the statement quoted Sukhu as saying.

He added, "Every effort is being made to minimize inconvenience to the public during construction work." PTI

Centre failed to ensure rehabilitation of PoK-displaced persons: SOS International

JAMMU, MARCH 9



The SOS International, a leading body of displaced persons from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), accused the BJP-led Centre on Sunday of failing to ensure their proper rehabilitation.

It alleged that the saffron party is using the narrative of reclaiming PoK for electoral gains.

"The unfortunate reality is that there is no concrete plan with the government to reclaim the PoK. Instead, this rhetoric is being pushed as a gimmick for elections," SOS International chairman Rajiv Chuni said in a statement here.

He accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of exploiting the emotions of lakhs of displaced persons from PoK, 80 per cent of whom are living below the poverty line.

"The BJP is discussing reclamation of PoK while ignoring the hardships endured by those displaced due to Pakistani aggression in 1947 in Mirpur, Muzaffarabad and Poonch districts," Chuni said. PTI

J&K LG orders thorough, transparent investigation into Kathua killings

JAMMU, MARCH 9

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Sunday ordered a thorough and transparent investigation into the killing of three relatives of a family in Kathua district.

The bodies of Varun Singh (15), his paternal uncle Yogesh Singh (32) and maternal uncle Darshan Singh (40) were found from the Ishu nullah in the remote Malhar area in the higher reaches of the district on Saturday. The trio had gone missing on March 5.

"I have ordered a thorough and transparent investigation, and all the necessary support to the families will be provided," the LG said in a post on X.

He said he was shocked and saddened beyond words at the brutal killing of the three.

"I assure the people that the perpetrators will be brought to book at the earliest. Justice will be ensured and accountability will be fixed," Sinha said.

He offered his condolences to the families and friends of the deceased. PTI

Kathua killings: Union minister points to terror angle, home secretary reviews situation

JAMMU, MARCH 9

Union minister Jitendra Singh on Sunday pointed to the involvement of terrorists in the killing of three civilians in a remote area in Billawar tehsil of Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district.

The killings have sparked protest and a shutodwn in the area. The bodies of Varun Singh, 15, and his uncles Yogesh Singh, 32, and Darshan Singh, 40, were found in Ishu nullah in the remote Malhar area in the higher reaches of the district on Saturday. The minister said the killings were a matter of great concern.

"The brutal killing of 3 youth by terrorists in Bani area of district Kathua is extremely sad as well as a matter of great concern. There appears to be a deep conspiracy behind spoiling the atmosphere in this peaceful area," the minister, who represents Udhampur Parliamentary constituency that covers Kathua, said on X.

"We have discussed this matter with the officials concerned. The Union Home Secretary himself is reaching Jammu so that the situation can be assessed on the spot. I am confident that it will be ensured that such incidents do not happen again and the confidence of the people remains strong," he said.

Officials said Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan is reviewing the security situation at a meeting here.

J-K Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary condoled the killings, and said "increasing crime is a matter of concern." PTI

Fashion show held in Gulmarg during Ramzan evokes criticism

SRINAGAR, MARCH 9



A fashion show held in the winter tourist resort of Gulmarg during the fasting month of Ramzan has evoked widespread criticism, with Kashmir's chief priest, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, saying obscenity in the name of tourism promotion will not be tolerated.

"Outrageous! That In the holy month of Ramzan an obscene fashion show is organised in #Gulmarg, pictures and videos from which have gone viral sparking shock and anger among people. How could it be tolerated in the valley known for its Sufi, saint culture and the deeply religious outlook of its people?" the mirwaiz said in a post from his X handle.

He said those involved in organising the event should be held accountable.

"Those involved should be immediately held accountable. Such obscenity in the name of tourism promotion will not be tolerated in #Kashmir!" he added.

Social activist Raja Muzaffar Bhat described the event as an attempt to demolish the moral, religious and ethical values of Kashmir.

"Who allowed this nude fashion show at Gulmarg in Holy Ramzan? Semi nude men and women walking on snow. Will Tourism Deptt, CEO GDA throw some light? Why are you hell bound to demolish our moral, ethical, cultural and religious values (sic)?" he asked in a post on X. PTI

Youth stabbed by brother, elderly man thrown from rooftop in separate incidents

JAMMU, MARCH 9

A youth and an elderly man were murdered in two separate incidents here, police said on Sunday.

In the first instance, a 23-year-old man was killed by his younger brother over a domestic dispute at Smailpur in Domana area early on Sunday, a police spokesperson said.

He said Anil Kumar (20) attacked his brother Mukesh Kumar with a sharp-edged weapon over a domestic dispute, resulting in his death.

The accused has been arrested, he added.

In the second incident, four persons manhandled an elderly person before throwing him from the rooftop of his house in Shakti nagar, the spokesperson said.

The accused - Ashok Kumar, Sahil Badiyal, Aman and Rishi - barged into the house of Madan Lal and allegedly assaulted him and son Sanjay Kumar over an old enmity, he said. PTI

NEWSBRIEFS

Earthquake of magnitude 4.3 jolts Myanmar

NAYPYIDAW: An earthquake of magnitude 4.3 on Richter Scale jolted Myanmar on Sunday, a statement by the National Centre for Seismology said. As per the NCS, the earthquake occurred at a depth of 125km. In a post on X, the NCS said, "EQ of M: 4.3, On: 09/03/2025 13:25:12 IST, Lat: 25.03 N, Long: 95.28 E, Depth: 125 Km, Location: Myanmar." Earlier on March 3, an earthquake of magnitude 4.2 on Richter Scale jolted Myanmar, a statement by the National Centre for Seismology said. As per the NCS, the earthquake occurred at a shallow depth of 10km, making it more susceptible to aftershocks. **AGENCIES**

South Korea: Number of damaged houses in accidental bombing grows to 142

SEOUL: The number of houses damaged in last week's accidental bombing of a South Korean northern village has grown from 58 to 142 following a second survey, the local government said on Sunday. The village in Pocheon, some 40 kilometres north of Seoul, suffered large-scale damage after two KF-16 fighter jets "abnormally" dropped eight MK-82 bombs outside a training range during live-fire drills on Thursday, reports Yonhap news agency. **IANS**

Woman arrested for allegedly sparking massive wildfire in South Carolina

MYRTLE BEACH: A 40-year-old woman from Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, has been arrested for allegedly starting a wildfire that scorched over 2,059 acres, local media reported. The accused, identified as Alexandra Bialousow, faces charges of endangering lives and property after authorities traced the fire's origin to a backyard fire pit that quickly spiralled out of control. According to the South Carolina Forestry Commission, Bialousow was arrested on Thursday on charges of negligently allowing a fire to spread and igniting a fire in woodlands, grasslands, or similar areas without taking necessary precautions. **IANS**

Bangladesh tops in child marriage rate in Asia: UNICEF

DHAKA: Bangladesh continues to grapple with high rates of child marriage, gender inequality, violence, and limited opportunities for girls, as revealed by a recent global report. The report, titled, 'Girl Goals: What has changed for girls? Adolescent girls' rights over 30 years', was released by UNICEF, UN Women, and Plan International to mark International Women's Day. The report highlights that Bangladesh has the highest rate of child marriage in Asia, with over 50 per cent of girls being married off before the age of 18. **IANS**

BAPS Hindu temple vandalised in California with 'Anti-India' graffiti

CALIFORNIA: A BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, one of the largest Hindu temples, located in Chino Hills, California, was vandalised with "Anti-India" messages written on it on Sunday. The official page of BAPS for the United States, shared the details of the incident on social media platform X, saying that they will "never let hate take root" and peace and compassion shall prevail. **IANS**

Japan, Philippines strengthen defence cooperation to counter China's aggression

MANILA, MARCH 9



Japan and the Philippines have agreed to strengthen their defence ties in response to China's growing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific, as reported by Indo-Pacific Defense Forum.

In a meeting in Manila, Japanese Defence Minister Gen Nakatani and Philippine Defence Secretary Gilberto Teodoro outlined plans to enhance cooperation, including safeguarding shared military information, amid concerns over China's actions in the South China and East China seas, Indo-Pacific Defense Forum reported.

Teodoro emphasized the Philippines' commitment to deepening defence relations with Japan to counter China's and other countries' attempts to alter the international order. Nakatani highlighted their mutual agreement to bolster operational cooperation, which will involve joint and multinational defence training, port visits, and the exchange of military information.

According to the Indo-Pacific Defense Forum, the two officials also agreed to initiate talks on establishing a mechanism to protect military information.

According to the Indo-Pacific Defense Forum, the two officials also agreed to initiate talks on establishing a mechanism to protect military information.

Teodoro stated that the Philippines is keen to strengthen defence ties with Japan "against unilateral attempts by China and other countries to change the international order and the narrative."

Both Japan and the Philippines are treaty allies of the United States, which plays a significant role in their defence strategies. In 2024, the Philippines and the US secured an agreement to exchange military intelligence and technology, facilitating the acquisition of US weapons and expanding joint military activities, including large-scale combat drills.

The Indo-Pacific Defense Forum further highlighted that during their discussions, Nakatani and Teodoro expressed concerns over the increasingly challenging security environment and affirmed the necessity for enhanced defence cooperation between their nations. This will contribute to maintaining peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

Additionally, they explored the expansion of bilateral cooperation under the 2024 Reciprocal Access Agreement, which allows their forces to deploy in each other's territory for training and exercises. Japan has similar agreements with Australia in 2022 and the United Kingdom in 2023. Both countries have condemned China's frequent territorial incursions in the East and South China seas. **AGENCIES**

Ukraine 'determined to end war' with Russia for lasting peace: Zelensky

KYIV, MARCH 9



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has shared details of the upcoming meeting between American and Ukrainian officials in Saudi Arabia for negotiating peace talks as the Russia-Ukraine war continues.

In a post on Saturday on X, Zelensky said, "Today, a highly productive meeting took place in Kyiv between the diplomatic teams of Ukraine and the UK. We discussed our joint steps that could bring us closer to peace and accelerate diplomatic efforts. I'm grateful for the support. Ukraine is determined to do everything to end this war with a just and lasting peace as soon as possible."

This will be the first high-level gathering of US and Ukrainian officials since the February 28 meeting between Zelensky and US President Donald Trump.

Zelensky also said on Saturday that a meeting took place between the diplomatic teams of the UK and Ukraine to discuss steps to achieve peace.

Earlier, the Ukrainian President expressed strong appreciation for the support Ukraine has received during a European leaders summit in London on March 2, focused on Ukraine's future and its relationship with Europe.

During his recent visit to the UK, Zelensky and UK PM Keir Starmer discussed the challenges facing Ukraine and Europe, and efforts to achieve a just peace with strong security guarantees.

Earlier this year, the UK and Ukraine signed a 100-year partnership agreement, which had given a call for Ukraine's recovery and committed towards fostering technological innovation along with focus on several other areas.

The Ukrainian President further said that next week, he will visit Saudi Arabia, where he will hold a meeting with the Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, followed by a meeting with the American team.

"Next week, I will begin with a visit to Saudi Arabia. After my meeting on Monday with the Crown Prince, Ukrainian diplomatic and military representatives will stay for a meeting on Tuesday with the American team. The Ukrainian team will include Andriy Yermak, Andriy Sybiha, Rustem Umerov, and Pavlo Palisa," he said in his post.

"On our side, we are fully committed to constructive dialogue, and we hope to discuss and agree on the necessary decisions and steps." **IANS**

Israel to send delegation to Doha on March 10 to advance Gaza ceasefire talks

JERUSALEM, MARCH 9



Israel will send a delegation to Qatar's capital Doha on Monday to advance negotiations for renewing the ceasefire in Gaza and securing the release of Israeli hostages held by Hamas, according to a statement issued by the Israeli Prime Minister's Office.

The statement said on Saturday that Israel had accepted the invitation of the mediating countries, backed by the US, Xinhua news agency reported.

Earlier on Saturday, Hamas said there were positive signs regarding negotiations for the second phase of the ceasefire agreement in Gaza.

Hamas spokesman Abdul Latif Al-Qanou said in a press statement that "the efforts of Egyptian and Qatari mediators are ongoing to finalise the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and initiate negotiations for its second phase, with positive indicators in that direction".

He emphasised Hamas's readiness to engage in these negotiations in a manner that meets the demands of the Palestinian people.

There was no immediate comment from the White House, which made the surprise confirmation on Wednesday of direct US talks with Hamas.

Over the past week, Israel has pressed Hamas to release half of the remaining hostages in return for an extension of the first phase, which ended last weekend, and a promise to negotiate a lasting truce. Hamas is believed to have 24 living hostages and the bodies of 34 others.

Israel last weekend cut off all supplies to Gaza and its more than two million people as it pressed Hamas to agree. Hamas has said that the move would affect the remaining hostages as well.

The ceasefire has paused the deadliest and most destructive fighting ever between Israel and Hamas, sparked by the Hamas-led terrorist attack on southern Israel on October 7, 2023. The first phase allowed the return of 25 living hostages and the remains of eight others in exchange for the release of nearly 2,000 Palestinian prisoners.

Israeli forces have withdrawn to buffer zones inside Gaza, hundreds of thousands of displaced Palestinians have returned to northern Gaza for the first time since early in the war, and hundreds of trucks of aid entered per day until Israel suspended supplies.

Before their weekly rally in Tel Aviv, relatives of hostages appealed to US President Donald Trump, who met with eight former hostages on Wednesday.

"Mr. President, a return to war means a death sentence for the living hostages left behind. Please, sir, do not allow Netanyahu to sacrifice them."

Foreign Ministers from Muslim nations rejected Trump's calls to empty the Gaza Strip of its Palestinian population on Saturday and backed a plan for an administrative committee to govern the territory to allow reconstruction to proceed. **IANS**

Arab League, Iraq, Egypt voice concern over Syria's security situation

CAIRO/BAGHDAD, MARCH 9



The Arab League (AL) has been following with great concern the security situation in Syria, the pan-Arab body said in a statement.

The AL on Saturday also condemned violence and uncontrolled killing, as well as any external interventions aimed at fueling the internal situation in Syria, Xinhua news agency reported. The Secretary General of the League of Arab States condemned on Saturday acts of violence and targeting of government security forces in Syria.

The Egyptian Ahram Gate website quoted the General Secretariat as saying in a statement on Saturday: "The General Secretariat voices its condemnation of the acts of violence and targeting of government security forces and uncontrolled killing, as well as any external interventions aimed threatening civil peace and exacerbating the challenges facing Syria at the current stage." "We are following up with great concern the developments of the security situation in the coastal region of Syria, and the confrontations that took place there."

The General Secretariat stressed that these conditions require focusing on policies and measures that enhance and fortify stability in order to thwart any plans seeking to destabilise Syria and undermine its chances of recovery.

The ongoing developments in Syria require a focus on policies and measures that enhance stability and civil peace in order to thwart attempts at destabilising Syria and hindering its recovery, the statement added.

Also on Saturday, the Iraqi Foreign Ministry expressed concern over the ongoing security developments in Syria and called for the protection of civilians and restraint from all parties. **IANS**

Protests in Pakistan against 'anti-people' policies, Sindh's rights violations

KARACHI, MARCH 9



Pakistan has witnessed a series of protests in recent days, with citizens voicing their anger against what they describe as anti-people policies and the violation of Sindh's rights.

The protests are particularly aimed at corporate farming and the construction of six new canals in Sindh, local media reported.

A significant demonstration, known as the Mehnatkash Aurat Rally, saw working-class women taking to the streets. The rally began at the Youth Auditorium and concluded at the Arts Council of Pakistan, drawing large numbers of women, men, farmers, and members of the transgender community from various regions.

The rally was led by Zehra Khan, General Secretary of the Home-Based Women Workers Federation, who raised slogans against anti-Sindh water projects, land grabbing, and the ongoing food crisis, leading Pakistani daily, The Express Tribune reported. **IANS**

Israeli military says missiles, weapons seized in raids on Syria



JERUSALEM, MARCH 9

Israel's military has said that it carried out raids in Syria over the past week, seizing missiles and weapons belonging to the Syrian army.

Israeli troops are continuing operations and are deployed "at strategic points in Syria," the military said on Saturday in a statement. "The troops located, confiscated and dismantled numerous weapons, including rifles, ammunition, missiles, and additional military equipment," it added.

The operations, carried out by units including paratroopers and armoured forces, aimed to "eliminate any threat and strengthen the defence of the State of Israel," the military noted. Over the past week, the IDF said it carried out several "targeted raids" in southern Syria, during which troops captured and destroyed numerous weapons. **IANS**

Nationwide protests erupt in Bangladesh after brutal assault of 8-year-old



DHAKA, MARCH 9

Outraged by the brutal assault of an eight-year-old girl in Magura, citizens across Bangladesh took to the streets on Sunday, demanding justice and stricter measures to curb violence against women and children, according to local media reports.

The horrifying incident has sparked widespread protests in various parts of the country, with students and civil society groups raising their voices in anger.

According to reports, the tragic incident occurred on Wednesday when the young victim was raped at her sister's house in Magura. The child, who sustained critical injuries, was initially treated in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at Dhaka Medical College Hospital before being transferred to CMH Hospital for advanced care, reports the leading Bangladeshi newspaper, The Daily Star.

So far, Magura police have arrested four individuals in connection with the assault.

In response to the incident, teachers and students of Dhaka University staged a protest rally on campus earlier on Sunday. **IANS**

Death toll in Syria's clashes exceeds 1,000 as Red Cross, UN officials call for civilian protection

DAMASCUS, MARCH 9



The death toll from ongoing clashes in Syria's coastal region has surged to 1,018, including 745 civilians, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said, revising upwards previous reports.

According to the observatory on Saturday, allied paramilitary groups with the new administration have been involved in retaliatory killings following a series of attacks by remnants of the ousted Bashar al-Assad government against government troops earlier this week, in which 16 security personnel were killed.

Government officials said the ambushes were premeditated, Xinhua news agency reported.

The observatory said that of the overall toll, 125 were members of government security forces, and 148 were militants with armed groups loyal to the former regime. However, the numbers could not be independently verified.

The war monitor, meanwhile, warned that the absence of legal accountability could fuel further violence and destabilise post-Assad Syria. **IANS**

Day after South Korean impeached Prez Yoon's release, massive rallies held in Seoul

SEOUL, MARCH 9



Tens of thousands of people gathered in South Korea's capital city, Seoul, on Sunday to rally for or against impeached President Yoon Suk Yeol a day after his surprise release from detention.

Sarang Jeil Church, led by conservative activist pastor Jeon Kwang-hoon, held a Sunday service outdoors near the presidential residence in central Seoul. Around 4,500 people had gathered as of noon, reports Yonhap news agency, citing an unofficial police estimate.

"With President Yoon's release, the impeachment trial has become meaningless. It's over," Jeon said. "In the event the Constitutional Court does something funny, we will exercise the people's right to resist and get rid of them with a single slash."

On Saturday, Yoon was released from the detention centre where he had been held since mid-January over his failed martial law bid in December after a court ruled that his detention was invalid. Even in the absence of physical detention, Yoon still has to stand trial on charges of leading an insurrection and is awaiting the verdict of the Constitutional Court on whether to uphold or dismiss his impeachment.

Conservative civic group Angry Blue was scheduled to hold a separate rally opposing Yoon's impeachment at Bosingak Pavilion at 1 p.m. before marching along Jongno 3-ga street.

An opposing rally by a group of activists calling for Yoon's immediate ouster was held overnight just outside of Seoul's Gyeongbok Palace, and the group held a press conference outside the nearby government complex Sunday to declare a week of "emergency action" urging Yoon's removal from office.

At 2 p.m., the group will begin a march from the National Palace Museum, with a reported attendance of 100,000 people, leading to partial road closures in the area. **IANS**

lifestyle



Kriti & Kanika

win big at IIFA 2025 as 'Do Patti' bags 'Best Actor' & 'Best Original Story'

Donning the hat of a producer for the first time, Kriti Sanon and Kanika Dhillon have created waves at IIFA 2025 with "Do Patti". The writer-producer has received the award for 'Best Story Original', whereas Kriti Sanon has bagged the 'Best Actor- Female'. Sharing pictures with the award, Kriti penned on her Instagram handle, "First Best Actor for my first production #DoPatti at the first IIFA digital awards!! 2 big wins for DoPatti, Congratulations my partner @kanika.d !! #BestStory #BestActor...Thank you @iifa and a huge thank you to the audiences for all the love and support! A shoutout to my team for making me look and feel my best yesterday for this big moment!"

Talking about the big win, Kanika shared, "Do Patti is my maiden project as a producer and the love it has been getting across the globe is surreal. Any kind of appreciation feels magical - honoured and humbled - with all the audience's love and accolades. Made under the direction of Shashanka Chaturvedi, the film went on to become the most-watched Netflix India Original of the year.

"Do Patti" revolves around twin sisters, Saumya and Shailee (Kriti) harboring deep secrets, and a determined police inspector, Vidya Jyothi (Kajol) seeking to uncover the truth in an attempted murder case. Between two pretty twin sisters, one is timid and introverted while the other is bubbly and daring. Up next, Kriti will be a part of Anand L Rai's "Tere Ishk Mein", opposite Dhanush. The movie is a spiritual successor to the 2013 film "Raanjhanaa", delving deeper into themes of unrequited love, and emotional conflict. On the other hand, Kanika is now set to release her highly anticipated project, a revenge action drama, "Gandhari", starring Taapsee Pannu and Ishwak Singh. Helmed by National award-winning director Devashish Makhija, the movie has been produced under Kanika's Kathha Pictures banner. **IANS**



Huma tells her work mantra: 'Calm se kaam'

Actress Huma Qureshi has revealed her mantra she uses for work and she mentioned it is to remain "calm". Huma took to Instagram stories, where she shared a picture from her balcony. The image shows she is surrounded by greenery. For the caption, she wrote: "Calm se Kaam". Last month, Huma revealed that she has started working on the fourth season of "Maharani". She shared a picture of her back towards the camera. The actress could be seen wearing a black sweatshirt which had "Maharani is back".

Huma captioned the post: "It is time for Season 4!! Team Maharani is backkk" Clicked by my producer sahiba. Thank you audience for all the love. Upwards and Onwards." The political drama series had Huma playing the title role.Season 1 of the series is directed by Karan Sharma, Season 2 by Ravindra Gautam and Season 3 by Saurabh Bhave. It also stars Sohum Shah, Amit Sial, Kani Kusruti and Inaamulhaq.

The multi-seasons political series is partly inspired by events in Bihar in the 1990s when Lalu Prasad Yadav made his homemaker wife Rabri Devi his successor. The story of season 1 is from 1995 to 1999 and is inspired by real-life events and characters like Ranvir Sena, left-wing militants, Naxalite groups, the Communist Party of India (Marxist–Leninist) Liberation, 1997 Laxmanpur Bathe massacre, Fodder Scam, Brahmeshwar Singh. **IANS**



Sonakshi Sinha

threatens to bite hubby Zaheer Iqbal

Sonakshi Sinha threatened to bite hubby Zaheer Iqbal in her latest Instagram post. The 'Heeramandi' actress dropped a video on social media enjoying a car ride with hubby Zaheer. In his latest attempt to irritate Sokanshi, Zaheer can be seen moving his hand in front of Sonakshi's face.

However, he plays by the rules, "Not touching can't get mad". Towards the end of the clip, a visibly irritated Sonakshi can be seen trying to bite him. "He is really going to get bitten one of these days", Sonakshi captioned the post. Recently, Sonakshi and Zaheer channeled their inner Juhi Chawla and Akshay Kumar from the famous 1997 film "Mr. &; Mrs. Khiladi" during dinner time. Zaheer took to his IG stories and dropped a video of him relishing a "samosa", while Sonakshi had her dinner. Holding the "samosa", Zaheer was seen grooving to the number "Jab tak rahega samose mein aaloo" from "Mr. & Mrs. Khiladi". Surprised by this, Sonakshi started laughing and patted him on the head.

For the unaware, Sonakshi and Zaheer were in a relationship for almost seven years before they finally tied the knot in June last year in the presence of close friends and family members. On the professional front, Sonakshi will next be a part of "Jatadhara". The makers unveiled her powerful first look from the movie on Women's Day on March 8. Sonakshi was seen flaunting elaborate traditional jewelry, including a golden headpiece, bangles, and rings. Her bold makeup included dark kohl-lined eyes, a red bindi, and a tilak on her forehead, making for a fierce look. Adding to the intensity, Sonakshi covered part of her face with her hand, adorned with rings and long nails. The poster included the tagline, "A Force of Strength and Power." "Jatadhara" will mark Sonakshi's Telugu debut, alongside Sudheer Babu. **IANS**

Kareena brings out her inner Poo once again for IIFA performance

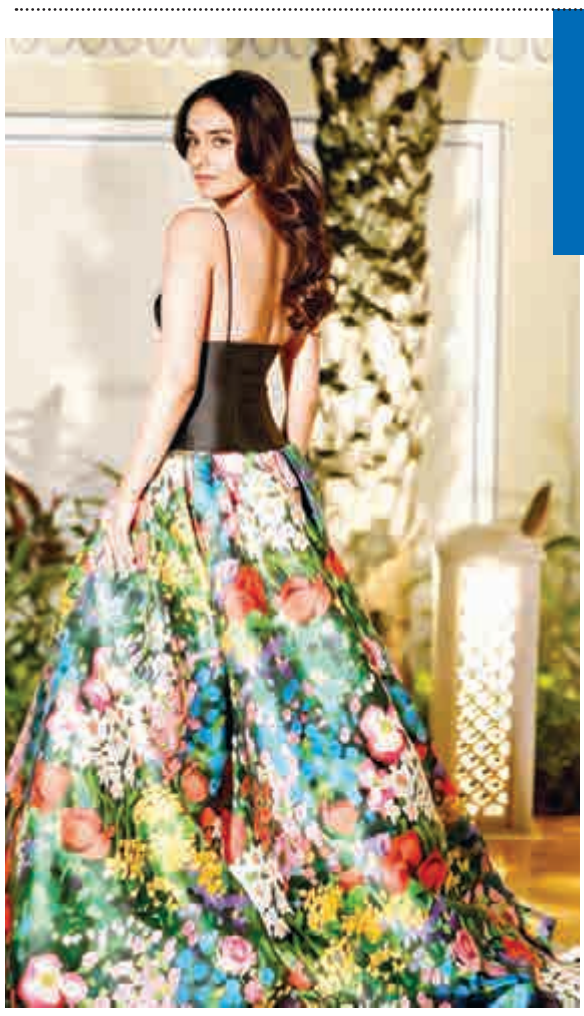
Bollywood diva Kareena Kapoor Khan brought out her inner 'Poo', an iconic over-the-top character she performed in the 2001 blockbuster "Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham", during the practice sessions ahead of her big performance at the 25th edition of IIFA Awards grand ceremony on Sunday. The official Instagram handle of IIFA shared a video from backstage, where Kareena was present. The video had the diva dressed in a white T-shirt paired with yoga pants and sunglasses.

Looking at the camera, Kareena said the iconic dialogue "Kaun hai yeh jisne dobara mudke mujhe nahi dekha, who is he?" Kareena's character of Poo is one of the most memorable and loved roles from the actress's career. Not just her fashion, it was the sassy one-liners that made Poo stand out from all the other roles the actress, who is fondly referred to as Bebo, has performed on screen.

Some of the most popular lines said by Poo were "Kaun hai yeh jisne dobara mudke mujhe nahi dekha", 'P.H.A.T – Pretty, Hot And Tempting' and "Tumhe koi haq nahi banta ki tum itni khoobsurat lago. Not fair" among many others.

"Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham..." a family drama was directed by Karan Johar. The film also stars Amitabh Bachchan, Jaya Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan, Kajol and Hrithik Roshan, and with Rani Mukerji in an extended guest appearance. It tells the story of an Indian multimillionaire family, which faces troubles and misunderstandings over their adopted son's marriage to a girl belonging to a lower socio-economic group than them.

In 2022, Kareena spoke to IANS about if Poo deserves a movie to herself. She also shared what makes the character, who comes from Chandni Chowk in New Delhi and then moves to London with her sister essayed by Kajol and brother-in-law played by Shah Rukh Khan, have such a massive fan following. "I think for the way she is, the way she talks, the kind of millennial Gen-Z kinda words that she uses connect somehow. So, I think it is because of that more than anything else. Let's see a film someday, who knows." **IANS**



Manushi Chhillar:

Would never recommend leaving everything behind without a plan

Former beauty queen and actress Manushi Chhillar emphasises that "The world of glamour is a challenging field that requires genuine passion and commitment. You have to truly want to do it,". Manushi, who entered Bollywood without any connections, has shared genuine advice for newcomers to approach their career choices with careful planning. "I would never recommend leaving everything behind without a plan. If you are not from this industry and are completely new to the world of entertainment, my suggestion would be to finish your education, or have a platform like I did before you start, because it is not going to be an easy journey" she said.

Manushi will next be seen in "Maalik" starring Rajkummar Rao.The action-thriller "Maalik", in which Rajkummar will be seen in a gangster avatar for the first time, is all set to release on June 20. "Maalik" is directed by Pulkit, who has previously helmed "Dedh Beegha Zameen", "Bose: Dead/Alive" and "Bhakshak".

She then had "Tehran" with John Abraham. Made under the direction of debutant Arun Gopalan, the project also stars John Abraham as the lead, along with Neeru Bajwa, Hadi Khanjanpour, Madhurima Tuli, Adam Karst, and Allon Sylvain in key roles. "Tehran" is believed to be inspired by true events set against the backdrop of the Russia-Ukraine war. Touted to be a geopolitical thriller, the drama will offer India's perspective on the ongoing conflict between the two nations. The film also marks Arun Gopalan's directorial debut. Before this, Manushi Chhillar was a part of the movies "Samrat Prithviraj", "The Great Indian Family" and "Bade Miyan Chote Miyan". **IANS**

NEWSBRIEFS

Jindal Stainless marks Int'l Women's Day with 'Flip the Script' campaign

HISAR: Jindal Stainless marked International Women's Day with a two-fold initiative: the launch of a thought-provoking video campaign titled 'Flip the Script' and a grand celebration at its Hisar facility. Jindal Stainless released a compelling video campaign, 'Flip the Script', challenging gender bias in workplaces. The video creatively reverses roles, placing men in scenarios where they face the same gender-specific stereotypes and questions that women frequently encounter in professional settings. Jindal Stainless Hisar hosted a vibrant celebration to honor women's contributions to the workforce. The event commenced with a handicrafts exhibition by women from JSL's CSR initiative, Asmita, displaying handcrafted textiles and artworks. Vijay Kumar Bindlish, Senior Vice President and Unit Head, Jindal Stainless Hisar, said that Women's empowerment is not just about rights; it is the foundation of societal progress and prosperity. At JSL, we are committed to ensuring equal opportunities for women to achieve their dreams in every field. **BPE**

Agritech startup Falca's loss triples to ₹15 crore in FY24 as expenses surge over 30 pc

BENGALURU, MARCH 9

Full-stack agritech supply chain startup Falca reported a sharp rise in its net loss for the financial year 2023-24 (FY24) as the company's net loss widened threefold to Rs 15 crore, compared to Rs 5 crore in the previous fiscal year (FY23).

The primary reason behind mounting losses was the rising expenses, which surged by 30.2 per cent to Rs 384 crore in FY24. The company's biggest cost was the procurement of materials, which accounted for 94 per cent of total expenses.

Material costs alone rose by 27 per cent to Rs 362 crore in FY24, in line with the company's growing scale. Employee benefit expenses doubled to Rs 10 crore, while finance costs increased by 50 per cent to Rs 3 crore. Other operational expenses added another Rs 9 crore for the year. **IANS**

FM Nirmala Sitharaman highlights SBI role in empowering women

MUMBAI, MARCH 9



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has inaugurated 70 branches and 501 Women Customer Service Points of the State Bank of India (SBI) as part of the commitment to extend banking services to the underserved population of the country. The Finance Minister said the inauguration of the new Women Customer Service Points on International Women's Day, highlights the SBI's commitment to fostering financial independence for women across the country.

"These service points will enhance last-mile banking access, empowering more women to take charge of their financial well-being and contribute actively to India's economic growth," she said.

The Finance minister said: "SBI continues to be a trusted partner to over 51 crore customers—more than the population of many countries—demonstrating its deep-rooted commitment to economic progress across all income groups." She further noted that as one of the largest commercial banks in the world, catering to approximately 5.6 per cent of the global population, SBI's agility and competitiveness remain unmatched.

"The bank's ability to evolve and innovate has been instrumental in maintaining its leadership despite regulatory challenges and market disruptions. By embracing digital transformation, SBI has redefined customer experiences, introduced seamless financial products, and enhanced operational efficiency, making banking more accessible and inclusive than ever before," the Finance Minister said.

She added that this financial year, the bank has continued to strategically target key regions to make banking services more accessible to underserved communities.

Meanwhile, SBI said, in a statement, that the inauguration of branches in villages such as Pughophoto in Nagaland, Itamati in Odisha, Chullimanoor in Kerala, Palasamudram in Andhra Pradesh, and Chinnambavi in Telangana stands as a testament to the bank's unwavering commitment to financial inclusion.

"Expanding its footprint further, the bank added around 100 branches during Q3 FY25, surpassing a network of 22,800 branches. Additionally, SBI maintains a robust network of 78,023 Customer Service Points (CSPs)," the statement said.

It added that the bank has reinforced its commitment to social impact by allocating Rs 26 crores towards 17 CSR initiatives across its 17 Local Head Offices, supporting projects in women's empowerment, healthcare and sanitation, livelihood development, and environmental sustainability. **IANS**

Startups instrumental in employment creation, development of fisheries sector: Minister

NEW DELHI, MARCH 9



Startups are instrumental in employment creation, particularly for youth, and the government is committed in supporting the startups in all possible ways, Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Rajiv Ranjan Singh, has said. Singh highlighted that the role of startups is very important for development of the fisheries sector and also to the Indian economy.

During an event in Hyderabad, he urged startups to come forward and contribute in the fields of value addition for enhancing exports, advanced technology solutions, island development of Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep for harnessing the tuna potential, upgradation of vessels for high sea and deep sea fishing with onboard processing units, etc.

Singh also launched the National Fisheries Digital Platform (NFDP) Mobile Application, developed under PM-MKSSY. Now available on the Google Play Store, the app provides a seamless interface for startups to access various modules and scheme benefits.

Additionally, the Union Minister also unveiled the Fisheries Startup Grand Challenge 2.0, with an earmarked fund of Rs 1 crore to promote technological advancements in fisheries and allied sectors. Ten winning startups will receive financial incentives and incubation support to develop innovative solutions for enhancing production, efficiency, and sustainability in fisheries and aquaculture.

The Union Minister encouraged startups to participate in Fisheries Startup Grand Challenge 2.0, aimed at fostering healthy competition and driving technical innovations in the sector.

He also urged them to leverage the benefits of government schemes such as the Fisheries Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF) and Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana (PM-MKSSY) to support their growth and development. During the event, Union Minister distributed 'Entrepreneur Model' approvals under PMMSY to eight selected fisheries start-ups/entrepreneur/FFPOs with total project cost of Rs 33.46 crore for recognising their pioneering projects in aquaculture, value chain modernisation and sustainable fisheries. **IANS**

India, EU to hold next round of trade talks on March 10



NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

India and the European Union are scheduled to begin the next round of talks for a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) from Monday in Brussels with the aim of concluding the talks by the end of this year, a senior official said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen had agreed to expedite the conclusion of the India-EU free trade agreement (FTA) by the end of the year at their meeting in Delhi last month.

"A free trade agreement between the EU and India would be the largest deal of this kind anywhere in the world. I am well aware it will not be easy. But I also know that timing and determination count and that this partnership comes at the right moment for both of us," Von der Leyen, said during her two-day visit to India.

Her statement came in the backdrop of massive tariff hikes proposed against all countries by US President Donald Trump under his 'America First' policy which is threatening to disrupt global trade and heighten uncertainty in the global economy.

PM Modi and the European Commission President committed to task their respective negotiating teams to pursue negotiations for a balanced, ambitious, and mutually beneficial FTA. Officials were asked to work as trusted partners to enhance market access and remove trade barriers. They were also tasked to advance negotiations on an Agreement on Investment Protection and an Agreement on Geographical Indications.

Reaching a deal will be complex, however, with significant concessions wanted on both sides in areas ranging from cars and whisky to pharmaceuticals and textiles. The EU wants India to lower tariffs on cars, wine, and whisky as well as some agricultural products. India, on the other hand, wants greater market access and lower tariffs for key exports, including pharmaceuticals, textiles, and apparel.

The EU is India's largest trading partner, accounting for 124 billion euros of trade in goods in 2023, or 12.2 per cent of total Indian trade. Trade in services between the EU and India reached nearly 60 billion euros in 2023, almost double the level in 2020. A third of that were digital services, according to figures compiled by the World Economic Forum.

The US and China account for 10.8 per cent and 10.5 per cent of total Indian trade, respectively. India, meanwhile, is the EU's ninth largest trading partner, accounting for 2.2 per cent of the bloc's trade, WEF figures show. **IANS**

Govt extends duty-free import of yellow peas to keep inflation in check

NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

The Government has extended the duty-free import of yellow peas by three months till the end of May and clamped a duty of 10 per cent duty on imports of lentils (masur) with immediate effect, according to an official notification.

The government has imposed a 10 per cent import duty on lentils (mosur) and extended the duty-free import of yellow peas by three months till May 31 this year to increase domestic availability of the pulses and keep prices in check.

The government has levied a 5 per cent basic customs duty and 5 per cent Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess (AIDC) on lentils with effect from Saturday.

The government has been tuning its tariff policy on pulses to keep inflation in check in the case of shortfalls and at the same encouraging domestic production.

The government had allowed the duty-free import of yellow peas in December 2023 to control local prices as the domestic production of 'chana' was falling short. This relaxation was extended from time to time till the end of February. India's yellow peas imports stood at 30 lakh tonnes out of 67 lakh tonnes of overall pulses imported during 2024.

The Centre has also been procuring pulses at MSP from domestic farmers after approval for the continuation of the integrated Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA) Scheme during the 15th Finance Commission cycle up to 2025-26. **IANS**

TCS, SBI lead market rally as 7 of top 10 firms gain ₹2.1 lakh crore

MUMBAI, MARCH 9



The combined market value of seven out of the top ten most valued companies in India increased by Rs 2,10,254.96 crore last week.

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and State Bank of India (SBI) were among the biggest gainers as stock markets witnessed strong momentum. During the week, the 30-share Sensex rose by 1,134.48 points, or 1.55 per cent, while the Nifty gained 427.8 points, or 1.93 per cent.

The positive trend helped several large companies increase their market capitalisation, according to reports.

TCS saw a significant rise in its market value, climbing Rs 46,094.44 crore to reach Rs 13,06,599.95 crore.

With this gain, it regained its position as the second most valued company in India. SBI's market capitalisation soared by Rs 39,714.56 crore, reaching Rs 6,53,951.53 crore. Bharti Airtel also experienced strong growth, with its valuation increasing by Rs 35,276.3 crore to Rs 9,30,269.97 crore.

ITC's market value rose by Rs 11,425.77 crore, taking its total valuation to Rs 5,05,293.34 crore. ICICI Bank also saw an increase of Rs 7,939.13 crore, bringing its market capitalisation to Rs 8,57,743.03 crore. Hindustan Unilever added Rs 2,819.51 crore to its market value, which now stands at Rs 5,17,802.92 crore. However, some companies faced losses last week. HDFC Bank's market valuation declined by Rs 31,832.92 crore, falling to Rs 12,92,578.39 crore.

Bajaj Finance also saw a drop of Rs 8,535.74 crore, bringing its total valuation to Rs 5,20,981.25 crore. Infosys' market value dipped slightly by Rs 955.12 crore, reaching Rs 7,00,047.10 crore. **IANS**

Khadi sales crossed ₹12 crore at Maha Kumbh: KVIC chief



NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

The exhibition of Khadi products at the Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj from January 14 to February 27 this year recorded robust sales to the tune of Rs 12.02 crore, according to Chairman of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) Manoj Kumar.

He said that the exhibition featured 98 Khadi stalls and 54 village industry stalls, which collectively recorded sales of Rs 9.76 crore in Khadi and Rs 2.26 crore in village industry products.

He also said that in alignment with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of spreading the 'Sweet Revolution' across villages, the 'Honey Mission' has been initiated to distribute bee colonies and bee boxes to beekeepers.

Kumar distributed 2,050 bee boxes, honey colonies, and toolkits to 205 beekeepers across six states through a video conference from KVIC's Rajghat office in Delhi.

Addressing the artisans, the KVIC Chairman recalled that in 2016, from Banaskantha's Deesa in Gujarat, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had called for a 'Sweet Revolution' alongside the 'White Revolution.' Inspired by this, KVIC launched the 'Honey Mission' in 2017, under which more than 20,000 beneficiaries have so far received two lakh bee boxes and bee colonies.

He further noted that in the 75th episode of the monthly broadcast 'Mann Ki Baat', the Prime Minister had discussed the benefits of bee farming, emphasizing that apart from honey, bee wax is also a major source of income. **IANS**

Kia sells over 4,000 units of Tasman pickup truck in first month of launch

SEOUL, MARCH 9



Kia, South Korea's second-biggest carmaker, said on Sunday it has sold over 4,000 units of its first pickup truck, the Kia Tasman, less than a month since its release, raising expectations it will revitalize the local pickup truck market.

Kia sold more than 4,000 Tasman trucks in February, a feat achieved in just 17 days since its first-ever pickup truck was launched here on Feb. 13, according to company officials, reports Yonhap news agency.

The tally marks nearly 30 percent of all pickup trucks sold here in the entire 2024.

In 2024, five major carmakers -- Hyundai Motor Co., Kia, GM Korea Co., Renault Korea Motors Co. and KG Mobility Corp. (KGM) -- sold a combined 13,475 pickup trucks in the country, according to the Korea Automobile Manufacturers Association (KAMA).

The yearly figure has been on a constant decline from 42,619 in 2019 to 38,117 in 2020, 29,567 in 2021, 28,753 in 2022 and 17,455 the following year.

Market watchers said the domestic pickup truck demand has been falling due to a limited model lineup by the five automakers, but the appearance of the Kia Tasman may help boost consumer sentiment.

Only four pickup truck models, comprising two from KGM and the other two from GM Korea, had been available in South Korea before the release of the Kia Tasman.

The Kia Tasman made its debut at the 2024 Jeddah International Motor Show in Saudi Arabia. **IANS**

South Korea's manufacturing output posts biggest drop in 18 months

SEOUL, MARCH 9

South Korea's manufacturing production fell more than 4 percent from a year earlier in January, marking the sharpest drop in 18 months, data showed on Sunday.

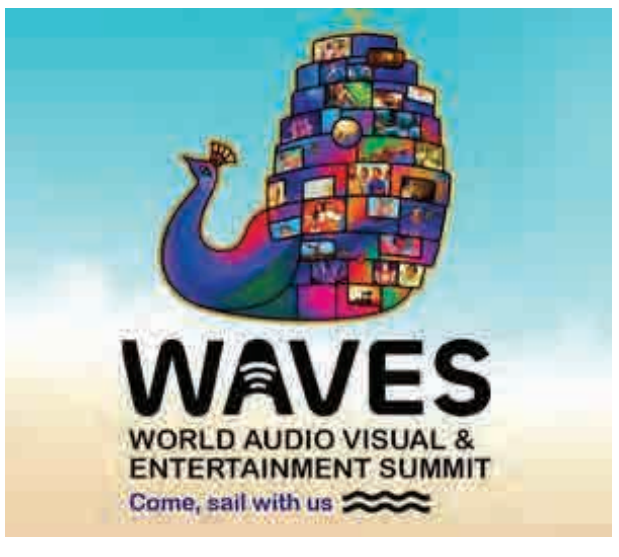
The Manufacturing Production Index stood at 103.7 points in January, down 4.2 percent from a year ago, according to the data from Statistics Korea.

It marked the steepest rate of on-year decrease since July 2023, when the index dropped 6.6 percent, reports Yonhap news agency.

The government said the sluggish manufacturing production can be largely attributed to the reduced number of business days in January due to the extended Lunar New Year holiday, but the report comes amid growing concerns over a prolonged slowdown. **IANS**

WAVES to connect Indian creators, technologists with global talent: Centre

NEW DELHI, MARCH 9



The upcoming World Audio Visual & Entertainment Summit (WAVES) will serve as a major platform to connect Indian creators and technologists with global industry leaders, the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (I&B) said on Sunday.

The first edition of WAVES is set to take place from May 1 to May 4 in Mumbai.

According to the government, WAVES will bring together professionals from the media and entertainment (M&E) industry to showcase India's talent and potential.

The event will focus on four key areas -- broadcasting & infotainment, AVGC-XR (animation, visual effects, gaming, comics, and extended reality), digital media & innovation, and films.

It aims to create new opportunities for collaboration between Indian and international industry players.

One of the major highlights of WAVES is the animation filmmakers competition, launched in partnership with Dancing Atoms, a leading animation company.

This initiative is designed to discover and promote India's best storytelling talent in the field of animation.

The competition is open to students, amateurs, and professionals. Participants were required to submit a logline, a two-page summary of their film concept, and a poster.

Selected participants will undergo mentorship sessions and masterclasses conducted by industry experts.

The final winners will be announced in April 2025, with prizes and global exposure awaiting the best entries.

While films can be in any language, the submission forms have to be completed in English to accommodate an international panel of jurors.

The competition received entries from across the country and abroad, highlighting the growing interest in animation.

Selected participants will now go through an intensive mentorship programme, where industry experts will help them refine their ideas through masterclasses.

Entries are being judged based on originality, entertainment value, market appeal, audience engagement, and presentation. **IANS**

XABI ALONSO

"WE DID NOT HAVE CONTROL, WE PLAYED WITHOUT LOGIC. WE DID NOT ATTACK THE LAST THIRD WELL. IT WAS TOO HECTIC AND THE CHANCES WERE NOT CLEAR CHANCES."

India beat NZ by 4 wickets to lift Champions Trophy 2025

DUBAI, MARCH 9





India captain Rohit Sharma led from the front as he made 76 off 83 balls, struck seven fours and three sixes, during his stay in the middle, while Shreyas Iyer (48 runs, 2 fours and 2 sixes), Shubman Gill (31 runs, 0 fours and 1 six) and Axar Patel (29 runs, 1 four and 1 six) made telling contributions before K L Rahul (34 runs, 1 four and 1 six) ensured that India made it over the line with an over to spare as Ravindra Jadeja (9 runs, 1 four) scored the winning runs.

Shepherded by a brilliant Kuldeep Yadav (2/40), Indian spinners aced the conditions but well-timed fifties



by Daryl Mitchell and Michael Bracewell steered New Zealand to a competitive 251 for seven in the Champions Trophy final here on Sunday.

Daryl Mitchell (63, 101 balls) and Bracewell (53 off 40 balls) navigated the Blackcaps through a turbulent middle phase after they opted to bat first.

However, the start made by New Zealand did not justify the total that they eventually managed.

They raced to 69 for 1 in 10 overs despite losing Will Young to Varun Chakravarthy (2/45), who came to bowl as early as the sixth over. The introduction of Kuldeep 11th over changed the complexion of the game.

With his first ball, Kuldeep consumed Rachin Ravindra, who failed to read a wonderfully concealed googly that disturbed his stumps.

It also ended a good 57-run opening stand, in which Ravindra, who punished Hardik Pandya for a six and two fours in row, was dropped on 28 by Mohammed Shami off his own bowling.

In the very next over, Kane Williamson's forward prod off the left-arm wrist spinner eventuated in a return catch as the Kiwis slipped to 75 for three in 12.2 overs.

A chase of 252 looked like an easy task for India on a pitch which didn't give



much turn, but a fighting New Zealand making regular strikes meant that it wasn't a cakewalk. After Rohit fell for an explosive 83-ball 76, there was a sudden nervous energy in India's chase. But the enviable batting depth, despite New Zealand's spinners fighting hard, meant they got over the line with an over to spare.

The win would also come as a soothing balm for the Indian team and its ardent fans after missing out on the 2023 ODI World Cup triumph on home soil. On a sunny afternoon, contrasting half-centuries from all-rounders Daryl Mitchell (63 off 101 balls) and Michael Bracewell (53 not out off 40 balls) took New Zealand to 251/7 in their 50 overs.

India's spinners called the shots majorly to pick five wickets collectively on a sluggish pitch. Wrist spin duo of Kuldeep Yadav and Varun Chakaravarthy picked two wickets each, while Ravindra Jadeja had a scalp to his name to set the base for a super consistent team. **AGENCIES**

India enter Masters League semis with win over Windies

RAIPUR, MARCH 9

BRIEF SCORES:
India Masters: 253 for 3 (Ambati Rayudu 63, Saurabh Tiwary 60, Yuvraj Singh 49 not out, Gurkeerat Singh Mann 46) beat West Indies Masters 246 for 6 (Dwayne Smith 79, William Perkins 52, Lendl Simmons 38; Stuart Binny 3/13, Pawan Negi 2/27) by 7 runs.

India defeated the West Indies by seven runs to enter the semi-finals of the International Masters League 2025 in Raipur on Saturday night.

The home side rode on Stuart Binny's three-wicket burst and a smart final over from Irfan Pathan to get over the line in the high-scoring thriller.

The stage was set for a nostalgic showdown, rekindling one of cricket's most legendary rivalries -- Sachin Tendulkar vs Brian Lara. But the Indian legend was rested.

India Masters set the tone with a commanding batting display, spearheaded by blistering half-centuries from Ambati Rayudu (63) and Saurabh Tiwary (60), before stand-in skipper Yuvraj



Singh's late-order fireworks propelled them to an imposing 253 for 3 after winning the toss.

In response, West Indies Masters matched India's aggression with an explosive start.

Dwayne Smith (79) and William Perkins (52) launched a fierce counterattack, slamming destructive fifties and forging a menacing 121-run opening stand.

But just when the visitors looked in control, Binny's introduction turned the tide; his crucial breakthroughs derailed the chase, steering India Masters to a memorable victory, restricting West Indies Masters to 246 for 6. **PTI**

Matthew Wade joins Gujarat Titans' support staff



NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

Gujarat Titans have named former Australia wicketkeeper Matthew Wade as the team's assistant coach ahead of the IPL 2025.

Wade was with GT for two seasons as a player-- in 2022 and in 2024 -- but was not part of the IPL mega auction following his retirement from international cricket.

"Champion. Fighter. Now our Assistant Coach! Welcome back to the GT Dugout, Matthew Wade!," Gujarat Titans wrote on X.

Wade, who had a short career of 15 matches in the IPL, played 12 of them for GT and was part of the title-winning squad in 2022 under Hardik Pandya's leadership.

Wade will join head coach Ashish Nehra, batting coach Parthiv Patel, and assistant coaches Aashish Kapoor and Narender Negi in GT's coaching staff. **PTI**

PSG increase lead at the top of Ligue 1 with win at Rennes

RENNES, MARCH 9



Leaders Paris St Germain continued their domination of Ligue 1 with a 4-1 win away to Stade Rennais on Saturday, with substitute Ousmane Dembele scoring twice in added time as the visitors earned their sixth successive league victory.

PSG, unbeaten in the league this season, move to 65 points, 16 ahead of Olympique de Marseille who play Lens later on Saturday, while Rennes remain 11th in the standings on 29 points.

Luis Enrique made eight changes to the side which lost 1-0 to Liverpool midweek in their Champions League last 16 first leg tie, but the visitors completely dominated proceedings in the opening stages.

Despite all their possession, PSG failed to create any decent openings until Rennes keeper Brice Samba denied Goncalo Ramos but shortly afterwards Bradley Barcola put them ahead in the 27th minute.

After a quick free kick taken on the halfway line, Desire Doue rolled the ball forward into the path of Barcola who beat the offside trap and coolly slipped his shot past Samba. The goal forced Rennes out of their shell, with Ludovic Blas putting a shot just wide of the post from a narrow angle and five minutes from the break Mohamed Meite rocked the crossbar with a header.

PSG were immediately on the front foot after the interval and doubled their lead five minutes into the second half when Barcola crossed from the left and Ramos was there to guide the ball to the net from close range.

Rennes pulled one back just three minutes later from a corner, with Jeremy Jacquet flicking the ball on towards the back post where Lilian Brassier headed in and Rennes suddenly looked the better side.

Luis Enrique responded, sending on four of his big guns from the bench, Khvicha Kvaratskhelia, Ousmane Dembele, Vitinha and Nuno Mendes charged with securing the win

Despite the changes, Rennes continued to have the upper hand, and Blas had an excellent chance to equalise after a one-two with Meite but fired his shot straight at the keeper. **AGENCIES**

Inter Milan extend lead atop Serie A with comeback win over Monza



MILAN, MARCH 9

Inter Milan were given a real scare by bottom club Monza before coming back to win 3-2 at the San Siro on Saturday, where an own goal allowed the hosts to extend their lead at the top of the Serie A standings.

Inter move to 61 points, four ahead of Napoli who host Fiorentina on Sunday, while Monza remain rooted to the bottom of the table on 14 points, 10 from safety.

Monza had the first strike on goal when Keita Balde let fly from distance, his shot bouncing just wide of the target, but he would later find the net to celebrate his 30th birthday. Inter preferred a more measured approach early on but began to turn the screw and Monza needed keeper Stefano Turati, and VAR, to keep Inter goalless.

Turati pulled off a fine save from Marko Arnautovic's header and then showed great reflexes to deny a Lautaro Martinez headed effort and although the forward netted the rebound, it was ruled out for handball.

Monza, with just two league wins all season, stunned the home crowd in the 32nd minute when a clever one-two with Dany Mota sent Samuele Birindelli through on goal and he coolly picked his spot. **AGENCIES**

Leverkusen suffer shock home loss to Werder Bremen



LEVERKUSEN, MARCH 9

Bayer Leverkusen suffered a shock 2-0 home loss to Werder Bremen in the Bundesliga on Saturday to miss their chance to close in on leaders Bayern Munich.

The reigning champions, who lost 3-0 to Bayern Munich in their Champions League Round of 16 first leg on Wednesday, are on 53 points, with Bayern staying top on 61 despite their stunning 3-2 loss at home to VfL Bochum. "For us it was a bad game. Really bad day," Xabi Alonso, told a press conference.

After the loss in Munich we wanted to be a bit fresher but it did not work. We will forget this game now and start believing again.

"We did not have control, we played without logic. We did not attack the last third well. It was too hectic and the chances were not clear chances," Alonso said

Visitors Werder, who had lost their previous five matches, took a surprise seventh-minute lead with Romano Schmid slotting in at the far post after a Leverkusen defensive error.

Aleix Garcia came agonisingly close to an equaliser for the hosts but his first-half stoppage time free kick bounced off the crossbar.

To make matters worse for Xabi Alonso's team, who host Bayern in the return leg on Tuesday, attacking midfielder Florian Wirtz suffered an ankle injury in the 54th minute and the Germany international had to be substituted. **AGENCIES**

Liverpool 16 points clear; Forest stun Manchester City

LONDON, MARCH 9







Liverpool's march to the Premier League title continued with a 3-1 victory over last-placed Southampton on Saturday as Mohamed Salah bagged a double and Darwin Nunez scored to give them a 16-point provisional lead over Arsenal.

Arne Slot's men have 70 points, while the second-placed Gunners have 54 but two games in hand. They play at Manchester United on Sunday.

Nottingham Forest's Callum Hudson-Odoi struck late in a 1-0 victory over Manchester City that boosted their chances of a top-four finish and a prized place in next year's Champions League.

Last-minute penalty drama gave Brighton & Hove Albion a 2-1 win over Fulham for their fourth consecutive win, while Crystal Palace salvaged a 1-0 win over relegation-threatened Ipswich Town with a late goal from Ismaila Sarr.

had to come from a goal down at Anfield after Will Smallbone took advantage of miscommunication between goalkeeper Alisson and Virgil van Dijk just before the break.

The league leaders ran roughshod over the struggling Saints in the second half and Nunez levelled in the 51st minute, then won a penalty three minutes later that Salah fiercely slotted home.

Salah completed his double in the 88th minute with a second goal from the spot after Yukinari Sugawara's hand ball, the Liverpool talisman's 27th league goal this season.

"We need to keep winning games -- it's as simple as that," said Liverpool midfielder Harvey Elliott. "It's about taking it game by game and making sure we apply ourselves in the best possible way."

At Nottingham, Hudson-Odoi picked up a diagonal pass from Morgan Gibbs-White before stepping outside Josko Gvardiol and driving the ball between City goalkeeper Ederson and his near post in the 83rd minute. "I'm absolutely buzzing with the goal," said Hudson-Odoi after his contribution secured Forest their first league win over Manchester City since 1997.

The result in a game of few chances kept this season's surprise team Forest in third on 51 points, putting them in a strong position for their first berth in Europe's elite competition since the mid-1990s.

Reigning league champions City are fourth on 47 points but manager Pep Guardiola is not panicking. **AGENCIES**

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