

Himachal News : Electricity may become expensive in Himachal from April, citing a revenue loss of Rs 300 crore



Diary Times Desk : Electricity may become expensive in Himachal Pradesh from April 1, 2025. The electricity board management has sent a proposal of 50 to 70 paise per unit hike to the State Electricity Regulatory Commission. In this, the board has demanded an increase in electricity rates citing a loss of Rs 300 crore. Now in the public hearing, the commission will take suggestions and objections from all stakeholders on the board's proposal. There has been no increase in electricity rates in Himachal this year. Although the board is given Rs 750 to 1000 crore every year as grant by the government, despite this it has become difficult for the board to meet its expenses. The board needs about Rs 180 crore per month for salary and pension. The revenue deficit of the board has exceeded Rs 300 crore. Giving 125 units of free electricity every month has disturbed the financial balance of the board. In view of this, the board has sent a proposal to the State Electricity Regulatory Commission and advocated an increase in electricity rates from April 2025. The electricity board is providing supply to about 25 lakh domestic and other categories of consumers in Himachal. Due to the Lok Sabha elections in the year 2024, electricity did not become expensive in the state.

Yogi targets Congress, says 'Discovery of India' not country's oldest book

Agencies : Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath on Sunday targeted the Congress and other opposition parties over several issues, including their "exclusive ownership" claims on the country's legacy, Ram Temple, and proposed no-confidence motion against VP and Rajya Sabha chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar. Addressing the Hindustan Divya Mahakumbh 2025 conclave in Lucknow, Yogi said that those who ruled in the country for decades without delivering meaningful progress, are now criticising the present government. "They are troubled by how Kashi Vishwanath Dham was transformed. They are troubled by how Ram Mandir was built and how Ayodhya became so divine and grand.

In Maharashtra Cabinet Expansion, BJP Gets 19 Berths, Allies Get 20

Agencies : Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis went ahead with his cabinet expansion today -- more than three weeks after the assembly election results were declared. Thirty-nine ministers took oath at a grand programme in Nagpur --- his constituency. Maharashtra can have a maximum of 43 ministers. Nineteen of the ministers were from the BJP, eleven from the Shiv Sena and nine from the NCP - adding Mr Fadnavis and his deputies, 42 berths are full now. Mr Fadnavis attended the programme at the Raj Bhavan in Nagpur along with Mr Shinde and Mr Pawar. BJP's state unit chief Chandrashekar Bawankule, along with Ashish Shelar, Ganesh Naik, Mangal Prabhat Lodha, Pankaja Munde, Girish Mahajan, Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil, Chandrakant Patil, and Nitesh Rane, were among those who took the oath.



"Our History": Yogi Adityanath As Sambhal Temple Reopened After 46 Years

Agencies : As authorities reopened a temple in Sambhal locked since 1978 following communal riots, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday said the temple did not reappear overnight and represents "our enduring heritage and the truth of our history". Speaking at a private event on Kumbh, the chief minister highlighted the tragic incidents that took place 46 years ago in Sambhal where innocent people lost their lives to "barbaric violence", and questioned, "Why have perpetrators of the massacre not been brought to justice even after decades?" He criticised those who seek to "suppress the truth and tarnish cultural events" like the Kumbh, asserting that voices of truth often face threats and efforts to silence them. The chief minister spoke about the temple in Sambhal that was unlocked recently after decades, following an anti-encroachment drive by the local administration, according to an official statement.

Sri Lanka President Anura Kumara Dissanayake arrives in New Delhi for three-day visit

Agencies : Sri Lanka President Anura Kumara Dissanayake arrived in New Delhi on Sunday (December 15, 2024) for a three-day visit to boost bilateral ties and cooperation with India. Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, Dr. S. Murugan and other diplomatic officials welcomed Mr. Dissanayake upon his arrival in India. In his first overseas visit after assuming office, Mr. Dissanayake will have discussion bilateral matter with Minister of External Affairs Dr. S. Jaishankar, and National Security Advisor Shri Ajit Doval later tonight (December 15, 2024). His visit comes after Mr. Jaishankar's invitation to visit New Delhi.

'She may not understand': BJP on Priyanka Gandhi's barb on Prime Minister Modi's speech in Lok Sabha

Agencies : The Congress on Saturday termed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 11 resolutions he articulated in his speech in the Lok Sabha as "hollow" and called him a "distorian" par excellence who "puts WhatsApp University to shame." The opposition party also questioned why Prime Minister Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh were not present in the House when Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi spoke while participating in a two-day debate on the "Glorious Journey of 75 Years of the Constitution of India." PM Modi on Saturday said the Congress, having "tasted blood," repeatedly wounded the Constitution while his government's policies and decisions since it took office in 2014 have been aimed at boosting India's strength and unity in line with the Constitution.

Denied Cabinet Berth, Shiv Sena MLA Resigns From Party Post

Agencies : An MLA from Eknath Shinde's faction of Shiv Sena, peeved at being denied a cabinet berth, has resigned from a party post. Narendra Bhonekar was the deputy leader of the Shiv Sena and party coordinator for Vidarbha, where the BJP-led ruling alliance Mahayuti won 47 of 62 seats. The MLA of Bhandara-Pavani Assembly Constituency, however, has not resigned from the assembly. Mr Bhonekar -- a three-time MLA of Shiv Sena -- was promised a minister post. But he did not get a spot in the cabinet. He put in his papers today after his text messages to Eknath Shinde, senior leaders Uday Samant and Eknath Shinde's son Shrikant Shinde drew no response. Uday Samant took oath as a minister in the new cabinet of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis today. Mr Fadnavis today completed his cabinet expansion exercise as 39 MLAs took oath in Nagpur more than three weeks after the assembly election results were declared. Thirty-nine ministers took oath at a grand programme at the Raj Bhavan this evening.



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Shimla Winter Carnival: Punjabi singer Satinder Sartaj will rock the Shimla Winter Carnival, Star Night almost confirmed

Diary Times Desk : Famous Punjabi singer Satinder Sartaj can make a splash in the second Shimla Winter Carnival starting from December 24 in the capital Shimla. The Municipal Corporation is going to invite Sartaj for a star night. Talks have been held with Satinder Sartaj about this. Now talks are going on with him regarding the show fee and date. Satinder Sartaj will spread the magic of his voice for the first time in Shimla Winter Carnival. Earlier in the year 2023 also Sartaj had come to Shimla. However, then he had performed during the Summer Festival. One evening in the ten-day long Winter Carnival, Nati King Kuldeep Sharma will also add color. According to Municipal Corporation Mayor Surendra Chauhan, artists from the state are also being invited to the carnival. Talks have also been held with Kuldeep Sharma in this regard. Indian Idol fame Neha Dixit of Neri, Shimla will also participate in the Winter Carnival. According to the Municipal Corporation, there will be two star nights. For this, talks are being held with a Bollywood and a Punjabi artist. The names of all the artists will be decided in the next two-three days.



Lok Sabha defeats Rajya Sabha in Tuberculosis-awareness friendly cricket match

Agencies : It was a fun day out for Parliamentarians on Sunday as they were seen taking on each other again, but not inside the House this time, but on a cricket field in a friendly match played between them at Delhi's Major Dhyana Chand National Stadium to raise awareness against tuberculosis. A group of select MPs from both the Houses of Parliament and across party lines were divided into two teams -- namely, Lok Sabha Speaker's XI led by former Union Minister Anurag Singh Thakur, and Rajya Sabha Chairman's XI captained by Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju. The one-off match was titled as "TB-Free India Awareness Cricket Match". The Parliamentarians could be seen having a lot of fun during the match, which was eventually won by Anurag Thakur-led Lok Sabha Speaker's XI, who beat the Rajya Sabha Chairman's XI by 73 runs.

'Abusing power as CM': Karnataka BJP chief hits back at Siddaramaiah on corruption allegations

Agencies : Bharatiya Janata Party Karnataka chief BY Vijayendra hit back at Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah over him calling a CBI investigation into an alleged corruption case involving him, and accused him of "abusing" power. Vijayendra reacted after Siddaramaiah, in a post on X, alleged that the BJP leader tried to bribe Anwar Manippady, the former Minority Commission Chairman with ₹150 crore to suppress investigations into Waqf property encroachments. In the post, the Chief Minister also called for the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) inquiry into the matter. The Karnataka CM has alleged that the BJP state president visited the house of Anwar Manippady and offered the money. "Anwar Manippady had publicly stated that Vijayendra visited his house during B.S. Yediyurappa's tenure as CM and offered ₹150 crore to keep silent about the Waqf property encroachment report. He has further stated that Anwar sent Vijayendra out of his house and reported this incident to PM @narendramodi and the BJP President," he added. Siddaramaiah further said that Prime Minister Modi's 'silence' on the issue raises several questions. He also slammed the Karnataka BJP leaders, stating that the party has turned Karnataka into its "ATM." In response, Vijayendra slammed Siddaramaiah, questioning his moral standing on asking for an investigation while he himself is being accused.

'Nehru Model Failed, We're Trying To Correct It Since 2014': S Jaishankar

Agencies : A 'Nehru development model', inevitably produced a 'Nehru foreign policy' and "we seek to correct that abroad", just as efforts being made to "reform" the consequences of the model at home, External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar said on Saturday. In a virtual address at the launch of the book 'The Nehru Development Model' by former NITI Aayog vice chairman Arvind Panagariya, he also said the author suggests that former prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru's choices set India on a "deterministic path". "The model and its accompanying narrative permeated our politics, the bureaucracy, of course, the planning system, the judiciary, the public space, including the media, and most of all teaching," the Union minister said. Mr Jaishankar said both Russia and China today "unambiguously reject" the economic assumptions of that period, which they did more than anyone else to propagate. Yet, these very beliefs "appear to live on" in influential sections of our country even today. "Certainly after 2014, there has been a vigorous effort towards course correction, but the author does assert with good reasons that it still remains an uphill task."

Himachal Pradesh: Political uproar over serving chicken after samosas, know what Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu said

Diary Times Desk : After samosas, politics has heated up in Himachal on serving chicken in dinner after the Chief Minister's program. BJP made an issue of the chicken served by the villagers in Kupvi. Now, whether this chicken is wild or indigenous is a matter of investigation. BJP alleges that the chicken served in the program held in Tikkar of Kupvi is wild and its hunting is prohibited by law. BJP has also cited the viral video and alleged menu on social media for this. However, Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu has clarified the situation on this and said that he avoids both oily dishes and non-veg for health reasons. Desi chicken was served in the tikkar, not wild, which is a part of the hill culture of this region. Jairam Thakur is not getting any issue. On Friday night, villagers in Tikkar village of Kupvi organized dinner for the Chief Minister, Health Minister and other guests. An alleged video and menu of the conversation between CM Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu and others during this dinner has gone viral on social media. Based on this, many other leaders including Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur have made it an issue. However, on this, Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu said that BJP leaders have chosen this way to defame the villagers. Opposition leaders do not have any issue now. Sukhu said that the villagers are local. We do not eat, yet they were giving it to me. Non-veg food is a part of mountain life. This is spoiling the image of the villagers. On the question of wild chicken at dinner, the Chief Minister told the journalists that this is wrong, because what can we talk about something that has not happened. That chicken was not wild, it is a tribal tradition there. People there asked me if I eat chicken, I denied it. On this he said that it is not local and has not been bought from the market.

Kolkata Woman Beheaded, Chopped Into 3 Pieces For Rejecting Brother-In-Law

Agencies : A woman in her 30s in Kolkata rejected the advances of her brother-in-law. Refusing to accept the rejection, he first strangled her, then beheaded her, cut her body into three pieces, and then dumped the parts in a garbage vat behind a multi-storey building in south Kolkata's posh Tollygunge neighbourhood. The severed head, found Friday morning in the Regent Park area, was concealed in a polythene bag and spotted by locals, who immediately informed the police. Subsequent police investigations uncovered the torso and lower portion of the woman's body near a pond on Saturday. Atiur Rahman Laskar, the 35-year-old brother-in-law who works as a construction worker, has confessed to the crime. He revealed that he killed the woman, who worked as a domestic helper in the same area after she repeatedly spurned his romantic overtures. The woman, separated from her husband for two years, had been commuting to work daily with Laskar. According to Deputy Commissioner of Police Bidisha Kalita, the victim had started avoiding Laskar and even blocked his phone number. This rejection enraged him.



Himachal Pradesh: Report reveals that 3 districts of Himachal are in high risk category and 4 districts are in medium risk category in terms of flood



Diary Times Desk : Taking an important step towards tackling the challenges of climate change, a report mapping the risks of floods and droughts using the District-level Climate Risk Assessment IPCC framework for India has been released. This report has been prepared in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati, IIT Mandi and the Centre for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP), Bengaluru. This report was released on Friday. During this, IIT Mandi Director Prof. Laxmidhar Behera was also present. This report has revealed that three districts of Himachal are in the high risk category in terms of floods and four are in the medium risk category. Whereas in terms of drought, four are in the high risk category and six are in the medium risk category. In terms of floods, Kangra, Una and Bilaspur are in the high risk category, Mandi, Hamirpur, Solan and Sirmaur are in the medium risk category. In terms of drought, Una, Chamba, Kangra, Hamirpur are in the high risk category and Sirmaur, Shimla, Mandi, Bilaspur, Solan, Kullu are in the medium risk category.

HP Weather: Sunshine makes you sweat during the day, cold at night due to minus temperature; Know the weather update of Himachal

Diary Times Desk : While the sunshine is making people sweat during the day in Himachal, it is extremely cold at night with minus temperature. The night temperature in the capital Shimla has been recorded as the highest in the state. On Friday night, the minimum temperature in Shimla was recorded at 9.0 degrees. The night temperature in Una, Bilaspur, Mandi and Hamirpur districts is in minus. The minimum temperature was recorded in minus in 11 areas of Himachal on Friday night. The problem of slippery roads has increased due to water accumulation on the roads. The weather remained clear throughout the state on Saturday. The temperature in Kangra, Solan, Una, Bilaspur and Hamirpur was above 23 degrees. The weather is forecast to remain clear in the entire state till December 20. During this period, the minimum temperature will decrease further. Most areas including the capital Shimla remained sunny on Saturday. The weather remained clear on Saturday in the tribal area Lahaul and district Kullu. The sun shone from morning to evening and tourists enjoyed a lot in Koksar of Lahaul. The Jalori pass which was closed for buses has opened for corporation buses.

Himachal News: CCTV cameras installed in all police stations of Himachal Pradesh, know what is the whole matter

Diary Times Desk : In compliance with the orders of the Himachal Pradesh High Court, the affidavit filed by the DGP said that CCTV cameras have been installed in all the police stations of the state. In the affidavit filed in the court, it has been said that District Level Inspection Committee (DLOC) and State Level Inspection Limited (SLOC) have been formed in the state. Which will do the work of location and maintenance of CCTV cameras installed in police stations. The division bench of Acting Chief Justice Tarlok Singh Chauhan and Justice Satyen Vaidya has said that the instructions given in the Supreme Court's judgment Paramveer Singh vs Baljit Singh should be followed. In which the District Level Inspection Limited will ensure that CCTV cameras are installed and maintained at every police station. In this decision, the Supreme Court has directed the states that the entry and exit points of all police stations, the main gate of the police station, all lockups, lobby, all verandahs.

Shimla Accident: High speed wrecks havoc in Shimla! Two cars collide heavily, taxi overturns on the road; case registered

Diary Times Desk : A road accident took place on Sunday morning near Sankatmochan Temple on Shimla-Chandigarh National Highway. There was a fierce collision between two cars here, after which the Himachal Pradesh taxi HP-01-A-3165 overturned on the road, while the Delhi car number DL-3CBM-3259 also suffered heavy damage. The accident happened when a Shimla taxi and a Delhi car were coming at high speed. According to the information, the taxi driver was suddenly trying to change the way with his car. Meanwhile, the Delhi car hit the taxi, due to which the taxi overturned on the road. The taxi driver was badly injured in this collision, who was taken to IGMC hospital. At the same time, the Delhi car was also badly damaged, although the people in the car were slightly injured. After the collision, the traffic was completely disrupted. Due to this incident, there was a long jam on the road which caused a lot of trouble.

Shimla News: HPU hostels will remain open during winter holidays, still waiting for the approval of the Vice Chancellor

Diary Times Desk : The hostels will be kept open during the winter holidays from January 1 to February 18 in Himachal Pradesh University. After the demand being raised by the student organizations, this has been agreed upon in the meeting of the Warden Committee. Now these hostels will remain open for students and researchers from tribal areas. Apart from this, the students who want to stay in the hostel due to important work like internship, training included in the course, project etc. will also get this facility but approval will have to be taken for this. The proposal from the meeting of the Warden Committee has been sent to the Vice Chancellor for approval. A decision on this is expected by Monday. After this, the students living in the hostel will be given time to apply for staying in the hostel. For this, permission will have to be taken from the Chairman and Warden of the concerned department. Only after this will the students get the facility.

CM Sukhu: Chief Minister Sukhu gave the gift of projects worth Rs 31 crore to Nalagarh assembly constituency

Diary Times Desk : Chief Minister Sukhu also laid the foundation stone of three bridges including Kotla Kalan Bridge to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 5.77 crore, Retar Khad Bridge to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 4.44 crore and Bhatauli Khad Bridge to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 3.51 crore. The Chief Minister reiterated the State Government's commitment for the development of Nalagarh Assembly Constituency and said that there would be no dearth of resources for development here. He said that the present government was giving priority to equitable development in the entire State and all possible efforts were being made for the welfare of the people. Thakur Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu flagged off two ambulances donated to the District Red Cross Society. He expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the donors for their generous contribution and felicitated them for this noble deed. Nalagarh MLA Hardeep Bawa expressed his gratitude for these projects and said that the Chief Minister has special affection for the people of Nalagarh. On this occasion, Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr. (Colonel) Dhaniram Shandil, MLAs Ram Kumar, Sanjay Awasthi and Vinod Sultanpuri along with other dignitaries were also present.

Shimla News: Two brothers coming to Shimla by bike were arrested with chitta, police had set up a blockade in Shoghi

Diary Times Desk : Police has arrested two real brothers from Mohali, Punjab with 12.280 grams of chitta (heroin). Police has implemented this action during a blockade in Shoghi area late night. Police caught the accused when they were coming towards Shimla with chitta on a motorcycle. According to the information, Shimla Police had conducted patrolling and traffic checking campaign on NH-05 near Shoghi Housing Board Colony. During this, the police stopped a motorcycle coming from Chandigarh for routine checking. There were two people riding in it. When the police investigated, 12.280 grams of chitta (heroin) was recovered from their possession. The accused have been identified as Davinder Singh (28) and Mandeep Singh (34), residents of Mohali Punjab. Police has arrested both the accused by registering a case against them under various sections of NDPS Act in Balaganj police station. SP Shimla Sanjeev Gandhi said that drug smugglers will not be spared under any circumstances. He appealed to the people to inform the police about the drug business. Drug smuggling can be stopped only with their cooperation.

"If Pranab Mukherjee Were PM...": Mani Shankar Aiyar On Congress' 2014 Rout

Agencies : The result of the 2014 general election, which saw the BJP storm into power, would have been different and the Congress would not have suffered a humiliating defeat if Pranab Mukherjee was made Prime Minister and Dr Manmohan Singh the President during the UPA-II government, veteran Congress leader Mani Shankar Aiyar has said. The former Union Minister spoke to news agency PTI about his new book, *A Maverick In Politics*, in which he has chronicled his political journey and also narrated developments of national importance that he witnessed during that journey. Speaking about the Congress's worst Lok Sabha polls performance in 2014 -- it won just 44 seats --, Mr Aiyar said that a major factor behind the Congress's dismal show was "no governance" in 2013.

"My Grandson Dead Or Alive?": Atul Subhash's Father After Nikita Arrested

Agencies : Hours after Atul Subhash's estranged wife Nikita Singhania, her mother Nisha and brother Anurag were arrested for allegedly abetting his suicide, the techie's father Pawan Kumar Modi has questioned where Atul's four-year-old son is and said the family was worried about him. Speaking to news agency ANI, Mr Modi thanked the police for arresting Nikita and her family members in the abetment to suicide case. "We don't know where she has kept our grandson. Has he been killed or is he alive? We don't know anything about him. I want my grandson to be with us," he said. "I thank the police and law enforcement. At least they have been arrested," Mr Modi said. The family has decided not to immerse Atul's ashes till they get justice. "We have brought his ashes. We are religious, but we will not immerse his ashes till we get justice." Mr Modi alleged that the judge hearing Atul's case in Jaunpur family court was corrupt. "She asked him for money. He was not someone who would pay bribes. He was ready to pay a penalty, but never bribe." The elderly father, who lost his 34-year-old son last week, broke down and said he had never seen his grandson. The child was born in 2020 and Nikita and Atul separated the next year. "We appeal to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav to ensure we get our grandson.

Modi govt reverses decision to introduce 'ONOE' bills in Lok Sabha on Monday



Agencies : In a surprise move, the Narendra Modi government has reversed its decision to introduce two 'One Nation, One Election' bills in Lok Sabha on Monday, within hours of indicating its intention to do so. Government sources indicated that the bills are likely to be brought later this week as they want to first pass the first batch of supplementary demands for grants before any other business. The Winter Session of Parliament is scheduled to conclude on December 20. Major Opposition parties are against the proposal to hold simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and state Assemblies and they are likely to raise strong objections at the introduction stage itself. The List of Business for Monday was published on the Lok Sabha website and it included Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal introducing The Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill, 2024 and The Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill.

AAP Replies To BJP's Dare: Arvind Kejriwal, Atishi To Fight Current Seats

Agencies : Arvind Kejriwal will contest the upcoming Delhi Assembly election from his current constituency New Delhi, the fourth and last list of candidates Aam Aadmi Party released today shows. Delhi Chief Minister Atishi and ministers Saurabh Bharadwaj and Gopal Rai are sticking to their current seats, Kalkaji, Greater Kailash and Babarpur, respectively. AAP has now released the names of its candidates for all 70 seats in the Delhi Assembly. Shortly after AAP released its final list of candidates, Mr Kejriwal said the party would contest these polls with full confidence and preparations. "The BJP is invisible. They don't have a Chief Minister face, a team or a plan, or a vision for Delhi. They have just one slogan -- 'remove Kejriwal'. Ask them what they have done for five years, they will say 'we abused Kejriwal'," said the former Chief Minister, who has resigned from the post and said he would return only after the verdict in the "people's court"

"Can't Say You Don't Like EVMs Because...": Ally Junks Congress' Charge

Agencies : At a time when Congress and its allies have raised questions on the Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) and demanded a return to ballot voting, INDIA alliance member National Conference has said one has to be "consistent" in questioning the voting method. Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, also the vice-president of Congress ally National Conference, told news agency PTI in an interview that it is wrong to question EVMs only when results don't meet expectations. "When you get a hundred plus members of Parliament using the same EVMs.

"Congress Must Earn Its Place As INDIA Bloc Leader": Omar Abdullah

Agencies : Acknowledging growing discontent among INDIA bloc partners with the Congress, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has asked the party to justify its leadership role in the alliance instead of taking it for granted. Abdullah, while recognising the Congress' significant position as a pan-India party and the largest opposition in Parliament, emphasised that leadership "has to be earned" and cannot be taken for granted. He also suggested that the party should raise the issue of restoration of statehood in J&K.

Sambhal officials reopen ancient temple closed since riots in 1978

Agencies : The Sambhal district officials on Friday reopened an ancient temple that had been locked since communal riots in the town in 1978. The authorities happened to "stumble" upon the temple house during an anti-encroachment in the area near the Shahi Jama Masjid, only to find a Hanuman idol and Shivaling there, PTI reported. Locals claimed that the Bhasma Shankar temple had remained since 1978 after the communal riots resulted in the displacement of the local Hindu community there. Meanwhile, SDM Vandana Misra, who was leading a campaign.

Kirti Kisan Forum expresses concern over farmer leader Jagjit Dallewal's health

Agencies : The Kirti Kisan Forum (KKF), an outfit of former IAS, IPS, Army officers and social activists, on Saturday expressed concern over the deteriorating health of farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal, who has been on a fast-unto-death at the Khanauri (Punjab-Haryana) border since November 26. The forum urged the government authorities to act fast to resolve the farmers issues. Appreciating the struggle launched by Dallewal and his associates to serve the cause of small and marginal farmers, who are facing bad times, the forum has urged all farmer bodies to sink their differences and join hands to fight collectively for their demands.



Russia, Turkey struggle to realign strategy for post-al Assad Syria

Agencies : The fall of the Bashar al-Assad regime at the hands of the rebel coalition forces comprising Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and the Syrian National Army (SNA) led by Abu Mohammed al-Jolani, has thrown new challenges for the troubled nation. With Assad's departure, the conflict has transitioned into an uncertain phase with key players like Russia and Turkey, deeply entrenched in the region's geopolitics. Syria's geopolitical positioning and alliances have always underscored its strategic significance. It hosts critical Russian military installations, including the naval facility at Tartus and the Khmeimim air base. These bases have been crucial for Russia's assertion in the Middle East, doubling as logistical hubs for operations in North Africa and the Sahel.

Bangladesh commission says Sheikh Hasina involved in enforced disappearances

Agencies : An inquiry commission in Bangladesh said on Saturday that former premier Sheikh Hasina and some officials of security forces and her government were involved in enforced disappearances. The Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances also recommended the disbanding of the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) in a report submitted to caretaker administration chief Muhammad Yunus. The commission submitted its first interim report to Yunus on Saturday, according to an official statement. There was no immediate response to the development from Hasina, who is currently in India, or her Awami League party. Hasina stepped down in the face of widespread protests led by student groups and fled to India in August. The interim government led by Nobel laureate Yunus was formed days later. Yunus and other officials have spoken about seeking Hasina's extradition from India, though no formal request has been made so far. The five-member commission led by retired justice Mainul Islam Chowdhury handed over the report titled "Unfolding The Truth" to Yunus.

South Korea's president reportedly defies summons in martial law inquiry



Agencies : South Korea's conservative president, Yoon Suk Yeol, has reportedly failed to obey a summons from prosecutors investigating him on charges including insurrection as he faces impeachment after declaring martial law. Yoon, who was sent a summons on Wednesday requesting him to appear for questioning at 10am local time on Sunday, did not show up, according to the Yonhap news agency. Yoon and other senior officials are being investigated on possible charges of insurrection, abuse of authority and obstructing people from exercising their rights. Yonhap said prosecutors - who are also seeking arrest warrants for senior military officials, including the head of the army special warfare command and the chief of the capital defence command - plan to issue another summons for the president.

India's crude oil imports from Russia drop 55% in November, lowest since June 2022

Agencies : India's import of Russian crude dropped to its lowest level since June 2022 in November this year, reported the news agency PTI on Sunday, December 15, citing a Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) report. "India's imports of Russian crude oil dropped by a massive 55 per cent in November - the lowest figure since June 2022," the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) said in its latest report, quoted the news agency. According to the European think tank's report, Russia still remains as the largest supplier of crude oil to India, followed by Iraq and Saudi Arabia. India became the second largest buyer of Russian crude since the Russia-Ukraine war began in February 2022. The crude imports from Russia to India increased to nearly 40 per cent of India's total oil purchases, compared to its earlier level of less than 1 per cent, as per the news report.

Donald Trump to get \$15 million from ABC News over anchor's 'liable for rape' remark

Agencies : ABC News will pay \$15 million (approx. ₹127.5 crore) to Donald Trump, as the two sides reached a settlement to resolve a defamation lawsuit brought by the US President-elect, court documents filed on Saturday showed. Under the terms of the settlement, ABC News will donate the money to a fund dedicated to a "presidential foundation" and museum for Trump. The Republican leader filed the lawsuit over on-air comments by George Stephanopoulos, a top anchor at the news network, suggesting that the former was found "liable for rape." Stephanopoulos made the remark while interviewing Nancy Mace, a Republican Senator, in March. ABC News and Stephanopoulos will also issue public apologies saying they "regret statements" made about Trump during the interview, and the broadcaster will also pay \$1 million, separately, as attorney fees.



Indian Student Killed, 2 Others Injured In US Crash

Agencies : An Indian student has been killed and two others injured in a road accident in the US, officials said. The accident occurred when their car collided with another vehicle just after midnight Friday in Memphis, a city in the US state of Tennessee. The victim has been identified as 26-year-old Naga Sri Vandana Parimala, who was reportedly pursuing a Master of Science (MS) degree at the University of Memphis. She was rushed to a hospital, where she died, police said. A daughter of a businessman in Andhra Pradesh's Guntur district, Ms Parimala had moved to the US in 2022 for higher studies. Two other students - Pavan and Nikith - were also taken to the hospital, where the former is said to be in critical condition.

Captagon, once a pharma drug, now linked to Assad regime's fall in Syria

Agencies : Bashar al-Assad's brutality was already a significant enough factor contributing to the downfall of his regime in Syria at the hands of rebel groups. Now, vast quantities of the illicit drug 'captagon' are also reportedly linked to his downfall. Syrian rebels, led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), seized large stockpiles of captagon at military bases and distribution centres, revealing the darker aspects of Assad's rule. Earlier, AFP reported that captagon pills were found hidden inside electrical components destined for export at a quarry on the outskirts of the capital, Damascus. The factory, a HTS fighter said, is for Maher al-Assad, a military commander and the brother of the ousted Syrian president.

Luigi Mangione's Lawyer Karen Friedman-Agnifilo Married To Diddy's Attorney

Agencies : Luigi Mangione, the University of Pennsylvania graduate accused of murdering UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson, has hired high-profile lawyer Karen Friedman-Agnifilo to defend him. Interestingly, Ms Friedman-Agnifilo's husband, Marc Agnifilo, is currently representing rapper Sean "Diddy" Combs in his ongoing sex trafficking case. Karen Friedman-Agnifilo served as the Chief Assistant District Attorney of the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, overseeing approximately 500 lawyers, 700 support staff, and 80,000 cases annually, as per her website. She was responsible for policy matters, including the Criminal Justice Investment Initiative, which involved investing \$800 million in criminal asset.

Punjab DGP, MHA Director meet fasting farmer leader Dallewal; urge him to get medical aid

Agencies : The Punjab Director-General of Police, along with a senior officer in the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, on Sunday met fasting farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal and enquired about his health. Punjab Police chief Police Gaurav Yadav and Director in the Ministry of Home Affairs Mayank Mishra reached the Khanauri border point where Dallewal has been sitting on fast unto death since November 26, and also heard his demands. The 70-year-old Dallewal, a cancer patient, has been on a fast-unto-death at the Khanauri border point between Punjab and Haryana to press the Centre to accept the agitating farmers' demands, including a legal guarantee of MSP on crops. Their visit came two days after the Supreme Court directed the Centre and Punjab government representatives to immediately meet Dallewal. The top court had further directed that the farmer leader be provided medical help and persuaded him to break his indefinite fast, saying his life was precious. DIG Mandeep Singh Sidhu, Patiala SSP Nanak Singh, Patiala Deputy Commissioner Preeti Yadav, former ADGP Jaskaran Singh, former DIG Narinder Bhargava were also present in the meeting as Dallewal's fast unto death entered the 20th day.



Women panel vice-chief, arrested in bribery case, sent to judicial custody

Agencies : A local court here on Sunday remanded Haryana State Women Commission vice-chairperson Sonia Aggarwal to judicial custody, while her personal assistant (PA)-cum-driver Kulbir was sent to one-day police remand. The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) team of Jind had on Saturday evening arrested Aggarwal and Kulbir was caught red-handed while allegedly taking a bribe of Rs 1 lakh in lieu of making settlement in a marital dispute of a couple.

Panipat admn aims at making NH-44 a 'model road'

Agencies : The district administration has decided to make a model road in the globally known 'Textile City' by decongesting the NH-44 and covering it with the high-resolution CCTV surveillance system. The CCTV camera project, however, was planned last one year and is still stuck in files. The district administration and the police department had conducted a survey and identified 106 sensitive points in the city to install 250 cameras around one year ago. The district police have started working to identify more such points where high-resolution CCTV cameras will be installed. Besides, the district administration has also made a plan to purchase its own recovery van to deal with the traffic rule violators, especially those who park their vehicles on road or on the service lanes. Sources said police teams conducted a survey and prepared a detailed project report (DPR) of sensitive points, the maximum being on the highways and outer roads in the city, to install the CCTV cameras. DSP, Traffic, Suresh Kumar Saini said the main motive was to make a congestion free-model road in the city where traffic moves smoothly, he said. Under the project, the NH-44 on both sides of the elevated highway – from the start point at toll plaza to end of the elevated highway near Sewah – would be included, the DSP traffic said. This zone would be covered with the CCTV cameras which reads the number plate of a vehicle. Those speeding, jumping red lights or driving on wrong lanes would be challaned automatically, he said. SP Lokender Singh said the teams were working on the project sincerely to make a model road in the city. The project was being carried out jointly with the district administration and the Municipal Corporation, he added. Deputy Commissioner Virender Dahiya said the CCTV installation project.

Inter-state gun-running racket busted in Amritsar; 2 arrested

Agencies : The Punjab Police busted an inter-state gun-running racket backed by a US-based handler with the arrest of two members, Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav said on Sunday. The police seized 10 country-made pistols along with 20 magazines and ammunition from the pair, he added. The arrested accused have been identified as Satnam Singh alias Prince of Buttar Kalan and Manjit Singh of Bhagi Nangal in Batala of Gurdaspur district. Investigations revealed that Satnam was primarily in touch with his US-based handler, Sunny Masih alias Gulli, wanted in multiple heroin smuggling cases. For his convenience, Satnam involved his relative Manjit in peddling drugs and transporting illegal weapons, Yadav said. The investigations also revealed that the accused procured illegal weapons from Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand on the directions of Masih to supply them to Punjab-based gangsters. Further investigations are under way to unearth the network, the police chief said.

Women panel summons Dhami over remarks against Jagir Kaur

Agencies : The Punjab State Women Commission has summoned SGPC president Harjinder Singh Dhami for passing derogatory remarks against his predecessor Bibi Jagir Kaur. In a notice, the commission directed Dhami to appear in person at its office in Mohali and submit a written explanation regarding the incident by December 17. Failure to comply with the notice will result in the commission recommending appropriate legal action under the Punjab State Women Commission Act, 2001, to the relevant authorities. Commission chairperson Raj Lali Gill has issued the notice to Dhami regarding his offensive comments about former SGPC president and political leader Bibi Jagir Kaur. Gill said the commission had taken the matter seriously and reaffirmed its commitment to safeguarding the rights, dignity, and honour of women in Punjab.

Sarwan Pandher urges SKM to join hands with protesting farmers



Agencies : Punjab farmer leader Sarwan Singh Pandher on Sunday said he has written to the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) to join hands with the farmers protesting at Punjab-Haryana border points over their various demands, including a legal guarantee on the MSP for crops. His statement came days after SKM leader Rakesh Tikait called for unity of farmers for a "joint fight" to press the Centre to accept their demands. Farmers under the banner of Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha are spearheading the 'Delhi Chalo march' and have been camping at Shambhu and Khanauri border points between Punjab and Haryana since February 13 after their march to Delhi was stopped by security forces.

Cold wave persists in Punjab, Haryana; Faridkot remains coldest with 1°C

Agencies : Cold weather conditions continued to grip Punjab and Haryana on Sunday, with Faridkot being the coldest place in the region at a minimum temperature of one degree Celsius, the meteorological department said. In Punjab, Gurdaspur and Bathinda also experienced chilly nights, recording minimum temperatures of two degrees Celsius and 4.6 degrees Celsius, respectively, it said. Pathankot registered a low of 3.5 degrees Celsius, while Amritsar shivered at 3.9 degrees Celsius, the weather office said. It said that Ludhiana logged a minimum temperature of 6.8 degrees Celsius and Patiala registered a low of 3.8 degrees Celsius. In Haryana, Hisar recorded a chill of 1.7 degrees Celsius while Narnaul registered a minimum temperature of 3 degrees Celsius, the Met department said. Piercing cold also swept Bhiwani, which recorded a low of 4 degrees and Gurugram logged a minimum temperature of 5.6 degrees Celsius, it added. Rohtak logged a low of 5.2 degrees and Ambala registered 5.7 degrees Celsius, the department said. The weather office said that Chandigarh, Haryana and Punjab's common capital.

Udaipur residents divided over land acquisition for road project

Diary Times Desk : Residents of Udaipur panchayat in Lahaul and Spiti district are divided over the land to be acquired for the widening of the Sansari-Killar-Thirot-Tandi (SKTT) road, a strategic project aimed at improving connectivity between Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir. The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) is executing the project, sparking a heated debate among locals. The controversy centres around the acquisition of 12.04 bighas of private land for the road's expansion. While the owners of seven bighas have agreed to the acquisition, the rest of the landowners, particularly those with small plots, are opposing the project. Many of these settlers, owning no more than three to four biswa, fear displacement and the loss of their agricultural land and ancestral homes. A special gram sabha had recently issued a consent letter for the project's approval, with a majority of participants supporting land acquisition on the current alignment of the road. Of the total 71 participants, 47 had favored the acquisition, while 24 raised objections.

1.43L Solan residents to be screened for TB

Diary Times Desk : As many as 1.43 lakh out of the about 5.65 lakh people in Solan district will be screened for tuberculosis under a 100-day intensive tuberculosis-free campaign. The district has 48 tuberculosis-free panchayats which were granted the bronze certificate. They will move to the silver level if they maintain this status next year. The Health Department aims to cover 192 panchayats of the district while moving towards making it tuberculosis free. In the rural areas, the emergence of one case per 1,000 population will qualify a panchayat to be declared tuberculosis free. "Under the campaign, 1.43 lakh people, who fall in the high risk category comprising those having diabetes, asthma, HIV, those on dialysis, people residing in slums, etc, will be screened for 10 symptoms," said Gagandeep Hans, District Programme Officer. There are 1,660 tuberculosis patients undergoing treatment in the district. In 2023, there were 1,766 patients while in 2022, the department had identified 1,760 patients. At least 10 per cent of the patients comprise migratory.

Enrolment up to Class VIII in govt schools down by 50K in Himachal this year



Diary Times Desk : The decline in enrolment in government schools continues. As compared to the last academic session (2023-24), the number of students from Class I to VIII has dropped by over 50,000 in the current academic session. As against 4.80 lakh students in the last academic session up to Class VIII, there are 4.26 lakh students in the current academic session. Incidentally, the enrolment in the government schools has been declining over the past many years. From a robust strength of around six lakh students during 2003-2004 in primary classes, the number has come down to mere 2.36 lakh students, a decline of around 60 per cent. In the same period, the enrolment in the upper primary section (Class VI to VIII) has dropped from around 3.75 lakh to around 1.90 lakh students, a drop of around 50 per cent. While the exodus to private schools continues to be a major reason for the declining enrolment in government schools, Elementary Education Director Ashish Kohli points out two more factors – fixing six years age for admission to Class I and the declining total fertility rate in the state – as the possible reasons for the decline in enrolment in this academic session.

HP High Court: FIR not registered even after complaint, orders of investigation against police officers, know the whole matter

Diary Times Desk : The Himachal High Court has ordered an inquiry against the guilty police officers for delaying in registering an FIR after receiving information or complaint. A division bench of Acting Chief Justice Tarlok Singh Chauhan and Justice Satyen Vaidya passed these orders while hearing three separate cases. The division bench, citing a judgment of the Supreme Court, said that it is mandatory to register an FIR within 48 hours after receiving information and complaint, despite this, the police is not registering a case even after receiving a complaint in sensitive cases. The division bench said that even after the instructions of the constitutional bench of the apex court, the orders are being flouted in police stations and the fundamental rights of the people are being violated. The Supreme Court has clearly said in the case that if the information received reveals a cognizable offence, then it will be mandatory to register an FIR and in such a situation no preliminary investigation is required. If the police does not find the information to be solid, then in such cases the complainant will have to be informed about closing the case within a week.

Kullu News: Residential house burnt to ashes in Rumali village of Ani, loss worth lakhs; accident occurred at night



Diary Times Desk : A massive fire broke out at around 1 am in the village of Rumali of Lafali Phaati Buchhair Panchayat of Ani area of Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh, in which a residential house of eight rooms was reduced to ashes. Lakhs of rupees worth of property including two sheep, one cow, gold jewellery and cash worth 70 thousand rupees have been lost in the accident. On receiving the information, fire brigade from Ani and Kumarsain reached the spot, but before they could reach, the strong flames of the fire had reduced everything to ashes. An inquiry has been ordered to find out the cause of the fire. Efforts are being made by the administration to provide temporary relief to the affected family.

Jairam Thakur: Leader of Opposition said- Despite repeated refusals and lies, the government is bringing the guest teacher policy

Diary Times Desk : Former CM and Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur said that despite repeated assurances to the people of the state, the government has backtracked and has come up with a rule to recruit teachers under the Guest Teacher Policy. Under the Guest Teacher Policy, teachers will teach students on an hourly basis. This matter had come to light earlier as well, which was strongly opposed by the youth of the state, after which the government had announced to withdraw this policy. After this, the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister, Education Minister of the state had also assured the youth of the state that the government will not bring any such policy which is a fraud with the youth. Due to the failure of the government, parents are avoiding government schools in the state this session. This is the failure of the government because the education of the people of the state is not at all a priority of the government. That is why the Sukhu government closed more than five hundred schools. Jairam Thakur said that from the election campaign to the formation of the government, the representatives of the government told the youth of the state that they will be given permanent jobs with ten years of service, pension. Therefore, the youth of the state need not worry. Trust us. When the youth gave assurance, what did they get in return from the government? Congress made exaggerated promises during the elections. Despite the guarantee of providing one lakh jobs every year, the government is planning to provide jobs to the youth on hourly basis.



Tons from Head, Smith put Australia in the box seat

Diary Times Desk : Travis Head and Steve Smith scored centuries as the duo laid into India's bowling on a largely well-mannered surface at The Gabba, to put Australia in the box seat to dictate proceedings for the three remaining days of the Brisbane Test. Head continued to be the scourge of India as his 160-ball 152 marked his third ton in six innings against India, including two from the last two. Smith has historically enjoyed playing India in this format and got to his 10th ton against them, and 33rd overall, but his battling 101 was just his first three-figure score in a lean 2024, ending a sequence of low scores. The pair's 241-run stand for the fourth wicket either side of Jasprit Bumrah's bursts that led to another five-fer - his 12th in just 43 Tests - took the hosts to a commanding 405 for 7 at Stumps. The Head-Smith partnership, that spanned just three deliveries short of 50 overs, served not only to put the hosts in the ascendancy at a delicate juncture of the series but also shone a harsh spotlight on some of India's decision making, including the one to bowl first. More crucially, the visitors were also left to ponder their bowling resources and depth for the conditions. Between them, India's fourth and fifth bowlers - Nitish Reddy and Ravindra Jadeja - bowled 29 overs for 141 runs and one wicket.



Short TAKES

Amidst Test recall speculation, Shami picked in Bengal's VHT squad

Agencies : Even as uncertainty continues over Mohammed Shami's availability for the ongoing Border Gavaskar Trophy (BGT) Down Under, the ace pacer has been included in the Bengal squad for the Vijay Hazare Trophy (VHT) competition. Along with Mukesh Kumar, another international, Shami has been made part of the squad for the 50-over tournament which starts across centres from December 21. "India star pacers Mohammed Shami and Mukesh Kumar will form a strong Bengal bowling attack while the young Sudip Kumar Gharami will lead the team in the forthcoming Vijay Hazare Trophy," a Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) release said on Saturday. Shami has been a subject of heightened interest within the Indian team setup. While speculation has been growing about the pacer's inclusion in the BGT squad, Cricbuzz reported on December 7 that the real dilemma on the pacer is not when he will join, but whether he will be included at all.

India's coach falls over after getting struck on the head during 3rd Australia Gabba Test, players rush to check on him

Diary Times Desk : After a rain-marred Day 1 at the Gabba in Brisbane on Saturday, the second day at the iconic venue witnessed early drama in both the Indian and the Australian camps. For the visitors, one of their assistant coaches was hit on the head during the team's warm-up on Day 2, and he fell over immediately. Meanwhile, for the hosts, Jasprit Bumrah struck twice early to leave Australia two down at the start of Sunday. The incident in the Indian camp happened when the team was gearing up for the start of the second day of the third Test match of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy series. Nuwan Seneviratne, India's throwdown specialist coach, was throwing balls during a fielding drill when it happened, according to a report by Channel 7. As the Sri Lanka international was preparing to catch a ball, he was unaware that a different ball was heading in his direction from another angle. It struck him straight on his head, and he fell over on the ground. The sight left players and other Indian support staff concerned as they rushed towards Seneviratne immediately. The former cricketer lay on the ground, clutching his head for several minutes, before he was helped to get on his feet.

World Chess Body Reacts To Claims Of Ding Liren 'Deliberately Losing' To D Gukesh

Diary Times Desk : The International Chess Federation (FIDE) has reacted to the claims of China's Ding Liren losing to India's D Gukesh on purpose during the recently-concluded 2024 World Chess Championship match in Singapore. In the aftermath of Gukesh's history success, Ding was accused of deliberately losing the match by Russian Chess Federation chief Andrei Filatov. Russian news agency TASS quoted Filatov asking the International Chess Federation (FIDE) to open a probe and investigate the result. For the unversed, Ding made a huge blunder in the decisive Game 14, moving the Rook adjacent to his King, which allowed Gukesh to become the youngest-ever world chess champion. "The result of the last game caused bewilderment among professionals and chess fans. The actions of the Chinese chess player in the decisive segment are extremely suspicious and require a separate investigation by FIDE," Filatov told TASS. "Losing the position in which Ding Liren was is difficult even for a first-class player. The defeat of the Chinese chess player in today's game raises a lot of questions and looks like a deliberate one," he added.

Jasprit Bumrah Faces 'Racial Slur' On Commentary; Fans Reminded Of 'Monkeygate' Scandal

Agencies : Former England women's cricket team star Isa Guha found herself in the middle of a massive controversy after making a racially insensitive remark about Jasprit Bumrah on commentary during Day 2 of the third Test encounter against Australia on Sunday. Following the dismissals of Nathan McSweeney and Usman Khawaja, legendary Australia pacer Brett Lee was left impressed by Bumrah's bowling and he went on to share his thoughts. "Bumrah, today: five overs, 2-4. So, that's the tone, and that's what you want from the ex-skipper," Lee said on FOX Cricket. In response, Guha referred to Bumrah as the "Most Valuable Primate" - a comment that sparked a massive row and earned her a lot of criticism from the fans. "Well, he's the MVP, isn't he? Most valuable primate, Jasprit Bumrah," she said. The incident quickly went viral on social media and many fans drew parallels to the infamous 'Monkeygate' scandal in 2008 where Harbhajan Singh was accused by Andrew Symonds of allegedly calling him a "monkey". Meanwhile, bowling coach Morne Morkel on Sunday accepted that Indian bowlers failed to execute plans against Australian century-maker Travis Head.

"Do Mongrels Simply Purr?": Sunil Gavaskar Hits Back At Australia Crowd Booming Mohammed Siraj

Agencies : Former India cricketer and cricket pundit Sunil Gavaskar has lashed out at Australia's cricketers and the public for portraying Indian pacer Mohammed Siraj in poor light following his fiery send-off to Australian batter Travis Head during the second Test at Adelaide. Amid widespread criticism from Australian fans towards Siraj, Gavaskar has called out the apparent hypocrisy, stating that the same fans would cheer had it been an Australian who gave the send-off. Gavaskar also expressed his surprise at the incident. Gavaskar went as far as saying that should the Australian team choose to be "mongrels", they would be backed by their fans. "Siraj is getting the stick from all the 'saints' in Australian cricket who, of course, were known for their impeccable behaviour on the field. It may have incensed Australian fans that Siraj's fiery send-off was directed at Head, who scored a magnificent century, and was also the local boy," Gavaskar wrote in his column for the Sydney Morning Herald.

