

Himachal Chief Justice: Gurmeet Sandhawalia became the 30th Chief Justice of Himachal High Court, Governor administered the oath



Diary Times Desk : On Sunday, Justice Gurmeet Singh Sandhawalia took the oath of office and secrecy as the Chief Justice of Himachal High Court. He will be the 30th Chief Justice of Himachal High Court. Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla administered the oath to Justice Gurmeet Singh Sandhawalia at the Raj Bhavan. Chief Justice Gurmeet Singh told the media that coming to Himachal Pradesh is like coming home for him. He has been coming to Himachal Pradesh earlier also. Earlier Himachal Pradesh was a part of Punjab. He said that it is a comparatively small state and crime cases are also less here. Most of the cases here are related to service and civil. He said that he will try to settle the cases as soon as possible with the cooperation of everyone. He said that he himself has also been a lawyer. In such a situation, he understands the problems faced by the people in a better way. He will try that people get justice instead of dates.

Himachal News: Shock to farmers of Himachal Pradesh, fertilizers will become costlier by Rs 240 from the new year; Know the new prices

Diary Times Desk : Farmers are going to get a financial shock at the beginning of the new year. The government has decided to increase the prices of DAP and 12-32-16 fertilizers used before sowing the crop. The price of a bag of DAP fertilizer has been increased by Rs 240. At the same time, the price of a bag of 12-32-16 fertilizer has been increased by Rs 200. From January 1, farmers will have to pay the increased prices of fertilizers. Currently, a 50 kg bag of DAP fertilizer is available for Rs 1,350 across the country. In Himachal, the state government gives a subsidy of Rs 50 per bag on it. Therefore, farmers pay Rs 1,300 per bag.

Minister's 1984 Riots Response To Rahul Gandhi's "Sikh PM Insulted" Charge

Agencies : Hitting back at the Congress over its allegations of mismanagement at the state funeral of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said this was not the time to score "cheap political shots". Congress leaders, led by Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi, have accused the BJP of insulting the former Prime Minister by organising the cremation ceremony at Delhi's Nigambodh Ghat. In an interview with NDTV, Union Minister Puri said Mr Gandhi was trying to "mix facts with fiction". He said the day after Dr Singh's death, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called a cabinet meeting and it was decided that the former Prime Minister would be given a state funeral of the highest order. He said the Union Home Ministry also agreed to Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge's request for a memorial for Dr Singh.



"You Think Rohingyas Will Vote For BJP?" Minister On AAP's 'Op Lotus' Claim

Agencies : Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Sunday dismissed the Aam Aadmi Party's allegations of operating "Operation Lotus" in Delhi for voter manipulation and challenged the notion that Rohingyas, whom AAP has accused the party of settling in Delhi for votes, would ever support the BJP. In a sharp rebuttal to AAP's accusations of voter manipulation, Hardeep Puri questioned the credibility of the claims. Do you think that the Rohingyas, in any condition, will vote for the BJP? There is no chance that they will vote for us," Hardeep Puri asserted, turning the tables on the accusations. When asked about, AAP's charges that 'Operation Lotus' is being operated in Delhi from December 15 wherein BJP has cut out 5000 voters and added 7000 voters. Replying to the allegations, Hardeep Puri said, "This is the same Arvind Kejriwal and the same Aam Aadmi Party that were claiming that the BJP has brought Rohingyas to Delhi. We (BJP) have clarified everything in connection with this. Do you think that the Rohingyas in any condition will vote for the BJP? There is no chance that they will vote for us." "This has all been done by the AAP. These 'illegal infiltrators' have been brought and settled by them for votes. If you cut these votes, I say it will be very good for our democratic process. Arvind Kejriwal says one thing and the very next moment changes his stance on that," said Mr Puri. The BJP leader's response underscores the idea that the party believes allegations of settling Rohingyas in Delhi for electoral gain are baseless. They contend that any suggestion that the Rohingyas--whom AAP has painted as a vote bank for BJP--would vote for the party is far-fetched. Mr Puri on Sunday also attacked AAP convenor Arvind Kejriwal.

BJP Vs Congress in Karnataka Over Contractor's Suicide

Agencies : The suicide of a contractor in Karnataka and his allegations against an aide of Priyank Kharge -- Karnataka minister and the son of Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge -- is becoming the next flashpoint between the BJP and the Congress. A BJP member of Rajya Sabha took at dig at Kharge senior with a post on X, saying while he is "busy saving democracy in Delhi, this is what is happening in his backyard, the Republic of Kalaburgi". His son, who acts like a great constitutional expert, is getting into one trouble after another. This is not the only thing that is happening, the details of Kharge Ji's family trusts and land scams are also tumbling out one after the other. His family trust was recently forced to return 5 acres of KIADB land in Bengaluru, taken under the Dalit quota. Thanks to Smt. Sonia Gandhi's RTI legislation, the documents are rich in details," added Lahar Singh Siroya in his post.

India-Australia FTA enabled over 14% export growth in 2023-24: Piyush Goyal

Agencies : The India- Australia free trade agreement has been a "landmark" pact that enabled growth in exports by over 14% in 2023-24 and increased market access for Indian exporters, commerce minister Piyush Goyal said on the second anniversary of the India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA). "This landmark agreement has brought with it increased market access for Indian exporters, expanded opportunities for MSMEs and farmers, and generated several employment avenues," he said in a post on X. India signed an FTA with Australia on April 2, 2022 that was operationalised on December 29, 2022. He said the agreement also gave "notable boost" in IT/ITeS, business and travel services and post-study work and work holiday visas. "Since its signing, bilateral merchandise trade has more than doubled, surging from \$12.2 billion in 2020-21 to \$26 billion in 2022-23. Total trade, however, moderated in the year 2023-24 to \$24 billion in 2023-24, with India's exports to Australia growing by 14%. The current fiscal year continues to reflect strong momentum.



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Himachal News: Father and son found dead in a room in Una, suspected to have died due to suffocation; had slept with a fireplace and heater burning

Diary Times Desk : A father and son died of suffocation on Saturday night in Jalgran village under Una police station. It is being told that the father and son slept in the room at night after lighting a fireplace and heater. The incident came to light when the elder son Sharif, who was sleeping in the other room, reached the room of his father Shahid (48) and younger brother Sadiq (18) with tea on Sunday morning. When he saw the father and son in an unconscious state, he informed the police and the people around. Police and doctors reached the spot. On investigation, it was found that both had died. In the preliminary investigation, it is believed that both died due to suffocation. The deceased have been identified as Mohammad Azam Nagar Shahi Rural District Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh. Shahid used to do the business of selling vegetables with his two sons in Amar Singh Ward-3, Kumhara Da Mohalla village Jalgran Tehsil Una for about 20 years. Shahid's elder son Sharif told that on Saturday night his father and younger brother were sleeping in the same room. Due to ill health, he slept in another room.



Four workers die after gas leak at chemical plant in Dahej

Agencies : Four workers died on Sunday after they were allegedly exposed to toxic gas at Gujarat Fluorochemicals Ltd's (GFL) chemical manufacturing facility in Dahej, Bharuch district. Bharuch superintendent of police (SP) Mayur Chavda said that a pipe carrying hazardous gases started leaking on early Sunday morning and the workers were exposed to it. "The toxic fumes claimed the lives of four workers. The victims were rushed to a private hospital in Bharuch, where they succumbed," Chavda told HT. He said that the relevant authorities are investigating the cause of the leak, and efforts are underway to identify the deceased workers. GFL, part of the INOX Group, is a leading chemical manufacturing company specialising in the production of refrigerants, fluoropolymers, and various fluorochemicals. Authorities are investigating the cause of the leak, and efforts are underway to identify the deceased workers.

Himachal Pradesh: Now you will have to take license for chain wood cutter in Himachal Pradesh, you can apply online here

Diary Times Desk : In Himachal Pradesh, on the lines of gun license, it will be mandatory to obtain license for chain wood cutter (wood cutting machine). The forest department is going to implement this system to stop illegal deforestation. Licenses will be issued to chain wood cutters on the basis of horse power. Small machines may be exempted from license. Chain wood cutters are being used on a large scale for cutting domestic wood in Himachal Pradesh. Some people are also using big chain wood cutters to cut trees in forests. Trees are being cut in minutes with the help of chain wood cutter. In view of the huge loss to forest wealth due to illegal deforestation, it has been decided to issue license for using chain wood cutter. The forest department will prepare rules to implement the new system. There may be provision for confiscating wood cutter and imposing fine for using chain wood cutter without license. The forest department has initially started a special campaign to find out the number of chain wood cutters being used in the state. The Panchayats have been directed by the department to inform the people using chain wood cutters in their area to inform the concerned DFO so that the department can estimate the number.

Tigress Covers 300 Km Across 3 States In 21 Days, Tranquillised In Bengal

Agencies : The Forest Department in West Bengal has finally tranquillised a tigress that was on the move across three states for 21 days. The tigress was successfully sedated and caged after a 21-day hunt, in which it covered over 300 km across Odisha, Jharkhand, and West Bengal. Forest Department officials managed to tranquillise the tiger near Gosaindihi village of Bankura district. Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also praised the forest department officials for their success. My heartiest congratulations to the forest officials of West Bengal on the successful rescue of the tigress Zeenat. My sincere gratitude to the district administration, police, panchayat functionaries, and the local people for their invaluable support and collaboration in this remarkable effort. This rescue is a shining example of teamwork and dedication toward wildlife conservation. Your combined efforts have not only saved a majestic creature that strayed out of its habitat but also reinforced the importance of protecting our natural heritage. Thank you for your outstanding work," she said in a post on social media platform X.

Police Lathi Charge, Use Water Cannons On Students Demanding Bihar Public Service Re-Exam

Agencies : The protest by Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC) aspirants demanding a re-test of the 70th Combined Competitive Examination (CCE) escalated today in Patna, prompting the police to resort to lathi charges and use water cannons. Earlier in the day, thousands of students gathered at Gandhi Maidan before marching towards JP Golambar, intending to proceed to Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's residence. The police had not approved the move. The BPSC aspirants were also demanding a meeting with chief minister to discuss the issue. The All India Students' Association (AISA) called for a 'chakka jam' on Monday in protest against the use of force by the police on students. Prashant Kishor, founder of Jan Suraj, joined the protest and expressed his full support for the students. He participated in their march to JP Golambar, where he announced that a five-member student delegation would meet the Chief Secretary to present their demands. Kishor stated that if no concrete decision was reached, the students would resume protesting the following day. However, the students rejected the proposal for a meeting with the Chief Secretary and refused to leave the protest site, prompting the police to use force to disperse the crowd. Kishor returned to Gandhi Maidan while the students remained at the site. Earlier, he had called for a "Chhatra Sansad" at Gandhi Maidan on Saturday, coinciding with Gandhi Jayanti, to discuss the students' issues and strategise future actions. However, the city administration denied permission for the event. The ongoing protests, which have continued for over the last 10 days, stem from allegations of a paper leak at the Babu Pariksha Parisar exam center. While the BPSC conducted a re-examination at that center, the commission has maintained that the irregularities were isolated and do not warrant the cancellation of the entire exam.

"Doing Great Work": PM Modi After Meeting Perplexity AI CEO Aravind Srinivas

Agencies : Aravind Srinivas, the Indian-origin Co-founder and CEO of Perplexity AI, met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday and they discussed the potential for the adoption of artificial intelligence in India. While the Chennai-born Srinivas said he was inspired by the PM's dedication to staying updated on the topic and his "remarkable vision" for the future, PM Modi said it was good to see the CEO doing "great work" with Perplexity AI. Posting a photo of their meeting, Mr Srinivas wrote on X, "Had the honor to meet Prime Minister @narendramodi ji. We had a great conversation about the potential for AI adoption in India and across the world. Really inspired by Modi Ji's dedication to stay updated on the topic and his remarkable vision for the future." Replying to the post, PM Modi wrote, "Was great to meet you and discuss AI, its uses and its evolution. Good to see you doing great work with @perplexity_ai. Wish you all the best for your future endeavors." Perplexity AI is a conversational search engine that uses large language models (LLMs) to answer queries. Before co-founding Perplexity AI in the US in 2022, Mr Srinivas was an AI researcher.



Himachal News: Deputy Director and Additional Director of Shimla's Sub Zonal Office transferred



Diary Times Desk : In the case of demanding a bribe of Rs 2.5 crore in two complaints related to money laundering, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has transferred the officers posted in Shimla Zonal Office. Rajiv Kumar posted in ED Headquarters Delhi has been appointed Additional Director of Shimla Sub Zonal Office-2 and Jivitesh Anand has been appointed Deputy Director in Shimla Sub Zonal Office. Also, Vishal Deep, Additional Director of Shimla Sub Zonal Office-2, who is under investigation, has been transferred to the headquarters (office). At present Vishal Deep is absconding and the CBI is raiding various places to catch him. Kuldeep Shivaji, Deputy Director posted in the Zonal Office located in Shimla, has also been transferred to the headquarters (office). Rajiv Kumar posted in Shimla Sub Zonal-2 has also been appointed as Additional Director Shimla Sub Zonal-1. He has been given additional charge of Shimla Sub Zonal-1.

Himachal News: CBI raids ED office again, another middleman arrested, Shimla office staff changed;

Diary Times Desk : CBI again raided ED Shimla office on Saturday in the case of demanding bribe of Rs. 2.5 crore in two complaints related to money laundering. Many documents were scrutinized from around 11 am to 4 pm. Another middleman has been arrested in the case. The middleman was presented in a special court in Chandigarh, from where he was sent to CBI custody for one day. CBI returned to Chandigarh after investigating for five hours. Some staff of ED office in Shimla has been changed in the case. A joint director posted in Chandigarh has been removed and attached to Delhi headquarters. On the other hand, ED Assistant Director Vishal Deep Singh, the main accused of demanding bribe who absconded from Shimla, is still absconding. He has been suspended. CBI had started investigation against ED Assistant Director Vishal Deep Singh posted in Shimla a month ago, but was unable to take action due to lack of evidence. Meanwhile, on receiving a complaint of demanding bribe of Rs. 2.5 crore in two cases related to money laundering, CBI raided Shimla ED office on 24 December. Earlier, the Assistant Director fled with a middleman partner, while his brother was caught by the CBI in Jind, Haryana with Rs 55 lakh bribe.

Himachal Pradesh: Bill to increase marriage age of girls to 21 stuck, state government is taking opinion on legal complications

Diary Times Desk : The departmental glitch of Himachal Pradesh Child Marriage Prohibition Bill-2024 is stuck. The bill to increase the marriage age of girls to 21 years has been going around in the offices for three months. This bill was passed in the monsoon session. This matter is related to both the central and state government as it is related to the concurrent list of the Constitution, so it is being deeply contemplated upon. It is being told that before sending it to the Governor, legal opinion has to be taken once again. It can be sent to the President for approval from the Raj Bhavan. The state government has approved the amendment in this bill in the last assembly session. During the monsoon session, Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Colonel Dr. Dhaniram Shandil presented the Child Marriage Prohibition (Himachal Pradesh Amendment Bill 2024). It was passed in the assembly without discussion.

SP ILMA AFROZ: Notice issued to Home Secretary and DGP on immediate appointment of SP Ilma in Baddi

Diary Times Desk : The Himachal Pradesh High Court has issued a notice to the state Home Secretary and DGP for the immediate appointment of Superintendent of Police Ilma Afroz in Baddi and ordered them to give clarification on this. A division bench of Justice Vivek Singh Thakur and Justice Rakesh Kanthala gave this order on the hearing of the PIL filed by the petitioner. The petitioner told the court that if SP Ilma is posted in Baddi, Barotiwala and Nalagarh, then the general public there will feel safe. The petitioner has alleged that Baddi, Barotiwala and Nalagarh remain the stronghold of drug mafia and mining mafia. The police of the said area has failed to initiate any legal action against these drug mafia and mining mafia. Since Ilma was posted as Superintendent of Police in Baddi in the year 2024, she has done good work in this area. She worked to implement all the instructions of NGT as well as all the orders passed by the Himachal High Court. She initiated legal action against the drug mafia and mining mafia. Ever since Superintendent of Police Ilma Afroz went on leave, the police in the area have changed their working style and planning. The Superintendent of Police was forced to go on indefinite leave.

Himachal Weather: Mountains covered in snow, Himachal shivering in cold, 10 thousand tourists stranded in Solanganala rescued

Diary Times Desk : Due to continuous snowfall in many areas of Himachal for the last 24 hours, the mountains have become covered with snow. Heavy snowfall has occurred in the mountainous areas of Kullu, Lahaul-Spiti, Kinnaur, Shimla, Chamba and Kangra districts and heavy rains are falling in the entire state. Due to heavy rain and snowfall, 433 roads have been closed across the state including three national highways. On Friday night, about 10 thousand tourists stranded in 2,000 vehicles from Solanganala have been safely brought to Manali. Two people have been rescued from Tindi of Lahaul. About 50 tourists are stranded in Sissu, Shashin Nursery and surrounding areas, but all are safe in hotels and homestays. On the other hand, due to the change in the weather.

Himachal News: A private bus from Punjab fell into a ditch in Chintpurni, police reached the spot; this is why the accident happened

Diary Times Desk : A private bus from Punjab fell into a ditch near Talwara bypass at Chintpurni in Una district of Himachal Pradesh on Sunday at around 9 am. There was no loss of life in the accident. Fortunately, there were no passengers in the bus when the accident happened. The bus was completely empty and the driver was taking the bus a little ahead to park it, when due to lack of pressure in the bus, the bus backed up and fell into the ditch. The bus driver Pradeep Singh said that three buses of Vansh Transport Company had brought devotees from Chintpurni temple Amritsar on Sunday, out of which one bus dropped the passengers at Talwara bypass and the devotees sitting in the bus went for temple darshan. After which the driver took the bus to Talwara bypass to park.

Shimla News: Blackout in extreme cold, queen of mountains shivered; Electricity board workers engaged in repair work day and night

Diary Times Desk : The Queen of the Hills shivered due to power failure in the extreme cold amid heavy rains. People shivered in the minimum temperature of one degree Celsius on Saturday. The CT (current) transformer and lightning arrester (LA) in the 66 KV Tutu power house station blasted due to rain late Friday night. This affected power supply in many areas of the capital. The CT of the transformer of the station blasted at around 10 pm on Friday night. After some time, the lightning arrester also got damaged. Due to this, power supply was completely disrupted in most areas of the city including Summerhill, Baluganj, Taradevi, Bharari, Khalini, Tutu, Khalini, Sanjauli. Alternative power supply was provided in these areas from the 33 KV Parwanoo line. The employees of the electricity board worked day and night to fix the technical fault. Power supply was restored in most areas by 8 o'clock on Saturday. According to officials, the board's equipment has malfunctioned due to power. The technical faults including the whistle were fixed at around 5 am.

"Physical Relations" Can't Automatically Mean Sexual Assault: High Court

Agencies : The Delhi High Court has acquitted a man in a POCSE case, saying the use of the phrase "physical relations" by the minor survivor cannot automatically mean sexual assault. A bench of Justices Prathiba M Singh and Amit Sharma allowed the appeal by the accused, who was given imprisonment for the rest of his life, and observed that it was unclear how the trial court concluded that there was any sexual assault when the survivor had voluntarily gone with the accused. The court asserted that the leap from physical relations or "samband" to sexual assault and then to penetrative sexual assault must be established by evidence and cannot be deduced as an inference. "The mere fact that the survivor is below 18 years cannot lead to a conclusion that there was penetrative sexual assault. The survivor, in fact, used the phrase 'physical relations', but there is no clarity as to what she meant by using the said phrase," the court said in the judgment passed on December 23.

16 Hours Too Late: Boy Rescued From Borewell In Madhya Pradesh Dies

Agencies : Rescued from a borewell in Madhya Pradesh's Guna after a 16-hours-long operation, a 10-year-old boy died soon after he was admitted to the hospital. Guna district chief medical and health officer Dr Rajkumar Rishishwar told reporters, "The child was in the narrow borewell for the entire night in the chilly weather. His hands and feet were drenched and swollen. His clothes were also wet and mud was found in his mouth," he said. Sumit Meena slipped into the open shaft of the borewell at around 5 pm on Saturday in Pipliya village while flying a kite and was trapped at a depth of 39 feet. The borewell did not strike water, and hence no casing had been put on it. A parallel 25-feet pit was dug, while rescuers used their hands to make a passage between the pit and the 140-feet borewell to retrieve the boy. The operation concluded at 9.30 am, after which he was taken to a hospital in Raghogarh. Raghogarh Congress MLA Jaivardhan Singh told PTI that the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) had conducted the rescue operation, pumping oxygen into the borewell. Amid plummeting temperatures, the rescue operation continued through the night. Meanwhile, in Rajasthan's Kotputli, hopes continue to plummet as he rescue operations to retrieve.

With rain and snow, north India to enter 2025 in cold wave conditions, IMD forecast



Agencies : With rain and snow, parts of north India are set to enter the new year with cold wave conditions, as per the India Meteorological Department's (IMD) forecast. The weather agency has predicted cold wave to severe cold wave conditions in some areas of Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan from December 30 to January 2. "Cold wave to severe cold wave conditions likely in a few pockets of Himachal Pradesh; cold wave conditions in isolated pockets of Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh-Gilgit-Baltistan-Muzaffarabad, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan," the IMD said in its latest forecast. The weather department on Saturday also said that temperature in Western and Eastern Uttar Pradesh are likely to drop further by December 29 as the rain clears up. IMD scientist Atul Kumar Singh told ANI that the weather will clear up from Sunday, with a significant drop in minimum temperatures by 3-6 degrees Celsius over the next 2-3 days.

First Commercial Flight Validation Test Successful At Navi Mumbai Airport

Agencies : The Navi Mumbai International Airport took a big step toward becoming operational on Sunday with its first commercial flight validation test being carried out successfully. An A320 aircraft from Indigo Airlines successfully touched down at runway 08/26 and was welcomed with a traditional water salute by two crash fire tenders. The landing was witnessed by senior officials from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, Airports Authority of India, Customs, Immigration, Central Industrial Security Force, City and Industrial Development Corporation of Maharashtra (CIDCO), India Meteorological Department, Bureau of Civil Aviation Security as well as Adani Airport Holdings Limited (AAHL) and other key stakeholders. This is a momentous day for Navi Mumbai International Airport. The successful completion of the validation flight is a major milestone, and we are now one step closer to operationalising the airport.

Pranab Mukherjee's daughter takes 'real rot' jibe at Congress: 'Why no CWC...'

Agencies : Sharmistha Mukherjee, the daughter of former president Pranab Mukherjee, alleged that the Congress party is in a "sad state of affairs" and called for "serious introspection". In an interview with PTI, she also alleged that party workers feel alienated from its top leadership due to the "current state of affairs" and the lack of an "ideology" among top Congress leaders. Mukherjee said that the party did not convene a Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting to condole her father's death in August 2020. CWC is the party's highest decision-making body.

Bank Manager Arrested For Data Theft, Defrauding Company Of Rs 12.51 Crore

Agencies : Four people, including the manager of a private bank, were arrested for allegedly siphoning off Rs 12.51 crore by stealing sensitive data from a company, police said on Saturday. The matter came to light after the director of Dream Plug Pay Tech Solutions Private Limited (CRED) approached the police in November, alleging the siphoning of Rs 12.51 crore from the company's accounts. According to the police, the director alleged that the company's nodal and current bank accounts were with the Indiranagar branch.

Misplaced, Misleading": Delhi Official On Arvind Kejriwal's "Arrest" Claim

Agencies : After AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal claimed that Delhi Chief Minister Atishi would be arrested in a "fake" case orchestrated by the BJP through central agencies, Delhi Transport Department's top official issued a strong rebuttal today. Addressing a press conference alongside Atishi, Mr Kejriwal this week accused the BJP of conspiring to fabricate a case linked to the free bus rides scheme for women in Delhi. According to Mr Kejriwal, sources within his party have revealed that a meeting was held where instructions were issued to central agencies.

BPSC rules out 70th CCE re-exam in the entire state, says there is no basis

Agencies : Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC) on Saturday ruled out a state-wide re-test for the 70th Combined Competitive Preliminary Examination (CCE Prelims), citing a lack of evidence or grounds for such a decision. BPSC's exam controller Rajesh Kumar clarified that the commission takes decisions such as re-test and exam cancellation based on reports sent by district officers and other compelling evidence and not on the basis of 'baseless, unfounded, misleading' allegations and 'slogans'. As far as the question of conducting re-examination...it is clarified that neither any report has been made available before the commission by any district officer nor any evidence/proof has been received from other sources on the basis of which a decision can be taken," he said. He added that except for the Babu exam centre in Patna, there is no basis to conduct a re-test in the other 911 test centres across the state.



Man, Fishing With Family In Australia's Great Barrier Reef, Killed In Shark Attack

Agencies : A shark has attacked and killed a 40-year-old pastor who was fishing with his family in the waters of Australia's Great Barrier Reef, officials and local media said. The predator bit him on the neck on Saturday afternoon off Humpy Island on the country's east coast, emergency services said. The victim was Luke Walford, a youth pastor at the Cathedral of Praise church in the central Queensland town of Rockhampton, according to local media including public broadcaster ABC. "The man was fishing with family members when he was bitten by a shark," Queensland state police said in a statement. He sustained "life-threatening injuries" and died about an hour-and-a-half afterwards, police said, adding that a report would be prepared for the coroner. They were unable to confirm whether he was spearfishing at the time. Photos posted by Walford on social media in 2021 showed him aboard a boat in a wetsuit holding up large fish.

Dutch Plane Skids Off Runway After Emergency Landing In Norway

Agencies : An Amsterdam-bound flight skidded off the runway at Oslo Torp Sandefjord Airport in Norway after an emergency landing. The incident happened on Saturday night, when a KLM Royal Dutch Airlines-operated Boeing 737-800 experienced a hydraulic failure shortly after taking off from Oslo Airport, prompting the crew to divert to Sandefjord Airport. This came hours before a Boeing 737-800 aircraft, operated by Jeju Air, flying from Bangkok to South Korea with 181 people on board crashed on landing at Muan International Airport on Sunday, leaving all but two people plucked from the wreckage feared dead. As per media reports, the KLM flight was carrying 176 passengers and six crew members. It landed safely at Sandefjord Airport, situated 110 kilometres south of Oslo. However, on landing, the plane veered off the runway before stopping in soft grass near a taxiway, a video of which is being widely shared on social media. Video shows passengers being evacuated from the aircraft.

Tornadoes touch down in Texas and Mississippi, killing two and injuring six others

Agencies : At least two people were killed and six more injured as several tornadoes touched down in Texas and Mississippi on Saturday, damaging homes and flipping vehicles. One person died in the Liverpool area, located south of Houston, and four people suffered injuries that weren't considered critical, said Madison Polston, spokesperson for the Brazoria County Sheriff's Office. Polston said there were "multiple touchdown points" in the county between Liverpool and Hillcrest Village and Alvin. She said that so far officials knew of around 10 damaged homes but were still working to determine the extent of the damage. In Mississippi, one person died in Adams County and two people were injured in Franklin County, according to a spokesperson for the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency. "These storms are probably going to get a lot worse this evening and overnight the further east you go," said Josh Lichter, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service.



Azerbaijan President Says Plane That Crashed Was Shot At From Russia



Agencies : The Azerbaijan Airlines plane that crashed in Kazakhstan this week killing 38 people, was damaged due to a shooting from the ground in Russia, the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev said on Sunday. He also accused Moscow of having tried to hide the cause of a deadly jet crash and called for Russia to admit "guilt" in the disaster. President Aliyev said he regretted that "some circles" in Russia had tried to hush up the truth about the crash, in which 38 of the 67 people on board were killed, by sowing false narratives about the causes of the crash, the Azerbaijan state television reported. Baku regretted that Moscow "put forward theories" that "clearly showed the Russian side wanted to cover" up the issue, he said. "The facts are that the Azerbaijani civilian plane was damaged from the outside over Russian territory, near the city of Grozny, and almost lost control," Aliyev said in televised comments, according to state news agency, Azertag. "We also know that electronic warfare systems put our plane out of control," he said, adding that "at the same time, as a result of fire from the ground, the tail of the plane was also severely damaged."

"Always In Favour": Trump Backs Elon Musk, Vivek Ramaswamy In H-1B Visa Debate

Agencies : Donald Trump weighed in Saturday in a bitter debate dividing his traditional supporters and tech barons like Elon Musk, saying that he backs a special visa program that helps highly skilled workers enter the country. "I've always liked the (H-1B) visas, I have always been in favor of the visas, that's why we have them" at Trump-owned facilities, the president-elect told the New York Post in his first public comments on the matter since it flared up this week. An angry back-and-forth, largely between Silicon Valley's Musk and traditional anti-immigration Trump backers, has erupted in fiery fashion.

Biden still regrets ending re-election campaign, feels he could have defeated Donald Trump: Report

Agencies : Joe Biden still feels bad about withdrawing from presidential run in 2024 and thinks he could have defeated Republican leader Donald Trump, according to a new report. He stepped out from the contest during the summer after an embarrassing first debate against Trump, low approval ratings, and declining revenue. Insiders familiar with the discussions told the Washington Post that Biden recently expressed confidence that he could have beaten Trump in November, despite the challenges his campaign experienced. Following his dismal debate performance on June 27, Biden ultimately announced his retirement from the campaign on July 21, as calls for his withdrawal from the race became louder among Democrats. He delayed his endorsement of Kamala Harris, giving the vice president just three months to run against Trump. Harris ultimately lost the popular vote by 2.2 million votes and was swept in all of the battleground states.

Indian Passport Holder Explains Benefits Of 10-Year US Visa: "Best Travel Investment"

Agencies : A vlogger recently shared compelling reasons why Indian passport holders should consider investing in a 10-year US visa, emphasising its long-term benefits for frequent travellers. The 10-year multiple-entry visa reduces the hassle of reapplying and provides flexibility for personal, professional, or leisure trips to the US. In a post on X, Ami Palan, who holds an Indian passport, highlighted that having a US visa often simplifies obtaining visas for other countries, as it signals credibility to immigration authorities worldwide. Moreover, for Indian passport holders, such a visa opens doors to global opportunities, including access to US territories and transit privileges, making international travel more convenient. She wrote, "Last year, I secured a 10-year USA visa, and it's one of the best travel investments I've made. For example, I can now get a Turkish e-Visa for just \$60, a fraction of the standard cost. When I travelled to the UAE, I paid half the usual visa price, and it was visa-on-arrival & no prior hassle." "With a valid US visa, Indian passport holders get visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to over 25 countries, making travel more affordable and convenient. Also, with a US visa, countries like Mexico, Costa Rica, and the Philippines allow visa-free."

Two drug peddlers behind Islamabad police station grenade attack nabbed



Agencies : With the arrest of two drug peddlers, the police have cracked the Islamabad police station hand grenade attack case. The accused have been identified as Gurjeet Singh of Dande village of Amritsar and his relative Baljit Singh of Chhapa village in Tarn Taran. They were part of narco-terror module being operated by foreign-based handlers. They were arrested by the State Special Operation Cell (SSOC) following intelligence-based operation. Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav said Gurjeet and Baljit had confessed to have lobbed the Chinese grenade at the Islamabad police station. He said they had also recovered 1.4 kg heroin, a hand grenade and two sophisticated pistols—9MM Zigana and 9MM Glock—along with ammunition from their possession. On December 17, panic gripped densely populated locality after a hand grenade was hurled at the Islamabad police station at around 3 am. A cop on duty had a narrow escape while the cement sheet roof collapsed. Hours later, Germany-based gangster turned terrorist Jeevan Fauji, associated with the Babbar Khalsa International (BKI), claimed the responsibility for this act of terror on social media.

Diljit show organisers face Rs 15L penalty for noise norm violation

Agencies : The UT Administration is gearing up to impose a maximum of penalty on the organisers of the Diljit Dosanjh show for the violation of noise-level restrictions. The concert was held at the Exhibition Ground in Sector 34 on December 14. The noise level during the concert exceeded the 75-decibel limit mandated by the Punjab and Haryana High Court. It ranged between 76.1 and 93.1 decibels at three locations. The Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) of the area has submitted a detailed report to the Environment Department, which has forwarded its recommendations under the Environment Protection Act to the Administration. According to officials, a notice will soon be issued to the organisers to seek their response before a final decision is made. They emphasised that giving the organisers a hearing is mandatory under the Act. The Administration is likely to recommend a maximum penalty of Rs 15 lakh for this violation.

Jhuriwala keeps Panchkula down in the dumps

Agencies : The district witnessed an eventful year, anchored by dramatic political stories unfolding and the local population reeling under persisting local challenges and a series of unsettling crimes. The unexpected defeat of long-time Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA Gian Chand Gupta in the Haryana assembly poll was one of the big upset stories of the election season. Chander Mohan Bishnoi of the Congress, who had held the seat for multiple terms in the past, made a surprise comeback into the winners' circle. His victory signalled an end to BJP's dominance in Panchkula and the public's growing dissatisfaction with local governance, particularly issues such as infrastructure, unemployment and stagnation in development. The Congress leader's campaign, centre around "change", meanwhile, resonated with the fatigued.

Up to Centre to decide if it wants to forcibly evict Dallewal from protest site: Farmer leaders

Agencies : With Jagjit Singh Dallewal's indefinite hunger strike entering its 34th day on Sunday, farmer leaders at Khanauri said they have been following the Gandhian way to continue their protest and it is up to the government to decide whether it wants to use force to evict their senior leader. Their statement comes amid the Supreme Court's strong criticism of the Punjab government for not shifting Dallewal to a hospital. The farmers have been protesting at the Punjab-Haryana border to press the Centre for several demands, including a legal guarantee for a minimum support price (MSP) for crops. Speaking to reporters at the Khanauri border protest site, farmer leader Abhimanyu Kohar said, "We want to make it clear that the Centre, right from day one, has been trying to defame and suppress our agitation." He said a narrative is being built that farmers are stubborn. "Whereas it is the Centre that is adopting such an attitude, not listening to us and not paying any attention to farmers' demands."

Sikh activist escapes unhurt as assailants open fire at car in Patiala

Agencies : Sikh activist Bakshish Singh escaped unhurt as assailants opened fire at his car here, police said on Sunday. The incident took place around 1.30 am on the Patiala South Bypass road near Urban Estate, they added. According to SSP Nanak Singh, the incident was being investigated and an FIR had been lodged at the Urban State police station. According to police sources, Baba Bakshish Singh, who has been raising various issues, including those of Bandi Singhs (Sikh prisoners), was returning from Gurdwara Karhali Sahib, near Samana, to his house at SST Nagar when the assailants fired at his car.

Tarn Taran police arrest 5 members of Bhagwanpuria, Amritpal Bath gangs

Agencies : The CIA staff arrested five members of the Jaggu Bhagwanpuria and Amritpal Bath gangs from here on Saturday night and seized arms and ammunition from them. SSP Abhimanyu Rana said here on Sunday that those arrested had been identified as Gurmeet Singh of Bhagwanpur village in Batala, Harpal Singh of Nurpur village in Gurdaspur, Lovepreet Singh of Nawapind village in Amritsar, and Shamsher Singh and Sandeep Singh of Kot Khalsa in Amritsar.

Haryana khap mahapanchayat extends support to farmers' stir

Agencies : A khap mahapanchayat, which is being held at Baas village in Hisar, has extended support to the ongoing farmers' stir. The resolutions made at this gathering could influence the future of the protests, as various issues, including Jagjit Singh Dallewal's hunger strike, were discussed. Farmer leaders had called on Haryana's khap panchayats to back their cause and advocate for the fulfillment of their long-standing demands. Organisers said representatives from 102 khap panchayats, leaders from the Samyukt Kisan Morcha and other farmer organisations were in attending the mahapanchayat. Kisan Mazdoor Morcha convenor Sarwan Singh Pandher and Olympic medallist Bajrang Punia were also present.

OP Chautala's ashes immersed in Western Yamuna Canal in Karnal

Agencies : Keeping in view the sentiments of the people of the state who could not attend the cremation of former CM and INLD supremo OP Chautala, the party workers took out an 'Ashti Kalash Yatra' covering all the districts of the state. On the third and final day of this Yatra (Sunday), the ashes of Chautala, who passed away on December 20, reached Karnal, where the party leaders paid tribute to former CM and immersed the ashes in Western Yamuna Canal. The immersion of the ashes programme drew a large crowd of INLD workers, leaders, and local residents. State president Rampal Majra and Arju Chautala arrived in Karnal with the ashes. According to Majra, the ashes will next be taken to Kaithal and then Kurukshetra. This yatra was organised on the request of the party leaders and workers. "Former CM OP Chautala ji was the leader of state and nation who worked tirelessly for the rights of the common man. His contributions to Haryana and the voice he gave to farmers and labourers will always be remembered. The immersion of his ashes in the sacred waters of Western Yamuna Canal is to honour his legacy and his lifelong commitment to the state," said Majra. "Given OP Chautala's connection with the people of Haryana and every party worker, we requested his family to conduct an 'ashti kalash yatra' across the state, following the immersion and final rituals in Haridwar. The family accepted our request, and we carried out the yatra with the former CM's ashes in 22 kalashes. We immersed the ashes from each kalash in every district," he added.

Paragliding suspended at Bir-Billing, power supply hit in Baijnath, Sullah

Diary Times Desk : The upper reaches of Dhauladhar hills and Chhota Bhangal and Bara Bhangal areas of the Palampur region experienced heavy snowfall in the past 24 hours, while lower areas received heavy rain. The Palampur region is in the grip of a severe cold wave. Bara Bhangal is cut off from the rest of the state following heavy snowfall at the Thamsar Pass located at a height of 19,000 feet. One feet of snow was recorded at Billing, a major tourist resort and paragliding site, and Kothi Kohar in Chhota Bhangal till this afternoon. The district administration suspended paragliding at Bir-Billing. Normal life was affected in the region and power supply and transport services were hit. Many parts of Baijnath, Jaisinghpur, Sullah and adjoining areas remained without power for hours following a snag in transmission lines feeding many parts of Kangra. Vehicular traffic to Chhota Bhangal and Billing came to a standstill following heavy snowfall. No bus could reach the upper areas of Chhota Bhangal. Meanwhile, tourists have been advised not to visit Billing as the road is covered with snow at many stretches.

Centre finalises alignment of Jalori tunnel on NH-30

Diary Times Desk : The Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has approved the final alignment for the Jalori tunnel on the Aut-Luhri national highway (NH-305), which will connect Sainj on NH-5. The 4.16-km tunnel will be constructed beneath the 10,800-ft Jalori Pass from Shoja in Banjar and Bhargol in Anni. Though this will only reduce the distance by 8 km, it will provide all-weather connectivity between Banjar and Anni. The approach road from the Banjar side will span 5.48 km from Ghiyagi, while from the Anni side, it will extend 2.14 km from Khanag. The consultant has been directed to make necessary modifications to the Banjar side approach to meet the Indian Roads Congress (IRC) standards. Additionally, two viaducts will be built on the approach roads.

We will sit for longer hours to clear pendency: Sandhawalia after taking oath as HP Chief Justice



Diary Times Desk : Justice GS Sandhawalia was sworn in as the Chief Justice of Himachal Pradesh High Court in a ceremony at Raj Bhavan here today. Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla administered the oath of office to Justice Sandhawalia. The ceremony was attended by Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, Judges of the High Court, Chief Secretary Prabodh Saxena and other prominent individuals. Born on November 1, 1965, Justice Sandhawalia did his graduation in B.A. (Hons.) from DAV College, Chandigarh in 1986. An alumnus of the Department of Laws, Panjab University, Chandigarh, he was enrolled as an advocate in August 1989 and practiced at the Punjab and Haryana High Court. He was elevated to the Bench on September 30, 2011, and became a permanent judge of this Court on January 24, 2014. He has been the chairman of several committees like the Departmental Promotion and Recruitment Committee.

India ex-captain Ajay Thakur retires from kabaddi

Diary Times Desk : Former Indian kabaddi team captain Ajay Thakur, a two-time Asian Games medallist, has announced his retirement from the sport at the international level. Thakur, who is in Melbourne for a Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) event, made the decision public through a social media post today: "Retire from international Kabaddi – last match 28 December at Melbourne, Australia." The 38-year-old Thakur was part of the Indian team that bagged the gold at the Incheon Asian Games in 2014. Four years later, he was captain of the team that won a bronze – the first time India did not win gold since the sport was included in the Asian Games in 1990. Hailing from Dhabota village near Nalagarh in Solan district, Thakur rose to prominence when he won the gold with the Indian team at the 2007 Asian Indoor Games. He cemented his place in the national team and was a key contributor to India's success at the 2014 Asiad. Thakur's most outstanding performance came at the Kabaddi World Cup in 2016, in which India won gold. Thakur ended up as the top raider of the tournament with 68 points, making a decisive impact in the final. He led India to victory at the Asian Kabaddi Championship the next year.

Over 10,000 tourists rescued from Solang

Diary Times Desk : About 2,000 vehicles, including tourist cars and buses, were stranded in Solang Nala of Kullu district yesterday following heavy snowfall in the Lahaul valley and the Manali region. The snowfall caused a major traffic disruption on the Manali-Leh Highway. According to the local police, over 10,000 tourists stranded in the region were safely evacuated. A snowstorm, which began early in the morning, led to an abrupt halt to traffic movement, leaving vehicles stranded in the region's steep and treacherous terrains. The authorities concerned swiftly began a rescue operation and deployed police teams to help the stranded persons. DSP, Manali KD Sharma said that the rescue operation focused on ensuring the safety of tourists and other passengers, who were stranded for several hours in the region. He confirmed that all stranded vehicles, including buses and cars, were safely evacuated last night and the travellers were transported to secure locations in Manali, away from the snow-hit areas. The DSP said that over 10,000 tourists along with their vehicles were evacuated safely to Manali.

300 roads blocked, power supply hit as snow, rain lash most dists

Diary Times Desk : The state has recorded light to moderate snowfall at higher altitudes in several districts and light to moderate rainfall across the state over the past two days. Significant snowfall has been recorded at many places in Kinnaur and Lahaul and Spiti districts and some places in Shimla, Kullu and Chamba districts. The lower region of the state has received significant rainfall over the past 24 hours. Several roads are blocked due to the precipitation in the affected districts. Water schemes and power distribution transformers, too, have been affected. As per the sources in the State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA), over 300 roads are blocked while more than 300 power distribution transformers have been disrupted due to the snowfall. As a result, HRTC bus services have been hampered on the affected roads. Besides, cold to severe cold conditions during the day were observed at Sundernagar, Mandi, Chamba, Una and Kangra. While the average minimum temperatures remained normal or above normal, the average maximum temperatures at most stations dropped by 4°C to 6°C. The severe cold conditions are likely to continue at many places until tomorrow noon. A fresh spell of cold wave is likely to resume over lower hills and plains from Monday morning.



Bumrah, Siraj and Labuschagne headline fast-moving Day 4 at MCG

Agencies : Jasprit Bumrah became the first bowler in the history of the sport to pick 200 wickets at an average under 20 as his massive influence was felt on yet another day of cricket in the Border Gavaskar Trophy. Mohammed Siraj overturned his first-innings wastefulness by finding his rhythm quickly and keeping it up to snare three wickets. For Australia, Marnus Labuschagne rode his massive share of luck to score his second fifty of the Test to keep his team afloat on a see-saw day of cricket. Beyond the impact of this trio, Australia pushed their lead to 333 through a stubborn final-wicket stand between Nathan Lyon (41* off 54) and Scott Boland (10* off 65). India's reliance on Bumrah has stood out in this Test - in the first innings, he bowled 28.4 overs of 122.4 - only thrice before had he bowled more in a single innings in Tests. In the second, he shouldered a bigger share - sending down 24 off 82 overs so far. In these 24 overs, he picked up four wickets to rattle Australia's cage after India conceded a 105-run first-innings lead. He gave Day 4 a blockbuster start, taking out his first-innings nemesis Sam Konstas.



South Africa seal WTC Final berth with thrilling win

Agencies : South Africa clinched their spot in the World Test Championship final to be held at Lord's in June after they beat Pakistan by two wickets in Centurion. In a nail-biting Test match which ebbed and flowed towards both sides until the very end, South Africa came into Day 4 requiring 121 runs and were in a comfortable position at 96 for 4. But Mohammad Abbas, who picked up career-best figures of 6-54 and bowled 15.3 overs continuously from one end, had other ideas as a mini collapse saw the hosts stumble to 99 for 8. However, an unbeaten 51-run partnership for the ninth wicket between Kagiso Rabada and Marco Jansen sealed the victory for the hosts as Abbas' efforts went in vain. With 121 more to get for the hosts, Aiden Markram and Temba Bavuma were initially measured in their approach. They played the balls on merit and didn't fish outside their off-stump. They creamed the drives through the covers and Bavuma also pulled Abbas for a six, thanks to Naseem Shah stepping past the boundary line after taking the catch. But it was after the drinks break, when the game turned on its head. Abbas was finally rewarded for his control as he castled Markram, getting a delivery to keep low before hitting the off-stump.

Allrounder Reddy wants more: 'Not happy with the way I'm bowling'

Agencies : Finding ways to defy expectations is something that has brought Nitish Kumar Reddy joy on this tour. He was a relative unknown when he was picked, having played only 21 first-class matches with his best work coming in T20 cricket. Now he has a century at the MCG. "I haven't given a thought like that, but I know some people doubted me," the 21-year-old allrounder said at the end of day four. "Like such a youngster who played IPL, who came here, and he can't perform in such a big series, and I know a lot of people talk about that. I just want to make them feel wrong about what they have said about me, and that's what I'm doing, I want to make people know that I'm here to give my 100% for Indian team." Reddy also looked back to the end of day three when, in front of more than 80,000 fans and his team watching from the dugout, he hit Scott Boland down the ground for four to bring up his hundred. He also expressed his thanks to the No. 11 batter Mohammed Siraj for helping him get there by getting through the last three balls of the previous over from Pat Cummins. "It was such a grateful moment for me, I've been watching Virat [Kohli] since childhood."

Short TAKES

'We are probably just ahead' - Labuschagne

Agencies : At the end of a terrific day's play at the MCG, Australia sit pretty with a lead of 333 runs with the final wicket pair looking solid with a partnership that has in all probability put the hosts in command. Speaking after the day's play, Labuschagne admitted that the final few minutes of the day was exciting to watch from the dressing room. India definitely clawed it back there today, and we're probably going into day five, 333, you know, I would say that we're probably just ahead," Labuschagne admitted. But I would say that it was amazing. I was sitting up at the top with our batting coach, Michael Di Venuto, and I was just watching every ball, we're scrapping for runs. There were overthrows, leg byes, running twos, that last bit had everything. I mean, we even had the game finished with a no-ball wicket into a last ball four. So, I mean, people that say Test cricket isn't exciting. I'm a player and I was watching and I was excited." Labuschagne also revealed that Australia's ideal plan coming into the fourth day was disrupted by India's comeback as the hosts had initially planned to pile on the runs and declare to have a crack at India before stumps. However, with the middle order collapsing, the home side had to consolidate and review their targets for the day.

Bumrah gets to 200 wickets with the best average in Test cricket

Agencies : For a bowler whose Test career is laden with breathtaking dismissals, Jasprit Bumrah's 200th wicket was relatively tame - Travis Head flicking straight to midwicket. Bumrah, however, got to the landmark with incredible numbers, reiterating his status as one of the greatest bowlers. Of the 85 bowlers to have taken 200-plus Test wickets, 12 got there in fewer games than Bumrah, who was playing his 44th Test at the MCG. In terms of bowling average, though, Bumrah is right on top of the list with 19.56 per wicket - he's the first bowler to concede fewer than 4000 runs for his first 200 wickets. Bumrah's strike rate of 42.4 - a wicket every seven overs - is only behind Waqar Younis, Dale Steyn and Kagiso Rabada, all masters with both new and old ball. Bumrah's record in South Africa, England, New Zealand and Australia also stands out. He has the highest percentage of wickets for an Indian fast bowler in these nations. Sixty-four of Bumrah's first 200 wickets were of top three batters.

Koneru Humpy Clinches Women's Chess Championship

Agencies : Just a few days back Telugu-origin teenager Gukesh who is currently based out of Tamil Nadu made the nation proud by becoming the World Chess Champion at the age of just 18. Now, in another matter of great pride, our own Telugu chess champion Koneru Humpy has made the nation proud by winning FIDE Women's World Rapid Chess Championship 2024. After having won this very same championship back in 2019, she won the World Rapid Chess Championship again this year by defeating Indonesia's Irene Sukandar. Chief minister, Chandrababu Naidu took to social media to appreciate Humpy for the achievement. "What a proud moment for India! Congratulations to Koneru Humpy on winning the FIDE Women's World Rapid Chess Championship 2024. Her incredible triumph caps off a phenomenal year for Indian chess!" Babu tweeted. It really needs to be said that 2024 has been an incredible year for India in the chess arena. First, it was Gukesh, who made the nation proud by becoming the World chess champion, and this is followed by the latest achievement of Koneru Humpy.

