

Himachal Weather: Mountains again covered in snow, 200 roads including two NHs closed; more than 120 transformers down



Diary Times Desk : Due to the intermittent snowfall for the last 24 hours, the mountains of Himachal have once again become covered with snow. Snowfall occurred in many areas of the state including Manali, Dalhousie, Shimla, Kufri, Narkanda, Rohtang on late Wednesday night and Thursday morning. Fresh snowfall has occurred on the mountainous regions of Kinnaur, Lahaul-Spiti, Chamba, Kullu, Shimla and Sirmaur along with the Dhauladhar mountains of Kangra and rain in the lower areas. Due to rain and snowfall, movement has been stopped on 200 roads in the state including two national highways. More than 120 transformers have stopped working. Road connectivity of Pangri with the district headquarters has been cut off. Due to the changing mood of the weather, the day temperature has dropped to ten degrees. According to the Meteorological Center Shimla, the weather will be clear in the state on Friday, but there is a possibility of snowfall again in the middle and high mountainous regions of eight districts from January 18 to 22.

Fresh snowfall in Jammu and Kashmir affects rail, road traffic

Agencies : Fresh snowfall and light rains in Jammu and Kashmir prompted suspension of train services and closure of the Srinagar-Sonamarg-Gumri (SSG) road on Thursday. The weather office has predicted more bouts of snowfall between January 20 and 23 besides spells of wet weather, especially in the higher reaches of the valley, soon. The Himalayan valley received fresh snowfall in many parts, including in the tourist resorts of Pahalgam and Kokernag in south Kashmir, Sonamarg in central Kashmir and Gurez in north Kashmir. The meteorological centre in Srinagar said that higher reaches of the valley in various districts experienced snowfall in the morning while the plains including summer capital Srinagar.

Intruder Entered Room of Saif's Son Jeh, Demanded Rs 1 crore, Caretaker Says in FIR

Agencies : The intruder who attacked Saif Ali Khan was first spotted by the nanny of his younger son Jeh, and he demanded Rs 1 crore, according to the statement given by the caretaker to the police, which forms the basis of the FIR. The attack took place outside Jeh's room around 2.30 am on Thursday. The entire family - Khan, wife Kareena Kapoor, and their two sons -- four-year-old Jeh and eight-year-old Taimur - were home in the 12th floor apartment along with their five house helps. The intruder did not force his entry or break into the actor's flat but possibly sneaked in at some point during the night with the intention of robbery, police said. The attacker, who made his escape through the stairs, remains on the run. Recounting the horrific events to the police, Jeh's nanny, Eliyama Philip, said she was sleeping on the floor in Jeh's room and woke up around 2 am when she heard a sound and saw a man move towards the sleeping child.



'You can't get it in any shop': DK Shivakumar slams Satish Jarkiholi over KPCC chief remarks

Agencies : Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Thursday hit out at Minister Satish Jarkiholi for his statement on replacing him as the party's state president. Shivakumar has been serving as Congress state chief since 2020. "Can anyone get it (post) in the media? You can't get it in the media or any shop. It is given as a reward for the work we do. Will the media gift it to you. These are new trends," Shivakumar told reporters here. Jarkiholi on Wednesday sparked a debate within the ruling Congress over the change of the state president, saying a full-time leader was needed to devote more time to the party in the state. According to him, while there is a lot of discussion happening at the lower levels, it should come from the top. Later, he clarified that he never spoke about replacing Shivakumar as the Congress president.

Robbers shoot dead two security guards, steal Rs 93 lakh from ATM in Karnataka

Agencies : In a daylight robbery, two security guards were shot dead by armed robbers on Thursday in Bidar, Karnataka. The incident occurred at the busy Shivaji Chowk in Bidar's headquarters town, where the victims were preparing to refill an SBI ATM with Rs 93 lakh in cash. The deceased, identified as Giri Venkatesh and Shiva Kashinath, were employees of CMS Agency, which handles ATM cash refills. Police reported that the robbers, who were on a bike, shot the guards dead with eight rounds of gunfire to execute the crime. The robbery took place at approximately 11.30 am when the security guards had arrived at the ATM. After the shooting, the assailants quickly fled the scene with the cash, leaving behind a scene of terror and chaos. The local police swiftly responded to the incident, rushing to the location and immediately securing the area.

Himachal : Ban on new stone crushers in Una, Himachal Pradesh, lease of old ones will also not be renewed

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Blackmailed By Uncle Over Private Photos, Bengaluru Techie Dies By Suicide

Agencies : A 24-year-old woman techie died after setting herself ablaze in a Bengaluru hotel room because she was allegedly repeatedly blackmailed by her uncle and aunt with her private photos and videos, police said on Thursday. The woman's uncle, who is the prime accused, has been arrested and a detailed probe is underway, the police added. The woman set herself on fire at Radha Hometel, near Kundalahalli metro station, on Sunday evening, when her uncle forced her to meet him there. According to Whitefield Deputy Commissioner of Police Shivakumar Gunar.



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Himachal News: Himachal will become self-sufficient for wheat seeds, will not buy from other states

Diary Times Desk : Himachal Pradesh will become self-sufficient for wheat seeds. The farmers of the state can now prepare good quality seeds and sell them to the Agriculture Department at good prices. The Agriculture Department has started a seed production program in the state. Under the program, farmers will have to register. After this, better quality seeds will be provided to the farmers by the department. After this, when the crop is ready, the quality seeds will be purchased by the department at good prices. This will also earn farmers well. According to the information, when the wheat crop of farmers is ready, they get only up to two thousand rupees per quintal of wheat in the markets, but under the seed production program, farmers will get more than Rs 2500 for wheat. Last year, the department had purchased 17 thousand quintals of wheat seeds from registered farmers in the state. Under the seed production program, farmers are given necessary information for seed production.



'Koi awaaz nahi': Saif Ali Khan's son Jeh's nanny recounts attack horror

Agencies : Eliyama Philip, the nanny of Saif Ali Khan's son Jeh, on Thursday recounted the knife attack that grievously injured the actor. In a statement to the police, the woman, who first encountered the armed attacker, said he asked for ₹1 crore. The intruder did not force his entry or break into the actor's flat but possibly sneaked in at some point during the night with the intention of robbery, police officials said. Philip said she was sleeping on the floor in Jeh's room and woke up at around 2 am when she heard a sound and saw a man move towards the sleeping child. She was pushed away by the attacker as she scampered towards the child. I sat up to see who was in the bathroom... I saw a thin and short man come out and go towards Jeh's bed," Philip said in the statement that forms the basis of the police FIR on the incident.

Himachal News: Industry Minister said- Government is worried due to non-stopping of illegal mining, instructions given to officers to take action

Diary Times Desk : Industry Minister Harsh Vardhan Chauhan has said that the government is making serious efforts to stop illegal mining. Despite this, it is still going on. People involved in illegal mining are using alternative routes to avoid check posts. While chairing a review meeting on mining activities on Thursday, the Industry Minister directed the officials to take strict action against those involved in it. He said that Nalagarh, Una, Nurpur and Paonta Sahib are highly vulnerable to illegal mining. With the increasing demand for raw material for road construction and other developmental works including domestic needs, there is a need for strict implementation of mining rules and scientific exploitation. He directed the mining officials to monitor the mining sites regularly. He said that permissions should be given for lease of mines to avoid illegal mining and earn revenue. Harsh Vardhan Chauhan said that the mining wing of the Industry Department is an enforcement agency to implement the laws related to mining and it should be strengthened with adequate staff, vehicles and IT etc. He directed the officials to send a detailed proposal about the necessary reforms for this purpose. He directed to expedite the auction of limestone mines at Arki in Solan district, Sunni in Shimla district and Baroh-Sindh in Chamba district.

Mahakumbh 2025: IMD predicts rain, fog in Prayagraj, sounds orange alert

Agencies : The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued an Orange alert for Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj for today and Thursday, where the Mahakumbh is underway. IMD scientist Soma Sen Roy told ANI, "There is a possibility of rain and fog conditions today in southeast UP, where the Kumbh Mela is currently going on. Even if the fog is not too dense, its impact will be high, and because of this, we have issued an Orange alert for today and tomorrow in this area." "Rain is expected to increase from 18 January, especially in the hill states. A third WD is expected on the 21-22 January. So there is a possibility of rain over planes," Roy added. The IMD scientist further said, "Today western disturbance is over Pakistan and induced cyclonic circulation is over South Haryana. Many places in north India experienced rainfall yesterday. This WD is moving eastwards, due to which there's a possibility of thunderstorm activity in hilly areas and west UP, and snowfall in hill states today. From 18-19 January, another WD is expected to occur."

Kasauli gang rape case: Hotel manager and others questioned, police will complete investigation and submit report in 26 days

Diary Times Desk : The police has intensified the investigation in the gang rape case registered in Kasauli police station against Haryana BJP state president Mohan Lal Baroli and singer Rocky Mittal. The police claim that they will prepare and submit a complete report of this case in 26 days. So far, apart from the victim, the manager and staff of the Tourism Corporation hotel have been questioned in the case. If sources are to be believed, the hotel staff does not remember anything as the case is old. Some staff members have also been replaced in this. A dozen hotel employees have been questioned. The police have also questioned the accused. The police is preparing to call them again for investigation. Apart from this, the police is now also taking the opinion of medical experts. It is also being seen how gang rape can be confirmed in a one and a half year old case. However, the police has already taken the records from the hotel. So far, they have also found evidence of the arrival of the concerned people in it. Their Aadhar cards have also been given to the police from the hotel. However, the police is not telling in whose name that room was booked at that time. It is being told that the police has also made the victim woman identify the spot. There are preparations to call her again. Till now the police has not been able to find any concrete evidence so that the investigation can be completed. After the press conference by the woman's companion who was present with her on the day of the incident, a new twist has come in this case. The woman has completely denied this case, on the basis of which the police has now started a fresh investigation. On the other hand, SP Solan Gaurav Singh said that the investigation of the case is going on. The police will prepare and submit the report of the case on time.

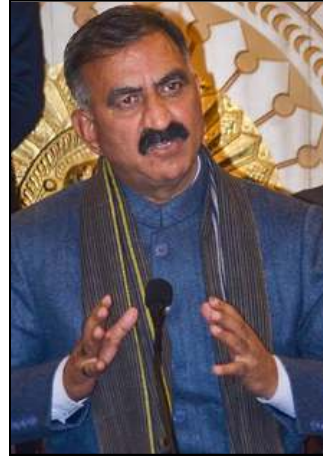
12 Maoists Killed In Encounter With Security Forces In Chhattisgarh

Agencies : As many as 12 Maoists were killed in a fierce encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district on Thursday, a senior police official said. The gunfight broke out at around 9 am in a forest of south Bijapur when a joint team of security personnel was out on an anti-maoist operation and the intermittent exchange of fire lasted till late in the evening, he said. Personnel belonging to the state police's District Reserve Guard (DRG) from three districts, five battalions of CoBRA (Commando Battalion for Resolute Action - an elite jungle warfare unit of the CRPF) and the 229th battalion of CRPF were involved in the operation, he said. "As per preliminary information, 12 Naxalites were killed in the gunfight. Further details were awaited as a search operation was still underway in the area," the official informed. No harm was reported to security forces, he said. With this, 26 Maoists have been gunned down in separate encounters in the state so far this month. On January 12, five Maoists, including two women, were killed in an encounter with security personnel in the Madded.



Himachal: CM Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu said- Government will develop private land for urban development in BBN

Diary Times Desk : Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu said that private land will also be developed for urban development in the Baddi-Barotiwala-Nalagarh (BBN) area of Solan. Land owners will be allotted plots in proportion to the area. For this, the government has started the Land Pooling Policy 2025 in the Baddi-Barotiwala-Nalagarh Development Authority (BBNDA). This decision has been taken to promote organized development in the area. This policy focuses on replacing unorganized land arrangements with well-organized planning with the active participation of landowners. Land pooling is a way to collaborate with landowners for urban development. Under this, landowners transfer their land to the government for local development. This accelerates urban development and reduces the need for land acquisition. The Chief Minister said that under this policy, better urban planning and infrastructure development will be possible even without compulsory land acquisition. Through the policy, land will be pooled and developed with the cooperation of landowners to provide essential services and planned layouts in the area. After the layout is approved, it will be published within two months.



Himachal : Raid continued in pharma company in Jhadmajri for the second day, records checked by running generator

Diary Times Desk : The Income Tax Department's raid continued for the second day in the pharma company located in the industrial area Jhadmajri. Due to power failure, the department officials could not complete the proceedings on Wednesday. When the department team raided on Wednesday, there was no electricity here. Electricity was restored by 1:00 pm. After some time, the power went off again. It is being told that electricity came at around 8:30 pm, due to which the team could not complete its work. However, some records were seized on the first day itself by running the generator here. On Thursday, the Income Tax Department officials were busy searching the records the whole day. The phones of the company's staff and managers have been switched off for two days. The Income Tax Department team did not allow any worker to come out on Thursday.

Children Of The State: Children who returned after visiting Delhi and Goa expressed their gratitude to the CM, Sukhu said – this is your right

Diary Times Desk : After returning from their first air journey and memorable stay in three star hotels, 22 children of the state met Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu at his official residence Oak Over in Shimla on Thursday. These children shared their experiences about the 13-day educational and recreational trip and thanked the Chief Minister for this. The Chief Minister, while talking to the children, inquired about their experiences during the trip. Describing the air journey, Nancy, a 12th class student, said that it was thrilling to experience everything from the airport arrangements to the air journey. Historical monuments were also visited. Kashish shared her fascination for the objects displayed in the Science Museum of Delhi and the joy of the imaginary ride. Dharmendra recalled the moments spent with the group.

Himachal News: Nayak Hemraj of Mandi awarded with Army Medal, had killed two terrorists

Diary Times Desk : Naik Hemraj of Malwana village in Mandi district, who showed indomitable courage during an encounter with terrorists in Pulwama, Jammu and Kashmir, was awarded the Army Medal on the 77th Army Day. This bravery award was given by Chief of Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi on Army Day in Pune, Maharashtra. Hemraj is the son of Prakash Chand, a resident of Malwana. During his deployment in Pulwama on 28 February 2023, he received information about terrorists hiding in a village. Army personnel led by Naik Hemraj carried out this operation. As soon as the terrorists hiding in a house got information about the arrival of the army, they started firing indiscriminately. In response, Naik Hemraj and his comrades responded. During this encounter, Naik Hemraj was shot in the legs and back. Without caring for his life, Hemraj killed two terrorists. After long treatment, Hemraj is completely healthy. Naik Hemraj is posted in 62 Cavalry Tiwari Cantt Gurdaspur. Naik Hemraj of Malwana village in Mandi district was awarded the Army Medal on the 77th Army Day. On 28 February 2023, he killed two terrorists in Pulwama.

Himachal News: Mukesh Una and Vidhan Sabha Speaker will hoist the tricolor in Kullu, state level function will be held on the Ridge of Shimla

Diary Times Desk : District level functions have been decided for the Republic Day celebrations. Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri will hoist the tricolor in Una and Assembly Speaker Kuldeep Singh Pathania will hoist the tricolor in Kullu. The General Administration Department released the schedule of ministers for the Republic Day celebrations on Thursday. Like every year, a state level function will be organized at the Ridge Maidan in the capital Shimla. Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla and Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu will preside over the function. Public Works Minister Vikramaditya Singh will also be present at the function in Shimla. Assembly Deputy Speaker Vinay Kumar will preside over the district level Republic Day function in Keylong of Lahaul-Spiti, Health Minister Dr. Dhaniram Shandil in Mandi, Agriculture Minister Chandra Kumar Chamba, Industry Minister Harshvardhan Chauhan Hamirpur, Revenue Minister Jagat Singh Negi in Rekong Peo of Kinnaur, Education Minister Rohit Thakur in Nahan.

Himachal News: HT line fell in Sirmaur district of Himachal Pradesh, 8 animals died, 2 injured

Diary Times Desk : A tragic incident took place on Thursday in Haripurkhol of Sirmaur district. The HT line of electricity fell here. 8 animals died in this accident while 2 were injured. There was chaos in the area after the incident. Maryam was devastated when the HT wire of electricity suddenly fell in Haripurkhol. During this, 5 of her buffaloes, one cow and 2 calves died on the spot due to electric shock. 2 animals were burnt. Thankfully, no person was hit by the current during this time. After getting the information, the administration team reached the spot and gave immediate relief amount of 20 thousand rupees to the victim's family. SDM Paonta Sahib GS Cheema said that investigation is being done in the case. Investigation will be done after the investigation. He said that 8 animals died in the accident while 2 were injured. Immediate relief of 20 thousand rupees has been provided to the victim's family.

HP Police Recruitment: 1296 applications cancelled for not paying fees for Police Constable Recruitment



Diary Times Desk : The State Public Service Commission has canceled 1296 applications for not depositing the fee for police constable recruitment. Applications have been canceled under male recruitment. 780 posts are to be filled under male constable recruitment. Applications were sought for recruitment till November 2024. The fee was asked to be deposited by 25 December 2024. Even after this, the commission has canceled 1296 applications for not depositing the fee. On the other hand, 91 applications for not depositing the fee for Himachal Pradesh Judicial Service Examination have also been canceled. The commission has released the list of all the canceled applications on the website.

Panel for legal action against 'individual' in Pannun plot

Agencies : Just days before the Joe Biden government demits office in the US, a high-powered committee set up by the Centre to probe inputs received from Washington on an alleged plot to kill Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, a designated terrorist, has submitted its report and recommended legal action against "an individual". Though a press statement issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Wednesday did not identify the individual, it is learnt the person was Vikas Yadav, a former intelligence official. Yadav was indicted by the US Department of Justice in connection with the plot. The committee was set up by the Centre on November 18, 2023, to look into the inputs provided by the US regarding activities of some organised criminal groups, terrorist organisations and drug peddlers, who undermined the security interests of both India and the US, the statement said. The inputs were shared by Washington with New Delhi regarding the alleged involvement of Yadav. The Ministry of External Affairs had said in November last year that Yadav "was no longer an employee of the Government of India". "The inquiry committee conducted its own investigation, and also pursued leads provided by the US. It received full cooperation from the US authorities and the two sides also exchanged visits. The committee further examined a number of officials from different agencies and also scrutinised relevant documents in this connection," the statement said.

Delhi pollution: Centre revokes GRAP 4 restrictions after dip in pollution levels

Agencies : The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) on Thursday revoked curbs under Stage 4 of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) amid a dip in pollution levels in Delhi-NCR. However, curbs invoked under Stage 3 GRAP are to remain. The restrictions under Stage 3 and Stage 4 of GRAP were invoked on Wednesday after air quality in the city deteriorated. Stage 4 curbs include a ban on all construction activities, entry of non-essential polluting trucks into Delhi, and mandatory shifting of school classes, except for classes 10 and 12, to hybrid mode. Non-essential diesel trucks are prohibited from entering Delhi, while Delhi-registered BS-IV and older diesel-run heavy goods vehicles are banned.

8th Pay Commission for central government employees approved by Cabinet



Agencies : The Union Cabinet on Thursday approved to set up 8th Pay Commission to revise salaries of central government employees and allowances of pensioners. The decision to set up the 8th Pay Commission was taken at a meeting of the Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said. The minister informed that the chairman and two members of the Commission will be appointed soon. Consultations will also be held with central and state governments and other stakeholders, the minister added. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that the government's decision to constitute the eighth pay commission will boost consumption and improve the quality of life. "We are all proud of the efforts of all Government employees, who work to build a Viksit Bharat. The Cabinet's decision on the 8th Pay Commission will improve quality of life and give a boost to consumption," he wrote on X.

'Key to space ambitions': India succeeds in historic space docking mission

Agencies : India on Thursday morning successfully docked one satellite onto another, joining a small group of elite spacefaring nations to have carried out the complex technological feat in zero gravity. Only the United States, Russia and China have carried out space docking missions, which allow separate satellites to work as a team, coordinating their tasks and sharing resources that can't be carried on one spacecraft. The Indian mission, dubbed Space Docking Experiment (SpaDex), lifted off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in the country's southern Andhra Pradesh state on December 30, carrying two satellites, called Chaser and Target.

Devendra Fadnavis reacts to Saif Ali Khan stabbing: 'Mumbai not unsafe'

Agencies : Maharashtra chief minister Devendra Fadnavis on Thursday termed the stabbing attack on actor Saif Ali Khan as "serious", but added it was wrong to brand Mumbai as "unsafe". "Mumbai is the safest mega city in country. The incident is serious but wrong to brand city as unsafe," PTI quoted the chief minister as saying. Actor Saif Ali Khan is currently undergoing treatment at Mumbai's Lilawati Hospital after he was stabbed by an intruder in his apartment around 3 am on Thursday. The incident must be taken seriously. The government will take steps.

"People's Mandate": Congress Files Top Court Plea In Places Of Worship Case

Agencies : The Congress on Thursday filed an intervention petition in the Supreme Court, which last month began hearing petitions challenging certain provisions of the Places of Worship Act passed in 1991. The party has sought strict implementation of the law, and has joined other opposition parties, including Asaduddin Owaisi's All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen, in moving the top court in this matter. Earlier this month the court agreed to hear Mr Owaisi's plea, ordering be heard with others on February 17. The Congress' petition was filed by senior leader KC Venugopal. It said the law - passed by the opposition party when it was in power at the head of the United Progressive Alliance government. Then Home Minister, SB Chavan, red-flagged "an alarming rise of intolerance propagated by certain sections for their narrow (and) vested interests" as he tabled the bill. Fast-forward 33 years, and the Congress has now joined a list of opposition parties.

BRS moves Supreme Court seeking disqualification of defected MLAs

Agencies : Upping the ante in its fight against the Congress in Telangana, the BRS approached the Supreme Court and filed two separate petitions, seeking directions for action against 10 MLAs who defected to the ruling Congress. Following deliberations with former Minister and senior leader T Harish Rao on Wednesday, the party advocates filed the petitions in the Supreme Court. While a writ petition was filed seeking directions on seven of its MLAs - Pocharam Srinivas Reddy, Kale Yadaiah, Sanjay Kumar, Krishnamohan Reddy, Mahipal Reddy, Prakash Goud and Arekapudi Gandhi.

Engineering Student Sexually Assaulted By Driver At Hyderabad Hostel: Cops

Agencies : A woman engineering student was allegedly sexually assaulted at a private hostel here by a driver employed by the building's owner, police said on Thursday. The incident occurred on Wednesday night when the first-year student was alone in her room. The accused allegedly knocked on her door, claiming he had a bed sheet to offer. When the woman opened the door, the intruder suddenly entered the room and allegedly sexually assaulted her. Police said the accused is a driver working for the hostel building's owner. The woman had practical exams on Thursday, a police official said. Some other students were in different rooms at the time. The victim lodged a complaint, based on which a case was registered at Ibrahimpatnam police station. She was taken to a hospital for a medical examination, and technical data has been collected, police added. The accused has been apprehended, and further investigation is underway.



Australian Woman Poisoned Baby For Cash And Clicks, Amasses \$37,000

Agencies : An Australian woman has been arrested and charged after she poisoned a one-year-old baby and posted videos of the infant in distress to gain social media following and donations, according to a report in CNN. The unnamed 34-year-old woman from Sunshine Coast, Queensland allegedly administered "several unauthorised prescription and pharmacy medicines" to the girl who was known to her, without medical approval, from August 6 to October 15, 2024. The woman has been widely reported in local media to be the baby's mother but the police have not officially confirmed this. She is accused of raising just over \$37,000 via GoFundMe by publicising the baby's plight. After the reports of her deceit came out, the online fundraising platform is now working to return the money to donors. "Proactive refunds are being issued to all donors as part of our ongoing commitment to protecting Australian generosity," a GoFundMe spokesperson told ABC News. As per the Queensland Police, the woman disregarded medical advice about a health condition that the child was suffering from and was hospitalised for. She went to great lengths to obtain the unauthorised medicines and administered them to the infant, whose condition did not improve.

"Oligarchy Taking Shape In America," Says President Joe Biden In Farewell Address

Agencies : Outgoing US President Joe Biden warned Americans about a "dangerous concentration of power" among a few wealthy people in the United States and urged them to "stand guard" against threats from oligarchs, disinformation and AI in a future under Donald Trump as he delivered a farewell address on Wednesday ahead of stepping down next week. In a brief Oval Office speech, the Democrat touted his achievements in steering the US economy out of the deep crisis inflicted by the Covid-19 pandemic and said he had made the nation's alliances abroad stronger. In a veiled reference to incoming President Trump's close ties to billionaire Elon Musk and other tycoons.

Pope Francis suffers injury after fall at his residence, second incident in a month



Agencies : Pope Francis injured his arm on Thursday after a fall at his residence. The Vatican spokesperson said, Pope Francis fell Thursday and hurt his arm, AP reported. "This morning, due to a fall at the Santa Marta house, Pope Francis suffered a contusion on his right forearm, without fractures. The arm was immobilised as a precautionary measure," the Vatican spokesman in a statement said. This comes almost a month after the 88-year-old pope whacked his chin on his nightstand following an apparent fall that resulted in a bad bruise on his chin. The pope uses a wheelchair amid his struggle with knee and health problems. The pontiff previously suffered from long bouts of bronchitis. His health condition has been a concerning issue among the Vatican. In the past two years, the pope suffered from influenza and related problems several times. He also underwent a major surgery in 2021 due to a painful condition called diverticulitis. In 2023, the pope was operated to repair a hernia.

At Least 70 Killed In Gaza Airstrikes After Ceasefire Deal Announcement

Agencies : After news of a ceasefire agreement sparked mass rejoicing in Gaza, residents woke up Thursday to columns of smoke, rubble and more deaths following new Israeli air strikes. "We were waiting for the truce and were happy. It was the happiest night since October 7," said Gaza resident Saeed Alloush, referring to the Hamas attack on Israel that sparked the war in 2023. "Suddenly... we received the news of the martyrdom of 40 people," including his uncle, Alloush said. "The whole area's joy turned to sadness, as if an earthquake struck." The latest strikes came after Qatar and the United States announced a fragile ceasefire deal that should take effect on Sunday. AFP has contacted the Israeli military for comment.

Pam Bondi tells Democrats she won't be 'bullied' by them at confirmation hearing

Agencies : Pam Bondi had a tense exchange with Democratic senators during her confirmation hearing. The 59-year-old was tapped by Donald Trump to serve as the US attorney general after his first pick, Matt Gaetz, bowed out of consideration. On Wednesday, she fended off onslaughts from Senators Adam Schiff and Alex Padilla as they grilled her about her loyalty to the president-elect. Padilla questioned Bondi over her visit to Philadelphia in the aftermath of the 2020 election as the then-Florida attorney general. "Do you have any evidence of election fraud or irregularities in the 2020 election?" he asked, referring to her statement — "We've won Pennsylvania" — during a press conference appearance alongside Rudy Giuliani at the time. As Bondi began answering, Padilla cut her off, prompting her to clap back with, "You pointed your finger at me and said you were speaking. Let me answer your question. I'm not going to be bullied by you, Senator Padilla." However, the senator was unphased as he continued to talk over her, asking her about the 14th Amendment.

Trump's NSA Pick Waltz Signals Continuation Of Biden's Policies On India, China

Agencies : The incoming Trump administration in the United States will reinforce President Joe Biden's Indo-Pacific strategy, especially while dealing with China and strengthening ties with India. Donald Trump's National Security Advisor (NSA) choice, Mike Waltz, has noted that China poses a long-term strategic challenge to America, and India is a key partner for the US in this competition. Speaking at an event titled "Passing the Baton 2025: Securing America's Future in the Era of Strategic Competition" at the US Institute of Peace in Washington DC on Tuesday, Waltz also touched upon issues of regional alliances, defence, and trade. His predecessor Jake Sullivan, Biden administration's NSA also attended the event. Mike Waltz, the former co-chair of the US-India Caucus, identified India as a "critical partner" for the United States in the future, especially in efforts to counter China's rise. The incoming NSA's remarks came after Sullivan noted the strong support the US-India Congressional Caucus enjoys in India. Sullivan, who had recently visited India, told the audience that Waltz is very popular there. "I was just in India last week.

Strong winds weaken in LA, giving respite to weary firefighters

Agencies : Firefighters battling two fires that have wreaked destruction across Los Angeles for nine days could get some respite on Thursday from the weather. The hurricane-strength winds that initially fanned the flames and hampered rescue efforts have weakened into much lighter gusts. Progress has been made in containing the two largest fires burning across a combined total of about 40,000 acres. At least 25 people have been killed and more than 12,000 structures destroyed in some of the worst fires in memory to engulf America's second biggest city. The two largest fires, Eaton and Palisades, are still burning after more than a week — and firefighting help has been sought from Mexico and Canada. Red flag warnings have been lifted by the National Weather Service (NWS), but could return in a few days. There will be "a big improvement for tonight and tomorrow, though there'll still be some lingering areas of concern," Ryan Kittell of the NWS told news agency AFP.



Dissident Akali Dal leaders again meet Jathedar, seek fresh directions to party to comply with Akal Takht orders



Agencies : Dissident Akali Dal leaders on Thursday approached Akal Takht Jathedar Giani Raghbir Singh, seeking directions to the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) to maintain the sanctity of the seven-member committee constituted by Akal Takht to revive the party. Gurpartap Singh Wadala and Santa Singh Umaidpuri, the two members of the Akal Takht-formed committee, met the Jathedar showing their resentment against the SAD leadership for non-compliance with the Akal Takht directions. Wadala said that the Jathedar had declared that only the seven-member committee had been entrusted with the responsibility of revamping the party. "Despite clear instructions by the Jathedar that only the seven-member committee constituted by Akal Takht 'stands' and that the directions would have to be abided by in toto, the SAD overlooked it. This compelled us to meet the Jathedar saheb who specifically told us that only the Akal Takht committee has been authorised to chalk out and oversee the SAD membership drive," he said.

Dense fog hits flight operations at Chandigarh airport

Agencies : Dense fog and low visibility on Thursday morning affected the flight schedule at the Shaheed Bhagat Singh International Airport, Chandigarh. One flight was cancelled, while three departures were delayed till 10 am. The departure to Delhi (6:55 am) was cancelled while to Chennai (7:20 am), Mumbai (9 am) and Delhi (7:40 am) were delayed. The Delhi flight (7 am) arrival here touched down at 8:35 am. Meanwhile, temperatures plummeted across North India, with the people of Chandigarh and neighbouring regions woke up to light rain on Thursday. As thick fog engulfs Chandigarh, the minimum temperature is expected to reach eight degrees Celsius on Thursday, as per the India Meteorological Department (IMD), which has forecasted dense fog on Friday. Also, the AQI in Chandigarh remains "poor" at 232 index value.

Malhotra re-elected city BJP president unopposed

Agencies : City BJP chief Jatinder Pal Malhotra (60) has been re-elected to the post unopposed for a three-year term. Malhotra was the only candidate to file his nomination for the post today. The official announcement with regard to his election will be made at the party office in Sector 33 tomorrow. Malhotra replaced Arun Sood to become city BJP chief in October 2023, and is yet to complete his three-year term. However, the nomination process for the post of city president and National Council members was conducted as part of the BJP's ongoing organisational elections, Sangathan Parv. For the two posts of BJP national council members, former MP Kirron Kher and former city BJP president Sanjay Tandon filed their nomination papers today. Narinder Singh Raina, a senior BJP MLA from Jammu and Kashmir and the party's national secretary, was the returning officer for the elections. A resident of Sector 21 here, Malhotra did his bachelor's degree from DAV College, Sector 10, and master's degree in public administration.

SKM tells govt to talks to protesting farmers as Dallewal's indefinite fast enters 52nd day

Agencies : The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) demanded on Thursday that the Union Government initiate talks with farmers protesting at the Punjab-Haryana border over their demands and called for holding kisan mahapanchayats in all states as farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal's indefinite fast entered the 52nd day. In a statement, SKM said they will write to Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the deteriorating health of Dallewal, the convener of SKM (Non-Political), who has been on a hunger strike since November 26 last year. "In the context of the fast-unto-death struggle of Jagjit Singh Dallewal at Khanauri border that has crossed 52 days, a series of protest action and interaction with political parties will be undertaken to put pressure on the Union Government with the demands of immediately holding talks with all the farmer organisations on the long-pending demands, including MSP and loan waiver, save the life of Dallewal and immediately withdraw the National Policy Framework on Agricultural Marketing (NPFAM)," SKM said. It said at National Coordination Committee meeting held on January 15, it was decided that SKM will write to the Prime Minister, stressing the grave danger to Dallewal's life due to his indefinite fast.

Instagram affair leads to murder: Woman, lover arrested for husband's killing

Agencies : The Kapurthala police on Thursday uncovered the mystery of blind murder of a Phulowal resident, who had been brutally attacked by unidentified assailants on his way to work. During the investigation, the police found that Lakhwinder Singh's wife, Tamanna, and her lover, Kuldeep Kumar, had hatched a plot to kill him. The two had met on Instagram about a year ago and had been in a romantic relationship since then. Under SSP Gaurav Tura, along with SP Investigation Sarabjit Rai, DSP SD Deep Karan Singh, DSP Detective Parminder Singh, and a team of officers, including Inspector Jarnail Singh (In-Charge, CIA Staff Kapurthala) and Kripal Singh, chief officer, Thana Sadar, Kapurthala, the police solved the murder mystery. On the evening of January 12, around 7.30 pm, Lakhwinder was attacked near the cremation ground of Danwind village on his way to work. The assailants struck him on his head with a stick. Based on the statement of Lakhwinder's brother Balwinder Singh, an FIR was registered on January 13 under Sections 126(2), 118(1), 3(5) of the BNS at the Kotwali police station in Kapurthala against the unidentified assailants.

Bank 'fraud': ED attaches over Rs 440 crore assets of ex-promoters of Kwality

Agencies : The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Thursday said it has attached assets worth more than Rs 440 crore in Delhi, Haryana and Punjab as part of an alleged bank loan fraud linked money laundering case against former promoters of dairy major Kwality Ltd. An order was issued under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) for the provisional attachment of a 12,000-sq yard farmhouse located at DLF Chhatarpur, residential properties at Vasant Vihar and Punjabi Bagh in Delhi and some residential plots at Karnal (Haryana) and Mohali (Punjab), the federal agency said. The total value of these properties is Rs 442.85 crore. These properties were "owned" by former promoters Siddhant Gupta and Sanjay Dhingra of Kwality Limited through "dummy" companies. The driver and security guard of the said promoters were the directors in such companies, ED said. The agency had raided 15 locations in Delhi-NCR in November 2024 as part of the action against former promoters and directors of the company — Sanjay Dhingra and Siddhant Gupta — apart from some "shell" (paper) companies related to them.

Court dismisses election petitions against Congress candidate from Hisar

Agencies : The Punjab and Haryana High Court has dismissed two election petitions challenging the election of Indian National Congress candidate Jai Parkash Saharan from the Hisar parliamentary constituency. Among other things, Justice Anoop Chitkara ruled the petitioners, claiming to be Haryana ministers, failed to establish status as a voter in the Hisar parliamentary constituency and their name did not appear in the contesting candidate list. "The petitioner did not prima facie establish his locus; the petition lacks essential pleadings and petition is defective, and the cause of action is absent", Justice Chitkara asserted, adding that an election petition could be rejected at the threshold if it suffered from any vice. The petitioners had approached the court seeking the nullification of the election results declared on June 4, 2024, alleging corrupt practices by the elected representative. He further sought a direction for fresh election and disqualification of the elected MP under Section 8A of the Representation of People Act, 1951.

Cong should apologise for unfulfilled promises: Jai Ram

Diary Times Desk : Congress leaders should apologise to people for unfulfilled promises. The Sukhu government had failed to deliver what it promised during the election campaign in 2022, said Jai Ram Thakur, former Chief Minister, while interacting with media after addressing a 'Sainik Rally' organised by Sarv Kalayankari Trust at Sujanpur, near here, today. He said that not only people of the state but many leaders in the Congress were feeling ignored. Responding to the alleged Operation Lotus, Leader of Opposition said that it was not BJP but Congress MLAs had challenged the leadership as it was not capable of keeping them in party fold. "What could be more disgraceful that six Congress MLAs left the Chief Minister and despite being in the government Congress lost the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha elections," said the LoP. He said that Congress not only lost all four seats in the state but also the seat of home constituency of CM. Responding to relinquishing electricity subsidy, the LoP said that the Chief Minister should remember his guarantee to give free 300 units of electricity during the elections and that was the reason of mandate to Congress. He said that Sukhu government has failed on every front and development of the state has been stalled. He added that if elections are held today, Congress party would not even win 10 Assembly seats.

State govt committed to support retired soldiers, families: Shandil

Diary Times Desk : Health and Sainik Welfare Minister Dhani Ram Shandil today said that the youth of the state were playing a crucial role in the country's armed forces and the government was committed to providing every possible support to the war veterans, disabled soldiers, ex-servicemen, serving personnel and their families. Chairing a meeting with the officers of Sainik Welfare Department and Himachal Pradesh Ex-servicemen Corporation here today, Shandil said special emphasis was on providing employment opportunities.

Snowfall in Shimla's Kufri and Narkanda; rain in lower regions of Himachal



Diary Times Desk : Himachal Pradesh is gearing up for another round of snowfall and rain in its high-altitude regions. It started snowing in the higher reaches of the state on Thursday morning. Even tourist destinations of Kufri and Narkanda have received around one to two inches of snowfall this morning. Some parts of Shimla also received traces of snowfall early morning. The snowfall has disrupted National Highway 5 at Narkanda, and traffic has been diverted to the alternate route of Sainj-Luhri-Shimla. The lower areas of the state are receiving light to moderate rainfall. The weather department had issued a forecast for light to moderate snowfall from Wednesday night till Thursday night. As per the forecast, the higher reaches of Shimla, Kullu, Kinnaur, Lahaul and Spiti, Kangra and Chamba could receive good snowfall throughout the day.

CM's 10-day winter sojourn of Kangra to begin today

Diary Times Desk : Chief minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu will start his 10-day winter sojourn in Dharamsala from tomorrow. During the sojourn, the Chief Minister would tour various areas of Kangra district and inaugurate and lay foundation stone of various developmental projects in the district. As per the tour program, tomorrow the Chief Minister would hold a meeting with the officials regarding the ongoing development projects. He would also listen to the grievances of the public in Dharamsala mini secretariat. On January 17 the Chief Minister would inaugurate various projects in Dharamsala including meeting hall of Zila Parishad, women police station in police lines and hostel building of mountaineering institute in McLeodganj. He would lay the foundation stone of food street market being developed under the Smart City project on international cricket stadium road. On January 18, the CM would visit the Haripur area in Dehra assembly constituency where he would inaugurate the wildlife information centre and lay the foundation stone of high level bridge on Gajj river in the area. The Chief Minister will also visit Jawali Assembly constituency. On January 19, he would inaugurate district forensic unit in Nurpur Assembly constituency.

Special Task Force to combat drug abuse, organised crime: Sukhu

Diary Times Desk : The state government has taken a significant decision towards combating drug abuse and dismantling organised crime networks by establishing a Special Task Force (STF). Stating this, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said that drug abuse has become a global challenge requiring stringent measures. "The state government has enacted laws to curb this menace, including provisions for confiscating the properties of offenders involved in drug trafficking," he said. The Chief Minister said in order to strengthen its operations, the STF will operate across three zones headed by Superintendents of Police in Dharamsala, Parwanoo and Mandi, with its headquarters here in Shimla. The task force will submit fortnightly progress reports to the government, which will review its actions and strategies as needed. He said a special task force (STF) under the leadership of Additional Director General of Police or Inspector General of Police has been established to make the state drug-free and foster a healthy and civilized society.

Speaker: Amend FCA, FRA for inclusive development

Diary Times Desk : Speaker of the Himachal Pradesh Assembly Kuldeep Singh Pathania on Wednesday stress on the need to amend the Forest Conservation Act (FCA) and the Forest Rights Act (FRA) to ensure sustainable and inclusive development in the state. Addressing a public gathering at Duragai-Ghatta village near Chowari in the Bhattiyat Assembly constituency, Pathania highlighted the importance of raising these issues in the Assembly to expedite the implementation of development projects and prioritise land allocation for disaster-affected people. The Speaker further called for efforts to increase the proportionate revenue share the state receives from central corporations benefiting from Himachal Pradesh's natural resources. Speaking at the foundation stone-laying ceremony of the Burja link road, a project estimated to cost ₹1 crore, Pathania reiterated the challenges posed by prolonged delays in obtaining environmental clearances for developmental projects under the FCA. Outlining the progress made in the Bhattiyat constituency, Pathania noted that 21 out of 32 proposed link road construction projects initiated in the past two years are nearing completion. He also assured residents that 11 additional roads are planned under the gram panchayats of Raipur, Sadal and Jandrogh with four projects already cleared under the FRA. Pathania further committed to expediting the construction of the new building for the Sadal Primary Health Centre.



Women's Premier League Schedule Released By BCCI, Third Edition To Begin On...

Agencies : The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Thursday unveiled the schedule for the much-awaited TATA Women's Premier League (WPL) 2025. The third edition of the world's premier women's T20 league will be held in four cities - Baroda, Bengaluru, Lucknow, and Mumbai - promising a festival of thrilling T20 action. The tournament will kick off on 14th February at the newly built BCA Stadium in Baroda, where the Gujarat Giants (GG) will square off against defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) in a high-octane season opener. Baroda will host a total of six matches before the action shifts to Bengaluru, where RCB will play their first home game against the formidable Mumbai Indians (MI), champions of the first WPL edition, at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium on 21st February. RCB will have three more opportunities to entertain their home crowd as they host UP Warriorz (UPW) on 24th February, GG on 27th February and Delhi Capitals (DC) on 1st March. Adding to the excitement, Lucknow will make its debut as a WPL venue this season, with UPW playing three matches at their home ground from 3rd March. The final leg of the tournament will unfold in Mumbai, with the iconic Cricket Club of India.



Sitanshu Kotak set to join India team as batting coach ahead of England T20Is

Agencies : Former Saurashtra captain and batter Sitanshu Kotak is set to join the India men's set-up as batting coach. ESPNcricinfo has learned that Kotak, who is 52, will start with the five-match home T20I series against England which starts from January 22. Kotak, who retired in 2013 after a first-class career spanning more than 20 years, has been the batting coach at the National Cricket Academy since 2019. Kotak also was the head coach of several India A tours and served as assistant coach to VVS Laxman when the latter helmed India's white-ball bilateral engagements as head coach in the last few years. Kotak will be the fifth assistant on the coaching staff which is led by Gautam Gambhir, who took charge as the all-format head coach last August. At the time Gambhir brought in three assistant coaches: former South Africa fast bowler Morne Morkel (bowling coach), along with former India and Mumbai all-rounder Abhishek Nayar and former Netherlands and Essex captain Ryan ten Doeschate as assistant coaches. T Dilip, who was the fielding coach during Rahul Dravid's tenure, was retained. The development comes soon after the BCCI conducted a review meeting.

BCCI Unhappy With 'KKR Touch' In Gautam Gambhir's Team India Support Staff, Two Big-Shots Under The Scanner

Agencies : Team India assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate and Abhishek Nayar's roles are under scanner as the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) aren't happy with the apparent 'Kolkata Knight Riders touch' in the team management, according to a source from the BCCI. Former Indian all-rounder Abhishek Nayar and former Netherlands star Ryan Ten Doeschate joined Team India's support staff as assistant coaches during the white-ball tour of Sri Lanka. Nayar and Doeschate were also the assistant coaches at KKR and worked with Gambhir. Under Gambhir's mentorship, the Kolkata-based franchise won the 2024 edition of the Indian Premier League after beating Sunrisers Hyderabad by eight wickets. According to a recent report from ESPNcricinfo, BCCI is set to implement stricter protocols during Team India's tours. The report added that BCCI will limit the players spending time with their families on tours. The players will also be barred from taking independent transport to commute during practice and matches.

"If Sarfaraz Khan Leaked Dressing Room News In Australia, You...": Harbhajan Singh's Direct Message To Gautam Gambhir

Agencies : Since the India vs Australia Border Gavaskar Trophy ended in the first week of January, Indian cricket has been a hotbed of controversies. There have been many rumours that are doing the rounds. In the midst of this, came a startling claim by a new report that India coach Gautam Gambhir took a player's name in the BCCI review meeting, who leaked news about the Indian dressing room. According to a video report by News 24, the player was Sarfaraz Khan. Talking on the rumour, spin great Harbhajan Singh called for better sense to prevail and had a message for Gautam Gambhir. "Whatever has happened in the last few days, be it in Australia or after that...there are wins and losses on the field. But every day new stories should not come out of the dressing room. Today, there was a report that coach saab (Gautam Gambhir) has said Sarfaraz Khan leaked dressing room talks to media. If coach saab has said this, he should not have done so. If Sarfaraz Khan had done this in Australia, you are the coach, you could have talked to him then. He is a player, make him understand. He is a youngster, he will play for India in the future," Harbhajan Singh said on his YouTube channel.



Short TAKES

"Would Like To Finish On Winning Note": Pakistan Captain Shan Masood On Final WTC Challenge

Agencies : Ahead of the first Test against West Indies, Pakistan Test captain Shan Masood said the team would like to finish their World Test Championship (WTC) cycle on a winning team. Pakistan will face West Indies in the two-match Test series commencing at the Multan Cricket Stadium from January 17. The second Test will also be played at the same venue starting on January 25. West Indies, who will play a Test match in Pakistan for the first time since December 2006, are currently at the bottom of the WTC table. In the last Test series between the two sides on Pakistan soil, PCB Hall of Famer Inzamam-ul-Haq led the home side to a 2-0 win in the three-match Test series. "This is our last Test series in the current ICC World Test Championship cycle, and we would like to finish it on a winning note. Every match in this format holds great importance, and we are committed to giving it our all to end the campaign with a memorable series win," Masood said in the pre-match press conference on Thursday.

Rohit Sharma Maintains Suspense Ahead Of Ranji Trophy Squad Deadline, Report Says Selectors To...

Agencies : India's Test captain Rohit Sharma has lifted the expectations of fans by appearing in a practice game with the Mumbai Ranji Trophy team, where he batted with former teammate Ajinkya Rahane. Rohit, who endured a difficult outing in Australia during the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, has been urged by head coach Gautam Gambhir and others in the BCCI to return to the Ranji Trophy but the skipper is yet to make a final decision on the topic. Rohit, though, was spotted doing some running in the BKC Ground, showing that he is working hard on his fitness. However, he seems to have not made up his mind about returning to domestic cricket yet. It has been reported that Rohit is set to be approached by the Mumbai selectors over confirmation on the team's next Ranji Trophy match against Jammu & Kashmir. The squad for the match is expected to be announced on January 20. "The selectors are expected to announce the squad on January 20, during which they will follow the due process of checking for the availability of every player.