

Jairam Thakur: Leader of Opposition said- Non-payment of fees in Sukhashray Yojana is another shameful face of system change



Diary Times Desk : Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur said that every day some shameless face of Sukhu government's 'Sukh ki Sarkar' and 'Vyavastha Parivartan' comes to the fore. This makes it clear that the only aim of the government is to tell one lie after another and the third lie after the second lie. It has come to light through newspapers that the fees of the students studying under Sukhashray Yojana in Chamba have not been deposited to the concerned educational institutions. This is a model of Sukhu government's system change in the name of which the government shouts at the top of its voice from the platforms every day. The government is talking big about Sukhashray every day but the ground reality is that the government is not even depositing the fees of such children. Jairam Thakur said that ever since the Sukhu government has come to power, it has been promoting this scheme every day. There will be no corner of the state where a huge hoarding of the smiling Chief Minister is not seen promoting Sukhashray Yojana. If you go through the roads, you see this hoarding on every second or third bus.

Republic Day 2025: A glimpse of Sirmaur's Singhtu dance will be seen on the path of duty

Diary Times Desk : On the occasion of Republic Day, for the first time, Singhtu dance of Hati tribe of Giripar region of Sirmaur district of Himachal Pradesh will be presented in the cultural parade on Kartavya Path in Delhi. World record holder and folk artist Dr. Jogendra Habbi said that in the 76th National Republic Day celebrations, artists of Aasra Sanstha Pazhoua, Sirmaur will present a glimpse of Singhtu dance of Hati tribal area of Sirmaur district. In the cultural program being organized by the courtesy of Ministry of Culture, Government of India, more than five thousand artists from almost all the states and union territories of India will present various types of folk and tribal dances in unison.

Stay United for 'Viksit Bharat': PM Modi on Netaji's Birth Anniversary

Agencies : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday called upon people to stay united in pursuit of 'viksit Bharat' and warned them against the forces seeking to weaken the country and break its unity. Addressing a 'Parakram Diwas' event held in Cuttack to commemorate Subhas Chandra Bose's birth anniversary in the city of his birth, Modi said the iconic freedom fighter's life is a source of continuous inspiration for people. In the remarks delivered virtually, he said Netaji, as Bose was fondly called, chose to shun comfort zone and preferred to struggle for the country's independence. Modi said, "He never got trapped in a comfort zone. Similarly, we all have to step out of our comfort zone to build a viksit Bharat. We have to make ourselves best globally. We have to choose excellence and focus on efficiency." Bose was single-mindedly focused on the country's independence and people from diverse background united for the cause, he said. "Now we have to stay united for a developed India," he said.



China rejects Trump's 100% tariff talk, reaffirms BRICS neutrality on global trade

Agencies : China on Thursday said BRICS doesn't advocate bloc confrontation and does not target any third party, days after US President Donald Trump's assertion that 100 per cent tariffs would be imposed on the group if its member nations tried to cut dollar use in trade. India, for its part, has already stated that it had "no interest" in weakening the US dollar. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, during his address at the Doha Forum in December last year, had said that India had never been for "de-dollarisation" and right now there was no proposal to have any BRICS currency. Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) spokesperson today said, "As an important platform for cooperation among emerging markets and developing countries, BRICS advocates openness, inclusiveness and win-win cooperation, not bloc confrontation, and does not target any third party. The aim is to realise common development and prosperity."

4 Nepalese among 13 persons killed in Jalgaon train accident

Agencies : At least four out of the 13 persons killed in the Jalgaon train accident have been identified as hailing from Nepal, authorities said on Thursday. A minor boy and two women were among the four Nepalese victims, they said. At least 13 persons were killed and 15 injured after some passengers of the Mumbai-bound Pushpak Express, who got off the train after an alarm chain-pulling incident, were run over by the Karnataka Express on the adjacent tracks in Maharashtra's Jalgaon district on Wednesday evening. "Of the 13, we have identified eight bodies so far, including two from their Aadhaar cards," Special Inspector General of Police Dattatraya Karale told PTI. The eight identified deceased include four hailing from Nepal, Jalgaon district information officer Yuvraj Patil said.

CM Sukhu laid the foundation stone of milk processing plant in Dhagwar, 35,000 farmers will be benefited

Diary Times Desk : Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu on Thursday laid the foundation stone of a state-of-the-art milk processing plant with a capacity of 1.50 lakh litres per day (LLPD) at Dhagwar in Kangra district. He said the initial processing capacity of the plant is 1.50 LLPD, which can be increased to three LLPD in future. Once operational, the Dhagwar milk processing plant will significantly strengthen the economy of farmers of Kangra, Mandi, Hamirpur, Chamba and Una districts, benefiting over 35,000 milk producers. Apart from increasing the income of milk producers, the plant will create employment opportunities in milk collection, processing, quality control and distribution. It will also generate indirect employment in areas such as transportation, supply chain management and maintenance services, he said. The Chief Minister said the entire funding for the construction of this plant is being provided by the state government, which will be completed by February 2026.

Amid crow deaths due to bird flu, 4,200 chicks found dead in Maharashtra's Latur

Agencies : Nearly 4,200 chicks were found dead in a poultry farm in Maharashtra's Latur district, days after about 60 crows succumbed to bird flu, an official said on Thursday. The five-to-six-day-old birds died in the Dhalegaon village, Ahmedpur tehsil, and samples of the carcasses have been sent to the State Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory in Aundh, Pune, on Wednesday, he said. Deputy Commissioner for Animal Husbandry Dr Shridhar Shinde said their team had visited the site. Officials said the baby chickens died over two to three days.



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Himachal News: He went to Goa after extorting money in the name of getting a job, he is accused of cheating 5 youths

Diary Times Desk : A youth from Kullu district has got conditional bail from the Sessions Court in a case of fraud in the name of getting a government job. Accused Suraj, resident of Bayal-Koyal Tehsil Nirmand, had filed a petition for bail. According to the police, the youth is accused of extorting money from the youth in the name of getting a government job and issued fake joining letters. After this, he himself went on a trip to Goa with the money taken from the youth. Accepting the petition, the court of Sessions Judge Davinder Kumar has now ordered his release on bail. The accused was lodged in Kaithu Jail on judicial custody. The police arrested him on 13 November 2024. Now after submitting a bail application in the court, he has got bail for Rs 50 thousand. According to the police, on July 8, 2024, a case has been registered against the accused under 420, 465, 468 in Chhota Shimla police station. Accused Suraj is accused of getting a job for complainant Ashish Kaushal, Tanuja, Ishaan and Suresh as data entry operator in HPMC Nigam Vihar. For this, the accused had prepared their fake and forged joining letters. Police investigation has revealed that the accused had spent the fraud amount by going on a trip to Goa. After this, cases have also been registered against the accused under sections 420, 467, 468, 471 IPC in Nirmand police station on 25 July 2024. At present, the accused has been ordered to be released on the condition of presenting a personal bond and a surety of the same amount to the satisfaction of the Additional Judicial Magistrate.

Andhra college student waxes out of classroom in session, dies after jumping off 3rd floor

Agencies : A first-year student at a college in Andhra Pradesh died by suicide after jumping from the third floor of the building. The shocking incident was captured on a surveillance camera. The Narayana college student walked out of the classroom at 10:15 a.m., stood on the ledge, and jumped off the third floor. He also took off his slippers before jumping. A video from the classroom shows the boy leaving the room while the class was in session. The video also shows his classmates walking out of the room shortly after they realised he had jumped. Anantapur Rural sub-divisional police officer T Vekateshulu said the 16-year-old had just returned to college from Sankranti holidays on Thursday morning and died by suicide at 11:55 am. "After the holidays, this boy came to the college around 9:30 am on Thursday. While the class was going on, around 11:55 am.

HRTC News: Modern way of paying fares increased in HRTC buses, passengers increased 3 times in nine months

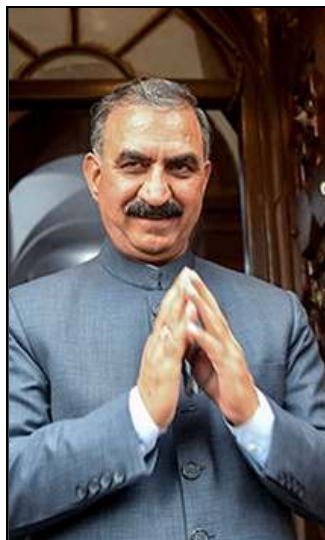
Diary Times Desk : The number of people paying cashless fare in Himachal Path Parivahan Nigam (HRTC) buses has increased three times in nine months. 2500 people are paying fare through cashless medium every day in the state. Not only this, the number of people paying fare with HRTC's NCMC card has increased more than 10 times in just 4 months. HRTC started cashless facility for fare payment in buses on 7 March 2024. This facility was made available with the help of e-ticketing machines. In the first week of its launch, only 40 people were making cashless payment daily and in just 9 months, the number of people making cashless payment of fare through debit card, credit card and UPI has increased to 2500 daily. Apart from this, the corporation started the facility of NCMC card for fare payment on 5 September. In the first week of its launch, 75 people were paying fare with NCMC card and in just 4 months the number of people using the card has reached 800 daily. HRTC's sub-divisional manager (IT) Rajesh Kumar Sharma said that the NCMC card can be used for fare transactions in the buses and metro of the transport corporation as well as in any other public transport system in the country.

India always open to legitimate return of undocumented Indians: Jaishankar

Agencies : India has always been open to legitimate return of undocumented Indians to their country, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Wednesday, noting that New Delhi is still in the process of verifying those from the US who can be deported to India and the number of such individuals cannot be determined yet. "As a government, we are obviously very much supportive of legal mobility because we do believe in a global workplace. We want Indian talent and Indian skills to have the maximum opportunity at the global level. At the same time, we are also very firmly opposed to illegal mobility and illegal migration," Jaishankar told a group of Indian reporters here. "Because you also know that when something illegal happens, many other illegal activities get joined onto it, which is not desirable. It is certainly not good reputationally. So, with every country, and the US is no exception, we have always maintained that if any of our citizens are there illegally, and if we are sure that they are our citizens.

Himachal CM: Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu said- OPS will continue as long as Congress is in power

Diary Times Desk : Chief Minister Thakur Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu addressed a huge public gathering at Dadi Mela Ground in Dharamshala Assembly Constituency of District Kangra. He announced to build the country's largest international convention center near Tapovan at a cost of Rs. 150 crore. He said that large-scale seminars will be organized in this convention center which will boost tourism activities and generate employment opportunities for the local youth. The Chief Minister also announced operationalization of Primary Health Center Yol Cantt, funds for construction of bridge in IT Park, allocation of adequate funds to complete the construction of OBC Bhawan and road construction projects. These include Jhiyol School to Anjani Mata, Parol to Ghiyana Khurd Bada Kholi, Kufri to Chamunda Temple, Alkhani to Jayul Kand Kardiana, Kaned to Jhakhrehad, Chelian to Pasu, Tika to Bani and Lunta-Bagotu-Khabrot-Tillu road construction projects.



No talks held on resumption of trade with Pakistan: Jaishankar

Agencies : There have been no talks with Pakistan on resumption of trade with India, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Wednesday. "After last year, there have been no talks with Pakistan on trade, nor has any initiative come from their side," Jaishankar said in response to a question at a news conference here. India, he said, never stopped trade with Pakistan, and the decision in this regard was taken by the Pakistan government in 2019. "From the very beginning, our interest was that India should get the status of most favoured nation. We used to give MFN status to Pakistan. But they did not grant the same status to us," Jaishankar said. The then-Pakistan government headed by Imran Khan suspended all bilateral trade in August 2019 in retaliation to India abrogating Article 370 of its Constitution, which granted special status to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. Islamabad had also downgraded its diplomatic ties with New Delhi. India, he said, never stopped trade with Pakistan, and the decision in this regard was taken by the Pakistan government in 2019.



Himachal Weather: Snowfall on peaks, drizzle in Shimla, winds increased the cold; Weather clear in Himachal till 29th

Diary Times Desk : There was light snowfall around Atal Tunnel Rohtang on Thursday. There was drizzle in the capital Shimla. Cold winds continued to blow across the state, due to which cold wave has intensified in many areas of the state. On Friday, cold wave in Una, Hamirpur and lower areas of the state, apart from fog in some areas, there are chances of fog. At the same time, the weather is expected to remain clear from Friday to January 29. The weather changed again on Thursday in Lahaul Spiti and Kullu district. Light snowfall occurred on the high peaks of Kullu including Lahaul in the afternoon. Snowfall occurred on Rohtang Pass, Koksar, Atal Tunnel, Sissu, Darcha, Baralacha, Kunjum Pass and Shikunla Pass, located at an altitude of 13050 feet. The view around Atal Tunnel Rohtang was worth seeing due to snowfall. Tourists who went in four by four vehicles were thrilled to see the fresh snowfall. In case of clear weather, buses will be operated between Manali-Keylong-Kullu via Atal Tunnel Rohtang on Friday. On Thursday, due to dry weather in the state, cold wave swept Una, while visibility in Bilaspur decreased to 50 meters due to dense fog. Meteorological Center Shimla has also predicted dense fog in Bilaspur and Mandi districts.



Himachal News: Student suddenly left home at night, body found in a well in the morning; the case is from this district

Diary Times Desk : The body of a girl was found in a well in Kotlu Bindade village of Panchayat Kotlu Brahmana under Ghumarvi Police Station on Thursday morning. The girl had gone missing the night before. The family was searching for her. The police is investigating the matter. According to the information, Riddhima (16) was studying in a room with her sisters on Wednesday night. She came out of the room at around 11:00 pm, but did not return for a long time. The sisters informed the family about this. After this, the family started searching. At around 3:00 am, the family looked in the well near the house and saw the body. On receiving information about the incident, the police from Ghumarvi police station reached the spot. The police took out the body from the well with the help of the villagers. Riddhima was a student of class 11th in Government Senior Secondary School Barthin. Riddhima belongs to a poor family. Riddhima's father has also been ill for a long time and is undergoing treatment at IGMC Shimla. DSP Ghumarvi Chandrapal Singh said that the post-mortem of the body has been done. The cause of death can be ascertained only after the report comes. Investigation into the matter is ongoing.

BJP workers reached to surround CM Sukhu during public meeting in Dadi and sat on dharna

Diary Times Desk : During the public meeting of the Chief Minister at Dadi Mela Ground in Dharamshala, BJP workers reached to surround him. During this, BJP workers reached the meeting place and staged a dharna, and also demonstrated on the Dharamshala-Palampur road, due to which the road was blocked for some time and a long jam occurred on the road. According to the information, on Thursday, Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu was addressing the public meeting at Dadi Mela Ground after giving a gift of crores of rupees to the district residents. During this, BJP workers expressed anger over the state government not depositing the amount of Rs 30 crore for the construction of the campus of the Central University to be built in Dharamshala. BJP workers had come to give a memorandum to the CM to deposit Rs 30 crore soon.

Himachal: Four paraglider pilots narrowly escaped after flying in bad weather; landed on the hills of Deol village

Diary Times Desk : Four paraglider pilots from Beed had a narrow escape due to bad weather on Thursday afternoon. All the four pilots landed safely in the hills above Deol village of the subdivision when the weather turned bad. However, according to the administration representative, these pilots took off as solo from the hill near Deol, but the discussion is that these pilots took a tandem flight from Billing despite the weather not being favorable. It was fortunate that they landed safely at a place called Jalgran above Deol amidst strong winds. People say that deaths are occurring in accidents during paraglider flights in the state every day. On the other hand, pilots are not refraining from putting people's lives at risk. In Billing, marshals are present for checking flights during bad weather. Despite this, rules are being ignored. Due to this, the functioning of these marshals has also come under question. People have demanded the administration to take strict action against the pilots who disobey the rules.

Himachal : Driver felt dizzy, bus collided with two vehicles, major accident averted; there were so many passengers

Diary Times Desk : A major accident was averted in Rampur on Thursday. The driver of a bus going from Rampur to Shimla suddenly felt dizzy at Dakold. The bus went out of control and collided with two vehicles parked on the side of the road. Fortunately, the bus stopped after colliding with the vehicles, due to which no passenger in the bus was injured. In this accident, vehicles HP 26 A 1168 and HP-06A-3156 parked on the side of the road were damaged, while the private bus mini coach was going on the Rampur to Shimla route. There were about 12 passengers in the bus. It is being told that the driver is fine now. On Thursday afternoon in Rampur, Himachal Pradesh, the driver of a private bus going from Rampur to Shimla suddenly felt dizzy, due to which the bus went out of control and collided with the vehicles parked on the roadside.

Kullu Murder: Young man murdered in Manali Winter Carnival, attacked on the neck with a bottle, found bleeding in the gallery

Diary Times Desk : The murder of a youth in the third cultural evening of the national level Manali Winter Carnival has created a sensation. During the carnival, someone suddenly slit the throat of the youth near the Municipal Council office. Although the police was taking the youth to the hospital, he died on the way. The police is investigating the matter. One accused has been arrested. According to the information, during the Winter Carnival program in Manurangshala, someone attacked Vashisht's Daksh in the throat with a bottle in the gallery near the Municipal Council office. Due to this, he was badly bleeding. The police personnel on duty immediately brought him to the hospital but by then it was too late. The doctor in the hospital declared him dead.

Hamirpur News: Leopard found dead in a well in Kakkar village, cause of death will be known after the post-mortem report comes

Diary Times Desk : A dead leopard was found in a well in ward number two of Bhadthu village of Gram Panchayat Kakkar in Hamirpur district. The forest department has taken the body of the leopard into its custody. The reasons for the death of the leopard are not clear yet. Eyewitness villager Satish Kumar said that he has started construction work of his house. On Thursday afternoon, when he went towards the well to install a pump for the construction work, he saw a dead leopard in the well. He informed the people around him about the incident. The head of both the panchayats, Bhukkad Kishore Chand and Kakkar Panchayat head Vinod Kumar reached the spot and informed the forest department guard about it. Forest guards Shubham Sharma and Yograj took the dead leopard out of the well. He said that the leopard will be cremated after conducting a post-mortem.

Ram Gopal Varma Gets 3 Months In Jail In Cheque Bounce Case, Warrant Issued

Agencies : Filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma has been sentenced to three months in jail in a cheque bounce case. The Andheri Magistrate Court, which has been hearing the case for seven years, delivered the verdict on Tuesday. Mr Varma, of 'Satya', 'Rangeela' fame, was not present during the hearing which led the court to issue a non-bailable warrant (NBW) for his arrest. "With regard to the news about me and Andheri court, I want to clarify that it is to do with a 7-year-old case of Rs 2 lakh 38 thousand amount, relating to an ex-employee. It is not about settling the meagre amount but is about refusing to be exploited in the attempts to fabricate. Anyway, that's all I can say for now as it's in court," the filmmaker said in a statement. The case involves a cheque issued by Mr Varma's firm that could not be encashed, an offence under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act. This section penalises cheque dishonour due to insufficient funds or amounts exceeding the arranged limit. Mr Varma has also been ordered to pay Rs 3.72 lakh in compensation to the complainant within three months or face an additional three months of simple imprisonment.

Andhra College Student Walks Out Of Classroom, Jumps Off 3rd Floor

Agencies : A 16-year-old student was seen walking out of a classroom and jumping off the third floor in disturbing CCTV footage from a junior college in Andhra Pradesh today. The student at Narayana College, Anantapur, walked out of the classroom at 10:15 am after taking off his slippers. Then he walked straight to the ledge, climbed it and jumped without a pause. A video from the classroom shows the boy leaving the room when the class was ongoing. After he jumps, his classmates run out of the room to see what happened. Police officer T Venkateshulu was quoted by news agency PTI as saying that the boy had just returned to college after holidays on Thursday morning. The reason for the suicide is not known yet. The student's father and activists have linked the death by suicide to unpaid fees. The father alleged that he had told the college authorities he would pay the fees when he came to drop off his son. "I think they asked him about the non-payment of fees. What exactly happened, I am not sure," said the grieving father. The college is yet to respond to the claim.

Jalgaon tragedy: Karnataka Express arrived 20 minutes after Pushpak halted by chain pulling



Agencies : Dismissing reports that some passengers of Pushpak Express jumped off the train amid a fire rumour, railway officials Thursday said the passengers alighted after they stopped the train by pulling alarm chain and had adequate time to move to safe location as Karnataka Express arrived 20 minutes later. Thirteen passengers of the Mumbai-bound Pushpak Express, who got off the train, were run over by the Karnataka Express heading from Bengaluru to Delhi on the adjacent tracks in Maharashtra's Jalgaon district on Wednesday evening. The officials said that the passengers who got down on the adjacent tracks had adequate time to move to safe areas, but they kept standing without realising the impending danger. Several videos shared by passengers prior to the tragedy also suggest the same. "Pushpak Express stopped between Maheji and Pardhade stations in Jalgaon district at 4:45 pm.

Hyderabad Man Chops Up Wife's Body, Boils Parts In Pressure Cooker

Agencies : A Hyderabad man allegedly killed his wife and attempted to cover up the crime by chopping up the body and boiling the parts in a pressure cooker. Guru Murthy, 45, a former soldier who works as a security guard with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), allegedly confessed to the police, but his horrific story is yet to be corroborated. Venkata Madhavi, 35, was reported missing by her family on January 16. When the police began investigating, they suspected her husband. When they questioned him, he detailed a gruesome crime. Police Inspector Nagaraju said.

ID Card, Learner's Licence: Cops Get Proof Saif Attacker Is Bangladeshi

Agencies : The Mumbai Police teams investigating the stabbing of actor Saif Ali Khan have accessed two identity cards proving the nationality of his alleged attacker Sariful Islam, who had illegally entered India from Bangladesh last year and assumed the alias Bijoy Das. Sariful, 30, was arrested on Saturday from Thane near Mumbai after a three-day manhunt involving at least 20 teams from the Mumbai Police. He was produced in court the next day and has been in police custody since then. On Thursday, police officials said that while they already knew that Shariful was Bangladeshi.

"I Took Dip At Sangam...": Yogi Adityanath's Yamuna Dare To Arvind Kejriwal

Agencies : Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday assailed the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), saying its government has turned Delhi into a "garbage dump" and "den of chaos" while helping illegal Bangladeshis and Rohingyas to settle down in the national capital. Addressing his first rally in the Kirari area for the February 5 Delhi Assembly polls, Adityanath alleged that in a well-planned conspiracy, AAP deprived Delhiites of basic facilities and jeopardised national security with their actions. He also accused AAP's councillors and MLAs of being complicit in the entire plot.

Andhra Pradesh IT minister Nara Lokesh on impact of Trump on H-1B visas

Agencies : Andhra Pradesh IT minister Nara Lokesh on Wednesday expressed confidence that the H-1B visa policy will not see any changes under the new Donald Trump administration and the fears over an immigration overhaul were just a pre-election rhetoric. Speaking at ANI at the 2025 World Economic Forum (WEF) summit in Davos, Nara Lokesh cautioned that we have to remain in a "wait and watch" mode to see if there is potential shift in US immigration policy. "I think there's a clear thing that the H-1B policy will not be changed, though pre-election has some rhetoric. But post-election, I think things have changed. There's a bit more calmness on that. We have to wait and watch," he said. The H-1B visa is very popular among Indian techies since it allows US companies to hire skilled foreign workers in specialized fields like technology, engineering, finance and Artificial Intelligence.



C-Sections On Rise As Indians In US Scramble To Beat Trump's Citizenship Order

Agencies : After he was sworn in as the 47th President of the United States Monday, Donald Trump signed an executive order ending 'birthright citizenship', a 127-year-old amendment to the Constitution that guarantees American nationality to children born there, even if neither parent holds it. The order - which has already been contested, in separate lawsuits filed by a coalition of 22 states and civil rights groups - was the opening shot in what will likely be a flurry of laws that will alter, dramatically, the United States' immigration landscape, which was what Trump promised his voters. Just how that landscape will change is anybody's guess; Trump's flurry will also include a clampdown on what the Republican has said as illegal immigration along the southern border, i.e., with Mexico. But one impact - on Indian families living in that country, specifically those on temporary HIB or LI visas, which do not grant permanent residency - is already being felt. Doctors and gynaecologists in the US are reporting a sudden increase in the number of pregnant Indian women, on such visas, asking for a caesarean, to ensure pre-term delivery of their children; i.e., before February 20, which is when Trump's new mandate goes into effect.

Meta Clarifies On Forcing Users To Follow President Trump On Facebook, Instagram

Agencies : Meta has issued a statement, denying claims circulating on social media that Facebook and Instagram users were forced to follow President Donald Trump's official accounts. The company said the changes noticed by the users were standard practices, often followed when there is a transition from the previous administration to the incoming one. "People were not made to automatically follow any of the official Facebook or Instagram accounts for the President, Vice President or First Lady. Those accounts are managed by the White House so with a new administration, the content on those Pages changes," wrote Meta spokesperson Andy Stone. "This is the same procedure we followed."

Los Angeles wildfires: New 'Hughes Fire' forces evacuation orders for 50,000 people

Agencies : Days after rapidly moving wildfires left behind a trail of massive destruction in Los Angeles, California, a new 'Hughes Fire' has prompted evacuation orders or warnings for more than 50,000 people in the US state. The new blaze broke out late Wednesday morning and has burned down 9,400 acres of land and is under zero per cent containment, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL Fire). Plumes of dark smoke were seen near Lake Castaic, a popular recreation area in the northwestern neighbourhood of Los Angeles, located about 40 kilometres from the destructive Eaton and Palisades fire that continue to be burning for the third week now. Data from CAL Fire showed that the Palisades fire, which has charred 23,448 acres of land to date, is under 68 per cent containment. The Eaton fire, meanwhile, is under 91 per cent containment after burning down 14,021 acres.

"Falsely Smeared...": Netanyahu Defends "Great Friend" Elon Musk Over Salute Row



Agencies : Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said billionaire tech mogul Elon Musk was being "falsely smeared" in a row over a gesture he made at Donald Trump's inauguration that critics described as a Nazi salute. "Elon is a great friend of Israel," Netanyahu posted on X, the social media site owned by Musk. The billionaire, whom Trump has tasked with slashing US government spending, "repeatedly and forcefully supported Israel's right to defend itself against genocidal terrorists and regimes who seek to annihilate the one and only Jewish state", Netanyahu added. He mentioned Musk's visit to Israel in the aftermath of the October 7, 2023 attack by Hamas. That trip followed a separate row in which the Tesla chief executive was accused of anti-Semitism. At the time, Musk had endorsed a post accusing Jewish people of "hatred against whites", calling it "the actual truth". He later apologised.

Trump Tells Putin To Make Ukraine Deal "Now" Or Face Tariffs, Sanctions

Agencies : US President Donald Trump told his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on Wednesday to make a deal to end the grinding Ukraine war "now" or face tariff hikes and more sanctions. "If we don't make a 'deal', and soon, I have no other choice but to put high levels of Taxes, Tariffs, and Sanctions on anything being sold by Russia to the United States, and various other participating countries," Trump said on his Truth Social network. Trump said he was "not looking to hurt Russia" and had "always had a very good relationship with President Putin," a leader for whom he has expressed admiration in the past. "All of that being said, I'm going to do Russia, whose Economy is failing, and President Putin, a very big FAVOR. Settle now, and STOP this ridiculous War! IT'S ONLY GOING TO GET WORSE." Trump was taking a harder line than he had during a White House press conference on Tuesday.

"Chose Not To Pardon Myself": Trump Slams Biden In 1st Interview As President

Agencies : US President Donald Trump on Wednesday sat for his first interview since returning to the White House and targeted his predecessor former President Joe Biden for issuing several pardons for family members and officials on his last day in office. Mr Trump claimed he was given the option to pre-emptively pardon himself at the end of his first term, but chose not to. "I was given the option, they said, 'Sir, would you like to pardon everybody, including yourself?'" Mr Trump told Fox News Channel's Sean Hannity on Wednesday. "I said I'm not going to pardon anybody, we didn't do anything wrong. And we had people that suffered, they're incredible patriots," he said. When asked how he felt about returning to the Oval Office, the President said, "Well, it was a lot of work and as you know, I felt that we shouldn't have had to necessarily be here." Repeating his misleading claims about being re-elected in 2020, Mr Trump stated, "It could have been done, a lot of work could have been done, it would have been over." Adding to his claim, the President said, "We wouldn't have inflation, we wouldn't have had the Afghanistan disaster, we wouldn't have October 7 in Israel where so many people were killed and you wouldn't have a Ukraine war going on. But with all that being said, I think it's bigger. It's bigger than if it were more traditional."

Climbing Everest just got pricier. Nepal hikes permit fee by 36%

Agencies : The Nepalese government is considering hiking the permit fees for climbing Mount Everest by 36%. Since Nepal has not increased the permit fees in almost a decade now, this will surely prove to be a costly endeavour for adventurers looking to scale the tallest mountain in the world. Permit fees along with foreign expenditures are crucial for generating revenue and creating employment opportunities in Nepal. Considering the fact that Nepal has eight out of the fourteen tallest mountains in the world, it is not surprising that tourists flock to the country for climbing and hiking purposes. The new fee will take effect from September 2023, which will allow climbers to start applying for the new season starting from April 2024. It is also expected that this increase will help the struggling economy of Nepal in a positive way. It has also been reported that permit fees for the unpopular September to November.



SAD alleges registration of 'bogus voters' for SGPC polls

Agencies : A delegation from the Shiromani Akali Dal met the Chief Commissioner of the Gurdwara Elections Commission on Thursday, alleging the registration of "bogus votes" for the general elections of the apex gurdwara body -- the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC). The delegation, which included SAD working president Balwinder Singh Bhundar, former president Sukhbir Singh Badal, SGPC chief Harjinder Singh Dhami, and senior party leader Daljit Singh Cheema, met Gurdwara Elections Commission Chief Commissioner Justice (ret'd) Surinder Singh Saron. Speaking to the media, Cheema alleged that there had been large-scale registration of "bogus votes" for the SGPC elections. "Thousands of bogus votes have been registered," he claimed. Cheema said that a significant number of votes without the "Singh" and "Kaur" suffixes had been added to the voter lists. "We provided the voter lists where 'Singh' and 'Kaur' were missing after names," he said. Cheema said that there has also been a complaint that the lists of genuine votes were also missing. The delegation called for a thorough scrutiny of the voter lists, he added.



Ahead of Delhi Assembly polls, Punjab Police cops withdrawn from Kejriwal's security



Agencies : Punjab Police personnel deployed in the security of Aam Aadmi Party national convener Arvind Kejriwal have been withdrawn, the state police chief said on Thursday. "Time to time, we get reports of threats to Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and Arvind Kejriwal and we share them with the concerned agencies. "Following the directions of the Delhi police and the Election Commission today, we withdrew the component of the Punjab police in the security of Kejriwal ji," Director-General of Police Gaurav Yadav told reporters in Patiala. We showed our concerns to them. We will remain in touch with them. We will share our inputs with the Delhi police," he said. The development comes ahead of the election to the 70-member Delhi Assembly on February 5.

Punjab and Haryana HC calls for robust response to sophisticated drug networks

Agencies : The Punjab and Haryana High Court has called for a resolute and uncompromising response to dismantle sophisticated networks and curb drug proliferation across the border using drones. The observation came in a case involving the alleged seizure of 22 grams of heroin from an accused. The contraband was allegedly smuggled into India from Pakistan via drones. "The method of trafficking evidenced by the contraband being smuggled from Pakistan via drone highlights the sophisticated network facilitating such illegal trade, which demands a resolute and uncompromising response," Justice Sandeep Moudgil asserted. The court asserted that the intent of the legislature and the sanctity of the rule of law was also required to be upheld at all costs, irrespective of the quantity of contraband involved. "The modus operandi of the kingpins engaged in illicit activities, whether trafficking in small or intermediate quantities, must be met with unwavering resolve and stringent action. The intent of the legislature and the sanctity of the rule of law must be upheld at all costs, and cannot be allowed to be undermined.

New grain market in Sector 39: Chandigarh forms committee for auction of shops

Agencies : The shifting of the grain, fruit and vegetable market from Sector 26 to a new site in Sector 39 will finally see the light of day. Punjab Governor and UT Administrator Gulab Chand Kataria has given approval to the auction of 46 shops at the new market. After getting approval from the Administrator, the State Agriculture Marketing Board has constituted an eight-member committee to conduct the auction of shops in the first phase. The committee comprises the Administrator, Market Committee, Chandigarh; the Joint Secretary, State Agriculture Marketing Board; the Assistant Estate Officer-I; the Technical Director, National Informatics Centre (NIC), Chandigarh; an Assistant Town Planner, Department of Urban Planning; a Sub-Divisional Engineer (SDE), State Agriculture Marketing Board; a Section Officer, Estate Office (Auction Branch); and a Law Officer, State Agriculture Marketing Board. The committee will hold an open auction for the public and the shops will be allotted on a leasehold basis for 99 years, instead of freehold. The reserve price for each 120-square-yard unit has been fixed at Rs 3.35 crore.



67 villages in Panipat under scrutiny for skewed sex ratio

Agencies : The Health Department has flagged 67 out of 190 villages in Panipat district for their skewed Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB), placing them in the red zone category. The district, which once led the state in SRB improvement under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) campaign, now ranks 17th with an SRB of 900 in 2024. Launched from Panipat in January 2015 by the Prime Minister, the BBBP campaign marked its 10th anniversary amid concerns over declining SRB figures. "In 2015, Panipat's SRB was 892 girls per 1,000 boys. Following the launch of BBBP, it climbed to a record 945 in 2017. However, it has declined over the years, reaching 900 in 2024," said Civil Surgeon Dr Jayant Ahuja. The Health Department has identified specific villages where the SRB has fallen below 850. Some of these villages include PHC Mandi with SRB as low as 478, PHC Bapoli (eight villages), PHC Chulkana (six villages) and PHC Patti Kalyana (seven villages). Dr Ahuja said, "Teams are analysing data from these villages to understand the causes. All health workers have been instructed to monitor pregnant women and maintain detailed records from the first trimester. This data must be uploaded on the Health Department portal before any ultrasound is conducted."

Exceeding 15% viva-voce cap in judicial recruitment valid: Punjab and Haryana

Agencies : The Punjab and Haryana High Court has upheld the validity of exceeding 15 per cent limit for viva voce in judicial service recruitment. The Bench referred to the distinct requirements of assessing candidates for judicial roles while passing the order. "The inference to be drawn is that it is valid to exceed the 15 per cent limit for viva voce as the broader purpose of evaluating candidate's suitability for judicial position requires a more nuanced approach," the Division Bench of Chief Justice Sheel Nagu and Justice Sudhir Singh asserted, while dismissing a petition challenging the recruitment process for Civil Judge (Entry Level) in Haryana. The Bench was told that the petitioner, an aspirant for the judicial post, applied after an advertisement was issued by the Haryana Public Service Commission. Despite securing 513.50 marks out of 900 in the written examination, he was awarded only 29.75 out of 200 in the viva voce, leading to his failure to achieve the requisite 50 per cent aggregate marks.

Girls should learn martial arts for self-defence: Himachal minister Shandil

Diary Times Desk : Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Dhani Ram Shandil on Wednesday said every girl should learn martial arts for self-defence, emphasising the need to make it a mandatory subject. "A girl trained in martial arts can save and defend herself in challenging situations," the minister said while participating in a function held to mark 10 years of the 'Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao' scheme. Stating that it was a good initiative taken by the Centre, Shandil said the state government had initiated various welfare schemes for women as it was committed to empowering them by providing them equal opportunities. "Gods reside where women are respected. Such society always prospers and excels in every field," he said. He outlined several schemes being implemented in the state in favour of women. Some of these include the Indira Gandhi Sukh-Samman Nidhi Yojana, under which eligible women are being provided Rs 1,500 per month, Mukhyamantri Kanyadan Yojana, Mukhyamantri Shagun Yojana, Mahila Swarojgar Yojana and Vidvah Punarvivah Yojana.

Ambuja Cement directed to pay Rs 6.6L compensation for flouting green norms

Diary Times Desk : In a move aimed at ensuring the compliance with green norms, the State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) has imposed an environmental compensation (EC) of Rs 6.6 lakh on Ambuja Cement's Rauri plant in Darlaghat. The compensation has been levied for a period of 22 days from December 8 to December 30 for the violation of the provisions of the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981. A slew of inspections conducted in the plant revealed that the plant machinery was suffering operational snags owing to lack of timely maintenance. Following the observations of the board officials, the plant halted its operations on December 11, 2024, to rectify the defects.

CM reviews development projects, says 2025 will be 'Year of Performance'



Diary Times Desk : Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, reviewed the progress of various development projects being undertaken in the district. He directed the officers to expedite the implementation of the state government's flagship projects and ensure their timely completion. While presiding over the meeting of the officers of Kangra district in Dharamsala today, he said that the year 2025 would be "Year of Performance" for the state government and all officers and officials must extend their cooperation for development of the state. He directed officials to end the practice of delaying matters, calling it "delayed corruption." The state government was providing budgets for all the schemes, ensuring that there was no shortage of resources for development. The government's goal is to make Himachal Pradesh self-reliant and to ensure that welfare schemes reach the eligible beneficiaries. The CM said that the government was focusing on the health and education sectors and Rs 1,500 crore would be spent in the coming months to procure modern equipment.

CBI raids Noel Pharma in Baddi over Rs 33 crore fraud

Diary Times Desk : CBI, Shimla, conducted raids at three places, including a pharma unit at Judikalan in Baddi last evening, after an FIR was registered against it for cheating, criminal conspiracy, breach of trust among other violations of the law. According to the FIR, the CBI registered a case of cheating, criminal conspiracy, criminal breach of trust by public servant, fraudulent or dishonest prevention of debts from being paid to creditors as well as various sections of the Prevention of Corruption Act against Noel Pharma, Chief Managing Director of the firm Sandhrapalle Venkataiah, its director Gundluru Mastan and two public servants on January 13 at Shimla, confirmed an official. The central agency had earlier received a complaint on May 2, 2024, from SBI's Assistant General Manager at Baddi alleging that Noel Pharma Private Limited through its directors, Sandhrapalle Venkataiah and Gundluru Mastan, allegedly connived with some public servants and private persons. It said they cheated the bank by disposing collateral properties, mortgaged with the bank without their consent and utilised its proceeds for their own purpose, failing to deposit them in the lending bank. "This misappropriation of funds caused a loss.

Manali youth murdered during Winter Carnival; authorities launch manhunt

Diary Times Desk : A shocking incident unfolded in Manali on Wednesday evening, when a youth was brutally murdered during the ongoing Winter Carnival event at the Manurangshala Pavilion. The victim, identified as Daksh, a resident of Vashishth village near Manali, was fatally attacked while the cultural programmes were taking place in the pavilion. According to eyewitness accounts, a scuffle broke out between four youths in the pavilion during the event. The altercation escalated quickly, with one of the accused attacking Daksh with a sharp-edged weapon. The victim was struck in a violent manner, leaving him in a pool of blood. In the chaos that followed, the assailants fled the scene, leaving Daksh critically injured. The victim was rushed to the Civil Hospital in Manali by onlookers, where medical professionals attempted to stabilise his condition. However, despite their best efforts, Daksh succumbed to his injuries and was declared dead upon arrival at the hospital. This tragic loss has left the local community in shock, with many expressing disbelief over the violence.

Himachal Deputy CM meets Amit Shah, seeks funding for cooperative sector

Diary Times Desk : Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri today urged the Centre for allocating adequate funds to the state of Himachal for various schemes in the cooperative sector. Agnihotri today met Union Home Minister Amit Shah at New Delhi seeking liberal funds for computerisation of Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS), state Programme Management Unit (PMU) and the Institute of Cooperative Management (ICM). He apprised the Union minister that the state has already provided Rs 5 crore and the land for the setting up of the ICM at Panjwar in Una. He further requested the Union Minister to provide Rs 10 crore as grant-in-aid for the setting up of this state-of-the-art cooperative training institute i.e. ICM in the state. The Union minister stated that the Ministry of Cooperation would soon convene a meeting of Central and state officers to discuss all important issues. He also assured that Centre would accord all possible help to Himachal for funding of the Cooperative schemes. Agnihotri said Himachal has made great strides in the computerisation project. As many as 870 PACS have been identified in the first phase out of which 647 have been made Go-Live. An amount of Rs 18.57 crore has been spent on this while in the second phase, 919 societies have been identified and digitization work is under progress, he added.



Tale of two normal days: Umar Nazir shines, Rohit Sharma stumbles



Agencies : Umar Nazir had a very normal night, going to bed around 10 PM and waking up feeling relaxed on Thursday morning. After a usual breakfast, he made his way to the BKC ground. With Mumbai captain Ajinkya Rahane opting to bat first, the 31-year-old Jammu and Kashmir pacer was called into action straightaway. The pitch had a tinge of grass and a lot of moisture. The red soil pitch in Mumbai offers bounce and so that was an added advantage. The plan was to pitch it further up, a little beyond the good length. And lo, he did not have to wait too long for success. In just his third over, the team's sixth, there was success for him. The Mumbai team has so many big names in the line-up, it was natural that his victims could be international batters. But he didn't expect it to be Rohit Sharma. What prized scalp? It was more than that. "The best wicket in my career, of course," he said. But he did not erupt into wild, frenzied celebrations – the India captain deserves the reverence. Evidently a calm, sensible head is resting on the broad shoulders. "The first thought in my mind was... I did not celebrate, as a fan of Rohit Sharma."

Ravindra Jadeja silences

Rishabh Pant, only India star to shine on Ranji Trophy return

Agencies : Ravindra Jadeja made an instant impact on his return to the Ranji Trophy for Saurashtra, as he bagged a five-wicket haul vs Delhi in their Round 6 match, in Rajkot. The India all-rounder accounted for the dismissals of opener Sanat Sangwan (12), Yash Dhull (44), skipper Ayush Badoni (60), Harsh Tyagi (3) and Navdeep Saini (0). Rishabh Pant, who was also making his return to the Ranji Trophy for Delhi, had a disappointing first innings, as he could only muster one run off 10 balls, before losing his wicket to Dharmendrasinh Jadeja. The match also marked Jadeja's 35th career First-Class five-wicket haul, and his overall tally of wickets for Saurashtra now stands at 201. He is only the fourth Saurashtra bowler to claim 200 wickets or more. In his previous Ranji Trophy outing against Tamil Nadu in January 2023, Jadeja took eight wickets. Jadeja has always represented Saurashtra in domestic cricket. He made his first-class debut in the 2006-07 Duleep Trophy, where he played for West Zone. Meanwhile, he also debuted with Saurashtra at the Ranji Trophy.

Australia seal Ashes in rain-marred finish to Canberra T20I

Agencies : A collective batting performance from Australia once again was the cornerstone as the hosts secured a six-run win (DLS) over England in the second T20I in Canberra and took an unassailable 12-0 lead in the multi-format Ashes series. Chasing a daunting target of 186, rain interrupted England's chase twice but the second delay with the tourists needing 18 off five deliveries was the final nail in the coffin. It meant a frustrating end for Heather Knight (43* off 19) who had sparked some interest into the finishing stages with a fiery innings. Unlike the series opener where they lost two wickets early in the chase, England got off to a much better start this time around. Danielle Wyatt-Hodge (52 off 40) was in top form as she put on a 46-run opening stand with Maia Bouchier who struggled to get going. With rain around the corner from the start of the England innings,

Mumbai Cricket Association Achieves Guinness World Record For...

Agencies : The Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) on Thursday achieved the Guinness World Record for the largest cricket ball sentence using 14,505 red and white varieties of the ball at the Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai. The feat came as a part of MCA's grand celebrations for the completion of 50 years of one of India's iconic cricket venues, the Wankhede Stadium, which has been home to some of Indian cricket's superstars. It was also the venue where India achieved their second 50-over World Cup title in 2011 under the legendary MS Dhoni. "We are thrilled to announce that the Mumbai Cricket Association has achieved a Guinness World Record for the largest cricket ball sentence at Wankhede Stadium, using 14,505 red & white cricket balls," said MCA president Ajinkya Naik. "This incredible feat, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the first Test match at Wankhede, is dedicated to the memory of Late Shri Eknath Solkar and other former Mumbai players who have served Mumbai cricket and are no longer with us," he added. The record was created on the anniversary of the first international match at the Wankhede Stadium played in 1975 from January 23-29 between India and the West Indies.

Ravindra Jadeja silences Rishabh Pant, only India star to shine on Ranji Trophy return

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Rahul Dravid 'interfered' when Sanju Samson's career was being 'destroyed': 'They're jealous of you; tu chinta mat kar'

Agencies : The ongoing feud between Sanju Samson and the Kerala Cricket Association is now an open secret. The tiff, which first came into the public limelight when Samson wasn't included in Kerala's squad for the Vijay Hazare Trophy, is now pretty much a full-blown war, with the India batter's father levelling serious allegations against the association. Samson's father, Viswanath, accused KCA of tarnishing and ending his son's career, calling out certain 'small people' within. In an explosive interaction with Sports Tak, Samson's father spoke at length about how KCA plotted conspiracies against his son. Samson's tumultuous relations with Kerala aren't new. In fact, they date back to when Samson was yet to hit his teens. As per Viswanath, the KCA has been hell-bent on destroying Samson's career from as early as when he was 11 years old. However, amid all the chaos, Samson Viswanath claims his son breathed a sigh of relief after an intervention from none other than 'The Wall' Rahul Dravid. Narrating how Dravid's 'interference' revived Sanju Samson's career, Sanju's father shared how the former India captain's efforts paved the way for a promising future for his son.

Real Madrid Thrash RB Salzburg 5-1, Eye UEFA Champions League Top 8 Spot

Agencies : Champions League holders Real Madrid got back on track in Europe with a 5-1 victory over RB Salzburg on Wednesday to ensure they will not be eliminated at the first hurdle. Vinicius Junior and Rodrygo Goes struck twice each with French superstar Kylian Mbappe also on target in a ruthless display at the Santiago Bernabeu. Carlo Ancelotti's side lost three of their first six games in a worrying start to the competition and will likely have to compete in the extra play-off round in February which is part of the competition's new format, unless they can scrape a top-eight spot. Champions League holders Real Madrid got back on track in Europe with a 5-1 victory over RB Salzburg on Wednesday to ensure they will not be eliminated at the first hurdle. Vinicius Junior and Rodrygo Goes struck twice each with French superstar Kylian Mbappe also on target in a ruthless display at the Santiago Bernabeu. Carlo Ancelotti's side lost three.