

Jairam Thakur: Leader of Opposition said- People are suffering due to huge water bills, why should they suffer the punishment of government's failure



Diary Times Desk : Former Chief Minister and Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur said that the people of the state are troubled by the system change of Sukhu government. Every day the people of the state are getting troubled by some Tughlaqi decree. Jal Shakti Department is also not behind in troubling the people. There are reports of jaundice spreading in various places in the state, which means that poor quality drinking water is being supplied. Along with this, the water bill sent to the people by the department is a separate shock. In Joginder Nagar itself, people's water bills have been increased by Rs 1000 and sent to them. Against this, the people there expressed their protest by gheraoing the concerned office and have even warned of agitation if the increased bill is not withdrawn. Similarly, in Theog also, the department handed over a bill of Rs 45,000 to the consumer for a building without installing taps and connections. The Theog division has already come into the news for the scam of water supply through motorcycles and scooters. The Leader of Opposition said that in this way this government is only harassing the people of the state. Such a huge increase in water bills at one go is not right in any way. Will the people of the state pay the price of the government's failures in this way?

Himachal Weather: March-like heat in January Una 34, Shimla-Kangra hottest after 8 years

Diary Times Desk : Amidst the changing weather in Himachal Pradesh, Una recorded 34 degrees on Tuesday, Shimla and Kangra recorded the highest temperature in January after eight years. Most of the areas of the state are experiencing March-like heat in January. People are sweating during the day in the plains as well as in the mountains. The maximum temperature in Una in January 1991 was 28.4 degrees. On Tuesday, the mercury here was 27.6 degrees. In Shimla, the mercury was 20.6 degrees in January 2018, today it was 20.2 degrees. In Kangra too, the mercury was 24.5 degrees in January 2018, the mercury was 24.4 degrees Celsius on Tuesday.

Maha Kumbh Stampede: 30 Dead, 60 Injured; UP CM Orders Judicial Probe

Agencies : At least 30 people were killed and 60 injured in a pre-dawn stampede at the Sangam area of the Maha Kumbh early Wednesday as millions of pilgrims jostled for space to take a holy dip on the occasion of one of the most auspicious days of Mauni Amavasya. Several hours after the incident took place between 1-2 am, Maha Kumbh DIG Vaibhav Krishna gave the details of the casualties at a press conference here in the evening. "The incident took place due to the pressure of the crowd. The crowd broke barricades and jumped to the other side, crushing those waiting there. Over 90 injured were rushed to the hospital, of whom 30 died," he said. The officer said 25 of the deceased have been identified. Four of them are from Karnataka and one each from Assam and Gujarat. Among those injured, 36 are undergoing treatment at the hospital and the rest have been sent with their families.



Bengal varsity orders probe as woman professor 'marries' student in class

Agencies : Viral videos of a senior woman professor getting "married" to a student in the classroom at a state-run university in West Bengal triggered a furore, following which an inquiry was ordered on Wednesday, officials said. The professor, however, claimed it was a drama that was part of her class. The incident happened at the Psychology Department of the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad University of Technology (MAKAUT) at Haringhata in Nadia district, they said. The videos showed the professor, who was dressed like a bride, and a first-year student performing various rituals of a Hindu Bengali wedding, including 'sindoor daan' and 'mala bodol', in the classroom. As the videos went viral, triggering criticism and outrage, the university formed a three-member inquiry panel and sought clarification from the professor, officials said. The professor told the varsity authorities that it was a psychodrama demonstration, which was part of her class, and not real, they said.

Water received from Haryana 'extremely poisonous' for human health, Kejriwal tells EC

Agencies : AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday told the Election Commission that his remarks accusing the Haryana government of poisoning the Yamuna river were made in the context of an urgent and alarming public health crisis concerning the deteriorating quality of drinking water in Delhi. "The fact remains that Delhi depends on raw water supplies from Haryana for potable water. The statements were made in furtherance of an imperative public duty to highlight the severe toxicity and contamination of raw water received from Haryana, which presents an imminent and direct threat to public health," Kejriwal said in his reply. The former CM cited a letter of the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) CEO, which revealed that the Yamuna water contained 7 ppm of ammonia -- 700% above the permissible.

Himachal CM: CM Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu met Mallikarjun Kharge, expressed grief over the stampede incident in Maha Kumbh

Diary Times Desk : Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu met Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge in New Delhi on Wednesday and apprised him of the activities of the government and the organization. During this, the formation of the new executive of the Congress in Himachal was discussed. The Chief Minister gave feedback on the working style of the senior leaders of the party. Chief Minister Sukhu has gone to campaign for the Delhi Assembly elections these days. On Tuesday late evening, the CM held an election public meeting in favor of Congress candidate Alka Lamba in Kalkaji assembly constituency. On Wednesday also, the Chief Minister held election rallies in many areas. Met Kharge in the afternoon. According to party sources, during this time how the new organization of the party is to be formed in the state. Which leaders are capable of handling big responsibilities. How was the functioning of the former office bearers.

Air India to resume Delhi-Tel Aviv flights from March 2

Agencies : Air India will resume direct flights to Tel Aviv from March 2, after suspending the services in August last year amid tensions in the Middle East. Five weekly flights will be operated from the national capital to Tel Aviv in Israel, the airline said in a release on Wednesday. The airline will deploy its Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner aircraft having 18 flat beds in Business Class and 238 seats in Economy Class on the route. The non-stop flights will be operated on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays. The decision to resume operations on the Delhi-Tel Aviv route follows.



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DIARY TIMES

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Himachal News: Friend himself committed fraud, along with the manager, committed fraud of Rs 1 crore; both accused arrested

Diary Times Desk : Police have arrested Cooperative Society Chairman Sushil Kumar Garg and Manager Amar Lal Kashyap in connection with taking a loan by preparing fake documents in the name of a petrol pump owner near Subathu. Petrol pump owner Paras Ram had registered a case of fraud of one crore against two people including his friend Sushil. According to Solan Superintendent of Police Gaurav Singh, investigation found that both of them took a loan by preparing fake documents in the name of the complainant in collusion. By cheating, they created liabilities of one crore in the name of the complainant. SP said that on May 17, 2023, Paras Ram, owner of Shanti Filling Station Radiana Subathu, complained at Dharampura police station that he was undergoing treatment at IGMC Shimla in 2020. During this time, the work of petrol pump was handed over to Sushil resident Subathu. He also handed over two cheque books of his Punjab National Bank and HDFC Bank to him, so that there is no problem in business. It is alleged that Sushil kept depositing the income in his co-operative society instead of depositing it in these accounts. He prepared fake documents regarding himself being a partner in the filling station, in which he claimed to be the owner of 50 percent shares in the petrol pump. Sushil opened an account in his name with a fake signature in NATCS Subathu and took a loan. He also diverted the income of the petrol pump to this account. Sushil used to operate the account in connivance with the society manager. Sushil used to transfer money from the above account to his PNB bank account.

India rejects Canadian Commission's report on election interference

Agencies : India on Tuesday night strongly rejected "insinuations" made against it in a report by a Canadian commission that investigated allegations that certain foreign governments were meddling into Canada's elections. In a strong reaction, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said it rejects the report's "insinuations" on India. It is in fact Canada which has been "consistently interfering" in India's internal affairs, it said. "We have seen a report about alleged activities on purported interference. It is in fact Canada which has been consistently interfering in India's internal affairs," the MEA said. "This has also created an environment for illegal migration and organised criminal activities," it said in a statement. "We reject the report's insinuations on India and expect that the support system enabling illegal migration will not be further countenanced."

Maha Kumbh Stampede 2025: Thousands of people from Himachal Pradesh also went to Maha Kumbh, relatives were worried

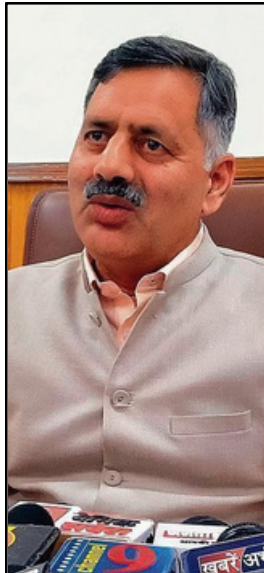
Diary Times Desk : Thousands of people from Himachal also went to take bath in Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj. After the stampede in Maha Kumbh, the families of the people who went to take bath were worried. They kept contacting their family members on phone. At the time of stampede, a group from Bhuntar of Kullu district, which had gone to Kumbh in a traveler, was at the place where this incident happened, but everyone is safe. At the same time, the government does not have the data of how many people from Himachal were present in this bath during Mauni Amavasya in Maha Kumbh. Actually, there was no arrangement to send people to Maha Kumbh for this at the government level. People went by their own means. On Wednesday, the Home Department officials were busy in finding out whether there were any casualties in the stampede, but no such information could be found. Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu has expressed grief over the stampede incident during Maha Kumbh. The Chief Minister prayed to God to give peace to the departed souls who lost their lives due to this accident and to give strength to the families to bear this sorrow. The Chief Minister wished for the speedy recovery of the devotees injured in the accident.

Chhattisgarh man targets car of wife's boss with remote-controlled bomb on suspicion of affair

Agencies : A 42-year-old man triggered a blast in the car of his wife's employer with a remote-controlled bomb in Chhattisgarh's Durg district on suspicion she was having an affair with him, a senior police official said on Wednesday. No one was inside the parked car at the time of the blast, which damaged the vehicle, he said. The accused, Devendra Singh, a resident of Ram Nagar locality in Bilai city, was arrested on Wednesday, a day after the incident, he said. After the blast in the car of realtor Sanjay Bundela outside his office in Bilai city on Tuesday, police lodged a case against an unidentified person under relevant sections of the BNS and the Explosive Substances Act, and started a probe, the official said. Based on the technical analysis of CCTV footage, the police detained Singh for questioning who confessed his involvement in the crime, he said. Singh told the police he committed the act on suspicion that his wife, who works as an assistant manager in Bundela's office.

Rajesh Dharmani: Technical Education Minister Rajesh Dharmani said- The debt that has accumulated on the government is due to the tenure of BJP

Diary Times Desk : Technical Education Minister Rajesh Dharmani has alleged that BJP leaders are trying to mislead the public by making baseless statements. By going to the Center, BJP leaders are stopping the interests of Himachal. When elections are held in the states, BJP leaders present wrong figures and curse the Congress government. First in Haryana, then Maharashtra and now by going to Delhi, an attempt is being made to mislead the public. These leaders are repeatedly talking about taking loans, but the debt that has piled up on the government is from the tenure of the previous BJP government. The state government has taken a total loan of 30 thousand 80 crores from December 2022 to December 2024. In this, a loan of 9 thousand 337 crores was taken from December 2022 to 31 March 2023. This loan had to be taken to fulfill the budget announcements of the then BJP government. He said that Rs. 7,264 crore has been spent on repaying the principal amount of the loan and Rs. 11,590 crore has been spent on paying the interest on the loan. A loan of Rs. 18,854 crore has been taken for other items. The state has earned an additional revenue of Rs. 2631 crore within a year.



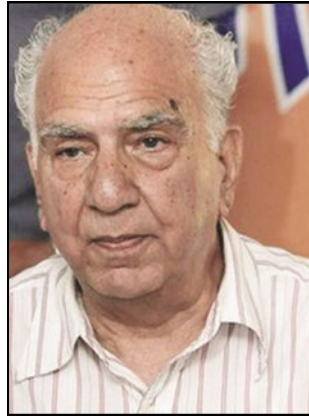
Baba Siddique murder: Warrant issued against Anmol Bishnoi, 2 other wanted accused

Agencies : A special court here on Wednesday issued a non-bailable warrant against gangster Anmol Bishnoi and two other wanted accused in the NCP leader Baba Siddique murder case. The special judge for cases under the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA), B D Shelke, said in his order that the court believes the "wanted accused Bishnoi has absconded or he will not obey the summons". Hence, a standing non-bailable warrant is required to be issued against him to secure his presence, the judge said. The court made similar observations while issuing NBWs against absconding accused Shubham Lonkar and Mohammad Yasin Akhtar. The judge noted that the court has already issued a request for deportation of Anmol Bishnoi to a competent authority in the United States in a case pertaining to the firing outside actor Salman Khan's Bandra residence in April 2024. The police have filed a chargesheet against 26 arrested accused in connection with the October 12 murder of Siddique, a former Maharashtra minister. Anmol Bishnoi (suspected to be in the US or Canada), Lonkar and Akhtar were shown as wanted accused in the case.



Himachal News: Former Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh said- The population of those who divided the motherland is increasing again

Diary Times Desk : Former Chief Minister Shanta Kumar said that Uttarakhand has become the first state in India to implement the Common Civil Code. He congratulated and thanked Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami for this. He said that unfortunately our beloved motherland has been divided into three parts. First Pakistan was formed and then Bangladesh which is now becoming another Pakistan. The crisis is still not over. The population of those who divided the motherland is increasing again. The intention is already bad. The day is not far when the demand for another Pakistan will arise. He said that Mohan Bhagwat, some other leaders have asked to have three children for this reason. This treatment will not be able to counter the terrible crisis of population growth. There is only one treatment for this that Home Minister Amit Shah should fulfill his announcement and implement the Common Civil Code in the entire country. If the law cannot be made, then make a rule that a family with more than two children will not get any facility from the government.



Una: Main operator arrested from Haryana in illegal liquor factory case in Amrali of Haroli

Diary Times Desk : In the case of making fake liquor in a liquor factory located in Amrali of Haroli area, the police has arrested the main operator and brought him to Una. Accused Mukesh Sangwan was lodged in a jail in Haryana. Haroli police has brought him here after obtaining his production warrant. According to the information, this case came to light in the year 2024. A case was registered at Police Station Haroli on the complaint given by the Excise Department. Police first arrested Anil Kumar, a main businessman of the liquor factory. After Anil's arrest, all his associates absconded. The police was searching for them for a long time. Taking the investigation of the case forward, a team of Haroli Police led by Sub Inspector Chetan Singh went to Rajasthan. From where another accused of the incident, Krishna Kumar, was arrested and taken to Haroli. Now the main accused of the incident, Mukesh Sangwan, was arrested by bringing him on a production warrant from Haryana.

Drug Trafficking: Police raids four places including residences of two gangsters in Una, accused Dhillon arrested

Diary Times Desk : Police raided four places including the residences of two gangsters in the district on Wednesday. Superintendent of Police Rakesh Singh said in a press conference on Wednesday evening that criminals involved in extortion, mining and drug smuggling may be linked to each other. On Tuesday, the SIT of the police arrested Rakesh Kaushal, a criminal involved in extortion activities, from Ropar in Punjab on a production warrant. He has been taken on five-day police remand till February 3. During interrogation, the SIT has received information from the accused about some suspects. The concerned police stations were informed about this. On Wednesday, the district police raided four different places in Police Station Haroli, Police Station Sadar, Police Station Tahliwal and Police Station Gagret. The team of Police Station Haroli, under the leadership of Police Station Incharge Sunil, raided the house of a person named Harpreet Singh Dhillon located in Saloh. During the search, 367 grams of opium and two lakh rupees of drug money were recovered from Harpreet Singh's house. After seizing the consignment of drugs and cash, the police registered a case and arrested the accused.

Himachal: Proposal will be sent for cabinet approval to remove ban on transfer of teachers, reorganization of directorates

Diary Times Desk : A review meeting has been called on Wednesday under the chairmanship of Education Minister Rohit Thakur to decide when the ban on transfer of teachers in Himachal Pradesh schools will be lifted during the academic session. The meeting also discussed the reorganization of education directorates and merging of schools and colleges with low number of students. The new schedule of holidays to be fixed for the schools of the state was also discussed during the meeting. Chief Minister Sukhu has announced the formation of three education directorates in the state. In the state cabinet meeting held in Dharamshala recently, a presentation was made by the education secretary on this matter. In this connection, on Wednesday, Education Minister Rohit Thakur discussed it with the departmental officials.

Himachal Weather: Weather will change in Himachal, rain and snowfall expected in many parts for six days

Diary Times Desk : There are chances of change in weather due to the activity of western disturbance in many parts of Himachal Pradesh. Meteorological Center Shimla has forecast rain and snowfall for six days in many parts of the state. According to the department, there is a possibility of light rain and snowfall at some places in the middle and high mountains on 29-30 January and 2 February. On the other hand, there are chances of light to moderate rain and snowfall on 31 January, 1 and 3 February. There will be rain in the lower hilly and plain areas. There is a possibility of light to moderate rain and snowfall at most places on 4 February. On the other hand, there is no possibility of any major change in maximum and minimum temperature during the next 48 hours. Then during the next 2-3 days, there is a possibility of a 3-5 degree Celsius drop in maximum temperature in many parts of the state and a gradual increase of 2-3 degree Celsius in minimum temperature in some parts. Today, the capital Shimla is cloudy. Himachal received 81 percent less rainfall than normal from January 1 to 29. During this period, 79.1 mm rainfall was considered.

CDL Kasauli: Record 7300 batches of life saving vaccines released in one year

Diary Times Desk : To save the lives of people in the country, Central Drugs Laboratory (CDL) Kasauli has set a new record in releasing vaccines. In one year i.e. from January 2024 to December 2024, 7300 batches of various types of life saving vaccines were released. This includes many life saving vaccines including hepatitis B, rabies, diphtheria. Apart from this, vaccine batches have also been released to protect against corona virus. The batches of BCG Rabies, Snake Bite Antiserum, Typhoid, Malaria, Hepatitis, Tetanus and others are the highest. Testing of all batches has been done at CDL Kasauli. After checking the purity and quality of the vaccine, the company was given a certificate to launch it in the market. The special thing is that this work was done rapidly by the experts. A batch of vaccine coming for testing contains several thousand doses or boils.

HP Horticulture: Preparations are on to bring greenery to 93 ruined government gardens with new species of fruits

Diary Times Desk : 93 Progeny cum Demonstration Orchards (PCDO) established for the convenience of gardeners in Himachal Pradesh have been destroyed. Now there are preparations to re-model them. Regarding this, the department has sought new plans from all the gardens. The government has built demonstration gardens in every district for the convenience of gardeners. Many types of problems are being faced in these gardens. The biggest problem is of workers and staff. Now the government is taking steps towards re-modeling these gardens. Regarding this, plans have been sought from the gardens. A plan is being prepared to plant such fruits in the gardens which are in high demand and also get good prices in every season. This especially includes dragon fruit, avocado, good quality guava and many other fruits. Himachal maker Dr. YS Parmar's dream was to strengthen the economic condition of the farmers in the village so much that they do not have to go to other cities. According to the department, the highest number of PCDOs are in Sirmour district. There are 15 gardens here. After this, there are 14 in Shimla, 12 in Chamba, 11 in Mandi, 10 in Solan, 8 in Kinnaur, 6 in Bilaspur, Kangra, 4 in Hamirpur.

True people's court: Chief Justice on 75 years of Supreme Court

Agencies : Seventy five years since the first sitting of the Supreme Court, it has transformed and evolved into the world's most vibrant apex court, yet anchored in its foundational mission, the Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna said. On a ceremonial bench, marking the 75-year milestone, the Chief Justice stressed on Tuesday that it was a "true people's court", embodying the aspirations of 1.4 billion people. "What began in 1950 as a successor to the federal court, has evolved into perhaps the world's most vibrant and dynamic apex court, one that truly embodies the aspirations and diversity of 1.4 billion Indians. What sets our Supreme Court apart on the global stage is its unique character as a true people's court," Justice Khanna said. He said that the top court's transformation reflects a deeper recognition that justice must be both principled and practical. "Over the seven and a half decades, this Court has transformed the constitutional promise into a reality through its judgments... This transformation reflects a deeper recognition that justice must be both principled and practical. In doing so, it makes the constitutional promise of justice--social, economic, and political--a living reality for millions of Indians," he said.

"I Cannot...": Why Father Of Techie Killed In 2014 Won't Contest Acquittal

Agencies : S Jonathan Prasad lived a nightmare 11 years back after his 23-year-old daughter Esther Anuhya's rotten body was found on a Mumbai road. A software engineer with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Esther had just returned from holidays in her hometown Vijayawada when she was brutally raped and murdered. Mr Prasad, crushed by the tragedy, found some solace when a Mumbai court convicted Chandrabhan Sanap of the gruesome crime and sentenced him to death in 2015. A decade later, the elderly man's wounds have been reopened after the Supreme Court acquitted Sanap yesterday. And this time, Mr Prasad does not have the strength to keep fighting. Esther was at her Vijayawada home for Christmas and New Year's Eve in the winter of 2013. On January 5, she returned to Mumbai after a two-week break and was last seen leaving the Lokmanya Tilak Terminus station. When her family could not contact her, they filed a missing complaint and started looking for her in Mumbai. On January 16, a decomposed body was recovered.

'People Fell On Those Sitting': Cops On How Maha Kumbh Stampede Happened



Agencies : The stampede at Maha Kumbh on the early hours of Wednesday took place because the crowd had gathered ahead of time and broke the barriers, the Uttar Pradesh police have said. Thirty people have died in the pre-dawn stampede that took place as people jostled for a dip at the confluence on Mauni Amavasya, one of the holiest days of the month-long religious festival. "Before Brahma Muhurta, between 1 am to 2 am, a huge crowd gathered on the Akhara Marg," said Vaibhav Krishna, the Deputy Inspector General posted at the Mahakumbh. "Due to this crowd, the barricades on the other side broke and the crowd ran over the devotees waiting to take a holy dip of Brahma Muhurta on the other side," he added. One of the families that lost two of its members, however, told NDTV that the tragedy could have been averted if the barriers were opened as the crowd started building.

"A View Like No Other": ISRO Shares Onboard Footage Of 100th Rocket Launch

Agencies : The Indian Space Research Organisation or ISRO on Wednesday celebrated its 100th rocket mission with the successful launch of a navigation satellite. The early morning launch from Andhra Pradesh's Sriharikota - the Indian space agency's first this year - saw the GSLV-F15 launch vehicle precisely injecting the navigation satellite NVS-02 into the intended required (GTO) orbit. The mission was also the first for the space agency's new chairman, V Narayanan. Hours later, the ISRO shared a minute-long onboard footage from the GSLV-F15 during the launch of NVS-02.

How PM Narendra Modi played mascot of Odisha's transformation

Agencies : Prime Minister Narendra Modi has firmly positioned himself as the mascot of Odisha's transformation, embodying the state's aspirations for economic progress and global recognition. At the Utkarsh Odisha-Make in Odisha Conclave 2025, held at Bhubaneswar's Janata Maidan, Modi's dynamic vision for the state was on full display on January 28, the first of the two-day event. The flagship investment summit—renamed by the BJP government from its earlier iteration under Biju Janata Dal (BJD) rule—marked.

Fishers attacked by Sri Lankan navy had permission till Jan 28: Minister

Agencies : Hours after two fishermen from Puducherry were injured after the Sri Lankan Navy opened fire while apprehending a group of fishers early on Tuesday, Puducherry fisheries minister K Lakshminarayanan said that the fishermen had permission to fish in the sea till January 28 and urged the Centre to take steps to stop such attacks. "We have received information from the fishermen about their arrest and the attack on them. We will urge the Union Government to take steps to stop such attacks," the minister said.

Rahul Gandhi Calls Arvind Kejriwal "Architect Of Liquor Scam", He Responds

Agencies : Congress MP Rahul Gandhi's broadside on Arvind Kejriwal Tuesday - naming the former Delhi Chief Minister as the "architect of the liquor scam" and raking up the 'sheeshmahal' jab, a staple of the Bharatiya Janata Party's attacks - underlined the chasm between his party and the Aam Aadmi Party, both of which remain (on paper, if nothing else), part of the INDIA opposition bloc and national allies. Hitting back, Arvind Kejriwal said Mr Gandhi was repeating the BJP's speech, suggesting there's an agreement between the two parties. Addressing a rally in Delhi's Patparganj, before the city votes next week in an election that could, potentially, enhance or break Arvind Kejriwal's political reputation, Mr Gandhi took aim both at the AAP leader and his right-hand man, ex-Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, both of whom had been arrested, and jailed, by the Enforcement Directorate on corruption charges. Both were released on bail, by the Supreme Court, late last year. "... Kejriwal had a small car (the blue Maruti Wagon-R that the AAP leader reported stolen in October 2017) when he came, and he declared he will introduce a new kind of politics. He had climbed an electric poll and promised to transform Delhi..."



"Trump Will Not Have Greenland," Says Denmark's Foreign Minister

Agencies : Denmark's foreign minister on Tuesday said that Donald Trump "will not have Greenland", following the US president's expressed desire to control the Danish autonomous territory. "Trump will not have Greenland. Greenland is Greenland. And the Greenlandic people are a people, also in the sense of international law," Lars Lokke Rasmussen told reporters, adding that "this is also why we have said time and again that it is ultimately Greenland that decides Greenland's situation."

Zelensky Says Putin "Afraid" Of Negotiations On Ending Ukraine War

Agencies : Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Tuesday that Vladimir Putin was "afraid" of negotiations on ending the Ukraine war, after the Russian president ruled out direct talks with his Ukrainian counterpart. "Today, Putin once again confirmed that he is afraid of negotiations, afraid of strong leaders, and does everything possible to prolong the war," Zelensky posted on X.

Global Tensions, Climate Crisis Push Doomsday Clock Closest To Catastrophe

Agencies : As global tensions rise and climate threats loom, the Doomsday Clock, a symbol of humanity's precarious position, has been moved to 89 seconds before midnight - the closest it's ever been to a catastrophe. This alarming shift is a "warning" from a panel of international scientists, who cite a range of escalating threats, including Russia's nuclear threats in Ukraine, rising military tensions in global hotspots, the military use of artificial intelligence, and the worsening climate crisis. The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, which created the clock in 1947 during the Cold War, set the time closer to the theoretical point of annihilation - one second closer than last year. The closer the clock is to midnight, the more danger there is. "In setting the Clock one second closer to midnight, we send a stark signal: Because the world is already perilously close to the precipice, a move of even a single second should be taken as an indication of extreme danger."

India May Cut Duties On Some Goods From US, Day After Trump's Tariffs Jab



Agencies : India may cut tariffs on a few high-end goods - such as a special kind of steel, expensive motorcycles, and electronic items - imported from the United States, sources told NDTV Profit Wednesday. Such a move is not likely to have a major impact on the respective domestic industries and this could be confirmed Saturday, when Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presents the budget. India imports 20 items from the US on which there are duties in excess of 100 per cent. All of this comes a day after US President Donald Trump referred to India, China, and Brazil - founding members of the increasingly influential BRICS bloc - as "tremendous tariff makers". Speaking to House Republicans, he said he would not allow this to continue, declaring, "... we're not going to let that happen any longer... we're going to put America first." "We're going to put tariffs on outside countries and people that really mean harm to us. China is a tremendous tariff-maker, and India, Brazil, and so many other countries. (But) we're not going to let that happen any longer... because we're going to put America first," Trump declared to cheers.

Plane crashes in South Sudan while taking off; Indian among 20 killed

Agencies : A small plane crashed in a remote part of South Sudan, killing at least 20 people, including an Indian national, on Wednesday, news agency AFP reported. Gatwech Bipal, the minister of information in the oil-rich Unity state, said that the flight, chartered by Chinese oil firm Greater Pioneer Operating Company (GPOC), had 21 people on board, including two pilots. The Unity state is where the crash happened earlier on Wednesday. The plane crashed while it was taking off near an oil field to head to the international airport in Juba, the South Sudanese capital. The plane crashed 500 metres away from the airport," the minister told AFP by phone. "21 people were on board. As for now, there's only one survivor," the minister added.

Video Shows Moment When US Air Force's F-35 Fighter Jet Crashed In Alaska

Agencies : A US Air Force fighter jet crashed during a training exercise at Eielson Air Force Base in Alaska on Tuesday. The pilot flying the single-seat F-35 fighter was safe after bailing out. A video of the crash was widely posted on social media, where the aircraft can be seen vertically descending from the air and flipping before it crashed. The crash was followed by a large explosion, with fire rising several meters up in the air. The pilot, who ejected the plane on time, was seen descending on the ground with the help of a parachute. The pilot experienced an "in-flight malfunction," and was able to eject from the aircraft, US Air Force Colonel Paul Townsend, commander of the 354th Fighter Wing, told a news conference, according to a report from the Associated Press. The crash reportedly happened while landing during a training exercise. The incident on Tuesday afternoon resulted in "significant damage" to the F-35 Lightning II aircraft, according to Eielson Air Force Base.

Russian Leader Warns Of Nuclear War Over Claims Of Putin's Assassination Plot

Agencies : Tucker Carlson, a prominent US journalist and conservative commentator, sparked intense debate on Monday with his explosive claim that the Joe Biden administration had attempted to assassinate Russian President Vladimir Putin. Carlson made this allegation on his podcast, "The Tucker Carlson Show," without providing concrete evidence to support his assertion. Carlson's statement has ignited a firestorm of reactions, with the Kremlin responding to the claim. Dmitry Peskov, Putin's spokesman, emphasised that the Russian President is well-protected from potential threats, but he refrained from confirming or denying any alleged US attempts to target Putin. "The Russian special services are constantly taking all the necessary measures to ensure public safety, and, of course, the safety of those who are under state protection. This concerns first and foremost the head of the state", Peskov said. However, Russian Parliament Speaker Vyacheslav Volodin adopted a more forceful tone, warning that any plot to assassinate Putin would have catastrophic consequences, including the possibility of nuclear war.

Donald Trump Pauses Foreign Assistance To Pakistan, Key Projects Hit: Report

Agencies : The US has temporarily suspended foreign assistance to Pakistan for re-evaluation following an executive order issued by President Donald Trump, according to a media report on Tuesday. This move has instantly stopped a number of important United States Agency For International Development (USAID) projects in Pakistan, including the Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP), which is the flagship programme to promote cultural heritage preservation and protection, the Geo News reported. According to the US embassy here, the AFCP fund "helps protect historic buildings, archaeological sites, museum collections, and traditional cultural expressions like indigenous languages and crafts around the world". Quoting an unnamed official at the US Consulate in Karachi, the report said the US has paused Pakistan's foreign assistance for re-evaluation as per the executive order issued by Trump. Five projects related to the energy sector have also come to a halt as a result of this decision, the report said.



Dallewal asks farm unions to sink differences for unity

Agencies : Reiterating that he would continue his indefinite fast until the demands of farmers were met, farm leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal on Tuesday said all farm unions should unite, setting aside differences of opinion. He said SKM (All-India) leaders came to Khanauri with a resolution of "ekta" (unity) following the kisan mahapanchayat in Moga. "If a resolution was passed and supported by the people, what is the hurdle? ...we are inching towards a victory and need only a push. I don't understand why it is taking so long for the formation of a united front. Multiple rounds of meetings are taking place. What is the need? I haven't gone for the meetings, so I don't know what is happening," he said. "Those engaged in talks with the SKM (All-India) do not tell me what is happening there. These multiple meetings are not good. People's sentiment is that we should fight together," he added. The difference of opinion primarily stems from the fact that protests by farmers at Shambhu and Khanauri remain restricted to the demands of debt waiver and MSP law, while the SKM (All-India) has been claiming that the MSP is secondary to the Draft National Policy Framework on Agricultural Marketing as it contains provisions of the now-scrapped three farm laws.



High Court rebukes Punjab over unchecked illegal mining, flags environmental and security risks

Agencies : The Punjab and Haryana High Court has come down heavily on the state of Punjab for its failure to tackle illegal mining, observing that it would cause irreversible environmental damage in no time if left unchecked. The court also expressed grave concern regarding rampant mining in the Swan river, which had already led to structural damage of the Kalwa Nangal bridge since July 2023, forcing residents to take a 30-km detour. Dismissing an anticipatory bail plea filed by the owner of a stone crusher facing multiple FIRs for illegal mining, Justice Sandeep Moudgil remarked: "No doubt, sand mining, being a lucrative industry worth crores, has become a significant problem in the present times, causing damage to the environment at large and losses to the state exchequer. Another ecological damage that can be caused by unplanned mining is that it can bring change in the course of natural flow of the river water, making the surrounding area prone to water floods," Justice Moudgil observed. The court categorically held that the inability of the state government to combat illegal mining was evident, citing the damage already inflicted on public.

Supreme Court appoints Justice Jaishree Thakur as observer for Chandigarh mayoral election

Agencies : In a move to ensure fairness in the upcoming Chandigarh mayoral election, the Supreme Court earlier this week appointed Punjab and Haryana High Court's former judge Justice Jaishree Thakur as an independent observer. The election, scheduled for January 30, will be conducted under her direct supervision, with proceedings being recorded on camera. Justice Jaishree Thakur, known for her sharp legal acumen and humane approach to justice, retired from the Punjab and Haryana High Court in July 2023 after nearly 9 years on Bench. Born on July 24, 1961, she was elevated as a judge in September 2014 and left an indelible mark in the field of service and criminal law. During her tenure, Justice Thakur was lauded for her meticulously reasoned judgments and her ability to bridge legal complexities with a deep sense of justice. Her rulings have been cited across various high courts, setting new legal precedents and interpretations. She was particularly vocal against bureaucratic inefficiency and emphasised the responsibility of government officers in decision-making. Justice Thakur's legal philosophy was underscored by her ability to dissect legal.

Domicile-based quota in PG medical admission unconstitutional: SC

Agencies : Holding that it violated the right to equality under Article 14 of the Constitution, the Supreme Court on Wednesday declared domicile-based reservation for admissions to postgraduate medical courses within the state quota. "The benefit of 'reservation' in educational institutions including medical colleges to those who reside in a particular state can be given to a certain degree only in MBBS courses, for which we have assigned reasons in the preceding paragraphs. But considering the importance of specialists doctors in PG Medical Course, reservation at the higher level on the basis of 'residence' would be violative of Article 14 of the Constitution of India," a three-judge Bench of Justice Hrishikesh Roy, Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia and Justice SVN Bhatti said. Having declared that residence-based reservation was impermissible in PG medical courses, the top court said, "...the state quota seats, apart from a reasonable number of institution-based reservations, have to be filled strictly on the basis of merit in the All-India examination."



Haryana files case against Kejriwal over 'poison in Yamuna' remark

Agencies : The Haryana government has filed a case against Arvind Kejriwal in a Sonapat court for his 'Yamuna poisoning' remark, under the Disaster Management Act. Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Vipul Goel on Wednesday said the state government had taken strong note of Kejriwal's statement on Delhi's water supply. Goel was speaking to the media here. Calling Kejriwal's statement absurd and misleading, Goel said the Election Commission should take strict cognisance of such baseless statements. "Kejriwal has done cheap politics by levelling such allegations against Haryana, leading the state government to take action," he said, adding that the water being supplied to Delhi is the same that is consumed by the President, Prime Minister and Union ministers. He accused Kejriwal of spreading fear not only among Delhi's people but also among those of Haryana. He criticised the Delhi government for having failed to clean the Yamuna. He said the people of Haryana considered the Yamuna sacred, and spreading false propaganda is both an insult to Haryana and an attempt to mislead the people of Delhi. Goel said Kejriwal claimed that he stopped the "poisonous water" from entering Delhi, but he had no evidence to support this. He said the AAP leader was in the habit of making false statements.

Haryana government schools lag behind Punjab, HP in arithmetic, literacy skills

Agencies : Highlighting weak arithmetic skills among Haryana Government school students, the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2024 reveals that only 43.1% of Class 8 students in rural government schools can perform division. This marks a decline of 6.4 percentage points compared to the 49.5% in 2022. In comparison, Punjab leads with 58%, followed by Himachal Pradesh (HP) at 44%. The division test involved solving a three-digit number divided by a single-digit number. For Class 5 students, only 29.4% in Haryana can do division, an improvement from 2022, but still far behind HP (44%) and Punjab (46.3%). Similarly, 33.1% of Class 3 students in Haryana can subtract, with HP (46.7%) and Punjab (43.9%) outperforming the state. The report also evaluated reading skills. While 53.9% of Class 5 students in Haryana can read a Class 2-level text.

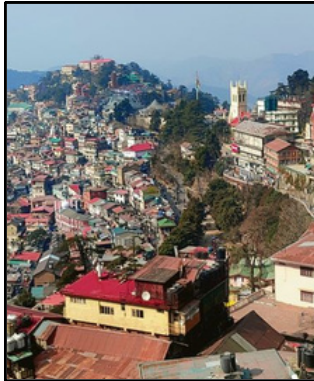
Order issued against plantation on routes used by Gaddi shepherds

Diary Times Desk : It is for the first time that the Forest Department will undertake digitisation of the grazing lands, migratory routes followed by the Gaddi shepherd communities in the state. Directions to this effect have been issued by the Forest Department to the field staff all across the state. The task of issuing grazing permits to the migratory gaddis communities will also be done digitally to facilitate the community, concentrated in large numbers in Chamba, Kangra, Mandi and Kullu districts. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF), Himachal has issued orders to all the forest officials in the field against carrying any plantation drives in the pastures and water points used by the migratory Gaddi shepherds in the state. The decision has been taken as per the suggestions of the Grazing Advisory Committee meeting under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, who holds charge of the Forest Department.

Zaidi concealed facts about Suraj's death: CBI court

Diary Times Desk : Alka Malik, Special Judge, CBI Court, Chandigarh, in the order of sentencing eight accused for life imprisonment in custodial death case of Kotkhai said day after the death of Suraj Singh in custody, head of SIT IGP Zahur H Zaidi, visited Police Station, Kotkhai, on July 19, 2017 to conduct the fact-finding enquiry and also examined constable Dinesh about the incident. In the detailed order made available on Tuesday, the court said that constable Dinesh was on sentry duty on the night when the victim died. Zaidi recorded the statement of Dinesh in his mobile phone who narrated the entire sequence of events leading to death of Suraj Singh to him. After recording the version of constable Dinesh in his mobile phone, instead of taking action against the erring police officials, reprimanded constable Dinesh. The court said that the transcript of interview of Dinesh as well as audio recordings heard by this court clearly reveal.

Shimla MC seeks one-time settlement of illegal buildings



Diary Times Desk : With the status of more than 10,000 unauthorised buildings raised in violation of the construction norms in the state capital remaining illegal, the Shimla Municipal Corporation has sought one-time settlement to decide their fate once and for all. The Shimla Municipal Corporation (SMC) yesterday moved a resolution, urging the government to decide the status of these illegal structures in Shimla, though the total number of such structures all over the state is close to 25,000. The highest number of these unauthorised buildings is concentrated in Shimla MC, especially in the merged areas, which were merged into the municipal corporation from the suburbs which were earlier outside the planning limits. "The number of such structures under Shimla MC is anywhere around 10,000 and we are seeking a one-time settlement from the state government so that their status could become legal," said a councillor. A large number of MC Councillors have been persistently raising this issue hanging fore for the last almost two decades.

Himachal village: Baraat returns empty-handed as no wedding was planned

Diary Times Desk : In a bizarre incident, a marriage party (baraat) from Nari village in Himachal Pradesh's Una district returned home without the bride as no wedding was planned in any home of Singa village, where the marriage ceremony was supposed to take place. The groom, who arrived with the wedding procession, did not even meet the bride. On Tuesday, the 'baraat' arrived in cars from Nari village but the villagers of Singa village were surprised as there was no wedding planned in the village. Everyone was in shock and when the groom's side showed the photograph of the bride, they were told that she is not from the village. Gurdev Singh Gyani, the sarpanch of Singa village, said there is no such girl or family in the village, adding the incident is unfortunate. Sensing the gravity of the situation, the middlemen Manu, the wife of one Rajiv from Nari village, fled from the spot in a car on the pretext that she would find the girl. The couple Manu and Rajiv, the neighbours of the groom who acted as middlemen and reportedly took Rs 50,000 to fix the marriage, are now being questioned as the groom and the bride never met, and they only spoke on phone for a week before the wedding.

Himachal Pradesh among top 3 states in Annual Status of Education Report

Diary Times Desk : Himachal Pradesh is among the top states that have recorded significant gains, with an overall increase of more than 10 per cent points in various spheres in schools between 2022 to 2024. The 2024 Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), in which 268 schools were inspected, indicated very encouraging results for Himachal Pradesh, especially in case of government schools in several areas. In terms of Class-8 reading levels, Himachal Pradesh has been placed at the third position with 84.2 per cent. Mizoram topped the list at 90.1 per cent, followed by Kerala at 84.5 per cent. Good news for the hill state, which is grappling with issues like geographical constraints and huge teacher vacancies in remote areas, is the quantum jump in reading proficiency of students in government schools at Class-3. Himachal Pradesh ranked first with 90.4% schools having drinking water supply, up from 88.9% in 2022. In terms of digital literacy, where students have access to smartphones, Himachal Pradesh has been placed third with 94.3%.

Kangra tourism industry demands better connectivity ahead of Union Budget

Diary Times Desk : With the Union Budget on the anvil, the tourism industry in Kangra district is urging the government to improve connectivity in the region, citing a decline in domestic tourists since the opening of Jammu and Kashmir. Industry stakeholders have submitted a demand charter to BJP MP Rajiv Bharadwaj, outlining their proposals to revive the sector. The tourism sector supports around 1 lakh people in the Kangra region, making it a vital part of the local economy. Ashwani Bamba, president of Hotel and Restaurant of Kangra, said, "We have requested the BJP MP from Kangra for the extension of Vande Bharat train from Una to Kangra district to boost tourism and provide better connectivity. There hardly has been any extension of railway services in Himachal." He added that the Union Government should also offer a financial grant for the expansion of the Gaggal airport. The work on the four-lane road projects, including the Pathankot-Mandi road and Matour-Shimla road, should be expedited, Bamba said. Sanjeev Sharma, a hotelier, said, "In the Kangra region, the Union Ministry of surface transport must provide ropeway projects connecting snowline areas in the Dhauladhar mountain ranges and Triund trekking summit."



Late Twist For Virat Kohli's Ranji Trophy Return, DDCA Mandates...



Agencies : India's star batter Virat Kohli is all set to make his domestic comeback after a long gap of over 12 years. The 36-year-old's last appearance came in the Ranji Trophy back in November 2012 against Uttar Pradesh. It will be Delhi's game against Railways from January 30 onwards this year that will see the right-handed batter playing in domestic cricket again. He will feature under the captaincy of a young Ayush Badoni at the Arun Jaitley Stadium, Delhi. Keeping the interest of the fans in mind, the Delhi and District Cricket Association (DDCA) has made the entry free for fans, however, it has asked the visiting spectators to get there with their Aadhaar card and its photocopy. "The Gautam Gambhir Stand will be open for the spectators. The fans can enter from Gate No 16 and 17. Gate No 6 will also be open for the DDCA members and guests. We are expecting a 10,000 crowd for the first day," DDCA secretary Ashok Kumar Sharma told The Indian Express. "It's a free entry. The fans just need to bring their original copy of their Aadhaar card and its photocopy as well. The arrangements for the fans has been made.

Champions Trophy Stadium Supervisor Breaks Silence On Renovation Delay, Slams PCB

Agencies : The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) insists that Karachi's National Stadium will be ready to host matches of the upcoming Champions Trophy despite mounting concerns around the venue's preparedness for the marquee event starting February 19. Pakistan's respected leading English daily 'Dawn' on Wednesday carried a story which stated that "it seems absolutely impossible to contemplate the renovation work being completed within the deadline, but the personnel handed the responsibility are beaming with confidence." "The board would either be hero or zero for taking up such a mammoth task," the newspaper commented. Although PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi inspected the Rawalpindi stadium on Tuesday and assured that the Champions Trophy would be held as planned, it seems unlikely that the board would get control of the renovated venues in Lahore, Karachi and Rawalpindi by the January 31 deadline. The other upcoming major international matches at these venues include the four-match tri-series with New Zealand and South Africa from February 8 to 14 with the first two games in Lahore and then two matches, including the final, in Karachi.

Tata Steel Master: D Gukesh Beats Leon Mendonca To Jump Into Sole Lead

Agencies : World Champion D Gukesh crashed through the defenses of compatriot Leon Luke Mendonca in the ninth round to jump into sole lead at the Tata Steel Master. On a day when R Praggnanandhaa lost his first game against Dutch GM Anish Giri, veteran P Harikrishna also found himself under the spotlight, falling to Russian-turned-Slovenian Vladimir Fedoseev. "I'm happy that I played a good game today and there are still four rounds left so I'm not thinking much about the standings. I'm just happy as to how I am playing," Gukesh said after his game. With the win, Gukesh took his tally to 6.5 points out of a possible nine and a half points ahead of Uzbek Nodirbek.

Khawaja slams ton as Sri Lanka continue to toil

Agencies : Australia continued to boss the opening day of the first Test in Galle, led by Usman Khawaja's (119*) 16th Test century. The left-hander was well accompanied by Steve Smith, who himself ended the second session unbeaten on 64, in a fourth-wicket partnership of 126 runs. In what was a flawless session for the visitors, Australia scored 116 runs without losing any wickets. Immediately after the Lunch break, Smith gave charge to Prabath Jayasuriya and cleared the ropes. The two batters were very confident with their defence, comfortably getting forward or going back in the crease and placing the ball in the gaps. They also pounced on any overpitched deliveries by the Sri Lankan spinners. It further frustrated the visitors after a tough opening session. Similar to that period, Sri Lanka missed another opportunity to review and this time see the back of Khawaja on 74 after a faint nick to the 'keeper was not given out by the umpire. Eight overs into the session, Smith switched gears, making full use of Jeffrey Vandersay's erring lines on both sides of the stumps with three boundaries. He continued to make it look easy against Jayasuriya with a flick for four over a vacant mid-wicket region. Khawaja, meanwhile, continued to unfurl the reverse sweep and then caressed one through extra-cover for four as he moved into the nineties.

ICC rankings: Adil Rashid No. 1 again, Varun Chakravarthy climbs to fifth among T20I bowlers

Agencies : England legspinner Adil Rashid has reclaimed the top spot in the ICC rankings for T20I bowlers, after his consistent performances in the first three games against India helped the visitors keep the series alive. Rashid starred with frugal figures of 1 for 15 from overs in the third game in Rajkot to register a 26-run win for his side. Prior to that, he had finished with 1 for 14 and 1 for 27 at the start of the five-match series. Rashid had first claimed the No. 1 ranking at the end of 2023 for about a year until Akeal Hosein had displaced him before Christmas in 2024. Varun Chakravarthy, who bagged a five-for in the third T20I on Tuesday, galloped 25 places to reach No. 5 place among the T20I bowlers whereas Jofra Archer went one place behind Varun by jumping 13 spots after taking five wickets in the three T20Is in India. Arshdeep Singh retained his ninth rank, Ravi Bishnoi slipped from fifth to 10th place whereas Axar Patel went up five spots to No. 11. Among T20I batters, Tilak Varma closed in on Travis Head's top spot by going up from third place to second with scores of 18, 72* and 19* so far in the series.

Gautam Gambhir Blasted For 'Tactical Mistake' That Cost India 3rd T20I

Agencies : Indian batters faltered against an incisive England bowling attack as the visitors lost the third T20I by 26 runs in Rajkot on Tuesday. It was a must-win game for the Three Lions, who were trailing 0-2 in the five-match series before the game. The win helped England keep the series alive and also gave the guests the much-needed momentum. Mohammed Shami made a solid comeback to international cricket after 14 months but it was Varun Chakravarthy's bowling effort that stood out as his five-wicket haul helped India limit England to 171 for 9. India should have chased down the target but the batters could only manage 145 for 9 in 20 overs. Hardik Pandya scored a crucial 40 but that failed to win the game for India as other batters had a flop show. While reacting to the hosts' defeat, former Pakistan player Basit Ali said that India head coach Gautam Gambhir made a "technical and tactical mistake". Basit explained that there was no dew in the ground and so India could have batted first as the ball was coming better onto the bat in the first innings. Notably, India skipper Suryakumar Yadav had won the toss and opted to bowl first against England in the game at the Niranjan Shah Stadium, Rajkot.

Sam Konstas' First Reaction After Galle Test Snub Revealed: "No Stress..."

Agencies : Nineteen-year-old Australian cricket prodigy Sam Konstas displayed composure and professionalism after being left out of the playing XI for the opening Test against Sri Lanka, according to selector Tony Dodemaide, who reassured that Konstas remains a crucial part of Australia's plans for the future and revealed the youngster's classy response to being dropped for the opener. "A lot of the narrative has been around this tour doesn't matter. It really does, it's Test cricket. That's our priority. Leaving Sammy out was a very difficult thing. There was a long discussion there. We feel though that he's on a remarkable journey. He's a hugely talented player, hasn't played a lot in this part of the world but he'll learn quickly obviously. "There's a lot to like and be impressed about Sam. One of the things is his ability to take things in his stride. It's remarkable really, whether it's playing in front of 90,000.