

Budget 2025: These Big Announcements Were Made In The Union Budget, Himachal Will Also Benefit; Know What Agriculture-Tourism Got



Diary Times Desk : Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the budget in the Lok Sabha on Saturday. During this, she made many big announcements. Although, there has been no separate announcement for Himachal Pradesh in the General Budget 2025-26, but the state will definitely benefit from the national level announcements. Announcing the new tax slab, the Finance Minister said that this will strengthen the middle class country's economy. Under the new tax system, no income tax will be payable on income up to 12 lakhs (ie average income of 1 lakh per month excluding special rate income such as capital gains). For salaried taxpayers, this limit will be 12.75 lakhs due to the standard deduction of 75,000. Changes are being made in tax slabs and rates across all categories to benefit all taxpayers. This new structure will significantly reduce the taxes of the middle class and they will have more funds available to promote domestic consumption, savings and investment. For taxpayers having income up to Rs. 12 lakh (except for specific income rate), in addition to the benefit arising due to reduction in slab rates, tax exemption is being provided in such a manner that no tax will be paid by them. There are about 6.5 lakh taxpayers in Himachal. In the new tax system, a taxpayer having income of Rs. 12 lakh will get a tax benefit of Rs. 80,000 (100% of his tax payable as per old tax rates). A person having income of Rs. 18 lakh will get a tax benefit of Rs. 70,000 (30% of his tax payable as per old tax rates). A person having income of Rs. 25 lakh will get a tax benefit of Rs. 1,10,000 (25% of his tax payable as per old tax rates). The number of TDS rates and limits will be reduced and made rational. The interest deduction limit for senior citizens is being doubled from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 1 lakh. The annual limit for TDS on rent has been increased from Rs 2.40 lakh to Rs 6 lakh. 1.10 lakh employees and about 40 thousand pensioners of the state will get the benefit of the new income tax slab. However, many demands were made by the Himachal Pradesh government to the central government to include them in the budget. The main demand in this was to release the pending relief package for the disaster in the form of flood and cloudburst in the state in the year 2023, but the state has got disappointment in this.

Union Budget: CM Sukhu Said- This Is Anti-poor And Opportunistic Budget, Interests of Himachal Ignored

Agencies : Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu expressed disappointment over the Central Government's budget for the financial year 2025-26, saying that this budget is showing inequality and a large part of the budget is focused on the state of Bihar. He said that many important areas have not been given attention in this budget. He called for immediate amendments to meet the needs of various important sectors related to Himachal Pradesh and the population here. The interests of Himachal Pradesh have been ignored in the Union Budget. Such a big natural disaster struck Himachal Pradesh in the year 2023. Himachal's rights have not been given yet. This budget presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is focused on Bihar. The upcoming assembly elections have been targeted. The Chief Minister said that this budget has failed to address important issues of the country like unemployment, poverty and rising inflation. He said that apple producers of Himachal Pradesh are making a significant contribution to the state's economy. To reduce the financial constraints and difficulties related to this category, no measures have been taken to increase the import duty on apples, which would have provided relief to the gardeners of the state.



Budget offers 'band-aid for bullet wounds', aimed at Bihar, Delhi polls: Opposition

Agencies : The Opposition on Saturday described the Union Budget as one offering "band-aid for bullet wounds" and said the BJP-led Central Government was only trying to woo voters in Bihar and Delhi through the announcements. While Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said the Centre was "bankrupt of ideas" and needed a paradigm shift to solve the economic crisis, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the government was busy garnering praises for the Budget when the entire country was struggling with inflation and unemployment. Kharge, the Opposition leader in the Rajya Sabha, claimed the Budget was an attempt to "dupe" the people and described it as "nau sau choohe khake billi hajji ko chali"—a Hindi proverb that means seeking to be pious after committing a number of sins.

New income tax slabs: Individuals can save up to Rs 1.10 lakh in taxes

Agencies : Individuals having an annual income of Rs 24 lakh or more can hope to save of Rs 1.10 lakh in income tax, while those earning Rs 12 lakh will have to pay no tax, benefiting to the tune of Rs 80,000 from next fiscal under the new regime. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget exempted, from income tax, persons earning up to Rs 12 lakh per annum and rejigged the tax slabs under the new tax regime. As per government calculations, people with income of Rs 13 lakh a year will save Rs 25,000 on tax liability. Similarly, persons having annual income of Rs 14 lakh will save Rs 30,000, Rs 15 lakh (Rs 35,000), Rs 16 lakh (Rs 50,000), Rs 17 lakh (Rs 60,000). In case of income of Rs 18 lakh the savings would be Rs 70,000, Rs 19 lakh (Rs 80,000), Rs 20 lakh (Rs 90,000). Those earning Rs 21 lakh will stand to save Rs 95,000 in their tax liability, Rs 22 lakh.

Union Budget: Nadda, Jairam and Bindal react on Union Budget, senior citizens say - big relief in tax

Diary Times Desk : Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the budget in the Lok Sabha on Saturday. In Himachal Pradesh, leaders and common people have given different reactions to the budget. BJP State President Dr. Rajiv Bindal said that India's economy is the fastest growing economy among all major global economies. The development track record and structural reforms of the Modi government in the last 10 years have attracted significant international attention. The transformative work done during the first two terms of this government serves as a guide, which has enabled this government to move forward with determination. Development measures have been proposed in various sectors, focusing on youth, farmers and women, poor, youth, farmers, women. Bindal said that relief in income tax is a big gift of the central government to the public. Democracy, demography and demand are the major supporting pillars in our journey towards developed India, the middle class gives strength.

Budget allocates Rs 2.03 lakh crore for world's largest free food grain scheme

Agencies : With focus on feeding the nation, the Union Budget has allocated Rs 2.03 lakh crore to Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana. Under the scheme, food grains are procured for distribution under the National Food Safety Act (NFSA) and for maintaining the buffer stock. The Budget proposals focused on 'garib', youth, 'annadata' and 'nari', focusing on feeding the nation and rural prosperity, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said. The budgeted allocation will be utilised to procure paddy (775 LMT), wheat (265 LMT) and coarse grains (8.74 LMT) which will benefit over 1.35 crore farmers who will be Minimum Support Price running into more than 2 lakh crore. The Finance Minister also announced a six-year mission.



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Himachal News: Preparations to start five new courses in universities and colleges, youth will get employment oriented education

Diary Times Desk : With the aim of providing employment oriented education to the youth in Himachal, the government is preparing to start Apprenticeship Embedded Degree Program (AEDP) in all universities and colleges from the new academic session. Under this, five new courses will be started in universities and colleges. Courses will be started in government, non-government universities and colleges under the National Initiative for Skill Integrated Education. In a workshop chaired by Education Secretary Rakesh Kanwar at the State Secretariat on Friday, a presentation was given on the facilities and benefits of these courses to young students in getting employment. In the presentation, representatives of the Center for Research in Schemes and Policies (CRISP) gave information about AEDP and sought suggestions for starting the course in universities and colleges. It was decided to call a meeting soon regarding starting the courses. Representatives of about 24 government and private colleges including Himachal Pradesh University and Sardar Patel University Mandi were present in the meeting. Education Secretary said that the course will be started from the next session itself: Education Secretary Rakesh Kanwar told the representatives of CRISP that the AEDP program will definitely be adopted. Courses will be started in Himachal in the academic session 2025-26. Courses will be started in colleges which have the necessary and infrastructural facilities. This initiative is being taken to fulfill the government's commitment to provide employment-based education to the youth. The state government will start courses according to the employment market in collaboration with CRISP.

Finance Minister walking on worn-out path, not willing to break free: Congress

Agencies : Asserting that the BJP-led Centre has "no new ideas", the Congress on Saturday said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is walking on the "worn-out path" and not willing to break free as its governments had done in 1991 and 2004. The Opposition party said the takeaway from the Union Budget 2025-26 is that the ruling BJP is wooing the tax-paying middle-class and the Bihar electorate. Addressing a press conference here along with his party colleague Gaurav Gogoi, senior Congress leader and former finance minister P Chidambaram said these announcements will be welcomed by the 3.2 crore tax-paying middle class and the 7.65 crore voters of Bihar. But for the rest of India, the finance minister had nothing more than soothing words, punctuated by the applause of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) members led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said.

PM Surya Ghar Yojana: PM Surya Ghar Yojana became people's choice, 1.53 lakh people registered in Himachal

Diary Times Desk : The central government's PM Surya Ghar Free Electricity Scheme is being liked by the people of Himachal. So far, 1.53 lakh consumers have registered for installing solar panels of 1 to 10 kilowatts under this scheme in the state. Solar rooftop panels have already been installed in 4,721 houses. For this, consumers are being given a subsidy of 40 to 60 percent. The target of the scheme is to connect 90 thousand houses in the state with solar power by March 2027. In this scheme of the central government, the highest number of 1,389 solar installations have been done in Kangra district. Hamirpur is in second place with 624 installations. Mandi is in third place with 608 installations. Similarly, 418 solar installations have been done in Una, 370 in Bilaspur, 336 in Shimla, 315 in Solan, 273 in Sirmaur, 182 in Chamba, 150 in Kullu, 50 in Kinnaur and 21 in Lahaul Spiti. The capacity of these solar panels is 26.6 MW. Out of these, 426 consumers have received subsidy of Rs 3,64,49,523. It is noteworthy that the scheme launched by PM Narendra Modi in February 2024 aims to install 1 crore rooftop solar in the residential sector by the financial year 2027. Since then, about 1,53,709 registrations have been done in the state so far.

Census, NPR unlikely in 2025 too as only Rs 574 crore allocated in budget

Agencies : If budgetary proposals are anything to go by, the decadal census is unlikely to be carried out in 2025 as well with a meagre Rs 574.80 crore allocated for the exercise in the Budget presented on Saturday. A meeting of the Union Cabinet on December 24, 2019 had approved the proposal for conducting census of India 2021 at a cost of Rs 8,754.23 crore and updating the National Population Register (NPR) at Rs 3,941.35 crore. The house listing phase of the census and the exercise to update the NPR were scheduled to be carried out across the country from April 1 to September 30, 2020 but were postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The census operation continues to be on hold and the government has not yet announced the new schedule. The Budget 2025-26, presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday, allocated Rs 574.80 crore for Census, Surveys and Statistics/Registrar General of India (RGI), a significant reduction from the Budget 2021-22 when Rs 3,768 crore was allocated, and an indication the decadal exercise may not be carried out even after this significant delay. The allocation under the head was Rs 572 crore in 2024-25.

Himachal: 5.50 lakh students will now get nutritious food in mid-day meal two days a week

Diary Times Desk : 5.50 lakh students studying in Himachal Pradesh schools will be given nutritious food two days a week under the mid-day meal scheme. There are preparations to expand the Chief Minister's Nutritious Food Scheme being run for students from pre-primary to class VIII. Currently, banana and egg are being given as nutritious food in schools once a week. Soon its scope will be increased to two days a week. Education Minister Rohit Thakur said that provision for this will be made in the budget. About 5.50 lakh children studying in Himachal Pradesh government schools from nursery to class VIII are served different types of food six days a week. For this, a special menu has been prepared in schools. Whole moong dal and rice are prepared on Monday of the first week, soya pulao with vegetables on Tuesday, rajma rice on Wednesday, khichdi with chana dal and vegetables on Thursday, urad dal and rice on Friday, black gram and rice on Saturday. Similarly, in the second week, mixed dal and rice is prepared on Monday, black gram and dal on Tuesday, moong dal and vegetable and rice on Wednesday, vegetable and soya pulao on Thursday, rajma and rice or curry on Friday. To provide nutritious food to all the children, Himachal Government started a new scheme last year.



India announces plans to amend nuclear liability laws ahead of Modi's expected visit to US

Agencies : India on Saturday announced plans to set up a nuclear energy mission and proposed to amend the liability laws governing the sector, a move that came ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's likely visit to the US. New Delhi made public its decision to amend the nuclear liability laws a little over two weeks after Washington lifted restrictions on three Indian nuclear entities saying the move will open up new avenues for India-US collaboration in the civil-nuclear field. Certain clauses in India's Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010 have emerged as hurdles in moving forward in implementation of the historic civil nuclear deal that was firming up between the two strategic partners around 16 years ago. Modi is expected to visit Washington this month to hold wide-ranging talks with US President Donald Trump with a focus on further shoring up bilateral cooperation in a range of areas including trade, energy and defence. India's decision to set up a 'Nuclear Energy Mission' with an outlay of Rs 20,000 crore and plans to amend the nuclear liability laws were announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman while presenting budget.



Himachal Weather: Drizzle in Shimla, light snowfall on high peaks, know how the weather will be till February 7

Diary Times Desk : The weather remains bad in many parts of Himachal Pradesh today. There was drizzle in the capital Shimla in the evening. On Saturday, there was light snowfall on and off from morning to afternoon in the high peaks of Kullu and Lahaul. There was drizzle in Manali-Kullu. This has increased the intensity of cold. Along with Rohtang Pass, snow has also fallen in Kunjam Pass, Raja Ghepan Peak, CV Range hills. The Meteorological Center Shimla has forecast light rain and snowfall at some places on February 1 and February 3. There is a possibility of light to moderate rain and snowfall at some places on February 4 and 5. The weather is expected to remain clear in the entire state on February 2-3 and 6 and 7. The administration has instructed tourists not to go towards snowy areas. There is no possibility of any major change in the maximum temperature during the next 24 hours. After this, the maximum temperature is expected to increase by 2-3 degrees Celsius in some parts of the state during the next 2-3 days. The minimum temperature is expected to fall by 3-4 degrees Celsius in many parts of the state during the next 2-3 days. After this, the minimum temperature will increase by 2-3 degrees Celsius in many parts of the state. The minimum temperature was recorded at Shimla 3.2, Sundernagar 6.0, Bhuntar 5.1.



Himachal Scholarship Scam: CBI gave clean chit to many institutions, ED investigation started revealing links

Diary Times Desk : The Rs 181 crore scam in the scholarships issued by the Central Government for SC, ST and OBC categories in Himachal between 2013 and 2017 is again in the headlines. After the arrest of the ED Assistant Director investigating the case and the DSP of CBI Shimla branch, new arrests have started being made in this case. The joint team of Enforcement Directorate Delhi and Shimla branch has started a fresh investigation of this case from money laundering. The records of 29 private institutions are being scrutinized. Apart from this, the records of the private educational institutions which have been given a clean chit by the CBI have also been scrutinized. It is being told that the arrest of Vikas Bansal and Gulshan Sharma will reveal many layers in the case. After questioning them, many arrests will be made. CBI Shimla branch has taken action against the operators of 29 educational institutions of Himachal Pradesh. Nearly 150 people have been made accused in this. While 7 private educational institutions have been given a clean chit. CBI Chandigarh has already arrested the DSP who was investigating the case on behalf of CBI. He has been accused of taking commission. At the same time, the Assistant Director who was investigating the money laundering case on behalf of ED has also been arrested on charges of bribery. After this, ED Directorate has changed the staff of Shimla branch and started a fresh investigation of the case.

Bhanupalli-Bilaspur Railway Line: Train will stop at 4 on 3.2 km diversion track, line will be inspected today

Diary Times Desk : In the strategically important Bhanupalli-Bilaspur-Leh rail project, trains will be run on the 3.2 km long new diversion track from February 4. The Railway Safety Commissioner (CRS) will inspect this new line on Saturday. After inspection, permission for train operation will be given. The diversion track has been laid from chainage number minus 2600 to plus 600 in Bhanupalli. This new line has been laid by diverting the old line, so that the construction work beyond Bhanupalli towards Bilaspur can be completed without interruption. The Railway Safety Commissioner will conduct a thorough inspection of the 3.2 km diversion track on Saturday. During this, all the RVNL officials who are working on this project will be present with him. During this process, the structural strength of the track, signal system and safety standards will be tested. Trains will be run on this route after getting permission.

Himachal: Relief to 19.5 lakh ration card holder families, will get oil quota of three months at once

Diary Times Desk : Ration card consumers of Himachal will get three months' quota of mustard oil in February. The Food Supply Corporation has finalized the oil tender and issued supply orders to the companies. APL and poor families will get mustard oil at Rs 146 and income taxpayers at Rs 153 per liter. The announcement made by Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu in the budget session to provide oil to consumers as per their need has also been included in this. Oil will be made available to consumers as per demand. For this, it has been made mandatory for consumers to show cards of marriage and other functions. For this, the depot holder will first take demand from the people. After mustard oil, now the Food Supply Corporation is going to tender for refined oil. There are 19.5 lakh ration card families in Himachal Pradesh, the state government is providing ration to consumers at subsidized rates. After the tender was cancelled four times, the oil tender has been finalized for the fifth time. Consumers have not got oil in the depots for the last three months. The Food Supply Corporation believes that consumers will get mustard oil 30 to 35 rupees cheaper than the market price.

Himachal News: Former MLA Rajendra Rana got permission to go abroad, petition was filed in High Court

Diary Times Desk : Himachal Pradesh High Court has allowed former MLA BJP leader Rajendra Rana to go abroad. The High Court has asked the petitioner to submit a personal bond of Rs 1 lakh. The court of Judge Rakesh Kanthala has ordered the petitioner to give all the information about his coming and going to the police station within two days. He has also been asked to give information to the police after returning from abroad. The petitioner had filed a petition in the High Court on January 9 to go abroad. It was said in the petition that he has to go to Malaysia between February 3 and February 11 for his daughter's postgraduate studies in medicine. The former MLA has already visited the United Kingdom between September 10 and September 16, 2024. Former MLA BJP leader Rajendra Rana has been allowed to go abroad.

Himachal Pradesh: Land owner will have a unique ID, can get signed Jamabandi online from home

Diary Times Desk : Himachal Pradesh government has taken important steps towards making revenue services online to bring transparency in land related works and to make it convenient for common people. People of the state will now be able to get online jamabandi from home. On Friday, a new format was released in the gazette regarding this. The government has invited suggestions and objections within 7 days regarding the new format. People of the state will now be able to get digitally signed jamabandi through online medium. This jamabandi will be completely valid for revenue works. People will no longer need to visit the offices of the Revenue Department and Patwaris to get jamabandi. Every land owner will be issued a unique ID. Digital jamabandi will be obtained with its help only. This facility will be available with the help of Himbhoomi portal. Apart from jamabandi, other information related to land data like khasra, khatauni, land map, property registration, stamp duty calculator and other services will also be made available. Under the scheme, digital revenue record rooms will be set up at all district headquarters.

Himachal: Affidavit of not consuming drugs will have to be given at the time of admission, Raj Bhawan issued instructions to all universities

Diary Times Desk : To stop the increasing trend of drug abuse among the youth in Himachal Pradesh, the serious Raj Bhawan has decided to make it compulsory for the youth to fill an affidavit at the time of admission in the new academic session. For this, instructions are being issued to all the universities soon. In this affidavit, the student will have to write that he will not consume any kind of drug, if found consuming drugs, there will be a provision to cancel his admission. Apart from this, it will also be mandatory to form a separate squad in every educational institution to stop drug abuse.

Udit Narayan Reacts To Backlash Over Kissing A Female Fan: "Hum Decent Log Hai"

Agencies : Veteran singer Udit Narayan faced massive backlash online after several videos surfaced showing him kissing a female fan during a live performance. In a recent interview with Hindustan Times, the singer has responded to the controversy. He said, "Fans itne deewane hote hain na. Hum log aise nahi hain, hum decent log gain (Fans are crazy. We are not like this, we are decent people). Some people encourage this and show their love through this. Udaake kya karna hai ab iss cheez ko (What is the point of making a big deal out of this)? There are so many people in the crowd, and we have bodyguards present too. But fans think they are getting a chance to meet, so someone extends their hands for a handshake, some kiss the hands... yeh sab deewangi hoti hai. Uspe itna dhyaan nahi dena chahiye (All this is fans' craze, it shouldn't be given so much attention)." In the clips circulating on social media, Udit Narayan can be seen performing Tip Tip Barsa Paani when a crowd of female fans gathered near the stage to take selfies with him.

Dense fog blankets Delhi, over 100 flights delayed due to reduced visibility

Agencies : A 'dense' fog blanketed the national capital on Saturday, hitting flight operations due to low visibility recorded at the Delhi airport, with at least 140 flights being delayed. The visibility recorded at the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport was 50 metres at 8 am, while the visibility at the Hindon commercial airport dropped to zero on Saturday morning. At least 125 flights departing from IGI airport were delayed with an average delay time of half an hour, while seven flights were cancelled at 8 am, according to flight tracking website, Flightradar 24. Additionally, 21 flights arriving at Delhi were delayed, and seven flights were cancelled, as per Flightradar 24. The Delhi Airport issued a passenger advisory at 8 am, stating that flights which don't have the mechanism to land or take off in low visibility conditions might be affected. An 'orange' alert was issued in Delhi on Saturday by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) due to 'dense' fog at most places and 'very dense' fog at isolated places. The IMD forecasted a minimum temperature of 10 degrees Celsius and a maximum temperature of 26 degrees Celsius for Saturday. The weather department has predicted dense to moderate fog for Saturday and Sunday, while it has forecasted 'rain'.

"What Happens if You Don't Have A Job?" Shashi Tharoor On Union Budget 2025



Agencies : Congress MP Shashi Tharoor on Saturday reacted to the Union Budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, questioning what would happen to those who are not employed. Mr Tharoor's statements were in response to the revised tax slabs and rates under the new regime. "I think, frankly, the applause you heard from the BJP benches was for the middle-class tax cut. We look at the details and that may be a good thing. So if you have a salary, you may be paying less tax. But the important question is, what happens if we don't have a salary?" the Congress leader said. "The fact is yes, I suppose if you have a job and you are earning Rs 12 lakh or less, there is every reason to be happy," he added. Mr Tharoor claimed the Finance Minister did not mention unemployment throughout her Union Budget speech. "We didn't even hear the words unemployment or inflation from the Finance Minister today. It was a mercifully short speech, but she didn't use either of those words, which is not so merciful," the Congress leader said.

Budget announces wider definition for MSMEs, enhanced credit flow

Agencies : Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday proposed a wider definition of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and outlined a number of initiatives to increase credit flows amid a budget focus on helping smaller businesses. "To help them achieve higher efficiencies of scale, technological upgradation and better access to capital, the investment and turnover limits for classification of all MSMEs will be enhanced to 2.5 and 2 times respectively." The broader revenue criteria will help more businesses to come under the ambit of smaller businesses access government benefits.

As Middle Class Rejoices Tax Relief, Railways See Scant Mention In Budget

Agencies : In the Union Budget 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government has turned to the country's middle class to revive growth. In a massive relief, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced an exemption to annual income of up to Rs 12 lakh from income tax and changed tax slabs. However, the capex target for a sector that is significant for the economy has been unexpectedly kept unchanged. At Rs 2.52 lakh, the capital outlay for railways for 2025-26 is the same as last year.

Nitish Kumar's Big Message On Bihar Mention In Budget 2025

Agencies : The 2025 Union Budget is "positive and welcome... progressive and forward-looking", Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar said Saturday evening, lavishing praise on Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's speech in the Lok Sabha. Ms Sitharaman's budget, for FY 2025/26, made mention of several special schemes and welfare measures for Bihar, which will vote in an Assembly election later this year. Nitish Kumar - who will lead the state's ruling Janata Dal (United) and Bharatiya Janata Party alliance in that election - declared this budget, the eighth presented by Ms Sitharaman, would "further accelerate the development of Bihar (apart from) increasing pace of development of the country". The Bihar leader also heaped praise on Ms Sitharaman for two big-ticket announcements on income tax, i.e., hiking the rebate ceiling from Rs 7 lakh to Rs 12 lakh and rejigging new regime tax slabs. As a result of the latter move, the Finance Minister had said, money in consumers' hands.

Coldplay's Chris Martin, Dakota Johnson take a dip at Sangam during Mahakumbh 2025

Agencies : Coldplay frontman Chris Martin and girlfriend Dakota Johnson recently attended the Maha Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj. Now, taking to Instagram, a fan has shared a video of him meeting the duo there. A person, Bharat Chaudhary, shared a video on Instagram in which he and his partner were seen heading inside the waters to take a dip. As he zoomed in on his camera, Chris and Dakota were seen nearby, getting inside the water to take a dip. In the clip, Chris was seen in black shorts while Dakota opted for a kurta.

8 Naxalites killed in encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh

Agencies : Eight Naxalites were killed in an encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district on Saturday, police said. The gunfight began around 8.30 am in the forests of the Gangaloor police station area when a joint team of security personnel was conducting an anti-Naxalite operation, news agency PTI reported. According to a senior police official, the operation was launched on Friday following intelligence inputs about the presence of Maoist cadres from the West Bastar Division in the region. Personnel from the District Reserve Guard (DRG), Special Task Force (STF) of the state police, and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), including its elite unit CoBRA (Commando Battalion for Resolute Action), were involved in the operation. Security forces had been engaged in intermittent gunfire with the Maoists since the morning. More details about the encounter are awaited as the operation is still ongoing. Patrolling and search operations continue in the area to ensure security and gather further intelligence.



Crashed Black Hawk chopper was tasked to save US officials during 'doomsday'

Agencies : The Black Hawk helicopter which collided with an American airlines Bombardier CRJ700 passenger plane, was on a training flight to a military mission to evacuate senior officials in case there was an attack on the United States, Reuters reported. According to the report, the military mission known as "continuity of government" and "continuity of operations," is meant to preserve the ability of the US administration to operate. The crews transport VIPs around Washington DC, buzzing with chopper traffic. US defence secretary Pete Hegseth said that the crew members on board the Black Hawk were on a "routine, annual re-training of night flights on a standard corridor for a continuity of government mission." At least 67 people were killed when an American Airlines regional passenger jet collided with a US Army Black Hawk helicopter on Wednesday and crashed into the frigid Potomac River near Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport.

China Building Military Facility 10 Times Bigger Than Pentagon: Report

Agencies : China is building a new military command centre near Beijing that is expected to be 10 times the size of the Pentagon, a report in Financial Times, citing US intelligence officials has claimed. Dubbed "Beijing Military City", the construction on the project started in mid-2024 with recent satellite images showing deep holes dug in the 1,500-acre area, located 30 km southwest of the capital city. The new military command may house large buildings and hardened bunkers, designed to protect the top Politburo officials during any conflict, including a nuclear war. "Nearly 10 times bigger than the Pentagon, it's fitting for Xi Jinping's ambitions to surpass the US," an unnamed Chinese researcher told the publication. "This fortress only serves one purpose, which is to act as a doomsday bunker for China's increasingly sophisticated and capable military." The details of the project have been kept under wraps with the Chinese embassy in Washington claiming that it was not aware of the details. Though the military officials are not present at the site.

List of US government web pages that have gone dark to comply with Donald Trump orders

Agencies : A number of U.S. government web pages changed or went dark Friday as agencies scrambled to comply with President Donald Trump's executive orders declaring his administration would recognize only two genders and ordering an end to diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives. In a letter sent on Wednesday, the Office of Personnel Management directed agency heads to terminate grants and contracts related to "gender ideology," ask staff to remove pronouns from their government emails, and disband resource groups on the issue, too. The directive, which ordered agencies to institute changes by 5 p.m. on Friday, also asked agencies to remove the term "gender" from government forms and swap it out with "sex." Here is a list of changes and missing pages seen so far. A number of pages have popped up since being taken down, some with changes.

Three Israeli hostages and dozens of Palestinian prisoners released



Agencies : Three Israeli hostages being held by Hamas in Gaza were released from captivity on Saturday, in exchange for 183 Palestinian prisoners held by Israel. Yarden Bibas, 34, Ofer Kalderon, 53, and Keith Siegel, 65, were handed over to the Red Cross - the latest hostages to be released as part of a ceasefire deal struck last month. Palestinian prisoners were taken in buses to Gaza and the West Bank, many of them coming from the nearby Ofer prison. The tone of the exchange sat in stark contrast to Thursday's chaotic handover, during which surging crowds pressed in on hostages, eliciting concern for their safety and prompting Israel to delay that day's release of Palestinian prisoners. Saturday's release was more orderly, but retained the presentational elements that sought to project that Hamas remains the governing force in Gaza. Lines of armed fighters kept crowds at bay, while the men who were released were flanked by more armed and masked fighters. A banner behind them bore the images of killed Hamas leaders.

'Forceful but...': Justin Trudeau reacts to Donald Trump's threat to impose tariffs on Canada on Saturday

Agencies : Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said his country's response will be "forceful but reasonable" if the US decides to impose 25 per cent tariffs as threatened by President Donald Trump. "No one - on either side of the border - wants to see American tariffs on Canadian goods. I met with our Canada-U.S. Council today. We're working hard to prevent these tariffs, but if the United States moves ahead, Canada's ready with a forceful and immediate response," Justin Trudeau posted on X. Donald Trump has threatened to impose tariffs on Canada and Mexico as early as Saturday. "If the president does choose to implement any tariffs against Canada, we're ready with a response - a purposeful, forceful but reasonable, immediate response," Jutin Trudeau earlier told reporters.

18 soldiers, 24 militants killed in clashes in Pakistan's Balochistan

Agencies : Eighteen paramilitary soldiers and 24 militants were killed in fighting in south-western Pakistan, the military's media wing said in a statement on Saturday. The militants had tried to set up roadblocks overnight in the restive province of Balochistan and most of the deaths had taken place as security forces removed them, the military said. Eleven of the militants were killed in what the military described as "clearance operations" on Saturday. It was not immediately clear which group the militants belonged to. Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in a statement condemned the attack. The mineral-rich province, which borders Iran and Afghanistan, has been the scene of a decade-old insurgency by separatist ethnic Baloch groups and Islamist militants also operate there. On Tuesday, in a separate incident, Islamist militants in an explosive-laden vehicle were thwarted in their attempt to overrun a Pakistani security post near the border with Afghanistan. In August, at least 73 people were killed in Balochistan when separatist militants attacked police stations, railway lines and highways and security forces launched retaliatory operations.

How Elon Musk Aides Are Using White House Cred To Infiltrate Federal Body

Agencies : A group of Elon Musk's close associates, including former interns and trusted sidekicks, has taken control of the General Services Administration (GSA), the federal agency which manages government offices and technology. The team is attempting to use White House security credentials for unusual access to GSA tech, deploying AI software, and restructuring the office to reflect Musk's vision, according to leaked documents obtained by Wired. Several people who helped Musk take over Twitter now have key roles at GSA. Nicole Hollander, who was part of Musk's Twitter transition team, now holds a top government position with access to GSA systems. Her husband, Steve Davis, who also stayed at Twitter HQ, is now an integral member of Musk's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). Other appointees include Thomas Shedd, a former Tesla engineer, Edward Coristine, a past Neuralink intern, and Ethan Shaotran, a Harvard AI researcher. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has also brought in key figures from Musk's circle - Amanda Scales, formerly with xAI, is now OPM chief of staff.



Punjab once again ignored in Union Budget: CM Mann

Agencies : Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann expressed disappointment over the Union Budget on Saturday, claiming that the border state has been "ignored" once again and not given anything. Describing it as an "election budget", the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader said it only made announcements for Bihar. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented her eighth budget in Parliament on Saturday. Reacting to the budget, Mann alleged that Punjab has once again been "ignored" in the budget presented by the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Centre. "The Union government has not given anything to the farmers and youngsters of Punjab," he said in a post on X. The chief minister criticised the Centre for not announcing a minimum support price (MSP) for crops or any package for the state's industry. "The Centre has neither given an MSP to farmers on their crops nor has the state been given any package for any industry. Punjab has not been given anything that can improve its economy and future," he said. This budget is only an election budget, in which there are announcements only for the state of Bihar," Mann added. Once again, the Centre has meted out stepmotherly treatment to Punjab and Punjabis in the budget, he said, adding, "But we will make Punjab stand on its own feet."



Good news for farmers, Kisan Credit Card loan enhanced from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 5 lakh

Agencies : The Kisan Credit Card facilitates short-term loans for 7.7 crore farmers, fishermen and dairy farmers. The loan limit under modified interest subvention scheme has been enhanced from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 5 lakh for loans taken through the KCC. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said: "For self-reliance in urea production, the government had reopened three dormant urea plants in the eastern region to further augment urea supply - a plant with annual capacity of 12.7 lakh metro tonnes will be set up at Namrup in Assam." Sitharaman announced PM Dhan Dhyan Krishi Yojana, covering 100 districts with low yields, modern crop intensity and below-average credit parameters. Presenting her record eighth consecutive budget, she also said that the scheme would benefit 1.7 crore farmers. She added the government will launch rural prosperity, and resilience programme focusing on youth, women and farmers. Nafed (National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India) and NCCF will procure pulses in the next four years. The government will also roll out a 6-year programme for Atmanirbharta in pulses.

Chandigarh power supply goes into private hands

Agencies : Finally, the UT Administration has handed over the Electricity Department to Eminent Electricity Distribution Limited (EEDL), a subsidiary of the Kolkata-based RP-Sanjiv Goenka (RPSG) Group. A share-purchase agreement was today executed between the Administration, EEDL and Chandigarh Power Distribution Limited (CPDL), marking a major step in modernising the city's power supply. The RPSG Group, through its subsidiary EEDL, has officially taken over the power distribution and retail supply business, following approvals from the Punjab and Haryana High Court (November 2024) and the Supreme Court (December 2024). Under the privatisation plan, the entire power distribution and retail supply function have been transferred to the CPDL. This transition will significantly enhance the power services for over 2.35 lakh consumers in the city. This initiative aligns with the Atmanirbhar Bharat vision, ensuring improved reliability, efficiency and sustainability in the local power sector. The EEDL has invested Rs 871 crore, far exceeding the reserve price, while ensuring the protection of employee service conditions and pensions. Significant investments in smart grids.

Kejriwal forced people to drink contaminated water: Saini

Agencies : Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini strongly critiqued former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal over the quality of Yamuna water, stating that no work had been done in Delhi over the past 10 years. He accused Kejriwal of resorting to cheap politics to cover up his failures. "For the last decade, Kejriwal has forced the people of Delhi to drink contaminated water," Saini claimed. While presenting water samples from both Haryana and Delhi to the media at Yamuna Ghat in Wazirabad today, he emphasised the difference between the two. He stated that in Delhi, polluted water was being dumped into the Yamuna. Directly holding the Delhi Government responsible, Saini said, "We supply clean water to Delhi through the Yamuna, but due to mismanagement, the Delhi Government is polluting it." He said when the same water reached Faridabad, its quality was significantly compromised. He said PM Narendra Modi allocated Rs 8,500 crore for cleaning drains, ponds, repairing sewage system, and other related works, but the results were not visible. He said it was the Chief Minister's responsibility to provide facilities to the public, but such facilities were not evident in Delhi.



Get off copter to know people's pain: Vij's fresh swipe at Saini

Agencies : Senior Haryana Minister Anil Vij today left the BJP-led government red-faced yet again by launching an attack on Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, saying he had been travelling in his "udan khatola" (helicopter) ever since he assumed office. "Our CM has been on a helicopter since the day he became the CM. He will come to know about people's pain only after he gets out of the helicopter. This is not just my voice, but that of all MLAs, MPs and ministers as well," the seven-time BJP MLA alleged. Vij's fresh attack comes close on the heels of his threat to go on a fast-unto-death, on the lines of farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal, over alleged non-compliance of his orders by government officials. The state government today got into damage control mode and tried to mollify the senior minister by shifting Ambala DC Parth Gupta to Yamunanagar, posting Ajay Singh Tomer in his place. Vij again accused a leader of trying to ensure his defeat and even orchestrating an attack on him. "Within a week of winning my seventh election, I publicly raised the issue of those who played a role in trying to defeat me - whether they were officials, employees or political figures. It has been more than 100 days now, but no action has been taken. It doesn't matter to me anymore," Vij asserted. Vij had earlier claimed that the orders given by him at a district grievances committee meeting had not been implemented. "I will not attend the meeting of the committee because the orders issued at the meeting are not followed," Vij had said.

Officials crack down on fake BPL beneficiaries in Hisar

Agencies : A district administration survey has exposed numerous families in Hisar who continue to avail Below Poverty Line (BPL) benefits despite owning large houses and even expensive pets. The survey, initiated by a team led by the Additional Deputy Commissioner, aims to identify discrepancies in the BPL list and remove ineligible cardholders. According to official data from the Aadhaar-enabled Public Distribution System of the State Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department, the BPL population in Hisar district stood at 13,08,274 this month, down from 13,55,505 in November 2024. This marks the removal of 47,231 individuals from the list in just two and a half months.

For homestays, govt extends mudra loans in Budget 2025

Diary Times Desk : The government would develop top 50 tourist sites in partnership with states and also extend mudra loans to homestays, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Saturday. In efforts to boost tourism in the country, Sitharaman said medical tourism will be promoted in partnership with the private sector and the government will also give special focus to destinations related to life and times of Lord Buddha. Presenting the Budget for 2025-26, the minister also said financial support will be provided for Western Kosi Canal, benefiting 50,000 hectare in Mithilanchal region in Bihar.

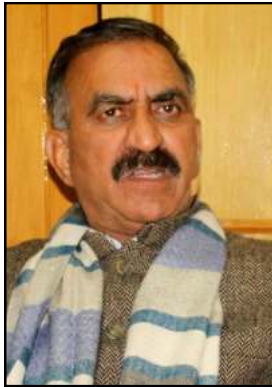
Kishan Kapoor, BJP leader from Himachal's Kangra, dies of brain stroke in PGI

Diary Times Desk : Former BJP leader Kishan Kapoor passed away at Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) in Chandigarh on Saturday morning. Kapoor had been admitted to PGIMER for a brain stroke. He had been in coma for the past fortnight. Kapoor breathed his last at about 10.30 am today. His body would be brought to Dharamsala in the evening. The last rites would be performed on Sunday. Kapoor was a five-time MLA. He also served as a BJP MP from the Kangra parliamentary constituency from 2019 to 2024.

Collective effort needed to root out drugs: Pratibha

Diary Times Desk : Expressing concern over the increasing drug addiction among the youth in the state, state Congress president Pratibha Singh today said a state-wide campaign, involving administration and sections of society, should be launched to curb the growing menace. "Due to the increasing drug addiction, many youths are dying every day. It has become a matter of great concern," she said. She said chitta or other types of drugs had ruined thousands of families. "A collective effort is needed to root out this evil of drug addiction," she said. Praising the organisations who have announced rewards for people.

CM Sukhu, Congress president slam Union Budget for ignoring Himachal's needs



Diary Times Desk : Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu expressed disappointment over the Union Budget, terming it "inequitable" and focused mainly on Bihar. Sukhu stated that the budget failed to address pressing issues such as unemployment, poverty, and rising prices. The Chief Minister highlighted the struggles of apple growers in the state, who contribute significantly to the state's economy. He emphasised that the budget offered no measures to alleviate their financial constraints or increase the import duty on apples. Sukhu also pointed out that the budget overlooked the expansion of the rail network in the state, which is essential for economic growth. Additionally, he mentioned that the cessation of GST compensation has put Himachal Pradesh in a precarious financial position, resulting in an annual loss. "It's an anti-poor budget and not futuristic. It is totally an opportunistic budget," said Sukhu. State Congress president Pratibha Singh also criticised the budget, stating that it was disappointing for Himachal Pradesh. She claimed that the budget favoured Bihar, with an eye on the upcoming elections, while ignoring the state's needs.

New IAS, IPS officers won't be inducted into state cadre: CM

Diary Times Desk : Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu today said that the government has decided against inducting new IAS and IPS officers into the state cadre. "With a population of approximately 70 lakh, the state does not require 153 IAS officers. Consequently, the state government has decided against inducting new IAS and IPS officers into the state cadre," Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said while talking to mediapersons in Solan today. He further said that the government aims to reduce the number of Indian Forest Service (IFS) officers as well. The Chief Minister also pointed out the poor condition of the Solan-Parwanoo four-lane highway and attributed it to the flawed design of the highway. He said he had already discussed the matter with Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, and had requested a re-design and re-alignment of the highway to improve its condition. As for his expectations from the Union Budget, the Chief Minister said state lacked an international-standard airport, and that the Centre should bear the entire cost of its construction. Additionally, the Centre should also fully fund the construction of the Bhanupalli-Beri and Chandigarh-Baddi railway lines.

Public works minister opens three link roads in Basantpur

Diary Times Desk : Public Works and Urban Development Minister Vikramaditya Singh today inaugurated three connecting roads in the Basantpur development block of the Shimla (Rural) Assembly constituency, constructed at a cost of Rs 3 crore and said that the inauguration of these three roads is a significant gift for the people of the area. The roads include the Shada-Nalah link road that has been constructed at a cost of Rs 1.12 crore, Shada-Nadohat link road constructed at a cost of Rs 1.42 crore and the Karayali-Mateog link road constructed at a cost of Rs 32 lakh. The minister also said that the construction work of the road connecting the village of Khun at a cost of Rs 13 lakh is under progress. He assured that these roads would be paved soon under the MLA's priority scheme to maximise their benefits to the local people. Singh also announced that nearly Rs 11 lakh have been approved for various developmental works in the Karyali gram panchayat. He further said that the Pandoa Khadd to Kali Bagri drinking water project in Sunni tehsil would be inaugurated soon. He said that almost 95 per cent of the construction work.

IIT-Mandi hosts conclave to enhance industry-academia collaboration

Diary Times Desk : IIT Mandi iHub and HCI Foundation successfully launched the second edition of its flagship conclave, HIVE 2.0, today at IIT Mandi campus at Kamand. The event, aimed at promoting translational research and enhancing industry-academia collaborations, attracted leading professionals from academia, industry, startups and government sectors. It focused on fostering collaboration, aligning research with real-world needs and exploring innovations in human-computer interaction (HCI). The conclave covered key themes such as assistive technologies, device-led technologies, experience technologies and generative AI-led design technologies. Rajesh Dharmani, Minister of Town and Country Planning, Housing, Technical Education, Vocational and Industrial Training, Himachal Pradesh, inaugurated the event and a new skill development hub at IIT Mandi. He emphasised the government's commitment to fostering innovation and skill development to create a tech-savvy workforce for Himachal Pradesh and the nation.



"Someone Who Has Played For...": Hardik Pandya's Blunt Admission On His New Role



Agencies : Hardik Pandya may be an all-rounder but he holds his batting exploits close to his heart because it gives him a "wonderful feeling" every time he scores big runs and guides India to victory. Pandya produced another sterling performance with the bat in the fourth T20I against England on Friday, emerging as the joint-highest scorer with Shivam Dube on 53 runs in the match in Pune. His half-century not only guided India to a 15-run win but also helped the hosts take an unassailable 3-1 lead in the five-match series. "Batting has always been my number one (love) or close to my heart. That's a very satisfying day (on Friday), and at the same point of time before sleeping (it) gives me a wonderful feeling and I've always had a good sleep post that," the all-rounder said in a video posted by BCCI on 'X', formerly twitter. Pandya, who played a pivotal role with the ball in helping India defeat South Africa to lift the T20 World Cup in the West Indies last year, said cricket is a way of life for him and he prioritises it over everything else. "For me, I love this sport way too much; it's been my life, it's been my priority, it's been my first love. The sport does not wait much, your first love always gives you the kiss back," he said.

'I noticed D Gukesh... He was 12 then...': Magnus Carlsen spills the beans on discovering India No. 1 for the first time

Agencies : D Gukesh is still in the sole lead at the ongoing 2025 Tata Steel Chess Masters, in Wijk aan Zee, Netherlands. Gukesh is on top of the standings with 8.00 points, followed by R Praggnanandhaa and Nodirbek Abdusattorov at 7.50 points. Gukesh is the reigning world chess champion, having defeated Ding Liren in Singapore. Since his win, Gukesh has become probably the most popular chess grandmaster in the world and also has overtaken Arjun Erigaisi to become India No. 1. Now the 18-year-old has received special praise from Magnus Carlsen, who revealed how he discovered Gukesh. Speaking on the video posted by Take Take Take application, Carlsen claimed that he first saw Gukesh, when he was 12-years-old. "I noticed Gukesh around the time he became a grandmaster. He was 12 then, one of the youngest grandmasters of all time," he said. "You could sense that he had something. He was playing an extremely ambitious kind of chess, which was not quite the same as others. At that time, he did not have the strength to actually sustain that, so he actually lost a lot of games. But I think I drew my game against him, and he was actually better in that game."

PCB confirms Gaddafi stadium inauguration date, invites ICC chairman Jay Shah

Agencies : PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi revealed the inauguration date of the Gaddafi Stadium, which will mark the commencement of the much-awaited ICC Champions Trophy 2025. He also announced that the board has invited the heads of all cricketing boards, ICC officials, and chairman Jay Shah for a ceremony on February 16 ahead of the tournament. While addressing the media within the Gaddafi ground itself, Naqvi praised everyone involved in the degradation of the stadium. Naqvi said the stadium will be inaugurated on February 7 and will be inaugurated by Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif.

On Virat Kohli's Early Dismissal In Ranji Trophy, Ex-India Star Points Out "Only Solace"

Agencies : It was a forgettable Ranji Trophy return for Virat Kohli at Delhi's Arun Jaitley Stadium. While the Delhi team registered a dominating win over Railways on his comeback to domestic cricket after 12 years, Kohli, the batter, couldn't shine in the game. Fans in huge numbers went to the stadium to watch Kohli, but they failed to witness him bat on the opening day as Delhi won the toss and opted to bowl first. One-down Delhi resumed their batting on the second day and fans kept eagerly waiting for Kohli, who was about to come in to bat next. A wicket fell and did come Kohli amid a loud cheer from the crowd, however, his innings could not last long. He was bowled by an incoming delivery of Railways' right-arm pacer Himanshu Sangwan. Kohli fell for 6 off 15 balls. To add to the fans' disappointment, Kohli could not come out to bat for the second time in the game as Delhi registered an innings and 19 runs victory over Railways. While speaking about Kohli's knock, former India batter Aakash Chopra said the only positive about the innings was that Kohli didn't get out to an outside off-stump delivery. Chopra's comments came in regard to Kohli's poor run in the recently-concluded five-match Test series against Australia where he was frequently dismissed on deliveries going outside off-stump.

"I Stopped The Fight": Virat Kohli vs Gautam Gambhir IPL Feud Discussed During Ranji Trophy

Agencies : As Virat Kohli marked his return to the Ranji Trophy, another familiar face from the Indian Premier League (IPL), Rajat Bhatia, was sitting in the commentary box. The Delhi vs Railways clash in the Ranji Trophy also brought some interesting anecdotes from the past. Bhatia, who played against Kohli during his time with the Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in the IPL, brought about the famous 2013 on-field altercation between Gautam Gambhir, the then captain of the franchise, and Virat, the then skipper of Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB). Bhatia joked about how people remember him for being the person who stopped the fight between the two, rather than his own performances on the cricket field. "People know me largely because I stopped a fight between two people. They remember that about me, more than my performances. Now, one has a stand, the other has a pavilion (laughs)," Bhatia said on-air while commentating on Day 2 of the Delhi vs Railways match. "There are small confrontations in every team."

"You Will Find Akash Deep Not Playing Another Test": R Ashwin's Blunt Take On Team India

Agencies : Former India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin feels pacer Akash Deep will find it hard to get back into the Test side in the near future. Ashwin, who retired last month during the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, explained how bowlers don't get enough backing in India, whereas in Australia things are different. Speaking at AWS AI Conclave 2025 in Bengaluru, Ashwin explained why India is far behind Australia as a cricketing powerhouse. Ashwin rued over the fact that bowlers tend to get sidelined after a few bad outings, unlike the batters; who don't get the same treatment. "It is an unfair world. The batters get cocooned, but the bowlers don't. You will find Akash Deep not playing another Test match because he didn't get enough wickets in Australia. But you will never find another batter who hasn't made enough runs not playing another game for India. That's exactly why Australia is a dominant force in world cricket and Indians aren't," said Ashwin. On the contrary, Ashwin explained why Australia are far ahead of India in terms of recognising their strengths, which is the main reason why they always manage to perform at big events.

Australia Star Beth Mooney Makes History, Becomes First-Ever Women's Player To Huge Milestone

Agencies : Australian wicketkeeper-batter Beth Mooney made history on Saturday, slamming her maiden Test century and becoming the first-ever women's player from her country to have centuries across all formats. Mooney achieved this feat during the one-off Women's Ashes Test against England at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG). In the first innings in reply to 170 scored by England who were put to field first, Australia's Mooney more than half the deficit herself, making 106 in 173 balls, with seven fours. Her runs came at a strike rate of over 61. In eight Tests, Mooney has made 559 runs in 13 innings at an average of 43.00, with a century and four fifties. Having played 82 ODIs, Mooney has also scored 2,553 runs at an average of 47.27 at a strike rate of over 85, with three centuries and 18 fifties in 75 innings. Her best score is 133. In 109 T20Is, Mooney has scored 3,215 runs at an average of 41.21 and a strike rate of over 124, with two centuries and 25 fifties. Her best score is 117*.