

Budget 2025: Nothing separate for Himachal Pradesh, neither apple tax increased nor special package for disaster relief



Diary Times Desk : There has been no separate announcement for Himachal in the Union Budget 2025-26, but the people of the state will also get the benefit of various schemes including the new tax slab. Making annual income up to twelve lakhs tax-free and this limit up to 12.75 lakhs for salaried persons has given a big relief to lakhs of taxpayers of Himachal. There are six and a half lakh taxpayers in Himachal. Out of these, about three lakh people coming in this slab will get direct benefit from this. Now, instead of three lakhs, cheap loan up to five lakh rupees will be available on Kisan Credit Card. Lakhs of farmers and gardeners in Himachal are Kisan Credit Card holders. In the general budget, it has been announced to develop 50 sites related to Buddha. In Himachal, Key Gompa located in Lahaul-Spiti, McLeodganj, the residence of Dalai Lama, Dharamshala and other Buddhist monasteries can get its benefit. It has also been announced to develop 50 top tourist destinations of the country. Being a tourist state, Himachal can get its benefit. However, the state government had sent several demands to the Centre to include them in the budget. Among these, the demand to release the pending relief package for the disaster in the form of floods and cloudbursts in the state in the year 2023 was prominent. Himachal has been demanding to increase the import duty on apples for a long time. The state has also been disappointed on many demands in the budget.

5 killed, 35 injured as bus carrying pilgrims falls into gorge in Gujarat

Agencies : Five people were killed and 35 injured as a private bus carrying pilgrims on a trip to various religious places fell into a gorge in Gujarat's Dang district on Sunday morning, police said. Among the injured, 17 were seriously hurt, they said. The accident took place at 4.15 am when the bus driver lost control over the wheel near the Saputara hill station, Superintendent of Police SG Patil said. The bus, carrying 48 pilgrims, broke the crash barrier and fell into a depth of about 35 feet, he said. "Five people died on the spot and 17 suffered serious injuries. The seriously injured have been rushed to the civil hospital at Ahwa. Some others have sustained minor injuries. The rescue operation is nearly over," the official said. The bus driver was among the deceased.

Budget 2025 Is By The People, For The People: Nirmala Sitharaman

Agencies : Paraphrasing Abraham Lincoln, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday described the Union Budget as "by the people, for the people, of the people", and said Prime Minister Narendra Modi was fully behind the idea to cut taxes for the middle class but it took time to convince the bureaucrats. "We have heard the voice of the middle class", who had been complaining about their aspirations not being met despite being honest taxpayers, she told PTI in an interview. With the honest and proud taxpayers wanting the government to do more to limit the impact of factors like inflation, the prime minister was quick to task Sitharaman to look at ways to give relief. While Modi was quick to agree to tax relief, it took a bit of convincing to get on board the officials in the finance ministry and the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) - who are tasked to ensure revenue collection to meet welfare and other schemes, she said. Presenting her eighth straight budget, Sitharaman on Saturday announced an increase in the personal income tax threshold below which taxpayers owe no tax to Rs 12 lakh, up from Rs 7 lakh, as well as a rejig in tax brackets that would help those earning higher than that save up to Rs 1.1 lakh.



Maha Kumbh stampede: SC to take up PIL seeking safety measures for pilgrims on Monday

Agencies : The Supreme Court will on Monday take up a PIL seeking directions for measures to ensure safety and security of people attending the world's largest religious gathering - Maha Kumbh at Prayagraj where 30 pilgrims died and over 60 got injured in a stampede on January 29. The PIL filed by advocate Vishal Tiwari is listed before a Bench of Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar on February 3. A day after the stampede at Maha Kumbh, Tiwari had filed a petition accusing the Uttar Pradesh Government of "lapses, negligence and utter failure of administration" and sought action against UP Government officials for their alleged negligence and lapses that led to the stampede. "Direct the State of Uttar Pradesh to submit a status report on the Maha Kumbh 2025 stampede incident that took place on January 29, 2025, and also direct to initiate legal action against the persons, authorities and officials for their negligent conduct," Tiwari submitted. The petition was mentioned on Friday for an early hearing before a Bench led by CJI Khanna, which had asked the petitioner to follow the procedure and approached the top court's Registry. Tiwari has also sought directions to state governments to prevent stampedes at crowded places like Mahakumbh and ensure safety and security of people attending religious festivals. "All states governments with coordination of the Uttar Pradesh Government shall also deploy its small Medical team at Prayagraj Maha Kumbh comprising Doctors and Nurses so that at the time of medical emergency there may not be shortage of Medical staff," Tiwari demanded.

CM Himanta Sarma spoils 'Udta Assam party', warns local drug dealers

Agencies : Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Sunday hailed his Assam counterpart Himanta Biswa Sarma for taking tough measures against illegal poppy cultivation and drugs in the state. He said both the states remain resolute in building a future where youth are protected from the shadow of drugs. Replying to media queries on Sarma's post on X, Singh said at the sideline of a programme in Imphal West district, "I appreciate the chief minister of Assam. He is taking up counter drugs activities very actively. We have to be united and save the future generations from drugs." Later in a post on X, Singh appreciated his Assam counterpart in taking measures against illicit poppy cultivation. "My deep appreciation for the decisive measures taken in Assam.

'Operation Eleven' to manage crowd during Basant Panchami Amrit Snan at Maha Kumbh

Agencies : The Uttar Pradesh government on Sunday said it has put into place a special crowd management plan named 'Operation Eleven' for the 'Amrit Snan' on Basant Panchami at Maha Kumbh. The 'Amrit Snan' on Basant Panchami will take place on Monday. According to a statement, the plan, devised under "strict instructions" from Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, ensures a "one-way traffic route" for devotees and smooth movement on pontoon bridges. To prevent overcrowding at the Triveni ghats, additional police forces have been deployed and barricades have been increased. The heightened measures have been put in place as part of the state government's "zero-error" programme for the Basant Panchami Amrit Snan in the wake of a stampede at Sangam on Mauni Amavasya which claimed at least 30 lives and left 60 pilgrims injured who had gathered for a holy dip on one of the most auspicious bathing dates at the Kumbh.



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Jairam Thakur: Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur said- BJP Legislature Party will boycott MLA priority meeting

Diary Times Desk : Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur said that the BJP will boycott the MLA priority meeting to be held on February 3 and 4. In the last two years, no work mentioned by the BJP MLAs has been given priority by the Sukhu government, on the contrary, our MLAs are being harassed in various ways by the government. In the priority meeting, BJP MLAs tell about their works, but the government does not give them any priority at all. Instead of elected MLAs, Congress leaders rejected by the public and defeated are being given importance. When the Sukhu government is not listening to the priorities mentioned by the BJP MLAs in the MLA priority meeting, then what is the justification of the MLA priority meeting. That is why the BJP Legislature Party is boycotting the upcoming MLA priority meeting. Jairam Thakur said that the elected representatives of the BJP are being ignored even in the inauguration programs of the works started by the previous government which are currently being completed. They are not even being invited to the inauguration programs, their names are not even being written on the inauguration plaque. Instead of the elected representatives, Congress leaders rejected by the people and defeated by them are being given importance. The present government is insulting the elected Bharatiya Janata Party MLAs at every level. Jairam Thakur said that since Congress lost the Rajya Sabha elections, the government has been misusing the police. BJP MLAs and leaders are being harassed by misusing power. This government is targeting not only the MLAs but also their families, relatives and their businesses.

Woman forces husband to sell kidney at Rs 10 lakh, elopes with money, lover

Agencies : A woman allegedly coerced her husband to sell his kidney for Rs 10 lakh to raise money for their daughter's education, only to flee with another man taking away the entire cash in West Bengal's Howrah district, a police officer said on Sunday. Police launched a probe based on a complaint lodged by the husband's family living in Sankrail. According to the complaint, the woman had been pestering her husband for the past one year to sell his kidney and earn some money to run their household in a better way, and admit their 12-year-old daughter to a good school. Believing in his wife, the man agreed to go under the scalpel after she sealed a contract with a buyer for Rs 10 lakh to sell the organ. After the surgery held last month, the man brought home the money. His wife asked him to take rest and not step outside for a speedy recovery. "Then one day, she left the house and did not return.

Himachal women's Kabaddi team created history in the national competition, became champion for the third time

Diary Times Desk : Himachal Pradesh's women's Kabaddi team performed brilliantly in the National Kabaddi Competition and set a new record by winning the gold medal for the third time in a row. In the final match, Himachal defeated Haryana 27-22 and maintained its winning streak. Himachal Pradesh's women's Kabaddi team has become the first team in the country to achieve this feat. In the final match, Himachal's team defeated Haryana with its aggressive playing style. Himachal's players maintained dominance from the beginning of the match and did not give Haryana's team a chance to come back. The state's team has performed well during the tenure of Himachal Pradesh Kabaddi Association's General Secretary Krishna Lal. Himachal Pradesh Kabaddi Association's President Rajkumar Branta congratulated the entire team for this achievement.



Kejriwal writes to EC; slams Amit Shah over 'attacks' on AAP workers

Agencies : As the Delhi assembly election draws near, AAP convenor Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday slammed Union Home Minister Amit Shah over the alleged attacks on its volunteers by BJP workers. The former Delhi chief minister also wrote to the Election Commission demanding the arrest of BJP workers involved in the alleged attacks along with suspension of police officials and appointment of independent observers in the New Delhi constituency. At a press conference on Sunday morning, Kejriwal alleged, "The BJP has lost its temper after seeing a storm by AAP in the upcoming election; therefore, they have resorted to violence and assaults on our workers." Kejriwal said AAP MP Sanjay Singh had witnessed heckling by BJP workers at Parliament Street while he was talking to media during a door-to-door campaign. In the letter, the former Delhi chief minister also cited some alleged incidents of attack on AAP workers in his New Delhi constituency. Kejriwal is contesting from New Delhi against BJP's Parvesh Verma and Congress's Sandeep Dikshit. AAP MLA Mohinder Goyal was allegedly assaulted during a public rally in Rohini on Saturday.

Budget 2025: Himachal did not get relief in GST, budget is silent even on removal of economic restrictions

Diary Times Desk : The conditions for taking interest-free loan for 50 years to the states will again be a burden on the hill state of Himachal. A letter was sent to the Center by the Himachal Pradesh government to provide relief in the general budget. Himachal was expecting big relief from the Center, but the Congress-ruled state did not get this relief. The Congress government of Himachal Pradesh, which had many hopes from the Union Budget, has been disappointed by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. The government's demand for GST compensation has been ignored again. There is no special mention of Himachal Pradesh in the general budget presented on Saturday. There has been no relief on many types of economic restrictions imposed on the state. The Central Government has imposed many conditions for taking interest-free loan given to the states. It is not easy for a small state like Himachal to fulfill these difficult conditions. Many problems were faced in taking this loan even in the current financial year. These problems will persist in the new financial year as well. The state has less sources of income. GST compensation has been abolished. A special economic package should have been given to reduce the fiscal deficit, but that did not happen. There was no budget provision for railway expansion. It is not easy for the state to pay huge amounts for land acquisition. The farmers and gardeners of the state have been disappointed by the Union Budget 2025. The gardeners were demanding to increase the import duty and import price on apples, but both the demands have been ignored. For the third consecutive year, the central government has not made budget provision under the Mandi Mediation Scheme.

CJI, top SC judges hold meeting to discuss appointment of ad-hoc judges in HCs

Agencies : Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna, along with two senior judges of the Supreme Court, on Sunday held a meeting with high court judges to discuss issues related to filling up of vacancies, appointment of ad-hoc judges in high courts and establishment of evening courts. The meeting was held a day after a national conference was organised by the apex court here to address issues faced by the state judiciary. "The conference was followed by a meeting of the chief justices of the high court and senior-most judges of the high court with the Chief Justice of India, Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Justice B R Gavai and Justice Surya Kant, judges of the Supreme Court of India," the top court administration said in a press release. "Issues relating to filling up of vacancies in high courts, appointment of ad-hoc judges in high courts and establishment of evening courts were discussed," it said. On January 30, considering a backlog of over 18 lakh criminal cases, the apex court allowed the high courts to appoint ad-hoc judges, not exceeding 10 per cent of the court's total sanctioned strength.



Himachal Pradesh: Thousands of people pulled the chariot of Lord Raghunath with the slogan of Jai Siya Ram, gulal flew

Diary Times Desk : On Sunday, Vasant Panchami was celebrated with fervour in Lord Raghunath's city Kullu. On the occasion of Vasant Panchami, 40 days before Holi, a lot of gulal was thrown in the temporary camp of Lord Raghunath. A grand Rath Yatra of Lord Raghunath was taken out in Dhalpur. Thousands of people pulled the chariot with the slogan of Jai Siya Ram. Ram-Bharat meeting was the center of attraction in the Rath Yatra. Earlier at 1:24 pm, Lord Raghunath reached Dhalpur ground riding a palanquin. As soon as he reached Dhalpur ground, the atmosphere echoed with the chants of Jai Shri Ram. Earlier, when Lord Raghunath left for Dhalpur from his temple, devotees gathered at various places to have his darshan. After performing all the traditions in Dhalpur, the Rath Yatra started. When the Rath Yatra went for some distance, Lord Raghunath's entourage stopped. After this, Ram and Bharat met here. After reaching the temporary camp in Dhalpur, Lord Raghunath was worshipped amidst the music of musical instruments. The tradition of applying gulal was performed in the temporary camp. People of the Vairagi community also sang Holi songs. This sequence will continue for the next 40 days. Lord Raghunath left for the temple at 3:54 pm from the temporary camp.



Budget only draft to gain political mileage in Delhi poll: Dharmani

Diary Times Desk : Technical Education Minister Rajesh Dharmani today said the Budget announced by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman was only a draft to gain political mileage in Delhi and Bihar elections and had nothing for Himachal Pradesh. He said the state government had urged the Centre to provide 100 per cent funding for Centrally-sponsored projects in the hill state. Dharmani added that the state government had requested funding for the expansion of the Kangra airport but there was no mention about this in the Budget. He said he was hopeful that Himachal's MPs would try to protect the interests of the state and seek special packages for the state from Sitharaman and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. During a review meeting of development projects at the Block Development Office in Ghumarvin, Bilaspur, Dharmani said law enforcing agencies should act sternly against mining and drug mafia. He said there were regular reports of illegal mining and drug peddling in the area.

Weather is clear today and tomorrow, chances of rain and snowfall again on 4th and 5th February

Diary Times Desk : Snowfall occurred on Saturday on the high peaks of Himachal including Rohtang, Pangi, Bharmour and drizzle occurred in the plains including the capital Shimla, Manali. The change in the weather increased the cold in the morning and evening. Most of the areas of the state remained cloudy. The weather is forecast to remain clear on Sunday and Monday. There are chances of rain and snowfall again due to the activation of Western Disturbance on 4 and 5 February. Light snowfall occurred on the upper peaks of Bharmour and Pangi on Saturday afternoon, while light rain occurred in the lower areas. This has brought relief to the farmers and gardeners. The moisture of the fields has increased, which will benefit the crops. Light snowfall continued intermittently from morning to afternoon in the high peaks of Kullu and Lahaul.

Shimla: Petition challenging the tender for robotic surgery rejected in Himachal High Court

Diary Times Desk : Himachal Pradesh High Court has rejected the petition filed by the petitioner company for not giving the bid to any other company in robotic surgery. The company had pleaded to the High Court to give them a chance to represent so that they can show that the company has capable equipment to perform robotic surgery. The company alleged that the government is doing as it pleases while tendering. They have not been given equal opportunity. In the petition, they had asked to stop giving the bid to another company. The court of Justice Rakesh Kanthala said in the order that the committee of expert doctors has found deficiencies in the equipment of the company. Due to this, the government cannot redo the evaluation process done by the petitioner. On behalf of the government, Deputy Advocate General Pranay Pratap Singh told the court that the committee constituted by the Himachal government prepared a technical report after investigation at Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute, Delhi. The report stated that the machines for which the conditions have been laid down in the tender are not available with the company.

Kishan Kapoor's last rites performed with state honours, son Shashwat lit the pyre

Diary Times Desk : The body of senior BJP leader and former MP late Kishan Kapoor was brought to his residence Dadnu in Dharamshala late Saturday evening. At the same time, on Sunday morning, his body was kept for the last darshan at Patola ground outside his old ancestral village in village Khaniyara. After that, he was cremated with state honors at the crematorium built on Manjhi Khad. Kishan Kapoor was a five-time MLA from Dharamshala assembly constituency, a three-time minister in the state government and a one-time MP from Kangra Chamba Lok Sabha constituency. Kishan Kapoor was a minister in the government of then Chief Minister Prem Kumar Dhumal from 1998 to 2002 and 2007 to 2012 and in the government of then Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur from 2017 to 2019. He was an MP from 2019 to 2024. His son Shashwat Kapoor lit the funeral pyre. Leader of Opposition Jai Ram Thakur.

Rs 1.6 cr relief paid to potato farmers last year: Agri Dept

Diary Times Desk : The Una Agriculture Department today launched the 'Meri Policy, Mere Haath' campaign to deliver crop insurance policies directly at the doorstep of farmers in the district. The campaign, aimed at beneficiaries of the Prime Minister's Weather-Based Crop Insurance Scheme, will run until March 15. This initiative ensures that farmers receive their policy documents without the need for online access, streamlining the process for compensation claims in case of crop failure. Deputy Director of the Una Agriculture Department, Kulbhushan Dhiman, reported that in the current financial year, 19,177 farmers have insured their maize crops during the kharif season, and 20,152 farmers have insured their wheat crops for the rabi season. Additionally, 1,462 farmers have insured their potato crops during the kharif season, while 1,208 farmers have insured them during rabi. Dhiman emphasised that more farmers are opting for crop insurance due to the benefits they've experienced in the past. Last year, 1,806 potato farmers in Una received a total compensation of Rs 1.6 crore. He also pointed out that farmers could easily register for crop insurance at local Lok Mitra Kendras or bank branches.

Horticulture training camps need of hour: Kinnaur DC

Diary Times Desk : Kinnaur Deputy Commissioner Dr Amit Kumar Sharma attended the closing ceremony of a 15-day horticulture training camp organised by JSW and Krishi Vigyan Kendra as the chief guest. Speaking at the event, he emphasised that the camp aimed to equip apple growers in Kinnaur with the latest horticultural techniques and tools to enhance productivity and sustainability. Dr Sharma highlighted JSW's efforts in selecting youth from underprivileged backgrounds in project-affected areas to provide them with skill development opportunities and improve their livelihoods. The training covered essential topics such as soil testing, pest management, disease prevention, beekeeping, pruning, nursery management and pollination. He noted that these initiatives would help small and marginal orchardists boost their income. Kinnaur Deputy Commissioner Dr Amit Kumar Sharma attended the closing ceremony of a 15-day horticulture training camp organised by JSW and Krishi Vigyan Kendra as the chief guest.

After Bihar budget bonanza, YSRCP's swipe at NDA ally TDP: 'Andhra got zero'

Agencies : After BJP-led National Democratic Alliance's (NDA) ally Bihar found multiple mentions in Union Budget 2025, opposition in Andhra Pradesh, another partner of the ruling bloc in Centre, took a swipe at the CM Chandrababu Naidu-led government of the state for not securing significant budgetary allocations. YSRCP leader Karthik Yellapragada slammed the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) government for not getting the state in on the budget despite having considerable influence at the Centre. He said that it was due to the lack of effective political leadership, particularly from the TDP-Jana Sena coalition government and BJP at the Centre, that this couldn't happen. In a self-made video, Karthik highlighted how Nitish Kumar's state received many benefits like Greenfield airports, expansion of Patna Airport, Makhana board, and the Western Kosi Canal ERM project. Wherein, Andhra Pradesh received no allocations in key sectors like education, agriculture, industry and infrastructure.

Agnipath budget up 32% as recruitment scheme expands

Agencies : The government has allocated ₹1,039 crore for the Agnipath scheme for short-term induction of soldiers in the three services in the defence budget 2025-26, an increase of more than 32% over the revised estimates last year to cater for the growing numbers, documents show. The outlay for the Agnipath scheme comes under the revenue head. The army's share in this year's budget for the scheme is ₹9,414 crore, the Indian Force's ₹853 crore and the navy's ₹772 crore, compared to last year's allocation of ₹6,274 crore, ₹618 crore and ₹579 crore, respectively, the budget documents show. Agnipath was a major departure from the military's decades-old recruitment system that was scrapped when the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government announced the new scheme in June 2022. Only young men and women aged between 17 and a half and 21 are eligible under the scheme that seeks to recruit soldiers for only four years, with a provision to retain 25% of them in regular service for another 15 years. The budget of the three services for the scheme was ₹3,082 crore in 2023-24. India on Saturday set aside more than ₹6.81 lakh crore for defence spending in the Union Budget, including ₹1.8 lakh crore for the modernisation of the military.

Days After 30 Killed In Crush, UP Preps For Another Big Day At Maha Kumbh



Agencies : The authorities in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj overseeing the arrangements at the Maha Kumbh expect at least three crore people to take the holy dip on the auspicious Basant Panchami on Monday. To ensure enough personnel are available to manage the crowd - days after 30 people were killed and 60 were injured in a stampede due to crowding at the Maha Kumbh venue - the authorities have engaged every available hand. At least 270 trainee Indian Police Service (IPS) officers including 77 women officers have arrived in Prayagraj to help out. The authorities have restricted VVIP movements a day before any major snan (bath) day and on the day of the snan. People will be encouraged to take the holy dip at any of the ghats and not insist on going to any particular one as it may lead to crowding. A continuous aerial survey of the Maha Kumbh venue will be conducted to estimate the crowd size. So far, over 33 crore people have taken the holy dip at the Maha Kumbh, which began on January 13 and will end on February 26.

Faizabad MP Breaks Down After Dalit Woman Found Dead, Her Eyes Gouged Out

Agencies : Faizabad MP Awadhesh Prasad broke down during a press meet today and said he would resign from Lok Sabha if the family of a 22-year-old Dalit woman, found murdered near Ayodhya, did not get justice. Ayodhya is part of the Faizabad parliamentary constituency. A video of the press meet that is now viral shows the Faizabad MP crying and others consoling him. "Let me go to Delhi. I will raise this matter in Lok Sabha before (Prime Minister Narendra) Modi. I will resign from Lok Sabha if we do not get justice. We are failing to save daughters. How will history judge us? How did this happen to our daughter,"

SC national conference focuses on judicial reforms, timely case disposal

Agencies : In a concerted effort to streamline judicial processes and enhance efficiency in case disposal, the Supreme Court, under the guidance of Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna, hosted a national conference on Saturday for addressing issues faced by the state judiciary. The conference brought together key stakeholders from across the judiciary, including Supreme Court judges, chief justices and judges of high courts, and district judges from all states and Union territories. Senior officials from the ministries.

'Declare Kerala Backward If You Want Funds': Row Over Minister's Remark

Agencies : Amid the Opposition's charge that Budget 2025 had ignored Kerala, Union Minister George Kurian has said the southern state must declare that it is backward if it wants more funds from the Centre. The remark has intensified the row and the ruling Left has said the minister's statement reflects the Centre's "anti-Kerala" stand. Shortly after Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman delivered the Budget speech in Lok Sabha, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said it was a disappointing budget.

"Every Family Happy": PM Plays Up Budget Tax Breather At Delhi Poll Rally

Agencies : As campaigning for the February 5 election in Delhi enters its last leg, Prime Minister Narendra Modi today pointed to Budget 2025 and played up the proposals for Bihar and the income tax relief to the middle class. Addressing a rally in south Delhi's RK Puram, the Prime Minister said this Budget was the people's Budget and represents the hopes and aspirations of the middle class. "The country is growing economically. In earlier times, corruption would have eaten up the people and your hard-earned money would have been taken away. BJP's honest governance has worked for the welfare of every section - be it the poor, the middle class, people in rural areas, or urban voters." "The entire middle class is saying this budget is a middle-class-friendly Budget. Every family is happy and hopeful. During Nehru's time, if you were earning Rs 12 lakh, you would have to pay 1/4th of your salary as tax. If this were Indira Gandhi's time, you would have to pay Rs 10 lakh tax on Rs 12 lakh income. But under the BJP government, people will have to pay zero tax," he said. The Prime Minister said many residents of RK Puram have government jobs. "You have got not just tax relief but 8th Pay Commission is also being introduced, pension schemes consolidated, and budget benefits extended to senior citizens and the retired government officials too," he said, adding that young couples, too, will save a lot on taxes.



On Arvind Kejriwal's "Gundaraj" Allegation, BJP's "Lies" Response

Agencies : Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal today alleged Union Home Minister and BJP leader Amit Shah is allowing "gundaraj" (hooliganism) to harass AAP workers ahead of voting in the Delhi assembly election scheduled on Wednesday. Mr Kejriwal told reporters people allegedly backed by the BJP assaulted AAP workers, and the Delhi Police did not do anything to stop it. A video has surfaced showing members of the Valmiki Samaj and the Dalit Mahapanchayat protesting against Mr Kejriwal, who was Delhi chief minister before Atishi took over. In the video, the protesters are seen vandalising an AAP campaign tempo. The protesters are seen tearing apart posters of the yellow-and-blue broomstick election symbol of the AAP, which were pasted on the van. The AAP alleged the Delhi Police did not act against the attackers. The New Delhi Deputy Commissioner of Police, however, in a post on X said they have not received any complaint about the alleged attack.

Israel's Netanyahu heads for Washington to renew connection with Trump

Agencies : Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu left Israel on Sunday for a meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump that he hopes will reset relations with Washington after tensions with the previous administration over the Gaza war. Netanyahu, the first foreign leader to visit Trump since his inauguration last month, leaves with a six-week ceasefire in Gaza still holding and negotiations aimed at a second phase expected to begin this week. "The decisions we made in the war have already changed the face of the Middle East," he said at the airport before his departure for the meeting expected on Tuesday. "Our decisions and the courage of our soldiers have redrawn the map. But I believe that, working closely with President Trump, we can redraw it even further and for the better." In his previous term, Trump handed Netanyahu a series of successes, including relocation of the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem and the signing of the Abraham Accords, normalising relations between Israel and a number of Arab states including the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. Trump's new administration includes several pro-Israel figures expected to endorse expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank and resist international pressure over the war in Gaza.

Pak Army Chief In Balochistan After Deadly Clashes Kill 41 In 24 Hours

Agencies : Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff Gen Syed Asim Munir visited Balochistan on Saturday amid clashes in the restive province in which 18 security personnel and 23 terrorists have been killed in the last 24 hours, according to a media report. The army chief was given a comprehensive brief on the prevailing security situation in the province which was also attended by senior security and intelligence officials, the Associated Press of Pakistan reported. The army chief along with Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti and Governor Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail offered prayers at the funeral of the soldiers and also visited the injured soldiers in the Combined Military Hospital Quetta.

'Real-Life Parasite': Homeowner Finds Man Secretly Living In Basement For 7 Years

Agencies : A man made a shocking discovery while cleaning his house. The person, who lived in the Jiangsu province in eastern China, discovered that his ex-landlord had been secretly living in the basement of the house for the past seven years, reported the South China Morning Post. The hidden door was behind the stairs that led to a fully functional basement. The room was equipped with decent lighting, a ventilation system and even a small bar, the report added. Upon inspection, the homeowner identified as Li also noticed obvious signs of recent habitation, which left him feeling "creeped out". Li immediately contacted the previous owner, a woman surnamed Zhang, and accused her of deliberately hiding the information about the house during the sale. In response, Zhang claimed the basement wasn't part of the listed property or the sale agreement. She said, "I sold you the house, but I never said the basement was included. If the basement belongs to you, where am I supposed to relax in my free time?" It is unclear how the woman entered and exited the basement without Li noticing. Speculation on social media ranged from some people claiming that she might have used a door that connected the basement to the parking garage, while others said she had an extra key.



Trump Says "Pain" From Tariffs Will Be "Worth The Price"



Agencies : President Donald Trump said Sunday that Americans may feel economic "pain" from his tariffs on key trading partners, but argued it would be "worth the price" to secure US interests. On Saturday, Trump finally signed off on threatened 25-percent tariffs on neighboring Mexico and Canada -- despite sharing a free trade pact -- and hit China with a 10-percent tariff in addition to already enacted levies. The president had vowed since before his inauguration to take such action, claiming the countries were not doing enough to halt illegal immigration and the trafficking of the deadly opioid fentanyl into the United States. In imposing the tariffs, which are set to begin Tuesday, Trump invoked the International Emergency Economic Powers Act. The move provoked immediate vows of retaliation from all three countries, while analysts warned that the ensuing trade war would likely slow US growth and raise consumer prices over the short term.

New Syria leader meets Saudi crown prince on first foreign visit

Agencies : Syria's interim president Ahmed al-Sharaa met with Saudi crown prince and de facto ruler Mohammed bin Salman on Sunday during his first trip abroad since taking power. Accompanied by his foreign minister, Asaad al-Shaibani, Sharaa was greeted by Saudi officials on arrival in Riyadh, images from state television outlet Al-Ekhbariya showed. The official Saudi news agency SPA later reported that Sharaa was received by Prince Mohammed, but details of their discussions were not immediately disclosed. Sharaa, whose Islamist group led the overthrow of Bashar al-Assad in December, was named Syria's interim president on Wednesday. Saudi Arabia's King Salman and his son Prince Mohammed were among the first to congratulate him on his official appointment. The Syrian authorities are counting on wealthy Gulf countries to finance the reconstruction of their war-ravaged nation and revive its economy.

56 Killed, 158 Injured In Busy Sudan Market As Civil War Intensifies

Agencies : Artillery shelling and air strikes killed at least 56 people across greater Khartoum on Saturday, according to a medical source and activists, the latest bloodshed in Sudan's devastating war. Sudan's regular army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have been locked in a battle for power since April 2023 that has intensified this month with the army fighting to take back control of the capital. RSF shelling killed 54 and injured 158 people at a busy market in army-controlled Omdurman, part of greater Khartoum, overwhelming the city's Al-Nao Hospital, according to a medical source and the health ministry. "The shells hit in the middle of the vegetable market, that's why the victims and the wounded are so many," one survivor told AFP. The RSF denied carrying out the attack, which French medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF) said caused "utter carnage" at the hospital. Across the Nile in Khartoum proper, two civilians were killed and dozens wounded in an air strike on an RSF-controlled area, said the local Emergency Response Room, one of hundreds of volunteer groups coordinating emergency care across Sudan.

Trans Pilot Breaks Silence After Being Falsely Named In Washington Crash

Agencies : Jo Ellis, a transgender helicopter pilot, has shared a "proof of life" video after she was falsely identified as the pilot of the Black Hawk helicopter that collided with American Airlines' passenger jet in Washington, US, on Wednesday, leaving 67 people dead. Sharing a video on Facebook, Jo Ellis can be heard saying, "Interesting morning. This is Jo Ellis. I am a Black Hawk helicopter pilot with the Virginia National Guard for 15 years. I understand some people have associated me with a crash in DC and that is false." Jo Ellis added it was insulting to the families of victims "to try to tie this to some sort of political agenda. They don't deserve that. I don't deserve this. And I hope you all know that I am alive and well." Sharing the video on Facebook, Jo Ellis wrote, "Proof of life and statement." Jo Ellis has also shared a screenshot of tweets on X (formerly Twitter) that have linked the pilot to the deadly crash. In the post, a user stated that they "wouldn't be surprised" if "the pilot was trans" while replying to another post claiming Jo Ellis "has been making radicalised anti-Trump statements on socials."

Union Budget pro-corporate, no promise on MSP: Farmer bodies

Agencies : Protesting farmer bodies on Saturday termed as "pro-corporate" the Union Budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, saying the government did not make any provision for their long-standing demand of minimum support price of crops. Farm leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal — who has been observing an indefinite fast since November 26 at Punjab's Khanauri border point with Haryana over the demand for a law guaranteeing assured prices of crops — too called the Budget anti-farmer. He said the farming community constituted over 50 per cent of the country's population but only 3.8 per cent of the total allocation has been kept for the labour-intensive agriculture sector. Sarwan Singh Pandher, the convener of the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM), said the Budget failed to meet expectations of farmers and farm labourers, for which we are protesting for over a year now," added Pandher. Harmeet Singh Kadian, a leader of the Bharti Kisan Union (Kadian), slammed the Union Budget for failing to give a push to the food processing industry in Punjab. "Neither a budgetary allocation has been made to promote food processing in the state nor any provision made to support research on crop diversification," Kadian said. Kadian said the credit limit under the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme should be increased to Rs 10 lakh as the current cap of Rs 5 lakh is inadequate.



2 smugglers nabbed with heroin packet dropped by Pakistani drone in Punjab's Gurdaspur

Agencies : Two suspected narcotics smugglers were apprehended with a packet of heroin near the border area of Gurdaspur district in Punjab, a Border Security Force (BSF) official said on Sunday. The smugglers were apprehended after they retrieved the heroin packet weighing about 550 grams that was allegedly dropped by a Pakistani drone in Chanduwadala village late on Saturday, the BSF official added. A metal hook was found attached to the packet, confirming that it was dropped by the drone, he further said. BSF troops were conducting a search operation in the area while acting on intelligence regarding drone activity. The accused were residents of the village, the official said.

Haryana chief secretary unveils state's Rs 3.14L crore credit plan for 2025-26

Agencies : The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) has assessed a credit potential of Rs 3.14 lakh crore, reflecting an increase of 37.64 per cent over the previous year under priority sector lending in Haryana for 2025-26. The credit potential under agriculture, MSME and other priority sectors, including education and renewable energy, has a share of 35.60 per cent, 57.12 per cent and 7.28 per cent, respectively. This was revealed in Nabard's State Focus Paper, which was released by Chief Secretary Vivek Joshi here during the State Credit Seminar 2025-26 in the presence of Nivedita Tiwary, Chief General Manager, Nabard. Joshi appreciated the efforts of Nabard to assess the credit potential under agriculture, MSME, export, education, renewable energy, etc. of the state that align with the government's vision for farmers' welfare and rural development with emphasis on crop diversification, climate-resilient agriculture, shrimp farming and promoting vegetable clusters. He urged banks, government departments and other stakeholders to synergise coordinated efforts for creating increased employment opportunities in rural areas. He said the State Focus Paper should act as a benchmark and guiding force for the activities to be undertaken this year to strengthen the rural economy. "Haryana has always been at the forefront of agriculture, contributing significantly to India's food security. However, we must acknowledge the challenges posed by depleting groundwater.

Union Budget: Chandigarh share up 7.21%, focus on development

Agencies : There has been a 7.21% increase in the allocation for Chandigarh in the Union Budget 2025-26 compared to the previous fiscal estimates. The total allocation is Rs 469.56 crore more than Rs 6,513.62 crore — the budget estimates for the past year. This year estimates for the UT have been pegged at Rs 6,983.18 crore, including Rs 6,185.18 crore for revenue and Rs 798 crore for capital expenditure, in the Budget presented in Parliament by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman today. Terming the Budget 2025-26 a historic step, Punjab Governor and UT Administrator Gulab Chand Kataria thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Sitharaman for the provisions, which would benefit the poor, farmers and the middle class. He said, "In my 40 years of public life, this is the first time I have witnessed such a significant support for the middle class through tax exemptions and other incentives. This is highly commendable and a welcome step. This budget marks an important milestone in the empowerment of all sections of society." Kataria also expressed gratitude for the budgetary provisions made for the city's development. He emphasised the Central Government's commitment to modernising the city.

BJP hails Budget; Tewari says nothing for Chandigarh

Agencies : City MP Manish Tewari today said there was nothing at all for Chandigarh in the Union Budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. "The total outlay has gone from Rs 5,838.66 crore in FY 2024-25 to Rs 6,187.48 crore in FY 2025-26 that barely covers inflation," he said, adding that the annual inflation stands at 5.22%. "In fact, the entire northern region, including Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Chandigarh, has drawn a blank in the Union Budget," he said. There was nothing for the agitating farmers who have been sitting on the borders of Punjab and Haryana for years now, he added. "Kudos to the Finance Minister for her empathy." Hailing the Budget, city BJP president Jatinder Pal Malhotra said it was an all-round development budget, offering numerous benefits for Chandigarh and the nation as a whole. The government's decision to exempt individuals with income up to Rs 12 lakh from paying income tax was a significant move, aimed at alleviating the financial burden on low and middle-income households, he said. "This is a people's budget and it's easy to see why. The government focus on inclusive growth and development is evident in the various provisions made for different sectors.

Wanted in Haryana and Delhi, gangster Joginder Geong deported from Philippines

Agencies : Notorious gangster Joginder Geong, alias Joga Don, wanted by the Haryana and Delhi police, was deported from the Philippines and arrested upon his arrival at the Delhi airport on Sunday. Geong, a convicted criminal involved in over 15 cases, including murder, is a key member of the Kaushal Chaudhary gang. He leads a criminal syndicate operating across Delhi, Haryana, and Punjab, according to police officials. Geong's deportation from Manila on Saturday marks a significant breakthrough in curbing organised crime in the region. Parmod Kushwaha, Additional Commissioner of Police (Special Cell), Delhi Police, revealed that Geong was a close associate of Kaushal Chaudhary, whose gang had been linked to targeted killings in Punjab. "Geong's brother, Surinder Geong, was also a prominent aide of Chaudhary until he was killed in an encounter with the Haryana Police in 2017. Following his brother's death, Joginder fled to the Philippines via Nepal," Kushwaha said.



Interest of common man protected: Jai Ram Thakur

Diary Times Desk : Terming it as the budget of a common man, Leader of Opposition Jai Ram Thakur said it was a road map for the aspirations of common man and the goal of developed India. "This Budget takes into account the interest of common man, who is the engine of the country's development. It cannot be imagined that an income of more than Rs 1 lakh every month can be tax free. It will benefit 10 crore tax payers of the country," he said. Besides, increasing the income tax exemption for the elderly from Rs 50,000 to Rs 1 lakh will give them a lot of relief. Thakur said that 36 medicines used in the treatment of cancer have been exempted from custom duty and custom duty on 6 important life-saving medicines has been reduced to 5 per cent. Also, starting cancer care facility in district hospitals will help fight the disease better. He further said that the Budget was dedicated to promoting innovation and scientific thinking in young minds. The youth will greatly benefit from the establishment of 50,000 Atal Tinkering Labs in government schools by the government. "This Budget will reduce the prices of insurance premium, medical equipment, mobile phones, clothes made in India, LED and LCD TVs," he said.

Income tax relief big gift to public: Rajiv Bindal

Diary Times Desk : State BJP president Rajiv Bindal said the relief in income tax is a big gift by the Central government to the public. "The NDA government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always believed in the energy and potential of the middle class in nation building. Recognising their contribution, the Modi government has reduced their tax burden from time to time," said Bindal. He further said that after 2014, the 'zero tax' slab was increased to Rs 2.5 lakh and then to Rs 5 lakh in 2019 and to Rs 7 lakh in 2023. "Now, there will be no income tax on income up to Rs 12.75 lakh as the standard deduction benefit of Rs 75,000 is available to the salaried class," he said. Bindal said that India's economy was the growing fastest among all major global economies and the development track record.

'Inequitable', key issues like rail expansion overlooked: CM



Diary Times Desk : Expressing disappointment over the Union Budget, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu termed it "inequitable", with much of the focus on election-bound Bihar. Calling for immediate revision to address the needs of the wider population, the Chief Minister said it did not address the state's needs related to rail expansion and financial assistance and other issues. The Chief Minister was hoping for the Centre funding the much-needed expansion of rail network in the state but the issue was not addressed in the Budget. "A robust rail network is essential for economic growth, yet it remains overlooked," Sukhu said. He further said the allocation for interest-free loan to states has not been increased and the tough conditions attached to availing this loan do not help small states like Himachal Pradesh due to cost disabilities. "The end of GST compensation has put the state in a precarious financial position, resulting in an annual loss that our state can ill afford. A special financial package is urgently needed to mitigate this loss and support our fiscal stability. The absence of such a package in the Budget is a significant setback," he said.

Himachal Pradesh ignored yet again, says Congress chief

Diary Times Desk : Terming the Union Budget "disappointing" for Himachal Pradesh, state Congress president Pratibha Singh said there was nothing in it for the state. "Bihar has been given a lot of importance with an eye on the elections there. For Himachal, it's a disappointing Budget. We were hoping that some relief package would be announced for the state to help it cope with massive losses suffered during the natural disaster, but the Centre has ignored us yet again," said Pratibha Singh. She said the Budget had left the fruit growers and farmers of the state disappointed. "Apple growers had been seeking increase in import duty on apple from the existing 50 per cent to 100 per cent, but this long-standing demand remained unaddressed this time too," she said. She further claimed that the BJP MPs, in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, had failed to protect the interest of the state. "I had written a letter to all BJP MPs that we should go and meet the Prime Minister to seek assistance for the state following the natural disaster, but none responded," she said. Terming the Union Budget "disappointing" for Himachal Pradesh, state Congress president Pratibha Singh said there was nothing in it for the state.

Reinforces govt commitment to start-ups, MSME sector: Investors

Diary Times Desk : Investors have termed the Union Budget as progressive and growth-oriented that reinforces government's commitment to start-ups and micro small and medium enterprises (MSME) sector. Steps like doubling credit guarantee cover for the MSME, enhancing their investment and turnover limits by 2.5 times and 2 times, respectively, to boost their growth and operational efficiency and introducing customised credit cards for them will stimulate economic growth, says the industry. The Budget 2025-26 focuses efforts of the Union Government to secure inclusive development, uplift household sentiment and enhance the power of India's middle class, stated Rajiv Aggarwal, president, Baddi Barotiwala Nalagarh Industries Association (BBNIA). He added "In India, MSMEs contribute 36 per cent in manufacturing and 5.7 crore MSMEs are giving employment to 7.5 crore people. Government focus on MSME development will lead to generation of more employment and support to industry." Terming the budget as revolutionary.

Himachal receives ninth lowest rainfall in January since 1901

Diary Times Desk : With 13.3 mm average rainfall recorded from January 1 to February 1 against a normal of 85.3 mm, Himachal Pradesh received its ninth lowest rainfall in the first month of the calendar year since 1901, the local meteorological department said. The lowest ever January rainfall of 0.3 mm was recorded in 1966, followed by 6.8 mm in 2024, and 9 mm in 2018. The rain deficit was 84 per cent, the MeT department said. All 12 districts of the state received deficit rainfall in January, ranging between 76 per cent in Kullu district and 95 per cent in Hamirpur and Una districts. Lahaul-Spiti district received 77 per cent less rain, followed by Solan and Kinnaur at 93 per cent, Chamba 88 per cent, Mandi 85 per cent, Shimla 82 per cent and Sirmour 80 per cent, the weather office said. The state received isolated to fairly widespread rainfall in January with weak activity on many days and normal activity on three days—January 12, 16 and 17. The highest single-day rainfall of 23.5 mm was recorded at Pandoh in Mandi district on January 7, followed by 18.1 mm at Sarahan in Shimla district on January 12. Koksar in Lahaul-Spiti district received the heaviest snowfall at 19 cm on January 17, followed by Bharmour in Chamba district at 15.3 cm on January 16, and Hansa in Lahaul-Spiti district at 15 cm on January 20.



BCCI Announces Massive Cash Reward For Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup-Winning Team



Agencies : The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced a cash reward of Rs 5 crore for the Indian side that claimed their second consecutive U19 ICC Women's T20 World Cup at the Bayuemas Oval on Sunday. Led by a spirited captain, Niki Prasad, the Indian team remained unbeaten throughout the tournament as they showcased exceptional skill, composure, and dominance. India played with fearless intent throughout the tournament, culminating in a commanding nine-wicket victory over South Africa in the final. "The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) extends its heartfelt congratulations to the India Under-19 women's team for successfully defending their title at the ICC Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup 2025 in Malaysia. "To honour this remarkable achievement, the BCCI has announced a cash reward of INR 5 Crore for the victorious squad and support staff, led by Head Coach Nooshin Al Khadeer," read the statement by BCCI. "Congratulations to our girls for retaining the U19 Women's World Cup. It has been an exemplary campaign wherein they've remained unbeaten throughout. We spoke about their performances at the Naman Awards last night and today they have made us all proud.

Abhishek Sharma records India's second-fastest T20I century; Wankhede carnage bamboozles England

Agencies : Abhishek Sharma displayed brute force as he smashed England bowlers all round the park in the fifth and final T20I at the Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai. The left-handed batter made full use of the powerplay overs to give India a solid start after being asked to bat by England captain Jos Buttler. Abhishek Sharma brought up his century off just 37 balls to leave the visitors shell-shocked. As a result of this knock, Abhishek Sharma recorded the second-fastest century for India in T20Is. The record belongs to Rohit Sharma, who scored a ton off 35 balls against Sri Lanka in Indore in 2017. Abhishek Sharma also recorded the highest T20I score for any India batter, surpassing Shubman Gill's 126-run knock against New Zealand in 2023. Abhishek eventually returned to the hut after scoring 135 runs off 54 balls. He was dismissed by Adil Rashid. Owing to Abhishek's knock, the hosts posted 247/9 in the allotted 20 overs.

Hina Munawar Appointed First Female Manager For Pakistan Men's Cricket Team

Agencies : Hina Munawar, a police officer with a strong background in security and operations, has been named as the first female team manager for the Pakistan men's cricket team ahead of the Champions Trophy. Munawar, who has served in the Frontier Constabulary in the high-risk Swat area, has been appointed as the Operations Manager for Pakistan's Tri-Nation series and the Champions Trophy which begins on February 19 in Karachi. While senior retired bureaucrat Naveed Akram Cheema will continue as team manager, Munawar's appointment has sparked curiosity among cricket fans, experts, and media. After passing the Civil Superior Services exam, Munawar transitioned into various law enforcement and security roles. "Perhaps her appointment is aimed at streamlining operations within the team and between players and the board, as she has worked in strategic and leadership roles, helping to streamline various operations," said a source close to the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB). Munawar, who joined the PCB last year, was also appointed manager of the Pakistan women's under-19 team for the Asia Cup. "She made history as the first female officer.

MS Dhoni Asked By Top BCCI Official About Contesting For Lok Sabha. His Reply Was...

Agencies : Rajeev Shukla, the vice-president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has opened up on the prospect of MS Dhoni entering politics. Former India captain Dhoni, who retired from international cricket in 2019, is still active as a cricketer in the Indian Premier League (IPL). During a recent interaction, Shukla in confident that Dhoni 'can become a good politician'. However, he suggested that if Dhoni wants to enter politics, the decision should be totally up to the legendary wicketkeeper-batter. Shukla also revealed his chat with Dhoni after the cricketer was rumoured to contest Lok Sabha election. "I feel Dhoni can become a politician. It is up to him, if he will become a politician or not. Sourav, I always felt he would enter Bengal politics. Dhoni can also be good in politics. He will win easily, he is popular. I don't know if he will enter politics, it is purely in his hands. I asked him once that I heard that he was going to contest for Lok Sabha seat, he said 'No, no, no,'" Shukla told Ranveer Allahbadia on the latter's YouTube channel.

J&K seal easy win, enter Ranji quarter-finals

Agencies : Jammu and Kashmir triumphed over Baroda by 182 runs in their Ranji Trophy Elite Group A encounter, sealing their place in the quarter-finals on Sunday. After winning the toss and opting to bat, Jammu and Kashmir posted a solid first-innings total of 246. The team J&K, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) followed it up with a second-innings score of 284, setting Baroda a daunting target of 365 runs to win. Baroda were dismissed for 166 in their first innings and struggled again in their second innings, managing only 182/7 at lunch on Day 4. They required 184 more runs to win, despite some resistance, they were unable to chase the target. Jammu and Kashmir's dominant performance with both bat and ball helped them secure the comprehensive win, ensuring their advancement to the quarter-finals of the competition.

Ricky Ponting Predicts Champions Trophy Finalists, Also Points To One 'Unpredictable' Team

Agencies : ICC Hall of Famer and former World Cup-winner Ricky Ponting predicted India and Australia as the two finalists of the upcoming mega event, ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 which is scheduled to kick start from February 19 in Pakistan. Ponting also predicted the other two semifinalists of the competition. The former Australian skipper stated that the other two semifinalists of the tournament will be England and South Africa. Former India head coach Ravi Shastri was also present at the latest The ICC Review episode, and he agreed with Ponting's predictions at the episode. Speaking to Sanjana Ganesan in a bumper episode of The ICC Review, the duo predicted India and Australia will fight out the final, based on their recent success in big tournaments and star-studded lineups. "It's hard to go past India and Australia again. Just think about the quality of players in both countries right now, and you look back in recent history when these big finals and big ICC events have come around and inevitably Australia and India are there somewhere," Ponting told The ICC Review.

"Wife Will Be Watching...": Rohit Sharma's Reply To Smriti Mandhana's Query Stumps Everyone

Agencies : It is an open secret that India's ODI and Test captain Rohit Sharma has a poor habit of forgetting things. His teammates have already spoken about it a lot in the media before. When he encountered a question on similar lines during BCCI Awards 2025 in Mumbai on Saturday, Rohit came up with a funny response that left everyone in splits. During an interaction at the event, women's team player Smriti Mandhana asked Rohit if he had picked up any hobby recently that his teammates tease him about. "I don't know. They tease me about forgetting. Obviously, it's not a hobby but this is what they tease me about - that I forget my wallet, and passport - which is absolutely not true. That happened a couple of decades back," said Rohit. Mandhana then asked Rohit about the biggest things he has ever forgotten. "I can't say that!" said Rohit with a laugh. "If this is coming live, my wife will be watching, and I can't say that. I will keep that to myself," added the India captain leaving everyone in splits. India's legendary batter Sachin Tendulkar was crowned with the Col. CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award at the BCCI Awards 2025. The Master Blaster still holds the records for most runs in Test and ODIs, as well as the unique feat of scoring 100 centuries.