

## PM MODI USA VISIT

# "NOT EVEN A CONTEST": TRUMP ON WHO NEGOTIATES BETTER – PM MODI OR HIM

**Diary Times Desk :** Immediately after their hour-long meeting where US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi discussed the entire gamut of India-US bilateral ties, the two leaders held a joint press conference where they took questions from the international media.

With Donald Trump announcing sweeping reciprocal tariffs for all countries as a tit-for-tat trade policy hours before his meeting with PM Modi, one of the questions asked to President Trump was about who is a tougher and better negotiator – him or Prime Minister Modi? To this, the US President swiftly replied "He is a much tougher negotiator than me and he is a much better negotiator than me. There is not even a contest."

Speaking specifically about reciprocal tariffs, President Trump said that "it is only fair that taxes and tariffs are reciprocal." Explaining his point he said that over time "many attempts have been made" by the US to reduce tariffs on US exports, "but since that has not worked out, we have now decided to reciprocate in the exact same way – something that has not been done before." Trade and tariffs have been a top priority for Donald Trump in his efforts to "make America great again". On multiple occasions in the past, Trump has said "tariff" is his favourite word in the dictionary and that he is convinced they are key to the revival of the US economy.

Even on Thursday evening (US Eastern Time), Donald Trump said "We (US) have been a great economy, the number one in the world – still is – but, ever since Covid, the economy has been under stress. We will now revive it," he said while answering another question on tariffs. The two leaders spoke to the press even before the bilateral talks began. Donald Trump praised PM Modi saying "Prime Minister Modi is a great leader," adding that "We're going to make some wonderful trade deals for India and the US."

Besides trade and tariffs, the two leaders had a detailed discussion on matters concerning regional and global security, the India-US defence partnership, foreign investment, energy, technology, education, visas, and immigration. PM Modi is one of the first global leaders to travel to the US for an official visit and meet Donald Trump after his electoral win. This is PM Modi's 10th visit to the United States as prime minister and fourth with Trump as President.



## PUNJAB CM BHAGWANT MANN

# PUNJAB CM HITS OUT OVER FLIGHTS WITH ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS FROM US LANDING IN AMRITSAR: 'CONSPIRACY TO DEFAME PUNJAB'



**Diary Times Desk :** Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann on Friday criticised the Centre over the likely landing of another plane carrying illegal Indian immigrants at the Amritsar airport. In a press conference, Mann accused the Narendra Modi-led NDA government of trying to defame Punjab.

The BJP-led Centre always discriminates against Punjab. It does not let go of any chance of defaming Punjab," Mann alleged. "Under a conspiracy, they are trying to defame Punjab and Punjabis." Mann said earlier the first US plane carrying illegal Indian immigrants had 33 people from Haryana and Gujarat each and 30 from Punjab.

"Now the second plane (carrying illegal Indian immigrants) is coming. It will also land at Amritsar airport tomorrow. Why? What is the criterion for choosing Amritsar?" the Punjab CM asked. "The Centre and Ministry of external affairs should tell me. Why do you choose Amritsar? You choose to defame Punjab and Punjabis."

Highlighting that deportation is a national problem, Mann also sought to know why flights do not go to Delhi, Gujrat or Haryana. The Punjab CM also targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi, asking whether he was bringing a "gift" from the USA, referring to another plane of illegal Indian immigrants.

Two flights carrying as many as 119 illegal Indian immigrants from the US are likely to land at Amritsar airport on February 15 and February 16. Among the 119 illegal Indian immigrants, 67 hail from Punjab, 33 from Haryana, eight from Gujarat, three from Uttar Pradesh, two each from Goa, Maharashtra and Rajasthan and one each from Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir.

The deportees scheduled to reach India include people who had entered the United States through Mexico and other routes. They also allegedly tore up their passports immediately after entering the US illegally, according to the officials.

Earlier on February 5, a US military aircraft carrying 104 illegal Indian deportees had landed at the Amritsar airport.

Of them, 33 each were from Haryana and Gujarat, 30 from Punjab, three each from Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, and two from Chandigarh.

Some deportees claimed that their hands and legs were cuffed throughout the journey and they were unshackled only after landing in Amritsar.

## DID NOT DISCUSS ADANI ISSUE WITH TRUMP, SAYS PM MODI

**Diary Times Desk :** Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he did not discuss the bribery charges that the US government had levelled against infrastructure tycoon Gautam Adani, during his meeting with US President Donald Trump. At a press briefing at the White House, Modi was asked if he raised the indictment of Adani and his key associates in a New York court over his involvement in an alleged bribery scheme. "First, India is a democratic country, and our culture and our thought philosophy is, 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'. We consider the whole world as one family. I believe every Indian is mine," he said. He then went on to state that such "individual issues" are not discussed when two world leaders meet. "Two prominent leaders of two countries never discuss such individual issues," he said. Trump made no mention of the case during the presser.



## RANVEER ALLAHBADIA MOVES SC AGAINST FIRS LODGED OVER HIS REMARKS IN YOUTUBE SHOW

**Diary Times Desk :** Podcaster Ranveer Allahbadia on Friday moved the Supreme Court challenging multiple FIRs lodged against him for allegedly making certain vulgar comments in a recent episode of 'India's Got Latent'. Allahbadia's remarks on parents and sex on comedian Samay Raina's YouTube show 'India's Got Latent' triggered a controversy, leading to several FIRs being lodged against him. Advocate Abhinav Chandrachud mentioned his petition for urgent hearing before a Bench led by CJI Sanjiv Khanna, saying the Assam police have summoned Allahbadia for joining the probe during the day. However, the Bench refused to grant an urgent hearing. Noting that it's a fresh matter, the CJI said, "I have assigned the Bench and it will come up (before a Bench) in two-three days." The show – which included Allahbadia, known as Beer Biceps, comedian Samay Raina and YouTuber Ashish Chanchlani.

## INDIA-BANGLADESH BORDER TALKS NEXT WEEK; FENCING, ATTACKS BY BANGLADESHI MISCREANTS ON AGENDA



**Diary Times Desk :** The border forces of India and Bangladesh will hold their bi-annual talks here next week with issues such as border fence construction and attacks on BSF personnel and civilians by Bangladeshi miscreants figuring among the discussion points, an official statement said on Friday. The 55th Director General-Level Border Coordination Conference between BSF and the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) will be organised at the Border Security Force (BSF) headquarters here from February 17-20. This would be the first top-level meeting between the two sides after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government in August last year. The Indian side will be led by BSF Director General (DG) Daljit Singh Chawdhary while the BGB delegation will be headed by Maj General Mohammad Ashrafuzzaman Siddiqui.

## CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS IN MANIPUR FORCED IMPOSITION OF PRESIDENT'S RULE: CONGRESS

**Diary Times Desk :** The Congress on Friday said the imposition of President's rule in Manipur is a direct admission of the failure of the BJP governments at the Centre and the state, and asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to apologise to the people there. In a post on X, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said there is a Constitutional crisis in Manipur that forced the imposition of President's rule. "Narendra Modi ji, It is your party which has been ruling at the Centre for 11 years. It is your party which was ruling Manipur for 8 years. It is the BJP which was responsible for maintaining Law & Order in the state. "It is your government which is responsible for National Security and border patrol. The imposition of President's rule by YOU, suspending YOUR own party's government is a direct admission on how YOU failed the people of Manipur," Kharge said. He said the government has imposed President's rule not because it wanted to, but because there is a Constitutional crisis in the state, as none of the NDA MLAs are willing to accept the "baggage of your incompetence".



## YOUR HOROSCOPE 15-02-2025

### Aries

Today, you will meet old friends, which will refresh old memories. Employed people may be fired from the job due to heavy arguments with colleagues in the workplace. People doing business should thank God for getting financial benefits from the advice of their spouse. Due to irritation in the eyes, you should consult an ophthalmologist.

### Gemini

Today you should include yoga and meditation in your daily routine. For employed people, your responsibilities may increase due to promotion in the workplace. People doing business may suffer financial loss from any unknown person today. There may be difficulty in walking due to nerve pain problems.

### Leo

Today, you should offer water to Lord Shiva to avoid difficulties. A heated argument with HR in the workplace will spoil your whole day. Businessmen have to exercise patience, there are chances of improvement in business. Today, you may face stomach and pancreas problems due to eating too much fried food.

### Libra

Today is going to be a busy day for you. Employed people will get a chance to work with senior officers due to advancement in their professional field. People doing business should avoid exchanging money with any unknown person today. Pregnant women may have to face problems due to changing weather.

### Sagittarius

Today you should take all important decisions of your career thoughtfully. Employed people may have to face some problems due to the start of a new job in the workplace. Due to financial gain for business people, you can invest in a new business. Problems like leg pain and headache may bother you.

### Aquarius

Today you may have to face huge arguments in your family over small matters. Employees will be suspended due to indiscipline in the workplace. People doing business should solve all the problems of their customers in time. Due to worsening weather, problems related to cold and cough may increase in the family.

### Taurus

Today you will get success as your long pending legal proceedings will come in your favor. There will be an atmosphere of happiness in the family as employed people will get progress in their workplace. People doing business should make a budget and spend the money in order to get financial benefits. Housewives should change their food according to health and season.

### Cancer

Today you will get relief from all your problems due to sudden financial gain. Employed people may have to get scolded by their boss due to being hasty in the workplace. People doing business may face increased difficulties in business due to arguments with business partners. As the problem of foot pain increases, you must consult a specialist doctor.

### Virgo

Today you should take special control over your speech and behavior. People in employment will get success in the workplace with the help of friends. People doing business will get financial gain due to some special offer, your financial condition will be strengthened. Old diseases of elders in the house may emerge.

### Scorpio

Today you may have to face huge arguments in your family over small matters. Employed people may have to face mental problems due to extra workload in the workplace. People doing business may have to travel abroad in connection with business expansion. Diabetic patients should get themselves checked by a doctor in case of any problem today.

### Capricorn

Today you can invest especially in land and buildings. Employed people may have to travel long distances due to office work, due to which your health may deteriorate. People doing business may face difficulties in repaying business loans due to loss of money. High BP and cholesterol problems will increase the problems of your spouse.

### Pisces

Today your interest in creative work will especially increase. Employed people may be given an important project by their boss to handle important projects in the workplace. People doing business should control their speech and behavior with their customers. You should walk carefully on the road, problems may arise due to injury.





## Vikramaditya Singh: Cabinet Minister Vikramaditya Singh said- 42 thousand job opportunities given in two years

**Diary Times Desk :** Public Works and Urban Development Minister Vikramaditya Singh claimed that 42 thousand job opportunities have been provided to the youth in two years. Whereas the previous BJP government had given only 20 thousand jobs in 5 years. During a press conference at the Secretariat on Friday, Vikramaditya said that 25,516 recruitments have also been made in the private sector. Information about this will also be made available in the Assembly. Vikramaditya Singh also lashed out at Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur. He said that the former Chief Minister is meeting central leaders in Delhi to stop support to Himachal from the Center. Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu is taking strict decisions to make the state self-reliant, the benefits of which will be visible in the future. Accusing the Center of step-motherly treatment, he said that the revenue deficit grant received on the recommendations of the 15th Finance Commission is being reduced year after year. In the year 2025-26, it is likely to shrink to 3000 to 3200 crores. Jairam Thakur should raise this matter before the Central Government.



## Shimla Fire Incident: Fire broke out in the Tourism Corporation workshop in Shimla, loss of lakhs; office records burnt

**Diary Times Desk :** A fire broke out in the Tourism Corporation's workshop and office near Ghodachok in the capital Shimla on Thursday evening. Goods worth lakhs have been destroyed in this incident. The cause of the fire has not been ascertained yet. According to the information, the incident took place on Thursday evening around 7:00 pm when the corporation's watchman Pritam was on duty. He saw smoke rising from inside the workshop and immediately informed the corporation officials and the fire department about the matter. As soon as the information was received, three fire engines from Balaganj and Mall Road Center reached the spot and started trying to extinguish the fire. First of all, the Volvo bus and other vehicles parked here were removed which were in danger of burning in the fire. After an hour of hard work, the fire was brought under control. According to the fire department, there were about 7 rooms in the workshop. It had a workshop and an office. The workshop had spare parts, compressors and records of the corporation's employees and office, which got destroyed in the fire. The fire kept smoldering in the documents kept in the cupboards throughout the night. In view of this, a team has been kept on the spot overnight so that the fire can be controlled if it spreads again.

## HP Board Dharamshala: 'It is necessary to install CCTV cameras at the entry and exit points of examination centers'

**Diary Times Desk :** Himachal Pradesh School Education Board Secretary Dr. Major Vishal Sharma has issued guidelines to the center coordinators for the examinations to be held in March. He said that CCTV cameras must be installed at the entry and exit points of the examination centers. He has also been asked to keep the recordings of these cameras safe for six months. While issuing instructions, he has said that before the commencement of the examination, the institute should install CCTVs at all the examination halls, rooms, entry and exit points of the examination center. Apart from this, ensuring safe functioning, monitoring, recording and preservation of CCTV footage during the examination will also be the joint responsibility of the Principal / Headmaster and IT Inspectors of the concerned school. CCTV footage should be preserved for a period of six months under the terms and conditions.

## Jairam Thakur: Leader of Opposition said- There is chaos everywhere in Himachal, government is silent on public interest issues

**Diary Times Desk :** Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur said that there is chaos everywhere in the state. Most of the facilities provided by the government are not being provided to the people of the state. There is chaos everywhere in hospitals. Even government tests are closed in IGMC and DDU, X-ray machines in far-flung hospitals do not get repaired even for six months if they break down. All development work has come to a standstill. Jairam Thakur said that the government is not concerned with the problems of the people of the state. Payments to people have been stopped. Public representatives are on hunger strike and threatening to protest if MLA funds are not released. Such a situation has never come in Himachal Pradesh when the entire state is troubled by the government. The only reason for this is that public welfare works are not in the priority of the present government, the government of happiness is committed only to protect the interests of its friends. Jairam Thakur said that the government has increased the prices of water drastically. When the central government installed taps in every house.

## Chief Minister Sukhu said- People will get better treatment by replacing old machines in government hospitals

**Diary Times Desk :** The Himachal Pradesh government is going to replace 30-40 year old machines installed in the government hospitals of the state, for which the state government has made a provision of about 1800 crore rupees. Due to delay in treatment, the patient's illness increases and the cost of treatment also increases. Due to the disease not being identified at the right time, the patient's expenditure on the disease increases by 30-50 percent. In such a situation, seeing the problems faced by patients due to old machines, Chief Minister Thakur Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu has given instructions to replace them, because the previous governments did not make any effort to replace the old machinery. Following the instructions of the Chief Minister, the Health Department has prepared the project report. Work will be done on four points to rejuvenate government health institutions.

## Mandi Mahashivratri: Big God Kamrunag will not be seated in Seri Chanani during the Shivratri fair

**Diary Times Desk :** This time in Mandi Mahashivratri Mahotsav, Bada Dev Kamrunag will not be seated in Seri Chanani to give darshan to his devotees. Dev Kamrunag has clearly refused to sit in Seri Chanani. The deity has clearly instructed his Guru and Devlu that after meeting Rajdevta Madho Rai, he will give darshan to the devotees in Tarana temple during the entire fair. After the fair is over, he will directly go from Tarana temple to the houses of the Yajmans (devotees) to host them. This will be seen for the first time in Shivratri fair when the deity will not be seated in Seri Chanani. Bada Dev Kamrunag is the biggest deity of the district. Every year on Mahashivratri festival, all the works start only after his entry into Chhoti Kashi. The deity sits in Tarana temple instead of Paddal ground like other deities. Dev Kamrunag does not tolerate leather musical instruments. That is why the deity likes to stay alone on Tarana hill. Thousands of people have faith in the deity and the people of Chhoti Kashi eagerly await the arrival of the deity in Mandi. On the concluding day of the Shivratri festival, the deity descends from Tarna and appears for some time to the devotees at Seri Chanani.

## Himachal: 99% e-KYC of ration card consumers in six districts of the state

**Diary Times Desk :** E-KYC of ration card consumers in Himachal Pradesh is now in its final phase. So far, e-KYC of 99 percent consumers has been done in six districts across the state. While in five districts, e-KYC percentage has crossed 97. There is only one district where e-KYC has reached 97 percent. However, these figures are now almost final. The government has given exemption for e-KYC to children below five years of age. Excluding these children, the percentage of e-KYC in the state has reached 98.26. 99.43 percent e-KYC has been done in Kinnaur and Shimla, 99.09 percent in Kullu, 99.03 percent in Mandi, 99.71 percent in Sirmaur and 99.81 percent in Solan. While 97.72 percent e-KYC has been done in Bilaspur, 97.70 percent in Chamba and Kangra, 97.65 percent in Lahaul Spiti and 97.02 percent in Una.

## BJP plans grand ceremony for Delhi CM's swearing-in

**Diary Times Desk :** While the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is yet to announce the name of the chief minister of Delhi, party leaders aware of the details said that the swearing-in ceremony will be a grand affair which will be attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, CMs of National Democratic Alliance (NDA)-ruled states and other senior leaders. For the event – which is likely to take place next week as party leaders have said that they are awaiting the PM's return from his official foreign tour – the party is exploring venues, including Jawahar Lal Nehru stadium and Ramlila Maidan, the leaders said. The ceremony will be "historic" as the BJP has returned to power in Delhi after a gap of 27 years, a BJP leader said. "In Delhi, the BJP has come to power after a gap of 27 years as the people of Delhi have given a historic mandate to us. The swearing-in ceremony will also be historic where the party wants to thank the people for their trust in the leadership of PM Modi. Apart from the CMs, over 200 MPs and former MPs of the party, and leaders who participated in the over month-long election campaign in the Capital will also be invited to the event.

## "No Role For Deep State, Leave It To PM Modi": Trump On Bangladesh Crisis

**Diary Times Desk :** The regime change in India's neighbour Bangladesh which many geopolitical analysts have attributed to the US' deep state's alleged work in the shadows grazed US President Donald Trump during his joint press briefing with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Washington DC. A reporter sought the views of President Trump on whether the previous Democratic government under former President Joe Biden carried out a regime change in Bangladesh, and installed Muhammad Yunus as a chief adviser. President Trump denied the US deep state played any role in the developments in Bangladesh, whose ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina took shelter in India. "There was no role for our deep state. This is something that the Prime Minister has been working on for a long time, for hundreds of years, frankly I have been reading about it. I will leave Bangladesh to the Prime Minister," President Trump said. While the Republican did not directly address the question, speculation is that the response indicated the new Trump administration may not get itself involved in Bangladesh, where alleged radical Islamist elements.

## Kerala ragging case: Senior students to be expelled from medical college



**Diary Times Desk :** Senior students would be expelled from medical college in the Kerala ragging case, reports NDTV. The case came into light after disturbing visuals of the brutal ragging of a junior student at the Government Nursing College surfaced on Thursday, showing the victim being tied to a cot and his body repeatedly pierced with a compass. According to footage received by the Gandhinagar police, the victim was stripped half-naked and subjected to horrifying acts, including having dumbbells placed on his private parts after being tied to a cot and having facial cream poured into his mouth. The abuse took place in the boys' hostel targeting first-year nursing students. Five third-year students, identified as Samuel Johnson (20), Rahul Raj (22), Jeev (18), Rijil Jith (20), and Vivek (21) were arrested in the case. They were arrested after a case was registered under the Prohibition of Ragging Act, following a complaint that ragging had been ongoing for nearly three months at the nursing institute.

## 119 Indian migrants deported from US to arrive in Amritsar on Feb 15, 16

**Diary Times Desk :** Two flights carrying 119 Indian migrants deported from the US are expected to arrive at the Guru Ram Dass International Airport in Amritsar on February 15 and February 16. Both flights are scheduled to land at 10.05pm on February 15 and February 16, officials, on condition of anonymity, told Hindustan Times. Most of the deportees on the flights are from Punjab (67). They are followed by people from Haryana (33), Gujarat (8), Uttar Pradesh (3), Maharashtra (2), Goa (2), Rajasthan (2) and one each from Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir, according to PTI. The deportees scheduled to reach India include people who had entered the United States through Mexico and other routes. They also allegedly tore up their passports immediately after entering the US illegally, according to the officials. The flights to Amritsar make the second tranche of people returning amid an unprecedented crackdown on people entering the US illegally.

## Mumbai, Assam Cops Land Up At Ranveer Allahbadia's Home. But Door Is...

**Diary Times Desk :** Mumbai and Guwahati police went looking for Ranveer Allahbadia, aka 'the BeerBiceps guy', on Friday – the podcaster who faces charges of obscenity and offending public morality, and is under fire for crass comments while appearing on an episode of 'India's Got Latent', a stand-up comedy show. But he was not to be found at his Mumbai residence; the apartment was locked. A police officer told news agency PTI that Mumbai law enforcement had initiated an inquiry and went to the apartment, in the city's Versova neighbourhood, to question him. On Thursday, Allahbadia had been asked to report to the police station in Mumbai's Khar to record his statement. However, he later requested that this be done at his home. That request was denied. And, after he failed to appear, the cops issued a second summons and then landed up at his home, in which trip they were joined by colleagues from Guwahati.

## "No Compromise On Manipur's Territorial Integrity": Sambit Patra After President's Rule Imposed

**Diary Times Desk :** Following the imposition of President's Rule in Manipur, BJP MP Sambit Patra on Friday reiterated the state's territorial integrity would remain intact and vowed his party's commitment to restoring peace in the region. Mr Patra, who is in-charge of BJP's northeast unit, emphasised the party's dedication to maintaining stability in the conflict-hit state. He said illegal infiltration into Manipur would be dealt with a severe hand, as security was heightened in the state capital Imphal on Friday, amid political instability and ethnic tensions. "After the report by the Governor of Manipur, the President of India, Droupadi Murmu, has put the state assembly under suspended animation, meaning it can be revived as and when the President of India deems fit, depending on circumstances," Mr Patra told ANI. "As far as the BJP is concerned, we are committed to the continuing efforts of peace in the state and to maintaining the territorial integrity of Manipur."

## Rajiv Kumar's Term Ends, New Election Body Chief To Be Named Soon: Sources

**Diary Times Desk :** The selection of a new Chief Election Commissioner – who will oversee the conduct of polls in Bihar later this year and, most probably in Bengal and Tamil Nadu in 2026, and Assam and Kerala too – will begin soon, sources told NDTV. The committee is expected to meet Monday. It will consist of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal, and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi in his capacity as the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha. The process will start a day before the Supreme Court hears petitions against the new law governing selection of a CEC and ECs. Critics say the law gives the centre an edge in the processes. The current Chief Election Commissioner is Rajiv Kumar, who will demit office on Tuesday. Since then he has overseen multiple high-profile electoral exercises, including the Lok Sabha election in April-June last year and Jammu and Kashmir's first Assembly poll in over a decade.





## Hamas Confirms It Will Release 3 Israeli Hostages On Saturday

**Diary Times Desk :** Hamas's armed wing confirmed on Friday that it would release three Israeli hostages from the Gaza Strip on Saturday, including one that has been held by Palestinian group Islamic Jihad. Under the "prisoner exchange deal, the (Ezzedine) Al-Qassam Brigades have decided to release the following Israeli prisoners (hostages) tomorrow, Saturday," Abu Obeida, spokesman for the armed wing said on Telegram. AFP did not publish the names as they were still to be confirmed by Israeli authorities.

## Ready To Talk To Russia After Reaching 'Common Position' With US, Europe: Zelensky

**Diary Times Desk :** Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Friday he was ready for direct talks with Russia once Kyiv reached a common position with the United States and Europe on how to end the three-year war. He also said Donald Trump had not finalised his plan for how he wants to end the conflict, two days after the US President held phone calls with both Zelensky and Russian President Vladimir Putin. "We are ready for any conversations with America and our allies," said Zelensky. "If they provide us with specific answers to specific requests from us and a common understanding of the dangerous Putin, then, with our unified understanding, we will be ready to talk with the Russians," he added. The Ukrainian leader is in Munich where he will hold talks with US Vice President JD Vance. In an interview with the Wall Street Journal, Vance said Washington had "military leverage" it could use against Russia and that he backed Ukraine's "sovereign independence". Zelensky said of Vance's comments: "His signals were strong, we are grateful for that." Trump's desire for a swift end to the war, his repeated criticism of aid to Ukraine and his lengthy phone call to Putin earlier this week have triggered concern in Kyiv that it could be forced to accept peace on Moscow's terms. But the US leader has not yet outlined the terms for a possible agreement.

## India To Be Hit Hard By Trump's Reciprocal Tariffs



**Diary Times Desk :** President Donald Trump's recent announcement of reciprocal tariffs on all US trading partners has sparked widespread concern and uncertainty globally. This move, made ahead of his meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, aims to address the long-standing imbalance in trade relationships where other countries impose high tariffs on US goods while the US maintains a relatively open economy. According to Cousin's analysis, India charges US imports more than 10 percentage points higher than US levies on Indian goods. Mr Trump said, "They can build a factory here, a plant, or whatever it may be, and that includes the medical, that includes cars, that includes chips and semiconductors, that includes everything." "If you build here, you have no tariffs whatsoever. And I think that's what's going to happen. I think our country is going to be flooded with jobs," he added. Mr Trump's decision is particularly significant for India, which is one of the countries most affected by the reciprocal tariffs.

## European Union Says It Will Respond "Firmly, Immediately" To Trump's Tariffs

**Diary Times Desk :** The EU vowed Friday to respond "firmly and immediately" to trade barriers after US President Donald Trump unveiled tariffs that could hit both allies and competitors. The European Commission said Trump's plans were "a step in the wrong direction" that heightened economic uncertainty and disrupted the efficiency of global markets. "The EU will react firmly and immediately against unjustified barriers to free and fair trade," the commission, which runs trade policy for the bloc's 27 nations, said in a statement. Trump said Thursday he had decided to impose reciprocal duties, in a dramatic escalation of an international trade war he has unleashed since taking office in January. Speaking in the Oval Office, the Republican said that US allies were often "worse than our enemies".

## On defence, the dance between Indian commitments and American tech flexibility

**Diary Times Desk :** Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Donald Trump have expressed their "unwavering commitment to a dynamic defence partnership spanning multiple domains", with India expressing its willingness to buy more American equipment and engage in nuclear commerce and the US expressing openness to lift tech restrictions that have inhibited sales. This commitment comes in a year when both countries are set to announce a new ten-year framework for the US-India major defence partnership. Each such framework in the last two decades has been accompanied by a major qualitative and quantitative deepening of defence ties. In his remarks at a joint press conference with President Donald Trump, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the US had a key role in Indian defence preparedness, new technologies and equipments will enhance Indian capacities and as trusted strategic partners, both countries would engage in joint development, joint production and transfer of technology. Trump said that India would buy "billions of dollars" of US equipment.

## Pakistan: 9 killed, 6 injured in Karachi coal mine explosion

**Diary Times Desk :** A blast in a coal mine in southwestern Pakistan killed at least nine people and injured six, broadcaster Geo News said on Friday, citing district officials. At least nine people died and six were injured in a coal mine blast in southwestern Pakistan, as reported by district officials on February 14.

## Humpback Whale Gulps Kayaker In Chile, Father Was Recording Video

**Diary Times Desk :** A 24-year-old man was kayaking with his father in Bahia El Aguila, Chile, when a humpback whale gobbled up his yellow boat before miraculously spitting him out. A terrifying video showing the giant mammal momentarily swallowing Adrian Simancas before releasing him unharmed surfaced on social media. The incident took place on Saturday near the San Isidro Lighthouse in the Strait of Magellan in Chile's southernmost Patagonia region. The video, recorded by his father, Dell, from another kayak, shows Mr Dell mistaking the approaching whale for "pretty waves." He is later seen trying to calm his son.

## "Tough Accent": Trump Skips Question On "Anti-India Activities" In US

**Diary Times Desk :** President Donald Trump on Thursday skipped a journalist's question on "anti-India activities" in the US, saying he couldn't understand his "tough accent". During a joint press conference with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the White House, a reporter asked Trump whether several groups who raise anti-India voices should continue in the US. The reporter also said that Indians will "welcome" Trump's decision to extradite Tahawwur Rana, an accused in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, to India. "You're going to have to go louder," the US President responded. As the reporter started repeating his question, Trump interrupted and said, "I can't understand a word he's saying. It's the accent. It's a little bit tough for me." Shortly after, another reporter asked Trump how the US is going to cooperate with India in dealing with Khalistani terrorists, referring to Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, who faces more than 100 cases in India.



## Meeting between farmer leaders, Centre cordial; next round of talks on Feb 22

**Diary Times Desk :** The crucial meeting between the protesting farmer unions -- Samyukt Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha -- and the Centre was held here in a cordial atmosphere on Friday evening. The two sides decided to meet again on February 22. Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan is likely to take part in the next meeting. The talks between the two sides resumed after a year. During the course of this year, 60 farmers have died during the protests at the Shambhu and Khanauri borders. BKU (Sidhupur) leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal has been on an indefinite fast since November-end last year, demanding that the Centre hold talks with them and meet their demands. Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Pralhad Joshi led the Central team, while the two farmer forums - KMM and SKM (Non-Political) were led by Sarwan Singh Pandher and Jagjit Singh Dallewal. The latter reached here in an ambulance from the Khanauri border. Besides these two, 26 other farmer leaders participated in the meeting. Punjab Agriculture Minister Gurmeet Singh Khudian, Chief Secretary KAP Sinha, DGP Gaurav Yadav and Additional.



## Final arguments conclude in 17-year-old cash-at-judge's door case

**Diary Times Desk :** Final arguments by the prosecution and the defence have concluded in a 17-year-old cash-at-judge's-door case. After hearing the rebuttal arguments by the prosecution on Friday, Alka Malik, Special Judge, CBI Court, has adjourned the hearing of the case for February 19. "It has been brought to the notice of the court that a petition under Section 528 of the BNSS (Section 482 Cr.PC), filed on behalf of the CBI, is pending before the High Court at Chandigarh and the same is fixed for February 17. On these premises, propriety demands that this court shall wait for the orders from the High Court at Chandigarh. Proceedings are, therefore, adjourned to February 19 for awaiting orders, if any, from the High Court. Accordingly, orders shall be pronounced in this case thereafter," said the court in the order. The Chandigarh Police had registered the FIR in the case on August 16, 2008, on the complaint of Amrik Singh, a peon working at the residence of Justice Nirmaljit Kaur.

## Civic body drafts budget with Rs 1,079 crore deficit

**Diary Times Desk :** With hopes of getting increased funds, the Municipal Corporation (MC) has drafted Rs 2,114 crore budget for 2025-26, with a massive deficit of Rs 1,079 crore. The draft budget was presented in the Finance and Contract Committee meeting today and is likely to be tabled in MC House meeting on Budget scheduled for February 17. According to the draft, the MC has sought Rs 1,704 crore as a grant-in-aid from the Centre and Rs 9 crore as reimbursement for electricity duty from the UT Administration. It plans to generate Rs 410 crore from its own sources, primarily through property tax and water bills. However, with the UT Administration allocating only Rs 625 crore from the Central Budget announced on February 1, the civic body is facing at a massive deficit of Rs 1,079 crore. The funds fall short of even covering its committed liabilities, including Rs 900 crore for staff salaries, pensions and utility bills.

## 2nd US flight carrying deportees to land in Amritsar on Saturday; 67 Punjabis among 119 Indians on it

**Diary Times Desk :** A special flight from the United States carrying 119 deported Indian nationals is expected to arrive at Sri Guru Ram Dass Jee International Airport in Amritsar on Saturday, police officials said on Friday. This is the second US flight carrying the deportees to India following a crackdown on illegal immigrants by the US government. According to sources, the majority of deportees are from Punjab, with 67 individuals returning to the state. Haryana follows with 33 deportees. Gujarat accounts for eight, Uttar Pradesh three, and Goa, Maharashtra and Rajasthan two each. Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir have one returnee each on the flight. A police officer, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the authorities are closely monitoring the situation, and proper security and procedural arrangements have been made at the airport. Immigration officials, police personnel and representatives from the Ministry of External Affairs will be present at the airport.

## CM Bhagwant Mann opposes landing of US plane carrying deportees in Amritsar; lodges protest with MEA

**Diary Times Desk :** The landing of flights carrying deported Indian nationals from the US in Amritsar has triggered a political controversy with the Punjab Government lodging its dissent with the Union Government. With two more flights scheduled to arrive on February 15 and 16, Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann has arrived in Amritsar to receive the deportees. "Being the head of the state, it is my duty to receive our natives. They might have broken the law in the US, but have committed no offence here. I have come specially to receive them," he said, while disclosing that the government was firm on designing a rehabilitation policy for them too. He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi was in the US having parleys with US president Donald Trump. "It is ironic that at the same time, migrants were being handcuffed and chained to be deported to India. Did the PM take up this inhumane treatment issue with Trump? I don't believe he did that. The chained Indians deported to their native land appeared to be a return gift to Modi by Trump," he said. Doubting the intention of the Centre, the CM blamed that it was a deliberate attempt of the BJP-led Union Government to "defame Punjab". He said that he had strongly lodged a protest with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

## BJP opts for strategic approach in Municipal Committee elections

**Diary Times Desk :** Faced with an overwhelming number of ticket aspirants for civic body elections, the BJP has decided not to contest in over a dozen municipal committees across Haryana on the party symbol. This move follows recommendations from local party units and aims to prevent vote division, potential resentment among candidates and rebellion from those denied tickets. Elections for eight municipal corporations, four municipal councils and 21 municipal committees are scheduled for March 2, with Panipat voting on March 9 due to a delay in finalising the voter list. Confirming the decision, BJP Haryana affairs incharge Satish Punia said, "We will contest the elections on the party symbol for all municipal corporations and council posts across the state. However, the election for ward councillors in municipal committees will not be contested on the party symbol. The decision has been left to the local units and many are not in favour of contesting on the symbol. While the post of president in most committees will be contested on the party symbol, we will not field candidates for ward councillor positions."

## Pile-up on NH-44 due to 'sudden braking' by escort vehicle of Haryana BJP chief Mohan Lal Badoli

**Diary Times Desk :** A pile-up occurred on the National Highway-44 near Oasis Tourist Resort on Friday afternoon when a vehicle in Haryana BJP president Mohan Lal Badoli's convoy "suddenly applied brakes" while taking a turn. The abrupt piling-up of vehicles caused minor injuries to a couple who were going towards Faridabad. The accident also left four vehicles damaged, including a police escort vehicle. When contacted, BJP state president Mohan Lal Badoi initially denied it but later admitted that there had been a pile-up of vehicles. Vishnu Miter, SHO, Sadar, said there was no casualty in this piling up. "Three-four vehicles were involved in the accident, including an escort vehicle of the convoy," he added. The injured couple told mediapersons that the driver of escort vehicle suddenly applied brakes, after which other vehicles collided with each other. A pile-up occurred on the National Highway-44 near Oasis Tourist Resort on Friday afternoon when a vehicle in Haryana BJP president Mohan Lal Badoli's convoy "suddenly



## Norms tougher, just 24% pass fitness test for recruitment of women constables in Sirmaur district

**Diary Times Desk :** Merely 24 per cent women made the cut for physical proficiency test meant for recruiting women constables in Sirmaur district as stringent norms acted as a deterrent. "Among 2,178 women candidates who appeared for recruitment on the first three days from February 11 to 13, merely 535 managed to qualify while 1,640 were disqualified for failing to meet the designated parameters," said Sirmaur SP Nischint Negi. He added that 3,014 candidates had been called for the fitness test but 836 were absent. As many as 1,088 constables, comprising 708 men and 380 women, are being recruited from across the state in various districts. A person who has passed Class XII and falls within the age group of 18 to 26 years is eligible to compete for this post. With few employment avenues being available in the government sector, a large number of women candidates had descended at the Nahani Police Lines for the physical aptitude test.

## Devastated HPTDC hotel area at Manikaran turns into dumping site

**Diary Times Desk :** The place at Manikaran where Hotel Parbati of the Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (HPTDC) once stood has become a waste dumping yard. Heaps of garbage dumped there are an eyesore, especially considering the site's proximity to key religious places, including the ancient Shivalaya, Naina Devi Temple and the Ram Temple. The hotel was devastated by floods in 1999 and 2001. The stench emanating from the garbage has become a health hazard and the lack of waste management in the area is exacerbating the situation. Locals and visitors alike are dumping waste there with impunity, as there is no designated garbage disposal site at Manikaran or nearby Kasol. The proposed material recovery facility near Kasol is also facing opposition from the locals. The area has no proper arrangements for waste.

## Like Shimla, Manali also witnessing lesser snowfall, hoteliers worried



**Diary Times Desk :** Just like Shimla, Manali, too, is bearing the brunt of climate change. Like in the state capital, snowfall has been receding in this famous tourist spot as well. In the past 15 years, snowfall started decreasing noticeably from 2019-2020. Until then, barring 2015-16, Manali received good snowfall, ranging from 109 cm to 688 cm. In the past six years, including the current year, the total snowfall has not gone beyond double digits. This year, in particular, has been the worse over the past 15 years – the locals claim the town hasn't seen even 15 cm snowfall this winter. Compared to Shimla, which is enduring the third consecutive dry winter, Manali is better placed but the alarm bells have started ringing here as well. In 2010-11, Manali had received a massive snowfall, 688 cm. Even in 2012-13, it received 310 cm of snowfall, and 180 cm in 2016-16. In the last six years, however, the snowfall has barely crossed 80 cm on three occasions and has been less than 50 cm on the other three occasions. Like in Shimla, the snowfall window has been shrinking here as well. The town used to receive good snowfall in December and March as well but the snowfall in March is on the decline over the last few years.

## Vetiver grass to be cultivated to mitigate landslides: Chief Minister

**Diary Times Desk :** The Congress government will introduce bio-engineering solutions to curb the problem of the increasing frequency of landslides in the state. Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said here today that a pilot project had been initiated to cultivate vetiver grass, known for its deep and dense root system that stabilises soil and prevents erosion. He said, "Vetiver grass is widely used worldwide for soil conservation, particularly in landslide-prone areas, highway embankments and riverbanks. The Himachal Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (HPSDMA), in collaboration with the Vetiver Foundation-Climate Resilience and Sustainability Initiatives (CRSI), Tamil Nadu, has undertaken a project to develop sustainable mitigation strategies against landslides." As part of the initiative, the HPSDMA had requested the CRSI to provide vetiver nurseries to ensure adequate availability of plants before the 2025 monsoon season. The CRSI has supplied 1,000 vetiver grass saplings free of cost and these saplings have been planted in a nursery established at Berti village in Solan district in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture. The Chief Minister said that the HPSDMA was closely monitoring the pilot project.

## Kangana Ranaut opens cafe 'The Mountain Story' in Manali

**Diary Times Desk :** Actor and BJP MP Kangana Ranaut opened her cafe 'The Mountain Story' in Manali on Friday on Valentine's Day. "The Mountain Story', a dream nurtured since childhood, now blossomed in the heart of the Himalayas. This cafe is more than just a place to dine; it's a love story—a tribute to the aromas of my mother's kitchen and the serene beauty of these mountains," Kangana said in her message to the guests. Each dish on the menu is crafted with care, using fresh, locally sourced ingredients that celebrate the richness of our land, she added. The cafe located on the Manali-Naggar road at Prini village, about 4 km from Manali, offers Himachali cuisine in a cozy setting, reflecting the region's rich heritage. The construction of the two-storey cafe started in 2020. It has been built in local Kath Kuni style, Duni Chand, the architect of the cafe, told PTI. Kath Kuni is a traditional style of architecture in which alternating layers of wood and stone are used to build structures in Himachal Pradesh. The cafe offers Pahadi vegetarian thali for Rs 680 and Pahadi non-vegetarian thali for Rs 850, besides several other dishes, including Siddu, a local Himachali dish and Mumbai Poha and Vada Pav.

## Rs 1,800 crore to be spent on medical equipment in Himachal Pradesh

**Diary Times Desk :** The obsolete and outdated medical equipment in use for the last four decades at various health institutions will be replaced with state-of-the-art equipment at a cost of Rs 1,800 crore. Considering the challenges being faced by patients due to old medical machinery, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu has directed replacement of the equipment to provide better healthcare facilities, which the previous governments failed to do. In line with these directives, the health department has prepared a project report to offer world-class healthcare services in government healthcare institutions. The obsolete medical machinery and equipment will soon be replaced with new healthcare facilities as the state government has allocated approximately Rs 1,800 crore for this purpose. "Delays in treatment often worsen a patient's condition and increase their medical expenses. Studies indicate that late diagnosis can raise medical costs by 30 to 50 per cent for a patient," said a healthcare government official. According to the data released by the health department, 9.5 lakh patients travel outside Himachal Pradesh annually for treatment, resulting in an economic loss of Rs 1,350 crore to the state's GDP. If quality healthcare services are made available within the state, it is estimated that Rs 550 crore of the state GDP could be saved annually, along with valuable time for patients. The Chief Minister has instructed the health department to ensure that patients receive high-quality treatment within the state and to implement the plan in a time-bound manner.



## Champions Trophy winners to get US\$2.24 million as prize money

**Diary Times Desk :** The winners of the upcoming Champions Trophy 2025 will receive US\$2.24 million as prize money along with the trophy they lift on March 9. The runners-up will get \$1.12 million, and the losing semi-finalists will be awarded \$560,000 each. The total pot is worth \$6.9 million, a jump of 53% from 2017, when Pakistan had lifted the trophy at The Oval. The Champions Trophy continues to be an eight-team tournament, split into two groups of four teams each. The top two from each group will proceed to the semi-finals. Each group match is worth more than \$34,000 to the victorious team. The teams that finish fifth and sixth will each earn \$350,000, while the seventh- and eighth-placed teams will take home \$140,000 each. "In addition, all eight teams are assured of \$125,000 each for competing in the ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025," an ICC statement said. ICC chair Jay Shah said, "The substantial prize pot underscores the ICC's ongoing commitment to investing in the sport and maintaining the global prestige of our events. Beyond the financial incentive, this tournament ignites fierce competition, captivates fans worldwide, and plays a vital role in fostering the growth and long-term sustainability of cricket for future generations." The tournament begins on February 19 in Karachi with hosts Pakistan taking on New Zealand. It's the first ICC tournament to be played in Pakistan since they co-hosted the 1996 World Cup.



## 7 Wickets For 28 Runs: Australia Hit All-Time Low, Whitewashed By Sri Lanka

**Diary Times Desk :** Sri Lanka spinner Dunith Wellalage took four wickets to give a hapless Australia their lowest ever total in Asia with a 174-run loss in Friday's second and final ODI. Chasing a target of 282 in Colombo, a much-changed Australia testing their lineup for next week's Champions Trophy were bundled out for a meager 107. The spectacular collapse saw them lose their last seven wickets for just 28 runs. "Not the best result we wanted. We used lot of players and everyone got a game," Australia skipper Steve Smith said. "Credit to Sri Lanka. They deserved the series win. We struggled a bit in Colombo... Their bowlers were superb." Asitha Fernando set the tone with a fiery opening spell of 3-23 in four overs before the spinners tightened the screws. Wellalage triggered the collapse, bamboozling Josh Inglis with a skiddy arm ball that crashed into the stumps. In his next over, he delivered another peach, rattling the dangerous Glenn Maxwell's timber to finish 4-35. Wanindu Hasaranga joined the party from the other end to take three more including Smith, who was trapped plumb in front.

## Kapil Dev believes packed cricket schedule is reason for growing injuries

**Diary Times Desk :** Indian cricket legend Kapil Dev has voiced his concerns about the increasing number of injuries among Indian cricketers, attributing it to their packed playing schedule. With key players like Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami sidelined, he emphasised the need for a strong team effort in the upcoming Champions Trophy. As the president of the PGTI, he also highlighted the potential of LIV Golf to revolutionise the sport, similar to how the IPL changed cricket. Additionally, he called for improved infrastructure to promote golf in India. Kapil Dev has raised alarms over the increasing number of injuries to Indian cricketers, linking it to the demanding international schedule that keeps players on the field for nearly ten months a year. The National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bengaluru, originally established to nurture talent, has now turned into a rehabilitation centre, with players spending more time recovering than training. India's latest setback is the injury to pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, who missed the second innings of the final Test in Sydney due to a back problem.

## Rachin Ravindra "Has Had Headache For Few Days": New Zealand Coach Gives Concerning Update

**Diary Times Desk :** New Zealand head coach Gary Stead has revealed that star batter Rachin Ravindra is yet to regain full fitness after sustaining an injury during the first match against Pakistan in the ongoing Tri-Nation Series as the opener "had a headache for a few days" since suffering a nasty blow to the forehead. Ravindra was forced out from the field after being struck in the forehead by the ball while attempting a catch in the 38th over of their match against Pakistan in the ODI tri-series last week. The 25-year-old missed New Zealand's victory over South Africa, which secured their spot in the decider in Karachi on Friday. Stead mentioned that despite returning to the nets on Thursday night, he was still not ready to play. "The pleasing thing is that he's progressing well. We're following (head injury assessment) protocols at the moment," Stead said in a video shared by BlackCaps on social media.



## Sears ruled out of Champions Trophy with hamstring injury

**Diary Times Desk :** New Zealand pace bowler Ben Sears has been ruled out of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 with a hamstring injury. Jacob Duffy, who is with the New Zealand team for the ongoing tri-series in Pakistan, has been named Sears' replacement for the eight-nation tournament. According to a New Zealand Cricket release, Sears experienced pain in his left hamstring during the team's first training session in Karachi. He subsequently underwent a scan which revealed a minor tear, needing at least two weeks' rehabilitation. Considering this, Sears would have only been available for New Zealand's final group match against India on March 2, leading to the decision of replacing him for the entire tournament. "We're all really feeling for Ben," said head coach Gary Stead. "It's always tough being ruled out of a major event at such a late stage, and it's especially tough in Ben's case given it would have been his first major ICC event."

## On Axar Patel Batting Ahead Of KL Rahul vs England, Gautam Gambhir's Honest "Impact" Verdict

**Diary Times Desk :** India's dominant 3-0 series victory over England left little room for doubt about their superiority, but one aspect of their batting order drew scrutiny. In two of the successful chases, all-rounder Axar Patel was promoted up the order, leaving KL Rahul with minimal involvement. This move, seemingly influenced by head coach Gautam Gambhir's preference for a right-left combination in the middle order, sparked debate among commentators. Addressing the criticism, Gambhir defended the strategy, emphasizing that adaptability in the batting order is crucial to modern cricket. "That's the way cricket is meant to be played," Gambhir stated during a press conference. He added, "I know a lot of people talk about it, but that's the way we got to play the game, and that's the way cricket should be played. It's not about the batting order; it's about who can create what impact. If you have the option of putting a quality left-hand batter in the middle, why wouldn't you do that?" He explained that his approach is not dictated by conventional statistics but rather by the impact a player can have in a given situation. "Why would you want to have a top five consisting only of right-handers?"