

DELHI CM REKHA GUPTA

REKHA GUPTA SWORN IN AS DELHI CM, 6 CABINET MINISTERS ALSO TAKE OATH

Diary Times Desk : BJP's debutant legislator Rekha Gupta was sworn in as Delhi Chief Minister on Thursday in a grand show of strength that marks the party's return to power in the city after more than 26 years.

The ceremony at the historic Ramlila Ground was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the top BJP brass and NDA chief ministers. Gupta is Delhi's fourth woman chief minister.

After the administration of oath by Lt Governor V K Saxena, Gupta became the 9th Chief Minister of Delhi. The 50-year-old MLA from Shalimar Bagh is also the only woman in the NDA team of chief ministers. Besides Gupta, six newly elected MLAs -- Parvesh Verma who defeated AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal from the New Delhi seat, Ashish Sood, Pankaj Singh, Manjinder Singh Sirsa, Kapil Mishra and Ravinder Indraj -- were sworn-in as cabinet ministers.

The new Council of Ministers headed by Gupta is likely to hold its first meeting at the Delhi Secretariat on Thursday evening and could implement the Mahila Samridhi Yojna, under which eligible women will get a monthly payment of Rs 2,500, and Ayushman Bharat health insurance scheme, party sources claimed. Among those who attended the event were chief ministers of states ruled by the BJP and its NDA allies -- Maharashtra's Devendra Fadnavis, Andhra Pradesh's Chandrababu Naidu, Goa's Pramod Sawant, Haryana's Nayab Singh Saini and Meghalaya's Conrad Sangma. Deputy chief ministers of Uttar Pradesh Keshav Prasad Maurya and Brajesh Pathak, and Andhra Pradesh's Pawan Kalyan were present too. Gupta, 50, was chosen as Leader of the House in the newly constituted 8th Delhi Assembly, in a meeting of the BJP legislature party on Wednesday.



UP BUDGET

22% FOR DEVELOPMENT, 13% FOR EDUCATION IN UP'S RS 8.09 LAKH CRORE BUDGET



Diary Times Desk : Uttar Pradesh Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna on Thursday tabled a Rs 8,08,736-crore Budget for the financial year 2025-26 in the state assembly, with a focus on research & development and Information Technology.

Mr Khanna in his Budget speech said around 22 per cent of the Budget has been allocated for development purposes, 13 per cent for education, 11 per cent for agriculture and related services, while six per cent has been allocated for health.

"We have focussed on research, development and Information Technology in the Budget," said Khanna.

Mr Khanna began his address by praising Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and highlighting developments in the state under his leadership. He also mentioned the ongoing Maha Kumbh as he began his address. He described the Kumbh as not only a cultural and religious event but also a rare astronomical occurrence symbolising India's ancient faith and cultural integrity. Mr Khanna said the total Budget outlay for financial year 2025-26 is 9.8 per cent higher than the Budget outlay for FY25.

The size of the state's Budget for 2024-25 was Rs 7,36,437 crore that included new schemes worth Rs 24,863.57 crore. Mr Khanna said the state government will develop an Artificial Intelligence City and set up a park for technological research in cyber security.

There are also provisions for the modernisation of the Legislative Assembly as well as the development of smart classes and laboratories in schools and polytechnics. Mr Khanna informed that work will be done to develop 58 municipal bodies of the state as ideal smart municipal bodies. For this, a provision of Rs 2.50 crore per municipal body amounting to a total of Rs 145 crore was proposed.

KHARGE SLAMS MODI GOVT OVER CHINA POLICY, ALLEGES NATIONAL SECURITY RISK

Diary Times Desk : Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of putting India's national security and territorial sovereignty at risk by adopting soft policy towards China, which he said is settling new 90 villages on Arunachal Pradesh border. The Congress chief alleged the Prime Minister is adopting the soft policy towards China instead of taking a tough stance. "You are adopting the policy of 'red salute' instead of 'red eye' towards China!" he alleged. He said the Modi government is putting India's "national security, territorial sovereignty and integrity" at risk. He claimed that the allegation levelled by him against the PM is based on facts. Highlighting news report 'China building 90 villages along Arunachal Pradesh, 628 such villages already established', he said the Modi government promotes the 'vibrant villages programme' on the border. "You have exaggerated it in the Parliament. But the truth is that 90 per cent of the funds of 'Vibrant Villages Programme' have not been spent in the last two years. This scheme was launched in February 2023 and of the Rs 4,800 crore fund allocated, only Rs 509 crore has been spent," he said. In Himachal Pradesh, where the Congress is in power, Kharge alleged no funds have been provided for the state's 75 villages under the programme.



BIMAN BANGLADESH FLIGHT EMERGENCY LANDING: PASSENGERS LEAVE BY ANOTHER PLANE 19 HOURS LATER

Diary Times Desk : A replacement aircraft from Biman Bangladesh Airlines took off for Dubai on Thursday with nearly 400 passengers after their earlier flight made an emergency landing at Nagpur airport following detection of smoke in the hold area. On Wednesday night when flight BG-347 was on its way to Dubai from Dhaka, the pilot received an alert from the fire alarm system forcing him to land the aircraft at Nagpur airport at 10.45 pm with 396 passengers and 12 crew members. A full emergency was declared at the airport and the aircraft, after landing, was taken to an isolation bay where the passengers disembarked safely and the cargo was offloaded. Although smoke was reported in the aircraft's hold, a thorough examination showed no signs of fire, officials said. Almost 19 hours after the emergency landing, passengers continued with their journey.

71 PER CENT OF NEWLY SWORN-IN DELHI MINISTERS FACE CRIMINAL CASES

Diary Times Desk : Five, including the chief minister, out of seven newly sworn-in ministers in Delhi have declared criminal cases against them, while two are billionaires, according to poll rights body Association for Democratic Reforms. The findings are based on the self-sworn affidavits submitted by the ministers ahead of the 2025 Delhi Assembly elections. According to the analysis by the ADR, five out of seven ministers (71 per cent) have declared criminal cases against them, while two ministers (29 per cent) are billionaires. The report highlighted that five ministers, including Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, have declared criminal cases against them. Among them, one minister, Ashish Sood, faces serious criminal charges. On the financial front, two ministers, accounting for 29 per cent of the cabinet, are billionaires. The minister with the highest declared total assets is Manjinder Singh Sirsa from Rajouri Garden with assets worth Rs 248.85 crore and the minister with the lowest declared total assets is Kapil Mishra from Karawal Nagar constituency with assets worth Rs 1.06 crore.



MUMBAI POLICE RECEIVE THREAT TO BLOW UP DEPUTY CM SHINDE'S CAR

Diary Times Desk : Mumbai police on Thursday received mails threatening to blow up Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's car, an official said. According to the official, mails threatening to bomb Shinde's car were received at Goregaon and JJ Marg police stations in the morning, after which a probe began in the case. "The IP address of the sender is being traced. All angles are being probed," the official said. A senior Mumbai police official had earlier said a threat call had been received.



YOUR HOROSCOPE 21-02-2025

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.



MP Suresh Kashyap: BJP MP Suresh Kashyap said- The state government distributed the funds received in the name of disaster

Diary Times Desk : BJP MP from Shimla parliamentary seat Suresh Kashyap said that Modi government has taken care of every section in the Union Budget. The decision to increase the income tax limit from 7 lakh to 12 lakh in the budget is historic. Apart from this, provision has been made for promoting agriculture and startup of industries. He said this during a press conference held in Solan. He said that adequate funds have also been provided for defense, railways, health, education, rural development and infrastructure. Rs 11806 crore has been sanctioned for various projects of Himachal in the Union Budget. This will lead to extensive improvement in the state's infrastructure, transportation, railway expansion, water supply, agriculture and health. Along with this, stalled development works will get momentum. In the last 11 years, Himachal has received a total financial assistance of Rs 54662 crore. At the same time, Himachal received very little financial assistance during the previous UPA regime. The MP said that many projects of the state are pending due to the state government not getting its share. The state government has distributed the funds received in the name of disaster. The money for housing scheme was also distributed in the name of disaster.



Himachal Pradesh: Woman lawyer arrested in Chitta smuggling case, 25 women on police radar

Diary Times Desk : In the case of inter-state chitta smuggler Sandeep Shah gang, police has arrested a woman lawyer after the tehsil welfare officer. Accused Avantika was caught by police from Shoghi barrier on Wednesday. Her family members have been informed about this. Police has taken this action on the basis of evidence of bank account transactions with Sandeep Shah. So far, police has arrested three women in this case. According to police, apart from this, about 25 women are on the police radar. Police claims that a large number of women have been found involved in drug smuggling in the inter-state chitta smuggler Sandeep Shah gang. Now the police is completing the process of arrest after gathering facts against them. A police personnel has also been arrested in this case. This shows that Shah gang had trapped youth of every class in the district in the quagmire of drugs. In this, some got involved in drug smuggling after falling prey to drug addiction, while some were smuggling chitta in the greed of earning money. District police has so far arrested 36 people in this case. While investigating the bank accounts linked to Shah, the police have so far gathered information about transactions worth Rs 5 crore, while the investigation of several benami accounts is still going on.

Jairam Thakur: Leader of Opposition said- Law and order is in shambles in Himachal, murder cases are on the rise

Diary Times Desk : Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur said that the law and order situation in the state is completely destroyed. Criminal and stubborn people are doing whatever they want. At present, cases of murder have increased rapidly in the state. Today, I read in the news that 15 murder cases have been reported in Una within the last one and a half months. In which, recently, after the murder of a woman, the circumstances in which her body was found are extremely painful. The incident of setting a colony on fire by migrant youths with anarchist tendencies in Baddi is also very worrying. Such anarchist elements should be taught such a lesson that they can never dare to break the law. To maintain the image of peace loving Devbhoomi, the police should take strict action against the criminals. We cannot promote mafia rule and anarchy in the state. The way in which drug addiction is increasing.

Himachal : Patwari was caught with chitta in Kangra, Revenue Department suspended him

Diary Times Desk : Revenue department has suspended Patwari Rajesh Kumar resident Rajera, District Chamba who was arrested with 7.31 grams of chitta in Kangra district. The department took this action under Central Civil Services Classification Control and Appeal 1965 Act. Currently the accused is in police custody. Please note that police had caught two youths of Chamba with 7.31 grams of chitta near Sanaura on Sarah road under Gaggal police station. On receiving information about an accused posted as a patwari in the revenue department being caught with chitta, the revenue department took action at its own level and suspended the patwari. It is being told that the accused was posted as a patwari in the year 2019. Deputy Commissioner Chamba Mukesh Repaswal has confirmed the suspension. Told that after the accused trapped in a criminal case is released, he can also be expelled from the job. The revenue department has suspended the patwari who was caught with chitta in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. The accused was posted as a patwari in the year 2019.

Himachal: 67 teachers left for Singapore, will take training from trainers from Oxford University

Diary Times Desk : Education Minister Rohit Thakur on Thursday sent 67 teachers from the capital Shimla on an educational tour to Singapore. In a program organized at the Directorate of Samagra Shiksha, the Education Minister congratulated the teachers and handed over their passports to them. Teachers of JBT, C&V and TGT categories are included in this tour. The Education Minister said that the process of selection of teachers was difficult. The government adopted a completely transparent merit-based selection process for this tour, due to which the most qualified teachers of the state got this opportunity. He said that the government is committed to giving world-class exposure to teachers. Teachers will get training on modern teaching techniques from trainers of institutions like Oxford and Cambridge University.

Shimla: Compassionate dependent families started speed post campaign regarding their demands

Diary Times Desk : The Karunamulk dependent families who have been waiting for jobs for the last 15 to 20 years have started a speed post campaign to convey their demands to the state government. Under the leadership of the state president of the union, Ajay Kumar, all the Karunamulk dependents of the state have started sending their demand letters to Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu through speed post. The Chief Secretary and Finance Secretary have also been informed about their demands through letters. A Karunamulk sub-committee has been constituted by the Chief Minister. Demand letters are also being sent to this committee. The state president of Karunamulk Sangh, Ajay Kumar, while demanding from the government, said that jobs should be restored by making a provision of special budget for the dependents. The income limit should be amended and the notification issued by the previous government on 22 September 2022 should be completely canceled. For those departments, boards, corporations and universities where there are no vacant posts, provision of jobs should be made to these families.

Himachal Weather Report: Rain and snowfall likely to continue in many parts for six days, thunderstorm alert in eight districts

Diary Times Desk : Snowfall has been recorded in the high altitude areas of Himachal Pradesh and rain in other areas. The high altitude areas of Chamba, Kullu, Shimla, Mandi, Kinnaur, Lahaul-Spiti, Kangra and Sirmour districts have been covered in a blanket of snow. The Meteorological Department has predicted that the period of rain and snowfall will continue in many parts of the state for the next six days. This is also likely to bring down the temperature. On the other hand, after fresh snowfall, the famous tourist destination Kufri adjoining Shimla has returned to its glory. After fresh snowfall on Thursday, a large number of tourists reached Kufri.

"Those Buying Videos Of Women Bathing At Maha Kumbh Will Be Arrested": UP Cop

Diary Times Desk : Those who are buying videos of women bathing at the Maha Kumbh will be arrested, along with those who are selling such videos, a Uttar Pradesh police official told NDTV, adding that so far 103 social media accounts have been identified for action. The UP social media monitoring team detected that certain platforms were uploading videos of women bathing and changing clothes at the Kumbh, the world's largest religious gathering, violating their privacy and dignity, the police said in a statement. The Kumbh Mela attracts tens of millions of Hindu faithful every 12 years to the city of Prayagraj. The six-week Kumbh Mela is the single biggest milestone on the Hindu religious calendar, and officials said around 500 million devotees have already visited the festival since it began last month. Hindus believe bathing there during the Kumbh helps cleanse sins. Yesterday, we came to know that there are some social media profiles, some groups have been formed where such illegal activities are being carried out. We have lodged an FIR against them and all those people are being identified who are involved in such misdeeds.

In Ranveer Allahbadia's Supreme Court Hearing, A Nupur Sharma Reference

Diary Times Desk : Advocate Abhinav Chandrachud's reference to suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma on Tuesday - in a hearing on podcaster Ranveer Allahbadia's 'sex and parents' comment on stand-up comedy show 'India's Got Latent' - has triggered quite the kerfuffle online. A number of users on X and other social media platforms have called out the "false equivalence", and most have backed Ms Sharma, criticising Mr Chandrachud and insisting that her controversial remarks - on Prophet Mohammed - pale in comparison to Mr Allahbadia's "obscene" words. During the hearing Mr Chandrachud sought protection for Mr Allahbadia, arguing his client had received death threats, including warnings of acid attacks, and faced a Rs 5 lakh 'bounty'. Please see my interim application. 'Ranveer Allahbadia ki zubaan kaatkar laane wale ko milega 5 lakhs ka inaan' (Whoever ends Ranveer Allahbadia's life will get Rs 5 lakh as reward) is the threat." Mr Chandrachud then cited legal precedents to make his case, including that of Nupur Sharma, saying, "In the Nupur (Sharma) case there were threats.

In Push For BJP's Key Poll Plank, Delhi Chief Minister's Day 1 Yamuna 'Aarti'



Diary Times Desk : Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and her ministers, hours after taking oath, made a beeline for Yamuna at Vasudev Ghat, where they are participating in the river "aarti" -inspired by the daily evening ceremony at the ghats of Ganga at Haridwar and Varanasi. The gesture - apart from being a political message of the party's comeback after 26 years -- was also a reaffirmation of the BJP's promise to clean up the river that was once the lifeblood of the centuries-old city but is now little more than a drain. "We will fulfil all the promises that we have made... At 5 PM, we will go to Yamuna Ghat for aarti. The cabinet meeting will be held at 7 pm," the Chief Minister had said while assuming charge at the Delhi Secretariat and meeting officials and leaders. Ahead of the assembly polls, the BJP promised a clean Yamuna in three years. The promise was reinforced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the victory celebrations of the party. PM Modi had promised to make Yamuna "The identity of Delhi."

22% For Development, 13% For Education In UP's Rs 8.09 Lakh Crore Budget

Diary Times Desk : Uttar Pradesh Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna on Thursday tabled a Rs 8,08,736-crore Budget for the financial year 2025-26 in the state assembly, with a focus on research & development and Information Technology. Mr Khanna in his Budget speech said around 22 per cent of the Budget has been allocated for development purposes, 13 per cent for education, 11 per cent for agriculture and related services, while six per cent has been allocated for health. "We have focussed on research, development and Information Technology in the Budget," said Khanna. Mr Khanna began his address by praising Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and highlighting developments in the state under his leadership. He also mentioned the ongoing Maha Kumbh as he began his address. He described the Kumbh as not only a cultural and religious event but also a rare astronomical occurrence symbolising India'.

BJP Questions Lokayukta Clean Chit To Siddaramaiah, Congress Hits Back

Diary Times Desk : The Lokayukta's clean chit to Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in the alleged MUDA land scam has triggered a political slugfest, with the BJP alleging that the state government handpicked the officers investigating the case and the Congress hitting back and saying that the issue was politically motivated. The Lokayukta on Thursday submitted an 11,000-page closure report to the Special Court for MLAs and MPs in Bengaluru in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) case against Siddaramaiah, his wife BM Parvathi, brother-in-law Mallikarjunswamy and landowner J Devaraju. The allegation is that Siddaramaiah's wife was allotted 14 sites in Vijayanagar Layout, an upmarket area in Mysuru, as compensation for the use of 3.16 acres of land in Kesare village near the city. An anti-corruption activist had complained that this had caused a loss of Rs 45 crore to the state. Siddaramaiah has maintained that there was no wrongdoing in the transactions, asserting that the plots were gifted to his wife by her brother. Writing to one of the complainants, the Lokayukta had said on Wednesday that there was not enough evidence to conduct an investigation against Siddaramaiah and the charges seemed civil in nature and not "suitable for criminal charges".



"Very Unfair": Donald Trump On Elon Musk's Tesla Building Factory In India

Diary Times Desk : Days after Tesla started hiring staff in India, signalling its potential entry into the market, US President Donald Trump has said that any potential plans of the EV maker to build a factory in India, to circumvent that country's tariffs, would be 'very unfair'. The US President made the remarks during a joint interview with Tesla CEO Elon Musk for Fox News' Sean Hannity. President Trump recalled that he called out India's high duty on cars during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the United States last week, but agreed to work towards an early trade deal and resolve their standoff over tariffs. During his US visit, PM Modi also met Tesla CEO Elon Musk, who has long criticised India for having import tariffs of around 100 per cent on EVs which protect local automakers such as Tata Motors in the world's third largest auto market, where EV adoption is still at a nascent stage. Mr Trump said it is "impossible" for Elon Musk to sell a car in India. "Every country in the world takes advantage of us.

Week After President's Rule, Manipur Governor's 7-Day Arms Ultimatum

Diary Times Desk : People from all communities should surrender looted and illegally held weapons and ammunition within seven days, Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla said in a statement today. No punitive action will be taken against anyone who returns such weapons within the deadline, the Governor said; however, strict action will be taken for keeping looted or illegal weapons after the seven-day deadline ends. The state that shares an open border with Myanmar and where ethnic clashes between the Meitei community and over a dozen distinct tribes collectively known as Kuki began nearly two years ago, is under the President's rule. Chief Minister N Biren Singh and his council of ministers resigned on February 9, after which the Governor placed the assembly in suspended animation, or MLAs active but without powers. "People of Manipur, both in valley and hills, have suffered immense hardship for the last over 20 months due to a series of unfortunate incidents.

Trump Declares Himself "King" After Move Snubbing New York Governor

Diary Times Desk : A recent declaration by Donald Trump has raised questions about his views on presidential authority. In a statement on Truth Social, Trump proclaimed himself "king" after his administration's efforts to dismantle New York City's congestion pricing program. This program, designed to raise funds for the city's aging mass transit system, has been a point of contention between Trump's administration and local authorities. Trump's announcement, which included the phrase "CONGESTION PRICING IS DEAD. Manhattan, and all of New York, is SAVED. LONG LIVE THE KING!" was further amplified by the White House's official X account. The account shared a mock Time magazine cover featuring Trump adorned with a crown and the caption "long live the king." Adding to the controversy, White House deputy chief of staff Taylor Budowich shared an AI-generated image of Trump wearing a crown and regal cape. In a letter to New York Governor Kathy Hochul, Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy expressed the president's objections to the congestion pricing program, labeling it "backwards and unfair" and a "slap in the face to working-class Americans and small business owners." Duffy claimed that federal officials would discuss plans with the state for the "orderly cessation of toll operations."

"Was Sleeping": Trump Accuses Ukraine's Zelensky Of Treating US Envoy "Rudely"

Diary Times Desk : US President Donald Trump said Wednesday his treasury secretary was treated "rudely" during an official visit to Kyiv, accusing Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelensky of "sleeping" and failing to make a deal. US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent met Zelensky in Ukraine's capital last week to discuss granting Washington access to rare earth minerals in return for security support. "Scott Bessent actually went there and was treated rather rudely, because essentially, they told him 'no'," Trump told reporters on Air Force One. "And Zelensky was sleeping and unavailable to meet him. Bessent "traveled many hours on the train, which is a dangerous trip.

India Responds After Illegal Migrants Deported By US Seek "Help" In Panama



Diary Times Desk : India is working closely with the authorities in Panama to ensure the well-being of Indian migrants deported by the United States to the Latin American country. The Indian embassy in Panama said the migrants are safe and secure at the hotel where they are detained. "Panamanian authorities have informed us that a group of Indians have reached Panama from US, They are safe and secure at a hotel with all essential facilities. Embassy team has obtained consular access. We are working closely with the host Government to ensure their wellbeing," the embassy said in a post on X. The statement came a day after a report claimed nearly 300 individuals from various countries, including Iran, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and China, who were deported from the United States under President Donald Trump, were confined in a hotel in Panama. Some of those deportees resorted to displaying desperate messages for "help" on their hotel room windows, stating "We are not save (sic) in our country".

"One Of The Hardest Days": Israelis Gather For Return Of Hostage Bodies

Diary Times Desk : Dozens of flag-waving Israelis gathered under a stormy sky Thursday lining the route of a convoy bringing home the bodies of four deceased hostages handed over by Hamas in Gaza. The Palestinian militants had handed over black coffins they said contained the bodies of Shiri Bibas and her two young boys, Kfir and Ariel -- who became symbols of the ordeal that has gripped Israel since the Gaza war began. The Red Cross-mediated handover, which Hamas said also included the body of elderly captive Oded Lifshitz, took place at a former cemetery in the south Gaza city of Khan Yunis. It is the first handover of bodies by Hamas since its October 7, 2023 attack on Israel triggered the Gaza war.

S Jaishankar Meets Counterparts From Singapore, Brazil On G20 Sidelines In South Africa

Diary Times Desk : External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held a meeting with his counterparts from Singapore and Brazil on the sidelines of G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in South Africa's Johannesburg on Thursday. S Jaishankar and his Singaporean counterpart Vivian Balakrishnan discussed their work in furthering bilateral ties. They also spoke about the state of the world. In a post on X, he stated, "Always a good conversation with FM @VivianBala of Singapore, this time in Johannesburg on the sidelines of G20 FMM. Discussed the state of the world and our work in furthering bilateral ties." S Jaishankar also met his Brazilian counterpart Mauro Vieira in Johannesburg. The two leaders discussed bilateral ties, global developments and the work of two nations in the G20 and Brazil's BRICS Presidency. "Delighted to meet FM Mauro Vieira of Brazil today in Johannesburg. Discussed bilateral ties, global developments, our work in the G20 and Brazil's BRICS Presidency," S Jaishankar posted on X. S Jaishankar is on a two-day visit to South Africa to participate in the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting (FMM) at the invitation of South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Ronald Lamola.

Donald Trump Says Trade Deal With China 'Possible' Amid Tariff Tensions

Diary Times Desk : US President Donald Trump suggested on Wednesday that a trade deal was "possible" with China -- a key target in the US leader's tariffs policy. In 2020, the United States had already agreed to "a great trade deal with China" and a new deal was "possible," Trump told reporters. One month into his second term in office, Trump has threatened sweeping tariffs on allies and adversaries alike -- targeting China as well as neighbors Canada and Mexico, and the European Union -- and using levies as his main policy tool for lowering the massive US trade deficit. At the beginning of February, he slapped additional customs duties of 10 percent on all products imported from China. He is also threatening to impose 25 percent tariffs on all imported cars, and similar or higher duties on pharmaceuticals and semiconductors as he turns up the heat on some of the biggest US trading partners. Trump also told journalists aboard Air Force One on Wednesday that his administration.

Mt Everest's Snow Cover Receded By 150 Metres This Winter, Show Satellite Images

Diary Times Desk : Snow cover atop Mount Everest retreated by 150 metres, indicating a lack of snow accumulation during the winter season of 2024-2025, researchers have noted. Analysing NASA satellite images from October 2023 till early January 2025, trends illustrated "a rise in snow line through January in both 2024 and 2025", glaciologist Mauri Pelto, a professor of environmental science at Nichols College, US, wrote in a blog post on February 2. At 8,849 metres above sea level, Mount Everest is the tallest point on Earth. The Himalayan peak is located between Nepal and Tibet. Snow line refers to the boundary or elevation at which snow permanently stays on a mountain. A 'rising snow line' -- in which snow melts at lower heights, forcing the snow line boundary up a mountainside -- is suggestive of a warming climate. Pelto said that warmer and drier conditions have been prevailing in recent winters, including those of 2021, 2023, 2024 and 2025, which are driving a reduced snow cover, higher snow lines and increased forest fires.



Punjab dismisses 52 cops for corruption, 42 are constables

Diary Times Desk : The Punjab Police have dismissed 52 personnel over the past 10 days for involvement in corruption, criminal activities or prolonged absenteeism, Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav said on Wednesday. Addressing the media here, the DGP said the action aligned with Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's directions for ensuring transparency, accountability and integrity in public service. Following the Aam Aadmi Party's poor performance in the Delhi Assembly elections, the Mann government in Punjab has intensified crackdown on corruption. The AAP had won the 2022 Assembly poll in Punjab on the promise of eradicating corruption, particularly among the "black sheep" in uniform. However, the latest dismissals are limited to officials up to the rank of inspector. Yadav said the dismissed officials included one inspector, five assistant sub-inspectors, four head-constables and 42 constables across various districts. The highest seven dismissals are in Ludhiana —four under the Commissionerate of Police and three in the Ludhiana-Rural wing. Five police personnel have been dismissed in Patiala, followed by four each in Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur.



Another case falls flat: 41 accused of Panchkula riots acquitted

Diary Times Desk : The court of Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM), Panchkula, has acquitted 41 people of violence committed in the aftermath of conviction of Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh for rape in 2017. The police claimed that the accused were followers of Ram Rahim. More than 40 people were killed in the riots and 152 cases were registered across Panchkula, but there has been no conviction so far. The FIR in the present case was registered on the complaint of ASI Prakash Chand, who had stated that around 5 pm-5.30 pm on August 25, 2017, Head Constable Vikramjeet Singh and Home Guard Sukhwinder Singh informed him that hundreds of people had entered the Industrial Area from Sector 11/14, Panchkula, and were armed with sticks and rods. They allegedly vandalised CCTV cameras and manhandled policemen. However, the police managed to apprehend some of the individuals and seized their weapons. The accused faced the trial for rioting, using criminal force against police personnel, disobedience of order promulgated under Section 144, CrPC, and Sections 3 and 4 of the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act.

23 ready mix concrete plants violate pollution norms, face Rs 1.90-cr fine

Diary Times Desk : A total of 23 ready mix concrete (RMC) plants — 17 in Panipat district and six in Karnal district — have been found violating pollution norms near Dadlana village, close to the Indian Oil Corporation (IOCL) refinery. The violations were revealed in a joint inspection report by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Haryana State Pollution Control Board (HSPCB) and the district administration, conducted on the directions of the National Green Tribunal (NGT). The HSPCB has served closure notices to all the RMC plants and recommended an environmental compensation of Rs 1.90 crore on 19 plants — 14 in Panipat and five in Karnal. The inspections were initiated following a complaint by Deepak, a resident of Dadlana village.

AAP leader shoots dead Sarpanch's husband in Abohar, protesters block highway

Diary Times Desk : An AAP leader allegedly shot and killed the husband of a village Sarpanch in the Kallar Khara village, 27 km from Abohar, on Thursday. The suspect, Manoj Kumar, is reportedly the block president of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). The victim, Shankar Jalap, succumbed to his injuries while being taken to Sri Ganganagar. His body was later taken to Civil Hospital Abohar for the postmortem examination. His wife, Poonam, who is also a member of AAP, was elected Sarpanch in last year's Panchayat election. Initial reports suggest that a dispute arose in the village regarding the construction of a drain. While the village Panchayat was attempting to resolve the matter, Manoj Kumar reportedly lost his temper when his demands were disregarded. He allegedly drew a weapon and shot Jalap. The police are investigating the incident, and SSP Varinder Singh Brar has assured that teams will do their best to trace the suspect. However, protesters have blocked the Abohar-Sri Ganganagar highway, disrupting interstate traffic, and are demanding the arrest of the suspect.

Chandigarh grenade attackers received funds, weapons from foreign-based accused: NIA

Diary Times Desk : The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has made a significant claim in the Chandigarh grenade attack case, stating that the accused, Rohan Masih and Vishal Masih, received funds, weapons, and explosives from foreign-based individuals to carry out terror acts in Punjab and Chandigarh. According to NIA, the accused were part of a larger criminal conspiracy hatched by Harwinder Singh alias Rinda and Harpreet Singh alias Happy Passia to assassinate a retired Punjab police officer in Chandigarh. The investigation revealed that Rohan Masih had been conducting reconnaissance of the target's house since June 2024, along with an associate of Harpreet Singh. NIA has sought a production warrant for the two accused, who allegedly hurled a grenade at a house in Sector 10D, Chandigarh, on September 11, 2024. Initially, the Chandigarh Police investigated the case, but it was later handed over to the NIA by the Ministry of Home Affairs. The agency has found incriminating evidence, including chats, videos, photos, and foreign numbers, on the mobile phones of the accused. The data was recovered from three mobile phones seized from the accused, which were sent to Central Forensic Science Laboratory (CFSL) in Chandigarh.

Congress lodges complaint with poll panel against Saini

Diary Times Desk : The Congress has lodged a complaint with the State Election Commission regarding alleged violation of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) against CM Nayab Singh Saini. In the complaint addressed to the state Chief Election Officer of Haryana, Congress mayoral candidate from Rohtak Surajmal sought action against Saini. "I want to bring to your cognisance that Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini has violated the Model Code of Conduct. While addressing a nomination meeting of Mayor and municipal councillors at Rohtak on February 17, the Chief Minister had stated that the government would make the provision for grant of Rs 2,100 per head to the women of the state in the upcoming budget and implement the same from the coming year after the budget, which is a clear violation of the election rules and the MCC," he said in his complaint. The Congress leader maintained that the CM's statement could adversely affect the fairness of the election process. "It is a serious matter as per the MCC and requires immediate action. I, therefore, request you to get a thorough probe conducted in this regard and take appropriate legal steps in order to maintain the impartiality of the election process," he said.

Haryana seeks special package to achieve 'Water Safe State' goal

Diary Times Desk : Haryana Public Health Engineering Minister Ranbir Gangwa has reiterated the state's commitment to becoming a 'Water Safe State' before 2047, with ongoing expansions in Jal Jeevan Mission, AMRUT Yojana and canal-based drinking water projects. Speaking at the 'Water Safe Nation' conference in Udaipur, Gangwa urged the Centre to provide a special package to strengthen Haryana's water security initiatives. Irrigation, Women and Child Development Minister Shruti Choudhry was also present at the event. Highlighting Haryana's water conservation efforts, Gangwa said, "The government is continuously taking steps to counter excessive groundwater exploitation." He noted that the state had permanently provided drinking water to 216 villages through the Ranney Well project from the Yamuna, calling it a "game changer." The minister revealed that Haryana operates.

SNOW IN SHIMLA'S KUFRI, NARKANDA; RAIN IN LOWER REACHES OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

Diary Times Desk : People of higher reaches of the state woke up to snow this morning. Tourist spots like Kufri and Narkanda are also witnessing snow, which has made the roads slippery. The administration has issued an advisory to not ply vehicles till the roads are cleared. Shimla, meanwhile, saw light drizzle. The lower parts of the state are receiving rainfall. Light to moderate spells of rain are very likely to continue over many parts of Hamirpur, Bilaspur and Mandi and over some parts of Kangra, Shimla, Solan and Sirmour. A few spells of light rainfall, with one or two moderate spells, are also very likely in some parts of Kullu and Chamba. The weather department has issued an orange alert for heavy rain and snow in four districts for today and predicted light to moderate rain and snow at most places till Friday morning.

SOLAN SUPER SPECIALTY HOSPITAL PROJECT HELD UP OVER UNPAID POWER LINE SHIFT

Diary Times Desk : More than a year after the Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board Limited (HPSEBL) sought Rs 53.65 lakh for shifting a 33 KV power line from the construction site of an upcoming super specialty hospital at Kather Bypass, the required funds are yet to be provided. This financial hurdle has further delayed the project, which has already been facing repeated fund shortages. Initially, the power board estimated the shifting cost at Rs 38.96 lakh, but it was revised to Rs 53.65 lakh in November 2024 based on updated cost calculations for the financial year 2023-24. An official from HPSEBL stated that the cost may rise further as the work is yet to be executed. The project has already suffered delays due to financial constraints. The contractor had previously halted work for several months due to pending payments amounting to crores. Though work resumed later, the lack of funds has now stalled the power line relocation, further obstructing construction progress.

LOCALS OPPOSE PLAN TO DIVERT HOLY WATER OF MANIKARAN TO KASOL FOR COMMERCIAL USE

Diary Times Desk : The proposal of transferring water from Manikaran -- a pilgrimage site for both Hindus and Sikhs -- to Kasol in Himachal Pradesh's Kullu district to establish hot bath facility has led to a disagreement with locals opposing the move and now an alternative has been found by digging hot water spring in Kasol. It was decided in a recent meeting of the Special Area Development Authority (SADA) that a new nature park would be built in Kasol with a hot bath facility for which the water would be diverted from Manikaran through pipes. The locals threatened to launch an agitation if the holy water of Manikaran is used for commercial purposes at Kasol, a much sought after tourist destination. The distance between Manikaran and Kasol is about five kilometers. Opposing the proposal, the locals also submitted a petition in this regard to Kullu Deputy Commissioner Torul S Raveesh. Confirming the same, the deputy commissioner said that the proposal was in a preliminary stage and it was yet to be decided that the water would be diverted from which location. The locals and the BJP leaders here had maintained that even the local deities would not allow transferring of water from Manikaran to Kasol and maintained that if the hot baths have to be built, it should be set up in Manikaran.



CONG IN-CHARGE RAJNI PATIL TO VISIT STATE NEXT MONTH

Diary Times Desk : Rajni Patil, newly appointed All India Congress Committee (AICC) in-charge for party affairs in Himachal, will visit the state in the first week of March. In all probability, the process to reconstitute the dissolved Himachal Pradesh Congress Committee (HPCC) will pick up pace after her visit. It has been three and a half months since AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge dissolved the HPCC and other party units, right up to the block level. Congress workers as well as a couple of ministers have expressed their displeasure over the delay in the reconstitution of the HPCC. Public Works Department (PWD) Minister Vikramaditya Singh said that Rajni would visit the state in the first week of March and he had urged her to reconstitute the HPCC at the earliest. "We have urged her to reconstitute the HPCC as soon as possible so that the stalled organisational work can be resumed to strengthen the party," he added. Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, Deputy Minister Mukesh Agnihotri and Vikramaditya have met Rajni in Delhi after her appointment as the state in-charge. HPCC president Pratibha Singh is also likely to meet her in the next couple of days. In the run-up to the reconstitution of the HPCC, leaders are likely to lobby with her to have their confidants on key positions.

HIGH SILT ACCUMULATION IN BSL CANAL AT MANDI THIS YEAR

Diary Times Desk : The BSL canal in Sundernagar of Mandi district has witnessed significant silt accumulation this year. The accumulation of silt has been attributed to a snag in the flood gates at the Pandoh dam during the rainy season last year. The Pandoh dam, a crucial water source for the BSL canal, faced issues during the last rainy season, causing an unexpected build-up of silt in the canal. Official sources confirmed that the accumulation of silt is a result of this snag, which prevented proper flow of water, leading to the sediment settling within the canal. The BSL canal plays a vital role in the irrigation and water supply systems of the region. Poor flow of water caused by the silt poses a serious concern for local agriculture and water distribution. However, authorities from the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) have assured the public that steps are being taken to resolve the situation. According to Chander Mani Sharma, XEN, BBMB, at Sundernagar, machinery for the removal of the silt is only allowed during the rainy season and the clearance operation will be conducted accordingly. To address the silt build-up, the BBMB authorities have developed designated.

DALAI LAMA BACK FROM TIBETAN SETTLEMENTS IN KARNATAKA

Diary Times Desk : The Dalai Lama concluded his over a month-long visit to Tibetan settlements in Bylakuppe and Hunsur in South India's Karnataka state and reached Delhi. He is expected to be back in Dharamsala soon. The Dalai Lama left Dharamsala on January 3 and reached the Tashi Lhunpo Monastery on January 5, making it his first visit to the settlement in seven years. He stayed at the monastery till February 15. During his stay at Tashi Lhunpo Monastery, the Dalai Lama presided over numerous spiritual gatherings. On January 9, he led a prayer service in the monastery's courtyard to honour the victims of the earthquake in Dingri and other affected areas of Tibet's Shigatse region. Later, on January 18, he attended the winter debate session of the Gelug Jamchoe and Rigtsog, where monks from various prominent monasteries including Sera, Drepung, Ganden, Tashi Lhunpo, and Ratoeshow participated. On February 5, a long-life prayer ceremony was offered to Dalai Lama by Sera Jey and Sera Mey Colleges at Sera Monastery, which was attended by 8,000 devotees. On February 12, Tashi Lhunpo Monastery held a long-life prayer ceremony in its main assembly hall, attracting another 8,000 people. The following day, His Holiness bestowed the White Tara long-life empowerment to 26,000 members of the public at Tashi Lhunpo. On February 16, the Dalai Lama left from Bylakuppe to Gyumed Tantric College in Hunsur Rabgaying Tibetan Settlement, his first visit to the settlement in about a decade. The following day, Gyumed Tantric College honoured him with a long-life prayer ceremony in their main assembly hall, which was attended by 6,000 people.



Mohammed Shami, Shubman Gill Guide India To Easy 6-Wicket Win Over Bangladesh

Diary Times Desk : Mohammed Shami and Shubman Gill starred as India eased past Bangladesh by 6 wickets in their Champions Trophy campaign opener in Dubai on Thursday. Mohammed Shami broke multiple records as India bowled out Bangladesh for 228 after the side opted to bat first. Shami returned figures of 5 for 53 in 10 overs. Bangladesh were 35 for 5 at one stage but still managed to post a fighting total, thanks to Towhid Hridoy (100) and Jaker Ali (68). In the chase, India got off to a solid start through Rohit Sharma and Gill. While the captain fell at the score of 41, Gill took his innings deep to take India over the line. The side faces Pakistan next on February 23 at the same venue.



Mohammed Shami breaks Mitchell Starc's world record

Diary Times Desk : Jasprit Bumrah is not there but Mohammed Shami is. The veteran seamer ensured India did not miss their premier bowler in the opening match of the Champions Trophy 2025 against Bangladesh at the Dubai International Stadium. Playing his first ICC tournament since the ODI World Cup final in 2023, Shami broke Mitchell Starc's world record for the fastest to take 200 ODI wickets (in terms of balls bowled). He also became the fastest Indian to take 200 ODI wickets (in terms of matches), beating current BCCI chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar by a huge margin. Shami achieved the milestone by dismissing Bangladesh's Jaker Ali for 68 in the 43rd over of the match on Thursday. It was a well-disguised slower ball and Jaker was through his shot way too early. All he managed to do was get it as far as the long on fielder Virat Kohli, who made no mistake. Shami pacer took 104 ODIs to get to 200 wickets. Agarkar, the previous record holder for India, had taken 133 matches. Shami also equalled Pakistan great Saqlain Mushtaq to become the joint second-fastest (in terms of matches) in the world to take 200 wickets. The fastest in the list is Australia's Mitchell Starc. The left-arm pacer took 102 ODIs to complete.

Fakhar Zaman ruled out of Champions Trophy 2025

Diary Times Desk : Fakhar Zaman, the Pakistan opening batter, has been ruled out of the remainder of the Champions Trophy 2025 after sustaining an oblique injury during the tournament opener against New Zealand. Pakistan have named Imam-ul-Haq as his replacement. Zaman had to leave the field only two deliveries into the match against New Zealand after injuring himself while fielding. After opener Will Young played a Shaheen Afridi delivery through covers, Zaman pursued the ball and managed to stop it from crossing the boundary but got injured in the process. Zaman later returned to the field during the latter stages of the first innings but couldn't open the innings later considering the lengthy time off the field. Even when he came out to bat at No.4, he struggled with running between the wickets. He scored 24 off 41 in a 47-run stand off 65 deliveries with Babar Azam, with the latter also struggling to up the ante. Pakistan, who were chasing a target of 320, fell short as they went down by 60 runs in the opener. The defending CT champions play their next match, against arch-rivals India, on February 23 followed by their final Group A game against Bangladesh in Rawalpindi on February 27.

Yuzvendra Chahal shares another cryptic post, thanks God amid divorce rumours

Diary Times Desk : India spinner Yuzvendra Chahal shared a cryptic post on Instagram amid divorce rumours with partner Dhanashree Verma. Chahal, on Thursday, February 20, thanked God for protecting him from difficult conditions. He did not specifically mention what those circumstances were, strengthening rumours of his divorce with Dhanashree Verma. The India spinner is currently out of the national team, which is playing in the ICC Champions Trophy in Dubai. Chahal is not playing cricket at the moment. He played his last professional game on December 5, 2024, representing Haryana in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy. "God has protected me more times than I can count. So I can only imagine the times I've been rescued that I don't even know about. Thank you, God, for always being there, even when I don't know it. Amen," Chahal wrote on Instagram. Neither Yuzvendra Chahal nor Dhanashree Verma have ever openly acknowledged any issues in their marriage. The duo has not responded to any rumours either. This is not the first time that Chahal has posted something cryptic on Instagram. Earlier in January 2025, Chahal had written about his hard work and character, hinting to his fans about how hard he had worked to reach the position he was in.

Badminton star Satwiksairaj Rankireddy's father, 65, dies due to cardiac arrest

Diary Times Desk : India shuttler Satwiksairaj Rankireddy's father, R Kasi Viswanatham, died of cardiac arrest on Thursday, February 20. The incident occurred right before his father was scheduled to fly out to New Delhi to meet his son. Satwik's father was going to attend the ceremony where the shuttler was set to receive the prestigious Khel Ratna award. Satwik is currently in the national capital for the 43rd PSPB Inter-Unit badminton tournament. His father, a retired physical education teacher, was set to travel to join him for the ceremony but tragically passed away before he could make the trip. "It is extremely sad and unfortunate that Satwik has lost his father this morning," said a source close to the family. The 24-year-old shuttler from Amalapuram will depart for Andhra Pradesh this afternoon to be with his family. Satwik, who forms a formidable men's doubles pair with Chirag Shetty, has been a trailblazer in Indian badminton.

MS DHONI ADDRESSES RETIREMENT RUMOURS, GIVES LIFE LESSONS TO FANS IN HEARTFELT SPEECH

Diary Times Desk : Former Chennai Super Kings captain MS Dhoni has opened up about his retirement. The 43-year-old MS Dhoni called time on international cricket back in 2020. 2024 was expected to be his final season as a professional; however, Dhoni did not announce his retirement after CSK were knocked out of the playoffs race by Bengaluru. Speaking at an event in Mumbai, MS Dhoni put an end to rumours of his retirement, stating that he wanted to enjoy the last few years of his cricket career. Dhoni does not play any professional cricket apart from the Indian Premier League. In recent years, the former captain of the Indian team has played in a reduced capacity. Dhoni has batted at the No. 8 position in the batting line-up, where he has had an incredible impact, striking at 229.55. Dhoni scored 161 runs from just 73 balls last season. The legendary cricketer said that he wanted to enjoy his last few years of cricket the way he enjoyed playing cricket as a child.

