

## VP JAGDEEP DHANKHAR

## DHANKHAR BRINGS THE HOUSE DOWN BY CALLING MARRIAGE 'LIFELONG CHALLENGE' AT BOOK LAUNCH

**Diary Times Desk :** Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar was seen in a light-hearted mood during the launch of a book on Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel's life on Thursday, drawing laughter from Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and others present.

Speaking at the release of Governor Patel's biography titled 'Chunautiyan Mujhe Pasand Hain' (I Like Challenges), Dhankhar humorously referred to the book's title while pointing towards his wife, Sudesh Dhankhar.

He said, "Aapne (Governor Anandiben Patel) apni kitaab ka sheershak rakha hai 'Chunautiyan Mujhe Pasand Hain'. 1 February 1979 ko maine chunauti se saat phere le liye. Saath jeevan jeene ka wada kar liya. Chunauti ke saath rehne ki mujhe aadat hai." (You've titled your book 'I Like Challenges'. On February 1, 1979, I took seven vows with a challenge. I promised to live together for life. I am used to living with the challenge.)

He added with a smile, "Maine to khud chunauti ko sweekar kiya hai. Main chunauti ke saath rehta hoon. Har karyakram mein chunauti ko apne paas rakhta hoon." (I have accepted the challenge myself. I live with the challenge. I take it along to every event.) His remarks prompted loud laughter from Adityanath, Assembly Speaker Satish Mahana, Governor Anandiben Patel and others.



## PAHALGAM TERROR ATTACK

## "CHUN CHUN KE JAWAB...": AMIT SHAH'S BIG WARNING AFTER J&K ATTACK



**Diary Times Desk :** Union Home Minister Amit Shah today warned terrorists that India will "hunt each and every one of them" for killing 26 civilians in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam. At an event in Delhi today, Mr Shah in his first public comment on the terror attack said the worst is yet to come for the terrorists.

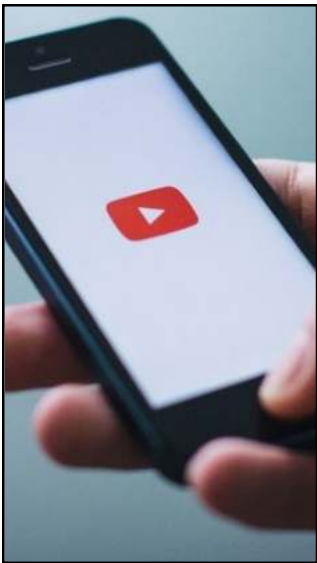
"Whoever carried out the dastardly terror attack in Pahalgam will not be spared. We will hunt down each and every perpetrator of the Pahalgam terror attack. Don't think that you have won by killing 26 people. Every one of you will be made answerable," the Home Minister said at the event to unveil a statue of Upendra Nath Brahma, the leader of Assam's Bodo community, and name a road after him.

"Har vyakti ko chun chun ke jawab bhi milega, jawab bhi diya jayega... This is the Narendra Modi government; no one will be spared. It is our resolve to uproot terrorism from every inch of this country and it will be accomplished," he said.

The Home Minister, along with Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and other officials also observed a moment of silence in memory of the victims of the terror attack on April 22. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Bodoland Territorial Council chief executive member Promod Boro also attended the Delhi event. Tension has been rising in India and Pakistan ties following the Pahalgam terror attack. The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi was told about cross-border linkages of the terrorists during the CCS' first meeting last week. The last biggest escalation between the two neighbours was in February 2019 when India bombed a terror camp deep inside Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK), in retaliation against the suicide bombing attack.

## INDIA BANS PAKISTAN ARMY’S YOUTUBE CHANNEL, LATTER STOPS PLAYING INDIAN SONGS ON RADIO

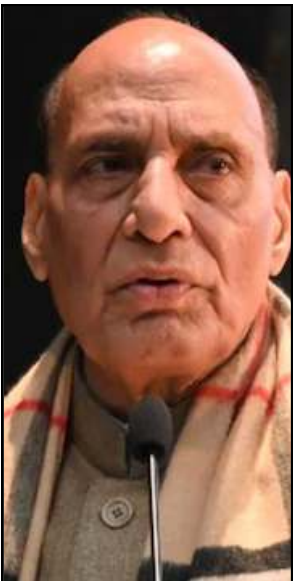
**Diary Times Desk :** India has intensified its digital crackdown on Pakistani media outlets and blocked access to YouTube channel of Pakistan Army’s media wing, ISPR, following the barbaric terror attack in south Kashmir’s Pahalgam where 26 civilians were gunned by a group of terrorists affiliated with The Resistance Front (TRF) – an offshoot of Lashkar-e-Taiba. The move follows national outrage over the Pahalgam massacre and rising concerns over the dissemination of propaganda by Pakistani state and non-state actors. According to official sources, the government has reportedly urged platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and X to ban all Pakistani handles from operating in India. Visitors attempting to access the ISPR channel on YouTube are now greeted with a message stating: “This content is currently unavailable in this country because of an order from the government related to national security or public order.” Apart from ISPR, several more popular Pakistani drama channels on YouTube, including ARY, Har Pal Geo, and Hum TV, have also been blocked by the Indian government. Several Pakistani celebrities’ Instagram handles, including Hania Aamir, Mahira Khan, Ali Zafar, Sanam Saeed, Bilal Abbas, Iqra Aziz.



## CONGRESS VETERAN GIRIJA VYAS PASSES AWAY AT 78

**Diary Times Desk :** Congress veteran and former union minister Girija Vyas passed away on Thursday at a private hospital in Ahmedabad where she was admitted following severe burns at a family event in Udaipur on April 2. Vyas was shifted from Udaipur to Ahmedabad after sustaining 90% burns in a tragedy during Gangaur puja at her Udaipur house. She was 78. Expressing anguish at the demise, former Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot said, “The demise of former Union minister and former Congress state president Girija Vyas is an irreparable loss for all of us. Vyas had made a great contribution in the field of education, politics and social service. Her untimely demise in such an accident is a big shock for us.” Vyas began her political career as Udaipur district Congress chief in 1977. From 1985 to 1990 she was an MLA and a minister in Rajasthan. In 1991 she was elected to the Lok Sabha for the first time and became a junior information and broadcasting minister in the PVRao government.

## US SUPPORTS INDIA’S RIGHT TO DEFEND ITSELF: DEFENCE SECRETARY HEGSETH TO RAJNATH




**Diary Times Desk :** The US on Thursday said it supports India’s right to defend itself and its fight against terrorism as American Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth phoned Defence Minister Rajnath Singh amid rising tensions between India and Pakistan over the Pahalgam terror attack. Singh told Hegseth that Pakistan has been “exposed” as a “rogue” state fuelling global terrorism, and “destabilising” the region. The world can no longer turn a “blind eye” to terrorism, the defence minister said during the conversation, according to an official readout. Hegseth said the US stands in solidarity with India and supports India’s right to defend itself, Singh’s office said in a social media post. “He reiterated the strong support of the US government in India’s fight against terrorism,” it said. The defence minister told the US Secretary of Defence that Pakistan has a history of supporting, training and funding terrorist organisations,” the readout issued by the defence ministry said. “Pakistan has been exposed as a rogue state, fuelling global terrorism, and destabilising the region. The world can no longer turn a blind eye to terrorism,” the ministry quoted Singh as saying.

## PAKISTAN’S ENVOY TO US URGES PRESIDENT TRUMP TO STEP IN TO DEFUSE TENSIONS WITH INDIA


**Diary Times Desk :** Pakistan’s envoy to the US has urged President Donald Trump to help ease tensions with India as he simultaneously strives to solve conflicts in Europe and West Asia, Newsweek reported. Pakistan’s Ambassador Rizwan Saeed Sheikh said that for a president “who is standing for peace in the world as a pronounced objective during this administration”, there was no “higher or flashier flash point” than Kashmir. His remark comes amid heightened tension between India and Pakistan after terrorists killed 26 people, mostly tourists, in Jammu and Kashmir’s Pahalgam on April 22. Meanwhile, Pakistan Peoples Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Thursday urged the international community to intervene to prevent a potential conflict between Pakistan and India, Geo News reported. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday told the top defence brass that the armed forces have “complete operational freedom” to decide on the mode, targets and timing of India’s response to the Pahalgam attack. “If we have a president who is standing for peace in the world as a pronounced objective during this administration.





### YOUR HOROSCOPE

02-05-2025



**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.





## HIMACHAL WEATHER: RAIN AND HAILSTORM IN HIMACHAL PRADESH, THUNDERSTORM IN MANY PLACES, AVALANCHE IN LAHAUL

**Diary Times Desk :** Amidst the weather department's alert, there was rain and hailstorm in many areas of Himachal on Thursday. Snowfall also occurred in the high altitude areas of Lahaul including Rohtang. Hailstorm along with rain occurred in many areas including Shimla, Dharamshala, Mandi, Solan, Bilaspur and Kullu. On the other hand, an iceberg fell on the Udaipur-Kilad road in Lahaul-Spiti near Dared Nala on Wednesday night. Due to this the road remained blocked for about three hours, due to which dozens of vehicles were stranded. Due to the falling of the iceberg, there are piles of snow on the road. The route was restored on Thursday morning. The hailstorm has damaged apple flowering, stone fruits, peas and other crops. Wheat has also been damaged due to rain during harvesting. Various areas of the state including Shimla remained cloudy throughout the day on Thursday. The rain which started after four o'clock in the evening continued till late night. There was also a thunderstorm along with rain in other areas including Dharamshala. Hailstorm occurred in Jaghori and Phancha Panchayat of remote area 15/20 of Rampur.



## JAIRAM THAKUR: LEADER OF OPPOSITION JAIRAM THAKUR SAID- GOVERNMENT SHOULD RESTORE HIM CARE FACILITY

**Diary Times Desk :** Leader of Opposition Jairam Thakur said that the government should restore the treatment facility from Him Care with immediate effect. People are coming to hospitals for treatment and are going back without treatment or with incomplete treatment due to not being able to pay the huge bills of the hospitals. He said that after their lives are in danger, people are forced to take loans and get treatment. He also gets calls from people every day. Everyone says the same thing that your Him Care card is not working. Doctors have refused to treat you. Jairam Thakur said that when the government is saying that Him Care has not been closed, then why is treatment not being done in government hospitals? Jairam Thakur said that Him Care Card is not working in the treatment of people suffering from serious diseases. Jairam Thakur said that the government is charging some fee or the other every day.

## SHIMLA: IPD STARTED IN CHAMIYANA HOSPITAL, CM SUKHU INSPECTED HEALTH SERVICES

**Diary Times Desk :** The wards of the departments of Gastroenterology, Urology and Plastic Surgery running in Indira Gandhi Medical College and Hospital (IGMC) have been shifted to Atal Super Specialty Institute Chamiyana. Now patients will get operation theatre and lab services in Chamiyana itself. IPD has also started here from Thursday. On Thursday, Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu inaugurated the Internal Patient Department (IPD) in Chamiyana. After inspecting the institute, he held a meeting with the senior officials of the Health Department and gave necessary guidelines. During this, Health Minister Dr. Dhaniram Shandil, Panchayati Raj Minister Aniruddh Singh and others were present. During this, CM Sukhu inspected all the wards and other services. Talking to journalists, the CM said that high-end facilities are being made available in selected hospitals. He said that 337 beds have been provided in Chamiyana Hospital.

## HIMACHAL : PRIMARY TEACHERS REACH HIGH COURT AGAINST SUSPENSION, NOTICE TO THE GOVERNMENT; HEARING TO BE HELD ON 13TH

**Diary Times Desk :** The office bearers of the Primary Teachers' Union, who are on a hunger strike in the capital Shimla, have reached the Himachal High Court against the suspension orders of eight teachers. Union President Jagdish Sharma, Sanjay, Pratap Thakur and Ram Singh Rao have jointly filed a petition. The matter will be heard on May 13. The High Court has issued a notice to the Education Secretary and the Director of School Education in the matter. During the preliminary hearing on Thursday, the government sought some time from the court to respond. The High Court gave the respondents one week's time to file a reply on an application seeking interim relief. Additional Advocate General Rajan Kahol requested the court to give one week's time to file a reply, which was accepted by the court. On the other hand, the petitioners allege that the government took unilateral action against them to suppress their constitutional rights. Under the suspension orders, their headquarters were fixed far away. There is no question of tampering with the record in the charge on which they have been suspended. On April 26, hundreds of teachers protested against.

## 637 SETTLEMENTS OF THE STATE WILL BE CONNECTED WITH ROAD FACILITY, VIKRAMADITYA RAISED THE MATTER IN NEW DELHI

**Diary Times Desk :** Public Works Minister Vikramaditya Singh met Union Minister of State for Rural Development Kamlesh Paswan in New Delhi on Thursday. During this, he urged the Union Minister of State to give early approval to the roads of 637 settlements pending verification in view of inclusion in PMGSY-4. He informed that 57 percent of the roads in the state have been constructed under PMGSY and Rs 250 crore is being spent every year on the maintenance of these roads. Despite this, more funds are required in view of the difficult geographical conditions of the state. He also demanded to provide additional funds for the current financial year for the maintenance of roads. Vikramaditya Singh said that there is a need to upgrade three roads constructed under PMGSY-1. He urged to include these roads in PMGSY-4. He thanked the Union Minister for approving road projects under PMGSY-3 and allowing to extend the work of four road projects of Dodra-Kwar and Bara Bhargal area under PMGSY-1 till March 31, 2026. Union Minister of State for Development Kamlesh Paswan assured all possible help to the state.

## HIMACHAL: DUSTBINS MANDATORY IN COMMERCIAL VEHICLES, ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE MADE AT EVERY BUS STAND AND TAXI STAND TOO

**Diary Times Desk :** Himachal Pradesh government has made it compulsory to keep dustbins in commercial vehicles. From today, if dustbins are not found in commercial vehicles, a fine of Rs 10,000 will be imposed. Vehicles will be checked at entry points and city entry points. The government has issued instructions to keep two dustbins at every bus stand and taxi stand in Himachal. Wet garbage will be put in one and dry garbage in the other. It will not be compulsory for private vehicle owners to keep dustbins, but vehicle owners will also not throw garbage on the road. If they do so, they will be fined. Transport Corporation drivers will have to stop the bus at the stoppage and get the dustbin emptied. Inspections will also be done from Wednesday to see whether people are following the rules or not. Action will be taken against those who violate the rules. It has also been asked to keep dustbins at tourist places. Businessmen coming to Himachal from other states park their vehicles on the roadside and after cleaning, throw the garbage in the jungle or on the roads. This is spreading filth in tourist places. Therefore, the government has made a provision of fine in the Himachal Pradesh Non-Biodegradable Garbage Control Act. Himachal Transport Corporation (HRTC) buses will also have dustbins.

## HIMACHAL: HIGH COURT SAID- ENCROACHERS CANNOT FILE INJUNCTION AGAINST REAL LAND OWNER

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CHHATTISGARH PROFESSOR  
ARRESTED FOR FORCING  
STUDENTS TO RECITE NAMAZ  
AT NSS CAMP

**Diary Times Desk :** A professor of Guru Ghasidas Central University was arrested on Thursday in connection with an alleged forcible namaz recital by some students during a National Service Scheme (NSS) camp in Chhattisgarh's Bilaspur district, a police official said. Professor Dilip Jha was taken into custody in the morning in connection with an FIR registered on April 26 against eight persons over the alleged incident, said Deputy Superintendent of Police Rashmeet Kaur Chawla. Jha and six faculty members of the Bilaspur-based central Guru Ghasidas Central University and a team core leader-cum-student have been booked under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Chhattisgarh Freedom of Religion Act for promoting enmity among groups on the basis of religion, outraging religious feelings and other offences, she said. The accused persons allegedly forced 159 students to offer namaz on March 31 during the NSS camp, held between March 26 and April 1, in Shivtarai village under Kota police station limits of the district, though only four among them were Muslims, the official said.

AIR INDIA'S '\$600 MILLION IN  
LOSSES DUE TO PAK AIRSPACE  
BAN' WARNING: REPORT

**Diary Times Desk :** Air India may pay up to \$600 million in extra costs after Pakistan shuts its airspace to Indian airlines, news agency Reuters said Thursday evening citing a company letter it had accessed. The letter said the costs - which could add up over the next year, assuming Pak airspace remains shut to it - includes increased fuel costs for longer flight times by re-routed planes. The longer flight times, the airline warned, will also impact passengers. As a result, Air India expects a loss of over \$591 million for each year the ban lasts. The ban - ordered in response to diplomatic restrictions by India after the Pahalgam attack, which Delhi has said was supported by the Pak deep state - is expected to stay till May 23. It does not, however, affect international airlines. Air India has, therefore, asked the government for proportionate subsidies, Reuters said, quoting the letter to the Aviation Ministry. "Subsidy for affected international flights is a good, verifiable and fair option ... the subsidy can be removed when the situation improves..." "Impact on AI is maximum due to airspace closure, additional fuel burn, crew." Neither Air India nor the Aviation Ministry has commented so far.

INDIA WILL BECOME THE ENTERTAINMENT HUB  
OF THE WORLD: MUKESH AMBANI



**Diary Times Desk :** "The day is not far when India will become the entertainment hub of the world," Mukesh Ambani, chairman and managing director of Reliance Industries, said in his keynote address at the World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES). He added: "We are living in an era of global media renaissance when two tectonic shifts have changed the landscape of the creative industry globally." The first is geo-economic, and the other is technological. The economic power of the Global South, which accounts for 85 per cent of the world's population, is rapidly rising, and this means most of the creation and consumption of media and entertainment products will start taking place in Asia, Africa, and South America, he said. He added that India is the real power because culture and arts have the power to unite the world.

"WHY DIDN'T THEY...": CHIRAG  
PASWAN SLAMS OPPOSITION'S  
CASTE CENSUS CLAIMS

**Diary Times Desk :** Union Minister and BJP ally Chirag Paswan has hit out at opposition parties, including Congress, for claiming credit for the Narendra Modi government's decision to record caste data in the next Census. Mr Paswan, Union Minister for Food Processing Industries and chief of BJP ally Lok Janshakti Party (Ramvilas), told NDTV that the Opposition parties had their chance to get this done, but did not take it. Asked if the announcement was linked to the upcoming Assembly polls in Bihar, where caste plays a major role, Mr Paswan said the Opposition was trying to create a narrative that the decision was taken just for the election. "A national-level census just for Bihar? If we were to do this, we would have done it before the Lok Sabha election. This was the need of the hour, it was much needed. BJP and its allies were working on it for the longest time," he said. Mr Paswan, who won five seats in Bihar in the election.

PM MODI TO INAUGURATE RS 8,900  
CRORE VIZHINJAM PORT ON MAY 2 IN  
KERALA

**Diary Times Desk :** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the 'Vizhinjam International Deepwater Multipurpose Seaport' worth Rs 8,900 crore on May 2, according to a press release. According to the release, it is the country's first dedicated container transshipment port, representing the transformative advancements being made in India's maritime sector as part of the unified vision of Viksit Bharat. The release noted that Vizhinjam Port, which is strategically important, has been identified as a key priority project that will contribute to strengthening India's position in global trade, enhancing logistics efficiency, and reducing reliance on foreign ports for cargo transshipment. Its natural deep draft of nearly 20 meters and location near one of the world's busiest sea trade routes further strengthen India's position in global trade. Meanwhile, Kerala Ports Minister VN Vasavan addressed a media briefing.

"CHUN CHUN KE JAWAB...": AMIT SHAH'S BIG WARNING AFTER J&K ATTACK

**Diary Times Desk :** Union Home Minister Amit Shah today warned terrorists that India will "hunt each and every one of them" for killing 26 civilians in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam. At an event in Delhi today, Mr Shah in his first public comment on the terror attack said the worst is yet to come for the terrorists. "Whoever carried out the dastardly terror attack in Pahalgam will not be spared. We will hunt down each and every perpetrator of the Pahalgam terror attack. Don't think that you have won by killing 26 people. Every one of you will be made answerable," the Home Minister said at the event to unveil a statue of Upendra Nath Brahma, the leader of Assam's Bodo community, and name a road after him. "Har vyakti ko chun chun ke jawab bhi milega, jawab bhi diya jayega... This is the Narendra Modi government; no one will be spared. It is our resolve to uproot terrorism from every inch of this country and it will be accomplished," he said. The Home Minister, along with Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and other officials also observed a moment of silence in memory of the victims of the terror attack on April 22. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Bodoland Territorial Council chief executive member Promod Boro also attended the Delhi event.





**UKRAINE EXPECTED TO RATIFY US MINERALS DEAL LACKING SECURITY GUARANTEES**

**Diary Times Desk :** Ukraine's parliament is expected to ratify a controversial minerals deal with the United States in a decisive step towards securing the latter's long-term commitment to the war-battered country amid stalled efforts to strike a Ukraine-Russia ceasefire. The deal, signed by Kyiv and Washington on Wednesday, pushed by US President Donald Trump and after protracted negotiations, marks an inflection point of sorts in the war, granting the US priority access to Ukraine's critical minerals as a means of deterring future Russian aggression. However, it stops short of offering specific security guarantees and questions remain over accessing minerals in areas under Russian control. Ukraine's Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrii Sybiha said on Thursday that the deal "marks an important milestone in Ukraine-US strategic partnership aimed at strengthening Ukraine's economy and security".

**DONALD TRUMP ON FALLOUT FROM TRADE WAR: 'US KIDS MAY GET 2 DOLLS INSTEAD OF 30'**

**Diary Times Desk :** US President Donald Trump on Wednesday stated that tariffs imposed by his administration could lead to American children having "two dolls instead of thirty," but China would suffer more from the trade war, reported Associated Press. Trump said about inflation caused by tariffs, "You know, somebody said, 'Oh, the shelves are going to be open.' Well, maybe the children will have two dolls instead of thirty dolls. So maybe the two dolls will cost a couple bucks more than they would normally." Trump also stated that China was having "tremendously difficulty" after being slapped with a total of 145 per cent tariffs because their factories were not able to do any business. The US President's comments come after a new government report showed that the country's economy shrank 0.3 per cent during the first three months of the year, soon after Trump came to power. He took to social media to blame the state of the economy on his predecessor Joe Biden, "This is Biden's Stock Market, not Trump's. Tariffs will soon start kicking in, and companies are starting to move into the USA in record numbers.

**DEAL WITH INDIA CLOSE BUT NOT THERE YET: TOP US TRADE NEGOTIATOR**

**Diary Times Desk :** India and the US are close to a trade deal but they are not there yet, the top US trade negotiator said on Wednesday. US media and policy circles have been agog with talk of a US-India trade deal as the first to be announced in the rush for agreements to beat President Donald Trump's 90-day pause in the implementation of his sweeping levies on nearly all of America's trading partner countries. "I wouldn't say finish line (but) close," Jamieson Greer, the US Trade Representative, told Fox News, when asked in an interview if a deal with India was close to the finish line. "I have a standing call with India's Trade Minister. I sent my team to India for a week. They were here last week and I met with their chief negotiator," he added. Asked about US Vice-President J.D. Vance's visit to India, Greer referred to the announcement by the two sides of a framework for trade negotiations between the two sides. Greer is an old hand at the office of the US Trade Representative.

**TRUMP OFFICIAL MIKE WALTZ, WHO OWNED UP TO 'SIGNALGATE', TO QUIT: REPORT**

**Diary Times Desk :** US National Security Advisor Mike Waltz, who is embroiled in a huge controversy over sending details of airstrike plans in the messaging app Signal, will step down from his post, US media reported today. The Atlantic in March released details of plans for US airstrikes on Iran-backed Houthis in Yemen that were mistakenly shared by Mr Waltz with its editor-in-chief, Jeffrey Goldberg, on Signal. Mr Waltz on March 26 claimed "full responsibility" for mistakenly adding the journalist to the group chat in which top American officials discussed impending strikes in Yemen. "I take full responsibility. I built the group; my job is to make sure everything's coordinated," Mr Waltz told Fox News host Laura Ingraham, adding that he does not personally know Mr Goldberg, the journalist who was added to the chat.

**ISRAEL FACES NATIONAL DANGER AMID RAGING WILDFIRE, PEOPLE ABANDON VEHICLES, FLEE**

**Diary Times Desk :** A massive wildfire sweeping through the outskirts of Jerusalem has triggered a national emergency in Israel, forcing thousands of residents to evacuate and sending thick plumes of smoke over the country's capital. The blaze, described by authorities as one of the largest in the nation's history, erupted on Wednesday-coinciding with Israel's Memorial Day for fallen soldiers-and has rapidly spread due to dry conditions and strong winds. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned that the rapidly advancing flames could reach Jerusalem itself, calling it "a national emergency, not just a local one". He emphasised the need for more fire engines and firebreaks, saying, "The priority right now is defending Jerusalem." Thick smoke billowed above highways as firefighters battled the flames, with the military deployed to assist in evacuation and rescue efforts. Israel's emergency medical service, Magen David Adom (MDA), said it had treated 23 people so far.

**GLOBAL NUCLEAR FUSION PROJECT READY WITH WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL MAGNET**

**Diary Times Desk :** A much-delayed nuclear fusion project involving more than 30 countries is ready to assemble the world's most powerful magnet - a key part of efforts to generate clean energy by smashing atoms together at super-high temperatures. The International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) project, based in southern France and backed by the United States, China, Japan, Russia and the European Union, needs the magnetic system to create an "invisible cage" to confine super-hot plasma particles that combine and fuse to release energy. ITER said late on Wednesday that the final component of the system - the central solenoid - had been completed and tested by the United States, and assembly was now underway. "It is like the bottle in a bottle of wine: of course the wine is maybe more important than the bottle, but you need the bottle in order to put the wine inside," said Pietro Barabaschi, ITER's director general. The magnet was originally scheduled for completion in 2021, but has been beset by delays.

**"DON'T PRETEND TO BE DEAF, DUMB": CHINA CLAIMS COVID-19 ORIGINATED IN US**

**Diary Times Desk :** The Covid-19 pandemic originated from the United States and not Wuhan, China said on Wednesday, accusing Washington of "shifting the blame". The statement came in response to the US government's latest claims that the virus likely leaked from a lab in Wuhan, China. China hit back, accusing the US of "shamelessly politicising" the virus' origins. In a white paper, Chinese officials said, "Substantial evidence suggested the Covid-19 might have emerged in the United States earlier than its officially-claimed timeline, and earlier than the outbreak in China." The paper also focused on Beijing's long-standing position that a lab leak is "extremely unlikely," citing a joint World Health Organization (WHO)-China study. "The US government, instead of facing squarely its failure in response to COVID-19 and reflecting on its shortcomings, has tried to shift the blame and divert people's attention by shamelessly politicising SARS-CoV-2 origins tracing," the Chinese government said. The US should not "pretend to be deaf and dumb," they said. The white paper alleged Washington evaded responsibility and attempted to distract from its mishandling of the pandemic.

## PUNJAB CONVENES SPECIAL ASSEMBLY SESSION ON MONDAY AFTER BBMB'S MOVE TO RELEASE WATER TO HARYANA

**Diary Times Desk :** The Punjab government on Thursday convened a special Vidhan Sabha session on Monday on the issue of Haryana being given additional water from the Bhakra dam. An all-party meeting has also been convened on Friday. The decision was taken at a meeting of the AAP ministers and MLAs called on an urgent basis. Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal were present in the meeting. The meeting was convened to discuss the emerging situation after the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) order to release 8,500 cusecs of water to Haryana. Meanwhile, the Punjab government has intensified security around the Nangal dam after the BBMB on Wednesday evening decided to release water to Haryana, a move which drew strong opposition from CM Mann, who said they would not tolerate "robbery" of Punjab's rights. Mann visited the Nangal dam in Rupnagar district, where his minister Harjot Singh Bains, along with party workers, staged a dharna in protest against the BBMB's decision of giving water to Haryana.



## NO DROP OF PUNJAB'S WATER WILL BE DIVERTED TO HARYANA: MOHINDER BHAGAT

**Diary Times Desk :** Punjab Horticulture and Defence Services Welfare Minister Mohinder Bhagat on Thursday strongly opposed the BJP-led Union Government's unilateral decision to release Punjab's share of water to Haryana, calling it a grave injustice to the people of the state. Staging a protest at Babu Jagjivan Ram Chowk, accompanied by District Planning Committee chairman Amritpal Singh, Bhagat said the decision disregards Punjab's rights and is a direct attack on the state's autonomy. "The Union Government's dictatorial move will not be tolerated. The Punjab Government under Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann will go to any extent to protect Punjab's water," he asserted. Bhagat accused the Centre of pursuing a discriminatory agenda against non-BJP ruled states like Punjab and West Bengal. "Punjab's water belongs to Punjabis. We will not allow even a single drop to be diverted to Haryana, which has already received its due share," he said. Highlighting the widespread resentment, the Minister said that AAP ministers and MLAs have launched state-wide protests to express Punjabis' collective outrage.

## BBMB WATER RELEASE ORDER TO HARYANA SPARKS CONTROVERSY; 2 OFFICERS TRANSFERRED

**Diary Times Desk :** A day after the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) ordered that 8,500 cusecs of water be released to Haryana from the Bhakra dam, the Director of Water Regulation at Nangal, Akashdeep Singh (who is from Punjab), has been transferred out. He has been replaced by the Haryana cadre Director, Sanjeev Kumar, who has now been given the charge of Water Regulation. With this move, the BBMB is hopeful of implementing its decision of releasing additional water to Haryana, which the Punjab government has been objecting to. Sources say that, probably on the instructions of the Punjab government, Akashdeep Singh had been insisting that he would release water to Haryana only upon receipt of an indent for the release of water from Punjab, as specified in the Regulation Manual. Interestingly, the transfer orders of the two officers who have swapped places mention that the transfer is being made at the request of Akashdeep Singh. The latter has now also sent a letter to BBMB denying having made any such request. Even as the Punjab government has started exploring its legal options, the Chief Engineer of Punjab has written a letter to BBMB stating that the newly posted Director.

## UPROAR IN MC HOUSE AS BJP DISTRIBUTES SWEETS OVER FUND ASSURANCE BY GUV

**Diary Times Desk :** Distributing sweets over the assurance given by Punjab Governor and UT Administrator Gulab Chand Kataria about giving Rs 238 crore to the cash-starved Municipal Corporation created a ruckus in the General House meeting of Municipal Corporation (MC) here today. The Congress and AAP alleged that the BJP councillors and Mayor Harpreet Kaur Babla disrespected the victims of the Pahalagam terror attack by distributing sweets. The Congress councillors walked out of the meeting and even wrote to the UT Administrator, seeking the Mayor's resignation and an apology by the BJP councillors to the public. Leader of the Opposition from AAP Jaswinder Kaur, along with all party councillors, also boycotted the meeting. It all started when the Mayor told the staff to distribute the photocopies of The Tribune's exclusive interview with the Governor among all councillors just before the meeting began. While quoting the news report, which appeared in these columns on Wednesday, she thanked the Governor for assuring that the MC would get Rs 238-crore fund.



## SUPREME COURT EXPUNGES STRICTURES AGAINST HARYANA'S ADDITIONAL ADVOCATE GENERAL

**Diary Times Desk :** Terming it "wholly unwarranted", the Supreme Court has expunged certain strictures passed by the Punjab and Haryana High Court against Haryana's Additional Advocate General Deepak Sabharwal. "We find that the said observations, which are bordering on strictures, were wholly unwarranted having regard to the facts and circumstances of the case. We set aside the impugned order of the high court by also expunging all those observations as against the state and/or learned Additional Advocate General, representing the state," a bench led by Justice BV Nagarathna said. The top court – which had on February 17 stayed certain strictures – disapproved of the high court passing a lengthy order despite the death of the petitioner. "In the circumstances, the high court could have simply disposed of the matter by recording the said fact (of the petitioner's death). However, the high court has proceeded to pass a lengthy order of about 26 paragraphs and in the said order apart from recording the fact that the petitioner in the said matter was since deceased nevertheless proceeded to make certain observations against the state represented by learned Additional Advocate General," it said.

## 'DON'T TARGET MUSLIMS OR KASHMIRIS': LT. VINAY NARWAL'S WIFE APPEALS TO NATION ON HIS BIRTHDAY

**Diary Times Desk :** On the birth anniversary of Lt. Vinay Narwal – who was recently killed in the terror attack at Pahalgam, Kashmir – his wife Himanshi today made an emotional appeal to the nation. "We should not target Muslims or Kashmiris. We want peace," she asserted. She also demanded justice, saying, "Those who were involved in this attack should get a strict punishment." To mark the day, his family members organised a blood donation camp in collaboration with various social organisations. A large number of people, including Lieutenant Narwal's family members, donated blood to pay tributes to the young officer. Himanshi, who tied the knot with Vinay on April 16, said that she would also follow the path of service to nation shown by her husband. "The nation should pray for Vinay's peace where he is. We are here today not to mourn but to honour his spirit through service," she added. Lieutenant Narwal's sister Srishti expressed her gratitude.



**FIRE AT NAUNI  
UNIVERSITY'S CANTEEN  
CAUSES EXTENSIVE  
DAMAGE**

**Diary Times Desk :** A canteen located near the campus of Dr YS Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry, Nauni, caught fire last night, causing a loss of Rs 5 lakh. The fire spread within no time due to the presence of inflammable material like fuel inside and it gutted the entire canteen comprising ration, utensils, racks, cupboards, etc. No person was injured in the fire. "The fire staff was informed around 10.20 pm last night. A four-member crew doused the fire by utilising one water tender after several hours of meticulously fighting the flames," informed Santosh Sharma, Commandant, Home Guards. The canteen was being run by one Uday Thakur. Though the cause of the fire was yet to be ascertained, short-circuit was assessed as the preliminary reason.

**SUKHU: CABINET TO  
TAKE CALL ON RAISING  
RETIREMENT AGE,  
PENSION  
COMMUTATION**

**Diary Times Desk :** Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu today said that the Cabinet would take the final call on the issues of increasing the retirement age of employees and the commutation of their pension. "The Cabinet Sub-committee on Resource Mobilisation has recommended to the state government to rethink on the issue of pension commutation, as 40 per cent of the pension is given to an employee on superannuation," he said while talking to mediapersons here. The Cabinet Sub-committee on Resource Mobilisation, headed by Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri, has made these recommendations to improve the financial health of the state. Sukhu said, "I very well understand the importance of pension and its commutation for a retired employee, as it is with this amount he builds his house and lives the remaining life. Today, 1,500 employees retired and the file regarding their pension commutation was put before me. I decided that they should get the commuted pension. I admit that the financial health of the state is not very good but at the same time, we have to look at the whole issue from the perspective of the employees."

**HIMACHAL TOURISM CORP HAS REGISTERED OVER RS100 CR  
TURNOVER FOR FIRST TIME: CM**

**Diary Times Desk :** The Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (HPTDC) has registered a turnover of over Rs 100 crore for the first time, said Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu while presiding over a meeting of the corporation and the Tourism Department here today. He added that this milestone was made possible due to the earnest efforts of the state government. He said that the HPTDC had achieved an annual turnover of Rs 78 crore during the tenure of the previous BJP government and it had risen to Rs 107 crore under the present state government though there were challenges posed by natural disaster. He directed the officers concerned to improve services across the HPTDC properties and explore the possibility of leasing its vacant properties on the operation and maintenance basis to private players. The Chief Minister said that due to the profits earned, the HPTDC had been able to clear Rs 41 crore benefits of the pensioners in the past two and a half years while the previous BJP government had disbursed only Rs 26 crore during its five-year rule. He appreciated the purchase agreement reached with the Food and Civil Supplies Corporation for the supply of materials, including ration, groceries and other essential items, to HPTDC hotels.

**GOVT REDUCES WHEAT PROCUREMENT  
TARGET, AS FARMERS SELL PRODUCE TO  
PVT TRADERS**

**Diary Times Desk :** Wheat growers are turning to private traders in the border areas of Punjab to sell their produce, as they are receiving higher prices than the minimum support price (MSP) set by the state government. At Malpur in Baddi, the growers have already contributed 8.55 metric tonnes (MT) of wheat against a target of 9 MT. Last year, this centre had contributed only 7.75 MT against the target of 500 MT, reflecting the growers' preference for selling their produce in private grain markets in places like Ropar in Punjab. The centre at the market yard in Nalagarh, however, has contributed 60.4 MT till now as against the target of 86 MT. The target was scaled down from 500 MT last year, as the government agency procured only 78.3 MT of wheat. At the centre located in the Takarala market yard of Una district, procurement has been rather dismal, as only 41 MT of wheat was purchased against the target of 301 MT. Last year, this centre had supplied 273.5 MT against the target of 1,000 MT. Though procurement targets were set based on production estimates, given the poor response last year, the figures were revised and significantly curtailed this year. The state's target of procuring 10,000 MT of wheat last year was not met and only 2,880.25 MT was purchased.

**LAHAUL WITNESSED 13% SURGE IN  
TOURIST FOOTFALL LAST YR**

**Diary Times Desk :** Picturesque Lahaul and Spiti district has emerged as a key tourist destination in Himachal Pradesh that had witnessed a significant rise in both domestic and foreign tourist arrivals in 2024. As per the official data, the district welcomed 10.55 lakh domestic tourists and 7,504 foreign tourists in 2024, marking a 13.24 per cent increase in the total tourist footfall compared to 2023. This upward trend highlights the growing appeal of the region's serene landscapes, adventure tourism and unique cultural experiences. In 2023, the district had recorded 8.23 lakh domestic and 7,035 foreign tourists, representing a 5.99 per cent increase from 2022 figures. June 2024 stood out as the peak month for domestic tourism, attracting 2.91 lakh visitors, while February 2024 saw the lowest footfall with just 5,213 domestic tourists, primarily due to harsh winter conditions and limited accessibility. In terms of foreign tourist arrivals, July 2024 registered the highest influx with 2,118 visitors, whereas December 2024 recorded the lowest with just 23 international tourists. The upward trajectory began in 2022, when 7.42 lakh domestic and 3,792 foreign tourists visited the district. June in 2022 recorded the highest domestic tourist arrivals of 2.55 lakh.

**CONGRESS POLITICISING NATIONAL SECURITY ISSUE, SAYS HIMACHAL  
LOP JAI RAM THAKUR**

**Diary Times Desk :** Leader of the Opposition Jai Ram Thakur today said that disagreement in politics was acceptable but differences on the matters of national policy, especially national security, were condemnable as was reflected in the statements of Congress leaders. Thakur, while addressing mediapersons here, criticised the Congress for playing politics at a time when the entire country stood united and support for India was pouring in from across the world. "It is shameful that ministers in the Congress government are speaking the language of Pakistan rather than backing Prime Minister Narendra Modi against terrorism," he said. Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu should not take such highly objectionable statements of his Cabinet colleagues lightly, especially on the issue of national security. He objected to social media posts on the Prime Minister posted by Congress leaders and said that the entire nation was ashamed over such a behaviour of the Congress. "At a time when the entire nation should stand united in the fight against terrorism and Pakistan, the Congress is trying to politicise the issue," he added.



## IPL 2025: RAHUL DRAVID'S RR KNOCKED OUT, HARDIK PANDYA'S MI STORM TO NO.1 SPOT

**Diary Times Desk** : Mumbai Indians crushed Rajasthan Royals by 100 runs to end the home team's playoffs hopes in the IPL in Jaipur on Thursday. Batting first, MI scored 217/2. In reply, RR were all out for 117 in 16.1 overs as MI closed in on securing a playoffs berth. MI rode on brisk half-centuries from Rohit Sharma (53) and Ryan Rickelton (61) to post a formidable total. Skipper Hardik Pandya (48\*) and Suryakumar Yadav (48\*) gave finishing touches to MI's innings with their whirlwind knocks. The likes of Jasprit Bumrah (2/15) and Trent Boult (3/28) then rattled the RR batting before leg-spinner Karn Sharma (3/23) wrapped up a big win for the visitors.



### MI SIGN LEGSPINNER RAGHU SHARMA AS REPLACEMENT FOR INJURED VIGNESH PUTHUR

**Diary Times Desk** : Mumbai Indians' (MI) left-arm wristspinner Vignesh Puthur has been ruled out of IPL 2025 with bone stress reactions in both his shins. The franchise has signed uncapped legspinner Raghu Sharma as Puthur's replacement. Puthur had a memorable debut earlier this season, picking up three wickets against Chennai Super Kings (CSK). In all, he took six wickets in five games at an economy rate of 9.08. "Vignesh will continue to be with the team to focus on his recovery and rehabilitation with the Mumbai Indians medical and S&C team," the franchise said in a statement. Raghu, 32, was part of MI's net bowlers and joins the main squad at his base price of INR 30 lakh. Just like Puthur, this will be a maiden IPL stint for him. He has represented Punjab and Puducherry in domestic cricket over the years. In 11 first-class matches, he has 57 wickets at an average of 19.59. He has 14 wickets in nine List A games and three in three T20s.

### LORD'S TO HOST 2026 WOMEN'S T20 WC FINAL

**Diary Times Desk** : The 2026 Women's T20 World Cup, to be hosted by England, shall have its final at Lord's. This development was confirmed by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) on May 1. This will be the third time in a row that an ICC World Cup edition hosted by England will have its summit clash at the iconic venue. The previous women's World Cup hosted by the country, the 50-overs tournament in 2017, had its final at Lord's, as did the men's ODI World Cup in 2019. Coincidentally, England were the winners on both occasions. Apart from Lord's, six other venues have also been earmarked for the tournament. Old Trafford, Headingley, Edgbaston, Hampshire Bowl, The Oval and Bristol County Ground are the venues that will join Lord's in hosting the 2026 women's T20 World Cup. The tournament, featuring 12 teams, begins on June 12 with the final slated to be held on July 5. A total of 30 league fixtures will be played out, with the teams split into two groups of six each. ICC Chair Jay Shah backed the ECB to organise a flawless tournament.

### INJURED SANDEEP SHARMA TO MISS REMAINDER OF IPL 2025

**Diary Times Desk** : Rajasthan Royals fast bowler Sandeep Sharma has been ruled out of the remainder of IPL 2025 with a fractured finger, the franchise confirmed on Thursday (May 1). "He showed immense bravery to continue bowling with this injury in the last match and everyone at the franchise wishes him a full and speedy recovery," a Royals release said. The 31-year-old Sandeep suffered the injury during the Royals' home game against Gujarat Titans while attempting to field a Shubman Gill shot off his own bowling. The bowler was instantly tended to by the team's physio and even continued to bowl the eight remaining balls in his spell. It's a significant blow to the Royals' chances, who at the time of writing, are still alive in the race to the playoffs. Sandeep took nine wickets from 10 games at an economy of 9.89 before he had to be replaced from the playing XI by Akash Madhwal for the game against Mumbai Indians. The Royals release stated that their team management is actively working on finalising his replacement, which will be announced in due course.

### ROHIT SHARMA'S DRS TIMING SPARKS INTERNET STORM AS FANS FUME DURING RR VS MI: 'WHAT'S THE POINT OF HAVING A TIMER?

**Diary Times Desk** : Rohit Sharma's DRS survival during Mumbai Indians' clash against Rajasthan Royals has stirred debate online, with fans questioning the legitimacy of the review timing. The incident occurred in the second over of IPL 2025 league match, when Rohit was trapped in front of the stumps by RR pacer Fazalhaq Farooqi. The on-field umpire raised his finger after a strong appeal, and Rohit initially looked unsure about taking the review. As the 15-second countdown ticked away, he seemed to let it go. However, just as the timer reached zero, Rohit signalled for DRS – either barely in time, or perhaps just after, depending on one's view of the footage. The decision was eventually sent upstairs, and to MI's relief, the third umpire found that the ball had pitched outside leg stump. The on-field decision was overturned, and Rohit survived. He exhaled visibly and cracked a smile, knowing how close he came to walking back early. But the drama didn't end there. Several fans quickly pointed out that the review appeared to be signalled after the 15-second timer had expired. According to DRS regulations, players must opt for a review within the stipulated 15 seconds after a decision is made. The marginal call has since prompted heated reactions online, with many questioning whether the decision should have stood in the first place.

### SHIKHAR DHAWAN CONFIRMS RELATIONSHIP WITH SOPHIE SHINE; WHO IS FORMER INDIA CRICKETER'S NEW-FOUND LOVE?

**Diary Times Desk** : Shikhar Dhawan has confirmed his relationship with Sophie Shine on Thursday in a social media post, thus putting all speculations about the duo to rest. Dhawan and Shine have been dating each other for quite some time and their public appearances together sparked speculations. Although Dhawan kept mum on his relationship, Shine took to Instagram to officially announce it in collaboration with the Indian cricketer. Shine captioned the post "My love (with a red heart emoji)." Lately, Shine has been in and around India, visiting several historical places. She also posted pictures in traditional Indian attire and was also seen making reels with Dhawan. Shine was also spotted with Dhawan at the ICC Champions Trophy, where the former India cricketer was named as a brand ambassador. For the unknown, Shine is Dhawan's second new-found love after the Indian cricketer's divorce from Aesha Mukerji in 2023, citing grounds of cruelty and mental agony.

### INDIA'S SQUAD FOR ENGLAND TOUR: ROHIT SHARMA TO LEAD, TWO IPL STARS SET TO RETURN FOR TESTS: REPORT

**Diary Times Desk** : Rohit Sharma is all set to captain the Indian cricket team in the upcoming Test series against England with the BCCI shortlisting around 35 players for the tour, according to a report by Times Of India. While there was some speculation over Rohit's position following the series loss against Australia, he is expected to stay as captain. The report also claimed that the selectors are keen to find a steady middle-order batter who can No. 5 or 6 with Karun Nair and Devdutt Padikkal being the top contenders. However, Shreyas Iyer and Axar Patel have reportedly not part of the selectors' shortlist as of now. "Rohit is most likely to travel as the board feels that one needs a strong captain through the series, which is likely to be as tough as the Australia tour. With regard to the middle-order, the team management has shown very little confidence in Sarfaraz Khan's ability. Nair and Patidar are seasoned red-ball players and are in fine form. It is likely at least one of them will be in the India 'A' team. As for Iyer, he was dropped last year based on his poor returns in Test cricket. A final call is yet to be taken," a BCCI source said. Sai Sudharsan is also expected to be the back-up opener for the series.