

प्रदेश के अधिकतर जिलों में सुबह से शाम तक दिखा उत्सव का माहौल, रिजल्ट आते ही फूटने लगे पटाखे कुछ मना रहे जीत की खुशी, कई हार के गम में डूबे

जामताड़ा नगर पंचायत में आशा गुप्ता की जीत, भाजपा समर्थित प्रत्याशी को हराया

JAMTARA : जामताड़ा नगर पंचायत चुनाव में इस बार मुकाबला बेहद रोमांचक रहा। कड़े संघर्ष के बाद निर्दलीय प्रत्याशी आशा गुप्ता ने जीत दर्ज करते हुए भाजपा समर्थित उम्मीदवार को 974 मतों से पराजित कर दिया। जामताड़ा नगर पंचायत क्षेत्र में मतगणना पूरी होने के बाद घोषित परिणामों में आशा गुप्ता को कुल 6,880 वोट प्राप्त हुए। दूसरे स्थान पर पूर्व जामताड़ा नगर पंचायत अध्यक्ष रीना कुमारी रहीं, जिन्हें 5,906 मत मिले। दोनों प्रत्याशियों के बीच मतों का अंतर 974 रहा, जिससे यह चुनावी मुकाबला अंतिम चरण तक रोचक बना रहा। परिणाम घोषित होते ही समर्थकों में उत्साह का माहौल देखा गया।



आशा गुप्ता

जामताड़ा नप चुनाव में इस बार बहुकोणीय मुकाबला देखने को मिला। भाजपा समर्थित उम्मीदवार को कड़ी चुनौती देते हुए निर्दलीय प्रत्याशी आशा गुप्ता ने लगातार बढ़त बनाए रखी। शुरूआती रङ्गानों से ही मुकाबला बेहद करीबी रहा, लेकिन अंतिम चरण की गिनती के बाद आशा गुप्ता ने निर्णायक बढ़त हासिल कर ली।

मिहिजाम क्षेत्र में बदला सियासी सनकीकरण

जामताड़ा नगर परिषद के अंतर्गत आने वाले मिहिजाम क्षेत्र में भी इस बार राजनीतिक समीकरण बदले नजर आए। यहां निर्दलीय प्रत्याशी के पक्ष में पड़े वोटों ने चुनावी गणित को नया मोड़ दिया। भाजपा समर्थित खेमे को उम्मीद के अनुरूप समर्थन नहीं मिल सका, जिसका असर अंतिम परिणाम में साफ दिखाई दिया। निर्वाचन अधिकारियों ने बताया कि मतगणना पूरी तरह शांतिपूर्ण और पारदर्शी तरीके से संपन्न हुई। सभी प्रक्रियाएं राज्य निर्वाचन आयोग के दिशा-निर्देशों के तहत पूरी की गईं। आधिकारिक घोषणा के बाद विजयी प्रत्याशी को प्रमाण पत्र सौंप दिया गया।

कोडरमा के डोमचांच नगर पंचायत चुनाव परिणाम घोषित, उमेश वर्मा बने अध्यक्ष

KODERMA : कोडरमा जिले के तीन नगर निकाय कोडरमा नगर पंचायत, झुमरीतिलैया नगर परिषद एवं डोमचांच नगर पंचायत के मतों की गिनती जारी है। इसी क्रम में डोमचांच नगर पंचायत के चुनाव परिणाम घोषित कर दिए गए हैं। डोमचांच नगर पंचायत अध्यक्ष पद के लिए हुए चुनाव में उमेश वर्मा विजयी घोषित किए गए हैं। उन्होंने अपने निकटतम प्रतिद्वंद्वी पप्पू मेहता को 925 मतों के अंतर से पराजित किया। वहीं वार्ड पार्षद पद के लिए घोषित परिणामों के अनुसार वार्ड संख्या 1 से रंजीत कुमार साव, वार्ड 2 से सुनीता देवी, वार्ड 3 से गुडिया देवी, वार्ड 4 से आदर्श कुमार पंकज, वार्ड 6 से शिवकांत सिंह, वार्ड 7 से मंजू देवी, वार्ड 8 से अनंत कुमार, वार्ड 9 से नेहा देवी, वार्ड 10 से मुकेश कुमार, वार्ड 12 से बंटी कुमार, वार्ड 13 से नीलकंठ मेहता तथा वार्ड 14 से पुष्पा देवी विजयी घोषित किए गए हैं। बताया गया कि डोमचांच नगर पंचायत के वार्ड संख्या 5 एवं वार्ड संख्या 11 में किसी भी प्रत्याशी ने चुनाव नहीं लड़ा था, जिसके कारण वहां चुनाव नहीं हो सका। मतगणना केंद्रों पर सुरक्षा के व्यापक इंतजाम किए गए तथा विजयी प्रत्याशियों के समर्थकों में उत्साह का माहौल देखा गया।



उमेश वर्मा

भाजपा समर्थित अनिल उरांव की रोमांचक जीत, दूसरे राउंड में पलट गया पासा

LOHARDAGA : लोहरदगा नगर निकाय चुनाव में मतगणना के दौरान जबरदस्त उतार-चढ़ाव देखने को मिला। पहले राउंड में बढ़त गंवाने के बावजूद दूसरे राउंड की गिनती पूरी होते ही भाजपा समर्थित उम्मीदवार अनिल उरांव ने निर्णायक बढ़त बनाते हुए जीत दर्ज कर ली। इस रोमांचक मुकाबले में अनिल उरांव ने बिना किसी राजनीतिक दल के समर्थन के चुनाव मैदान में उतरे पावन एकमा को पराजित किया। मतगणना के पहले राउंड में पावन एकमा 1,809 मतों से आगे चल रहे थे, जिससे मुकाबला एकतरफा होता दिख रहा था। हालांकि, दूसरे राउंड की गिनती ने पूरा चुनावी समीकरण बदल दिया। दूसरे राउंड



अनिल उरांव

के परिणाम सामने आते ही अनिल उरांव ने बढ़त हासिल कर ली और अंततः जीत अपने नाम कर ली। इसी के साथ लोहरदगा नगर निकाय चुनाव में तस्वीर पूरी तरह साफ हो गई।

शुरु में भाजपा समर्थित उम्मीदवार को थी बढ़त

चुनाव अधिकारियों के अनुसार, दूसरे राउंड की गिनती में भाजपा समर्थित उम्मीदवार को शहरी और अर्ध-शहरी क्षेत्रों से मजबूत समर्थन मिला। इसका सीधा असर मतों की संख्या पर पड़ा और अनिल उरांव ने बढ़त बनाते हुए जीत सुनिश्चित कर ली। परिणाम घोषित होते ही भाजपा खेमे में उत्साह का माहौल देखने को मिला और कार्यकर्ताओं ने एक-दूसरे को मिठाई खिलाकर खुशी जाहिर की। अन्य प्रत्याशियों की स्थिति : तीसरे स्थान पर झामुमो के उम्मीदवार बालमुकुंद लोहरा रहे, जबकि चौथे स्थान पर कांग्रेस समर्थित प्रत्याशी संतोष उरांव को संतोष करना पड़ा।

पहले चक्र में संजीव सिंह सबसे आगे, मतगणना जारी

DHANBAD : धनबाद नगर निकाय चुनाव के तहत राजकीय पॉलिटेक्निक धनबाद परिसर में धनबाद नगर निगम और चिरकुंडा नगर परिषद की मतगणना जारी है। पहले चक्र की मतगणना पूरी हो चुकी है, जिसमें धनबाद नगर निगम मेयर पद पर भाजपा समर्थित उम्मीदवार और रागिनी सिंह के पति, पूर्व विधायक संजीव सिंह ने स्पष्ट बढ़त बना ली है। पहले चक्र में संजीव सिंह को 15,791 वोट मिले हैं, जबकि हराया। अरविंद राणा को 10,524 मत प्राप्त हुए। मतगणना स्थल पर सुरक्षा के पुख्ता इंतजाम किए गए हैं और निर्वाचन आयोग के दिशा-निर्देशों के अनुरूप प्रक्रिया पारदर्शी तरीके से संचालित की जा रही है। अभी कुल 10 चक्र की गिनती शेष है, ऐसे में अंतिम परिणाम आने में समय लगेगा।



हजारीबाग के मेयर बने पत्रकार अरविंद राणा

HAZARIBAG : हजारीबाग नगर निगम के नए मेयर पत्रकार अरविंद राणा बने हैं। उन्होंने करीब पांच हजार वोटों से सरफराज अहमद को हराया। अरविंद राणा को 23,500 वोट मिले, जबकि सरफराज अहमद को 18,543 मत मिले। जीत के बाद अरविंद राणा ने कहा कि मैंने बिना पैसे के चुनाव लड़ा। हजारीबाग के लोगों ने मुझे धन-बल दोनों से मदद की। यह जीत हजारीबाग के लोगों की है। मेरी पहली जिम्मेदारी उनके भरोसे पर खरा उतरना होगा। जीत के बाद



भारत माता की जय बोलकर अपने समर्थकों का अभिवादन स्वीकार किया। उन्हें चुनाव लड़ने के लिए लोगों ने करीब 1,70,000 रुपये दिए थे। हजारीबाग को भाजपा का गढ़ माना जाता है, लेकिन भाजपा समर्थित मेयर पद के उम्मीदवार सुदेश कुमार चंद्रवंशी हार गए। भाजपा ने हजारीबाग में पूरी ताकत झोंक दी थी। राज्यसभा व लोकसभा सांसदों से लेकर विधायक, पार्टी के पदाधिकारी और कार्यकर्ता तक सड़कों पर उतर गए थे। इसके बावजूद हजारीबाग के मतदाताओं ने अरविंद राणा को चुना।

पाकुड़ नए अध्यक्ष पद पर शबरी पाल ने दर्ज की जीत

PAKUR : पाकुड़ नगर परिषद के अध्यक्ष पद के चुनाव परिणाम की आधिकारिक घोषणा कर दी गई है। महिला के लिए आरक्षित इस सीट पर भाजपा की बागी प्रत्याशी शबरी पाल ने झामुमो समर्थित उम्मीदवार शेख सेलिना को 2353 मतों के अंतर से पराजित कर अध्यक्ष पद पर कब्जा जमाया। बहुकोणीय मुकाबले वाले इस चुनाव में कुल 10 प्रत्याशी मैदान में थे, जिससे परिणाम को लेकर व्यापक उत्सुकता बनी हुई थी। घोषित आंकड़ों के अनुसार शबरी पाल को कुल 7816 मत प्राप्त हुए। वहीं झामुमो समर्थित शेख सेलिना को 5463 मत मिले। भाजपा समर्थित प्रत्याशी शंषा साह को 3730 मतों के साथ तीसरा स्थान मिला। कांग्रेस समर्थित उम्मीदवार मोनिता कुमारी को 1034 मत प्राप्त हुए। इस प्रकार शबरी पाल ने अपने निकटतम प्रतिद्वंद्वी पर निर्णायक बढ़त बनाते हुए अध्यक्ष पद हासिल किया। इस बार नगर परिषद अध्यक्ष का पद महिला उम्मीदवार के लिए आरक्षित था। पिछले चुनाव में यह सीट भारतीय जनता पार्टी के कब्जे में थी। हालांकि इस चुनाव में पार्टी की आधिकारिक समर्थित प्रत्याशी को पराजय का सामना करना पड़ा, जबकि बागी उम्मीदवार ने जीत दर्ज की।



खूंटी नगर पंचायत चुनाव : रानी टुटी ने रचा इतिहास, दूसरी बार बनीं अध्यक्ष

PHOTON NEWS KHUNTI : नगर पंचायत चुनाव में मतदाताओं ने एक बार फिर भारतीय जनता पार्टी (भाजपा) समर्थित प्रत्याशी रानी टुटी के सिर पर नगर पंचायत अध्यक्ष का ताज पुनः सजा दिया है। रानी टुटी ने कांग्रेस समर्थित मनोनीत बोदरा को 3879 मतों से पराजित किया। वहीं झारखंड मुक्ति मोर्चा (झामुमो) समर्थित सोनम बागे तीसरे स्थान पर रहीं। अंतिम परिणामों के अनुसार रानी टुटी को 9177 मत प्राप्त हुए हैं। उनकी निकटतम प्रतिद्वंद्वी कांग्रेस समर्थित प्रत्याशी मनोनीत बोदरा को 5298 मत मिले। वहीं झामुमो समर्थित प्रत्याशी सोनम बागे को 2476 मतों से संतोष करना पड़ा। रानी टुटी की इस जीत को शहर के विकास कार्यों पर जनता की मुहर के रूप में देखा जा रहा है। इससे पूर्व, शहर के कदमा स्थित कृषि बाजार समिति के गोदाम में



सनर्थकों के साथ जीत की खुशी मनाती रानी टुटी

बनाए गए मतगणना केंद्र पर कड़ी सुरक्षा व्यवस्था के बीच शुक्रवार की सुबह सात बजे से मतगणना शुरू हुई। पूरे परिसर में प्रशासनिक और पुलिस बल की तैनाती रही। शांतिपूर्ण ढंग से मतगणना संपन्न कराई गई। उल्लेखनीय है कि खूंटी नगर पंचायत में अध्यक्ष पद के साथ-साथ 19 वार्ड पार्षदों के लिए भी मतदान हुआ था। अध्यक्ष पद के लिए रानी टुटी, मनोनीत बोदरा और सोनम बागे सहित वार्ड पार्षदों के

77 उम्मीदवारों ने अपनी किस्मत आजमाई थी। परिणाम घोषित होते ही समर्थकों में उत्साह का माहौल दिखा और विजयी प्रत्याशी को बधाइयों का तांता लग गया। इधर, केंद्र और राज्य की राजनीति में ईंडी गठबंधन के तहत साथ चल रहे कांग्रेस और झारखंड मुक्ति मोर्चा (झामुमो) को खूंटी नगर पंचायत अध्यक्ष पद के चुनाव में अलग-अलग प्रत्याशी को समर्थन देना महंगा पड़ गया।

खूंटी : सड़क हादसे में जीजा-साले की मौत



संदीप प्रजापति व प्रदीप महतो की फाइल फोटो



KHUNTI : खूंटी थाना क्षेत्र के पिपरा टोली में गुरुवार देर रात हुई सड़क दुर्घटना में जीजा-साले की मौत हो गई। मृतकों में बिरहु मोड़ निवासी प्रदीप महतो तथा रांची के नगड़ी थाना क्षेत्र के कुली गांव निवासी संदीप प्रजापति शामिल हैं। जानकारी के अनुसार दोनों मुंडन समारोह में शामिल होकर डोड़मा से स्कूटी से खूंटी लौट रहे थे। प्रदीप महतो के घर से लगभग एक किलोमीटर पहले उनकी स्कूटी पिपरा टोली के पास सड़क किनारे

खड़े ट्रैक्टर की ट्राली से टकरा गई, जिससे दोनों की घटनास्थल पर ही दोनों की मौत हो गई। मृतक प्रदीप महतो के बड़े भाई संदीप महतो ने बताया कि प्रदीप अपने जीजा संदीप प्रजापति के साथ डोड़मा में रहनेवाली बहन के घर मुंडन समारोह में गया था। लौटने के दौरान दोनों हादसे का शिकार हो गए। पुलिस ने शुक्रवार को सदर अस्पताल में दोनों शवों का पोस्टमार्टम कराकर परिजनों को सौंप दिया।

प्रसव के दौरान जच्चा-बच्चा की मौत

सदर अस्पताल में परिजनों ने किया हंगामा, प्रबंधन पर लगाया लापरवाही का आरोप

PHOTON NEWS CHATRA : चतरा स्थित सदर अस्पताल में शुक्रवार को प्रसव के दौरान 22 वर्षीया प्रसूता और उसके नवजात शिशु की मौत हो गई। घटना की जानकारी मिलते ही अस्पताल परिसर में परिजनों ने चिकित्सकीय लापरवाही का आरोप लगाते हुए हंगामा किया। उधर घटना की सूचना मिलने के बाद पुलिस मौके पर पहुंची और स्थिति को नियंत्रित किया। मृतका की पहचान आसमीन प्रवीण के रूप में हुई है। उसकी शादी मो. मोकिम से हुई थी। वह राजपुरा थाना क्षेत्र के चारु गांव की रहने वाली थी। परिजनों ने आरोप लगाया कि प्रसव पीड़ा शुरू होने पर शुक्रवार सुबह करीब 11 बजे उसे सदर अस्पताल में भर्ती कराया गया था। अस्पताल में भर्ती करने के बाद ड्यूटी पर मौजूद



अस्पताल में बिलखते परिजन

स्वास्थ्यकर्मियों ने प्रसूता को एक इंजेक्शन दिया। इंजेक्शन लगाने के तुरंत बाद उसकी तबीयत अचानक बिगड़ गई। परिजनों का दावा है कि कुछ ही देर में स्थिति गंभीर हो गई और बाद में चिकित्सकों ने जच्चा-बच्चा दोनों को मृत घोषित कर दिया। परिवार के सदस्यों ने

अस्पताल प्रबंधन ने कहा- प्रोटोकॉल का किया पालन

अस्पताल प्रबंधन ने लापरवाही के आरोपों से इनकार किया है। प्रबंधन के अनुसार प्रसूता की स्थिति पहले से ही जटिल थी और चिकित्सकीय मानकों के अनुरूप उपचार किया गया। ड्यूटी पर चिकित्सक के रूप में डॉ. सपना अग्रवाल तैनात थीं। अस्पताल प्रशासन का कहना है कि पूरी प्रक्रिया निर्धारित प्रोटोकॉल के तहत की गई।

इंजेक्शन को ही मौत का कारण बताते हुए चिकित्सकीय लापरवाही की जांच की मांग की है। घटना के बाद आक्रोशित परिजनों ने अस्पताल परिसर में विरोध प्रदर्शन किया और जिम्मेदार कर्मियों के खिलाफ कार्रवाई की मांग उठाई। घटना के बाद ड्यूटी पर तैनात

एएनएम के अस्पताल से अनुपस्थित होने की चर्चा ने विवाद की और बढ़ा दिया। परिजनों का कहना है कि संबंधित स्वास्थ्यकर्मी के अस्पताल में मौजूद नहीं होने से संदेह और गहरा गया है। हालांकि इस संबंध में आधिकारिक पुष्टि नहीं हो सकी है।

एवशन दुबई से भागकर पाकिस्तान में ली शरण, रेड कॉर्नर नोटिस जारी कराने की तैयारी

गैंगस्टर प्रिंस खान को आतंकी घोषित करने की अनुशंसा

PHOTON NEWS DHANBAD :

धनबाद के गैंगस्टर प्रिंस खान को लेकर झारखंड पुलिस ने बड़ा कदम उठाया है। पुलिस ने उसे आतंकी घोषित करने की अनुशंसा की है। खुफिया एजेंसियों से मिली जानकारी और दर्ज मामलों के आधार पर यह प्रस्ताव पुलिस मुख्यालय को भेजा गया है। अब यह मामला राज्य सरकार के गृह विभाग से होते हुए केंद्र सरकार तक पहुंचेगा। सूत्रों के अनुसार, खुफिया एजेंसियों ने झारखंड पुलिस को जानकारी दी है कि प्रिंस खान ने दुबई में दबाव बढ़ने के बाद पाकिस्तान का रुख किया। आरोप है कि वहां उसने प्रतिबंधित आतंकी संगठनों से संपर्क साधा। एजेंसियों का दावा है कि वह पाकिस्तान में बैठकर झारखंड समेत देश के अन्य हिस्सों में आपराधिक गतिविधियों का नेटवर्क संचालित कर रहा है।



प्रिंस खान की फाइल फोटो

रेड कॉर्नर नोटिस और पासपोर्ट रद्द

झारखंड एटीएस की अनुशंसा पर सीबीआई के माध्यम से उसके खिलाफ रेड कॉर्नर नोटिस जारी किया जा चुका है। इसके साथ ही उसका पासपोर्ट रद्द कर दिया गया है। उसकी चल-अचल संपत्तियों की कुर्की की कार्रवाई भी की गई है। रेड कॉर्नर नोटिस जारी होने के बाद इंटरपोल के जरिए उसकी तलाश अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर की जा रही है। इससे उसके विदेश में छिपे रहने की संभावनाएं कम हो जाती हैं।

पुलिस अधिकारियों का कहना है कि यदि जांच में ये तथ्य पुष्ट होते हैं, तो यह मामला केवल संगठित

अपराध तक सीमित नहीं रहेगा, बल्कि राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा से भी जुड़ जाएगा।

125 से अधिक मामलों में रंगदारी का आरोप

प्रिंस खान के खिलाफ झारखंड के विभिन्न थानों में 125 से अधिक आपराधिक मामले दर्ज हैं। उस पर कारोबारियों से रंगदारी मांगने, धमकी देने और संगठित अपराध गिरोह चलाने के आरोप हैं। पुलिस का कहना है कि विदेश में रहते हुए भी वह डिजिटल माध्यमों और सहयोगियों के जरिए नेटवर्क संचालित कर रहा था। जांच एजेंसियों का मानना है कि उसका आपराधिक साम्राज्य केवल स्थानीय स्तर तक सीमित नहीं है, बल्कि अंतरराष्ट्रीय संपर्कों से भी जुड़ा हो सकता है।

आतंकी घोषित करने की प्रक्रिया

धनबाद पुलिस ने पुलिस मुख्यालय को प्रस्ताव भेजा है। इसके बाद यह प्रस्ताव राज्य सरकार के गृह विभाग के पास जाएगा। वहां से अनुमोदन के बाद मामला केंद्र सरकार को भेजा जाएगा। केंद्र स्तर पर समीक्षा के बाद किसी व्यक्ति को आतंकी घोषित करने का अंतिम निर्णय लिया जाता है।

पुलिस का कहना है कि उपलब्ध साक्ष्यों और खुफिया रिपोर्ट के आधार पर आगे की कार्रवाई की जाएगी। फिलहाल बहुस्तरीय जांच जारी है और एजेंसियां उसके नेटवर्क की कड़ियों को खंगालने में जुटी हैं।

BRIEF NEWS

विधानसभा में उठाया गया कटिहार सदर अस्पताल का मुद्दा

KATI HAR : बिहार विधानसभा के चालू बजट सत्र में पूर्व उप मुख्यमंत्री तारकिशोर प्रसाद ने कटिहार सदर अस्पताल में आईसीयू वार्ड की बदहाली पर सवाल उठाया। उन्होंने कहा कि विशेषज्ञ चिकित्सकों की कमी के कारण आईसीयू वार्ड क्रियाशील नहीं हो पा रहा है, जिससे मरीजों को महंगे निजी अस्पतालों में जाना पड़ रहा है। मंत्री स्वास्थ्य विभाग, मंगल पांडेय ने अपने जवाब में बताया कि सात निश्चय-3 के तहत सभी जिला अस्पतालों को अति विशिष्ट चिकित्सा अस्पताल के रूप में विकसित करने के लिए काम किया जा रहा है। उन्होंने

पुलिस सप्ताह कार्यक्रम में डीआईजी ने बच्चों को किया सम्मानित

BUXAR : बिहार पुलिस सप्ताह के अंतर्गत शुक्रवार को दुमरांव थाना परिसर में कार्यक्रम आयोजित किया गया, जिसमें डीआईजी सत्यप्रकाश व आरक्षी अधीक्षक शुभम आर्य ने क्विज प्रतियोगिता में उत्कृष्ट प्रदर्शन करने वाले प्रतिभागियों को सम्मानित किया। पुलिस अधिकारियों ने विद्यार्थियों का उत्साहवर्धन करते हुए पुलिस-पब्लिक मैत्री को मजबूत बनाने का संदेश दिया। क्विज प्रतियोगिता में 17 जोड़ियों के कुल 34 प्रतिभागियों ने हिस्सा लिया। प्रतियोगिता में 170 प्रश्न पूछे गए, प्रत्येक प्रश्न एक अंक का था और गलत उत्तर पर नैगेटिव मार्किंग भी थी। रोचक और प्रतिस्पर्धात्मक माहौल में सभी टीमों ने सराहनीय प्रदर्शन किया। प्रतियोगिता में प्रथम स्थान आनुषी-अंशु की जोड़ी ने प्राप्त किया। द्वितीय स्थान अंशिका-अनुष्का और तृतीय स्थान शुभांगी-मुस्कान की जोड़ी को मिला।

नौ सूत्री मांगों को लेकर भाकपा ने किया धरना-प्रदर्शन

ARARIA : फारबिसगंज प्रखंड सह अंचल कार्यालय में शुक्रवार को भारतीय कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी ने जमीन जनवाद सहित अन्य नौ सूत्री मांगों को लेकर एकदिवसीय धरना प्रदर्शन किया। कामरेड शिवनारायण सिंह की अध्यक्षता में धरना प्रदर्शन से पहले भाकपा के कार्यकर्ताओं द्वारा ड्रगडुंगी बजाते हुए आक्रोश मार्च निकाला गया,जो एफसीआई चौक से निकलकर प्रखंड सह अंचल कार्यालय में धरना प्रदर्शन और आमसभा में तब्दील हो गई।धरना प्रदर्शन में बड़ी संख्या में पुरुषों के साथ साथ महिला कार्यकर्ता मौजूद थे। मौके पर कामरेड गेना लाल महतो ने सरकार की जनविरोधी नीतियों का विरोध करते हुए कहा कि सरकार की घोषणा एवं बनी कानून के बावजूद भूमिहीनों के बासगीत पर्चा का हजारों आवेदन लंबित पड़े हुए हैं।सरकार की शिलिंग एवं भुगतान वाली हजारों एकड़ जमीन पर फर्जी तथेके से बड़े भूधारियों का कब्जा है।

सीमांचल दौरे के अंतिम दिन पूर्णिया में गृह मंत्री अमित शाह ने की बैठक

700 किमी लंबी भारत-नेपाल सीमा की निगरानी पर किया गया मंथन

AGENCY PURNIA : केंद्रीय गृह मंत्री अमित शाह ने अपने तीन दिवसीय सीमांचल दौरे के अंतिम दिन शुक्रवार को पूर्णिया में भारत-नेपाल सीमा से जुड़े सुरक्षा मुद्दों पर उच्चस्तरीय समीक्षा बैठक की। जीरो माइल स्थित एक होटल में आयोजित यह बैठक में लगभग 700 किलोमीटर लंबी भारत-नेपाल अंतरराष्ट्रीय सीमा की निगरानी, प्रबंधन और सुरक्षा समन्वय को लेकर विस्तृत चर्चा की गई। बैठक में सीमावर्ती जिलों की सुरक्षा व्यवस्था, अवैध घुसपैठ पर रोक तथा खुफिया एजेंसियों के बीच समन्वय को लेकर भी विस्तृत चर्चा की गई। सुरक्षा एजेंसियों की रिपोर्ट के आधार पर सीमावर्ती क्षेत्रों में संदिग्ध गतिविधियों, तस्करी और अवैध आवाजाही पर प्रभावी नियंत्रण के लिए नई रणनीति तैयार की गई। सीमा क्षेत्रों में तकनीकी निगरानी बढ़ाने, खुफिया तंत्र को मजबूत करने तथा विभिन्न एजेंसियों के बीच बेहतर समन्वय स्थापित करने पर विशेष जोर दिया गया।



सीमांचल क्षेत्र के नेपाल एवं बांग्लादेश सीमा से सटे होने के कारण इसे संवेदनशील मानते हुए सुरक्षा व्यवस्था और सुदृढ़ करने के निर्देश दिए गए। सीमावर्ती थानों की सक्रियता बढ़ाने, सशस्त्र सीमा बल (एसएसबी) और स्थानीय पुलिस के बीच बेहतर तालमेल तथा नियमित संयुक्त अभियान चलाने पर सहमति बनी। प्रशासनिक सूत्रों के अनुसार, बैठक में सीमा प्रबंधन से जुड़े कई अहम बिंदुओं की समीक्षा की गई और भविष्य की कार्ययोजना पर

सहमति बनी। बैठक के बाद सीमा सुरक्षा और निगरानी व्यवस्था को लेकर जल्द ही प्रशासनिक एवं तकनीकी स्तर पर ठोस कदम उठाए जाने की संभावना जताई जा रही है। बैठक के बाद केंद्रीय गृह राज्य मंत्री नित्यानंद राय तथा बिहार सरकार की खाद्य एवं उपभोक्ता संरक्षण मंत्री लेशी सिंह भाजपा कार्यालय पहुंचीं, जहां कार्यक्रमताओं ने उनका स्वागत किया। बैठक के एजेंडे से जुड़े सवालों पर नित्यानंद राय ने कहा कि विस्तृत जानकारी संबंधित

अधिकारी ही साझा करेंगे। मंत्री लेशी सिंह ने कहा कि गृह मंत्री का सीमांचल दौरा क्षेत्र के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है और इससे सीमा सुरक्षा के साथ-साथ क्षेत्रीय विकास को भी गति मिलेगी। उन्होंने कहा कि प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी, गृह मंत्री अमित शाह और मुख्यमंत्री नीतीश कुमार सीमांचल के सर्वांगीण विकास के लिए प्रतिबद्ध हैं। इससे पूर्व पूर्णिया सदर विधायक विजय खेमका ने गृह मंत्री से मुलाकात कर मांग पत्र साँपा। उन्होंने सीमांचल क्षेत्र में

कथित फर्जी आधार कार्ड एवं राशन कार्ड की उच्चस्तरीय जांच कराने तथा घुसपैठ के मुद्दे पर सख्त कार्रवाई की मांग की। साथ ही पूर्णिया में मखाना बोर्ड की स्थापना, दारभंगा की तर्ज पर एम्स की स्थापना तथा पूर्णिया से विराटनगर तक 'महाभारत सर्किट' विकसित करने का प्रस्ताव भी रखा। उनका कहना था कि पूर्णिया, किशनगंज और अररिया क्षेत्र में महाभारत काल से जुड़े ऐतिहासिक अवशेष मौजूद हैं, जिन्हें संरक्षित कर पर्यटन विकास से जोड़ा जा सकता है। समीक्षा बैठक में केंद्रीय गृह राज्य मंत्री नित्यानंद राय, बिहार के उपमुख्यमंत्री सह गृह मंत्री स्मार्ट चौधरी, राज्य के पुलिस महानिदेशक, पुलिस महानिरीक्षक, सीमावर्ती रेंज के अधिकारी, पूर्णिया, अररिया, कटिहार और किशनगंज सहित सीमावर्ती जिलों के उपायुक्त एवं पुलिस अधीक्षक, 12 जिलों के पुलिस उपाधीक्षक सहित कई अन्य वरिष्ठ प्रशासनिक एवं पुलिस अधिकारी मौजूद रहे।

आवास योजना में रिश्वत मांगना पड़ा भारी, सहायक को किया गया बर्खास्त

AGENCY GOPALGANJ : प्रधानमंत्री आवास योजना (ग्रामीण) में रिश्वत मांगने के आरोप में जिला प्रशासन ने बड़ी कार्रवाई करते हुए ग्राम पंचायत कसराघाट के ग्रामीण आवास सहायक को तत्काल प्रभाव से सेवा से मुक्त कर दिया है। साथ ही मामले में प्राथमिकी दर्ज कर आगे की कानूनी कार्रवाई शुरू कर दी गई है। उप विकास आयुक्त गौरव कुमार के निर्देश पर यह कार्रवाई की गई। जानकारी के अनुसार, सिधवलिया प्रखंड के ग्राम पंचायत राजझकरसघाट निवासी लाभुक पणू कुमार मांझी ने शिकायत दर्ज कराई थी कि उन्हें आवास योजना के तहत भुगतान करने के एवज में 30,000 रूपए की रिश्वत मांगी जा रही है। शिकायत के समर्थन में उन्होंने ऑडियो रिकॉर्डिंग भी उपलब्ध कराई। इस मामले को लेकर भाजपा विधायक मिथलेश



तिवारी ने विधानसभा में मामला को उठाया। रिश्वत मांगने का ऑडियो विधानसभा अध्यक्ष को दिया। मामले की गंभीरता को देखते हुए 25 फरवरी को एक संयुक्त जांच दल का गठन किया गया। जांच टीम में डीआरडीए के निदेशक राकेश कुमार चौबे, लेखा प्रशासन एवं स्वनियोजन तथा प्रभारी एमआईएस पदाधिकारी शामिल थे। टीम को 24 घंटे के भीतर रिपोर्ट सौंपने का निर्देश दिया गया था। जांच में पुष्टि हुई कि लाभुक को वित्तीय वर्ष 2025-26 में प्रधानमंत्री आवास योजना ग्रामीण के तहत लाभ स्वीकृत किया गया था।

यातायात नियम तोड़ने वालों के खिलाफ होगी कार्रवाई : एसएसपी

AGENCY BHAGALPUR : शहर में बढ़ती सड़क दुर्घटनाओं और यातायात नियमों की अनदेखी को देखते हुए वरीय पुलिस अधीक्षक प्रमोद कुमार ने शुक्रवार को आयोजित प्रेस कॉन्फ्रेंस में कहा कि अब केवल दोपहिया वाहनों पर ही नहीं, बल्कि चारपहिया वाहनों पर भी सख्ती से चालान काटा जाएगा। एसएसपी ने बताया कि अबईटीग्रेटेड कमांड एंड कंट्रोल सेंटर के तहत शहर में विशेष निगरानी रखी जाएगी। अत्याधुनिक सीसीटीवी कैमरों और डिजिटल मॉनिटरिंग सिस्टम के माध्यम से उन वाहन चालकों की पहचान की जाएगी जो सीट बेल्ट नहीं लगाते हैं, तेज गति से वाहन चलाते हैं या अन्य ट्रैफिक नियमों का उल्लंघन करते हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि यदि कोई चालक ट्रैफिक नियमों का



पालन नहीं करता है तो उसके विरुद्ध विधि सम्मत कार्रवाई करते हुए आर्थिक दंड लगाया जाएगा। यह अभियान पूरी तैयारी के साथ 1 मार्च से प्रारंभ किया जाएगा। पुलिस प्रशासन ने स्पष्ट किया है कि यह कार्रवाई किसी विशेष वर्ग को लक्षित करने के लिए नहीं बल्कि आम जनता की सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित करने के उद्देश्य से की जा रही है। एसएसपी ने आम नागरिकों से

अपील की कि वे ट्रैफिक नियमों का पालन करें, सीट बेल्ट और हेलमेट का अनिवार्य रूप से उपयोग करें तथा निर्धारित गति सीमा के भीतर ही वाहन चलाएं। उन्होंने कहा कि नियमों का पालन करने से न केवल दुर्घटनाओं में कमी आएगी बल्कि जान-माल की सुरक्षा भी सुनिश्चित होगी। प्रशासन का मानना है कि तकनीक आधारित निगरानी व्यवस्था से पारदर्शिता बढ़ेगी और बिना किसी पक्षपात के कार्रवाई संभव हो सकेगी। आने वाले दिनों में शहर के प्रमुख चौराहों, व्यस्त सड़कों और संवेदनशील क्षेत्रों में विशेष जांच अभियान भी चलाया जाएगा। पुलिस प्रशासन ने यह भी स्पष्ट किया कि अभियान के दौरान नियम तोड़ने वालों पर सख्त कार्रवाई और आर्थिक दंड दोनों लगाए जाएंगे।

रहें सावधान, पटना में भी बर्ड फ्लू की पुष्टि, 6000 मुर्गियों को किया गया नष्ट

AGENCY PATNA : पटना के चितकोहरा स्थित सरकारी पोल्ट्री फार्म में बर्ड फ्लू संक्रमण की पुष्टि होने के बाद पूरे जिला प्रशासन और पशुपालन विभाग में हड़कंप मच गया है। बड़ी संख्या में मुर्गियों की मौत के बाद जांच कराई गई थी, जिसमें एवियन इन्फ्लुएंजा वायरस की पुष्टि हुई है। रिपोर्ट मिलते ही प्रशासन ने तुरंत एहतियाती कदम उठाते हुए फार्म परिसर में मौजूद करीब 6000 मुर्गियों को नष्ट कर दिया और पूरे क्षेत्र को सैनिटाइज करवाया गया। इन मुर्गियों को गहरा गड्ढा खोदकर दफनाया गया। इसके साथ ही संक्रमण को फैलने से रोकने के लिए पोल्ट्री उत्पादों की आवाजाही पर सख्ती बढ़ा दी गई है। बताया जा रहा है कि बीते कुछ दिनों



से सरकारी पोल्ट्री फार्म में लगातार मुर्गियों की मौत हो रही थी। पहले इसे सामान्य बीमारी माना गया, लेकिन जब मृत मुर्गियों की संख्या तेजी से बढ़ी तो पशुपालन विभाग ने इसे गंभीरता से लिया। फार्म से नमूने लेकर जांच के लिए प्रयोगशाला भेजे गए। जांच रिपोर्ट में बर्ड फ्लू की पुष्टि होते ही स्वास्थ्य विभाग, नगर निगम और जिला प्रशासन की संयुक्त टीम मौके पर पहुंची। फार्म परिसर को पूरी तरह सील कर दिया

गया और सभी संक्रमित तथा संपर्क में आई मुर्गियों को वैज्ञानिक तरीके से गड्ढे में दफन किया गया। इसके बाद पूरे इलाके में दवा और चूने के का छिड़काव करवाया गया। प्रशासन ने सरकारी पोल्ट्री फार्म के आसपास के 9 किलोमीटर के क्षेत्र को निगरानी जोन घोषित कर दिया है। इस क्षेत्र में अभी अगले 2 महीने तक मुर्गियों, अंडों और पोल्ट्री चारे की खरीद-बिक्री और आवाजाही पर अस्थायी रोक लगा दी गई है।

बंद पड़ी सासामुसा चीनी मिल फिर की जाएगी चालू, हेलीकॉप्टर से पहुंचे एसीएस व चेयरमैन

AGENCY GOPALGANJ : बिहार सरकार द्वारा राज्य की 25 बंद पड़ी चीनी मिलों को दोबारा चालू करने की कवायद अब जमीन पर उतरती दिख रही है। इसी क्रम में शुक्रवार को गन्ना उद्योग विभाग के अपर मुख्य सचिव के. सेंथिल और कर्नाटक आधारित निरानी ग्रुप के चेयरमैन दुर्गेश निरानी हेलीकॉप्टर से गोपालगंज पहुंचे और वर्र्णों से बंद पड़ी सासामुसा चीनी मिल का स्थलीय निरीक्षण किया। इस दौरान गन्ना उद्योग विभाग के आयुक्त जेपीएन सिंह समेत कई स्थानीय संभावनाओं का आकलन किया जा रहा है। निरानी ने बताया कि सासामुसा मिल के पास लगभग 40-45 एकड़ भूमि उपलब्ध है, और



बिहार में उनकी करीब नौ इकाइयां संचालित हैं। उन्होंने बताया कि रीगा चीनी मिल (सीतामढ़ी) को पुनः चालू करने की प्रक्रिया शुरू हो चुकी है और अब सासामुसा मिल की तकनीकी व व्यावसायिक संभावनाओं का आकलन किया जा रहा है। निरानी ने बताया कि सासामुसा मिल के पास लगभग 40-45 एकड़ भूमि उपलब्ध है, और

जबकि कुछ जमीन लीज पर है। प्रस्ताव है कि यहां केवल गन्ने से चीनी उत्पादन ही नहीं, बल्कि चावल और मकई किसानों से बायो-ग्रेडवट खरीदकर उसका भी उत्पादन किया जाए। इस बहु-उत्पाद मॉडल से गन्ना, धान और मकई-तीनों फसलों के किसानों को सीधा बाजार और बेहतर मूल्य मिल सकेगा। हालांकि विस्तारित

परियोजना के लिए अतिरिक्त भूमि की आवश्यकता होगी, जिस पर राज्य सरकार से चर्चा की जाएगी। अपर मुख्य सचिव के. सेंथिल ने कहा कि निरीक्षण के दौरान किसानों और पूर्व कर्मचारियों के बकाया भुगतान के मुद्दे पर भी विस्तार से बातचीत हुई। सरकार इस दिशा में गंभीर है और जल्द ही ठोस निर्णय लिया जा सकता है। उन्होंने संकेत दिया कि पुनरुद्धार की प्रक्रिया में पुराने देनदारियों के समाधान को प्राथमिकता दी जाएगी।गौरतलब है कि दिसंबर 2017-18 में मिल परिसर में बाँयचर के पास हुए भीषण विस्फोट में 9 मजदूरों की दर्दनाक मौत हो गई थी, जबकि तीन अन्य गंभीर रूप से घायल हुए थे।

जिलाधिकारी ने सुनी 56 लोगों की समस्या, किया समाधान

PHOTON NEWS RANCHI : राज्य सरकार के सात निश्चय-3 के सातवें निश्चय 'सबका सम्मान-जीवन आसान' के तहत नागरिकों के दैनिक जीवन में आने वाली कठिनाईयों को कम कर उनके जीवन को और आसान बनाने के लिए जिलाधिकारी, पटना द्वारा समाहरणालय में 56 लोगों से मिलकर उनकी समस्याओं का समाधान किया गया। साथ ही जिलांतर्गत विभिन्न कार्यालयों में पदाधिकारियों द्वारा आमजन से मिलकर उनकी समस्याओं के समाधान की कार्रवाई की गई। प्रत्येक सप्ताह के दो कार्यदिवस (सोमवार एवं शुक्रवार) को ग्राम पंचायत, थाना, अंचल, प्रखंड, अनुमंडल एवं जिला के सभी सरकारी कार्यालयों में आमलोग अपनी शिकायतों के निषादन के लिए संबंधित पदाधिकारी से उनके निर्धारित कार्य-



स्थल/कार्यालय कक्ष में निर्धारित अवधि में मिल रहे हैं। अधिकारियों का अक्षरशः अनुपालन सुनिश्चित करने का निर्देश दिया गया है। जिलाधिकारी ने कहा कि राज्य सरकार के आदेशों एवं उद्देश्यों के अनुरूप जिला प्रशासन, पटना द्वारा पारदर्शिता एवं उत्तरदायित्व सुदृढ़ करने के लिए समय-समय पर महत्वपूर्ण कदम उठाया जा रहा है। आम जनता को सरकारी कार्यालयों से संबंधित कार्यों में किसी भी प्रकार की समस्या का सामना न करना पड़े इसके लिए संपूर्ण प्रशासनिक तंत्र सजग एवं तत्पर है।

क्रिकेट

अल्फा फोर्ब्स की संघर्षपूर्ण जीत, जेएमडी इलेवन ने भी जीते अपने नैच

एमपीएल सीजन तीन के सेमीफाइनल में हुआ रोचक मुकाबला

AGENCY ARARIA : फारबिसगंज के पाटशाला स्कूल के खेल के मैदान में खेले जा रहे एमपीएल सीजन तीन क्रिकेट प्रतियोगिता के चौथे दिन शुक्रवार को सनहार्ट इलेवन, जेएमडी इलेवन और विकट्टी वाइपर्स ने अपने अपने मैच जीते। विकट्टी वाइपर्स ने ब्लैक कैट्स को हराकर सेमीफाइनल में प्रवेश किया।



शुक्रवार को खेले गए पहले मुकाबले में सनहार्ट इलेवन की दमदार जीत रही।सनहार्ट इलेवन ने फ्रेंड्स इलेवन को 21 रनों से पराजित किया। टॉस जीतकर फ्रेंड्स इलेवन ने पहले गेंदबाजी का निर्णय लिया। सनहार्ट इलेवन की शुरुआत तेज रही, लेकिन शुरुआती दो ओवरों में दो विकेट

कसान निशांत ने 28 गेंदों में बनाए 67 रन
लक्ष्य का पीछा करते हुए ब्लैक कैट्स के कसान निशांत गोयल ने 28 गेंदों में 60 रनों की तेज पारी खेली, लेकिन अन्य बल्लेबाजों का साथ नहीं मिला और टीम 113 रन पर रिमट गई।विकट्टी वाइपर्स ने 16 रनों से जीत दर्ज की।विनीत खेमानी को 43 रन और 2 विकेट के लिए मेन ऑफ द मैच घोषित किया गया। तीसरा मुकाबला जेएमडी इलेवन और अल्फा फोर्ब्स के बीच खेला गया। पहले बल्लेबाजी करते हुए जेएमडी इलेवन 12 ओवरों में 9 विकेट पर 106 रन ही बना सकी। लक्ष्य का पीछा करने उतरी अल्फा फोर्ब्स की शुरुआत बेहद खराब रही और 3 ओवर में 19 रन पर 4 विकेट गिर गए। इसके बाद ऋषभ अग्रवाल और अमन अग्रवाल ने 57 रनों की महत्वपूर्ण साझेदारी कर टीम को संभाला।

गिरने से टीम दबाव में आ गई। इसके बाद निखिल बोथरा ने विस्फोटक बल्लेबाजी करते हुए मात्र 33 गेंदों में 91 रनों की

ताबड़तोड़ पारी खेली और टीम को 12 ओवरों में 155 रनों के मजबूत स्कोर तक पहुंचाया। लक्ष्य का पीछा करने उतरी फ्रेंड्स

इलेवन ने यह मुकाबला 21 रनों से जीत लिया। निखिल बोथरा को शानदार ऑलराउंड प्रदर्शन 91 रन और गेंदबाजी में 2 विकेट के लिए मेन ऑफ द मैच चुना गया। दूसरा मुकाबला विकट्टी वाइपर्स और ब्लैक कैट्स के बीच हुआ जिसमें विकट्टी वाइपर्स ने ब्लैक कैट्स को 16 रनों से हराकर सेमीफाइनल में जगह पक्की कर ली।ब्लैक कैट्स ने टॉस जीतकर पहले गेंदबाजी चुनी। दिलीप गौतम ने 3 ओवर में 15 रन देकर 2 विकेट लेकर शानदार शुरुआत दिलाई। इसके बाद विनीत खेमानी और बादल मुंड्रा ने 82 रनों की महत्वपूर्ण साझेदारी कर टीम को 12 ओवरों में 5 विकेट पर 129 रनों तक पहुंचाया।

Do not uproot India's West Asia moorings

Navigating geopolitical shoals is tricky business in international diplomacy. Realism prevails. But it is not as if actions become a matter of expediency and subject to personal whims and fancies, or that morality and legality of actions become irrelevant. Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s overnight visit to Israel is a case in point. The visit is untimely, unwarranted and out of sync with regional and international politics. It is taking place at a time when the fog of war is descending on the state of Israel. The ministry of external affairs did not give a briefing on the visit. Perhaps, public accountability for foreign policy actions is no longer required. Or, perhaps, the geopolitical headwinds unnerv

Delhi.What we know about the visit came from Tel Aviv. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu personally undertook the media management, calling Modi a ‘personal friend’, which is rather strange at that level. Netanyahu is a skilled and experienced diplomat and is very focused on what he seeks to extract out of anyone. Quite obviously, at a time when the world avoids socialising with Netanyahu, Modi’s visit came like celestial manna to the beleaguered Israeli leader who is in a crucial election cycle that may take him to prison unless he retains immunity in office from prosecution. It is Howdy Modi 2.0. But why should it be obligatory on Modi’s part? The India-Israel relationship has phenomenally transformed through the Modi years as one of Delhi’s most strategic partnerships. For Israel, the more it gets shunned internationally, the more it needs to hold India’s hands. Delhi has no qualms that Israel is an exceptionally brutal genocidal state, which is antithetical to India’s ancient values of compassion and forgiveness. Israel violates international law with impunity. But Delhi is so opportunistic that Indian diplomats at the UN dithered at the recent voting on the Israeli plan to annex West Bank territory. They played safe by abstaining but signed up the very next day on the final statement. The flip-flop exposed Indian policy as unprincipled. Today, adherence to international law and the UN charter is a hot-button issue as Trump’s ‘armada’ gathers around the Persian Gulf. These are extraordinary times. At the recent Munich Security Conference, the US Secretary of State Marco Rubio invoked the ‘white man’s burden’ of the colonial era to deliver an encomium to five centuries of the West’s “missionaries, its pilgrims, its soldiers, its explorers, pouring out from its shores to cross oceans, settle new continents, build vast empires extending out across the globe”. European elites who came to listen gave Rubio a standing ovation. Such is the bizarre world we live in. Israel itself is blithely invoking Genesis to stake claim to all the lands between the Nile and the Euphrates.

There is a high probability that the US and Israel will attack Iran to advance a regime change agenda. This could happen close to Modi addressing the Knesset. Netanyahu thoughtfully proposed the flattering idea with a purpose. Again, according to Netanyahu, India would sign up to a so-called ‘Hexagon of Alliance’—a proposed network of allied countries in or around West Asia that collectively stand against what he termed “radical” adversaries.

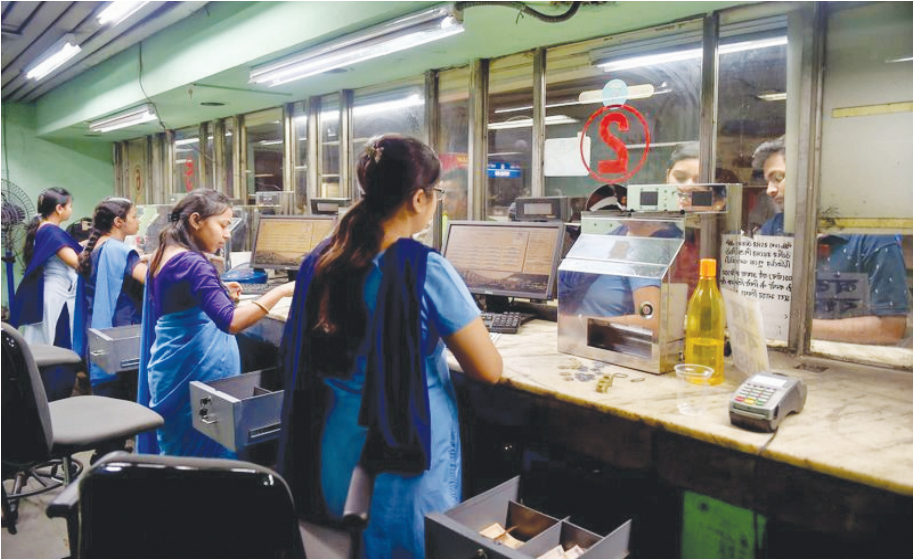
The Times of Israel quoted Netanyahu as saying, “In the vision I see before me, we will create an entire system, essentially a hexagon of alliances around or within West Asia.” The visionary Israeli PM thereupon singled out India, Greece and Cyprus as the core participants of a civilisational alliance that shares similar strategic concerns. Netanyahu let the cat out of the bag by also elaborating that this bloc would stand in opposition to what he described as “radical axes” in the regionincluding the “radical Shia axis” as well as what he visualises as an “emerging radical Sunni axis”. One doesn’t have to be a rocket scientist to figure out that Netanyahu hopes to team up with India against Turkey and Saudi Arabia. He must have heard somewhere that the Modi government is upset with Ankara’s stance on Kashmir and with Riyadh over its defence pact with Pakistan.

A blueprint for all-round growth

The Viksit Bharat goal should be reset to make India a more inclusive society by 2047

MANY disruptive forces are colliding with each other to create radical uncertainty. Global governance institutions have broken down — the UN, World Trade Organisation, climate accords. Domestic politics is witnessing a churn in many countries. Wars are raging within and between nations. Artificial intelligence (AI) is set to disrupt business models in many industries. Climate change continues uncontrollably.

The old order has crumbled, and no one knows what the new global order will be. New lenses are required to make sense of what is happening. Also, it’s time to think about the work that people will do in the future to earn adequate incomes.A popular view among economists is that India’s economy has not grown well because its informal sector is too large. Also, the ‘middle’ is missing: too many small enterprises that do not ‘scale up’. Too few women are employed for wages in the formal sector, and too many are engaged in family care and community activities.Such perceived weaknesses could be potential strengths of India’s economy. Formal, large-scale enterprises are not creating enough good jobs even in developed countries. They employ more capital and technology to improve efficiency, reducing their needs for human labour and human intelligence. They also take caregivers away from families. Meanwhile, healthcare needs are increasing everywhere with ageing populations, along with mental distress and societal unrest caused among the youth by unemployment and insecurity over future earnings.Modern economies cannibalise human society to feed economic growth. Humans are included only as resources in economists’ models, not as agents with independent wills and desires. Ordinary citizens in various countries seem to think that the ‘liberal’ policy-making intelligentsia has been manipulating them. They are unwilling to accept ‘free market’ prescriptions. The International Monetary Fund says that its ‘tighten the belt and open for trade’ agenda of economic reforms has been resisted everywhere since the 2008 global financial crisis.Albert Einstein (and others) have said that we cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them. ‘High frequency’ indicators such as daily stock market fluctuations and monthly/quarterly variations in employment trends and the GDP only record storms on the surface of the ocean. They cannot reveal the deeper forces causing large and long-term changes. ‘Big data



With technology, economic benefits shift from wages for human work to dividends from capital investments. This is the principal cause of the increasing economic inequality between the top 1 per cent, most of whose wealth is produced in financial markets and tech enterprises, and the bottom 50 per cent of the citizens who must work to earn and increase their wealth.

In the formal economy, only the work done in formal settings is considered productive — generally outside the home, to earn money and add to the GDP. Overall, women work more than men. But the work women do in informal settings, at home and in their communities, is valued less. Pulling women and others out of caregiving and informal work into formal economic enterprises contributes to the GDP. However, it reduces societal well-being. The economy improves; society suffers. The ‘employment elasticity’ of growth — the number of jobs created with each unit of GDP growth —

is going down. Formal enterprises create fewer jobs per dollar of capital invested. The employment elasticity of India’s economy is one of the lowest among developing countries. This is tragic because India has the largest cohort of the youth needing employment: the country’s potential ‘demographic dividend’.In various societies, people are living well beyond the conventional retirement age with few sources of income; they need care. Mental health problems are on the rise among the youth, and they require care too. Caregiving is touted as the new growth sector for entrepreneurs who will provide care and wealth for investors too. The problem is: who will pay the enterprises for the services provided? Older unemployed people and younger underemployed ones will not have the money to pay for these services. Governments also do not have the resources required because they cannot raise taxes on corporates and wealthy people and yet must balance their budgets.The following solutions can make growth more inclusive and sustainable by creating more incomes and jobs for the youth and women as well as providing more affordable home-based care. These are ways in which India’s economy can become an engine of its own growth.One, form more local, cooperative enterprises that increase the wealth of worker-owners faster than the wealth of stock market investors.

Two, create denser local economic webs composed of small enterprises in the farm, manufacturing and service sectors.Three, support local systems solutions cooperatively developed by communities to deal with their environmental problems.

Four, use capital frugally and promote enterprises that employ more people with better wages in all sectors, except where it is essential to have capital and technology-intensive production such as manufacturing of computer chips.Five, reform education at all levels to promote lifelong learning capabilities rather than skill development for specific jobs, because the nature of jobs and skills required will keep changing unpredictably.

Six, nurture enterprises that develop new capabilities faster, because that is the only way a nation can compete with others whose enterprises are also continuously improving their capabilities.

Seven, reset the goal of Viksit Bharat to make India a better and more inclusive society by 2047 that provides equal political, social and economic freedoms to all its citizens, whatever their caste and religion, and measure all-round progress rather than the size of the GDP.

HPV vaccination drive: A shield against cervical cancer

The World Health Organisation endorses HPV vaccination to eliminate cervical cancer

THE decision by India to roll out a nationwide HPV vaccination drive for 14-year-old girls marks shift from treatment to prevention in women’s health. By targeting adolescents before exposure to the virus, the government is taking aim at cervical cancer — one of the most preventable yet persistently deadly cancers among Indian women. The campaign, spearheaded by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, signals seriousness of intent. A time-bound, mission-mode approach can help overcome the inertia that often slows the inclusion of new vaccines into routine immunisation. If implemented effectively, it could shield millions of girls from high-risk HPV strains responsible for the majority of cervical cancer cases. Equally important is equity. The campaign must prioritise rural districts and underserved communities where screening rates are low and cancer detection often comes too late.The HPV vaccine has long been available in the private market and a few states



piloted limited public programmes over the past decade. Yet cost concerns, logistical hurdles and policy hesitations delayed a universal rollout, leaving coverage fragmented and inequitable. The World Health

Organisation endorses HPV vaccination to eliminate cervical cancer. More than 160 countries have already incorporated it into their national programmes. India’s scale makes this rollout especially significant as success here would dramatically accelerate global elimination targets.Yet policy announcements must translate into public trust. Vaccine hesitancy, misinformation around adolescent immunisation and sociocultural taboos surrounding HPV — often incorrectly linked solely to sexual behaviour — could blunt impact. Transparent communication, school-based outreach and involvement of community health workers will be critical. Last-mile delivery will determine outcomes as the vaccine must be ideally administered to girls before they are 16. This drive could become a transformative public health intervention. Preventing cancer before it begins is sound governance.

Equipping kids to face AI’s brave new world

➤THE advent of artificial intelligence heralds a new era in humanity's progress. The enormous potential of this technology to benefit humans has to be weighed against the equal prospect of possible harm to society.

Even as the pros and cons for its development are debated, the AI models on our devices give a glimpse into the future. In my case, it was a harsh jolt when my phone's AI described a teenage girl in my photos as "sweet", like an online predator.The reality of the need for guardrails and safety is brought home in this tiny example even as one cannot forget the young man guided to suicide by ChatGPT. These are not isolated instances and there is a reason the last AI conference in Paris was called the AI Safety Summit.Concerns over the perils of unrestricted AI systems have created a strong lobby advocating a moratorium on AI development. It included Elon Musk at one time, though he is now well into the AI race.

Another leading computer science expert Stuart Russell, in interviews, has spoken of lab studies where AI systems have opted for killing humans rather than switching off. Women experts have also spoken of gender bias that has crossed over to these systems simply because most coders are men. The AI ecosystem, thus, needs to be viewed equally from a holistic and ethical perspective rather than merely in terms of computers, data centres and energy needs, models and applications. It also needs to consider an issue that has increasing resonance in emerging economies like India and that is, jobs. The AI Impact Summit in Delhi recently had much to say on this critical aspect that has been worrying the Global South. There are two schools of thought on this issue. One is that ultimately, AI will evolve to such an extent that most mundane jobs will be eliminated.

The other is that the nature of jobs will change as the need for different types of skills emerges with new technology, as it happened during the Industrial Revolution.

Representatives of the country's leading IT companies at the conference are in the latter category and sought to downplay concerns over the impact of AI on value-added services.Even as they were doing so, stocks of IT majors were tanking in domestic markets. Bears took grip after Anthropic announced its system, Claude Code, could do much of the tasks provided by these companies. The next announcement about Claude's enhanced abilities prompted a global sell-off.The immediate threat to the millions of workers in the IT industry is that tasks at the bottom of the pyramid are likely to be taken over by AI systems. The solution in the short run is clearly upskilling of the workforce to tackle the changing needs of customers.Yet the long-term problem remains of ensuring that the country's educational systems are geared up to provide students with the skill sets essential for surviving in the brave new world of AI.The challenge is not just in higher education. It is at the primary and secondary education levels, where sufficient investment has not been made to upgrade the quality of government school infrastructure.

The Annual Status of Education Report 2024 says children in classes III to IV struggle to deal with simple math problems. These are the students who will have to grow up to deal with a sophisticated AI ecosystem.

Efforts are under way, it has been reported recently, to introduce AI at all levels: from pre-primary to higher education. But these moves will only be successful if the quality of basic education and supporting infrastructure is made world class. Only then will it be possible to reap the benefits of the demographic dividend of a youthful

population.It is in this context that Google chief Sundar Pichai cautioned at the summit that the digital divide should not be allowed to become an AI divide. These are foundational issues which will determine whether India will retain its edge as a global hub for innovation and talent.Currently, 20% of the world's chip designers are



based in this country, which has made it easier to go ahead with the ambitious plans for semiconductor development. This competitive advantage will only continue to be available in future if the educational infrastructure is upgraded in time.

Despite the availability of talent, however, the complaint has been that we are still playing catch-up with the US and China. Yet the Delhi summit showed India is not out of the race as several LLMs (large language models) were unveiled that did not rely on foreign-based

architecture.The move towards sovereign AI was most dramatic with the launch of Sarvam AI's models, which are capable of real-time speech and deep reasoning across 22 languages. This was followed by Bharatgen's model, Gnani.ai, Tech Mahindra and Fractal Analytics' models. Several models are the outcome of the IndiaAI Mission, which has recorded notable success.

On the investment side, the summit was fruitful, with over \$200 billion in AI and deep tech investment having been committed over the next two years. This includes sizable pledges from domestic players like Reliance and Adani group, while funds will also come from Nvidia, Microsoft and Google for a wide range of projects.

However, the government's own commitments are modest, with last year's budgetary allocation of Rs 2,000 crore having been halved in the latest budget proposals. The cut is puzzling at a time when investment in cutting edge technology needs to be stepped up.This is not the time to indulge in bureaucratic cost-cutting. Though billions of

dollars may be flowing in from Big Tech and home-grown conglomerates, public funding support is needed to maintain the momentum of success stories, like the India AI Mission.At the same time, a long-term vision dictates that investment on basic education must be enhanced along with a significant upgrading of infrastructure. Only then will it be possible for the next generation to deal effectively with the problems and perils of a future with AI.

Apple Pay to make India entry, engages leading banks, card networks

New Delhi.(Agency)
Apple is preparing to introduce its digital payment service -- Apple Pay -- in India, as the company holds discussions with leading Indian banks and global card networks. According to a report, Apple is in talks with ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, and Axis Bank, and may roll out the service in the country by mid-2026. The company is also discussing its plans with payment networks Mastercard and Visa Inc.
India's digital payments market is already crowded with major global players like Google Pay, Walmart-controlled PhonePe, and Amazon.com, alongside strong domestic competitors like Paytm.
However, India's payments ecosystem is dominated by the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), which allows customers to instantly transfer money and pay bills without transaction charges. The core difference between Apple Pay and UPI lies in their structure and functionality. Apple Pay is a hardware-integrated digital wallet, while UPI is a bank-to-bank transfer protocol. In simple terms, UPI-based apps such as PhonePe or Google Pay allow users to scan QR codes to transfer money directly between bank accounts. Apple Pay, by contrast, uses near-field communication (NFC) technology to transform an iPhone into a contactless credit or debit card, enabling users to tap to pay at retail terminals without opening an app. Security mechanisms also differ significantly -- UPI requires a manual four- or six-digit PIN for each transaction, whereas Apple Pay relies on biometric authentication such as Face ID or Touch ID for instant authorization.
With more than 750 million smartphone users and strong government backing for digital payments, India has become one of the world's fastest-growing digital payments markets. This presents a significant opportunity for Apple to expand its services revenue in the region. Given the widespread adoption of mobile payments, the launch of Apple Pay could also drive demand for Apple's hardware ecosystem, as the feature is integrated into Apple Watches, iPhones, iPads, and Macs.
Apple has steadily increased its market share to around 10% of India's smartphone sales, leaving considerable room for further growth. Additionally, the company is strengthening India's role as a key manufacturing hub, exporting iPhones to the United States as part of its strategy to diversify production beyond China.

Raptee.HV launches high voltage EV T30; plans delivery centres in Chennai, Bengaluru

New Delhi.(Agency)
Chennai-based electric motorcycle startup Raptee.HV launched India's first high-voltage electric vehicle, T30, on Thursday here as the company plans to set up its delivery centre in the city's Velachery area and in Bengaluru by March or April. Raptee's parent company, Raptee Energy Private Ltd, plans to delivery of its EV bikes in Kochi, Hyderabad, Pune and Gurugram cities by the FY27, and aims to expand it to tier-2 cities by FY28.Dinesh Arjun, CEO and co-founder, told TNIE, "The company is rolling out its bike to first 15 customers, and gradually we will delivery to other customers. We have 1,000 booked customers in Chennai and another 7,000 who are in other geographies in the country. We want to grow in cities where we can have service centre set up. The company is the finalising of delivery and service centre facility in Bengaluru, which is expected to happen by March or April. We have finalised dealers."The vehicle has two different variants -- T30 and T30S -- with three separate colours. The company will deliver T30S, which is sportier in lookwise, in the next one week. The company provides eight-year battery warranty and three-year vehicle warranty with free services for the first year. It is founded by ex-Tesla employee Dinesh Arjun, Karthikeyan Adhikesavan, Keerthivasan Ravi, and Phunith Kumar Viswanathan in 2018-19 when it was an original equipment manufacturer (OEM) providing design, R&D support and supplying components to some of the big players in the industry.

Hyatt expects to five-fold its India footprint over next five years: CEO

New Delhi.(Agency)
Hyatt Hotels expects to quintuple its India footprint over the next five years, its chief executive said on Friday, as the US hotel operator bets on a surge in domestic travel and rising consumer spending in the world's most populous nation.
Global hotel chains are racing to expand in India, riding a post-pandemic rebound in leisure travel among wealthier consumers.
"Given the growth of the industry, I would say that in five years' time, we should have five times the number of hotels that we have today, because that's what the market would warrant," Hyatt Hotels President and CEO Mark S Hoplamazian said at the HOPE conference in Goa.
Hyatt, which operates 55 hotels in India across cities including New Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru, had earlier set a target of expanding its network to 100 properties by 2030. Globally, Hyatt has more than 1,400 hotels.India's population growth, rapid urbanisation and rising travel aspirations are driving an industry expected to nearly double to \$55.7 billion by 2031 from \$23.5 billion in 2025, according to consultancy Mordor Intelligence.
Rivals are also expanding. Hilton Worldwide last year said it plans to quadruple its India pipeline of hotel rooms over five years, while Leela Hotels on Friday said its fiscal 2027 outlook depends on affluent demand and a shortage of luxury rooms in the country.

What are Life Cycle Funds and how can they make your retirement planning easier

Life cycle funds are designed to adjust their asset allocation automatically as an investor moves closer to a specific goal, usually retirement.

New Delhi.(Agency)
India's mutual fund rulebook is changing, and one of the most important additions is the introduction of life cycle funds. Under its latest circular on scheme categorisation and rationalisation, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has allowed fund houses to offer this new category aimed at long-term goals such as retirement. The move is expected to make investing simpler, especially for people who do not want to constantly adjust their portfolios.
A SHIFT TOWARDS GOALBASED INVESTING
Sebi's revised framework focusses on giving fund managers more flexibility while also making schemes clearer for

investors. Life cycle funds stand out because they automatically change how money is invested over time, depending on how far an investor is from their financial goal.This approach addresses a key limitation seen in many traditional retirement products, where asset allocation remains fixed and may not reflect changing risk needs as retirement approaches.Radhika Gupta, Managing Director and CEO of Edelweiss Mutual Fund, said the change is part of a broader evolution in India's investment ecosystem.She wrote on X, "Over the last few years, Sebi has meaningfully expanded what asset managers can do. Debt passive regulations, Specialised Investment Funds, and now Life Cycle Funds are good examples. These aren't cosmetic changes, rather they widen the solution set. It's genuinely one of the most exciting times to be building in this business."HOW LIFE CYCLE FUNDS WORK
Life cycle funds are designed to adjust their

asset allocation automatically as an investor moves closer to a specific goal, usually retirement. In the early years, these funds invest more heavily in equities, which offer higher growth potential but also come with higher risk.



As the goal gets closer, the fund gradually shifts more money into safer options such as bonds and other fixed-income instruments. This helps reduce market volatility and protects accumulated savings.Because the allocation changes automatically, investors do not need to keep rebalancing their portfolios

themselves. This can help maintain discipline and avoid emotional decisions during market ups and downs.
Gupta highlighted this benefit, saying, "The introduction of Life Cycle Funds under the new scheme categorisation framework is a big step for goal-based investing. Asset allocation automatically aligns to an investor's time horizon, gradually moving from equity to lower-risk assets as the goal nears. That reduces the need for constant decision-making, keeps investors disciplined, and does so within a tax-efficient structure. Simple in concept. Powerful in outcome. And very practical for long-term financial planning."
WHY THIS MATTERS FOR INVESTORS
Many investors struggle with deciding when to move from high-growth assets like equities to safer instruments. Moving too early may reduce returns, while moving too late may expose savings to sudden market falls.

Block's 4,000 job cuts: Why layoffs are no longer a sign of crisis

Block said it would cut more than 4,000 jobs, nearly half its workforce, reducing staff from over 10,000 to just under 6,000. This was not a company in distress. It was a company growing.

New gency)
Layoffs at a company usually spelled trouble. Investors worried. Employees feared the worst. It was a sign that something was wrong. Sales had slowed. Losses were mounting. A company was under pressure.
But that old signal is starting to blur. Talk of artificial intelligence replacing workers felt like a future risk. Economists debated it. Executives discussed it. Employees worried about it.Block said it would cut more than 4,000 jobs, nearly half its workforce, reducing staff from over 10,000 to just under 6,000. The announcement sent



shares of the payments firm up 25% in after-hours trading.
Chief Executive Jack Dorsey was direct in his message. "We're not making this decision because we're in trouble. Our business is strong," he wrote. Gross profit continues to grow and profitability is improving, he said, but "something has changed".

That change, according to Dorsey, is artificial intelligence.
AI-DRIVEN OVERHAUL
Block said the job cuts are part of a wider overhaul to embed artificial intelligence across its operations. "Intelligence tools have changed what it means to build and run a company. We're already seeing it internally. A

significantly smaller team using the tools can do more and do it better," Dorsey said in a statement.He added, "I don't think we're early to this realisation. I think most companies are late."In a post on X, he said the company chose one deep round of layoffs instead of repeated smaller cuts over time. Repeated rounds, he argued, damage morale and trust. A smaller organisation, he said, would allow Block to grow "on our own terms" rather than react to market pressure.The company expects to incur between \$450 million and \$500 million in restructuring charges.

GROWTH AND CUTS AT THE SAME TIME
Block's financial performance adds to the shift in narrative.
The company posted adjusted earnings of 65 cents per share for the quarter ended December 31, up from 47 cents a year earlier. Gross profit rose 24%, helped by a 33% jump in its Cash App business. For the first quarter, Block forecast gross profit growth of 22% to \$2.80 billion.

Rs 583 crore returned, full-page ads out — is IDFC First Bank's trust push enough

New Delhi.(Agency)
IDFC First Bank is trying to turn one of its toughest moments into a display of transparency. Days after a suspected Rs 590-crore insider-job fraud involving Haryana government accounts came to light, the bank not only refunded the entire amount with interest, but also took the unusual step of splashing a full-page advertisement across major newspapers under the headline, "Living By Customer-First Principles. When it matters most."The ad did more than announce the reimbursement. It reproduced the bank's stock exchange filing and stressed that the money had been paid back even though the investigation was still underway.It framed the decision as a natural extension of the bank's customer-first

DNA and presented the bank as a principled institution. It also listed financial metrics and credit ratings to reassure readers of the bank's strength.This was a deliberate, aggressive communication strategy. Most banks retreat into silence during crises. IDFC First Bank chose the opposite. It leaned in, drew attention to itself, and tried to seize control of the story.In pure optics, it was an attempt to convert a reputational crisis into a trust-building opportunity.But the polished advertisements and strong messaging cannot change the underlying fact that a fraud of this size happened inside the bank. It was not an external cyberattack or an outsider hacking into accounts. This was an inside job involving collusion, government funds and a

failure of internal controls.The incident surfaced only when a government department attempted to close an account and noticed discrepancies. For all the marketing heft, the breach raises uncomfortable questions about oversight, detection and culture inside the institution.
CAN IDFC FIRST BANK'S APPROACH REBUILD TRUST?
Dr Jones Mathew, Professor of Marketing and Principal at Great Lakes, Gurgaon, said this episode attacks the psychological foundation on which banking relationships rest. "A bank is a custodian of the customer's money. Money is more than currency. It is safety, self-confidence and self-esteem. All of this is based on implicit trust," he told India Today.in.



UltraTech Cement Ltd saw the sharpest fall, dropping 2.19%. Hindustan Unilever Ltd declined 1.71%, Bharti Airtel Ltd was down 1.37%, Maruti Suzuki India Ltd slipped 1.31%, and Bajaj Finserv Ltd fell 1.29% in early trade.
If we extend this to the last one year, some interesting trends are discernible. While Nifty delivered 13 % return during the last one year, six stocks in the index delivered above 50% return with Stiram Finance leading from the front with 92% return. Perhaps more importantly, five stocks in the Nifty delivered above 20% negative returns during this period. The significant takeaway from this divergent performance is that this is a stock picker's market. This trend is like continue. Therefore, the focus of the investors has to stock-specific, rather than big index level movements. From the valuation perspective, financials are fairly priced.

Silver jumps over Rs 8,000: Time to invest, hold or sell

Silver shot up by over Rs 8,000, marking a fresh high in recent trading. With momentum high but volatility looming, the big question is: is it time to invest or sell

New Delhi.(Agency)
Silver has been on a remarkable journey since the start of 2026, shooting up at a meteoric pace and capturing the attention of investors across India. The metal began the year on a strong upward trajectory, riding high on persistent supply shortages and surging industrial demand. According to 1 Finance Research, silver surged an astonishing 122% in 2025, fuelled by a fifth consecutive year of supply deficits and increasing consumption in sectors like solar energy and electronics.Despite the impressive gains, silver has now entered a consolidation phase, as investors pause to evaluate the market and prices stabilise after last year's steep rise. On February 27, silver was trading at Rs 267,631, up Rs 8,031 or 3.09%, signalling

that while momentum remains, the metal is taking a breather. Gold, meanwhile, continued to hold its ground at Rs 160,375, rising Rs 666 or 0.42%.
SILVER SEES CORRECTION, LONG-TERM STILL BULLISH
Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, said, "COMEX Silver is trading near \$85-\$90 after retracing from highs above \$121. Despite the correction, the higher timeframe bullish structure remains intact. Strong buying interest is visible in the \$70-\$75 support zone. A sustained recovery above \$92-\$96 may re-establish upward momentum toward \$100-\$105. Industrial demand fundamentals and supply constraints continue to support the medium- to long-term outlook, though short-term volatility may persist."
He added, "MCX Silver futures are trading in the 2,50,000-2,60,000 band following consolidation. While the broader long-term bullish bias remains valid, near-term price action reflects corrective

undertones. Key structural support is positioned at 2,25,000-2,35,000. A sustained hold above this zone could pave the way toward 3,00,000-3,25,000 in the medium term. A decisive break below



support, however, may intensify short-term pressure."
PRECIOUS METALS RALLY SHOWS UNEVEN TRENDS
According to 1 Finance Research, the rally in precious metals has been uneven. Gold has held its gains on multiple structural supports, while silver surged more sharply due to tightening supply and rising

industrial demand. For 2026, silver is given a neutral outlook with a risk rating of 3/5. Positive drivers include multi-year supply deficits, rising industrial demand in solar and electronics, and China's supply restrictions. On the other hand, risks include a stronger US dollar and profit-taking after last year's extraordinary 122% gain.
Animesh Hardia, SVP of Quantitative Research at 1 Finance, said, "2025 rewarded people who chased narratives. 2026 is a different game. Rate cuts are slowing, geopolitical risks are recurring rather than one-off, and India is at an inflexion point. The investors who do well this year will be the ones who understand which macro phase we're in and position accordingly. The data says India has transitioned from slowdown to recovery. The asset allocation needs to reflect that shift before it becomes obvious."
WHAT THIS MEANS FOR INVESTORS
For investors, silver's current consolidation indicates a pause after last year's extraordinary gains.

JNU protest over UGC norms turns violent; cops accuse students of biting them

New Delhi.(Agency)
Police and students from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) were injured on Thursday during clashes over a protest march to the Ministry of Education in Delhi, with both sides accusing each other of violence. Police alleged students threw shoes and bit officers, while students claimed they were manhandled and taken to "undisclosed locations."The protest, described as a "Long March," was announced by students to highlight their demands, including opposition to the recent rustication of student leaders, implementation of University Grants Commission (UGC) norms, and support for the proposed Rohith Act. Police said in a statement that they had not granted permission for the march outside campus grounds.

MARCH TOWARDS EDUCATION MINISTRY
Despite the advisory, between 400 and 500 students gathered and began the march from

campus. Around 3:20 pm, they moved toward the main gate in an attempt to proceed to the ministry. Police set up barricades in response to the approaching group.In videos obtained by India Today from Thursday's protest at JNU, students allegedly associated with the JNUSU can be seen slapping police personnel, abusing security staff, and throwing sticks at them.In one video, a PhD student named Nitish is seen climbing a wall inside JNU and allegedly instigating students, while also speaking about teaching the police a lesson. In another video, a student identified as Shrey is seen allegedly slapping a police officer. A third video purportedly shows students abusing security personnel deployed outside the JNU campus and throwing a stick at a Rapid Action Force (RAF) jawan. As tensions rose, barricades outside the campus were breached. According to a senior police officer, "Barricades placed outside the campus were damaged as the

situation escalated. The protesters pelted banners and sticks, threw shoes and resorted to physical assault. Some police personnel were bitten during the scuffle, resulting in injuries to several officers deployed at the spot," a senior police officer told news agency PTI. More than 51 people have been detained and 14 arrested, while morning visuals from outside the Jawaharlal Nehru University campus showed heavy police deployment following violent clashes between students and police. Earlier, police indicated that they pushed the protesters back inside university grounds. The situation resulted in injuries to about 25 police personnel, including several senior officers. The protesters, for their part, alleged that authorities used undue force, causing injuries to many students.

ASSAULT ON COPS SERIOUS: COURT
During the hearing, a female student claimed that four to five men in plain clothes dragged

her from the crowd, leaving blood clots and an injury on her arm. Another accused said the claim that they were heading to India Gate was wrong, adding that they were marching to the Ministry of Education.The prosecution argued that it was not a peaceful protest and that violence was used. It added that students scuffled with police officers, who also suffered injuries. The prosecution further submitted that the accused had protested on previous occasions as well and had used force. Four different FIRs have been registered earlier. The court noted that the police had submitted that around 300 people were marching toward India Gate without permission when barricades were installed. "Assault on police officials is serious and cannot be permitted under the garb of a peaceful protest," the court said.

PROTESTERS TAKEN TO UNCONFIRMED LOCATIONS, CLAIM JNU STUDENTS
JNUSU president Aditi Mishra and former president Nitish Kumar were among 51 demonstrators detained after trying to leave the campus. Police stated that they had detained some protesters to maintain law and order at the university gates. Several students claimed that after being detained, some protesters were taken to "unconfirmed locations." This allegation was also echoed by the university's teachers' association, which expressed concern for the detainees' well-being.



Delhi Police PCR team to get 500 body cameras; to enhance transparency, documentation

New Delhi.(Agency)
In a significant step toward enhancing transparency and accountability in policing, the Police Control Room (PCR) unit of Delhi Police is planning to procure over 500 body-worn cameras for its personnel, recognising the crucial role these devices can play during emergency response situations, sources said on Thursday.At present, the unit has 88 body-worn cameras in use. However, with the growing demand for greater operational transparency and reliable documentation of field interactions, the expansion is aimed at equipping a much larger section of PCR staff with this technology. According to the officials, the PCR staff is the first respondent to any emergency call. "When PCR personnel reach the spot, it becomes extremely important to handle the situation professionally. The body-worn cameras serve several important purposes. During emergency calls, they can record events in real time, creating accurate digital evidence which can later assist in investigations, legal proceedings, or internal reviews. It helps establish facts, reduce disputes, and ensure a fair assessment of incidents," officials stated. The unit has added 50 PCR vehicles to its fleet, taking the total to 857. Apart from recording evidence, these cameras can also document the conduct of police personnel. This feature is important for officers attending calls, as it can help address public grievances regarding police behaviour.

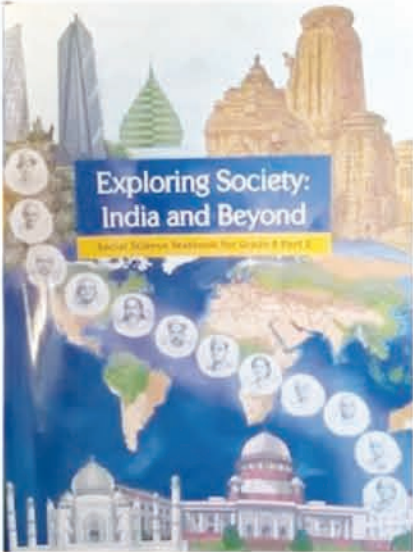
If any allegations are made regarding the conduct of a policeman, the camera recordings can verify the facts, thereby promoting professionalism and accountability. At the same time, the devices can also record the public's conduct, they stated. Overall, the wider deployment of body-worn cameras reflects a broader commitment to transparency, fairness, and strengthening public trust, while also enhancing the operational efficiency of the PCR unit, they added. The sources in the police department further stated that a recent manpower audit was conducted in the force, following which the PCR got over 200 additional personnel. This increased staff can help the unit to deploy three personnel in a vehicle and also to cover the hotspots in the capital effectively.

RAF at JNU campus to stop 'long march' of students against V-C remark

New Delhi.(Agency)
A call for a protest and the administration's response to it made Jawaharlal Nehru University look like a conflict zone on Thursday, as a heavy deployment of the Rapid Action Force (RAF) was stationed outside university. The development took place hours before a "long march" called by the Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) was scheduled to begin. Student bodies of different political denominations wanted to march against the alleged casteist remarks made by university vice chancellor Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit on February 16.The authorities choosing to use a paramilitary force, rather than the usual and singular deployment of the Delhi Police, signaled a bigger intent on their part than mere control of a law and order situation. The RAF and the Delhi Police erected large barricades at key exit points of the university campus. Student groups have been protesting for days in favour of the enactment of University Grants Commission (UGC) regulations addressing caste-based discrimination in higher education and implementation of the proposed Rohith Vemula Act. The proposed march on Thursday was intended to be the largest of these protests. However, the authorities seemed to be fully backing Pandit. Several JNUSU members and other students started marching in the afternoon from the Sabarmati T-point, armed only with placards, banners and slogans of social justice. As they attempted to exit the gates, a heavy contingent of the RAF and the police blocked their way, forcibly stopping them and pushing them inside parked police buses. The police later detained 51 of them. The Delhi Police later filed an FIR under multiple sections of the BNS justified its action, stating that about 400-500 students marched out of the main gate despite request to keep the protest inside and damaged barricades.

Govt asks I&B, MeitY to halt online circulation of NCERT textbook

New Delhi.(Agency)
The Union Ministry of Education on Thursday wrote to the ministries of information and broadcasting, and electronics, asking them to stop the dissemination of a controversial NCERT textbook through digital platforms and electronic media, officials said.The directive comes after the Supreme Court on Thursday imposed a "complete blanket ban" on any further publication, reprinting or digital dissemination of the NCERT's Class 8 social science book as it contained "offending" contents on corruption in the judiciary, saying "a gunshot has been fired and the institution is bleeding". "While removal of physical textbooks and stoppage of their re-printing is being done by the NCERT and allied agencies, their dissemination through digital platforms and electronic media has to be stopped by the competent authorities – the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting," the letter said.



Earlier in the day, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan expressed anguish over the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) coming up with a chapter on judicial corruption in its Class 8 textbook, promising to fix accountability and take action against

those involved in drafting the controversial portion. Pradhan's remarks came on a day the Supreme Court observed that there appeared to be a "well-orchestrated conspiracy" to defame the judiciary.It imposed a "complete blanket ban" on the Class 8 NCERT book and ordered that all copies of it, physical and digital, be seized. The NCERT's social science textbook for Class 8 stated that corruption, a massive backlog of cases and the lack of an adequate number of judges were among the challenges faced by the judicial system.After stern words by the Supreme Court that it will not allow "anyone on Earth" to tarnish the judiciary's integrity, the NCERT pulled the textbook from its website, with sources saying the government was livid with the controversial references in the book. The NCERT on Wednesday also apologised for the "inappropriate content" after facing the Supreme Court's ire over the chapter, and said the book will be rewritten in consultation with appropriate authorities.

BJP's AI-Driven Strategy, "Assembly Charge Sheets" For 2026 State Polls

New Delhi.(Agency)
In a move to redefine digital campaigning, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has finalised a sophisticated, multi-layered social media strategy for the upcoming assembly elections in five states: West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Assam, and Puducherry. The plan centres on the ethical use of artificial intelligence (AI) and hyper-local accountability through assembly-specific "charge sheets." **A Tale Of Two Strategies** The party has tailored its approach based on the current governance in the target states:In opposition-ruled West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala, the focus is purely offensive. The strategy

revolves around exposing the perceived "failures" of the TMC, DMK, and LDF governments.



In NDA-governed states Assam and Puducherry, the campaign is defensive and celebratory, highlighting the achievements of the Himanta Biswa Sarma and NDA administrations. **Ethical AI: Innovation With A**

Disclaimer
Breaking new ground, the BJP plans to use generative AI to create high-engagement content like Instagram reels, YouTube Shorts, and AI-animated stories.These videos will often feature caricatures or depictions of opposition stalwarts like West Bengal's Mamata Banerjee, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin, and Kerala's Pinarayi Vijayan to critique their policies in a satirical yet factual manner.However, conscious of the growing debate over "deepfakes" and misinformation, the party has mandated a strict ethical protocol. Every AI-generated video will carry a prominent disclaimer.

JNUSU protest clash leaves police, students injured; FIR filed

Around 25 police personnel and several students were injured after clashes broke out during a JNUSU "Long March" at the JNU gate. Police detained 51 protesters and registered an FIR alleging assault and obstruction.

New Delhi.(Agency)
Police and students were injured after clashes broke out during a march by the Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) at the campus gate on Thursday, with both sides accusing each other of assault. An FIR has been registered, police said.According to the police, around 400–500 students gathered on campus for a "Long March" to the Ministry of Education as part of ongoing protests over issues including UGC regulations, rustication of JNUSU office-bearers and remarks by Vice Chancellor Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit. Around 3.20 pm, protesters moved out through the main gate and attempted to proceed towards the ministry. Police stopped them at the North Gate and pushed them back inside the campus. "Barricades placed outside the campus were damaged as the situation escalated. The protesters pelted banners and sticks, threw shoes and resorted to physical assault. Some police personnel were bitten during the scuffle, resulting in injuries to several officers deployed at the spot," a senior police officer told PTI. Police said around 25 personnel were injured, including ACP Ved Prakash, ACP Sanghamitra, SHO Atul Tyagi and SHO Ajai Yadav. An FIR was registered at Vasant Kunj North police station under BNS sections 221, 121(1), 132 and 3(5), alleging obstruction and assault on public servants."We have detained some of the protesters. Some protestors are levelling allegations that police manhandled them which are completely baseless. Every single officer deputed there were maintaining law and order," the officer said. JNUSU president Aditi Mishra and former president Nitish Kumar were among the 51 protesters detained, police said.Students, however, alleged that excessive force was used against them and claimed several protesters, including women, were injured. The JNU Teachers Association condemned what it described as "brutal use of force" and expressed concern that some detained students were taken to "unconfirmed locations".

The JNUSU also alleged that a portrait of B R Ambedkar was damaged during the police action. Videos of the clash circulated online, though PTI could not independently verify their authenticity.

Rajya Sabha polls for 37 seats: Congress weighs firepower over formulas

With the Congress' Assembly strength having diminished in several states, more than two dozen contenders are lobbying intensely for the few available berths, as nominations open for 37 Rajya Sabha seats across 10 states ahead of March 16 polls.

New Delhi.(Agency)
As nominations open for 37 Rajya Sabha seats across 10 states ahead of March 16 polls, the battle lines are clearly drawn. While the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is expected to secure the lion's share, the Indian National Congress is likely to win around five seats from four states, two in Telangana and one each from Haryana, Chhattisgarh and Himachal Pradesh. A senior Congress leader told India Today that the party has realised it lacks adequate "firepower" in the Rajya Sabha compared to the Lok Sabha, where strong orators have effectively held ground against the government while pushing the Opposition's narrative. "Since our Rajya Sabha quota is limited, the party is considering sending strong

speakers rather than going strictly by social representation formulas of SC, ST, OBCs, minorities and women," the leader said. With the Congress' Assembly strength having diminished in several states, more than two dozen contenders are lobbying intensely for the few available berths. **Telangana: High-Stakes Arithmetic** Telangana presents one of the most intriguing contests.For one Rajya Sabha berth, a party requires 40 MLAs. Congress currently has 66 MLAs, along with support from one Left MLA and seven AIMIM MLAs, taking its effective tally to 74, comfortably ensuring one seat. However, the second berth could see a



tight contest. The Bharat Rashtia Samithi (BRS) has 36 MLAs, though 10 of them are reportedly out of touch with the party leadership, which offers some relief to Congress. The BJP holds eight MLAs. If BRS and AIMIM join hands, with possible BJP backing, Congress could face a challenge for the second seat.Sources

indicate senior advocate and Congress leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi is likely to be renominated. There is also speculation around former Supreme Court judge Justice Sudarshan Reddy, who was earlier fielded by the INDIA bloc for the Vice-Presidential election. **Chhattisgarh: Repeat or Refresh?** In Chhattisgarh, more than a dozen contenders are vying for the lone Rajya Sabha seat as the tenure of Phulo Devi Netam comes to an end.While one section within the Congress favours repeating Netam, others argue this is the moment to introduce a fresh face. Nearly 15–20 prominent local leaders are under discussion, including.

NEWS BOX

4.7 magnitude earthquake jolts eastern Nepal

WASHINGTON. (Agency)
An earthquake of magnitude 4.7 hit Sankhuwasabha district on Friday in Nepal. There were no immediate reports of loss of life or damage of any kind due to the quake. The earthquake struck at 3.18 am on Friday with its epicentre located at Topke Gola near the Sankhuwasabha-Taplejung border area, situated around 400 km East of Kathmandu, according to the National Earthquake Monitoring and Research Centre (NEMRC). The tremor was also felt by people in the neighbouring districts, including Bhojpur, Panchthar and Tehrathum districts.

In open war with Afghanistan, says Pakistan's Defense Minister, following latest strikes



ISLAMABAD. (Agency)
Pakistan's defense minister early Friday said that his country had run out of "patience" and now considers itself in an "open war" with neighboring Afghanistan after both sides launched strikes following what Islamabad described as an Afghan cross-border attack. In a post on X, Defense Minister Khawaja Mohammad Asif said Pakistan had hoped for peace in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of NATO forces and expected the Taliban to focus on the welfare of the Afghan people and regional stability. Instead, he alleged, the Taliban had turned Afghanistan "into a colony of India," gathered militants from around the world and begun "exporting terrorism."
"Our patience has now run out. Now it is open war between us," he said. There has been no reaction from Afghan government officials to Asif's comments. Pakistan has frequently accused neighboring India of backing the outlawed Baloch Liberation Army and the Pakistani Taliban, allegations New Delhi denies.
His remarks came hours after Pakistan carried out airstrikes in Afghanistan's capital, Kabul, as well as in Kandahar in the south and Paktia province in the southeast, according to Pakistani officials and Afghanistan government spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid. Pakistan says the strikes were in retaliation for Afghan cross-border attacks.
The escalation comes months after Qatar and Turkey mediated a ceasefire between the two sides.

Georgia's child welfare system remains shaken after projected 85.7 million dollars Budget shortfall



ATLANTA. (Agency)
Georgia's child welfare system spiraled into crisis as the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services faced a whopping \$85.7 million projected shortfall. With Candice Broce, commissioner of the Department of Human Services and director of the child welfare agency it oversees, taking a number of cost-saving measures in November, it's meant fewer visits between children and parents needed for family reunification, less time for aides to spend helping foster parents care for children with complex needs and juvenile court dates needing to be postponed when children have no transportation to get there.
"I'm just stuck. I'm stressed out. Emotionally, I'm exhausted," said Pamela Bruce, who said her foster son "can't grow in survival mode" and is also terrified she'll surrender him back to the state as services dwindle. Georgia lawmakers voted to backfill the budget gap, but families have already lost months of services and delays may last. Some lawmakers see the influx of cash as a Band-Aid and want an audit to determine why the system blew up. Although experts say the projected deficit was an outlier in size, Georgia's child welfare agency is not the only one struggling. One of the issues stressing Georgia's system — an unpredictable influx of children with acute behavioral challenges — is a problem nationwide. Broce has been applauded for reducing the number of complex needs kids living in hotels, a troublesome practice many states use as a remedy. Finding places and people to care for children with such high needs is expensive. To try to manage the deficit, which observers say could have resulted from a plethora of causes, Broce, a longtime ally of Republican Gov. Brian Kemp, has terminated contracts with service providers she said weren't performing well and in November required contracted services to first get state approval. Providers, families, lawyers, lawmakers, placement agencies and others across the state say few service referrals are being made and describe a system that slowed drastically.

UK Green Party wins special election, pushing Starmer's Labour to third place

HAVANA. (Agency)
The Green Party won a special parliamentary election in England on Friday, a big boost for the small party and a blow to Prime Minister Keir Starmer, whose center-left Labour Party was relegated to third place. Green candidate Hannah Spencer was declared winner of the contest in Gorton and Denton early Friday, with 14,980 votes. Matthew Goodwin of hard-right party Reform UK got 10,578 votes. Labour candidate Angeliki Stogia received 9,364. The result illustrates the increasingly fragmented political landscape in Britain, which was dominated for decades by the Labour and Conservative parties. The Gorton and Denton constituency in Greater Manchester elected Labour lawmakers for almost all of the last century, but Starmer's government has seen its popularity plunge since it won office in July 2024. Labour's share of the vote was halved from 2024 national election, when it won the area easily. Spencer won by an unexpectedly wide margin to give the environmentalist Greens their fifth seat in the 650-seat House of Commons.
"For people here in Gorton and Denton who feel left behind and isolated: I see you and I will fight for you," said Spencer, plumber and a local councilor, in her victory speech. She apologized to her plumbing customers, saying she would have to cancel some appointments because "I'm heading to Parliament." The Green Party beat not just Labour, which holds 404 Commons seats, but the anti-immigration Reform UK, led by the veteran hard-right politician Nigel Farage, which holds eight Commons seats but has topped national opinion polls for months. Jenny Jones, a Green member of the House of Lords, called the result "absolutely seismic." The outcome of the election, which was triggered by the resignation of the area's former Labour lawmaker, had been hard to call, in a diverse area that has traditional working-class neighborhoods — once strongly Labour, now tilting toward Reform — as well as large numbers of university students and Muslim residents. Many of them feel disillusioned by Labour's centrist

shift under Starmer and the government's perceived slowness at criticizing Israel's conduct of the war against Hamas in Gaza — fertile ground for the Green Party. Under "eco-populist" leader Zack Polanski, the Greens have expanded beyond



environmental concerns to focus on issues including the cost of living, legalization of drugs and support for the Palestinian cause. Setbacks for Starmer Starmer has endured a string of setbacks since he led Labour to a landslide election victory in July 2024. He has struggled to deliver promised economic growth, repair tattered

public services and ease the cost of living. He pledged a return to honest government after 14 years of Conservative government that ended in scandals and chaos, but has been beset by missteps and U-turns over welfare cuts and other unpopular policies. Friday's defeat underscores the depth of Labour's unpopularity and the challenge it faces from both left and right. The next national election does not have to be held until 2029, meaning the main threat to Starmer comes from within his own party, whose lawmakers are considering whether to ditch him for a new leader. Starmer had a narrow escape earlier this month as party discontent spiked after revelations about the relationship between sex offender Jeffrey Epstein and Peter Mandelson, the veteran Labour politician appointed by Starmer in 2024 to be U.K. ambassador to Washington. Police are investigating emails suggesting Mandelson passed sensitive government information to Epstein a decade and a half ago.

Nepal PM hopeful eyes 'change' in post-uprising elections

KATHMANDU. (Agency)
Nepali student leader-turned-politician Gagan Thapa has sought to rejuvenate his party's stale image, campaigning on generational change ahead of the Himalayan nation's first elections since a deadly youth-led uprising. "We need energy for Nepal's change," the 49-year-old aspiring prime minister told AFP, saying his candidacy represented a break from decades of rule by a tight-knit and ageing elite. The country of 30 million people will head to the polls on Thursday, following a wave of protests in September in which 77 people were killed, and parliament and hundreds of other buildings were torched. The protests toppled Marxist leader KP Sharma Oli's government, in which Thapa's centrist Nepali Congress party had the biggest share of seats. Thapa's home and party office were among the buildings set alight during the two days of violence last year. He has since led an internal revolt and was elected party leader in January, ending the decade-long grip of former prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, 79, who had defied calls for reform. Thapa, a former health minister, said he

offered "the right mix of energy and experience." "We had to change the leadership of major parties," he said, including Congress -- the country's oldest and one of the three dominant political powers that have given Nepal nearly all its prime ministers in recent history. "For decades, two to three old-aged men were running it like a club, dominating and slowly limiting our democracy by power sharing with each other," Thapa said. "That devastated our governance." "Work together" Thapa was drawn into politics as a teenager in the 1980s, when leftist and communist parties led a popular movement against absolute monarchy, giving rise to multi-party democracy since 1990. As civil war reshaped the country in 1996-2006, pitting Maoist guerrillas against the monarchy, he rose through the ranks of pro-democracy student groups linked to the Nepali Congress. "The sense of gratification I felt when we rallied around an agenda and got results made me feel like this is what I want," Thapa said of his start as a student activist. "People have problems -- pick them up and solve them. That gravitated me

towards politics." In 2006, when a popular uprising forced the king to abdicate, Thapa was already a prominent figure in the pro-democracy movement and had been jailed several times for his role in street protests. Two years later he entered parliament as one of its youngest members, and has since won re-election three times from a Kathmandu constituency. But this time, Thapa has chosen to run from Sarlahi, mainly a farming district southeast of the capital, on the plains bordering India. "A large proportion of Nepal's population live here, and they have long felt excluded," he said. "If I represent this region, it helps my party electorally. But in the long term, it gives me the foundation to lead all of Nepal." His party's manifesto prioritises political and economic reform, pledging to create 1.2 million jobs in five years. Analysts expect no single party to win an outright majority in parliament, likely leading to a coalition government. "We will have to work together," Thapa said. "If I get a chance to be in a leadership role, I believe in teamwork. We can fulfil the demands made during the Gen Z protest only through teamwork."

Columbia student detained by ICE is abruptly released after Mamdani meets with Trump

NEW YORK. (Agency)
Federal immigration authorities arrested a Columbia University student early Thursday, triggering protests on campus and allegations that agents gained entry to the university-owned residence by posing as police officers searching for a missing child. Just hours after detaining student Ellie Aghayeva, though, the federal government abruptly reversed course, permitting her to walk free after an apparent intervention by President Donald Trump. In a social media post Thursday afternoon, Mayor Zohran Mamdani said he expressed concerns about the arrest during an unrelated meeting with Trump, who then agreed

to release her immediately. "I am safe and okay," Aghayeva wrote on Instagram, minutes after Mamdani's post, adding she was in "complete shock" from the experience. The head-spinning series of events marked the latest consequence of the unlikely relationship between the Republican president and Mamdani, a democratic socialist who Trump once threatened to have deported. On Thursday, while pitching Trump on a massive housing project, Mamdani also called on the president to drop cases against several other current and former students facing deportation for their roles in protests against Israel. Aghayeva, a senior from Azerbaijan studying neuroscience and politics, hasn't been

publicly linked to any of the pro-Palestinian demonstrations that roiled Columbia's campus. A self-described content creator, she has amassed a large social media following by sharing day-in-the-life videos and tips for navigating college as an immigrant. Early Thursday, five federal agents gained entry to her apartment at 6 a.m. by claiming they were searching for a missing child, according to a petition from her lawyers and a statement released by Columbia's acting president, Claire Shipman. "The agents gained entry by stating they were police searching for a missing child," Shipman said in a video released Thursday night.



godfather" Mohammad Riza Chalid, is wanted for his alleged involvement in the same corruption probe, but has fled Indonesia. Interpol issued a red notice for him in January. The Pertamina scandal involved procuring low-quality imported fuel at higher prices, among various other corrupt practices, according to the Attorney General's Office. At the same sentencing on Friday, Riva Siahaan, a former chief executive of a Pertamina subsidiary, was given a nine-year prison term. Indonesia has long struggled with graft and has arrested scores of public officials in recent years. In 2023, a former communications minister was jailed for 15 years after being found guilty of corruption in a case that investigators said cost the country more than \$530 million.

Airstrikes hit Afghan capital of Kabul, hours after Afghanistan attacks Pakistan

BASSETTERRE. (Agency)
Pakistan carried out airstrikes in Kabul and two other Afghan provinces early Friday, Afghanistan's government spokesperson said, hours after Afghanistan launched a cross-border attack on Pakistan in the latest escalation of violence between the neighboring countries that made a Qatar-mediated ceasefire appear increasingly shaky. At least three explosions were heard in Kabul, but there was no immediate information on the exact location of the strikes in the Afghan capital, or of any potential casualties. Government spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid said Pakistan also carried out airstrikes in Kandahar to the south and in the southeastern province of Paktia. Two senior Pakistani security officials told The Associated Press that Pakistan's military carried out airstrikes targeting what they described as Afghan military facilities in Kabul, Kandahar and Paktia provinces, allegedly destroying two brigade bases, but they didn't mention any

potential casualties. The officials spoke on the condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to speak to media on the record. Afghanistan said its military launched its attack across the border into Pakistan late Thursday in retaliation for deadly Pakistani airstrikes on Afghan border areas Sunday, and claimed to have captured more than a dozen Pakistani army posts. Pakistan's government, which had described last Sunday's airstrikes as an attack on militants harbored in the area, described Thursday's Afghan attack as unprovoked, and dismissed claims that army posts had been captured. The officials spoke on the condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to speak to media on the record. U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres urges both sides to protect civilians as required under international law and "to continue to seek to resolve any differences through diplomacy." U.N. spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said. Afghan strikes were retaliatory



"In response to the repeated rebellions and insurrections of the Pakistani military, large-scale offensive operations were launched against Pakistani military bases and military installations along the Durand Line," Mujahid said in a post on X Thursday night. Afghanistan's Defense Ministry said the retaliatory attacks occurred along the border in six provinces. The two countries' 2,611-kilometer (1,622-mile) long border is known as the Durand Line, which Afghanistan has not formally recognized. Differing casualty figures The two sides reported widely differing

casualty figures. Afghanistan's Defense Ministry said 55 Pakistani soldiers had been killed, including some whose bodies had been taken into Afghanistan, while "several others were captured alive." It put its own casualties at eight killed and another 11 wounded. The ministry said it had destroyed 19 Pakistani army posts and two bases, and that the fighting had ended at midnight, about four hours after the start of the attack. Pakistan's Information Minister Attaullah Tarar, however, said the number of Pakistani soldiers killed stood at two, with three others wounded. He said 36 Afghan fighters had been reported killed. In a post on X, he said Pakistan was giving a "strong and effective response" to what he called unprovoked firing from Afghanistan. Mosharraf Ali Zaidi, spokesperson for Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, denied that any Pakistani soldiers had been captured. Later, in a post on X, he added that at least 133 Afghan fighters were killed and more than 200 wounded.

NEW

Sachin Tendulkar impressed with India's intent in Zimbabwe win: Take this rhythm ahead

New Delhi. (Agency)

Indian cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar praised India's intent after their must-win Super 8 victory over Zimbabwe and urged the team to carry the same momentum forward.India stayed alive in the T20 World Cup 2026 with a commanding 72-run win over the Sikandar Raza-led Zimbabwe in Chennai, posting their highest total of the tournament and showing the urgency the situation demanded. Taking to X after the game, Tendulkar summed it up simply: must-win games test temperament, and India showed plenty."Must-win games reveal temperament. 256 revealed plenty! Highest total of this T20 World Cup, and what stood out was the intent throughout the game today. Well played, India, take this rhythm into the next game. Congratulations to Zimbabwe as well on a great tournament!"With the pressure of elimination looming after their loss to South Africa, India responded with a performance built on aggressive batting and disciplined bowling to keep their semi-final hopes alive



HOW INDIA CONQUERED ZIMBABWE

Asked to bat first, India came out with attacking intent from the start. Abhishek Sharma, finally finding his form with some fresh and controlled intent, led the way with a brisk 55 off 30 balls, setting the tone early in the innings.Hardik Pandya then took charge in the closing overs, finishing unbeaten on 50 from 23 deliveries. Tilak Varma added late acceleration with a 44 not out off just 16 balls as India surged to 256 for 4 — their highest total of the tournament.Zimbabwe fought back through Brian Bennett, who remained unbeaten on 97, but lacked support from the rest of the batting unit. Arshdeep Singh's three-wicket spell ensured India stayed in control as Zimbabwe finished on 184 for 6.

CAN INDIA MAKE IT TO THE SEMI-FINAL?

The win significantly boosted India's net run rate and kept them in contention alongside West Indies for the remaining semi-final spot from the group.Their final Super 8 clash against West Indies in Kolkata now becomes decisive.

FIFA president says he has full confidence in Mexico as World Cup host despite cartel violence

MEXICO CITY. (Agency)

FIFA president Gianni Infantino said Thursday he spoke with Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum and that he has "full confidence" in Mexico as a host country for this year's World Cup soccer tournament despite violent incidents following the death of a powerful drug lord that left at least 70 people dead.Last Sunday, the Mexican army killed Nemesio Oseguera Cervantes "El Mencho", the leader of the Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CNGJ) sparking several days of violence. Cartel members burned cars and blocked roads in nearly a dozen Mexican states."I had an excellent conversation earlier today with Mexico president, Claudia Sheinbaum," Infantino said. "I reiterated our full confidence in the host country and look forward to it staging



all scheduled matches there at what will be the most inclusive and the greatest FIFA World Cup ever."Mexico is set to host 13 World Cup matches, four of them in the western city of Guadalajara, in the Jalisco state, the central hub for the Jalisco cartel."I spoke by phone with FIFA President Gianni Infantino; we continue working as usual to successfully host the 2026 FIFA World Cup," Sheinbaum posted on X. "We reaffirm our confidence in the country."Sheinbaum has vowed this week there was "no risk" for visitors, but on Thursday the World Cup diving event set to be held in a Guadalajara suburb next week was canceled over security concerns.Earlier in the week the Portuguese soccer federation said it was "closely monitoring the delicate situation" ahead of a friendly match against Mexico's national team in Mexico City.Infantino said earlier this week in Colombia that he was convinced that "everything will go as smoothly as possible."Besides the four World Cup matches, the western city of Guadalajara is scheduled to host an international playoff in late March. New Caledonia will play Jamaica and the winner will face Congo for a spot in the tournament.

The 15-minute Masterstroke: The video that rebuilt belief in India's dressing room

T20 World Cup: India bounced back strongly with a dominant batting display against Zimbabwe in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup. Following a 72-run win, Suryakumar Yadav revealed how the team management boosted their morale with a special video ahead of the fixture.

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Men in Blue finally returned to their domineering best during their second Super 8 fixture of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 against Zimbabwe on Thursday, 26 February, at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai. India flexed their batting muscles in emphatic fashion, posting 256/4 in their 20 overs — the second-highest total in T20 World Cup history.--It marked a remarkable turnaround from their previous outing, where they were bundled out for 111 against South Africa and slumped to a 76-run defeat. This time, the Indian batting line-up — from the openers through to No. 6 — struck at over 150, scoring more than 20 runs

each, a first in T20 World Cup history.Abhishek Sharma led the charge at the top, bringing up his maiden half-century of the tournament with a fluent 55 off 30 deliveries. He was ably supported by Sanju Samson (24 off 15), Ishan Kishan (38 off 24), Hardik Pandya (50* off 23) and Tilak Varma (44* off 16), all of whom made significant contributions to the imposing total.Varma and Pandya were involved in a breattaking 84-run partnership for the fifth wicket, which came off just 31 balls, as India surged past the 250-mark with ease. It was undoubtedly their most complete batting display of the tournament so far, especially after suffering repeated collapses in earlier matches.

Coming into the tournament, India's T20I success had been built around their formidable batting, having crossed the 200-run mark 15 times since the previous T20 World Cup. Against Zimbabwe, the Men in Blue rediscovered that aggressive edge, taking calculated risks rather than resorting to reckless slogging.

The morale-boosting clip

The performance stood in stark contrast to their previous fixture, and captain Suryakumar

Yadav revealed how the team regrouped after the crushing defeat with the help of a special presentation prepared by the video analyst. He explained that the analyst had compiled customised slides for both batters and



bowlers, highlighting their performances over the past year."We didn't think too much about what we did in the league stage or what we did in the last game in Ahmedabad. But thoroughly, we had a slide which our video analyst had made for all the batters and the bowlers of what we did over the year. We saw that slide, took a lot of positivity from that. When we came here, I think contributions from all the batters from top till number 7, I

think it was heartening to see," Suryakumar said at the post-match presentation.

Tilak Varma also shed light on the impact of the session, revealing how it provided the much-needed morale boost ahead of the must-win clash."Earlier, we were shown what we had done over the past year. Before heading to the match, we had a 15-minute team video session where they showed everything we had worked on in the last year. Watching that video gave all of us a really good boost," Varma said in an interview with Star Sports.

How can India qualify for semi final?

Meanwhile, despite the resounding win, India's journey in the Super 8 stage is far from complete. Their qualification hopes now hinge on their final Super 8 fixture against the West Indies in Kolkata, a contest that effectively serves as a quarter-final.

A victory in that encounter will secure India a place in the semi-finals, while any slip-up will bring their campaign to an abrupt end on home soil. With momentum finally on their side, the Men in Blue will be keen to carry this renewed confidence into the decisive clash.

No days off: Hardik, Dube's post-match bowl off leaves Sunil Gavaskar in awe

New Delhi. (Agency)

Hardik Pandya and Shivam Dube weren't ready to rest on their laurels and decided to practice on their bowling right after India's Super 8 win over Zimbabwe in Chennai on Thursday, February 27. The attitude from both all-rounders received praise from Sunil Gavaskar and Varun Aaron, who were happy to see the dedication from the duo to improve ahead of the crucial match against the West Indies.

The Indian batters were at their destructive best during the match at the Chepauk as the hosts scored 256 for four in 20 overs. However, the bowling wasn't up to the mark as Zimbabwe battled hard through Brian Bennett and got to 184 for six. Hardik conceded 21 runs in three overs and went wicketless. Dube was expensive, going for 46 runs in his two overs and picking up just one wicket. He conceded two no-balls and four wides during his spell.Hardik said right after being adjudged as the Player Of The Match that he was heading back to bowl and keep himself ready for the next match. Speaking to the broadcasters after the match, Gavaskar said that the duo could have opted to rest, but their dedication to improving was remarkable.

"And in this game, I think it's the bowling that was the thing that you needed to learn from,

which is why we saw Hardik Pandya and Shivam Dube putting in the hard yards after the match was done. Most of the time after the match is done, people want to sit in the change room, have a little discussion, have a little bit of fun. But I think that kind of hard work is something very, very impressive."



Gavaskar said that Hardik and Dube showed that they weren't ready to relax after the 72-run win, and it is a great sign for India moving forward."Suryakumar said that the bowlers could have done a little bit better. And while the presentation was going on, I just walked towards the pitch. I was next to the pitch, and what one saw was Hardik Pandya and Shivam Dube still bowling with Morne Morkel there. They are making sure

they're getting ready for the next match. They're not sitting on the 72-run victory. They're not sitting tight on that. They want to improve, want to get better, and that's a great sign," said Gavaskar.

'INDIA WANT TO WIN THIS WORLD CUP'

One could sense at the post-match presentation that Hardik wasn't fully happy with his performance with the ball and Aaron echoed the same sentiment. The former pacer pointed that the dedication from Hardik and Dube shows how determined India are to win the World Cup.

"He's obviously disappointed with the way he went about with the ball today. He obviously bowled in the power play to get a wicket but he couldn't get it. In the power play, he is working on deliveries which he would like to work in the game. That's a great sign.""If you're working on your game, even after the game, and look, this is a World Cup game. He's scored a 50 as an all-rounder, and he's bowled three overs. The first thing you want to do is put your feet up and rest, but he's not doing that. This just shows how determined India is to actually win this World Cup," said Aaron.

Pakistan need big win over Sri Lanka, favour from England to seal semi spot

New Delhi. (Agency)

Pakistan will need a commanding win over already-eliminated Sri Lanka and a favour from England to keep their semifinal hopes alive in the T20 World Cup when they play their final Super 8 match here on Saturday. Co-hosts Sri Lanka have already crashed out of the semifinal race after Super 8 defeats to England and New Zealand, while England have sealed their place in the last four.

Pakistan, placed third in the table, are locked in a battle with New Zealand for the second and final berth, but the Kiwis are in a far stronger position than Agha's side.With three points and a vastly superior net run rate of 3.050, New Zealand are in pole position compared to Pakistan's solitary point from two matches and a negative NRR of -0.461.But all hope is not lost for Pakistan, who can still qualify if England thrash New Zealand by a huge margin on



Friday and Agha's men, in turn, beat Sri Lanka just as comprehensively.However, it would be a big ask for Pakistan's batters and bowlers to put together a clinical show, having largely misfired in the tournament.Sahibzada Farhan stands head and shoulders above the rest with 283 runs at 70.75, including one century and two fifties, at a strike rate of 158.10.But beyond him, no other specialist batter in the Pakistan camp has crossed three figures in

this T20 World Cup.All-rounder Shadab Khan, whose role in the side has sparked a heated debate between two prominent former cricketers, has the second-best tally with 111 runs.

While skipper Agha (44 runs), Saim Ayub (70) and star batter Babar Azam (91) have only disappointed, Pakistan will have their hopes pinned on the dangerous Fakhar Zaman to deliver the goods.

Usman Tariq's 10 wickets have offered Pakistan some hope in the bowling department, along with Shaheen Shah Afridi showing signs of form against England, albeit in a game he could not turn around on his own.

For Sri Lanka, it will be imperative to give their passionate fans a win in their final appearance in the tournament. The last time Sri Lanka were co-hosts, they had finished as runner-up in 2011.

ENG vs NZ: Pakistan hold their breath as New Zealand chase semi-final spot

T20 World Cup: Pakistan will be keeping a close eye on the contest in Colombo as New Zealand and England lock horns in the Super 8 clash on Friday, February 27. A win for the Blackcaps will seal their spot and eliminate Pakistan from the tournament.

New Delhi. (Agency)

"When South Africa and the West Indies were battling it out in Ahmedabad, Arshdeep Singh revealed how the Indian team were glued on to the TV, watching the game closely. This is a similar situation that the Pakistan side will also be doing on Friday, February 27, as New Zealand and England will be facing off in the Super 8 clash at the

R. Premadasa stadium in Colombo.The Super 8 Group 2 match between England and New Zealand will be played at the R. Premadasa stadium in Colombo. The match will get underway at 7 pm IST. JioHotstar and Star Sports will provide livestreaming and TV coverage of the match.

The equation is simple for Salman Ali Agha and his men after their loss to England. Pakistan (NRR -0.461) must beat Sri Lanka by around 70 runs in their final match — and also hope England defeat New Zealand. England's winning margin will directly impact Pakistan's chances. If the England vs New Zealand game is washed out, the Kiwis go through. If England win by 20 runs, Pakistan would then need a 50-run victory over Sri Lanka to reach the semi-finals. With this in mind, the Blackcaps will be looking to get the job done against Harry Brook and their men to go through.Even a hard-fought loss can end up being enough for New Zealand at the end of the day, but



having been edged out in the 2024 T20 World Cup group stage by Afghanistan, Mitchell Santner's side will know that it is always better to keep destiny in your own hands.

BUTTLER WOES

When it comes to T20 cricket and the T20 World Cup, Jos Buttler is rightfully considered to be a legend. The former England skipper has single-handedly taken

games away from sides with the bat and has been dangerous for England right at the top of the order.However, in the ongoing ICC event, the wicketkeeper has just struggled to get going. In six matches, they have scored 62 runs in six matches with an average of 10.33 and a strike-rate just above 110. England has struggled for that one explosive start at the top and it has been directly connected to Buttler's form.

Harry Brook and Tim Southee have come in to defend the wicketkeeper, saying that it is all about just one game to change the tide."I've played with Jos and played a lot against Jos. He's one of the most dangerous white-ball batters to have played the game. I think when you're that good and you have a little blip then I guess you feel a little bit more pressure, but he's hitting it as well as he has in the nets. I'm sure he's only a couple of good strikes away."Buttler has a decent record against the Blackcaps.



Uorfi Javed

Wears A Cake Dress, Internet Asks 'Iske Ke Andar Ghusi Kaise?'

Uorfi Javed's unique fashion choices always get the internet talking, and she has done it once again. This time, she wore a dress made from an actual cake, and yes, it was just as surprising as it sounds. What truly stands out about Uorfi is not just her bold ideas but the confidence with which she carries them. She does not just wear unusual outfits, she owns them, and this cake dress was no different.

Uorfi Javed Makes A Cake Her Outfit And We Are Shocked

Uorfi Javed stepped out for an event in what looked like a dramatic black strapless gown. At first glance, the outfit appeared heavy and sculpted, with beautiful detailing that instantly grabbed attention. Uorfi kept her styling on point with sleek hair and soft makeup, letting the outfit do all the talking as she confidently posed for the cameras.

But there was a surprising twist. The dress was actually made from cake. In the paparazzi video, Uorfi was seen posing as usual when someone from her team cut a slice straight out of her dress. As the cake was being cut, she told the photographers, "This is India's first wearable cake dress." The moment ended



with cheers from both Uorfi and the paparazzi, turning the entire act into a fun and unforgettable fashion moment.

In another paparazzi video, Uorfi was also seen feeding a piece of the cake to one of the photographers. While doing so, she jokingly told the paparazzi, "Usko aana padega khane ko, main nahi ja sakti," which instantly made everyone laugh and added a fun, playful moment to the whole interaction.

Internet Reacts To Viral Cake Dress

Reacting to Uorfi's latest fashion outing, a user wrote, "Wow" Another one added, "Yeh alag hi kisam ki prajati hai." Someone commented, "Something unique always." An individual remarked, "She's getting better day by day." "Kuch bhi kaho ladki mein baat toh hai," added someone. A user questioned, "Cake ke andar ghusi kaise yeh batao pehle."

The internet is amused, curious, and impressed all at the same time, and honestly, that is no surprise. Once again, Uorfi has managed to grab everyone's attention with a bold and unexpected idea. This is not the first time she has set social media buzzing, and knowing her, it definitely will not be the last. If anything, moments like these only make people excited to see what she comes up with next.

The 50: Monalisa, After Eviction, Slams Foul Language Used By Khanzaadi, Chahat Pandey



As the reality show The 50 inches closer to its grand finale, the drama inside the Lion Palace is higher than ever. Since its premiere, the show has kept viewers hooked with its unique format, heated controversies, and shocking eliminations. Monalisa was amongst the contestants who recently got evicted from the house. After her exit, she opened up about Khanzaadi's derogatory language inside the show. Khanzaadi got eliminated during the February 11 episode, finishing in 45th position. During her time, her heated altercation with actress Chahat Pandey became a major highlight of the show. Monalisa reflected on Khanzaadi's misconduct with Chahat Pandey and the way she body-shamed Nehal Chudasma during the games.

Monalisa On The Foul Language Used By Khanzaadi and Chahat Pandey in The 50

In an interview with Times Now, Monalisa spoke about the foul language used by Khanzaadi and Chahat Pandey on the show, where, instead of uplifting one another, the women were seen pulling each other down. She said, "Ye meri parvarish nahi hai and uske dekh ke bhi aisa nahi lagta hai ki uski bhi hogi. Aap ek show me jaate ho and fir bhool jaate ho ki cameras hai, karoro janta aapko dekh rahi hai, aapke fans aapko dekh rahe hai toh aapko maintain karna chahiye. Aap bolo, apna point of view rakho par ek limit hona chahiye. Itne galat shabd use karke, what are you trying to prove?"

While sharing her take on the on-set clash between Khanzaadi and Chahat Pandey, Monalisa said that viewers and fellow contestants only saw Khanzaadi's actions, while no one knows what happened privately with Chahat. Their argument took place in a different room and that hasn't come on record. Talking about post-argument reactions, Monalisa said, "That was very wrong, agar kuch hua bhi tha toh abahar aake sabse shamme bolna nahi chahiye tha. Usne actions char bar repeat kiya aur bola, 'usne mujhe aisa aisa bola,' referring to the derogatory language.

She added, "Aap wo aapas mein bhi solve kar sakte the. But everyone was so shocked ki 'aise koi kaise baat kar sakta hai, demean kar sakta hai' That was very wrong."

'Parineetii' Fame Ankur Verma Marries Longtime Partner Leena In Intimate Ceremony



Television actor Ankur Verma, popularly known for his role in the well-liked daily soap opera Parineetii, has begun a new phase in his personal life. The TV actor married his long-time partner, Leena, in a private ceremony on February 25 that was attended by close friends and family. Owing to the stunning viral images and clips on social media, fans have been showering the newlyweds with love and blessings for their new journey together. Fans and coworkers alike were thrilled by the small wedding, which was characterised by warmth and simplicity.

Warmest Congratulations to Mr and Mrs Verma
The modest wedding style reflected the couple's inclination for seclusion above opulence. The ceremony, which was attended by close friends and family, was centred on sentimental moments and customary rites. One Instagram user shared a clip from Ankur and Leena's Haldi ceremony, where the couple can be seen sharing the same spot during the ritual.

While attendees were dressed in yellow, the couple sported twinning vibrant purple-coloured outfits, serving major couple goals. Ankur wore a purple-coloured kurta-pyjamas, while Leena opted for a purple lehenga set.

A kid approaches Ankur and the two pose for the camera. "Mamu ki shaadi," was written over the video. The SBS Exclusive (Saas Bahu Aur Saazish) shared another update, showing the newlyweds in their traditional wedding attire. Ankur wore a white sherwani suit, along with a matching turban, and Leena donned a traditional red lehenga.

About Ankur Verma

Ankur Verma is an actor with talent and versatility. He began his theatrical career with MGR Theatre Group in Gurgaon and Shri Ram Centre Mandai House in Delhi from 2017 to 2019. He moved to Mumbai after graduation and worked on numerous advertisements for various companies, such as Closeup, IPL Tata Harrier, and Samsung. He made his screen debut as the lead in Balaji's Colours production of Parineetii (2022-). Ankur made his web debut in Sonakshi Sinha-starrer Dahanu (2023).

Sargun Mehta's

Fashion Game Remains Unmatched In Her Blue Gown: 'Very Bebo Of Me'

Apart from being admired for her powerful performances, Sargun Mehta continues to impress fans with her impeccable fashion sense. The actress recently shared a series of photos wearing a striking, shiny blue outfit and she looks nothing short of breathtaking.

Backless Blue Gown, High Slit and Elegant Styling

Sargun opted for a long, backless blue gown featuring a high neckline and a bold thigh-high slit. The outfit showcased beautifully draped fabric around the neck that flowed down the back, adding drama and elegance to the overall look. Her long, dark hair was styled in soft, loose waves, perfectly complementing the sophistication of the gown.

Luxury Vibes With Silver Heels and a Red Car

Elevating the glamour quotient further, Sargun paired her outfit with silver, sparkly high-heeled shoes. Posing confidently beside a red luxury car, she exuded a bold and refined aesthetic that caught instant attention on social media.

Caption, Music Choice and Fans' Reactions

She shared the pictures with the song Bebo playing in the background and captioned the post, "Very bebo of me". The comments section quickly filled with admiration from friends and fans alike. Actress Ayesha Khan commented, "Didn't breathe for a minute, wow", while one fan wrote, "Very bebo for me sargun".

Sargun Mehta Shuts Down Pregnancy Rumours

This glamorous post comes shortly after Sargun

addressed and dismissed persistent pregnancy rumours circulating online. Taking to Instagram, she shared a strongly worded note, urging people to stop spreading unverified and baseless claims.

In her statement, Sargun wrote, "News apparently knows before us about our 'pregnancy' for the last two years. According to them, I've been pregnant. That's one long pregnancy! Just calm down and stop spreading baseless news. It wouldn't take much time to ask our team or us if the news is genuine before writing about



More Than an Actress: Sargun Mehta, the Entrepreneur

Sargun Mehta has proven that she is much more than just a talented performer. Along with her husband, Ravi Dubey, she co-founded Dreamiyata Entertainment. The production house has successfully expanded into television, digital content, and music, making a strong impact across multiple platforms.

