

## IN BRIEF

### Three dead, 1 injured in TNSTC bus and SUV collision

Ramanathapuram, Feb 14 (UNI) : Three persons were killed and another one seriously injured in a head-on collision between a Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation (TNSTC) bus and a sports utility vehicle (SUV) near Sethupathy Government Arts College at Achundanvayal on the Madurai-Rameswaram national highway here on Friday.

Police said three occupants of the car, identified as Chinna Muniyandi (45), Kuthalingam (47) and Radhakrishnan (55) were killed on the spot, while another occupant was rescued from the mangled remains of the SUV and admitted to the Ramanathapuram Government Medical College Hospital, where his condition was stated to be critical.

The TNSTC bus was proceeding to Kumuli from Ramanathapuram, while the ill-fated car was coming to Ramanathapuram from Madurai. Ramanathapuram Bazaar police have registered a case and are investigating.

### Rajanna seeks clarity on Shivakumar's KPCC presidency

New Delhi, Feb 14 (UNI) : Karnataka Cooperation Minister KN Rajanna on Friday urged the Congress high command to clarify the status of Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar as the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) President.

Rajanna stated that the party had earlier decided that Shivakumar would retain the KPCC presidency until the parliamentary elections. With the elections now concluded, he suggested the arrangement be revisited.

Speaking to reporters, Rajanna said, "Following the assembly elections in May 2023, the Congress central leadership had stated that Shivakumar would serve as both Deputy Chief Minister and state unit president until the completion of the Lok Sabha elections."

"Since the Lok Sabha elections concluded in June 2024, I have requested the party's top leadership to clarify whether Shivakumar will remain in the position or if a new president will be appointed," he said.

## Defence a major plank of Indo-US joint statement; US to sell F-35s to India, says Trump

Washington/New Delhi, Feb 14 (UNI) : Defence was a major agenda on the talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump with the latter announcing that his administration would pave the way to provide India with the F-35 stealth fighters.

The US President said in his White House address: "We will be increasing our military sales to India from this year by many billions of dollars. We are also paving the way to ultimately provide India with the F35 stealth fighters."

PM Modi in his address said, referring to Defence, that the US has an important role in India's defense preparedness. "As strategic and trusted partners, we are actively moving in the direction of joint development, joint production and transfer of technology."

"In the coming time, new technology and equipment will increase our capability. We have decided to launch the Autonomous Systems Industry Alliance. The Defence Cooperation Framework will be created for the next decade. Defence inter-operability, logistics, repair and maintenance will also be its main parts," the PM announced.



In this image released by @narendramodi via X, Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a meeting with US President Donald Trump at the White House, in Washington, DC, USA.

According to the Joint Statement: The two sides firmed up a new 10-year Framework for the US-India Major Defense Partnership in the 21st Century, which will be signed this year.

The US will expand defense sales and co-production with India to strengthen interoperability and defense industrial cooperation.

"The leaders welcomed the significant integration of US-origin defense items into India's inventory to date, including C-130J Super

Hercules, C-17 Globemaster III, P-8I Poseidon aircraft; CH-47F Chinooks, MH-60R Seahawks, and AH-64E Apaches; Harpoon anti-air missiles; M777 howitzers; and MQ-9Bs.

"The leaders determined that the U.S. would expand defense sales and co-production with India to strengthen interoperability and defense industrial cooperation.

"They announced plans to pursue this year new procurements and co-production arrangements

for "Javelin" Anti-Tank Guided Missiles and "Stryker" Infantry Combat Vehicles in India to rapidly meet India's defense requirements."

India is to procure six additional P-8I Maritime Patrol aircraft to enhance its maritime surveillance following agreement on sale terms.

The two sides will review their respective arms transfer regulations, including International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR), in order to streamline defense trade, technology exchange and maintenance, spare supplies and in-country repair and overhaul of U.S.-provided defense systems.

They called for opening negotiations this year for a Reciprocal Defense Procurement (RDP) agreement.

They called for accelerating defense technology cooperation across space, air defense, missile, maritime and undersea technologies.

The US announced a review of its policy on releasing fifth generation fighters and undersea systems to India.

They announced a new initiative - the Autonomous Systems Industry Alliance (Contd on page 3)

## Triple murder, including son of notorious rowdy, shocks Pondy

(Standard Post Bureau)

Puducherry, Feb 14 : In a shocking incident, three people--son of a notorious rowdy and two of their associates--were brutally hacked to death in the Union Territory of Puducherry on Friday.

The incident took place in broad daylight at an abandoned building in Rainbow Nagar in Puducherry.

The deceased were identified as Rishi, son of notorious rowdy Dasthan, Deva and Adi.

Deva and Adi were associates of Rishi and previous enmity was stated to be the reason for this brutal killing.

Acting on information from locals that two bodies were lying in the abandoned building, police rushed to the spot recovered them and sent to hospital for autopsy.

At the same spot, police found another person with serious cut injuries and rushed him to the hospital, where he later succumbed.

Senior police officials rushed to the spot and conducted a preliminary inquest. Special teams were formed to nab the killers and to ascertain the real motive behind the incident.



## Nityanand Rai raises alarm over growing complexity of cross-border terror financing

Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai expressed concerns about the growing cross-border connections in terror financing, noting that the flow of funds is becoming more complex. He highlighted that with the advancement of new digital technologies, the methods, sources, and channels through which terrorists move assets are becoming more complex and posing a major challenge to global security, a Home Ministry statement said here on Friday. The Minister was speaking at the 4th No Money for Terror (NMFT) Conference held in Munich, Germany, on Thursday.

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## Role of maritime sector vital for India to become developed ...



Former President Ram Nath Kovind on Friday emphasised on the critical importance of India's maritime resources, trade routes, and strategic positioning in the global geopolitical landscape.

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## Smith optimistic about Champions Trophy despite ...



Australia's stand-in skipper Steve Smith was unperturbed about the team's Champions Trophy prospects despite the side suffering a 2-0 ODI series reversal against Sri Lanka. Australia have been ravaged by selection issues, with Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood and Mitchell Marsh all ruled out of the tournament with injuries.

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## Punjab CM launches revolutionary digital education ...



Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Friday distributed laptops to the students of the government school as a part of the digital education program of the Ludhiana administration.

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## Chennai Port Chairman inaugurates Saksham 2025

Chennai, Feb 14 (UNI) : Saksham 2025 (Sanraksham Kshamata Mahotsav), the annual flagship initiative of the Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas was inaugurated by Chennai Port Trust (CPT) Chairman Sunil Paliwal here on Friday.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from senior officials of the Oil and Gas sector, industry leaders, environmental advocates and students.

This year's theme, "Cleaner Environment through Green and Clean Energy", highlights the importance of transitioning to a gas-based economy, promoting biofuels and alternative fuels, encouraging the use of electric vehicles, increasing awareness of hydrogen as a clean energy source, and digitally transforming energy systems for efficiency.

Organized under the guidance of Mr. M Anna Durai, State Level Coordinator (Oil Industry)-Tamil Nadu and Puducherry and Executive Director and State Head, IndianOil (Tamil Nadu State Office), the campaign aims to create widespread awareness on fuel conservation, energy efficiency, and the adoption of clean and green energy sources. In his inaugural address, Sunil Paliwal emphasized the urgent need for energy conservation and environmental responsibility.

He said India is at a crucial juncture where sustainable energy solutions are no longer a choice but a necessity.

With growing energy demands, he urged every citizen to contribute by adopting cleaner fuels, reducing wastage, and embracing energy-efficient practices.

He further highlighted that the Saksham initiative plays a pivotal role in educating people about responsible energy consumption and protecting the environment for future generations. Reaffirming Tamil Nadu's commitment to green energy initiatives, he called upon citizens to take proactive steps towards reducing carbon footprints and promoting renewable energy sources.

The event commenced with Mr. M Anna Durai, delivering the welcome address, highlighting the significance of Saksham 2025 in achieving India's energy security goals.

Mr. T Arumugan, GM (Geology), ONGC administered the Saksham 2025 Energy Conservation pledge, reinforcing the collective responsibility towards sustainable future. As part of Saksham 2025, an extensive range of awareness programs will be conducted across Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry.

## In a technological marvel, ISRO develops world's largest solid propellant mixer

Chennai, Feb 14 (UNI) : The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has designed and developed the world's largest solid propellant mixer for rocket motors. ISRO termed the development of 10 ton Vertical Planetary Mixers for processing the solid propellant as a significant technological marvel and a true testament to

India's growing technological prowess, self-reliance and unwavering commitment to innovation.

The Space Agency on Friday said the 10 ton vertical mixer is the world's largest solid propellant mixing equipment.

The development involves collaboration with academia and industries and has successfully completed factory level acceptance

tests. This high-capacity mixer will enable the productivity, quality and throughput improvement for the heavy solid motors production. It said the Department of Space (DOS) has undertaken multiple initiatives towards indigenous development of critical technologies, materials and machinery as part of 'Atmanirbharatam Space'. Realisation of indigenous 10 ton vertical mixer is a true testament to India's growing technological prowess, self-reliance and unwavering commitment to innovation. Solid propulsion plays a crucial role in Indian Space Transportation Systems and vertical mixer is one of the critical equipment in solid motor production.

Solid propellants are the

backbone of rocket motors and their production requires precise mixing of highly sensitive and hazardous ingredients.

Towards increasing the production scale of solid motor segments, Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) SHAR, ISRO in collaboration with M/s Central Manufacturing Technology Institute (CMTI), Bangalore, a premier R and D organization under the Union Ministry of Heavy Industries has successfully designed and developed 10 ton Vertical Planetary Mixers for processing the solid propellants, which is a significant technological marvel.

The 10 ton vertical mixer weighs about 150 tons with the length of 5.4 m, breadth of 3.3 m and height of 8.7 m.

## NTPC gets honour for water resilience

Chennai, Feb 14 (UNI) : NTPC Ltd., India's largest integrated power utility, has been honoured with Forward Faster Sustainability Award 2025 in the Water Resilience category. The award was presented at an event organised by the UN Global Compact Network India (UN GCNI) here on Thursday.

The award was received by Harekrushna Dash, ED (Sustainability, Environment and Ash) and K Karthikeyan, AGM (Environment and Sustainability) in recognition of the company's outstanding efforts in water conservation and sustainable

management initiatives, a press release today said.

The Forward Faster Sustainability Awards celebrate organisations in India that have made significant strides in advancing sustainability and corporate responsibility, aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Students hug their parents during an event on the occasion of 'Matru Pitru Pujan Diwas' at a school, in Surat on Friday.

## President Rule in Manipur indicates bankruptcy of double engine govt :CPI

Patna, Feb 14 (UNI) : Communist Party of India (CPI) state Secretary Ramnaresh Pandey alleged that imposition of President's rule in Manipur indicates total bankruptcy of the double engine government of BJP.

Accusing the BJP of the violence Manipur has been facing for the past two years, Pandey alleged here on Friday that the President's rule in Manipur

was not in the interest of the state but was imposed to sort out the internal bickerings in the ruling NDA in the state.

He alleged that RSS supported the then Chief Minister N Biren Singh, the main culprit of the violence, and was forced to resign.

The partial role of the Chief Minister was being probed by the court where evidence of his role in communal tensions had

been produced, he said adding that under such circumstances, the CM had no option other than to quit his post.

He alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not even care to tour the trouble-torn Manipur district which shows the communal mentality of the central government.

The CPI leader said that President Rule was not a solution to the problems

and maintained that the centre cannot shy away from its responsibilities. Pandey said that the centre should immediately initiate steps to sort out the deep-rooted differences after dialogue with the representatives of various communities.

He said such steps were essential to protect the democratic rights of the people and to bring normalcy to the state.

## Cong, CPI-M flay Centre for imposing PR

Imphal, Feb 14 (UNI) : The Congress and the CPI-M on Friday came down heavily on the Centre for imposing President's rule in Manipur.

Leader of the Congress in the Assembly and former state Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh said no one in democratic India has seen in the past the sort of crisis going on in Manipur since May 2023.

Ibobi told mediapersons that the people of Manipur and the Congress don't want President's rule, whose imposition he termed as a "wrong step" on the part of the Central government. The people of Manipur will suffer more under the President's rule, Ibobi said.

He said the way the

Centre is dealing with a democratically elected government is "deplorable". Any government which is in Manipur whether it is of the BJP or the Congress, takes charge after getting the people's mandate.

If the Centre does not respect the mandate of the people and resorts to such action that is not acceptable, Ibobi said. Ibobi questioned why the Central government removed all the Constitutional powers from the Chief Minister.

If such things happened when there was a Congress government in the state, the situation would have been different. Law and order is a state subject, and the state government should control

the situation using state forces, he added.

Kshetrimayum Santa, Secretary, CPI(M), Manipur State Committee, said the imposition of the President's rule in Manipur underlines the "utter bankruptcy" of the BJP's "double engine government" under whose rule the state has been in violent turmoil for two years.

President's rule has been imposed not in the interests of Manipur but to buy time to settle the internal conflicts within the ruling coalition, particularly the BJP, he added.

Calling the Chief Minister "the main culprit" backed all along by the BJP-RSS, the CPI-M leader said N Biren was forced to

resign because his partisan role was being examined by a court where evidence was presented of his sectarian partisan role which left him with no choice but to quit.

During these developments, the central leadership of the ruling party and the Central government refused to take the required action to alleviate the deep suffering inflicted on the people of Manipur symbolised by the Prime Minister's "callous refusal" to even visit the troubled state, he said.

This exposes the sectarian approach of the ruling party and the state and central government it heads, which put its own political interests above that of the state and its people, Santa said.

## Nityanand Rai raises alarm over growing complexity of cross-border terror financing

New Delhi, Feb 14 (UNI) Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai expressed concerns about the growing cross-border connections in terror financing, noting that the flow of funds is becoming more complex.

He highlighted that with the advancement of new digital technologies, the methods, sources, and channels through which terrorists move assets are becoming more complex and posing a major challenge to global security, a Home Ministry statement said here on Friday. The Minister was speaking at the 4th No Money for Terror (NMFT) Conference held in Munich, Germany, on Thursday. Rai said that unity amongst nations is essential in the fight against terrorism, and under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India stands steadfast with the global community in this fight against the scourge of terrorism. He expressed gratitude to the German government for hosting the conference on the crucial issue of countering terror financing and effective multilateral cooperation to develop a shared understanding of the risks and take forward the discussions from the NMFT Conference 2022 held in New Delhi.

Rai lauded the initiative of the NMFT Conference and expressed the need for permanency for this unique initiative by setting up an NMFT Secretariat in India, the idea of which was also mooted in the conference 2022 held in New Delhi, to sustain the continued global focus on countering the financing of terrorism. Moreover, the minister also held bilateral meetings with dignitaries from Singapore and Turkey. The conference had four sub-verticals i.e. multilateral cooperation, financing methods for terrorism, financial inclusion and risk-based approaches, and terrorist financing and organised crime.

## Dy. CM Ajit Pawar Reviews State Development Projects

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Feb 14 : Deputy CM Ajit Pawar, on Thursday, instructed that all departments should maintain coordination and ensure the pace of development work in Maharashtra. "Delays lead to a significant increase in project costs and ultimately leave the state in losses. To avoid this, focus on completing the projects on time," Pawar stated, further directing the follow-up with the Union Health Ministry to set up AIIMS in Pune. He gave the instructions at the meeting held with the Project Monitoring Unit (PMU) under his chairmanship in Mantralaya.

The meeting was attended by senior officials from various departments, including Dr. Rajagopal Deora (Additional Chief Secretary, Planning Department), O.P. Gupta (Additional Chief Secretary, Finance Department), Manisha Mhaikar (Additional Chief Secretary, Public Works Department),

## Army jawan injured in suspected sniper shot in Akhnoor Sector

Jammu, Feb 14 (UNI) : An army jawan sustained an injury from a sniper shot suspected to be fired from across the border in the Keri area of Akhnoor sector.

Official sources this evening said that a sniper shot was reportedly fired by the Pakistani Army towards an Indian post in the Keri area falling under the jurisdiction of Khour in Jammu.

"One Army jawan suffered an injury on his hand and was rushed to the hospital," they said.

On Tuesday, two Army personnel were killed in a suspected Improvised Explosive Device (IED) blast in Akhnoor sector.

On Monday, an army jawan sustained a bullet injury along the Line of Control in the Nowshera sector of Rajouri district in Jammu and Kashmir.

He received an injury from suspected firing from across the border, official sources said.

On Feb 8, Indian troops effectively retaliated to the firing by suspected terrorists along the Line of Control in Rajouri district.

Meanwhile, on the intervening night of February 4 and 5, a major infiltration bid was foiled when a group of suspected terrorists was believed to be killed in a landmine explosion on the Line of Control in the Battal area of the Krishna Ghati Sector in the Mendhar area of Poonch district.

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday chaired a high-level meeting and reviewed the security scenario in Jammu Division. The Lieutenant governor said that the focus should be on the complete wipeout of terrorism from Jammu Division.

## Security beefed up in Manipur after imposition of President rule

Imphal, Feb 14 (UNI) : After bringing troubled Manipur under President's rule, the authorities on Friday tightened security around the Raj Bhawan and other important locations, while discussions continued within the ruling BJP to find a successor to N Biren Singh, who quit as Chief Minister last week.

N Biren submitted his resignation to Governor A K Bhalla on Sunday and the BJP hasn't so far been able to choose a new leader of its legislative party.

The Central government on Thursday imposed President's rule in the northeastern state where the legislative

Assembly has been kept under suspended animation. Ksh Santa, Manipur state Secretary of the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) has demanded fresh election rather than keeping the state under President's rule. BJP leader Sambit Patra, who is camping in Manipur to hold talks with party MLAs and leaders, has also been given Z category security by the Union Home Minister.

A notification issued by Ministry of Home Affairs said President of India Droupadi Murmu received a report from Manipur Governor Bhalla and after considering the report and

other information she was satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the Government of the state could be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of India. So she imposed President's rule. This is the 11th time that President's Rule has been promulgated in Manipur. The last time such a measure was in place was from June 2, 2001 to March 6, 2002 - a period of 277 days. Manipur had then witnessed a major crisis on the demand for protecting the territorial integrity of the state. Eighteen persons died during the violence in June, 2001.

## India, Switzerland discuss progress in India-EFTA trade and economic partnership agreement

New Delhi, Feb 14 (UNI) India and Switzerland held the 13th round of Foreign Office Consultations on Thursday in New Delhi, during which the discussions focused on the progress in trade and investment, including the India-European Free Trade Association trade and economic partnership agreement negotiations.

The Indian delegation was led by Tanmaya Lal, Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs, and the Swiss side was headed by Alexander Fasel, State Secretary of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, a statement said. The co-chairs reviewed the entire gamut of India-Switzerland bilateral and multilateral cooperation, and regional and global matters of mutual interest.

The discussion focused over the progress in diverse sectors including trade & investment, and the India-EFTA TEPA (Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) with EFTA (European Free Trade Association) countries comprising Switzerland, Iceland, Norway & Liechtenstein).

It also focused on innovation and sustainability, air services matters, technology and mobility. They also discussed ways of increasing collaboration in new and emerging sectors of digitisation, AI and Quantum.

The co-chairs welcomed the impact of India-Swiss Innovation Platform to strengthen S&T ties by harnessing innovation capacity to develop the startup ecosystem of the two countries. They also discussed the recent opening of EFTA dedicated desk at Invest India in New Delhi and highlighted its significance for implementation and operationalization of the TEPA. Recognising the positive outcomes of the MoU on 'Technical cooperation in the field of Climate Change and Environment' signed in 2019, co-chairs looked forward to an early renewal of the MoU. Both sides agreed to convene the next round of India-Switzerland Foreign Office Consultations at mutually convenient dates, the statement added.

## SP MP Afzal Ansari booked for comments on Maha Kumbh

Ghaziपुर (UP), Feb 14 (UNI) : A case has been lodged against Samajwadi Party (SP) Lok Sabha MP from Ghaziपुर Afzal Ansari for allegedly hurting religious sentiments by making controversial remarks about ongoing Maha Kumbh, police sources said here on Friday.

Police sources said that the former Chairman of the District Cooperative Bank Dev Prakash Singh filed a report against Ansari at Shadiabad police station on Thursday night.

"The complainant has stated that Saint Ravidas birth anniversary was being celebrated on 12 February at Shadiabad square under the aegis of Guru Ravidas Maharaj Ji Janseva Sansthan Trust in which MP Afzal Ansari was the chief guest," they said. Police sources said that the complainant has alleged that during his speech the MP made indecent remarks about Maha Kumbh due to which religious sentiments of the people, who believe in Sanatan Dharma, have been hurt. "Shadiabad police has filed a case against MP Afzal Ansari," they said.

## Drug smuggler arrested with 30 kg heroin

Chandigarh, Feb 14 (UNI) : In an intelligence-led operation, Punjab Police busted a racket of criminals smuggling drugs from Pakistan by apprehending a smuggler and recovered 30 Kg heroin costing Rs 210 crore along with a car in Amritsar district, a top officer said on Friday. Punjab Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav said on X that drones were used to transport drugs from Pakistan. The value of the consignment of heroin in international market is Rs 210 crore.

DGP Yadav said the arrested accused was involved in large-scale heroin smuggling, and it was reported that he had recently received a large consignment of heroin smuggled via drone across the border. The senior officer said an FIR has been registered at Gharinda police station. Further investigations was on to identify more individuals involved and to trace the origins of the smuggling network.



Milind Mhaikar (Additional Chief Secretary, Forest Department), Sanjay Sethi (Additional Chief Secretary, Transport and Ports Department), Vikaschandra Rastogi (Principal Secretary, Agriculture Department), Dheeraj Kumar (Secretary, Medical Education Department), Sanjay Dashpute (Secretary, Public Works Department), along with Anil Gaikwad (Managing Director, Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation), Rajeshkumar Jaiswal

(Managing Director, Maharel), and Atul Chavan (Chief Engineer, Pune Division, Public Works Department).

On video conferencing, the meeting was attended by officials, including Chandrakant Pulkundwar (Divisional Commissioner, Pune), Dr. Rajendra Bhonsle (Pune Municipal Commissioner), Shravan Hardikar (Managing Director, MahaMetro), Jitendra Dudi (Pune District Collector), Santosh Patil (Satara District Collector), Shekhar Singh (Pimpri-

Chinchwad Municipal Commissioner), Yogesh Mhase (Metropolitan Commissioner and CEO), and senior officials from Nashik, Ahmednagar, Raigad, Ratnagiri, and related authorities. Deputy Secretary Vikas Dhakane convened the meeting.

Pune's traffic congestion is serious and should be given priority. The Pune Ring Road project should be expedited to ease traffic congestion. With lakhs of new vehicles hitting the roads annually, the pressure on Pune's

transport system is increasing. Work on metro projects, flyovers, the ring road, and other ongoing infrastructure projects should be accelerated to ensure a seamless commute in Pune. All departments involved in these projects should coordinate effectively to relieve Pune residents from traffic congestion. Additionally, Pawar instructed to assess the feasibility of the 'Karjat-Bhimashankar-Khed-Shirur' road, which is crucial for improving connectivity in rural Pune.

Pawar also reviewed the progress of projects, including the planned skywalk in Lonavala, Pune-Nashik Greenfield Semi High-Speed Railway, regional centers of the Sarathi Institution in various cities, and infrastructure developments like Satara Medical College, Alibaug Medical College, Satara Sainik School, Rewas-Reddy Coastal Highway, GST Bhavan in Wadala, and several other major projects.

## Handloom Sector Key to Economic Growth: Union Minister Giriraj Singh



(By Ravi Kumar Boppna)

New Delhi, Feb 14 : Union Minister of Textiles Giriraj Singh emphasized the significance of India's handloom sector in driving economic growth as he inaugurated the Andhra Pradesh pavilion at Bharat Tex 2025 in the national capital on Friday. He was joined by Rekha Rani, Commissioner of Handlooms and Textiles, and Kaliseti Appalanaidu, in

unveiling the state's vibrant showcase of traditional weaves.

Speaking at the event, Giriraj Singh highlighted the government's commitment to reviving the handloom sector and expanding its global outreach. "Andhra Pradesh is home to some of the country's finest handloom traditions. This pavilion is a testament to the skill and craftsmanship of our weavers. The government

is dedicated to supporting artisans through innovation, market expansion, and sustainable development," he said.

The Andhra Pradesh pavilion features an extensive display of the state's renowned handloom heritage, including Venkatagiri, Mangalagiri, Dharmavaram, Uppada, and Kalamkari weaves. The initiative aims to promote local artisans and boost the state's textile

industry on both national and international platforms. Rekha Rani, Commissioner of Handlooms and Textiles, reiterated the state's focus on empowering weavers, stating, "Bharat Tex provides a vital platform for Andhra Pradesh's artisans to showcase their craftsmanship, connect with global markets, and secure sustainable growth."

MP Kaliseti Appalanaidu underlined the economic importance of handlooms, noting, "Handloom weaving is not just a tradition but a crucial livelihood for thousands of families. This exhibition will help expand their market reach and provide much-needed recognition."

The Andhra Pradesh pavilion will remain open throughout Bharat Tex 2025, offering visitors live demonstrations by skilled artisans, an immersive experience of the state's textile heritage, and opportunities to purchase authentic handcrafted textiles.

## JD(U) rubbishes claim of Lalu on NDA not winning Bihar assembly polls

Patna, Feb 14 (UNI) : JD(U) Working President Sanjay Jha on Thursday rubbished the claim of RJD chief Lalu Prasad that BJP would not be in a position to form the government after the next Bihar assembly elections this year. Jha told media persons here that Prasad had lost political relevance and credibility, and there was no need to take notice of what he was talking about. How could Prasad claim that NDA would not be in a position to form the government after the next Bihar Assembly elections when people had already rejected him 20 years back, he pointed out. "RJD was ousted from power in 2005 and since then party has been losing Lok Sabha and Assembly elections one after the other", JD(U) leader said adding that people had been giving blessings to Nitish led NDA government for the last 20 years and it would continue in next assembly elections as well.

## Data-Driven Governance Key to Future Growth: RP Sisodiya



(By Ravi Kumar Boppna)

Guntur, Feb 14: "Data is the backbone of modern governance and business strategy. The ability to harness analytics and artificial intelligence will define the success of organizations in the coming years," said RP Sisodiya, Special Chief Secretary to the Government (Revenue), as he inaugurated the National Seminar on Advances in Business Analytics and Intelligence at Acharya Nagarjuna University.

Delivering the address as the Chief Guest, Sisodiya emphasized the transformative role of data-driven decision-making in governance and industry. He highlighted how artificial intelligence and big data are revolutionizing various sectors, from revenue management to public service delivery, enabling governments and businesses to make more informed and strategic choices. He noted that organizations that effectively integrate analytics into their operations will gain a significant advantage in the evolving economic landscape. Sisodiya also stressed the importance of preparing students and professionals for a data-driven future, urging participants to embrace technological advancements while remaining mindful of ethical considerations in data usage.

The seminar was

presided over by Prof. K. Gangadhara Rao, Vice-Chancellor of Acharya Nagarjuna University, who commended the university's efforts in fostering research and innovation in business analytics. He emphasized the need for academic institutions to collaborate with industry experts to equip students with the necessary skills to excel in the era of big data and artificial intelligence.

Prof. R. Siva Ram Prasad, Head of the Department of Commerce and Business Administration and Seminar Director, highlighted the significance of data analytics in shaping business strategies and decision-making processes, emphasizing that such academic engagements provide valuable insights for students and researchers.

The seminar featured expert insights from leading institutions. Prof. Vijaya Bhaskar from IIM Visakhapatnam delivered a keynote address on the growing influence of AI and machine learning in business intelligence, stressing the importance of ethical data management. Varsha Mamidi from IIM Raipur spoke about the intersection of intellectual property rights (IPR) and data analytics, highlighting the challenges and opportunities in protecting intellectual assets in the digital age. Prof. Srinivasa

Murthy, Director at IPE Hyderabad, provided insights into predictive analytics and its role in enhancing decision-making processes, showcasing real-world applications across industries.

Throughout the event, industry leaders and researchers shared their perspectives on emerging technologies, the challenges of big data management, and how AI-driven analytics are transforming industries. Sessions also focused on the integration of data visualization tools like Power BI and Tableau, demonstrating their impact on strategic business decisions and real-time analytics.

Commending Acharya Nagarjuna University for its initiative in bridging academia and industry, Sisodiya lauded the collaborative efforts of faculty and researchers in advancing the field of business analytics. He emphasized the need for continuous learning and adaptation in an era where data is shaping economies and governance structures.

As the seminar concluded, Sisodiya left the audience with a powerful message: "The future belongs to those who can interpret, analyze, and act upon data intelligently. Let us commit to building a smarter, more data-driven India." His address set the tone for an engaging and insightful seminar, reinforcing Acharya Nagarjuna University's role as a center for excellence in business analytics and intelligence research.

## Defence a major plank of Indo-US ....

(Contd from page 1)

(ASIA) - to scale industry partnerships and production in the Indo-Pacific. (The Autonomous Systems Industry Alliance refers to India-US cooperation in the area of underwater domain awareness technologies.

The US has offered a few co-production and co-development opportunities for UDA technologies, on commercial basis.

India is the very first country with whom US defence industry has offered to work with on these sensitive technologies.

Discussions are ongoing between concerned US companies and potential Indian partners in this regard. Some of the technologies offered are as follows.

- Sea Picket autonomous surveillance system with sonar acoustic array (produced by Thayer Mahan)
- Wave Glider unmanned surface vehicle systems (negotiations ongoing between Liquid Robotics/Boeing and Sagar Defence Engineering for co-production of 60 Wave Glider platforms in India)
- Low Frequency Active Towed Sonar (discussions ongoing with L3 Harris for co-development with Bharat Electronics)
- Multi-Static Active (MSA) sonobuoys (discussions ongoing with Ultra-Maritime for co-production with Bharat Dynamics Ltd.)

## CM asks officials to clear all pending dues of BC Welfare Dept

(Standard Post Bureau)

Vijayawada, Feb 14 : Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, on Friday made it clear that there should be accountability for the expenditure being made by the State Government for the welfare of the students from the Backward Classes (BCs). Holding a review meeting on the progress of the ongoing welfare measures being implemented in the State by the BC Welfare Department, the Chief Minister wanted noticeable changes in the well-being of the BC students. Chandrababu directed the officials to complete the ongoing repair works taken up at 660 government hostels at a cost of Rs 13.10 crore within six weeks.

When the officials informed the Chief Minister that plates, glasses, kitchen items, and other such materials were not supplied by the previous government to the hostel's inmates and that now steps are being taken to supply these items at a cost of Rs 16 crore, Chandrababu told them to complete the whole

process by the third week of March. The Chief Minister gave his nod for immediate clearance of all the pending dues to tutors as honorarium in 485 hostels amounting to Rs 4.35 crore, which includes Rs 2.02 crore till March last.

When the officials informed that Rs 185.27 crore is pending as diet changes for students, Chandrababu gave clearance to immediately pay Rs 110.52 crore along with clearance of pending bills for cosmetic charges amounting to Rs 29 crore. The Chief Minister also told the officers to immediately clear the pending bills concerning power charges to the hostels. The Chief Minister agreed for the upgradation of BC Welfare Girls Schools at Nasanakota and Atmakur in Satya Sai district to Residential BC Women Colleges and gave the green signal for setting up a BC Girls Residential School at Kuppam. Stating that the Government is keen on reviving 34 percent quota for BCs in local bodies and this has been cleared by the Cabinet as

promised during electioneering, the Chief Minister alerted them that if necessary the Government has to go for a legal battle on this.

He is also keen that funds be allocated for every population ratio and clarified that the State Government is committed to lifting GST on handlooms as promised during elections and already necessary guidelines have been formed. The Chief Minister wanted the officers to focus on repairs of the dhobi ghats constructed during 2014-19 for the benefit of the Rajaka community and build new ones wherever necessary.

He said that the BC buildings should be completed in the State with the funds to be allocated in the coming budgetary proposals and also collect the details of those beneficiaries of the BC Welfare Corporation since 2014 and conduct an audit on how many people who have obtained loans based on their professions are continuing in their profession now.

## Maha Kumbh Amrit Kaal of faith of India: Yogi

Lucknow, Feb 14 (UNI) Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday expressed happiness over the number of devotees crossing 50 crores in Prayagraj Maha Kumbh and said that this is the Amrit Kaal of India's public faith. Taking to X, the CM wrote, "More than 50 crore devotees have taken a holy dip in the holy Triveni so far in Maha Kumbh 2025, Prayagraj, a living symbol of India's spirituality, unity, equality and harmony."

He said, "110 crore citizens of India's total population are followers of Sanatan Dharma and out of that, the holy bath in Sangam by more than 50 crore citizens is a symbol of the strengthening faith towards the great Sanatan, the best expression of excellent human values. In the true sense, this is the Amrit Kaal of India's public faith."

Yogi said, "Hearty congratulations to all the revered saints, religious leaders, Kalpvasis, and devotees who received the holy bath in this 'Mahayagya' of unity and faith. Heartfelt thanks to the Maha Kumbh Mela administration, local administration, police administration, sanitation workers, voluntary organisations and religious institutions, boatmen, and all the departments of the central and state government associated with the Maha Kumbh, who participated in the successful organisation of this festival of humanity and congratulations to the people of the state. May Lord Teerthraj Prayag fulfil everyone's wishes."

## CM highlights Youth Congress legacy, criticises BRS leadership

Hyderabad, Feb 14 (UNI) : Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Friday emphasised the significant role of the Youth Congress in shaping top political leaders in the Telugu states, including Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and former Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao (KCR).

Speaking at Gandhi Bhavan in Hyderabad during the swearing-in ceremony of newly elected Telangana Youth Congress President Jakkidi Shivacharan, Revanth Reddy recalled that leaders like Naidu and KCR had their political beginnings in the Youth Congress under Hanumantha Rao's leadership. He also

mentioned Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar and Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka as examples of leaders who rose from the organisation. Revanth Reddy stressed that the Youth Congress is the foundation for political leadership and urged young leaders to continue fighting for public issues, irrespective of whether they hold positions.

Highlighting his government's initiatives, the Chief Minister stated, "We have provided free bus travel for women, constructed houses for the poor, waived off farm loans, and created 55,000 jobs." He criticised the previous BRS government for failing to fulfil promises, particularly regarding double-bedroom housing. Taking a direct jibe at

KCR's leadership, Revanth Reddy said, "If money alone could win elections, KCR would have secured 100 seats. People have rejected the Kalvakuntla family due to their corruption." He also alleged that the BRS leadership was deliberately obstructing the caste census to prevent accurate representation of BC communities. Accusing Prime Minister Narendra Modi of "legally converting to BC" for political gain, Revanth Reddy asserted that Modi was originally from an upper-class background until 2002. He further called for the social boycott of KCR, KTR, and Harish Rao for allegedly avoiding participation in the state's caste census survey.



### JOINT ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION

(For the State of Goa and Union Territories)  
3rd & 4th Floor, Plot No. 55-56, Udyog Vihar  
Phase-IV, Sector 18, Gurugram, Haryana 122015  
Email: secyjercuts@gov.in  
Website: www.jercuts.gov.in  
Phone No. 0124-4684705

#### Public Notice

In exercise of the powers conferred by 181 of the Electricity Act, 2003 (36 of 2003), read with section 61, 66 and 86 thereof and all other powers enabling it in this, the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission proposes "Consultation Paper on Determination of the Generic Levelised Tariff for the Renewable Energy Technologies as specified under Regulation 8 of the JERC (Terms and Conditions for Tariff determination from Renewable Energy Sources) Regulations, 2024".

We would like to inform you that the last date for submitting comments/suggestions on the Consultation Paper has been extended. The new timeline for submission is from 14.02.2025 to 28.02.2025. The Consultation Paper is available at the JERC's official website <https://jercuts.gov.in>.

The comments/suggestions may be forwarded to the Commission by post or by email addressed to the Secretary, Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (for the State of Goa & Union Territories), 3rd & 4th Floor, Plot No. 55-56, Udyog Vihar, Phase-IV, Sector 18, Gurugram, Haryana 122015. (email: secyjercuts@gov.in).

Sd/-

(S.D. Sharma)

CBC 34124/12/0021/2425 Secretary, (1/c), JERC

### EAST COAST RAILWAY

e-Tender Notice No.: DYCEGSUWAT  
ENGG2025002, Dated: 08.02.2025

**NAME OF WORK:** CONSTRUCTION OF ROW OVER BRIDGE WITH (1x60 MTR BOW STRING GIRDER + 2x18.0 MTR COMPOSITE GIRDER + 11x24.0 MTR-T BEAM GIRDER) AND APPROACHES OF EXISTING SPECIAL CLASS (MANNED AND INTER-LOCKED) LEVEL CROSSING-463 AT KM. 821/9-11, 821/10-12 UP AND DN BETWEEN VIZIANAGARAM-KORUKONDA STATION OF WALTARA DIVISION.

Approx. Cost of the Work : ₹ 35,70,20,079.26, EMD: ₹ 19,35,100/-, Completion Period of the Work : 24 (Twenty Four) Months.

Tender Closing Date & Time : At 1500 hrs. of 04.03.2025.

No manual offers sent by Post / Courier / Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website: [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in)  
Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 15 (Fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigenda issued for this tender. The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/ bidder can participate on e-tendering.

The tenderers should read all instructions to the tenderers carefully and ensure compliance of all instructions.

By, Chief Engineer (GSU/ Waltar

PR-163/CH/24-25

## STANDARD POST

## Role Of Prashant Kishor In Helping Trinamool Counter BJP In Bengal

Elections in Bengal just two months away, poll strategist Prashant Kishor's team is playing a key role for Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress, helping it tackle the BJP challenge. Amid speculation that it also has a say in candidate selection, the Indian Political Action Committee or IPAC says it is acting as a force multiplier for the ruling party, helping it identify chinks in its armour, plugging gaps in its strategy and draw in votes that had moved away.

The third item on the list is important, with the BJP rapidly expanding its footprint in tribal areas of the state. A portion of Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and Adivasi votes in the western and northern parts of the state had shifted to the BJP in 2019, giving it a chunk of the 18 parliamentary seats it won in the state.

The IPAC's role is to ensure that Trinamool's message for these segments get amplified. Much of this is done through outreach programmes, where mid-level and district leaders can interact with the Chief Minister.

At one such programme organised by IPAC to reach out to the party's tribal and Scheduled Castes leaders, Mamata Banerjee had said: "I am appealing to my brothers from the SC/ST and Adivasi community. They (the BJP) have won a lot of your seats. They have won in Janglemahal and North Bengal. They have won so many MPs. Have they given you anything?"

The event set the tone for the messaging the Trinamool wanted to send out.

Mamata Banerjee's flagship scheme "Duarey Sarkar" has distributed over 10 lakh caste certificates for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes within a month. This initiative has to reach the ground and the IPAC comes into the picture here, Trinamool leaders say.

The IPAC is closely working with the party's SC/ST cell leaders to bring back the Scheduled Caste votes the BJP has been eyeing.

President of Trinamool's cell for the Scheduled Castes, Dr Tapas Mandal, said: "When a political representative goes to the people, he may not get the entire truth. But when an independent agency goes to the people, we will get unbiased information."

The IPAC is also helping the party stand against the BJP's bombardment of advertisements and videos on social media and WhatsApp. From providing feedback from the ground to regular updates on concerns of voters, it is also keeping the party's top leadership updated. Party leaders say Mamata Banerjee is also aware the BJP troll army's relentless attack on her is helping it polarize the state.

IPAC teams are also educating district-level leaders about the pitfalls of social media blunders. Booth-level workers are being advised to attend training sessions on weekends to familiarize themselves with the party's social media strategy.

The IPAC is also helping Trinamool run a directed campaign.

For example, in one block of Kalyani, where the Trinamool has to recover ground, a key trouble area was pending land deeds for residents. That feedback was shared with the party and the local leadership has managed to sort out the issue.

Now the message that the government has been of help in a predominantly Scheduled Caste area is now spreading through word of mouth. "We have taken the "Duarey Sarkar" programme to the people's doorstep. People here were waiting for the land certificates for years. Recently Mamata Banerjee had given these people her word and now they have been given land ownership documents," Pankaj Singh, Kalyani Block President, Trinamool Congress told NDTV.

Arjun Datta, who works with IPAC, said: "We are force multipliers. The party's leadership, the party's grassroots leaders are the individuals who will go into the communities and convince people to support the Chief Minister and the party's programme." There, however, are critics of Mr Kishor as well. Those who have been expelled from the party like Baishali Dalmiya, say Prashant Kishor hasn't been able to do what he set out to.

Leaders like Suvendu Adhikari have also blamed him for their departure -- a stance the party has vehemently objected to. Suvendu Adhikari had "plans to join the BJP with 35 MLAs and try and become Chief Minister," party MP and its youth wing chief, Abhishek Banerjee said.

## Conversation with Ms. Basmati Gagrai

### A Trailblazer in Empowering Tribal Communities

(By Swapnil Singh)

Ms. Basmati Gagrai, a remarkable social reformer, hails from Lamjhari, located in the Manjhari block of West Singhbhum district in the state of Jharkhand. Her roots in this region have deeply influenced her commitment to empowering tribal communities and fostering education and awareness among marginalized groups. Basmati's journey is truly inspiring. Overcoming significant challenges, including financial struggles, limited educational opportunities, and a traumatic assault at the age of 17, she demonstrated remarkable resilience and determination. Today, she is the founder of a residential school that provides holistic education to 330 children, from nursery to 7th standard. Beyond education, her efforts extend to raising rights-based awareness among over 42,000 forest-dwellers in the tribal regions of Jharkhand, empowering marginalized communities and fostering a brighter future. Ms. Gagrai's journey began humbly, with just four students under a tree during 2016. From this modest beginning, she established a school that has since grown to impact the lives of many children now her school is registered as a public charitable trust under name Rural Development of Child Education and Women Empowerment (RDCEWE). Her vision, hard work, and determination transformed a small initiative into a thriving institution, empowering students with education and opportunities for a better future. She visited our MS Engineering College in Bengaluru, and I had the honor of engaging in a conversation with her.

What motivated to start

At a school by quitting teaching job? Ms. Basmati shared that the condition of her village and the surrounding areas in the district was much poorer compared to others. The children in her village had no access to proper education, and basic facilities were lacking. She felt a deep sense of responsibility to address these challenges and create an opportunity for the children in her community to receive an education. This drive to improve the lives of these children, who were otherwise deprived of educational opportunities, led her to take the bold step of founding a school.

The challenges she faced during school construction?

Ms. Basmati shared that her journey was filled with both physical and emotional obstacles. The greatest challenge was the resistance she encountered from her own community. Many villagers were not supportive of her efforts, with some even trying to sabotage the construction of the school. They feared the changes she represented and believed that educating children, particularly in a way that broke with tradition, would disrupt their way of life. This resistance soon escalated into direct opposition.

As

the value of her efforts, and her school became a symbol of courage, resilience, and the power of education.

When asked what gives her satisfaction? Basmati shared that her greatest fulfillment comes from using her skills in fund and resource management to construct five classrooms for her school. These classrooms were built using locally available materials like mud, clay, and an asbestos roof, reflecting her commitment to resourcefulness and sustainability. She takes great pride in leading her village with the mindset of helping people, ensuring that everyone has access to education, and fostering a community-oriented approach. Ms. Basmati is particularly passionate about women's empowerment and supporting those who are physically or economically disadvantaged. She shared the poignant story of a physically challenged woman who had been bitten by ants and rats. Basmati stepped in to provide food and care for her, embodying her compassion and dedication to improving the lives of the most vulnerable. Meeting Basmati and hearing her life experiences was truly inspiring. It offered valuable life lessons on resilience,



selflessness, and the power of community-driven change.

When asked how she convinced parents to send their daughters to school?

Ms. Basmati explained that her first step was to convince her own mother about the importance of education for girls. Once her mother understood and supported the idea, she became a key ally in convincing the rest of the village. Together, they worked to change the mindset of the community, emphasizing that education was not just a right but a necessity for all children, regardless of gender. Ms. Basmati also reassured the parents that the school was equipped with all necessary facilities, including separate toilets for girls, ensuring that their daughters would have a safe and comfortable environment in which to learn. By addressing their concerns and showing them that the school would provide a supportive and secure space for their children, she was able to gradually gain the trust of the parents. Over time, the efforts paid off as more and more families, initially hesitant, began to see the benefits of sending their daughters to school. Eventually, the majority of the village's parents recognized the value of education for girls, and

more girls enrolled in the school. This was a significant shift in the community's mindset, and Ms. Basmati's persistence in advocating for girls' education played a vital role in breaking down the barriers that had previously kept many girls from attending school.

When asked about her visit to M.S. Engineering College in Bengaluru? Basmati expressed her admiration for its peaceful and creative environment. She noted that it reminded her of Shantiniketan, a renowned place celebrated for fostering learning in a calm, artistic setting. She appreciated how the college encourages not just academic learning, but also personal growth, creativity, and emotional well-being. Ms. Basmati praised the leadership of the college, particularly Dr. Rana Pratap Reddy, the Principal, and Mr. Sudarshan Raju, the Secretary. She emphasized that their vision and commitment have made the college a nurturing space where students can explore, think freely, and develop into well-rounded individuals. Ms. Basmati particularly admired how the college supports students in achieving not only academic success but also in becoming compassionate, thoughtful, and innovative individuals who can make a meaningful impact in the world. Her visit served as a powerful reminder that education goes beyond classrooms and textbooks.

It's about creating an environment where students feel inspired, supported, and empowered to pursue their dreams.

She encouraged everyone at the college to take full advantage of the resources and opportunities available to them, to work hard, think big, and never give up on their goals.

## Science of Yagya - Ashwini Guruji Dhyani Ashram

(Standard Post Bureau)

A Yagya is a means of direct interaction with the positive forces in creation. Vedas abound with descriptions of yagyas performed the rishis and munis to energise the manifested creation. Devas and devis would come to be a part of such yagyas. Asurs and daityas would also come...to disturb them, the Creation being a balance of the two forces, positive and negative.

Asurs are known to disrupt havan and create obstruction in invocation of devic forces. Even in the times when Rishi Agastya and Vishvamitra were in the body, asurs tried to disrupt the yagyas and havan performed by these rishis. Ram and Lakshman went with Rishi Vishvamitra to protect one such yagya.

The nature of a human being is to aid the positive forces, the devas and devis, by protecting the havan for the peace and prosperity of one's home, surroundings and creation at large.

Satyug was the time when devas and devis and rishis and munis would roam about freely on earth, since the positivity was at its peak. The present times, the times of kaliyug, are



times of heightened negativity and so, subtler energies like yogis and gurus are rare to find in the body, and devas and devis can only be accessed in their subtle forms by invoking positive aspect of creation through certain yogic practices and acts of charity and service.

Sanatan Kriya details the amazing science of yagyas as given by the vedic rishis to induce positivity in the body as well as surroundings. The practice involves making oblations to fire using specific chants. Fire, having the ability of transformation can transform the physical into the subtle and the mantras have the ability to manifest the ability and power of devas in the physical world and also have the power

and ability to control nature and normal human physical lives. At the beginning of a yagya, a sankalp is made which indicates the purpose for which the yagya is conducted. Then the ahvahan (invocation) of specific devas and devis is done requesting them to bless the yagya.

A yagya performed under the sanidhya of a Guru, with purity thought, ingredients and the correct chants, has the effect of completely changing the environment – the weather changes, air becomes fragrant, birds perch on the trees around, there is peace and stillness within and outside and diseases disappear – these are all indicators of warding off negativity and manifestation of positive forces in creation. Sadhaks

at Dhyani Ashram routinely conduct such yagyas for purity of homes, environment and body, the manifestations are witnessed and recorded and their effects felt by one and all. If there is smoke in a yagya or any kind of unpleasantness, it indicates the chants are incorrect or not done by an adept. Erroneous chants can have disastrous effects and do more harm than good, therefore one must ensure yagya is performed with correct chants and purity of ingredients and thoughts.

If you want to know whether the yagya was performed properly or not, just watch the yagya-agni at the time of purna-ahuti. You will be able to see the form of dev/devi if the invocations were successful.

## Role of maritime sector vital for India to become developed nation by 2047: Kovind

New Delhi, Feb 14 (UNI) Former President Ram Nath Kovind on Friday emphasised on the critical importance of India's maritime resources, trade routes, and strategic positioning in the global geopolitical landscape.

Speaking at the Vice Admiral KK Nayyar Memorial Lecture, Kovind highlighted the vital role of the maritime sector in realising India's aspirations to become a developed nation by 2047, a Defence Ministry statement said. The former President's lecture focused on "Increasing Maritime Consciousness in India: A Strategic Imperative for National Prosperity and Security."

He emphasised on fostering a robust maritime culture to enhance economic growth, strengthen national security, and solidify India's stature as a leading power in the Indo-Pacific region.

The 2025 edition of the Vice Admiral KK Nayyar Memorial Lecture coincided with the 20th Foundation Day of the National Maritime Foundation (NMF).

This prestigious event commemorates the enduring legacy of VAdm KK Nayyar, whose vision and intellectual rigour established the National Maritime Foundation as a premier institution for maritime thought and policy advocacy.

Speaking on the occasion, Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, Chief of the Naval Staff, highlighted the National Maritime Foundation's role as India's premier maritime think tank, dedicated to the study and advocacy of maritime issues critical to the nation's growth and security, that through its research, publications, and policy recommendations, continues to shape India's maritime future in alignment with the nation's aspirations. He underscored the Indian Navy's increasing role in ensuring a stable and secure maritime environment, exemplified by its ongoing maritime security missions and enhanced regional cooperation.

## China denounces U.S. accusations of so-called Chinese aggression in Indo-Pacific

Beijing, Feb 14 (UNI) : A Chinese defence spokesperson on Friday denounced the U.S. baseless accusations of so-called Chinese "aggression" in the Indo-Pacific, stressing that China pursues a national defence policy that is defensive in nature and the Chinese military is a staunch force for peace.

Zhang Xiaogang, a spokesperson for the Ministry of National Defence, made the remarks at a press conference in response to a relevant question.

China, as a peace-loving nation, does not engage in military aggression or territorial expansion, said Zhang. "But we will never give up our legitimate rights and interests and will take firm action in countering any external threats or challenges."

The spokesperson said that a stable, healthy, and sustainable China-U.S. diplomatic and defence relationship serves the common interests of both countries and meets the broader expectations of the international community.

Zhang expressed the hope that the United States will work with China, based on the principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and win-win cooperation, to strengthen exchanges and cooperation between the two countries and the two militaries and inject certainty and positive energy into the world.

## 4 killed, 2 under cardiac arrest in SKorea's construction site fire

Seoul, Feb. 14 (UNI) : Four people were killed and two others were left in cardiac arrest after fire broke out at a construction site in South Korea's southeastern port city of Busan on Friday, multiple media outlets said.

The fire broke out at about 10:51 a.m. local time (0151 GMT) at a hotel construction site in Busan, some 325 km southeast of the capital Seoul.

Among six people going into cardiac arrest, four people were confirmed dead later.

Earlier reports said eight people were in cardiac arrest in the fire. Before the fire outbreak, 10 workers were working inside the building.

The fire was believed to have started from insulation materials loaded near a swimming pool on the first floor

## Iran rejects U.S. accusations of funding and arming Yemen's Houthis

Tehran, Feb 14 (UNI) : Iran's permanent mission to the United Nations (UN) in New York has rejected the U.S. accusation that Tehran is providing the Yemen-based Houthis with financial resources, arms support, and military training.

Speaking at a UN Security Council briefing on Yemen on Thursday, Dorothy Shea, acting U.S. ambassador to the UN, said, "Iran's continued and unprecedented provision of weapons components, financial support, and training and technical assistance to the Houthis over more than a decade violates the arms embargo this council imposed on the group," calling on the Security Council members to press Iran "to stop arming, funding, and training the Houthis."

In response to Shea's remarks, Iran's UN mission submitted a letter on Thursday to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and Fu Cong, rotating president of the UN Security Council for February, Iran's official news agency IRNA reported.

In the letter, the Iranian mission denounced the U.S. accusation as "unfounded," stressing Iran's principled policy has always been based on supporting peace and stability in Yemen and a political solution to the Arab state's crisis.

It added that Washington could not conceal its complicity in Israel's "crimes" by hurling accusations at Iran, noting that Iran "has always been and will remain committed to the fundamental principles of international law and the UN Charter, as well as the Security Council resolutions."

# Trump says Ukraine to be involved in peace talks with Russia



Washington, Feb. 14 (UNI) : U.S. President Donald Trump said Thursday that Ukraine would be involved in peace negotiations with Russia over ending the conflict between the two countries.

"They're part of it. We would have Ukraine, and

we have Russia, and we'll have other people involved, a lot of people," Trump told a joint press conference with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the White House.

Trump attributes the origins of the Ukraine conflict partly to Ukraine's

potential NATO membership, which Russia had long opposed.

"From day one ... they've said they cannot have Ukraine be in NATO. They said that very strongly," Trump said, adding that, "I actually think that that was the thing

that caused the start" of the conflict.

Trump said U.S. and Russian officials would meet in Munich, Germany, on Friday and that Ukraine was also invited.

Trump also mentioned to reporters that high-ranking officials, though not the leaders, from all three countries would meet in Saudi Arabia next week to work toward ending the conflict.

"We're working with (Ukrainian) President (Volodymyr) Zelensky and with (Russian) President (Vladimir) Putin, and my impression is that ... I know that President Zelensky wants to make a deal, and I also feel that I know that President Putin wants to make a deal," Trump said.

## Lebanon rejects Israeli demand to stay in 5 southern locations beyond ceasefire deadline

Beirut, Feb. 14 (UNI) Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri voiced on Thursday Lebanon's "absolute rejection" of Israel's demand to hold five locations in southern Lebanon beyond the ceasefire deadline on Feb. 18, according to the official National News Agency.

"I refused to discuss any extension of the withdrawal timeline. It is the Americans' responsibility to enforce the withdrawal; otherwise, they would be causing the biggest setback for the government," Berri told reporters in the Lebanese village of Ain al-Tineh after meeting with U.S. General Jasper Jeffers, head of a five-member monitoring committee on the ceasefire agreement between Israel

and Hezbollah, in the presence of U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Lisa Johnson. "If the (Israeli) occupation remains, time will tell. This is the responsibility of the Lebanese state, and the army is fully carrying out its duties south of the Litani River. As for the area north of the Litani, that matter is for the Lebanese people and a national dialogue table to discuss a defense strategy," he said.

According to Lebanese local TV channel LBCI, Berri has rejected deploying foreign forces at border positions, stressing that the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and the Lebanese army are fully prepared to handle the task. Earlier Thursday, Bloomberg reported that

Israeli Strategic Affairs Minister Ron Dermer said Israel will retain control over five strategic points in Lebanon after the deadline.

Israeli public broadcaster KAN later reported that the United States has permitted Israel to stay "in several locations" in Lebanon beyond the deadline. Israeli newspaper Haaretz said the United States has yet to decide whether to approve or reject Israel's demand for a withdrawal delay.

The U.S. and French-brokered ceasefire, in effect since Nov. 27, 2024, initially set a 60-day timeline for Israel's withdrawal from Lebanese territory. However, due to delays, the agreement was extended on Jan. 26 until Feb. 18 following a U.S. proposal.

## US court orders Trump administration to resume frozen foreign aid

Washington, Feb 14 (UNI) A judge in the US Columbia District Court on Friday ordered the administration of President Donald Trump to resume frozen foreign

aid, according to a court filing.

Trump ordered a 90-day suspension of all foreign assistance in one of his first executive orders after his inauguration on January 20, as part of a reassessment of US financial commitments abroad in accordance with his administration's "America First" policy.

"It is hereby ORDERED that Defendants [State Secretary] Marco Rubio, [Acting USAID Deputy] Peter Marocco, [Director of the Office of Management and Budget] Russell Vought, the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the Office of Management and Budget and their agents are temporarily enjoined from enforcing or giving effect to any ... directives that implement [the] Executive Order," the court document decision read.

Under the order, the defendants cannot in any way prevent distribution of foreign aid and suspend or terminate

any contracts for this aid.

The court also said that the reason for the freeze was for the government to be able to review aid programs to assess their effectiveness.

"However, at least to date, Defendants have not offered any explanation for why a blanket suspension of all congressionally appropriated foreign aid, which set off a shockwave and upended reliance interests for thousands of agreements with businesses, nonprofits, and organizations around the country, was a rational precursor to reviewing program," the filing read.

## 3 Israeli hostages, 369 Palestinian prisoners to be released on Saturday

Jerusalem/Gaza, Feb 14 (UNI) Israel confirmed Friday that it has received a list of three hostages set to be released on Saturday from Hamas captivity in the Gaza Strip. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office initially stated that the list was "acceptable by Israel," but a spokesman for Netanyahu later backtracked, clarifying that Israel had only received the list. "This is a purely factual description and does not reflect any Israeli position on the matter," the spokesman said. The list was delivered to Israel via Qatari and Egyptian mediators. According to a statement from Al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, the hostages are Alexander (Sasha) Troufanov, a 29-year-old Israeli-Russian civilian; Sagui Dekel-Chen, a 36-year-old Israeli-American civilian; and Yair Hom, a 46-year-old Israeli.

Meanwhile, Israeli army radio reported that 369 Palestinian prisoners will be released on Saturday. Among them, 333 will be returned to Gaza, with 10

others sent back to their homes in the West Bank and one released in East Jerusalem, while the remaining 25 of the prisoners sentenced for life will either be deported to Gaza or sent abroad via Egypt, said the report.

This will mark the sixth batch of prisoner-for-hostage exchanges between Israel and Hamas under the ceasefire agreement that took effect on Jan. 19. The anticipated release comes amid heightened tensions after U.S. President Donald Trump warned that if "all of the hostages" in Gaza were not freed by Saturday at noon, the truce would be canceled, and he would "let hell break out." Netanyahu and Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz echoed the warning, saying Israel would resume its onslaught on Gaza.

Hamas announced on Monday that it would delay the hostage release scheduled for Saturday, citing Israeli violations of the agreement and demanding Israel reaffirm its commitment to maintaining the ceasefire.

## Trump to impose retaliatory tariffs on Canada, France over digital services taxes

Washington, Feb. 14 (UNI) : As U.S. President Donald Trump signed an executive order for reciprocal tariffs on Thursday, his administration planned to impose tariffs on Canada and France over their digital services taxes on U.S. technology giants.

Trump assigned his economic team the task of creating a plan to impose retaliatory tariffs on any country that had imposed duties on U.S. exports.

In June 2024, Canada began imposing a tax to address the challenge of taxing digital giants like Google's parent company Alphabet and Amazon.com, which are able to book their profits in low-tax countries.

The White House sent out a fact sheet calling digital services taxes in Canada and France "unfair," with each country collecting over 500 million U.S. dollars annually from U.S. businesses.

## China urges Philippines to honour promises of removing Typhon missile system

Beijing, Feb 14 (UNI): A Chinese military spokesperson on Friday denounced the Philippines for using the deployment of the Typhon mid-range missile system as a bargaining chip on the South China Sea issue, warning that such actions endanger the well-being of its people, and regional peace and stability.

Zhang Xiaogang, spokesperson for the Ministry of National Defence, made the remarks in response to a media query regarding the remarks from the Philippine side that it would return the Typhon system to the United States so long as China stops its territorial



claims. Noting that the Typhon missile system is a strategic asset and an offensive weapon, Zhang said that the Philippine side had repeatedly gone back on its words and brought in the system to cater to the U.S. side.

Such a decision would only place its national security and defence in the hands of others, and lead to geopolitical confrontation and risks of an arms race in the region, Zhang added.

Stating that the territory of the Philippines is defined by a series of international treaties, Zhang said that China's Nansha Qundao and Huangyan Dao fall

outside Philippine territory. "It's legitimate, lawful and beyond reproach for the Chinese side to conduct law-enforcement activities in relevant waters," he said.

"We require the Philippine side to remove the Typhon missile system as soon as possible to honor its open promises, and return to the right track of dialogue and consultations at an early date," Zhang said, adding that China will continue to take necessary measures to resolutely counter provocations and infringements and safeguard its territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests.

 <p>सत्यमेव जयते</p>	<p><b>BUREAU OF INDIAN STANDARDS</b> (National Institute of Training for Standardization) A-20&amp;21, Institutional Area, Sector 62, Noida 201309 (UTTAR PRADESH)</p>	 <p>सत्यमेव जयते</p>
<p><b>Advertisement No.: NITS/Trg./03/2024-25/01</b></p>		
<p>Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), the National Standards Body of the country is inviting applications from qualified and experienced professionals for engagement as Resource Persons for conducting sessions as Faculty in Capacity Building Programmes designed for various State Government Departments. These programmes will be organized by National Institute of Training for Standardization, BIS and BIS' Branch Offices at various locations across the country.</p> <p>For Resource Persons, BIS is seeking individuals having a minimum experience of 3 years in the relevant field who can be Member of concerned BIS Technical Committees; Retired Officer of the concerned government department like, CPWD, PWD, PHED, Distribution Utilities, Water Resources, Irrigation, etc; Faculty of the concerned discipline from Engineering/Science Colleges with preference to BIS' partner Institutes; Serving Industry personnel/consultant of the concerned field; and Member of the concerned professional bodies like Institution of Engineers (India), Indian Association of Structural Engineers, Indian Plumbing Association, Indian Water Works Association, Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. Minimum 3 years' experience in relevant areas. In addition, they shall have in-depth knowledge and experience in relevant areas and strong communication and interpersonal skills. Proven track record in training, capacity building, or related fields is desirable.</p> <p>These Resource Persons are expected to deliver expert sessions and training as per the session transaction plans and using the course materials and powerpoint presentations to be provided by BIS. Guidelines for State Government Capacity Building Programmes and Engagement of Resource Persons and Session Transaction Plans for the programmes for the various state government departments can be accessed from the following link:</p> <p><a href="https://www.services.bis.gov.in/php/BIS_2.0/trainings/dashboardnew/session-plans.php">https://www.services.bis.gov.in/php/BIS_2.0/trainings/dashboardnew/session-plans.php</a></p> <p>Interested candidates can submit their applications along with duly filled in Annexure 1 of the above mentioned Guidelines to <a href="mailto:nits@bis.gov.in">nits@bis.gov.in</a>, latest by <b>28 February 2025</b>, and join BIS in its efforts towards national capacity building.</p> <p>NOTE - BIS reserves the right to revise/reschedule/modify/cancel/suspend the process without assigning any reasons. The decision of BIS shall be final and no appeal shall be entertained in this regard.</p>		
<p><b>CBC 08103/12/0020/2425</b></p>		

# FASHION AFFAIRS...

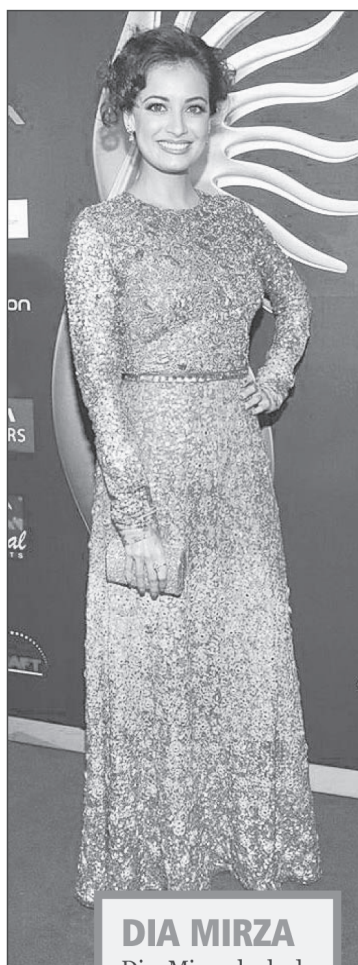
B-town divas were recently seen flaunting their designer outfits and beautiful jewellery for the cameras at an award function. Here are few of the best dressed fashionista's straight from the green carpet

Bollywood glitterati were in attendance for the fashion parade at the IIFA Awards green carpet recently in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Here's a look at some of your favourite celebs fresh from Asia's green capital.



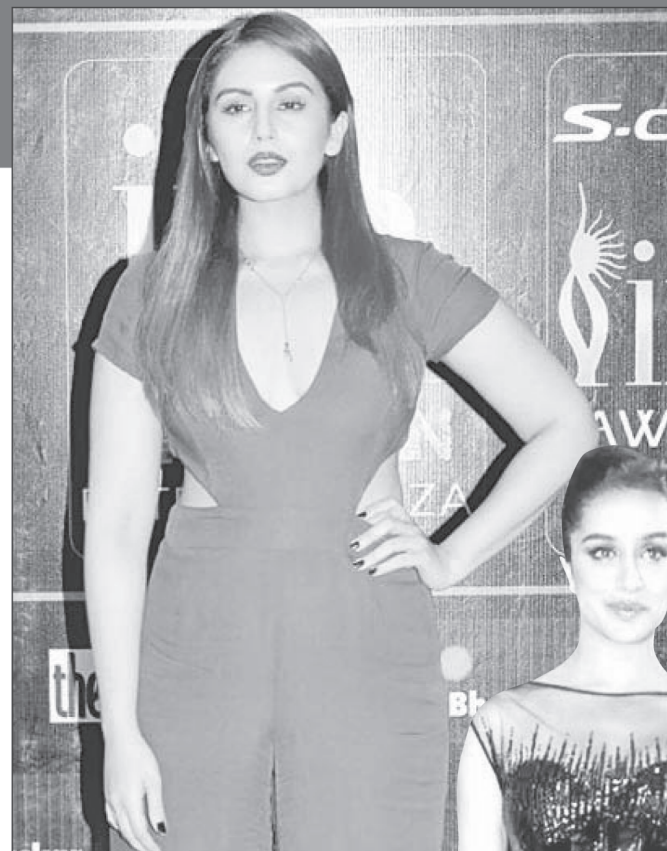
**ADITI RAO HYDARI**

Aditi Rao Hydari attended the function in a Urvashi Joneja gown with a sleek top knot. Aditi kept her look simple with minimal jewellery. She rounded up her look with red lips and perfect make-up.



**DIA MIRZA**

Dia Mirza looked pretty in a fully embellished ombre pink and gold gown by Sabyasachi. She styled her outfit with a matching clutch, messy hairdo and peach lipstick.



**HUMA QURESHI**

Huma was spotted wearing a Sonia Mehra jumpsuit. Letting the olive jumpsuit featuring a cutout back be the focus, she gave a finish to her look a dark lip, delicate necklace and snake-skin pumps.



**PRIYANKA CHOPRA**

Priyanka looked enchanting in a pink Jenny Packham gown. She styled her attire with berry lips, curly bob and pointed beige pumps.



**MALAIKA ARORA KHAN**

Malaika Arora Khan sizzled in a light lilac pastel coloured Michael Cinco gown. She added more panache to her look with Farah Khan Ali jewelry and Louboutins.



**SONAKSHI SINHA**

Sonakshi caught everyone's attention in Anamika separates and Amrapali necklace. She matched the outfit with a pair of ankle strape black sandals. The starlet kept her eyes dramatic with nude lipstick.

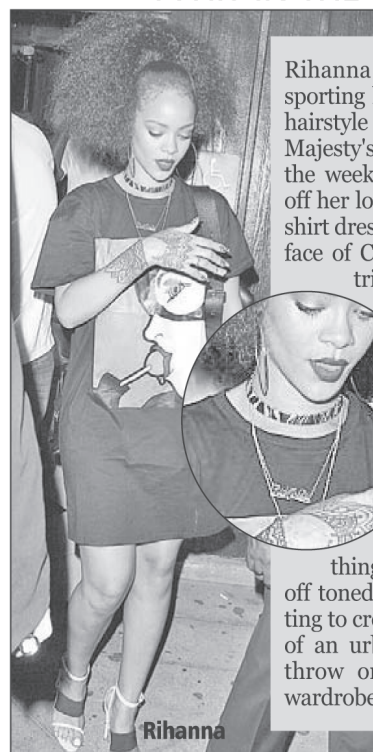


**SHRADDHA KAPOOR**

Shraddha Kapoor walked the green carpet sparkling in a black corset bodice Georges Chakra knee length dress. Hair worn up, she added to her look with peach lipstick. She matched her outfit with a pair of classic black pumps.

## FIRANGITADKA

PRESENTING TRENDS THAT ARE A HIT IN THE WEST



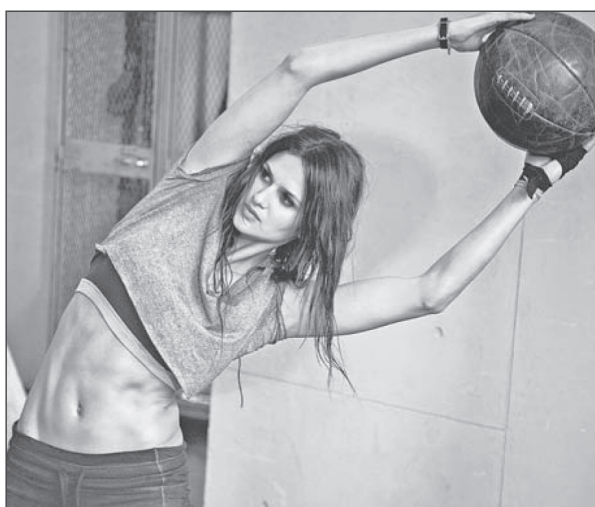
Rihanna looked ravishing sporting her Pebbles Flintstone hairstyle from her baby cousin Majesty's birthday party over the weekend. She showed off her long legs in a graphic T-shirt dress emblazoned with the face of Catwoman. She wore a trio of necklaces and a pair of golden hoop earrings. Not everyone wants to be a girly girl and if that's you then make Rihanna your style icon. T-shirt dresses are a great way to keep things casual. They show off toned legs but are loose fitting to create that laid back vibe of an urban cool kid. Easy to throw on, they're a summer wardrobe essential.

Rihanna

## STRONG IS THE NEW SKINNY

Say goodbye to arm fat for good with our easy at-home workout. Sculpt strong and toned arms fast with these essential exercises

Strapless dresses expose your upper back, shoulders, upper chest, and arms. This workout will shape all those places. Do these six moves one after another with no rest in between. Repeat the circuit, resting a minute between circuits. Do this workout at least



four to six times a week.

### HOW TO GET STARTED

#### What to lift:

For dumbbell exercises, use five- to 10-pound (two- to five-kilogram) weights. Once you can easily do 12 repetitions, try heavier weights.

#### The repetitions:

Complete one to two sets of eight to 12 repetitions for each of the exercises you do.

#### Side raise with dumbbells

Works: Anterior and mid-

dle deltoids.

**A.** Stand with feet hip-width apart and knees slightly bent. Holding a dumbbell in each hand, let your arms hang by your sides, palms facing in.

**B.** Keep a slight bend in your elbows as you raise your arms out to the sides until the dumbbells are level with shoulders and palms face the floor.

**C.** Lower your arms; repeat.

#### Triceps push-up

Works: Triceps

**A.** Get into a push-up position with arms straight but with knees on the floor and feet in the air. Hands should be under your shoulders but closer together than in a regular push-up.

**B.** Tighten abs and bend arms, bringing chest toward the floor. Keep upper arms close to your sides and back straight. Elbows should point behind, not out.

## FASHIONPOLICE



Deepshikha Nagpal

### BORING BLACK

Deepshikha was recently spotted wearing a black and white dress at the screening of a movie. As if the dress was not enough of a disaster because of its unflattering sleeve length, she also tried to match it with neck piece and golden hand accessory, which didn't work out either. To add more to it, she paired the outfit with dull black ankle strap sandal.

## Good skin in a teacup!



Miranda Kerr

## Miranda Kerr's secret to glowing skin and her beauty routine revealed

Miranda Kerr is known for unique beauty tricks, and the latest insider tip to be revealed involves using green tea.

While drinking green tea has a multitude of health benefits, the supermodel isn't consuming it in the traditional way. In her latest newsletter for her skincare range Kora Organics by Miranda Kerr, she revealed one of her secrets to maintaining healthy, glowing skin is to steam her face with the tea.

Explaining her weekly 'DIY deep double cleanse facial' regime, the gorgeous revealed that the routine involves cleansing once using a regular cleanser and once with an exfoliating cleanser to remove matter from pores. 'It's a pampering ritual I look forward to at

the end of each working week,' she said.

'Not only can I relax and unwind...I'm doing something beneficial for my skin that has immediate results so I can go makeup free for the weekend.' After the double cleanse, Kerr adds a green tea bag to boiling water and steams her face in a DIY steam bath.

'Fill your basin with a jug of freshly boiled water, add an organic green tea bag to the water, place your head over the basin and cover with a large towel, let the steam envelope your face for a few minutes to open your pores,' Kerr said. The benefits of green tea have been well documented, and the use of it in skin care has increased rapidly over the last few years due to its high antioxidant levels and apparent anti-aging bene-

fits. Alexandra Matkevich, skin care expert, says the benefits of green tea are due to a specific antioxidant compound called EGCG. 'Some research and anecdotal evidence shows that EGCG is useful in improving signs of ageing and inflammation,' Matkevich told a source.

'It is included in skincare products to soothe the skin, manage acne and fight premature ageing,' she said.

The antioxidant has also been tested in sunscreens to reduce photo-damage on a cellular level.

By using the tea in boiling water, the antioxidants are shot straight into pores by the steam, detoxifying and hydrating the skin. The process also plumps the skin, boosts blood flow and removes any leftover dirt from the pores.

## Richa, Perry power RCBW to stunning win

Vadodara, Feb 14 (UNI) : A scintillating counterattack from Ellyse Perry and Richa Ghosh guided Royal Challengers Bengaluru Women (RCBW) to a stunning six-wicket victory over Gujarat Giants in a high-scoring Women's Premier League (WPL) encounter here on Friday.

After Gujarat Giants posted a daunting 201/5 in their 20 overs, RCBW chased down the target with 1.3 overs to spare, finishing at 202/4 in 18.3 overs. The chase, which initially seemed improbable after a poor start, was powered by Perry's well-paced fifty and Richa's destructive onslaught, exposing Gujarat's sloppy fielding.

Winning the toss and electing to bat first, Gujarat Giants showcased an explosive batting display, overcoming early stutters to post a commanding total. Skipper Beth Mooney (56) anchored the innings

**Smith optimistic about Champions Trophy despite series loss to Sri Lanka**

Lahore, Feb 14 (UNI) : Australia's stand-in skipper Steve Smith was unperturbed about the team's Champions Trophy prospects despite the side suffering a 2-0 ODI series reversal against Sri Lanka.

Australia have been ravaged by selection issues, with Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood and Mitchell Marsh all ruled out of the tournament with injuries.

With pacer Mitchell Starc unavailable for selection and all-rounder Marcus Stoinis announcing his retirement from the format earlier this year, it was a much-changed Australia lining up for the ODIs against Sri Lanka.

## Yuvraj Sandhu continues love affair with Tollygunge Club, triumphs at season-opener by two shots

Kolkata, Feb 14 (UNI) : Chandigarh's Yuvraj Sandhu continued his love affair with Tollygunge Club as he triumphed by two shots at the Rs 1 crore TATA Steel PGTI Players Championship 2025, the PGTI season-opener.

Yuvraj (63-61-68-68), who was in the lead in all three previous rounds, shot a final round score of two-under 68 to emerge wire-to-wire champion with a total score of 20-under 260 on Friday. The 27-year-old Sandhu thus bagged his second title at Tollygunge Club where he had previously won in 2022.

Bangladesh's Jamal Hossain (65-62-66-69), who posed a serious challenge to Yuvraj on the back-nine on Friday, produced a 69 on the last day to finish runner-up at a total of 18-under 262. Bengaluru-based Rahil Gangjee, who originally hails from Kolkata, carded a 70 on day four to take third place at 14-under 266.

Dhruv Sheoran of Gurugram fired the day's



before Ashleigh Gardner unleashed a brutal assault on the RCBW bowlers. Gardner's 67-run partnership with Deandra Dottin (25 off 13) propelled Gujarat past the 200-run mark.

Gardner's onslaught saw her smashing eight sixes, equalling Sophie Devine's WPL record for the most in an innings. Gujarat's ten sixes in total were the second-highest ever in a single WPL match.

Their 201/5 joined the elite club of highest WPL totals, trailing only behind Delhi Capitals and Mumbai Indians.

Chasing a mammoth 202, RCBW got off to a disastrous start as Gujarat's skipper Gardner struck twice in the second over, dismissing Smriti Mandhana (9) and Danni Wyatt-Hodge (4) within five balls. With RCBW reeling at 14/2, Gujarat had a golden opportunity to

tighten their grip on the match. However, what followed was a horror show in the field. Dropped catches, missed run-outs, misfields, and poor bowling discipline cost Gujarat dearly. Perry was dropped on 2 in the fourth over and again on 18 in the sixth over, while Richa was let off on 0 in the 12th over. These missed chances proved to be the turning point as both batswomen went on to notch fifties. Perry (57 off

34) steadied the ship after the early blows, anchoring the chase and laying a strong foundation. But it was Richa Ghosh who completely took the game away from Gujarat with a sensational knock. The wicketkeeper-batswoman blazed her way to 64 off just 27 balls, hammering seven fours and four sixes to dismantle the Giants' bowling attack.

Her fearless approach and calculated aggression shut the door on Gujarat, with her six-hitting prowess demoralising the opposition. Supported well by Kanika Ahuja (30\* off 13), Richa ensured RCBW got over the line comfortably. This thrilling chase will serve as a huge confidence booster for RCBW as they head into the rest of the season.

Meanwhile, Gujarat will be left rueing their missed opportunities, knowing they had the match in their grasp before lapses in the field proved costly.

## Japan defeats Thailand, South Korea edges Syria

Shenzhen, Feb 14 (UNI) Asian football powerhouse Japan eased past Thailand 3-0, while South Korea beat Syria 2-1 in Group D of the AFC U20 Asian Cup here on Friday.

Hisatsugu Ishii broke the deadlock for Japan in the 14th minute before Rion Ichihara doubled the lead in the 33rd minute from a penalty.

In the 69th minute, Ryunosuke Sato scored in the goal area to seal the 3-0 victory.

South Korea took an early 2-0 lead thanks to two goals from Sung Shin and Baek Min-gyu in the eighth and 23rd minute, respectively.

Syria pulled one goal back in the 60th minute as Aland Abdi netted from distance, but they couldn't find the equalizer in the last 30 minutes.

## OCA first vice president declares Harbin Asian Winter Games closed

Harbin, Feb 14 (UNI) : Timothy Fok Tsun-ting, first vice president of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), declared the 9th Asian Winter Games closed at the Harbin International Conference, Exhibition and Sports Center on Friday night.

"This is truly a unique and charming part of China and the world - not only for the beauty of the city and the landscape but also for the warmth and friendliness of the local people," Fok said in his speech during the closing ceremony.

The Games, officially opened on February 7, showcased over 1,200 athletes from 34 countries and regions across Asia, making this edition the largest in terms of participating delegations and athletes.

On the final day of competition, the Philippines claimed its first-ever gold medal in Asian Winter Games history by defeating South Korea 5-3 in the men's curling final, while China beat Hong

Kong, China 10-3 to secure the bronze.

In the women's curling final, South Korea won over China 7-2, with Japan taking the bronze. In ice hockey, Kazakhstan and Japan defended the men's and women's titles, respectively, on Friday.

China topped the medal tally with 32 gold, 27 silver, and 26 bronze medals, followed by South Korea with 16 gold, 15 silver, and 14 bronze medals. Japan ranked third with 10 gold, 12 silver, and 15 bronze medals.

The host nation tied the record for the most gold medals set by Kazakhstan at the 7th Asian Winter Games in Astana-Almaty in 2011. Harbin has embraced the Winter Asiad for the second time, having hosted the third edition 29 years ago. In 2007, China also hosted the 6th edition of the Games in Changchun. The 2029 Asian Winter Games will be held in Trojena, Saudi Arabia, marking the first time the event is hosted in West Asia.

## Barcelona wants to keep Lewandowski, says sporting director Deco

Warsaw, Feb 14 (UNI) FC Barcelona sporting director Deco stated that the club authorities are extremely pleased with Robert Lewandowski and are keen for him to remain with the team.

The Polish forward's contract is valid until June 2026. In 2022, Lewandowski signed a three-year deal with an automatic one-year renewal clause, triggered if he plays in at least half of the team's matches during the season. If he starts Monday's match against Rayo Vallecano and plays a minimum of 45 minutes, the clause will automatically extend his contract. Deco emphasized that, regardless of the clause, the club is committed to continuing their collaboration with Lewandowski - but ultimately, the decision rests with the player. "We're clear that we want him to stay, but Robert isn't just a Barca player; he's a global figure, one of the best forwards in football history. I think he'll want to stay because, in addition to having a contract, we're very happy with him. But if a player doesn't want to stay, it's always difficult to keep them," he told Spanish media on Friday.

## KIIT adjudged as best University for promotion of sports

Bhubaneswar, Feb 14 (UNI) : Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT), a Deemed-to-be University in Bhubaneswar, has been recognized as the Best University for the Promotion of Sports at the 2025 Sportstar Aces Awards, held in Mumbai on Friday. The award was conferred upon KIIT in recognition of its outstanding contributions to the promotion of sports and its excellence in nurturing athletes. Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Founder of KIIT & KISS, received the award at the event.

Expressing his gratitude, Dr. Samanta thanked Sportstar for selecting KIIT-DU for this prestigious award for the second time, after first receiving it in 2022.

KIIT and KISS have been actively working toward the holistic development of sports and the nurturing of athletes while promoting and encouraging sporting talent. The university has produced 23 Olympians, 3 Paralympians, 11 Arjuna Awardees, and one Khel Ratna Awardee to date, a feat that captured the attention of the Sportstar

Aces Award jury.

As an institution, KIIT-DU has earned several accolades in the field of sports over the years.

It received the "Best Sports Facility" award at the inaugural CII Sports Business Awards 2023. Additionally, it was honored with the Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar 2022 by the Government of India, the FICCI India Sports Award 2022, the Sportstar Aces Award 2022 by The Hindu, and the Biju Patnaik Sports Award 2019 for Best Contribution to the Promotion of Sports and Games by the Government of Odisha.

The world-class sporting infrastructure of KIIT & KISS, combined with the expertise of its international coaches, has helped over 200 athletes represent India at the Olympics, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, and other international events, where they have won numerous medals for the country. To date, KIIT and KISS has nurtured more than 5,000 athletes of regional, national, and international repute, thanks to their state-of-the-art sporting infrastructure.

## Mohun Bagan SG aim to extend excellent away record against Kerala Blasters FC

Kochi, Feb 14 (UNI) Kerala Blasters FC will host Mohun Bagan Super Giant in the Indian Super League (ISL) match on Saturday.

The Jose Molina-coached side are placed comfortably atop with 46 points from 20 games, on the back of 14 wins and four draws. However, FC Goa's four wins in their previous five encounters mean that they have closed gap with the Mariners.

The Gaurs trail them by seven points (39) in the same number of matches at the second spot, and will be raring to capitalise upon any momentary slip-up by the Kolkata-based team.

Kerala Blasters FC have won thrice and drawn once in their previous five encounters, accumulating 24 points from 19 matches. They are placed eighth and chasing sixth-placed Mumbai City FC (31), though Kerala Blasters FC (19) have played a game lesser than the Islanders (20). The Mariners have won each of their last three ISL games against Kerala Blasters FC, including a 3-2 triumph in the reverse fixture this season, and they have a chance to register their third league double over Kerala Blasters FC after scaling this feat in 2022-23 and 2020-21.

Mohun Bagan Super Giant have an encouraging attacking record at this venue, having scored four or more goals in each of their games against Kerala Blasters FC in Kochi. The Mariners are one of two teams that the Kerala Blasters FC are yet to defeat at home in the ISL (also Punjab FC). Kerala Blasters FC were unable to score in

their most recent home game in the ISL, a 0-0 draw against NorthEast United FC on January 18, 2025. The last time they could not find the back of the net in back-to-back home games was a stretch of two matches between October and November in 2019.

With the Mariners' high-scoring record at the venue and Kerala Blasters FC's renewed run of positive form, another high-octane clash looks set to play out in Kochi. Opponents have averaged a pass completion rate of only 63.9% in the opposition half when playing against Kerala Blasters FC, the lowest such rate in ISL 2024-25. The Kochi-based team themselves have the second-best pass completion rate in this category (71.3%), trailing only Mumbai City FC (71.8%). It shows that they have been proactive in recovering possession from the other teams.

Adrian Luna (six assists this season) is one away from equaling his own record of most assists by a Kerala Blasters player in a single ISL campaign (7 in 2021-22). Luna has created 43 goal-scoring opportunities and made 35 passes per game at 80%

accuracy in ISL 2024-25.

Mohun Bagan Super Giant have not given away a goal in their last four ISL matches. If they secure another clean sheet, it will be their longest-ever such streak in the competition.

Mohun Bagan Super Giant have netted 39 times in ISL 2024-25, with Jamie Maclaren (8), Subhasish Bose (6), Manvir Singh (5), top-scoring for them. Their offensive consistency coupled with defensive diligence has produced the sure shot recipe for sustained success this season.

The two sides have faced off nine times in the ISL, with Mohun Bagan Super Giant winning seven games, Kerala Blasters FC claiming one victory, and one match ending in a draw. Kerala Blasters FC interim head coach TG Purushothaman said that his side has broken down and analysed the Mariners thoroughly. "We study the strengths and weaknesses of all opponents and we have approached this game similarly. We are ready for the match," he said.

Mohun Bagan Super Giant head coach Jose Molina touched upon his team's preparations for the Kochi fixture.

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# GM, CR, Dharam Veer Meena conducts Safety Inspection of the Ballarshah-Sewagram Section on Nagpur Division

## Achievements of RPF, SCR During January 2025

(Standard Post Bureau)  
Mumbai, Feb 14 : Mr Dharam Veer Meena, General Manager, Central Railway, conducted a detailed safety inspection of the Ballarshah-Sewagram section on Nagpur Division on February 14, 2025.

**Inspection at Ballarshah**  
At Ballarshah the General Manager inspected the following :

- Route Relay Interlocking (RRI) cabin and Panel room,
- Relay/Power unit.
- CCTV control room at the Railway Protection Force (RPF) Thana.
- The Station Manager's Office
- Crew Lobby,
- Crew Running Room
- PRS Counters and various passenger amenities at the Station
- Limited Height Subway
- Goods Shed, and the Road Accident Relief Train at Ballarshah.

The ongoing works under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme

The General Manager also:

- Interacted with employees and advised them to remain vigilant to ensure safety & security.
- Interacted with esteemed freight customers to discuss plans for realizing existing potential and enhancing loading



capacities.

**Inspection at Chandrapur**

Shri Meena conducted a brief inspection of Chandrapur station. The General Manager also met Shri Kishor Jorgewar, Hon'ble MLA and Shri Sudhakar Adbale, Hon'ble MLC and discussed various issues

Shri Meena also released department specific booklets enroute for improvement of the knowledge of the staff and extension of services to the passengers and freight customers.

**Inspection of Bhandak-Majri Section**  
On the Bhandak-Majri section, Shri Meena inspected the:

- Konda Bridge
- Curve No. 01 and Level Crossing Gate No. 32.
- The General Manager also visited exhibition stalls displaying Ultrasonic Flaw Detection tools used for detecting defects in railway rails & welds, improving safety and reliability of railway infrastructure.

**Inspection at Warora**

At Warora, the General Manager inspected the:

- Station, Railway Health Unit, and Staff Colony.
- Shri Meena

also met Shri Karan Sanjay Devtale, Hon'ble MLA and discussed several issues with him.

**Inspection at Hinganghat**

Shri Meena inspected the Traction Sub Station at Hinganghat

**Speed Run Test**  
The General Manager also conducted a speed run test on the Hinganghat-Chitoda section between km 789/7 to 762.07.

**Nagpur**  
At Nagpur the General Manager:

Interacted with Branch Officers, emphasizing the Hon'ble Minister of Railways' call for a threefold increase in efforts toward safety, maintenance, quality, and training (SMQT) to modernize railway infrastructure.

Held discussions with union representatives  
Interacted with the Press and the genuine queries were satisfactorily answered.  
The General Manager also engaged with ground-level staff throughout the inspection, emphasizing the importance of safe train operations and operational efficiency.

Vinayak Garg, Divisional Railway Manager, Nagpur Division, along with Principal Heads of Departments and Senior Officers from Headquarters and Nagpur Division, accompanied the General Manager during the inspection.

### RPF Recovers Stolen Property Worth Rs. 71.26 Lakhs Under 'Operation Yatri Suraksha'



(Standard Post Bureau)

Hyderabad, Feb 14 : The prime objective of RPF is to carry on unrelenting fight against criminals in protection of Railway property, in facilitating passenger security and safety. RPF is always in the forefront even in risking their own lives to safeguard the Railway property as well as the lives of passengers. In order to give focused attention to the above mission, RPF/SCR is coordinating with Government Police and other Law Enforcement Agencies. Further, RPF has also launched several operations and recorded noteworthy performance during January-2025.

1. Under "Operation YATRI SURAKSHA", RPF has arrested 34 offenders and recovered stolen property worth Rs.71.26 lakhs with registration of 30 cases.

2. Under "Operation AMANAT", RPF personnel provided help in securing passenger belongings, retrieved 264 belongings of passengers valued Rs.60.80 lakhs and handed over them to rightful owners.

3. RPF has launched "Operation NARCOS" to curb narcotic smuggling through Railways, has confiscated Ganja valued Rs.21.16 lakhs with arrest of 12 persons and handed over to concerned agency.

4. Under "Operation NANHE FARISHTE", RPF undertook the noble cause of identifying and rescuing children in need of care and protection

who are lost/separated from their family due to various reasons. 91 children (70 Boys + 21 girls) have been rescued and handed over to CWCs (Child Welfare Committee).

5. RPF has launched "Operation AAHT". Under this mission, RPF has rescued 16 boys & 07 girls duly handing over 14 Traffickers to concerned authorities.

6. Under "Operation Jeevan Raksha", RPF saved life of 01 male passenger from the Jaws of death.

7. Under "Operation SATARK", RPF seized liquor worth Rs.85,348/- being transported illegally through trains and subsequently handed over to Excise Department who registered 04 cases against the unknown offenders.

8. RPF has launched "Operation UPLABDH" to curb the activities of touts and make railway tickets available to the common man. 25 cases were registered by RPF with arrest of 25 Touts with seizure of 120 live tickets valued Rs.2,06,279/-.

9. By using the CCTV technology, RPF apprehended 02 offenders and recovered stolen passenger property worth Rs.1,30,000/- and handed over to concerned agencies for further prosecution.

10. RPF has launched "Operation RAIL SURAKSHA" to curb the activities against the railway property. 39 cases were detected with recovery of stolen railway property worth Rs.8,17,082/-.

## Tools & Techniques in Molecular Biology and Bioinformatics Workshop held at MANUU



(Standard Post Bureau)

Hyderabad, Feb 14 : The Zoology Section of School of Sciences at Maulana Azad National Urdu University organized 4th National Hands-On Workshop on "Tools and Techniques in Molecular Biology and Bioinformatics". Prof. Kota Arun Kumar, Department of Animal Biology, University of Hyderabad was the Chief Guest. Prof. Syed Ainul Hasan, Vice-Chancellor presided over the inaugural session. Prof. Ainul Hasan, in his presidential remark underscored the importance of skill development and announced that the year

2025 will be the Year of the School of Sciences at MANUU. Prof. Arun Kumar acknowledged the workshop theme and conveyed the importance of the Western Blotting technique in the field of Proteomics.

Prof. Arif Ahmad, Head, Zoology Section delivered the welcome address. Prof. P.F. Rahaman, Convenor workshop, highlighted the theme and objectives of the workshop. He informed that the primary aim of this workshop is to enhance skills through exposure and training in contemporary biological techniques for researchers and faculties from various colleges and

institutions. Dr. Mohammad Kamran, the Co-Convenor proposed a vote of thanks in the inaugural session. Prof. H. Aleem Basha, Dean, School of Sciences addressed the valedictory session yesterday and also distributed certificates to the participants.

20 participants from various academic and research Institutes participated in the workshop. The participants received hands-on training from faculty members - Dr. Mohammad Kamran, Dr. Sufaya Jameel and Dr. Ali Raza, focusing on protein isolation, quantification, and identification using Western blotting techniques.

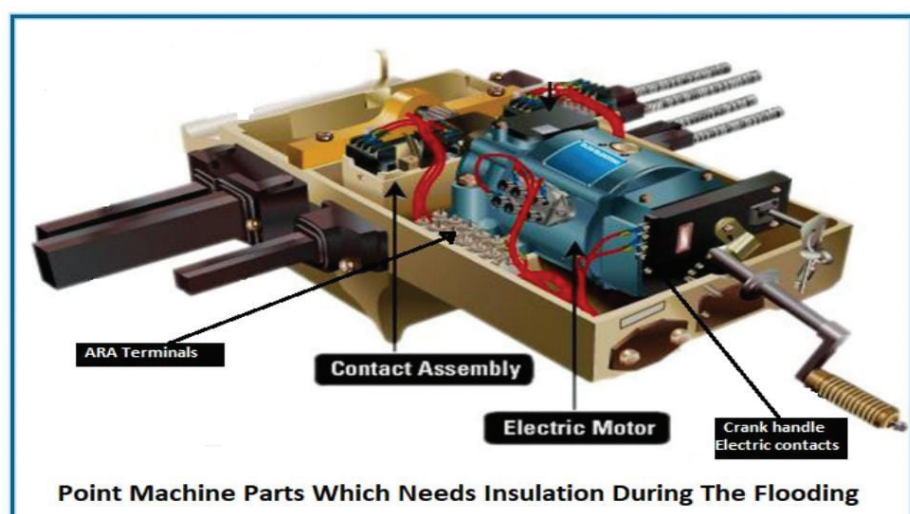
(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Feb 14 : Central Railway has clinched 1st and 2nd prize in the Suggestion Scheme of Best Innovation on Indian Railways" for the FY 2023-24.

"The 1st prize for Best Innovation was won by Central Railway for providing an "Innovative Solution to Prevent Point Machine Failures in submerged conditions" an important initiative to run suburban services in Mumbai during the Monsoon Season. The prestigious award recognizes the exceptional efforts put in by the Central Railway team for their ground breaking work in finding a solution to prevent Point Machine failures in submerged conditions especially during the monsoon.

The modification of point machine covers has been developed internally by Central Railway's dedicated team, demonstrating a commitment to innovative, cost effective and practical solution. This solution was implemented at various identified flood-prone locations across the Central Railway network specifically in Mumbai Suburban area, ensuring widespread protection and enhanced reliability. The reduction in point machine failures on account of

## CR innovations recognised with 1st and 2nd prize by IRs



flooding during monsoon significantly improved

operational efficiency. This enhancement ensured that

lakhs and 2nd prize carries award of 2 lakhs.

The "Suggestion Scheme for Best Innovation" by Indian Railways, aims to identify and reward creative employees who propose practical improvements across various aspects of railway operations, boosting morale and encouraging cost-effective innovations to enhance productivity and quality across the network.

"The Objective of this Scheme is to encourage employees at all levels to come up with innovative ideas that can improve the efficiency and quality of railway services.

The scheme operates on three levels: divisional/ workshop, zonal/ production unit, and Railway Board level. "Innovations that are implementable and demonstrate their usefulness are considered for awards.

This scheme helps to motivate employees, foster a culture of innovation, and identify potential solutions to existing challenges within the railway system and has received an overwhelming response from Railway Employees. The scheme intends to foster the spirit of innovation and creativity among all employees to productively deploy and implement the novel solutions.

## Nitish Rajora emphasises on strengthening media coordination through digital platforms

Jammu, Feb 14 (UNI) Newly appointed Director of Information J&K, Nitish Rajora, on Friday emphasised enhanced public outreach, efficient communication strategies, timely dissemination of government initiatives, strengthening media coordination, and improving public engagement through digital platforms. The director made these remarks while chairing a meeting to review the performance and functioning of the Department of Information and Public Relations at Media Complex here.