

IN BRIEF

Divis Laboratory conducts pool campus drive in JNTUK

Kakinada, Feb 25 (UNI) : Hyderabad-based Divis Laboratories Limited Company has conducted a pool campus drive in JNTUK Kakinada here on Tuesday for those who have completed B Tech in mechanical and chemical engineering besides BPharmacy, MPharmacy, BSc Chemistry and MSc Chemistry and also the male students studying in final year.

As against 110 students registered their names, 60 attended the interview.

Later in the interviews conducted at the placement office, 38 were selected for the final round and they would be interviewed by the HR wing for giving placements, Divis lab announced.

Candidates not only from JNTUK campus colleges but also from affiliated colleges besides Visakhapatnam, Srikakulam and Nuzvid also attended the pool campus drive, it added.

Kharge alleges massive cuts in scholarships for marginalised youth

New Delhi, Feb 25 (UNI) : Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday accused the central government of "massive cuts" in scholarships for SC, ST, OBC, and minority youth and said that without adequate support, their progress would be hindered.

He alleged that the Modi government had not only made massive cuts in the number of beneficiaries but had also spent 25 percent less funds. On social media platform X, Kharge said, "Your government has usurped the scholarships meant for SC, ST, OBC, and minority youth!". "These shameful statistics show that the Modi government has not only drastically reduced the beneficiaries in all scholarships but has also reduced the funds by an average of 25%, over the years!" he alleged.

He said that "until the students of the weaker sections get opportunities, their skills are not encouraged; how will we be able to increase jobs for the youth of our country?" "Your slogan of 'Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas' cruelly mocks the aspirations of the weaker sections every day!" he said.

Andhra Pradesh is implementing RCB as part of EoDB: CS

(Standard Post Bureau) Vijayawada, Feb 25 : Chief Secretary K Vijayanand on Tuesday said that the state government is actively implementing the Reduction of Compliance Burden (RCB) or Regulatory Compliance Burden (MRCB) program as part of the Ease of Doing Business policy.

He explained that the state has so far reduced 632 compliances in more than 60 regulations. Cabinet Secretary Dr. TV Somanathan held a video conference with Chief Secretaries from Delhi on Ease of Doing Business. Speaking on the occasion, AP Chief Secretary Vijayanand said that efforts have been made to regain momentum under the Compliance Burden Reduction Program in the state of Andhra Pradesh for the past year.

He said that the government has also constituted an Empowered Committee (EC) headed by the Chief Secretary to monitor the implementation of this program in the state, adding that the Empowered

Committee will also review the compliance reduction proposals submitted by various departments and issue appropriate orders accordingly.

Chief Secretary Vijayanand explained to the Cabinet Secretary that Andhra Pradesh is giving priority to the Ease of Doing Business (Business Reforms Action Plan, RCB, (MRCB) program with the aim of becoming the most attractive investment destination in the country.

Cabinet Secretary Dr. TV Somanathan said that since the beginning of 2025, more than 60 burdensome compliances have been reduced in 7 departments. In the National Conference of Chief Secretaries held under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister on December 13-15 last year, it was decided to set up a Deregulation Cell under the leadership of a Secretary-level Coordinating Officer in the Cabinet Secretariat to assist the states in reforming and simplifying the rules and procedures related to Ease of Doing Business.

SC grants anticipatory bail to YSRCP leaders in ransacking and Vandalism cases

New Delhi, Feb 25 (UNI) The Supreme Court on Tuesday granted anticipatory bail to YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) Vijayawada East coordinator Devineni Avinash after the Andhra Pradesh High Court rejected his plea earlier in a case related to allegedly ransacking the TDP Central office in Mangalagiri in 2021.

Avinash was accused of allegedly ransacking the NTR Bhavan, the central office of the ruling Telugu Desam Party (TDP) in Mangalagiri, during the YSRCP regime in October 2021. Avinash has been under interim protection since September last year. He faces charges under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), including 147, 148, 452, 427, 323, 506, 324 read with 149, and Sections 326, 307, 450, 380 read with 109 and 120B.

A bench comprising Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia

and Justice Manmohan also granted anticipatory bail to former Minister and MLA Jogi Ramesh in connection with the alleged vandalism of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu's Undavalli residence in 2021.

Like Avinash, Ramesh had also been granted interim protection. He faces charges under IPC Sections 143, 324, 506, 188, 269, and 270 read with 149.

The Court directed the petitioners to cooperate fully with the investigation, and warned that any non-cooperation would result in the vacation of the bail order.

Additionally, the petitioners were instructed to surrender their passports and were barred from leaving the country without informing the investigating officer.

Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Avinash, argued that fresh investigations began only

after a change in the ruling government, despite the alleged incident occurring three years ago and involving 88 individuals.

He contended that the complainant's claims in the FIR exaggerated the injuries sustained, and Avinash was not identified in the CCTV footage. However, Senior Advocate Siddharth Luthra, representing the Andhra Pradesh government, opposed the plea, stating that the accused had not been cooperating with the investigation and had failed to provide details of their mobile phones.

It was further alleged that Avinash attempted to leave the country, a claim refuted by Sibal, who clarified that his client had only travelled within India and failed to inform the Court due to a lack of awareness. Senior Advocate Siddhartha Dave also made brief submissions on behalf of Jogi Ramesh.

Tuskers trample 3 persons to death

Kadapa, Feb 25 (UNI) : Three devotees were trampled to death by a herd of elephants and two were injured at Y Kota village in Obulavaripalli mandal in Annamayya district in the wee hours on Tuesday when they were going to the famous Shiva temple, located at Kona village.

Police said that about 30 devotees, belonging to the

Kannegunta colony at Y-Koda village, were going to the famous Siddeswara Swamy temple to worship Lord Shiva on Maha Shivaratri day.

When they were going through the forest area, a herd of elephants attacked them and trampled them to death in the wee hours on Tuesday. Two devotees suffered injuries in the

incident, and they were admitted to the GGH in Railway Kodur, where their condition was said to be critical.

The deceased were identified as Vankayala Dinesh, Tupakula Manemma, and Chungal Rayudu. The police rushed to the forest area and shifted the bodies and injured to the GGH in Railway Koduru.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu expressed shock and grief over the death of three devotees. He spoke to the officials of the Annamayya district and directed them to provide better treatment to the injured. He assured them of extending all help to the bereaved families.

Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Forest K

Pawan Kalyan announced Rs 10 lakh ex gratia to the families of the bereaved and Rs 5 lakh to the injured.

He directed the Railway Kodur MLA Sridhar, to rush to the Y Kota village to provide the required help to the stranded devotees.

The Deputy Chief Minister also ordered the forest officials to submit a report on the incident.

Rescue operations continue for 8 workers trapped in SLBC tunnel

Hyderabad, Feb 25 (UNI): The rescue operation to save eight people including two engineers and six laborers trapped in the Srisailem Left Bank Canal (SLBC) tunnel collapse at Domalapenta in Telangana's Nagarkurnool district, continued for the fourth day on Tuesday with all efforts concentrated on reaching the final stretch of the tunnel.

More than 72 hours after a portion of the Srisailem Left Bank Canal (SLBC) tunnel caved in, the fate of eight people was unknown.

Around 600 personnel from various disaster management agencies, including NDRF, SDRF alongside the Indian Army and Navy, continued their efforts to locate the missing people. Scores of rescue workers continued their efforts to dewater and desilt the tunnel to reach

the point where a portion of the roof had collapsed.

Despite intensive efforts, the teams could not reach the front portion of the tunnel boring machine as the tunnel was filled with muck.

Two workers were injured and eight others were trapped when a portion of the tunnel collapsed near Domalapenta. A total of 50 persons were working on the left-side tunnel when the roof collapsed. The accident occurred at the 14th km point.

While 42 workers came out of the tunnel, the remaining eight were trapped.

The trapped men are from Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir. A Group of Ministers led by Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhathi Vikramarka reviewed the progress of the rescue mission at the project site today.

1984 Anti-Sikh Riots: Delhi Special court awards life imprisonment to Sajjan Kumar

New Delhi, Feb 25 (UNI) : A Delhi Special Court on Tuesday awarded life imprisonment to former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar in a case related to the murder of two persons in Saraswati Vihar area during the Anti-Sikh riots.

Special Judge for MPs/MLAs cases Kaveri Baweja after hearing arguments on behalf of Prosecution and Defence Counsel had pronounced the order.

The Court had convicted Kumar on February 12 for offences punishable under Sections 147/148/149 IPC and for offences punishable under Sections 302/308/323/395/397/427/436/440 read with Section 149 of Indian Penal Code (IPC).

After hearing arguments on quantum of sentence, the court listed the matter for February 25 for pronouncing the judgment.

The present case relates to one of the several instances of the widespread

anti-Sikh riots that took place in Delhi and other parts of the country after assassination of the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her two Sikh bodyguards.

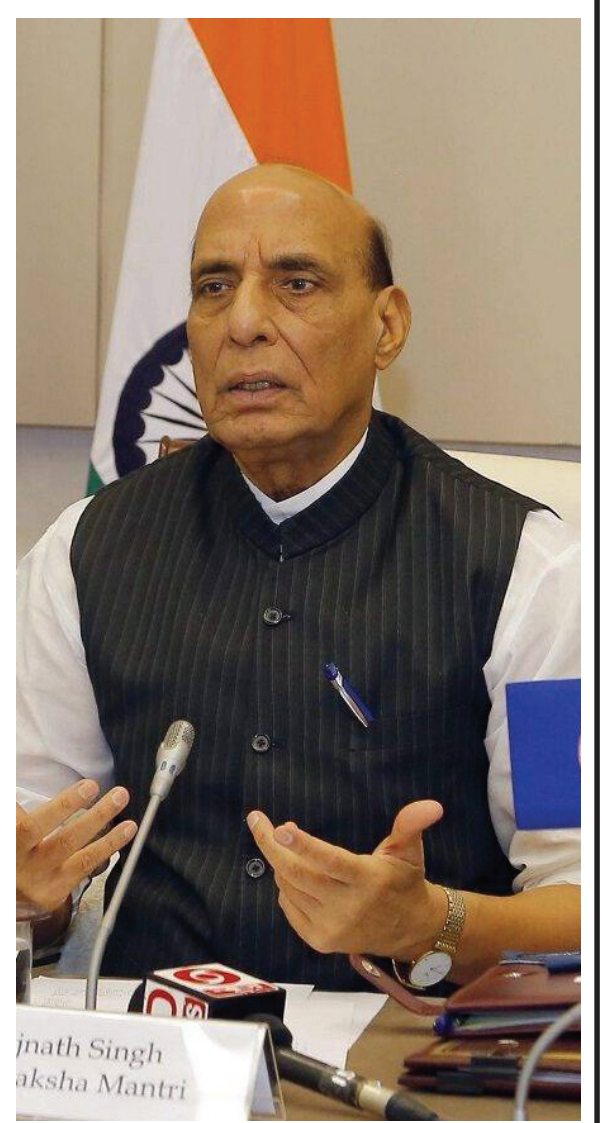
In the riots, thousands of Sikhs were mercilessly killed in various parts of the country, their houses and shops were burnt and their belongings were looted.

The instant case is in respect of killing of one S. Jaswant Singh and his son S. Tarundeep Singh, both residents of Raj Nagar, Delhi, at the hands of an unruly mob comprising of thousands of persons.

It is the case of the prosecution that accused Sajjan Kumar was leading the mob and it is upon his instigation and abetment, the mob burnt alive Jaswant Singh and Tarundeep Singh, damaged and looted their household articles and other property, burnt down their house and also inflicted severe injuries on their family members and

relatives residing in their house. The Prosecution alleged that the mob attacked the house of the complainant, Jaswant's wife, killing her husband and son apart from looting articles and setting their house ablaze. Initially, the chargesheet in this case was filed in e-form in the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Rouse Avenue District Court (RADC). On 05.05.2021, the chargesheet was received physically and it was accordingly directed to be checked and registered.

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate vide order dated 26.07.2021, took cognizance of the alleged offences. Subsequently, vide order dated 30.07.2021, after compliance of provisions of Section 207 Cr.P.C., ACMM transferred the matter to the court of Sessions as the offence punishable U/S 302 IPC, along with other offences, are exclusively triable by a court of Sessions.



Rajnath calls upon ICG to stay vigilant against emerging ...

Highlighting the rise of unconventional threats driven by modern technological advancements, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday called upon maritime forces, particularly the Indian Coast Guard (ICG), to stay vigilant against challenges like cyber attacks, data breaches, signal jamming, radar interference, and GPS spoofing, alongside traditional threats. Congratulating the personnel after conferring gallantry, distinguished service, and meritorious service medals during the 18th ICG Investiture Ceremony here,

(See on page 2)

G7 working on joint statement on Ukraine, several countries



Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly said that the G7 countries were still working on a joint statement on Ukraine, noting the disagreement of several countries with the US position on the conflict. "We've been working, indeed, with Europeans and Americans, we are still having some conversations," the minister said at a briefing broadcast by CPAC.

(See on page 5)

Battle Royale in Copa as Real Sociedad entertains Real Madrid



Real Sociedad entertains Real Madrid in the first leg of their Copa del Rey semifinal on Wednesday night in a tie where Madrid is the favorite to play either FC Barcelona or Atletico Madrid in the final.

(See on page 7)

Women peacekeepers to play crucial role in combating



Union Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth on Tuesday emphasised the crucial role of women peacekeepers in preventing and tackling gender-based violence and providing support and protection to survivors. Delivering the valedictory address at the conference on 'Women in Peacekeeping - A Global South Perspective' here, the Minister said,

(See on page 8)

UP Gov, Yogi greet people on Maha Shivratri

Lucknow, Feb 25 (UNI) Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday along with Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav extended their greetings and best wishes to the people of the state on the occasion of Maha Shivratri.

In her message, the Governor said the festival of Maha Shivratri inspires to recognise the purpose of life and fulfil it. She said that people should recognise the Shiva within them and pledge to follow his path.

She wished the festival rain happiness, prosperity and peace in the lives of all and with the grace of Lord Shiva, our lives should be bright and full of peace. "May Lord Shiva, the God of Gods, bless our lives, give us all the power of wisdom, courage and dedication," she said.

Yogi extended hearty greetings and best wishes to the people of the state and the revered saints and devotees who have come to bathe in the Maha Kumbh on the auspicious occasion of Maha Shivratri.

He said the holy festival of Maha Shivratri inspires to be committed to public welfare. "Mahadev, the God of Gods, is universally worshipped by the people. Festivals and celebrations are inspiring occasions to strengthen our tradition and nationalism. Jyotirlingas located in different parts of India are symbols of national unity," he said.

SP chief Akhilesh Yadav has also greeted everyone on Maha Shivratri, wishing them good luck and prosperity.

He said it is a great festival of the union of Shiva and Shakti. "Shiva is benevolent, embodiment of consciousness and bliss. Shiva gives the message of freedom from negative virtues. He drank poison for public welfare. Shiva is the symbol of truth and beauty," he said.

Atishi among 21 AAP MLAs suspended from Delhi Assembly amid uproar

New Delhi, Feb 25 (UNI) The Delhi Legislative Assembly on Tuesday suspended 21 Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLAs, including Leader of Opposition Atishi, for three days for creating ruckus and sloganeering during Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena's address. Regarding

CBI conducts searches at over 60 locations across India in cryptocurrency scam

New Delhi, Feb 25 (UNI) The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has conducted extensive searches at more than 60 locations across the country as part of its investigation into the Gain Bitcoin cryptocurrency scam.

"The search operations are being carried out in major cities, including Delhi NCR, Pune, Chandigarh, Nanded, Kolhapur, Bengaluru, and others, targeting premises linked to key accused individuals,

their associates, and entities suspected of laundering the proceeds of crime." CBI said in a statement on Tuesday.

It informed that the fraudulent scheme lured investors by promising lucrative returns of 10% monthly in Bitcoin for 18 months.

Investors were encouraged to purchase Bitcoin from exchanges and invest them with GainBitcoin through "cloud mining" contracts, the federal agency said.

CBI said Initially, investors received payouts in Bitcoin. However, as the influx of new investments dwindled by 2017, the scheme began to collapse.

"Multiple FIRs were registered across India, alleging large-scale fraud and money laundering. Given the vast scale and complexity of the scam, cases registered in various states" it said.

Later the case was transferred to CBI on the recommendation by Supreme Court.

India hosting first-ever Capacity Building Programme on UNSC Resolution 1540

New Delhi, Feb 25 (UNI) At least 24 government experts from eight countries in the Asia-Pacific region are participating in the first-ever Capacity Building Programme on the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 and Strategic Trade Controls for Asia-Pacific countries, being held in India from Feb 25-27.

The eight countries participating include Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Iraq, Laos, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Thailand. It is being held at the National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes and Narcotics (NACIN), Palasamudram, Andhra Pradesh.

It is being organised by the Government of India, in partnership with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), a statement said.

Speakers and experts from the UNSC 1540 Committee and UNODA; India's Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, National Authority Chemical Weapons Convention, Department of Biotechnology, Directorate General of Foreign Trade, and Disarmament and International Security Affairs Division of the Ministry of External Affairs; and Indian industry, will be sharing their implementation experiences and best practices on relevant aspects of the UNSC Resolution 1540 and Strategic Trade Controls.

This flagship programme is a reaffirmation of India's robust credentials on non-proliferation and further demonstration of India's contribution to the international non-proliferation architecture, it said.

The MEA spokesperson said in a post on X:

"The India-UNODA Capacity Building Program on UNSC Resolution 1540 & Strategic Trade Controls for Asia-Pacific countries was inaugurated today at @nacinbic.

"This first-of-its-kind programme is a reaffirmation of India's commitment to the international non-proliferation architecture."

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 was adopted on April 28, 2004, and it aims to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, as well as their means of delivery, to non-state actors.

the disruption caused by AAP MLAs during Mr. Saxena's address, Cabinet Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh brought a resolution in the House demanding strict action against those who indulged in undignified acts, which was supported by MLA Abhay Verma and demanded suspension of

all 21 members for three days. Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta moved a motion to suspend 21 AAP MLAs for three working days, which was accepted by the House by a voice vote. Of the 22 AAP MLAs, Okhla MLA Amanatullah Khan was not present in the House on Tuesday.

EPFO adds 16.05 lakh members

New Delhi, Feb 25 (UNI) Retirement fund manager Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) added 16.05 lakh net members during the month of December 2024, an increase of 9.69% over the previous month. As per official payroll data released on Tuesday, EPFO enrolled around 8.47 lakh new subscribers in December 2024. An official release from the Ministry of Labour and Employment said that the increase in EPFO subscribers during the month of December last year signified increased employment opportunities and heightened awareness of employee benefits.

"EPFO enrolled around 8.47 lakh new subscribers in December 2024. The new subscribers' addition shows year on year growth of 0.73% from the previous year in December 2023. This surge in new subscribers can be attributed to growing employment opportunities, increased awareness of employee benefits, and EPFO's successful outreach programs," it said.

The official data showed employees in the age group of 18-25 dominated the overall subscriber addition, constituting a significant 57.29% of the total new subscribers added in

December 2024.

"The net payroll addition for the age group 18-25 for December 2024 is approximately 6.85 lakh reflecting an increase of 16.91% compared to the previous month of November 2024. This is in consonance with the earlier trend which indicates that most individuals joining the organized workforce are youth, primarily first-time job seekers," the release said.

As per payroll data, about 15.12 lakh members exited and subsequently rejoined EPFO. This figure represents a 5.10% increase compared to the previous month of November 2024.

Rajnath calls upon ICG to stay vigilant against emerging technological threats

New Delhi, Feb 25 (UNI) : Highlighting the rise of unconventional threats driven by modern technological advancements, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday called upon maritime forces, particularly the Indian Coast Guard (ICG), to stay vigilant against challenges like cyber attacks, data breaches, signal jamming, radar interference, and GPS spoofing, alongside traditional threats.

Congratulating the personnel after conferring gallantry, distinguished service, and meritorious service medals during the 18th ICG Investiture Ceremony here, Rajnath asserted that the vision of a secure and prosperous India can only be realised if its security system is robust and the forces are strong. He said that the ICG



President Droupadi Murmu during the centenary celebration of Patna Medical College and Hospital, in Patna on Tuesday.

has evolved into a powerful, reliable, and highly efficient maritime force, playing a crucial role in maintaining strategic security, a defence Ministry statement said.

"Geographically, India is surrounded by sea on three sides and its coastline is vast. The nation's strategic security faces two types of threats. The first is war which is dealt by the Armed Forces, and the second are the challenges of piracy, terrorism, infiltration, smuggling and illegal fishing for which the marine forces, especially ICG, are always alert.

ICG working proactively to tackle these challenges, is a key player in ensuring strategic security," Singh said. The Defence Minister said that in the last one year, ICG has achieved significant achievements in maritime safety, security

and humanitarian operations. It apprehended 14 boats and 115 pirates, apart from carrying out a major drug seizure of about Rs 37,000 crore.

Rajnath reiterated his Government's commitment to increasing the efficiency of ICG. Moreover, ICG saved 169 lives through various rescue operations and provided medical assistance to 29 seriously injured people, he added.

Stating that these achievements are not just statistics, but a story of ICG's courage and dedication towards national security, the Minister said, "By being alert on the maritime borders, ICG not only stops illegal infiltration, but also helps in positively impacting India's sovereignty and internal security.

"Indian Coast Guard has been allocated Rs

9,676.70 crore for the Financial Year 2025-26, which is 26.50 percent more than the previous budget. It is a crucial step towards modernising ICG. In addition, the procurement of 14 Fast Patrol Vessels, six Air Cushion Vehicles, 22 Interceptor Boats, six Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessels and 18 Next Generation Fast Patrol Vessels has been approved to make ICG stronger," he said. Rajnath acknowledged ICG's focus on technological advancements, while commending the foundation laying of the Digital Coast Guard project.

All these efforts will continuously strengthen the ICG to effectively deal with conventional and unconventional threats, he said, assuring the Government's full support in achieving this objective.

Govt planning to end Mandi system: Rakesh Tikait

Pilibhit (UP), Feb 25 (UNI) :Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) National Spokesperson Rakesh Tikait on Tuesday alleged that the government is planning to end the Mandi system by bringing a new draft.

During the Mahapanchayat of BKU held here in Pilibhit, Tikait said after 13 months of agitation against the three agricultural laws, the government withdrew the laws. "Now under the new system,

farmers have been allowed to sell grains outside the mandi. This will reduce the inflow of grains and revenue in the mandis," he claimed.

Citing the example of Madhya Pradesh, he said that there plots of 500 to 1000 meters are being cut and given to people close to the government on a lease of 99 years. "Market committees have been closed in Bihar since 2006. Now preparations are being

made to implement the same system in Uttar Pradesh," he said.

On the problems of sugarcane farmers, the BKU leader said that the government does not make timely payments. "Farmers are being cheated in the name of MSP. Some industrialists are buying crops from farmers at low prices and selling them to the government by calling themselves farmers," he alleged. He alleged that

the government has not increased the circle rates of land since 2013. "The government's intention behind this is that farmers become landless and labourers," he said.

Accusing the Pilibhit police of harassing the farmers of the Sikh community, Tikait warned that if the farmers are stopped from protesting, then there will be a 72-hour dharna against the officer concerned.

He said only the

DGMO visits Manipur to assess situation along Indo-Myanmar Border

New Delhi, Feb 25 (UNI) The Director General Military Operations (DGMO) of Indian Army Lieutenant General Rajiv Ghai, visited Manipur to assess the situation along the Indo-Myanmar Border (IMB) and review the progress of ongoing border infrastructure development in the state.

During his visit, Lt General Ghai called on the Governor of Manipur Ajay Kumar Bhalla, State Security Advisor, the Chief Secretary of Manipur and the Director General of Police Manipur, a Defence Ministry statement said on Tuesday. The DGMO focused on the operational preparedness of the Indian Army, carried out an assessment of the security situation along the Indo-Myanmar Border (IMB), and the current security dynamics in the state, including fringe areas.

He also emphasised on a 'whole of government approach' during interactions with key stakeholders. The discussions centred around the normalisation of prevailing security situation in the state, particularly the need to enhance border management and strengthen security infrastructure along the IMB. Lt General Ghai's visit highlighted the collaborative approach between the military and state officials to implement strategic initiatives aimed at promoting stability and the welfare of the people of Manipur.

Nostalgia to rule Delhi roads at The Statesman Vintage and Classic Car Rally Sunday

New Delhi, Feb 25 (UNI) Timeless automotive beauties will hit the roads of the national capital and drive through the city's landmarks, as the much-awaited The Statesman Vintage & Classic Car Rally takes place on Sunday, March 2.

It will be a nostalgic day for history lovers and auto enthusiasts as they soak in the charm of the aesthetically restored vintage and classic cars of various make and from different eras.

The annual rally, which has through the decades become a headline event in Delhi's calendar, is set to start with a colourful flag-off ceremony at 10 a.m. from The Statesman House

on Barakhamba Road here.

Taking the spectators on a time travel into the past, the cars will go past various iconic spots of the city, which itself is steeped in history but simultaneously embraces modernity.

The rally will end at the Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium at India Gate, where the prize distribution ceremony is scheduled for 3 p.m.

The cars taking part in the rally have been classified into four categories: Vintage Cars, Classic Cars, Post-War Cars, and Others, showcasing a varied and enthralling collection of road queens..

Assam can act as hub for Act East Policy: EAM Jaishankar in Guwahati

Guwahati/New Delhi, Feb 25 (UNI) External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar addressed the Advantage Assam Summit 2.0 in Guwahati today, during which he highlighted the Modi Government's commitment to the 'Act East' policy, and added that Assam can act as a hub for connectivity to Southeast Asia.

In a post on X, the EAM said he addressed the summit alongside Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma, and ambassadors and delegates.

"Pleased to address Advantage Assam Summit 2.0 in Guwahati alongside CM @himantabiswa, Ambassadors and delegates. "Spoke about Modi Government's commitment to 'Act East, Act Fast and Act First'.

Highlighted: *Act East starts with a change of approach by Delhi towards Assam and Northeastern States that has happened since 2014 under Modi Government.

*It is supported by Purvodaya Scheme to bring new energy and resources to infrastructure, employment, skilling and development.

*Neighborhood First policy has transformed infrastructure and connectivity across our eastern borders. Wholehearted commitment to bilateral and regional cooperation can take it further.

*ASEAN is a partner of enormous

consequence. AITIGA (ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement) review, mobility arrangements and new tech domains offer great possibilities.*IMTT (India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral) highway can be a real game changer. Every effort should be made to advance it.

*BIMSTEC is receiving heightened attention. We intend to commit more energies and resources.

*Giving our collaboration with Japan and South Korea a more contemporary character is important. The partnership with Australia also merits a particular mention.

*Assam can act as a hub for our Act East policy. Brand Assam grows stronger by the day."

EAM Jaishankar and Assam CM led a high-powered session titled "Act East, Act Fast, Act First" at Advantage Assam 2.0 in Guwahati on Tuesday, placing Assam at the heart of India's Act East Policy.

Among those participating were Simon Wong, Singapore High Commissioner; Hervé Delphin, EU Ambassador to India; Major General Vetsop Namgyel, Bhutan's Ambassador; Keiichi Ono, Japan's Ambassador; Union Minister of State for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita; Assam's Act East Policy Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary, and leading trade experts.

STANDARD POST

IIT Roorkee study finds mother's milk natural shield for probiotics

The Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee (IIT Roorkee) said that it has made a groundbreaking discovery about the potential of mother's milk in improving infant health.

The study, published in the Food Chemistry journal, explores how fat globules in human milk can act as a natural carrier for probiotics and the research could pave the way for advanced baby formulas that not only provide nutrition but also support gut health.

The study, led by Professor Kiran Ambatipudi from the Department of Biosciences and Bioengineering, focuses on the Milk Fat Globule Membrane (MFGM), a bioactive component of mother's milk.

The researchers found that this membrane can serve as a protective layer, ensuring that beneficial probiotic bacteria reach an infant's gut safely.

These probiotics are essential in shaping a newborn's gut microbiome, especially in premature babies, enhancing their immunity and overall health.

By closely studying two types of beneficial bacteria found in infants, the team discovered that these microbes effectively colonise the gut and promote a healthy digestive system.

More importantly, the milk fat globule membrane acts as a shield, protecting these probiotics as they travel through the stomach and intestines.

This unique feature enhances the survival and function of good bacteria while protecting the infant's gut from harmful microbes and oxidative stress.

The findings of this study suggest a promising application in the development of functional infant formulas.

Using mother's milk components as a delivery system for probiotics could revolutionise baby nutrition, making formulas more effective in mimicking the benefits of natural breastfeeding.

This breakthrough aligns with the Indian government's initiatives, such as Ayushman Bharat and Atmanirbhar Bharat, which emphasize health and self-reliance through scientific advancements.

Special Preparations by Railways for Maha Shivaratri Plan to Run Over 350 Trains from Prayagraj

(Standard Post Bureau)

The final AmritSnan of Mahakumbh 2025 is scheduled for February 26. A large number of pilgrims from various states, including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bengal, and others, have gathered in Prayagraj to bathe at the Sangam, the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati rivers. On Sunday and Monday, there was a high number of passengers at stations such as Patna, Danapur, Muzaffarpur, Gaya, Sasaram, Katihar, Khagaria, Saharsa, Jaynagar, and Darbhanga in Bihar. Similarly, there was an increased number of pilgrims at stations in Uttar Pradesh, such as Gorakhpur, Lucknow, Ayodhya, Varanasi, Kanpur, Gonda, Deen Dayal Upadhyay, and Jhansi, among others. Stations in Madhya Pradesh like Chitrakoot, Jabalpur, Satna, and Khajuraho also saw high footfall, while a significant number of passengers also travelled from Jharkhand's Dhanbad, Bokaro, Ranchi, Garhwa, and Medininagar stations to Prayagraj.

After the AmritSnan, a large number of people are expected to return to their hometowns, which will likely lead to a heavy crowd at railway stations. Keeping this in mind, North Central Railway, North Eastern Railway, and Northern Railway have made

Special Vigilance Directed at Stations



extensive preparations, and all officials and staff have been directed to remain vigilant at their workstations. On the occasion of Mouni Amavasya, over 360 trains were run, successfully transporting more than 20 lakh people to their destinations. Similarly, special arrangements have been made to run additional trains after the MahaShivaratriSnan, and extra rakes have been stationed near Prayagraj for use as needed. Initially, the railway had planned for the operation of approximately 13,500 trains during the Mahakumbh, and as of the

42nd day, more than 15,000 trains, including a large number of special trains, have already been run. The entire railway operation is being closely monitored by Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw. The Chairman and CEO of the Railway Board, Satish Kumar, is also actively involved in monitoring the train operations. The General Managers of the three zonal railways are working with their teams to strengthen railway arrangements. Railway minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has instructed the Chairman of Railway Board and General Managers of

All Zonal Railways to ensure complete care of the Mahakumbh passengers and, if necessary, run additional special trains.

In light of the en masse pilgrims expected on MahaShivaratri, the railway administration has made arrangements for the convenience of passengers, including security, shelters, easy ticketing apart from running a large number of trains. Over 1,500 commercial department staff and 3,000 Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel have been deployed at all stations in Prayagraj region.

Additionally, 29 squads of Railway Protection Special Force, 2 squads of Women Railway Protection Special Force, 22 dog squads, and 2 bomb disposal squads have been stationed in Prayagraj.

Teams from Scouts & Guides, Civil Defense, and other departments are working to provide better travel facilities to the pilgrims.

To ensure a smooth journey for pilgrims, internal movement plans have been implemented at all stations in the Prayagraj region, and pilgrims have been sent to their destinations via special

trains. At Prayagraj Junction, passengers were directed to specific shelters based on their destinations and then taken by special trains to their respective locations. When the number of passengers increased, the railway implemented its emergency plan by holding passengers at Khusro Bagh and passengers were directed to enter the station safely through passenger shelters before boarding the trains. All activities were monitored by senior officials of the Prayagraj Division at the control tower at Prayagraj Junction, and timely decisions were made to avoid any disruptions in train operations and ensure the safe departure of pilgrims in special trains.

Medical facilities were also available at various stations, where serious cases of pilgrims were treated in observation rooms. During the Mahakumbh 2025, many pilgrims made use of the digital services offered by the railway. Millions of passengers accessed the website and the Kumbh app for their travel needs.

In the final weekend of Mahakumbh, the railway continued to manage regular and special trains at good fettle. On Sunday, the railway successfully operated 335 trains, transporting over 16 lakh people to their destinations.

Biological E. Ltd Partners with Bavarian Nordic to increase global access to chikungunya vaccine

(Standard Post Bureau)

Biological E. Limited (BE) today announced a strategic partnership with Bavarian Nordic A/S (OMX: BAVA) to expand access to Bavarian Nordic's Chikungunya Vaccine in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC).

This partnership comprises a technology transfer of the current drug product manufacturing process for the Chikungunya Vaccine, with the option to transfer the drug substance process at a later stage. To that effect, the companies have reached an agreement to expand their capacity to provide future supplies to endemic low- and middle-income countries.

The initial technology transfer would be followed by regulatory approval applications and commencement of commercial manufacturing thereafter. BE's existing facilities in Genome Valley, Hyderabad will be augmented to make the Chikungunya Vaccine. The manufacturing of Chikungunya Vaccine at BE is expected to generate up to 300 new jobs.

This agreement has come about as Bavarian Nordic continues to explore opportunities in line with its strategy to provide global access to its Chikungunya Vaccine via partners for markets outside the US and Europe. The recent and first approval of the vaccine in the US as the first



Chikungunya Vaccine for persons as young as 12 years and the positive opinion from the European Medicines Agency's Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use have demonstrated the viability to expand regulatory approvals beyond these markets.

Ms. Mahima Datla, Managing Director, Biological E. Limited, said, "We are pleased to collaborate with Bavarian Nordic to help expand the availability of their Chikungunya Vaccine in low and middle-income countries.

The scale of our manufacturing and successful track record in providing global access to vaccines is synergistically aligned with Bavarian Nordic via this strategic partnership. We are committed to utilising our advanced & efficient manufacturing technologies to meet health needs in endemic regions and we are excited that our collaborative efforts will soon help improve public health in preventing

Chikungunya in various parts of the world."

"We are pleased to announce our first collaboration to expand global access to our Chikungunya Vaccine and also our first partnership with Biological E, who have solid expertise and comprehensive experience in supplying vaccines for improving public health worldwide," said Paul Chaplin, President & CEO of Bavarian Nordic. "Expanding supply is a prerequisite for our ability to address the increasing need for solutions to prevent Chikungunya in vulnerable populations in endemic regions, and we are dedicated to pursuing strong partnerships that can help us achieve this goal."

About CHIKV VLP vaccine

CHIKV VLP is an adjuvanted VLP recombinant protein vaccine for active immunization for the prevention of disease caused by chikungunya virus (CHIKV) in individuals 12 years and

older. Because VLPs contain no virus genetic material, the vaccine cannot infect cells, reproduce or cause disease.

While the mechanism of action of CHIKV VLP vaccine still needs to be further characterised, it is thought that the vaccine can induce protection from CHIKV infection by inducing neutralising antibodies against certain CHIKV proteins resulting in neutralisation of live virus. An adjuvant is added to increase the magnitude of vaccine-mediated immune responses.

In February 2025, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved VIMKUNYA™ (CHIKV VLP) as the first chikungunya vaccine for persons as young as 12 years.

The approval was based on results from two phase 3 clinical trials which enrolled more than 3,500 healthy individuals 12 years of age and older.

The studies met their primary endpoints, with results showing that 21 days after vaccination, the vaccine induced neutralizing antibodies in up to 97.8% of the vaccinated individuals and demonstrated a rapid immune response starting to develop within one week. The vaccine was well-tolerated and vaccine-related adverse events were mainly mild or moderate in nature.

CAG report tabled in Delhi assembly, citing loss of over Rs 2000 cr due to excise policy

New Delhi, Feb 25 (UNI) : Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta tabled the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) report, highlighting the alleged financial irregularities during the previous Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) administration, including alleged irregularities in the Delhi Excise liquor policy.

The report was tabled on the second day and mentioned that the Delhi government suffered a massive financial setback, incurring losses of over Rs 2,000 crore due to "flaws" in its 2021-22 excise policy.

The report 'Performance Audit on Regulation and Supply of Liquor in Delhi' was tabled following the suspension of 12 AAP MLAs, including Leader of Opposition Atishi, in a face-off with the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party over an auditor report.

The report pointed out that recommendations of an expert panel, formed to suggest changes for the formation of the now scrapped policy, were ignored by then deputy CM and excise minister Manish Sisodia.

Additionally, the Excise Department lost Rs 890.15 crore due to the surrender of licenses and the department's failure to re-tender liquor zones, the report said.

The CAG report also flagged an irregular waiver of Rs 144 crore granted to licence holders, citing Covid-19 restrictions, a decision personally approved by Manish Sisodia despite finance department objections.

Earlier, the assembly session began with an address by Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena but quickly descended into chaos as opposition members protested the reports.

The move triggered a massive uproar from AAP MLAs, leading to their expulsion from the House by speaker Vijender Gupta. Slamming the AAP government, Speaker Vijender Gupta said, "It is amazing to know that the CAG report has not been tabled in the assembly after 2017-18. It was much needed to obtain the financial condition of the state. Unfortunately, the CAG report was not tabled, and the previous government violated the Constitution."

Presenting the CAG reports, LG Saxena said, "My government, in its first Cabinet meeting, decided to table the CAG reports. This will pave the way to identify and address administrative deficiencies of the last government."

LG said, "In the coming months, we will focus on corruption-free governance, women empowerment, clean Delhi, Yamuna rejuvenation, and clean drinking water."

Saxena also pointed out the importance of cooperation between the Delhi government, the Centre, and other states, saying, "Continuous clashes and blame games over the past 10 years have hurt Delhi. My government will work in coordination with the Centre and other states."

G7 working on joint statement on Ukraine, several countries disagree with US: Ottawa

Kyiv, Feb 25 (UNI) : Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly said that the G7 countries were still working on a joint statement on Ukraine, noting the disagreement of several countries with the US position on the conflict.

"We've been working, indeed, with Europeans and Americans, we are still having some conversations," the minister said at a briefing broadcast by CPAC. "Canada and other countries do not agree with the position that the US advocated at the UN, particularly the resolution that they brought up."

She added that in the three and a half years that she has been the foreign minister, she cannot recall such an "intense" situation in terms of diplomatic efforts to agree on this document.

Bloomberg, citing sources familiar with the situation, previously reported that the G7 countries might not agree on the text of the statement on Ukraine on Monday due to disagreements between the US and European countries; Washington was threatening to withdraw support for the entire document, not just individual formulations.

Possible agreement on resources between US, Ukraine has nothing to do with Russia: Putin

Moscow, Feb 25 (UNI) : A possible agreement on natural resources between the United States and Ukraine has nothing to do with Russia, although Ukraine's resources must be carefully assessed, Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Monday.

"This does not concern us. I am not assessing it at all and do not want to think about this. Of course, these resources need to be assessed, how real they are, how much of these resources there are, what they are like, how much they cost, and so on. But this, I repeat, is none of our business," Putin told Russian journalist Pavel Zarubin.

At the same time, Russia would be ready to offer US partners, private businesses, as well as governmental structures the opportunity to work together in the field of rare earth metals, the president added.

"Rare earth metals are very important resources for advanced economy sectors, and we are doing little in this direction. We must do more," Putin said.

Lasting Peace in Ukraine only possible if all stakeholders involved in Talks: Erdogan

Ankara, Feb 25 (UNI) : A lasting peace in Ukraine can only be achieved if all sides to the conflict come to the negotiating table, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Monday.

"Generally speaking, we welcome the desire of the US President, Donald Trump, to end the war through negotiations. However, the following fact must be considered: the path to a just and lasting peace can be opened by having an equation in which all stakeholders are represented. Except for the Istanbul process, Russia has so far been excluded from the negotiations and the desired result has not been achieved. Ukraine should also be invited to participate," Erdogan said while addressing the nation after a cabinet meeting.

The Turkish leader added that he had already expressed his position on the issue to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, French President Emmanuel Macron and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

Erdogan also stressed the importance of Lavrov's recent visit to Ankara amid enhanced international efforts to achieve a peaceful solution in Ukraine.

Lavrov held talks with his Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidan on February 23. The two diplomats discussed a possible settlement in Ukraine and the situation in the Middle East, including in Syria.

Putin says developing rare earth metals strategic priority

Moscow, Feb. 25 (UNI) : Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Monday that developing the rare earth metals industry is a strategic priority that will enhance Russia's global competitiveness, economic growth and quality of life.

Speaking via video conference at a meeting on advancing the rare earth metals industry, Putin noted that the sector is a crucial resource base for its modern economy.

Rare metals are essential in microelectronics, energy, digital infrastructure and defense industries, he said, adding that they are required almost across the new technological paradigm.

Russia is among the world's leading nations regarding rare earth metal reserves. However, Putin acknowledged that the country has yet to fully capitalize on these resources, stressing intensified development efforts in this critical sector.

Russia launched a national project New Materials and Chemistry this year to enhance the country's industrial capacity in the field.

Under this initiative, Russia aims to establish a full-cycle rare earth metals industry -- encompassing the extraction, processing and manufacturing of high-value technological goods.

Russia remains open to working with foreign partners in the rare earth metals sector, including U.S. companies, Putin told local media.

Macron believes Ukraine Truce could be reached in few weeks

Kyiv, Feb 25 (UNI) : French President Emmanuel Macron believes that a ceasefire in the Ukrainian conflict could be reached within a few weeks.

"I hope so," Macron said in an interview with Fox News when asked whether it would be possible to settle the Ukraine conflict in a few weeks, as US President Donald Trump expected.

The arrival of Trump is a game changer, and he has the deterrence capacity of the US to re-engage with

Russia, the French leader said. "So I think it's feasible. My concern is that we have to go fast, but we need something first, a truce which could be assessed and checked, and full-fledged negotiation," he added. Macron noted the need for solid security guarantees for all sides.

"I think the initiative of President Trump is a very positive one, but my message was to say, be careful, because we need something substantial for Ukraine, but for security of

Europe and France," he said. Russian President Vladimir Putin previously stated that the goal of settling the conflict in Ukraine should not be a short ceasefire and a respite for regrouping forces and rearming with the aim of subsequently continuing the conflict, but a long-term peace. In turn, US President Donald Trump said that Volodymyr Zelenskyy was ready to conclude a deal to settle the conflict in Ukraine, but did not specify on what terms.

Two people detained in Marseille

Moscow, Feb 25 (UNI) : Two men aged 48 and 59 were detained at a pro-Ukrainian demonstration in the French city of Marseille on Monday evening, one of them is suspected of attacking the Russian consulate, the RMC radio reported, citing sources.

A police source told the radio station that the suspects have been placed in custody, the report said on Monday.

On Monday, an explosion occurred on the territory of the Russian diplomatic mission in Marseille. French media reported that unknown persons threw two Molotov cocktails into the consulate's garden. The Russian Embassy in Paris confirmed to

Sputnik that Molotov cocktails were thrown at the Russian Consulate General in Marseille, adding that no one was injured.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told Sputnik that the attack bore all the hallmarks of a terrorist attack. She underscored Russia's expectation that France take immediate action to enhance security at its diplomatic facilities. Meanwhile, Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service has warned that Ukraine may attempt attacks on Russian diplomatic missions across Europe to derail negotiations aimed at resolving the Ukraine conflict.

AUS, NZ register highest breast cancer rates globally: Study

Sydney, Feb. 25 (UNI) : Australia and New Zealand have the highest rates of breast cancer incidence in the world, the Science Media Exchange (Scimex) online news portal reported on Tuesday. In a new study, researchers from Australia and Canada analyzed the breast cancer incidence and mortality rates in 185 countries.

They found that one in 20 women globally will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime and that one in 70 will die from the disease.

However, the study found that the breast cancer risk is not evenly distributed throughout the world. "Incidence rates were highest in Australia and New Zealand followed by Northern America and Northern Europe and lowest in south-central Asia," the research paper said.

It found that the age-standardized incidence rate (ASIR) of breast cancer in

Australia and New Zealand in 2022 was 100.3 cases per 100,000 people.

By comparison, in south-central Asia the ASIR was 26.7 cases per 100,000 people.

Nehmat Houssami, a co-author of the study from the University of Sydney, said that the high incidence rates in Australia and New Zealand could be attributed to their aging populations as well as lifestyle risk factors such as alcohol consumption, low physical activity and obesity.

The age-standardized mortality rate (ASMR) for breast cancer was the highest in Melanesia at 26.8 deaths per 100,000 people followed by Polynesia and western Africa and the lowest in eastern Asia at 6.5 deaths per 100,000 people.

Out of all the countries analyzed, France had the highest risk of lifetime breast cancer diagnosis and Fiji the highest lifetime risk of dying. In 2021, the World Health Organization

(WHO) launched the Global Breast Cancer Initiative (GBCI), setting a goal for countries to reduce breast cancer mortality by 2.5 percent annually.

The new research found that only seven countries -- Malta, Denmark, Belgium, Switzerland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, and Slovenia -- are meeting the GBCI goal. Australia and New Zealand have reduced mortality by 2.1 percent annually over the last decade.

The research warned that breast cancer cases and deaths will increase by 38 percent and 68 percent respectively by 2050, disproportionately impacting countries with low Human Development Index (HDI) scores.

Authors of the study called for urgent action to address growing inequities in breast cancer survival rates worldwide -- particularly in countries with lower HDI scores.

Maryland judge blocks Trump administration from making immigration arrests at gurudwaras

Washington/New Delhi, Feb 25 (UNI) : Nearly a month after law enforcement officials in the US reced gurudwaras in New York and New Jersey to hunt for illegal immigrants, a federal judge in Maryland blocked the Trump administration from carrying out immigration enforcement actions at certain places of worship, including for Sikhs.

The federal judge on Monday issued the directive following lawsuits by the Quakers, Cooperative Baptists and Sikhs, challenging President Trump's unwinding of a Biden-era memo that barred immigration arrests at certain protected locations.

US District Judge Theodore Chuang granted a request for a narrow

preliminary injunction sought by the religious groups as they pursue their challenge to President Trump's directive allowing federal immigration authorities to conduct enforcement actions at places of worship. Chuang's order only applies to houses of worship owned or used by the challengers -- the Quakers, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and the Sikh Temple, reported CBS News.

The groups had argued that the new policy allowing immigration arrests at places that were previously considered protected violates their First Amendment rights and burdens the free exercise of religion under federal law.

The judge ordered the Trump administration to

reinstate a 2021 memorandum from then-Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas that barred the department and its components from taking enforcement action in certain places that "require special protection," including schools, medical facilities or places of worship.

The court's order requires the Department of Homeland Security under Trump to abide by the terms of the 2021 memo when pursuing enforcement actions at the three faith communities' places of worship.

Gurudwara Sahib West Sacramento is among the dozens of religious groups that have sued the Trump administration over the past few weeks after the

US-proposed resolution on Ukrainian crisis adopted in UNSC



Kyiv, Feb 25 (UNI) : The newly proposed resolution on the Ukraine conflict, drafted by Washington, was adopted by the UN Security Council members, a RIA Novosti

correspondent reported. The voting was as follows: 10 in favor, 5 abstentions and no one was against it.

US Deputy Ambassador Dorothy

Camille Shea also reminded that this resolution is not a "peace deal," but "a path to peace."

All European-proposed amendments to the resolution were rejected.

TikTok, along with Douyin, becomes first app to hit 6 bln USD in annual in-app purchase revenue

San Francisco, Feb. 25 (UNI) : TikTok, along with its Chinese counterpart Douyin, has become the first non-gaming app to surpass 6 billion U.S. dollars in annual in-app purchase (IAP) revenue, according to a report by app intelligence firm Sensor Tower.

The report highlights that TikTok generated an unprecedented 1.9 billion dollars in gross IAP revenue in the fourth quarter of 2024 alone.

With 6 billion dollars in IAP revenue for the year, TikTok more than doubled the earnings of any other app or game. The popular mobile game Monopoly GO, which ranked second, accumulated 2.6 billion dollars over the same period. TikTok's annual revenue saw a significant increase compared to the previous year, rising from 4.4 billion dollars in 2023.

TikTok has remained available in app stores in the United States, following a decision by President Donald Trump to delay a proposed ban on the platform due to national security concerns.

Iraq proposes new security pact to US : Defense Minister

Doha, Feb 25 (UNI) : Iraq has proposed to the United States to agree on a new security pact that will include intelligence cooperation, Iraqi Defense Minister Thabit Al-Abbasi said on Tuesday.

"We have proposed a new security agreement to the United States, and we think it is still under consideration," the minister told Saudi TV channel Al-Hadath.

He explained that a new security agreement would provide for a "sustainable security partnership and cooperation in intelligence."

Iraq expects US troops to withdraw from its soil

this fall, ending more than a decade of US military presence in the country. The US sent troops to Iraq in 2014 as part of an international coalition against the Islamic State terror group (banned in Russia). Baghdad is preparing to sign new security agreements with coalition partners.

Commenting on the US military presence in Syria, Al-Abbasi said that Iraq wanted the US to keep boots on the ground until Syria builds an army or an agreement is reached with the Kurdish-led rebel Syrian Democratic Forces, which control northeastern Syria with US's help.

Ukraine to lose half its weapon stock without US support

Moscow, Feb 25 (UNI) : Ukraine will lose about half its arms, including "most effective" ones, if the United States stops sending military aid, Politico reported on Tuesday, citing Ben Barry, a senior fellow for land warfare at the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Some US military systems, such as Abrams tanks and Patriot air defense systems, could potentially be replaced with European alternatives like German-made Leopards, IRIS-Ts and Norway's NASAMS air defense systems, the news website reported. Lithuanian Foreign Minister Kestutis Budrys told Politico that Europe had no substitutes for certain types of weaponry and equipment, such as some long-range munitions. Russia believes that arms supplies to Ukraine hinder the peace process and directly involve NATO countries in the conflict. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has said any cargo containing weapons for Ukraine will be a legitimate target for Russia.

Iran, European 3 hold new round of talks on JCPOA : Top Diplomat

Tehran, Feb 25 (UNI) : Iran and the European Three - the United Kingdom, Germany and France - held a new round of talks on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), also known as the Iran nuclear deal, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi said.

"On the margin of Minister Araghchi's visit to Geneva to participate in the Conference on Disarmament and Human Rights Council's high-level

segments, I held a new round of constructive talks with E3 Political Directors. We exchanged views on nuclear and sanctions lifting issues. All sides emphasised their commitment to finding a diplomatic and negotiated solution. It was agreed to continue talks," Gharibabadi said on Monday.

The JCPOA was signed in 2015 among Iran, France, Germany, the UK, China, Russia and the United States, as well as the European Union.

Career

ICICI Bank unveils app to replicate cheque book

To encourage customers — habituated to cheque books — migrate to electronic mode, ICICI Bank has launched the 'eftCheque' mobile application. This app replicates the look and feel of the physical cheque but remits funds instantly to anyone without having to register beneficiaries and without the recipient's bank details. The app also has an option to deposit a physical cheque received by the customer electronically by clicking a photo



using the mobile app's MICR reader option. Since Reserve Bank of India (RBI) regulations require that cheque imaging takes place at the bank branch, the cheque has to still be deposited. However, the fact that cheque details are uploaded to the bank enables the clearing process to be speeded up.

"Around 30% of the cheques that our customers issue are for peer-to-peer payments. In most cases, it is the issuer who has a mindset over using electronic payments as for the receiver it is always less effort to receive the funds electronically," said Anita Pai, senior FM in charge of retail banking at ICICI Bank.

Almost a decade after the RBI introduced National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT), which enables accountholders to transfer funds directly to other accountholders anywhere in the country, over 125 crore cheques continue to clog the payment system. A large part of this cheque issuance is because of customer mindset and are issued despite the customer having access to an electronic option. The difference between eftCheque and sending payments online is that the eftCheque can be issued to anyone and not just registered beneficiaries. Also, the sender need not know bank details of the recipient while issuing the eftCheque.

Keep this is mind while changing Careers

Thinking of quitting your job to pursue that long-time hobby or simply take up something which offers a seemingly better prospect? Read on to know the things you need to consider before making the switch.

In today's times, a number of professionals, who are not satisfied with their career path, switch streams without much thought. Most often, these people take up a job or set up a business of which they have no prior experience or relevant degree. What drives these people to make the move is their interest and passion for pursuing their dream. However, while taking up something that you are enthusiastic about is a good move, there are certain important measures that you need to consider before making the switch.

RESEARCH IS THE KEY

Research is the first and most vital step towards pursuing your goal. One of the important questions that you need to answer is how fruitful the career prospects are in the potential field of work. Also, since you are most likely changing your line of work as a result of stagnancy in your current job, you need to weigh all the pros and cons of the alternate career option you are considering.

SKILLS SET

Swati Pande Nalawade, faculty, marketing and branding at a university says, "It is possible to switch careers without pursuing a degree in that field. But the next best thing to possess, if not a degree, are skills set related to

that profession. I have seen a number of students switching fields and doing well. You need to have the acumen and passion for the industry you will be opting for. Also, since there is a high possibility of financial risk as well as of failure, you need to be mentally prepared to take the plunge."

Additionally, you need to take into account that you have or are in a position to acquire the skills set required for your new job. If training is necessary, you should make sure it is short-spanned and feasible.

NETWORKS AND MENTORS

While developing the right skills set is important, having a few contacts in the potential industry of work is an added bonus. Taking advice from people who are already part of the industry can prove to be very helpful.

Says Parag Gopale, a marketing professional turned full-time photographer, "It is a challenging journey to quit a

corporate job and pursue your passion. I quit when I realised that my interest in photography was taking a backseat. I must say that networking helps build contacts in the industry."

DEGREE OR NO DEGREE

"Accepting a job in banking at the age of 21 was a good start to my career as an accounting major. But after working for three years in an international bank, I realised that this job and career choice wasn't exactly what I wanted. When I thought of switching my career, my biggest challenge was to believe in my goal. It is not easy to pursue a career without a degree. You have to believe that the choice you

make is the right choice, no matter what anybody says to discourage you. Without a relevant degree and with a lot of research, I switched my career from being an accountant to becoming a baker," says Dhvani C, recounting her experience.

PARTING WORDS

While switching careers may not be an easy decision to make, the thing to remember is, job satisfaction is the most crucial part of leading a fulfilling professional life. So take that leap of faith before it's too late.



Now, a university course on Selfies!

First, there was the camera phone. Then came the selfie rod. And now there's actually a course that teaches you to analyse the cultural and social impact of the selfie!

The University of Southern California has introduced this course, describing the selfie as a 'cultural artefact'. The #SelfieClass will allow students to critically analyse 'society's influence on self-identity, and how selfies reflect and affect the global culture in which we live'. While the premise is interesting, professors in India don't see such a course finding a place in an Indian college soon. However, Ananya Chakraborti (Chatterjee), journalism teacher at St Xavier's College, Kolkata, agrees that the course on selfies could be relevant from a psychological point of view. "The course material needs to be combined with Psychology to study how it affects the thinking of people." She also points out that the culture of having portraits painted by artists has been around for hundreds of years. "While earlier, only the rich could have their own paintings done, with the advent of the camera and now the mobile phone, anyone can get themselves clicked. This is how technology has helped break the class barrier."

Psychiatrist Dr Seema Hingorrany feels that such a course, while it is edgy and different, can't have a direct effect on a student's career options, "Though it is breaking away from conventional courses across the globe, these programmes are good only for students who think differently. It can never make for a career option."

Talking about the importance of selfies in present-day culture, psychiatrist Sauleha Shaikh says, "Self-captured images allow young adults and teens to express their mood. As teens and teens try to form their identity, selfies serve as a way to test how they look, and therefore feel, in certain outfits, makeup, poses and places. Because they live in a digital world, self-portraits provide a way of participating in it." We look at some unusual courses taught across the globe.

Simpsons and Philosophy — University of California This two-unit class delves into the hit cartoon series from the point of view of the likes of Nietzsche and Plato. Apparently, the "fairly rigorous" course attempts to answer questions such as whether Homer's infamous 'D'oh' utterance says anything about his existential self.

The Joy of Garbage — Santa Clara University

If you think environmental studies is all about conservation of trees, it's time you explore the joy of garbage! This course engages students to investigate trash and study the science behind what humans consume and discard, and suggest sustainable solutions to waste problems.

Invented Languages: Klingon and Beyond — University of Texas

Do you speak Klingon? Not yet? Here's your chance to learn about it. The sci-fi language, made famous by the fictional alien race in Star Trek and Sheldon Cooper (from the sitcom The Big Bang Theory), is said to be used as a medium to discuss invented languages.

The Vampire in Literature and Cinema — University of Wisconsin-Madison

Thanks to books and telly shows, the blood-sucking creatures are quite a hit among youngsters worldwide. So, why not make it a part of higher studies! This course, however, attempts to break the negative perceptions and perhaps analyze folklore, literature and films about vampires.

Horology — Birmingham City University

Wearing a wristwatch may be a thing of the past for many, but there are people who still take interest in learning about the art or science of measuring time. Students are often found peering through a magnifying glass, putting together minuscule metal parts of a timepiece.



False flattery at work can ruin your career

Sycophancy may get you noticed but it will do no wonders for your career in the long run. Every workplace has its share of sycophantic employees; these are the people who use tools like flattery, deference and obsequiousness towards their superiors to accelerate their careers. They build a special relationship with their bosses and utilise the same to create an unwarranted, elevated place for themselves in the organisation.

Udit Mittal, MD, Unison International tells us the potential effects on one's career if one is surrounded by sycophantic peers, "Being surrounded by sycophants might bring negative effects to one's career because there is a possibility of remaining unnoticed by seniors in the bleak environment created by flattery.

Sycophancy creates emotional disturbances and eventually affects performance." As bosses, it is important for professionals to not be susceptible to sycophancy from their juniors. Chitbhanu Nagri, global head HR, Tavant Technologies, explains, "For leaders who want to achieve overnight success, sycophants act like 'fuel to fire'; they create an illusion of grandeur and make them believe that everything is hale and hearty. Leaders rationalise this as the organisational sentiment, get defensive when they hear divergent views and ultimately, the ones with differing views either distance themselves or move on to take up other opportunities. Sycophants can use this opportunity to get a larger share of the pie. However, reality catches up soon; either the

leaders realise their mistake and take corrective actions, or become hugely unpopular and ineffective in the organisation." Harvey Deutschendorf, author of 'The Other Kind of Smart: Simple Ways to Boost Your Emotional Intelligence for Greater Personal Effectiveness and Success' tells us why professionals adopt sycophancy, "People may have started out with the notion that talent and abilities will be recognised when it comes to promotions, but then they witnessed others who they see as less capable but more pleasing to their superiors being chosen above them. As a result of observing this, they may have come to see sycophancy as being the path of least resistance and the easiest way to get ahead."

Undeserved promotions are the most critical consequence of sycophantic employees. Vivian Fernandes, HR head, Opus Consulting, explains, "As bosses, it may sometimes be difficult to see the right picture immediately, but with experience, it becomes easy to understand who is a sycophant and who the real hard workers are. If an organisation has clearly chartered out the parameters KRAs for promotions and does stringent reference checks, such situations of unwarranted promotions can be avoided."

Rajiv Burman, managing partner, Lighthouse Partners gives some tips on dealing with sycophantic peers, so as to not let them dictate one's behaviour or career:

Firstly, it is important to recognise that there is no point in talking to the sycophantic peers as they behave in the manner that they do because they think it gets them brownie points from the boss.

The best step is to talk to your boss in a non-confrontational way with facts and figures about your performance and express your disappointment that a lesser deserving peer has been given preferential treatment. If this does not work, then seek a meeting with the skip-level boss; if this too fails, then talk to the HR manager. If none of these measures bring favourable results, then it is best to look for another job.

Thus, it is important for an organisation to encourage a merit-based culture, rather than sycophancy among their employees.

Commonwealth Games gold medalist of Uganda Chesang confirmed

Kampala, Feb 25 (UNI) : Uganda's Stella Chesang has been confirmed to take part in the TCS London Marathon 2025 slated for April 27.

Dominic Otchet, President of the Uganda Athletics Federation (UAF), on Monday said, "We have now confirmed both Jacob Kiplimo for the men's and Chesang for the women's category in the London Marathon. And we expect very good performances from them because they are very experienced runners."

The 28-year-old Chesang who won gold in 10,000m in the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, Australia will face tough competition from defending champion Peres Jephchir and world record-holder Ruth Chepngetich, all from Kenya.

She will also face strong resistance against Ethiopia's Tigist Assefa, a two-time Berlin Marathon champion, and Sifan Hassan, the Olympic marathon champion. Chesang told Xinhua,

"I am looking forward to the Marathon and I am preparing well enough because I know the competition will be tough." Besides winning gold at the 2018 Commonwealth Games, Chesang also finished 10th in the World Cross Country Championship. She also represented Uganda at the 2016 Rio Olympics and holds national records for the 10,000 meters and half marathon.

Battle Royale in Copa as Real Sociedad entertains Real Madrid

Madrid, Feb 25 (UNI) : Real Sociedad entertains Real Madrid in the first leg of their Copa del Rey semifinal on Wednesday night in a tie where Madrid is the favorite to play either FC Barcelona or Atletico Madrid in the final.

The game comes with Real Madrid in arguably its best form of the season after knocking Manchester City out of the Champions League and a comfortable 2-0 win at home to Girona. But Real Sociedad has drastically improved its home form in recent months, with 11 wins from its last 13 games in the Reale Arena, and its last win was a comfortable 3-0 at home against Leganes, whom Real Madrid beat in the Copa quarterfinals.

Real Sociedad coach Imanol Alguacil will be able to call on forwards, Sheraldo Becker and Take Kubo, who are both

suspended for this weekend's game away to Barcelona. Kubo scored his side's second goal against Leganes and Real Madrid would still take 50 percent of any profit from a future sale of its former player. Jude Bellingham's suspension after his red card for swearing at referee Jose Luis Munuera Montero in Pamplona just over a week ago is only applicable in LaLiga and he will return to the side on Wednesday, with Brahim Diaz likely to step down to the subs' bench. Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti is also likely to make changes in his defense, with Antonio Rudiger back in action, while Fran Garcia steps in at left-back. One player who looks likely to miss out is midfielder Fede Valverde, who was rested at the weekend with muscle fatigue and is also likely to rest on Wednesday.

Bigger goal, firmer attitude India's motto against Korean powerhouse

Sharjah (UAE), Feb 25 (UNI) : The Indian senior women's team will face Korea Republic in their third and final friendly match at the Pink Ladies Cup on Wednesday at the Al Hamriya Sports Club Stadium here.

On Sunday, the Blue Tigresses went down fighting 0-2 to Russia, conceding mid-way through the first half and deep in injury time.

In their first match, India beat Jordan 2-0. Head coach Crispin Chettri, who is leading the national team for the first time, stated before the tournament that all three matches will pose different kinds of challenges, and that's how the story has panned so far. "Jordan was different from Russia. Korea will be different tomorrow," Crispin said. "They all have contrasting playing styles and we have to adjust accordingly."

Against Russia it was always going to be a tough test for the defence, and

after some nervy moments in the initial stages, India gradually gained confidence and held their own for large parts. But Crispin made it clear that they cannot be content with a narrow defeat and the winning mentality needs to persist against every opponent.

"I think we shouldn't be happy losing with only two goals. We could have done better. We created chances and we could have scored. But I think the mentality of the players is improving after every game. The attitude we showed against Russia. I am happy with the effort but not with the result. We could have done much better," said the 44-year-old.

Korea Republic, ranked 20th, 49 places above India, have registered two comfortable victories so far. The Shin Sang-woo coached side beat Uzbekistan 3-0 and Thailand 4-0. It will be the eighth time in history that they will face India. The

Karnataka HC refuses to quash cheating case against Lakshya Sen

Bengaluru, Feb 25 (UNI) : The Karnataka High Court has declined to quash a cheating case against Indian badminton players Lakshya Sen, Chirag Sen, their parents, and coach U Vimal Kumar over alleged fabrication of birth certificates for age-group tournaments.

Justice MG Uma, while pronouncing the order, observed that prima facie evidence indicated collusion in manipulating birth certificates, thereby making it inappropriate to quash the case at this stage. The case originated from a private complaint filed by MG Nagaraja, who, based on documents obtained through the Right to Information (RTI) Act, alleged that Chirag Sen's birth certificate had been altered to show his birth date as July 22, 1998, instead of his actual birth period in January-February 1996. Similar allegations were made regarding Lakshya Sen's birth records, allegedly modified to falsely establish eligibility for age-restricted tournaments and government benefits.

Following the complaint, the trial court directed an investigation under Section 156(3) of the Criminal Procedure Code, leading to an FIR at the High Grounds Police Station in Bengaluru.

The High Court found merit in the RTI-based evidence, holding that the investigation should proceed unhindered. It dismissed the petitions seeking to quash the case, stating that there was sufficient material to justify further inquiry.

Despite multiple opportunities, the petitioners' counsel, Advocate Varun Joshi, did not present arguments. On the other hand, the State of Karnataka was represented by High Court Government Pleader (HCGP) Venkat Sathyanarayan, while Advocate K Vijaya Kumar appeared for the complainant.

Taegeuk Ladies have won all previous seven meetings.

"We've had two days to prepare for Korea. We know how they play. They're completely different from Russia. I think Russia is great in size and strength. But when it comes to Korea, they are quicker. Their decision making is much faster. And I think they are much more clinical in front of the goal," he said.

"We shouldn't be letting them run down the flanks and create cutbacks because they are very good at that. We can't let them run behind us and go for cutbacks. On the attacking front, we are looking for quick counter attacks through Manisha," Crispin said. "I'm planning to give a few youngsters a chance to play with the best because if you want to build a team, I think this is the right kind of test, so the ones who are in the national team for the first time know what it takes to be here," said Crispin. Centre-back

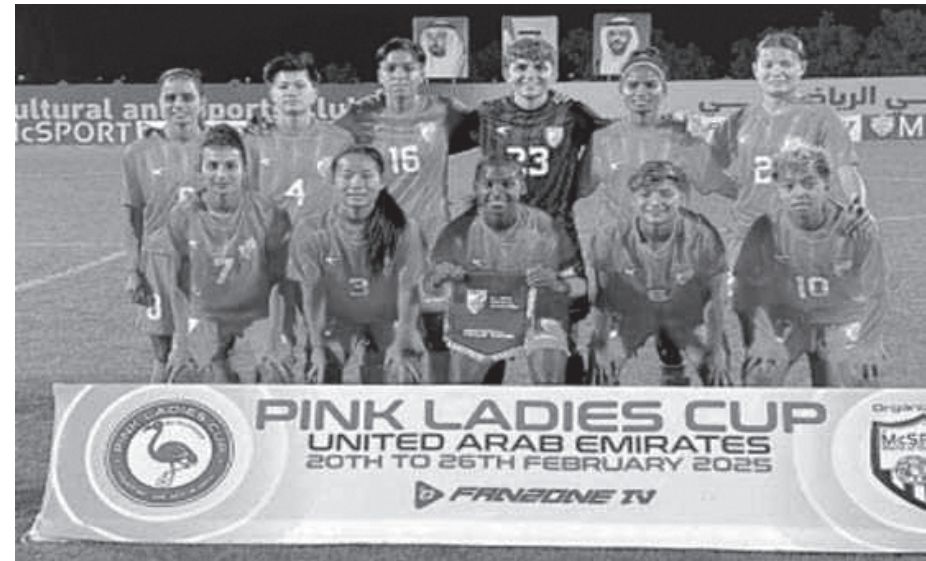
India U20 women end Pink Youth Cup campaign with defeat against Russia

Manavgat (Turkey), Feb 25 (UNI) : The India U20 women's team ended their Pink Ladies U20 Youth Cup campaign with a 0-3 defeat to Russia at the Emirhan Sport Center here on Tuesday.

Russia scored twice inside the first 17 minutes and added another soon after the restart before India created a handful of opportunities to get on the scoresheet but ultimately came out empty-handed.

The Young Tigresses had beaten Jordan 2-1 and Hong Kong 1-0 last week. For India, these friendly matches were part of their preparations for the SAFF U20 Women's Championship and the AFC U20 Women's Asian Cup Qualifiers, which will take place in July and August, respectively.

It was an end-to-end start, with both India and Russia having a go at each other's defence in the first 10 minutes. While Lhingdeikim saw her 20-yard effort dip on top of the net, Arina Shuba forced



Moirangthem Monalisha Devi to make a one-on-one save. Gradually, Russia began to exert control and India were pinned inside their defensive third. Getting on the end of a free-kick from Tatiana Danilochkina, Mariia Nachaeva headed into the far corner to open the scoring in the 15th minute. Less than two minutes later, Polina Pavlova doubled the lead with a solid 20-yard half-volley that rocketed into the top corner.

After that blitz, India

regrouped and dished out a better defensive performance until the end of the first half. However, Natalia Perminova got Russia on the scoresheet again just two minutes after the restart, side-footing a cutback from 10 yards out. India became desperate to get something from the game and ventured forward more frequently.

That turned out well for Joakim Alexandersson's side as they were not only able to create a host of chances, but also prevent

any further damage as Russia were kept busy inside their half.

Lhingdeikim, who scored against Jordan, came the closest to getting a goal for India. The 17-year-old turned her marker inside out and took a low shot with her left foot. The goalkeeper was beaten but Luliana Kamorina produced a superb goal-line clearance to deny her. Lhingdeikim also saw a curling right-footed free-kick saved at the far corner by Uliana Obukhova. Sibani Devi and

Nongmeikapam Sibani Devi, Thingbaijam Sanjita Devi (Alina Chingakham 78'), Cindy Remruatpui Colney (Kayenpaibam Anju Chanu 90+2).

Chinese Lin, Sun maintain top places in table tennis world rankings

Beijing, Feb 25 (UNI) : China's Lin Shidong and Sun Yingsha continue to sit atop the world rankings updated by the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) on Tuesday.

Despite falling short in the semifinals of the Asian Cup, Lin keeps his grip on the men's singles top position, while seeing his advantage over teammate Wang Chuqin, the Asian Cup winner, reduced to 100 points.

Fellow Chinese paddler Liang Jingkun, beaten finalist at the Asian Cup, sits third in the rankings.

Men's paddlers ranking fourth to 10th are Tomokazu Harimoto of

Japan, Brazil's Hugo Calderano, France's Felix Lebrun, Truls Moregard of Sweden, Germany's Patrick Franziska and Qiu Dang, and Alexis Lebrun of France.

The women's top 10 players remain unchanged, with Sun leading a Chinese quartet in the top four, along with Wang Manyu, Wang Yidi and Chen Xingtong.

The fifth-10th ranked female paddlers are Hina Hayata and Miwa Harimoto, both of Japan, China's Kuai Man, Japan's Satsuki Odo and Mima Ito, and Shin Yubin of South Korea.

China's Wang Chuqin/Sun Yingsha and Lin Shidong/Kuai Man rank top two in mixed doubles.

India clinches bilateral T20 Cricket series for Blind

Bengaluru, Feb 25 (UNI) : Team India delivered a dominant performance in the Men's Bilateral T20 Cricket Series for the Blind 2025, securing a comprehensive nine-wicket victory over Bangladesh in the third league match at D5 Sports, Manipal University Campus, Yelahanka. With this emphatic win, India sealed the series 3-0. Opting to field first after winning the toss, India's bowling unit put up a disciplined effort, restricting Bangladesh to 173/4 in 20 overs.

B3 Salman led Bangladesh's fightback with a steady 50 off 38 balls, while India's T. Durga Rao (B3) impressed with a three-wicket haul to keep the opposition in check. In response, India's chase was nothing short of spectacular, as Sunil Ramesh (B3) stole the show with an unbeaten 96 off just 46 balls, while Nakula Badanayak (B2) played a crucial supporting role with 50 off 31 balls.

Hynek Barton stuns top seed Kopriva at Bengaluru Open

Bengaluru, Feb 25 (UNI) : Qualifier Hynek Barton stunned top seed Vit Kopriva in the Round of 32 at the DafaNews Bengaluru Open on Tuesday, securing a hard-fought 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 victory at the KSLTA Tennis Stadium.

Barton, hailing from the Czech Republic, recovered from a set down to oust his compatriot in a match that lasted just over two hours on Court 2. The Bengaluru Open, organised by the Karnataka State Lawn Tennis Association (KSLTA), is an ATP Challenger 125 event with a prize pool of USD 200,000, marking it as India's premier international tennis tournament. The winner of the hard-court event will earn 125 ATP ranking points. Having recently

teamed up for a semifinal run at the Delhi Open, Barton and Kopriva brought their familiarity with each other's games into the contest. The first set saw both players evenly matched until Kopriva capitalised on Barton's unforced errors to break in the seventh game and claim the lead. Barton responded strongly, breaking late in the second set and early in the third to complete a stunning comeback. "We are good friends, so it was a bit nervous in the beginning. He's more experienced, I am the younger one who wants to win. We played up and down," Barton said after the match. "In the third set, I broke him in the fourth game and then just focused on holding my serve. That's

what I accomplished, and I am happy."

Barton, who has been playing across India since the start of the year, expressed his comfort with the playing conditions. "I like the heat and humidity. I feel the rhythm. I really don't mind it; I actually quite like it," he added. Meanwhile, India's teen sensation Manas Dhamne bowed out in the first round, despite a spirited fight against qualifier Petr Bar Biryukov. After losing the opening set 3-6, Dhamne levelled the match with a 6-3 second-set win but fell short in the decisive tiebreaker.

Karan Singh also saw his campaign end in the first round, losing to Jurij Rodionov in a marathon 6-4, 4-6, 7-6(3) encounter.

India beat World No.1 Netherlands 2-1 in shootout

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25 (UNI) : After a thrilling 2-2 draw, India grabbed the bonus point as they defeated the Netherlands 2-1 in shootout during the FIH Hockey Pro League (Women) at the Kalinga Stadium here on Tuesday.

Despite being two goals down, India made a remarkable comeback in the third quarter with goals coming from Deepika (35') and Baljeet Kaur (43'). Captain Pien Sanders (17') and Fay van der Elst (28') scored for the Netherlands.

Following the incredible upset victory, Hockey India announced cash award of Rs 1 lakh to each Indian player and Rs. 50,000 to each member of the support staff in addition to their existing policy of rewarding Rs. 50,000 for every victory.

The Dutch were dominant in the first quarter both, in terms of possession and attempts on goal. The visiting team won the first penalty corner of the evening in the 5th minute as Matla Frederique

took a powerful shot, met by a breathtaking save by Savita.

The Netherlands won three back-to-back corners in the remaining minutes but India's tight defence denied them the opening goal.

The Dutch continued to pile on the pressure in the second quarter and found the opening goal in the 17th minute courtesy of a penalty corner. The Netherlands played out a variation perfectly as Captain Sanders received the ball on the baseline and found the net from a tight

angle to give her side the lead. The Netherlands won their sixth penalty corner in the 23rd minute and tried to play the same variation as before but this time, Sanders' shot was blocked by an Indian defender. In the 28th minute, Lalremsiami made a brilliant individual run with the ball from the left flank and pierced into the circle but unfortunately for India, they couldn't make an attempt on goal.

With two minutes left in the first half, the Netherlands extended their lead in fine fettle.

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Arun Kumar Jain, GM, SCR Conducts Safety Inspection of Wadi - Tandur - Vikarabad - Secunderabad Section

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Feb 25 : Arun Kumar Jain, General Manager, South Central Railway undertook a detailed inspection between Wadi - Tandur - Vikarabad - Lingampalli - Secunderabad section of Secunderabad Division today. He was accompanied by Shri Bhartesh Kumar Jain, Divisional Railway Manager, Secunderabad Division and other senior officials from both the Headquarters and Division throughout the inspection.

Shri Arun Kumar Jain has commenced the journey with rear window inspection between Wadi - Chittapur stations, wherein he reviewed the safety aspects of track maintenance and electrical & signaling equipment of the section. He conducted a detailed inspection of Chittapur Railway station and reviewed the passenger amenities, circulating area, Foot over bridge etc. He inspected Crew Booking Lobby, Running Room and checked the hygiene of food supplied to staff. The General Manager interacted with Loco Pilots and Guards about the facilities provided to them during the stay in Running Rooms. The General Manager planted a tree sapling towards green initiative.

The General Manager conducted a detailed inspection of Sedam Railway station and reviewed the passenger



amenities, circulating area, Foot over bridge etc. He checked the Station Manager's room and checked the all the records and safety literature and then inspected the catering stalls on the platform and checked the prices of items. He visited the stalls set up to present the recent developmental activities undertaken by the Division. He then conducted a rear window inspection

between Sedam and Mantatti section. Later, the General Manager conducted a detailed inspection of Level Crossing Gate No. 12E. He complemented the gatemens for his knowledge on safety aspects, alertness and devotion to duty in critical situations

Mr Arun Kumar Jain conducted a detailed inspection of Tandur Railway station and

reviewed the passenger amenities, circulating area, newly constructed Foot over bridge etc. He also inspected the on-going re-developmental works of the Vikarabad railway station under Amrit Bharat Station Scheme with an expenditure of Rs. 24.35 Cr. He advised the officials to complete the works as per target date. He inspected Running Room and Traction Sub Station

near the station and checked the safety aspects. He also checked all the points and crossings related to track and signalling in the station. Later, the General Manager inspected Curve no. 5 between Dharur and Godamgura stations on Tandur - Vikarabad section.

The General Manager conducted a detailed inspection of Vikarabad Railway station and reviewed the passenger amenities, circulating area, newly constructed Foot over bridge etc. He also inspected the on-going works of re-developmental works of the Vikarabad railway station under Amrit Bharat Station Scheme with an expenditure of Rs. 24.35 Cr. He advised the officials to complete the works as per target date. He inspected Running Room and Traction Sub Station

He checked the Station Manager's room and checked the all the records and safety literature.

Bhopal Receives IT Park and HLBS Factory as a Mahashivratri Gift

India to be Ready for 'Made in India' Chip by 2025: Ashwini Vaishnaw



(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Feb 25 : Union Minister Mr Ashwini Vaishnaw joined through video conferencing on the second day of the 'Global Investors Summit 2025' organized in Bhopal. On this occasion, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw congratulated the HLBS family for the new plant on the auspicious eve of Mahashivratri. He also announced that by 2025, the first 'Made in India' semiconductor chip would be ready for production.

Mr Vaishnaw acknowledged the significant contributions of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shri Mohan Yadav in achieving this milestone. He noted that under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, electronic manufacturing in Madhya Pradesh has gained significant momentum. Two electronic manufacturing clusters have been approved by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, one in Bhopal and the other in Jabalpur. Currently, 85 companies are actively engaged in the electronics manufacturing sector in the state, marking a major success for the Double-Engine Government.

Training for 20,000 Engineers in Madhya Pradesh

The Union Minister also highlighted the government's commitment to technological advancement by announcing the training of 20,000 engineers under the Future Skills Program in Madhya Pradesh. Over the past decade, the electronics manufacturing sector has witnessed unprecedented growth, reaching a valuation of ₹ 10 lakh crore. India is currently exporting electronics worth ₹ 2.5 lakh crore, including mobile (₹ 4 lakh crore); laptops, servers, telecom equipment (₹ 75,000 crore) and defence & medical electronics. Electronics is amongst the Top 3 export items.

Strengthening India's Semiconductor Manufacturing Capabilities

India has made significant progress in semiconductor manufacturing, with five

units under construction simultaneously. The first 'Made in India' chip is expected to roll out by 2025. To further strengthen the talent pipeline, the government has initiated a program to train 85,000 engineers in advanced semiconductor and electronics manufacturing.

Mr Vaishnaw apprised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's clear vision and leadership, emphasizing that the government's unwavering commitment has propelled India's electronics manufacturing industry to new heights. He congratulated Chief Minister Shri Mohan Yadav and the people of Madhya Pradesh on this remarkable achievement and extended his best wishes on the auspicious occasion of Mahashivratri.

Key Features of the New IT Campus

The newly inaugurated IT campus spans 1 lakh square feet, equipped with state-of-the-art facilities to manufacture IT hardware and electronic products under one roof. The plant will produce servers, desktops, motherboards, chassis, RAM, SSDs, drones, and robots, among other end-to-end electronic components. Over the next six years, the campus will witness an investment of approximately ₹ 150 crore, generating employment for nearly 1,200 professionals. The facility will also manufacture desktop computers, all-in-one workstations, laptops, tablets, and monitors.

On the first day of the Global Investors Summit, the Union Minister also announced significant investments in Madhya Pradesh. The Indian Railways and the Madhya Pradesh government signed agreements on renewable energy projects, further strengthening their partnership.

India's Focus on Future-Ready Infrastructure

The Modi government has been focusing extensively on future-ready infrastructure and capacity building. To achieve the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, the government is prioritizing four key areas across all sectors: infrastructure investment, inclusive growth, manufacturing expansion, and simplification of laws.

India's Development on the Fast Track

Over the past decade, India has laid over 31,000 km of new railway tracks, making remarkable strides in railway infrastructure. Under the world's largest station redevelopment program, more than 1,337 railway stations are undergoing modernization. For the fiscal year 2025-26, a record allocation of ₹ 14,745 crore has been made for the development of railway infrastructure in Madhya Pradesh. Additionally, since 2014, 2,808 km of railway lines in the state have been electrified, achieving 100% railway electrification in the region.

India's Hyperloop Vision Moves Forward with IIT Madras Collaboration and Cutting-Edge Test Track

India Takes a Giant Leap Towards Hyperloop Travel with Launch of Test Track at IIT Madras

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Feb 25 : IIT Madras, which hosted Asia's First Global Hyperloop Competition 2025 concluded successfully, spotlighting the progress and promise of cutting-edge transportation technologies. The event was India's involvement in hyperloop development, a revolutionary transportation concept aimed at reshaping the future of high-speed travel.

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw's Vision for Innovation

During the closing ceremony, Union Minister of Railways, Information & Broadcasting, Electronics, and IT, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, joined virtually and emphasized the government's commitment to fostering innovation through collaborations between Indian Railways and academic institutions like IIT Madras. Mr Vaishnaw reiterated that the competition was aligned with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of promoting technological advancements and strengthening partnerships between industry and academia.

Highlights of the Competition:

Prestigious Awards: Several awards were presented, with the Best Demonstration Team

Award being among the most notable. Other categories recognized teams for achievements in Braking & Traction System Demonstrations and Best Sub-System (Mechanical).

Innovation at the Forefront: Shri Vaishnaw praised the young innovators who participated in the competition. He highlighted that their groundbreaking work reflects India's growing capabilities in science, engineering, and next-generation transportation solutions. These innovations play a crucial role in accelerating India's journey towards adopting hyperloop technology, among other futuristic travel systems.

Hyperloop Test Track: The competition showcased the 422-meter-long Hyperloop test track at IIT Madras, located in Chennai. This state-of-the-art facility is a key asset, marking a significant partnership between Indian Railways and IIT Madras. The test track serves as a crucial testing ground for hyperloop systems, signalling India's growing commitment to leading the way in hyperloop technology.

Focus on Future Transportation Projects:

The Railway Minister's address also highlighted the collaboration between

Indian Railways and IIT Madras on another exciting project: the development of a Vertical Take-Off & Landing (VTOL) Vehicle. This VTOL project is set to revolutionize the way we think about mobility, as it promises to provide solutions for efficient and sustainable transportation in urban and rural areas. The project is funded by Indian Railways and is expected to push the boundaries of modern mobility technologies.

The Significance of Hyperloop Technology in India's Future

The competition was not only a showcase of India's potential in hyperloop technology but also an indicator of the country's ambitious plans for a futuristic transportation network. Hyperloop systems are expected to dramatically reduce travel times between cities, offering an alternative to traditional rail and air travel.

The hyperloop concept envisions high-speed, low-pressure pods traveling at speeds of up to 1,200 km/h, connecting major cities in a matter of minutes. As part of the competition, participants presented innovative ideas for the design, safety, and efficiency of these pods, making clear strides towards creating a feasible and scalable hyperloop

system.

IIT Madras and the Future of Mobility

Shri Vaishnaw emphasized the crucial role of IIT Madras in India's technological strides, including the successful rollout of India's 5G network, the fastest in the world. This partnership between academia and Indian Railways is expected to accelerate the development of hyperloop technology and other future-ready mobility solutions.

By showcasing the capabilities of India's young innovators and their contributions to the hyperloop field, the event demonstrated the potential for India to become a global leader in the next generation of transportation systems.

A Bright Future for India's Transportation Innovations

The Hyperloop test track and the ongoing VTOL project are just the beginning. As the country continues to explore futuristic travel solutions, the collaboration between Indian Railways and IIT Madras will likely play a central role in making these innovations a reality. With both technological breakthroughs and collaborative partnerships on the horizon, India's journey toward revolutionary transportation systems is poised to accelerate in the coming years.

Short Termination of trains : ECoR

(Standard Post Bureau)

Visakhapatnam, Feb 25 : Due to technical reasons the following trains will be short terminated as detailed below.

1. The train No. 67289 Visakhapatnam-Palasa passenger leaving Visakhapatnam 02.03.2025 to 08.03.2025 (except Friday & Sunday) will short terminate at Srikakulam Road

2. The train No. 67290 Palasa-Visakhapatnam passenger from 02.03.2025 to 08.03.2025 (except Friday & Sunday) will start from Srikakulam Road instead of Palasa.

However, the following train will run normally on the below mentioned dates

3. The train No. 67287 Visakhapatnam-Vizianagaram passenger leaving Visakhapatnam from 01.03.2025 to 07.03.2025 (Except Thursday) will run upto Vizianagaram.

4. The train No. 67288 Vizianagaram-Visakhapatnam passenger will start from Vizianagaram 02.03.2025 to 08.03.2025 (Except Friday) to Visakhapatnam.

People are requested to note the changes and act accordingly

Women peacekeepers to play crucial role in combating gender-based violence: Seth

New Delhi, Feb 25 (UNI) : Union Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth on Tuesday emphasised the crucial role of women peacekeepers in preventing and tackling gender-based violence and providing support and protection to survivors.

Delivering the valedictory address at the conference on 'Women in Peacekeeping - A Global South Perspective' here, the Minister said, "Their presence and actions demonstrate the importance of gender diversity in creating sustainable peace and security", a Defence Ministry statement said.

He highlighted that participation of women peacekeepers fosters an

inclusive approach to peacekeeping, ensuring that the unique needs of women and children are addressed in conflict-affected areas.

Seth emphasised on the fact that India is a proud partner in peacekeeping operations, having deployed more than 2.9 lakh troops over seven decades in more than 50 UN Peacekeeping Missions.

"As one of the largest troop contributors, we recognise that peacekeeping is not just about deploying forces but about strengthening capacities, enhancing preparedness and ensuring a people-centric, culturally sensitive and inclusive approach to conflict resolution," he

added. Throwing light on the ever evolving security landscape with multiple conflicts and emerging challenges, the Union Minister underscored that there is a need for unity among Global South nations to secure peace, prosperity and stability.

He further stated that the countries must learn from each other's experiences, leverage the collective wisdom and pool the resources to transform shared aspirations into tangible progress.

Seth reiterated the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi that India has articulated its global engagement through five guiding principles: Respect, Dialogue, Cooperation, Peace and Prosperity.