

## IN BRIEF

### Young motorcyclist crushed to death between 2 ST buses

Kolhapur / Raigad, Feb 27 (UNI) : In an unfortunate incident, a young motorcycle rider died after being crushed between two State Transport buses at Alibaug ST bus depot in Raigad district on Thursday afternoon.

According to police, the deceased, identified as Jaydeep Bana (16), was coming out of Alibaug bus stand on his bike when an ST bus while entering the bus stand hit his bike, at that time, another ST bus that was moving out of the bus depot rammed the motorbike from behind.

As a result, Jaydeep was killed on the spot after being crushed between two ST buses.

After the accident, a tense situation prevailed in bus stand area as irate peoples staged an impromptu 'rasta roko' agitation, demanding to take bus driver into custody.

Sensing trouble, heavy police force was deployed as agitators refused to listen to police.

After police detained the driver, agitators withdrew their agitation, sources added.

### Western Railway announces mega block on March 1- 2

Mumbai, Feb 27 (UNI) : The Western Railway (WR) announced on Thursday that there will be a megablock between Vangaon and Dahanu Road on the Western route on Saturday and Sunday, March 1 and 2, 2025.

According to a statement issued by Railway official, the block is carried for shifting, diversion, and heightening of the monopole, and it will last for one hour from 10:30 am to 11:30 am on March 1 and from 9:50 am to 10:50 am on March 2, 2025, affecting both the Up and Down main lines.

Meanwhile, the Central Railway has announced an eight-day night mega block on the central route, which started on February 26 and will continue until March 7.

This block is being implemented for maintenance work.

## CM urges Centre to allow MahaVitrans to issue interest-free bonds



Mumbai, Feb 27 (IANS) : Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Thursday suggested that the Central government should bring back schemes like UDAY (Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana) for the financial turnaround of power distribution companies, reduce interest rates on financing, abolish levy and allow the state run Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company (Mahavitaran) to issue interest free bonds.

Fadnavis was speaking here at the second meeting of the Group of Ministers formed by the central government on Financial Efficiency of Power Distribution Companies and related matters.

Fadnavis said that Mahavitaran is the largest power distribution company in the country in the energy sector.

"28 per cent of electricity consumption is for agriculture, which is the highest in the country. The revenue is Rs 1.12 lakh crores and 49 per cent of the revenue is from industries. The state government is taking measures to improve the financial condition of Mahavitaran," he added.

He said that the government is promoting solar energy in the state, which will reduce the loss of electricity distribution and bring down the electricity rates.

He further stated that the money that will be saved from this will ensure that everyone from the general consumer to the industry will get electricity at a cheaper rate.

According to the Chief Minister, solar agricultural pumps are also being provided in large quantities whereby farmers will get electricity during the day.

"The Pradhan Mantri Suryaghar Yojana is also benefiting a lot. Solar energy will be provided for all houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. Almost 30 lakh houses will get this

electricity. This will also bring a big revolution. Through all such measures, an attempt is being made to increase the share of renewable energy to 52 per cent in the state," he said, adding that the government is promoting the use of AI in a big way in the electricity sector.

Fadnavis said that Mahavitaran has submitted a proposal to the Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission to save Rs 66,000 crore in electricity purchase cost by implementing various measures. Also, a proposal has been given to reduce electricity tariffs in phases in the next five years. The intention is to make electricity tariffs more affordable for common consumers by removing cross-subsidies on industries.

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## MEA takes up case of Indian student Neelam Shinde

New Delhi, Feb 27 (UNI) : The Ministry of External Affairs has taken up the case of Indian student, Neelam Shinde, who is in critical condition after a car accident in California, sources said.

The US side is looking into the formalities for early grant of visa for her family, the sources added.

Neelam Shinde, 35, a student from Satara, Maharashtra, is in critical condition after a car accident in California on February 14. She is currently in a coma and being treated in the ICU, Supriya Sule, a Member of Parliament, told the media.

The driver who allegedly caused the accident has been arrested.

As Neelam's condition remains grave, her family is desperately seeking assistance from the government to obtain an

emergency visa that would allow her father, Tanaji Shinde, to travel to the US and be by her side during this critical period.

Shinde's family has applied for an urgent visa.

Voicing her concern, Sule posted on social media: "Student Neelam Shinde has met with an accident in the USA and is hospitalized in a local hospital. Her father, Tanaji Shinde, from Satara, Maharashtra, India, urgently needs to visit his daughter due to a medical emergency. Tanaji Shinde has applied for an urgent visa to the USA and requires assistance."

Sule requested the MEA to step in and help with the processing of the visa and tagged External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, asking them to "look into the matter and provide the necessary assistance".

## Implement time-bound programme to settle forest rights claims: Governor

Mumbai, Feb 27 (UNI) : Pending claims of individual and collective forest rights should be promptly settled for timely implementation of the Forest Rights Act, Maharashtra Governor C. P. Radhakrishnan said on Thursday. He was speaking in a review meeting of the implementation of the Forest Rights Act, 2006 in the presence of six divisional commissioners of the state and other senior officials at the Raj Bhavan here.

All Divisional Commissioners should be careful to clear the pendency of forest rights claims themselves. Also progress report in this regard should be given to Raj Bhavan every fifteen days, the governor said.

A special camp should be conducted in tribal areas to settle the claims and issue Aadhaar cards to tribal citizens, said Radhakrishnan. The governor also called for completing the digitisation and scanning of forest rights claims and stressed the need for using the online portal in forest rights claims cases.

## TMC will win 215 seats in 2026 Bengal Assembly polls: Mamata

Kolkata, Feb 27 (UNI) West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday said the ruling Trinamool Congress would emerge victorious with a two-thirds majority in the West Bengal Assembly elections next year.

Addressing a Trinamool Congress workers' meeting at the Netaji Indoor Stadium here, Banerjee said her party would win 215 of the total 294 seats in the 2026 elections.

Banerjee called upon the party workers to set aside their differences and connect with the people by going from house to house in the run up to the elections. She urged the party workers to ensure the BJP, Congress and Left Front candidates lost their security deposits in all the seats in the polls.

Banerjee said she agreed with party Natioal General Secretary Abhishek Banerjee's statement that in 2026 the TMC must win a higher number of seats than the previous elections. In the 2021 elections the TMC

had won 214 seats in the 294-member House.

"I agree with Abhishek. We should get at least one more seat than what we got in 2021. We should ensure 215 seats and try for more. We should ensure that candidates of the BJP, the CPIM, and Congress forfeit their deposits in the elections," the TMC supremo said.

Banerjee, also revived her 'Khela Hobey' (the game is on) slogan, vowing a fierce battle in the state in 2026. She warned that the TMC would not hesitate to protest outside the Election Commission office if needed against registration of fake voters in the electoral list.

"Khela abar hobey (the game is on again), in 2026 elections, bowl hard, kick fast," Banerjee said, using imageries from cricket and football, as she urged the TMC workers to ensure the defeat of the BJP, the current main opposition in the state.

She said the BJP won the recent polls in Delhi and Maharashtra by using fake voters with the Election

Commission of India's blessing.

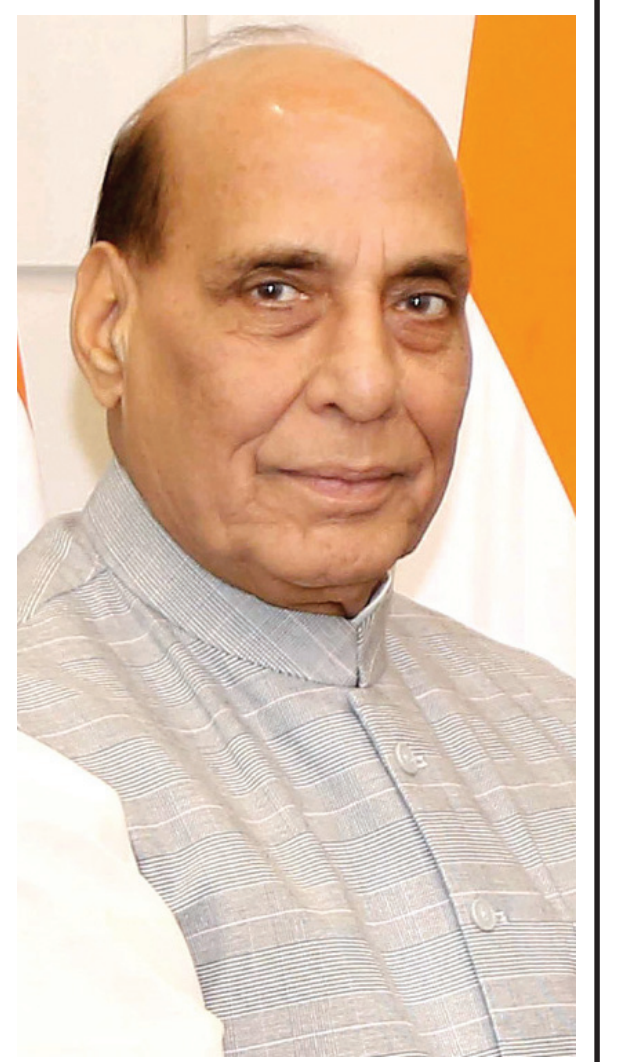
"We need to clean the voter list first, and then go to the hustings," Banerjee told the party workers.

The Chief Minister said when the election approaches, the CBI, ED, and other central agencies become active. She asked the central agencies if anyone so far arrested from her party has been convicted.

"Even the RG Kar Hospital case could not be settled," Banerjee pointed out, referring to the brutal murder of a lady junior doctor in the leading medical college of the state on August 9 last year.

"We know now many more names would be added in the CBI and ED list as the elections approach, but you (BJP) can not do anything because the people of Bengal have not been misguided so far," Banerjee said.

Earlier Diamond Harbour MP Abhishek Banerjee dared the CBI to prove if he has done anything wrong.



## Defence Minister Rajnath Singh releases hindi magazine ...

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has launched the first edition of the Ministry of Defence's biennial Hindi magazine 'Sashakt Bharat' here on Thursday. The magazine contains poems on the valour, patriotism and sacrifice of the Armed Forces personnel and articles on the policies of the Government written by the personnel of the Ministry. The Defence Minister appreciated the efforts of the Ministry of Defence, Department of Official Language for promoting Hindi. He stressed on the need to increase the adoption and use of Hindi and described the language as a connecting thread in the social and cultural fabric of India.

(See on page 2)

## Modi-BJP's claims of women's safety hollow: Congress



The Congress on Thursday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of making "hollow promises" about ensuring women's security, and claimed that cases of harassment against women are increasing under the BJP's rule.

(See on page 4)

## Ex-England coach Jones returns to South Africa staff



Former England defence coach, Felix Jones will become an assistant coach with South Africa from next week. Jones stepped down from his position with England in December after becoming disillusioned in Steve Borthwick's set-up, the BBC reported.

(See on page 7)

## SC disposes challenge to Rakesh Asthana's appointment ...



The Supreme Court recently disposed of a challenge to the appointment of former Delhi Police Commissioner Rakesh Asthana. However, it left open the legal question of whether the 2006 judgment in Prakash Singh versus Union of India applies to the appointment of Delhi Police Commissioners.

(See on page 8)



## Concrete steps of Mahagathbandhan government for women safety!

(By Rajesh Undi)

Mumbai, Feb 27 : Today, in the wake of the accident in Pune, I had an important meeting with Transport Minister Pratapsarnaik and @msrtcofficial officials. Some concrete suggestions were given and a statement was made to increase the safety of women passengers.

Effective promotion of 112 women helpline - awareness through stickers in buses and loudspeakers in ST depots

Toilets should be clean and safe at every ST station in the state.

Especially in urban and rural areas, there should be a rickshaw stand outside every ST station and it should be under CCTV surveillance. This service is very important for women who travel late at night or early in the morning to reach home safely.

CCTV cameras should be installed in ST buses running under the Transport Department and private travel companies.

It should be considered whether a police beat can



be deployed at every bus depot.

Proposal to set up police beat in every ST depot Officers should periodically patrol the stalled buses, places where there is less movement of people. This place should be monitored by security guards.

When the bus is parked in the parking lot, its doors should be closed and all the windows should be closed, so that the bus is not misused in any way. Security increased and

regular patrolling done for buses parked at deserted places

The government has immediately suspended 23 security guards for negligence in duty and has set up effective mechanism to arrest the accused. Therefore, soon the accused will be arrested and strict rules will be implemented.

Our dutiful Chief Minister Devabhau is always committed to the issue of women safety. Therefore, I am sure that no

woman will be mistreated or harassed in our state.'

To make ST travel safe and reliable for women passengers, a strong SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) is being prepared soon under the leadership of our Transport Minister Hon. Pratap Sarnaik ji.

From now on, the government will try its best to make every woman's travel safe. May his beloved sisters remain safe in Devbhau's kingdom...Said by MLA Chitra wagh

## Defence Minister Rajnath Singh releases hindi magazine 'Sashakt Bharat'

New Delhi, Feb 27 (UNI) Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has launched the first edition of the Ministry of Defence's biennial Hindi magazine 'Sashakt Bharat' here on Thursday.

The magazine contains poems on the valour, patriotism and sacrifice of the Armed Forces personnel and articles on the policies of the Government written by the personnel of the Ministry. The Defence Minister appreciated the efforts of the Ministry of Defence, Department of Official Language for promoting Hindi. He stressed on the need to increase the adoption and use of Hindi and described the language as a connecting thread in the social and cultural fabric of India. The objective of 'Sashakt Bharat' magazine is to highlight the creative talent of the employees of the Ministry of Defence and encourage them to perform their daily tasks in Hindi. The e-version of the magazine is available on the official website of the Ministry of Defence.

Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth, Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh, Secretary (Defence Production) Sanjeev Kumar, Secretary (Ex-Servicemen Welfare) Dr Niten Chandra, Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman, DRDO, Dr Sameer V Kamath and other senior officers of the Ministry of Defence were present on the occasion.

## Himachal to spend Rs 100 cr on Mandi Shiv dham

Mandi (HP), February 27(UNI) : Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister SS Sukhu on Thursday took part in the opening day of the National level Shivratri fair and announced a grant of Rs 100 crore for the construction of the Shiv Dham here. The work for the Dham was started during the BJP regime but was later stalled due to some unknown reasons. Addressing a huge gathering at Paddal ground Amid heavy rains, Sukhu announced that his government would complete the work of Mandi Shiv Dham in the next two years and for that, he issued strict instructions to the local authorities.,

## People have to play constructive role to control drug menace: JK Dy CM

Srinagar, Feb 27 (UNI) : Jammu and Kashmir Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary on Thursday said that the people have to play a constructive role to control the drug menace in the society.

The Deputy Chief Minister was talking to media persons in central Kashmir Budgam district.

"I appeal to people in general to play a constructive role to control the drug menace which has found space in our homes and in the society", Choudhary told media persons.

"We don't know where from it is coming, but there is dire need to catch the drug traffickers", he said and added "we hope that Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha will play a role and instruct police, who is under his belt, to put a break on the drug trafficking in Jammu and Kashmir".

When asked that contractors are not being paid their pending dues, the Deputy CM said that he visited several places to inspect the work and found substandard material has

been used.

We will identify contractors and those who will work honestly will be paid money and those contractors using substandard material in their work would never be paid anything", he emphasized.

Choudhary said that he will review the industry estates and said that "there were so many places where monkey business has taken place during the past six years". "Where ever our children would like to work we will provide them a good atmosphere and construct industry estates", the Deputy CM said.

In reply to another question, he said "the corrupt system has come up in our hands and we will correct it and the people will see soon".

Choudhary also launched work on Chewdara Beerwah bridge being constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 14.15 crore in Budgam district.

The project, being executed under NABARD, will cater to a large chunk of commuters and general public as well, augmenting

the connectivity in the area to great extent.

While speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister said that the government is committed to holistic and sustained development of Jammu and Kashmir. He said that a new era of progress and prosperity has been ushered in the region with tremendous development in every nook and corner of the UT.

Choudhary directed the executing agencies to address the challenges impeding the project's advancement.

"Work should be completed within the stipulated time so that cost escalation does not take place and the vital project is dedicated to the people in time", the Deputy Chief Minister maintained and directed for a synergetic approach to remove bottlenecks, if any. Later, he interacted with several deputations at Town hall and reiterated the Government's commitment towards speedy development besides prompt public service delivery and redressal of grievances.

## Sarbananda Sonowal Unveils 'One Nation, One Port' to Enhance Efficiency with Ease of Doing Business



(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Feb 27 : The Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal launched a series of major initiatives of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW) aimed at modernising India's maritime infrastructure, strengthening its global trade presence, and promote sustainability. These initiatives were launched during a stakeholders meeting to

discuss on various possibilities from the major announcements made in the Union Budget for the Maritime sector here today.

The Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal launched the "One Nation: One Port Process (ONOP)" initiative to standardise and streamline operations across India's major ports. This step aims at removing inconsistencies in documentation and processes that led to

inefficiencies, increased costs, and operational delays. Sarbananda Sonowal also launched Sagar Ankalan — the Logistics Port Performance Index (LPPI) for FY 2023-24, as a significant step towards enhancing efficiency and global competitiveness in India's maritime sector.

Speaking on the occasion, the Union Minister, Sarbananda Sonowal said, "It gives me immense pleasure to launch the important of our Ministry which are aligned with honourable PM Narendra Modi ji's vision of Viksit Bharat, driving self-reliance, sustainability, and economic growth. With the launch of 'One Nation, One Port' Process and Sagar Ankalan - LPPI Index, India is taking a decisive step towards standardised, efficient, and globally competitive ports. By enhancing port performance and streamlining logistics, we are reducing inefficiencies, cutting carbon footprints, and strengthening India's position in global trade. Our commitment to modern, green, and smart port infrastructure will not only fuel economic resilience but also ensure a sustainable maritime future for generations to

come. This is a transformative leap towards making India a maritime powerhouse, contributing to Atmanirbhar Bharat and a developed India by 2047.

Sarbananda Sonowal also launched Bharat Global Ports Consortium to Strengthen Global Trade by expanding India's maritime reach and enhance global trade resilience. The Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal also launched MAITRI logo (Master Application for International Trade and Regulatory Interface) with an aim to streamline trade processes, reduce bureaucratic redundancies and expedite clearances, reinforcing India's commitment to ease of doing business.

Adding further, Sarbananda Sonowal said, "The launch of Bharat Ports Global Consortium and MAITRI App marks a transformative step in strengthening India's maritime and trade ecosystem. These initiatives will sustain the initiatives taken since 2014, under the 2 dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji, to enhance efficiency, streamline trade processes, and bolster global supply chains, reinforcing India's position as a key player in international logistics. Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji, India is rapidly modernising its ports and trade infrastructure, aligning with his commitment to Viksit Bharat and Atmanirbhar Bharat. By leveraging digital innovation and global partnerships, we are creating a seamless, efficient, and future-ready trade network, accelerating India's journey towards becoming a global economic powerhouse."

Adv Swati A. Teli

### PUBLIC NOTICE BEFORE THE COURT OF MEMBER MOTOR ACCIDENT CLAIMS TRIBUNAL, THANE AT THANE

M.A.C.P. No.618/2023, Exh No. 19  
Next Date: 21/04/2025

Master Sahil Dattatray Manjulkar .....Applicant

V/s.

M/s. Pappuraj Tour & Travels & 1 .....Opponents To,  
M/s. Pappuraj Tour & Travels,  
O/at: A/P Tinhewadi, Rajgurunagar,  
Tal- Khed, Dist:- Pune, 410 505,

Whereas the above named applicant has filed accident Claims application for the compensation of Rs. 1,00,000/- in the Tribunal against you and others.

You are hereby given notice to appear in the Tribunal in person or by pleaser duly instructed and to file your say within 30 days from the publication of this notice. Failing which the said application will be heard in your absence and determined ex-parte.

Give under my hand and seal on this day of 20<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2025.

By Order

Sd/-  
Clerk



Sd/-  
Superintendent

Motor Accident Claims Tribunal Thane.

### CENTRAL RAILWAY SOLAPUR DIVISION E-TENDER NOTICE

The Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD), Central Railway, Solapur, for and on behalf of the President of India invites online e-tenders on Railways e-procurement website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) from reputed, experienced & Licensed Electrical contractors for the following works. Tender No.: SUR/TD/T/2025/02R Name of work: Electrical TRD portion of work in connection with:- 1) Solapur - Wadi - CTR(P) - 14.279 TKM; TRR(P)-7.305 TKM & TSR(P) - 39.250 TKM. 2) Daund - Wadi - CTR(S/P) - 0.999 TKM & TRR(S) - 18.165 TKM (Re-Invitation). Estimated cost: ₹ 67,01,197.76/- Bid Security: ₹ 1,34,000/- Completion Period: 12 Months Validity of offer: 60 Days Date & time of tender closing on website: 26/03/2025 at 15.00 hours. ANJ-39

### WESTERN RAILWAY MODIFICATION OF SIDE PATHWAY FOR PROVISION OF OHE MAST OVER THE BRIDGE

DY. CE (Bridge-Line)-Dadar, Western Railway invites E-Tender No: DYCE-BR-DDR-2025-04. Name of Work: Modification of Side pathway for provision of OHE mast over the bridge in connection with raising of speed up to 160 Kmph under ADEN/B/BL in Virar-Surat section. Approx. cost of the work: ₹ 83,51,715.49. EMD: ₹ 1,67,000/-. Date and time for submission of e-tender and opening of e-tender: On line tender is to be submitted on 25.03.2025 before 15:00 Hrs., and is to be opened on same date - 25.03.2025 at 15:30 Hrs. Website particulars and notice for location where complete details can be seen etc.: Website @ [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). 1126

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### BRIHANMUMBAI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

#### TREE AUTHORITY

- PUBLIC NOTICE -

In accordance with the provision under section 8 (3) (C) of the Maharashtra (Urban Areas) Protection & Preservation of Trees Act 1975 (As modified upto 24th June 2021), 01 Proposal from 'R/North' Ward & 03 proposals from R/Central Ward i.e. Total 04 Proposals in Zone - VII for removal of trees are approved by Municipal Commissioner, Chairman, Tree Authority MCGM under sub section 6 of section (8) of the said Act.

The information of the trees for cutting/ Transplanting in above mentioned proposals is available on mcgm website → [www.mcgm.gov.in/](http://www.mcgm.gov.in/) → About us wards/ Department → Department manuals → Gardens & Tree Authority → WS253-R/North, WS254-R/Central, WS255-R/Central, WS256-R/Central.

Supdt. of Gardens & Tree Officer

Supdt. of Gardens & Tree Officer of the Tree Authority Penguin Building, 2nd Floor Veermata Jijabai Bhosale Udyan Dr. Ambedkar Road, Byculla (E), Mumbai - 400 027. Tel No : 23742162

Email : [sg.gardens@mcgm.gov.in](mailto:sg.gardens@mcgm.gov.in)

PRO/2649/ADV/2024 - 25

Avoid self medication.

Sd/-  
Supdt. of Gardens & Tree Officer



## Conduct security audit of all bus stands and depots : Minister

Mumbai, Feb 27 (UNI) : Transport Minister Pratap Sarnaik on Thursday ordered officials to immediately conduct security audit of all bus stands and depots in the state.

He also directed to dispose of unregistered State Transport buses and vehicles seized in operation from the bus stands and depots by April 15.

He gave these instructions at a meeting held in the office of additional chief secretary (Transport) to review safety measures of women passengers at bus stands

in the state following the horrific incident of rape on a young woman inside a parked ST bus in Pune on Wednesday. The minister suggested to fill the vacant post of Chief Security and Vigilance Officer in State Transport Corporation by appointing an Indian Police Service (IPS) officer to this post. He instructed to update CCTV system using an AI technology and install the cameras at all ST bus stands and depots in the state. He further directed to install CCTV and GPS system in all new ST buses. He also directed to

intensify patrolling of the bus stations with the help of police.

Apart from this, he also directed to give an identity card to every ST employee working at the bus stand so that no one can cheat passengers by pretending to be an employee.

Also, while leaving a bus at the depot, the driver-conductor should ensure that the bus brought to the depot is closed. Also, security guards at the bus stations should keep an eye on strangers loitering around in the area and take appropriate action against them, added Sarnaik.

## Youth sets himself on fire after incurring losses in stock market

Nashik, Feb 27 (UNI) : A 28-year-old youth allegedly committed suicide by setting himself on fire here on Wednesday evening after losing more than Rs 16 lakh in his investment in the stock market.

He was admitted to the district government hospital in a serious condition where he succumbed to injuries late at night.

According to police, Rajendra Kolhe, who hails from Vitai in Chandwad taluka of the district and came to Nashik for work, was working in a private investment company. Instead of sending money to his parents in the village, he started investing money in the stock market like other friends. This investment reached Rs 16 lakh a few days ago.

However, Rajendra was hit hard by the stock market crash. Later, he changed jobs and started working in a private bank in Myco Circle. He was depressed due to the

loss in the stock market. Many people were still owing money.

Since it was a holiday on Wednesday due to Mahashivratri festival, he went to Trimbakeshwar temple to pay his obeisance. While returning in the evening, he stopped his bike in the open premises of Jyoti Vidyalaya in Pimpalgaon Bahula, sat on the bike, poured petrol on himself and set himself on fire.

As soon as the villagers noticed this, they informed the Satpur police about it. They reached the spot. At that time, the bike was reduced to ashes, while Rajendra had also sustained 90 percent burnt. Since the ambulance called by the police did not arrive even after an hour, police, with the help of locals, wrapped him in a sheet and took him to the district hospital in a police vehicle. There, Rajendra died late at night. A case has been registered at the Satpur police station in this connection, sources added.

## Man arrested for raping two daughters

Mumbai, Feb 27 (UNI) : A 56-year-old man associated with the Chotta Rajan gang was arrested by the Maharashtra police for allegedly sexually exploiting his two daughters - aged 22 and 21 years - at their residence in Nallasopara, an official said here on Thursday.

The arrests were made by the central crime unit (CCU) attached to the neighbouring Mira Bhayandar-Vasai Virar (MBVV) police within 24 hours after the registration of the complaint. The accused not only threatened, assaulted and raped his daughters on multiple occasions since 2018, but also impregnated one of them and forced her to undergo abortions five times, the official said.

## 'No matter how many dips you take, mark of betrayal will remain forever': Uddhav Thackeray slams Shinde

Mumbai, Feb 27 (IANS) Shiv Sena UBT chief Uddhav Thackeray on Thursday took a swipe at the Deputy Chief Minister and Shiv Sena chief leader Eknath Shinde saying that 'no matter how many dips you take, the mark of betrayal will remain forever'.

He was commenting on the visit by Shinde and his party ministers on Monday to take a holy dip in the Ganga during the Kumbh Mela. He was speaking at the function organised on the occasion of Marathi Bhasha Divas.

In a stinging taunt to Shinde, the Shiv Sena UBT chief said: "I came from bath in Ganga and took 50 khoke and then took a holy dip there. What is the use of such dip? Commit a treachery against Maharashtra and go there to take a dip. No matter how many dips you take, the mark of betrayal will remain



forever."

Thackeray's swipe at Shinde came hours after the latter questioned his absence from the Maha Kumbh Mela despite calling himself Hindu.

He stepped up attacks against Shinde saying that people who go to Dubai to watch the cricket match between India and Pakistan after their return are telling about Balasaheb

Thackeray's thoughts.

"Mumbai is the capital of Maharashtra. The Marathi theatre in this capital has made a big contribution. The plays that were necessary at that time were brought and the society was taught what should be done. People who go to Dubai and watch cricket matches are telling us about Balasaheb's thoughts. No matter where

the India-Pakistan match is, they will go and watch the match," he remarked.

"Why don't you go to your village and sit there because you didn't get a ministerial post?" he asked.

He warned Shinde that they will not allow the outsiders to enter the state.

Thackeray recalled that when he was the chief minister he made Marathi language compulsory in the

state.

"We will speak Marathi in Maharashtra. I made this law that Marathi boards should be displayed in shops. But how could someone go to a court against the government's decision? We are Hindus but we are also Marathi. I am not against the Gujarati community. But they (the central government) want to destroy Marathi and Maharashtra. They want to destroy Mumbai. They want to take out industries," he claimed.

"There is no deficiency in our language. How much effort was put into giving it the status of a classical language to Marathi. Who are you (the central government) to give the status of a classical language? The language of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was Marathi. If it were not for him, you would not have seen Delhi," he taunted

## HC slams Thane court for shocking relief to police man involved in custodial death of accused Shinde

Mumbai, Feb 27 (UNI) : The Bombay High Court on Thursday expressed "shock" and raised questions over an order passed by a sessions court in Thane, which kept "in abeyance" the findings made by a magistrate in a report questioning the legitimacy of the encounter of an accused in the Badlapur sexual assault case.

A bench of Justices Revati Mohite-Dere and Neela Gokhale questioned how the sessions court judge D R Deshpande passed an order that granted relief to policemen in the encounter case was "shocking" and that the judge overreached the High Court order.

Thane court had submitted a report on January 18, holding five policemen—senior police inspector Sanjay Shinde of the Thane Crime Branch, assistant police inspector Nilesh More, head constables Abhijeet More and Harish Tawade and police constable Satish Khatal—accountable for Akshay Shinde's custodial death.

The policemen, who were escorting Shinde from Talaja Prison to Kalyan for questioning, had claimed that Shinde snatched API More's service pistol, leading to a struggle during which both were injured.

Accused Shinde had been arrested by the Badlapur police for allegedly sexually assaulting minor girls at a local school. While in judicial custody at Talaja Prison, he was taken into police custody on September 23 via a transfer warrant in connection with a second FIR (first information report) lodged by his wife. However, during transit, he sustained firearm injuries and later succumbed.

## Over 95 lakh people get medication for filariasis in UP

Lucknow, Feb 27 (UNI) : Uttar Pradesh has made significant progress in its fight against filariasis as 95.97 lakh people have already taken the prescribed medication as a part of the Mass Drug Administration (MDA) campaign, conducted across 14 districts, official sources said here on Thursday.

Sources said that to ensure complete coverage, the remaining beneficiaries, out of the targeted 1.10 crore, will be given the medicine during a mop-up round by March 4.

"The effectiveness of the campaign is evident from the significantly low number of families refusing the medication, marking a major step toward the state's filariasis eradication goal," they said.

State Programme Officer for Filariasis Dr AK Chaudhary said that the MDA round was conducted from February 10 to 25 across 45 blocks in 14 districts of UP. The campaign aimed to provide medication to 1.10 crore people, out of which 95.97 lakh have already received the medicine.

Prayagraj, Lucknow, and Bareilly performed exceptionally well, securing the first, second, and third positions, respectively," he said.

He said that in order to ensure 100 percent coverage, a mop-up round will be conducted from February 27 to March 4 to provide medicine to those who missed it earlier.

He said that reaching every individual this year is crucial to achieving the goal of eliminating filariasis from the state and country by 2027.

## Acquitted accused in 26/11 Mumbai terror attack case moves High Court

Mumbai, Feb 27 (UNI) Lone acquitted accused in the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack case, Fahim Arshad Mohammad Yusuf Ansari, moved the Bombay High Court seeking police clearance certificate (PCC) to enable him to work as an autorickshaw driver to earn a livelihood.

Ansari, who was acquitted by a special court

in 2010, told the high court that police denied his application for PCC, stating that he allegedly had links to terrorist group Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT). He claimed it "arbitrary, discriminatory" and an action with "prejudice". The petition is now scheduled to be heard by a division bench led by Justice Sarang Kotwal on March 18. Ansari was

arrested in December 2008 in connection with the 26/11 Mumbai attacks while he was already in custody for a separate case in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. In that case, he was charged with offences related to waging war against the country, convicted, and sentenced to 10 years in prison. After serving his sentence, he was released in 2019.

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**Work and location: Ukai Songadh-Jalgaon Section**-Supply, installation commissioning and operating (5 years) track-based rail Gauge Face Lubricators (Electronic type and carry down effect up to 1 km) between **Ukai Songadh to Jalgaon**. **Approx. cost of work: ₹ 5,25,24,985.20. EMD: ₹ 4,12,600/-.**

**Date & time of submission:** Till 21.03.2025, 15:00 hrs. **Date & time of opening:** On 21.03.2025 at 15:30 hrs. For further details please visit our website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). **Manual offers will not be considered.** 1129

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**E-tender notice**

**MSETCL invites online bids (E-Tender) from registered contractors/agencies on Mahatransco E-Tendering website <https://srmetender.mahatransco.in> for following works under EHV O&M Division, Kalwa,**

Sr. No.	Tender No	Estimated Amount in Rs.	Nature of Work	Download of tender documents Date
1	EE/EHV/(O&M)/Dn./KLW/TENDER/01/2025-26	5,99,100.31	Work of hiring of LMV for use of Executive Engineer, EHV (O&M) Dn., Kalwa for the year 2025-26 - (RFx No.7000035331)	Tender Downloading Dates & time. From <b>Dt. 28.02.2025 To Dt: 14.03.2025 up to 10:00 Hrs.</b> <b>Technical Opening: - Dt.14.03.2025 at 11:00 hrs</b> (Onwards if possible) <b>Commercial Opening: - Dt 14.03.2025 at 14:00 hrs</b> (Onwards if possible)
2	EE/EHV/(O&M)/Dn./KLW/TENDER/02/2025-26	5,99,110.80	Work of hiring of LMV i.e. TATA Sumo for 220KV Mahape & other unmanned substations under 220KV Mahape substation under EHV (O&M) Dn., Kalwa for the year 2025- 26- (Rfx no 7000035332)	
3	EE/EHV/(O&M)/Dn./KLW/TENDER/03/2025-26	5,99,110.80	Work of hiring of LMV i.e. Tata Sumo / Innova/ Mahindra / Bolero for 220KV Kamba substation under EHV (O&M) Dn., Kalwa for the year 2025- 26.- (RFx no 7000035333)	
4	EE/EHV/(O&M)/Dn./KLW/TENDER/04/2025-26	5,99,110.80	Work of hiring of LMV i.e. Tata Sumo / Innova/ Mahindra / Bolero for 220KV Temghar & 100KV Bhiwandi substation under EHV (O&M) Dn., Kalwa for the year 2025-26. (RFx no 7000035334)	
5	EE/EHV/(O&M)/Dn./KLW/TENDER/05/2025-26	5,99,110.80	Work of hiring of LMV i.e. Tata Sumo / Innova/ Mahindra / Bolero for 220KV Bapgaon substation under EHV (O&M) Dn., Kalwa for the year 2025-26. (Rfx No. 7000035335)	
6	EE/EHV/(O&M)/Dn./KLW/TENDER/06/2025-26	5,99,110.80	Work of hiring of LMV i.e. Tata Sumo / Innova/ Mahindra / Bolero for 100KV Mumbra substation under EHV (O&M) Dn., Kalwa for the year 2025-26.- (RFx.No.7000035337)	

**Tender fee:- Rs. 500+GST**

**Contact Person : The Executive Engineer, Mob. No. 9930496231.**

For further details visit our Mahatransco E-Tendering website <https://srmetender.mahatransco.in>

**Note :-All eligible interested contractors are mandated to get enrolled on SRM E-Tender portal (New) - <https://srmetender.mahatransco.in>.**

-Sd-  
EE, EHV (O&M) Dn., Kalwa

**BRIHANMUMBAI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**

**E-Tender Notice**

Tender Document ID No.	2025_MCGM_1154229_1
Name of the Organization	BRIHANMUMBAI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
Subject	Work of repairing servicing,overhauling with the replacement of spares with accessories of hydro extractor No.1 to 3 and Main Shaft, with Dynamic Balance of Main Drum with accessories of Hydro Extractor Machine No.4 at Municipal Power Laundry.
Tender Fee	Rs 1320/- (+ 18% GST)
Cost of E-Tender (Estimated Cost)	Item Rate Tender
Bid Security Deposit / EMD	Rs. 1710/-
Date of Issue and sale of tender	27-02-2025 from 16.00 Hours
Last date & time for sale of tender	05-03-2025 upto 16.00 Hours
Submission of Packet A, B & Packet C (Online)	05-03-2025 upto 16.00 Hours
Pre-Bid Meeting	Not Applicable
Opening of Packet A (Bid Opening) on/after	06-03-2025 upto 16.00 Hours
Opening of Packet B (Bid Opening) on/after	06-03-2025 upto 16.00 Hours
Opening of Packet C (Bid Opening) on/after	07-03-2025 upto 16.00 Hours
Address for Communication	Office of the : E.E.Mech (South), BMC Municipal Workshop, R. S. Nimkar Marg, Byculla, Mumbai - 400008.
Venue for opening of bid	On line in A. E. Mech (M.P.L.)'s office.
Contact Person :	
(a) Name	Shri N. T. Jadhav
(b) Mobile No.	9769005647
(C) E-mail address	<a href="mailto:aempl.me@mcgm.gov.in">aempl.me@mcgm.gov.in</a>
Website	<a href="http://portal.mcgm.gov.in/tenders">http://portal.mcgm.gov.in/tenders</a> <a href="https://mahatenders.gov.in">https://mahatenders.gov.in</a>

**This tender document is not transferable.**

The BMC reserves the right to accept any of the application or reject any or all the application received for above subject without assigning any reason there of.

**Sd/-**  
**Ex.Engg. Mech**  
**(South)**

**PRO/2643/ADV/2024-25**

**Let's together and make Mumbai Malaria free.**



## STANDARD POST

## Healthcare leads AI adoption in India, surpasses FMCG and manufacturing sectors

India's healthcare sector is on the cusp of a revolution, with an increase in adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) and technology-driven solutions, according to a report.

The report by Deloitte India showed that AI adoption in healthcare has surged past 40 per cent, surpassing sectors such as FMCG (about 30 per cent) and manufacturing (about 25 per cent).

The report credited this to government-backed initiatives such as the IndiaAI Mission and the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 -- setting the stage for a digitally empowered healthcare ecosystem.

"India's digital healthcare ecosystem is rapidly advancing, with AI-powered diagnostics, MedTech innovations, and digital health records transforming patient care," said Joydeep Ghosh, Life Sciences and Health Care Industry Leader, Partner, Deloitte India. Ghosh noted that the surgical consumables and disposables exports in the country "reached \$1.6 billion in FY 2022-23, showcasing its growing capabilities and presence in the global healthcare market".

The report also mentioned the government's strategic initiatives such as the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, an influx of private sector investments, and the integration of various technological breakthroughs.

Initiatives such as mobile cancer detection hubs in Telangana and Uttar Pradesh, along with AI-driven diagnostic labs in Himachal Pradesh, are improving early disease detection and making advanced diagnostics more affordable. India's healthcare system is poised to significantly influence the health of over a billion people, stimulate economic growth, and provide high-quality, affordable care to previously underserved regions of the country, the report said.

Despite advancements, the adoption of AI in healthcare is progressing more slowly than in banking and financial services, said the report, citing concerns on data security, regulatory fragmentation, and limited digital infrastructure in rural areas.

In addition, the shortage of professionals trained in AI further complicates the seamless integration of these technologies into clinical workflows.

To realise AI's full potential in healthcare, "the sector must overcome challenges such as regulatory alignment, workforce training, and infrastructure limitations. With targeted investments and focused policy advancements, India can become a global leader in AI-powered healthcare, elevating patient outcomes and accessibility," Ghosh said.

## Ashwini Vaishnaw visits Prayagraj, congratulates Rail Parivar - Everyone - for extraordinary work during Mahakumbh!



(Standard Post Bureau)

Railway Minister, Mr Ashwini Vaishnaw, undertook a morning visit to Prayagraj to personally review Indian Railways' extensive preparations for Mahakumbh 2025. Recognising the scale and significance of this grand religious gathering, he visited various stations under North Central Railway (NCR), North Eastern Railway (NER), and Northern Railway (NR) to assess on-ground operations. During his visit, he interacted with railway personnel, inspected key arrangements, and ensured that all systems were functioning smoothly to accommodate the unprecedented influx of devotees. Shri Vaishnaw also lauded the seamless coordination between different departments and reaffirmed Indian Railways' commitment to facilitating safe, efficient, and comfortable travel for all pilgrims. Railway Minister thanked Hon'ble Prime Minister for his continuous guidance and also thanked Hon'ble Home Minister Shri Amit Shah, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Shri Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shri Mohan Yadav, and the governments of neighboring states for their unwavering cooperation in handling the massive influx of pilgrims.

Railway Minister Commends the Outstanding Dedication of Rail Karmayogis

During his visit, the Railway Minister personally met and extended his appreciation towards every individual of the Railway Workforce who played a role in managing an event of this magnitude. From frontline staff assisting passengers to RPF, GRP and police personnel ensuring security, from engineers maintaining seamless train

operations to safai karmis upholding cleanliness, and from doctors and paramedics providing medical aid to help desk officials and booking staff facilitating travel—each contribution was recognised. He also extended his gratitude to TTEs, drivers, assistant drivers, signal and telecom personnel, TRD and electrical teams, ASMs, control officials, trackmen, and railway administrators, whose coordinated efforts ensured the smooth execution of this massive undertaking. He thanked every employee starting from the first to last row personally. He personally thanked every employee, from the first to the last row, walking through the stations, exchanging words of encouragement, and expressing heartfelt gratitude to those who worked tirelessly around the clock to ensure a seamless Mahakumbh 2025 experience for millions of pilgrims.

Unprecedented Scale of Rail Operations

Indian Railways significantly exceeded its initial operational plan for Mahakumbh 2025. A total of 17,152 trains were run, surpassing the originally planned 13,000 trains, marking a fourfold increase compared to the last Kumbh. This included 7,667 special trains and 9,485 regular trains, ensuring that pilgrims reached their destinations smoothly and efficiently. The total number of pilgrims attending Mahakumbh stood at 66 crore, with 4.24 crore passengers handled at the nine key railway stations of Prayagraj alone.

Enhanced Passenger Facilities in Prayagraj Region

To accommodate the vast number of pilgrims, Indian Railways implemented extensive

infrastructural and operational enhancements across nine key stations in Prayagraj, adding second entry points, 48 platforms, and 21 Foot Over Bridges (FoBs) to streamline movement. Surveillance was strengthened with 1,186 CCTV cameras, including facial recognition technology, and drone monitoring for crowd control. To manage peak-hour congestion, 23 permanent holding areas were established, while multilingual announcements and leaflets in 23 languages improved passenger communication. Ticketing facilities were expanded with 554 counters, including 151 mobile UTS counters and a QR-based system. Additionally, 21 Road Over and Under Bridges (ROBs/RUBs) were constructed to ensure seamless connectivity.

Strengthening Medical and Emergency Preparedness

Indian Railways implemented a robust medical and emergency support system to ensure passenger safety and convenience. Centralised help desks, medical facilities, ambulances, fire brigades, and mobile toilets were deployed in coordination with district authorities, while additional catering services were arranged at stations. To maintain smooth passenger movement, parcel traffic was restricted, and an app-based system was introduced for efficient staff deployment and accommodation. Continuous monitoring of rakes, coaches, and locomotives ensured operational efficiency, while focused efforts enabled the swift completion of the last 34 km of track linking in the Varanasi-Prayagraj section within a month.

A Testament to Indian

Railways' Commitment

The seamless execution of Mahakumbh 2025 operations stands as a testament to Indian Railways' unwavering dedication to public service. Through multi-tier coordination and advanced crowd management, the Railway network successfully transported millions of devotees.

Acknowledging this extraordinary effort, Railway Minister Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw personally expressed his gratitude to the entire rail workforce whose relentless dedication ensured smooth and efficient travel for all. Their commitment and teamwork have once again set a new benchmark in large-scale operational excellence, reinforcing Indian Railways' role as the backbone of the nation's transport system.



(Standard Post Bureau)

1,186 CCTV (10 % cameras with facial recognition), Drones for surveillance

23 permanent holding areas

Announcement in 12 languages at Prayagraj, Naini, Cheoki and Subedarganj and information leaflets in 23 languages

554 ticket counters (151 mobile UTS) & also QR based Ticketing facility

21 ROB/RUBs : Improving mobility of road as well as rail

Color coding : Colour coding of holding areas and tickets for easy identification and direction-wise segregation of passengers.

Red: Lucknow, Ayodhya

Blue: DDU, Sasaram, Patna

Yellow: Manikpur, Jhansi, Satna, Katni, MP area

Green: Kanpur, Agra, Delhi

5 tier Monitoring System:

PF/ holding area ? Station ? Division? Zonal ? Railway Board war room

13,000 extra staff deployed

RPSF women's team 2 battalion, 22 Dog squad, 1000+ Sanitation workers, 1,500+ TTE and booking staff, More than 3,000 running staff (Guard, driver and Ast driver)

Medical help provided to more than 3 lakh pilgrims

Special arrangements done

Adequate holding areas made for passengers at critical stations - 20 acre area

Fixed barricading, Segregated pathways, Signages to guide & control passengers movement

24 x 7 Intensive deployment of Railway manpower: More Staff at Peak Hours

Help from Scout / Guides for crowd guidance.

Coordination with Chief Secretary, DGP, District Collectors & SPs, Magistrates and thanas

Close Coordination & Monitoring with State Govt through Focused WhatsApp Groups and live monitoring of Crowd Inflow/ Movement + Bulk Bus Movement + Vehicular Movement

Additional ticketing arrangements: Additional windows (Portable UTS Counters) in the holding areas

Regular Manual Announcements: from PA system and Megaphone in the entire station area & platforms.

Special Mela Trains: as per the need to clear passengers rush

Extra halts: provided to regular Mail/Express trains for boarding/de-boarding of passengers to handle heavy rush.

5 tier coordination: PF/Station/Division/Zonal/Railway Board war room

Hot lines communication and CCTV Monitoring of crowds at Platforms, FOB, Entry/Exits and holding areas.

Central help desk at enquiry counter and in the holding areas.

Basic medical facilities

Increased Catering provided in circulating areas / stations.

Ambulance, Fire Brigade and Mobile Toilets have been arranged with the help of Civil / District Administration.

Parcel traffic has been restricted to facilitate free passenger movement.

App based deployment of other division's staffs and their resting arrangements

Rake, coach and loco monitoring

Assistance to stakeholders in deploying manpower for track linking of the last 34 km in a month in Varanasi - Prayagraj section.

Preparations made by Railways during Mahakumbh-2025:

All the goods trains have been diverted in DFC +200 rakes have been provided in the Kumbh area having either train set or engines on both sides (to avoid shunting operations)

5,000 Cr work done in last 3 years for Maha Kumbh area

Banaras - Prayagraj doubling (including Ganga bridge)

Phaphamau - Janghai doubling

17,152 trains Run for Mahakumbh against 13,000 planned trains, 4 times more than the last Kumbh ( Special Trains, 7,667 and regular trains 9,485=17,152)

Total No. of pilgrims to kumbh 66 crore (Out of which 4.24 crore passengers handled at 9 Kumbh railway stations of Prayagraj) Passenger facilities in prayagraj area

9 Stations, all with second entry, 48 PF, 21 FoB

PF/ holding area ? Station ? Division? Zonal ? Railway Board war room

13,000 extra staff deployed

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## SC clarifies power of arrest Under GST & Customs laws

New Delhi, Feb 27 (UNI) : The Supreme Court on Thursday held that arbitrary arrests and coercion by tax authorities violate constitutional rights, and directed that enforcement actions by the officials should remain within the bounds of the law.

While delivering a landmark judgment clarifying the powers of arrest under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Act and the Customs Act, a bench comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna, Justice MM Sundresh, and Justice Bela M Trivedi ruled that officers under these tax laws do not hold the status of police officers, rejecting the argument that they should be treated as such.

The bench held that procedural safeguards under the Code of Criminal Procedure (now Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita) will equally apply to arrests made under these laws.

The top court further held that anticipatory bail provisions apply, allowing individuals to seek relief from the judiciary even before an FIR is registered.

The bench observed that the arrests under GST and Customs laws must be based on "verifiable material," not mere suspicion.

Officers under these laws are not police officers and cannot exercise similar powers. Circulars issued by the GST department on arrests must be strictly followed.

The court directed that the allegations of coercion in tax payments must be taken seriously; those affected can approach the court for redress.

The SC said citizens should not be harassed due to ambiguities in arrest provisions, and emphasised that there can be no private complaints under the GST Act.

The court applied the principle from the Arvind Kejriwal case, where arrests under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) must be backed by "reasons to believe." It ruled that the same principle applies to GST and Customs arrests since the relevant legal provisions are nearly identical.

CJI Khanna, while delivering the verdict, stated, "We have held that Deepal Mahajan's case was different, and we have referred to the Arvind Kejriwal case."

"Section 132 and 104 of the Customs Act, when specifying offences as cognizable and bailable, should instead be treated as non-cognizable and non-bailable."

"We have observed that allegations of coercion in tax payments have some merit and that such practices must not be permitted," he said.

Justice Trivedi, in her concurring judgment, addressed the powers of judicial review under Article 226, reaffirming the court's stance on upholding constitutional safeguards in tax-related arrests.

## Modi-BJP's claims of women's safety hollow: Congress

New Delhi, Feb 27 (UNI) The Congress on Thursday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of making "hollow promises" about ensuring women's security, and claimed that cases of harassment against women are increasing under the BJP's rule. Addressing a press conference at the party headquarters here, Congress spokesperson Ajay Kumar referred to the alleged rape of a young woman inside a government bus in Pune on Tuesday and regretted that the police were unable to catch the culprit.

"The incident has raised serious questions on women's safety as the accused is still out of police custody even two days after the incident," he said. The former Congress MP said that on the one hand, Narendra Modi and the BJP never tire of making hollow claims related to women's safety. On the other hand, the BJP governments have completely failed to stop crime against women.

"Why didn't the police know about the history-sheeter who was out on bail? If the accused was roaming around as a conductor, then what was the administration doing? Women are being treated under the BJP government, but why is the government sitting like lame ducks?" he asked.



## Health

# High blood pressure: Exercise and tips

This is largely due to unawareness regarding early detection and cure. In India, around 16 per cent of people above 20 years of age suffer from high blood pressure. However, a single high reading does not necessarily imply that you have hypertension. Moreover, even if you were informed recently that you have the condition; there is absolutely no reason to panic. All you need are some basic lifestyle tips and a well-planned exercise routine and you will be as fit as a fiddle.

## Overview:

High blood pressure or hypertension is a medical condition when the difference between the maximum (systolic) and minimum (diastolic) pressures exerted by the circulating blood on your blood vessels increases the desirable value (above 90-119 systolic and 60-79 diastolic).

## Prime risk factors:

Some of the major factors that increase your risk of developing the condition are:

Age Increased levels of blood pressure are closely associated with age and the effects of an unhealthy lifestyle

gradually build up.

**Ethnicity** Generally, it is observed that people belonging to the African-Caribbean and South-Asian communities have increased probability of developing hypertension.

**Family history** Having a family history of high blood pressure places you at a greater risk of developing the condition.

**Lifestyle issues** It is a well-known fact that your lifestyle can affect your risk of developing it. Major lifestyle flaws include high intake of alcohol, excessive smoking, too much salt and not eating sufficient fruits and vegetables.

## Tips to prevent and

## control:

One of the primary steps to ensure that you do not develop the condition is by adopting a healthy lifestyle. By healthy lifestyle, we refer to the complete cycle of following a healthy eating plan, and moderate indulgences. Broadly, the prevention and control tips can be segregated into:

- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Practice moderation if you drink alcohol
- Quitting smoking
- Regulating the excessive intake of salt and sodium
- Frequent regulation of your health by visiting health care professionals at periodic intervals.

## Exercise tips for managing blood pressure:

Becoming active and incorporating regular physical activity in your day-to-day living helps make your heart stronger. This, in turn, can lead your heart to pump more blood with less effort, thereby lowering the force on your arteries and the subsequent reduction of blood pressures.

**Aerobic training** This form of training can have a major influence on your blood pressure levels. This can include anything from walking, running and hiking to biking and even swimming. On an average, target at least 30 minutes of aerobic activity for most days of the week. In case, you are unable to manage

**Commonly referred to as a 'silent killer', high blood pressure or hypertension is a leading cause of death globally.**

this time set, you can also opt for shorter bursts of activity as they count too.

**Weight training** Although these exercises can lead to sudden spikes in your blood pressure levels, they can have long term benefits. Make sure that you consult a physician before embarking on any weight training programs.

**Yoga and meditation** In order to prevent this condition, yoga postures and meditation techniques should also be incorporated in your daily routine. The prime effect of these fitness programs is that they help combat stress and saturate the mind with tranquility.

**Deep-breathing exercises** According to a recent research published in the American Journal of Hypertension, a person can regulate his blood pressure level by 'harnessing' the body's own natural pressure regulator. Breathing techniques are easy and effective ways to curb elevated levels of blood pressure. Regular and right breathing techniques can help you maintain normal blood pressure.

However, for long term effects, always remember that you will have to follow these exercise and lifestyle tips on a regular basis. The benefits last as long as you continue with the planned fitness regime.

**'Fitness at workplace' is the latest mantra in the corporate world.**

**Companies have realised that regular exercise boosts employee morale, enhances productivity,**

**reduce**

**s absenteeism and signs of burnout or depression.**

Nowadays, the corporate employees not only stretch themselves beyond their responsibilities, but also stretch their muscles in the office gym.

A little bit of planning and a few small additions in one's office routine can help one a healthier lifestyle. According to a World Health Organisation report, India could incur losses to the tune of \$237 billion by 2015 due to rise in lifestyle diseases like heart disease, diabetes, stroke and cancer, because of unhealthy workplaces.

Here are some easy everyday things you can do to get healthy and fit while at your workplace:

### Stay hydrated:

Water helps your body with physical and mental performance, detoxification and

# Fun ways to keep

# fit

# in your office

avoid monotony.

### Make reasons to walk around:

Give yourself several reasons to take a break and move around after every 40 minutes. Simply getting up and moving around for a few moments can keep you focused, less fatigued and feeling better. For example, avoid ordering a cup of coffee/tea at your desk, go and get it yourself or while speaking with someone on cell phone walk around till you end the call. Get down from your car if driven by a chauffeur a few blocks before your office and walk the remaining distance provided you leave home 10 to 15 minutes before your usual time.

### Hit the office gym in lunch hours:

Try to exercise for 30 minutes during the lunch time and grab a bite at your desk afterwards. Encourage having an area of a simple gym in your office. It could be jogger or a stationary bicycle or a treadmill.

### Simple stretching:

People often face stress, back and joint pains and weight gain problems at work. To get rid of such health problems, while sitting in your chair, flex your feet and

circle your ankles, stretch your legs and arms as frequent as you can.

### Take the stairs:

Whenever possible, get moving and take the stairs rather than the elevator. Taking stairs will keep you fit and energetic.

### Pack healthy snacks:

Rather than buying chips, junk food and sodas during office hours, bring some granola, fruit or raw veggies to snack on. This healthy diet will keep your energy levels fit and steady.

### Conduct meetings on the go:

When it's practical, schedule walking meetings or brainstorming sessions. Do laps inside your building or take your walking meetings outdoors.

### Participate in different office games:

Office games such as table tennis, basket ball are an interesting way to keep healthy and fit. These games not only keep your energy levels high but also keep your body in good shape.

digestion. Keep a water bottle at your desk and you'll find it much easier to drink the recommend eight glasses of water each day. It will ease stress and result in sustained energy throughout the day. You can also supplement it with fresh lemonade and coconut water, etc, to

## Use neem oil, garlic for mosquito free home

**As the national capital battles one of its worst dengue seasons, experts suggest natural methods like neem and coconut oil concoction or garlic to keep the mosquito-borne tropical disease at bay.**

Neem oil acts as a great indoor mosquito-repellent owing to its smell that wards off mosquitoes. One can make an effective insecticide by mixing neem oil and coconut oil in equal proportion and rub it on the exposed parts of a body.

- Another natural method to keep mosquitoes at bay is to plant Tulsi near the window panes. The plant has properties that do not allow mosquitoes to breed.

- A mixture of lemon oil and eucalyptus oil is extremely effective in warding off mosquitoes naturally. Both have the active component cineole in it carrying antiseptic and insect repellent properties, which makes them effective when applied to the skin.

- Camphor is an easily available ingredient that kills mosquitoes in a house. Made from the extract of a tree, this compound has been found to have the longest mosquito repellent effect as compared to other natural products. Burning camphor in a closed room can be extremely effective in keeping mosquitoes at bay.

- Garlic might smell bad, but that is exactly why mosquitoes stay away. All you need to do is crush a few pods of garlic, boil them in water and spray the liquid in the room.





## 'Problem of delaying release of Palestinian prisoners resolved'

Gaza, Feb 27 (UNI) An agreement was reached to resolve the problem of delaying the release of Palestinian prisoners who were supposed to be released in the last batch, Hamas said in a statement.

The prisoners would be released simultaneously with the bodies of the Israeli hostages that were agreed to be handed over during the first stage of the Gaza ceasefire deal, Hamas said in a statement.

A Hamas leadership delegation concluded its visit to Cairo, where it met with Egyptian officials, the statement said, noting that discussions were held on the implementation of the ceasefire agreement, the exchange of prisoners, and the prospects for the second phase of negotiations.

"The delegation of the movement's leadership stressed its clear position on the necessity of full and precise commitment to all its provisions and stages," the statement added.

Israel announced early Sunday that it had postponed the release of Palestinian detainees, who were set to be freed Saturday under the ceasefire agreement until more hostages are released. Israel was expected to release more than 600 Palestinian detainees on Saturday after Hamas freed six hostages earlier in the day. However, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said in a statement that it had decided to delay the release of Palestinian detainees scheduled for Saturday "until the release of the next hostages is secured, without the disgraceful ceremonies."

## Russia rejects deployment of European peacekeeping troops in Ukraine

Moscow, Feb 27 (UNI) The Kremlin has dismissed statements that Russia was open to European peacekeeping troops in Ukraine.

When asked about the possible deployment, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov declined to make a direct comment but referred to an earlier rejection of the idea by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

"There is a position on this issue here, which was expressed by Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov. I have nothing to add to this and nothing to comment on," the spokesman said on Tuesday. Lavrov said last week that Russia rejected the use of Western soldiers in Ukraine.

## SL resumes vehicle imports after 5-year suspension

Colombo, Feb. 27 (UNI) The first batch of vehicles imported for private use arrived at Colombo Port on Tuesday, following the government's decision to end a five-year suspension on vehicle imports due to foreign reserve shortages.

Speaking to the press in Colombo on Wednesday, Vehicle Importers' Association of Sri Lanka President Prasad Manage said the first shipment has arrived from Thailand, and another shipment from Japan was scheduled to arrive at Hambantota International Port on Thursday.

The Sri Lankan government officially lifted the temporary ban on vehicle imports, which had been in place since early 2020, on Jan. 31, 2025.

One of primary reasons for lifting the suspension was to boost state revenue and meet the tax target of 15 percent of gross domestic product, a requirement under Sri Lanka's bailout agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

During a recent budget speech in the parliament, Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Disanayake said the liberalization of motor vehicle imports was expected to generate a significant portion of the government's revenue gains. He also said that vehicle imports will be closely monitored to prevent any adverse effects on the country's external sector stability.

## Asteroid 2024 YR4 no longer poses significant threat to Earth: NASA

Los Angeles, Feb. 27 (UNI) NASA has confirmed that asteroid 2024 YR4, which was initially flagged as a potential threat, poses no significant danger to Earth in 2032 or beyond. The near-Earth asteroid, nearly the size of a football field, was first discovered in December last year.

Experts previously projected a 3 percent chance of the asteroid striking our planet before lowering the chance to 0.28 percent last week.

Following further observations, NASA updated the probability of its impact on Dec. 22, 2032 to only 0.004 percent, said the Center for Near-Earth Object Studies.

NASA added that the asteroid poses no significant risk to Earth for at least the next century. However, there remains a 1.7 percent chance it could impact the moon. NASA will continue to observe asteroid 2024 YR4. The asteroid's observation has provided valuable data for advancing planetary defense methods and refining impact prediction processes, the agency said.

## Tokyo stocks extend falls amid U.S. trade policy concerns

Tokyo, Feb. 27 (UNI) Tokyo stocks extended falls on Wednesday as concerns over U.S. trade policies and economic slowdown led investors to cut holdings.

The benchmark Nikkei stock index, the 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average, closed at 38,142.37, down 95.42 points, or 0.25 percent from the previous day.

This marks the lowest level since Nov. 27, 2024. At one point, the index dropped more than 400 points, briefly falling below 38,000 yen, as the Tokyo Stock Price Index (TOPIX) index also dipped below its 200-day moving average, raising market concerns.

## Flooding kills 6, injures 5 in Afghanistan's Helmand

Lashkar, Afghanistan, Feb. 27 (UNI) At least six people have been killed and five others were injured after flash floods caused by heavy rains in southern Afghanistan's Helmand province, a local official reported Wednesday.

The recent flash floods swept through multiple regions, including Garashk, Sangin, Musa Qala, Nawzad, Babaji districts and Lashkar Gah city, the capital of the province, said Hafiz Abdul Bari Rashid, provincial director of information and culture.

On Tuesday, rain-related incidents in the provinces of Kandahar and Farah, adjacent to Helmand, killed 29 people and injured several others.

Since Monday, most parts of Afghanistan have experienced rain and snowfall. The country's meteorological department has forecasted snowfall and intermittent rain in 32 out of the 34 provinces.

## Türkiye detains 153 suspects in Istanbul drug crackdown

Ankara, Feb. 27 (UNI) : Turkish police have detained 153 suspects in a large-scale anti-drug operation in Istanbul province, Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya said Wednesday.

The operation, dubbed "Narkopan-14," targeted street-level drug dealers in the Gaziosmanpaşa and Kagithane districts, Yerlikaya said on X, without specifying the time frame of the operation.

Authorities seized 25.5 kg of heroin, 17 kg of methamphetamine, some weapons, and large sums of foreign currency and Turkish lira, he said.

## Military plane crash in Sudan leaves 19 dead

Khartoum, Feb 27 (UNI) At least 19 people were killed in a crash of a Sudanese military plane in Sudan's Omdurman, media reported on Wednesday.

Earlier in the day, the Alrakoba newspaper reported that a military plane had crashed near Omdurman, killing the crew and officers on board. The Sudanese army later confirmed the crash of the plane. The Antonov military plane crashed shortly after taking off from the Wadi Seidna airbase, killing 19 people, including both military personnel and civilians, Al Sudani newspaper reported.

The commander of operations in the Bahri region, Bahar Ahmed Bahar, was among the victims, the newspaper reported.

Khartoum Governor Ahmed Osman Hamza visited the crash site and offered his condolences to the families of the victims.

The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have been fighting the regular Sudanese army for control of the country since April 2023. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has said that the ongoing fighting could lead to the collapse of the health care system.

# Death toll from tropical disease in Australia rises to 12

Sydney, Feb 27 (UNI) : The number of deaths from a disease linked to heavy rainfall and flooding in northeast of Australia's state of Queensland has more than doubled to 12, local health authorities said.

Health authorities in the tropical north coast region of Queensland confirmed on Tuesday that the death toll from melioidosis in the current wet season has risen to 12, up from five deaths that had been reported as of Feb. 21.

Of the 12 deaths, nine occurred in and around Cairns, the largest city in the region, and three in the city of Townsville, almost 300 km south.

Melioidosis is a rare tropical disease caused by bacteria commonly found in soil and water in Southeast Asia and northern Australia. After heavy rainfall, it becomes airborne. Queensland's tropical northern coast was



hit by widespread damaging flooding earlier in February, with many towns recording record rainfall for the month in a matter of days.

There have been 53 confirmed cases of melioidosis in Cairns and 34 cases in Townsville since the start of 2025, Australian Broadcasting Corporation reported, citing Jacqueline Murdoch, director of the Tropical Public Health

Services.

"It absolutely is a record-breaking year. Certainly we haven't seen anything like this and the numbers are very alarming," said Murdoch on Tuesday.

"It's a very severe disease and it has a reasonably high fatality rate, so we do have a large number of deaths now, which is reflecting the large number of cases." She said

that most of the patients were older people and that the majority had contracted the disease through the air.

Murdoch urged people to be careful about being outside in heavy rain, being in contact with soil and to wear a mask when using a high-pressure hose.

Anyone with a cough or difficulty breathing has been advised to visit their doctor or nearest emergency department.

## Hong Kong to step up cooperation with ASEAN, ME markets

Hong Kong, Feb. 27 (UNI) The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) will facilitate the financing of overseas enterprises and specific products as part of a broader effort to boost the securities and derivatives market, said Paul Chan, financial secretary of the HKSAR government, on Wednesday. Delivering the

2025-26 budget at the HKSAR's Legislative Council, Chan said that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is an important economic region that continues to grow, and that a number of enterprises from ASEAN are seeking to apply for listing in Hong Kong, covering businesses in areas including biotechnology, integrated

logistics, and mining.

The Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited (HKEX) will step up its promotion in ASEAN and the Middle East, and actively explore areas of cooperation with countries in the region, including the listing of exchange-traded funds, to enrich the investment product choices in mutual markets and promote two-way capital

flows, he said. HKEX will also strive to increase the number of overseas recognized exchanges to facilitate more overseas companies' secondary listing in Hong Kong, he added. Meanwhile, Hong Kong will continue to attract global capital and develop a vibrant ecosystem for family offices. Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK) of the HKSAR

government has assisted over 160 family offices in setting up operations or expanding their businesses in Hong Kong, Chan noted.

The city will be hosting the third edition of the Wealth for Good in Hong Kong Summit shortly under the theme of "Hong Kong of the world, for the world," showcasing Hong Kong's strengths as a global hub for family offices, he said.

## 'Russia preparing to launch rare earth metal investment projects'

Moscow, Feb 27 (UNI) Preparations are underway for the launch of major investment projects focused on rare earth metals in Russia's Murmansk and Irkutsk regions and the Sakha Republic, the Russian Ministry of Industry and Trade told Sputnik on Wednesday.

"Preparations for the launch of the largest investment projects in the Murmansk Region, Irkutsk Region, Yakutia and other regions are underway. These projects will address the key needs of Russian industry for strategic raw

materials and, in the future, for high value-added products based on them," the ministry said.

The ministry also revealed plans to establish a full production cycle for rare earth metals by 2030, ensuring Russia's raw material and technological sovereignty.

Currently, 24 key production chains for rare earth metals and their compounds are under development in Russia, the ministry said. Full-cycle enterprises are being constructed, ranging from raw material extraction to the production of high-tech

products. Last week, Russian Industry and Trade Minister Anton Alikhanov said that over the next six years, Russia intends to reduce its import dependency on rare and rare-earth metals from the current 75% to 45%.

On Monday, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that Russia is one of the leading countries in terms of rare earth metal reserves, having much more of such reserves than Ukraine. Russia is also ready to work with foreign partners in the development of rare earth metals, the president said.

## Australian PM pledges 2 bln USD for transport projects ahead of general election

Canberra, Feb. 27 (UNI) Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has pledged over 2 billion U.S. dollars to fund transport projects in the country's second-most populous state in a major pre-election commitment. Albanese on Wednesday announced over 3.3 billion Australian dollars (2.08 billion dollars) for road and rail projects in the state of Victoria.

Of the total funding, 2 billion AUD (1.26 billion USD) will go towards the Melbourne Airport rail link project. The Melbourne Airport, located 20 km northwest of the central business district, is the second-busiest in Australia but has never had a railway connecting it to the city

center, forcing travelers to rely on either buses or cars.

Construction on the rail link began in 2022 after decades of failed proposals. Albanese's announcement on Wednesday takes the federal government's funding commitment to the project to seven billion AUD (4.42 billion USD) out of a total final estimated cost of 13 billion AUD (8.22 billion USD).

The new funding will go towards building a new rail hub in the suburb of Sunshine, 13 km south of the airport, which will connect the new line to regional rail services and Melbourne's existing train network. The rail link is scheduled to be completed by 2033. "Whether you're

going on holiday, or traveling for work, getting to and from the airport shouldn't be the most complicated part of your trip," Albanese said in a speech in Melbourne.

"Melbourne Airport needs a rail link. Melbourne needs one. And Victorians deserve one."

He also announced 1 billion AUD (632.4 million USD) in federal funding, on top of 200 million AUD (126.5 million USD) from the state government, for road repair works in growth areas in Melbourne's southeast and north. An additional 325 million AUD (205.5 million USD) will be spent increasing capacity on a railway line serving the city's western suburbs.

## 36 killed, 40 injured in rain-related incidents in Afghanistan

Kabul, Feb. 27 (UNI) At least 36 people have died and 40 others were injured in rain-related incidents throughout Afghanistan, Mullah Janan Saeq, the spokesman for the national disaster authority, said Wednesday. More than 300 residential houses have been either completely or partially destroyed due to the disaster, the official said, noting that the flash floods have also swept away hundreds of acres of agricultural land.

The severe casualties and damages from the flash floods have taken place in western Farah province and its adjacent provinces of Kandahar and Helmand.

Most parts of Afghanistan, including the capital Kabul, have been receiving heavy rains and snowfall since Monday.

## Known for his anti-India comments, Mahfuz Alam is Bangladesh's new Information Advisor

Dhaka, Feb 27 (UNI) : Bangladesh's Interim Government on Wednesday named student activist Mahfuz Alam, who in the past has posted anti-India statements on social media, as Information and Broadcasting Advisor.

Mahfuz Alam, who played a critical role in the movement that led to the ouster of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in August last year, is already holding the post of Special Assistant to Chief Advisor Mohammed Younus.

Meanwhile, Chief Advisor Younus has taken charge of the Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology, which were previously being handled by Nahid Islam, another student activist, who resigned on Tuesday as Information Advisor.

Nahid Islam handed over his resignation letter to Mohammed Younus after an informal meeting of the Advisory Council held on February 25, following which the country's Cabinet Division issued a circular confirming the new appointment today, according to Business Standard BD. Nahid Islam came to the spotlight during the July-August uprising in 2024 which led to the ouster of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League government. Seen as a key coordinator of the movement, Islam is set to join the upcoming party of Students Against Discrimination and the Jatiya Nagorik Committee scheduled to be launched on February 28, where he is expected to be the convener of the new party.

On December 20, India had registered a strong protest with Bangladesh over a social media post by student leader Mahfuz Alam, special aide to Mohammad Yunus, where he had shared a controversial map of Bangladesh that included India's eastern and northeastern areas such as West Bengal, Assam, and Tripura. Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal had said in his weekly briefing: "We have registered our strong protest on this issue with the Bangladesh side."

"We understand that the post being referred to has reportedly been taken down. We would like to remind all concerned to be mindful of their public comments. "While India has repeatedly signalled interest in fostering relations with the people and the interim government of Bangladesh, such comments underline the need for responsibility in public articulation," he stressed. In his Facebook post, Mahfuz Alam alleged that India practises a "contain" and "ghettoize" policy towards Bangladesh. He claimed that the 1975 coup which saw Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and almost his entire family killed, and the 2024 protests, both came to save Bangladesh from Indian "reliance" and "hegemony".



## Delhi Capitals appoint England legend Kevin Pietersen as team mentor

New Delhi, Feb 27 (UNI) : Delhi Capitals on Thursday announced the appointment of England legend Kevin Pietersen as their team mentor ahead of the upcoming IPL season.

The 44-year-old will link up and work alongside a formidable Delhi Capitals support staff which includes Director of Cricket Venugopal Rao, Head Coach Hemang Badani, Assistant Coach Matthew Mott and Bowling Coach Munaf Patel.

Pietersen played for the Capitals, then known as Delhi Daredevils, from 2012 to 2014, scoring 599 runs in 19 appearances.

Welcoming the former England captain onboard, Kiran Kumar Grandhi, Chairman & Co-owner,

Delhi Capitals, said, "We are delighted to welcome KP as our team mentor. He has been a Delhi boy, having played for us in the IPL earlier, and it's great to have him back in a different role. We are confident that his vast experience, his tactical understanding of the game, and his passion for the franchise will be invaluable to our team and our players."

Parth Jindal, Co-owner of Delhi Capitals, said, "KP was arguably one of the best modern-day batters, and having him in our team is a valuable addition. We look forward to seeing him apply his knowledge and help our players drive towards our objectives. My best wishes to him in this new role."

Marking his return to the franchise after more than a decade, Pietersen commented in great spirits, "I've got incredible memories of representing the Delhi franchise in the IPL, and I've been able to maintain that passion for

the team even as a broadcaster over the years. I shared the field with

Venu (Venugopal Rao) during the 2012 season, and it's great to be reconnecting with him as we begin a new chapter at this amazing franchise."

"I've got a great relationship with the owners and the Delhi Capitals fans, so when this idea came about, it was a very quick YES from me. It's an exciting opportunity to step into this new role as a mentor for the Capitals, and I'm really looking forward to joining the squad, working closely with the boys, and doing everything I can to help us win that ultimate prize," he added.

A veteran of 200 T20s with 5,695 runs, Pietersen appeared in 36 IPL matches scoring 1001 runs across his stints with the Delhi Daredevils, Royal Challengers Bengaluru, Sunrisers Hyderabad, and the Pune franchise.

The South African-born player, who captained England between 2008-2009, won the Player of the Series award for his remarkable performance in the 2010 ICC T20 World Cup, which helped

England secure their maiden ICC trophy.

In his illustrious international career, Pietersen played 104 Tests, scoring 8,181 runs, and 136 ODIs, amassing 4,440 runs.

Earlier this week, Delhi Capitals also announced the appointment of renowned and highly successful coach Matthew Mott as their assistant coach. Mott coached the England men's team to victory in the 2022 ICC T20 World Cup and previously spent seven record-breaking years with Australia's women's team.

## Fanatics to double its workforce to 500 within next two years

Hyderabad, Feb 27 (UNI) Fanatics, a leading global digital sports platform with 22,000 employees across more than 80 locations, on Thursday announced the strengthening of its leadership, increasing technical hiring, and expanding its footprint within India.

As part of its global expansion and commitment to enhancing the fan experience, the company will double its technical workforce in Hyderabad from 250 to over 500 employees within the next two years, said Fanatics Interim Chief Technology Officer Matthias Spycher in a press conference here.

In 2018, the company opened its first technology innovation center in Hyderabad as part of its commitment to growing its technology, data, and analytics capabilities, he said. In addition to the hiring growth, the company will move into a new large office space in Hi-Tech City by 2028 which will be three times the size of its current office space in the city, he informed.

The company is committed to enhancing the fan experience and maximizing the presence and reach of its hundreds of sports partners globally by offering products and services across Fanatics Commerce, Fanatics Collectibles, and Fanatics Betting and Gaming allowing sports fans to Buy, Bet, and Collect, he added. The recently appointed Vice President and General Manager Abhishek Dhasmana, said "This expansion reinforces Fanatics' commitment to Hyderabad as a strategic hub for technological advancement and growth".

## Strikers camp with McCann behind scintillating field goals of India at Hockey Pro League

New Delhi, Feb 27 (UNI) : The Indian Men's Hockey Team's recent performance at the FIH Hockey Pro League 2024-25 (Men) where they won five out of eight matches was backed by a week-long coaching camp for strikers held in Bhubaneswar.

The Indian team is now placed third in the points table only behind England and Belgium while Netherlands, Germany and Australia are placed No.4 to No.6 respectively with the finale scheduled in June.

To foster the Indian team's performance in a crucial year with the FIH Men's World Cup qualification at stake, Hockey India invited legendary former Australian forward and striker's coach Michael McCann for a camp in Bhubaneswar between February 6 to 12.

McCann was part of Australia's dream team that won the Athens Olympic Gold in 2004 and Gold in FIH Champions Trophy 2005 in Chennai.

He is also a two-time Silver medalist in FIH Men's World Cup and a back-to-back Commonwealth Games

## Teenage qualifier Tien stuns top seed Zverev in Mexican Open

Vallarta (Mexico), Feb 27 (UNI) : World number two Alexander Zverev suffered a shock early exit from the Mexican Open with a straight-set defeat against teenage qualifier Learner Tien.

Australian Open finalist Zverev, the top seed in Acapulco, put in an uncharacteristically error-strewn performance as American Tien won 6-3 6-4.

Tien, 19, beat Briton Cameron Norrie in the previous round and will face Czech Tomas Machac in the quarter-finals, the BBC reported.

"I just went out there and tried to control my side of the court," said Tien.

"Obviously I knew it was going to be a tough match. To come through feels great... I think just focusing on what I can control and keeping my cool as best as I can has really taken me a long way," he said. Tien is the youngest American man to record a victory against a top-three opponent since Andy Roddick in 2001.

He has enjoyed a memorable few months, reaching the final at the Next Gen ATP Finals in December before making it through to the fourth round at the Australian Open in January.

Zverev is one of six seeds to exit the competition in the second round. Casper Ruud, Tommy Paul and Holger Rune all pulled out because of a stomach bug, while Ben Shelton and Frances Tiafoe were beaten by David Goffin and Alejandro Davidovich Fokina respectively. Ruud finished runner-up at the ATP 500 event in 2024 but the second seed did not make it to the court for his encounter against local favourite Rodrigo Pacheco Mendez.



gold medalist in 2002 and 2006.

Over the past eight years, McCann has been closely working with the German U21 side and the Senior squad.

Underlining the importance of working with experts like McCann particularly in the training blocks leading up to Men's Asia Cup this year and World Cup and Asia Cup next year, India Chief Coach Craig Fulton said, "It was great to have Michael here ahead of our Pro League campaign. This would particularly help the youngsters in the squad and though it was a short

camp, it was very effective. We worked a lot of basics and also had one-hour off-the-field sessions so players could also interact with him. We look forward to having more such sessions leading up to the World Cup and Asian Games next year."

Elaborating on the camp, experienced India striker Mandeep Singh, who scored a magical goal against Ireland that helped the team bounce back from 0-1 to 3-1 win, said, "It was a very good camp and Michael was not only extremely informative on the field but his off-the-field meetings were also

extremely knowledgeable where he showed us a lot of short clips on specific areas."

"I particularly enjoyed the basics inside the D, shot on target two-feet from the goal. He also taught us new things specific to strikers' lead and re-lead within the circle and how to deflect from the nine yards mark near the D with two-touch to the goal were some of the interesting aspects he made us work on," he said.

"Small things like, angle of the body while receiving the ball, fake-passing to beat the defenders in the D was fun to learn. If you see our performance in the Pro

League, we scored a lot of field goals. This was a very good learning point for us, and we were able to implement what we learnt in the camp in the matches," he added.

Uttam Singh, also emphasized his learnings from the camp and thanked Hockey India for the exposure.

"The things I particularly enjoyed working on was on my finishing. Michael touched upon how to finish, when we can't get a full attempt on goal. Receiving the ball and what position we must be in while receiving in the second post and which side we must hold the stick and how important it is to look at the goalkeeper's position when we take strike were all some of the finer details which I think will help me in the long run.

It was a very good experience especially for youngsters like me," expressed Uttam, former India Colts Captain.

The Indian Men's Hockey Team is currently on a break and will regroup mid-March following the Hockey India Annual Awards to be held in New Delhi.

## Kerala 131/3, trail by 248 at stumps on Day 2

Nagpur, Feb 27 (UNI) : Kerala staged a spirited fightback in the morning session, claiming five wickets, before Vidarbha's lower order resilience saw them post a competitive 379 in the Ranji Trophy final here on Thursday.

In response, Kerala ended Day 2 at 131/3, trailing by 248 runs.

Danish Malewar was the standout performer for

Vidarbha, scoring a crucial 153, guiding his side close to the 400-run mark. Vidarbha, resuming from their overnight score, added 119 runs before losing their last six wickets. Kerala bowlers tightened their grip as Eden Apple and Nideesh claimed three wickets each, while Nedumankuzhy Basil claimed two.

Kerala's reply began on

a shaky note as they lost both openers early, courtesy of Darshan Nalkande's fiery spell. Ahammed Imran and Aditya Sarwate then steadied the innings, ensuring no further damage in the evening session. Imran fell to Yash Thakur's short-pitched delivery after a well-compiled 37 while Sarwate remained unbeaten on 66, holding Kerala's hopes for

a strong reply on Day 3. The pitch has played well so far with no significant assistance for bowlers, allowing both teams to put up a strong contest.

Kerala will aim to capitalise on the platform built, while Vidarbha bowlers, especially Nalkande and Thakur, will be keen to make early inroads on the third morning.

## Ex-England coach Jones returns to South Africa staff

London, Feb 27 (UNI) Former England defence coach, Felix Jones will become an assistant coach with South Africa from next week. Jones stepped down from his position with England in December after becoming disillusioned in Steve Borthwick's set-up, the BBC reported. The 37-year-old was part of the Springboks' coaching staff during their 2019 and 2023 World Cup victories, working under head coach Rassie Erasmus in the first of those triumphs. "We are delighted to welcome Felix back and we are excited to see him pick up where he

left off in 2023," said Erasmus, who returned as head coach when Jacques Nienaber left for Leinster following the 2023 World Cup win. "He was a vital cog in the coaching team from 2019 to 2023 and his experience, professionalism, and excellent work ethic will make him a great addition.

"After spending some time in England, his experience of studying opposition teams in the Six Nations and other international tournaments will add immense value in assisting us as we cast an eye on a tough international

season ahead. "Former Ireland wing, Jones is one of three new appointments to Erasmus' backroom staff along with physiotherapist Lance Lemmetjies and team dietician Robyn Moore.

"As a team we are well aware that we need to keep improving and growing if we want to remain one of the best teams in the world and to give ourselves the best possible chance to defend our World Cup title in Australia in 2027," Erasmus added.

"Felix, like all the other coaching and support staff, will play a key role in guiding us to do so."

## Arsenal drop more points in title race with draw at Nottingham Forest

Nottingham, Feb 27 (UNI) : Arsenal's slim title hopes faded further after a frustrating stalemate at Nottingham Forest.

The goalless draw at the City Ground left the Gunners 13 points behind leaders Liverpool, who now look like making the run-in a title procession.

If that is the case, the last few days will be viewed as pivotal to Arsenal's season following their home defeat to West Ham and dropped points against third-placed Forest, the BBC report.

Before this game, with the Gunners 11 points behind Liverpool and having a game in hand, boss Mikel Arteta vowed to

fighting, but it is surely now a futile chase after Wednesday's results.

They needed to win at Forest but lacked a cutting edge, despite dominating possession, with their attacking options blunted by injury. Without the injured Bukayo Saka, Gabriel Jesus, Gabriel Martinelli and Kai Havertz, Leandro Trossard and Mikel Merino were neat and tidy up front but offered no focal point.

The closest Arsenal came was when full-back Riccardo Calafiori's effort bounced off the post and into Matz Sels' arms midway through the first half, before the goalkeeper saved Merino's header soon after the break.

## Banthia-Somani storm into semifinals of Bengaluru Open doubles event

Bengaluru, Feb 27 (UNI) : The unseeded Indian duo of Siddhant Banthia and Parikshit Somani stormed into the semifinals of the DafaNews Bengaluru Open doubles event with a dominant 7-5, 6-0 victory over Nicolas Mejia and Bernard Tomic on Thursday. The home pair will now face Australia's Blake Bayldon and Matthew Christopher Romios for a place in the final. Organised by the Karnataka State Lawn Tennis Association (KSLTA), the Bengaluru Open is an ATP Challenger 125 tournament featuring a prize pool of USD 200,000. It holds the distinction of being India's most prestigious international tennis event, with the singles champion earning 125 ATP ranking points.

On Court 1 of the KSLTA Tennis Stadium, Banthia and Somani endured an evenly contested first set against Mejia and Tomic, saving a crucial break point in the seventh game. They capitalised on their momentum, winning their service games in the ninth and eleventh games

before breaking their opponents in the twelfth to take the set. The second set, however, saw a commanding performance from the Indian pair, who bageled their rivals in just 20 minutes to seal the win.

Earlier, defending champions Ramkumar Ramanathan and Saketh Myneni advanced to the semifinals with a clinical 6-3, 6-3 victory over Hynek Barton and Eric Vanshelboim. The Indian duo secured an early break in the first set and then dominated the second with crucial breaks in the fifth and ninth games.

They will next take on the winners of the quarterfinal between Anirudh Chandrasekar/Ray Ho and SD Prajwal Dev/Aryan Shah.

Joining the two Indian pairs in the semifinals, second seeds Bayldon and Romios secured a 6-2, 6-4 win over India's Adil Kalyanpur and Karan Singh. The Australians set the tone with an early break in the first game and overcame a spirited fightback in the second set, saving two crucial break points in the eighth game to clinch victory.

## DafaNews Bengaluru Open partners with DD Sports

Bengaluru, Feb 27 (UNI) : The DafaNews Bengaluru Open, India's largest international tennis event, has collaborated with Doordarshan Sports to telecast key moments of the tournament, ensuring wider accessibility for Indian audiences. The ongoing tournament offers a total prize purse of \$200,000 and 125 ATP ranking points for the champions in both singles and doubles categories.

DD Sports will provide live coverage of the event on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, broadcasting the crucial knockout stages, including the semifinals and finals, to tennis enthusiasts across the country. Notably, this is the only ATP Challenger event in India that features ATP-produced television coverage.

The Tennis Channel will also stream the tournament live via Samsung TV in India, while its international coverage extends to the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Spain, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and the Netherlands. Sunil Yajaman, Tournament Director & Secretary, KSLTA, expressed his enthusiasm over the expanded coverage, stating, "We are thrilled to extend the Bengaluru Open's reach through a strong national broadcast network, making it accessible to fans across India and worldwide. DD Sports' coverage ensures Indian viewers can follow the tournament's most crucial moments, while ATP's global distribution platforms allow international audiences to witness the rising talent and thrilling competition at this year's Challenger 125 event." Additionally, the ATP website and app will provide online streaming of the tournament. Internationally, the event will be available across multiple platforms, including DAZN in Italy and New Zealand, Arena Sport in Slovakia and Czechia, and BB Sport in Russia, further enhancing its global footprint.

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## WR played a significant role in carrying Maha Kumbh Pilgrims

**Around 1.70 lakh pilgrims travelled through Kumbh Special trains from various stations across WR**

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Feb 27 : During the Maha Kumbh, a huge multitude of pilgrims had gathered at Prayagraj. Many departments and agencies played their respective roles, but the role of Railways is undoubtedly leading in it. Indian Railways helped pilgrims & devotees from all over the country to reach the holy land of Prayagraj, and also created a unique record in terms of rail operations. Approximately, almost 15 crore pilgrims took advantage of train travel during this one and a half month event.

In other words, about one-fourth of the pilgrims of Maha Kumbh went by rail transport to reach Prayagraj or nearby major cities.

According to a press release issued by Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, Mr Vineet Abhishek, the Special Trains run by Western Railway played a crucial role in facilitating the movement of the devotees. Western Railway operated 125 trips of Special trains from various stations of WR viz. Mumbai Central, Vapi,

Valsad, Udhna, Vadodara, Vishwamitri, Ahmedabad, Sabarmati, Bhavnagar, Rajkot, Indore, etc to cater to this huge rush of pilgrims proceeding to attend the Maha Kumbh. 26 trips of Kumbh Special trains were run from Mumbai Central Division, 24 trips from Ahmedabad Division, while 8 trips are from Bhavnagar Division, 4 trips from Rajkot Division, 2 trips from Vadodara Division & 6 trips are from Ratlam Division. These Special Trains were run to Prayagraj, as well as other nearby railway stations and it is estimated that around 1.70 lakh pilgrims travelled by these Kumbh Special trains.

Mr Vineet informed that the Indian Railways played a leading role in making the Maha Kumbh at Prayagraj, divine and grand.

All efforts were taken in making the journey of the pilgrims & devotees gathering at Maha Kumbh, a pleasant and spiritual experience. Railways had started giving concrete shape to their action plan much before the commencement of Maha Kumbh. To meet the

increased travel demand, plans were made to run trains according to the estimated number of pilgrims from different parts of the country, especially on specific occasions. In view of the huge demand, the railways adopted special measures for this and additional extra trains were run. Senior Railway officials were monitoring the ongoing situation round the clock from the war room, where CCTV camera footages from all the railway stations were being received. Accordingly, the plans were drawn & preparations were reviewed to manage the situation. Also, special arrangements were made to remove the pressure on any one route, at any particular train or station. Special trains were run one after the other according to the number and demand of pilgrims.

Indian Railways provided the best of services to the pilgrims attending the Maha Kumbh 2025. The Railway administration worked tirelessly to ensure that the devotees have a safe and comfortable journey to and from the Maha Kumbh.

## WR to provide Additional stoppage to Bandra Terminus Palitana special train at Palghar station

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Feb 27 : For the convenience of passengers, Western Railway will provide additional stoppage at Palghar station to Train No. 09093/09094 Bandra Terminus - Palitana Special Train for Phalgun Pheri.

According to a press release issued by Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, Mr Vineet Abhishek, the details are as under:-

Train No. 09093 Bandra Terminus - Palitana Special has been provided with additional halt at Palghar station w.e.f journey commencing Ex Bandra Terminus on 10th March, 2025. The train will arrive Palghar station at 18:50 hrs and depart at 18:52 hrs.

Similarly, Train No. 09094 Palitana - Bandra Terminus Special has been provided with additional halt at Palghar station w.e.f journey commencing Ex Palitana on 13th March, 2025. The train will arrive Palghar station at 05:28 hrs and depart at 05:30 hrs.

For detailed information, passengers may please visit [www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in](http://www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in).

## Haryana CM meets Modi, briefs development and future projects

New Delhi, Feb 27 (UNI) : Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Thursday met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and briefed him about Haryana's infrastructure development and future projects.

Saini also discussed with the Prime Minister about the upcoming civic election in the state.

According to sources, during the around half an hour meeting, the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister reviewed the development programmes in Haryana.

## Central Railway to Run Additional 48 Holi Special Trains

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Feb 27 : Central Railway will run additional 48 Holi special train services on key routes. These special trains are aimed at ensuring a smooth and comfortable journey for passengers traveling. These special trains will run between:

Mumbai - Mau / / Danapur / Banaras / Samastipur / Kanniyakumari / Thiruvananthapuram

Pune - Ghazipur / Danapur / Hazrat Nizamuddin

1) LTT-Danapur-LTT Bi-Weekly Special (6 trips)

01009 Bi-weekly Special will leave LTT Mumbai at 12.15 hrs on 10.03.2025, 15.03.2025 & 17.03.2025 and will arrive Danapur at 17.00 hrs next day. (3 trips)

01010 Bi-weekly Special will leave Danapur at 18.15 hrs every on 11.03.2025, 16.03.2025 & 18.03.2025 and will arrive LTT Mumbai at 04.40 hrs on third day. (3 trips)

Halts: Thane, Kalyan, Igatpuri, Nashik Road, Jalgaon, Bhusaval, Khandwa, Pipariya, "Narsinghpur, Madan Mahal, Katni, Maihar, Satna, Manikpur, Prayagraj Chheoki, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn, Buxar and Ara.

Composition: 06 Sleeper Class, 9 AC-III Tier, One AC-2 Tier, One AC-2 Tier cum AC-III Tier, 3 General Second Class and 2 Second Class-cum-Luggage-cum Guard's Coach (22 Coaches).

2) LTT-Mau-LTT Bi-Weekly Special\* (8 trips)

01123 Bi-Weekly special will leave Lokmanya Tilak Terminus at 12.15 hrs on 07.03.2025, 09.03.2025, 14.03.2025, 16.03.2025 (4 trips) and will arrive Mau at 20.20 hrs next day.

01124 Bi-Weekly special will leave Mau at 05.50 hrs on 09.03.2025, 11.03.2025, 16.03.2025, 18.03.2025 (4 trips) and will arrive Lokmanya Tilak Terminus at 16.45 hrs Next day.

Halts: Thane, Kalyan, Igatpuri, Nashik Road, Jalgaon, Bhusaval, Khandwa, Pipariya,

"Narsinghpur, Madan Mahal, Katni, Maihar, Satna, Manikpur, Prayagraj Chheoki, Varanasi Jn, Jaunpur Jn and Aunrihar.

Composition: 06 Sleeper Class, 9 AC-III Tier, One AC-2 Tier, One AC-2 Tier cum AC-III Tier, 3 General Second Class including 1

Generator Car and 2 Second Class-cum-Luggage-cum Guard's Coach (22 Coaches).

3) LTT-Banaras-LTT Bi-Weekly Special (4 trips)

01053 Bi-Weekly special will leave Lokmanya Tilak Terminus at 12.15 hrs on 12.03.2025 and 13.03.2025 (2 trips) and arrive Banaras at 16.05 hrs next day.

01054 Bi-Weekly special will leave Banaras at 20.30 hrs on 13.03.2025 & 14.03.2025 (2 trips) and arrive Lokmanya Tilak Terminus at 04.40 hrs third day.

Halts: Thane, Kalyan, Igatpuri, Nashik Road, Jalgaon, Bhusaval, Khandwa, Pipariya, "Narsinghpur, Madan Mahal, Katni, Maihar, Satna, Manikpur, Prayagraj Chheoki and Varanasi Jn.

Composition: 06 Sleeper Class, 9 AC-III Tier, One AC-2 Tier, One AC-2 Tier cum AC-III Tier, 3 General Second Class and 2 Second Class-cum-Luggage-cum Guard's Coach (22 Coaches).

4) Pune - Danapur-Pune Bi-Weekly Special (6 trips)

01481 Pune - Danapur Bi-Weekly Special will leave Pune at 19:55 hrs on 10.03.2025, 14.03.2025, and 17.03.2025 and arrive at Danapur at 05:00 hrs on the third day (3 trips).

01482 Danapur - Pune Bi-Weekly Special will leave Danapur at 06:45 hrs on 12.03.2025, 16.03.2025 and 19.03.2025 and arrive at Pune at 17:35 hrs next day. (3 trips).

Halts: Daund Chord Cabin, Ahmednagar, Kopergaon, Manmad, Jalgaon, Bhusaval, Itarsi, Pipariya, Narsinghpur, Madan Mahal, Katni, Maihar, Satna, Manikpur, Prayagraj Chheoki, Deendayal Upadhyay Junction, Buxar and Ara.

Composition: 01 AC 2-Tier, 07 AC 3-Tier, 08 Sleeper Class, 04 General Second Class, 02 Luggage cum Guard's Brake Vans (22 Coaches)

5) Pune - Ghazipur City - Pune Bi-Weekly Special (8 trips)

01431 Pune - Ghazipur City Bi-Weekly Special will leave Pune at 06:40 hrs on 07.03.2025, 11.03.2025, 14.03.2025, and 18.03.2025 and arrive at Ghazipur City at 19:05 hrs on next day (4 trips).

01432 Ghazipur City - Pune Bi-Weekly Special will leave Ghazipur City at 04:20

hrs on 09.03.2025, 13.03.2025, 16.03.2025, and 20.03.2025 and arrive at Pune at 16:20 hrs next day (4 trips).

Halts: Daund Chord Cabin, Ahmednagar, Manmad, Jalgaon, Bhusaval, Khandwa, Pipariya, Narsinghpur, Madan Mahal, Katni, Maihar, Satna, Manikpur, Prayagraj Chheoki, Varanasi, Jaunpur and Aunrihar Junction.

Composition: 01 AC 2-Tier, 07 AC 3-Tier, 08 Sleeper Class, 04 General Second Class, 02 Luggage cum Guard's Brake Vans (22 Coaches)

6) LTT-Samastipur - LTT Weekly Special (4 trips)

01043 Weekly special will leave Lokmanya Tilak Terminus at 12.15 hrs on Tuesdays 11.03.2025 & 18.03.2025 (2 trips) and will arrive Samastipur at 21.15 hrs next day.

01044 Weekly special will leave Samastipur at 23.20 hrs on Wednesdays 12.03.2025 & 19.03.2025 (2 trips) and will arrive Lokmanya Tilak Terminus at 11.00 hrs next day.

Halts: Thane, Kalyan, Igatpuri, Nashik Road, Jalgaon, Bhusaval, Khandwa, Pipariya, "Narsinghpur, Madan Mahal, Katni, Maihar, Satna, Manikpur, Prayagraj Chheoki, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn, Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra Jn., Hajipur and Muzaffarpur.

Composition: One AC First Class, Three AC-2 Tier, 15 AC-3 Tier, 1 Pantry Car, 2 Luggage Cum brake van. (22 Coaches).

7) Pune - Hazrat Nizamuddin - Pune Weekly Superfast Special (4 Trips)

01491 Weekly superfast special will leave Pune at 17.30 hrs on Fridays 07.03.2025 and 14.03.2025 and arrive Hazrat Nizamuddin at 18.10 hrs next day. (2 trips)

01492 Weekly superfast special will leave Hazrat Nizamuddin at 22.10 hrs on Saturdays 08.03.2025 and 15.03.2025 and arrive Pune at 23.55 hrs next day. (2 trips)

Halts: Lonavala, Kalyan, Bhiwandi Road, Vasai Road, Palghar, Vapi, Valsad, Udhna Junction, Vadodara, Ratlam, Bhawani Mandi, Sawai Madhopur, and Mathura Junction.

Composition: 01 AC 2-Tier, 04 AC 3-Tier, 11 Sleeper Class, 04 General Second Class, 02 Luggage cum Guard's Brake Vans (22

Coaches).

8) CSMT - Kanniyakumari - CSMT Bi-Weekly Superfast Special (4 Trips)

01005 Bi-Weekly superfast special will leave CSMT at 00.20 hrs on Mondays 10.03.2025 and 17.03.2025 and arrive Kanniyakumari at 12.15 hrs next day. (2 trips)

01006 Bi-Weekly superfast special will leave Kanniyakumari at 14.15 hrs on Tuesdays 11.03.2025 and 18.03.2025 and arrive CSMT at 04.15 hrs third day. (2 trips)

Halts: Dadar, Thane, Kalyan, Lonavala, Pune, Daund, Solapur, Kalaburagi, Wadi, Krishna, Raichur, Mantralayam Road, Adoni, Guntakal Gooty, Tadipatri, Yerraguntla, Cuddapah, Ruzampet, Renigunta, Tiruttani, Katpadi, Vellore Cantonment, Tiruvannamalai,

Thirukkivilur, Villupuram, Vriddhachalam Jn., Ariyalur, Tiruchirappalli Jn., Dindigul Jn., Kudal nagar, Madurai Jn., Virudhunagar Jn., Satur, Kovilpatti, Tirunelveli Jn, Valliyur and Nagarcovil Jn.

Composition: Two AC-2 Tier, 09 AC-3 Tier, 05 Sleeper Class, 02 General Second Class, 2 Luggage Cum brake van. (20 Coaches)

9) LTT-Thiruvananthapuram North-LTT Weekly Special - 4 trips

01063 Special will leave Lokmanya Tilak Terminus every Thursday at 16.00 hrs on 06.03.2025 and 13.03.2025 and will arrive Thiruvananthapuram North at 22.45 hrs next day. (2 trips)

01064 Special will leave Thiruvananthapuram North every Saturday at 16.20 hrs on 08.03.2025 and 15.03.2025 and will arrive Lokmanya Tilak Terminus at 00.45 hrs on third day. (2 trips)

Halts: Thane, Panvel, Pen, Roha, Khed, Chiplun, Sangameshwar Road, Ratnagiri, Kankavali, Sindhudurg, Kudal, Sawantwadi Road, Thivim, Karmali, Madgaon Jn, Karwar, Gokarna Road, Kumta, Murdeshwar, Bhatkal, Mookanbika Road, Byndoor, Kundapur, Udupi, Suratkal, Thokur, Mangaluru Jn, Kasaragod, Kannur, Calicut, Tirur, Shoranur, Thrissur, Ernakulam Town, Kottayam, Tiruvalla, Chengannur, Mavelikara, Kayankulam and Kollam.

## Surprise inspection of Vizianagaram Railway Station by DRM, ECoR



(Standard Post Bureau)

Visakhapatnam, Feb 27 : Divisional Railway Manager, Waltair Division Shri Lalit Bohra did surprise inspection of Vizianagaram station on 26.02.2025 night. Accompanied by ADRM (operations) Shri Manoj

Kumar Sahoo & senior officials, Divisional Railway Manager checked for cleanliness, crowd management, passenger amenities and safety related issues.

DRM Mr Lalit Bohra inspected the Platform No.1

Booking Office area, Foot over bridge, Catering stalls etc and reviewed the Amrit Bharat Station works at the station.

He checked the various facilities at the station during his maiden visit to the station.

## Central Railway contributes significantly to the success of Maha Kumbh 3.85 lakh devotees travelled

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Feb 27 : Central Railway has played a pivotal role in the grand success of MahaKumbh-2025. With a well-planned and extensive train service network, over 3.85 lakh devotees have been able to travel comfortably to take a holy dip at Prayagraj during MahaKumbh-2025, one of the largest religious gathering of world. "The Maha Kumbh at Prayagraj saw a massive influx of pilgrims from all over the country, and Indian Railways played a pivotal role in facilitating their journey. A major part of the rail operation during this spiritual gathering was carried out by Central Railway, which ensured that the devotees reached the holy land of Prayagraj

and nearby cities with ease and comfort. With a record 17,000 plus train trips, Indian Railways has played an important role in transporting devotees from various destinations to Prayagraj and nearby areas and back.

Central Railway operated a total of 823 train services from Mumbai alone, which includes 708 train services from Lokmanya Tilak Terminus (LTT) and 115 train services from Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) to facilitate the journey of Kumbh Mela devotees.

Apart from Mumbai, Pune has also contributed significantly by operating 102 train services including 6 special trains, while Nagpur witnessed 225 train services including 6 special

trains. These trains were meticulously planned and operated to ensure smooth and timely travel for the devotees, attending the Maha Kumbh.

Central Railway facilitated devotees with more than 6793 train stoppages at various stations for Maha Kumbh-2025

"Several trains passing through major stations of Central Railway have seen a remarkable influx of devotees:

\* 383 trains having stoppages at Thane

\* 687 trains having stoppages at Kalyan

\* 723 trains having stoppages at Bhusawal

\* 601 trains having stoppages at Nashik

\* 537 trains having stoppages at Manmad

"\* 138 trains having stoppages at Betul"

Central Railway took comprehensive measures to provide a safe, comfortable, and hassle-free journey for the pilgrims. The planning for the Maha Kumbh began well before the event started, with special attention paid to the specific demands of train travel on auspicious days. In anticipation of the overwhelming rush, additional trains were scheduled, and regular monitoring of the situation was carried out by senior railway officials, who remained vigilant round the clock.

CCTV footage from various stations ensured that all aspects of the operation were closely observed.

## SC disposes challenge to Rakesh Asthana's appointment, leaves legal question open

New Delhi, Feb 27 (UNI) : The Supreme Court recently disposed of a challenge to the appointment of former Delhi Police Commissioner Rakesh Asthana.

However, it left open the legal question of whether the 2006 judgment in Prakash Singh versus Union of India applies to the appointment of Delhi Police Commissioners.

A bench, comprising Justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh, stated, "The only legal issue that survives for consideration is whether the principles enumerated by this court in Prakash Singh (I), Prakash Singh (II), and Prakash Singh (III) shall be applicable in the matter of appointment of Commissioner of Police, Delhi. While the case of the petitioner is that those principles will apply 'mutatis mutandis' to the Commissioner of Police, Delhi, the Union of India contends that the Prakash Singh decision does not apply to the deployment, posting, or appointment of officers belonging to the AGMUT cadre."

Given that Asthana retired during the pendency of proceedings, the Court ruled, "Keeping in view the subsequent events mentioned above, the special leave petition is disposed of as having become infructuous. However, the question of law is kept open to be gone into

in an appropriate case." Asthana, a 1984-batch Gujarat cadre IPS officer, was appointed Delhi Police Commissioner in July 2021 on inter-cadre deputation. Four days before his retirement, the Ministry of Home Affairs extended his service for one year beyond his superannuation date of July 31, 2021. Several litigants challenged his appointment in the Delhi High Court, arguing that the post of Delhi Police Commissioner was akin to a State DGP position and, therefore, the Prakash Singh guidelines should have been followed by the central government.

The Prakash Singh judgment laid down the following key guidelines for the appointment of State DGPs:

That the DGP should be selected from the three senior-most officers empanelled by UPSC, based on service record and experience. The DGP must have a minimum tenure of two years, irrespective of superannuation and the candidates should have a residual tenure of at least six months before retirement.

Petitioners contended that Asthana's appointment violated these guidelines as he was not empanelled by UPSC and had less than six months of residual tenure, retiring just four days after his appointment.