

## IN BRIEF

### Complaint of sexual harassment against Nana Patekar disposed off on technical grounds

Mumbai, Mar 8 (UNI) : A court here has disposed of the complaint filed against actor Nana Patekar, accused of sexually harassing an actress during the #MeToo movement in 2018, on technical grounds, a lawyer said on Saturday.

Questioning the delay of over 10 years in filing a complaint, a Magistrate court said that the FIR (first information report) was filed under sections 354 (sexual harassment) and 509 (outraging modesty of a woman) of the Indian Penal Code in 2018 for an alleged incident dating back to 2008.

Both the sections have a limitation of three years as per the Criminal Procedure Code, but no explanation or reasons were given for the delay in filing the FIR, so many years after the alleged incident, the court said.

The actress had alleged that she was sexually harassed by Patekar in 2008 during a movie shoot. Based on her complaint, an FIR was filed at Oshiwara police station in 2018 against Patekar, choreographer Ganesh Acharya and two others.

### Delhi Cabinet approves Mahila Samridhi Yojana to provide Rs 2,500 monthly aid to women

New Delhi, Mar 8 (UNI) On the occasion of International Women's Day, the Delhi Cabinet on Saturday approved the 'Mahila Samridhi Yojana' to provide Rs 2,500 monthly aid to women.

Talking to reporters here, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said that the Mahila Samridhi Yojana was approved in the Cabinet meeting held today. She said that for making good use of the occasion of International Women's Day, the Cabinet met, and the promise made to the sisters of Delhi before the Assembly election was approved. For this, a provision of Rs 5100 crore has been made so that poor sisters can get benefits. The Chief Minister said that a committee has been formed headed by her and three Cabinet Ministers Ashish Sood, Parvesh Sahib Singh and Kapil Mishra will be the members.

## 'Strengthening of rural economy through women's self-help groups'



(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Mar 8 : With women becoming entrepreneurs through Self-Help Groups (SHG) due to financial support schemes of the central and the state governments, the rural economy is getting stronger, asserted Maharashtra Governor C P Radhakrishnan on Saturday.

He was speaking at the state-level concluding ceremony of 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' function organised by the Department of Women &

Child Development and the felicitation of girls at Raj Bhavan on occasion of International Women's Day.

The Governor said that contribution of women is important for development of the country along with the family and noted that the women who were felicitated today are doing remarkable work in various fields.

As per the Prime Minister's decision, women have been given the opportunity to work in the three branches of armed forces and they have proved

their mettle there as well, he added. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Ministers Aditi Tatkare, Meghna Bordikar, State Women's Commission Chairperson Rupali Chakankar and members of Women SHG were present.

Fadnavis also spoke on occasion. Meanwhile, interacting with women journalists on occasion of International Women's Day, the Chief Minister said that the government will not compromise on the safety of women. The government is making strict laws for the

safety of women, he said and stressed on the need for change in the mentality towards women in the society. The state government is taking concrete measures to control crimes against women with the help of cyber technology to stop malpractice through morphing and deepfake videos on social media, Fadnavis said and asserted that the government will not compromise on the safety of women. Complaints of women are being redressed immediately, he added.

## We bow to our Nari Shakti: PM on International Women's Day

New Delhi, Mar 8 (UNI) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday extended his wishes on the occasion of International Women's Day, bowing to the strength and power of 'Nari Shakti'.

He highlighted his government's commitment to empowering women through various schemes and programs. He said, "The government has always worked for empowering women, reflected in our schemes and programs."

"We bow to our Nari Shakti on #WomensDay! Our government has always worked for empowering women, reflected in our schemes and programs. Today, as promised, my social media

properties will be taken over by women who are making a mark in diverse fields," he wrote on X.

On International Women's Day, the PM also handed over the control of his social media accounts to women making a mark in diverse fields.

Scientist Elina Mishra, Indian chess Grandmaster R. Vaishali, and Shilpi Soni, a space scientist, were among the women achievers who took over his X handle.

Along with the wishes, the Prime Minister also shared a video titled 'Nari Shakti: Viksit Bharat Ki Sabse Badi Gurantee', highlighting the importance of women's empowerment.

## People of Gujarat wants an alternative to BJP, not B-team: Rahul Gandhi

Ahmedabad, Mar 8 (UNI) : Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Saturday called upon party workers to build up a relationship with the people of Gujarat, stressing that they were tired of the BJP's three-decade-long rule and were seeking an alternative.

"People of Gujarat want an alternative vision, not the B-team of the BJP", Gandhi said, while addressing party workers here.

He said, the Congress can easily provide that alternative. Noting that, the Congress only needs to improve its vote share by five percent in Gujarat and there will be a "complete turnaround".

Stating that Gujarat gave great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel to the Congress and to the nation, the former Congress President said, "People of Gujarat were expecting the Congress to provide the same sort of leadership once

again". Rahul said, he wanted to build up a relationship with the people of Gujarat including youth, farmers, labourers, small and medium businessmen and traders, who were looking towards Congress to provide an alternative vision, as the current "model" that is in place for about last three decades has completely failed.

He noted that the small and medium industry and trade were the backbone of Gujarat's economy. But, he regretted that this section of the business and trade had been completely destroyed, while referring to the massive decline in the diamond, textile and ceramic industry.

"Gujarat is stuck; it is looking for a way out. It does not see a way out", the Rae Bareilly MP observed, adding, "Gujarat wants to move forward". He made it clear that the people of Gujarat want an alternative and not a B-team of the BJP. The

## Speed up mining lease auction process in State : Fadnavis

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Mar 8 : Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said on Saturday that the mining leases in the state which have been auctioned, should start immediately and directed the relevant government agencies to take immediate action for this.

Presiding over a meeting held here in connection with implementation of 40 mining leases of major minerals in the state, he also directed that the auction process should be speeded up to make the mining leases operational in the state.

He suggested that the 'Gati Shakti' platform should be used effectively in the new mining lease approval process.

Fadnavis also said that the hearings related to the mining leases should be completed immediately and the industries that comply with the rules should be given an extension, he added.



## Women's empowerment lies at the core of India's ....

Highlighting the transformative role of women in advancing India's growth, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Saturday stated that women are not just participants in development but are taking the lead across various fields, including governance, science, defence, education, and entrepreneurship. On the occasion of International Women's Day, Om Birla reiterated that India is witnessing a new era where women are assuming leadership roles at every level—from grassroots democracy to the highest positions of power, a statement by Lok Sabha Secretariat said.

(See on page 2)

## Nothing concrete done for women empowerment before ...



Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Saturday came down heavily on previous regime for doing nothing concrete to empower women, saying only his government had taken a number of steps for women empowerment after coming to power in 2005 in Bihar.

(See on page 2)

## India, Australia to focus on strategic partnership on .....



India and Australia agreed to strengthen their partnership under the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, focusing on mutual dedication to regional security and defence cooperation.

(See on page 5)

## Congress party organises Sadbhavana Padayatra

Mumbai, Mar 8 (UNI) : To ensure that incidents such as brutal and inhumane murder of Massajog's Sarpanch Santosh Deshmukh do not happen again, to eradicate cruelty and to promote humanity and harmony, the Congress party had organised the Sadbhavana Padayatra, stated Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee president Harshvardhan Sapkal on Saturday.

The Congress state chief visited the late Santosh Deshmukh's family in the

morning and formally launched the Sadbhavana Yatra from Massajog.

Speaking to media about the march, Sapkal questioned, "Will we learn nothing from Santosh Deshmukh's sacrifice? He gave his life fighting against a certain ideology, and we must all take a stand to eradicate it. Harmony is in the DNA of our country and enshrined in our Constitution. We are the torchbearers of this ideology."

He stressed that

criminals have no caste or religion—they are simply criminals.

While discussions are ongoing about who is behind this mentality, the spirit of harmony must be taken to the people, he said.

"We stand with the Deshmukh family in their fight for justice. The culprits in Deshmukh's murder must be given the harshest punishment. Such an incident should never happen again in Maharashtra, and this sacrifice must not be in vain.

## Mumbai police issues Blue corner notice

Mumbai, Mar 8 (UNI) The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the city police has issued a Blue Corner notice against former chairman and acting vice-chairman of New India Cooperative Bank for their alleged involvement in the Rs 122 crore scam, officials said here on Saturday.

Investigators have traced Hireen Bhanu, the alleged mastermind and former chairman of the bank, to Abu Dhabi and his wife Gauri, the acting vice-chairman of Bank, to Thailand, leading to issuance of the said notice.

The EOW had initially issued a lookout circular. Now, with confirmed foreign locations, the alert has been issued.

According to legal experts, notices are international requests for cooperation or alerts allowing police in member countries to share critical crime-related information while the Blue notice is to collect additional information about a person's identity, location or activities in relation to a criminal investigation. Now, with confirmed foreign locations, the alert has been issued.

## New Zealand ready to have a second go against India: Santner



New Zealand captain Mitchell Santner concedes while the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 Final is not just any game - his team will prepare for facing India in the showdown in just the same way as they have done before all their other matches.

(See on page 8)



## In-depth discussion in Jagriti Sammelan organized by Rajasthani Mahila Mandal on Women Empowerment



Various guests are seen on the stage of Jagriti Sammelan organised by Rajasthani Mahila Mandal in Mumbai on the occasion of International Women's Day.

(Standard Post Bureau) Mumbai, March 8 : On the occasion of International Women's Day, Rajasthani Mahila Mandal successfully organized Jagriti Sammelan in Mumbai. The theme of this conference was - "How much women empowerment."

This thought-provoking event took place on the evening of Friday, 7th March, 2025 at Tejpal Hall, Gowalia Tank, Mumbai, in which eminent guest speakers discussed in depth the rights of women and their empowerment. As the chief guest of the conference, former Union Minister Smt. Smriti Irani mesmerized everyone with her speech. She gave useful information about various important efforts being made by the government in

the interest of women.

The conference was effectively conducted by Dr. Manju Mangal Prabhat Lodha, Chairperson of Lodha Foundation and Vice-President of Maharashtra State Hindi Sahitya Academy, who conducted the entire conference efficiently and shared her elegant views on various aspects of women empowerment. Renowned advocate Mrs. Mrinalini Deshmukh highlighted the difficulties faced by women in getting justice and the laws made in the interest of women. On this occasion, during the "Mahila Pratibha Samman Program", IAS officer Ms. Sarika Jain was honored with "Mahila Pratibha Samman", who cleared the UPSC examination on the strength of her self-confidence and

hard work even in adverse circumstances. Currently, she is working as a senior officer in the Income Tax Department. She was honored with a trophy, shawl and a bouquet. On this occasion, an inspirational video of Ms. Sarika Jain was also presented, which inspired everyone immensely.

Her story of struggle and success taught everyone that we should maintain patience and courage even in difficult times. Under the cultural presentation, famous artist of Bangalore, Anjana Chandak gave a solo play named 'Sita' regarding Sita's patience and self-confidence. In this play, she presented the self-confidence, tolerance and patience of Mother Sita in a lively form, which emotionally moved all the audience. At the beginning

of the conference, the welcome speech was given by Mrs. Rajshree Birla, Senior Trustee of Rajasthani Mahila Mandal, who warmly welcomed all the guests. In the end, the President of the Mandal, Mrs. Lata Rungta thanked everyone.

The concept of this conference was ensured by Urmila Rungta and Madhuri Nevatia. Lekha Rungta and the entire executive committee had a special contribution in making the conference successful. This Jagriti Sammelan established a meaningful dialogue on the real situation of women empowerment and underlined the collective responsibility of the society to move forward in this direction. A large number of women participated in the conference.

## Nothing concrete done for women empowerment before 2005 in Bihar: Nitish

Patna, Mar 8 (UNI) Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Saturday came down heavily on previous regime for doing nothing concrete to empower women, saying only his government had taken a number of steps for women empowerment after coming to power in 2005 in Bihar.

Kumar while addressing a function organised to mark international women's day at his party office here said that no previous regime before 2005 had done something concrete for women empowerment in Bihar. His government had taken a number of steps for women empowerment after coming to power in Bihar in 2005, he pointed out.

"Women are making progress in all sectors including health, education, and other government services, due to opportunities given to them by our government", Chief Minister said adding that women were given 35 percent reservation in government services including police recruitment. Bihar was the first state in the country to give 50 percent reservation to women in Panchayati Raj institutions and local bodies, he pointed out.

## On the eve of International Women's Day-2025

### Indian Railway Catering and Tourism (West Zone) Mumbai Organized Entertainment and Health Awareness Programme for Women



(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, March 8 : On the eve of International Women's Day-2025, seminars and entertainment programmes on mental health of women were organized in IRCTC, West Zone, Mumbai, in which women

employees of Human Resource Department, Finance, Catering and Tourism Departments were enthusiastically participated.

On this occasion, all the women employees of the office were also honoured by giving them gifts.

## Grand ceremony organized at Banaras Locomotive Works on International Women's Day



(Standard Post Bureau) Mumbai, March 8 : A grand ceremony was organized today on the occasion of International Women's Day in the Cinema Hall of Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW). Various activities were organized in this program to promote women empowerment, equality and self-reliance.

The program was inaugurated by lighting the lamp by the Chief Guest,

Special Guest and members of BLW Women Welfare Organization. Thereafter, the Chief Guest and Special Guests were welcomed by Mrs. Chitra Singh by giving planters. In her inaugural address, Chief Guest Mrs. Madhu Shukla appreciated the contribution of women employees and said that women are setting new dimensions of success in every field with their hard work and skill. Expressing

happiness over the increasing participation of women in BLW, she said that this institute is committed to giving equal opportunities to women and their development.

On this occasion, various inspirational speakers highlighted the achievements of women and the challenges they face. Expressing her views, renowned social worker and member of BLW Sexual

Harassment Committee, Mrs. Jagriti Rahi, invited as a guest speaker, said that the vision of self-reliant India cannot be fulfilled until women come into leadership roles in every field.

She believes that women have contributed as much to the freedom struggle as men. She inspired everyone and said that with the participation of women, both society and

organization become more capable and empowered.

Dr. Preksha Pandey, Gynecologist at BLW Central Hospital, said in her statement that today's women are not behind in any field.

They also have the ability to do whatever they decide. She said that in the present perspective, it is necessary to have equality in women's education, behavior and thoughts.

## JK Budget is 'anti-people and hollow': AIP

Srinagar, Mar 8 (UNI) : Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) headed by jailed Member Parliament Engineer Rashid termed the Budget presented by Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in the Assembly on Friday as "anti-people and hollow."

This was informed by State Secretary of AIP Sheikh Ashiq here on Saturday.

He said the budget offers nothing substantial for the common masses, industries, commerce, traders or transporters.

Addressing a press conference in Srinagar, Ashiq warned that any

move to increase petrol, diesel prices, or impose a 5% hike in taxes on Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) would be met with strong political resistance, as it will have a cascading effect on all sectors and burden every citizen. "We have pursued extensively to ensure a decrease in ATF taxes. It was the Lieutenant Governor of J&K who, on our request, slashed ATF tax in 2021. Now, the Omar-led government is set to increase it substantially. This is unacceptable. Such moves will not only burden the people but will also trigger a hike in the prices of essential goods and

services, affecting every household and business. AIP will fight tooth and nail against any such hikes," he said. The AIP State Secretary said that despite tall claims, the budget failed to address key concerns.

"There is no mention of welfare measures for industries and commerce. It is an empty budget. The promise of 200 free electricity units and 12 LPG cylinders has been completely ignored. Even the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) beneficiaries, who are very few in number, will see limited benefit that too with condition," he said.

## All Women crew special trains flagged off on International Women's Day



(Standard Post Bureau)

Varanasi, March 8 : To celebrate International Women's Day (IWD), an all-women crew special train was flagged off from Visakhapatnam to Srikakulam Road by Smt. Jyotsna Bohra, President of the East Coast Railway Women's Welfare Organization (ECoRWWO), Waltair Division at Visakhapatnam station. The event was graced by Divisional Railway Manager Shri Lalit Bohra and executive members of ECoRWWO. Later, the Swachh Sewaks were felicitated by President Smt Jyotsna at the Visakhapatnam Station.

Waltair Division has consistently been at the forefront of promoting women's empowerment, actively engaging women in various roles such as track maintenance, train operations, and other key areas. Women have played vital roles in Route Relay Interlocking, train management, loco operations, ticket checking, and office duties. The Division has also established all-women teams at Loco Sheds, responsible for maintaining crucial parts of locomotives, and operates dedicated women's security teams, Meri Saheli and Subhadra Vahini, to ensure the safety and well-being of women passengers both on trains and at stations.

As part of the International Women's Day celebrations, Waltair Division organized a series of events at the Subham Sports Complex, where DRM Shri Lalit Bohra was the chief guest. The events included a seminar on Work-Life Balance, delivered by Mrs. Keerthi Aduri, Senior Executive (HR), Gitam University, and a workshop on Psychology and Stress Management by Dr. Ramya Spandana, Associate Professor, Psychiatry, Gitam University. Additionally, an awareness program on Women's Health & Nutrition was conducted by Divisional Medical Officer Dr. Bhashini Priyanka and Sr. DMO Dr. T. Tarun. A session

on women's rights with insights on the protection of women from domestic violence was delivered by Mrs. Anuradha Pappu, Senior Advocate and President of WAWA, Visakhapatnam. To conclude, fun games were organized to engage participants and offer some entertainment. The guest speakers were felicitated for their insightful guidance and awareness lectures. In his address, DRM Mr Lalit Bohra emphasized that International Women's Day is a time to reflect on the progress made in women's empowerment and to continue accelerating efforts to overcome gender inequality.





South Western Railway DRM Amitesh Kumar Sinha flags off a train managed by an all-womn crew during celebrations of the International Women's Day, at Bengaluru Railway Station on Saturday.

## Court rejects Railway plea banning shoeshine workers on railway platforms

Mumbai, Mar 8 (UNI): A district court in neighbouring Thane city has rejected an appeal filed by the Divisional Commercial Manager (DCM) of Central Railway, seeking to prevent nine shoeshine workers from working at Thane and Mumbai railway stations, a lawyer said on Saturday.

DCM of Railway had filed appeal in absence of any shoeshine societies successfully securing tenders for performing shoe

polishing on railway platforms.

The court held that since the livelihoods of the shoeshine workers depend on this profession, it would not interfere with the trial court's order. However, it granted the Railways the option of approaching the trial court for a modification of the order if a new tender is floated and approved.

Principal District Judge S B Agarwal, in a six-page order, stated: "No doubt, the arrangement (of

allowing nine shoeshine boys to work on the railway platform without any tender) was temporary in nature until the tender was issued and granted.

"As per the order of 2007, these nine shoeshine boys were permitted to work. The trial court observed that the tender awarded to Bhima Shoeshine was rejected and that no new tender had been invited by the railways. The situation remains unchanged to this

day." In view of this, a strong prima facie case for continuation is clearly made out since the livelihood of the plaintiffs is involved, and no interference is warranted in the impugned order."

However, the court granted the Railways the liberty to approach the trial court for a modification of the order as and when a fresh tender is allotted, regarding continuation of the nine shoeshine boys working without tenders.

## RPI (A) chief asks Govt to fulfil electoral promise of giving Rs 2,100 stipend to Ladki Bahin yojana beneficiaries

(Standard Post Bureau) Pune, Mar 8 : Union Minister of State for Social Justice and RPI (A) president, Ramdas Athawale, said here on Saturday that the Mahayuti government, led by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, should fulfil promise of giving a stipend of Rs 2,100 instead of Rs 1,500 to the women beneficiaries of Ladki Bahin yojana made by Eknath Shinde when he was the chief minister.

Talking to reporters here, Athawale said although the Ladki Bahin scheme is putting some pressure on the government exchequer, the state government should fulfil its promise to

provide more funds to the Ladki Bahin beneficiaries.

Some decisions taken by Eknath Shinde as the chief minister have been cancelled by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, as a result, an atmosphere of tension is being created between Shinde and Fadnavis, the RPI-A chief noted.

In fact, during Shinde's tenure as chief minister and in the current government led by Fadnavis, the Chief Minister and both the Deputy CMs take decisions together after deliberation, he added.

RPI (A) chief Ramdas Athawale also demanded that a grand memorial for Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar be built on a two-acre plot

lying vacant behind Ambedkar Bhavan near Pune Railway Station.

He said that he will discuss the matter with Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis.

Although this site is being sought for a cancer hospital, another site should be selected for the hospital, he suggested.

Although it is necessary to build a hospital, he clarified that he is insistent that a grand Dr Ambedkar memorial be built on the site near Ambedkar Bhavan.

This demand is supported by the Republican Party., he said and informed that the party will protest in all districts, talukas and important cities of the

state from March 10 to 19 for this demand.

Athawale said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the most popular leader in the country.

The Mahayuti is getting a huge response from the people in the state and the National Democratic Alliance across the country, therefore, it will not be possible for Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to unseat Modi.

The INDA bloc at the Centre and the Maha Vikas Aghadi in the state have become ineffective, he added.

Athawale strongly condemned growing cases of atrocities and humiliation against women.

## Peon at Land Records office trapped in ACB

Nashik, Mar 8 (UNI) : A peon at Land Records office here has been arrested by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) while allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs 3.5 lakh for himself and the Superintendent of Land Records from a complainant in Niphad tehsil of the district. Accused Nitendra Kashinath Gadhe, who was working as a peon at the Land Records Office, Niphad, had demanded a bribe of Rs four lakh for himself and Deputy Superintendent of Land Records, Bhabad from complainant in return for marking the boundary of the land in Niphad tehsil of the district, sources in ACB said on Saturday. However, after bargaining, the bribe amount was reduced to Rs 3.5 lakh.

According to the complaint, a trap was laid in this regard and Gadhe was caught red-handed while accepting the bribe money from complainant on Friday evening, it was stated.

## Two arrested, iron bars worth Rs 11.60 lakh seized

(Standard Post Bureau)

Kolhapur, Mar 8 : Local Crime Branch (LCB) on Saturday arrested two thieves at Samratnagar, a suburb of the city, and seized iron bars used for building construction worth Rs 11.60 lakh from them. Acting on a tip off, a police team conducted a raid at Samratnagar area and arrested both suspects and recovered stolen iron bars worth Rs 11.60 lakh.

The duo was identified as Aakash Sanjay Kapase (35) and Vishwas Vilas Pati (43), both of the city, who stole iron bars from Arya Steel in Kagal-MIDC area.

## Boy dies in stray dogs attack

Nashik, Mar 8 (UNI) : A five-year-old boy died after being attacked by a pack of stray dogs at Mamdapur in Yeola taluka of the district. The boy, Shyam Mamraj Rathod, went missing after returning home from school on Friday. His family members launched a search for him and found his body later in the evening, sources said on Saturday

## Shirpur PI suspended

Dhule, Mar 8 (UNI) : Superintendent of Police Shrikant Dhivare on Saturday suspended Police Inspector Kantilal Patil for allegedly beating people who came to lodge a complaint at the Shirpur city police station of the district.

A non-prosecution case has been registered against PI Kantilal Patil under Sections 115(2), 352, 351(2) of the Indian Penal Code in alleged beating case.

Further investigation of this case has been handed over to SDPO Sanjay Bamble of Sakri.

Along with this, PI Patil's charge has been handed over to Inspector Jaipal Hire of Shirpur taluka police station. Meanwhile, a protest march was also taken out in Shirpur city today to protest the beating by PI Patil of those who came to lodge a complaint.

## Governor Radhakrishnan pays tribute to Ahilyadevi Holkar on her 300th birth anniversary

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, Mar 8 : Describing Maharani Ahilyadevi as an exemplary ruler and an able administrator who served the people with fairness, justice and compassion, Maharashtra Governor C P Radhakrishnan on Saturday called for the use of social and digital media to spread awareness about the life and work of Ahilyadevi Holkar among the younger generation.

Speaking at the 300th birth anniversary celebration of Ahilyadevi Holkar at an event held at BSE Convention Centre here by the Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Holkar Trishatabdi Jayanti Samaroh Samiti, Mumbai,

the Governor said, "Ahilyadevi Holkar redefined governance, establishing justice for the common man. She was not just a queen — she was a reformer and a warrior who redefined leadership with her strength and devotion to her people."

He also recalled how Ahilyadevi Holkar rebuilt numerous temples across India and introduced significant tax reforms, ensuring the well-being of her kingdom's people.

Radhakrishnan said while Adi Sankaracharya achieved the cultural integration of India by establishing Peethas in four directions of India, Punyashloka Ahilyadevi Holkar reconstructed

temples at many places.

He said the public utilities created by Ahilyadevi Holkar have stood the test of time. The Governor expressed his appreciation to the Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Holkar Tri Shatabdi Jayanti Samaroh Samiti Mumbai for its efforts in commemorating Rajmata Ahilyadevi Holkar's legacy. He also inaugurated a dedicated website (ahilyadevi.org) on Rajmata Ahilyadevi Holkar, aimed at preserving and promoting her extraordinary contributions.

Convener of the Samiti Dhiraj Borikar said the Samiti has been organising the programmes and competitions in various colleges of Mumbai.

## Rohini Khadse writes to President demanding pardon for women for one murder

Mumbai, Mar 8 (UNI) : Maharashtra NCP (SP) women's wing president,

Rohini Khadse, has written a letter to President Draupadi Murmu demanding that women be forgiven for one murder, creating a stir in political circles.

On occasion of Women's Day on Saturday, she has sent the letter to the President. A copy of the same was uploaded on social media.

In the said letter, she has sought to draw attention of President

Murmu to the safety of women in the current situation.

While referring to recent gangrape of a 12-year-old girl in Mumbai, Ms Khadse has demanded that women be forgiven for one murder.

Citing findings of an international survey report, she said that the report has recently been published which stated that India is the most unsafe country for women in the Asian continent. This survey has also taken into account many factors such as the rate of disappearance of

women, kidnapping and domestic violence.

She further said in the letter that when the country was in crisis, historical figures like Maharani Tarabai and Ahilyadevi Holkar also took up the sword. "So why should we lag behind when bad tendencies are increasing in society," she stated.

"We hope that you will accept our demand after giving due consideration to our demand. This is your gift to us on International Women's Day," Ms Khadse added.

## IAC chief upbeat about Maha economy getting back on track under CM Fadnavis leadership

Pune, Mar 8 (UNI) National president of India Against Corruption and OBC leader, Hemant Patil, expressed on Saturday that the state's economic train will come back on track under the leadership of Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. Notably, while the country's growth rate is expected to be 6.5 percent, the state's growth rate has been estimated to be 7.3 percent in the Economic Survey Report, he said and pointed that there is a positive atmosphere.

In 2023-24 fiscal year also, the state's growth rate was 7.6 percent, he said and maintained that due to political stability, the possibility of an increase this year cannot be ruled out.

The state's per capita income is likely to increase. Last year, Maharashtra's per capita income was Rs 2.78 lakh crore and this year, it is estimated that it will go up to Rs 3.09 lakh crores, said IAC president. Furthermore, the government is inclined to complete development works that were stalled during the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) period at a fast pace, giving rise to an atmosphere of enthusiasm in agriculture, industry and services sectors, he said.

Talking about the state government's commitment to get farmers out of natural crisis, he claimed that the government has approved Rs 1,470 crore to compensate for the losses suffered by farmers due to unseasonal rains and

## India role significant in changing, unstable world: yoga guru

Kolhapur, Mar 8 (UNI) : India's role is very important amidst the changing global situation and unstable world, said yoga guru Baba Ramdev on Saturday. Addressing a women's rally organised by Patanjali Yoga Samiti (PYS) on occasion of International Women's Day today on grounds of Gandhi Maidan here, he said that the world is facing economic, political and social challenges, in this changing global scenario, India's role is very important. He also said that the world is anxious about what decisions might be taken at crucial moments by Presidents of United States, China, Russia and Korea.

### WESTERN RAILWAY MAINTENANCE WORK

Sr.DEE/P/BCT invites Tender Notice No: EL-Maint-81-903-WA-19 Dated 05.03.2025 Work of location: Mumbai Division - Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract (CAMC) of 10 KVA and 20 KVA UPS for two years. Approx. Cost of Work: ₹5,92,744/- EMD: ₹11,900/- Date & Time of submission: till 02.04.2025, 15.00 hrs. Date & Time of opening: On 02.04.2025 at 15.30 hrs. For further details please visit our website www.ireps.gov.in. 1164

Like us on: [Facebook.com/WesternRly](https://www.facebook.com/WesternRly)

### WESTERN RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT OF GATI SHAKTI MULTI-MODAL

Divisional Railway Manager (Commercial), Mumbai Central division Western Railway DRM Office, Ground Floor Mumbai Central-400008 invites E-Tender No: WR-MMCTOCOMM (CGGC)/3/2025/605274 Name of the Work: Development of Gati Shakti Multi-modal Cargo Terminal (GCT) Under GCT policy at Gangadhara (GGAR) Entirely on Railway Land. Earnest Money Deposit: ₹1,50,13,400/- Date & Time For closure & Submission of e-Tender: till 03.04.2025, 15.00 hrs. Date & Time for opening of e-Tender: On 03.04.2025 at 15.30 hrs. For further details please visit our website www.ireps.gov.in. 1162

Like us on: [Facebook.com/WesternRly](https://www.facebook.com/WesternRly)



राष्ट्रीय परीक्षा एजेंसी National Testing Agency

(An Autonomous Organization under the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India)

### BIOTECHNOLOGY ELIGIBILITY TEST (BET) 2025

Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India, through nodal agency, Regional Centre for Biotechnology (RCB), Faridabad announces the following National Examination:

**Biotechnology Eligibility Test (BET) for award of DBT – Junior Research Fellowship (DBT-JRF) for pursuing research in frontier areas of Biotechnology and Life Sciences.**

Regional Centre for Biotechnology (RCB), Faridabad, on behalf of Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India is conducting BET 2025 through the National Testing Agency (NTA). NTA has been established by Ministry of Education, Government of India as an autonomous, self-reliant and self-sustained premier testing organization.

Submission of online application forms	28 February, 2025 to 28 March, 2025 (upto 5:00 PM)
Last date of submission of application fee	28 March 2025 (upto 11:50 PM)
Date and Time of BET- 2025	13 May 2025 (Tuesday) from 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Mode of examination	Computer Based Objective Test
Paper pattern	Multiple Choice Questions
Exam fee	Rs.650/- for SC/ST/PwD and Rs 1300/- for all others

Scheme, duration, medium, syllabus of examination, eligibility criteria, examination cities, important dates etc., are mentioned in the Information Bulletin, hosted at [www.nta.ac.in](http://www.nta.ac.in) / <http://dbtbet2025.ntaonline.in/> / [www.rcb.res.in](http://www.rcb.res.in). Candidates who wish to appear in the examination may read the detailed Information Bulletin for BET 2025 and apply online only at [www.nta.ac.in](http://www.nta.ac.in) / <http://dbtbet2025.ntaonline.in/>. The examination fee is also required to be paid online, as mentioned above through Net Banking/Debit Card/Credit Card/ UPI/Wallet. Candidates are also advised to visit the above websites from time-to-time for any updates. Please write to [dbt@nta.ac.in](mailto:dbt@nta.ac.in) or call 011-40759000 for any help.

CBC 21354/12/0009/2425

Director (Exams)



## STANDARD POST

## DMK calls for nationwide opposition to delimitation exercise

The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) has decided to mobilise political parties across India to oppose the Union government's proposed delimitation exercise.

The decision was taken during a meeting of DMK Parliamentarians at the party headquarters, 'Anna Arivalayam', under the leadership of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK president M. K. Stalin.

According to sources within the party, CM Stalin assigned key ministers to visit different states and engage with regional political parties, urging them to join a joint action committee that will scrutinise the implications of the delimitation proposal.

State IT Minister Palanivel Thiaga Rajan has been tasked with reaching out to Kerala, while Ministers EV Velu, Kanimozhi Karunanidhi, and TRB Rajaa will travel to Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, and Odisha, respectively. Additionally, DMK MPs have been directed to collaborate with other opposition MPs in Delhi to mount a strong challenge against the delimitation exercise in Parliament.

The party has consistently voiced concerns about the issue, alongside its opposition to the Union government's three-language policy.

The DMK plans to raise multiple issues in the upcoming parliamentary session. Apart from delimitation and the three-language policy, the party will focus on the delay in the allocation of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) funds, the denial of flood relief assistance, and the non-disbursement of funds under the Samagra Shiksha scheme due to Tamil Nadu's rejection of the National Education Policy (NEP).

The decision to aggressively push these issues comes amid criticism from opposition parties, including the newly formed Tamizhaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK), led by actor Vijay, regarding the DMK MPs' performance in Parliament.

By taking a proactive stance, the DMK aims to counter these criticisms effectively. Chief Minister Stalin has also criticised what he describes as the Union government's discriminatory allocation of funds for language development.

He highlighted that while Tamil is spoken by approximately eight crore people, only Rs 74 crore has been allocated for its development.

In contrast, Sanskrit, which has a significantly smaller number of speakers, has received Rs 1,488 crore. CM Stalin has been vocal about the BJP-led government's alleged attempts to impose Hindi on Tamil Nadu through the NEP's three-language policy. His opposition extends beyond India, as he recently supported a protest by the Tamil diaspora in the United States against the policy.

Tamil Diaspora Protests in the US A group of Tamil protesters in Dallas, US, recently demonstrated against the Union government's language policy, accusing it of undermining Tamil Nadu's long-standing two-language system. CM Stalin expressed solidarity with the demonstrators by sharing a news report and a video of the protest, using the hashtag #VazhgaTamil.

The DMK's firm stand against both the three-language policy and the proposed delimitation exercise signals its continued resistance to what it perceives as attempts to diminish Tamil Nadu's linguistic and political influence.

## Ajit Pawar to present first MahaYuti govt budget amid financial constraints

Amid financial constraints to continue freebies and simultaneously carry out capital expenditure despite rising public debt, the fiscal and revenue deficits, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister and Finance and Planning Minister Ajit Pawar will present the state budget for the year 2025-26 on Monday.

It will be the first budget of the newly-elected MahaYuti government but it will be Ajit Pawar's 12th budget as Finance Minister. He will become the second Finance Minister after Sheshrao Wankhede (who had presented a record 13 times) to present the state budget more than 10 times not necessarily in succession. Former finance minister Jayant Patil had presented the budget 10 times and Sushilkumar Shinde nine times.

Ajit Pawar faces the major challenge of bridging the gap between receipts and expenditures while laying a much-needed emphasis on financial discipline in a bid to chase the state government's much more ambitious target of a \$1 trillion economy by 2027-28. Ahead of the presentation of the



budget for 2025-26, the state government has initiated a 30 per cent spending cut in revenue and capital expenditure from annual allocation in various degrees across departments.

The state finance department has estimated that the fiscal deficit has already crossed Rs 2 lakh crore against the budget estimate of Rs 1.10 lakh crore by the end of 2024-25 due to a slew of welfare and development schemes of Rs 96,000 crore including Ladki Bahin Yojana launched in the July last year.

However, the experts believe that the fiscal deficit may widen to 4.8 per cent of gross state domestic product (GSDP), significantly higher than earlier estimates of 2.6 per

cent if the state government continues to implement various welfare and development schemes unabatedly. Fiscal deficit is projected to be lowered to 2.3 per cent of GSDP by 2026-27. The populist schemes were amounting to 2.2 per cent of GSDP and 19 per cent of revenue receipts. A state finance department officer said with committed expenditures (salaries, pension, and interest payments) already accounting for 55 per cent of revenue, only 26 per cent of revenue is available for discretionary spending, including capex. Despite being India's largest state by economic size, Maharashtra's capex-to-GSDP ratio averaged just 1.5 per cent from fiscal

2019 to 2024, placing it at 16th out of 19 large states.

The state government has budgeted a revenue deficit of Rs 20,500 crore, which is 0.5 per cent of GSDP for FY25. With additional funds earmarked for women welfare schemes such as Rs 25,000 crore for the Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana, Rs 6,056 towards skill development, Rs 4,317 crore towards social justice, Rs 4,185 crore towards public health and allocation towards other welfare measures, the revenue deficit would be 1.3 per cent of GSDP in FY25. However, the state government faces an acid test to fulfil its poll promise of increasing monthly aid to Rs 2,100 from Rs 1,500 to women beneficiaries under the

Ladki Bahin Yojana.

"This change is likely to increase the budget allocation by 40 per cent, from Rs 46,000 crore (1.1 per cent of the GSDP) to Rs 64,400 crore (1.5 per cent of the GSDP)," according to the finance department sources.

Another challenge the government faces is rapidly rising public debt even though it has proposed to maintain the tax revenue of 11.70 per cent of GSDP in 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27. The total debt stock, which was Rs 7.11 lakh crore in 2023-24 and expected to increase to Rs 7.82 lakh crore in 2024-25 will be 17.59 per cent and 18.35 per cent respectively.

However, the government has estimated total debt of 18.61 per cent and 18.91 per cent in 2025-26 and 2026-27 respectively in the wake of its focus on generating productive assets. However, the government claims that the total debt will be maintained within the permissible limit of 25 per cent of the GSDP.

Incidentally, NITI Aayog in its report on the Fiscal Health Index released in January has cautioned the Maharashtra government about the surge in the debt. "Debt has grown at

an average rate of 9.92 per cent annually between 2018-19 to 2022-23. The majority of the borrowing was used to repay older borrowing in the current period. While the Debt to GSDP ratio went down marginally to 18.1 per cent in the current year from 19.3 per cent in 2021-22, it stood at 17.27 per cent in 2018-19. The ratio of interest payment to Revenue Receipts has also declined from 12.2 per cent in 2018-19 to 10.3 per cent in 2022-23," reads the report.

However, the finance department sources said that Ajit Pawar in his budget will give the government's road map to increase own tax and non-tax revenue by tapping the loopholes and curbing tax evasion. He will also provide a government blueprint to regain Maharashtra's revenue surplus state position. Further, Ajit Pawar is expected to release an action plan to higher growth of the state economy than that of the country's economy. The Medium Term Fiscal Policy Statement has clearly indicated that its successful implementation will take the state's economy to \$1 trillion by 2028 and \$3.5 trillion by the nation's centennial year.

## Complex surgery successfully performed at KIMS Saveera ; Surgeons remove all stones



(Standard Post Bureau) A 23-year-old student from Hindupur had been suffering from severe abdominal pain for the past six months. After seeking treatment elsewhere, he was diagnosed with chronic calcific pancreatitis (pancreas filled with stones). Despite undergoing medication, he found no relief and approached KIMS Saveera Hospital.

At KIMS Saveera, Consultant Surgical Gastroenterologist Dr. N. Mahammad Shahid performed a highly complex surgery and successfully removed all the stones. Due to the pancreas' location and its delicate structure, such procedures are extremely challenging. Suturing the pancreas is also a difficult task, as any leakage can pose a significant risk to other organs. If left untreated, this condition could have been life-threatening.

Understanding Chronic

Calcific Pancreatitis. Dr. Shahid explained that this condition is more commonly seen in men aged 30-40 and is found in 50% of such cases. Among those diagnosed, 25-80% develop Type 3c diabetes, which affects blood sugar regulation and digestive enzyme production. Stones in the pancreas form over time within pancreatic tissues and obstruct pancreatic ducts, leading to severe pain and improper digestion. As time passes, the condition worsens, impairing pancreatic function. Since the pancreas plays a crucial role in digestion and blood sugar regulation, its dysfunction results in severe nutritional deficiencies and other complications.

Causes of Pancreatic Stones: Excessive alcohol consumption, Cancer, stones, or traumatic injuries, Genetic factors, Chemotherapy, Autoimmune diseases like

lupus, High calcium levels in the blood, High blood lipid levels

Symptoms: Pancreatic stones lead to various symptoms, affecting both digestive functions and metabolism. Patients may experience fatty stools, significant weight loss, and, in severe cases, complete pancreatic dysfunction. In 85% of cases, the pancreas loses more than 90% of its function. Additionally, the inability to produce insulin results in Type 3c diabetes.

Treatment Approaches: The primary approach includes lifestyle modifications, pain management, pancreatic enzyme supplements, and insulin therapy when necessary. In some cases, endoscopic procedures are used to remove stones or insert stents. However, when stones are large or numerous, surgery becomes essential. Since pancreatic surgery is highly complex, it is performed only when necessary.

## Women's empowerment lies at the core of India's development journey: Om Birla

New Delhi, Mar 8 (UNI) Highlighting the transformative role of women in advancing India's growth, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Saturday stated that women are not just participants in development but are taking the lead across various fields, including governance, science, defence, education, and entrepreneurship.

On the occasion of International Women's Day, Om Birla reiterated that India is witnessing a new era where women are assuming leadership roles at every level—from grassroots democracy to the highest positions of power, a statement by Lok Sabha Secretariat said.

He paid tribute to the inspiring vision of the 15 Women Members of the Constituent Assembly stating that their contributions continue to energize the nation and serve as a guiding force for future generations.

"Our past shows the way forward, and these pioneering women laid the foundation for gender equality, inclusive governance, and women's empowerment in India," the Lok Sabha Speaker stressed.

Emphasising that women's empowerment lies at the core of India's development journey, Om Birla highlighted that as the nation celebrates 75 years of the Indian Constitution,

it is essential to recognize the immense contributions of the 15 women members of the Constituent Assembly, whose vision and dedication helped shape India's democratic framework.

He also reflected on India's deep-rooted tradition of reverence for women, where motherhood, strength, sacrifice, and resilience are celebrated as integral values of society.

The Lok Sabha Speaker applauded their growing presence in defence, where they are now flying fighter jets, serving in combat roles, and commanding naval expeditions.

He noted that women's leadership in governance is stronger than ever, with majority of elected representatives in rural local bodies being women. This, Om Birla said, is a testament to the growing strength of women-led development in the country.

The Speaker expressed confidence that a day would come when women would hold a majority in elected bodies even without reservations, solely on merit and capability.

Highlighting the historic Nari Shakti Vandan Act, Om Birla described it as a transformative reform in India's democratic landscape. As the first law passed in the new Parliament building, this Act symbolizes India's unwavering commitment to gender equality and

ensures that women have a greater role in shaping policies and decision-making at the highest levels.

Recognising the economic contributions of women, he praised their role in entrepreneurship, self-help groups, and micro-enterprises, which are transforming rural economies and driving financial independence for countless families. The Speaker also reiterated the urgent need to achieve 100 per cent female literacy, emphasizing that education is the cornerstone of women's empowerment.

Om Birla called for 2025 to be a landmark year for women's self-reliance and leadership, ensuring that Nari Shakti continues to drive India's future. He urged all sectors of society to work together in creating an inclusive environment where every woman receives equal opportunities, respect, and the freedom to excel.

The Speaker emphasized that International Women's Day should not just be a celebration but a commitment to advancing women's leadership across all fields. He called upon every individual to contribute towards building a society where women are at the forefront of innovation, governance, and nation-building.



## PM Modi's Mauritius visit is timely, will provide orientation to future engagement: FS Misri

New Delhi, Mar 8 (UNI) : Prime Minister Narendra Modi's March 11-12 visit to Mauritius to attend the National Day celebrations as the Chief Guest is a very timely visit and will enable both sides to take stock of bilateral ties and provide orientation to engagement in the coming months and years, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said today.

Addressing a special media briefing ahead of the PM's visit, the FS said that during the visit, Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam will together inaugurate some projects that have been implemented with Indian assistance and will also witness the signing of several MOUs on cooperation in the field of capacity building, bilateral trade, tackling of cross-border financial crimes and promoting small and medium enterprises.

The PM will also interact with members of the Indian community, friends of India and socio-cultural organizations in Mauritius during the visit.

An Indian naval ship will be present in Mauritius for the March 12 occasion and in addition, the Indian Air Force's Aakash Ganga skydiving team will also participate in the

ceremonies, the FS informed. The PM will arrive in Port Louis very early in the morning of March 11 and will be accorded a ceremonial welcome on his arrival. He will visit the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical Garden to pay homage to Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, the former Prime Minister and the founding father of Mauritius, and Sir Anerood Jugnauth, former President and former PM of Mauritius.

Prime Minister Modi will call on the new President of Mauritius, Dharambeer Gokhool, which will be followed by bilateral meetings with Prime Minister Ramgoolam, and also meetings with other political leaders during the visit.

To a question on the Agaléga island, the FS said that during the previous visit of PM Modi in 2015 the two sides had inked an MOU on the improvement of facilities on Agaléga Island for sea and air connectivity.

In February last year, the facilities were jointly inaugurated by the Prime Ministers of the two countries. "The facilities have contributed to enhancing connectivity between the island and mainland Mauritius," the FS

said, adding that during his visit last year he was told how a very devastating cyclone had torn through Mauritius and had particularly affected Agaléga quite badly.

"We had managed to mobilize our assets very quickly and utilizing and leveraging the facilities that had been created in Agaléga were able to deliver much needed assistance and relief material to the people in need on the island. There were sorties also that were conducted between Agaléga and the mainland to undertake additional relief operations. So, during my visit there, my interlocutors were extremely appreciative of the fact that it is the creation of these facilities that has allowed this kind of early and very quick response to take place, and to bring real relief to people who were affected by this disaster," the FS said.

The Mauritius Prime Minister Navin Ramgoolam told parliament last week that PM Modi's upcoming state visit "is a singular privilege" which the Indian PM is undertaking "despite his extremely busy agenda". "It is a testament to the close relations of our two nations," the Mauritius PM said. PM Modi will be

the Guest of Honour at the flag raising ceremony on March 12, which will be held at noon at Champ-de-Mars, Port-Louis. The ceremony will be followed by a traditional cultural program at which Mauritian artists will be on stage to highlight the cultural diversity in Mauritius.

PM Modi had last visited Port Louis on March 11 and 12, 2015, when the two sides signed several agreements, including one related to the facilities in Agaléga island. The visit is PM Modi's second State Visit as the Chief Guest at Mauritius's National Day Celebrations after 2015.

In March 2024, President Droupadi Murmu visited Mauritius from March 11 to 13 to attend the National Day celebrations on March 12 as the chief guest. In November last year, PM Modi had congratulated Mauritius Prime Minister Navin Ramgoolam on his election victory in Mauritius.

The PM's visit reaffirms the enduring commitment of both countries to further deepen, enhance, and consolidate their unique and special relationship.

Indian-origin people comprise nearly 70% of the island's population of 1.3 million. The Mahatma Gandhi Institute (MGI) was

established in 1976 as a joint venture between India and Mauritius for promoting Indian culture.

Mauritius also hosts the World Hindi Secretariat, an India-Mauritius bilateral organization to promote Hindi globally, which was constructed with Indian funding and inaugurated during the visit of President Kovind in March 2018.

India is amongst the largest trading partners of Mauritius.

Mauritius is the second largest source of FDI into India for the FY 2023-24, after Singapore. The two countries signed the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) on 22 February 2021, during the visit of EAM S. Jaishankar after nearly 15 years of negotiations. It is the first trade agreement signed by India with an African country.

At present, 11 Indian PSUs are in Mauritius, including Bank of Baroda, Life Insurance Corporation, New India Assurance Corporation, Telecommunications Consultant India Ltd, Indian Oil (Mauritius) Limited, Mahanagar Telephone (Mauritius) Ltd., State Bank of India (Mauritius), among others.



Two girls in front of a sanitary pad dispenser in Majhaul in Bihar's Begusarai.

## India, Australia to focus on strategic partnership on regional security, defence cooperation

New Delhi, Mar 8 (UNI) : India and Australia agreed to strengthen their partnership under the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, focusing on mutual dedication to regional security and defence cooperation.

During his visit to Australia from March 4 to 7, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan held deliberations focusing on strengthening military cooperation, with key emphasis on maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region, joint exercises, capacity building, defence technology exchange and new bilateral defence initiatives.

Gen Chauhan held high-level discussions with Admiral David Johnston, Australia's Chief of Defence Force, and with the Chiefs of Staff Committee at the Russell Offices of the Australian Defence Force, a Defence Ministry statement said.

The CDS also visited Headquarters Joint Operations Command (HQJOC), gaining insights into Australia's operational command structure and exploring avenues for

enhanced joint operations.

His other engagements include visits to Forces Command Headquarters, Australian Army and Fleet Headquarters Royal Australian Navy, fostering deeper coordination in maritime security and strategic operations.

In alignment with India's commitment to professional military training and education, Gen Chauhan also visited the Australian Defence College, where he held discussions of enhancing professional military education with Rear Admiral James Lybrand, Commandant of the ADC. He addressed senior officers undergoing the Defence and Strategic Studies Course on strategic challenges in the Indo-Pacific region and interacted with Indian student officers undergoing training at the ADC, acknowledging their role in fostering bilateral military understanding and professional exchanges.

Furthering intellectual and policy exchanges, CDS chaired a round-table discussion at the Lowy Institute, Australia's premier think tank and

engaged with Air Chief Marshal (retired) Sir Angus Houston and renowned strategic experts Dr Michael Fullilove and Sam Roggeveen, exchanging valuable perspectives on India-Australia defence cooperation, multilateral security frameworks, and strategic convergence in the Indo-Pacific.

Moreover, CDS received a detailed briefing on Advanced Navigation Systems, showcasing cutting-edge technologies that enhance battlefield awareness, precision targeting, and situational awareness in complex operational environments.

He also visited leading Australian Defence Industry facilities, gaining first-hand insights into Australia's advanced defence manufacturing, Research & Development and technological innovations.

This visit further solidified the India-Australia defence partnership, enhancing mutual trust and understanding while reinforcing the growing convergence of strategic interests between the two nations in the Indo-Pacific region.

## Wanted terrorist arrested by UPATS from Moradabad

Lucknow, Mar 8 (UNI) : A Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) terrorist, who was absconding for the last 18 years, has been arrested in a joint operation by the Uttar Pradesh Anti-Terror Squad (ATS) and Moradabad police, an ATS spokesman said here on Saturday.

The spokesman said during the Saharanpur unit of ATS got a tip-off that Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist Ulfat Hussain alias Mohd Saiful Islam alias Afzal, a resident of Fazalabad village, Surankote in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir, was residing in Moradabad. "Acting on the information, the ATS and Moradabad police arrested Ulfat on Friday," he said. He said that Ulfat was involved in anti-national activities and was wanted by Katghar police in Moradabad district under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), CLAA Act, POTA, and the Arms Act.

He said, "Earlier, the absconding terrorist was arrested on July 9, 2001, during which 1 AK-47, 1 AK-56, 2 pistols, 12 hand grenades, 39 timers, 50 detonators, 37 batteries, 29 kg of explosive substance, 560 live cartridges, and 8 magazines were recovered from his possession."

The spokesman said that the Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate (14) in Moradabad district had issued a permanent warrant against the accused on January 7, 2015, and March 5, 2025, in this case. "The Moradabad police have also announced a reward of Rs 25,000 on his arrest," he said.

## Women's Day observed in Manipur

(Standard Post Bureau) Imphal, Mar 8: International Women's Day 2025 on the theme "Accelerate Action" was organized by Manipur State Commission for Women (MSCW) here on Saturday.

Speaking at the function Director IPR Ngangom Uttam Singh appealed to the women to act speedily and rapidly towards achieving the goal of equal rights. Giving equal rights, gender equality and honouring women are the main areas that should be implemented rapidly.

He opined that it may take two generations to fully implement these women's rights. The first one has already conceded, where equality has been almost achieved and lets us pledge to arrange a path where our children can achieve and enjoy the rights that 100 percent, he stated.

Singh applauded the entire team of MSCW for

their dedication and hard-works in spite of several drawbacks regarding budgetary, lack of vehicles, manpower, but assured that with few supportive suggestions they will surely overcome many obstacles and become more stronger than before, he added. The Director highlighted the distinctive importance of One Stop Centre (OSC). In case of any emergencies, difficulties, unsafe or causalities every woman can seek medical, police, legal aid support and other available services by dialling 181 of OSC.

Impressed to witness the diversified attendance of today's celebration, Uttam Singh cited that, previously the North Eastern States were known as Seven Sisters, however with the inclusion of Sikkim it is now compiled of eight States, henceforth, by latest it is called Astha Lakshmi, the eighth incarnations of Goddess of Wealth, Lakshmi. It is

considered lucky to be born as a woman in a state like Manipur, where they receive high-level status and honours while compared to other mainland states of India. He appealed to all the women of the state, to be the torch-bearers of women empowerment, in addition, they should display and inspire all the women of the nation, about the privilege, rights and freedom being enjoyed by the women of North East States.

Among others Thumlip Tiningpham Monsang, Chairperson, MSCW; Lourembam Dayabati Devi, Member MSCW graced the celebration as President and guests of honour respectively. Felicitation of women achievers from different fields namely Rev. Apila Thangal, Sorokhaibam Bidyarani Devi, Anwari Noorjahan, Seram Nirupama Devi and Sr. Maria Dilibung was the main highpoints of celebration on Saturday.

## Olive Ridley Sea Turtles return to Ekakula Nasi beach for Mass Nesting after 33 years

Kendrapara (Odisha), Mar 8 (UNI) : The endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles have returned to Ekakula Nasi in large numbers for mass nesting after a gap of 33 years.

According to Manas Kumar Das, Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) in charge of Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary, the last recorded mass nesting at Ekakula Nasi occurred during the 1992-93 turtle season. In the past 48 hours alone, approximately 1,69,348 female Olive Ridley turtles have laid eggs at Ekakula Nasi.

On March 6, around 3,000 Olive Ridelys arrived at Ekakula Nasi for nesting, while on March 7, the number surged to 1,66,348 female turtles.

During the ongoing turtle season, a total of 4.34 lakh female Olive Ridley turtles have laid eggs at Nasi-2 and Ekakula Nasi beaches within the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary over the last three days (March 5-7), according to forest officials. While 2,64,657 turtles nested at Nasi-2 beach, 1,69,348 turtles nested at Ekakula Nasi.

Although Ekakula Nasi beach stretches for 8 kilometers, the turtles have utilized only 3 kilometers of the beach for nesting. Experts predict a record number of turtles may arrive this season, as mass nesting is expected to continue for another three to four days. The previous record was set in 2023 when an estimated 5,12,175 Olive Ridley turtles came ashore at Nasi-2 beach within the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary, laying eggs over four days from March 9 to March 13, 2023, Das added.

However, forest officials express concerns that Olive Ridelys may skip mass nesting at Gahirmatha in the future due to the shrinking Nasi-2 beach, which is gradually eroding due to constant sea action. The return of Olive Ridelys to Ekakula Nasi after three decades indicates that these turtles prefer to lay eggs at the same beaches where they nested in the past. Favorable environmental conditions and suitable beach structures play a crucial role in their nesting behavior.

## Tripura's unemployment stands at half of national average: CM

Agartala, March 8 (UNI) : Tripura Chief Minister Dr Manik Saha on Saturday claimed that unemployment rate of the state has significantly dropped in the last quarter and data showed Tripura's unemployment is half of the national average. While addressing the celebration of 2nd anniversary of the second BJP government in Tripura, Dr Saha stated that the law and order situation of the state has improved impressively. Crime rate of the state has stood third from the bottom of the list among 28 states.

PM Modi always says that without developing the Northeast, the development of India is not possible, and for this he introduced the Act East Policy and offered HIRA model for Tripura. As a result, Northeast has experienced massive development in last decade," Dr Saha underscored.

"My government has been working in a mission mode to make Ek Tripura Shrestha Tripura pursue an inclusive growth model," he said and claimed that in terms of GDP, Tripura has achieved a milestone, besides significant improvement in infrastructure development, law and order and per capita income. "Development does not only mean building or construction but also includes the development of communication, human life, the economy, education, and peace. We are working in the direction of Vikshit Bharat," the Chief Minister pointed out.

## Subhadra Yojana has become a revolution in Odisha: CM Majhi

Bhubaneswar, Mar 8 (UNI) : The Subhadra Yojana has become a revolution in Odisha today which will empower and uplift women of all ages while instilling new hope and confidence in their minds, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said. The Subhadra Yojana is set to transform into a massive statewide campaign, Majhi said while distributing the second installment of the scheme to 1,00,64,000 women at Ambapua in Berhampur town, in Ganjam district, on the occasion of the 51st International Women's Day. He emphasized that the new government, in just nine months, has paved the way for financial freedom for over one crore women in the state. "All mothers have received Rs. 10,000 in two installments," he said, describing the day as the happiest and most glorious in his tenure as Chief Minister.

Majhi criticized the previous BJD government for merely raising slogans about women's empowerment over the past 24 years, asserting that women's empowerment remained nothing more than a slogan during that period.

"We decided to implement the historic Subhadra Yojana within 24 minutes of coming to power. The good news is that it started working within three months, and today, in just nine months, more than one crore women have received the second installment," the Chief Minister said. Lashing out at the BJD for criticizing his government, Majhi remarked, "What you could not achieve in 24 years, we have accomplished in just nine months."

He further stated, "Our detractors forget that even a child must spend nine months in the mother's womb before being born. There are still four days left for our government to complete nine months in office."

Sending a strong message to those who commit violence and misconduct against women, the Chief Minister asserted that such criminals have no place in a civilized society and belong within the four walls of a jail. "I have already issued strict instructions to departmental officers to ensure this is enforced," he said. The Chief Minister also highlighted the 'Lakshapati Didi' scheme, which aims to make women financially independent, stating that the target is to create three crore 'lakhpati didis' (women earning at least one lakh rupees) across the country.

## CM lays foundation stone of development projects worth Rs 30.9 cr in Shahpur

Kangra, Mar 8 (UNI) : Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu on Saturday laid the foundation stone of various development projects worth Rs 30.9 crore in Shahpur assembly constituency of Kangra district.

These include construction of Laleta-Banu Mahadev link road at a cost of Rs 11 crore, construction of link road from National Highway 154 to Dhanotu via Bad Basti at a cost of Rs 4.41 crore and upgradation of Bhanala-Rulahad road at a cost of Rs 19.86 crore.

Apart from this, the Riddmar-Kutharna road will be upgraded at Rs 5.47 crore and the pavilion block of Rait (Chambi) stadium will be constructed with Rs 1.16 crore.

CM Sukhu also performed puja-archana at Maharana Pratap Bhawan being constructed by Rajput Sabha.



# Home & Garden



A fresh flower arrangement never fails to lift your spirits. It adds colour to your house, filling it with positivity and energy. But what measures can one take to make all this last longer? As laymen, we are aware of certain measures such as adding a spoonful of sugar or an aspirin for the nourishment of the flowers or using a water spray to keep them looking bright. But, the process of making fresh flowers stay fresh starts right from its selection process. Be careful while taking your pick as these flowers are expensive compared to their artificial counterparts. Ideally, one should look for the ones that look youthful and not matured. The tell-tale signs of the latter would be drooping petals with a yellowish or brownish tinge at the corners. Fresh ones shall always have petals that are

firm and are just beginning to bloom. The vase or the container in which the flowers are to be kept should be clean. They should be free from any leftover mucous from the earlier arrangements. Light is the source of life. Hence, it is advisable to keep flowers in a place where there is enough light coming in. This surely does not mean that you expose them to direct sunlight, as that

will only make them shrink. Just make sure they aren't put away in some dark corner of a room, and expose air them once in a while.

An important thing to remember is that one should not keep flower arrangements atop devices that heat up such as a television, a refrigerator or an oven. This can cause the flowers to lose excess water and wither away quickly.

Sharing some tips, florist Munira Taherbhoy says, "It is important to keep a constant watch that the stems do not catch any fungus. The trick to achieve that is by removing the leaves that are below the waterline.

They are the main cause of promoting the growth of fungi-causing bacteria. It also helps to retain the freshness of these flowers, as the leaves soak up a lot of water

## Let the Flower Bloom indoors

resulting in less water being transported to the other parts." Taherbhoy also suggests a daily change of water in the container. Some other tried and tested ways are adding a mixture of a pinch of salt and baking soda or adding a copper element to the water. Also, ready pouches of medicine are available in the market. They keep these colourful creations of nature smiling.

Be it family heirlooms or household antiques, brass needs fairly regular cleaning in order to look its best.

Unlacquered brass tarnishes when exposed to air. A weekly wiping with a little liquid ammonia on a soft cloth will help keep unlacquered brass shiny. Experts at the Michigan University researched this subject and their studies resulted in a definitive version of caring for your precious brass items. In simple language, here are some ways to go about it.

Use a commercial cleaner or a homemade cleaner to remove tarnish. On antique brass, test the cleaning product to be sure of obtaining the desired effect. Some methods not only clean tarnish but also remove the mellow coloring of age that is desirable on old drawer pulls and other accessories.

**To polish antique brass pieces:**

wash in hot, soapy water to remove grime, wax, etc. Rinse and dry.

## Care for your brassware

Moisten a soft cloth with boiled linseed oil and rub on the brass surface until all the dirt and grease have been removed. Polish with a soft cloth. Very old brass items, especially if in poor condition, require special care, in which case you can consult museum experts for advice.

**To polish for a soft finish:**

wash in hot, soapy water, rinse and dry. Make a paste of whiting and boiled linseed oil. Apply with a soft cloth and rub to remove tarnish. Wipe off excess paste and

polish with a clean cloth. To remove heavy tarnish, difficult stains and corrosion: wash in hot, soapy water or a weak ammonia and water solution and rinse. Dampen a soft cloth in hot vinegar, then dip in table salt and rub the brass, or make a paste of flour, salt and vinegar. You may need several applications. When the item is clean, wash in hot, soapy water, rinse and dry thoroughly, then polish with a cloth moistened with lemon oil. If preferred, dip a slice of fresh lemon into table salt and rub over the corroded area. Wash, rinse and dry carefully.

Brass andirons and fire sets that have been neglected require special treatment. They can be rubbed with extra-fine steel wool; however, this requires much time and work. Very fine emery cloth will give quicker results, but the metal must be rubbed in only one direction, do not use a circular motion. When clean, polish with a brass polish. Some commercial polishes do not require rinsing, so follow label directions.



## Use wall Clocks to enhance home decor

Wall clocks may sound boring as decorative pieces but if selected with care they can add more meaning and character to the decor of your house. There are people who are passionate about this and take real pains to search for the perfect clock to match the interior of a home and most of the times, when used intelligently, they add an attractive touch to your house.

"I love collecting clocks of different kinds. They fascinate me. Every room in my house has a different kind of clock on its walls," says singer, Abhijeet Bhattacharya. Though there are

some that have been gifted to him by his admirers and friends, most of them have been personally picked. They are indeed truly intriguing. "Whenever I go abroad I pick up ones that look interesting," he elaborates. Clocks that have a period look and those that are contemporary have both found a place in his house.

Decorative wall clocks come in many varieties and are easily available says interior designer Sheetal. Some are handcrafted and made of wood; there are others that are made up of metal, or plastic and acrylic. Precious metals like silver are also used.

"The most important thing to remember when decorating with wall-clocks is to choose something that you feel represents you and in some way enhances the decor of your room," says Hitesh Somaiya, who has used clocks in interesting patterns to decorate walls.

Hanging a wall-clock is pretty much like hanging a picture or a painting in a room. It is part of the overall decor. Since wall-clocks are generally inexpensive, you could actually have a collection of them. One of the ways to decorate with wall-clocks is to hang several similar ones in a row, as if they were an art gallery. You can set the clock to display real-time of some popular city in another part of the world. "My sons live abroad and I have placed three clocks showing the time of Chicago, London and India in one single row," says Chandana

Sengupta, an artist who has herself designed her Bandra home.

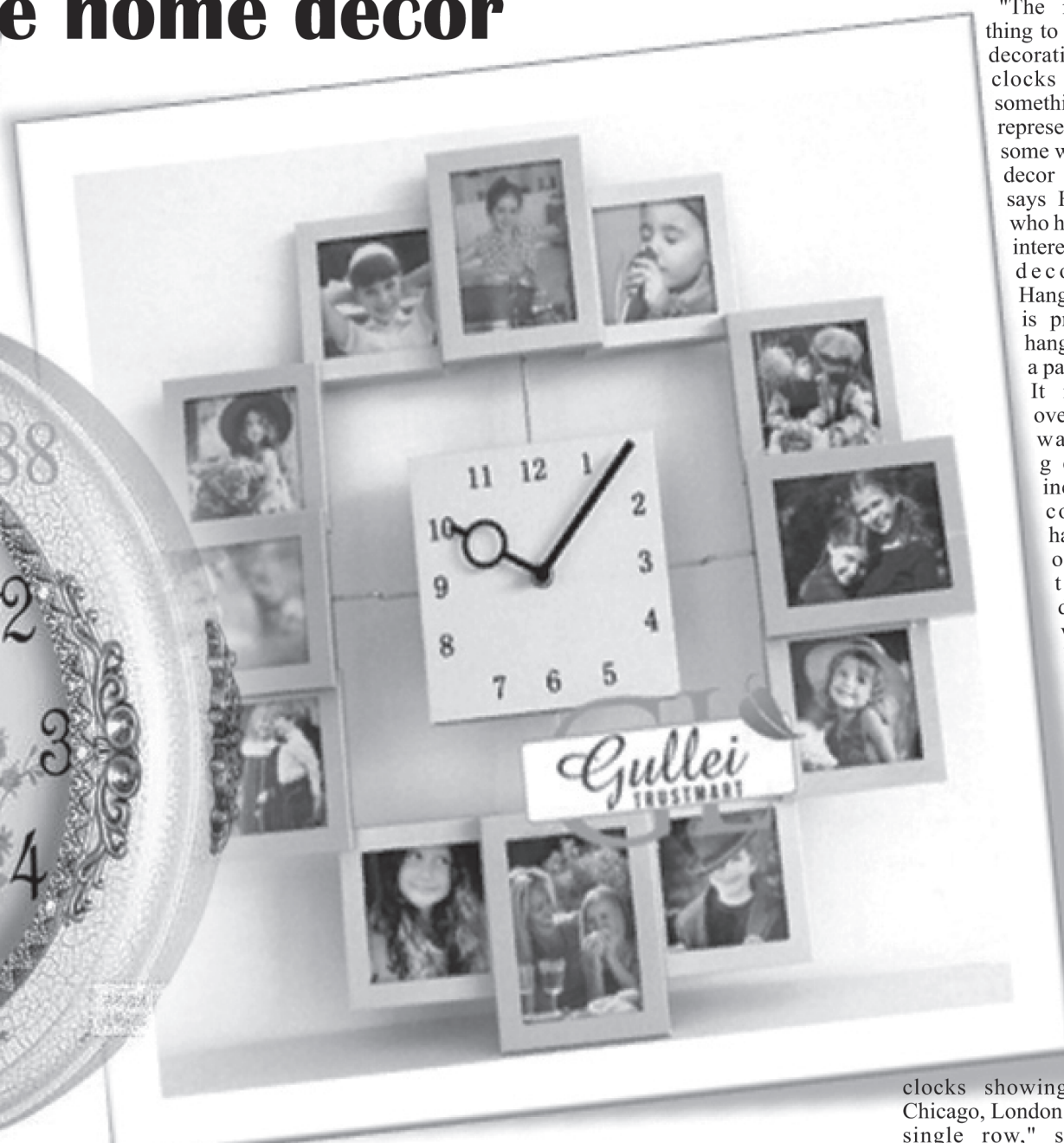
Placing a dark colored wall-clock on a pristine white or light coloured wall is an eye-catching option.

One of the oldest types of wall clocks are the cuckoo clocks and their timeless will never go out of style. Even today, think wall-clocks and somewhere the thought of a cuckoo clock is bound to cross your mind. Most of these clocks are made either in the shape of a birdhouse or chalet. They have a small mechanical cuckoo bird pop out of a door on the hour to accompany the chirping noises.

A cuckoo clock is among the most unusual type of clocks. A majority of them are pendulum clocks that give the time by striking the hour, using whistles that often sound exactly like the call of the cuckoo bird. Another kind of wall-clock that you can consider are those that come equipped with front-opening beveled glass doors, polished brass lyre pendulums, and are quartz-driven. These clocks are generally key-wound with chime silence options. Some of the many finishes available are cherry, oak, mahogany, and even leather.

However, for a more stylish touch, go in for antique wall clocks. Many antique wall clocks are pendulum operated and some are set in picture frames.

Of late, even eclectic art deco with motifs of the sun, moon, stars, and other new age designs are becoming popular. While we are at interesting ideas for the home, why should the kitchen be left behind? So, try out kitchen wall clocks as well! There's again a large variety of designs to choose from — fresh fruits, roosters, etc. Your kitchen clock will be a great addition to your kitchen and will help to enhance an inviting, relaxing atmosphere. For the kids room especially, you can opt for neon wall clocks. Not only are they a great way to add extra light, they are also fun and funky.





## New Zealand ready to have a second go against India: Santner

Dubai, Mar 8 (UNI) : New Zealand captain Mitchell Santner concedes while the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 Final is not just any game - his team will prepare for facing India in the showdown in just the same way as they have done before all their other matches.

"It's easy to say it's just another game, it's obviously not, but I think the way you approach it has to be the same," he told reporters on the eve of the summit clash here.

"We've done a lot of good stuff this tournament, we're just trying to progress and build on the things we've been doing as a team, and keep trying to take this team forward," Santner said.

"It's on the biggest stage tomorrow. The guys will go out with confidence, try and keep it a pretty relaxed environment, let the guys go out there and have some freedom and enjoy it," he said. The finalists have already played each other this tournament, facing off in the final Group A match to decide who would top it, and Santner thought that knowing the conditions in Dubai could give his team some added impetus, an ICC report said.

"The mix of experience and a few younger boys in this group, what we asked them at the start was to buy into a way we want to approach cricket on and off the field," he said.

"We've been playing some good cricket, long may it continue. You have to treat it as another chance

against a very good opposition," Santner said.

"You get to the business ends of these tournaments. Your first goal is to make play-offs [semi-finals] but going into a final it's whoever can stand up on the day. The way we go about it is to not get overawed by the occasion...trying to keep it pretty relaxed but also know we have to put in a good shift tomorrow," he said.

Asked whether the tournament's leading wicket-taker Matt Henry would be fit to play after hurting his shoulder in the field during the semi-final against South Africa, he replied: "We'll be going across the road and training after this. Matt's going to have a bowl and see how he is, and we'll make a call after that."

Santner also assessed the India bowling attack, with some particular words on Varun Chakaravathy, an opponent he knows well from their shared time in the IPL, describing him as 'a world-class bowler' with a 'little bit of mystery'.

Chakaravathy took five wickets against New Zealand in their group match as India put on a convincing display, but Santner is confident his players have learnt from that experience.

"If the pitch plays a similar way, he'll be a challenge, along with all three of their other spinners," he said.

"The boys will be ready for tomorrow, we've looked at a little bit more footage.



India's Virat Kohli, Rishabh Pant and other players during a practice session ahead of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 final cricket match between India and New Zealand, in Dubai, UAE, Saturday.

## Chennaiyin FC aim for strong finish in last game of season

Chennai, Mar 8 (UNI) Chennaiyin FC will host Jamshedpur FC at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here in the Indian Super League (ISL) match on Sunday at 7:30 PM IST.

This is the last league stage match for both teams this season. The Red Miners have qualified for the playoffs and are placed fourth in the table with 38 points from 23 games. The Marina Machans are positioned 11th with 24 points from 23 encounters.

Chennaiyin FC had won the reserve fixture by 5-1, their goal-scoring struggles are concerning, having failed to find the back of the net in their last two ISL matches. Jamshedpur FC are one win away from levelling their best-ever season tally of 13 victories, but have won just once in

their last five outings.

Chennaiyin FC have been triumphant in just two of their 11 home games this season (D4 L5), their second-worst such record in ISL after 2018-19 (one win). The Marina Machans have not scored in 10 matches this season, their joint-highest in a single ISL campaign (2020-21). Wilmar Jordan Gil has been effective with 10 strikes, but the next best after him has been Daniel Chima Chukwu with four goals.

Jamshedpur FC have banked on their international trio of Javi Hernandez (7), Jordan Murray (6), and Javi Siverio (6) for goals, with the three of them netting 19 out of their 35 strikes thus far. Hernandez is suspended for this match though.

Jamshedpur FC have

also been adept at breaking opposition's offences, since Muhammad Uvais (33), Nikhil Barla (24), Sourav Das (24) lead the tackling charts for them.

In 15 fixtures between these two teams, Chennaiyin FC have won seven games and Jamshedpur FC have been triumphant thrice.

Chennaiyin FC head coach Owen Coyle maintained that there's a significant lot to play for in this match for his team.

"We are playing against a very good opponent. So there's a lot to play for, both individually and also at a collective level," he said.

Jamshedpur FC head coach Khalid Jamil insisted that his side is placing adequate importance on the coming encounter.

"We need to prepare

like we have been doing so far in the last game and look to win the match," he said.

Jamshedpur FC's Albino Gomes has made 88 saves, stopped four penalties, rounded off 171 recoveries, alongside punching nine times in 23 games this season.

Chennaiyin FC's Irfan Yadwad has made four assists in 2024-25 and is one away from equalling the club record for most assists in a single season by an Indian player (Anirudh Thapa and Aakash Sangwan - 5).

Chennaiyin FC's Pachuau Laldinpuia has made 34 interceptions this season and is five away from setting a new season record for an Indian player at the club. The 28-year-old has also won 27 tackles, 29 aerial duels, and 91 duels too.

## NorthEast United FC defeat East Bengal FC 4-0 in ISL

Shillong, Mar 8 (UNI) : NorthEast United FC defeated East Bengal FC by 4-0 at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here in the Indian Super League (ISL) match on Saturday evening.

The Highlanders thus bagged their 10th win of the league season, wrapping up their 24 games and earning 38 points before embarking on their playoffs journey. This was the eighth match where NorthEast United FC scored three or more goals this season, and also got their first-ever ISL win in Shillong.

East Bengal FC had limited chances coming their way in the first half, but Cleiton Silva did give NorthEast United FC a moment of scare through a probing free-kick in the 22nd minute. With the team earning a chance at a

promising spot on the left flank, Silva swerved in a telling delivery that resulted in the ball landing over the crossbar.

NorthEast United FC retaliated by moving gradually up the left wing through Alaaeddine Ajaraie, who lobbed in a cross for Nestor Albiach in the 32nd minute. Nestor made a robust effort at hitting the target with an aerial effort, but the shot was kept off limits by East Bengal FC goalkeeper Debjit Majumder.

Ajaraie back-heeled a pass for the onrushing Tondonba Singh on the left flank, followed by the latter drilling in a cross for Nestor at the centre of the 18-yard box. Nestor met the lateral ball with thorough finesse and slotted it into the bottom right corner with his left foot to break the

deadlock in the 59th minute.

The Highlanders rode on this brief wave in their favour as Nestor played a key role in shaping up a dynamic offensive sequence from a corner kick. Guillermo Fernandez curled in a right-footed inward curling cross for Macarthon Nickson that was hammered on target. Debjit made a quick first save, before Ajaraie lapped upon the rebound and nestled it into the bottom left corner amid a crowded box to double the lead in the 66th minute. Ajaraie took over a dazzling role thereafter with East Bengal FC conceding him plenty of space to work his footwork around in the defensive third.

The free-flowing forward looked to breach into the opposition's box from the left side and sprinted near the six-yard box.

South African team from 2017-2019, and has since held several coaching positions across the T20 franchise circuit.

Ottis joins a strong support staff unit at KKR, comprising mentor Dwayne Bravo, head coach Chandrakant Pandit, bowling coach Bharat Arun, spin-bowling coach Carl Crowe and others.

## Chirag-Amar pair defeat Deepak - Pradeep in J&K UT doubles lawn tennis final

Jammu, Mar 8 (UNI) : A pair of Chirag Dogra and Amar Jyoti Sharma have defeated Deepak Chib and Col S Pradeep in a well contested match to win UT Men's Doubles Lawn Tennis final title of Jammu and Kashmir UT Lawn Tennis Open Championship played at the lawns of Maulana Azad Stadium here.

Jammu and Kashmir Sports Minister Satish Sharma was the Chief Guest on the occasion.

As per the results, in the UT Open Men's Doubles Final, Chirag Dogra and Amar Jyoti Sharma defeated Deepak Chib and Col S Pradeep 7-6, (7-5), 3-6, 6-4.

Earlier in the semifinals, Chirag Dogra and Amar Sharma defeated Sojanya Thappa and Kuljeet Singh 8-4 while Deepak Chib and Col S Pradeep defeated Vikram Gupta and Raghav Sabharwal 8-6.

However, in the men's singles final, Vikram Gupta defeated Shaurya Pratap Singh 6-3, 6-2.

Earlier Vikram Gupta defeated Chirag Dogra 8-7 (7-5) in tie break and Shaurya Pratap Singh defeated Gurleen Singh 8-

2 to enter into the final round.

Sports Minister Satish Sharma while interacting with the players boosted them stating that the Jammu and Kashmir government is very keen to make this region a hub of sports and lot many things are in the pipeline to promote this sector.

He however, wished them for their future endeavours.

Players in various age groups from across the Jammu and Kashmir participated in the event.

President, Jammu and Kashmir Lawn Tennis Association, Murti Gupta was also present on the occasion while General Secretary, B S Jaggi along with Hanumant Singh supervised the tournament.

The Tournament was organized by the Jammu and Kashmir Lawn Tennis Association (JKLTA) under the aegis of J&K Sports Council.

The tournament, as per the officials, is specifically designed for all age groups providing them with an opportunity to showcase their skills.

## Gill on India's mindset for Champions Trophy Final

Dubai, Mar 8 (UNI) : India vice-captain Shubman Gill says that their ICC Men's T20 World Cup triumph in 2024 stands them in good stead for their Champions Trophy 2025 final showdown with New Zealand.

"Once you get one title, that breaks the jinx and it gives you the momentum and you are not very desperate about getting the title," he told reporters on the eve of the summit clash in Dubai.

"It is not good when desperation kicks in, it's hard to put the occasion out of the equation," Gill said.

"In all these big matches, the players and teams that can put aside the pressure and the occasion out of the game has a better chance of winning it," he said.

"I think winning the title in 2024 doesn't mean we are less hungry but I think it makes us more balanced - yes, we have won an ICC title and we will do our best to win this one," Gill said.

What bolsters India's push for winning their third Champions Trophy title, Gill reckons, is their power-packed batting.

Describing it as the best India batting line-up he has ever been part of, powered by seasoned campaigners in Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, Gill broke down why India's batting has been well rounded of late,

## Skiing event for foreign visitors held ahead of Khelo India Winter Games

Srinagar, Mar 8 (UNI) Jammu and Kashmir Youth Services and Sports Department organised a special skiing event for foreign visitors and skiers today in the run-up to the Khelo India Winter Games scheduled to be held in Gulmarg from March 9-12.

The initiative was conducted as per the directions of the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir to provide an engaging pre-event experience for international participants, an official spokesman said.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from foreign skiers, who expressed their appreciation for the world-class skiing slopes of Gulmarg and shared their views on the upcoming Khelo India Winter Games.

They commended the efforts of the administration

in promoting winter sports and fostering international participation in Gulmarg's snow-clad arenas.

With the official commencement of the Khelo India Winter Games 2025 set for tomorrow, this pre-event activity served as a curtain-raiser, highlighting the growing global interest in winter sports in Jammu & Kashmir.

An official spokesman said the Department of Youth Services and Sports J&K remains committed to ensuring a grand and seamless sporting spectacle, reinforcing Gulmarg's stature as a premier winter sports destination.

The athletes are gearing up for intense snow sports events including- ski mountaineering, alpine skiing, snowboard, and Nordic skiing

## Boca Juniors extends winning run in Argentine top flight

Buenos Aires, Mar 7 (UNI) Boca Juniors continued its resurgent form in Argentina's Primera Division Apertura tournament with a 3-0 away win over Central Cordoba.

Milton Gimenez put the visitors ahead with a 16th-minute strike before Jose Florentin inadvertently turned the ball into his own net on Friday.

The host was reduced to 10 men on the stroke of halftime when Jonathan Galvan was shown a straight red card for violent conduct. Miguel Merentiel put the result beyond doubt with a composed finish after combining with Luis Advinula. Boca, which has won each of its past three league matches, is now second in the 15-team Group A standings, a point behind leader Argentinos Juniors. Central Cordoba is seventh, six points further back.

## Kolkata Knight Riders appoint Ottis Gibson as Assistant Coach

Kolkata, Mar 8 (UNI) Kolkata Knight Riders announced Ottis Gibson as assistant coach ahead of the 2025 TATA Indian Premier League. A former fast bowler from Barbados himself, with over 650 first-class wickets to his name, Ottis represented West Indies in both Tests and ODIs from 1995-1999 before embarking on his journey

as a coach. He comes with extensive experience, having had two stints as bowling coach of the England Cricket Team - from 2007-10 and again from 2015-17. He served as Head coach of the West Indies from 2010-14. During his tenure, the team won its first ICC World T20 title, in 2012 in Sri Lanka. He went on to become Head coach of the

Printed, Published and Owned by  
Mohammed Shafi

Printed at Modi Print & Co.,  
Gala No. : MFL-IF, Devidayal Industrial Estate,  
Near Britannia Factory, Darukhana, Reay Road (E),  
Mumbai - 400 010. Maharashtra and  
Published from # Room No:106, Ground Floor,  
Flat No.40, Malvani Gate, Near Collector Compound,  
Near Quadri Masjid, Malad (W), Mumbai-400 095

Editor: Mohammed Shafi  
R.N.I.No. : MAHENG/2014/59632

Cell : 9849881368  
Email : standardpostmumbai@gmail.com



## International Women's Day 2025 Western Railway celebrates International Women Day 2025



**(Standard Post Bureau)**  
Mumbai, March 8 : On the occasion of International Women's Day 2025, Western Railway organized a series of impactful and inspiring initiatives to honor the remarkable contribution of its women employees across various operational and technical fields.

The celebrations were aimed at promoting gender inclusivity, recognizing the dedication

competency and dedication of women railway employees in ensuring seamless operations.

The successful operation of this train stood as a powerful symbol of women's empowerment in the railway sector, setting an inspiring precedent for future endeavors.

Mr Vineet further added that, a significant highlight of the

and inspire more women to pursue careers in technical roles within the railway sector.

Similarly, Western Railway also felicitated the all-women operated Matunga Road Railway Station, recognizing their commendable service in managing railway operations.

The station is entirely operated by women employees, including station masters, booking

dedication and exceptional service of its women employees. The video captures inspiring stories of women employees who work relentlessly to ensure a safe and comfortable travel experience for railway commuters. In addition to this, a special podcast featuring Smt. Preeti Kumari, Senior Motorman from Western Railway, was also released, highlighting her inspiring journey, challenges, and achievements.

This podcast has been officially published on Western Railway's official YouTube channel, allowing a larger audience to witness and appreciate the contribution of women in technical and operational fields.

In another significant step towards creating a more inclusive and supportive work environment, Mumbai Central Division of Western Railway released the Guidelines for Gender Inclusive Systems at railway stations and workplaces.

The objective of these guidelines is to promote gender equality, ensure a safe and inclusive work culture, and enhance the participation of women employees across all domains of railway operations. This initiative is expected to foster an environment where women can thrive, grow, and contribute significantly to the railway sector.

clerks, ticket checking staff, RPF personnel, and housekeeping staff, who collectively ensure the smooth and efficient functioning of the station. This station has become a symbol of women empowerment, showcasing the strength, capability, and commitment of women in the railway sector. The felicitation by PCPO Smt. Manjula Saxena was a gesture to appreciate their consistent efforts in serving railway passengers with utmost dedication.

To make the day even more special, Western Railway, in collaboration with Radio Channel Fever 104 FM, launched an exclusive collaboration video titled "Nothing is Impossible" to honor the

celebrations was the felicitation of the all-women maintenance team at Mahalaxmi Traction Substation (TRD) by Smt. Manjula Saxena, Principal Chief Personnel Officer (PCPO) of Western Railway. This pioneering team has been actively engaged in maintaining 25kV and 110kV traction power supply equipment, ensuring the seamless operation of suburban train services.

The formation of this exclusive all-women maintenance team is a remarkable example of Western Railway's commitment to fostering inclusivity and breaking gender barriers in technical fields. The felicitation aimed to recognize their exceptional contribution

of women employees, and encouraging equal opportunities for women in the railway sector.

According to a press release issued by Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, Shri Vineet Abhishek, as part of the celebrations, Western Railway operated a Container goods train from Vasai Road station with an all-women crew, comprising Smt. Meera Bai Meena – Locopilot (Goods), Smt. Utkarsha Sharma – Sr. Assistant Locopilot and Smt. Carol D'Souza – Train Manager. This unique run on Women's Day is a commendable step towards promoting gender inclusivity in core operational roles, showcasing the

## ECoR to introduce three important trains from Bhubaneswar New Station

**(Standard Post Bureau)**  
Bhubaneswar, Mar 8 :The East Coast Railway (ECoR) has planned to introduce the originating and terminating of three important trains from Bhubaneswar New Station. These trains include the Bhubaneswar-Mumbai Konark Express, Bhubaneswar-Secunderabad Visakha Express, and Bhubaneswar-Visakhapatnam Intercity Express.

The date of implementation for these changes will be announced shortly, ECoR sources said.

The introduction of these originating trains from Bhubaneswar New Station will provide immense benefits to passengers from the northern parts of Bhubaneswar and adjacent areas.

These trains will also have a two-minute

stoppage at Mancheswar Railway Station. According to ECoR sources, the station will serve as a convenient hub for students studying in the numerous engineering, medical, and other educational institutions located in North Bhubaneswar.

Passengers traveling for medical purposes will also benefit greatly, as many hospitals are situated in this part of the city.

With these trains originating from Bhubaneswar New Station, residents will experience enhanced travel convenience and reduced congestion at Bhubaneswar Main Station.

The redevelopment of Bhubaneswar New Station is also proposed under the Amrit Station Scheme, with a primary focus on

enhancing passenger amenities.

The major planned works include the expansion and improvement of the circulating area, the provision of an additional Foot Over Bridge (FOB), modern waiting rooms, and upgraded toilets for enhanced passenger comfort. The existing platforms will also be improved with better illumination.

Additionally, the installation of Coach Watering Facilities, lifts on all platforms, and the upgradation of the existing station building are also in the pipeline. With these developments, Bhubaneswar New Station is set to become a crucial hub catering to the travel needs of students, travelers, and residents of North Bhubaneswar and nearby areas.

## Central Railway celebrates International Women's Day with a Historic First

**Operates prestigious Vande Bharat Express with an All-Women Crew"Operates Special Goods Train with an All-Women Crew**

**(Standard Post Bureau)**  
Mumbai, March 8 : Central Railway, as part of its International Women's Day celebrations operated the prestigious Vande Bharat Express Train with an All-Women Crew on 08.03.2025.

Train No. 22223, the CSMT-Sainagar Shirdi Vande Bharat Express, was helmed & managed by an all-women crew making it a historic and inspiring journey. The train was steered by Smt. Surekha Yadav, Asia's First Woman Loco Pilot, along with Ms. Sangeeta Kumari as the Assistant Loco Pilot.

Smt. Shweta Ghone served as the Train Manager, ensuring smooth operations throughout the journey.

A dedicated team of Women Travelling Ticket Examiners were deployed to guide passengers and ensure their comfortable travel. The team comprised of: Head Ticket Examiners: - Ms Anushka K. P & Ms. M. J. Rajput Senior Ticket Examiners: Ms. Sarika Ojha, Ms. Suvarna Pashte, Ms. Kavita Maral & Ms Manisha Ram.

The All-Women crew included a team of On-Board Train Hostess ready to serve the passengers. This comprised of: Ms. Monica, Ms. Rubina, Ms. Pooja, Ms. Namrata & Ms. Uma.

The Vande Bharat Express with special All-Women Crew departed from CSMT at 06.20 hrs marking a significant milestone in Indian Railways' commitment to women's empowerment.

It was a heartwarming sight as the All-Women Operated Vande Bharat Express passed through Matunga station, India's first All-Women managed station and the entire team of Matunga station exchanged signals with the Train Manager and cheered in celebration.

A Special Goods Train with an All-Women Crew was also operated on 08.03.2025 as part of the International Women's Day celebrations on Mumbai



Division, showcasing the strength and capability of Women in Indian Railways.

"The Special Goods train operated from Kalyan to Trombay comprising of 43 wagons with a load of 1150 tons was helmed by Ms Sangeeta Sarkar as Loco Pilot alongwith Ms Tejaswi Walke as Assistant Loco Pilot and Ms Rohini Jadhav as Train Manager.

This historic initiative is a tribute to the dedication and excellence of Women in Indian Railways and aims to promote gender inclusivity in railway operations.

**International Women's Day was also celebrated on Nagpur, Bhusaval, Pune & Solapur divisions of Central Railway.**

On Nagpur Division various events were held where a large number of women employees participated.

69 outstanding Women employees from different departments were felicitated for their remarkable contributions in

cultural, social, literary, and sports fields. Nagpur Division has 1,579 women employees with Ajni station entirely managed by 22 women handling train operations, booking, ticket checking, security, and signal & telecommunication functions.

On Bhusaval Division a Special Goods Train managed entirely by an all-women crew, was operated marking a momentous occasion highlighting the skills and dedication of women employees.

The train was steered by Smt. Jyoti Singh, Loco Pilot along with Ms. Shivani, Assistant Loco Pilot, and Smt. Bhagyashree Pimple, Train Manager.

On Pune Division, the First Women's Barracks for Women RPF personnel was inaugurated. These barracks are extremely useful for rest to the women RPF staff working in Pune suburban area, women personnel posted in other

places of the division like Kolhapur, Satara, Sangli, Daund, Ahmednagar (Ahilyanagar) who come to Pune for official work and women personnel working in Mumbai division and Solapur division who come to Pune for train escorting duty. On Solapur Division, a women led ticket checking team was deployed on Solapur – CSMT Mumbai – Solapur Vande Bharat Express (train nos 22226/22225). The women's team efficiently managed the ticket-checking duties on the train service, reflecting their competence and commitment to passenger service and railway operations. This initiative highlights the division's commitment to promoting women empowerment and recognising the invaluable contribution of women in the railway workforce. These were indeed proud moments, celebrating the strength, dedication, expertise and leadership of Women in Indian Railways.

## Solapur Division of Central Railway Celebrates International Women's Day 2025

**Led by Women Ticket Checking Team on Vande Bharat Express**



Laxmi Fulari



Lourdes D Conlon



Shilpa Bhalekar



Priti Dhavane



Ahilya Rathod

**(Standard Post Bureau)**  
Solapur, March 8 :The Solapur Division of Central Railway, on the occasion of International Women's Day 2025 (8th March) deployed a women led ticket checking team on Solapur – CSMT Mumbai – Solapur Vande Bharat Express (train nos 22226/22225). This initiative

highlights the division's commitment to promoting women empowerment and recognising the invaluable contribution of women in the railway workforce.

The following women ticket checking staff were deputed to perform duty on this special occasion:

- Shilpa C. Bhalekar,

Chief Ticket Inspector - Priti V. Dhavane, Chief Ticket Inspector - Ahilya V. Rathod, Travelling Ticket Inspector - Lourdes D. Conlon, Travelling Ticket Inspector - Laxmi R. Fulari, Senior Ticket Examiner"

The initiative aims to recognise and celebrate the

dedication and professionalism of women railway staff while fostering an inclusive and diverse working environment.

The women's team efficiently managed the ticket-checking duties on the train service, reflecting their competence and

commitment to passenger service and railway operations.

The Solapur Division of Central Railway remains dedicated to creating opportunities for women and encouraging their active participation across all spheres of railway operations.