

# Daily Current Affairs





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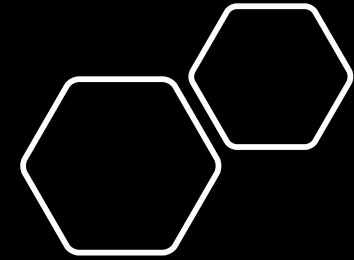
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Home • Business • Sports • Entertainment • Health • Education • Environment • International • India • World • Opinion • Columns • Letters • Editorials

**DELEGATION ROW**  
Siddaramaiah extends support to Stalin

STATES • PAGE 2

**WAR LIFTED**  
U.S. resumes arms supply to Ukraine

WORLD • PAGE 14

**U.S. LAWSUIT ON AFRICA**  
Centre routes summons via court

NEWS • PAGE 5

**REALITY CHECK**  
The illusion of development

Environmental issues need to be factored in

EDITORIAL • PAGE 8

**A LEGEND**  
Former India player Abid Ali passes away

SPORT • PAGE 10

**INSIDE**

**Central officials meet Kuki-Zo, Meitei groups**

NEW DELHI: Home Ministry officials separately met Kuki-Zo and Meitei civil society groups in Manipur on Tuesday and Wednesday, respectively, amid the ongoing violence in the Kuki-Zo groups. • PAGE 4

**Farmers march to Mumbai against Shaktipeeth plan**

MUMBAI: Amid the ongoing Budget session in Maharashtra, thousands of farmers marched to Asai Maidan in Mumbai on Wednesday opposing the Shaktipeeth Expressway, a pet project of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis. • PAGE 5

**Opposition wins Greenland vote, nationalists surge**

COPENHAGEN: The centre-right opposition has won a surprise victory in legislative elections in Greenland as support also surged for the nationalist Naleraq party. • PAGE 14

**Russia takes back five villages in its Kursk region**

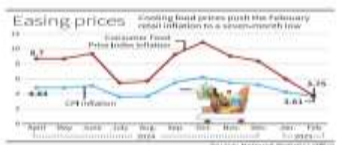
MOSCOW: Russia has made sweeping gains in its Kursk region in the past 24 hours, taking back control of five villages held by Ukrainian troops, the Russian military said. • PAGE 14

# Retail inflation at 7-month low as food prices decline

Consumer price inflation drops to 3.6% in February 2024, with growth slowing for the fourth straight month, inflation is now below RBI 4% target, increasing chances of a repo rate reduction

**Ashokanthan.T. MUMBAI**

India's retail inflation slipped to a seven-month low of 3.6% as food prices eased in February 2024, led by vegetables, pulses, and eggs. The annual change in consumer prices was 4.26% in January 2024.



The increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which measures the retail prices, has slowed for the fourth consecutive month and is now lower than the Reserve Bank of India's target inflation of 4%.

2024. It is the lowest year-on-year inflation after July 2023, the National Statistics Office said. A basic point is the decline of 4% percentage. The data showed that the Consumer Food Price Index (CPI) increased just 3.75% in February, the slowest monthly increase in two years. CPI fell at 5.3% in the previous month. Vegetable prices

entered negative territory for the first time in the current fiscal, deflating 1.35% in February. The easing of food inflation comes on a higher base as, for the better part of 2023-24, food prices rose at a pace of over 8%. Price rise for urban consumers slowed to 3.3%, compared with 3.8% in the previous month. Rural consumers saw inflation dip to 3.8%, from 4.6% in the previous month.

Retail inflation was the highest in Kerala at 7.3% and the lowest in Telangana at just 1.1%. New States and Union territories affecting food prices are the reason for this differential, says Madan Mohan, Chief Economist at the Bank of Baroda.

# Pakistan train siege ends; 340 freed, 27 soldiers dead

Agencies, Reuters, Pakistan

More than 340 train passengers taken hostage by a militant group in Pakistan were freed on Wednesday by security forces after a 30-hour siege, an Army official said, confirming that 27 off-duty soldiers were shot dead by militants.

Pakistan security forces launched a rescue mission on Tuesday after news of the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) the militant group, bombed a rail track in mountainous southwest Balochistan and stormed the Jaffar Express with around 450 passengers on board. In a statement after the attack, the BLA demanded the release of its imprisoned members.

One off-duty soldier was killed in the operation. The Army official did not give the civilian death toll, but said more than 30 militants and a police officer had been killed. Several passengers who escaped or

were freed by the militants said the latter first checked their identity cards to confirm who was from outside the Balochistan province. The BLA and other separatist groups have been accusing outsiders of plundering the natural resources in Balochistan, which borders Afghanistan and Iran. Attacks by the such groups have soared in the past few years, mostly targeting security forces and ethnic groups from outside the province.

## Winter wonderland



Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah takes a snowmobile during the closing ceremony of the 68th Kerala India Winter Games in Gulmarg on Wednesday. Indian Army retained the title for the second year in a row while Himachal Pradesh finished second. Himachal

# U.S. tariffs on aluminium, steel imports take effect

Reuters, WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump's increased tariffs on all steel and aluminium imports took effect on Wednesday, starting up a campaign to recorder global trade systems in favour of the U.S. that drew swift retaliation from Europe.

Mr. Trump's action to build up protections for American steel and aluminium producers, including an effective global tariff of 25% on all imports of the metals, and extends the duties to hundreds of downstream products made from the metals, from auto bolts to car seat-cans and bulldozer blades.

The European Union (EU) on Wednesday announced that it will impose counter-tariffs on U.S. imports, including against President Donald Trump's steel and aluminium tariffs, hours after they came into effect.

The countermeasures will amount to tariffs on \$26 billion of U.S. goods entering the EU, equivalent to Mr. Trump's targeting of \$28 billion of EU goods entering U.S. markets.

"We deeply regret this measure," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said, referring to Mr. Trump's move to impose 25% tariffs on steel, aluminium, and products based on these from the EU and other jurisdictions.

The EU's tariffs will impact 5% of all EU goods exports to the U.S., the EU said in a statement.

The first Trump administration had initially applied these tariffs in 2018. They are referred to as "Section 232" tariffs named after a provision in the 1962 Trade Expansion Act that allows the president to impose tariffs for reasons of "national security".

The first Trump administration had initially applied these tariffs in 2018. They are referred to as "Section 232" tariffs named after a provision in the 1962 Trade Expansion Act that allows the president to impose tariffs for reasons of "national security".

# In Mauritius, Prime Minister says 'free, open, and secure' Indian Ocean priority for both countries

Rafid Bhattacharya, NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said a "free, open, secure, and safe" Indian Ocean was a common priority for both India and Mauritius.

Mr. Modi, who is on a two-day state visit to the island nation, said this while delivering a speech alongside Mauritian Prime Minister Navin Randhawa.

He conveyed India's unambiguous support for the sovereignty of Mauritius over the Chagos archipelago. The U.K. and Mauritius had reached an agreement over the archipelago last year. "In the next five years, 500 civil servants of Mauritius will be trained in India. We have also agreed to settle trade matters through local courts."

The Prime Minister and I agree that defence cooperation and maritime security are important parts of the strategic partnership between the two sides. Free, open, secure and safe Indian Ocean is our common priority," Mr. Modi said after the conclusion of bilateral talks.

The two sides also sealed eight memorandums of understanding, including one that will allow settlement of trade issues through local courts.

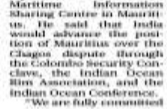
Mr. Modi assured that India would extend all possible help in the establishment of the Mauritius Zone of Economic Special Interest Area (ZEEA) in the Indian Ocean. Information Sharing Centre in Mauritius. He said that India would advance the position of Mauritius over the Chagos dispute through the Colonial Security Committee, the Indian Ocean Region Council, and the Indian Ocean Indian Ocean Conference.

"We are fully committed to ensure protection of the Exclusive Economic Zone of Mauritius," he said.

**Military base**  
The Exclusive Economic Zone of Mauritius gained prominence during the U.K.-Mauritius negotiations over the Chagos Islands. The agreement also allows unhindered operations, including one that will see the Enforcement Directorate and the Financial Crimes Commission of the Republic of Mauritius.

Foreign Secretary Vikramjit Singh reiterated India's support for Mauritius' claim over the Chagos archipelago. Addressing India-Mauritius bilateral ties, Mr. Modi said travellers from Mauritius would receive assistance for the Char Dham Yatra pilgrimage to four holy spots in India) and the Ramayana Trail. He announced that new development projects worth Mauritius Rupee 800 million would be launched under bilateral partnership.

Mr. Modi was earlier conferred the highest honour of the country, the Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi attends the Mauritius National Day celebrations in Port Louis on Wednesday with Mauritius PM Navin Randhawa (right) and President Prithviraj Singh. Himachal



# U.S. tariffs on aluminium, steel imports take effect

Reuters  
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump's increased tariffs on all steel and aluminium imports took effect on Wednesday, stepping up a campaign to reorder global trade norms in favour of the U.S. that drew swift retaliation from Europe.

Mr. Trump's action to bulk up protections for American steel and aluminium producers restores effective global tariffs of 25% on all imports of the metals, and extends the duties to hundreds of downstream products made from the metals, from nuts and bolts to soda cans and bulldozer blades.

## Allies upset

Close U.S. allies Canada, Britain, and Australia criticised the blanket tariffs, with Canada mulling reciprocal actions, and British Business and Trade Secretary Jonathan Reynolds saying "all options were on the table" to respond in the national interest.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the move was "entirely unjustified... and against the spirit of our two nations' enduring friendship" but ruled out tit-for-tat duties.

The run-up to the tariff deadline came with some drama on Tuesday as Mr. Trump threatened Canada with doubling the duty to 50% on its steel and aluminium exports to the U.S.

But the U.S. President backed off those plans after Ontario Premier Doug Ford agreed to suspend his province's decision to impose a 25% surcharge on electricity exports to the States of Minnesota, Michigan, and New York until earlier U.S. tariffs were removed.



Eye for eye: EU chief Ursula von der Leyen with U.S. Vice-President J. D. Vance at a Paris meeting last month. REUTERS

## EU strikes back with tariffs on U.S. imports

Sriram Lakshman  
LONDON

The European Union (EU) on Wednesday announced that it will impose counter-tariffs on U.S. imports, retaliating against President Donald Trump's steel and aluminium tariffs, hours after they came into effect.

The countermeasures will amount to tariffs on €26 billion of U.S. goods entering the EU, equivalent to Mr. Trump's targeting of \$28 billion of EU goods entering U.S. markets.

"We deeply regret this measure," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said, referring to Mr. Trump's move to impose 25% tariffs on steel, aluminium, and products based on these from the EU and other jurisdictions.

The U.S. tariffs will impact 5% of all EU goods exports to the U.S., the EU said in a statement.

The first Trump administration had initially applied these tariffs in 2018. They are referred to as "Section 232" tariffs, named after a provision under U.S. trade law permitting tariffs for reasons of "national security".

The EU response would consist of allowing current suspensions of countermeasures to tariffs imposed during Mr. Trump's first term to expire at the end of the month, resulting in a return to higher tariffs from April 1.

The EU would then consider targeting another approximately €18 billion of U.S. imports to reflect the fact that the current U.S. tariffs impact a broader range and higher value of EU exports to the U.S. This second stage would be fully in place by April 13.

"In the meantime, we remain fully open to negotiations," Ms. Von der Leyen said, emphasising that it was not in America's or the EU's interest to burden their economies with such tariffs.

The EU will also begin consulting individual member countries on the measures immediately. The proposed list of products being targeted includes industrial goods such as steel and aluminium products, leather, and textiles. It also includes agricultural goods such as poultry, beef, seafood, nuts, dairy, sugar, and vegetables.

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## U.S. Imposes Tariffs on Aluminium and Steel Imports | अमेरिका ने एल्युमिनियम और स्टील आयात पर शुल्क लगाया

- **The U.S. imposed a 25% tariff on all steel and aluminium imports.**  
अमेरिका ने सभी स्टील और एल्युमिनियम आयात पर 25% शुल्क लगाया।
- **This move is aimed at protecting American steel and aluminium producers.**  
यह कदम अमेरिकी स्टील और एल्युमिनियम उत्पादकों की सुरक्षा के लिए उठाया गया है।
- **The tariffs extend to hundreds of downstream metal products like nuts, bolts, soda cans, and bulldozer blades.**  
ये शुल्क नट, बोल्ट, सोडा कैन और बुलडोजर ब्लेड जैसे धातु से बने अन्य उत्पादों पर भी लागू होंगे।



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## Reactions from U.S. Allies | अमेरिका के सहयोगी देशों की प्रतिक्रिया

- **Canada, Britain, and Australia criticized the tariffs.**  
कनाडा, ब्रिटेन और ऑस्ट्रेलिया ने इन शुल्कों की आलोचना की।
- **Canada considered taking reciprocal actions against U.S. exports.**  
कनाडा ने अमेरिकी निर्यात के खिलाफ जवाबी कार्रवाई पर विचार किया।
- **Australian PM Anthony Albanese called the move "unjustified" but ruled out retaliatory tariffs.**  
ऑस्ट्रेलियाई प्रधानमंत्री एंथनी अल्बनीज ने इस कदम को "असंगत" कहा लेकिन जवाबी शुल्क लगाने से इनकार किया।

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## U.S.-Canada Tensions | अमेरिका-कनाडा संबंधों में तनाव

- **President Trump threatened to double duties on Canadian steel and aluminium exports to 50%.**  
राष्ट्रपति ट्रंप ने कनाडाई स्टील और एल्युमिनियम निर्यात पर शुल्क को 50% तक बढ़ाने की धमकी दी।
- **However, he later backed off after Ontario's Premier suspended tariffs on U.S. electricity exports.**  
हालांकि, ओंटारियो के प्रीमियर द्वारा अमेरिकी बिजली निर्यात पर लगाए गए शुल्क को निलंबित करने के बाद ट्रंप ने यह फैसला वापस ले लिया।
- **The tariffs are a continuation of Trump's "Section 232" trade policies from 2018.**  
ये शुल्क ट्रंप प्रशासन की 2018 की "सेक्शन 232" व्यापार नीति का विस्तार है।



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## EU Retaliation Against U.S. Tariffs | यूरोपीय संघ की अमेरिका के खिलाफ जवाबी कार्रवाई

- **The EU announced counter-tariffs on \$26 billion (€26 billion) worth of U.S. goods.**  
यूरोपीय संघ ने \$26 बिलियन (€26 बिलियन) मूल्य के अमेरिकी उत्पादों पर जवाबी शुल्क लगाने की घोषणा की।
- **This move comes as retaliation for Trump's steel and aluminium tariffs.**  
यह कदम ट्रंप के स्टील और एल्युमिनियम शुल्क के जवाब में उठाया गया है।
- **The EU tariffs target industrial goods, including steel, aluminium, leather, and textiles.**  
यूरोपीय संघ के शुल्क औद्योगिक उत्पादों जैसे स्टील, एल्युमिनियम, चमड़ा और कपड़ा को प्रभावित करेंगे।
- **Agricultural products such as poultry, beef, seafood, nuts, and dairy are also included.**  
पोल्ट्री, बीफ, समुद्री भोजन, नट्स और डेयरी उत्पादों को भी इस सूची में शामिल किया गया है।

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## Future Trade Relations and Possible Negotiations | भविष्य के व्यापारिक संबंध और संभावित वार्ता

- **The EU may impose an additional \$18 billion (€18 billion) in tariffs by April 13.**  
यूरोपीय संघ 13 अप्रैल तक अतिरिक्त \$18 बिलियन (€18 बिलियन) के शुल्क लगा सकता है।
- **The EU remains open to negotiations with the U.S. to avoid economic burdens.**  
यूरोपीय संघ आर्थिक बोझ से बचने के लिए अमेरिका के साथ बातचीत के लिए तैयार है।
- **Member countries will be consulted before finalizing additional trade measures.**  
अतिरिक्त व्यापारिक उपायों को अंतिम रूप देने से पहले सदस्य देशों से परामर्श किया जाएगा।



IN BRIEF



Defence Ministry, BEL sign \$2,906-crore radar contract

The Defence Ministry on Wednesday signed a \$2,906-crore contract with Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Ghaziabad for the procurement of the low-level transportable radar Ashwini. Ashwini is an active electronically scanned phased array radar based on state-of-the-art solid state technology, the Ministry said. "The radar is capable of tracking aerial targets from high-speed fighter aircraft to slow moving targets such as Unmanned Aerial Vehicle and helicopters. Its acquisition will significantly enhance operational preparedness of Indian Air Force," the Ministry said. The contract was signed in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh.

Video of dog eating human embryo sparks panic

The video footage of a stray dog eating a human embryo at the government women's hospital at Lalohi in Rajasthan's Bikaner district created panic in the town, after which the district administration ordered a probe. Initial reports suggested that it was a case of abortion and "unwanted delivery" by a widowed woman. The video recording, which went viral on social media on Tuesday, showed a dog tearing apart a fetus and eating it, with the onlookers making an attempt to free the hospital, but it could not find any traces of the embryo. The dog could also not be found at the scene.

APAAR ID system voluntary, but activists and parents raise concern over growing mandates

Arundhati Datta NEW DELHI

Parents and activists worry that it could become mandatory to sign out of the Education Ministry's Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR) ID for school students, though enrolment is supposed to be voluntary. The APAAR ID links the Digital Locker and the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC), which the government hopes to use to standardise students' school transcripts in a uniform way as a "single source of truth". However, the APAAR ID system has drawn scrutiny on data privacy and necessity grounds. While the Education Ministry has said in a document on its website that getting an APAAR ID is not mandatory, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) told schools in a circular in January that it expects them "to ensure 100% saturation of APAAR IDs for all students". A document that many schools have taken as a mandate. APAAR IDs are linked to Aadhaar, and some parents who are willing to enrol their children have reported issues linking the students' Aadhaar with APAAR, due to spelling mismatch between their name in school records and the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) database. Such parents must be referred to a Common Service Centre to update children's documents, the CBSE said in its January circular. "The APAAR ID system presents significant risks, especially in the collection and handling of sensitive data, including

Soldier suffers injuries in firing at LoC in Jammu

The Hindu Bureau JAMMU

A soldier was injured in firing from across the border in Nowshera district of Jammu on Wednesday. Officials said the soldier, posted at a forward post close to the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kalyani area of the Nowshera sector, was hit by a bullet. Later, the injured soldier was evacuated to the military hospital in Udhampur for advanced treatment. An investigation is under way to ascertain the cause of the firing, officials said.

Preliminary reports suggest that the explosion provided by an explosion in the LoC, around 10 km, followed by three rounds of gunfire. However, there was no immediate report of any casualty in the blast. The Jammu region witnessed multiple cases of cross-border firing this week. Official figures suggested that six civilians were reported on the LoC in Jammu, Bijnour and Poonch districts in January and February. A Captain and a soldier were killed in a blast by an improvised explosive device, and at least two other soldiers were hit by snipers.

'Design stage of small modular nuclear reactor completed'

It will take 60 to 72 months for the reactor to be constructed after the project is sanctioned, Union Minister Jitendra Singh tells Lok Sabha

Jacob Kottar NEW DELHI

The "concept design" stage of India's Bharat Small Modular Reactor (BSMR) has been completed and is in the process of being approved. Since the project is sanctioned, it will take 60 to 72 months for the reactor to be constructed, Union Minister of State for Science and Technology Jitendra Singh said in the Lok Sabha in response to a query on Wednesday. The BSMRs are modified versions of India's existing Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR) and will have a capacity of 200 MW each. They will be fuelled by natural uranium, "one-use" and are being jointly designed and developed by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre and Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL). Manufacturing and delivery of equipment and component will be carried out through various indigenous nuclear vendors developed by the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE). "Critical items" such as low alloy steel forgings required for manufacturing the reactor pressure vessel and reactivity control drive mechanisms, will be procured by domestic vendors. India's existing BSMRs will be used by energy intensive industries such as steel, aluminium and cement for captive power and can be set up by equipping thermal power plants that are to be decommissioned. They can also provide electricity in remote places. The BSMR was based on the "globally proven" pressurised water reactor technology. It was equipped with passive safety features as well as several engineered safety systems to



The BSMR will be based on the pressurised water reactor technology. It was equipped with passive safety features.

ensure nuclear safety during accidents. Systems were planned to handle fuel and hot steam in situ, Mr. Singh's written response read. In his budget speech in July 2024, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the government would be partnering with the private sector for setting up Bharat Small Reactors (BSRs), reactors under legislative purview of BSMRs, and research & development of new technologies for nuclear energy. The government has committed ₹20,000 crore for setting up the first of these by 2033. India expects to have 100 GW (gigawatt) of nuclear power installed by 2047.

Indian Railways to dig ponds under govt's Mission Amrit Sarovar

S. Vijay Kumar CHENNAI

The Indian Railways will dig ponds as part of the Union government's Mission Amrit Sarovar that aims to address the critical issue of water scarcity in the country.

Mission Amrit Sarovar was launched in April 2022 with the ambitious goal of constructing or rejuvenating 75 ponds in each district of the country. The project made significant progress and as of October 2024, more than 68,000 ponds have been completed and groundwater availability in various regions. These ponds have not only addressed immediate water needs but also established sustainable water resources. Phase 2 of the mission was launched with a renewed focus on ensuring water availability, with particular emphasis on BSMRs, and research & development of new technologies for nuclear energy. As part of these initiatives, the government is roped in the Railways for identifying, excavating, identifying waterbodies or constructing new ones at out-



The mission was launched with the ambitious goal of constructing 75 ponds in each district of the country.

stations in the vicinity of railway lines. Railway authorities were told to request the respective district authorities to identify possible sites for the creation of new waterbodies near railway work sites. The excavated material would be used in railway embankments, wherever the quality of the soil is found suitable for rail construction. The Railways would work in close coordination with the Rural Development Ministry. The Union government has sent letters to the Chief Secretaries of all the States and Union Territories on the role of the Railways in Mission Amrit Sarovar, sources said, adding that a substantial number of ponds would be rejuvenated or constructed by August 15.

Nitish Kumar disrespects women and makes 'lewd gestures', say RJD leaders

Anamath Tewary PATNA

Opposition Rashtraiya Janata Dal leaders walked out of Bihar legislature on Wednesday, accusing Chief Minister Nitish Kumar of disrespecting the women of the State and making "lewd gestures", including at former Chief Minister Rabi Devi.

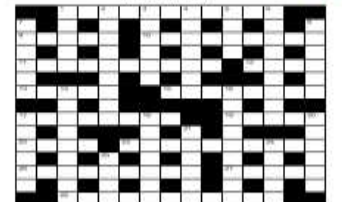


Rabi Devi

After a heated exchange between Mr. Kumar and Mr. Tewary, the Speaker of the Council, Mr. Devi alleged: "Nitish Kumar consumes alcohol, drinks and comes to the State Assembly. He disrespects women, including his own wife, and makes lewd gestures about women. He pressures on the women to change their clothes before 2005. I want to ask him, did women he even wearing education uniform, were they going to

God to keep his healthy. Nitish Kumar's remarks in the House indicate that he is not looking for his own improvement. "In the House, he makes lewd gestures. He generated a bad name for himself by putting a hand on his face and asking why are you putting on a bindi... I want to get that video from the House. Earlier too, he had made similar remarks on a Minister Sheila Marfatia and shouted slogans against Mr. Kumar. Mr. Yadav slammed Mr. Kumar's remarks about his father and former Chief Minister Lalu Prasad. "He says he made Lalaji. There is no comparison between him and Lalaji. The Chief Minister took consecutive allegations, while my father became an MP in 1977. It is such a stage when we pray

THE CROSSWORD 14431



- 1. Art shack produces frames for keeping hangover (6)
2. Film-maker strongly crosses across results of set (6)
3. Amount returned by in-charge for producing harmonious notes (6)
4. Comedian's kitchen has class room furniture (8)
5. Diva's public relation is initially with her name single (10,1)
6. Home audio equipment gear (6)
7. Push the Spanish royal first (5)
8. A gushing jet may produce nitrous oxide (10,4)
9. Down
1. Chinese alchemist's summit's head (5)
2. Three fishing equipment containing a set of musical instruments (9)
3. Items composed at locations (2,4)
4. Homesite's embossed gem around Asian part passage for soldier (7)
5. Man leaving from Ankara for Greece (4)
6. Notes and reverse tax after food at back end's searched initially (6)
7. Husband leaves protective hangover under front of parlour window facing (6)
8. Housewife's Master's name, is a certain outfit (6)
9. Reserves leaving place for setting upemphatic perhaps (9)
10. Removing problem on actor passing away (6)
11. Decaying gemstone's back of neck (6)
12. Formerly coast person roughly cast words, in absence of actor (6)
13. Infant may be here (6)
14. Elongate period of time (7)
15. Not to be here (6)
16. North Central banking gives protection for embryo (8)
17. Decaying gemstone's back of neck (6)
18. Half of thousand for one in steps of year (4)

SUDOKU

9x9 grid for a Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Solution to previous puzzle
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
8 6 1 7 9 3 4 5 2
4 9 8 2 5 6 7 3 1
7 9 6 3 8 1 4 2 5
2 7 8 9 2 1 3 4 6
2 7 8 9 2 1 3 4 6

FAITH Sani Peyarchi's significance

Every one on this earth is affected by good and bad events taking place in their lives. Whenever there are setbacks, it is human nature to seek help, either emotional empathy from friends, or divine interventions, if one is a believer. One can take the highs and lows of life with equanimity due to the limitations of human nature, add Sri Sri Sriparam Brahma-dara Lakshmidhar. At periodic intervals, devotees also undergo apprehensions when the orbits of time herald a change, such as Sani Peyarchi, with direct impact on one. People tend to seek out their friends or astrologers when Sani Peyarchi's onset of Saturn from one house to another is imminent. His transit will bring both good and bad times to all which is why, our ancestors have recommended that everyone should undertake remedial measures as advised. The most efficacious way of facing Sani Peyarchi is to take part in pujas and bhajans conducted by priests well versed in the scriptures and various mantras. Another recommendation is for individuals to follow simple rituals at home. None of the mantras can do away with the changes Saturn will bring, however, one will be in a better position to face the same. Although Sani is said to bring about both good and bad times in a person's life he traverses through, a sense of impending doom usually devotes. As per the almanac, and other astronomical calculations, Sani is set to move from 11th house (Tamil zodiac sign, Kumbha) to 12th house (on March 29 and impact certain zodiac signs.

# Indian Railways to dig ponds under govt.'s Mission Amrit Sarovar

**S. Vijay Kumar**  
CHENNAI

The Indian Railways will dig ponds as part of the Union government's Mission Amrit Sarovar that aims to address the critical issue of water scarcity in the country.

Amrit Sarovar was launched in April 2022 with the ambitious goal of constructing or rejuvenating 75 ponds in each district of the country. The project made significant progress and as of October 2024, more than 68,000 ponds have been completed, rejuvenating surface and groundwater availability in various regions. These ponds have not only addressed immediate water needs but also established sustainable water resources.

Phase 2 of the mission was launched with a renewed focus on ensuring water availability, with community participation (*Jan Bhagidaari*) at its core. It aims to strengthen climate resilience, foster ecological balance, and deliver lasting benefits for future generations.

As part of these initiatives, the government roped in the Railways for desilting, excavating identified waterbodies or constructing new ones at suita-



The mission was launched with goal of constructing 75 ponds in each district of the country.

ble sites in the vicinity of railway lines.

Railway authorities were told to request the respective district authorities to identify possible sites for the creation of new waterbodies near railway worksites.

The excavated material would be used in railway embankments, wherever the quality of the soil is found suitable for rail construction.

The Railways would work in close coordination with the Rural Development Ministry.

The Union government has sent letters to the Chief Secretaries of all the States and Union Territories on the role of the Railways in Mission Amrit Sarovar, sources said, adding that a substantial number of ponds would be rejuvenated or constructed by August 15.

## Indian Railways Joins Mission Amrit Sarovar | भारतीय रेलवे मिशन अमृत सरोवर में शामिल

- **Indian Railways will dig ponds to address water scarcity in the country.**  
भारतीय रेलवे देश में जल संकट को दूर करने के लिए तालाब खोदेगा।
- **This initiative is part of the Union Government's Mission Amrit Sarovar.**  
यह पहल केंद्र सरकार के मिशन अमृत सरोवर का हिस्सा है।
- **The project aims to rejuvenate and construct water bodies across various regions.**  
इस परियोजना का उद्देश्य विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में जल निकायों का पुनरुद्धार और निर्माण करना है।



## Overview of Mission Amrit Sarovar | मिशन अमृत सरोवर का परिचय

- **Launched in April 2022 with the goal of constructing 75 ponds in every district.**  
अप्रैल 2022 में प्रत्येक जिले में 75 तालाब बनाने के लक्ष्य के साथ शुरू किया गया।
- **By October 2024, over 68,000 ponds have been completed.**  
अक्टूबर 2024 तक 68,000 से अधिक तालाब पूरे किए जा चुके हैं।
- **These ponds improve surface water storage and groundwater levels.**  
ये तालाब सतही जल भंडारण और भूजल स्तर में सुधार करते हैं।
- **The project aims to create long-term sustainable water resources.**  
यह परियोजना दीर्घकालिक सतत जल संसाधन बनाने का लक्ष्य रखती है।

## Phase 2 of the Mission | मिशन का दूसरा चरण

- **A renewed focus on water availability and community participation (Jan Bhagidari).**

जल उपलब्धता और सामुदायिक भागीदारी (जन भागीदारी) पर नया जोर।

- **Objective: Strengthen climate resilience, ecological balance, and long-term benefits.**

उद्देश्य: जलवायु अनुकूलता, पारिस्थितिक संतुलन और दीर्घकालिक लाभ सुनिश्चित करना।

## Role of Indian Railways in the Project | परियोजना में भारतीय रेलवे की भूमिका

- **Railways will help in desilting, excavating, and constructing new water bodies.**  
रेलवे गाद निकालने, खुदाई करने और नए जल निकायों के निर्माण में सहायता करेगा।
- **Ponds will be created near railway worksites and tracks.**  
रेलवे कार्यस्थलों और पटरियों के पास तालाब बनाए जाएंगे।
- **Railway authorities will coordinate with district officials to identify suitable sites.**  
रेलवे अधिकारी उपयुक्त स्थलों की पहचान के लिए जिला अधिकारियों के साथ समन्वय करेंगे।
- **Excavated material from ponds will be used for railway embankments.**  
तालाबों से निकाली गई मिट्टी का उपयोग रेलवे तटबंधों में किया जाएगा।





## After Bharti, Jio allies with Musk's SpaceX for Starlink net services

**Lalatendu Mishra**

MUMBAI

A day after Bharti Airtel signed a pact with American billionaire Elon Musk's SpaceX to offer Starlink's high speed internet broadband services to customers in India, Reliance Industries' Jio Platforms Ltd (JPL) followed suit.

Jio platforms would offer Starlink services with the pact subject to SpaceX receiving authorisations to sell Starlink in India.

Jio would make available Starlink solutions through retail outlets as well as online storefronts.

Jio will not only offer Starlink equipment at its retail outlets but establish a mechanism to support customer services, Jio said.

"Starlink complements JioAirFiber and JioFiber by extending high speed Internet to the most challenging of locations in a quick and affordable manner," Jio added.

Jio and SpaceX are also evaluating other complementary areas of cooperation to leverage respective infrastructure to boost India's digital ecosystem.

"Ensuring every Indian, no matter where they live, has access to affordable and high-speed broadband remains Jio's top priority," said Mathew Oommen, Group CEO, Reliance Jio.

"We applaud Jio's commitment to advancing India's connectivity," said Gwynne Shotwell, president and chief operating officer, SpaceX.

## 1. Jio Partners with SpaceX for Starlink Internet Services | जियो ने स्पेसएक्स के साथ स्टारलिंग इंटरनेट सेवाओं के लिए साझेदारी की

- **Jio Platforms Ltd (JPL) has partnered with Elon Musk's SpaceX to offer Starlink broadband services in India.**

रिलायंस इंडस्ट्रीज की जियो प्लेटफॉर्म लिमिटेड (JPL) ने भारत में स्टारलिंग ब्रॉडबैंड सेवाएं प्रदान करने के लिए एलन मस्क की स्पेसएक्स के साथ साझेदारी की।

- **This agreement came a day after Bharti Airtel signed a similar pact with SpaceX.**

यह समझौता भारती एयरटेल द्वारा स्पेसएक्स के साथ इसी तरह के समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर करने के एक दिन बाद हुआ।

- **Jio's agreement is subject to SpaceX receiving the necessary regulatory approvals in India.**

जियो का समझौता इस बात पर निर्भर करेगा कि स्पेसएक्स को भारत में आवश्यक नियामक मंजूरी मिलती है या नहीं।



## Jio's Starlink Service Offerings | जियो की स्टारलिंग सेवा प्रदान करने की योजना

- **Jio will sell Starlink solutions through retail outlets and online stores.**  
जियो अपने खुदरा स्टोरों और ऑनलाइन प्लेटफॉर्म के माध्यम से स्टारलिंग समाधान बेचेगा।
- **Jio will not only provide Starlink equipment but also offer customer support.**  
जियो न केवल स्टारलिंग उपकरण बेचेगा बल्कि ग्राहक सहायता तंत्र भी स्थापित करेगा।
- **Starlink will complement Jio's existing services like JioAirFiber and JioFiber.**  
स्टारलिंग, जियो के मौजूदा जियोएयरफाइबर और जियोफाइबर सेवाओं को पूरक करेगा।
- **This partnership aims to expand high-speed internet access to remote locations in India.**  
यह साझेदारी भारत के दूरदराज के क्षेत्रों में हाई-स्पीड इंटरनेट सेवाएं प्रदान करने के लिए की गई है।

## Future Collaboration between Jio and SpaceX | जियो और स्पेसएक्स के बीच भविष्य का सहयोग

- **Jio and SpaceX are exploring additional areas of collaboration to enhance India's digital infrastructure.**

जियो और स्पेसएक्स भारत के डिजिटल बुनियादी ढांचे को बढ़ावा देने के लिए अन्य क्षेत्रों में सहयोग के अवसर तलाश रहे हैं।

- **Their focus is to provide affordable, high-speed broadband across India.**

इनका मुख्य उद्देश्य पूरे भारत में किफायती और हाई-स्पीड ब्रॉडबैंड प्रदान करना है।

- **Mathew Oommen, Group CEO of Reliance Jio, emphasized that digital connectivity for all Indians is a top priority.**

रिलायंस जियो के ग्रुप सीईओ मैथ्यू ओम्मेन ने कहा कि सभी भारतीयों के लिए डिजिटल कनेक्टिविटी सुनिश्चित करना उनकी सर्वोच्च प्राथमिकता है।

## 4. SpaceX's Perspective | स्पेसएक्स का दृष्टिकोण

- **SpaceX President Gwynne Shotwell appreciated Jio's commitment to advancing India's connectivity.**

स्पेसएक्स की अध्यक्ष ग्विन शॉटवेल ने भारत की कनेक्टिविटी को आगे बढ़ाने के लिए जियो की प्रतिबद्धता की सराहना की।

- **The partnership will boost SpaceX's presence in the Indian broadband market.**

यह साझेदारी भारतीय ब्रॉडबैंड बाजार में स्पेसएक्स की उपस्थिति को मजबूत करेगी।



**TURNING POINT**  
Failure to win close matches hurt RCB badly, admits Smriti



"The first two matches in Bengaluru were the turning points. Sometimes you get a lot of things right and you get your way in the last few three overs. We saw last year by winning those moments this year in Bengaluru, we couldn't make those moments ours." RCB skipper Smriti Mandhana after a disappointing season in the WPL.

**IMPORTANT ELEMENT**  
Just need Matthews to keep enjoying her cricket, says Jhulan



Hayley Matthews is the only one to feature among both the top 10 batsmen as well as the highest wicket takers in the IPL. MI bowler Jhulan Goswami praised the all-rounder. "Hayley is a very important member. It is important that she stays in a good form of mind and just enjoys her cricket."

**BIDDING ADIEU**  
Mahmudullah calls time on his international career



When Bangladesh batter Mahmudullah announced his retirement from international cricket on Wednesday, the 39-year-old Bangladeshi was the country's fourth highest ODI run-getter with 5838 runs at an average of 33.46, including four centuries. — off in ICC tournaments. He is Bangladesh's only batter to hit three ODI World Cup centuries.

**RECOGNITION**  
Gill wins ICC Player-of-the-Month award for February



Shubman Gill was named ICC Men's Player of the Month for February following his stellar performance, which includes his exploits in the team's title-winning Champions Trophy campaign. Gill beat Australia's Steve Smith and New Zealand's Glenn Phillips. In his first ODI over the course of the month, Gill completed 406 runs, averaging 101.50.

**Giants, MI face off for a shot at title**

The Gujarat team can derive a lot of confidence from its show in the past fortnight. Harmanshree and overseas core have been on fire for Mumbai



Breaking through Gansohi, centre, has succeeded in taking Gujarat into the playoffs for the first time. Anantash, right.

**WPL**  
Vishkesh Mishra

On Monday night, Gujarat Titans came within striking distance of beating Mumbai Indians for the first time in three seasons of the Women's Premier League (WPL). As the two teams face off in the Eliminator at Traroune Stadium on Thursday, another contest as riveting as the one at the start of this week will go a long way towards lighting up the business end of the third edition. GC, of course, will be hoping for a different outcome. Harmanshree Karu's MI, on the other hand, will be more than satisfied if status quo is maintained.

At stake this time is a lot more than any of their six previous battles, with the winner setting up a date with Delhi Capitals in the final on Saturday. Having qualified for the playoffs for the first time, Adelaide Guardians' team is in uncharted territory. But it can derive a lot of confidence from how the players have shaped up over the past fortnight. Before the defeat to MI, it won three matches in a row, and convincingly at that. The protagonists with the bat in GC's campaign have been Gardner, Beth Mooney and Harleen Govil. Bharati Palsani's blistering 61 on Monday also adds renewed zest to the lower middle-order. With the ball, two young Indians in Kashvee Gautam and Priya Mishra have grabbed the spotlight. While Kashvee is GC's leading wicket-taker with 10 scalps, Priya's breakthroughs have often come at vital junctures. For the 2025 champions, besides Harmanshree's runs at No. 4, it is the overseas core that has done the heavy lifting. Not Sabeeh Brist is leading the scoring tally in the tournament with 416 runs in eight innings at a strike rate of 151.62. Leggie Amelia Kerr and off-spinner Hayley Matthews are the joint-highest wicket-takers this season with 14 victims each. Many of these names are match-winners. But who will seize the moment in a knockout game and take their team over the line?

**Sindhu falls in the first round; Indian doubles pairs move up**

**ALL ENGLAND**  
Prerna Trivedi

Star Indian shuttler PV Sindhu bowed out of the All England Championship with a three-game loss to Korea's Kim Ga Eun in the women's singles opening round on Wednesday. The two-time Olympic medalist, returning after recovering from a hamstring injury, lost 21-19, 13-21, 13-21 to world No. 21 Kim. However, there was good news for India in both women's doubles and mixed doubles. Gayatri Gopichand and Trivedi fell just short to China's Zhuo Yun Sun and Chen Hui Yu 21-17, 21-13 in the first round. Rohan Kapoor and Nishika Shivani Gade progressed to the second round of mixed doubles competition. The results: First round: Women: Kim Ga Eun (20) vs.



Smooth sailing: Trivedi and Gopichand made it to the last 16. Sindhu (R), 21-19, 13-21, 21-13. Doubles: Gayatri Gopichand & Prerna Trivedi vs Sun Yu Sun and Chen Hui Yu (16) 21-17, 21-13. Mixed doubles: Rohan Kapoor & Nishika Shivani Gade vs Wang Yi and Hsueh-Chen Chen (16) 21-13, 17-21, 24-22.

**Will it be coronation for the Kings at last?**

**Shukar Narayanan K.J.**

It's fair to say change has been the only constant for Punjab Kings. The franchise tweaked its status, went through 18 captains and 10 coaches in 17 seasons, and almost always had a major overhaul come auction time. Success, however, has remained elusive. The last time the Punjab outfit made the Indian Premier League playoffs, M.S. Dhoni was still an active Test cricketer and Lewis Hamilton had just one Drivers' Championship. The onus is now on the Shreyas Iyer-Ricky Ponting alliance to take the Kings one step further than their runner-up finish in 2024. And there is scope for hope given that the side had an impressive start to Delhi Capitals' campaign. The skipper's stand at No. 3, will be to add stability to a line-up that has power-hitters aplenty. In Marcus Stoinis, Glenn Maxwell, Josh Inglis and Anantash Chahal, the side has enough and more foreign willow-wielders; the same, however, cannot be said about the Indian part of the set-up. Hence, it is imperative that Prabhsimran Singh and Shaheer Singh PRS only two retentiones ahead of the auction — have a good season.



The likes of Nehal Wadhwa, Musheer Khan and Victoria Viviani need to chip in when called upon. The bowling arsenal looks promising and exciting. The pace battery will be led by the ever-reliable Anshdeep Singh, who was brought back using the

**PR-18 COUNTDOWN**

**Punjab Kings**

**THE SQUAD**  
Shreyas Iyer (c), Rishabh Pant, Victoria Viviani, Anshdeep Singh, Musheer Khan, Glenn Maxwell, Marcus Stoinis, Anantash Chahal, Prabhsimran Singh, Shaheer Singh, Musheer Khan, Gurjansh Shergill, Anshdeep Singh, Yashvir Jaiswal, Yash Thakur, Lockie Ferguson, Ruben van der Dussen, Ben Starc and Priansh Datta.

**OVERALL NUMBERS**

Runs	246	Wickets	112	Matches	134
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**BY OPPOSITION**

Opposition	Runs	Wickets	Matches
KKR	13	17	16
RRR	13	17	16
MI	14	12	14
SRH	22	14	17
CSK	30	18	16
RR	28	12	16
Delhi	14	7	16
GT	8	8	9
LSG	4	3	9

Punjab Kings' remaining matches: (16: PW/10, 16: 16, 16: 16) and 4: 1)

**PRMS' 2024 LEAGUE CAMPAIGN**

Date	Opposition	Time
April 19	RRR	7:30 pm
April 20	RRR	7:30 pm
April 21	CSK	7:30 pm
April 22	CSK	7:30 pm
April 23	SRH	7:30 pm
April 24	SRH	7:30 pm
April 25	CSK	7:30 pm
April 26	CSK	7:30 pm
April 27	RRR	7:30 pm
April 28	RRR	7:30 pm
April 29	RRR	7:30 pm
April 30	RRR	7:30 pm

**Former India all-rounder Syed Abid Ali passes away**

**Sports Bureau**  
HYDERABAD

Former India all-rounder Syed Abid Ali passed away on Wednesday. He was 63. A medium pace bowler all-rounder, Abid played 29 Test matches for India, scoring 1048 runs and taking 47 wickets. One of the finest cricketers from Hyderabad, he made a fantastic debut in his Test career against Australia in Brisbane in 1967-68, when he registered an impressive 6 wickets for 55, his career best. Later in the same series, he scored 78 and 81, showcasing his potential with the bat. He was a member of the Indian team led by Ajit Wadekar that won the historic Test at The Oval in 1971, after bowling out England for only 103 in the second innings. The four-wicket wicket, coupled with the other two Test classics and his Test final ending in a draw, saw India register its first-ever series win in England. A fine batsman, Abid notably opened both the batting and bowling for India in seven Tests against New Zealand in February 1968 and September/October 1969 and against the West Indies in February and April of 1971.



He was a lion-hearted cricketer who led anything the team needed. He was a thorough gentleman with impeccable manners. Syed Abid Ali. The Hyderabad Cricket Association. While his ODI career spanned only five matches (583 runs and seven wickets), three of them came in the tri-series, World Cup in England in 1975.

**KBFC denies HFC in hard-fought draw**

**ISL**  
Anantash Velamuri

In what could be the final match of Hyderabad FC's existence, it was held to a 1-1 draw by Kerala Blasters in an Indian Super League clash at the GMR Hyderabad International Cricket Stadium on Wednesday. Both teams started with a spring in their step. Seven minutes into the contest, the visitor broke the deadlock when his hammered Ahmed's lob into the top corner headed home by an unmarked Dusan Ljajic at the far post. There was a penalty appeal by IFCE in the 17th mi-

**Final points table**

No.	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
1	Chennaiyin FC	26	17	5	4	67	38	56
2	FC Goa	26	14	4	8	53	39	46
3	Bengaluru FC	26	11	5	10	46	31	38
4	Kerala Blasters	26	10	6	10	49	39	36
5	Odisha FC	26	10	5	11	42	38	35
6	Mumbai City FC	26	9	6	11	38	38	33
7	Delhiana FC	26	8	7	11	37	37	33
8	Kerala Blasters	26	8	4	14	37	48	28
9	Goan Athletic	26	6	4	16	38	50	22
10	Goan Athletic	26	6	4	16	38	50	22
11	Goan Athletic	26	6	4	16	38	50	22
12	Goan Athletic	26	6	4	16	38	50	22
13	Goan Athletic	26	6	4	16	38	50	22

# Former India all-rounder Syed Abid Ali passes away

**Sports Bureau**

HYDERABAD

Former India all-rounder Syed Abid Ali passed away on Wednesday. He was 83.

A medium-pace bowling all-rounder, Abid played 29 Test matches for India, scoring 1018 runs and taking 47 wickets. One of the finest cricketers from Hyderabad, he made a fantastic start to his Test career against Australia in Brisbane in 1967-68, when he registered impressive figures of six for 55, his career-best. Later in the same series, he scored 78 and 81, showcasing his potential with the bat.

He was a member of the Indian team led by Ajit Wadekar that won the historic Test at The Oval in 1971, after bowling out England for only 101 in the second innings.

The four-wicket win, coupled with the other two Tests (Lord's and Old Trafford) ending in a draw, saw India register its first-ever series win in England.

A fine fielder, Abid notably opened both the batting and bowling for India in seven Tests: against New Zealand in February 1968 and September/October 1969 and against the West Indies in February and April of 1971.



Abid Ali. THE HINDU ARCHIVES



He was a lion-hearted cricketer who did anything the team needed. He was a thorough gentleman with impeccable manners

SUNIL GAVASKAR

While his ODI career spanned only five matches (93 runs and seven wickets), three of them came in the first-ever men's World Cup in England in 1975.

In 212 First Class games, Abid took 397 wickets and scored 8732 runs.

He scored 169 runs and picked up 19 wickets in 12 List A matches.

As a coach, Abid handled the Hyderabad junior team, the national sides of Maldives and the UAE, and was a mentor at the Telangana Cricket Association.

He was also at the helm of the Andhra team that won the South Zone league in the 2001-02 Ranji Trophy.

Abid moved to the United States after he retired, and breathed his last there.

## 1. Passing of Syed Abid Ali | सैयद आबिद अली का निधन

- **Former Indian all-rounder Syed Abid Ali passed away at the age of 83.**  
पूर्व भारतीय ऑलराउंडर सैयद आबिद अली का 83 वर्ष की उम्र में निधन हो गया।
- **He was a medium-pace bowling all-rounder who played 29 Test matches for India.**  
वे एक मध्यम गति के गेंदबाजी ऑलराउंडर थे जिन्होंने भारत के लिए 29 टेस्ट मैच खेले।
- **Abid Ali scored 1018 runs and took 47 wickets in Test cricket.**  
टेस्ट क्रिकेट में उन्होंने 1018 रन बनाए और 47 विकेट लिए।



## Cricketing Career Highlights | क्रिकेट करियर की प्रमुख झलकियां

- **He made his Test debut against Australia in Brisbane (1967-68), taking 6/55 in his first match.**  
उन्होंने ऑस्ट्रेलिया के खिलाफ ब्रिस्बेन (1967-68) में टेस्ट डेब्यू किया और अपने पहले ही मैच में 6/55 का शानदार प्रदर्शन किया।
- **In the same series, he scored 78 and 81, proving his batting potential.**  
उसी श्रृंखला में उन्होंने 78 और 81 रन बनाए, जिससे उनकी बल्लेबाजी क्षमता साबित हुई।
- **He was part of the Ajit Wadekar-led Indian team that won the historic Test at The Oval in 1971.**  
वे 1971 में अजित वाडेकर की कप्तानी में भारत की ऐतिहासिक ओवल टेस्ट जीत का हिस्सा थे।
- **This victory marked India's first-ever Test series win in England.**  
इस जीत ने इंग्लैंड में भारत की पहली टेस्ट श्रृंखला जीत को चिह्नित किया।



## Contribution in ODIs | वनडे करियर में योगदान

- **Abid Ali played five ODIs, scoring 93 runs and taking 7 wickets.**  
आबिद अली ने 5 वनडे मैच खेले, जिसमें 93 रन बनाए और 7 विकेट लिए।
- **Three of these matches were in the first-ever Men's Cricket World Cup in England (1975).**  
इनमें से तीन मैच 1975 में इंग्लैंड में आयोजित पहले पुरुष क्रिकेट विश्व कप में खेले गए थे।

## Coaching and Mentorship | कोचिंग और मार्गदर्शन

- **Abid Ali coached the Hyderabad junior team, and the national teams of Maldives and UAE.**  
आबिद अली ने हैदराबाद जूनियर टीम और मालदीव तथा यूएई की राष्ट्रीय टीमों को कोचिंग दी।
- **He was a mentor at the Telangana Cricket Association.**  
वे तेलंगाना क्रिकेट एसोसिएशन में मेंटर के रूप में कार्यरत थे।
- **Under his coaching, the Andhra team won the South Zone league in the 2001-02 Ranji Trophy.**  
उनके कोचिंग कार्यकाल में आंध्र टीम ने 2001-02 रणजी ट्रॉफी के साउथ ज़ोन लीग का खिताब जीता।



THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2023, NEW DELHI, LATE CITY, 22 PAGES

### BUSINESS AS USUAL



### THE WORLD

#### U.S. WEAPONS FLOW TO UKRAINE AGAIN, KREMLIN MULLS A CEASEFIRE PROPOSAL

#### ISM Dhanbad, 4 IITs, 2 IIMs among 9 Indian institutes in QS global top 50

#### ISM Dhanbad, 4 IITs, 2 IIMs among 9 Indian institutes in QS global top 50

#### UP, Maharashtra top list of those freed from cyber crime centres

#### 16 steps to end discrimination: In a Bengal village, 5 Dalits enter temple for the first time

#### One dialect, one fable at a time: A Telugu model opens a window for India AI dream

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## DAY AFTER BALOCH REBELS HIJACKED TRAIN WITH 440 ON BOARD Pakistan train siege ends: 21 hostages dead, all 33 attackers killed, says Army

**SALEEM AHMED & ASIF SHAHZAD**  
QUETTA, MARCH 12

PAKISTANI SECURITY forces rescued a train on Wednesday that had been hijacked by separatist militants, killing all 33 attackers and ending a day-long standoff involving hundreds of hostages, the military said.



A security person stands guard near a train carrying empty coffins of a railway station in Quetta Wednesday. The coffins are being sent to India, where a train was hijacked.

Itamed to have carried out the attack and warned that the hostages' lives would be at risk if the government did not negotiate.

## India needs to grow 8% for progress, core sector must invest: SBI chief

**HITESH VYAS, GEORGE MA THEW & SANDEEP BISHN**  
MUMBAI, MARCH 12

INDIA DEFINITELY needs to grow at 8 per cent to progress, and this needs consumption and private capital expenditure, said Challa Sreenivasulu Reddy, Chairman, State Bank of India, the largest bank in the country with a deposit base of \$2.29 trillion.



Hitesh Vyas, Chairman, State Bank of India, during an interview.

## Telangana arrests two women journalists for video critical of CM

**RAHUL V PISHARROY & NIKHILA HENRY**  
HYDRABAD, MARCH 12

HYDRABAD POLICE arrested two YouTube journalists on Wednesday over a video critical of Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. The two women were arrested based on a complaint filed by a Congress leader.

Hydrabad Police arrested two YouTube journalists on Wednesday over a video critical of Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. The two women were arrested based on a complaint filed by a Congress leader.

## ENHANCED STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP India, Mauritius sign eight pacts as PMs decide to elevate ties

**SHUDDHAJIT ROY**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 12

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi and Mauritius Prime Minister Navin Chandra Ramgoolam decided Wednesday to elevate the status of the India-Mauritius partnership to an "Enhanced Strategic Partnership".



PM Narendra Modi with Mauritius President Ramgoolam in Port Louis.

The Indian government announced new bilateral trade pacts — small in scale and meant for the local economies — worth 300 million Mauritian rupees (about \$600 crore). It will also build the new Parliament building in Mauritius. The two countries agreed to enter their mutual trade in local currency.

After the bilateral meeting in Port Louis, Prime Minister Modi said, "Today, Prime Minister Navin Chandra Ramgoolam and I decided to give the India-Mauritius partnership the status of 'Enhanced Strategic Partnership'." To the several phases of community development projects, new revenue of 500 million Mauritian rupees will be started. Mauritius will be a focus in the next five years," he said.

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### Behind Delhi's outreach

CHINA'S AMBITION and its expanding footprint in the Indian Ocean has been closely tracked by Delhi. For this very reason, it has been firming up alliances, especially those related to maritime security, with island nations in the region.

## UP, Maharashtra top list of those freed from cyber crime centres

**MAHFENDER SINGH MANNAL**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 12



The Indian nationals were brought back home in two batches — 206 on Monday and 283 on Tuesday.

AS THE government brought home 483 Indian nationals who had been detained with fake job offers and forced into cyber-crime activities in Southeast Asia, a probe has revealed that 83 of them are from Uttar Pradesh, 61 from Maharashtra, 57 from Gujarat and 48 from Punjab. All of them have been questioned by multiple agencies, including the CBI.

The Indians were flown home in two batches — 206 on Monday and 283 on Tuesday — in military aircraft. Many of them had been trafficked to scam centres operating in Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos.

## One dialect, one fable at a time: A Telugu model opens a window for India AI dream

**RAVIR BHATTACHARYA**  
COCHIN, MARCH 12



Dalits enter the temple in Gidhagaram village, North India.

IT'S 10 am, and the village of Gidhagaram in West Bengal's Purba Bardhaman district — about 130 km from Kolkata — has turned into a fairground. The village is preparing for a historic event: a Dalit, a member of the lowest caste in the Hindu caste system, will enter the village's Gidhagaram temple — an event that they have marked the beginning of the end of centuries of discrimination.

The 16 steps we climbed to enter the temple and other caste-related generations of discrimination," said 50-year-old Manjiv Das after the event.

As India attempts to build an AI dream, it needs to build an AI dream. L.M. Veesha's experience with documenting the language in this case, Telugu — offers a window into what an Indian model will need to factor in.

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# India, Mauritius sign eight pacts as PMs decide to elevate ties

India to build new Mauritius Parliament building, train 500 civil servants

SHUBHAJIT ROY  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 12

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi and Mauritius Prime Minister Navin Chandra Ramgoolam decided Wednesday to elevate the status of the India-Mauritius partnership to an "Enhanced Strategic Partnership".

The Indian government announced new infrastructure projects — small in scale and meant for the local communities — worth 500 million Mauritian rupees (about Rs 100 crore). It will also build the new Parliament building in Mauritius. The two countries agreed to settle their mutual trade in local currency.

After the bilateral meeting in Port Louis, Prime Minister Modi said, "Today, Prime Minister Navin Chandra Ramgoolam and I decided to give the India-Mauritius partnership the status of 'Enhanced Strategic Partnership'."

"In the second phase of community development projects, new projects worth 500 million Mauritian rupees will be started. Five hundred civil servants from Mauritius will be trained in India in the next five years," he said.



PM Narendra Modi with Mauritius President Dharambeer Gokhool (left) and PM Navinchandra Ramgoolam in Port Louis. PTI

"We decided that India will cooperate in building the new Parliament building in Mauritius. This will be a gift to Mauritius from the Mother of

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

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**EXPLAINED**  
**E** Behind Delhi's outreach

CHINA'S ASSERTION and its expanding footprint in the Indian Ocean has been closely tracked by Delhi. For this very reason, it has been firming up alliances, especially those related to maritime security, with island nations in the region.



## **New projects**

- Work towards timely delivery of 100 e-buses and the associated charging infrastructure.

- Replacement of 100 km water pipeline in Mauritius.

- New Parliament building on a site identified by the Mauritius government

- Redevelopment of the Ganga Talao Spiritual Sanctuary

## **Political**

- Welcoming ongoing discussions between Parliaments of the two countries, including in the field of capacity building, both leaders agreed to strengthen cooperation on sharing best practices on parliamentary proceedings.

## **Training/Capacity building**

- Training programme for 500 civil servants of Mauritius through the National Centre for Good Governance in India over five years.

- Training for Mauritian officials in civil, police, parliamentary, customs, legal, health.

## **Health sector**

- Jan Aushadhi Kendras by India abroad in Mauritius and agreed to expand the initiative to various parts of Mauritius.

- Setting-up of an Ayush Centre of Excellence in Mauritius.

## **Digital**

- Support implementation of e-judiciary system

- Strengthen cooperation in the field of ICT including cyber security, Digital Public Infrastructure

- Explore implementation of successful digital tools developed by India, such as PM Gati Shakti digital platform.

## **Defence & maritime security**

- Refit of Coast Guard Ships – Victory, Valiant and Barracuda, on grant basis.

- Defence and maritime assets and equipment, as per needs and priorities of Mauritius.

- Enhance maritime coopera-



## ISM Dhanbad, 4 IITs, 2 IIMs among 9 Indian institutes in QS global top 50

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 12

THE INDIAN School of Mines in Dhanbad, which is an IIT, has secured the highest ranking for an Indian institution in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2025, standing at rank 20 globally in 'Engineering - Mineral and Mining' subject, up from rank 41 last year.

Global higher education analysts Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) released the rankings by subject for 2025 on Wednesday. A total of 79 Indian institutions featured in the rankings, 10 more than last year.

Nine Indian institutions featured in the top 50 across subjects. In addition to the Indian School of Mines Dhanbad, these included the IITs in Delhi, Bombay, Madras, and Kharagpur, the IIMs in Ahmedabad and Bangalore, and the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU). The only private Indian institution that featured in the top 50 across subjects was Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences, which was ranked 26 in Dentistry.

While it remains among the top 50, IIT Madras has seen a drop in its ranking, from 16 last year to 31 this year in Petroleum Engineering.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## ● 9 Indian institutes in QS top 50

IIT Delhi was ranked 26 in Engineering and Technology, making it the best performing Indian institution in the subject, followed by IIT Bombay at rank 28. Both IITs have performed better compared to their ranking of 45 last year.

IIM Ahmedabad was ranked 27 in Business and Management Studies, while IIM Bangalore secured rank 40 in the same subject. Both institutions have dropped in their rankings compared to last year — IIM Ahmedabad was ranked 22, while IIM Bangalore was 32 last year.

The JNU has also seen a drop in its ranking from 20 last year to 29 this year in Development Studies.

India's top performing institutions in terms of the number of subjects they featured in (ranging from 18 to 29 subjects) in the rankings are the IITs — Bombay, Kharagpur, Kanpur, Madras, Delhi, Guwahati and Roorkee — and the University of Delhi, JNU, and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc). Of these 10, IISc recorded a fall in rank in more subjects than a rise — its performance improved in five subjects and fell in six compared to the 2024 ranks.

Of these 10 institutions, eight saw their best ranks fall this year compared to last year. Among these are the older IITs — Bombay saw a highest rank of 25 last year

and 28 this year; Kharagpur secured highest rank of 28 last year and 45 this year; Madras saw highest rank of 16 last year and 31 this year; Kanpur recorded highest rank of 36 last year and 51-100 this year; Guwahati saw highest rank of 42 last year and 51-100 this year.

IIT Delhi saw an improvement in its best rank, from 35 last year to 26 this year.

The highest rank that the University of Delhi secured was 51-100 in the Anthropology and Development Studies categories. In Development Studies, DU saw its rank drop from 43 last year, while in Anthropology it retained the 51-100 rank.

In law, O P Jindal Global Law University was the highest ranked Indian institution, in the 78th position. It was ranked 72 last year. National Law School of India University stood in the 201-250 rank band this year, having seen a fall from the 151-200 rank band last year.

The rankings cover 1,700 universities and 55 academic disciplines across 100 locations. The five indicators based on which the rankings by subject were determined: academic reputation, employer reputation, research citations per paper, H-index (based on number of citations), and the institution's international research network.

## HOW THE RANKINGS HAVE CHANGED

### Social Sciences and Management

	IIT-D	JNU	DU
2022	211	350	195
2023	167	336	188
2024	108	NA	303
2025	75	258	137



### Life Sciences and Medicine

	AIIMS	DU
2022	204	330
2023	229	383
2024	249	379
2025	226	362

### Engineering and Technology

	IIT-Delhi
2022	72
2023	48
2024	45
2025	26

### Arts and Humanities

	JNU	DU
2022	188	227
2023	256	271
2024	244	210
2025	177	160

### Natural Sciences



	IIT-D	JNU	DU
2022	217	NA	307
2023	218	NA	318
2024	183	NA	345
2025	146	501-550	275


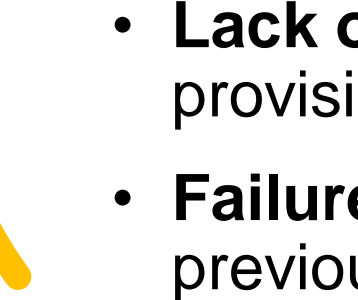
Source: Quacquarelli Symonds rankings

WFI suspension  
revoked





- 
- The Union government revoked the suspension of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), restoring its status as a National Sports Federation (NSF).
  - The suspension, imposed in December 2023, was lifted after the WFI shifted its office location and complied with governance norms.
- 

- 
- The **suspension was imposed in December 2023** due to:
    - **Sexual harassment allegations** against former WFI President **Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh**.
    - **Irregularities in governance**, including WFI operating from the former president's residence.
    - **Lack of transparency** and violation of National Sports Code provisions.
    - **Failure to function independently**, with undue influence from previous leadership.
- 

## What is WFI?

- **The Wrestling Federation of India (WFI)** is the **national governing body for wrestling** in India.
- It is responsible for **organizing national tournaments, selecting teams for international competitions, and promoting the sport.**
- It operates under the **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports** and is affiliated with **United World Wrestling (UWW).**
- **Headquarters: Delhi**

## **Structure and Functions of WFI**

**1. Administrative Functions:** Regulates and governs **wrestling tournaments and events** in India.

1. Implements **rules and regulations set by UWW and the Indian government.**

**2. Athlete Development & Selection:** Conducts **national-level selection trials** for international competitions.

1. Oversees **training programs and wrestling camps.**





## **1. International Representation:** Affiliated with **United World Wrestling (UWW)**.

1. Ensures **India's participation in Olympics, Asian Games, and World Championships.**

## **2. Governance and Compliance:** Must adhere to the **National Sports Code**.

1. Required to **maintain transparency and accountability in management.**
- 

▪ **Stone Tools in India's Human History:**

Period	Tools & Technology	Key Sites
Lower Palaeolithic (600,000 – 150,000 BCE)	Hand axes, cleavers, choppers (for cutting, chopping, skinning)	Bori (Maharashtra), <b>Son &amp; Sohan valleys (Punjab)</b> , Didwana (Rajasthan), Bhimbetka (MP)
Middle Palaeolithic (150,000 – 35,000 BCE)	Flakes, blades, points, borers, scrapers (from small stone pieces)	Narmada valley, <b>Belan valley (UP)</b> , Tungabhadra region (South India)
Upper Palaeolithic (35,000 – 10,000 BCE)	Blades, burins, scrapers (more refined and diverse)	<b>Bhimbetka (MP)</b> , Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat sand dunes
Mesolithic Age (9000 – 4000 BCE)	Microliths (tiny stone tools, often used as composite tools)	Bagor (Rajasthan), <b>Adamgarh (MP)</b> , South of Krishna River
Neolithic Age (7000 – 5500 BCE)	Rectangular axes, polished stone axes	<b>Mehrgarh (Balochistan)</b> , Burzahom (Kashmir), Gufkral (Kashmir), Senuwar (Bihar)

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10 MCQ from the session

**The U.S. recently imposed a 25% tariff on which imports?**

**अमेरिका ने हाल ही में किन आयातों पर 25% शुल्क लगाया?**

- **A. Electronics and Semiconductors / इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स और सेमीकंडक्टर्स**
- B. Aluminium and Steel / एल्युमिनियम और स्टील**
- C. Automobiles and Spare Parts / ऑटोमोबाइल और स्पेयर पार्ट्स**
- D. Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices / फार्मास्यूटिकल्स और चिकित्सा उपकरण**

**Which countries criticized the U.S. tariffs on aluminium and steel?**

**किन देशों ने अमेरिका द्वारा एल्युमिनियम और स्टील पर लगाए गए शुल्क की आलोचना की?**

- **A. India, China, and Brazil / भारत, चीन और ब्राजील**
- B. Canada, Britain, and Australia / कनाडा, ब्रिटेन और ऑस्ट्रेलिया**
- C. Germany, France, and Italy / जर्मनी, फ्रांस और इटली**
- D. Japan, South Korea, and Mexico / जापान, दक्षिण कोरिया और मैक्सिको**

**How did the EU respond to the U.S. tariffs?**

**यूरोपीय संघ ने अमेरिकी शुल्कों का कैसे जवाब दिया?**

- **A. By banning U.S. imports / अमेरिकी आयात पर प्रतिबंध लगाकर**
- B. By imposing counter-tariffs worth \$26 billion / \$26 बिलियन मूल्य के जवाबी शुल्क लगाकर**
- C. By seeking WTO intervention / डब्ल्यूटीओ के हस्तक्षेप की मांग करके**
- D. By increasing trade with China / चीन के साथ व्यापार बढ़ाकर**



**Under which trade policy did the U.S. impose these tariffs?**

**अमेरिका ने इन शुल्कों को किस व्यापार नीति के तहत लगाया?**

- **A. Trade Act of 1974 / 1974 का व्यापार अधिनियम**
- B. Section 301 Tariffs / धारा 301 शुल्क**
- C. Section 232 of Trade Expansion Act / व्यापार विस्तार अधिनियम की धारा 232**
- D. Fair Trade Policy Act / निष्पक्ष व्यापार नीति अधिनियम**

**What is the primary objective of the "Mission Amrit Sarovar"?**

**"मिशन अमृत सरोवर" का मुख्य उद्देश्य क्या है?**

- **A. Constructing roads in rural areas / ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में सड़क निर्माण**
- B. Reviving and creating water bodies to address water scarcity / जल संकट से निपटने के लिए जल निकायों का पुनरुद्धार और निर्माण**
- C. Developing rainwater harvesting systems in urban cities / शहरी शहरों में वर्षा जल संचयन प्रणाली विकसित करना**
- D. Promoting organic farming near water reservoirs / जलाशयों के पास जैविक खेती को बढ़ावा देना**

**How many ponds have been completed under Mission Amrit Sarovar by October 2024?**

**अक्टूबर 2024 तक मिशन अमृत सरोवर के तहत कितने तालाब पूरे किए गए हैं?**

- A. 35,000**
- B. 50,000**
- C. 68,000**
- D. 75,000**

**What is Indian Railways' role in Mission Amrit Sarovar?**

**मिशन अमृत सरोवर में भारतीय रेलवे की क्या भूमिका है?**

- **A. Building dams along railway routes / रेलवे मार्गों के साथ बांध बनाना**
- B. Excavating and constructing ponds near railway worksites / रेलवे कार्य स्थलों के पास तालाबों की खुदाई और निर्माण**
- C. Installing solar water pumps for irrigation / सिंचाई के लिए सौर जल पंप स्थापित करना**
- D. Developing water purification plants / जल शुद्धिकरण संयंत्र विकसित करना**



**Which telecom company partnered with SpaceX to offer Starlink services in India?**

**भारत में स्टारलिंग सेवाएं प्रदान करने के लिए स्पेसएक्स के साथ किस टेलीकॉम कंपनी ने साझेदारी की?**

- **A. Airtel**
- B. Vodafone Idea**
- C. Jio**
- D. BSNL**

**Why was the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) suspended in December 2023?**


**दिसंबर 2023 में भारतीय कुश्ती महासंघ (WFI) को क्यों निलंबित किया गया था?**

- **A. Financial mismanagement / वित्तीय कुप्रबंधन**
- B. Sexual harassment allegations against former WFI President Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh / पूर्व WFI अध्यक्ष बृजभूषण शरण सिंह पर यौन उत्पीड़न के आरोप**
- C. Failure to conduct national-level wrestling tournaments / राष्ट्रीय स्तर की कुश्ती प्रतियोगिताओं का आयोजन करने में विफलता**
- D. Doping scandal involving Indian wrestlers / भारतीय पहलवानों से जुड़े डोपिंग घोटाले**

**Where is the headquarters of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) located?**

**भारतीय कुश्ती महासंघ (WFI) का मुख्यालय कहां स्थित है?**

- **A. Mumbai / मुंबई**
- B. New Delhi / नई दिल्ली**
- C. Kolkata / कोलकाता**
- D. Chennai / चेन्नई**



Thank you  
guys.

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