

THE INDIAN MAIL

ENGLISH DAILY

FRIDAY, 14 February 2025

VOLUME : 15 ISSUE : 169 PAGES : 12 ₹ 4

PUBLISHED FROM HYDERABAD, VIJAYAWADA



'I told Mo before captaining RCB...': Patidar reveals leadership talks with team director

Newly appointed Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) skipper Rajat Patidar revealed how he reacted when....

12



CM Revanth's beer price hike betrays public trust : Dr Sravan Dasoju

The people of Telangana are deeply disappointed by the 15% hike in beer prices imposed by the Revanth Reddy government. "This anti-people decision is not just an economic burden..."

02



Adani Green Energy withdraws from Sri Lanka RE wind power, transmission projects

Adani Green Energy on Thursday said it is withdrawing from further engagements in the renewable energy (RE) wind energy...

07



CM Revanth inaugurates new campus building of Microsoft in Hyderabad

Hyderabad, Feb.13 (NSS): Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, along with Minister for IT and Industries Duddilla Sridhar Babu, on Thursday inaugurated a brand-new campus building of Microsoft as the company celebrates its glorious 25 years in Hyderabad. This state-of-the-art 1.1 million sq. ft. LEED-certified building in Gachibowli will house 2,500 ad-

ditional employees. This is already Microsoft's largest R&D hub outside US Headquarters and the inauguration of the new campus further consolidates Hyderabad's position as the leading global IT powerhouse. Microsoft employs over 20,000 professionals in India, over half of which work in Hyderabad. With the launch of the new build-

ing, Microsoft plans to hire another 4,800 employees. On the occasion, Microsoft also announced another landmark initiative in partnership with Govt of Telangana to impart AI training to over 1.2 lakh persons in the State. Under the first program ADVANTA (I) GE TELANGANA, Microsoft is launching an AI Foundations

Academy to introduce AI education to 500 government schools benefiting 50,000 students. In addition to this, the AI-Industry Pro programme will upskill 20,000 industry professionals across Telangana. The third programme AI-Govern initiative will further train 50,000 government officials in critical areas such as digital productivity, Generative AI and cybersecurity. Moreover, Microsoft will establish and operate an AICoE in collaboration with the Government of Telangana and other stakeholders. This CoE will establish cloud-based infrastructure for AI development, including a centralised AI Knowledge Hub.



President's Rule imposed in Manipur

Imphal, Feb 13 (IANS): President's Rule has been imposed in Manipur on Thursday under Article 356 of the Constitution five days after the state Chief Minister N Biren Singh resigned from the post following the directions from the central BJP leaders.

A notification issued from the Ministry of Home Affairs said on Thursday that the President has received a report from the Governor of Manipur and after considering the report and other information received by the President, she was satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the government of that state cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.



FM Sitharaman introduces new Income Tax Bill in Lok Sabha

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman introduced the new Income Tax Bill, 2025, in the Lok Sabha on Thursday as part of the tax reforms to streamline and simplify the provisions so that they are easier to understand and reduce the scope for legal disputes.



Both sides have 'concrete asks', says expert on upcoming PM Modi-Trump meet

Washington, Feb 13 (IANS) : Both sides have very "concrete asks" for the upcoming summit, said Richard Rossow, a leading US expert on bilateral ties, on the upcoming meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Donald Trump, later on

Thursday. "President Trump will push for concrete commitments to expand purchases of US goods—particularly defence equipment and hydrocarbons," Rossow told IANS.

YSRCP leader Vallabhaneni Vamsi arrested in Hyderabad in SC/ST atrocity case

Hyderabad, Feb 13 (IANS) Andhra Pradesh Police arrested YSR Congress Party leader former MLA Vallabhaneni Vamsi Mohan here on Thursday in a kidnap and SC/ST atrocity case. A team from Patamata Police Station arrested the former Gannavaram MLA from his apartment in Raidurgam and took him to Vijayawada. A case under sections 140 (1), 308, 351 (3) r/w 3 (5) of Bharat Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) was booked against Vamsi.



Telangana minister Ponnababbar asks BRS leaders to participate in caste survey

Hyderabad, Feb 13 (IANS) : Telangana Backward Classes Welfare and Transport Minister Ponnababbar on Thursday asked the leaders of the main opposition Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) to prove their sincerity by participating in the caste survey.

He told media persons in Karimnagar that since some people did not share their details during the survey conducted in November-December 2024, the government has decided to give them an opportunity from February 16 to February 28. The minister said this was not a re-survey as BRS leaders claimed. He said the BRS leaders, who did not participate in the survey, were making baseless allegations. "If top BRS leaders have faith in democracy, they should prove this by participating in the survey," he said. Branding BJP as a party of businessmen, he alleged that the party does not want caste census.

Congress won't alienate any section : Addanki

Hyderabad, Feb.13 (NSS): TPCC general secretary Addanki Dayakar today said there is no conspiracy in the SC classification and it was done scientifically.



SC grants actor Mohan Babu anticipatory bail in journalist assault case

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : In a big relief to Telugu actor Manchu Mohan Babu, the Supreme Court on Thursday granted him anticipatory bail in the case relating to the attack on a journalist.

SHIRIRAM FINANCE LIMITED
Registered Office: Sri Towers, Plot No.14A, South Phase, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai-600032
Administrative office:6th Floor(Level 2), Building No.Q2, Aurum Q Parc, Gen 4/1, TTC, Thane Belapur Road, Ghanoli, Navi Mumbai-400710

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE
Whereas, the undersigned being the authorised officer of Shiriram Finance Limited, (Shriram City Union Finance Limited, amalgamated with Shiriram Transport Finance Company Limited, subsequently Shiriram Transport Company Limited name changed as Shiriram Finance Limited, by its Incorporation Certificate dt.13-11-2022) a corporate body registered and incorporated as a company under the Indian Companies Act 1956, is doing Non-Banking financial activities, having its Registered Office: Sri Towers, Plot No.14A, South Phase, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai- 600 032 and having its administrative office at 6th Floor (level 2), Building No.Q2, Aurum Q Parc, Gen 4/1, TTC, Thane Belapur Road, Ghanoli, Navi Mumbai-400710, under the provisions of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (said Act) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 (said Rules) issued demand notices to the Borrowers details of which are mentioned in the table below to repay the amount mentioned in the said demand notices.

Table with 2 columns: Borrower Name and Address, Amount Due as per Demand Notice. Includes details for Murali Dadi S/o Pocham, 29.64, 837/- (Twenty Nine Lakhs Sixty four Thousand Eight Hundred and Fifty Seven Rupees Only).

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY - G0VRFKTF221300003 - (Property holder name is MURALI DADI, Mortgage dated 30.12.2022 Registered as Document No 1823/2022 on the file of the office of Sub-Registrar at Sulthanabad. Open land measuring to an extent of 968.00 Sq. yards equal to 809.34 Sq. meters, in Survey No. 136/11/1/5, situated at kodurupaka revenue village of Sulthanabad mandal, peddapally district within the limits of the Grampanchayat Kodurupaka Registration Sub District Sulthanabad and Registration District Karimnagar. 2nd Menda Rajitha D/o. Buchaiah, Age:39 Years, Occ:Trained Graduate Teacher(Twelve/Lc, Girls), H.No: C-118, Penchikolpet, Peddapally, Karimnagar, Pincode:505188. 2nd Add: H.No:18-3-85/3, Markendaya Colony, Ganeshnagar, Godavarihanchi, Karimnagar, Pincode: 505209. 3) Kandunoori Satish S/o. Shankaraiah, Age:40 Years, Occ:Sub-Inspector Of Police(Intelligence),Emp Code:1554321, H.No:2-3-89/1, Buddhigadda Bhashti, Kothagudem, Khammam, Pincode: 507101.

This notice is also hereby to caution the general public at large that the authorized officer of SFL is in the lawful Symbolic Possession of the immovable property mentioned herein above and the Borrowers or any person shall not after receipt of this notice transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise deal with/ alienate any of the above mentioned secured assets referred to in this notice, without prior written consent of SFL.

Date : 13.02.2025 Sd/-Authorized Officer
Place :Sulthanabad SHIRIRAM FINANCE LIMITED

PM Modi meets US Intelligence chief Gabbard, discusses 'India-US friendship'

Washington, Feb 13 (IANS) : In what was his first formal official meeting after arriving here, Prime Minister Narendra Modi met with Tulsi Gabbard fresh off from her Senate victory confirming her as the Director of National Intelligence. Following the meeting on Wednesday night, PM Modi posted X: "Congratulated her on her confirmation. Discussed various aspects of the India-USA friendship, of which she's always been a strong votary." Gabbard overcame strong opposition and scepticism to win the Senate vote on Wednesday for her confirmation for the nation's top intelligence job and was sworn in just hours before meeting PM Modi. She received 52 votes to 48, with only one Republican, Senator

Mitch McConnell, joining the Democrats to vote against her. She is an American Hindu with parents who have embraced the faith. Some of those opposed to her used her religion in their campaign against her. During her 11 years in the House of Representatives, she was a strong supporter of India. She was the co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian Americans. She also served on the House Intelligence Subcommittee and the Armed Forces Committee. A former Vice President of the Democratic Party, she left the party and joined the Republican Party and campaigned for Trump last year. Attorney General Pam Bondi administered the oath of office to



Gabbard, who Trump called "an American of extraordinary courage and patriotism". He noted that she was deployed three times in the Army National Guard and that she is a former Democratic Congresswoman, riffing, "Can you believe that?" Gabbard, 43, a former Democratic Congresswoman from Hawaii, had faced bipartisan scepticism about her suitability for overseeing the spy agencies. Gabbard thanked the President for

his trust in her and vowed to "refocus our intelligence community" after she was sworn in. "Unfortunately, the American people have very little trust in the intelligence community, largely because they've seen the weaponisation and politicisation of an entity that is supposed to be purely focused on ensuring our national security," the new Intelligence Chief said.

Possession Notice (For Immovable Property) Rule 8-(1)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of IIFL Home Finance Limited (Formerly known as India Infoline Housing Finance Ltd.) (IIFL-HFL) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, a Demand Notice was issued by the Authorized Officer of the company to the Borrower to repay the amount mentioned in the table below to the undersigned and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Rules. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of IIFL HFL for an amount as mentioned herein and interest thereon. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, if the borrower clears the amount mentioned in the table below together with all charges and expenses incurred, at any time before the date fixed for sale or transfer of the secured assets shall not be sold or transferred by "IIFL HFL" and no further step shall be taken by "IIFL HFL" for transfer or sale of the secured assets.

Table with 5 columns: Name of the Borrower (s) / Co-Borrower(s), Description of the Secured Asset (Immovable Property), Total Outstanding Dues (Rs.), Date of Demand, Date of Possession. Includes details for Shaik Gouse Peer, Pudi Chenchu Krishnaiah, Manjula Chenchu Krishnaiah, etc.

Public Notice For E-Auction Cum Sale (Appendix - IV A) (Rule 8(6))

Sale of Immovable property mortgaged to IIFL Home Finance Limited (Formerly known as India Infoline Housing Finance Ltd.) (IIFL-HFL) Corporate Office at Plot No.14A, South Phase, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai-600032 and Branch Office at: D.No.6-22/95/15th Floor, Home Town, Hyderabad, Telangana-500049. 1st Floor 13-37, Vainthnavei Street, Opposite Kala Bhagathi Kalyana Mandapam, Ballipeta Road, Bobbili, Vizianagaram Dist.PIN Code-535558/ 40-5-5-1A, 1/B, Chandramouli Puram, Tikke Road, Near Sweet Market, MG Road, Vijayawada - 520010 under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (hereinafter referred to as the "Act") and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(4) of the Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 (hereinafter referred to as the "Rules") issued by the Reserve Bank of India on 13.11.2002. The undersigned is hereby notified that the following immovable property pursuant to the notice issued U/S 13(2) of the Act in the following loan accounts/prospect nos. with a right to sell the same on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS, AS IS WHAT IS BASIS AND WITHOUT RECOURSE BASIS" for realization of IIFL-HFL's dues. The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform at the website: www.iffonehome.com

Table with 5 columns: Borrower(s) / Co-Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s), Demand Notice Date and Amount, Description of the Immovable property Secured Asset, Date of physical Possession, Reserve Price. Includes details for 1. Mrs. RUTH Chalagala, 2. Mr. Jesse Dayanand Masa, 1. Mr. Gavandiga Narayan, etc.

Important Information: This auction is published basis possession vide Sec 13 (4) of SARFAESI Act. We have received Section 14 Order and physical possession will be offered as per process (It). Property Type: Residential. Location: Hyderabad. Auction Date: 15.02.2025. Time: 11:00 AM. For further details please contact to Authorized Officer at Branch Office: D.No.37-1-175/8/2, 1st Floor, Opp. Konjeti Petrol Bunk, Kumool Road, Ongole-523001/Sababala Temple, Swatara Park Street, Gandhichimma, Centre, Pogotha, Nellore - 524002/15-570-34-1, 1st Floor/Pallavi Towers, Opp. Canara Bank, Kantapuram-515001, Andhra Pradesh, India. Door No. 17-37/1, 1st Floor, Subbarao Street, Opp. Studio 11, Chittoor-517001/D.No.3/11, First Floor, Gandhi Silks Building, Opp.VVS Grand, Rajaganer centre, Machilipatnam-521001 or Corporate Office: Plot No.98, Phase-IV, Udyog Vihar, Gurgaon, Haryana.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:-
1. For participating in e-auction, intending bidders required to register their details with the Service Provider https://www.iffonehome.com well in advance and has to create the login account, login ID and password. Intending bidders have to submit / send their "Tender FORM" along with the payment details towards EMD, copy of KYC and PAN card at the above mentioned Branch Office.
2. The bidders shall improve their offer in multiple of amount mentioned under the column "Bid Increase Amount". In case bid is placed in the last 5 minutes of the closing time of the auction, the closing time will automatically get extended for 5 minutes.
3. The successful bidder should deposit 25% of the bid amount (after adjusting EMD) within 24 hours of the acceptance of bid price by the AO and the balance 75% of the bid amount within 15 days from the date of confirmation of sale by the secured creditor. All deposit and payment shall be in the prescribed mode of payment.
4. The purchaser has to bear the cess, applicable stamp duty, fees, and any other statutory dues or other dues like municipal tax, electricity charges, land and all other incidental costs, charges including all taxes and rates outgoings relating to the property.
5. The purchaser has to pay TDS application to the transaction/payment of sale amount and submit the TDS certificate with IIFL HFL.
6. Bidders are advised to go through the website https://www.iffonehome.com for details regarding the auction process and the terms and conditions of auction sale & auction application form before submitting their bids for taking part in the e-auction sale proceedings.
7. For details, help procedure and online training on e-auction prospective bidders may contact the service provider E mail ID:- care@iffonehome.com, Support Helpline Numbers: @1800 2672 499.
8. Any query related to the auction details, inspection of property and Online bid etc. call IIFL HFL toll free no. 1800 2672 499 from 09:30 hrs to 18:00 hrs between Monday to Friday or write to email:- care@iffonehome.com.
9. Notice is hereby given to above said borrowers to collect the household articles, which were lying in the secured asset in the time of taking physical possession within 7 days, otherwise IIFL HFL shall not be responsible for any loss of property under the circumstances.
10. Further the notice is hereby given to the Borrowers, that in case they fail to collect the above said household articles, same shall be sold in accordance with Law. In case of default in payment at any stage by the successful bidder / auction purchaser within the above stipulated time, the sale will be cancelled and the amount already paid will be forfeited (including EMD) and the property will be again put to sale.
11. AO reserves the rights to postpone/cancel or vary the terms and condition of tender/auction without assigning any reason therefor. In case of any dispute in tender/auction, the decision of AO of IIFL HFL shall be final and binding on the bidder.
15 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER THE RULE 9 SUB RULE (1) OF SARFAESI ACT, 2002
The Borrower are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned above along with upto dated interest and ancillary expenses before the date of Tender/Auction, failing which the property will be auctioned/sold and balance dues if any will be recovered with interest and cost.
Place:Andhra Pradesh & Telangana, Date: 14-Feb-2025 Sd/- Authorised Officer, IIFL Home Finance Limited.



CM Revanth's beer price hike betrays public trust : Dr Sravan Dasoju

Hyderabad, Feb.13 (NSS): The people of Telangana are deeply disappointed by the 15% hike in beer prices imposed by the Revanth Reddy government. "This anti-people decision is not just an economic burden, but also an outright betrayal of public trust", BRS senior leader Dr Sravan Dasoju said and strongly condemned this move, calling it a clear case of quid pro quo between the government and liquor manufacturers. "Just a few weeks ago assured the public that Telangana would not succumb to liquor companies' demands for price hikes. He boldly claimed that liquor lobbies would not dictate government policies. But today, we see him doing the exact opposite—kneeling before the liquor mafia and imposing a 'Revanth Reddy Tax (RR Tax)' on the people of Telangana," he added.

Dr Sravan Dasoju said and strongly condemned this move, calling it a clear case of quid pro quo between the government and liquor manufacturers. "Just a few weeks ago assured the public that Telangana would not succumb to liquor companies' demands for price hikes. He boldly claimed that liquor lobbies would not dictate government policies. But today, we see him doing the exact opposite—kneeling before the liquor mafia and imposing a 'Revanth Reddy Tax (RR Tax)' on the people of Telangana," he added.

TGMDC officially order staff to work for 24 hours sand operations!

Hyderabad, Feb 13 (NSS): BRS spokesperson Krishank Manne today exposed official order of Telangana State Mineral Development Corporation, which asked its officials to work in three shifts from 7am to 3pm, 3pm to 11pm, 11pm to 7am, which violates the Government of India Environmental guidelines which clearly States that Sand Mining Operations should operate from 6am to 7pm then how can TGMDC officially order staff to work for 24 hours sand operations? Official Order of Corporation also reveals that overloading and malpractices of zero loading operating vehicles are persistent. Government revenue has collapsed. During KCR's tenure Rs 800+ crore annually Government's revenue out of Sand Mining but now there is massive reduction. When Navjot Singh Siddhu, Congress leader as Minister visited Telangana to study the Model and announced Telangana's Mining Policy as the best and Punjab would adopt it. Congress Government in Telangana has changed five Managing Directors in one single year for the Corporation which explains how chaotic and disordered the situation. As officials have not cooperated, Congress leaders resort to corrupt practices.

Hyderabad, Feb 13 (NSS): BRS spokesperson Krishank Manne today exposed official order of Telangana State Mineral Development Corporation, which asked its officials to work in three shifts from 7am to 3pm, 3pm to 11pm, 11pm to 7am, which violates the Government of India Environmental guidelines which clearly States that Sand Mining Operations should operate from 6am to 7pm then how can TGMDC officially order staff to work for 24 hours sand operations? Official Order of Corporation also reveals that overloading and malpractices of zero loading operating vehicles are persistent. Government revenue has collapsed. During KCR's tenure Rs 800+ crore annually Government's revenue out of Sand Mining but now there is massive reduction. When Navjot Singh Siddhu, Congress leader as Minister visited Telangana to study the Model and announced Telangana's Mining Policy as the best and Punjab would adopt it. Congress Government in Telangana has changed five Managing Directors in one single year for the Corporation which explains how chaotic and disordered the situation. As officials have not cooperated, Congress leaders resort to corrupt practices.

BODUPPAL BRANCH
Plot No.12,13, Anusha Reddy Mansion, Veerardhy Nagar, Boduppal, Medipally Mandal, Medchal - Malkajgiri Dist - 500092

POSSESSION NOTICE
Whereas The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of India under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 02-11-2024 calling upon the borrower Shri. Nalabala Shekar to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.12,77,105.69 P + interest from 30-09-2024 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. As the demand notices were returned, the same has been published in Newspapers on 06-12-2024. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken POSSESSION of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this 11th day of February of the year 2025. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Bank of India, Boduppal Branch for an amount of Rs.12,77,105.69 P and interest thereon. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
All the House No 7-8/5/9 with Plinth Area of 300 Sft with RCC constructed on Plot No 102 Southern part in Survey No 79 & 80 measuring with 75 Cds or 62.7 SqMtrs situated at Peerzaidiga village and Municipality, Medipally Mandal, MedchalMalkajgiri district, Telangana state in the name of Mr. N. Shekar bounded by North: Part of house on Plot No 102 Northern part, South: 20' Wide Road, East: 30' Wide Road, West: Plot No 96
Date : 11.02.2025 Sd/- Authorised Officer
Place:Hyderabad BANK OF INDIA

ROSAR BRANCH
3-5-822/5, 1st Floor, Hyderguda Main Road, Hyderguda, Hyderabad-500 029
Tel: + 91 40 23421635, E-mail: vjyahyd@bankofbaroda.co.in

Notice before Sale Notice Under Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 ("Pre-sale Notice")
To, Borrower/Guarantors/Mortgagors:- 1) Mr. Malothu Balu, Address Flat No: 501, Sai Residency H No: 13-8-20/A/501, P & T Colony Patel Nagar, Gaddiannaram Village Saroomnagar Mandal, Rangla Reddy District.
Dear Sir / Madam,
Re: Whereas the Authorized Officer of the Bank of Baroda u/s 13(2) of the above said SARFAESI Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred u/s 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 3 issued a Demand Notice on 25.08.2023 calling upon the Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s) Mr.Malothu Balu to repay the amount in terms of the said notice within 60 days from the date of the said notice.

And whereas the Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Corporate Guarantor(s) have failed to repay the amount and hence, the undersigned, in exercise of the powers conferred u/s 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 4 and/or Rule 8 of the Rules has taken over the symbolic possession of the property/properties (hereinafter referred as the said properties) more particularly described herein below on 17.11.2023. And whereas the undersigned in exercise of the powers conferred u/s 13(4) (a) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 proposes to realize the bank's dues by Sale of the said properties. Please take notice that the sale of secured assets mortgaged/charged to the bank more fully described hereunder will be Sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis through E- auction at any date after expiry of 30 days period from the date of this notice. Separate public e-auction notice will be sent to you, when the bank decides to auction the property/s through e-auction. You may please note that the amount due from the Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s) to the bank as on 31.01.2025 is Rs.33,02,229.21 (Rupees Thirty three lacs Two thousand Two hundred twenty nine and paise Twenty one only) plus interest from 01-02-2025 plus charges, which has to be realized by the sale of the said properties. You are requested to make payment of the amounts mentioned in the notice in terms of the security /financial/ Guarantee agreement executed by you.

Details of Secured Assets/Mortgaged Property:
Description of the Immovable Property: All that the Residential Flat bearing No. 501 in the Fifth Floor of apartment building "SAI RESIDENCY", bearing H No: 13-8-20/A/501 having plinth area of 1180 Sq. Feet including common areas and one car parking area of 100 Sq. Feet together with undivided share of land measuring 50 Sq. Yards out of 980 Sq. Yards on land bearing Plot No: 14, House No: 13-8-20/A (Old No: 16-11-578) and Plot No: 15, House No: 8-20/B to 8-20/M in Survey No: 274/1, 284/1 & 284/3 situated at P & T Colony of Patel Nagar, Gaddiannaram Village, Saroomnagar Mandal, Rangla Reddy District and bounded by Boundaries for Entire Land North: Neighbour's House, South: 40' Wide Road, East: Neighbour's House, West: Neighbour's House. Boundaries of Flat, North: Corridor, South:Open to Sky, East : Flat No: 502, West: Open to Sky.
Date: 01.02.2025 (Ajay Kumar K) Chief Manager
Place: Hyderabad Bank of Baroda

LB NAGAR BRANCH: 3-8-110, Grand Floor, Opp. Vijayalaxmi Theatre, Chandrapuri Colony, LB Nagar, Hyderabad-500074, TS.

APPENDIX IV (See rule-8(1))
POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)
Whereas, the undersigned being the authorized officer of the BANK OF INDIA under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 03.12.2024 calling upon the borrowers Mr. Lakkyreddy Raja Sekhar Reddy & Mrs. Lakireddy Chandraakula, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.48,76,098.20 + interest from 28.01.2024 (contractual dues up to the date of notice) with interest thereon @ 9.15% p.a. compounded with monthly rests and all costs, charges and expenses incurred by the bank. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
Equitable Mortgage of property registered vide Document No: 19272/16 dated 15.12.2018 in the office of the Joint Sub-Registrar Office, Keesara, Medchal-Malkajgiri District bearing Plot No.92, in Survey No.68, measuring 200 Sq.yards or 167.20 Sq.mtrs, with a Built-up area 1260 Sft. R.C.C., in Ground Floor, situated at Nagaram Village & Grampanchayat, Keesara Mandal, Medchal-Malkajgiri District with the following Boundaries: North: Plot No.86, South: 30' wide Road, East: Plot No.93, West: Plot No.91.
Date: 11.02.2025 Sd/- Authorized Officer
Place: LB Nagar Bank of India

For further tender conditions / details and for downloading the tender documents, Please visit website at https://www.ireps.gov.in or www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in

Comprehensive plan to reuse polluted water to be developed: Maharashtra Minister

Mumbai, Feb 13 (IANS) : Maharashtra Minister of Environment Pankaja Munde on Thursday said that the government is set to develop a comprehensive plan to prevent sewage from contaminating rivers and lakes while promoting the reuse of polluted water. Additionally, a technical cell will be established to implement innovative technologies for pollution control in municipal and metropolitan areas. She was speaking at a one-day conference on "Municipal Wastewater Management Gaps, Sustainability, and the Way Forward," organised

jointly by the Department of Environment and Climate Change, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB), and IIT Powai. The event focused on sustainable sewage management in municipal corporations and local self-governing bodies. Munde highlighted that large volumes of untreated sewage from village panchayats, municipal corporations, and metropolitan areas directly enter rivers, causing significant environmental and health concerns. To tackle this issue, the Environment Department will prepare a strategic and technical plan for river and lake conservation. Furthermore, a dedicated technical



cell will be set up to provide training and awareness programmes for local governing bodies on innovative wastewater management technologies. She also stressed that pesticides used in agriculture contribute to water pollution. To mitigate this, a collaborative approach between various government departments is necessary to ensure strict pollution control measures. This includes public awareness campaigns, legal actions where required.

Armed criminals open fire at CCL coal mine gate in Ranchi injuring worker

Ranchi, Feb 13 (IANS) : Armed criminals opened indiscriminate fire near the main gate of the Central Coalfields Limited (CCL) mines in Churi, under the Khilari police station limits here on Thursday afternoon, triggering panic among workers and locals. The attack left a CCL employee, Pradeep Sao, injured after he sustained a gunshot wound in his leg. He was immediately rushed to a hospital in Ranchi, where his condition is said to be stable and out of danger. According to eyewitnesses,

the assailants arrived on three motorcycles and fired between eight to ten rounds near the Churi project's main gate. The sudden burst of gunfire led to chaos, with people running pell-mell for cover to save their lives. Reports suggest that as Pradeep Sao was leaving for home after his duty.



'Banners didn't feature MGR, Jayalalithaa': AIADMK leader clarifies on skipping EPS felicitation event

Chennai, Feb 13 (IANS) : Former AIADMK Minister and sitting Gobichettipalayam MLA K.A. Sengottaiyan has denied reports that he boycotted a felicitation event for former Chief minister and AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K.Palaniswami (EPS) for the implementation of the Avinashi-Athikadavu project in Annur, Coimbatore district. Addressing the media in Gobichettipalayam on Thursday, February 13, Sengottaiyan clarified that he "chose not to participate" because the invitation and banners for the event did not feature images of former Chief Ministers M.G. Ramachandran (MGR) and J. Jayalalithaa. The event was organised by farmers' associations that supported AIADMK. However, Sengottaiyan's absence fueled speculation of internal discord within the party, prompting him to issue a clarification.

USAID funded outfits to break India? BJP MP asks pointed questions, draws Rajiv Gandhi Foundation link

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : BJP lawmaker Nishikant Dubey on Thursday said that the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), closed down recently by the US President, funded anti-India elements with an aim to destabilise the nation and demanded that the government launches a thorough investigation to unearth its evil plot. Speaking in Lok Sabha during the zero hour,

Nishikant Dubey also drew a connection between George Soros, a known India baiter and the Congress party and its first family, claiming that the latter received funding via indirect means to further the 'Western' agenda. The BJP lawmaker stated that US President Donald Trump completely shut down the USAID because it was purposely used to bring down and topple sovereign governments in other nations, with 'illicit' funding. Firing a volley of

questions, the BJP MP asked, "Did the USAID provide Rs 5,000 crore to the Open Society foundation run by George Soros to destabilise India? Did USAID and George Soros Foundation give money to the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation and Rajiv Gandhi charitable trust or not?" He also claimed that USAID-funded organisations fanned stir in the country against government schemes like Agniaveer Yojana and also supported the clamour around caste-based census



and the Naxal movement. As the BJP lawmaker claimed that the anti-India elements were being funded by USAID and they also enjoyed the backing of the Congress party, it evoked strong reac-

tions from the opposition benches. Congress members erupted in protest and demanded a point of order in the House but the same was declined by the chair.



MUDA case: Karnataka HC extends stay on ED summons to CM Siddaramaiah's wife

Dharwad (Karnataka), Feb 13 (IANS) : The Dharwad Bench of Karnataka High Court, headed by Justice M. Nagaprasanna, on Thursday extended the stay over the summons issued by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's wife, B.M. Parvathi, and Minister for Urban Development, Byrathi Suresh, in connection with the MUDA land scam matter. CM Siddaramaiah's wife Parvathi is named as the second accused in the MUDA case. CM Siddaramaiah is the accused number one. The Bench headed by Justice M. Nagaprasanna passed the order and adjourned the matter to February 20. The court has directed the ED, not to continue with investigation in this regard until further orders.

Gujarat: Union Health Minister kickstarts initiative to combat lymphatic filariasis

Gandhinagar, Feb 13 (IANS) : In a step towards eradicating Lymphatic Filariasis (commonly known as Elephantiasis), Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda virtually launched the Mass Drug Administration (MDA) program on Thursday in the presence of Gujarat Health Minister Rishikesh Patel and senior health officials.

The initiative aligns with the Union government's target of eliminating Filariasis by 2027 and marks the beginning of the second phase of the campaign, scheduled from February 10 to 12.

Under this phase, mass drug distribution will be carried out across four talukas - Netrang in Bharuch district, Nandod and Dediapada in Narmada district, and Waghai in Dang district, covering an estimated 5.46 lakh people. The program aims to administer preventive medication to halt the spread of Lymphatic Filariasis, a disease transmitted by mosquitoes that can cause severe physical disabilities. Speaking at the launch, Union Minister J.P. Nadda emphasised the government's commitment to public health, stating,



Delhi voters trusted PM Modi, dumped AAP-da, says Anurag Thakur in LS

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : The BJP's historic win in the Delhi Assembly election came up for mention in Parliament on Thursday when former Union minister Anurag Thakur took a swipe at the AAP, saying that voters in the Capital trusted Prime Minister Narendra Modi and put an end to the former's loot. Taking part in the discussion on the Union Budget 2025-26 in Lok Sabha, Thakur, BJP MP from Hamirpur, hailed the BJP's victory and said Delhi voters

have reposed faith in PM Modi and chosen his development model over the corruption-riddled model of AAP. The voters in the national capital have given their verdict against the AAP for its 10-year misgovernance and pollution, he said, as members of the treasury bench members welcomed his remarks by thumping tables. "The Lotus has blossomed in Delhi and AAP-da has been routed," he said, claiming that PM Modi lives in the heart of every citizen in the Capital. Referring to the Rs 12-lakh exemption limit for income tax of-

fered in the Budget, Thakur said, "Something that seemed impossible till now has been delivered all because 'Modi hai toh mumkin hai' (Nothing is impossible for Modi)." Thakur, who had addressed several rallies during the Delhi election campaign to woo Himachali voters in the city, earlier said in Lucknow on Sunday that the people of Delhi have embraced the "Modi Ki Guarantee" while rejecting the "false guarantees" of AAP national convenor Arvind Kejriwal.

Delhi HC grants 2-day custody parole to Engineer Rashid

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : The Delhi High Court on Thursday granted two-day custody parole to Lok Sabha MP Engineer Rashid to attend the ongoing Parliament session. Engineer Rashid, who won the Lok Sabha election from J&K's Baramulla constituency by defeating National Conference (NC) Vice Presi-

dent Omar Abdullah (now Chief Minister) by over two lakh votes while staying in Tihar Jail, is accused in a terror funding case being probed by the National Investigation Agency (NIA). A bench of Justice Vikas Mahajan granted custody parole to Engineer Rashid for February 11 and 13 while imposing a slew of conditions. As per the Delhi HC or-

der, Engineer Rashid will not interact with any person except for his limited responsibility of attending the House and will not address the media in any manner. On February 7, Justice Mahajan-led Bench reserved its verdict on Engineer Rashid's plea seeking interim bail, or alternatively, custody parole, to attend the ongoing Parliament session, after hearing

the oral arguments advanced by the counsel representing the federal anti-terror agency and Engineer Rashid's lawyer. During the hearing, senior advocate Sidharth Luthra, appearing on behalf of the NIA, argued that there are security issues and custody parole is not a vested right of a legislator. Engineer Rashid has petitioned

the Delhi High Court seeking directions to the trial court judge to expedite a decision on his pending regular bail application or decide the matter itself. Earlier, a court here, instead of passing an order on the application for regular bail, had recommended the District Judge to transfer his case to the MP/MLA court as Rashid became an MP.



In his plea pending before the Delhi HC, he sought interim bail to attend the ongoing Budget session of the Parliament.

OPINIONmail



Massive 300-km traffic jam on route to Maha Kumbh leaves lakhs of pilgrims stranded

A sea of vehicles stretching up to 300 kilometres turned the roads leading to the Maha Kumbh Mela in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj into a massive parking lot, leaving lakhs of devotees stranded for hours, unable to reach the world's largest religious gathering. The unprecedented congestion forced many to remain stuck in their vehicles, some even hundreds of kilometres away from the fair site on Sunday and Monday. A day earlier, heavy traffic heading toward Prayagraj had already led to police stopping hundreds of vehicles in different areas of Madhya Pradesh to prevent overcrowding. The extreme bottleneck, which social media users dubbed the "world's biggest traffic jam," reportedly extended across 200 to 300 kilometres, affecting pilgrims travelling through Madhya Pradesh. The situation prompted the state police to halt traffic across multiple districts, leaving travellers stuck for long hours on highways. Taking a swipe at the Uttar Pradesh government, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav blasted the administration's handling of the event, urging authorities to address the plight of stranded devotees.

"The hungry, thirsty, distressed, and exhausted pilgrims stuck in traffic jams should be looked at with a humane perspective. Are common devotees, not human beings?" Yadav asked in a post on X. The former Chief Minister also demanded that vehicles be made toll-free across Uttar Pradesh during the Maha Kumbh to ease congestion and ensure a smoother journey for devotees. "On the occasion of Maha Kumbh, vehicles should be made toll-free in UP.

This will reduce travel problems and also the issue of traffic jams. When films can be made entertainment tax-free, then why not exempt vehicles from tolls for this religious event?" he wrote. He further highlighted specific trouble spots, mentioning major jams at Nawabganj, 30 km before entering Prayagraj from the Lucknow side, a bottleneck at Gauhania, 16 km before Rewa Road, and a traffic snarl extending 12-15 km towards Varanasi. He also cited reports of overcrowding in trains, with passengers even squeezing into engines to reach their destination. "Normal life has become difficult," he added. Meanwhile, authorities in Madhya Pradesh responded by halting vehicular movement in multiple districts. In Katni, police announced through loudspeakers that traffic had been stopped until Monday. In Maihar, officers advised vehicles to turn back toward Katni and Jabalpur to find temporary shelter.

Several videos circulating on social media captured the extent of the congestion, with endless lines of cars and trucks clogging roads across the Katni, Jabalpur, Maihar, and Rewa districts. Eyewitnesses reported that the traffic jam spanned nearly 250 kilometres from Katni to the MP-UP border at Chakghat in Rewa district. As the crisis unfolded, Madhya Pradesh BJP president V.D. Sharma urged party workers to assist stranded pilgrims in their respective regions. "All workers are requested to help the devotees heading to Maha Kumbh in every possible way. Arrange food and shelter if needed.

Ensure that no devotee faces inconvenience. Let us play our role in this Maha Yagya," he posted on X. Frustrated devotees have also voiced their grievances over the mismanagement of the traffic situation. Pilgrims from Faridabad reported that what should have been a routine journey took them over 24 hours to reach Prayagraj. A family from Jaipur shared their frustration, saying they were stuck for hours just to cover a mere four-kilometre stretch. With the Maha Kumbh continuing until February 26, authorities face mounting pressure to resolve the traffic chaos and ensure smoother movement for the remaining weeks of the grand religious gathering.

EDITORIAL
the indian mail

Aero India 2025: Shivakumar bats for incentives to boost aircraft, helicopter manufacturing

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar has urged Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to provide incentives for aircraft and helicopter manufacturers to establish their industries in Karnataka and across the country. He made this appeal during his speech at the inaugural ceremony of the prestigious 'Aero India 2025' event in Bengaluru on Monday. "Karnataka, particularly Bengaluru, is home to some of the best talent in the aerospace industry, making it an ideal location for aircraft and helicopter manufacturing. By offering incentives to manufacturers, we can retain this talent within India and prevent

brain drain. I appeal to the Defence Minister to consider this request," the Deputy Chief Minister said. Shivakumar emphasised Karnataka's crucial role in India's aerospace sector, contributing 67 per cent of the country's aircraft and helicopter manufacturing for defence services and 65 per cent of India's aerospace-related exports. "Despite these impressive figures, a major gap still exists. While India has a well-established aircraft servicing and repair industry, the manufacturing of aircraft and helicopters remains largely absent. Most of the aircraft and helicopters used by the country are still imported from other nations," he pointed out.

He added that Bengaluru is widely recognised as India's aerospace capital, hosting over 60 per cent of the country's aerospace manu-



facturing and defence research companies. "Major organisations like Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), and Boeing India have played a pivotal role in strengthening India's defence and space capabilities," said the Deputy Chief Minister. Shivakumar added that with over 1,50,000 professionals employed in Bengaluru's aerospace sector, the city stands as a global leader in aviation and defence technology. "Bengaluru ranks among the

top three global aerospace cities in attracting foreign investments. The Government of Karnataka is actively developing aerospace and defence hubs across the state, including in Bengaluru, Belagavi, Mysuru, Tumakuru, and Chamarajanagar districts," he stated. He also highlighted Bengaluru's leadership in drone technology and unmanned aerial systems, which are transforming both commercial and defence sectors.

Too late, BJP will never be free of this stain: Pramod Tiwari criticises delay in Manipur CM's resignation

Following the resignation of Manipur's Chief Minister N. Biren Singh on Sunday, Congress leader Pramod Tiwari on Monday expressed his criticism of the delayed response, stating that it came too late and the BJP will never be free from this stain. Tiwari pointed out that Opposition leaders, particularly Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha (LoP) Rahul Gandhi, had long been urging Prime Minister Narendra Modi to visit Manipur and address the ongoing crisis, but their appeals were ignored.



Foreign Affairs Advisor Hossain to meet EAM Jaishankar in Muscat: Bangladesh media reports

Touhid Hossain, the Foreign Affairs Advisor to the interim government in Bangladesh led by Muhammad Yunus, is expected to meet External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar on the sidelines of the Indian Ocean Conference being held in Muscat next week, local media in Dhaka reported on Monday. "According to diplomatic sources, during this meeting, Bangladesh would like to convey a message aimed at preventing further strains in the relationship between both nations," reported Prothom Alo, Bangladesh's leading Bengali daily. The 8th Indian Ocean Conference is being organised by India Foundation in association with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Oman on Feb-

ruary 16-17 in Muscat, Oman. The theme for this year of the conference, which serves as a key platform for regional dialogue, is 'Voyages to New Horizons of Maritime Partnership'. EAM Jaishankar and Hossain had last met on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York in September, marking the first high-level engagement between India and Bangladesh's interim government after former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's ouster in August 2024. Even though India continues to bat for normalisation of relations between the two neighbouring countries, the current regime in Dhaka has faced massive criticism for making groundless accusations and also targeting the Hindu community in Bangladesh since the mass upris-

ing of students and the dramatic fall of Hasina's Awami League government on August 5, last year. In December, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri visited Dhaka on a day-long visit, conveying New Delhi's concerns, especially those related to the safety and welfare of minorities in Bangladesh, to the top leadership of the interim government. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) stated that, during these meetings, Misri highlighted India's support for a democratic, stable, peaceful, progressive and inclusive Bangladesh while reiterating New Delhi's willingness to build a positive and constructive relationship with Bangladesh, based on mutual trust and respect and mutual sensitivity to each other's concerns and interests.

Ladakh hot springs to be thrown open as battlefield tourism destination from June 15

Ladakh hot springs located in Galwan Valley area close to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China are being thrown open for visitors as part of battlefield tourism from June 15. Officials said on Monday, "Hot springs in Eastern Ladakh will be thrown open for the tourists on June 15 this year, the fifth anniversary of martyrdom of 20 Indian soldiers in clash with People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China which lost its 42 jawans. "At present, even the locals can't visit Galwan Valley. The requisite infrastructure is being generated to promote tourism. "The Ministry of Defence has taken a decision to this effect and the Indian Army is on board. The Union Territory administration of Ladakh has been briefed about the decision and is making all arrangements for converting Galwan Valley into a battlefield tourism destination. "The Hot Spring area which also falls close to the LAC in Ladakh is also being opened to tourists with infrastructure development and recce operations already underway." Officials said, "The move is expected to



boost border and rural tourism in the region, providing economic benefits to local communities. From establishing war memorials to commemorate the sacrifices of Indian soldiers to promoting wildlife and cultural tourism, the initiative holds promise for Ladakh's tourism industry and regional development."

A recce of the Galwan area was conducted on January 19 by a 10-member team of Tourism Enablers representing ALTOA, Taxi Union, Tempo Union, Bike Union and ALGHA Tourism. "The recce was organised by the GOC Kharu Division and initially, the plan is to open the area to domestic tourists. Pangong Lake already attracts a large number of tourists and the addition of Galwan as a destination is expected to give a significant boost to tourism.

Raj HC to hear six petitions in high-profile single lease case involving Shanti Dhariwal

The Rajasthan High Court will hear six petitions on Monday related to the high-profile single lease case involving former state minister Shanti Dhariwal.

The hearing, overseen by Chief Justice M.M. Shrivastava as per the Supreme Court's directive, could add to Dhariwal's legal troubles, officials said. Even after 14 years, the former Minister continues to face scrutiny in the matter.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta will present arguments via video conferencing on behalf of the state government.



Malaysia celebrates Swami Vivekananda's vision of tolerance and peace for mankind

Kuala Lumpur, Feb 13 (IANS): Commemorating 25 years of its presence in the country and also the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, the Ramakrishna Mission in Malaysia on Thursday emphasised the inspirational leader's vision on education, social service, self-reliance, and spiritual development. The Ramakrishna Mission Malaysia, in partnership with the High Commission of India in Kuala Lumpur and Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) in Malaysia, recently organised an event 'Arise, Awake' at the Penang Institute which was attended by over 150 people from across the society, children from local

Tamil schools, and local media. This was the second of the 25 events planned by Ramakrishna Mission Malaysia under the guidance of its President Swami Supriyananda. The introductory event of the series titled 'Be and Make' was held in Kuala Lumpur on January 12. Y B Dato Seri Sundarajoo Somu, Penang State EXCO (State Minister) for Housing and Environment represented the Chief Minister of Penang as the chief guest at the event where Indian High Commissioner B N Reddy welcomed the gathering and commended Ramakrishna Mission Malaysia President Swami Supriyananda for his visionary leadership of over 15 years. In his address, Reddy lauded the efforts of Ramakrishna

Mission Malaysia for organising the events and for its unwavering commitment to the spiritual and social welfare of humanity. Swami Satyalokananda, Vice-President at the Ramakrishna Mission in Singapore also graced the event and delivered the keynote address. The High Commission of India organised an exhibition on the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda on the sidelines of the event along with a book display. The Indian High Commissioner also gifted books on Swami Vivekananda to the Penang Institute, one of the country's major think tanks.



IMF scans Pakistan's judicial, regulatory system

Islamabad, Feb 13 (IANS): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) was scrutinising the judicial and regulatory system of Pakistan as part of the ongoing \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) to address governance and corruption vulnerabilities, according to the Ministry of Finance. According to the Government of Pakistan, the IMF team will engage with financial, revenue, and election bodies in the country. An assessment must be published in July sharing measures to address corruption and governance vulnerabilities, reports Dwan, quoting the Ministry of Finance. Under the United Nations framework, Pakistan is required to publish the corruption report im-

mediately after a review. A technical mission of the IMF is in Pakistan for a week-long examination of six key governance-related sectors and institutions, the ministry stated. In October, Pakistan committed to the IMF to strengthen institutional capacities to fight corruption, support inclusive growth, and provide a level playing field for businesses and investments. As a result, a structural benchmark had been set to publish by July 2025 a report on the Governance and Corruption Diagnostic Assessment (GCDA) to analyse critical governance and corruption vulnerabilities and identify priority structural reforms moving forward, the ministry said. According to the media report, the mission would also be engaging

with leading members of the superior judiciary besides the leadership of the financial, revenue, and election bodies to review their process. The mission will examine six core state functions, including fiscal governance, central bank governance and operations, financial sector oversight, market regulation, rule of law, and anti-money laundering and counter-financing terror. In 2024, The IMF approved \$7 billion to Pakistan under a 37-month loan program, with \$1 billion earmarked for immediate disbursement. Pakistan has been dependent on IMF funds to meet its needs for decades and has struggled after years of financial mismanagement. It is currently its fifth-largest debtor and has taken 24 loans from the IMF since 1958.

South Korea: NHRCK meets over agenda on Yoon's right to fair trial

Seoul, Feb 13 (IANS): South Korean state human rights watchdog began a meeting on Thursday to discuss whether to adopt a recommendation to guarantee President Yoon Suk Yeol's right to defence during his impeachment trial at the Constitutional Court. The National Human Rights Commission of Korea (NHRCK) convened its ple-

nary meeting on the issue amid growing demand among Yoon's supporters that the impeached president should be guaranteed a fair trial at the Constitutional Court. The meeting came after an NHRCK standing commissioner proposed the recommendation as part of an agenda to address the national crisis triggered by Yoon's short-lived martial law declaration

on December 3 last year. But the commission failed to hold discussions on January 13 and 20 amid strong protests from supporters of liberal opposition parties. Earlier on Monday, pro-Yoon demonstrators attempted to enter the NHRCK building in central Seoul in a bid to block protesters opposing the proposed recommendation but were scattered later after police intervened, Yonhap news agency reported.



Yoon's supporters have demanded the commission adopt the recommendation in his favour, whereas opposition parties and their supporters have come out against the move. Ahead of the meeting, ruling and opposition party lawmakers visited the commission to express their opinions on the agenda.



Australian police seize 41 kg of cocaine found in containers at Sydney port

Sydney, Feb 13 (IANS): Australian police have seized more than 40 kg of cocaine found in refrigerated containers imported into Sydney. The Australian Federal Police (AFP) and Australian Border Force (ABF) said on Thursday that about 41 kg of cocaine was found in the containers that arrived at Sydney's Port Botany from Chile and Belgium in January. They said that officers have observed a recent drug import trend where cocaine is hidden by criminal syndicates in refrigerated containers used by legitimate businesses to import goods. Once the container has arrived in Sydney, local members of the syndicates attempt to break into the docks or other storage areas to recover the drugs. The AFP and ABF said in a joint statement that there has been a significant increase in the use of the tactic since April 2023 and that they are now actively targeting refrigerated containers arriving in Sydney. They said that more than one tonne of cocaine has been seized in total from the containers since 2023, as well as tracking devices used by organised crime gangs to monitor and identify the containers.

Pakistan: Massive protest by lawyers leads to chaos in Islamabad

Islamabad, Feb 13 (IANS): Chaos ruled in Pakistan's capital Islamabad once again as lawyers of the country took to the streets on Thursday, protesting against a meeting being held at the Supreme Court to finalise names of eight Supreme Court judges. The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) is considering elevating eight High Court judges to the Supreme Court in spite of calls from some several judges and thousands of lawyers to defer the meeting. The legal organisations in Islamabad have also been strongly opposing the recent transfers of five judges to the Islamabad High Court (IHC), terming the move as an attempt to divide the judiciary. Authorities and security forces in Islamabad have blocked and barricaded all routes leading to the Supreme Court and deployed additional forces to handle any situation in case the protest intensifies. Islamabad Police have also closed several key entry points

to the Red Zone in the federal capital in response to the protest called by lawyers. The protest also led to the suspension of Metro bus services on multiple routes between Islamabad and Rawalpindi, causing significant inconvenience for commuters. The lawyers have gathered in big number outside the Supreme Court in Islamabad, raising slogans of freedom of judiciary and carrying banners in support of the protest. The protesting lawyers have called the 26th Constitutional Amendment as completely "unacceptable". The Lahore High Court Bar Association (LCBA) also moved an application before the apex court, expressing opposition to the 26th Constitutional Amendment, seeking postponement of the JCP meeting. The matter of transfer of judges had aggravated after Justice Sarfaraz Dogar was transferred from the Lahore High Court (LHC).



Australian homelessness services report surge in demand for assistance

Sydney, Feb 13 (IANS): Australia's homelessness services have reported a major surge in demand for assistance amid the country's housing crisis. According to a survey conducted by NGO Everybody's Home, 87 per cent of Australia's frontline homeless support organisations experienced a major increase in their workload in December and January compared to previous years. Among the organisations that were surveyed, 98 per cent reported increased workloads last year and said they expect demand to continue rising in 2025. Two-thirds of organisations said they have been unable to provide long-term housing solutions for clients, 71.7 per cent reported increased waitlists and half said they have fewer resources per client than a year ago. Everybody's Home spokesper-

son Maiy Azize said that the organisations reported "the worst summer on record" as high rental prices and the rising cost of living continue to impact Australians. "The services at the coalface of Australia's housing crisis are at breaking point. They can barely keep up with the rising number of people facing housing stress and homelessness," Azize said in a statement on Monday. A separate report published on Monday by Melbourne-based think tank the Grattan Institute found that two-thirds of retired Australians who rent in the private market are living in poverty, Xinhua news agency reported. Over 70 per cent of retired single women and men who rent are living in poverty, the report said. Data released by government agency the Productivity Commission at the end of January said that 37,779 Australians were experiencing persistent homelessness in 2023-2024, up from 30,306 people in 2019-2020. Homelessness can expose people to violence and victimisation, result in long-term unemployment and lead to the development of chronic ill health. People experiencing homelessness have significantly higher rates of death and chronic illness when compared with the general population.

Laos aims to boost sustainable tourism, cultural preservation

Vientiane, Feb 13 (IANS): The Lao government has called for greater efforts to promote sustainable tourism and cultural preservation, emphasising their significant contributions to socio-economic growth.





2 pc rise in vote share a step forward: Cong on Delhi election defeat

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : Congress National Spokesperson Ragini Nayak on Thursday acknowledged the party's underwhelming performance in the Delhi Assembly elections, where 67 of its 70 candidates lost their security deposits. However, she pointed out that the party's vote share had increased by 2 per cent, marking what she called a step forward. Despite fielding 70 candidates, only three managed to save their security deposits. Speaking to IANS, Nayak said, "The result has not been as per the Congress party's wish. But it cannot be denied that our vote share has increased by 2 per cent. We have taken a step forward from the last time and in many seats in Delhi, where we have got more than double the votes than the last time." She expressed optimism, drawing an analogy to a hopeful outlook, stating that just as an optimist sees the glass as half full, every Congress worker and leader would embark on the next five years with determination.

She assured that the party "would stand by the people" in every constituency and work towards strengthening its role as a "strong Opposition." "While introspection is necessary, the focus would also be on action. I am confident that the party would not only reflect on how to multiply its votes tenfold but would also take concrete steps to achieve that goal soon," Nayak added. While acknowledging the slight increase in vote share as a positive indicator, she said, "I am happy that our vote percentage has increased. But this is not a matter of overconfidence or overexcitement. We have to accept that we wanted to bring a much better result than this. We failed in that. Failure is a challenge and we accept it," she said. Among the 699 candidates contesting the Delhi Assembly elections, 555 lost their security deposits. Congress, once a dominant force in Delhi, failed to win a single seat for the third consecutive election.

NHRC member Priyank Kanoongo tells YouTube to pull down Allahbadia's vulgar remarks

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : The NHRC on Thursday directed social media platform YouTube to pull down "obscene and vulgar" content based on remarks of podcaster Ranveer Allahbadia on the controversial show 'India's Got Latent' and file an Action Taken Report within three days. Rights panel member Priyank Kanoongo wrote to the YouTube's Head, Public Policy, Mira Chatt, saying that the content in question prima facie appears to be in violation of various legal provisions under Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, the Information Technology (IT) Act, and other applicable laws. Referring to a complaint received by the NHRC against the show, Kanoongo told Chatt, "You are hereby directed to take urgent action to remove the concerned episode/videos from YouTube."



"Prior to the removal of such content, you are also required to submit details of the channel and the specific videos to the concerned police authorities where the FIR has been registered, for further necessary action," he wrote on Thursday. Sharing links of various episodes of the show allegedly containing objectionable content, Kanoongo said.

MUDA case: Petitioner says he won't challenge K'taka HC order in SC

Bengaluru, Feb 13 (IANS) : The petitioner in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) case, Snehamayi Krishna stated on Thursday that he won't approach the Supreme Court challenging the High Court order which quashed the petition seeking a CBI probe. Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is accused number one in the MUDA case, while his wife B.M. Parvathi is the second accused and his brother-in-law Mallikarjuna Swamy is named as the third accused. The Karnataka High Court recently quashed the petition seeking the CBI investigation

into the case. The Karnataka Lokayukta and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) are probing the matter. The Lokayukta has completed the investigation and will be submitting the report on Tuesday to the court. Snehamayi Krishna stated, "I have been questioned frequently about filing an appeal in the Supreme Court to transfer the MUDA case to the CBI. After carefully reading the verdict given by the High Court regarding my petition.



CPI(M)'s West Bengal meet to draft strategy on fighting TMC, BJP

Kolkata, Feb 13 (IANS) : Maintaining its individual identity despite alliances and adopting equal aggression against both the ruling Trinamool Congress and the BJP, will top the agenda at the CPI(M) state conference scheduled in West Bengal later this month, a party leader said on Monday. The conference, to be held from February 22 to 25 at Dankuni in Hooghly district, is crucial for drafting the party's strategy ahead of elections.



Pariksha Pe Charcha energised students, Madhya Pradesh participants applaud PM Modi

Bhopal, Feb 13 (IANS) : Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Thursday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's interaction with students through Pariksha Pe Charcha has infused them with new energy and confidence. More than 18 lakh students and teachers across Madhya Pradesh watched the live broadcast of the event in

their schools, according to the state education department. "PM Modi's interaction with students through Pariksha Pe Charcha has filled them with motivation and a positive outlook," Yadav said. Students of classes 10 and 12, who attended the eighth edition of the programme, praised the Prime Minister for his guidance. Rohan Rajput, a Class 12 student,

said, "After watching PM Modi's programme, I feel energised. His advice on time management was particularly inspiring -- not just for exams but for life in general." Another student from Bhopal, Shubham Patel, said the Prime Minister's insights on stress-free exam preparation were invaluable. "It felt like PM Modi was speaking directly to me. His words on staying calm and focused will help

me a lot," said Patel, who is preparing for his Class 12 board exams. Anjali Bhargava, principal of a government higher secondary school in Bhopal, highlighted that the programme was meaningful not just for students but also for teachers and parents. "PM Modi emphasised that teachers should identify and nurture each student's unique talent. If a child excels in

sports or dancing, they should be encouraged to pursue their passion. This is an important message for parents as well," she said. Madhya Pradesh School Education Minister Uday Pratap Singh, who watched Pariksha Pe Charcha at a government school in Bhopal, said the



Prime Minister's words would greatly benefit students. "It felt like a head of the family guiding his children. His approach made a lasting impact."



Delhi Congress Chief vows to strengthen party and win back people's trust after election setback

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : After Congress's disappointing performance in the Delhi Assembly elections, where it failed to secure a significant share of votes, Delhi Congress chief Devender Yadav on Thursday expressed optimism for the future and committed to winning back the hearts of the people. Talking to IANS, Devender Yadav discussed the party's strategy moving forward, acknowledging the challenges posed by the strong showings of the BJP and AAP.

Talked family matters with Kharge, not politics: Parameshwara on K'taka Congress infighting

Bengaluru, Feb 13 (IANS) : Karnataka Home Minister G. Parameshwara said on Thursday that no political discussions took place during his meeting with Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge and the two leaders discussed family matters only. Speaking to reporters in Bengaluru, he stated, "Our family and Mallikarjun Kharge's family are closely connected. Beyond politics, he is like an elder brother to me. I frequently meet him, and during these meetings, we mostly discuss family matters. Not every meeting needs to involve political discussions." He further emphasised that even during Saturday's meeting, there were no political discussions. "We talked

about various family matters, and there is no need for excessive speculation. Not a single word was spoken about politics," said the state Home Minister. Responding to media questions about his visit to New Delhi, Parameshwara remarked: "There is no need to read too much into it or make unnecessary assumptions as far as my Delhi trips are concerned."



TN police step up patrolling at railway stations following sexual assault bid in moving train

Chennai, Feb 13 (IANS) : The Government Railway Police (GRP) have intensified patrolling and enhanced security measures at all major railway stations across Tamil Nadu following the brutal attack on a pregnant woman, who was pushed off the ladies' compartment of a moving train near Katpadi Junction at Jolarpet during an attempted sexual assault.

J&K: Arms & ammunition recovered in Kupwara district, searches on in Poonch

Srinagar, Feb 13 (IANS) : Security forces said on Thursday that during a Cordon & Search Operation (CASO) in J&K's Kupwara district, a large cache of arms and ammunition were recovered while searches are going on in the Poonch district as well. An official said that the army

and Jammu and Kashmir Police (JKP) jointly conducted a CASO in Amrohi village, Karnah tehsil, Kupwara district during which recovery of a large cache of arms and ammunition was recovered. "The recoveries include two AK-47 Rifles, two AK Magazines and twelve AK rounds," he said.

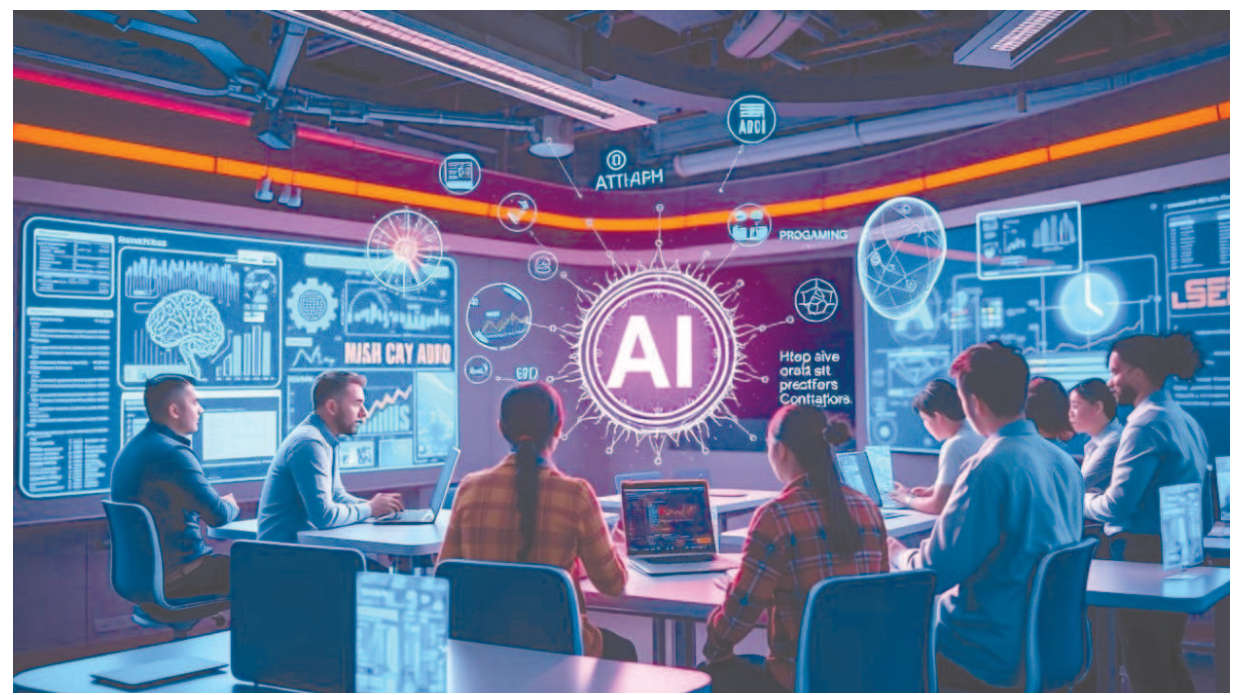


SIDBI gets \$100 mn credit facility from France's AFD for green projects in MSME sector

New Delhi Feb 13 (IANS) : Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) and AFD, France have signed a \$100 million credit facility agreement to scale up green finance solutions for Indian micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), according to a SIDBI statement issued on Thursday. The partnership aims to support sustainable growth and drive the transition towards a low-carbon economy. Under this agreement, AFD will provide a credit line of \$100 million to

SIDBI to deploy the funds to expand access to affordable financing for MSMEs investing in energy-efficient technologies, renewable energy solutions, and climate-friendly business practices. This initiative aligns with both institutions' commitment to fostering sustainable economic development and enhancing climate resilience in emerging markets. The partnership leverages AFD's global leadership in climate financing space and SIDBI's understanding of the MSME ecosystem, the statement said. Lise Breuil, AFD's country director for India, stated:

"At AFD, we are proud to support India's transition towards a greener and more resilient economy. The \$100 million credit line signed with SIDBI marks a crucial step in empowering MSMEs to invest in sustainable solutions. MSMEs have to play a major role in India's commitment to achieving carbon neutrality by 2070." "This initiative also complements our work on the Greening Indian Financial System (GIFS) Platform, which focuses on integrating sustainability.



Indian companies increasing AI investments, focus on open source and governance : Report

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : Indian businesses are making significant strides in AI adoption, with 87 per cent of surveyed companies have advanced their AI strategies for 2024 and 76 per cent already seeing positive returns on their investments, a report said on Thursday. Companies are not only investing in AI for the long term but are also increasingly leveraging open-source tools to drive innovation and maximise returns. A remarkable 89 per cent of surveyed companies have already

launched more than 10 AI pilot projects in 2024, according to new research by IT major IBM. Looking ahead, 93 per cent of respondents plan to increase their AI investments in 2025, and 71 per cent aim to leverage open-source ecosystems to optimise their AI implementation. However, governance has emerged as a key concern, with businesses recognising the importance of responsible AI practices. Implementing AI responsibly requires a structured approach that ensures fairness, transparency,

privacy and explainability. The biggest challenges in AI adoption include a lack of governance (53 per cent), insufficient AI expertise (51 per cent), difficulties in technology integration (51 per cent), data management issues (41 per cent), and struggles to generate business value (39 per cent). Despite these challenges, Indian enterprises remain committed to AI investments. About 97 per cent of surveyed organisations plan to either increase or maintain their AI spending in 2025.



QIP fundraising reaches record high in India, real estate leads with Rs 22,320 cr in 2024

Mumbai, Feb 13 (IANS) : Fundraising through qualified institutional placements (QIPs) reached an all-time high in India in 2024, with 99 issues raising a massive Rs 1,41,482 crore across sectors, a report said on Thursday. QIPs are a capital-raising method for listed companies without having to submit legal paperwork to market regulators. Real estate emerged as a key contributor, with eight developers and one real estate investment trust (REIT) collectively raising Rs 22,320 crore.

This accounted for 16 per cent of the total QIP fundraising for the year, according to the report by Anarock Group. Compared to 2023, when only 43 QIP issues raised Rs 55,109 crore and real estate saw no activity in this space, 2024 marked a significant shift. It saw the highest QIP fundraising year in the past 11 years, with real estate making a strong comeback as institutional investors showed confidence in the sector's long-term growth.

India's Income Tax reforms to foster more transparent, taxpayer-friendly environment : Experts

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : The new Income Tax Bill 2025, scheduled to take effect on April 1, 2026, is set to foster a more transparent and taxpayer-friendly environment, representing a historic milestone in India's tax landscape, industry experts said on Thursday. The Bill repre-

sents a significant overhaul of India's tax legislation, marking a pivotal shift towards simplification and modernisation of the Income-Tax Act of 1961. The Bill, which spans into 622 pages, reduces the complexity of the 1961 Act and replaces intricate legal jargons with clear and straightforward language. "Another notable



aspect of the Bill is the strategic use of tables and formulas, which will help simplify interpretation of the provisions. The Bill aims to

minimise disputes and litigation while enhancing taxpayer certainty," said Himanshu Parekh, Partner, Tax, KPMG in India.



Boeing supply chain in India exporting Rs 10,000 cr worth plane parts every year

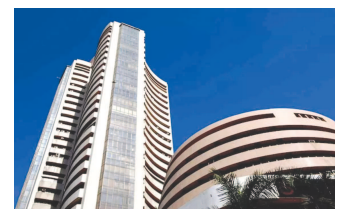
Bengaluru, Feb 13 (IANS) : Boeing's supply chain in India is exporting an impressive Rs 10,000 crore worth of aerospace components every year, making the US plane maker the largest foreign manufacturer in the country, Boeing India President Salil Gupte said. He dismissed the idea that high-tech aviation manufacturing was not happening in India. "That may have been true 10 years ago, but today, India has an interesting opportunity," he observed in an interview to NDTV Profit. Gupte pointed out that Boeing has expanded its operations in India with as many as 5,000 aeronautical engineers working at its 43-acre site in Bengaluru who are mostly looking at domestic work but also supporting some overseas projects. Boeing also has an extensive

supply chain in India, with suppliers in Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Gujarat and northern India. "These suppliers export about Rs 10,000 crore worth of aerospace components every year, making us the largest foreign OEM (original equipment manufacturer) in India," Gupte said on the sidelines of the 'Aero India 2025' show here. He further highlighted that Boeing is working under the 'Make in India' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiatives in the defence sector. "A key factor in defence manufacturing is localisation. Any final assembly for a defence contract today requires 50 per cent indigenous content. That's why we have been investing in localisation efforts," Gupte explained. He also underscored the importance of partner companies like US tech giant GE, which is setting up an engine manufacturing

unit with Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL). "GE has a big place in a lot of our platforms for both civil and defence," Gupte noted. "For final assembly in India, you need tier-1 suppliers and engine manufacturers already present which is already happening," he remarked. Gupte said that Boeing has been in India for eight decades, but over the last 10 years its presence has really started to grow. Boeing has been actively supporting civil aviation customers, and in defence, it has introduced several key platforms such as the C-17 cargo aircraft, P-8 maritime patrol aircraft, and Apache helicopters. "The head of the state fleet, where we get to fly the Prime Minister and the President of India, is also a Boeing fleet," he pointed out.

Sensex ends flat ahead of key PM Modi-Trump meet, Nifty holds 23,000 level

Mumbai, Feb 13 (IANS) : The Indian stock market on Thursday saw a choppy session as benchmark indices gave up early gains and ended flat, with investors awaiting the outcome of the meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump that aims to boost the growing relations between the two largest democracies. The Sensex closed at 76,138.97 by slipping 32.11 points or 0.04 per cent from its previous close. The index moved within a range of 76,764.53 and 76,013.43 during the day. Similarly, the Nifty also ended on a muted note as closing at 23,031.40 which was down by 13.85 points or 0.06 per cent. The index touched an intra-day high of 23,235.50 but also slipped to a low of 22,992.20 before closing.



Adani Green Energy withdraws from Sri Lanka RE wind power, transmission projects

Ahmedabad, Feb 13 (IANS) : Adani Green Energy on Thursday said it is withdrawing from further engagements in the renewable energy (RE) wind energy project and two transmission projects in Sri Lanka. However, it reaffirmed the availability of any development opportunity in the South Asian country. "Adani Green Energy has conveyed its Board's decision to

respectfully withdraw from further engagement in the RE wind energy project and two transmission projects in Sri Lanka," an Adani Group spokesperson said in a statement. "However, we remain committed to Sri Lanka and are open to future collaboration if the Government of Sri Lanka so desires," the spokesperson added.





Road safety: Vadodara cops detain 59 vehicles for illegal ferrying of passengers

Vadodara, Feb 13 (IANS) : In a crackdown against illegal ferrying of passengers, the traffic branch of Vadodara City Police detained 59 private vehicles for endangering lives and violating provisions of the Motor Vehicles (MV) Act, an official said on Thursday. The Assistant Police Commissioner's office said the operation, conducted over the past 24 hours as part of National Road Safety Month - 2025, targeted vehicles that were illegally ferrying passengers in a bid to make a quick buck.

Govt spending on infra has surged to Rs 11 lakh crore in 2024 from Rs 2 lakh crore in 2014: Scindia

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia has highlighted that government investment in the development of infrastructure such as highways, railways and ports has surged to Rs 11 lakh crore in the last one year under the Modi government compared to a mere Rs 2 lakh crore a year during the erstwhile UPA regime.

Explaining the rationale of the budget, the Communications Minister told journalists that Prime Minister Narendra Modi considers the poor, farmers, women and youth as the only four castes in India and the Budget for 2025-26 focusses on empowering these four categories.

The minister said that national highways had been constructed across 6,000 km while new railway lines had been laid over

2,031 km in the last one year. Besides, in the telecom sector, towers have been installed in 10,700 villages to provide connectivity to rural areas. Highlighting that India has

emerged as the fastest growing economy, Scindia said while the global growth rate is stuck at 3.2 per cent, India has registered a 6.5 per cent GDP growth.



Crime Branch to probe Rs 1,000 crore Kerala CSR scam

Thiruvananthapuram, Feb 13 (IANS) : Amid rising complaints from the public about being duped in a massive fake Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) fund scam, estimated to exceed Rs 1,000 crore, Kerala State Police Chief (SPC) Sheikh Darvesh Sahib has handed over the investigation to the Crime Branch.

The decision, taken after extensive consultations, was announced on Thursday.

The probe will be led by Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) H. Venkatesh, with separate teams being formed in all 14 districts of the state to handle the mounting complaints. Initially, 34 cases have been transferred to the Crime Branch. However, early scrutiny of bank accounts linked to the NGO 'Muvattupuzha Socio-Economic Development Society' and the alleged mastermind, 26-year-old Anandhu Krishnan, suggests the number of cases could exceed 30,000, as nearly one lakh individuals are believed to have fallen victim to the scam.



SC questions Gujarat govt over FIR against Cong MP Imran Pratapgarhi

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : The Supreme Court on Thursday raised questions over an FIR registered against Congress Rajya Sabha MP and poet Imran Pratapgarhi for allegedly disturbing social harmony. The complaint dates back to January 3, 2025, when a complaint was filed at Jamnagar police station by an advocate's clerk. The complainant alleged that a video posted by Pratapgarhi on Instagram, which featured a poem, was inciting unrest and harming social peace.

"Please see the poem. It's ultimately a poem. It is not against any religion. It is not against any particular community. Please apply your mind to the poem," remarked a Bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan as it adjourned a hearing on the request made by the Gujarat government's counsel.

The matter will be heard next after three weeks. Earlier on January 21, the Justice Oka-led Bench, in an interim order, shielded Imran Pratapgarhi from arrest as it issued a notice to the Gujarat government and posted the matter for further hearing on February 10.

Gujarat : Transport inspectors strike work over promotions

Ahmedabad, Feb 13 (IANS) : The functioning of Regional Transport Offices (RTO) across Gujarat was hit on Thursday as inspectors and sub-inspectors launched a two-day protest over their demands including transfers and promotions. On the first day of the protest, employees declared a 'No Log In Day,' effectively shutting down all operations.

Two arrested for duping people on pretext of giving govt jobs in Assam

Guwahati, Feb 13 (IANS) : Two fraudsters have been arrested by Assam Police on Thursday for allegedly collecting money from job aspirants on the pretext of giving them government jobs, officials said. The arrested persons have been identified as Shamim Ahmed and

Nabajit Barman. A senior police official said that Ahmed and Barman were running a forum for specially abled persons and they collected a handsome amount of money from people by falsely promising them jobs

in the state government departments. "The two accused persons used to collect Rs 3-4 lakhs from each person who have been seeking jobs in the government sector.



Calcutta HC warns Bengal Police of summoning CAPF for demolition if it fails

Kolkata, Feb 13 (IANS) : A single-judge bench of the Calcutta High Court on Thursday cautioned the Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) about the possibility of summoning Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) to demolish illegal construction in the city if the municipal authorities fail to do so with the assistance of state police.

The bench, presided over by Justice Amrita Sinha, also set a deadline for this process. If the deadline is not met, the court will assign the task of demolishing the illegal construction in the city to the central forces.

The illegal construction in question is a five-storey building in Narkeldanga, North Kolkata. Although KMC authorities have declared the construction illegal, issued a demolition order, and received a court order on this matter some time ago, the demolition work has yet to begin for unknown reasons.

The matter was brought before Justice Sinha's bench, where she set March 10 as the deadline for KMC to ensure the demolition of the building with the help of state police. Failing this, CAPF will be summoned.

Justice Sinha's observations were based on complaints by KMC authorities that they were not receiving the necessary co-

operation from Kolkata Police to demolish the illegal construction.

KMC also informed the court that without police assistance, their officials are unable to vacate the building of its occupants and commence the demolition process.

Justice Sinha noted that since KMC had issued the notice for the demolition of the building, it must take responsibility for it. She remarked, "If cooperation from the city police is not available, there will be no other option but to seek assistance from central forces to ensure the demolition."



Cong MP questions own party, calls for fundamental changes in organisation

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : In the wake of a string of defeats in recent elections in Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), Maharashtra, and now Delhi, Congress MP Tariq Anwar on Thursday openly questioned his party's leadership and called for fundamental changes within the organisation.

Taking to social media platform X, Tariq Anwar expressed his concerns about the Congress party's current direction.

He wrote, "Congress needs to clarify its political strategy. They have to decide whether they will engage in coalition politics or go it alone. Besides, it has also become necessary to make fundamental changes in the

organisation of the party." The Congress party has been grappling with consistent losses, and Anwar's remarks come after the party's crushing defeat in the Delhi Assembly elections, where it failed to secure a single seat.

The outcome was a bitter blow to the Congress, once the dominant political force in the national Capital, where it ruled for 15 years under the leadership of former Chief Minister, late Sheila Dikshit.

Meanwhile, senior Congress leader TS Singh Deo also spoke about the INDIA bloc.

He stated that the "INDIA bloc is united with a single objective to focus on national issues, but at the state level.



Jammu students applaud life lessons given by PM Modi on 'Pariksha Pe Charcha'

Jammu, Feb 13 (IANS) : Students from Jammu on Thursday expressed their deep appreciation for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's insightful 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' (PPC) programme, calling it a game-changer for both their academic and personal growth. The Prime Minister's words of wisdom not only helped them alleviate exam-related stress but also provided valuable life lessons that they plan to carry forward. The annual interaction between PM Modi and students, aimed at addressing the anxieties around exams, has garnered immense praise from students at Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVS) in Jammu. Speaking to IANS, Alaap Sharma, a student from KVS Jammu, shared his experience.



Kerala HC reserves order on demand for CBI probe into suicide of former Kannur ADM

Kochi, Feb 13 (IANS) : The Kerala High Court on Thursday reserved its orders on the appeal moved by deceased ADM Naveen Babu's wife against a single-judge bench's refusal to order a CBI probe into her husband's death. Naveen Babu was found hanging at his official residence on October 15, 2024, a day after being accused of corruption in public by a local woman CPI-M leader.

ED attaches assets valued at Rs 32.57 lakh belonging to some people in Sikkim

Gangtok, Feb 13 (IANS) : The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached movable and immovable assets valued at Rs 32.57 lakh belonging to some people under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, official sources said on Thursday. The ED sleuths of Gangtok Sub-Zonal office have provisionally attached movable and immovable assets valued at Rs 32.57 lakh belonging to Narendra Kumar Chettri, his wife Jayanti Thapa and other individuals under the provisions of the Prevention of the PMLA, 2002. The attachment is in connec-



tion with the fraudulent siphoning of funds from the Indian Himalayan Centre for Adventure and Eco-Tourism (IHCAE), Chemchey, South Sikkim. The ED initiated the investigation based on an FIR, registered on June 13, 2016 by the Sikkim Vigilance Police against Narendra Kumar Chettri, who,



Maha govt sets up 9-member Project Management Unit for development of MMR as growth hub

Mumbai, Feb 13 (IANS) : The Maharashtra government on Thursday appointed a nine member Project Management Unit (PMU) headed by the additional chief secretary of housing department for the implementation of the NITI Aayog's report on making the bursting Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) a growth hub with a \$300 billion economy by 20230 from the present level of \$140 billion. The PMU includes additional chief secretaries of transport, planning and urban development departments, Mumbai Metropolitan Commissioner or additional commissioner as member secretary, chief executive officer of Slum Rehabilitation Authority, Mumbai Port Trust chairman or its representative, Konkan Divisional Commissioner and the representative of Institute for Sustainability, Employment and Growth.

Bengaluru gears up for Aero India 2025

Bengaluru, Feb 13 (IANS) : The Silicon Valley of India, Bengaluru, is all set to host Asia's premier aerospace and defence exhibition, the prestigious Aero India 2025 between February 10-14. The breathtaking event showcasing aerial performances and aviation technology will be held at Yelahanka Air Force Station in Bengaluru. The international event is organised by the Ministry of Defence, in collaboration with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Defence Research and Develop-

ment Organisation (DRDO) and the Department of Space. The authorities are making all-out efforts for the spectacular event. Aero India attracts participants from around the world. Aero India 2025 is the ultimate international meeting ground for the aerospace sector, fostering innovation, collaboration, and knowledge exchange among professionals globally. This event serves as a premier platform for industry leaders to connect and shape the future of aerospace. The show is a key platform for business exchanges, product

showcases, and forging strategic partnerships. It's where the next generation of aerospace innovation takes form, making it essential for businesses looking to influence the industry's trajectory. Defence manufacturers, defence investors, innovators, Indian defence industries, MSMEs/Startups, Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM), foreign investors, fabricators, joint ventures, academia, military suppliers, space industry suppliers, Research and Development organisations from across the world are taking part in the



event. Outdoor surfaces facilitated at Aero India 2025 are ideal for exhibiting large-scale aerospace equipment and ve-

hicles, providing ample space for dynamic displays and demonstrations that are too big for indoor halls.



Maha Kumbh: Manipur, Haryana CMs take holy dip in Triveni Sangam

Prayagraj, Feb 13 (IANS) : Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Saini, and Haryana BJP chief Mohan Lal Badoli on Thursday took the holy dip in the Triveni Sangam during the ongoing Maha Kumbh. The Manipur Chief Minister arrived in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, on Wednesday, along with his Cabinet, and on Thursday he took the holy dip along with his ministers. Taking to X, he wrote, "Standing at the sacred confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and the mystical Saraswati at Triveni Sangam, one feels the embrace of divinity itself. As the cool waters touch the soul, they wash away not just the dust of the body but the burdens of countless lifetimes." "With folded hands and a heart full of devotion, I pray for the peace, prosperity, and well-being of our great nation and the beloved people of Manipur," he further added. Meanwhile, the Haryana Chief Minister arrived in Prayagraj on Thursday morning and took the holy dip. He will continue his journey to Ayodhya the next day to offer prayers at the Ram Temple. These visits come a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Prayagraj on Wednesday. The Prime Minister took a holy dip at the Triveni Sangam, the sacred confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and the mythical Saraswati rivers.

He also offered prayers to River Ganga and kept his visit brief to ensure minimal disruption for other pilgrims amid the VIP movement. Speaking to IANS on PM Modi's visit, Biren Singh said, "We are very happy that PM Modi came here to pray for the peace of the country and the world. I am here to pray for peace and prosperity too. I am here for the peace and prosperity of Manipur." The Maha Kumbh 2025, which began on January 13 and will continue until February 26, has already drawn millions of devotees from across India and abroad. The grand religious gathering is expected to set new records in attendance. On Basant Panchami, lakhs of devotees gathered for the Amrit Snan, forming a massive crowd from various parts of the country. Despite a recent stampede that claimed 30 lives and left over 60 people injured, the enthusiasm among pilgrims remains strong. In response to the tragedy, security has been significantly tightened, with Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath personally overseeing the arrangements. The heightened security was particularly evident during the Basant Panchami Amrit Snan, where thousands of devotees took a peaceful and well-organised dip at the Sangam Nose.

Maha family court orders Dhananjay Munde to pay Rs 2 lakh monthly maintenance to Karuna Sharma

Mumbai, Feb 13 (IANS) : In a setback for NCP leader and Maharashtra's Food and Civil Supplies Minister Dhananjay Munde, the Bandra Family Court has directed him to pay Rs 2 lakh per month as interim maintenance to Karuna Sharma, his live-in partner. The ruling

comes amid growing calls for his resignation over the murder of Massajog sarpanch Santosh Deshmukh from Beed district. The court issued the order in response to Karuna Sharma's petition under the Domestic Violence Act, in which she sought Rs 15 lakh in monthly maintenance from Munde who had previously admit-

ted to a past live-in relationship with Sharma and acknowledged their children, which served as the basis for the ruling. As Munde was recovering from eye surgery, his lawyer Sayali Sawant issued a press note clarifying the order. "The court's directive pertains solely to interim maintenance based on financial considerations.



It does not imply any adverse findings against my client regarding allegations of violence. The order was passed purely on the financial needs of the applicants."



Controversy over DGP appointment in Jharkhand : BJP alleges violation of SC order

Ranchi, Feb 13 (IANS) : A controversy has erupted over the appointment of Jharkhand's Director General of Police (DGP). State BJP President Babulal Marandi has accused the Hemant Soren government of violating Supreme Court directives and bypassing UPSC guidelines in the selection process. Addressing a press conference at the BJP state office here on Thursday, Marandi alleged that the state government hastily introduced a new rule to appoint

an IPS officer set to retire in April 2025 and granted him an extension until April 2026. He asserted that such a rule can't be enacted through an executive order without legislative approval and that even the newly framed rule was not followed properly. Citing the 2006 Supreme Court ruling in Prakash Singh vs Union of India, Marandi emphasised that a DGP must be appointed from a panel recommended by the UPSC. However, he claimed that the Hemant Soren government ig-

nored this mandate and appointed Anurag Gupta, whose name was not on the UPSC-recommended list. Terming the appointment a "direct attack on the Constitution and the judiciary," Marandi accused the government of using the police force for political purposes. The BJP leader further alleged that Anurag Gupta, a controversial officer, had previously been suspended for two years due to election-related irregularities.

Rajasthan CM participates in Prana Pratishtha ceremony of Sri Dudeshwar Mahadev Temple

Jaipur, Feb 13 (IANS) : Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma emphasised that temples are the essence of Sanatan culture, serving as both symbols of religious faith and key centres of social and cultural consciousness. He also reiterated the government's commitment to cultural and spiritual development across the state. Speaking at the Murti Prana Pratishtha ceremony of Sri Dudeshwar Mahadev Temple in Narsana, Jalore, on Thursday, Sharma highlighted the role of temples in preserving Indian traditions, culture, and values.



Slovak PM seeks information from Elon Musk on US grants to NGOs, media in Slovakia

Bratislava, Feb 13 (IANS) : Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico has unveiled a letter addressed to Elon Musk, head of the US Department of Government Efficiency, requesting details on US grants provided to Slovak non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and media outlets. In the letter shared on Thursday on social media, Fico expressed

concerns over "the misuse of foreign funds in Slovakia to disadvantage part of the political spectrum," adding he expects to meet Musk in person, Xinhua news agency reported. "It's indisputable that USAID money was used in Slovakia for political purposes, aimed at distorting the political system and favouring certain political par-

ties," Fico wrote in the letter, adding that "based on incomplete public sources, it's clear that USAID has supported these entities with grants totalling several million dollars in a relatively short period". To distinguish between beneficial projects and what he described as "blatant interference in Slovakia's internal affairs."



All 8 stations in Prayagraj area fully functional, lakhs of pilgrims reaching home safely daily: Minister

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : Union Minister of Railways and Electronics and IT, Ashwini Vaishnaw, on Thursday informed that about 330 trains from eight different stations in the Prayagraj area carried 12.5 lakh passengers back to their homes on Thursday. Stressing that the

Indian Railways is working on war footing to make sure that devotees come in and go back smoothly during the ongoing Mahakumbh, the minister said that even as rush is not coming down, the Indian Railways -- by running one train each from these stations in just above 4 minutes -

- is making sure that devotees don't have to wait after their holy dip. Ahead of the next pious Amrut Snan of Maghi Poornima on February 12, one rake of these trains is catering to on an average 3,780 passengers in a single trip.



India to inaugurate EFTA Desk to bolster economic ties with 4 European nations today

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : In a significant step towards deepening economic ties with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal along with his counterparts from EFTA bloc will inaugurate the EFTA Desk at Bharat Mandapam in the national Capital on Thursday. The initiative, in line with the India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA), which was signed on March 10, 2024, aims to serve as a dedicated platform to promote trade, investment, and business facilitation between India and the four EFTA nations — Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein, according to a statement issued by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Manipur CM resigned only after political embarrassment: Priyanka Chaturvedi

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Priyanka Chaturvedi strongly criticised the delay in Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh's resignation, following a two-year-long period of violence and unrest in the state and taunted that eyes opened quickly and Biren Singh resigned only after political embarrassment. She criticised the political motivation behind the resignation. Speaking to IANS Chaturvedi remarked, "The resignation came after a No Confidence Motion was to be raised in the Assembly. The

CM knew that his own MLAs might support the motion, and he realised that he was losing political support. To avoid embarrassment, the resignation was forced." Chaturvedi added, "After that the eyes opened quickly, and it became clear through the ears." "Two years have passed, and Manipur has been waiting all this while for the Chief Minister to resign. Over the last two years, so many incidents have occurred. Two factions in Manipur have been divided, leading to violent clashes among the public, many lives lost, and women subjected to exploitation," she added.



Chaturvedi pointed out the continued violence and division in the state that escalated over time. "There was so much violence, so many lives lost, and women were subjected to exploitation for two years, but only after all this did the government act," she said, expressing her frustration over the government's delayed response. Earlier on Sunday Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh submitted his resignation to Governor A.K. Bhalla.



Murder of activist: TN environmentalists to hold statewide protests against illegal mining

Chennai, Feb 13 (IANS) : The Federation of Environmental Activists of Tamil Nadu has announced a series of agitations across the state, demanding protection for green activists who raise their voices against illegal mining activities. The move comes in response to the alleged murder of K. Jagaber Ali, an environmental activist.



Congress must lead and coordinate, not just demand seats: Sanjay Raut

Mumbai, Feb 13 (IANS) : Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut on Thursday took a swipe at the Congress party saying that its role should be to coordinate efforts rather than merely demand a larger share in seat-sharing negotiations. "Congress is a national party with 100 seats, and it has the potential to win more than 100 seats -- but only if we all stand together," Raut stated.

His remarks come in the wake of the BJP's resounding victory, the AAP's humiliating defeat, and Congress' repeated failure to secure a single seat in the Delhi Assembly elections. Lamenting the discord within the opposition, Raut said, "PM Narendra Modi's message -- 'if united, we are safe' -- applies not just to the nation but also to the INDIA bloc. The alliance fought the Lok Sabha elections together across states, but its strategies failed in the assembly elections, delivering a setback. Does this mean we should cede state elections to the BJP? The INDIA bloc is visible only in Parliament right now, but it must unite and take a strong stand on critical issues." Taking a jibe at the Congress, Raut remarked, "When elections come, we don't need a 'Big Brother' just for seat-sharing. A leader's job is to coordinate, not just secure a larger share of seats. We have seen this in Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra during the Lok Sabha elections.

Gurugram: Three held for looting cab driver at gunpoint

Gurugram, Feb 13 (IANS) : Gurugram Police have arrested three suspects for allegedly robbing a cab driver along with his car and phone at gunpoint, who had booked his cab in Gurugram, police said. The accused have been identified as Deepak, Rahul and Suraj Kumar a resident of Ashok Vihar Phase-3, Gurugram. The incident took place in Gurugram's Ashok Vihar area when the trio accused booked the victim's Rapido car on February 6. The victim later filed a complaint against the accused on February 7 at the Rajendra Park Police Station. The complainant told the police, the accused had booked his car from Ashok Vihar Phase-3, Gurugram. On reaching the location near Paras Society Sector-106, Gurugram, when the victim asked the suspects to get out of the vehicle.



Chennai airport to remove obstacles for full utilisation of second runway

Chennai, Feb 13 (IANS) : The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has decided to remove all obstacles hindering the full utilisation of the second runway at Chennai International Airport, particularly in the Kolapakkam area. The clearance process will be carried out with minimal inconvenience to local residents. According to sources in the AAI, once the second runway is fully operational, Chennai Airport will be able to handle a greater number of flights, including large aircraft, thereby increasing

overall capacity. A meeting of the advisory committee for Chennai International Airport, chaired by Member of Parliament and former Union Minister T.R. Baalu, addressed this issue. The meeting was attended by Members of Parliament (MPs), Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), senior airport officials, and District Collectors from Chengalpattu, Kancheepuram, and Chennai, along with representatives of local governing bodies. The Chennai Airport currently has two runways, the primary runway, which is 3.66 km long, is capable of handling large aircraft, while

the secondary runway, measuring 2.89 km, is primarily used for smaller aircraft and private jets. The secondary runway, located near Kolapakkam village, faces operational challenges due to obstacles such as tall buildings, trees, mobile towers, and power pylons, which pose safety risks to air traffic. The AAI has been urging local authorities for years to address these issues. A survey conducted by the AAI identified 509 obstacles obstructing the proper functioning of the second runway.



German Chancellor Scholz criticises Trump's Gaza plan as 'scandal'

Berlin, Feb 13 (IANS) : German Chancellor Olaf Scholz criticised US President Donald Trump's plan to relocate Palestinians from the Gaza Strip, calling it "a scandal." Scholz and Friedrich Merz, leader of the opposition Christian Democratic Union (CDU), engaged in the first televised debate on Thursday evening ahead of Bundestag elections on February 23. One of the key topics discussed was how Germany should engage with the United States under Trump's administration. Addressing the Middle East issue, Scholz reaffirmed his opposition to Trump's Gaza proposal,

Xinhua news agency reported. Speaking at a campaign event on Friday, Scholz had voiced his disapproval, stating, "We must not resettle the population of Gaza to Egypt," and expressing his "complete rejection" of the plan. During Sunday's debate, Scholz described his strategy for dealing with Trump as involving "clear words and friendly conversations." Merz, while also expressed concerns over Trump's proposal, described it as "part of a series of irritating proposals from the American Administration."



Operation Devil Hunt sees 1,300 arrests in nationwide crackdown on violence in Bangladesh

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : Bangladesh's security forces have arrested over 1,300 individuals till Thursday in a major crackdown that began on Thursday that is aimed at quelling a new wave of violence that has rocked the country for the last few days. The nationwide operation, dubbed 'Operation Devil Hunt,' was launched by the Chief adviser Muhammad

Yunus-led interim government following a series of violent incidents targeting properties linked to deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's family and key members of her Awami League party. The Muhammad Yunus-led interim government ordered 'Operation Devil Hunt' on Saturday after the attack on students.

South Korea holds emergency meeting on US tariffs on steel, aluminum imports

Seoul, Feb 13 (IANS) : South Korea's industry ministry held an emergency meeting on Thursday to assess the possible impact on local businesses from the United States' plan to impose a 25 per cent tariff on all steel and aluminium imports. The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy held a meeting with officials from major local steel companies, including POSCO Holdings Inc. and Hyundai Steel Co., to discuss responses to the proposed US tariffs, according to ministry officials. Earlier in the day, US President Donald Trump said he would announce on Monday (US time) the imposition of a new 25 per cent tariff on all

steel and aluminium imports into the US. The announcement stoked concerns South Korean companies could be directly influenced by the anticipated US tariffs unlike the Trump administration's previous move to impose tariffs on Canadian, Mexican and Chinese goods. South Korea accounts for some 13 per cent of US steel imports, according to data from the Korea International Trade Association (KITA). Trump imposed a 25 per cent tariff on all steel imports to the US in 2018, citing national security concerns. At the time, the US waived the tariffs on South Korean steel products in return for a yearly import quota of 2.63 million tons, which



accounted for about 70 per cent of Seoul's average export volume between 2015-2017. In the emergency meeting, Deputy Trade Minister Park Jong-won said the government will "proactively" respond to the shift in US trade policy by using "all available networks" and closely collaborating with related indus-

tries. Officials at local steelmakers Hyundai Steel and POSCO Holdings said they are closely monitoring the situation as there are uncertainties surrounding the US trade policies at the moment. Hyundai Steel had been considering constructing a steel mill in the US, prior to Trump's recent announcement.

Israeli army says struck Hezbollah targets in Lebanon despite ceasefire

Jerusalem, Feb 13 (IANS) : The Israeli military said Thursday that it has launched airstrikes on Hezbollah targets in eastern and southern Lebanon. An Israeli aircraft struck an underground tunnel used by Hezbollah for arms transfers in eastern Lebanon's Bekaa region, which extended from Syria into Lebanese territory and had previously been targeted by Israeli forces, an Israeli military spokesperson said. The Israeli Air Force also struck sites in southern Lebanon that contained "munitions and rocket launchers that posed an imminent threat," the spokesperson added. Meanwhile, Israeli fighter jets carried out multiple airstrikes on Sunday evening targeting areas in the Nabatieh region of southern Lebanon, the rugged outskirts of Hermel near the Lebanese-Syrian border, and areas in the eastern Bekaa region, Xinhua news agency reported quoting Lebanon's state-run National News Agency.



Trump says he will announce 25 pc duties on steel, aluminum imports; threatens more to come

New York, Feb 13 (IANS) : US President Donald Trump has said that he will announce a 25 per cent duty on all steel and aluminum imports, a long-standing contentious category of trade for India and the US. President Trump said on Thursday that he will announce the tariffs on Thursday covering imports from all countries. "Any steel coming into the United States is going to have a 25 per cent tariff, aluminum, too", Trump said while flying to New Orleans for the Superbowl. He said that reciprocal tariffs would also be coming for all countries. "Very simply, if they charge us, we charge them"; he said. Those tariffs will be announced on Tuesday or Wednesday and take effect immediately, he added. The tariff threat came ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Washington this week.

India exported steel worth \$4 billion and aluminum worth \$1.1 billion during 2023. Steel and aluminum trade has been a contentious – and complicated issue – for India and the US with Washington accusing New Delhi of subsidising those exports. During PM Modi's visit to Washington in 2023, the two countries agreed to settle six disputes before the World Trade Organisation involving the metals. However, in October, the US slapped duties of as much as 39.5 per cent on some categories of aluminum imports.

Vessel carrying 65, mostly Pakistanis, capsizes in Libya

Islamabad, Feb 13 (IANS) : In yet another boat tragedy, a vessel carrying at least 65 passengers, mostly Pakistanis, capsized off the coast of Libya, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) confirmed in Islamabad on Thursday. "Our Embassy in Tripoli has informed us that a vessel carrying approximately 65 pas-

sengers capsized near the port of Marsa Dela, North West of Zawiyah city, Libya. The Pakistan Embassy in Tripoli has immediately dispatched a team to Zawiyah hospital to assist the local authorities in identification of the deceased," read a statement issued by the Pakistan Foreign Office. "The Embassy is also trying to ascertain further details of the Pa-

kistani affectees," the statement added. The foreign office did not confirm the total number of Pakistani nationals among the 65 passengers, adding that it was working with the authorities in Libya to ascertain the nationalities of the passengers. The latest incident has brought back traumatic memories of a similar incident from January 2025 when a boat carrying at

least 86 passengers, 66 of them Pakistani citizens, capsized near Morocco. The Moroccan authorities were able to rescue only 36 people and 50 passengers died in the incident. Following the incident, Pakistan government launched a major crackdown against human traffickers and their facilitators as the government.



Bangladesh Election Commissioner vows to remain 'neutral' in elections

Dhaka, Feb 13 (IANS) : Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of Bangladesh, AMM Nasir Uddin, has said the commission does not intend to support or oppose any political party and vowed to remain neutral, local media reported. "We, in the commission, do not want to engage in politics. We do not want to stand for or against any political party," he said, adding, "We want to remain neutral." He made these remarks while addressing the annual general meeting and prize distribution ceremony of the Reporters Forum for Election and Democracy (RFED).



UN urges more resources against worsening droughts in Somalia

Mogadishu, Feb 13 (IANS) : The United Nations relief agency on Thursday called for efforts to mobilise more resources in response to an escalating drought crisis in several areas of Somalia. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) warned that the spread of prolonged, extreme dry conditions is worsening an already dire humanitarian situation in Somalia. "To mitigate the situation, hu-

manitarian agencies must urgently mobilise and coordinate resources to address the escalating drought crisis and prepare for the anticipated challenges of the Gu (rainy) season," OCHA said in its humanitarian update released in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia. It said the poor performance of the October-to-December 2024 deyr (short) rains led to drought conditions in southern and central regions.



Indian women's team banks on home support ahead of the FIH Pro League matches

Bhubaneswar, Feb 13 (IANS): After the remarkable Women's Asian Champions Trophy title win in November last year, the Indian team is all set to continue its run of form into the FIH Pro League matches at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar from February 15 to 25. India will kickstart their campaign with two matches against England on February 15 and 16 followed

by clashes against Spain on February 18 and 19. The side will also face challenging opponents in World No. 4 Germany and World No. 1 Netherlands on February 21, 22 and February 24, 25, respectively. India are led by Arjuna Awardee Salima Tete with deputy Navneet Kaur by her side. With a blend of experienced players of the likes of Savita, Sushila Chanu, Nikki Pradhan, Vandana Katariya,

Udita, Lalremsiami and Sharmila Devi alongside star youngsters like Deepika, Sunelita Toppo and Jyoti in the ranks, India have a well-balanced squad. The Indian players are heading into the tournament after their recent performances in the Women's Hockey India League, which followed their iconic Women's ACT win in Rajgir. Last season, India had a disappointing campaign, finishing

with only eight points in 16 games and could only score 16 goals over the course of the prestigious Pro League and will be eyeing to put up an improved show backed by the home crowd. Ahead of the India leg, captain Salima Tete stated, "We can't wait to play at the Kalinga Stadium again and win as many points as we can."

'I told Mo before captaining RCB...': Patidar reveals leadership talks with team director

Bengaluru, Feb 13 (IANS) : Newly appointed Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) skipper Rajat Patidar revealed how he reacted when he was first asked to captain the franchise and said that he told the Director of Cricket Mo Bapat that before leading RCB, he'd like to have the captaincy of the state (Madhya Pradesh) team. Patidar was named the franchise's new captain

ahead of IPL 2025 in an event on Thursday. He will take over the role from Faf du Plessis, who captained the team for three seasons from 2022 to 2024. When asked about his captaincy style, Patidar, who was one of RCB's three re-tentions apart from Virat Kohli and Yash Dayal, said, "If I talk about my way of captaincy, I'm not that expressive, but at the same time I'm aware of the situation of the matches."



'It never goes away': Botha on Kuhnemann's suspect bowling action

Brisbane, Feb 13 (IANS) : Former South Africa offspinner and current Queensland and Brisbane Heat coach Johan Botha claimed that Matthew Kuhnemann will always carry the stigma of having his action reported, regardless of the outcome of his upcoming testing in the next few weeks.

Kuhnemann, who plays under Botha at Heat, was reported for a suspected illegal bowling action during the second Test against Sri Lanka in Galle. Botha said it's a long road ahead for Kuhnemann to come out clean, and if he is cleared, the tag will always stick with him. "It is a long process, and unfortunately, either way, if you get cleared or not, it will always be there. Guys think it's a one-off and you get rid of it."

Pakistan have a good chance of defending Champions Trophy title, says Sarfaraz Ahmed

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) Former Pakistan captain Sarfaraz Ahmed believes that Mohammed Rizwan-led side has a "good chance" of defending their ICC Champions Trophy title in front of home fans. Under Sarfaraz's leadership, Pakistan defeated India by 180 runs in the Champions Trophy final in 2017 at The Oval to lift the title for the first time. The veteran wicketkeeper-batter added that players from the title-winning side including Babar Azam and Fakhar Zaman will be a key factor in their journey in the eight-team competition. "Pakistan have a really good chance of defending that title and I think they have a strong team."



Labuschagne's form 'alarming sign' for Australia ahead of WTC final, opines Finch

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) Former captain Aaron Finch opined that Australia should consider dropping Marnus Labuschagne for the World Test Championship final against South Africa at Lord's in June, citing his extended lean form as a reason he should no longer be included.



Shooting: Suruchi unstoppable; Kiran and Varun also win in National Trials

New Delhi, Feb 13 : Haryana's teenage pistol shooter Suruchi remained unstoppable as she swept aside a top domestic line-up to win the women's 10m air pistol T1 match at the Rifle/Pistol National Selection Trials (Group A).

IPL: Sairaj Bahutule returns to Rajasthan Royals as spin bowling coach

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) : Former India cricketer Sairaj Bahutule has returned to the Rajasthan Royals as the side's spin bowling coach ahead of IPL 2025. Bahutule, 52, returns to the franchise after having been a part of the setup from 2018-21, before going to the BCCI Centre of Excellence (CoE) for a three-year stint.

"Joining Rajasthan Royals again is a tremendous honour. The franchise's commitment to nurturing talent and playing an exciting brand of cricket resonates with my own coaching philosophy. "I am eager to work alongside Rahul and the rest of the coaching staff to develop our bowling attack and contribute to the team's success. Together, we aim to achieve great milestones in the forthcoming season," said Bahutule in a statement issued by the franchise on Thursday.



Relying on pace may work in few games but line & length are key: Nahid Rana

Dhaka, Feb 13 (IANS) : Bangladesh's pace sensation Nahid Rana said he is unfazed by the 150 kmph tag and opined that relying solely on pace may work for a couple of matches, but the line and length are crucial in the long run.

The right-arm pacer had become the first Bangladeshi bowler to clock 150 kmph, when he rocked Pakistan with his pace and bounce during a 2-0 Test series win in Rawalpindi last September. "I'm not thinking about the tag (150 kmph). My focus is on

maintaining myself and bowling with the right line and length. Relying only on pace might work for one or two matches, but not for the remaining eight out of ten, so

line and length are crucial. "In cricket, if your line and length are right, you can prove yourself on any wicket, in any situation."



WPL 2025: After second U19 WC trophy, Shabnam Shakil ready to win matches for Gujarat Giants

New Delhi, Feb 13 (IANS) Fast bowler Shabnam Shakil comes into the 2025 season of the Women's Premier League (WPL) on the back of winning the Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup for the second time with the Indian team. With the euphoria of victory in Kuala Lumpur etched in her memory forever.