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The injury suffered by senior batter Virat Kohli ahead of Thursday's first ODI against England here may turn out to be a minor setback for...

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Cargo handled at India's major ports surges to 819 million tonnes

The cargo handled at India's major ports has increased from 581.34 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 819.23 million tonnes in FY 2023-24, a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 3.5 per cent....

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Complete all civil works related to Anganwadi centers

District Collector Rajarshi Shah has instructed engineering officials to complete all civil works related to Anganwadi centers as soon as possible....

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Caste Census Survey Will Provide Justice For BCs : Konda Surekha

Hyderabad, Feb.6 (NSS): Minister for Forest and Endowments, Konda Surekha, has expressed her confidence that the caste census survey will lead to justice for the Backward Classes (BC) community in Telangana, thus fulfilling the commitment made by the Congress party in the Kamareddy Declaration.



CM Revanth asks Congress MLAs to ensure victory in local body elections

Hyderabad, Feb 6 (NSS) : Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and AICC Telangana Affairs In-charge Deepadas Munshi have urged the Congress MLAs to ensure that both newly-appointed and established leaders collaborate effectively to secure victory in the upcoming local body elections. They emphasized that the party's success in local bodies hinges on the coordinated efforts of all leaders within

their respective constituencies. On Thursday, the Chief Minister convened a meeting with Congress MLAs and Ministers at the Dr. MCR HRD Institute of Telangana, which lasted over three hours. During the discussion, Revanth Reddy noted that the BC

caste census was conducted in line with the Kamareddy Declaration, while opposing parties have been unnecessarily raising objections regarding this matter. It was advised that each MLA should launch a counter-initiative at the constituency level in re-

sponse to the BC census survey. The Chief Minister affirmed the Congress government's commitment to the categorization of Scheduled Castes and expressed readiness to implement this in Telangana.



PM Modi attacks Congress for 'family-first', polarisation

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS) : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday trained his gun at the Congress for pursuing politics of "family first and polarisation" and adopting a "predatory approach" and harming its allies. Replying in Rajya Sabha to the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, PM Modi said that before his government came to power in 2014, the Congress had given the country a development model based on "lies, deceit, corruption, dynastic rule and polarisation".

Continued on pg 02



RJ Shekhar Basha booked on a complaint by victim in Jani Master case

Hyderabad, Feb 6 (IANS) : Police in Hyderabad have registered another case against 'Bigg Boss-Season 8' contestant and well-known Radio Jockey Shekhar Basha on a complaint by a woman assistant choreographer, who was allegedly a victim of sexual assault by Tollywood choreographer Jani Master. A case against Basha was registered at Narsingi Police Station of Cyberabad Police Commissionerate on a complaint by the 22-year-old woman.

Andhra Pradesh forms SIT to probe corruption in liquor sales during YSRCP term

Amaravati, Feb 6 (IANS) The Andhra Pradesh government has constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to further investigate the allegations of irregularities and corruption in Andhra Pradesh State Beverages Corporation Limited (APSBCL) under the YSR Congress Party's tenure. The seven-member SIT has been constituted to investigate irregularities from October 2019 to March 2024.



CM Chandrababu Naidu holds cabinet meeting

Amaravati, Feb 6 (NSS): Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu today chaired a cabinet meeting in Amaravati on Thursday. Several key issues learnt to have come up for discussion in the meeting. It is also learnt that the CM has given several important instructions to the higher officials on this occasion. The CM has given clear instructions to the officials to clear Rs 900 crore kept for Neeru-Chettu scheme. He suggested that the

dues of pre-2019 houses should also be cleared. CM Chandrababu reminded that many activists and leaders were roaming around them for the clearance of the dues. He instructed the district incharge ministers to focus on the issue of the dues when they visit districts. There was a long discussion on revenue in this conference. Chandrababu stressed the need for the ministers and officials to pay attention to bogus passbooks and registrations. Stating that a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

has also been signed in renewable energy during his recent Davos visit, he asked the ministers and the officials to focus on the grounding of the projects. He asked the officials to focus on setting up a training institute of Customs department in Anantapur district.

Govt should remove confusion over BC Reservations: Talasani

Hyderabad, Feb.6 (NSS) : Former minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav today demanded that the State government drive out confusion over the implementation of 42% BC reservations and implementation of SC reservations in Telangana. He asked the State government to re-survey the caste census and added that there would be no confusion among the people if the survey was conducted for the second time.



Changes in UGC norms violate federal spirit, says BRS

Hyderabad, Feb 6 (IANS): Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) has opposed the proposed changes in guidelines of the University Grants Commission (UGC), saying they violate the federal spirit and undermine state authority over universi-

ties. BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR), along with party leaders and public representatives, met Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Thursday.



Women need to be aware of the laws : Senior Civil Judge Radhika Jaswal

Rajanna Siricilla, Feb 6 (TIM Bureau) : District Legal Services Authority Secretary Senior Civil Judge Radhika Jaswal said that students and women should be aware of the laws. On Thursday, she inaugurated the Manonyaya Legal Head Clinic set up by the District Legal Services Authority at the SESS Government Girls Junior College in the district center. Speaking on the occasion, she said that women and students should be aware of the laws.

Six states pass resolution opposing draft UGC regulations 2025 : Sridhar Babu

Hyderabad, Feb 6 (NSS): Minister for IT and Industries Duddilla Sridhar Babu has taken a firm stand against the draft UGC Regulations 2025, which seek to clip the wings of State governments in appointing university vice-chancellors. Representing the Telangana government in place of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Sridhar Babu participated in a crucial meeting in Bengaluru, where Education Ministers and representatives from six (non-BJP-ruled) states—Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Telangana, Jharkhand, and Himachal Pradesh—closed ranks to challenge the Centre's move. At the meeting, Sridhar Babu pulled no punches, slamming the central government's attempt to tighten its grip on higher education. "For years, States have had the final say in appointing vice-chancellors, and now the Centre wants to call the

shots. Telangana alone spends nearly Rs.4,000 crore annually on higher education, setting up new universities, fostering research and innovation, and ensuring quality education. What gives the Centre the right to meddle in our affairs?" he asked. The Minister tore into the proposal that would allow industry leaders, bureaucrats, and external individuals to be appointed as vice-chancellors.



MLC Kavitha demands govt release Rythu Bharosa funds simultaneously

Hyderabad, Feb.6 (NSS): BRS party MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha has expressed her displeasure over the State government's indifference towards the release of rythu bharosa funds to the farmers of the State. She demanded that the government immediately release all the rythu bharosa funds simultaneously. She also demanded that pending bills be released to village sarpanches.



Complete all civil works related to Anganwadi centers

Adilabad, Feb 5 (TIM Bureau) : District Collector Rajarshi Shah has instructed engineering officials to complete all civil works related to Anganwadi centers as soon as possible by the end of this month and he held a review meeting at the Collectorate conference hall on the repairs of Anganwadi centers, toilets, drinking water, and grounding of completed Indiramma model houses. RDO Vinod Kumar, DWO Sabita, Additional CDPO Milkha, CDPOs, supervisors, PD Housing, AD Mines, Engineering department officials, and others participated in this meeting. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that the government has granted permission to build 200 toilets in Anganwadi centers, of which 80 have been completed so far. He said that out of the 44 drinking water works, 24 have been completed so far and water is being provided. He said that bills for completed work have been paid so far and instructed engineering officials to complete the remaining construction work by the end of this month.

Public Notice For E-Auction For Sale of Immovable Properties

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
1. Mr. Namburi Satyanarayana 2. Mrs. Susela Namburi	23-May-2024 Rs. 10,59,574/- (Rupees Ten Lakh Fifty Nine Thousand Five Hundred and Seventy Three Only)	All that part and parcel of the property bearing Door No.17-63, Survey No.2603, Bheemadoli Village and Mandal, West Godavari District, AP, India, 534425. Area Measuring (In Sq. Ft.): Property Type: Land Area, Built-Up Area, Carpet Area	17-Jan-2025	Rs. 20,46,000/- (Rupees Twenty Lakh Forty Six Thousand Only)
3.Chandru Agencies (Prospect No IL10244512)	Bid Increase Amount Rs. 25,000/- (Rupees Twenty Five Thousand Only)	Property Area: 4792.00, 430.00, 400.00	09-Jan-2025 On Date 09-Jan-2025 (Rupees Twelve Lakh Seventeen Thousand Three Hundred Forty Five Only)	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs. 2,04,600/- (Rupees Two Lakh Forty Six Thousand Five Hundred Only)
1. Mr. Badiganchula Naga Prasanna 2. B Naga Prasanna Jewellery Works 3. Mrs. Venkata Sujatha Badiganchula (Prospect No IL10144663)	22-Aug-2024 Rs. 43,92,870/- (Rupees Forty Three Lakh Ninety Two Thousand Eight Hundred and Seventy Only) Bid Increase Amount Rs. 50,000/- (Rupees Fifty Thousand Only)	All that part and parcel of the property bearing Near Door No.3-344, Dr. No. 4, Asst No.2813, Survey No.124, Navuru Village, Mangalgiroli Mandal, Guntur District, AP, India, 522503 Area Measuring (In Sq. Ft.): Property Type: Land Area, Built-Up Area, Carpet Area, Super, Built-Up Area Property Area: 1535.00, 1368.00, 1368.00, 2016.00 (Area Ad.Measuring: 4752 Sq.ft)	29-Oct-2024 Total Outstanding as On Date 09-Jan-2025 Rs.44,93,138/- (Rupees Forty Four Lakh Ninety Three Thousand One Hundred Thirty Eight Only)	Rs.60,36,000/- (Rupees Sixty Lakh Thirty Six Thousand Only) Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs. 6,03,600/- (Rupees Six Lakh Three Thousand Six Hundred Only)

BAJAJ HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED

Corporate office: Cerebrum IT Park B2 Building 5th Floor, Kalyani Nagar, Pune, Maharashtra-411014. Branch Office: 2nd Floor Flat No.203, Office No.3A & 3B, Aditya Trade Center, Above passport office, Ameerpet, Hyderabad Telangana India-500038.

POSSESSION NOTICE

U/s 13(4) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002. Rule 8-(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002. (Appendix-IV)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of M/s BAJAJ HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED (BHFL) 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 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notice(s) to Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s) mentioned herein below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s) and the public in general that the undersigned on behalf of M/s Bajaj Housing Finance Limited, has taken over the possession of the property described herein below in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8-(1) of the said rules. The Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s) in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the below said property and any dealings with the said property will be subject to the first charge of BHFL for the amount(s) as mentioned herein under with future interest thereon.

Name of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor (s) (LAN No., Name of Branch)	Description of Secured Asset (Immovable Property)	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Date of Possession
Branch: Hyderabad LAN No. H400HLT1539027 and H400HLT153906 1.Mohd Shanawaz Hussaini (Borrower) , 2.Arifa Hussaini (Co-Borrower) both the above at Flat No.106 Ground Floor, White Petals Apartment, Plot No.260 & 275, Survey No. 158, 159, 160 & 161, Durga Nagar Colony, Kistareddy Village, Ameerpet Mandal, Sangareddy District, Telangana State, East : Corridor, West : Open To Sky, North : Open To Sky, South : Duct & Flat No.G-105.	All that piece and parcel of the Non-agricultural Property described as: All that the Semi-Finished Flat No.G-106 In Ground Floor, Known as "White Petals Apartment" Constructed on Plot No's 260 and 275, along with an undivided share of land measuring area 29 Sq. Yards out of total area 1000 Sq. Yds, in Survey No's.158, 159, 160 and 161, having built up area 1000 Sq. Feet, (including common area and one car parking) Roof Covered With RCC, Situated at "Durga Nagar Colony" of Kistareddy Village & G.P. Ameerpet Mandal, Sangareddy District, Telangana State, East : Corridor, West : Open To Sky, North : Open To Sky, South : Duct & Flat No.G-105.	05th Nov 2024 Rs.32,75,263/- (Rupees Thirty Two Lacs Seventy Five Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Three Only)	03-Feb-2025

Date: 07.02.2025, Place: Sangareddy Sd/- Authorised Officer, Bajaj Housing Finance Limited

STRESSED ASSET MANAGEMENT BRANCH, HYDERABAD

3rd Floor, Andhra Bank Building, Sultan Bazar, Koti, Hyderabad-500001. E-mail: ubin0812048@unionbankofindia.bank, Tel No: 7032920743, 9982011143

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 9 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged / charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Union Bank of India (secured creditor), will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on the date mentioned below, for recovery of dues as mentioned hereunder to Union Bank of India from the below mentioned Borrower(s) & Guarantor(s). The Reserve Price, the Earnest Money Deposit and Bid Increments are also mentioned hereunder.

Date & Time of E-Auction: 23-02-2025 From 12.00 Noon to 05.00 PM
(with 10 minutes unlimited auto extensions) E-auction Website: https://baanknet.com

To: BORROWER: M/s Makro Cast Pvt Ltd., D.No.40-5-19/4, Flat No.SF6, Geethanjali Apartments, Tikkle Road, Labbipet, Vijayawada-520010 (UNDER CIRP). Directors/Co-obligants/Guarantors/Mortgagors: (1) Mrs. Kollu Lakshmi, W/o Sri Kollu Gopi, D.No.74-24-26B, Ashok Nagar, Patamata, Vijayawada-520010. (2) Mrs. Medarametta Deepthi (Suryadevara Deepthi), H.No.40-4-8, Flat No.3A, Raj Residency, Murali Fortune Road, Labbipet, Vijayawada-520010. (3) Mrs. Medarametta Lakshmi Devi, D.No.40-4-8, Flat No.3 A, Raj Residency, Murali Fortune Road, Labbipet, Vijayawada-520010. (4) Mr. Medarametta Vikyunta Lakshmi Narayana, S/o Late M.Gopalaiah, D.No.40-4-8, Flat No.3A, Raj Residency, Murali Fortune Road, Labbipet, Vijayawada-520010. (5) Mrs. Vattikonda Aruna Kumari, W/o Sambasiva Rao, D.No.12-266 BY1, Ladak Bazar, Madhira, Khammam Dist-507203. (6) Ms. Vankineni Madhavi, W/o V.V.Nagendra Babu, D.No.40-4-8, Flat No.3A, Raj Residency, Murali Fortune Road, Labbipet, Vijayawada-520010. (7) Mr. Vankineni Venkata Nagendra Babu, C/o M.V.L.Narayana, D.No.40-4-8, Flat No.3A, Raj Residency, Murali Fortune Road, Labbipet, Vijayawada-520010. (8) Mr. Patibandla Srinivasa Babu, S/o Late Ramandham, D.No.40-4-8, Flat No.3A, Raj Residency, Murali Fortune Road, Labbipet, Vijayawada-520010. 9) M/s. Foundries represented by its partners, No.1 C, Ganguru Panchayathi Office Road, Edupugallu, Kankipadu, Krishna Dist-521121.

The secured debt for the recovery of which the immovable secured asset is to be sold: Rs.114,04,54,299/- (Rupees One Hundred Fourteen Crore Four Lakh Fifty Four Thousand Two Hundred Ninety Nine Only) as on 30.06.2024 with subsequent interest, charges and costs thereon. (As per demand notice dated 30.07.2019, the outstanding dues Rs.81,76,46,877.48 (Rupees Eight One Crore Seventy Six Lakh Forty Five Thousand Eight Hundred Seventy Seven & Paise Four Eight Only) as on 22.07.2019 with subsequent interest, charges and costs thereon).

Description of immovable secured assets to be sold: Property No.1:- Building in a site admeasuring 432 Sq.Yds bearing No.12-103/5, Ward No.12 and situated at Ladka Bazar, Babu Sahib Road, Madhira, Khammam District located to Mrs. V.ArunaKumari, East: Panchayathi Road, West: Panchayathi Road, North: Panchayathi Road, South: Land belongs to Kolla Kumara Swamy. GPS Coordinates: 16.924588 80.67947222, Type of Possession: Symbolic Possession (Property description as specified in the Deed 03/1989 dated 04.02.1989)

Reserve Price: Rs.59,81,450/-; EMD: Rs.5,98,145/-, Bid Increase Amount: Rs.60,000/-

Property No.2:- Site admeasuring 786.50 Sq.Yds. in R.S.No.183/1, Door No.16-130/29, JRD Tata Ind. Estate, Poranki Village Krishna Dist in the name of Mr. M.V.L.Narayana, M.D., M/s Makro Cast Pvt Ltd. East: Panta Kaluwa, South: 40' Wide Road, West: Property of Mohammad Fajual Haq, North: Property of V.V.Ratnam.

GPS Coordinates: 16.50138889 80.67947222, Type of Possession: Physical Possession (Property description as specified in the Deed 14/7196 dated 24.05.1996)

Reserve Price: Rs.1,73,12,928/-; EMD: Rs.1,73,1293, Bid Increase Amount: Rs.2,00,000/-
Last date for Submission of EMD: EMD shall be deposited before participation in the auction process

Registration, Login and Bidding Rules visit the following sites:

The Online E-Auction will be held through web portal/website https://baanknet.com on the date and time mentioned above with unlimited extension of 10 minutes. The intending bidders / purchasers required to register through https://baanknet.com (Buyer Registration - link provided in the home page of the website) by using their mobile number and valid email-id. The intending bidders / purchasers further required to upload KYC documents and Bank Details. The intending bidders / purchasers can be guided by the Buyer Manual provided in the home page of the website

- https://baanknet.com using mobile number and email ID.
- For Registration and Login and Bidding Rules visit Buyer Manual link provided in the home page of https://baanknet.com
- For queries contact Number: 8291220220, 7032920743 & email ID support.BAANKNET@psballiance.com
- For auction related queries e-mail to For auction related queries e-mail to ubin0812048@unionbankofindia.bank or contact 7032920743.
- Bidders are advised to go through the website: https://baanknet.com and https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in/auction-property/view-auction-property.aspx tender for detailed terms and conditions of Auction Sale before submitting their bids and taking part in the E-Auction sale proceedings. Successful bidder will be intimated through e-mail after the closing of the e-Bidding Process.

Place: Hyderabad, Date: 04-02-2025 Sd/- Chief Manager & Authorized Officer, Union Bank of India

Bank of Baroda

[Abridged Sale Notice for publication in News Papers for Auction conducted on baanknet.com]

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

"APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6)]

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s), Mortgagor (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Bank of Baroda, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis for recovery of dues in below mentioned accounts. The details of Borrowers/ Mortgagor/Guarantor(s)/Secured Asset(s)/Dues/Reserve Price/E-auction date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below-

Sr./Lot No.	Name & address of Borrower(s) / Mortgagor(s)	Give short description of the immovable property with known encumbrances, if any	Date of e-Auction, Start Time to End Time	Reserve Price, EMD, Bid Increase Amount	Status of Possession (Constructive/ Physical)	Property Inspection date & Time
1	Mr. Alladi Srinivas Goud, S/o Lingaiah, H.No. 3-7-182/22A, Sundaralah Nagar, Khammam Urban, Khammam-507001.	All the part and parcel of the property situated at Flat bearing No.104, in Ground Floor, "Lotus Towers" with plinth area of 1150 Sft. along with undivided share of land measuring 29-12 Sq.Yards in the Plot bearing No's 27 and 32, total measuring 800-00 Sq.Yards, in S.No.170/1a, 170/1/Ee, 170/1/1u, 169/Aa, 169/E, 170/2, 169/1Aa, 169/1/E, 169/1/1u, 170/1/1u, 169/1/1uAa, 169/2, 169/1/1u, 169/1/1u1Aa, 169/1/1u1E and 169/1/1u1u, situated at Sai Prabhath Nagar within the limits of Pedda Thanda Grampanchayat, Khammam Rural Mandal, within the boundaries: East: Open to Sky, West: Corridor & Open to Sky, North: Open to Sky, South: Open to Sky.	Rs.26,54,969.82 (Twenty Six Lakhs Fifty Four thousand Nine hundred sixty Nine and Eighty Two Paise only) + Unapplied interest and Legal and other expenses together with further interest thereon from 19.10.2023 onwards at the contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment.	Reserve Price For Property: Rs.22,05,000/- (Rupees Twenty Two Lakhs Five Thousand only) Earnest Money Deposit: Rs.2,20,500/- (Rupees Two Lakhs twenty thousand Five Hundred only) Bid Incremental Amount: Rs.20,000/- (Rupees Twenty thousand Only)	Physical	17-02-2025 to 24-02-2025 from 11.00 AM to 01.00 PM

For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer/visit to the website link https://www.bankofbaroda.in/e-auction and online auction portal Baanknet.com. Also, prospective bidders may contact the Authorised officer on Tel No.08742-224967, Mobile 7993316581

Date: 04-02-2025, Place: Hyderabad Sd/- Chief Manager & Authorized Officer, Bank of Baroda

PM Modi attacks Congress for 'family-first', polarisation

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He presented the report card of his government's policies over the past 10 years, capturing the welfare schemes targeted at women, farmers, artisans, small entrepreneurs, Dalits, disabled and transgenders.

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. 88, Udhyog Vihar, Phase-IV, Gurgaon-122015 (Haryana) and Branch Office at "Door No 4-11-111 A, 1st Floor, Opposite Sivalayam, Anjaneyapat, Amaravathi Road, Guntur - 522007" H.No.22C-1-31, 1st floor, Yegireddy complex, old bus stand back side, Eluru, West Godavari AP, 534007 under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (hereinafter "Act"). Whereas the Authorized Officer ("AO") of IIFL-HFL had taken the possession of the following properties 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 provided at the website: www.iiflhome.com

Borrower(s) / Co-Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Description of the Immovable Property / Secured Asset	Date of Symbolic Possession	Reserve Price
1. Mr. Ramesh Mend 2. Mrs. Bharathi Gaddi (Prospect No IL1029392)	15-Mar-23, Rs.23,75,059/- (Rupees Twenty Three Lakh Seventy Five Thousand Five Hundred and Ninety Only) Bid Increase Amount Rs. 25,000/- (Rupees Twenty Five Thousand Only)	All that part and parcel of the property bearing Flat No.S4, Land Area 162 Sq. Ft., Carpet Area 455 Sq. Ft., Super Built-Up Area 650 Sq. Ft., Second Floor, Door No.39-4-92/9, Chandran Residency, S.No.824, Industrial Estate, Marripalem Village, Vishakhapatnam District, Andhra Pradesh, India, 533007.	26-May-2023 Total Outstanding as On Date 09-Jan-2025 Rs. 30,17,686/- (Rupees Thirty Lakh Seventeen Thousand Six Hundred Eighty Six Only)	Rs. 19,40,000/- (Rupees Nineteen Lakh Forty Thousand Only) Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs. 1,94,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Ninety Four Thousand Only)
1. Mrs. Chandra Sekhar Mallemudi 2. Mrs. Vira Lakshmi Mallemudi 3. Chandrasekhar Vegetalable Market (Prospect No IL1029799)	12-Apr-2024, Rs.30,93,366/- (Rupees Thirty Lakh Ninety Three Thousand Three Hundred and Sixty Six Only) Bid Increase Amount Rs. 40,000/- (Rupees Forty Thousand Only)	All that part and parcel of the property bearing Door No. 3-138, Asst No. 313, Chinnapalankurki Village, Chinnapalankurki Mandal, Guntur Dist, AP, India, 522005. Area Admeasuring (In Sq. Ft.): Property Type: Land Area, Super, Built-Up Area, Carpet Area, Built-Up Area Property Area: 1431.00, 1101.00, 848.00, 848.00.	10-Aug-2024 Total Outstanding as On Date 09-Jan-2025 Rs. 11,522/- (Rupees Thirteen Thousand Five Hundred and Twenty Two Only)	Rs.25,95,000/- (Rupees Twenty Five Lakh Ninety Five Thousand Only) Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs.2,59,500/- (Rupees Two Lakh Fifty Nine Thousand Five Hundred Only)
1. Mr. Sreedhar Kallakuri 2. Mrs. Venkata Radhika Madhavi Kallakuri (Prospect No IL10643716)	23-Aug-2024, Rs.20,14,819/- (Rupees Twenty Lakh Fourteen Thousand Eight Hundred and Ninety Only) Bid Increase Amount Rs.20,000/- (Rupees Twenty Thousand Only)	All that part and parcel of the property bearing Flat No S-1, Second Floor, Phase II, of Chanti Apartments, Door No. 16/141, R.S.No. 1342/2, Asst. No. 1068016531, Satyanarayanaapuram, Guduvada Town & Municipality, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh - 521301. Area Admeasuring (In Sq. Ft.): Property Type: Built-Up Area, Area Admeasuring Property Area: 215.00, 594.00.	01-Feb-2025 Total Outstanding as On Date 09-Jan-2025 Rs. 20,98,483/- (Rupees Twenty Lakh Ninety Eight Thousand Four Hundred Eighty Three Only)	Rs.15,40,000/- (Rupees Fifteen Lakh Four Thousand Only) Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs. 1,54,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Fifty Four Thousand Only)

Date of Inspection of property 21-Feb-2025 11:00 hrs -14:00 hrs
EMD Last Date 24-Feb-2025 08 P.M.
Date/Time of E-Auction 28-Feb-2025 11:00 hrs -13:00 hrs

Mode of Payment: EMD payments are to be made via online mode only. To make payments you have to visit https://www.iiflhome.com and pay through link available for the property Secured Asset only. Note: Payment link for each property Secured Asset is different. Ensure you are using the link of the property Secured Asset you intend to buy via public auction. For Balance Payment - Login https://www.iiflhome.com -> My Bid -> Pay Balance Amount.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

- For participating in e-auction, intending bidders required to register their details with the Service Provider https://www.iiflhome.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 the KYC and PAN card at the above mentioned Branch Office.
- 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 be automatically get extended for 5 minutes.
- 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.
- 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 outgoing relating to the property.
- The purchaser has to pay TDS application to the transaction/payment of sale amount and submit the TDS certificate with IIFL HFL.
- Bidders are advised to go through the website https://www.iiflhome.com and https://www.iifl.com/home-loans/properties-for-auction for detailed terms and conditions of auction sale & auction application form before submitting their Bids for taking part in the auction sale proceedings.
- For details, help procedure and online training on e-auction prospective bidders may contact the service provider E mail ID: care@iiflhome.com, Support Helpline Numbers @1800 2672 499.
- For any query related to Property details, Inspection of Property and Online bid, 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@iiflhome.com
- Notice is hereby given to above said borrowers to collect the household articles, which were lying in the secured asset at the time of taking physical possession within 7 days, otherwise IIFL-HFL shall not be responsible for any loss of property under the circumstances.
- Further the notice is hereby given to the Borrowers, that in case they fail to collect the above said 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.
- AO reserves the rights to postpone/cancel or vary the terms and condition of tender/auction without assigning any reason thereof. In case of any dispute in tender/auction, the decision of AO of IIFL-HFL will be final.

15 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8 (6) OF THE 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, Date: 07-Feb-2025 Sd/- Authorised Officer, IIFL Home Finance Limited

Assam: Over 1 lakh migratory water birds of 124 species spotted in Kaziranga

Guwahati, Feb 6 (IANS) : A total of 1,12,062 migratory water and wetland-dependent birds of 124 species, the highest number for freshwater lakes in northeast India, counted in Assam's Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNPTR), officials said on Thursday.

waterbird count exercise found 1,12,062 migratory water and wetland-dependent birds of 124 species higher than the fifth round (2023-24) of bird count exercise when 88,710 such birds were found against the fourth round's (2021-22) 66,776 birds. She added that out of 124 species, 62 were winter migrants. The results of bird count were announced on Thursday.

According to the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) red list, seven species are globally threatened and 15 are near-threatened. Out of three divisions, Nagaon Wildlife Division recorded the highest number of species (107). "Key sightings included the critically endangered Baer's Pochard and the Endangered Pallas's Fish Eagle.



Gurugram : Man kills wife on suspicion of having affair, arrested

Gurugram, Feb 6 (IANS) : A man was arrested for allegedly killing his wife in Gurugram's Sector-61 area over suspicion that she was in an illicit relationship with another person, police said on Thursday. The accused has been identified as Abrar of Uttar Pradesh, they said. Police received information on January 28 that a 20-year-old woman identified as Saloon was brought to the hospital. A team from the Bhandsi police station reached the hospital, took custody of the body, and kept it in the mortuary. On January 29, the deceased's sister told the police that her sister used to live with Abrar in a rented accommodation in Sector-61. The victim died due to an illness. An autopsy report of the deceased disclosed that she was strangled to death.



IIT Mandi to establish extension campus in Palampur

Shimla, Feb 6 (IANS) : In a significant achievement for higher education and technological advancement in Himachal Pradesh, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Mandi will establish an extension campus in Palampur on nearly 52 hectares of land. The announcement was made on Thursday by Gokul Butail, Principal Advisor (Innovation, Digital Technologies, and Governance) to Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, in Palampur. Butail, who also serves on the Board of Directors of IIT Mandi Catalyst, the institute's startup incubator, said he had actively advocated for the expansion of IIT to Palampur. For this purpose, 22 hectares of land at Bhagotla village have already been allotted for lease to IIT Mandi under the Technical Education Department, while an additional 31 hectares will be sent for forest clearance to the Central government. Palampur, already home to prestigious institutions like Chaudhary Sarwan Kumar Himachal Pradesh Krishi Vishwavidyalaya Agricultural University and CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology, offers a strategic advantage with improved connectivity.

Faizabad MP breaks down over Dalit woman's rape-murder in Ayodhya; CM Yogi responds

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS) : Awadhesh Prasad, the Samajwadi Party MP from Faizabad, burst into tears on Thursday during a press conference over the rape and murder of a Dalit woman and declared that he would resign from his position if the perpetrators of heinous crime were not caught and punished. Prasad's teary outburst was in response to the murder of a 22-year-old Dalit woman whose body was found in Ayodhya, which is a part of the Faizabad constituency. According to reports, the naked body of the woman was recovered from a canal near her village. As per her family members, she was violated before the murder and her eyes were also gouged out.

The Samajwadi Party MP, speaking to the press, started crying over the incident, lamenting that he could not save her. A video of Prasad breaking down also circulated on the social media. In the video, he can be seen crying while fellow colleagues were consoling him. "I will raise this matter in Lok Sabha before the Prime Minister. I will resign from Lok Sabha if we do not get justice. We are failing to save our daughters. How did this happen to our daughter," he could be heard saying in the video.



The incident has left the villagers angry and outraged while her family members are demanding stringent action against the perpetrators. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also took note of the incident and promised that the guilty would face the harshest punishment.

Fugitive gangster deported from Philippines, arrested at IGI airport

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS) : In a significant development, a dreaded gangster, Joginder Gyong, was deported from Philippines on Thursday and arrested at Delhi's IGI airport by the Special Cell of Delhi Police over his role in multiple criminal cases. The criminal is wanted by Haryana and other states over criminal conspiracy and murder charges besides other heinous crimes. The gangster was ar-

rested in Philippines and brought back Delhi via Bangkok, where his custody was taken by the Special Cell of Delhi Police. Joginder Gyong has been guilty of engaging in criminal activities along with his brother Surinder Geong. He has multiple cases

against him, with murder charges lodged against him at Panipat police station in 2017. The fugitive gangster was involved in multiple criminal cases with cases lodged against him in Delhi also, over offences of robbery, murder, attempt to murder.



Driven by 'political motives': Cong's Udit Raj on Union Budget

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS) : Congress leader Udit Raj, while responding to the Union Budget, said on Thursday that it was driven by political motives eying Delhi voters. Commenting on the tax rebates announced in the budget, he said, "It was awaited for many years, the way inflation has increased. When salaries are being increased, this tax exemption limit was also needed to increase. In such a situation, tax collection will also increase. This has been done keeping in mind the Delhi elections." "But, there is not much relief in the times of inflation. The most important thing is that inflation should come down. That is not happening, inflation is increasing. You may give income tax exemption. Now if inflation increases, there is no net benefit," Udit Raj told IANS. Criticising the budget, the Congress leader said, "In the budget, there is no mention of farmers' MSP.



School admissions dipped, pollution spiked under AAP govt: Ajay Maken

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS) : A drop in admissions in government schools and shortage of public transport buses are the dark facts about the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government's failed education and transport models in Delhi, former Union Minister and AICC Treasurer Ajay Maken said on Thursday. Addressing media persons, Maken said the Arvind Kejriwal and Atishi governments had misled Delhiites by promising world-class education and transport facilities in the city but failed to deliver them. The Congress leader said that it was surprising that despite Delhi's population increasing sharply, the number of admission of students in government schools under the Kejriwal government came down, with fewer students passing out of Class XI. He said the AAP government in Delhi was the only one in the world where the Education and Excise Minister was the same person -- Manish Sisodia -- who wore the mask of education to commit the crime of liquor scam. He added that the people of Delhi have now fully

understood the fake models of Kejriwal and were determined to vote in the Assembly election for the Congress on February 5, to bring back the Sheila Dikshit-led Congress government's model of development. The AICC Treasurer said that during the Congress regime in 2008-09, 75,974 students had passed the Class 12 Board exams, and the number rose to 147,420 when Congress left office in 2013-14. Under the AAP government in 2015-16, the students who passed the Class 12 Board exams came down to 116,792 and the number further slumped to 109,098 in 2019-20, he added. Similarly, under the Congress government in 2013-14, 166,257 students appeared for Class 12 Board exams while under the AAP government in 2023-24, the number came down to 15,1429 -- instead of going up in proportion to the increase in the Capital's population.

HDB Financial Services Ltd.
Regd. Office: Radhika, 2nd Floor, Law Garden Road, Navrangpura, Ahmedabad-09.
Branch: #Shree Balaji PSR Tower, 1st Floor H.No: 1-8-616, 1, Prakash Nagar, Begumpet, Hyderabad, Telangana 500016

[APPENDIX IV] POSSESSION NOTICE
See Rule 8(1) (For Immovable property)

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorised officer of M/s.HDB Financial Services Ltd., 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) (3) & R/w Rule 8 & 9 of the Security Interest(Enforcement) Rules, 2002 calling upon the Applicant/Co-Applicants/Guarantor in Loan A/c Nos- 14672671, 1) Yousuf Khan Mechanical Works MG Road Suryapet Suryapet-508213 Telangana. and also H No. 1-4-249/101/1/A an Extent of 90 Sq.Yds out of B Madaram Revenue Survey No. 285 E; House of A Kotlaiah W; House of Bikki Suryapet-508213 Telangana, 2) Md Yousuf Khan H No.1-4-249/101/1/A Balaji Nagar Near Majid Road Suryapet Suryapet-508213 Telangana, 3) Mohammad Jameelunnisa Begam H No.1-4-249/101/1/A Balaji Nagar Near Majid Road Suryapet-508213 Telangana To repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.19,76,655.80-(Rupees Nineteen Lakh Seventy Six Thousand Six Hundred & Fifty Five -Paise Eighty Only) as on 15.03.2024 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Applicant /Co-Applicants/Guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Applicant /Co-Applicants/Guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of the powers conferred on him under section 13(4) of the said Act R/w Rule 8 And 9, on this 06 th day of February of the year 2025.

The Applicant /Co-Applicants/Guarantor 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 M/s.HDB Financials Ltd., for an amount of Rs.19,76,655.80-(Rupees Nineteen Lakh Seventy Six Thousand Six Hundred & Fifty Five - Paise Eighty Only) and interest and charges thereon.

The Applicant /Co-applicants/Guarantor attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Sec.8 of the Sec 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Schedule of the securities I :- All that residential house bearing no.1-4-249/101/1/a, an extent of 90 sq.yds, out of B. Madharam revenue survey no. 285, situated at Balaji nagar, Suryapeta Municipality limits & Districts with in the following boundaries are :
Boundaries as:- North: 20 feet wide road, South: House of mallesh, East: House of a.kotlaiah, West: House of bikki buchalaiah.

Date: 06-02-2025
Place: Nalgonda

Sd/- Authorized Officer
HDB Financial Services Ltd.

HDB Financial Services Ltd.
Regd. Office: Radhika, 2nd Floor, Law Garden Road, Navrangpura, Ahmedabad-09.
Branch: #Shree Balaji PSR Tower, 1st Floor H.No: 1-8-616, 1, Prakash Nagar, Begumpet, Hyderabad, Telangana 500016

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The Applicant /Co-Applicants/Guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Applicant /Co-Applicants/Guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of the powers conferred on him under section 13(4) of the said Act R/w Rule 8 And 9, on this 05th day of February of the year 2025.

The Applicant /Co-Applicants/Guarantor 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 M/s. HDB Financials Ltd., for an amount of Rs.48,41,935.5/- (Rupees Forty Eight Lakh Forty One Thousand Nine Hundred & Thirty Five - Paise Fifty Only) and interest and charges thereon.

The Applicant /Co-applicants/Guarantor attention is invited to provisions of Sub- Sec.8 of the Sec 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Schedule of the securities I :- All that piece and parcel of house property bearing municipal no 22-6-989/1, (consisting of ground and first floor) admeasuring 94.45 sq yards situated at Irani Galli Hyderabad, Telangana State and bounded by: North: Neighbours house, South: 10 feet wide common passage, East: Neighbours house, West: Neighbours house.

Date: 05-02-2025
Place: Hyderabad

Sd/- Authorized Officer
HDB Financial Services Ltd.

OPINIONmail

118-member foreign delegation
takes sacred bath at
Maha Kumbh, praises Indian culture

At the Maha Kumbh Mela, a special 118-member foreign delegation, including diplomats and Heads of Missions from 77 countries, took a sacred dip at the Triveni Sangam in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj along with their spouses and expressed their happiness on this auspicious occasion. The ambassadors of various countries and their families appreciated the Indian culture and spirituality and hailed the arrangements made at this huge spiritual and religious event. The delegation expressed gratitude to the Central and Uttar Pradesh governments and described reaching this holy place as a unique experience. Seeing this historic occasion of Mahakumbh, several members of the delegation gained a deep understanding and respect for Indian culture. Colombia's Ambassador Victor Chaveri said: "It was a wonderful experience of my life. This is an opportunity that everyone should experience once in a lifetime. It is a very special experience to feel the spirituality and power of the people here in Mahakumbh. Indian culture is extremely rich and the message here is for peace and humanity. When you see so many people engrossed in spirituality here at the confluence of rivers Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati, one feels a strange power."

Diana, wife of the Russian Ambassador, said: "I would like to thank the Indian Ministry of External Affairs for giving us the opportunity to be a part of this sacred event. I got a lot of spiritual peace after bathing here and I am very impressed by the safety, organisation, and cleanliness of the water here. Indian culture is very diverse and deep-rooted, and it is great to see that people here preserve and follow it." Slovakia's Ambassador Robert said: "The experience was unforgettable. The energy and peace here have left a deep impression on me. The main message of this event is peace and unity, and it should be spread throughout the world. I would like to congratulate the Indian government, Uttar Pradesh government, and its people for organising this grand event."

Cuban Ambassador Juan Carlos Marjan said: "The religious event was truly wonderful. Lakhs of people here became a part of this religious event, and I was proud to see how rich and deep Indian culture is. We are fortunate to have had the opportunity to be a part of this great event." Ecuadorian Ambassador Fernando said: "When I was a child, I always dreamed that one day I would bathe in the sacred waters of the Ganges. Today that dream has come true, and it was a very spiritual experience for me. I am learning a lot about Indian culture, like yoga, Ayurveda, and meditation. The atmosphere here is very peaceful and spiritual, and I am very happy to be here."

Senior BJP leader and MLA Siddharth Nath Singh said: "Our arrangements and facilities provided at the Maha Kumbh are of world-class quality and we have been in constant contact with the Ministry of External Affairs. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar had also said that many people want to come to Maha Kumbh, and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has invited everyone here." He also added: "Ambassadors and High Commissioners of many countries have come here and they are very happy to be here."

These people want to get acquainted with the culture and spirituality of India. These people also took bath in Sangam -- the confluence of rivers Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati today." Uttar Pradesh Energy Minister A.K. Sharma said: "Till now more than 30 crore people from India and abroad have come and taken a dip in the Maha Kumbh. Apart from this, a large number of people are still coming here. What the Uttar Pradesh government was saying is that 45-50 crore people will come to take a sacred dip, that figure seems to be proving true." "People who come here and take a dip are leaving happy. People are very impressed by the environment and arrangements here."

EDITORIAL
the indian mailThousands flee homes as
Australia battles massive floods

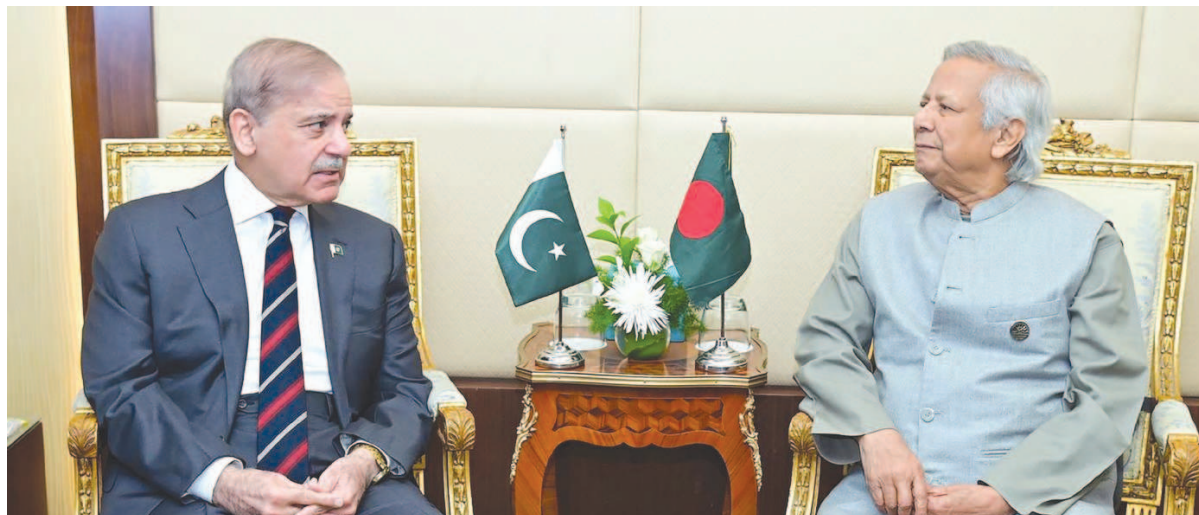
A woman has died while thousands of people have been forced to flee their homes after torrential rainfall caused flooding in northern Queensland, authorities said, adding that waters will continue to rise and warned of a "dangerous and life-threatening" situation. More than 1,000mm (39 inches) of rain has fallen on parts of northeast Queensland since Friday with "record rainfalls" set to continue into Monday, according to Queensland State Premier David Crisafulli. Crisafulli said conditions were unlike anything northern Queensland had experienced "for a long time". Meteorologists said that these could be the worst floods in the region in more than 60 years, BBC reported. "It's not just the intensity, but

it's also the longevity of it," he told Australian broadcaster ABC. The woman who died was onboard a State Emergency Service (SES) dinghy which hit a tree and capsized in the town of Ingham, in north-west Queensland. It is understood she was a member of the public who was being rescued at the time and was not an emergency worker, BBC reported. The other five people on board were able to get to safety. An investigation has been launched. Meanwhile, three people were rescued from the roof of a house in Cardwell, about halfway between Cairns and Townsville. Video has emerged showing a man clinging to a pole in Ingham after his vehicle was washed away -- and being taken to safety by locals in a boat.

Namibia tracks
two lions outside protected areas

Namibia's Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) said it is tracking two lions that strayed from protected areas into farmland. The first lion, a female, was spotted between Tsumeb and Oshivelo, both towns in northern Namibia along a key route connecting the country's interior to Etosha National Park, a major wildlife conservation area, MEFT spokesperson Romeo Muyunda said in a statement on Saturday. According to Muyunda, the lioness is part of a pride with two adult lions and four cubs at Onguma Farm, a private reserve bordering Etosha, reports Xinhua news agency. "We believe that one female lion went out from the farm and was spotted and captured by travellers in the circulating video," Muyunda said. "Our staff have tracked the spores of the lion to the Punyu farm." The affected area consists mainly of private farmland, re-

ducing the risk of direct encounters with people, he said, urging farmers and nearby communities to take precautions while officials work to return the lion to Onguma. Another lion was reported at Oromowa, a farming area on the western periphery of Etosha National Park, and is suspected to have strayed from the park. "Equally, our staff members are tracking the lion and caution communities in those areas to be vigilant and ensure the livestock are safe," Muyunda said. The ministry confirmed that no livestock losses, property damage, or attacks on humans have been reported. Namibia faces ongoing challenges in managing human-wildlife conflict as its growing population and expanding agricultural activities encroach on wildlife habitats. Large carnivores such as lions and elephants often stray from national parks and conservancies into farming areas, leading to livestock losses and property damage.

Bangladesh's growing closeness
with Pakistan: Implications for India

The recent visit of four high-ranking ISI officials, including Director General of Analysis Maj Gen Shahid Amin Afsar, to Dhaka on January 21 marks a significant shift in Bangladesh-Pakistan relations. The two nations, historically estranged since the brutal 1971 Liberation War—wherein Pakistani forces are accused of massacring nearly three million people and violating 2,00,000 Bengali women—are now demonstrating signs of rapprochement. The evolving diplomatic

landscape comes in the wake of Bangladesh's political turmoil, following the abrupt removal of Sheikh Hasina in August 2024, triggered by a student-led mass uprising. Her ousting has upended regional power equations, particularly unsettling India, which had long maintained a strong strategic partnership with Hasina's government. The burgeoning Pakistan-Bangladesh engagement now presents a challenge to India's regional influence. Just days before the ISI delegation's arrival in Dhaka, a Bangladeshi military

delegation led by Lt Gen SM Kamrul Hasan, the Principal Staff Officer of the Armed Forces Division, visited Rawalpindi—the nerve centre of Pakistan's military establishment—from January 13 to 18. The delegation met the chiefs of the Pakistani army, navy, and air force, highlighting a deepening military dialogue. The Pakistani military's media wing, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), characterised the two nations as "brotherly," underscoring their resilience against "external influences."

With calm being restored
in DR Congo, risk of
disease outbreaks increases : UN

While calm is being restored in Goma, the key eastern city in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the risk of disease outbreaks, including cholera and Mpox, increases on the outskirts, according to the United Nations officials.

"In Goma, currently, the situation remains tense and volatile, with occasional shooting continuing within the city, but I would say that overall, calm has been gradually restored," said Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix at a press briefing on Friday. "Water and electricity have been restored in much of the city, but we continue to grapple with the challenge of unexploded ordnance... a very serious obstacle to freedom of movement," he said. Runways at the city's airport sustained significant damage in the recent fighting and are unusable. Aid cannot be flown in as only roads into neighboring Rwanda are open.

South Korea's
per capita GDP exceeds \$36,000 in 2024

South Korea's gross domestic product (GDP) per person is estimated to have exceeded the \$36,000 mark last year, data showed on Sunday. The GDP per capita for 2024 is estimated at \$36,024, up \$454, or 1.28 percent, from a year earlier, according to the data compiled by the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Bank of Korea and Statistics Korea. The

2024 tally is higher than those of Japan and Taiwan, which stand at \$32,859 and \$33,234, respectively, according to estimates from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), reports Yonhap news agency. South Korea's per capita GDP was calculated based on a nominal growth rate of 5.9 percent from the nominal GDP of 2.4 quadrillion won (\$1.65 trillion) in 2023 and the average won-dollar exchange rate of 1,363.98 won last



year. South Korea's total population in 2024 was estimated at 51.75 million. For this year, the country's per capita GDP is forecast to rise above the \$37,000 threshold if it meets the growth

forecast. Seoul logged a per capita GDP of over \$30,000 for the first time in 2016 and hit the highest mark of \$37,503 in 2021 before dropping to \$34,810 the following year.



Iran unveils 3 new homegrown satellites

Tehran, Feb 6 (IANS) : Iran on Thursday unveiled three new domestically developed satellites in the Iranian capital Tehran to mark its National Space Technology Day, media reported. The satellites, namely Navak-1, Pars-2, and an upgraded model of Pars-1, were unveiled in a ceremony attended by Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, Minister of Information and Communications Technology Seyyed Sattar Hashemi, as well as several cabinet members, officials, and military commanders, the report said. Developed by the Iranian Space Research Centre.



Malaysia sets up new agency to strengthen border control

Kuala Lumpur, Feb 6 (IANS) : Malaysia formed a new agency to oversee its border control on Thursday, solidifying the government's commitment to creating a smooth and efficient border control framework. The Malaysian Border Control and Protection Agency (AKPS) marks the government's unwavering commitment to creating a smooth and efficient border control framework, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof. The AKPS launched on Sunday becomes the sole border control agency and brings together expertise and resources from various government agencies, including Immigration and Customs, to single-handedly streamline operations at the country's international entry points nationwide, Xinhua news agency reported. "The era of globalisation that lies ahead of us demands that all parties be more prepared with a robust and integrated border management system." "Various efforts and initiatives have been pioneered by the government to ensure Malaysia remains a competitive trading nation with efficient and integrity-driven service delivery at the country's entry points," he said when launching AKPS here on Sunday. Also present were Home Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail, Communications Minister Fahmi Fadzil, Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Amirudin Shari, and Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Razarudin Hashim.



Israel expands military operation in West Bank

Jerusalem, Feb 6 (IANS) : The Israeli military said on Thursday that it has expanded its major campaign in the northern occupied West Bank. Overnight, Israeli troops raided the town of Tammun, north of Nablus, where an Israeli airstrike killed 10 militants last week, a military spokesperson said in a statement.

Africa CDC calls for immediate action amid escalating health crises across Africa

Addis Ababa, Feb 6 (IANS) : The Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) has called for "immediate action" to address the "unprecedented convergence of crises" that threaten to undo the decades of progress in Africa's health security. The Africa CDC said in a statement issued Thursday that the number of health emergencies in Africa has been surging over the years. Calling for concerted efforts from African countries and international partners, the Africa CDC expressed concern over the shifting global landscape, which has seen many "wealthy nations turning inward," reducing development assistance to prioritise domestic



needs, including the recently announced 90-day pause in US foreign aid. "The repercussions are dire. Africa CDC projections warn that without urgent intervention, these financial constraints could reverse health gains, pushing morbidity and mortality rates back to the early 2000s levels. An estimated 2 to 4 million additional deaths per year from preventable and treatable diseases could occur," it said.

Greek parliament fails to elect new President in 2nd round of voting

Athens, Feb 6 (IANS) : The Greek parliament failed to elect the country's next President in the second round of voting. A majority of 200 votes in the 300-seat parliament was needed for one of the four candidates to assume the post. All 300 members of parliament

participated in the voting on Thursday. Today's attempt followed an inconclusive voting on January 25. Constantine Tassoulas, former parliament speaker and nominee of the ruling conservative New Democracy party, received 160 votes, like in the first round. The other three candidates each se-

cured less than 50 votes again, Xinhua news agency reported. A third round is scheduled for February 6, the parliament speaker said, with the threshold lowered to 180 votes in line with the Greek constitution. If no candidate achieves the required votes in the third round, a simple majority of 151 votes is

required in the fourth round. Based on the voting so far, political analysts here expect that Tassoulas will emerge as the winner in this round. If no candidate secures the required minimum in the fourth round, in the fifth and final round of voting, the president will be elected with a relative majority.



Tunisian president, British foreign secretary discuss bilateral ties

Tunis, Feb 6 (IANS) : Tunisian President Kais Saied met with visiting Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs of the United Kingdom David Lammy to discuss bilateral relations, according to a statement issued by the Tunisian presidency. During the meeting on Thursday, Saied emphasised the strength and stability of the bilateral relations, noting that there is still room for improvement, especially in sectors such as the economy, investment, trade, security, energy, and education. The Tunisian president also discussed the potential for enhanced cooperation, both bilaterally and multilaterally, to address regional and global challenges, Xinhua news agency reported. Addressing global issues, Saied pointed out that the international response to the ongoing atroci-

ties faced by the Palestinian people has been stronger, faster, and more unified than that of traditional global institutions. He also mentioned other pressing challenges, including terrorism and inhumane migration, driven by cross-border criminal networks. Saied also called for stepping up international cooperation to dismantle the networks and ensure individuals from source countries have the means to live with dignity, security, and stability to return home. For his part, Lammy invited Saied to visit Britain soon and deliver a lecture at Oxford University in London on new humanitarian political thought at the national and global levels. After meeting with Saied, Lammy was welcomed by Tunisian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohamed Ali Nafti at the ministry's headquarters.

Netanyahu says possible to 'broaden the circle of peace'

Jerusalem, Feb 6 (IANS) : It is possible to strengthen security and expand peace, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Thursday before departing for Washington, where he will negotiate the second phase of the Gaza ceasefire deal. "I believe that we can strengthen security, broaden the circle of peace, and achieve a remarkable era of peace through strength," he said before boarding his flight.

UN urges restraint amid communal violence in South Sudan

Juba, Feb 6 (IANS) : The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) on Thursday expressed concern about the escalating violence between cattle keepers and settled farming communities in Eastern Equatoria State, which has reportedly left at least 35 people dead. Nicholas Haysom, special representative of the UN Secretary-General and head of UNMISS, strongly condemned the ongoing violence and called on all involved parties to demonstrate restraint, Xinhua news agency

reported. "Such attacks and counter-attacks must stop," Haysom said in a statement issued in Juba, the capital of South Sudan. Armed conflict erupted on January 31 between pastoralists

and settled communities in and around Magwi County, Eastern Equatoria State, leading to retaliatory fighting in Agoro, Chomboro, Obama, and Ayiii villages.



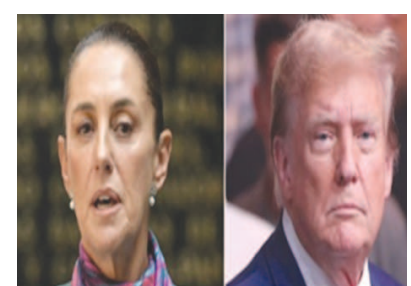
Mexico hits back at US after Trump's decision to impose tariffs

Mexico City, Feb 6 (IANS) : In response to former US President Donald Trump's imposition of a 25 per cent tariff on Mexican imports, Mexico's President Claudia Sheinbaum has announced counter-tariffs on American goods, further escalating trade tensions between the two nations. Rejecting allegations from the White House that her administration has ties to criminal organisations, Sheinbaum shifted the blame

onto the US, accusing American arms dealers of supplying weapons to illicit groups. "If any alliances exist, they are in the United States' weapons industry, which sells high-powered firearms to these criminal groups, as the US Department of Justice itself confirmed in January this year," she asserted. Sheinbaum firmly stated that Mexico would not accept any form of foreign interference. "We outright reject the White House's baseless claims that the Mexican government is aligned with crimi-

nal organisations, as well as any attempt to intervene in our country's affairs," she declared. Stressing the importance of diplomacy, Sheinbaum emphasised Mexico's preference for coopera-

tion over conflict. "We advocate for collaboration between neighbouring nations. Our efforts must be based on shared responsibility, mutual trust, and respect for sovereignty, which is non-negotiable. Coordination, yes; subordination, no," she posted on X. Responding to Trump's accusations that Mexico has failed to control fentanyl trafficking and illegal migration, Sheinbaum highlighted her government's extensive anti-drug efforts.



BJP leader Shahnawaz Hussain terms Budget 2025 a roadmap for 'Viksit Bihar'

Patna, Feb 6 (IANS) : Senior BJP leader and spokesperson Syed Shahnawaz Hussain hailed the Union Budget 2025-26 as a historic milestone for Bihar, stating that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has "opened the treasury" for the state. "This Budget is not just a roadmap for 'Viksit Bharat' (Developed India) but also for 'Viksit Bihar' (Developed Bihar)," he said.

Speaking about the Budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Lok Sabha, Hussain emphasised that the extensive allocations for Bihar reaffirmed PM Modi's commitment to the state's progress. "This budget proves once again that PM Modi deeply cares for Bihar and its people. His vision is to see Bihar flourish and fulfill the dreams of its citizens," he said. Shahnawaz Hussain also praised Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for wearing a Mithila

painting saree, gifted by Padma Shri awardee Dulari Devi, while presenting the Budget. He stated: "This gesture reflects the Finance Minister's deep respect for Bihar's rich heritage and its people." Calling the Budget 2025-26 a blueprint for Bihar's development, Hussain expressed profound gratitude to PM Modi and FM Sitharaman for prioritizing Bihar's needs. Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh, also known as, Lalan Singh meanwhile

criticised Tejashwi Yadav for calling the Union Budget 2025-26 "disappointing and hollow". Singh dismissed Yadav's remarks as baseless, asserting that the budget introduces several new and transformative initiatives for Bihar. Reacting to Tejashwi Yadav's claim that the Budget contains "nothing new", Lalan Singh retorted: "Is the expansion of Patna and Bihta airports an old announcement? Are the new Greenfield airports, the National



Food Processing Institute, and the establishment of a Makhana Board all previous announcements? Tejashwi Yadav knows nothing about development." "He knows nothing about governance. His father and mother are known for 'Jungle Raj' in Bihar,

and he has no interest in development," he added. Singh emphasised that the Union Budget 2025-26 lays the foundation for a progressive and developed Bihar, with major investments in infrastructure, agriculture, education, and industry.

SC to hear plea seeking directions to NBE to release NEET (PG) question paper, answer key

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS) : The Supreme Court is slated to hear on Thursday a plea seeking directions to the National Board of Examinations (NBE) to release the question paper and answer key of the NEET (PG) examination. As per the causelist published on the website of the apex court, a bench of Justices BR Gavai and K Vinod Chandran will hear the matter on February 3.

In June last year, a vacation bench presided over by Justice Vikram Nath agreed to examine the plea and called for a response from the NBE, Medical Counselling Committee (MCC) and others.

"Issue notice returnable on 8th

of July, 2024. In the meantime, respondents may file their counter affidavits," it had ordered. During the hearing, the National Testing Agency (NTA) said it was not a necessary party to the litigation and may be deleted from the array of parties.

"The PG (entrance exam) is conducted by the National Board of Examinations," NTA's counsel had submitted.

After hearing the submission, Justice SVN Bhatti said, "You may put it on record. When we pass an order, we will use our discretion under Supreme Court rules and delete you from the array of parties." The plea filed directly before the apex court assailed the "arbitrary act and decision" of



NBE of not releasing the question paper, answer key, and answer sheet for NEET-PG 2022 and not allowing any option to re-evaluate the score, even after knowing the fact that there were "serious discrepancies" in the scores of the candidates who appeared for the exam in recent past, i.e., for NEET-PG 2021 and NEET-PG 2022. "There are no other competitive exams in India, with such lack of transparency and complete one-sided flow of information as NEET-PG," said the plea filed through advocate Charu Mathur. It added that the NEET-UG conducted by NTA gives an option to candidates to challenge the answer keys and several other prestigious exams, including IIT-JEE, CMAT, CLAT, and judicial services examinations, also give an option to challenge the answer keys.

Punjab achieves 11.87 pc growth in GST, says Minister Cheema

Chandigarh, Feb 6 (IANS) : Punjab Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema said on Thursday that the state has achieved an 11.87 per cent growth in net GST collection till January in this fiscal, compared to the previous one.

This growth rate surpasses the national average of 10 per cent. Additionally, Punjab has witnessed a net growth of 15.33 per cent in excise and 11.67 per cent in taxes from net GST, excise, VAT, Central Sales Tax (CST), and Punjab State Development Tax (PSDT) in the current fiscal year.



Three workers killed during sewage cleaning near Kolkata

Kolkata, Feb 6 (IANS) : Three workers engaged in scavenging and manual cleaning of a sewerage drain pipe within Bantala leather complex on eastern outskirts of Kolkata died on Thursday morning.

However, at the time the report was filed, there was confusion about the exact reason behind their death. The police are not ruling out any of the two possibilities.



Kashmiri Muslims want Pandits to return: Mirwaiz Umar Farooq

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS) : Hurriyat (M) chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq on Thursday said that the Muslims of Kashmir Valley want the Kashmiri Pandits to return, while emphasising that the issue is a humanitarian one and not political.

During an interaction with IANS, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq also spoke on several issues, including the long-standing Kashmir conflict and the Waqf Amendment Bill. He expressed concern over the Waqf Amendment Bill and termed it as against the interests of Muslims.

Here are some excerpts from the interview. IANS: What do you have to say about the current situation in Kashmir?

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq: The situation in Kashmir can be seen by all of us. Everything is clear, nothing is hidden. We always believe that the Kashmir problem can be solved only through dialogue. The issue is an old one and its solution is possible only through dialogue.

IANS: You have recently met a delegation of Kashmiri Pandits. Would you like to talk about that meeting?

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq: The issue of Kashmiri Pandits is a humanitarian matter, it is not a political one. Muslims of Kashmir want Kashmiri Pandits to return to their homes. I met representatives of Kashmiri Pandits in Delhi and discussed this.

I have openly said this many times in Jama Masjid that we are ready to provide all possible support for the return of Kashmiri Pandits. Some steps should be taken by the Kashmiri Pandit community as well. A suggestion has been made to form a committee which we will consider further and take steps. We will take initiatives for the return of Kashmiri Pandits.

The bond of love and brotherhood that existed earlier between Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims should be re-established.

IANS: Preparations are on to present the Waqf Amendment Bill in Parliament. Any remarks? Mirwaiz Umar Farooq: I have submitted my reservations on this. I believe that this Bill will adversely affect the interests of Muslims and create more problems in society. I want this Bill not to be passed.

Union Minister hails Budget for 80 pc hike in outlay to Rs 32,646 crore for labour welfare, benefits to gig workers

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS) : Union Minister of Labour & Employment Mansukh Mandaviya on Thursday hailed the Union Budget 2025-26 for the nearly 80 per cent hike in allocation to a record Rs 32,646 crore for the Ministry of Labour & Employment and the social security benefit for gig workers. "Our focus is firmly on the newly announced Employ-

ment Generation Scheme (ELI), for which the budgetary allocation has been doubled from Rs 10,000 crore to Rs 20,000 crore. The allocation under the Employees' Pension Scheme has been increased by Rs 300 crores and under the PM Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana by 37 per cent compared to last year," the minister said. He further stated that the Budget was a landmark initiative for India's labour welfare with its comprehensive framework

to extend formal recognition and social security benefits to over 1 crore gig workers. "The gig workforce is a vital pillar of India's new-age economy, driving innovation and efficiency across digital platforms. The Finance Minister has announced measures to facilitate their identification through unique identity cards, streamline their registration on the e-Shram portal, and ensure access to healthcare under PM Jan Arogya Yojana. These



steps will further strengthen the safety net for over crore crore gig workers across sectors," he said. The Union Minister said that a pilot initiative has already been undertaken by the Ministry of Labour & Employment to register platform workers and aggregators on the e-Shram portal.

Modi govt's budget strengthens India's infrastructure: BJP

Jaipur, Feb 6 (IANS) : BJP Haryana state in-charge and former Rajasthan BJP chief, Satish Poonia, hailed the Union Budget 2025-26 as the "best budget" for India's development, calling it a "blueprint" for the nation's reconstruction. He further commended Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for presenting a budget that strengthens India's infrastructure and fosters inclusive growth.

Poonia highlighted the historic move of raising the income tax exemption limit to Rs 12 lakh, ensuring that individuals earning up to Rs 1 lakh per month pay no tax. He described this as a major relief for the middle class and a step towards economic empowerment.

He emphasised that the budget includes special provisions for MSMEs, education, healthcare, infrastructure.



Budget a political document against federalism : Pinarayi Vijayan

Thiruvananthapuram, Feb 6 (IANS) : Coming down heavily on the Union Budget, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Thursday termed it as nothing but a political document and against federalism. "This budget is a political document and is against federalism. The budget has been announced keeping the upcoming Assembly elections in mind. This budget will fuel in-

flation, unemployment, and poverty," said the Chief Minister. He added that the crucial sectors like agriculture and industry have not been considered with seriousness while the cutting subsidies in the agrarian sector continue unabated. "The MGNREGA which was a succour to the poor and marginalised doesn't find a place in the budget either," he said.

Budget 2025: Relief for homeowners as no tax on second self-occupied house

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS) : The Union Budget 2025 presented brought good news for homeowners, as Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced new tax benefits. Under the proposed changes, homeowners will now be able to claim a nil valuation for two self-occupied houses instead of just one, as was previously allowed. The Budget suggests amending Section 23, sub-

section (2) of the Income-tax Act which allows the annual value of a house or part of it to be considered as nil if the owner occupies it for personal residence or is unable to do so for any reason.

"Presently taxpayers can claim the annual value of self-occupied properties as nil only on the fulfillment of certain conditions," Finance Minister Sitharaman said during a Budget presentation in

Parliament. She also added that considering the difficulties faced by taxpayers, it is proposed to allow the benefit of two such self-occupied properties without any condition.

In addition, the government has proposed raising the annual threshold for Tax Deduction at Source (TDS) on rent from Rs 2.4 lakh to Rs 6 lakh.

This increase will benefit small

taxpayers and landlords by reducing the number of transactions liable for TDS.

The monthly TDS limit on rent has been increased from Rs 24,000 to 50,000, which amounts to Rs 6 lakh annually.

"I propose to rationalise TDS by reducing the number of rates and thresholds above which TDS is deducted," FM Sitharaman said in her Budget speech. The Finance



Minister added that further, threshold amounts for tax deduction will be increased for better clarity and uniformity. According to the Finance Minister, this change will provide relief to small taxpayers receiving modest rental payments.



SBI posts robust 84 pc surge in net profit at Rs 16,891 crore in Q3

Mumbai, Feb 6 (IANS) : India's largest public sector lender, the State Bank of India (SBI) on Thursday reported an impressive 84.32 per cent surge in net profit (year-on-year) at Rs 16,891 crore for the October-December quarter (Q3 FY25), from Rs 9,164 crore in the year-ago period. The profit rise was aided by higher core income during the quarter. The net interest income (NII), or core income, was up 4.09 per cent from a year ago and

stood at Rs 41,445.5 crore compared to Rs 39,816 crore, according to the bank's stock exchange filing. The gross NPA ratio improved to 2.07 per cent as on December 31, 2024, against 2.13 per cent in the September quarter. On a sequential basis, the net NPA ratio remained unchanged at 0.53 per cent as on December 31, 2024.

The bank's ROA and ROE for the nine months of this fiscal (FY25) stood at 1.09 per cent and 21.46 per cent, respectively.

The employee expenses dropped 17 per cent to Rs 16,074 crore and the SBI's domestic loans grew 14.06 per cent year-on-year. Provisions rose 32.4 per cent from last year to Rs 911.06 crore.

Operating profit for Q3 FY25 grew by 15.81 per cent YoY to Rs 23,551 crore.

Adani Green Restricted Group 1's outlook revised to 'positive' from 'stable': Crisil

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS): Reflecting strong revenue visibility, Crisil Ratings has revised its outlook for long-term bank facilities and non-convertible debentures of Adani Green Restricted Group 1 (RG) to "positive" and reaffirmed the rating at 'Crisil AA+'. 'AGEL RGI' comprises three special purpose vehicles (SPVs) -- namely Adani Green Energy UP Ltd, Prayatna Developers Private Limited and Parampujya Solar Energy Private Limited -- henceforth known as 'AGEL RGI'.



Global oil prices likely to stay in \$75 to \$80 per barrel range over next 6 months : CareEdge

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS) : Crude oil prices are expected to remain range bound at an average of \$75-\$80 a barrel over the next 6 months, essentially on the back of higher overall global crude oil production aided by increase in crude oil production by the US while demand growth is expected to remain relatively subdued in the backdrop of a slowdown in major global economies, according to a CareEdge Ratings report released on Thursday.

The higher thrust towards Electric Vehicles (EVs) and alternative fuels is also expected to dampen demand for oil.

The report points out that the decline in crude oil prices would result in improved retail margins of oil marketing companies such as Indian Oil, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum

which are expected to be in the range of Rs 7-9 per litre.

The higher retail margins of oil marketing companies are expected to offset the impact of reduced gross refining margins whereby integrated players having a presence in both refining and fuel retailing businesses are expected to be better-off compared to standalone refiners.

CareEdge Ratings observed a softening of Gross Refining Margins (GRMs) for Indian public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs).



Samsung, Naver executives to attend AI Action Summit in Paris next week

Seoul, Feb 6 (IANS) : South Korea's leading tech companies, including Samsung Electronics and Naver, will attend the upcoming AI Action Summit, where global government and business leaders will discuss strategies for the safe development of artificial intelligence (AI), industry sources said on Thursday. Naver chief executive officer (CEO) Choi Soo-yeon is set to attend the event, which will take place Monday and Tuesday in Paris, according to the sources, reports Yonhap news agency. Samsung Electronics President and chief technical officer (CTO) Cheun Kyung-woon will also visit France to attend the summit and assess emerging trends in the AI and technology industries.

Additionally, Bae Kyung-hoon, President of LG AI Research, LG Group's AI-focused think tank, has been invited to the event. The South Korean delegation will be led by Minister of Science and ICT Yoo Sang-im, with Ko Hak-soo, chairperson of the Personal Information Protection Commission, also in attendance

Car sales clock 15.5 per cent surge to 4.66 lakh units in Jan

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS) : Car sales in India surged by a robust 15.53 per cent to 4,65,920 in January this year, according to data released by the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) on Thursday. Sequentially, month-on-month car sales were up 58.77 per cent. "PV (passenger-ve-

hicle) sales grew robustly, although some of that spike stems from December purchases registered in January for a 2025 model year advantage," FADA President CS Vigneshwar said in a statement. "Inventory levels have improved, dropping by around five days to 50-55 days, suggesting improved supply-demand balance. Many dealers noted improved de-

mand, but also pointed to last year's heavy discounting, which helped clear older models and shift registrations," he added. The "positive indicators" listed in the FADA report include the marriage season and promotions. It expects the wedding demand for cars, SUVs and two-wheelers and fresh product introductions to sustain footfalls.



Cargo handled at India's major ports surges to 819 million tonnes

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS): The cargo handled at India's major ports has increased from 581.34 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 819.23 million tonnes in FY 2023-24, a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 3.5 per cent which is comparable to global standards, the Parliament was informed on Thursday. During 2023-24, the cargo handled comprised 33.80 per cent liquid bulk,

44.04 per cent dry bulk, and 22.16 per cent container cargo, Minister of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways Sarabandanda Sonowal told the Rajya Sabha in a written reply. Infrastructure development and capacity augmentation of major ports is a continuous process which involves the construction of new berths and terminals.

MRF shares tank as Q3 profit drops 38 pc, firm declares Rs 3 as dividend

Mumbai, Feb 6 (IANS) : Leading tyre manufacturer MRF on Thursday reported a 38 per cent decline in net profit for the December quarter (Q3 FY25), as the firm's net profit stood at Rs 315 crore, compared to Rs 510 crore in the same period last year (Q3 FY24). MRF's earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortisation (EBITDA) also dropped 21 per cent to Rs 835 crore in Q3FY25, down from Rs 1,055 crore in the previous year. The company's EBITDA margin also shrank to 11.93 per cent in the December quarter from 17.12 per cent a year ago. Despite the fall in profit, MRF's revenue from opera-

tions saw a 14 per cent rise at Rs 7,001 crore in Q3, up from Rs 6,162 crore from the year-ago period. However, the decline in profitability weighed on investor sentiment. The shares of MRF went down 4 per cent at Rs 1,10,374 apiece on the BSE during the intra-day trade. The company also

announced a second interim dividend of Rs 3 per equity share for the financial year ending March 31, 2025.

"The Board of Directors has declared a Second Interim Dividend of Rs 3 per equity share for the financial year ending 31st March, 2025."



Kenya on high alert over Sudan Ebola virus outbreak in Uganda

Nairobi, Feb 6 (IANS) : Kenya's Ministry of Health has intensified surveillance at all entry points across the country following an outbreak of Sudan Ebola Virus Disease in neighbouring Uganda. "As a precautionary measure, surveillance systems have been enhanced in all counties and points of entry," Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Health Mary Muthoni said in a statement issued in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya. Muthoni said a rapid assessment of the country's capacity to respond to a similar outbreak is un-

derway, shortly after which a comprehensive plan will be developed to guide countrywide preparedness and response to Ebola. She encouraged the public to seek accurate information from qualified healthcare workers, community health promoters or the Ministry of Health through its website. The statement came after the Ugandan Ministry of Health on Thursday declared an Ebola outbreak after a 32-year-old male nurse succumbed to Sudan Ebola virus Wednesday, marking the eighth outbreak of the deadly dis-

ease in the East African country, Xinhua news agency reported. The World Health Organization (WHO) said it is "working closely with Ugandan health authorities to revitalise a robust surveillance and case management system, community mobilization, and risk communication in response to the outbreak." Last September, Uganda's Ministry of Health had announced the launch of a comprehensive Ebola preventive vaccination campaign targeting 25,000 people at high risk of contracting the deadly dis-

ease. Charles Olaro, Director of Health Services at the ministry, said that the initiative aimed at safeguarding vulnerable populations and enhance preparedness against the viral disease in the country. Olaro said that the ministry had acquired 25,000 Ebola vaccine regimens. The two-dose regimen has previously been used in the neighbouring Congo and Rwanda, with "Zabdeno" administered first and "Mvabea" given about eight weeks later as a second dose. The Ebola virus is highly conta-



rious and causes a range of symptoms, including fever, vomiting, diarrhea, generalized pain or malaise, and, in many cases, internal and external bleeding. According to the World Health Organization, the mortality rates for Ebola fever are extremely high.

Power cuts return to South Africa after 10 months

Johannesburg, Feb 6 (IANS) : South Africa will experience load-shedding, or rolling blackouts, over the weekend after more than 10 months of uninterrupted electricity supply, Minister of Electricity and Energy Kgosientsho Ramokgopa said. During a media briefing Thursday afternoon, Ramokgopa explained that several factors, including a number of unit failures at state power utility Eskom's power stations, led to a "perfect storm," triggering the necessity of initiating load-shedding. "We had units out for planned maintenance, and then there were unit failures at Matimba and Lethabo power stations. For most of the week, we had to rely on the open-cycle gas

turbines. We had to rely on diesel. We exhausted our reserves," he said. This came after Eskom announced that stage 3 load-shedding would be implemented Friday and run for the weekend, Xinhua news agency reported. "This is a potentially temporary setback. Load-shedding is largely behind us due to the structural improvements in our generation fleet," said Eskom Group Chief Executive (CEO) Dan Marokane in a statement. "However, over the past seven days, we have experienced several breakdowns that require extended repair times. This has necessitated the use of all our emergency reserves, which now need to be replenished over the weekend." As the country prepared for a resumption of load-shedding later Friday, Rethabile Melamu, CEO



of the South African Photovoltaic Industry Association, said it is important not to lose focus and not to lose hope, urging all stakeholders to work with the government to address the power cuts. "This is indeed a sad setback, but our work needs to continue. We are within touching distance of the finish line. I call on all stakeholders and role-players to remain committed to finally ending load-shedding permanently," she said.

Scheduled power cuts, commonly referred to as load-shedding in South Africa, have hindered the country's economic growth for over a decade. Since March last year, however, there have been no power cuts due to a significant improvement in Eskom's electricity supply, resulting in more than 300 consecutive days without outages.

Young residents drive Tokyo's population influx

Tokyo, Feb 6 (IANS) : Tokyo saw a net population inflow of approximately 79,000 people in 2024, marking an increase of over 11,000 from the previous year, according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. Young people moving to Tokyo for education and employment were the primary contributors to this trend, reinforcing the continued centralization of population in Tokyo, the ministry noted.

In 2024, a total of 461,454 people moved into Tokyo, an increase of 7,321 from 2023, while 382,169 people moved out, a decrease of 3,679 from the previous year, resulting in Tokyo's third consecutive year of rising net inflow. By age group, the largest net inflow was among 20 to 24-year-olds (64,070 people), followed by 15 to 19-year-olds (14,286 people). Following Tokyo, the top prefectures with net population inflows were Kanagawa.



Pakistan: 18 soldiers among 30 killed in restive Balochistan

Islamabad, Feb 6 (IANS) : At least 18 soldiers of Pakistan's Frontier Corps (FC) have died during an operation in Mangocher, a city located in the Kalat district of the Balochistan province, the country's military authorities confirmed on Thursday. "On the night of January 31/February 1, terrorists attempted to

establish roadblocks in Manocher, Kalat District of Balochistan. Security forces and law enforcement agencies were immediately mobilised, who successfully thwarted the evil design and killed 12 of them, ensuring security and protection of local populace," read a statement issued by Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the Pakistani mili-

tary. However, the statement added, 18 soldiers were also killed during the operation. ISPR stated that the security personnel are currently clearing the entire area, assuring that "facilitators and abettors" of the "heinous and cowardly act" will be brought to justice. The latest incident comes less than 24 hours after the security forces killed 10 terrorists in five different intelligence-based counter terrorism operations in different parts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province. Pakistan has consistently maintained that Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and separatist groups of Balochistan, including the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), are getting continuous support from Afghanistan.

Egypt, Iran reaffirm support for Lebanon

Beirut, Feb 1 (IANS) : Egypt and Iran reaffirmed their commitment to supporting Lebanon across multiple sectors, pledging assistance for the country's recovery from the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah. During a meeting with Lebanese President Joseph Aoun, visiting Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty conveyed a message on Thursday from Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi, underscoring Egypt's solidarity with Lebanon and its willingness to contribute to rebuilding Lebanon's key sectors, including electricity and gas, Xinhua news agency reported. According to a state-



ment released by the Lebanese presidency, Abdelatty highlighted that Egyptian companies are prepared to participate in Lebanon's reconstruction. He also stressed Egypt's unwavering support for Lebanon's stability, the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701, and Israel's un-

conditional withdrawal from occupied Lebanese territories. He reaffirmed Egypt's commitment to supporting the Lebanese military and facilitating the return of displaced residents to their homes in Lebanon's southern area and western Bekaa region.



Ethiopia's ruling party holds meeting to review progress, plan for future

Addis Ababa, Feb 6 (IANS) : Ethiopian leaders have reiterated that the ruling Prosperity Party (PP) has delivered its promises by transforming the country's economy and promoting inclusivity.

Iran to make 'immediate, decisive reaction' to attack on its nuclear sites : FM

Tehran, Feb 6 (IANS) : Iran will make an immediate, decisive reaction to any attack on its nuclear facilities, Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi has warned. US participation in potential Israeli attacks on Iran's nuclear sites would be one of the "biggest historical mistakes," Araghchi said in an exclusive interview with

Qatar's Al Jazeera TV network, while responding to a question about Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's threats of attacking Iran's nuclear facilities and a possible US involvement. In the interview aired late Friday, Araghchi noted that Iran's nuclear programme was domestically developed, and the country has managed to acquire the nuclear capability and technology relying on

its own capacities. "Iran's nuclear programme is inside the Iranian scientists' brains, not on the ground. Such a capability and programme will not be destroyed through bombardments and airstrikes," he said. In addition, Iran's nuclear facilities are not located in one or two regions, but in several areas across the country, and in places that are "very difficult and even impossible" to tar-

get via airstrikes and protected by "very good air defence," said the minister. "Unlike the previous times, if any attack is carried out against Iran's nuclear facilities, the country's reaction will be immediate and decisive," said Araghchi, Xinhua news agency reported. Should such an attack be launched, "we will enter an all-out war in the region, a disaster nobody, neither inside nor outside the region,



wants," he said. "I do not think Americans would make such a big miscalculation."



Sri Lanka plans elephant corridors to curb human-elephant conflict

Colombo, Feb 6 (IANS) : Sri Lanka is planning to establish five elephant corridors in its north-central province to reduce human-elephant conflicts, media reported on Thursday. The north-central province has experienced the highest number of human-elephant conflict incidents compared to other regions, according to the state media. Out of the province's 29 Divisional Secretariat Divisions, 27 have seen a sharp increase in human-elephant conflicts in recent years, according to the report. To address the issue, authorities have decided to create five elephant corridors. Additional measures include preventing encroachment on protected areas, managing elephant habitats by cultivating grasslands, and rehabilitating water tanks in conservation zones, the state media reported. Human-elephant conflict is a serious problem in Sri Lanka, Xinhua news agency reported. In 2024, 388 wild elephants and 155 people lost their lives due to these conflicts, according to official data. The Human-Elephant Conflict (HEC) in Sri Lanka is a critical and multifaceted issue posing significant challenges to the conservation of the endangered Asian elephant.

Union Budget has rightly focused on green economy progression: Environmentalists

Kolkata, Feb 6 (IANS) : The good aspect of the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's Budget proposals for the Financial Year 2025-2026 had been the Union government's focus on the country's transition to green economy, feel a section of the green technologists and environmentalists.

According to Kolkata-based green technologist and environmentalist Somendra Mohan Ghosh, the Union government's focus on environmental protection is expected to not accelerate the country's transition to a green economy but will also generate green jobs, entrepreneurship, and innovation. "The Budget is likely to provide incentives and policy support for scaling up green hydrogen production and infrastructure.



New technology bolsters South Africa's border security, says minister

Johannesburg, Feb 6 (IANS) : The implementation of new technology has significantly strengthened South Africa's border security, resulting in a 215-per cent increase in the prevention of illegal cross-border movements at ports of entry during this festive season, Home Affairs Minister Leon Schreiber said.

Speaking at a briefing Thursday on the Border Management Authority (BMA) festive season campaign, Schreiber said the piloting of new technology, including drones and body cameras, has demonstrated the power of digital transformation to secure and enhance border management.

"It is now time for the BMA to permanently acquire these capabilities, as we accelerate our work to digitalise South Africa's port environment, including automating all entry and exit procedures," the Minister said. He revealed that 50,312 undocumented individuals were intercepted while attempting

to cross into South Africa illegally in the 2024/2025 festive season, Xinhua news agency reported.

The minister attributed the increase to the deployment of drones at five ports of entry. During the 2023/2024 festive season, the number of intercepted individuals stood at 15,924.

"Another 6,159 people were detected for overstaying, and a further 1,923 were refused entry due to fraudulent documentation or non-compliance with entry requirements," he added.

Schreiber commended the success registered at ports of entry to curb illegal activities.

Schreiber also disclosed that BMA border guards, in cooperation with the police, made 322 arrests, including 132 wanted criminals, and

seized illicit goods worth 690 million rand (about \$37 million), including illegal cigarettes.

Additionally, he said the BMA processed the legitimate movement of 5,084,251 travelers across the country's ports of entry. The use of technology at border crossings led to an increase of 51,680 travellers compared to the 2023/2024 festive period.



Budget outlay for Jal Jeevan Mission hiked to Rs 67,000 crore

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS) : Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday enhanced the total outlay for Jal Jeevan Mission to Rs 67,000 crore in her proposals for Budget 2025-26 and said that the Mission stands extended until 2028. FM Sitharaman stated that 15 crore households representing 80 per cent of India's rural population have benefitted from the Jal Jeevan Mission since 2019. She added that access to potable tap water connections is provided under this Mission, and in the next three years, the target is to achieve 100 per cent coverage.

Jal Jeevan Mission's focus will be on the quality of infrastructure and operation and maintenance of rural piped water supply schemes through "Jan Bhagidhari".

Separate MoUs will be signed with states and UTs to ensure sustainability and citizen-centric water service delivery, she explained.

The Union Government has launched several flagship schemes aimed at fostering inclusive rural development, poverty allevia-

tion, and improving the living conditions in rural areas. These initiatives, implemented under the Ministry of Rural Development and other key departments, address critical areas such as employment generation, housing, infrastructure, skill development, and social welfare.

For instance, the vision of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is to enhance the livelihood security of rural households across the country by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

Daycare cancer centres in every district in India a timely initiative

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS) : The Union Budget's plan to establish daycare cancer centres in every district over the next three years is a timely initiative, experts said on Thursday. Cancer incidence in India is rising, with cases expected to increase by 27.7 per cent from 2015 to 2025.

According to the 'National Cancer Registry Programme Report' 2020, one in nine people is likely to develop cancer in their lifetime.

The Budget move "aims to improve access to cancer treatment and support, particularly in remote areas, bridging a critical gap in healthcare services," said Ashok Varma, Partner, Grant Thornton Bharat.

The Government will facilitate the setting up of daycare cancer centres and 200 such centres will be established in 2025-26. Moreover, the Budget announced 36 life-saving drugs and medicines (mainly for cancer and rare diseases) to be added to the list of medicines that are fully exempt from basic customs duty (BCD).



Rwanda aims to achieve universal health coverage by 2030

Kigali, Feb 6 (IANS) : Rwanda on Thursday launched a comprehensive blueprint to advance progress toward universal health coverage by 2030.

The Health Sector Strategic Plan V (HSSP V) for 2024-2029, launched in Kigali, the capital, aims to create a healthier, more productive population that drives Rwanda's development goals, authorities said.

The launch coincided with the unveiling of Mission 2027, an initiative to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer.

"With HSSP V, we are not just continuing our progress. We are accelerating it," said Yvan Butera, Rwandan minister of state in the Ministry of Health. "We will expand our health workforce, strengthen primary healthcare, and ensure quality services reach every Rwandan."



Uganda starts mpox vaccination targeting high risk populations

Kampala, Feb 6 (IANS) : Uganda on Thursday launched mpox vaccination campaign targeting high-risk populations in Kampala, the Ugandan capital, the current epicentre of the virus outbreak in the east African country.

Charles Olaro, Director General of Health Services at the Ministry of Health, told Xinhua news agency by telephone that phase one of the vaccination exercise, which targets high-risk populations and health workers, aims to stop human-to-human transmission of the highly infectious virus.

'Visionary and futuristic': Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan lauds Union Budget 2025

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS) : Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Thursday lauded the Union Budget 2025-26, emphasising it as a Budget that takes everyone together and prioritises the welfare, well-being, and empowerment of all citizens while firmly placing India on the path to achieving the goal of developed India by 2047.

The Union Minister expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for a "visionary and futuristic Budget". He said that this Budget aims to cater to the comprehensive

requirements, right from childhood to youth, who would be leading from the front in realising the Viksit Bharat agenda in 2047 and beyond. He also added that the Budget announcements encompass today's entire youth demographic, who will lead the nation for the next 25 years. This will strengthen the "Bhartiya Gyan Parampara" within our education system and foster a global community, he added. The Minister highlighted that the Budget 2025-26 emphasises investing in people and facilitating the all-round development of India's human capital. He noted that with "Gareeb, Yuva, Annadata, and Naari" as the pillars, this Budget would uplift

sentiments of the poor and middle class, accelerate spending, catalyse investments, and spur growth. He emphasised that it would remove regional imbalances, build rural prosperity, nurture research, innovation and entrepreneurship, invigorate the education and skilling landscape, and lead to employment-led development. The Minister expressed gratitude for continuing with bigger and bolder investments in education, skilling, research, and innovation, stating that this budget represents another big leap towards empowering India's population with more opportunities for world-class education and building capacities of human capital.

The Minister said that the total Budget allocation for the Ministry of Education has reached Rs 128,650 crore, marking a 6.22 per cent increase over the budgetary estimate for 2024-25. He added that 50,000 Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL) will be set up in government schools in the next five years to cultivate the spirit of curiosity and innovation and foster a scientific temper among young minds. With this, students of all government secondary schools will have access to ATL. The Union Budget also proposes to provide Broadband connectivity to all government secondary schools and primary health centres in rural areas under the BharatNet project, he



added. Union Minister Pradhan said that the total number of students in 23 IITs has increased 100 per cent from 65,000 to 1.35 lakh in the past 10 years. Additional infrastructure will be created in the five IITs started after 2014 to facilitate education for 6,500 more students. Hostel and other infrastructure capacity at IIT,

Patna will also be expanded, he added.

Union Minister Pradhan said that to help students understand their subjects better, it is proposed to implement a Bharatiya Bhasha Pustak Scheme to provide digital-form Indian language books for school and higher education.

WHO donates over 2000 doses of Ebola trial vaccine to Uganda following new outbreak

Kampala, Feb 6 (IANS) : The World Health Organization (WHO) has donated 2,160 doses of Ebola trial vaccine to Uganda to evaluate the efficacy of the vaccine in combating the virus which in the recent outbreak has killed a health worker in Kampala, the country's capital. WHO is working with Uganda's Ministry of Health, Makerere University Lung In-

stitute and the Ugandan Virus Research Institute, as well as worldwide filovirus and trial experts and regulators to initiate the trials, according to a statement posted on the website of the WHO. Uganda's Ministry of Health on Thursday declared an Ebola outbreak after a 32-year-old male nurse working at Mulago National Referral Hospital in Kampala succumbed to Sudan Ebola Virus Disease (SVD), marking the eighth

outbreak of the deadly disease in the east African country. "The aim of the vaccine trial is to evaluate a potentially efficacious candidate vaccine, and if efficacious, to possibly contribute to ending the ongoing outbreak and protect populations at risk in the future," said WHO. "Those eligible to join the trial are those at highest risk of SVD, like close contacts of a person who has been confirmed to have had SVD or

who has died from the disease. The study sites will therefore be the locations where contacts of the case or cases reside." There are no approved treatments or vaccines for Sudan virus, but early initiation of supportive treatment has been shown to significantly reduce deaths from Sudan virus disease, according to WHO. Uganda's previous SVD outbreak started in September 2022 and ended in January 2023.



World Bank warns Zimbabwe on climate-induced economic losses

Harare, Feb 6 (IANS) : The World Bank (WB) has warned that climate change could erode up to 12 per cent of Zimbabwe's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) annually if the country does not implement robust measures to tackle the phenomenon. In its latest Zimbabwe economic update report launched in Harare, Zimbabwe's capital, the WB urged Zimbabwe to bolster resilience against climate-related shocks, focusing on agriculture as a critical pillar of the economy. Statistics from the Zimbabwean government show agriculture contributes from 11 per cent to 14 per cent of GDP and provides employment for some 70 per cent of the population and about 60 per cent of all raw materials for the industry. The country's heavy reliance on rainfed systems and maize production, however, leaves it vulnerable to increasingly severe climate events, the WB noted.

Uganda reaffirms commitment to wetland conservation amid progress

Kampala, Feb 6 (IANS) : As the world prepares to mark World Wetlands Day Thursday, Uganda is reaffirming its commitment to wetland conservation, citing progress in its restoration efforts. In a statement issued before the day, the Ugandan Ministry of Water and Environment announced that the country will commemorate the day under the theme, "Conserving Wetlands Today for a Secure Tomorrow." Beatrice Anywar, minister of State for Environment, emphasised the role of wetlands in sustainable development. "By acting now, we can ensure that these vital ecosystems continue to thrive and support biodiversity, filter water, provide a buffer against extreme events like floods and storms, avail water for domestic use and agriculture," she said. "Therefore, by investing in wetlands today, we are essentially investing in a more resilient and sustainable future."

Despite their importance, wetlands face increasing threats from unsustainable urban expansion, agriculture, and pollution. According to the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), the state environmental watchdog, Uganda's wetland coverage has declined from 13 per cent to about 8 per cent of the country's total land area.



South Korea: Massive rallies in Seoul oppose, urge Yoon's ouster

Seoul, Feb 6 (IANS) : Crowds of protesters gathered in South Korea's Seoul on Thursday in massive rallies, either opposing the ouster of impeached South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol or urging his removal from office, following his recent indictment under physical detention. An estimated 3 million people, according to organisers, thronged Seoul's central Gwanghwamun area, waving the Taegeukgi and the Stars and Stripes and calling for Yoon's release in a rally opposing his impeachment. Last Sunday, prosecutors indicted Yoon with physical detention on insurrection charges over his short-lived declaration of martial law on December 3. The following week, the National Assembly voted to impeach Yoon, prompting a Constitutional Court trial to decide whether to reinstate or permanently remove him from office.

At least 45 civilians killed, 82 injured in paramilitary attack in Sudan's Omdurman city

Khartoum, Feb 6 (IANS) : At least 45 civilians were killed and 82 others injured in a shelling by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) on Thursday on a crowded market in Omdurman, north of the Sudanese capital Khartoum, a volunteer group and a medical source said. "The RSF militia committed a new massacre today (Saturday) with a deliberate bombing of the Sabreen Market in the Karari locality," the Al-Thawra Resistance Committee, a volunteer group, said in a statement. "So far, 45 civilians have been killed and 82 others injured," the statement added, without providing further details. Meanwhile, a medical source at Al-Nao Hospital in Omdurman said, "The hospital has received over 24 bodies, along with dozens of injured individuals." "The situation is catastrophic in every sense of the word. We need blood donors and medical supplies."



Qatari PM meets Turkish FM on cooperation, developments in Gaza, Syria

Doha, Feb 6 (IANS) : Qatari Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, met with Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan to discuss bilateral cooperation and the latest developments in the Gaza Strip and Syria. According to a statement by

Qatar's Foreign Ministry, the two officials reviewed ways to strengthen bilateral ties, as well as the latest developments in Gaza, the Palestinian territories, and Syria, along with several issues of mutual concern. During the meeting on Sunday, Al Thani emphasised the need for both parties involved in the conflict to continue implementing

the ceasefire agreement in Gaza, expressing his appreciation for the strong Qatari-Turkish partnership in promoting peace and stability in the region, Xinhua news agency reported. In a joint press conference following the meeting, Al Thani stressed the importance of all parties adhering to the full implementation of the agreement's provisions

and commencing negotiations on the second phase, as stipulated in the agreement. He further urged the partners in the international community to maintain pressure to ensure the success of these negotiations. He emphasised that no party should be allowed to obstruct them to prevent the closure of this irreplaceable window.



50 patients from Gaza enter Egypt via Rafah crossing

Cairo, Feb 6 (IANS) : Fifty patients from the Gaza Strip entered Egypt on Thursday through the Rafah crossing, the only link between the Palestinian enclave and Egypt, Egypt's state-run Nile TV reported. They are the first group of Gazan patients entering Egypt via the crossing for medical treatment since last May. TV footage

showed the patients entering the Egyptian side of the crossing one by one and boarding ambulances waiting at the border. An Egyptian Red Crescent source told Xinhua news agency earlier on Saturday that 30 well-equipped ambulances were stationed at the Egyptian side of the crossing to transport the patients.



Rajasthan Dy CM terms Union Budget 2025 as 'game changer'

Jaipur, Feb 6 (IANS) : Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister termed the Union Budget 2025 as the 'game changer' for inclusive growth on Thursday. She said that the budget focuses on empowering farmers, the poor, women and youth while accelerating infrastructure development. The budget, she said, perfectly captures Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas' initiative and also brings about all-round development and proactively promotes industry and tourism. She emphasised that the decision to exempt annual in-

comes up to Rs 12 lakh from income tax will offer substantial relief to the common man. Moreover, it would result in higher disposable income for the middle class, thereby increasing consumption expenditure and boosting domestic demand. She said that the out-of-the-box decision to develop tourism destinations in partnership with the state governments will give a huge boost to the sector. Elaborating further, she highlighted the expansion of the 'Jal Jeevan' scheme until 2028, emphasising that it will accelerate drinking water facilities across the country. She also praised the MSME scheme, which has been aptly called a 'second engine of growth' in the budget

announcement. Highlighting rural-focused measures, the Deputy Chief Minister welcomed the expansion of Kisan Credit Card's limits to Rs 5 lakh, saying that the launch of the 'Pradhan Mantri Dhan Dhanya Krishi' scheme will give a significant boost to the agriculture sector

and increase agricultural income for our 'Annadas'. She added that starting 50,000 Atal Tinkering Labs in government schools, as well as the 'Bhartiya Bhasha Pustak' scheme will further strengthen the education sector.





North Korea says US arms aid cannot 'save' South Korea from strategic deficiency

Seoul, Feb 6 (IANS) : North Korea on Thursday accused the US of stepping up weapons aid to allies in what it called an attempt to cement its hegemonic status, saying such weapons provisions are still not sufficient to "save" South Korea from a strategic deficiency. The North's state media made the

accusation after the US Defence Security Cooperation Agency recently announced proposed sales of weapons to South Korea, which will include BQM-177A subsonic sea-skimming aerial targets for Aegis-equipped destroyers and GQM-163 target drones, Yonhap news agency reported. "The US, the world's big-

gest war merchant, is getting worked up, more than ever, on its weapons sales scheme to nations that follow (the US)," the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said in a commentary, stressing that such sales to South Korea are increasingly becoming "persistent." The KCNA claimed such arms provisions to the South reflect the US' attempt to destroy the balance of power in the region and solidify its hegemonic status. "No weapons aid from the US can redeem (South Korea) from its fate of strategic deficiency ... the US will not be able to realise its ambition due to our righteous power," it said. The commentary came as the North has long denounced military cooperation between South Korea and the US, calling joint military drills between the allies rehearsals for invasions while using them as a pretext for provocations. Last week, Pyongyang vowed to maintain "the toughest counteraction" to the US as long as it rejects the country's sovereignty and security interests.

Mexican president confirms death of 6 Mexicans in plane crash in Philadelphia

Mexico City, Feb 6 (IANS) : Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum confirmed the death of six Mexicans aboard a plane that crashed Thursday evening in northeastern Philadelphia, the US. The Mexican president lamented the death of her compatriots and announced that the consular authorities are "in permanent contact with the family members." "I have asked the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs to support everything required. My solidarity with the loved ones and friends," she said on the social media platform X. Jet Rescue Air Ambulance, the company operating the plane, confirmed that the air-

craft was carrying four crew members, a pediatric patient who had just finished treatment in Philadelphia, and the patient's escort, Xinhua news agency reported. The crash came just two days after a deadly collision between an American Airlines jet and a US Army Black Hawk helicopter over Washington, DC, which claimed 67 lives. Earlier on Friday evening another plane crash occurred in US when a small aircraft crashed in Philadelphia in the nearby state of Pennsylvania setting several homes on fire. It was a medical flight, according to local news reports, carrying six people. Multiple homes were on fire in a neighbourhood new Roosevelt



Boulevard and Cottman Avenue. A local news outfit, said witnesses on social media have reported seeing an orange flash near Roosevelt Mall, an outdoor shopping centre off the boulevard, which is what Route 1 is called as it runs through the city before the Bucks County border. Homes surround the shopping centre. The news site cited emergency services dispatches to say the aircraft crashed near the 7200 block of Calvert Street, a residential street, shortly after 6 p.m. Friday.

Arab countries reject attempt to displace Palestinians from Gaza, West Bank

Cairo, Feb 6 (IANS) : Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the Palestinian Authority (PA), and the Arab League (AL) stressed in a joint statement on Thursday the rejection of any attempt to displace Palestinians from the Gaza Strip and the occupied West Bank. The statement was issued after a meeting in Egypt's capital Cairo attended by top diplomats from Egypt, Jordan, Saudi

Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE, as well as high-ranking officials from the PA and AL. Participants of the meeting expressed their commitment to working with US President Donald Trump's administration "to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on the two-state solution," according to the statement. They also voiced full support for the Palestinians and their legitimate rights, rejecting any attempt to displace the Palestinian people, whether by eviction or ef-

orts to transfer or remove them from their land under any circumstances. The statement also urged the international community to coordinate efforts for planning and implementing a comprehensive process for the reconstruction of Gaza to improve the Palestinians' daily lives and address the problem of internal displacement, Xinhua news agency reported. On January 25, Trump proposed a controversial plan to displace Palestinians from Gaza to Egypt and Jordan, which was strongly

rejected by both countries. On Friday, thousands of people gathered near the Egyptian side of the Rafah crossing, the only channel linking Egypt with Gaza, to express opposition to the displacement of Palestinians. Earlier this week, the Arab League (AL) had reaffirmed that stability and peace in the Middle East will only be achieved after settling the Palestinian cause and implementing the two-state solution. The AL said that "any attempts to displace the Palestinian people from their



land, either through deportation, annexation or settlement expansion," have proved to be failures and are rejected as a violation of international law. The pan-Arab group stressed that the current

stage requires continuous work by all to consolidate the Gaza truce and ensure its continuation in preparation for the immediate start of rebuilding Gaza after a 15-month brutal war.

Trump fires Biden-appointee Rohit Chopra who headed consumer protection

New York, Feb 6 (IANS) : US President Donald Trump has fired Rohit Chopra, who was appointed the head of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) by former President Joe Biden. In a letter to Trump on Thursday, Chopra acknowledged that his term as the director of the CFPB "has concluded". Media reports said that he was informed of his firing in an email. Chopra, whose five-year term was to end next year, was caught in the Trump purge of Biden administration hold-overs. He was among the last of the Indian Americans appointed by Biden to senior, high-visibility positions left after Trump took over. Chopra had served on the Federal Trade Commission as a nominee of the Democratic Party before Biden picked him to head the CFPB. The bureau says its mission is to protect consumers from "unfair, deceptive, or abusive practices" and deal with consumer complaints. In his last major action at CFPB, Chopra fined the international remittance company Wise about \$2.5 million on Thursday for inaccurately advertising fees and not properly disclosing exchange rates.



Eight Palestinians freed by Israel to be deported: Egyptian media

Cairo, Feb 6 (IANS) : The Egyptian side of the Rafah crossing received on Thursday eight Palestinian prisoners set for deportation after being released by Israel as part of the ongoing ceasefire deal with Hamas, Egypt's Al-Qahera News TV channel reported. An Egyptian source, who required anonymity, told Xinhua that the released Palestinians, convicted of murder by Israel, will be deported to Turkiye, Qatar, Algeria, and Tunisia, after being transferred to Cairo. The source explained that Egypt would serve as a transit point for these released Palestinian prisoners until their departure to other countries. The decision on their destinations is coordinated with Israel, which required the deportation of Palestinian murder convicts, Xinhua news agency reported. According to a report by the Times of Israel on Wednesday, Israel demanded that Palestinians convicted of the most serious crimes not be released to the Gaza Strip or the West Bank. Egypt agreed to temporarily host these individuals, including 70 prisoners released last week, who are now in Cairo. Egyptian authorities are ramping up preparations to receive more prisoners at the Rafah crossing,

the source added. Earlier in the day, 50 patients from Gaza crossed into Egypt through Rafah, the only link between the Palestinian enclave and Egypt. Meanwhile, for the first time in eight months, 50 wounded Palestinians and patients were allowed to leave Gaza through the Rafah border crossing for treatment in Egypt, under the supervision of the World Health Organization (WHO). On Saturday, Egypt announced the reopening of the Rafah crossing between Egypt and Gaza, which had been closed since May 2024 when Israel took control of the Palestinian side. Patients gathered at Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City and Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis before being transported to the crossing, with critical cases evacuated by Palestinian Red Crescent ambulances. Mohammed Zaqout, director general of hospitals in Gaza, told Xinhua that more than 6,000 wounded and sick Palestinians require urgent treatment, with 12,000 in need of care abroad. Israeli media outlets reported that the Israeli army withdrew from the Rafah crossing on Friday, handing control to international forces, and approved the list of patients permitted to leave.

Balanced, transparent trade environment vital to deepening US-India economic ties: USIBC

New Delhi/Washington, Feb 6 (IANS) : A balanced and transparent trade environment is vital to deepening US-India economic ties and in line with President Donald Trump's emphasis on fair and reciprocal trade, India can consider bolder steps to address structural bottlenecks and foster a more predictable policy environment that instills investor confidence and promotes long-term strategic partnerships, the US-India Business Council (USIBC) said on Thursday. As the world's fifth-largest economy and a critical partner in the Indo-Pacific, India's continued economic reforms are essential to strengthening commercial ties with the US

and unlocking new growth opportunities, said Ambassador Atul Keshap, President of the US-India Business Council (USIBC). "USIBC welcomes the presentation of the Union Budget 2025-26, which emphasises crucial sectors like agriculture, MSMEs, investment, and exports, reinforcing India's role as a dynamic player in the global economy," Keshap emphasised. While the Budget outlines a vision for economic resilience, technological advancement, and global competitiveness, India's growth trajectory requires sustained and deeper reforms. "Foreign direct investment remains steady but has not seen significant acceleration, and businesses continue to navigate complex regulatory landscapes.



USIBC urges a more ambitious push for systemic reforms in taxation, regulatory frameworks, and business procedures to further enhance India's global competitiveness and attract greater investment," Keshap noted. USIBC welcomed the plan to set up a high-level committee for regulatory reforms but urged a quick movement to identify and remove regulations detrimental to business. "A cut in taxes for the middle class is also welcome as the move will help boost consumption, savings and investments," said the Council.



Canada, Mexico & China brace for US tariff hike

New York, Feb 6 (IANS) : China, Canada, and Mexico, the three biggest trading partners of the U.S., are bracing for tariff hikes threatened by President Donald Trump, who

also warned of "short-term disruption". Trump has said he would raise the tariffs on imports from Canada and Mexico by 25 per cent to strong-arm them to stop illegal migration to the US and the inflow

of drugs, and on China by 10 per cent to end the export of the deadly Fentanyl drug and its components that find their way to the US. Although Trump has asserted that the added cost would be absorbed by the exporters, he conceded on Thursday, "There could be some temporary, short-term disruption, and people will understand that." "But the tariffs are going to make us very rich and very strong - and we're going to treat other countries very fairly," he added. The impact of the higher tariffs would not be fully felt immediately and will take time to seep into the retail markets.



I-League, IWL clubs owners meet AIFF chief, discuss way forward for Indian football

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS) : The owners/representatives of a host of I-League and IWL clubs had a meeting with the All India Football Federation president Kalyan Chaubey and his team of senior officials in the national capital to discuss the way forward for Indian football. AIFF secretary general Anilkumar, treasurer Kipa Ajay, and DSG Satyanarayan M. were present at the meeting attended by nine I-League and four IWL clubs. The meeting discussed at length about next season's fixtures, calendar, promotion of the leagues, broadcasting and release of national team men and women players for longer camps.



1st ODI: Kohli's injury appears minor, likely to get into action in next match

Nagpur, Feb 6 (IANS) : The injury suffered by senior batter Virat Kohli ahead of Thursday's first ODI against England here may turn out to be a minor setback for India as the injury does not look serious and the former India captain is likely to be back in the next match. India captain Rohit Sharma informed at the toss that Kohli had injured his right knee during practice on Wednesday evening and therefore was withdrawn from the first ODI. Though both the Indian team management and Kohli himself would feel disappointed in losing the opportunity to play the match, the injury seems minor. BCCI said in an official update that Kohli was unavailable for selection in the first ODI in Nagpur due to a sore right knee. Kohi was on the field with his teammates soon after they arrived at the stadium, warming up for the first ODI though with a strapping or kneecap on his right knee. This proves the injury is not very serious.

Would absolutely play with full energy and give my best : Shreyas Iyer

Nagpur, Feb 6 (IANS) Ahead of the first ODI against England, India batter Shreyas Iyer said he would give his best and absolutely play the game with full energy in the bilateral series, as both teams plan to fine-tune their combinations ahead of the Champions Trophy.

Iyer last played for India in the 2-0 ODI series defeat in Sri Lanka in August 2024, and is now back in the mix for back-to-back 50-over assignments in the national set-up. "I love to be in the present and that's what I am going to do in the ODI series right now, match by match. The learnings and knowledge I would be gaining out of this, especially on joining the team after a long time, is key. "It gives me chills every time I wear the Indian team jersey – showcasing the emblem and logo – is a proud moment. I would play the game with full energy and give my best.



WI to commence new WTC cycle with three-Test home series against Australia

St George (Antigua), Feb 6 (IANS) : The West Indies men's team will begin their 2025-27 World Test Championship cycle three-match home Test series against Australia while their women's side will play host to South Africa ahead of a potential place at this year's World Cup as the Cricket West Indies (CWI) unveiled schedule from May to December 2025, featuring a mix of home and away

fixtures. The Windies men will battle for the prestigious Frank Worrell Trophy against Australia in a three-match Test series, beginning in Barbados (June 25-29), before moving to Grenada (July 3-7) and concluding in Jamaica (July 12-16). It will be the first time Australia has toured the West Indies to play Tests since 2015.



Champions Trophy: Cummins, Hazlewood ruled out of Australia's squad

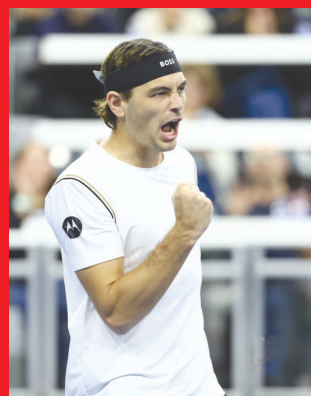
New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS) : Australia have officially announced that skipper Pat Cummins and fellow fast bowler Josh Hazlewood have been ruled out of the squad for the upcoming Champions Trophy and preceding two ODIs against Sri Lanka. Cummins has not recovered from the left ankle soreness which he developed at the end of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy series against India, where he led Australia to a 3-1 win. On the other hand, Hazlewood has developed a hip problem after recovering from his previous injuries - side strain and calf issue. "Unfortunately Pat, Josh and Mitch are managing some ongoing injuries and

haven't come up in time for the Champion's Trophy. While disappointing, it does present a great opportunity for other players to perform for Australia in a world event," national selection panel chair George Bailey said in a statement. Both Cummins and Hazlewood will require extensive rehabilitation before they are declared fit to play. The big double blows mean Australia have four vacancies to fill in their Champions Trophy squad, after Mitchell Marsh was ruled out due to back injury and Marcus Stoinis surprisingly announced his retirement from the format.

Fritz prevails in Dallas opener for season's first home win

Dallas, Feb 6 (IANS) : American No. 1 Taylor Fritz notched up his first home win of the 2025 ATP Tour season, cruising past Arthur Rinderknech 6-4, 6-2 at the Dallas Open on Thursday (IST) to open his campaign at the newly upgraded ATP 500 event.

Fritz lost just six points on serve against Rinderknech and raced through the finish line after breaking in the final game of the opening set. The American fired 11 aces and won 93 per cent (27/29) of his first-serve points, backing up his deliveries with ruthless aggression on short balls, according to ATP Stats.



1st ODI: Hammered for 26 in an over, Harshit Rana bags 2-43 in first spell on debut

Nagpur, Feb 6 (IANS) : It was baptism by fire for India's pace-bowling all-rounder Harshit Rana as he was hammered for 26 runs in an over by England opener Phil Salt in the first ODI of the three-match series at the Vidarbha Cricket Association Stadium here on Thursday. But the young pacer on his debut showed great courage to recover from that hammering and came back strongly to bag the first two wickets of his ODI career to help India recover in the match. Af-



ter Mohammed Shami had started the proceedings with a maiden over, Rana bowled a few good deliveries but the English opener took him on aggressively, welcoming the newcomer with a boundary on the fourth ball of his first over and then walloped him again on the last ball of the over.



Melbourne Stars sign Mitchell Swepson on three-year deal

Melbourne, Feb 6 (IANS) : Melbourne Stars have signed leg-spinner Mitchell Swepson on a three-year deal on the final day of the BBL's first player movement window. Swepson makes the move from the Brisbane Heat, where he played 87 matches

over the course of 10 years, including the BBL 2023-24 title. The 31-year-old has 72 scalps to his name in BBL with an average of 31.12 and an economy rate of 7.66. However, he struggled in the 2024-25 season.

India should be worried about Bumrah's fitness, says Pakistan coach Javed

New Delhi, Feb 6 (IANS) : Pakistan's interim head coach Aaqib Javed said India should be worried about the fitness of their leading fast-bowler Jasprit Bumrah ahead of their clash in the upcoming Champions Trophy, set to happen in Dubai on February 23. Bumrah has been out of action since back spasms ruled him out of bowling in the fourth innings of the Sydney Test.

