



**BJP secretly awarded solar project to Adani, alleges Congress**



**Russia releases detained U.S. citizen Marc Fogel**

# Central Chronicle



## Ten million take holy dip at Kumbh Mela

**Agencies, Prayagraj**

More than 10 million devout Hindus seeking absolution from their sins took a dip in holy waters in northern India during a span of four hours on Wednesday, authorities said, as they braced for millions more to swarm the site of the Kumbh Mela.

Authorities stepped up the numbers of police officers and put air ambulances on standby in the city of Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh state on one of the holiest days of the Hindu festival, considered the world's largest gathering of humanity.

"There are more people in this city in one day than the population of many countries, and the numbers

are swelling by the minute," Prashant Kumar, the state's chief of police, told Reuters.

The numbers arriving had pushed infrastructure arrangements to the brink, making delays and traffic jams inevitable, he added. Media said vehicles were backed up for hundreds of kilometers from the edges of the city.

More than 10 million people had bathed by 8 a.m., authorities said, with more expected.

The full moon on Wednesday, known as Magh Purnima, makes it one of the holiest days in the six-week-long festival, held at the confluence of India's three holiest rivers.

### Devotee from Australia takes holy dip

A devotee from Australia who took a holy dip at Triveni Sangam in Prayagraj on the occasion of Magh Purnima 'snan' at the ongoing Mahakumbh termed it as an "experience for a lifetime".

"Words cannot define my happiness and gratitude of being here...This is an experience for a lifetime..." said the devotee from Australia.

Another foreigner said, "This was an incredible opportunity to take a holy dip in the River Ganga and find inner peace here...Its such a blessing. it is incredible to see how many people can take the sacred dip in the Ma Yamuna, Ma Ganga, Ma saraswati. Incredible, incredible"

### MUSTREAD

#### Mentally ill person arrested for threat call warning terror attack on PM Modi Aircraft

**Mumbai:** A mentally ill person from Mumbai was arrested by police for making a threat call giving warning of a terror attack ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's two-day US visit, Mumbai Police said on Wednesday. The police control received the threat call on Tuesday, February 11, as the PM was leaving on an official visit abroad. The person who made the call was arrested. As per the Mumbai Police, he is mentally ill. "On 11th February, a call was received at the Mumbai Police Control Room warning that terrorists may attack PM Modi's aircraft as he was leaving on an official visit abroad. Considering the serious nature of the information, the police informed other agencies and began an investigation, the police said in a statement.

#### BSF apprehends 2 smugglers with 1.1 kg of narcotics

**Amritsar:** Border Security Force (BSF) and Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) Amritsar in a joint operation apprehended two Indian smugglers with 1.1 kg of narcotics on the Amritsar border on Wednesday, Punjab Frontier BSF said in a press release. The BSF said, "On February 11, 2025, the BSF Intelligence Wing developed and shared information regarding a possible smuggling attempt involving few suspects on the Amritsar border. Acting on this intelligence, the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF), Amritsar, launched a joint operation.

#### 15 Bangladeshi immigrants deported, 35 more to be deported by March

**Ahmedabad (Gujarat):** The Ahmedabad Crime Branch has successfully deported 15 Bangladeshi immigrants and is in the process of deporting 35 more by the month of March, Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Bharat Patel said. According to Patel, in 2024 the Crime Branch conducted a combing operation in the area, which led to the detention of 50 illegal Bangladeshi immigrants, including one minor girl, located near the Chadola Lake in Ahmedabad. These immigrants were found to be in possession of fake Indian documents, including fake Aadhar cards.

### Sensex

BSE..... 76,171.08 (-122.52)  
NSE..... 23,045.25 (-26.55)

### Bullion

Gold..... 86,670 (24 carat 10gm)  
Silver..... 99,500 (1kg)  
USD(\$)/INR(Rs)..... 87.90



### Weather

Sunrise	Sunset	Day	Night
6:55	6:15	28.8	13.6

## Supreme Court criticizes practice of announcing freebies in elections



**New Delhi (UNI)**

In a significant observation, the Supreme Court on Wednesday expressed concern over the growing trend of political parties announcing "freebies" ahead of elections.

A bench comprising Justice B R Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih questioned whether such policies were fostering dependence rather than integrating individuals into the national mainstream for development.

"Rather than promoting them to be a part of the mainstream of soci-

ety by contributing to the development of the nation, are we not creating a class of parasites?" Justice Gavai remarked during the proceedings.

The court was hearing a matter concerning the right to shelter for urban homeless persons when the issue of government schemes distributing free rations and financial assistance without work was brought up.

Justice Gavai noted that such handouts, especially those declared just before elections, discouraged people from seeking employment. "Because of these freebies, which are announced on the anvil of elections, people are not willing to work," he added, referring to various government schemes such as 'Ladli Bahin' and others. Senior Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for one of the petitioners, countered the argument, stating that there were hardly any individuals unwilling to work if employment opportunities were available.

## Madhya Pradesh: A land of opportunity for Global Investors

**New Delhi**

In a compelling address at the Global Investors Summit 2025 (GIS-2025) Curtain Raiser in New Delhi, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav positioned the state as one of the most attractive investment desti-

- Land prices 40 times cheaper than Delhi, 100 times cheaper than Mumbai – A golden investment opportunity
- CM Dr. Mohan Yadav calls for Global Investments at GIS-2025 curtain raiser in New Delhi

nations in India.

He assured investors that Madhya Pradesh (MP) is an investor-friendly state, offering seamless facilitation and a pro-business environment.

"Madhya Pradesh offers land at a cost 40 times lower than Delhi and 100 times lower than Mumbai.



We provide up to 200% incentives in the textile sector, and our high-quality cotton makes the state an ideal destination for textile investments.

The government is committed to supporting investors at every step," said Dr. Yadav.

### A Dynamic Platform

The event witnessed an overwhelming response, with over 400 participants, including diplomats, business leaders, and trade representatives from 40 countries.

(Contd on Page 12)

## Massive arms haul in Mizoram

**Three arrested with AK-47s, M4 Carbines**

**Aizawl:** In a major crackdown on illegal arms trade, Mizoram police intercepted a vehicle in Lunglei district in southern Mizoram early Wednesday, uncovering a cache of high-powered weapons and arresting three individuals.

According to police sources, the haul included two AK-47 rifles, five US-manufactured M4 carbines, 20 magazines, 504 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition, and 4,675 rounds of 5.56mm ammunition.

Authorities also recovered Rs 49,550 in cash, multiple identity documents, SIM cards, ATM cards, and five mobile phones.

The arms were seized from an Aizawl-registered Suzuki Alto near Lunglei Bazar at around 2:30 am. The vehicle had travelled from Thenzawl in Serchhip district, but investigators are yet to ascertain its final destination, a senior police official said.

## India, France agree to partner in civil nuclear energy following talks between PM Modi, President Macron



**Marseilles/New Delhi (UNI)**

In a major step in civil nuclear energy cooperation, India and France agreed on establishment of partnership in Advanced Modular Reactors and Small Modular Reactors, follow-

ing bilateral talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Emmanuel Macron of France in Marseilles.

The two leaders also jointly inaugurated India's Consulate in Mar-

seille, and paid homage to the Indian soldiers who died during World War I at the Mazargues War Cemetery.

Earlier, the two leaders flew together from Paris to Marseille in the French Presidential Aircraft on Tuesday, in a special gesture reflecting the personal rapport between the two leaders.

They held discussions on the full spectrum of bilateral relations and key global and regional issues.

This was followed by delegation level talks after arrival in Marseille.

The leaders reaffirmed their strong commitment to the India-France Strategic Partnership, which has steadily evolved into a multifaceted relationship over the past 25 years, a statement said.

The talks covered all aspects of the India-France strategic partnership. The two leaders reviewed cooperation in the strategic areas of Defence, Civil Nuclear Energy and Space.

## India crush England by 142 runs

### Secure series clean sweep ahead of Champions Trophy

**Agencies, Ahmedabad (Gujarat)** Fine bowling performances by bowlers and top knocks by Shubman Gill, Shreyas Iyer and Virat Kohli helped India secure a clean sweep series win over England, with a 142-run win in the third ODI at Ahmedabad's Narendra Modi Stadium on Wednesday.

This concludes India's successful home white-ball series against England, securing 4-1 win in T20Is and 3-0 win in ODIs. This is Gautam Gambhir's first ODI series win as head coach.

In the run chase of 357 runs, openers Ben Duckett and Phil Salt gave the Three Lions a fine start. Duckett was an aggressor against Arshdeep Singh and Harshit Rana, scoring four successive boundaries



off Arshdeep in the fifth over. England reached the 50-run mark in just 5.2 overs.

The opening stand of 60 runs was undone by Arshdeep, who removed

Duckett for 34 in 22 balls, with eight fours. A fine catch by Rohit Sharma at mid-off put India ahead. India was 60/1 in 6.2 overs.

(Contd on Page 11)

## Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Temple Chief Priest passes away

**Lucknow (UNI)**

Chief priest of Shri Ram temple Acharya Satyendra Kumar Das passed away at Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (SGPGIMS) here on Wednesday.

He was about 87 years old. Acharya Das was recently admitted to SGPGI due to brain haemorrhage, where he breathed his last at around 7 am. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has condoled the death of Shri Das.

He posted on X, "The death of Acharya Shri Satyendra Kumar Das Ji Maharaj, the chief priest of Param Ram Bhakt, Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Temple, Shri Ayodhya Dham, is extremely sad and an irreparable loss to the spiritual world. Humble tributes. I pray to Lord Shri Ram to give a place to the departed soul at his lotus feet and give strength to the bereaved



disciples and followers to bear this immense sorrow. Om Shanti."

Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Samvad Kendra Ayodhya Dham issued a statement and shared the information about the death of Mahant. It said that the chief priest of Ayodhya Dham, Acharya Shri Satyendra Kumar Das Ji Maharaj, has passed away on the holy day of Magh Purnima, at around 7 am, and breathed his last at PGI Lucknow.