## **MUSTREAD**



### Police apprehend drug smuggler with 10 kg heroin

Amritsar: In an intelligencebased operation, Punjab police apprehended an alleged drug smuggler with links to a Pakistani criminal and recovered 10 kilos of heroin valued at Rs 70 crore from the border district of Amritsar, a top officer said on Wednesday. State Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav said Harmandeep Singh was nabbed from Mahal village in the distric. Yadav said on X that the arrested accused was constantly in touch with Pakistan-based smuggler Chacha Bawa, who sent Heroin via drones in the Attari sector for further distribution. He also said that an FIR has been registered, with further investigation underway to identify others associated with the accused.

#### **CBI** raids Commissioner Secretary's office at Civil Secretariat

Srinagar: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is conducting searches at the office of a senior government official in the Civil Secretariat, Srinagar, official sources said here on Wednesday. The raid is part of an ongoing investigation into the infamous arms license scam of Jammu and Kashmir which licenses were issued allegedly for monetary gains. The Centre has already granted prosecution sanction to the CBI against an IAS cadre officer one of the accused in the case A CBI spokesperson said that they have no official information about any raid in Srinagar at this time.

### EAM to visit Johannesburg for G20 Foreign Ministers' meeting

New Delhi: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is paying a two-day visit to Johannesburg, South Africa, on February 20-21 to participate in the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting (FMM). His visit is at the invitation of the visit is at the invitation of the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa Ronald Lamola. EAM's participation in the G20 FMM will strengthen India's engagement with G20 countries and bolster the voice of the Global South in this important forum, a statement said. EAM is expected to hold a few bilateral meetings on the margins of the FMM.

## Manipur HSLC exam begins

Imphal: High school leaving Examination conducted by Board of Secondary Education Manipur began here on Wednesday in the state. Prohibitory orders were imposed around the examination centres. There was some confusion in two schools as about 36 students complained that they didn't get admit cards. The Board authority clarified that it is the duty of the schools concerned to process documents from Class IX of every student to get admit cards.

#### **Bull tamers, spectators** among 34 persons injured in Jallikattu event

Dindigul: Thirty four persons, including bull tamers and spectators were injured in the annual Jallikattu (taming of Bulls) event held at Pugaiyilaipatti village in Dindigul district of Tamil Nadu on Wednesday. Official sources said the Jallikattu event was held as part of the annual St.San-thiyagappar and St.Sebastian Church festival. Around 760 registered bulls and 273 bull tamers from Tiruchirapalli, Theni, Madurai, Pudukottai, besides Dindigul district took part in the day-long event.

## Tuition teacher gets 3 yrs jail for sexually harassing minor girl student

Mumbai: A special court under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act awarded three years sentence to a 56-year-old tuition teacher, Sanjay Ghadigaokar, who was found guilty of sexually harassing a girl student in 2020 when she was 13 years old. Court also imposed a fine of Rs 20,000 on

# Kharge flays PM Modi for "failing"

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for "failing" to defend India's trade and business interests during his recent visit to the United States

In his opening remarks at A meeting of AICC general secretaries and in-charges here, Kharge said, "He (the PM) had failed to protect India's trade and business interests. The PM did not protest the imposition of tariffs by the US on Indian goods".

"They are forcing a loss-making deal on us, which our government is silently accepting. This is clearly an insult to India and its people", he said, while adding, "America is hurting us deeply even in economic mat-

Kharge said despite Modi's visit, America was sending back Indian citizens handcuffed as before.

Alleging that vegetarian passengers were given non-veg food, Kharge said, "Our government also failed to protest this insult properly".

Referring to his party, Kharge said ...to defend Indian interest during US visit



those in-charge of different states will be accountable for the organisation and the electoral performances

in their respective states.
"I would like to tell you one very important thing about accountability. All of you will be accountable for the organisation and the future election results of the states under your

charge", he told the general secretaries and in-charges.

Referring to the new challenge of alleged "voter list manipulation", he claimed that it was happening on a large scale in elections, and Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi had also raised the issue in the Lok SabAsserting that this "rigging" has to be stopped at all cost, he pointed out how the names of Congress supporters were deleted from the voter list or the names were removed and added in a different polling booth at the last

He accused the BJP of adding fresh names just before the elections.

During the meeting, the Congress president also referred to the manipulation of the selection process of the Chief Election Commissioner by the government by excluding the Chief Justice of India from the selec-

He said the Chief Justice of India was also included in the selection committee of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) by the order of the Supreme Court, but Modi removed him. "The government does not even trust the impartiality of the Chief Justice of the country", he added, while referring to Rahul Gandhi questioning the purpose of the committee, where the government was trying to use the Leader of the Opposition merely for "certification".

### Man booked for allegedly selling his nine-month-old infant

Hoshiarpur: A man has been booked for allegedly selling his nine-monthold infant for Rs 1 lakh with the help of his brother-in-law in Punjab's Hosiarpur district, police said on

The incident came to light when a police team patrolling the village Panam received a tip-off about the deal. The informer claimed that Sohan of village Panam had conspired with his brother-in-law Sagar of Bilogi in SAS Nagar district, to sell his infant son, Gurpreet Singh, police said

The child was allegedly sold to Harjinder Singh of Salarpur under Sadar police station, Jalandhar, for Rs 1 lakh, police added.

Preliminary investigation revealed that part of the payment was allegedly made in cash, while the remaining amount was transferred to Sagar's bank account.

The Investigating officer at Garhshankar police station said an FIR under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act has been registered.

## Infected person can be treated, but infected mindset can't be cured: Yogi Adityanath

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday termed the language of opposition leaders regarding Maha Kumbh as a direct attack on Sanatan culture and said that an infected person can be treated but an infected mindset is incur-

While responding to the opposi-tion's allegations regarding Maha Kumbh systematically on the second day of the Assembly budget session, the CM said, "The opposition presented many wrong facts about Maha Kumbh and even called it a waste of money. While the RJD chief calls Maha Kumbh a waste, Samajwadi Party (SP) President Akhilesh Yadav calls it a waste of money," he said.

He said, "SP leader Jaya Bachchan said that the bodies of the people



who died in the stampede on Mauni Amavasya were thrown in Triveni, due to which it has become polluted. Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge says that thousands of people lost their lives in the stampede. More than this, a leader also says that this is not Maha Kumbh but

'Mrityu Kumbh'."
Yogi said that opposing Sanatan culture has become a habit of these leaders. "In fact, an infected person can be treated but treatment of infected thinking is not possible. The opposition is continuously spreading propaganda about the organisation of Maha Kumbh, whereas this event is the pride of Sanatan culture and no laxity will be shown in celebrating it grandly," he said.

He said, "If anyone feels that this a crime then my government would like to commit this crime again and again. The government is determined to make Maha Kumbh historic." The CM said that the language used by the opposition does not fit any civilized society. Some opposition leaders question the grandeur of an event like Maha Kumbh and try to spread confusion in the society.

## Central govt approves Rs 1554 cr of additional assistance to 5 states

A high-level committee, under the chairmanship of Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday approved Rs 1554.99 crore of additional central assistance under the Na-Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) to five states, affected by flood, flash flood, landslides, cyclonic storm during the year 2024.

The HLC approved central assistance of Rs 1554.99 crore to five States from NDRF, subject to an adiustment of 50 percent of the opening balance for the year available in the SDRF, a Home Ministry statement said.

Out of the total amount of Rs 1554.99 crore, Rs 608.08 crore has been approved for Andhra Pradesh; Rs 170.99 crore for Nagaland; Rs 255.24 crore for Odisha; Rs 231.75 crore for Telangana and Rs 288.93



crore for Tripura.

This additional assistance is over and above the funds released by the centre to the states in the State Dis aster Response Fund (SDRF), already placed at the disposal of the states.

'Today, the MHA approved additional central assistance of Rs 1554.99 crore to Andhra Pradesh, Nagaland, Odisha, Telangana, and Tripura under the NDR fund.

## Maha likely to sign MoU with Tripura

Agartala: Minister of Environment and Climate Change of Maharashtra Pankaja Gopinath Munde has interacted with bamboo growers and artisans of Tripura during her two-day visit to the state and expressed interest in developing bamboo bamboo-based industrial relationship between the two states.

Tripura is home to 21 species of bamboo out of the 130 species available in India

Munde arrived here on Tuesday along with Maharashtra Chief Secretary Vinita Singhal to attend a review meeting at Bamboo and Cane Development Institute (BCDI).

She mentioned the potential of bamboo-based materials as an ecofriendly alternative in infrastructure development besides different households and fancy items.

## CM Omar Abdullah calls for collective effort

Agencies, Jammu

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said on Wednesday that Jammu and Kashmir was staring at a water crisis this year and all need to collectively act to address the crisis.

The Chief Minister said in his post, "J&K is staring at a water crisis this year. It's not a recent phenomenon, actually it's been building up for

## J&K stares at water crisis

a few years now. While the government will have to adopt a more proactive approach for water management & conservation, it can't just All of us residents of J&K will have to change the way we take water for granted. I'll be reviewing the measures the Jal Shakti (PHE) Dept intends to take to deal with the devel-



oping crisis & I'll also be talking to the people of J&K over the next few months about what we can do collectively.

An unprecedented dry spell has hit Jammu and Kashmir this winter. Except for December 28 when the Valley and the higher reaches had a moderate snowfall, the season so far has been dry. There was no rain or snow-

## fall in the month of January, and February to date has also been dry. A large number of perennial springs, which support hundreds of villages across the Valley, have gone

Unprecedented winter dry spell threatens Kashmir's wa-

- ter resources Historic springs like Achabal
- and Verinag running critically Jal Shakti department warns of
- drinking water contamination
- Agricultural sector faces potential severe drought impact

lowest ever seen water discharge.

The historic Achabal spring that was decorated with a garden by Mughal Empress Noor Jahan in the 17th has dried up.

## KIMS Doctors remove a pen cap stuck in lungs for 21 years

Hyderabad: Doctors at KIMS Hospital have removed a pen cap stuck in the lungs of a 26-year-old man from Karimnagar for 21 years.

He accidentally swallowed it at

Over the past month, he had been experiencing persistent cough and unexplained weight loss, the hospital said in a release here on Wednes-

His condition worsened significantly over the last ten days, making it difficult for him to sleep.

Upon consulting doctors, a CT an was conducted, revealing an in-

fection in the lower left lung.

He was then referred to KIMS
Hospital, Kondapur, Hyderabad,
where a further CT scan was per-

## Sanatan surge has left the opposition sleepless: Anil Vij



Chandigarh (UNI)

Haryana Minister and senior BJP leader Anil Vij on Wednesday launched a verbal attack on the country's opposition parties, alleging they have become "sleepless" because of the surge of the Sanaan Dharma in India.

'The way Sanatan is surging, it has left the opposition parties sleepless," said Vij, who handles the portfolios of Energy, Transport and Labour in Harvana Chief Minister

Nayab Singh Saini's cabinet.

He said: "There is immense enthusiasm and zeal among people for Sanatan, and 55 crore people have already taken a dip in the Maha Kumbh." Vij was responding to a question from a mediaperson re-garding the attacks on Sanatan by

the opposition in the country.

He said: "55 crore people have taken a holy dip in the Maha Kumbh, and if we calculate, that would be equivalent to two and a half times Pakistan's population, which is 20

## Indian culture is unshakable and eternal: Manjhi

Prayagraj: Union Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi on Wednesday took a holy dip at Triveni Sangam, the confluence of Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati, during the ongoing Maha Kumbh being organised in Prayagraj and reflected on India's rich cultural and spiritual heritage, emphasising its legacy as a 'Vishwaguru'.

Calling Maha Kumbh a symbol of unwavering faith and unity, the Union Minister said, "Today, some forces are trying to undermine our faith, but the presence of crores of devotees here proves that Indian culture remains resolute and eter-

Highlighting the global significance of this massive spiritual gathering before taking the holy bath, he said, "The faith of devotees at Maha Kumbh is showcasing India's strength to the world."

# Tejashwi puts Nitish Kumar in

Patna (UNI)

Leader of the opposition in Bihar assembly Tejashwi Prasad Yadav on Wednesday put Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in dock saying he was not taking any action against those responsible for rising crimes in the state.

dock over rising crimes in Bihar Yadav, also a senior RJD leader issued crime bulletin for the month of January 2025, on his social media account X, and put Chief Minister Nitish Nitish Kumar in dock saying he was not taking any action against those responsible for such a grim situation when life and property was

not safe and secured. He had mentioned 137 crimes occurred in the month of January in various districts of Bihar.

Bhojpur, Darbhanga, Vaishali and Muzaffarpur are among the districts worst affected by this criminal activities", the RJD leader pointed

How could Chief Minister Nitish Kumar claim that rule of law had been established by him in Bihar, Ya-

# India, Malaysia agree to enhance cooperation

The 13th Malaysia-India Defence Cooperation Committee (MIDCOM) meeting took place in Kuala Lumpur on Wednesday, where both sides identified ways to deepen existing collaboration, particularly in the defence industry, maritime security, and multilateral engagements.

The meeting was co-chaired by Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh and Secretary General of Ministry of Defence, Malaysia Lokman Hakim Bin Ali, a Defence Ministry statement said here.

Both sides expressed happiness at the growing bilateral defence cooperation with regular engagements between the two Armed Forces in re-

The two sides held wide-ranging

## In defence industry, maritime security



discussions on effective and practical initiatives to further expand bilateral defence engagements and regional and global issues and also identified steps to further enhance cooperation in emerging areas such

as cyber security and AI. Moreover, they agreed to form a joint focus group to address non-traditional maritime security threats.

their commitment to fully implement the new initiatives under the defence pillar of Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, as envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Malaysian counterpart Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim during the lat-

ter's visit to India in August 2024.

They also exchanged the finalised Terms of Reference (ToR) on the establishment of strategic affairs work-

This forum will act as a consultative mechanism intermediate between the MIDCOM and the two sub-committees to progress all aspects of bilateral defence cooperation. They also exchanged the finalised ToR on establishment of Su-30 forum as an outcome of

### **Ex-CM Jagan demands** AP Govt to provide remunerative prices to chilli produce

Guntur: Former Chief Minister and YSRCP president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy voiced his concern at the declining price of chilli produce, putting the farmers in lurch, and demanded Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu to take steps to provide remunerative prices

to the chilli produce. Reddy visited the mirchi yard and interacted with farmers here on Wednesday. Speaking on the occasion, he observed that since the coalition government came to power, farmers had been deprived of

Moreover, there are no buyers to purchase the chilli produce.