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Police apprehend drug smuggler with 10 kg heroin

Amritsar: In an intelligence-based 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 district. 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 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 Pugaiyilapatti village in Dindigul district of Tamil Nadu on Wednesday. Official sources said the Jallikattu event was held as part of the annual St. Sebastian Church festival. Around 760 registered bulls and 273 bull tamers from Tiruchirappalli, 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 him.

# Kharge flays PM Modi for "failing"

New Delhi (UNI)

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 matters."

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 Sabha.

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

Lucknow (UNI)

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 incurable.

While responding to the opposition'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 is 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.

## 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 eco-friendly 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 be a government centric approach. 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-

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

New Delhi (UNI)

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 National 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 adjustment 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

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

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

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.

## 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 the age of five.

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

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

Upon consulting doctors, a CT scan was conducted, revealing an infection in the lower left lung. He was then referred to KIMS Hospital, Kondapur, Hyderabad, where a further CT scan was performed.

## Tejashwi puts Nitish Kumar in dock over rising crimes in Bihar



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 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 out.

How could Chief Minister Nitish Kumar claim that rule of law had been established by him in Bihar, Yadav asked.

## India, Malaysia agree to enhance cooperation

New Delhi (UNI)

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 recent years.

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.

India and Malaysia reaffirmed 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 latter's visit to India in August 2024.

They also exchanged the finalised Terms of Reference (ToR) on the establishment of strategic affairs working group.

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 MIDCOM.