

MUSTREAD

After lunar eclipse, darshan and worship resume at Ayodhya's Ram temple

Ayodhya: After the lunar eclipse ended, darshan and prayers began at the Ram temple in Ayodhya. A large number of devotees lined up along the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi path to pay their respects to Ram Lalla. Due to the lunar eclipse, the Satak period began in the morning, and doors were closed of all the major temples in Ayodhya, including the Ram temple, Hanuman Garhi, Kanak Bhawan, and Nageshwar Nath. Devotees, who arrived in Ayodhya to pray to Ram Lalla and Hanuman Lalla had to wait for more than 12 hours. Due to the lunar eclipse and the resulting Satak period, the busy Ram path in Ayodhya remained quiet.

Chhagan Bhujbal too doubts AAIB's crash report

Mumbai: Top Airtel NCP leader Chhagan Bhujbal today openly expressed doubts about the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau's (AAIB) 22-page preliminary report on the January 28 air crash, which killed former Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar in Baramati. When asked to comment on the 22-page AAIB report, which was released on Saturday (February 28), Bhujbal told media persons in Nashik, when we went there (Baramati airstrip where the late Ajit Pawar's aircraft crashed), nobody told us that the aircraft had hit any tree. Hundreds of people had gathered at the airport to welcome Ajit Dada, but nobody said that his aircraft hit a tree. I am also surprised which tree the aircraft hit. I never met even a single person there who said that the plane hit a tree. If the aircraft had hit any tree, then the tree would have been found damaged.

NC urges release of detained youths

Srinagar: The Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (NC) on Tuesday appealed to union Home Minister Amit Shah and Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to consider releasing youths detained over the past two days, keeping in view the sentiments of grieving families and mourners. Party chief spokesperson and MLA Tanvir Sadiq said such a humanitarian gesture would help ease public anguish while contributing to peace and stability in the region. Describing the killing of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as a deeply tragic and distressing incident, Sadiq termed it a profound shock and an irreparable loss for the Muslim Ummah.

ULFA-I militant surrenders before Joint Security Forces

Itanagar: In a significant success for security forces in Arunachal Pradesh's Tirap district, a hardcore insurgent belonging to the proscribed United Liberation Front of Asom (Independent) (ULFA-I) surrendered before a joint team of security personnel at Khonsa on Tuesday. Acting on credible intelligence inputs about the presence of a militant in the general area of Horu Chinghan, a focused joint operation was launched by Tirap Police in coordination with the 36 Battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the Khonsa Battalion of Assam Rifles from COB Nonglo. After reaching the suspected location, security personnel activated local sources to establish contact with the insurgent and persuaded him to lay down arms.

DK Shivakumar calls legislators' dinner meet

Bengaluru: Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday announced that he has convened a dinner meeting of Congress legislators on March 10. He, however, dismissed speculation over a possible leadership change, asserting that his political journey has been shaped by struggle rather than the pursuit of power. Shivakumar said the meeting, involving party MLAs and MLCs, has been called to mark the completion of six years of his tenure as Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) president, describing it as a routine interaction with legislators. "On the 10th, I have called a dinner meeting of MLCs and MLAs as I am completing six years as State Congress President," he said while speaking to reporters here.

Cong releases first list of candidates for Assam assembly polls

New Delhi (UNI)

The Congress on Tuesday announced its first list of 42 candidates for the upcoming elections to the Assam Legislative Assembly, setting the stage for a keen electoral contest in the northeastern state.

The list was finalised by the party's Central Election Committee and released by AICC General Secretary KC Venugopal.

The announcement reflects the party's attempt to balance experience with fresh faces across regions, including reserved constituencies for Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST).

Among the prominent names in the first list is Lok Sabha MP Gaurav Gogoi, who has been fielded from the Jorhat constituency.

Besides Gogoi, the candidates named in the first phase include: Abudus Sobahan Ali Sarkar - Gauripur;



Markline Marak - Goalpara West (ST); Girish Baruah - Bongaigaon; Mahananda Sarkar - Barpeta (SC); Ramen Singh Rabha - Boko-Chaygaon (ST); Nandita Das - Hajo-Su-

alkuchi (SC); Satyabrata Kalita - Kamalpur; Mira Borthakur Goswami - Dispur; Diganta Barman - Barkhetri; Ashok Kumar Sarma - Nalbari.

Ratul Patuwar - Tihu; Binanda Kumar Saikia - Sipajhar; Bubul Das - Jagiroad (SC); Nurul Huda - Rupohihat; Tanzil Hussain - Samaguri; Utpal Bania - Raha (SC); Swapan Kar - Lumding; Ripen Bora - Barchalla; Narayan Bhuyan - Bihpuria; Raj Kumar Medak - Jonai (ST); Durga Bhujmij - Doomdooma; Prateek Bordoloi - Margherita; Pranjal Ghatowar - Chabua-Lahowal.

Dhruba Gogoi - Duliajan; Pranati Phukan - Naharkatia; Utpal Gogoi - Sonari; Ajoy Kumar Gogoi - Demow; Debabrata Saikia - Nazira; Indraneel Pegu - Majuli (ST); Pallabi Saikia Gogoi - Teok; Bitupan Saikia - Golaghat; Raton Engti - Bokajan (ST); Augustine Enghee - Rongkhang (ST); M. Santi Kumar Singha -

Lakhipur; Ajit Singh - Udhorbond; Dr. Amit Kumar Kalwar - Barkhola; Abhijit Paul - Silchar. Aminul Haque Lasker - Sonai; Jakaria Ahmed - Karimganj North; Kartik Sena Sinha - Patharkandi; Suruchi Roy - Ramkrishna Nagar (SC).

The announcement marks the formal beginning of the Congress party's campaign for the state polls.

Party leaders indicated that additional names would be released in subsequent lists.

The selection underscores the party's strategy to strengthen its grassroots presence across Upper Assam, Lower Assam, Barak Valley, and hill districts.

With the electoral battle expected to be intense, the first list signals the Congress' intent to consolidate its traditional support base while reaching out to new voter segments across the state.

Congress MP welcomes Revanth Reddy's proposal for Rahul as PM



Hyderabad (UNI)

Congress MPs on Tuesday welcomed Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's proposal that Rahul Gandhi should become the Prime Minister of the country.

Addressing a press meet at Gandhi Bhavan, Nagarkurnool MP Mallu Ravi said the proposal made by the Chief Minister during the DCC train-

ing session reflected the party's collective aspiration.

Mallu Ravi said that although Rahul Gandhi had opportunities in the past to assume the post of Prime Minister, he instead chose to stay connected with the people and understand their problems. He noted that Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra and Nyay Yatra helped him gain a deep understanding of social issues across the country.

Praising Rahul Gandhi's role as Leader of the Opposition, the MP said he is effectively raising people's issues in Parliament and fighting for social justice and the equitable distribution of resources. He added that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy was working to translate Rahul Gandhi's vision into action by pursuing 42 per cent reservation for Backward Classes in Telangana.

Rahul & Kharge highlight Sonia Gandhi's article over Govt's silence on killing of Iran's leader

New Delhi (UNI)

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and the Indian National Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge today drew public attention to an article penned by the Congress Parliamentary Party (CPP) Chairperson Sonia Gandhi, where she has raised doubts on government's response to the reported killing of Iran's sitting head of state.

Taking to social media platform X, Rahul Gandhi stated that the CPP chairperson Sonia Gandhi has written at the critical global juncture, emphasizing that India must stand for sovereignty and peace, and rediscover moral strength.

Sharing CPP chairperson's article on social media, Rahul Gandhi has indicated that government's stance on the issue is not as per the coun-



try's tradition.

"When the targeted killing of a foreign leader draws no clear defence of sovereignty or international law from our country and impartiality is abandoned, it raises serious

Student shot dead by stalker in Basti, accused absconding

Basti: In a shocking incident, a Class 12 student was allegedly shot dead by a man reportedly obsessed with her in the Kalwari police station area of Basti district, police disclosed on Tuesday.

The victim, Anushka, a resident of Badari Ehtmal village, was sleeping in the verandah of her house along with her brother when the accused, identified as Mandeep, allegedly entered the premises late on Monday night and fired at her from close range. She sustained two bullet injuries to her head and chest.

When her mother woke up to the sound of gunshots and tried to intervene, the accused reportedly pointed the weapon at her and fired, but the bullet missed.

Police investigations revealed that the accused had allegedly lured the girl into a relationship earlier and recorded intimate photos and videos.

When she distanced herself, he allegedly shared the images on social media on December 18, 2025.

BJP names Rahul Sinha as RS candidate from West Bengal

Kolkata: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Tuesday announced its candidates for nine Rajya Sabha seats across six states, naming Rahul Sinha as the party's nominee from West Bengal. The announcement is strong indication of the central leadership's decision to give greater weight to the state unit's views in selecting candidates for the Upper House.

Rahul Sinha, a former state president of the BJP in West Bengal, had later served as a national secretary before remaining without any organisational post for the past few years.

When he was removed as national secretary and replaced by Anupam Hazra, Sinha had openly questioned the leadership's decision, though he stayed on in the party.

MoD seals Rs 5,083 Cr maritime boost

Russian missile pact, HAL helicopters included

New Delhi (UNI)

In a major boost to India's maritime combat capabilities, the Ministry of Defence today signed contracts worth Rs 5,083 crore for the acquisition of six Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) Mk-II (Maritime Role) for the Indian Coast Guard and Surface-to-Air Vertical Launch (VL-SRAM) Shtil missile systems for the Indian Navy.

The contract for the procurement of Surface-to-Air Vertical Launch - Shtil missiles and associated missile holding frames, valued at Rs 2,182 crore, has been signed with JSC Rosoboronexport, Russian Federation.

The agreements, formalised at South Block in the presence of De-

fence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh, are aimed at significantly enhancing surveillance reach, rapid-response capability and layered air defence preparedness across India's maritime domain.

The contract for ALH Mk-III (MR) along with operational role equipment, an engineering support package, and performance-based logistics support, valued at Rs 2,901 crore, has been inked with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, Bengaluru under the Buy (Indian-Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured) category.

These twin-engine helicopters incorporate state-of-the-art features superior to the currently operated airborne platforms and are capable

of undertaking a wide spectrum of maritime security missions from shore-based airfields as well as from ships at sea. The induction will significantly enhance the Indian Coast Guard's capability for fulfilling the duties of safety and protection of artificial islands, offshore installations, and protection of fishermen and marine environment.

The project envisages supply of equipment from more than 200 MSMEs and is expected to generate approximately 65 lakh man-hours of employment.

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ED conducts searches in Sahara Land Sale case

32 acres in Berhampur allegedly sold fraudulently

New Delhi (UNI)

The Enforcement Directorate (ED), Kolkata Zonal Office, on Tuesday said it recently conducted search operations at multiple premises in Anantapur (Andhra Pradesh), Ballari (Karnataka), Bhubaneswar, and Berhampur (Odisha) in connection with the sale of a land parcel belonging to Sahara Prime City Limited at Berhampur, Odisha.

The searches were carried out as part of an ongoing investigation in the case of 'Humara India & others'. An official said that statements of various persons were recorded under Section 17 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

During the searches, it was revealed that around 32 acres (out of a total of 43 acres) of land in Berhampur were fraudulently sold in December 2025 on the basis of a revoked Board Resolution in favour of a Sahara employee and in



violation of the guidelines of the Supreme Court. The sale was allegedly carried out at the direction of the senior management of the Sahara Group. Discrepancies were also noticed between the declared sale consideration and the estimated market value of the land.

Digital evidence, such as WhatsApp communications, contact details, and call records were recovered and seized. Financial records and books of accounts of the entities

concerned, along with other incriminating documents, were also seized for detailed examination.

Earlier, the ED initiated an investigation based on FIRs registered under Sections 420 and 120B of the IPC, 1860, against M/s Humara India Credit Cooperative Society Ltd. and others by police in several states. More than 500 FIRs have been registered against various Sahara Group entities, with over 300 involving scheduled offences under the PMLA, alleging large-scale cheating of depositors through forced redeposits and denial of maturity payments.

The ED investigation revealed that the Sahara Group was allegedly operating a Ponzi scheme. Funds collected from depositors were reportedly managed in an unregulated manner without depositor oversight. Maturity proceeds were not repaid but instead reinvested, and books were allegedly manipulated to conceal such non-repayments.

High-stakes RS battle in Odisha

Dillip Ray's surprise entry sparks political buzz

Bhubaneswar (UNI)

In a move that has set Odisha's political circles abuzz, former union minister Dillip Ray has announced that he will contest the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections from the state as an Independent candidate, with the backing of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

His decision has intensified the race for the crucial fourth Rajya Sabha seat, turning it into a high-stakes political contest.

Ray's entry into the fray has triggered heightened political activity across the state.

In the 147-member Odisha Legislative Assembly, the BJP holds 79 seats and also enjoys the support of three Independent MLAs, putting it in a comfortable position to secure



two of the four Rajya Sabha seats from Odisha. The Biju Janata Dal (BJD), with 48 members, will win one seat.

The real contest, however, is for the fourth seat, which is set to witness a direct battle between Dr. Dattaswar Hota, a noted urologist and former Vice-Chancellor of Odisha Health University, and Dillip Ray.

Dr. Hota has been declared the common candidate of the BJD and the Indian National Congress, while Ray is contesting as an Independent with the BJP's support.

Earlier, the BJP's Central Election Committee approved the names of Manmohan Samal, the party's Odisha president, and Sujeet Kumar as its candidates for the March 16 Rajya Sabha elections.

LG chairs security review in Srinagar, calls for high alert

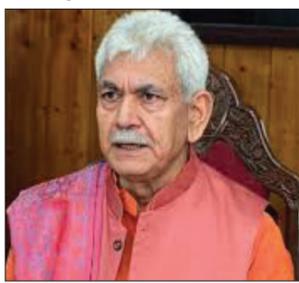
Srinagar (UNI)

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday chaired a series of security meetings in Srinagar and directed officers to remain on high alert to ensure public peace and tranquillity.

Kashmir has been witnessing widespread protests since last three days over the killing of Iranian Supreme leader Ali Khamenei.

Lieutenant Governor Sinha, who oversees security operations in the union Territory, chaired a high-level meeting of senior police and civil administration officials at the Police Control Room, Kashmir, to review the law and order situation.

The meeting was attended by Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat; Special Director General of Police (Coordination) S.J.M. Gillani; Additional Director General of Police



(Armed) Anand Jain; Additional Director General of Police CID, Nitish Kumar; Inspector General of Police, Kashmir, V.K. Biridi; Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, Anshul Garg; Deputy Inspector General of Police, Central Kashmir Range, Rajiv Pandey; Deputy Commissioner, Sri-

nagar, Akshay Labroo; and other senior officials, an official spokesman said.

The Lieutenant Governor directed the officers to remain on heightened alert and take all necessary measures to ensure public peace and tranquillity.

The Lieutenant Governor also appealed to the citizens and community leaders to uphold harmony and contribute to an atmosphere of calm and goodwill in society.

"Preserving peace and sustaining the progress of society is a shared responsibility that rests equally upon each one of us," he said.

Earlier in the day, Lieutenant Governor held in-depth deliberations on the prevailing security situation in the union Territory with senior Army and police officers.

The high-level meeting to review

the ground situation and preparedness measures with top security officials was held at Lok Bhavan in Srinagar.

According to a government spokesperson, the meeting was attended by General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Northern Command, Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma; Director General of Police, J&K, Nalin Prabhat; General Officer Commanding of the Srinagar-based 15 Corps, Lieutenant General Prashant Srivastava; and Major General Balbir Singh, MGGS, Northern Command.

Kashmir has been witnessed widespread protests since since Khamenei. While demonstrations remained largely peaceful on Sunday, clashes erupted on Monday, leaving nearly a dozen people, including security personnel, injured.

Ex-Minister RK Roja demands action against TTD chairman BR Naidu

Tirupati: Former Minister R K Roja has said that firm action should be taken against the TTD Board Chairman B R Naidu as he refuses to quit in the wake of the videos and pictures circulating on social media.

Speaking to the media here on Tuesday, she alleged that the Chairman is responsible for all the disasters that happened at Tirumala, from the mass deaths of cows to the stampede and the alleged insult to the Bhagavad Gita.

"Appointing a one-man Commission even after the Supreme Court-appointed SIT gave its report, which stated that there is no animal fat in the ghee, is ridiculous," she observed and questioned how the contract was given to Indapur at very high prices.