

Cremation of Dr Manmohan Singh to take place today

Tributes pour in for the former Prime Minister <-> Funeral at Nigambodh Ghat: MHA

NEW DELHI, Dec 27: President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar and Prime Minister Narendra Modi were among the top dignitaries who paid homage to former prime minister Manmohan Singh at his residence here on Friday.

Several leaders cutting across party lines, including Union ministers and Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi, also paid their tributes to the former two-term prime minister who died on Thursday night.

President Murmu and Vice President Dhankhar visited the residence of Singh and paid their last respects to him and met his wife and other family members.

Prime Minister Modi, who also laid a wreath, described his predecessor's death as a big loss to the nation, asserting that his commitment to the people and for the country's development would al-



ways be respected.

In a video message, Modi recalled Singh's life journey after his family migrated to India following

Partition and noted that he left everything behind but his numerous achievements since then were no mean feat. Singh, the architect

of India's economic reforms and a consensus builder in the rough world of politics, died at AIIMS, Delhi, late on Thursday. He was

Assam Govt announces 7-day mourning

declared a seven-day state mourning in honour of former prime minister Manmohan Singh.

The national flag will fly at half mast at all state government establishments and all official entertainment programmes have been cancelled, he said. The state mourning, beginning from December 26

will last till January 1, 2025.

three daughters.

on national life.

"As a mark of respect to Dr Manmohan Singh Ji, former Prime Minister of India, Government of Assam will observe a period of 7-day state mourning from 26.12.2024 to 01.01.2025. During this period the national flag will fly at half mast at all state gov-

92. He is survived by his wife and Modi, the cabinet observed a twominute silence in honour of the de-The Union cabinet at its meeting parted soul and adopted a Condolence Resolution in the

held under PM Modi also condoled Singh's passing and hailed him as memory of Singh. an eminent statesman and a distin-"Dr Manmohan Singh has left his imprint on our national life. In guished leader who left an imprint his passing away, the Nation has

During a meeting chaired by lost an eminent statesman,

GUWAHATI, Dec 27: The Assam government has ernment establishments and all official entertainment programmes are cancelled," chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma posted on X.

The former prime minister was a Rajya Sabha member from Assam for five consecutive terms from 1991 to 2019. His residential address in Guwahati was a rented ground-floor apartment in the house of former Assam chief minister Hiteswar Saikia in the Sarumotoria area.

Saikia's son and leader of the opposition in the Assam Assembly Debabrata Saikia said that he is on his way to Delhi from Belgaum to pay respects to the former prime minister. (PTI)

> renowned economist and a distinguished leader," the resolution read. The government has announced a seven-day State mourning as a mark of respect to the former prime minister. Draped in the Tricolour, Singh's body was brought to his 3, Motilal Nehru

China defends plan to build world's largest dam over Brahmaputra River in Tibet **Leopard enters** Guwahati house, BEIJING, Dec 27: China on Friday sparks panic

GUWAHATI, Dec 27: Panic prevailed in the densely populated Kumarpara area of Guwahati city on Friday, after a leopard was found taking shelter inside a house, an official said.

The leopard, suspected to have strayed into the residential area from the nearby hills, was found in the staircase of the house.

Efforts were made to trap the animal by tranquilising it, but the leopard after receiving the first shot escaped from the spot, he said. The forest department has launched an operation to capture the leopard.

Meanwhile, prohibitory orders were clamped in Kaliabor co-district after a Royal Bengal Tiger strayed from the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve, injuring a woman and killing another earlier this week.

The tiger's movement has been spotted in the Kaliabor Tea Estate, Sonarigaon, and Silghat areas.

safeguard measures. defended its plan to build the world's largest dam on the Brahmaputra River in Tibet, saying the project will not "negatively affect" lower riparian states and that safety issues have been addressed through decades of studies. Chinese Foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning played down apprehensions about the mas-

sive project to dam the Brahmaputra River, which is called Yarlung Zangbo in Tibet. The project estimated to cost around USD 137 billion is located in the ecologically fragile Himalayan region, along a tectonic plate boundary where earthquakes occur frequently.

STF apprehends suspected

jihadi in Dhubri

Mao said China carried out indepth studies for decades and took

China has always been responsible for the development of crossborder rivers, Mao told a media briefing here in response to a question on the concerns related to the dam. She said the hydropower development there has been studied in depth for decades, and safeguard measures have been taken to ensure the project's security and ecological environment protection.

"The project will not negatively affect the lower reaches," she said referring to the concerns in India and Bangladesh which are the lower riparian states. "China will continue to maintain

communication with countries at the lower reaches through existing channels and step up cooperation on

During the operation, a wanted anti-

national jihadi was apprehended,"

The STF also recovered various

the statement added



benefit of the people by the river," she said.

disasters. China on Wednesday ap-

proved the construction of the world's largest dam, stated to be the

The hydropower project will be built in the lower reaches of the Yarlung Zangbo River, the Tibetan name for the Brahmaputra River, an official statement here said.

The dam will be built at a huge gorge in the Himalayan reaches where the Brahmaputra River makes a huge U-turn to flow into Arunachal Pradesh and then to Bangladesh. Mao said China's hydropower development in the lower reaches of the Yarlung Zangbo River aims to speed up the development of (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Eight killed, over 20 injured in Punjab's **Bathinda bus accident**

Road, (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

BATHINDA (PUNJAB), Dec 27: Eight people were killed and more than 20 injured on Friday, when a bus crashed through the railing of a bridge and plunged into a drain a few feet below in this Punjab district, police said.

The bus had more than 45 passengers and it fell into the Lasara drain in Jeewan Singhwala village, officials said.

The accident occurred when the bus was on its way to Bathinda from Talwandi Sabo. Locals rushed to the spot immediately to help the passengers, the officials said, adding that eight people, including five women, were killed.

Police and district administration officials launched a rescue operation and rushed the injured people to a hospital. A National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) team also reached the spot to provide assistance, the officials said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief over the incident. "Saddened by the loss of lives in

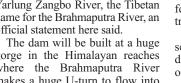
disaster prevention and relief for the the Yarlung Zangbo River aims to speed up the development of clean energy and respond to climate She said China's hydropower dechange and extreme hydrological

velopment in the lower reaches of

Himanta in limelight by pushing **BJP's Hindutva agenda in Assam**

GUWAHATI. Dec 27: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma further consolidated his position in both state and national politics by pushing the BJP's Hindutva agenda and engaging in intense anti-Congress rhetoric. From banning the consumption of beef in public and intensifying the fight against child marriage to leading the BJP to significant electoral victories. Sarma's policies kept him in the limelight. The Assam leg of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra in January faced challenges due to the state government's refusal to allow him to offer prayers at the birthplace of Vaishnav saint Srimanta Sankardeva at Batadrava, and also to enter Guwahati city. The Congress leaders and party workers tried to break through barricades and engaged in a scuffle with the police, leading to injuries to senior party leaders and workers. The chief minister's evident animosity towards Gandhi again came to the fore when Sarma accused the Congress leader of using a 'body double' during the yatra. The CM claimed the 'body double' has been identified and the details will be revealed but failed to produce any proof thereof. Banning of public consumption of beef in hotels, restaurants and community gatherings in the state by amending an existing law has been viewed as a step by Sarma to further BJP's Hindutva agenda, drawing flak from opposition parties as a "political gimmick" to polarise voters and also an infringement upon people's freedom. The BJP, however, countered by stating that the decision will help to preserve cattle and create a society where the religious sentiments of all communities

planet's biggest infra project on the Brahmaputra River in Tibet close to the Indian border, raising concerns in India and Bangladesh.



The prohibitory orders restrict the entry and movement on the new PWD road from Silghat/Rubber Bari via Silghat Kamakhya Temple to Sonarigaon/Kamakhya village, as well as the surrounding tea plantation area, from 4 pm to 9 am. The orders will remain in force until further notice, but is not applicable to police and other security personnel, forest staff, or government officials on duty, according to an official notification. (PTI)

prehended a suspected jihadi from Assam's Dhubri district, said an official statement on Friday.

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Dec 27: Special

Task Force (STF), Assam has ap-

The jihadi, identified as 36-yearold Shahinur Islam, was arrested during the 'Operation Praghat' against terrorists.

Assam man stabbed to death in Kota, 2 arrested

"In connection with that an ongoing investigation under STF PS Case No. 21/2024, the Special Task Force (STF) Assam conducted a successful raid this morning (27th December 2024) at Bandhabpara, Bilashipara under Dhubri District.

incriminating items such as two books titled Nuriliza, Jana Wazib, one PAN Card, one Aadhaar Card, one Passport and one mobile phone. In this regard, the police have initiated necessary legal and procedural formalities. "Necessary legal and procedural formalities are being carried out. The STF remains committed to ensuring the safety and security of the state by taking decisive action against anti-national activities," the statement concluded.



Assam Moslem Marriages and Divorces Registration Act and Rules of 1935', which permitted underage marriages under specific conditions, and the government subsequently tabled the repealing Bill in the assembly. The chief minister asserted this was done to not only abolish child marriages but to bring registration of Muslim marriages and divorces under a proper system of the government.

The state government also continued to crack the whip on child marriage for the third time in two years with 431 people arrested and 345 cases registered in December. Authorities claimed these drives have led to a considerable decline in maternal and infant mortality rates. The policies adopted by the state government ensured that Sarma remained in the limelight and he was rewarded with election campaign responsibilities during assembly polls in Odisha, Rajasthan, Haryana, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Jharkhand. The chief minister also successfully led the NDA in the state to an impres-

the bus accident in Bathinda, Punjab. Condolences to those who lost their loved ones. May the injured recover soon," he said in a post on X. Modi also announced an ex-gratia amount of Rs 2 lakh each from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) for the next of kin of the deceased and Rs 50,000 each for the injured.

According to the officials, the weather in the area was inclement. However, the exact cause of the accident is yet to be ascertained and investigations are on.

The drain in which the bus fell is currently a carrier of sewage water, which made the rescue operations difficult

Bathinda deputy commissioner Showkat Ahmad Parray, who reached the spot to supervise the rescue operations, said medical teams and ambulances were rushed to the spot. While five people were killed on the spot, three succumbed to their injuries in the hospital. More than 20 people were injured Bathinda (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Two of the roommates were arrested following the fight in the intervening night of Thursday and Friday, they said Hospital where he was soon declared dead. According to police, four roommates -- Vishavjeet

(22) and Inderjeet (21) who were brothers, and Paranieet (30) and Sidharth -- were having a drinking party in the room they shared. All four of them were from Kamrup district in Assam.

KOTA (RAJASTHAN) Dec 27: A man from Assam

was stabbed to death in a drunken brawl between room-

mates here in Transport Nagar, police said on Friday.

The two brothers were involved in an altercation with Paranjeet. One of them held Paranjeet while the other

ing to the complaint submitted to the police by Sidharth. In the altercation, Vishavjeet also sustained a minor injury, Kota city SP Amrita Duhan said. Other occupants of the building rushed Paranjeet to New Medical

allegedly stabbed him with a knife in the back, accord-

After the hospital alerted police regarding the incident, Anantpura police rushed to the Emergency where Sidharth narrated the sequence of events. Vishavieet. who was also treated at the hospital for his injury, was discharged and later arrested by the police. Police kept

the body of Paranjeet, who was working as a cook in in the accident, police said. are respected. The state cabinet also approved the abolition of 'The the city, in the mortuary (CONTD. ON PAGE-2) sive win in the Lok Sabha polls, (CONTD. ON PAGE-2) Small island developing states were hit the hardest Issued over 1 million nonimmigrant visas Climate change led to 41 additional days of to Indians for 2nd year: US embassy extreme heat in 2024, says new report

mission in India on Friday said it issued more than one million nonimmigrant visas for the second year in a row, including a record number of visitor visas, underscoring the huge demand of Indians for travel to the US. Washington is also working to formally establish a US-based to renew H-1B visas in that country in 2025 that is expected to benefit a significant number of Indians.

In the past four years, visitor numbers from India have increased by five times, and more than two million Indians travelled to the US in the first 11 months of 2024, a 26 per cent increase over the same period in 2023, it said.

Over five million Indians already have a nonimmigrant visa to visit the US and each day the mission issues thousands more, the embassy said

"The US mission to India issued more than one million nonimmi-

NEW DELHI, Dec 27: The US grant visas for the second year in a row, including a record number of visitor visas, underscoring the huge demand of Indians for travel to the United States for tourism, business, and education," it said in a readout.

The embassy noted that the State Department completed a successful pilot programme to renew H-1B visas in the US States this year.

This allowed many specialty occupation workers from India to renew their visas without leaving the US.

"This pilot program streamlined the renewal process for thousands of applicants, and the Department of State is working to formally establish a US-based renewal program in 2025," it said.

The US mission to India issued tens of thousands of immigrant visas, facilitating legal family reunification and the migration of skilled professionals, according to the readout. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

NEW DELHI. Dec 27: The world experienced an average of 41 more days of extreme heat in 2024 due to climate change, a new report said on Friday. According to the European climate agency Copernicus, 2024 is set to end as the

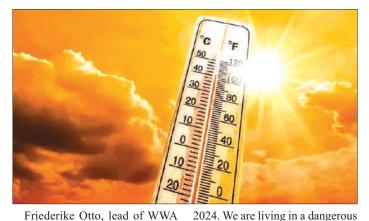
warmest year on record and the first year with a global average temperature 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. A yearly review report by two

groups of climate scientists --World Weather Attribution (WWA) and Climate Central -- said the world saw an average of 41 more days of dangerous heat in 2024.

Small island developing states were hit the hardest, with their people experiencing over 130 additional hot days. The scientists identified 219 extreme weather events in 2024 and studied 29 of them. They found that climate change contributed to at least 3,700 deaths and displaced millions in 26 extreme weather events

"It is likely the total number of people killed in extreme weather events intensified by climate change this year is in the tens or hundreds of thousands," the report said. The floods in Sudan, Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, and Chad were the deadliest event studied by the group, with at least 2,000 people killed.

The study found that if global warming reached two degrees Celsius, which could happen as early as the 2040s or 2050s, these regions might face similar heavy rainfall events every year.



2024. We are living in a dangerous and senior lecturer in climate scinew era. ence at the Imperial College, Lon-

"We know exactly what we need don, said, "The impacts of fossil to do to stop things from getting fuel warming have never been worse -- stop burning fossil fuels. clearer or more devastating than in The top resolution for 2025 must

be transitioning away from fossil fuels, which will make the world a safer and more stable place," he added. The year 2024 is expected to end with a global average temperature at least 1.55 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, according to Copernicus.

However, a permanent breach of the 1.5-degree Celsius limit specified in the Paris Agreement refers to long-term warming over a 20- or 30-year period.

That said, experts feel that the world is now entering a phase where temperatures will be consistently above this threshold.

The average global temperature has already risen by 1.3 degrees Celsius compared to the 1850-1900 average, driven by the rapid buildup of (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

maker has seven plants and a total

workforce of 4,000. The company

aims to achieve a manufacturing

capacity of 25 MTPA capacity by

2030, according to information

It has cement manufacturing

units at Lumshnong town in

Meghalaya, Sonapur near Guwa-

hati and at Mohitnagar near Jal-

paiguri, West Bengal. Moreover, it

UltraTech is the leading cement

company in India with an installed

capacity of 156.66 MTPA of grey

cement. To maintain its lead in the

sector, the Aditya Birla group flag-

ship firm plans to have 200 MTPA

capacity by FY27. In 2024 it ac-

quired India Cements Ltd and is in

process of acquisition of Kesoram

its subsidiary ACC has also ac-

ments. These acquisitions and

pan-India presence in 2024, within

two years of entry in the sector

with 70 MTPA acquired capacity

Adani Cements, a lateral entrant

Industries' cement business.

available on its portal.

has three grinding units

UltraTech is the leading cement company in India with an installed capacity of 156.66 MTPA of grey cement UltraTech to acquire minority stake in Star Cement from promoters in ₹851-cr deal

NEW DELHI/KOLKATA, Dec 27: Leading cement producer UltraTech Cement on Friday said it will acquire a minority stake of 8.69 per cent from the promoters of Meghalaya-based Star Cement in a deal worth up to \gtrless 851 crore.

UltraTech Cement will by pick up stakes from Rajendra Chamaria and his family's holdings, part of the promoter group, sources told PTI. Only the Chamaria family is selling its stake in the company, while other promoters who control Century Ply remain committed and are not divesting any shares, the sources said.

Rajendra Chamaria, when asked for comments, did not deny the development but refrained from divulging further details.

'The Chamarias are gradually selling out and have approached co-promoters like Sajjan Bhajanka and Sanjay Agarwal. Currently, the Chamarias' holdings are estimated to be around 13-14 per cent. Any new investor will not have a board seat," the sources close to the development said.

According to the latest shareholding data, the total stake of all promoter shareholders with the surname Chamaria stands at 11.25 per cent. The development comes three days after the Aditya Birla group firm completed the acquisition of a controlling stake in India Cements Ltd, turning the southbased company into its subsidiary.

The firm is expanding its capacity through acquisitions and capacity enhancement as it faces competition from billionaire Gautam Adani-led Adani Group's Ambuja cement, which is the second

ICICI Prudential Life launches 'ICICI Pru Wish' for women HT Bureau GUWAHATI, Dec 27: ICICI Prudential Life Insur-

ance has launched 'ICICI Pru Wish', the first health product in the life insurance industry specifically designed for women. ICICI Pru Wish instantly pays out up to 100% of the health cover amount on diagnosis of critical illnesses like breast, cervical, uterine cancers and heart ailments to name a few, an official statement said.

Importantly, the premium amount remains constant for a period of 30 years, enabling customers to plan their funds outflow in a better manner, it further stated. Another notable feature of this product is the premium holidav i.e. the customer has the option to not pay premiums for a period of 12 months anytime during the premium payment tenure.

Notably, the product also offers customers the option to take cover related to maternity complications and newborn congenital illnesses. Amit Palta, chief product and distribution officer. ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, said, "ICICI Pru Wish is the first health product in the life insurance industry specifically designed to cater to the health needs of women. The lump sum payout on diagnosis of a critical illness gives them financial strength to face such difficult situations", said speaking on the occasion



largest player and is also scaling up its capacity. Both the players are snapping up small cement players to consolidate their positions and achieve their targeted growth ahead of time.

Star Cement has an installed capacity of 7.7 MTPA (million tonnes per annum) with a presence in the markets of north-eastern India and is expanding in eastern markets of West Bengal and Bihar. It is the largest cement brand in north-east India.

Star Cement has recently announced plans to execute a twomillion-tonne greenfield plant in Silchar, Assam, and has outlined a long-term roadmap to reach a capacity of 15 million tonnes.

According to UltraTech Cement, some promoter and promoter group entities of Star Cement "propose to sell their equity holding in Star Cement and have approached the company for the same".

"The board of directors of the company at its meeting held today considered the proposal and approved making an investment to

acquire non-controlling minority stake up to 3.70 crores equity shares of Star Cement at a price not exceeding ₹ 235/- per share, excluding STT, stamp duty and other levies," it said.

Over the cost of acquisition or the price at which shares are ac-

scrip on Thursday. Based on that

2024. The promoter Bhajanka family and the promoters group own 66.47 per cent shareholding in

Star Cement, which was incorporated in November 2001. Star Cetax stood at ₹ 295 crore.

Manmohan Singh's reforms transformed India, unshackled economy: Economists

ister Manmohan Singh's 1991 budget unshackled India's economy, significantly enhancing the economic prospects for hundreds of millions of Indians, first deputy managing director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Gita Gopinath said on Friday.

In a social media post on X, Gopinath further said Singh's visionary reforms inspired countless young economists like her.

"Dr Manmohan Singh's 1991 budget unshackled India's economy, significantly enhancing the economic prospects for hundreds of millions of Indians. His visionary reforms inspired countless young economists like me. Rest in peace, Dr Manmohan Singh," she said. Singh, the architect of India's economic reforms, died here at the age of 92 late on Thursday. He served as the prime minister for two terms -- from 2004 to 2014.

Former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan

Contd. from Page 1...

Climate change led to 41 additional

greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and methane in the atmosphere. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the UN body for assessing the science related to climate change, says global emissions must peak by 2025 and reduce by 43 per cent by 2030 and 57 per cent by 2035 compared to 2019 levels to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

However, according to the latest UN data, current policies will take global warming to around 3 degrees Celsius by 2100. Even the full implementation of all Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) or national climate plans will likely lead to just a 5.9 per cent emission reduction by 2030 compared to 2019 levels, according to the synthesis report of countries' NDCs. Fossil fuels -- coal, oil, and gas -- are the largest contributors to climate change, accounting for over 75 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions and nearly 90 per cent of all carbon dioxide emissions.

However, the world is struggling to transition away from fossil fuels rapidly enough to prevent breaching the 1.5-degree Celsius goal due to a combination of political, economic, technological, and social challenges. The transition to clean energy sources is particularly difficult for poor countries in the Global South due to dependence on fossil fuels for jobs and cheap energy, lack of funding and technology, weak power grids, and limited expertise. (PTI)

Issued over 1 million nonimmigrant

These immigrant visa holders became permanent residents upon their arrival, adding to the already rich and siz-able Indian diaspora community in the US, it said. The US mission to India also provided more than 24,000 passports and other consular services to American citizens living and travelling in India, it noted. A new version of the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) debuted in 2024, making it easier for the embassy and consulates to contact American citizens during emergencies and send them safety and security alerts, the embassy added.

It said increase in processing of thousands of interview waiver-eligible nonimmigrant visa applications each week made it quicker and easier than ever for Indians to renew their nonimmigrant visas. "By streamlining operations and utilizing global consular resources, the US mission has been able to redirect its own resources to focus on in-person interviews, reducing wait times for all applicants," it said.

The mission also provided details about visas issued to Indian students

"More Indian students than ever before now have U.S. student visas. In 2024, India became the top sender of international students for the first time since the 2008/2009 academic year with more than 331,000 students overall studying in the US," it said. It further added that India also remained the largest sender of international graduate students in the US for the second year.

Indian graduate student numbers increased by 19 per cent to reach almost 200,000 students, according to the details. "Many exchange visitors will now be able to remain in the United States and not need to return home for two years after completing their programmes in the US, offering them more opportunities to further their careers and education," the embassy said.(PTI)

Cremation of Dr Manmohan Singh to

residence -- the sprawling bungalow in Lutyens' Delhi that served as his retirement abode for the last over 10 years ever since he relinquished charge as prime minister. Several leaders paid their last respects to the former prime minister in the presence of his wife Gursharan Kaur and other family members. Singh would be

cremated on Saturday and his final journey will commence from the AICC headquarters on Saturday, Congress general secretary K C Venugopal said. The last rites of Singh will be conducted at 11:45 am Saturday at the Nigambodh Ghat crematorium here

with State honours, the Union Home Ministry said. "It has been decided by the Government that State funeral will be accorded to Dr. Manmohan Singh. The funeral will take place at 11:45 AM on 28h December, 2024 at Nigambodh Ghat, New Delhi," the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said in a communication on Friday.

Modi said Singh's life would always serve as a lesson for the future generations on how someone can rise above deprivation and struggles to attain the heights of success. Noting that he served in various capacities in the government, the prime minister said Singh put the country on a new economic path as finance minister in the government headed by P V Narasimha Rao.

"As prime minister, his contribution to the country's development and progress will always be remembered," he added. Union ministers Amit Shah and Rajnath Singh, and BJP president J P Nadda also paid their tributes to Singh. Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin, Andhra Pradesh chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu, Himachal Pradesh chief minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu and Telangana chief minister Revanth Reddy also came to Delhi to pay their last respects to the former prime minister. Delhi chief Minister Atishi, former Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal and former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Akhilesh Yadav also paid their last respects to Singh. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat and general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale condoled his passing, saying his contributions to Bharat would always be remembered.

Born to Gurmukh Singh and Amrit Kaur on September 26, 1932 in Gah village of the Punjab province of undivided India (now Pakistan), Singh passed his matriculation examination in 1948. His family migrated to Amritsar after Partition in 1948 after living shortly in Haldwani.

Singh completed his intermediate and graduation in economics from the Hindu College here before moving out of the city to pursue higher studies in Panjab University's Hoshiarpur campus. His academic career took him from Punjab to the University of Cambridge, UK, where he earned a First Class Honours degree in Economics. Singh followed this with a DPhil in Economics from Nuffield College of Oxford University.

Singh's half-brother Surjit Singh Kohli said the former prime minister had deep affection for his grandmother, who raised him following his mother's death when he was very young. After migrating to India, the Singh family settled in a small rented house in Amritsar till he graduated. A few years ago, Singh attended the convocation-cum-alumni meet of the Hindu College in Amritsar as chief guest and interacted with the staff like an ordinary person, reminiscing old memories, retired Hindu College professor Rajinder Loomba said.

Raj Kumar (71), an Amritsar resident, told PTI Videos that Singh used to live in Petha Wala Bazaar near the Golden Temple. The house where the Singh family lived is in a dilapidated state now, Kumar said. Some locals recalled Singh as someone who always took pains for Amritsar, saying the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government he headed sanctioned several projects for the holy city. His passing also witnessed people from various fields sharing their anecdotes about him. The social media was flooded with pictures that people posted along with the former prime minister and shared their memories with fondness and nostalgia.(PTI)

NEW DELHI, Dec 27: Former Prime Minsaid Manmohan Singh's modesty came from a deep sense of courage and self-confidence.

from Swiss firm Holcim. ment had a turnover of ₹ 2,910.66 Shares of UltraTech Cement Ltd crore in FY24 and its profit after were trading at Rs 11,492.40 on BSE, up 0.31 per cent from the The Meghalaya-based cement previous close. (PTI)

in the sector, completed the acquiquired, UltraTech said it will "not sitions of Saurashtra-based Sanghi exceed ₹ 851 crore". Industries as well as Penna Indus-Shares of Star Cement were tries, and has recently announced trading at ₹ 238.80 on the BSE, up the acquisition of CK Birla group 3.94 per cent after the announcefirm Orient Cement as part of its inorganic growth strategy. ment. It has settled at ₹ 229.75 per Besides, it has snapped up small players facilities as My Home and

UltraTech has offered a premium of 2.3 per cent

Star Cement's peak share price quired Asian Concretes and Cein the last 52 weeks was at ₹ 255.95 on May 22, 2024, and lowexpansions helped Adani Cement est at ₹ 169.80 on January 18, to cross a 100 MTPA (million tonnes per annum) capacity with a

Lime Jhatka win prestigious startup award

HT Bureau GUWAHATI, Dec 27: The co-founders of Lime Jhatka, Ritesh Agarwal and Vikram Sharma, were honoured with the Startup Award at an event celebrating New Age Startups in Indore, Madhya Pradesh recently. The recognition was presented by the honourable minister of civil aviation, Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu. The journey of Lime Jhatka began with a personal mission. Ritesh and Vikram, hailing from small towns in Bengal, wanted to provide a healthier alternative to traditional sodas. They launched Lime Jhatka just before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to an official statement, the pandemic brought unexpected challenges, including market closures and rising costs. However, the duo persisted and restructured their strategy, focusing on ethnic Indian drinks and targeting the eastern states. Their efforts paid off, with Lime Jhatka achieving record-breaking sales and a growing presence in new markets. "Lime Jhatka's unique blend of Indian spices and herbs sets it apart in the competitive soft drinks segment. The brand has earned the trust and loyalty of consumers, with repeat orders exceeding 60% even in newly launched markets," the statement said.

said Singh was a brilliant economist with a visionary outlook on India's potential, combined with a fine sense of political feasibility.

Rajan described Singh as understated and soft-spoken, qualities that enabled him to attract some of the brightest minds to his team, including Montek Singh Ahluwalia, C Rangarajan and Rakesh Mohan.

"He was a brilliant economist with a great vision of what India could be, combined with a fine sense of what was possible politically ... the liberalisation and reforms he undertook with the support of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao laid the foundations of the modern Indian economy," he told PTI.

Rajan, the 23rd Governor of the Reserve Bank of India between September 2013 and September 2016, recalled that Singh was always curious. "Most persons with his experience and achievements would hold forth their views. Instead, Dr Singh heard others out and then tried to make use of what they conveyed, including criticism. "And he was a man of great integrity, never using any of his offices for personal gain," Rajan noted.

Former World Bank chief economist Kaushik Basu said Singh, admired for his sharp intellect, innate modesty, and personal integrity - qualities rarely found in politics, will be remembered as one of the greatest political leaders not only in India but also globally. Basu, who was Chief Economic Adviser (CEA) to the government in 2009-12, further

tual capaciousness that enabled him to grasp the big picture and simultaneously the minute details of policymaking.

"I have no doubt that he will go down in

"He was a combination of sharp intellect,

innate modesty and personal integrity, which

is rare in politics," the former CEA told PTI.

the early 1990s transformed India from a

struggling developing nation to one of the

spilling out from India to the United States

and Europe, in the fields of corporate leader-

owe a lot to this transformation of the 90s."

ship, science, research, and policymaking

he noted. Working closely with Singh from

2009 to 2012, Basu said he saw an intellec-

"The talent and creativity that we see today

world's fastest-growing economies.

Basu said reforms that Singh initiated in

history as one of the great political leaders not

just of India but of the world.

"He (Singh) had little time for political intrigue. And that made all the difference for India," the former CEA said.

EAC-PM member Rakesh Mohan recalled how former prime minister Manmohan Singh used to encourage young technocratic talent to join the government and play a role in policymaking. Mohan, who was also deputy governor of the Reserve Bank of India, further said Singh was receptive to ideas given by young people.

"One of his contributions to Indian policymaking was to induct a number of economic advisers at a young age, starting with Montek Singh Ahluwalia, myself, Shankar Acharya, and Arvind Virmani.

"...he was very encouraging of technocratic talent and induced them to come to the government and join," Mohan said.

Singh was a great listener and spoke verv little but whenever he did, he spoke only substance, former RBI governor D Subbarao recalled his association with Singh, who died on Thursday.

"I had experience with him as prime minister and as finance secretary and late as governor. What I would say about Dr Manmohan...that he was a great listener.

"He did not speak very much. But whenever he spoke, it has lots of substance," Subbarao, who was RBI governor from 2008 to 2013. said. (PTI)

China defends plan to build world's

clean energy and respond to climate change and extreme hydrological disasters. The total investment in the dam could exceed one trillion yuan (USD 137 billion), which would dwarf any other single infrastructure project on the planet, including China's own Three Gorges Dam which is regarded as the largest in the world, the Hong Kongbased South China Morning Post reported on Thursday.

China has already operationalised the USD 1.5 billion Zam Hydropower Station, the largest in Tibet in 2015. The Brahmaputra dam was part of the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) and National Economic and Social Development and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035 adopted by Plenum, a key policy body of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) in 2020. Concerns arose in India as the dam besides empowering China to control the water flow could enable Beijing to release large amounts of water flooding border areas in times of hostilities because of its size and scale. India too is building a dam over Brahmaputra in Arunachal Pradesh.

India and China established the Expert Level Mechanism (ELM) in 2006 to discuss various issues related to trans-border rivers under which China provides India with hydrological information on the Brahmaputra and Sutlej Rivers during the flood seasons. (PTI)

Assam man stabbed to death

for post-mortem and informed his family about the incident. Based on Sidharth's complaint, a murder case was lodged against the two brothers. Inderjeet was held from bypass Jhalawar road, where he was allegedly trying to flee Kota, the SP said. The two accused are being interrogated and they would be produced before a court on Saturday, she added. The two brothers and Paranjeet had come to Kota for work six months ago and were sharing a rented room in Transport Nagar in Kota. (PTI)

Himanta in limelight by pushing

emerging victorious in 11 of the 14 parliamentary constituencies while Congress's Gaurav Gogoi wrested the Jorhat seat from BJP and Rakibul Hussain defeated AIUDF leader Badruddin Ajmal by a record margin of over 10 lakh votes. The BJP and its allies also emerged victorious in the by-elections to four assembly constituencies, vacated by members who were elected to the Lok Sabha, with the ruling party successfully breaching the minority stronghold Samaguri, held for over 25 years by the Congress. The implementation of the Citizen Amendment Act (CAA) in March this year appears to have had no impact in the state with only one person, originally from Bangladesh receiving citizenship so far.

Meanwhile, the Centre unlocked the biometrics of over 9 lakh people from Assam who were affected during the National Register of Citizens (NRC) process for issuing Aadhaar cards. The state cabinet, however, decided on the linking of Aadhaar cards with NRC, stating that all applicants will get the unique identity card only if they had applied for NRC. The signing of the tripartite peace agreement with the pro-talks faction of ULFA heralded some hope for lasting peace, although there were misgivings about its fruitfulness as no breakthrough was made regarding dialogue with ULFA(I) led by Paresh Barua.

Although insurgency-related violence dipped over the years, sporadic incidents such as ULFA(I) claiming to have planted 'bomb-like objects' during Independence Day and the arrest of militants from a few Upper Assam districts were reported. Security concerns in Assam remained high with the arrest of suspected terrorists, including some Bangladeshis and Rohingyas, who were using the state as a corridor to either go to Delhi or Kashmir.

The situation in neighbouring Bangladesh following the deposition of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and alleged atrocities on minorities in that country also led to concerns in Assam, which shares a 263-km-long border, with the state police beefing up security along the bordering districts.

The recent visit of Sarma to Bhutan, however, opened up new vistas for strengthening economic ties with the Himalayan country. The state was also rocked by the online trading scam which came to the fore in August this year when investors, who had put in huge sums of money in 29-year-old Deepankar Barman's company, complained that he had not paid them the due returns and his office has been closed since August 21. Assam's annual floods continued to wreak havoc, affecting over 50 lakh people, inundating vast tracts of land, claiming the lives

of wildlife and livestock and damaging infrastructure. (PTI) Eight killed, over 20 injured

Urban MLA Jagroop Singh Gill visited the civil hospital here, where the injured were taken.

Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, in a post on X, said a team of the state administration reached the spot after the accident and the injured were rushed to a hospital.

"I pray to God for peace to the departed souls and a speedy recovery of the injured passengers," Mann said. Former Punjab chief minister and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Amarinder Singh, in a post on X, said: Deeply saddened by the tragic bus accident in Bathinda, that has claimed 8 lives and injured 26.

"My heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims. May they find strength in this difficult time and I pray for the quick recovery of all injured." (PTI)

CAD moderates marginally to 1.2 pc of GDP in Q2: RBI data

MUMBAI, Dec 27: India's current account deficit (CAD) moderated marginally to USD 11.2 billion or 1.2 per cent of GDP year-on-year in the July-September quarter of 2024-25, according to Reserve Bank data released on Friday.

The CAD, an indicator of the country's external payment scenario, was USD 11.3 billion or 1.3 per cent of GDP during the second quarter of 2023-24. "India's current account deficit (CAD) moderated marginally to USD 11.2 billion (1.2 per cent of GDP) in Q2 2024-25 from USD 11.3 billion (1.3 per cent of GDP) in Q2:2023-24," the RBI said. During April-September 2024 (H1 2024-25), the current account deficit was USD 21.4 billion or 1.2 per cent of GDP compared to USD 20.2 billion (1.2 per cent of GDP) in the year-ago period.

Merchandise trade deficit increased to USD 75.3 billion in the second quarter of 2024-25 from



USD 64.5 billion in the comparaand transportation services. ble period of 2023-24, as per the RBI's data on Balance of Payments. Net services receipts increased to USD 44.5 billion in Q2 2024-25 from USD 39.9 billion a year ago. Services exports have risen, on a year-on-year basis, across major categories like computer services, business services, travel services the RBI said net foreign direct in-

of 2023-24. Net inflows under foreign portfolio investment increased to USD 19.9 billion in Q2 2024-25 from USD 4.9 billion a year ago. During April-September 2024, the RBI data showed that net invisibles receipts at USD 119.0 billion were higher in H1 2024-25 against USD 101 billion a year ago, primarily on account of higher net services receipts. Also, net FDI inflows at USD

4.4 billion in H1:2024-25 was higher than USD 3.9 billion in Further, private transfer receipts, mainly representing remittances by H1:2023-24. FPI recorded net in-Indians employed overseas, rose to flows of USD 20.8 billion in H1:2024-25 compared to net in-USD 31.9 billion in the July-September quarter in 2024-25 from flows of USD 20.7 billion a year ago. In H1 2024-25, there was an USD 28.1 billion in the second accretion of USD 23.8 billion to quarter of 2023-24, the data showed. In the financial account, the foreign exchange reserves (on a BoP basis), the RBI said. (PTI)

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vestment recorded an outflow of USD 2.2 billion in Q2 2024-25 compared to USD 0.8 billion outflow in the corresponding period

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2024

REGION

Higher education has transformative role in enriching human resources: Governor

HT Bureau GUWAHATI, Dec 27: Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya said that higher education has transformative role in shaping individuals, society and the nation and the university like Tezpur University should lead the way in using the reformed human resources towards Viksit Bharat, an official statement said on Friday.

Addressing the 22nd convocation of Tezpur University in Na-paam, the Governor said, "Higher education is not merely a means to enhance an individual's knowledge and skills; it is also a powerful instrument for the overall development of society and the nation."

"This academic achievement is a result of your hard work, dedication, and unwavering faith in your goals. I am confident that all of you will continue to contribute to the growth of your family, society, and nation through your knowledge and skills," Acharya stated.

The Governor lauded Tezpur University for setting exemplary standards in education, research, innovation and social service.

He highlighted its role in fostering social awareness and providing quality education, which has earned the institution a distinctive

identity The Governor further terming the graduates the greatest assets said that with determination and courage, even the most challenging obstacles can be overcome. As the torchbearers of change, the graduates must remain vigilant and nurture a sense of national loyalty.

He further urged the students to embrace the rapid changes in the domains of knowledge, science, and technology, saying, "To re-main relevant in the 21st-century world, you must nurture a continuous desire to learn. Your responsibility extends beyond building a successful life for yourselves which includes contributing significantly to nation-building and societal development."

The Governor encouraged the graduates to work towards creating a harmonious society that ensures dignity for every individual, particularly the underprivileged and marginalized.

He remarked, "Only through such actions can India emerge as a developed, strong, and prosperous nation." During the convocation, the Governor also paid heartfelt tributes to former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, who passed away on December 26, 2024.

HT Bureau KOKRAJHAR/GUWAHATI, Dec 27: Assam is mourning following the passing of Dr Manmohan Singh, former Prime Minister and a towering figure in Indian politics and economic reforms. Dr Singh breathed his last on Thursday at

9:15 PM at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in New Delhi, after suf-

fering a sudden health crisis. He served as India's 13th Prime Minister from 2004 to 2014, was renowned for his pivotal role in liberalising the Indian economy during his tenure as Finance Minister in the 1990s. A visionary economist and a statesman of unmatched integrity, his contributions have left an indelible mark on the nation's history. Dr Manmohan Singh shared a special

bond with Assam, having represented the state in the Rajya Sabha for an unprecedented 28 years, starting in 1991.

His tenure as a representative of Assam brought attention and resources to the state, which he frequently visited during his time in office

In 2012, Dr Singh visited Kokrajhar in the Bodoland Territorial Council meeting people from various communities and addressing their concerns.

Prominent leaders from Assam and across the nation have expressed their condolences and paid tribute to Dr Singh.

Pramod Boro, chief executive member (CEM) of the Bodoland Territorial Region and President of the United People's Party Liberal (UPPL), called him a leader whose "legacy as a statesman and economist will inspire generations to

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma also extended his heartfelt condolences, reminiscing about Dr Singh's humility and intellectual brilliance. "I have had the privilege of knowing Dr Manmohan Singh Ji since 1991. In all my interactions, his simplicity and decency, combined with

intellectual his prowess, always stood out," Dr. Sarma stated. He lauded Dr

Singh's pivotal role in transforming India's economy and ending on Friday.

decades of regressive policies. Meanwhile, All Bodo Students Union (ABSU) also expressed profound sorrow and extended heartfelt condolences on the passing of Dr Manmohan Singh, the former Prime Minister of India and a towering fig-

Assam mourns the loss of former

Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh

CM Sarma lauds Dr Singh's pivotal role in transforming India's economy

ure in Indian politics. In a statement, ABSU president Dipen Boro and general secretary Khanindra Basumatary highlighted Dr Singh's immense contributions to the nation, stating, "Dr

Manmohan Singh was a remarkable statesman who played a pivotal role in strengthening and shaping the Indian economy during his tenure. His dedication to public service, humility, and commitment to the betterment of the nation will albe ways remembered." Assam Governor

Lakshman Prasad Acharya condoled the demise of former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, an official statement said

In his condolence message, Acharya termed Dr Manmohan Singh's death a great loss to the nation who spearheaded India's economic reforms scripting a new height in economic management.

"As a public representative he contributed

immensely to the general welfare of the people at large. He served the country with deep commitment, love and compassion. Assam was very close to his heart, as he represented Assam for 28 years," the Governor said.

"I convey my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family members and pray to God to be with the bereaved family members in this testing time. May his soul rest in peace", the Governor added.

Our Sivasagar correspondent adds: The Sivasagar Doulmukh Chariali Byabasayee Santha held a condolence meeting at Swahid Khageswar Talukdar Market to mourn the death of former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh

Local leaders, including journalist Sonesh Deka, trader association president Anil Gupta, and educationist Jyoti Dutta, paid tribute to Dr Singh recalling his contributions to Assam, especially in funding infrastructure like the indoor stadium at Government High Secondary School.

At Rajiv Bhawan, a condolence meeting was organised by the Congress, where leaders such as Lakhi Handique, Manjeer Gogoi and Monoranjan Borgohain spoke about Dr Singh's economic reforms and his amiable personality.

The meetings were attended by several Congress workers and local residents, reflecting on Dr Singh's lasting impact on India's economic growth.



HT Bureau

TEZPUR, Dec 27: The three-day Tezpur Literary Festival (TLF) concluded recently, with a vibrant finale at NERIWALM, bringing together literature, storytelling, and cultural heritage in a celebration of creativity and community. The festival attracted intellectuals, authors, artists and literature enthusiasts from across the region.

The concluding day began with the session "Catalysts of Change: Pioneering Progress in the Socio-Economic Landscape," featuring Neelam Dutta and Puspadhar Das. Moderated by Pankaj Das, the discussion

explored ways to foster entrepreneurship in

Assam, revolutionise agriculture with innovative practices, and promote Assamese cuisine as a global cultural and economic asset.

The speakers called on the youth to lead in reimagining agriculture and cuisine as pillars of sustainable progress.

Renowned author and translator Mitra Phukan conducted a "Workshop on Translation", moderated by Dr Rajlakshmi Basumatary. She highlighted the creative possibilities and challenges of literary translation, emphasising the need to preserve cultural and emotional nuances.

"In translation, we are translating not just words, but cultures and stories," she remarked.

Former Indian volleyball captain Abhijit Bhattacharya was felicitated online during the session. He shared insights into the success of the Brahmaputra Volleyball League and announced the upcoming Super League in Tezpur on January 23, 2025.

The "Versified Hues" multilingual poetry and prose session, moderated by Himanshu Raj Borah, celebrated linguistic diversity with poetic recitations in English, Assamese, Hindi, Bengali and Sadri.

A festival highlight, the Galpakatha storytelling session, featured Atanu Bhattacharya and Mitali De narrating Gulzar's "Dhuwa" and the Bengali tale "Heera Besibole Oha Manuh Jon", accompanied by Raktim Goswami's guitar melodies.

tory session, graced by Assamese actor and voice artist Kapil Bora as the chief guest.

Bora reminisced about filming his first sponsors were felicitated.

Coordinator Pankaj Das delivered a heartfelt vote of thanks, marking the end of the festival. The Tezpur Literary Festival was lauded as a resounding success, celebrating the power of literature to connect people, languages, and traditions while inspiring creativity and community growth.



AWU introduces

HT Correspondent

JORHAT, Dec 27: Assam Women's University (AWU) has launched an innovative initiative using a humanoid robot named "Maya" to teach English at peripheral schools in the Rowriah area.

The humanoid robot is specifically designed to make language

learning interactive and enjoyable. Highlighting the significance of the initiative, Prof Ajanta Borgohain Rajkonwar, vice-chancellor of AWU said, "This is the first startup on campus. This initiative reflects the university's dedication towards applying technology in the field of education to overcome challenges in teaching and learning, particularly in areas with limited access to quality resources. It's a step toward reimagining educa-

tion for a better future. The robot was developed by Day-long event held on Science Conference Project

HT Correspondent HOWRAGHAT, Dec 27: The Assam Council of Science, Technology and Environment, in collaboration with Aryabhatta Science Centre and the National Children's Science Conference, hosted a day-long event on Children's Science Conference project on science research under National Discovery Mission at Howraghat Nagar Girls Higher Secondary School on Friday.

The conference, focusing on "Traditional Knowledge Methods for Sustainable Development," featured projects from class IX to XII students to from 16 government and provincialised schools.

The event aimed to nurture scientific thinking among students and highlight sustainable development through traditional knowledge. A total of thirty projects were presented in the event, with all participants receiving certificates.

The event was inaugurated by Karuna Kanta Boro, retired senior teacher of Ok-Kereng High School.

It was attended by dignitaries such as principal of Howraghat English Medium High School, Muktalal Das; senior teacher of Rajapathar High School Lalita Bardoloi; senior teacher of Howraghat Nagar Girls High School, Krishna Rajbanshi and district coordinator of Aryabhatta Science Center Karbi Anglong District, Bhavananda as distinguished guests.

Two-day Nath-Jugi Sahitya Sanmilan kicks off in Morigaon

HT Correspondent MORIGAON, Dec 27: The two-day Nath-Jugi Sahitya Sanmilan-2024 began at Morigaon Bihutoli ground on Friday, aiming to promoting Nath-Jugi literature.

The event commenced with the hoisting of the organaisation's flag by the president of district

The festival concluded with a grand valedic-

movie at the NERIWALM venue and spoke on the role of books and literature in fuelling creativity. He distributed prizes to quiz winners and contributors, while TLF's advisors and

Humanoid Robot to

Governor reviews government schemes in Jamugurihat

HT Correspondent BISWANATH CHARIALI, Dec 27: Assam Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya reviewed government schemes in Jamugurihat on Friday, as a part of his 3 day visit in Sonitpur district.

After attending the convocation at Tezpur University, the Governor toured the Kanyaka Bahumukhi Krishi Farm, where he was felicitated by the Kanyaka family.

He planted a sapling at the farm's namghar and toured various facilities including the nursery, fish farm, dairy farm, poultry farm, and piggery.

The Governor later visited Moronakuri village, where he experienced Assamese culture and cuisine, including traditional

dishes like chunga pitha and til pitha. He interacted with villagers, farmers and children and took stock of ongoing government schemes such as the JJM project and Adarsha Anganwadi center.

He further had a brief interaction with the teachers of Ghiladhari LP School. The Governor's visit highlighted the state's efforts in community development and the implementation of government welfare schemes.

The governor was accompanied by Kumud Devi, the first lady of the state, Sootea MLA Padma Hazarika, district commissioner of Sonitpur Ankur Bharali. SP. Sonitpur Barun Purkavastha, ADCs besides other officials during the entire tour

Brother appeals to public to find his missing brother and sister-in-law

HT Correspondent

BOKAJAN, Dec 27: The brother of a couple, who had gone missing since November 2, has urged public to inform police if they find any leads about them.

The missing couple has been identified as Pontu Buragohain and Bobita Buragohain, both residents of Vophong Terang village in Karbi Anglong's Sukhanjan.

As per family members, first Pontu went missing in Kerala where he used to work and subsequently his wife -- Bobita Buragohain -- also disappeared from the house leaving behind a 14 month old baby.

Following this, the family members launched a search hunt for both in Bokajan as well as in Kerala. However, they failed to collect any information about them.

Upon failing in their attempts, the family eventually knocked the door of police station and lodged a missing complaint.

Prakash Jyoti Das, faculty of computer science and technology and said that it is equipped with AI-driven teaching capabilities designed to make learning interactive and effective.

Vice-Chancellor Rajkonwar described it as the university's first start-up and a significant step toward transforming education in resource-limited areas.

Head of English Department, Dr Prashanta Puzari has announced the plans to expand the initiative, aiming to inspire educational excellence across more schools.

The project has been widely lauded by parents and educators as pioneering effort in Northeast India



committee Lakhyajyoti Nath, followed by the flag-raising of Sahitya Sanskriti by vice president Balen Ch Barua. The ceremony included a 'smriti tarpan' by the reception committee president Basanta Kr Nath and cere-

cationist Punaram Nath. In conjunction with the event, a 'health mela' was inaugurated by Dr Arun Kr Nath, joint director of health, Morigaon.

The food hall was inaugurated by Mayong College's Samir Kr Nath and Minalini Devi.

A poetry recitation event was inaugurated by Dr Jayanta Kr Nath with Dr Utpal Nath of Mayong College conducting the session.

The cultural segment included folk song and dance performances from artists of Darrang and Kokrajhar, inaugurated by district cultural officer Angshuman Dutta. The program will conclude on Saturday with various cultural performances.

Nowgong college professor honoured for research excellence in Lichenology

HT Correspondent NAGAON, Dec 27: Dr Farista Yasmin, an associate Professor in the Department of Botany at Nowgong College has been honoured with the prestigious title of 'Fellow for the year 2024' by the Indian Lichenological Society in Lucknow.

She was felicitated and honoured for her exceptional contributions to the field of lichenology.

Dr Yasmin has made significant discoveries, including the identification of two new species of lichens from Assam and the documentation of 628 lichen species.

Notably, she has also recorded 105 species of lichens, one of which is a new addition to India's lichenological records.

Her research has set new milestones in the study of lichens, marking a major achievement in the scientific community.

Distinguished guests, including Dr Mukut Goswami a prominent physician and donor of the Dulal Chandra Goswami Memorial Research Award, attended the event. Dr Goswami praised Dr Yasmin's remarkable work and congratulated her for bringing distinction to both the college and

the state. The ceremony was attended by



Dr Yasmin's students, colleagues and well-wishers, along with online participation from eminent personalities such as Dr Sanjiva Nayaka, chief scientist at the National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow and Dr Jagannath Vishwakarma, senior scientist at the

University of Bristol. In addition to Dr Yasmin's felicitation, the event featured the release of the Department of tion she has brought to the Botany's annual newsletter, institution

"Green Leaf." Another highlight of the ceremony was the recognition of Deepjyoti Deka, a former student of the department, for clearing the Com-

mission examination. The administration of Nowgong College has expressed immense pride in her accomplishment, acknowledging the global recogni-

bined Assam Public Service Com-

Nagaon Police seize drugs worth over ₹3 crores

HT Correspondent NAGAON, Dec 27: In a major drug bust, Nagaon police seized a large consignment of narcotics valued at over ₹ 3 crores.

The drugs were discovered on Thursday hidden in a vehicle, which had been kept under police custody at Nagaon Sadar police station after being seized during an anti-drug operation at Anand Nagar in Nagaon town.

The operation followed the arrest of a drug peddler, Anzar Hussain, on December 6. Although initial attempts to seize the drugs were unsuccessful, as Hussain reportedly set them on fire inside his toilet, the police later seized a vehicle (registration number AS 01 AX2621) from his residence.

The police conducted a thorough search of the vehicle in the presence of a magistrate and uncovered 44 packets of drugs concealed in a secret chamber. The estimated market value of the seized drugs is over ₹ 3 crores.

Further investigations are ongoing, and authorities are continuing their efforts to dismantle the local drug network.

Rotary Clubs host musical event to promote awareness on organ donation

Celebrated the birth centenary of legendary singer Mohammed Rafi



<u>HT Bureau</u>

GUWAHATI, Dec 27: In an extraordinary blend of music and social awareness, six Rotary Clubs (RC) of Guwahati recently hosted a musical event to promote awareness on organ donation.

The six Rotary Clubs. known as RC Guwahati, RC Gauhati South, RC

endary West, RC Guwahati Luit, and RC Guwahati Icons, hosted Musicologies – Sangeet se Sanjivani, a spectacular event celebrating the life-saving importance of organ donation and the timeless legacy of The event marked the

The day began with an Organ-O-Walk rally from Latasil playground which flagged off by Bornali Sharma, secretary of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Assam.

Over 300 participants carried banners advocating organ donation, followed by an energetic Zumba session led by Ms Hasina of Gold Gym.

The event served as a platform for powerful video messages on organ donation and Rotary Clubs' community initiatives. In a special message, chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma complimented the initiative for raising awareness for the life saving practice of Organ donation.

The combined efforts of the six Rotary Clubs and their partners ensured the programme's success, leaving the audience both entertained and inspired to support organ donation

Guwahati Metro, RC Gauhati music.

birth centenary of leg-Gupshup.

ham, SBI, DY365, and

singer hammed Rafi It was held in association with Zublee Foundation and IFRM 3240 Guwahati Symphony. The Assam Tribune partnered as the Print Media Sponsor, with support from esteemed organisations like Sub-

Mo

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THE HILLS TIMES VOL.I, ISSUE 294, GUWAHATI, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2024

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country. - John F Kennedy

Architect of India's economic reforms

n June 21, 1991, the 70-year-old Congress veteran P V Narasimha Rao took oath as the Prime Minister of a minority government amidst massive political uncertainty over its survival. The Congress had got only 232 seats as against the usual majority of 272 in the Lok Sabha elections in 1991 out of the total strength of 543. The next 34 days from June 21 to July 24, the day, P V Narasimha Rao's first budget was presented by the Finance Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, had all the elements of a high octane political and economic thriller which can be made use of by an ace director to make a top-class eco-political film. The soft-spoken Rao, the former chief minister of Andhra Pradesh who knew 17 languages. created history by pioneering the economic reforms through his first budget and the new industrial policy presented on the same day July 24. In full collaboration with the economist and finance minister Dr Manmohan Singh. Those who had the opportunity to observe the developments from close quarters in those tumultuous days, saw how resolutely, Prime Minister Rao protected his finance minister from all attacks by his senior Congress colleagues and led the senior bureaucrats to go ahead with the reforms programme despite continuous feedback from the Congress seniors that Rao was deviating from Nehruvian policies.

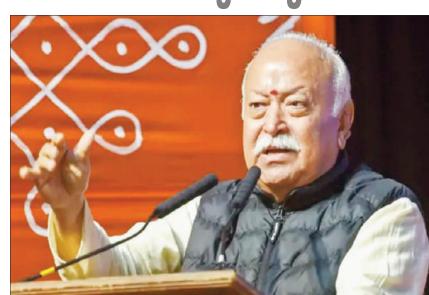
The Rao government had the benefit of a qualified team of senior bureaucrats who worked till late night in fine-tuning the explosive new ideas of the Prime Minister and the finance minister. On D-Day, July 24, the Prime Minister was quite nervous in the morning. But Singh's 1991 budget unshackled India's economy, significantly enhancing the economic prospects for hundreds of millions of Indians. Dr Singh, often hailed as the architect of modern India's economic reforms, also championed environmental conservation and climate action during his decade-long tenure as prime minister (2004-2014). He was a brilliant economist with a great vision of what India could be, combined with a fine sense of what was possible politically... the liberalisation and reforms he undertook with the support of Prime Minister Rao laid the foundations of the modern Indian economy. Under his leadership. India launched the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), passed the landmark Forest Rights Act (FRA) to protect the rights of tribal communities and established the National Green Tribunal (NGT) to safeguard the environment through swift legal action.

For centuries, India's tribal communities were sidelined from decisions about their own land. The UPA-1 government under Singh flipped that script. His government passed the Forest Rights Act in 2006, handing back the control of forests to the people who lived in and protected them. Unassuming, erudite, soft-spoken and a consensus builder, Singh died at Delhi's All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) on Thursday. He was 92. The Congress leader, who steered India for 10 years from 2004 to 2014 and helped set up the country's economic framework as finance minister. Dr Singh, admired for his sharp intellect, innate modesty, and personal integrity - qualities rarely found in politics, will be remembered as one of the greatest political leaders not only in India but also globally.

Mohan Bhagwat's bold tutoring - Sign of an internal disquiet?

olitical climate in many countries has Deen altering these days. There have been reasons behind trends that have democratically overthrown incumbent governments. But there have also been chaos and skirmishes and armed rebellions in streets in some countries which ultimately vanquished ruling regimes. Bangladesh, India's neighborhood, was one among those regions that empowered its people to overthrow an elected government, which they call, a popular uprising that converted the country into a radical destination for the Islamists. What followed after the eviction of Sheikh Hasina was heart wrenching and horrendous. Minorities, especially hundreds of Hindus and Buddhists were thrashed, molested, raped and burnt alive. The situation in that country came as a convincing example for the rest of the world that intolerance of the majority can any time turn into an unpredictable violence with its gargantuan dominance on the minorities. India's case is different. Here, the major-

ity, the Hindus, hold a different philosophy that rests on the pillars of assimilation and acceptance. The majority in India has been extremely magnanimous when it comes to their habit of sharing space for others. But its history has been ridiculously manipulated and concealed of facts by the perpetrators, the historians who could easily mislead and misrepresent it for decades. Invasions, aggressions and the polarization of the Hindus have been consistently depositing emotional insecurity and apathy on them. Their temples and spiritual places were toppled and distorted and they still remain symbols of barbaric aggression causing indelible wounds in their minds. Obviously there had been vigor and valor. But there had also been helplessness and the vacuum it created throughout the journey of independent India was unfathomable. Their resentment was silent, and their approach was conservative and they could easily be polarized in the name of caste, and they could not activate a profound momentum against the partiality they suffered. Leaders at the time of India's independence, after slicing a radical Islamist region out of its landmass, conceived a new India, which was secular in nature and accommodated everybody including those who shamefacedly raised slogans for a particular state in the name of religion. Everybody had a space for survival in India. But Pakistan was the creation of animosity being hatched for years in the name of a religious belief and its intolerance geared up all through the



dark days of freedom struggle slitting the veins of togetherness.

What remained unseen for years were the bruises of the Islamic invasion and the brutal partition of India and the horror it had on formation of RSS had also been the result the majority. Vulnerability to the extent of of the ruthless killing of innocent Hindus by distrusting a man at the neighborhood for a Muslim mob in the Malabar region of his being the follower of a different religion Kerala in 1921. Though banned multiple was the worst. Ideologically convulsed and times, the Sangh enhanced its reach and irritably intolerant were the beliefs of the power all over the country ever since the conspirators. People representing such beforming governments in India, today its emliefs placed their religion beyond the glory of the nation and they strictly believed that their acrimonious behavior and if necessary, unquestionable their deat

would justi

witness justice.

'holy'

India's

death too, justify their	DEGREE OF THOUGHT
stance - division.	By: M.R.Lalu

and pillaged during Though the struggle for freedom was a the external aggression remained inconcommon cause, there had been this exaspertestably painful among the majority while ation which emanated from the conflict of identity. Ultimately leading to the vivisection of an inclusive nation that attracted prominent faiths from across the globe, India's ruling regimes from the beginning of its independent journey failed to demonstrably help its major chunk of population Well before India's independence, there had also been thoughts that began to sense urgency for a Hindu unity. The undercurrent of intolerance and distrust in the name of religion remained a reality and probably that

laws and lawmaking mechanisms of the country consistently strengthened the Muslim minority from all directions, unpardonably submissive to its collective vote bank. Multiple laws get enacted phenomenally over and over again just to satiate the Muslim interests while disparagement of the majority continued to be disregarded under the regimes led by the Congress for decades. Things began to change in 2014, when Narendra Modi, a present-day incarnation of the Hindutva political ecosystem gained accolades. Ever since, there have been distinct and extraordinary approaches from the regime's side to strengthen the feelings of the majority.

Since 2014, elections across the country

freedom. In 1925 an organization intended

to organize the Hindu majority was estab-

lished which later came to be known as

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). The

British left its soil. Growing to the level of

inence, prominence and dominance became

In fact the temples

and religious places

which were plucked

have reverberated slogans signaling the unity of the Hindus, though the Prime Minister was visibly hesitant to go with the flow until recently. Election results to the Jammu-Kashmir assembly might have shaken his conviction. This time, in Maharashtra, Narendra Modi's "Divided we fall" call had broken the long-standing precedent of a feeble coalition with BJP an underdog. The electorate of the state blessed his party with a commendable victory. The saffron camp's concerns have been intense as Muslim unity has been visibly toppling electoral equations in various pockets.

There have also been attempts to revive the fallen spiritual structures including the Ayodhya through judicial processes. The recent attempts to revive Gyanvapi, Mathura Krishna temple and the controversy erupting from Sambhal began to gain prominence mainly due to the legal interventions of individuals and agencies outside the government and the ecosystem of RSS. There has been a confusion simmering so strong ever since Mohan Bhagwat, the RSS chief came all guns blazing against such movements. His point of warning to those on the forefront of this emancipation spree was to shed such demands of revival. He critiqued them for attempting to viciously break the amiability among religions by disruptively searching for buried debris of temples under mosques. He stretched his hands of friendship ideally by visiting mosques and conversing with Muslim clergymen. But his attempts seemed to have not gone well among the Sangh Parivar. This time his suggestion was to forget and forgive even though moments of horrors and bloodshed from the past are bound to haunt the majority. Quite unusually, Bhagwat's statements brought bitter resentments among sages. Some of whom publicly reprimanded him for confusing people. Jagadguru Ramabhadracharya slammed the RSS Chief for his mandir-masjid remarks. As the year draws to a close, there seems to be an emotional wrestling match evolving between the Sangh and the sages. Does the BJP subscribe to the views of Mohan Bhagwat, or will it go ahead with its unity slogans "batoge to katoge" and "ek hai to safe hai"? Year 2025 is the centenary of the RSS. We need to wait until next year to know how the Sangh Parivar is going to perceive the blistering remarks of its chief. (The author and freelance journalist who can be reached at mrlalu@30gmail.com)

Dr Manmohan Singh: The Dr Manmohan Singh: A silent reformer By: Himangshu Ranjan Bhuyan architect of Indian economy he story of Dr. Manmohan Singh is

On December 26, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi, announced his passing. Dr Singh, who had been in frail health for months, succumbed to age-related complications after losing consciousness at his residence earlier that evening

By: Dipak Kurmi

Manmohan Singh, India's former Prime Minister and economic liberalization, passed

growth Under Dr. Singh's stewardship, India transitioned from the "Hindu rate of growth" of 3.5% annually to the architect of the nation's a robust growth rate exceeding 7%. This economic renaissance spurred

Despite his monumental achievements, Dr. Singh often struggled to communicate his successes to the masses. His understated demeanor and aversion to self-promotion allowed political rivals to undermine

one of quiet perseverance, unwavering integrity, and transformative leadership. Throughout his life, he exemplified a unique blend of intellectual brilliance and humility, leaving an indelible mark on India's economic and political landscape. His passing marks the end of an era, but his legacy as a silent reformer endures, offering valuable lessons for generations to come.

was the reason which propelled a thought

process for a new organization; an organi-

zation that would seek the unity of Hindus

and would ultimately lead the country to its

Born in the modest village of Gah, now in Pakistan, on September 26, 1932, Dr. Singh experienced the upheavals of Partition firsthand. This early exposure to loss and dis-



away at the age of 92. His demise marks the end of an era, leaving behind an indelible legacy of economic transformation, political astuteness, and unparalleled statesmanship. A luminary of modern India, Dr. Singh's contributions spanned over five decades, encompassing roles as an economist, reformer, and leader who profoundly influenced the trajectory of the nation.

On December 26, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi, announced his passing. Dr. Singh, who had been in frail health for months, succumbed to age-related complications after losing consciousness at his residence earlier that evening. Despite resuscitative measures, he was declared dead at 9:51 PM. His death has left the nation in mourning, with tributes pouring in from political leaders, intellectuals, and citizens across the country.

Dr. Singh's life was a testament to the transformative power of vision and perseverance. Born in 1932, his academic journey began at Panjab University and culminated at Oxford University, where he earned a D.Phil in Economics. An illustrious career in academia and bureaucracy followed, with pivotal roles such as Chief Economic Advisor, Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, and Secretary-General of the South Commission in Geneva. His intellectual rigor and economic expertise laid the foundation for his most significant contribution to India's history-the economic reforms of 1991.

The Architect of Economic Liberalization

As Finance Minister in Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's government, Dr. Singh steered India out of an economic abyss. Faced with a severe balance-of-payments crisis, he dismantled the labyrinthine "Control Raj" of permits and licenses, ushering in a new era of economic liberalization. His reforms reduced bureaucratic hurdles, introduced competition, and opened India's doors to foreign investments and global trade. These changes not only stabilized the economy but also set the stage for unprecedented

technological advancements, industrialization, and urbanization, lifting millions out of poverty. The reforms also democratized access to consumer goods, making automobiles, electronics, and improved dietary options available to the burgeoning middle class and lower-income groups

Dr. Singh's vision extended beyond economic metrics. He sought to empower the Indian populace by fostering entrepreneurship, encouraging innovation, and promoting education. His policies reflected a commitment to creating a more equitable society while integrating India into the global economic order.

A Statesman of Unmatched Dignity

As Prime Minister from 2004 to 2014, Dr. Singh led the Congressled United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government with humility and quiet determination. While Sonia Gandhi managed party dynamics and Pranab Mukherjee handled day-to-day governance, Dr. Singh focused on overarching policy frameworks. His leadership style, marked by restraint and intellect, stood in stark contrast to the theatrics often associated with Indian politics.

One of Dr. Singh's crowning achievements was the Indo-US Civil Nuclear Agreement, which ended India's decades-long nuclear isolation. Despite vehement opposition from his Leftist allies, he demonstrated remarkable courage and conviction, prioritizing the nation's strategic interests. The deal not only bolstered India's energy security but also elevated its status as a responsible nuclear power on the global stage.

Dr. Singh's tenure was also marked by deft diplomacy. He skillfully navigated India's relationships with neighboring countries and major global powers, turning international challenges into opportunities. Following the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, he galvanized global support against Pakistan's statesponsored terrorism, isolating Islamabad on the world stage without resorting to military conflict. The Undervalued Communica-

toi

his legacy. Critics accused him of being overly reticent and out of touch with the electorate, failing to effectively counter populist narratives. Yet, history has a way of separating the ephemeral from the enduring, and Dr. Singh's contributions are increasingly recognized as transformative milestones in India's development

A Farewell to a Visionary Dr. Singh's passing has elicited tributes from across the political spectrum. President Droupadi Murmu hailed him as "a visionary statesman and one of the greatest sons of Bharat," while Prime Minister Narendra Modi acknowledged his wisdom, humility, and farreaching contributions. Congress leaders, including Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi, lauded his integrity, honesty, and unwavering commitment to the nation.

As the nation bids farewell to this iconic leader, it is essential to reflect on the breadth of his legacy. Dr. Singh's vision extended beyond immediate economic gains; he sought to empower every Indian through opportunities created by an open and dynamic economy. His reforms laid the foundation for India's ascent as a global power, while his humility and ethical leadership set a benchmark for public service.

Remembering the Good Doc-

Dr. Singh's journey from a small village in undivided Punjab to the highest echelons of power is a source of inspiration. His life exemplifies the transformative power of education, perseverance, and a steadfast commitment to public welfare. As the world remembers him, the words he spoke in his final press conference as Prime Minister resonate profoundly: "History will be kind to me.' Indeed, history will remember Dr.

Manmohan Singh not only as the architect of India's economic reforms but also as a statesman who shaped a more prosperous, inclusive, and globally respected India. His legacy will endure as a beacon of hope and progress for generations to come. (The writer can be reached at dipakkurmiglpltd@gmail.com)

placement forged a resilience that defined his character. His academic journey, which took him from Punjab University to the University of Cambridge and later to Oxford, was a testament to his exceptional intellect. Dr. Singh's scholarly pursuits were rooted in economics, a field where he would later make groundbreaking contributions as a policvmaker.

Dr. Singh first came to national prominence during the economic crisis of 1991, when India faced a balance of payments crisis that threatened its financial stability. As Finance Minister under Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, Dr. Singh was entrusted with the monumental task of rescuing the economy. In what can only be described as a watershed moment, he introduced a series of economic liberalization measures that dismantled decades of protectionism. These reforms opened India's doors to global trade and investment, ushering in a period of unprecedented economic growth. His famous assertion in Parliament-"No power on earth can stop an idea whose time has come"-captured the urgency and inevitability of the changes he championed.

The liberalization of the Indian economy under Dr. Singh's stewardship marked a departure from the License Raj, a system that had stifled entrepreneurship and innovation. By eliminating bureaucratic hurdles, encouraging foreign investment, and reducing trade barriers, he laid the foundation for India's transformation into a global economic powerhouse. These reforms were not without controversy; critics argued that they widened income disparities and left some sections of society behind. Yet. Dr. Singh's vision was clear—economic growth was essential for lifting millions out of poverty and securing India's place on the global stage.

In 2004, Dr. Singh assumed the role of Prime Minister, leading a coalition government that required delicate balancing acts to maintain stability. His tenure was characterized by policies aimed at inclusive growth, reflecting his deep concern for the underprivileged. Landmark initiatives such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and the Right to Information Act empowered millions of Indians, particularly in rural areas. These policies underscored his belief that economic progress must translate into tangible benefits for the marginalized.

Dr. Singh's approach to governance was rooted in consensus-building and quiet diplomacy. In stark contrast to the often confrontational style of contemporary politics, he relied on dialogue and mutual respect to navigate the complexities of coalition poli-

tics. His ability to maintain composure under pressure earned him respect across the political spectrum. This was particularly evident in his handling of the Indo-U.S. Civil Nuclear Agreement, a landmark deal that not only strengthened India's energy security but also cemented its position as a responsible global power.

Despite his achievements, Dr. Singh's tenure as Prime Minister was not without challenges. Allegations of corruption and

Born in the modest village of Gah, now in Pakistan, on September 26, 1932. Dr. Singh experienced the upheavals of Partition firsthand. This early exposure to loss and displace*ment forged a resilience* that defined his character

policy paralysis during his second term tarnished the public perception of his government. Critics accused him of being overly reticent and failing to assert himself against vested interests within his coalition. Yet, even his harshest detractors acknowledged his personal integrity. Dr. Singh's reputation as a leader who placed national interest above all else remained intact, a rarity in an era of increasing political opportunism.

One of Dr. Singh's most defining qualities was his humility. He was a leader who never sought the spotlight, preferring instead to let his work speak for itself. This humility extended to his interactions with colleagues, opponents, and the public. He often described himself as an "accidental politician," a phrase that belied his profound understanding of governance and policy. For Dr. Singh, leadership was not about rhetoric or personal aggrandizement; it was about service to the nation.

Dr. Singh's legacy is multifaceted. As an economist, he redefined India's economic trajectory, proving that bold reforms could coexist with social responsibility. As a

statesman, he demonstrated the power of quiet diplomacy, earning the respect of global leaders. As a Prime Minister, he prioritized the welfare of ordinary citizens, ensuring that the benefits of growth reached the most vulnerable sections of society. But perhaps his greatest contribution was his unwavering commitment to ethical governance.

In an age of hyper-partisanship and political grandstanding, Dr. Singh's measured approach to leadership stands out as a beacon of hope. He showed that effective governance does not require theatrics but rather a deep understanding of issues, a clear vision, and a steadfast commitment to the greater good. His calm demeanor and thoughtful decision-making were a welcome antidote to the often chaotic nature of Indian politics.

Dr. Singh's life was a journey of service, guided by principles of honesty, compassion, and intellectual rigor. His contributions to India's growth and development are immense, but his legacy extends beyond policies and reforms. He leaves behind an example of leadership that is as relevant today as it was during his time in office. At a time when the world faces complex challenges, from economic inequality to climate change, the values Dr. Singh espoused-integrity, humility, and a focus on long-term solutions-offer invaluable lessons.

As India mourns the loss of one of its most distinguished leaders, it is also an opportunity to reflect on the principles that defined his life. Dr. Singh's journey from a small village in Punjab to the highest echelons of power is a testament to the transformative power of education, perseverance, and a commitment to excellence. His story is a reminder that true leadership lies not in words but in deeds, not in power but in purpose.

Dr. Manmohan Singh was more than a reformer; he was a visionary who shaped the destiny of a nation with quiet determination and unshakeable resolve. His legacy will continue to inspire future generations, reminding them that even in the most challenging of times, progress is possible when guided by integrity and a clear vision. As we bid farewell to this extraordinary leader, we carry forward his dream of a more prosperous, equitable, and compassionate India. (The Writer is Editor in Chief of the Assamese E-magazine SAMPROTIK who can be reached himangshur1989@gmail.com)



JOBS & CAREER

THE HILLS TIMES

Career in Meditation

By: Ranjan K Baruah

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2024

e should know that according to archaeologists, meditation dates back to 5,000 BCE, and the practice itself has ties in ancient Egypt and China, Judaism, Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism and Buddhism. Additionally estimates suggest that between 200 and 500 million people practice meditation worldwide. There is no doubt that meditation can help reduce stress, blood pressure and anxiety, promote emotional health, enhance self-awareness and improve sleep.

We are discussing meditation and how we can choose it as a career path for ourselves. It is an earliest practice that involves fopresent moment. Rooted in religious, yogic, and secular traditions across cultures, meditation has been practiced for thousands of years. Today, it is embraced worldwide, transcending its spiritual origins to become a universal mechanism for personal well-being and mental health.

The most recognized definition of meditation generally describes it as a practice where an individual uses techniques such as mindfulness, focused attention, or concentrated thought to train the mind and achieve a state of mental clarity, emotional calmness, and physical relaxation.

There are diverse types of meditation, each offering unique

ing lowering blood pressure and managing pain.

Technology has further expanded access to meditation, with apps and online platforms enabling individuals to practice anywhere and anytime. The World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes the significant benefits of meditation, particularly mindfulness meditation. WHO's discussions on stress

management underscore the importance of learning coping mechanisms, such as meditation, to support mental and physical

The WHO acknowledges the mental health benefits of practices like yoga, which often incorporate meditative elements. To raise awareness about meditation and its benefits, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 21 December as World Meditation Day, recalling the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

There are courses related to meditation in different parts of India which cover a range of meditation techniques, including mindfulness, Vedic Japa, Vipassana, Kundalini, and more. These

courses can be suitable for those who want to teach meditation or deepen their own practice. Courses are available for beginners who want to deepen their practice and learn about the relationship between the mind and meditation.

One may choose the course for self or to impart training to others. We have already seen the mental stress amongst people due to work pressure and other issues. Meditation can be one of the best tools to keep balance in life and get rid of many mind issues. There are demands for experts in educational institutions, corporate to

tience, good communication One may not get a direct job in the government sector but they



may work with the government Mentor and Skill Trainer and and get engaged in many other currently the Advisor, Skill Employment and Entrepreneurship Department of Bodoland Territhey must have other skills. Pa- torial Council and can be reached at skills are a must apart from other *bkranjan@gmail.com* or skills. (The write is a Career 8473943734)

NIACL Assistant Recruitment 2025 – 500 Posts, Online Apply

Last Date: 01/01/2025

The New India Assurance Company Ltd. (NIACL) has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 500 Assistant posts in Class III cadre. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online.

Name of post: Assistant No of posts: 500 posts

No of posts in Assam: 6 posts Category-wise vacancy:

UR: 260 # SC: 91 # ST: 51 # OBC: 48 # EWS: 50

Pay scale: Rs.22405-1305(1)-23710-1425(2)-26560-1605(5)-34585-1855(2)-38295-2260(3)-45075-2345(2)-49765-2500(5)-62265

Eligibility Criteria of NIACL Recruitment Age Limit: Candidates age must be between 21 to 30 years as on 1st December 2024.

Age Relaxation: Category-wise age relaxation is as follows # SC/ ST: 5 years # OBC-NCL: 3 years # PwBD: 10 years

Educational Qualification: A candidate must possess the minimum qualification of Graduation in any discipline from a recognized University or any equivalent qualification recognized as such by the Central Government. The candidate should have passed in English as one of the subjects at SSC / HSC / Intermediate / Graduation level. Candidate should possess certificate in proof of passing the qualifying examination as on 01/12/2024.

Language Proficiency: Knowledge of Reading, Writing and Speaking of Regional Language of the State / UT against the vacancies for which a candidate wishes to apply, is essential. To ascertain the candidate's familiarity with the Regional Language of the State / UT, a language test will be conducted before final selection. Candidates not found to be proficient in the Regional Language Test would be disqualified.

Application Fee (Non-Refundable):

SC/ ST / PwBD: Rs. 100/- (Intimation charge only)

Others: Rs. 850/- (Application fee including intimation charges)

Payment mode: Debit Cards (RuPay/Visa/MasterCard/Maestro), Credit Cards, Internet Banking, IMPS, Cash Cards/ Mobile Wallets

How to Apply for NIACL Recruitment?

Interested and eligible candidates may apply online for these vacancy through online mode by visiting official NIACL Recruitment Portal. Candidates may follow

Recruitment – 56 Posts, Online Apply

Last Date: 05/01/2025

Assam Cancer Care Foundation (ACCF) has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 56 District Coordinator, Dentist and Staff Nurse posts under Assam Cancer Care Foundation (ACCF). Interested and eligible candidates may apply online.

1. District Coordinator No of post: 11 posts

Educational Qualification: Masters in Social Work with 1 year of experience in

Experience: 1-3 years in health sector. Job Location: Tinsukia, Nagaon, Goalpara, Sree Bhumi, Majuli, Dhubri, Morigaon, Dima Hasao, Nalbari, Baksa and Dhemaji.

2. Dentist No of post: 14 posts

Educational Qualification: Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) from a recognized university with minimum 1 year of experience.

Experience: 1 year.

Job Location: Nagoan, Goalpara, Golaghat, Dhubri, Biswanath, Chirang, Dima Hasao, Charaideo, Sree Bhumi, Dibrugarh, Jorhat, Bongaigaon, Nalbari and Hojai.

3. Staff Nurse

No of post: 31 posts

Educational Qualification: GNM

Job Location: Tinsukia, Nagaon, Goalpara, Sreebhumi, Majuli, Dhubri, Biswanath, Morigaon, Chirang, Dima Hasao, Hojai, Golaghat, Karup Rural, Nalbari, Bongaigaon and Baksa.

How to Apply for Assam Cancer Care Foundation Recruitment ?

Interested and eligible candidates may apply online for these vacancy through online mode by visiting official Recruitment Portal. Candidates may follow below mentioned steps to apply for ACCF Recruitment.

Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section

Click on the "Online Application Form" and fill your all personal and educational details.

- # Next, upload your CV/ Resume.
- # At the end, submit the form.

Important Dates of Assam Cancer Care Foundation Vacancy

Educational Qualification: Candidates must be a Graduate in any discipline from a recognised University or any equivalent qualification recognised as such by Central Government. Candidates having integrated dual degree (IDD) certificate should ensure that the date of passing the IDD is on or before 31.12.2024.

ways for which apart from be-

coming an expert in mediation

Final Year Candidates: Those who are in the final year/ semester of their graduation may also apply provisionally subject to the condition that, if provisionally selected, they will have to produce proof of having passed the graduation examination on or before 31.12.2024.

Local Language Proficiency: The candidates applying for vacancies of a particular State/UT, should be proficient (reading, writing, speaking and understanding) in the specified opted local language of that State/UT. Candidates who produce 10th or 12th standard mark sheet/ certificate evidencing having studied the specified opted local language will not be required to undergo the language test

Application Fee of SBI Clerk 2024

The category wise fee structure for SBI Clerk online application is given below.

Category	Fee
UR	Rs. 750/-
OBC/EWS	Rs. 750/-
SC/ST	Nil
PWD	Nil

Payment Method: Debit Card, Credit Card, Net Banking or UPI.

How to Apply for SBI Recruitment? Interested and eligible candidates can apply online through the SBI Career website https://bank.sbi/careers or https://www.sbi.co.in/careers starting from 17th December 2024 onwards. To apply online they may follow below mentioned

Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section . # Click on Online Application Form link . # A new webpage will be opened. # Enter all your personal and educational details as required

Upload your passport sized photograph and signature and other required documents

Pay the application fee as per your category and at the end click on submit button

Don't forget to take a print of submitted application form

Important Dates of SBI Junior Associate Recruitment 2025

Starting date of online application submission: 17th December 2024 # Last date of online application submission: 7th January 2025

Important Web-Links of SBI Vacancy Selection Process of SBI Clerk Recruitment

The selection process of SBI Clerk Recruitment will consist of on-line test (Preliminary & Main exam) and test of specified opted local language.

Phase-I: Preliminary Examination

health sector. OR Any Graduate with 3 years of experience in health sector.

Assam Cancer Care Foundation

impart mediation.

cusing one's concentration on the approaches to achieving calm, clarity, and balance. Research underscores its ability to reduce well-being stress, improve focus and emotional balance, alleviating anxiety and depression, and enhance sleep quality. It also contributes to better physical health, includ-

below mentioned steps to apply for NIACL Assistant Vacancy.

Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section . # Click on the "Online Application Form" and complete the registration process by clicking "Register Now'

Fill your all personal and educational details and upload necessary documents. # Next, pay the application fee as per your category and submit the form. # At the end, take a print out of the application form .

Important Dates of NIACL Recruitment 2025 # Starting date to apply online & fee payment: 17th December 2024 # Closing date to apply online & fee payment: 1st January 2025 # Tier I Online Examination (Preliminary Exam): 27th January 2025 # Tier II Online Examination (Main Exam): 2nd March 2025 # Download of Call Letters: 7 days prior to the date of each examination.

Selection Process of New India Assurance Assistant Recruitment The selection process of New India Assurance Assistant Recruitment consists of following stages -

Tier I : Preliminary Examination

Preliminary Examination consisting of Objective Tests for 100 marks will be conducted online. This would consist of 3 sections (with separate timings of 20 minutes for each section) as follows:

arks

Max. M
30
35
35

Exam centres in Assam: Dibrugarh, Guwahati, Jorhat, Silchar and Tezpur

Tier II: Main Examination

The Main Examination for 250 marks, would be of tentatively 2 hours duration (separate time for each test / section or composite time) and will consist of 5 sections as follows with 40 questions each.

Section/s	Max. Marks
Test of Reasoning	50
Test of English Language	50
Test of General Awareness	50
Test of Numerical Ability	50
Computer Knowledge	50

Exam centre in Assam: Guwahati

Tier III: Regional Language Test

Candidates shortlisted in the online Main Examination will subsequently be called for Regional Language Test to be conducted by the Company, at select centres. Candidates applying for vacancy under State / UT other than their domiciled State / UT, have to appear and qualify the Regional Language Test in the language of State / UT for which they have applied.

The Regional Language Test will be of qualifying nature only. No Scores will be allotted for the same.

The scores obtained by the candidates in the Online Main Examination will be considered while arriving at the Final Ranking subject to their qualifying the Regional Language Test. Candidate should be sufficiently high in the Merit List to be shortlisted for subsequent Recruitment process.

Starting date of submission of online application: 25th December 2024 # Last date of submission of online application: 5th January 2025 up to 6.00 PM

SBI Clerk Recruitment 2025 – 13735 Junior Associate Posts, Online Apply Last date: 7/01/2025

State Bank of India (SBI) has released the official employment notification for the recruitment of 13735 Junior Associate (Customer Support and Sales) vacancy in clerical cadre in various branches of SBI across the country. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online here.

Candidates can apply for vacancies in one State/UT only. Candidates can appear for the test only once under this recruitment project. The candidates applying for vacancies of a particular State/UT, should be proficient (reading, writing, speaking and understanding) in the specified opted local language of that State/UT.

Name of post: Junior Associate (Customer Support and Sales) Name of organisation: State Bank of India (SBI) No of posts: 13735 posts

No of posts @ North Eastern states: 692 posts

State	No of posts
Assam	311 posts
Arunachal Pradesh	66 posts
Manipur	55 posts
Meghalaya	85 posts
Mizoram	40 posts
Nagaland	70 posts
Tripura	65 posts

Mode of application: Online

Pay Scale: Rs.24050-1340/3-28070-1650/3-33020-2000/4-41020-2340/7-57400-4400/1-61800-2680/1-64480.

Advertisement No.: CRPD/CR/2024-25/24

Helpdesk: In case of any problem in filling up the form, payment of fee/ intimation charges or receipt of Admission/call letter, queries may be made at telephone no. 022-22820427 (between 11:00 AM and 05:00 PM only on Bank working days) or lodge his/her query on http://cgrs.ibps.in.

Candidates are advised not to forget to mention 'Recruitment of Junior Associate-2024' in the subject of the email.

Eligibility Criteria of SBI Junior Associate Recruitment

Age Limit: Candidates age should not below 20 years and not above 28 years as on 01.04.2024, i.e. candidates must have been born not earlier than 02.04.1996 and not later than 01.04.2004 (both days inclusive).

Age Relaxation: Category-wise age relaxation is as mentioned below

SC/ST: 5 years # OBC: 3 years # PwD (Unreserved): 10 years # PwD (OBC): 13 years # PwD (SC/ST): 15 years

Online Preliminary Exam consisting of Objective Tests for 100 marks will be conducted online. This test would be of 1-hour duration consisting of 3 Sections as follows:

No. of Questions	Max. Marks	Duration
30	30	20 Minutes
35	35	20 Minutes
35	35	20 Minutes
100	100	60 Minutes
	30 35 35	30 30 35 35 35 35

Each test will have a separate timing as mentioned above. There will be negative marks for wrong answers in the Objective tests. 1/4th of mark assigned for question will be deducted for each wrong answer. No minimum qualifying marks are prescribed for individual test OR for aggregate score. Section wise marks will not be maintained.

Adequate number of candidates in each category as decided by the Bank (approximately 10 times the numbers of vacancies. subject to availability) will be shortlisted for the Main Exam from the list of all candidates arranged in descending order of aggregate marks scored.

Phase - II: Main Examination

Structure of Online SBI Clerk Recruitment Main Exam would be as follows:

Test	No. of Question	Max. Marks	Duration
General/Financial Awareness	50	50	35 Minutes
General English	40	40	35 Minutes
Quantitative Aptitude	50	50	45 Minutes
Reasoning Ability & Computer	50	60	45 Minutes
Aptitude Total	190	200	160 Minutes

Each test will have a separate timing as mentioned above.

There will be negative marks for wrong answers in the Objective tests. 1/4th of mark assigned for question will be deducted for each wrong answer.

Candidates are required to score a minimum percentage marks on aggregate (For SC/ST/OBC/PwBD/ESM/DESM candidates, 5% relaxation available thereon). Minimum qualifying marks on aggregate will be as decided by the bank. No minimum qualifying marks for individual subject are prescribed. Section wise marks will not be maintained.

Merit list will be drawn State wise, category wise. Candidates qualified in the test (main examination) will be placed according to their aggregate marks in descending order in respective States and Categories.

Test of specified opted local language

Those who qualify for selection and produce 10th or 12th standard mark sheet/ certificate evidencing having studied the specified opted local language will not be subjected to any Language test. In case of others (qualified for selection), specified opted local language test will be conducted after provisional selection but before joining. Candidates who fail to qualify this test will not be offered appointment. Candidates not found proficient in specified opted local language would be disqualified.

Final Selection

The marks obtained in the Preliminary Examination (Phase-I) will not be added for the selection and only the aggregate marks obtained in Main Examination (Phase-II) will be considered for preparation of the final merit list. Provisional selection will be made on the basis of candidate's performance in the test (Main Examination).

World

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2024

Condolences pour in from world leaders on Manmohan Singh's death Ukraine's military intelligence says N Korean

Dec 27: Leaders from across the world including, the US, Canada, France, and Sri Lanka have expressed grief over the death of former prime minister Manmohan Singh and recalled his contributions to strengthening bilateral relations.

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Singh, the architect of India's economic reforms, died at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences on Thursday night. He was 92.

He is survived by his wife Gursharan Kaur, a history professor, and three daughters.

Leaders from Afghanistan, Maldives, Mauritius, and Nepal also paid their tributes to Singh.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken called him "one of the greatest champions of the bilateral strategic partnership.'

"Dr Singh was one of the greatest champions of the US-India strategic partnership, and his work laid the foundation for much of what our countries have accomplished together in the past two decades." US Secretary of State Tony Blinken said. Offering condolences to the people of India for the passing of Singh. Blinken said the leadership of the former prime minister in advancing the US-India Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement signified a major investment in the potential of the US-India relationship.



"At home. Dr Singh will be remembered for his economic reforms that spurred India's rapid economic growth. We mourn Dr Singh's passing and will always remember his dedication to bringing the United States and India closer together." Blinken said

French President Emmanuel Macron on Friday said "India has lost a great man" and France a true friend, in the person of Dr Manmohan Singh. He had devoted his life to his country. Our thoughts are with his family and the people of India.

Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake issued a message of condolence and called the former

prime minister "a visionary leader". "On behalf of the people of Sri Lanka and myself, I extend my heartfelt condolences to the Republic of India, Dr Manmohan Singh's family, and his countless admirers worldwide," the message read.

"A visionary leader, Dr Singh's influence transcended national boundaries. As Prime Minister from

2004 to 2014, his transformative policies, like the Right to Education Act and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, reflected his steadfast commitment to equity and inclusivity." "A tireless advocate of international collaboration, he forged lasting alliances, contributed to coalitions like BRICS and showcased remarkable diplomacy through achievements such as the Indo-US nuclear agreement," the message said.

"His humility, intellect, and dedication to public service will forever inspire future generations. May his soul find peace and be united with the divine!

China also paid tributes to Singh saying that he made a "positive contribution" to the development of India-China relations recalling a key agreement signed between the two countries during his tenure to address the vexed boundary issue.

Singh has made a positive contribution to the development of India-China relations, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a media briefing in Beijing.

Former Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper said he was saddened to learn of the passing of his former colleague, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

"He was an individual of exceptional intelligence, integrity, and wisdom. Laureen and I wish to convey our condolences to all his family and friends," he said.

Former Prime Minister of Nepal Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' said in a post on X, "Deeply saddened by the demise of Dr Manmohan Singh, a visionary leader and an

extraordinary statesman. My heartfelt condolences to his family and the people of India. His legacy will inspire generations.

Former Maldivian President Mohamed Nasheed wrote X that he found the former Prime Minister as a "benevolent father figure" and a good friend of Maldives.

"So sad to hear Manmohan Singh has passed. I always found him a delight to work with and like a benevolent father figure. He was a good friend of the Maldives," Nasheed said.

Former President of Sri Lanka Mahinda Rajapaksa called him a visionary economist and the architect of India's economic liberalisation." "Deeply saddened by the passing of former Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. A visionary economist and the architect of India's economic liberalization, his contributions shaped a new era for India. My heartfelt condolences to his family, friends, and the people of India."

Former President of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai in a post on X said that India has lost one of its most illustrious sons. Calling him an "unwavering ally and friend to the people of Afghanistan", Karzai profoundly mourned Singh's passing and expressed his deepest condolences. (PTI)

troops suffering heavy battlefield losses KYIV, Dec 27: North Korean claimed to have intercepted 59 mistroops are suffering heavy losses in the fighting in Russia's Kursk region and facing logistical difficulties as a result of Ukrainian attacks, Ukraine's military intelligence has

The intelligence agency, known under its acronym GUR, on Thursdav said Ukrainian strikes near Novoivanovka inflicted heavy casualties on North Korean units. It said North Korean troops also faced supply issues and even shortages of

drinking water. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said earlier this week that 3,000 North Korean troops have been killed and wounded in the fighting in the Kursk region. It marked the first significant estimate by Ukraine of North Korean casualties several weeks after Kviv announced that North Korea had sent

10,000 to 12,000 troops to Russia to help it in the almost 3-year war. The casualty disclosure came as the Biden administration was press-

ing to send as much military aid as possible to Ukraine before President-elect Donald Trump takes over in January.

Ukrainian forces launched an incursion into the Kursk region in August, dealing a significant blow to Russia's prestige and forcing it to deploy some of its troops from eastern Ukraine, where they were pressing a slow-moving offensive.

The Russian army has been able to reclaim some territory in the Kursk region from Ukrainian forces, but has failed to fully dislodge them.

At the same time, Russia has sought to break Ukraine's resistance with waves of strikes with cruise missiles and drones against Ukraine's power grid and other infrastructure.

The latest attack on Christmas morning involved 78 missiles and 106 drones, striking power facili-

ties, Ukraine's air force said. It in a statement. (AP) South Korea's opposition-controlled National Assembly votes to impeach acting President Han

SEOUL, Dec 27: South Korea's opposition-controlled National Assembly voted Friday to impeach acting President Han Duck-soo despite vehement protests by governing party lawmakers, further deepening the country's political crisis set off by President Yoon Suk Yeol's stunning imposition of martial law and ensuing impeachment. Han's impeachment means he

said that the company had issued will be stripped of the powers and more than 200 alerts regarding duties of the president until the Constitutional Court decides whether to dismiss or reinstate him. The court is already reviewing whether to uphold Yoon's earlier impeachment. The impeachments of the country's top two officials

siles and 54 drones and jammed 52 other drones.

On Thursday, Russia attacked Ukraine with 31 exploding drones. Twenty were shot down and another 11 didn't reach their target due to jamming, the Ukrainian air force said.

As part of the daily barrage, Russian forces also struck a central market in Nikopol in the Dnipropetrovsk region with a drone, wounding eight people, according to local authorities.

Russian President Vladimir Putin threatened Thursday that Russia could again hit Ukraine with the new Oreshnik hypersonic ballistic missile that was first used in a Nov 21 strike on the Ukrainian city of Dnipro.

Speaking to reporters, Putin said Russia has just a few Oreshnik missiles, but added that it wouldn't hesitate to use them on Ukraine.

We aren't in a rush to use them, because those are powerful weapons intended for certain tasks. he said. But we wouldn't exclude their use today or tomorrow if necessary. Putin said Russia has launched serial production of the new weapon and reaffirmed a plan to deploy some of Oreshnik missiles to Russia's neighbor and ally Belarus. Belarus' authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko told reporters Thursday that his country could host 10 or more.

Ukraine struck back with drone strikes of its own. Ukraine's Centre for Strategic Communications said the military struck a plant in Kamensk-Shakhtynsky in Russia's southern Rostov region that produces propellant for ballistic missiles.

This strike is part of a comprehensive campaign to weaken the capabilities of the Russian armed forces to carry out terrorist attacks against Ukrainian civilians, it said

port of two-thirds. There are no specific laws on the impeachment of an acting president. Han's powers will be officially suspended when copies of his impeachment document are delivered to him and the Constitutional Court. The deputy prime minister and finance minister, Choi Sang-mok, will take over.

Han, who was appointed prime minister by Yoon, became acting president after Yoon, a conservative, was impeached by the National Assembly about two weeks ago over his short-lived Dec. 3 imposition of martial law. Han quickly clashed with the main liberal opposition Democratic Party as he pushed back against opposition-led

Canadian ministers head to Palm Beach for Aviation experts say Russia's air defence fire likely caused Azerbaijan plane crash as nation mourns talks with incoming Trump administration

BAKU, Dec 27: Aviation experts

TORONTO, Dec 27: Two top Canadian Cabinet ministers are visiting Palm Beach to talk border security and trade with the incoming Donald Trump administration as Trump threatens tariffs on all Canadian products.

New Finance Minister Dominic LeBlanc and Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly will be in Palm Beach, Florida on Thursday for the talks this week, said Jean-Sébastien Comeau, a spokesman for LeBlanc.

LeBlanc said last week he would meet with Tom Homan, Trump's incoming "border czar," after Christmas to discuss Canada's plan to secure the border as part of a bid to avoid the sweeping tariffs.

Comeau said LeBlanc and Joly "look forward to building on the discussions that took place when the Prime Minister met with President Trump at Mar-a-Lago last month, as well as the positive call the Ministers held with Mr Tom Homan earlier this month."

"The Ministers intend to focus on Canada's efforts to combat fentanyl trafficking and illegal migration and the measures outlined in Canada's Border Plan, as well as the negative impacts that the imposition of 25%

Trudeau the governor of the 51st state and has threatened to impose sweeping tariffs if Canada does not stem what he calls a flow of migrants and drugs in the United States — even though far fewer of each cross into the US from Canada than from Mexico, which Trump has also threatened.

Canada has a billion-dollar plan to increase security at the border. LeBlanc last week he discussed parts of the plan with American officials and is optimistic, but said they have a lot of work ahead.

Trump has also made an issue of the US trade deficit with Canada, erroneously calling it a subsidy.

Canada's ambassador to Washington, Kirsten Hillman, has said the US had a \$75 billion trade deficit with Canada last year. But she noted a third of what Canada sells into the US are energy exports and said there is a deficit when oil prices are high. About 60% of US crude oil imports and 85% of US

electricity imports are from Canada. Nearly \$3.6 billion Canadian dollars (\$2.7 billion) worth of goods and services cross the border each day. Canada is the top export destiobserved a nationwide moment of nation for 36 US states. silence.

said Thursday that Russian air defence fire was likely responsible for the Azerbaijani plane crash the day before that killed 38 people and left all 29 survivors injured. Azerbaijan Airlines' Embraer 190 was en route from Azerbaijan's capital of Baku to the Russian city of Grozny in the North Caucasus on Wednesday when it was diverted for reasons still unclear and crashed while making an attempt to land in Aktau in Kazakhstan after flying east across the Caspian Sea. The plane went down about 3 km (2 miles) from Aktau. Cellphone footage circulating online appeared to show the aircraft mak-

ing a steep descent before crashing into the ground and exploding in a fireball Other footage showed a part of its fuselage ripped away from the wings and the rest of the aircraft

lying upside down on the grass. Azerbaijan mourned the crash victims with national flags at halfstaff across on Thursday. Traffic stopped at noon, and sirens sounded from ships and trains as it is that the plane changed its course between Baku and Grozny due to worsening weather conditions and monitors the world's airspace and headed to Aktau airport, where it airports for risks, said that the analysis of the images of frag-

crashed upon landing, he said. Russia's civil aviation authority, ments of the crashed plane indicate Rosaviatsia, said that preliminary information indicated the pilots dia surface-to-air missile, or SAM. verted to Aktau after a bird strike led to an emergency on board. of it being a SAM attack on the air-

Authorities in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Russia were tightlipped about a possible cause of the crash but a lawmaker in Azerbaijan blamed Moscow. Rasim Musabekov told the Azerbaijani news agency Turan that the plane was fired on while in the skies over Grozny and urged Russia to offer an official apology.

Those who did this must face criminal charges, Musabekov was quoted by Turan as saying, adding that compensations to the victims should also be paid. If it doesn't happen, relations will be affected. As the official crash investigation started, some experts pointed out that holes seen in the plane's

drone attacks and air defense systems in Russia during the war. This incident is a stark reminder tail section could indicate that it of why we do what we do, Nicholcould have come under fire from son posted online. It is painful to Russian air defence systems fendknow that despite our efforts, lives ing off a Ukrainian drone attack. were lost in a way that could have Ukrainian drones had previously been avoided. attacked Grozny, the capital of the Yan Matveyev, an independent Russian republic of Chechnya, and Russian military expert, noted that other regions in the country's images of the crashed plane's tail North Caucasus. An official in reveal the damage compatible with Chechnya said another drone atshrapnel from a small surface-totack on the region was fended off air missiles, such as the Pantsyr-S1 on Wednesday, although federal air defence system. (AP)

authorities didn't report it. Mark Zee of OPSGroup, which

that it was almost certainly hit by

Much more to investigate, but at

high level we'd put the probability

craft at being well into the 90-99%

Osprey Flight Solutions, an avi-

ation security firm based in the

United Kingdom, warned its

clients that the Azerbaijan Airlines

flight was likely shot down by a

Russian military air-defense sys-

tem. Osprey provides analysis for

carriers still flying into Russia after

Western airlines halted their flights

Osprey CEO Andrew Nicholson

bracket, he said.

during the war.

tariffs on Canadian goods would have on both Canada and the United States," Comeau added in a statement. The Trump transition team did not immediately respond to a message seeking comment.

Trump keeps calling embattled Canadian Prime Minister Justin der. (AP)

Flows of migrants and seizures of drugs are vastly different at the US' two land borders. US customs agents seized 43 pounds of fentanyl at the Canadian border during the last fiscal year, compared with 21,100 pounds at the Mexican bor-

Speaking at a news conference Wednesday, Azerbaijani President Ilham Alivev said that it was too soon to speculate on the reasons behind the crash, but said that the weather had forced the plane to change from its planned course. The information provided to me

worsen its political turmoil, deepen its economic uncertainty and hurt its international image.

The single-chamber National Assembly passed Han's impeachment motion with a 192-0 vote. Lawmakers with the governing People Power Party boycotted the vote and gathered around the podium where assembly Speaker Woo Won Shik was seated and shouted that the vote was invalid and demanded Woo's resignation. No violence or injuries were reported.

The PPP lawmakers protested after Woo called for a vote on Han's impeachment motion after announcing its passage required a simple majority in the 300-memer assembly, not a two-thirds majority as claimed by the PPP. Most South Korean officials can be impeached by the National Assembly with a simple majority vote, but a president's impeachment needs the sup-

efforts to fill three vacant seats on the Constitutional Court, establish an independent investigation into Yoon's martial law decree and legislate pro-farmer bills.

At the heart of the fighting is the Democratic Party's demand that Han approve the assembly's nominations of three new Constitutional Court justices to restore its full nine-member bench ahead of its ruling on Yoon's impeachment. That's a politically sensitive issue because a court decision to dismiss Yoon as president needs support from at least six justices, and adding more justices will likely increase the prospects for Yoon's ouster. Yoon's political allies in the governing People Power Party oppose the appointment of the three justices, saying Han shouldn't exercise the presidential authority to make the appointments while Yoon has yet to be formally removed from office. (AP)

UK honours legacy of India's 'reluctant prime minister' Manmohan Singh

LONDON, Dec 27: India's "reluctant prime minister" and the "architect of economic reforms" is how sections of the UK media have been honouring the legacy of Dr Manmohan Singh, the former prime minister who passed away aged 92 in New Delhi on Thursday.

British High Commissioner to India Lindy Cameron took to social media to pay tribute to "a great Prime Minister, Finance Minister and global statesman who advanced India's interests through bold economic reforms and played a key role in putting India in its rightful place on the world stage and stabilising

the global economy after the financial crisis".

"The UK will always be proud of his invaluable partnership with three UK Prime Ministers, and proud of him as an alumnus of two of our great universities. My thoughts and wishes are with his family and the people of India," she said.

Singh's tenure overlapped with Labour prime ministers Tony Blair and Gordon Brown and Conservative David Cameron, who later wrote in his memoir that he "got on well" with this "saintly man" who was robust on the threats India faced. "On a later visit he

told me that another terrorist attack like that in Mumbai in July 2011, and India would have to take military action against Pakistan," notes the former UK PM in 'For the Record', published in 2019.

Manoj Ladwa, founder and chairman of UK-based policy and events platform India Global Forum (IGF), described the former PM as a "towering statesman and visionary" economist"

"His transformative reforms in the 1990s not only shaped India's future but also helped spark my own commitment to fostering

stronger UK-India ties. As an alumnus of Oxford and Cambridge, he symbolised the deep cultural and academic connections between our nations. His legacy will inspire generations," he said.

'The Guardian' newspaper referenced Singh's "trademark sky-blue turbans and home-spun white kurta pyjamas" in its obituary. "Singh, called India's 'reluctant prime minister' due to his shyness and preference for being behind the scenes, was considered an unlikely choice to lead the world's biggest democracy. (AP)

US 2024: Trump makes dramatic return to presidency India-US relationship remains 'in a very strong place'

NEW YORK, Dec 27: It was a dramatic year for the US in which President Joe Biden abandoned his reelection bid after his poor performance in a nationally televised debate against Republican candidate Donald Trump, a convicted felon who survived two assassination attempts during a bitter campaign.

Trump, 78, defeated Indian-origin Kamala Harris. His return to the White House after a gap of four years shattered the dreams of the Democratic Party and millions of her supporters who hoped to see the first woman President.

Trump is the first president after Grover Cleveland who was 132 years ago evicted from the White House and return to it again four vears later. As the Biden administration prepares to exit the White House, the India-US relationship is "in a very strong place" – according to a Biden administration official and observers expect that bilateral ties will continue to receive bipartisan support under the incoming Trump presidency. But at the end of 2024, new challenges are casting

their shadow over these relations -there is an ongoing indictment related to an alleged assassination bid on a Sikh separatist, another involving Indian billionaire Gautam Adani, and Trump's threat to impose high tariffs on Indian imports. Months before the elections in the world's oldest democracy, the

electorate in the world's largest democracy voted for Prime Minister Narendra Modi for a historic third term. Modi congratulated his "friend" Trump - the oldest person in US history to be elected president - on his "historic" victory and said he looks forward to renewing their collaboration to further strengthen India-US Comprehensive the Global and Strategic Partnership. His relations with both President Biden and Trump have been strong. Between June 2023 and September 2024, both Modi and Biden hosted each other in their countries, visits that underscored the strong trajec-

tory of bilateral relations. In June 2023, Biden hosted Modi for a State Visit in Washington and then travelled to New Delhi in September for the G-20 Summit.



In June 2024, the two leaders met in Italy on the sidelines of the G7 Summit. Three months later, Modi travelled to the US for the 4th Quad Leaders' Summit held at Biden's home in Wilmington, Delaware.

After a bilateral meeting on the margins of the summit. Biden said the "US' partnership with India is stronger, closer, and more dynamic than any time in history." Later, a joint statement said the India-US partnership is "decisively delivering

on an ambitious agenda that serves the global good," calling it the "defining partnership of the 21st century." However, the relationship was not without hiccups.

If the year 2023 had ended on a sombre note with the Biden administration charging Indian national Nikhil Gupta in a foiled plot to assassinate Sikh separatist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun on American soil, in October 2024, former Indian government employee Vikash

Yadav was charged by US authorities for his alleged role in the plot. In November, the US Securities and Exchange Commission charged billionaire Gautam Adani and his nephew Sagar Adani, along with Cyril Cabanes, an executive of

Azure Power Global Ltd., in connection with an alleged USD 250 million bribery scheme. In a parallel action, the US Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York unsealed criminal charges against Gautam and Sagar Adani and others. The criminal indictment also charged Vneet S Jaain, Ranjit Gupta, Rupesh Agarwal, Cyril Cabanes, Saurabh Agarwal and Deepak Malhotra.

India said it is a "legal matter involving private firms and individuals and the US Department of Justice...there are established procedures and legal avenues in such cases" that would be followed.

It remains to be seen how the cases pan out during the incoming administration of Trump, who has picked several Indian-Americans for key positions. Vivek Ramaswamy for the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), Tulsi Gabbard as Director of National Intelligence, Kash Patel as Director of the FBI, Harmeet K Dhillon as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Jay Bhattacharya as Director of National Institutes of Health and Sriram Krishnan as Senior policy advisor on Artificial Intelligence are among the Indian-Americans expected to play key roles in Trump 2.0 admin-

istration. On the indictments, a senior administration official said the US-India relationship is "increasingly complex, increasingly diverse and increasingly deep. It is the case that invariably, we will reach occasions of challenges on both sides, and the key is how we deal with those."

"I can just assure you that we've had the deepest possible appropriate consultation between the two sides, and I'm confident that we will be able to weather this appropriately," the official added.

As Trump prepares to return to the White House for his second term, his recent rhetoric to impose reciprocal tariffs in retaliation for

the "high tariff" imposed by New Delhi on the import of certain American products has garnered much attention

The outgoing Biden administration has said it expects that the India-US relationship will continue to remain strong even after the handover in January.

"We are quite confident that we'll be handing the bilateral relationship off to the incoming Trump team at its strongest possible apex, with key support from stakeholders in the industry, in technology, in finance and defence," said Kurt Campbell, Deputy Secretary of State. Principal Deputy National Security Advisor Jon Finer has said that "to a large degree, there has been bipartisan consensus on the importance of this relationship".

"Over the last two decades, different administrations in Washington and New Delhi have helped strengthen our cooperation. While no relationship is without challenges, we believe that we are leaving this partnership in a very strong place as we prepare to pass the baton to the incoming team." (PTI)

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2024

NORTHEAST

THE HILLS TIMES 7

in the crossfire.

erly people, who were caught

been killed and thousands ren-

dered homeless in ethnic violence between Meiteis and

Kuki-Zo groups in Manipur since May last year.

Meanwhile, unidentified persons left a hand grenade ir

the compound of the house of

a doctor in Chingmeirong are

in Imphal West district, ar

A note stating 'KCP (PWC

last warning' was also foun

along with the grenade, the of

ficer said, adding that the

threat could be related to ex

Banned militant outfit Kar

gleipak Communist Party

(People's War Group) is a

legedly involved in extortio

Police later removed the

tortion demands and an inve

tigation is underway.

across Imphal Valley.

other police officer said.

More than 250 people have

Arunachal Guv, CM, DyCM condole Manmohan Singh's death



ITANAGAR, Dec 27: Arunachal Pradesh Lt Gen K T Parnaik (Retd), Chief Minister Pema Khandu, Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein on Friday condoled the death of former prime minister Manmohan Singh

The governor said Singh was a distinguished economist and statesman and was instrumental in liberalising India's economy, propelling the nation towards significant economic growth.

Known for his humility, integrity, and intellectual brilliance, the passing away of Singh marks the end of an era in Indian politics, but his contributions to Arunachal Pradesh, like the Trans-Arunachal Pradesh Highway, the state secretariat building, the Pare and Dibang power projects, and the Itanagar water

supply scheme will endure as a lasting legacy, Parnaik said. "I join the people of Arunachal

Pradesh in extending our deepest condolences to his family and relatives," the governor added.

The CM condoled the death of Singh and described him as a distinguished economist

Khandu said Singh a 'distinguished economist' had laid the foundation of a vibrant and resilient India.

"Extremely saddening to learn the demise of former prime minister and distinguished economist Manmohan Singh Ji. It's a huge loss to the nation. His phenomenal contributions to economic reforms as the finance minister in the early 1990s laid the foundation of a vibrant and resilient India," Khandu said in a

post on X on Friday. He also said, "Singh's passing marks the end of an era in Indian politics. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family members, kin, admirers, and followers. May the departed soul rest in eternal peace. Om Shanti!"

Arunachal Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein also mourned the demise of former prime minister Manmohan Singh.

"Deeply saddened by the passing of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh ji. A visionary leader, his unparalleled contributions to India's economic reforms and progressive policies will forever be remembered. My heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones during this time of immense loss. May his soul rest in eternal peace," Mein said in a post on X.

Arunachal Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) president Nabam Tuki termed Singh as a visionary leader and 'greatest economist in the world."

"Manmohan Singh, the visionary leader and greatest Economist of the world, who gave historic special economic and development packages to North Eastern states during his tenure as prime minister will be remembered. May his soul rest in peace," Tuki said in a so-

cial media post on Thursday. Singh, the architect of India's economic reforms, died in Delhi on Thursday night at the age of 92. He was the prime minister during 2004-14. (PTI)

IMPHAL, Dec 27: At least two persons, including a policeman, were injured in a gunfight with armed men in Manipur's Imphal East district on Friday, police said.

Armed men from the hills launched gun-and-bomb attacks in Sanasabi and Thamnapokpi villages in the district, to which security forces retaliated, leading to a fierce encounter, a senior police officer said.

Two persons suffered in-juries in the gunfight in suffered minor injuries on his Sanasabi village. The policehands during the gun battle man, identified as 37-year-old was also taken to a private K Haridash, suffered bullet inhospital, where his condition juries on his left shoulder and is out of danger. The village was rushed to Jawaharlal volunteers had joined the secu-Nehru Institute of Medical rity forces in the gun battle Sciences around 3.30 pm, the against the armed men from officer said. the hills. He will undergo a minor

surgery, officials at the hospital said. Another 'village volunteer

grenade from the spot. (PTI) around 10.45 am at Sanasabi eral women, children and eld-Union Minister Pralhad joshi to visit Tripura for two-day official engagement

village and adjacent areas,

forcing security personnel to

Locals ran helter-skelter as

'Armed men also launched

attacks at Thamnapokpi village around 11.30 am, creating

panic among the residents,

CRPF personnel, rescued sev-

Security forces, including

retaliate," the officer said.

the gunfight broke out.

the officer said.

Two injured in gunfight in Manipur

HT Correspondent

AGARTALA, Dec 27: Union Minister Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Pralhad Joshi will arrive in Tripura on December 28 for a two-day official visit to the state. Officials said that during his visit, the Union Minister will engage in multiple government programs and meet-

"He is expected to arrive in Agartala tomorrow afternoon and commence his itin-

erary with a visit to the Food Corporation of India (FCI) office at Nandannagar. This will be followed by an inspection of the state government's food godowns. Joshi will later chair a meeting with officials from the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC)", she said.

In the evening, a review meeting on various central schemes related to food, public health, aspirational districts, and renewable energy will be held at Secretariat. Chief minister Manik Saha will also be present a the meeting to discuss progress and imple mentation strategies.

On December 29, the second day of hi visit, union minister Joshi will head t Charilam under Sepahijala District to inspect a programme organised by th Tripura Renewable Energy Development Agency (TREDA). He is expected to inter act with local residents during this visit

KARBI ANGLONG AUTONOMOUS COUNCIL DEPARTMENT OF WORKS KAAC::SECRETARIAT DIPHU-782460

"Armed men from the hill-

tops started firing indiscrimi-

nately and hurling bombs

No KAAC/E.E-W-1041/2024-25/

Dtd. 13/12/2024

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tender affixing non refundable KAAC court fee stamp (receipt) Rs. 10.00 (Rupees Ten) only eventually to be drawn up in form are hereby invited from KAAC registered contractor/reputed firms of works department and will be received by the undersigned up to 4 P.M. on 02/01/2025 and will be opened on the same date, place and the hours in presence of the tenderer or their authorized agent if any.

If the day of the opening of tender happens to be a holiday/non-working days, the tender will be opened in the next day. The undersigned has the right to accept, reject any tender without any reason thereof and will not be bound to accept, the lowest tender quoted rate.

SL No.	Name of Works	Tender Amount	A/A Amount	Earnest money	Time allowed for completion
1	Construction of Cremation Shed at Lokhan Bey Gaon Jaipong.	Rs. 7,36,000.00	Rs. 7,36,000.00	ST/SC/OBC= 1% General = 2%	90 days
2	Construction of RCC Ringwell with C.C. Platform (1 Nos) at Lokhan Bey Playground Jaipong.	Rs. 2,00,000.00	Rs. 2,00,000.00	ST/SC/OBC= 1% General = 2%	60 days
3	Earth Filling at Sport Playground at Jaipong Lokhan Bey Jaipong.	Rs. 9,42,000.00	Rs. 9,42,000.00	ST/SC/OBC = 1% General = 2%	90 days

Manmohan Singh's contribution in shaping economic landscape of country will always be remembered: Tripura CM



AGARTALA, Dec 27: Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saĥa condoled the death of former prime minister Manmohan Singh and said his contribution in nation building and shaping the economic landscape of the country will always be remembered.

Singh, 92, died in AIIMS Delhi on Thursday night.

"Deeply saddened by the passing of former PM of India and veteran Congress leader Manmohan Singh Ji. His contributions in nation-building and shaping the economic landscape of the country will

ji, the former prime minister. He was a towering figure of Indian politics and a statesman of unparalleled integrity. His visionary leadership, astute economic acumen, and unwavering commitment to the nation's progress have left an enduring legacy", TPCC said in a Facebook post on Thurs-

It also said, "He (Singh) has been an inspiration for all of us. We stand behind the bereaved family during difficult times. The country has lost a genius son" Tipra Motha Party (TMP)

arrested IMPHAL, Dec 27: Two militants of the banned Kangleipak Communist Party (People's War Group) were arrested from Manipur's Imphal West district, a police statement said

Two militants

on Friday. The two militants involved in extortion activities were arrested from Awang Wanagai Lamkhai area of the district on Thursday, the statement said. Two mobile handsets and other items were seized from their possession, it added. (PTI)

7-day state mourning

in Manipur IMPHAL, Dec 27: The Manipur governor on Friday ordered a seven-day state mourning as a mark of respect to former prime minister Manmohan Singh, an official statement said.

Singh, the architect of India's economic reforms, died in Delhi on Thursday night at the age of 92. He was the prime minister from 2004 to 2014.

The state mourning commenced on December 26 and

"During the period, the na-

always be remembered, the chief minister wrote in a post on Facebook on Thursday.

"May the departed soul find eternal peace! Om Shanti", Saha said

The Tripura Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) also expressed grief over the death of former prime minister Manmohan Singh.

"We are deeply mourned by the death of Manmohan Singh

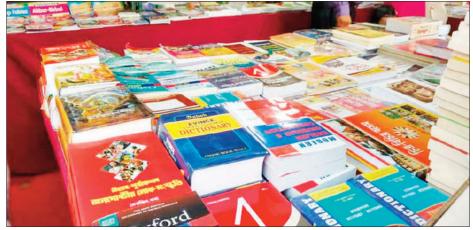
supremo Pradyot Kishore Manikya also mourned the will continue till January 1. death of former prime minister Manmohan Singh and said his tional flag will be flown at legacy will live on forever. He posted on Facebook on

half past throughout the state and there will be no official "RIP Manmohan entertainment during the state Singh - history will be kinder of mourning," the notification to you. Your legacy will live issued by the state governon forever! Let us bow to a ment's General Administrative Department by orders and gentleman who has left us today - it's a collective loss for in the name of the governor the whole nation". (PTI) said. (PTI)

Agartala Book Fair from Jan 2-14

Friday,

Bangladesh publishers not to participate



AGARTALA, Dec 27: The 43rd Agartala Book Fair will be held from January 2 to 14, 2025 but Bangladesh publishers or booksellers will not participate in the event, an official said on Friday.

Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha will inaugurate the 12-day-long book fair in West Tripura's Badharghat fair ground on January

"The lottery for distribution of stalls at the book fair is scheduled to take place on Friday. Till now, no Bangladeshi publishing house or bookseller has submitted any application for setting up stalls at the book fair venue," Director of Information and Cultural Affairs (ICA), Bimbisar Bhattacharjee told PTI.

However, he said publishers from Kolkata, Guwahati and Delhi will participate in this year's book fair apart from local publishing houses.

President of Tripura Publishers' Guild (TPG), Subabrata Deb said, "Given the situation in Bangladesh after the ouster of the Sheikh Hasina, no publication house or bookseller seems to be brave enough to join the book fair at Agartala. We keep contact with publication houses of Bangladesh but they are not in a position to join the book fair this time. As book lovers, we will miss the essence of Bangladeshi publications.

"This will be the first time in many years that Bangladeshi publishers are not participating in the book fair," Deb added.

He hailed the state government's decision to advance the book fair from February-March to January this year.

"Normally Agartala book fair used to be held in February or March but this time it has been advanced to the first week of January. We oppose organising book fair in February and March because of board examinations. I hope this time, students will get a fair chance to visit the book fair due to advancement in the book fair schedule", he said.

Eminent writer Nandita Roy said, "It is natural that Bangladesh publishers are most unlikely to participate in the Agartala book fair because of their internal problem. Besides, visa problem is also there. I heard that they are also not going to join the Kolkata book fair. We will miss literary masterpieces of Bangladeshi publishing houses as well as research based books which have good demand in Tripura. Last year, they had joined the book fair". (PTI)

Detail NIT documents and name of works amounts may be obtained from Office of the S.E.(Works), KAAC, Diphu during working hours .

Terms & Conditions

N.B

- 1. The rate to be quoted as % (Percent) above/below/as per schedule rate for building/sanitary/ works for all division under CPWD for the year 2020-21.
- 2. Earnest money should be deposited in favour of the undersigned in the form of call deposit/bank draft & should be attached with the tender without which no tender will be accepted
- 3. The Contractor shall Repair/Re-Construction if the works executed failed due inferior quality of works The KAAC Authority will take legal action if the contractor refuse to repair/Re- construction the woks
- 4. The work must be carried on as directed by the E.E. (W). KAAC/KAAC Authority.
- 5. The following up to date documents should be enclosed with the tender
 - a. Professional Tax Clearance Certificate
 - b. Sale Tax Clearance Certificate/GST.
 - c. KAAC Registration (Contractual)
 - d. Call Deposit.
 - e. Caste Certificate.
 - f. Bank Account number & Pan Card
- 6. Payment will be made subject to availabilities of fund
- 7. The undersigned is not bound to accept the lowest quoted rate.

Sd/-**Executive Engineer (Works)** Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council DIPHU. Dtd. 13/12/2024. Memo No. KAAC/E.E.-W-1041/2024-25/ 360(A)

NATION

Illegal B'deshi woman migrant deported from Delhi: Police

NEW DELHI, Dec 27: Delhi Police has deported a Bangladeshi immigrant allegedly living unlawfully in the national capital for the past six years, an official said on Friday.

"During our special drive of checking illegal immigrants staying in the national capital, we got to know about a 28-year-old woman. She was discovered living in Mumbai and Delhi in violation of the Foreigners Act," said deputy commissioner of Police (Southwest) Surendra Choudhary.

The officer further said the woman hails from Singasholpur village in Narail Sadar Upazila in Bangladesh and was staying in India without necessary documentation, raising concerns over her unauthorised immigration.

The operation to identify and deport her was carried out by the Anti-Narcotics Unit of the Delhi police

Delhi Police previously identified over 1,500 Bangladeshi immigrants during an operation in the national capital and the southeast district police arrested two people for allegedly staying illegally.

The drive for identifying illegal Bangladeshi immigrants in Delhi was launched after the LG secretariat recently ordered a crackdown

Teams from police stations in 15 districts in the national capital have been visiting slums and Delhi's Kalindi Kunj, Shaheen Bagh, Hazrat Nizamuddin and Jamia Nagar to check voter IDs and Aadhaar cards to identify suspected Bangladeshi immigrants.

The Delhi LG secretariat directed the chief secretary and police chief to launch a two-month special drive to identify and take strict action against such immigrants residing in the city.

Aside from sending data to the Foreigners Regional Registration Office, police is verifying the genuineness of Aadhaar cards. (PTI)

'Those who were trying to tarnish Bharat's image have been defeated? Naqvi warns against 'pseudo-secular syndicate' subverting 'sanatan sanskar'

PRAYAGRAJ, Dec 27: BJP leader Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi here on Friday warned against a "syndicate" subverting the "sanatan sanskar and culture.3

He said there is a "pseudo-secular syndicate" that is always trying to take a "political ride on a communal riot.

The former Union minister made the remarks while addressing a press conference during his three-day visit to Prayagraj.

Naqvi said, "Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has demolished the deceit of communal polarisation with the commitment to all-embracing empowerment.

Modi has strengthened the pride and prestige of Bharat even

amid the turmoil across the world.'

He added, "Those who were trying to tarnish Bharat's image have been defeated.

Every citizen of Bharat feels proud that the entire world is looking at Modi Ji as a 'troubleshooter' during the global crisis."

On the detractors of Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath and his ways of dealing with criminals, Naqvi said the UP government is committed to security and harmony by cracking down on rioters and anarchists.

These "Samanti Sultans," who cry over action against musclemen and rioters, are unable to digest this fact, he added. (PTI)

Kejriwal, Atishi pay homage to Manmohan Singh at his house



NEW DELHI, Dec 27: AAP national convenor Arvind Kejriwal on Friday paid homage to former prime minister Manmohan Singh at the latter's residence in New Delhi

Manmohan Singh, whose leadership was defined by compassion and intellect, died in the national capital Thursday night at the age of

Kejriwal said in a post on X, "Paid my last respects to former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. Met his family during this solemn moment and extended my condolences to them.

Singh was a visionary leader whose economic reforms shaped modern India and whose humility touched countless lives, the AAP chief added.

Other AAP leaders, including Delhi chief minister Atishi and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh, also visited Singh's house and paid tributes to his mortal remains.

"Paid last respects to former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and extended my condolences to his family. A brilliant economist with a profound legacy of driving India's transformative economic reforms in the 1990s, he redefined the nation's trajectory at a pivotal moment in history," Atishi said in a post on X.

Singh's contributions to our economic and political systems have left an indelible mark, shaping modern India in ways that will continue to inspire all generations to come, she added.

Manmohan Singh faced a trial by fire when he presented the pathbreaking 1991 Union budget that saw the nation rise from its darkest financial crisis.

A seven-day state mourning will be observed throughout the country as a mark of respect to him. The national flag will be flown at halfmast across India during the period. (PTI)



Endless incarceration without trial falls

foul of Art 21 of Constitution: Delhi HC

personal bond of \mathbf{E} 50 lakh with two sureties. and though the offence was serious, long incarceration was a relevant factor.

ance of the accused during the trial and the apprehension of the accused being a flight risk could be allayed by imposing appropriate conditions, it said.

The court said the prosecution could issue a look out circular against him.

Delhi Police arrested the man for allegedly cheating a company of ₹ 7 crore by issuing fake payment receipts after placing bulk orders for rice containers.

Police's Economic Offences Wing lodged a complaint alleging Sandeep Tilwani made 74 bookings for 640 rice containers with the company for transportation amounting to ₹ 11.2 crore, police said.

Singh, argued he was framed in the case and the complainant lodged the FIR owing to financial

The accused said he was only a middleman between importers and companies providing freight services, and his only role was to introduce parties to each other. (PTI)

Tilwani, represented by advocate Utkarsh



MUMBAI, Dec 27: A court here on Friday granted bail to Aditya Pandit, the jailed boyfriend of an Air India pilot who allegedly committed suicide last month.

Pilot Srishti Tuli (25), who lived in a rented flat in the 'Kanakia Rain Forest' building in Marol area, was found dead in the early hours of November 25.

A day later, police arrested Pandit (27), her boyfriend, and charged him with abetment of suicide under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) section 108. His bail application was allowed by Additional Sessions detailed order has not been made available yet. The complaint lodged by

The complaint lodged by The complaint lodged by application, men-Tuli's father said the accused and his daugh-tioned that when he was on his way to the

he said Nikam further argued that in order to attract the charge of abetment, it was necessary to show that the deceased was left with no other option but to commit suicide.

of witnesses falls foul of Article 21 of the Con-

stitution of India," the court said on December

NEW DELHI, Dec 27: Endless incarceration

without trial in near future falls foul of Article

21 of the Constitution, the Delhi High Court

said recently and granted bail to a man held in

Justice Amit Mahajan said if an accused was

suffering a prolonged incarceration without a

timely trial in the case, courts would ordinarily

be obligated to release them on bail.

a cheating case in 2022.

Mumbai court grants bail to

boyfriend held on abetment charge

"This was not so in the present case. The deceased was an educated lady. If she was unhappy in the relationship, she could have always walked out of it or if she was being harassed by the accused she could have complained about it," he said. Neither there was any complaint earlier nor any suicide note, and hence it cannot be said that the ap-Judge (Dindoshi court) T T Aglawe. But the plicant abetted the suicide, the lawyer ar-

Friday expressed concern over the condition of farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal, who is on an indefinite hunger strike, and directed the Punjab government to ensure he was given medical assistance. A vacation bench of Justices Surva Kant and Sudhanshu Dhulia issued a notice to the Punjab

government on a contempt petition against its chief secretary and the director general of police (DGP) for non-compliance of an order directing medical aid to Dallewal. "If there is a law and order situation, you have

to deal with it with iron hands. Somebody's life is at stake. You need to take it seriously. Medical aid has to be given and the impression is that you are not following it," the bench said.

The apex court directed the state go

offer assistance to the state government, solicitor general Tushar Mehta said its interference might lead to complications. "Few people cannot keep him (Dallewal)

hostage. One man's life is in danger. The state government can take measures," said Mehta. The Punjab AG informed the bench when the

ministers' delegation went to meet Dallewal on December 24, he gave a letter addressed to the Prime Minister. "He says, if some dialogue is opened up, only

then he is willing to cooperate with medical assistance," Singh said.

Mehta said Dallewal's admission in a hospital should be the top priority.

Dallewal has been on an indefinite fast at the hanauri border since November 26 to press the

opposite Shahi Jama Masjid in Sambhal, measurement begins ana anna anna

UP: Police outpost to be built



SAMBHAL (UP), Dec 27: Following the violence that erupted in Sambhal on November 24, the Uttar Pradesh Police is taking measures to enhance security and as part of these efforts, construction of a new police outpost is set to commence in the field opposite Shahi Jam

Article 21 of the Indian Constitution deals with the right of life and personal liberty. In the case at hand, the judge said charges were yet to be framed, the prosecution had sought repeated adjournments to file a supplementary chargesheet and it had been a year since the accused's last bail plea was dismissed. The order therefore released the man on a "The applicant has spent more than two years in custody. There is no likelihood of the trial The court said the law preferred bail over jail, being completed in near future. In such circumaiming to balance the rights of the accused with losses stances, incarceration of the applicant for an the requirements of the criminal justice system, endless period on account of non-examination

The object of jail was to secure the appear-

ter were residing in the same room for fivesix days prior to her suicide. However, on the day of the incident the accused left for Delhi. As per the complaint, the accused and the deceased had different food preferences and this was a matter of contention between them. Tuli was a non-vegetarian and the accused a vegetarian. Pandit constantly put pressure on Tuli to change her food habits may have led her to commit suicide, the complainant alleged.

However, Pandit's lawyer, Aniket Nikam argued that a case of abetment of suicide was not made out.

"Merely because there were some fights between both of them, it would not mean that the applicant had any criminal intent,"

national capital, he called Tuli multiple times, but got no response. He got worried and rushed back to Mumbai and found the door of her flat locked from inside.

application, men-

When Tuli did not open the door despite repeated knocks, Pandit called a key maker and got it opened. On finding his girlfriend hanging in the flat, he, as a law-abiding citizen, rushed her to hospital in order to save her life. However, the said effort became infructuous, his petition said. "It is submitted that without admitting any of the allegations, even if, the entire FIR is taken as it is, it does not indicate any such abetment of suicide. Only because an FIR has been registered by the respondents, the applicant (Pandit) came to be arrested," it said. (PTI)

to file a compliance report by December 28, when it would again hear the matter and ordered the Punjab chief secretary and the DGP to virtually remain present during the hearing.

During the hearing, Punjab advocate general Gurminder Singh submitted a delegation of eight cabinet ministers along with the Punjab DGP visited the protest site to convince Dallewal to move to a hospital but the farmers resisted it.

"We have provided everything on site. If there is physical jostling, we cannot take that risk," he added. The bench however responded, "We have serious doubts about those farmers, those who are not conscious and aware and concerned about his life.

Singh said the state government was "very earnestly" following up on the issue.

Centre to accept the farmers' demands, including a legal guarantee of minimum support price for crops

Ôn December 20, the apex court left it to the Punjab government officials and doctors to decide on the hospitalisation of Dallewal.

The court had said 70-year-old Dallewal could be moved to the makeshift hospital setup within 700 metre of the protest site at Khanauri border between Punjab and Haryana.

The bench on December 19 referred to civil rights activist Irom Sharmila continuing her protest for more than a decade under medical supervision and asked the Punjab government to convince Dallewal for a health examination. It had pulled up the state for not running med-

ical tests on Dallewal. (PTI)

Masjid, officials said Friday.

A survey of the area has already been conducted, and construction will begin soon at the site, located in the Kot Garvi neighbourhood of the city, they said.

"Measurements for the new outpost have been completed," Additional Superintendent of Police Shrish Chandra said.

However, he declined to reveal the proposed name of the outpost at this stage.

"The outpost is being established to bolster security in the region. Once completed, it will be manned round-the-clock to ensure a continuous police presence," the officer said.

Four people were killed and several others, including security personnel, were injured in violence that broke out in the Kot Garvi area on November 24 when some locals clashed with police during a courtordered survey of the Shahi Jama Masjid over a petition that claimed a Harihar temple once existed at the site. (PTI)

Jammu's tourism can grow by encouraging pilgrims to visit other attractions: Omar Abdullah

'This facility should host school events, allowing students to hone their skills

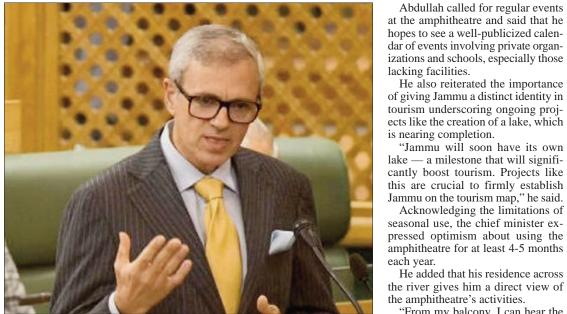
JAMMU, Dec 27: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah had said that encouraging pilgrims of Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine to explore other attractions in Jammu could result in an additional 15 lakh tourists in those places.

Abdullah highlighted the nearcompletion of a long-pending project to create a lake in Jammu describing it as a pivotal step in establishing the region as a significant destination on the tourism map. "If we can encourage even 15 percent of the pilgrims visiting Mata Vaishno Devi to explore other attractions in Jammu, we could see an influx of 15 lakh tourists - a figure comparable to Kashmir's peak tourism years," he said.

The chief minister shared his vision of transforming Jammu into a distinct tourist destination while inaugurating the open-air amphitheatre at Bagh-e-Bahu on Thursday night.

Highlighting Jammu's potential, Abdullah underlined the importance of leveraging the region's prominent pilgrimage sites, particularly the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine, which

draws over a crore visitors annually. He praised the development of Bagh-e-Bahu, recalling its transformation from a modest site to a tourism hub with water fountains, an



aquarium and a sound and light show.

"I have seen Bagh-e-Bahu evolve from a modest site into a hub featuring water fountains, an aquarium, and a sound and light show. Today, it forms a key part of this amphitheatre, which adds a new dimension to Jammu's cultural and tourism landscape," he said.

soothing sounds of the river and oc-He urged the concerned departments to maximize the amphithecasionally enjoy the sound and light show," he said atre's potential advocating for its use as a platform for various activities.

'This facility should host school events, allowing students to hone their skills and showcase their talent. It's vital that this amphitheatre is not left underutilised," he added.

Naxalite with ₹7 lakh reward on his head surrenders in Maharashtra's Gondia GONDIA, Dec 27: A Nax-Additional SP Nityanand Jha. He was part of the outlawed

movement since 2014 when

he just a teen and served in the

Maharashtra - Madhya

Pradesh-Chhattisgarh zone of

the Naxalites," the official

Deva was involved in firing

alite with a reward of ₹ 7 lakh on his head surrendered in Maharashtra's Gondia, a police official said on Friday. Deva alias Arjun alias Rakesh Sumdo Mudam (27) was part of the Malaikhand

'dalam' and Pamed 'platoon' hopes to see a well-publicized calennumber 9 of the outlawed dar of events involving private organ-Communist Party of India izations and schools, especially those (Maoist), the official said.

He also reiterated the importance Thursday in front of Collector of giving Jammu a distinct identity in Prajit Nair, Superintendent of tourism underscoring ongoing proj-Police Gorakh Bhamre and

NOTICE

said.

No. AESRB/064/2024/768

Assam Engineering Service Recruitment Board (AESRB) invites online application through the official website of AESRB (www.aesrb.in) from the permanent residents of Assam and having requisite qualification for recruitment to vacant posts of Librarian (3 Nos.) in the Government Engineering Colleges under Higher Education Department, Government of Assam

The details of the caste/category wise vacancy, eligibility criteria, pay scales, instructions to apply etc. will be made available in the official website of AESRB (www.aesrb.in).

Online application shall be accepted from 3rd January, 2025. Interested candidates are requested to visit the official website of AESRB only for applying.

Further, interested candidates are also requested to visit the official website of AESRB frequently for any future notifications. The last date for submission of online Application is 20th January, 2025.

Sd/-Member Secretary Assam Engineering Service Janasanyog/D/11144/24/28-Dec-24 Recruitment Board

PROVISION OF COPPER JUMPERS IN LUMDING DIVISION

Tender Notice No.: TRD/LMG/15 c 2024-25; Dated: 24-12-2024; E-Tende re invited by the undersigned for th ollowing work; Tender No.: EL-TRD NFR-LMG-OHE-MOD-27; Name o Work: Provision of 160 sq.mm coppe jumper in place of 105 sq.mm coppe imper in isolators under Lumdin Advertised Value ivision. ₹70,47,063.70/-; Earnest Money ₹1,41,000/-; Date & time of closing of ender at 15:00 hrs. on 20-01-2025. Fo omplete information with the tende ocument of above e-tender will be available in website www.ireps.gov.in

Sr. DEE/TRD, Lumding NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
 Serving Customers With A Smile

RESTORATION/ MAINTENANCE OF TELECOM GEARS

E-Tender No. SNT-41 LMG-2024-25 Dated: 24-12 2024. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the followin works: Name of work: Restoration Maintenance of Telecom Gears in Aathori-Thekeraguri section of Lumding Division for a period of one year. Tender Value ₹48,21,552.29/-, Earnest Money 96,400/-. Date & Time of closing of Tender: 15.00 hrs. on 20 01-2025 & will be opened at 15.30 hrs. on 20-01-2025. The complete information of the tende document of above e-tende will be available in the website www.ireps.gov.in

Note: (1) For any changes o ender Please check on interne website/News Paper/Corrigendu of the original tender notice.

DSTE, Lumdin NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

looks forward to hearing the vibrant buzz of activities from the amphitheatre as a regular feature, urging the departments to ensure continuous en-

Abdullah called for regular events

"Jammu will soon have its own

"From my balcony, I can hear the

The chief minister said that he

gagement and wide publicity. (PTI)

->

cases in Tipagarh in Gadchiroli, Jhilmili Kashibehra Bakarkatta in Chhattisgarh's "He laid down arms on Rajnandgaon as well as other incidents of Naxal violence and attacks on security forces, the official informed. (PTI)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2024

NATION

Envoys of US, Russia, China condole passing away of Manmohan Singh

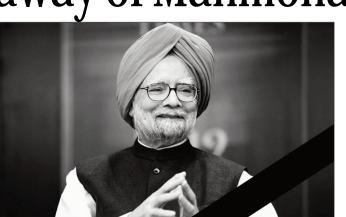
NEW DELHI. Dec 27: Envoys of several countries, including Russia, China and the US, on Friday expressed condolences over the passing away of Manmohan Singh, describing the former prime minister as an "outstanding leader" and hailing his commitment to the progress of India.

In a post on X, the French Embassy in India said his leadership "bolstered India's global standing and strengthened bonds with France"

Singh, the architect of India's economic reforms, died here on Thursday night. He was 92.

Ambassadors of many countries have expressed grief on passing of Singh, respected globally for his expertise in economics.

"It is a moment of poignant sorrow and grief for India and for Russia. Dr Manmohan Singh's contribution to our bilateral ties was immeasurable. His suave demeanour was always endearing as unquestionable was his expertise as an economist and his commitment to the progress of India," Russian envoy to India, Denis Alipov, said in a post on X.



"Our thoughts and prayers are with the family of Dr Manmohan Singh ji and the Indian people," he added

US ambassador Eric Garcetti remembered Singh as a leader "who set in motion a historic chapter in US-India relations"

"Remembering the selfless contributions of our dear friend and former prime minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, who set in motion an historic chapter in US-India relations. His dedication to India's growth and prosperity continues to inspire us. Grateful for his leader-

ship and vision," the US envoy said in a social media post. Singh served two terms as India's prime minister from 2004-

2014 The civil nuclear deal signed

during Singh's prime ministership changed India's overall engagement with the US as it paved the way for building the bonds of a strategic partnership, especially in areas of high-technology and defence. Expressing condolences in a

post on X, Chinese envoy Xu Feihong said, "Deeply saddened by

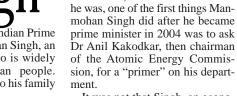
the passing of former Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, an outstanding leader who is widely revered by the Indian people. Heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones."

Many embassies in India also put out posts on social media along with photographs while remembering Singh.

"Deepest condolences to the family and friends of former Prime Minister of India, Dr #ManmohanSingh. A statesman admired worldwide, he leaves behind a legacy of compassion and progress. His leadership bolstered India's global standing and strengthened bonds with France," the French Embassy posted on X. The Embassy of Iran said Singh

played a key role in fostering historic ties between the two countries

"The Embassy of Iran in Delhi extends its heartfelt condolences to the government and people of India on the demise of Dr Manmohan Singh. He was a highly respected leader, who played key role in fostering Iran-India historic ties," it said in a social media post. (PTI)



It was not that Singh, an economist-turned-politician, was unfamiliar with India's nuclear energy and weapons situation, noted Dr Kakodkar, reminiscing about his interactions with the former PM who died in Delhi on Thursday at age 92.

Before he became PM, Singh had served as a member of the AEC.

"I was surprised at this demand for a primer, because of the time constraints a prime minister has. I told him that the primer on the subject cannot be restricted to two pages," Kakodkar told PTI on Friday.

"He said page restrictions did not matter.

Soon, he had a detailed note running into 15-20 pages ready for the prime minister.

"Dr Singh had an eye for details. He read the primer for an hour and a half, with me sitting beside him, understanding the nuances involved in this strategic department. At the prime minister's level, you do not expect this," Kakodkar said. The Department of Atomic En-

ergy reports directly to the Prime Minister's Office. Kakodkar served

scribing him the architect of eco-

nomic reforms and one of the tallest

leaders. Singh, who opened up the

economy as finance minister and

consecutive terms, died on Thurs-

"History will forever honour his

pivotal role in the transformative

1991 reforms that reshaped India

and opened its doors to the world.

drasekaran called Singh one of the

stalwarts who envisioned a new,

liberalised India that is taking its

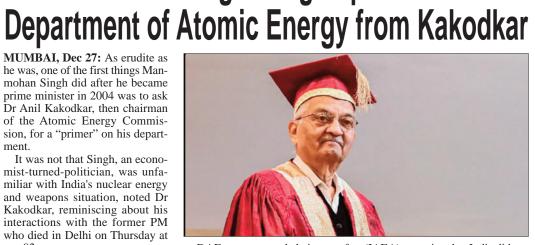
rightful place in the world.

day at the age of 92.

in a post on X.

No.NDB-40/Tender/2024-25/2766

IPR(BTC)-2023-24/1199



as DAE secretary and chairman of the AEC from 2000 to 2009. It was under Singh that the his-

When PM Singh sought 'primer' on

toric Indo-US nuclear deal was signed in October 2008, paving the way for strategic cooperation not only with the US but also other developed countries in areas of nuclear energy, space and defence research.

There was a section within the government that wanted to expedite the nuclear deal citing economic benefits, Kakodkar said.

"He was an economist who was well aware of the economic benefits after the Indo-US nuclear deal. But Dr Singh ensured that India goes ahead with the deal only after securing its strategic interests. He was very firm on that," he said. One of the hallmarks of the

Indo-US nuclear deal was that not all atomic reactors were placed under the safeguards of the Inter-

(IAEA), ensuring that India did not have to shelve its nuclear weapons programme

After his visit to the US in 2005, when Kakodkar accompanied Singh and during which hectic parleys took place on the nuclear deal, Singh paid him a generous compliment

"He placed a hand on my shoulder and said, 'You saved the country (referring to the terms and conditions of the deal)'," said the former AEC chairman.

The former PM was a wise, knowledgeable person who never threw his weight around, always heard out everyone's view and gave his colleagues freedom to work, Kakodkar said.

When the construction of the country's Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor was to start, the DAE invited Singh for its launch at Kalpakkam. Singh honoured the national Atomic Energy Agency request, Kakodkar recalled. (PTI)

J-K: Shutdown in Katra against ropeway project enters third day, more people join hunger strike



REASI/JAMMU, Dec 27: The shutdown in Katra against the proposed Vaishno Devi ropeway project entered its third day on Friday, with more people sitting on the hunger strike to demand the release of those detained during earlier demonstrations.

The Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Sangharsh Samiti called for a 72-hour shutdown, which began on Wednesday. It announced that all activities in Jammu and Kashmir's Katra would remain suspended during the bandh.

Women and children have now joined the six protesters who began a hunger strike on Wednesday night, demanding the release of 18 Samiti members detained during a protest march against the project earlier that day.

Last month, the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board decided to move forward with a ₹ 250-crore passenger ropeway project between Tarakote Marg to Sanji Chhat along the 12-kilometre track to the shrine after shelving

a spokesperson for the Samiti.

Criticising the administration for its lack of engagement, the spokesperson said, "The administration is indifferent to the plight of people, including women and children, holding peaceful protests. Our simple demand is to shelve the project, as it threatens the livelihood of Katra residents, most of whom rely on the pilgrimage economy.'

He further claimed that instead of initiating dialogue, the administration resorted to force, including the detention of Samiti leaders during a peaceful protest. "They are creating an unnecessary crisis with their approach," he stated.

Shiva, a participant in the hunger strike, had to be hospitalised after his condition deteriorated.

"Our hunger strike will continue until the detained individuals are released. If someone falls ill, another person will replace them,"

former Madhya Pradesh transport department official BHOPAL, Dec 27: The ED on Friday conducted searches at multiple locations in Madhya Pradesh as part

of a money-laundering probe against a former transport department official who was recently searched by the Lokavukta police on allegations of possession of disproportionate assets, official sources said.

The federal agency is also probing into a "linked" seizure of gold and cash worth about ₹ 52 crore from an

state capital Bhopal, Gwalior and Jabalpur. The premises are linked to the family and associates of Saurabh Sharma -- the official under the scanner, the sources said.

A security team from the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) is assisting the search parties, they said.

The former official and his associates are under the scanner of three probe agencies -- the state Lokayukyta, Income-Tax Department, and the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

The Lokayukta police recovered assets worth more than ₹ 7.98 crore during the recent searches conducted at locations linked to the former official.

The vehicle was found registered in the name of one Chetan Singh Gaud, a "close associate" of Sharma, sources had said.

The sources said the two instances could be "linked and that an investigation is underway to ascertain the

According to the Lokayukta, Sharma was appointed as a constable in the transport department on compassionate rounds in 2015 and took voluntary retirement in 2023 His father, a government doctor, died in 2015, according to the special police establishment of the Madhya Pradesh government. The Lokayukta alleged that Sharma earned money through corrupt means, including setting up a school and a hotel in the name of his mother, wife, sisterin-law and close associates Gaud and Sharad Jaiswal, officials said. (PTI)

in paying tributes to Manmohan Singh NEW DELHI, Dec 27: Billionaire deep insights while always being humble and upholding his personal Gautam Adani, Tata Sons Chairman

values." Chandrasekaran said. His inspiring leadership earned him respect across the world, he added

Aditya Birla Group Chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla said with Singh's demise the nation has lost one of its tallest leaders and finest served as prime minister for two economists

"His most defining contribution the epochal 91 reforms spurred a multi-decadal economic boom and more importantly reshaped the calculus of possibilities for India and Indians," Birla said in a statement.

He further said, "Over several A rare leader who spoke softly but achieved monumental strides decades in public life, his intellect, through his actions. Dr Singh's life wisdom, and humility stood as exremains a masterclass in leadership, emplars, leaving an indelible mark humility and service to the nation on the nation's conscience." and will inspire generations to Singh's extraordinary rise from come," Adani group chairman said humble beginnings to the Prime Tata Sons Chairman N Chan-

Minister's office epitomises the boundless potential of India and serves as an inspiration for generations of Indians, Birla added. Indian industry, economy, and

entrepreneurs in particular, owe a ter's life was a testament to

economist, Singh finds his place among India's tallest leaders.

"I am deeply saddened by the passing away of Dr Manmohan Singh. As a Prime Minister, Finance Minister and an economist he finds his place among India's tallest leaders. Indian industry, economy and especially entrepreneurs owe a debt of gratitude to the liberalisation reforms that were ushered in the early 90s under his leadership," Mittal said.

Infosys founder Naravana Murthy described Manmohan Singh as a gentleman, a scholar, and a value-based politician.

"His leading the economic reforms, under the guidance of Sri Narasimha Rao, is what laid a strong and durable foundation for the acceleration of India's economic growth. Therefore, every Indian should be extremely grateful to this extraordinary individual for enhancing the prosperity of our country," Murthy said.

Reliance Group head Anil Ambani said the former prime minishumility, wisdom and service to

N Chandrasekaran and business tycoon Anil Ambani led India Inc. in paying tributes to former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, de-

abandoned SUV. Raids are being undertaken at about eight premises in

Following this, on December 19, the Income-Tax Department seized 52 kilogrammes of gold bars worth ₹40crore and more than ₹ 10 crore in cash from an abandoned SUV in Bhopal.

facts".

ED raids in case against Adani, Chandrasekaran lead India Inc

the project in the past due to similar protests.

The project will facilitate access to the temple for senior citizens, children and others who find it difficult to climb the track to the cave shrine, it had said.

The Samiti, which represents shopkeepers, pony operators and palanquin owners, argues that the ropeway would destroy the livelihoods of local business owners and has demanded that the project be scrapped.

With black flags displayed across the town, shops, restaurants, and other business establishments remained closed for the third day, and vehicular movement was at a standstill, following the Samiti's call for protest.

The bandh has disrupted normal life in one of India's busiest pilgrimage hubs, which is visited daily by thousands of devotees seeking blessings at the cave shrine.

'The bandh is part of our 72-hour-long shutdown against the ropeway project. It is going on peacefully. The committee will decide on the next course of action soon," said

said another participant in the hunger strike. Eighteen protesters, including Samiti leaders Bhupinder Singh and Sohan Chand, were detained by police during Wednesday's march

and taken away from the protest site. The proposed ₹ 250-crore ropeway project will connect Tarakote Marg to Sanji Chhat, leading to the cave shrine in Reasi district.

In Jammu, the Shiv Sena Dogra Front (DFSS) extended its support to the pilgrims, who are facing hardships due to the bandh, and urged that the issue be resolved amicably. "We stand with the pilgrims and support better facilities. If needed, create two ropeways instead of one. Provide more amenities for accommodating pilgrims during the yatra," said DFSS President Ashok Gupta.

Gupta added that the pilgrimage had significantly boosted Katra's economy, and the bandh was causing inconvenience to devotees. "Yatra, business, ponywalas are all dependent on pilgrims. They should not be put to inconvenience," he said. (PTI)

sius.

degrees Celsius, while south

Kashmir's Kokernag, regis-

tered minus 4.8 degrees Cel-

The weather is expected to

remain mainly dry from De-

cember 29-31 and light

snowfall is possible at iso-

lated to scattered places in

Sarpanch's car attacked with cement block, petrol-filled condom in Dharashiv district

MUMBAI. Dec 27: Four persons allegedly shattered the windshield of a sarpanch's SUV and hurled a condom filled with petrol inside the vehicle in Maharashtra's Dharashiv district, police said on Friday.

The sarpanch, Namdeo Nikam, and another occupant of the vehicle suffered injuries in the attack, which took place around 10 pm on Thursday at Tuljapur, an official said.

Nikam, the sarpanch of Mesai Jawalga, was going towards the village from Barul in his SUV at the time, an official said.

Four persons on two motorcycles came close to his vehicle and threw eggs on the front glass of Nikam's ve-

hicle, the official said. The group broke the SUV's windshield with a cement block improvised to act like a hammer. The assailants also threw a petrol-filled condom inside the vehicle and splashed the flammable fuel on it, the official said.

Based on Nikam's complaint, the Tuljapur police have registered a case under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) section 110, concerning attempt to commit culpable homicide, against four unidentified attackers, the official said

Nikam told the police that he lives in Pune and visits the village two to three times a week. He has also claimed that he has no enmity with anyone in Mesai Jawalga, the official said, adding that a probe is underway.

The attack on the village head comes amid a massive outrage over the abduction and killing of Santosh Deshmukh, sarpanch of Massajog village, in Beed district earlier this month. The opposition has claimed that state minister Dhananjay Munde's close aide Walmik Karad is the mastermind behind the murder. (PTI)

We mourn the passing away of debt of gratitude to the liberalisation former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, one of the stalwarts who envisioned a new, liberalised India that is taking its rightful place in the world," he said in a statement.

said. "Dr Singh will always be remembered for his visionary thinking and

reforms that were ushered in the India. early 90s under Manmohan Singh's leadership, Bharti Enterprises Founder and Chairman Sunil Mittal

Mittal further said that as a Prime Minister, Finance Minister and an

"As the Guru Granth Sahib says, 'Nanak Naam Chardi Kala, Tere Bhane Sarbat Da Bhala' - 'With the Divine Name comes eternal optimism; by You will, may there be well-being for all'. (PTI)

Dt.26/12/2024

Tender No. 14 of 2024-25 PRESS NOTICE NOTICE INVITING TENDER (For offline of Multiple works)

NO.NDB-40/Tender/2024-25/2766, Dt.26/12/2024, Sealed tendersare invited affixing a non refundable court fee stamp of Rs. 8.25 (Rupees Eight &paisa twenty five) only on behalf of Nagrijuli Dev. Block (P&RD) from the intending contractors/ Suppliers/ firms for the work mention below:-

Sl.	Name of Work	Estimated Amount/	EMD Bid Security	Tender Fees (In
No.		Value (in lakh)	(inRs.)	Rs.)
1	Const. of Community Toilet at AmritSarovar near SSB Camp for the year 2023-24 during 2024-25	10,47,960/-	10,480/-for SC/ST 20,960/-for Gen.	314/-
2	Const. of Community Toilet at Amar Chowk for the year 2023-24 during 2024-2025during 2024-2025	10,47,960/-	10,480/-for SC/ST 20,960/-for Gen.	314/-

Pre-bid date and time: 20/12/2024 at 4 PM; Last date and time of bid submission: 09/12/2024 at 2.30 PM. Date &time of bid opening: 09/01/2025 at 3.00 PM

Tender documents can be obtain from the office of the BDO, Nagrijuli on any working days/hours up to 4.00 PM from 20/12/2024 to 09/01/2025 or in https:/sppp.assam.gov.in. A pre bid meeting will be held as mention above. The address for the meeting is O/o the BDO, Nagrijuli Dev. Block. The bid will be opened in the office of the undersigned as per the schedule mention above. The TIA reserves the right to accept or reject any bid tender and to cancel annual the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award.

UNSEALED TENDER WILL SUMMARILY BE REJECTED.

Sd/-Name of the TIA:- BDO Address of the TIA:-Nagrijuli Block, Nagrijuli

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, P.W.D. (R&B), **DIPHU CIRCLE-1, DIPHU**

No. DPU/Special Grant/KAAC/2024-25/1562

Dated : 24.12.2024

PRESS NOTICE INVITING BID

The Superintending Engineer PWD(R&B), Diphu Circle-I, Diphu invites bid on behalf of Governor of Assam for Improvement of road under Special Grant to KAAC for the year 2024-25 in Karbi Anglong district amounting to Rs. 1,59,07,938.00 (approx.) from approved & eligible contractors registered with PWRD, Assam. Details may be seen at website www.assamtenders.gov.in and also in the office of the undersigned during office hours from 27.12.2024 to 16.01.2025. The last Date / Time for receipt of bid will be upto 2.00 PM on 16.01.2025.

> Sd/-Superintending Engineer, P.W.D(R&B) Diphu Circle-1, Diphu Dated : 24.12.2024

Memo No. DPU/Special Grant/KAAC/2024-25/1562- A

Slight rise in minimum temperatures in Kashmir; Dry weather expected from Dec 29-31, says MeT

Srinagar recorded a low of

minus 7.3 degrees Celsius

on Thursday night, slightly

down from the previous

night's minus 7 degrees Cel-

sius, the MeT department

Gulmarg, a town known for

said.

SRINAGAR, Dec 27: The including Dal Lake. minimum temperatures improved slightly at most places in Kashmir as a western disturbance is likely to impact the region on Friday, bringing light snowfall over a few higher reaches, officials said.

Under the influence of the western disturbance, light rain is possible over the plains of Jammu and light snow over the higher reaches of the Chenab Valley and Pir Panjal range, the India Meteorological De-

partment (IMD) said. Intense cold wave-like conditions are prevailing across Kashmir, as the minimum temperatures continue to settle several degrees below freezing due to dry weather. Both the minimum and maximum temperatures have been staying below normal for this time of the season. The drop in temperature has led to the freezing of water supply lines and a thin layer of ice has covered the surface of several water bodies,

skiing activities in north Kashmir from January 1-5. Kashmir, recorded a low of The MeT Office said there is minus 6 degrees Celsius, the a likelihood of some imsame as the previous night, provement in temperatures the department added. until Monday. Pahalgam, the base camp for Kashmir is currently under the annual Amarnath Yatra the grip of 'Chillai-Kalan' -in south Kashmir, registered considered the harshest pea minimum temperature of riod of winter -- which minus 8 degrees Celsius, began on December 21. slightly up from the previous During the 40 days of night's minus 8.6 degrees Celsius. Qazigund, the gateway town to Kashmir, logged a minimum temperature of minus ably

6.9 degrees Celsius, while Konibal, a hamlet in the Pampore area, was the coldest recorded place in the valley at minus 9.5 degrees Celsius.

Kupwara, in north Kashmir, 10-day (baby cold). (PTI) recorded a low of minus 6.4

Chillai-Kalan, the chances of snowfall are most frequent and maximum and the temperature drops consider-It ends on January 30 next

year, but the cold wave continues even after that in the valley. The 40 days are followed by a 20-day 'Chillai-Khurd' (small cold) and a 'Chillai-Bachha'

ENTERTAINMENT

JUNAID KHAN, KHUSHI KAPOOR'S NEXT MOVIE IS ROMANTIC COMEDY 'LOVEYAPA'



NEW DELHI, Dec 27: Newcomers Junaid Khan and Khushi Kapoor's upcoming romantic comedy has been titled "Loveyapa" and will be released in theatres on February 7, 2025. Described as a "tangled tale of love and its complications with a mix of fun and laughter", the film is directed by Advait Chandan of "Laal Singh Chaddha" and "Secret Superstar" fame, according to a press release. "Loveyapa" is backed by Phantom Studios and AGS Entertainment. "In theatres 7th Feb 2025. 'Loveyapa'. Khushi Kapoor Junaid Khan Directed by Advait Chandan. Situationship? Relationship? Love ka syapa? ya Loveyapa? See you in the theatres on the 7th of Feb 2025," Phantom Studios posted on its social media pages. "Loveyapa" is the second project for both Junaid and Khushi. Junaid, son of superstar Aamir Khan and Reena Dutta, forayed into acting with the historical drama "Maharaj" from Siddharth P Malhotra. The film, which also featured Sharvari, Shalini Pandey and Jaideep Ahlawat in pivotal roles, was released on streaming service Netflix. Khushi, daughter of late Bollywood star Sridevi and producer Boney Kapoor, started her career with 2023 Netflix movie "The Archies", co-starring Suhana Khan and Agastya Nanda. (PTI)

'THE SECRET OF THE SHILEDARS' TO STREAM ON DISNEY+

Unparalleled humility, quiet dignity: Cine stars pay tributes to former PM Manmohan Singh

NEW DELHI, Dec 27: Rajinikanth, Kamal Haasan, Chiranjeevi, Manoj Bajpayee and other film stars on Friday condoled the demise of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, remembering him as a "visionary" and a "great financial reformer and statesman".

Singh, the architect behind India's economic reforms, passed away on Thursday night at Delhi's All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at the age of 92. He served as the prime minister from 2004 to 2014. As the nation's finance minister in 1991, he played a pivotal role in shaping India's economic framework, earning widespread recognition in global financial and economic circles.

In a post on X, actor-politician Haasan said the nation has lost "one of its finest sons". "India has lost one of its most eminent statesmen and scholars. The passing of Dr. Manmohan Singh marks the end of an era in Indian polity. A man of quiet dignity, he reshaped the nation through his visionary economic and social policies.

"Few have influenced the nation's trajectory with such far-reaching impact. His policies, both as Finance Minister and Prime Minister, empowered millions, strengthening the fabric of Indian democracy and uplifting the most vulnerable," Haasan posted.

Rajinikanth was asked about Singh's demise at the Chennai airport and he said, "He was a great human being. Great financial reformer and statesman."

Chiranjeevi said he is anguished by the passing away of Singh, who was a "highly educated, most graceful, soft spoken and humble leader".

"His visionary and game changing contributions as the finance minister and then his highly successful tenure as the 13th Prime Minister of India for two successive terms will remain etched in history," he said. The actor said he was privileged and fortunate to have served as a member of parliament and minister of state for tourism during Singh's second tenure as the PM.

"I fondly cherish my interactions with him and the inspiration and wisdom I got from him forever. It is a tremendous loss to



our country. My deepest condolences to his family and each of his numerous admirers," he added. Sunny Deol also hailed Singh for

playing a pivotal role in shaping India's economic liberalisation. "His wisdom, integrity & contribu-

tions to the nation's growth will always be remembered. My heartfelt condolences. #RIPDrManmohanSingh," he posted on X. Bajpayee said, "Saddened by the

passing of our former Prime Minister. A statesman whose contributions in every aspect of our nation's growth will always be remembered. My heartfelt condolences to his family. #RIPDrManmohanSingh." Anil Kapoor recalled that he once

met the former PM who left "an indelible impression" on the actor.

"He was a man of unparalleled humility and wisdom. His extraordinary contributions will forever be remembered. May his soul rest in peace," he said. Diljit Dosanjh shared a photo of Singh on his Instagram Stories and captioned it, "Oh Waheguru".

Anushka Sharma wrote on Instagram Stories, "Rest in peace Dr Manmohan Singh ji."

Sharing a photo of Singh on Instagram, Allu Arjun said, "His leadership and dedication to the nation will always be remembered. Rest in peace sir." Veteran actor Anupam Kher, who played the role of the former PM in the 2019 film "The Accidental Prime Minister" based on the memoir of Singh's former media advisor Sanjay Baru, said he is deeply saddened by his demise.

"Having studied him for more than a year for the movie #TheAccidental-PrimeMinister, it felt that I actually spent that much time with him. He was inherently a good man. Personally completely honest, great economist and a very humble person. Some can say may be not an astute politician! My heartfelt condolences to his family," he said on X.

Kajol said, "Tributes to Dr. Manmohan Singh Ji, a distinguished leader who served India with dedication & wisdom. May his legacy continue to inspire future generations." Sanjay Dutt posted, "Deeply sad-

dened by the loss of Dr. Manmohan Singh Ji. His contributions to India will never be forgotten." Riteish Deshmukh called Singh one

of India's "finest Prime Ministers". "The man who propelled India's

economic growth. He epitomised dignity and humility. We will forever be indebted to his legacy. May his soul rest in eternal glory. Thank you Shri Manmohan Singh ji," he said. (PTI)

'Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani' to re-release in theatres on January 3

NEW DELHI, Dec 27: Ranbir Kapoor and Deepika Padukone starrer "Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani" is set to re-release in theatres on January 3, 2025. Directed by Ayan Mukerji, the film was produced under Karan Johar's Dharma Productions and also featured Aditya Roy Kapur and Kalki Koechlin. The film had its original release on May 31, 2013. According to a press release, "Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani", which went on to have great box office in 2013, will release on January 3 across 140 PVR INOX Cinemas in 46 cities. Johar said "Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani" is a perfect film to start the new year. "'Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani' holds a special place in the heart of Dharma Productions. The film has great music, stunning locations, some of our most loved actors, and a story that resonates across all generations. The film leaves you with a warm, fuzzy feeling about life. We can't wait to see how Gen Z feels about watching it as adults on the big screen while millennials join in, singing along and repeating all the dialogues before the actors do," he said in a statement. Mukerji said the film is like a second child for him. "More than a decade later, I can confidently say that creating it was one of the greatest joys of my life. What we accomplished, despite its perfections and imperfections, remains a source of immense and lasting pride for me," he added. "Ayan Mukerji's masterful storytelling sets the perfect tone, making it a timeless repeat watch, with emotions that transcend all barriers. We are thrilled to bring this film back to the big screen and eagerly anticipate the audience's reaction," said Niharika Bijli, Lead Strategist, at PVR INOX Ltd. The romantic comedy followed the stories of four friends, Bunny (Kapoor), Naina (Padukone), Avi (Kapur) and Aditi (Koechlin) as they go through the various adventures life has in store for them. The film was also praised for its songs such as "Badtameez Dil", "Ghagra", "Kabira", "Dilliwaali Girlfriend" and "Subhanallah". (PTI)

HOTSTAR

NEW DELHI, Dec 27: Disney+ Hotstar on Friday an-nounced that its upcoming series "The Secret of The Shiledars", headlined by actor Rajeev Khandelwal, will start streaming on its platform from January 31. Helmed by Aditya Sarpotdar of "Munjya" fame, the series is touted as a first-of-its-kind treasure hunt-based series and also stars Sai Tamhankar, Gaurav Amlani and veteran actor Ashish Vidyarthi in pivotal roles. "The Secret of The Shiledars" narrates the story of the Shiledars, who were members of military units in the Maratha Empire. Sarpotdar said it was his curiosity about stories of adventure and history that led him to "The Secret of the Shiledars". "The concept of Shiledars', The Guardians, hasn't been explored before, making it intriguing yet fulfilling. I believe that The Secret of the Shiledars is the project that challenged me and made me move out of my comfort zone and I am so glad that I could embark on this journey with Rajeev Khandelwal as he has truly given his heart and soul to it and I am sure it will reflect on screen," the filmmaker said in a statement. (PTI)

in sereen, the minimaker said in a statement. (1 11)



'ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE' STARS ON EMBODYING NOVEL'S CHARACTERS: A MAGICAL AND SURREAL EXPERIENCE

NEW DELHI, Dec 27: Walking on the massive Netflix sets of "One Hundred Years of Solitude" felt like she had stumbled into a parallel universe, says actor Susana Morales, who plays young Ursula Iguaran in the streamer's ambitious adaptation of Garbriel Garcia Marquez's 1967 literary classic.

Morales stars alongside Vina Machado and Marco Gonzales, who play Pilar Ternera and young Jose Arcadio Buendia, respectively, in the eight-episode Spanish series, whose first part is currently streaming on Netflix.

The actor said she does not have the right words to describe how it felt to be acting in a story that has been such an integral part of every Colombian's life.

"It was just (like) living in a different world. Each part of the art, costumes and everything, it felt like a complete universe. It was like a parallel universe. Sometimes, it would click in our heads and we would be, 'I don't understand why I'm walking around right now'," Morales told PTI in an interview. "Well, I feel like it was a playroom for grownups and such beauty to just discover each set," Gonzales added.

As young Ursula Iguaran and Jose Arcadio Buendia, the two actors play the central couple who set out to find a new land at the beginning of the book and establish the fictional town of Macondo where Marquez's multi-generational saga takes place.

Machado, who is such a big fan of Marquez that she can recite pages of the book from memory and has read it seven times, said she just felt lucky to be part of the experience. "Sometimes, I would come to the sets and go: 'Oh my god, I am living on the pages of the book'. We are so happy and honoured," the actor said.

"I can phrase it in my mind all the time. Actually, when we were watching the first episode, I was saying the lines because I am like that. I am by the book. I'm very structured in my work.... That's such a magical oeuvre, such a magical book that when you have these little things and you just let it flow into your imagination," she added.

As Pilar Ternera, Machado plays a character whose fate is tied closely to the lead Buendias. She comes to Macondo to escape the man who raped her. Pilar can predict the future with the help of cards.

For decades, Marquez's novel was considered unfilmable with its century-spanning sweep, multiple characters and how the Nobel laureate intricately wove elements of magic realism with Colombian history, politics and religion.

One of the most ambitious and expensive productions in Latin American history, it took Netflix six years to translate the book to the screen. The 16-episode series, divided in two parts, was shot in Colombia with the support of the author's family.

Machado believes it was the right time for the book to be adapted for screen as they had the ability, technology, writers and ac-

tors to recreate the grandeur as well as the "little things" that make the book great.

"This was the right moment to do it and do it right," she said about Marquez's most celebrated creation that has fans in every corner of the world.

Morales said the series, which has received great reviews internationally, could come together beautifully because of the hard work and respect that every department showed to the original work.

"Our biggest effort was to be really true to the story," she said, adding that everyone worked on the series with a sense of responsibility. Gonzales admitted that the adaptation was a big challenge for those involved.

"I feel like when something is impossible, its just sparks (something in us) as humans. And it's a challenge that we give our all because you cannot pick and choose what you will do," he added.

The actor read the book when he was 18 and re-read it again before realising that it was important to "let it go".

"Because if not, you just start recreating all these scenarios and it's fine to do it but it can take away the joy of the moment in that particular thing. I rather be there (on the sets) and enjoy and not speculate about all the things that it might be," he said.

Morales found it easy to rely on the script and the book but also to the people around her as the story takes into account "the way we are in Colombia, Latin America and the way we live in our body".

"I think all the characters surround our daily life too," she added.

Gonzales hopes that the attention that the series is receiving will, hopefully, shine a light on Colombian talent.

"Everything is built by small steps, so if we can be part of small steps for the industry to put their eyes on Colombia, to believe in our talent, and in our capacity, I just feel happy to open the door." (PTI)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2024

Sports

World Boxing forms new Asian body; Lovlina in Athletes' Commission, Ajay Singh named board member

NEW DELHI, Dec 27: Tokyo Olympic medallist Lovlina Borgohain has been included in the Athletes' Commission while six Boxing Federation of India (BFI) officials, including president Ajay Singh, will be part of the newly-formed interim Asian body established by the breakaway organization World Boxing. India will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of Asian boxing within this new structure, with the BFI holding seven key positions, including Singh, who has been appointed as a board member.

Borgohain will represent the athletes' voices in Asian and global boxing

Key BFI officials, including

general Hemanta secretary Kumar Kalita and treasurer Digvijay Singh, will hold positions on the Olympic Commission and Finance and Audit Committee respectively. "The creation of Asian Box-

ing marks a significant milestone for World Boxing and a crucial step toward ensuring that boxing remains a part of the Olympic Games in LA 2028 and beyond," Singh was quoted as saying in a media release ..

"India is proud to be at the heart of this transformative initiative, contributing to the process of securing boxing's

Olympic future. With strong representation across key commissions, India

is strategically positioned to influence key policies, drive the development of Indian boxing, and champion the growth and prominence of the sport not only within the country but across Asia," Singh said on the formation of the interim Asian body and BFI's role.

Borgohain, one of three members of the Athletes' Commission, emphasised the importance of the platform to advocate for better infrastructure, fair opportunities, and support systems for athletes across

Asia. "It is an honour to represent India as a member of the Athletes' Commission in Asian Boxing. This is a vital platform



to ensure that athletes' voices are robust support systems throughheard and prioritised in the deout Asia that empower boxers to cision-making process. excel on the global stage," she "My focus will be on advocatsaid BFI officials Narender Kumar

ing for better training infrastruc-Nirwan and D P Bhatt will serve ture, fair opportunities, and

on the Constitution and Sports & Competition Commissions, respectively, while Dr. Karanjeet Singh will join the Medical Commission. The announcement comes a

week after India was awarded the hosting rights of the World Boxing Cup Final in November 2025

The country will also simultaneously host he World Boxing Congress

The development comes amid the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) repeated threats to exclude boxing from the 2028 Olympics unless national federations move away from the suspended International Boxing Association (IBA) and form a new governing body. India had joined WB earlier this year.

However, the Asian Boxing Confederation (ASBC) has twice voted against leaving the IBA to join the rival association this year.

In the wake of the latest vote last month, ASBC President Pichai Chunhavajira and Secretary General Ali Salameh resigned from their positions with the former revealing plans for creating a new Asian boxing governing body under the aegis of WB. WB is a breakaway international federation aiming to secure recognition from the IOC and ensure that boxing remains on the Olympic roster. (PTI)

Chennaiyin FC aim to return to winning ways; League: Delhi SG HFC look to halt East Bengal's momentum



CHENNAI, Dec 27: Chennaiyin FC will be aiming to rebound to winning form and finish the year on a positive note when they face Bengaluru FC in the Indian Super league here on Saturday.

In the day's other game, Hyderabad FC will host East Bengal FC with an aim to turn things around and halt the visitors' momentum.

Chennaiyin and Bengaluru have played each other 15 times in the ISL, with the former winning four matches. This corresponding fixture last year produced a 2-0 win for the Marina Machans and head coach Owen Coyle will be eyeing the same this time.

However, the tactician will be without captain Ryan Edwards, who is suspended for the match, and is expected to field an all-Indian backline.

Bengaluru come into the match as the second-placed side in the league, and Coyle is wary of the threat they carry, especially with the team missing key personnel. On the availability front,

Coyle confirmed that he will take late calls on Wilmar Jordan Gil and Ankit Mukherjee, both of whom are back in training after receiving knocks

in the previous home match, is recovering in his native Brazil and will be rejoining the squad in the new year.

This will be the ninth ISL meeting between the two sides, with East Bengal FC aiming to continue their recent dominance over Hyderabad FC.

East Bengal FC have won their last two ISL matches against Hyderabad FC, including a league double in the 2023-24 season.

Meanwhile, Hyderabad FC will look to bounce back after a disappointing run that has seen them lose their last five matches in the league on a trot.

The Red & Gold brigade has managed a turnaround in the previous five matches, winning four of those clashes.

They are 11th in the table with 13 points from 12 matches, whereas Hyderabad FC are positioned 12th with seven points from the same number of games as East Bengal FC.

The visitors have rediscovered the spark in their frontline in the last five outings. netting nine times in total, and their match-up against the Hyderabad FC defence two pools: The head coach also re- will have a key say in the Pool A (Delhi eventual outcome of this

Gonasika in opener ROURKELA, Dec 27: A new era in Indian hockey will be ushered in when the much-anticipated Hockey India League League (HIL) restarts with the opening clash between Delhi SG Pipers and Gonasika of Vizag here on Satur-

Hockey India

Pipers to take on

The HIL is set to be revived in a new avatar after seven years with eight men's teams in the fray. The icing of the cake is the introduction of the women's league, comprising four teams, which will be played in

Ranchi from January 12. The Birsa Munda Stadium will host the men's teams till the final on February 1, while the women's teams will compete from January 12 to 26 in Ranchi.

The first phase of men's HIL. from December 28 to January 18, will see the teams

play each other once. The second

phase, beginning on January 19, will see the teams divided into 🌠 SG

"All our players are excited to play against Gonasika and are looking forward to the start of the league. We have prepared well for the last two weeks and we have had a few bonding sessions as well," Shamsher said

"There is a bit of pressure that comes with it but all the players in our squad are well trained and aware of the demands at this level, so we will play the match with the aim to do our best.

"We have to execute the strategy set by our coaches and take it game by game. Every match is important but it is also important to take the first step in the right direction tomorrow," he added.

"HIL is returning after seven years and everyone in the team is excited for the match against Delhi. We have a good understanding amongst each other and (we have) a good mixture of oungsters, Indian seniors and foreigners.

We will Piner

vealed that Elsinho, who left eventual ou the pitch under medical care game. (PTI)

Deepti stars with all-round show as India whitewash West Indies 3-0

India were in a spot of bother at 73/4 but Deepti (39 not out in 48 balls) used

all her experience to see the team

through with plenty of overs remaining.

Richa Ghosh was unbeaten on an 11-ball

23 when the winning runs were scored.

nerves with two boundaries after last

match centurion Harleen Deol's (1) dis-

missal left India at 23/2, blazed away to

a 22-ball 32 before getting bowled by

Swashbuckling wicketkeeper-batter

Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, who eased

VADODARA, Dec 27: Senior off-spinner Deepti Sharma did the star turn with career-best figures of 6/31 before doing her bit with the bat as India completed a 3-0 whitewash of the West Indies with a five-wicket victory in the final Women's ODI here on Friday.

Having bowled out West Indies for 162 after Deepti's superlative performance and pacer Renuka Singh's (4/29) excellent show with the new ball, India recovered after a top-order wobble to reach the target of 163 in 28.2 overs.

Inter-District Athletics *Competition begins in* Morigaon

HT Correspondent MORIGAON, Dec 27: The 46th Inter-District Athletics Championships, organised by the Assam Athletics Association in collaboration with the Morigaon District Sports Association and the Morigaon District Administration, commenced on Friday at Khirud Barua Stadium, Morigaon. The tournament has attracted over 1,500 athletes from various districts of Assam.

Competitions in multiple categories for boys and girls under 14, 16, 18, and 20, as well as for men and women, began at 6 am. In the afternoon, the flag of the Assam Athletics Association was hoisted by its president and Minister Jayanta Malla Barua, while the flag of the Morigaon District Sports Association was hoisted by its President and Morigaon MLA Ramakant Deuri.

Following the flag ceremony, a Kuch Kawaz greeting event featured athletes from different districts. The tournament was inaugurated by senior journalist Pratap Hazarika, and the memorial book Kridangan, edited by Dr. Achyut Kumar Das, was launched by Sports Minister Nandita Garlosa.

Afy Fletcher.

The event was graced by dignitaries, including Ministers Piyush Hazarika and Keshav Mahanta, MP Jayant Basumatari, Advocate General Devajit Lon Saikia, MLAs Manav Deka and Rupak Sharma, Assam Athletics Associ-Secretary Gitartha ation Goswami, Treasurer Ritubaran Sharma, Secretary of Sports and Welfare Department Youth Kaushar Jamil Hillali, Director of Sports Pradeep Timu, and Director of Fisheries Gauri Shankar Das. Renowned athletes Taiyabun Nesa and Lovlina Borgohain were also present, along with several other notable figures.

Competitions in various athletics events will begin at 7 a.m. on Saturday. The grand event is set to conclude by the end of the day. allow their declared reform

smashed seven boundaries and looked good for a big one before getting dismissed.

In-form opener Smriti Mandhana (4) departed early as Ashmini Munisar completed a strange one-handed catch after appearing to have misjudged what should actually have been a straightforward catch off the bowling of Aaliyah Alleyne.

times, vice-captain Mandhana did not get the visitors cheaply. (PTI)

During her breezy knock, Kaur to the pitch of the ball on the day and paid the price.

One-down batter Deol followed suit, nicking for a Deandra Dottin delivery way outside off-stump and got a faint edge that was taken by wicketkeeper Shemaine Campbelle.

Middle-order batter Jemimah Rodrigues chipped in with 29 off 45 balls. Earlier, Renuka Thakur tormented West Indies with a fiery opening spell Enjoying a good run of form in recent before Deepti got into the act to bowl out

Kalinga Lancers) and Pool B (Gonasika, Hyderabad Toofans, Tamil Nadu Dragons, UP Rudras). Each team will face the other in

Club,

Shrachi Rarh

Bengal Tigers,

Soorma Hockey

their respective pool, with the topfour advancing to the semifinals on January 31

Vedanta

Delhi SG Pipers will look to make a positive start to their campaign in the men's competition.

Co-captained by Olympic medallist Shamsher Singh and Australia's Jake Whetton, the Delhi franchise have a strong squad and would be buzzing with confidence after a successful pre-tournament camp at Bhubaneswar.

plement the things we have trained on so far in the match tomorrow. We have also

played with and against these players before, so we will look to play our game and do our best to minimise their goal-scoring opportunities," Gonasika captain Manpreet Singh said.

Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers, Delhi SG Pipers, Soorma Hockey Club and Odisha Warriors are the four teams in the Women's HIL. Their matches will be played at Ranchi's Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Munda Astro Turf Stadium, with each team playing against the others twice.

After the pool stage, the top two teams will meet in the final on January 26. (PTI)

Bickering, stagnation as Indian tennis battles for relevance

NEW DELHI, Dec 27: Disilprocess to begin. lusioned players declined nathe elections were held in viola-

tional duty and their governing body grappled with infighting as Indian tennis struggled to stay afloat in a largely disappointing 2024. The All India Tennis Associa-

tion (AITA) and the players being at loggerheads was not a new development. But the striking part was the lack of transparency in decision-making and nearly non-existent effort to address the concerns of the play-

ers. Result was that the game plunged to new depths. AITA President Anil Jain, who was accused of using his position for personal gains, avoided facing a no-confidence motion from the state associations only after he agreed to step aside. Towards the end of a forgettable year, a new team of administrators won the elections, promising to change Indian ten-

nis but a writ petition filed by two former players did not

matter will not be heard before March 25, putting on hold the much-needed revamp of the system. In a nutshell, everything that could have gone wrong, went wrong for Indian tennis in 2024

> Yuki Bhambri refused to play for India in a Davis Cup tie against Sweden in September without communicating any reasons. But it was made clear by federation sources that his withdrawal was in response to being left out of the Paris Olympics where Rohan Bopanna, being a top-10 player, preferred N Sriram Balaji as his doubles partner.

There were accusations that

tion of the Sports Code. The

The same Bhambri had travelled to Islamabad, Pakistan despite security concerns for a Davis Cup engagement in January-February an with some counselling from the administrators, he might have been able



to let go of his misgivings.

But the AITA could not give a convincing reply to Bhambri either on why his name was not sent for inclusion in Target Olympic Podium Scheme or the role Bopanna had in making decision for Paris.

While Bhambri was disillusioned, India's top singles player Sumit Nagal's decision to pull out of ties against both Pakistan and Sweden was a bit baffling.

Captain Rohit Rajpal had even agreed to Nagal's demand for a remuneration amount of USD 50,000 for annual Davis Cup duty but the Jhajjar player cited a back strain to pull out of the Sweden tie and also withdrew from an ATP Tour event the following week.

AITA went public with Nagal's demands for money after India were thrashed 0-4 by a beatable Sweden. This once again triggered a war of words between AITA and Nagal.

Amid this drama, Sasikumar Mukund, the second-best singles player in India, was not even picked for the tie because a ban was imposed on him for his earlier refusal to travel to Pakistan owing to security fears and other disciplinary violations. All these issues should have been handled in a better way. On court, India did not enjoy much success. The 44year-old Bopanna won the Australian Open men's doubles title with Matthew Ebden, the high point of a productive partnership that drew to a close in November. But singles success was very limited.

After a decent first half in which Nagal touched a careerhigh rank of 68, he began to fizzle out in the second half of the season.Such was his struggle that in his last 12 tournaments, Nagal has managed to win only two matches -- one at Kitzbuhel Challenger in July and one at Basel in October. (PTI)

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SPORTS

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2024

India collapse after Jaiswal's terrible run-out

MELBOURNE, Dec 27: A familiar collapse unfolded after Yashasvi Jaiswal's inexplicable run-out as India stared down the barrel at 164/5 against a menacing Australia on day two of the fourth Test here on Friday.

Jaiswal, who was quite fluent during his 118-ball stay that yielded 82 runs, was way short of his crease after a mix-up with Virat Kohli (36) while attempting a quick single, handing Australia the breakthrough that could prove decisive.

India are still 310 runs behind Australia's first innings score of 474 and would need another 111 runs to avoid a follow-on that should never have been a consideration on a placid batting track.

It was 153 for 2 at one stage and in four overs, another three wickets fell with Gautam Gambhir's plan of sending a night watchman in Akash Deep turning out to be one of the many poor calls that the head coach has taken in this game.

In a space of barely five minutes, cricket showed its fickle nature as Jaiswal pushed towards mid-on and called for a quick single with an assured Kohli (36) at the other end. Kohli took a step and half before retreating.

Pat Cummins swooped the ball and threw at the striker's end with a frustrated Jaiswal seen telling his idol "my call".

This moment will be one for posterity as Kohli looked down and perhaps felt that he could have at least said a loud



poked a delivery bowled in the corridor of uncertainty and it was the end The run-out broke his concentration and for the first time after 85 balls, he Scott Boland repeated the dismissal

that has been a norm for quite a while now. Akash Deep didn't have the technique to survive and the day ended in Australia's favour just like it started.

The Jaiswal-Kohli pair had added 102 runs and looked comfortable just like they did in the Perth second innings. The ball hardly did anything after Rohit Sharma (3) played a poor shot and KL Rahul got a ripper from Pat Cummins.

Jaiswal was in regal form, as he cut, pulled, drove and lofted the Australian bowlers stamping his authority as the next megastar of Indian batting.

Kohli, at the other end, endured boos for Thursday's run-in with debutant Sam Konstas and battled his demons This was after Steve Smith's 34th Test

hundred ensured a very good total for hosts. Starting the day at 311 for 6, Smith

added 112 and 44 runs with Cummins (49) and Mitchell Starc (15) respectively, leaving the visitors searching for back-up plans.

Jasprit Bumrah (4/99 in 28.4 oves) was once again brilliant despite the first spell thrashing from Konstas but Mohammed Siraj's ordinary showing (0/122 in 23 overs) was the primary reason for batters not being under any pressure.

Smith, who was unbeaten overnight on 68 off 111 balls, took another 56 deliveries in the second morning to complete a Test ton which placed him on even keel

with the legendary Sunil Gavaskar (34). The century came with a push drive through the vacant cover region and celebrations were pretty muted with a just vigorous head nod for his teammates in

the dug-out. Smith, who had a torrid run till the second Test of this series, played both days in contrasting styles. On Thursday, he

was ready to be patient and waited for deliveries at the expense of looking ugly. On Friday, the same batter was walking down the track to force the bowlers to alter their length. He was ready to pull and hook, getting two sixes off Bumrah and Siraj respectively.

Despite a significant drop in temperature and some nip in the air, Indians failed to make use of the semi-new Kookaburra, with lines going all awry and length being short enough to be punished. Cummins was allowed to settle down and hit seven boundaries.

The Indian ploy of playing two spinners backfired with Ravindra Jadeja (3/78 in 22 overs) and Washington Sundar (1/49 in 15 overs) never looking penetrative. For a change, Siraj didn't try and sledge an in-form batter, something that he did in Adelaide with some disastrous results.

But that didn't soften the Australian supporters, who constantly booed him and Kohli as and when the ball went to them. (PTI)

Kohli jeered at *MCG*; *pitch invader* tries to embrace him

MELBOURNE, Dec 27: Indian batting star Virat Kohli was booed and jeered while walking back to the dressing room after his dismissal in the Boxing Day Test against Australia here, prompting him to turn around for a brief stand-off with the fans on an eventful day for him.

Kohli's conduct has become a hot topic in the ongoing fourth Test where he shoulder-charged 19-yearold debutant Sam Konstas on the opening day. It resulted in a fine and a demerit point.

On Friday, Kohli batted well for his 36 before being caught behind off Scott Boland.

He was dismissed shortly after a mix-up with Yashasvi Jaiswal resulted in the opener running himself out at 82.

As he entered the tunnel leading up to the dressing room, fans in that section of the MCG began booing him and also made some comments in a short clip that has since gone viral. Kohli strode back after hearing something that was not clearly audible in the 22-second video.

The 36-year-old didn't seem pleased as he looked at the stands on his left before being escorted back to his original destination by a security personnel. (PTI)

There's difference between being out of runs and out of form: Smith



MELBOURNE, Dec 27: Australian batting mainstay Steve Smith always knew that he was "out of runs" but never "out of form" as he got back-to-back Test hundreds against India within a week of each other after 18 months of lull.

Having scored his 33rd ton in Brisbane. Smith equalled Sunil Gavaskar's then world record of 34 hundreds on the second day of the fourth Test at the MCG on Friday.

Asked how did he chug along all these days when big runs were not coming that easily, Smith dived deep into his inner core.

"Sometimes you can be hitting the ball really nicely, which I think I said to all you guys when I wasn't scoring the runs. I actually felt like I was batting pretty well. And

thought I was hitting the ball nicely," Smith said at the day-end press conference here.

"I mean, you've got to have faith. You've got to have a bit of trust in what you're trying to do. I've played the game for long enough now to know that you can have your ups and downs. Having some faith and confidence," said the man, who is expected to get to 10,000 Test runs before the fivematch series concludes.

"I think you need a lot of luck on these wickets to get big runs as well, the ones we're playing at the moment. And last week I had my fair share. I think I got an umpire's call and got beaten on numerous occasions as to on other days, I would nick it.

"So, yeah, you need a bit of luck. But you've just got to have faith that you're going to turn it around."

Australia's batting was a lot more aggressive on the second day after resuming on overnight 311 for six but Smith said that while batting with Pat Cummins, there was no "general plan" as such.

"There wasn't really a general plan. It was just go out there and play. Yeah, there wasn't a real plan. It was just go out and play and see what's going on. I thought Patty (Cummins) played really nicely. Really good, positive intent. "We were able to get a nice partnership together and take there's a difference, I think, between being out of form and out of runs. So, yeah, I that point, I suppose." (*PTI*)

Markram leads South Africa to 180-5 in 1st test against Pakistan CENTURION

AFRICA), Dec 27: Opening batter Aiden Markram closed in on his eighth test century and led South Africa to 180-5 at lunch on the second day of the first test against Pakistan on Fridav.

South Africa, which needs to win one of the two test matches against Pakistan to seal a place in the final of the World Test Championship at Lord's next year, trails the visitors by 31 on a pitch tailor-made for fast bowlers.

Markram was batting on an attractive 81 off 123 balls before Pakistan hit back with two wickets in the latter half of the first session with captain Temba Bavuma (31) and David Bedingham (30) both edging behind the wickets.

Wicketkeeper-batter Kyle Verreynne was yet to score but Markram stood tall in the first session and helped South Africa score 98 runs before lunch for the loss of two wickets. Resuming on 82-3, Markram completed his half century with an exquisite cover driven boundary off Naseem Shah and stretched the fourth-wicket stand to 70 runs with Bavuma before Pakistan got its first breakthrough.

Aamer Jamal was rewarded for persistent length balls to

The risk was not really necessary, says Gavaskar on Jaiswal's run out (SOUTH MELBOURNE, Dec 27: Indian batting great Sunil Gavaskar and former Aus-

tralia opener Justin Langer on Friday said Virat Kohli and Yashasvi Jaiswal could have avoided attempting the "risky" single that led to the latter's run-out, giving Australia a potentially decisive breakthrough in the fourth Test here.

Jaiswal, who made a breezy 118-ball 82 on the second day of the game, was way short of his crease after a mix-up with Kohli (36) while attempting a quick single.

"It would have been a quick run, and somebody like Virat Kohli would definitely have made it. But the thing was, he looked at the fielder. When you look at the fielder, when you turn, you've lost that vital second. Your balance is completely off. And it would have he would have gone for the been a tight run," Gavaskar told Star Sports.

"I think at that stage, why was a risky run. do you need to take a run that

carries an element of risk? there was no need for it. They You're batting well, runs are were on top. They had it abcoming. At that stage, the risk solutely under control. As fast

mu

Even if he hadn't picked it up, in the middle when stumps were called. "Jadeja batted really well at

were getting the ball to grip, turn, and maybe get a little more bounce as well.

ero L'Hero

"So Nathan Lyon will certainly enjoy bowling to the left-handers. There are three left-handers now, two at the crease, with Washington Sundar still to bat. He will proba-

Jadeja and Rishabh Pant were

in the head of Pat Cummins, non-striker. It would have been close, but I thought it the same application here as

"At that stage of the game, well. Pant is the kind of player who we know can take the game apart. So we need another -- India needs another

Ravindra Jadeja bowling, they Gabba, so he needs to bring in

a complete no-no, says CA CEO

Physical contact on cricket field is

MELBOURNE, Dec 27: Cricket Australia CEO Nick Hockley on Friday said there is no place for physical contact on the cricket field, following the face-off between India superstar Virat Kohli and Australian debutant Sam Konstas.

The brief showdown took place after the 10th over of the Australian innings on the opening day of the fourth Test when the players were crossing over. Kohli and Konstas bumped shoulders while moving across the pitch in the face off that was initiated by the travelling star.

Following the incident, Kohli was charged with breaching Level 1 of the ICC Code of Conduct and accepted the sanctions proposed by match referee Andy Pycroft at the end of the day. He was also fined 20 percent of his match fee.

"Not a great look I mean you know physical contact on the cricket field is a complete no-no so it wasn't great," Hockley told SEN Radio.

"I think clearly Virat in accepting the charge has taken responsibility," he added. Konstas downplayed the incident, explaining that Kohli had accidentally bumped into him, a response Hockley considered remarkably mature for a teenager. (PTI)

Bavuma as the South African skipper finally got a thick outside edge while going for a loose drive.

his

Bedingham counterattacked from the onset, smashing five boundaries in his 33-ball knock and also survived when Pakistan unsuccessfully went for an lbw television review against Naseem Shah's full pitched delivery, which television replays suggested would have missed the leg stump.

However, Naseem didn't have to wait long as Bedingham was beaten by some extra bounce and nicked it in the first slip in the penultimate over before lunch. (AP)

was not really necessary. Gavaskar, however, added risky a run to take. I love seethat Kohli could have completed the run if had fully committed himself to it "only because Kohli is such a fansaying.

tastic runner" between the wickets.' The horrible mix-up led to Jaiswal's run out and affected Kohli's concentration, who their first innings. then fished at a delivery out-

side off-stump. Langer said, "I thought it was a risky run because Pat and get as close as possible to Cummins is a brilliant athlete. Australia's total. Ravindra from Washington Sundar and

as he is, I thought it was too 100-plus partnership. "It's not just about saving ing guys drop and run hard, the follow-on. India needs to spend a little more time at the but that was a risky run. I think that's what Virat was crease tomorrow. Even if they can take it till post-lunch, they

A familiar collapse ungive themselves a very good folded after Jaiswal's exit as chance. India stumbled to 164/5. The Gavaskar also feels seavisitors trail by 310 after the hosts posted 474 all out in soned off-spinner Nathan Lyon will "come into play on

the third day." Gavaskar said India need to "He hasn't had much of a put their "head down" and try role to play in the entire series, but now, with what we saw

bly be used a little more.

The legendary batter added, "Clearly, India needs to put their heads down. Like I said. they have to try and take their first innings past lunch, maybe as close to tea as possible, and therefore get as close as pos-

sible to the Australian total. "Australia will not give you the follow-on, make no mistake. Even if India falls short of 274, Australia will not give you the follow-on. They'll want to bat you out of the game." (PTI)

Tendulkar, Sindhu among sporting stars to pay tributes to Manmohan Singh

NEW DELHI, Dec 27: Stalwarts of Indian sports paid rich tributes to former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, who died on Thursday, describing him as a visionary, who had quiet strength and humility.

Singh died here after losing consciousness at his home due to age-related ailments. He was 92.

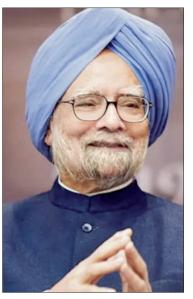
"Rest in peace, Dr. Manmohan Singhji. His quiet strength, wisdom, and humility were truly inspiring. I had a brief interaction with him in 2013 — he was kind, gracious, and left a lasting impression. My heartfelt condolences to his family," wrote India's ace shuttler Sindhu on 'X'.

Cricket great Sachin Tendulkar termed Singh's demise as a huge loss for the country.

"Dr Manmohan Singh ji's demise is a profound loss for India. His contributions to our nation shall always be remembered. My prayers are with his family and loved ones as we mourn his passing away."

Legendary golfer Jeev Milkha Singh recalled Singh's simplicity and humility, saying he was committed to national duty all his life.

"Dr Manmohan Singh was probably one of the most humble men I had met in my life - a simple and extremely intelligent man. His sense of



duty and responsibility shone through. The world has lost a visionary," wrote Jeev.

On Friday, both the men's and women's cricket teams wore black armbands during their respective national assignments to pay homage to the former PM.

Earlier, World Cup-winning former cricketer Yuvraj Singh called Singh a "true statesman"

A visionary leader and a true statesman who worked tirelessly for India's progress. His wisdom and humility will always be remembered. My heartfelt condolences to his loved ones," Yuvraj Singh posted on X.

Similar sentiments were expressed by his former teammate and Aam Aadmi Party's Rajya Sabha member Harbhajan Singh, who described Singh as a thorough gentleman and visionary leader.

"What truly set him apart was his calm and steady leadership in times of crisis, his ability to navigate complex political landscapes, and his unwavering belief in India's potential," he wrote.

It was during Singh's second term that India hosted the 2010 Commonwealth Games in the national capital. It was the first international multisport extravaganza to be held in the country after the 1982 Asian Games, also hosted by Delhi.

He had also inaugurated the National Football League's 11th edition in Kolkata back in 2005 when late Congress leader Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi was heading the All India Football Federation.

Former wrestler Vinesh Phogat, who is now a Congress MLA in Haryana, called Singh a man of "ex- a Rajya Saha MP. (PTI)

traordinary wisdom, simplicity and vision."

"Dr. Manmohan Singh was not just a Prime Minister, but he was a thinker, economist and a true patriot. His calm leadership style and economic vision gave the country a new direction, from the 1991 economic reforms to establishing India's reputation on the global stage.

"There was depth in his humility and wisdom in his every word. His services and contributions to the country will always be remembered. You will always live in our hearts, Sir," she wrote in her emotional tribute on social media.

Former cricketers Virender Sehwag and VVS Laxman and ex-women's hockey team captain Rani Rampal were also among those who expressed their sadness at his death.

Before serving as Prime Minister from 2004 to 2014, Singh was finance minister in the P V Narasimha Raoled government and was the brain behind the economic reforms of 1991 that marked the beginning of liberalisation in the country.

Widely respected for his intellect and grace in public life, Singh had retired from active politics in April this year after over a three-decade run as

30th Assam Inter-District Master's Athletic Championship gets underway in Kokrajhar



HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, Dec 27: The 30th Assam Inter-District Master's Athletic Championship, 2024, commenced at the SAI Stadium Complex, Kanthalguri Titaguri, here on Friday. The four-day event, scheduled to conclude on December 30, has drawn nearly 1200 participants from 32 districts of Assam competing in events such as race, shot put, discus throw, javelin throw, marathon, and jumping.

Assam cabinet minister Urkhao Gwra Brahma inaugurated the championship as the chief guest, with Kokrajhar East MLA and Organizing Committee president Lawrence Islary delivering the welcome address.

In his inaugural speech, Minister Brahma said the Master's Athletic Meet is a sporting event for players aged 35 to 90 years, which is a commendable effort. He added that many veteran players and winners of national and international events have come to Kokrajhar to participate, which is highly encouraging. Brahma emphasised the need for improved sports infrastructure in Kokrajhar, adding that the successful hosting of the Durand Cup had brought attention to the region and enhanced facilities at the SAI center. The event was also addressed by Maguram Balary, working president of the Assam Master's Athletic Association (AMAA), and attended by dignitaries including former Assam Football Association president Hemendra Nath Brahma, BTC Deputy Secretary of Sports Rijendra Brahma, Assam Olympic Association vice president Kabiranjan Brahma, and Kokrajhar Municipal Board chairperson Pratibha Brahma

Earlier, the AMAA and Organising Committee flags were hoisted by Maguram Balary and MLA Lawrence Islary, respectively. The participants' oath was led by Sudhir Ranjan Narzary, while the oath for judges and referees was taken by Niraj Daimary.

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