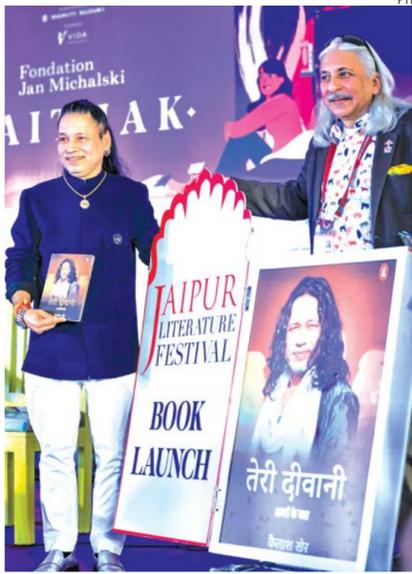


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Singer Kailash Kher at a session during the Jaipur Literature Festival 2025, in Jaipur, Rajasthan

Two workers electrocuted, injured at railway station in Thane district

THANE: Two workers sustained severe burns after suffering electrocution while working on a project at a railway station in Maharashtra's Thane district, an official said on Friday. According to the Government Railway Police (GRP), the accident happened due to negligence during cable installation work at Diva railway station on January 28. Senior Police Inspector (Sr. PI) Archana Dusanee said technician Anand Sanjay Gondadki (26) and Vishwajit Omprakash Mishra (27), a helper, sustained severe burns. She said Gondadki and Mishra sustained 80 per cent and 40 per cent burns, respectively, and are undergoing treatment at a hospital.

Girl dies after brutal assault, sexual abuse by boyfriend in Kerala

KOCHI: A 19-year-old girl, who was sexually abused and brutally assaulted by her boyfriend at her residence a few days ago, died on Friday as a result of the injuries suffered by her, police said. The girl, a POCSO case survivor, was found in a severely injured state at her home in Chottanikkara on Monday, was admitted to a private hospital here on that same day and was on ventilator support. "She died in the afternoon," a police officer said. The boyfriend, who is in his twenties, was arrested on Wednesday. An officer of Chottanikkara police station said that the youth may now be booked for murder once the inquest and postmortem are over and the statement of the concerned doctors is recorded.

UP: Police team attacked while arresting criminal, six held

DEORIA (UP): A police team who went to arrest a wanted criminal in Surouli village here was attacked by some people. A sub-inspector and constable got injured in the attack, they said. SHO Kanchan Rai said that Pankaj Gupta, a resident of Ahilwar village, had given a cheque after taking money from a person, but the cheque bounced. An FIR was registered against him following this. On Wednesday evening, Bariyarpur police station's Inspector Varun Singh and constable Amar Singh were going to investigate a case in Surouli, when they spotted Gupta and nabbed him, he said. Meanwhile, Gupta's supporters reached the spot and attacked the inspector and constable.

Two women arrested for jewellery theft at Kashmere Gate Metro in New Delhi

NEW DELHI: Delhi Police has arrested two women for involved in a jewellery theft worth Rs 10 lakh at Kashmere Gate Metro Station here, an official said on Friday. The stolen gold jewellery has been recovered from the accused, he said. On November 19, 2024, Sanju Kumari, a resident of Noida in Uttar Pradesh UP, arrived at New Delhi Railway Station from Siwan in Bihar. While making her way into the metro station around 10 am, she was pushed and shoved by a woman. Moments later, Kumari realised that her bag had been unzipped, and her jewellery which was wrapped in a handkerchief, was missing. Following her complaint, an FIR was registered at Kashmere Gate Metro Police Station and further investigation was taken up.

Samajwadi Party MP, workers booked over roadshow in Ayodhya

AYODHYA: A case has been registered against a Samajwadi Party MP for violating government orders during a road show, police said on Friday. The FIR was lodged at Inayat Nagar police station based on a complaint by Sub-Inspector Alok Kumar Singh, against unidentified party workers and MP Dimple Yadav. The complaint alleged violation of government orders, including the use of more vehicles than permitted, police said. The roadshow, which covered the stretch from Kumarganj to Milkipur, caused traffic congestion on both lanes of the Raebareilly Highway due to the large crowd, Tripathi added. Investigation in the matter is underway, officials said.

Warmer, drier February expected in India: IMD

NEW DELHI: Most parts of India are expected to experience above-normal temperatures and below-normal rainfall in February, following a warmer and drier January, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Friday. The rainfall in February is likely to be below 81 per cent of the long-period average (1971-2020) of 22.7 mm. IMD Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said most parts of the country are likely to receive below-normal rainfall, except for some areas in west-central, peninsular and northwest India.

India-Nepal Friendship Festival to be held in UP from February 5

LUCKNOW: The Uttar Pradesh government will organise 'India-Nepal Friendship Festival' from February 5 to 23 to strengthen the bilateral relations between the two countries, an official said on Friday. The festival will see song and dance performances by artists from the state and Nepal. A cultural tour will also be taken out in districts bordering Nepal.

Tariffs on Canada, Mexico coming on Saturday, may also include oil on list, Trump announces

PTI, WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has announced plans to impose on Saturday a 25 per cent tariff on Canada and Mexico, its two neighbouring countries, and is also in the process of considering a similar measure against China.

Trump said he would make a decision on Thursday night about whether to include oil in the list of tariffed items.

"We will be announcing the tariffs on Canada and Mexico for a number of reasons," the president told reporters in the Oval Office of the White House on Thursday.

He cited illegal immigration, smuggling of drugs and the massive subsidies that the US gives to Canada and Mexico in the form of deficits as the reasons for the tariffs.

"I will be putting the tariff of 25 per cent on Canada and, separately, 25 per cent on Mexico. We will really have to do that because we have very big deficits with those countries. Those tariffs may or may not rise with time," said the president.

BIRTHRIGHT CITIZENSHIP WAS FOR CHILDREN OF SLAVES, NOT FOR WORLD TO PILE INTO US: US PREZ TRUMP

PTI, WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump has said that birthright citizenship was primarily intended for the children of slaves and not for the whole world to "come in and pile" into the US. On the very first day of his inauguration, Trump issued an executive order against birthright citizenship, which was struck down by a federal court in Seattle the next day. Trump has said that he would appeal against it. On Thursday, he exuded confidence that the Supreme Court would rule in his favour. "Birthright citizenship was, if you look back when this was passed and made, that was meant for the children of slaves. This was not meant for the whole world to come in and pile into the United States of America," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office of the White House.

Responding to a question, Trump said he would decide Thursday night whether to include oil among the items subject to tariffs.

"We're going to make that determination probably tonight on oil. Because they send us oil...it depends on what the price is. If the oil is properly priced, if they treat us properly, which they don't," he said.

"Mexico and Canada have never been good to us on trade," Trump said, adding that the two countries have

treated the US "very unfairly" on trade.

He asserted that the US will be able to make it up "very quickly" as it "does not need" the products that they have.

"We have all the oil you need. We have all the trees you need, meaning the lumber. We have more than almost anybody in those two categories. In oil, we have more than anybody," he said.

"We don't need anybody's trees, we have great lumber in this country. We have to

TRUMP WARNS BRICS NATIONS AGAINST REPLACING US DOLLAR, TELLS THEM TO FIND ANOTHER SUCKER NATION

PTI, WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump has once again warned that he will impose 100 per cent tariffs against BRICS nations if they attempt to replace the US dollar in international trade, telling them to go and find "another sucker nation." BRICS is an intergovernmental organisation of ten countries --Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates. "The idea that the BRICS countries are trying to move away from the dollar, while we stand by and watch, is OVER," Trump said on Thursday in a post on Truth Social, a social media platform owned by him. Trump said he wanted a commitment from these "seemingly hostile" countries that they would neither create a new BRICS currency nor back any other currency to replace the "mighty" US dollar.

free them up environmentally, which I can do very quickly," he said.

"We don't need what they have. For us to be subsidising Canada to the tune of USD 175 billion a year, and subsidising Mexico to the tune of USD 250 billion-USD 300 billion a year," he said.

Trump said he was also thinking about taking measures against China for sending fentanyl into the US.

"Because of that, they're causing us hundreds of

thousands of deaths. China is going to end up paying a tariff also for that. We are in the process of doing that. We'll make that determination of what it's going to be," he said.

"China has to stop sending fentanyl into our country and killing our people," Trump said.

Fentanyl is a highly addictive synthetic opioid, which, according to the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), presents

Trump won't say whether he'll pull troops out of Syria

AP, WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump is declining to say whether he intends to maintain current US troop levels in Syria.

"We'll make a determination on that," Trump told reporters on Thursday when asked if he intends to withdraw US troops deployed to Syria to fight the Islamic State group. "We're not involved in Syria. Syria's its own mess. They got enough messes over there. They don't need us involved with everything."

The US had said for years that there were about 900 troops in Syria, but the Pentagon acknowledged in December that US troop levels had surged to about 2,000.

the deadliest drug threat in the country.

UNDERSEA THREAT



The Norwegian-owned ship Silver Dania, suspected of cable sabotage in the Baltic Sea, has been brought into the port of Tromsø, Norway, for investigation

DeepSeek blocked by some app stores in Italy to protect users' personal data

AP, MILAN: Italy's data protection authority on Thursday blocked access to the Chinese AI application DeepSeek to protect users' data and announced an

investigation into the companies behind the chatbot.

The authority, called Garante, expressed dissatisfaction with DeepSeek's

response to its initial query about what personal data is collected, where it is stored and how users are notified. DeepSeek's new chatbot

has raised the stakes in the AI technology race, rattling markets and catching up with American generative AI leaders at a fraction of the cost.

FROM PAGE 1 & 2

ECO WARRIOR RINGS WATER CRISIS ALARM BELL FOR N GOA

"The situation is dire," Kerker said. "If the government continues to ignore the deteriorating condition of the Bicholim river, the region could face long-term environmental and socio-economic disaster. The water crisis will be inevitable if urgent action is not taken now."

The environmentalist pointed to the rampant pollution of the Bicholim river, which has been exacerbated by extensive mining activities in the area. Kerker emphasized that the Bicholim water crisis is not a natural disaster but a man-made problem, driven largely by unchecked industrial activity.

Kerker also criticised the government's consistent failure to act on rejuvenating the Bicholim river, which was once a vital waterway. The river, which originates in Talekhol village, Dodamarg (Maharashtra), is now under threat from stone-crushing operations in the region. He called for immediate steps to preserve the water sources of the Bicholim river before it's too late.

The situation is equally troubling for the Valavanti river, which flows from Chorla Ghat in Karnataka into Goa. Kerker noted that the river is facing dwindling water levels due to the construction of the Haltara dam by the Karnataka government and the Virdi irrigation dam by Maharashtra, both of which are diverting crucial water resources. This, he warned, could impact the Sakhali and Padoshem water treatment plants that supply water to Bardez, Bicholim, and Sattari.

"The people of Bardez are already feeling the effects of this water shortage," Kerker said, referring to the recent water scarcity in Bardez taluka. "The government must act swiftly to prevent a complete collapse of the water supply in these talukas."

Even as these concerns are raised, the Water Resource Department (WRD) has attempted to assure the public, claiming that the restoration work on the Tillari canal, a key water source for the region, will be completed by Monday. Officials stated that about 80 per cent of the restoration work has been finished and that regular water supply would resume soon. Water Resources Minister Subhash Shirodkar, accompanied by officials from both Goa and Maharashtra, inspected the ongoing repair work of the breached Tillari dam canal.

SUNITA WILLIAMS SETS SPACEWALK RECORD

She surpassed Whitson's record for total spacewalking time by a female astronaut. Williams now has 62 hours

and 6 minutes of total spacewalk time, fourth on NASA's all-time list, according to NASA.

In 2012, during a trip to the ISS, Williams became the first person to finish a triathlon in space, during which she simulated swimming using a weight-lifting machine and ran on a treadmill while strapped in by a harness so she wouldn't float away.

Williams, 59, and Wilmore went on what was meant to be an eight-day mission to the ISS aboard Boeing's Starliner in June 2024.

However, technical issues including helium leaks and thruster malfunctions meant that the Starliner was unsafe for their return.

NASA plans to bring them back to Earth in late March aboard a spaceship built by SpaceX, a rival company of Boeing.

Despite these setbacks, the astronauts have continued their work aboard the ISS while awaiting a safe journey home.

WAS 2ND SIDDIQUI VIDEO DONE AT GUNPOINT?

Palekar's claim is sure to bring further scrutiny to the case, which has the unusual distinction of being investigated by the same agency - the Crime Branch - whose officials were involved in helping him escape. Goa Congress Vice-President Sunil Kawthankar said: "The departmental inquiry has found four more cops guilty in the Siddiqui escape, which vindicates our stand that it cannot be the job of a single police constable. Was the alleged presence of Deputy Speaker Joshua in the police lockup investigated - Goa Police has to answer this."

Speaking to O Herald, former SP Bossuet Silva said: "In this case, there are two videos presenting two different versions. I have no idea how the first video reached Sunil Kawthankar, and I am unaware of its source. The first video is supported by CCTV footage, but the case has been severely compromised as the complainant himself is under suspension, and disciplinary action has been initiated against him by the department."

Referring to the second video, the Silva remarked, "If the second video involves claims of coercion or being forced at gunpoint, such allegations would typically warrant an investigation by a central agency, as they cast aspersions on the integrity of Goa Police officers." He further noted, "Even the accused, after being re-arrested, had demanded a CBI inquiry."

US court rules banning gun sales to adults under 21 unconstitutional

AP, BATON ROUGE (US): A US appeals court on Thursday ruled against a federal law requiring young adults to be 21 to buy handguns, finding it violated the Second Amendment.

The ruling, handed down by a panel of three judges on the conservative 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans, comes amid major shifts in the national firearm legal landscape following a landmark US Supreme Court decision that expanded gun rights in 2022.

The court found that people aged 18-to-20 should not be prohibited from buying guns. "Ultimately, the text of the Second Amendment includes eighteen-to-twenty-year-old individuals among the people whose right to keep and bear arms is protected," the court wrote in its ruling. The ruling sends the case back to a lower court judge.

In the past, the appeals court has upheld the age restriction. However, since the Supreme Court's ruling that said firearm restrictions

must be rooted in the nation's historical traditions, judges in states like Minnesota, Virginia and Texas have struck down similar laws.

The Biden administration had fought those rulings. It is uncertain exactly how the Trump administration might proceed, but he told an NRA audience during last year's campaign that "no one will lay a finger on your firearms."

The Supreme Court, meanwhile, decided to keep a federal gun law on the books last year. The high court overturned a different ruling from the 5th Circuit and upheld a law intended to protect victims of domestic violence.

Federal law requires a person to be 21 to purchase a handgun from a licensed firearm dealer and 18 to buy a long gun from a dealer, according to Everytown for Gun Safety. There is an 18-year-old minimum for handgun purchases from unlicensed sellers and no minimum age for long guns, according to the group's research.

DAY BEFORE BUDGET, ECO SURVEY LOWERS GROWTH FORECAST TO 6.3-6.8%

Infrastructure expansion has also lost momentum, with the growth of eight key sectors slipping to 4% in December 2024, down from 5.1% the previous year.

Coal, refinery, and steel output declined, while natural gas production shrank.

Despite efforts to boost foreign direct investment (FDI), inflows remain weak. The net FDI during the first eight months of FY25 stood at just \$0.48 billion, a drastic decline from \$8.5 billion in FY24. The report calls for urgent steps to improve tax stability and deregulation to attract global capital.

The survey highlights that India needs massive infrastructure investment over the next two decades to sustain high growth. The general elections in 2024 and heavy monsoons slowed government infrastructure spending in early FY25. Though capital expenditure picked up later, private sector participation remains weak, despite government initiatives like PM-Gati Shakti and the National Infrastructure Pipeline.

The survey also strongly advocates systematic deregulation, arguing that excessive bureaucracy stifles innovation and economic freedom. It calls for states to simplify business regulations, reduce compliance costs, and cut tariffs. Chief Economic Adviser V Anantha Nageswaran stressed the need to move away from over-regulation, urging the government to 'get out of the way' and let businesses drive growth.

While India remains a bright spot in global growth, economic headwinds demand urgent reforms. The financial sector is resilient, and stock markets have seen strong participation, but risks persist. The report warns that without bold policy changes, India may fail to achieve its long-term economic ambitions.

STINK OF GOVT APATHY AS DEAD BODIES PILE UP IN MORGUES FOR YEARS

Her secretary assured that the collector would return the call, but no response was received.

A senior doctor from the Forensic Department at the South Goa Hospital attributed the negligence to a bureaucratic mindset, stating, "Unfortunately, many in the government view these matters as mere paperwork, forgetting the dignity and respect the deceased deserve. This carelessness is a result of such an approach."