



**Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman with MoS for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary during the celebration of International Customs Day 2025, in Mumbai**



**Former President Ram Nath Kovind during a visit to the Swaminarayan Gurukul at Wedrood in Surat**



**Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis offers prayers at Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple, in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh**



**External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar during a meeting with former UK prime minister Rishi Sunak, in New Delhi**

## B-Tech third-year student from Nepal found dead in hostel

**PTI, BHUBANESWAR:** A third-year B-Tech student of a private engineering institute here died allegedly by suicide in her hostel leading to tension in the campus, po-

lice said on Monday. The deceased was identified as Prakriti Lamsal from Nepal. She was a B-Tech third-year student of Kalinga Institute of Industri-

al Technology (KIIT), varsity Registrar said.

The deceased's cousin lodged a complaint at Infocity police station in Bhubaneswar alleging that his sister hanged herself in her hostel room on Sunday. He suspected that another male student of the varsity was blackmailing his sister for which she committed suicide.

KIIT in a statement said: "A Nepali student studying in the third year of B-Tech committed suicide in the hostel yesterday. It is suspected that the student was in a love affair with another student studying at KIIT. It is suspected that the student may have committed suicide due to some reason." The KIIT said that the incident was immediately reported to the police.

Bhubaneswar DCP Pinak Mishra said: "We have registered a case at Infocity Police Station based on the allegation that a male student abated her suicide. The accused student is in police custody and subjected to interrogation. The police have seized the mobile phone, laptop and other gadgets of the deceased woman. We are undertaking a scientific investigation into the matter."

The DCP appealed to the students not to take the law into their own hands and to maintain peace.

# Modi-led panel finalises name of next CEC

Congress asks govt to defer decision till Supreme Court hearing

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** The selection committee headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi met here this evening and is learnt to have recommended the name of the next chief election commissioner to the President, sources said, even as the Congress asked the government to defer the decision pending a SC hearing.

Besides Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi are part of the three-member panel to select the CEC. The committee met here at the Prime Minister's Office in South Block and recommended the name to President Droupadi Murmu.

The sources in the government said the notification announcing the name of the next CEC could be issued "in the next few hours". Incumbent CEC Rajiv Kumar demits office on Tuesday on attaining the age of 65.

A new law on the appointment of the CEC and ECs came into force in 2023 under which a search committee shortlists five names from among secre-

**Congress leader Abhishek Singhvi said that by removing the Chief Justice of India from the selection committee, the government has made it clear that it wants control and not preserve the credibility of the Election Commission**

tary-level officers for consideration and finalisation by the prime minister-led panel.

This law has been challenged in the SC and the next hearing is scheduled on February 19. After Rajiv Kumar, Gyanesh Kumar is the senior-most election commissioner. His tenure as Election Commissioner is until January 26, 2029.

If Gyanesh Kumar is approved as the next CEC, a new EC could also be appointed to fill the vacancy created by his elevation.

According to sources, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was learnt to have asked the government to defer its decision on the new CEC till the Supreme Court hearing on February 19 on a petition challenging the composition of the selection panel.

Congress leader Abhishek Singhvi said that by removing the

Chief Justice of India from the selection committee, the government has made it clear that it wants control and not preserve the credibility of the Election Commission.

Singhvi did not disclose anything on what transpired in the meeting apart from saying that Gandhi attended it.

Singhvi said the case challenging the new act is pending before the Supreme Court, which has issued a notice, and the matter is now listed for next hearing on February 19.

It was just a matter of 48 hours and the government should have approached the SC for an early hearing of the petition, he said.

"It is our suggestion that the Central government adjourned this meeting until after the hearing and instruct its counsels to appear and assist the court so

that the hearing may be an effective one. Only then, can a decision be taken in earnest," Singhvi said.

AICC treasurer Ajay Maken, who also addressed the press conference, said, "The Congress believes that when the SC has indicated that they will hear the case on the constitution of the committee on the 19th, this meeting should have been postponed."

Singhvi said the essence of the Congress' stand is that the letter and spirit of the Constitution have to be followed.

"It is necessary that a transparent, balanced, impartial decision is taken, which is in the public interest, and in the interest of democracy. Which can create a level-playing field, which is in the foundation of our republic. This is the stand of the Congress," he said.

Singhvi referred to the Supreme Court judgment in the Anoop Baranwal case in which it said the committee to select the CEC and ECs should have the Chief Justice of India along with the prime minister and the Leader of the Opposition in it.

**CHANGE IN NAME**  
I NAGESHWARI POLNATI R/O H NO 717, CHOVOATH, CORTALIM MORMUGAO GOA like to change my name from NAGESHWARI POLNATI to NAGESHWARI POLNATI. Hereafter in all my dealing and documents I will be known by the name NAGESHWARI POLNATI.

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
I, VALERIE ANN SALES DE ANDRADE E FERNANDES, r/o H. No. 831, Danswaddo, Near Holy Trinity Church, Benaulum, has changed my name from VALERIE SALES DE ANDRADE E FERNANDES to VALERIE ANN SALES DE ANDRADE E FERNANDES. Hereafter, in all my dealings and documents, I will be known by the name VALERIE ANN SALES DE ANDRADE E FERNANDES. Sd/- VALERIE ANN SALES DE ANDRADE E FERNANDES

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
I, the undersigned Lobo Edwin, resident of House No. 427/1, Almeida Vaddo, Parra, Bardez, North Goa 403510, wants to change my name from Lobo Edwin Peter to Lobo Edwin. Hereafter I will be known as Lobo Edwin in all my dealings and documents. Sd/- Lobo Edwin

**CHANGE IN NAME**  
I Yashwant Choudhary, R/O Sabmin aptt., SF1, Near NEI School, Curchorem, South - Goa. do hereby change my name from Yashwat Murari Choudhary to Yashwant Choudhary. Hereinafter, in all my dealings and Official documents, passport etc. I will be known by the name Yashwant Choudhary. Sd/- Yashwant Choudhary

Office of the **Mormugao Municipal Council**  
**Vasco-da-Gama - Goa**  
Tel. No.: (0832) 2512363  
email: co@mrmvcvasco.com. councilvasco@gmail.com  
Website: www.mrmvcvasco.com  
No.MMC/Tech/ender Notice/2024-2025/1799 Date: 17/02/2025  
**TENDER NOTICE**  
(E-Tendering Mode Only)  
The Chief Officer, Mormugao Municipality Council, Vasco-da-Gama, Goa invites on behalf of the Mormugao Municipal Council "Tender" via online mode from the dealers/agencies/vendors.  
For detailed tender notice and for participation in E-Tender, please visit website https://eprocure.goa.gov.in detail notice is also displayed on Council notice board.  
DI/AdvT/1999/2025

**FEDERAL BANK**  
BRANCH: PORVORIM  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**GOLD AUCTION**  
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and the account holders in particular that e-auction of the pledged gold ornaments in the below mentioned accounts will be conducted by Federal Bank Ltd., on 07-03-2025 through online portal, https://gold.samil.in. Interested buyers may log on to the auction portal or contact the Bank at 0832-2410003 /09 for further information. In case e-auction is not materialised for any reason on the date mentioned above, with respect any or all items of the pledged ornaments, Bank shall be conducting private sale of the items on any subsequent date/s without further notice.  
Branch Porvorim  
18306100053118 18306400020468 18306400029980 18306400031093  
18306100053124 18306400020609 18306400030004 18306400031101  
18306100054197 18306400021037 18306400030590 18306400031119  
1830610005798 18306400025566 18306400030772 18306400031341  
18306100056341 18306400026812 18306400030913 18306400031374  
18306100056986 18306400027802 18306400030921 18306400031705  
18306100057273 18306400028180 18306400030947 18306700001317  
18306400020229 18306400029063 18306400030954 18306700001481  
Place: Porvorim Sd/- Authorised Officer  
Date: 17-02-2025 For The Federal Bank Ltd.  
Federal Bank | Br Porvorim | Ground Floor, Cosme Costa Nucleus, NH 17, Opposite Holy Family Church, Porvorim, Bardez, Goa - 403521 Phone: 0832-2410003 Email: panj@federalbank.co.in | Website: http://www.federalbank.co.in  
CIN: L65191KL1931PLC000368 website: www.federalbank.co.in

**FEDERAL BANK**  
BRANCH: Panaji  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**GOLD AUCTION**  
**PRIVATE SALE OF GOLD**  
Notice is here by given that gold ornaments in the below mentioned accounts will be put to private sale by Federal Bank Ltd on 07th March 2025 or any subsequent date/s at the branches shown below as the concerned borrowers failed to redeem the pledged items/regulate the loan accounts. Respective branches may be contacted for further information.  
Branch: Panaji Loan Account Numbers:-  
13526400040118 13526400036892 13526400088331 13526400067426  
13526400047253 13526400070891 13526400050620 13526400084306  
13526400059589 13526400075304 13526400060330 13526400084330  
13526400075809 13526400002118 13526400069263 13526400070693  
13526400080866 13526400084710 13526400049028 13526400083456  
13526400081658 13526400074448 13526400075478 13526400058706  
13526400034095 13526400076096 13526400087598 13526400061262  
13526400040555 13526100262921 13526400075874 13526400066832  
13526400075395 13526400076187 13526400082581 13526400071634  
13526400083565 13526400077656 13526400075973 13526100263994  
13526400066659 13526400080353 13526400076120 13526400084280  
13526400072293 13526400083373 13526400082714 13526400085683  
13526400084728 13526400083803 13526400049077 13526400079868  
13526400047865 13526400086384 13526400087465 13526400087523  
13526400066014 13526400059928 13526400069521 13526400087838  
13526400066022 13526400083035 13526400038385 13526400074166  
13526400067095 13526400088633 13526400038781 13526400074091  
13526400075668 13526400038278 13526400043880 13526400074109  
13526400080825 13526400076252 13526400063516 13526400079769  
13526400066444 13526400082961 13526400049077 13526400079868  
13526400081245 13526400085287 13526400049374 13526400073614  
13526400066030 13526400069596 13526400044268 13526400073226  
13526400084553 13526400079322 13526400072673 13526400073762  
13526100262582 13526400041850 13526400061163 13526400066428  
13526400077508 13526400077235 13526400069521 13526400066576  
13526400086780 13526100262160 13526400076229 13526400075239  
13526400087416 13526400066477 13526400066212 13526400075247  
13526400088042 13526400083795 13526400067194 13526400077243  
Date: 15/02/2025 Sd/- Authorised Officer  
Place: Panaji For The Federal Bank Ltd.  
The Federal Bank Ltd. Panaji Branch, Dayanand, Smtulji Building, Swami Vivekanand Rd, Panaji, Goa 403001

## SIT formed to probe case against Pak man

Congress MP Gogoi says his stand clear over wife's 'ISI links'

**PTI, GUWAHATI:** Amid controversy over the alleged ISI links of Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi's British wife, the Assam government on Monday constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to investigate a case against Pakistani national Ali Tauqeer Sheikh for his social media comments on India's internal affairs.

Gogoi, on the other hand, said the BJP-led government in Assam is free to conduct any inquiry on the issue of his spouse Elizabeth Colburn's alleged links with the Pakistani spy agency, but he and his party know where they stand.

Sheikh, an advisor of the Pakistan Planning Commission and a former colleague of Colburn, was charged under various sec-

tions of the BNS and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). The four-member SIT team will be headed by CID Special DGP M P Gupta, AIGP (Admin) Pranabjyoti Goswami, SP CM's Special Vigilance Cell Rosie Kalita and Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police, Guwahati (West) Moitrayee Deka.

"Pursuant to the registration of the case, the DGP, Assam Police, has constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to investigate the matter. Assam Police will conduct a professional and completely objective investigation," the chief minister posted on X.

Sarma said earlier in the day that an FIR was lodged against Sheikh as his comments on India's



**Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi arrives to address a press conference after BJP accused his wife of having links with Pakistan and the ISI, in Guwahati, Assam, on Monday**

internal affairs and parliamentary matters were aimed at disrupting communal harmony and the nation's interests.

"In pursuance of the Cabinet decision taken yesterday, Assam Police has lodged an FIR and the same

had been registered as CID PS Case No 05/2025/U/S 48/152/61/197(1) BNS, 2023 RW Sec.13(1) UA(P) Act against Ali Tauqeer Sheikh and unknown others," he said in a post.

Section 48 deals with abetment committed out-

side India, while Section 152 addresses exciting secession, armed rebellion and subversive activities. Section 197(1) deals with actions or statements that harm national integration, and Section 61 deals with criminal conspiracy.

Section 13(1) of the UAPA deals with punishment for unlawful activities.

The Assam Cabinet on Sunday had decided not to register any case against the Congress MP or his British spouse but instructed the DGP to file an FIR against Ali Tauqeer Sheikh.

The Assam CM and the BJP have been attacking Gogoi, the deputy leader of the Congress in Lok Sabha, over his wife's alleged connection with the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI).

## DMK, allies to protest over NEP

PTI, CHENNAI/ NEW DELHI: As Tamil Nadu stepped up its opposition to the National Education Policy, with the ruling DMK and its allies announcing a protest on February 18, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Monday dismissed the state gov't opposition as "politics" and said the Centre is committed to implementing the NEP across the country. Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram, termed as "peak of arrogance," Pradhan's insistence on NEP and wanted Tamil Nadu people to oppose the 'arrogance' by showing unity. Dy CM Udhayanidhi Stalin said the next course of action would be decided following consultations with CM M K Stalin, and dubbed the Centre's insistence on NEP as "atrocious" and asserted that the three-language policy cannot be accepted.

## voice of business

# Jan exports dip 2.38%

Trade deficit widens to USD 23 billion

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** India's exports declined for the third month in a row in January, falling by 2.38% year-on-year to \$36.43 billion, while the trade deficit widened to \$22.99 billion in the month.

Imports rose by 10.28% year-on-year to \$59.42 billion in January due to an increase gold shipments, according to the Commerce Ministry data.

The trade deficit was \$21.94 billion in December and \$16.55 billion in January last year.

Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal told reporters that despite economic uncertainties in the world, India's exports are doing better in both goods and services sectors.

He said that sectors like electronics, pharma, rice and gems and jewellery are registering health growth rates during the month under review.

"Despite conflicts, and tariff retaliation around the world, we are doing well," Barthwal said, adding India's goods and services exports would cross \$800 billion in 2025-25. Total exports were worth \$778 billion in 2023-24. In January, gold imports

**FIEO President Ashwani Kumar said the decline can be attributed to the volatility in commodity and metal prices, as well as ongoing trade disruptions such as the tariff war and currency fluctuations**

rose to \$2.68 billion from \$1.9 billion in the same month last year. Gold imports were \$4.7 billion in December 2024.

Crude oil imports fell to \$13.43 billion from \$16.56 billion in January 2024 and \$15.27 billion in December 2024.

The data showed that the estimated value of services exports for January 2025 was \$38.55 billion compared to \$31.01 billion in January 2024. Imports, on the other hand, are estimated at \$18.22 billion compared to \$14.84 billion in January 2024.

On the goods front, key export sectors, including petroleum, and chemicals, have registered negative growth during the month under review.

Petroleum product shipments declined by 58.66% to \$3.56 billion last month. However, textiles, electronics, engineering, rice and marine products recorded healthy growth in

January this year. Cumulatively, during April-January this fiscal, exports rose by 1.39% to \$358.91 billion and imports by 7.43% to \$601.9 billion.

Trade deficit, the difference between imports and exports, during the ten-month period widened to \$242.99 billion. During the first ten months of this fiscal, petroleum product exports contracted by 24.76% year-on-year to \$53.06 billion.

Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) President Ashwani Kumar said the decline can be attributed to the volatility in commodity and metal prices, as well as ongoing trade disruptions such as the tariff war and currency fluctuations.

Kumar however said this surge in imports, coupled with the widening trade deficit, has raised alarms about potential impacts on domestic industries and the overall trade balance.

## businessday

**Profit booking leading FIIs to sell Indian equities, says Finance Minister**

**MUMBAI:** Seeking to assuage concerns over foreign institutional investors (FII) selling Indian equities lately, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday attributed the action to profit booking. Speaking to reporters in the financial capital, Sitharaman said the Indian economy is one where the investors are bagging better returns which leads to profit booking. "FIIs also go out when they are able to or in a position to book profits. Indian market today, Indian economy today, has an environment in which investments are also yielding good returns and profit booking is also happening," she said. It can be noted that FIIs have sold over Rs 1.56 lakh crore of stocks since October last year, including nearly Rs 1 lakh crore in 2025 itself, which has led to a sharp correction on the indices and wiping out investor wealth.

**Airtel completes landing of SEA-ME-WE-6 submarine cable in Chennai**

**NEW DELHI:** Bharti Airtel on Monday said it has completed the landing of the new SEA-ME-WE 6 submarine cable system in Chennai. The company recently landed the SEA-ME-WE 6 (Southeast Asia-Middle East-West Europe-6 or SMW6) cable in Mumbai on December 30, 2024. "The cable landing, both in Mumbai and Chennai, will be fully integrated with Airtel's data centre arm, Nxtra by Airtel, at its large facilities in the respective cities with an aim to enable global hyperscalers and businesses in the country to seamlessly access international connectivity and data centre services," Bharti Airtel said in a release.

currency		bullion	
US Dollar	86.85	Silver (Rs/Kg)	95,614
British Pound	109.63	Gold (Rs/10gm)	85,062
Euro	91.05		
Russian Ruble	00.94		
Kuwaiti Dinar	281.46		
Bahraini Dinar	230.98		
Qatari Riyal	23.86		
Emirati Dirham	23.64		
Omani Rial	225.58		
		Sensex	75996.86
		Nifty	22959.50