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INDIA'S FIRST HYDROGEN-POWERED TRAIN FLAGGED OFF IN HARYANA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday inaugurated India's first hydrogen-powered train from Jind railway station to Sonapat in Haryana

ZERO EMISSION, YET MASSIVE POWER

The indigenously designed train features 10 coaches and a 3,200 hp propulsion system, making it one of the most powerful and largest hydrogen-powered trains in the world. Most hydrogen trains currently operate with only 2-4 coaches. The new train runs on hydrogen fuel cell tech, produces zero emission and can accommodate 2,600 passengers



SUCCESS OF MAKE IN INDIA, SAYS PM MODI

- At the inauguration, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said India has joined an elite group of nations — Germany, Japan, China, and the US — actively developing hydrogen-based rail transport |P10
- The PM said the train is a shining example of 'Make in India', designed by Indian engineers and built solely by domestic companies



75 kmph

MAXIMUM SPEED THAT THE TRAIN CAN ATTAIN ON JIND-SONEPAT ROUTE

Minor shoots live-in GF dead, buries body with kin's help

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

IN a horrific incident, a 16-year-old girl was allegedly shot dead by her minor live-in partner using a country-made firearm on July 10 after he found her texting another boy on social media. To cover up the crime, the accused, along with two others, buried her body in their agricultural field. Police have arrested all the three accused.

The murder took place at Kempalanatha village in the Kodihalli police station limits of Kanakapura taluk in Bengaluru South district. The crime came to light on Friday, a week after the murder, when the police knocked on the door's of the accused following a missing person's complaint filed by the girl's parents.

The victim, a resident of Venkatarayadoddi in Sathanur, was a Class 9 dropout. The accused is a 16-year-old school dropout. The other arrested persons have been identified as the boy's brother, Puttamada (19), and his uncle, Harish (40), both daily wage labourers and residents of Kempalanatha village.

According to the police, the two minors fell in love after meeting on social media. The girl had been living with the boy for about a month in a room next to his parents' house in the village. The boy's parents were aware of their relationship. P5

JPC seeks to temper higher education bill

Suggests key changes in draft, curbs on govt's sweeping powers

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

WITH the Centre preparing to move the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025 for passage in the monsoon session of Parliament, a Joint Parliamentary Committee has sought safeguards against excessive centralisation, recommended stronger consultation with states, and protection of institutional autonomy.

According to the draft report circulated among members, the panel recommended changes to key clauses that drew sharp criticism from multiple quarters, including NDA allies, for granting the Centre sweeping powers to override policy disagreements, supersede regulatory bodies, and control funding.

The Bill proposes an overhaul of the higher education sector by dissolving the University Grants Commission, All India Council for Technical Education, and the National Council for Teacher Education to create a single, unified regulatory commission.

While Clause 47 allows the Centre to supersede the Commission or any Council with Presidential approval, the panel recommended that 'supercession' should be invoked only in extraordinary circumstances, for a limited duration and as a last resort.

NDA-ruled Andhra Pradesh,



Report on bill to sack PM, CMs put off

The JPC examining the bill on removal of the prime minister and chief ministers detained on serious charges, on Friday decided to defer the adoption of a draft report when voting was underway on the panel's recommendations. AIMIM's Asaduddin Owaisi and NCP (SP) MP Supriya Sule had submitted their dissent notes but withdrew them after the panel decided to defer the adoption

several universities, opposition and other stakeholders have characterised the provision as "critical vulnerability" as it allows the Centre to dissolve the regulator entirely without adequate safeguards. In its recommendation, the panel said, "Clause 47 be comprehensively reviewed and the expressions 290 "unable to dis-

charge functions" and "persistently made default" shall be defined through objective, measurable, and verifiable criteria in the Act or the rules, to eliminate ambiguity, ensure transparency, and prevent arbitrary invocation of the power of supersession."

It further said that the Clause 47(2)(a) shall be amended may be read as, "The Chairperson of the Commission, or the Presidents of the Councils and other members of the Commission or the Councils, as the case may be, shall, as from the date of 'supercession', cease to hold their respective office and desist from exercising all the powers, functions and duties under the provisions of this Act, and their office shall deemed to have been as vacated."

While Clause 45 empowers the Centre to issue binding directions on questions of policy, the panel called for objective thresholds, procedural safeguards and transparency requirements governing the Centre's power. It proposed adding the words "for the purposes of this Act" to the provision allowing the government to assign additional functions, to restrict its scope.

The JPC also recommended increasing the number of state government nominees on each of the three councils under the Commission to three.

India raps Japan leader's charges on bullet train

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

INDIA on Friday squarely rejected claims by former Japanese minister Hideki Makihara that New Delhi was responsible for delays in the Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed rail project, describing his remarks as a personal opinion that was "at considerable variance with facts" and asserting that the flagship India-Japan venture is progressing as planned.

Makihara, a former Justice Minister and a member of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party, had alleged in a social media post that India's handling of the Shinkansen project was marked by broken commitments and poor negotiations.

"The Shinkansen project in India is something I was involved with myself, but what stood out in international meet-



They keep pushing their own self-interest to the end. I feel 100% that the reason this hasn't moved forward is on the Indian side

Hideki Makihara, former Japanese minister



ings and negotiations was the sheer recklessness of the Indian side, repeated over and over. They just don't keep promises," he wrote.

He went on to criticise the In-

dian leadership overseeing the project, saying, "They keep pushing their own self-interest right up to the very end. The minister in charge was especially awful—if the top guy's

like that, there's no way to have any decent dealings."

Responding to the remarks, External Affairs Ministry (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal dismissed them as unrepresentative of the bilateral engagement. "It is an individual opinion and at considerable variance with facts," he said.

Japan, he added, will supply the next-generation E10 series Shinkansen trains in the early 2030s, as the rolling stock is still under development. "First section will be opened in 2027 itself. Both sides agreed to start the operations with Indian high speed train. The signalling equipment has been ordered accordingly... No Japanese offer was received in this context. The project execution is in line with the common goal of starting the high speed train at the earliest," Jaiswal said.

CONSOLATION MATCH

In the rebranded 'Bronze match' at the World Cup's penultimate game, England face France. A look at the game.



Today's match: 3rd place play-off: France vs England 2.30 AM* (*IST Sunday)

Mbappe, Kane, Jude and the golden boot

This match has historically seen coaches play fringe players. This one could see the likes of Kylian Mbappe, Harry Kane and Jude Bellingham start because of what's at stake: the Golden Boot. Both Mbappe and Lionel Messi have the same goals but the latter is the leader on account of him more assists |P15



Trump to attend final

US President Donald Trump will attend Sunday's World Cup final between Spain and Argentina, the White House said, saving his first appearance at the tournament for its grand finale



NCP MERGER BID

Big buzz on Pawar party joining NDA

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI & RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ Mumbai/New Delhi

SPECULATION that Sharad Pawar's NCP(SP) is set to join the BJP-led NDA and merge with the Ajit Pawar faction intensified after senior NCP (SP) leader Jayant Patil held key meetings with BJP general secretary Vinod Tawade, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, and Deputy CM Eknath Shinde.

Shiv Sena minister Sanjay Shirsat claimed the picture would become clear within the next eight days. Highly placed sources said Sharad Pawar has personally entrusted Patil, his confidant, with negotiating the terms of NCP(SP)'s entry into the NDA and the merger of the two NCP factions.

Sources said Patil and Jitendra Ahwad could be inducted as cabinet ministers in Maharashtra, while Lok Sabha MP Supriya Sule and Rajya Sabha MP Praful Patel could be inducted as cabinet ministers at the Centre. However, Sunetra Pawar, wife of Ajit Pawar and NCP national president, has opposed the move fearing it would end her family's control over the party and jeopardise the political future of her sons, Parth and Jay.

The BJP, however, is not inclined to accommodate NCP (SP) separately in the Maharashtra NDA government, a senior BJP source said. Instead, it is pushing for a merger of the two NCP factions, with the merged entity continuing as a key NDA ally, the senior BJP source said.



The BJP has given the green light (to the merger), but NCP national president Sunetra Pawar has raised the red flag, saying it will end their career

Top BJP leader

Finance remains thorn

A key factor delaying consensus within the NCP (Pawar) faction is its reported demand for the finance portfolio in the Maharashtra government, a department previously held by Ajit Pawar before it was taken over by Fadnavis following Pawar's death

SIT ON RAM TEMPLE

MAY SUBMIT INTERIM REPORT TO THE SC

The SIT probing the alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram temple may submit an interim report to the SC on July 20 in compliance with its directions, sources said

Karwar man in ED net for Goa land grab

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

THE Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Panaji Zonal Office, Goa, on July 16 arrested Karwar resident and history-sheeter Siddique Khan alias Suleman Khan (55), son of late Mohammed Khan, for his alleged involvement in large-scale land grabbing cases of high value in Goa.

"Khan is the mastermind and principal beneficiary of an organised syndicate engaged in the large-scale grabbing of around 25 hectares (about 62.5 acres) of high-value immovable properties in Goa through forged and fabricated title documents," the ED stated in an official statement on Friday. P7

GOODBYE LEGEND He left us but we'll have lots of good memories

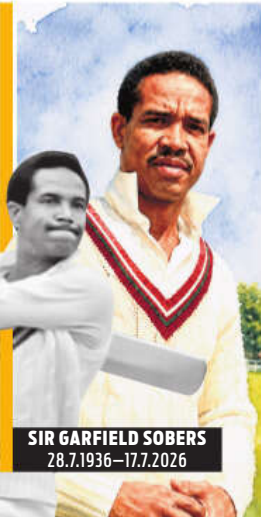
MICHAEL HOLDING

IT is obviously a very sad day. We all know that no one lives forever. We all know these things are inevitable. But at the same time, when you have these occurrences, it shifts you a bit. It's not someone that is a distant past friend. It's someone that you have known for many, many years and still have some sort of contact with over the years.

So it's a bit tough at times. No, I obviously didn't play with Sir Garry. He was before my time, but he was always around cricket. He was always around whenever we had tours. There are always cocktail parties everywhere you went with cricket teams. And he was always in attendance at those cocktail par-

ties in Barbados and some of the other islands because, of course, he travelled around the Caribbean whenever cricket was going on.

And of course, he was on tours. He came to Australia. He was down there during Kerry Packer as well. So people of my generation, who did not play with him, still had a lot of close contact with him. I also spent a brief bit of time with him when there was the 20/20 tournament with Stanford in the Caribbean. I spent about 10 months with him on that. I didn't last



SIR GARFIELD SOBERS 28.7.1936-17.7.2026

very long. But even so we had contact. We spoke, and even if I didn't speak to him personally, I would see his friends who were close to him and we'd exchange views. I can't say that he inspired me in any way. There's no way I could ever think of doing anything that he did, anything as good as he did it. So it was not a matter of inspiring me with my game.

I went out there trying to play as best as I can for the West Indies. I didn't think about Garry Sobers when I was out there. I couldn't match anything he did. He did a lot of great things for the West Indies, for Barbados, for individuals he came across. We'll have lots of good memories. P15 The writer is former WI great As told to Firoz Mirza

Hakki Pikki woman sells daughter in Senegal

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Chikkamagaluru

A Hakki Pikki woman from Mallenahalli village in Chikkamagaluru taluk has been accused of selling her 20-year-old daughter in Senegal, West Africa, for monetary gain. Police registered a suo motu case against the woman, while the daughter has since been rescued.

According to a Hakki Pikki forum, the family frequently travelled to African countries to sell traditional herbal products and often took the daughter along. The forum alleged that during one such visit, the woman sold her daughter to a person in Senegal in exchange for money. After

her parents returned to Chikkamagaluru, the young woman was allegedly confined and subjected to torture.

The Karnataka Hakki Pikki Budakatu Sanghatane said the woman was rescued by local police in Senegal with the assistance of the Indian Embassy.

She is currently in Senegal and is expected to return to India within the next one or two days.

Superintendent of Police Jitendra Kumar Dayama told TNIE that leaders of the Karnataka Hakki Pikki Budakatu Sanghatane submitted a written complaint to the SP's office, seeking action against the accused. Based on the complaint, Chikkamagaluru Women's Police registered a suo motu case. P7

