

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Indian teacher who created hundreds of learning centres wins \$1 million Global Teacher Prize

DUBAI, Feb 5: An Indian teacher and activist known for creating hundreds of learning centers and painting educational murals across the walls of slums won the \$1 million Global Teacher Prize on Thursday.

Rouba Nagi accepted the award at the World Government's Summit in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, an annual event that draws leaders from across the globe.

Her Rouba Nagi Art Foundation has established more than 800 learning centers across India. They aim to have children who never attended school begin to have structured learning. They also teach children already in school.

Nagi also paints murals that teach literacy, science, math and history, among other topics.

The prize is awarded by the Varkey Foundation, whose founder, Sunny Varkey, established the for-profit GEMS Education company that runs dozens of schools in Egypt, Qatar and the UAE.

Nagi plans to use the \$1 million to build an institute



that offers free vocational training.

Nagi is the 10th teacher to win the award, which the foundation began handing out in 2015.

Past winners of the Global Teacher Prize have included a Kenyan teacher from a remote village who gave away most of his earnings to the

poor, a Palestinian primary school teacher who teaches her students about non-violence and a Canadian educator who taught a remote Arctic village of Inuit students. Last year's winner was Saudi educator Mansour al-Mansour, who was known for his work with the poor in the kingdom. (AP)

GEMS Education, or Global Education Management Systems, is one of the world's largest private school operators and is believed to be worth billions. Its success has followed that of Dubai, where only private schools offer classes for the children of the foreigners who power its economy. (AP)

India-born Singaporean to be appointed non-executive chairman of city-state's Keppel Ltd

SINGAPORE, FEB 5: India-born Singaporean Piyush Gupta will be appointed non-executive chairman of the city state's global asset manager and operator.

Gupta, 66, will succeed retiring chairman Danny Teoh on April 17, Keppel Ltd announced on Thursday.

The India-born former banker with 27 years of international experience is currently deputy chairman of Keppel, which has global business interest including India.

Gupta was CEO of DBS Group from November 2009 until his retirement in March 2025, during which he led the bank to become a global financial powerhouse with a subsidiary bank in India.

He is also currently an al-



ternate member of the Council of Presidential Advisers – which advises the president in the exercise of his custodial powers to safeguard Singapore's reserves and uphold the integrity of the public service.

Gupta is also the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Singapore Management University, Chairman of Mandai Park Holdings and an advisor and non-executive Chairman (India) to Temasek International Advis-

sors. Gupta holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Degree in Economics from St. Stephen's College, Delhi University, India, and a Post Graduate Diploma in Management from Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, India.

Keppel separately released its FY2025 report on Thursday. It logged a 29 per cent rise in full-year profit, supported by improved performance across its three segments and higher recurring income.

The asset manager's profit from continuing operations rose to SGD1.02 billion (USD801 million) for the year ended Dec 31, from SGD787 million a year earlier. (PTI)

Imran Khan's sons accuse Pak's Sharif Govt of 'deliberately' refusing visa to meet their father



LAHORE, FEB 5: Sons of Pakistan's incarcerated former prime minister Imran Khan have accused the Shehbaz Sharif government of "deliberately" refusing visas to them, saying democracy in the country is "hollow" and basic human rights are being "crushed."

Khan, 73, was arrested and jailed in August 2023 in multiple cases and currently lodged in the Adiala Jail at Rawalpindi after his conviction in one of them.

Suleman Khan and Kasim Khan, who currently live in London, are Khan's sons from his first marriage with British TV personality Jemima Goldsmith.

"My brother and I are trying to travel to Pakistan to see our father. For 914 days, he has been held in solitary confinement while his health deteriorates and he is denied access to independent medical care."

"Now the government is deliberately refusing to process our visas. Denying a prisoner treatment is cruel. Denying his children the right to see him is collective punishment," Kasim Khan said in a post on X on Wednesday.

Imran Khan's family has claimed he has been in solitary confinement for the past several months and his health condition is not better.

On January 29, Informa-

tion Minister Attaullah Tarar confirmed that Imran Khan underwent a medical procedure for an eye ailment at a hospital a week before and currently is in "good health."

The development came a day after the former prime minister's party, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), claimed that its jailed founder was suffering from a serious eye ailment that could cause permanent damage to his eyesight if not treated promptly.

Kasim Khan reiterated that his father has now spent "over 900 days in a death cell with no family visits and no access to his personal doctors," and added in his post on X that credible reports confirm he has been diagnosed with central retinal vein occlusion, a danger-

ous blockage that can lead to permanent vision loss if not treated through urgent medical intervention in a proper hospital.

"Yet authorities continue to block his treatment and deny him the doctors he trusts. I am even denied the right to speak to him. This is not governance. This is authoritarian cruelty," Kasim Khan said and called on every defender of human rights to act "before it is too late."

The world must see that in Pakistan today, democracy is hollow and basic human rights are being crushed. I call on international human rights organisations and governments to speak out and act before irreversible harm is done," he said. (PTI)

Before Minister Tarar's

At least 216 terrorists, 36 civilians and 22 personnel killed in Balochistan: Pak Army

ISLAMABAD, FEB 5:

At least 216 terrorists, 36 civilians and 22 personnel were killed in the days-long operation launched in response to terror attacks at multiple places in the restive Balochistan province, the Pakistan Army said on Thursday.

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the Pakistan military's media wing, announced in a statement that it has "successfully concluded" the operation, code named Radd-ul-Fitna-1, that was launched on January 26.

The Pakistan Army said that the operations were initiated in Panjgur and on the outskirts of Harnai district after credible and verified intelligence confirmed the presence of terrorists.

"During this phase, security forces undertook operations against identified terrorist hideouts, resulting in the elimination of 41 terrorists," it said.

It said subsequently, aggressive and steadfast responses by the security forces effectively thwarted the attacks.

"As a result of these well-coordinated engagements and subsequent clearance operations, 216 terrorists have been sent to hell, significantly degrading the leader-



ship, command-and-control structures and operational capabilities of terrorist networks," the ISPR said.

The army said 36 civilians, including women and children, and 22 personnel of the security forces and law enforcement agencies were killed in the operations.

The statement alleged that "Indian-sponsored terrorist elements were seeking to disrupt peace and development" in the region.

India has earlier categorically rejected as baseless Pakistan's allegations of an Indian hand in attempts to disturb peace in Balochistan, and said it is Islamabad's usual tactic to deflect attention from its "internal failings".

Meanwhile, railway services have been restored in Balochistan province after remaining suspended for the last five days, a Pakistan Railways official said on Thursday. Pakistan Railways spokesperson Muhammad Kashif said that after the outbreak of terror attacks in different parts of the province since Saturday, all railway traffic from Quetta had been suspended because of security reasons.

He said that during the attacks, several railway tracks were damaged which also led to the suspension of railway services. On Tuesday, Pakistan's National Assembly adopted a resolution urging the government to adopt an "aggressive" national re-

sponse to tackle the threat of external sponsors of militancy and their internal facilitators.

Balochistan, bordering Iran and Afghanistan, is home to a long-running violent insurgency. Baloch insurgent groups have previously carried out several attacks targeting the USD 60 billion CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor) projects.

In 2025, the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) claimed responsibility for the March hijacking of the Jaffar Express train traveling from Quetta to Peshawar, killing 31 civilians and security personnel and holding hostage over 300 passengers.

Indian HC denies alleged attack on Sri Lankan fishermen by Indian Coast Guard

COLOMBO, FEB 5:

The Indian High Commission here on Thursday denied the alleged attack on a group of Sri Lankan fishermen by the Indian Coast Guard.

Issuing a statement, the Indian High Commission said it had noticed media reports pertaining to the alleged assault on Sri Lankan fishermen at sea on January 29, 2026.

"On our side, we have ascertained and can confirm that no such assault was inflicted by any Indian Navy or Indian Coast Guard personnel," a press release said.

"India has consistently maintained that a humanitarian approach should be adopted to fishermen's livelihood concerns and that the use of force should not be resorted to under any circumstances," it said.



On February 2, the Sri Lankan fisheries minister Ramalingam Chandrasekaran said a protest was to be recorded with the Indian government on the incident.

He said the Indian High Commission has been informed on the incident by them.

On January 29, three trawlers with 12 fishermen had ventured out for fishing

from the Wellamankaraya fishing harbor at Wennaipuva in the north western coast. They were allegedly attacked by the Indian Coast Guards.

The Navy deployed a vessel to bring ashore four fishermen who had been badly injured by the assault. Another naval craft was moved to bring back six more injured fishermen, the Naval

spokesman Buddika Sam-path said.

Tyrone Mendis the fishermen's association official said, "three trawlers had come under attack, two of them were within Sri Lankan waters when they were attacked".

He charged that Sri Lankan Navy was helpless to prevent the attack by Indian coast guards. (PTI)

Russia, Ukraine hold second day of US-brokered peace talks in Abu Dhabi

KYIV, FEB 5:

Negotiators from Moscow and Kyiv on Thursday held a second day of US-brokered talks in Abu Dhabi on ending their war amid an escalation in Russia's winter attacks on Ukraine's power grid and after a sharp rise last year in Ukrainian civilians killed in the fighting.

"We are working in the same formats as yesterday: trilateral consultations, group work, and further synchronisation of positions," said Rustem Umerov, Ukraine's National Security and Defence Council chief, who was present at the meeting.

The delegations from Moscow and Kyiv were joined in the capital of the United Arab Emirates by US special envoy Steve Witkoff and US President Donald Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, according to Umerov. They were also at last month's talks in the same place as the Trump administration tries to steer the two countries toward a settlement.

General Alexus Grynkevich, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, was also present



at the talks, according to a spokesman for the general who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive matters.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky urged allied countries to press Moscow into ending its all-out invasion, which began almost four years ago on February 24, 2022, and said his country needs security guarantees to deter any postwar Russian attacks.

Ukrainians must feel that there is genuine progress to-

ward peace and "not toward a scenario in which the Russians exploit everything to their advantage and continue their strikes," Zelensky said on social media late Wednesday.

Fighting has continued in parallel with the talks. Russia has hammered Ukraine's electricity network, aiming to deny civilians power and weaken their appetite for the fight, while a grinding war of attrition continues along the roughly 1,000-kilometre front line snaking along eastern and southern parts of Ukraine.

Last year saw a 31 per cent increase in Ukrainian civilian casualties compared with 2024, the advocacy group Human Rights Watch said in a report published Wednesday. Almost 15,000 Ukrainian civilians have been killed and just over 40,000 injured since the start of the war through last December, according to the United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine. (AP)