

THE TIMES OF INDIA

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'It's not our war. We have other priorities,' says US secretary of state Marco Rubio, warning that Trump will walk away from efforts to broker a Russia-Ukraine peace deal 'within days' unless there are clear signs that a deal can be done, PAGE OPP

US airstrikes on Yemen's Ras Isa fuel terminal on Red Sea coast kills at least 74 people, marking single deadliest known attack against Houthis under Donald Trump's new campaign, which began March 15, PAGE OPP

Perry vs Perry case reaches Australia's highest court 5 years after designer Katie Perry sued singer Katy Perry, claiming the pop star had infringed on her fashion label trademark

'Maddest game...,' says Harry Maguire, after his dramatic winner in extra time helps Man U stage a spectacular comeback to beat Lyon 5-4 and set up a Europa League semifinal clash against Athletic Bilbao, P 22

Hindu abducted, beaten to death in Bangladesh

Bhabesh Chandra Roy (58), a well-known figure in the Hindu community of Bangladesh's Dinajpur district, was beaten to death Thursday. Four motorcycle-riders stormed into his home...

Delhi to Dhaka: Avoid virtue signalling, focus on protecting minorities, P 16

se and abducted him, his wife said Friday. Roy was taken to another village, where he was assaulted. Later, his body was dumped at his home. **PAGE OPP**

Bizman shoots at trucker in Noida

A businessman who had parked his SUV in the middle of a road for a drink in Noida Sector 63 early on Friday shot a truck driver in his head after he honked for passage. The trucker is in critical condition. The businessman was arrested. **P 8**

Sambhal SIT charges 2 with twin murders

An SIT probing last Nov's violence that claimed five lives during a survey of Shahi Jama Masjid in UP's Sambhal has named two local residents as accused in its chargesheet over the alleged murders of two of the five victims. **P 12**

Allahabad HC stays mosque demolition

The demolition of Madina Masjid in UP's Fatehpur district, which had been cleared by the district revenue authority, has been stayed by Allahabad HC till the next hearing on May 23. The court also directed the state govt to reply within two weeks. **P 12**

China ready to step up India imports: Envoy

Hopes For 'Fair, Transparent' Biz Environment For Chinese Firms

Sachin.Parashar @timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Amid escalating US-China trade tensions, Beijing has reached out to New Delhi, saying it is ready to welcome more premium Indian goods and stands ready to help Indian businesses tap into the Chinese market to address India's trade deficit that, according to reports this week, widened to a record \$99.2 billion.

In an exclusive interview to TOI, his first to an Indian media outlet after arriving here, Chinese ambassador Xu Feihong, however, also hoped India would provide a transparent and non-discriminatory business environment for Chi-

India & China should respect each other's core interests & concerns, handle differences through consultation & dialogue, & put boundary question in proper place in bilateral ties

China has never deliberately pursued trade surplus. Trade surpluses (India's trade deficit with China has widened to a record \$99bn) reflect market-driven efficiency & evolve with changing economic conditions

China never seeks water hegemony & won't use development of water resources to coerce countries in lower reaches of (Yarlung Zangbo/Brahmaputra)

- XU FEIHONG | Chinese ambassador to India

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW | P 18

nese companies. Echoing PM Modi's remark that competition should not be allowed to turn into conflict, Xu said dialogue was important for a stable and cooperative relationship. China was ready to warmly welcome the PM for the SCO summit later this year, he said.

About US reciprocal tariffs, he said China and India had the responsibility to oppose all forms of unilateralism and protectionism. He responded in writing to questions about India's concerns over Chinese export controls on manpower and equipment and the role of people-to-people contacts and media in fostering better understanding between the two.

On the issue of trade imbalance, Xu said in 2024, Indian products, such as chilli peppers, iron ore and cotton yarn, saw growth in exports to China surging by over 17%, 160%, and 240%, respectively. On the border issue, he said China and India possessed the wisdom and experience to navigate challenges constructively.

Renovation of Jinnah House awaits MEA nod



South Court, the Art Deco villa Pakistan's founder M A Jinnah built in Mumbai's Malabar Hill in 1936, is likely to be renovated, subject to a final clearance by MEA, which plans to turn it into a diplomatic enclave. **P 17**

'Half of student visas US revoked are of Indians'

The US state department and Immigration & Customs Enforcement continue to aggressively target international students with visa revocations, termination of their legal status, and removal. With Indians constituting the largest cohort of international students, it isn't surprising that the majority of those impacted are from India.

The American Immigration Lawyers Association collected 327 reports of visa revocations and SEVIS terminations from attorneys, students, and university employees and found that

Govt seeks fgn funding info from Harvard

The Trump administration said on Friday it sought Harvard University's records on foreign funding going back a decade and on some foreign ties. US law requires universities to report donations from foreign sources exceeding \$250,000 in a year. **PAGE OPP**

50% of these international students were from India, followed by 14% from China. **TNN**

Terror accused Happy Passia arrested in US

FBI Thursday announced it had arrested alleged Pakistan-backed pro-Khalistan terrorist Harpreet Singh, alias Happy Passia, living illegally in California. FBI, now under Kash Patel, said Harpreet came via Mexico and had been evading capture using burner phones and encrypted applications.

Harpreet allegedly masterminded 15 strikes in Punjab and Chandigarh in the last eight months, including 12 grenade attacks, many of those on police stations. Punjab Police hopes he would be deported like other illegal immigrants. A formal extradition may take longer. **P 16**

ICU technician held for hosp sexual assault

Gurgaon: Deepak, a 25-year-old ICU technician at Gurgaon's Medanta Hospital, was arrested on Friday for allegedly sexually assaulting a flight attendant, 46, while she was on ventilator support on April 6, reports Samad Hoque.

The woman, who works with a private airline, filed a police complaint on April 14, saying she could not speak up or resist because of her condition. Police said suspicion fell on Deepak after going through his movement in the CCTV footage. The technician was suspended, Medanta said Friday.

► Statements, P 8

Assure accused will not go to Tihar: UK extradition authority

'Bhandari Ruling Citing Risk Will Affect All Cases'

New Delhi: The deputy chief crown prosecutor who oversees extraditions from the UK has advised India to provide sovereign guarantee that any accused being sought to be extradited to New Delhi will not be kept in Tihar Jail, or subjected to torture and inhuman treatment in prison, reports Pradeep Thakur.

The advice comes after two back-to-back rejections of extradition requests by UK courts, the last one on April 11 of Virkiran Awasthi and his wife Ritika who are wanted in connection with an alleged Rs 750 crore bank fraud case. On Feb 27, the UK high court had rejected alleged arms dealer Sanjay Bhandari's extradition while

AN ULTIMATUM?

► UK deputy chief crown prosecutor says if Indian govt fails to give the undertaking ruling out Tihar, it would 'not pursue any appeal' in other cases

► Detention must satisfy Article 3 of European Convention on Human Rights that accused should not face real risk of torture, inhuman treatment or punishment in the requesting country

also refusing India permission to appeal in UK Supreme Court against its verdict.

"...The Bhandari ruling will likewise affect other cases we are conducting which involve detention in Tihar Jail, namely the (Awasthi) 'Hasad Fraud' case..." the prosecutor said in a communication to the Indian govt.

► 'Appeal futile', P 19

4 new secys in finmin amid major reshuffle

New Delhi: In the biggest such reshuffle in economic ministries in several years, govt Friday appointed four new secretaries in the finance ministry — expenditure, economic affairs, revenue and public enterprises — while naming new heads for commerce, labour and civil aviation. In all, 18 new secretaries were named across departments.

► Govt appoints 19 new CBDT members, P 17

Aviation secretary V Vudalnam is expenditure secretary replacing Manoj Govil, who moves as secretary (coordination) in cabinet secretariat. PMO's Arvind Srivastava will head revenue. **TNN**

► Top-deck changes, P 15

Teen's murder sparks protests in NE Delhi

New Delhi: In a murder that triggered protests and led to tension in the area, a 17-year-old boy, Kunal, was stabbed to death Thursday evening by two teenagers in what appears to be a "revenge killing" in northeast Delhi's Seelampur, reports Devanshi Mehta.

Police have identified the suspects, who are on the run, and 10 teams are conducting raids to nab them. A woman named Zikra has been arrested for allegedly abetting the crime and conspiring with the killers, police said. She and the two suspected murderers are allegedly part of Shoaib-Mastan gang active in the area, sources said.

► 'Want justice', P 6

Modi, Musk discuss tech, innovation collaboration

New Delhi: PM Modi on Friday spoke to Elon Musk, the world's richest person with a strong influence on the Trump administration, as they discussed potential for collaboration in areas of technology and innovation.

Modi's conversation with Musk comes at a time when Tesla is reportedly poised to enter the Indian market. The development also comes against the backdrop of ongoing negotiations for a bilateral trade agreement between India and the US.

Commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal had



Musk and Modi in DC in Feb

also held a meeting with top executives of Musk's Starlink in Delhi on Wednesday to discuss the company's investment plans for India. **TNN**

► Satellite telecom, P 17



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World Liver Day: Healthy diet cuts disease risk by 50% | 10

TIMES CITY
THE TIMES OF INDIA, NEW DELHI | SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 2025

TEMP ON FRIDAY
41° MAXIMUM
25.6° MINIMUM

FORECAST ▶ Partly cloudy sky. Max and min temperatures on Saturday would be around 38°C and 26°C

MOONSET 9.55AM (SAT)
SUNSET 6.49PM (SAT)

MOONRISE 12.43AM (SUN)
SUNRISE 5.51AM (SUN)

219
AQI IN DELHI ON FRIDAY (POOR)

Jamia makes up to 40% online learning mandatory | 9



Delhi to get nodal officers for waterlogging hotspots | 7

Dangerous driving on repeat: Over 13k caught 3 or more times

Ishita.Jairath@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: In a city where every second counts amid constant heavy traffic flow, some drivers seem habitual in breaking rules. Traffic police data reveals that around 13,676 are repeat violators, caught three or more times for dangerous driving under Section 184 of Motor Vehicles Act and for drunk driving under Section 185 of the same Act over the past five years.

Section 184 includes offences like jumping red lights, ignoring stop signs, overtaking from the wrong side, using hand-held mobile devices while driving, carrying passengers on goods vehicles and even driving against traffic flow.

Sometimes, these can turn fatal too. In the past four years, fatal road accidents in Delhi rose by 24.7%, climbing from 1,206 in 2021 to 1,504 in 2024, causing around 2,543 fatalities during that period.

These habitual offenders are the drivers caught on the

ground by traffic police personnel under these two sections. They could also be challenged for other traffic violations spotted through cameras or other tech usage. Among the total 13,676 violators, 7,188 hold driving licences from Delhi and 6,488 from other states, including 3,777 from Uttar Pradesh, 701 from Bihar, 595 from Haryana and 298 from Punjab. Of the top 20 habitual violators, 15 have driving licences issued outside Delhi. But many of the drivers with a DL from outside Delhi may now be living here.

TIMES Special

Some violators are fined, have DLs impounded, or are sent to traffic correctional facilities—yet the offences continue. The top offender is a driver who was challaned 34 times under sections 184 or 185. The second, third and fourth most frequent offenders were each booked 29 times, followed by one at 27 times.

Over the years, fines have been raised, and police have followed court instructions to send repeat violators to correctional facilities for 15 days of four-hour daily rigorous training, and tried various awareness campaigns. But, when it comes to the offenders like this hardened group of 13,676 drivers, none of it seems to stick.

Anil Chikara, a transport expert, said, "Motor Vehicles Act provides enhanced penalties for repeat offenders. These provisions are workable with technology. With new video-capturing and AI features, habitual offenders can be targeted." He, however, pointed out that not only young drivers lacked fear of the law, "but our culture also glorifies breaking rules, and anyone who follows traffic norms is seen as outdated".

Chikara added, "There's no reward for safe driving. Often, it's the first-time or doubtful offenders who get caught. We need prosecution SOPs that make such regular

THE USUAL SUSPECTS

13,676 drivers caught three or more times for violations under dangerous driving (Section 184 MV Act) or drunk driving (Section 185 MV Act) over the last five years

Topping the chart is one driver challaned under same sections 34 times

Top 10 drivers | No. of challans

34
29
29
29
27
26
26
24
23
23

▶ As per Road Accidents Report 2022, the second most common cause of fatal accidents is wrong-side driving

▶ In the last four years, fatal road accidents in Delhi rose by 24.7%, climbing from 1,206 in 2021 to 1,504 in 2024, causing around 2,543 fatalities

▶ Of the top 20 habitual violators, 15 have driving licences issued outside Delhi. However, many may still be residing in the city

offenders feel some shame. Retests and community service might work better than licence suspension. But for hardcore offenders like the one challaned 34 times, DL should just be cancelled."

Some violators, however, demanded a more user-friendly approach. TOI tracked down a few of these repeat violators. One, with around five pending challans, claimed confusion over recklessness. "I'm not a dangerous driver. I just got caught in traffic confusion. I didn't even get the message about my challan and suddenly it was sent to court. The system needs to be more efficient and user-friendly." Another said she did not get a message or "sometimes, a wrong car gets a challan because the numberplate wasn't clearly visible, and it was wrongly read".

Traffic police said their powers were limited to fines and holding awareness sessions. Additional commissioner of police, traffic headquarters,

Satya Vir Katara said, "As is evident from the data, over 13,000 drivers across Delhi, including migrants, have developed a habit of repeatedly violating offences under serious sections 184 and 185 of MV Act. Fatal accidents also occur, but there seems to be no improvement in such cases."

From issuing challans to showing awareness videos, various measures have been tried, but they still commit such offences, he added. Impounding DLs, too, did not work as offences did not decrease, Katara said, adding that the fear of getting licences cancelled may be useful, at least for habitual offenders.

Katara pointed out, "Tech solutions are available, so the probability of getting caught is increasing. But what comes next is uncertain, and hence, the fear is diminishing. Offences keep increasing. Some autonomy is the need of the hour to address the same. We are mulling now on what could be done."

Why Delhi Feels Like Oven At Night

Blame Your Rising Discomfort On Concretisation, Loss Of Green Cover And Fewer Waterbodies

Kushagra.Dixit@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: As city residents endure persistent heat stress even after sunset and minimum temperatures soar consistently, experts suggest that warmer nights have health and economic repercussions.

With the nights not cool enough to provide comfort, April has already recorded two warm nights. Thursday recorded a minimum temperature of 25.7 degrees Celsius, followed by Friday at 25.6 degrees Celsius. The last time the city recorded warm night conditions was on April 9 and 10, when the minimum temperatures were 25.6 and 25.9 degrees Celsius, respectively.

Experts pointed out that the health impact of high night temperature was worse than high daytime mercury levels. Mitashi Singh, programme manager for sustainable habitat programme at the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), said the reason for high temperatures was not limited to meteorology but also poorly designed or un-upgraded localities, poor green cover, diminishing water bodies, bad urban planning and waste management, among others.

"Our cities, which were once able to cool themselves off during the nighttime, cannot do so anymore. Among the major reasons are concretisation, loss of green cover and fewer water bodies. The heat sinks are gone. We keep on trapping radiation throughout the day and releasing it at night. That precisely is the urban heat island effect," said Mitashi. She said that more paved surfaces and the use of poor materials like tin sheets or galvanised iron sheets as roofing material also contribute to the night-time heat.

"There is a global pattern. Bigger cities mean more population, cars and buildings. Thus, anthropogenic activities are the bigger factors contributing to heat in the cities. This is also in line with the fact that approximately 70% of greenhouse gases come from cities. Issues like more car-centric mobility, urban waste landfills, air pollution and buildings are prevalent. Delhi has these issues; there are three landfills too," she said. She added that the use of indigenous methods or insulated bricks for construction, the use of cool roof techniques, and planning low-rise residences like 5-6 floors with canopy trees.

Experts pointed out that besides health impacts, the heat stress during nighttime has other economic consequences as well. "India is projected to lose 5.8% of working hours in 2030, a productivity loss that is equivalent to 34 million full-time jobs due to global warming," a CSE report pointed out.

The heat also leads to a vicious circle where warmer nights lead to cooling requirements like the use of ACs, which emit more heat that gets trapped, prompting more cooling requirements. This causes high power demand as well. However, there are fixes as well. According to a report by the International Water Association, water bodies and greenery have an impact on heat.

Last June, the higher temperature at the base weather station at Safdarjung itself recorded 35.2 degrees. According to Dr Praseon Singh, a fellow at the Centre for Climate Change Research at TERI, while the city is still seeing high night temperatures, low humidity levels have so far stopped high stress levels from unleashing havoc on residents, for now.

"Since the temperatures in the daytime are very high consistently and there is no cooling taking place, the heat is cascading to the next day. Night heat is harmful, even more than the daytime, since the body needs comfort with the cooling of the environment."

Light rain brings temporary relief after hot, dry day

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The city experienced a hot and dry day with a further spike in the maximum temperature that reached 41 degrees Celsius.

However, around 8:30 pm, the city got a much-needed respite from the heat in the form of very light rain.

The rain brought temperatures down. The weather department expects the respite to continue on Saturday.

No heatwave has been issued for the next six days. The India Meteorological Department (IMD), however, has issued a yellow alert for Saturday as light rain to a drizzle and thunderstorms with strong winds up to 40-50 km/h and occasional gusts up to 60 km/h are expected.

The maximum on Friday

at the city's base station, Safdarjung, was 41 degrees Celsius, 4.2 notches more than the season's normal. Ayanagar recorded 40.4 degrees and was the second warmest area of the city. The humidity oscillated between 32% and 68%.

The minimum temperature was 25.6 degrees Celsius, four notches above normal. "By 8.30 pm, the wind speed had reached up to 33 km/h over Pragati Maidan," an IMD official said.

According to IMD, the maximum and minimum temperatures on Saturday are expected to be 37-39 degrees Celsius and 25-27 degrees Celsius, respectively.

The city's air quality index read 219 on Friday. The Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) has said the AQI could improve to moderate levels on Saturday.

URBAN HEAT STEALING SLEEP AND PRODUCTIVITY

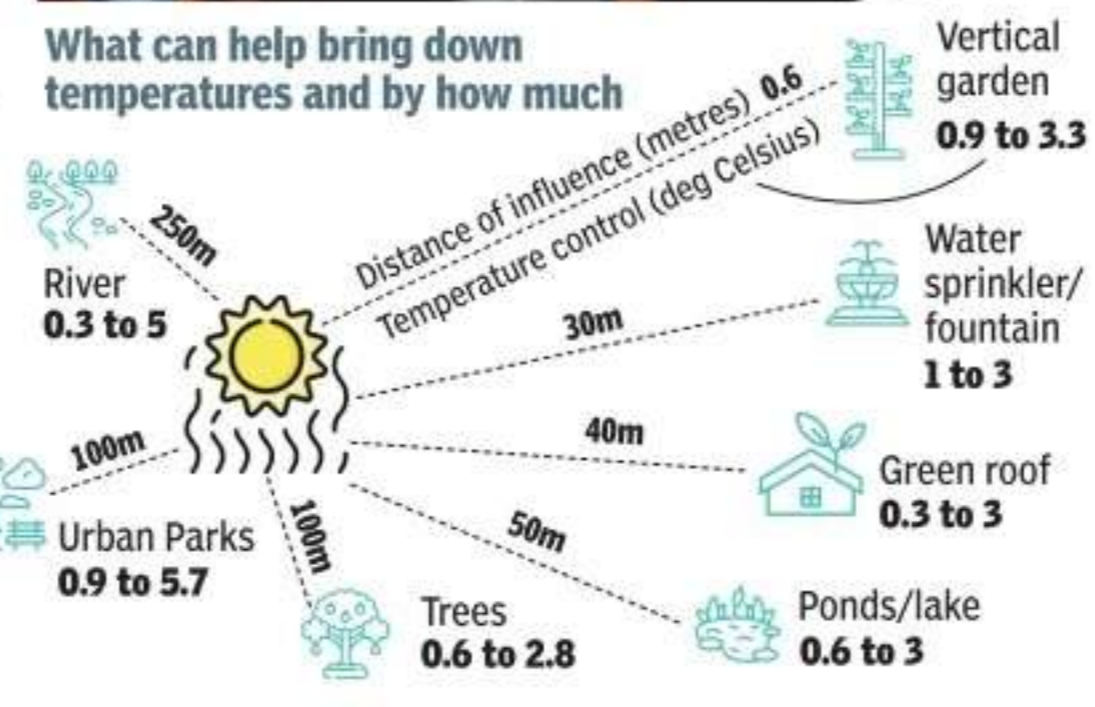
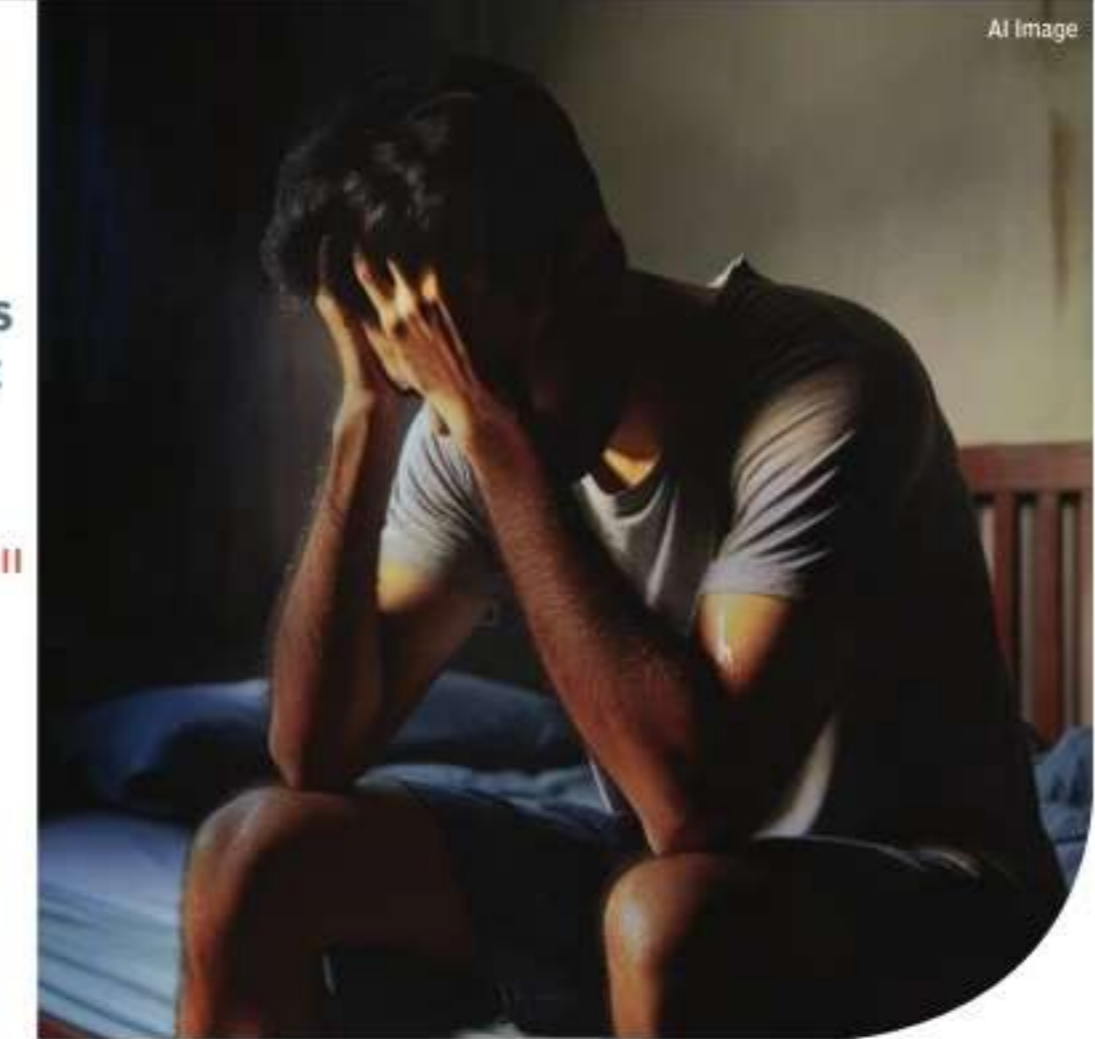
Two warm night conditions experienced this month with temperatures consistently above normal

Cities cannot cool themselves off during night due to heat trapping

Why heat gets trapped

- 1 Non-insulated concrete structures
- 2 Low green covers and diminishing waterbodies
- 3 Tin or galvanised iron sheets used as roofing materials in informal sectors as well as residences
- 4 Urban mobility centred around private vehicles
- 5 Unmanaged waste and landfills
- 6 Poor shading or lack of canopy trees in low-rise housing areas with wide roads

- Impact**
- Body does not get enough rest, impacts health
 - Productivity or work efficiency affected, resulting in economic losses
 - High power and water demand
 - Economically weaker sections or professionals with outdoor duties most impacted
- Solutions**
- More greenery: Use of canopy trees, shrubs and grasses
 - Insulation in houses using mud quoting, reflective paints, autoclaved aerated concrete blocks
 - Focus on public transport
 - Maintaining waterbodies



Yet another fire guts 100 seized vehicles at Wazirabad malkhana

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Another fire gutted 100 seized vehicles at Delhi Police's malkhana in north Delhi's Wazirabad on Friday, making it the second such incident within a month at the impound yard that has witnessed multiple fires in the past year. In the latest blaze, 65 two-wheelers and 35 four-wheelers were destroyed.

According to a Delhi Fire Services official, a call was received about the fire at



UP IN FIRE

2.32am. "Five fire tenders were sent to the scene, with about 35 firemen present at the spot to douse the fire. The fire erupted in the south district police malkhana located at Delhi Police Training School in Wazirabad," the official said.

He added, "Of the 100 vehicles, 65 were two-wheelers, including motorcycles, scooters and more, and 35 were fo-

ur-wheelers, including cars, tempos, pickup vehicles and others. All of them were seized by Delhi Police."

The fire was doused around 3.25 am. The firemen in this impound yard face major challenges while dousing fire since the south malkhana is located deep inside it, and the roads are narrow and muddy, which makes it harder for fire tenders to reach the site.

"The fire also spreads rapidly within minutes due to the presence of highly inflammable substances in the yard, including parts of vehicles such as fuel tanks and CNG cylinders. Some of the vehicles still contain residual fuel, intensifying the fire," a fireman said. "Plastic and foam sheets stored inside these defunct vehicles also quickly feed the flames," he added. The surroundings, full of small trees, bushes and piles of dry leaves, help the fire spread rapidly too.

Just 12 days ago, a fire gutted over 300 vehicles in the Wazirabad yard. Last year, in Jan, a massive blaze gutted at least 450 vehicles while another fire in May destroyed over 300 vehicles. In Aug, two separate fires broke out within a week, damaging 125 vehicles in the first incident and gutting around 150 in the second.

An investigation is underway to ascertain the cause of the fire.

Get your binoculars out! Riding the winds, birds from afar nest in capital for summer

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New Delhi: The city, with the arrival of summer, has seen visits from several types of birds that come here to breed and live through the monsoon, only to fly back with their hatchlings as winter sets in.

These birds, which also include some local migratory birds, often arrive from southern India and Sri Lanka. "They want to come here before the monsoon so that by the time the monsoon arrives in the Delhi-NCR area or north-west India up to the lower reaches of the Himalayas, they have already hatched, and the monsoon gives them plenty of food and protein to raise the brood. They return at the onset of winter," pointed out major-general Arvind Yadav, a birder.

Birders say it's time to spot the Indian pitta, golden oriole and paradise flycatcher among the forest birds. For grassland habitats and some of the biodiversity parks, bristled grass birds and quails, such as the button and rain quails, are major attractions, while bitterns are the most sought after.

Birders point out that these birds start coming in April from different habitats in southern India and the Ghats to breed and hatch.

"Summer months are an exciting time for the birding

community, who enjoy the breeding season of many resident birds, and a few others that arrive here with the onset of summer," birder Kanwar B Singh said. Later during the monsoon, cuckoos come from east Africa and return by Sept-Oct.

"During the monsoon, winds come from Africa towards the Indian subcontinent, or west to east, so these birds fly on these winds. Similarly, on their way back, the return monsoon winds are from

east to west, so they ride these winds," Yadav said.

According to wildlife biologist and scientist in charge of the biodiversity program, Fayaz Khudsar, while summer is indeed a good time to watch the summer migratory birds, it's also a great time to watch local birds in their courtship behaviour, like peacocks. "There are many passerine birds which started courtship behaviour, especially the rufous treepie, yellow-footed green pigeon and the black drongo. Peacocks are dancing everywhere in the DDA biodiversity parks. Darter, black-crowned night herons, cormorants and egrets are now seen attempting to carry nesting material, though it is a little early," Khudsar said.

Birders explained that the process the region's habitat currently sees is a tedious one and may take over three weeks. Yadav explained that it begins with the selection of a partner, and then the pair makes a nest

together, checking safety, security and camouflage, which is followed by breeding with the laying of eggs. For different birds, the size, shape and hatching time is different, ranging between 15-40 days.

Major habitats in the region to spot these birds include Mangar Bani Forest, Asola Bhatti Sanctuary, Sultanpur, Okhla Yamuna Khadar, Najafgarh Jheel, Dhanuairi, and biodiversity parks in Gurgaon and Delhi.

After complaint by residents, NGT directs water test of Janakpuri block

New Delhi: National Green Tribunal has directed Central Pollution Control Board to collect water samples from houses in Janakpuri's A Block to test if they meet the prescribed standard.

The order followed a petition submitted in NGT by the residents welfare association of A-1 Block alleging that they were not receiving fresh water with the requisite norms while Delhi Jal Board claimed that the water met the prescribed standard.

In a report dated April 5, DJB said officials conducted a physical site inspection on March 27 in the presence of the RWA office bearers, which had also complained about the overflowing of the sewer lines.

"However, during the joint inspection, about 70 manholes in the lane were checked, and no overflow of the sewer line was found at any location. At one spot at the back of house number 154, water was found overflowing, but that was from the MCD drain and not from the DJB sewer line, which was also shown to the RWA members and residents," said the DJB report. It added that the quality of water from all the samples collected in the area was also found satisfactory.

The tribunal allowed the request of the counsel for the applicant to get the test report of the water samples of the area concerned from CPCB, an independent agency. NGT also allowed the applicant to file a rejoinder to the DJB report within two weeks. The matter will be next heard on May 14.



JNUSU Election On Hold Over Violence, Security Concerns

Polls Conducted By Students, Admin Doesn't Intervene: Official

Meghna Dhulia
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New Delhi: The Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) election committee on Friday put the poll process on hold, citing concerns over the safety of its members. The decision followed reports of alleged violence and vandalism targeting the committee's office and its members over the past two days.

This is the first time in the JNUSU history that the election process has been halted after the final list of candidates was prepared, said an official.

A notice issued by the committee, which has students as its members, stated, "In light of a major lapse of security and the environment of hostility, fear and insecurity following the violence, it has been decided to put the entire election process on hold. Till further notice, the final list of candidates has also been put on hold."

The notice added that the election committee (EC) would resume the election process only after the safety of its members was ensured by the administration as well as the student organisations. "EC also demands that the administration takes appropriate ac-

This is the first time in JNUSU history that the election process has been halted after the final list of candidates was prepared, a poll panel official said

tion against the perpetrators of violence. It is unfortunate that despite EC's continuous requests to the administration for providing enough security, the administration has not responded in a satisfactory manner," it claimed.

The final list for the election was to be released on April 16. However, citing delays in verifying nomination forms, the committee extended it by one day. Candidates were asked to withdraw their nominations by 4pm on April 17. According to some students, the breaking of the long-standing United Left alliance led to a ruckus during the withdrawal of nominations.

The deadline was then extended by another half an hour, during which some candidates arrived to file their nominations. This led to protests from Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), resulting in some candidates allegedly

being unable to file nominations. Late on Thursday evening, Students' Federation of India (SFI) began a protest that continued till the early hours of Friday. The election officer then issued another order allowing candidates to withdraw their nominations between 2pm and 2.30pm on Friday, which was opposed by ABVP as "undemocratic". The unrest continued, with some students breaching barricades and breaking glass at the election office. Guards were unable to control the students, and police had to be called in.

According to students, the situation took a turn when some candidates filed nominations during the reopened window. ABVP members allegedly forced their way into the committee's office, breaking through barricades. "ABVP members took the members hostage and intimidated them when the committee reopened the withdrawal of nominations for 30 minutes," alleged the United Left panel of AISADSE. "They stormed inside the committee office, through the

barricades, to impede its smooth functioning. Last evening, these ABVP mob pelted stones at the committee office, smashed glass windows, chased members to the terrace of the office," it claimed.

ABVP said the entire process was unfair and undemocratic. "The committee, working under the pressure of the so-called Left United, not only disrupted the election process but also carried out unexpected and unconstitutional actions such as revisions and withdrawal of the candidate list even after the final date for nominations. This is a well-orchestrated conspiracy against the very spirit of democracy," claimed its JNU unit.

A senior JNU official said the elections were conducted by students and the administration didn't intervene in the process.

The elections are being held for the second consecutive year after a four-year gap. In the last election, the United Left panel won three of the four central posts while one went to BAPSA, backed by the Left alliance.

2 men on bike snatch chain worth ₹2 lakh

Ghaziabad: Two bike-borne assailants snatched a gold chain worth Rs 2 lakh off a woman's neck in Kavi Nagar on Wednesday afternoon. The woman had been on her way to work when the incident occurred. Rashmi Chaudhary, a resident of Shastri Nagar in Kavi Nagar, told the cops in her complaint that she took an auto-rickshaw from her home to her place of work, a beauty parlour in the area on Wednesday afternoon. TNN

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Teen Went To Buy Food For His Mother, Never Returned

Murder Sparks Outrage, Residents Urge CM To Intervene

Devanshi Mehta
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Before stepping out on Thursday evening, 17-year-old Kunal turned to his mother Parveen and said, "Subhe se kuch khana nahi hai aapne, main kuch leke aata hoon (you haven't eaten anything since morning, I'll just go get something)."

It was a familiar gesture—one he'd made countless times. But minutes later, neighbourhood children came running with the news: Kunal had been stabbed. By the time his mother reached him, he was gone. "I thought he'd be back in

a few minutes after getting milk and samosas," said Parveen (45), her voice shaking. "We had just returned home after spending days at the hospital with my mother-in-law. I don't know why anyone would kill a 17-year-old!"

Kunal lived with his parents and three siblings. His father, a driver by profession, has been unable to work since undergoing surgery. His mother, who used to take up odd jobs, has been out of work as well due to an injury in her legs. Due to financial constraints, Kunal was forced to discontinue his education and had recently started working

at a belt-making factory to support the family.

Lucky, his 20-year-old brother, said, "If I had even the slightest idea someone was bothering him, I would've never let him step out alone."

The killing of the teenager, meanwhile, sparked outrage in the area. On Friday, the narrow lanes of Seelampur filled with hundreds of residents who stepped out of their homes to show support for the grieving family. Many raised slogans demanding justice for Kunal, and immediate and decisive action from the police.

In response to the simmering

tension, there was heavy deployment of CRPF, RAF and Delhi Police near the victim's residence. Several lanes leading up to J Block, where the murder took place, were also barricaded.

Alleging that this was not an isolated incident, the protesting locals claimed the area had seen a rise in similar violent crimes. They urged chief minister Rekha Gupta to intervene directly, seeking swift justice for the victim's family and a safer environment for the residents.

Several families expressed fear, saying they were considering selling their homes due to rising "targeted violence" in the area. Many in the neighbourhood held up posters saying "Makaan bikau hai (house for sale)". Some also claimed a communal angle to the incident.

"We no longer feel safe living in Seelampur. There's a new, dangerous group of local goons who brandish weapons, both in real life and openly on social media," said a resident, not wishing to be named.

Residents also alleged that despite repeatedly facing the law, these individuals would be released without consequences. "These boys and girls don't fear anything. They roam freely, showing off weapons, and no one stops them," said Kunal's friend Rahul (19).

Calling for increased patrolling and stronger police action, another resident, Vinod Verma (60), said, "The more time you spend here, the more clearly you can identify these groups. So, if they are easily recognisable, why are they still roaming free and terrorising the neighbourhood? People are scared to speak out against them."

'I want justice, my son didn't deserve to die like this'

Continued from P1

Investigations revealed that the crime was likely a fallout of a stabbing incident reported last Nov from the same area. One of the suspects, who was 17 at the time, was stabbed and injured during an altercation. The suspects believed that Kunal was behind that incident and were seeking revenge.

Zikra, who was earlier arrested for flaunting weapons on Instagram, allegedly instigated the accused to attack Kunal, police said. On Thursday, the boys cornered Kunal and stabbed him multiple times in a lane metres away from his home.

"The injured boy succumbed to his injuries during treatment at hospital," a senior police officer said. A case was registered at Seelampur police station under section 103 (murder) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. As per the police, Kunal had stepped out briefly to buy samosas and milk for his family. They had just returned from GTB Hospital, where his grandmother had been admitted for the past 10 days.

Sheesh Pal (60), who adjacent to where Kunal was stabbed, said, "I heard some boys arguing outside my door. These kinds of brawls are not unusual here. The next thing I saw was a boy soaked in blood trying to walk towards a clinic. I've learned not to interfere. You never know when you'll be the one attacked."

Despite heavy bleeding, Kunal staggered on trying to reach a doctor, said a family member: "I was heading to offer prayers when I saw some boys running. I called out to them, but they didn't stop. Then I saw some children, and when I asked what happened, they said, 'Chaaku maar diya hai (There has been a stabbing)'. As I rushed ahead, I saw the boy—drenched in blood, stumbling toward the blue door of the clinic, just 10-15 steps away. Even after being stabbed, he had the courage to walk, probably hoping they wouldn't chase him. He somehow made it to the clinic, but by the time I reached him, he had already bled to death," said Mohsin (35), a resident.

When TOI visited the spot, blood stains were still visible, a trail stretching several metres up to the door of the nearby clinic. Locals said that the lane, usually busy during the day, becomes quiet and isolated in the evening, making it easier for such incidents to go unnoticed.

"Zikra and her brothers have been threatening my family and many others in the neighbourhood for a long time," the victim's mother said. "They move around in a gang, flaunt their guns, post photos with weapons on social media and instill fear in everyone. Even children are terrified of them. I know it's them who did this to my child. I want justice. My son didn't deserve to die like this." Zikra previously worked as a bouncer for jailed gangster Hashim Babu's wife, Zoya. She was arrested for flaunting weapons in her posts on Instagram, where she has 15K followers.

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Zikra, who was earlier arrested for flaunting weapons on social media, instigated the accused to attack Kunal, police said

TWO SUSPECTS IDENTIFIED

Photo: Jatin Kumar

WHEN: April 17, 7.38pm

WHERE: J block, New Seelampur, Northeast Delhi

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- Kunal (17) leaves home around 7.15pm to buy samosas and milk from nearby shop
- Some distance away, he is chased by a group of 2-3 boys and stabbed multiple times
- The assailants flee the scene after the attack
- Kunal staggers towards a local clinic, bleeding heavily; collapses and dies before receiving any treatment

PROTESTS FOLLOW

- Locals protest in large numbers, demanding immediate police action
- CRPF, RAF and Delhi Police personnel deployed
- Residents allege that the area has seen a rise in violent crimes and demand a safer environment

INVESTIGATION SO FAR

- Police have linked the murders to a stabbing incident from last Nov
- Two suspects identified through CCTV analysis. One of them, 17, had been stabbed in Nov, and cops suspect Kunal was behind it
- A woman, Zikra, earlier held for posing with pistols, had been arrested for abetting and conspiring in the murder

Police arrest 33-yr-old with banned e-cigs

New Delhi: Delhi Police's Crime Branch has arrested a 33-year-old man and seized 78 banned ELFBAR vapes imported from China, with an estimated market value of Rs 1.56 lakh.

Gurucharan, from Paritgarh in Uttar Pradesh, runs a pan shop named Chaurasia in Ashok Vihar and used it as a front to peddle illegal e-cigarettes.

According to police, the arrest was made during routine patrolling in the intervening night of April 17-18. "A police team was stationed near a banquet hall on Bhagan Mahavir Road. Around 2am, officers flagged down a suspicious Scooty approaching from Azadpur Road.

The rider attempted to flee but was intercepted after a short chase," additional commissioner of police (crime) Sanjay Kumar Sain said.

"Police officers found a plastic bag containing 78 ELFBAR e-cigarettes, currently prohibited under Indian law. Each piece was valued at Rs 2,000, totalling Rs 1.56 lakh. A case was registered under the Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2019," additional CP Sain added.

Gurucharan confessed to selling these banned products at inflated rates, especially targeting young first-time smokers attracted by the sleek, trendy design. He admitted to earning nearly Rs 800 profit on each unit. **TNN**

Stabbing death sparks political blame game over law & order situation in city

Atul Mathur@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: The fatal stabbing of a 17-year-old boy in northeast Delhi's Seelampur sparked a political row on Friday, with opposition AAP blaming BJP's "double-engine" govt for the "deteriorating" law and order situation in the national capital.

While chief minister Rekha Gupta said the family of Kunal, the victim, will get justice, leader of opposition in Delhi assembly Atishi alleged that the BJP-led central govt and Delhi Police had failed to ensure the safety of citizens.

"The murder of a 17-year-old youth in Seelampur is another example of the deteriorating law and order situation in Delhi. What is Delhi Police doing? What is home minister Amit Shah doing? What is the double-engine govt doing?" the former Delhi CM posted on X.

Gupta, however, said Delhi Police was trying to crack the case. "I have talked to the police commissioner. The police are making all efforts and I hope the accused will be arrested soon. It will be ensured that the family of the youth gets justice," she told reporters.

Manoj Tiwari, BJP MP from North East Delhi, appealed for calm. Condemning the killing, Tiwari said the case was being taken seriously by law enforcers. "The anger among the people of the area is quite natural. I have been in touch with senior police officers from the district since last night. Most of the criminals were identified and a thorough investigation is underway," Tiwari posted on X.

BJP MLA Ravinder Singh Negi said the police were doing their job and the culprits will be punished. "We have assured the family that there is no need to panic or leave the area. Strict action will be taken

against the accused," he added.

Addressing a press conference, AAP Delhi president Saurabh Bharadwaj said it was a matter of shame if the reports of Hindus leaving the area were true. "Murders are happening in broad daylight and people are being killed for not paying extortion money. Despite this, Delhi Police released data last week claiming that crime is decreasing. This is an attempt by the police and the central govt to mislead the public with false data," he alleged.

AAP's Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh questioned BJP govt's handling of law and order, saying, "Where are the BJP leaders hiding now? Delhi now has a double-engine govt. This is the same Delhi where the PM, home minister, President, VP MPs, cabinet ministers and ambassadors from around the world reside—and yet crime is at its peak."

Traffic cops organise road safety progs

New Delhi: In an effort to enhance road safety and promote responsible driving practices, Delhi Traffic Police conducted multiple awareness programmes across different locations in the city.

The exercise involved educating cyclists, bus drivers and general public on traffic rules, women's safety and responsible road usage. A training session on handling breakdown of DTC vehicles was also organised in collaboration with DTC authorities at Mayapuri depot on Friday.

The objective of the session was to equip traffic police personnel with basic, yet essential, skills to effectively manage and ease traffic situations arising from such breakdowns. The session, attended by 41 newly inducted traffic cops, was designed to address the recurring issue of DTC cluster bus breakdowns in the middle of roads, particularly during morning and evening peak hours. In peak summers, engine overheating is common and can lead to bus breakdowns—often resulting in traffic congestion. **TNN**

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Additional Executive Officer
Paschim Bardhaman Zilla Parishad

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Elderly man dies after assault during quarrel

New Delhi: A 67-year-old man died after he was allegedly assaulted by a group of men during a quarrel in east Delhi's Gandhi Nagar area on Friday.

The deceased was identified as Satish Gupta, a financier by profession. Police said, a call was received from a private hospital around 12.30 pm that the man was brought by his son, Vishal Gupta, in an unconscious state, following a dispute. Doctors declared him dead on arrival.

"Police from Gandhi Nagar police station reached the hospital and after initial formalities, shifted the body to a mortuary for further proceedings. As per the medico-legal

certificate, no external injuries were found on Gupta's body," DCP (Shahdara) Prashant Priya Gautam said.

"During inquiry, Vishal told police that around 10.30am, a quarrel broke out between his father and another resident, Rajiv Kumar Jain, and his family members—Deepak, Rahul and Ravi—over a minor issue. The situation got tense and the men assaulted his father," DCP Gautam said.

Police said a case has been registered under sections 105 (punishment for culpable homicide not amounting to murder), 115 (voluntarily causing hurt) and 126 (wrongful restraint) of the BNS. **TNN**

Robber shot at during encounter, arrested

New Delhi: A 30-year-old man was shot at during a brief exchange of fire with the police in Dwarka's Najafgarh area and later arrested on Friday. The accused, identified as Akshay Ali Golu, was wanted in a recent robbery case.

According to police, a robbery was reported on April 17 at the Najafgarh police station. "The complainant said he went to attend a 'jagran' in Dharampura when he was threatened by a man who introduced himself as a local gangster, 'Golu'. The accused allegedly assaulted him, stole his motorcycle and decamped with cash. A case was registered," police said.

Following this, a team began tracking the accused and received information that he would be passing through the Nala area, near Jai Vihar, police said. "Around 5 am, police spotted Akshay on the robbed motorcycle. When signalled to stop, he tried to escape and fired at the police team. In retaliation and self-defence, police returned fire, injuring him in the left leg. He was overpowered and taken to a hospital," police said.

During interrogation, Akshay confessed to the robbery and admitted to being involved in multiple criminal activities. He has 13 prior cases against him, police said. **TNN**

Man gets life term for raping minor

Vineet Upadhyay & Devanshi Mehta | TNN

New Delhi: A city court sentenced a 45-year-old man to rigorous life imprisonment for raping and impregnating a 16-year-old girl, stating that it was "very scary to live in a society where children are unsafe and preyed on by people who are like vultures."

Additional sessions judge Babita Puniya was hearing the arguments on sentencing against the 45-year-old man convicted under Section 6 (aggravated penetrative sexual assault) of PoCSO Act and Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) rape provisions.

On Feb 25, police received a PCR call from a hospital regarding a 16-year-old girl who gave birth to a baby girl. "When police reached the hospital and inquired into the matter, the complainant, a Class XI student, stated that she was repeatedly raped by the accused, resulting in pregnancy and thereafter, birth of the baby," DCP (outer) Sachin Sharma said.

Based on the complainant's statement, a case was registered at Nihal Vi-

har police station. A police team, comprising woman sub inspector Pojja and constable Manjeet Panghal, led by inspector Shispal, SHO of Nihal Vihar police station, was constituted.

During investigation, police gathered crucial evidence within a short timeframe. "Using technical intelligence and collaborating with informants, police traced the accused the next day itself, and within 31 days, a chargesheet was filed. This case marks the first heinous crime under the BNS in Delhi, where the accused was sentenced to rigorous life imprisonment," DCP Sharma said.

The case came to the court on March 28, alleging the rape of the girl, after which she became pregnant and delivered a baby. The court reserved its judgment on April 8 and pronounced it on April 15, convicting the man of offences under PoCSO Act and 64(2)(m) (committing rape on the same woman repeatedly)/351(2) (criminal intimidation) of BNS.

On April 16, the court awarded a rigorous life term to the man, observing that

the survivor was an innocent, helpless child who was sexually assaulted by the man in a calculated manner. "It is very scary that we live in a society where children are not safe and people—like the convict—keep an eye on them like vultures to quench their lust," the judge observed, sentencing the convict to rigorous life imprisonment, which would mean imprisonment for the remainder of his natural life.

According to the prosecution, an FIR was registered in the matter in March this year, more than a year after the offence was committed.

Noting that the baby born to the girl was given to a special adoption agency, the court said even the infant became a victim of the convict's crime. Awarding Rs 19.5 lakh compensation to the survivor, the court said that though her suffering couldn't be compensated in monetary terms, financial assistance would enable her to equip herself with desirable skills or education, which would, in turn, help her achieve some level of independence.

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

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GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

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GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

ABRIDGED TENDER NOTICE
Enit-03/2025-2026/EE/DMSD/PHE DTE Tender Publication Date-16/04/2025 at 18:30 Hrs. Bid submission dated online on-08/05/2025 up to 18:30 P.M. (Non-JJM works) For any kind of details are available in website: www.wbtenders.gov.in and www.wbphed.gov.in Sd/- Executive Engineer, Durgapur W/S Division, P.H.E. Dte.
ICA-17765(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

ABRIDGED CORRIGENDUM 01
Niet No. 18 OF EN/ACD-1 OF 2024-2025
Bid Proposal submission end date is extended up to 02/05/2025 at 16:00 IST For NIT documents & other details visit www.wbtenders.gov.in & www.wbphed.gov.in Sd/- Executive Engineer, Nadia Arsenic Civil Division-II, P.H.E. Dte.
ICA-17755(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

ABRIDGED TENDER NOTICE
Tender Reference No. Niet 46 of EE/RD/PHED of 2024-2025 Tender ID : 2025_PWD_821243_1 to 62 Last date for submission of Technical and Financial Bid (online)-08/05/2025 upto 3:00 P.M. Tender invited by the undersigned for Installation of IEP in different PWSS under Raiganj Division, P.H.E. Dte. All details available in website: <http://www.wbtenders.gov.in> & www.wbphed.gov.in Sd/- Executive Engineer, Raiganj Division, P.H.E. Dte.
ICA-17770(4)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

Electronic Notice Inviting Tender
No. WBP/PHED/EE/BD/NIT-2 of 2025-2025
TENDER ID-2025_PHE_834975_1 (NON JIM WORK)
Last date of Documents download/closing date (Online) is on 02.05.2025 upto 01:00 P.M. Date of opening of technical Proposals (Online) on 05.05.2025 at 01:30 P.M. Further details will be available in our website: www.wbtenders.gov.in & www.wbphed.gov.in Sd/- Executive Engineer, Berhampore Division-I, P.H.E. Dte.
ICA-17763(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

e-TENDER NOTICE
Tender ID No. 2025_PHE_836207_1 to 14 A/E/MMSD-I, P.H.E. Dte invites NIT (Online) No-1 of 2025-26 tender reference No. WBP/PHED/EE/MMSD-I/NIT-2 of 2025-26 tender ID No. 2025_PHE_836207_1 to 14 for work under M.M.D, P.H.E. Dte. Bid submission end date 05-05-2025 at 18:00 p.m. Details may be download from <http://www.wbtenders.gov.in> Sd/- A/E/MMSD-I/PHED.
ICA-17761(2)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

e-TENDER NOTICE
e-Tender is invited by the Assistant Engineer, Hasnabad Sub-Division, P.H.E. On behalf of the government of West Bengal vide Ref. No. WB/PHED/AE/HSO/NIT-1/HSO of 2025-26 and ID : 2 0 2 5 - P H E D - 8 3 4 3 6 3 - 1 , 2 0 2 5 - P H E D - 8 3 4 3 6 3 - 3 , 2 0 2 5 - P H E D - 8 3 4 3 6 3 - 3 , 2 0 2 5_PHE_834363_4 for over hauling work. Details will be available in the website: www.wbtenders.gov.in Last date for submission of tender is 28.04.25 upto 2:00 p.m. Hours. Corrigendum if any will be published at the above website only. Sd/- The Assistant Engineer, Hasnabad Sub-Division, P.H.E. Dte.
ICA-17764(2)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

e-TENDER NOTICE
Tender ID: 2025_PHE_832126 (1)
WBP/PHED/EE/MD/NIT 66 OF 2024-2025
Ref. Memo No. 701/JMD dated 28.03.2025
The Executive Engineer, Jhargam Mechanical Division, P.H.E. Dte. has invited open e-tender for the work (SI No. 1) as mentioned in the respective NIT. Last date of submission 28.04.2025. For details please visit www.wbtenders.gov.in & the departmental website i.e. www.wbphed.gov.in and Office Notice Board. Sd/- EE/MD, P.H.E. Dte.
ICA-17764(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

TENDER NOTICE
e-NIT No. WB/WTU/CE/NIT(e)-NIT-01(e)/2025-26 under the Central Tender Unit, Irrigation & Waterways Directorate. Online e-tender has been invited by the undersigned for a work having amount put to tender Rs. 751.874 lakh. Last date of submission of online bid 13.05.2025 upto 14:00 Hrs. All necessary details are available from West Bengal Government e-tender portal www.wbtenders.gov.in Sd/- S.E., Central Tender Unit
ICA-17751(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

ABRIDGED e-TENDER NOTICE
e-Tender No. NIT/01/24-2025 (2nd Call) vide Memo No 2630/E dtd. 13.04.2025 e-Tender is invited from bonafide, resourceful, experienced Contractors/Firms in West Bengal for "X-Ray Baggage Scanner (Single View)". The details may have obtained from the website <http://www.wbtenders.gov.in>
ICA-17743(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

e-Tender Notice
Ref. No.: WBP/CP/HARINGHATA/SURVEY/2025 (3rd call)
e-Tender ID: 2025_WBIDC_836295_1
WBIDC invites e-tenders for Selection of surveyor agency for handing over plots to allottees at Haringhata Industrial Park with the help of the land details available with WBIDC. Details available at www.wbtenders.gov.in
ICA-17743(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

TENDER NOTICE
e-Tender is invited by the Commissioner of Police, Kolkata for Supply and Installation of Water Purifier Machines with in-built Tank for Water storage & Chlorinator for the use of Traffic Department of Kolkata Police. The last date for submission of the tender is on 05.05.2025 up to 15:00 hours. The NIT Document and other details will be available in the website: www.wbtenders.gov.in Sd/- For Commissioner of Police, Kolkata.
ICA-17745(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

IRRIGATION AND WATERWAYS DIRECTORATE
e-NIT No. WB/WTU/CE/NIT-02(e)/2025-26
e-Tender is hereby invited on behalf of the Governor of West Bengal for the eligible bonafide contractors for 08 (eight) nos. work under CSDS. Last date & time of Bid submission is 13.05.2025 till 17.00 Hrs IST. Details of Tender may be seen at <http://www.wbtenders.gov.in> or <http://www.wbwdc.gov.in> Sd/- Superintending Engineer, Damodar Irrigation Circle.
ICA-17740(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

ABRIDGED TENDER NOTICE
e-Tender is invited by the Ex-Engr. Bol.MD, PHED on behalf of Government of W.B. vide Ref. No. WBP/PHED/02/EE/Bol M D / 2 0 2 5 - 2 6 and ID : 2025_PHE_836595_1 to 10 for Supply of different Electro-Mech accessories and other Allied works in Draught affected areas within Birbhum district. Details can be obtained from the website: www.wbtenders.gov.in The last date of tender submission is 17.05.2025 upto 12:00 noon.

Delhi To Get Nodal Officers For Waterlogging Hotspots

Officials To Be Held Accountable If Flooding Reported: CM

10-DAY DEADLINE TO FIX DARK SPOTS



Garbage removal underway near the waterlogged area adjacent to WHO building in Anna Nagar near ITO

Photo: Anindya Chattopadhyay

Waterlogging: Nodal officers assigned to each point; officials to be held accountable

Traffic: Guidelines issued for 233 congestion points; focus on smart management and public transport

Cleaning: MCD & PWD directed to clean Ring Road and other major roads; post-cleaning photos required

Illegal Posters: Strict action against unauthorised displays on govt property

Dark Spots: 1,989 of 4,780 spots fixed; 10-day deadline for remaining

Control Room: Integrated system for better departmental coordination and efficient monitoring



REKHA GUPTA

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Delhi gov't will appoint nodal officers at waterlogging-prone spots and ensure proper drainage of rainwater during the monsoon to ensure people do not face hardships, chief minister Rekha Gupta said on Friday. If waterlogging is found in any area, the officers concerned will be held accountable, she added.

During an inspection of vulnerable points, Gupta said BJP gov't in Delhi was making every effort, including deploying automatic pumps and personnel at vulnerable spots, to ensure the city remains free from waterlogging during the monsoon.

Accompanied by lieutenant governor V K Saxena and PWD minister Parvash Verma, CM inspected the waterlogging-prone Minto Bridge underpass to take stock of the preparations for the rainy season, a statement issued by Delhi gov't said.

"All pumping systems on the sites will be fully automated and operators will be sta-

tioned on the sites 24x7 during the monsoon, ensuring immediate response to any situation. The gov't is working with full commitment to make Delhi flood-free and well-managed," Gupta said.

She said in the past, vehicles, including buses, would often get submerged in the accumulated rainwater at the Minto Bridge underpass. "Last year, even the pump got submerged and the operator could not access it. This time, the gov't is making well-planned and timely preparations, so that such situations don't recur," she added.

Waterlogging-prone spots have been identified and corrective measures are being taken, Gupta said, asserting that waterlogging will no longer be accepted as a norm in Delhi. Departments will be held responsible for any lapse in monsoon-related work, she said, adding all departments have been asked to work in coordination with each other and complete the necessary preparations before the monsoon arrives.

Gupta also inspected monsoon preparedness at other

major waterlogging points, including near Tilak Bridge, which has been among the top 10 waterlogging hotspots for the past several years. According to the Delhi gov't statement, Gupta was not satisfied with the progress of the desilting work of the drain near Tilak Bridge, and instructed officials to take immediate and effective action to address the issue. "It is our foremost priority that the citizens of Delhi do not experience inconvenience during the rainy season," she said.

After the inspection, CM held a meeting with several departments, including power and PWD, during which projects involving traffic congestion and dark spots on roads were discussed. She sought a special focus on the over 3,000 'dark' spots identified by Delhi Police in the city. While streetlights have been repaired at 1,989 spots, the remaining will be covered in the next 10 days, she said.

Gupta also directed officials to address the issue of traffic congestion at 233 locations. An

integrated control room will be used to ensure coordination among various departments, she said. CM also instructed officials to remove illegal banners and posters from all govt properties and take strict action against violators under the Property Defacement Act.

MCD and NDMC officials present in the meeting were directed to complete all the work within the timelines set, said Verma.

"Our clear goal is that there should be no problems like waterlogging, traffic snarls or dark spots in any part of the capital. We have instructed all departments to complete the work on time and every detail is being monitored," he said.

According to Verma, 194 waterlogging locations were identified last year by the traffic police, and most were on PWD roads. "We are taking long-term measures, such as desilting of drains, installation of additional pumps and deployment of pump operators, at these points to ensure rainwater is flushed out," he said.

Govt to launch 1.1k GPS-enabled water tankers to boost supply

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: In a step towards ensuring timely water supply to Delhiites, gov't will flag off 1,111 GPS-enabled water tankers from the Nirankari ground in Burari on Sunday.

These tankers will be deployed across the city, especially in the areas facing acute water shortages or where piped supply is not feasible, said a senior official. "Each tanker is equipped with advanced GPS technology, enabling real-time tracking. A state-of-the-art command centre has been set up to monitor the movement of the tankers, ensuring that water reaches the intended locations on time and in a transparent manner," he added.

Water minister Parvash Verma said on Friday, "We are working with complete dedication to realise Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of water for all. We will do whatever it takes to free Delhi from the water crisis. The deployment of GPS-enabled tankers represents transparency, timeliness and accountability," he said.

"Our commitment is to ensure that no citizen in the capital is deprived of water. Gov't is taking every possible step to ensure water reaches every colony, settlement and neighbourhood," he said.

The initiative is part of the water department's broader strategy to modernise the city's water distribution system. It also includes strict monitoring of water theft, wastage and irregular distribution. The command centre will have access to complete real-time data, including the tankers' location, delivery timings and movement speed.

"Technology can enhance citizen services. The GPS-enabled tanker initiative is expected to set a new benchmark in transparency and accountability in the capital's water supply system," said the official.

Delhi Jal Board recently devised a summer action plan to ensure full water distribution during peak summer. The strategy encompasses several measures, including reduced charges for regularising connections, implementing GPS monitoring of water tankers for accountability, and optimising tanker operations to achieve daily trips.

HC issues norms for aid to minor rape survivors seeking abortion

Abhinav.Garg@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Delhi High Court has laid down key guidelines to expedite legal and medical support for minor rape survivors seeking termination of pregnancy, particularly in cases delayed due to lack of awareness about procedures and permissions.

Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma, on Thursday, issued directives aimed at ensuring timely assistance to minor survivors, especially when pregnancies have crossed the 24-week threshold. The court expressed concern over the continued delays in setting up a dedicated panel to handle such sensitive cases.

The court ruled that whenever a minor survivor—whose pregnancy exceeds 24 weeks—is presented before a Child Welfare Committee (CWC) and referred to a hospital, the CWC must inform the Delhi High Court Legal Services Committee (DHCLSC) without delay.

In situations where a medical termination is being sought with the survivor's or guardian's consent, an urgent court intervention is required, the

The court criticised the delay, noting that despite earlier orders many survivors are still being left in limbo, waiting for judicial orders before even being medically examined

CWC will gather necessary details and share them with the DHCLSC. The committee must then promptly evaluate whether legal action is needed, including approaching the appropriate court for permission to terminate the pregnancy.

"This will enable the Legal Services Committee to act swiftly, ensuring timely court intervention wherever required," the court said.

The directions came while hearing a case involving a 15-year-old rape survivor who sought to terminate her over 27-week pregnancy—beyond the legally allowed limit of 24 weeks. The issue arose when the minor's parents approached LNJP Hospital, which required a court order since the gestational age of the foetus had

crossed the permissible duration under the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act.

The court criticised the delay, noting that despite earlier orders for establishing permanent medical boards in government and private hospitals, many survivors were still being left in limbo, waiting for judicial orders before even being medically examined.

HC pointed out that permanent medical boards constituted in eight gov't and five private hospitals in the capital were expected not to wait for a court order before examining the survivor and preparing the report. Despite that two years passed since the directions, the court expressed regret and questioned how a survivor was left for days awaiting a court's order. "This delay offers no solace to a survivor already traumatised," the court observed.

After learning that the girl had been admitted to a hospital, the court directed the hospital to proceed with the termination immediately. Doctors were also instructed to preserve foetal tissue for DNA analysis, which would be used in the criminal case against the accused.

After Sood's criticism, AAP targets BJP on school fee hikes

Meghna.Dhulia@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Taking a jab at the BJP gov't over the school fee hike issue, AAP's Delhi chief Saurabh Bharadwaj on Friday accused the BJP-led Delhi gov't of misleading the public over the auditing of private schools. He questioned the lack of action on gov't's part, despite the district magistrate's (DM) visit and his subsequent report on DPS Dwarka, which allegedly barred children from attending regular classes and confined them to the library as their parents did not pay the hiked fee.

"Despite the DM's report, no action was taken, and children were made to sit in the library, missing regular classes. Parents, after repeatedly approaching the gov't for a resolution and receiving no response, became frustrated. It was then that they turned to the Delhi High Court. Delhi gov't ministers should not take credit for actions they had no part in. The education minister should present any document showing that he moved the Delhi HC, and we will acknowledge it. But the fact is, it wasn't the gov't but the parents who went to court," Bharadwaj said.

AAP Delhi chief further said that the parents were forced to move the court because the

gov't failed to investigate the matter. "The court asked the gov't what actions were taken, to which the gov't responded by saying they issued a show cause notice. The court questioned the seven-day timeline for this notice, asking why the school was given additional time. When the DM visited and saw the children being mistreated, why weren't they immediately allowed into the classrooms? The gov't had no answer," Bharadwaj said.

He added, "Why was an FIR not filed against the principal, given the clear evidence of student harassment? Once again, the gov't had no answer. This shows that the gov't had no real intention of taking action against DPS or similar schools. Nearly 99% of parents have already paid the hiked fees, and the gov't likely believed that the remaining 1% would eventually comply. That's why they stayed silent on the issue."

On Thursday, Delhi education minister Ashish Sood criticised the AAP gov't for its inaction over the last five years, claiming that concerns over arbitrary fee hikes in private schools went unaddressed for too long. "These issues were neglected for years. It is only after the BJP came to power in Delhi that serious steps are being taken," Sood said.



Saurabh Bharadwaj



Watch the excitement of 'AutHER' AWARDS on



TV Episode Date and Timings

ET Now	19th April SAT 6 pm, 20th April SUN 6 pm
Times Now	19th April SAT 6:30 pm

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Road Rage: Bizman Shoots Truck Driver

Honking For Passage Costs 28-Yr-Old His Life

Avishek Kumar
@timesofindia.com

Noida: A 28-year-old truck driver was shot in the head after an argument over honking with a businessman drinking inside his Toyota Fortuner in Sector 63. The incident — which occurred around 2am on Friday — left the victim fighting for his life at Safdarjung Hospital.

Lalu Prasad — a resident of Badaun — was driving a truck loaded with snacks from the Haidiram factory in Sector 63 to Orai when he encountered the Fortuner parked right in the middle of the road near Ginger hotel. What began as a simple request for passage soon turned into a heated exchange as the SUV owner — Vikash Kumar (47) — refused to move his vehicle.

Lalu, according to his friend Surjeet, waited for five minutes for Vikash to remove the SUV, but to no avail. When Lalu honked a couple of times and asked Vikash to make way for him, the businessman allegedly hurled a volley of abuses.

"There were two persons inside the Fortuner. Lalu waited patiently for some time, but started blaring the horn as he was getting late. After an exchange of words, they eventu-

CCTV footage confirmed that both the Fortuner and the victim's truck were moving parallelly when the shooting took place

ally turned the car, moved a little ahead and pulled over after a few metres," said Surjeet, who was driving another truck behind Lalu's.

As Lalu started to drive away, Vikash allegedly asked him to stop. Still seated inside the car, he whipped out a pistol and fired at Lalu, hitting him above the right eyebrow.

"We wasted no time, but informed police and took Lalu to a nearby hospital for treatment. As his condition deteriorated, he was referred to Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi," Surjeet said.

On Friday evening, Lalu was still battling for life — with the bullet lodged in his head — and awaiting a surgery.

Vikash — who runs a milk business in Jaipur — was arrested from his house in Noida Sector 71. His employee Lalit Kumar (28), who was with him in the SUV, was picked up from Ambedkar Nagar.

Shakti Mohan Avasthi, DCP (central Noida), said the two were headed for Hari-dwar, but turned back when Vikash's wife called up to say she was feeling unwell. The men had been drinking in the car for some time — first in Bhopura and then Sector 63 — when the incident occurred.

CCTV footage confirmed that both the Fortuner and Lalu's truck were moving parallelly when the shooting took place after a brief conversation between the drivers. Police said Vikash had obtained his gun licence from Bulandshahr in 2005 and routinely carried the weapon with him.

The dairy businessman bought the Fortuner only last month and got his number plate a couple of days ago.

According to Avdesh Pratap Singh, the SHO of Sector 63 police station, Vikash told interrogators he had fired in the air, but the bullet accidentally struck Lalu in the head.

However, following a complaint from Surjeet, an FIR was registered against both Vikash and Lalit under sections 109 (attempt to murder), 351 (2) (criminal intimidation), and 352 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of trust) of the BNS.

13 years on, Noida revives plan for elevated road from DND to Sec 57

Aditya.Dev@timesofindia.com

Noida: As it sees a rapid expansion of its urban area and a surge in traffic, the search for solutions has taken Noida Authority more than a decade back, to a project conceived in 2012 but whose time is probably finally ripe. In 2012, Noida Authority had planned an elevated road from Sector 19 to 12/22 intersection. Its foundation stone was laid by Akhilesh Yadav, then CM, in 2015, but the project went cold since.

In 2023, the civil department drew up a proposal for a four-lane elevated road from Rajnigandha Chowk to Sector 57, but the draft did not move beyond the drawing boards. It has now been revived with Noida Authority CEO giving an in-principle approval for an elevated road from DND Flyway to Sector 57 along Master Plan (MP) 1 road to ease traffic congestion and improve connectivity in sectors 57, 58, 59, 65 and Mamura. IIT-Roorkee, commissioned a feasibility study-cum-DPR, will also take up route surveys and cost estimates before submitting its report in six months.

The 7.5km elevated corridor is expected to reduce the travel time of 30-40 minutes to just 10 minutes by eliminating traffic signals and bottlenecks.

But constructing an elevated corridor at Rajnigandha intersection could be a major challenge, say officials. The in-

UNDERPASS, METRO LINE POSE DESIGN CHALLENGE

➤ Signal-free, 7.5km elevated road is proposed from DND Flyway to Sector 57

➤ Corridor to ease traffic congestion, especially near Rajnigandha Chowk, and improve connectivity to sectors 57, 58, 59, 65, and Mamura

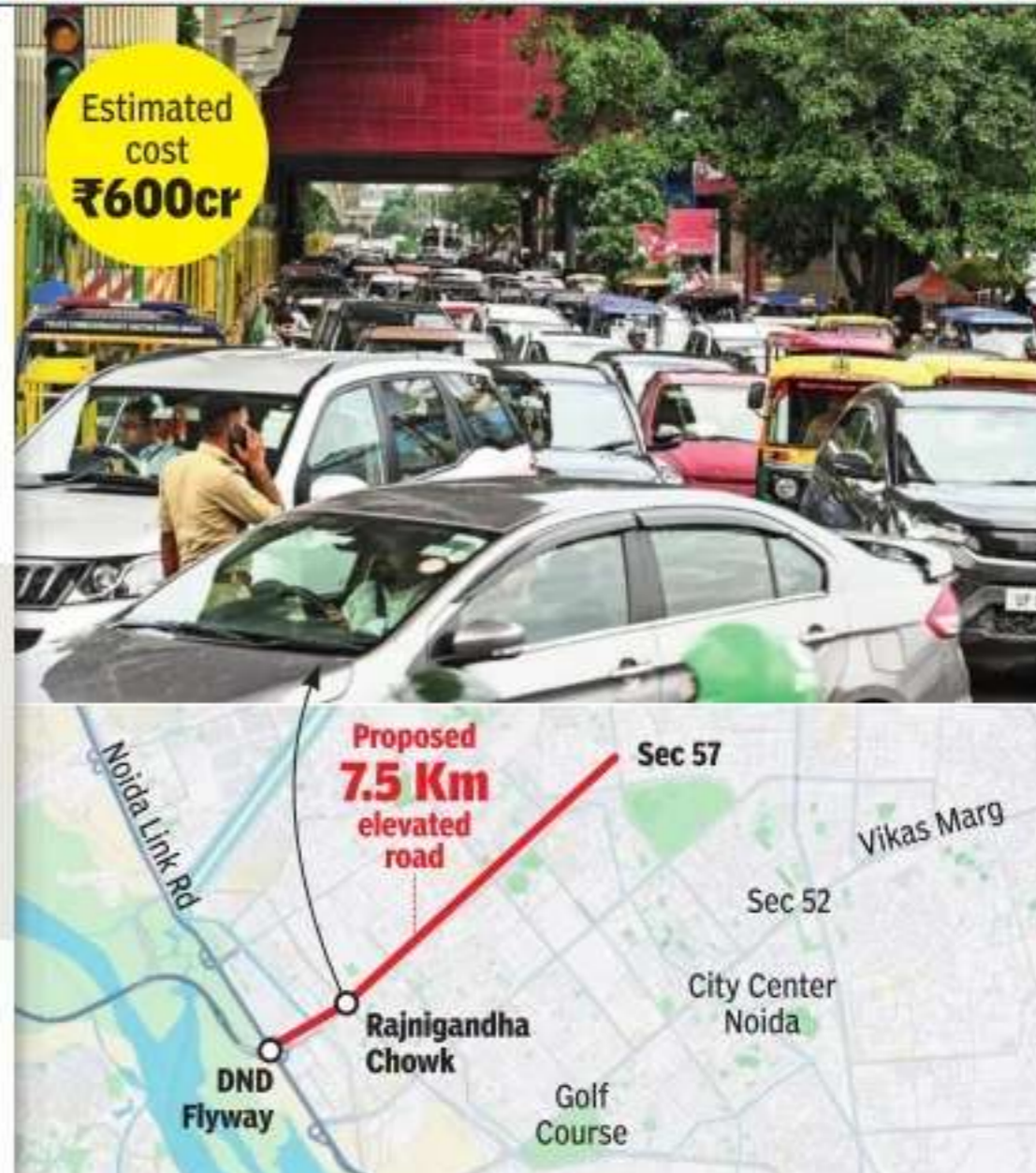
➤ To reduce travel time from over 30 minutes to just 10 minutes

Alignment challenges
Corridor alignment is proposed over the MP1 road

■ An underpass on the MP-1 & Blue Line Metro corridor along DSC Road at Rajnigandha intersection poses a design challenge

Status | IIT-Roorkee to evaluate the technical feasibility of both options

■ Prepare a feasibility report and DPR in six months



tersection has an underpass on the MP-1 stretch and a metro corridor along the DSC Road. So, the elevated corridor may have to be built above Delhi Metro's Blue Line corridor or split into two sections. The project is estimated to cost Rs 600 crore, but may rise due to design tweaks.

Currently, the DND to Sec-

tor 57 stretch, connecting residential and industrial sectors, caters to vehicles travelling from Delhi, Khoda and Indrapuram to Noida and Greater Noida West. During peak traffic hours, traffic crawls from Rajnigandha to sectors 12/22 and 56 intersections.

This is the fourth major road project Noida will embark on af-

ter the second expressway along Yamuna, Chilla elevated road from Delhi's Chilla regulator to Noida's Mahamaya Flyover, and Bhangal elevated road along DSC Road. While Bhangal Elevated Road is expected to be functional in the next few months, construction of the Chilla Elevated Road has started recently and will take another three years to complete.

AIIMS faculty to protest over headship policy

Anuja.Jaiswal@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: The AIIMS Faculty Association has decided to launch phase-wise protests from May 1 onwards if the administration fails to execute the pending rotatory headship policy in the institution.

The association has given two weeks to the health and family welfare ministry to execute the policy. Following separate general body meetings of FA-IMS on April 16 and the PGI Chandigarh Faculty Association on April 17, participants collectively emphasised the significance of rotatory headship and collegium systems to ensure fair, transparent and democratic institutional governance.

The planned protest strategy includes wearing black badges in the first month, followed by relay hunger strikes in the subsequent month. If their requests remain unaddressed after two months, the association plans to intensify their protest. The associations jointly voiced concern regarding the persistent delay in implementing the long-standing policy of rotatory headship in their institutions.

The call for rotatory headship is not new. The Union ministry of health and family welfare stated in 2023 that the rotatory headship policy would take effect at AIIMS, New Delhi, and PGI, Chandigarh, in June 2024. However, despite faculty bodies' repeated submissions, no concrete action was initiated nearly a year later.

DGCA orders probe into pilot's death at IGI just after operating flight from Srinagar

Saurabh.Sinha@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has ordered a thorough investigation into the death of Air India Express first officer Armaan at IGI last Wednesday, just after safely operating a flight from Srinagar.

DGCA chief Faiz Ahmed Kidwai has formed a two-member panel to examine Armaan's medical history, whether he received timely aid, and the preparedness of the IGI medical centre. The panel is expected to "preferably" submit its report within six months. The govt is also reviewing whether current guidelines need revision.

"(Did) the crew report to air traffic control (ATC) while in air and if so, did ATC initiate action appropriately; whether due precaution was taken during rostering of such crew who has flying restriction due to medical reasons; (are there) any specific medical checks required for such pilots to undergo before undertaking the flights," Kidwai's order states. The late captain reportedly had a medical restriction on his licence. AI Express says the pilot was operating "as per DGCA rules regarding such cases."

Investigators will also assess "if the remaining crew acted promptly when Armaan reported feeling unwell" and "time taken to move Armaan to the airport's medical centre and then to a hospital". The panel includes DGCA deputy director (air safety) Vishal Yadav as investigator-in-charge and Group Captain Murtaza, a subject matter expert, as a member.

First officer Armaan, 35, suffered a "sudden cardiac arrest" while operating flight IX-153 from Srinagar on April 9. After safely landing in Delhi, he vomited in the lavatory and collapsed in the forward galley. He was taken to the airport medical centre by cabin crew and ground staff. Later, he was taken to a private hospital in Vasant Kunj but could not be saved. He had joined AI Express in 2023 from SpiceJet and had flown under 12 hours in the last seven days, it is learnt.

Following his death, the Airline Pilots' Association of India, which represents over 800 pilots of various Indian carriers, issued a statement that sought transparent rules prioritising pilot rest, humane scheduling practices, and robust mental health support systems.

Demolish illegal meat shops in residential areas, orders Sirsa

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Environment minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa on Friday ordered a crackdown on illegal meat shops and dhabas operating in residential areas. He directed officials to demolish such establishments and disconnect their water and power supplies.

During an inspection in west Delhi's Rajouri Garden assembly constituency, Sirsa said there were widespread civic violations and pollution concerns. He stressed that unauthorised commercial activities in residential localities would not be tolerated.

"In a single lane, there are 40-50 illegal dhabas and meat shops. These pose a serious threat to public health and cause inconvenience to residents," Sirsa said. "I have instructed the district commissioner and the additional commissioner to take immediate action. Such units will be sealed and their utilities disconnected."

The minister also said tandoors, dyeing units, denim factories and other polluting industrial activities were operating illegally in residential colonies, contributing to environmental degradation and affecting the quality of life. "Thousands of illegal meat shops and dhabas have come up in residential areas. They not

only cause pollution but also lead to congestion and safety concerns, especially for women and senior citizens. This situation will not be allowed to continue," he said.

Sirsa emphasised that meat shops must be licensed, hygienic and confined to designated commercial zones. "Polluting and illegal establishments cannot function within residential colonies. This endangers public health and the well-being of citizens," he added.

He also directed officials to address waterlogging issues urgently and ensure cleaner roads to prevent the spread of disease. Sirsa flagged noise pollution and illegal parking as concerns and reiterated the importance of adhering to Supreme Court's guidelines on loudspeakers.

The minister interacted with residents and assured them that their civic concerns, from sanitation to road infrastructure, would be addressed promptly. "We are committed to building a Viksit Delhi and a beautiful Delhi. Residents have the right to clean and pollution-free surroundings," he emphasised.

Officials from multiple departments, including MCD, DDA, PWD, DJB and BSES, accompanied the minister during the inspection, to ensure a coordinated response to the issues.

Sexual assault on flight attendant: Medanta suspends technician

Continued from P1

The woman's statements and the nurses' statements corroborate the CCTV footage, and this also established him as an accused," a police officer said.

The technician, who is from Bihar's Muzaffarpur and who works as an equipment technician at Medanta's ICU for five months, was among 50 staffers questioned by police and "admitted" to the crime during the interrogation, police said.

Medanta said it would continue to provide full support to police in the investigation. "We have been informed that the police have identified a suspect who has been taken into custody in connection with the ongoing investigation concerning allegations of sexual assault on a patient. On the basis of the information provided to us by the police, at present, we have suspended the suspect employee," the statement issued by the hospital's medical superintendent Dr Sanjay Durani said.

The flight attendant was taken to the hospital on April 5 after she nearly drowned in a swimming pool while training at the airline's facility in

the city. She said the sexual assault took place on April 6 but could not recall a time-range as she was in a dazed condition at the time.

It was only after her discharge from the hospital that she told her husband about the sexual assault. The couple approached Sadar police station on April 14 and an FIR was registered under BNS sections 64(2) (rape) and 68 (sexual intercourse in authority).

Police commissioner Vikas Kumar Arora subsequently formed an SIT headed by DCP (HQ) Arpit Jain. The eight-member team includes ACP (Sadar) Yashwant, ACP (crimes against women) Kavita, SHO (Sadar) Sunil Kumar and SHO (women's PS) Geeta.

DCP Arpit told TOI that the team scanned footage from more than 800 CCTV cameras installed at the hospital premises and questioned over 50 staff members.

"After scanning CCTV footage, police were able to identify and trace the accused, who was arrested from Sadar on April 18. The accused has been identified as Deepak (25), who is from Badhouli village in Muzaffarpur district of Bihar," the DCP said.

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Deeply missed by Ruby Aggarwal and Suveer Aggarwal

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S/O Prof. P.R. Bhaskaran Nair and Suseelamma
Passed away peacefully on 17 Apr 2025 in Delhi.

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Renuka Anoop Kumar, Radhika Nair, Aparna Nair, Ajith Nair, Aneesh Nair
Email: renu_anoop@yahoo.com

In loving memory of
VANDANA SHARMA
11-06-1969 - 19-04-2021

It's hard to put into words just how deeply you are missed. Your kindness, strength, & unwavering love guide us daily. Not a moment passes without thoughts of your laughter, your warm hugs, and the comfort of your presence. You were the heart of our home, and your memory is forever etched in ours. Always loved, never forgotten, & deeply missed every single day. Your Loving Family-Lavekesh, Ishan & Isha.

"HONOUR. COURAGE. BRAVERY." Three words that you taught us. Three words that help us cope with your loss.

The silent joy of remembering a loved one. The moments you shared together. Little moments that make life beautiful. Share them. With Friends. Relatives. Neighbours. Colleagues. With all those whose lives the departed Soul has touched. Because while life goes on, when you share memories, they stay on forever.

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Your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure, you are loved beyond words and missed beyond measures.

Deeply missed by:
Smt. Shashi Saxena
Ashish & Mittal
Reyansh & Vivaan
Supriya & Swati

At Jamia, Up To 40% Online Learning Must

Defaulters Won't Be Allowed To Take End Term Exam

Sugandha.Jha@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: A growing number of universities in Delhi are pushing students to complete parts of their curriculum across disciplines through govt-run online courses. This shift follows the 2021 University Grants Commission guidelines allowing institutions to offer up to 40% of any course through SWAYAM, a Massive Open Online Course platform.

Leading the charge is Jamia Millia Islamia, which has made SWAYAM courses compulsory. According to an official order, students who fail to complete the required SWAYAM component cannot sit for their final semester exams.

A notification issued last month stated the vice-chancellor, on behalf of Academic Council, has approved a draft policy for SWAYAM implementation beginning from the even semester of the 2024-25 academic session. A nine-member panel was formed to oversee the rollout.

Under the policy, students must complete a minimum of 20% and up to 40% of their courses each semester via SWAYAM, subject to approval by Board of Studies. In semesters with only two theory papers, at least one must be taken online.

"Only students who complete the SWAYAM course and submit at least 75% of the assignments and quizzes will be eligible to appear in final exams," the notification states. Eligibility will be verified by the SWAYAM nodal officer, it added.

Students barred from exams due to non-compliance must re-register for the same course in another semester. If they fail the end-semester exam conducted by the university's Controller of Examinations, they will get two more chances. Failure in all attempts means they must re-register for a course, with BoS approval.

To pass, students need at least 40% in both assessments and the final exam. The end-semester exam accounts for 70% of the grade, and 30% is based on assignments and quizzes uploaded on the portal. These exams will be held alongside



JAMIA'S SWITCH-HIT: Students must complete a minimum of 20% and up to 40% of their courses each semester via SWAYAM

regular university exams, and the marks will appear on the official marksheets.

While the policy helps universities cut down teaching load and tackle faculty shortages, students and teachers say it comes at a cost.

"As a final-semester Master's student, I'm shocked. We are a few weeks away from end-term exams, and many of us didn't even know about this policy being made mandatory. There was no formal communication by Centre. Now, this notice says we won't be allowed to sit for exams without 75% assignment submission on SWAYAM. That's absurd," said Sonakshi, who's studying media governance at Jamia.

"For students from marginalised sections, SWAYAM hasn't been effective. It's designed without understanding how students actually study, live or struggle. We've always rejected this top-down, one-size-fits-all model being pushed by govt. And now it's being used to decide whether we can sit for our exams. Universities are being turned into digital testing centres while student voices are completely ignored," she added.

Dr Majid Jamil, professor at Jamia's department of electrical engineering, said, "There's no substitute for classroom teaching. This will encourage absenteeism, as students will rely on online modules and skip physical classes."

The policy, he added, might allow universities to bypass the urgent issue of faculty

shortage. "Instead of appointing permanent teachers, universities may start offloading courses to SWAYAM."

There was no immediate response from Jamia VC Mazhar Asif and Controller of Examinations Pawan Kumar Sharma. Other central universities in Delhi are also adopting the policy. At Jawahar Lal Nehru University, SWAYAM is optional. "We are primarily a research university, with 70-80% students in PhD programmes. So, the SWAYAM model is adapted based on what suits our students," said B S Balaji, chairperson, Centre for E-Learning.

At Delhi University, the model has been discussed in Academic Council meetings but not formally adopted. Some colleges are informally offering SWAYAM modules as optional add-ons.

Teachers' groups have raised concerns over mandatory implementation. "SWAYAM was meant to be voluntary and supplementary. Forcing it on students reduces engagement and sidelines teachers," Pankaj Garg, a faculty member at DU, said, adding, "SWAYAM was never meant to replace classroom teaching. Handing over that responsibility to a platform undermines the role of teachers and jeopardises faculty recruitment."

Garg warned the lack of alignment between assessment styles and teaching methods risks turning students into passive consumers of content, rather than active participants.

Schools asked to formulate smartphone usage policy

New Delhi: Following a recent Delhi High Court judgment, the Delhi govt has directed schools to formulate policies regarding students' use of smartphones.

The high court has outlined guiding principles to strike a balance between the advantages and potential drawbacks of allowing students to use smartphones while in school.

Accordingly, the education department of the Delhi govt has instructed all heads of govt, govt-aided, and unaided recognised private schools in the city to develop and implement a school-level policy on this matter.

Recently, the Delhi High Court, in a significant ruling, has refused to ban children from bringing smartphones to school. The court clarified in its decision that the use of smartphones does not have a negative impact on teaching, discipline, or the overall educational environment in the classroom.

The judgment passed by Justice Anup Jairam Bhambhani came during the hearing of a petition filed by a student, which sought the issuance of guidelines regarding the use of mobile phones in schools. A minor student represented by Advocate Ashu Bidhuri stated that during the hearing, the parties involved, particularly the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), requested the court to establish guidelines for the use of smartphones in schools.

The court noted that as a policy, students should not be barred from carrying smartphones to school, but the use of smartphones must be regulated and monitored, it said. The policy should establish transparent, fair, and enforceable consequences for violation of the rules for the use of smartphones in school, ensuring consistent application without being excessively harsh.

Given the fast-paced advancement of technology, the policy should be regularly reviewed and revised to tackle emerging challenges.

During the proceedings, the court invited submissions, suggestions, and material from the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights, and the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, who were present, to address the aforementioned issue. ANI

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Healing Begins In Kitchen: Healthy Diet Cuts Liver Disease Risk By 50%

FOOD IS MEDICINE: Experts Say Damage Done Can Be Reversed If Timely Action Is Taken

Anuja Jaiswal
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: With rising cases of liver diseases among both urban and rural populations, doctors are emphasising the critical link between dietary habits and liver health, stating that healthy changes today can cut liver disease risk by 50%.

On World Liver Day, medical experts emphasised that "food is medicine."

Dr Sanjiv Saigal, president of the Liver Transplantation Society of India (LTSI), said, "50% of liver disease cases can be prevented simply by changing food habits and improving nutrition. Damage done to the liver from poor dietary choices, alcohol, processed food and sedentary lifestyles can be reversed if we take action today. The liver has a remarkable ability to heal itself, and even years of damage can be reversed with the right lifestyle changes."

He emphasised that including fresh fruits, green vegetables, whole grains and lean protein in the diet supports liver restoration and protection. "We witness miracles when patients switch to cleaner diets — liver enzyme levels improve, energy levels bounce back, and long-term health outcomes become significantly better. The first step is reading food labels and reducing your dependence on processed foods," he said.

The World Liver Day 2025 theme, "Food is Medicine," underscores how proper nutrition maintains liver health. Doctors note that liver problems now extend beyond alcohol-related conditions, with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) showing worrying growth rates due to unhealthy eating habits, obesity, and sedentary lifestyles.

Recent research in Frontiers in Nutrition revealed the significant relationship between diet and liver health. Studying data from over 121,000 UK Biobank participants showed that people

What to eat for a healthy liver

Fruits and vegetables
Berries, leafy greens and cruciferous vegetables are particularly beneficial

Whole grains
Choosing whole grains over refined carbohydrates can help regulate blood sugar and support liver function

Lean protein
Sources like lean meat, fish and eggs are important for liver health

Healthy fats
Omega-3 fatty acids, found in fish, such as salmon, can help reduce inflammation and support liver health

Other liver friendly foods
Olive oil, garlic, grapefruit and beets are also known for their liver-protective properties



Foods to limit or avoid

Processed Foods
These are often high in sugar, unhealthy fats, and sodium, which can contribute to liver damage

Sugary Drinks
Excessive sugar intake can lead to fatty liver disease

Deep-Fried Foods
These are high in fat and can negatively impact liver health



What can be harmful for liver

Alcohol
Excessive alcohol consumption is a major cause of liver damage, leading to conditions like alcoholic fatty liver disease, inflammation, and eventually cirrhosis. Consume in moderation, or avoided entirely if you have liver disease

Sugar
Excessive sugar intake, especially fructose, can lead to non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD)

Medications
Certain medications, including over-the-counter pain relievers, statins, and some antibiotics, can also cause liver damage

Viral Infections
Hepatitis A, B, and C can cause inflammation and damage to the liver

Obesity and Diabetes
These conditions can contribute to the development of NAFLD and other liver problems

High-Fat Diet
Consuming excessive saturated and trans fats, and processed foods high in fat and sugar, can negatively impact liver health

Symptoms of fatty liver disease

Fatty liver disease usually doesn't cause symptoms

People who have symptoms may:

Feel tired or generally unwell

Have pain in the upper right part of their abdomen, lose weight

Signs that you may have more serious fatty liver disease include:

Yellow eyes and skin (jaundice), bruising, dark urine, swollen tummy

Vomiting blood, black stools, itchy skin



Doctors' advise

1. Prioritise clean eating, avoid unnecessary medication

2. Choose fresh produce, home-cooked meals, hydration and mindful eating

3. Reduce alcohol consumption, and exercise regularly

consumption of sugary drinks, processed foods, and frequent fast-food consumption threatens liver health.

Additional research published in Nutrients reveals a worrying connection between high fructose consumption from processed foods and metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD) in obese children. The findings show excessive fructose intake, common in sugary drinks and processed snacks, correlates with increased hepatic fat accumulation and insulin resistance. These results emphasise the necessity to reduce added sugars in children's diets to address rising paediatric liver disease.

Doctors say liver problems now extend beyond alcohol-related conditions, with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease showing worrying growth rates

Dr Saigal advocated for decisive measures including food labelling reforms, nutrition-focused school meal programmes, and taxation on sugary drinks and ultra-processed foods. "We urge parents, educators, and young adults to view food as medicine. Prioritise clean eating, avoid unnecessary medication, and recognise that the liver—body's detox powerhouse—needs daily attention. A healthy liver ensures better overall health," he said.

Dr Chaudhary noted that the liver manages over 500 functions — processing toxins, regulating metabolism, supporting digestion, and enhancing immunity. It's essential to acknowledge this vital organ's importance. Through informed food choices, reduced alcohol intake, and regular exercise, we can prevent liver damage and decrease pressure on India's healthcare system.

Simplify settlement of bills and discharge process at hosps: HC

Abhinav.Garg@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Highlighting the "harassment and mental trauma" faced by patients and their family members during hospital discharge and bill settlement, Delhi High Court has called for a regulatory mechanism to ease the process.

The court, in an order on Thursday, said the Centre, Delhi govt, and statutory bodies must step in to carve out a regulatory policy while dealing with the case of a lawyer who accused Max Hospital, Saket, of several offences, including cheating, wrongful confinement, and breach of trust.

Giving a clean chit to the hospital as far as criminal offences were concerned, the high court, however, flagged the tendency of patients being harassed over pending bills.

"Such incidents of alleged harassment in settling final bills are not untold stories but are frequently suffered by patients," Justice Neena Bansal Krishna noted, adding, "The trauma of an ailment is often compounded by delays in discharge caused by insurance approvals, pushing families into distress."

The court stressed that while the petitioner's grievance was understandable, the scenario did not constitute a criminal offence. "Much angst has been expressed at many forums about the delay in insurance approvals. This may be a ground for seeking compen-

sation for mental harassment but not for criminal prosecution," the judge stated.

The case involved a lawyer diagnosed with cysticercosis in his right hand, who underwent surgery at Max Hospital. He held a cashless insurance policy with Max Bupa Health Insurance, which included Max Hospital in its network. However, due to limited pre-authorization, the hospital asked him to deposit the balance at admission. He later alleged that this amounted to fraud and wrongful confinement.

The high court upheld the sessions court's ruling, stating that no fraudulent intent could be ascribed to the hospital. "Though it may seem onerous, requiring a patient to deposit the balance when pre-authorization is limited cannot be termed extraction of money or dishonest conduct. The patient was informed in advance."

It was further explained that the patient's insurance only covered a standard room, whereas he availed a deluxe room. The difference of 57,332 was adjusted from his deposit.

The court reiterated that such situations highlight the need for regulatory reforms. "Despite recommendations from various courts and the NHRC's proposed Charter of Patients' Rights, no final framework has been implemented. This is an area that must be addressed jointly by the Centre, Delhi government, IRDA, and medical councils," it said.

HC clears man in adultery case

New Delhi: Delhi High Court discharged a man in an adultery case filed by the husband of a woman he was allegedly having an affair with, citing Supreme Court's decision to strike down the "archaic law" under IPC Section 497.

The court noted that the concept of considering a woman as the husband's "property" was well documented in the case of Draupadi in the Mahabharat.

Justice Neena Bansal Krishna said that the wife was neither the offender, nor abettor, due to the "chauvinistic logic" that she was, in fact, the victim who was seduced.

"The woman being considered as the property of the husband and its devastating consequences are well documented in the Mahabharat. Draupadi was put on stake in a gambling game by her husband, Yudhishtir, while the other four brothers were silent spectators, and Draupadi had no voice to protest for her dignity," the court said. "She was lost in the game, and what followed was the great war of Mahabharat," it added.

The husband had alleged that his wife was in an adulterous relationship with the petitioner. The high court said the case was liable to be quashed. **TNW**

SEARCH FOR MISSING



Kavita Kumari Poddar

General Public is hereby informed that one Girl (depicted in the photo) namely **Kavita Kumari Poddar, D/o Ram Shankar Poddar R/o Sumer Singh Yadav ka Makan, Gali No-3, Near Charti Wala Kuan, Kapashera, New Delhi, Age: 31 Years** has been reported missing since 16.04.2025 at 12.30PM from her residence vide **DD No. 127A, Dated 16.04.2025** registered at **Police Station Kapashera, South West District, Delhi**. Her physical description is as under :-

Gender: Female, **Height:** 5'3", **Built:** Strong, **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Round, **Wearing:** Blue Jeans, Blue Top and Slipper on her feet.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing girl but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone have any information about this missing girl, please inform to the following.

SHO P.S. Sultanpuri, Distt. South West, Delhi DP/4913/SW/2025 Mob.: 9315881937

SEARCH FOR MISSING



Satender Singh Kohli

General Public is hereby informed that a male namely **Satender Singh Kohli S/o Lt. Sh. Inder Mohan Pal Singh Kohli R/o H.No. 1899-C/18 Upper Ground Floor Govindpuri, Extn. New Delhi** has been missing since 12.01.2025 at 10:00 to 11:00 PM, from his house the jurisdiction of PS Kalkaji, South-East District, New Delhi. In this regard a **DD No. 97A dated 17.01.2025** has been lodged at PS,

Kalkaji, South-East District, N. Delhi. The description of missing male is as under : **Name:** Satender Singh Kohli, **Age:** 43 Years, **Height:** 5'7", **Complexion:** Fair, **Built:** Thin, **Face:** Round, **Wearing:** Green and White Strips T-Shirt & Black Lower and Black Color Shoes in feet

If anyone having any clue/information, kindly inform the undersigned at following phone numbers.

SHO P.S., Kalkaji New Delhi Ph.: 011-26430607 8750870930

SEARCH FOR MISSING



Khushbu Kumari

General public is hereby informed that this girl **Name:** Khushbu Kumari D/o Omparkash Prasad R/o Hanuman Chowk, Qutub Vihar Ph-II, Goyla Diary, New Delhi **Age:** 19 years, **Height:** 5 feet 4 inch, **Face:** Round, **Built:** Medium, **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Wearing:** Blue colour kurta (shirt), White colour jeans & White colour shoes in feet is missing from her house since 16.04.2025. In this regard a **DD No. 66A dated 17.04.2025** has been lodged at P.S. Chhawla, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing girl may kindly inform the following.

SHO : P.S. Chhawla, New Delhi, Ph. : 8750871631, 9891960450 DP/4905/DW/2025

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



Unknown

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified male namely **Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown was found dead on 12.04.2025 at 06:55 PM in front of shop no. 4077-78, Naya Bazar, Lahori Gate, Delhi**. In this regard **DD No. 10A dated 12.04.2025** has been lodged at Police Station, Lahori Gate, Delhi. Identification of unidentified male dead body is as under:

Name: Unknown, **Age:** 40-42 Years, **Height:** 5'4", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Id Mark:** "सुभा" tattoo on left hand and "संभू", "SK" in right hand, **Wearing:** Brown Colour Pant & No clothes on Upper body.

If anyone have any information or clue about this male deceased may kindly be inform undersigned.

SHO Police Station Lahori Gate, Delhi Ph.: 011-23953776,8750870122 DP/4763/N/2025

Appeal for Identification



Unknown

General Public is hereby informed that a male dead person **Name:** Unknown, **S/o Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age:** about 65-70 years, **Height:** 5'4", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Built:** Normal, **Face:** Long, **ID Mark:** A Mark of old scar on nose. **Wearing:** White Checked Shirt and Blue Color Pant was found unconscious at gate no 3 chandni chowk metro near railway magistrate court Where Railway Doctor

declared him dead at the spot. In this regard, a **DD No. 12A, dated 15.04.2025 U/s 194 BNSS** has been lodged at PS ODRS, Delhi. Dead Body preserved for 72 hrs in Subzi Mandi Mortuary for identification.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this person but no clue has come to light so far. Any, person having any information or clue about this person may kindly inform to the following.

SHO P.S., Old Delhi Railway Station, Delhi DP/4919/Rly/2025 Ph. : 011-23961522, 9899207231

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



Unknown

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified male person (depicted in the photo) name **Unknown**, residence and family is **Unknown** age 60-65 years approx. was found dead at **Kodiya Pual, Pani Ki Pyau, SPM Marg, Opp. Old Delhi Railway Station, Delhi on 15.04.2025 at 10.45 am**. In this regard a **DD No. 38A Dated 15.04.2025** has been lodged at PS Kotwali, Delhi.

His physical description is as under:-

Sex: Male, **Age:** 60-65 years approx., **Height:** 5' 7" ft., **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Wearing:** Cream Colour Kurta & Koti Blue Colour and White Colour Pajam and Warefoot.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following:-

SHO PS: Kotwali, Delhi Ph.: 011-23977100, 23953442 Mobile: 8750870121 DP/4838/N/2025 (UIDB)

Appeal for Identification



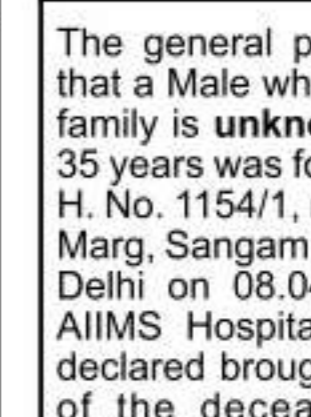
Unknown

General public is hereby informed that one male person **Namely:** Unknown, **S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age:** 28-30 Yrs. **Height:** 5'6", **Sex:** Male, **Complexion:** Fair, **Face:** Round, **Build:** Strong, **Hair:** Black **Wearing:** Without Cloth, **Place of Recovery:** Dwarka Mor Metro Station Gate No.-2 The dead body has been preserve in Safdarjung Hospital Delhi, Mortuary for identification.

In this regard **DD No. 8A Dated: 15/04/2025** has been lodged at **Police Station: Bindapur Delhi**, Any clue come to notice please inform undersign.

SHO P.S.: Bindapur Delhi Phone: 7428581030, 8750871025 8826250534 DP/4908/DW/2025

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



Unknown

The general public is hereby informed that a Male whose name, residence and family is **unknown**, whose age is about 35 years was found dead in Pavement of H. No. 1154/1, near Gas Godown, Ratiya Marg, Sangam Vihar, South District, New Delhi on 08.04.2025. He was sent to AIIMS Hospital, New Delhi where Dr. declared brought dead. The Dead Body of the deceased person has been preserved at AIIMS Hospital, New Delhi. In this regard, an information has been lodged vide **GD No. 63A Dated 08.04.2025** at **P.S Sangam Vihar, New Delhi**. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to identify the deceased person, but no clue has come to light, so far. The description of the UIDB is as under:

Sex: Male, **Age:** 35 Years, **Height:** 5'8" ft, **Complexion:** Dark, **Face:** Oval, **Hair:** Black, **Wearing:** Black Color Round Neck T Shirt & Blue Color Half Pants. If anyone has any information about his relatives, kindly inform the SHO/ Sangam Vihar, New Delhi.

SHO PS, Sangam Vihar, New Delhi Ph. No. 011-26044546,81&8750870833 DP/4844/SD/2025

SEARCH FOR MISSING



CHAYA

General Public is hereby informed that one Girl (depicted in the photo) namely **Chaya, D/o Rajkumar R/o C-1/312 Sultanpuri, Delhi Age: 13 Years** has been reported missing since 8.04.2025 at 4.00PM from her residence vide **FIR No. 275/25, U/S 137(2) BNS Dated 14.04.2025** registered at **Police Station Sultanpuri, Outer District, Delhi**. Her physical description is as under :-

Gender: Female, **Height:** 5'0", **Built:** Thin, **Complexion:** Fair, **Face:** Round, **Wearing:** Pink Top & Grey Jeans and Slipper on her feet.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing girl but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone have any information about this missing girl, please inform to the following.

SHO P.S. Sultanpuri, Distt. Outer, Delhi DP/4898/OD/2025 Mob.: 8527313830

SEARCH FOR MISSING



Seema Yadav

General public is hereby informed that a female namely **Seema Yadav, W/o Rakesh Kumar Yadav, R/o H.No. 525, Nai Basti, Kishan Ganj, Delhi** has been missing since 11.04.2025 at about 02:30 PM to 03:00 PM from her home. In this regard **DD No. 042 A, Dated 14.04.2025** has been lodged at Police Station Gulabi Bagh, Delhi.

The description of missing female is as under:

Name: Seema Yadav, **Age:** 30 Years, **Height:** 5', **Complexion:** Fair, **Face:** Round, **Built:** Normal, **ID Mark:** Shankar Bhagwan tattoo on right wrist, **Wearing:** Light Sky Blue Colour Suit & Salwar and White Colour Sandal in Feet.

If anyone has any information about this missing female please inform P.S. Gulabi Bagh, Delhi.

Web: http://cbi.nic.in, E-mail: cbc@cbi.gov.in Ph.: 011-24368638/24368641, Fax: 011-24368639 SHO Police Station Gulabi Bagh, Delhi DP/4789/N/2025 Ph: 011-23651692, 8750871634

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



Unknown

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified male (depicted in the photo) name **Unknown S/o Unknown, R/o Unknown, age** 40-45 years. He was found Dead at 1335-1 Pillar UP Line Near Bhairo Railway Bridge New Delhi Railway Station Tilak Bridge, Delhi. In this regard **DD No. 72A, Dt. 15.04.2025**, has been lodged at **P.S. New Delhi Railway Station, Delhi**. His physical description is as under.

Sex: Male, **Age:** 40-45 years, **Height:** 5'1", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Built:** Thin, **Wearing:** Black Colour Underwear.

Any person is having information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address and telephone number

S.H.O PS: New Delhi Railway Station, Delhi Ph No.: 01123744073, 8750871305, 8826820817 DP/4830/Rly/2025

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



Tanu/Siddharth

General public is hereby informed that a Lady **Namely: Tanu W/o: Vidhur R/o: H.no. 269, Village Palla Harizan Basti Alipur, Delhi** has been missing/ kidnapped from her Home With her Son. Since 12.04.2025 at 10:00 Pm. In this regard, a **DD No. 27A Dt. 13.04.2025**, has been registered at **P.S.: Alipur, Delhi**. The description of the missing Lady and her child as under.

Age: 27 years, **Height:** 5'2" **Face:** Round, **Built:** Medium **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Wearing:** Black Colour Suit Salwar & Green Colour Slipper.

Son Name: Siddharth, **Age:** 7 Years. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out them but no clue has come to light so far. Any person is having information or clue about this missing Lady and her child may kindly inform to the following.

Ph. No. 011-24368638, 24368641 Website: http://cbi.nic.in E-mail: cbc@cbi.gov.in Fax No. 011-24368639 S.H.O PS: Alipur, Delhi Ph No. 9873369900 DP/4814/ON/2025



AJIT PAWAR SLAMS OPPN TO HINDI IN SCHOOLS, BUT SAYS MARATHI WILL REMAIN TOP PRIORITY



MOVIE 'JAAT' SPARKS ROW: FIR AGAINST SUNNY DEOL & HOODA 'FOR HURTING RELIGIOUS SENTIMENTS'

TOI History Meets AI APR 19
AI VISUALISATION OF HISTORICAL EVENTS

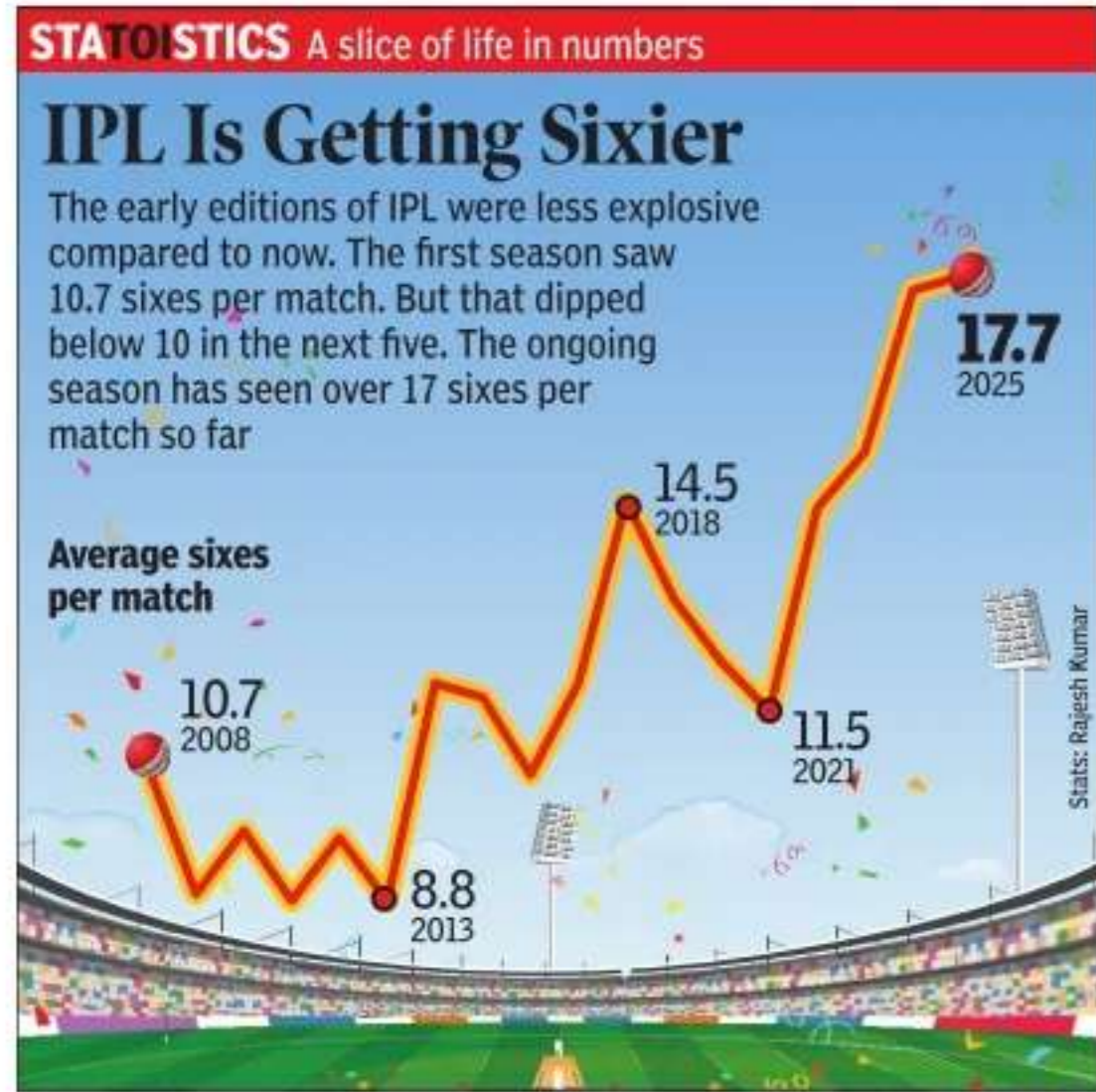
India launched its first satellite Aryabhata on this day in 1975 marking the country's entry into space

Sajeev Kumarapuram

Foresters pose as Maoists, FIR filed

When the rebels' guns fall silent, some take a shot at rumours. An FIR has been filed against five foresters, including a range officer, for spreading false claims that an Odisha patch freed of Maoists nearly 20 years ago was still not out of the woods, report **Riyans Ramanath & Naresh Chandra Pattanayak**.

The Anandpur range officer and four other staffers allegedly spread the rumours in the Keonjhar pocket to terrorise poachers and exert their own influence, according to the case filed by police. The forest department has started parallel departmental proceedings. Anandapur is part of Similipal landscape, though not within the tiger reserve there. Brijesh Rai, DIG (western range), said the five were booked under BNS sections for "spreading false information with an intent to misuse their power to harm". The move followed concerns among residents and subsequent checks.



Military ops crippled as ALHs continue to remain grounded

With 330 Dhruvs Stuck, Critical Missions & Border Logistics Suffer

Rajat.Pandit@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: It's a double whammy for the armed forces. Already grappling with the high crash rate and low serviceability of their 350 obsolete single-engine Cheetah and Chetak choppers, the prolonged grounding of the around 330 twin-engine 'Dhruv' advanced light helicopters (ALHs) has majorly hit military operations and preparedness.



The armed forces rely on ALHs for vital flights to forward posts along the China and Pakistan borders, including reconnaissance and rescue missions

The armed forces bank heavily on multi-role ALHs for 'sustenance flights' to forward areas and posts along the unresolved borders with China and Pakistan as well as for observation and reconnaissance, search and rescue missions. "All have suffered major disruptions for over three months now. ALH pilots are also losing flying currency, and forced to make do with simulators," a senior officer told TOI.

including 60 weaponised versions called 'Rudra', manufactured by defence PSU Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL). IAF in turn, has 75 ALHs, while Navy 24 and Coast Guard 19. The 5.5-tonne ALHs have been military workhorses since their induction began in 2002, with the choppers in the Army alone clocking around 40,000 hours of flying in 2023-24.

The most affected is over 11.5-lakh strong Army, which has a fleet of over 180 ALHs, pounded the long-standing problem of huge shortfalls in rotary-wing birds. The armed forces, in fact, have projected a requirement of over 1,000 new choppers of different types over the next 10-15 years, including 484 light utility helicopters (LUH) in 3.5-tonne class and 419 Indian multi-role helicopters in 10-15-tonne class. But there has been huge delays in these projects being executed by HAL.

Barely a day after cremation, dispute erupts over Aitken's Mussoorie home

Anmol Jain | TNN

Mussoorie: Less than 24 hours after the cremation of acclaimed author and longtime Mussoorie resident **Bill Aitken**, a dispute broke out on Friday morning over his hillside cottage, Oakless, in the Bala Hissar area.

princely state of Jind, who had given its rights to a trust. Aitken, who was Kaur's companion, had been allowed to live in a portion of the house during his lifetime.

"Two individuals, Pradeep Singh Guman and Geetanjali — who claimed to have possession of the house — and five unidentified men forcibly entered the part of the house where Aitken stayed. They locked it from inside and did not allow me or my family to enter. They also threatened us," Chauhan told TOI.

In a written complaint to the police, he further alleged that cash amounting to Rs 3 lakh, valuables, and important documents were stolen in the process.

Both parties were called to the police station, but no official complaint was registered by the police. When TOI tried to contact Pradeep Guman, he did not respond to repeated calls. Meanwhile, Mussoorie station officer Santosh Singh Kunwar said, "Pradeep is the legal owner of the house and took possession of it after Aitken's demise."

Sukma village 1st to be 'Maoist-free' in Bastar after 11 more surrender

HM Shah Tells Hiding Reds To Turn Selves In

Rashmi.Drolia @timesofindia.com



Raipur: A small village in Sukma that had little claim to fame apart from showing up on the 'low-literacy chart' has suddenly been catapulted to the limelight as all 11 youths who had joined Maoists and taken up arms against govt, surrendered on Friday.

The day began with a fierce encounter in Kasod-Kumuradi forests of Abujmahar after a security team was attacked by Maoists. Security forces fought back and forced the Maoists to flee. A search of the area yielded a whopping 50kg of explosive material, Rs 6 lakh cash, 11 laptops, 20 litres of petrol, two 'pressure-cooker bombs', a large quantity of ammunition and other supplies.

Badesatti is the first village in Bastar division to be tagged 'Maoist-free'. It's now eligible for development projects worth Rs 1 crore. Shah lauded the security forces and tweeted: "CoBRA commandos and Chhattisgarh Police have arrested 22 notorious Naxalites with modern weapons and explosive materials in various operations in Bijapur district. Also, 11 Naxalites have surrendered in Badesatti of Sukma, due to which this panchayat has become completely Naxal-free."

A little later, in Sukma, a group of 22 Maoists—including nine women—surrendered before police and CRPF officials. A couple of hours later, 11 others, including two women, also turned themselves in, saying that they were disillusioned with the hollow ideology of Maoists and insecurity of life on the run in jungles. They wished to avail benefits of the new surrender and rehabilitation policy and lead a normal life, SP Kiran Chavan said on Friday.

After Kuno, cheetahs to get second home in MP tomorrow

Indore: Madhya Pradesh CM Mohan Yadav will release two male cheetahs from Kuno in Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary in Neemuch-Mandsaur on Sunday, making it the second home of cheetahs in India, Neemuch collector Himanshu Chandra said on Friday, reports **Sagar Choukse**.

marks phase-II of the cheetah reintroduction project to revive the population nearly eight decades after the species was hunted to extinction in the country. With 16 cheetahs now prowling the wild in Kuno, Project Cheetah is ready for the next step — expanding the territory under the fastest feline's pugmarks.

BANASKANTHA DISTRICT CO.OP. MILK PRODUCERS' UNION LTD.

BANAS DAIRY, PB.NO.20, PALANPUR-385001
DIST. BANASKANTHA, GUJARAT, PHONE: 02742-253881-85

TENDER NOTICE

Date: 17/04/2025

Tender is invited for Civil, Structural, Plumbing, firefighting Electrification, ELV, HVAC & Horticulture & irrigation works for proposed 10LLPD Green Field Dairy Plant including staff quarters at village: Meethi, Taluka & Dist. Baghat (U.P.). For more information regarding detailed tender notice, eligibility criteria and procedure to purchase tender document bidders may visit www.banasdairy.coop

I/c. Managing Director

INDRAPRASTHA INSTITUTE of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DELHI

(A State University established by Govt. of NCT Delhi)

VACANCY NOTIFICATION (NON-ACADEMIC POSTS)- ADVERTISEMENT NUMBER 08/2025

Online applications are invited for Direct Recruitment (Contractual) for following posts at Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Delhi (IIIT-D). Last date for inviting applications is 9th May 2025.

S. No.	POST NAME	NUMBER OF POSTS	CATEGORY	PAY LEVEL
1	Junior Administrative Officer (IRD)	1	OBC	4

For detailed information, please visit Institute's website: <https://iiitd.ac.in/careers/>

Registrar

जैव चिकित्सा अनुसंधान केन्द्र

Centre of BioMedical Research

उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार का स्वास्थ्यकारी केन्द्र

SGPGIMS Campus, Raebareilly Road, Lucknow - 226014, U.P. (INDIA)
Email: director.cbmr@cbmr.res.in, admin.officer@cbmr.res.in, Website: cbmr.res.in

Recruitment on the post of Attendant/Lab Attendant

Adv No.: CBMR/RCT/01/2025

Centre of BioMedical Research (CBMR) Lucknow invites applications for the post of Attendant/Lab Attendant as per full details (Advertisement/Application Form) available on our website www.cbmr.res.in. The Application will be received upto 19.05.2025 through Speed Post/ Registered post/ Courier only.

Director

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-Tendering Tender Notice

Divisional Railway Manager (Works) N.C. Railway, Jhansi for and behalf of President of India invites sealed "Open Tender" through on Line (E-Tendering) for the following work.

E-Tender No.: JHS-ENGG - E - 2025-53

Description of work : Jhansi-Khairair section; Proposal for Cover over of approach, Sump well, Repair to road surface, hump etc. at LHS no. 415 under ADEN/MBA jurisdiction.

Approx Cost : 19330240.88 Earnest Money : 246700.00

Date of completion /period from issue acceptance letter. 06 Months

E-Tender No.: JHS-ENGG- E - 2025-54

Description of work : ADEN/Banda Sub Division:- Provision of re roofing of quarters with RCC slab/GI sheeting under ADEN/BANDA section.

Approx Cost : 23065291.95 Earnest Money : 265300.00

Date of completion /period from issue acceptance letter. 15 Months

Date of closing Tender : 12/05/2025 at 15:00 hrs., Tender on line can be submitted up to 15:00 hrs on 12.05.2025. For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.irps.gov.in

662/25 (D)

North central railways @ CPNCR www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

UTTARAKHAND POWER CORPORATION LTD.

(A Govt. of Uttarakhand Undertaking) (Corporate Identity No. U40100UR2010@CG22867/2369)

Victoria Cross Vijaya Ganesha Singh Ujja Bhawan, Kanwal Road, Dehradun-248001
Phone No.: 0135-2763672-76, Fax: 0135-2760289, Website: www.uktenders.gov.in

ESTENDER NOTICE (INT)

TENDER SPECIFICATION NO. CCF-III/4/2025-2026

Uttarakhand Power Corporation Ltd. Dehradun invite e-tender for following work:-

Sl. No.	Name of work	Estimated cost (in ₹ Lakh)	Average yearly Turn Over of preceding three financial years (in ₹ Lakh)	Earnest Money Deposit (in ₹)	Cost of tender document including GST (in ₹)	Last Date & time of online request for Tender and submission of tender in online & offline mode	Date of opening of Part-I of Tender in online and offline mode
1	Engagement of Energy Auditor to carry out the Annual Energy Audit for FY 2024-2025	2.95	8.85	11 800	295	02.05.2025 upto 17:00 hrs	03.05.2025 at 15:30 hrs

For further details, please visit our website www.uktenders.gov.in

Superintending Engineer Corporate (Contract & Procurement-11)

SAVE ELECTRICITY IN THE INTEREST OF THE NATIONS Use LED Bulb Save Electricity. (Toll-Free- 1912)

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हरियाणा रेल अवसंरचना विकास निगम लिमिटेड

(हरियाणा सरकार और रेल मंत्रालय का संयुक्त उपक्रम)

Haryana Rail Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd.

A Joint Venture of Government of Haryana & Ministry of Railways

(VACANCY NOTICE) Date: 19.04.2025

HARYANA RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LTD (HRIDC) invites applications for retired railways personnels on re-Engagement basis from suitable candidates for the following posts on Contractual Basis:-

Sr. No.	Designation	Posts	Place of Posting	Vacancy Notice No.	Issue Date	Last Date
1.	OS / Clerk	01 Post	Manesar	HRIDC/ 2025/08	19.04.2025	05.05.2025
2.	SSE (P-Way)	01 Post				
3.	JE / SE (P-Way)	01 Post				
4.	Blacksmith	01 Post				
5.	Track Maintainer / Trolleyman	03 Post				
6.	Keyman / Patrolman	06 Post				

For more details regarding Educational/ Technical Qualification, Experience, Age, other details and terms & conditions, may please refer HRIDC website: www.hriddc.co.in

Sd/- DGM/HR/HRIDC

THE HUTTI GOLD MINES COMPANY LIMITED

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)

Hutti - 584 115, Raichur Dist., Karnataka State. Ph: (08537) 275463, 276339, Fax: (08537) 275048, 275054
e-Mail: material276339@gmail.com website: www.huttigold.karnataka.gov.in

TENDER NOTIFICATION NO.29/24-25 Dt: 19.04.2025

(Through KPP Portal only)

Tender is invited by "The Senior Manager (Materials)" for the procurement of following Indents.

Sl. No.	Description	EMD in Rs.
1	Supply of buckets for underground LHDS as per drawing. HGML/2024-25/IND0265.	2,09,000/-
2	Supply of manpower for the services like civil repair works, electrical work and pipeline repair or maintenance work for the colony qtrs. and other buildings and operation and maintenance of bio gas. HGML/2024-25/SE0045.	3,05,000/-
3	Ore Transportation from New Projects to Hutti HGML/2024-25/SE0046.	4,72,000/-

Calendar of events: (1) Pre-Bid Meetings (Zoom): 21.04.2025 for SI.No.1 at 11.00 AM, SI.No.2 at 11.30 AM and SI.No.3 at 12.00 PM (2) Last date for receipt of tender: 19.05.2025 at 4.00 PM (3) Opening of Technical Bid on: 21.05.2025 at 10.00 A.M

For further details interested bidders are advised to log on to website <https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in> or contact the office of undersigned during working hours. For participating in the above tender bidder needs to be registered in KPP Portal.

Sd/-Senior Manager (Materials)

LEADING GOLD PRODUCER IN INDIA

SARDAR SAROVAR NARMADA NIGAM LIMITED

(A wholly owned Government of Gujarat Undertaking)

Tender Notice No. & Name of the work

1	2	3
1) Est. Cost (Rs. in lacs)	2) Tender Fee (in Rs.)	(a) Date of uploading
3) EMD (Rs. in lacs)	4) Class	(b) Pre bid Meeting
5) Time Limit		(c) Last date for online downloading/ submission of tender document
		(d) Date for submission of tender documents
		(e) Online verification of tender document
		(f) Opening of Technical bid
		(g) Opening of Price bid

Works under the Chief Engineer (Amdavad), SSNNL, Gandhinagar

Tender Notice No- 02 of 2025-26

ID No. 175923

Enhancement of Irrigation facilities to the Nalkantha Area (Phase-II) including operations and maintenance for 5 years.

1	2	3
(1) 95426.42/-	(2) 35400/-	(a) 21/04/2025 18:00 hrs.
(3) 954.27/-	(4) "AA" Class & Above	(b) 01/05/2025 12:00 hrs. Onwards
(5) 24 Months		(c) 05/06/2025 up to 18:00 hrs.
		(d) 06/06/2025 to 13/06/2025 up to 18:00 hrs.
		(e) 06/06/2025 from 11:00 hrs. onwards, (if possible)
		(f) 06/06/2025 from 12:00 hrs. onwards, (if possible)
		(g) 06/06/2025 from 13:00 hrs. onwards, (if possible)

Note: The details regarding contact place for submission and opening of tender, please visit website tender.nprocure.com

INF/123/2025-26

PATRACHAR VIDYALAYA

DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION

GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI

GURU TEG BAHADUR NAGAR, DELHI-110009

(website: www.edudel.nic.in)

No. F.10(30)/PV/Adv/23/ 21 Date: 17.04.2025

Admission-Notice

The interested persons/students of Delhi who fulfil the criteria/guidelines mentioned in the 'Prospectus of Patrachar Vidyalaya for the academic session 2025-26' may apply for admission to Class X or XII (as per eligibility) in Patrachar Vidyalaya (NIOS Curriculum) for the Session 2025-26 from 01.04.2025 to 25.07.2025 (without any Late Fee).

The 'Prospectus-2025-26' and link for Online Admission is available on the official website of Directorate of Education i.e. www.edudel.nic.in (Patrachar Vidyalaya Icon).

S. No.	Criteria	For Class - X	For Class-XII
1.	Eligibility Criteria A valid Date of Birth Proof is mandatory.	(i) Students who passed or failed in Class IX from a recognised school OR Students who failed in Class X from a recognised school are also eligible for admission to Class X. (ii) Students who studied privately/at home upto Class IX are also eligible for admission to Class X on submission of an Affidavit to this effect by their Parents/Guardians.	(i) Students who passed/ failed in Class XI OR Students who have completed minimum one year gap period as on 31.03.2025 after passing Class X from a recognised school are also eligible for admission to Class XII
2.	Minimum Age Required	14 Years as on 31st July 2025	-----
3.	Maximum Age	No Maximum Age restriction.	No Maximum Age restriction.
4.	Date of Admission without Late Fee	01.04.2025 to 25.07.2025	01.04.2025 to 25.07.2025
5.	Date of Admission with Late Fee	01.08.2025 to 13.08.2025 (with Late Fee Rs. 260/-) 16.08.2025 to 29.08.2025 (with Late Fee Rs. 520/-) 01.09.2025 to 13.09.2025 (with Late Fee Rs. 910/-). In addition, Admission/Registration Fee, Examination Fee, Practical Fee and Additional Subject Fee etc., as prescribed by NIOS for the period 01.04.2025 to 25.07.2025 are also payable.	

Note: Students must note that the Patrachar Vidyalaya, Guru Teg Bahadur Nagar, Delhi-110009 is the only Patrachar Institution/School in Delhi working under the Directorate of Education, GNCT Delhi and accredited with NIOS. Patrachar Vidyalaya has not authorised/hired any Branch/Institution/Coaching Centre/Agents for Admissions or for receiving fees etc. Students must be careful with the institutions having similar names.

Sd/-, DEPUTY DIRECTOR
PATRACHAR VIDYALAYA
Directorate of Education
Govt. of NCT of Delhi

DIP/Shabdarth/Classified/0019/25-26

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tender & notices

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is notified for the information that my original sale deed with entire chain of documents for my residence H No 8 G/F Bazar Lane Bhogal New Delhi-110014 have been lost on 03rd April 2025 noon time. If found please contact - Renuka Jhau at 9811085786.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for information of General Public that our client is ACQUIRING THE COMMERCIAL OFFICE NO. 302, 3rd FLOOR, MILESTONE, PANCHSATI, PUNJAB, OPP. IDBI BANK, OPP. TRIVENI APARTMENT, JAMNAGAR-361008 ("PROPERTY") from M/S. NAYAN & KEVIN CONSULTANTS & ENGINEERS having its office at STREET NUMBER 3, OSWAL COLONY, JAMNAGAR, GUJARAT-361005. Any person having any claims in respect of the said property in any manner whatsoever, is hereby required to give a notice of the same to the undersigned at the address given below within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication hereof together with copies of all documents on the basis of which such claims are made failing which it will be deemed that there is no claim against the said property and our client may proceed to conclude the transaction of purchase.

ASHOK CHHABRA & ASSOCIATES
ADVOCATES (D236/1974)
Office: A-104, L.G. Defeat Colony,
New Delhi-110024, M. 9810008481

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to all the concerned that I, Mr. Satyaveer Sharma, Alotee of Apartment No. 103, 1st Floor-3, situated in Sprerwood, Sector-103, Gurgaon is in process of selling the aforesaid Apartment in open market to a third party. It may please be noted that if anyone has an objection in regard to the transfer of the aforesaid Apartment to a third party, may come forward and file their objections along with supporting documents before the undersigned within the period of 14 (fourteen) days from the publication of this notice, failing which, it shall be construed that there are no claim/demands of any sort over the transfer of Apartment and the Company shall proceed forward.

Mr. Kamal Kumar Nagpal
General Manager-Commercial
AlphaCorp Development Limited
6th Floor, J-602, Tower 'J',
World Trade Center, Naraina, Ring Road,
New Delhi-110029 (Haryana)
T +91 11 4831 1111
E-Kamal.n@alphacorp.in

TENDERS

TENDER invited for Security Services at Saviour Greenisle GH-11, Crossing Republik, Ghaziabad Detailed tender document is available at our office and <https://sgaoo.co.in> Last Date April 24, 2025

COURT NOTICE

PROCLAMATION OF SALE (UNDER ORDER 21 RULE 66) IN THE HONBLE COURT OF SH. SACHIN MITTAL - LD, DISTRICT JUDGE-03, (SOUTH EAST DISTRICT), ROOM NO. 316, 3rd FLOOR, SAKET COURT COMPLEX, NEW DELHI EX. 3281/2024

IN THE MATTER OF: Universal Polychem (India) Private Limited ... Decree Holder
Versus
M.P. Teelinks Limited & Ors. ... Judgment Debtors

To General Public,
In the above noted execution matter, the Hon'ble court had attached immovable property of the judgement debtor no. 1 for realization of the decretal amount in favor of the decree holder. Vide its order dated 21.03.2025, the said Hon'ble court had directed the undersigned/court auctioneer to conduct the sale of the below mentioned attached property by way of issuance of proclamation of sale.

Description of the attached property : Entire First Floor (covered area 1350 sq. ft.) with one car parking space on ground floor, without roof rights, with one servant quarter with attached bathroom on the terrace of top floor, in a freehold property bearing no.-460, First Floor, Lajpat Nagar-III, Delhi-110024 consisting of basement plus ground floor plus two storied building.

Date, Time & Place of Sale: 06.05.2025 at 11:00 AM to 01:00 PM at the location of the attached property.

Accordingly, in compliance of the directions passed by the Hon'ble Court, this public notice/proclamation of sale is being issued and interested persons parties are invited to participate in the auction process as per the details provided above. Kindly note that attached property is being sold "as is where is" and what is there is basis" and the sale of the attached property shall be subject to confirmation by the Hon'ble Court.

It is further notified that the reserved price of the attached property is fixed at INR 1,70,00,000/- (Rupees One Crore Seventy Lakh only) and the successful bidder shall pay 25% of the sale consideration immediately upon the declaration of sale during auction by way of cheque in favor of "DISTRICT JUDGE-03, SOUTH EAST DISTRICT, SAKET COURT COMPLEX, NEW DELHI" and remaining full sale consideration before the Hon'ble court within fifteen days after the declaration of sale of property.

All the interested parties may inspect the attached property on the date of inspection i.e. 06.05.2025 between 10:30 AM to 11:00 AM.

Given under my hand on this 16th day of April 2025 in terms of the order dated 21.03.2025 passed by the Hon'ble Court in the captioned execution matter.
Ajay Mathawan
Court Auctioneer/Advocate
Flat No. 67, Vidhi Apartments,
Plot No. 116, P.J. Extension,
Delhi-110092
Mob: 9899662697

real estate

FOR SALE

SOUTH DELHI

FOR Sale-A Block Defence Colony, 217 sq yds, 3BHK, Ground & First Floor, East Facing, Wide Road New Height, Call - 9971478478

FOR SALE Govt. approved Marriage/ Party hall in South Delhi. Prime location. Clear title. Contact +9198710 23345

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8076115713
9899890102

personal

CHANGE OF NAME

I Kanika Sharan D/O Siywar Sharan, R/O A-40, Vijay Nagar, Mohan garden Extn, Uttam nagar-110059, changed my father's name to SIYWAR SHARAN SINGH.

I have changed my name from Yuvraj (old name) to Yuvraj Singh Jakhar (new name) in future I will be known as Yuvraj Singh Jakhar (new name) son of Badal Jakhar R/O Mayur Vihar, Patparganj, New Delhi

I Sunehra Devi w/o Late Sukhbir singh r/o H.No.516, Prahaldpur Bangar, North West Delhi-110045 have changed my name to Sunera Devi.Wrong (DOB-18.12.1963) Correct (DOB-20.12.1963)

I, Naveen Kumar, R/O H.No. 156 B, Dabri, Delhi-110045, have changed my name from Aashu Jarawara to Aashu Jarawarey for all purposes.

LOST & FOUND

I, Saroj Narang, W/o Ramesh Chandra Narang have lost Original Sale Deed of property 15/200, First Floor, Mahiya Nagar, New Delhi. Founder please return to above address.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

कब्ज व गैस से परेशान? टैब्लेट व चूर्ण
टैब्लेट व चूर्ण
पेट का भारीपन अपचन दूर भगाये
RELIEF FROM CONSTIPATION
पर संपर्क करे: 8601841515 TATA 101

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98108-00550
हमेशा सर्टिफाइड रत्न ही खरीदें | सबसे सस्ता | सबसे अच्छा

KAROL BAGH (Monday Closed) 2547/7, 2nd Floor, Beadonpura Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi-5. 98108-00550
GURGAON (7 Days Open) UGF- 25, JMD Regent Arcade Mall, Sector 28, Gurugram, Haryana. 93555-04878
For Free Consultation Call For Appointment करीब नंबर: 98108-00550 (Tue, Fri & Sat) गुडगाँव: 93555-04878 (Sun & Mon)

TIMES interact
TO ADVERTISE IN THE CLASSIFIEDS SECTION, FOR ANY OF THE BELOW MENTIONED CATEGORIES
PROPERTY, MATRIMONIAL, BUSINESS, CHANGE OF NAME, LOST & FOUND, RECRUITMENT, EDUCATION, SHOPPING, TENDER, PUBLIC NOTICE, SERVICES, VEHICLES, TRAVEL, BIRTHDAY/ANNIVERSARY ADS

HC upholds conviction of 7 for forging WW2 MIA soldier's will to grab land

Chandigarh: Punjab and Haryana high court has upheld the conviction of seven villagers from Punjab's Nawanshahr for attempting to swindle land by forging the will of a soldier who vanished during World War 2, reports Ajay Sura.

Harbans Singh, a native of Sheikhpur Bagh village, disappeared after 1943, prompting his wife Joginder Kaur to have him officially declared dead to claim his benefits as a legal heir. Decades later, the group of villagers falsely claimed Harbans had lived with one of them and passed away leaving a will, aiming to claim his property.

As they failed to prove the presence of the soldier, HC upheld their conviction and three-year term awarded by the trial court. "If it is proved that a person has not been heard of for seven years by those who would naturally have heard of him if he was alive, then the burden of proof that he is still alive would rest upon the person who affirms the factum of his living," Justice Mahabir Singh Sindhu said in his April 7 order.

HC directed the seven, who were out on bail, to surrender before a Nawanshahr



"If it is proved that a person has not been heard of for seven years by those who would naturally have heard of him if he was alive, then the burden of proof that he is still alive would rest upon the person who affirms the factum of his living"

JUSTICE MAHABIR SINGH SINDHU

court within six weeks and undergo the remaining part of their sentence. Joginder, on whose complaint the FIR was filed in 1996, died during court proceedings, as did some of the accused.

Joginder married Harbans in 1941, and he joined the Army about a year later. She never saw or heard from him after 1943. Harbans owned over 50 kanal (approximately 6.2 acres) of land. With no kids and advanced in age, she lived with one Bawa Singh, who supported her.

"The offence is serious, inasmuch as, the petitioners committed forgery with a soldier who left his wife, house, and property to serve in WW2. Taking advantage of his absence, petitioners opened a fake bank account in the

name of Harbans Singh, manufactured a forged will dated April 7, 1992, and thereafter, procured a false entry of his death. Thus, in the opinion of this court, petitioners do not deserve any leniency on the quantum of sentence," HC held while dismissing a plea by the seven against their conviction.

According to the prosecution, the seven villagers forged a bank passbook of Joginder's husband, entered a false death record, concocted a will through impersonation, and manipulated revenue officials to fraudulently transfer land ownership. They were sentenced by the lower court in July 2010 and their conviction was later upheld by a sessions court. They later appealed in HC.

800-pg chargesheet filed against 'insurance mafia'

Names 11 From Bihar, UP & J'khand

Sandeep.Rai@timesofindia.com

Meerut: Three months after a insurance scam worth hundreds of crores was unearthed in Sambhal, police have filed an 800-page chargesheet against 11 accused — residents of UP, Bihar and Jharkhand. The group — dubbed the "insurance mafia" — allegedly created fraudulent life insurance policies involving the dying and even those already dead to siphon off money from reputed companies such as ICICI Prudential, PNB MetLife, Bajaj Allianz and SBI Life Insurance.

TOI was the first to expose the scam and had then reported extensively on the reach, pattern and players involved in the multi-state fraud. The investigation, led by

YOU READ IT HERE IN TOI
Insuring the dying & dead: Multi-crore scam running for 7 years across 8 states uncovered
Agents Colluded With Gram Pradhans, Town Authorities, Asha Workers, Insurance Cos To Get Policies For Terminally Ill, Only To Steal Compensation From Desperate Families
A shiny black SUV roared through the narrow lanes of a village in Bihar. A man in a white shirt and dark trousers, looking slightly nervous, stepped out of the car. He was surrounded by a group of people, some of whom were holding documents. The man, who was identified as a police officer, was seen talking to a group of people who appeared to be in a state of distress. The scene was set in a rural area, with simple houses and a dirt road. The police officer was seen talking to a group of people who appeared to be in a state of distress. The scene was set in a rural area, with simple houses and a dirt road.

Sambhal SP Krishna Kumar Vishnoi, ASP Anukriti Sharma, and circle officer Deepak Kumar, came after a tip-off that revealed a 26-member syndicate operating across many states. These individuals were subsequently arrested in connection with several FIRs lodged against them.

"The 800-page chargesheet, filed on Thursday, has every detail of the evidence collected from Jan 17 when an SUV was intercepted in Sambhal and unexplained

cash in large quantity along with PAN cards, debit cards, etc, were found in it. That led to unearthing of the scam, spread across 12 states. As of now, we've named 11 accused, including Omkeshwar Mishra (Varanasi), Surajpal, Shaikh Khan from Sambhal; and Shivendra Kumar from Bihar, in the chargesheet. Since it is an ongoing investigation, there are many others who are on the run or under the radar. Their names will be included in supple-

Vasectomy failure does not imply medical negligence: HC

Chandigarh: Punjab and Haryana HC overturned the compensation awarded to a couple who conceived a child after a failed vasectomy, reports Ajay Sura. HC said this was "not due to medical negligence" but because the couple did not exercise "due care and caution". While passing the order, judge Nidhi Gupta referred to a SC verdict, saying a sterilised woman can become pregnant due to natural causes but could opt for termination of pregnancy. The pleadings in the case took a dramatic turn with the husband comparing his restraint to that of Lord Ram, claiming he showed "great tolerance" by not abandoning his wife, invoking Sita's 'Agni Pariksha'. To this, HC referred to the couple's medical reports and said the girl born due to failed vasectomy was their daughter; so there was no cause for social stigma. The state had approached HC arguing that the couple ignored the post-surgery precautions advised by doctors.

Duo with link to Dubai fugitive charged for Sambhal 'murders'

Kanwardeep.Singh@timesofindia.com

Bareilly: A 500-page chargesheet was Thursday filed by the SIT in cases involving the alleged murder of Mohd Bilal and Ayan, two of the five men killed in violence during a court-directed survey of the Shahi Jama Masjid in Sambhal on Nov 24, 2024.

An SIT officer in Sambhal, requesting anonymity, said Friday that the chargesheet in the "two murder cases" was submitted to the local court on Thursday evening, and "chargesheets in two other cases will be filed soon". Police had already filed chargesheets related to stone pelting and mob attack, and this was the "first chargesheet" filed in connection to the deaths in the violence. Several police personnel were also injured at that time.

Ghulam Shah and Mulla Afroz — both local residents with a criminal past and purported links with Dubai-based fugitive Shariq Satha



This is the first chargesheet in connection to the deaths during the Sambhal violence in Nov '24

— have been charged with the alleged murders of Bilal and Ayan along with "inciting others to create violence". After their arrest, police said a large quantity of weapons and other suspicious items were seized.

During investigation, the name of Satha, one of the alleged masterminds, cropped up. He was purportedly found to have orchestrated the unrest via local aides, and "supplied the weapons". The probe also revealed that Shah and Afroz alleged-

ly fired with illegal weapons upon the crowd on Nov 24. The duo is believed to have said during interrogation that the supply of weapons was carried out at the behest of Satha, who was "providing instructions from the UAE".

Police have registered seven FIRs for "violence". The victim's kin have lodged four more FIRs against unidentified persons for the "killings". Another FIR was filed by an injured person against unidentified suspects of Turkic descent in Moradabad for "attempt to murder". All 12 FIRs are under SIT investigation. Police also recovered bullets reportedly manufactured in Pakistan and the US, suggesting "external links".

Among the 12 FIRs, 37 accused have been named, including SP MP Ziaur Rahman Barq and MLA Iqbal Mahmood's son Suhail. In addition, around 3,750 unidentified individuals are accused in multiple cases, and according to police, over 80 people have been arrested so far.

HC stays UP mosque razing till May 23

Prayagraj: Allahabad HC has stayed the demolition of Madina Masjid in UP's Fatehpur district till the next hearing, fixed for May 23, reports Rajesh Kumar Pandey. Hearing a writ petition filed by Haider Ali, president of Waqf Sunni Madina Masjid Committee, against the district revenue authorities' order clearing the demolition, Justice Manish Kumar Nigam Thursday directed state govt to file its reply in two weeks. The petitioner contended that the order for demolition of the mosque was passed on Aug 22, 2024, merely on the ground that he had encroached upon the gram sabha land. The entire proceedings were concluded within a period of 26 days, and no opportunity was granted to him to file evidence in support of his case, the petitioner further submitted.

KEM doc suspended after POSH complaint by 6

Lata.Mishra@timesofindia.com

Mumbai: A senior doctor at BMC-run KEM Hospital has been placed under suspension after six women doctors filed a complaint of sexual harassment against him. Dr Ravindra Deokar, professor in the forensic medicine and toxicology department, has been barred from attending work or taking up any work linked to his profession privately. Police from Bhoiwada station, where the doctors filed an FIR on April 12 detailing multiple instances of inappropriate sexual conduct, have pasted a notice on the door of the doctor's residence inside KEM campus asking him to present himself for questioning. "His phone is switched off

Child rapist-killer freed after 21 yrs for good conduct

Rourkela: A convict who was given the death penalty for the rape and murder of a five-year-old in 2002 before Supreme Court commuted his sentence to a life term has been freed from Odisha's Rourkela jail after 21 years due to good behaviour under a govt premature release policy, reports Malay Raj. Purna Chandra Kusal, 48, was among three released Wednesday from the jail and 30 across the state under the policy. Among the other two, one was serving a life term for rape and the other for murder, assistant jailor Priyajit Mangus said. Prison authorities said Kusal, who has lost vision in one eye, demonstrated exemplary behaviour and was elected "panchayat" member by inmates four times, most recently in 2022-23. "He showed remorse for his actions," said an official.

Office of the Chief Engineer (East) cum Addl. Secretary. C. A.D Jaipur
Phone 0141-2709487, Email:-cecadjaipur@rajasthan.gov.in
फ़ोन नं.:- F-224/CE(E)CAD/T/NIT/2024-25/1531 दिनांक:-03.04.2025
E-TENDER NOTICE NO. 01/2025-26
On behalf of Governor of Rajasthan E-Tenders are invited from "AA" Class category or equivalent contractors/firms registered in CAD/Water Resources Department and State Government/Other State Government/Authorized organizations of Central Government/CPWD/Post and Telegraph department/Railway etc. for the works of Cement Concrete Lining by Paver Machine (4 Nos. of works) of Chambal Right Main Canal System CAD Kota amounting to Rs. 27578.80 Lac. The tender documents & other details may be downloaded and uploaded from the following websites:-
1. <http://www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>
2. www.dipronline.org
3. <http://www.spppraj.nic.in>
UBN:- CKJ2526WLOB00001 CKJ2526WLOB00002 CKJ2526WLOB00003 CKJ2526WLOB00004
Sd/-
Chief Engineer (East) Cum
Additional Secretary C.A.D.
Jaipur
DIPR/C/4995/2025

POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION OF UTTARAKHAND LTD.
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"Vidyal Bhawan" Near ISBT Crossing, Saharanpur Road, Majra, Dehradun- 248002
Corporate ID U40101UR200456C028675 Tel. No. 0135-2642711
E-TENDER CORRIGENDUM-2
The clarifications of the E-Tender for "Replacement of old Panther conductor with HTLS conductor of 132 KV Majra-Jhajira line" against Tender Specification no. PTCUL/E-Tender/C&P-II/TL-19/2024-25 has been uploaded on e-tender website. For more details please visit the e-tender website www.uktenders.gov.in (tender id no. 2025_PTCU4_81047_1) and for e-tender corrigendum notice our website www.ptcul.org. All other terms and conditions shall remain same.
For any assistance on E-Tendering, please contact +91-8899890000
Ro 713/HQPU/PTCUL/
Superintending Engineer (C&P-II)
Dated 17.04.2025 "Save Electricity in the Interest of Nation"

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-Tendering Tender Notice
Deputy Chief Engineer (Construction), Planning, N.C. Railway, Prayagraj for and on behalf of the President of India invites online open E-Tenders for "Linking of track and other P-way activities between Chunar-Sonbhadra section in connection with Chunar-Chopra doubling Work. "(Two packets System) for the following works:
E-Tender No. : CEN-CAR-CPU-2025-26-01 | Approx. Cost : Rs. 49.81 Cr
Description of work : "Linking of track and other P-way activities between Chunar-Sonbhadra section in connection with Chunar-Chopra doubling Work."
Date of closing Tender : 14.05.2025 | Completion period : 18 months
Tenders on line can be submitted up to 15:00 hrs. on 14.05.2025. For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.ireps.gov.in 66125 (C)
CPRONCR | North central railways | Cproncr | www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

TOURISM CORPORATION OF GUJARAT LIMITED (TCGL)
(A Government of Gujarat undertaking)
Udyog Bhavan, Block No. 16, 4th Floor, Sector - 11, Gandhinagar - 382 011
Website: <https://www.gujarattourism.com>
TENDER NOTICE
Bids are invited from reputed and experienced Consultants for "Setting up of Project Management Unit (PMU) for Gujarat Tourism"
The project requirements, technical specifications, eligibility criteria, selection process, etc. are included in the Tender documents, which shall be available for download from the websites: <https://tender.nprocure.com/> and <https://www.gujarattourism.com> from 19/04/2025 onwards.
The last date for submission of the Technical Bid and Financial Bid (online only) is 19/05/2025 up to 6:00 pm. and Technical Bid (physical only) is 21/05/2025 up to 3:00 pm. Managing Director

TOURISM CORPORATION OF GUJARAT LIMITED (TCGL)
(A Government of Gujarat undertaking)
Udyog Bhavan, Block No. 16, 4th Floor, Sector - 11, Gandhinagar - 382 011
Website: <https://www.gujarattourism.com>
TENDER NOTICE
Bids are invited from reputed and experienced Consultants for preparation of Policy and Action Plan for "Development of Caravan Tourism, Camping Sites and Wayside Amenity for Gujarat Tourism"
The project requirements, technical specifications, eligibility criteria, selection process, etc. are included in the Tender documents, which shall be available for download from the websites: <https://tender.nprocure.com/> and <https://www.gujarattourism.com> from 19/04/2025 onwards.
The last date for submission of the Technical Bid and Financial Bid (online only) is 19/05/2025 up to 6:00 pm. and Technical Bid (physical only) is 21/05/2025 up to 3:00 pm. Managing Director

Karnataka State Medical Supplies Corporation Limited
No.1, Dr. Siddhai Puranik Road, KHB Colony, Magadi Road, Bangalore - 560079. Phone: +91-80-29619801, Email: md.ksmscl@gmail.com
No: KSMSCLEQPT/HFW/NPCBVI/OPHTHAL/TND/02/2025-26 Date: 17.04.2025
TENDER NOTIFICATION
Ref. Tender Notification No: KSMSCLEQPT/HFW/NPCBVI/OPHTHAL/TND/02/2025-26 Dated: 17.04.2025
Nationwide Tender is invited through e-Tendering system under KTTP Act 1999 and Rules 2000 for the following tender:
RE-TENDER TENDER FOR SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF PROCUREMENT OF OPHTHALMIC EQUIPMENT UNDER NPCB & VI PROGRAMME (IND 0226)
Details regarding EMD, Terms and Conditions and other information are available in the Tender Document, which can be downloaded from the website <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> from 17.04.2025. The eligible tenderers shall submit their e-tenders under e-procurement platform for above mentioned tenders. Further information if any may be obtained from this office.
Sd/-
Managing Director
KSMSC, Bangalore
DIPR/CP/248/SSC/2025-26

KARNATAKA STATE INDUSTRIAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
"Khanija Bhavan" 4th Floor, East Wing, No.49, Race Course Road, Bengaluru -560001 Ph. 080 22258131-33, 22254330, Website: <https://ksiidc.karnataka.gov.in>
Email: eswara.ksiidc@gmail.com
Selection of a Professional Consultancy Firm to Prepare Vision Document for KSIIDC
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Though Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (<https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>) KSIIDC intends to select a well-established, reputed professional consultancy firm to Prepare Vision Document for KSIIDC, in accordance with the Terms of Reference of RFP document. The consultancy firm should have domain expertise and functional competency and skilled manpower for accomplishing the assignment. The RFP document is available in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (<https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>). Interested Consultants may submit their Proposals for providing the services along with requisite EMD (INR 1,00,000/- only) through the e-Procurement platform from 19.04.2025.
IMPORTANT DATES: Pre-bid Meeting: 25.04.2025. Last date for submission of Proposals: 20.05.2025. KSIIDC reserves the right to change the terms of the RFP and reject any or all Bids without assigning any reasons thereof.
In case of any queries / clarifications, please contact: General Manager-I/c (Recovery), email: eswara.ksiidc@gmail.com
Sd/- General Manager, KSIIDC

NORTHERN RAILWAY
OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE
For & on behalf of the President of India, Chief Workshop Manager, N.Rly. C&W workshop, Jagadhri Workshop/Yamuna Nagar invites open e-tender for the following work:
1 Name of work Work of Handling, Movement and many other activities related to ICF & LHB Springs at C&W Workshop, Northern Railway, Jagadhri for 02 years
2 Location Northern Railway, Carriage & Wagon Repair Shop, Jagadhri Workshop, Yamuna Nagar, Haryana-135002
3 Tender Value Rs. 7286169.60
4 Quantity As per Scope
5 Cost of Tender form Nil
6 Earnest money amount ₹ 145700.00
7 Completion period of the work 24 months from the date of issuance of Letter of Acceptance
8 Date & Time for submission of tender form 09.05.2025 till 15:30 hrs.
9 Opening of tender 09.05.2025 till 15:35 hrs. Tender opening will be done any time after the tender closing time. The tenderers are not required to be present during the opening. Railway reserves the right to open the tender any time after closing of tender.
10 Website particulars www.ireps.gov.in
No: 6-S/60/Tender/2024-25 dt. 17.04.2025 1156/25
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Government Of Rajasthan
Office of the Settlement Commissioner & CEO, RBAAS
Viman Bhawan, Gopalbari Jaipur-302001, Fax 0141-2373904
Email: scr-rj@nic.in
F/19/SCR/DILRMP/Incen./DGPS/2024/ 821 Date:- 15/04/2025
NOTICE INVITING e-BID
Commissioner, Land Settlement Department & CEO, RBAAS, Rajasthan invites e-Bid proposals from the eligible bidders for the following bid:
S.No. Procurement Activity Estimated cost of the Bid Bid Start Date & Bid Opening Date Technical Bid Opening Date
1 Procurement of 39 DGPS Machine sets for Rajasthan State at Land Settlement Department. Rs. 7.80 crores 17-04-2025 from 10:00 am & 08-05-2025 at 6:00 pm 09-05-2025 at 11:00 am
The details of the bidding document can be seen at website: <http://sppprajasthan.gov.in>, <http://www.landrevenue.rajasthan.gov.in> In case any of bidders fails to physically submit the instrument for Tender Fee, Bid Security, and RSL Processing Fee, its bid shall not be accepted.
Sd/-
(Dr. Arun Garg)
Commissioner Land Settlement & CEO, RBAAS
Rajasthan, Jaipur
DIPR/C/5274/2025

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
ABSENTEE NOTICE
Letter No.: Sig/E-10/रो.कू.तौ./2025/Notice Dated: 16.04.2025
It is informed that Shri Rohit Kumar Tomar S/o Shri Vijendra Singh, Technician-III/Sig./N.C.R./Makkhanpur, has been unauthorised absent since 26.07.2022. Therefore, it is informed that Shri Rohit Kumar Tomar S/o Shri Vijendra Singh, Technician-III/Sig./N.C.R./Makkhanpur should report to the office of SSE/Sig./East/Tundla within 10 days of publication of this notice. Otherwise it will be considered that you are not interested to continue the Railway service and the Railway administration is free to take ex parte decision against you.
Name- Mr. Rohit Kumar Tomar
Post- Technician-III/Sig./N.C.R./ Makkhanpur
Father- Shri Vijendra Singh
Village Muzaffarpur Devidas, Post- Phulsanha Dhampur
District- Bijnor (Uttar Pradesh) PIN- 246733 667/25 (A)
North central railways | Cproncr | www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
NOTICE INVITING E-AUCTION
Letter No.: DRMC/AGRA/PAY & USE/POLICY/2024 Dated: 16.04.2025
On Behalf of The President of India, The Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, North Central Railway -Agra invites E-Auction as per categories given as under:-
Category: Normal Pay & Use | Auction Catalogue No.: PNU-AGRA-25-2
Manning of Normal Pay & Use Toilet on Operation and Maintenance (O&M) basis at Achhnera Jn. Railway Station.
Manning of Normal Pay & Use Toilet (IRFC) on Operation and Maintenance (O&M) basis at Vrindaban road Railway Station Circulating Area.
Manning of Normal Pay & Use Toilet (IRFC) on Operation and Maintenance (O&M) basis at IDGAH Railway Station Circulating Area.
Manning of Normal Pay & Use Toilet (IRFC) on Operation and Maintenance (O&M) basis at Chata Railway Station Circulating Area.
Manning of Normal Pay & Use Toilet (IRFC) on Operation and Maintenance (O&M) basis at Ramgarh Railway Station Circulating Area.
E-Auction Start Date and Time: Date:- 02.05.2025 Time:- 11:00
E-Auction End Date and Time: Date:- 02.05.2025 Time:- 12:10
Note: Prospective bidders are requested to visit E-Auction Leasing Module on IREPS website (www.ireps.gov.in). The Lot-wise details are available therein under the above mentioned Catalogue Number. 659/25 (A)
North central railways | Cproncr | www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

दक्षिणांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि
मुख्य अभियन्ता (RDSS), द0वि0वि0नि0लि0, आगरा
ई-निविदा सूचना: पत्रांक:- 1367/मु0अभि0(RDSS)/आगरा विज्ञापन दिनांक: 17.04.2025
कार्य का नाम: आर0डी0एस0एस0 योजना के अन्तर्गत छूटे हुए दक्षिणांचल निगम लि के 2 जनपदों ललितपुर एवं महोबा में DA-JGUA के अन्तर्गत ऑन-ग्रिड विद्युतीकरण के कार्य
ई-निविदा प्रपत्र शुल्क: ₹ 5900/- घरोहर राशि: ₹ 3.80 लाख
ई-निविदा हेतु प्रि-बिड मीटिंग दिनांक 30.04.2025 को समय 12:00 बजे तथा दिनांक 13.05.2025 को समय 13:00 बजे तक ऑनलाइन अपलोड की जा सकेगी एवं निविदा दिनांक 14.05.2025 को सांय 16:00 बजे खोली जायेगी।
विस्तृत जानकारी एवं प्रपत्र वेबसाइट पर उपलब्ध है। अग्रहर समस्त सूचनाएं वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर ही प्रदर्शित की जाएगी।
निविदा शुल्क केवल ऑनलाइन DVVNL, AGRA की वेबसाइट www.dvvn.org के माध्यम से ही स्वीकार किया जायेगा। विवरण के लिए कृपया निविदा प्रपत्र ध्यानपूर्वक पढ़ लें।
EMD/Bid Security Amount एवं Tender Fee esa MSME पंजीकृत संस्थाओं को MSME Guideline के अनुसार छूट दी जायेगी।

JAIPUR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Indira Circle, Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg, Jaipur-302004
No: JDA/EE&TA to Dir.Engg.-I/2025-26/D- Dated: 17.04.2025
NOTICE INVITING BID
NIB No. : EE & TA to Dir. Engg.-I/03/2025-26
Bids are invited from interested bidders for following works :-
S. No. UBN No. Cost of Work (Lacs) Nature of Work Last Date
1 JDA2526WLOB00043 17067.21 Elevated Road 14.05.2025
2 JDA2526WLOB00047 2180.86 Road (RC) 08.05.2025
3 JDA2526WLOB00045 576.93 Drain 06.05.2025
4 JDA2526WLOB00012 635.60 Electrical 28.04.2025
Other particulars of the respective bid may be visited on Procurement Portal website www.sppprajasthan.gov.in, www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in and www.jda.rajasthan.gov.in.
Executive Engineer & TA to Dir.Engg-I
Raj_Samwad/C/25/965

HUBLI ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(Wholly owned Government of Karnataka undertaking)
Corporate Office, Navanagar, PB Road, Hubballi-580025
Phone: 9449057833, Fax: 0836-2324307 mail: ID.seepmc.hescom@gmail.com
Corporate Identity Number CIN: U31401KA2002SGC030437
No: HESCOM/SEE(PMC)/EE-P2/AEE-2/2025-26/ Cys:554 Date: 17-04-2025
SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPPP Portal Only)
Superintending Engineer (Ele), Projects Monitoring Cell, Corporate Office, HESCOM, Hubballi invites tenders for (Project-31 to 37) "Selection of Solar Power Generators (SPGs) on the basis of Build Own & Operate (BOO) for Design, Survey, Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning, Operation & Maintenance of grid connected distributed solar power plants for solarization of selected Agri feeders at Sub-Station (SS) level in HESCOM jurisdiction totally covering approximate 5,707 IP sets, its associated 11kV line to connect the plant with concerned SS and Remote Monitoring System (RMS) of solar power plants through RESCO mode, for 25 years under Component C-Feeder Level Solarization of PM-KUSUM scheme" vide Indent No: HESCOM/2025-26/SE0379
The detailed notification regarding the bid enquiry can be obtained by logging in to the website <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> on or after 17-04-2025
Sd/-
Superintending Engineer (Ele),
Projects Monitoring Cell,
HESCOM, Hubli
DIPR/Dharwad/61/
2025-26/DeshpandePublicity

अदिति महाविद्यालय
(रिजली विश्वविद्यालय)
जोधपी रोड, बावना, दिल्ली-110039
दोहरे फोन: 27751317
Aditi Mahavidyalaya
(University of Delhi)
Auchandi Road, Bawana, Delhi-110039
Telefax: 27751317
Advt. No. AM/2025/701 Dated: 09.04.2025
ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE POST OF PRINCIPAL
Online applications are invited in the prescribed Application Form from eligible candidates for appointment to the post of Principal, in the Academic Pay Level 14 of 7th Central Pay Commission Pay Matrix, in the College. The last date for receipt of application is 02.05.2025 or within two weeks from the date of publication of the advertisement in the Employment News, whichever is later.
Web link for applying online: <http://rec.uod.ac.in>
For complete details, please visit the College website: aditi.du.ac.in
Any addendum/corrigendum shall be posted only on the College/DU website.
Chairperson, Governing Body
Important Note:
The details regarding qualifications, publications, experience, screening guidelines and indicative proforma etc. are available on the College website along with this advertisement. The applicants are required to read these details before filling up the form.

UJVN Limited
H.O.: "UJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephone: 0135-2763908, Fax: 0135-2763598
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC028666, Website: www.ujvn.com
RO No. 270 e-tender corrigendum Notice-9 Dated : 17/04/2025
In continuation to uploaded below e-tender for construction of Sirkali Bhyol Rupsiabagar HEP (3X40 MW), Munsyari, Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand, date corrigendum has been uploaded in the portal.
Tender No. (Package-I): 01/DGM(Civil)/SBR/2024-25
Tender No. (Package-II): 02/DGM(Civil)/SBR/2024-25
Tender No. (Package-III): 03/DGM(Civil)/SBR/2024-25
Name of work (Pac-I): Construction of Cofferdam, Barrage, intake and its appurtenant works including river diversion works & associated project roads and bridges etc
Name of work (Pac-II): Construction of Feeder tunnel, Desander, HRT, SFT, surge shaft, valve house, adits and its appurtenant works & associated project roads.
Name of work (Pac-III): Construction of underground Power House Building, Tail Race tunnel, Switch yard and other associated work of Power House site, Adits, MAT, vertical pressure shaft & steel liner including branch tunnel & associated project roads.
Bid submission closing date on portal: 08.05.2025 upto 16:00 Hrs
For full & further details, kindly visit e-procurement portal "<http://uktenders.gov.in>".
DGM (Civil), Munsyari
"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited
(A Govt. of India Enterprise)
Notice for vacation of premises occupied unauthorisedly by Shri Sudhakar Bassi
As a final opportunity, Shri Sudhakar Bassi, former employee (no.2943) of BPCL is hereby notified about the order dated 18.9.2024 of Estate Officer, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited, NRO, Noida, in the matter of, his unauthorized occupation of company owned premises at Flat No. B-1, Vivek Vihar, Village Kuri Bhagatsni, Jodhpur - 342802.
The operative part of the aforesaid order reads as under:
"I hereby order that opponent Shri Sudhakar Bassi and all other persons who may be in occupation of the said premises or any part thereof to vacate the premises forthwith. In the event of refusal or failure to comply with this order, opponent Shri Sudhakar Bassi and all other concerned are liable to be evicted from the said premises....."
Failure to comply with the aforesaid order within 15 days will result in eviction process.
ESTATE OFFICER, BPCL, NOIDA REGIONAL OFFICE, NOIDA
Energisng Lives; Energisng Naya Bharat

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. 0420252026 Date: 17.04.2025
E-Tendering Tender Notice
Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering)/North Central Railway, Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites online open tenders (E-tender) as detailed below:-
S.No.: 1 E-Tender Notice No.: 0420252026-15, Name of Work : Balance Work of:- Proposed renovation of swimming pool, outside area and dismantling of school in Coral club at Prayagraj.
Approx. Cost (In ₹): ₹ 88,09,605.6 | Earnest Money (In ₹): ₹ 1,76,200.00
S.No.: 2 E-Tender Notice No.: 0420252026-16, Name of Work : Combined Tender for Balance work of: (A) Heavy repairs to GM Bungalow & surrounding campus at Leader Road, Prayagraj. (B) Rehabilitation of GM Bungalow at Leader Road, Prayagraj.
Approx. Cost (In ₹): ₹ 2,26,79,421.4 | Earnest Money (In ₹): ₹ 2,63,400.00
S.No.: 3 E-Tender Notice No.: 0420252026-17, Name of Work : Prayagraj-Improvement to staff quarters in Malgoadam, GRP, GPO & Rajapur colony.
Approx. Cost (In ₹): ₹ 2,34,74,925.2 | Earnest Money (In ₹): ₹ 2,67,400.00
Date & Time of Closing of tender:- For S.N.: 1 to 3- 09.05.2025 at 12:00 PM
Completion Period: For S. N. 1 & 2 :- 06 Months and S.N. 3:- 09 Months
Nature of work: For S.N.: 1 & 3:- Any Civil Engineering works and S.N. 2:- Construction of building.
Note: (1) For full details and submission of tenders, please see the Indian Railway website www.ireps.gov.in 668/25 (MG)
North central railways | Cproncr | www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

DELHI ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION
Viniyamak Bhawan, C-Block, Shivalik, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi - 110 017
www.derc.gov.in
RECRUITMENT NOTICE
Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission invites applications for filling the following position in the Office of Electricity Ombudsman on contract basis:
Sl. No Name of post Consolidated Salary No. of post
1. Secretary Rs. 1,00,000/- 1
● For further details such as eligibility, qualifications, experience and other terms & condition of appointment etc., please refer to DERC's website www.derc.gov.in.
● Applications for above position may be forwarded to the Secretary, Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission, Viniyamak Bhawan, C-Block, Shivalik, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi- 110017, clearly super-scribing the envelope with details of the position applied for.
● The last date for receipt of applications is 30 days from the date of advertisement.
DIP/Shabdharth/Classified/0018/25-26 Rajesh Dangl, Secretary

F.No. 20025/34/2023-NCST (e-26648)
Government of India
Ministry of Tribal Affairs
Filling up of two (2) posts of Director 'Group A' in National Commission of Scheduled Tribes (NCST) on deputation basis including short term contract in the Level 12 in the pay Matrix (Rs. 78800- 209200/-)
Applications are invited from eligible and willing officers under the Central Government or State Governments or Union territory or statutory or autonomous organisations or public sector undertakings or recognised Universities or recognised research institutions for appointment to the two (2) posts in National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST), proposed to be filled up on deputation basis including Short term contract.
For more details, please visit our website <https://tribal.nic.in>. The application through proper channel should reach at the following address within 60 days from the date of publication of the advertisement in the Employment News.
Dhiraj Chandra Ray
Deputy Director (NCST Division)
Ministry of Tribal Affairs
Gate No.5, First Floor,
Jeevan Tara Building
Ashoka Road, Patel Chowk
New Delhi
Email: dhirajc.ray@nic.in
(Telephone: 011-23340472) CBC 43101/11/0006/2526

F.No. 20025/66/2024-NCST (e-29322)
Government of India
Ministry of Tribal Affairs
Filling up of (1) post of Assistant Director 'Group A' in National Commission of Scheduled Tribes (NCST) on deputation basis in the Level 10 in the pay Matrix (Rs. 56100-177500/-)
Applications are invited from eligible and willing officers under the Central Government or State Governments or Union territory or statutory or autonomous organisations or public sector undertakings or recognised Universities or recognised research institutions for appointment to (1) post in National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST), proposed to be filled up on deputation basis.
For more details please visit our website <https://tribal.nic.in>. The application through proper channel should reach at the following address within 60 days from the date of publication of the advertisement in the Employment News.
Sh. Dhiraj Chandra Ray
Deputy Director (NCST Division)
Ministry of Tribal Affairs
Gate No.5, First Floor,
Jeevan Tara Building
Ashoka Road, Patel Chowk
New Delhi
Email: dhirajc.ray@nic.in
Telephone: 011-23340472
CBC 43101/11/0004/2526

Unique Identification Authority of India
4th Floor Bangla Sahib Road, Behind Kail Mandir
Gole Market, New Delhi - 110 001
Vacancy circular for filling up the post of Consultant (Electrical) on contract basis at Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) Head Office, New Delhi.
The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) invites applications from eligible retired officers on contract basis for one post of Consultant (Electrical) at Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) Head Office, New Delhi.
The application may be furnished in the prescribed proforma and forwarded to the Director (HR), Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), 4th Floor Bangla Sahib Road, Behind Kail Mandir, Gole Market, New Delhi - 110 001. The last date for receipt of applications complete in all respects is 20.4.2025.
Applications received after the last date or otherwise found incomplete shall not be considered. Further details, including the terms and conditions of application procedure, are available on the Authority's website at https://uidai.gov.in/images/vc_46_2025.pdf.
Director (HR)
Now Aadhaar Enrolment & Update Facilities can also be available at Aadhaar Seva Kendra (ASK). To locate one near you, visit uidai.gov.in or call 1947
CBC 54103/11/0004/2526

BUREAU OF INDIAN STANDARDS
Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution
(Department of Consumer Affairs),
Govt. of India
Manak Bhawan, 9 Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi-110002
INDICATIVE ADVERTISEMENT
Advertisement No. 01 (Consultant) /2025/HRD
Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), a statutory body under the administrative control of Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Govt. of India, is the National Standards Body of India and is responsible for activities in the field of Standardization, Product and System Certification, Hallmarking of Gold/Silver Jewellery, Laboratory Testing etc., in the country. BIS is also responsible for Standardization and Certification at the International level.
2. Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) invites online applications from willing and eligible candidates for engaging Consultants for Standardization Activities in BIS on contract basis for one year. Persons with requisite qualification and experience may apply online. The summary is as follows:
a) Total No. of Posts - 160
b) Upper age Limit - 65 years
c) Remuneration per month - ₹ 75,000/- (fixed)
d) Experience & Educational Qualification -Kindly see the detailed advertisement
3. The Detailed Advertisement is available on the BIS website: www.bis.gov.in. The candidates are required to apply ONLINE from 19.04.2025 onwards till 09.05.2025 (last date) through BIS website. No other means/mode of submission of applications will be accepted under any circumstances.
4. Application Fee: Nil.
BIS reserves the right to Revise/Reschedule/Cancel/ Suspend the process without assigning any reasons. The decision of BIS shall be final and no appeal shall be entertained in this regard.
Date: 19.04.2025 Place: New Delhi Head (HRD) Bureau of Indian Standards CBC 08103/12/0001/2526



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GREEN BELT VILLAGES

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Immediate Registry & Possession
Investment starts from 2.50 Cr per Acre
Huge upside potential

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L & K ZONE (UNDER MPD 2041)

5 ACRES - SECTOR 18
ON 25 FT ROAD, KHARKHARI NAHAR

3.5 ACRES - SECTOR 8
(K1 ONE) DICHAN KALAN
ADJOINING UER II

5 ACRES - SECTOR 5
ON 60 FT RD, DICHAN KALAN
ADJACENT TO UER II

2.5 ACRES - SECTOR 8
ON 60 FT ROAD, DICHAN KALAN
ADJACENT TO UER II

NEAR BY
15 MINUTES FROM IGI AIRPORT
10 MINUTES FROM YASHO BHOOMI/
DWARKA GOLF COURSE
CLEAR TITLE / 10 MINUTES FROM RAILWAY STATION

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MANDATE Deal: DLF Phase-4, 270 Sq. Yards Kothi for Sale next to Galleria Market, Gated, Prime Location
Capital Partners:- 9999774666

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DLF

Rajeev Mittal
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DLF THE Belaire area
3500 sqft, main Golf Course Road, Higher floor, 4 BHK for immediate sale
9811017103

DLF APARTMENTS FOR SALE

Crest
Aralias
Magnolias
Park Place

PRE RENTED

TATA ZUDIO	25,000	55 L
HOP-UP	42,500	85 L
TATA ZUDIO	60,000	1.53 CR
SCO FLOORS	90,000	1.77 CR
HDFC BANK	2.0 L	5.35 CR
SBI BANK	3.86 L	11.58 CR
HONDA SHOWROOM	5.93 L	15.82 CR

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Sunil Srivastava
9999499496

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GOVT. BANK	35,000	BANK	3,50,000
RELAXO	2,05,000	DOMINO'S	3,70,000
SHOPPERS STOP	2,25,000	BANK F.BLD.	8,00,000
BANK	2,40,000	MANYAVAR	10,00,000
TATA	4,25,000	WAREHOUSE	21,00,000
BANK	4,50,000	FULL BUILD	26,00,000

NARESH AGGARWAL PROP
9650524789, 9810278333

BUY/SELL ON DWARKA EXPRESSWAY PLOTS / SCO AVAILABLE IN GURGAON

READY TO MOVE/ UNDER CONSTRUCTION
Apartment available in Sobha/ Godrej / Elan and many more options available.

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ORCHID PETAL'S READY TO MOVE IN 500 sq.yd. 5BHK Luxury Villa

Sector 49, Gurugram

For More Info.
9310107701

FACTORY FOR SALE

SECTOR 37, PACE CITY-2, GURUGRAM

PRICE-19Cr

Basement / GF / FF / SF - 5745 sq ft each with 12 to 14 ft height
Third Floor - 4476 sq ft Shed with 15 ft height

Plot size-1000 sq mtr

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9810149494
9810036190

For Sale/Rent DLF Crest, Park Place, West-end Heights, Essel Tower Orlov & Pilot Court, Loans also Available

GUEST HOUSE CAR SHOWROOM FOR LEASE

1) 162P Sec-52 40k Rooms @16 Lac; 2) 1991 Sec-45, 18 rooms @ 7 lac; 3) 135 Sec-37 Commercial 25000 s.ft @25 Lac. Owner 9311139322.

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ADANI OYSTER
CONTACT
8510925219
8510926219

ADANI OYSTER Sec-102 1700sqft 3 Bedroom for Sale, One covered parking, higher Flr (20th), Demand-2.75 CR (fixed).

PRE RENTED FOR SALE

UNITECH COM. TOWER II
TENANT: SBI ADVT & MOTO Co.
LOCK-IN: 4 YRS | ESC: 6% Every Year
DEPOSIT: 4 Months | RCD: APR 25

Golf Course Road (Extn.)
TENANT: S200 Sq. Ft. Commerce Firm
LOCK-IN: 3 YRS | ESC: 15% in 3 Years
DEPOSIT: 2.5 Months | RCD: MAR 25

SECTOR 45
TENANT: HEALTHTECH PLATFORM
LOCK-IN: 3 YRS | ESC: 7% Every Year
DEPOSIT: 2.5 Months | RCD: MAR 25

M3M IFC
TENANT: INDIAN AIRLINES ACCELERATOR
LOCK-IN: 3 YRS | ESC: 15% in 3 Years
DEPOSIT: 4 Months | RCD: APR 25

MG Road
TENANT: MALAYALAM LARGEST RETAIL
LOCK-IN: 3 YRS | ESC: 15% in 3 Years
DEPOSIT: 4 Months | RCD: OCT 23

CONTACT OWNER
9910045276

TRINITY REALTY
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multiplex - Golf Course Extn. Rd 6000 sq. ft. with Long-term lease. Call now for details.

Exclusive Mandate

DLF Park Place
Golf Course Rd Gurugram

- Size: 1983 Sq.Ft
- 2 Car Parks
- 3 BHK + S.Q
- Park & Pool facing

Multiple Options available for Sale/ Lease

THE REALTY COMPASS Sandeep Sharma 8860611091 Ujjwal 9811312400

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11 ACRES OF LAND IN DERAMANDI
• New Bungalows, Built-up Area 20000 sq. ft.
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• Rarest Opportunity to Develop.
• Clear Title with Registry
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MANOJ SHARMA
9810779402

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SOBHA INTERNATIONAL CITY PLOTS

- 6-99 (PLOTS)
- BPTP AMSTORIA
- EXPERION WESTERLIES
- VATIKA

Many more options available.

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SABHARWAL ASSOCIATES
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9810099174

BLDR FLR Dup. & Triplex In DLF City 1-2-4, S.Lok-1, Park Facing, Cor-nr, Gated, 100% PBU Size, 300-400-500 & 1000 sq yd.

ASHOK SHARMA CLU CONSULTANT
Contact:-
9810491457

FARM LAND Sale Purchase Gurugram, Sohna, Dharuhera, Mansarovar, Parknagar, Jhajjar And New Bombay Highway. 9810491457

SONEPAT NOIDA

BEST Loc Factory Sale 21205 Sqyd on wide Shyamabad Rd, Near Bahalgarh -Sonapat Rd, Sonapat. Also Suit for Banquet hall & School. 9466202537

YAMUNA Ex-way near Noida Airport Rest & Inds. Authority Comm. Land, Corporate Plot Sec-17, 18, 20, 22D, 29, 32, 33. 9911714666

BIGSEARCH
95601 06262

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• Land 4000-22500 sqmt. & more. # 9560106262

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ATS FLAT OWNER
9560320940

ATS RHAPSODY 1 BHK +servant-Park&Pool facing 1st Floor Flats for Sale. 2 Flats single/ jointly 2408 sqft each. NE & sun facing.

BIGSEARCH
88608 81619

FOR SALE IT-Corporate
Sec-62, 5000 sqft. Noida. Expway. 45000, 65000, 150000 sqft. use for co-working also. # 8860881619

PRE-RENTED PVR CINEMA

RENTED COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

GLOBAL BUSINESS PARK, M G Road, Gurugram
Area: 6600 + Sq. Ft.

Unitach Signature Tower, South City 1, NH-8, Gurugram
Area: 5720 Sq. Ft.

Eros Hotel, Nehru Place, New Delhi
Area: 5265 Sq. Ft. (GF)
Tenant: ICICI Securities

CENTURY 21 DGS
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TIMES interact

Credit to PM for India discussing its culture with pride: Harivansh

New Delhi: Reflecting on India's rich heritage, Rajya Sabha deputy chairman Harivansh on Friday said that even after India emerged from the shadows of colonial rule after Independence, it was only "post-2014 that India has begun to speak about its culture and ancient heritage with pride, and this credit goes to Prime Minister Narendra Modi."

He was speaking at the release of a compilation of PM Modi's speeches and thoughts on culture, titled 'Sanskriti ka Panchva Adhyay', released at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) on 'World Heritage Day' observed each year on April 18.

After releasing the book, Acharya Mahamandaleswar Swami Avdeshanand Giri, the head of Juna Akhara, said "Since Narendra Modi became PM in 2014, a definite change has occurred. People now discuss cultural subjects with greater depth and pride." Citing an example, he said, "In 2008, an Indian guru residing in Europe made great efforts to institute International Yoga Day and sought help from Indian govt. In 2016, Modi made it a reality. Today, 21st June is celebrated worldwide as International Yoga Day-a proof to his commitment to India's cultural heritage." TNN

Stop virtue-signalling, shield minorities, India tells B'desh

Brushes Off Dhaka Remarks On Violence In West Bengal

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Following Bangladesh's remarks on West Bengal violence, the Indian govt hit out at the interim govt in Dhaka saying it should focus on protecting the rights of its own minorities instead of indulging in virtue signalling.

The Indian govt also said that the criminal perpetrators of violence against minorities in Bangladesh continued to roam free. "We reject the remarks made by the Bangladesh side with regard to the incidents in West Bengal. This is a barely disguised and disingenuous attempt to draw a parallel with India's concerns over the ongoing persecution of mi-



Vehicles torched in violence against waqf Act in Murshidabad

norities in Bangladesh where the criminal perpetrators of such acts continue to roam free," said MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal. "Instead of making unwarranted comments and indulging in virtue signalling, Bangladesh would do better to focus on protecting the rights of its own minorities," he added. Jaiswal was responding to media queries regarding comments made by Bangladesh officials on the developments in West Bengal. Shafiqul Alam, the press secretary to Bangladesh chief adviser Muhammad Yunus, on Thursday called on New Delhi and the West Bengal govt to take "all steps to fully protect the minority Muslim population." "We condemn attacks on Muslims causing loss of lives and

Internet ban lifted in Murshidabad

Internet services were restored Friday in strife-torn Samsheganj and Suti of Bengal's Murshidabad after a police assessment suggested the situation had improved enough not to require further restrictions. Bengal Police's SIT team probing the violence last week lodged 30-odd fresh FIRs after speaking to residents of the areas that bore the brunt of mob attacks, including Saju More, Bedbona and Dak Bungalow Ghosh, reports Dwaipayan Ghosh.

properties," he had said. "We urge the govt of India and West Bengal to take all steps to fully protect the minority Muslim population," Alam had added. Some parts of West Bengal, including Murshidabad, witnessed sectarian violence in the past few days following protests by the Muslim community against the Waqf Amendment Act.

FBI nabs terrorist, 'kingpin' of 15 Punjab attacks, in California

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

Washington: US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), now with an Indian-American, Kash Patel, at the helm, Thursday announced that it has arrested alleged Pakistan-backed Khalistani terrorist Harpreet Singh, wanted in India and living illegally in California.

FBI field office in Sacramento, which apprehended him, said Harpreet had entered the US from Mexico and had been evading capture by using untraceable burner phones and encrypted applications. Agents from FBI's legal attaché office in New Delhi informed Sacramento that Harpreet was wanted in connection with multiple terror attacks across Punjab, the Bureau said, pointing to close cooperation between the two countries since Patel took charge of the agency.

Harpreet is the alleged mastermind of 15 terror assaults in Punjab and Chandigarh in the last eight months alone, including 12 grenade attacks, many of them on police stations. "This case reinforces the importance of international cooperation in apprehending those who threaten global security," the Bureau said, noting that Harpreet is suspected to have collaborated with Pakistan's ISI and Khalistani terrorist group Babbar Khalsa International (BKI). Alleged to be a key oper-



A photograph released by FBI Sacramento showed a portly Harpreet being held by a female FBI agent and male police officer from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)

ative of BKI, which has historical ties with ISI, Harpreet targeted religious sites and police establishment in Punjab in recent months to revive the Khalistani movement. Indian authorities say he worked closely with Pakistan-based BKI operative Harwinder Singh Sandhu aka Rinda to orchestrate attacks, recruit operatives, and conduct reconnaissance in Punjab.

A photograph released by FBI Sacramento showed a portly Harpreet being held by a female FBI agent and male police officer from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Harpreet, also known as Happy Passia or Jora, is said to have homed into Sacramento, a farming area with a large Sikh community after crossing over illegally from Mexico in 2021, having arrived there from the UK. The district is represented by Indian-American Congresswo-

man Ami Bera and has several wealthy Sikh farmers with huge tracts of farmland.

A social media account in the name of 'Harpreet Singh Khalistan' placed him living in Fresno, two hours south of Sacramento, which has many Sikh farmers growing tree nuts (almonds, walnuts and pistachio) and stone fruits (peaches, plums and prunes). Some of them are second- and third-generation farmers who are pro-Khalistan despite sketchy ties to India.

Following a series of attacks in Punjab starting 2022, NIA declared him an absconder and offered a Rs 5 lakh reward in Jan 2025 for information leading to his capture. They followed up by filing a chargesheet in March against him and three others (including Rinda) for a grenade attack in Chandigarh, while also alerting US authorities to his presence in California.

Rana disclosures may prompt NIA to re-examine Headley

Bharti.Jain@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: With 26/11 conspiracy accused Tahawwur Hussain Rana, recently extradited from the US, being questioned by NIA about the larger Lashkar-e-Taiba conspiracy behind 26/11 attacks as well as co-accused David Headley's reconnaissance trips to India between 2006 and 2009, any new disclosures from Rana's interrogation may prompt NIA to consider questioning Headley afresh.

Headley is currently serving jail in the US, having been handed 35 years in prison following a plea bargain, under which he cannot be extradited to India, Denmark or Pakistan. Headley was interrogated by NIA in the US just once in 2010.

An officer privy to the case developments said an NIA team is probing Rana to gather undisclosed details of the 26/11 conspiracy — including the role of Pakistan-based LeT masterminds Hafiz Saeed, Zakir ur Rehman



PANDORA'S BOX?

Lakhvi, Abdur Rehman, Ilyas Kashmiri and ISI officers Major Samir Ali and Major Iqbal etc, besides a contact in Dubai — that don't figure in the US department of justice's case records. NIA will take a call "as and when needed" on whether it should seek fresh access to Headley to confront him with any additional information revealed by Rana, an officer told TOI. It will be interesting to see how the US will view such a request.

Sources said Rana, who had cited multiple health concerns in pleas before US

courts to stall his extradition, is being subjected to medical examination every 48 hours in NIA custody. A source said Rana has been cooperating with the investigation, but brings up his ailments from time to time.

Meanwhile, former home secretary G K Pillai, who was in office when Headley was questioned in the US by NIA, told TOI that Headley was Rana's prime link to the 26/11 conspiracy and would regularly update the latter on the Pakistani handlers' terror plans and reconnaissance tips. Headley had first informed Rana in 2006 that he was tasked by LeT to conduct surveillance of 26/11 targets. Rana, a deserter from Pakistan Army, was included in the terror plot by Headley, in consultation with his LeT handlers. Rana arranged travel documents for Headley and allowed his immigration business to be used as a "cover" for Headley's reconnaissance trips to both India and Denmark.

AIMIM man held over violence during Nashik dargah-razing

Nashik: Mukhtar Shaikh, former Nashik city unit chief of Asaduddin Owaisi-led AIMIM, was arrested late Thursday night in connection with the violence during the demolition of a dargah at Kathe Galli on the night intervening of Tuesday and Wednesday, reports Abhilash Botekar. Police said the arrest was made based on interrogation of previously apprehended individuals involved in the violence.

DCP Kirankumar Chavan said the number of arrested individuals had now reached 37, excluding a juvenile. "All of them have been remanded in police custody till Saturday," he said. On Shaikh's role, Chavan said, "The charges against him include instigating people for violence, both personally and through social media. Police have collected some inputs regarding it."

However, Parvez Khalid, AIMIM's north Maharashtra in-charge, claimed Shaikh was at the spot to defuse the tension.

Punjab police hope Happy will be deported, not extradited

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chandigarh/Amritsar: Punjab police are hopeful Khalistani terrorist Harpreet Singh alias Happy Passia would soon be deported like other illegal immigrants.

A senior officer told TOI: "We believe Passia will be deported like other illegal immigrants from the US since ICE was involved in his arrest. We don't think an extradition process would be required."

The officer said if the extradition route is taken, which is highly unlikely, it could take a long time.

"In extradition cases, on detention based on red corner notice, a request must be sent to the country where the

wanted criminal is detained for a provisional arrest within 48 hours after getting information of detention. The accused is produced in a local court and is invariably sent to 60-day detention. Within these 60 days, a request by the state police through CBI's In-

TERROR TRAIL

terpol division must be made for extradition and the accused can contest that in the court in that country before final decision is taken on extradition," the officer added.

Punjab DGP Gaurav Yadav on X described Harpreet's arrest as a major milestone in police's sustained crackdown on ISI-backed terror net-

works. "Between 2023 and 2025, Happy played a central role in orchestrating targeted killings, grenade attacks on police establishments, and extortion across Punjab and other states," he said.

The DGP said Harpreet started his criminal career in the organised crime with Jaggu Bhagwanpuria gang and his US-based associates Darman Kahlon and Amritpal. Subsequently, he came in contact with BKI's terrorist Harwinder Rinda. Yadav said an extensive dossier on Harpreet was shared with the central agencies and through appropriate channels, the information was shared with US authorities, leading to his detention by the US authorities.

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After heritage OK, Jinnah House awaits MEA nod for renovation

Nauzer.Bharucha
@timesofindia.com

Mumbai: South Court, the elegant ground-plus-one storey villa that Mohammad Ali Jinnah, founder of Pakistan, built for himself in 1936 on Malabar Hill, is set to undergo renovation and restoration and is awaiting final clearance from the Union external affairs ministry. TOI has learnt. MEA wants to convert the 2.5-acre bungalow property nestled amid thick foliage into a diplomatic enclave.

The Mumbai Heritage Conservation Committee (MHCC) gave its approval in Aug 2023 for restoration of this Grade II A heritage site. MEA has assigned the task to CPWD, which has appointed the Sir JJ College of Architecture as consultant to the project. Interestingly, Jinnah's Art Deco house was designed by Claude Batley, who was then head of architecture at the JJ School of Arts.

In 2018, the Prime Minister's Office had notified that the property, more famously known as Jinnah House, would be transferred to MEA from the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR). In 2017, then external affairs minister Sushma Swaraj, in a letter to Malabar Hill MLA Mangal Prabhat Lodha said her ministry would refurbish the bungalow on the pattern of facilities available in Hyderabad House in Delhi.

Lodha had replied to Swaraj on Oct 5 that year requesting that Jinnah House be made a cultural centre.

Documents made available to TOI show that the proposal submitted to MHCC sought change of activity and additions/alterations and restoration of the 39,000 sq ft (built up area) bungalow known as South Court, which is listed under the name 'Jinnah House' as a Grade II A heritage site. "The proposal contemplates a change of activity from a residential building to office space with necessary alterations and restoration along with landscaping work," it said.

Facade restoration would include removal of vegetation, plastering and painting, repair and refurbishment of doors, windows and ventilators. There will also be major structural repairs, mason



(Top) The bungalow as it stands today; (Above) Archival pictures of it

ITALIAN MARBLE & WALNUT WOODWORK

- > South Court was built by Jinnah in 1936 for ₹2 lakh
- > Designed by architect Claude Batley in art deco style. Batley was principal of Sir JJ School of Arts from 1923 till 1943
- > Sea-facing palatial bungalow constructed using exquisite Italian marble and walnut woodwork
- > Ground floor has a large verandah, 6 rooms, with kitchen, store room and garage and toilets; plus 5 servant rooms
- > First floor has 8 rooms with attached toilets
- > Italian stonemasons employed for construction, with Jinnah supervising construction "brick by brick"
- > Bungalow, with its pointed arches and impressive columns, is currently in dilapidated state
- > Report related to its fabric status, façade conservation etc part of work approved by Mumbai heritage panel

work, reconstructing the linear staircase along the front facade, removal of internal walls on the first floor to create larger spaces by putting in new beams and columns and providing a new RCC retaining wall. Landscaping will be done without affecting the existing heritage fabric.

During a site visit in mid-2023, the heritage committee recommended that original furniture, fittings, chandeliers and accessories be restored and reused. It also suggested that the existing compound wall be repaired/reconstructed in stone to match the original design.

"Although all permissions and plans are in place, we are now waiting for the final nod from the Centre to start work," said people connected with the project.

Documents show MEA has not made any changes to any part of the building nor is asking for more construction rights.

"But there will be a lot of internal aesthetic changes, which may be carried out to portray our nation's identity, history and culture," it said. Dina Wadia, Jinnah's only daughter and Nusrat Wadia's late mother, had moved Bombay high court in 2007 to regain control of the estate. After her death, Nusrat Wadia was allowed to step in as petitioner by Bombay HC.

Jinnah House is defined as "evacuee property"—property of those who left India after Mar 1, 1947 to stay in Pakistan.

After Partition, Jinnah wanted the property to be used only by a "small European family or a refined Indian prince." In his memoirs, Sri Prakasa, India's first high commissioner to Pakistan, recounted his meeting with Jinnah: "He (Nehru) wanted me to see Mr Jinnah and find out his wishes, and the rent that he would like to have... I gave him the prime minister's message. He was taken aback and almost pleadingly told me: 'Sri Prakasa, don't break my heart. Tell Jawaharlal not to break my heart. I have built it brick by brick. Who can live in a house like that? What fine verandahs. It is a small house fit only for a small European family or a refined Indian prince. You do not know how I love Bombay. I still look forward to going back there.'"

In the year 1949, Jinnah House, requisitioned by the Bombay govt, was allotted to the deputy high commissioner of the United Kingdom.

The bungalow, with its pointed arches and impressive columns, is currently in a dilapidated state. The ground floor of the bungalow property has a large verandah, six rooms, with a kitchen, store room and garage and toilets; plus, it has five servant rooms. The first floor has eight rooms with attached toilets.

Italian stonemasons were employed for the construction of the place, with Jinnah supervising the construction "brick by brick".

The report related to the structure's fabric status, façade conservation, structural repairs, waterproofing, interior refurbishment and landscape design has been part of the conservation work approved by the Mumbai Heritage Conservation Committee.

Not waiting to be hired, India's youngest interns are creating

Hemali.Chhaphia
@timesofindia.com

At Podar, the question isn't just how to teach using Artificial Intelligence—it's how to discover curiosity in the minds of sixth and seventh graders, those on the cusp of teenage wonder and worldly wisdom.

Down a different road, in Lohum's labs where lithium breathes its second life, the story is about the unseen cost of our convenience. Recycling a battery isn't glamorous. But Lohum thinks it can be a revolution. So, they don't preach; they invite. They show school kids how a spent cell lights a village lamp, or how reclaimed cobalt brings life to a smartphone.

Then there's Sphera, folded into Blackstone's global holdings, doing what software rarely gets credit for—listening. It calibrates, guides, and tells a factory how to save water, nudging a brand toward better packaging, tracking a footprint before it turns into regret. In Sphera's world, sustainability hums in the background like a conscience with code.

All of them have something else in common: they're placing bets on the young—the ones who want to learn more than teachers teach, more than syllabi can hold. Those who don't wait for a degree to begin working, and for whom the end of school is just the beginning of something else. Every year, close to 10 million students in India take the Class 12 exams. Some follow the line that stretches from campus to cubicle. But a few—fewer still—sidestep that path. They choose the harder question. The unexpected turn.

Across the ocean, Palantir recently announced a fall fellowship for the best and brightest high school graduates—an internship that could become a full-time job. But back home, there are quiet revolutions too. At Mumbai's RN Podar School, startups working in AI, clean tech, and sustainability are already seeking out bright minds—before they graduate.

"Our toppers are picked early on for short internships. In fact, we're picking some of our brightest students and placing them where they can build," says Avnita Bir, director-principal of the school. "This year, some will use AI to design learning modules for sixth and seventh graders."



GROWING ON THE JOB: At R N Podar School in Mumbai, startups working in Artificial Intelligence, clean tech, and sustainability are seeking out bright minds—before they graduate

Others will scrape the internet for alumni data. A third group will produce podcasts on topics relevant to the school. She doesn't call them interns. She calls them explorers.

Anubhav Kumar, 19, is already charting his orbit. A former research scholar at UPL and intern at IIT Bombay's green energy lab, he's now interning with Sphera, in his first year at IIT Madras, studying AI and data science. "Internships don't open up easily for the really young," he says. "But if you bring value, they make space." He is also an author and wants to start something of his own.

At 18, Arsalan Alam has already redesigned a donation platform for PayPal in collabo-

ing to grow older. They're starting now—building, questioning, creating. Age isn't a barrier anymore. If they come to us, our job is to match their urgency with opportunity."

In the Indian tradition, age was never a barrier to education or attainment. Spiritual master Ashtavakra, the guru of Raja Janak, was only 12 years old.

At Lohum, the Greater Noida-based battery recycling company, the youngest interns are ten. They don't come to build resumes. They come to ask questions—about waste, about energy, about why things must end when they can begin again. "Those who come after Class 12," says HR manager Tushti Singla,

“We've had 260 startups emerge from our campus in the past five years. So now, we tell our B.Tech students — if you want to launch your startup after your second year, go ahead. We'll give you a diploma. You'll have five years to come back & finish your degree — if you want to”

PROF B S MURTY | Director, IIT Hyderabad

ration with Control Alt Delete, an international NGO. He's won a \$10,000 grant from Emergent Ventures, attended the math and rationality camp at UC Berkeley, and worked with California State University East Bay. Now, when he writes code as an engineering student, it isn't for a classroom—it's for the real world.

Last year, Samarth Anand spent his internship at Gaussian Networks, not fetching coffee but analysing user trends and mapping competition. "What strikes me most about this generation is the intensity of their energy and the clarity of their purpose," says Prof Rudra Pratap, founding vice-chancellor of Plaksha University. "They're not wait-

"want to roll up their sleeves and take a closer look at what's really happening out there." Most such internships are, however, not paid ones.

But it's a shift even institutions are noticing. "We're seeing more young people wanting to build rather than be hired," says Prof B.S. Murty, Director of IIT Hyderabad. "We've had 260 startups emerge from our campus in past five years. So now, we tell our B.Tech students—if you want to launch your startup after your second year, go ahead. We'll give you a diploma. You'll have five years to come back and finish your degree—if you want to." Because learning, like lithium, doesn't have to end. It just needs a second life.

Sidda in spot after ministers representing Vokkaligas, Lingayats red-flag caste census

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Bengaluru: Ministers representing Karnataka's Vokkaliga and Lingayat communities have put the Siddaramaiah-led Congress govt in a spot, flagging the recalibrated caste survey data that the state plans to adopt as flawed and warning of social unrest if that were to be used to define reservation.

A special cabinet meeting convened Thursday to discuss the report submitted to state govt last year ended without a consensus after at least two ministers pointed to alleged discrepancies in data.

The Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes, headed by H Kantharaj, started its socio-economic and educational survey in 2015, covering 5.9 crore people across 1.3 crore households. The survey was completed in 2018, but the report remained under wraps for years.

Another commission, led by Jayaprakash Hegde, revised the report using data from Kantharaj's commission.

Although CM Siddaramaiah seems inclined to implement the report, opposi-



“The report was discussed in the cabinet yesterday. The data was incomplete, so the next discussion is scheduled for May 2. Nobody has opposed the report”

KARNATAKA CM SIDDARAMAIAH

tion from some of his ministers has proved a hurdle. Those opposed to the report fault the methodology, pointing to allegedly inflated data pertaining to marginal sub-castes within the Vokkaliga and Lingayat communities and lower representation of the dominant sub-castes.

Some have complained that no enumerator visited their houses in past decade. These charges have been fuelled by allegations of enumerators admitting the exercise was riddled with challenges because of inadequate publicity and public awareness.

Urban enumeration was particularly problematic as they purportedly couldn't enter gated communities or high-rise apartment complexes where people from some dominant caste groups reside.

"We were asked to survey large areas in a short time. In cities like Bengaluru, we

would be turned away from flats, with residents unwilling to disclose caste details," said an enumerator who worked at Rajajinagar.

A field officer from Davanagere shared similar concerns. "We were asked to record caste details based on sub-sect & not religion. Many entries had to be completed manually, and there was confusion about caste classification as people gave evasive answers. Some communities were unsure how to describe themselves. This was because there was no awareness about the exercise and why it was being conducted."

SK Murthy, a public policy researcher from Mysuru, said the govt should release the raw data and explain the methodology used for the survey. "Transparency is key. If there are errors, let these be debated in the open. Independent data auditors

should be brought in as there is still scope for making corrections," he said.

Siddaramaiah declared recently that 95% of report was accurate. "Without examining it, one should not dismiss it as unscientific."

The govt might set up a panel to re-examine the urban data. "We are open to suggestions. Our aim is not to divide but to deliver welfare based on evidence," said a senior official in the chief minister's office.

State BJP president BY Vijayendra said the Congress govt may have "wasted over Rs 150 crore" on an exercise whose credibility had been called into question by its own ministers. "Many communities, including Jains and backward classes, are contradicting the numbers shown in the report. BJP has repeatedly stated this survey was not carried out properly."

CM Siddaramaiah contested reports of dissent within his cabinet over the caste survey report. "It was discussed in cabinet yesterday. The data was incomplete, so next discussion is scheduled for May 2. Nobody has opposed the report," he said.

J&K prof alleges assault by Army, probe ordered

Jammu: Army Friday ordered an inquiry after an Ignoor professor accused troops of assaulting him without provocation during a checking of vehicles in J&K's Rajouri Thursday night. Officials said the professor, Liaqat Ali, allegedly suffered head injuries in the assault that took place near a border village in Nowshera. A purported video showing a bleeding Ali has surfaced online.

An Army statement suggested the victim had tried to snatch weapon of troops, and might have sustained injuries during the scuffle. "Should any personnel be found guilty of misconduct, action will be taken in accordance with the existing law," the statement added.

"This act has shattered a common man's faith — especially painful given that the victim's family has proudly served in the Army (sic)," PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti said on X. TNN

Toddler mauled to death by stray dogs in Goa

Margao: A 20-month-old girl was mauled to death by a pack of stray dogs at Bonbag, Durgabhat in Ponda, early on Friday morning. The victim, identified as Anabia Issac Shaikh, was attacked just outside her uncle's residence where she was staying with her mother.

The horror unfolded at 6.45am when the toddler, who had just woken up, stepped outside through the open main door, unnoticed by her mother. As the child wandered onto the road, she was set upon by seven to eight stray dogs that attacked her ferociously, dragging her several metres away.

Despite the desperate efforts of passersby who rushed to her aid upon hearing her screams, the child suffered severe injuries. She was rushed to ID Hospital in Ponda but was declared dead on arrival by doctors. TNN

Oppn, BJP spar over Dhankhar's judiciary tirade

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A day after Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar's strong words against the judiciary, opposition and BJP members sparred over his statements with Rajya Sabha member Kapil Sibal saying he had never seen an RS chairman make "political statements" of this nature and former RS MP and BJP leader Mahesh Jethmalani backing the VP.

Sibal said the LS speaker and the RS chairman remained equidistant from the opposition and governing party, and could not be the "spokesperson of the party".

"Everyone knows that the LS speaker's chair is in between. He or she is the speaker of the House, not the speaker of one party. The same is with the upper House. You are equidistant between the opposition and the ruling party. No speaker can be the spokesperson of a party. I don't say that he (Dhankhar) is but no speaker in principle can be the spokesperson of any party. If it appears so, then the dignity of the chair is lowered," Sibal said at a press conference.

Jethmalani, a renowned lawyer, took to X and said the recent Supreme Court order prescribing a time limit for the President to dispose of bills reserved for her assent by governors was bound to "stir a hornet's nest". It took the "irrepressible" VP of India to take up cudgels, he added. "While some may question the constitutional pro-



Dhankhar had Thursday described Article 142, which grants plenary powers to the SC, as a "nuclear missile against democratic forces available to the judiciary 24x7"

priety of a symbolic second head of the state entering the arena of conflict between two limbs of govt, the pointing out of a patent constitutional flaw (VP is an accomplished jurist besides) that Article 145(3) of Constitution mandated that a question pertaining to interpretation of a constitutional provision be dealt with by a five-judge bench only and that the two-judge bench decision was a nullity would surely be in discharge of vice president's sworn obligation to uphold the Constitution," he said.

Congress's Randeep Singh Surjewala too expressed disagreement with Dhankhar. "The Supreme Court judgment putting constitutional fetters on the power of governors and the President is timely, accurate, courageous and corrects the notion that those holding high offices are above any fetters or imposition of checks and balances in exercise of their powers."

Govt appoints 4 new CBDT members

New Delhi: The central govt has appointed four new members of Central Board of Direct Taxes, filling up crucial posts that had been lying vacant.

Pankaj Kumar Mishra, Sanjay Bahadur, L Rajasekhar Reddy and G Aparna Rao, all from 1989 batch of Indian Revenue Service, have been named as members. CBDT has been functioning with chairman Ravi Agrawal and two members. TNN

Modi, Musk meet amid satellite telecom push

Continued from P1

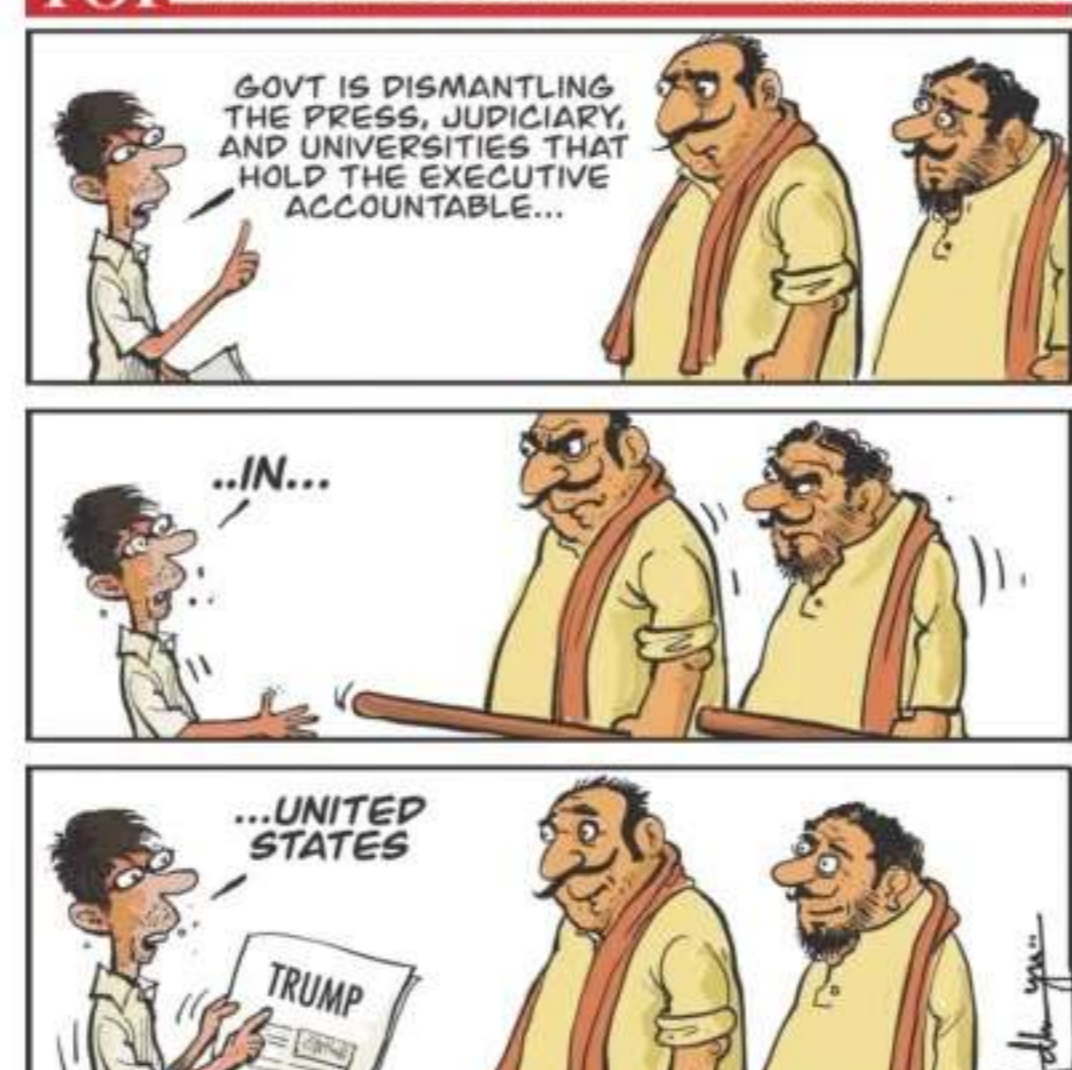
The meeting comes even as domestic telecom majors such as Airtel have been in touch with the US company for the possible launch of satellite telecom services in India.

"Spoke to @elonmusk and talked about various issues, including the topics we covered during our meeting in Washington DC earlier this year. ... Modi posted on X, adding, "India remains committed to advancing our partnerships with the US in these domains." Musk spearheads the

department of government efficiency (DOGE) aimed at cutting govt expenditure and reducing federal workforce. The PM had met Musk in Washington during his visit to the US in Feb this year.

"Had a very good meeting with Elon Musk in Washington DC. We discussed various issues, including those he is passionate about such as space, mobility, technology and innovation. I talked about India's efforts towards reform and furthering 'Minimum Government, Maximum Governance.' Modi had stated on X after the meeting.

TOI LINE OF NO CONTROL SANDEEP ADHWARYU



GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA		TENDER NOTICE			
Sr. No.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	MODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	HARTON	ONE TIME PROCUREMENT OF 1125 TABLET DEVICES ON BEHALF OF HARYANA POLICE UNDER CCTNS PROJECT.	18.04.2025 19.05.2025	END 2 LACS	https://tenders.hry.nic.in dnwarden.harton@gmail.com

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'India, China should respect each other's core interests & concerns'

In an exclusive interview to TOI's Sachin Parashar, his first since he arrived in India, Chinese ambassador Xu Feihong addresses Indian concerns about border peace, trade imbalance, export controls and threat of water diversion while also seeking a fair business environment for Chinese companies. Excerpts:

India and China seem to have resolved the 2020 border standoff, leading to signs of improvement in ties, but the bigger question of rebuilding trust between the two countries remains. It's a two-way process but what can China do on its part to facilitate further de-escalation and ensure long-term border peace?

Last Oct, President Xi Jinping and PM Narendra Modi held a fruitful meeting in Kazan, which provided strategic guidance for improving and developing China-India relations. Recently, both sides have been earnestly implementing the important consensus reached by the two leaders, strengthening



PM Modi is warmly welcome to China to attend the SCO summit this fall. China is ready to work with India and other member states and lead the SCO into a new stage of high-quality development

thening exchanges and practical cooperation at all levels, and have made a series of positive progress. In my opinion, first and foremost, the key to sustainable, healthy and stable development of China-India relations is adhering to the strategic judgement made by the two leaders that "China and India are partners rather than rivals, and development opportunities rather than threats to each other" and correctly view each other's development and strategic intentions. Secondly, both countries should respect each other's core interests and major concerns, properly handle differences through dialogue and consultation, and put the boundary question in a proper place in bilateral relations. We should not allow bilateral relations to

be defined by the boundary question, or let specific differences affect bilateral cooperation. Thirdly, we should steadily promote friendly exchanges and cooperation in various levels and fields, make the cake of practical cooperation bigger so that more people from the two countries benefit from development of bilateral relations and participate more actively in the cause of China-India friendship. During a recent podcast interview, PM Modi noted that for centuries, India and China have learnt from each other and together contributed to the global good in some way. As two major neighbours, differences are natural. Our focus is to ensure these differences do not turn into disputes. Indeed, as ancient civilisations, China and India possess the wisdom and experience to navigate challenges constructively. I am fully confident in that.

Are you expecting PM Modi to visit China for the SCO summit this year?

PM Modi is warmly welcome to China to attend the SCO summit this fall. China is ready to work with India and other member states to jointly host a friendly, united & fruitful summit, and lead the SCO into a new stage of high-quality development to benefit people from both countries and the region.

As India opens up to China, how can China help India address the trade imbalance?

The essence of China-India economic and trade relations is mutual benefit and win-win cooperation. China has never deliberately pursued a trade surplus. Trade surpluses reflect market-driven efficiency and evolve with changing economic conditions. President Xi has pointed out that China offers great potential for investment and consumption with the world's second largest consumer market and largest middle-income group. Valuing China's super-sized market will unlock greater commercial opportunities for Indian companies. In fiscal year 2024, Indian products such as chilli peppers, iron ore and cotton yarn saw significant export growth to China, surging by over 17%, 160%, and 240% respectively. We welcome more premium Indian goods export to China and stand ready to help Indian businesses tap into China's market demand. Indian enterprises can fully leverage platforms such as the China International Im-



TOI INTERVIEW

port Expo, the China-South Asia Expo, and the China International Consumer Products Expo to connect with Chinese buyers and consumers. At the same time, we hope India will take China's concerns in the economic and trade field seriously provide a fair, transparent, and non-discriminatory business environment for Chinese enterprises, elevate China-India bilateral economic and trade cooperation to new heights, and deliver tangible benefits to the people of both countries.

India is concerned about China's export controls on equipment and manpower that are coming in the way of India's efforts to ramp up its domestic manufacturing. As ties improve, will Beijing address this issue?

China has never imposed mandatory restrictions on the export of relevant equipment or the travel of personnel to India. On the contrary, China has always been willing to share its experience with friendly nations and strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation. However, the reality is that Chinese citizens face significant difficulties in obtaining Indian visas, Chinese enterprises based in

As two major neighbours, differences are natural. Our focus is to ensure these differences do not turn into disputes. Indeed, as ancient civilisations, China and India possess the wisdom and experience to navigate challenges constructively

India encounter unfriendly and unfair treatment, and voices opposing Chinese investment are often heard in the media. These factors have created a backlash in Chinese society.

Therefore, both sides need to meet each other halfway and work together to improve the situation.

Can China assure India that the flow of water into downstream countries won't be impacted by the mega Chinese hydropower project in the lower reaches of the Brahmaputra/Yarlung Zangbo river?

China adheres to a responsible attitude towards cross-border river development and pursues a policy of balancing utilisation and protection and taking into account the interests of upstream and downstream countries. China's hydropower development aims to speed up developing clean energy, and respond to climate change and extreme hydrological disasters. China's decision to build the hydropower project in the lower reaches of the Yarlung Zangbo river was made after rigorous scientific evaluation. The project does not consume water but only uses the potential energy of water to generate electricity. China never seeks "water hegemony" and will not use the normal development of water resources to "coerce" downstream countries. The project will not have a negative impact on the ecological environment, geological conditions and the rights and interests related to water resources of downstream countries. On the contrary, it is beneficial to downstream disaster prevention and relief as well as climate change response to some extent. China and India have maintained communication on this issue, and a new round of meeting of China-India Expert Level Mechanism on Trans-Border Rivers will be held in New Delhi shortly.

You have spoken about a reboot in ties. Do you think there's a need now for a new framework for effective border management?

In the 23rd meeting of special representatives on China-India boundary question held late last year, both sides emphasised the need to give full play to the role of this mechanism, strengthen the normalised management and control of the border situation, and jointly maintain peace and tranquillity in the border areas. In the future, both sides should continue to make full use of the existing diplomatic and military communication channels, adhere to the principles of equal consultation and mutual equal security, further refine the border area management and control rules according to the actual situation along the LAC, and strengthen confidence-building measures, so as to achieve sustainable peace and tranquillity in the border areas.

WB SSC to change rules to make teachers' recruitment transparent

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Kolkata: The West Bengal School Service Commission (SSC) has begun preparations for fresh recruitment of teachers after Supreme Court annulled the earlier batch of recruitment. Under the new process, candidates are likely to receive copies of OMR (Optical Mark Recognition) answer sheets, with SSC maintaining the records for future reference. SC asked the SSC to advertise for the exam by May 31, 2025, and complete recruitment by Dec 31, 2025.

Sources said this time round, candidates may receive copies of answer sheets or OMR sheets after the exam. Provisional answer keys and final answer keys would be published, so that candidates can check them before the results are announced, maintaining transparency in the examination process. Learning from the current recruitment-related issues, SSC is trying to make



FUTURE TENSE

the fresh recruitment procedure smooth to prevent complications. Sources confirmed that after the apex court order, SSC officials began reviewing draft rules to make minor modifications.

"All major revisions were made in the draft copy that the SSC created in 2022, where minor modifications may be made as required," an official of the school education department said.

Taking lessons from the previous examination, SSC is now prioritising the development of a more transparent and secure system for evaluating and preserving the answer sheets. During evaluation, SSC will release provisional and final answer keys before declaring the final result, allowing candidates to cross-check with their OMR sheets. Through this procedure, SSC can avoid court cases in the future.

SSC has already begun to upgrade internal systems, like enhancing infrastructure and raising internal storage. SSC has also submitted a list of "tainted" and "other candidates" to the department. After the SC order, the department will issue an order soon to segregate them, based on the list to disburse salaries.

Sources said before the next session, these matters will be cleared so that eligible candidates, who were given relief to attend schools, could receive their salaries too.

Hope LS enforces 33% women's quota soon: Justice Nagarathna

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New Delhi: Pitching strongly for early implementation of 33% reservation for women in Lok Sabha and state assemblies, Supreme Court Judge B V Nagarathna Friday hoped it would happen within her

lifetime, a day which would mark the culmination of the goals of 'real equality' envisaged by framers of the Constitution.

"The Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023 provides for 33% reservation for women in Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabhas. I hope this gets implemented in our lifetime and that day will mark the culmination of centuries of struggle of women for gender equality, a cherished goal of the framers of our Constitution," she said at the release of

book 'Women Laws — From the Womb to the Tomb' authored by senior advocate Mahalakshmi Pavani.

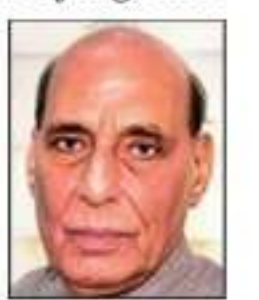
Justice Nagarathna, who would be the first woman CJI in Sep 2027, said women are the rightful participants in public roles and positions. "They are not invading men's territory but reclaiming the territory which had been denied to them through the barriers of patriarchal discrimination. We are not anti-men. We are pro-women," she said.

She appealed to retired SC judge D N Maheshwari, who was recently appointed chairperson of the law commission, to study all laws that appear to be discriminatory towards women and make a "series of recommendations to Union govt to effect remedial measures" to usher in gender equality.

Rana Pratap & Shivaji heroes, not Aurangzeb, says Rajnath

Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar: Defence minister Rajnath Singh Friday questioned history textbooks "glorifying" Mughal rulers like Aurangzeb while ignoring or suppressing the legacy of indigenous warriors like Maharana Pratap and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, terming it a historical injustice, reports Prasad Joshi. Speaking after the unveiling of Maharana Pratap's statue here, Singh quoted first PM Jawaharlal Nehru, who described Aurangzeb as a "fanatic", and highlighted the Mughal emperor's imposition of 'jizya' (tax), suppression of rulers and demolition of temples. "How can such a ruler be a hero for anyone?" Singh asked.

"It is a historical injustice that we were presented with a twisted history. It is our moral responsibility to present the correct history to youth," he said.



Extinct tusker fossils found in Maha's Penganga riverbed

Mazhar Ali | TNN

Chandrapur: Towering over today's Asiatic elephants with its massive frame and spiralled tusks that could stretch nearly 13ft, the Stegodon Ganessa once roamed the grasslands of India about 25,000 years ago. Now, the fossilised bones of this long-extinct giant have resurfaced from the riverbeds of Maharashtra's Chandrapur district, offering new clues to the subcontinent's prehistoric past.

Geologist and researcher Suresh Chopane was surveying the banks of Wardha and Penganga rivers when he spotted what looked like an enormous bone embedded in the sediment. It turned out to be the beginning of a landmark discovery: the first-known fossils of Stegodon Ganessa ever found in Maharashtra.

"These are crucial to understanding the mega-fauna that once roamed this region," said Chopane, who has been conducting fossil explorations across Vidarbha since 2019. "We also found Stone Age tools alongside the fossils, which suggests early humans not only coexisted with these giants but possibly hunted them."

This marks the first discovery of Stegodon fossils in Maharashtra. It adds to growing evidence that Ice Age In-



Stone Age tools at site suggest early humans coexisted with ancestors of modern-day Asiatic elephants

dia supported a wide variety of now-vanished megafauna. The fossilised remains date back to the late Pleistocene epoch, which stretched from about 200,000 to 11,700 years ago — a period marked by alternating glacial and warmer cycles and teeming with large mammals. The period ended with dramatic climate shifts and massive flooding that wiped out many species.

The first set of remains was discovered during the Covid lockdown in 2020-21 near the confluence of Wardha and Penganga rivers. Additional surveys in Warora taluka in 2021-22 uncovered large elephantine bones resembling those of another extinct species — Elephas Namadicus.

Discovered specimens include massive thigh bones, molar teeth, rib fragments, a skull cap, and part of a tusk. While the distinctive tusks for which Stegodons are known

have not been fully recovered, Chopane believes further excavation may yield more.

"Due to years of river flooding, several fossils may have been washed away, but many more lie buried in alluvial soil," he said Thursday.

After six years of steady fieldwork, Chopane's findings have now been validated by both national and international experts, including retired geologist Dr Avinash Nanda of Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology. "Dental evidence confirms these fossils belong to Stegodon Ganessa, a species believed to have gone extinct around 23,000 to 26,000 years ago," said Nanda.

What makes the find even more compelling is the co-discovery of prehistoric human tools — hand axes and other implements — at the same site. "Co-occurrence of fossils and tools strongly suggests hunting activity," Chopane said. "Over-hunting could have been one of the factors that led to extinction of species."

All fossils are now housed at Suresh Chopane Rock Museum in Chandrapur, which the geologist opened to serve the academic community. His latest find offers new, tangible evidence of a prehistoric upheaval — and the lives that once pulsed through a vastly different Indian landscape.

BJP dares Sonia, Rahul to seek quick disposal of Herald case

New Delhi: Keeping heat on Congress over ED's chargesheet against Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi in National Herald case, BJP Friday dared the two to seek a quick and time-bound disposal of the cases.

At a presser, former minister Anurag Thakur accused the two Congress functionaries of being caught red-handed in the case, claiming that any mention of the issue created a sensation within the Congress ecosystem. "It's obvious they feel the heat, as they've been caught stealing red-handed once again. They acquired assets worth Rs 2,000 crore by paying just Rs 50 lakh," Thakur said and dismissed allegations of political vendetta.

The Gandhis own 76% of Young Indian which he said was given a loan of Rs 50 lakh by Congress. The firm took over Associated Journals Limited, which owns the newspaper, in lieu of Rs 90 crore it owed to Congress, he said and asked if a party could give a loan.

Teen refuses to chant 'Jai Shri Ram', attacked

Kanpur: A teenage Muslim boy's refusal to bow and say "Jai Shri Ram" after being waylaid by three juvenile suspects in UP's Kanpur allegedly triggered an attack in which the trio slashed his left thigh with a shard of glass.

The victim's grandfather said the 14-year-old was on his way to a bus stop Thursday evening when he was stopped and allegedly attacked for defying his tormentors. The complaint mentions that the teenager frequently faced harassment at the hands of the suspects. "This time, they blocked his path, insisted he repeat a religious chant. His refusal resulted in a violent assault," it states. ACP Sumit Ramtek said a case has been lodged, and cops are probing the matter.

Brics nations launch land restoration pacts, join hands to stop soil fertility loss

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Brics nations, including India, have launched "Brics Land Restoration Partnership" to address the issues of land degradation, desertification, and soil fertility loss in the group's 11 member countries, and reiterated their resolve to make the global agri-food system fair, inclusive, innovative, and sustainable.

The move was supported by these countries at the 15th Brics Agriculture Ministers'

meeting in Brasilia, Brazil on Thursday. It was the first agriculture ministers' meeting of the expanded Brics which now has 11 members.

India was represented by Union agriculture and rural development minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan at the meet.

Chouhan in his speech emphasised the need to place welfare of small and marginal farmers at centre of global agricultural strategies.

Brics nations collectively account for 47% of the

world's population and contribute 36% of global GDP.

Besides five old members, Brazil, Russia, India, China & South Africa, six new members — Egypt, Ethiopia, UAE, Iran, Indonesia and Saudi — have joined the group in past year. The meeting underlined need to make agricultural trade fair, control global price volatility, and ensure remunerative prices for small farmers.

India stressed on the importance of public food stock-holding systems, MSP, and value chains that connect small-holders directly to consumers.

THE SPEAKING TREE

Turn Enemies Into Friends

A sense of fairness is an integral part of everlasting peace; we must balance wisdom with warmth, be kind, but draw clear boundaries, says SWAMI SHRIHARIPRASAD, founder, Sri Vishnu Mohan Foundation, in an interview with SONAL SRIVASTAVA ON sidelines of tenth Peace and Reconciliation Conference — Peace Is Born of Justice — held in Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu

In the age of technology such as AI and machine learning, how do we perceive right and wrong? Anything that hurts another person is wrong. Even if I feel that I have a right to retaliate because I was hurt previously, does not justify hurting someone else in return? 'If I'm a decent person and someone stamps on me, and I stamp them back—what have I gained? We've just made ourselves equal to the aggressor. We must balance wisdom with warmth. Be kind but draw clear boundaries.

In the West, philosophers such as John Rawls define justice as equity and fairness. But how do we understand justice from an Indic lens?

If justice is absent, it's like a worm eating into a tree. Sathguru Gnanananda Sarasvathi shared the example of Satyavati, who had no right to disinherit Bhishm in the Mahabharat. That single act of adharma sowed seeds of conflict. Her sons died, and eventually, she had to turn to Bhishm and ask him to give heir to the family. He, of course, refused.

Even when the succession eventually happened, it lacked a sense of acceptance. Vichitravirya had two wives. One wife was scared, the other closed her eyes. So, they shut themselves from grace that was coming their way and consequently there was no proper patra, vessel, to receive grace. Ultimately, three brothers were born: Dhritrashtra was the strongest man in the world, Pandu was a mighty archer, and Vidur was the wis-



ARUNDYUTI DAS BASU

est. Pandu eventually died. Deep understanding of dharma and doing the right thing was not there in Dhritrashtra. Only later, Pandavs set things right. Even though Dhritrashtra was the root of the tree of adharma, as Krishna said, Pandavs still cared for him after Mahabharat war. That's why we need justice that comes from the heart, without manipulation. We may think it's important to talk, and move forward in life—but not at the cost of someone else's dignity or future.

Today, the world is facing two major conflicts: Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Palestine. Can everlasting peace really prevail there? When one group seeks to exploit and crush another, dharma is lost. Even in

war, there must be boundaries. Causing fear in others will not work in the long run. Perpetrators might say they are eliminating an enemy, but affected people think of retaliation. They may not act, but inner trauma remains. Cruelty breeds deep injustice. Some people try to move on, but others are consumed by the need to get even. And so, the cycle of revenge continues—an eye for an eye, until everyone is blind. When there's no recourse to justice—natural or legal—people lose hope. Each action has three effects: "If I hit somebody, there are three ways the effect plays out: First, the effect on the person who is hit, he feels pain; experiences humiliation and emotional hurt of having been hit." Second, the effect on myself: "I realise that by hitting someone, I have pushed my agenda forward. So now I have internalised the idea that violence works—it gets things done." Third, effect on environment: "People around me see that I hit someone and succeeded." This normalises acts of violence and creates a climate where aggression becomes acceptable. So, more violence follows. If you don't stand up and speak out, people assume that this behaviour is acceptable to you. When you see it happening to someone else and still stay silent, violence slowly becomes normalised. Abraham Lincoln said, "The best way to destroy an enemy is to make him a friend." That's not always easy to do. Some people may prefer being bad. In such cases, we let them be—but we can still stand our ground and say: "I will not tolerate this." Sometimes, they back off when you assert yourself. ■

'Medicine pollution is changing salmon migration — it impacts how fish see risks'

Marcus Michelangeli, ecologist at Griffith University's School of Environment and Science in Australia, spoke from Queensland to Srijana Mitra Das at Times Evoke about fish — facing drugs:

What is the core of your research?

I'm a behavioural ecologist — my focus is now on blending this into ecotoxicology. Hence, I study how pollution affects the behaviour of wildlife. A lot of my work is on pharmaceutical pollution — this includes medications prescribed to humans which end up in rivers, streams and other waterbodies. I study the effects of these pharmaceuticals on fish and their behaviour, populations and entire ecosystems.



Can you tell us about your new study?

This was conducted 2020 onwards in the Dal River in southern Sweden. We studied how two common pharmaceutical pollutants — a drug treating anxiety and sleep disorders and a painkiller — are now affecting the migration of Atlantic salmon. As these often reach rivers, we asked if these drugs influence this crucial ecological event for 'Salmo salar' fish. So, we tracked the entire migration of salmon from the Dal to the Baltic Sea, once they were exposed to either of the two medications or a mix of both, with one group exposed to no drugs at all. Among the four groups, quite unexpectedly, we found the salmon exposed to the anti-anxiety medicine as having the highest migration success — higher even than those with no drug exposure at all. More fish on this drug successfully reached the Baltic Sea.

Earlier, lab-based studies had shown these pharmaceutical concentrations affect the behaviour of such species but the laboratory is a controlled environment — we couldn't understand how those effects translate in nature. In our study, we were



FISHING: Salmon trips interest birds



WHEN FISH FLY: Atlantic salmon migrate 3,000 miles from their spawning grounds — in this vast journey from river to sea where they mature, they cross streams where predators like bears await, shoal strategy saving many a fish

able to test behaviour in this species in their actual environment. We used acoustic telemetry, a system that lets you track species underwater — we implanted fish with an acoustic tag and set up a receiver system all along the Dal. These tracked the tags and told us every two minutes where the fish had reached. This let us map their entire migration — the fact that we found these drugs still affected behaviour in a natural environment, with far-reaching consequences even for migration, shows these pollutants have huge impacts.

How can an anti-anxiety drug for humans boost salmon migration?

The fish exposed to this medicine actually became faster at passing two hydropower dams situated along their route. These dams are usually a big barrier for salmon during their travel. The fish reach the dams and hesitate as passing through the turbines there is very risky for them. However, fish exposed to this drug became quicker at going through the turbines — the medicine made them bolder and more risk-taking.

We then followed up with lab studies to see how this medicine impacted salmon shoaling behaviour. We found this drug made schools of fish less cohesive — they were swimming further apart. Shoaling is very important for salmon in migration — it helps them avoid predators and

navigate successfully. However, those fish who were exposed were less united in groups, which suggested their perception of risk had reduced. Importantly, animal behaviours evolved to be the way they are for a reason — if a drug changes that behaviour, even in ways that may seem helpful to human eyes, it could have negative consequences. Other studies have shown similar drugs affecting the reproduction of species and their capacity to respond to predators — we predict that while this salmon group showed more success in reaching the Baltic, where they are to mature, they could have experienced greater mortality than others at sea.

What steps can reduce contamination?

It's important to note such pollutants have also been found in sources used for drinking water by humans. This is particularly true in developing economies where wastewater treatment isn't very advanced. However, studies find pharmaceuticals in drinking water in Europe as well, Sweden being an example. Contamination is now rising because we are producing much more drugs. Wastewater treatment technology must be improved, making it

possible to remove a greater portion of such contaminants from water. We must also develop more green chemistry faster — drugs must be designed in a way which makes them more efficient at breaking down once in the environment. We need better regulation of the different chemicals allowed into the market. There is a tendency as well to over-prescribe pharmaceuticals which needs to be managed better. And people worldwide should be educated more about pharmaceutical pollution — many of us are unaware of how our medicines can end up in waterbodies or other ecosystems. We need institutions to tell us safer ways to dispose of these, which won't impact the environment and species that coexist in nature.



RIVER ROSES: Sockeye Pacific salmon

TIMES EVOKE



EPIC BABY: A little 'salmo salar'

'Bank fraud case appeal futile sans Gol Tihar pledge'



PRISON DIARIES

Continued from P 1

Subject to what I set out below, all these cases will inevitably fail and further legal activity on them is futile," the deputy chief crown prosecutor wrote.

The prosecutor, who is supposed to help India with its extradition requests, told the govt it has to immediately assure UK courts in writing that no accused will run afoul of Article 3 of ECHR (European Convention on Human Rights), which prohibits torture and inhuman treatment of prisoners. In rejecting Bhandari's extradition, the court had concluded "a real risk of Article 3 mistreatment in Tihar Jail and a generalised risk of torture during interrogation".

The deputy chief crown prosecutor said that pending an assurance, "there is no prospect of a successful appeal in this case", referring to the rejection of the Awastys' extradition plea and further prospects of rejection of an appeal before higher courts in the UK.

"I have to stress in the strongest possible terms that the only prospect left to us to salvage the case against Mr and Mrs Awasty is the urgent provision of an unequivocal assurance from the GoI. This has been discussed in various and repeated advice and conferences but has so far not been forthcoming," the deputy chief crown prosecutor said.

The assurance pertains to the govt giving an undertaking that the accused "will not be detained in Tihar Jail, either on

remand or if and when convicted; if they are to be detained on remand or upon conviction, then the detention conditions will comply with Article 3".

The deputy chief crown prosecutor said if govt failed to give these undertakings, it would "not pursue any appeal" not only in the Awasty case but also in others even if there was merit in filing an appeal.

A senior district judge at Westminster Magistrates' Court in London had on April 11 discharged the case of Awasty "on the grounds that, firstly and because he could not be satisfied Awasty's Art 3 ECHR rights would not be violated in the event he was detained in Tihar Jail". The other reason cited by the judge was "insufficient evidence for a prima facie case and for abuse of process based on the two-year delay in submitting the case following its earlier discharge".

The Crown Prosecution Service said it was ready to appeal against the verdict but as per existing conditions, it was difficult to assure a favourable outcome.

"As far as the Article 3 grounds are concerned, based on the papers and the latest correspondence we have received from the govt of India, I advise now that there is no prospect of a successful appeal in this case. Further, if that remains the case, the Crown Prosecution Service will not be able to lodge the necessary grounds of appeal to sustain the appeal and accordingly Awasty will be discharged, bringing the case to an end," it said.

READERS WRITE

Dear Times Evoke,
TE's interview with Nobel Laureate economist Michael Spence (12th April) was fascinating! While superpowers are waging tariff wars, India is growing as a prominent economy. TE skilfully traced how China developed its green tech, shoring up resilience. India should also encourage clean energy, EVs and pro-environment innovation to lead in this 'brave new world'. TE, this was very thought-provoking.
— Garima Sharma, PhD scholar, Mumbai

I was truly delighted to read TE's conversation with Nobel Laureate Michael Spence. Very timely, Spence's recognition of India's growth was encouraging. Alongside, his view that India leads the interests of non-aligned nations, in contrast to China's more self-focused posture, was striking. I also appreciated India's forward-looking and diversified energy strategy. Thanks for this excellent interview, TE!
— Manicklal Chakraborty, Chennai

TE's page on geoeconomics looked beautiful and I enjoyed Catherine Wolfram's insights on green strategies and how nations can increase these despite Donald Trump. Her perspective on US policy-making around Russian oil was very compelling as well.
— Richa Gupta, Delhi

I enjoyed TE's excellent articles on energy which impacts security, prices and climate. MIT's Catherine Wolfram underscored air-conditioning's paradox very lucidly as people are addressing global warming by using more energy, raising emissions and temperatures. The solution, as TE's global experts stated, is renewables, not fossil fuels.
— Suresh Dodia, Rajkot

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Many have sued US authorities over legal status termination

Continued from P 1

Other significant countries represented in this data include South Korea, Nepal, and Bangladesh. "These reports paint a concerning picture of the arbitrary nature of these visa revocations and terminations," it states in its policy brief.

As per an Open Doors Report for the academic year 2023-24, India sent over 3.3 lakh students to pursue higher education in the US — an increase of 23% over the previous year. China was the second leading place of origin with almost 2.8 lakh students — this was a slight decline of 4% over the previous year. Anecdotal evidence shows that the number of Indian students aspiring to study in US is dipping sharply.

However, even as the crackdown on international students continues, several hundred students have filed lawsuits in US district courts challenging arbitrary termination of their legal status. Several courts have also granted 'temporary restraining orders', enabling students to continue their study in US.

Referring to ALLA's policy brief, Congress MP Jairam Ramesh posted on X: "A press statement issued yesterday by the American Immigration Lawyers Association is cause for concern to us in India. Out of the 327 visa revocation cases of international students collected by the organisation so far, 50% are Indians. The reasons for revocation are random and unclear: There is growing fear and apprehension. Will the external affairs minister take note and raise the concern with his US counterpart?" He also tagged foreign minister S Jaishankar.

"We are aware that several Indian students have received communication from the American govt regarding their F-1 visa status, which happens to be the student visa. We are looking into the matter. Our embassy and consulates are in touch with the students to provide support," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at a

weekly press briefing.

International students on completion of their studies are allowed to gain work experience under the optional practical training program for a year — this is further extended by two years from students hailing from the science, technology, engineering and mathematics field. According to the Open Doors Report, over 97,000 students undergoing OPT post completion of their studies were from India, whereas Chinese students pursuing OPT stood at around 61,000.

ALLA's policy brief points out that 50% of the impacted students were on OPT. "These individuals are unable to work immediately upon the termination of their SEVIS record. The road to reinstating status for those who have already graduated and are employed on OPT is much more difficult and murkier than those who are currently students," it stated.

The grounds on which action was taken against international students were arbitrary. In some cases international students found their SEVIS records were terminated and/or visas revoked owing to a criminal record — and they did not have a history of interaction with police and there was nothing in their record that would prompt a visa revocation.

Students who encountered police for infractions are instances which most US citizens would consider a daily occurrence. These included not wearing a seatbelt, tickets for illegal parking, or speeding tickets and did not warrant visa revocation and/or SEVIS termination, states ALLA.

There was no uniformity in the issue of notices of SEVIS termination. There were many cases where there was a delay between the SEVIS termination and when the student was informed. This is risky because if students kept working without knowing their SEVIS was terminated, it could affect their immigration status, states ALLA's policy brief.

50 Yrs Of Aryabhata: Satellite That Launched India's Space Journey

Chethan.Kumar@timesofindia.com

It was Saturday, April 19, 1975. At 1:28:55pm IST, India launched its first satellite, Aryabhata, from a remote Soviet cosmodrome. Built in just 30 months by a young team of Indian scientists, the satellite didn't just mark the beginning of India's space era — it became a symbol of scientific ambition in a developing nation.

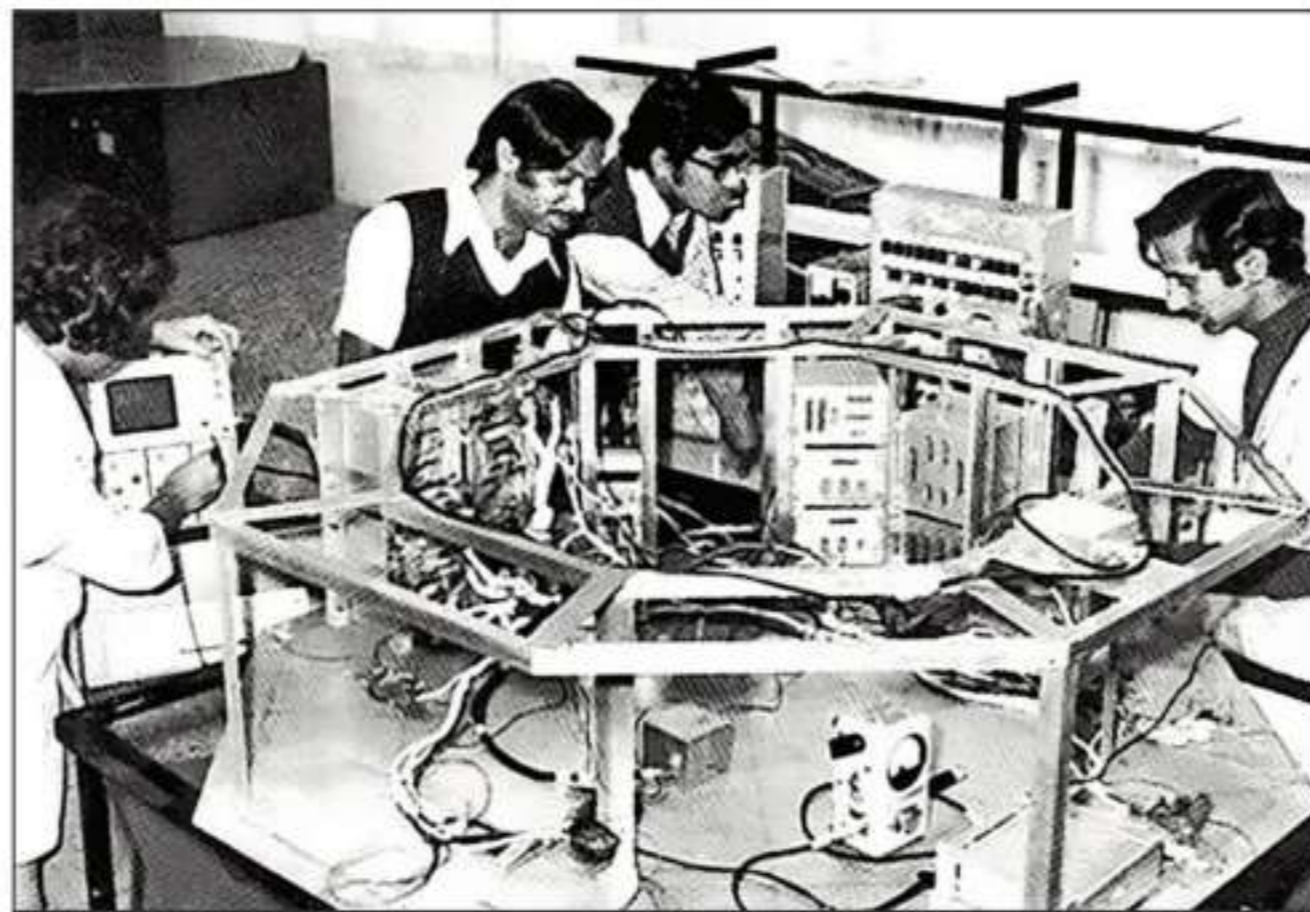
While Aryabhata fell silent just four days after launch due to a power failure, it achieved much more than expected. It demonstrated India's ability to design and build a satellite from scratch, a satellite that would conduct experiments in X-ray astronomy, solar physics, and aeronomy (see box). The mission was India's first step in using satellites for scientific discovery, not just communications.

Aryabhata's project director, Udupi Ramachandra Rao, who passed away in 2017, used to talk about that chilly morning in Russia, when the satellite was launched. Everything had been meticulously prepared for this moment, with Indian scientists working tirelessly for 40 days in Russia. Every little detail had been taken care of.

As the countdown progressed at Kapustin Yar Cosmodrome, the Indian team heard someone shout 'Payyakkali', a Russian expression meaning 'let us go'. (Yuri Gagarin, before taking off on the world's first manned space flight, had said it.) And then the Indian team saw their 358kg satellite soaring aboard the Kosmos-3M rocket. At that moment, India joined an elite space-faring club.



LEADING FROM FRONT: Prof UR Rao, India's Satellite Man, was a key architect of the mission



PIONEERS: Members of team Aryabhata working on the satellite

How It All Began

In 1971, as India toyed with the idea of building a 100kg scientific satellite compatible with a Scout rocket, PM Indira Gandhi forwarded Vikram Sarabhai a letter from DP Dhar, the Indian ambassador in Moscow. The Soviets were open to assisting India in space projects. Sarabhai swiftly arranged a meeting with Soviet ambassador Nikolai Pegov. UR Rao was asked to present India's case.

"After patiently hearing me for 30 minutes, the ambassador asked about the weight of China's first satellite. When I said around 190kg, he insisted India's must be heavier — and said the USSR would launch it, whatever the weight," Rao later recounted.

Sarabhai's sudden demise in a plane crash in Dec 1971 didn't stall progress. Under Prof MGK Menon — a renowned cosmic-ray physicist holding interim charge of Isro — a joint meeting with Soviet experts to finalise the Indo-Soviet space cooperation was held in Thiruvananthapuram in Feb 1972. Rao assembled a core team — SP Kosta, K Kasturirangan, R Ashiya, and Tarsem Singh. But first they had to figure out how much it would cost. Rao did the maths: it would cost Rs 3 crore, Rs 1 crore of which would be in foreign exchange. He relayed the figure to Gandhi.

"Go ahead and sign the agreement," she said. On May 10, 1972, a historic Indo-Soviet agreement was signed between M Keldysh, president of the USSR Academy of Sciences, and Menon. It outlined

the launch of India's first satellite — yet unnamed — from a Soviet cosmodrome. VM Kovtunenok was appointed Soviet project director; Rao led the Indian side.

Tin Sheds in Peenya

The next question was where to build the satellite? Bangalore or Hyderabad? Bangalore won. With help from Karnataka's industries secretary Satish Chandran, Rao secured four bare industrial sheds — 5,000 sqft each — in the then-nascent Peenya Industrial Estate.

These sheds were transformed at astonishing speed. Two became specialised control electronics labs, including a 1,500-sqft clean room for satellite integration. On Ganesh Chaturthi, Sept 11, 1972, they were informally inaugurated. A handful of scientists grew into a 150-strong team working round the clock. But procurement



INNOVATION HUB: The four sheds in Peenya where Aryabhata was built. Bangalore, which was chosen over Hyderabad, has never looked back

Aryabhata Conducted Experiments In...

X-Ray Astronomy: The branch of astronomy that studies the universe using X-rays

Solar Physics: The study of the sun, encompassing its internal structure, atmosphere, and the effects it has on the Earth and other bodies in the solar system

Aeronomy: The scientific study of the upper atmosphere, including the physics and chemistry of regions like the ionosphere and exosphere



was a major hurdle. Undeterred, Isro formed a special procurement team led by Rao, with TN Seshan and YS Rajan. They travelled across Europe and the US, placing spot orders and bypassing red tape to secure equipment affordably — and fast.

On July 11, 1974, PM Gandhi visited Peenya. As she looked into the clean room where Aryabhata's flight model was being finalised, her face lit up with quiet pride. This wasn't just a machine — it was India's boldest declaration of scientific intent.

Jawahar? Maitri? Or Aryabhata?

At the final project board meeting in March 1975 — just a month before launch — the team discussed names for the satellite. The options: Aryabhata (after the ancient Indian astronomer), Jawahar (after Pandit Nehru), and Maitri (for Indo-Soviet friendship).

"As expected, Mrs Gandhi picked Aryabhata," Rao recalled. A special stamp was planned to mark the launch.

What Aryabhata Achieved

The quasi-spherical satellite measured 1.59m across and weighed 358kg. Its 26-faced polyhedron structure was covered with solar cells generating 46W, supported by a Ni-Cd battery. It employed passive thermal systems and cold gas jets for spin stabilisation, demonstrating sophisticated engineering. A notable feature was its data handling capability.

With its launch into an LEO orbit — 50.7° inclination, 619km apogee, 568km perigee — Aryabhata established a foundation for future satellites.

All on-board systems functioned perfectly until the satellite experienced tumbling at 0.3° per second instead of maintaining a stable spin, and the aeronomy instrument's power supply failed. However, engineers stabilised the satellite at 50 revolutions/minute by the 45th orbit. But in five days, it went silent though its mainframe remained active until March 1981 and the satellite itself remained in orbit until its atmospheric re-entry on Feb 10, 1992.

Despite power issues affecting scientific experiments, initial data yielded significant discoveries. The X-ray instrument measured intensity from the complex "Cygnus X-1" source. Several other technological experiments relevant to future programmes were successfully conducted, including satellite tracking using tone ranging, voice and data communication between USSR and Bangalore, telemedicine experiments connecting remote rural areas with city hospitals, and meteorological data transmission as a precursor to later data relay experiments on Insat.

Aryabhata's most significant impact was establishing a firm foundation in satellite technology, creating a confident core team for building more complex operational satellites, and developing infrastructure for India's future satellite programme.



A thought for today

We are all strong enough to bear the misfortunes of others

LA ROCHEFOUCAULD

When It Clicks

Great news photos become more than just an image

If you are not close enough, your photograph is not good enough, said the Hungarian war photographer Robert Capa. He was at work when he stepped onto a landmine and died. It's a dangerous job. But it is able to tell the world about the most horrific things done by humans to each other – proof like nothing else that, yes, absolutely, that happened. The winning picture of this year's World Press Photo competition is that of a young Palestinian boy, with both arms severed. It brings the brutal destruction of Gaza 'close' to those far away, and not just in kms.



Over time, some photographs become emblematic of large historic events. Like the one of a naked girl fleeing a napalm bombing, which refuses to let American atrocities during the Vietnam War fade into collective amnesia. Or the one titled *Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima* that represents American heroism in World War II. Photographers of TOI, India's newspaper of record, have also taken readers close to the most troubling events, again and again. The frontal photo of a man pointing a pistol at a policeman and threatening to kill him during the 2020 Delhi riots, and photos of Ajmal Kasab that helped establish his guilt in the 26/11 attacks, are just two of the most haunting examples.

The camera may be the most important invention since the printing press. But at what point, how many photographs later, do viewers grow immune to the horrors captured in these? When do these stop afflicting the comfortable and comforting the afflicted? The sad truth is that no one book or photo can end a war – that power continues to vest with men in power and their generals. And yet, the truth of the greatest photos is also indisputable. These are humanity's conscience. However much we wring our hands at their limits, we would be more uncaring without them.

Straight Up Fraud

Investors dread greedy, crooked startup founders

Another one bites the dust. The startup business is nine parts risk, maybe more. Anecdotal, over 90% of restaurants in India shut down within 18 months. 'Real' startups, the ones whose staff – in popular imagination – codes on tablets sitting in cafes, also have a 90% failure rate globally. It could be bad luck, or bad service, or a horribly stupid idea like 'Juicero'. They made a \$400 Wi-Fi-connected juicer, raised \$70mn, and became a Silicon Valley darling until somebody showed you could extract the same amount of juice with your bare hands, faster.

BluSmart wasn't a stupid idea, though. It was an electric cab service without surge-pricing and last-minute ride cancellation. People in Delhi-NCR, Mumbai and Bengaluru liked it. What broke it was the original sin of business – promoter greed. A cookie seller keeps his hands out of the cookie jar, but BluSmart's Jaggi brothers thought nothing of helping themselves to borrowed funds at their parent firm, Gensol. Altogether some ₹262cr hasn't been accounted for. But their purchase of a premium Gurgaon apartment with company funds is talk of the town now.

Lenders, drivers and customers with money stuck in BluSmart wallets have become collateral damage, but India's startup scene is also tarnished. Commerce minister Piyush Goyal feels, with some justification, Indian startups aren't enterprising enough – fixated on ice cream delivery rather than foundational models. Investors have other reasons to worry. There's been a spate of big-name scandals. BharatPe, GoMechanic, Mojicare, Paytm and others have been in regulatory crosshairs. The fall of Byju's – valued at \$22bn in 2022, now worthless and sued for \$533mn in US – is the most glaring. While investors can forgive bad ideas – Juicero – what they detest is deceit, a la Elizabeth Holmes of Theranos, and now the Jaggis.

Dalai Lama's Quiet Victory Over China

His influence is reason Beijing wants to pick his successor

History is not a political project written in the present, *Dalai Lama* reminds Beijing, and the free world, in *Voice for the Voiceless: Over Seven Decades of Struggle with China for My Land and My People*. That said, commitment to a mutually beneficial relationship would mean "there's no need to insist the two parties agree on exactly the same version of the past."

It's been 75 years since China invaded and annexed Tibet. Tibetan Buddhism's spiritual head turns 90 in July. The hot question is who's his successor? He/she'll be from the free world, says Dalai Lama. In a cruel twist, the 'leader' of this 'free world' recently created a more immediate problem for Tibet's gov't-in-exile. It froze USAID funds.

From his first encounter, as a hopeful teenager, with Mao Zedong to his expectations of Deng Xiaoping (who said "except for independence, everything is negotiable"), to Tibetan gov't-in-exile's last exchange in 2010 for Tibet's self-rule, not independence, the book lays out both the road travelled and a roadmap ahead for the Tibetan struggle. The basic point: "The simple truth is no Tibetan will ever say, 'I am Chinese.'"

There have been no formal talks since 2010. A meeting with Xi during his 2014 trip to India didn't materialise. Dalai Lama had hopes from Xi as "the most powerful Chinese leader since Deng Xiaoping". That "he'd seize the opportunity for a bold vision (for) Tibet...Xi had made positive remarks about Buddhism (in Paris)."

The monk was told Xi's mother was a practising Buddhist, and, he

had met Xi's father, who had opposed the Tiananmen crackdown, on his first visit to Beijing 1954-1955.

But Dalai Lama always found CCP's leadership changes "hard to gauge". Transitions from Deng to Jiang to Hu to Xi were "difficult to navigate in real time". When dealing with "any Chinese leader, it isn't clear if one is speaking to an empowered individual or someone caught in the complex web of power relations with other Politburo members," writes Dalai Lama. Individual efforts seemed thwarted by the leadership.

The book recounts China's Buddhist traditions and argues that Tibetan Buddhism alone can bring "mental peace among millions of young Chinese." Beijing's got their land. But Dalai Lama may just be making his way into Chinese people's hearts and minds. "What gives me hope is that the relationship between the two peoples – Tibetans and Chinese – has not been irreparably damaged."

Communist China had invaded a theocratic state. But Dalai Lama shaped Tibet-in-exile as a democracy. He mused that people may abolish his post even – an acutely political idea that would suit paid to Beijing's strategy of picking his successor. The takeaway from the Tibet struggle perhaps is that CCP has had to concede that Dalai Lama's reach and influence – regardless of the fact that Beijing sees him as a "separatist" – has no parallel.

Communist China waiting to appoint a religious head, the next Dalai Lama, shows how strong the current Dalai Lama's brand is.

mindfield

SHORT TAKES ON BIG IDEAS



What In The Name Of Aid...

Western liberals compete in rushing aid to nations hit by natural disasters, only they try to rescue 'democracy' too while at it – it's the same rulebook that's playing out in Myanmar

Padma Rao Sundarji



● On Jan 26, 2001, an earthquake of magnitude 7.6 hit Bhuj in Gujarat. Nearly 14,000 people were killed.

● On Dec 26, 2004, Indonesia's Aceh experienced an earthquake of magnitude 9.2. A massive tsunami followed. Even Sri Lanka, nearly 1,800km away, was devastated. More than 30,000 people were killed there.

● On March 28, 2025, an earthquake of magnitude 7.7 struck Myanmar. The death toll has crossed 3,700 with more than 5,000 people missing.

There are more commonalities between the three disasters: civil wars, and rulers who were – and are – anathema to most western nations ruled by liberals, or social and/or conservative democrats. There's also competition and opportunism between such nations, who consider themselves the inventors and upholders of democracy.

As always, they demand unfettered access to every inch of the disaster-hit country. Denial invites fierce criticism. This eagerness to hit 'ground zero' stems not from humanitarianism or Messianic philanthropy but, as one western left-wing group has aptly dubbed it – from 'disaster capitalism' – and political meddling.

When the Bhuj earthquake hit, BJP was in office both at the Centre under Vajpayee and in Gujarat under Keshubhai Patel. India's earlier refusal, under Congress govts, to sign anti-nuke treaties and the nuclear test in 1998 had already attracted global wrath. This 'rogue nation' had dared to dream with the big boys. Western journalists based in India – never mind the neutrality they like to claim – launched a concerted campaign against BJP.

Immediately after the quake, western rescue teams arrived in Mumbai. But bureaucratic waffling by both state and central govts delayed clearances for their equipment. Admittedly, it was a self-go by India.

Criticism in the western media reached a crescendo, even implying deliberate delay, only because very young cadres of RSS had already swung into action at the

epicentre. Even as tremors continued, this writer witnessed and reported on how the cadres swiftly removed body after body, catching barely any sleep, burying or cremating, as per the religion of each dead person.

There may be much to criticise in both RSS and BJP. But given the urgency of the immediate task on hand, the condemnation of the report by some European "intellectuals" at the time, merely because it painted RSS in a positive light, smacked of intolerance for India's ground reality.

If it isn't 'democracy' that the West wants to 'rescue', there are civil wars it wants to end. Ending bloodshed is



good, but that zeal almost always plays out in regions with enormous racial, religious and linguistic complexities, far too alien to the West. And the zeal is fired even further, if such countries also happen to be rich in oil reserves, gems, or minerals containing rare earths.

In Indonesia, the twin disasters saw a peace agreement with rebels in Aceh. But in Sri Lanka, there was a fragile ceasefire between separatist terror group LTTE and Colombo, when the tsunami devastated the coasts of both warring sides. Norway and EU (home to influential

Tamil diaspora voters, many of whom funded LTTE) strode into the photo-op with renewed vigour and mounted pressure on then president Chandrika Kumaratunga.

Despite a withdrawal of support of the Marxist-Leninist JVP of current president Anura Dissanayake in protest, Kumaratunga signed an agreement to share tsunami aid, and allow distribution by the Tigers. Courts struck down the agreement. But in any case, LTTE had long begun preparation for a return to war. Now, the unhindered flow of tsunami aid directly to the Tamil Tigers from various Tamil 'relief organisations' in the West, only helped LTTE weaponise even more rapidly and – return to war.

India and other 'first responders' have reacted rapidly to Myanmar's call for help. They have also refrained from commenting on the country's ongoing civil war. But even before the 72-hour rescue deadline was up and undoubtedly egged on by their govts, western media concerns, who were denied entry into Myanmar, launched a chorus of accusations and demands.

They have quoted vague 'rebel sources' to 'confirm' air strikes by the army, some hours after the earthquake (though air strikes are planned in advance, quakes don't announce their arrival and the junta later announced a ceasefire). They demand that foreign journalists – and western aid – be allowed directly and unhindered into rebel-held territories. We saw how that played out in Sri Lanka.

The absurd belief that only (Asian) govts or military rulers – and not underground rebels – will misuse aid, still prevails. Finally, they demand that "democracy" be restored immediately.

Will Myanmar's military junta oblige? Will it take liability if anything happens to such intrepid reporters, some of whom have already sneaked in and filmed without permission?

Or, will Nappayidaw stick to a ceasefire but – channel foreign aid through its own distributors and in full view of UN and other monitors? Whatever it decides, there are big players watching. Myanmar is in the spotlight, and it's not going to shift in a hurry.

The writer is a senior foreign correspondent based in New Delhi

'Any device running software and connected to internet opens itself up to hacking...brain implants are no exception'

On Thursday, neurotech firm Precision Neuroscience announced it had received the first-ever FDA approval for part of its brain-computer interface (BCI) that may help restore speech and movement in paralysed persons.

It's a milestone in a field where Elon Musk's Neuralink has so far hogged headlines. Rajesh PN Rao, Hwang endowed professor and director of Neural Systems Laboratory at University of Washington, tells Abhilash Gaur neurotechnology is advancing rapidly, and its promises and dangers could come true sooner than we realise.

● How big is the BCI field, and who are the leaders?

There are at least 10 major BCI firms and many more startups. Neuralink has cutting-edge technology for robotic insertion of wires into the brain, and a wireless implantable device. Synchron has a less invasive stent-like BCI whose sensors are inserted through the jugular vein. This BCI lets paralysed patients text, email and browse the web using brain signals. Onward Medical's BCI stimulates the spinal cord of a person with paralysis to help them walk. NeuroPace, Blackrock Neurotech, Paradromics, Precision Neuroscience, Forest Neurotech,

Motif Neurotech and Medtronic are the other major players. Even Meta, Microsoft and Apple are exploring non-invasive interfaces based on brain or muscle signals, and have filed patents.

● Is there a BCI race, like the AI race?

US currently dominates, both in terms of academic research and companies. Major university labs in EU have contributed to BCI research since the 1990s. China, Russia and India have traditionally focused on non-invasive BCIs, which do not translate easily into commercial or clinical applications. But there's a recent surge of interest in implantable BCIs in both China and India. Last year, Chinese company NeuCyber NeuroTech demonstrated an implanted BCI system that allowed a monkey to control a robotic arm. After that, Shanghai-based StairMed raised \$48mn to develop an implantable BCI half the size of Neuralink's implant, and flexible electrodes one-fifth the size of Neuralink's.

● And where are we headed after that?

Beyond medical applications, we may see applications

● Is India active in the BCI field?

In India, Pratiksha Trust, established by Infosys co-founder Kris Gopalakrishnan and his wife Sudha Gopalakrishnan, has launched a moonshot project at IISc called 'Brain Co-Processors'. It's a concept I proposed a few years ago to combine BCIs with AI to restore or augment the brain's capabilities. Brain co-processors allow biological neural networks in the brain to directly interact with artificial neural networks in AI.



● What are the major uses of BCIs we'll see in the coming years?

We will first see an increasing number of medical applications. Trials are on with multi-purpose brain-controlled interfaces that allow paralysed people to control a range of devices, from computers and phones to robotic prostheses. BCIs that stimulate the brain may get approved for treatment of not just movement disorders but also neuropsychiatric conditions like depression and PTSD. In the longer term, brain co-processors using AI will allow targeted rehabilitation of the brain after stroke or other injury, paving the way for more ambitious BCIs, such as memory prostheses for persons with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia.

● And where are we headed after that?

Beyond medical applications, we may see applications

of BCIs that are aimed at enhancing existing human capabilities. These include amplification of physical, sensory or cognitive function; brain-to-brain communication; accelerating the learning and acquisition of new knowledge and skills; novel forms of virtual reality and gaming involving a complete sensory experience, including smell and taste; brain-adaptive entertainment with stories that adapt to a viewer's current brain activity, ultra-realistic telepresence and avatars; brain-based lie detection and biometrics, and neuromarketing and advertising based on brain signals.

Most of these applications raise important ethical, legal, social and regulatory issues that we as a society need to address before the technology gets too far ahead.

● Can BCIs 'hack' your thoughts? Is it possible to erase brain data or plant a 'virus'?

Any device that runs software and is connected to the internet opens itself up to the possibility that a malicious actor could hack into it. BCIs are no exception. The Neuralink BCI, for example, runs software within the implant and connects wirelessly to a computer connected to the internet. Such a device and future BCIs like it require the strongest possible security protocols, beyond what is currently used in medical devices like heart implants and deep brain stimulators.

If the security protocol is not strong enough, the BCI could be hacked and a virus could, in principle, be planted. If the BCI only "reads" the brain (records brain signals but does not stimulate), then the virus could invade your privacy by transmitting to others your brain signals (for example, some aspect of your intentions or thoughts) without your knowledge or permission.

A BCI that can both "read" and "write" the brain (record and stimulate) carries an even bigger risk – a future hacker could influence the user's brain by biasing brain activity towards one choice or another, erase recently stored information by perturbing memory regions of the brain, or even write new information into the brain. However, this assumes that neuroscientists have made sufficient progress in understanding how memory and cognition work in the brain, which may take several decades. It is my hope that countries and companies will have adopted a comprehensive ethical and regulatory framework for BCIs by then.

Calvin & Hobbes



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Death Is Linear, Dying Is Circular

Christopher Mendonca

It seems that suffering is part of natural order of the universe. At all levels in nature, we see struggle for survival, growth and decay, emergence of new life and a return to earth of what is biodegradable. Subtly different from death is the process of dying. Death, it seems, is linear; a discrete event in time. Dying, however, is circular. There is a continuous cycle of death and birth in the seasons. Winter gives way to spring; the sun sets before it rises again and each day and night displays before our very eyes continuous cycle of dying and rising. Varying shades of brown and green leaves that adorn nature speak of a constant process of life giving but not before there is the process of dying. In our own bodies, countless cells continuously die and are replaced. In our minds, we experience constant birth and death of myriads of

thoughts and ideas that are here one moment and disappear before giving birth to the next.

The emergence of human intelligence brought with it a capacity to disengage from this process and look at it as different from oneself. And with it came the desire to control the process rather than be part of it. What was once a unified whole, now became an experience of duality, a sense of separateness. We have the capacity to disengage from each other and from the world of nature. We create illusion of ego and identify with it. In this

experience of separateness, we seek to control nature and to some extent one's own course of life. But with it also comes the ability to look upon the whole of one's life as a personal asset to be preserved, to see deprivation as a

personal loss, to avenge a perceived wrong.

The order of creation just below humans, however, lacking the machinations of a mind does not cry out in anguish at its loss and destruction. Its passing away or transformation when it often occurs, takes place often unnoticed but always without complaint. Death and destruction are never 'avenged'. With the human mind came the concept of 'victim' hitherto unknown in creation. Suffering came to be seen as punishment, sickness was often considered to be a consequence of sin. But more

importantly not only did humans experience 'victimhood', they also learned to victimise others. It has invaded all forms of human relationships. It is in this context that the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus assume

importance. We are being called to journey back from the linear to the circular. Death occurs in time; dying is a part of timelessness and as a consequence, a process of constant renewal. The Risen Christ bears the imprint of his wounds in his resurrected body. Thomas, one of the apostles, is still stuck with the linear and refuses to believe. The others have, in a manner of speaking 'stepped out of line' in faith, transcending limitations of time. They recognise that the linear is only part of the larger circle of life, with no beginning and end. They have journeyed into timelessness. Thomas in a moment of recognition touches the sacred wounds of Jesus only to see them transformed and begins to believe.

The Resurrection of Jesus transforms suffering and death through a process of constant dying to self. For those who experience it, it has the power not to do away with suffering but to transform it.

Sacredspace



There is neither creation nor destruction, neither destiny

nor free will, neither path nor achievement. This is the final truth.

Ramana Maharshi

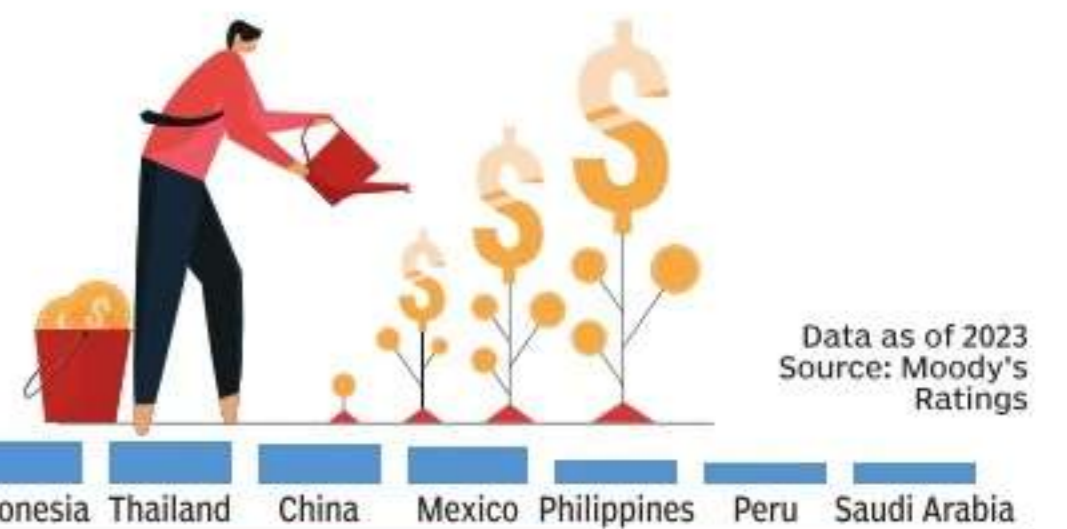
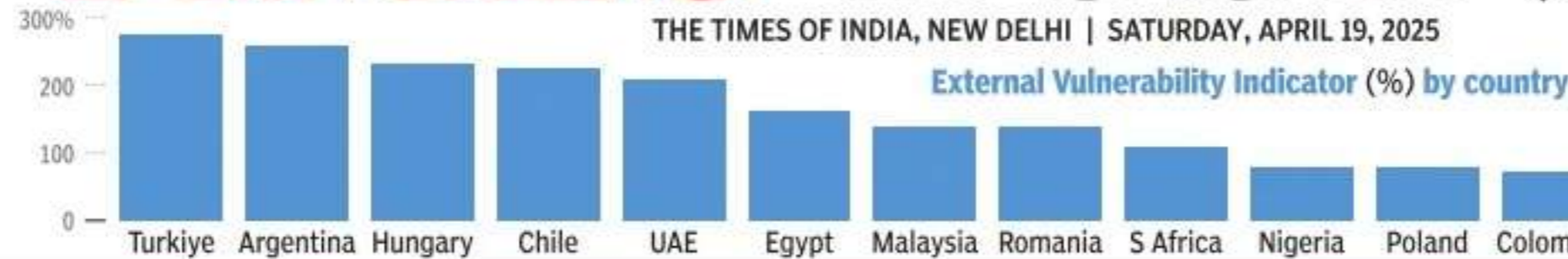


THE SPEAKING TREE

Turkiye, Argentina and Hungary are most vulnerable to external financial shocks as indicated by high External Vulnerability Indicator. **India and Brazil are better positioned** to attract and retain global capital in risk-averse conditions

TIMES BUSINESS

THE TIMES OF INDIA, NEW DELHI | SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 2025



Data as of 2023
Source: Moody's Ratings

More hired than fired but IT pain lingers

Top 3 Cos Add 1,438 Techies In Q4 | Net New Jobs In FY25 Stand At 13.5K After Degrowth In FY24

Shilpa.Phadnis@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: For over two decades, IT companies have been the biggest hirers of engineering and technology talent. However, amid uncertainty, IT companies are treading cautiously when it comes to workforce expansion. With increased adoption of AI and automation, there is greater focus on productivity.

The top three Indian IT firms added 1,438 employees during the March quarter, reversing a decline of 936 in headcount in the Dec quarter. TCS added 625 people, while Infosys and Wipro added 199 and 614 employees, respectively, during Q4.

However, the top five Indian IT firms saw a collective net headcount reduction of 2,587 in the Dec quarter, contrasting sharply

CUTTING COSTS AMID DULL DEMAND

Hiring in FY25
Net addition: +13,503 employees
Previous year: -64,000 employees

March quarter (Q4 FY25)
TCS: +625
Infosys: +199
Wipro: +614
Total addition: 1,438 employees

Why IT Hiring Has Not Picked Up Enough...
 > AI & automation focus
 > Shift to non-linear growth models
 > Emphasis on cost efficiency

with the Sept quarter's addition of 15,033 employees.

IT firms are bracing for a bleak hiring forecast due to the overhang of macroeconomic headwinds reshaping demand environment, leading to a dent in the job market. Firms are proceeding with caution, stressing the current climate necessitates prudent workforce planning and cost-

efficiency measures. For FY25, the combined net headcount addition of TCS, Infosys, and Wipro was 13,503 compared to a decline of 64,000 people in the previous year. TCS EVP & CHRO Mihind Lakkad said that the business environment will influence the firm's decision on net additions. "We'll continue to hire from campuses, and it will be similar

to last year's numbers. With respect to net additions, it depends on the overall business environment and what we eventually hire in the market," he said.

Wipro CHRO Saurabh Govil said his company has adopted a prudent campus hiring strategy. "We burnt our fingers three years back. So, we are very conscious that we do it the right way," he said. Ramkumar Ramamoorthy, partner at tech growth advisory firm Catalinc, said, "In the new era of growth driven by AI, platform, and third-party software sales, hiring metrics are increasingly losing relevance."

Phil Fersht, CEO of US-based HIS Research, said there is considerable focus on major IT services firms to keep costs to a minimum and maximise current resources. "This hiring metric is very

relevant to the changing times. The services firms are looking to incorporate current staff plus AI as opposed to the traditional model of hiring freshers and new staff to bolster growth," he said.

India's tech sector hired 1,26,000 people in FY25, taking the total talent base to 5.8 million. Nasscom restated that it hired 90,000 employees during the year-ago period, taking the tally to 5.6 million. This comes at a time when large IT firms are seeing a decline in headcount, and much of the net addition last year was on account of GCCs. "This is perhaps the worst environment we have known for college graduates looking for jobs. With the current economic uncertainty, this slow hiring metric will continue to be flat, and I can see it staying this way throughout 2025," Fersht said.

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At \$677.8bn, forex reserves rise for 6th straight week

Mumbai: India's forex reserves increased by \$1.5 billion to \$677.8 billion for the week ended April 11, RBI said on Friday. This is the sixth consecutive week of a rise. The overall reserves jumped by \$10.8 billion to \$676.2 billion in the previous reporting week ended April 4. Forex reserves touched an all-time high of \$704.9 billion in Sept 2024. Gold reserves surged by \$638 million to \$79.997 billion. AGENCIES



'No settlement without backing of Byju's creditors'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal dismissed attempts by Byju's founder Byju Raveendran's brother Riju Ravindran and cricket body BCCI to withdraw insolvency proceedings against the edtech firm without creditor approval. This decision reinforces the authority of the committee of creditors (CoC) in the corporate insolvency case.

NCLAT upheld an earlier decision by the Bengaluru bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), which declined to immediately approve the out-of-court settlement between BCCI and Byju's. The appellate tribunal stated that since the settlement proposal came after the formation of the CoC, it cannot proceed without the consent of 90% of the creditor group, in line with Sec 12A of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code.

The CoC includes GLAS Trust, a US-based trustee representing lenders to whom

Insolvency Withdrawal Plea Dismissed

Ruling highlights
 > NCLAT rejects Byju's & BCCI's attempt to withdraw insolvency plea
 > Reason: No approval from Committee of Creditors (CoC)
 > Legal Basis: Section 12A of IBC requires 90% creditor consent after CoC formation

Who's in the CoC?
 > GLAS Trust (US-based trustee) & Aditya Birla Finance
 > GLAS represents \$1.2bn in loans
 > It holds 99.4% voting rights

Origin of dispute
 > Creditor: BCCI
 > Claim: ₹158.9 crore over 2019 team sponsorship
 > Insolvency plea filed in 2023

Broader crisis at Byju's
 > Alpha lawsuit: Misuse of \$533mn loan alleged against top leadership
 > Aakash division: Urgent capital infusion needed; NCLT hearing on April 30

Byju's owes \$1.2 billion, and Aditya Birla Finance. Based on admitted claims, GLAS Trust holds a 99.4% voting share in the committee.

The case stems from a sponsorship dispute involving BCCI, which filed an insolvency plea last year over unpaid dues of Rs 158.9 crore tied to a 2019 team sponsorship agreement.

Though NCLAT briefly stayed insolvency proceedings in Aug 2024 after a settlement was proposed, that ruling was overturned by the SC in Oct following

objections from GLAS Trust. The lender alleged that the funds offered for settlement by Ravindran were questionable and should be directed toward broader debt obligations.

Ravindran and BCCI argued that their withdrawal application was submitted before the CoC was formed. However, the tribunal found that Form FA - the official application for withdrawal - was filed on Nov 14, 2024, by which time the CoC had already been constituted. As a result, the application triggers mandatory creditor consent.

Infy sacks 240 trainees, 3rd lot in 3 mths

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Infosys terminated 240 trainees at its Mysuru campus after they failed to clear an internal assessment. This decision came after the trainees were given three attempts to qualify. The company gave them ample preparation time and arranged several mock assessments and doubt-clearing sessions. Despite these efforts, the trainees were unable to meet the required standards. This marks the third instance of such terminations at the IT firm's Mysuru facility in recent times.

In Feb, Infosys terminated around 350 freshers after they failed to clear internal assessments. In March, the company dismissed 45 trainees for the same reason.

On completing a separation and general release agreement, the company said it will offer one month's salary, a relieving letter, and a 12-week training programme for potential roles in the BPM sector. Infosys has also partnered with NIIT and UpGrad to assist the affected trainees by sponsoring their training programmes to prepare them for future openings in the BPM industry.

IS A US RECESSION COMING?

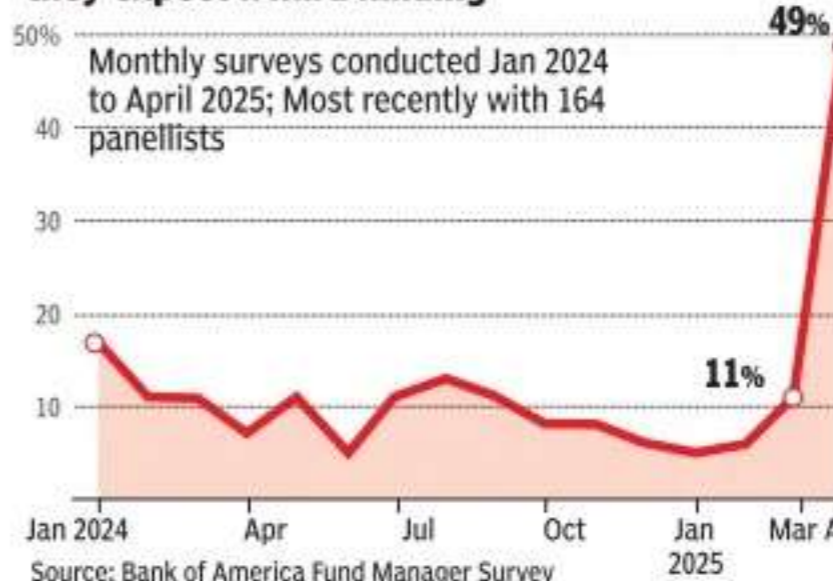
5 KEY QUESTIONS ANSWERED

The US economy may be heading into rough weather - and when America slows down, the world feels the tremors. With Trump tariffs putting global trade under pressure and India closely tied to both the US and China, a possible recession in the US can, at the very least, slow down growth rate in India too. Here's what economists and investors are saying:

1 How close is US to a recession? Five agencies and experts have following to say

Agency	Key Reasons
Conference Board's Leading Economic Index (LEI) has declined at least 15 of the past 18 months; board says a "significant growth slowdown" is baked in, though a full recession is still not its base case	Weakness across manufacturing new orders, consumer expectations, and building permits
Reuters economists' poll of April 7 puts median probability of recession in next 12 months at 45% - highest since Dec 2023	Tariffs already shaving 0.8 percentage point off 2025 GDP forecasts; business sentiment and capex plans falling
Moody's Analytics's Mark Zandi in a March 2025 podcast put recession odds at 40% by end-2025	Tariffs, fading fiscal impulse, and tight credit standards
Bloomberg Opinion's John Authers says odds of a 2008-style policy mistake are rising; warns "it's best not to wait for NBER confirmation"	15-month slide in the Conference Board Leading Economic Index, tariff shock to supply chains, and a deeply inverted 2-10 year Treasury curve
Ray Dalio , founder Bridgewater Associates, has said the US is "very close to a recession," adding that tariffs are "like throwing rocks into the production system" and could lead to "something worse than a recession" if mishandled	Tariff shock is crippling supply-chain efficiency; combines with ballooning US debt, and intensifying geopolitical conflict - conditions, Dalio says, mirror the 1930s

Share of hedge fund managers who say they expect a hard landing



National Bureau of Economic Research's (NBER) definitions

Recession is a significant decline in economic activity spread across the economy, lasting more than a few months; judged on depth, diffusion, duration

Downturn is a noticeable loss of momentum, but growth merely stalls or contracts very briefly. Does not fit the NBER "depth/diffusion" test

Depression is extreme recession - 3 years or more or 10% or larger fall in annual GDP. Rare; modern economists still reserve the label for 1929-33

2 US recessions since 2000

	Peak	Trough	Duration (months)	Real GDP peak-to-trough	Peak unemployment
Dot-com / 9-11	Mar 2001	Nov 2001	8	-0.3%	5.7%
Great Recession	Dec 2007	Jun 2009	18	-4.0%	10.0%
Covid-19 Recession	Feb 2020	Apr 2020	2 (shortest on record)	-19.2% q/q annualised (Q2)	14.7%

3 Can US recession trigger global recessions?

US recessions can go global when they coincide with a systemic financial shock (2008) or an exogenous event (pandemic). Otherwise, spill-overs are milder. IMF has ruled out a global recession

> 2001 US recession did not cause a global one. World GDP grew 2.5%, but trade growth collapsed

> 2007-09 was a US & global recession - first post-war global contraction (-1.3% world GDP '09)

> In 2020, Covid lockdown pushed world GDP down by -3%, deepest since 1945

4 China & India recessions since 2000

Country	Periods of outright GDP contraction (past 25 years)	Notes
China	Q1 2020 (-6.8% y/y) - first contraction since 1976	Annual growth still +2.2% for 2020; 2022 growth just 3% (worst outside 2020)
India	FY 2020-21 (-7.3%, with -24% in April -Jun 2020); RBI classified H1 FY21 as a "technical recession"	Previous near-recessions: 1991 balance-of-payments crisis (real GDP +1%), 2008-09 slowdown (growth fell to 3.1%, but stayed positive)

5 Why a recession in India is different from one in the US

Dimension	United States	India
General nature of primary shock	Financial cycle & consumer credit (housing, credit cards); inventory cycle	Supply-side shocks (oil, monsoon), external capital flows, informal-sector demand
Stabilising factors	Large: Unemployment insurance, progressive taxes mitigate hit	Small; Informal employment > 45% limits social-security reach
Monetary-policy pass-through	Fast: Deep bond market, mortgage refinancing	Slower; Bank-led system, high share of small firms outside formal credit
Job & Wages	Unemployment rises sharply but benefits cushion income	Job losses push workers back to agriculture/informality, depressing under-employment more than headline jobless rate
Global spillover	A US recession tightens global financial conditions via dollar funding & risk aversion	An Indian recession mainly drags on regional trade, remittances, and commodity demand; financial contagion limited by capital controls

CITU to hold protest against Samsung

Chennai: The CITU-affiliated Samsung India Thozhilalar Sangam has announced a demonstration against the company on April 21. It plans to conduct demonstrations at Sunguvarchatram bus stand demanding to hold wage-revision talks, and allow the suspended employees back to work. TNN

RIL board to consider debt fund-raising

Reliance Industries on Friday said it will consider raising funds via issuance of non-convertible debentures at a board meeting on April 25. The conglomerate will also declare its results for the March quarter on the same day. REUTERS

Cognizant CEO pay up 14% at \$8.2mn in FY24

Bengaluru: Cognizant CEO Ravi Kumar's realised compensation increased by nearly 14% to \$8.2 million in the 2024 financial year compared to \$7.2 million in the prior period, according to the 2025 proxy statement filed with the US markets regulator SEC. TNN

'Public Ltd' tag: PhonePe, Razorpay closer to IPOs

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Fintech unicorns PhonePe and Razorpay have transitioned into public limited companies, signalling a step forward in their long-term plans to go public in India.

The recent regulatory filings showed that PhonePe approved its conversion on April 3. The process includes changing the company's name from PhonePe Private Limited to PhonePe Limited, though it still awaits shareholder approval and clearance from the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

Razorpay, also based in Bengaluru, confirmed its transition to a public structure, relating to its efforts to re-domicile from the United States to India. According to a company spokesperson, the move begins the process of public company compliance well in advance of its anticipated IPO in about two

To-Do List For Listing

- > PhonePe approved its conversion into a public limited company on April 3. It awaits shareholder approval and clearance from the Ministry of Corporate Affairs
- > Razorpay confirmed its move to transition to a public structure and its efforts to re-domicile from the United States to India
- > Both companies are preparing to access Indian capital markets

years, ensuring timely adoption of governance protocols. Both companies are preparing to access Indian capital markets.

The prospect of a PhonePe listing was first confirmed by Walmart CEO Doug McMillon in Feb, without specifics on timing. Razorpay is anticipated to target an IPO between 2026 and 2027

financial years, following the completion of regulatory requirements and the amalgamation of its US and Indian entities. Previously, PhonePe's IPO prospects were clouded by regulatory issues concerning UPI market-share limits. The National Payments Corporation of India's recent extension of the deadline to cap individual app market share at 30% grants PhonePe additional time to scale up before listing. At present, PhonePe accounts for almost 48% of UPI volumes in India.

In FY24, PhonePe's operating revenue rose 74% to Rs 5,064 crore, and losses narrowed to Rs 1,996 crore. Razorpay recorded Rs 2,068 crore in revenue and a profit of Rs 35 crore in the same period. Other fintech companies like Paytm and MobiKwik are already listed on Indian exchanges, while Pine Labs and PayU are also planning IPOs in the coming year.

No plan for GST on ₹2,000+ UPI payments: Govt

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Govt on Friday clarified that it is not considering to levy GST on UPI transactions above Rs 2,000. Clarifying on reports, which said govt is considering levying GST on UPI transactions over Rs 2,000, the finance ministry said they are false, misleading, and without any basis.

GST is levied on charges, such as Merchant Discount Rate (MDR), relating to payments made using certain instruments. Effective Jan 2020, the CBDT has removed MDR on person-to-merchant UPI transactions. "Since currently no MDR is charged on UPI transactions, there is consequently no GST applicable to these transactions," the ministry said. UPI transaction values have seen an exponential increase, from Rs 21.3 lakh crore in 2019-20 to Rs 260.6 lakh crore by March 2025. AGENCIES

Indonesian coffee chain may brew price war

Asmita.Dey@timesofindia.com

Mumbai: Global coffee giants Starbucks and Tim Hortons have a new competitor in India - Asian rival Kopi Kenangan. The Indonesian brand, valued at over \$1 billion, plans to capitalise on the growing cafe culture in the country with pricing lower than its competitors and a menu localised to cater to the Indian palate.

"For any retail brand, it would be such a waste if you miss the train in India," Edward Tirtanata, co-founder and group CEO at Kenangan Brands, told TOI. The company is backed by Peak XV Partners and Meta co-founder Eduardo Saverin's B Capital. A huge population, expanding economy, and signifi-

KOPI KENANGAN'S INDIA FORAY

> The Indonesian brand, valued at over \$1bn, plans to capitalise on the cafe culture in the country with pricing lower than its competitors
 > Prices start at ₹99 for an Espresso and under ₹150 for bigger servings, lower by ₹80-100 than what Starbucks and local chains like Blue Tokai offer

> Sluggish consumer demand amid high inflation has weighed on brands like Starbucks, which slowed expansion
 > Cafe Coffee Day, which ushered in cafe culture in the country in the 90s, lost ground to rivals weighed down by huge debt and financial troubles

cant purchasing power in metros like Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru provide enough room for new entrants to have a play in the market despite a growing mix of global and local coffee chains in the country, said Tirtanata. For India, where the cafe market is still nascent compared to

other Asian countries, the brand has priced its menu cheaper than the rate at which it sells in other markets like Singapore and Australia, Tirtanata said.

Besides global brands like Starbucks, Tim Hortons and Pret A Manger, a new crop of home-grown brands like

Third Wave Coffee and Blue Tokai Coffee Roasters are expanding in the local market alongside traditional chains Barista and Cafe Coffee Day.

C CD, which ushered in the cafe culture in the country in the 90s, lost ground to rivals weighed down by huge debt and financial troubles. The company has been reducing its store count.

In India, where socialising over a cup of coffee or tea is a popular culture, QSR brands McDonald's and KFC are also competing for a share of the coffee space through their offerings.

Kopi Kenangan's pricing in the market, which is largely led by students, young Gen Z, and millennials, many of whom are also in their first jobs and may look for cheaper

options, starts at Rs 99 for an Espresso shot and under Rs 150 for bigger servings, lower by about Rs 80-100 than what Starbucks and local chains like Blue Tokai offer. "Our price points are far more accessible than other international chains. We are positioned well within a gap that exists in the Indian market," said Tirtanata.

Its strategy to source most ingredients locally has partly helped the company to keep its pricing low. Sluggish consumer demand amid high inflation over the past few quarters weighed on brands like Starbucks, which slowed store expansion. Kopi Kenangan, which launched in Delhi earlier this month, plans to enter Mumbai and Bengaluru in the next couple of years.

Made-in-India electronic products recognised globally, says Vaishnav

Manesar: India's electronics manufacturing and export prowess have grown multi-fold in the last decade driven by enabling policies and incentives and the Made-in-India products now command global recognition, given their reliability and respect for IP rights, Union minister Ashwini Vaishnav said on Friday. Vaishnav said electronics

manufacturing in India has risen five-fold in the last decade topping Rs 11 lakh crore. Exports have grown six times during this period, crossing Rs 3.3 lakh crore. The entire ecosystem has spurred 25 lakh jobs, Vaishnav, minister for electronics and IT said. "In global market, Indian pro-

ducts, given their reliability and respect for IP rights, have an advantage, and it is being recognised globally." India's design capabilities have paved the way for complex products - from AI cameras to automobile electronics and telecom network equipment to power electronics - being designed here, adding to India's sheen as an electronics hub, he said. AGENCIES

GALLERY

U18 Asian javelin gold for Himanshu

New Delhi: India's Himanshu claimed the javelin gold in the 6th Asian U18 athletics championships in Dammam, Saudi Arabia on Friday. Himanshu bagged the top position with a throw of 67.57m in his first attempt which was four feet more than the throw which earned Lu Hao of China the silver. Hao had a throw of 63.45m. Uzbekistan's Ruslan Sadullayev finished third with 61.96m. The men's Indian medley relay team - Chiranth P (100m), Saket Minj (200m), Sayed Saabeer (300m), Kadir Khan (400m) -- won silver with a time of 1:52.15 to better the national youth record of 1:52.96. China won gold with 1:51.68, with Saudi Arabia taking bronze with 1:52.36. Sprinter Aarti bagged her second bronze medal in the girls 200m final, clocking 24.31 sec to finish behind UAE's Mariam Kareem (23.99 sec) and Japan's Shibata Misato (24.16), who won the gold and silver respectively. Prisha Mishra clocked 25.16 seconds to finish eighth.

Oly champion Hafnaoui banned for 21 months: Tokyo Olympics 400 metres freestyle champion Ahmed Hafnaoui received a 21-month suspension for three whereabouts failures, the Aquatic Sports Integrity Unit said. The Tunisian swimmer's ban runs until Jan 10, 2026 and all of his results from April 11, 2024 onwards have been disqualified, it added.

Tsurenko takes WTA to court for distress: Ukrainian tennis player Lesia Tsurenko has filed an amended lawsuit that accuses the WTA Tour and its chairman, Steve Simon, of a breach of contract, negligence and the "negligent infliction of emotional distress" because of the way it has handled Russian and Belarusian players amid the war in Ukraine.

Veer, Anahat enter semis: Indian squash players Veer Chotrani and Anahat Singh advanced to the semifinals of the World Championship Qualifying Event (Asia) after registering contrasting wins in Kuala Lumpur on Friday.

Ghai wins Calance Open: Overnight leader Tapendra Ghai hung on to his lead, returning an even-par 70 on the final day to clinch the Rs 1 crore Calance Open title at the Qutub Course in New Delhi on Friday.

56 Indian boxers set for Asian U-15, U-17 c'ships: India has fielded a 56-member squad for the Asian U-15 & U-17 Boxing Championships being held in Amman, Jordan. This is the first event organised by Asian Boxing, endorsed by both the Olympic Council of Asia and the newly-formed World Boxing. TNN/AGENCIES

ACTION TODAY

F1: Arabian GP, Qualifying, 10.30 pm (Fancode)
CRICKET: GT vs DC, 3.30 pm; RR vs LSG, 7.30 pm (Star Sports, JioHotstar); Sri Lanka vs Ireland, 4th ODI, 11.30 am (Eurosport)
FOOTBALL: EPL, 7.30 pm & 10 pm (Star Sports, JioHotstar)

Rajasthan Royals Head Coach Dismisses Talk Of Rift In Camp Following Super-Over Defeat To Capitals

'SANJU AND I ARE ON THE SAME PAGE'

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Jaipur: It hasn't been a happy comeback in the IPL for Rahul Dravid. After leading India to the 2024 T20 World Cup title win, Dravid's appointment as head coach of Rajasthan Royals was expected to yield better results than where the team is currently placed in the points table — a disappointing eighth among 10 teams.

Even as the team struggles to arrest the slide, reports of internal discord have taken social media by storm. Based on video footage, there has been speculation that captain Sanju Samson may have been disinterested in the discussions while planning for the Super Over in the last match against Delhi Capitals.

Dravid, however, dismissed reports of any rift between him and Samson. "I don't know where these reports are coming from. Sanju and I are on the same page," a curt Dravid said when asked about the issue in the pre-match press conference on Friday.

"The decisions are being made by me, with Sanju being an integral part of that, and in consultation with our other coaches and analyst team. So, a lot of decisions are made with people who are pretty much experts in the field and who have spent a lot of time in the field.

"A lot of decisions can be

looked at from the outside and termed as perplexing but there is a lot of thought that goes into making these decisions. Some of them work out, some of them don't," he said.

That said, Dravid did concede that his side's performance has not been up to the mark. With a young and relatively inexperienced squad, the former Indian captain, renowned for his ability to nurture talent, has not delivered according to expectations. "I will accept the fact that we have been a bit disappointing this season. There is no doubt about it when you lose five games out of seven. We haven't probably played according to our potential," Dravid said while defending all the decisions taken by the management.

'Waiting for scan reports of Sanju'

On Samson's availability for the game against Lucknow Super Giants on Saturday, Dravid said, "He experienced a bit of pain in the abdominal area in the game against Capitals. He has done some scans. We are awaiting the results. Once we get more clarity around the scans and severity of it, we will make a decision tomorrow."

"The decisions are being made by me, with Sanju being an integral part of that, and in consultation with our other coaches and analysts. A lot of decisions can be looked at from the outside and termed as perplexing but there is a lot of thought that goes into making these decisions. Some of them work out, some of them don't."

—Rahul Dravid | RR COACH



MID-SEASON BLUES: Rajasthan Royals' head coach Dravid with skipper Sanju Samson

Down and out Royals face tough LSG test

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Jaipur: Rajasthan Royals will have to quickly forget their heart-breaking Super Over defeat to Delhi Capitals and take on Lucknow Super Giants in a crucial game at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium here on Saturday. Their third straight loss made matters worse for the Royals. Their qualification bid is now looking tougher. With just a couple of wins to their credit at the halfway stage, the remaining seven matches will all be a must-win ones for the Sanju Samson-led team, who are lying in eighth spot. To achieve the magic figure of 16 points for making the cut for the IPL playoffs, RR will have to win six out of seven matches.

Lucknow Super Giants are far better placed in fifth spot, with eight points. Although LSG were at the receiving end in their last home encounter against Chennai Super Kings, which Dhoni's boys won by five wickets with three balls to spare, they have looked good with three wins in their last four ties.

Samson has a lot to worry about as he braces up to face resurgent LSG. Samson, RR's most successful captain, had to retire hurt after making 31 off 19 balls due to a rib-cage injury against DC. He is racing against time to be fit for the LSG clash. The Royals will be searching for their maiden win in their second home match here after they were outclassed by RCB last Sunday. After posting a decent total of 173, RR bowlers failed to control RCB openers Phil Salt and Virat Kohli, who scored fifties.

FACE-OFF
RR VS LSG
TV TIME: 7.30 PM
STAR SPORTS
JIOHOTSTAR

HEAD TO HEAD
RR: 4
LSG: 1

LAST FIVE MATCHES
RR: L L L W W
LSG: L W W W L

VENUE: JAIPUR
WEATHER: 36°C
ODDS: RR 11/10, LSG 8/10

Likely XII: RR: Yashasvi Jaiswal, Sanju Samson (C/WK), Nitish Rana, Riyan Parag, Shimron Hetmyer, Dhruv Jurel, Jofra Archer, Maheesh Theekshana, Wanindu Hasaranga, Sandeep Sharma, Tushar Deshpande, Shubham Dubey.
LSG: Aiden Markram, Mitchell Marsh, Nicholas Pooran, Rishabh Pant (c/wk), Ayush Badoni, Abdul Samad, David Miller, Shardul Thakur, Ravi Bishnoi, Akash Deep, Avesh Khan, Digvesh Rathi.

Bowlers corner focus in clash of table toppers

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Ahmedabad: In-form teams Delhi Capitals (DC) and Gujarat Titans (GT) will clash here on Saturday with the focus on the premier bowlers on both sides, especially after Mitchell Starc took DC to a fine win over Rajasthan Royals with his inswinging yorkers. Starc's fellow pacers Mukesh Kumar and Mohit Sharma also played their parts in that game, but against GT they will have to compete for eyeballs with another fine bowling unit.

GT and DC, in fact, boast the two best bowling units this season — five of the top 11 wicket-takers so far are from the two teams.

Pacer Prasidh Krishna (10 wickets, economy rate 6.95), left-arm spinner R Sai Kishore (10 at 8.47), and opening bowler Mohammed Siraj (10 at 8.50) have ensured that Titans haven't suffered on the bowling front in spite of the meagre returns from their tallisman leg spinner Rashid Khan and the absence of Kagiso Rabada.

The Capitals' lead spinner, meanwhile, is in supreme form — left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav has 11 wickets (ER 6.04) and is second on the list of top wicket-takers behind CSK's Noor Ahmad.

Kuldeep's returns in the middle overs have strangled opposition teams, while Starc's reverse swinging yorkers

in the death overs have knocked the wind out of the opposition's sails. Mukesh Kumar has been metronomic in the opening overs and Mohit Sharma's slower balls and good-length deliveries in the middle have made him difficult to score off.

DC's mystery spinner Vipraj Nigam, the Capitals' find of the season, and captain Axar Patel, though not among the wickets, have been able to keep the scoring under check.

The Capitals' batting has revolved around mainstay KL Rahul. While Jake Fraser-McGurk hasn't fired, left-handed opener Abhishek Porel has risen to the occasion. Uncertainty still persists around the availability of

South African Faf du Plessis. However, a strong middle order comprising Rahul, Axar, Ashutosh Sharma, and South African Tristan Stubbs has made the Capitals a well-rounded unit.

Likely XII: GT: Shubman Gill (capt), B Sai Sudharsan, Jos Buttler (wk), Sherfane Rutherford, Shahruxh Khan, Washington Sundar, Rahul Tewatia, Rashid Khan, Arshad Khan, R Sai Kishore, Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna
DC: Faf du Plessis/Jake Fraser-McGurk, Abhishek Porel, Karun Nair, KL Rahul (wk), Tristan Stubbs, Axar Patel (capt), Ashutosh Sharma, Vipraj Nigam, Mitchell Starc, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohit Sharma, Mukesh Kumar

FACE-OFF
GT VS DC
TV TIME: 3.30 PM
STAR SPORTS
JIOHOTSTAR

HEAD TO HEAD
GT: 2
DC: 3

LAST FIVE MATCHES
GT: L W W W W
DC: W L W W W

VENUE: AHMEDABAD
WEATHER: 39°C
ODDS: GT 7/10, DC 11/10

4 DC have won the last four games in Ahmedabad — by 7 wickets vs KKR, by 7 wickets vs PBKS (both in 2021); by 5 runs in 2023 & by 6 wickets in 2024 (both vs GT).
—Stats: Rajesh Kumar

Shriyanka reaches first WC final, finishes 8th in 50m rifle 3P event

Lima: Paris Olympics shooter Shriyanka Sadangi finished eighth in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions (3P) final on the third day of the ISSF World Cup Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun stage here. She became the latest Indian shooter on this double-legged South American sojourn to make the cut for a maiden individual World Cup final, but made the exit after the 10th shot of the standing position round, the 40th of the 45-shot final. Sagen Maddalena of the USA, the silver medalist in the Paris Games, won the gold. Sagen's effort took the USA to the top of the medal tally with three golds and six medals.

India was second at the end of the competition on day three on Thursday, with two gold medals and a silver and a bronze each.

Indian shooters had a challenging day overall with none of them making the men's 3P final and also finding themselves with lots to do after the first round of qualifying in the men's 25m rapid-fire pistol (RFP) event. In the women's 3P as well, the Indians struggled after the first two kneeling and prone positions. But all three — Shriyanka, Ashi Chouksey and previous World Cup gold winner Sift Kaur Samra — picked up the pace admirably in the final standing position to make a dash for the qualifying mark. PTI

Unreal feeling that a stand is named after me, says Rohit Sharma

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Mumbai: Filled with gratitude after the Mumbai Cricket Association named a stand at the Wankhede Stadium after him at its AGM on April 15, India's Test and ODI captain Rohit Sharma on Friday described the rare honour as "unreal."

"To sit back and think that there is going to be a stadium stand in my name — it's such an unreal feeling. It's something I had never imagined, and I will be forever grateful for this big honour in my life," Rohit said at the inauguration ceremony of the third edition of the Mumbai T20 League, set to kick off on May 26. The 37-year-old will be the face of the league.

Recalling his early days as an Under-16 Mumbai cricketer struggling to catch a glimpse of Ranji Trophy stalwarts at the Wankhede.

"I still remember those days — around 2003 or 2004 — when I used to stand outside Wankhede just hoping to watch the Mumbai Ranji team practice. After our U-14 or U-16 training at Azad Maidan, a few friends and I would cross the railway track just to get a glimpse of the Ranji stars. I know how tough it was to get inside Wankhede back then. Even now, random people aren't allowed in," the veteran opener said.



Europa League: Man Utd beat Lyon in epic turnaround; Tottenham, Bilbao also reach semis

Manchester: Harry Maguire said the 'maddest game' of his life summed up a topsy-turvy Manchester United career after scoring the winner in a 5-4 victory over Lyon to send his team into the Europa League semifinals. After a 2-2 draw in the first leg, United appeared to be cruising into the last four when they led 2-0 at half-time on Thursday.

Lyon fought back to level at 2-2 before having Corentin Tolisso sent off just before extra time. Yet the 10 men found themselves 4-2 up with just six minutes of extra time remaining. Bruno Fernandes' penalty and Kobbie Mainoo's cool finish levelled at a raucous Old Trafford before Maguire headed in after being sent forward as a makeshift striker.

"I've been here six years now and that game pretty much summed up my time at this club, to be honest. It was an incredible feeling to score that winner in such an important game, in a game that was full of emotion and the strangest, maddest game I've ever played in or witnessed."

United have been famed for comebacks — none more famous than victory against Bayern Munich to win the Champions League final in 1999 when late goals by Teddy Sheringham and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer sealed a 2-1 win. United faced Athletic Bilbao in the semifinals with the chance to save their season.

In Bilbao, Athletic beat Rangers 2-0 to progress to the last four; Tottenham Hotspur beat 2022 Europa League winners Frankfurt 1-0 in Germany to advance 2-1 on aggregate. It is Tottenham's first European semi-final since their run to the Champions League final in 2019, and they will play Bodo/Glimt. The Norwegians beat Lazio 3-2 on penalties in Rome after another remarkable tie finished 3-3 on aggregate. AGENCIES

120 Man United are the first team in history to score two goals in the 120th minute of a major European match.

5 The game between Man United and Lyon is the first match in major European football history to see five goals scored after extra-time.

5-4 It is only the second time Man United have won a match 5-4 in their entire history, with the other coming against Arsenal in February 1958.

9 The nine goals scored are the most ever in a Europa League match.

"The sound in the stadium for Robbie Mainoo and Harry Maguire's goals was the best sound I have ever heard. A lot of people want to keep shirts, I just want to keep that sound. It is the best sound in the world."
— Ruben Amorim
Man United manager

CHELSEA MAKE CUT DESPITE LEGIA LOSS

Paris: Chelsea edged into the UEFA Conference League semifinals on Thursday when a 2-1 home defeat by Legia Warsaw was enough for a 4-2 aggregate win. Chelsea went 1-0 down to a 10th minute penalty before Marc Cucurella's close-range equaliser on 33, but French defender Steve Kapuadi put the Poles ahead again in the 53rd minute with what proved to be the winner on the night.

Chelsea boss Enzo Maresca said he maintains the full backing of the club's owners despite growing disquiet among the Blues' fanbase. Qualification for the semifinals on Thursday was overshadowed by boos that greeted the players at the end of their second-leg defeat to Legia Warsaw.

LA LIGA TO HAVE FIVE TEAMS IN CL

Madrid: La Liga will be represented by at least five teams in the Champions League next season after Italy's Lazio were eliminated from the Europa League on Thursday while Athletic Bilbao progressed to the semi-finals. La Liga earned the second of two European Performance Spots handed out by UEFA, which go to associations "with the best collective performance by their clubs" in UEFA competitions.

Upholding fairplay: Chief arbiter who protects integrity of chess

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UNSUNG HERO: Ivan Syrovoy

Pune: Ivan Syrovoy of Slovakia is not just a global-level chess arbiter. His innate sense of right and wrong and calculations are quite strong too. The 43-year-old had penalised Russians Ian Nepomniachtchi and Daniil Dubov for playing pre-arranged draw with dubious moves known as 'Dance of Knights' in the World Rapid and Blitz championship at Samarkand, Uzbekistan, in Dec 2023.

"I had to take action against them, regardless of their names," Syrovoy told TOI on Thursday about the Nepo-Dubov incident. "It was a clear case of not just pre-arranged draw but bringing the game into disrepute. You have to decide when to make the decision and how to make it."

Syrovoy, who started as an arbiter in his teens and is working at the top level for 20-odd years now, is in Pune as chief arbiter at the ongoing Women's Grand Prix.

the Nepo-Dubov case was so blatant that there was no question of giving benefit."

Nepo was twice world championship finalist at that time and Dubov a former second of Magnus Carlsen. Syrovoy knew that the players would appeal against his verdict of half a point punishment to each player and rearranging pairings of the Swiss League tournament according to their reduced points tally. "Hence I did not take the decision in haste. I waited for one more round and the day's play to end and allowed the appeals committee enough time to deliberate without delaying the last round pairing of the day and wasting other players' time," said Syrovoy.

"I felt happy and vindicated when the appeals committee upheld my decision after deliberating for many hours."

Did he fear for the backlash? "If you start worrying what will happen, then you will end up making a bad decision."

Vaishali scores 1st win in FIDE women's GP

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Pune: A handful of spectators were treated to thrilling endgames in the fifth round of FIDE women's GP chess meet at Amanara The Fern, Hadapsar, here on Friday. R Vaishali scored her first win of the event, giving Batkhuyag Munguntuul of Mongolia her fifth successive decisive result (two wins, three defeats). GM Vaishali won the rook and light-coloured bishop endgame with powerful pawns in the 'g' and 'h' files. That, along with Divya Deshmukh having a pawn up against Polina Shuvalova of Russia in a rook endgame, excited some Indian supporters. But Shuvalova uncorked copybook defence amid some whispers. Divya had to force a stalemate to split a point.

K Humpy vs D Harika and Alina Kashlinskaya vs Melia Salome ended in draws.



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PUNJAB SIZZLE IN THE RAIN

RCB Remain Winless At Home As Bowlers Chahal, Arshdeep And Jansen Impress In Rain-Hit Tie Before Wadhera Settles Issue

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@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: Royal Challengers Bengaluru's (RCB) winless run at home extended to three matches on Friday night as Punjab Kings (PBKS) registered a five-wicket win over the hosts in a rain-hit contest here, with Marco Jansen, Yuzvendra Chahal, Nehal Wadhera and Arshdeep Singh all starring for Punjab in a truncated 14-overs-a-side contest.

Seventeen years ago, on April 18, 2008, Kolkata Knight Riders' Brendon McCullum rained runs against RCB at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium to signal the beginning of the IPL. On Friday, the anniversary of that memorable T20 bash, one would have expected a high-voltage contest between the hosts and Punjab. The weather gods, though, had other plans.

While many parts of Bengaluru experienced a light drizzle or grey weather, the clouds, which menacingly hovered around the stadium since evening, opened, and ensured the covers were on for over four hours. The match finally began at 9.45 pm, with the rain reducing it to a 14-over-a-side affair.

RCB's batters immediately made a beeline back to the dugout, scoring only 95/9. In reply, Punjab fumbled in

tricky conditions but Nehal Wadhera's 19-ball 33 not out (3x4; 3x6) helped them cross the finish line in 12.1 overs.

Much of the credit for restricting RCB goes to the Punjab bowlers, who got their act together. Arshdeep (2-23), Marco Jansen (2-10) and Chahal (2-11) all made instant impacts.

However, a late flourish from big-hitter Tim David (50 not out off 26b, 5x4, 3x6), who walked in to bat at No. 7, saved Bengaluru from ignominy. The Australian looked in good touch but he did not find support from the tailenders.

Left to do the heavy lifting, he smashed three sixes off left-arm spinner Harpreet Brar in the final over.

Punjab, who opted to bowl first, pushed Rajat Patidar's men on the back foot early on. Arshdeep was on the money with the new ball. In the first over, he dismissed opener Phil Salt, who has been the team's enforcer in the Powerplay.

It brought Patidar (23; 18b, 1x4, 1x6) and he opened his ac-

50 Tim David's unbeaten knock off 26 balls is his maiden fifty in the IPL. His previous best was 46 vs SRH at Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai on May 17, 2022.

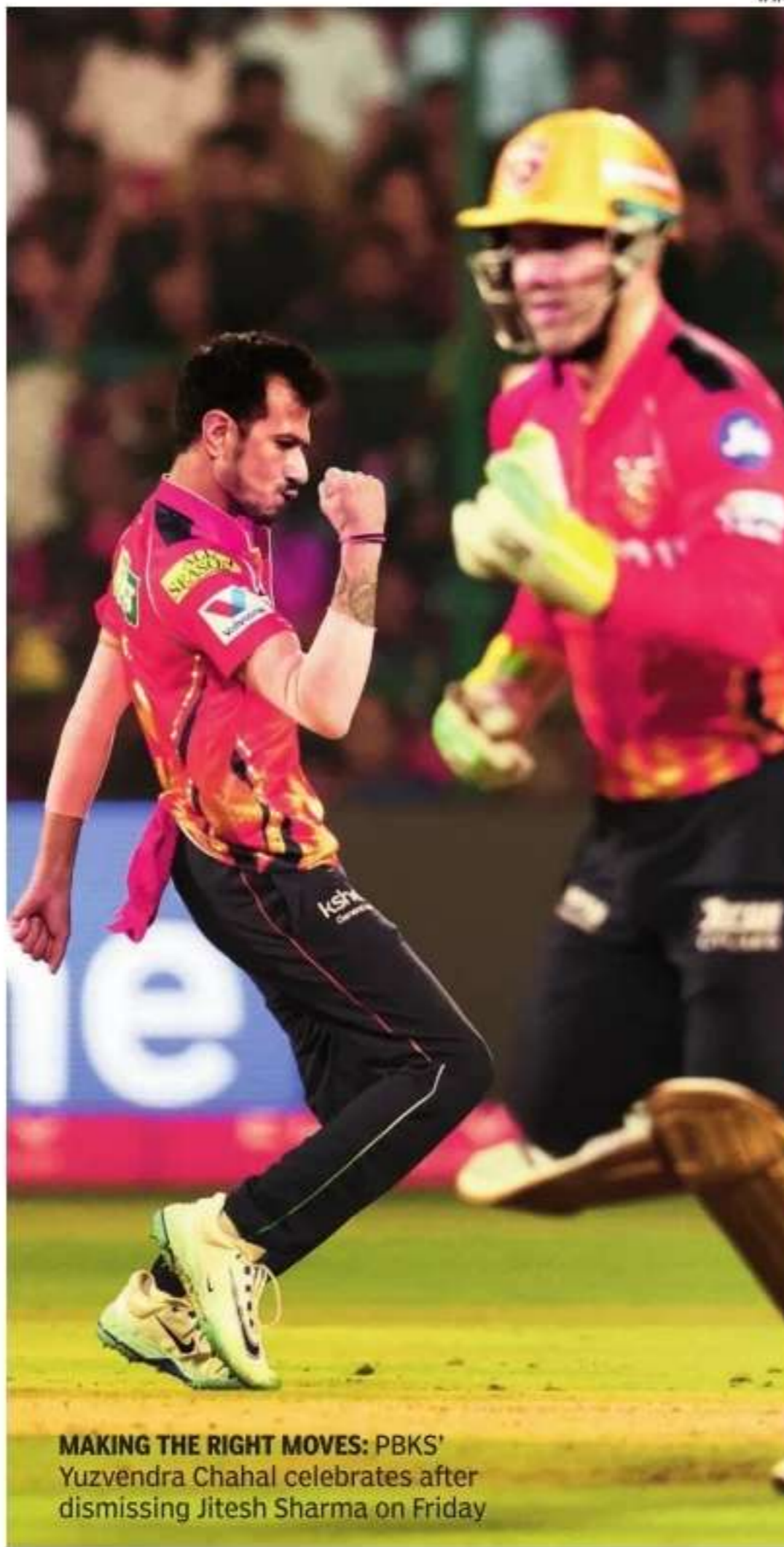
—Rajesh Kumar

count with an elegant flick to the fence.

Virat Kohli did not face a ball in the first two overs. Eventually, when he got a chance, he lasted three balls, becoming Arshdeep's second victim. Things did not improve with Xavier Bartlett also joining the party. He dismissed new man Liam Livingstone, reducing the home team to 26/3 in the four-over Powerplay.

There were no freebies from the Punjab bowlers as leg-spinner Chahal and Jansen tightened the screws, dismissing Jitesh Sharma and Krunal Pandya in succession. RCB were staring down the tunnel at 33/5 in the seventh over.

When Chahal removed Patidar in the next over, it became 41/6 in the eighth over. From a stage when lasting 14 overs looked remote, it was thanks to David, who, like he did against DC, waged a lone battle to lift the home team.



MAKING THE RIGHT MOVES: PBKS' Yuzvendra Chahal celebrates after dismissing Jitesh Sharma on Friday

SCOREBOARD

RCB: P Salt c Inglis b Arshdeep 4, V Kohli c Jansen b Arshdeep 1, R Patidar c Bartlett b Chahal 23, L Livingstone c Arya b Bartlett 4, J Sharma c Wadhera b Chahal 2, K Pandya c&b Jansen 1, T David not out 50, M Bhandage lbw b Jansen 1, B Kumar c Bartlett b Brar 8, Y Dayal lbw b Brar 0, J Hazlewood not out 0; **Extras: (nb1, 1); Total: (9 wkts, 14 overs) 95; FoW:** 1-4, 2-21, 3-26, 4-32, 5-33, 6-41, 7-42, 8-63, 9-63;

Bowling: Arshdeep 3-0-23-2, Bartlett 3-0-26-1, Jansen 3-0-10-2, Chahal 3-0-11-2, Brar 2-0-25-2.

PBKS: P Arya c David b Hazlewood 16, P Singh c David b Kumar 13, S Iyer c Jitesh b Hazlewood 7, J Inglis c Suyash b Hazlewood 14, N Wadhera not out 33, S Singh c Salt b Kumar 1, M Stoinis not out 7; **Extras: (b4, lb1, w2) 7; Total: (5 wkts, 12.1 overs) 98; FoW:** 1-22, 2-32, 3-52, 4-53, 5-81;

Bowling: Bhuvneshwar 3-0-26-2, Dayal 2.1-0-18-0, Hazlewood 3-0-14-3, Krunal 1-0-10-0, Suyash 3-0-25-0.

RESULT: PBKS won by 5 wickets

HOW THEY STAND

TEAM	M	W	L	NRR	PTS
DC	6	5	1	0.744	10
PBKS	7	5	2	0.308	10
GT	6	4	2	1.081	8
RCB	7	4	3	0.446	8
LSG	7	4	3	0.086	8
KKR	7	3	4	0.547	6
MI	7	3	4	0.239	6
RR	7	2	5	-0.714	4
SRH	7	2	5	-1.217	4
CSK	7	2	5	-1.276	4

Jacks breaks through for MI after slow start

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Mumbai: When Mumbai Indians bought Will Jacks for Rs 5.25 cr at the IPL auction in Jeddah last Nov, team owner Akash Ambani, in a rare gesture, walked over to the Royal Challengers Bengaluru table and shook hands with the RCB management. He was thanking them for not using the RTM card to retain the English allrounder!

Having smashed a 41-ball century for RCB against Gujarat Titans in IPL-2024, Jacks arrived in the MI dressing room with a glowing reputation. However, across MI's first five games in IPL 2025,

the big-hitter did little to justify his price tag, scoring just 55 runs with a sequence of 11, 16, 5, 22, and 1*. On Thursday at Wankhede Stadium, Jacks showed why he was worth every penny.

In a tournament where off-spinners have gone out of fashion — Washington Sundar warming the bench for GT and Ashwin struggling for impact at

CSK — Jacks proved the craft still holds value. He took 2/14 in three overs of crafty, attacking off-spin, and followed it up with a 26-ball 36 as MI beat SRH by four wickets.

"I knew there was going to be a bit of spin assistance, so as long as I wasn't floating the ball up and bowled aggressively... that's what I was trying to do, look for wickets," he said. "If you bowl tentatively to batters, it's only going to end one way. Sometimes I feel I can be too defensive instead of using what I'm good at. It's very easy to focus on the batters, but you've got to remember you've got skills too."



JACKS



CSK rope in Dewald Brevis as replacement for Gurjapneet

New Delhi: Chennai Super Kings on Friday announced the roping in of South Africa all-rounder Dewald Brevis into their squad, replacing injured pacer Gurjapneet Singh for the remainder of the IPL. Brevis has made a name in franchise tournaments around the world, including playing in the IPL, CPL, MLC and SA20.

GT replace injured Phillips with Dasun Shanaka

Bengaluru: Gujarat Titans have added Sri Lankan allrounder Dasun Shanaka to their squad after New Zealand's Glenn Phillips was ruled out of the remainder of the IPL due to injury, the 2022 champions said. Phillips sustained a groin injury while fielding as a substitute in GT's seven-wicket win over SRH earlier this month. AGENCIES

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India's Project Cheetah moves to its 2nd stage with two Kuno felines moving to MP's Gandhi Sagar sanctuary, P 11

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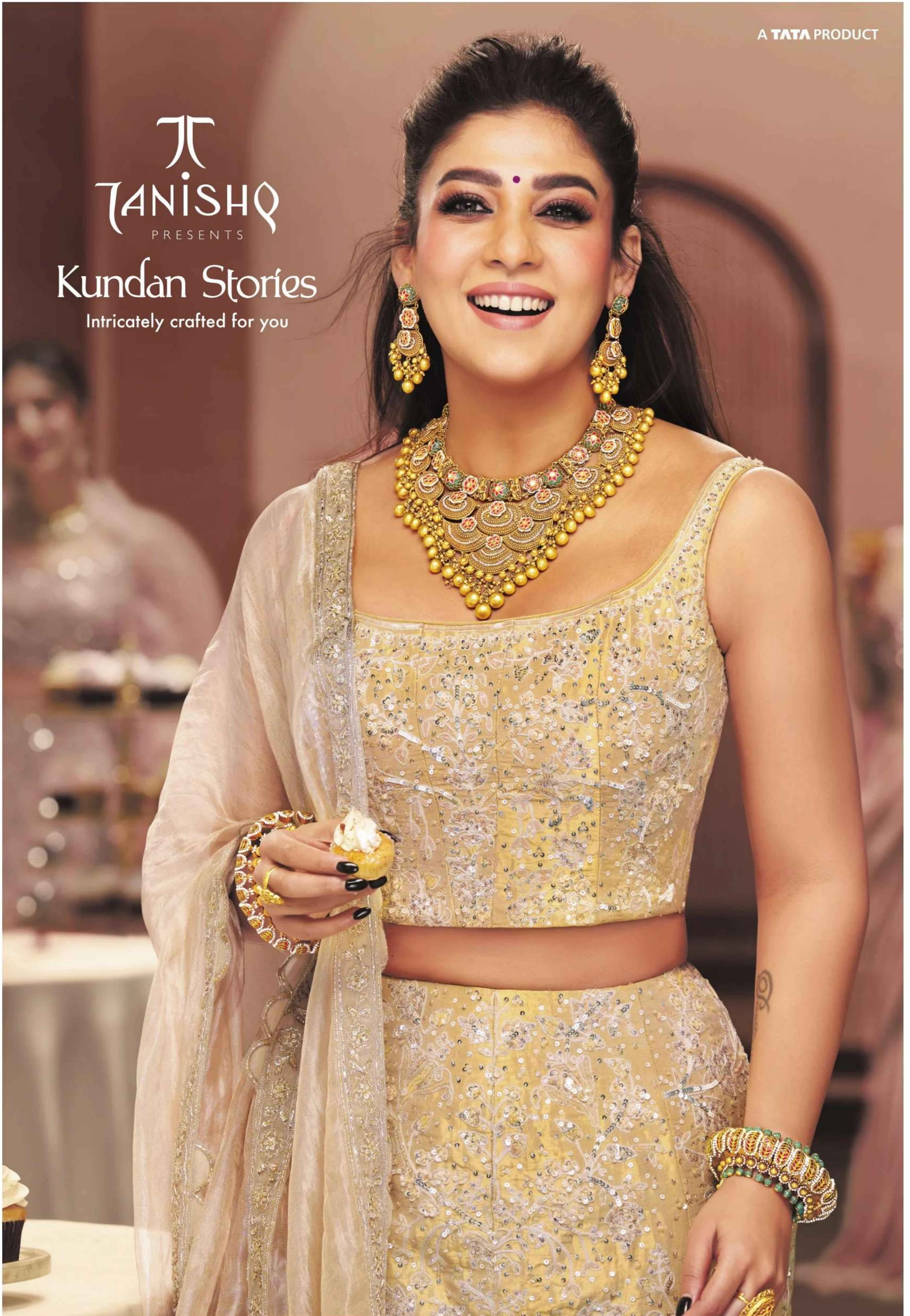
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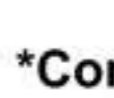
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Focus on **Starc** and **Siraj** in clash of table toppers as GT host DC today. In another IPL match, **RR** face tough **LSG** test, **P 22**



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NATALIE PORTMAN SAYS SHE WAS 'REALLY SEXUALISED' AS A CHILD STAR SO SHE TOOK ON 'BOOKISH' PERSONA TO PROTECT SELF: 'I'M SILLY IN REAL LIFE'

RYAN GOSLING WILL FLY TO 'A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY': ACTOR CAST IN NEW 'STAR WARS' FILM SLATED FOR RELEASE IN 2027



Trump govt seeks records on foreign funding and ties from Harvard

Washington: The US govt on Thursday accused Harvard of failing to report large foreign donations to the federal govt as required by law, part of a widening effort to target the institution after it refused to comply with President Trump's demands. The education department told Harvard to provide names and all records of communication with foreign donors from the beginning of 2020. It also asked for a swath of records pertaining to foreigners who spent time at Harvard, including any students Harvard had expelled or those who had their credentials cancelled, going back to 2016. The request included details on visiting researchers, scholars, students and faculty from other countries beginning from 2010, along with their last known addresses. A Harvard spokesman disputed the notion that the university had not been complying with laws requiring them to file reports disclosing foreign donations of over \$250,000. "Harvard has filed Section 117 reports for decades as part of its ongoing compliance with the law," he said. Harvard, by its own numbers, has over 69,000 alumni who live outside the US, in 202 countries. All of them are likely to have been solicited by the university for donations. **NYT**

Republicans launch probe too
Republicans in the Congress announced their own investigation into Harvard Thursday, accusing it of flouting civil rights law. The lawmakers wrote to the education institution demanding documents on its hiring practices, diversity programs and last year's pro-Palestinian campus protests. **AFP**

Trump: US ready to 'take a pass' if no quick progress on Ukraine

Washington To Decide In Days If Ending War Is 'Doable': Rubio

President Trump signalled he could walk away from efforts to end the war in Ukraine if a deal can't be found soon, as Russia said a one-month pause on targeting Ukrainian energy infrastructure had ended. "If for some reason, one of the two parties makes it very difficult, we're just going to say, you're foolish," he told reporters Friday. "You're folks, you're horrible people, and we're going to just take a pass. But hopefully we won't have to do that." Trump said he did not have a "specific number of days" in mind by which he wanted to see an agreement before walking away, but needed to see quick progress. "I know when people are playing us, and I know when they're not," Trump said. "And I have to see an enthusiasm to want to end it. And I think I see that enthusiasm. I think I see it from both sides."

His comments followed a meeting of US officials — including US secretary of state Marco Rubio and US special envoy Steve Witkoff — with representatives from France, Germany and the UK in Paris on Thursday, where the US indicated its aim was to secure a full ceasefire in Ukraine within weeks, according to sources.



US-EUROPE MEETING ON TARIFFS SOON? A day after Italian PM Giorgia Meloni's Washington visit, the White House and Meloni's office on Friday issued a joint statement that said President Trump would visit Italy "in the very near future." There is also consideration to hold, on such an occasion, a meeting between US and Europe, the statement said. Meloni has positioned herself as a bridge between the US and Europe and was the lone PM of an EU nation to attend Trump inauguration

Trump plan on rapid removals to 3rd nations halted

A US judge barred the Trump administration from rapidly deporting hundreds of migrants to countries other than their own without giving them a chance to show they fear being persecuted, tortured or killed there. District judge Brian Murphy last month temporarily blocked the administration from fast-tracking deportations, hobbling its ability to remove migrants who in some cases have legal protections preventing them from being sent back to their countries of origin. Friday's preliminary injunction will keep that order in place until the litigation is resolved. **REUTERS**

The high-level talks between American, European and Ukrainian officials were the first of their kind, intended to bring "convergence" between their views of the war. Following the meeting, Rubio said the US needed to see in "a matter of days" whether a deal was "doable in the short term." "Because if it's not, then I think we're just going to move on," Rubio told reporters. He also said the European nations could help "move the ball" to get a resolution and that their ideas had been "very helpful and constructive." "We had a good meeting yesterday," he added. "But this isn't going to go on forever." Rubio said Trump "has spent 87 days at the highest level of this govt repeatedly making efforts to bring this war to an end." Before taking office, Trump said he would end the war within "24 hours". Separately, Trump said that a deal on critical minerals that he's demanded with Ukraine is expected to be signed on April 24. **BLOOMBERG & NYT**

Washington slaps new port fees for China-linked ships

The Trump administration took steps to impose levies on Chinese vessels docking at US ports, threatening to shake up global shipping routes and escalate the trade war between the world's two biggest economies. Under a plan put forward by the US trade representative on Thursday, all Chinese-built and -owned ships docking in the US would be subject to a fee based on the volume of goods carried, on a per-voage basis. The proposal follows a months-long investigation ordered by the Biden administration into whether Chinese shipbuilding threatens US national security. The plan also hits non-Chinese shipbuilders, adding a levy to any vehicle carriers not made in America called at US ports.

The so-called 301 petition ordered the fee to go into effect in six months, with another phase restricting foreign-built vessels that transport liquefied natural gas to begin in three years. After six months, the fee for Chinese vessels would be set at \$50 per net tonne, or the volume of a ship's revenue-earning space, and then increase incrementally over 3 years.

A China foreign ministry spokesperson slammed the move, saying it will hurt US consumers and businesses, disrupt global supply chains, and also fail to revitalise US shipbuilding industry. **BLOOMBERG**

IRS head being ousted amid treasury's power feud with Musk

The acting commissioner of internal revenue service (IRS) is being replaced after treasury secretary Scott Bessent complained to President Trump that the latest head of the agency had been installed without his knowledge and at the behest of billionaire Elon Musk, according to five people with knowledge of the change.

Bessent believed Musk had done an end run around him to get Gary Shapley installed as the interim IRS head, even though the agency reports to him. Musk's department of government efficiency pushed the appointment through White House channels, but Bessent was not consulted or asked for his blessing, the people said.

Bessent got Trump's approval to unwind the decision. The next acting head of IRS, which has seen a conveyor belt of temporary bosses under Trump, is expected to be treasury deputy secretary, Michael Faulkender. Shapley, a longtime IRS agent, was lauded by conservatives after he publicly argued that the justice department had slow-walked its investigation into Hunter Biden's taxes.

Trump picked Shapley on Tuesday to run the agency after the previous interim head, Melanie Krause, decided to resign. Krause quit after treasury department agreed to use IRS data to help immigration and customs enforcement deport undocumented immigrants.

"Disagreements are a normal part of any healthy policy process, and ultimately everyone knows they serve at the pleasure of President Trump," said White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt. **NYT**

US strike in Yemen kills 74 at oil port: Houthis

Deadliest Attack Of Trump's Campaign



A fuel tank burns after US struck Ras Isa fuel terminal. The US Central Command didn't comment on the casualty figure, but said "the objective of the strikes was to degrade economic source of power of the Houthis"

Aden/Washington: US strikes on Yemen's Ras Isa fuel terminal on the Red Sea coast have killed at least 74 people in the deadliest attack since the United States started its bombing campaign against the Houthis last year, according to the Houthi-run health ministry. President Trump ordered the intensification of strikes last month in the biggest US military operation in West Asia since he took office in Jan. Washington has vowed to keep attacking the Iran-aligned Houthis until the group halts attacks on Red Sea shipping. Health ministry spokesman Anees al-Asbahi said 171 people were injured in Thursday's strikes, as per preliminary figures, with rescue teams continuing efforts to search for victims.

The US military said the strikes aimed to cut off a source of fuel for the Houthi militant group. The port has a heavy military presence in addition to being a primary hub for fuel imports, Yemeni sources said. Among the dead were employees of Safer Oil Company, which operates the port, and Yemen Petroleum Company, responsible for overseeing imported fuel shipments and their distribution, sources said. US Central Command did not comment on the health ministry's figure. "The objective of these strikes was to degrade the economic source of power of the Houthis, who continue to exploit and bring great pain upon their fellow countrymen," it had said in a post on X. The US and Israel have previously targeted the port, viewing it as a hub for launching drones, missiles, and attacks on ships. The Iran-aligned Houthis have taken control of swathes of Yemen over the past decade. Since Nov 2023, the group has launched dozens of drone and missile attacks on vessels in the Red Sea, saying they were targeting ships linked to Israel in solidarity with Palestinians over the war in Gaza.

Ras Isa terminal, about which is about 55 km north of the port city of Hodeidah, has a storage capacity of 3 million barrels. Fuel import taxes bring in hundreds of millions of dollars annually for Houthi administration, sources said. **REUTERS**

Memes, mockery & more: US, China torch each other in propaganda war

Washington: US and China are engaged in an all-out propaganda battle to present their narrative of the tariff war and portray the other side as weak and crumbling in the face of adversity. The Chinese have cottoned on skillfully to artificial intelligence tools to launch a series of AI-generated videos and memes portraying Americans as obese and unhealthy, while mocking the US desire to reclaim manufacturing jobs that Trump and co say were stolen from America. The videos suggest the Chinese now think these jobs are low-skilled and they are ready

to move up the value chain, leaving Americans to do the grunt work. Several Chinese vloggers have been posting clips showing the incredible infrastructure China has built over the past two decades while the US has slid into urban degradation and dystopia, with its once-vaunted cities now eclipsed by glittery Chinese metropolises that go beyond Beijing and Shanghai, and make NYC and LA look shabby. Chinese propagandists are also getting personal. Earlier this week, they launched a wave of TikTok videos caricaturing US vice-president JD Vance, who offended the Chinese by saying the US was buying products made by Chinese peasants with money borrowed from Chinese peasants' savings with money borrowed from Chinese peasants. Chinese response: That's coming from a "hillbilly", a pejorative term for someone from a rural,



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mountain area like the Appalachians, where Vance grew up. Vance, who is scheduled to visit India next week, eventually grew out of that eco-system and wrote an acclaimed book titled "Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis" that brought him into national limelight and pitched him into politics. Amid severe blowback against the US veep from the Chinese commentary, vloggers are posting video clips showing Vance as an effeminate cross-dresser wearing nail polish and with prominent eyeliner, mascara, and lipstick. Also in the Chinese crosshairs is White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt, whose

wardrobe is being scrutinised every day for signs she is wearing "Made in China" apparel to the daily press briefing. Twice in the past week, Chinese trolls have posted dresses identical to what she is wearing from Chinese e-commerce sites. Both sides are also wheeling out partisan "experts" to back their narrative in a trade war that is becoming more bitter by the day with no sign of resolution despite President Trump's assertion on Thursday that China is reaching out to the White House — a claim that China is ignoring. While Beijing is wheeling out academics like Victor Gao, an English-proficient Chinese nationalist to present Chi-

na's view of the spat, American are not far behind, trotting out Chinese Americans with names like Peter Chang and John Woo to describe how terrible tariff war has been for China. On social media, channels like "China Observer" are posting videos claiming Chinese factories are sitting on inventories while production is grinding to a halt and workers are being laid off. "Tariff War Crushes More Chinese Factories, Rapid Decline Spreads Across Cities, Millions Unemployed", said one recent story it posted, while another said "Tariff War Triggers Massive Unemployment in China, With Growing Support for Trump to Topple the CCP".

Tehran wants guarantees Trump will not quit a new N-pact: Iranian official

Dubai: Iran told the US in talks last week it was ready to accept some limits on its uranium enrichment but needed water-tight guarantees President Donald Trump would not again ditch a nuclear pact, a senior Iranian official said on Friday. Iran and the US are set to hold a second round of talks Saturday in Rome, a week after a first round of negotiations in Oman. Trump, who has restored a "maximum pressure" campaign on Tehran, ditched a 2015 nuclear pact between Iran and six world powers in 2018 during his first term and reimposed crippling sanctions. Former US president Joe

Biden, whose administration unsuccessfully tried to reinstate the 2015 pact, was not able to meet Tehran's demand for guarantees that no future US govt would renege on it. Tehran's red lines "mandated by supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei" could not be compromised, the official said. He said those red lines meant Iran would never agree to dismantle its centrifuges for enriching uranium, halt enrichment altogether, or reduce the amount of enriched uranium it stores to a level below the level it agreed in the 2015 deal. It would also not negotiate over its missile programme. **REUTERS**

Hindu man abducted, beaten to death in B'desh

Dhaka: A prominent Hindu community member in Biral upazila of Dinajpur, Bangladesh, was allegedly abducted from his home and beaten to death on Thursday. The victim, Bhabesh Chandra Roy, 58, served as the vice-president of the Biral unit of the Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad and was a well-known figure in the local Hindu community, locals said. According to his wife, Shantana Roy, Bhabesh was at home when he received a phone call around 4.30pm. She said the call was made by the perpetrators to confirm his presence at home. About 30 minutes later, four men reportedly arrived on two motorcycles and abducted him. Quoting eyewitnesses, the Daily Star reported that Bhabesh was taken to Narabari village, where he was brutally assaulted. Later that evening, the attackers allegedly brought

back his unconscious body to his home on a van. Family members, aided by locals, rushed him to the Biral Upazila Health Complex. He was later transferred to Dinajpur Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared him dead on arrival. His body was sent for autopsy. Quoting Abdus Sabur, officer-in-charge of Biral police station, the Daily Star reported that preparations are under way to file a case. Police are currently working to identify and apprehend the suspects.

Fear, panic at Florida state univ after deadly shooting

Tallahassee: When a 20-year-old opened fire at Florida State University, terrified students barricaded doors and fled across campus, abandoning notes and even shoes, in a shooting that investigators said killed two men and wounded at least six others. By early Friday, memorials of candles and flowers dotted the campus and a school-wide vigil had been scheduled as students and faculty tried to start healing from the shooting, which sent shockwaves of fear across the campus. "I heard some gunshots and then just blacked out after," said Carolina Sena, a student. "Everyone was crying and just panicking. We were trying to barricade ourselves in a little corner in the basement." The shooter, identified as Phoenix Ikner, is believed to be a Florida State student and son of a sheriff's deputy who opened fire with his mother's former service weapon. Authorities have not yet revealed a motive for the shooting, which began around lunchtime Thursday. The two men who were killed were not students, said police chief, who didn't release additional details about the victims. The shooter's mother has been with the sheriff's office for over 18 years and has been a model employee, said Leon county sheriff Walt McNeil. The shooter was a long-standing member of sheriff's office's youth council, engaged in a number of training programmes, the sheriff said. "It's not a surprise he had access to weapons." President Trump called the shooting "a horrible thing" while also suggesting that he would not advocate for any new gun legislation. **AP**

Indian student dies in Texas hit-and-run; another injured

Madhu.Rasala@timesofindia.com
A 23-year-old student from Guntur district in Andhra Pradesh, Vangavolu Deepthi, lost her life in a hit-and-run case in Denton city, Texas, just weeks before completing her master's degree. Deepthi was pursuing MS in computer and information science at the University of North Texas after completing her BTech from Guntur in 2023. The accident took place in the early hours of April 12, when Deepthi and her friend, Snigdha from Medikonduru in AP, were walking along Carril Al Lago drive, a residential street. A speeding sedan mowed down the two students and fled the scene. Deepthi suffered critical head injuries, while Snigdha sustained non-life-threatening injuries. Emergency responders rushed the duo to a nearby hospital, where Deepthi was kept in intensive care. Despite receiving advanced treatment, supported by a crowd-

funding campaign that raised nearly \$80,000, she succumbed on April 15. Snigdha is undergoing treatment. Police have launched an investigation. Deepthi's family recalled their last conversation with her on April 10. She had invited her parents to attend her convocation in May. Deepthi's body would be airlifted on Saturday and reach home on Monday. Minister Pemmasani Chandrasekhar's office coordinated with officials in the US to ensure Deepthi received prompt medical care, and is now overseeing the arrangements to bring back her body.

DAILY PLANET



WASTE ART: A artefact made of plastic waste is displayed at London

Venice expands day-tripper taxes to fight overtourism

Venice is charging day-trippers to the famed canal city an arrivals tax for the second year starting Friday, a measure to combat the overtourism that officials say is putting the city's Unesco World Cultural Heritage status at risk. The tax will be applied every Friday through Sunday and on holidays from April 18 to July 27, for a total of 54 days. That's almost double the number of days it was in place last year. Tourists who don't make reservations up to four days in advance will pay €10 instead of the usual €5. The tax will be in force during peak hours, from 8.30am to 4 pm. A Unesco body decided against putting Venice on list of cultural heritage sites deemed in danger after the tax was announced. But opponents say the fee has done little to discourage visits. Officials say 8,000 day-trippers paid in advance to enter the city Friday, among the 77,000 who have registered so far to enter this year.

ring in what officials called a "transformative" era of modern banking in the remote archipelago. For years, Tuvalu's 12,000 residents have done all their banking in cash. Now they will be able to withdraw money at the swipe of a card from the ATM. Dignitaries gathered in front of the ATM, on the main island of Funafuti, to mark the occasion with a chocolate cake. With a landmass of barely 26sqkm, climate-threatened Tuvalu is one of the smallest and remotest nations on planet.

Sweden turns up Eurovision heat with wacky sauna song
Sweden is getting up a head of steam for what could be a record number of Eurovision wins this year with a humorous sauna act. KAJ, a comedy group, is already bookies' favourite to triumph at the extravaganza in Switzerland on May 17. With their song "Bara Bada Bastu" (Just Have a Sauna), the Finnish trio pay homage to sauna culture, clad in brown suits and accompanied by an accordion in a wink to Finland's other big cultural phenomenon — tango. "The melody works internationally. Even I am able to hum the chorus, and I absolutely do not speak the language," said a French Eurovision expert.

Busking at Leicester Sq banned. It was George Michael & Rod Stewart's first step to fame

Jonathan Wolfe
For generations, street musicians have provided the soundtrack for Leicester Square, a tourist hub in London's West End, where the likes of Rod Stewart and George Michael busked before becoming superstars. Now the city is changing its tune. The Westminster city council this week banned street performances in Leicester Square after a judge described them as a "nuisance", noting that repetitive sounds, including famous pop songs, were a well-known feature of "psychological torture."

The ban was announced Thursday after Global, a media company with an office building on the square, took the council to court, arguing that the noise from the performances was "overwhelming". The company said its office workers were forced to take phone calls in cupboards to escape the sounds from the street below. Buskers have long been polarising in big cities. Some see whimsy in a cover band in subway stations; others would rather keep it out of public spaces. In one London square, at least, the critics seem to have won out. On Thursday morning in Leicester Square



'PSYCHOLOGICAL TORTURE' Westminster council banned street shows in Leicester Sq after a judge called them 'psychological torture'

(pronounced "Lester"), the yellow circles where buskers had performed were empty. News of the ban provoked joy, indignation and relief. "Oh, thank God," said Abu Khan, 28, after a reporter told him about the ban. Khan, who works 12 hours a day at a convenience store in Leicester Square, said the music was sometimes so loud he couldn't hear customers. "I have to scream loud, and my customer thinks I'm fighting with him," he said. The shows also drew crowds of tourists who blocked the entrance to the shop, he said. The blaring tunes also stressed him out. "They give me headaches."

For others, the music has been part of the square's charm. Dorian Ronne, a pub manager, noted that people had been performing in the square longer than some of the nearby businesses had existed. "It's like people going to the countryside and complaining about the hogs and cows," Ronne, 27, said. Sandy Malai, a 22-year-old deputy manager at a fast-food restaurant, said the buskers' soundtrack lightened her workdays and delighted her customers. "It's the culture of Leicester Square," she said. Chris Jones, 35, a bartender

at a nearby pub, was of two minds. Great performances felt like "fresh air," he said. But "there's a proportion of them that ruin it for everybody else." He said he'd seen performers harass tourists for donations and beatboxes "slander" people and the govt. Edward Lewis, 43, a construction worker, said the ban was an affront to liberty. "How do you take away someone's right to perform on the street?" The ban applies only to Leicester Square, and not to the other 24 locations across the city, like Trafalgar Square and Piccadilly Circus, where buskers can still perform. **NYT**