



Sawan Barwal breaks 48-year-old marathon national record, longest standing mark in Indian athletics, by 2 secs at Rotterdam, **P 18**

THE TIMES OF INDIA

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HEATHER GRAHAM SAYS H'WOOD CHANGED HER IMAGE: 'MY CLASSMATES DISMISSED ME AS NERDY AND SMART, NOBODY CONSIDERED ME PRETTY'

Nuclear mistrust, Hormuz sink Vance's peace mission

Tehran Defends 'Legitimate Interests', Says US Couldn't Gain Iran's Trust

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

Washington: Tehran and Washington are returning to a crisis and confrontation mode—at the expense of the rest of the world—after US Vice President JD Vance returned home empty-handed from his mission in Islamabad aimed at subjugating Iran into giving up its nuclear programme.

After almost a full day of talks in Pakistan, Vance acknowledged failure, striking a characteristically blunt note before he left Islamabad for Washington DC. "We've had a number of substantive discussions with the Iranians. That's the good news. The bad news is that we have not reached an agreement," he said in the early hours of Sunday, after all-night parleys with the Iranian delegation. "I think that's bad news for Iran much more than it's bad news for the US," the US vep added cryptically, underscoring the asymmetry of consequences that is seen as a warning to Tehran.

Vance said Tehran had rejected Washington's "final and best offer," though he left the door ajar for future talks, before the two-week cease-fire expires on April 22. "We leave here with a very simple proposal: a method of understanding that is our final and best offer. We'll see if the Iranians accept it," the US vep said without providing specifics.

Iran, however, painted a very different picture of the impasse with its parliament speaker and leader of the delegation Mohammed Bagher Ghalibaf, saying "the US was unable to gain the trust of the Iranian delegation in this round."

Esmail Baqhaei, spokesman for Iran's foreign ministry, said in a post on social media that the talks spanned a wide range of issues — from the

5 POINTS ON WHICH TALKS BROKE DOWN

 400 kg Fate of 'near-bomb-grade' uranium remains unresolved	 \$27 billion Dispute over release of Iran's frozen assets
 6 weeks Who pays for damage from weeks of air strikes?	 0 delay US wants Strait of Hormuz fully open immediately
 2 weeks Scope of truce unclear — does it cover Lebanon or not?	

Iran says it has full control of Hormuz

Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) on Sunday said Iranian security forces had the Strait of Hormuz, a key shipping bottleneck, under full control. "The enemy will become trapped in a deadly vortex in the Strait if it makes the wrong move," IRGC said, after President Trump ordered a US naval blockade of the Strait. Separately, IRGC's navy said Sunday that military vessels approaching the Strait of Hormuz "will be met with a firm and forceful response," according to two semi-official Iranian news agencies.

Strait of Hormuz and the nuclear question to sanctions relief, war reparations and a comprehensive ceasefire — but hinged ultimately on Washington's willingness to recognise what Tehran called its "legitimate rights and interests." These rights include a civilian nuclear programme that Iran is entitled to as a signatory to Nuclear Proliferation Treaty.

Vance reiterated that Washington demands an "affirmative commitment" that Iran will neither pursue nuclear weapons nor retain the capacity to develop them. "We need an affirmative commitment — they will not seek a nuclear weapon, now or long-term. That's President's core goal," he said. Iran has long insisted it does not seek nuclear weapons — a position it maintains is consistent

with both its strategic doctrine and prior international commitments — but refuses to relinquish what it considers its sovereign right to a civilian nuclear programme.

A second fault line ran through regional security, particularly Iran's network of allied West Asian groups like Hezbollah and Houthis. US officials pressed for curbs on Tehran's support for such proxies in Lebanon and elsewhere, demands Iran dismissed as "excessive" and beyond the scope of the current crisis.

The most combustible disagreement, however, centred on the Strait of Hormuz. Iran has sought a greater degree of control over the international waterway, framing it as a matter of regional sovereignty and security. Washington, backed

by allies and partners, views any such move as a direct threat to energy supplies and global economic stability.

Tehran also pressed for the unfreezing of its overseas assets and raised claims for war reparations — demands Washington was unwilling to entertain in the absence of broader concessions. The failure of the talks casts immediate doubt on the durability of the tenuous ceasefire. While neither side formally declared an end to the ceasefire, the absence of progress — coupled with hardening rhetoric — suggests that renewed confrontation is a distinct possibility.

Vance's comments hinted at a belief in Washington that time is on its side. By stressing that the outcome is "bad news for Iran much more" than for the US, he signalled confidence that economic pressure and military deterrence will eventually force Tehran back to the table on US terms. Iranian officials, by contrast, appear prepared for a prolonged stand-off, betting that geopolitical realities will constrain US options.

Adding a layer of surreal contrast to the diplomatic drama was President Trump's own schedule. Even as Vance was engaged in negotiations, Trump flew to Miami to attend a Ultimate Fighting Championship event — a spectacle critics often liken to circled brutality. Earlier, he had struck a tone of airy nonchalance in Washington, declaring the outcome of the talks largely irrelevant. "We win, regardless. We've defeated them militarily," Trump said.

The juxtaposition — peace talks and prizefighting — captured the paradox of a moment in which diplomacy and brinkmanship collide, with consequences that could reverberate far beyond the region.

'Civilisation will die' post forced Iran to talk: Trump

Washington: President Trump on Sunday said his "civilisation will die" remarks brought Iran to the now failed peace talks. "That statement got them to the bargaining table, and they have it left. They have left the bargaining table. I predict they come back and they give us everything we want," he told Fox News programme 'Sunday Futures'.

On April 7, Trump had threatened that the US forces would wipe out the "whole civilisation" and demanded that Iran open up the Strait of Hormuz. On Sunday, Trump tried to justify his remarks. "When I say about a civilisation, it really has changed. But think of it: they're allowed to say, 'Death to America, death to this, death to—' you know, I make one statement, they say, 'Oh, such a big deal,'" Trump said.

Campaign against Iran not over, have more to do: Bibi

Jerusalem: Claiming "historic achievements" in the fight against Iran, Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu said in a video statement on Saturday that the "campaign is not yet over." "We still have more to do," Netanyahu said. "We went into the campaign because Iran was very close to nuclear weapons and the capability to produce hundreds of missiles per day. Two existential threats that we had to remove," he asserted.

Separately, in another video, Netanyahu said that Israeli forces had eliminated the threat of an invasion by Hezbollah militants during a visit to troops in southern Lebanon. He said the operations helped in "containing the danger of rocket fire" from Hezbollah targeting northern Israel.

Man climbs over US air force plane in Ireland, held

London: Police in Ireland on Sunday said officers had arrested a man who entered "an unauthorised area" of Shannon airport, as social media footage appeared to show a man climbing onto a US Air Force plane. The Shannon hub facilitates the movement of US troops.

The footage posted on X showed a figure apparently on top of what media reports said was a C-130 Hercules aircraft. The intruder appeared to be striking the fuselage. "An adult male was arrested for alleged criminal damage," a police statement said. He remained in police custody on Sunday, police added.

Now, Trump threatens China with 50% tariffs if it sends arms to Iran



Smoke rises from the site of an Israeli airstrike in Lebanese city of Nabatieh on Sunday. Lebanon's health ministry said the toll since the start of the war between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah is now 2,020

Washington: US President Trump said his threat to impose 50% tariffs on goods from countries that sold weapons to Iran was aimed at China.

Trump told Fox News' "Sunday Morning Futures" that has heard reports of China giving anti-aircraft "shoulder missiles" to Iran. He played down the possibility of China supplying weapons to Iran, but said their goods would be taxed if they did. "I doubt they would do that, because I have a relationship, and I think they wouldn't do that, but maybe they did a little bit at the beginning," Trump said. "But if we catch them doing that, they get a 50% tariff."

CNN reported late on Friday that US intelligence indicates China is preparing to deliver new air defence systems to Iran within the next few weeks, citing three people familiar

with recent intelligence assessments. The network said there are indications Beijing is working to route the shipments through third countries to mask their origin. China is preparing to transfer shoulder-fired anti-air missile systems known as MANPADS, CNN said.

Putin and Peshkhian discuss failed talks with US

Russian President Putin and Iranian President Masoud Peshkhian discussed the latest developments in West Asia in a phone call Sunday, the Kremlin said. Peshkhian briefed Putin on the US-Iran talks held in Pakistan and thanked Moscow for its position "aimed at de-escalating the situation," the Kremlin said in a statement. It also said Putin had "emphasised his readiness" to help bring about a diplomatic settlement to the hostilities.

In a first, insurgents attack Pakistan coast guard boat, 3 personnel killed

Quetta: Separatist insurgents killed three Pakistan coast guard personnel on Sunday in the first-ever attack on one of the maritime authority's patrol boats operating in the Arabian Sea, security officials said.

Intelligence and police officials said the boat was on a routine patrol in a coastal area close to the Pakistan-Iran border when the militants opened fire

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the attack. "Following the operations on land, the action in maritime boundaries marks a new development in the BLA's military strategy," the BLA said in a written statement.

Authorities have launched an investigation and security has been heightened in the area, said the intelligence

Will ceasefire hold? West Asia braces for more tension

Doha: A sense of dread spread across West Asia after talks between the US and Iran collapsed, as fears of renewed fighting rattled an already tense region. Questions about what would come next and whether the two sides would continue to respect a two-week ceasefire was anybody's guess as both the Iranian and American delegations departed Pakistan without a deal.

"Things could change at any moment," said Aishah, a 32-year-old consultant based in Doha. "It's more about taking each day as it comes."

The failure of the talks however did not surprise many. "I didn't have a lot of hope for them going in, because the two sides want completely opposite things," Laura Kaufman, a 38-year-old school teacher in Tel Aviv, told AFP. "There didn't seem to be anyone willing to actually negotiate."

A recent poll found that only 10% of the Israeli public believe the war against Iran had constituted a "significant success, compared to 32% who view it as a failure." "I really wanted them to make peace," said Mahsa, a 30-year-old employee of an export company in Tehran. "It's been almost 45 days now that I've seen everyone stressed. It's a bad situation."

Elsewhere, the talks' failure only seemed to guarantee more uncertainty. "I am worried about the return of attacks again, because they were causing me tension," said Imam, an Egyptian housewife living in Abu Dhabi. "I was making a great effort not to pass my tension on to my children." AFP

Hormuz blockade will hit India, China, Japan, S Korea

Continued from P1

While Trump himself has said the US will not be affected by the closure since it does very little business through it, a blockade would have serious economic consequences for China, India, Japan, and South Korea, each of which imports more than 50% of its energy needs through this waterway.

Indeed, while the blockade will strangle Iran's oil revenues, it will also affect energy exports from Washington's allies



IN TROUBLED WATERS

such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar and UAE, while allowing energy-rich US to profit from the crisis, something Trump has openly boasted about.

"At some point, we will reach an 'ALL BEING ALLOWED TO GO IN, ALL BEING ALLOWED TO GO OUT' basis, but Iran has not allowed that to happen by merely saying, 'There may be a mine out there somewhere,' that nobody knows about but them. THIS IS WORLD EXTORTION, and Leaders of Countries, especially the US, will never be extorted," Trump said. He announced that he has instructed the US Navy to "seek and interdict every vessel in International Waters that has paid a toll to

Iran." "No one who pays an illegal toll will have safe passage on the high seas," he added.

While there is no clear evidence that specific countries are officially paying Iran tolls, there are reports of a murky, ad hoc system where individual ships or shipping companies — sometimes linked to certain countries — have quietly paid for safe passage. In any case, there was no toll system or extortion or a blockade of the straits, which accounts for 20% of the global energy flow, before Israel and the US attacked Iran.

Techie from Andhra drowns in Missouri river on b'day outing

Nalla.Babu@timesofindia.com

Software engineer Singireddy Sai Sree Hari Krishna, 26, from Andhra Pradesh drowned Saturday in the Meramec river in Missouri, US, while celebrating his birthday with friends at Meramec State Park near Sullivan.

Hari Krishna, from Piridi village in Vizianagaram district, and his friends checked into a resort on Saturday. He later entered the river for a swim and got trapped in underwater weeds that caught his legs and pulled him down, officials said on Sunday. He struggled, went under and did not resurface. Crews from the Sullivan fire department later pulled out the body, according to Missouri State Highway Patrol.

Hari Krishna went to the US in 2023 after completing BTech from a private college. He did his master's in engineering and recently joined Elecent Clean Technologies in St Louis, about 130kms from Sullivan. Youngest of three siblings, he is survived by two married sisters and his parents — auto-rickshaw driver Srinivasa Rao and primary health centre employee Ramadevi.

Residents of Piridi said he had called his parents days earlier, promising to send money to buy a small plot and build a house. Family approached a state minister seeking help to bring his body back from the US.

China sets up new county in Xinjiang near POK

Beijing: China has set up a new county in its Xinjiang province near Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (POK) and the Afghanistan in an apparent move to beef up security along the narrow Wakhan Corridor to curb infiltration by Uyghur separatist militants. The county, named Cenling, is located near the strategic Karakoram mountain range.

This is the third new county established by China in Xinjiang, a predominantly Uyghur region, in just over a year. Last year, India lodged a protest with China over the creation of Hean and Hekang counties, stating parts of their jurisdiction fall within its Union territory of Ladakh. It will be administered by Kashgar prefecture, according to a report in the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post. Kashgar, located on ancient Silk Road, is a gateway connecting China with South and Central Asia. It is also the starting point of the \$60 billion CPEC.

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Pakistan to get \$5bn aid from Saudi Arabia, Qatar

Islamabad: Cash-strapped Pakistan is set to receive \$5 billion in financial support from Saudi Arabia and Qatar, providing a critical buffer for its fragile external position, according to a media report on Sunday. The expected inflows come at a crucial juncture as Islamabad prepares to repay \$3.5 billion to the UAE this month and faces pressure on its foreign exchange reserves, Dawn newspaper said.

The development coincides with finance minister Muhammad Aurangzeb's visit to Washington to attend the IMF World Bank Spring Meetings and advance Pakistan's economic diplomacy. Aurangzeb will participate in the meetings scheduled from April 13 to 18, where he is expected to hold talks with officials of the IMF and the World Bank.

Policy makers view these interactions as part of a broad

der strategic outreach, with indications that traditional factors such as strict programme conditionalities or reliance on third-party guarantors, including the UAE, may carry less weight in the current context. The IMF has stipulated that Pakistan's three key bilateral creditors — Saudi Arabia, China and the UAE — must maintain their cash deposits with the country until the completion of the ongoing three-year programme. It seems the UAE will be replaced by Qatar, Dawn report said.

Saudi Arabia remains a major source of concessional financing for Pakistan, having rolled over deposits amounting to \$5 billion so far. Pakistan has said it will repay \$3.5 billion to the UAE by the end of April, a liability that had been rolled over since 2018.

China says will resume some ties with Taiwan

Bangkok: China said Sunday it would resume some ties it had suspended with Taiwan such as direct flights and imports of Taiwanese agricultural products following a visit by the Beijing-friendly opposition leader of the island.

The Taiwan Work Office under China's Communist Party issued a statement saying it would explore setting up a longstanding communication mechanism between the Communist Party and Taiwan's Kuomintang Party.

Cheng Li-wun, the head of the Kuomintang, and China's President Xi Jinping held a high-profile meeting Friday during which they called for peace, without offering specifics. China claims the island as part of its territory and Beijing hasn't ruled out the use of force to annex it.

Taiwan's mainland affairs council, which oversees the relationship with China, said the measures that were announced, such as promoting a communication mechanism, were "political transactions" between the two parties that circumvented gov't of Taiwan.

"Gov't's position is clear: to ensure the interests of the nation and its people, all cross-strait affairs must be negotiated by both govts on an equal and dignified basis," the mainland affairs council said.

Relations between China and Taiwan, which remain split since 1949, have been tense since the election of pro-independence President Tsai Ing-wen from the Democratic Progressive Party in 2016. Beijing cut off most of its official dialogue with Taiwan gov't. AP

WORLD DIGEST

Nigerian airstrike hits market, 200 feared dead in Yobe

At least 200 people are feared dead after Nigerian military jets struck a village market while pursuing militants in the northeast of the country on Saturday night, a councillor for the area and residents said on Sunday. Nigeria's air force said it had killed Boko Haram militants in the Jili axis in Borno state, but in a statement released to Reuters on Sunday it did not mention hitting a market. It did not respond to further requests for comment. The strike occurred in a village in Yobe on the border with Borno, the heartland of a long-running insurgency.

Youtuber arrested for criticising Nepal PM, released after protests

A journalist, who was arrested on charges of using abusive language against Nepal PM Balendra Shah 'Balen' on his YouTube channel, was on Sunday released following criticism and objection by Gen Z activists. Roshan Pokharel, who ran the YouTube channel 'Hades,' was arrested on Thursday.

Haiti fort stampede kills at least 30: Report

A stampede at an historical fortress in Haiti has killed at least 30 people, a government minister said on Sunday. Citadelle Henri, also known as Citadelle Laferriere, is a 19th-century fortress and popular tourist spot. It is a Unesco World Heritage Site.

Record turnout in Hungary election that could oust Orban, rattle Russia

Budapest: Hungarians voted on Sunday in an election that could end PM Viktor Orban's 16-year hold on power, rattle Russia and send shockwaves through right-wing circles across the West, including President Trump's White House.

Orban, a eurosceptic nationalist, has carved out a model of an "illiberal democracy" seen as a blueprint by Trump's MAGA movement and its admirers in Europe. But many Hungarians have grown weary of Orban, 62, after three years of economic stagnation and so-



Women in traditional Hungarian dresses at a polling station in Veresegyhaz

aring living costs, along with reports of oligarchs close to going amassing more wealth.

Opinion polls have shown Orban's Fidesz party trailing Peter Magyar's upstart centre-right opposition Tisza party by 7-9 percentage points, with Tisza at around 38-41%. Pollsters predicted a record voter turnout, and data at 3pm GMT showed over 74.2% of voters had cast their ballots, up from 62.9% at the same time in the 2022 election. Magyar, after casting his vote in Budapest, said Hungarians would write history as they

choose "between East and West," and urged voters to report any irregularities.

Magyar expressed confidence about the outcome, saying the only question was whether Tisza won a simple majority or a two-thirds majority in the 199-seat parliament that would allow it to amend Hungary's constitution.

Orban, who cast his vote in the same Budapest district and swept the last four elections, told reporters: "There is a constitution in Hungary and it needs to be followed. The decision

of the people needs to be respected." The vote is being closely watched in Brussels, with many European Union peers criticising Orban, who has kept close ties with Russia and is a Trump ally; over what they say is an erosion of Hungary's democratic rule, media freedom and minority rights. An Orban defeat would deprive President Putin of its closest ally in the EU, while for Ukraine it could mean the release of a \$105 billion EU loan vital for its war effort that the Hungarian leader has been blocking. Reuters



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Union Berlin names Marie-Louise Eta as head coach, making her 1st female manager of a men's team in a top-5 European league, **P 18**

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Gzb 4-yr-old goes with uncle, found dead under car

A four-year-old girl who was allegedly taken for "a walk" by her maternal uncle with the promise of buying her food was later found dead under a parked car in Teela Mod area in Ghaziabad, with her family accusing the man of rape and murder. Forensic teams have collected evidence from the spot. **P 3**

51% Mazagon stake in Colombo Dockyard

India's premier defence shipyard Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd has secured 51% controlling stake in Colombo Dockyard PLC for Rs 249.5 crore (\$26.8 million), marking its first international acquisition. **P 8**

Hungary PM Orbán concedes defeat

Hungary's long-serving far-right PM Viktor Orbán conceded defeat after rival Fidesz party looked set for a 2/3rds majority, with projections giving it around 135 out of 199 seats in parliament. **Earlier report, P 6**

Man found in drain with bullet wounds

A 32-year-old missing man was found with 3 bullet wounds in a drain in Ghaziabad on Friday. Police are analysing call records of his phone, which was switched off after somebody picked police's call. **P 5**

Strait to crisis: Trump orders Hormuz block as talks sink

Truce Will Break If Military Ships Approach: Iran

Chidanand Rajghatta & Agencies

US President Trump on Sunday announced that US Navy will begin a blockade of the Strait of Hormuz.

FULL COVERAGE P 15, 16, PAGE OPP

muz with immediate effect after a high-stakes diplomatic mission led by vice president JD Vance ended without an agreement with Iran after night-long talks in Pakistan.

SUBSTANTIVE TALKS, NO DEAL: VANCE

Iran says it has full control over Hormuz: "Enemies will be trapped in a deadly vortex" Iran Prez Pezeshkian says Putin willing to mediate

China preparing to give Iran air def systems, hints US intel, reports CNN. If so, will slap "50% tariff" on China, says Trump

Iran war has cost Israel at least \$11.5bn so far, says Israel's finance ministry

"The Blockade will begin shortly. Iran will not be allowed to profit off this Illegal Act of EXTORTION. They want money and, more importantly, they want Nuclear. Ad-

Daily Count of Ships Visibly Passing Through Hormuz

Feb 27 104 April 12 7

We've had a number of substantive discussions with Iranians, that's the good news. The bad news is that we haven't reached an agreement

— JD VANCE, IN ISLAMABAD

ditionally and, at an appropriate moment, we are fully "LOCKED AND LOADED," and our Military will finish up the little that is left of Iran!" Trump said in a post hours af-

ter the inconclusive meeting in Islamabad that saw Vance head home without a deal.

Iran's revolutionary guards said any military vessels trying to approach the strait will be considered a violation of the two-week US ceasefire and be dealt with harshly, adding that Hormuz was under the "smart management" of Iran's Navy. "Hormuz is open for safe passage of non-military vessels in accordance with specific regulations," it said.

Any blockade of the strait, by US or Iran, will almost certainly be illegal under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

► See PAGE OPPOSITE

Haan, yahi kahenge hum sada, ki dil abhi nahin bhara

Arijit Ghosh

Asha Bhosle, whose voice foregrounded the rebellious notes of desire and abandon in Hindi film music at a time when such attributes were frowned upon in cinema and society, who overcame the looming shadow of her peerless sister Lata Mangeshkar to become the empress of a versatile music universe, and whose voice is sub-cons-

ETERNAL ASHA: P 17

ciously part of every Indian's emotional archive, passed away on Sunday. She was 92.

Asha *tai*, as she was fondly called, was admitted to a Mumbai hospital on Saturday following exhaustion and chest infection.

A Dadasaheb Phalke reci-



1933-2026

ipient, her career spanned nearly eight decades and more than 11,000 songs; her best rendered under the baton of OP Nayyar and RD Burman.

Rollicking duets (especially with Kishore Kumar), bhajans, ghazals, qawwalis, discos, Indi-pop, Bhosle didn't

just sing for every possible genre, she owned them all, enthralled Gen Now and Gen Nehru alike. "All singers are actors. We just act with our voices," she once said.

Her voice was an ideological antonym of her sister's. At its core, Lata's voice personified decorum and goodness, attributes tailor-made for decent leading ladies in the 1950s and 60s while Asha's embodied dissent created space for celluloid social outsiders such as cabaret dancers and gangster's girls.

Nobody also adapted better to the changing trends. And nobody defied age like her. It's scarcely believable that even in 2026, she collaborated with Gorillaz, a virtual British band. An era has ended. But Asha Bhosle is forever.

India calls out China renaming bid in Arunachal

With China undertaking another exercise to rename places in Arunachal Pradesh, India has categorically rejected "any mischievous attempts by the

► China sets up new county near POK, **P 6**

Chinese side to assign fictitious names to places which form part of the territory of India". MEA said such actions detract from ongoing efforts to stabilise and normalise ties. **P 9**

J'khand girl murder: Entire police stn staff suspended

ASRP Mukesh & Divya Khare | TNN

Ranchi: All 28 cops at a police station in Jharkhand's Bokaro district were suspended Sunday after the skeletal remains of an 18-year-old girl missing since July last year were found and the murder suspect was arrested — both within days of Jharkhand high court pulling up the DGP and district police over what the victim's mother alleged was a compromised probe.

The suspended officers include Pindrajora police sta-

City police exam racket busted, 16 held

City police's crime branch has dismantled a network allegedly responsible for compromising the integrity of recruitment exams for positions in Delhi police. Two police officers among 16 arrested. **P 2**

tion's officer-in-charge Abhishek Ranjan, IO Aniket Kumar, SIs, ASIs and constables.

► 'Football with case', **P 8**

Rights that can't be exercised are hollow: CJI Kant

Chief Justice of India Suzy Kant said a right that cannot be exercised is nothing more than a promise made on paper. India's justice system does not suffer from absence of rights, he said, but the real challenge was to ensure that they could be meaningfully used. Launching the Nyaya Mitra portal at a two-day conference, Kant said effort must be to take justice to every doorstep in a form that was accessible, speedy and real. **P 15**

TMC backs tukde-tukde gang in parl, streets: PM

Rohit Khanna @timesofindia.com

Kolkata: PM Modi during his campaign in north Bengal's Siliguri on Sunday accused the TMC of backing the "tukde-tukde gang", and of "intentionally" keeping the region underdeveloped.

"The tukde-tukde gang wanted to separate the Northeast from the rest of India," he said. "Trinamool supports such groups, in Parliament and on the streets. This is their true face." Modi described

Mamata warns of imminent arrests

Mamata Banerjee warned of "operations" to arrest TMC workers ahead of assembly polls. At a rally, Mamata also opposed the delimitation bill. **P 12**

the Siliguri corridor connecting the Northeast to the rest of the country "an arm of a strong nation".

► 'Stop illegal entry', **P 12**

'₹1k cr BJP deal' video real but edited: Kabir

Suspended Trinamool Congress MLA Humayun Kabir has admitted the video that shows him seeking Rs 1,000 crore from BJP and calling Muslims gullible is authentic but said it was selectively edited from a longer recording. He said the recording took place at his flat on Dec 19, 2025. He alleged TMC's Abhishek Banerjee orchestrated the sting. CM Mamata Banerjee seized on the key admission, sharpening her attack on BJP. **P 12**



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Scorching heat!
Temperature likely
to cross 40 degrees
Celsius by Friday | 3

TEMP ON SUNDAY

34.7°

MAXIMUM

TEMP ON SUNDAY

20.2°

MINIMUM

FORECAST

Mainly clear sky. Max & min temperatures on Monday would be around 37°C and 20°C

MOONSET 2.37PM (MON)

SUNSET 6.46PM (MON)

MOONRISE 3.49AM (TUE)

SUNRISE 5.57AM (TUE)



Legend of Cyprus: Quiet story of a city road's link to a global statesman | 4

AQI IN DELHI

ON SUNDAY

(MODERATE)

DU looking to rejig
course combos
to tackle vacant
seats issue | 4



Ctrl+Alt+Hire: How This Police Exam Racket Operated On Remote Control

2 Officers Among At least 16 Held; Bypassed Secure Testing Environment Using Virtual Apps

Rajshankar Jha
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Delhi Police's crime branch has dismantled a criminal network allegedly responsible for compromising the integrity of recruitment examinations for positions in Delhi Police, among others.

Over 16 arrests have been made, including two police officers, sources said. One of them was posted at the IGI Airport police station, a senior airport cop confirmed.

The role of former policemen has also surfaced. Multiple suspects were produced in court and taken on remand, documents confirmed. Some of the accused were recently granted bail after exchanges in court.

The operation, which has been a guarded secret for over two months, has exposed sprawling corruption spanning multiple states, including Delhi, Haryana, Punjab and Rajasthan.

The examination was conducted by the Staff Selection Commission and the fallout has prompted Delhi Police to alert SSC regarding the vulnerabilities uncovered during the probe.

Senior crime branch officers refused to comment. Special CP (crime) Devesh Srivastava said it was an ongoing, sensitive operation. DCP Sanjeev Kumar Yadav, who led the operation, remained unavailable despite several attempts.

Sources said the crime branch has filed three FIRs. One pertains to an operation in Jodhpur by a team led by DCP (crime) Harsh Indora and DCP (crime, Jaipur Police) PD Nitya. The gang there was facilitating online cheating in the Delhi Police head constable (ministerial) exam. Three suspects, including two superintendents of the exam centre, were arrested. As the exam was con-

BADGE FOR SALE: HOW THE GANG WAS BUSTED

About the Op

Delhi Police conducted a two-month secret probe into a recruitment scam, that targeted exams for constables and head constables



Over a dozen suspects, including exam centre owners and administrators, in custody; raids in multiple states

Investigators uncovered digital footprints and incriminating messages on devices

SSC alerted to overhaul protocols and fix security vulnerabilities

Probe ongoing, cops checking if other testing centres were similarly compromised

Gang aimed to charge over Rs 10-15 lakh per candidate

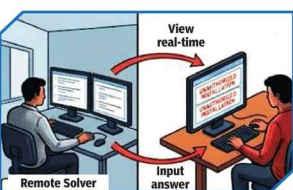
Lookout circular to be issued against some suspects

A high-tech 'INSIDE JOB' using remote desktop apps

Solvers viewed questions and submitted answers in real-time for candidates

Candidates paid large sums and surrendered admit cards as a form of registration

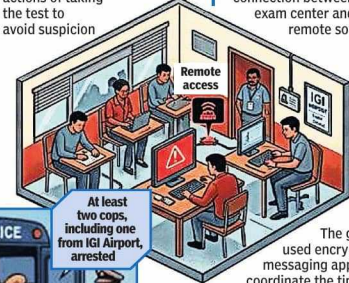
Technicians installed unauthorised software to create a secret "digital bridge" to the exam terminals



Candidates were instructed to sit at their desks and mimic the actions of taking the test to avoid suspicion

Remote solvers were stationed at off-site locations to take the exams on behalf of paying candidates

High-speed internet ensured a seamless connection between the exam centre and the remote solvers



At least two cops, including one from IGI Airport, arrested

A quiet intelligence gathering mission blossomed into a massive crackdown

Financial transactions were secured by the gang holding candidates' original documents as collateral until full payment was made

ducted online, the gang enabled cheating through remote desktop applications at a centre in Khokhariya, under Banar police station there.

The main accused was Pemaram, the centre head who assisted several candidates for a bribe. Admit cards of candidates were found from his possession, along with de-

tails of conversations regarding money payment.

However, this was a "contained attempt" at online cheating. The second FIR, according to police's submission in court, pertains to a massive, organised racket breaching Delhi Police and other examinations conducted by SSC.

What began as a quiet intel-

ligence gathering mission has become a massive crackdown.

The gravity of the situation is underscored by the involvement of insiders. Investigators have confirmed the operation was an "inside job" orchestrated by individuals entrusted with maintaining the security of the examination process.

Exam centre owners,

technical administrators and facilitators acted as middlemen in the scam.

The gang relied on complex digital infrastructure. The modus operandi involved the unauthorised installation of remote desktop applications on terminals at the centres.

This was not a breach achieved from the outside, but rat-

New tools to help cops track, decrypt, crack digital crimes

Abhay@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Delhi Police is enhancing its cyber infrastructure with advanced tools to tackle digital crimes across the city.

The aim is to extract data from a broad range of sources, including mobile devices, before a dedicated forensic workstation takes it for in-depth analyses. This system is being deployed across 15 cyber police stations.

Central to this upgrade is the introduction of a universal forensic extraction kit, a specialised tool for extracting and analysing data from these devices, a senior officer said. "With smartphones now at the heart of most criminal activity, this software will allow investigators to retrieve critical evidence like messages, call logs, multimedia files and app data," the officer added. The system will also be capable of decrypting data and recovering deleted files, along with location history and other sensitive information.

Each cyber station will be equipped with high-performance forensic workstations, featuring 32 advanced computers capable of handling large volumes of data and complex analytical tasks, ensuring fast and secure processing of evidence.

The move comes amid a steady and worrying rise in cybercrime-related financial losses. Official data shows 1,591 such cases were reported in 2024, with losses amounting to Rs 1,145 crore. By 2025, the number of cases rose to 1,600 and the losses to Rs 1,271 crore, underscoring the growing economic toll of digital offences.

The upgraded systems will be equipped to handle data from the likes of mobile phones, internet of things (IoT) devices, wearables and cloud platforms. They will also support link analysis and call detail record (CDR) analysis, helping investigators map connections between suspects, track communica-

tion patterns and identify organised criminal networks.

A comprehensive digital investigation platform will further streamline forensic workflow by allowing investigators to extract and analyse data from live systems, hard drives, mobile devices, and cloud services. This is expected to significantly cut turnaround times in ongoing investigations.

Advanced image and video analysis software will also be deployed at each station. These tools can verify the authenticity of digital media feed, enhance low-quality footage, detect tampering and produce visual evidence suitable for courtroom use.

AN OFFICER SAYS

With smartphones now at the heart of most criminal activity, this software will allow investigators to retrieve critical evidence like messages, call logs, multimedia files and app data

"There are cases where cyber fraud suspects withdraw money from ATMs or tamper with these machines, but the image quality capturing their activities is often poor. This technology will help enhance such visuals," the officer said.

Vinit Kumar, DCP, Intelligence Fusion & Strategic Operations, said the equipment and software have already been procured and distributed to the cyber police stations. These upgrades are expected to enhance the investigative capabilities of cops, enabling them to handle cybercrime cases more efficiently, analyse digital evidence with greater precision, and improve the overall speed and quality of investigations, he added.

ART MEETS DIVINITY IN THIS VISUAL JOURNEY IN CAPITAL

Mapping India's devotional art — across time and place

Meghna Dhulia
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New Delhi: Sacred art moves beyond temple walls and into everyday life in a new set of exhibitions that invite Delhiites to engage with devotion through image, texture and tradition. A month-long showcase at Bikaner House brings together two exhibitions, 'Dakshin | Dilli: A Sacred Dialogue' and 'Prints of Divine', which trace how faith has travelled and transformed across regions.

From richly detailed oleographs that made divine figures intimate and accessible to layered displays of gold-leaf icons, narrative paintings and ritual objects, the exhibition unfolds as a visual dialogue between north and south India, revealing a shared yet diverse cultural imagination.

The exhibitions, presented by RGA Group, will remain open to visitors until May 10.

At the heart of the showcase is Dakshin..., which traces a rich visual and spiritual exchange between devotional traditions of Deccan and north India. Over centuries, sacred ideas and artistic forms travelled along pilgrimage routes, trade networks, and through cultural interactions between courts and temples.

From temple icons to narrative paintings and ritual objects, artists across regions have sought to give form to the divine.

The exhibition brings into focus the celebrated south Indian traditions of Tanjore and Mysore painting, where deities appear as radiant icons embellished with gold leaf and intricate ornamentation. In contrast, north Indian devotional practices, particularly the Pichwai tradition, animate sacred narratives through evocative scenes from the life of Lord Krishna set in the pastoral landscapes of Vrindavan.

Complementing these works is a selection of ritual objects, sacred mounts and guardian figures, offering a rare insight into how devotion extends beyond imagery into lived practices within temples, festivals and domes-



From Tanjore icons and Pichwai paintings to rare oleographs, the artworks at Bikaner House highlight how faith, tradition and artistic practices connect north and south India

ticspaces of worship. "India's sacred visual culture has always been shaped by journeys of ideas, artists, pilgrims and patrons. The two exhibitions together trace how devotion travelled across regions and centuries, inspiring diverse artistic languages while remaining rooted in a shared spiritual imagination," said curator Raseel Gujral Ansal, a designer and cultural patron.

Running alongside this narrative is Prints of Divine, which foregrounds the transformative role of early Indian lithographic prints, particularly those associated with the Raja Ravi Varma Press. The exhibition features 21 rare oleographs and devotional prints, tracing the evolution of India's print culture in the late 19th

and early 20th centuries.

Among the highlights are rare works, such as Indira and Mohini by Varma, alongside prints enhanced with distinctive techniques like Burma cloth and silk embellishments that lend texture and luminosity to the imagery. The show also includes works of artists like M V Dhurandhar, K S Sidhalinga swamy and G V Venkatesh Rao, whose contributions expanded the reach of sacred imagery through printmaking.

"Varma's lithographs transformed Indian visual culture by bringing sacred imagery into everyday homes. When Varma created and exhibited his paintings, they quickly gained widespread popularity, with people eager to reproduce and

share them. Recognising this growing demand, a king advised him in 1884 that his individual effort would not be enough to supply so many admirers and suggested that his works be converted into oleographs," said Prem Kandwal, a Delhi-based collector from whose collection the exhibition has been curated.

Lithography is a printing technique in which an image is drawn on a flat stone or metal surface using a greasy substance. When ink is applied, it adheres only to the drawn areas, allowing the image to be transferred onto paper. Oleography builds on this method to produce richly coloured prints that resemble oil paintings, with multiple layers printed sequentially to recreate the full image.

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22nd April, 2026

Shri Badrinath Temple opens on
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Weather You Like It Or Not: Temp May Hit 41°C In 5 Days

After Relatively Cooler April, Lack Of Rain To Make Delhi Sweat

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Prepare for hotter days as temperatures are likely to reach 41 degrees Celsius by April 17.

The maximum temperature on Sunday was 34.7 degrees Celsius, one degree below normal and the same as Saturday.

The city has mostly been recording mercury below normal in April as rain and overcast skies kept temperatures under check. However, after the rain spell stopped and clear skies returned, the mercury again started rising from April 9.

With rain unlikely in the next seven days, the mercury is predicted to show a rising trend. "As no active western disturbance is expected to impact Delhi, the days are likely to become warmer. A gradual rise in maximum temperatures by 4-5 degrees Celsius is expected during the next seven days. The maximum temperatures are likely to be normal



MERCURY RISING: With rain unlikely, days are likely to become warmer

during the next two days and above normal to appreciably above normal thereafter," a Met official said.

The India Meteorological Department has predicted that the day temperature is likely to stay between 36 and 38 degrees Celsius on Monday, and it may touch 40 degrees Celsius for the first time this year by April 15. It is expected to rise further to around 39-41

degrees Celsius by April 17. In this season so far, the highest maximum temperature stood at 36.8 degrees Celsius on two days: April 2 and March 11. The second half of March was relatively cooler due to back-to-back western disturbances causing light rain and overcast skies.

In contrast, April last year saw an intense heatwave spell from April 7 to 9 as the mercury crossed 40 degrees Celsius. Strong winds prevailed in parts of the city on Sunday. Gusts with speed up to 37 kmph prevailed over Palam from 4.30 pm for nearly three hours. "Surface winds during the day are expected to prevail with speed up to 30 kmph on Monday," said another official.

The minimum temperature on Sunday stood at 20.2 degrees Celsius, one degree below normal. It is likely to hover around 19-21 degrees Celsius on Monday, but it may reach 25 degrees Celsius by April 16.

Meanwhile, Delhi's air quality continued to remain in the moderate category. The AQI was 163 as opposed to 123 a day earlier.

According to the Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi, which functions under the Union ministry of earth sciences, the air quality is likely to stay in the moderate category till April 15, and it may hover between the moderate and poor range in six days thereafter.

4-year-old goes for a walk with uncle, found dead under car

Avishek Kumar
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Ghaziabad: A four-year-old girl who was allegedly taken for "a walk" by her maternal uncle with the promise of buying her food was later found dead under a parked car in Teela Mod area, with her family accusing the man of rape and murder.

Police said they received a call around 8pm on Saturday about the child's body lying under a white car. She had been missing for more than eight hours by then. The body was sent for an autopsy, and forensic teams collected evidence from the spot. The autopsy and forensic reports are awaited.

The girl was the second of three siblings. Her parents work as daily wagers. According to the family, the child was taken from outside her home around noon, when only she and her father were present. Her father is blind.

The father said the accused, his brother-in-law, had been staying a short distance away for about a month and used to visit them often. On Saturday afternoon, he came to the house while the girl was sitting outside eating ice-cream and took her away, saying he would buy her more things.

By the time the girl's mother returned home and realised her daughter was missing, the child had already been gone for some time. The family began searching the neighbourhood.

Residents told the family they had seen the maternal uncle with the girl. When they went to his room, it was locked. A relative said the accused later spoke from the landlord's phone and claimed the girl had been with him, but that he had dropped her back home.

Hours later, the family was informed by police about the body of a young girl. At the hospital, they identified her as their daughter.

A family member alleged that the accused, a resident of Muzaffarnagar, was a habitual substance abuser and had come to stay in the area about a month ago after a dispute with his wife and family.

Police handed over the body to the family on Sunday.

Celebratory firing at wedding leaves woman injured

New Delhi: Celebratory firing at a wedding function in north-east Delhi's Dayapur left a 32-year-old woman injured after a bullet allegedly struck her head on Saturday night. The accused who has not been identified is absconding, police said.

The injured woman has been identified as Tabassum, a homemaker and a neighbour who was watching from her balcony. According to police, the incident occurred around 11 pm, when a group of young men

was dancing to loud DJ music. During the festivities, a firearm was allegedly brandished and fired in the air as part of celebratory firing, police said, adding that during this act, one bullet reportedly hit Tabassum, who was present nearby, causing injuries to her head.

She was immediately rushed to Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital, where she is currently undergoing treatment.

Following the incident, the accused person allegedly fled

the spot, creating panic among guests. A police officer said, "The firing was not continuously happening. Attendees and locals did not understand when the weapon was brandished and how it was fired."

Police further added that they are trying to ascertain whether the weapon used in the firing was licensed or illegally acquired. A case has been registered under sections 324 (mischievous) and 3(5) (common intention) of BNS and Arms Act. 1969.

Girl killed in bus accident near Shadipur, driver held

New Delhi: A 40-year-old bus driver has been nabbed for killing an 11-year-old girl in a road accident near Shadipur Depot in central Delhi's Baljeet Nagar area on Saturday night. The accused driver fled the scene. She was taken for medical attention but was declared dead. Her body was later shifted to Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital for post-mortem. The driver, identified as Kaptan Singh, has been nabbed. TNN

3 held for robbing man of ₹15L on Dwarka e-way

New Delhi: Nearly a week after Rs 15 lakh was robbed on Dwarka expressway, police have arrested three men involved in the case. Police said the robbery was reported on April 6 near Sector-22, Dwarka, where the accused allegedly targeted the victim and fled with the cash. The cops recovered nearly Rs 12 lakh from the accused, along with a mobile phone allegedly purchased using the robbed money. Further investigation is underway. TNN

NHAI bars two- & three-wheelers on Geeta Colony-EPE elevated section

Dipak Dash@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: NHAI has prohibited two- and three-wheelers, tractors, multi-axle hydraulic trailers and other slow moving vehicles on the 26.5-km elevated section from Geeta Colony in Delhi to EPE junction of the Delhi-Dehradun economic corridor.

The move comes after instances of accidents — including involvement of two-wheelers — even before the formal opening of the high-speed corridor. PM Narendra Modi is scheduled to open the 210-km economic corridor from Akshardham in Delhi to Dehradun on April 14, the birth anniversary of Dr BR Ambedkar.

As per NHAI notification, the first package of the expressway, connecting Laxmi Nagar-Geeta Colony-Biharipur-Ankur Vihar-Tronica City-Mandaula to EPE Crossing in Baghpat (Uttar Pradesh), has been developed as a six-lane



The move is seen as a bid to cut accidents in the high-speed zone

access-controlled highway. It said there are service roads, alternative routes and roads available to commuters.

The 26-km elevated section starts from Geeta Colony and passes through Shastri Park, New Usmanpur, Khajuri Chowk, Loni Border, and Mandola before reaching Baghpat.

The notification said since the highway stretch has been developed as a high-speed corridor, movement of "high speed vehicles may pose risk to

the safety of certain classes of comparatively slow moving vehicles". The highways authority has invoked Section-35 of the Control of NH (Land and Traffic) Act, which empowers NHAI to put such restrictions "in the interest of public safety or convenience". Officials said cameras have been installed on the entire highway for surveillance and for detecting violations so that respective police departments can issue e-notices to violators.

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WHO WAS ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS?

Archbishop Makarios III (1913-1977) was a Greek Cypriot prelate and statesman who served as the Archbishop of the Church of Cyprus from 1950 until his death in 1977

He was also the first president of the Republic of Cyprus, leading the country through independence from British colonial rule in 1960

He played a central role in negotiating Cyprus's sovereignty and navigating geopolitical tensions involving Greece, Turkey and Britain



Quiet story of a city road's link to a global statesman

LEGEND OF CYPRUS LIVES ON IN DELHI



ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS' INDIA CONNECT

Archbishop Makarios Marg is a road in central New Delhi named in honour of Archbishop Makarios III, reflecting his stature as a world leader and symbol of independence and diplomacy

The road lies near Lodhi Road in the diplomatic and cultural area

According to experts, originally known as Golf Links Road, it was renamed Archbishop Makarios Marg in the early 1980s

The prominence of this road was highlighted when Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred the Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III, Cyprus's highest civilian honour, strengthening a diplomatic thread between New Delhi and Nicosia

symbolic of broader international solidarity. "In Delhi, many of these road names emerged in the post-Independence period, shaped by the ideals of NAM. When India played a leading role in the movement, there was a conscious effort to build ties. That context explains why the names of several international leaders appear on Delhi's map," said Minni Sawhney, former Delhi University professor.

Today, the road runs through one of the city's prominent diplomatic and cultural zones, within reach of embassies, cultural institutions and historic neighbourhoods. Its relevance resurfaced recently when Prime Minister Narendra Modi was awarded the Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III, Cyprus's highest civilian honour, in 2025. The recognition renewed attention to the historical link between New Delhi and the Cypriot leader whose name quietly marks a street in the city.

▶ NEXT: KWAME NKRUMAH MARG

WHAT'S IN A NAME

ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS MARG

Speeding car hits man, daughter; driver flees spot

New Delhi: A dry fruit businessman was grievously injured after a speeding car allegedly rammed into him in west Delhi's Tilak Nagar. He has been identified as Jasmeet Singh. CCTV footage of the incident, showing a vehicle being driven recklessly in a narrow lane and hitting the duo, surfaced on social media on Sunday.

The incident was reported on April 5, when the 39-year-old man, who owns a dry fruit shop on his way to gurdwara with his daughter at 10.30 am. The duo reached the intersection near a school in Mukherjee Park when a purple vehicle allegedly came at high speed, struck his shoulder and sped away. Following the collision, he fell on the ground. The complainant managed to memorise the number plate of the car and informed cops of the same.

The CCTV footage captured a collision in a narrow residential lane. The man and his daughter were seen walking through the passage and were about to turn left when a car struck them. In the video, the daughter was seen falling due to the impact.

The accused was arrested and his vehicle was seized. TNN

Odisha man honey-trapped by 'Pakistani woman' to join radical group, say police

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Bhubaneswar: Sheikh Imran (22) of Bhubaneswar, who was arrested by Delhi Police on Saturday for his alleged links with a radical group, had reportedly undergone a short-term training in cyber trade craft related to terrorism, police sources said.

According to sources, Imran was reportedly honey-trapped by a suspected Pakistani woman before being coerced into joining the group. "Through his social media accounts, he came in contact with a close group, where radical content on religious lines was circulated," a written statement by the commissionerate police said.

A senior officer in Odisha Police said they have come to know that he visited Delhi several times over the past year to "meet the Pakistani woman and attended a week-long programme to learn specialised cyber techniques used in subversive activities". The state Crime Branch's special task force (STF) is analysing his online chats with the woman.

"The honey-trap angle and cyber terrorism training are being verified," STF SP Rabi Satapathy said, adding they are trying to find out whether others from Odisha were part of the radical group.

The state police, in coordination with their Delhi counterparts, are probing Imran's background, including his social media activity, financial transactions and call records. Investigators said his names surfaced during interrogation of several youths detained in Delhi last week.

Imran's family expressed shock at the allegations. "My son was glued to his mobile phone for hours, but I never imagined he was involved in anti-national activities. I believe the mobile phone ruined him," his father Sheikh Amir said.

While police described Imran as unemployed, Amir claimed his son worked as a delivery agent for an online food aggregator. "He often asked me for money. I told him to find work, and he said he was doing food delivery, though I was never sure," Amir said.

Five held as cops crack ₹2.3-crore cyber fraud case

New Delhi: Five men from Narela have been arrested for allegedly operating a cyber fraud network that used mule bank accounts to route cheated money across India and abroad.

The arrests were made following a probe into multiple complaints lodged on national cyber crime reporting portal.

The accused have been identified as Rahul (22), Bunty (22), Ankith (19), Salim A (22) and Noore Alam (19), all residents of Narela. Police said the group was part of an organised, interstate cyber fraud syndicate involved in facilitating financial transactions through a network of mule bank accounts.

Investigators revealed that at least 28 bank accounts linked to the accused were being used to channel funds obtained through cyber fraud. These accounts were connected to 43 complaints from across states, including Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and West Bengal, involving an estimated fraud amount of ₹2.3 crore. DCW (north) Reshwar V Swami said, "The accused opened these accounts using their own and others' credentials and procured SIM cards linked to these accounts." TNN

Why DU May Rejig Course Combinations This Session

Univ Has Found No Takers For Nearly 24,000 Seats In Past 4 Yrs

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New Delhi: With undergraduate admissions just weeks away, Delhi University is looking to plug a recurring problem — thousands of vacant seats — by restructuring course combinations, particularly in BA programmes, based on student demand trends observed over the past few years.

The move comes as DU prepares to begin admissions for the 2026-27 academic session, likely in the third week of May, following the declaration of CUET results.

Facing consistent vacancies since 2022, when admissions were centralised through CUET, the university recently constituted a committee to examine how courses — especially in off-campus colleges — could be realigned to improve seat-fill rates. The panel has now recommended a series of changes aimed at making programmes more flexible and aligned with student preferences.

Among its key suggestions: Colleges should reassess BA programme discipline combinations and merge low-demand subjects with more popular ones to improve uptake.

Languages such as Urdu, Arabic, Persian, Bengali and Telugu, which have faced persistent low enrolment even in on-campus departments/colleges, may be clubbed with another discipline within a single combination.

Vocational academic courses like office management and

DU ADMISSION RESET

▶ A DU panel set up to address persistent issue of vacant seats has made key recommendations

▶ These will be implemented from upcoming 2026-27 admissions, subject to approval

WHAT MAY CHANGE IN 2026 ADMISSIONS

Low-demand BA Programme combinations to be reworked

Scope to increase seats in high-demand combinations (if feasible)

▶ Languages like Urdu, Arabic, Persian, Bengali, Telugu to be clubbed with another subject

▶ Vocational courses like OMS, AMSP to be replaced with 'Commerce'

▶ Subjects like Food Technology, to be grouped under 'Community Science'

▶ Colleges to redesign combinations based on students demand trends

WHAT STAYS THE SAME

▶ No course will be scrapped

▶ No new courses will be introduced

▶ Total sanctioned seats will not be reduced

THE TRIGGER

▶ Vacant seats a recurring issue since 2022 (CUET-based admissions)

▶ Delays in CUET results — late admission cycles

▶ Students opting for other universities in the meantime

secretarial practices (OMSP) and AMSP may be replaced with 'commerce' in BA combinations and subjects such as food technology and HDPE may be brought under a broader 'community science' discipline.

No programme will be scrapped, but colleges can redistribute or expand seats within existing courses based on demand and capacity, according to the panel.

The recommendations will be placed before the Academic Council on April 15 for approval.

The DU committee included senior university officials such as the dean of colleges, registrar, dean (academics), dean (admissions), along with principals of colleges, including Shaheed Bhagat Singh College, Miranda House and Daulat Ram College, among others.

The exercise follows internal discussions held with multiple colleges this Jan, where institutes flagged persistent vacancies in several courses despite multiple rounds of admission.

Vacant seats have emerged as a structural concern for DU since CUET-based admissions began. Delays in entrance test results and the subsequent admission process often compress the academic calendar, prompting many students to secure seats in other universities, leaving DU with unfilled capacity — particularly in less sought-after courses and colleges. However, last year, even some high-demand courses in top colleges reported vacancies in later rounds.

In Dec, TOI had reported that DU was considering phasing out or restructuring low-demand undergraduate programmes after an internal review highlighted weak response trends compared with pre-CUET years. The university later clarified that no courses would be discontinued, but combinations could be reshuffled to minimise vacancies.

In the past four years, nearly 24,000 seats have gone vacant at Delhi University — around 5,000 in 2022, 7,000 in 2023, 3,000 in 2024, and about 9,000 last year — marking a loss not just for the university, but also for thousands of aspirants who missed the opportunity to study at DU, which attracts students from across the country.

Grievance cells to ensure schools don't deny EWS admissions or free facilities

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New Delhi: The directorate of education (DoE) has set up a grievance redressal mechanism to address complaints against private unaided recognised schools over denial of EWS/DG/CWSN admissions and failure to provide mandated free facilities.

A grievance cell has been constituted at the directorate headquarters to receive and process complaints regarding non-compliance with these directions, with officials tasked with handling cases related to denial of these three types of admissions and non-provision of free facilities. Similar cells will be established at the district level to ensure complaints are addressed closer to the ground and without delay.

"The district-level cells will make timely intervention in each case and ensure that complaints are not left unresolved. They will also forward an action taken report to the headquarters on a daily basis to enable continuous monitoring," an official said.

The mechanism is aimed at creating a structured and accountable system for redressal, the official said, adding, "The idea is to ensure that parents have a clear channel to report violations and that schools are held accountable through regular tracking and prompt action."

The move follows repeated complaints from parents and stakeholders that some private schools were not providing free uniforms, books and writing materials to students admitted under the EWS/DG/CWSN categories and were instead de-

POLICING THE SCHOOLS

Concerns

▶ Private schools charging money for uniforms, books and writing materials meant to be free

▶ EWS/DG/CWSN students not being provided these free facilities

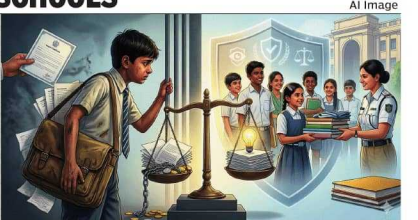
▶ Schools demanding income certificate every year instead of once at admission

▶ Students being denied classes, exams or promotion due to document issues

Steps taken by DoE

▶ Grievance cells established at headquarters and district levels to receive and resolve complaints promptly

▶ Schools must provide free



uniform, books and writing materials to EWS students; no charges allowed

▶ Income certificate required only at the time of admission

▶ No student can be expelled, debarred or denied any facility without prior approval of the

Overall impact

▶ Parents are protected from unnecessary financial burden and repeated documentation

▶ Students receive uninterrupted education and equal access to basic facilities

▶ Schools are held accountable through monitoring and legal enforcement

manding money in violation of existing norms under the Right to Education Act, 2009.

Reiterating its directions, DoE has made it clear that private unaided recognised schools "shall not demand money" from EWS/DG students for uniforms, books or writing materials, and must ensure these are provided free of cost.

The department has also flagged complaints of schools insisting on fresh income certificates every year for continuation of EWS admissions. Clarifying the rules, an official communication stated that "an income certificate is required only at the time of admission," and thereafter, "only a

self-declaration of annual income on affidavit" is to be submitted by parents each year.

Further, the order emphasises that no student admitted under the EWS/DG category can be expelled, debarred, or denied access to classes, examinations, promotion or any other facility solely on account of non-submission of documents, including the income affidavit, without prior approval of the director of education.

District deputy directors of education have to ensure strict compliance with these instructions and act on complaints received from parents and stakeholders. They have also been tasked with moni-

ring schools in their jurisdictions and ensuring that violations are addressed promptly through the newly established grievance redressal system.

"Non-compliance with these directions shall be viewed seriously," an official said, adding that any deviation from the rules, whether in the form of denial of facilities, illegal fee demands or unjustified disciplinary action, will invite stringent action. Erring schools may face proceedings under the Delhi School Education Act and Rules, Right to Education Act, 2009, and other applicable legal provisions, including further penal action in cases of continued violations.

After wage protests, Noida promises weekly off, double pay for overtime

Noida: After two days of protests by factory workers over low minimum wages, the Noida administration on Sunday rolled out a set of safeguards aimed at easing tensions across the industrial belt.

It announced a compulsory weekly off for all workers, double pay for overtime and work on weekly holidays, annual bonus before Nov 30, salary disbursement by the 10th of every month, medical cover, workplace safety measures and a formal complaints system to address harassment.

The decisions were taken at a joint meeting at the Noida Authority office in Sector 6, attended by district magistrate Medha Rupam, Authority CEO Krishna Karumesh, police commissioner Laxmi Singh and other officials. Senior labour department officials, including principal secretary MKS Sundaram and labour commissioner Markandeya Shahi, joined virtually.

Rupam said the administration had spent the past few days holding talks with industrial units and was committed to protecting workers' interests. She said factories had been asked to ensure a weekly off for every worker and pay double if any one is made to work on that day. Overtime, too, must be paid at double the rate.

To deal with complaints of harassment, a committee headed by a woman will be set up. Officials said factories must also ensure workers are treated with dignity and provided medical cover and safe working conditions. TNN

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ON A PLANK AND A PRAYER

How two narrow cement structures, serving as a 'shortcut bridge', are testing survival skills

Photos & text by
Anushka Kogta

New Delhi: In a congested pocket of Okhla Phase-I near Indira Camp, two narrow cement planks, typically used for electric poles, serve as a lifeline for hundreds of residents crossing a waterlogged drain every day. What locals call a "shortcut bridge" has, over the years, turned into a serious safety hazard, with multiple injuries and at least one reported death linked to the crossing.

Residents say the makeshift structure has existed for years, forcing people to balance dangerously while moving between two sides of the locality.

Vishaka Devi, 35, while crossing the makeshift bridge with her four-year-old grandson on her shoulder, pointed out how the structure was once wider and safer. "There used to be three slabs. Now only two are left, making it difficult and risky to cross." Devi suffered injuries in Nov during one such precarious trip and is still undergoing treatment at a hospital. "I have to cross this 'bridge' 30-35 times a day to get supplies for my general



store. I have no other option," she added.

Another resident, 55-year-old Nipen Chand Rai, sustained a fracture after slipping at the same spot during rain around 10 days ago. The most alarming case, residents say, is that of 50-year-old Suresh Kumar, who fell into the drain two months ago and died a month later after falling ill due to exposure to the contaminated water.

Residents say the plank was initially installed as a temporary measure. During monsoon, the situation worsens significantly. "It's been like this for a long time," said Ramesh Yadav, 42, who has lived in the area for 25 years. "When it rains, the plank shifts and the water rises up to here," he said, gesturing



towards his waist. Over the years, residents have repeatedly repaired and repositioned the plank at their own expense. "Whenever it breaks or slips, we gather people from the area and repair it again," said Karan Poddar, 31.



Three Pasts Of Present

CITY CITY BANG BANG

SANTOSH DESAI



What was once a food meant for those who could afford nothing else is back as a superfood of choice. Millets are now seen as a food for those with evolved tastes. As are jowar, bajra and ragi. Millet and so many other grains that an earlier generation had striven to leave behind. Handloom now has a special sheen, and the surest way to sell something at three times the price is to put the word 'artisanal' in front of it. Is this nostalgia, this reaching back into the recesses of the past to retrieve something and attach a new value to it?

It might appear that we are nostalgic about the past, that we are recovering lost memories, but something else might be at work here. For what we are enacting is not a replay of tradition but a simulation of memory. None of the people raving about millets had any in their past. They did not grow up eating that, perhaps even their parents did not. There is a recognition that this is part of a collective past, quite detached from personal memory. It is a memory of a self that never existed, of someone else's past.

What this simulated memory does is to provide a new kind of anchor that looks as if it has been there all along. It is appealing because it has the appearance of authenticity, of groundedness. At a time when we construct and perform ourselves through acts of consumption, every choice is a statement. We become who we are through choices that must be continuously performed. This is a world where consumption is organised around verbs rather than nouns, around doing and experiencing rather than having and holding. The simulated past provides gravity.

This gives us a past without the com-

plications that an actual past brings. No obligations, no constraints, none of the entanglements that actually come from somewhere involves. The craft gin with the regional botanical, the revived festival with the curated ritual, the heritage grain with the origin story on the label: all these offer depth without roots, connection without cost.

But this is only the surface of the layers that make up the country. A large part of the country does not need to perform a retelling of the past, but continues to be embedded in it. Caste, for instance, is a structure that operates at a subterranean level. It sits in our surnames, me-

What this simulated memory does is to provide a new kind of anchor that looks as if it has been there all along. It is appealing because it has the appearance of authenticity, of groundedness

diates marriages, influences residential clusters, governs implicit rules about who can do what where. Even in the parts of the country which think of it as invisible, it appears in the way household help is treated, what spaces they are allowed to share and what aspirations they are allowed to have. One does not need to believe in caste, or to notice it, for caste to structure one's life.

Gender operates similarly. The distribution of labour within the household, who waits and who is served, who speaks and who is consulted: these are not remembered traditions. They are inhabited structures. They persist not because anyone is reviving them but because nobody needs to. They were never lost.

The past in India takes three different forms. The first is the past that

continues largely unhindered: habit, custom, practice that feels instinctive. Here, no one is consciously making a choice. The second is actual lived memory. The past that one has experienced growing up. When one made pickle at home, and every festival meant weeks of preparation, cooking foods consumed specifically at that time. The third is simulated memory: the past as conscious retrieval, deliberate, performative, available to be put to work in the service of present-day needs.

The deepest irony in contemporary India may be this: the revivalist project, the conscious, loud, assertive retrieval of tradition, is most active precisely where tradition is feared to have weakened. The people most embedded in structural continuity, the rural, the lower-caste, the poor, are rarely the ones singing odes to millets. They do not need to. They are still living inside the past in the most literal sense.

This is not to say that all revival is false. It is based on a reality that has been transposed from its original setting and customised to meet the needs of the present. But the mechanism through which it operates, the simulation of a memory one does not possess, is identical regardless of what it is put in the service of. A beautiful textile and a bruising political campaign can both draw on the same simulated past. The structure is the same. What differs is what gets done with it.

The past is always, in some ways, imagined to serve the purposes of the present. We make the past what we need from it. Today, it seems that we need the past largely to fulfil our identity needs. At one end of the spectrum, it takes the form of self-conscious consumption of a curated past. At the other, the certainty that comes from defending something we believe we have always been. Neither is more authentic than the other. But not every act of recovery is as gentle as choosing a grain.

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CM orders 5-yr audit of liquor retail companies

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New Delhi: Chief minister Rekha Gupta has ordered an audit and cross-verification of financial records of state-run entities involved in liquor retail over the past five years amid concerns over possible irregularities, the chief minister's office (CMO) has said.

She made it clear that any lapse — be it negligence, mismatch in accounts or financial mismanagement — won't be tolerated. "She noted that recent findings indicate that accounts in some of these undertakings

were not properly reconciled for extended periods, raising the risk of discrepancies and potential losses to the public exchequer," the CMO said.

Liquor retail operations in Delhi are currently handled by govt entities — Delhi Consumer's Cooperative Wholesale Store (DCCWS), Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation (DTTDC), Delhi State Civil Supplies Corporation (DSCSC) and Delhi State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (DSIIDC) — all of which run outlets across the city.

The CM said that the objective is not just to correct records but to establish a robust system of financial oversight involving strict monitoring, reconciliation, and end-to-end verification and validation of accounts.

The audit and cross-verification of the financial records will cover sales, purchase and stock and cash accounts, with every entry subjected to thorough scrutiny. These companies have also been asked to work closely with the excise department to ensure complete validation of records. To strengthen ac-

countability, the excise commissioner will independently cross-check data related to sales, inventory and revenue. Gupta said that strict action will be taken against anyone found responsible for discrepancies or loss of revenue. "Safeguarding public money is our top priority, and there will be zero tolerance for lapses," she said.

All concerned departments and agencies have been instructed to compile a detailed report of the entire exercise and submit it to the finance department within two months from the date of the order.

Govt nod to two hostel buildings in MAMC

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Delhi govt has approved the construction of two hostel buildings at Maulana Azad Medical College. Chief minister Rekha Gupta has said the move will address the growing demand for student accommodation and strengthen infrastructure in medical education.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the expenditure finance committee (EFC) chaired by the chief minister. The project, estimated at Rs 573.41 crore, is for separate hostels for male and female students on the college campus.

According to officials, the facility for female students will be built at Site A at a cost of Rs 269.19 crore, while the boys' hostel will come up at Site B with an allocation of Rs 304.22 crore.

Officials said the hostels are expected to be completed within 36 months, including six months earmarked for planning and 30 months for construction.

Land is already available, and work is expected to begin within six months after administrative and financial approvals.

Student intake has increased from 150 to 250 in recent years, putting pressure on existing facilities. Due to the shortage of rooms, many students share accommodation.

The existing hostels, constructed between 1965 and 1982, have also aged, and new infrastructure was needed.

Officials said the project has been designed with a social objective, with a focus on supporting students' academic growth.

BJP launches campaign backing women's quota

New Delhi: Delhi BJP on Saturday launched a campaign in support of the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, releasing a missed call number to mobilise public backing. BJP MP Kamaljeet Sehrawat and party leader Bansuri Swaraj on Saturday addressed a joint press conference and launched the campaign. The event was coordinated by state office-bearers. TNN

Waste dumping near schools: NGT issues notices

New Delhi: National Green Tribunal (NGT) has issued notices to Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) and Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) in a matter related to dumping of waste and overflowing garbage near two schools in south Delhi's Safdarjung Enclave.

A local resident, Bhupendra Kumar Gupta, filed a plea in the tribunal alleging that the waste dumping site is located on Chaudhary Jhandu Singh Marg. A dump yard is just adjacent to the wall of the school, which is creating serious problems for the children going to these schools. The applicant claimed that the solid waste is overflowing and is causing severe pollution and emission of foul odours and is creating health hazards to thousands of children who are going to the school. TNN

Moving with times: Delhi Metro takes up mid-life revamp of Red, Blue line trains

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) on Sunday said it has undertaken a comprehensive mid-life refurbishment initiative for 70 trains running on Red and Blue Lines to enhance passenger safety, comfort and overall travel experience.

The trains, which were inducted between 2002 and 2007 and have completed nearly 19 to 24 years of service, are being upgraded with modern systems and features to align them with the latest rolling stock standards.

The trains are being refurbished in a phased manner; 31 have so far been retrofitted with upgraded features. "In the first phase, 12 trains have been upgraded. In the second, 18 trains have been refurbished. Work on another nine trains will begin soon before the rest of the trains are upgraded. In the third phase, 22 Blue Line trains will be refurbished by Nov 2027," said Anuj Dayal, principal executive director, corporate com-

The trains, which were inducted between 2002 and 2007 and have completed nearly 19 to 24 years of service, are being upgraded with modern systems and features to align them with the latest rolling stock standards

munications, DMRC. Vikas Kumar, managing director of DMRC, inspected the first refurbished train of the third phase before it was inducted into passenger service. The work includes major improvements to both train interiors and systems. The interiors, including passenger sections and driver cabins, have been repainted to restore aesthetics and fix the wear and tear from many years of use. Electrical panels have been upgraded to enhance performance and reliability. Passenger announcement and passenger infor-

mation systems, CCTV systems and LCD-based dynamic route map, along with display screens, have been installed. "These systems provide real-time information about routes, current time and expected arrival of trains at stations. They also enable communication between passengers and train operators during emergencies," said Dayal.

For passenger safety, a new fire detection system, equipped with smoke and heat detectors, has been installed in all coaches. "Old relays and miniature circuit breakers (MCBs) have been replaced with advanced units to improve safety and ensure smooth operations," Dayal said, adding that mobile and lap-top-charging points for passengers have been introduced in all refurbished coaches. The first section of Red Line — from Tis Hazari to Shabdar — was inaugurated on Dec 24, 2002, and opened to the public a day later. The Blue Line's first section was inaugurated on Dec 31, 2005.

Rekha takes stock of metro and flyover projects; says will help ease congestion

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Several key Delhi Metro corridors and major flyover projects are set for completion by Dec, with work gathering pace across priority stretches, chief minister Rekha Gupta said on Sunday after reviewing ongoing work.

Chairing a high-level meeting at the Delhi secretariat, Gupta said corridors such as Krishna Park extension to Deepali Chowk (around 6.6 km), Majlis Park to Derawal Nagar (3.5 km), Derawal Nagar to R.K. Ashram (7.4 km), Tughlakabad to Sangam Vihar (6.3 km), Sangam Vihar to Saket G Block (4.3 km) and Saket G Block to Aerocity (12.6 km) are targeted for completion by the end of this year.

Officials said the Phase IV expansion of the network has progressed 80%. At present, Delhi Metro spans 416 km, covering 303 stations across 12 lines with 32 interchange stations. An additional 104.45 km with 81 stations is under construction.

The chief minister said that some stretches under Phase IV such as Majlis Park to Maujpur, Deepali Chowk to Majlis Park and Janakpuri West to Krishna Park Extension

are already operating.

Alongside the Metro expansion, flyover projects nearing completion would also ease congestion. A 2.16-km double-decker flyover from Azadpur to Tripolia Chowk, designed to carry both metro and road traffic, is about 73% complete, while a 1.40-km flyover from Yamuna Vihar to Bhajanpura has reached around 85% completion.

In south Delhi, work is under way on a 2.48-km six-lane flyover from Saket G Block to Sangam Vihar along MB Road, along with underpasses at Saket G Block and Ambedkar Nagar.

The project has achieved around 40% progress so far. Design and alignment work is also in progress for a 2.53-km flyover from Maa Anandmayee Marg to Pul Prahladpur, with issues such as ASI permissions, tree cutting and land acquisition being addressed.

Officials said that work has begun on the remaining three Phase IV corridors — Lajpat Nagar to Saket G Block, Inderlok to Indraprastha and Rithala to Kundli — with a completion timeline of March 2029. Phase V(A) projects, including RK Ashram Marg to Indraprastha, Aerocity to IGI Airport Terminal 1 and Tughlakabad to Kalindi Kunj, have also been initiated.



Rekha Gupta

Man found dead in drain with 3 bullet wounds

Ghaziabad: The body of 32-year-old Jitendra Kumar, who had been missing since April 9, was found in a drain in Chiranjeevi Vihar on Friday morning. A resident of Bamheta village, he had suffered three bullet wounds. An FIR has been registered against unidentified persons on the basis of a complaint filed by his wife Chital. During the investigation, police found that he had two wives.

According to police, Jitendra's mobile phone was last traced to a location about 100 metres from the spot where his body was discovered, near a railway track. An officer said when police called the number, someone answered but switched off the phone before investigators could reach the area. TNN

Boy falls in water tank, dies; bldg owner held

New Delhi: A nine-year-old boy drowned after falling into an underground water tank at an under-construction site while playing last week. The building owner was arrested.

The child, Shreyansh, was a Class IV student at MCD Primary Boys' School and a resident of Tughlakabad village in southeast Delhi. His father runs a tea stall.

On Wednesday afternoon, Shreyansh was on his way home from school around 1 pm with his 11-year-old sister when he wanted to play with two classmates, despite the sister's objections, police said. To hide from his sister, the boy and one of his friends entered a construction site in Tughlakabad village. "Due to poor lighting, he did not see the tank and fell into it," said DCP (southeast) Hemant Tiwari.

After a friend alerted the family, Shreyansh's father managed to pull him out of the tank. He administered CPR and rushed the boy to a hospital, where he was declared dead. A police officer said: "There were no guards, no barricades around or covering on the tank."

The building owner, Jagdish (60), is a resident of Tughlakabad village. A case was registered at Govindpuri police station. TNN



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On behalf of Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd., Regional Electrical Engineer, KRCL, Ratnagiri, is inviting E-Open Tenders for the following work. **Name of the work** - Annual Maintenance contract for lighting arrangement provided in Tunnels, Substations, on Platforms, approach roads and Circulating areas in Two years in section between Roha (Excluding) and Marmagao (including) stations in Ratnagiri Region of Konkan Railway. **Tender No. KR/RN/EL/T/3/2026 DATED 13.04.2026. Estimated cost** - ₹ 1,60,98,088/- (Excluding GST). **Cost of Tender form - NIL. EMD - ₹ 3,21,820.00/-** (as shown on IREPS portal). **Last date and time of depositing of tender on LINE** : 04/05/2026 upto 15:00 hrs. For further details, contact office of Sr. Regional Electrical Engineer, MIDC area, Mirjole, Ratnagiri or on Railway web site (www.ireps.gov.in).

PMML invites online bids for "Selection of Agency for Annual Zonal Work (Civil) for White Washing, Distemping, Painting and Miscellaneous Repair Works for All Buildings, Circulation Areas and Parking at PMML for the period of 1 year." The tender document can be downloaded from <https://pmml.nic.in> and <https://pmml.ewizard.in> from 07.04.2026 onwards.

- **Pre-Bid Meeting:** 16.04.2026 at 11:30 AM
 - **Bid Submission End Date:** 28.04.2026 up to 05:30 PM
 - **Technical Bid Opening:** 29.04.2026 at 11:00 AM
- All further updates/addendums shall be available on the above websites only.
- CBC 09142/12/0003/2627 **Director, PMML**



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Maharashtra Industrial Township Limited (MITL) is a SPV formed by Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) & National Industrial Corridor Development Implementation Trust (NICDIT). MITL is developing a **'Smart Industrial Township'** at Shendra – Bidkin Industrial Area branded as **AURIC** near Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar as one of the nodes of DMIC.

MITL invites online applications for e-bidding at Bidkin for 16 plots - 4 Industrial MSME, 3 Industrial Food Park, 4 commercial, 3 residential and 2 plots for Public and Semi-public Amenities—one for a Fuel Station & Workshop and another for an Education-Higher Secondary School.

MITL also invites online applications for e-bidding at Shendra for 11 plots - 3 Commercial plots, 7 Residential plots, and 1 plot for Community Shopping and Public Semi-Public Amenities. Online application have been opened and last date for submission of application is on **22 April, 2026 till 17.00 hours**. Interested investors may log on to **www.auric.city** for further details.

For Maharashtra Industrial Township Limited

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IN THE HIGH COURT OF
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(ORDINARY ORIGINAL CIVIL
JURISDICTION)
(Under Order V Rule 20 r/w
Section 151 CPC)

I.A. 326965/2025 in
CS (COMM) 987/2018

National Fire Protection
Association, Inc.
.....PLAINTIFF(S)

Vs

M/s Swets International
Services Pvt. Ltd. & Ors.
.....DEFENDANT(S)

To,
Mr. Jatin Goel,
11, Ansari Road,
Daryaganj, Delhi-110002

.....Defendant No. 5

WHEREAS the above named Plaintiff has instituted the captioned suit against you, the above named Defendant No. 5, and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of this Court that it is not possible to serve you, the above named Defendant No. 5, in the ordinary way, therefore, this notice is given by way of publication directing you, the above named Defendant No. 5, to make appearance before the Registrar (Judicial) on 09th day of July, 2026 at 11:00 AM.

Take further notice that in default of appearance by you, the above named Defendant No. 5, on the date(s) fixed in the captioned suit, the suit will be heard and determined ex parte in the absence of you, the above named Defendant No. 5.

Given under my hand and the seal of this Court, this 04th Day of April, 2026.

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Savita Dhawan alias Naresh, born on 15.6.1954. r/o JE-23, first flr, Khirkri ext., Malviyanagar, New Delhi-110017, W/o Ashok Kumar Dhawan. shall henceforth be known as Nareish Dhawan.

I Vinod Kumar Gupta S/o Bal Mukand r/o Hno106, Sec-5, Rachna, Vaishali, Gzb, UP-201010 have changed my name from Vinod Kumar Gupta to Vinod Kumar Henceforth I would be known by the name of Vinod Kumar

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Hacks are based on verified public sources. Readers are advised to follow official websites & updated rules



'Intel alert': 3 J&K univs end MoUs with US NGO

Naseer.Ganai
@timesofindia.com

Srinagar: Three universities in Kashmir have terminated academic agreements with a US-based NGO, Kashmir Care Foundation (KCF), following internal reviews amid buzz that intelligence agencies had flagged concerns over its activities.

University of Kashmir and Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir issued orders cancelling their MoUs with the Atlanta-based KCF on March 25; Islamic University of Science and Technology did the same the following day.

Officials said the terminations followed "adverse reports", underscoring growing caution over collabora-

tions with foreign institutions, especially in technology, research, and data sharing.

University of Kashmir registrar Naseer Iqbal wrote to KCF president Altaf K Lal that the MoU was executed on Dec 15, 2025, "with the objective of furthering educational initiatives... The MoU has been reviewed by competent authorities and it has been determined that continuation is not in the larger institutional interest of the university."

Iqbal said the MoU had a termination clause. "We decided on our own to terminate it as we thought it was not advisable due to so many reasons," the registrar said, declining to go into specifics.

The three varsities made it clear that no money was exchanged, nor liabilities created, during the MoU period.

STATISTICS A slice of life in numbers

Half of married, educated women have sought work for over 3 years

Among urban, graduate women aged 25-34 who are currently married and looking for work,

50.2% are searching for over 3 years

How other groups compare



Graduate job seekers aged 25-34

Source: PLFS 2024

HC: Barring wife from kitchen is mental cruelty

Vaibhav.Ganajpure
@timesofindia.com

Nagpur: Bombay HC's Nagpur bench has held that preventing a wife from entering the kitchen of her matrimonial home amounts to mental cruelty under Section 498A of IPC, refusing to quash an FIR against a Nagpur-based man while granting relief to his mother.

Justice Urmila Joshi-Phalke said in a recent order that allegations against the husband made out a prima facie case. "She was even not allowed to enter the kitchen, and she was asked to get food from outside," the court said, adding that this conduct was sufficient to infer mental cruelty.

Section 498A covers "any wilful conduct... likely to drive the woman to commit suicide or to cause grave injury or danger to life, limb or health".

The case stems from a complaint by an Akola woman who got married on Nov 29, 2022. She alleged restrictions on movement and denial of visits to her parents. She said she was barred from cooking and forced to buy food, her belongings were thrown out, and she was pressured to get a divorce.

The husband challenged the 2024 FIR as a "counterblast" to his divorce plea, calling the allegations general. The HC sided with the prosecution, saying the claims were specific and indicative of wilful conduct causing mental harm.

The HC quashed the FIR and proceedings against the man's mother, saying the allegations against her were vague. "There are general, omnibus and fake allegations only because she is the mother-in-law of the complainant-wife," the bench said.



Dr. Anshul Gupta
MD, DM Oncology
Senior Consultant
Delhi

Surviving lung cancer involves more than treatment. After surgery, chemotherapy, or radiation, patients require comprehensive post-treatment and supportive care strategies to enhance recovery, well-being and overall quality of life.

1) Physical Rehabilitation and Exercise:

Pulmonary Rehabilitation Programs: After treatment, reduced lung capacity and breathing difficulties may occur. Tailored exercises and therapies improve respiratory function, endurance, and overall lung health.

Physical Therapy: Surgery or radiation can affect mobility. Physical therapy restores strength, flexibility, and function, supporting a quicker return to daily activities.

2) Emotional and Psychosocial Support:

Counseling and Psychotherapy: Survivors often experience anxiety and depression. Counseling provides a supportive space to process emotions and cope with the impact of cancer.

Support Groups: Connecting with others who share similar experiences fosters understanding, community, and shared coping strategies.

Mind-Body Practices:

Mindfulness, meditation, and yoga help reduce stress, strengthen emotional resilience, and improve overall mental well-being after cancer.

Approval ID: EM-10864 Approval Date: 25/03/2026 Expiry Date: 25/03/2028

Disclaimer: This article is for general awareness of the people and should not be construed as treatment advice. Please consult your doctor in case you have any symptoms or require further information/clarification. This public awareness initiative is supported by AstraZeneca Pharma India Limited.

SUNETRA LAUNCHES BARAMATI BY POLL CAMPAIGN, SAYS 'DON'T JUDGE MY WORK BY MY GENDER'



Ashish.Chauhan
@timesofindia.com

1 Indian child caught by US border agency every 3 days: Report

Ahmedabad: Chasing the elusive American dream, one Indian child is detected entering or living illegally in the US every three days on an average, according to data from United States Customs and Border Protection.

Between Oct 2025 and Feb 2026, the first five months of the US fiscal year, 56 Indian children were identified, including 39 unaccompanied and 17 accompanied ones.

Across all nationalities, 4,247 unaccompanied children were caught at the US border between Oct and March, of which 43 were Indians. Monthly data shows a steady rise: seven Indian unaccompanied minors each in Oct and Nov, eight in Dec, and a spike to 13 in Jan 2026. The numbers were four each in Feb and March.

The Jan spike renewed attention to the tragic death of a family from Gujarat's Dingucha village who perished in the extreme cold while attempting to enter

the US illegally via Canada.

While the number of unaccompanied Indian minors declined from 730 in FY2023 and 517 in FY2024 to just 91 in FY2025, the current data suggests a troubling reversal.

Equally concerning is the rise in accompanied minors. In FY2026, of the 669 accompanied children of all nationalities detained between Oct and March, 26 were Indian. The monthly breakup shows four in Nov, six in Dec, two in

LIVING ILLEGALLY

Jan, five in Feb and nine in March. In comparison, 261 Indian accompanied minors were detected in 2021, 55 in 2024 and 23 in 2025.

Sources point to an exploitative modus operandi: Children are paired with unrelated adults to form fake families for easier entry. "Once inside US territory, children are sent to border agencies, after which handlers posing as guardians claim them. This helps illegal immigrants secure shelter and legal pathways," said an official.

IT firm suspends 6 men held in sex harassment case

Nashik: Cops have stepped up searches for an eighth suspect, a woman, named in nine sexual harassment complaints filed by employees of an IT company, reports **Abhilash Botekar**.

Six male staffers and one woman, the AGM (HR) of the company, have been arrested so far based on the complaints filed in Nashik and Mumbai. The company has suspended the six arrested men.

A police officer said two teams had been formed to track the woman, accused of sexual exploitation and hurt-

ing religious sentiments.

The company issued a release reiterating its "long-standing zero-tolerance policy towards harassment and coercion of any form". It said, "We have always ensured the highest standards of safety and well-being of our employees... As soon as we were made aware of the matter, we took swift action."

The company offered no response to unconfirmed reports that it was closing its Nashik office.

(With inputs from Shashank Didmishe)

With 10.9% net voter deletions, Bengal 5th among 12 states, UTs

SIR Phase 2: State Saw Lowest Number Of Electors Being Added

Bharti.Jain@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: West Bengal, which has seen the most noise against SIR, ranked fifth in terms of net deletions (10.9%) among the 12 states/UTs where SIR Phase 2 stands completed, and third in terms of the absolute number of deletions of absent, shifted, dead and doubly enrolled (ASDD) electors.

The state was second only to Uttar Pradesh in the count of dead electors dropped from the roll. While 25.5 lakh deceased electors were detected and removed in UP,

DANCE OF DEMOCRACY: PAGE 12

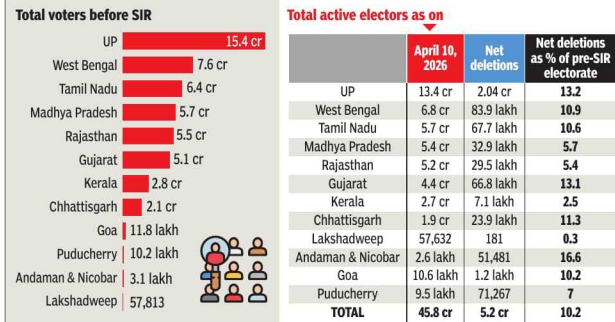
West Bengal had 24.2 lakh such voters. Together, UP and West Bengal accounted for almost three-fourths of the 66.9 lakh dead electors deleted across the 12 states/UTs.

In terms of permanently shifted electors struck off the rolls in Phase 2, West Bengal, with 19.9 lakh of the total 3.1 crore deletions in this category, figured at number six. This, notwithstanding the fact that the strength of Bengal's electorate at the start of SIR was second only to UP's.

UP, where outmigration is a common phenomenon, accounted for the highest number of deletions of shifted electors (1.3 crore), followed by Tamil Nadu (52.7 lakh), Gujarat (40.2 lakh), Rajasthan (24.9 lakh) and Madhya Pradesh (22.8 lakh).

Electors removed across the 12 states/UTs for being enrolled at multiple places tallied nearly 1.3 crore. In this category, West Bengal was at number 8, the lowest among the big states. With the removal of 1.4 lakh doubly enrolled electors, it finished behind UP (79.5 lakh), Tamil Nadu (13.5 lakh), Gujarat (9.7

UP LOSES 2.5X MORE VOTERS THAN BENGAL



SIR strikes 'gutli man of India' off voter roll

Kolkata: Jasmit Singh Arora, known as "gutli Man of India" for his nationwide mission to collect discarded mango seeds and turn them into trees, will not be able to vote in the Bengal polls since his name has been deleted from the electoral roll, reports **Dipawali Mitra**.

The 54-year-old entrepreneur-turned-environmentalist has been living in Kolkata for 46 years now and had his name on the 2002 voter list. His wife and daughter, who mapped themselves to Jasmit, are on the voter roll.

"This entire exercise has turned into a joke. There is no algorithm, pattern or reason for deletion. I was not called for any hearing

but suddenly discovered that my name had been deleted when the final roll was published. My wife's name has 'wife of Jasmit Singh Arora' written there," Jasmit said. "Upon inquiring, I was told to file a fresh application."

Jasmit said he collected mango seeds from across the country. "Even people from Sweden, Australia and New Zealand send seeds. Schools, Army personnel and BSF have joined in. I make saplings and then graft them... Through my 'Tree ka langar' initiative, I distribute them to farmers," he said. "I am well known for my social work. Despite that, my name got struck off. I do not know whether to laugh or cry."

lakh), Madhya Pradesh (8.4 lakh), Kerala (6.4 lakh), Rajasthan (4.6 lakh) and Chhattisgarh (3.7 lakh).

Apart from ASDD electors struck off the rolls, there is an "others" category covering those who chose not to fill and submit enumeration forms despite multiple visits by booth level officers. Of the 12.7 lakh deletions under this head, West Bengal accounted for the fourth-highest number (57,604), behind UP (7.7 lakh), Gujarat (4.9 lakh) and Kerala (1.6 lakh).

West Bengal saw the low-

est number of electors being added among the major states during SIR. These additional enrolments were made based on Form 6 (first-time electors) and Form 8 (existing voters enrolling at a new address). West Bengal saw an addition of 7.5 lakh electors, putting it in seventh place after UP (92.4 lakh), Tamil Nadu (35 lakh), Kerala (20.4 lakh), Rajasthan (15.4 lakh), Madhya Pradesh (12.9 lakh) and Gujarat (12.2 lakh).

Another 63.2 lakh names were deleted across the 12 states/UTs through Form 7 or

adjudication, with the latter exercise being exclusive to West Bengal. The TMC-governed state topped the list with 33.1 lakh deletions, including 27.1 lakh adjudicated by judicial officers and the remaining 6 lakh removed following objections received through Form 7.

Overall, West Bengal's net deletions of 10.9% — as a percentage of the electorate at the start of SIR — positioned it lower than Andaman and Nicobar Islands (16.6%), UP (13.2%), Gujarat (13.1%) and Chhattisgarh (11.3%).

Flight landing on Surat runway hits jackal

Surat: A serious incident was averted at Surat airport on April 8 when an IndiGo flight from Hyderabad ran over a jackal while landing on the runway around 8am, reports **Vishal Patadiya**. The incident came to light on Sunday. Airport officials said the animal's small size prevented any major impact on the aircraft, which safely reached the apron. "We carried out a detailed inspection of the aircraft in accordance with protocol but found no damage," a senior airport official said. The jackal was split into two parts. Its remains were handed over to forest department officials. Forest officers also intensified efforts to trap another jackal suspected to be on the premises.

SPOTLIGHT

Beyond Treatment: Strategies for Post-Treatment Care in Lung Cancer Patients

3) Health Monitoring and Surveillance:

Regular Follow-up Visits: Ongoing appointments with healthcare providers are essential to monitor recovery, manage complications, and detect recurrence early.

Imaging Studies: Periodic CT scans or X-rays help identify recurrence or new developments, enabling timely intervention and improving treatment effectiveness.

4) Nutritional Support and Dietary Guidance:

Nutritional Counseling: Cancer treatment can affect appetite, weight, and nutrition. Personalized guidance helps survivors maintain a balanced diet suited to their recovery needs.

Supplementation: Some may need vitamins or minerals to correct treatment-related deficiencies, with healthcare providers recommending appropriate supplements.

5) Health Promotion and Lifestyle Changes:

Smoking Cessation Support: Ongoing support to quit smoking after treatment improves overall health and lowers the risk of cancer recurrence.

Physical Activity Promotion:

Regular exercise aids physical recovery, boosts energy, reduces fatigue, and enhances mental well-being.

Cancer Survivorship Plans: Individualized plans outlining follow-up care, monitoring, and lifestyle guidance provide a clear roadmap for long-term recovery.

Care Coordination and Comprehensive Survivorship Clinics: Multidisciplinary survivorship clinics: These clinics unite oncologists, rehabilitation specialists, mental health professionals, and nutritionists to

deliver coordinated, comprehensive care that addresses survivors' diverse physical and emotional needs.

Patient Navigation Services: Patient navigators guide survivors through post-treatment care, helping manage appointments, access resources, and connect with appropriate support services.

Conclusion:

The period after lung cancer treatment is a critical phase requiring comprehensive, multidimensional care. Physical rehabilitation, emotional support, ongoing health monitoring, and lifestyle changes all contribute to survivors' overall well-being. Survivorship extends beyond the absence of disease, encompassing physical, emotional, and social health.

Continued research and advances in survivorship care support the development of tailored interventions that address survivors' unique needs. By adopting a patient-centered approach and recognizing the individualized nature of recovery, healthcare providers can enhance post-treatment experiences and help survivors achieve a healthy, fulfilling life beyond cancer.

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STUDY @ KAHER (KLE) ALL INDIA ENTRANCE TEST (AIET) 2026-27 for the following Programs

ONLINE PROCTORED ENTRANCE TEST Date: Sunday, 10th May 2026, Time: 11.00 AM to 01.00 PM

Last date for submission of online application: **Thursday, 30th April 2026, 04.00 PM**

PHARMACY	NURSING SCIENCE	PHYSIOTHERAPY
• B.Pharm. • Pharm.D. @ Belagavi, Hubballi, Bengaluru	• B.Sc. Nursing @ Belagavi	• B. Physiotherapy @ Belagavi & Hubballi

B.Sc./Bachelor of Allied Health Science Programs @ Belagavi

- Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science
- Bachelor of Medical Radiology and Imaging Technology
- Bachelor of Anaesthesia and Operation Theatre Technology
- Bachelor of Dialysis Therapy Technology
- Bachelor of Emergency Medicine Technologist
- Bachelor of Respiratory Technology
- Bachelor of Radiation Therapy Technology
- Bachelor of Nutrition and Dietetics (Honors)
- Bachelor of Optometry
- B.Sc. Cardiac Care Technology
- B.Sc. Perfusion Technology
- B.Sc. Neuro-Science Technology
- B.Sc. Critical Care Technology
- B.Sc. Endoscopy Technology
- B.Sc. Health Informatics
- B.Sc. Forensic Science Technology
- B.Sc. Health Information Management

OFFLINE ENTRANCE TEST for MASTER OF PHYSIOTHERAPY(MPT) SATURDAY, 9th May 2026 @ Belagavi

Last date for submission of online application: **Thursday, 30th April 2026**

Admissions through: INTER-SE MERIT INTERVIEW

AYURVEDA	PHARMACY
• Diploma in Pharmacy (Ayurveda) @ Belagavi	• Diploma in Pharmacy @ Belagavi, Hubballi, Bengaluru
NURSING SCIENCE	PHYSIOTHERAPY
• P.B.B.Sc. Nursing @ Belagavi	B. Occupational Therapy @ Belagavi B. Prosthetics & Orthotic @ Belagavi

#WALK IN ADMISSIONS

- B.Sc. Hotel Management & Catering Technology
- B.Sc. Biostatistics and Demography
- Bachelor of Hospital Administration
- Bachelor of Fine Arts (Hindustani Classical Music- Vocal)

Eligibility: XII - ARTS, SCIENCE, COMMERCE

INTEGRATED PROGRAM BPH & MPH integrated program

* Admissions based on: **NATIONAL ELIGIBILITY CUM ENTRANCE TEST (NEET-2026)**

MEDICAL-MBBS	DENTAL-BDS	AYURVEDA & HOMOEOPATHY
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* Admission to the Medical/Dental/Ayush courses will be on the basis of the Rank obtained in the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) & counselling/ allotment of seats by (MCC). * Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) * Ayush Admissions Central Counselling Committee (AACCC), New Delhi

Contact No : **0831-2444 444** For further details please visit our website: **www.kaher.edu.in**

MEDICAL | DENTAL | PHARMACY | AYURVEDA | NURSING | PHYSIOTHERAPY | HOMOEOPATHY



Kerala student death: Audio clip alleges faculty abuse

Kannur/Thiruvananthapuram: An audio message attributed to BDS student Nithin Raj, 23, alleges harassment by faculty at a dental college near Ancharakandi in Kannur district, while his family claims he was repeatedly targeted over caste, complexion and finances.

Raj died Friday afternoon after falling from a college building in Ancharakandi, a town 480km north of Thiruvananthapuram. His body was taken on Sunday to his home in Uzhamalackal on the outskirts of Thiruvananthapuram and buried on family land.

In the audio clip, the student from an SC community purportedly speaks of threats and humiliation. "The staff room is the place where they attack us as a group. Each one is worse than the other there...I was told my limbs will be chopped if I leave the gates, and I will have to live without my hands for the rest of my life."

College management suspended two faculty members — head of dental anatomy MK Ram and associate professor Sangeetha. 766

GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA
Public Works (Electrical) Division, Nagpur
E-mail: elnagpur.ee@mahapwd.gov.in Telephone No.0712-2560856

e-Tender Notice No.03/2026-27 (Recall)

(Online) E-Tender from appropriate Class Registered Contractor for following works in B-2 Format are invited by Executive Engineer, Public Works (Electrical) Division, Nagpur for the following works (Serial No.1) from the Bidder who satisfy the qualifying Criteria. The tender documents should be downloaded from the Government website <http://mahatenders.gov.in> The competent authority reserves the right to reject/accept any or all the tenders. Conditional tenders will not be accepted.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Tender Amount (In figure)	Tender Amount (In words)	EMD Amount
1	Estimate No. 905/NGP/2025-26: Providing Street Light & Shifting of HT, LT Lines & DTC, Streetlights and allied electrical services work on road and over bridge from Ajni Railway Station Chowk to Medical Chowk Road, Nagpur	37,26,64,740/-	Thirty Six crore Eighty nine lac seventy four thousand nine hundred ninety	18,64,000/-

1. Tender Available From

2. Pre bid Date and Time

3. Tender Open

As per e-tender schedule uploaded on e-portal

As per e-tender schedule uploaded on e-portal

As per e-tender schedule uploaded on e-portal

All information relating to this e-Tender is available in the following website:
1. <http://mahatenders.gov.in>
(Any Corrigendum will be published in the website)
2. For any correspondence contact above mention e-mail & Telephone no.
3. Notice Board of office of the Executive Engineer, Public Works (Electrical) Division, Nagpur.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Public Works Electrical Division, Nagpur

DGIPR/2026-2027/176

Mazagon Dock buys 51% stake in Colombo dockyard for \$27m

Move To Check China's Lanka Port Presence

Surendra.Singh
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Marking its first international acquisition, India's premier defence shipyard Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDL) has secured a 51% controlling stake in Colombo Dockyard PLC (CDPLC) for approximately Rs 249.5 crore (\$26.8 million).

The Mumbai-based defence PSU announced in a statement on April 9 that the deal brings Sri Lanka's largest shipyard under its operational control, marking a transformative step in India's maritime expansion strategy. The deal involves



The PSU said the deal brings Sri Lanka's largest shipyard under its operational control, marking a transformative step in India's maritime expansion strategy. The deal involves acquiring shares from Japan's Onomichi Dockyard.

The acquisition is strategically important for India to counter China's growing maritime footprint in Sri Lanka. Beijing holds a 99-year lease for Hambantota Port and has regularly docked naval vessels in Colombo, raising alarms in New Delhi.

MDL's acquiring 51% stake in CDPLC is also being seen as a geopolitical response to China's increasing presence in Indian Ocean Region. "The Board of CDPLC has been reconstituted with MDL nominees," the statement said.

MDL CMD Capt Jagmohan (Retd) said, "MDL's acquisition of CDPLC is a landmark moment — not just for

our two organisations, but for maritime cooperation between India and Sri Lanka."

CDPLC, listed on Colombo Stock Exchange, is the flagship of Sri Lanka's maritime industry and serves a wide spectrum of commercial and governmental clients across Asia, West Asia and Africa. MDL's strategic backing had enabled CDPLC to secure its largest shipbuilding contract in its 52-year history—a \$150 mn deal with Orange Marine for construction of two advanced cable laying and repair vessels. MDL is also in discussions with Shipping Corporation of India to route vessel repair and refit work to CDPLC, aiming to boost the regional maritime corridor.

Protests surge in Imphal valley over bomb attack

Imphal: Protests stretched into a sixth day across Manipur's valley districts on Sunday after a bomb attack on April 7 killed two children in Bishnupur and firing by security forces during ensuing demonstrations left three civilians dead, reports Donald Sairem.

Rallies, sit-ins and road blockades spread across Imphal valley as hundreds, mostly women, formed a human chain in Imphal East, blocking key roads with placards and slogans. Demonstrations stayed largely peaceful.

Protesters blamed Kuki militant groups and called for action, urging withdrawal of ceasefire agreements. Protests reflected the ethnic divide, persisting since violence between Meitei people and Kuki-Zo tribe erupted on May 3, 2023.

Cops 'played football' with case for 7 mths, says victim's mother

► Continued from P 1

Talking to TOI after performing the victim's last rites, her mother, who is a daily-wage earner's wife, said, "I want capital punishment not just for my daughter's killer, I want it for the bada babu (OC) too as he and his team deliberately delayed the probe after taking bribes from the culprit."

The teen was reported missing after leaving home on July 21, 2025, to submit an application at Chas College in Kurra of Bokaro district. Her mother said she visited Pindrajora police station that day but her complaint wasn't accepted.

Bokaro SP Harvinder Singh told the high court at a hearing last Friday that the case was reported on July 24 but the FIR wasn't registered until Aug 4. The probe moved only after the victim's mother filed a habeas corpus plea in the high court this Feb. After successive hearings till April 7, an SIT and a one-member

committee headed by DIG Sandhya Rani Mehta was formed. The suspect, Dinesh Kumar Mahto, 26, was arrested over the weekend.

SP Singh said an internal probe revealed serious lapses and alleged misconduct by everyone at Pindrajora police station. "We have learnt the accused was shielded in return for bribes in cash and kind."

The mother said police kept "playing football with the case" for seven months. "My daughter would have been alive if they had shown some seriousness. If it were a case involving any influential person, the entire police machinery would have worked overnight. Right from the start, the OC and his men tried to discourage and intimidate us through various means to stop pursuing the case because they were bribed," she said.

Police said Dinesh had confessed to killing the teenager near the Chas college after she allegedly pressured him for marriage.

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER,
Gwalior Municipal Corporation

No.-/PIU/2026 (NIT) Date : 07/04/2026

Gwalior Municipal Corporation, Gwalior Invites online for the following work:

S. no.	E-Tender No.	Tender Name	Probable Amount of Contract (Rs)	EMD (Rs)	Tender Fee (Rs)	Period of completion	Sale Start/Sale End Date & Time
01	2026_UAD_496182_1	Detailed Survey, Design drawing and construction of rain water harvesting system at different locations within the limits of Gwalior municipal corporation including maintenance of system for a Period of 03 years so as to ensure efficient functioning of system throughout the maintenance period.. File No. 98/26/3/3	1,37,17,026.88	68,586/-	12,500/-	48 month (12 month construction period + 36 month O&M)	01/04/26, 10:30 Am & 30/04/26, 5:30 Pm

Full detail of the above tenders can be seen on www.mptenders.gov.in. Amendments to NIT, if any shall be published on website only. (G.S.T Excluding)

जलसम्पर्क 80 ब्रॉक 231, दिनांक 11-04-2026 Executive Engineer (PIU), Gwalior Municipal Corporation

Har Ghar-Har Grihini Yojana

Under the scheme

- Beneficiary families are being provided gas cylinders at ₹500
- By January 2026, over 17.77 lakh families have registered on the portal to avail the benefits of this scheme

Non-Stop Haryana

- By January 2026, more than 14.38 lakh under-privileged families have taken refill cylinders
- Subsidy of ₹243.52 crore deposited into the bank accounts of beneficiary women from registered BPL / AAY families on 8th March, 2026

Information, Public Relations & Languages Department, Haryana

www.pharyana.gov.in | Follow us on

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INDIA DIGEST

India kept balance during West Asia conflict: Rajnath

India has followed a "balanced and composed" diplomatic line in the West Asia crisis, retaining strong ties across rival camps despite rising tensions among major powers, defence minister Rajnath Singh said Sunday.

His comments came after peace talks between US and Iran collapsed in Islamabad. He pointed to attacks on US-linked military bases in West Asian countries as proof of the gravity and unpredictability of the crisis. "In such a complex situation, if any country has acted in a truly balanced manner, it is India."

He added India will become self-reliant in the defence sector, noting the manufacturing of the BrahMos missile has begun in Lucknow and the first batch has been delivered to the Army.

Amarnath yatra from July 3, registrations to start from April 15

The annual pilgrimage to the cave shrine of Amarnath will start on July 3 and continue for 57 days, concluding on Raksha Bandhan on Aug 28. "Pilgrims between the ages of 13 and 70 can undertake the yatra. Registrations will begin on April 15. Registered pilgrims will receive group accident insurance with the sum assured enhanced to Rs 10 lakh per person," LG Manoj Sinha said Sunday.

Govt staffer among 3 arrested for teen's murder in Ranchi

Police arrested three people, including a woman, on Saturday night in connection with alleged torture and murder of a 16-year-old girl in Manatu in Ranchi, police said.

Khushboo Kumari, who was working as a domestic help at the house of Sushma Kumari, a child development project supervisor, for the last four years, was found dead on Saturday.

Sushma arrived at the girl's home with her body, claiming that she slipped in the bathroom and died.

Locals staged a protest, claiming there were marks on her body. Sakshi Jamuar, ASP, said police arrested Sushma, her

brother and her driver on Saturday night for the murder.

Mumbai woman loses ₹60 lakh in 'digital arrest' case

Fraudsters posing as police personnel recently forced a 58-year-old woman to sell her property purportedly "to clear her late husband's loans" and cheated her of Rs 60 lakh by carrying out a 'digital arrest'. However, not only did the fraudsters say that a bank account linked to her Aadhaar card was linked to a money laundering case of Rs 1.5 crore, they sent their accomplices close to her residence to collect some of the amount demanded in cash.

Woman raped by two family friends, court orders FIR

An FIR has been registered against two men, aged 42 and 45, who allegedly raped their 40-year-old family friend on the pretext of giving her a lift on Jan 15. The action on Saturday night follows an order issued by the court of chief judicial magistrate in UP's Pilibhit as police allegedly declined to take action earlier. The woman alleged she was forced to inhale an intoxicant by the men, causing her to lose consciousness, and was then raped in a field. When she resisted, they tried to strangle her with a scarf and threatened to kill her and her husband.

Haryana man kills daughter over domestic dispute

A 50-year-old man slit the throat of his 23-year-old daughter following a domestic dispute at their residence in Gohana town in Haryana's Sonapat district on Sunday.

Police arrested the suspect, Anil, along with his son, Rahu. Chinu was a student of general nursing and midwifery at a private college. Police said Chinu and her father — who is in the transport business — were in a heated argument just before the murder. Neighbours alerted police after hearing a commotion in the house. Jitendra Gehlawat, DCP of Gohana, said the suspect and his son are being questioned to ascertain the motive of the murder.

China's 'fictitious names' mischievous, says India

'Won't Alter Reality, Leads To Instability In Ties'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: With China undertaking another exercise to rename places in Arunachal Pradesh, India has categorically rejected "any mischievous attempts by the Chinese side to assign fictitious names to places which form part of the territory of India".

In a statement, ministry of external affairs (MEA) said such actions detract from the ongoing efforts to stabilise and normalise India-China ties. Govt further said that China should refrain from moves which inject negativity into relations. Beijing has given Chinese names to 23 places in Arunachal in what is the 6th such exercise in the past 10 years to reinforce its claim over the Indian state it calls Zangnan.

"Such attempts by China at introducing false claims and manufacturing baseless narratives cannot alter the undeniable reality that these places and territories, including Arunachal Pradesh, were, and are will always remain an integral and inalienable part of India," said MEA spokes-



Beijing has given Chinese names to 23 places in Arunachal in 6th such exercise in the past 10 years to reinforce its claim over the Indian state

person Randhir Jaiswal.

India's response also followed reports from Beijing that China had set up a new county in its Xinjiang province, apparently to ramp up security along the narrow Wakhan Corridor to curb infiltration of Uyghur separatist militants. A PTI report said the county named Cenling is located near the Karakoram mountain range and close to the borders with Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and Afghanistan, underscoring its strategic significance.

This is the third new county established by China in Xinjiang, a predominantly Muslim Uyghur region, in just over a year. India had last year lodged a protest with China over creation of Hean and Hekang counties, stating that parts of their jurisdic-

tion fall within Ladakh.

China has in the past renamed places in Arunachal Pradesh five times – in 2017, 2021, 2023, 2024 and 2025. On the last occasion – in 2025 – India had described the exercise as preposterous, saying that creative naming will not alter the undeniable reality that Arunachal Pradesh remains an integral and inalienable part of India.

China claims not just Tawang in Arunachal but effectively the entire state, saying it's a part of south Tibet, even as the Tibetan govt-in-exile holds that Arunachal Pradesh is a part of India. China cites examples like the second-most important Tibetan Buddhism monastery being in Tawang and the 6th Dalai Lama being born there to back its claim.

Man found dead with syringe in arm in Bathinda

Bathinda: A 20-year-old man was found dead with a syringe in his arm in Bathinda's Nati Basti area Sunday, marking the fourth suspected drug-related fatality in Punjab in six days, reports **Neel Kamal**. Police identified the deceased as Bhondhu of Alwar, Rajasthan, who had been living in Bathinda's Janta Nagar. Members of a local NGO found the body on the road and shifted it to the hospital.

**Office of Superintending Engineer,
Moradabad Circle, P.W.D. Moradabad**
E-Procurement Notice Inviting Tenders

No. 2132 /E-Tender/MBD Circle/25-26

Dated : 27-03-2026

1. On behalf of the Governor of UP, tenders for following work are invited by the Superintending Engineer, Moradabad Circle, PWD Moradabad online on website <http://etender.up.nic.in> from registered contractors from 15-04-2026 at 10.00 am to 28-04-2026 at 12.00 Hrs. Technical bid /Prequalification of tenders shall be opened on 28-04-2026 at 12.30 PM. In office of undersigned by tender committee in presence of authorised representatives / bidders who wish to be present. Financial bid of the tenders' who qualify in technical bid shall be opened on date and time as specified by a notice in the office of undersigned. In case of Government holiday the required process shall be carried out on next working day. Amount mentioned in column 5 & 7 shall be mandatory deposited by netbanking only on E-Tender Portal.

Sl. No.	Dis-TRICT	Name of Work	Estimated cost including maintenance (Rs. in Lacs)	Bid Security (Rs.in Lacs)	Time of completion of the work (including rainy season)	Cost of tender documents including GST	Category of Bridge contractor eligible
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Year 2025-26 Construction of Minor Bridge work

1	Sambhal	Year 2025-26 Construction of a Minor Bridge over the Sot River at Km 2 of the Dhaneta Solipura Allipur Khurd Link Road in District Sambhal.	265.00	15.25	12 Month	2354.00	A Bridge Work
2	Sambhal	Year 2025-26 Construction of a Box Culvert with a 3 x 5 m span instead of the damaged and narrow Hume Pipe Culvert No. 15/2 at Km 15 of the Rajpura Tikta-Bahjoi Road (Other District Road) in District Sambhal.	98.00	6.90	6 Month	2354.00	A & B Bridge Work

3. In PWD technical evaluation of tenders is to be done by Prahari Software. URL for Prahari is <http://wms.uppwd.gov.in/Prahar/>. On opening of the website Prahari login page will open in which user type Contractor is to be selected. User name and password for login on Prahari shall be same as used for contractor's registration on Chakaya Portal. Bidders have to upload all the basic information and required document on Prahari as given in Prahari in detail. If a bidder does not upload information and document on Prahari technical evaluation of the tender shall not be done and the bidder will be responsible for that. Rules/conditions & details of the tender are available at website <http://etender.up.nic.in> and <http://wms.uppwd.gov.in/Prahar/>.

(Er Suneel Prakash)
Executive Engineer
Provincial Division PWD
Sambhal

UPID 249559
dt 10.04.2026,
www.upgov.nic.in

(Er. S.P.Singh)
Superintending Engineer
Moradabad Circle, PWD Moradabad.
For and on behalf of Governor of UP
Mob No. 9557104999
Mail ID:- semoradabad13@yahoo.com

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
AGRA CIRCLE, P.W.D.
AGRA
NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

Letter No. : 2119/14M-A.C/2025

Date : 02.04.2026

1. The Superintending Engineer Agra Circle, U.P.P.W.D. on behalf of Governor of Uttar Pradesh invites the percentage rate bids online from the eligible and approved registered Contractors. As the work comprises of specialized Road work, hence contractors bidding for this work must be registered in Road work with UP PWD. Bidders are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 4 of the Instructions to Bidders to qualify for the award of the contract.

2.

Sl. No.	Dis- trict	Name of Work	Estima- ted cost (Rs in Lac)	Bid Secu- rity (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of Document (in Rs.)	Time of Completion	Address of Executive Engineer executing the work	Address of Superin- tending Engineer	Address of Chief Engineer	Category of Con- tractor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	Mathura	Renewal work with BC on KNBG road to Mathura- Deeg road Km 1, 2, 3(900) in district Mathura.	210.00	12.50	Rs.2000.00 STC + 300.00 TC + 60.00 GST= 2360.00	05 Months (includ- ing Rainy Season)	Executive Engineer, Provincial Division, P.W.D., Mathura	Superin- tending Engineer, Agra Circle P.W.D., Agra	Chief Engineer, Agra Zone, P.W.D., Agra	Class A
2	Mathura	Renewal work with BC on Adegung Bypass road KM 1, 2(700) in district Mathura.	120.00	8.00	Rs.2000.00 STC + 300.00 TC + 60.00 GST= 2360.00	05 Months (includ- ing Rainy Season)	Executive Engineer, Provincial Division, P.W.D., Mathura	Superin- tending Engineer, Agra Circle P.W.D., Agra	Chief Engineer, Agra Zone, P.W.D., Agra	Class A, B

3. Bid document with detailed terms and conditions will be available online on website <http://etender.up.nic.in> and Prahari (<http://wms.uppwd.gov.in/Prahar/>) From 15.04.2026 to 21.04.2026. Bids must be submitted online only at e-tendering portal of <http://etender.up.nic.in> and Prahari App with all documents as per GO No 14/2020/879(1)/23-7/2020/176(mg/mg)/06 Dt 25-08-2020 on or before 12:30 Hours Dt. 21.04.2026. Technical Bid received online will be opened on 21.04.2026 at 1:00 Hours.

4. Original MM-11 forms proof of royalty shall have to be produced at time of every running bill in accordance to Principal Secretary, Directorate of Geology & Mining Uttar Pradesh Letter No-2146/86-2019-52(IK0)/2019 Dt. 30.09.2019, G.O. No- 115(1)/86-2020 dated 15.01.2020 and other relevant Government orders, circulars for all the materials procured from the quarries.

5. The bidders are required to submit Original receipt of Internet Banking of E-tender portal Account as per G.O. No-742/78-2-2018-42 I.T./2017 T.C., I.T. & Electronics Section-2 Dated- 03-12-2018 follows as:

(1) Online Tender Cost towards the cost of bid document (As per Column 6) by Internet Banking of E-tender portal Account (Non Refundable).

(2) Online Bid security (As per Column 5) in favour of designation of Column 9 by Internet Banking of E-tender portal Account.

(Gulvir Singh)
Executive Engineer
Provincial Division, P.W.D., Mathura

UPID 249633
dt 10.04.2026
www.upgov.nic.in

(C.P. Singh)
SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
AGRA CIRCLE, PWD, AGRA

FIR against 9 for molesting Dalit girl in UP

Pilibhit: Nine men in their 20s, including three named and six unidentified, were booked on Sunday for allegedly molesting a 15-year-old Dalit girl and sexually harassing her while her family, belonging to a nomadic community, was camping in a village in Pilibhit, reports **Keshav Agarwal**. The case was registered on a complaint filed by the girl's mother. The family had been camping in the village for the past eight months.

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Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, Govt of India
24, Regal Building, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110001

NOTICE – INDUSTRY CONSULTATION (PRE-RFP STAGE)

Khadi Gramodyog Bhavan (KGB), New Delhi invites agencies for Industry Consultation for selection of an agency for Warehouse Management & Logistics Services. The consultation is open to technology providers, service vendors, system integrators, consultants, startups, and domain experts. Interested agencies may drop email for queries and confirmation of participation on the email mentioned in the Notice.
Contact: **Director/General Manager**
Email: kgbnewdelhi.kvic@gov.in | Ph: 011-41045702
Last Date of Submission: 21.04.2026
For more details, please visit: <https://kvic.gov.in/kvices/tender.php>

VACANCY
Assistant Director & Management Executive – Delhi

A premier export promotion organization invites applications for the following positions at its Delhi office:

1. Assistant Director

- Post Graduate
- Min. 5 yrs experience in EXIM trade/event management
- Strong liaisoning skills with Govt. & industry
- Proficiency in English & Hindi (foreign language an added advantage)
- Experience in sales/business development preferred
- Age: 30–35 yrs

2. Management Executive

- Graduate in any discipline (MBA an added advantage)
- Min. 2 yrs experience in EXIM trade/event management
- Proficiency in English & Hindi
- Liaisoning skills with Govt. & industry desirable
- Age: 25–30 yrs

Role: Export promotion, Membership drive, stakeholder engagement, coordination with Central/State Governments
Remuneration: Commensurate with qualifications & experience.
APPLY: Send resume with recent photograph to apply4exim@gmail.com within 15 days of publication.

Government of India
Ministry of Women and Child Development

Nari Shakti Vandan Sammelan

Panchayat to Parliament

Women Driving Decisions, Shaping New India

On this occasion
Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi
will
Address **women** across the country
Conversation with **women** from diverse fields
A resolve to ensure **women's impactful participation** from Panchayat to Parliament
Commitment towards **Women-led Development**
for **Viksit Bharat @2047**

13 April 2026 | 11:00 AM onwards | Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi

Live telecast on DD News | For live webcast, visit: <https://pmindiawebcast.nic.in>

#NariShaktiVandan

CBC 46101/13/0001/2027

Sustainable India

Green Rankings

ESG

Green Rankings (S&P), 2024

2024 DBC Rating, 2025

Leadership, Green ranking 2024

B-Schools revamp MBA-IB curricula amid shifting global trade dynamics

The revised syllabus now embeds geopolitical risk, policy analysis and supply chain resilience, alongside modules in sanctions compliance, trade analytics and global sourcing strategies

Vishal Katoch
@timesofindia.com

Amid increasing upheaval and geopolitical tensions, B-schools are busy revamping MBA in International Business (IB) curricula, to prepare future managers to handle the changing business dynamics. The new syllabus includes critical components such as geopolitical risk, trade policy analysis, and supply chain resilience into core learning. By incorporating specialised modules on sanctions compliance, trade analytics, and global sourcing strategies, B-schools are responding to a fragmented global landscape. This shift has triggered a significant surge in aspirant interest as businesses increasingly prioritise export competitiveness and market diversification. However, academics warn that syllabus updates alone are insufficient; to remain competitive, future managers must also become adept at navigating multicultural environments, leading geographically dispersed teams, and converting rapid global developments into actionable business strategies.

Speaking to Education Times, Prof Ramakrishnan Raman, vice-chancellor, Symbiosis International (Deemed) University, Pune, says, "Academic programmes are increasingly incorporating modules on sanctions compliance, trade analytics, country risk modelling, and global sourcing strategies. Case-based simulations now explore scenarios such as tariff hikes, logistics rerouting, and currency fluctuations. Courses covering digital supply chains, trade finance analytics and geopolitical scenario planning are also becoming commonplace, designed to equip graduates with the skills to assess market entry strategies, restructure sourcing networks and manage disruptions in an increasingly fragmented global trade landscape."

Career Trajectory

Prof Rakesh Mohan Joshi, vice-chancellor, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT) Delhi,



Grads secure roles in technology, fintech and GCCs, joining global firms such as DHL, Nestlé and Deloitte

highlights a marked increase in aspirant interest over the last five to six years, driven by a corporate shift toward international market strategy. "The surge in interest gained significant momentum post-pandemic. Businesses are now aggressively operating in global markets with a focus on de-risking; they are expanding across new geographies, restructuring supply chains for resilience, and navigating a labyrinth of new trade regulations and cross-border investment policies," says Prof Joshi. Recruiters are no longer just looking for 'export managers' but strategic leaders who understand global finance, digital commerce, and multicultural environments. Students have also realised that this degree is no longer a niche choice but a future-proof gateway into consulting, technology, and global policy roles. "The qualification has become a gateway into high-impact sectors, including consulting, strategy, technology and analytics, as well as global operations, finance, e-commerce and policy formulation, with graduates joining DHL, Nestlé, Deloitte and Volvo," adds Prof Joshi.

However, academics warn that IB curricula and pedagogy require more than mere syllabus updates or discussions on real-time global developments. "To remain competitive globally, Indian institutions must align their IB programmes with the country's growth trajectory, ensuring students are equipped to secure their place in the global

marketplace. This can be achieved through experiential learning, digital and AI-driven simulations, cross-cultural exposure, and digital trade competencies. The objective is to ensure graduates are not only globally aware but also globally employable," says Prof Ana Sinha, assistant professor, International Business, FORE School of Management, New Delhi.

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POLL VAULT



People, on top of a bulldozer, attending a public rally of UP CM Yogi Adityanath in Bankura on Sunday. Yogi said due to Mamata's appeasement politics people are living in fear, while infiltrators rule the roost

EC shifts 5 cops ahead of WB polls
The EC has transferred five more inspectors across three police commissionerates ahead of the first phase of polls in Bengal. The transfers come barely 24 hours after 59 cops were transferred on Saturday.

NIA summons 43 TMC men in '24 blast case'
The NIA issued notices to 43 TMC members from Nandigram, summoning them to its Kolkata office on April 17. The notices relate to clashes between TMC and BJP supporters during cooperative agriculture and rural bank polls on Dec 8, 2024, which involved bombing outside the polling station.

EPS silent on BJP's 'atrocities': Stalin
Tamil Nadu CM M K Stalin on Sunday accused AIADMK's Edappadi K Palaniswami of going "silent" on questions over "atrocities by BJP" and demanded his stand on UCC. Campaigning in Ramanathapuram and Tuticorin, he also sought to know EPS's position on the three-language policy and delimitation.

Vijay's AI-driven governance plan
TVK chief Vijay on Sunday announced a third set of poll promises centred on "AI-powered governance" and digital reforms. He proposed setting up the state's first AI university, and innovation centres in Madurai, Coimbatore, Salem and Tiruchirappalli to support startups. A dedicated ministry for AI was also among his promises.

Many of you will be arrested: Mamata warns TMC workers

'Operations Launched Sunday Night'

Dwaipayan Ghosh & Mohammad Asif | TNN



CM Mamata Banerjee at a public rally in Bankura on Sunday

Kolkata/Khandaghor (East Burdwan): Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee warned of "operations" starting Sunday night to arrest Trinamool workers ahead of assembly polls less than a fortnight away, urging them to be careful under an administration now under the EC.

Mamata vowed to resist BJP's attempt "to break Bengal through delimitation" that is slated to start following the Census this year. BJP, she said, is trying to "harass and intimidate" Bengal's voters, including her, because it "knows it will lose the elections".

"Many will be detained and arrested before the polls

(as part of an election strategy). These operations will start (Sunday) tonight. Do not be intimidated... Remember, everything is under EC during this election — nothing is in our hands. Be vigilant for another 15-21 days; then we will see, we will fight, and we will win again... They (BJP) know they will lose the election. That is why they have changed everything here," the CM said at a rally in East Burdwan's Khandaghor, alluding to a wave of transfers in the state administration.

Flagging her opposition to a delimitation bill, which the Centre is likely to introduce in Lok Sabha this month, Mamata called it a design to "break Bengal into three parts". "Then NRC will be implemented. People will be sent to detention camps. In Assam, out of 19 lakh people sent to detention camps, 13 lakh were Hindus and six lakh Muslims. We will never allow detention camps in Bengal," the CM said.

Mamata described SIR as "the biggest scam". PM Narendra Modi, she said, was voted to office for a third term by people on the 2024 rolls. "Is everyone an infiltrator?" she asked, referring to those who voted in the last Lok Sabha elections but have been excluded after SIR.

Chandra Bose joins TMC, attacks BJP

Subhas Chandra Bose's grandnephew, Chandra Bose, joined TMC on Sunday in the presence of state education minister Bratya Basu and party MP Kirti Azad, reports **Prithvijit Mitra**. After his induction, he attacked his BJP, which he had quit in 2023. "BJP's policies are blatantly communal and anti-Constitution. They attempt to win polls by playing the religion card, which is a divisive policy. This is exactly what the British did during their 200-year rule in India. We drove them out, and now the time has come to drive out BJP," Bose told TOI.

Chandra Bose, she said, was voted to office for a third term by people on the 2024 rolls. "Is everyone an infiltrator?" she asked, referring to those who voted in the last Lok Sabha elections but have been excluded after SIR.

Illegal immigration must stop now, else it'll be too late: Modi

► Continued from P 1

PM Narendra Modi blamed infiltration by illegal immigrants on Trinamool's watch for north Bengal's changing demography. "The social balance is getting disrupted. Language and culture are changing, while jobs are being usurped. If this isn't stopped now, it will be too late," he said.



Modi accused CM Mamata Banerjee's party of harbouring what he termed an "anti-north Bengal" bias, saying it was reflected in the state govt organising a Durga Puja carnival on Kolkata's Red Road at a time when swathes of north Bengal were experiencing devastating floods.

"When several districts in north Bengal faced a crisis after heavy showers and people were crying for help, TMC's



PM Modi addresses a public meeting in Siliguri on Sunday

"nirmam" (cruel) govt was celebrating in Kolkata," he said. Modi alleged that north Bengal's backwardness was TMC's doing. "Over the years, people suffered the ravages of negligence. Central funds were usurped by TMC members. While north Bengal received insufficient funds, the state govt gave Rs 6,000 crore to madrasas."

He contrasted this with BJP's plans for north Bengal, which include the proposed Sevoke-Rangpo rail link to connect Siliguri with Sikkim. He mentioned the Vande Bharat

Express from Malda and redevelopment of major stations such as New Jalpaiguri, Siliguri and Kamakhya as proof of his commitment to the region.

In an outreach to Matuas and Namahudras, many of whom had their names deleted from the electoral rolls during the just-concluded SIR, the PM urged them not to fall for TMC's "jooth ki factory (factory of lies)" about what BJP thinks of them. "Matua and Namahudras should be aware of TMC's intent," he said, trying to assuage their fears over CAA. "Modi is with you, and the Constitution is with you. CAA has given you constitutional rights; TMC can't harm you."

The PM promised voters that TMC would be made accountable for its alleged misdeeds over the past 15 years. "People of Bengal, who have at various times elected Congress, Left Front and TMC to office, should now give a chance to Modi to restore the rule of law," he said.

'₹1,000 crore BJP deal' video real, admits Kabir; TMC questions PM

Tamagna Banerjee | timesofindia.com



Humayun Kabir's admission has handed Trinamool fresh ammunition against BJP ahead of Bengal elections

Kolkata: Suspended Trinamool MLA Humayun Kabir has acknowledged that a video released by the party — purportedly showing him seeking Rs 1,000 crore from BJP and calling Muslims "gullible" — is authentic but alleged it was selectively edited from a 51-minute recording. The admission has handed Trinamool fresh ammunition against BJP ahead of Bengal polls after PM Narendra Modi's comment on TMC circulating AI-generated clips.

"The video is true, but only 19 minutes of a 51-minute conversation have been shown. I was speaking to two persons — one claimed to be a sabbu from Siliguri, the other a journalist from Delhi. He gave the full video to support my claims," Kabir said.

He alleged that TMC's Abhishek Banerjee had or-

chestrated a sting operation, sending a man "disguised as a maharaj" and a Delhi-based journalist to entrap him. The 19-minute clip, titled "The Reality of HK", has not been independently verified.

"I will identify them and take legal action. I have six lawyers ready," he said, adding the recording took place at his Berhampore flat on Dec 19, 2025. "There is no footage showing me meeting any BJP member — not Modi, not Shah," he said.

TMC was quick to use the admission to target BJP. "When Kabir himself has said the video is real, why did the PM call it AI-generated?" a party functionary asked.

CM Mamata Banerjee seized on the admission. "You are seeing how a Rs 1,000 crore deal has been made to divide Hindus and Muslims. The person in the video is saying it is real — how will this be covered up now?" she asked at a rally in Bankura's Onda.

The controversy has already claimed political casualties. AIMIM snapped its alliance with Kabir's AUPJ with a day of the video surfacing, saying it "cannot associate with statements where the integrity of Muslims is questioned" and announcing it would contest the Bengal elections independently. The alliance, announced weeks earlier, had envisaged AUPJ contesting 182 of Bengal's 294 seats and AIMIM 17.

NIA detains Cong nominee, 3 others over Malda unrest

Malda: The NIA has detained Congress' Mothabari candidate Sayem Choudhury, gram panchayat member Golam Rabbani, and two others for questioning in connection with the April 1 violence in Mothabari, where seven judicial officers were confined for eight hours at the Kaliachak-II block office in Bengal's Malda, reports **Subhro Maitra**.

Sources said Choudhury and Rabbani were among the crowd that gathered outside the office that morning. Rabbani, an ISF panchayat member, was reportedly seen addressing villagers, mostly women whose names had been deleted from the electoral roll.

NIA, which took over the probe following a Supreme Court order, has already taken custody of 50 people earlier arrested by police.

4 days after Bengal roll freeze, tribunals to start hearings today

Srishti Lakhota & Kaushik Pradhan | TNN



CJ Sujoy Paul and retired judges inspecting the office that will house the appellate tribunals

Kolkata: The 19 appellate tribunals are set to begin hearing appeals for the inclusion or exclusion of electors at Dr Sayam Prasad Mookerjee National Institute of Water and Sanitation in Kolkata from Monday, four days after the electoral roll for the second-phase Bengal assembly polls was frozen on Thursday.

The tribunals, constituted and notified by EC on March 20 following a Supreme Court order, have so far disposed of only four appeals that were specifically mentioned before SC.

Of 60 lakh cases under adjudication, a little over 27 lakh names have been deleted from the supplementary lists. Those affected can approach the tribunals for relief.

On Sunday, a team of retired judges, along with chief secretary Dushyant

Narjala and Calcutta HC chief justice Sujoy Paul, visited the institute to review the arrangements. Sources said 119 computers have been installed, and around 200 micro-observers will oversee the process.

Each tribunal will be supported by 4-5 staff members who underwent training on Friday on document scrutiny and procedural requirements, an official said. Many people have been gathering on the Joka Institute campus to raise grievances.

35 nuns struck off Chowringhee list

Around 35 nuns at Missionaries of Charity, an order founded by Mother Teresa and headquartered in Kolkata, have been struck off the voter list of Chowringhee following SIR adjudication, prompting the body to write to EC and the sisters to move the appellate tribunal. The nuns are also filling out Form 6 to be reinstated as new voters. One of the nuns said, "Many sisters have been deleted from the electoral rolls despite attending SIR hearings and submitting documents. Many are moving to Sealdah court." Several others, however, have been cleared as voters in Chowringhee. "Over 120 sisters were called for SIR hearings as they were not mapped to the last SIR of any state or UT, including Bengal's 2002 SIR roll, and could not show any linkages," a source said. TNN

Education TIMES

SCHOOL GUIDE

► MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2026
www.educationtimes.com

CBSE Advanced Maths, Science stress HOTS; standard papers focus on fundamentals

Rajlakshmi Ghosh | timesofindia.com

To boost students' analytical and problem-solving skills, the CBSE is set to introduce a two-level structure for Maths and Science from 2026-27, combining a compulsory standard exam for all with optional advanced papers aimed at strengthening Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). While the standard exams will ensure a strong foundation through application-based learning, the advanced level will offer students an opportunity to deepen conceptual understanding without impacting their overall scores.

Under the revised framework, all students will study Standard Maths and Science covering a common syllabus and appear for a compulsory 80-mark exam (3 hours). This will be conducted as a school-

Standard Maths, Science cover common syllabus and have a 80-mark, 3-hour long exam

based annual exam for students in class IX from 2026-27 and as a board exam in class X from 2027-28. Additionally, students can opt for Mathematics Advanced and/or Science Advanced for deeper conceptual clarity. The 1-hour long optional papers will be of 25 marks — serving as an indicator of aptitude for higher studies without creating academic pressure. Students securing 50% or more in the advanced paper will have a note indicating successful completion of the advanced level in their marksheet. However, these marks will not be added to the overall aggregate score. If a student does not secure



the qualifying marks, no mention of the advanced level will be made. The two-level structure will apply only to the theory component. Internal assessments of 20 marks

in class X will remain as before. "The advanced level is purely optional, with flexible choice—students can opt for Maths, Science, or both, in consultation with their school

and teachers. It is designed as a certification opportunity rather than a high-stakes filter; failure will not be highlighted, ensuring that students' confidence and self-es-

teem are protected," says an educationist on condition of anonymity. He adds, "The earlier distinction between Basic and Standard Maths will be discontinued, moving towards a single, uniform curriculum for all to ensure standardisation, while retaining flexibility through the optional advanced assessments."

The restructuring was driven primarily to align with NEP 2020 and NCF 2023, notes Manisha Pavi, TGT Maths, Sarodaya Kanya Vidyalaya (SKV), Delhi. She says, "As stated by CBSE officials, this will strengthen students' analytical thinking, logical reasoning, and problem-solving skills. The revised framework focuses on conceptual clarity and application-based learning. This will help students cope with real-world problems, interdisciplinary thinking, and higher-order cognitive challenges."

NCERT Hindi textbook *Ganga* lacks diverse, contemporary voices, claim teachers

While the book blends devotional texts, nationalist writings, and modern prose, there is a stark gender imbalance

Vishal Katoch | timesofindia.com

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) unveiled its new class IX Hindi textbook, *Ganga*, designed as per NEP 2020 guidelines. While the textbook has many firsts including a travelogue by Mohan Rakesh titled *Aakhri Chhataan* and an old interview of Lata Mangeshkar titled *Aisi Bhi Baatein Hoti Hain*

included as one of the chapters, Hindi teachers point at the exclusion of powerful women voices, translation of international literature and no representation of writers from south, east and west.

Speaking to *Education Times*, Indra Mani Upadhyay, PGT Hindi, PM Shri Kendriya Vidyalaya CRPF Bijnaur, Lucknow, says that the selection of writers remains heavily weighted towards the past. "There is limited

representation of new-age writers as the chapters are largely from older writers, with almost no voices from the present day. While stalwarts such as Munshi Premchand (*Do Baiton Ki Katha*), Padumal Punnaal Bakshi (*Kya Likhun?*), and Shekhar Joshi (*Samvadheen*) remain essential, they have been staples of the NCERT Hindi textbook curriculum for decades. A more balanced mix of these established writers alongside contemporary

The limited inclusion of female authors likely stems from a reliance on established historical texts

authors would have made the textbook more effective for students," says Upadhyay. Academics further argue that the textbook lacks global perspective, noting the absence of overseas authors and no chapter based on translation of international writers. Unlike previous editions that offered exposure to diverse cultures through translations, *Ganga* focuses exclusively on domestic texts, missing the opportunity to include material from other southern Indian states or international literature. "A class IX student is a teenager; it is our responsibility to introduce them to varied issues and writings from different regions. While we may not teach every subject in depth, introducing these diverse topics is essential," Upadhyay adds.

Similarly, there is a stark gender imbalance in the new textbook, as only one chapter featuring Subhadra Kumari Chauhan's *Jhansi Ki Rani* is included, while other female voices are missing.

Pooja Gugani, TGT Hindi, National Victor Public School, IP Extension, Delhi, highlights the missed opportunity to showcase the breadth of the female literary canon. "Hindi literature possesses a vast wealth of influential women writers such as Mahadevi Verma, Amrita Pritam, Krishna Sobti, Mannu Bhandari and Geetanjali Shree, whose literary works could have been included to provide students with a much more varied perspective," says Gugani.

"The limited inclusion of female authors likely stems from a reliance on established historical texts or a simple oversight in the selection process; however, NCERT could have easily integrated icons like Mahadevi Verma or Mannu Bhandari by swapping out two or three of the current entries," she adds.

Education TIMES



BRAINSTRAIN

>> First three correct entries will win a 'pen drive'. Send in your entries only through e-mail with your Name, Address, Email, Tel no. and Profession to Brainstrain.hyd@gmail.com

Directions for questions 1 to 5: Pick the word from among the choices, that is the most appropriate substitute for the question word in the given context and mark its corresponding letter as your answer.

- SPURT:** The government has directed oil companies to freeze retail prices of petrol and diesel despite a **spurt** in the price of Brent crude.
(a) surge (b) cascade (c) torrent (d) flurry
- CONCILIATORY:** it was the right **conciliatory** note to strike in a debate that has had its fair share of heat.
(a) propitiatory (b) ameliorative (c) condoning (d) propitiating
- WHITTLED DOWN:** Arun Shourie has slowly and steadily **whittled down** the opposition to privatisation.
(a) consumed (b) carved (c) eroded (d) trimmed
- TROUNCE:** Steve Waugh's words were inspirational enough to help the team **trounce** the Pakistanis in the final.
(a) spank (b) chastise (c) lambast (d) rout
- INCONVERTIBLE:** The weapon inspector's report was not expected to provide **incontrovertible** evidence of weapons of mass destruction.
(a) conclusive (b) disputable (c) inconvenient (d) indecisive

Directions for questions 6 to 10: Fill in the blanks with suitable phrases.

- _____ she is not available; can I take a message?
(a) At the moment (b) Of the moment
(c) For the moment (d) In the moment
- She _____ about his not taking any responsibility around the house.
(a) started over (b) started off (c) started on (d) started out
- We were really _____ by the news of the accident.
(a) taken aback (b) taken back (c) taken apart (d) taken in
- Contact lenses may seem to be uncomfortable especially when using them for the first time, but this feeling soon _____
(a) wears away (b) wears down
(c) wears off (d) wears something out

Answer key for the last week's quiz: 1. (c), 2. (c), 3. (d), 4. (c), 5. (a), 6. (d)

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Corrigendum

With reference to the article titled 'Identifying Gaps in Indian Teaching and Learning Processes', published in *Education Times* on March 30, 2026 (Page 4), a statement saying, "The problem with foundational teaching-learning processes is the teacher," was misinterpreted. The correct version reads: "The onus is not just on the teacher... It is tempting to conclude that the problem with foundational teaching-learning processes in India is the teacher. But this is far from the case, because strong teachers are typically embedded in strongly supportive systems. Rather than resorting to quick-fix solutions, the TLPS 2025 clearly identifies the need to invest in, reimagine, and strengthen both pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes." The error is regretted.

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The global economy faces major test
The West Asia war has triggered a large supply shock, cutting oil flows by about 13% and LNG flows by about 20%, pushing up prices and disrupting supply chains globally



AI boom drives global VC funding to record \$300bn

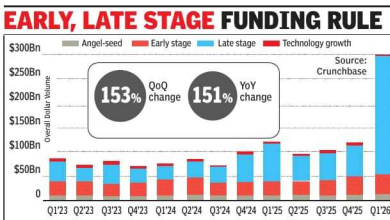
AI Startups Corner 80% Of Proceeds | Broader Activity Uneven

Supriya.Roy@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: Global venture funding hit a record \$300 billion in the Jan-March quarter, the highest ever for a single quarter, according to Crunchbase data. The surge, driven largely by artificial intelligence deals, has reignited the debate on whether venture markets are truly recovering or if capital is concentrating in a narrow set of companies.

Nearly 80% of the funding went to AI startups, with four companies — OpenAI, Anthropic, xAI and Waymo — accounting for about \$188 billion, or roughly two-thirds of the total. The scale of these deals has lifted overall funding numbers, even as activity across the broader market remains uneven.

Andreesen Horowitz, in a recent blogpost, said the quarter cannot be viewed only through the lens of mega-



rounds. Even excluding the four largest deals, funding would still have totalled around \$112 billion, a level it said would have been a record in most prior years. The top-tier venture capital firm also pointed to movement in the rest of the market, with early-stage funding up 41% year-on-year and seed funding rising 31% in value, although the number of seed deals declined, indicating fewer but larger bets. Investors closer home

the second half of the year as early-stage companies mature. In India, however, we are yet to see this late-stage concentration of capital," said Sanjay Swamy, founder and managing partner at Prime Venture Partners.

"India is not yet seeing the same late-stage recovery as global markets. Early-stage activity is improving, but mid-to-late-stage capital remains constrained, especially with several large global investors who were historically active in India not participating as much in the current AI-led funding cycle," said Rahul Taneja, partner at Lightspeed India. Data from Tracxn shows that while sentiment in India is improving, the recovery remains gradual. About 74% of investors expect funding conditions to improve in 2026, while capital deployment continues to be selective, with a focus on AI.

Gold, silver brace for turbulent week amid W Asia crisis

New Delhi: Precious metals may witness heightened volatility when markets open on Monday as the collapse of US-Iran negotiations keeps sentiment fragile and investors track domestic inflation and Chinese economic data, analysts said. Besides developments related to West Asia, traders will also monitor the US Producer Price Index (PPI), crude oil prices and speeches from several Federal Reserve officials for further direction on bullion prices, they said. Domestic commodities market will remain closed on Tuesday for the morning trade on account of Dr Baba Saheb Ambedkar Jayanti. AGENCIES



Coal imports fall 8.5% in Feb on high stocks

New Delhi: India's coal import dropped 8.5% to 16.6 million tonnes in Feb on record stockpile of domestic coal and firmness in seaborne prices. The country's coal import is poised to maintain a weak trend this month with domestic miners making efforts to liquidate stockpiles. Of the total imports in Feb, non-coking coal imports stood at 9.80mt, lower than 11mt imported in the same month in 2024-25. AGENCIES

War in Gulf, layoffs hit discretionary spends

Asmita.Dey@timesofindia.com

Mumbai: Consumers seem to be cutting back on discretionary spends, allocating more budgets to essentials and value purchases as a mix of war-driven uncertainty and layoffs have nudged people to tighten their purse strings and save more.

Even as the US and Iran agreed upon a two-week ceasefire last week, the prospects of a peace deal faded as talks between the two countries held in Pakistan failed to produce desired results. Analysts said that caution will prevail until there's clarity on a full-fledged de-escalation. "Post mid-March, discretionary outflows slowed down," said Satyaki Ghosh, CEO at Raymond Lifestyle, pinning hopes on the upcoming wedding season to

WAR WEIGHS HEAVY ON WALLETS

- **Raymond Lifestyle** saw slowdown in discretionary spends post mid-March
- **Consumers** not just curbing overall spending at stores, but also gravitating towards affordable options, said **Zydus Wellness**
- **Beauty brand Plum** seeing some tightening of spends by a section of consumers
- **Parle** too has seen some softening of discretionary and indulgent purchases
- **Kerala market** slowed down for **Blue Star** as war weighed on remittances
- **Customers** are evaluating options more carefully, said **Interio By Godrej**

support demand going ahead. "We are running some value-based offerings but no direct discounts as yet," Ghosh said. Consumers are not just curbing overall spending at stores, but are also gravitating more towards affordable options and value-driven choices, prioritising essentials over indulgences, said Tarun Aroa, CEO & whole-time director at Zydus Wellness, maker of brands such as Complian and Glucan-D which is looking at smaller and more accessible formats where relevant. People are not necessarily trading down although there is some tightening of spends with simpler routines and fewer impulse additions, said Shankar Prasad, CEO at D2C beauty brand Plum.

"What we are seeing is a gradual shift in consumer preference towards essential categories, with relatively higher spends on everyday, need-based products, while discretionary and indulgent purchases have softened a bit, which is typically the case during periods of uncertainty," said Mayank Shah, chief marketing officer at Parle Products. For the time being, the company is focusing on pushing value packs of premium products so that even indulgent purchases remain accessible, said Shah. The war-led surge in crude oil has already pushed up costs for companies with firms pointing to inflationary pressures and looking to implement price hikes. Many firms across spaces

FPIs continue to sell equities in April, pull out over ₹48k cr

New Delhi: Foreign investors maintained their aggressive sell-off in Indian equities, withdrawing Rs 48,213 crore (\$5.1 billion) in the first 10 days of April, as rising geopolitical tensions and global macroeconomic uncertainties reduced risk appetite.

The sell-off follows a record outflow of Rs 1.2 lakh crore (about \$12.7 billion) in March, the worst monthly exodus on record. The sharp reversal comes after FPIs had infused Rs 22,615 crore in Feb, marking the highest monthly inflow in 17 months.

With the latest withdrawals, total outflows by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have surged to Rs 1.8 lakh crore in 2026 so far. In April alone, foreign investors withdrew equities worth Rs 48,213 crore from cash market till April 10, according to NSDL data. Market participants attributed the sustained selling pressure to a combination of global macroeconomic headwinds and heightened geopolitical risks.

Himanshu Srivastava, principal manager, research, at Morningstar Investment Research India, noted that selling was largely driven by risk aversion triggered by escalating tensions in West Asia, which pushed up crude oil prices and revived concerns about inflation globally. Echoing similar concerns, V K Vijayakumar, chief investment strategist at Geojit Investments, said the energy crisis, coupled with the potential spillover impact on the Indian economy has kept FPIs firmly in sell mode. AGENCIES

Toy prices soar as raw material costs rise due to Gulf conflict

Yogesh.Kabirdoss@timesofindia.com

Chennai: Toy prices are rising ahead of the summer holidays as the West Asia conflict pushes up crude-linked raw material costs, making the season more expensive for parents. Prices in some categories have already increased.

Shabbir Gabajiwala, president of The All India Toy Manufacturers Association (TA-TMA), said toy prices could rise 10%-40%, depending on plastic content, with products such as building blocks, children's ride-ons, toy guns etc made of plastic. "While some manufacturers have raised prices, others may to follow, as plastic costs have surged 70% from Rs 100 to Rs 170 per kg in the past month," he said. The war has led to increase in the cost of inputs such as acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS), polypropylene (PP), and packaging. Funschool India said the most impacted inputs are plastic resins — ABS and PP which have risen 40%-60% over last month. CEO K A Shabir said, "The sharp rise in input cost is putting pressure on margins." Gujarat's Aditi Toys' founder Subhashbhai Balubhai Zala said the rise is driven by crude's volatility and supply disruptions. "Prices have increased by up to 30% in certain categories at Aditi Toys," he said.

RBI criticises banks' rupee arbitrage trades

A senior Reserve Bank of India official criticised foreign-exchange market makers for their role in aggravating the rupee's weakness during the ongoing West Asia tensions, as the regulator keeps up its tough messaging stance in its defense of the currency.

Addressing an annual foreign exchange dealers' conference in Paris at the weekend, deputy governor T Rabi Sankar said the arbitrage between local and offshore markets strained dollar liquidity at a time when the rupee was under pressure due to large foreign outflows, according to people familiar with the matter. They asked not to be identified as they are not authorised to speak to the media.

The central bank did not respond to an email seeking comment outside of regular business hours. Sankar did not reply to a text message

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➤ Sankar's comments came two weeks after RBI clamped down on speculation against the rupee by capping currency bets by banks at \$100 million each and barring them from entering derivative contracts in the offshore market
➤ The restrictions forced banks to reverse around \$30 billion worth of arbitrage trades under which they had bought dollars in the local market and gone on to sell them offshore

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worth of arbitrage trades under which they had bought dollars in the local market and sold them offshore.

In his speech, Sankar signalled the regulator's displeasure at banks transferring arbitrage trades from their books to corporate clients even though companies are not allowed to undertake such transactions, the people said. The RBI also disapproved of certain other ways in which banks took the trades off their books to reduce their exposure, the people cited Sankar as saying at the conference in Paris. Last week, RBI governor Sanjay Malhotra said arbitrage positions had been building between offshore and local markets towards the end of March. While these linkages were important for efficient price discovery in normal times, excessive volatility could be destabilising, he said. BLOOMBERG

Multi Cap Funds Back In Focus After Recent Correction In Markets

Multi cap funds are drawing renewed attention after the recent correction in equity markets, with wealth managers pitching them as a one-stop route to invest across large, mid and small-cap stocks. These funds can be volatile

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What Are Multi Cap Funds?

Multi cap schemes invest at least 25% each in large, mid and small cap stocks, with the balance at the fund manager's discretion. Fund managers can choose stocks across sectors, subject to these market-cap allocations. Large-cap companies are those ranked 1-100 by market capitalisation, mid-caps are ranked 101-250, and those beyond 250 are classified as smallcap companies. The category currently has 32 schemes, with about 1.1cr folios and assets worth ₹2.2 lakh crore.

How Different Is A Multi Cap Fund Compared To Other Popular Categories Like Flexi Cap?

Multi cap funds combine exposure to large, mid and small cap stocks within a single scheme, removing the need for investors to allocate separately across categories. However, unlike flexi cap or value funds, where managers can shift allocations depending on market conditions, multi cap funds are bound by regulation to maintain a minimum allocation to each segment. This limits the manager's ability to move defensively during periods of market stress. With at least 50% of the portfolio structurally allocated to mid and small-cap stocks, these funds tend to be more volatile than large cap or flexi cap funds. During corrections, sharper declines in smaller stocks can result in deeper

drawdowns for multi cap portfolios.

Who Should Consider Multi Cap Funds?

These funds are better suited for investors who are willing to stay invested across market cycles and are comfortable with higher exposure to mid and small cap stocks. They may appeal to investors seeking a single-fund approach across market capitalisations, but are less suited for those looking for downside protection during periods of volatility.

— PRASHANT MAHESH

Cheaper generics capture 20% of weight-loss mkt

Rupali.Mukherjee@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: A wave of affordable generic versions of Ozempic and Wegovy (semaglutide) has rapidly captured around 20% of the nearly Rs1,600 crore weight-loss market within days of launch, following the drug's patent expiry on March 20.

A handful of early movers, including Torrent, Sun Pharma and Zydus Lifesciences, are already chipping away at the stronghold of innovator firm Eli Lilly, which markets the rival weight-loss shot, Mounjaro (tirzepatide).

Both semaglutide and tirzepatide belong to the GLP-1 (glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists) class, used for the management of type 2 diabetes and obesity. Mounjaro, launched a year ago, has dominated the weight-loss and diabetes market since Oct last year, emerging as the largest-selling drug in the organised pharma retail market. It retained that position in March as well, clocking Rs 114 crore in sales. Launch of generics resulted in a Rs 21 crore dip in Mounjaro's March sales month-on-month, while simultaneously expanding the semaglutide market by Rs 10 crore, according to latest data from research firm Pharmamarck.

Lower pricing by generics and the MNC firm Novo Nordisk, which markets Ozempic and Wegovy, as against tirzepatide, is bolstering semaglutide's position, according to Sheetal Sapale, vice-president (commercial) at the firm.

Launch of generics resulted in a Rs 21 crore dip in Mounjaro's (Eli Lilly) March sales month-on-month

While Eli Lilly has seen a share of 8%, followed by Dr Reddy's, Zydus, Lupin and Sun Pharma. Higher share of Torrent is due to the fact that it is offering both oral and injectable formulations. Torrent is leading with a share of 8%, followed by Dr Reddy's, Zydus, Lupin and Sun Pharma. Higher share of Torrent is due to the fact that it is offering both oral and injectable formulations.

GitHub's base in India rises to 27mn, up 2mn this year

Akhil.George@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: There are 27 million developers on GitHub in India, according to GitHub COO Kyle Daigle. More than two million joined the platform since the beginning of 2026 — the highest from any country. Daigle said India remains GitHub's fastest-growing developer community. "One in every seven developers joining GitHub are from India," he told TOI. He was in Bengaluru for the company's developer event over the weekend.

He said the growth cannot be explained by population alone, pointing instead to a rising pipeline of younger, AI-native developers entering the ecosystem. "There's more excitement and interest from this first generation of AI-native software developers," he said, noting that students and even teenagers are contributing to projects. Greater access to tools is also accelerating adoption. AI-assisted coding tools are lowering entry barriers and enabling developers to take on more complex work. "It's helping them solve bigger problems much more quickly," Daigle said, adding that the surge is visible not just in sign-ups but in activity levels.

India now has more open source contributors than any other country and ranks second only to the US in open source AI contributions.

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CONTRAPUNTO

The end move in politics is always to pick up a gun

- R BUCKMINSTER FULLER

Talk, Don't Fight

That US, Iran met is a good beginning, even minus an agreement. Israel-Lebanon talks can offer an off-ramp to both

Vance's statement that US-Iran talks yielded no breakthrough, should not be a cause for quiet satisfaction anywhere in the world. It underscores a deeply unsettling reality: diplomacy, when most urgently needed, is still struggling to find traction. The global economy, already bruised by the six-week Iran war, has barely begun to stabilise. Oil prices, which briefly cooled to \$95 after spiking close to \$120, are poised to climb again. Ripple effects are unmistakable – fertilisers, polymers, and a wide range of downstream industries, remain under sustained pressure. In such a fragile moment, the prospect of renewed hostilities, is not just undesirable; it is untenable.

Perhaps expectations of a swift resolution were misplaced from the outset. The scale of devastation inflicted during the conflict runs deep. Coordinated US-Israel strikes significantly weakened Iran's political and military command structures, while also leaving civilian infra scarred. Tehran's retaliatory targeting of Gulf Arab states, meanwhile, marked a dangerous escalation, breaching long-standing red lines and intensifying mistrust. The animosity is real, layered, and far from easily resolved.

And yet, amid the bleakness, there is a sliver of cautious optimism. The very fact that both sides agreed to sit across the table marks a notable shift. This was their first direct engagement in a decade, and the highest-level dialogue since the Iranian Revolution. Diplomacy often begins not with agreement, but with willingness – and that, at least, has re-emerged. Still, the distance between positions remains vast. Iran seeks sweeping concessions: control over Strait of Hormuz, war reparations, and a region-wide ceasefire. Washington, by contrast, remains singularly focused on curbing Iran's nuclear ambitions and ensuring the reopening of Hormuz. Hovering over these demands is a profound deficit of trust. US withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal in 2018 continues to cast a long shadow, as does Iran's subsequent acceleration of uranium enrichment.

Complicating matters further is Iran's past use of diplomatic breathing room to expand its regional influence through groups like Hezbollah. Yet, abandoning dialogue now would be a grave miscalculation. The economic toll alone demands restraint: US inflation has surged sharply, while Iran faces a collapsing currency and staggering food inflation. What is urgently needed are off-ramps – pragmatic pathways to de-escalation. A potential opening may lie in upcoming Lebanon-Israel talks, which could end up cutting out Hezbollah, and offer all sides a face-saving exit. For now, the immediate priority is clear: extend the fragile ceasefire, resist the pull of escalation, and give diplomacy the time it, so desperately, requires.

Trim Reaper

Regulators can't be MIA as people buy weight-loss drugs off the internet, including from China

Many have a big medical need, others are merely driven by vanity. Either way, Indians are racing at predictable pace towards the 'magic pills' they have heard so much about, that could thin them without the 'bitter pills' of diet and exercise. It's helped that Novo Nordisk lost the patent for Semaglutide, the most used GLP-1 drug, in India in March. Brands have slashed prices, generics have started rolling out excitedly. And yet, as a **TOI** story highlighted yesterday, there are people choosing a third, dangerous alternative to the branded and generic meds. They are ingesting untested, unregulated drugs from China.

This can be about chasing the lowest-priced option. Or going DIY, instead of following doctor's orders. Or even buying hokey and hogwash, from some social media influencer. Content creators can be highly irresponsible launch monkeys. Sometimes, out of greed, and other times, because they don't know any better. Whatever the reason, medically unsupervised use of drugs that alter core metabolic signals inside the human body, is a mug's game. Laypersons have no idea if these meds interfere with the others they are taking. How to dose up and dose down are also highly technical matters.

The Chinese in-vitro drugs circulating in India, through the internet, need to be a wake-up call. This is what happens when doctors' prescriptions are replaced by an influencer's testimonial, and the pharmacy by Instagram DMs. Yes, NFHS-5 data indicates that around a quarter of both women and men in India, are either overweight or obese. In a way, we got here because of being bad at science, paying a heavy price for poor literacy in both nutrition and biology. This has, of course, been a failure of regulators, too. They really have to figure out how to stop the GLP-1 revolution from being captured by celeb tubers and muckamucks, bent on shooting scientific illiteracy to even more treacherous highs.

D for Dilemma

Alter-Me scores over Me and D2

Startled by Me's reaction on skimming the show timings of D2, Alter-Me said, "I'm not accompanying you. It is longer than a T20 match." A determined Me in rising crescendo said, there is a show in almost every theatre, single or multiplex, every 30 minutes past the hour, throughout the day. "An emphatic no," was Alter-Me's absolute response.

Me wanted to opt for the 2.15 am show, so that we could return to wake the night-duty watchman, and welcome the doordhwa. "Not only will you sleep in the theatre, but you will also not be able to sleep on return," said Alter-Me.

Ok, what about the 6.30 am, 7.30 am, or 8.30 am shows? "Which means we have to wake up at unearthly hours to reach on time. We will struggle to even rise for the national anthem," said Alter-Me, who did not want to spend atrocious amounts for popcorn and samosa, "for breakfast".

Having watched D1, Me was definitely wanting to see what happens in the sequel. "I will sit with you max for 90 minutes. After that you can substitute me with any impact player," said Alter-Me, full of sarcasm.

Still amazed at D2 hijacking shows throughout day and night, into the third week, Me suggested other show timings. "I can't skip lunch at home by going for shows after 10, and can't go for shows after lunch, as it would be impolite not to nap in AC, given the heatwave outside," said Alter-Me. He also ruled out disturbing dinner.

Me was getting pretty annoyed at Alter-Me's stubbornness, but did not feel brave enough to see the reported glory scenes all alone. "Darpok, just shut your eyes for a few seconds, and they will be gone," counselled Alter-Me.

"BTW, shows are at less unearthly hours now," countered Me. "Just BTW too, what is the cost of the tickets?" asked Alter-Me.

The shriek that came when Me mentioned the astronomical figure, with a softly polite voice, was not from Alter-Me but from the Mrs, not Me but Alter-Me's. "That's crazy. No need to pay so much, to watch something at unearthly hours, especially when we know both of you will be fast asleep, even before the interval. There are no technical timeouts here, okay," she said firmly. "We will wait for it to land on OTT," said Alter-Me, leaving Me nodding in capitulation.

Two Couldn't Tango, Now What?

That the talks collapsed was predictable. Trump may go for a naval blockade of Iran. That'll make Netanyahu happier. And Iran angrier. Expect renewed turbulence

Aydin Sezer



Columnist based in Ankara

A breeze of cautious optimism had swept through various diplomatic circles, as soon as it was announced that there would be US-Iran talks over the weekend. And even as Islamabad prepared to host these, it seemed that both Washington and Tehran were already rushing to declare victory. The real winner, of course, was common sense.

It had seemed to me that the two sides getting together at the same table, established through China's balancing power and Pakistan's mediation, was in fact a 'forced interval'. It's where weary boxers take a breather, rather than a lasting peace.

In this sense, what came out of Islamabad, or did not, would actually have been no surprise, to anyone following the matter closely. When JD Vance remarked that he was returning from Islamabad, without having reached an agreement, that, too, was generally along expected lines.

The truth is that, from the onset, no one had harboured grand illusions, about a deal coming through in Islamabad. Indeed, it would have been contrary to the nature of things, for a magical formula to have been found within such a short period, which would have 'reset' relations between Washington and Tehran, sort of returning both parties to their default settings. After all, none of the structural issues that triggered the present crisis have been resolved. On the contrary, new and far more complex knots have been tied on top of the pre-war situation.

Who emerged as the winner at the table? Well, it was prefigured in what happened before everyone sat themselves down – in the high tension, harsh rhetoric, zero trust, countless preconditions, and only a tiny, intermittent window of diplomacy.

And the biggest obstacle? That was the vast chasm between the two parties' priorities. US elevated the security of Hormuz Strait – an issue not even on the agenda before Feb 28 – to the top priority. Iran, a master of the art of international negotiation, placed Israel's attacks on Lebanon, right at the centre of the table.

Fundamental issues such as Iran's nuclear programme, uranium enrichment activities, and ballistic missiles

range, which harbour the real danger, were pushed into the background. We only heard the word 'nuclear' in the muttered remarks of Vance, on his way back.

At the table, Washington aimed to extract a clear and binding "commitment not to develop nuclear weapons" from Iran. Tehran refused even to negotiate on this issue. The fact that the nuclear issue retains its status as an indispensable 'red line' for Iran, will continue to be an existential threat, which keeps not only Israel and Netanyahu, but now also the Gulf

indication that he will emerge as the new and pragmatic centre of power in Iranian domestic politics in the post-Khamenei era, possibly even in an early presidential race. That is, provided he does not lose his life, in an Israeli or US attack.

Who would the talks' collapse have pleased? Netanyahu. He, and Israel, had earlier seemed in danger of being the biggest losers, in any equation where a ceasefire would be formulated between US and Iran, in Islamabad. Now, talks collapsed, Netanyahu is looking at a scenario he had desired from the very beginning.

It is now highly likely that the Trump administration will place greater emphasis on the other, hardline options at its disposal, and options to hasten 'regime change' in Iran. Trump's threat to impose a full-scale 'naval blockade' on Iran, reveals a key to the process ahead. A strategy aimed at blocking Iran's access to the coast, will mean intensified attacks by the US-Israel bloc. It will also pave the way for Nato and/or European forces to join a new *de facto* blockade in Hormuz Strait, under the pretext of securing global energy routes.

Is the global economy now on knife's edge? Yes. Although Brent crude eased to around \$95 when the Islamabad talks began, we were still a long way from the pre-crisis range of \$65-70. Collapse of the negotiations, and looming scenarios of a naval blockade, will reignite uncertainty in energy and financial markets. Given the inflationary bottleneck the world is currently navigating, there is scarcely any need to explain what even the slightest spark from Hormuz Strait would mean, for global supply chains and the economy.

In conclusion, the curtains appear to have come down on diplomatic theatre, for now. In the coming weeks, all parties will likely harden their negotiating positions, through military manoeuvres on the ground. Still, we must not forget that in international relations, doors are never fully locked.

Let us hope that this failure is not the beginning of a bloodier conflict, but rather a painful part of 'necessary pause', during which the parties will test their strength. We have no choice but to hope that the window of diplomacy does not close completely, even if only the tiniest of cracks remains open.

The writer is a former Turkish diplomat



states, awake at night.

Who emerged as the winner at the table? Speaker of the Iranian parliament, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf. Even though the Islamabad negotiations collapsed, this process has yielded an outcome of critical importance for Iran's domestic politics. The fact that Ghalibaf made himself visible during such a critical period, and took the initiative of stepping into the fray, was no ordinary bureaucratic assignment.

Ghalibaf proving his mettle here, is the strongest

She Sang India's Hidden Desires, Her Songs Anticipated Change

The best kind of music, like Asha Bhosle's songs, tells us where society is headed. The best kind of tribute, never mind India's official idea of itself, is that everyone, at some point, has hummed Dum Maro Dum

Partha Sinha



Asha Bhosle, who died yesterday at 92, was the second voice in that duet, the one the republic did not officially endorse, but could not stop listening to.

Jacques Attali argued that music does not merely reflect society; it anticipates it. It rehearses futures before institutions are ready to host them. It whispers possibilities that the law will only later learn to pronounce. By that measure, Asha Bhosle was not just a singer. She was an early warning system.

To understand what she warned us about, one must return, briefly, reluctantly, to the Lata-Asha binary. Lata Mangeshkar was the voice the nation chose to recognise itself in. Controlled, ethereal, almost deliberately de-bodied. It aligned beautifully with the post-independence imagination of femininity: dignified, restrained, morally legible.

Asha was something else entirely. Her voice had texture. It carried breath, hesitation, suggestion. It sounded like a body that refused to fade into respectability.

This was not an aesthetic difference. It was moral zoning. The nation needed a pure sound to represent itself publicly. But it also needed somewhere to place everything that did not fit into that purity: desire, play, ambiguity, mischief. So it built a second channel. And then, in a move of quiet genius, outsourced it to the same family.

Every Oct in Kolkata, something instructive happened. The Durga Puja pandals ran loudspeakers through the night, and the cultured Bengali, who spent the remaining eleven months carefully curating his aesthetic respectability, discovered a sudden, convenient amnesia. Rabinindra Sangeet could wait. The request, again and again, was for Asha. *Dum Maro Dum*. *O Mere Sona Re*.

This was not a lapse. This was the point. Pujo is, among other things, a society's annual licence for abandon, the carnival that strengthens the order it briefly suspends. The goddess arrives, rules loosen, and loudspeakers say, without embarrassment, what drawing rooms edit out.

Asha Bhosle was the sound that Bengali bhadralok culture reached for, the moment it was given permission to stop performing itself. The anthropologists have a name for this mechanism. The rest of us just hummed along.

The word most frequently used to describe her has been "versatile". It sounds like praise. It is, in fact, a cultural workaround: a polite container for tonalities that made the culture slightly nervous. Her voice had what Roland Barthes called grain, that irreducible body inside the sound that no amount of cultural coding can fully discipline. Even when the words behaved, the voice suggested otherwise.

Listen to *Dum Maro Dum* today and it still carries a certain looseness, a refusal to be domesticated by its



own narrative. The film disapproves. The song does not care. The state banned it from *All India Radio*. The public repeated it until the ban became irrelevant. Music had moved ahead. Culture took its time catching up.

The playback system was built to keep these two things apart: the actress performed the narrative, the singer carried the emotional surplus. Asha inhabited the surplus. She sang for characters who would eventually be corrected by the script, but the suspension lasted longer than the correction.

Men in cultural production are granted the privilege of distance. Women are asked to remain legible, anchored to narrative. Asha's voice constantly slipped that anchoring.

Which is perhaps why it required so much interpretation.

Then there is the matter of scale. Twelve thousand songs. At some point admiration gives way to a more complicated recognition. This is not just artistry. It is infra. A voice industrialised at a volume that has no parallel in recorded history.

Yet, within that scale she retained a capacity for surprise. A turn of phrase. A tonal shift. A refusal to be entirely standardised. She worked inside the system, and kept exceeding it, not by revolt, but by increments so consistent, they became their own argument.

Near the end, the culture revealed itself most plainly. When Asha Bhosle sang Rabinindra Sangeet, a section of Bengal's cultural establishment objected. The controversy was dressed in aesthetic language, purity of rendition, fidelity to tradition, but its emotional content was something older and less comfortable.

The woman who had given voice to the nation's desires was being told she had not earned the right to sing its prayers. The same Madonna-Vamp binary, which the film industry had enforced structurally for five decades, was now being enforced explicitly, in public, with cultural credentials as the instrument.

The same culture that reached for her voice every Pujan night questioned her standing in the devotional register. The permission it granted at the pandal, it withdrew at the concert hall.

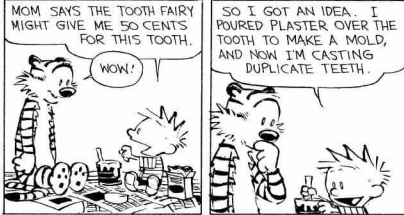
This is not contradiction. This is the system working precisely as designed. India has always liked to believe that it knows what it is. Its music suggests otherwise.

The nation articulated one version of itself in public. It rehearsed another in private, at the pandal loudspeaker, in the kitchen, through the transistor radio in rooms where no one was keeping score. It placed one voice at the centre of its official imagination, and allowed the other to circulate, in what it called the margins. Except those margins, over time, became memory. We were the ones humming. We simply preferred not to say so.

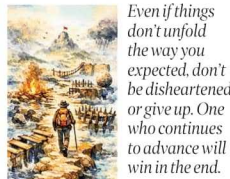
Asha Bhosle gave sound to what the culture could not formally accommodate. And if Attali is right, if music truly anticipates the society that follows, then she did not just sing the India that was. She sang the India that was still becoming.

We heard it first as a tune. It has taken us this long to realise it was the truth we were rehearsing.

Calvin & Hobbes



Sacredspace



Daisaku Ikeda

Peace, Not War: Reconciliation Is Best

Farida Khanam

The month-long military confrontation involving US, Israel, and Iran, which began in late Feb, was suspended on March 25, 2026, under a temporary ceasefire. The conflict claimed nearly 5,000 lives, and left a trail of destruction in terms of infra, environment, and human livelihoods.

In the present age of weapons of mass destruction, the real cost of war has become impossible to ignore. As Chamberlain observed, "In war, whichever side may call itself the victor, there are no winners, but all are losers." What appears to be a victory ultimately turns into a loss, both material and environmental.

A person in New Delhi associated with medical tourism once remarked on the impact of prolonged wars in countries like Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen. The effects, he said, have been devastating. The use of explosives and chemical weapons

has left entire populations vulnerable to cancer and other serious illnesses. Even those not directly involved in the fighting have suffered. Physical disabilities, too, have become widespread. This is why the Quran says, "reconciliation is best" (4:128), not that war is best.

Today, nations are connected in one region quickly affects others. The recent energy crisis is one example. The ongoing tensions in West Asia have had repercussions not only there, but also in Europe, US, India, and across Asia.

In such a world, war is no longer an option. It does not move humanity forward – it pushes it back. For this reason, both religious wisdom and secular thought reject war and urge that every path leading to conflict be closed – even if it requires restraint and compromise. Prophet Muhammad provides a clear historical example of his

method in negotiating the Hudaibiya peace treaty. On the occasion, he brought matters to a successful conclusion by unilaterally accepting his opponents' conditions.

In this peace treaty, the Prophet had not apparently received justice or his rights.

What was in effect a 10-year no-war pact gave the Prophet an opportunity to work uninterrupted on a constructive programme, which would otherwise have been impossible.

Though it appeared to be a one-sided concession at first, it later proved to be a clear victory. A modern parallel is Japan, which, after apparent submission in making peace with the United States, rapidly advanced in other fields.

The Prophet said that God grants through nonviolence what He does not grant through violence (Sahih Muslim). This shows that peaceful action is superior to violent action. War only deepens hatred, destroys resources, and leads to the loss of

precious lives. As Maulana Wahiduddin Khan writes, peace is not simply the absence of war; but the creation of opportunities. Peace creates favourable conditions that would enable us to strive for justice and other constructive ends.

Violence and peace both have wide connotations. Violence includes everything from hatred to war. Peace includes everything from tolerance to love. Peace means normalcy; and normalcy provides opportunities that foster a healthy environment.

Peace is essential for a better way of living: peace of mind, peace in the family, and peace in nature. The way forward must, therefore, rest on peace and negotiation. The Quran lays down the principle clearly: "And if they incline to peace, then incline to it" (8:61). Promoting a culture of peace is not only necessary, it is more relevant today than ever before.

The writer is chairperson, Centre for Peace and Spirituality International, New Delhi

LEGEND
UP CLOSE:
QUEEN B
IN HER
MANY
MOODS



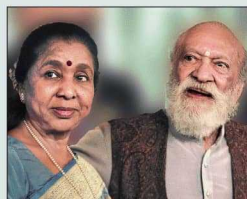
THE CHANTEUSE AND THE SEDUCTRESS: The duo whose talents made Muzaffar Ali's Umrao Jaan a landmark film



YEH KYA JAGAH HAI DOSTON: With Khayyam who scored the Umrao Jaan songs, regarded among her finest work



GOING WEST: With British popstar Boy George (centre) and R.D. Burman in Bombay, an encounter that led to an artistic collaboration



SITARON SE AAGE: Keeping time with the great instrumentalist of his age, the peerless Ravi Shankar



MUTUAL ADMIRATION: Sharing a light moment with PM Modi along with her sister Meena



FROM ME TO YOU: A.R. Rahman gets an award from the diva, who sang for his Raga compositions

ASHA BHOSLE | 1933 - 2026

Asha springs eternal through the ages

Bella Jaisinghani | TNN

The most prolific recorded artiste ever, songstress from Mangeshkar clan mastered a range of genres and held millions in thrall with her sensual, exuberant voice

'Jaiye aap kahan jayenge...'

Exemplary singer Asha Bhosle, whose life quilt was woven by skeins of struggle and triumph, passed away at age 92 Sunday. The evergreen artiste breathed her last at Breach Candy Hospital, a day after being hospitalised for cardiac and respiratory ailments.

An innocuous "chance" given to her by All India Radio at the age of 15 led into a career spanning 11,000 songs, the final flourish being a three-hour concert at age 90.

Her son Anand Bhosle said the final rites will be performed at Shivaji Park crematorium at 4pm Monday April 13 with full state honours. Members of the public can pay respects from 11am to 3pm at her residence Casa Grande in Lower Parel.

Born Sept 8, 1933 in Sangli to noted Natyasaangeet exponent Pt Deenanath Mangeshkar and Shevanti Bai, Ashaji defied the adage that nothing grows beneath the shade of a vast banyan tree. She blossomed into a robust musical persona despite the abundant talent and fame of her elder sister, legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar. "It is the sapling's will to grow that helps it sprout," she said.

Their rivalry became a frequent topic of conversation down the years. Siblings Meena, Usha and Hridaynath Mangeshkar were also stalwart artistes who bonded firmly as India's first family of playback singing.

Financial compulsions initially forced Ashaji to accept songs that Lataji declined - cabaret numbers, and songs pictured on the lead heroine's sister or friend, dancer and vamp. But that turned out to be a blessing in disguise as Ashaji's full plumage of vocals unfurled before the nation. Her partnership with Helen is history.

In her heyday she recorded seven or eight songs, flitting between studios, languages and genres. Old visuals of her recording in a pastel cotton sari with a flower in her hair slowly graduated to beautiful silken saris with similar coloured faux blossoms as the years wore on.

Diverse composers like Madan Mohan, O.P. Nayyar, Kalyanji Anandji, Laxmikant Pyarelal, R.D. Burman and Khayyam, and Marathi music directors Shridhar Phadke and Hridaynath Mangeshkar partnered her journey. Between her early hits like 'Aaiye meherbaan' to 'Tora mann darpan kehlaye' and 'Sapna mera toot gaya' to the memorable Umrao Jaan ghazals, everything in be-

tween was as consequential.

The in-house Mangeshkar pool of talent also created a fragrant bouquet of melodies. Ashaji laughingly recalled how she felt shy to sing 'Taru aarhe raatra aajon', a beautifully erotic Marathi bhavgeet composed by her brother Hridaynath 'Bal' Mangeshkar. Son Hemant Bhosle tuned the whisper-like 'Jaage jaage nainon mein' for her in Damaad.

However the stairway to heaven was paved with gold and rocks both. Ashaji was candid about the numerous setbacks she suffered in her personal life including domestic abuse by her first husband Ganpatrao Bhosle, whom she eloped with and married as an impressionable teenager. Her liaison with composer O.P. Nayyar ended in bitterness while her second marriage to R.D. Burman was no bed of roses either.

"Irrespective of all the ups and downs I was facing in my personal life, the moment I stood before the microphone, I shut that out of my mind and concentrated solely on the song I had to deliver. There were days my children were sick but I had to come to the studio and sing a peppy or romantic number. God gave me troubles but he also gave me the strength to overcome them. I have worked hard. Very hard," she said in an interview to Doordarshan.

NOTES HIGH & LOW



A STAR IS BORN

> Born Sept 8, 1933, in Sangli, Asha Bhosle was the third daughter of Pt Deenanath Mangeshkar. She was about four years younger than her legendary sister Lata Mangeshkar.

> Dinanath's premature death at the age of 41 left the family in dire straits. Asha was barely nine then.

THE EARLY YEARS



With elder sister and rival Lata Mangeshkar

> A dramatic phase in her teenage years began when she eloped at the age of 14 with a man who was nearly 20 years older. Ganpat Bhosle encouraged her to take up singing as a career.

> Her earliest songs in Hindi films were as part of the chorus. They included 'Saawan aaya' (Chunariya) in 1948. Her first solo Hindi film song was for Raai Ki Rani (1949).

> Her milestone collaboration with composer O.P. Nayyar sparked with the BR Chopra film, 'Naya Daur' (1957). Her last song with him was 'Chain se humko kabhi aapne jeene na diya' ('Pran Jaye Par Vachan Na Jaye', 1974). This song won her a Filmfare Award though it was never picturised in the film.

THE BURMAN-GULZAR COMBO



Her professional and romantic partner R.D. Burman

> Her partnership with music director R.D. Burman, whom she later married, blossomed as they worked on 'Teesi Manzil' (1966). Asha had recalled how she was once rehearsing the convulsive tune of 'Aa aa aaja!' seated in the back of her car when the alarmed driver heard her wheezing and turned to ask if she was feeling ill!

> Her collaboration with R.D. Burman and Gulzar resulted in a breeze of film and non-film classics like Khushboo (Ghar Jagaye), Jhazat (Mera kuchh saaman), Namkeen (Phir se aaiya badra bidesi), Khoosurat (Saare niyam to do).

AWARDS

> Asha Bhosle won a record seven Filmfare awards for best female playback singer including for 'Dum maro dum' (Hare Rama Hare Krishna) and 'Yeh mera dil' (Don). She won her first National Award for 'Dil cheez kya hai' in Khayyam's piece de resistance 'Umrao Jaan' (1981). Her second National Award came for 'Mera kuchh saaman' (Jhazat, 1986).

> In 1997, she became the first Indian singer to be nominated for a Grammy. She had two Grammy nominations. She was bestowed the Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2001. She was awarded the Padma Vibhushan, the country's second highest civilian honour, in 2008.

INTERNATIONAL FAME



In an MTV video with the British boy band 'Code Red', singing a ballad in her silk saree

Her collaborations with international artists including Boy George, REM's Michael Stipe, the Kronos Quartet, Nelly Furtado and Code Red began in the 1980s with a group called the West India Company. In 1997, a British band Cornershop paid tribute to her with 'Brimful of Asha'. A 2005 hit number by Black-Eyed Peas 'Don't Phunk With My Heart' was derived from two of Asha's songs.

A GREAT COOK

Asha Bhosle was an excellent cook. Friends and colleagues looked forward to her invitations, particularly when non-veg items were on the menu. In 2002, this passion gave rise to her Asha's chain of restaurants across locations in five countries including UAE (Dubai, Abu Dhabi), Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and UK (Birmingham and Manchester). Menu includes her personal favourites, especially Mumbai's street food

CHURA LIYA HAI TUMNE JO DIL KO

> In 2011, the Guinness World Records recognised Asha Bhosle as the most recorded artist in music history, with 11,000 songs including solos, duets and chorus numbers in multiple languages to her credit.

> Age did not prevent her from experimenting with different facets of her talent. Her work spanned film music, pop, ghazals, bhajans, folk songs, qawwalis.

> In 2002, Asha composed the music for an original album 'Aap Ki Asha'. In 2013, at the age of 79, she stepped before the camera as an actress with the Marathi film 'Mai' co-starring her niece Padmini Kolhapure.



First song (1943)
Chala chala
mar bala
(Marathi film Majha Bai)

Last song (2026)
The Shadow
Light
For British
virtual band
Gorillaz

A never-ageing diva, and her lessons in crisp delivery

Shruti Jauhari

Mein chaman mein chahe jahan rahoon, mera haq hai fasal-e-bahar par... (singer: Asha Bhosle, music: Jaidev, lyrics: Jigar Moradabadi - 1971). Yes Asha tai, you will always be Mallika (Queen) of the sur-e-gulzar - garden of notes. Asha lost her father, one of the most celebrated Natyasaangeet artists, Pt Deenanath Mangeshkar, when she was just nine. But 'Baba' continued to live through her clean and crisp, intricate yet perfectly measured musical phrase deliveries.

For decades she was unstoppable, belting out gems like: 'O panchchi pyare' (Bandini - 1963), 'Jhunka gira na' (Mera Saya - 1966), 'Aaja aaja mein hum pyar tera' (Teesi Manzil - 1966), 'Dam maro dam' (Hare Rama Hare Krishna - 1971), 'Chain se hamko kabhi' (Pran Jaye Par Vachan na Jaye - 1973), 'Chura liya hai tumne jo dil ko' (Yaadon Ki Baarat - 1973), 'Mujhe rang de' (Thakshak - 1999).

Back in the days when the singers along with a 40-piece orchestra recorded a song on just two tracks and the entire piece was done in one take, she delivered 'Dekho bijali bole bin baadal ke' (Phir Wah! Dil Laya Hum - 1963), the Punjabi number 'Do guttan ker mariyan' (Posti - 1951), Bappi-da's 'Chirodini tumi je aamar' (Amar Sangi - 1987), and the exquisite Jaidev's ghazal 'Caravan guzra kiya ham reh-guzar dekha kiye' (1970).

The challenges of perfect diction demand not just vocal intricacy but immense mental discipline. All this from a single mother,

equally devoted to her family!

For students of music, impeccable phrases woven throughout her songs remain an education. Listening to the rapid yet crystal-clear cascading phrase, from the antara of 'Paan khayee sayan hamara' (Teesi Kasam - 1966), or 'Sakhi ri sun bole' (Miss Mary - 1957) or 'Khat likh de sanwariya ke naam babu' (Aaye Din Bahar Ke - 1966), seems as if a string of fireworks is exploding. The seamless vocal contours (meends) of 'Abhi na jao chhod ke' (Hum Dono - 1961), 'hamne to dil ko aapke kadm pe rakhi diya' (Mere Sanam - 1965), 'Jivalaga rahile door ghar maze' (A Musical Journey - EP Asha Bhosle - 1981), proves her virtuosity over all aspects of voice modulation.

Ashaji's versatility made her voice a true reflection of Madhubala's iconic beauty in the song 'Aaiye meherbaan' (Howrah Bridge - 1956), Helen's fluid dance moves in 'Piya tu ab to aaja' (Caravan - 1971) and Rekha's enigmatic gaze in the ghazal 'Dil cheez kya hai' (Umrao Jaan - 1981).

While composer O.P. Nayyar used her to perfection in 'Uden jab jab zulfen teri' (Naya Daur - 1957), 'Pochoo na hamein hum unke liye' (Mitti Mein Sona - 1960), 'Jaiye aap kahan jayenge' (Mere Sanam - 1965) and 'Yehi hum jagah hai' (Ye Raat Fir Na Aayegi - 1966), R.D. Burman once admitted that he wouldn't have made songs like 'Daiyya ye mein kahan aa phasi' (Caravan - 1971), 'Mera naam hai Shabnam' (Kati Patang - 1970), if he did not have Ashaji to render them. There is no asha (hope) of seeing another Asha ever. (The writer is a music teacher/singer)



FIRST FAMILY: Between them, Mangeshkar siblings Usha, Lata, Hridaynath, Asha and Meena possessed a diverse set of skills in music; Asha with her late daughter Varsha

'The biggest challenge in my life was marrying Bhosle'

From the TOI archives, the singer in her own words

You like taking up challenges, don't you?

■ Every day of my life has been a challenge —from singing a song that is not my type to being asked suddenly to sing a classical song with no practice. The biggest challenge was when I decided to marry Bhosle, a man of my choice. Twelve years of my life went into making it work.

What was it like being Lata's sister?

■ It was more of a disadvantage. There would be comparisons. People would often say Lata is better. Some other woman in my place would have given up singing, but I was very stubborn. I fought and made a place for myself. Many say that marrying Bhosle was a big mistake, but I am Asha Bhosle because of him. He pushed me into

singing. He kept a tutor for me and made me sing. The reason could have been money, but I am Asha Bhosle because he helped me become one.

Is there any truth to the stories about sibling rivalry between you and Lata?

■ Yes, there is, but it's from my sister's side. She was the queen, and when I got popular it did upset her.

What about the current crop of singers? Who do you like from among them?

■ Real singers were people like Lata Mangeshkar, Mohd Rafisaab, Kishore Kumar, etc. Even today, we have some very good singers like Shankar Mahadevan, Shaan and KK. Then there's Shreya (Ghoshal) and Sunidhi (Chauhan) who sing well, but unfortunately they aren't getting good songs. Nowadays, it's Mumukshu Bhattacharya. Hui.

...when she emerged from the shadow of an elder sister

Avijit Ghosh

Societies clinging to the past while dreaming of the future are often trapped in a duality. India, just out of the clutches of colonialism, too experienced this. The nation's attitude to the female playback voice was complicated. After all, voices are secret catalogues of social history.

Around Independence, several singers such as Zohrabai Ambalewali, Rajkumari, Amirbai Karnataki, Shamshad Begum, Geeta Dutt, jostled for space and ascendancy in Hindi film music. But within a few years, Lata Mangeshkar's voice encapsulating purity and propriety became the gold standard.

Asha Bhosle, almost four years younger, began her career under the shadow of her elder sister Lata. Keen to find her own voice, the Sangli-born singer listened to a farrago of foreign artists: samba singer Carmen Miranda, the joyous Caterina Valente, even the breathless Elvis Presley. "Slowly," Asha revealed in an interview to composer Salil Chowdhury on DD Bangla in 1993, "I carved out a different

style from my sister."

In time, the two became antonyms to each other: Lata's voice had the innocence of a morning hymn, the sanctity of a temple while Asha's evoked the sizzle of cabaret, the rush of a French kiss. "Lata didi and I are like Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru. Gandhi was good; Nehru wasn't bad either," Asha told Outlook magazine in April, 2006.

The sisters were fundamentally apart, even in their choices and their personalities. She thinks with her "head", me with my "heart", Asha once said. Perhaps, circumstances played a role. Lata started singing for films at 13 after her father singer-actor Deenanath Mangeshkar's untimely demise. She never married. Lata disappeared when Asha eloped.

In the 1950s and 60s, Asha wasn't the preferred singer of most A-list music directors, barring O.P. Nayyar. She was rarely the playback for major heroines. She once credited BR Chopra for giving her the chance to sing for a big movie, Dilip Kumar's 'Naya Daur' (music: O.P. Nayyar, 1957).

By mid-60s, Asha had carved out her



Siblings, both singers yet poles apart

distinctiveness. Her range expanded. And her voice was richer in tone, more nuanced in texture. Three songs exemplify this. 'Aagey bhi jaane na tu' (Waqt, composer: Ravi, 1965) underlined a felicity for aligning each note with the lyric's emotional intent. In 'Teesi Manzil' (1966), young composer R.D. Burman rewrote film music grammar, capturing the new musical zeitgeist. In 'Teesi Kasam', set in hinterland Bihar and released the same year, her rendition of 'Pan khayee sayan hamaara' was

flawless flavouring the film with a folksy authenticity. The three belonged to three different musical worlds.

Music director R.D. Burman, whom she would marry in 1980, "really exploited the full potential of my voice and challenged me to greater heights," she told journalist Kavita Chhibber in a long 2003 interview. "When he offered me Aaja aaja, I was petrified...but didi said you are a Mangeshkar and you can do it." The remark reveals how Lata was also a mentor despite their differences.

Broadly speaking, RD preferred Lata for his more classical compositions. But the nightclub with cigarette smoke and the grungy hippy joints were Asha's fiefdom. These settings were home to some of the most furious and distinctive 70s rhythms. 'Mera naam hai Shabnam' (film: Kati Patang, 1970), 'Piya tu ab to aaja' (film: Caravan, 1971), 'Dum maro dum' (film: Hare Rama Hare Krishna, 1972) and many more.

In 1981, 'Umrao Jaan' (music: Khayyam) became to Asha what films like 'Anarkali' and 'Pakeezah' were to Lata. Her voice became an extension of the court-

san's melancholic life. "Through her voice, you reach Umrao Jaan's soul," Khayyam told this reporter in 2008.

Compared to Lata, Asha was more eager to embrace and adapt to shifting music trends. Hers was the sensual voice that the more conservative India sought to consign to the background. But as the country changed and evolved, she found wings. In 1980s, when disco was the celluloid favourite and ghazals the flavor of private albums, she sang 'Disco Station' for Bappi Lahiri (film: Hathkadi, 1982) and outshone Pakistani singer, Ghulam Ali, in Meraj-e-Ghazal (1983). And when Indi-Pop took centre stage in the 1990s, she delivered one of its most memorable tracks, 'Jaanam samjha karo (1997)."

Much before the two sisters reached the autumn of their careers, Asha had become the preferred voice for a new generation of singers. She was their light-house and lodestar: Whether we like Asha or Lata has more to do with the person we are rather than the songs they sang. We see in their voices our own reflections. For true lovers of music, it is never Lata or Asha; it is always both.

Coach removed, top stars leave volleyball camp

Sabi Hussain
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Indian volleyball has been jolted by a players' revolt, as senior internationals Anand K and John Joseph walked out of the national camp in Gandhinagar on Sunday. Their protest targets the abrupt removal of long-time foreign coach Dragan Mihailovic and alleged administrative lapses within the interim Volleyball Federation of India (VFI), led by Virender Kanwar.

The camp, held at the SAI's Gandhinagar regional centre, is part of India's preparations for the upcoming AVC Men's Cup (June 20-26, Ahmedabad), a key tournament featuring 12 top Asian teams. With the Asian Games also on the horizon, the timing of the disruption raises serious concerns.

Anand K criticised the decision to remove Mihailovic, linking it directly to declining preparation standards.

"We had strong results under Mihailovic, including a runner-up finish at the Central Asian Volleyball Association (CAVA) tournament in Uzbekistan last year. His removal, without clarity, has hurt our preparations for the AVC Cup, AVC Men's Championships and Asian Games," he said. He added that the new coaching set-up lacks the same global expertise, affecting player confidence and performance readiness.

Mihailovic, who coached India for three years, was credited with modernising training methods and improving results, including strong showings at international events. Players believe his exit disrupts continuity at a crucial phase.

Sources within the interim VFI suggest deeper governance issues. An official requesting anonymity indicated that Mihailovic's alignment with a reform-oriented "steering committee" backed by the FIVB created friction.

CITY CLOSE GAP

Pump Three Past Chelsea
To Turn The Heat On Arsenal

Manchester: Manchester City ignited the Premier League title race with a second-half blitz that sealed a 3-0 win against Chelsea as they closed the gap on leaders Arsenal on Sunday.

Pep Guardiola's side produced a devastating spell immediately after half-time, with Nico O'Reilly and Marc Guehi scoring in the space of six minutes at Stamford Bridge.

Jeremy Doku wrapped up a statement victory to ensure City took advantage of Arsenal's shock 2-1 home defeat against Bournemouth on Saturday.

Second-placed City are now only six points behind Arsenal with a game in hand, setting up a seismic showdown against the Gunners at the Etihad Stadium on April 19.



Marc Guehi scores Man City's second goal

Having beaten Arsenal in the League Cup final and thrashed Liverpool in the FA Cup quarter-finals, City are hitting form at just the right time.

Their bid for a seventh English title under Guardiola appeared to be fading after successive draws with strugglers West Ham and Nottingham Forest in their previous two league matches.

Ngumoha makes Anfield history

Liverpool: Liverpool's teenaged winger Rio Ngumoha became the club's youngest to score a Premier League goal at Anfield on Saturday before Mohamed Salah, who will leave the club at season end, struck four minutes later in a 2-0 win over Fulham that boosted their quest for a top-five finish. AGENCIES

Barcelona move nine points clear at top

Barcelona: Barcelona took a major step towards retaining their LaLiga title with a 4-1 home victory over Espanyol on Saturday.

LA LIGA moving nine points clear of second-placed Real Madrid.

Ferran Torres struck twice, assisted by Lamine Yamal both times, first with a header from a corner in the 10th minute before doubling the lead in the 25th, racing clear from another Yamal pass.

Espanyol pulled one back in the 56th minute when Pol Lozano fired in a rebound from just inside the box, but

Yamal restored control in the 87th on a quick counter, with Marcus Rashford adding a fourth from Frenkie De Jong's cross.

Barca moved to 79 points with seven games left, while Real lost ground after a 1-1 draw with Girona on Friday. "It's not over until we've

won the league, but it's only up to us and that's a great feeling," Torres told DAZN.

"It was a tough, hard-fought match, the scoreline doesn't tell the whole story. It was close, some little mistakes almost cost us dearly. But we're proud of our performance." REUTERS

Yamal restored control in the 87th on a quick counter, with Marcus Rashford adding a fourth from Frenkie De Jong's cross.

Barca moved to 79 points with seven games left, while Real lost ground after a 1-1 draw with Girona on Friday. "It's not over until we've

Rory loses six-shot edge to share lead

Augusta: Rory McIlroy charged back late after squandering a six-stroke edge to share the lead with Cameron Young after a wild third round at the Masters on Sunday.

A chaotic afternoon at Augusta National saw both men plunk key shots into water on the back nine but finish level atop the leaderboard on 11-under 205 through 54 holes, one stroke ahead of American Sam Burns.

McIlroy, who started the day with a record six-shot lead, carded a one-over-par 73 while Young roared into contention with a scintillating seven-under-par 65.

"I didn't have it today," McIlroy admitted. "I scrambled a lot on the front nine."

Second-ranked McIlroy birdied the 14th and 15th holes to regain the lead but found

AUGUSTA MASTERS

the trees off the 17th tee on one-over round.

"This golf course has a way of, when you're not quite feeling it, you struggle," McIlroy said. "You have to dig deep. I still have a great chance," McIlroy added. "I'm in the final group. That's where I want to be. I need to be better tomorrow. If I'm going to win tomorrow I have to be better than I was today."

McIlroy, a five-time major winner, hopes to match Tiger Woods, Jack Nicklaus and Nick Faldo as the only back-to-back winners of the green jacket. Third-ranked Young, last month's Players Championship winner, got off to a scorching start with birdies on five of the first 10 holes.

Sinner beats Alcaraz to win title, gets back No. 1 spot

Monte Carlo: Jannik Sinner beat Carlos Alcaraz in straight sets to win the Monte Carlo Masters for the first time on Sunday and reclaim the world number one ranking from his Spanish rival.

Sinner downed Alcaraz 7-6 (7/5), 6-3 to capture his third ATP 1000 title of the year after completing the "Sunshine Double" last month with victories in Indian Wells and Miami. The 24-year-old joins Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal as only the third player to win four successive ATP 1000 titles. He also triumphed in Paris at the end of last season.

"We came here trying to get as many matches as possible, getting good feedback before other big tournaments coming up. Today was a high level from both of us," Sinner said. "It was a bit windy, a bit breezy. Different conditions from what the tournament has brought. The result is amazing. Getting back to No.1 means a lot for me... I am very happy to win a big title on this surface, I haven't done it before and it means a lot to me."

It was the first meeting between Sinner and Alcaraz since the Italian prevailed at the ATP Finals in November.



Jannik Sinner with the trophy on Sunday

MONTE CARLO MASTERS

Sinner, who is now 7-10 in his career against Alcaraz, will return to the top of the rankings Monday for the first time this year.

He has won his last 17 matches and becomes the first man since Djokovic in 2015 to win the first three ATP 1000 titles of the season. "It's impressive what you are achieving right now," Alcaraz said to Sinner during the trophy ceremony. "Just one man had won the 'Sunshine Double' and Monte Carlo and you are the second." AGENCIES

Ayush loses to Shi, claims Asian silver

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World champion Shi Yu Qi ended Ayush Shetty's brilliant run at the Badminton Asia Championships with a straight-game 21-8, 21-10 victory in Ningbo, China on Sunday.

Sunday's result notwithstanding, Ayush will cherish the memorable week. The 20-year-old beat some of the best in the world to win the only silver for India at the continental championships.

Dinesh Khanna had won the men's singles gold in 1965, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty had clinched the men's doubles gold in 2023 while several Indians had won bronze medals at this championship. A day after knocking out world No.1 and defending champion Kunlavut Vitidsarn, Ayush was off-colour against the world No.2.

Summing up the final, his coach Vimal Kumar said, "Ayush came up against a top-quality opponent and the match



Ayush Shetty in Ningbo

clearly showed the difference that experience, control and tactical discipline can make at the highest level. Shi controlled the tempo brilliantly, denying Ayush the rhythm he usually thrives on."

Nevertheless, Vimal said Ayush had a significant week. "Matches like these are invaluable. They expose exactly what is required to compete consistently with the very best in the world. The gaps are clear: better shot variation, improved rally construction, tighter control under pressure and smarter point building," said Vimal.

World No.1 An Se Young of South Korea defeated Wang Zhi Yi of China 21-12, 17-21, 21-18 for the women's singles title.

Barwal sets natl mark in marathon

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Bengaluru: Sawan Barwal fell twice in quick succession just about 150 metres from the finish line. As the seconds ticked past, a volunteer helped the Armyman to get back on his feet. The soldier from Himachal Pradesh now used the last few ounces of energy in his body to cross the finish line in 2 hours, 11 minutes, 58 seconds at the NN Marathon in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, on Sunday.

For the 28-year-old making his marathon debut, it was a dream finish as he eclipsed the 47-year-old mark of 2:12:00 set by Shivanath Singh on May 28, 1978 in Jalandhar.

"Today's marathon was a memorable experience. I felt strong and in control until around 40 km, I was progressing at 2:09 pace but the last 2

km didn't go as planned. I even fell twice before the finish line due to strong cold wind, but I'm proud that I kept getting up and finished the race," said Barwal, who also holds the national half marathon record at 1:02 set in New Delhi in 2024.

"I'm extremely happy to have broken the 47-year-old national record, even if it's by a small margin. That means a lot to me. A special thanks to the volunteer near the finish line who helped me get back up and continue, truly grateful for that support. I would

like to thank the entire team at Reliance Foundation, AFI, ASI, MRC and my training partners Gopi (Thonakal) and Man (Singh) for their constant support," he added.

While Barwal finished in 20th spot, Gopi, the second Indian in the fray, clocked 2:13:16 to finish 23rd. Ethiopia's Guye Adola won the race in 2:03:54.

TIMES NATION

Cabaret to global pop, Asha lived 'crossover' before it was buzzword

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There are singers who belong to an era, and then there is Asha Bhosle, who treated decades like passing trends she would dip into and then outdo.

A vocal sponge, Bhosle was soaking up the pop and jazz genres long before the internet made it easy. "I used to watch Carmen Miranda a lot and try to imitate her style," she had said in an interview, "like I did later with Shirley Bassey."

Tucked into voluminous saris, the Asha tai who loved dishing out her signature 'Maa ki Dal' and jaggery kheer was the same woman who watched Bill Haley's Rock Around the Clock three times just to nail the phrasing for 'Eena Meena Deeka', who received a letter from the Vatican for her rendition of 'Ave Maria', and became the first Indian singer to form a pop group overseas in Britain, The West India Company, in the 1980s.

At a time when playback voices in India were still neatly boxed — classical, romantic, devotional — Bhosle was slipping between them. Trained in Hindustani classical music, she said, "If you have the desire and riyaz... you can sing anything." She wandered into cabaret, jazz, rock, 'n' roll, and global pop long before the industry had quite figured out what to call any of it.

The turning point, as many stories go, arrived with the Burmans. S D Burman first showed her how to add her own 'inputs' to a track to make it work, but it was with R D Burman it started taking root when the duo would sit up until 4am listening to jazz and rock. When he handed her 'Aaja Aaja' for Teesri Manzil, she is said to have balked at its Westernised swagger. This wasn't a tune you could approach like a ghazal. It needed breathless phrasing and a loose shrug. Ten days of rehearsal later, she owned it so completely that it now sounds like it was always hers.

That became a pattern. Whether it was the smoky,

HER SONGS WILL FOREVER ECHO IN PEOPLE'S LIVES: PM

"... One of the most iconic and versatile voices India has ever known. Her extraordinary musical journey enriched our cultural heritage... Her soulful melodies carried timeless brilliance... She will continue to inspire generations, and her songs will forever echo in people's lives — **PM Narendra Modi**

"Asha Tai not only carved out a unique identity with her sweet voice but also enriched Indian music further through her melodies. Her extraordinary ability to adapt to every genre of music won over every heart... Through her voice, she will forever remain in our hearts — **Home minister Amit Shah**

"The news of the demise of the great singer Asha Bhosle ji is extremely heartbreaking. Through her voice, her art will forever remain immortal among us — **LoP Rahul Gandhi**

"As a playback singer, she lent her voice to thousands of films and music albums. The echo of her sweet melodies will resonate forever — **Defence minister Rajnath Singh**

"... An era of playback singing comes to an end. An epitome of legendary versatility and grace, her unique style of singing was appreciated by millions across the globe — **Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge**

"A legend whose voice defined eras, Asha Bhosle ji leaves behind an enduring musical legacy. Her contribution to Indian music will always be remembered with deep respect — **I&B minister Ashwini Vaishnaw**



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SUPER 11 Tracks

- **Aaiye meherbaan |** Howrah Bridge (1958)
- **Aage bhi jaane na tu |** Waqt (1965)
- **Aaja aaja, main hoon pyar tera |** Teesri Manzil (1966)
- **Piya tu ab toh aaja |** Caravan (1971)
- **Raat akeli hai |** Jewel Thief (1967)
- **Chura liya hai tumne jo dil ko |** Yaadon Ki Baraat (1973)
- **Dum maaro dum |** Hare Rama Hare Krishna (1971)
- **Chain se humko kabhi |** Pran Jaye Par Vachan Na Jaye (1974)
- **Phirse aaiyo badra bidesi |** Namkeen (1982)
- **In aankhon ki masti |** Umrao Jaan (1981)
- **Mera kuchh saamaan |** Jaazat (1987)

Brightman lifted 'Dil Cheez Kya Hai' into operatic pop. In 2005, the Kronos Quartet built an album around her, 'You've Stolen My Heart'. She recorded the R D Burman classics with such velocity — the quartet to four songs a day — the quartet struggled to keep up. It earned her a Grammy nomination.

Even in later years, she seemed game for unlikely pairings, whether it was a duet with cricketer Brett Lee to collaborations with Pakistani pop singer Jawad Ahmed that ignored the politics of the moment.

Which brings us to 2026. Bhosle, well into her nineties, recording "The Shadow Light" from her Pedder Road home for the genre-blurring British virtual band Gorillaz — her voice against a swirl of hip-hop, dub and electronica, with an old harmonium in the mix — in what would be her final collaboration.

'With Umrao Jaan, she gave Lucknow a permanence'

Muzaffar Ali

Asha Bhosle was never just a voice; she was a presence — one that entered a moment and made it eternal. Voices fade, but hers has only withdrawn into a deeper chamber of memory, where it will continue to resonate for those who have known longing through song.

Each time she sang, something unseen was summoned — an alchemy of *sur* and soul that refused to belong to time. When I approached her for 'Umrao Jaan', with Khayyam shaping the music and Shahryar giving it language, to inhabit the world of Rekha, she sensed immediately that this was not a recording — it was a reckoning.

She understood that she would have to travel beyond craft. That she would have to become the voice of a civilisation that once lived in *tahzeeb*, in restraint, in unspoken ache. She gave Lucknow a permanence that cinema had long denied it. In an industry often without place, she created one.

To bring her into Awadh was not direction, it was invocation. The only distant echo was Begum Akhtar. Yet even that was not imitation, but inheritance. Both carried that rare, unnameable gift — the ability to dissolve and become. She knew this without being told.

And she met it with something that cannot be rehearsed — surrender. She did not sing the character; she yielded to it. Such truth is rare in the architecture of commercial Hindi cinema. It is rarer still to be recognised, as it was, at the 29th National Film Awards.

(The writer is the director of 'Umrao Jaan')

Before women's quota bill session, PM steps up direct outreach

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: PM Narendra Modi will address eminent personalities and women achievers from different sectors on Monday as he steps up his direct outreach to people to build support for bills proposing the implementation of women's quota in legislatures from 2029, amid critical voices from the opposition, especially over the likely delimitation exercise.

An official statement described the programme as "Nari Shakti Vandan S-amelan", similar to the women's quota law passed in 2023 named 'Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam'.

The bills, which Parliament is expected to take up on April 16 during a special sitting, propose to fix the implementation of the law, which provides for reservation of one-third of seats for women in Lok Sabha and assemblies, from the 2029 national elections.

"The programme will witness participation of eminent personalities and women achievers from diverse fields. It will bring together representatives

Kharge seeks all-party meet

New Delhi: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has written to PM Modi that he convene an all-party meeting after April 29 — the last day of current round of polls — to discuss the delimitation issue, linked to the women's reservation law, rebuffing his outreach to Congress in favour of amendments to the quota measure being brought in Parliament's special sitting from April 16-18. TNN

from different sectors such as govt, academia, science, sports, entrepreneurship, media, social work and culture," the statement said.

With a united opposition in a position to deny govt the two-third majority needed for the passage of the constitutional amendment bill, especially in Lok Sabha, Modi has turned to mobilising public support to raise political cost for his rivals in case they turn against the move. He has spoken about the women's quota bill in his recent political rallies as well.

Shivraj named observer, BJP starts process to form Bihar govt

New Delhi: With Nitish Kumar tipped to quit as Bihar chief minister on April 14 after chairing his last cabinet meeting, the process for the first BJP-led govt to take over in Bihar kicked in on Sunday as Union minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan was named the party's central observer for election of the leader of its Bihar legislature party, reports **Rakesh Kumar**. There are indications that Samrat Choudhary is the frontrunner for the post of next chief minister.

Chouhan said he will be in Patna on April 14 as BJP lawmakers elect their leader, who will then be chosen as NDA legislature party leader to succeed Nitish.

Sources said that the oath-taking ceremony, likely on April 15, may be a simple affair, involving a few members. Nitish's son Nishant is being seen as JD(U)'s choice for deputy CM as the party looks to preserve its founder's political legacy and enthrone its cadres.

With BJP known for keeping its cards close to its chest, NDA circles are agog over its choice of Nitish's replacement. Yet, Samrat is being seen as the frontrunner for the investment his party has made in him since he joined it in 2018.

Conducted key SARS virus test in space during Covid time: Cosmonaut

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New Delhi: Denis Matveev, veteran Russian cosmonaut and spacewalker who served as a flight engineer on the International Space Station (ISS) and spent 195 days in space, in an interaction with **TOI** on Sunday, revealed that he had conducted an important SARS virus-related test in space in 2022 during the Covid period, and that he has been involved in training and mentorship of four Indian astro-

nauts (Gaganauts) at the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Centre in Russia's Star City.

"The four chosen Indian pilots — Shuk (Shubhanshu Shukla), Papa (Prashanth Nair), Max (Anag Pratap) and Ajit Krishnan — are great guys. Very professional. They are the right choice from India for Gaganyaan mission," Matveev said.

Matveev, who had conducted four spacewalks and participated in a wide array of research, told **TOI** at the Nehru Planetarium, "I was able to conduct a very inter-

esting experiment (in space). It was called the magnetic fabrication and its idea was to grow in a microgravity state the proteins of the Covid virus. In microgravity, protein cells grow bigger and (you get) a more clear structure to examine it."

"So, I was able to grow those SARS proteins and successfully returned it to the previous team. Later, they were sent to a Chinese lab for examination. That's what I would say helped humanity to understand how the virus works and also helped in making a good vaccine," he said.

RCB ADD INSALT TO INJURY

Opener Blazes Away To 36-Ball 78; Kohli, Patidar Slam 50s; Rohit Retires Hurt As MI Go Down By 18 Runs, Chasing 241

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78 Phil Salt has recorded his highest score for RCB, eclipsing the 65 vs RR at Jaipur on April 13, 2025 – his fifth fifty in 17 innings for RCB in the IPL. His first fifty in four innings vs MI is his eleventh in the IPL.

5 In five successive IPL matches between June 1, 2025 and April 12, 2026, Jasprit Bumrah has failed to take a wicket – a dubious distinction achieved by him for the first time in IPL.

Stats: Rajesh Kumar

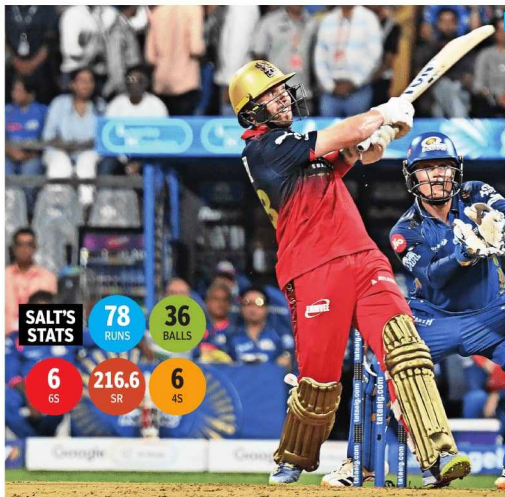
Mumbai: Riding on half-centuries from Phil Salt (78 off 36; 6x4, 6x6), skipper Rajat Patidar (53 off 20; 4x4, 5x6) and Virat Kohli (50 off 38; 5x4, 1x6), Royal Challengers Bengaluru downed Mumbai Indians by 18 runs in another high-scoring contest at the Wankhede on Sunday night.

Chasing 241, Mumbai Indians finished at 221 for five, with Impact Player Sherfane Rutherford producing a late blitz – 71 not out off 31 balls, including nine sixes. He hammered four sixes in the final over off Romario Shepherd, but the damage had already been done.

The win took RCB to three victories in four matches, lifting them to third on the table, while MI slumped to their third straight defeat, after four games, staying eighth. What RCB produced with the bat was pure carnage – an innings studded with 18 sixes, leaving MI's fielders mere spectators on a hot and humid night.

The conditions took a toll on players from both sides. Kohli did not return to the field, while Rohit Sharma, who went past 6,000 runs for MI, retired hurt due to cramps after scoring 19 (13b). RCB pacer Rasikh Salam, who came in as an 'Impact Player', also struggled with cramps but managed to dismiss Naman Dhir (1) in the 16th over.

Asked to bat first, RCB raced



HIGHEST TOTALS VS MI

Score	Team	Venue	Date
277-3	SRH	Hyderabad	27.3.2024
257-4	DC	Delhi	27.4.2024
240-4	RCB	Mumbai	12.4.2026
235-1	RCB	Mumbai	10.5.2015
233-3	GT	Ahmedabad	26-5-2023

PHIL SALT DEPOSITS ONE INTO THE STANDS DURING HIS SAVAGE INNINGS VS MI ON SUNDAY

SALT'S STATS

78 RUNS

36 BALLS

6 6S

216.6 SR

6 4S

smashing 4, 6, 6, 6 off his first four balls. Among those was the shot of the night: a reverse sweep for six over backward point off leg-spinner Mayank Markande.

MI's bowling unravelled under pressure. Attempting to bowl wide and short, they conceded 11 wides, with Thakur (1-32 in two overs) sending down six of them. The bigger concern for MI, however, was Jasprit Bumrah's continued wicketless run. He returned 0-35 in four overs, making it four matches in a row without a wicket this season.

SCOREBOARD

RCB: P Salt c Pandya b Thakur 78, V Kohli c Yadav b Pandya 50, R Patidar c Tilak b Santner 53, T David not out 34, J Sharma lbw b Boult 10, R Shepherd not out 2. **Extras:** (lb-1, nb-1, w-11) 13. **Total:** 240/4 in 20 overs.

Fall-of-wickets: 1-120, 2-185, 3-194, 4-231. **Bowling:** T Boult 4-0-50-1, H Pandya 4-0-39-1, J Bumrah 4-0-35-0, M Santner 4-0-43-1, M Markande 2-0-40-0, S Thakur 2-0-32-1.

MI: R Ricketon c Kumar b Suyash 37, R Sharma (ret'd hurt) 19, S Yadav c Salam b Pandya 33, T Varma c Duffy b Suyash 1, H Pandya c Shepherd b Duffy 40, S Rutherford not out 71, N Dhir c Patidar b Salam 1, M Santner not out 8. **Extras:** (lb-2, nb-1, w-9) 12. **Total:** 222/5 in 20 overs.

Fall-of-wickets: 1-72, 2-74, 3-121, 4-145, 5-154.

Bowling: Jacob Duffy 4-0-58-1, B Kumar 4-0-38-0, R Salam 2-5-0-23-1, K Pandya 4-0-26-1, S Sharma 4-0-47-2, R Shepherd 1-1-0-28-0.

Result: RCB won by 18 runs.

Player-of-the-Match: Phil Salt.

RR manager breaches ACU protocol, BCCI to probe incident

Guwahati: Rajasthan Royals team manager Romi Bhinder has landed in controversy after TV cameras showed him using a mobile phone in the dugout during the IPL match against Royal Challengers Bengaluru in Guwahati. The BCCI has taken note, with secretary Devajit Saikia saying the board will

Overton's spell a breath of fresh air for CSK

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Chennai: Chennai Super Kings' first win of the season sparked debate over the 'Player of the Match' call. While Sanju Samson earned the award for his fluent unbeaten century, a strong case could be made for **Jamie Overton**, whose incisive spell proved decisive.

Overton's 4 for 18 on a batting-friendly surface was, for many, the real difference. Hitting hard lengths and cleverly varying his pace, the English allrounder removed key batters including Sameer Rizvi, David Miller, Aaqib Nabi and Tristan Stubbs. His control – an economy of 4.50 – brought much-needed bite to a struggling attack. The standout moment came in the 19th over, when he dismissed Stubbs with Delhi Capitals needing 30 off 12 balls, effectively sealing the contest.

What made the spell more remarkable was the context. Just days earlier, Overton had gone for 42 against Royal

SRH brace for red-hot Royals

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Hyderabad: The city is bracing for a severe heatwave. Mercury has already breached the 40-mark and is rising. All that, however, will be lost on Vaibhav Sooryavanshi when he takes the field against Sunrisers Hyderabad, who are yet to get their bearings right in this edition of IPL.

Red-hot Rajasthan Royals are the in-form team going into the match at the Rajiv Gandhi International stadium on Monday and they owe quite a bit of their success to Sooryavanshi. He had a reputation to maintain coming into this edition and Sooryavanshi is doing it in great style, taking apart bowlers and attacks with the nonchalance of a 15-year-old.

Thanks to his marauding ways at the top in association with Yasashvi Jaiswal, Rajasthan have shown they are equally good at setting or chasing down totals. Factor in Dhruv Jurel's calm influence in the middle and it becomes clear why the Rajasthan top three dominate the Orange

WEATHER
32°C

NUMBERS GAME

4 Sunrisers Hyderabad have won the last four IPL fixtures against Rajasthan Royals – by four wickets at Jaipur on May 7, 2023; by one run at Hyderabad on May 2, 2024; by 36 runs at Chennai on May 24, 2024 & by 44 runs at Hyderabad on March 23, 2025. RR's last win over SRH was by 72 runs at Hyderabad on April 2, 2023.

cap standings. That Sooryavanshi strikes at 266/6 is the reason why Rajasthan hurtle along like a burning train.

Abhishek Sharma also strikes at 218/64, but inconsistently so and that has impacted the Sunrisers, who must have realised by now that last year's template of a 200-plus total is no longer a safe bet.

From being the envy of the teams for breaching 200 for fun last season – SRH piled up 286/6, the second highest IPL

Sanju's no-panic mode takes Chennai back to Dhoni days

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Chennai: The frustration had been building, but it has now vanished. One show of swagger from Chennai Super Kings' new recruit **Sanju Samson** against a competitive Delhi Capitals at Chepauk on Saturday has reignited belief in the camp.

Sanju's unbeaten 115 off 56 balls, his first major statement in CSK colours, showcased everything that makes him a prized T20 batter. There was no rush, no overindulgence in big hitting, no desperation to clear the ropes. Instead, he trusted his strengths, constructing a high-quality innings against a strong attack.

Not one for brute force, Sanju relied on timing and placement, striking nine boundaries in the Powerplay. His control and game awareness helped CSK snap a six-match Chepauk jinx and finally get their campaign moving.

The innings also marked a sharp turnaround. After failures in his first three matches, the pressure had begun to mount on the Kerala batter, who calls Chennai his "second home." But if there was tension, it never showed. CSK bowling coach Eric Simons underlined that composure, placing Sanju just a notch below MS Dhoni in terms of calmness.

"I've had the privilege of working many years with MS Dhoni, one of the calmest cricketers I've seen. Sanju isn't far behind," Simons said. "There's no panic, no urge to over-practise. When you have a player of his class, you know poor form is temporary."

Simons pointed to Sanju's self-belief as the defining trait. "It's something he has in abundance. Our job is to keep trusting him," he added.

That belief has served Sanju well before. At the recent T20 World Cup, he entered the XI late after a string of low scores but stuck to his natural game, reaping rich rewards with two consecutive Player-of-the-Match performances.

The move to CSK came with expectations. The franchise released long-time stalwart Ravindra Jadeja to bring him in – a decision that underlined their faith. Sanju admitted it was important to repay that trust. "After the trust CSK showed in me, it was important to deliver so we stay in contention," he said. "It's never easy starting with a new franchise, but I never felt that here. It's like a second home."

Sanju is no stranger to setbacks and believes those phases have shaped him. "I have failed a lot, but failure teaches you how to come back," he said.

GALLERY

Aman, Mukul settle for silver

Bishkek: Aman Sehrawat settled for a silver while Mukul Dahiya also lost the final as India signed off from the Asian Wrestling Championships on Sunday with 17 medals, including two gold.

Super subs seal win for Bagan: In a dramatic ISL game, Mohun Bagan fell behind twice but found in two substitutes, Sahal Abdul Samad and Jason Cummings, the makers of two game-defining moments on way to edging past Punjab FC 3-2 at the Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata on Sunday, reports **Nilesh Bhattacharya**

In Lucknow, Inter Kashi edged past Mohammedan SC 1-0.

Aariz becomes youngest Indian IM norm holder: Just ten years of age, Delhi's Aariz Kapil became the youngest

Indian chess player to make an International Master norm while Shivika Rohilla became a Woman International Master following a final round draw with IM Rudolf Sertic in the first Saturday chess.

Belgium shock US to reach finals: Belgium ousted 18-times champions the US to qualify for the Billie Jean King Cup tennis finals on Sunday.

Gout Gout powers to 200m win: Gout Gout ran a blistering 200m in 19.67 sec to win at the Australian championships on Sunday, faster than Usain Bolt at the same age. Bolt had clocked 19.93 in 2004. Aidan Murphy also cracked the 20-second mark, coming second in 19.88. **TNN & AGENCIES**

ACTION TODAY

CHESS: Candidates 14th rd 6 pm (Chess24 YT, Fidechess YT); **CRICKET:** IPL: SRH vs RR 7.30 pm (Jio Hotstar, Star Sports); Football: EPL: Man utd vs Leeds 12.30 am (Jio Hotstar, Star Sports)

Sindarov a draw away from glory

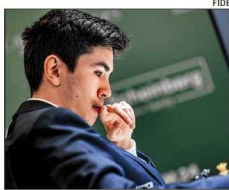
Uzbek Set For A Gen Z World Championship Clash With Gukesh

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Nagpur: Youngest World Cup winner Javokhir Sindarov is just a draw away from Candidates glory. The 20-year-old Uzbek Grandmaster made an effortless draw with World No. 2 Hikaru Nakamura in the 12th round of the Candidates Chess tournament in Cyprus on Sunday evening.

CANDIDATES CHESS

With two rounds remaining, the World Cup winner took his tally of points to nine to continue his unbeaten run in Candidates chess history, that too as a debutant. Sindarov's nearest rival, Dutch super GM Anish Giri failed to break the defensive Chinese wall of Wei Yi to secure a draw and is now two points behind the runaway leader. Even if Giri wins all his remaining rounds, Sindarov will need just a draw in



FINISH LINE IN SIGHT: Sindarov

one of his two games to clinch the Candidates tournament and emerge as the challenger to India's youngest world champion D Gukesh – setting up a Generation Z clash.

In the 13th round, Sindarov will be defending with his black pieces against his nearest rival Anish Giri. In the last and 14th round, Sindarov will be playing with the white pieces against Chinese Wei Yi.

In the 12th-round top-board action, Sindarov picked the English Opening with Anglo-Indian, Queen's Knight Variation against Nakamura. He earned a quick 33-move draw in just over an hour of play.

As early as in the 15th move, Sindarov exchanged his queens. Thereafter, at the 27th turn, both the players traded their rooks to bring the position equal on the board with a bishop and six pawns each. Finally, the peace treaty was signed within the next six moves.

Vaishali loses, shares lead with Zhu

In the women's group, tournament leader Vaishali Rameshbabu suffered a 39-move defeat against China's Zhu Jiner. On Vaishali's King Pawn opening, Zhu chose the Caro-Kann Defense. A couple of mid-game inaccuracies from Vaishali gave Zhu an advantage on the board as well as on the clock. With Zhu on the verge of winning the positional battle, Vaishali resigned. Despite the defeat, Vaishali shares the lead on top with Zhu.

Ukraine's Anna Muzychuk looked in a commanding position against Aleksandra Goryachkina but failed to garner full points for the lead after a 71-move draw. At the end the women's group has a two-way tie on top between Vaishali and Zhu at 7 points each.

Connolly finds 'beauty' in grind of three formats

Hindol.Basu@timesofindia.com

Chandigarh: Cooper Connolly, the 22-year-old Australian allrounder who has turned heads in his debut IPL for the Punjab Kings, embodies a rare blend of youthful swagger and quiet introspection. In a format that prizes power above all, Connolly is sticking to his guns, letting the game come to him rather than chasing the big hits every ball. "I'm pretty keen to stick to my strengths," Connolly said during an interaction on the JioStar Press Room, his voice carrying the confidence of someone who has already shouldered pressure in all three international formats.

"Obviously power is becoming a big part of T20 cricket, but there're other ways to go around it (too). And that's going to be me and I'm confident I'm going to get around that."

That approach shone through in Mullanpur in Punjab's opening game against Gujarat Titans, where Connolly walked in at No. 3 amid a collapse and hit an unbeaten 72 off 44 balls. Across



four matches so far, Connolly has aggregated 119 runs at a strike-rate north of 152. "I'm pretty happy with the tempo of my game because that's allowing me to perform the best," he added.

But Connolly is no IPL flash-in-the-pan. Having broken into the Australian national team setup, he has sampled all three formats – T20Is, ODIs and Tests – without yet being boxed into a fixed role. "There is a beauty about playing all three formats," Connolly said. "It's a challenge, and it's going to take some time to understand how I'm going to go between all three formats. I'm still (only) 22."

Sub-continents spin has been his latest classroom, especially after making his Test debut against Sri Lanka in Galle last year, and now the tracks in India during the IPL. "The wickets, obviously, have been relatively nice so far (in the IPL), so I think it's just about trying to put the pressure back on the spinners," Connolly said.

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Prasidh, the star in facile win for Titans

Gill, Buttler Slam 50s; LSG Suffer 2nd Home Loss

Fazal Khan | TNN

Lucknow: Gujarat Titans rode on authoritative half-centuries from captain Shubman Gill and Jos Buttler to beat Lucknow Super Giants by seven wickets with eight balls to spare at the Ekana Stadium on Sunday, sealing their second straight win while handing the hosts a second successive defeat at home.

Composed and in control, Gill and Buttler defused any pressure in the chase, keeping LSG on the back foot throughout and silencing a hopeful home crowd. Earlier, disciplined medium-fast bowling, led by Prasidh Krishna, ensured Gujarat restricted Lucknow to a manageable total after opting to field.

Gill anchored the pursuit with his 28th IPL fifty, also crossing the 4,000-run mark in the league with a boundary off Mohammed Shami. Buttler matched him stroke for stroke, bringing up his 26th IPL half-century while also completing 14,000 T20 runs and 100 fifties in the format.

Gujarat began steadily, with Gill and Sai Sudharsan adding 45 in 5.1 overs before Sudharsan fell. Gill then stitched a decisive 84-run stand off 58 balls with Buttler, effectively taking the game away from the hosts. By the time Gill departed at 129/2 in the 15th over, the result was all but sealed. Buttler fell soon after, but Washington Sundar (21*) and Rahul Tewatia (10*) completed the formalities with ease.

The result carried a touch of symmetry. Last year, on April 12, LSG had beaten GT at the same venue. This time, Gujarat returned the favour emphatically.

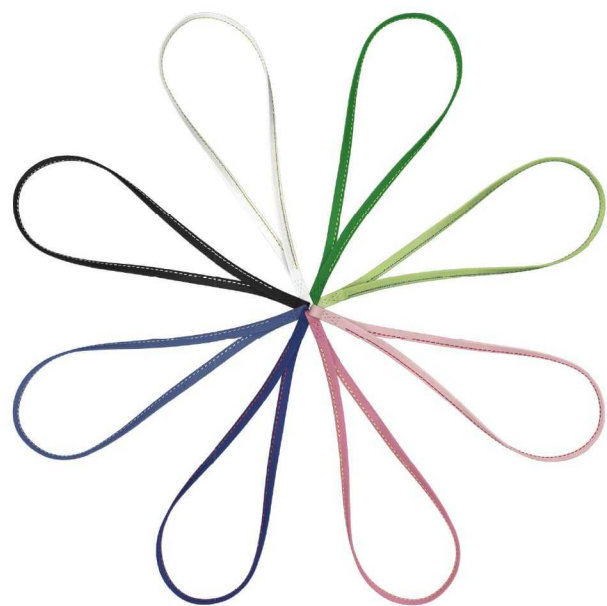
Gujarat Titans' pacer **PRASIDH KRISHNA**'s 4/28 vs LSG on Sunday are his best figures in T20 cricket

RANA, RUTURAJ COP HEFTY FINES

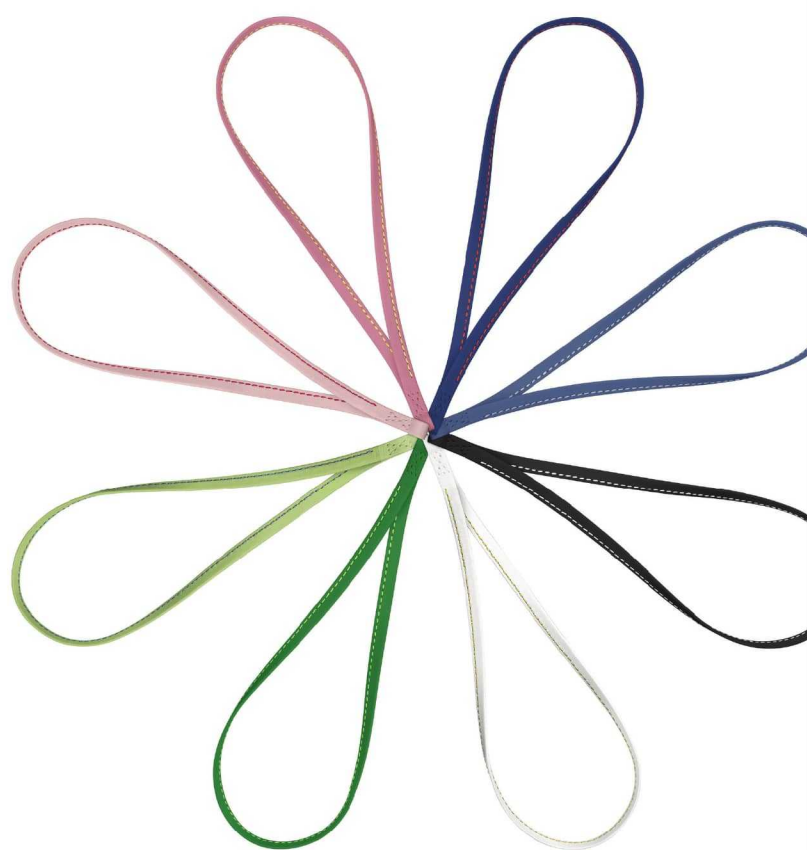
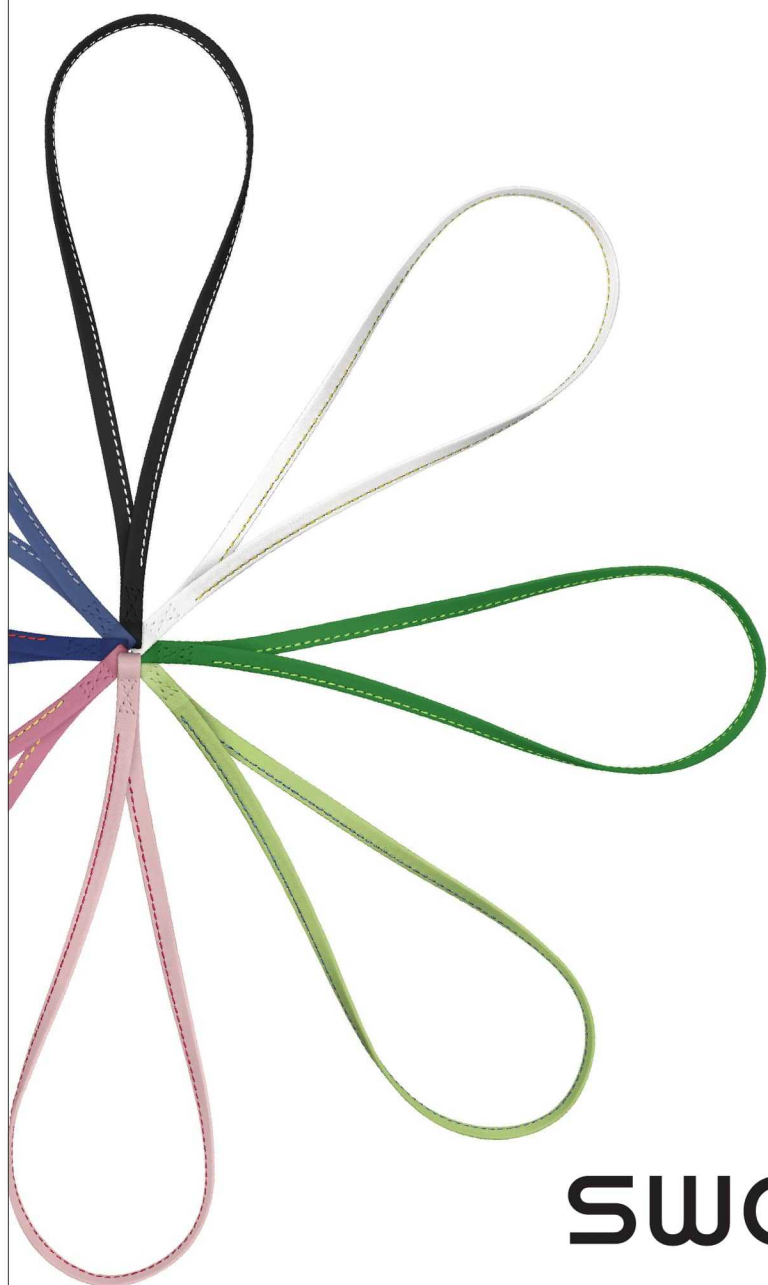
Chennai: Delhi Capitals batter Nitish Rana was fined 25% of his match fee and given a demerit point after an altercation with the fourth umpire during their IPL clash against Chennai Super Kings in Chennai. Meanwhile, Chennai Super Kings captain Ruturaj Gaikwad was fined 12 lakh for a slow over-rate.

HOW THEY STAND

TEAM	M	W	L	NR	NRR	P
RR	4	4	0	0	2.055	8
PBKS	4	3	0	1	0.720	7
RCB	3	3	1	0	1.148	6
DC	4	2	2	0	0.322	4
GT	4	2	2	0	-0.029	4
LSG	4	2	2	0	-0.427	4
SRH	4	1	3	0	-0.024	2
MI	4	1	3	0	-0.772	2
CSK	4	1	3	0	-1.532	2
KKR	4	0	3	1	-1.315	1



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There are days when I don't feel well, but the moment I step onto the stage, all of that is forgotten. I think I am just 40!

To the voice that made every emotion come alive in song:

TERE BINA BHI KYA JEENA!

8 SEPTEMBER, 2025

ASHA BHOSLE 1933-2026

Asha Bhosle's most iconic songs over 83 years

PIYA TU AB TO AAJA
(Caravan, 1971)

DUM MARO DUM
(Hare Rama Hare Krishna, 1971)

LE GAYI LE GAYI
(Dil To Pagal Hai, 1997)

YEH MERA DIL YAAR KA DIWANA
(Don, 1978)

DIL CHEEZ KYA HAI
(Umrao Jaan, 1981)

RADHA KAISE NA JALE
Lagaan, 2001

CHURA LIYA HAI TUMNE
(Yaadon Ki Baaraat, 1973)

IN AANKHON KI MASTI
(Umrao Jaan, 1981)

KAJRA MOHABBAT WALA
(Kismet, 1968)

Asha Bhosle recorded her first professional song, Chala Chala Nav Bala, at the age of 10 for the Marathi film Majha Bai in 1943

Awards and honours

- National Film Award for Best Female Playback Singer (1981): Dil Cheez Kya Hai (Umrao Jaan)
- National Film Award for Best Female Playback Singer (1987): Mera Kuchh Saamaan (Jhazakat)
- Dadasaheb Phalke Award (2000)
- Padma Vibhushan (2008)
- Grammy Nomination (1997): Legacy
- Grammy Nomination (2006): You've Stolen My Heart
- Guinness World Record (2011): Most recorded artist in music history for recording up to 11,000 solo, duet, and chorus-backed songs in over 20 Indian languages since 1947
- Maharashtra Bhushan (2021)
- Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Puraskar (2023)
- Maharashtra State Film Award for Best Female Playback Singer (18 times)

With Asha *ai*, versatility was not a skill; it was instinct. Cabaret, ghazal, pop, folk, romance, *qawwali* – every genre found in her. She embraced the sexy and the playful with a rare confidence, turning songs into teasing glances, smoky invitations and unforgettable acts of performance. In her voice, flirtation

had rhythm, desire had elegance, and mischief became music. Today, as the music falls briefly silent, what remains is not absence but abundance: melodies that still drift through car radios, wedding dance floors, late-night playlists and inherited memories. Some voices fade into history. Asha Bhosle's will continue to hum through it.

Asha Bhosle's mortal remains will be kept for *antim darshan* at her Lower Parel residence from 11 am to 3 pm today, followed by her cremation at Shivaji Park at 4 pm with full state honours.

She sang in a way that her voice embraced the actress' personality in the film: Asha Parekh

I had met Ashaji for the first time on the sets of my debut film *Dil Deke Dekho* (1959). Her warmth, talent and lovely personality continued to be the same over my 40-year career in Hindi cinema. I remember her telling me how the song *Daiya Yeh Main Kahani Phasi* from my film *Caravan* (1971), was a very difficult song for her. She had shared how it had many variations and it was not easy singing that song. The most important thing about her singing was how she sang in such a way that her voice embraced the actress' personality in the film, and it felt that the actress was singing it. That was the power of her versatility and talent. The song *Aaja Aaja* from *Teesri Manzil* (1966), sung by Ashaji and Mohammed Rafi and composed by RD Burman is my personal favourite. This song has stayed with me forever. I loved performing to the song. *Dil cheez kya hai* from *Umrao Jaan* (1981) is also one of my favourites. We had kept in touch regularly over the years and I can never forget her smile, and her songs will continue to ring in my ears forever.



Still from *Parde Mein Rehne Do, Shikhar* (1968)

Asha Bhosle & RD Burman - A legendary partnership

Asha Bhosle's creative partnership with RD Burman transformed Hindi film music in the 1970s and '80s. Together, they created unforgettable hits like *Piya Tu Ab To Aaja*, *Dum Maro Dum*, and *Mehbooba Mehbooba*. Burman's experimental, Western-influenced compositions perfectly complemented Asha's versatile voice. Their collaboration pushed boundaries – introducing jazz, rock and Latin rhythms into mainstream Bollywood music. The duo later married, making their artistic partnership deeply personal as well. Asha Bhosle often credited Burman for bringing out her bold, playful and experimental side as a singer. Their songs continue to influence generations of musicians and remain staples of Indian pop culture.



Salman's Maatrubhumi undergoes reshoots and Army consultations?

'For a movie that has not had its script approved, if the ADGPI becomes aware of it, they get in touch with the producer'

There are also industry talks about the film facing several hurdles with the CBFC. Major (Retd) Sandeep Sangwan, who is also a defence consultant on films like *Pippa*, explains what could have happened. "When there is a movie based on a battle or war, the script is submitted to the Additional Directorate General of Public Information, HQ of MoD (Army) (ADGPI). Most major changes, if any, are suggested by the ADGPI, and producers incorporate them. The changes are suggested at the script stage, and then the movie moves into the production phase. In the post-production phase, when the movie is ready, a special screening is conducted for the ADGPI. If they find that further changes are required, they suggest them. For instance, with Sam Bahadur and Pippa, I am aware that a couple of changes were suggested by the ADGPI after screening, and the films were released after those changes were made."

He further adds, "First, the title itself could have been an issue because even China does not officially name *Galwan*. Accurate locations or references are often avoided. In general, when a film deals with the Army, the CBFC asks producers to first get a go-ahead from the ADGPI. The CBFC only clears the film once ADGPI approval is in place. Now, for a movie that has not had its script approved, if the ADGPI becomes aware of it, they get in touch with the producer and ask for submission and changes." The makers and the ADGPI are yet to comment on the issue.

Niharika Lal

The title of Salman Khan's forthcoming war drama *Battle of Galwan* was changed to *Maatrubhumi* last month. Salman had shared a new poster of the film with the revised title, writing, "May War Rest In Peace #Maatrubhumi."

While there has been no official statement from the makers regarding the reason for the title change, industry speculation suggests that the decision may have followed discussions with authorities. Chinese state media outlet *Global Times* had previously accused the film of distorting facts following the release of its teaser. Between the two titles, the film's plot has reportedly been modified. "There have been industry discussions for months, but we are not aware of anything official. The release date has been announced, but there is still speculation about when the film will be in theatres," says exhibitor and veteran business analyst Raj Bansal.

Sources in the government indicate that "the certification process is conducted in a strictly confidential manner, in line with the Cinematograph Act, 1952, and the Cinematograph (Certification) Rules, which mandate a controlled examination of films by designated CBFC committees, with access restricted to authorised persons only"

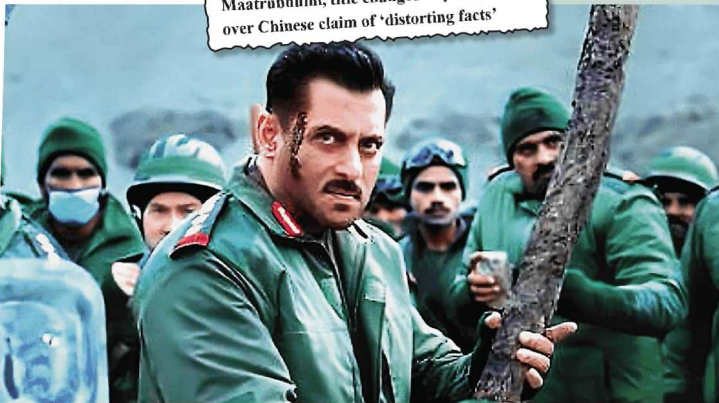
'Any kind of wrong optics, involving a popular star like Salman, can have an impact'

Since the new title of *Battle of Galwan* was announced, industry chatter suggests nearly 40% of the film is being reshoot, with references to China removed and a fictional twist added. Exhibitor and industry expert Akshay Rathi says, "No statement has been issued by the makers of the film yet and we are only hearing from industry sources. Obviously, national interest is paramount. Any kind of wrong optics, especially involving a popular star like Salman Khan, can have an impact on how things are perceived

by citizens of other countries or by the Chinese Embassy in India."

APRIL 15

Salman Khan's *Battle of Galwan* is now *Maatrubhumi*, title changed days after row over Chinese claim of 'distorting facts'



CBFC calls Jana Nayagan leak claims misleading

The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has rejected claims that it was responsible for the leak of Vijay's film *Jana Nayagan*, calling such reports baseless and misleading.

In an official statement, the CBFC said that reports claiming the Tamil film *Jana Nayagan* was leaked from the board were false and misleading.

The CBFC clarified that it follows a secure KDM (Key Delivery Message) system for all theatrical films submitted for certification. Access to the content is password-protected, and the KDM remains solely with the producer or filmmaker. Without a valid KDM, the film cannot be accessed or viewed.

The CBFC stated, "The DCP (Digital Cinema Package) of *Jana Nayagan* was handed over to the applicant in Mumbai on 17 March with due acknowledgement and has remained with them since."



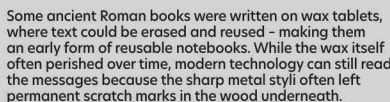
TNN

VOICES

I'm hesitant to say that the film opens the door for everyone else. I don't think any one film can claim that. Nepal has always had hundreds of powerful stories, what hasn't always been consistent is the space and visibility for those stories to reach a global stage. I see this selection as a signal to the world to stop looking past us

– *Elephants In The Fog* director Abinash Bikram Shah on Nepal's first film selected for Cannes' Un Certain Regard





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When I sang *Rangela Re and Tanha Tanha Yahan Pe Jeena* for him, I was 62 years old! I thank AR Rahman for bringing the best out of an elderly person
- Asha Bhosle in an earlier interview

'Paeans will continue to be written about her'

Tributes pour in amid the loss

Her enthusiasm and energy at 92 gives us hope: Shankar Mahadevan

"As someone who worships her and looks up to her as inspiration, not only musically but also generally in life - I am heartbroken. At 92, she had such enthusiasm and energy that she would dance on stage. So, this gives us hope that we too can do it. I've known her for many, many years, and she's always blessed me with her love and with her admiration for whatever little I have contributed to the music world. She was such a joyful human being... it was all about family and children and cooking for other people, entertaining guests and being completely updated with everything that's happening around," he tells us.

ASHA BHOSLE 1933-2026

I had a very special relationship with both Lata ji and Asha ji: Hema Malini

In a post on Instagram, Hema Malini wrote, "Asha tai no more! I just can't believe how someone so full of life, she who lent so much vivacity and character to her songs, has left us grieving. It is especially hard for me as I have an emotional connect with Asha ji - she has made many of my songs so popular with her unique voice and style. I had a very special relationship with both Lataji and Ashaji who have contributed in no small measure to my rise in the film industry. It is a huge loss that can never be compensated or replaced ever!"



A talent that will outlive many: SRK

It's truly sad to learn about Asha Tai's passing... her voice has been one of the pillars of Indian cinema and will continue to resonate world over for centuries to come. A talent that will outlive many, she always showered me with blessings and love and I will miss her.

Her voice will remain immortal: Shabana Azmi

"Ashaji has been my most favourite singer of all times. *Unki awaaz mein joh ras hai jo sharaar hai*, it's unmatched. During COVID, we became very close because we were stuck in Khandala and she was with her family in Lonavala. She would cook the most delicious meals for us and between Javed and her, we would be regaled with hilarious anecdotes from the industry, which were told with cheeky humour. Paeans will continue to be written about her and her voice will remain immortal, but I will cherish the memories she has left behind for us," shares Shabana Azmi.

- Inputs from Tanvi J Trivedi and Debarati S Sen

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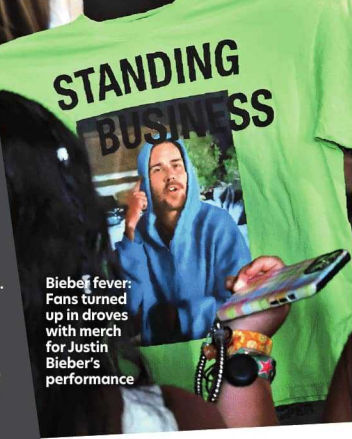
The Coachella weekend delivered moments both messy and memorable

Sabrina's apology
Sabrina Carpenter faced backlash after reacting to a traditional Arabic zaghrouta call during her set, and calling it "weird." After the backlash, she issued an apology on X. "My apologies. I didn't see this person with my eyes and couldn't hear clearly. My reaction was pure confusion, sarcasm and not ill intended. Could have handled it better! Now I know what a Zaghrouta is! I welcome all cheers and yodels from here on out," she wrote.



BINI's historic Coachella debut
BINI made history as the first act from the Philippines to perform at Coachella, taking the Mojave stage with a 45-minute set featuring their hit tracks. The eight-member group – Aiah, Colet, Maloi, Gwen, Stacey, Mikha, Jhoanna and Sheena – marked a milestone for Filipino representation on the global festival stage.

Coachella's pricing paradox
Born from Pearl Jam's 1993 boycott of corporate "junk fees," Coachella has ironically evolved from a scrappy desert rebellion into a profit-driven juggernaut. Today, the festival mirrors the tactics it once opposed, trading artist-led affordability for record-breaking prices and corporate-scale exploitation. A general admission ticket that cost \$449 in 2022 now starts at \$649 - a 44% increase. VIP tickets start at \$1,299. "Buy Now, Pay Later" plans, used by 60% of attendees, include a \$41 fee, generating \$6-\$8 million in extra profit for the festival.



Bryan Cranston keeps the family chaos alive and hilarious

MALCOLM IN THE MIDDLE: LIFE'S STILL UNFAIR
(Comedy/Drama)
★★★★
Cast: Bryan Cranston, Jane Kaczmarek, Frankie Muniz, Christopher Masterson, Justin Berfield
Director: Ken Kwapis
Duration: 4 episodes
Language: English (U/A 13+)
Streaming on: JioHotstar



Review in short

The show returns after two decades with a revival that feels more sincere than nostalgic. Malcolm (Frankie Muniz), now an overworked father, is pulled back into family chaos when Hal (Bryan Cranston) and Lois (Jane Kaczmarek) demand his presence at their 40th wedding anniversary. What follows is a chaotic reunion filled with sibling rivalries, old resentments, and the same domestic madness he once tried to escape. The series works because it does not soften the family's abrasive edges. Though the four-episode format leaves some ideas underdeveloped, the revival remains funny, and honest

- Abhishek Srivastava

A storm of sharks & chaos that never quite comes together

THRASH
(Survival/Thriller)
★★
Cast: Phoebe Dynevor, Whitney Peak, Djimon Hounsou
Director: Tommy Wirkola
Duration: 1hr 26min
Language: English (A)
Streaming on: Netflix



Review in short

Thrash is a chaotic mash-up of hurricane disaster drama and shark thriller that never fully finds its footing. Set in a storm-ravaged Annville, the film follows multiple characters battling rising floodwaters and deadly sharks. While the premise promises edge-of-the-seat tension, the narrative splits into two disconnected storylines that barely intersect. Director Tommy Wirkola keeps the pace brisk, and the absurdity occasionally. However, the film struggles with logic and coherence.

- Archika Khurana

Want a more detailed review? Head to etimes.in

RATING SCALE	THRASH ★ BELOW AVERAGE ★★ AVERAGE ★★★
	ABOVE AVERAGE ★★★★ GOOD ★★★★★ VERY GOOD ★★★★★
	OUTSTANDING ★★★★★ MASTERPIECE ★★★★★

UP TO DATE WHAT'S #TRENDING AND WHY

SNL opens with Trump and Pete discussing renewed strikes on Iran

Just a couple of hours after Vice President JD Vance announced that marathon peace talks with Iran produced no agreement, *Saturday Night Live* opened with Donald Trump (James Austin Johnson) and Pete Hegseth (Colin Jost) revelling in the negotiation failure and the prospect of bombing again. After speaking by cell phone from the Oval Office with Tiger

Woods and Melania Trump, the prez contacts Hegseth, who asked, "Are you actually negotiating with these herbs?" Trump replied, "You know what? Don't worry about the negotiations. I just heard they're going really, really bad. I sent in my secret weapon, JD Vance. After those Iranians spent 20 hours with JD, they said, 'Please sir, just go back to bombing us.'"



Batman Begins actor John Nolan passes away

British actor John Nolan, known for his roles in Christopher Nolan's *Batman* films and the CBS series *Person of Interest*, has died at the age of 87. The cause of death has not been confirmed yet, as per *The Hollywood Reporter*. "My uncle John was the first artist I knew... I miss him terribly," Chirs Nolan said.



Kazakhstan to host International AI Film Festival

Kazakhstan will host the Astana AI Film Festival (AIAIFF 2026) this autumn, one of the first international festivals dedicated to films created using artificial intelligence, reports ANI. The event is expected to bring together filmmakers, digital creators, tech companies, industry experts and investors, and serve as a platform for projects at the intersection of cinema and AI.



Badshah removes derogatory lyrics from Tateere after row

Badshah, under fire for his controversial song *Tateere*, on Friday said he has removed all "derogatory" portions from the Haryana track after meeting authorities, including the National Commission for Women. In a note on Instagram, he wrote: "In the last few days, we listened to what government authorities... had to say... We have made necessary changes... and removed those portions that were deemed derogatory." He added that responsibility towards society matters and announced a revised version, *Tateere Phir Se*, releasing April 14. The song had drawn backlash for derogatory lyrics, prompting an apology. Badshah earlier appeared before the NCW and promised a women empowerment track, while Haryana Police removed 857 related links online.

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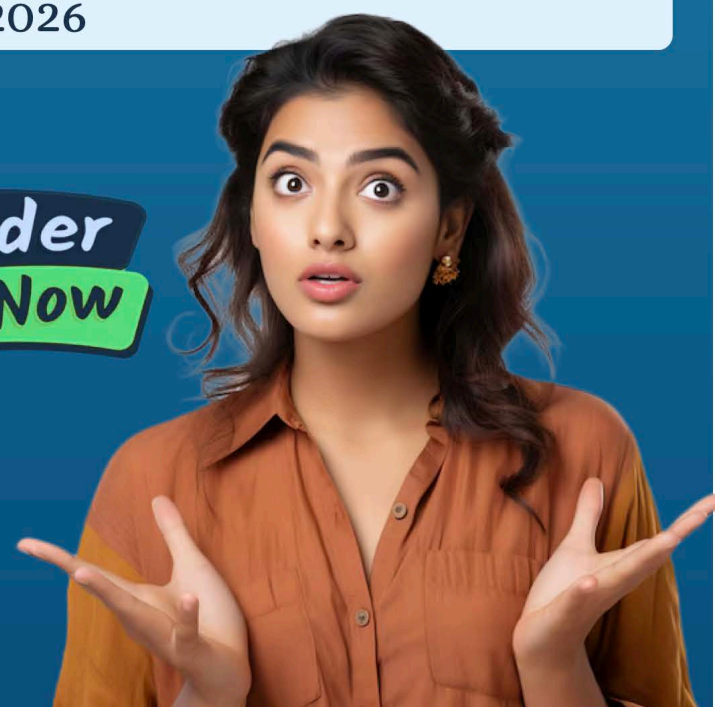
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